



City of Geneva, Illinois

Local Historic District & Landmarks
Property Inventory Survey

GENERAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

HISTORIC NAME: John and Lena Nelson House

COMMON NAME: Carl and Arthur Sunleaf House

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: Circa 1900

SIGNIFICANT ALTERATION DATES: Circa 1925 (porch enclosed)

ARCHITECT: n/a

BUILDER: n/a

WILSON BROTHERS: ☐ AUGUST ☐ OSCAR ☐ BOTH

ARCHITECTURAL DATA:

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Queen Anne

OVERALL PLAN SHAPE: Rectangular

NUMBER OF STORIES: 2

FOUNDATION MATERIAL: Rock-face Limestone

PRIMARY WALL MATERIAL(S): Aluminum over Wood Clapboard

FRONT PORCH: Yes

VISIBLE SIDE PORCH: Yes

ENTRY DOOR(S): Historic

WINDOW MATERIAL: Wood

WINDOW STYLE: Double-hung (1/1, 3/1)

PRIMARY ROOF FORM: Hipped, Gable

PRIMARY ROOF MATERIAL: Asphalt

VISIBLE CHIMNEY: Yes

CHIMNEY MATERIAL: Brick

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:

Overall massing including street facing gables with decorative shinglework and south-facing, two-story bay window.

PROPERTY ADDRESS:

112 North Fifth Street

PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (PIN):

12-03-404-009



LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE RATING:

- ☐ Significant
- ☒ Contributing
- ☐ Non-Contributing – Built After 1987
- ☐ Non-Contributing – Reversible Alterations
- ☐ Non-Contributing – Irreversible Alterations

HISTORIC DISTRICT LOCATION:

- ☐ Central Geneva NRHD
- ☒ North Geneva NRHD
- ☒ Local Geneva HD
- ☐ Not in HD / Individual Historic Landmark

NR DISTRICT SIGNIFICANCE RATING:

- ☒ Contributing
- ☐ Non-Contributing
- ☐ Not Applicable / Not in NR District



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ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

BRIEF HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION:

The lot was purchased in June 1900, and the residence was constructed beginning in September 1900 for John P. (b. 1860) and Lena (Anderson) Nelson (1862-1909) and their son, Reuben (b. 1895). The house was completed in 1901. John and Lena Nelson married in Kane County in September 1890.

John Nelson was a carpenter in the Wheeler Screen Co. shops in Geneva. Within two years of the unexpected death of Lena Nelson in May 1909 (following a "serious operation"), John P. Nelson and his son returned to the father's native Sweden.

The house was sold to Sol Joshel in July 1910; Joshel sold the home in 1921 to Carl Sunleaf, who also worked at the Wheeler Screen Co.; Carl Sunleaf sold it in 1932 to his brother, Arthur William Sunleaf, who owned the home until his death in 1966. The house was converted into a two-flat / apartment house by Carl and/or Arthur Sunleaf between 1923 and 1930 when the front porch was enclosed with double-hung, 3-over-1 windows. At that time, the front entry was remodeled and the stairway was moved to a former rear porch area. A pair of small double-hung windows were installed on the first floor of the south elevation where the original staircase, presumably, had been located. Additionally, the original windows on the first-floor Front Parlor were replaced during the 20th-century remodeling. The Sunleaf brothers probably resided in the two apartments.

Except for the porch, Front Parlor, and south elevation windows, all other window and door locations and materials appeared—in 2019—to be original, but many were modified. However, windows on the north elevation were allowed to be relocated to align with existing basement windows and to accommodate interior plan modifications. The synthetic siding was removed in 2019-2020 with the historic siding to be restored. Alterations were approved by the IL-SHPO under the Tax Assessment Freeze program.

The property may be notable within the context of Swedish properties in Geneva.

Non-contributing garage (circa 1970).

SOURCES:

GHPC Case History; GHM Archives; 2016 North Geneva NRHP Update; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps; Kane County Recorder's Office Land Records



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CONTRIBUTING ACCESSORY STRUCTURES:

AS1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

AS2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

CONTRIBUTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

HPC ACTION:

☐

Demolition Approved: n/a

Other HPC Action:

5.5.17 Shingles; 7.16.19 Windows





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1999

