

Headlines

April 17, 2005

Old Lincoln School Among Top 10 of Endangered Historic Places

The plight of Old Lincoln School, a [Rock Island Landmark](#) and prominent fixture at the edge of the [Broadway](#) National Register Historic District, received a big media boost on March 9 when the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois (LPCI) named the building as one of the Ten Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois. The announcement was made in the Press Room of the State Capital.

“This list calls attention to remarkable sites throughout the state,” said David Bahlman, president of LPCI, a statewide historic preservation advocacy group. “In doing so, we also hope this will generate solutions for preservation.”



Old Lincoln School was designed by architect Edward S. Hammatt as Public School #4. It opened its doors in 1894. For many years, the school served children from Broadway and [Greenbush](#) neighborhoods. The school closed in 1980 and was threatened with demolition four years later, before it was saved through local landmark designation.

Owner Chris Larson has allowed the property to stand vacant for 20 years. The City hopes to acquire the building through eminent domain proceedings, focused on elimination of neighborhood blight, and to seek a developer who will rehabilitate the long-vacant structure.

The purpose of the “Ten Most” list is to focus attention on sites threatened by deterioration, lack of maintenance, insufficient funds, or inappropriate development. Since the program’s inception in 1995 over 100 properties have been identified on the endangered list, calling attention to statewide resources in need of preservation. Only 15 sites have been lost to demolition.

Old Lincoln School was nominated by the City of Rock Island following a request to do so by LPCI. The building had been unsuccessfully nominated for the “Ten Most” list by the [Rock Island Preservation Commission](#) in 2002 and 2003. City staff believed LPCI requested the nomination to show that eminent domain can also be a good use of public policy in the cause of historic preservation.

2005 Ten Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois

John Park Gillett Memorial Arch (Elkhart)
Jeweler’s Row Historic District (Chicago)
Lincoln Hall, University of Illinois (Urbana)
Old Lincoln School (Rock Island)
Tuscan Masonic Lodge (Carbondale)

River Forest Women's Club (River Forest)
Universalist Unitarian Church (Peoria)
Veterans Memorial Pool (Dixon)
Westgate Street (Oak Park)
R. Harold Zook Home & Studio (Hinsdale)

Special 11th Designation:
Cook County Hospital (Chicago)