

FOOD, FINANCE, AND FUNERALS

Cermak Road in Berwyn

REFERENCES

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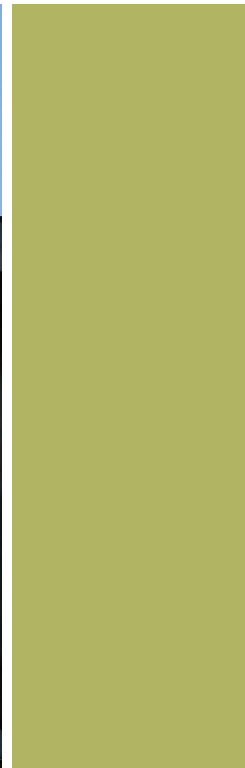
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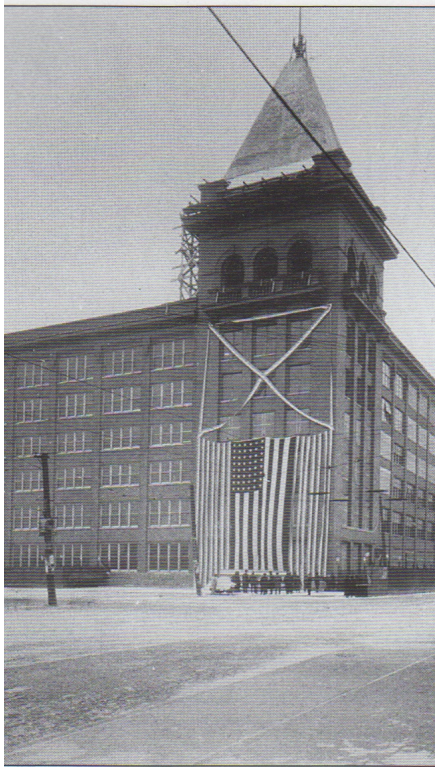
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Cermak Road was anchored by the old Western Electric Hawthorne Works - demolished in 1987 for a shopping center. At the opposite end of Cermak Road, the Berwyn National Bank was the landmark building, until the Cermak Plaza shopping center was built farther down the road in 1956.



Western Electric Hawthorne Works



Berwyn Building



Berwyn National Bank



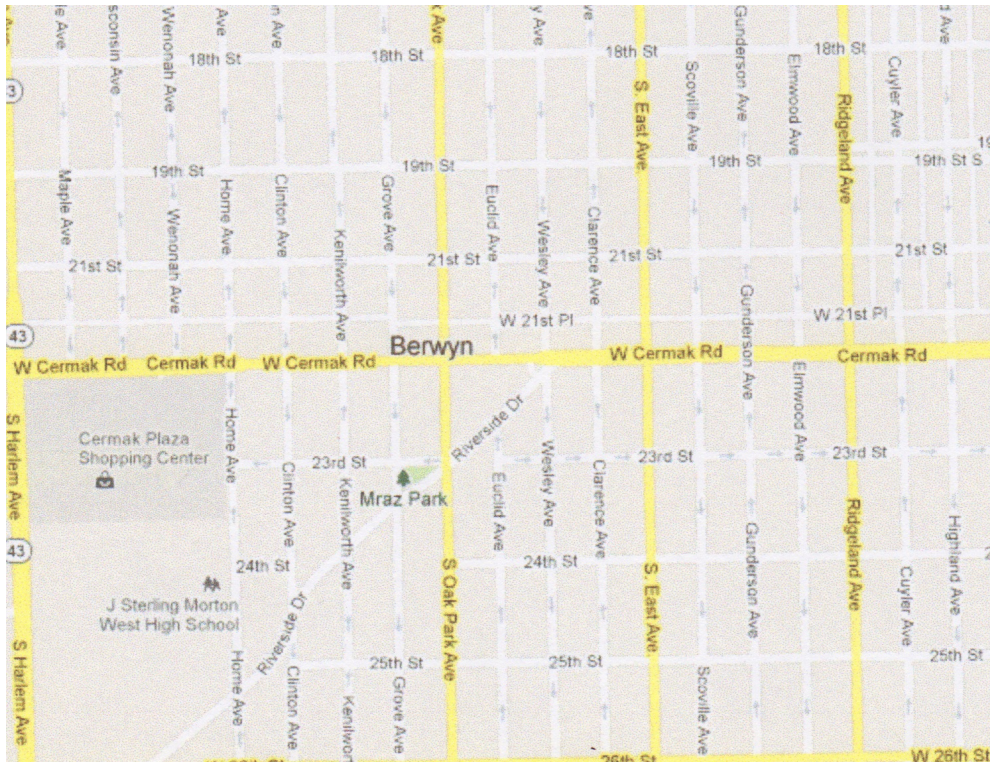
BERWYN & CERMAK ROAD HISTORY

Incorporated in 1908, Berwyn has been the home of immigrants for over 100 years. Czechs, Germans, Poles, Italians, and Mexicans have all found homes and businesses in the city. Fernando's Hair Studio is next to Cermak Plaza.

The road's original name was 22nd Street. The thoroughfare was renamed Cermak Road in 1933 to honor Czech-born Chicago Mayor Anton Cermak, who had been assassinated earlier that year.

The prosperity of Cermak Road mirrors the prosperity of its inhabitants. The boom periods of the 1920s, 1950s, and 1990s spawned most of the street's key structures.

Houby Fest is the annual October festival of the mushroom - begun by Berwyn's Czechs in 1968. People line Cermak Road to watch parades and dance troupes and to eat Czech food. Today's Hispanic residents have added piña coladas and enchilada booths to the parade route.



Cermak Road



Berwyn National Bank

WELCOME!

This self-paced walking tour helps you enjoy and appreciate the history and architecture along Cermak Road.

Beginning in the Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago and ending in Oak Brook, Cermak Road is the main commercial thoroughfare for Cicero, Berwyn and Riverside.

Cermak Road contains a variety of architectural styles, including Tudor Revival, Art Deco, Art Moderne, Victorian, and Mid-Century Modern.

See the evolution of Berwyn and its citizens through its buildings. Use the building names and the types of businesses to learn about the culture and needs of Berwynites.



CERMAK ROAD, ALSO
KNOWN AS BOHEMIAN
WALL STREET, HAS
BEEN THE
COMMERCIAL CENTER
OF BERWYN SINCE
1920

CERMAK ROAD SITES

6201 - Olympic Federal Savings & Loan/ Charter One

Completed in 1931 and remodeled in the 1960s, this building was one of the original banks on Cermak Road.

6210 - Old Fashioned Candies

The Old Fashioned Candies building was completed in the mid-1920s and originally housed a tea shop. It has remained a specialty food shop to the present day.

6227 - Svec & Sons Funeral Home

One of the oldest, continuous businesses on Cermak Road, the Svec & Sons Funeral Home was founded in 1915 and built this facility in the mid-1920s.

6350 - Medical Arts Building

Noteworthy for its sculpted relief panels created by Edouard Chassaing, the Medical Arts Building was designed by Conley and Carlson. It has housed a drugstore, offices, a beauty store, and a currency exchange since its opening in 1931.

6418 - Hurst's Berwyn Jewelers

Built to house a meat market in 1924, the building became the new home to the established firm of Hurst's Berwyn Jewelers in 1981.

6438 - Berwyn Building

The Berwyn Building has always been a combination retail/apartment building since its completion in 1931. The building retains the original brick and terra cotta ornamentation.

6507 - Marik Funeral Home

Built in 1929 and remodeled in 1963, the Marik Funeral Home incorporates Art Deco ornamentation with a Tudor Revival-style chapel and is nominated for the National Register of Historic Places. It is also in danger of demolition and may be replaced by a healthcare facility.

6621 - Karco Auto

This gas station has been in operation since 1924. Its castle turret is a familiar landmark to travelers.

6634 - Vesecky's Bakery

The original home of the FJ Krasik Meat Market in the 1920s, Vesecky's Bakery has been a Berwyn baked goods staple since 1964 and contains apartments upstairs. The building is in the Tudor Revival Style with Sullivanesque Ornamentation.

6650 - National City Bank/Ridgeland Savings & Loan

This mid-century modern building has been a bank since the 1950s and served as the headquarters for Ridgeland Savings & Loan

6655 - Land of Lincoln Savings & Loan/ Harris Bank

Another mid-century bank with ownership changes, this building is known for its ribbed metal panels and stonework.

6800 - Karavitis Store Building

Designed by Jens Jensen in the Art Moderne Style, the Karavitis Store Building has remained a commercial building since its opening in 1936.

6801 - American State Bank/Berwyn National Bank

The 1925 Classical Revival/Beaux Arts Berwyn National Bank building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and on the Illinois State Historic Survey. Currently unoccupied, the granite and brick walls made the structure an ideal bank for most of its existence.

7043 - Cermak Plaza

Cermak Plaza, built in 1956, was the first shopping center built in Berwyn. The signage and artwork are original, but most of the buildings have been renovated. Fans of the movie Wayne's World may remember the distinctive "The Spindle" artpiece that featured multiple cars skewered by a spindle. "The Spindle" was removed in 2008 for a new drugstore.

7100 - Berwyn Western Plumbing

Unchanged since its opening in 1962, Berwyn Western Plumbing's building exemplifies Mid-Century Modern architecture with its large window and neon-plastic signs.