

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



(FORMER) SCHLITZ BREWERY-TIED HOUSE 9401 S. EWING AVENUE



CITY OF CHICAGO
Lori E. Lightfoot, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Maurice D. Cox, Commissioner

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within the designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

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(Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House

9401 South Ewing Avenue

Date of Construction: 1907

Architect: Charles Thisslew

INTRODUCTION

In 2011, eight Chicago brewery-tied houses and one Chicago brewery stable building were designated as Chicago landmarks. In 2019, the current owner of the Schlitz Brewery-Tied House located at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue made a formal suggestion to the Program Committee of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks to be considered for landmark status as well. Attached herein, the Designation Report entitled (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House (5120 N. Broadway) is incorporated into this report and provides a more detailed discussion of the historical and architectural significance of Chicago's brewery-tied houses.

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, a combination of intense competition among brewing companies and increasing legal restrictions and social pressures on public drinking establishments compelled brewing companies in Chicago to adopt the "tied house" system. Developed in Britain a century earlier, the tied-house system involved the direct control of taverns (then known as saloons) not by independent entrepreneurs, but by large brewing companies which sold their products exclusively at their own establishments.

Brewery control of the tavern trade in Chicago began with the purchase of existing saloon buildings, but soon evolved into the acquisition of choice neighborhood real estate and the design and construction of tavern buildings. At least forty-one of these tied-house buildings are known to survive in the city. They were built by large Milwaukee-based brewers, most notably Schlitz, and by several local brewers such as the Atlas, Birk Brothers, Fortune Brothers, Gottfried, Peter Hand, Standard, and Stege breweries. In many cases, to attract customers, brewing companies employed high-quality architectural designs and popular historical styles of architecture for their tied houses to attract, and perhaps also to convey the legitimacy and decency of the neighborhood saloon in the face of rising social opposition to alcohol consumption by the temperance movement.

In addition to the tied house's contribution to Chicago's historic neighborhood architecture,

**(Former) Schlitz Brewery Tied-House
9401 S. Ewing Ave.**



The (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House, shaded in the above map, is located at the southeast corner of E. 94th Street and S. Ewing Avenue within the East Side Community Area.

these buildings convey important aspects of Chicago and American history in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, including the large influx of European immigrants, the growth of the vertically-integrated business model which sought to control all aspects of production from raw material to retail sale, and the increasing political power of anti-alcohol activists. The proliferation of tied houses in cities like Chicago was one of many factors that ultimately led to National Prohibition in 1919.

The former Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue is an excellent example of the architecturally distinctive Chicago taverns built by breweries around the turn of the twentieth century.

EAST SIDE COMMUNITY AREA HISTORY

The former Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue is located at the southeast corner of South Ewing Avenue and East 94th Street in the East Side Community Area. The East Side community began to develop in earnest during the 1870's, just after the neighboring South Chicago community began its development. Both areas benefited greatly from their location at the intersection of Lake Michigan and the Calumet River. Industrial development, in the form of early steel mills and the establishment of rail lines in the area helped position the East Side community for further industrial growth and population increase. Streetcar service along Ewing Avenue further cemented this growth.

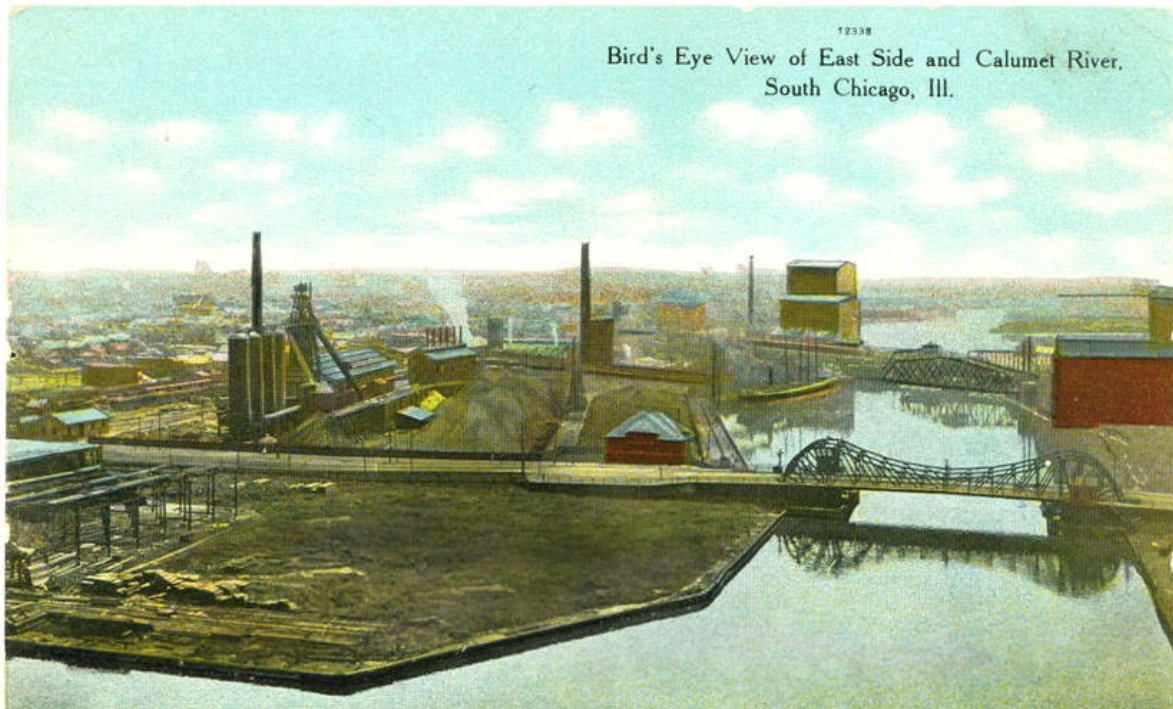
Early residents were largely comprised of people of German and Swedish origin. Later waves of ethnic immigrants hailed from Central and Eastern Europe and included Slovenes, Serbians and Croatians by the late 1880's. Later still, after 1910, Italians and other ethnic groups joined the community. By 1930, the population of the East Side reached 16,839.

Today the East Side Community Area contains four designated Chicago landmarks, including: the Illinois-Indiana State Line Boundary Marker (1838, designated 2002); the Calumet Park Fieldhouse (1922-24, designated 2006) and the North and South Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway Bridges (1912-15, designated 2007).

BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

The building was designed in the Queen Anne style by architect Charles Thisslew in 1907. Primarily rectangular in plan, the brick building is two-stories in height and is designed to take full advantage of its angled corner location. A simple but prominent arched parapet wall gives further definition to the corner along with limestone arching which frames in the main corner entrance. A simple metal cornice extends along the entire west, corner and north facades, providing a separation from the second floor of the building and the parapet wall above. Face brick is used on both the west and north facades while common brick is used on the secondary south façade. Further use of limestone accents occur on the corner and west façades, separating the first and second floors.

The building was commissioned by Edward Uihlein, the manager of Schlitz Brewery's



A postcard view of the East Side and Calumet River, circa 1910. (State of Illinois Digital Archives)



The (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House, located at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue, circa 1910s to 1920s. (Chicago History Museum via Mike Medina)



The (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue has been home to several businesses since its construction in 1907. The photo at the top (circa 1910s to 1920s) advertises an “Auto-Rest” establishment that likely provided rooms for rent to travelers coming into or out of Chicago along U.S. Route 41 (Ewing Avenue) (Chicago History Museum via Mike Medina). Club Selo occupied the building around 1950 (image lower left) and was known for hosting the Popovich Brothers, who were a Serbian-American Tamburitza Band (Mike Medina). In later years, the building was occupied by J.B.’s Bamboo Club known also as the Bamboo Lounge (photo, lower right, circa 1970s) (Mike Medina).

operations in Chicago who built fifty-seven tied houses in Chicago from 1897 to 1905. A small change to the original front façade included removing a portion of the original front window glass at a later date. The change was possibly designed by architect W.C. Presto who is credited with a similar façade change at the Schlitz Brewery Tied-House located at 5120 N. Broadway. The alteration was completed in a rustic and idiosyncratic Tudor Revival style, with roughly-laid brick masonry interspersed with irregular limestone flagstones on the lower half of the window opening. Though a departure from the Queen Anne style, the stylized Tudor alteration to the building is a significant early change.

A Schlitz globe is executed in terra cotta and located prominently in the middle of the upper west façade. Additional elements of the building include simple limestone key stones just under the metal cornice along the corner and front facades.

The building has been home to several different business establishments after Schlitz operated it. In particular, an establishment known as Club Selo occupied the building around the early 1950's. It was during this time that Club Selo gained notoriety for hosting musicians playing Tamburica music, which traces its history to Central and Eastern Europe. Indeed, the Popovich Brothers, known as a Serbian-American Tamburitza Band, performed in various establishments including Club Selo. Several members of the band also worked in area mills and other industries.

The upper floor of the building was designed for multiple residential use and is configured that way today. It is likely that this residential portion of the building served individuals in the many industries in the area who were in need of short term accommodations. An early photo of the building also advertises an "Auto-Rest" business that may have served travelers into or out of Chicago along U.S. 41 (Ewing Avenue).

TIED-HOUSE ARCHITECTURE IN CHICAGO

The (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue is representative of a distinct and recognizable building type in the city. Previous research has documented at least forty-one brewery-tied houses that survive in Chicago, and it is likely that there are other examples not yet identified. Although Schlitz built the majority of them, a host of other breweries built taverns in Chicago, including the Milwaukee-based Blatz, Pabst, and Miller breweries, as well as local brewers such as the Atlas, Birk Brothers, Fortune Brothers, Gottfried, Peter Hand, Standard, and Stege companies.

Compared to the independent shopkeeper or saloonkeeper, the brewing companies possessed substantially larger budgets for acquiring prime real estate and to build high-quality buildings. In the hands of brewers, the common "store and flat" building was elevated through well-designed architecture to attract customers and to promote the brewer's brand. The possibility also cannot be excluded that brewers employed attractive, and sometimes cheerfully picturesque, architecture to deflect criticism from their "Dry" opponents who saw the saloon as a moral threat.



The (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House, 9401 S. Ewing Avenue



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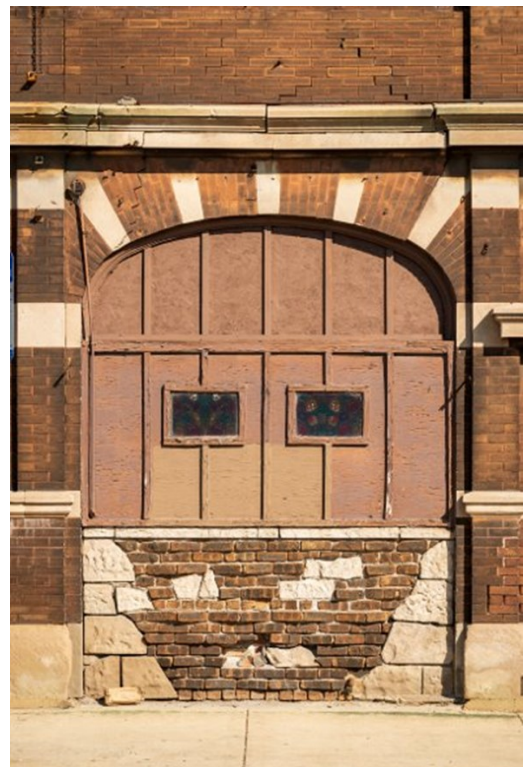
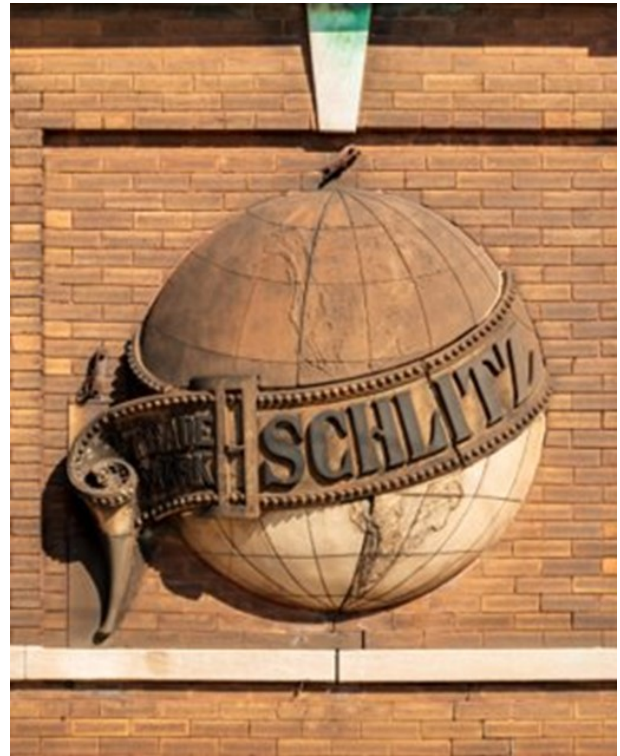
Brewery-tied houses are most commonly found at prominent and highly-visible corners of at least one, if not two, neighborhood commercial streets, typically with streetcar or nearby elevated train service. Brewing companies favored locating in neighborhoods that historically were working class, often with industrial complexes in walking distance. (It appears that no brewery-tied houses were located in Chicago's downtown.) While many of these neighborhoods had large immigrant populations, there is no indication that brewers located their taverns to serve specific ethnic groups. Contemporary observers of the Chicago saloon at the turn of the twentieth century noted that it was one of the few places where immigrants from several ethnic groups mingled, although most neighborhoods were predominantly inhabited by one or a few ethnic groups.

The overall form of the brewery-tied house is based on the common "store and flat" building, with the street level a retail space and private apartments on the second and, in some cases, third stories. In some instances the rear portion of the tavern included an attached one-story hall. Structurally, the tied houses typically consist of load-bearing masonry exterior walls with a wood-frame interior structure and a flat roof. Rectangular in plan, the tied houses typically measure 25' wide with depths ranging from 75' to 120'.

With their corner locations, tied houses have two street-facing elevations. Ornamentation is concentrated on the narrow front elevation, with the longer side elevation typically being less ornamented to plain, depending on the prominence of the side street. The utilitarian rear elevation and the interior side elevation, often obscured by a neighboring structure, are most characteristically unadorned common brick. The street-facing elevations are typically clad in face brick, often in two contrasting colors arranged in attractive patterns or tapestry bonds. Though less common, limestone cladding is also found at the front elevations of some tied houses in combination with a face-brick side elevation. Limestone is also used for carved ornamentation, sills, string courses, and as contrasting accents in arched brick openings. Pressed metal, either painted galvanized steel or patinated copper, is used for bay and turret cladding, finials, cornices, copings, and other ornamental details such as around more elaborate window openings.

The primary entrance to the tied houses is most commonly located at a chamfered corner of the building, often marked with a projecting bay, or oriel window, or turret above it. The front elevation often originally featured large storefront windows lighting the tavern interior and a separate entrance leading to the second-floor apartments. The longer side-street elevation of the first story commonly includes relatively large window openings and a secondary entrance to the tavern.

Architectural ornamentation on the tied houses is concentrated at the upper stories and parapet. Upper-story bay windows or corner turrets, often clad with pressed metal decoration and topped with conical or bonnet roofs, are often located at the corner. A second or even third window bay is also commonly found on side elevations. Parapets frequently include false gables, often stepped or scrolled, and crenellation. In addition to horizontal stringcourses, narrow brick piers



Architectural details of the (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue include dark face brick, limestone accents, metal cornice work and a simple parapet wall at the upper corner façade of the building (Upper Left). A characteristic terra cotta Schlitz globe is prominently deployed on the building's west façade (Upper Right). A Tudor-Revival styled alteration of the original glass window opening on the west façade was likely designed by W.C. Presto in the 1930's.

with stone or metal finials are also common. Patterned and tapestry brick, blind arches, corbelling, and pressed-metal and carved limestone decoration are often used in various combinations on the upper stories of tied houses. Depending on the individual building, and perhaps reflecting the character of the surrounding neighborhood, the use of ornamentation ranges from the more restrained to elaborate. In some of the more elaborate designs, complex rooflines and ornamentation is characteristic, including window openings at the second story framed with pressed-metal and carved limestone decoration that projects from the wall surface.

Tied-house facades are often branded with the trademark or insignia of the brewing company rendered in carved stone, terra cotta or pressed metal. Perhaps the most recognizable is Schlitz's "belted globe." The design is based on sculptor Richard Bock's design for Schlitz's exhibit at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. Bock described it in detail in his memoirs which were later published by his daughter in 1989:

There was an exhibition piece I needed to do for the Manufacturer's Building, the Schlitz Brewery trademark of a huge globe with a buckled belt around it. This globe was supported by four female figures in playful poses representing the four hemispheres. At their feet were gnomes. Flanking this centerpiece were four pedestals constructed of beer kegs, three to a pedestal, and on top of each a herald blowing a trumpet.

Franz Rugiska, a sculptor who had also worked with Louis Sullivan, assisted Bock with the piece. Other brewing company insignia found on Chicago's tied houses include the trademarks of Stege, Peter Hand, Standard, Blatz and Birk Brothers breweries.

ARCHITECT CHARLES THISSLEW

The former Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue was designed by architect Charles Thisslew (1858-1944). The Schlitz brewery also commissioned Thisslew to design other tied houses which survive in the city, including 2159 W. Belmont Ave. (1903-1904), 5120 N. Broadway Ave. (1904), 2001 W. Grand Ave. (1905), and 2901 W. Diversey Ave. (1902). The Chicago Historic Resources Survey identifies a number of single-family residences and flat buildings designed by Thisslew in a range of historically-popular styles from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. A concentration of eight Thisslew-designed two- and three-flat buildings from 1897 is located on the 2100-block of W. Concord Pl. in the Wicker Park Chicago Landmark District. Large and high-style single-family residences designed by Thisslew can also be found in that district as well as the Logan Square Chicago Landmark District. Thisslew's non-residential work includes the Mount Olive Cemetery Gatehouse (1901) and the Norwegian Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital (1900, demolished) that was at Leavitt St. and Haddon Avenue.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sect. 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a recommendation of landmark designation for a building, structure, object, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated “criteria for landmark designation,” as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity. The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City’s History

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois or the United States.

- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue represents a distinct property type that conveys important themes from Chicago and American history from the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, including the rise of vertically-integrated manufacturing production and retail sales; the role of science and technology in the transformation of crafts into industries, including the brewery industry; increasing competition among businesses as the city and country grew; the role of the neighborhood saloon; the role of ethnic immigrants as both leaders of the brewing industry and as consumers; and the national question about the role of alcohol in society which would later culminate in national Prohibition.
- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue conveys the economic prominence of the brewing industry in Chicago and Milwaukee during the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, made possible by those cities’ access to grain markets, fresh water, supplies of natural ice, and train transportation.
- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue is representative of the brewing industry founded and managed by German immigrants, and who were prominent businessmen active in the city’s affairs; and therefore reflects the importance of ethnic immigration in Chicago’s history and development, in general, and specifically the contributions of the Chicago’s German ethnic community, one of the city’s largest ethnic groups.
- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue is typical of other brewery-tied houses in Chicago which were most commonly located on prominent corners of commercial streets, well served by street cars or elevated trains, and in neighborhoods settled by large ethnic and working class populations; and, as such, the building conveys the early social character and leisure habits of these early residents of Chicago’s neighborhoods.
- As the unintended manifestation of legislation and social pressure by progressive reformers,

the Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue conveys the national debate about alcohol consumption and the “Dry” movement in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The subsequent proliferation of drinking places under the tied-house system was a factor in the establishment of national Prohibition in 1919.

- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue is one of a great number of buildings built in Chicago by the Schlitz Brewery, which may be traced back to the aftermath of the Fire of 1871, when the brewery sent water and, in particular, beer to the ravaged city, establishing a loyal customer base in Chicago, and solidifying its motto “The beer that made Milwaukee Famous.”

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue represents a distinct and recognizable building type in Chicago’s neighborhoods typified by such features as its display of brewery insignia, its prominent corner location and entrance on a neighborhood commercial street, and its use of typically high-quality masonry construction and picturesque styles of architecture.
- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue exemplifies aspects of picturesque styles of architecture including the Queen Anne and Tudor Revival. Popular in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, these styles emphasize visually-pleasing characteristics and motifs drawn from earlier periods, and these styles helped the brewery-tied houses to present a legitimate and socially-responsible image amidst growing opposition to drinking establishments.
- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue shows the influence of the Queen Anne style of architecture, with its simplified arched parapet corner, and its use of a mixture of exterior textures and building materials, including brick, limestone, and metal cornice.
- A later alteration to the Schlitz Brewery-Tied house at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue is representative of the Tudor Revival style of architecture in the use of roughly coursed brick masonry and flagstone masonry.
- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue was designed by Chicago architect Charles Thisslew, who designed a number of other Schlitz Brewery-Tied Houses which survive in the city, including 2159 W. Belmont Ave. (1903-1904), 5120 N. Broadway Ave. (1904), 2001 W. Grand Ave. (1905), and 2901 W. Diversey Ave. (1902).
- Characteristic of Chicago’s brewery-tied houses, the Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue displays Schlitz’s “belted globe” insignia in its facade, the design of which is based on sculptor Richard Bock’s design for Schlitz’s exhibit at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition.

Criterion 6: Distinctive Theme

Its representation of an architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other theme expressed through distinctive areas, districts, places, buildings, structures, works of art, or other objects that may or may not be contiguous.

- The Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue is part of a larger group of brewery-tied houses and associated buildings in Chicago that together convey important aspects of Chicago and American history from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, including: the rise of large, vertically-integrated commercial enterprises combining production and retail sales; the economic might of brewing companies in Chicago and Milwaukee; the role of the neighborhood saloon; the role of immigration in brewing and ethnicity in beer consumption; and the national debate about the role of the saloon in society which culminated in national Prohibition in 1919.
- Chicago's brewery-tied houses represent a distinct building type, and the individual examples of this type enhance the architectural character of diverse Chicago neighborhoods.

INTEGRITY CRITERIA

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic value. The (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue retains excellent physical integrity, displayed through its siting, scale, overall design, and historic relationships to its surrounding neighborhoods. It retains the majority of its historic materials and original detailing and imparts a strong sense of its original visual character. The building features the majority of its physical characteristics that define its historic and architectural significance, including historic wall materials in brick and limestone, its simplified corner parapet arched wall, its display of the insignia of the brewing company that built the building, and its corner and side entrances to the tavern. A later alteration to the Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue at the location of the original front glass window on the west facing façade is representative of the Tudor Revival style of architecture in the use of roughly coursed brick masonry and flagstone masonry. The age, design, craftsmanship and historic associations of these alterations contributes to the building's overall architectural and historical significance.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the “significant historical and architectural features” of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark. Based upon its evaluation of the (Former) Schlitz Brewery-Tied House at 9401 S. Ewing Avenue, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as follows:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building.

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