BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

NYS OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION
& HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
(518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
UNIQUE SITE NO.
QUAD
SERIES
NEG. NO.

YOUR NAME: Cynthia Howk DATE: Dec., 1994

YOUR ADDRESS: 133 S. Fitzhugh Street Rochester, NY 14608 TELEPHONE: 546-7029

ORGANIZATION (if any): The Landmark Society of Western New York, Inc.

* *

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME(S):
2. COUNTY: Monroe TOWN/CITY: Greece VILLAGE: ---
3. STREET LOCATION: 98 Florida Avenue
4. OWNERSHIP: a. public ☐ b. private ☒
5. PRESENT OWNER: Jill M. Weber ADDRESS: (same) Rochester, NY 14616
6. USE: Original: residence Present: residence
7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes ☒ No ☐
   Interior accessible: Explain private residence

DESCRIPTION

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard ☐ b. stone ☐ c. brick ☐ d. board and batten ☐ e. cobblestone ☐ f. shingles ☐ g. stucco ☒ other:
   Roof = not visible. Foundation = not visible
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: (if known)
   a. wood frame with interlocking joints ☐
   b. wood frame with light members ☒
   c. masonry load bearing walls ☐
   d. metal (explain)
   e. other
10. CONDITION: a. excellent ☐ b. good ☒ c. fair ☐ d. deteriorated ☐
11. INTEGRITY: a. original site ☒ b. moved ☐ if so,when?
    c. list major alterations and dates (if known):

(see continuation sheet)

12. PHOTO:

13. MAP:

"Ah - again I have to ask the question if we can justify raising this into a high category, as we did with #151 Dorsey Rd. I don't know if this one is inherently as good as #151, in terms of materials and workmanship. This house is a bit more like a cake with some 'frosting' trim on it, in regards to the tower & buttress details, etc. The house at #151 Dorsey had more of a sense of architecture. While this house is as much fun as #151 Dorsey, it's not as good in terms of its inherent qualities, so the best we can do for this is 'green plus.' It is certainly distinctive!" P.Malo.

COLOR CODE

Green plus +

An Equal Opportunity Agency

14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known ☒ b. zoning ☐ c. roads ☐
d. developers ☐ e. deterioration ☐
f. other: _____

15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:
a. barn ☐ b. carriage house ☐ c. garage ☒ - attached
d. privy ☐ e. shed ☐ f. greenhouse ☐
g. shop ☐ h. gardens ☐
i. landscape features: coniferous shrubs
j. other: _____

16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):
a. open land ☐ b. woodland ☐
c. scattered buildings ☐
d. densely built-up ☒ e. commercial ☐
f. industrial ☐ g. residential ☒
h. other: _____

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:
(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

(see continuation sheet)

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):

(see continuation sheet)

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: c. 1924 - 1930

ARCHITECT: not determined

BUILDER: not determined

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

(see continuation sheet)

21. SOURCES: (see continuation sheet)

22. THEME: residential

11c.

Contemporary metal awning over the front door and window.

Original garage (arched, double wood doors on facade) has been converted into a bedroom.

17. This house is located on the south side of Florida Avenue in the southeast quadrant of the town. The surrounding residential neighborhood has a mix of early 1900s and post-World War II frame houses, most of which are 1-1/2 story residences. Originally, this lot was twice as wide (now 40-feet); it included the property to its immediate west, which now has a late 1980s-1990s house on it. The house at #98 has the deepest set-back of any home on the south side of Florida Avenue.

18. This compact 1-1/2-story residence is constructed in a rectangular plan with a flat roof and stucco exterior. Fenestration is principally 1/1 double hung windows on the east and west elevations. Note, however, the narrow arched windows in the northeast tower.

On this fairly simple rectangular building are a number of decorative details characteristic of the early 20th-century Spanish Eclectic style. They include the 2-story square tower with crenelated top and arched openings, the front arched parapet wall with fleur-de-lis motif (in white), the smaller towers on the northwest and southwest corners, the roof-top parapet wall with arched openings along the top of the west wall, and the curved-topped, buttress-type, wing walls with arched openings on the west elevation.

The original arched, four-panel, wood garage doors are located on the facade, but the garage has been converted into a modern bedroom. A brick fireplace chimney is located on the east elevation and a smaller brick chimney is situated on the west elevation.

The house has no foundation, but the current owner reports that there is a trap door in her bedroom (now covered with carpeting) that leads down to a square, excavated area approximately 8'-deep that is lined with cement block. The original purpose of this space is not known.

18. continued

The interior of the house features a living room, dining room, kitchen and bathroom. A third bedroom has been created out of the original garage space. The northeast corner of the living room incorporates the additional space of the exterior 2-story square tower into its floor plan. The tower opens into the living room and it is here that the living room ceiling extends up 15′ into the upper section of the tower. The interior walls are of rough stucco and there is a brick fireplace in the living room. The current owner reported that she uncovered original "kitchen-type" colors of the 1920s-′30s when she stripped wall paper off of the interior walls.

The original lot was twice as wide when the house was built. It continued in this configuration into the 1980s when the property was subdivided and the house to the west was constructed. According to neighbor Margaret Bernatz, who has lived at #109 Florida Ave.for 52 years, there was originally a big lawn with flowers and two large trees, as well as a walkway that led to a fish pond at the rear of the house. A 1991 newspaper article notes that the original owner, Mr. Tubbs, also placed soldier figures around the house and had a moat or pond dug in the back yard and stocked with fish.

Two decorative brick walls are located on the site. At southwest corner of the house is a 1/2-story vertical brick wall with open arch in the center. A waist-high crenelated brick wall extends from the east elevation to the property line. Both walls are c. 3′-5′ in length and are more decorative than utilitarian.

20. Built c. 1924-1930, this house is architecturally significant as a distinctive example of early 20th-century Spanish Eclectic domestic architecture in the town of Greece. With its unique appearance, it has no known counterpart in either the Town of Greece or anywhere else in Monroe County.

Domestic buildings of Spanish precedent built before about 1920 are generally free adaptations in the Mission style. It was not until the Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego in 1915, the precise imitation of more elaborate Spanish prototypes received wide attention. Inspired by the wide publicity given the exposition, other fashionable architects soon began to look directly to Spain for source material. Although they referred to this style as "Spanish

20. continued

Colonial," it is now referred to as Spanish Eclectic because of its broad roots. The style reached its apex during the 1920s and early 1930s and passed rapidly from favor during the 1940s.

Spanish Eclectic is most common in the southwestern states, particularly California, Arizona, Texas and in Florida, all regions where original Spanish Colonial building occurred and continued into the 19th century. Landmark houses in this style are rare outside of Florida and the Southwest, but scattered vernacular examples are found in suburban developments throughout the country. The house at 98 Florida Avenue is such an example. Certainly, it is ironic that this southern style, so popular in the state of Florida, is located here in the town of Greece on a road that is named "Florida Avenue!"

The many details characteristic of the Spanish Eclectic style that are shown on this house include the stucco exterior, flat roof, towers, arched decorative openings and arched parapet wall. About 10 percent of Spanish Eclectic houses have flat roofs with parapeted walls. This sub-type, loosely based on flat-roofed Spanish prototypes, resembles the Pueblo Revival house. The two "buttress-type" wing walls on the west elevation are both distinctive and whimsical; buttresses were originally structural elements, yet these examples are strictly decorative. Other decorative elements are the stucco balustrade on the west side of the roof and the small brick walls at the east side and southeast corners of the house.

The precise date of construction for this house has not been determined. The 1924 map shows all of the lots laid out on this south side of the street, but no buildings had been built. This lot had the street number of #84. In the 1930 suburban directory, the address of "98 Florida Ave." is first shown with John H. and Jennie Tubb as owner/residents. Mr. Tubb is listed as a maintenance man. The Tubbs continued at this address through the late 1950s.

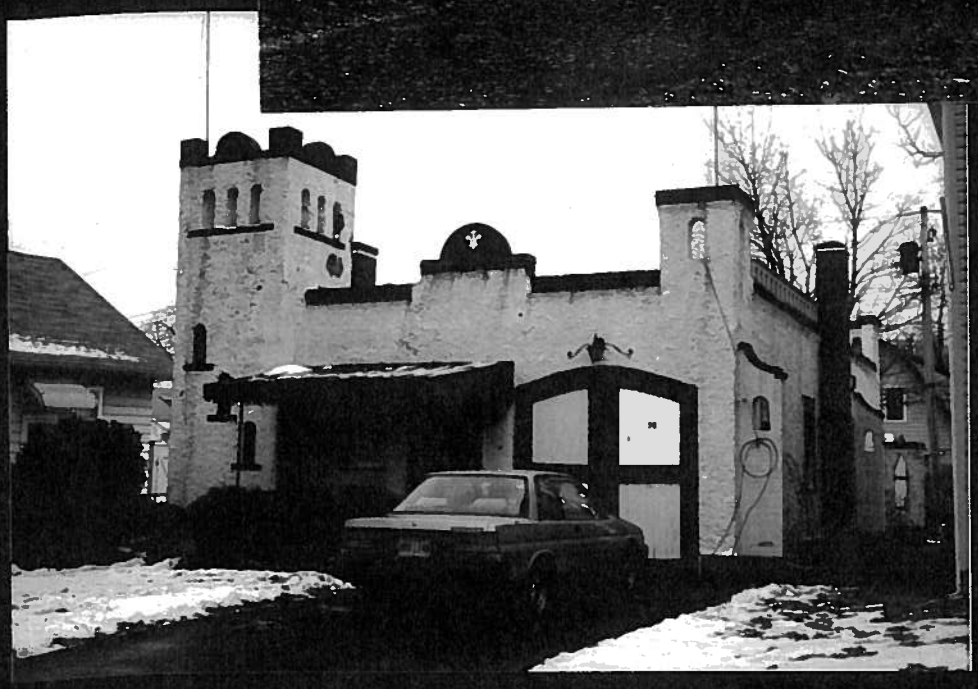
The 1959 county map shows this area as "Oak Openings Part 60-22." The house is situated on a 40'-lot with the adjacent 40'-lot to the west still open and undeveloped. The placement of this house on its site is unique on the street. All of the other residences are located closer to the front

20. continued

sidewalk and have garages at the rear of the property. This house has no outbuildings.

By 1963 Mr. & Mrs. Harold E. Graham are listed as owners. Mr. Graham was a dispatcher for Norwalk Truck Lines. By 1984, Walter Teall and his sister, Linda resided here; they continued here into the early 1990s.

A 1991 newspaper article quotes Alfred Bowers, a 61-year resident of this street, who noted that this street was originally to be named "Miller Street," due to the many Millers (all relations) who lived here. However, the street was named "Florida Avenue" instead. Other neighborhood information cites that the original owner of this house was from Florida, thus one possibility for selecting this unique style of architecture for the house (have not been able to confirm this information).

Surrounded by frame, 1-1/2-story houses, the Spanish Eclectic style residence at 98 Florida Avenue is a unique building in the community.

21. Bibliography listed in final report; interviews with owner, Jill M. Weber and neighbor, Margaret Bernatz, 1/1995.