

District 12: St. Anthony Park

District 12, in the northwestern corner of the city of St. Paul, is bounded on the west by the Minneapolis-St. Paul city line, and on the north by the suburban Ramsey County municipalities of Falcon Heights and Lauderdale. Forming boundaries are Como and Hoyt Avenues, which is the city line, on the north, Cleveland Avenue and the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota on the east, Interstate 94 on the south and the city line, approximately one block west of Highway 280 on the west. Planning District 12 includes three distinct areas. The two residential areas -- North St. Anthony Park and South St. Anthony Park -- are divided by the Northern Pacific (now Burlington Northern) railroad tracks. They are connected by the three span Pratt truss bridge on Raymond Avenue. The third area, West Midway, in the southeastern portion of the district along University Avenue, is predominately a commercial and industrial section.

Although a handful of farms may have been built in the St. Anthony Park area, no farmhouses were identified as part of the Historic Sites Survey. Many of the houses in the St. Anthony Park area date from as early as the 1880's and early 1890's, yet very few of the commercial, church or school public buildings predate 1900. The area does, however, contain an excellent cross section of St. Paul architecture from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The first concerted efforts to populate what is now District 12 began in the 1850's and 1860's when William Marshall, Minnesota governor from 1866 to 1870, began buying large tracts of land between Como Lake and the present Minneapolis city line. He sensed the area had tremendous potential because of its location midway between downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis, much in the way that Archbishop John Ireland promoted settlement of the Merriam Park area for the same reasons. Marshall hired Chicago

landscape architect Horace W.S. Cleveland in 1873 to develop a plan for the St. Anthony Park area. His plan had winding streets and irregularly shaped lots conforming to the rolling and somewhat swampy terrain, and unlike the grid-iron layout of much of St. Paul. The plan also indicated large five to ten acre estates.

The area was on several major railroad lines so it was convenient for residents to commute to either downtown, yet few people were attracted to the area until the mid-1880's when the St. Anthony Park Company was formed by Marshall and his associates.

At least two small passenger depots were built in St. Anthony Park at this time, one by the Great Northern Railroad, the other by the Northern Pacific Railroad -- probably with the encouragement and financial assistance of the St. Anthony Park Company. They both still stand though each has been moved and converted to a house. One is at 1048 Everett Court; the other at 2107 Commonwealth Avenue.

The St. Anthony Park Company divided the land into smaller lots, made improvements such as draining the lake where Langford Park is now located, and built several dozen houses in the mid-1880's to the early 1890's which they quickly resold to the people enticed to the area. Almost all of the houses built by the company are located south of Langford Park, along Raymond Avenue, and in South St. Anthony Park. All of those surveyed were of woodframe construction -- perhaps because one of the owners of the St. Anthony Park Company was also the proprietor of a lumber yard.

Many of the first residents of these houses were employed by furniture manufacturing companies the St. Anthony Park Company had attracted to the newly developing West Midway area, while others commuted to downtown St. Paul or Minneapolis along the University Avenue streetcar line. This first "interurban line" connecting the streetcar systems of both cities was completed in 1891 four years after all of present-day District 12 had been

annexed by the city of St. Paul. The other streetcar line in the area was also an interurban line. It was completed in 1898 and travelled along Como Avenue to Eustis where it connected with the Minneapolis line to Lake Harriet. After it was completed much of the land in St. Anthony Park north of Carter Avenue was settled. The establishment of the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota on Cleveland Avenue in Falcon Heights in the late 1880's was also an impetus to the settlement of the St. Anthony Park area. However, few houses were surveyed which were built for faculty members and were built before 1895.



30. 2201 Scudder Street, Joseph K. Moore House, 1887, designed by William Hunt. (Photo by Brad Daniels)

Among the most intact surviving houses built by the St. Anthony Park Company is a grouping of three adjacent houses on Scudder Street -- the Anson Blake House at 2205 Scudder built in 1886; the McGill House at 2203 Scudder, built in 1887 as the home of Andrew R. McGill, Minnesota governor from 1887 to 1891; and the Joseph K. Moore House at 2201 Scudder (no. 30), built in 1887 for McGill's business associate. Of the three, the Moore House is the most intact example of the Queen Anne style. The nearly identical, mirror-image McGill House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been designated a St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission site. Although the Blake House has been stuccoed, it is still an imposing Victorian mansion, complete with a square corner tower with a pyramidal cap. Another intriguing St. Anthony Park Company house is located nearby at 1181 Raymond Avenue. It was built in 1887 and has a round corner tower with an unusual bulbous cap. Further study should be done on the feasibility of creating an historic district which would include these houses and others near Langford Park, east of the railroad tracks and northwest of Raymond Avenue.

The cream-colored brick John Lunborg House at 995 Cromwell Avenue, built in 1886, is perhaps the oldest brick house still standing in the area and is one of the oldest houses in South St. Anthony Park. Among the oldest Victorian houses located north of Langford Park are the houses at 2338 Carter Avenue, built in 1887, and the less altered Archibald Wellington House at 2174 Commonwealth Avenue, built in 1889.

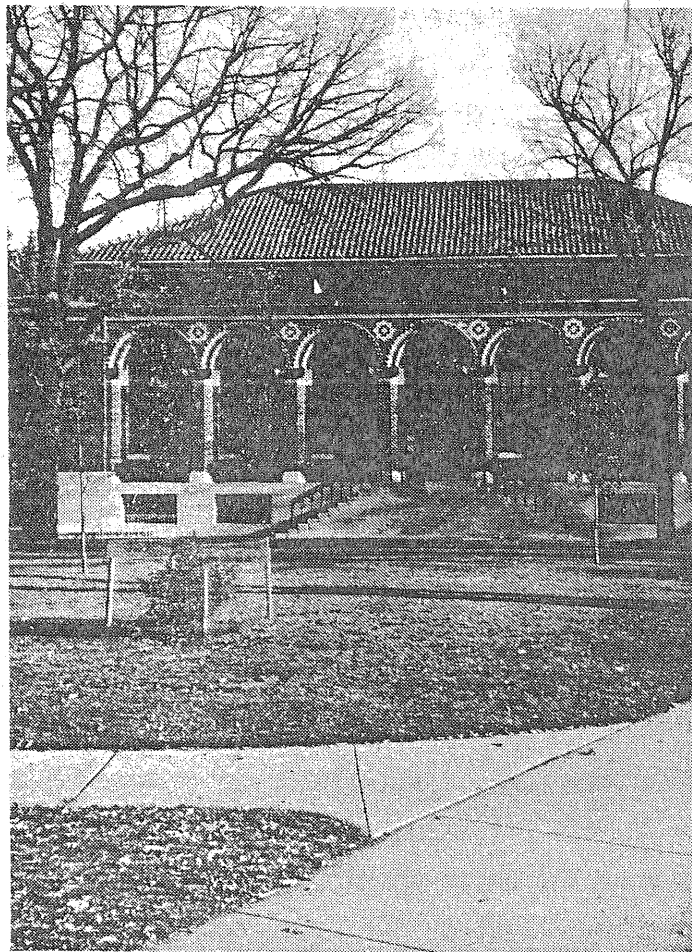
Several local builders and architects made their mark in present-day District 12 from the 1890's to World War I. Charles J. Buell designed a number of impressive Shingle Style houses including his own house at 2219 Knapp Street, built in 1892; the very similar house at 977 N. Bayless Avenue, built in 1891; and a house built in 1890 on the lot next door to the site where

he built his own house the following year. Thomas Husby and his brothers built numerous houses in the neighborhood at the turn of the century, many of which featured the Colonial Revival style, such as the house at 2135 Knapp Street, built in 1906 as the home of Professor Thomas Shaw. Park residents William Wycoff Clark and his wife are listed as the original owners and builders of numerous area houses, including the delightful shingled bungalow at 2210 Knapp Street in 1907 and many of the homes on Commonwealth Avenue. Charles Aldrich, an instructor of mechanical training at the St. Paul campus, built his house at 1323 Keston Street in 1895. His other designs include the M.H. Reynolds House at 2145 Knapp Street in 1900, and the I.O.O.F. Hall at 928 Raymond Avenue in 1902.

Dating from the same era are the Colonial Revival style house on the grounds of the Luther Seminary with an impressive, colossal Ionic portico, and the Tudor Revival-inspired Harvey Blodgett House at 2268 Knapp Street designed by Clarence H. Johnston, Sr. in 1901. More eclectic in design is the house at 2267 Carter Avenue built in 1913 as the home of Frank Wing, a cartoonist for the Minneapolis Tribune and the St. Paul Dispatch and Pioneer Press. Many of the houses built in the area in the early twentieth century are adaptations of Bungalow, Craftsman and Prairie style designs. One of the most impressive is the William L. Alban-designed house at 2181 Doswell Avenue.

Most of present-day District 12 had been settled extensively by 1930. A notable exception is the area along Hoyt Avenue, the northern edge of the city limits, which together with the neighborhood directly north of Hoyt, known as University Grove, which is technically located in Falcon Heights, has many houses built from about the 1930's to the 1970's. One of the most outstanding is the strikingly modern home of Governor Elmer and Eleanor Anderson at 2230 Hoyt Avenue built in 1951 and designed by the St. Paul firm Bergstedt and Hirsch.

Although North St. Anthony Park is essentially residential there are a handful of commercial, public, institutional, church, and school buildings -- almost all located along the major streets, such as Raymond and Como Avenues. Bockman Hall, built in 1900-01 at 2375 Como Avenue is the Beaux Arts inspired main building at the United Church Seminary, now part of the Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary. The Children's Aid Society, now the



31. 2245 W. Como Avenue, St. Anthony Park Branch Library, 1916, designed by Charles Hausler. (Photo by Brad Daniels)

Children's Home Society, built the Jean Martin Brown Receiving Home at 2237 Commonwealth Avenue in 1902. The building is now the Commonwealth Heath Care Center. The Twin City Linnea Society constructed the building at 2040 Como Avenue in 1917 as a home for aged Swedish people. It is now called the Linnea Home. The St. Anthony Park Library, built in 1916 at 2245 W. Como Avenue, (no. 31) is one of the three surviving public libraries in the city which were financed by the Andrew Carnegie Corporation. Across the street is the complex of shops and apartments now known as Milton Square. It was built from 1909-1912 and features a pleasing, Tudor inspired design by Franklin Ellerbe, founder of what is now one of the state's largest architectural firms, Ellerbe and Company. Breck School was once located in St. Anthony Park. The building at 2477 Como Avenue on the grounds of the Lutheran Seminary, now known as Aasgaard Hall, was built in 1926-29 as part of the Breck complex.

Important churches include the log Old Muskego church, built in 1844 and moved to its present location at the Luther Seminary in 1904; the St. Anthony Park Methodist Church at Como and Hillside Avenues designed in 1912 by Charles Hausler, the architect who designed the St. Anthony Park Library, and his then-partner William Alban. Clarence Johnston, Sr. designed two churches in the area, both built in 1914 standing back-to-back -- the St. Anthony Park Congregational Church at 2129 Commonwealth Avenue and the St. Matthew's Episcopal Church at 2136 Carter Avenue.

Few architecturally and historically significant non-residential buildings remain in South St. Anthony Park outside of the West Midway district. Important survivors include Engine House #13 at 926 Hampden built in 1894 and one of the last stations in the city to use horsedrawn fire engines; the I.O.O.F. Hall

across the street at 928 Raymond, built in 1902; and Baker School at 821 Raymond Avenue which was completed in 1909 and was renovated recently.

The most architecturally distinguished commercial and industrial buildings still standing in the West Midway district are all located along University Avenue near Raymond Avenue. Most were built from 1906-1917. St Paul architects Buechner and Orth designed the huge Northwestern Furniture Store, now the Specialty Manufacturing Company, at 2356-2362 University Avenue, in 1906. A delightful, tiny Streamlined Moderne storefront was installed on the east end of the building circa 1940 and is one of few remaining examples of this version of the Art Deco style in the area. The same architects designed the Twin City State Bank, now the home of Film in the Cities at 2388 University Avenue, in 1914. The Minneapolis-St. Paul Building at 2429 University Avenue is one of the most intact of the earlier buildings still standing in the area. Built in 1909, it features ornate patterned brickwork and brick pilasters, and was built as the general office for the Twin City Commercial Bulletin. In 1912 J. Walter Stevens, who had earlier designed many warehouses in Lowertown, designed the warehouse and wholesale house at 2233 University Avenue for the Wright, Barrett and Stillwell Company, paper and stationery dealers. One of the largest buildings along University Avenue is the Overland Company Building built in 1915 at 2572 University Avenue, west of Highway 280. It is now owned by the International Harvester Company. The Chittenden and Eastman Furniture Company at 2402-2414 University Avenue, built in 1917, features some of the finest Sullivanesque inspired terra cotta ornamentation in the city. It is suggested that consideration be given to creating a West Midway Historic District extending along University Avenue from the altered but historically important Midway Machine and Engineering Building at 2324 University Avenue,

which was built in 1891 as a streetcar garage for the Twin City Rapid Transit Company, west to Cromwell Avenue.

Following is a list of sites in District 12 which have already been designated as historic sites, a list of sites which the Historic Sites Survey staff believes are eligible for listing with the National Register of Historic Places and/or the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, a list of additional sites of major significance and a list of the suggested historic districts. Approximate locations of the sites are shown on the accompanying map.

DISTRICT 12

Sites Already Designated

1. 2375 W. Como Avenue, Norway Lutheran Church (Muskego)
2. 2203 W. Scudder Street, Andrew R. McGill House

Sites Eligible for Designation

Designated

- 3. 2245 W. Como Avenue, St. Anthony Park Branch Library
4. 2375 W. Como Avenue, Bockman Hall, United Church Seminary
5. 926 W. Hampden Avenue, Engine House #13
6. 2201 W. Scudder Street, Joseph K. Moore House
- UR 7. 2402-2412 W. University Avenue, Chittenden and Eastman Company
- UR 8. 2429 W. University Avenue, Minneapolis-St. Paul Building

Additional Sites of Major Significance

9. 977 N. Bayless Avenue, House
10. 2136 W. Carter Avenue, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
11. 2267 W. Carter Avenue, Frank Wing House
12. 2338 W. Carter Avenue, House
13. 2107 W. Commonwealth Avenue, Northern Pacific Railway St.
Anthony Park Depot (now a house)
14. 2129 W. Commonwealth Avenue, St. Anthony Park Congregational
Church
15. 2174 W. Commonwealth Avenue, Wellington House
16. 2237 W. Commonwealth Avenue, Jean Martin Brown Receiving Home
17. 2040 W. Como Avenue, Twin City Linnea Society
18. Ca. 2204 W. Como Avenue, St. Anthony Park Methodist Episcopal
Church
19. 2256-2262½ W. Como Avenue (also: 2226-2242 W. Carter Avenue),
Old Fireside Inn/Tamarack Lodge Hall/Franke's Grocery

20. 2375 W. Como Avenue, House (now daycare center)
21. 2477 W. Como Avenue, Breck School
22. 995 N. Cromwell Avenue, John Lunborg House
23. 2181 W. Doswell Avenue, Burr Oaks
24. 1048 Everett Court, Depot (now a house)
25. 2230 W. Hoyt Avenue, Elmer L. Andersen House
26. 1323 W. Keston Street, Charles R. Aldrich House
27. 2110 W. Knapp Street, F.A. Pike House
28. 2145 W. Knapp Street, M.H. Reynolds House
29. 2219 W. Knapp Street, Charles J. Buell House
30. 2223 W. Knapp Street, House
31. 2268 W. Knapp Street, Harvey Blodgett House
32. 821 N. Raymond Avenue, Baker School
33. 928 N. Raymond Avenue, I.O.O.F. Hall
34. Ca. 1050 N. Raymond Avenue, Raymond Avenue Bridge
35. 1181 N. Raymond Avenue, House
36. 2205 W. Scudder Street, Anson Blake House
- UR 37. 2233 W. University Avenue, Wright, Barrett and Stillwell Building
- UR 38. 2356-62 W. University Avenue, Northwestern Furniture Exposition Building
- UR 39. 2388 W. University Avenue, Twin City State Bank
40. 2572 W. University Avenue, International Harvester Company

Potential Historic Districts

St. Anthony Park Historic District

West Midway Historic District

DISTRICT 12

