

Living with History

What Historic District designation means to you



Clifton Boulevard
& West Boulevard
Historic District

Historic District

What is an Historic District?

The Clifton Boulevard and West Boulevard Historic District was created to recognize, protect, and preserve the history and character of one of Cleveland's premier neighborhoods.

Historic districts are areas of special character in which historic buildings and their settings are protected by a design review process. When properties have been designated as part of a Cleveland Landmark Historic District, any exterior changes to the property require review and approval by the Landmarks Commission to ensure that the character of the individual property and the district as a whole are maintained. Historic districts are created by an ordinance passed by Cleveland City Council, and the Cleveland Landmarks Commission is the City's preservation board that oversees the districts.

The Clifton Boulevard and West Boulevard Historic District was designated to recognize its place in Cleveland's history of park and boulevard planning. The Landmark designation preserves the district's significant architectural heritage, the character of these two grand streets, their boulevard setting, and the qualities that make this a desirable place to live and own a home.





The Clifton Boulevard and West Boulevard Historic District

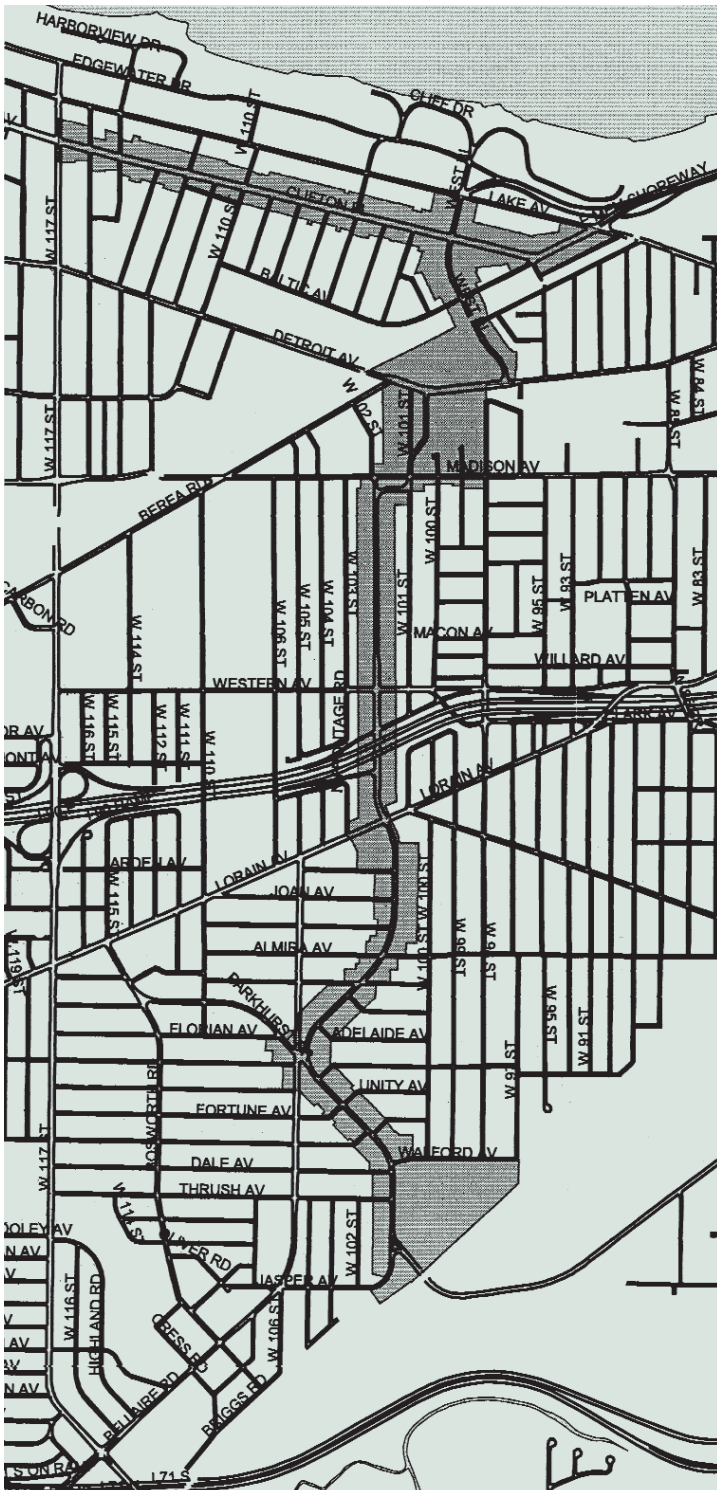
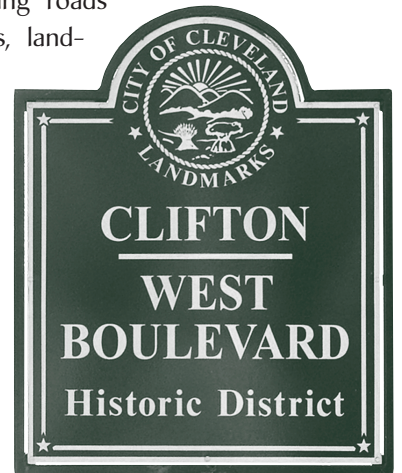
Boulevards

Clifton Boulevard and West Boulevard grew out of the City Beautiful and park and boulevard planning movements that began in Cleveland in the late nineteenth century.

Like its east side counterpart, East Boulevard, West Boulevard was planned as a landscaped parkway connection between Cleveland's large neighborhood parks – Edgewater Park and Brookside Park. West Boulevard still possesses the original qualities that distinguish it from other Cleveland streets – a bold, elegant stone bridge designed by noted Cleveland architect Charles Schweinfurth, gently winding roads with expansive tree lawns, landscaped green spaces with parallel rows of stately trees, and homes individually styled with unique design features.

Clifton Boulevard illustrates the impact of transportation to this neighborhood's development and how the City grew out from its downtown center. Unlike other streets in the city, the streetcar line ran down the middle of the tree lawns on the north and south side of Clifton. Service began in 1903 and ended in 1947 when the street was widened for a new express bus system. The popular streetcar line and the developing residential neighborhood sparked the erection of many of Clifton Boulevard's commercial structures in the 1920s.

The high quality and variety of architecture and the spectacular green space in which it is set are what distinguish the district. It is a unique mix of architecture and planning in which inspired landscape design brings harmony to the mix. Clifton-West Boulevard remains today one of the premier neighborhoods of Cleveland, an important illustration of neighborhood development.



Some general questions & answers



What is the best way to begin the review process?

First, you should contact the Landmarks Commission. The staff will explain the submission requirements for review and advise you about the appropriateness of your project and answer any questions. Remember that it is always important for you or your contractor to apply for a building permit from the City's Department of Building and Housing.

What is a Certificate of Appropriateness?

A Certificate of Appropriateness is the approval given by the Landmarks Commission when it has reviewed and determined that your proposed design changes are appropriate for the historic character of your house and the historic district. The Certificate of Appropriateness is only for the design of your proposed changes, all other City building and zoning code requirements must still be met. Staff can advise you or refer you to the proper authority.

Is all work subject to review?

All changes are subject to review for a Certificate of Appropriateness, except for routine maintenance, and in-kind repairs. These include repairs that match the existing design and materials. There is no review of interior work.



Who reviews my project?

A local design review committee, consisting of neighborhood residents, property owners and design professionals, reviews the project and makes a recommendation to the Landmarks Commission. The Landmarks Commission or staff will consider the local design review committee's recommendation in making the final decision. The Commission will either approve the project, approve it with conditions or recommendations, or disapprove it. The local Design Review Committee meets at the offices of Cudell Improvement. Contact Cudell for meeting dates and submission requirements.

Getting ready for Design Review

It is essential for the applicant to be prepared with all information and materials pertaining to the project in order for the Design Review Committee to make an appropriate recommendation to the City of Cleveland's Landmarks Commission.

- Applicants must bring two (2) sets of clear, color photos of the structure – both sets are to be left with the Committee. Photos are to be taken from the public right of way, as well as close-ups of any unusual architectural features (windows, doors, trim, etc.) that will be impacted by the project scope.
- Material samples are required, i.e. roofing shingles, windows, etc. Samples of paint colors must also be presented along with the brand and color name/number.
- Don't sign contracts or order materials until the project is approved or building permits are secured.
- If the work is to be performed by a general contractor/tradesperson, it is desirable for that person to accompany the applicant to Design Review. The professional can then describe to the Committee exactly how the work will be completed.
- If architectural plans have been prepared for the project, two sets of the plans must be left with the Design Review Committee. The architect is invited to accompany the applicant to Design Review.

Following these procedures will help ensure that the process moves forward in a smooth and expeditious manner.

For an appointment or information prior to Design Review, contact: Anita Brindza (Cudell Improvement, Inc.), 216-228-4383, during regular business hours. Please phone Anita Brindza before or by 9:00am on the morning of your scheduled Design Review if you must cancel.



Where can I go for help?

The staff at Cudell Improvement and Westtown Development can answer most questions and offer suggestions for many problems. The Cleveland Restoration Society can offer free **technical advice** and **financial assistance**. They can also refer you to an independent construction specialist. The Landmarks Commission and the City of Cleveland Department of Community Development can also help. Important phone numbers are listed at the back of this brochure. The Landmarks Commission staff can also suggest reference material for technical advice. Preservation Briefs – short, technical brochures published by the National Park Service – are an additional helpful resource.

How long will the review take?

The Landmarks Commission and the Design Review Committee meet two times a month. Some projects can be reviewed by the Landmarks Commission staff in consultation with the local committee, in which case the review may take only a few days.

What if my proposal is not approved?

If your proposed changes are not approved, the Landmarks Commission can explain in detail why they were not appropriate for your house and/or the historic district. You may request an informal review from the Landmarks Commission or consult with a staff person at Cudell Improvement before revising and resubmitting your request. The Landmarks Commission encourages you to improve your property, and will work with you to find the best solution for you and the historic district.



Is financial help available?

The City of Cleveland Department of Community Development has programs to assist homeowners in the maintenance and rehabilitation of their homes. Contact the City, Cudell Improvement, or Westtown Community Development Corporation for more information.

How can I find out about the history of my house?

Knowing your property's history can aid in the decision-making process. The Landmarks Commission staff can help you find resources for researching the history of your house. Old photographs are especially useful in

In addition, the Cleveland Restoration Society has established their **Heritage Home Loan Program** in the Clifton Boulevard and West Boulevard Historic District. Designed to assist property owners in the appropriate restoration of their historic homes, the program offers **low interest loans** and valuable technical assistance.



determining original design elements. The photograph collections at the Cleveland Public Library and the Cuyahoga County Archives are excellent sources for photographs.



Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation



- A property should be used for a purpose that does not significantly alter its defining features or environment.
- Preserve the historic character of the property. Do not remove or alter historic materials or design features.
- Avoid adding design elements that are not part of the property's history.
- Preserve changes that have acquired historic significance over time.
- Preserve distinctive design features, construction techniques, and evidence of craftsmanship.
- Historic features should be repaired rather than replaced. If beyond repair, replacement features must match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, if possible, materials. Replacement of missing features must be documented by physical or photographic evidence.
- Surface cleaning must be done by the gentlest means possible so as not to damage historic materials.
- When appropriate, archeological resources must be protected.
- New additions or new construction must not destroy historic features and must be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and design features of the property and its environment. Differentiate additions and new construction from the old.
- New additions or new construction should be built in such a way that if removed in the future, the integrity of the historic structure would not be affected.

For more information about the Standards: www.cr.nps.gov/hps/TPS/tax/rhb

Hot topics

When repairing or working on porches, windows and fences, special care needs to be taken since these features can drastically impact the character and integrity of a property.

Houses on Clifton Boulevard and West Boulevard reflect a wide range of architectural styles, including Colonial Revival, American Foursquare, Tudor, and an abundance of Craftsman-influenced designs, from high style to vernacular. The district also includes some notable terraces and apartment buildings. Built largely between 1900 and 1930, houses here possess an eclectic mix of architectural details typical of their time. Preserving original details like a porch's brackets or column capitals, railing spindles, shingle siding, or a tile roof, will have an important impact on the character of your house.

■ **Porches** should retain their original dimensions, features and details. Because porches are integral to the design of a house, they should not be removed or enclosed. If the original cannot be rehabilitated, new elements should match the original in design and materials as closely as possible. Care should be taken that porch railings and spindles are in keeping with the architectural character of the house.

■ **Windows** to a large degree define the overall character and charm of an historic home or building. Existing window sashes should be maintained and preserved. Sashes come in a variety of glass division configurations: For example, one-over-one, six-over-one, etc. Also, in a variety of styles based on function: double hung, casement, etc. It is critical for the size of the historic window, and the opening to which it belongs, to remain unchanged to preserve the structure's essential character. Framing and decorative elements should also be preserved. Irreplaceable decorative glass types, such as leaded, beveled, art glass, and cylinder glass, should be preserved. Replacement windows, if determined to be appropriate, should match the dimensions and configuration of the originals and should be wood or wood with aluminum cladding. Vinyl windows are discouraged as poor substitutes for authentic historic sashes.

■ **Special roofs** such as slate and clay tile should be preserved if at all possible.

■ **Front yard fences** and walls are discouraged because they visually encroach on the open green space of the boulevards. Chain link fences may be used for rear and side yard applications, however decorative metal and wood fences are preferred, and should not encroach beyond the setback of the house.

■ **Original siding** materials should be preserved and repaired or, if necessary, replaced in-kind.

Informational resources

Cudell Improvement, Inc.

11650 Detroit Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44102

216.228.4383

Web site: cudell.com

Westown Community Development Corp.

10313 Lorain Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44111

216.941.9262

Web site: westowncdc.org

City of Cleveland Landmarks Commission

601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 519, Cleveland, OH 44114

216.664.2531

Web site: planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/landmark/cpc.html

City of Cleveland Department of Community Development

601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 320, Cleveland, OH 44114

216.664.4000

Web site: city.cleveland.oh.us/government/departments/commdev/cdind.html

City of Cleveland Department of Building and Housing

601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 505, Cleveland, OH 44114

216.664.2927 - Building Permits

216.664.2007 - Code Complaint Center

Web site: city.cleveland.oh.us/government/departments/bldgandhousing/bhind.html

Cleveland Restoration Society and Preservation Resource Center

3751 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115

216.426.1000

Web site: clevelandrestoration.org

Cuyahoga County Archives

2905 Franklin Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44113

216.443.7250

Web site: centralservices.cuyahogacounty.us/archives/default.htm

For further information:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. U. S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service. Washington, D.C., 1992. (for sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents)

The Boulevard Neighborhoods of Cleveland. Cleveland Restoration Society *Preservation Briefs.* U. S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service. (Also available online: www.cr.nps.gov/TPS/briefs/presbhom.htm)

Funding: Cityworks, City of Cleveland Department of Community Development

Photographs: Franklin A. Piccirillo; Historic photograph courtesy of Cudell Improvement, Inc.

Publication design: David Meeker/Carl Lillis & Assoc., Inc.

This publication revised and reprinted: March 2007





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