



West Avenues West Historic District

PERMANENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION REPORT

CCF 250365

JULY 2025

WEST AVENUES WEST PERMANENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION REPORT AND PRESERVATION GUIDELINES JULY 2025

PROPERTY NAME

Historic: Wells Street, 26th Street, 25th Street, Assessment Subdivision Number 48, Harrison's Subdivision, Place's Subdivision, and Subdivision of Blocks 275 & 283 Historic District

Common: Avenues West

LOCATION

A. General Location

The district includes one-and-two family buildings in the 2400 and 2600 blocks of West Wells Street, 700 and 800 blocks of N 25th Street (not including 842 N 26th Street), and the 700 and 800 blocks of N. 26th Street, and the apartment building at 2634 W. Wells Street.

B. Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the West Avenues West Historic District are described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of N. 26th Street and W. Kilbourn Avenue; then proceeding south along the east curb line adjacent to the vacant lot at 850 N. 26th Street continuing south to the corner of N 26th Street and W. Wells Street; then proceeding west along the curb line of the south side of the 2600 block of W. Wells to the west property line of 2627 W. Wells Street; then proceeding south along the west property line of 2627 W. Wells Street; then proceeding east along the south property lines of 2627 W. Wells Street, 2619 W. Wells Street, and 2615 W. Wells Street; then proceeding south along the west property line of 747 N. 26th Street; then crossing N. 26th Street to the southwest property line of 740 N. 26th Street; then proceeding east along the south property line of 740 N. 26th Street; then proceeding south along the west property line of 743 N. 25th Street; then proceeding east along the south property line of 743 N. 25th Street; then proceeding north along the eastern property lines of 743-761 N. 25th Street; then crossing W. Wells Street to the southwest property line of 804 N. 25th Street; then proceeding east to the southeast property line of 2442 W. Wells Street; then proceeding north along the east property line of 2442 W. Wells Street; then

proceeding west to the northwest property line of 828 N. 25th Street; then proceeding south back to the southwest property line of 804 N. 25th Street; then proceeding west to the southeast property line of 2534 W. Wells Street; then proceeding north along the east property line of 2534 W. Wells Street; then proceeding west to the southeast corner of the property line of 814 N. 26th Street; then proceeding north to the northeast property line of 850 N. 26th Street; then west to the place of beginning.

Classification: District

Under s. 320-21-9-c of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances, this district was reviewed for its effect on low- and moderate-income housing within its boundaries. To the knowledge of staff the historic designation will not have a negative effect on low- and moderate-income housing.

NOMINATION DETAILS

Owner: Multiple

Nominator: Jim Dieter

Aldersperson: Ald. Robert Bauman, 4th District

DISTRICT DATA

YEARS BUILT c. 1885-1925

ARCHITECTS Ferry & Clas, Alfred C. Clas, James Douglas, Herman W. Buemming, Leiser & Holst, George Schley, Schnetzky & Liebert, Evans & Marshall

STYLES Queen Anne, Arts & Crafts, Craftsman, American Foursquare, Beaux Arts

GENERAL CHARACTER

The West Avenues West Historic District consists of thirty-one parcels containing twenty-eight properties constructed as single-family or duplexes, one apartment building, and two vacant lots. The buildings range in date of construction from c. 1887 to 1925. The period of construction coincides with the period of development for the near-west side of Milwaukee. The properties are located within the Assessment Subdivision Number 48, Harrison's Subdivision, Place's Subdivision, and Subdivision of Blocks 275 & 283 subdivisions, in a neighborhood without a historic neighborhood name but now known as Avenues West. The buildings are all on long, narrow single or double lots. The single-family and duplexes are all two-and-a-half stories tall, while the apartment is four stories on a raised basement. The vast majority of the properties are still used as single-family or duplex uses, though some properties have been further subdivided or are used as rooming houses. The architectural styles of the properties represent the period of development on the near-west side and include primarily Queen Anne and Arts & Crafts houses with American Foursquare and Craftsman style houses present. The Wellesly Apartment Building is the sole Beaux Arts style building.

TOPOGRAPHY

The West Side was originally an irregular terrain of ravines, swamps and waterholes that was bounded on its eastern edge by a series of high bluffs offering spectacular views of the Milwaukee and Menomonee River Valleys. The major topographical features were chronicled in detail by pioneer historian James Buck. After reading his account, Jerome Watrous commented in his 1909 *Memoirs of Milwaukee County*, "a stranger seeing our city today for the first time could not comprehend the amount of filling that has been done here." The steep bluffs, which began between North 8th and 9th Streets and extended from midway between Wisconsin Avenue and Wells Street to Vliet Street were cut down from ten to forty feet to permit the construction of streets and to fill the swamps that bordered the rivers and covered much of today's Central Business District. West of the bluffs the land was generally high and well drained, suitable for building, and covered with a dense forest of oak which extended beyond the western limits of the city into the hinterland. This topographical mess delayed the layout of subdivisions and mass settlement of the Avenues West area as compared to areas east of N. 8th Street.

EARLY SETTLEMENT: WEST SIDE LAND DIVISION

The settlement of southeastern Wisconsin was precipitated by the 1835 Federal Land Sale at Green Bay. Both Solomon Juneau and Byron Kilbourn purchased lands at this sale upon which they platted the respective villages of Juneautown and Kilbourntown on the opposite banks of the Milwaukee River. Kilbourntown extended west to North 9th Street, south of Juneau Avenue, and to North 13th Street, north of Juneau Avenue (Lapham, Increase "1836 Map of Milwaukee"). Much of the West Side was sold in large parcels to pioneer farmers and speculators. George Smith was probably the first major land holder on the West Side. At the 1835 Sale he purchased a tract of land extending from North 13th

Street to North 21st Street and between Wisconsin and Juneau Avenues. Smith was a Scottish businessman who invested heavily in the Wisconsin wilderness, purchasing land at \$1.25 per acre. In 1836, land speculation was peaking in Milwaukee and Smith sold seventy-five acres of his West Side parcel to Hans Crocker at the considerable profit of \$12 an acre.

Land sales were limited on the West Side because the Milwaukee and Rock River Canal Company held thousands of acres in trust to be sold to finance the construction of a canal from the west bank of the Milwaukee River to the Rock River in central Rock County. After it was chartered in 1838 by the State Legislature, the canal company did conduct one land sale to raise capital and to encourage settlement of the proposed canal route. Ultimately, the canal company proved to be unsuccessful and it ceased to exist in 1841. It was not until 1849, however, that all of the canal lands were surrendered to the state and made available for public sale. These lands sold quickly amidst speculation that the Milwaukee, Madison and Watertown Plank Road Company's (chartered in 1846) planned a plank road through the West Side would make the land valuable. The road began in the city at two points, the north fork at North 12th Place and Juneau Avenue and the south fork at North 11th Street and Kilbourn Avenue, and after merging at North 15th Street and Highland Avenue, followed an undulating route westward along the approximate course of present-day State Street.

By the end of 1849, when the plank road was completed through the city, all of the West Side lands had been sold. The land ownership patterns that emerged at that time partly would continue until the first subdivisions were platted in the mid-1850s. Between North 12th and North 27th Streets, and Vliet Street and Wisconsin Avenue, five individuals owned over seventy-five percent of the land. The largest property owners were Elisha Eldred, Hans Crocker, William P. Lynde, and Cyrus Hawley. South of Wisconsin Avenue all of the land between North 12th and North 20th Streets was owned by James H. Rogers, and between North 23rd and North 26th Streets by C.D. Davis. All of these men were either Yankees or British immigrants who had arrived in Milwaukee within the first five years of the town's settlement. They quickly emerged as civic, professional and business leaders as well as entrepreneurs who financed many of the city's first improvements. West of North 27th Street, intense speculation resulted in the division of the land into many small, ribbon-like tracts. These parcels were long, narrow slivers containing from two to five acres each that extended northward from Wisconsin Avenue and south from Juneau Avenue to frontage on the Watertown Plank Road.

URBANIZATION

Milwaukee emerged in the 1850s as a thriving city with an ever expanding population from both native and foreign sources. Between 1840 and 1855, the city grew an astounding 1,800% from 1,712 to 32,074 residents. New home sites were needed and the city's boundaries were extended in all directions. On the West Side, the city pushed its boundaries westward to North 27th Street and the long held speculative lands were finally

subdivided into residential lots. The first recorded subdivisions on the West Side were Kneeland's Addition in 1848, between North 12th Place and North 14th Street, and McKinley Avenue and Vliet Street, and Mitchell and Houghton's Subdivision in 1853, between North 9th and North 13th Streets, and Wells Street and Juneau Avenue. These were extensions of the original Kilbourntown settlement and the plats continued the street grid established by Kilbourn. Successive subdivisions were controlled by the 1856 City Charter which required all new streets and alleys to align with all existing and adjacent platting. This was done to prevent the misalignment of streets that had occurred when Kilbourntown and Juneautown were platted. It also established a uniform, but rigid, grid pattern as the only legal way to subdivide city land into residential lots. This provision was also part of the 1874 charter and continued the mandate that the West Side proceeded at a steady pace throughout the 1860's and 1870's, and all the land to 27th Street, except a few minor parcels, had been platted by 1885.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND ETHNICITY

Neighborhoods developed on the West Side along fairly rigid social, economic and ethnic lines. The West Side was originally divided into two wards: Ward 2 extended from the Milwaukee River to the city limits at North 27th Street between Kilbourn Avenue and Vliet Street; Ward 4, also extended westward from the river to the city limits, from Kilbourn Avenue south to the north edge of the Menomonee Valley. In subsequent years as the city's population grew and more land was annexed, the boundaries were adjusted to reflect these changes. By 1894, the West Side had been divided into four wards. The west boundaries of Wards 2 and 4 were retracted to North 13th Street, and Wards 15 and 16 were created out of their original western halves and extended from North 13th Street to North 35th Street. Political boundaries are not always reflective of settlement patterns, but the ethnic immigration patterns on the West Side coincide with the ward divisions. The first census reports of 1850 and 1860 for Milwaukee showed that Germans were the dominant group in Ward 2, later Ward 15; and that Yankees, British and Irish were the dominate groups in Ward 4, later Ward 16. This pattern of settlement by ethnic origin persisted on the West Side into the early 20th century as the second and third generations of the respective groups remained in the wards settled by their ancestors. Thus, north of Kilbourn Avenue the wards were predominantly German-American and south of Kilbourn Avenue the wards were predominantly Anglo-American. This splintering of the different ethnic groups on the West Side was typical of Milwaukee's ethnically determined settlement history city-wide.

Neighborhood development on the West Side after 1880 was largely based on the segregation of land uses and income levels. No longer were neighborhoods comprised of mixed uses with residences, shops and factories possibly on the same block. As the second and third generations prospered, a more clearly defined class structure emerged that was defined by occupation and social standing. One aspect of the previous neighborhood structure that carried through into the early-twentieth century was that ethnic associations were not erased by economic parity and those of the same foreign stock

continued to a large extent, to live in proximity to each other. An important characteristic of West Side neighborhoods during this period of residential expansion is that the older areas, primarily east of North 20th Street, remained fairly stable. There was little movement out of this part of the West Side, particularly by the wealthiest classes, even as more desirable home sites further west were made available.

In the period from 1880 to 1910, the city was experiencing a dramatic rise in population not only from internal sources, but from a new surge of post-Civil War foreign immigration. New housing was needed by both the rising middle and upper classes and the newcomers. The older neighborhoods, because of their stable character, did not provide a sufficient supply of cheap housing and to accommodate this need working class neighborhoods were created on the West Side alongside those of the wealthier classes.

The West Side neighborhoods that achieved distinction during this period were those located along or near one of the boulevards. This phenomenon of creating a municipal parkway as part of a city street was first introduced to Milwaukee with the creation of Highland Boulevard in 1896. McKinley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue were named in 1906. The boulevard not only had a landscaped esplanade down the middle of the roadway, but traffic was restricted, prohibiting all forms of heavy loads and undesirable vehicles. These became the choice residential areas of the West Side in the late nineteenth century.

Highland and McKinley Boulevards, though attracting different income groups, were almost all German-American. This was consistent with the ethnic patterns of the old second ward as established in the pre-Civil War settlement period. Highland Boulevard at the upper end of the income scale, was the residence of the wealthiest industrialists and businessmen in this part of the city. Because of its overwhelming German character, it was affectionately called "Sauerkraut Boulevard." Likewise, McKinley Boulevard was the residence of an equal number of German-Americans who were of the professional and managerial classes. Between the two boulevards a better than average neighborhood developed also of German background that included managers, skilled craftsmen and pockets of laborers.

Below Highland Boulevard was the Concordia College neighborhood. It had on its southern edge the former Grand Avenue, now West Wisconsin Avenue. Grand Avenue was a neighborhood unto its own. A residential street of the city's finest mansions and estates, its only near comparison was Prospect Avenue on the east side. It was a place of residence that was represented by Milwaukee's oldest and most socially prominent families as well as the wealthiest industrialists and financiers of the nineteenth century. Though it was heavily characterized by a predominance of Anglo-Americans, there were a significant number of German-American families who were of equal social standing by the end of the century.

The Concordia College neighborhood benefitted greatly by its location between two of the most prestigious residential streets in the city. The neighborhood was a natural attraction to those of the upper-middle class who largely could not afford a mansion-scale house as was characteristic of the boulevards. Centered on the college campus, numerous residences of high quality design and craftsmanship were built on gracious landscaped grounds. The entire area from Grand Avenue to Highland Boulevard flowed like one giant park. The ethnic make-up tended towards the Anglo-American pattern established in the previous generation, but like Grand Avenue it had a significant number of important German-American families so not either group was socially dominate.

The zenith of the elite West Side neighborhoods was short lived. In less than twenty years, the sons and daughters of these prominent Milwaukee families found the residences of Highland Boulevard, Concordia and even Grand Avenue to be architecturally obsolete and unbecoming of their social prominence. A survey of city directories indicates that beginning in the early 1900's there was movement of the wealthiest classes out of the West Side to move desirable home sites on the east side along the lakeshore, the north shore suburbs and to nearby Wauwatosa. This trend continued for the next three decades and by the mid-1940's many of the former mansions had been converted to rooming houses and institutional uses. At that time the ethnic character of the West Side was beginning to change.

DESCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS

WEST WELLS STREET



2442 WEST WELLS STREET (2434 Wells Street, old)

(1907) George Schley, architect (Permit dated August 20, 1907)

2442 W. Wells Street is a two-and-a-half story, Arts and Crafts style house constructed in 1907. The house is clad with wood clapboard siding on the first level and cedar shingles on the upper levels. The house has a full-width raised porch with a gabled dormer with decorative bargeboards. The house has triple six-over-one windows and entry door on the first floor. The upper level has paired six-over-one windows, with a triple bank of windows in the front gable. The house has exposed rafter ends and a small red brick chimney towards the rear of the west elevation. The house was constructed by George Schley.



2446 WEST WELLS STREET (2438 Wells Street, old)

(1907) George Schley, architect (Permit dated August 20, 1907)

2446 W. Wells is a two-and-a-half story American Foursquare style house was also constructed by George Schley in 1907. The house has a hipped roof with prominent gabled dormer. The house has a raised full-width porch enclosed with screens and screened French doors. The porch posts have decorative brackets. The house has a large overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends. It has paired one-over-one replacement windows and is clad with replacement siding.



2450 WEST WELLS STREET (2442 Wells Street, old)

(1907) George Schley, architect (Permit dated August 20, 1907)

2450 W. Wells St. is a two-and-a-half story Arts and Crafts style house also constructed by George Schley in 1907. The house is side gabled with a prominent steeply pitched front gable and dormer. The house has a full-width enclosed porch with large dormer. The house has paired one-over-one windows on the second level and single one-over-one windows in the front gable and dormer. The house is clad with asbestos siding on the first story and shingles on the upper levels.

2519 WEST WELLS STREET (2511-2513 Wells Street, old)

Vacant

2519 W. Wells St. is a vacant lot owned by the City of Milwaukee. The parcel formerly contained a grand Queen Anne house constructed in 1891 and designed by architect Frank Gray. The house was surveyed in 1984 but was razed in 1993.



THE WELLESLY APARTMENT BUILDING

2534-2540 WEST WELLS STREET (2528 Wells Street, old)

(1911) Leiser & Holst, architects (Permit dated October 31, 1911)

The Wellesly Apartment Building is the only non-one-or-two family building in the historic district. It was designed by designed by Leiser & Holst for John Hunholz. It was constructed as a nine-family apartment building and had a cost of \$30,000.

The Wellesly is a Beaux Arts style four-story building on a tall raised basement. The building is clad with red brick. The primary Wells Street façade is symmetrical and contains a center entry with slightly raised stoop. The entry is set within a slightly projecting brick bay with a rounded awning. The name of the apartment building “WELLESLY” is inscribed within the stone arch above the door. On either side of the entry is a bay of near vinyl windows with plywood boarded entry doors outside of those. The upper four levels all contain a centered window bay with three-window bay windows and open porches on either side. Window bays have concrete sills and the porches have

concrete floors that project from the building. The middle windows on floors two through four are set within decorative concrete trim with inset square designs. The building has a large parapet and a discolored band of bricks where a large metal cornice was removed between 2011 and 2015. All visible windows appear to be recent replacements.



DR. EUGENE W. & FRANCES BEEBE HOUSE

2601-2603 WEST WELLS STREET (2601 Wells Street, old)

(1906) Evans & Marshall, architects (Permit dated June 12, 1906)

The Dr. E.W. & Frances Beebe House is a two-and-a-half story Craftsman style house was designed by Evans & Marshall and constructed in 1906. The two-family house had a cost of \$7,000 when constructed. The house is located on the southwest corner of W. Wells Street and N. 26th Street and sits on a raised berm. The house is front gabled and clad with red brick on the first floor with clapboard siding on the second floor and decorative shingles and faux-half timbering in the gables. The house has a full-width porch with brick

columns. Just inside the brick columns are fluted wood columns with Ionic capitals supporting a decorative wood bracket that spans the porch. The front entry is flanked by two fluted Doric columns and one-over-one windows. To the left of the entry is a bay window with “zipper corners” of overlapping brick. The second level of the front façade continues the bay motif from the first floor and also includes a rounded bay with one-over-one window above the entry. The front gable has paired one-over-one windows.

The house was constructed for Dr. Eugene Winfield (E.W.) Beebe and his wife, Frances Augusta Beebe née Spencer. Dr. Beebe was born in Cheshire, New York in 1840 and moved to Wisconsin in 1847. He studied at Evansville Seminary and graduated from Hahnermann Medical College in Chicago in 1866. He operated a successful general and special practice in Evansville until 1879, when he relocated to Milwaukee to practice ophthalmology and otology exclusively.¹ He married Frances August Spencer in 1866 and the couple had one child, Dr. Claude Spencer Beebe M.D., in 1877.

¹ History of Homeopathy and Its Institutions in America, Volume 4. New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1905, 205.



JOSEPH B. REICHERT HOUSE

2605-2607 WEST WELLS STREET (2607 Wells Street, old)

(1892) Schnetzky & Liebert, architects (Permit dated April 23, 1892)

The Joseph B. Reichert House is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house designed by Schnetzky & Liebert in 1892. The house sits on a raised stone foundation and has an asymmetrical front façade with an offset raised entry accessed off a small stoop. The house is clad with clapboard siding on the first and second levels with a band of decorative fish scale shingles separating the two stories and in the two front gables. The ell-shaped front façade has a projecting bay to the left of the entry with a small oriel window on the first level. Most windows have been replaced with one-over-one vinyl windows, though there are paired ten-over-one double-hung sash windows in the attic level. The property now contains a parcel to the west that formerly contained a two-story dwelling at 2609 Wells Street (old).

The house was constructed by Joseph B. Reichert. He appears in city directories and census records with a variety of professions including saloon manager, grocer, and cigar manufacturing. By 1911, he was identified in the city directory as being president of the Light Horse Squadron Cigar Company. City directories following construction of the property continue to show Reichert living at 181 27th Street, located on N. 27th between W. Wisconsin Ave. and W. Wells St., and it is possible the house was constructed as an investment property or on speculation.



2615 WEST WELLS STREET (2611 Wells Street, old)

(Circa 1886) Architect unknown (No building permit located)

2615 W. Wells St. is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house constructed circa 1886. The house sits on a raised stone foundation and has an asymmetrical front façade with a raised center entry accessed off a small porch. The house is clad with replacement asbestos siding with decorative wood shingles in the front gable. The ell-shaped front façade has a slightly projecting bay to the left of the entry. The porch has decorative wood

columns with wood brackets. The porch has a small gable with fish scale shingles. Most windows have been replaced with newer one-over-one windows. No building permit was located for this property but the address appears as early as the 1886 city directory. The first residents located at that address in city directories are Mynard Vedder and Addie Vedder née Moulton. Vedder was born in Nassau, New York and was in Wisconsin by the early-1860s. City directories and census records indicate he worked as a carpenter and cabinet maker.



JACOB & ROSA MICHEL HOUSE

2619 WEST WELLS STREET (2615 Wells Street, old)

(1894) Ferry & Clas, architects (Permit dated May 10, 1894)

The Jacob & Rosa Michel House is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house designed by Ferry & Clas and constructed in 1894. The house sits on a raised rusticated concrete block foundation and has an asymmetrical front façade with an entry accessed off a non-historic full-width patio. The recessed entry is framed by a small pediment with

dentil cornice. The pediment is filled with sawtooth and fish scale shingles. The house is clad with clapboard siding with a band of sawtooth shingles between the first and second floors and decorative fish scale and square wood shingles on the second floor. The gable shingles have been covered with vinyl siding. The first floor corner has a cutaway window with drop ball finial. A second floor balcony above the entry has been infilled with paired replacement windows. Windows are a mix of picture, paired, and triple windows. All windows appear to be replacements. Mrs. J. Michel, Rosa Michael, pulled the permit for the \$2,800 dwelling on May 10, 1894. Jacob and Rosa Michel were both born in France, Jacob in 1839 and Rosa in 1849. They arrived in America in 1854 and 1853, respectively. The couple married around 1884. Jacob worked as a tailor and later traveling clothing salesman per city directories and census records. They appear to have lived at the subject address only briefly, later appearing at 2025 Cedar St. (now Kilbourn Avenue) and 1716 Prairie St. (now Highland Boulevard).



ROSA MICHEL HOUSE

2627 WEST WELLS STREET (2621 Wells Street, old)

(1889) Alfred C. Clas, architect (Permit dated March 12, 1889)

The Rosa Michel House is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house designed by Alfred C. Clas and constructed in 1889. The house largely appears to be a mirror of the house Michel built just to the east at 2619 W. Wells Street. The house sits on a raised brick foundation and has an asymmetrical front façade with an entry accessed off a covered stoop to the right of the façade. The stoop has a small pediment and plain 8"x8" posts. Unlike the house to the east, this house retains the open balcony above the entry. The house is clad with wide metal siding with asbestos shingles in the gables. The first floor corner has a cutaway window with drop ball finial. All windows appear to be replacements. The property contains the land that formerly contained a residence at 2629 W. Wells Street. That property was demolished in 1993. That portion of the subject property has been redeveloped as a driveway and parking lot for the adjacent commercial property. Rosa Michael pulled the permit for the dwelling on March 12, 1889. The Michel's

do not appear to have lived at the subject address and it may have been an investment property. Mrs. Michel noted their address at 208 5th Street when she pulled the permit.

NORTH 25TH STREET



WILLIAM J. TURNER HOUSE

743 NORTH 25TH STREET (181/183 25th Street, old)

(1887) James Douglas, architect (Permit dated March 12, 1889)

Locally designated July 15, 2005

The William J. Turner House is a grand Queen Anne style house located at 743 N. 25th Street. The house was designed by architect James Douglas and constructed in 1887. The following description is taken from the designation study report written by Milwaukee Historic Preservation staff in 2005:

The Turner house is a splendid example of Queen Anne style architecture. Hallmarks of the style include an asymmetrical, picturesque massing, finely crafted embellishments such as towers, turrets, ornamental wood shingling and projecting bays. Roofs are usually steeply pitched and multi-gabled, sometimes incorporating a large corner turret or tower and a picturesque character that typically incorporates, steeply pitched, multi-gabled roofs, corner towers and turrets, projecting bay windows and incorporated sweeping roofs, block-like projecting bays and asymmetrical massing.

The style has its roots in nineteenth century England when architects looked back to the past centuries to reinterpret historic styles of architecture and reportedly got its name during the 1870s from English architect J.J. Stevenson. The Queen Anne was based on English architecture of the late medieval and Renaissance periods in England. While the style was building in popularity in England during the 1870s, it didn't really catch on in America until about 1880 and then it remained popular for more than a decade. The best American wooden examples of the style, such as the Turner House, are often so highly embellished that their exteriors are compared with the design of fine interior cabinetry work.

In Milwaukee, Queen Anne style houses were also sometimes embellished with distinctively German features for the area's large German-American clientele. Research has revealed that the city's largest, towered Queen Anne style houses were usually custom-designed by the city's most prominent architects. Because of the size and complexity of these houses, they would have been considered major commissions by their respective architects.

It is important to place the Turner house in its proper architectural context. A very large, towered Queen Anne style house belongs to a decidedly small and elite grouping of buildings in Milwaukee. While there are many other smaller Queen Anne houses with towers, only a few rank comparably in size and detail with the Turner House. A century ago, however, there were many large, towered Queen Anne style houses in Milwaukee, but most have since been demolished making it important to preserve the few remaining examples. Today, the Turner House ranks among the best surviving wooden Queen Anne style houses in Milwaukee. In terms of its architectural significance, the Turner residence is comparable to another Douglas-designed mansion, the Charles Quarles House (1891), which is located at 2531 N. Farwell Ave. and individually listed on the National Register of Historic places since 1988. Perhaps the grandest of all the remaining wooden towered houses in Milwaukee is the Charles Stolper House at 2463 N. 1st St., which was designed by John Roth, Jr. It is a contributing structure in the North First Street National Register Historic District.

The materials, massing and sheer elegance of the Turner house all reflect the dexterous ability of the designer. The house is finely proportioned with windows and doors carefully sized to respond to the overall size of the house. This is a system of design that is very seldom applied to today's contemporary architecture.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the house is its remarkable 3-story round corner tower, which is topped with a bell-shaped roof. The tower is one of the quintessential features associated with the best examples of Queen Anne style architecture in this county. The Turner house tower is unquestionably a masterpiece of carpentry and constructing it required that each piece of siding had to be meticulously sawn to a precise boomerang shape in order to bend neatly in a level line around the tower.

In sum, the Turner house is important as a pivotal residential structure on the city's near West Side. It represents the zenith of the development of the Queen Anne style in Milwaukee and it is one of the few remaining examples of its kind in the city.²

The house was constructed in 1887 by investor Howard H. Hoyt but named for its first occupant, Judge William J. Turner. Turner was born in Waukesha in 1848. His family moved to New York in 1861, where Turner attended public schools. He graduated with a law degree from the University of Albany in 1871 and subsequently returned to Wisconsin and opened a law practice in Port Washington. He relocated to Milwaukee in 1882 and entered practice with Leander F. Frisby, who was then Wisconsin's Attorney General. Turner died at home in 1919.³ For a more comprehensive history of William Turner and the Turner House, refer to the Final Designation Study Report for the William J. Turner House available on the Historic Preservation Commission website.

² City of Milwaukee, Historic Preservation Commission. "Permanent Historic Designation Study Report, William J. Turner House." 2005.

³ Ibid.



EDWARD AND ESTELLA WADHAMS HOUSE

745 NORTH 25TH STREET (187 25th Street, old)

(1887) Architect unknown (No building permit located)

The Edward and Estella Wadhams House is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house constructed in 1887 at a cost of \$4,000.⁴ The house sits on a raised rusticated concrete block foundation and has an asymmetrical front façade with an entry accessed off a covered stoop to the left of the façade. The house is clad with vinyl siding. The right side of the front façade contains a projecting bay with a center picture window flanked by two one-over-one windows in a bay set at forty-five degree angles to the front plane. The front gable has a projecting triangular top supported by two brackets. The property was built for Edward and Estella Wadhams. Edward Wadhams was a partner of Wadhams, Magie & Co., a machinery oil retailer, and later president of Wadhams Oil and Grease

⁴ Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory, Record #110995.

Company. The company was later known for their Alexander C. Eschweiler designed pagoda-style filling stations.⁵

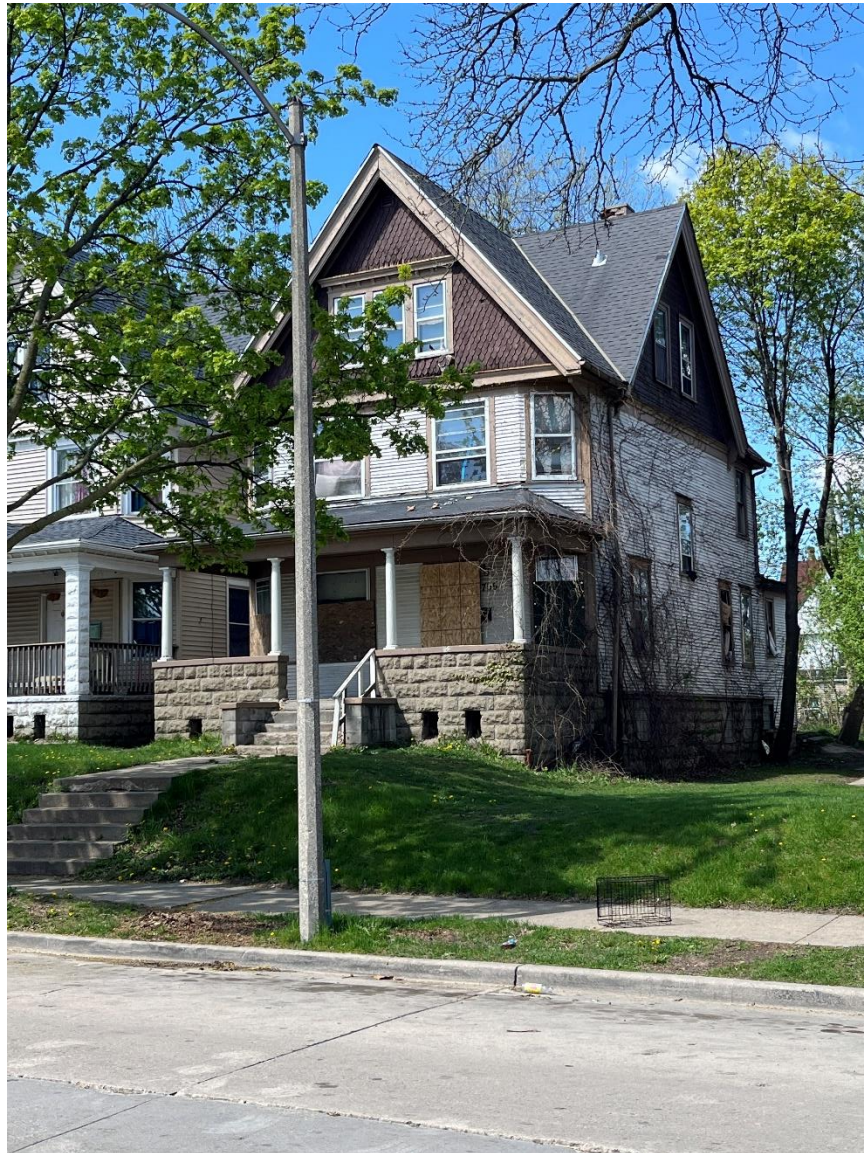


751 NORTH 25TH STREET (191 25th Street, old)
(1907) Architect unknown (Permit dated April 19, 1907)

751 N. 25th Street is a two-and-a-half story front gabled house constructed in 1907 at a cost of \$5,000. This house and 755 N. 25th Street were constructed by Forward Realty Company. No architect is listed on the building permits but Erdman Schultz was the mason and general contractor for both properties. The house sits on a raised rusticated concrete block foundation and has a symmetrical front façade with an entry accessed off a full-width raised porch. The house is clad with vinyl siding. The porch roof is supported by

⁵ City of Milwaukee, Historic Preservation Commission. "Permanent Historic Designation Study Report, Clinton Street Filling Station of the Wadham's Oil Company." 1999.

rusticated block columns. The porch and decorative band above the second floor have a dentil cornice. Windows appear to be one-over-one replacements.



**755 NORTH 25TH STREET (195 25th Street, old)
(1907) Architect unknown (Permit dated April 19, 1907)**

755 N. 25th Street is a two-and-a-half story front gabled house constructed in 1907 at a cost of \$5,000. The house was constructed by Forward Realty Company with Erdman Schultz serving as the mason and general contractor. The house sits on a raised rusticated concrete block foundation and has a symmetrical front façade with an entry accessed off a full-width raised porch. The house has retained its original wood clapboard siding on the first and second levels, with the gable being sided with fish scale shingles. The porch roof is supported by tapered Doric columns sitting on rusticated concrete blocks. The house appears identical in form to 751 N. 25th Street, with minor finish differences.



FRED SIVYER HOUSE

761 NORTH 25TH STREET (199 25th Street, old)

(1888) Architect unknown (No building permit located)

National Register of Historic Places listed January 16, 1986. NRHP #86000141

The Fred Sivy House is a grand Queen Anne style house located at 761 N. 25th Street. House was constructed in 1888. The following description is taken from the National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for the Fred Sivy House:

The Fred W. Sivy House is a high style Queen Anne residence. It is two stories in height with an attic level and sits on a foundation of rock-faced, coursed ashlar limestone. The same stone forms the base of the front porch. Asymmetrical in plan, the massing is centered around a rectangular block with a steeply pitched hip roof that broadly slopes down the main facade over the front porch. From the main block project a series of gables. The Sivy House is of frame construction

and the exterior is completely covered with clapboards, shingles and ornamental panels. . This multiplicity of surface material and pattern has produced facades of great textural variety that are distinctively different from each other. The main entry has double-leaf, paneled doors sheltered by the front porch. Above this is a gabled dormer with a broad round-arched window. Also of note is the segmental oriel projecting from the attic level on the main facade with its Queen Anne style sash. The windows are wooden, double-hung sash.

Fred W. Sivyer was a native of Milwaukee, born here in 1848. He was educated in the public schools and worked in a variety of jobs before deciding on a career in industrial management and education. In 1880 he formed a corporation that would later become Northwestern Malleable Iron Company. When he built this house on North 25th Street, he was secretary of the company and in 1895 was made its president. He lived in this house for two more years. In 1897 he moved to a mansion on West Wisconsin Avenue (razed) where he accomplished his most notable achievements as a businessman. Sivyver was nationally recognized for introducing industrial education to Milwaukee and helped establish the city's first trades school. Sivyver died on June 11, 1910 at his home on Wisconsin Avenue.⁶

Architect Henry C. Koch and his family moved from a mansion at 1914 Grand Avenue (razed) to the Sivyver House prior to 1900. The family resided there until shortly following Koch's death in 1910.

⁶ National Register of Historic Places, Fred Sivyver House, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. National Register # 86000141.



804 NORTH 25TH STREET (200 25th Street, old)

(1907) George Schley, architect (Permit dated October 7, 1907)

804 N. 25th street is a two-and-a-half story Arts and Crafts style house also constructed by George Schley in 1907. The house is cross gabled with two prominent steeply pitched front dormers. The house has a full-width porch with square columns on brick piers. The house is clad red brick veneer on the first story and shingles on the upper levels. The house has two bay windows on the first floor and a center one-over-one window flanked by paired one-over-one windows on the second level. The roofline has exposed bracket ends.



808 NORTH 25TH STREET (204 25th Street, old)

(1907) George Schley, architect (Permit dated October 7, 1907)

808 N. 25th street is a two-and-a-half story American Foursquare house also constructed by George Schley in 1907, with Louis Wilke serving as the mason. The house is has a hipped roof with a prominent center dormer. The house has a full-width porch with outer square brick columns and interior tapered wood columns sitting on the brick porch walls. The house is clad vinyl siding over the original clapboard and shingle siding. The house also has newer replacement vinyl one-over-one windows.



812 NORTH 25TH STREET (208 25th Street, old)

(1907) George Schley, architect (Permit dated October 2, 1907)

812 N. 25th street is a two-and-a-half story front gabled house constructed by George Schley in 1907. The house has a full-width porch with a large centered gable. The porch posts have simple brackets and sit on red brick piers. The porch has tongue-and-groove flooring and thick square balusters with decorative tops. The house is clad with vinyl siding on the first two levels, with wood shingles in the gable. The first floor has a center entry flanked by a picture window and one-over-one window. The second floor has two one-over-one windows and the attic level has a replacement horizontal slider window. The house is very similar in form to one Schley constructed around the corner at 2442 W. Wells Street.



818 NORTH 25TH STREET (212 25th Street, old)

(1907) George Schley, architect (Permit dated October 2, 1907)

818 N. 25th street is a two-and-a-half story Arts and Crafts style house also constructed by George Schley in 1907. The house is side gabled with a prominent steeply pitched front gable and dormer. The house has a full-width porch with square posts with decorative brackets. The center posts are recent 8"x8" posts and the porch railing and balustrade have been recently replaced. The house is clad with vinyl siding on the first level and shingles on the second level and in the gable and dormers. The first floor has a centered entry flanked by a picture window and a bay window. The upper level has two paired one-over-one windows. Original six-over-one windows appear in the attic level. The house is very similar in form and design to one Schley constructed around the corner at 2450 W. Wells Street.

NORTH 26TH STREET



**740-742 NORTH 26TH STREET (182-184 26th Street, old)
(1925) Architect unknown (Permit dated February 4, 1925)**

The duplex at 740-742 N. 26th Street is a two-and-a-half story American Foursquare constructed by Boettcher & Sauler in 1925. The house sits on a raised berm with a large grassy front lawn. The house has a hipped roof with center hipped dormer in the center. The house sits on a raised brick foundation with brick piers and square wood posts supporting the half-width entry porch. The house is clad with red brick on the first level and wood shingles on the second level and dormer. The first floor has a bank of four four-over-one windows and the raised entry with two entry doors. A small hipped roof separates the first and second levels. The second level has a similarly situated bank of four four-over-one windows and a small porch above the entry with rectangular and square

wood balusters. The builders, Boettcher & Sauler, were a carpenter-contractor business operated by brothers Albert and Herbert Boettcher and their brother-in-law, Ernest Sauler. The house was likely built on speculation.



A. KNECK HOUSE

744-746 NORTH 26TH STREET (188-190 26th Street, old)

(1922) Architect unknown (Permit dated November 25, 1922)

The duplex at 744-746 N. 26th Street is a two-and-a-half story Craftsman style residence constructed for Miss A. Kneck in 1925. The permit indicated the house had a cost of \$12,000. The house sits on a raised berm with a large grassy front lawn. The house has a front-gabled roof with a jerkinhead roof. The house sits on a raised brick foundation with large square brick columns supporting the half-width covered entry. The house has a large full-width brick porch with concrete caps. The house is clad with red brick veneer. The right half of the front façade has a projecting bay with a bank of three one-over-one windows on each level. The two entry doors have a decorative divided light window

between them. The upper porch has brick corners with concrete caps and a replacement wood rail and balustrade. The gable contains paired six-over-one windows that appear original. The owner on the building permit is listed as Miss A. Kneck, though city directories and census records have not yielded additional information about Ms. Kneck.



EMANUEL MANDEL HOUSE

747 NORTH 26TH STREET (187 26th Street, old)

(1914) Herman W. Buemming, architect (Permit dated February 25, 1914)

The Emanuel Mandel House is a two-and-a-half story American Foursquare designed by architect Herman W. Buemming in 1925. Louis Wilke & Son were the builders and Charles Breesh was the mason on the \$8,000 house. The house is notably wide, taking up nearly the entire width of the 50' wide lot. The house sits on a raised berm with a large grassy front lawn with mature bushes adjacent to the front porch. The house has a hipped roof with a wide overhanging eave. It is clad with tan brick veneer and has a prominent chimney protruding from the roof of the south façade and a center dormer with paired windows on the front facade. The house has a full-width one-story porch with a decorative

wood and plaster arch that spans the width. The porch is supported by large buttressed brick columns. The house is symmetrical and has a central entryway flanked by triple one-over-one windows. The second floor has a center arched leaded glass window flanked by paired one-over-one windows. The house was constructed for Emanuel Mandel, president of the Mandel Engraving Company.



KLAS AUGUST LINDERFELT HOUSE

752 NORTH 26TH STREET (196 26th Street, old; moved from 2600 Grand Avenue) (c. 1887) Architect unknown (No building permit located)

The K. August Linderfelt House is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house constructed around 1887. The house was originally constructed at 2600 Grand Avenue, the northwest corner of W. Wisconsin Avenue and N. 26th Street, and moved to its present location in 1926. No building permit was located for the house but it first appears in city directories in 1887 with K. A. Linderfelt listed as the occupant. The house has an asymmetrical façade with a projecting bay on the right and a recessed entry under a

gabled roof. The projecting bay has a bank of replacement windows on the first floor and a projecting oriel window with transoms on the second floor. The house had a large, corbelled chimney on the south façade constructed of Cream City brick that was recently removed. The house has recently been re-sided with vinyl. Klas August Linderfelt was the first occupant of the house when it was located at 2600 Grand Avenue. Linderfelt was the first librarian for the Milwaukee Public Library in 1880 and was instrumental in getting the present Central Library constructed. Linderfelt was convicted of embezzling funds from the Library and was arrested in 1892. When the judge handling his case issued a suspended sentence, Linderfelt fled first to Boston, then to England, and was never retried. In 1926, Frank J. Kane moved the house to its present location. There is no indication Kane lived at the property following the move.



**754-756 NORTH 26TH STREET (196-198 26th Street, old)
(1924) Architect unknown (Permit dated September 22, 1924)**

754-756 N. 26th Street is a two-and-a-half story Craftsman duplex constructed in 1924. The house is front gabled with a clipped gable end. The house is clad with vinyl siding with shingles in the gable. The house sits on a raised rusticated concrete block foundation and has paired entry doors on a raised stoop on the left of the front façade. The porch is supported by square columns. The upper balcony has been removed. The house has a bank of three three-over-one windows on the first floor and replacement one-over-one windows on the second floor. The attic level has original paired three-over-one windows. The owner on the building permit was listed as Julius Rasmussen. Rasmussen was born in Denmark in April 1868 and moved to the United States in 1887. He was the secretary-treasurer of the Julius Rasmussen Company, a mechanical belt manufacturing company with offices on Water Street. There is no evidence he resided in this house and it was likely built on speculation. He also built the house to the north, 762 N. 26th Street, and did reside there.



HORACE AND ANNIE FOOTE HOUSE

814 NORTH 26TH STREET (214 26th Street, old)

(c. 1885) Architect unknown (No building permit located)

814 N. 26th Street is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house around 1885. The house is has a cross-gabled roof with several gabled dormers. It has an asymmetrical front façade, with an entry to the right of the façade and a projecting bay in the middle of the façade. The house sits on a raised rusticated concrete block foundation and is clad with wood clapboard siding with a band of shingles separating the first and second floors and shingles in the dormers and around the porch. The house is painted in a three-color paint scheme typical of Queen Anne styles houses. The front porch has tapered wood posts, decorative spandrel brackets, and a sunburst gable ornament. The house has brackets over the corner windows on the second floor. It has a prominent corbelled Cream City brick chimney projecting from the right side of the roof. The windows appear to be wood one-over-one windows with two large picture windows in the center bays of each level. This house is one of the highest quality Queen Anne examples in the historic district, a result

of an extensive Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation (NIDC) restoration that took place in 2011. The earliest appearance of this house in city directories is in 1888 with Horace S. Foote family occupying the residence. Foote was born in Chicago in 1837 and worked as a book keeper and agent with the Goodrich Transportation Company, a passenger steamboat company that operated in the Great Lakes.



CHARLES J. HUSTIS HOUSE

822 NORTH 26TH STREET (216 26th Street, old)

(c. 1885) Architect unknown (No building permit located)

822 N. 26th Street is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house around 1885. The house has a gable-on-hip roof with dormers on both the north and south elevations. It has an asymmetrical front façade, with an entry to the left of the façade and a projecting bay on the right of the façade. The house sits on a raised brick foundation and is clad with wood clapboard siding with a band of alternative fish scale and square bottom shingles separating the first and second floors and alternative fish scale and square bottom in the

dormers and gables. The house is painted in a three-color paint scheme typical of Queen Anne styles houses. The front entry is recessed and has a turned wood post and horseshoe arch. The house has decorative corner brackets over the corner windows on the second floor. The house has a large first floor picture window in the center bay with a pediment with sunburst pattern above. There is a Queen Anne picture window in the center bay on the second level surrounded by a decorative frame with dentil cornice. A prominent corbelled Cream City brick chimney projecting from the right side of the roof. The property now includes the former parcel to the north that contained a gabled ell house located at 824-826 N. 26th Street. This house also underwent an extensive Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation (NIDC) restoration in 2011 and presents as a stately intact Queen Anne example. The earliest appearance of the house in city directories is in 1887, with Charles Joseph Hustis listed as the occupant. Hustis was born in 1851 to John Hustis and Laura Hustis née Ludington. The elder Hustis founded the Town of Hustisford, Dodge County, Wisconsin, in 1837, while Mrs. Hustis was the sister of Governor Harrison Ludington. Charles Hustis was employed as a stock broker and later worked in real estate.



BENJAMIN & KITTIE DOUSMAN HOUSE

830 NORTH 26TH STREET (moved from 730 N. 24th Street; 178 24th Street, old)

(c. 1885) Architect unknown (No building permit located)

830 N. 26th Street is a two-and-a-half story Arts & Crafts style house constructed around 1885. The house is cross-gabled with large projecting eaves and clad with stucco. It has an asymmetrical front façade, with an entry to the left of the façade and a projecting bay on the right of the façade. The house sits on a raised new rusticated concrete block foundation and has a full-width, raised porch with square posts and decorative brackets. The entry has an arced transom window. The projecting bay contains three newer twelve-over-one windows. The house is painted in a three-color paint scheme. The house, along with 834 N. 26th Street and 840 N. 26th Street, was moved to its present location in 2007 as a result of construction of a parking garage for the Ambassador Hotel. The earliest appearance of the house in city directories is in 1885, with Benjamin Dousman family listed as the occupants. Dousman was born in Milwaukee in 1859 and spent his entire

career with the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad. He married Emma “Kittie” Holston in 1882.



ANDREW S. CLARK HOUSE

**834 NORTH 26TH STREET (moved from 747 N. 23rd Street; 187 23rd Street, old)
(1887) Architect unknown (No building permit located)**

The Andrew S. Clark House is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style constructed at a cost of \$6,000 in 1887. The house is front gabled with a large dormer on the north façade and a smaller gable on the south façade. The house sits on a raised modern rusticated concrete block foundation and is clad with wood clapboard siding with a band of shingles separating the first and second floors and shingles in the gables and dormers. The house has a projecting entryway with a gabled dormer on hipped roof and square posts. The right bay projects from the house and has a gable that projects beyond the bay. The bargeboards have decorative rosettes and wood banding. Windows are newer on-over-one

replacements. The house was moved from 747 N. 23rd Street to its present location in 2007. The house was built for Andrew S. Clark. Clark was born in 1852 and married Julia Aldridge in 1882. He worked as a cashier for the Cudahy Bros. meatpacking company.



HENRY C. IMHOLZ HOUSE

**840 NORTH 26TH STREET (moved from 754 N. 24th Street; 190 24th Street, old)
(c. 1890) Architect unknown (No building permit located)**

The Henry C. Imholz House is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style constructed around 1890. The house has a gable-on-hop roof with a dormer on the south façade. The house sits on a raised modern rusticated concrete block foundation and is clad with wood clapboard siding with a band of fish scale shingles separating the first and second floors and in the gables and dormers. The house has an asymmetrical front façade with a projecting bay on the right of the façade. The entry is on a raised stoop with a flat roof with dentil cornice, square posts, and square-post balustrade. The house is painted in a three-color paint scheme often found on Queen Anne houses. The second floor has a

gable that projects beyond the house with decorative corner brackets. Windows appear to be newer one-over-one replacement windows. The house was moved from 754 N. 24th Street to its present location in 2007. The earliest appearance of the house in city directories is in 1891, with Henry C. Imholz family listed as the occupants. Imholz was born in 1852 and married Ada Anderson in 1882. Imholz's occupation was listed as a collector for the J. Obermann Brewing Company.

850 North 26th Street (aka 2537 W. Kilbourn Ave.; 240 26th Street/2529 Cedar Street, old)

Vacant

850 N. 26th Street is a vacant lot owned by the City of Milwaukee. The parcel formerly contained a grand German Renaissance Revival House constructed in 1897, designed by architect Henry J. Van Ryn for Lester L. Carr. The property was surveyed in 1980 and 1984 and the house was locally designated as historic in 1995. The house suffered a fire in 2000 and was house was razed in 2001.

ARCHITECTS

FERRY & CLAS

Jacob & Rosa Michael House, 2619 West Wells Street

The Jacob & Rosa Michael house was designed by the noted architectural firm of Ferry & Clas and constructed in 1903. The partnership of George B. Ferry (February 7, 1851 – January 29, 1918) and Alfred Charles Clas (December 26, 1858 – July 8, 1942) began in 1890 and lasted until 1912. George Ferry was born and educated in Springfield, Massachusetts. He studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and began his architectural career in his hometown in 1872. He relocated to Milwaukee and established his practice there in 1881. Alfred Clas was born in Sauk City, Wisconsin. He was educated in his home city and subsequently apprenticed with an architect and undertook two years of instruction in building construction. Following a two year stint working in an architect's office in Stockton, California, Clas returned to Milwaukee in 1880. He worked as a draftsman and architect in the offices of James Douglas in the 1880s before partnering with George Ferry in 1890. During their twenty-two year partnership, the firm designed many major architectural projects in the city including Milwaukee Public Library and Museum (1895, 814 W. Wisconsin Ave.), the Northwestern National Insurance Company Headquarters (1906, 526 9Shannon Dolan. "Hudson Flats Apartment Building" Wisconsin Historical Society Determination of Eligibility Form. Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society, 15. P age | 9 E. Wisconsin Ave.), the Frederick Pabst Mansion (1890-92, 2000 W. Wisconsin Ave.), and the Milwaukee Auditorium building (1907-09, 518 W. Kilbourn Ave.). Following the dissolution of their partnership in 1912, Alfred Clas continued in partnership with his sons Angelo and Rubens as Clas and Clas and later Clas, Shepard, and Clas. George Ferry remained in the Ferry & Clas offices on Broadway following the dissolution of the firm and continued his practice until 1916.⁷

⁷ City of Milwaukee, Historic Preservation Commission. "Permanent Historic Designation Study Report, Grand Avenue Apartments Historic District." 2023.

ALFRED C. CLAS

Rosa Michael House, 2627 West Wells Street

For biographical information on Alfred C. Clas, see Ferry & Clas, above.

JAMES DOUGLAS

William J. Turner House, 743 North 25th Street

James Douglas was born in Scotland in 1823 and first arrived in Canada in 1840 before moving to Milwaukee in 1843. He was involved with the construction of numerous early Milwaukee landmarks, including St. John Cathedral (1847, 812 N. Jackson Street), Holy Trinity church (1849, 605 S. 4th St.), and the first Milwaukee City Hall (razed). In 1847 he began working as an architect and building with his younger brother, Alexander, as J&A Douglas, architects and builders. Following a brief tenure in a management position with Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance in the 1960s, he returned to architecture full-time in 1872. While much of his work has been lost to demolition, his remaining designs in Milwaukee include Sanford Kane House (1883, 1841 N. Prospect Ave.), Willard Merrill House (1890, 1425 N. Prospect Ave.), and the Elias Calkins Double House (1875, 1612-14 W. Kane Place). A number of his designs are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and/or locally designated. Douglas also influenced the next generation of architects, with prominent apprentices in his office including Alfred C. Clas, Cornelius Leenhouts, Fred Graf and Otto C. Uehling. Douglas put his sons in charge of his firm due to failing health and before dying in 1894.⁸

HERMAN W. BUEMMING

Emanuel Mandel House, 747 North 26th Street

Herman W. Buemming was born September 5, 1872 in Toledo, Ohio. The Buemming family relocated to Milwaukee in 1884 and Herman completed his public school education in 1888. Buemming subsequently spent a year apprenticing with local architect Charles A. Gombert before taking the position as lead draftsman at Pabst Brewing Company. He enrolled at Columbia University in 1891 and studied there for three years. Buemming returned to Milwaukee in 1896, forming a partnership with architect Gustav Dick. Buemming and Dick's eleven-year partnership produced a number of Classical Revival and Colonial Revival buildings, including Century Hall (1899, 2346 North Farwell Avenue), Sterneman-Graham House (1903, 3112 West McKinley Boulevard), St. Matthew Roman Catholic Church (1905, 1126 South 25th Street), and the Church of the Immaculate Conception (1907, 1023 East Russell Avenue).

Following the dissolution of his partnership with Gustav Dick in 1907, Buemming designed a number of Prairie style such as the George Weinhagen House (1911, 3306 W. Highland Boulevard), A.E. Rietbrock House (1911, 726 N. 31st Street), and William Green House (1909, 2906 E. Linnwood Avenue). Buemming formed a partnership with Alexander C. Guth in 1919. The firm produced a number of revival-style residences projects, as well as commercial projects such as the east half of the Johnson Controls Building at 507 E. Michigan Street. Buemming entered into partnership with his son, John Durr Buemming,

⁸ City of Milwaukee, Historic Preservation Commission. "Permanent Historic Designation Study Report, William J. Turner House." 2005.

in 1927 until the younger Buemming's suicide in 1933. Buemming joined into partnership with his draftsman, Clarence W. Jahn, from 1939 until Buemming's retirement in 1943. He died in Waukesha County on April 17, 1947.⁹

LEISER & HOLST

The Wellesly Apartment Building, 2534-2540 West Wells Street

Leiser and Holst designed the Wellesly Apartment Building in 1911. The firm was operated by Milwaukee natives Julius Leiser (1875-1930) and Charles J.F. Holst (1876-1924). Leiser's architectural career began at the age of 15, apprenticing for Gustave Leipold. He briefly worked for Josslyn & Taylor in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, before returning to Milwaukee to work as a draftsman for Fred Graf. He briefly partnered with Frank H. Mueller in 1898. Holst worked for Uehling & Linde before partnering with Leiser in 1903. The firm operated their office out of the Germania/Brumder Building from 1903 through 1924, the duration of their partnership. The firm designed numerous apartment buildings, churches, commercial buildings, and residences, with commissions almost exclusively found in the City of Milwaukee. The firm worked in popular architectural styles, including Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and Prairie.⁹ Among the designs from the firm are the St. Marcus Evangelical Lutheran Kirche (1913, 2205 N. Palmer), Faith Lutheran Church (1922, 1000 S. Layton Blvd.), Frank and Ella Hochmuch House (1928, 5231 W. Washington Blvd.), and Dr. Frank C. Studley House (1908, 3528 N. Summit Ave.). Charles Holst died at a tuberculosis sanitarium in Colorado in 1924. Julius Leiser continued to practice architecture until his death in 1930.¹⁰

GEORGE SCHLEY

2442 West Wells Street, 2446 West Wells Street, 2450 West Wells Street, 804 North 25th Street, 808 North 25th Street, 812 North 25th Street, 818 North 25th Street

The following biography of George Schley was written for the National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for the Kenwood Park-Prospect Hill Historic District in Milwaukee:

The firm of George Schley and Sons offered "turn-key" services as architects and general contractors. The founder, George Schley, was born in Waukesha, Wisconsin on March 21, 1868. His parents were Daniel Schley, a native of New York State, and Margaret (Stahl) Schley, who was brought to America at the age of 4 by her parents. George Schley was educated in the Waukesha public schools before he began his work career at the age of 15. His first job was as a messenger for the National Exchange Bank in Waukesha where he reportedly earned eleven dollars per month. After two years with the bank, he left to take a job in Chicago with Parker Brothers, a wholesale commission merchant firm. He started there as a receiving clerk and eventually worked his way up to cashier and bookkeeper.

Schley was married on January 15, 1889 in Milwaukee to Cara E. Hensing. In 1891 at the age of 23, Schley left Chicago with his new wife to take a job in Milwaukee as a

⁹ National Register of Historic Places, Herman W. Buemming House, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. National Register # 89002315.

¹⁰ City of Milwaukee, Historic Preservation Commission. "Permanent Historic Designation Study Report, Grand Avenue Apartments Historic District." 2023.

bookkeeper with the People's Building and Loan Association. George and Cara Schley had two children, Perce George and Herbert Alien. George Schley was promoted to general manager two years later, but left about a year after that, in 1894, to start his own building and construction firm.

Over the years, Schley made a gradual transition from being only a contracting business to becoming a turn-key architectural/construction firm that offered complete, professional, in-house architectural design and construction services. In 1914 he took his two sons into the business and formally began the firm of George Schley and Sons. They were advertised as architects, engineers, and contractors who specialized in the construction of better-class residences. At least one member of the firm, but it is not known whom, was a member of the American Institute of Architects. During the late 1920s, the firm published a very impressive portfolio book of its residential work. George Schley was also active as the director and assistant treasurer of the Integrity Building and Loan Association in Milwaukee.¹¹

EVANS & MARSHALL

Dr. Eugene W. & Frances Beebe House, 2601-2603 West Wells Street

DR. EUGENE W. & FRANCES BEEBE HOUSE

Little information is known about the architects listed on the building permit for the Beebe House. Evans & Marshall appear as the listed architects on four properties identified in Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory: the subject property, Captain Wright House (1902, 2761 S. Logan Ave.), Mr. P's (1902, 525-528 W. National Ave.), and 2010 E. Estates Street (1904).

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¹¹ National Register of Historic Places, Kenwood Park-Prospect Hill Historic District, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. National Register # 02000185.

National Register of Historic Places, Herman W. Buemming House, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. National Register # 89002315.

National Register of Historic Places, Kenwood Park-Prospect Hill Historic District, City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. National Register # 02000185

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RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the West Avenues West Historic District be given permanent historic designation as a City of Milwaukee Historic Site as a result of its fulfillment of criteria f-3, f-5, and f-6 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 320-21(3) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

f-3 Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city.

RATIONALE: A number of the original property owners within the historic district were from prominent families of means or successful businessmen. The families were able to hire some of the city's most prestigious architecture firms to design their upper-middle class residences. Among the prominent early residents were Edward Wadhams, president of Wadham's Oil & Grease Company; William Turner, a prominent local judge; Klas August Linderfelt, the first librarian for the Milwaukee Public Library and who later became infamous for the embezzlement of library funds and subsequent escape to Europe; and Dr. E.W. Frances, a well-known ophthalmologist and otologist.

f-5 Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

RATIONALE: The twenty-nine properties recommended for inclusion in the West Avenues West Historic District display the range of architectural styles that could be found in an upper middle class neighborhood in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. The district consists of Queen Anne, Arts and Crafts, American Foursquare, front-gabled, and Beaux Arts style buildings. The district consists of a great cluster of Queen Anne style

houses, with thirteen Queen Anne designs present in the district. The remaining architectural styles are fairly evenly dispersed within the district, with five Arts & Crafts style houses, four American Foursquare style houses, three Craftsman style houses, three front-gabled houses, and the single Beaux-Arts apartment building at 26th and Wells. Although most of the houses have had alterations, all are restorable or are good candidates for renovations that would uncover and bring back their original exterior architectural detail.

f-6 Its identification as the work of an artist, architect, craftsman or master builder whose individual works have influenced the development of the city.

RATIONALE: Properties in the West Avenues West Historic District were designed by some of the top architects and architectural firms in Milwaukee during the 1880s-1920s. Houses designed and constructed by George Schley make up the largest number of houses in the district, with seven known designs. Schley was a prolific builder, who built throughout Milwaukee, including numerous properties on Newberry Boulevard, in the Kenwood Park-Prospect Hill Historic District, North Point North and North Point South Historic Districts, Concordia Historic District, and in Avenues West. The district also includes works by Ferry & Clas, Alfred C. Clas, James Douglas, Herman W. Buemming, and Leister & Holst, all prominent within Milwaukee and the state.

PRESERVATION GUIDELINES FOR WEST AVENUES WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this historic designation. However, the Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon design submissions. Building maintenance and restoration must follow accepted preservation practices as outlined below. The intent of the guidelines are to preserve the buildings as closely as possible to their original form and details. Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or restoration and/or replacement of documented original elements.

Any exterior alteration, exclusive of painting of non-masonry surfaces, will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Any existing exterior features can remain for their lifespan. The historic designation does not mean that owners are required to restore their buildings to original condition, but that changes are subject to review so that they are compatible with the historic character of the building.

These guidelines are based upon those contained in MCO 320-21-11 & 12 of the historic preservation ordinance. These guidelines serve as a guide for making changes that will be sensitive to the architectural integrity of the structure and appropriate to the overall character of the building.

I. Roofs

- A. Retain the original roof shape. Dormers, skylights and solar collector panels may be added to roof surfaces if they do not visually intrude upon those elevations visible from the public right-of-way. Avoid making changes to the roof shape that would alter the building height, roofline, pitch, or gable orientation.
- B. Retain the original roofing materials wherever possible. Avoid using new roofing materials that are inappropriate to the style and period of the building and neighborhood.
- C. Replace deteriorated roof coverings with new materials that match the old in size, shape, color and texture. Avoid replacing deteriorated roof covering with new materials that differ to such an extent from the old in size, shape, color and texture so that the appearance of the building is altered.

II. Exterior Finishes

- A. Masonry
 - (i) Unpainted brick or stone should not be painted or covered. Avoid painting or covering natural stone and unpainted brick. This is

likely to be historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date. Painting unpainted masonry also introduces a new maintenance issue.

- (ii) Repoint defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, style, texture and strength. Avoid using mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or not used when the building was constructed.
- (iii) Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration and with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting brick or stone surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Avoid the indiscriminate use of chemical products that could have an adverse reaction with the masonry materials, such as the use of acid on limestone or marble.
- (iv) Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as artificial cast stone or fake brick veneer.

B. Stucco

Repair stucco with stucco mixture duplicating the original as closely as possible in appearance and texture.

C. Wood

- (i) Retain original material whenever possible. Avoid removing architectural features such as clapboards, shingles, cornices, brackets, half-timbering, window architraves and doorway pediments. These are in most cases an essential part of a building's character and appearance that should be retained.
- (ii) Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. When feasible, avoid covering architectural features with new materials that are inappropriate or were unavailable when the building was constructed such as artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, vinyl or aluminum siding.

III. Windows and Doors

- A. Retain existing window and door openings that are visible from the public right-of-way. Retain the original configurations of panes, sash, lintels, keystones, sills, architraves, pediments, hoods, doors, shutters and hardware. Avoid making additional openings or changes in the principal elevations by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door panes or sash. Avoid discarding original doors and door

hardware when they can be repaired or reused. Secondary elevations that are not visible from the public right-of-way may offer greater flexibility.

- B. Respect the stylistic period or periods a building represents. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should complement the appearance and design of the original window sash or door. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements such as unpainted galvanized aluminum storm and screen window combinations. Avoid the filling in or covering of openings with materials like glass-block or the installation of plastic or metal strip awnings or fake shutters that are not in proportion to the openings or that are historically out of the character with the building. Avoid using modern style window units such as horizontal sliding sash in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building.

IV. Porches, Trim and Ornamentation

- A. Retain porches and steps visible from the public right-of-way that are historically and architecturally appropriate to the building. Avoid altering porches and steps by enclosing open porches or replacing wooden steps with cast concrete steps or by removing original architecturally appropriate to the building. Avoid altering porches and steps by enclosing open porches or replacing wooden steps with cast concrete steps or by removing original architectural features, such as handrails, balusters, columns or brackets.
- B. Retain trim and decorative ornamentation including copper downspouts and guttering, copings, cornices, cresting, finials, railings, balconies, oriels, pilasters, columns, chimneys, bargeboards or decorative panels. Avoid the removal of trim and decorative ornamentation that is essential to the maintenance of the building's historic character and appearance.
- C. Repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using replacement materials that do not accurately reproduce the appearance of the original material.

V. Additions

Make additions that harmonize with the existing building architecturally and are located so as not visible from the public right-of-way, if at all possible. Avoid making additions that are unsympathetic to the original structure and visually intrude upon the principal elevations.

VI. Guidelines for Streetscapes

The streetscapes in West Avenues West Historic District are visually cohesive because of the intact building stock and the retention of landscaping features. There are few prominent inappropriate additions to historic structures. The

traditional landscape treatment of the building lots and the period streetlights contribute to the maintenance of the district's traditional residential character.

- A. Maintain the height, scale, mass and materials established by the buildings in the district and the traditional setback and density of the block faces. Avoid introducing elements that are incompatible in terms of siting, materials, height or scale.
- B. Use traditional landscaping, fencing, signage and street lighting that is compatible with the character and period of the district. Avoid introducing landscape features, fencing, street lighting or signage that are inappropriate to the character of the district.
- C. Note that what is compatible and appropriate throughout the district generally may vary somewhat based on the character of the particular subject building.

VII. Signs/Exterior Lighting

Should there be an application for signage, plastic internally illuminated box signs with a completely acrylic face are not permitted. Approval will be based on the sign's compatibility with the architectural character of the historic building.

VIII. Guidelines for New Construction

There has been no new construction in the West Avenues West Historic District since 1925. It is important that additional new construction be designed so as to harmonize with the character of the district.

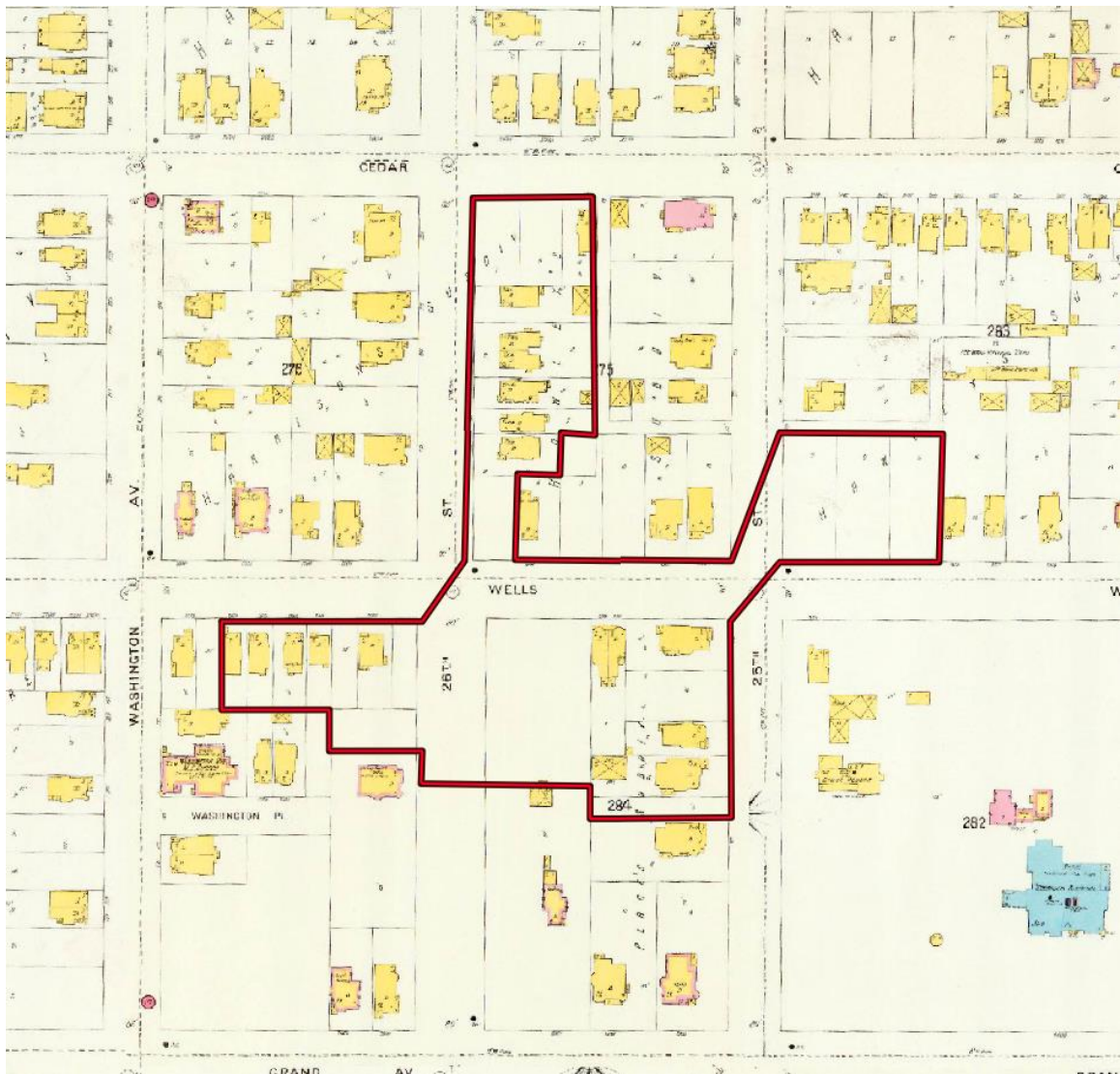
- A. Siting. New construction must reflect the traditional siting of buildings in the West Avenues West Historic District. This includes setback, spacing between buildings, the orientation of openings to the street and neighboring structures, and the relationship between the main building and accessory buildings.
- B. Scale. Overall building height and bulk; the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof; and, individual building components such as porches, overhangs and fenestration must be compatible with the surrounding structures.
- C. Form. The massing of new construction must be compatible with the surrounding buildings. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and recede from the main block must express the same continuity established by the historic structures.
- D. Materials. The building materials that are visible from the public right-of-way should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials traditionally used in the West Avenues West Historic District. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.

IX. Guidelines for Demolition

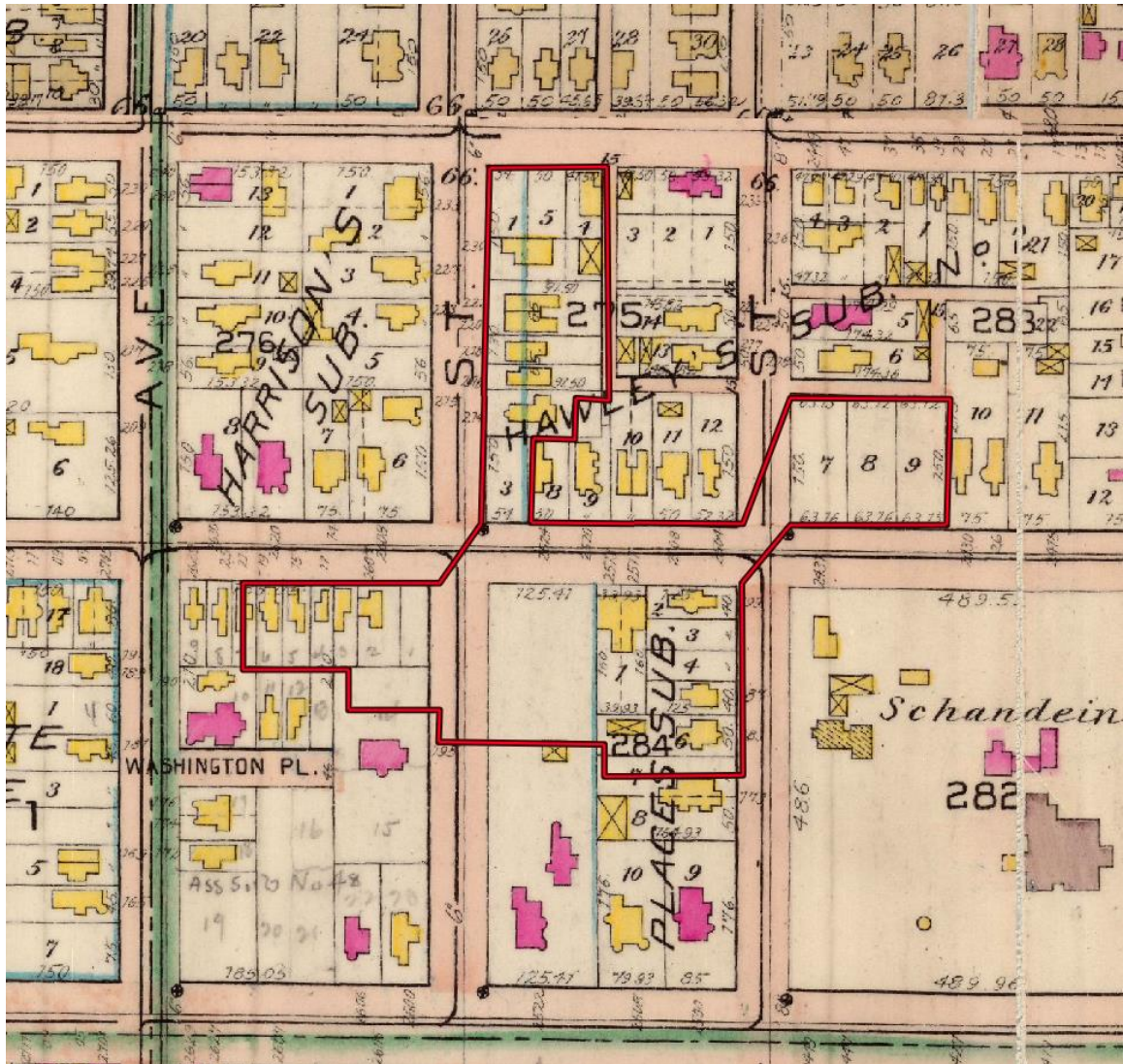
Although demolition is not encouraged and is generally not permissible, there may be instances when demolition may be acceptable, if approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission shall take the following guidelines, with those found in subsection 11(h) of the ordinance, into consideration when reviewing demolition requests.

- A. Condition. Demolition requests may be granted when it can be clearly demonstrated that the condition of a building or a portion thereof is such that it constitutes an immediate threat to health and safety.
- B. Importance. Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is of historical or architectural significance. Buildings lacking historical or architectural significance are more permissible to demolish than significant buildings. The relative modesty or grandeur of a building is not the only factor that influences these aspects of significance. Indeed, the architecture of the less grand buildings in the district may be significant examples of how and where people of different socioeconomic classes lived.
- C. Potential for Restoration. Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is beyond economically feasible repair. This will be weighed against the reason for the present disrepair, in order to avoid demolition by neglect.
- D. Additions. Consideration will be given to whether or not the proposed demolition is a later addition that is not in keeping with the original design of the structure or does not contribute to its character or historical pattern of development.
- E. Replacement. Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is to be replaced by a compatible building of similar age, architectural style and scale (see New Construction Guidelines).

Historic Maps



1894 Sanborn map of West Avenues West Historic District outlined in red. From Digital Sanborn Maps of Milwaukee, 1894 and 1910. New York : Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Limited, 1894. American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries. <https://uwm.edu/lib-collections/sanborn/>



1898 Baist's Property Atlas of the City of Milwaukee map. West Avenues West Historic District outlined in red. From Wisconsin Historical Society, Maps and Atlases Collections, G.W. Baist, 1898. <https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/maps/id/26212>



1910 Sanborn map. West Avenues West Historic District outlined in red. oFrom Digital Sanborn Maps of Milwaukee, 1894 and 1910. New York : Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Limited, 1894. American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries. <https://uwm.edu/lib-collections/sanborn/>