

Schenley Farms makes history

POST-GAZETTE

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the Schenley Farms and appear to have won in to have their area design- toric district. City Council to approve the concept.

major thrust behind the ef- s to halt the proposed cons- hotel adjacent to Syria the end result smacks a Pyrrhic victory for the as Civic Association. That originally proposed dis- considerably reduced and include that piece of ground es it encompass any Uni- sburgh property south of st stretch of Bigelow

however, benefits for the l to those already in place aree existing historic dis- an War Streets and Man- Northside and Market own. No major new con- or renovation or demoli- place in the area without a roval by the city's Histor- sion.

district as now consti- no buildings of value for s, and the homes in the re no older than the 20th or Schenley Farms resi- been apprehensive about ig property in their area asion or for spot use, the designation will be a

valuable shield.

The possibility still exists that some of the territory proposed in the original district may be reshaped into an Oakland Civic Institution District to include such buildings as the Syria Mosque, the Pittsburgh Athletic Association, Masonic Temple, the First Baptist Church, the University and City Ministries Building and Clapp Hall and the Music Building of the University of Pittsburgh. In a historic preservation sense, that would make even more sense than the Schenley Farms designation.

There are also reports that some members of the Schenley Farms Civic Association hope to place members on the citizens advisory committee for the proposed institution district as a check against any contemplated hotel near their neighborhood. If the purpose is to be sure the hotel design is in architectural good taste and not out of keeping with the neighborhood, well and good. But if the true purpose is to stop a hotel altogether, that's quite something else.

As the Post-Gazette has said before, historic designations, however worthy, should not be used to block a hotel in that part of Oakland if it can be justified before the City Planning Commission.

With their historic designation, Schenley Farms citizens have a way to prevent encroachment on their turf. They should now cease and desist from trying to encroach across Bigelow onto the turf of others.

Schenley Farms Status OK'd

AP 27 '82

City Council has unanimously approved a resolution designating the Schenley Farms neighborhood in Oakland a historic district.

Although the proposal generated much debate, the final passage of the resolution came during a sparsely attended council meeting yesterday afternoon.

Schenley Farms joins Market Square, the Mexican War Streets on the North Side and Manchester as designated historic districts under a 1979 city ordinance.

That ordinance requires property owners in such a district to submit any proposed exterior alterations to the city Historic Review Commission for approval.

Several Schenley Farms residents told council last week that the designation would ensure preservation of the neighborhood's historical flavor and its turn-of-the-century architectural styles.

In fact, the Schenley Farms Civic Association had argued for designation of a larger area, including the Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh Athletic Association, Masonic Temple and some University of Pittsburgh buildings.

The university and the city school board, however, objected to the plan, saying it would add an unnecessary tier of bureaucratic review to their plans for expansion and renovation in the district.

The newly designated historic district is bounded by Bigelow Boulevard to the south and east, Parkman Avenue to the west and Schenley Farms Terrace to the north.

It includes 129 residential structures and three institutional buildings — the Pennsylvania Historical Society, the 20th Century Club and the Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Hall.

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