

TOWNSHIP OF MAPLEWOOD



ORDINANCE

2662-11

AN ORDINANCE
TO DESIGNATE
MAPLEWOOD MEMORIAL PARK
as a LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

"Interpretive Statement"

This ordinance will designate Maplewood Memorial Park as a local historic landmark.

WHEREAS, the Maplewood Historic Preservation Commission ("the Commission") has been charged by the Township of Maplewood (the "Township") to identify historic sites, districts and landmarks within the Township and to recommend their designation as local historic sites; and

WHEREAS, in December 2009, the Commission prepared a nomination report with regard to Maplewood Memorial Park, Block 17.01 - Lot 17 and Block 17.02 - Lot 126 (the "Property"), a copy of which is annexed hereto; and

WHEREAS, after notice to the public and personal notice to the owners of the Property, the Commission held a public hearing on December 14, 2009; and

WHEREAS, at the public meeting on January 11, 2010, the Commission unanimously recommended that the Maplewood Township Committee designate Maplewood Memorial Park as a local historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the Commission tendered its nomination report to the Maplewood Township Committee under cover of memo dated January 28, 2011.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, that:

(1) For the reasons set forth in the Commission's nomination report dated December 2009, Maplewood Memorial Park, Block 17.01 - Lot 17 and Block 17.02 - Lot 126, be and is hereby designated a Local Historic Landmark.

(2) The Maplewood Township Planning Board shall list and map the aforementioned Property on the Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan.

(3) The designation of this Property shall be noted on all records of the Township including those records maintained by the Township Tax Assessor and the Township Clerk.

(4) Notice of this designation shall be made public by publication in the official newspaper of the Township and by distribution to all municipal agencies reviewing development applications and permits.

(5) A letter of designation shall be sent to the owners of record of the property.

SEVERABILITY:

If any section, paragraph, subparagraph, clause or provision of this Ordinance shall be adjudged invalid, such adjudication shall apply only to the specific section, paragraph, subparagraph, clause or provision so adjudged and the remainder of the Ordinance shall be deemed valid and effective.

REPEAL OF PRIOR ORDINANCES:

Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance be and the same are hereby repealed to the extent of any such inconsistencies.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

This Ordinance shall take effect after final passage and publication and as provided by law.

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that the foregoing proposed Ordinance was introduced and read by title for the first time at a meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, held on March 15, 2011, and that Committee met again on April 5, 2011, at 7:30 p.m. at the Municipal Building, 574 Valley Street, Maplewood, New Jersey, at which time and place the Committee proceeded to consider the said Ordinance on second reading and final passage.

ELIZABETH J. FRITZEN, R.M.C.
Township Clerk

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MAPLEWOOD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDING
DESIGNATION OF
THE MAPLEWOOD MEMORIAL PARK
BLOCK 17.01, LOT 17
AND BLOCK 17.02, LOT 126
AS A LOCAL LANDMARK

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission of the Township of Maplewood has conducted a comprehensive survey of historic sites in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board adopted a historic preservation element as part of the Master Plan of the Township of Maplewood that identifies Maplewood Memorial Park as a local landmark that is worthy of preservation; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has conducted an extensive analysis of Maplewood Memorial Park and adjoining buildings; and

WHEREAS, Maplewood Memorial Park is a significant historic site that meets the criteria for designation in the historic preservation element of the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, proper notice of the proposed designation was provided as required by the Historic Preservation Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Commission prepared a report on the nomination of Maplewood Memorial Park as a historic site. This report entitled "MAPLEWOOD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, Maplewood Memorial Park Nomination Report for Historic Landmark, Landmark"

#011-09" dated December 2009 is attached hereto as Exhibit A and is incorporated by reference; and

WHEREAS, the Nomination Report details the history of the proposed historic site and its significance and provides additional detailed information to support the designation of the property as a historic site; and

WHEREAS, for the reasons stated above and as addressed at length in the study annexed hereto as Exhibit A, Maplewood Memorial Park, the Commission recommends that the Maplewood Memorial Park be designated as a historic landmark.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RECOMMENDED by the Historic Preservation Commission of the Township of Maplewood that the Township Committee designate the Maplewood Memorial Park as a local landmark.

ROLL CALL

Richard Southwick:	_____	Gerard W. Ryan:	_____
Susan Newberry:	_____	Jon Stout, Alt.:	_____
Ginny Kurshan:	_____	David Rosen, Alt.:	_____
Patty Chrisman:	_____	Joanne Sockle:	_____
Gary Nelson:	_____		
Eric Hammarberg:	_____		

This Resolution adopted this _____ day of _____, 2010 memorializes the action taken at a meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission of the Township of Maplewood on December 14, 2009, with the roll call vote on the memorialization as follows:

ROLL CALL ON MEMORIALIZATION

Richard Southwick: _____ Gerard W. Ryan: _____
Susan Newberry: _____ Jon Stout, Alt.: _____
Ginny Kurshan: _____ David Rosen, Alt.: _____
Patty Chrisman: _____ Joanne Sockle: _____
Gary Nelson: _____
Eric Hammarberg: _____

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a
Resolution of the Historic Preservation Commission of the
Township of Maplewood memorialized on _____, 2010.

Adele Lewis
Planning Board Secretary

MAPLEWOOD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Maplewood Memorial Park
Nomination Report for Historic Landmark

Landmark #011-09
December, 2009

1. Boundary Description:

Maplewood Memorial Park Historic Landmark consists of all the property included in Memorial Park, aka Blocks 17.01, Lot 17, and Block 17.02, Lot 126, including the Civic House (recreation building) near Dunnell Road and the Skate House near Oakview Road, and excluding the Maplewood Main Library building on Baker Street.

2. Current owner (name, address):

Township of Maplewood
c/o Township Administrator
574 Valley Street,
Maplewood, NJ 07040

3. Description at time of designation:

Maplewood Memorial Park consists of approximately 25 acres, bounded by Valley Street to the east, Baker Street to the south, Dunnell Road to the west and Oakland Road to the north. The park is a large, triangular-shaped, landscaped area, designed in the picturesque tradition with artfully arranged trees and shrubbery, winding foot paths, and gracefully arching footbridges. Oakview Avenue bisects the park from east to west. The park features rolling hills and meadows, clusters of trees within and around the perimeter, curving pathways that open up to long vistas, rustic stone and wooden bridges over streams, a rock garden, as well as ball fields and playgrounds.

The East Branch of the Rahway River, which was diverted from its original course (approximately where Dunnell Road now lies) during the construction of the park, runs from north to south through the park and is the focus of a variety of features such as footbridges and winding footpaths. The river is lined with stone walls, some of which were replaced in 1999 with pre-cast concrete panels imitative of stone, following massive damage by Hurricane Floyd. In the northern section of the park, the river runs close to Dunnell Road, but moves further east as it moves south. Just north of the library, this stream joins with Crooked Brook which comes in to the park from the west. To the north and east of the library, the river feeds a small duck pond. Three rustic foot bridges constructed of stone piers and timber rails span the river, one behind the library, one near the duck pond, and another to the west of the Civic House. (All the bridges have been fitted with iron railings to meet federal ADA requirements.) The banks of the river, on either side, are planted with a variety of flowering trees and shrubs.

There are a variety of memorials located throughout the park. A high plot of ground, on the park's western edge facing the railroad station and tracks at Dunnell Road has a flagpole and was

rafter tails. The wood frame walls are clad in wooden shingles. The foundation consists of rubble supporting piers with concrete block infill. There is a roof extension on the east elevation (date unknown) supported by steel columns over a concrete pad.

6. History of property:

The history of Memorial Park relates closely to the early 20th century development of the Township as a railroad suburb.

The Morris and Essex Railroad had run through Maplewood, from Newark to Morristown, since 1838, hauling freight and passengers. In 1869, the Morris & Essex Railroad, which then specialized in passenger transportation, became a division of the growing Delaware, Lakawanna and Western Railroad. In 1901-03 the tracks at Maplewood were elevated and the present station structure at the top of the hill, on the eastern side of the tracks, was built. It became increasingly clear that the train station would make the area a focus of increasing activity. The land to the east of the station belonged to various people, including (according to an 1850 map) R. W. Smith, W. H. Skillman and S. P. Brown.

During the late 19th century, Maplewood (then the more rural part of the Village of South Orange) began to attract wealthy city dwellers, which led to the development of large new houses along the streets near the village. Around the turn of the 20th century the number of commuter trains running to Newark from Maplewood increased, as did the number of people settling in the quickly-growing town. During the first decade of the century, an average of 50 new houses was constructed annually. In 1904, the Village of South Orange separated itself from South Orange Township.

Land was purchased in 1911 from the Delaware Lackawanna and Western Railway and from R. A. Woodbury for an approach to the station. A plan was devised and carried out in which property near the train station was purchased by the Railroad jointly with the township for equal division, with the township's portion to be used for a park plot. This low-lying land around the East Branch of the Rahway River had always been the location of various early industries, mills and manufacturing, and for farming and grazing. By 1913, the Township condemned the Brown estate for property needed for park purposes, and additional land was purchased from the estates of Henry S. Smith and Samuel Brown. By 1919, titles were passed, deeds recorded and payment was made for purchase of the Smith and Trimpi properties for park purposes, and the south Orange Township Committee passed an ordinance to purchase all lands between Oakview Avenue, Baker Street and Dunnell Road.

The next year, playgrounds were set up in the area north of Oakview Avenue. These provided for separate areas for girls and boys. Other facilities included a football field, tennis courts and a skating rink. A small Shelter House was donated by architect Kenneth Dalzell of Budall Realty, who would subsequently design many homes in Maplewood. In the area on the Baker Street side of Oakview Avenue, land was purchased from Paul H. Land. The *Home News* reported the donation of land for the park by Albert J. Knoll, Albert J. Knoll Jr., Edward Gulick and J.C. Osman.

Memorial Park was dedicated in 1931 to the men and women of the Township of Maplewood who served their country in World War I. A stone monument with a dedicatory plaque is located on a rise at the southern end of the park near Baker Street. Other memorials are located in an area across Dunnell Road from the train station and include a flag pole and other plaques, and a stand of trees designed to echo those planted at the time of the park's opening in memory of the soldiers who had died in the Great War. Memorial trees continue to be added to the park to this day. The small Skate House was designed by William Mitchell and constructed in 1929-30. This building historically provided shelter from the cold to skaters at the nearby frozen pond. The other large structure, the Civic House, was constructed in 1929-30 and was designed by local architect Charles C. Grant (architect of the old police building). Grant completed an addition to this building by 1935 and the building was extended again in 1953 by William Mitchell. It serves as the location of civic activities and meetings such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and continues to be a center for community activities and offices. These buildings were included in the original designs for the park and are integral to the many uses of this space.

7. Statement of significance, incorporating criteria for designation:

Maplewood Code § 41-1, et. seq. requires that the Historic Preservation Commission consider for landmark designation “[a]ny buildings which merit landmark designation and protection, and possessing integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship” and which meet one or more criterion set forth in § 41-7(A) of the ordinance. The Maplewood Memorial park continues to exist at its original location and maintains a design that is very close to the original, although some vegetation has been replaced with similar materials over the years.

According to the criteria set forth in Section 7 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance of the Township of Maplewood (#2166-01), the Maplewood Memorial Park is eligible as a Maplewood Historic Landmark under criteria (1), (4), and (7).

(1) Of particular historic significance to the Township of Maplewood by reflecting or exemplifying the broad cultural, political, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community:

The Maplewood Memorial Park is significant because it was designed and constructed at a critical period in the development of the Township. The park serves as a town center for the community, located near the physical center of the Township in a valley between two ridges. The small river running through it, the East Branch of the Rahway River, and the surrounding park area has been the site of a variety of activities for many years, beginning with agrarian and residential uses and then community gatherings. However, this landscape and its important structures were designed and constructed in the 1920s and early 1930s and their arrangement and appearance are an integral part of the development of the Township as a picturesque residential suburban railroad town..

In 1922, as the Township's population soared and its character changed from rural to suburban, the name of the municipality was changed to the Township of Maplewood and the town leaders set out to create a distinct identity for the community. The governing body, aware of the dramatic

addition, sites associated with the late 19th and early 20th century houses that were removed along Baker Street and Dunnell Road (when the land was acquired by the Township for the park) may yield important information about that era of Maplewood's history.

Sources

Clerk's Minutes, Township of Maplewood, various years.

Essex County Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances.

The Home News, clippings and document files, photographs, and maps, Maplewood and Newark, NJ public libraries

"The Operating Railroad Stations of New Jersey, An Historical Survey" performed by Heritage Studies, Inc. of Princeton, New Jersey, 1981 for New Jersey Transit, Inc.

Maplewood Past and Present, A Miscellany, Edited by Helen B. Bates, Maplewood, NJ (1948).

Bausmith, John, *Maplewood*, Images of America Series, Arcadia Publishing (1999).

Brinley & Holbrook archives, Morristown Library

Report by Virginia Kurshan and Jon Stout
November, 2009

Maplewood Memorial Park
Character Defining Features

Maplewood Memorial Park consists of approximately 25 acres configured in a large triangular tract. Constructed in 1929, the park has been designed in the "Romantic" or "Picturesque" style emphasizing a natural or organic landscape approach. A number of elements within the park are characteristic of this approach and are fundamental components to its overall design. In any improvements or modifications to Memorial Park, these "Character-Defining Features" should be retained, and restored as required, to not compromise the integrity and quality of the park.

Landscape Features

- East Branch of the Rahway River including the extant stone embankment walls and riverbed
- Duck Pond
- Rock Garden – north of the library
- Mature specimen trees and shrubs
- Ornamental gardens and planting beds
- Winding footpaths
- Three stone and wood footbridges
- Memorial boulder commemorating WWI service
- Well-designed and framed park vistas

Structures

- Civic House – rustic Flemish bond brick masonry and stucco/half timber facades, slate roof, steel casement windows, wood doors, open porch. The Arts and Crafts style of this 1929 structure is stylistically sympathetic to the Picturesque design of the park;
- Skate House – wood shingled facades, hipped gabled roof, chimney, stone rubble and block foundation walls, porch, wood windows and doors.

Maplewood Memorial Park, as an active and always evolving centerpiece of the town, has numerous ballfields, tennis and basketball courts and other recreational facilities arrayed throughout its 25 acre landscape. These are necessary and welcome components of the park design and will continue to change to meet current and ongoing township needs. In the design of the recreational elements, such as fencing, lighting, backstops, etc., the siting, scale, lighting and materials should be selected to sympathetically relate to the character of overall park design.