The Miles Park Historic District is a location rich in history with potential for physical rebirth. Located in Southeast Cleveland, a stones throw from the impressive Mill Creek waterfall, greenspaces and other coming developments, the district was once the central town square for the former Village of Newburgh. Until the advent of the Ohio and Erie Canalway, the Village of Newburgh was the largest population center in Northeast Ohio.

Over the years, Newburgh was incrementally annexed into the growing City of Cleveland, making up present day neighborhoods stretching from Central, to Slavic Village, Union Miles and beyond. The district was also once the Southern terminus for Cleveland's streetcar system, and has remained a cultural and economic center for the surrounding neighborhoods. One such example of this legacy is the Newburgh Masonic Temple at 8910 Miles Park Avenue.
Designed by architect William J. Carter, the temple was constructed in 1917, and features a robust design typical of period Masonic structures. The building’s three levels were clearly used for large gatherings, as they include a stage, a ballroom, meeting room with balcony, a kitchen with dumbwaiter, an elevator shaft and numerous smaller rooms. The handsome red brick façade remains almost completely intact with ionic pilasters, dental cornice, decorative garlands surrounding masonic symbols and elaborate Greek revival door surrounds.

Architect William J. Carter was born in Cleveland, and a descendent of Lorenzo Carter, the first permanent Cleveland settler on record. (You may be familiar with Lorenzo’s family log cabin near Settlers Landing in the Cleveland Flats.) Carter graduated from Case School of Applied Science in 1891. He was a civil engineer with the Pennsylvania Railroad, and held positions with various Cleveland area electric and engineering offices. In 1900, Carter was appointed the U.S. Government Quartermaster’s Department Superintendent of Construction in Portland, Maine. Two years later, he returned to Cleveland and was appointed City Engineer. Carter served as the President of the Cleveland Engineering Society from 1920 to 1921.
A recent walk through of the building with a structural engineer determined that, in general, the building is in good condition and can be investigated for renovation and re-use. This opinion is based on limited observation of observable features and is subject to change based on more detailed inspection once debris is removed from the site. From a structural viewpoint, the exterior and interior of the building are in generally good condition. There was no major cracking observed on the columns and beams at the basement level. The steel structure for the upper levels was able to be seen as rusty, but no major corrosion was observed.

While this magnificent building retains structural integrity, it is facing continued deterioration following prolonged vacancy, and a pending foreclosure. The Newburgh Masonic Temple is a City of Cleveland local landmark and a contributing structure to the Miles Park Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places. These designations make the building a candidate for historic rehabilitation tax credits.
Presently, there is an opportunity for a new visionary to obtain the building at a low acquisition cost. Cleveland Restoration Society and local community development partners are issuing a call to advocacy, and invite interested development partners to further discuss opportunities for this treasured asset, ready for new life. The building is close to many assets such as bike trails, bus lines and a new construction project. There is vacant land nearby that could be available as part of a new development. A Phase 1 report has been completed. To learn more please contact Joe Duffy, Real Estate Development Director at Union Miles Development Corporation jo-sephd@unionmiles.org or 216-341-0757.