

It's official: Hyde Park a great neighborhood

By Steve Kemme • skemme@enquirer.com •
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Hyde Park, long considered one of Cincinnati's premiere neighborhoods, now has been recognized as one of the nation's premiere neighborhoods.

The American Planning Association named Hyde Park one of its 10 Great Neighborhoods for 2010 in its Great Places in America program.



"It has a great balance of the residential and the commercial," said Tre Jerdon, research associate with the American Planning Association, a Washington-based nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting good community planning. "That makes it a suburban-esque urban area.

"Hyde Park's historic architecture makes it unique," said Jerdon, who lived in Forest Park until moving out of the Cincinnati area in 1995. "It really stands out from other areas of the city."

Other factors that helped Hyde Park achieve its Great Neighborhood honor, Jerdon said, are the value its residents place on education, the good planning by the city that helped shape the neighborhood and the active nature of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Council.

"One of the things we work hardest at," said Ann Gerwin, president of the council, "is trying to preserve the right mix of residential and business. We want to protect the residential character of the community while supporting the local businesses."

Cincinnati Councilwoman Leslie Ghiz, who lived in Hyde Park for eight years, said she moved to the neighborhood in 2000 primarily because of its safety and the restaurants and shops in Hyde Park Square. "You have bikers, joggers and people walking around at night," she said. "It's a nice atmosphere to be in."

Hyde Park, a 10-minute drive from Downtown, is best known for its large, stately homes with manicured lawns and its picturesque and vibrant square.

Until the last decade of the 19th century, Hyde Park was a sleepy, rural area on the outskirts of Cincinnati.

In the early 1890s, a group of wealthy citizens formed a development group called the Mornington Syndicate. The syndicate changed its name and the community's from Mornington to Hyde Park by the time the village was incorporated in 1896.

In 1903, Hyde Park voted to become a part of Cincinnati, instigating its first big growth spurt.

The association's other nine Great Neighborhoods this year are: Downtown Frederick in Frederick, Md.; Historic Ninth Street Hill in Lafayette, Ind.; Lower Downtown in Denver; the Paseo in Oklahoma City; Cathedral Historic District in Sioux Falls, S.D.; Frank Lloyd Wright Historic Neighborhood in Oak Park, Ill.; Historic John S. Park Neighborhood in Las Vegas; Back Bay in Boston; and Riverside Avondale in Jacksonville, Fla.

Since the inception of the Great Places in America program, the association has honored 40 neighborhoods, 40 streets and 30 public spaces.