



Local Historic Landmark/District Application

City of Peoria Historic Preservation Commission

Property Information:

(The property proposed for designation. For a district, give a location such as 800 block of NE Perry or give the district a name.)

Address: McClure Branch Library, 315 McClure Ave., Peoria, IL 61604

Applicant: (The person/organization applying.)

Name: Peoria Public Library - Ms. Leann Johnson, Director

Company/Neighborhood Association: Peoria Public Library

Address: 107 N. E. Monroe

City: Peoria State: IL ZIP: 61602-1070

Daytime Phone: (309) 497-2000 Email: leannjohnson@ppl.peoria.lib.il.us

Applicant Signature:  Date: 6-24-2014

Additional Required Information:

- Include a map that identifies the boundaries of the property proposed for designation.
- Include labeled, color pictures of each of the properties proposed for designation.
- If you desire to prepare the application on a computer or typewriter, sheets may be attached, but please use the following pages as an outline and indicate all data in the order it is requested on the following pages to maintain consistency. All information is required.

LANDMARKS

For the property to be designated complete the following pages:

DISTRICTS

For each individual property to be designated complete the following pages. Make copies if necessary:

Also provide on a separate sheet and narrative that describes the distinguishing characteristics of the proposed district and setting forth reasons in support of designation. Specifically, it is helpful to the petition to indicate how the area is significant in terms of local or national development methods and trends, local or national individuals/residents, or architectural styles.

The narrative must show how the proposed district meets one or more of the designation criteria (Section 16-38 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance).

Individual Property Information: (The individual property(ies) proposed for designation.)

Address: McClure Branch Library, 315 W. McClure Ave., Peoria, IL Zip Code 61604

Tax ID Number: 14 - 33 - 179- 002

Owner: (Skip this section if the applicant and owner information is the same)

Name: See Applicant Information

Company/Neighborhood Association: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Daytime Phone: (_____) _____ Email: _____

Owner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Does the owner consent to designation? (circle one) **(yes)** (no)

How was the owner contacted? Owner is Applicant

Legal description of the property to be designated:

Virginia Place NW 1/4 SEC 33-9-8E S 127' Lots 6-7-8 BLK 5 Latitude 40.717981

Longitude-89.598199

Physical & Historical Characteristics:

Provide a statement describing the distinguishing characteristics of the property and setting forth reasons in support of designation. ***The written statement must show how the proposed designation meets one or more of the designation criteria (Section 16-38 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance) and address the following items.*** Contributing structures do not need to individually meet one or more criteria. However, they collectively may satisfy one or more of the criteria.

Kindly see attached PowerPoint document which includes detailed written statements
as to why the McClure Branch Library meets criteria 1, 4, 6, 8, and 10 of Section 16-38
of the Historic Preservation Ordinance of the City of Peoria. This PowerPoint also
includes other supplemental supporting information.

DESIGNATION CRITERIA (Section 16-38)

- (a) The historic preservation commission shall upon such investigation as it deems necessary, make a determination as to whether a nominated property, structure or area meets one or more of the following criteria.
1. Its character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, the county, the state or the United States of America deems it historically significant.
 2. Its location as a site of a significant local, county, state or national event.
 3. Its identification with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the city, the state or the nation.
 4. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction or use of indigenous materials.
 5. Its identification as the work of a master building designer, architect or landscape architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, the state or the nation.
 6. Its embodiment of elements of design, detailing, or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant.
 7. Its embodiment of design elements that make it structurally or architecturally innovative.
 8. Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature.
 9. Its character as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure with a high level of integrity or architectural significance.
- (b) Any structure, property or area that meets one or more of the above criteria shall also be suitable for preservation or restoration and have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration.

Filing Instructions and Information:

- 1) Fully completed applications must be received at least 28 days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting to be included on the agenda. Partial or Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- 2) \$50.00 Application fee (Fee is waived if the application is submitted by an approved neighborhood association. Documentation is required that verifies the validity of the association.)
- 3) The first step to designation is preliminary review. The applicant and owners of the property will be notified of the preliminary review. The application will be reviewed at a preliminary review to determine if the proposed designation warrants further discussion for adoption as a local historic landmark. If it is determined that additional review is necessary, the proposal will be heard at a public hearing.
- 4) 15 days prior to the public hearing, the applicant and all properties within 250 radial feet of the subject property will receive notice of the meeting.
- 5) The Historic Preservation Commission has regularly scheduled meetings the fourth Wednesday of each month at City Hall, 419 Fulton St, Room 400, Peoria, IL at 8:30 AM.
- 6) The format for the meeting follows:
 1. Chairperson proceeds with swearing in procedures
 2. Chairperson announces the case
 3. Staff enters case into the record
 - a. Staff presents case
 - b. Staff answers questions from the Commission
 4. Petitioner presents case and answers questions from the Commission
 5. Chairperson opens the meeting to the public
 6. Public comments – Chairperson may ask for response/input from staff and petitioner
 7. Petitioner presents closing statements
 8. Public testimony is closed (No further public comment)
 9. Commission deliberates and may consult staff
 10. Commission prepares findings, if applicable
 11. Commission votes

Application and inquires should be submitted to:

Historic Preservation Commission Staff
City of Peoria Development Center
419 Fulton Street, Room 300
Peoria, IL 61602-1217

Phone: 309/494-8600
Fax: 309/494-8680



Application for Peoria Historic Landmark Designation



McClure Branch ♦ Peoria Public Library
315 W. McClure Avenue, Peoria, IL 61604

McClure Branch Peoria Public Library



Legal Description



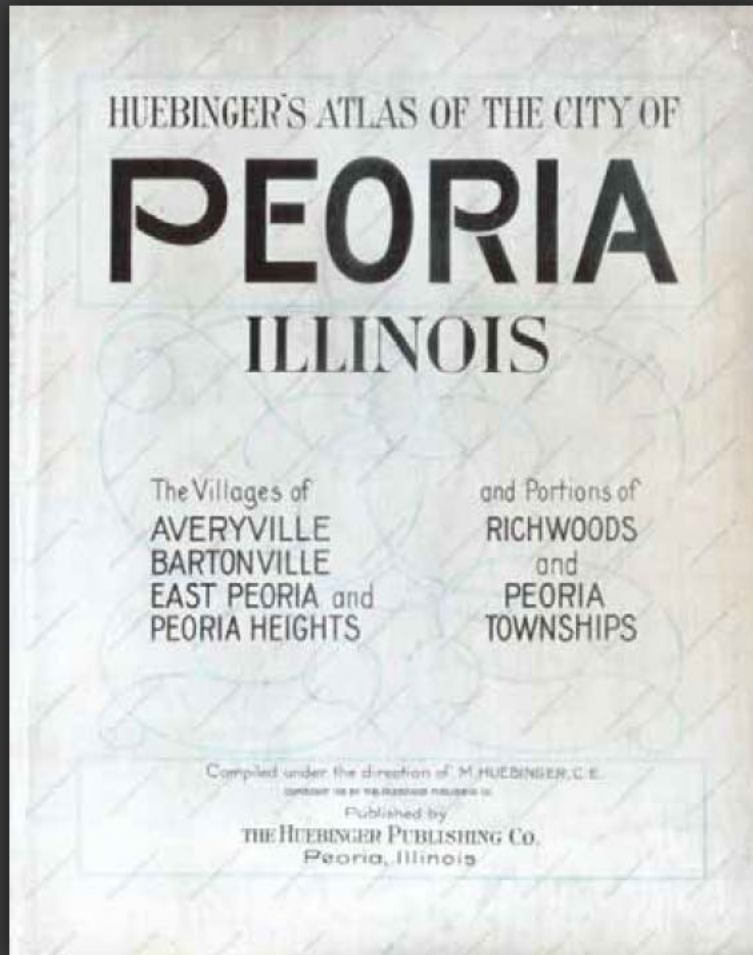
Virginia Place NW ¼ SEC 33-9-8E S 127' LOTS 6-7-8 BLK 5
Latitude 40.717981 Longitude -89.598199



Location Map



Huebinger's 1920 Atlas of the City of Peoria, Illinois



Applicable Designation Criteria



Section 16-38(a) Peoria Historic Preservation Ordinance

- 1. Its character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, the county, the state or the United States of America deems it historically significant.**
2. Its location as a site of significant local, county, state or national event.
3. Its identification with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the city, the state or the nation.
- 4. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction or use of indigenous materials.**
5. Its identification as the work of a master building designer, architect or landscape architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, the state or the nation.

Applicable Designation Criteria



Section 16-38(a) Peoria Historic Preservation Ordinance

- 6. Its embodiment of elements of design, detailing, or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant.**
7. Its embodiment of design elements that make it structurally or architecturally innovative.
- 8. Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature.**
9. Its character as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure with a high level of integrity or architectural significance.
- 10. The owner(s) consent.**

Criterion 1



Its character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, the county, the state or the United States of America deems it historically significant.



Criterion 1



Original East Bluff Branch Quarters Intersection of Knoxville and McClure

- In 1926, East Bluff Branch opens in rented space at intersection of Knoxville and McClure Avenues. After almost a decade in a rapidly growing area of city, the Board recognizes limited parking opportunities on Knoxville and subsequent danger to patrons, especially children who must cross the busy intersection.

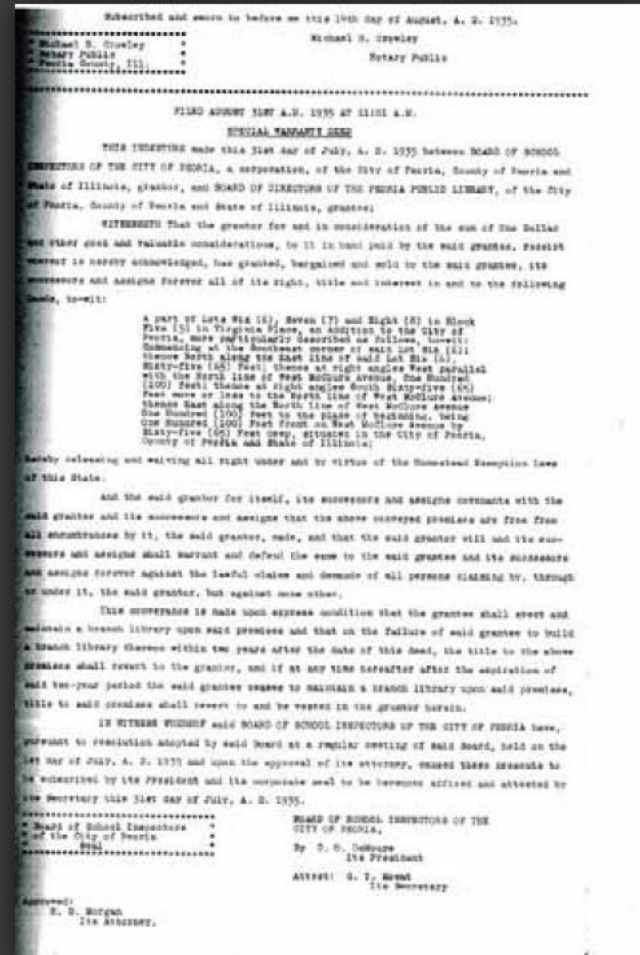


Criterion 1



School Board Generosity as East Bluff Expands

- Vital need of a new library discussed at May–June 1935 Board meetings
- Special Board meeting, August 21, 1935, Librarian Earl W. Browning receives authority to apply for WPA funds for two branch library buildings, one in East Bluff, one in Averyville
- Peoria Board of School Inspectors (precursor to Board of Education) donates an excellent section of Columbia School property fronting McClure to furnish a permanent home for the East Bluff Branch



Criterion 1



Board Minutes Chronology of New East Bluff Branch Building

East Bluff Branch

Jan. 1926 Quarters leased at 1804 Knoxville
Feb. " Furniture contract let
April " Branch opened.
May 1935. Report on branch site on Columbia School grounds.
Sept. 1935 Deed to site on Columbia grounds received
Aug. 1935 (Spec. meeting) W.P.A. requested to erect branch.
Jan. 1936. W.P.A. request approved but no action
Apr. 1936 No further action from W.P.A. expected

East Bluff Branch 3

June 1937. Request for ten additional feet in depth of lot granted.
March 1938 Total cost of branch $\frac{\$20,918.01}{\$0,586.70}$
Sept. " Deed of ten feet of land recorded.
" " Margaret Shaw made Head of Branch
Feb. 1938 Balance paid on branch.
Feb. " Cancelled mortgage from Buehler Home presented.
June 1938. Branch to open six instead of four evenings
Nov. 1938. Librarian asks for more suitable name for this branch

East Bluff Branch 2

April 1936. Architect to make blueprints
" " Buehler Memorial Home offers to lend money.
July 1936. Bid of Werner Construction Co. \$19,887 accepted
Sept. 1936. Building line caused to be set back.
" 70000 borrowed from Buehler Home.
Jan. 1937. Branch to be dedicated Jan. 25th
Feb. 1937 Request School Board for ten additional feet in depth of lot not granted
Mar 1937 Young people's room established

East Bluff Branch 4

Mar. 1939 Committee appointed to select new name
June 1941 New names reported by Committee. No action taken.
Nov. 1941. Outside steps to Children's Room replaced because of too narrow treads
May. 1942. Committee appointed to propose new name
Nov. 1943. Branch name changed to McClure Avenue Branch.

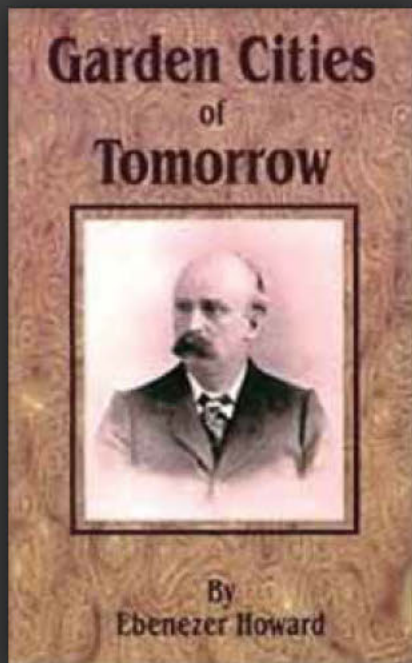
Criterion 1



Board at Opening Night Celebration ♦ January 29, 1937



Criterion 1



- The McClure Branch is a gem of an example of both the Garden City Movement and the City Beautiful Movement. The Garden City Movement sprang to life with the publication of Sir Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* in 1898, in the United Kingdom. This utopian planning model for new cities and towns emphasized order and symmetry, quietly placing all new man-made developments into lush and expansive natural surroundings. Architecture within these garden cities drew heavily from Neo-classical and Beaux-Arts traditions, where buildings were dignified, discreet, and softly harmonious with nature. Early in the twentieth century, the Garden City Movement crossed the Atlantic Ocean and took root in the American Midwest as the City Beautiful Movement.
- The McClure Branch Library, nestled into the southwest corner of a public park by the waters of Dry Run Creek, is a quintessential civic edifice of that City Beautiful Movement. When it was built in the mid-1930s, it was on the edge of Peoria, surrounded by new residential developments that were marked by boulevards and other town planning embellishments of this movement.

Criterion 4



Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction or use of indigenous materials.



Criterion 4



Architectural Facts

- This pre-1940, Depression-era historic East Bluff neighborhood anchor was designed by architect Hamilton B. Dox (who also did a remodel of the Business Room of the old Main Library) to contain two reading rooms with fireplaces, a reference room, circulating space, an office on the first floor, and a basement comprised of a staff room, locker room, private toilets, workroom, and lecture and assembly hall. By the end of 1937, a children's room was also placed in the basement.
- Werner Construction Company, 1610 S. Washington Street in Peoria, Illinois, had the low bid at \$19,900 and was awarded the contract in August 1936.
- Hamilton B. Dox was born on March 22, 1885, and was both a prominent Peoria architect and a contributor to Peoria Civic Society. He was active in the Professional Architects Organization and served on the Board of Directors of Buehler Home for 35 years. His prominent local designs included Buehler Home, Academy of Our Lady, Guardian Angel Orphanage, renovations at the St. James Hospital, Pontiac, Illinois, and the Catholic Diocesan retreat named King's House, Henry, Illinois, which was later renamed Nazareth House. Hamilton B. Dox died on October 13, 1970 and is buried in Saint Mary's Cemetery in Peoria, Illinois.



Criterion 4



Architectural Style

- The McClure Branch Library is entirely symmetrical and well-ordered, in both plan view and exterior elevation. A mid-level central entryway perfectly divides the structure into adult fiction and non-fiction (on the first floor) and youth and community services (on the basement floor). That same central entryway is flanked by Doric-style limestone pilasters that support a classical Greek pediment overhead (also in limestone). The prominent fenestration that serves the first floor, on three of the four façades, is characterized by large, vertical units, all topped by half-round windows. These and all other windows throughout the library are divided into very modest, human-scaled panes, representing a clear nod to the English branch of neoclassical architecture.
- Apart from these elements, the remainder of the McClure Branch Library's architecture is noteworthy for its simplicity and modesty, which is evidence of the era of the Great American Depression within which it was built. The vast majority of the entire façade is sheathed in a traditional variegated red brick, with a single horizontal band of limestone separating the first floor from the basement. That same limestone material is repeated along the top edges of each of the gable ends of the library, with decorative finials at each peak.



Criterion 4

Design Inspiration

- The McClure Branch library building followed the design of the Newfield Branch Library in Bridgeport, Connecticut by renowned architect Leonard Asheim.



Criterion 4



Urban Setting

- The McClure Branch Library, nestled into the southwest corner of a public park by the waters of Dry Run Creek, is a quintessential civic edifice of the City Beautiful Movement. When it was built in the early 1930s, it was on the edge of Peoria, surrounded by new residential developments that were marked by boulevards and other town planning embellishments of this movement.



Criterion 6



Its embodiment of elements of design, detailing, or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant.

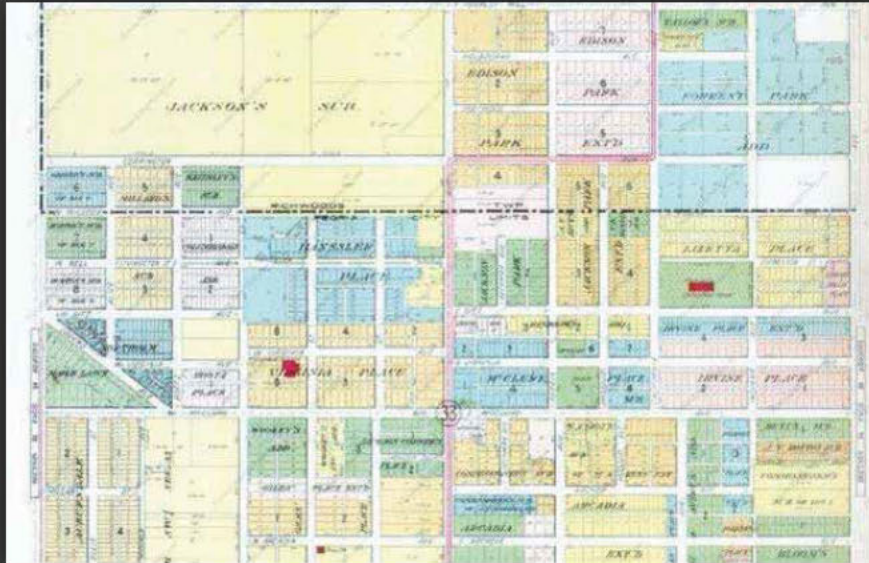


As described previously for Criteria 1 & 4, the McClure Branch Library embodies a wide variety of elements of design, detailing, and craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant. Its neighborhood context makes it a gem of an example of both the Garden City Movement and the City Beautiful Movement. And, its architecture illustrates the best of the neo-classical and beaux-arts traditions, with a dignified, discreet, and harmonious connection to nature.

Criterion 8



Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature.



Also as described previously for Criterion 1, the McClure Branch Library is a well-established and visually prominent landmark for the entire mid-section of the Greater Peoria community that it serves. It began its life as a library serving the East Bluff, which later expanded to include the central Bluff portion of the City. Today, many library patrons living closer to other branches still return to McClure because of its prominence as a historic Peoria landmark.

Criterion 10



Owner(s) consent



Criterion 10



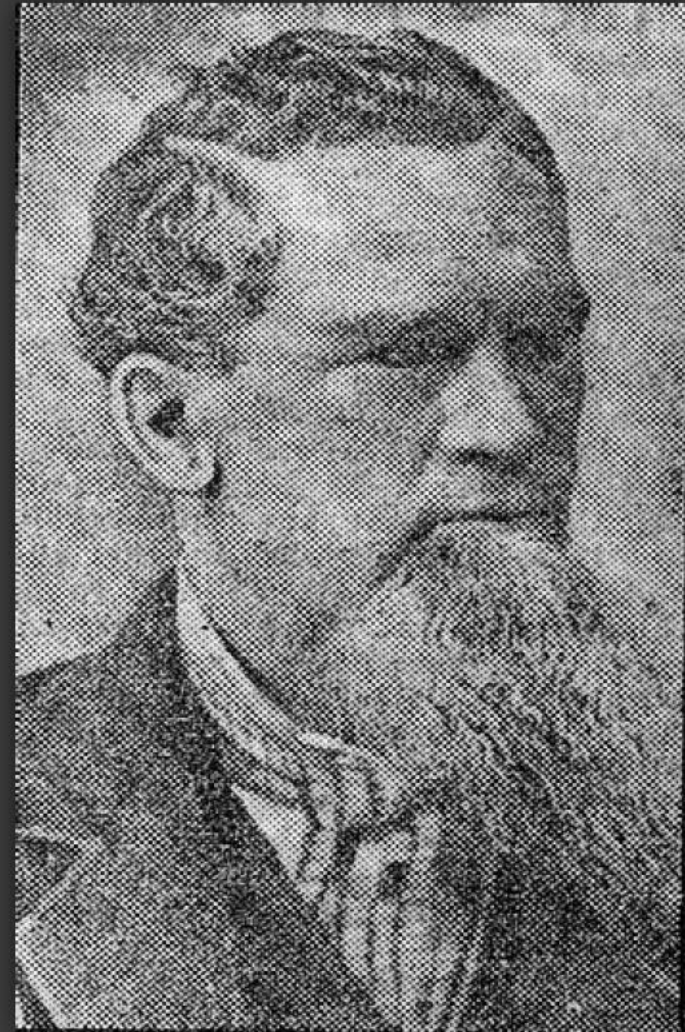
Owner(s) consent

- The Peoria Public Library Board of Trustees voted unanimously to submit this application to designate the McClure Branch Library as a local historic landmark and respectfully asks the Historic Preservation Commission to recommend the same.



Supplemental Support Information

- McClure Branch is identified through its name and location with Colonel John Dickson McClure, born in Pennsylvania on November 4, 1835, and died on March 2, 1911.
- He came to Peoria in 1849 as a 14-year old and completed his education in Galesburg, Illinois. Throughout a lifetime of distinguished contribution, he became known as one of the pioneer settlers and leading citizens of Peoria County.



Supplemental Support Information



Book of Records TF 436 Recorder of Deeds, Peoria County

- McClure acquired twenty acres of land close to Jackson's Corners (now Knoxville and McClure Avenues) on December 10, 1889.
- It was platted out (made a subdivision) by McClure in 1891, and he retained ownership until 1899.
- The road running along the south line of his property became McClure Avenue.



Supplemental Support Information



McClure Burial Site

- Colonel McClure's death occurred in the autumn of his life after many years as a prominent and successful citizen of Peoria.
- He was buried in the McClure family plot in Springdale Cemetery, a locally designated landmark with National Register of Historic Places distinction.
- Tombstone for Colonel John Dickson McClure, 1835–1911, in Springdale Cemetery, Peoria, Illinois.



Supplemental Support Information



CILF Marker

Central Illinois Landmarks Foundation recognized the McClure Branch through its marker program in 2012. The distinctive blue CILF oval marker was installed to the left side of the front entrance. Central Illinois Landmarks Foundation (CILF) is a community non-profit organization dedicated to historic preservation. Specifically, CILF helps identify, protect, and enhance buildings, structures and places of historic and cultural significance. To be granted a CILF marker, a property needs to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Pre-1865
- An outstanding example of an architectural style
- Association with an individual or event of local, state or national significance
- At least 50 years old and an outstanding example of an architectural style

Supplemental Support Information



Application meets Section 16-38(b)

- Any structure, property or area that meets one or more of the above criteria shall also be suitable for preservation or restoration and have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration.



Supplemental Support Information



Application meets Section 16-38(b)

- The exterior and interior of this building are both in excellent condition and worthy of preservation.
- The building sits on the original site. It has been well maintained and not significantly altered.
- In 2012, as part of a comprehensive improvement program for all Peoria Public Library facilities, the McClure Branch Library was further preserved and restored for the long-term future.

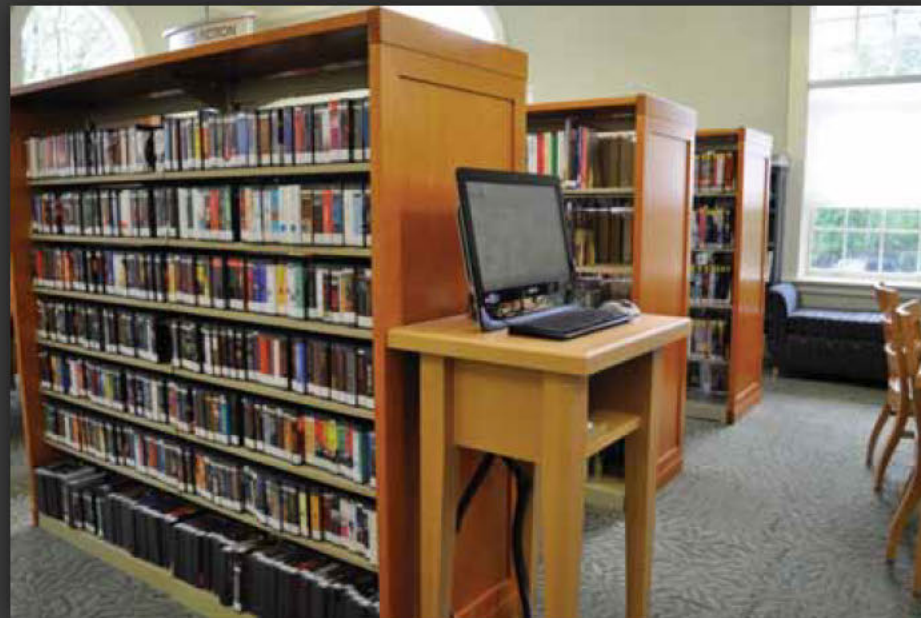


Supplemental Support Information



References and Sources

- Local History & Genealogy Department, Peoria Public Library
- Recorder of Deeds Office, Peoria County Courthouse
- Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library





Application for Peoria Historic Landmark Designation



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