

## Architectural Analysis of 209, Ira Avenue

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The house on 209 Ira Avenue in Mahncke Park is a nicely restored and updated 1920s bungalow. The long axis of the gabled roof faces the street, and exposed rafters, tucked neatly under the roof line, give an initial indication of its Craftsman inspiration. The design of the front façade, with a central entrance portico and symmetrical pairs of windows to each side, is one commonly seen in the neighborhoods just north of downtown.



However, notice the extra columns in front of the windows to the right. It appears that the right side of the house was once an exterior porch. An asymmetrical porch and side entry, tucked under the major roofline of the house, is a hallmark of American bungalow design. It was simply more economical to construct a rectangular foundation and allow the porch and entry to reside within this boundary. This leads me to believe that the attached entry portico in the center, although charming, was not part of the early design of the house. The original entry to the house would have been through a door off the porch, on the east wall, which is now simply a large framed opening between the living and sunroom areas.



The living room demonstrates two typical Craftsman bungalow characteristics: The high-boy style paneled door with wood dentils below its window pane and the design of the fireplace wall. The fireplace is flanked on each side by bookshelves, which may have once been enclosed with beveled glass doors. The square double-hung windows above each bookcase were designed to slide up or down to allow for cross ventilation in the warmer months of the year. Their high position was convenient in that the breeze would not ruffle

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papers or other lightweight objects in the house. The fireplace and chimney have been recently renovated. The floor-to-ceiling glass windows, a modern addition enclosing the sunroom, are designed with



asymmetrical, rectangular glass panels that mimic a pattern in Craftsman design: the large rectangles of wood paneling typically used as an inexpensive means to ornament walls. The wood siding of the ceiling is a reminder of this room's former function as the exterior porch.

The darkly stained oak floor of the living and dining room extends into the large, sun-filled kitchen. The pine ceiling has a dark stain to match and the walls are painted, in contrast, with a beautiful, creamy "green tea latte" color. The original white, painted wood cabinets are updated with white tile countertops and modern appliances. The bedrooms wrap around the back of the house in soft shades of buttermilk yellow. All of the original wood trim and molding is intact: white, painted base boards, wood molding, multi-paned windows and multi-panel doors. The doors even have their original cut glass doorknobs, and the bathrooms retain their quintessential 1920s hexagonal and black-and-white checkered tile.

