

# The Columbus Dispatch

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## **AREA ARCHITECTS HELP RENOVATE WRIGHT HOUSE**

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By Mike Pramik

Several Columbus architects are helping to transform a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed house in Springfield into a museum and center.

Columbus architects Schooley Caldwell Associates are assisting in the renovation of the house, which is the former residence of Burton and Orpha Westcott. The house was built between 1904 and 1908.

A team of architects that includes Jonathan Barnes, Michael Cadwell and Jane Murphy of Columbus will help architect Stanley Tigerman of Chicago turn the property on Greenmount Avenue into a complex of connected buildings to support the future Westcott House Museum, which will open in September.

Schooley Caldwell is joining with Chambers, Murphy & Burge Restoration Architects of Akron to restore the house. Bob Loversedge, Schooley Caldwell's chief executive, said it's the only Prairie-style house designed by Wright in Ohio.

The first floor of the house is 2,650 square feet in size. The 2,400-square-foot second level contains bedrooms with large walk-in closets, rare for the day.

"This is a really fabulous house, a gem that's been sort of undiscovered for many years," Loversedge said. "What strikes me about this building is when you walk through it, you could live in it today. It's very contemporary in terms of appearance and layout."

The house required major structural work as well as mechanical improvements. Air conditioning, for instance, is being added through a geothermal system that will avoid the use of unsightly compressors.

After the house has been restored, Barnes, Cadwell, Murphy and a Dayton architectural firm will work with Tigerman to create a commercial development of some kind near the museum.

Barnes said a transportation design center might work as a tribute to Westcott, a carmaker. The project also might resemble the Columbus Neighborhood Design Assistance Center, a city-funded nonprofit group that helps businesses and property owners with revitalization projects.

"We'd like to explore designing something that works more as a single construction and not necessarily four distinct buildings," Barnes said. "Like (Tigerman) says, they'll morph together."