

## REPORT TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

**FROM:** Bruce A. Knight, Planning Director

**DATE:** August 27, 1999

**SUBJECT:** Case No. HPC 98-017: Application for Landmark Designation for  
305 West University Avenue – The Parkview

**A. Introduction:** The Historic Preservation Commission is requested to consider the nomination of the property at 305 West University Avenue for designation as a Landmark. The Commission is requested to make a determination on the extent to which the application meets the designation criteria from Section 37-491 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**B. Recommended Action:** Staff recommends Alternative 1. Staff feels the application meets three of the criteria for designation and is therefore eligible for designation as a Landmark:

**C. Background:**

Applicant: Kevin Phillips, President, Parkview Building Corporation  
Owner: Parkview Building Corporation  
Location: 305 West University Avenue

*a. Description of Property:* Built in 1925, the property is a 3-story apartment building containing six units, 2 per floor. A raised basement adds to the height and stature of the building. The building is symmetrical in design on the exterior. Interior layout of the building is basically symmetrical, but with some minor variations among the units.

The building is of brick construction with concrete used for windowsills, horizontal detailing, framing around the main entry door, and along the castlitions on the roofline. The roof is flat. The castlated parapet on the front facade is one of the distinguishing features of the building.

Semi-octagonal bays rise the entire height of the building. Except for the front bays, most windows on the building are double-hung with a 6-over-1 divided light windowpane configuration. Windows in the center of the building (which light the stairwell) are also 6-over-1 configuration, but have divided light transoms. Windows in the front bays are a combination of casement and double-hung windows with 8 divided lights. Originally, the windows in the bays were casements. Some have been replaced with double-hung or awning type windows.

*b. Comprehensive Plan and In-Town Neighborhood Plan:* The Comprehensive Plan recognizes historic preservation as a tool for achieving healthy neighborhoods and commercial areas. The Plan encourages the preservation of buildings that have historical and architectural significance as a means of promoting visual environments of high aesthetic quality and variety. The In-Town Neighborhood Plan supports the creation of historic districts which “reinforce Neighborhood

Plan objectives relative to the conservation and preservation of significant structures within the area”.

The Parkview has both historic and architectural significance to the community and contributes to the aesthetic quality of the West Side Park environment and the surrounding neighborhood. The designation of this property would therefore be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the In-town Neighborhood Plan.

**D. Alternatives:**

1. Determine this application meets at least one criterion for designation, make findings to this effect, and nominate the property for Landmark designation.
2. Determine that additional information is required in order to make a finding on **at least** one criteria for designation, identify the information, and continue the case until the next regular scheduled meeting of the Commission.
3. Determine this application does not meet any criteria for designation, make findings to this effect on all criteria, and deny the application.

**E. Discussion of Alternatives:** Alternative 1 should be chosen if the Commission determines that the application meets **at least** one of the criteria listed in the *Zoning Ordinance, Section 37-491 - Criteria for Designation of Landmarks* and can be nominated. this alternative is chosen, the Commission should make a finding on each applicable criteria and include reasons for the finding (or adopt the findings attached to this report) and nominate the property for designation.

The applicant states the property meets the following criteria from Section 37-491 of the *Zoning Ordinance* as follows:

***(b) The property is associated with an important person or event in national, state or local history.***

The applicant states that two of the original residents (Albert Eisner and Robert Zuppke) of the building have significance in local history.

- (1) Albert Eisner founded the local Eisner Grocery chain. The chain eventually merged with Jewel Foods. While this connection would likely support this criterion, Staff feels that the application could benefit with additional research and supporting arguments on the significance of the Eisner Grocery chain in Champaign.
- (2) Robert Zuppke was the Coach of the Illini football team at the time a major fundraising effort was undertaken for the construction of the current football stadium. Memorial Stadium, named in honor of the Illini who lost their lives during World War I, was dedicated in 1924. Coach Zuppke coached for 28 years at the University of Illinois and took the team

to three national championships. The Stadium was renamed Zuppke Field in 1966 in his honor. Coach Zuppke is a well-known figure at University of Illinois and therefore Champaign history.

Staff has referenced only the association with Robert Zuppke in the Finding of Fact (Attachment B) as this association has been developed to a greater extent than the importance of Albert Eisner within the application.

***(e) The property is identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.***

Overlooking West Side Park, the Parkview has always had a prominent location. Its architecture also makes the building stand out to both users of the Park and those that pass by on University Avenue and State Street.

***(f) The property is one of the few remaining examples of a particular architectural style or use, or is an example, which clearly represents a major architectural style, and has undergone little or no alteration since its construction.***

The applicant considers the building to be Gothic Revival in style based on the castellated front parapet, prominent full height semi-octagonal bays, and arched main entry. Staff feels that the building is an eclectic mix of revival styles. Being a mix of styles rather than a pure style does not necessarily reduce the significance of the property. The castellations are not a common feature in any one-revival style however; the casement windows and flattened arch entrance are more common in Tudor Revival style. The combination of architectural elements on this property suggests that the building should simply be classified as an 'eclectic revival style'.

The period of construction of the Parkview coincides with the time period when prominent residences were built in one of a variety of revival styles. English, French, Spanish, and Italian revival styles were popular styles for homes of the wealthy in the period following World War I. Known as period houses, the recreation of these styles is known to be a distinctive architectural development that was basically an American trend<sup>1</sup>. It is likely that the architect of the Parkview incorporated the attractive elements of various revival styles to create a multi-family residence of quality and prominence for its owners.

Alternative 2 should be chosen if the Commission needs further information before making a final decision. If this alternative is chosen, the Commission should identify the information needed and continue the case to the next scheduled meeting of the Commission.

Alternative 3 should be chosen if the Commission feels the application does not meet any of the criteria for designation. If this alternative is chosen, the Commission should make findings to this effect on all criteria, include reasons for the findings, and deny the application for nomination.

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<sup>1</sup> Poppeliers, Chambers, and Schwartz, 1983. What Style is it? A guide to American Architecture, John Wiley & Sons, New York

**F. Budget and Staffing Impact:** If the property is designated as a Landmark, staff time will be required to review any applications for exterior alterations.

Prepared by:



Christine Newbold  
Planner II

CN:mlm

Attachment: A - Proposed Findings  
B - Application for Landmark Designation – 305 West University Avenue

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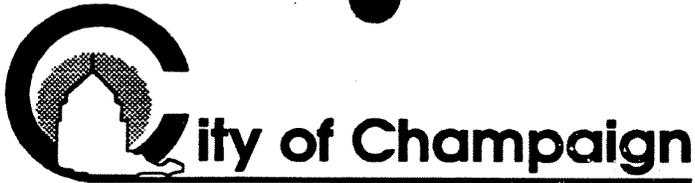
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
PROPOSED FINDING OF FACT - LANDMARK  
305 West University Avenue (The Parkview)**

**FINDINGS OF FACT ON CRITERIA (b) (d) and (f) OF SECTION 37-491 OF THE  
ZONING ORDINANCE:**

*(b) The property is associated with an important person or event in national, state or local history.* Robert Zuppke was the Coach of the Illini football team at the time a major fundraising effort was undertaken for the construction of the current football stadium. Memorial Stadium, named in honor of Illini who lost their lives during the World War I, was dedicated in 1924. Coach Zuppke coached for 28 years at the University of Illinois and took the team to 3 national championships. The Stadium was renamed Zuppke Field in 1966 in his honor. Coach Zuppke is a well-known figure at University of Illinois and therefore Champaign history.

*(e) The property is identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.* Overlooking West Side Park, the Parkview was built in its current location because of the prominence of the location. Its architecture contributes to the prominence of the building and attracts the attention of both users of the Park and those that pass by on University Avenue and State Street.

*(f) The property is one of the few remaining examples of a particular architectural style or use, or is an example, which clearly represents a major architectural style, and has undergone little or no alteration since its construction.* The castellated front parapet, prominent full height semi-octagonal bays, arched main entry, and use of multi-paned casement and double hung windows suggest an eclectic mix of revival styles. The building has undergone very little alteration since its construction. The only changes to the building have been the replacement of some casement windows with double-hung or awning style windows.



For Office Use Only  
RECEIVED  
AUG 10 1999  
PLANNING DEPT.  
Designation  
Case No.: 99-017

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
C/O PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
102 N. NEIL ST.  
CHAMPAIGN, IL 61820  
PHONE: (217) 351-4486  
FAX: (217) 351-6910

## APPLICATION FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION (please print or type):

1. Common street address of Property being nominated:

305 W University Avenue

2. Legal description of property being nominated:

Lot 3 of Block 13 of Farnham, Clark & White's addition  
to Urbana, now a part of the City of Champaign, Champaign  
County Illinois

3. Property Index Number:  
(from tax assessor's roll)

42-20-12-452-003

4. Name of Property Owner:  
(from tax assessor's roll)

Parkview Building Corporation

5. Address of Property Owner:  
(from tax assessor's roll)

Parkview Building Corporation  
% Kevin Phillips, President  
305 W University # 3  
Champaign IL 61820

6. Attach a map showing the boundaries and location of the property.
7. Attach photographs and slides showing the important features of the property or structure.

8. Indicate which of the following criteria apply to the property or structure (check all that apply):

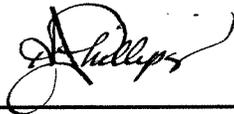
- The property or structure has significant value as part of the historical, cultural, artistic, social ethnic, or other heritage of the nation, state or community
- The property or structure is associated with an important person or event in national, state or local history.
- The property or structure is representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials.
- The property or structure is the notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an era.
- The property or structure is identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.
- The property or structure is one of the few remaining examples of a particular architectural style or use, or an example which clearly represents a major architectural style, and has undergone little or no alteration since its construction.

9. Attach a general statement describing the property and its historical significance and the reasons why it should be designated as a historic landmark. Include a statement describing how the property meets the criteria listed above in #8. At the end of these statements, please list your sources of information, including bibliographic references.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Additional detailed information and photographs to support this nomination may be required if the Historic Preservation Commission finds that the property merits consideration.

**10. Please provide the following applicant information.**

APPLICANTS NAME: Kevin Phillips PHONE(day): 351-4429  
ADDRESS: 305 W University # 3 CITY: Champaign IL  
ZIP CODE: 61820

APPLICANT SIGNATURE:  DATE: August 6, 1999

Applications must be received in the Planning Department three weeks prior to the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting for consideration at that next meeting.

The Historic Preservation Commission meets the first Thursday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

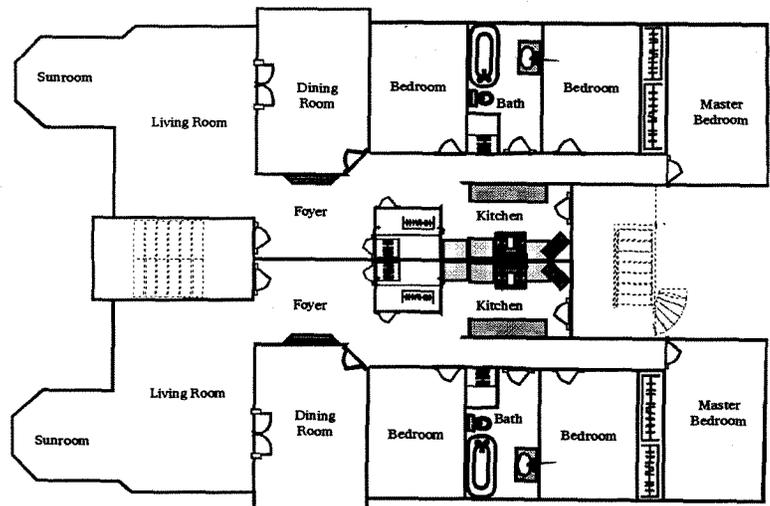


the Parkview  
305 West University  
Champaign, Illinois  
61820

## Parkview Building Historic Preservation Nomination

The Parkview Building Corporation was formed on October 13, 1924 in order to construct the current owner-occupied apartment building. Now a form of property ownership uncommon in Champaign, the Co-op form of property ownership was once much more prevalent, and is still very common in large cities. In a co-op, the entire building is owned by the corporation, whose shareholders are comprised of the owner-occupants of the building. Much more common today is the condominium form of ownership, but the co-op style realistically reflects the fact that the owner-occupants share in the life of the building. Only 9 of the old co-op apartment buildings built before WW II are still co-ops. During the last half of this century, most apartments have been constructed for transient rental occupancy, but this building reflects another approach to urban life, where flats are aimed at permanent owner occupants. An unusual feature of the Parkview, though not entirely unique, is that the original owner occupants formed the Parkview Corporation before the land was purchased or the building was built, rather than its having been built by an investor and sold off to the owners who come to comprise the Board after the building is done.

At the first meeting of the Board, on October 16, 1924, the stockholders agreed to purchase Lot 3 of block 13 of Farnham, Clark, and White's addition to Urbana, now a part of the City of Champaign, from Josephine Cresap Hensen. The board further accepted a contract from the Glenn W. North Company and the North-Raffin Construction Company for the construction of the apartment building. On January 19, 1925, at the stockholders meeting "it appeared that Mr. Albert Eisner, Robt' C. Zupke, and Jesse A Miller had decided to individually add a room to the rear of each of their apartments and the necessary foundation walls were already installed." The board decided to add the same room to the apartments on the other side of the building, and "that the method of financing same be determined at a later date." This began the life of one of Champaign's most recognizable co-operative apartment buildings overlooking West Side Park, which in 1925 was almost



precisely in the geographical center of Champaign.

The building is constructed in a style very common to urban apartments, two sets of linear apartments three units tall share a common wall, in this way every room has external windows. The rear of the building consists of the external rooms of the units, which extend for some distance behind the center of the building, creating a courtyard. Together with the garage to the rear, this creates a private outdoor space for the common use of the residents.

The cross-section above is based on one unit, actually as this building was built for 6 individual owners and as each owner has always had internal control of their unit, there are some minor differences between units, but the basic layout is similar. A common design element for urban townhomes of the era is a sunroom to the front, each apartment has a 9x12 sunroom overlooking West Side Park, as well as a view of the park from the living room.

The building is basically Gothic Revival of the English Medieval subschool in form, with the roofline being partly castellated. Castellations were more common in public buildings, but as a 6-unit brick apartment building the Parkview is of sufficient bulk to warrant this treatment. The sunrooms in the front are semi-octagonal in shape, thereby mimicking the parapets common to this style. While the windows are all rectangular in shape, the front door jamb has an arched shape common to the style, and all windows and doors (excepting those facing the rear and the courtyard) have concrete sills. The windows in the parapet sunrooms are narrow casements with 4 x 2 panes of glass, while those in the rest of the building are double-hung with 2 x 3 pane split tops, and single panes on the bottom.

While the exterior of the building was Gothic Revival, the interior was modern 1925 convenient. The units differ slightly with interior door layout and details, but each was originally equipped with bathrooms featuring exposed chromed piping, coming up through the floor interior to the bathtubs in order to avoid exterior walls. The building was classified as fireproof, meaning that the floors separating the units are of substantial cast concrete, and the wall dividing the units on each floor is also thick concrete. The building featured central heating, but each unit originally also had a functional ornamental fireplace.

The first occupancy of the building was in August of the following year, 1925, when it was complete enough for occupancy, though work continued for a few months on details.

The original owners of the building were :

Apt 1: Jesse A. Miller

- Apt 2: Albert Eisner, Sr, founder of the Eisner Grocery chain
- Apt 3: Elizabeth W. Stoltey, a Christian Science practitioner
- Apt 4: Robert Zuppke, coach of the Fighting Illini football team in the days of Red Grange, and for whom the field itself, (Zuppke field) is named.
- Apt 5: Darwin Kirby, physician & surgeon
- Apt 6: Vernon T. Ferris, a commercial travel agent.

In 75 years, the residents of the building have turned over several times, but frequently residents live in these old buildings for very long periods. About 9 years after Albert Eisner, Sr. moved into the building, he passed away, and his apartment was purchased by Edward F. Hegenbart, who had begun his career as a butcher for Mr. Eisner. By this time Mr. Hegenbart had established his own grocery store at 118 W. Church. Albert & his wife Nellie raised their family there, including their daughter Helen. Helen married and moved away, but returned to nurse her father in his old age. Helen still lives in apartment #2. I include this story, which is unremarkable in detached single-family homes, to demonstrate that co-op townhomes are often treated much more like family homes than outsiders would otherwise presume, often staying in the family. Ken & Marianne Kellerhals, who live in apartment #4, obtained their apartment thru the estate of Marianne's uncle, who had purchased the apartment in 1978 from the estate of Coach Zuppke.

In summary, the Parkview Building Corporation proudly places its building before the Champaign Historical Preservation Commission in nomination for Historic Landmark Status based upon the following 3 criteria:

**B - Associated with an important person or event in national, state, or local history:**

Two of the original owner-occupants of the Parkview are persons whose names are instantly recognizable to persons familiar with local history, Albert Eisner and Robert Zuppke.

The Eisner Grocery chain, which later merged with Jewel Foods, was founded in Champaign by Albert Eisner, who started his career as an independent Piggly-Wiggly franchisee. He struck off on his own and founded his own store, which became a chain, Eisner's, which merged much later with Jewel Foods to become a major midwestern grocery store chain.

Robert Zuppke was the Coach of the Illini football team when he accompanied George Huff, who was the

UI athletic director, on a cross-country fundraising effort, contacting alumni clubs across the United States in order to fund Memorial Stadium, soliciting funds from alumni such as Avery Brundage. During the dedication game on October 18, 1924, which dedicated the stadium to the 182 Illini who lost their lives during WWI, Harold "Red" Grange scored his historic 4 touchdowns in the first 12 minutes of the game, earning him his nickname as the Galloping Ghost, and showing off our new field on newsreels across the country Coach Zuppke took Illinois to 3 national championships, in 1919-1920, 1923-1924, and 1927-1928, in spite of his opposition to scholarships for football players. Coach Zuppke retired in 1941, following 28 years of coaching the Illinois Football Team. The field was renamed Zuppke Field in his honor in 1966, at the Dad's Day Football Game.

**E - Identifiable as a familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics:** Like two previously designated buildings, the Mattis and Trevitt homes, the Parkview sits on West Side Park. The Parkview is at the southeast corner of the park on University Avenue, and its prominence is emphasized by the conversion of University from one way to two way traffic at State, westbound traffic is stopped at the light at State and sent South to Springfield Avenue.

**F - One of the few remaining examples of a particular architectural style or use, or is an example which clearly represents a major architectural style, and has undergone little or no alteration since its construction:** Only 9 of the prewar co-ops remain as co-operative apartment buildings in Champaign (the Avalon, the Cambridge, the Dodson, the Eldridge, the Glenn, the Hawthorne, the Oxford, the Pembroke and the Parkview) remain as co-op apartments. As an apartment building built in the Gothic Revival of the English Medieval school form, with castellated parapets and semi-octagonal sunroom bays, the Parkview is an excellent example of its form, which is essentially unchanged since its construction in 1924.

For the reasons listed above, the Board of the Parkview Building Corporation respectfully requests that the Historic Preservation Commission, and subsequently the Plan Commission and the Champaign City Council designate our home at 305 West University Avenue as an Historic Landmark.

Sincerely,



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President, Parkview Building Corporation

Sources:

Parkview incorporation papers and minutes from the first 25 years of meetings, interviews of residents Ken & Marianne Kehrhals, Champaign & Urbana City Directories, 1935, 1938, 1940, 1948, Flanigan-Pearson Co., Comsilk and Chaff of Champaign County, Richard Morgan, and A Commemorative History of Champaign County, Illinois 1833-1983, Baker & Miller

Supplement 1 to the nomination of 305 W. University as a Landmark Building in Champaign

Excerpted and summarized from *A Field Guide to American Houses*, by Virginia & Lee McAlester and *What Style is It?* by Poppeliers, Chambers, & Schwartz.

## Gothic Revival

The Gothic Revival style began in England in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, but really only got a foothold in the United States in the 1830's. Writers such as Sir Walter Scott whetted the public's appetite for things romantic, and the Gothic style, with its ornamentation less formal and more fanciful than the Greek Revival Style which proceeded it, fitted the bill nicely.

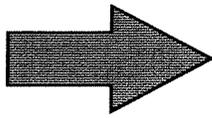
One subtype of the Gothic Revival Style, which amounts to about 5% of Gothic Revival Homes, involves a design based on English Medieval Models, and features flat roofs with castellated parapets.

Doors and windows often display a distinctive decorative crown, this crown is on the front door of the Parkview.

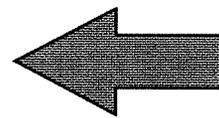
While the popularity of the Gothic Revival Style waned in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the influence of the style endured well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially in public and religious buildings.

# Photos of the Parkview

As seen from traffic  
passing by on  
University Avenue



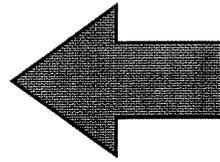
As seen from  
West Side Park



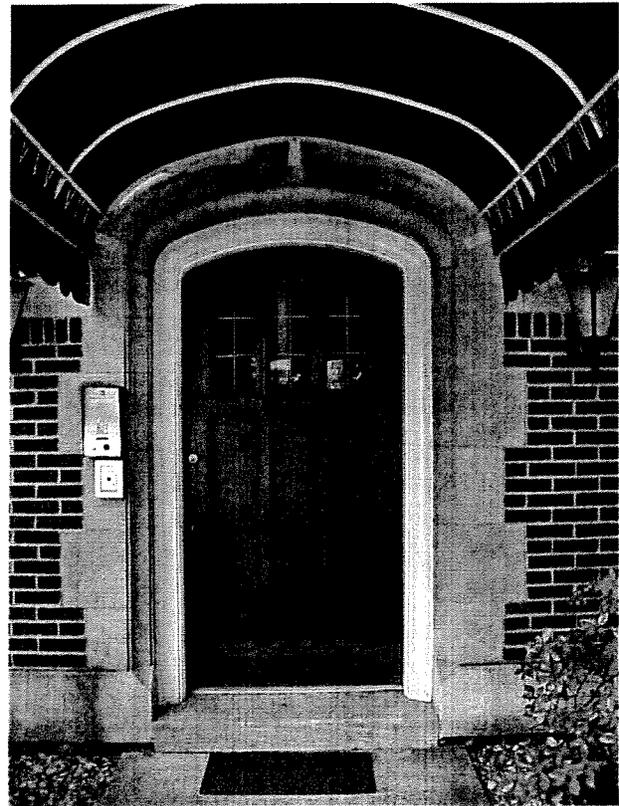
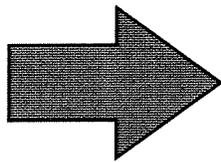
Detail Photos of the Parkview  
Front door



As seen from sidewalk  
showing door and window details



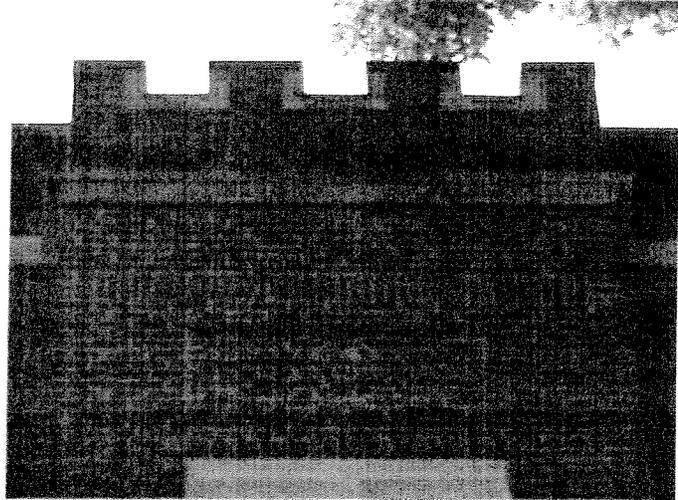
Front door closeup  
showing door details - note arched shape  
and quoins surrounding the door.  
Quoins are usually found only in the  
English Medieval subschool of the  
Gothic Revival Style



# Detail Photos of the Parkview Castellation & Parapet Sunrooms



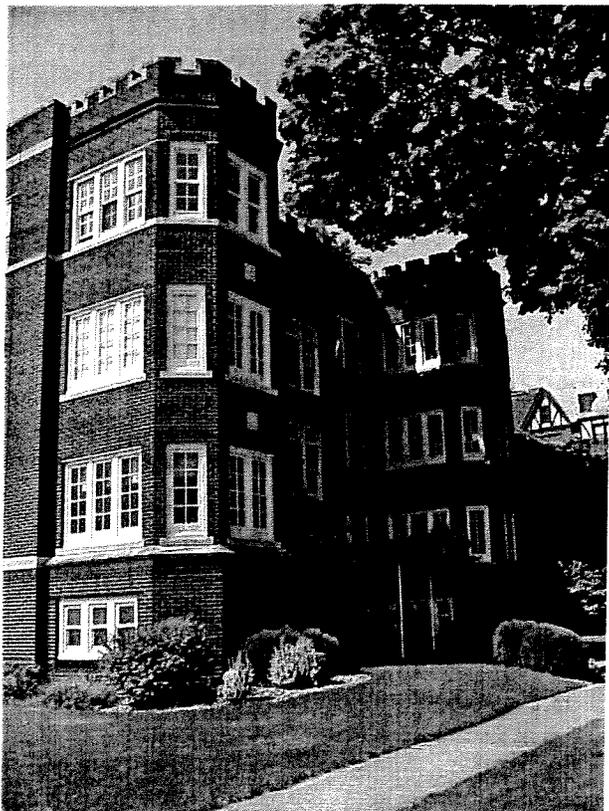
North East parapet



Center Castellation



View of front castellation  
from North East.  
Also shows concrete sills



Looking up & to the right  
from the entryway sidewalk



Supplement to the nomination of 305 W. University as a Landmark Building in Champaign

Excerpt from an article by Jim Fay, Ph.D.

The expression "Illiniwek" was first used in conjunction with the University of Illinois by football coach Bob Zuppke in the mid 1920's. Zup was a philosopher and historian by training and inclination, and he was intrigued by the concept the Illini peoples held about their identity and aspirations. They spoke a dialect of the Algonquin language and used the term "Illiniwek" to refer to the complete human being -- the strong, agile human body; the unfettered human intellect; the indomitable human spirit.

These days it would be easy to dismiss Zup's point as so much sports hyperbole, but that was not the case. Zup was not given to hyperbole. Although he won three national championships while at Illinois, he was constantly under criticism for his reluctance or refusal to offer scholarships or to tout the athletic program. Zup thought aggressive recruiting or "proselytizing" would kill the game,(1) and, for all intents and purposes, his principles eventually cost him his job.

Zup had an extraordinary football mind and was instrumental in the development of many of the standard elements of modern football such as the spiral pass and the huddle, which he showcased in the 1926 national championship game. But he strongly believed the essential element of football lie not in the strategies or the size or strength of the team, but in the character of the men on the team.

Zup's respect for the game rubbed off on his players. When Red Grange graduated from Illinois, he had serious doubts about the propriety of a man receiving money to play football even after his college playing days. A man whom he greatly admired finally persuaded him that being a professional football player need not be an unseemly activity for a man. The man who persuaded him was a feisty end who had played for the Illini some years before, George Hallas.(2)

At any rate, although Zuppke was enormously admired on campus, few people took note of his observations about the concept of Illiniwek. One man who did pursue the concept was the Assistant Director of Bands, Ray Dvorak.