

City of Detroit
CITY COUNCIL
Historic Designation Advisory Board

**Proposed
Rosedale Park Historic District**

Final Report

By a resolution dated February 22, 2006, the Detroit City Council charged the Historic Designation Advisory Board, a study committee, with the official study of the proposed Rosedale Park Historic District in accordance with Chapter 25 of the 1984 Detroit City Code and the Michigan Local Historic Districts Act.

The proposed Rosedale Park Historic District is located on the city's northwest side, approximately twelve miles from downtown Detroit. It is located south of Grand River Avenue and the North Rosedale Park neighborhood. The proposed district is primarily residential, consisting of over fifteen hundred single-family houses built between 1917 and 1955 during height of Detroit's substantial growth in both population and area. The proposed Rosedale Park Historic District has the same properties and boundaries as the National Register district of the same name, which will be listed in 2006.

Boundaries: The Rosedale Park Historic District boundaries follow traditional perimeters for the neighborhood, as delineated by original plat maps. They encompass the Rosedale Park Subdivisions located south of Grand River Avenue, including Rosedale Park Subdivision, Rosedale Park Subdivision #1, Rosedale Park #4, and part of Minock's Sub, the latter to include both sides of West Outer Drive. Combined, these plats contain over 1500 residential lots, and cover approximately 340 acres.

The boundaries of the proposed district are as shown on the attached map, and are as follows:

Beginning at a point, that point being the intersection of the west line of the right-of-way of the west service drive of the Southfield Freeway with the centerline of Lyndon Avenue; thence west along the centerline of Lyndon Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Westwood Avenue; thence north along said centerline of Westwood Avenue to its intersection with the south boundary of Rosedale Park Sub. No. 4 (L43 P76 Plats WCR); thence west along said south boundary of Rosedale Park Sub. No. 4 to its intersection with the centerline of Auburn Avenue; thence north along the centerline of Auburn Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of West Outer Drive; thence west along the centerline of West Outer Drive to its intersection with the centerline of Evergreen Road;

thence north along the centerline of Evergreen Road to its intersection with the centerline of Fenkell Avenue; thence east along the centerline of Fenkell Avenue to its intersection with a line lying one hundred and ten (110) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly along said line 110 feet east of the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with the northerly line of Lot 62 of Edward J. Minock's Subdivision (L. 28 P. 94 Plats); thence westerly along said north line of Lot 62 to its intersection with a line lying one hundred and eight (108) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly along said line 108 feet east of the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with the northerly line of Lot 61 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence westerly along said northerly line of Lot 61 to its intersection with a line lying one hundred (100) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly along said line 100 feet east of the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with the northerly line of Lot 59 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence easterly along said northerly line of Lot 59 to its intersection with a line lying one hundred and fifteen (115) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly thence northerly along said line 115 feet east of the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with the northerly line of Lot 58 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence westerly along said northerly line of Lot 58 to its intersection with a line lying one hundred (100) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly thence northerly along said line 100 feet east of the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with the northerly line of Lot 58 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence easterly along said northerly line of Lot 58 to its intersection with a line lying one hundred and ten (110) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly along said line 110 feet east of the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with a line eighty-eight feet north of and parallel to the southerly line of Lot 55 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence westerly along said line eighty-eight feet north of and parallel to the southerly line of Lot 55 to its intersection with a line lying one hundred (100) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly along said line 100 feet east of the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with a line lying eighty-two (82) feet north of and parallel to the southerly line of Lot 52 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence easterly along said line lying eighty-two (82) feet north of and parallel to the southerly line of Lot 52 to its intersection with a line lying one hundred and one (101) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly along said line lying one hundred and one (101) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with the northerly line of Lot 52 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence easterly along said northerly line of Lot 52 to its intersection with a line lying one hundred and fourteen (114) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly along said line lying one hundred and fourteen (114) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with the northerly line of Lot 51 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence westerly along said northerly line of Lot 51 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision to a line lying one hundred (100) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue; thence northerly along said line lying one hundred (100) feet east of and parallel to the east line of Minock Avenue to its intersection with the northerly line, extended southwest, of the triangular Lot 48 of said Edward J. Minock's Subdivision; thence southwest along said northerly line of Lot 48, as extended, to its intersection with the centerline of West Outer Drive; thence northerly along the centerline of West Outer Drive to its intersection with the centerline, extended northwest, of the alley lying one hundred (100) Feet southwest of, and parallel to, Grand River Avenue; thence southwest along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the east line, extended north and south, of Lot 1507 of Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1, (L37 P73 Plats WCR); thence northerly along said eastern line

of Lot 1507 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of Grand River Avenue; thence southeasterly along said centerline of Grand River Avenue to its intersection with the westerly line, extended northerly and southerly, of Lot 1444 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1; thence southerly along said westerly boundary of said Lot 1444 to its intersection with the centerline of the alley southwest of Grand River Avenue running northwest-southeast; thence southeast along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the east line, extended north and south, of Lot 1435 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1, thence northerly along said eastern line of Lot 1435 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of Grand River Avenue; thence southeasterly along said centerline of Grand River Avenue to its intersection with the westerly line, extended northerly and southerly, of Lot 1383 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1; thence southerly along said westerly boundary of said Lot 1383 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of the alley southwest of Grand River Avenue running northwest-southeast; thence southeast along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the east line, extended north and south, of Lot 1374 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1, thence northerly along said eastern line of Lot 1374 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of Grand River Avenue; thence southeasterly along said centerline of Grand River Avenue to its intersection with the westerly line, extended northerly and southerly, of Lot 1332 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1; thence southerly along said westerly boundary of said Lot 1332 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of the alley southwest of Grand River Avenue running northwest-southeast; thence southeast along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the east line, extended north and south, of Lot 1323 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1, thence northerly along said eastern line of Lot 1323 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of Grand River Avenue; thence southeasterly along said centerline of Grand River Avenue to its intersection with the westerly line, extended northerly and southerly, of Lot 1280 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1; thence southerly along said westerly boundary of said Lot 1280 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of the alley southwest of Grand River Avenue running northwest-southeast; thence southeast along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the east line, extended north and south, of Lot 1271 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1, thence northerly along said eastern line of Lot 1271 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of Grand River Avenue; thence southeasterly along said centerline of Grand River Avenue to its intersection with the westerly line, extended northerly and southerly, of Lot 1235 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1; thence southerly along said westerly boundary of said Lot 1235 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of the alley southwest of Grand River Avenue running northwest-southeast; thence southeast along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the east line, extended north and south, of Lot 1226 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1, thence northerly along said eastern line of Lot 1226 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of Grand River Avenue; thence southeasterly along said centerline of Grand River Avenue to its intersection with the westerly line, extended northerly and southerly, of Lot 1202 of said Rosedale Park Subdivision No. 1; thence southerly along said westerly boundary of said Lot 1202 as extended to its intersection with the centerline of the alley southwest of Grand River Avenue running northwest-southeast; thence southeast along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the east boundary of the Rosedale Park Subdivision No 1 (L37 P73 Plats WCR); thence south along the eastern boundary of the said Rosedale Park Subdivision No 1 to its intersection with the centerline of Fenkell Avenue; thence east along said centerline of Fenkell Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Grand River Avenue, thence southeast along said centerline of Grand River Avenue to its intersection with the west line of the right-of-way of the west service drive of the Southfield

Freeway, thence south along said west line of the west service drive of the Southfield Freeway to the point of beginning.

The following study report is taken wholly from the National Register Registration Form submitted to the Historic Designation Advisory Board by its consultant, Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group, Inc.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Rosedale Park Historic District is significant under National Register Criterion A, for its association with streetcar and automobile suburban development in relation to early twentieth century transportation corridors such as Grand River Avenue, Southfield Road, and Outer Drive West. It is also significant for its role in the westward expansion of the City of Detroit, as this planned community, platted between 1916 and 1921, populated a portion of Redford Township that was annexed by the City in 1926. The Rosedale Park Historic District is also significant for early suburban architecture under National Register Criterion C, as it contains a distinctive group of twentieth century residential architectural styles. It exhibits a moderate to high degree of integrity of feeling, setting, and contributing architectural resources. It also retains the park-like setting planned by its developers, with landscaped traffic islands, tree-lined streets, and a varied housing stock that dates from the 1910s to the 1950s.

Developmental and Planning History

The earliest section of Rosedale Park was platted by the Rosedale Park Land Company in September 1916, on farmland in Redford Township, Michigan, located approximately twelve miles northwest of the center of Detroit. The property was originally deeded in 1835, as two 80-acre parcels in Sections 23 and 24 of Redford Township, to Otis C. Freeman and George Bellamy (Rosedale Park Improvement Association 2000:1). The parcels were further divided in subsequent decades, but the majority later came under the ownership of A. J. Stahelin, a Redford Township farmer (Belden 1876, Sauer 1916, Rosedale Park Improvement Association 2000:1). A large portion of the Stahelin property was purchased in 1916 by the Rosedale Park Land Development Company, which had been formed in the same year as a joint venture group for the purpose of "subdividing and selling real estate" (Rosedale Park Plat Maps 1916:2514 and Rosedale Park Land Development Company 1917-1918:1).

In 1916, the newly formed Rosedale Park Land Company's combined assets amounted to \$530,638.99, the majority of which was tied up in land. Despite this lack of liquid assets, board members seemed to be confident about their promotional efforts and connections within the construction trades community. It appears that several board members utilized their business interests in raw materials and skilled services to meet the company's business objectives of development and construction. Although property buyers were free to contract with an independent construction company to build their houses, many buyers found it convenient to meet deed restrictions regarding size, style, and quality by engaging the Rosedale Park Land Company or its associates as their contractors (City of Detroit Building Permits). The company's connections included those of board president Frederick W. Harrison in Coal and Coke Wholesale and Retail; joint venture associate William J. Burton as president of Detroit Applied Ready Roofing and Window Manufacturers, with offices in the Builders and Traders Exchange; and joint venture associate Henry W. Harding as president of H. W. Harding Lumber Company (Marquis 1914:86, 221; Polk 1918).

The business connections of these board members were augmented by the experience and tenacity of board secretary Ernest Otto Knight, the son of a Detroit merchant with interests in men's furnishings, a grocery brokerage, and general mercantile (James T. White and Company 1966:314). Knight left the retail business in 1915, at the age of 42, to pursue real estate development with the Clemens, Knight, Menard and Paul Company, the "parent" company for the Rosedale Park Land Company. During his tenure with the company, "...it was responsible for the subdivision and sale of some 600 acres in Detroit" (James T. White and Company 1966:314). Among their developments were Greenfield Park (1915-1916), Glendale Gardens (1915), Glendale Courts (1916), Beverly Hills (c.1916), Rosedale Park (1916-1921), and North Rosedale Park (1919-1920, 1924-25, and 1937) (Statewide Search for Subdivision Plats 2004). All were located near Grand River Avenue, in what is now northwest Detroit, in the direct path of Detroit's suburban expansion.

Rosedale Park and North Rosedale Park, which were developed as abutting neighborhoods on the south and north sides of Grand River Avenue, respectively, were by far the company's largest and most ambitious developments. These two neighborhoods included over 2500 occupied residential lots, in comparison to the less than 600 occupied residential lots in their earlier large-scale attempt, Greenfield Park. The board members' business associations, combined with an established partnership with each subdivision's development company through their shared treasurer, E. Percy Ashton, allowed the Clemens, Knight, Menard and Paul Company to negotiate materials prices at reduced or volume rates, thereby making their construction costs attractive to potential buyers.

In addition to these business ties, the company principals were confident that their investments would enjoy a profitable return similar to those of other development firms of the time period, which had learned that "transit access would make undeveloped farmland attractive to potential commuters and thus raise its value" (Jackson 1985:120). This marketing tactic had been employed in Detroit for nearly two decades, with developers campaigning as early as 1892 by advertising the "repaving of Woodward Avenue" as an incentive to purchasers" in the Highland Park area (Jackson 1985:165). In considering this strategy, board members likely took into account the location of their property holdings in relation to the availability of streetcar and interurban service, the relatively well-maintained Grand River Avenue as a direct automobile link to downtown Detroit, and the contemporaneous construction of Outer Drive, a concrete parkway connecting the outer suburbs of Detroit (Polk 1918).

Despite their city holding the title of motor capital of the world, the concepts of concrete automobile roadways and non-recreational motoring were relatively new to Detroiters. It had only been a few years since city officials opened the "nation's first paved [concrete] highway" in 1909, on Woodward between Six Mile and Seven Mile Roads (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2000:237). In an attempt to impose order on increasing traffic pandemonium, the city had installed the first boulevard stop signs in 1915, while the invention of the stoplight by a Detroit police officer would not occur until 1920 (McShane 1994:127).

Regardless of the dangers and inconveniences associated with automobile transportation and Rosedale Park's distance from the city center, the company seemed to be confident that the combined options of both automobile and streetcar transportation were sound choices. They had learned from previous experience with other successful developments that transportation options, along with the development's attractive, picturesque character, would be the key points of attraction for early Rosedale Park residents. The company's speculative actions began to pay off in 1917, when its worth nearly doubled in a one-year period to \$909,127.58. These profits were realized as returns on sales in Rosedale Park and other simultaneous subdivision developments by members of the joint venture group (Rosedale Park Land Development Company 1917-1918:4).

In response to increased land value and interest in the development, the company expanded its initial Rosedale Park development by adding the Rosedale Park #1 plat in 1917, west of the existing plat (Rosedale Park Plat Maps 1917:2599-2600). The new plat provided residential lots with frontage on the north-south streets of Outer Drive West, Westwood Boulevard, Grandville Boulevard, Harvard Boulevard, Rosedale Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Stahelin Boulevard, Harrison Boulevard, Greenview Boulevard, Faust Boulevard, Tennyson Boulevard, Rosemont Boulevard, Ashton Boulevard, and Mill Road (now the Southfield Freeway).

The plat for Rosedale Park was drawn and submitted to the township by Blaine T. Colman, a construction engineer who would later become the president of both Colman and Harding Construction Engineers, Inc., and Wayne Trucking Company, as well as the mayor of Highland Park during the mid-1920s (Rosedale Park Plat Maps 1917:2599-2600; Polk 1918, 1925-26). Among the many sales offices of the Clemens, Knight, Mehard and Paul Company was a location at the corner of Mill Road and Grand River Avenue, at the northeastern edge of Rosedale Park (Polk 1918). According to local history accounts, the company enticed Detroit city residents to buy into the development with the slogan "Out of the Smoke Zone into the Ozone" (Rosedale Park Improvement Association 2000:1). This campaign propagated visions of bucolic country living with frequent reliable streetcars, close to well-maintained local roads and convenient markets, and flush with healthy, clean air.

Four years after the first addition was platted in 1917, Rosedale Park was enlarged a second time by the Rosedale Park Land Company with an addition at the junction of Outer Drive West and Westwood Boulevard (Rosedale Park Plat Maps 1921:17611). This additional expansion was located west of the north/south portion of Outer Drive West, and was bounded by Fenkell on the north and Stoepel Park on the south. It extended as far west as the residential lots fronting the east side of Evergreen Road, and included all of Plainview Boulevard, Auburn Boulevard, Minock Boulevard, Westwood Boulevard, and the curve of Outer Drive West. This second expansion was likely in response to the city's prodigious growth in the mid-1920s. It may also have anticipated future annexation by the City of Detroit, which took place in 1926 (Scott 2001:85). The annexation resulted in regular water and sewer service, but onset of the Great Depression in 1929 slowed expected development for several years. A building resurgence occurred after 1934, with the availability of mortgage loans through the relaxation of crediting procedures by the FHA (Jackson 1985:205).

The planning concepts for the second Rosedale Park addition appear to have differed from those for the earlier plats in a variety of ways. This plat features residential lots fronting both sides of Outer Drive West, which is a major ring-road boulevard, as opposed to the earlier practice of fronting residential lots only on secluded north-south side streets. With the exception of the large-scale boulevard landscaping on Outer Drive West, these additional streets lacked the signature landscaped traffic islands of the original plat and first addition. In contrast, the landscaped islands on residential streets in the earlier portions act as a defining characteristic, creating a park-like setting. These shifts in design for the second addition may have been an effort to accommodate lots on Outer Drive West, which had been opened in 1918 and thus predated this 1921 expansion (Polk 1918).

In comparison to the original plat and subsequent first addition, the second Rosedale Park addition is much more utilitarian in form. In addition to the lack of traffic islands and unexpected lot orientation to a wider ring-road, the plat exhibited a reduction in lot size and the resulting neighborhood shifted away from high-style architecture. Such an alteration in design suggests that this portion of Rosedale Park was deliberately

platted to accommodate the financial circumstances in which potential buyers found themselves after years of Depression. According to City of Detroit Building Permits, this section did not undergo development until the mid-1930s, after the advent of the automobile as an everyday mode of transportation. The majority of construction did not occur until the late 1930s and early 1940s. Vacant lots continued to be purchased and developed with modest houses in the early post-World War II era. Although the 1921 section presents a distinctly separate appearance and design, it nevertheless reflects another stage in the development of Rosedale Park. While three non-contributing apartment buildings were built in the 1970s on the district's fringe at Outer Drive West and Grand River Avenue, the most recent contributing structure in this section, an International Style house at 14901 Minock, was built in 1955 (City of Detroit Building Permits).

In 1925, four years after the final addition to Rosedale Park and nearly a decade after its original platting, the City of Detroit issued a Master Plan that detailed what the Rosedale Park Land Company had already known. The city's plans for transportation and suburban development targeted Grand River Avenue as a 204-foot wide major transportation artery for the northwest side of the city (City of Detroit Common Council Advisory Committee 1925:5). Due in part to his vision and connections for the development of Detroit, Ernest Otto Knight later joined the Detroit City Planning Commission in 1938. He served in that position until 1953. Although the City of Detroit's plans to expand Grand River Avenue were later abandoned in favor of constructing Interstate 96 in a similar direction, the path of suburban development nevertheless continued in the direction that the company had predicted.

Early residential suburbs such as Rosedale Park "fostered an emerging American aspiration for life in a semi-rural environment, apart from the noise, pollution, and activity of a crowded city, but close enough to the city for commuting daily to work" (Ames and McClelland 2002:3). Rosedale Park was served by streetcar and interurban service with stops at thirty and sixty minute intervals on Fenkell (Gavrilovich and McGraw 2000:232). Grand River Avenue, also known as the Lansing Road, was the principal carriage and automobile route between Detroit and points northwest (Hudson and Lillie 1948:2). It was also a connection to the business district in Redford, located only a few miles west of Rosedale Park, on the other side of the newly completed Outer Drive Concrete Road (Polk 1918). According to Polk's 1918 city directory, the Township of Redford, in which Rosedale Park was located, also got into the act of suburban promotion. In that year, it took out a full-page advertisement extolling the virtues of suburban living in Redford Township, including the village center's location on Grand River Avenue, "the paved highway which crosses the state," its municipal water system; and eleven miles of paved sidewalks. The advertisement listed other desirable features of this "village fast becoming a residence section" of Detroit, including Redford Township's fine schools, two state deposit banks, a variety of Protestant and Catholic houses of worship, and proximity to grocery and general goods stores (Polk 1918:2483). Despite the competitive presence of an established commercial district in the nearby village of Redford, the developers of Rosedale Park also included in their plans nearly ninety commercial lots. Located on the fringes of the residential lots, with frontage on Fenkell and Grand River Avenue, the majority of these lots were never developed due to road widening.

Although the majority of commercial lots within Rosedale Park remained undeveloped, commercial interests soon appeared near the district, catering to new residents with basic goods and services in direct competition with similar services located in Redford Township and Detroit. A. J. Stahelin, the former owner of the Rosedale Park lands, continued to maintain a residence on Fenkell and opened a country market on a triangular lot between Grand River Avenue, Fenkell Avenue, and Glastonbury Boulevard. Stahelin's farm market thrived on the business brought by the expanding local population, and helped create for residents a sense of country living in the city. Stahelin's house was replaced by the First Church of the Nazarene in 1950 (City of Detroit Building Permits). It is presently occupied by the Greater Ebenezer

Missionary Baptist Church and listed as a contributing resource to the district. The farm market property is located directly adjacent to the Rosedale Park Historic District and is currently the location of the c.1970s Grandland Shopping Center.

In addition to the amenity of market shopping, Rosedale Park residents were also able to conduct their banking business close to home. According to *Detroit Today* (Polk 1921:214), in 1920 Detroit had twenty-five banking institutions but a combined total of 191 banking main offices and branches. These numbers continued to expand, with the "visible evidence of growth and prosperity of the banks . . . found in the magnificent main and branch banking houses which they are constantly building" (Polk 1921:214). Central Savings Bank, with eight branches listed by Polk in 1921, continued to expand well through the 1920s. The simplified Neoclassical style Rosedale Park branch was a minor work from the famed Detroit architectural firm of Albert Kahn and built in 1927 for the Central Savings Bank (City of Detroit Building Permits). It is located at 18203 Fenkell, on the flat-iron corner of Grand River Avenue, Fenkell Avenue, and Ashton Boulevard near the Southfield Freeway. Included as a contributing resource in the Rosedale Park Historic District, this bank building is currently occupied by a Bank One branch office. Little exterior ornament was used on the flat-roofed building, which was limited to minimal dentils along the cornice and recessed framing around each door and window. Large plate-glass windows punctuate the stone façade on two sides, facing both Ashton Boulevard and the Southfield Freeway to the east and Fenkell and Grand River Avenue to the north. The main entrance, signified by double doors and a sign overhead, is thoughtfully oriented to face northeast into the intersection.

Located on the northern border of the district and facing Grand River Avenue and Fenkell, Rosedale Park's eastern group of commercial lots borders an elaborate set of brick and stone piers erected by the developers at the northern terminus of Ashton Boulevard at the intersection of Fenkell and Grand River Avenue. These piers are echoed by a somewhat less ornate version a few blocks west at Glastonbury Boulevard and Grand River Avenue; this set is adorned with a plaque stating the area was "Developed by Clemens Knight Menard Co." Finally, the westernmost gates, located in the 1917-platted subdivision, were erected at Grand River Avenue and Peidmont Boulevard with piers topped by large stone globes. These piers were likely erected in the 1930s during the construction of many homes in that section of the district (City of Detroit Building Permits).

The combined elements of commercial activity and monumental entry features serve to signify the shift to a residential area upon entering the district from Grand River Avenue or Fenkell. This shift in atmosphere is further emphasized by landscaped traffic islands placed in the center of many north/south street blocks, which require the road to curve around them. In addition to regular traffic on Fenkell and a narrow service alley behind the commercial lots on Grand River Avenue, five additional streets provide residents with east-west access to the area at regular intervals and include Midland Avenue, Keeler Avenue, Chalfonte Avenue, Eaton Avenue, and Lyndon Avenue. From the 1920s on, these side streets provided access to side yard driveways and garages by affording street parking and garage access for corner lots.

Architectural History

The first house in Rosedale Park was built in 1917 at 15001 Ashton Boulevard for Thomas Barkley and family (Rosedale Park Improvement Association 2000:1; United States Department of Commerce 1920). This two-story side gable masonry house occupies a lot at the corner of Ashton Boulevard and Chalfonte Street, one block west of the Southfield Freeway and one block south of the streetcar service on Fenkell.

This location provided the Barkley family both easy access to transportation and the attractive feature of relative seclusion. The neighborhood developed slowly at first, with only fifteen families residing in Rosedale Park just after the end of World War I (United States Department of Commerce 1920). The small community soon grew, however, with building surges in the mid-1920s and late 1930s. Development moved west from Ashton and Rosemont Avenues, with homes dotting the streets during the 1920s. By the end of the decade, building and home sales ground to a halt when "between 1928 and 1933, the construction of residential property [nationwide] fell by 95%" and "half of all home mortgages in the United States were in default" (Jackson 1985:193).

Construction and home purchase activities made a slow comeback in the mid-to-late 1930s, in response to several Federal incentive programs for home financing. These programs included the Federal Home Loan Bank Act in 1932, the Home Owners' Loan Act in 1933, and the National Housing Act in 1934 (Ames and McClelland 2002:30). The Federal programs resulted in the rapid acceleration of mortgage closings after 1936 (Jackson 1985:203, 205). Development in Rosedale Park was resuscitated by these and other economic improvements, resulting in an increase in housing construction in the late 1930s and early 1940s (City of Detroit Building Permits). In 1938, a particularly active year for new home construction in Rosedale Park, 399,000 homes were built or sold nationwide through the FHA (City of Detroit Building Permits; Jackson 1985:205). As shown on a 1938 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the blocks of the original 1917 subdivision averaged only one or two vacant lots, with some blocks completely occupied (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1938). In contrast, the 1921 subdivision located to the west of Outer Drive and Westwood was somewhat more sparsely occupied. This area averaged six or eight vacant lots per block, with some blocks containing as many as fourteen vacant lots in a forty-lot block. This western end of Rosedale Park was completed by postwar development of the late 1940s (Rosedale Park Improvement Association 2000:1).

Architectural styles and forms are widely varied in Rosedale Park. Builders and buyers selected their design ideas based on personal taste, popular opinion, perceived status, cost, and the fashion of the times. Between the years 1917 and 1955, residences were built in styles identified as English Tudor Revival, Arts & Crafts, Bungalow, Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Foursquare, Prairie, French Renaissance, Ranch, Garrison Colonial, and International Style. Throughout the history of Rosedale Park's development, mass-produced pattern books and house plans were constant sources of inspiration. It appears that private architects were rarely engaged for construction in Rosedale Park; rather, development companies or contractors, such as the Rosedale Park Land Company, worked with plans that owners obtained from pattern books or chose from a building company's standard offerings. These designs were often christened with romantic names, such as "The Glastonbury," or "The Warwick." The romantic names of these house plans appear to have influenced the renaming of several streets within Rosedale Park in the mid-1920s to names reflective of "merry old England - places like ... Glastonbury and Warwick" (Scott 2001:86). Although many new subdivisions of the time included deed restrictions setting minimal building requirements and dictating particulars such as cost of construction, square footage, building materials, design guidelines, or contractors for the purpose of uniformity or neighborhood character, no deed restrictions have been uncovered for the English country theme of Rosedale Park.

The perpetuation of this English country aesthetic appears to have been encouraged by the Rosedale Park Land Company, Rosedale Park's developers-turned-building contractors. Favored choices included the artificially aged appearance of the English Tudor Revival style, the naturalistic Bungalow, and the stately Colonial Revival style, all styles of many early Rosedale Park homes. Other styles occurred in more episodic fashion, such as the Dutch Colonial Revival and French Renaissance. These imposing abodes were

both costly and labor intensive to construct, but fit the financial means of many Rosedale Park residents during the years prior to 1929 and the onset of the Great Depression.

In 1935, the FHA's Better Housing Program launched its pamphlet, *How to Have the Home You Want*, in conjunction with new lending programs. Mail-order catalogs, such as those from Sears, Roebuck and Company as well as Detroit area firms also influenced popular taste to a certain degree (Stevenson and Jandl 1986; Schweitzer and Davis 1990). Locally produced brochures and pamphlets had particular impact, as they placed model homes in familiar contexts and offered assistance in obtaining plans or even building contractors. These publications included *Homes of Distinction*, by Thomas A. Parks of Detroit, and plan books published by several Detroit newspapers that reproduced designs originally printed in their weekend home sections. As budgets got tighter and materials and labor became more costly, the popularity of period styles faded in favor of less elaborate Colonial Revivals, early Ranches, and, to a lesser degree, Moderne style dwellings. These structures, however, still conveyed a scale and presence appropriate to Rosedale Park. Many dwellings of this time period blurred stylistic lines between two or more styles. A common example is the hybrid of a scaled-back Colonial Revival style, typically a one-and-one-half story home with sparse eaves and low pitched roof, and the English Tudor Revival, with artfully random stonework, arched entries, and irregular, massive chimneys.

Garages also figured prominently in the building tastes of Rosedale Park homebuilders and homebuyers. As discussed earlier, the automobile played an increasingly important role in the lives of Rosedale Park residents. After World War II, the personal automobile was very often the transportation mode of choice for at least one member of the average household. According to an article entitled "A House for the Automobile: The Changing Garage" in the *Old House Journal*, the "garage evolved in surprising ways to meet the demands of the automobile age" (Wahlberg 1998:60). Housing for the family car was a natural outgrowth from this new transportation lifestyle, sparking a range of one, one-and-one-half, and two car garages. These automobile shelters could be as simple as an enclosed stall or, in some cases, were built as miniature carriage houses for the car, echoing the construction style and materials of the home. The wider lots in Rosedale Park permitted side drives, so garages were most often placed behind the house at the rear of the lot. Corner-lot owners who saved side yard space by placing the garage to face the side street achieved particularly convenient garage placement. Other owners wished to prominently declare their automobile ownership by placing porte-cocheres or archways adjoining the house. This feature may be observed in the previously discussed English Tudor Revival residence at 14626 Artesian, as well as the Prairie style dwelling at 15034 Rosemont. A small percentage of residences featured garages integrated into the main body of the dwelling, but the combined factors of relatively narrow lots and aesthetic preferences resulted in the dominance of freestanding garage structures in Rosedale Park. The majority of builders and homeowners tended to select modest, utilitarian designs, "sett[ing] for the simple box garage with a gable or hipped roof, double doors, and perhaps a stock window or two" (Wahlberg 1998:62). Approximately half of original garages remain in Rosedale Park, while the remaining examples either have been torn down or replaced with larger, newer versions dating from around the mid-twentieth century to the present.

Social History

In addition to examining the geographic and architectural history of Rosedale Park, a variety of social, cultural, and historical factors must also be taken into consideration to properly evaluate its significance and place it in its proper historical context. As stated by public historian Delores Hayden in *The Politics of*

Public Memory, "finding these buildings and interpreting their history is one additional way to fuse the social and political meanings of space with the history of the urban landscape" (Hayden 1995:39).

Rosedale Park was developed in the late 1910s and early 1920s during a surge of suburban development on the western fringe of Detroit. New residents moved to Rosedale Park to remove their families from locations in the urban core that were perceived as unhealthy and potentially dangerous. These new subdivisions, located on the outskirts of large cities with ample lots and a country feel were popular for their promise of fresh air and clean streets.

Rosedale Park was a community where small families could grow, like the upwardly mobile family of David J. Griffith and his wife, Mamie. The Griffiths moved to 14626 Artesian in 1930 as a young couple from the Carolinas. According the 1930 census, Mrs. Griffith worked outside the home as a sales lady in a department store, while Mr. Griffith was listed in auto sales, where he began in 1927. He later became the owner of D. J. Griffith Sales and Service and Griffith Oldsmobile Company as well as a board member of the National Auto Dealers Association.

Compared with other contemporary neighborhoods such as Palmer Woods and parts of North Rosedale Park, Rosedale Park is more modest in house and lot sizes and, correspondingly, reflects the economic status of its original homeowners. While newly-subdivided Palmer Woods and the Grosse Pointes were among the neighborhoods of choice for Detroit's leaders in business and industry, Rosedale Park was generally home to an educated, solidly middle and upper-middle class.

Original owners included medical professionals like physician Jason B. Cooper at 15035 Grandview (1921) and dentist Jason H. Van Doren, the first owner of 15065 Grandville (1941). Among other business professionals were Roy C. Zimmerman, an accountant with the American Heater Company and Ternstadt Manufacturing Company, residing at 14527 Rosemont (1927), and Waldso Turner, president of Turner Engineering Company and treasurer of Electrical Warehouse, Inc., at 15094 Ashton (c. 1917). The bungalow at 15352 Glastonbury was built for the family of Frederick A. Melmoth, the vice president of the Detroit Steel Casting Company.

Many of Rosedale Park's early owners were employed by the automobile companies, such as Cleveland Ford Nixon, a chemical engineer with General Motors; Claude A. Crusoe, an auto worker and purchasing agent for Fisher Body Corporation; and Ralph Marsh, an assistant service manager of GM Truck and Coach. The Marsh family also demonstrates the tradition of long-term ownership in Rosedale Park; his family lived at 10144 Outer Drive West from 1937 until approximately 1980.

Common to the establishment of new middle-to-upper class subdivisions in the early twentieth century were restrictions that regulated physical characteristics of development, and these were included in the documents establishing the Rosedale Park Subdivisions. In addition to these subdivision restrictions, research has revealed a warranty deed between the Rosedale Park Land Company and the Union Trust Company, a trust mortgage company that handled many real estate transactions within the area. That deed specifically stated, "No part of the above property shall be sold to or occupied by any person or persons of the Ethiopian blood or race." (Wayne County Record of Deeds, 16 July 1923, Liber 37:74-75). Presumably, this odd language was meant to exclude all people of color and it seems fair to assume that race restrictions were included in all or most deeds issued by the developers.

Such restrictions were set to expire on 1 January, 1944, but were extended, at least for those properties whose owners agreed, through a Restriction Extension Agreement recorded 6 October 1943, to be operative and binding through 1 January 1974 (Wayne County Record of Deeds, 6 October 1943, Liber 6725:34). This agreement was voided in 1948, when all race restrictions related to real estate ownership and occupancy were struck down by the United States Supreme Court ruling that covenants based on race were deemed "unenforceable" and "contrary to public process" (*Shelley v. Kraemer* 334 U.S. 1, as cited in Ames and McClelland 2002:36). That ruling, of course, did not cause integration of the neighborhood, which is said to have taken place beginning in the 1970s. (Harriett Mottley, personal communication 26 July 2004).

In order to capture a better look at the population and typical middle-class occupations of Rosedale Park residents during its period of significance, three neighborhood blocks have been traced through four decades of Polk's *Detroit City Directory* listings. These three blocks, including the 14800 block of Ashton between Eaton and Chalfonte, 15300 block of Artesian between Fenkell and Keeler, and 15100 block of Auburn between Outer Drive West and Fenkell, were chosen to represent the original 1916 Rosedale Park plat, the 1917 addition, and the 1921 addition, respectively.

In 1927, the first year Rosedale Park addresses were included in Polk's *Detroit City Directory*, seven households were recorded in the 14800 block of Ashton Boulevard, located in the original Rosedale Park plat. They listed occupations such as law clerk, department head at Dodge Motor Company, teacher, and automotive toolmaker. Further west, in somewhat shorter 15300 block of Artesian located in the first addition, five households were recorded with occupations including barber, building superintendent, and bank branch manager. The second addition was by far the least-populated, as illustrated by the 15100 block of Auburn, where a pharmaceutical company president resided.

Within a decade, however, Rosedale Park's population appeared to be expanding. According to Polk's 1937 *Detroit City Directory*, the 14800 block of Ashton Boulevard listed eighteen households with occupations including advertising manager, auditor, building superintendent, clerk, coal company manager, editor at the Detroit Free Press, engineer, fur salesman, manufacturing company vice president/secretary, and teacher. The 15300 block of Artesian experienced marginal growth to eight households by 1937, with occupations including building superintendent and salesman, as well as chemical, electrical, and mechanical engineers. The 15000 block of Auburn posted similar occupation types in seven households, including auditor, auto sales clerk, electrical engineer, general contractor, telephone company manager, and yard superintendent.

According to Polk's 1941 *Detroit City Directory*, one of the last city directories published before World War II, Rosedale Park had enjoyed significant growth in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The 14800 block of Ashton recorded twenty-nine households; with a wider range of occupations including accountant, bank branch manager, clerk, clothing salesman, dentist, engineer, foreman, grocer, minister, medical instructor, manufacturing company vice-president/secretary, plumber, production manager, purchasing agent, railroad freight agent, and watchman. The 15300 block of Artesian also grew to fifteen households in 1941. Occupations listed included bank branch manager, company president, fire department chief, foreman, marine engineer, and salesman. In 1941, the 15000 block of Auburn included sixteen households, and listed occupations of accountant, automotive company vice-president, auto dealer, bank manager, engineer, electrician, foreman, general building contractor, linotype printing operator, and salesman.

The mid-1950s, near the end of this district's period of significance, saw Rosedale Park with a house on nearly every lot, likely a result of the post-World War II building boom. According to Polk's 1953 *Detroit City Directory*, thirty-five households were listed in the 14800 block of Ashton, with listed occupations including accountant, auditor, automotive engineer, automotive toolmaker, barber, building contractor, business agent, dentist, electrician, foreman, insurance company vice-president, lumber company manager, machinist, plumber, superintendent, teacher, vice-president. By 1953, 15300 block of Artesian had grown to a nearly full block of twenty households, with listed occupations of accountant, automotive engineer, electric company president, electrical engineer, factory worker, fire fighter, foreman, manager, salesman, toolmaker, and US Naval officer. The 15000 block of Auburn was not quite as populated, with only fifteen households; occupations listed included automotive inspector, automotive production engineer, bank branch manager, carpenter, electrical engineer, machinist, salesman, secretary, and shipping clerk.

During the mid-twentieth century, suburban expansion continued westward, southward, and northward from Detroit. Amid this development of newer suburbs outside the city limits, the quality of construction and level of craftsmanship in the mature Rosedale Park subdivision proved to be its greatest asset. Due to its high grade housing stock, charming setting, and active neighborhood association, the Rosedale Park neighborhood has been consistently listed on *Bresser's New Standard Cross Index Directory of Detroit, Michigan* Marketing Area Ratings Map as an "A" listed district (Bresser 1946 to 1999). This evaluation is based not only on the perceived grade of the area, but also on property values, crime rates, and levels of income, education, and homeownership in the district.

Complementing the architectural appeal and quality construction present in Rosedale Park is the Rosedale Park Improvement Association. Neighborhood associations of this type gained nationwide popularity around the turn of the twentieth century. By 1908, "over 2,500 improvement societies were striving to uplift their surroundings" (Kay 1997:144). The Rosedale Park Improvement Association was organized in 1922. Its first order of business was to address the issue of fire protection for the neighborhood, a problem solved by contracting with the City of Detroit Fire Department for response service on a per-call fee basis (Rosedale Park Improvement Association 2000:1). It later tackled the issue of water and sewer services by lobbying for annexation by the City of Detroit, which came to pass in 1926 (Scott 2001:85).

Although little else is known about the early history of the Rosedale Park Improvement Association, this organization has fought in recent decades to maintain the consistent qualities of clean neighborhood appearance, security, active homeownership, and community involvement. The Rosedale Park Improvement Association continues to act as a community advocate, promoting neighborhood involvement, safety, and security in maintaining Rosedale Park as a neighborhood of distinction. According to *Detroit Beginnings: Early Villages and Old Neighborhoods*, "many executives, teachers, doctors, and other professionals live in the Rosedale Park neighborhood – still very much a quiet place of charm and comfort within the city" (Scott 2001:86). The work of the Rosedale Park Improvement Association, combined with the neighborhood's size and variety of housing stock, as well as its lush setting within the city, have contributed to maintaining Rosedale Park as a significant early historic suburb of Detroit.

DESCRIPTION

Rosedale Park, located approximately twelve miles west of downtown Detroit, was developed in the early twentieth century as a streetcar and automobile suburb. Situated south and west of the corner of Grand River Avenue and the Southfield Freeway and covering over 340 acres, Rosedale Park with its stately homes, tree-lined streets, and proximity to the countryside attracted an elite group of residents. The buildings in this district are primarily residential in use, exhibit a wide range of architectural styles, and range from one to two-and-one-half stories in height. Rosedale Park's building stock presents a variety of architectural styles and patterns, but maintains a shared rhythm and cadence of residential construction with uniform setbacks and tree-filled medians between sidewalks and streets.

Originally developed at the edge of metropolitan Detroit's urban area, Rosedale Park was soon surrounded by the westward suburban expansion of Detroit. Adjacent farmland was filled with other housing developments, such as the Brightmoor, Grandmont, Grandmont I, and North Rosedale Park neighborhoods, as well as commercial interests lining Grand River Avenue. The most visually prominent contributing resources in the district are the former Central State Bank (now Bank One), built in 1927 at 18203 Fenkell, and the former First Church of the Nazarene (now Greater Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church), built in 1950 at 18751 Fenkell (City of Detroit Building Permits).

The present-day Bank One branch is a single-story stone veneer commercial structure designed by the firm of famed Detroit architect Albert Kahn. The pared-down neoclassical style branch is located at the flat-iron corner of Grand River Avenue, Fenkell Avenue, and Ashton Boulevard. Although it was only a minor project from Kahn's office, this building was designed with a keen eye for optimal location, presentation, and function. Despite alterations to the windows and entry with replacement glass and a relocated entrance, the building continues to capture maximum exposure and accessibility from each roadway. The First Church of the Nazarene, now the Greater Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church is located on the south side of Fenkell between Glastonbury and Artesian. This red brick veneer church is composed of a slightly vaulted central sanctuary portion rising nearly three stories in height, flanked by two single-story wings extending to the east and west of the north-facing central portion. A large stylized cross, a triple set of double doors, and substantial stone piers demarcate the principal entrance.

Today, the district is bordered by visually prominent developments including the Grandland Shopping Center, a strip-mall development located in a triangular lot between Grand River Avenue, Fenkell Avenue, and Glastonbury Boulevard, as well as two apartment complexes of moderate size on Outer Drive West near Grand River Avenue. Stoepel Park, located on the western edge of the district, south of Outer Drive West, preserved some open space for area residents to enjoy. The setting and feel of Rosedale Park within the district, however, have changed little since development ended in the mid-twentieth century.

Placed on generally flat terrain, the principal residential streets are alternately eighty and one hundred feet wide, and are oriented in a north-south fashion. These streets average between three to six blocks in length, from Lyndon Avenue on the south to the northwesterly angled Grand River Avenue on the north. Each street is lined with a range of approximately ten to nineteen lots per block, per side, with each lot measuring between thirty and sixty feet wide. Blocks tend to be longer in the southern portion of the neighborhood, while they are shorter in the northern portion between Fenkell and Grand River Avenue as well as the western portion between Outer Drive West and Fenkell. Sidewalks line each side of the streets, and are set

back from the road by a tree-lined median. East-west traffic within the district is provided by five fifty-foot-wide streets located at regular intervals, including Midland, Keeler, Eaton, Chalfonte, and Lyndon avenues.

Garages are nearly ubiquitous accessories for houses in Rosedale Park, with the majority of lots each containing one single bay or double bay detached garage. A small percentage of houses in Rosedale Park have an attached garage, but this feature is most usually a later addition to a pre-existing dwelling. A few exceptions to this rule are seen in the western portion of the neighborhood, in houses built in the late period of development in Rosedale Park. For example, 15043 Minock and 15080 Minock, were both constructed in the spring of 1938 in the Moderne style (City of Detroit Building Permits). These houses feature single bay garages integrated into the main portion of the structure. Construction types of these ancillary buildings vary from detailed efforts to match a house in roofline and materials to astylistic structures built simply to provide shelter for the family car. The earliest houses in Rosedale Park may have included garages for leisure vehicles, but as residents became more reliant on automobiles for everyday transportation in the 1920s, a garage was usually constructed along with a new house. Approximately half of original garages remain in Rosedale Park, with the remaining portion replaced with more recently constructed versions.

Garages are usually located in the side or back yard, parallel to or behind the house, and are accessed from the street by a driveway along one side of the lot. As few shared driveways exist in Rosedale Park, driveways are usually private. While garages on corner lots are also typically located on the lot in the same manner, corner lots deviate from their neighbors by orientating garages toward the side street. As a result, east-west side streets are uniformly lined with corner-lot garages accessed from the side street, and include almost no residential lot frontages.

For most of those streets platted between 1916 and 1917 in Rosedale Park Subdivision and Rosedale Park Subdivision #1 (Rosedale Park Plat Maps 1916:2599, 1917:2600), each block also features a focal point of community cooperative effort: a landscaped traffic island. These curbed and manicured spaces serve the dual purpose of creating visual appeal and regulating traffic. This section's residential streets are positioned perpendicular to adjacent commercial and transportation thoroughfares in an effort to discourage unwanted traffic and noise. These early streets include Ashton, Rosemont, Penrod, Faust, Greenview, Glastonbury, Stahelin, Artesian, Warwick, Piedmont, and Grandville boulevards. The 1921 westward expansion of Rosedale Park Subdivision #4 included the addition of the north-south streets of Minock, Auburn, and Plainview boulevards and Evergreen Road bounded on the north and south by Outer Drive West and Fenkell Avenue (Rosedale Park Plat Maps 1921:17611). These additional four blocks differ in the lack of landscaped traffic islands, although wide medians exist in portions of Outer Drive West.

While the busy corridors of Grand River Avenue and the Southfield Freeway only skirt the edges of Rosedale Park, both Fenkell Avenue and Outer Drive West actually pass through the district. Fenkell Avenue, which pre-dates the development of Rosedale Park, originally served the modest purpose of a farm lane. It has since been expanded to accommodate between three and four lanes of traffic as an access road for Grandland Shopping Center and a short-cut between Grand River Avenue, the Southfield Freeway, and Outer Drive West. Only a small percentage of residential frontages exist on Fenkell Avenue. Outer Drive West, with six traffic and parking lanes, also goes through Rosedale Park. Residential frontage on high-traffic roads is limited to those lots lining Outer Drive West and corner lots on intersecting streets.

In addition to strategically aligned streets and selective lot frontages, three sets of brick and stone piers mark major entrance points into the district. The earliest and most elaborate are located at the juncture of Ashton Boulevard and Fenkell Avenue, next to Bank One and near the intersection of Grand River Avenue and the

Southfield Freeway. Rising to over fifteen feet in height, these piers flank the Ashton Boulevard entrance to the district. The second pair of piers, located at the intersection of Glastonbury Boulevard and Grand River Avenue, echoes the form and material of those at Ashton Boulevard but is considerably smaller in scale. The final set, located at Piedmont Boulevard and Grand River Avenue, is the most modest in size.

These entry symbols abutting elements of commercial activity serve to signify the shift to a residential landscape and encourage conservative driving upon entering the district from either Grand River Avenue or Fenkell. This shift in atmosphere is further emphasized by the aforementioned traffic islands placed in the center of many north/south street blocks, which require the driver to curve around them. These islands, filled with flowers and large trees, serve to slow traffic, buffer noise, and provide a pleasing focal point of visual interest. Over the years, they have been a source of pride for residents, who have organized themselves into block groups to share in their upkeep and beautification.

Lining the streets are rows of oak and maple trees that cast heavy shadows over the neighborhood, with branches reaching toward the street's center to form a lush canopy in the warm months. Some of these trees were planted in the 1910s and 1920s, while others are younger replacements of trees lost to disease, storms, or age. Sidewalks, lining both sides of each street, act as semi-public spaces between the tree rows and private yards. The balance of each street, punctuated with landscaped islands and lined with trees and sidewalks, is echoed in the yard setbacks and lack of front yard fencing. Each house is placed on its lot with a minimum of thirty feet between the street and the house, thus creating a pleasing and unbroken greenbelt on both sides of the street.

Between the years 1917 and 1955, over 1500 houses were built in Rosedale Park in a variety of sizes, styles, and forms. Construction materials for these houses include wood, aluminum, shingle, and vinyl siding; half timbering; stucco; and masonry units of both solid and veneer brick, stone, and concrete block, with masonry construction as a significant element in the majority of houses in Rosedale Park. These construction materials were utilized in the expression of a diversity of styles spanning the aesthetic tastes and economic capabilities of five decades of homebuyers. To maintain a certain level of construction quality and desirability of setting, building and deed restrictions were imposed by the developers. It appears that these restrictions were not imposed uniformly throughout the entire development, but were limited to a street-by-street or block-by-block basis. They typically dictated an approval process for building plans through the Clemons, Knight, Menard Company as well as a list of acceptable materials, the depth of building set backs, and limitations on fencing materials. For example, according to a warranty deed dated 25 June 1919 for Lot 1206 Rosedale Park Subdivision Number 1, located at 15352 Glastonbury Boulevard (formerly Harrison Boulevard):

On said lot no structure shall be built except for dwelling house purposes only to cost not less than \$6,000 and said dwelling shall be at least two stories in height or an approved type of bungalow and for a period of five years no building shall be built thereon until the plans have first been approved by Clemons Knight Menard Co. Said dwelling shall have full basement of brick, stone, or cement and must be built at a distance of 30 ft from the front lot line and not nearer than three feet of side lot line, projections forming part of the body of the house must be set within the building line. Nothing by [sic] ornamental wire fences not over 5 ft. high may be erected on the property and said fences shall not be erected nearer to the front line than the rear of the building (Wayne County Register of Deeds, Liber 1246:360).

A number of Detroit-area building companies and contractors were prepared to meet these requirements. According to *Detroit's Beginnings: Early Villages and Old Neighborhoods*, many of the homes in Rosedale

Park were "custom-built by their owners with a variety of architectural styles and features such as libraries and breakfast rooms" (Scott 2001:85). As described in a neighborhood promotional publication, homes in the district typically have "between three and five bedrooms, and two thousand to twenty-five hundred square feet . . . [with] fireplaces, two car-garages, and are tree-shaded and landscaped" (Rosedale Park Improvement Association Ephemeral Files, c.1985; courtesy of Harriett Mottley).

Presented below are brief descriptions of representative examples of the architectural styles found in Rosedale Park. These descriptions are followed by a complete inventory of all 1,533 properties encompassed by the Rosedale Park Historic District, including a street address, building permit number, building permit date, architectural style, and contributing or non-contributing status.

Colonial Revival – 15094 Ashton Boulevard

This side-gable brick dwelling, located in the far eastern portion of the district, was likely built in the late 1910s as one of the earliest residential structures in Rosedale Park (no documentation of its construction date has been located). Rising to two-and-one-half stories in height, this traditionally appointed residence is a fine example of the Colonial Revival style. The principal façade presents a balanced five-bay fenestration pattern, with the remaining elevations following the pattern to a lesser degree. The first story is composed of a flat-roofed entry porch, with slender Doric columns framing a transom-lit doorway. Paired six-over-nine windows flank the entry, while the second story is punctuated with five evenly spaced six-over-six windows. The first story windows are topped with brick jack-arches and a centered stone keystone. Both the first and second story windows have stone sills and are framed by well-proportioned wooden louvered shutters with functioning hardware. The side gable roof is underscored by a wide cornice and side returns. Three gable front dormers with arched windows and tracery complete the uppermost story.

Bungalow – 15352 Glastonbury Boulevard

This one-and-one-half story Craftsman bungalow dwelling was likely built in the late 1920s. With its walls of stone and half-timbered stucco, this fine example of a bungalow is in keeping with the Craftsman precepts of unaltered natural materials and uncomplicated design. Dwellings of this type lacked excessive ornamentation, and relied on the strength and honesty of their materials for aesthetic appeal. In doing so, they "display[ed] a fine degree of craftsmanship and [were] constructed of materials left as close as possible to their natural state" (Poppeliers, Chambers, and Schwartz 1983:76). The first story is built of random fieldstone. The main entrance at the north on the principal façade and the triple window adjacent are sheltered by a wide porch covered by the main roof, which has exposed rafter tails and is supported by four substantial wooden columns. The low-pitched roof with wide, overhanging eaves supports a wide shed roof dormer with two pairs of six-over-one windows. The dormer and gable ends are half-timbered with stucco infill, while the south side of the dwelling features a random fieldstone chimney and stuccoed rectangular bay window.

Foursquare – 14805 Faust Boulevard

This two-and-one-half story brick structure was most likely built in the mid-1920s, during a surge in construction in Rosedale Park. It is a solid example of the American Foursquare housing type. This structure has a block-like form characteristic of the type. The main entry on the north side of the principal façade is adjacent to a triple set of six-over-six windows with stone sills, and is sheltered under a hip-roofed brick porch with stone half-wall caps. The second story is dominated by two sets of paired six-over-six windows, also with stone sills. Although the first and second story windows are most likely replacements, they are in keeping with the original fenestration pattern for this house. The shallow hipped main roof has a center hipped dormer; there is a brick chimney toward the front on the south side wall. The large

proportions and variety of usable space made the American Foursquare among the "most popular house types during the first two decades of the twentieth century," with "virtually every company offering mail-order houses or plans advertising models of this type" (Gordon 1992:137).

Arts & Crafts - 15363 Artesian Boulevard

This stone and frame two-and-one-half story dwelling was likely built in the mid-1920s and is a robust example of the Arts and Crafts style. It presents a pleasant visual appearance and a dominating lot presence with unexpected height and eclectic design. The first story is built of random stone, as are the porch piers and south wall chimney. A stone porch foundation runs the length of the principal façade, which is anchored by a gabled porch over the central door that is flanked on each side by a heavy timber pergola sheltering a triple window with steel casements. The second story is composed of half-timbered stucco, with two sets of three steel casement windows flanking a center set of three leaded-glass windows. The roofline is punctuated with two half-timbered gables, between which is a simple wood-sided shed roof dormer, lit with three small steel casement windows.

Prairie - 15034 Rosemont Boulevard

This imposing two-story dwelling was built around 1925. Sheathed with dark striated brick veneer applied to balloon frame construction, this hipped roof dwelling with overhanging eaves is complemented by a large brick automobile porte-cochere with corresponding hipped roofline. Although the form of the house is of the Foursquare type, the wide eave overhang is characteristic of the Prairie style, claimed by some architectural historians as one of the few truly American housing styles. The Prairie style was developed near the beginning of the twentieth century by architects associated with Frank Lloyd Wright and other Chicago studios (Gordon 1992:107). According to *What Style Is It?: A Guide to American Architecture* (Poppeliers, Chambers and Schwartz 1983:80), the "architects of the Prairie School consciously rejected currently popular academic revival styles and sought to create buildings that reflected the rolling Midwestern prairie terrain," implying a horizontality that this house lacks. Although this house is an anomaly among the profusion of period revivals in Rosedale Park, its solid proportions, battered walls, and paired or tripled nine-over-one windows combine to create a pleasing, thoroughly American appearance for this dwelling.

Dutch Colonial Revival - 15090 Stahelin Boulevard

This two-story wood frame house presents a nearly symmetrical appearance, with a low pitched gable entry hood over a recessed central entrance, flanked by two sets of tripartite windows. A hipped-roof single story portion, likely a sunroom, is appended to the south side of the residence. The upper level of the gambrel roof is punctuated by a central shed dormer with tripartite window and is flanked by a simple shed roof dormer on each side. Its gable ends are highlighted by two simple double hung windows, with half fanlights at attic level. Although this house was likely constructed in the 1920s, the Dutch Colonial Revival style was a standard offering in architectural plan books and mail order catalogues, as well as architect-designed residences (Gordon 1992:104). For example, "Sears, Roebuck and Company manufactured 27 different Dutch Colonial Revival homes from 1904 to the early 1940s" (Gordon 1992:104). The attractive exterior and balanced floor plan of this gambrel-roofed Dutch Colonial Revival dwelling made it a somewhat popular choice in Rosedale Park.

Art Deco - 14635 Warwick Boulevard

This two-story, rectilinear Art Deco style house was built in the late 1930s and reflects the fashion for classically-based structures with little or no ornament. Here a simplified English Regency is veneered in blonde glazed brick, and features a balanced, symmetrical fenestration pattern, broken only by a chimney on the south side. The first floor includes a central entry flanked by a six-over-one window on each side, while the second floor has two evenly spaced six-over-one windows on both sides of a central octagonal window. The structure's brick veneer was applied in an assortment of patterns, including vertical lintels above first floor windows, layered borders around the recessed entry, and two belted courses on the second story. The house is topped by a shallow hipped roof, which is screened by a parapet wall.

Tudor Revival - 14626 Artesian Boulevard

This one-and-one-half story side gable brick dwelling is a classic example of the Tudor Revival style popular in Rosedale Park. The house features a prominent triple-flue chimney, random corner stone work, a steeply pitched front-facing gable, and an entry with arched door and side light covered by a steep gabled roof, curved on one side. It would appear to be a variation on several popular house plans of the time period. These house plans were popularized by such publications as *Homes of Distinction*, published by Thomas Parks of Detroit. Parks christened his house plans with elegant, English manor-like names like "The Strathmore," "The Pinehurst," and "The Roselawn" (Parks c.1930:9,13,21). An unusual element is the wrought iron automobile archway over the driveway. Topped with an electric coach lamp, the archway is anchored to two stone piers flanking the driveway, with one pier integrated into the south wall of the structure. Although the original garage has since been replaced with a c.1960 two-car frame garage, the function of this feature remains the same.

French Renaissance - 14803 Rosemont Boulevard

This one-and-one-half story brick veneer house was constructed in the late 1930s and is a simplified version of the French Renaissance style. Executed in brick, this structure has as its most prominent element a corner turret entry framed with stone and topped by a conical roof. This side gable dwelling with its prominent intersecting front gable also features stone sills for its single, double, and triple sets of double-hung windows. Oriented to face the intersection of Rosemont and Eaton, it succeeds in establishing a corner presence, which is substantial for this relatively diminutive dwelling.

English Tudor Influenced - 15065 Grandville Boulevard

The one-and-one-half story dwelling at 15065 Grandville Boulevard was constructed in 1941 (Detroit City Building Permits). This side gable brick dwelling expresses architectural characteristics of a simplified Tudor Revival house, including its prominent chimney with substantial massing, the random decorative stonework near the corners and entry, and the stone lintels above some windows. Other elements, however, reflect the period, such as the simple eaves, windows with only horizontal muntins, and double gable front façade that creates an illusion of a larger second story. Houses of this type became popular in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Their blend of traditional elements with low cost proved to be an appealing combination for many families building homes in Rosedale Park.

Colonial Revival - 15067 Auburn Boulevard

Modest dwellings like this house, sometimes called minimal traditional for their reduced use of Colonial Revival details on modified traditional housing forms, were encouraged during the 1930s by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). At the time of construction, such houses were most frequently referred to as "bungalows," for their use of the efficient one-and-a-half-story plan, even though they do not resemble the

classic bungalow in appearance. These models of American suburban architecture were touted in a brochure entitled *How to Have the Home You Want*, published by the FHA's Better Housing Program near the end of the Great Depression (FHA 1935). In it, the FHA asserted that "an owned home should be the birthright of every American," no matter the size. While a few larger residences are featured in this brochure, the majority of homes pictured are of modest proportions with minimal detailing, thus making them more affordable for "every American." This side-gable, one story brick veneer dwelling follows the pragmatism of the time period. It has a brick chimney on the south side, a shed-roofed front porch, a tripartite front picture window, and a prominent gable-front portion with a simple double-hung window and contrasting siding. The limited details on the house, however, derive from the "colonial" of the period, such as the porch pillars, the returns on the front-facing gable, and the window given importance by a blind panel below and shutters on each side.

Ranch - 9756 Outer Drive West

This modest hip-roofed Ranch-type house was built in 1954 (City of Detroit Building Permits). Clad in pale gray brick veneer, this residence presents a sleek, modern appearance. Its principal façade faces east, and is dominated by a large picture window on the north side. This window is canted out from its base at a shallow angle, with extruded aluminum mullions dividing the glass into six equal sections. The simple entry is directly to the south, placed slightly off center on a brick and concrete entry pad. The house is embellished with five horizontal lines of black brick on each corner of the principal façade, perhaps in imitation of quoins.

Garrison Colonial - 15156 Plainview Boulevard

This two story wood frame, side gable dwelling was constructed in 1941 with a variety of materials and textures, including cladding of brick veneer, random fieldstone, and (presumably later) aluminum siding (City of Detroit Building Permits). Houses of this form, with a second-story front overhang, were popularized by pattern books in the years prior to World War II, as well as the post-war era. This form, called Garrison Colonial, was claimed by pattern books to have a "combination of brick veneer and wood frame on the outside [that] is pleasing to the eye" (Griffiths, Williams, and Dennis 1948: Home #87). The west facing principal façade of this example features on the first floor a recessed door to the north with a simple "colonial" surround adjacent to a tripartite picture window. Two evenly spaced double-hung windows pierce the second story. This house's Colonial Revival antecedents, coupled with its moderate size and price, made this building type a popular choice for later construction in Rosedale Park; indeed, hundreds of houses built to this plan exist in many areas of the city of Detroit.

International Style - 14901 Minock Boulevard

This International Style dwelling was built in 1955 (Bresser 1955). The lot, which is located at the end of a dead-end street and faces Stoepel Park, suits the style of this house. Finished in brick veneer and vertical wood siding on a steel and glass frame with a flat, gravel-topped roof, this rectilinear structure embodies many design qualities associated with the International Style. Its principal façade faces Stoepel Park to the south with a ribbon of windows on the first and second floors. In contrast to this emphasis on light and expanded views, the Minock Street façade has a windowless eastside wall and a flat-roofed carport. A wooden balcony runs the length of the second floor windows, terminating at the secluded rooftop deck, shrouded by trees, at the west end of the dwelling. The house turns its back on the street, an orientation emphasized by low gray brick walls screening the deck and windows from street view, and is augmented by a steel pergola extending from the carport. The building's sleek, modern appearance is complimented by sculpted juniper bushes at the intersection of the driveway and the end of the street.

Criteria: The proposed historic district meets criteria A and C as provided in the Michigan Local Historic Districts Act and in local ordinance. These criteria refer to resources:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Recommendation: The Historic Designation Advisory Board recommends that City Council adopt an ordinance of designation for the proposed historic district. A draft ordinance is attached for City Council's consideration.

Rosedale Park Historic District
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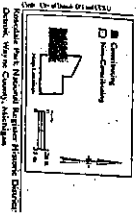
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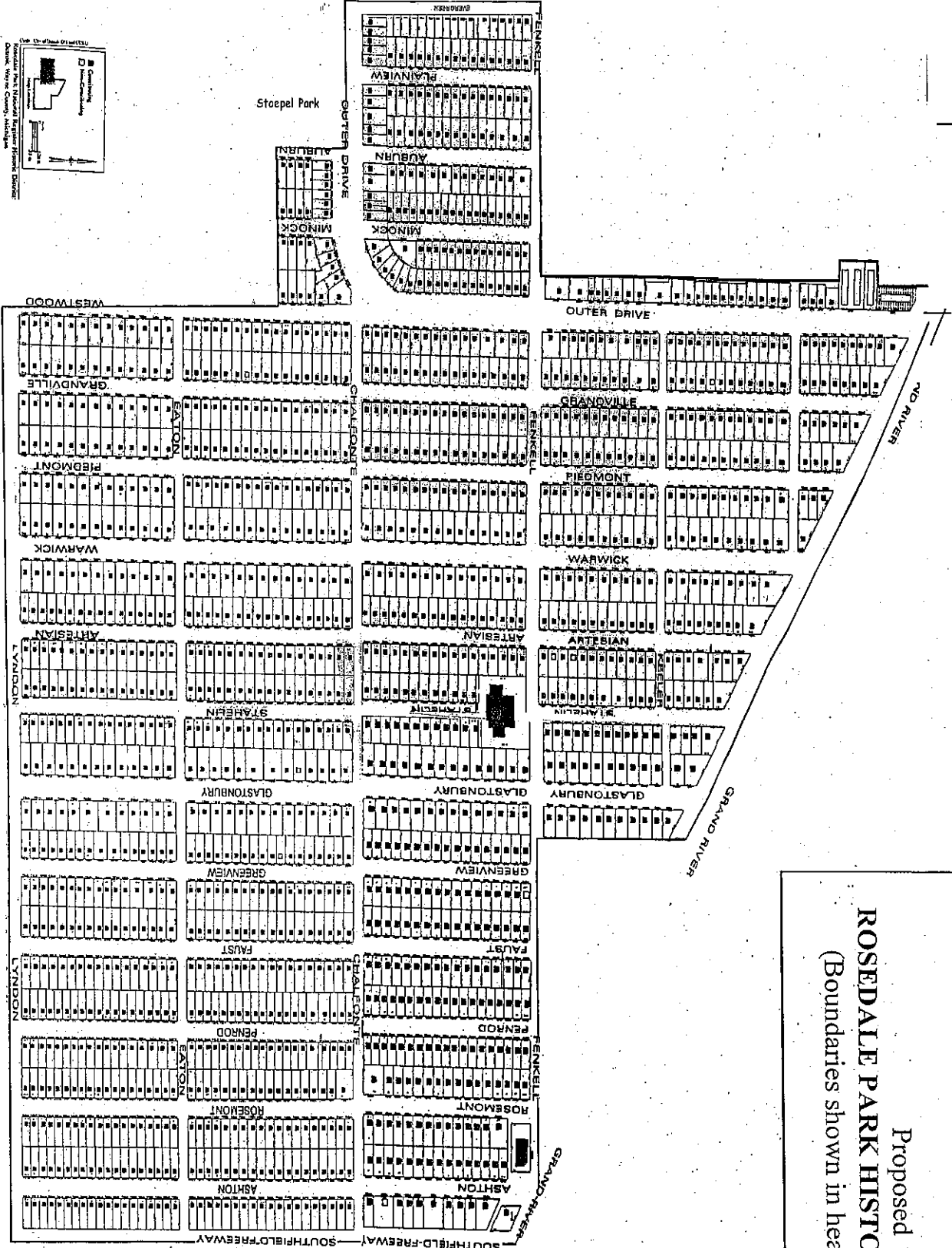
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Stoepel Park



Proposed
ROSEDALE PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT
(Boundaries shown in heavy black line)