

Oakland is named for historic status

Planners recommend designation

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Despite opposition from some property owners, the city Planning Commission voted yesterday to recommend creation of a historic district in Oakland.

The proposed district, known as the Oakland Civic Center, includes some of the city's most architectural-ly noteworthy buildings — the Cathedral of Learning, St. Paul Cathedral, The Carnegie, Carnegie Mellon Research Institute, Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall and Schenley High School.

The area was nominated for historic status by Councilman Jim Ferlo to prevent any more of its landmark structures from being demolished, as Syria Mosque was this fall. The city's Historic Review Commission is to make its recommendation on the nomination Friday, and then the final decision will be up to City Council.

The mosque site wouldn't be included within the proposed district because it is the subject of a separate historic nomination, which council hasn't acted on.

Structures within historic districts can't have exterior changes made,

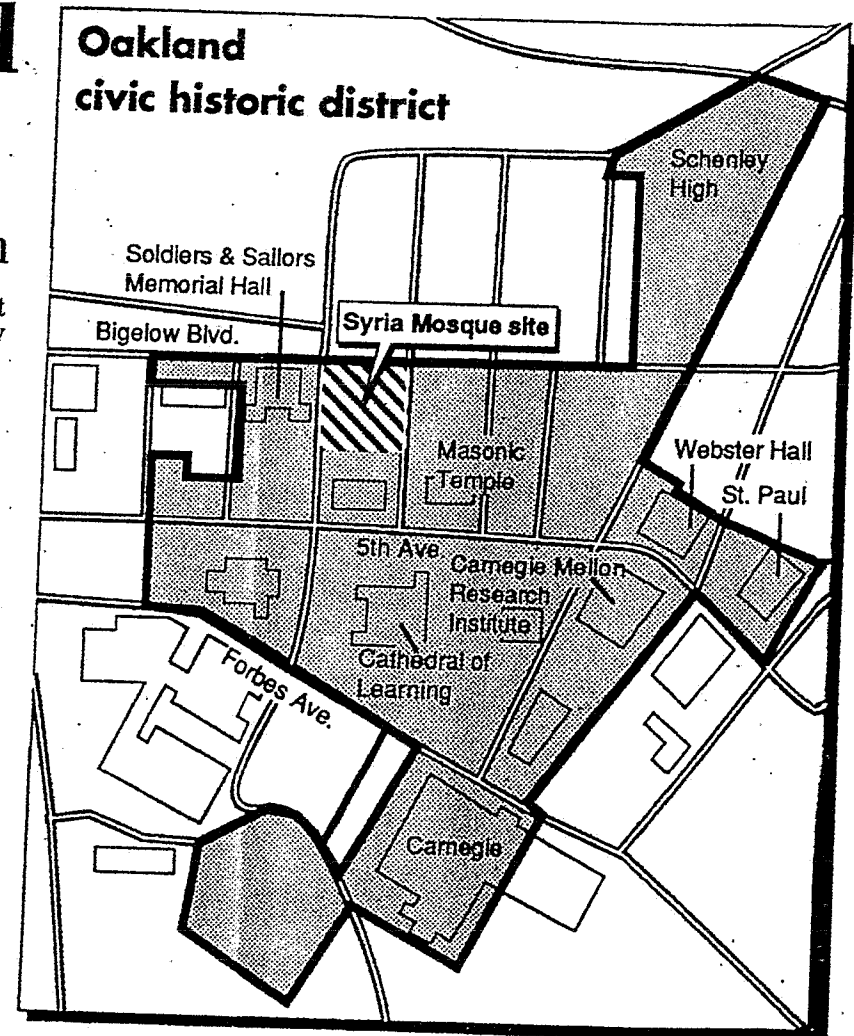
and can't be demolished, without approval from the Historic Review Commission.

Some property owners within the proposed Oakland district, including the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh and National Development Corp., have objected to creation of the district, fearing it could give the city control over their properties. National owns Webster Hall and other property in the area.

The University of Pittsburgh, another major Oakland property owner, supported the district, but with certain conditions. It wanted time limits placed on city approval of renovation projects, 10 days for minor ones and 60 days for larger ones.

If the Oakland historic district is enacted, it would become the eighth such area in the city, along with the Mexican War Streets, Manchester, Allegheny West and Allegheny Commons Parks, all on the North Side; Market Square and Penn-Liberty, both Downtown; and the Schenley Farms area in Oakland.

The Schenley Farms historic district, which is a residential area, is adjacent to the proposed Oakland Civic Center historic district. City



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officials said that both areas were planned in the early 20th century by local architects of the "City Beautiful"

school. The areas were intended to be examples of stately residential and institutional buildings.