



# Office of the City Clerk

City Hall  
121 N. LaSalle St.  
Room 107  
Chicago, IL 60602  
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## Legislation Text

File #: O2018-6918, Version: 1

### Department of Planning and Development

city of chicago

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September?, 2018

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City Clerk City of Chicago Room 107, City Hall 121 North LaSalle Street Chicago, IL 60602

The Honorable Anna Valencia

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**RE: Recommendation for the designation of the St. Peter's Church and Parish House be designated as a Chicago Landmark, 615-623 W. Belmont**

Dear Clerk Valencia:

We are filing with your office for introduction at the September 20, 2018, City Council meeting as a transmittal to the Mayor and City Council of Chicago the recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks that the St. Peter's Church and Parish House be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

The material being submitted to you for this proposal includes the:

1. Recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks; and
2. Proposed Ordinance.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Sincerely,

Eleanor Esser Gorski, AIA Bureau Chief  
Bureau of Planning, Historic Preservation and Sustainability Department  
of Planning and Development

ends.

cc: Alderman Thomas Tunney, 44th Ward (via email without enclosure)

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 1000. CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

**ORDINANCE**

**St. Peter's Church and Parish House 615-623  
West Belmont**

WHEREAS, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Municipal Code of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), Sections 2-120-630 through -690, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that the St. Peter's Church and Parish House (the "Building"), located at 615-623 West Belmont Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, legally described in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein, satisfies three (3) criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4) and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, St. Peter's Episcopal Church (1895) and Parish House (1926) had a long history at 615 to 623 West Belmont Avenue. From its founding in 1887 by a small group of Lakeview parishioners to its growth and the construction of its church in 1895 and its parish house in 1926, to the changing community demographics that led the parish to alter its role in the community during the twentieth century; and

WHEREAS, St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House are exemplary of a Chicago neighborhood church complex. Neighborhood churches like St. Peter's not only provided a place for ecclesiastical services, but also functioned as central spaces for community groups, activities, and socialization; and

WHEREAS, St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House together possess an overall high quality of architectural design that forms a visually-cohesive church complex executed in the Gothic Revival style, complemented by similar materials, details, and scale; and

WHEREAS, the 1895 church is an excellent example of neighborhood-scaled ecclesiastical architecture executed in the Gothic Revival style. The Bedford limestone-clad church displays the characteristic features of the style, including pointed arch windows and doors, buttresses, tower, and stained glass windows; and

WHEREAS, the 1926 parish house is also an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style built at the neighborhood-scale. It is attached to the church and features characteristic features of the style including a pointed archivolt and doorway, stone label molding above windows, tracery-framed windows, and leaded glass windows; and

WHEREAS, both St. Peter's Church and Parish House demonstrate a high degree of craftsmanship in traditional materials including carved stone, leaded glass, and wrought iron; and

WHEREAS, William A. Otis, architect of St. Peter's Church (1895), is a significant architect in the history of Chicago known for his designs for single-family homes built in fashionable late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Chicago and North Shore neighborhoods. Built largely for affluent clients, Otis designed the houses in a range of popular period styles; and

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WHEREAS, Otis is also notable for his contribution to the design and development of government and institutional buildings including the extant Chicago Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium in the North Park community area; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has a significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; now, therefore,

WHEREAS, on July 12, 2018, the Commission adopted a resolution recommending to the City Council of the City of Chicago (the "City Council") that the Building be designated a Chicago Landmark; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO: SECTION 1. The above recitals are hereby adopted as the findings of the City Council.

SECTION 2. The Building is hereby designated a Chicago Landmark in accordance with Section 2-120-700 of the Municipal Code.

SECTION 3. For purposes of Sections 2-120-740 and 2-120-770 of the Municipal Code governing permit review, the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as:

All exterior elevations, including rooflines of the Church and Parish House buildings

SECTION 4. The Commission is hereby directed to create a suitable plaque appropriately identifying the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

SECTION 5. If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 6. All ordinances, resolutions, motions or orders in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

**EXHIBIT A**

**Building Address**

615-623 West Belmont, Chicago, Illinois

**Permanent Index Numbers**

14,28-101-012-0000

**Legal Description**

LOTS 11, 12, 13 and 14 IN HITCHCOCK AND WILSON'S SUBDIVISION OF THE EAST V<sub>2</sub> OF LOT 1 OF BICKERDIKE AND STEELE'S SUBDIVISION OF THE WEST V<sub>i</sub> OF THE NORTHWEST <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> OF SECTION 28, TOWNSHIP 40 NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

**CITY OF CHICAGO COMMISSION ON CHICAGO  
LANDMARKS**

**July 12, 2018**

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO THAT CHICAGO  
LANDMARK DESIGNATION BE ADOPTED FOR**

**ST. PETER'S CHURCH AND PARISH HOUSE 615-623 West  
Belmont**

**Docket No. 2018-04**

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago:**

Pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that the St. Peter's Church and Parish House (the "Building") is worthy of designation as a Chicago Landmark. On the basis of careful consideration of the history and architecture of the Building, the Commission has found that it satisfies the following three (3) criteria set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code:

- 1. Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of (he heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*
- 4. Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*
- 5. Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

## **>■ BACKGROUND**

The formal landmark designation process for the Building began on May 3, 2018, when the Commission approved a preliminary landmark recommendation (the "Preliminary Recommendation") for the Building as a Chicago Landmark. The Commission found that the Building meets three (3) of the seven (7) criteria for designation, as well as the integrity criterion, identified in the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance (Municipal Code, Section 2-120-580 et seq.). As part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission preliminarily identified the "significant historical and architectural features" of the Building as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines of the Church and Parish House buildings

Also, as part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission adopted a Designation Report, dated May 2018, incorporated herein and attached hereto as Exhibit A (the "Designation Report").

At its regular meeting of June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Commission received a verbal report from Eleanor Gorski, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development, stating that the proposed landmark designation of the Building supports the City's overall planning goals and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.

In a letter dated June 13, 2018, the Commission officially requested the consent to the proposed landmark designation from the owner, The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, of the Buildings. On June 26, 2018, the Commission received a consent form, dated June 26, 2018, and signed by Jeffrey D. Lee, the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, the owner of the Building, consenting to the proposed landmark designation of the Building.

## **II- FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-120-650 of the Municipal Code, the Commission shall notify the owner of its determination with respect to the proposed Chicago Landmark designation within 45 days after receipt of the owner's consent; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code, the Commission has reviewed the entire record of proceedings on the proposed Chicago Landmark designation, including the Designation Report and all of the information on the proposed landmark designation of the Building; and

WHEREAS, St. Peter's Episcopal Church (1895) and Parish House (1926) had a long history at 615 to 623 West Belmont Avenue. From its founding in 1887 by a small group of Lakeview parishioners to its growth and the construction of its church in 1895 and its parish house in 1926, to the changing community demographics that led the parish to alter its role in the community during the twentieth century; and

WHEREAS, St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House are exemplary of a Chicago neighborhood church complex. Neighborhood churches like St. Peter's not only provided a place for ecclesiastical services, but also functioned as central spaces for community groups, activities, and socialization; and

WHEREAS, St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House together possess an overall high quality of architectural design that forms a visually-cohesive church complex executed in the Gothic Revival style, complemented by similar materials, details, and scale; and

WHEREAS, the 1895 church is an excellent example of neighborhood-scaled ecclesiastical architecture executed in the Gothic Revival style. The Bedford limestone-clad church displays the characteristic features of the style, including pointed arch windows and doors, buttresses, tower, and stained glass windows; and

WHEREAS, the 1926 parish house is also an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style built at the neighborhood-scale. It is attached to the church and features characteristic features of the style including pointed archivolt and doorway, stone label molding above windows, tracery-framed windows, and leaded glass windows; and

WHEREAS, both St. Peter's Church and Parish House demonstrate a high degree of craftsmanship in traditional materials including carved stone, leaded glass, and wrought iron; and

WHEREAS, William A. Otis, architect of St. Peter's Church (1895), is a significant architect in the history of Chicago known for his designs for single-family homes built in fashionable late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Chicago and North Shore neighborhoods. Built largely for affluent clients, Otis designed the houses in a range of popular period styles; and

WHEREAS, Otis is also notable for his contribution to the design and development of government and institutional buildings including the extant Chicago Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium in the North Park community area; and

WHEREAS, the Building meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4) and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has a significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preseived in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; now, therefore,

#### **THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS HEREBY:**

1. Adopts the recitals, findings and statements of fact set forth in the preamble and Sections I and II hereof as the findings of the Commission; and
2. Adopts the Designation Report, as revised, and dated this 12th day of July 2018; and

3. Finds, based on the Designation Report and the entire record before the Commission, that the Building meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4) and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

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4. Finds that the Building satisfies the "integrity" requirement set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code; and
5. Finds that the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as follows:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Church and Parish House buildings.

6. Recommends the designation of the Building a Chicago Landmark.

*This recommendation was adopted*

*by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks.*

Rafael M. Leon, Chairman Commission on Chicago Landmarks

## LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

# Saint Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House

## 615-623 West Belmont Avenue

Final Landmark Recommendation adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, July 12, 2018

CITY OF CHICAGO Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development David Reifman, Commissioner

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# Saint Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish



# House

615 - 623 West Belmont Avenue

Built: 1895, 1926

Architects: William A. Otis (Church, 1895)  
William C. Jones (Parish House, 1926)

St. Peter's Episcopal Church and its later adjoining Parish House are handsome examples of the Gothic Revival style and possess a strong and historic connection to Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood and its early development during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. St. Peter's Episcopal Parish, first organized in 1887 by affluent local families, quickly grew to become the city's largest Episcopalian congregation and a significant part of Lakeview's social fabric. The 1895 Church and 1926 Parish House reflect the growth and transition of the St. Peter's Parish and the surrounding Lakeview community.

The designs of the church and parish house complement each other in overall style and details, while forming a cohesive church complex and offering a balance to the mixed commercial and residential character of Belmont Avenue's streetscape. The church is well-executed with traditional carved stonework, fine wrought iron, and exemplary leaded glass. Its overall low profile, according to its architect William A. Otis, was intended to reflect the "fifteenth century style of architecture." The parish house also exhibits a high degree of craftsmanship and is clad in brick with costlier limestone limited to key decorative features.

St. Peter's Church and Parish House are located at 615-623 West Belmont Avenue in Chicago's Lakeview Community Area. The buildings are color-coded "orange" in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey (CHRS), which preliminarily identifies them as significant to their surrounding neighborhood. The church and parish house are also contributing structures in the Lakeview National Register Historic District.

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**North elevation of the St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House. The stone-fronted church (left) was completed in 1895, the brick parish house (right) was completed in 1926.**

**St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House are located on the south side of Belmont Avenue, just west of Broadway on Chicago's North Side in the Lakeview community area.**

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## History and Construction at St. Peter's Parish

### *Early Parish History*

St. Peter's Episcopal Parish was established in 1887, two years before the suburban City of Lake View (later in twentieth century the neighborhood and community area were spelled "Lakeview") was annexed to Chicago. At the time, the area east of Halsted Street was characterized by large suburban estates and villas built on vast lakefront parcels in the years after the U.S. Civil War, and to the west of Halsted were truck farms operated by German and Scandinavian immigrants. During 1880s, Lake View's suburban and agricultural character was rapidly transformed as larger tracts were subdivided into dozens of smaller lots, which attracted a wave of residential development with families moving to Lake View to build new frame homes along newly platted streets.

On Sunday, May 29, 1887 ("Whitsunday or Pentecost Sunday in the Episcopalian faith), several Episcopalian families in the area of Belmont Avenue and Broadway (historically developed as the Lake View Plank Road and known until 1913 as Evanston Avenue) assembled in the private home of Mrs. Charlotte Given to organize the St. Peter's Mission (a Mission designation is granted before a Parish designation). The front parlor and dining room of the frame home at 624 Briar Place (extant) served as the sanctuary of this fledgling Episcopalian congregation until Sunday services became too crowded. The mission next moved to a storefront of a nearby laundry on Clark Street before raising enough funds to build a permanent home on the southwest corner of Briar Place and Orchard Street. According to the parish's first reverend, Samuel C. Edsall, the new frame chapel (not extant) was completed in 1888 with donations of both money and building materials, including doors and stair railings from the home of Stephen G. Clarke, prominent Lake View resident and member of St. Peter's.

In 1890, St. Peter's Mission became an official parish with over 200 members. Lakeview's annexation to the City of Chicago in 1889 prompted a wave of development and expansion in the former suburb, which introduced new members to St. Peter's. However, the prospect of new members was limited by the size of the frame church then only recently completed. At the same time, Rev. Edsall recalled that, "our little wooden chapel had become totally inadequate; and annexation to Chicago and the extension of the fire limits, made the task of enlargement a serious undertaking." Rev. Edsall recognized the parish's early desire to have notable and beautiful edifice at a prime location, but later asserted that "in the dull, prosaic reality of life such visions when too rashly followed, result in unpaid creditors, foreclosed mortgages, and years of well-nigh hysterical struggle for money which grind out the spiritual life of a people, and sap the life and faith of a pastor." Instead of building a grand fire-proof stone church, the parish opted for a less costly solution.

In late 1890, the parish acquired the current lot on Belmont Avenue for \$10,000 and had their frame chapel raised on rollers and moved to the new lot. Moving buildings was a very common practice in Chicago at the time that, given higher material costs, tended to be less expensive than new construction. According to the Department of Public Works Annual Report, in 1889 alone over 1,300 buildings were moved in Chicago, including seventeen in Lakeview. With only limited interruption in services, the frame chapel was placed over a new basement, veneered in brick, and given a brick addition designed by architect and parishioner George

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**St. Peter's parish began as a mission in 1887 with only a few dozen members in the parlor room of a frame house that still stands at 624 West Briar Place (A). In 1888, the mission built its first permanent frame chapel at the southwest corner of what is today Briar Place and Orchard Street (B). St. Peter's became a parish in 1890 and required more room. The parish bought the current site at 615-623 West Belmont Avenue that same year, moved its frame chapel there, and built a more distinguished "church-like" brick addition (C). Rev. Samuel C. Edsall (D) was the parish's first rector and guided it through its formative years from 1887 through 1899.**  
**Source: St. Peter's Parish Index, Richard R. Seidel Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.**

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Beaumont. The renovated chapel opened in 1891 with accommodations for twice as many parishioners and basement meeting rooms for guilds, clubs, and other organizations. Over the following three years, St. Peter's Parish grew to over 1,000 members as the Lakeview community around it continued to expand.

### *Construction and Description of the 1895 Church Building*

By late 1893 St. Peter's Parish was actively seeking proposals for the design of a new and larger church to accommodate its growing membership. Rev. Edsall reasoned that a new and larger church was needed because families that were in regular attendance might stay away due to overcrowding. At the same time, Edsall saw value in the parish's Belmont Avenue location and understood the parish's financial limits. In a sermon in July 1894, Edsall appealed to parishioners:

We can build a thoroughly comfortable and well appointed church, whose interior shall be really beautiful, and be capable of development into as satisfactory a church ... as any in Chicago, where the light of colored windows shall fall through groups of columns and stately arches, where altar, chancel, baptistery and organ are given dignified ... proportions.

Originally, a design by architect John Neal Tilton was selected - the plan for an "Italian Gothic" style stone and pressed brick church - but the financial panic of 1893 halted the project before it was finalized.

St. Peter's parishioners ultimately selected architect William A. Otis's plan for the current stone church which was constructed adjacent to the old frame chapel. Otis based his design for St. Peter's Church on English late-Gothic architectural styles, giving the church a central nave with clerestory windows and flanking low side aisles. Ground was broken in September and the cornerstone was laid with great ceremony a week early on October 21, 1894. The roof was finished in January and a commission to design and build the church's art glass windows was given. All finishes were complete in time for parishioners to hold their first Easter service in the new church in April 1895. A procession including the vestry, other members, and Otis proceeded from the old chapel to open the new church to symbolically take possession of the building.

The church was built on the eastern half of St. Peter's parcel with alleyways bordering the eastern and southern edges. The main elevation faces Belmont Avenue and is faced in rusticated limestone ashlar with buttresses, dressed moldings and string courses, and battlements. The peaked gable end of the central nave is topped by a stone cross and features a pointed arch window with art glass. A single-story vestibule projects from the gable wall with twin doorways and a central stained glass window. Originally, the doorways were met by twin flights of stone steps with stone ogee-shaped knee walls; however, the westernmost stair was replaced by a wheelchair ramp with stone knee walls similar to the original stair. The most prominent feature of the main elevation is a low stone tower with buttresses, battlements, and a low peaked roof that anchors the eastern corner. A decorative wrought iron finial rises from the roof. Parishioners requested a taller tower, but finances ultimately maintained Otis's original design.

The eastern elevation is clad in pressed red brick with buttresses and pairs of art glass windows, but its low form is emphasized by the horizontal lines of the aisle and nave roofs, which were

**Architect William A. Otis was selected by the Parish to design the new Church, which was completed in 1895 facing Belmont Avenue, just east of the old chapel.**

*Source: Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, Art Institute of Chicago.*

**The main elevation of St. Peter's Church is clad in rusticated Bedford limestone. The building has a low profile with a projecting front vestibule, a short, crenelated tower on its eastern corner, and a gable featuring a pointed arch window with stained glass. Overall, St. Peter's Church is a well-design and -crafted building in the Gothic**

Revival style, with characteristic features including buttresses, pointed-arches, stained glass, and narrow lancet windows.

The eastern and southern elevations border alleyways and are clad in common brick with contrasting red pressed brick arches above stained glass windows.

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Details of the church include a decorative wrought iron finial atop the corner tower, stained glass tryptic windows with tracery, decorative copper downspouts and leader heads, and pointed arch front doors with decorative wrought iron strap hinges and drop pulls.

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St. Peter's

Parish Index

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*The church's completion was celebrated by the parish. An artistic rendering of the new edifice was proudly placed on the cover of the parish's monthly newsletter St. Peter's Parish Index.*

*Source: St. Peter's Parish Index, Richard R. Seidel Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.*

originally clad in slate shingles. The rear south elevation is clad entirely in common brick with fenestration limited to a large stained glass chancel window. The old frame chapel was connected to the new church by a corridor and converted to use as a parish house, with a meeting hall in the former sanctuary space. It served in this capacity until it was replaced by the current parish house in 1926.

#### *Plans for Expansion: 1899-1924*

The new century marked a period during which the parish expanded rapidly. In 1899, Edsall was succeeded by Rev. Frank DuMoulin, a native of Canada, who helped attract more parishioners to St. Peter's, during the first decade of the twentieth century, St. Peter's Parish became known as the largest Episcopalian congregation in Chicago and the parish itself claimed to be "the largest Episcopal Church west of the Allegheny Mountains."

In 1901, a three-story Gothic Revival style brick addition was built in front of the old chapel, filling the remaining space on the parish's lot. This early addition (not extant) was designed to create more space for guilds, clubs, and other parish and community groups. But, the addition proved to be insufficient and soon plans were proposed for the construction of

a new parish house and even a new church.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Lakeview neighborhood around the parish was in transition as families in single family houses moved from the area and were

#### St. Peter's Church and Parish House, Chicago

*In 1901, a three-story addition (right) was built in front of the parish's old chapel in order to expand its parish house (not extant). The addition and the old chapel were replaced in 1926 by the current parish house. Source: Chicago History in Postcards [chicagopc.info]*

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replaced by waves of new families taking up residence in Lakeview's denser new apartment flats. By 1910, the parish had over 400 regular members, including 175 enrolled in Sunday school. Though many of Lakeview's Scandinavian and German residents gradually moved away and were replaced by Italian Chicagoans. St. Peter's Parish saw the need to to widen its offerings beyond regular services to include greater community involvement, which entailed creating spaces for community recreation and socialization.

In 1907, parishioner Mrs. Hermon B. Butler donated \$50,000 to St. Peter's Parish for the establishment of a settlement house-type building for the benefit of the Lakeview community. The parish sought assistance and direction from Jane Addams in an effort to create a model settlement house for Chicago's North Side, but ultimately the new building was developed as half clubhouse, half settlement house to serve an increasing middle-class population of renters, "whose apartment existences," as a 1911 Tribune article described them, "estranged them alike from their neighbors." The parish acquired a large parcel on the northwest corner of Belmont Avenue and Broadway and in 1910 built a three-story building at 3212 North Broadway, named the Hermon Beardsley Butler House. Notable Chicago architects Solon S. Beman and his son -Spencer, who together designed over ninety religious buildings, designed the building. It featured a basement pool, a gymnasium, a branch of the Chicago Public Library, and several other spaces. Butler House remained under the direction of St. Peter's Parish until 1918 when it operated independently. It later served as a clubhouse for the American Legion, and in 1963 it

*St. Peter's acquired a large lot on the northwest corner of Belmont Avenue and Broadway (Evanston Ave) in 1907 to expand their physical presence in Lakeview. Plans included the construction of a settlement house, a new church, and a new parish house, but only the settlement house was completed. S.S. Beman designed the extant but much altered building in 1910 and it was named as a memorial to St. Peter's parishioner Hermon Beardsley Butler. The building widened the parish's community involvement by providing athletic and socializing spaces. Source: ebay*

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became the headquarters for Jane Addams Hull House. It is currently an athletic club. The parish expected to build a new church on the corner and a rectory to the west in order to accommodate the growing parish, but the parish's growth stabilized and the plans were never implemented.

Although the parish succeeded in building a settlement house, the new building did not resolve the crowded conditions of the parish house in the old frame chapel. In 1924, the process of planning and raising funds for a new parish house was begun. The parish house with its 1901 addition was described in fundraising brochures as being "entirely inadequate and is a makeshift at best." The fundraising campaign succeeded in convincing parishioners of the inherent need for a

completely new parish house. "To build," a brochure noted, "means self-respect and parish progress in all lines of our activities; NOT TO BUILD means the shrinking of a definite service ... gradual stagnation and ultimate failure."

#### *Construction and Description of the 1926 Parish House*

Several architectural firms drafted proposals for the parish including William A. Otis, who was at the time associated with Revilot Fuller; Edwin Clark & Chester Wolcott; and several others. After a year of deliberation, the parish selected architect William C. Jones whose renderings of a three-story parish house included a facade blended between the Gothic Revival style of the existing church with the form of the 1901 parish house addition. His initial design was to be set back to match the church vestibule and was to be clad in rusticated stone with a stair matching those of the church. The high cost of stone prompted a switch to brick, with dressed stone reserved for window sills, string courses, coping, and decorative elements.

St. Peter's new parish house was one of over a dozen building projects led by the Episcopal diocese in 1925. The Bishop at the time, Rt. Rev. C. P. Anderson, remarked in the Chicago Daily Tribune that, "from the standpoint of new buildings this is the most prosperous year in the history of the diocese." Of all the projects, the Diocese recognized St. Peter's new parish house as one of the largest yet to be built. At a cost of \$100,000, three times the original estimated cost, the new three-story and basement parish house provided new spaces for a range of services that would better engage the changing Lakeview community. A large kindergarten was placed in the basement for regular weekday use and Sunday services. The main floor featured a large reception room, offices, two large rooms for guilds, and a chapel with seating for eighty along the west side of the building. A combined auditorium and gymnasium with seating for 350 and a reception room for the parish filled the second floor, while locker rooms occupied the third floor attic.

The old parish house, consisting of the old chapel and its 1901 addition were demolished after Easter weekend in 1926, in time for excavation to begin in June. According to a parish newsletter, the parish house was completed within budget and open for parishioners by the fall.

The main elevation facing north onto Belmont Avenue is divided into three bays and is clad in dark brown wire-cut brick with slight olive under tones. Windows are set in groups of three on the outer bays, with sets of five on the middle bay. All upper floor windows are leaded, wood sash casements with glass panes set in a diamond pattern. The raised basement has a limestone water table that serves as a continuous sill for a series of double-hung sash windows. Located in

## II

As early as the mid-1890s, St. Peter's planned to build a new parish house when funding became available. The parish's first Rector, Rev. Edsall, imagined such a building would be a magnificent stone structure to match the church. This rendering, drawn for a fundraising campaign, shows a stone front with details similar to the church.

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**Architect William C. Jones, who became well-known across the Midwest as an efficient and cost-effective architect, designed St. Peter's new parish house, which was completed in 1926. Although the Parish had plans for a stone facade, Jones delivered a less costly but an equally well-designed proposal for a brick-clad parish house in the Gothic Revival style. The new building complemented the existing church stylistically and provided a contrast in materials.**

*Source: Richard R. Seidel Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.*

**St. Peter's Parish House was completed in the Gothic Revival style with a front of wire-cut brick in shades of brown. A limited amount of limestone was used for window sills, label molds above windows, coping, a cross finial, and most prominently, the pointed arch archivolt main entrance.**

**Detail of the parish house's pointed arch archivolt doorway, showing its original wood tracery transom and carved limestone spandrels and name plaque.**

**St. Peter's Parish House included meeting rooms, a chapel, a gymnasium, a kindergarten, and other spaces that greatly improved the Parish's ability to serve parishioners and residents of the Lakeview community.**

*Source: Richard R. Seidel Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.*

the eastern bay, the main entrance is topped with a leaded tracery transom and is set within a pointed-arch limestone frame with archivolts and spandrels decorated with grape vines and shields. A plaque with the raised letters "St. Peters Parish House" stands atop the doorway. The first floor windows have a plain limestone sill and feature fixed transoms above each casement. On the second floor, the windows have a plain limestone label molding with stops. The third floor is reduced to a flush dormer of matching brick with limestone coping and a stone cross Finial. The gable's tryptic of tracery-framed, pointed-arch windows originally opened into the rector's study room. A step-sloping roof flanks the dormer and is framed by the stone-capped brick parapet, which runs along the front and up the east and west side of the roof. All side and rear elevations are clad in common Chicago brick and are regularly fenestrated.

#### *Later History of the Congregation*

Following World War II, the parish completed several renovation projects on the church under the leadership of Rector John H. Scambler. One the largest projects was the replacement of the church's original painted art glass windows, which had been designed by the firm of George E.-Androvette & Company, a Chicago company that had risen to fame following a spectacular display the previous year at the World's Columbian Exposition. The new windows, created using in a range of richly colored stained glass by the Conrad Schmitt Studios of New Berlin, Wisconsin in 1948.

Despite significant improvements to the church, the Lakeview neighborhood began to change rapidly. Many of St. Peter's families left Lakeview over the following decades for suburban

developments. Apartment buildings continued to replace older single family homes throughout the community. New populations during the 1950s and 1960s, including Japanese-Americans and later Puerto Ricans, prompted St. Peter's Parish to again consider new ways to serve and engage with the community. St. Peter's was able to attract the community through new programming. The Parish House became a meeting space for community organizations. The gymnasium was opened not only to children and members of the parish, but also to neighborhood organizations. The parish founded the

Mission San Pedro for new Spanish-speaking members and sponsored a variety of engaging classes from karate to volleyball and soccer. The congregation still meets regularly in the 1895 church.

## The Gothic Revival Style of Architecture

St. Peter's Church and Parish House exemplify the Gothic Revival style of architecture, one of the most popular and important historically-based styles employed in the United States during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Based on medieval European buildings from the mid -twelfth through sixteenth centuries, a formal version of Gothic Revival quickly gained momentum, particularly for ecclesiastical architecture.

One of the first examples of the Gothic Revival style in the United States is New York's Trinity Church, which was built between 1839 and 1846 (extant) and was designed by architect Richard Upjohn, who is regarded as the father of Gothic Revival Movement in the U. S. St. Patrick's Cathedral (1858-1895, extant) by James Renwick, also in New York, is another prominent example of the style. Renwick later designed one of Chicago's best-known Gothic Revival churches, Second Presbyterian Church (1874, 1900, extant, 1939 South Michigan Avenue, designated Chicago Landmark). Other prominent examples of the Gothic Revival in Chicago, include the Cathedral of St. James (1856-7, 1875, extant, 65 East Huron Street); Holy Family Church (1858-60, extant, 1800 West Roosevelt Road); the Episcopal Church of the Atonement (1889-90, extant, 5749 North Kenmore Avenue) by Henry Ives Cobb and later, J.E.O. Pridmore; and the Episcopal Church of the Advent and Parish House (1905-06, 1926-27, extant, 2900 West Logan Boulevard, designated a Chicago Landmark) by Elmer C. Jensen.

In addition to churches, the style was also widely used for university buildings, where it is often referred to as "Collegiate Gothic." The popularity was largely due to the historical influences of English universities, such as Oxford and Cambridge, on American higher education standards, combined with the medieval Gothic style's historical associations with moral uplift. The Gothic Revival style prevailed, particularly for ecclesiastical purposes, well into the 1930s and 1940s. Characteristic features of the style include an overall vertical emphasis, pointed arch doors and windows, combined with a variety of other architectural elements such as buttresses, label molding above windows and doors, towers, stained glass windows, and ornamental tracery. All of these features can be seen in the design of St. Peter's Church and Parish House.

## The Lakeview Community Area

St. Peter's Church and Parish House is an exemplary church building that reveals the historic physical and social development of Lakeview during the late nineteenth and early twentieth

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centuries. Located on the shores of Lake Michigan, the Lakeview community historically was part of the greater Lake View Township, and it transformed from a suburban town to an urban neighborhood over a few short decades. St. Peter's Church and Parish House were built during this important period in the area's history as it developed.

### *History prior to Lakeview's 1889 annexation to Chicago*

Originally, Lake View Township stretched from the then-City of Chicago limits at Fullerton Avenue on the south to Devon Avenue on the north, and from Lake Michigan west to the North Branch of the Chicago River. The first European settlers to the area were Swiss-born Conrad Sulzer and his wife Christine. In 1836, the Sulzers journeyed beyond the then - newly incorporated City of Chicago and established a 100-acre farm along the "Ridge," near what is now the intersection of Montrose Avenue and Clark Street (now considered part of the Ravenswood neighborhood). Several other German, Swedish, and Norwegian farmers arrived later.



The sandy marsh land along the northern shores of Lake Michigan, largely inhospitable for farming, remained vacant until 1853, when James Rees, a prominent surveyor and real estate speculator, bought 225 acres of lakefront property north of Belmont Avenue to develop as a country retreat. In 1854, Rees built a grand hotel with a veranda that offered a sweeping view of Lake Michigan. The hotel, located in the vicinity of what is now 3900 North Lake Shore Drive, became known as the Lake View House, and the surrounding area was dubbed Lake View Township, which was officially organized in 1857.

In 1865, when Lake View Township was incorporated as the Town of Lake View, much of the new town was farmland. During these post-Civil War years, a number of wealthy Chicagoans were attracted to the verdant beauty of the rural, unspoiled lakeshore and built large summer villas on multi-acre estates on the lakefront east of today's Broadway (then Evanston Avenue). West of Broadway, large farms were quickly subdivided.

For residents who could afford to build a home outside Chicago's dense settlement, Lake View offered all of the benefits that one could need. It had ample drainage due to its sandy soil, which meant fewer soggy basements, and it had new rail lines connecting it to Chicago and Evanston. New sidewalks and brick sewers, cinder roads and carriage paths only added to the draw of Lake View's natural beauty. Both large houses and small cottages were constructed in the late 1870s and 1880s as Chicagoans of both great and modest financial means built homes in Lake View in the years before it was annexed to Chicago. Larger houses tended to cluster nearer the lakefront, while more modest houses were built farther inland.

#### *Lakeview: A Chicago Neighborhood*

The Town of Lake View was incorporated as a city in 1887, electing its own mayor and city council. Two years later, in 1889, City of Lake View residents voted in favor of annexation with the City of Chicago, allowing it to benefit from Chicago's services and water supply. Improvements in mass transportation encouraged rapid development. Within five years of annexation, by 1894 slow horse car lines on Clark St. (then called Green Bay Road) and Halsted Street were upgraded to electric streetcars, while in 1896, Broadway saw its own streetcars electrified. Four years later in 1900, the Northwestern "L" elevated train line

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***The Lakeview neighborhood developed rapidly following the annexation of the City of Lake View to Chicago in 1889. Areas east of Halsted Street prior to annexation were sparsely developed with often large suburban villas built after the Civil War. The top view from 1927 shows Belmont Avenue looking east from Broadway, while the bottom view looks westward along Belmont Avenue from Sheridan Road. The images reveal the degree to which waves of apartment flat development changed the area. Once isolated single family houses were now hidden between taller apartment buildings and towers. Lakeview's population increase coincided with a reduction in families, which prompted St. Peter's Church to develop new ways to engage with and attract the community. Source: (top) Chicago History Museum, ichi-17841; (bottom) IDOT Chicago Traffic Photographs, University of Illinois at Chicago.***

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(currently the Red, Brown, and Purple lines) opened, running from Chicago's downtown north to Wilson Avenue.

Development during the early 1890s was concentrated in areas within a few blocks of main transit stations and consisted mainly of 2- and 3-story frame apartment flats. Electrified streetcars, the elevated train, and the extension of water mains and sewer lines hastened the spread of development throughout the neighborhood. New 2- and 3-story brick apartment flats, some with elaborate limestone facades, were built during the late-1890s through 1900s. As demand for units increased at the turn of the century, many older frame houses were converted into apartment flats.

By 1910, most blocks in Lakeview south of Belmont and east of Halsted were densely developed with apartment flats and large residences that replaced most of the area's early Italianate style villas. The northward extension of Lincoln Park and easy financing in the 1920s prompted the construction of lakefront apartment buildings and towers. Examples of early twentieth century apartment buildings can be found in the Surf-Pine Grove Landmark District, which exemplifies Lakeview's development between the 1890s and the 1920s (a designated Chicago landmark district).

The Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II largely halted new construction in the area. During these trying decades, many apartment flats and houses were divided into single-room boarding houses. Many existing families left the area and were replaced by unmarried single residents. A great amount of redevelopment took place in Lakeview, primarily along the lakefront, during the post-war boom years of the 1950s, and continued through the 1960s and 1970s.

Lakeview during the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries During the 1960s, Lakeview saw an influx of Japanese-American refugees that had been released from forced imprisonment during the war. Many relocated to Lakeview from Lincoln Park following urban renewal. By the 1970s, hundreds of Japanese-American-owned shops, restaurants, and associations were located in the area. Additional residents, including Korean-Americans and Puerto Ricans moved into Lakeview, primarily west of Halsted, during the 1970s. However, Lakeview lost over 15 percent of its population by 1980, which reflected Chicago's greater population loss that had accelerated since the late-1950s.

Gentrification in the Lincoln Park community to the south increased during the 1970s as childless urban professionals renovated older homes. This spread into Lakeview beginning in the late-1970s and shifted to speculative redevelopment during the late-1980s as demand for housing increased. During the 1990s and 2000s, according to permit data, over 2000 buildings were demolished in Lakeview alone for new development. This contributed to the loss of affordable housing in the community, which prompted many existing residents to move away.

During the same period, Chicago's largest LGBTQ community developed along North Halsted Street. A range of venues from clubs and athletic groups to religious groups and political organizations all blossomed during the 1970s and 1980s, leading to the establishment of the

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#### **Architect William A. Otis (1855-1929)**

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when he was being considered as architect for St. Peter's parish house, Jones had designed over 2,000 churches and parish houses across the central and western United States. Two local buildings include the Neo Classical style First Church of Christ Scientists in Rock Island, Illinois (1914, extant) and the Tudor style Deer Path Inn in Glencoe (1923, extant).

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**Rear elevation of St. Peter's Church, facing south onto a public alleyway. The elevation is of common brick**

with a contrasting pointed arch of red brick above the stained glass chancel window.

## Criteria for Designation

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sections 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object with the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of historic integrity to convey its significance.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that Saint Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

### ***Criterion 1: Example of City, State, or National Heritage***

*Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- St. Peter's Episcopal Church (1895) and Parish House (1926) had a long history at 615 to 623 West Belmont Avenue. From its founding in 1887 by a small group of Lakeview parishioners to its growth and the construction of its church in 1895 and its parish house in 1926, to the changing community demographics that led the parish to alter its role in the community during the twentieth century.
- St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House are exemplary of a Chicago neighborhood church complex. Neighborhood churches like St. Peter's not only provided a place for ecclesiastical services, but also functioned as central spaces for community groups, activities, and socialization.

### ***Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture***

*Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*

- St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House together possess an overall high quality of architectural design that forms a visually-cohesive church complex executed in the Gothic Revival style, complemented by similar materials, details, and scale.

- The 1895 church is an excellent example of neighborhood-scaled ecclesiastical architecture executed in the Gothic Revival style. The Bedford limestone-clad church displays the characteristic features of the style, including pointed arch windows and doors, buttresses, tower, and stained glass windows.
- The 1926 parish house is also an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style built at the neighborhood-scale. It is attached to the church' and features characteristic features of the style including pointed archivolt and doorway, stone label molding above windows, tracery-framed windows, and leaded glass windows.
- Both St. Peter's Church and Parish House demonstrate a high degree of craftsmanship in traditional materials including carved stone, leaded glass, and wrought iron.

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**Criterion 5: Exemplary Architect**

*Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*

- William A. Otis, architect of St. Peter's Church (1895), is a significant architect in the history of Chicago known for his designs for single-family homes built in fashionable late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Chicago and North Shore neighborhoods. Built largely for affluent clients, Otis designed the houses in a range of popular period styles.
- Otis is also notable for his contribution to the design and development of government and institutional buildings including the extant Chicago Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium in the North Park community area.

**Integrity Criterion**

*The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express its historic community, architectural, or aesthetic value.*

St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House exhibit a high degree of architectural integrity. No major additions or alterations have been made to the buildings since the parish house was completed in 1926, leaving historic features, finishes, overall form, footprint, and location of entrances and arrangement of fenestration intact. The only significant alteration was the replacement of the church's original pair of front steps with a rebuilt east stair and a new handicap accessible ramp in 2004.

The exterior retains its historic brick and limestone cladding. Only the front steps of the church were rebuilt to accommodate a wheelchair ramp. This alteration was completed with similar materials and design to the original steps. Other decorative elements including metalwork, carved stone, and finials remain intact. All of the church's stained glass dating to 1948 remains intact. The front doors of the church were replaced with matching oak replacements in 2008, and the parish house's wood front doors were replaced in 2015.

The building's historic integrity is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express such values.

## Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Whenever an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its evaluation of St. Peter's Episcopal Church and Parish House, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as:

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- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Church and Parish House buildings.

*View of St. Peter's Church and its parish house circa 1928. Source: Richard R. Seidel  
Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.*

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*The St. Peter's Boys' Choir pose in front of St. Peter's Church (left) and non-extant parish house (right) in wagons bound for Lake Geneva, Wisconsin on July 4, 1899. Source: Chicago Public Library, Ravenswood-Lake View Community Collection*

*The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by (he Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to he City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.*

*The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the*

*potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.*

*This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.*

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