

Request:

Project Name: Wheelmen's Bench

Location:

Applicant:

Representative:

Jurisdiction:

Council District:

Case Manager:



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## Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

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# MEMORANDUM

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To:	Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission
From:	Savannah Darr, Historic Preservation Officer
Date:	August 9, 2024

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**Case No:** 24-LANDMARK-0002

**Property Address:** 3190 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

### Case Summary/Background

The Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission met on July 25, 2024 to review the request for Individual Landmark designation of Wheelmen's Bench. Commissioners in attendance were Chair Morgan Ward, Ashlyn Ackerman, Stefanie Buzan, Christopher Fuller, Kate Meador, Richard Price, Thomas O'Brien III, and Amin Omidy. After hearing from Staff and other interested parties, Commissioner Ackerman made a motion to continue the case to the next regularly scheduled meeting so that staff could draft a list of character defining elements and a modified designation boundary. Commissioner Omidy seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

### Proposed List of Character Defining Elements

Based on direction from Commissioners, Staff has compiled the following

- Rusticated stone details
- Inscription
- Internal bike wheel design on ground surface
- Central fountain feature
- Entry points and access
- Visibility from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street
- Light fixtures (as part of the original design)

### Proposed Designation Boundary

Based on direction from Commissioners, Staff has created one option for a designation boundary that includes the bench, access/entry points, and the viewshed to S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (**Figure 1**).



**Figure 1. Designation Boundary Option 1.**

The second option for a designation boundary includes the bench, access/entry points, and the planting area in front of the bench (**Figure 2**).



**Figure 2. Designation Boundary Option 2.**



# **Wheelmen's Bench**

## **Draft Report on the Proposal for Designation as an Individual Landmark**

**(24-LANDMARK-0002)**



**Metro Historic Landmarks and  
Preservation Districts Commission**

**May 28, 2024**

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## **Case Information**

### **Individual Landmark**

As defined by the Louisville Metro Code of Ordinances (LMCO) 32.250, an Individual Landmark is “a structure or site, including prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, designated as a local historic landmark by the Commission as provided in this subchapter or by action prior to the effect of this subchapter. A landmark structure or site is one of significant importance to the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation and which represents irreplaceable distinctive architectural features or historical associations that represent the historic character of the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation.”

### **24-LANDMARK-0002**

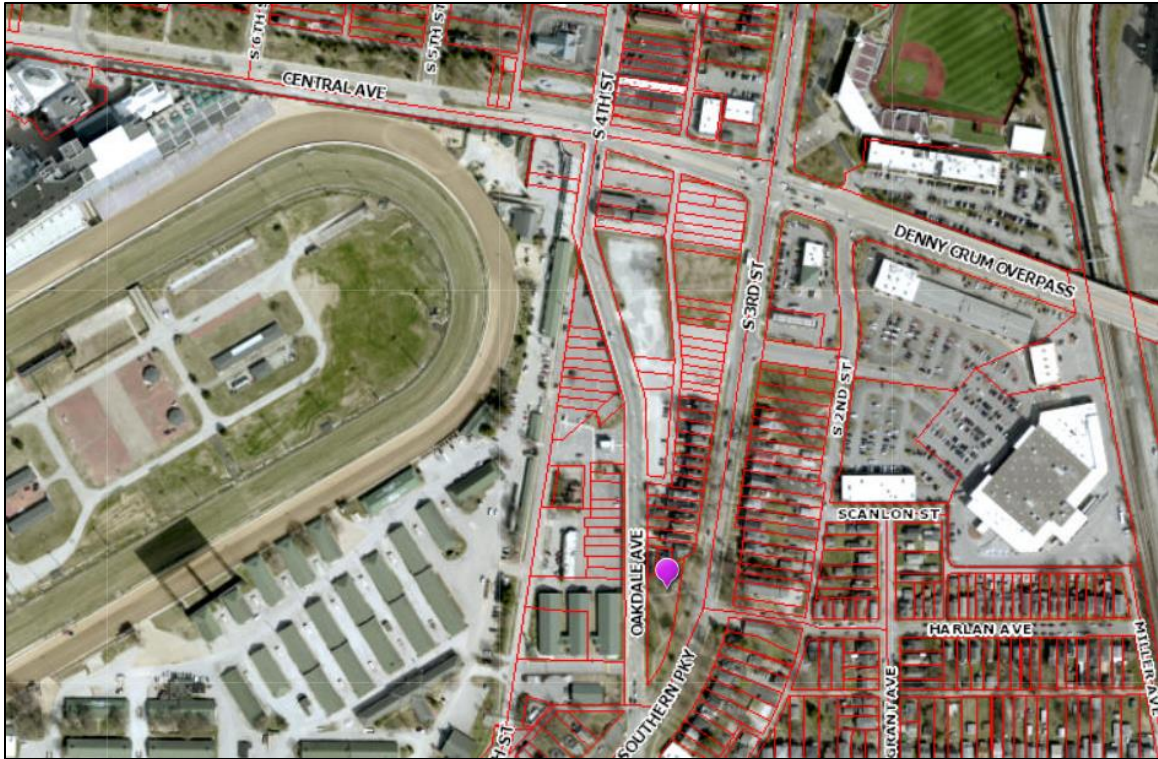
This case was initiated by a resolution from Metro Council to conduct a review of the building for designation consideration. The resolution was sponsored by Councilwoman Jennifer Chappell to recognize sites in Council District 15.

## **Property Description**

### **Location and Key Elements**

Wheelmen’s Bench is located at 3190 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Louisville, Kentucky within Wayside Park. It is owned by Louisville Metro Government. The property is a pie-shaped parcel bound by S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the east, Southern Parkway to the south, Oakdale Avenue to the west, and private property to the north (**Figure 1**). It is situated on the boundary between South Louisville and Wilder Park neighborhoods. There are National Register-listed properties located nearby. These include Southern Parkway as part of the Olmsted Parks System, Churchill Downs, and the Oakdale Historic District (**Figure 2**). Wayside Park is comprised of one parcel totaling 0.4712 acres. There is a single structure on the parcel, Wheelmen’s Bench.





**Figure 1. Aerial view of the property with a purple dot showing the location (LOJIC).**



**Figure 2. Map of the property (purple dot) showing the location of National Register-listed properties (brown hashing) (LOJIC).**



## Structure Description

Wheelmen's Bench is situated in the center of Wayside Park. It is surrounded by a series of walking paths and a landscaped area is located east of the structure. Several trees are located around the installation as well. The structure is semicircular in shape and constructed of rough limestone blocks. The interior of the structure faces east. It features smooth limestone panels with a bench. Each end of the structure is solid in design featuring the rough limestone. Brick pavers are situated in front of the structure creating a circular, bicycle wheel pattern around a metal, modern drinking fountain (installed 2018) (**Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 5**). There is an inscription in the bench that says, "Erected with the approval of the Board of Park Commissioners by the Kentucky Division of the League of American Wheelmen in Memory of A.D. Ruff MDCCCXCVII." A second inscription below says, "Wheelmen Assemble!!! Restoration of the Wheelmen's Bench in 1987 by the Louisville Wheelmen in Memory of Wallace 'Sprad' Spradling (**Figure 6**)."



**Figure 3. Wheelmen's Bench, looking northwest.**



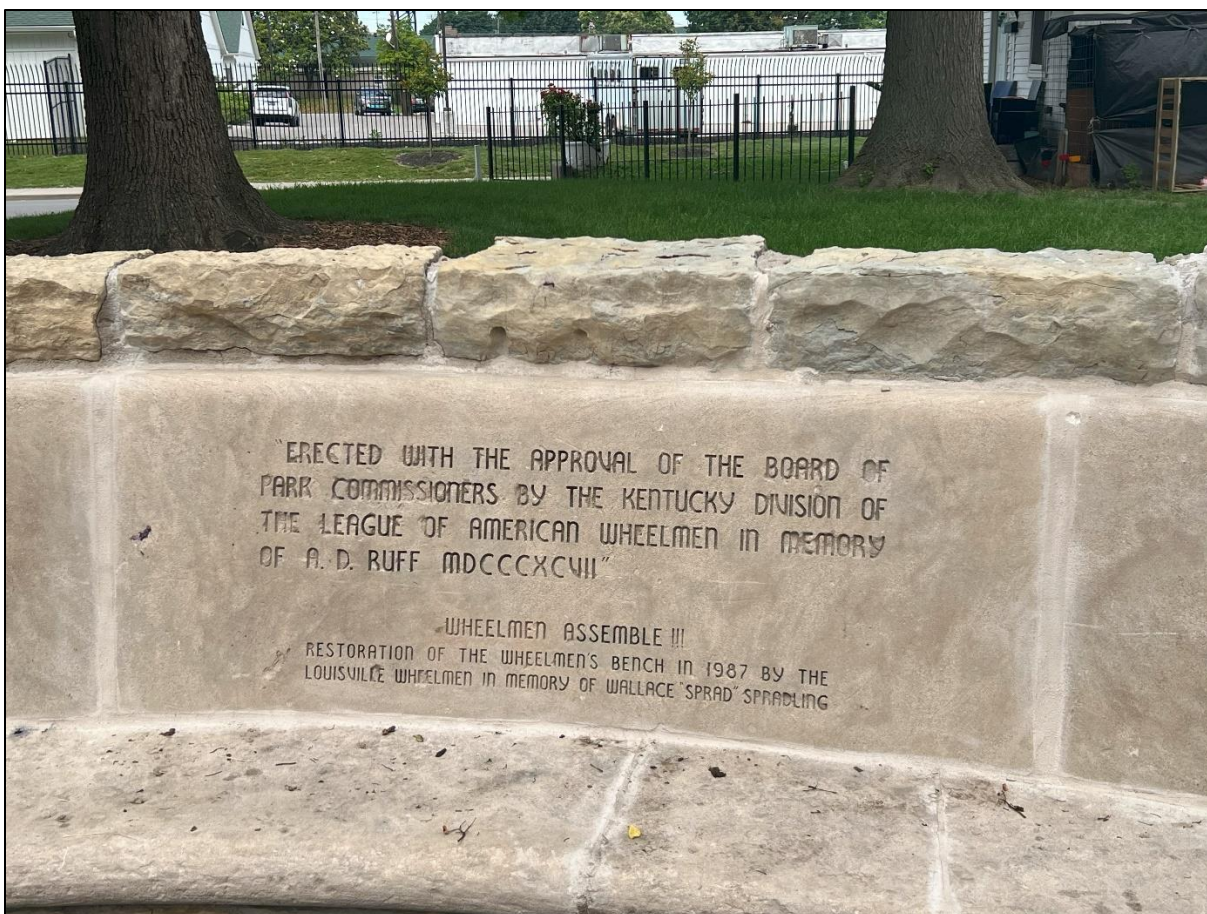


**Figure 4. Wheelmen's Bench, looking west.**



**Figure 5. Wheelmen's Bench, looking northwest.**





**Figure 6. Detail view of the inscriptions, looking west.**

## **Historic Context**

### **Ruff Memorial Fountain and Wheelmen's Bench**

Wayside Park, one of Louisville's Frederick Law Olmsted Firm–designed parks (circa 1891), has been tied to cycling since its creation. At the end of the 19th century, bicycles became all the rage in the US. While bicycles had existed for decades, a newer design with two equal sized wheels, air-filled tube tires, and a diamond-shaped frame hit the market. The “safety bicycle” allowed riders the ability to gain speed while remaining safe on the bicycle. This new model of bicycle grew in popularity as it was a relatively inexpensive, quick, and safe mode of transportation. Unlike previous models, this style of bicycle was also easier for women to ride, which increased the number of cyclists greatly.

According to Ostroff,

Bicycles extended women's mobility outside the home. A woman didn't need a horse to come and go as she pleased, whether to work outside the home or participate in social causes. Those who had been confined by Victorian standards for behavior and attire could break conventions and get out of the house. The bicycle craze boosted the “rational clothing” movement, which encouraged women to do away with long, cumbersome skirts and bulky undergarments. Safety bicycle frames accommodated skirts, which got shorter, and the most daring women chose bloomers that resembled men's pants. A sport corset was designed with elastic for comfort during exercise.

The safety bicycle gave women the personal mobility men enjoyed in the 1880s, offering independence from home or husband. It shaped women's identity and increased their visibility (literally) in society. There were limits to how the bicycle democratized mobility. Bicycles were expensive, and most Americans who took advantage of the movement were white and affluent. Then came cars.

The inventive spirit that drove the bicycle movement led to the electric streetcar, automobiles and motorcycles. The same clientele that adored bicycles pivoted to cars—the new icon of personal mobility. Bicycles were no longer the fastest way to get into the countryside or between towns and cities. Plus, there was the novelty—Americans were enamored with motors. Some bicycle manufacturers were always in the mix, and bicycles made a comeback in the middle of the 20th century, but nothing compared to the moment from 1892 to 1899 (Ostroff 2018).

The bicycling craze of the 1890s also hit Louisville. Cycling clubs were popular in city as was the moniker “wheelmen.” The west side of Fourth Street between Walnut and Chestnut Streets had a number of bicycle shops and was called Bicycle Row. In the fall of 1897, Charles P. Weaver ran for Mayor of Louisville. He estimated that there were 20,000 cyclists in the city, and he courted their vote by promising to pave a part of Broadway. Additionally, bicycle racing was popular at the time. Races were held at the Fairgrounds and other locations across the city, both indoor and outdoor. Fontaine Ferry Park had a 1/3 mile track with a twin-spired grandstand (Ward 1998).



The *Courier-Journal* even had a section on which they reported cycling news. On July 11, 1897, a reporter overheard a lawyer and a doctor discussing cycling over drinks. The lawyer bet the doctor that one morning at 5 o'clock, they would see over 2,000 wheels pass the corner of Fourth and Walnut Streets in three hours. The reporter joined them for their morning wager. The first cyclists they saw were African American and white men of the "janitor class," and before 6 o'clock 110 riders had passed. They noted that the most interesting of those was a tandem bicycle with an African American husband and wife. The reporter noted that the next wave of riders were "men who work in factories and the wholesale houses. The latter are usually shipping clerks and men who are forced to get down early in order that their place of employment may be opened. These and the factory hands carry their dinner baskets with them, and usually travel in bunches, particularly when they work in downtown factories" (*Courier-Journal* 1897). The reporter noted that many of these men simply rolled up their pant legs or tied a string around them so that they would not get caught. He noted that the next wave of riders, which was the largest they saw, were better dressed wearing full bicycle suits, knickerbockers (baggy trousers gathered at the knee), or golf stockings. These cyclists traveled in large groups at a slower pace as they had time to arrive at their office jobs. The women in the group were "fresh looking, with cool shirt waists and without an exception to show that they are in full control" (*Courier-Journal* 1897). In the three hours, the reporter saw "2,836 bicycle riders, of all colors, sizes, hues and ages, passed the intersection" (*Courier-Journal* 1897).

On October 8, 1897, the Wayside Park hosted the Cycle Carnival, a bike parade of an estimated 10,000 cyclists celebrating a new cinder bicycle path along Southern Parkway. Watched over by a 50,000-person crowd, the parade began at Third and Broadway and ended at the Iroquois Cycle Club (**Figure 7**). The décor theme of the parade was Asian inspired with lanterns (*Courier-Journal* 1897). According to the historical marker for Wheelmen's Bench, "Many cyclists were in costume; ladies wore bloomers. Bugles and cannon fire marked the parade's progress" (Kentucky Historical Society 1997).



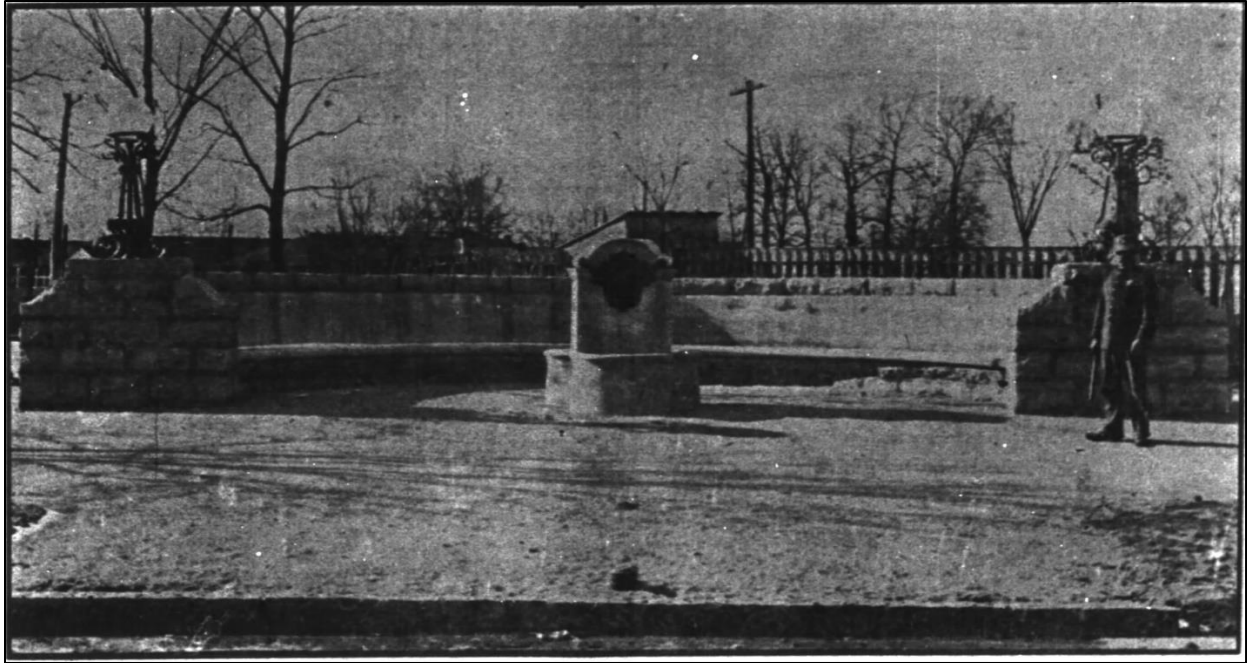
**Figure 7. 1897 Drawing of Cycle Carnival (*Courier-Journal* 1897).**

Also in 1897, the Kentucky Division of the League of American Wheelmen began exploring the idea of a monument in Louisville to honor cycling and A.D. Ruff (**Figure 8**). On January 11, 1896, Ruff died in Owingsville, Kentucky at the age of 69. Known as “Pap,” Ruff was a Canadian immigrant, wheelman, and jeweler by trade. According to his obituary, Ruff was one of the pioneer cyclists in the US and the oldest member of the League of American Wheelmen. He was most known for his 1893 bicycle ride from Kentucky to Yellowstone National Park. Upon his death, he bequeathed the League \$1,000. Unsure of how to use the funds, the League voted to erect a headstone for Ruff in Owingsville and a memorial in Louisville. The City’s Park Board decided upon Wayside Park, as the memorial would be visible along Southern Parkway (*Courier-Journal* 1896; *Courier-Journal* 1897).



**Figure 8. 1896 Portrait of A.D. Ruff (*Courier-Journal* 1896).**

Louisville sculptor Enid Yandell, an avid cyclist, was commissioned to create the Ruff Memorial Fountain and Wheelmen’s Bench (see **Enid Bland Yandell**). It was executed during the summer of 1897. On February 13, 1898, the *Courier-Journal* reported, “The fountain is in the center of a semi-circle, the water flowing from mouths of three heads of Neptune into basins below. The semi-circle enclosure is built of rough stone about five feet high; on the inside, facing the fountain in proper, is a bench with seating capacity for about half a hundred people. Around the outside of the semi-circle will be placed racks for bicycles. ... The fountain was designed and built by Miss Enid Yandell, and is the only public work of this talented woman in Louisville.” The article featured a photograph of the completed work (**Figure 9**).

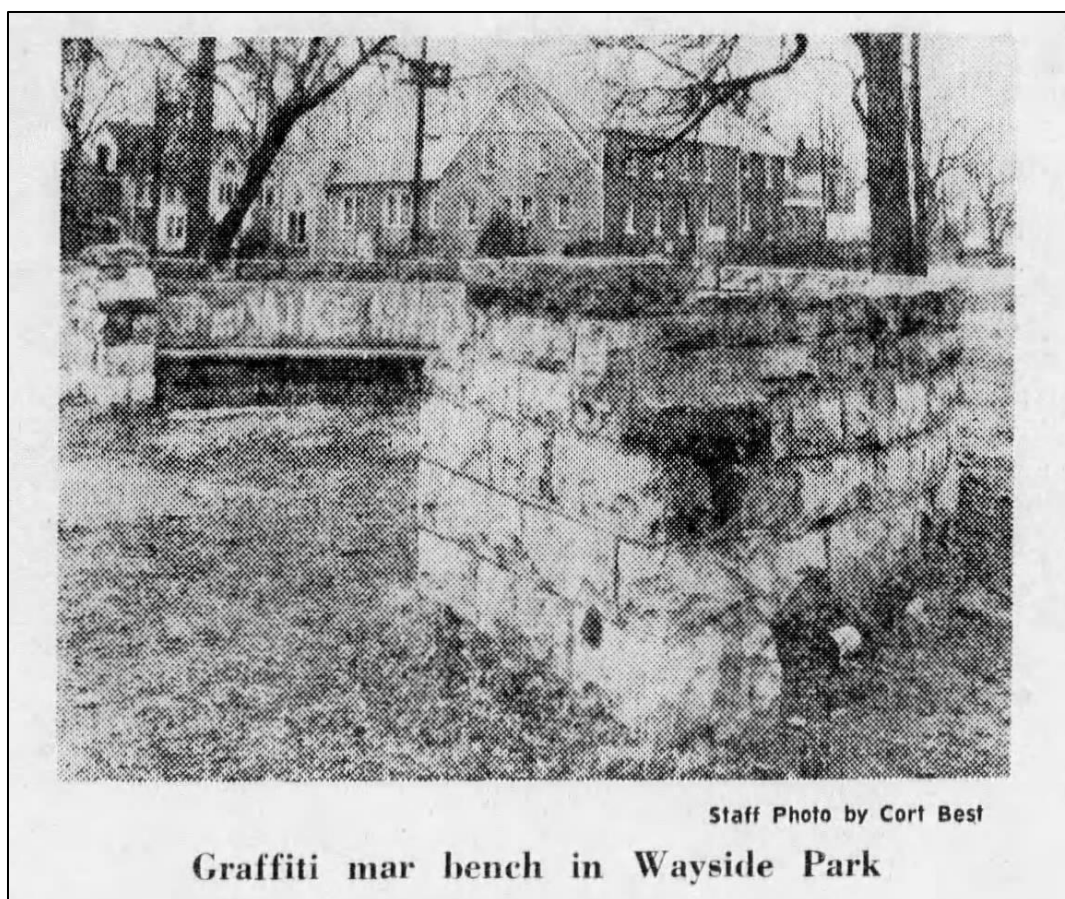


**Figure 9. 1898 Photograph of the Fountain and Bench (*Courier-Journal* 1898).**

The same *Courier-Journal* edition featured an interview with Enid Yandell from her New York studio. She had the following to say in a “decisive, forcible tone” regarding her work on the Ruff Memorial Fountain, “I was very mad at those Park Commissioners. They would not allow me enough to make any sort of a creditable job of it. You see I wanted to put up something in Louisville that would be a credit to the town and to me. But those men gave me \$50 less than the thing actually cost. O, I was so mad” (Anderson 1898).

While the cycling craze in the US was short-lived, the Louisville Wheelmen were still active in the local cycling community. From the 1890s to the 1930s, cyclists met at the bench every Sunday to ride to Elizabethtown and back. The cycling club disbanded around 1935 and reorganized around 1963. Throughout the next several decades, they frequently placed notices in the *Courier-Journal* for their group rides, many of which started at the bench (Kay 1971). However, by the mid to late 1970s, the original fountain was no longer in place and the bench had fallen into disrepair. Stones had been stolen from the bench, and it was tagged with graffiti (**Figure 10**).





**Figure 10. 1977 Photograph of the Bench (Coady 1977).**

Beginning in 1987, four South End neighborhood associations banded together to start a fundraising campaign for Wayside Park. The Beechmont, Oakdale, South Louisville, and Wilder Park neighborhood associations set a \$70,000 goal for several improvements including new curbs, sidewalks, playground equipment, plantings, and a possible monument for the park's history. Additionally, this neighborhoods group, the Wheelmen, and the Metropolitan Parks and Recreation Board banded together to restore Wheelmen's Bench. They noted that the mortar had deteriorated and stones were missing. As such, they were sourcing "the right kind of stone and a contractor who will donate the labor to repair the bench" (Voskuhl 1987). The neighborhood associations raised \$25,000 with city government contributing \$57,000 and the county government contributing \$5,000. The improvements to Wayside Park were completed in September 1988. "Masons restored the crescent-shaped bench, which is about 35 feet long and has a back rest about four feet high. Its restoration will be dedicated to Wallace Spradling, a beloved member of the Wheelmen who died in 1984. A new inscription echoes a cry that Spradling used when the bicyclists gathered for rides: 'Wheelmen, assemble.' Limestone used to restore the bench came from the foundation of the old Green Mouse Café, which was at Third Street and Winkler Avenue until it was demolished a few years ago" (Pike 1988). The restored bench was officially rededicated on October 30, 1988 by the Louisville Wheelmen.

It is unclear when the stone Ruff Memorial Fountain was removed from the bench. A circa 2017 Louisville Metro Commission on Public Art photograph shows a metal, hexagonal shaped, Murdock M-1776 Old Style, pedal water fountain, which dates to the mid to late 1930s (Murdock Manufacturing n.d.) (**Figure 11**). Then in 2018, this fountain was replaced with a modern drinking fountain (see **Structure Description**).



**Figure 11. Circa 2017 Photograph of the Bench and Fountain (Louisville Metro Commission on Public Art n.d.).**

## Enid Bland Yandell

According to Buzan,

On October 6, 1869, artist Enid Yandell was born in Louisville, Kentucky, to Lunsford Pitts Yandell, Jr. a prestigious surgeon and Louise Elliston Yandell. Enid attended Hampton College in Louisville. She earned a degree in both chemistry and art. She then accelerated through a four-year program, in two years, at the Cincinnati Art Academy. She never married. At a time when women were not encouraged to work, particularly women of affluent families, Enid's parents were supportive of their daughter's decision to pursue a career in sculpting, however, Enid noted that her Uncle David declared she was the first Yandell woman "who ever earned a dollar for herself."

Enid studied with notable sculptors of the day; Philip Mariny and Lorado Taft in Chicago and Karl Bittner in New York and Frederick MacMonnies in Paris. Throughout her career, she maintained studios in both New York and Paris (**Figure 12**). She was the first woman inducted into the National Sculpture Society and paved the way for other women.



**Figure 12. 1895 Photograph of Enid Yandell (right) with her bicycle and Geysa de Braunecker in France (Filson Historical Society).**

On January 8, 1893, a *Courier-Journal* reporter described Enid as, "sitting aloft on a scaffolding in Martinis Studio, clad in a corduroy gown and muddy apron, and daftly puts life and emotion into brown lumps of clay. Miss Yandell is a beauty of the black-eyed, black haired, fine-figured Kentucky type. She has ridden and



driven, and rowed and skated and used tools, until every muscle is fully developed, and she looks as though she might be a model for one of the statues. Enid had the following to say of her parents, "I think fathers and mothers amount to something. You remember the bull said to the boy: "You'd be as big as I am maybe if your parents had been carefully selected."

In 1893 sculptor Lorado Taft was falling short on his deadline to complete the decoration he was responsible for on the Horticulture Building for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. When Taft realized all of the other, capable male sculptors were committed to other projects, he asked permission from Daniel Burnham, the Director of Works for the World's Columbian Exposition, to do something unheard of at the time, use women assistants. Burnham's response was, "hire anyone, even white rabbits, if they can get the work done." Taft organized a group of three women, which included Enid Yandell. From that day forward, the three women became known as the White Rabbits.

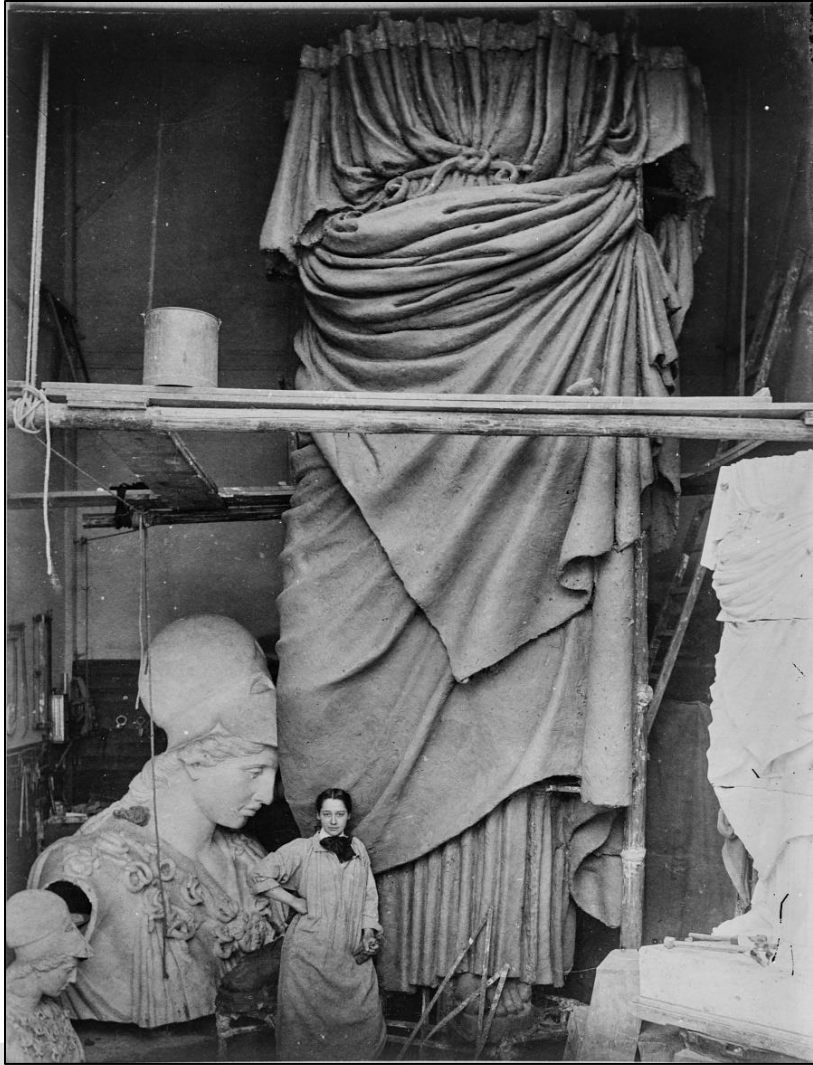
Enid and the other women sculptors that made up the White Rabbits shared a flat together and wrote a book called *Three Girls in a Flat* (Copyright 1892) that detailed their experience working on the Exposition. If you look at the inside of the cover of the book, you will find they dedicated it "To That noble body of women which is acting as advance-guard to the great army of the unrecognized in its onward march toward liberty and equality – The Board of Lady Managers of the World's Columbian Exposition."

Enid was commissioned by the Filson Club to complete a sculpture of Daniel Boone for the Kentucky Building at the World's Columbian Exposition (**Figure 13**). The Filson Club provided Enid with Boone's actual hunting shirt, flintlock rifle, tomahawk, knife and powder horn, along with a portrait of Boone to aid in her artistic interpretation. It was originally made from "staff", a non-permanent material. In 1906, C.C. Bickel, a large cigar manufacturer in Louisville, Kentucky, who happened to carry a line of cigars by the name of "Daniel Boone", commissioned a bronze version of the Daniel Boone statue as a gift to the City of Louisville. The Daniel Boone statue is still standing today at the foot of Eastern Parkway. Interestingly, in 1898, the *Courier-Journal* reported that Tiffany & Co. asked Miss Yandell to make them a copy in miniature of her celebrated statue of Daniel Boone, which they were to carry in stock. The reporter went on to note, "Tiffany & Co. are the judges of real artistic merit and have only such pieces, so this is a complimentary recognition of our young friend's position in the artistic world of New York. Enid Yandell is going to become famous as a sculptor before she is many years older. She bears the unquestionable stamp of a genius and is endowed by nature with many other remarkable attributes. She shows concentration of mind and purpose, much tact and savoir faire. Comprehensively, I find her an unusual woman."



**Figure 13. 1909 Photograph of the plaster cast of the Daniel Boone Statue (Filson Historical Society).**

February 21, 1897, the *Courier-Journal* headlines boasted “Largest Statue Ever Made By A Woman” in reference to the forty foot sculpture of Pallas Athena that Enid was commissioned to complete for the 1897 Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition. Enid sculpted Athena in her Paris Studio based on an eighteenth century design of Pallas de Velletri (**Figure 14**). The statue was created in three pieces that were shipped to Nashville, on a ship, separately. In 1977, the *Courier-Journal* reported the night before Athena set sail to Nashville, there an “elegant, Bohemian party that was given and food and drink served from a table set on her (Athena’s) twelve foot wide chest.” Athena was assembled in Nashville and took her place of welcoming visitors, standing before the Fine Arts Building, which was a full-size replica of the Parthenon in Athens. Unfortunately, Athena was made of staff and never cast in a permanent material. She deteriorated within a year.



**Figure 14. 1897 Photograph of Yandell with the Pallas Athena (Archives of American Art).**

Enid was commissioned to create the Ruff Memorial Fountain, located at the intersection of Third Street and Southern Parkway. It was executed during the summer of 1897 (see **Ruff Memorial Fountain and Wheelmen's Bench**).

Reporter Lilian Anderson lent some insight into Miss Yandell's studio life. "She sat in an easy, graceful position among the pillows on a luxurious, comfortable looking couch, playing with her inseparable little fox terrier, Thais. The dog was demanding some of her attention, determined I should not monopolize all of it, for she is very jealous. It is a pretty little French dog, which Miss Yandell brought over with her from Paris. Thais pays no attention to English, apparently not understanding it, but obeys her mistress' slightest command when spoken in French. She is well-trained and performs many tricks, a very cute one being to produce Miss Yandell's mouchoir (tissue) from the depth of her pocket."



And with excitement, she told Ada Patterson of the *Courier-Journal*, the story of her journey to receive the commission for the Struggle of Life fountain, dedicated in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1899 (**Figure 15**). The commission was by Italian diplomat Paul Bajnotti, in memory of his wife, Carrie Brown. “A committee was appointed to publish a call for competitive designs. Miss Yandell made fourteen designs, none of which pleased her. At last, she hit upon the allegorical idea of a struggle for the higher life. The figures are lie as symbolized by a struggling woman, the soul represented by an angel, and duty, passion and avarices, shown by three male figures. The struggle is between the woman and the angel, life and the soul, on one hand, and the three earthly claims, duty, avarice and passion on the other. The mantle of truth flowing from the shoulders of the angel softens somewhat the fierce struggle of the five figures. Miss Yandell said of the Struggle of Life, “Yes, I am proud of it. Because with it, I won in the competition with eighteen men. It is something to win in a bout with eighteen men, especially if four or five of them are well-known sculptors” (Buzan 2018).



**Figure 15.** April 28, 1901 *Courier-Journal* Front Page Feature on Yandell (Patterson 1901).

According to Wallace,

Yandell devoted much of her life to not only creating beautiful works of art but also to improving people's lives. She contributed to the education of future artists by founding the Branstock School in Edgartown, Massachusetts, in 1908. The art school functioned for several summers until her death in 1934. Yandell also actively supported the women's suffrage movement and campaigned for President Calvin Coolidge.

The horrors of World War I affected the artist to the point that she virtually halted her career. Yandell became involved with the French organization for the care of war orphans, La Société des Orphelins de la Guerre, and the Red Cross (**Figure 16**). She was also involved in Appui Aux Artists, which provided affordable meals for those involved in the arts and their families. Yandell eventually returned to the United States and continued her work, serving as director of the Bureau of Communications for the American Red Cross in New York and as chair of the Women's Committee for the Council of National Defense. Her social work consumed all of her time, and by 1925 she had almost completely ceased sculpting (Wallace n.d.).

Yandell maintained her New York studio until the 1930s when she moved to Boston. She died there on June 12, 1934 at the age of 64. In a 1901 interview, Yandell said, "Wherever I go, I am always very proud of being an American woman and prouder still of being from Kentucky" (Patterson 1901). Yandell is buried in Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville. Her Louisville monuments include Daniel Boone at Eastern Parkway, Hogan's Fountain in Cherokee Park, and the Wheelmen's Bench.



**Figure 16. Circa 1926 Photograph of Enid Yandell in her Red Cross Uniform (Filson Historical Society).**

## **Statement of Significance**

### **Historic Significance**

The Wheelmen's Bench is historically significant for its association with history of Louisville's cycling culture and Enid Yandell. At the end of the 19th century, bicycles became all the rage in the US. The "safety bicycle" allowed riders the ability to gain speed while remaining safe on the bicycle. This new model of bicycle grew in popularity as it was a relatively inexpensive, quick, and safe mode of transportation. Unlike previous models, this style of bicycle was also easier for women to ride, which increased the number of cyclists greatly. The bicycling craze of the 1890s also hit Louisville. Cycling clubs, races, parades, and more were prevalent in Louisville culture. The need for better road surfaces led to portions of Broadway and Southern Parkway being improved specifically for cyclists. The Kentucky Division of the League of American Wheelmen and Parks Commission commissioned sculptor Enid Yandell to create a monument to A.D. Ruff, a pioneer of Kentucky cycling. Yandell herself was an avid cyclist and advocated for women's rights. Many women saw the freedom that the bicycle afforded them as an accepted mode of transportation. For their safety, women's fashion also had to adapt from the typical, constrained Victorian standard. Upon completion, Wheelmen's Bench was "the only public work of this talented woman in Louisville" (*Courier-Journal* 1898). However, this would not remain the case. By working as a sculptor, a male dominated field, Yandell knew her successes showed what women could achieve if allowed. Throughout her life Yandell advocated for women. As a suffragist, she campaigned for women's rights and supported organizations and politicians that also worked to advance those rights. Her leadership as an artist and her public service increased during and after World War I. Yandell's life and work represent a struggle for equal rights for women. Some of the most well-known and celebrated pieces of public art in Louisville were created by Yandell and have influenced how parts of Louisville have been designed and developed to feature them. The Wheelmen's Bench is important symbol of an era of development and heritage of Louisville.

### **Archaeological Significance**

The Wheelmen's Bench has a low potential to contain archaeological resources. Wayside Park was created circa 1891. Prior to that, much of the property was vacant and undeveloped. There have been many changes to the site over time with the installation of the bench and fountain as well as the improvements to the park over the last century and more. These changes have likely negatively impacted possible archaeological deposits.

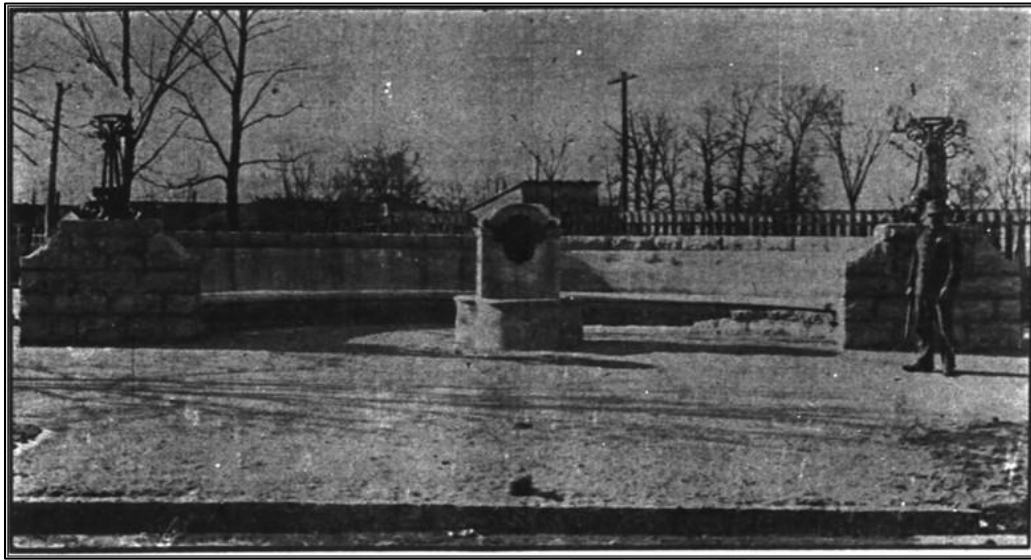


### **Integrity Assessment**

As defined by the LMCO 32.250, integrity is “The authenticity of a structure or site’s historic integrity evidenced by survival of physical characteristics that existed during the structure or site’s historic or prehistoric period. To retain historic integrity a site must possess some of the following aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association.” Note that the integrity as applied by the Landmarks Ordinance is for the exterior of the structure since that is the extent of regulation if designated.

The Wheelmen’s Bench retains its integrity in ***location*** and ***association*** to support the historic significance of the structure as it relates to its association with the history of Louisville’s cycling culture and Enid Yandell. The structure is in its original location, and it maintains its association with Wayside Park and surrounding historic resources. The stone fountain was removed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and replaced with a modern one. However, the association between the bench and a fountain remains even though it’s not the original fountain. The structure retains its integrity in ***feeling*** and ***setting***. Many changes have occurred around the property with a great deal of infill construction from Churchill Downs. However, these changes are not so drastic to say the building has lost its integrity. It is still located in a park setting with residential on most sides. Southern Parkway is still a present boundary with its mature trees.

The Wheelmen’s Bench retains its integrity in ***design***, ***materials***, and ***workmanship*** to support the historic significance of the structure as it relates to the history of Louisville’s cycling culture and Enid Yandell. The structure has had some alterations over the century including the loss of the decorative metal pieces on either side of the semicircle. Furthermore, some of the limestone blocks were replaced during the 1988 restoration due to missing or deteriorated blocks. However, these changes are in keeping with the overall design of the bench. When comparing the 1898 photograph to the current, most of the historic fabric is intact and the original design is apparent (**Figure 17** and **Figure 18**).



**Figure 17. 1898 Photograph of the fountain and bench (*Courier-Journal* 1898).**



**Figure 18. 2024 Staff Photograph of Wheelmen's Bench, looking west.**

### **Designation Criteria Analysis**

In consideration of a potential designation of an Individual Landmark, LMCO 32.250 defines an Individual Landmark structure or site as “one of significant importance to the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation and which represents irreplaceable distinctive architectural features or historical associations that represent the historic character of the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation.”

In accordance with LMCO 32.260(O), considering the designation of any area, site, or structure in Louisville Metro as an Individual Landmark, the Commission shall apply the following criteria with respect to such structure, site, or area. An Individual Landmark shall possess sufficient integrity to meet criterion (a) and one or more of the other criteria (b) through (e).

#### **A) Its character, interest, or value as part of the development or heritage of the city, the Commonwealth, or the United States.**

The history of the Wheelmen’s Bench is closely related to two key pieces of Louisville history: women’s history and the history of cycling. At the end of the 19th century, bicycles became all the rage in the US. The “safety bicycle” allowed riders the ability to gain speed while remaining safe on the bicycle. This new model of bicycle grew in popularity as it was a relatively inexpensive, quick, and safe mode of transportation. Unlike previous models, this style of bicycle was also easier for women to ride, which increased the number of cyclists greatly. The bicycling craze of the 1890s also hit Louisville. Cycling clubs, races, parades, and more were prevalent in Louisville culture. The need for better road surfaces led to portions of Broadway and Southern Parkway being improved specifically for cyclists. The Kentucky Division of the League of American Wheelmen and Parks Commission commissioned sculptor Enid Yandell to create a monument to A.D. Ruff, a pioneer of Kentucky cycling. Yandell herself was an avid cyclist and advocated for women’s rights. Many women saw the freedom that the bicycle afforded them as an accepted mode of transportation. For their safety, women’s fashion also had to adapt from the typical, constrained Victorian standard. Upon completion, Wheelmen’s Bench was “the only public work of this talented woman in Louisville” (*Courier-Journal* 1898). However, this would not remain the case. Some of the most well-known and celebrated pieces of public art in Louisville were created by Yandell and have influenced how parts of Louisville have been designed and developed to feature them. The Wheelmen’s Bench is important symbol of an era of development and heritage of Louisville.

#### **B) Its location as a site of a significant historic event.**

There are no singularly significant historic events that give the site its historic significance.

#### **C) Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, the commonwealth, or the nation.**

In consideration of significance associated with a person or persons, the evaluation relates to whether an individual’s period of significant contribution or productivity occurred while residing or occupying a building, structure, or site.



While Wheelmen's Bench is associated with Enid Yandell, she did not reside in or occupy the structure. Her connection is best discussed in Criterion E. The Bench was erected in memory of A.D. Ruff; however, his contributions to cycling are better discussed in Criterion A.

**D) Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen; or its embodiment of a significant architectural innovation; or its identification as the work of an architect, landscape architect, or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation.**

Wheelmen's Bench is not an embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

The structure does not represent a significant architectural innovation.

The structure is not the work of an architect, landscape architect, or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation. Enid Yandell was a sculptor. She was not technically an architect, landscape architect, or master builder as listed in this criterion.

**E) Its historic significance is based on its association with an underrepresented history within the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation and broadens our understanding of these underrepresented histories.**

In consideration of significance associated with underrepresented histories, the evaluation relates to inclusion and telling a comprehensive history.

The Wheelmen's Bench was designed by sculptor Enid Yandell. She "was an artist ahead of her time. She pursued a career in sculpture, a medium dominated by men during the early twentieth century, rather than choosing a life of domesticity. Although Yandell was from a prominent Louisville family, she relied on her talent rather than her social standing to advance her career" (Wallace n.d.). Throughout her life Enid advocated for women. As a suffragist, she campaigned for women's rights and supported organizations and politicians that also worked to advance those rights. Her leadership as an artist and her public service increased during and after World War I. Enid's life and work represent a struggle for equal rights for women. Famous works that have been attributed to her include Daniel Boone Statue, Hogan's Fountain, Pallas Athena, Carrie Brown Memorial Fountain, Victory (Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis), and Landon Garland bust. Yandell and her work have contributed greatly to the history of Louisville as well as the nation—in 1898, she was the first female inducted into the National Sculpture Society. Some of the most well-known and celebrated pieces of public art in Louisville were created by Yandell and have influenced how parts of Louisville have been designed and developed to feature them.

### **Boundary Justification**

The property proposed for designation is located at 3190 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. According to the Jefferson County PVA, the property (parcel number 051E00410000) contains a total 0.47120 acres of land. The Metro Council proposed boundaries for the Wheelmen's Bench Individual Landmark designation includes the bench and not the whole parcel (**Figure 19**).



**Figure 19. LOJIC map showing location of the proposed designation boundary for the Wheelmen's Bench Individual Landmark in red.**

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