





Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and developer Herbert Greenwald, planner Ludwig Hilberseimer, and landscape architect Alfred Caldwell. Together, they created a conceptual plan based on the “superblock” urban planning ideal that swept away the city grid and created a “suburb in the city.”

- The design is equally successful in terms of its overall site plan, a product of Ludwig Hilberseimer’s settlement unit ideals; its architectural design, with International style precedents established by Mies van der Rohe and carried out by subsequent architects; and its landscape design, in which Alfred Caldwell’s Prairie style tied together the site plan and architecture to create a naturalistic setting which remains attractive to city dwellers.
- Lafayette Park is the largest collection of Mies van der Rohe residential architecture in the country; and, depending on how the buildings are counted, is the largest collection of his work anywhere in the world. It is also the only realized grouping of low-rise townhouses by Mies.

**Integrity:**

- Lafayette Park retains a high degree of integrity in its form, materials, and aesthetic presentation. The location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association all remain.
- The most significant impact to the integrity of Lafayette Park was the loss of a two-story building that was originally part of the shopping center complex at the south end of the Park. Other minor issues include the installation of fencing and other landscape elements that diminish from the openness and accessibility, a hallmark of the design. However, these intrusions are minor in the context of the overall appearance and integrity of the landscape. Lafayette Park is now protected by local historic district ordinance.
- Lafayette Park’s integrity is equally based on its architecture and landscape, which together create an urban neighborhood within a lush, mature setting. The strong verticality of the high-rise buildings is balanced with wide horizontal planes created by clusters of townhouses and the open green space of the park. The landscape design provides a series of public open spaces, semi-private, and private outdoor spaces in a variety of scales and characters. Excellent pedestrian access and the relative absence of conflict between pedestrian and vehicular circulation are among the features that help define the uniqueness of Lafayette Park and which continue to contribute to its integrity.

**Owner of Property:** Various: public (Chrysler School – City of Detroit) and private (individual owners, condo associations, cooperatives).

**Acreage of Property:** Approximately 78 acres

**Origins of Nomination:** The nomination was commissioned by the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office as part of the *Michigan Modern* project to document and promote Michigan’s contribution to Modern architecture and design.



**Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:**

- NHL designation will recognize a benchmark development in the history of urban renewal in the United States.
- NHL designation will recognize one of the most significant Modern urban landscapes in the nation and the largest collection of Mies van der Rohe designed buildings in the world.

**Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:** None known.

**Landmarks Committee Comments:**

**Landmarks Committee Recommendation:** Designation. Mr. Hoyos moved, Dr. Chen seconded; unanimous approval.

**Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of 2/5/15):**

Ms. Lynn Burdell, President, Joliet Townhouses Cooperative, Inc., Detroit, Michigan

James B. Treece, President, Lafayette Town Houses, Inc., Detroit, Michigan

Christian Unverzagt, President, Board of Directors, LaSalle Townhouses Cooperative Association, Detroit, Michigan

Brian D. Conway, State Historic Preservation Officer, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Lansing, Michigan

Robert J. Hafel and Joan Elaine Blair (owners), Joliet Townhouse Cooperative Inc., Detroit, Michigan

**Advisory Board Recommendation:**