

BY AUTHORITY

ORDINANCE NO.
SERIES OF 2019

COUNCIL BILL NO. CB19-1259
COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE:
Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure

A BILL

For an ordinance designating the Tilden School for Teaching Health Historic District as a district for preservation.

WHEREAS, pursuant to D.R.M.C. Section 30-4, the Landmark Preservation Commission has transmitted to the Council a proposed designation of a district for preservation; and

WHEREAS, the application for designation of the district was submitted prior to October 31, 2019; and

WHEREAS, based upon the November 5, 2019 Landmark Preservation Commission recommendation, the staff report, and other evidence received at the hearing before City Council on December 16, 2019, the Tilden School for Teaching Health Historic District meets the criteria for designation as a district for preservation as set out in D.R.M.C. Section 30-3 prior to this section’s amendment on November 1, 2109 by maintaining its historical and physical integrity, relating to a historic context or theme, and meeting criteria in the following three categories:

(1) History.

a. Having a direct association with the historical development of the city, state or nation;

The Tilden School for Teaching Health Historic District is significant for its association with the development of Denver as it became a center for sanitariums and health rehabilitation facilities. Physicians from across the country believed that Colorado's climate and altitude were beneficial to those suffering from illnesses, often tuberculosis. By the early 1900s, Denver had become a key location for the development of treatment facilities, and the operation of medical sanitariums had become a major component of the local economy.

The school was developed by John Henry Tilden, a physician and surgeon, in 1915 and 1916. Dr. Tilden methods were described in 1918 as “... unique and original and, what is more, they are effective. He teaches his patients how to cure themselves. He protests that doctors can't cure disease; that disease is caused by wrong life and the doctor's prerogative is to teach the patient how

1 to get well, and the patient must cure himself. He has fearlessly combated medical error and is still
2 at it. His methods are strictly dietetics and hygiene.” The Tilden School for Teaching Health is
3 significant as representative of this era of the City's history, reflecting the popularity of private medical
4 institutions which used both traditional methods and developed non-traditional regimens for their
5 patients.

6 *c. Having direct and substantial association with a person or group of persons who had*
7 *influence on society;*

8 While the district is associated with multiple people, it is primarily significant for its association with
9 one individual who had influence on society. It holds direct and substantial association with its
10 founder, Dr. John Henry Tilden, who developed and extensively wrote about his treatment theories
11 and who was affiliated with the facility from 1915 to 1924. Dr. Tilden’s non-traditional theories and
12 methods became well-known for those seeking alternative medical options. A 1918 description of
13 Dr. Tilden’s influence noted “He has fought a successful fight for his ideas are being adopted by lay
14 and professional people all over the world, which certainly proves the truth of his theories”. The
15 Rocky Mountain News wrote on December 18, 1924, that his "theory with reference to proper
16 treatment of disease... has become famous."

17 (2) Architecture.

18 *a. Embodying distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type;*

19 The district is significant for the architectural style of two of its primary buildings and reflects the
20 medical theories of the period. The Administration Building/Bosler House provides an example of
21 late Victorian Italianate style. It is a rare remaining example of a large residence in this style in the
22 West Highland neighborhood. The Italianate style is seen in the asymmetrical composition with
23 gabled and hipped projections, the reconstructed third-story square tower, the narrow one-over-one-
24 light, double-hung windows with segmental arches and tooled stone sills, as well as the front and
25 side porches.

26 The Patient Apartments Building portray the Classical or Colonial Revival style in the symmetrical
27 building features, hipped tile roof, brick quoins at the corners of the front façade, door surrounds and
28 pilasters, and multi-light double-hung windows. The building is dominated by a central, circular, two

1 story entry portico composed of smooth columns with Corinthian capitals supporting a third story
2 uncovered balcony.

3 The Patient Apartment Building and the Main Building, which contains Craftsman elements, reflect
4 the attempt to create medical buildings which incorporated popular elements of residential
5 architecture. As many patients stayed for extended periods at the school, the buildings were
6 designed to invoke a feeling found in the solid apartment buildings and well-crafted homes of the
7 era. The substantial raised porches and bright sunrooms were also utilized in medical treatment to
8 provide access to the fresh air and sunshine which were considered vital components of a healthy
9 lifestyle and keys to recovery from disease. The abundant use of large windows in the design of the
10 buildings also reflected the importance of ventilation and light in medical theories of the time.

11 *b. Being a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;*

12 The district is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect. The district presents a
13 collection of buildings reflecting the work of prominent Denver architect Harry W. J. Edbrooke. He
14 was the only architect involved in the construction of the 'new' buildings for the Tilden School for
15 Teaching Health. Harry W. J. Edbrooke studied architecture and engineering in his home town of
16 Chicago at the University of Illinois and the Armour Institute of Technology. After establishing a
17 practice in Chicago, Harry W. J. Edbrooke was invited to join the firm of his uncle, Frank Edbrooke,
18 who was one of Denver's most successful nineteenth century architects. Harry Edbrooke was
19 associated with Edbrooke and Company from 1908 until his uncle retired in 1913. Harry Edbrooke
20 then established his own practice and continued designing until his death in 1946. The buildings in
21 the district were designed early in the life of the new firm and are a strong collection of Edbrooke's
22 work. Historian Wilbur Fiske Stone cited the Patient Apartments among Architect Edbrooke's notable
23 building designs.

24 *d. Portraying the environment of a group of people or physical development of an area in an*
25 *era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style;*

26 The district is significant for portraying the environment of a group of people – the patients the school
27 served. The patients were housed and educated on a campus with unifying architectural elements.
28 The Tilden School for Teaching Health is an example of an intact campus for patients of an early
29 twentieth century sanitarium to restore and maintain health. The Tilden School for Teaching Health

1 is significant for the type and methods of construction displayed, which represent early twentieth
2 century theories regarding patient treatment and building techniques integral to medical facilities of
3 the period and their adaptation utilizing popular architectural styles of the early twentieth century.

4 (3) Geography.

5 a. *Having a prominent location or being an established, familiar, and orienting visual*
6 *feature of the contemporary city;*

7 The district is geographically significant as an established visual feature of the city. The Tilden School
8 for Teaching Health sits within the far west portion of the Highland Park subdivision and just across
9 from a city park also named Highland Park. The campus provides a grouping of large institutional
10 buildings situated in a residential area of comparatively small houses. From the south, the Main
11 Building's near 300 feet length, footprint of more than 13,000 square feet and rising two and a half
12 stories has visually dominated this block of West Fairview Place since its completion in the early
13 1920s. Generous sized front lawns tie the Bosler-Yankee House, Patient Apartments and the Main
14 Building to the neighborhood streetscape. Historic lampposts along Fairview Place remain as
15 evidence of the historic entries to the campus. The setting provides a broad expansive view of the
16 campus from the open public space of the Highland Park on the east, inherently creating an
17 established, familiar, and orienting visual feature.

18 b. *Promoting understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of*
19 *distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;*

20 The district is significant under geography for its distinctive characteristics and rarity. Highland Park
21 subdivision, which is the home of the Tilden School for Teaching Health campus, was platted by the
22 Highland Park Company in 1875. The Highland Park Company developed street layout to follow the
23 natural contours of the land allowing an appreciation of the urban environment's topography. The
24 president of the Highland Park Company, Dr. William A. Bell, was particularly concerned with the
25 design. Dr. Bell, wanting the area to suggest something of his Scottish heritage, applied street names
26 such as Roxburgh Court (now Grove St.) and Inverness Drive (now west 34th Avenue). The organic
27 design was based on Riverside, an elite subdivision development located north of Chicago, Illinois.
28 This subdivision features a distinctive physical characteristic with a unique curvilinear layout
29 diverging from the typical development pattern of streets following the Platte River or the traditional
30 north-south east-west grid. The streetscape is defined by the geography of the site and follows a

1 natural hill slope. The Highland Park subdivision is cited as one of the few examples of nineteenth
2 century picturesque community planning in the area. The grouping of buildings that formed the Tilden
3 School for Teaching Health district, which provides a prominent gateway to the West Highland
4 neighborhood, remains as a rare remaining example of sanitarium health campuses of this scale
5 and age in Denver.

6 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF**
7 **DENVER:**

8 **Section 1.** That based upon the findings referenced above, and the evidence received at the
9 public hearings, certain property, herein called the Tilden School for Teaching Health Historic District,
10 and legally described as follows, together with all improvements situated and located thereon, be and
11 the same is hereby designated as a district for preservation:

12 **Tilden School for Teaching Health Historic District**
13 **Legal Boundary**

14 A portion of the Highland Park subdivision as originally recorded in Arapahoe County, located
15 in the SE ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 29, Township 3 South, Range 68 West

16 That part of Block 24 described as follows;

17 The southerly 71 feet of lots 1, 2 and 3.

18 The southerly 34 feet of lot 4.

19 All of lot 5 except, commencing at the northeasterly corner of said lot 5; thence running south
20 along the east line of said lot 5, a distance of 57 feet to a point; thence west at right angles
21 10 feet to a point; thence north and parallel with the east line of lot 5 to the northerly boundary
22 line of said lot 5; thence following the northerly boundary line easterly to the point of beginning.

23 All of lots 6 and 7

24 All of lot 8 except the westerly 25 feet

25 All of lot 12 except the southerly 88.21 feet and except the westerly 25 feet

26 All of Lots 13 through 20.

27 City and County of Denver,

28 State of Colorado.

29 Together with the adjoining public rights-of-way but only to the centerline thereof.

30 **Section 2.** The Landmark Preservation Commission shall utilize the Design Guidelines for
31 Denver Landmark Structures & Districts in conducting design review for projects in the District. The

1 Landmark Preservation Commission may adopt further district-specific guidelines utilizing the
2 application for landmark district status, the Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures &
3 Districts and Chapter 30, Denver Revised Municipal Code (Landmark Preservation) in formulating
4 said district-specific guidelines. Such district-specific guidelines must be adopted in open session
5 of the Commission by an affirmative vote of five members of the Commission.

6 **Section 3.** The effect of this designation may enhance the value of the property and of the
7 structure, but may delay or require denial of building permits found unacceptable by the Landmark
8 Preservation Commission under the criteria contained in the Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark
9 Structures & Districts and Section 30-6 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code.

10 **Section 4.** The period of significance for the District is established as being from 1915-1931.

11 **Section 5.** The structures listed below shall be considered contributing structures to the
12 District:

13 The primary structure at 3209 West Fairview Place; the primary structure at 3279 Grove Street; and the
14 primary structure at 3249 Fairview Place.

15 **Section 6.** This ordinance shall be recorded among the records of the Clerk and Recorder of
16 the City and County of Denver.

17 **[THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]**

1 COMMITTEE APPROVAL DATE: November 19, 2019.
2 MAYOR-COUNCIL DATE: November 26, 2019 by Consent.
3 PASSED BY THE COUNCIL _____
4 _____ - PRESIDENT
5 APPROVED: _____ - MAYOR _____
6 ATTEST: _____ - CLERK AND RECORDER,
7 EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE
8 CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER
9

10 NOTICE PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY JOURNAL: _____; _____

11 PREPARED BY: Adam C. Hernandez, Assistant City Attorney DATE: December 5, 2019

12 Pursuant to section 13-12, D.R.M.C., this proposed ordinance has been reviewed by the office of
13 the City Attorney. We find no irregularity as to form, and have no legal objection to the proposed
14 ordinance. The proposed ordinance is not submitted to the City Council for approval pursuant to
15 §3.2.6 of the Charter.

16
17 Kristin M. Bronson, Denver City Attorney

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19 BY: _____, Assistant City Attorney DATE: _____
20