

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Forest Park Headquarters Building

and/or common Forest Park Residence

2. Location

street & number Forest Park near Union Avenue entrance (115 Union) not for publication

city, town St. Louis vicinity of

state Missouri code 29 county City of St. Louis code 510

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name City of St. Louis, Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry

street & number 5600 Clayton Road

city, town St. Louis vicinity of state MO 63110

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Louis City Hall

street & number Tucker Boulevard at Market Street

city, town St. Louis state MO 63101

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri State Historical Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date September 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

721 Olive, Room 1113

city, town St. Louis state MO 63101

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Forest Park Headquarters Building is sited in a wooded area near the Union Avenue entrance to Forest Park in St. Louis. Designed in 1875 in an Italianate/Second Empire style by St. Louis architect James H. McNamara, the one and one-half story brick building was constructed for general office use of the Park Department and later occupied as a residence by the Park Superintendent.

The building features a T-shaped plan with the front entrance on the east elevation (Figure 1). Red brick walls (now painted white) rise one full story from a rusticated stone foundation; a straight-sided mansard roof covered with light green hexagonal slate tiles provides an additional half story. A wood cornice detailed with paired brackets and rectangular panels wraps around the building. Segmentally arched openings mark the first story and round-headed openings are used on the mansard story; all windows are double-hung and employ stone sills.

The east (primary) elevation (Photo #1) is articulated by a three-bay-wide projecting entrance; transomed, paired panelled doors are flanked by tall, slender segmentally arched windows. A tower effect is created by the steep mansard roof punctuated by a large wall dormer with two windows and cornice, surmounted by wood consoles. The shed-roof porch on concrete foundations was constructed in 1937; it replaced the original simple stoop illustrated in Julius Pitzman's 1888 map of the Forest Park Subdivision. A tall slender chimney banded with corbeled brickwork is located on the south side of the mansard tower. The south end of the east elevation features a grouping of three windows on the first story and a large pedimented and corniced wall dormer pierced with two windows in the mansard story (Photo #1, left).

Sometime after 1893 the south elevation (Photo #2, right) was altered by the removal of steps leading to a first story entrance and by the removal of a small balcony which once extended across the two upper story windows. A five-sided clapboarded bay (pierced with Queen Anne style multi-paned windows headed with round-arched fixed transoms) was added to the first story; the original segmentally arched double doors with panelled reveals and flanking windows are still intact.

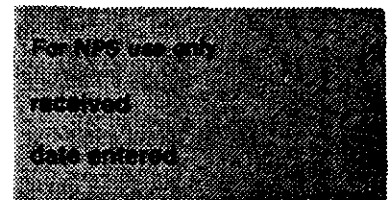
The rear (west) elevation (Photo #2) was altered in 1942 when an enclosed frame porch was added to the butler's pantry. A two-car frame garage, attached to the porch, is more recent. The first story fenestration and wall dormer design of the south end of the east elevation is identical to the corresponding primary (east) facade. Paired windows articulate both stories of the projecting north end (Photo #2, left).

The east end of the north elevation (Photo #3, left background) projects forward slightly and is roofed by the steep mansard tower which covers the front (east) entrance elevation; the design of the dormers is identical to that above the east entrance. The west end of the north elevation is pierced by two windows at the first story; a small pedimented dormer appears in the mansard roof.

In 1942, the interior of the building was remodeled to provide living quarters for the St. Louis Parks & Recreation Commissioner. (Plans for the interior alterations were drawn by Henri Rush, AIA, for Commissioner Palmer B. Baumes.) Alterations included a new kitchen

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Forest Park Headquarters Bldg Item number 7

Page 1

and pantry, bathrooms, additional closet space and new cabinetry as well as mechanical systems. The original staircase was partially reconstructed with new treads and a newel post (Photo #4) salvaged from the Cottage, a nineteenth century structure formerly standing in Forest Park. The building was used as a residence until the 1970s when it again served as office space for a variety of city agencies. It has been vacant since the early 1980s and is a victim of deferred maintenance.

The condition and integrity of the Forest Park Headquarters Building compare favorably with St. Louis properties of similar style, age and materials. The present front porch, which replaced a modest stoop original to the building, has not detracted from the building's principal historic design features (the picturesque massing, roof form, fenestration and cornice).

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

Specific dates 1875

Builder/Architect James H. McNamara

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Forest Park Headquarters Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C and is significant in the following area: ARCHITECTURE: Constructed in 1875 from plans executed by St. Louis architect James H. McNamara, the building is one of St. Louis' best examples of a small group of extant buildings designed in the late Italianate Villa style, combining Italianate and Second Empire features. Located in Forest Park, it is the only remaining nineteenth century building in this country's fifth largest urban park. The building's exterior has survived with only minor alterations.

The creation of a public park one and one-half miles west of the City Limits was first suggested by real estate dealer and entrepreneur Hiram W. Leffingwell in early 1870. By 1872, Leffingwell (who owned land adjacent to the proposed tract) and his supporters had secured passage of State legislation authorizing the purchase of "1,000 or more acres" for the park. Leffingwell, in fact, envisioned an acquisition of 2754 acres. Opposition to the proposal, especially from property owners whose land would be taken, resulted in a decision by the Missouri Supreme Court that the park legislation was unconstitutional. After an unsuccessful attempt to pass another Bill in 1873, Leffingwell reduced the size of the proposed tract to 1372 acres, thus gaining support from two of the major property owners.¹ A new Bill, drafted by Andrew McKinley, was passed by the State Legislature in 1874 and upheld by the Supreme Court. In 1875, the site was acquired by condemnation for \$799,995 and placed under the control of a Board of Park Commissioners. A topographical survey of the property was made under the direction of County Surveyor Julius Pitzman, the first engineer of the Park, and on the 15th of April 1875 ground was officially broken and work on improving the park began.

The park was designed by Superintendent and Landscape Gardener Maximilian G. Kern with assistance from the Board of Commissioners and the Chief Engineer. Born and trained in Germany, Kern (1824 - c. 1915) worked in the Royal Gardens in Stuttgart and the Tuilleries in Paris before emigrating to the United States in 1848. His first known project in St. Louis was the development of Lafayette Park, begun in 1864.² Two treatises on landscape gardening published by Kern in 1855 and 1884 attest to the author's endorsement of eighteenth century English picturesque landscape traditions as practiced by Humphrey Repton in England and Andrew Jackson Downing in America.³ In laying out Forest Park, Kern generally adhered to naturalistic principles of picturesque theory which advocated asymmetry, irregularity, informality, contrast and variety in landscaping in place of rigid axial layouts characteristic of formal classical gardening design. Guided by his stated objective of "creating as great a variety of scenery as the grounds will admit of,"⁴ Kern through well-calculated planting, pruning and placement of curvilinear paths and drives and irregularly shaped pools and lakes, transformed a tract of "forests, commons, dairies, orchards, coal mines and cultivated fields"⁵ into a picturesque urban park (Figure #2).

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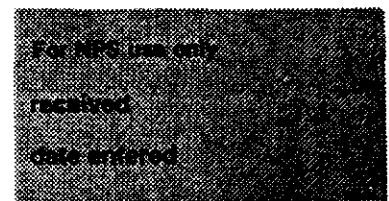
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Forest Park

Continuation sheet Headquarters Building

Item number 8

Page 1



While Kern proposed the erection of a variety of rustic shelters and houses for park visitors, he was not trained as an architect; hence the design of the Park Headquarters building was outside his province. A Building Committee appointed by the Board of Commissioners selected local architect James H. McNamara⁶ to design the new office building and also to convert an old building standing in the park (known as the Forsyth House) into a restaurant known as "The Cottage"⁷ (visible in the upper center of Photo #5). It is likely, however, that Kern did assist McNamara in siting the Headquarters Building and certainly in laying out the approaches and landscape features which were illustrated in Kern's original plan (Figure #2, top left, "2").

The style of architecture adopted for the Headquarters Building expressed the picturesque aesthetics of landscape design propounded by leading architects of the day who held that buildings and landscape settings should harmonize. Rural or natural scenery, such as that found in Forest Park, thus required buildings which displayed the same unrestrained, irregular and asymmetrical qualities found in the surrounding landscape. The Italian Villa style as propagated nationally by A. J. Downing and Calvert Vaux had supplied the appropriate picturesque features for numerous St. Louis suburban country estates of the 1850s and 1860s, only two of which survive in the city: George I. Barnett's design of 1849 for Henry Shaw's country house and the Superintendent's Residence at Tower Grove Park, built in 1868 and attributed to Barnett. Both houses feature the hallmark tall, square tower of the early Italian Villa, the primary expressive agent of picturesqueness.

Shortly after the close of the Civil War, the first mansard roof is reported to have been introduced in St. Louis domestic architecture. By the mid-1870s, a decade later, the Second Empire French roof was the fashion both for townhouses and suburban buildings in St. Louis. When combined with Italianate asymmetrical compositions, the mansard roof opened new and greater possibilities for increasing a building's picturesque silhouette than were offered in the gabled or low-hipped roof of the 1850s and 1860s. McNamara's design for the Forest Park house is one of only three known structures remaining in the city which exploit the picturesque potential of the mansard roof on an asymmetrically massed building. By breaking the roofline with a steep mansard entrance tower and employing large, prominent wall dormers as well as smaller dormers on each mansard slope, McNamara heightened the irregularity of the building's profile. The architect's use of typical Italianate features such as slender, vertically proportioned arched windows in groups of two's and three's, a tall, slim chimney and a bold, bracketed cornice further enhanced the Forest Park building's picturesque qualities (Photos #1, 2, 3).

When Forest Park was officially opened and dedicated, June 24, 1876, the completed Headquarters Building was described by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch as "the handsomest building within the inclosure," except for the music stand, an exotic architectural creation with "byzantine" and "moorish" imagery. The paper further noted that the basement of the Headquarters "is used as a calaboose for refractory visitors, while the building proper is well arranged for the general convenience of the board and the restaurateur who serves up meals in one of the cool and airy rooms."⁸ According to the Park Commissioner's report in 1877, the responsibilities of the keeper of Forest Park, in addition to weeding and cleaning, included "proper policing" of the grounds, for which duty he was sworn in as "special patrolman" by the Board of Police Commissioners.⁹ There is some reason to believe

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

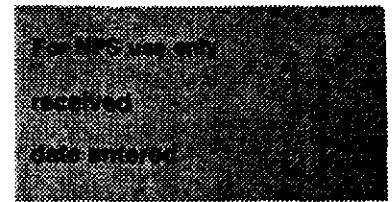
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Forest Park

Continuation sheet Headquarters Building

Item number 8

Page 2



that in various years the keeper resided in the Headquarters Building although the first city directory to confirm that address for a keeper was 1907.¹⁰

The selection of Forest Park as the site for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition transformed the western section of the Park, in 1904, into a temporary City Beautiful of palaces, formal gardens and spectacular water features. A condition of the Ordinance allowing the Exposition Committee to use the Park was a requirement that the land be returned to a park-like setting after the conclusion of the Fair. George Kessler¹¹ (hired by the Restoration Committee of the Exposition) proposed a plan to return the Park to its natural beauty by removal of all Exposition buildings except Cass Gilbert's Fine Arts Building.¹² However, after the land was cleared of Fair structures, a "World's Fair Pavilion" was built in 1907 as part of the Restoration. Using surplus funds from the Fair, the Jefferson Memorial, now the home of the Missouri Historical Society, was constructed in 1912 on the site envisioned in 1875 by Kern as a hippodrome and trotting track.

New institutions which later established themselves in the Park and constructed buildings include the Municipal Opera, opened in 1917; the Jewel Box, built for floral display in 1936; and the McDonnell Planetarium, opened in 1963. A large segment at the southeast corner of the Park was built upon by the Washington University School of Medicine. Suggestions that a large parking lot be built in the Park for the professional hockey team arena just outside the Park and that a Cross-Park highway be constructed focused public attention on the need for a Master Plan for Forest Park. Although drafts of a plan have been prepared, it is still under revision before eventual presentation to the Board of Aldermen.

Over the years all of the nineteenth century buildings constructed in the Park have been demolished except the Headquarters Building, which holds the additional distinction of being conceived as part of the original 1875 plan. The building has been vacant now for several years. It is hoped that renovation to an appropriate new use will preserve a significant symbol of the philosophy that informed the creators of the Park.

FOOTNOTES

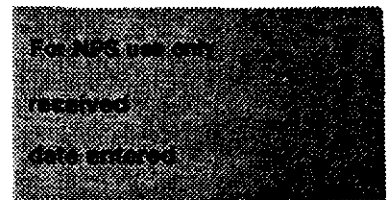
¹The two major property owners were William Forsyth and Thomas Skinker. Leffingwell also agreed to support the acquisition of a new park on the southside and one on the northside (Carondelet and O'Fallon Parks) thus quieting the opposition from those quarters.

²St. Louis Globe Democrat 14 June 1908.

³G. M. Kern, Practical Landscape Gardening, With Reference to the Improvement of Rural Residences, (Cincinnati: Moore, Wilstach Keys & Co., 1855); Maximilian G. Kern, Rural Taste in Western Town and Country Districts: in its Relation to the Principles of the Art of Landscape Gardening, (Columbia, MO: Herald Printing House, 1884).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Forest Park Headquarters Building Item number 8 Page 3

⁴Report of the Commissioners of Forest Park, (St. Louis: John J. Daly & Co., 1876) p. 46.

⁵Report of the Commissioners of Forest Park, pp. 39 - 40.

⁶Little is known about McNamara although he appears to have been a well-established, respected architect as he was a charter member of the St. Louis chapter of the AIA (founded in 1890). He is first listed in city directories in 1866 as a draughtsman for the firm of Mitchell & Desbonne; by the early 1870s he was in practice alone. His other known designs include Maryville Academy (1872) and the Chapel of the Sacred Heart Academy.

⁷Report of the Commissioners of Forest Park 1875, p. 22. An old building known as the "Cabanne Place" located near the eastern boundary of the Park (Kingshighway) was temporarily used as an office building. Upon completion of the new Headquarters Building, "Cabanne Place" was to be remodelled into a "Lodge." It was later demolished.

⁸St. Louis Post-Dispatch 24 June 1876.

⁹St. Louis Board of Public Improvements Report 1877-78 p. 294.

¹⁰During the nineteenth century several keepers were listed in city directories as residing in Forest Park but not at a specified location. The St. Louis Board of Public Improvements Report 1877-78 p. 294, notes that "the keepers of Carondelet, Forest, Gravois, Lyon and O'Fallon Parks reside on the premises in houses belonging to the city."

¹¹German-born George Kessler worked briefly with Olmstead at Central Park before arriving in Kansas City, Missouri where he was responsible for that city's park and boulevard planning.

¹²The first walk-through aviary, built by the Smithsonian Institution for the Fair, was also to be retained and is still in use as the largest bird cage in the world.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 4.3 acres

Quadrangle name Clayton, MO

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	7	3	7	1	4	0	4	2	8	0	6	4	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification The Forest Park Headquarters Building is located near the Union Avenue entrance to the Park. The site is bounded by a line running approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of Union and Lindell Avenues, then approximately 250 feet to the south, followed by approximately 250 feet to the east and finally 250 feet north to the point of beginning.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries of beginning.

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By © Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

name/title Mary M. Stiritz, Director of Research; and Carolyn H. Toft, Executive Director

organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc. date December 23, 1985

street & number 721 Olive, Room 1113 telephone (314) 421-6474

city or town St. Louis state MO 63101

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Frederick A. Brunner

Frederick A. Brunner, Ph.D., P. E., Director, Department of Natural Resources, and
title State Historic Preservation Officer date April 24, 1986

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

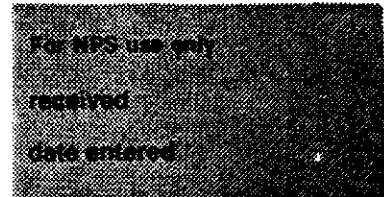
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Forest Park

Continuation sheet Headquarters Building

Item number 9

Page 1

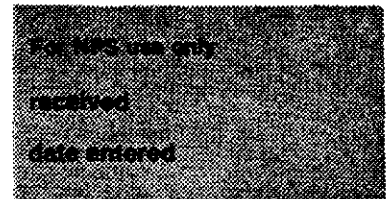


BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Forest Park Headquarters Bldg Item number 11

Page 1

2. James M. Denny
Chief, Survey & Registration and
State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks, Recreation,
and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Program
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Phone: 314/751-4096
Date: April 14, 1986

FOREST PARK HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

115 Union

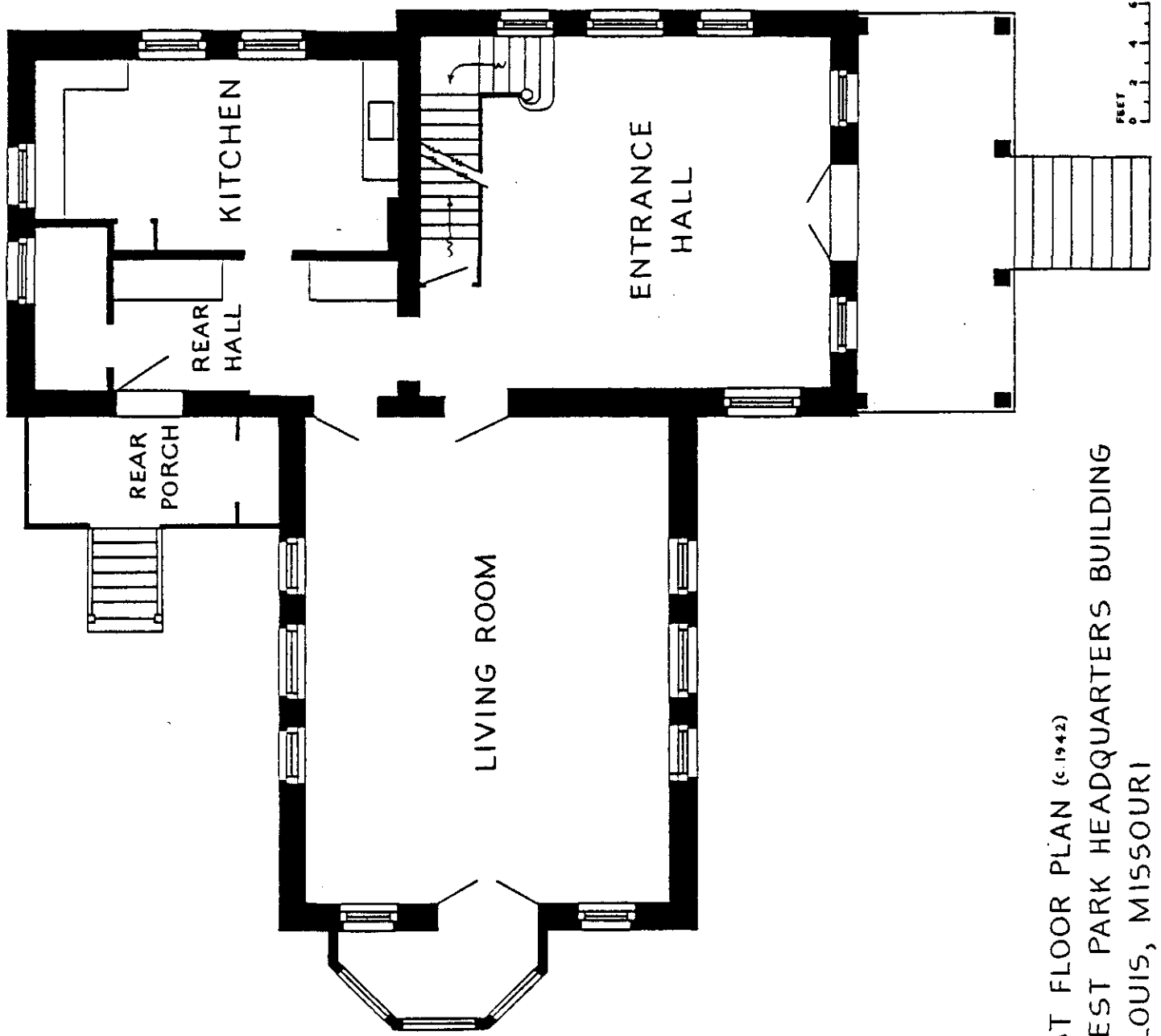
St. Louis, MO

Figure #1 of 2

First Floor Plan (c. 1942)

Redrawn by: Pat Hays Baer

Date: 1985



FIRST FLOOR PLAN (c.1942)
FOREST PARK HEADQUARTERS BUILDING
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

FOREST PARK HEADQUARTERS BUILDING
115 Union
St. Louis, MO

Figure #2 of 2

Section of Plan of Forest Park
(1875)

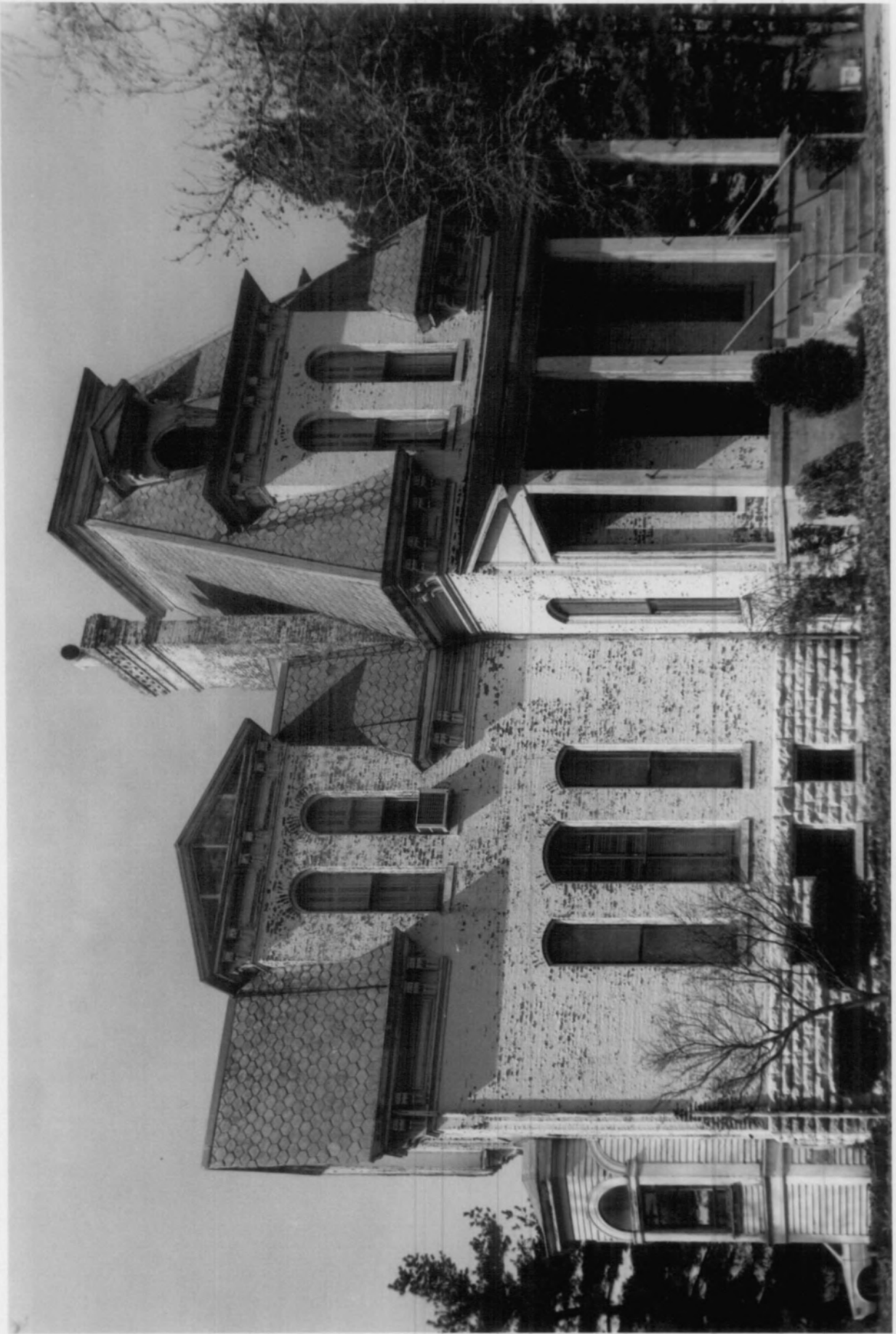
Source: Report of the Park Com-
missioners of Forest Park 1875.

FOREST PARK HEADQUARTERS
St. Louis, MO

#1 of 5 Front elevation

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch
Date: April 1985
Negative: Landmarks Association
of St. Louis, Inc.

Camera facing northwest



FOREST PARK HEADQUARTERS
St. Louis, MO

#2 of 5 Rear elevation

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch
Date: April 1985
Negative: Landmarks Association
of St. Louis, Inc.

Camera facing northeast



FOREST PARK HEADQUARTERS
St. Louis, MO

#3 of 5 Side elevation

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch
Date: April 1985
Negative: Landmarks Association
of St. Louis, Inc.

Camera facing southwest



FOREST PARK HEADQUARTERS
St. Louis, MO

#4 of 5 Staircase

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch
Date: April 1985
Negative: Landmarks Association
of St. Louis, Inc.

Camera facing north



FOREST PARK HEADQUARTERS
St. Louis, MO

#5 of 5 Plate 100
Compton & Dry: 1875

* Photocopy Parkview: 1985
Negative: Landmarks Association
of St. Louis, Inc.

