

4/9/90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

CLICK HERE for Multiple Property Listing,  
Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District  
Multiple Property Submission"

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sherman Park  
other names/site number Park #7

2. Location

street & number 1307 W. 52nd Street (mailing address)  not for publication  
city, town Chicago  vicinity  
state Illinois code IL county Cook code 031 zip code 60609

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
		objects
<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
The Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/ park

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ sports facility

OTHER/ fieldhouse

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/ park

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ sports facility

OTHER/ fieldhouse

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/

Beaux Arts Classicism

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof Asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Sherman Park is a 60.6 acre property located at 5500 south and 1300 west in Chicago, Illinois. Developed as one of the South Park Commission's (SPC) first neighborhood parks, Sherman Park's final plans were formally adopted in 1904. At that time, the character of the site and its surrounding neighborhood was dominated by the nearby stockyards and factory buildings. This was a relatively low lying and swampy area of the city. The Olmsted Brothers, landscape architects transformed the flat and dreary site into a masterfully crafted landscape which provided a sense of enclosure and buffer from the outside world. Though the park's landscape was predominantly naturalistic and informal, it had a unique relationship to its classically inspired architecture designed by Edward Bennett of D.H. Burnham and Company. The collaboration between the two design firms resulted in one of the premier parks of the South Park System.

The park continues to retain a strong degree of integrity in spite of certain alterations and additions which have been made over the years to accommodate the numerous and frequently changing demands placed on this public open space. Today, the park is composed of eight contributing features and ten non-contributing features which have been keyed onto a current plot plan and a historic plan attached to this nomination. The historic plan (1914) is a record drawing which represents the design as fully implemented during the park's period of significance.

Contributing features account for the majority of the park's elements. The landscape features are all counted as one contributing site, but have been numbered individually for reference purposes. They are: the lagoon [1], ball field island [2], small wooded island [3], and perimeter areas [4]. The circulation system is also counted as a contributing site. It is composed of the circuit drive and entrance [5], paths and walks [6], the terrace and boat landing [7] and 2 north and 2 south bridges [8, 9]. A third contributing site is the men's open air gym and running track [10]. The remaining contributing features include two structures: the concrete platform/ sand courts/ spray pool [11] and the swimming pool [12]; and three buildings: the women's gym and locker building/ power house/ service yard [13], men's gym and locker building/ storage room [14], and the fieldhouse [15].

The non-contributing features are generally minor additions and alterations which have been made to satisfy modern needs, particularly those associated with recreation. They tend to be reversible changes, and have only a slight impact on the historic character of the park.. There are ten non-contributing features. Seven are

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2 Sherman Park

classified as sites: the north playground [16]; southeast playground [17]; southwest playground [18]; tennis courts [19]; and basketball courts [20]. There is one non-contributing structure, the handball court [21], and two non-contributing buildings, the basket/ changing rooms [22] and the Sherman Park Library [23].

Though the Olmsted Brothers had originally hoped to use a formal design idiom for Sherman Park, in the final plan an informal, naturalistic landscape characterized the southern two-thirds of the property (Olmsted Brothers, 1904). In contrast, a classical and formal approach was taken in the design of the northern one-third section, which contained nearly all of the architectural elements of the park. While there have been some additions, modifications, missing features and reduction in vegetation, the essence of this contrasting design is still quite strong.

Three perimeter areas (southern, western and eastern) [4] define the outer portions of the southern two-thirds of the property. Here, the park's flat and rectangular site was transformed into rolling topography. This system of earthworks remains well in tact. The plantings throughout these bermed perimeters were extremely natural and informal with irregularly spaced trees and masses of shrubs. Though the amount of vegetation is greatly reduced today, the existing plantings are generally consistent with this historic design intent.

The only additions which have been made to the perimeter areas over the years have been two small playgrounds [17, 18] and the Sherman Park Library [23]. The playgrounds have little impact on the appearance of the landscape. They are both well screened, and cannot be seen from the Garfield Blvd. entrance to the park. The Sherman Park Library building was constructed in the 1930s, when the fieldhouse library space was no longer large enough to meet the needs of the public library. The building has been deemed non-contributing because it does not relate to the historic design intent for this area of the park. In addition, the building's integrity has been compromised by recent alterations. Due to its modest size, and the fact that little of the landscape around the building was altered, the Sherman Park Library does not detract from the historic character of the perimeter areas.

In the center of the southern section of the park, there is a meandering waterway [1] surrounding a large ball field island [2], and a smaller wooded island [3]. The ball field island is a wide expanse of green meadow which was designed not only to reinforce the pastoral setting, but also to provide play space for baseball. The large island, which is approximately 13.6 acres in size, continues to provide fields for ball games.

Drawing from a tradition of the earlier and larger "pleasure grounds," landscape views were incorporated into the design. A tree-lined walking path which gently curves around the lagoon provides a promenade from which the views are framed.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Sherman Park

---

The ball field island provides the middle ground, with the architecture of the northern section as the focal point. Such sweeping views are still afforded from every angle of the outer perimeter and the walking paths [6]. These paths follow an interior vehicular circuit road [5] which runs between the perimeter areas and lagoon in the southern two-thirds, and continues through the northern section one-third section of the park.

As it reaches the northern section of the park, the circuit road subtly becomes straightened, but completes its circular configuration. The formality of the northern section is pronounced by a circle concourse with a diameter of approximately 100 feet. This design element is symmetrically placed at the center of the north end of the road, on axis with the entrance to the park at its southern boundary.

A number of other landscape design elements also reflect the change which occurs at the northern section of the park as the classicism and symmetry of the architecture becomes the dominant feature. Unlike the hilly earthworks of the perimeter areas, the northern section is situated on a continuous elevated earthen platform which drops down to meet the lagoon. This landform gives prominence to the buildings and structures, reinforcing the landscape views.

The planting design also made a transition between the southern and northern sections of the park. Unlike the random and informal planting design of the southern section of the park, symmetrically placed trees on both sides of the north end of the circuit drive formed a formal esplanade (Olmsted Brothers, Preliminary Layout and Planting Plan, 1904). Trees were also used to around the edges of the circle concourse of the circuit road to articulate its shape. The classical "marblecrete" architecture was softened with vegetation. Vines were used on the buildings and pergolas. Neatly trimmed hedges and turf areas were used to define spaces and regulate traffic (SPC, Site Plan, 1914). Though there are still many trees in the northern section of the park, the amount of existing vegetation is considerably less than was intended. The contrast of this area's formal planting design is less apparent than it once was.

Even the design of the bridges reflects the contrast between the informal and formal sections of the park. The bridges which are located in the southern section of the park [9] are consistent with this naturalistic section. They have a rough-hewn, pebble finish and a narrow span. The design of the north bridges [8] relates to the formality of the northern section of the park. Constructed of the same "marblecrete" material as the architecture, they have a smoother finish. Their arch is more elegant and shallow than the south bridges, and unlike those bridges, they are symmetrically placed. The north bridges had ballustrades and simple classical detailing (SPC, 60' Concrete Arch, May 31, 1905; SPC, 50' Concrete Arch, June 6, 1905). They were similar in design to the nearby ballustrade [7] which lined the rear terrace and boat

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 4 Sherman Park

landing. None of the ballustrades remain today, and most of the classical detailing which was applied to the north bridges is currently missing.

The northern section of the park can be characterized as the recreation complex. Social, educational, and athletic activities took place in this concentrated area of the park. The north end of the circuit road, which was often closed off for festivals, concerts, and other special events, also functioned as the delineation of activities. On the north side of the road were the athletic facilities. Centered in this area is an outdoor swimming pool court which was originally enclosed by the men's and women's indoor gymnasiums and locker rooms, the office building, and pergolas. The gym and locker buildings still exist, but the pergolas and office building were removed. Flanking the indoor gymnasium and locker room buildings were the outdoor athletic facilities. On the west, adjacent to the women's indoor facilities, were the original women's open air gymnasium, children's playground, and wading pool, which included a pergola, sheltering a sitting area. On the east, next to the men's gymnasium and locker buildings was the men's open air gym and running track. Across the road from the athletic complex was the fieldhouse. This building provided the social, cultural, and educational programs.

The athletic component of the recreation complex was designed as a single unit. A semi-circular pergola, concrete platform, sitting area, and walks clarified its western edge. Originally, the pergola sheltered a concrete platform which provided a sitting area around a u-shaped wading pool. There were fluted removable poles running in an inner concentric semi-circle within the pergola, from which a cloth awning was attached (SPC, Wading Pool, Sand Courts and Pergola, August 1, 1905). The pergola had wooden rafters and plain concrete columns, devoid of capitals, bases, or any detailing (SPC Photographs, 1905-34). Today, the skeleton of the original features is well intact, though the pergola is missing, and the u-shaped wading pool was converted into a round spray pool [11]. The curved concrete platform still surrounds the four sand courts cut out of concrete paving. Adjacent to this sitting area, a new soft-surface playground has been placed [16] in the location of the original children's playground. The semi-circular shape of the western edge of the area was mirrored at the east end by the men's open air gym. While this area did not have a pergola, the semi-circular end of the cinder running track, reinforced by the vegetation, fencing, and paths, provided symmetry and balance to the design of the whole athletic area. Due to the loss of the pergola and the landscape features around the running track, this containment of the athletic components is currently less obvious. However, the concrete platform and sand courts at the west end [11], and men's running track [10] at the east end are still intact today. A handball court [21], which is a large concrete structure which is now located in the center of the men's open air gym. With the exception of this addition, and a reduction in the amount of surrounding vegetation, this section of the park is largely the same as it was originally designed.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5

Sherman Park

The indoor gymnasiums and locker buildings [13, 14], and the fieldhouse [15] were all composed of the same building materials as were used throughout the South Park Commission's system of neighborhood parks. They were constructed of "marblecrete" and had green tile roofs. The roofs had broad overhanging eaves with exposed end rafters. The architectural details of all of Sherman Park's buildings was cast directly into the "marblecrete." While a variety of simple, formal elements were used, a diamond pattern predominated. Though much of the original architectural fabric remains today, all of the roofing has been replaced with black asphalt shingles.

The men's and women's gymnasium buildings [13, 14] are two stories in height and have gabled roofs. The gable end facades have large segmental arched windows composed of panes in a union jack motif. The fenestration of the long facades of the gymnasium buildings are divided by pilasters which have diamond-shaped decorative detailing on their upper portions. These facades have rectangular hopper windows configured by a grouping of three windows across and two down. Each window is divided with crossed muntins.

The passageways linking the locker room buildings to the gymnasiums, the passageway linking the women's gymnasium with the power house, and the small room extending north from the men's gymnasium are all one story in height. They are constructed of "marblecrete" but unlike the locker and gym buildings, they are free of ornamentation and have flat roofs. The power house also has a flat roof and is free of ornamentation. From this structure, a tall square smoke stack extends.

The locker buildings are one story in height, and have hipped roofs. The long facades of the locker buildings are divided by pilasters which are located between the windows. The lights of the windows on these facades are also divided into union jacks, but these are rows of single windows. At the west end of the women's locker room building and the east end of the men's locker room building there are segmental arched windows with crossed muntins. On the east facade of the women's locker room building there were originally three sash windows. The west facade of the men's locker room had a door instead of a window. The openings in both of these facades were filled in when the pergolas and office building were removed (SPC, Photographs, 1905-34).

The office building, which was located at the center of the complex was a modest and scaled down version of the other buildings (gym and locker rooms). It had a hipped roof. Its north and south facades had doors, leading from the north drive to the inner swimming pool court. The office was flanked by pergolas composed of plain "marblecrete" columns (devoid of bases, capitals, or ornamentation) and wooden rafters. They ran east-west, linking with the locker rooms. These pergolas were replaced with walls which enclose the men and women's changing rooms, and a basket room has replaced the original office building [22]. Though this is a non-

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 6 Sherman Park

contributing structure, the alteration was made to address security needs, and provide the necessary open air changing areas and check-in basket room.

Similar to the east-west pergolas which originally linked the locker buildings to the office building, were two north-south entrance pergolas which extended from the locker buildings. These pergolas mirrored another set which originally extended from the entrances fieldhouse. The four north-south pergolas flanked the circular concourse of the circuit road. In general, the pergola rafters related to those which extended beneath the eaves of the buildings' roofs. The pergolas also defined the space and created unity. A variety of climbing vines covered sections of the building facades and pergola columns and rafters. Beneath the four entrance pergolas, there were brick walks of a herring bone pattern. Though the pergolas no longer exist, all four herring bone brick paths remain.

The fieldhouse [15] is composed of a two story center structure which is flanked on the east and the west by one story octagon pavilions. The two story portion of the fieldhouse has a hipped roof, and the pavilions have octagonal hipped roofs. Originally, the east pavilion, which housed a restaurant was enclosed, and the west pavilion was open. In 1907, the west pavilion was enclosed and converted to a library (SPC, Site Plan, 1914). Before this, there was a small library/ reading room within the two story portion of the building.

The north and south facades of the fieldhouse's center section are symmetrical in design and are almost identical. In the upper story there is diamond-shaped cast detailing which creates a band across the facade. Unlike the detailing of the gymnasium and locker buildings, there are medallions of a nautilus shell motif centered at intervals along this band. Terra cotta details enhance the "marblecrete" on both of the fieldhouse primary facades. Across each facade there are three Palladian openings divided by paired pilasters. Centered in the square capitals of the pilasters are bas relief star fish details, and at the corners there are modified acanthus leaf details. Each of the six arches had a terra cotta keystone, and under each sill of the second story windows was a small terra cotta bracket. On the north facade, the center arch projects from the primary plane of the building, and the Palladian motif is a blind arcade. In the center of the projecting bay, there is a two story concave arch sheathed with terra cotta. This provided the back wall for an engaged semi-circular fountain with a bronze bas relief sculpture, "The Fisher Boy" (which may not have been installed until 1917). The fountain still exists, but the bronze panel does not.

The two Palladian openings which flank the projecting center bay on the north facade, and the three identical openings on the south facade originally contained double door entrances, sidelights, and transom lights. All of the double doors have been removed and replaced with windows. Some of the sidelights have been converted to single doors. All of these alterations occurred without obscuring the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7

Sherman Park

Palladian motifs. Flanking the three Palladian arches on each facade there are two outer bays, divided into two distinct stories. On the north facade, there are single doors centered in the first story of each outer bay. These are original openings. Both single doors are surrounded by sidelights, a transom window, and capped with a cornice. On the south facade, the first story has triple double hung windows. In the second story outer bays of each facade, there are double casement windows. All of these are original windows.

The two octagonal pavilions are identical. Each corner is defined by a pair of engaged columns without capitals or bases. These are similar in design to those of the pergolas. The cardinal north and south facades of each octagon had paired doors surrounded by sidelights, and transom windows. Each of the other facades (with the exception of the connecting facades) had triple windows which extended 3/4 of length of the facade from the roof-line. The center window was wider than the two flanking windows (SPC Photographs, 1905-34, Chicago Park District Special Collections). The lower portions of the original window openings have been filled. The octagon pavilions do have triple windows which are located just beneath the roof-line. However, the length of the replacement windows is approximately two-thirds less than that of the original, and each of the triple windows is equal in width.

An additional alteration which has been made to the fieldhouse can only be seen on the exterior of the south facade. This alteration was the construction of two bathroom additions. They are identical one story structures. These small box-like additions are located between each octagon pavilion and the fieldhouse outer bays.

Originally, the fieldhouse sat on a formal platform. From each of the octagonal pavilions, a symmetrically placed set of steps led to the east and west lawns. These stairs no longer exist. The west lawn was originally developed as a music court. It had a wooden bandstand. The east lawn was an open landscape. Today, there are tennis courts [19] in the west lawn, and basketball courts in the east lawn [20]. On the south facade of the fieldhouse, the platform becomes the upper section of the rear terrace and boat landing [7]. Three sets of stone stairs extend down from the platform to the lower terrace. Originally, there were formal turf beds on the lower terrace. A set of stairs lead from the lower terrace down to a semi-circular landing at the water's edge. The stairs and projecting platform of the boat landing are intact, though the ballustrades are missing, and the formal layout of this area is now less apparent.

Sherman Park's architectural excellence is not only exemplified in exterior design, but the park's buildings have some noteworthy interior spaces. In the fieldhouse pavilions, the original exposed wooden ceiling rafters emphasize the octagonal shape of the spaces. Exposed wooden rafters and trusses are also found in the auditorium, and the gymnasium and locker room buildings. In addition to the impressive truss system, the fieldhouse's auditorium retains other fine interior features.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 8

Sherman Park

The case detailing (fretwork, dentils, the scored pattern etc.) carries through the interior of the center two story section of the fieldhouse. A mural of eighteen separate panels forms a band around the upper story of the room's walls. Composed of oil paint on canvas, the mural sections were painted by at least eight different artists. The mural depicts scenes related to American History. The title of each segment is painted on its lower portion. The auditorium room's remarkable interior integrity is evidenced by the fact that its current appearance is extremely similar to a historic photograph of the room which is included in Moore's Daniel H. Burnham: Architect, Planner of Cities (volume II).

Throughout the years, Sherman Park has received alterations and additions in response to changing trends in recreation, security and vandalism issues, and problems caused by deferred maintenance. It continues to function as a highly utilized urban park providing a variety of activities such as fishing (the lagoon is regularly stocked), baseball, football, tennis, basket ball, gymnastics, bicycle races (around the circuit road), arts and crafts, drama, and musical programs. In spite of all of the current pressures placed on this significant landscape, however, Sherman Park continues to convey a strong sense of its historic character. The property retains a high degree of the integrity of architecture, design, feeling, location, spatial relationships and setting. Though it has suffered from the loss of original fabric and a great reduction in vegetation, the skeleton of the original design is clear. With its rolling topography, unique waterway and islands, and classical architecture, the park still feels like a hidden world. The magnificence of Sherman Park is perspicuous in every season.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Landscape Architecture  
Social History  
Entertainment/ Recreation

Period of Significance

1904-07

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Burnham, D.H. and Company/ Bennett, Edward  
Olmsted Brothers

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Sherman Park meets with Criterion A and Criterion C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is among the first parks in the United States which were created in response to the Progressive Reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition, it is a significant example of the collaboration between important landscape design firm and architectural firm, the Olmsted Brothers and D.H. Burnham and Company.

First referred to as South Park #7, Sherman Park was one of the system of fourteen new parks which were originally proposed by the South Park Commission in 1903. Of that original group of proposed parks, six were to be squares (10 acres or less) and eight were to be small parks (between 11 and 100 acres in size). As the Sherman Park site was adjacent to Garfield Boulevard, the approximately sixty acre property met with the legislative requirements for small parks.

The park's period of significance spans from 1904 to 1907. These years encompass the period in which the planning and design commenced, construction took place, and the park opened to the public, went through early modifications and was officially named by ordinance (which passed August 17, 1907) (Breen, Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.), Historical Register of the Twenty-Two Superseded Park Districts, Volumes 1 and 2, Chicago Park District, 1941). It was named in memory of John B. Sherman who had served on the South Park Board of Commissioners from 1877 until his death in 1902. Sherman the was an organizer of Chicago's Union Stock Yards, which were located near the new park (SPC, Annual Report, 1905).

Sherman Park's programs and design clearly reflected the social agenda of the neighborhood parks of the Progressive Reform movement. All of the components which had been conceived of by the visionary J. Frank Foster, General Superintendent of the South Park Commission, were represented at Sherman Park (Tippens, "Synthesis of Reform: The Development of the Small Parks in Chicago's South and West Commissions," 1988). Thus, the park included: a wading pool, sand courts, a

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Sherman Park

---

children's playground, a fieldhouse, separate women and men's open air and indoor gymnasia and locker rooms, ball fields, and viewing and resting areas. In addition, the important social themes of the movement, such as the provision of educational and bathing facilities are represented by: the fieldhouse auditorium murals depicting important scenes from American history, the branch of the Chicago Public Library originally housed in one of the fieldhouse octagon pavilions, and the distribution of clean towels to people waiting in line to use the showers as depicted in a historic photograph located in the Chicago Park District Special Collections.

In 1903, the South Park Commission contacted the Olmsted Brothers and the D.H. Burnham and Company to solicit design ideas for the whole new system of neighborhood parks. Both firms had national reputations as well as long standing relationships with the Commission. By early 1904, both firms entered into contracts for the collaborative landscape and architectural design of the parks. However, at the time, Burnham was waiting the arrival of a new designer from New York, Edward Bennett, who was joining the firm specifically to work on this project. Therefore, the landscape design proceeded ahead of the built facilities, with the Olmsted Brothers on a schedule which began in mid-January, 1904. Preliminary landscape plans were due on March 1, 1904, preceding the date of Bennett's arrival and the beginning of architectural plans.

In the Olmsted Brother's initial recommendations to the South Park Commission on the design of squares and small parks, they expressed a strong feeling that most, if not all, of the neighborhood parks should be rendered in a formal manner to contrast Chicago's existing large "pleasure grounds." Concerned that the new parks were too small to be designed in an informal style, the Olmsteds stated that they wanted to avoid the "petty rendering of what can be far better accomplished in parks many times as large" (Olmsted Brothers firm, Manuscript Letter to Henry C. Foreman, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, December 7, 1903, p.11). It was also important to the firm that each of the new parks include the same components, but that each design be unique.

The Olmsteds were particularly interested in using a formal design idiom for Sherman Park. Due to the low and wet areas of the site, and greater amount of acreage (than most of the other new parks), it was determined that the plan would include a waterway which would loop around the majority of the park. In the firm's preliminary plan, dated January 15, 1904, the proposed waterway was very formal (Olmsted Brothers, Preliminary Plan, January, 1904). Delineated by concrete walls, it formed a rectangle around the outer perimeter of the park. The plan's interior rectangular island contained all of the park's buildings, as well as its ball field. Daniel Burnham asserted that he was particularly pleased with this scheme during a review of the Olmsted Brothers preliminary plans for all fourteen parks which took place in

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3

Sherman Park

February of 1904 (Notes, Chicago Parks, Visit by J.C. Olmsted, February 1, 1904, Library of Congress, Olmsted Papers Job Files).

The Olmsted Brothers formal plan for Sherman Park was rejected because the extensive hard features would be too expensive and the plan did not allow adequate space for the ball field. At a March 5, 1904 meeting, the South Park Commission President, Henry C. Foreman requested that the Olmsted Brothers submit a revised plan with a less formal waterway looping the park. The revised design, which had a naturalistic lagoon and relied less on the use of hard materials, was approved by the South Park Commission. The result of this revision process was that the new ideas of zoning recreational activities and the components generated by the playground movement were synthesized with the earlier design ideas which prevailed in the "pleasure grounds." A naturalistic pastoral setting predominated in the design. However, the northern section of the landscape was dramatically different. This area reflects the formal design objective which the Olmsteds had originally proposed for the whole park. The northern section was where the Park's architectural elements were located. Thus the final landscape design for this northern one-third related to the classicism of the architecture and contrasted with the naturalistic design of the remaining two-thirds of the park.

In assuming the role of designer for the buildings and structures of the South Park Commission's system of new neighborhood parks, Bennett had entered an undefined area in architecture. The result was the introduction of a new building type, "the fieldhouse" containing an auditorium, club and meeting rooms, a refectory, and often a branch of the public library. Thus, Bennett's task was to develop the way in which these buildings would be rendered. The buildings were laid out in complexes dividing the athletic functions and social, educational, and service functions into two parts of what was known as the recreation complex. Uniformity in design and architectural devices such as the pergola were used to unify the various elements. As the complex of facilities at Sherman Park was one of the most extensive of the new south parks, many pergolas were used to relate the buildings to each other and to the landscape.

The architecture of the whole system of new neighborhood South Parks was constructed of exposed aggregate reinforced concrete which has become known as "popcorn concrete" or "marblecrete." The inspiration for the design of the new buildings came from the White City and the City Beautiful Movement. The concrete was cast with classical detailing on both the exterior and interiors of the buildings. The buildings had green tile roofs and red stained eaves with white rafter ends. Similar to the respect in which the Olmsted Brother's developed related but varied plans to individualize each of the parks, Bennett varied the architectural design from park to park depending on size, neighborhood context and landscape design.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Sherman Park

---

In terms of design, Sherman Park was consistent with the other pioneering South Park Commission neighborhood parks in its style, details and materials. However, it can be interpreted as one of the South Park Commission's most superb neighborhood parks. Sherman Park's overall design is unique, because of the relationship between the formal northern section and the predominating naturalistic setting on the south end. The architecture exhibits a tremendous attention to massing and detail. The sophisticated composition of both of the landscape and architecture resulted in a cloistered environment, separate from the nearby squalor of the city. The importance of Sherman Park today is not only evidenced by its historic appearance, but by the documentation of this park in Daniel Burnham's 1909 Plan of Chicago and Moore's Daniel H. Burnham: Architect, Planner of Cities (volume II).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   2  

Sherman Park

Foster, J. Frank. "Paper on Small Parks given before the Chicago Society for School Extension," Chicago Historical Society, c. 1903.

Foreman, Henry C. "Chicago's New Park Service," Century Magazine, 69, #4, p. 611, 1905.

Library of Congress, Olmsted Papers.

Moore, Charles. Daniel H. Burnham: Architect, Planner of Cities. 2 Volumes, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921.

South Park Commission, Annual Report. Chicago, 1905.

South Park Commission, Annual Report. Chicago, 1906.

South Park Commission, Annual Report. Chicago, 1910.

Tippens, William W. "Synthesis of Reform: The Development of the Small Parks in Chicago's South and West Commissions," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Columbia University, 1988.

Tippens, William W., and Julia Sniderman. "The Planning and Design of Chicago's Neighborhood Parks," A Breath of Fresh Air: Chicago's Neighborhood Parks of the Progressive Reform Era, 1900-1925. The Chicago Public Library and the Chicago Park District, 1989.

Vinci, John and Stephen F Christy. "Inventory and Evaluation of the Historic Parks in the City of Chicago, Volumes 1-3, Prepared for the Department of Planning, City of Chicago, 1982-3.

Architectural and Landscape Plans and Drawings:

Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Sherman Park, Preliminary Plan, January 15, 1904.

Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Sherman Park, Plan, 1904.

Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Sherman Park, Preliminary Layout and Planting Plan, 1904.

Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Sherman Park, Grading Plan, 1904.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 3

Sherman Park

---

- Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Sherman Park, Grading Plan, 1905.
- South Park Commission, Sherman Park, 60' Concrete Arch., May 31, 1905.
- South Park Commission, Sherman Park, 50' Concrete Arch., June 6, 1905.
- South Park Commission, Sherman Park, Plan- Wading Pool, Sand Courts and Pergola, August 1, 1905.
- South Park Commission, Sherman Park, Plan of Building Showing Sewer and Water Pipes (8 sheets), 1906.
- South Park Commission, Sherman Park, Plan of Heating System, 1909.
- South Park Commission, Sherman Park, Site Plan, 1914.
- South Park Commission, Sherman Park, Plan of Sewer System, October, 1916.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park Branch Library, January 22, 1937.
- Chicago Park District, Men's Gym and Locker Building Elevations, March 2, 1937.
- Chicago Park District, Women's Gym and Locker Building Elevations, March 3, 1937.
- Chicago Park District, Fieldhouse First Floor Plan West Half and East Half, March 4, 1937.
- Chicago Park District, Fieldhouse South and West Elevations and Schedules, March 4, 1937.
- Chicago Park District, Open Showers Plan and Elevations, June 1, 1937
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Plot Plans, 1938.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Changes in Intersection and Entrance at Garfield Blvd. and Racine Ave., April 28, 1938.
- Chicago Park District, Men's Locker Building Foundation Plan, East Half, September 28, 1938.
- Chicago Park District, Women's Locker Building Foundation Plan, West Half, October 11, 1938.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 4

Sherman Park

---

- Chicago Park District, Floor Plan, Men's Gym and Locker Building, East Half, October 11, 1938.
- Chicago Park District, Roof Plan, Men's and Women's Gym and Locker Buildings, October 11, 1938.
- Chicago Park District, Fieldhouse Second Floor Plan, October 11, 1938.
- Chicago Park District, Fieldhouse Alterations and Additions, November 7, 1939.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Topographical Survey, (2 Sheets) September 13, 1940.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Planting Plan, 1949.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Fence for Playground at Racine Ave. and W. 54th St., April 16, 1950.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Proposed Children's Playground at Racine Ave. and W. 54th St., March 7, 1951.
- Chicago Park District- Fieldhouse Remodeling, July 16, 1953.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, General Plan of Removal of Drive at Loomis St. and Garfield Blvd., 1956.
- Chicago Park District, Fieldhouse Roof Repair, March 24, 1959.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Backstop Location Plan, June 29, 1961.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, East Lawn Multi- Purpose Play Area, March 13, 1962.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Area Lighting and Electric Layout, March 30, 1962.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Plan, Sandblasting of Buildings, August 30, 1962.
- Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Redevelopment of Entrances at S. Racine Ave. at 52nd St. and S. Loomis at 52nd St., May, 1962.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 5

Sherman Park

---

Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, New Floodlights on Field and General Relighting, 1962.

Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Planting Plan, 1967.

Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Interior Walk Paving Plan and Details, August, 1971.

Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Interior Walk Paving Plan, 1973.

Chicago Park District, Repairs to Northwest and Northeast Footbridges, March 29, 1976.

Chicago Park District, Athletic Field Renovation, January, 1982.

Chicago Park District, Athletic Field Floodlight Renovation, February 8, 1982.

Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, New Asphalt Tennis Courts, March 31, 1982.

Chicago Park District, Sherman Park, Planting Plan, 1983.

Chicago Park District, Plan, Playground Improvement, October, 1983.

Photographs:

South Park Commission Photographs, Sherman Park, 1905-34, Chicago Park District Special Collections.

Chicago Park District W.P.A. Photographs, Sherman Park, 1934-40, Chicago Park District Special Collections.

Chicago Park District Construction Photographs, Sherman Park, 1950, Chicago Park District Special Collections.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Articles, Books and Manuscripts:

Breen, Daniel, ed. Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.), Historical Register of the Twenty-Two Superseded Park Districts, Volumes 1 and 2, Chicago Park District, 1941.

Burnham, Daniel H. and Edward H. Bennett. Plan of Chicago. Chicago: The Commercial Club, 1909. Charles Moore, ed.

Chicago Post, January 24, 1906, Lincoln Park Commission Clipping Scrapbook, Chicago Park District Special Collections.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (38 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 60.6 acres

UTM References

A 

1	6
---	---

4	4	5	6	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	2	7	5	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

B 

1	6
---	---

4	4	5	6	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	2	6	9	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C 

1	6
---	---

4	4	5	2	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	2	6	9	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

D 

1	6
---	---

4	4	5	9	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	2	7	5	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is bounded by the north curb-line of Garfield Blvd., the south curb-line of 52nd. St., the west curb-line of S. Racine Ave., and the east curb-line of Loomis St.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This is the plot of land historically associated with the park.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Julia Sniderman, Preservation Planning Supervisor and William Tippens, Arch. Histori

organization Chicago Park-District date December 15, 1989

street & number 425 E. McPetridge, #3C telephone (312) 294-2226

city or town Chicago state Illinois zip code 60605

NY: Property Name, Multiple Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL Status

MISSOURI  
St. Louis County  
Wheeler House  
1000 N. Broad St.  
St. Louis 6/07/90 9000875

KANSAS  
Lea County  
Tipton House  
SR 90 W of Warsaw Branch  
Waltreak 6/07/90 9000876

COLORADO  
Rio Grande County  
El Norte Hotel  
925 First Ave.  
Monte Vista 6/07/90 9000879

South County  
Bell Mercantile  
101-111 Moffat Ave.  
Oak Creek 6/07/90 9000877

GEORGIA  
Gwinnett County  
Craig Robert Plantation  
1564 Five Forks Hickum Rd.  
Lawrenceville vicinity 6/08/90 9000885

Richmond County  
Harrisburg-West End Historic District  
Roughly bounded by 15th St., Dalton Way, Heard Ave., Milledge  
a Rd., and the Augusta Canal  
Augusta 6/07/90 9000882

Missouri County  
Brothwell Wine Works  
Jct. of First and Ireland Sts.  
Greensburg 6/07/90 9000870

MISSOURI  
St. Louis County  
Tule House  
408 Main St.  
Madisonville 6/07/90 9000874

MISSOURI  
St. Louis County  
Tule House  
Bounded by Carquest, Kennelbec, and Narragansett Aves. and Oro  
St.  
Oak Bluffs 6/07/90 9000877

MISSOURI  
St. Louis County  
Tule House  
Jct. of Lincoln Ave. and Roslyn Rd.  
Plym Heights 6/07/90 9000880

NORTH CAROLINA  
Forsyth County  
Conrad Starbuck House  
115 S. Cherry St.  
Winston-Salem 6/04/90 9000792

North Carolina  
Gamer Farm  
Jct. of NC 125 and I-95  
Days Crossroads vicinity 6/07/90 9000826

Sampson County  
Thirteen Oaks  
Sampson County MPS  
Jct. of US 13 and SR 1647  
Newton Grove vicinity 6/07/90 9000879

Multiple Resource Areas are identified by MRA  
Multiple Property Submissions are identified by MPS  
Thematic Resources are identified by TR  
NHL designates a National Historic Landmark

The following properties were also entered in the National Register but were excluded from a previous notice:

NY: Property Name, Multiple Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL Status

ILLINOIS  
Cook County  
Sherman Park  
Chicago Park District MPS  
Bounded by W. 52nd St., Racine Ave., Garfield Blvd., and Loop  
114 St.  
Chicago 5/21/90 90000745

The following nomination was listed on 2/6/89.  
Due to technical error, it must be delisted.

KENTUCKY  
Boone County  
Miller, John C., House  
3700 Beaver Road  
Union (Boone County MRA)