

SHEFFIELD: Walking tall



Residents strut their neighborhood's better homes and gardens

SIDE STREETS By Celeste Busk

The historic Sheffield neighborhood on the North Side is walking tall.

Property owners there are such a proud bunch that they've organized housewalks and garden walks to strut their neighborhood's stuff.

Sheffield Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic

Places in 1976 through the efforts of the Sheffield Neighborhood Association.

Today, the 500-member organization busies itself remaining in touch with the community by hosting weekend festivals, wine-and-cheese parties and spaghetti dinners and publishing a monthly newsletter. The Chicago Architect-

ture Foundation is sponsoring a walking tour of the community's buildings and history at 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$3. Call 326-1393 for more information.

One of the area's biggest

parties, sponsored by the neighborhood association, will be the 16th Annual Sheffield Neighborhood Festival and Garden Walk July 21-22.

"The walk originally

Landmark row houses in the McCormick Theological Seminary (left), and Italianate and Victorian two- and three-flats (above) are peculiar to the Sheffield Historic District. (Sun-Times Photos by Bob Black and Bob Ringham; Cover Design by Char Searl)

started as a small garden tour, where community residents opened up their gardens to the public," said Eric Carpenter, co-chairman of the event. "Two or three years later, residents began having garage sales in masses in conjunction

with the event.

"Last year, some 10,000 people attended and we're expecting 12,000 this year," Carpenter said.

"We're going to block off Sheffield and Webster and there will be a central en-

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Sheffield shows off homes, gardens

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tainment area, which will include blues on Saturday and jazz on Sunday," he said. "Local restaurants will open food booths." Tickets cost \$2. For more information, call 477-5100.

Sheffield, once a Potawatomi Indian village, has come a long way since 1830 when Joseph and Maria Sheffield started their nursery and truck farm.

At the end of the Civil War, the William Deering Harvester Works began building factories along the Chicago River enticing German workers.

Today, the only braves in the neighborhood are at Kelly's Pub, 949 W. Webster, after a De Paul Blue Demons/Marquette Warriors basketball game at the Rosemont Horizon.

Sister neighborhood to

Lincoln Park and Old Town, the Sheffield community—bounded roughly by Lincoln, Fullerton, Southport and Armitage—is a potpourri of 80- to 100-year-old brownstones, graystones, mansions and workers' cottages that have survived post-World War II demolition.

Stroll down the tree-lined streets and you'll find hundreds of the city's young professionals fixing their homes, gardening, jogging, bicycling, dining in dozens of restaurants, shopping in spiffy boutiques, drinking in corner pubs and playing softball in Sheffield's Oz and Oscar Mayer parks.

'Suburb in city'

"It's a suburb in the city," said Charles Acciari, one of the owners of Ro-

mas, a Webster Avenue restaurant anchor since 1919. "People here care about the neighborhood and they've been fixing up the buildings and making the area work."

"Sheffield is a strong viable neighborhood," said Henry Kluck, who owns a two-flat on West Drummond. "It has a nice mix of young and old people whose incomes are working- to upper-class."

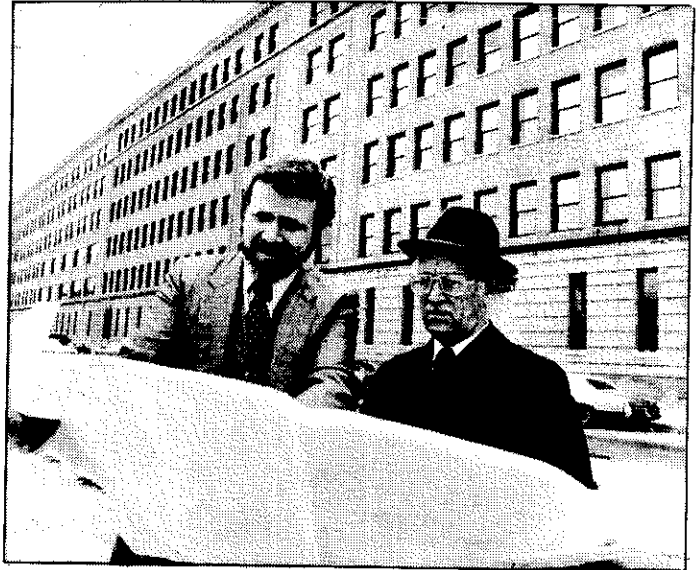
A new development destined to boost Sheffield's renaissance is the \$10 million revival of the Milwaukee Road office building at Fullerton and Southport.

The blocklong 200,000-square-foot landmark building is being converted into 119 apartments for senior citizens, a 248-bed nursing home and gerontological medical clinic by developers William Levy, president of Harper Realty Co., and Rudolph Tessler.

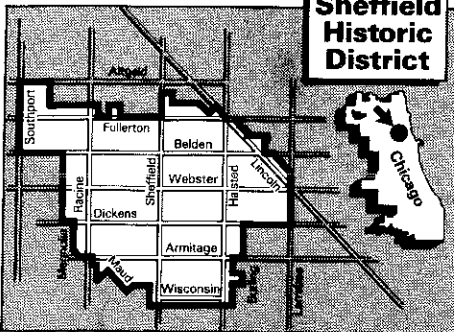
Lincoln Park Retirement Apartments, funded in part by a \$1.4 million Urban Development Action Grant, will feature a five-story atrium, gift, beauty and barber shops, a mini grocery store, maid services and laundry facilities.

Rents for the studio apartments will range from \$1,000 and will include three meals per day in the complex's dining room and weekly cleaning services.

"The center is a new concept in the delivery of geriatric care," said Tessler, who is consulting



Developers William Levy, president of Harper Realty Co., and Rudolph Tessler are converting the Milwaukee Road office building at Fullerton and Southport into senior-citizen apartments, a nursing home and medical clinic. (Sun-Times Photo by Dom Najolia)



The Sheffield neighborhood is a historic district. (Sun-Times Map by Tom Carollo)



This vintage single-family home in the McCormick Theological Seminary near the De Paul campus is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (Sun-Times Photo by Bob Black)

architect for the project. "We expect it to be a model for similar facilities throughout the country."

Rehab expansion

"This project is a natural continuation and expansion of the renovation activities that's been occurring to the east, north and south of the building for years," Levy said.

If you're thinking of buying a home in Sheffield, now is the time to do it.

"Renovation of Sheffield's housing stock is moving at a fast pace," said Lee Harris, president of Lee Harris Realty, 2646 N. Lincoln.

Rising values

"You can get more for your money in here than in Lincoln Park where home values are 25 percent higher. However, resale home values are increasing and will continue to get higher as restoration activity continues," he said.

For example, a vintage brick two-flat on the 2000 block of North Clifton recently sold for \$169,000. Two years ago the same building would have sold for \$140,000.

A brick Victorian on the 1800 block of North Bissel, one of Sheffield premier streets, sold for \$125,000 several months ago.

"Three years ago, this two-flat would have sold for \$95,000. The new owners plan to invest \$110,000 in renovation of the building. After it's completed, the house will sell for about \$270,000," Harris said.

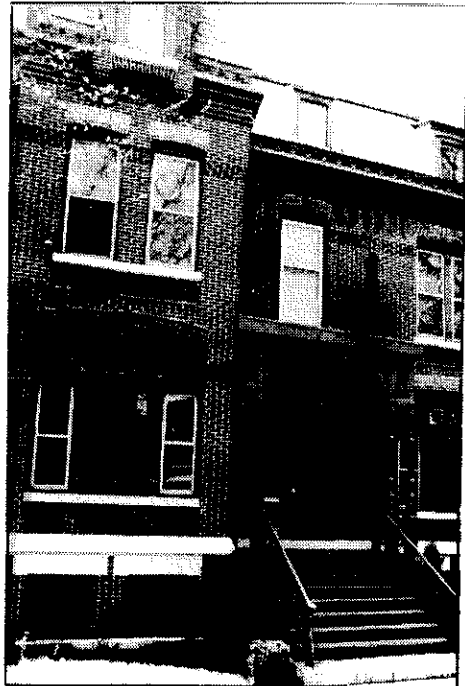
Bea Nelson, president of B. Nelson Realty, 2118 N.

Halsted, said typical town houses in Sheffield, which were built in the last 10 years, range in price from \$125,000 to \$180,000.

"Victorian row houses range in price from \$180,000 to \$250,000," Nelson said. "However, a plush renovated row house on the 2100 block of North Fremont is currently listed for

\$475,000. Typical one-bedroom condos range from \$55,000 to \$83,000."

You still can find an apartment in the mostly owner-occupied buildings. There also are many six- to 30-unit apartment buildings. Rents for a typical one-bedroom unit in Sheffield range from \$500 to \$600 a month.



A flurry of renovation activity in the Sheffield Historic District is pushing up property prices. (Sun-Times Photo by Bob Black)