



FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT BUILDING CONSERVANCY

January 28, 2019

Heather Bailey
Madison Municipal Building, Suite 017 (Lower Level)
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 53703

RE: Nomination to the World Heritage List by the United States of *The 20th-Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright*

Dear Ms. Bailey:

On November 20, 2018, the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy submitted a revised World Heritage nomination of a group of eight major works by Frank Lloyd Wright, located in six states across the country. These selected properties have figured prominently in shaping the course of architecture, playing a definitive role in the development and evolution of Modern architecture during the first half of the twentieth century and continuing to the present.

I am writing to inform you that the **Herbert and Katherine Jacobs House** is among these eight sites, and if inscribed it will be officially recognized among the most important buildings in the World.

Created in 1972, the World Heritage Convention is one of the most important global conservation and preservation instruments. Its primary mission is to identify and protect the world's natural and cultural heritage considered to be of Outstanding Universal Value. The Convention embodies a visionary idea – that some places are so important that their protection is not only the responsibility of a single nation, but is also the duty of the international community as a whole. In addition to cultural values, World Heritage listing brings with it significant tourism, local economic development and employment.

I have attached information about the nomination. In May 2019, we will be informed as to whether the nomination will be recommended for listing. A final decision will then be made at the World Heritage Committee in July 2019.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy is the only organization dedicated to the preservation of all of the built works of Frank Lloyd Wright worldwide. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara Gordon
Executive Director
Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy

Attachment

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FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT BUILDING CONSERVANCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eight Buildings Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright Nominated to the UNESCO World Heritage List

The United States previously submitted a collection of Wright buildings to the World Heritage List in 2015; the revised nomination will be considered by the World Heritage Committee in July 2019.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy, a private nonprofit organization based in Chicago, Illinois, has coordinated the nomination to the World Heritage List of a group of eight major works by Frank Lloyd Wright, widely considered to be the greatest American architect of the 20th century.

The 20th-Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, spanning 50 years of Wright's career, includes Unity Temple (constructed 1906-1909, Oak Park, IL), the Frederick C. Robie House (constructed 1910, Chicago, Illinois), Taliesin (constructed 1911-1959, Spring Green, Wisconsin), Hollyhock House (constructed 1918-1921, Los Angeles, California), Fallingwater (constructed 1936-1939, Mill Run, Pennsylvania), the Herbert and Katherine Jacobs House (constructed 1936-1937, Madison, Wisconsin), Taliesin West (begun 1938, Scottsdale, Arizona) and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (constructed 1956-1959, New York, New York).

The collection of Wright buildings represents the first modern architecture nomination from the United States to the World Heritage List.

The National Park Service submitted the nomination to the World Heritage Centre in Paris on November 20, 2018, and it will be reviewed at the 2019 session of the World Heritage Committee, scheduled to be held in early July in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The document, which was originally reviewed by the World Heritage Committee in 2016, has been revised in accordance with the Committee's request at that time for changes.

The owners of all the properties are participating voluntarily. Nominations are submitted by the U.S. Department of the Interior to the World Heritage Committee, an independent body that operates under the umbrella of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The nomination was prepared under the guidance of the National Park Service's Office of International Affairs. The nomination document is available on the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy's website at <https://www.savewright.org/news/revise-nomination-submitted-inscription-unesco-world-heritage-list/>.

As the only organization with the mission to facilitate the preservation and maintenance of the remaining structures designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, this nomination is one of the most important shared endeavors the organization has undertaken.

History of the Nomination

The United States nominated a series of 10 Frank Lloyd Wright sites in 2015 to the World Heritage List. At its meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, in July 2016, the World Heritage Committee (WHC) decided to "refer" the nomination. A referral provides the nominee an opportunity to respond to comments by the WHC and resubmit the nomination. There was strong general sentiment among the Committee members that the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright is globally important and should be recognized for its "outstanding universal value."

The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy worked with the council of sites and leading scholars over the last two years to revise the nomination and rework the justification for inscription. Based on advice from the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which is the official advisor to the WHC for cultural properties, the group made the difficult decision to remove Price Tower (constructed 1953-1956, Bartlesville, Oklahoma) and Marin County Civic Center (constructed 1960-1969, San Rafael, California) from the nomination, dropping the list to eight Wright-designed buildings.

"Serial" nominations involving discontinuous properties by a single architect are highly complex and requiring further refinements to the nomination is not uncommon. In 2016,

the WHC inscribed 17 works by Le Corbusier to the List after the nomination was reworked multiple times.

The Frank Lloyd Wright nomination has been in development for more than a decade, entailing the cooperation of the parties whose sites comprise the nomination, independent scholars and a substantial financial commitment realized through subsidies and donations, as well as countless hours donated by staff and volunteers.

What is the justification for inscription?

The 20th-Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright entails eight properties that have figured prominently in shaping the course of architecture. This series played a definitive role in the development and evolution of Modern architecture during the first half of the 20th century and continuing to the present. The Outstanding Universal Value of the series is manifested in three attributes.

First, it is an architecture responsive to functional and emotional needs, achieved through geometric abstraction and spatial manipulation. Spatial continuity is expressed through the open plan and blurred transitions between interior and exterior spaces; dynamic forms used innovative structural methods and inventive uses of new materials and technologies; and the buildings have a richness of experience created through contrast and carefully composted paths of movement.

Second, the design of the buildings in this series is fundamentally rooted in nature's forms and principles. All the buildings have an integral relationship with nature, expressed either literally in response to natural settings, or symbolically. They show a unity of design, in the way the parts relate to the whole, and the intrinsic qualities of materials are clearly expressed.

Third, the series represents an architecture conceived to be responsive to the evolving American experience, but which is universal in its appeal. This work vigorously embraces the new, addressing changing modes of living in the 20th century and promoting the value of the individualized expression. In transforming inspirations from other places and cultures, Wright created an original American architecture.

What is the timeline for the nomination?

The nomination will now be reviewed by ICOMOS, a private organization that is an official advisor to the World Heritage Committee. In May 2019, ICOMOS will make a recommendation as to whether the nomination should be listed, for the consideration of the World Heritage Committee, which meets in July 2019 and will make a decision on the nomination at that time. The Committee is made up of a rotating group of 21 countries elected from among the member countries of the World Heritage Convention.

What is the World Heritage Convention?

United States proposed the [World Heritage Convention](#) to the international community and was the first nation to ratify it, in 1972. The Convention, the most widely accepted international conservation treaty in human history, seeks to promote international cooperation to protect both cultural and natural sites that are of value to all of humanity.

What are the effects of nomination?

World Heritage listing is primarily honorary, though it also can often stimulate increased tourism. The Wright sites would be one of only 24 World Heritage sites in the U.S., and the only listing of modern architecture in this country. A list of U.S. World Heritage sites is available on the National Park Service website:

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/internationalcooperation/worldheritage.htm>

Listing does not impose any new regulations or restrictions on properties. The nomination documents the existing legal protections for the property. The nomination also identifies a “buffer zone” that protects the setting of the property through existing land-use laws, but which is outside the formally nominated property boundary.

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