

CITY OF FORT WAYNE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Petition for Historic Property or District Designation
Fort Wayne, Indiana
Historic Preservation Commission**

1. Name of Property

And/Or Common: Dunn House, William C. and Clara E.

2. Location

Address: 521 Dunnwood Drive; Fort Wayne, IN 46805

3. Owner of Property

Name: XXXX

Address: XXXX

4. Legal Description

France Addition Lot 1

5. Classification

Category: building

Present Use: commercial/private residence (rental residential)

Status: unoccupied

Access: restricted

6. Description

Condition: Fair/Original Site

Date of Original Structure: circa 1923

Period of Significance: circa 1923

Architect/Builder: unknown

Architectural Style: Colonial Revival/Prairie/Craftsman

Major Alterations/Additions (Date & Style): southeast porch demolished/new structure built circa 1967

The William H. and Clara E. Dunn House is located on nearly half an acre of land¹ encompassing lot 1 of the France Addition of the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana. When platted in 1923 by Joseph B. France, the addition incorporated several tracts of land already owned by people other than Mr. France which included William and Clara Dunn. However, lots 1 and 2 were nearly twice the size of most of the other lots. Located approximately 1.8 miles northeast from the town center, the Dunn House sits facing southeast on the northwest corner of Dunnwood Drive and Spy Run Avenue Extended, a northeast-southwest spur of Spy Run Avenue/US 27 that once paralleled the former Wabash and Erie Feeder Canal.² Spy Run Avenue Extended runs along the western edge of a segment of the St. Joseph River Parkway portion of the Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³

A definitive date of construction for the house could not be determined. In the 1909 probate records for Charles H. Rossington, who had purchased the property on which the house is built with his wife, Louise, several years earlier, it was stated that “said land is unimproved” indicating that there were no structures on the property at that time.⁴ Neither the Rossington’s nor the next two property owners are known to have lived at an address that approximates the location of this property.⁵

In 1914, William H. Dunn purchased the property,⁶ but it was not until several years later that he would live at an address that clearly indicated the presence of a structure on the land. In 1915, William and Clara lived on North Clinton Street, and on Leo Road in 1916 and 1919.⁷ As Clinton Street was also known as Leo Road,⁸ it’s possible that these addresses correlated with property on North Clinton Street that the Dunn’s are known to have also owned.⁹ However, a 1915 map of Fort Wayne shows the only streets in the area to be North Clinton, Field, and Dalgren, so the possibility exists that North Clinton Street could have been used as an address for the current location as it was one of the nearest roads at the time.¹⁰ From 1920 to 1922, city directory addresses for the Dunn’s placed them on Oak Knoll Place, described as the “Robison Park car line east of Spy Run rd.”¹¹ This car line connected Fort Wayne to Robison Park, located seven miles north of the city, following along Spy Run Avenue to a point where Spy Run Avenue Extended begins, and then turned “east to the river...with the canal feeder on one side and the St. Joseph River on the other,” indicating that the Dunn residence at the time was situated in an area that approximates its current location.¹² Seemingly, Oak Knoll Place might have been part of the Oak Knoll Addition to the City of Fort Wayne, platted in 1906 in an area near the southern border of the France Addition, but there is no street named “Oak Knoll Place” on the plat, so it is unclear where exactly

¹ Allen County, Indiana, property record card for 521 Dunnwood Drive, <http://www.acimap.us/website/prc/020736101001000074.pdf> (accessed October 23, 2015).

² Plat map of France Addition, 1923, Allen County, Indiana Recorder’s Office.

³ “National Register of Historic Places, Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevard System, Fort Wayne, Allen County, Indiana,” <http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/files/hp-FortWayneParks.pdf> (accessed October 23, 2015).

⁴ Abstract for 521 Dunnwood Drive, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

⁵ *Fort Wayne and Allen County Directory*, (Fort Wayne, IN: R.L. Polk and Company, 1900 - 1914).

⁶ Abstract.

⁷ *Fort Wayne City and Allen County Directory*, (Fort Wayne, IN: R.L. Polk and Company, 1915, 1916, 1919).

⁸ Bruce W. Elliott, “Fort Wayne a City of Smaller Communities,” *Fort Wayne(IN) Journal-Gazette*, 12 July 1914).

⁹ Abstract.

¹⁰ “The ‘Progressive’ Street Guide and Map of the City of Fort Wayne, Ind.,” (Fort Wayne, IN: Progressive Advertising Company, 1915).

¹¹ *Fort Wayne City and Allen County Directory*, (Fort Wayne, IN: R.L. Polk and Company 1920-1922).

¹² Roy M. Bates, “Full Text of Robison Park, 1896-1919,” http://www.archive.org/stream/robisonpark1896100bate/robisonpark1896100bate_djvu.txt (accessed October 23, 2015).

the Dunn residence from 1920 to 1922 was located.¹³ Other residents known to have lived on Oak Knoll Place at the same time as the Dunn's had addresses firmly associated with the Oak Knoll Addition beginning in 1924. Furthermore, the Dunn address in 1923 was simply "h (2)." In 1924, the year following the platting of the France Addition, the Dunn's address was "Dunnwood Drive," and by 1927 as "521 Dunnwood Drive," the current address for the property. Comparing the addresses of Dunn neighbors in 1927 to their addresses in 1923 revealed that two also had addresses of "h (2)," a possible indication that the Dunn's moved from Oak Knoll Place after 1922.¹⁴ Although evidence may suggest a construction date of the Dunn House to be in the late 1910s, the 1924 Dunnwood Drive address is the only conclusive evidence of a structure on this property. Therefore, a circa date of 1923 seems to be the most logical date. Also, while it would seem that Dunnwood Drive was named for William Dunn, this has not been confirmed.

The Dunn House is a hipped-roof, two-story tall structure, with approximately 1,800 square feet of finished living space.¹⁵ It exhibits a high level of architectural integrity. The main body of the structure, protected by wide, overhanging eaves, is brown-tinted stucco over structural clay tile with darker brown stucco accents used for the window sills, belt course, and water table. Wood architectural elements, consisting of wood clapboard siding, wood frieze board, wood beadboard, wood-framed primary windows, and wood-framed doors and screen doors, are painted white. Most of the windows are multi-paned-over-one, double-hung sash with some examples of casement and fixed windows. Other exterior building materials include an orange-colored, brick foundation; aluminum storm windows; and asphalt shingle roofing. Architecturally, the house features design elements of primarily the Colonial Revival and Prairie styles with minor Craftsman-style influences.

Sitting on a heavily-wooded hill overlooking Spy Run Avenue Extended and facing the St. Joseph River, the house is oriented diagonally on the lot from northeast to southwest. Centered on the southeast façade is a porch with a shallow, altered roof covering, while next to this toward the northeast is a squared bay. Beginning at about the midpoint of the northeast façade at the first floor level, an extension of the exterior wall spans the façade to the north corner. Located above this, a cantilevered sleeping porch extends from the north end, overhanging the first floor. This sleeping porch also projects from the north end of the northwest façade. Near the west end of this same façade is a chimney covered in stucco to the roofline, where it continues above the house as plain concrete. Centered on the southwest façade is a porch with hipped roof. Protruding through the center of the roof is a corbeled, brick chimney.

More specifically, the southeast façade features the main entry of the house. Three, wide concrete steps lead to the concrete porch floor flanked by stuccoed cheek walls with stone concrete caps. The entrance door, with decorative molding and beveled glass insert, is protected by a storm door and flanked by single-paned sidelights. Due to a falling tree, the original porch roof was destroyed in approximately 1967, and was replaced with the current shallow, wood structure supported by two wood posts sitting on a base of bricks stacked three courses high. This porch covering extends beyond the porch area to the northeast, projecting over the squared bay containing a pair of one-over-one, double-hung sash windows. On the opposite side of the porch and placed just below the beltcourse is a pair of multi-paned casement windows. Above the main entrance on the second floor is a narrow, multi-paned-over-one, double-hung window. Toward the southwest of this is a slightly wider window of the same design, while toward the northeast is a paired set of windows also of the same design.

The northeast façade incorporates a variety of architectural features. On the first floor and just in from the east corner is a narrow, one-over-one window placed just below the beltcourse. Immediately on the

¹³ Plat map of Oak Knoll Addition, 1906, Allen County, Indiana Recorder's Office.

¹⁴ *Fort Wayne City and Allen County Directory*, 1920-1924; 1927.

¹⁵ Property record card.

north edge of this window, the wall juts out to about the same depth as the bay on the southeast facade. This extension continues for just a short distance before the wall juts out again, but at a much wider depth. Incorporating a small, two-over-two, double-hung window, this second extension, with a foundation of concrete rather than brick, continues to about the midpoint of the façade, and was likely added on to accommodate the construction of a first-floor bathroom. Immediately next to this extension, the wall continues at the same depth to the north corner. Within this section of wall is a one-over-one, double-hung window; and at the corner, a wide, three-over-three, double-hung window. On the second floor, a one-over-one, double-hung window is placed toward the east side. Cantilevered off the north corner is a wood-clapboard sleeping porch containing five, six-paned awning windows.

On the northwest façade, just below the cantilevered sleeping porch, is a narrow, one-over-one, double-hung window, and a paneled door, with multi-glass panes in the upper portion and protected by a screen door, accessed by two concrete steps. Continuing along this façade on the first floor are paired one-over-one, double-hung windows placed just below the beltcourse, and an entrance door similar to that under the cantilevered porch. Toward the west end is an external chimney flanked by multi-paned casement windows with multi-paned storm windows. Openings on the second floor include a one-over-one, double-hung window positioned over the paired set on the first floor; a small, multi-paned casement window set lower on the wall and positioned in about the middle of the facade; and a two-over-two, double-hung window to the west side of the chimney.

The southwest façade incorporates a symmetrical placement of architectural features. Centrally-placed, three concrete steps lead to a concrete-floored porch with stuccoed cheek walls capped with concrete. Protecting the porch is a hipped roof braced by two squared, wood columns and two wood pilasters supported by the cheek walls. Under the cover of the porch is an entrance door, similar in style to that of the main entrance, protected by a screen door and flanked by a one-over-one, double-hung window with multi-paned storm window. In the middle of the façade on the second floor, is a small, multi-paned, fixed window set high on the wall. To either side of this are paired, multi-paned-over-one, double-hung windows.

Also on the property is a square, one-story garage with hipped roof located northwest of the house and oriented on the lot so the overhead garage door entrance faces southeast. The design of the garage echoes that of the house in form and materials. Constructed of brown-tinted stucco over structural clay tile extending all the way to the ground, it features wide, overhanging eaves, and a large multi-paned, fixed window on the northeast and southwest facades. Located in the middle of the northwest façade is a brick chimney covered in stucco. At ground level, surrounding the garage on the southwest, northwest, and part of the northeast sides, is a narrow, raised band of concrete that is the result of recent foundation work. Inside, the garage walls and ceiling are parged with concrete, although the brick of the chimney is exposed. Some areas of parging have fallen off, exposing the structural clay tile beneath. Access to the attic is through a wood-framed opening located on the ceiling near the center of the northwest wall.

The site is accessed at the southwest corner of the lot by a gravel drive that extends all the way around the property, and remnants of a concrete walkway that once surrounded the house still remain.¹⁶ A few small shrubs exist near the south corner of the house, and the lot contains many mature trees that are especially dense along the north and east property lines.

Original interior features throughout the home include wood baseboards, crown molding, door trim, window trim, five-paneled doors, built-in furniture, stair balustrades, and newel posts, all painted white.

¹⁶ Greg Dunn, Dunn House property representative, in-person interview by Jill Downs, Fort Wayne, IN, August 28, 2015.

The walls and ceilings are plaster. Most of the flooring is covered with carpeting, although tile has been applied in some areas.

The rooms of the Dunn House are arranged around a central entrance hall and staircase to the second floor. The hall, accessed by the southeast door, is flanked on the southwest by the living room and on the northeast by the dining room, each area accessed through wide, squared openings ornamented with smooth wood columns set on rectangular, paneled bases. In the living room, the primary feature is the fireplace, with simple wood mantle and trim, and a short, wood bookcase placed to either side. The dining room features a built-in, wood-paneled window seat on the southeast wall, and a built-in buffet, consisting of a center portion with drawers and glass-doored shelving units on either side, on the northeast wall. Behind the buffet is a bathroom, likely added on sometime after the house was originally constructed. The dining room connects to the northwest to the kitchen, remodeled in 2010 to include new tile flooring and new cabinets. Off the kitchen to the northeast is a utility room and an enclosed back porch area. Access to the basement is by a set of stairs off the southwest kitchen wall.

The staircase leads to a large open space on the second floor around which all the rooms are arranged. On the southwest wall are entrances to two corner bedrooms with a linen closet in between. The bathroom is accessed by a door on the southeast wall. On the northeast wall are entrances to two more bedrooms. Off the bedroom in the north corner is the entrance to the sleeping porch, paneled with beadboard on the ceiling and the northwest, northeast and southeast walls, while the southwest wall is stucco. The wood floor is painted gray.

7. Significance

(3) X Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, that represent the work of a master, possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction

The William H. and Clara Dunn House is significant under Criteria 3. Built circa 1923, it is a well-designed structure with Colonial Revival, Prairie, and Craftsman-style influences that retains a high level of integrity.

Colonial Revival architecture emerged following America's celebration of its Centennial in 1876, and is in reference to the country's early Georgian and Federal architecture.¹⁷ From about 1880 to 1955, Colonial Revival architecture was commonly used for residential buildings in the United States,¹⁸ and generally on a larger scale than their predecessors.¹⁹ Characteristic features of the style include a symmetrical main façade with prominent center entrance often flanked by sidelights; and windows with double-hung sashes, frequently placed in pairs, and with multi-paned glazing in at least one sash. Subtypes may include both hipped roof and gabled forms.²⁰ Interior ornamentation often includes white trim and paneled wainscoting.²¹

¹⁷ Rachel Carley, *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1994), 188.

¹⁸ Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), 321, 324.

¹⁹ Carley.

²⁰ McAlester and McAlester, 320-321.

²¹ Carley, 188-189.

Developed by a group of Chicago architects, most notable being Frank Lloyd Wright, the Prairie style was only popular in the United States from about 1900 to 1920. The most outstanding and architect-designed houses of this style are seen in the Midwest, while more vernacular versions proliferated across the country through the publication of pattern books. Architectural features common to the Prairie style include a hipped roof with wide, overhanging eaves; two stories in height; square porch supports; and detailing that emphasizes horizontal lines. One subtype of the style, called the Prairie Box or American Foursquare, is built around a simple square or rectangular plan with a symmetrical façade and conspicuous main entrance.²² Typical construction consists of brick masonry or stucco, and built-in amenities are common.²³

The Craftsman style gained a following in the United States in the early 1900s after California-based brothers Charles and Henry Greene began designing homes based upon Asian-inspired architecture and the English Arts and Crafts movement, which emphasized the use of craftsmanship over machine-made objects.²⁴ The “Craftsman” terminology took hold after Gustav Stickley, an American furniture maker also inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement, began publishing the magazine *The Craftsman* in 1901 to further the Arts and Crafts ideals, as well as his own house designs especially based upon the bungalow.²⁵ The Craftsman style of architecture was often seen in small houses and was widely popular for house design spanning only the years from about 1905 to 1930. Characteristic Craftsman style features include wide, overhanging eaves; primarily wood clapboard siding, although stone, brick and stucco are also seen; and wood windows consisting of a multi-paned upper sash over a single-paned lower sash.²⁶ Sleeping porches, typically screened in areas located on rear upper floors, may also be present.²⁷ Interior elements often include a use of built-in features.²⁸

From an architectural perspective, the design of the Dunn House combines features associated with all three of these architectural styles. Colonial Revival details of the house include the sidelights at the main entrance, white trim on the interior, and the paneled elements of the window seat and interior column bases, while the details typical of the Prairie style include the square porch supports, the beltcourse emphasizing horizontal lines, and simple rectangular plan. The second floor sleeping porch is a Craftsman-style feature. Several elements cross architectural styles such as the hipped roof, symmetrical southwest façade, and prominent porch entrances reflecting the Colonial Revival and Prairie styles; the double-hung windows with multi-pane sashes reflecting the Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles; and the wide eaves, built-ins, and stucco exterior reflecting the Craftsman and Prairie styles.

The Dunn House is rather unique in design and setting when compared to nearby houses. As stated earlier, the lot where the house is located is much larger in size than most of the lots around it. Additionally, as the Dunn’s also owned lot 2, next to lot 1 to the west, when the France Addition was platted,²⁹ the entire Dunn property was initially quite large and more typical of that of a suburban estate. A tour of the area shows that several homes on Dunnwood Drive are oriented to Dunnwood Drive, one-story in height, and built during a later time period, although there are examples across Dunnwood Drive and further west on the street that are two-story structures appearing to be contemporary to the Dunn

²² McAlester and McAlester, 439-440.

²³ Gerald Foster, *American Houses: A Field Guide to the Architecture of the Home* (Boston; New York: The Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), 342.

²⁴ Carley, 208.

²⁵ Paul Duchscherer and Douglas Keister, *The Bungalow: America’s Arts & Crafts Home* (New York, NY: Penquin Group, 1995), 7 -8.

²⁶ McAlester and 442, 453-454.

²⁷ Design Basics, LLC, “Design Elements of the Craftsman House,” <http://www.designbasics.com/articles/the-craftsman-house.asp> (accessed October 30, 2015).

²⁸ Foster, 348.

²⁹ Plat map of France Addition.

House. However, no other stucco examples are evident as these homes are clad in either vinyl or wood siding.

The Dunn House property more closely relates in size and orientation to those along North Clinton Street in the Oak Knoll Addition, located a short distance to the south. Oak Knoll, part of the Brookview-Irvington Park National Register of Historic Places District, was designed as a suburban-type addition incorporating grand homes onto wooded, estate-sized lots near the St. Joseph River.³⁰ None of the Oak Knoll homes on North Clinton Street, built in the early 1900s, are oriented to face the river or are similar in form or materials to the Dunn House, however, making it even more unique for the area. It is apparent that the setting of the Dunn House on a large wooded lot, oriented to the river, and facing the Robison Park trolley line and Wabash and Erie feeder canal made for a sort of river retreat, and a rare situation in Fort Wayne during the historic time period in which it was built.

Born in Indiana³¹ in 1861,³² William Dunn worked in a variety of occupations throughout his lifetime including owning a lumber mill, a cider and vinegar mill,³³ and the Dunn Coal Company.³⁴ He married Clara E. Sunderland on November 1, 1888,³⁵ with whom he had two sons, Ralph C. and Lester. On December 11, 1945, William died at age 84 while still residing at 521 Dunnwood Drive. Clara and his children survived him.³⁶ Not long after this, Clara moved to a nursing home where she died at age 95 on February 4, 1962.³⁷ To date, the Dunn House remains in the Dunn family encompassing over 90 years of one-family ownership.³⁸

8. Bibliographical References

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Design Basics, LLC. “Design Elements of the Craftsman House.”

³⁰ “Brooview-Irvington Park Historic District,” https://secure.in.gov/apps/dnr/shaard/r/262ac/N/Brookview_Irvington_Park_HD_Allen_CO_Nom.pdf (accessed October 30, 2015).

³¹ 1930 United States Census records for William H. Dunn, <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed October 2, 2015).

³² Lindenwood Cemetery burial records, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

³³ *Fort Wayne City and Allen County Directory*, 1900, 1905.

³⁴ “William H. Dunn,” *Fort Wayne (IN) Journal-Gazette*, 12 December 1945, 18.

³⁵ Indiana Marriage Collection 1800-1941, <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed October 2, 2015).

³⁶ “William H. Dunn.”

³⁷ “Mrs. Clara S. Dunn,” *Fort Wayne (IN) Journal-Gazette*, 6 February 1962, 20.

³⁸ Property record card.

<http://www.designbasics.com/articles/the-craftsman-house.asp> (accessed October 30, 2015).

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"Mrs. Clara S. Dunn." *Fort Wayne (IN) Journal-Gazette*, 6 February 1962.

Plat map of France Addition, 1923. Allen County, Indiana Recorder's Office.

Plat map of Oak Knoll Addition, 1906. Allen County, Indiana Recorder's Office.

"The 'Progressive' Street Guide and Map of the City of Fort Wayne, Ind." Fort Wayne, IN: Progressive Advertising Company, 1915.

"William H. Dunn." *Fort Wayne (IN) Journal-Gazette*, 12 December 1945.

9. Form Prepared By

Jill Downs
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January 2015

10. Petition

I (we) the owner(s) in fee simple of the property(ies) described herein, hereby request that the Fort Wayne Historic Preservation Commission consider initiating the establishment of said property(ies) as a local historic district, subject to city ordinance. Attach continuation sheet(s) if necessary.

Name (Print): _____ Date: _____
Signature: _____

11. Return form to:

Fort Wayne Historic Preservation Commission
Community Development
200 E. Berry Street, Suite 320
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Phone: 311 or 260-427-1127

Email: preservation@cityoffortwayne.org

HPC use only: Case no. _____ HPC action: _____
Date: _____ Date: _____

(Revised August 25, 2015)