



# NEW HISTORY

## EVALUATION OF NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES ELIGIBILITY OF THE WINDEGO PARK AUDITORIUM



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November of 2020, the City of Anoka hired New History to evaluate the continued National Register of Historic Places eligibility of the Windego Park Auditorium. The Windego Park Auditorium was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in February of 1980 and is considered historically significant for its design and its role as a community-gathering place. At the time of the property's designation, a number of key features of the original auditorium had been removed, including:

- The canvas awning system
- The ticket booth
- Light fixtures and railings
- Dressing rooms
- A sense of the location of the stage

The National Register of Historic Places nomination is quite clear about the condition of the site at the time of listing, noting that “features of the original design have either been destroyed or have deteriorated.”<sup>1</sup> With a full understanding of the condition of the site, the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Minnesota State Review Board, and the National Park Service chose to list the property in the NRHP. Further, in 1984, the SHPO reaffirmed this decision in response to a request from the City of Anoka to remove the property from the NRHP.

The authors of this report compared the historic integrity of the site at the time of listing to the conditions of the site today and determined that, between 1980 and the present, the property has not experienced a loss of qualities that caused it to be originally listed in the National Register.

*Federal Regulations, CFR 36, Chapter 1, Part 60, Section 60.15* defines the grounds for removing a property from the National Register of Historic Places. These regulations state that properties listed in the National Register prior to December 13, 1980 may only be removed from the National Register on the grounds that “the property has ceased to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register because the qualities which caused it to be originally listed have been lost or destroyed, or such qualities were lost subsequent to nomination and prior to listing.”<sup>2</sup>

New History confirmed its assessment of integrity of the Windego Park Auditorium in conjunction with the above statute with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office; the SHPO concurred that the auditorium has not experienced a loss of qualities that led to listing in 1980 and that the auditorium remains eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

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<sup>1</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Windego Park Auditorium/Open Air Theater, Anoka, Anoka County, Minnesota, National Register #80001934.

## METHODOLOGY

All work for this project was conducted in accordance with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office's *Historic and Architectural Survey Manual* (June 2017), and the National Park Service's *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

The Principal Investigator meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards in History and Architectural History. Additional report authors meet the Secretary of the Interior's Qualification Standards in History.

New History's scope of work was to confirm whether the Windego Park Auditorium remains eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

In order to evaluate NRHP eligibility of the site, New History conducted a site visit to assess current conditions on November 25, 2020. Archival research was completed through online repositories, including the Minnesota Historical Society Gale Family Library, the Minnesota Historical Society State Archives, the Hennepin County Library James K. Hosmer Special Collections, the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, and the University of Minnesota.

As part of the evaluation of National Register of Historic Places eligibility, New History reviewed Federal Regulations, CFR 36, Chapter 1, Part 60, Section 60.15, and corresponded with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office.

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Windego Park Auditorium is located on the west bank of the Rum River, near the historic downtown of the City of Anoka. The auditorium was constructed in 1914 and, when it opened, it could seat 1,600 people on the curved, reinforced concrete, stadium-style seating steps that are built into the hillside on the western boundary of the site; today the concrete seating steps show signs of deterioration including large cracks, weeds and overgrowth. The seating terminates at a concrete and turf orchestra pit; between the orchestra pit and the Rum River a large grassy lawn is located where there was once a grass covered stage.

In 1914, the seventeen curved steps were covered with “a colorful retractable awning system designed to protect patrons from inclement weather.” The back wall of the site, which is now bordered by a public sidewalk, was marked by iron railings and “originally included a box office, entrance doors, and a projection booth” (Figure 1). The orchestra pit sat above dressing rooms and storage space

The awning system, box office, entrance doors, projection booth, and site lighting were all removed by the time that the Windego Park Auditorium was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.<sup>3</sup>



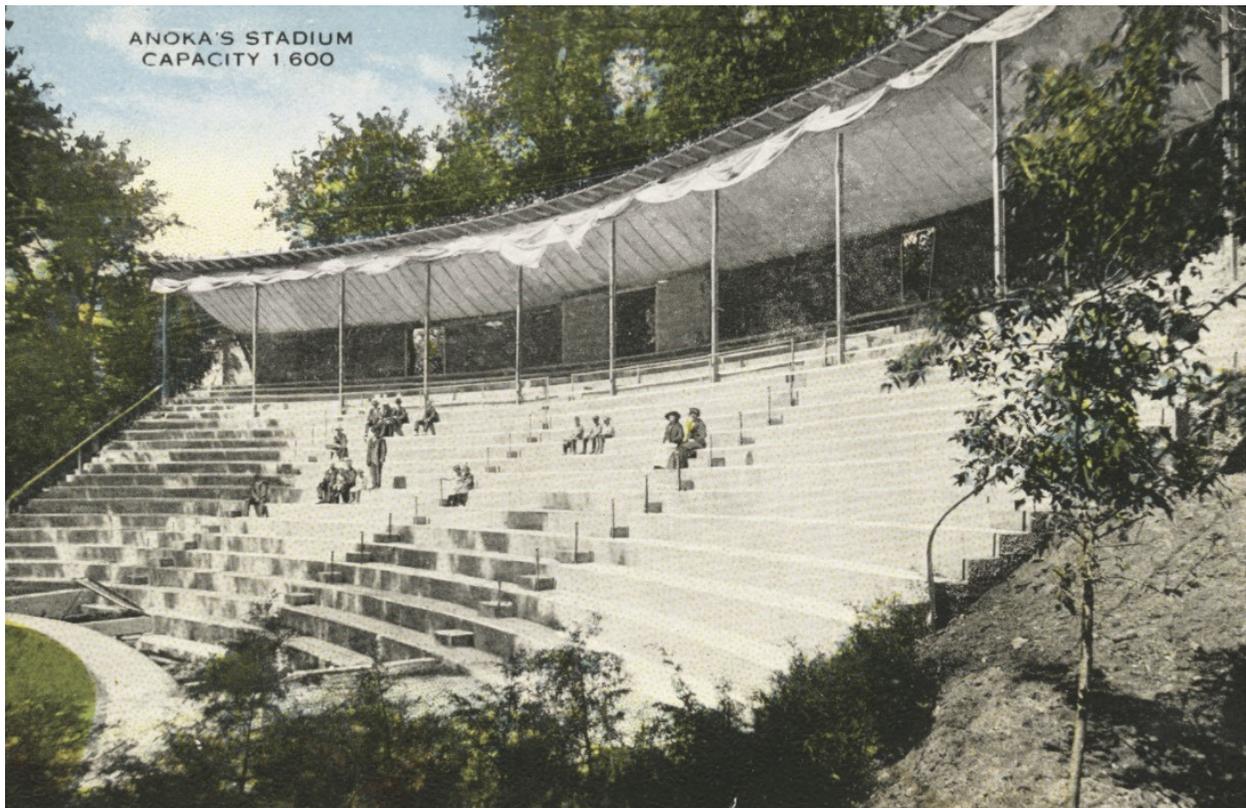
Figure 1. "Amphitheater, Anoka, Minn," courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

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<sup>3</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Anoka County, Anoka, Windego Park Auditorium.

## HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Windego Park Auditorium was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in February of 1980 and is considered historically significant for its design and its role as a community-gathering place. The auditorium was designed by the famed Minneapolis-based Prairie School architectural firm, Purcell & Elmslie, in collaboration with noted musical educator Thaddeus Giddings. Originally known as the Anoka “Open Air Auditorium,” and often called “Anoka’s Stadium” or the “Anoka Ampitheater,” the outdoor amphitheater was formally the “Eastman Stadium” shortly after it opened to the public. It bore this name until the 1940s, when it was christened the “Windego Park Auditorium,” the name that it still bears today.



**Figure 2. "Anoka's Stadium, Capacity 1,600," c. 1914, Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.**

The plan for the auditorium was developed and designed by an unlikely pair of long-time collaborators – the lauded Prairie School architectural firm of Purcell & Elmslie and music educator Thaddeus Giddings. Purcell and Giddings had met at the turn of the twentieth century in Oak Park, Illinois, where Giddings was working as a music teacher in the Oak Park schools and Purcell was a young architect.<sup>4</sup> Purcell had reached out to Giddings to discuss the “Kitchenette” plans that Giddings had developed and was selling in *Everybody’s Magazine*.<sup>5</sup> Giddings had developed the “kitchenette” when he

<sup>4</sup> William Gray Purcell, “John H. Kahler Residence Parabiography,” [https://organica.org/pejn18A\\_1.htm](https://organica.org/pejn18A_1.htm)

<sup>5</sup> Thaddeus Giddings, “They Used to Make Fun of Anoka!,” *Northwest Architect* 5 No. 5, 1941.

realized that his mother traveled more than a mile during the process of baking cookies in her Anoka farmhouse kitchen. His design was “a 6 ft. by 9 ft. sort of food-making laboratory...along the lines of a ship’s galley or dining car kitchen...”<sup>6</sup> The meeting to discuss the kitchenette design led to a lifetime friendship – and the design of the Windego Park Auditorium.

### *Thaddeus Philander Giddings*

Thaddeus Philander Woodbury Giddings was born in Anoka, Minnesota in 1868. He spent a year studying at the University of Minnesota before he was “asked to leave,” in 1887 and eventually began teaching music in area schools.<sup>7</sup> Giddings taught in Minnesota and Illinois before becoming the Supervisor of Music for the Minneapolis schools in 1910 – a post that he held for 32 years; he also taught at the University of Minnesota and at the MacPhail College of Music (now MacPhail Center for the Performing Arts).<sup>8</sup> In his role as an educator, Giddings wrote over 157 books on musical instruction and was an advocate of learning by doing – he felt that children would learn music by practicing music, not by studying music theory. Consequently, his teaching techniques were innovative and he was a strong advocate for making arts education and arts programming available to all students.<sup>9</sup>

While teaching in Minneapolis, Giddings returned to live in his home town of Anoka. In 1914, he “decided to do something in the way of creative entertainment for his town during the summer...and a Greek theater of concrete, built into a natural hollow in the bank along the shores of the Rum River was the answer.”<sup>10</sup> Giddings sought to create a community theater, where concerts, plays, and other performance could take place. In order to make the theater a reality, he reached out to his old friend, William Gray Purcell, who had relocated to Minneapolis in 1907 to start his own architectural practice.

### *Purcell & Elmslie*

Established in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the firm of Purcell & Elmslie was one of the leading firms in the Prairie School of architecture, a movement dedicated to creating a uniquely American style of architecture that would reflect the principles of American democracy and respond to the fast-paced changes occurring in early twentieth-century American society, culture, and technology.<sup>11</sup> The school’s inception can be traced to Chicago in the late 1890s, but it reached its peak in both quality and quantity of designs in the early 1910s, then declined quickly in popularity after World War I.<sup>12</sup> Essentially, the Prairie School was a regional

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<sup>6</sup> William Gray Purcell, “John H. Kahler Residence Parabiography,” [https://organica.org/pejn18A\\_1.htm](https://organica.org/pejn18A_1.htm)

<sup>7</sup> John Beery, “The Legacy of Maddy and Giddings,” *Music Educators Journal* 79, No. 7 (March, 1993), 36.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> William Gray Purcell, “Open Air Theater for Thaddeum P. Giddings Parabiography,” [https://organica.org/pejn277\\_1.htm](https://organica.org/pejn277_1.htm)

<sup>11</sup> Legler and Korab, *At Home on the Prairie*, 23 – 25; Gebhard, *Purcell and Elmslie: Prairie Progressive Architects*, 53 – 65; Hammons, “Purcell and Elmslie, Architects,” in Conforti, *Minnesota 1900*, 223 – 232; Gebhard, “William Gray Purcell and George Grant Elmslie,” 125 – 127; Olivarez, *Progressive Design in the Midwest*, 27; “Building News of the Week,” *Minneapolis Tribune*, January 27, 1907; Mark Hammons, “Purcell and Elmslie, Architects,” in Conforti, *Minnesota 1900*, 219, 236 – 241; Kennedy, *Historic Homes of Minnesota*, 193; Prairie School, 1893 – 1920,” City of Minneapolis, last updated February 6, 2019, [http://www.minneapolismn.gov/hpc/landmarks/hpc\\_landmarks\\_prairie\\_school](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/hpc/landmarks/hpc_landmarks_prairie_school).

<sup>12</sup> H. Allen Brooks, ed., *Prairie School Architecture: Studies from ‘The Western Architect’* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), ix – x; H. Allen Brooks, *The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwest Contemporaries* (1976; repr., New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), 3, 147.

movement focused on the Midwest, and its most notable architecture can be found in Chicago suburbs and other large midwestern cities, including Minneapolis.<sup>13</sup>

Though the term “Prairie School,” coined by perhaps the school’s most well-known practitioner Frank Lloyd Wright in 1936, did not achieve popularity until the mid-1960s, the name accurately reflects the school’s underlying desire to create an architecture of American democracy by drawing inspiration from the unique landscape of the American prairie. Though members of the Prairie School crafted an architectural expression that could be successfully employed for all building types, they were chiefly concerned with residential architecture, and primarily with the single-family suburban houses of the American middle class. Rather than borrowing their designs from the past, Prairie School architects situated their buildings in their present time and place, designing for the needs and comfort of individual occupants rather than the dictates of historic design formulas. In contrast to the disregard for site that they observed in the architecture of their contemporaries, their homes complemented the environment, with a horizontal emphasis and open interiors that reflected the midwestern prairie. Nature was a key source of inspiration for design, as reflected in the use of natural colors, natural materials, and ornamentation derived from the observation of nature; features such as deep eaves, low terrace walls, and bands of casement windows played with the distinction between indoors and outdoors. Prairie School architects emphasized simple, down-to-earth designs at a human scale, all-encompassing designs that included not only a building’s structure but also its interior decor and exterior landscaping.<sup>14</sup>

A key concept advanced by American architect Louis Sullivan, the de facto philosopher of the Prairie School, and other Prairie architects was the idea of “organic” architecture – according to this view, buildings were expressions of the soul of society and had the potential to be living organisms that were more than the sum of their parts. As art historian Judith A. Barter explains, Sullivan’s famous maxim, “form follows function,” was meant to convey his belief “that architecture should correspond to the example of the natural world where the forms of plants and animals reflected their ability to survive, reproduce, and endure. For Sullivan, and his Prairie School followers, the designs and materials of architecture reflected the meaning or function of the building itself.”<sup>15</sup> Function was not restricted to a building’s practical purpose but also encompassed its spiritual effect. In order to be organic, a building must also be “honest;” in other words, it must present its structure and use materials in a straightforward manner, meet the needs of its occupants, and display a sensitivity to its natural and human environment. Rather than imitating historic styles, buildings should reflect their own times and places. According to this system of thought, ‘honest’ buildings would

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<sup>13</sup> Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred K. Knopf, 1992), 440; Brooks, *The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwest Contemporaries*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwest Contemporaries*, 8, 11; Dixie Legler and Christian Korab, *Prairie Style: Houses and Gardens by Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School* (New York, NY: Archetype Press, 1999), 10 - 12; Legler and Korab, *At Home on the Prairie: The Houses of Purcell & Elmslie*, 14 - 15, 36; Gebhard, *Purcell and Elmslie: Prairie School Architects*, 25; Richard Guy Wilson, “Prairie School Works in the Department of Architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago,” *The Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 21, no. 2 (1995), 94; Brooks, *Prairie School Architecture: Studies from ‘The Western Architect,’* x – xi; Lathrop, “Architecture in Minnesota,” in Conforti, *Minnesota 1900*, 47 – 50. For a thorough explanation of the evolution of the name “Prairie School,” see Brooks, *The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwestern Contemporaries*, 9 – 11.

<sup>15</sup> Judith A. Barter, “The Prairie School and the Decorative Arts,” *The Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 21, no. 2 (1995), 113.

encourage individuals to fully develop their most positive individual traits, thus promoting democracy and creating a new national style appropriate for America.<sup>16</sup>

Though Sullivan is recognized as the Prairie School's philosopher, his own work focused largely on commercial buildings. The expression of Sullivan's philosophy in a new style of residential architecture was accomplished by Frank Lloyd Wright, the widely celebrated figurehead of the Prairie School. Drawing inspiration from Sullivan as well as a diverse range of sources, most of Wright's prairie houses featured a square or cruciform plan, an open floor plan that enveloped a central fireplace, and a spreading massing with horizontal lines. Highly influenced by nature, Wright's structures blurred the distinction between outdoors and indoors and featured natural wood, stone, and brick on both interiors and exteriors.<sup>17</sup> Wright acknowledged the influence of the American prairie on his designs, noting that "the prairie has a beauty of its own and we should recognize and accentuate this natural beauty, its quiet level. Hence gently sloping roofs, low proportions, quiet sky lines, suppressed heavy-set chimneys and sheltering overhangs, low terraces and out-reaching walls sequestering private gardens."<sup>18</sup>

From about 1903 until 1909, the Prairie School was largely defined by Frank Lloyd Wright and his studio of architects in Oak Park, Illinois; however, it was not until Wright left for Europe in the fall of 1909 that the school truly flourished. Between approximately 1910 and 1914, architects such as George Grant Elmslie and William Gray Purcell, Marion Mahoney, Walter Burley Griffin, William E. Drummond, and others –many of whom had trained under Sullivan – developed their own personal expressions of the style, producing the highest quantity and quality of designs. Simultaneously, the movement's geographic scope expanded out from its foundations in Chicago to rural Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin.<sup>19</sup>

When William Gray Purcell left Louis Sullivan's Chicago office and arrived in Minneapolis in 1907, he secured a few architectural commissions with his partner, George Fieck. For two years, Purcell continued to consult with his friend and mentor in Sullivan's office, George Grant Elmslie. Eventually Elmslie left Sullivan's firm and joined Purcell in Minneapolis. It was with the addition of Purcell that the firm truly

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<sup>16</sup> Olivarez, *Progressive Design in the Midwest*, 20; *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Louis Sullivan," last modified August 30, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Louis-Sullivan>; Roth, *American Architecture*, 274; Spencer, *The Prairie School Tradition*, 9; Gebhard, *Purcell and Elmslie: Prairie Progressive Architects*, 22 – 24, 76; Gebhard "William Gray Purcell and George Grant Elmslie," 22 – 23.

<sup>17</sup> Brooks, *Prairie School Architecture: Studies from 'The Western Architect,'* ix; Brooks, *The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwest Contemporaries*, 8, 27 – 77, 88 – 89; Legler and Korab, *Prairie Style: Houses and Gardens by Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School*, 11; James F. O'Gorman, "The Prairie House," in *American Architectural History: A Contemporary Reader*, ed. Keith L. Eggener (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 267 – 276; Spencer, *The Prairie School Tradition*, 9.

The beginnings of the Prairie School can be traced to the late 1890s, when a group of architects at Steinway Hall experimented with various approaches to simplified architecture. Beginning around 1903, Wright helped to solidify a cohesive design approach, inspiring other architects and creating a more consistent expression of the Prairie School.

<sup>18</sup> Cited in "Prairie School Style, 1900 – 1920," Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, last modified August 26, 2015, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/prairie-school.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwest Contemporaries*, 3, 8, 77 – 147, 198 – 201, 293; Brooks, *Prairie School Architecture: Studies from 'The Western Architect,'* x; Gebhard, "William Gray Purcell and George Grant Elmslie," 29 – 30.

found its footing – within a few years they had “produced banks, churches, residences, court houses, garages, and other types of buildings, all bearing unmistakable characteristics of the Prairie School.”<sup>20</sup>

According to Susan Frost of the Chicago Architecture Center, Prairie School buildings

...celebrate the long, low landscape of the Midwest. Their most defining characteristic is their emphasis on the horizontal rather than the vertical. They spread out over their lots, featuring flat or shallow hipped roof lines, rows of windows, overhanging eaves and bands of stone, wood or brick across the surface. Thin Roman bricks sometimes enhance the effect and cantilevers often extend the horizontal line without vertical support. Even the unwelcome verticals of downspouts are either eliminated or carefully placed. Prairie buildings often include:

- Strong geometry and massing, including large central chimneys
- Brick or stucco exteriors
- Open, asymmetric floor plans
- Connected indoor and outdoor spaces
- Interior wood banding
- Restrained use of applied ornamentation
- Exploration of motifs: one shape or plant form explored through furniture, wood carving, plaster, art glass and other elements within a building<sup>21</sup>

With the start of World War I in 1914, the Prairie School began a rapid decline and Purcell & Elmslie would eventually dissolve their partnership in 1922.<sup>22</sup>

### *The Windego Park Auditorium*

When Thaddeus Giddings had the idea for his open-air theater, his old friend William Gray Purcell was the perfect project partner. The Prairie School’s emphasis on strong geometry, open plans, and connected indoor and outdoor spaces would translate well to an outdoor theater. According to Purcell, “most of the work was done by the citizens, and there is nothing especially exciting about the enterprise, except the matter of covering it against rain.” For Purcell, the greatest design challenge was designing a canvas awning system “wide and long enough to reach from the back of the theater to a point back of the stage, a distance of twenty yards,” to cover the site during summer rainstorms. He was inspired by “the canvas awnings of the Coliseum of ancient Rome,” and considered the colorful awnings the only ornament for the auditorium.

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<sup>20</sup> “Purcell and Elmslie, Architects,” “An Exhibition from the Northwest Architectural Archives,” October, 1976, <https://www.lib.umn.edu/scr/bm/purcell-and-elmslie-architects>

<sup>21</sup> Susan Frost, “Prairie Style,” Chicago Architecture Center, c. 2015, <https://www.architecture.org/learn/resources/architecture-dictionary/entry/prairie-style/>.

<sup>22</sup> Brooks, *Prairie School Architecture: Studies from ‘The Western Architect,’* xi; Legler and Korab, *At Home on the Prairie*, 28; Gebhard, *Purcell and Elmslie: Prairie Progressive Architects*, 151 – 152; Brooks, *The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwestern Contemporaries*, 336 – 348.

The open air theater opened with a performance of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and was used for outdoor concerts, plays, pageants, and movies until 1938.

Over time, the theater fell into disrepair and many features that were critical to its operation, including the canvas awning system, the ticket booth, the projection booth, the dressing rooms, and light fixtures and railings were removed. Similarly, a sense of the stage was lost as the area between the orchestra pit and the Rum River returned to a more natural state.

However, the important role that the auditorium played in Anoka's civic and educational life, and its rarity in the body of Purcell & Elmslie's work allowed the property to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980, despite the removal of these important design and operational elements.

## EVALUATION OF HISTORIC INTEGRITY AND RECOMMENDATION OF NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

The Windego Park Auditorium was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in February of 1980. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places required two major components: 1) significance to American history, and 2) historic integrity – or enough of the original design and materials to tell the story of the Auditorium’s significance. While the standards of documentation required to demonstrate National Register eligibility have changed since 1980, these fundamental components – significance and integrity – remain the cornerstones of the designation process.

As stated in the National Park Service’s *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*,

The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Historic properties either retain integrity (this is, convey their significance) or they do not. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register criteria recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to convey its significance.<sup>23</sup>

The seven aspects of integrity are:

1. **Location:** the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
2. **Design:** the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
3. **Setting:** the physical environment of a historic property
4. **Materials:** the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
5. **Workmanship:** is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
6. **Feeling:** a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
7. **Association:** the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1995), 44.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 44-45.

As demonstrated in the preceding section of this report, the Windego Park Auditorium is undoubtedly historically significant to the City of Anoka. However, many of the historic features that were integral components of the design and essential to the operation of the auditorium have been removed, specifically:

- The canvas awning system
- The ticket booth
- The projection booth
- Light fixtures and railings
- Dressing rooms
- A sense of the stage

Since the property is already listed in the National Register, determining whether the auditorium retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its historic significance and remain eligible for the National Register required comparing the present-day conditions and integrity to the conditions and integrity of the auditorium at the time of its National Register listing.

New History compared the historic integrity of the site in 1980, based on the narrative description of the property, to the historic integrity today, as illustrated in the table below:

Aspect of Integrity	Present in 1980	Present in 2020
Location	X	X
Design		
Setting		
Materials <sup>25</sup>	X	X
Workmanship		
Feeling	X	X
Association	X	X

Between 1980 and the present, the property has not experienced a loss of qualities that caused it to be originally listed in the National Register. In fact, the 1980 nomination does not hide the site’s integrity problems, but deals with them candidly, stating that “features of the original design have either been destroyed or have deteriorated.”<sup>26</sup>

Because the property has not experienced a loss of qualities since its listing in 1980, it remains eligible for the National Register. *Federal Regulations, CFR 36, Chapter 1, Part 60, Section 60.15* defines the

<sup>25</sup> The terraced concrete seating accounts for the integrity of materials at the site.

<sup>26</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Windego Park Auditorium/Open Air Theater, Anoka, Anoka County, Minnesota, National Register #80001934.

grounds for removing a property from the National Register of Historic Places. These regulations state that properties listed in the National Register prior to December 13, 1980 may only be removed from the National Register on the grounds that “the property has ceased to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register because the qualities which caused it to be originally listed have been lost or destroyed, or such qualities were lost subsequent to nomination and prior to listing.”<sup>27</sup>

The SHPO reaffirmed listing in 1984 for this reason, stating,

The Open Air Theater [Windego Park Auditorium] was in a deteriorated condition in 1980 when it was nominated and placed on the National Register. To our knowledge, the essential qualities of the property have not changed since that time to such an extent that the significance of the property has been lost. Therefore, it is our opinion that the property retains its eligibility and that it is not appropriate to remove it from the Register.<sup>28</sup>

Given that the Windego Park Auditorium retains historic integrity that is comparable to the integrity at the time of National Register listing; and given that the property does not meet the standard for removal from the National Register of Historic Places outlined in the federal regulations;<sup>29</sup> New History recommends that the Windego Park Auditorium remains eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

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<sup>28</sup> Letter from Russell W. Fridley to Jerry Dulgar, January 25, 1984, courtesy of the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office.

<sup>29</sup> “...the property has ceased to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register because the qualities which caused it to be originally listed have been lost or destroyed, or such qualities were lost subsequent to nomination and prior to listing.”