



January 26, 2011

The Honorable City Council
City of Wildwood, Missouri
183 Plaza Drive
Wildwood, Missouri 63040

Council Members:

The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Wildwood has considered a request for nomination of a property to the Historic Registry maintained by this community. This request was reviewed under the criteria of Chapter 440 Historic Preservation Commission Requirements of the City of Wildwood Municipal Code for the purposes of establishing the validity of the requested nomination and definable benefits from a preservation perspective to the larger community. In completing this recommendation, public notices, hearings, and other avenues were provided to solicit input from adjoining property owners and the community at large. This recommendation is as follows:

Petition No.:	H.R. 2-10
Petitioner:	City of Wildwood Department of Planning
Request:	A request to add "Old Pond School" to the City's Historic Registry
Location:	North side of Manchester Road, west of State Route 109 (17123 Manchester Road)
Tract Size:	0.94 acres
Locator No.:	24V430031
Public Hearing Date:	October 27, 2010
Action Date:	December 2, 2010 - Approval by a vote 4 to 0 (Rhodes, Yeaman, James, and Martin)
Final Action Date:	January 26, 2011 – Approval by a vote of 4 to 0 (Rosener, Barth, Long, and Yeaman)
Report:	Attachment A
Plot Plan:	Attachment B
Background:	
Information:	Attachment C
School District:	Rockwood
Fire District:	Metro West
Ward:	One

A copy of the petitioner's application and related materials are on file with the City Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,
CITY OF WILDWOOD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Lynne Martin, Chair

ATTEST:

Joe Vujnich, Director
Department of Planning

Cc: The Honorable Timothy Woerther, Mayor
Daniel E. Dubruiel, City Administrator

Planning Tomorrow Today

183 Plaza Drive • Wildwood, Missouri 63040 • 636-458-0440 phone • 636-458-6969 fax

Rob Golterman, City Attorney
Liz Montalbano, Planner

ATTACHMENT A

Site History:

The history of the building, which is now called "Old Pond School", is one of high local interest and encompasses the entire 20th Century. The Old Pond School was built on land originally donated by the Dreinhofer Family, who were one of Wildwood's earliest pioneering families immigrating to this area from Germany. The Dreinhofer Family had originally reserved this one (1) acre tract of land in the latter part of the 1800s for the purpose of building a school for the children of the area. At that time, the acre of land was located near the southeast corner of their farm field next to Manchester Road, which was known as Market Street at that time.

The Old Pond School is actually the third of four (4) Pond Schools. The first known Pond School was built near the intersection of Pond Road and Manchester Road. From all reports, sometime possibly around 1880, the second Pond School was constructed on the land the Dreinhofers had donated, where the current Old Pond School is now located. This wooden schoolhouse caught fire sometime just after the turn of the century and burned to the ground. It was after this disaster that plans were made by community leaders to construct a new 'modern' Pond School on the same property. Obviously, this action was accomplished with the permission of the Dreinhofer Family, who allowed its utilization for the school.

Several accounts place the date of the construction of this new Pond School in 1914. Built by the Seibel Construction Company of Manchester, Missouri, this new school featured many modern improvements over the original wooden schoolhouse, such as the extensive use of fire resistant materials. While constructing the new school, the builders kept in mind the fire that had destroyed the original Pond School and planned ways to prevent the same from happening again. The new schoolhouse was constructed directly in front of the site, where the original school had been located. It was constructed primarily of concrete, clay, and stucco, three (3) components known for their strength and fire proofing capabilities (all of these materials were obtained from local sources for use in the construction of the school). Even the school's new roof was constructed with clay tile shingles to add to its fire-proofing characteristics and longevity.

Among other significant aspects of the school, and the property, is the large stone retaining wall situated along the southern property line at Manchester Road. The construction of this stone wall was part of the WPA (Works Progress Administration), which was created by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as part of the New Deal during the Great Depression. This agency employed millions of Americans and carried out public works projects, including the construction of public buildings and roads. Needless to say, the former community of Pond (now Wildwood) and its residents surely benefited from some of these projects due to job creation.

Another item of interest located at the school site is the concrete footings and frames remaining from the privies for this facility. These remnants have survived for many years and offer a great history associated with them as well. The privies on this site were constructed by a team of workers affiliated with the WPA (Works Progress Administration) and charged with this responsibility by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, when increasing numbers of rural school children were being infected by parasitic worms (helminths) due to poor sanitary conditions within the hodge-podge of these facilities found across the United States. This federal effort led to better construction standards for these types of structures, with concrete floors, and improved sanitary conditions substantially.

The Pond School was active as a school throughout much of the 20th Century. Classes were being held at the school during World War I in 1918 and Prohibition during the 1920s. The Old Pond School was operational, when Manchester Road was improved and designated Route 66, in 1926. It was in session during The Great Depression Era of the 1930s, World War II in the 1940s, the prosperous post-war days of the 1950s, and even the turbulent times of the 1960s.

With the reorganization and consolidation of the area school districts in the 1940's, a decision was made to construct a new, more modern (fourth), Pond School just west, and within the sight distance of the old facility. It is this Pond School that is still in operation as an elementary school today by the Rockwood School District. After the children from the Old Pond School were

transferred into this new school, the school district utilized the old schoolhouse for children with special needs. This "Special School" would last for over a decade, at which time the school district constructed administrative offices in the old schoolhouse around 1970. These administrative offices would occupy the Old Pond School for some years to come; then the school began to fall into serious disrepair from maintenance neglect and was used only for equipment storage.

Around 1998, a group of concerned citizens approached the Rockwood School District with the idea of obtaining the building in an attempt to save it by renovating and restoring it for the purpose of converting it to a small meeting and museum facility for a local historical group. While investigating this possibility, the school district learned that the school property had a deed restriction placed upon it by the Dreinhofer Family that prevented it from selling or transferring ownership of the property to someone other than the Dreinhofer Family. This restriction was placed on the property by the Dreinhofers, when they originally donated the property for the original school to be built before 1900 and remained legally binding. In 1999, the school property was returned to Ms. Loraine Conreux by the Rockwood School District, since the school district was no longer utilizing the property for educational purposes. Ms. Conreux was a descendant and legal heir to the Dreinhofer Family.

For the next three (3) years, officials from the City of Wildwood negotiated with Ms. Conreux in an attempt to possibly purchase the property from her in order to save and preserve the school, since it was one of Wildwood's last remaining unaltered turn of the century schoolhouses left in the City. In 2001, Ms. Conreux, through her generosity and devotion to the original concerns and commitment that her ancestors had made in establishing the earlier Pond Schools, decided to donate the property to the City of Wildwood. The City made a commitment to her and the family the school would be renovated and restored, as it had once appeared, and would eventually be opened to the public as a meeting facility and small museum. The surrounding outdoor property would also ultimately become a public park operated and maintained by the City for everyone to enjoy.

The building's renovation and restoration was completed in 2006. The City of Wildwood utilizes the old school building as a meeting facility, avails it to other community organizations, and the park grounds are offered to all to enjoy as a park and picnic area within this beautifully historic setting.

Current Request and Restoration:

The petitioner, the City of Wildwood, c/o the Department of Planning, is requesting the Historic Preservation Commission's favorable consideration of the request to place this one-room schoolhouse and the park property on the City's Historic Registry. The petitioner is planning to continue to utilize this property for a small museum, meeting space, and active park property for the City of Wildwood and its residents. Additionally, the City has amassed a small collection of artifacts and is seeking a single location to centrally store these items.

As part of this request, the petitioner is not seeking any type of incentive package for the preservation of this asset with its placement on the City's Historic Registry. Typically, when incentives are requested, they relate to certain zoning requirements associated with the future use of the site. However, the current zoning of the site and its present use are compatible in terms of a past zoning action by the City. In October 2004, the City of Wildwood adopted an ordinance changing the zoning of the site from NU Non-Urban Residence District to PS Park and Scenic District. This zoning request, and subsequent approval, occurred in the midst of a significant restoration effort of the one-room school house and park property. To this end, the purpose of his request is to make the community aware of this historic asset that has already been meticulously restored for preservation purposes and ensure it is protected and maintained for years to come.

The City expended a significant amount of resources in restoring the one-room school house to its previous condition. The school house was improved, as part of the park development's first phase, which included the installation of a new parking lot, drive aisle lane, patio area, benches, water fountain, fencing, landscaping, and trash receptacles. Phase Two of this park project included the installation of a pavilion, playground area, additional patio area, and more landscaping, and was partially funded by the St. Louis County Municipal Parks Grant Commission. Since the site's restoration, it has been used for a number of recreation events, including the Summer Concert Series and Spring Egg Hunt. More recently, these events have been moved to other locations of the City due to their large numbers of attendees, and Old Pond School has been utilized as a public park, a community meeting space, and museum. As apparent, Old Pond School, with the help of many individuals, organizations, and businesses, currently provides this community a gathering place, as it did throughout the 20th Century and, with its favorable registry recommendation, will for generations to come.

Thirteen (13) Criteria for Consideration of Property:

The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance establishes thirteen (13) criteria that are to be utilized in determining the appropriateness of a nomination under standards created by the United States Department of Interior's National Park Service. Only one (1) of these thirteen (13) criteria must be met for favorable consideration of a requested nomination to the registry. In the case of Old Pond School, the Commission has determined that Items # 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 meet this required compliance:

1. Its character, interest or value is part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the community, County, State or country;
2. Its overall setting is part of a collection of buildings, structures or objects where the overall collection forms a unit;
3. It has the potential to be returned to an accurate historic appearance regardless of alterations or insensitive treatment that can be demonstrated to be reversible;
4. Its location is the site of a significant local, County, State or national event;
5. It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, County, State or country;
6. It embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type valuable for the study of period, type, method of construction or use of indigenous materials;
7. It is identified as the work of a master builder, designer, architect or landscape architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the community, State or country;
8. It embodies design, detailing, materials or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant;
9. It embodies design that makes it structurally or architecturally innovative;
10. It has a unique location or singular physical characteristic that makes it an established or familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City;
11. Its character is a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure including, but not limited to, farmhouses, gas stations, or other commercial structures, with a high level of integrity or architectural significance;
12. It is suitable for preservation or restoration; and
13. It has potential to yield information important to history or prehistory.

Rationales for Support for this Registry Nomination:

In considering this request, the Historic Preservation Commission agrees the property is appropriate for consideration to the City's Historic Registry for a number of reasons. These reasons included the following:

1. These assets and property is located in a designated historic community, as identified by the City of Wildwood's Master Plan's Historic Conceptual Land Use Category;
2. The requirements of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance are met by this building and property;
3. The preservation of this building and property would guarantee its reuse and provide a standard for any further improvements to the structure and site to meet;
4. The approval of this request for the building and property's placement on the City's Historic Registry is further evidence of the growing support and importance these types of preservation activities hold in Wildwood; and
5. The inclusion of this property onto the registry benefits all parties.

Figure 1. - South Elevation of Old Pond School



Figure 2. - North Elevation of Old Pond School



Figure 3. - East Elevation of Old Pond School



Figure 4. - West Elevation of Old Pond School



Figure 5. - Ron James Memorial Pavilion



Figure 6. - Playground Area



Figure 7. – Stone Wall Constructed by WPA



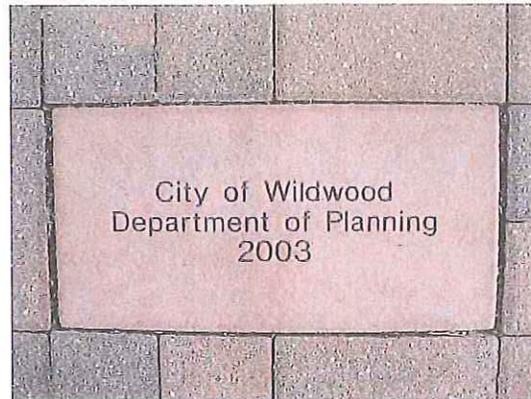
Figure 8. - Interior Picture



Figure 9. – Restored Original Wood Flooring



Figure 10. – Adopt-a-Brick Program – Stone Paver



Areas for Certificate of Appropriateness:

The Historic Preservation is recommending multiple levels of review according to the relative importance of this historic structure, and the property as well, within this community. Accordingly, when designs, plans, and construction of any new building/structures, along with improvements, are proposed (including interior modifications), these levels of reviews would include the following:

1. Site Development Plan, including, but not limited to, the placement of new buildings and structures, location of parking areas and materials, infrastructure levels and designs, lighting, signage, and landscaping.
2. Architectural Elevations, including all materials, colors, types, and design.
3. Construction Drawings/Improvement Plans.
4. Any and all alterations to approved plans and elevations.
5. Any demolition, in whole or part, requiring a permit from the City; and
6. Any additions or modifications to the site or its improvements altering its function and/or character.

Specific Items Initiating Review:

- ✓ Roof Repairs or Replacements
- ✓ Painting of the Exterior of the Building
- ✓ Repair or Replacement of Exterior Fascia Boards
- ✓ Installation or Removal of Windows

- ✓ Repair or Replacement of Doors
- ✓ Structural Modifications to the Building or Structure
- ✓ Additions or Modifications of a Non-Structural Nature, such as replacement or repair of gutters, downspouts, trim boards, or other key architectural elements of the exteriors
- ✓ Site Modifications including, but not limited to, parking and drive aisles, signs, trash enclosures, mechanical equipment, fences, and other structures, including all stone retaining walls

Design Criteria to be applied to Certificate of Appropriateness Review Process:

In considering an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Historic Preservation Commission shall be guided in principal by the Secretary of the Interior's standards as follows:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and exterior spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding non-authentic or architectural features of other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
9. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. (Ordinance No. 547 §1, 8-9-99)

Standards for Review Process:

Design guidelines for applying the criteria for review of Certificate of Appropriateness shall, at minimum, consider the following architectural criteria:

1. *Height.* The height of any proposed alteration or construction should be compatible with the style and character of the historic property.
2. *Proportions of windows and doors.* The proportions and relationships between doors and windows should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the historic property.
3. *Relationship of building masses and spaces.* The setback and relationship of the historic property to the open space between it and adjoining structures should be compatible.
4. *Roof shape.* The design of the roof should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the historic property.
5. *Landscaping.* Landscaping should be compatible with the architectural character and appeal of the historic properties.
6. *Scale.* The scale of the structure after alteration, construction, or partial demolition should be compatible with its architectural style and character and with surrounding historic properties.

7. *Directional expression.* Facades of historic properties should blend with other structures with regard to directional expression. Historic properties should be compatible with the dominant horizontal or vertical expression of surrounding structures. The directional expression of a historic property after alteration, construction or partial demolition should be compatible with its original architectural style and character.
8. *Architectural details.* Architectural details including materials, colors and textures should be treated so as to make a historic property compatible with its original architectural style and character and to preserve and enhance the architectural style or character of a historic property.
9. *Signage.* The character of signs should be in keeping with the historic architectural character of a historic property. Character of a sign includes the number, size, area, location, type, (e.g., off-site advertising signs and on-site business signs), letter size or style, and intensity and type of illumination.
10. *Minimum maintenance.* Significant exterior architectural features should be kept in a condition of good repair and maintenance. All structural and mechanical systems should be maintained in a condition and state of repair that will prevent decay, deterioration or damage to significant architectural features or otherwise adversely affect the historic property. (Ordinance No. 547 §1, 8-9-99)

Analysis

In considering the placement of the Old Pond School onto the City's Historic Registry, the Commission would note that over the past eleven (11) years, it has authorized a number of buildings, structures, and areas onto it. However, none of those assets included an institutional use of local significance as the community school that served many generations. This request is different in that regard and makes it important in the future for others to follow. Given this circumstance, the Commission is supportive of placing the Old Pond School on the City's Historic Registry. The Commission's support in this matter is based upon a three-fold approach to its review. This three-fold review includes the following: (1.) the role of this building in the community and region; (2.) the restoration effort that was undertaken and completed by the City in 2006; and (3.) the singularly important architecture and materials used in its construction. Each of these items is detailed below, as part of this analysis.

Role in Community and Region - This facility was constructed and opened to the community in 1914 and started accepting children of this area, which was a very different situation, since there was no Rockwood School District. The role this facility played in the lives of families of this rural area was significant, as witnessed by the class pictures the City has received over time from previous students. The facility provided a focal point of the community and a valuable service to it as well and offered a common link for many families as the community changed over the decades.

Along with this role, this school facility remains one of a few one-room school houses in St. Louis County, where once there were many. These facilities, once the backbone of the educational system of rural America, are rapidly vanishing by conversion or demolition. In this case, the City has been able to save this facility from removal, despite its initial condition upon its acquisition, which was very poor. However, through the dedication of many volunteers and City Councils, this historic asset was preserved, which led to a long process of its restoration. Preserving this school, and now placing it on the City's Historic Registry, is recognition of its role in the community and region, both from the perspectives of its service to youth and protection of the unique way these types of facilities had once served the overall region.

Restoration Effort - After the acceptance of the school by the City, it began a process of deciding how this facility would be restored and the timeline for its improvement in terms of respect for its original condition. This process for these determinations was given to a group of volunteers that included some of the facility's past students, design professionals, with expertise in historic preservation, and other residents that were members of the City's Historic Preservation Commission. This group considered these questions before it and determined a full restoration was best and, at least for the building, a single effort should be undertaken at once, given the building was open to the elements.

With these decisions made by the volunteer group, the City began the process of a full restoration effort of the building and a park project for the property itself. When this project was completed, the City and the volunteer group had meticulously restored the interior and exterior of the school to its past condition. Some of these restoration steps included the following:

1. The repair of the floor with the same type of wood material taken from a house that was constructed during the same period of time.

2. The installation of windows of a single pane type to preserve historical accuracy.
3. The replacement of all doors with appropriate replications of the original types that were custom-made.
4. The replacement of a shingle-type roof with a clay tile type that mimicked the original.
5. The repair of all exterior and interior walls, with their coating by appropriate types of plaster and stucco.
6. The installation of a metal ceiling that was the same as the type original to the school.
7. The installation of a restroom facility to be able to serve all populations.
8. The removal of the damaged basement floor and the pour of a new surface.
9. The installation of copper gutters and downspouts on the exterior of the building.
10. The development of the park improvements that were respective of the front yard area of the facility to maintain its viewscape from Manchester Road.
11. The development of the park, which also was undertaken from the perspective of replicating a style from the same period of time of the school.

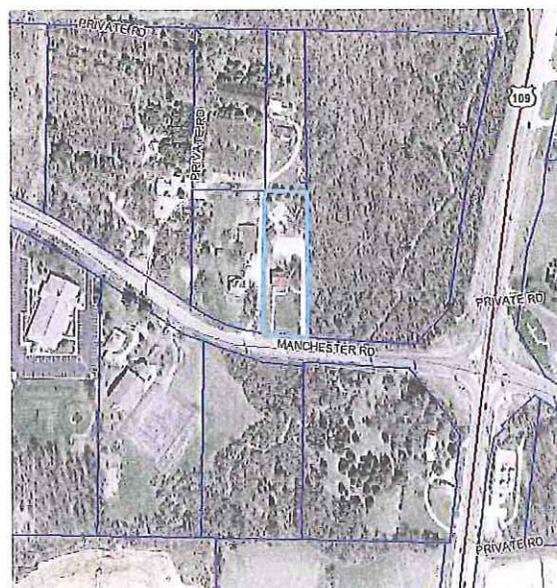
The Commission would note that any restoration effort of this magnitude and care is deserving of placement on the City's Historic Registry. As noted earlier in this report, and confirming the appropriateness of this building and property being placed on the City's registry, is that St. Louis County Historical Commission presented the project an award for its careful restoration.

Architecture - The final component of this affirmative action on this request by the Commission is the singularly unique architecture and material types of this building. This building was designed in a time before computers, space-age materials, and precise construction standards managed by an army of contractors and has stood the test of time by its current existence. The buildings design was simple, but functional. Along with the design, the materials were carefully chosen to ensure that the prevalent fires that had caused other versions of the school to be destroyed would not occur again. This selection included stucco and concrete blocks for exterior and interior walls and clay tiles for the roof. Not only does this material selection show the unique approach in the architecture of the building, which makes it an excellent example of this period's architectural character, but ensured it was worthy of preservation. All of these factors led to a building that has no peers in the City at this time.

Recommendation and Summary

The Historic Preservation Commission has determined the subject school house and property comply with the minimum level of items of the City's enabling legislation to be considered for its acceptance onto its Historic Registry and, with their addition, will ensure it has an integral part of the historic Pond Community. The items triggering the Certificate of Appropriateness review by the City's Historic Preservation Commission are reasonable and allow for the protection of the building, property, and area. In conclusion, the Commission appreciates and supports the reuse of this property and the restoration of the structure in the Pond Area in terms of an illustrative example of its history and the value of historic preservation as a way to enrich a community's character.

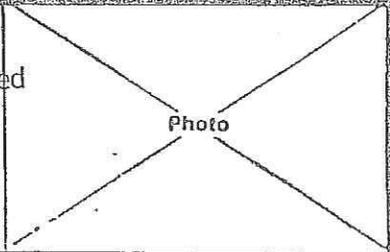
Figure 11. - Generalized Location Map



HISTORIC INVENTORY

1 No V430031 2 County St. Louis 3 Location of Negatives 32975-11	4 Present Name(s) Pond School 5 Other Name(s)	
6 Specific Location Part of Lot 3, Dreinhofer Estate 7 City or Town If Rural, Township & Vicinity Meramec Township, Pond 8 Site Plan with North Arrow	16. Thematic Category 17 Date(s) or Period constructed c. 1920's 18. Style or Design Arts & Crafts 19. Architect or Engineer 20. Contractor or Builder 21. Original Use, if apparent school 22 Present Use vacant 23 Ownership Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 24. Owner's Name & Address, if known R-6 School District 25. Open to Public? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 26. Local Contact Person or Organization 27. Other Surveys in Which Included	28. No. of Stories 1 29. Basement? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> 30. Foundation Material concrete 31. Wall Construction frame 32. Roof Type & Material cross gable, asphalt 33. No. of Bays Front 3 Side 3 34. Wall Treatment stucco 35. Plan Shape T-shape 36. Changes (Explain in #42) Addition <input type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input type="checkbox"/> 37. Condition Interior _____ Exterior fair/poor 38. Preservation Underway? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 39. Endangered? By What? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> redevelopment 40. Visible from Public Road? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> 41. Distance from and Frontage on Road /106'
9 Coordinates UTM Lat _____ Long _____ Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> 11. On National Register? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12. Is II Eligible? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> 13 Part of Estab Hist Dist.? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 14. District Potent'l? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15 Name of Established District	42. Further Description of Important Features Broad gables have turned under boxes at the corners. The front gable has a Palladian window in front with louvers in an arched center portion. Large rectangular louvered openings are on the sides. The front elevation has a triple window in the center, with paired windows to the right and the door to the left. Windows are tall and relatively narrow, nine-over-one. Door and transom over it have been boarded over. Basement is partly exposed at the northeast corner. It has an outside entry (contd)	
43 History and Significance This land came from the estate of John Frederick Dreinhofer, sold by his heirs to the school district sometime before the final settlement of his estate in 1886. The present building, however, appears to date from the 1920's. It has been replaced by a new Pond School at 17200 Manchester Road.		
44 Description of Environment and Outbuildings The school sits well back from the road near the top of a steep hill. The hill has a large and expensive cut-stone retaining wall along the road and on the east where the drive ascends.		
45. Prepared by E. Hamilton 47. Organization St. Louis County Parks 48. Date 49 Revision Date(s)		

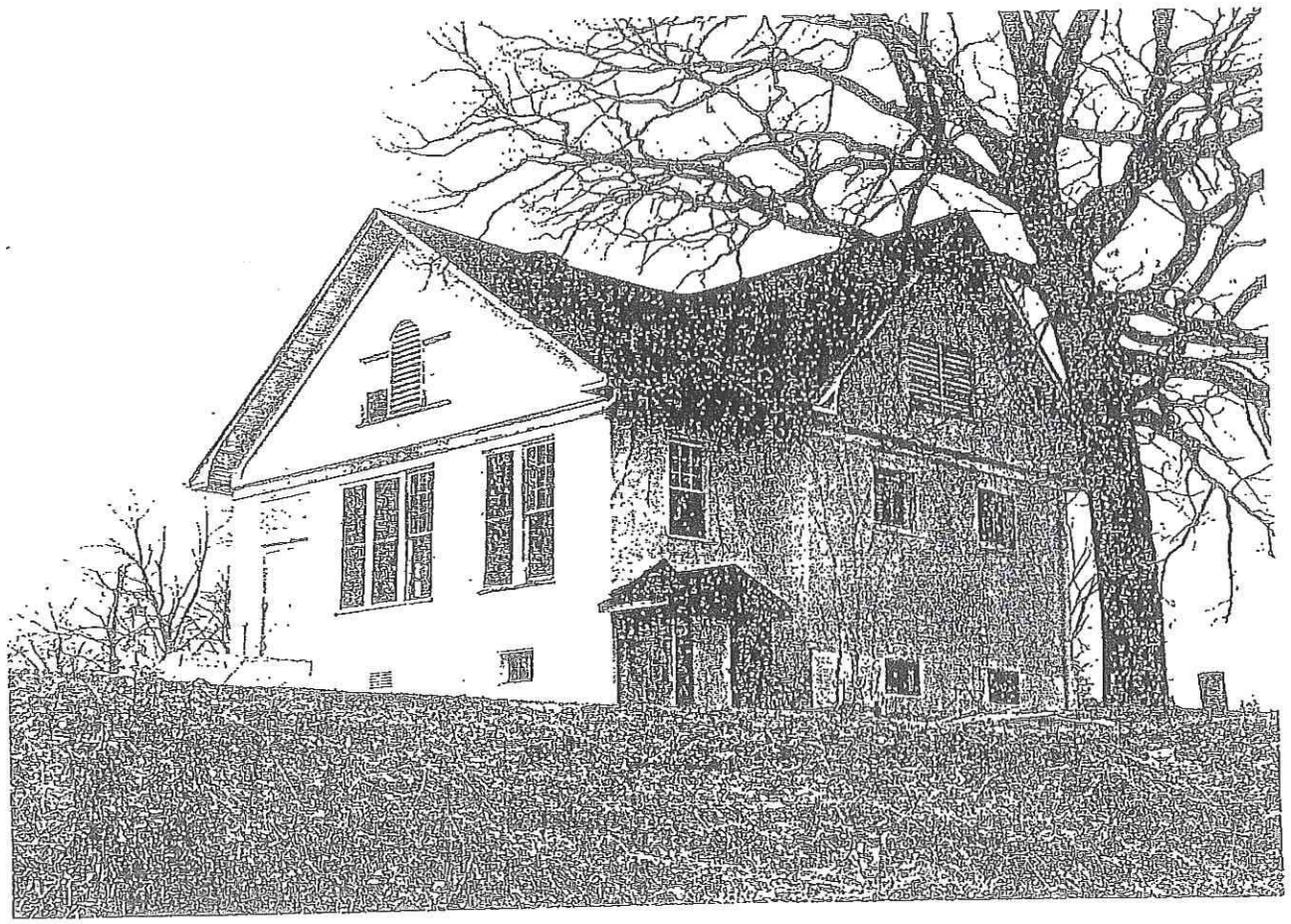
St. Louis Pond School



Pond School
Manchester Road

42. continued

of unpainted wood with low gable roof. Side windows are smaller, and some are casements.



27/2666G
1989

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Pond and Grover occupy historic crossroads, but the recent rerouting of both Manchester Road and Eatherton Roads has reshaped the topography of this district. The new Manchester Road, Highway 100, runs nearly parallel to the old road but roughly a quarter of a mile north of it. So far, access to this highway from properties fronting it has been limited. State Route 109, which follows Eatherton Road through this district, is for much of its length a new right-of-way designed to connect the western parts of the county that were inconveniently reached by the historic road pattern. More properties open directly onto Highway 109, as it is called, although this road too is not developed to the degree it may be expected to be.

The terrain in this district is generally rolling with some more hilly portions. Manchester Road is roughly the top of a watershed. To the south Hamilton Creek flows into the Meramec River, while to the north rise the headwaters of Bonhomme Creek, which flows into the Missouri River. The southern valley is largely protected by the Rockwood Reservation, 1,898 acres owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation. The wooded, rocky topography of the Reservation continues along Woods Road to within a few feet of Manchester Road.

The tangled skein of old rural roads that crisscross this landscape is rapidly being made more complex by an infill of modern subdivisions, with their typically writhing street patterns. So far, these developments are all east of Highway 109. The most important rural roads other than Manchester and Eatherton are Pond Road, which runs north from Manchester; Strecker Road, in the northeast corner of the district; and Old State Road, which cuts through the southeast corner of the district, the old route from Ellisville to Glencoe. Clayton Road, one of the most important highways in the metropolitan area with origins east of Forest Park, comes to an ignominious end here in a modern subdivision. An extension is planned as far as State Route 109, with further extension possible to Pond Road or beyond.

Although the construction of State Route 100 has accelerated the development of the area by improving traffic flow to the west, it has had the benefit of diverting through traffic from the old crossroads communities of Pond and Grover, which are the most significant parts of the area in terms of their history and visual character. Pond, which seems to be the older, is located where Pond Road meets Christy Road at Manchester. The buildings on three of those four corners retain some historic character, as do a few others nearby. Grover grew up around the intersection of Manchester and Eatherton, where a blacksmith shop, a general store, and a saloon were built, the latter two still surviving. Pond has one old "suburban" subdivision near it dating from 1910, and Grover has two dating from the 1920's. These period streetscapes have already been compromised by some modern intrusions, and more are scheduled, including a shopping center at the northwest corner of Manchester Road and Route 109. West of Pond some glimpses of the rural landscape remain, most notably at the Bethel Methodist Church, with its large cemetery. No doubt these scenes will also vanish before the end of the century given the current pace of development.

HISTORY

The settlement of west St. Louis County was generally less intense than in the northern or southern parts of the county. Farms were larger and roads were fewer. The west county was also much slower to be settled. E. Dupre's county atlas of 1838 shows many square miles still unclaimed, and Hutawa's 1847 atlas still shows many vacant sections. The first areas to be settled were along the rivers, particularly in the Bonhomme Bottom, the bottom land along the Missouri River. Land grants also reached into the interior along Bonhomme Creek and Wild Horse Creek. Louis Courtois, Senior, was granted over 6,000 acres on the Meramec at the west end of the county in 1800, and, according to testimony later given by Benito Vasquez to the U.S. land commissioners, Courtois and his family were to be seen traveling back and forth from this property as early as 1780.

In the area of Pond and Grover, most of the land along Manchester Road had been claimed by 1838, but the rest of township 44 range 3 was almost entirely vacant. Most of the early claimants settled here briefly if at all, selling their land to later settlers, particularly the incoming Germans. The exception was Cyrus Speers, who acquired a tract of 160 acres east of Pond Road and straddling Manchester Road about 1835 and opened a store there. (He also bought 40 adjacent acres from John Brockman, but that was not the site of the store, contrary to what Scharf wrote in 1883). The name Pond is said to come from a pond Speers had on his property, but it is not the pond that can currently be seen on the west side of Pond Road north of Manchester Road; that is on ground originally owned by Philip Tippet. Speers sold his land in 1846, so he couldn't have operated this store for many years. The most prominent resident of Pond was Frederick Essen, who took over Speer's store in 1853. His widow and children later operated a hotel there.

The primary reason for the location of Pond, and later of Grover, was the presence of Manchester Road, which was for years the most important road to the west in St. Louis County. Although stories of settlement along western Manchester Road go back to before 1820, the road was not officially authorized by the state legislature until 1835. It was intended to provide a route to the state capital in Jefferson City. Ballwin was laid out in 1837, about the same time as Cyrus Speers opened his store. When the railroads began to come into the county in the 1850's however, they followed routes closer to the Missouri and Meramec Rivers, leaving Manchester, Ballwin, Ellisville, Grover and Pond as backwaters, dependent on the much less important highway traffic and on trade with farmers in the immediate vicinity. Pond and Grover did have post offices from time to time, but often residents of the vicinity got their mail from rural routes based in Glencoe in the south or Centaur in the north.

By 1911, when William L. Thomas wrote his history of St. Louis County, Pond (presumably including environs) had a population of about seventy. In addition to the hotel, then run by Frederick Essen's daughter Emma, the settlement included two general stores, two blacksmith shops, and a whip manufactory. One of the blacksmith shops was Peter Blum's, on the south side of Manchester Road just east of Maple. Blum earlier had built the house at 2550 Pond Road. The other was John A. Kern's at 17300 Manchester Road, which

is still standing in the in the form of a gasoline service station, to which it was converted in the 1920's.

Grover in 1911 had a population of about forty. All three of its key businesses survive in somewhat altered form. Fred Rettker's general store at 16962 Manchester was then operated by Louis C. Fick. Fick also managed the switchboard of the Grover Mutual Telephone Company, which moved to a new building in Pond in 1920. The blacksmith shop at 16957 Manchester Road had been established as early as 1865 by Fridoline Wetterer and was owned at this time by his successor August Wiedner. The saloon, on the west side of the Eatherton Road intersection, was owned by Christian von Gruben, who, Thomas reported, "will not countenance anything approaching vulgarity, expecting his patrons always to conduct themselves in an orderly and gentlemanly manner." Christian's son Edward later took over the business.

The arrival of the automobile made Pond and Grover for the first time logical places of residence for people who didn't also work there. William and Emilie Poertner laid out a subdivision just west of the Pond Hotel in 1910, while Louis J. and Louisa Funk platted Grover Heights in 1925. Lindy Lane in Grover was privately subdivided by Caroline Paubel beginning in 1927. None of these subdivisions grew rapidly, however. When U.S. Route 66 was originally designated in 1926, the route from Chicago to Santa Monica went down Manchester Road. This brought another spurt of growth, recalled today by the former Big Chief Hotel, actually an early motel, located in Pond. Suburbanization of the west county may be said to begin with the incorporation of Ellisville in 1932. More extensive suburbanization, however, has occurred only within the past twenty years, and the recent state highway improvements to state routes 100 and 109 portend much more extensive development in the near future.

