

Community Center history and property description

History of Dunbar High School and Community Center

The building was erected in 1922 and opened in 1923 as Dunbar High School, a segregated city school located at 545 North Upper St. It was named after Paul Laurence Dunbar, a famous 19th century black poet. Dunbar became the first black high school in Kentucky to be admitted to the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The school closed in 1972. Portions of the old building were converted into a community center and offices for Lexington Parks & Recreation. Dunbar Community Center opened in 1978 with programming beginning in October of 1978.

Property description of Dunbar Community Center

The building is a three-story building with a full-size gymnasium and bleachers, men's locker room, two weight/exercise rooms, kitchen, game rooms, restrooms and computer lab. The third floor houses offices for Parks & Recreation personnel. There is a large parking lot with 70 spaces. The Dunbar Community Center is approximately 17,000 square feet.

History of Castlewood Community Center

Castlewood Community Center is located at 201 Castlewood Dr. in the middle of the Loudon-Meadows subdivision, just north of Loudon Avenue. This is a 32-acre public park and is one of the oldest in the city of Lexington. The land was sold to the city of Lexington in the 1920s. Castlewood Park is currently surrounded on all four sides by residential properties built in the 1920s – 1950s.

In the middle of the park sits the iconic Loudoun House. It was designed by famed New York architect Alexander Jackson Davis. The Loudoun House was built in 1852 for Francis Key Hunt and is one of the largest and finest examples of Gothic Revival architecture in the state of Kentucky. It is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The gymnasium was built in the 1930s as a Community Center adjacent to the Loudoun House which, at the time, housed offices for the Parks Department. Later community center activities were conducted in the Loudoun House. In the 1990s community center activities were moved out of the Loudoun House into an addition at the rear of the gym area. The Loudoun House is currently home to the Lexington Art League.

Property description of Castlewood Community Center

The Community Center has a full-size gymnasium, small kitchen area, game room and computer/activities room. On the grounds of Castlewood Park is an aquatic center, accessible playground, tennis courts, a Futsal court and two baseball fields. There is also a historic structure "the barn" that is rented out for various community activities.

The Community Center is 11,990 total square feet and has off-street parking with 25 – 30 spaces.

History of Kenwick Community Center

The Kenwick Community Center at 313 Owsley Ave. is run by Parks & Recreation. The building that is now Kenwick Center was originally Kenwick Church of the Nazarene in 1930. The building stayed a historical part of the neighborhood, even after the congregation moved out. The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government bought the property and now the Kenwick Center is one of four community centers operated by Parks & Recreation.

Property description of Kenwick Community Center

The Kenwick Community Center building is a one-story building with a basement that includes a pool table, library, crafts room, game/TV area, two restrooms and a small weight room. On the first floor is a small-size gymnasium with nine-foot goals, a kitchen, treadmill room, two restrooms and computer lab. There are five parking spaces located in front of the building and a playground located across the street from the center.

The Community Center is 11,500 square feet, including the gym and finished basement.