

611 W. Blodgett Street

Built in 1914, this Bungalow, designed in the Craftsman style, was an Elmwood/Sunbeam model, ordered from the Sears Roebuck & Company Modern Home Catalog by August and Margaret Masloff, who moved to Marshfield after their marriage in 1913. The originality of the home remains largely unchanged, which includes a mission-style, built-in cabinet in the dining area, a feature of Sear's built homes. The home also has five rooms and three porches – one open and two enclosed –



with 1,155 square feet of living space. Mr. Masloff worked for the North Western and Omaha Railroad, was the President of the Marshfield Local of Brotherhood of Carmen Lodge and served as Supervisor for the First Ward starting in 1932. The home has the proud distinction of being one of the buildings in Marshfield listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Mr. and Mrs. August Masloff, married recently in Athens, arrived Saturday to make their home here.

(from Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, 13 February 1913, pg. 5)

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August Masloff is having a residence put up on West B street.

(from Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, 07 May 1914, pg. 5)

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YOUNG WIFE CLAIMED BY DEATH

Mrs. August Masloff died at her home on West B street Friday morning. She had been sick 17 months and was a patient sufferer. Her illness started with rheumatic trouble. She leaves her husband, one son, four years old, and her mother, Mrs. Karl Paul of Edgar, and two sisters, Mrs. Ben Draeger and Mrs. Ed. Schaller of St. Paul, and two brothers, Henry Becker of Mt. Horeb and Dan Becker of Clintonville.

Mrs. Masloff was born in Blue Mound, Wis., and was 28 years old. She was married to her surviving husband five years ago, since which time her home has been in this city. She was a loving wife, a kind, devoted mother and a true friend, and had a friend in all who knew her.

Those from out of town who attended the funeral were: Mrs. Ben Draeger and Mrs. Ed Schaller of St. Paul, Henry Becker of Blue Mound, Mrs. Carl Paul and Mrs. Corai Bier of Edgar, Mrs. Anna Stremer of Athens, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Masloff of Grand Rapids and Miss Aurelia Masloff of Fond du Lac.

The Misses Esther and Rose Grambsch sang at the funeral service, Misses Cathryn Canivet and Lillian Martin served as the flower carriers.

The funeral was held Monday afternoon from the home.

(from Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, 17 January 1918, pg. 1)

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Mr. and Mrs. August Masloff visited at the M. J. Cephess and John Masloff homes in Wisconsin Rapids Thursday.

(from Marshfield News and Wisconsin Hub, 17 March 1921, pg. 5)

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Officers Elected

F. X. Pritzl was elected president of the Catholic Knights of Wisconsin at the organization's annual meeting held at St. John's school hall last evening. Other officers for the ensuing year were elected as follows: Vice-President, August Masloff; Recording Secretary, Jacob Rebsteck; Financial Secretary, George Specht; Sentinel, William Baer; Marshal, Isadore Seidl; Trustee for three years, Albert Wirkus.

Jacob Rebsteck and George Specht were elected delegates to the 1925 state convention with J. K. Stauber and William Baer as alternates.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 02 December 1924, pg. 4)

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THE SAME OFFICERS SERVE LOCAL LODGE 6 YEARS: Marshfield Local Of Brotherhood Of Carmen Has Membership Of 12

An entire set of officers holding office without a break since their original election six years ago is the novel record of the officers of Marshfield local of the Brotherhood of Carmen of America. The officers are: August Masloff, President; William Storm, Vice-president; Ernest Hillman, Treasurer; Robert H. Spencer, Financial and recording secretary; Joseph Grail, Sr. Chaplain; Kick Ruder, Emil Kult, and Rudolph Werner, trustees.

The present membership of the local includes the officers and August Schroeder, Alb. Storm, Joseph Winkler, and Herman Froehlich, two less than the charter membership, 14.

The members are car inspectors, car repairers, and coach cleaners of the Northwestern and Omaha lines.



At the last meeting of the local Mr. Spencer was elected as a delegate to the general convention of the Brotherhood in Kansas City in September. William Storm was chosen as alternate.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 04 July 1929, pg. 3)

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August Masloff is having a balcony at his home on West Blodgett street enclosed.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 20 July 1929, pg. 5)



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August Masloff, West Blodgett, enclosing balcony \$25.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 03 August 1929, pg. 5)

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Three New Supervisors

Likewise, three new supervisors were voted into office. August Masloff defeated John Scheuer in the first ward, George Koenig defeated E. S. Bailey in the fourth, and Luther W. Deniston won over Ed Halle in the fifth.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 06 April 1932, pg. 1)

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Mrs. A. Masloff Dies at Age 74

Funeral Services Will Be Tuesday

Funeral services will be held at 9 a.m. Tuesday in St. John's Catholic Church for Mrs. August (Margaret) Masloff, 74, 611 W. Blodgett St., who died of a cerebral hemorrhage in St. Joseph's Hospital Saturday. The Rt. Rev. Msgtf A. N. Schuh will officiate and burial will be made in Gate of Heaven cemetery.

The body is reposing at the Rembs Funeral Home, where the Rosary-Altar Society held a rosary service at 3 p.m. today. A general rosary service will be held there at 8 o'clock this evening.

The former Margaret Plateau was born Jan. 25, 1884, at Dancy. She received her education at Dancy and lived there until 1918, when she accepted employment at St. Paul, Minn. On May 19, 1920, she married August Masloff at Knowl-ton. After their marriage they moved to Marshfield, where she had lived since.

She was a member of St. John's Catholic Church and its Rosary-Altar Society.

She is survived by her husband, one stepson, Raymond Masloff, a warrant officer in the Army at San Antonio, Tex.; one grandchild; two brothers, Vincent Fleteau, Kelso, Wash.; Raymond J. Fleteau, Lakeland, Fla.; three sisters, Mrs. August Ross, St. Paul, Minn.; Mrs. William J. Cauley, Custer; Mrs. John J. Allman, Blenker. One sister preceded her in death

One sister preceded her in death.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 02 March 1959, pg. 10)

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Mr. and Mrs. Robert Jaecks and children, Debbie and Glen, moved from 409 W. 14th St.. to 611 W Blodgett St., on Saturday, June 23, the same day the W. Blodgett street home was vacated by Mr. and Mrs. James M. Cournoyer and their two sons. The Cournoyers now are living at 911 Washington St. in Wausau.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 09 July 1962, pg. 8)

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KollrossSommer

Lauri Sommer and Joe Kollross exchanged marriage vows at 2:30 p.m. Sept. 2 at St John the Baptist Catholic Church, Marshfield.

The Rev. Leonard Kaiser officiated. Music was provided by Mike Bletsoe, Steve Meissner and Karen Heckel, vocalists, and Bonny Thompson, organist.

Parents of the couple are Mrs. Josephine Sommer of Edgar and James and Jeanette Kollross of 7866 County Trunk H, Marshfield. The bride is also the daughter of the late Alphonse Sommer.

The bride, given in marriage by her mother, wore a candlelight satin gown with sabrina neckline, latices trimmed fitted bodice with imported lace appliques, long satin Elizabethan sleeves, basque waistline encrusted with hand-sewn pearls and sequins, back trimmed with satin buttons, floor-length skirt trimmed with beaded and sequined imported lace appliques, and hemline edged with venice lace extending into a cathedral-length train edged with latices style lace. She carried a bouquet of dried roses, liatrus, dianthus and ivory pearls.



Maid of honor was Frances Wilichowski of Boyd. Bridesmaids were Amy Knoeck of Madison, Ann Kollross and Renee Kollross, both of Arpin, and Heidi Brehm of Madison. They wore waltz-length emerald, iridescent, taffeta gowns accented by oversized three-quarter length puff sleeves with double bow attached at the elbow, fitted bodice, sweetheart neckline, basque waistline, and full skirt. They carried bouquets of dried carnations, roses and dianthus.

John Kollross of Arpin was best man. Groomsmen were Mike Kollross of Stevens Point, Tim Knoeck of Madison, Doug Brehm of Edgar, and Al Ashbeck of Marshfield.

Ushers were Tom Sommer of Edgar and Tom Kollross of Arpin.

A reception, dinner and dance were held at the Eagle's Club.

The bride is a graduate of Edgar High School and Mid-State Technical College. She is a medical assistant in the Cardiology Department at Marshfield Clinic. The groom is a graduate of Auburndale High School and Mid-State Technical College. He is an estimator for A & B Processing.

Following a honeymoon trip to Hawaii, the couple will reside at 611 W. Blodgett.
(from Marshfield News Herald, 19 September 1990, pg. 9)

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Marshfield Historic Preservation Week to be city's largest ever

The city of Marshfield will see its biggest ever celebration of historic preservation next week.

May 13-21 has been designated Historic Preservation Week around the nation, and it's no exception here.

The week has "really come together," according to Shirley Mook, Marshfield Historic Preservation Association president. It will kick off with city historic designations Saturday of the first two homes to receive the honor. The Sears Built House, 611 W. Blodgett St., will be designated at 1:30 p.m. Immediately following, the Eli Winch House, 201 S. Vine St., will be designated around 2 p.m. A reception will follow.

Mook, who owns and has restored the Winch House, said she's returned every room back to original luster. Winch descendants will be on hand at the designation.

"I'm hoping other people will do this," Mook said of the honor of being of the first homes.

The week will be dedicated to the memory of G. Stanley and Vi Custer, past Association members.

It is sponsored by the Marshfield Historic Preservation Committee, Marshfield Historic Preservation Association, North Wood County Historic Society, Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Main Street Marshfield, Inc.

Throughout the week, old time photos will be displayed in downtown businesses. Historic displays are hanging in the library and walking tours of the city will be available. Historic videos will also air on cable access.

On May 19 and 20, the organizers are encouraging persons to dress in vintage costume from 1800-1900.

For ladies, look at a white or black Victorian blouse with high necks, lace or "leg of mutton"

sleeves. A long summer dress, vest; crocheted skirt or woven shawl, long skirt, Victorian shoe or lace-up boot are also options.

Men are encouraged to wear an old three-piece, brown small-plaid or pin stripe suit, white shirt, silk scarf, oxford shoe, western boot, walking stick, top hat suspenders, pocket watches, felt hat and bow ties.

Children can also get in on the act. Boys can wear a shirt, cut-off pants for knickers, suspenders, cap, tights and high tops. Girls can don frilly dresses below the knee or a long skirt with white or black tights, high top shoes or slippers.

A special tree dedication in honor of the Custers will take place at 1 p.m. May 21 in Wildwood Park by the 2442 Engine, which both worked to preserve. A reception will follow at Upham Mansion.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 12 May 2000, pg. 18)

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Two city neighborhoods could achieve national historic status

By Thorn Gerretsen of the News-Herald

By the end of July, Marshfield could have something that's relatively rare in Wisconsin: two entire neighborhoods listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Pleasant Hill and Park Street are both listed on the Wisconsin Register of Historic Places. And normally, that makes national register status virtually automatic, said Ruth Voss, who did much of the initial research required for the nominations.

"Those neighborhoods are special" said Jim Drager, architectural historian for the State Historical Society. "When you're walking down the street or driving through them, you see enough historic buildings intact to get a historic flavor of the past. You lose yourself in past history there."

Drager walked through both areas at the request of local residents, and recommended that the community nominate both for the national register.

There are more than 100 historic districts on the national register, and about 40 of them are neighborhoods, Drager said.



News-Herald photo by Andi Stempniak

Pete Turney puts molding on in his Park Street home that he and his wife have been restoring for 20 years.

"It's a special status," he said. "What it says is that these parts of Marshfield are so important that compared with other neighborhoods, they're historically significant."

Voss owns the Sears Built House at 611 W Blodgett St., which was recognized May 13 for a listing on the city's register of historic places.

"That got me going," Voss said about her interest in historic preservation.

She noted that the efforts to preserve ; the Pleasant Hill and Park Street neighborhoods both arose from controversies which threatened at least part of those areas.

The inspiration to make Park Street a historic area came after the city bought three homes on the street in 1998, and made plans to demolish them to accommodate the proposed hotel/conference center. Two of the homes were later saved.

"The whole Pleasant Hill effort started because of the Boulevard," Voss said. "That was basically threatened."

That was more than a decade ago. Eventually, planners of the Near East Boulevard agreed that an initial survey be done to determine if the neighborhood could get historic status.

"Pleasant Hill is one of Marshfield's earliest neighborhoods," said Shirley Mook, president of the community's Historic Preservation Association.

It's bounded by South Cedar Avenue, East Fourth Street, South Vine Avenue and the Wisconsin Central railroad tracks. It includes 75 homes and two churches. Mook owns a home there, and has joined other residents in restoring their homes to their original distinctive appearances.

"When I started to work on my house, there were many rental units (in Pleasant Hill)," Mook said. "Now, the majority are owners who occupy their homes. Many are improving their homes, and we need to instill that same spirit in the landlords."

The homes are one-story and two-story frame houses built between 1880 and 1955. Some of Marshfield's early civic leaders and prominent businessmen lived in those homes.

The application for national register status listed seven homes - most in the 100 and 200 blocks of South Vine Avenue - that are above average in style and still retain their original integrity. It listed the 96-year-old Melvin and Helen Laird home at 208 S. Cherry Ave. as perhaps the finest house in the district. It has been listed separately in the national register.

"The house is a fine example of the Period Georgian Revival which features a symmetrical



News-Herald photo by Andi Stempniak

Homes along Vine Street and Second Avenue part of the Pleasant Hill neighborhood will soon be part of a historic district.

facade, a rectangular plan and a hipped roof," the application said. It also has a full porch, projecting bay above the balcony and many other unique features.

The Park Street district would include 13 homes in the 200, 300 and 400 blocks.

The neighborhood's biggest charm is its ambiance, according to the application filed for national register status.

The 300 and 400 blocks have "an obvious ambiance of gracious living because of the 80 foot wide street and the mature trees and wide boulevards," the application said. "The houses are set back from the street on flat, generous lots. All the properties are well maintained and show a pride of ownership."

"When I started to work on my house, there were many rental units (in Pleasant Hill). Now, the majority are owners who occupy their homes."

SHIRLEY MOOK
Local historian

A large Queen Anne house at 402 Park Street was a hospital and later a clinic. The house at 311 Park was a Masonic Temple for many years.

Only two houses retain their originality, the application said. They are the former Franklin Bissell house at 412 Park and the Bailey House at 304 Park. The oldest homes appear to be the tallest up to 2 1/2 stories.

"The neighborhood is representative of the architectural style for houses that were being constructed at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, prior to 1931. There is no consistency in the architectural design. The majority of the houses are clapboard, three are brick and one is stucco."

It's important to retain a home's external integrity, Mook said.

"Back in the 1960s and 70s people took out their woodwork," she said. "People took out beautiful hardwood floors. Some are stripping their walls and are surprised at what they see."

Both neighborhoods were placed on the state register in January, and Drager expects the National Park Service to give final approval for national register status within 60 days.

"Hopefully, this raises awareness that old buildings are nice," Voss said.

Mook said the heritage behind Marshfield's most historic buildings must be passed on to future generations.

"We had six tour guides give tours of the downtown this week for third-graders," she said. "They were so attentive. 'We didn't know there was so much history,'" Mook quoted the children as saying. "They wanted to know."

Mook also hopes national register status will give Marshfield a better reputation for preserving

its history. She notes that the Wisconsin Heritage Traveler, a publication by the state Department of Tourism, does not list the city. It does list Neillsville and Nekoosa.

"There's lots more we can do," Mook said.

If the national register status is granted, Drager said homeowners would not be required to keep up or modify their properties. But he notes that homeowners would be eligible for state tax credits to encourage them to keep them nice.

"It doesn't cover every conceivable thing," Drager said, "but it does cover major big ticket items like new furnaces, window replacements air conditioning and electrical upgrades."

"People don't have to keep them (the homes) intact," he said. "But through these benefits, the national register listing will recognize them as someplace special."

"Restoration increases the value of properties," Mook said. "I can't stress that enough."

(from Marshfield News Herald, 20 May 2000, pgs. 1 & 5)

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A Piece of History

Two Marshfield homes named as first members of the city historic register

The city of Marshfield boasts many historic homes, whether residents know it or not.

Last Saturday, two such homes became the first to officially be placed on the city's historic register.

For Shirley Mook, her Queen Anne home at 211 S. Vine Ave., is the culmination of detailed research and more than 15 years of sweat.

Now the three-bedroom home is nearing completion of restoration, although Shirley will never be completely done.

She purchased the home in November 1984 out of the simple love for old homes.

"I wanted another old house," she said, resting comfortably in her spacious parlor. "I bought it with the objective of restoring it."

And restore it she has. Shirley - who's children were grown when she purchased the house knocked down unwanted and added walls, painted and wallpapered more authentic colors to adorn the home and has done her share of scraping old paint.

The process began by looking at original deeds and finding relatives of the man who built the home in 1897, Eli Winch. During his lifetime, Winch sat on the state legislature, owned several stove factories and was one of the founders of Consolidated Papers. Shirley finally found one of the original granddaughters, Winnie, who was living in Stevens Point. One of Winnie's daughters brought her over to talk to Shirley about the home. From there ideas were gathered and sweat began to pour, not to mention a nearly constant flow of cash. "It's not cheap, and it takes a lot of time," she said. "I've done everything I can myself." That includes making her own drapes, some of which she'll be replacing

stave factories and was one of the founders of Consolidated Papers.

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"It's not cheap, and it takes a lot of time," she said. "I've done everything I can myself." That includes making her own drapes, some of which she'll be replacing with another set of hand-made drapes this summer.

From the moment a person walks in the home, the life of the old Winch house comes alive. The spot where children come to play is now stuffed with toys. A pump organ and piano grace the sitting room. The parlor boasts wall-to-wall carpeting duplicated to match turn of the century style.

Breath-taking furniture and decorations grace each wall; each requires Shirley to smile and chuckle before she graces visitors with the story of how they came to be in her possession.

There was the tin ceiling of her kitchen that she squeezed out of a downtown building that was being torn down. The museum-quality chairs in her living room were something "I just had to have."



News-Herald photos by Andi Stempniak

Shirley Mook's historic home at 211 S. Vine Ave. was the first to be placed on the city's historic register. Above, Shirley looks at pictures of her grandparents that hang in the home's library. To the left, the plaque presented to Mook from the city adorns the lawn in front of her home.

Each piece is patterned after the original, whether it be reproduced cabinetry in the kitchen or an actual claw-foot bathtub purchased to make the upstairs bathroom more authentic.

"It took hundreds and hundreds of hours, but it was worth every minute," she said of restoring the kitchen ceiling by finger-caulking the tin pieces together and hand painting each while situated on a ladder.

Shirley has made some additions, but has captured the original flavor of the home throughout.

And where you don't find original, you might instead stumble instead on a piece of Marshfield history.

An original Council desk adorns the bedroom used by one of the children. "They used these Council desks right up until the time it was moved," she boasted.

Intentional gaps in the upstairs wallpaper show the signature of those who originally papered the walls in 1897. Yes, Shirley also signed during her last papering ritual.

Even the servant's quarters "beyond the curve" are being redone.

The years of work on the 2 1/2-story house are paying dividends with the placement on the city register. This register requires homes to either have historic significance or to have been owned by historic individuals.

"He was a very prominent businessman," Shirley said of Winch. "He was on all kinds of boards ... Winnie said her dad said he was the most honest man in town."

Winch's presence in the home is one of the reasons Shirley was able to be the first house to be placed on the city's register, which requires either the home itself or the person who resided in it to be significant to the city's history.

Ruth Voss, who owns the Sears Built Home at 611 W. Blodgett, was also honored with a spot on the city's historic regis-



News-Herald photos by Andi Stempniak

Ruth Voss' Sears built home at 611 W. Blodgett is one of few original catalog houses in town. In this photo, the home stands true to the original design.

ter. Her home is not as ornate as Shirley's and she didn't spend as much time on it, but the historical significance of the well-maintained structure cannot be denied.

Built in 1914, the originality of the home remains largely unchanged. At first sight of the dining area, a mission-style, built-in cabinet catches the eye.



News-Herald photo by Andi Stempniak

This photo shows Voss next to the plaque the city presented to her last weekend, placing the home on Marshfield's historic register. Voss has worked to keep the home intact, despite the fact that she no longer resides in it.

"That's one of the keys of Sears built homes," Ruth said "They have some type of built-in cabinetry."

The entire home was selected from a Sears catalog and shipped via rail. All a homeowner needed was a lot, a foundation and a builder who could match the numbered pieces with the construction plans.

At an original cost of \$800, Voss said the structure came complete with shingles, bathroom fixtures and maple-stained pine woodwork. It is an Elmwood/Sunbeam model with an enclosed upper sun porch.

The basic home illustrates a trend to downsized homes in the early 1900s, Voss said, as more

women began to work and fewer homes employed kitchen help.

A book Ruth owns on Sears homes shows 110 models, ranging from a two-bedroom to a mansion. "They're everything from modest to not," Ruth said. Sears also manufactured several barns.

She originally discovered the value of her home after living there for several years when two old gentleman from a neighboring home explained that it was ordered from a catalog.

But it wasn't until relatives clipped articles from the Chicago Tribune on Sears homes that Ruth really understood how valuable it was.

Although she no longer lives in the house, Ruth still feels it's important to maintain the structure's integrity.

"You don't find very many of them and actually it's very comfortable," she said.

Ruth said hers is one of few which remain unaltered. Its historical significance is what placed it on the city register.

She applied for city register recognition to simply raise awareness of the need to maintain these homes, and to prove their value.

Both Ruth and Shirley are members of the Marshfield Historic Preservation Association. The

homes were placed on the register by the Marshfield Historic Preservation Association.

"If s a project initiated several years ago and never got off the ground," she added.

She believes there are many homes in Marshfield which would be eligible and don't necessarily require decades of restoration.

"I wanted to lead the way and encourage other people to do it also," Shirley said.
(from Marshfield News Herald, 20 May2000, pg. C-3)

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Preservation committee delays proposal review due to absences

By Jonathon Gneiser, Marshfield News-Herald

The Historic Preservation Committee will wait another month to review proposed changes to its policies and procedures, as its October meeting was canceled Monday afternoon due to the lack of a quorum.

The committee's ability to nominate historic sites to the local historic register without owner consent, which it used for one of the buildings in the city's Downtown Historic District that was demolished to make way for a new Kwik Trip gas station, has caused some city aldermen to push for a change.

Plan Commissioner David Korth, Alderman Mike Feirer, Pete Turney and Lyman Smith all indicated they were unable to attend the meeting, said Amber Miller, planning and economic development director. Sarah Fuelleman, historic preservation committee chairwoman, Iris Guensberg and Jeff Cichantek would have provided three out of the four committee members necessary for a quorum.

On smaller committees like historic preservation, having too few members to meet a quorum occurs about twice a year, said Miller, who added that she plans to send a memorandum to the Common Council to summarize the policy and procedural changes that will be proposed at the committee's meeting in November.

Under the staff proposal, Miller said if the committee is interested in nominating a property, it would be required to notify the owner by certified mail. An item would also be added to the nomination form where the property owner could indicate his or her support or lack of support of the idea.

"So we at least know they've been notified and they know what's going on," she said.

The committee also would be required to vote unanimously in favor of forwarding a nomination against a property owner's wishes under the staff proposal, Miller said.

"They discussed at council 'only under extraordinary conditions, she said. "It's hard to verbalize

what an 'extraordinary condition' is. If the committee needs to proceed forward, there should be no problem having a unanimous decision."

Staff also has proposed to require the committee to have at least one televised educational program each year, Miller said.

Ruth Voss owns a house at 611 W. Blodgett St. that's on the city's local historic register. The home, purchased through a Sears catalog, was built in 1914.

"It's a Sears house, and I wanted it recognized as such," Voss said. "It really has not be altered from the original plans, and I wanted to keep it that way."

Voss said the Historic Preservation Committee provides resources to guide her to appropriate materials or individuals for any specialized repair work the home may require.

"Most homes are far more attractive if they are maintained as the architects designed them," she said.

Shirley Mook's home at 201 S. Vine Ave. also is on the local historic register.

"I'm proud that I have a historic structure," she said. "I want to make sure that structure is preserved for all generations."

Mook said she believes people who own historic structures have a responsibility to future generations.

"For our local officials who say you can destroy whatever you want to, they're not being responsible to future generations either," she said.

Mook said adding her home to the local historic register has been financially rewarding, because the value of her house has increased significantly due to its restoration.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 12 October 2004, pg. A-3)

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Sears Craftsman homes built in Marshfield

Most people know what a pre-built home is. There are several companies in our area that produce this product, and most of us probably think of it as a rather recent idea.

There are two homes I have located that will change this thinking. Both are Sears Craftsman homes built in the early 1900s. Sears began selling these homes from a catalog in 1908 and continued until 1940. They had 447 house styles during that time and sold more than 70,000 homes. You even could purchase an outhouse separately for those very small homes and cottages that did not feature a bathroom.

You picked out the house of your dreams and ordered it, and it would be delivered by railroad

car to your nearest depot. All the pieces were cut to size, and it included all windows, cabinets, flooring, roofing, siding, plumbing and wiring. If there was a stairway in the house, all materials would be included, from banister to staircase. All you had to do was hire a contractor to assemble it, or do it yourself.

I had heard of the Craftsman homes but did not realize the great variety of styles and sizes available.

Back to the two examples I have located in our community. The first is at 611 W. Blodgett St. It was built in 1914 and has five rooms and three porches - one open and two enclosed - with 1,155 square feet of living area. It was part of the Elmwood/Sunbeam series and sold for \$1,294 to \$2,906 delivered.



The second home is at 309 E. Fourth St. It was built in 1916 and has six rooms and one open porch. It contains 1,694 square feet of living area. It was part of the Hazelton Series and sold for \$780 to \$2,248 delivered.

*This home on West Blodgett Street, above, as well as this house on East Fourth Street, below, are Sears Craftsman homes.
(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)*

The two extremes that I have found in the Sears catalog were the Natoma, which was 20 feet-by-16 feet with three rooms and sold for \$191, and the Magnolia, a Southern mansion. It had two stories with an upper floor containing four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a sleeping porch and two decks, one supported by white pillars. The first floor contained a living room, dining room, den, kitchen, butler's pantry, lavatory, breakfast nook, sun parlor and an open porch in front and a closed porch at the rear. Large white pillars framed the front entrance.



It sold for \$5,140 in 1914.

To see more of the homes offered, go to www.searsarchives.com/homes.

If anyone knows of more Sears Craftsman homes in the community, please drop me a line at hiddenmarshfield@yahoo.com.

Ken Wood is a member of the Marshfield Historic Preservation Committee. Write to him at hiddenmarshfield@yahoo.com.

(from Marshfield News Herald, 8 August 2011, pg. 5A)

For additional information on the home, check:

Property Records for the City of Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin:

<http://assessordata.org/reports/6973311531003.pdf>

Wisconsin Historical Society's Architecture and Inventory:

<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Property/HI55579>