



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

*Planning Division*

### **m e m o r a n d u m**

**TO:** The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission

**FROM:** Rebecca Bird, Historic Preservation Planner

**DATE:** May 1, 2009

**SUBJECT:** HP 2009-COA-03, Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove a courtyard entrance arch at Buena Vista Court Historic District

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### **Introduction & Background**

On April 13, 2009, Rebecca Rury Burlingame submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to remove the courtyard entrance arch at Buena Vista Court. The arch, which is listed as a contributing structure in the Buena Vista Court Historic District, had been leaning for several years and blew over during a storm in February 2009. The arch is located at the northern end of Buena Vista Court. The proposed work would include removing and disposing of the debris from the arch, but would salvage any reusable pieces.

The bungalows at #1 through #8 Buena Vista Court were designated a local historic district by the Urbana City Council on July 19, 2004, by Ordinance Number 2004-07-082 (see Exhibit E). The Ordinance lists the courtyard entrance arch as a contributing structure. Section XII-6.A of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance requires a COA for any alteration, relocation, construction, removal, or demolition that affects the exterior architectural appearance of any structure within a historic district. Table XII-1 indicates that removal of a contributing structure would require review by the Historic Preservation Commission.

### **Description of the Landmark**

Buena Vista Court (BVC) is a bungalow courtyard-style development, unique to the Midwest in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The district includes eight bungalows nestled in two rows with a courtyard between the rows, an entrance arch at the northern end of the courtyard, and an original birdbath. The bungalows were built in 1926 and are a combination of Spanish Colonial Revival and Craftsman architectural styles. No two bungalows are alike, but each one compliments the others as they incorporate different elements and characteristics of the Spanish Colonial and Craftsman styles. The exterior facades are in stucco, although each has a distinguishing color and application of the stucco and a distinctive parapet.

## Description of the Proposed Change

Although the petition indicates a plan to build a replacement arch, this COA is only requesting permission to remove and dispose of the debris from the fallen arch. The petition includes plans to salvage any pieces of the arch that are reusable.



**Courtyard Entrance Arch, looking south.  
2006 Photo by Rich Cahill.**



**Courtyard Entrance Arch, looking southeast.  
February 12, 2009**

## Discussion

The courtyard entrance arch at Buena Vista Court has been leaning toward the north for the last couple of years. City staff discussed the arch's condition with the owners of several bungalows late last year and was planning to apply for a grant in May to stabilize it. Shortly after the arch fell over in February 2009, City staff hosted a meeting for the owners to meet and discuss their options regarding the arch. The owners of six of the bungalows attended the meeting, and agreed to work together to replace the arch. They are hoping to replace the arch this summer.

The arch is located at the northern end of the courtyard, between the parking spaces for bungalows #4 and #5. Ownership of the arch and the land it was located on, however, is not clear. The original plat (see Exhibit B) does show a sidewalk easement for the U-shaped sidewalk that traverses the courtyard, including the northern end of the sidewalk that passed through the arch. The plat is not clear regarding the ownership of the land on either side of the sidewalk where the arch was located. City staff has researched the deeds of the bungalows, looking for language discussing communal ownership of land or structures, but found none. The arch and its land could be jointly owned by bungalows #4 and #5, or it could be jointly owned by all of the bungalows. There is no BVC home-owners association.

The petition was submitted by Rebecca Rury Burlingame, owner of #7 Buena Vista Court, on behalf of the owners of #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 Buena Vista Court (see attached signature page, Exhibit C). The owner of #8 lives out of state, but has expressed his support of the project to City staff. Although all of the owners are supportive of this petition, the lack of clear ownership is a difficulty. It is more difficult to hold a group of eight owners financially accountable for the maintenance/repair/replacement of a structure when ownership of said structure is not documented.

The arch consists of two pillars, located on either side of a sidewalk, supporting a concrete roof. The pillars are built of hollow brick tile construction with an aggregate stucco veneer. The roof is a shallow hipped roof with a ridge and curved edges, and is of a red clay-pigmented concrete with a fine white aggregate. The ceiling is beadboard. There are wood knee braces with chamfered ends on two sides of each pillar.

Steve Halfar, a local masonry contractor who gave a presentation on stucco construction for the City in 2006, estimates that repairing the existing arch would cost between \$6,000 and \$8,000. The owners support replacing instead of repairing due to the high cost of repairing. The petition states that they do intend to replace the arch, but they will apply for a separate COA for that part of the project. This COA only covers the removal and disposal of the debris from the existing arch.

### ***Requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness***

According to Section XII-6.B.1 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, in making a determination whether to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Commission shall consider, among other things, the effect of the proposed work upon the exterior architectural features and upon the historic value, characteristics and significance of the historic district. In this case, the condition of the arch, lying on the ground, is creating a public safety hazard and needs to be removed. The owners intend to replace the arch, but the replacement is not part of this Certificate of Appropriateness. Granting permission to remove the debris should not be contingent on a replacement arch as the owners have not received a cost estimate for the replacement and so do not know if it is financially feasible. The arch has been documented, with photos by City staff and architectural drawings by Commissioners Novak and Lipis.

For the reasons given above, the work proposed in this COA is a special case and the criteria generally used by the Commission in making its determination do not really apply. The criteria, listed below, are followed by an analysis offered by City staff.

- 1) *The maintenance of the significant original qualities or character of the buildings, structures, sites or objects including, if significant, its appurtenances. The removal or alteration of any historic or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.*

The arch is a contributing structure in the Buena Vista Court Historic District and its removal should be avoided when possible. However, the arch is no longer standing and is creating a public safety hazard. Repairing it would be a considerable cost to the owners. The issue here is complicated by the lack of clear ownership of the arch. The owners are planning to apply for a second COA to build a replacement arch, and have submitted tentative plans for the replacement with this application. The knee braces are an important architectural detail of the arch and appear to be in good condition. The arch has been well documented. The proposed removal will affect the character of the historic district, but saving it is beyond *maintenance*. City staff finds the proposed work to be necessary and unavoidable.

- 2) *The compatibility of proposed new additions and new construction to the original architecture of the landmark shall be evaluated against general guidelines of height, proportions of the structure's front façade, proportions of openings into the facility, the relationship of building masses and spaces, roof shapes, appurtenances, the scale of building or structure, and the directional expression of front elevation.*

The proposed work does not include a new addition or any new construction. This criteria, therefore, does not apply.

- 3) *The Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Historic Preservation Projects," as revised from time to time.*

The final criterion relates to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of historic properties.

*The Standards (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.*

The sixth Standard deals with repairing versus replacing: *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.* Although the existing arch could be repaired, it is not economically feasible. The owners are planning to replace the arch, which would help preserve the historic character of the district, but this COA does not include the replacement. The arch, in its current state, is a safety hazard and must be removed. City staff finds the proposed work to be necessary and unavoidable.

## **Options**

The Historic Preservation Commission has the following options in this case:

1. Grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work proposed in the application.
2. Grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work proposed in the application, subject to certain conditions.
3. Deny the requested Certificate of Appropriateness. If the Commission finds the application is inconsistent with the criteria and denies the application, the Commission should provide the reasons for denial and may recommend to the applicant ways to comply with the criteria.

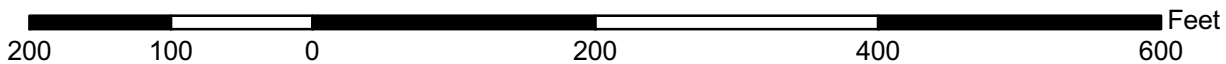
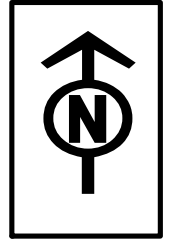
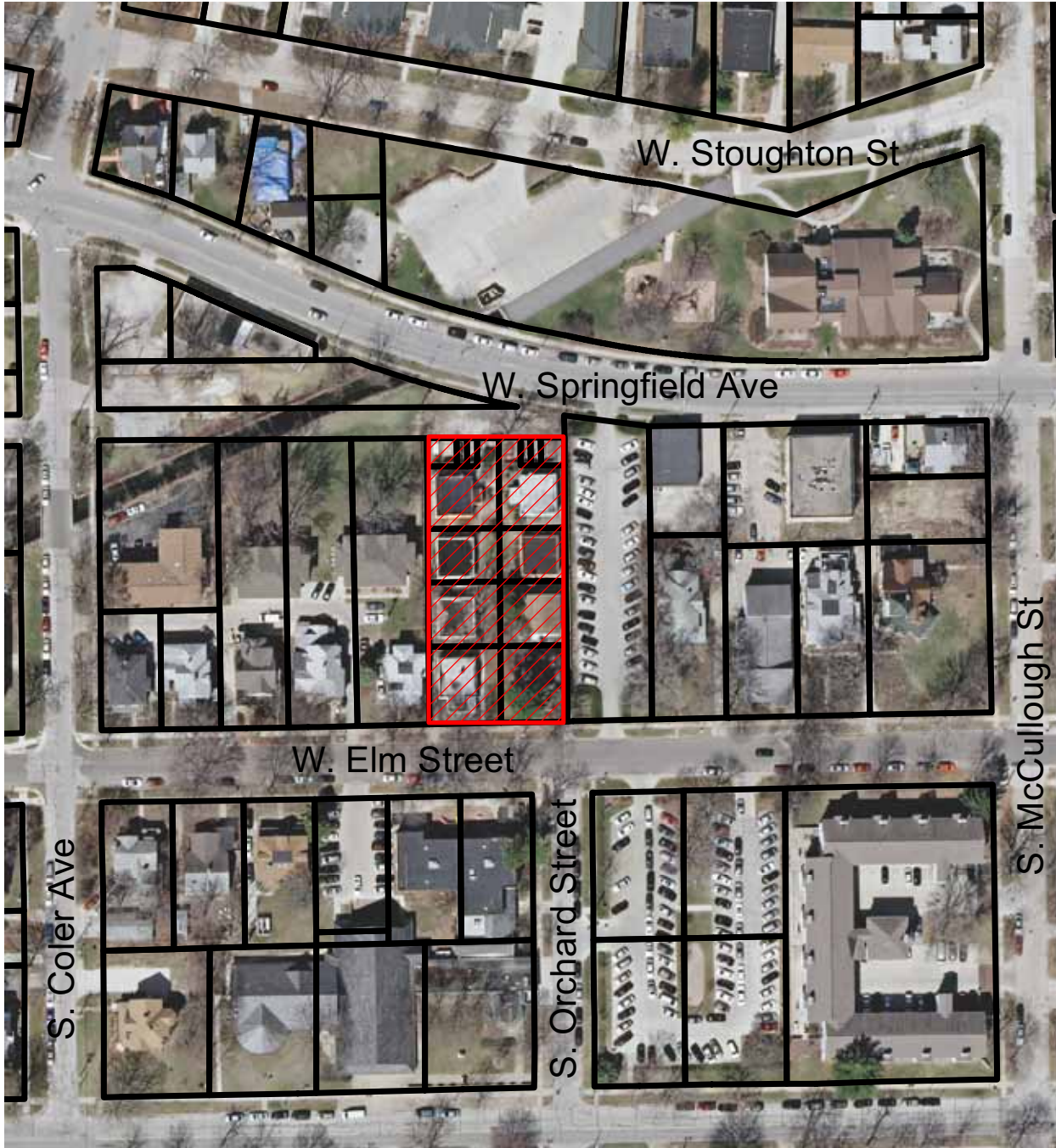
## **Staff Recommendation**

City staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission **GRANT** the requested Certificate of Appropriateness to allow removal of the fallen arch with the condition that the knee braces be salvaged so they can be incorporated into a replacement arch.

Attachments: Exhibit A: Location and Aerial Map  
Exhibit B: Plat  
Exhibit C: Architectural Drawings of Existing Arch  
Exhibit D: Application  
Exhibit E: Ordinance

cc: BVC Owners & Residents

# EXHIBIT A: Location & Aerial Map



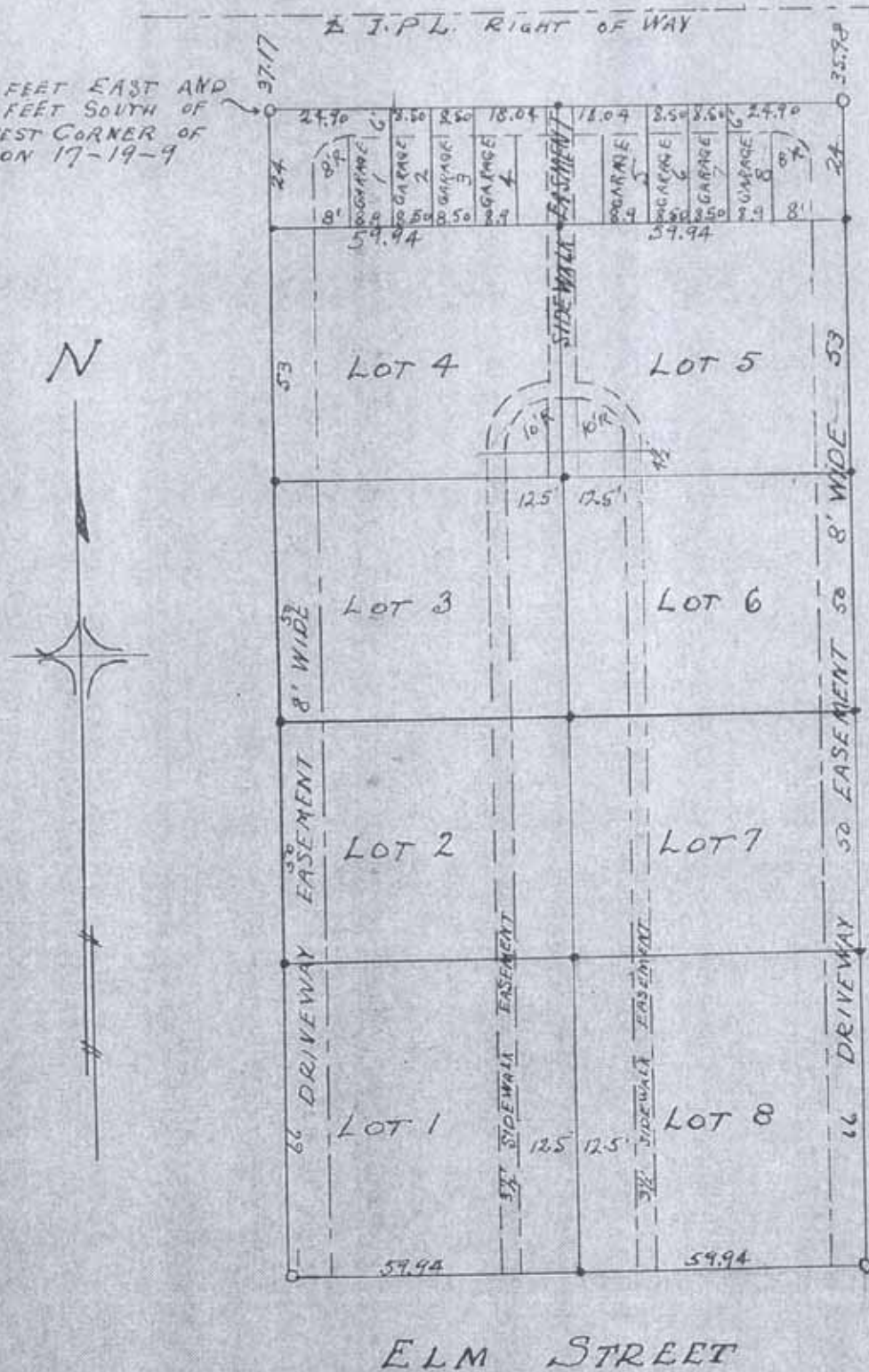
Case: HP-2009-COA-03  
Subject: Certificate of Appropriateness to remove a courtyard entrance arch at Buena Vista Court  
Location: Buena Vista Court, north end  
Petitioner: Rebecca Rury

 Subject Property

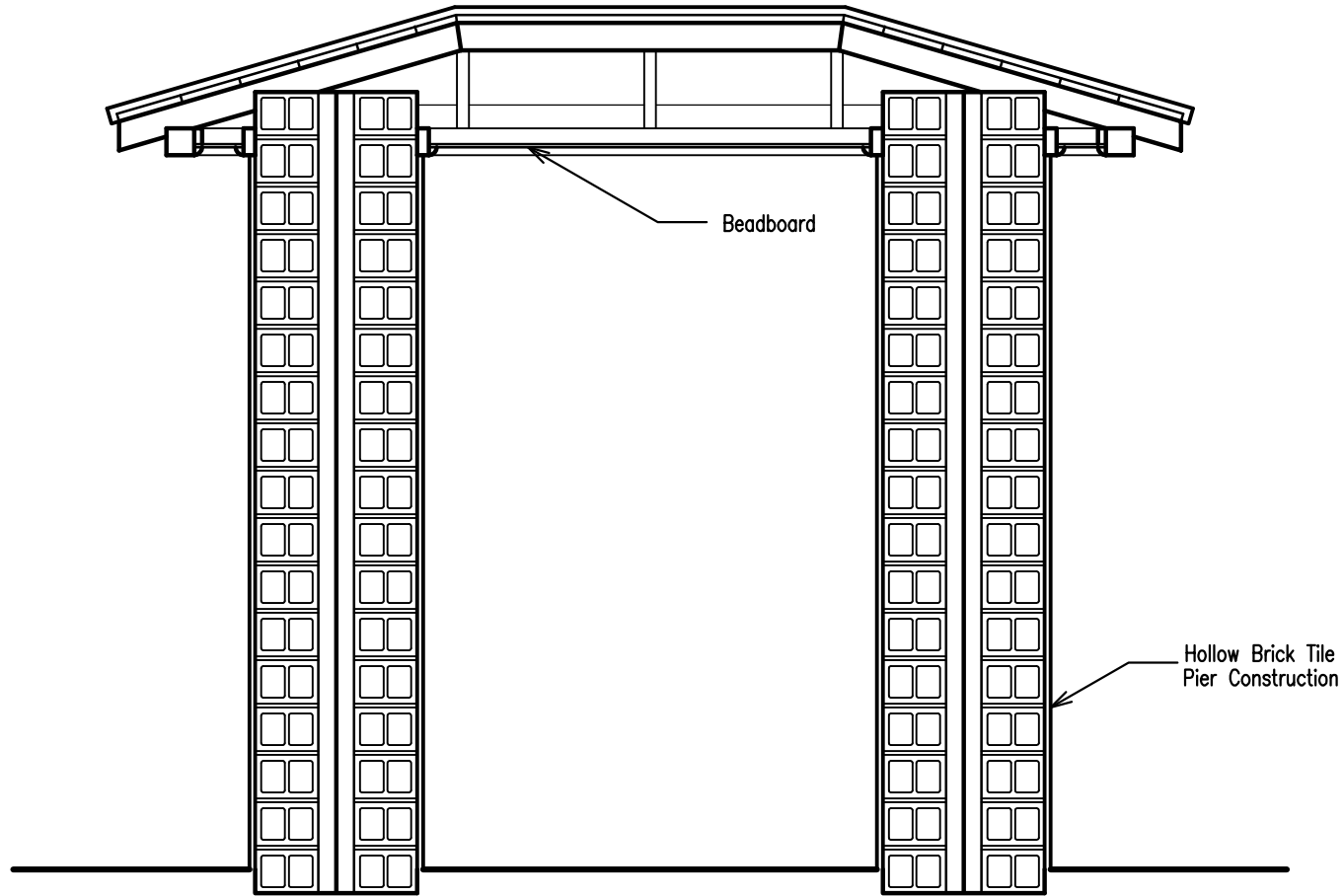
# WEST ELM COURT

A SUB-DIVISION OF LOTS 5, 10 & 11 OF BLOCK 8  
 OF J.W. SIMS, JR. ADDITION TO  
 URBANA - ILLINOIS  
 0 IRON PIPE CONCRETE MONUMENT  
 SCALE 1" = 30' ALFRED M. DANIELY  
 AUGUST 14, 1925 SURVEYOR

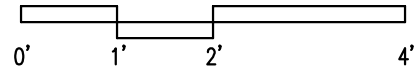
1216.12 FEET EAST AND  
 222.09 FEET SOUTH OF  
 NORTHWEST CORNER OF  
 SECTION 17-19-9



# Buena Vista Court Arch

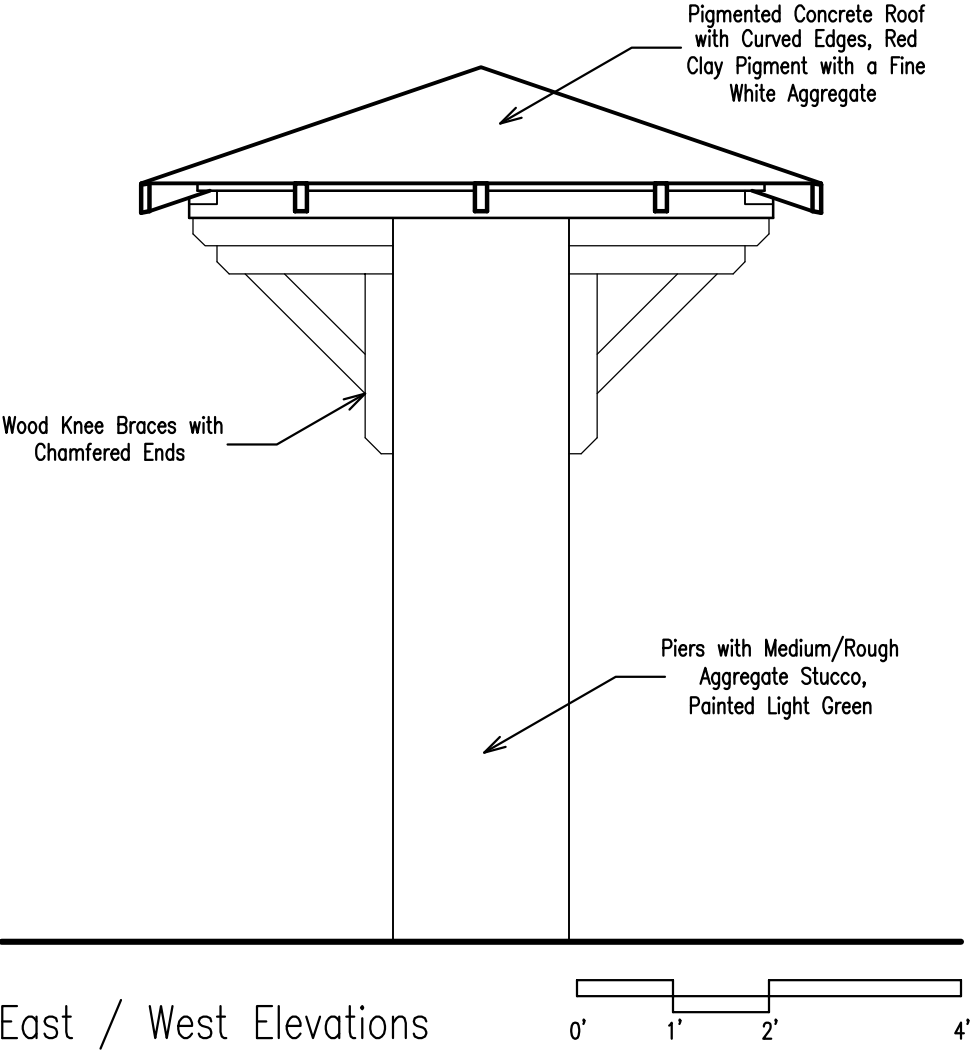


Longitudinal Section

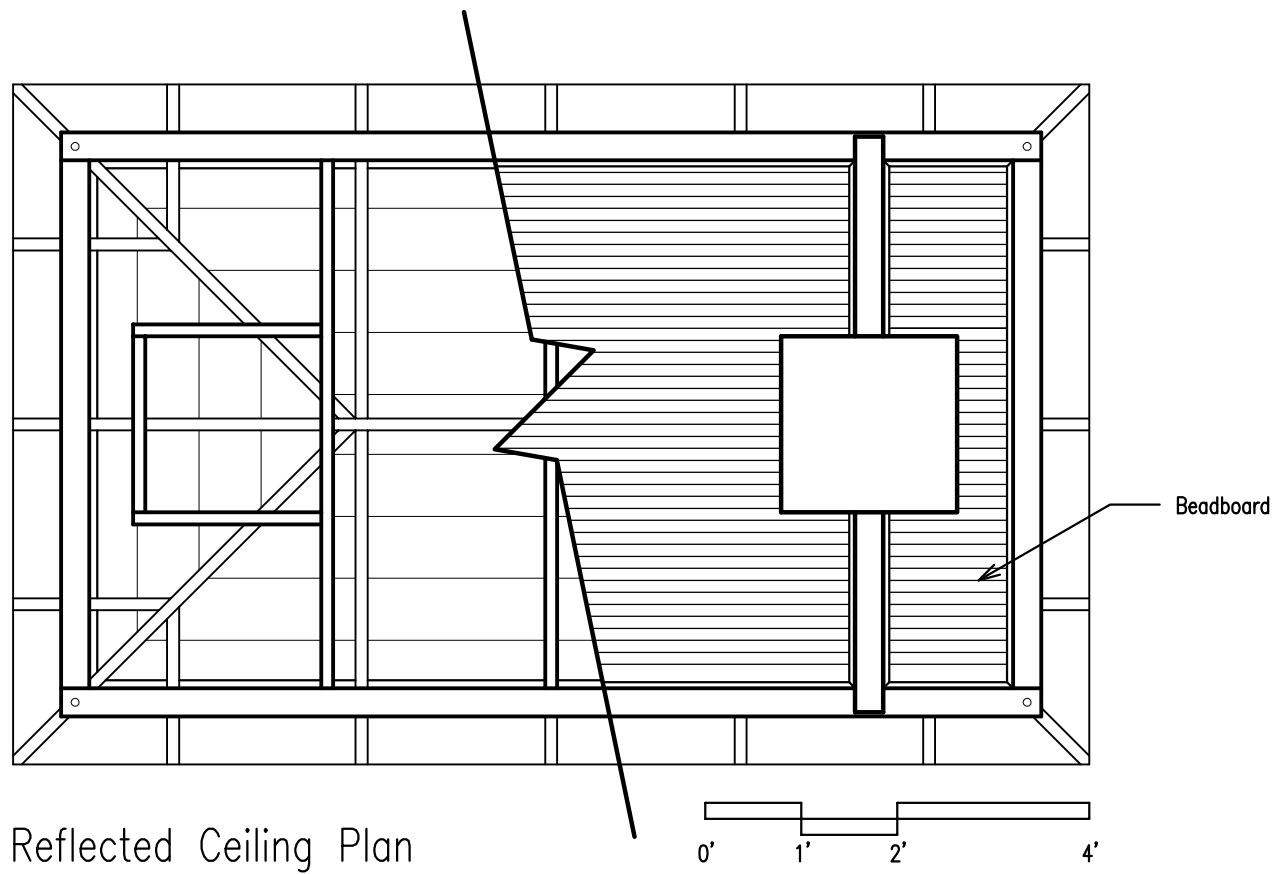




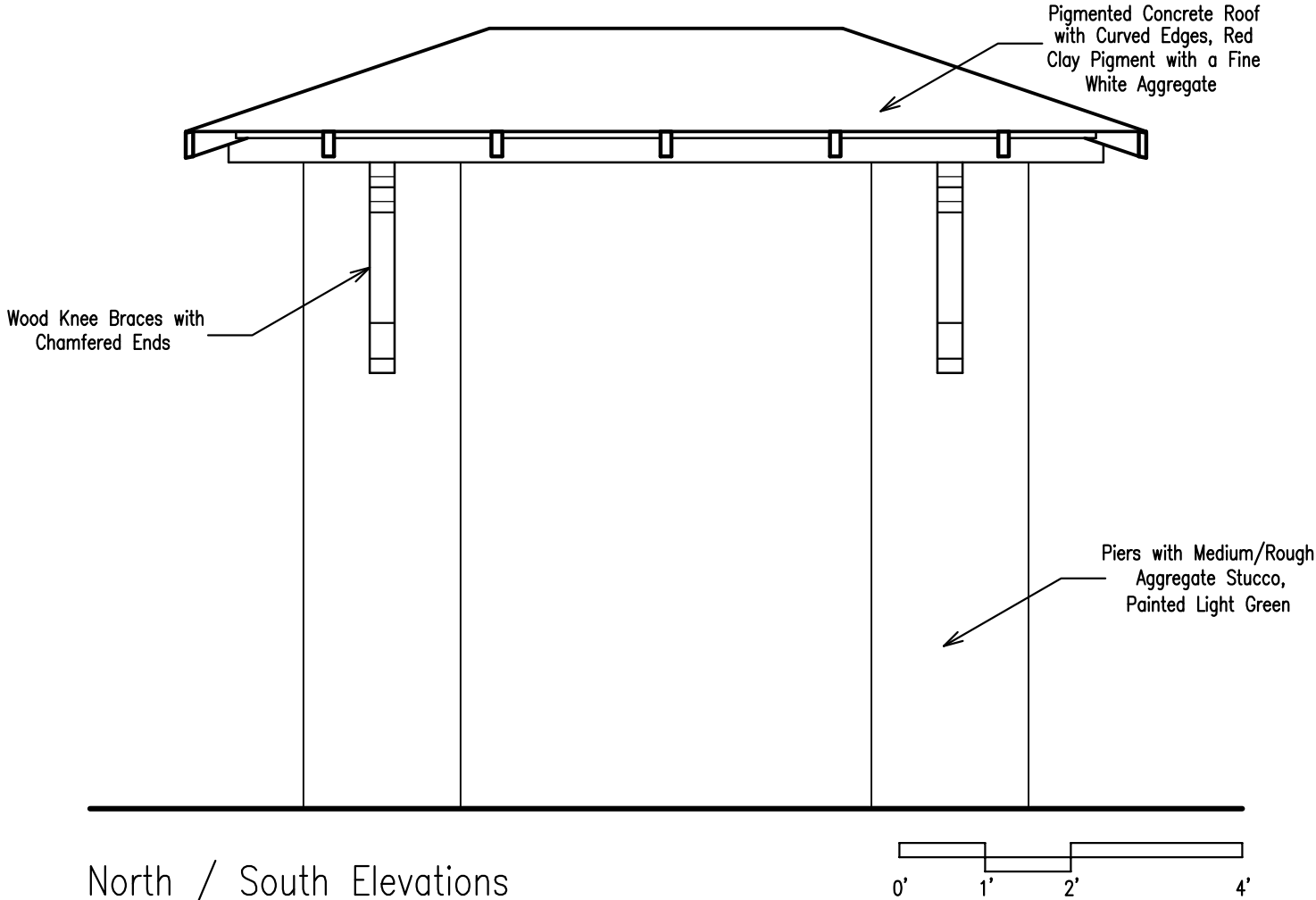
# Buena Vista Court Arch



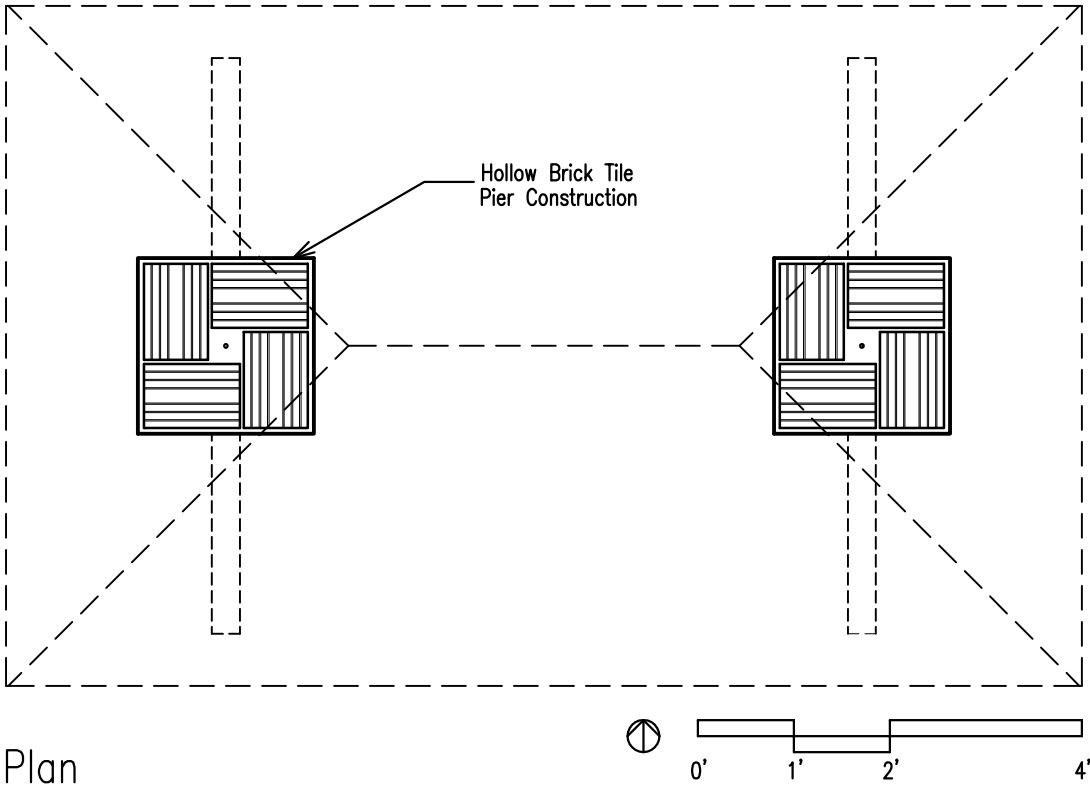
# Buena Vista Court Arch



# Buena Vista Court Arch



# Buena Vista Court Arch





# Application for Certificate of Appropriateness

## Historic Preservation Commission

### APPLICATION AND REVIEW FEE – NO CHARGE

Although there is no fee to file an application for Certificate of Appropriateness, the Applicants are responsible for paying the cost of any legal publication fees. The fees usually run from \$75.00 to \$125.00. The applicant will be billed separately by the News-Gazette, if applicable.

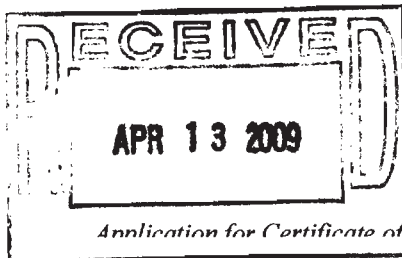
### DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE - FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Application Filed

Case No.

### PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

1. Location Buena Vista Court Urbana
2. PIN # of Location
3. Name of Applicant/Petitioner(s) Rebecca Rury Burlingame Phone 217-649-5138  
Address 106 North Third Street  
(street/city) Champaign (state) Il(zip)61820
4. Property interest of Applicant(s) Owner
5. Name of Owner(s) Rebecca Rury Burlingame Phone 217-649 5138  
Address same  
(street/city) (state) (zip)
6. Name of Professional Site Planner(s) Phone  
Address (street/city) (state) (zip)
7. Name of Architect(s) Phone  
Address (street/city) (state) (zip)



8. Name of Engineer(s) Phone  
 Address (state) (zip)  
(street/city)

9. Name of Surveyor(s) Phone  
 Address (state) (zip)  
(street/city)

**DESCRIPTION, USE, AND ZONING OF PROPERTY: Attach an additional sheet if necessary**

Legal Description 8 Bungalows in two rows separated by a courtyard. Built in 1926 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Located in the NE ¼ of the NW ¼ of section 21 Township 17 North Range 9 East of the Third Principal Meridian, in the City of Urbana.

Lot Size feet x feet = square feet  
 Historic Designation (*check one*) - Landmark \* District

**PROPOSED WORK FOR WHICH CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS IS BEING REQUESTED**

1. Describe and/or illustrate fully the proposed work to be done: (Plans associated with building permit applications can be referenced. If approval of an addition or detached accessory building is requested, submit a site plan showing the measurements of the lot, the existing buildings and proposed changes and the front, back and side yard setbacks. If approval of a demolition is being requested, submit a site plan of the property and the structure(s) to be demolished.)

Removal/disposable of debris left from arch collapse on the north side Buena Vista Court entrance (with the exception of any pieces salvageable/reusable) to be followed by the construction of a replica arch. Included with this application are drawings of one potential replica arch. These plans have not yet been finalized and do not wish to be approved or denied in this application. They have been included as a reference only.

2. Describe how the proposed work will change, destroy, or affect any external feature of the structure or site:

We are proposing to completely remove and dispose of all debris not salvageable or reusable. This will make way for a new arch to be built in its place.

3. How will the proposed work affect the preservation, protection, perpetuation and economic use of the structure or district?

We consider the masonry pillars and most of the wood to be a total loss; therefore they need to be replaced, not repaired. We feel that cleaning up and removing the debris is absolutely necessary for the maintenance and preservation of our district.

4. Attach a statement indicating how the proposed work meets each applicable criterion provided in **“EXHIBIT A”**, which is attached to this application form.

5. State any additional information which you feel the Zoning Administrator or the Historic Preservation Commission should consider in issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work:



WHEREFORE, petitioner prays that this petition be heard by the Urbana Zoning Administrator and if applicable, the Historic Preservation Commission and that the Application for Certificate of Appropriateness be granted.

Respectfully submitted this 13th day of April, 2009

Signature of Applicant

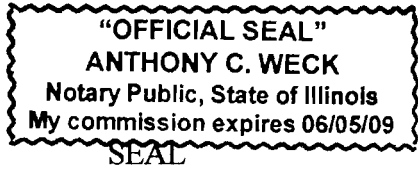
*Rebecca Burlingame*

STATE OF ILLINOIS }  
                                          }  
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY }

I, *Anthony C. Weck* being first duly sworn on oath, deposes and says, that *Rebecca Burlingame* is the same person named in and who subscribed the above and foregoing petition, that \_\_\_\_\_ has read the same and knows the contents thereof, and that the matters and things therein set forth are true in substance and in fact as therein set forth.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 13th day of April, 2009.

*Anthony C. Weck*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public



Petitioner's Attorney (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Address

Telephone

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

ZONING ADMINSTRATOR AND CHAIR REPORT

Minor Works Determination:

- The proposed work described in Section 3 of this application, and/or illustrated in drawings or plans attached as part of this application constitute minor works as defined by the Zoning Ordinance.
  
- The proposed work described in Section 3 of this application, and/or illustrated in drawings or plans attached as part of this application do **not** constitute minor works as defined in the Zoning Ordinance. This application for Certificate of Appropriateness is hereby forwarded to the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission for review and determination.

Zoning Administrator (or designee)

Date

DESIGN REVIEW DETERMINATION FOR MINOR WORKS:

- The minor works described in Section 3 of this application, and/or illustrated in drawings or plans attached as part of this application conform to the review criteria established in the Zoning Ordinance in the manner described.

A certificate of Appropriateness is hereby issued for work described in this application only.

- The minor works described in Section 3 of this application, and/or illustrated in drawings or plans attached as part of this application do not conform to the review criteria established in the Zoning Ordinance in the manner described.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is hereby denied. At the request of the applicant, this application may be forwarded to the Historic Preservation Commission for review and consideration.

Zoning Administrator (or designee)

Date

Commission Chair

Date

## Exhibit "A"

(Please respond to the Criteria a through h, indicated by the underlined text)

### Review Criteria for Certificate of Appropriateness.

In making a determination whether to issue or deny a Certificate of Appropriateness, if the proposed activities cannot be considered "minor works" as identified in Table XII-1 and Table XII-2, the Historic Preservation Commission shall consider, among other things, the effect of the proposed alteration, relocation, construction, removal or demolition upon the exterior architectural features and upon the historic value, characteristics and significance of the landmark or of the historic district.

The criteria to be used by the Preservation Commission in making its determination shall include, but not be limited to:

1. The maintenance of the significant original qualities or character of the buildings, structures, sites or objects including, if significant, its appurtenances. The removal or alteration of any historic or distinctive architectural features should be avoided whenever possible.
2. The compatibility of proposed new additions and new construction to the original architecture or the landmark or styles within the historic district shall be evaluated against the following general guidelines:
  - a. *Height*: The height of the proposed building or structure or additions or alterations should be compatible with surrounding buildings or structures.
  - b. *Proportions of structure's front façade*: The proportion between the width and height of the proposed building or structure should be compatible with nearby buildings or structures.
  - c. *Proportions of openings into the facility*: The proportions and relationships between doors and windows should be compatible with existing buildings and structures.
  - d. *Relationship of building masses and spaces*: The relationship of a building or structure to the open space between it and adjoining buildings or structures should be compatible.
  - e. *Roof shapes*: The design of the roof should be compatible with that of adjoining buildings and structures.
  - f. *Appurtenances*: Use of appurtenances should be sensitive to the individual building or structure, its occupants and their needs.
  - g. *Scale of building or structure*: The scale of the building or structure should be compatible with that of surrounding buildings or structures.
  - h. *Directional expression of front elevation*: Street façades should blend in with other buildings and structures with regard to directional expression when adjacent buildings or structures have a dominant horizontal or vertical expression.

## **Exhibit “A” Continued**

**(Please feel free to respond to the Criteria a through j, if they are applicable)**

The Secretary of the Interior’s “Standards for Historic Preservation Projects”, as revised from time to time, as follows:

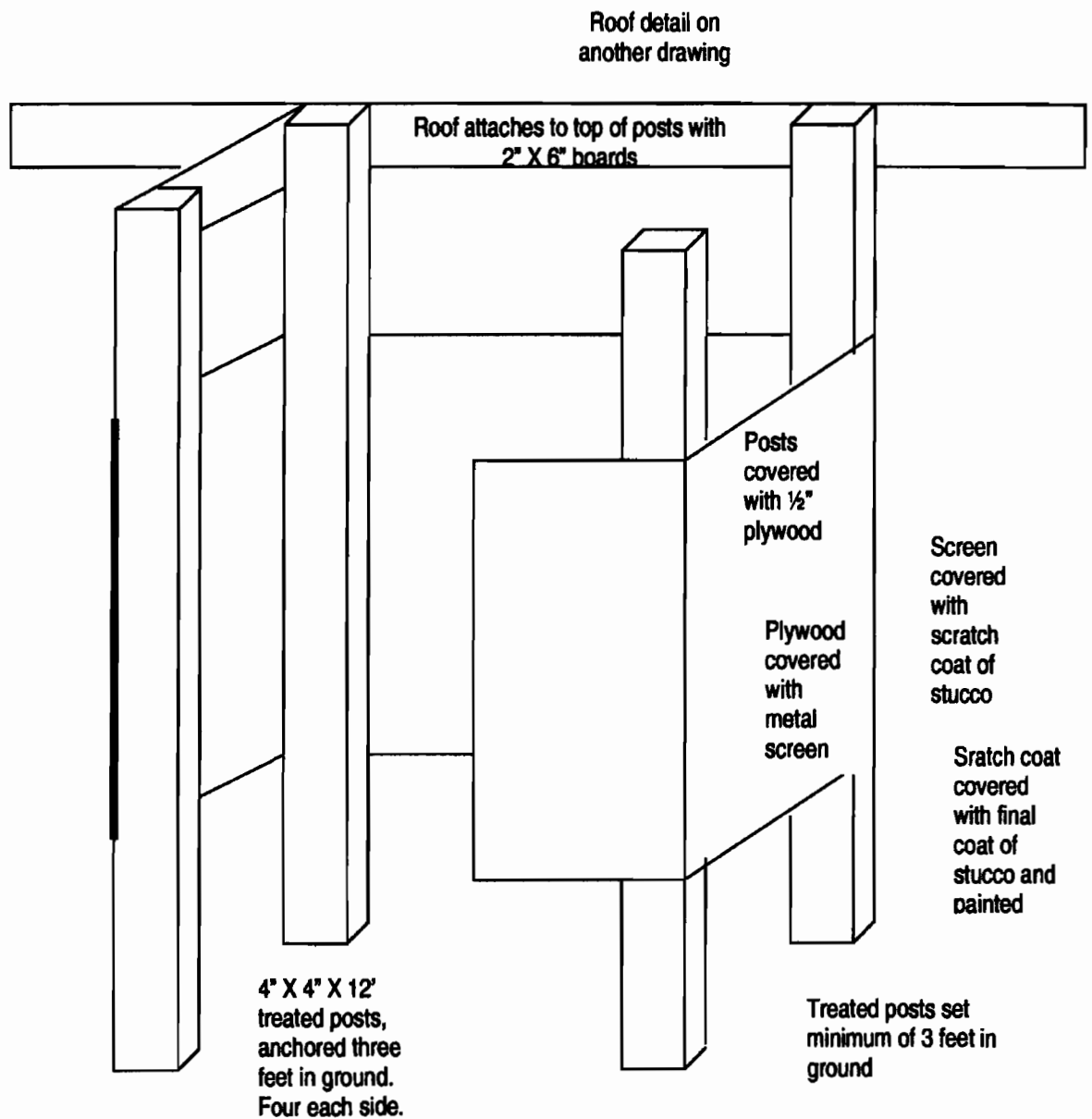
- a. Every reasonable effort shall be made to use a property for its originally intended purpose, or to provide a compatible use for a property that requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, site or object and its environment.
- b. The distinguishing historic qualities or character of a building, structure, site or object and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
- c. All buildings, structures, sites and objects shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
- d. Changes that may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, site or object and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
- e. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize a building, structure, site or object shall be treated with sensitivity.
- f. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever feasible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings, structures, sites or objects.
- g. The surface cleaning of buildings, structures, sites or objects shall be undertaken utilizing the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that may damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
- h. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by or adjacent to any project.
- i. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.
- j. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to buildings or structures shall be done in such manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building or structure would remain unimpaired.

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM ONCE COMPLETED TO:**

City of Urbana  
Community Development Department Services  
Planning Division  
400 South Vine Street  
Urbana, IL 61801

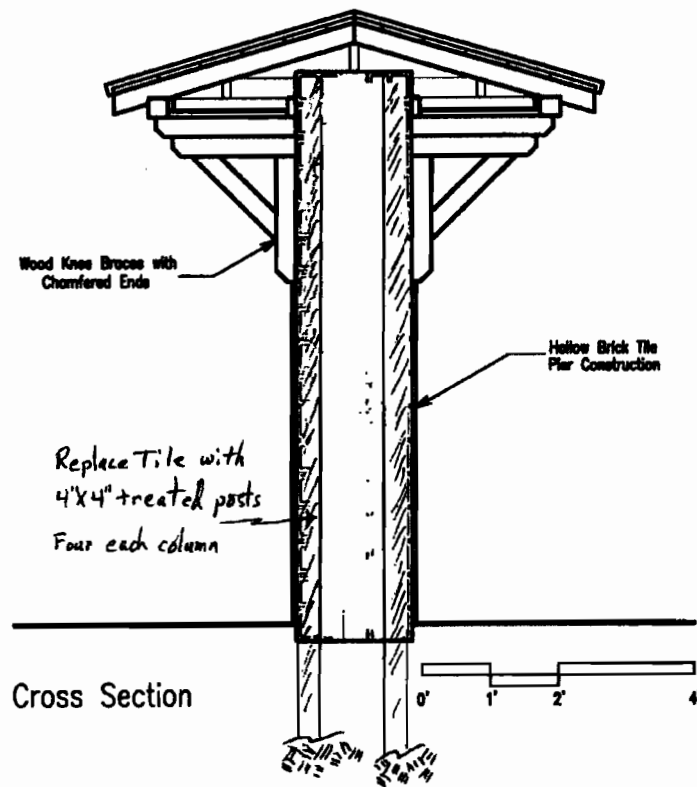
Or Fax to (217) 384-2367

Please call (217) 384-2440 if you have any questions.

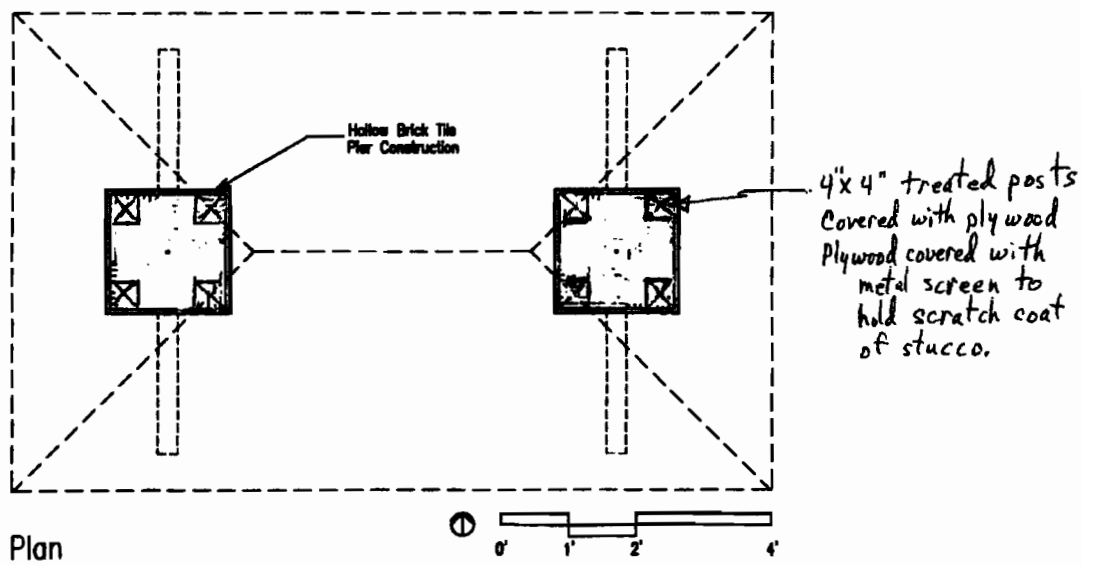


**Buena Vista Court  
Archway Proposal**

# Buena Vista Court Arch



# Buena Vista Court Arch









*2 copies*ORDINANCE NO. 2004-07-082

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE DESIGNATION  
OF THE "BUENA VISTA COURT HISTORIC DISTRICT" UNDER THE  
PROVISIONS OF THE URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE**

**(#1 through #8 Buena Vista Court)**

WHEREAS, an application has been submitted for nomination of a historic district pursuant to the Urbana Historic Preservation Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the district nomination is commonly referred to as the "Buena Vista Court Historic District" and contains the properties of 1-8 Buena Vista Court; and

WHEREAS, the owners of the subject properties as well as the petitioner have been duly notified of the nomination and each have registered a preference related to the nomination; and

WHEREAS, the owners of 1,4,5,6, and 7 of Buena Vista Court have signed the owner consent to register a favorable preference for the nomination; and

WHEREAS, after due publication and notice to all parties as is required under the Historic Preservation Ordinance, a public hearing was held by the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission on July 7, 2004 concerning the historic district nomination; and

WHEREAS, following the public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission voted to approve historic district designation for the subject parcels by a vote of 4 ayes, 0 nays, and 0 abstentions, and made a recommendation accompanied by a report summarizing the evidence presented at the hearing, with an explanation of its recommendation, which said recommendation and attachments was forwarded to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission evaluated the designated criteria as documented in the Historic Preservation Ordinance and

made the following findings of fact for designation of the Buena Vista Historic District:

1. The Buena Vista Court Historic District contains a significant number of buildings, structures, sites or objects meeting the standards as follows:

a. The Buena Vista Court Historic District is a significant value as part of the architectural heritage of the community. Properties yield high integrity and value in terms of architecture, community planning and design, community cohesiveness, and social heritage. Contributing structures and objects have a combination of Spanish Colonial Revival and Craftsman architectural styles that are significant to the community.

b. The Buena Vista Court Historic District is representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity. The combination of Spanish Colonial Revival and Craftsman architectural styles are evidenced in features of the proposed district and retain high levels of integrity.

c. The Buena Vista Court Historic District is identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics. The exclusivity as the only Spanish Colonial Revival style bungalow court in Urbana and the only bungalow court with an original functional

common-courtyard in Urbana-Champaign distinguishes it as an identifiable and familiar feature within the entire community.

2. The Buena Vista Court Historic District is an area containing a contiguous grouping of properties having a sense of cohesiveness expressed through a style, period or method of construction. The proposed district includes eight contributing bungalow structures, two contributing structures (birdbath and entrance arch) and one contributing site (courtyard), all of which are contiguous and grouped with a strengthened sense of cohesiveness expressed through the Courtyard style of development. The layout allows the residents a community within their surrounding neighborhood, with seclusion, privacy and a smaller network of community within the courtyard district.

Although each structure is unique, they all relate to each other as each bungalow incorporates different elements and characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival and Craftsman architectural styles that strengthen the "community cohesiveness" of the proposed district.

3. The Buena Vista Court Historic District is an area of sufficient historical integrity to convey a sense of historical time and place. The district conveys historical integrity with importance of the historical time in US history at the turn of the century when bungalows and the courtyard bungalow style of developments were popularly used. Although construction of the Buena Vista Court was completed in 1926, Bungalow courtyards were common layouts built in the early 20th Century in the south and southwest of the United States of America. They are unique to the Midwest region. The

proposed court follows in function and form associated with the rise of the bungalow as a residential unit in the United States. These factors strengthen the district by providing a sense of historical time and place.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS, THAT,

Section 1: The Urbana City Council hereby adopts the findings of the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission presented above and hereby determines that the subject historic district nomination for property commonly referred to as 1-8 Buena Vista Court along with two contributing objects including the birdbath and archway is hereby designated as a historic district, pursuant to the Urbana Historic Preservation Ordinance.


Section 2. The City Clerk is directed to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form by authority of the corporate authorities. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in accordance with the terms of Chapter 65, Section 1-2-4 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/1-2-4).

PASSED by the City Council this 19th day of July,  
2004 .

AYES: Chynoweth, Hayes, Huth, Otto, Patt, Whelan, Wyman

NAYS:

ABSTAINS:

  
Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this 28th day of July,  
2004 .

  
Tod Satterthwaite, Mayor