

District 11: Hamline-Midway

District 11, known as Hamline-Midway, is bounded by the Pierce Butler Route on the north, Lexington Parkway on the east, University Avenue on the south, and the railroad tracks just west of Transfer Road on the west. Much of Hamline-Midway is residential in character yet it has a significant number of light industry, retail and wholesale businesses, particularly along the major streets such as University, Snelling, and Hamline Avenues. In addition to Hamline University, the area includes several public and private elementary schools and a handful of neighborhood parks.

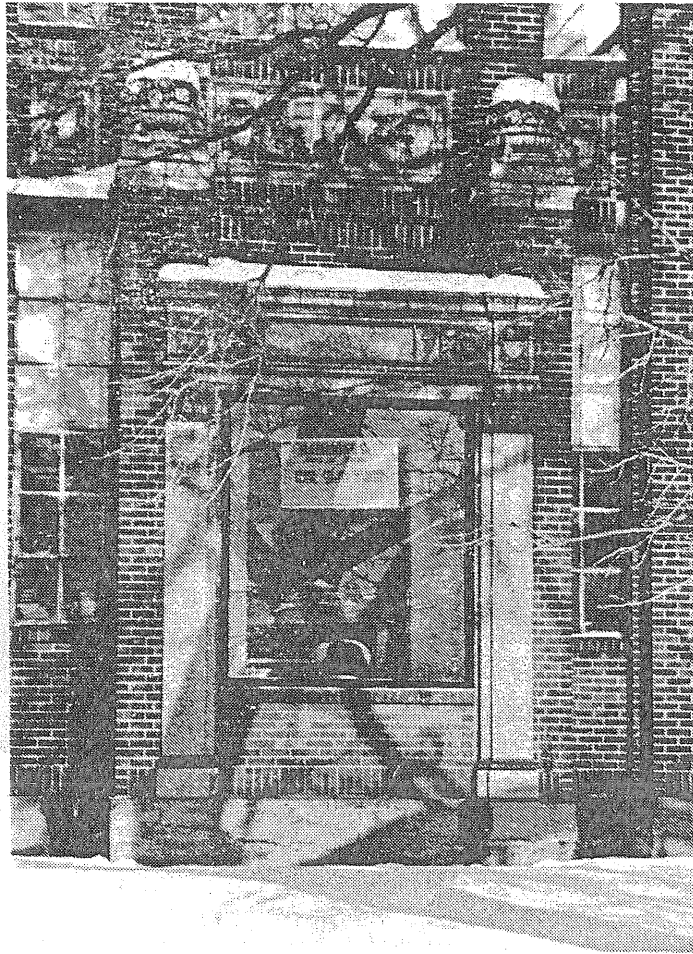
The Hamline-Midway area was once a wide stretch of prairie between the two small towns of St. Paul and St. Anthony (later incorporated into Minneapolis). Several early roads crossed the area, including the old military route which is now Snelling Avenue. Farmers settled there in the 1850's at the same time that several real estate speculators platted lots which were not developed for many years. Although the first railroad in the state, which opened in 1862, travelled through the Midway area, it did little to attract settlers. By contrast, the Minnesota Transfer Railroad, organized in 1883 and still doing business at 2021 University Avenue, was a major impetus to the industrial and commercial development of the region. The Minnesota Transfer Railroad was associated with a large stockyard located at the present site of the Amtrak Depot in Industrial Park. The railway transported freight and livestock between the several railroad lines running through the area. The railroad bridge located west of the transfer railroad building is part of the track system still in use. Another impetus to commercial and residential settlement was the completion in 1890 of the University Avenue streetcar line, the first line to connect the Minneapolis and St. Paul track systems. Streetcar lines were later built along parts of Lexington, Thomas, Hamline and Minnehaha Avenues, and a major streetcar servicing station was erected near Hamline-Midway on the present site of the



28. 1684 W. Van Buren Avenue, John J. Dewey House, 1889, built by Nobles Company of Merriam Park. (Photo by Patricia Murphy)

permit, though its simple proportions and tall, narrow segmental arched window openings suggest it may date from as early as 1880 and may have been an early farmhouse.

Few houses were built in Hamline-Midway in the mid-1890's. Houses built at the turn of the century and in the opening decades of the twentieth century are generally smaller than those built in the late 1880's and early 1890's. Among the more interesting turn of the century houses is the John North House at 1378 Minnehaha, built in 1899 for a trimmer at the Northern Pacific Railroad Como Shops (recently renamed Energy Park). The North House has a polygonal corner turret which towers above the main mass of the 1½ story house. The C.J. Christensen House at 1673 Sherburne, built in 1903, features brick corbelling at the eaves and rounded arches over the second story windows. Identical small houses at 1777 and 1785



29. 1885 W. University Avenue, Krank Building, (now Iris Park Place), 1926, designed by Toltz, King, & Day and Roy Childs Jones & Milo Williams. (Photo by Brad Daniels)

Van Buren Avenue are intriguing variations on the bungalow theme. Each has a steeply pitched gabled roof with flared eaves, cross bars in the gable end, clapboard on the first floor and stained shingles on the second.

By the 1920's builders in the area were employing various Period Revival styles such as the Pueblo/Mission Revival style Lena Howard House at 1672 Blair Avenue, built in 1926, and the Hansel and Gretel inspired twin bungalow at 1300-1302 W. Lafond Avenue, built by and for Peter Olesen in 1926. The Olesen house

features a style similar to the gas station at 666 N. Snelling, built in 1940 and now the Snelling Service garage. The Krank Manufacturing Company Building (no. 29), 1926, at 1885 University Avenue features glazed terra cotta panels with brightly carved floral and classical motifs adorning an otherwise utilitarian structure which has recently been renovated and renamed Iris Park Place.

Hamline-Midway has several architecturally significant church buildings representing a variety of twentieth century architectural styles. The Knox Presbyterian Church at 1536 Minnehaha Avenue, designed in 1912-14 by William Alban and Charles Hausler, is one of few St. Paul churches designed in the Prairie style. Although many churches were built in the city in the Late Gothic Revival style, few are as impressive as the Hamline Methodist Episcopal Church at 1514 Englewood Avenue. The Church of St. Columba at 1305 Lafond, built in 1949-50, was designed by a nationally famous Chicago architect, Barry Byrne. The design is an expressionistic and fluid modern landmark.

The Henry Hale Memorial Hamline Branch Library at 1558 Minnehaha, built in 1930, is nearly identical to the Merriam Park Branch Library on Marshall Avenue, west of Fairview. Another intriguing public building is the Hamline Playground Building, constructed by the Works Progress Administration in 1940 and featuring a somber interpretation of the Art Deco style.

Following is a list which includes one site which has already been designated as an historic site, a list of sites which the Historic Sites Survey staff believes are eligible for listing with either the National Register of Historic Places and/or the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, and a list of additional sites of major significance. Approximate locations of the sites are shown on the accompanying map.

DISTRICT 11

Sites Already Designated

1. 1536 W. Hewitt Avenue, Hamline University Hall

Sites Eligible for Designation

2. 1538 W. Englewood Avenue, Oric Whited House
3. 1305 W. Lafond Avenue, Church of St. Columba
4. 1536 W. Minnehaha Avenue, Knox Presbyterian Church
5. 1885 W. University Avenue, Krank Building
6. 1684 W. Van Buren Avenue, John J. Dewey House

Additional Sites of Major Significance

7. 1672 W. Blair Avenue, Lena Howard House
8. 1513 W. Englewood Avenue, Manor House at Hamline University
9. 1514 W. Englewood Avenue, Hamline United Methodist Church
10. 634 N. Fairview Avenue, J. W. Wallace House
11. 877 N. Fry Street, House
12. 1288 W. Hubbard Avenue, William A. Davern House
13. 1300-1302 W. Lafond Avenue, Peter Oleson Double Bungalow
14. 1564 W. Lafond Avenue, Hamline Playground Building
15. 1378 W. Minnehaha Avenue, John North House
16. 1464 W. Minnehaha Avenue, Frederick M. Grant House
17. 1558 W. Minnehaha Avenue, Henry Hale Memorial Library, Hamline Branch
18. 1765 W. Minnehaha Avenue, House
19. 1153 W. Sherburne Avenue, House
20. 1673 W. Sherburne Avenue, House
21. 666 N. Snelling Avenue, Snelling Service Garage

Designated

22. 2021 W. University Avenue, Minnesota Transfer Railway Building
23. 1730 W. Van Buren Avenue, Ellen Gillette House
24. 1777 W. Van Buren Avenue, House

