

D. MAGNOLIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT

The Magnolia Historic Preservation District was formed by action of the Stockton City Council on July 30, 1984. The designation consists of 216 lots, of which 161 were deemed contributory to the character of the District which was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The boundaries of the district “evolved for the most part from the location of significant buildings.” The District’s period of significance is strongest between c. 1890-1920, however diversely significant structures spanning the 1860s through the 1930s are also represented.

This neighborhood became established just north of the Central Business District on part of the original city grid as a residential enclave with principal development beginning in the 1870s-80s. Prior to that time, most families lived on farms outside the city limits. As their economic success grew, the desire to move into town to have schools, churches, social and cultural activities at hand caused this area to develop. In addition to the residential development of this neighborhood, there were institutional and commercial properties introduced, providing a mixed use, urban environment for residents. It was also well-served by the streetcar system.

Fine residential structures representing popular architectural styles popular were built. It should be noted that the term “Victorian” refers to the period when England’s Queen Victoria reigned from 1837-1901, rather than the name of any particular architectural style.

This neighborhood is represented by large homes of principally wood-frame construction employing shiplap, tongue and groove or shingle siding, on relatively large lots. The buildings are up to 2 ½ stories in height, often built on raised foundations to avoid the annual floods common in Stockton. These homes have large footprints with impressive square footage of living space and many include attics and basements. Front porches with tongue and groove flooring are also common features, reached by a flight of stairs. These dwellings are decorated with ornate woodwork, often including turned elements such as newel posts, and details inspired by fine furniture. Brick chimneys, some ornately decorated in a style influenced by Eastlake design are fairly common. Stained glass was often included in the transom over the main entrance and on the primary elevation’s fenestration.

This neighborhood was largely developed before automobiles had been invented. Garages, if present, are usually detached structures at the back of the lot, not readily visible from the street. In several locations, carriage houses are still located behind the dwellings and hitching posts may occasionally be seen. Mature landscaping is also a prominent feature of this neighborhood. Two of the City’s original park sites, blocks designated by Captain Weber as perpetual open spaces, serve as amenities to the Magnolia Neighborhood: Eden Park and Fremont Park. Ornate materials such as turned balustrades, spindles, carved or bandsawn bargeboard decorations, dentils, milled architrave mouldings, wrought iron and decorative shingling are common in this neighborhood.

Prevailing architectural styles include Greek Revival cottages, Italianate, Queen Anne, Eastlake, Italian Renaissance, Stick, Shingle, California Bungalow, Spanish Eclectic, Art Deco, Moderne, and Gothic Revival representing the work of local architects such as Edgar B. Brown, Glenn Allen, Ralph P. Morrell, Franklyn Werner and Frank V. Mayo.



Photos provided by Leslie Crow, Historian