

District 14: Macalester-Groveland

District 14, known as Macalester-Groveland, is in west central St. Paul, south of Merriam Park and north of Highland Park. It is bounded on the north by Summit Avenue, on the east by the Short Line and a segment of Interstate 35E, on the south by Randolph Avenue, and on the west by the Mississippi River. The area is primarily residential with scattered commercial developments along the main streets, such as Grand and St. Clair Avenues. Several schools and colleges including Macalester College at Snelling and Summit Avenues and the St. Paul Seminary at Mississippi River Boulevard and Summit Avenue are within the district.

The early history of present-day District 14 is associated with the old Reserve Township from which it and the adjacent Highland Park area, District 15, originated. Reserve Township was one of six townships created in Ramsey County when Minnesota became a state in 1858. Before then the land of Reserve Township was restricted from settlement because it was part of Fort Snelling's military reserve. Several would-be settlers were evicted by force. William Finn, a veteran from Fort Snelling, was granted a large section of land in the area in 1848 and the following year a number of others began staking illegal claims on the land after a township survey indicated the possibility of the impending sale of the reservation land. The sale occurred in 1854 and many who bought the land became the area's first farmers, including William Brimhall, who planted an apple orchard near Snelling and St. Clair, and John Ayd, who in 1860 built the only grist mill in Reserve Township, near present day Jefferson Avenue.

One of the few surviving farmhouses is the Frederick Spangenberg House built by a German immigrant and his family at what is now 375 S. Mount Curve, circa 1867. The house is probably the only surviving stone farmhouse of its vintage standing in Ramsey County. Few other farmhouses were identified in Macalester-Groveland. The

Charles Petzold House at 1227 Randolph Avenue, built in 1887, was the home of the proprietor of a dairy. At 2074 Jefferson Avenue is an unusual Colonial Revival style house facing Cleveland Avenue, rather than Jefferson, though a much newer house was built in its front yard, circa 1960. The side wall now serves as its main entrance. This house predates almost all of the neighboring houses in the western part of the district and is clearly shown on a 1916 atlas as part of a farm. The original construction date is unknown.

Several events occurred in the 1880's which would shape future development in Macalester-Groveland. The Short Line Railroad was laid along the eastern edge in 1880, serving commuters to Minneapolis and St. Paul. William Nettleton, the founder of Duluth, platted his one hundred thirty acre farm near Randolph and Lexington in the southeast corner of the area, and sold house sites although few buildings were constructed until well after 1900. In 1887, following landscape architect H.W.S. Cleveland's recommendations, the cities of both Minneapolis and St. Paul began to acquire land along the banks of the Mississippi River to preserve the area as a parkway.

Macalester-Groveland's major institutions of higher learning, Macalester College and the St. Paul Seminary, date from before the area was settled extensively. Though Macalester was founded much earlier, in 1884 it moved to the present site donated by a local real estate syndicate. The first building on the campus, now known as Old Main and completed in 1887 is arguably the finest. Other buildings of architectural interest include the Wallace Dormitory built in 1907, and the gymnasium designed by William Ingemann in 1924 and now undergoing an extensive, sympathetic renovation. The St. Paul Seminary was established at the west end of Summit Avenue in the early 1890's largely through the efforts of Archbishop John Ireland, an active promoter of the development of the area between Minneapolis and St. Paul, and by the railroad baron, James J. Hill. The first buildings at the seminary were designed by Cass Gilbert in the early 1890's. Another distinguished

structure at the seminary is the Romanesque inspired early twentieth century chapel designed by Clarence Johnston, Sr.

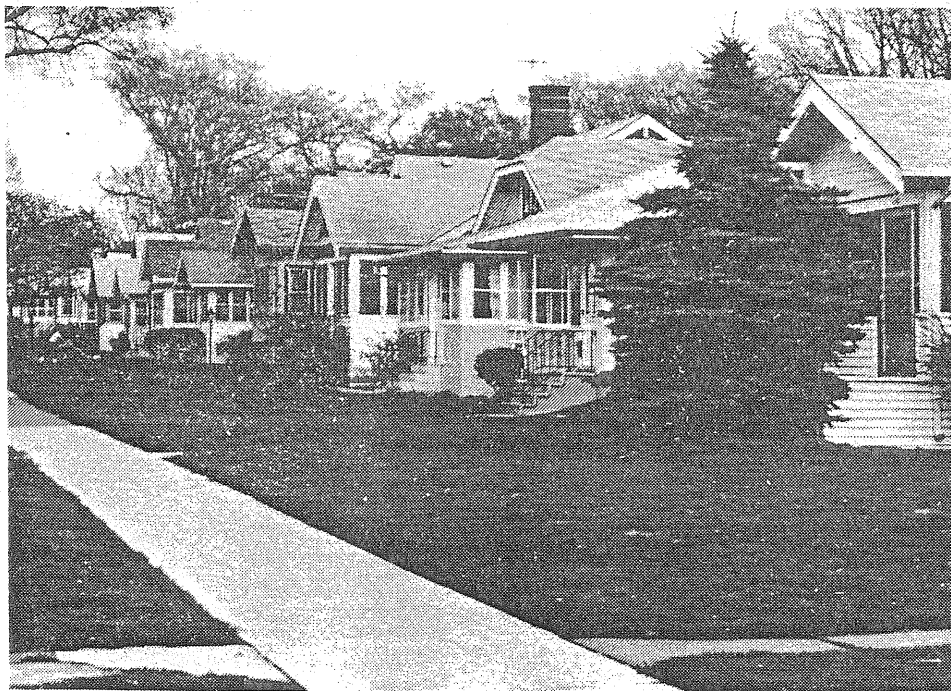
During the late 1880's and early 1890's numerous houses were constructed south and west of Macalester College in an area platted in 1883 as the Macalester Park Addition, but quickly dubbed "Tangletown" because of the winding streets and irregular size lots. It was similar in layout to the Warrendale neighborhood in District 6 and the St. Anthony Park neighborhood in District 12. However, the majority of the houses in Tangletown date from the early twentieth century. Among the most important older houses are the Queen Anne style Frank Harlowe House at 123 S. Cambridge Street built in 1886 and designed by H. S. Treherne; the Goewey House at 196 S. Vernon Street, built in 1889, which has a large corner tower as do many of architect Augustus Gauger's houses; the impressive Shingle style David W. McCourt House at 161 S. Cambridge, designed by Cass Gilbert and James Knox Taylor in 1890; and the simple Queen Anne style house at 1737 Lincoln Avenue built in 1892 with an open



35. 1262 W. Grand Avenue, House, 1890, designed by William Castner. (Photo by Gary Phelps)

front porch recessed under the second story of the main facade. Not far from Tangletown is an intriguing brick Victorian house at 2116 Lincoln Avenue. Although construction of this house began in 1891, it was delayed, probably because of the tough economic times of the early 1890's, and it was not completed until 1906. Another impressive house of the same vintage is located much further east at 1262 Grand Avenue, due west of the Short Line. It was designed in 1890 by William Castner, a local architect who was a master of the Shingle style but who died shortly after the house was completed. This house is in desperate need of repair and merits careful preservation (no. 35).

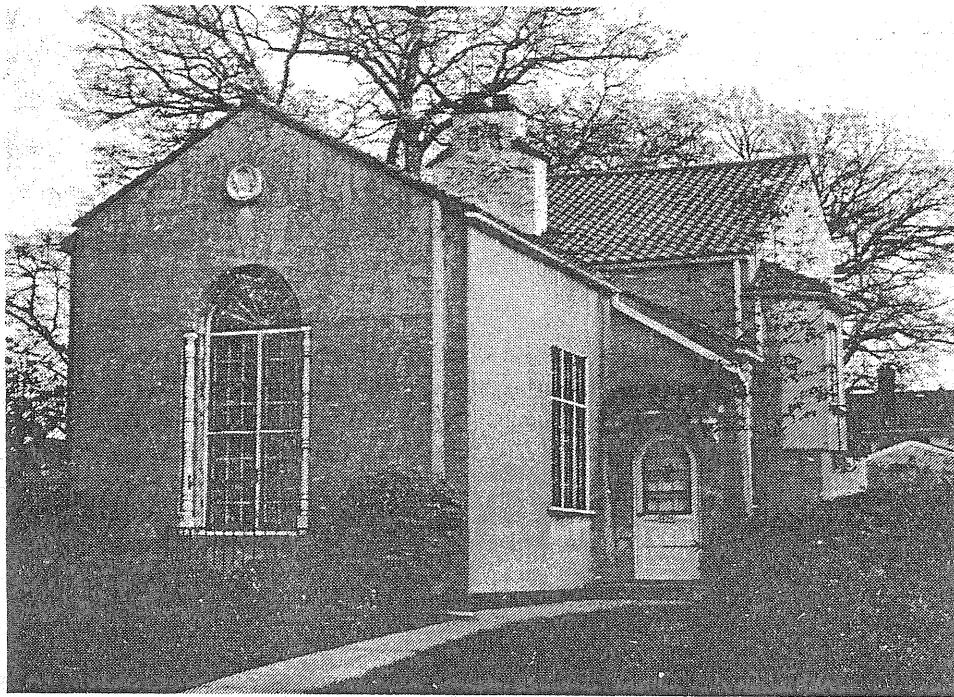
The period from 1900 to 1915 was indicative of the burgeoning residential development which followed. A number of neighborhood improvement associations were established, and streetcar tracks were laid along Snelling Avenue to south of Randolph by 1909. During this era, settlement generally moved from east to west, and from



36. 1700 Block of St. Clair Avenue, Bungalows, ca. 1915. These bungalows are typical of residential development in District 14 in the early twentieth century. (Photo by Gary Phelps)

north to south, and was concentrated in the area bounded by Summit and Fairmount, from Hamline to Cretin Avenues. Many houses were built in variations of the Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, bungalow and other styles. One of the most pleasing of the smaller houses is the Colonial Revival inspired cottage at 202 S. Cleveland Avenue built in 1905 for David Edwards, a clerk for a local confectioner. Two impressive Summit Avenue mansions built in the Tudor Revival style are the Frederick and Edith Crosby House at 2010 Summit Avenue, designed by Clarence H. Johnston, Sr. in 1910, and the Victor Ingemann House at 1936 Summit Avenue, designed by Ingemann and Company in 1912. Although built in the same year as the Ingemann House, the nearby Prairie style Beebe House at 2022 Summit Avenue is light years from it architecturally. The Beebe House is the only house in St. Paul designed by Minneapolis masters of the Prairie style, Purcell, Feick and Elmslie, and one of the oldest Prairie stylehouses in St. Paul. The English Gothic Revival style St. Paul's Church-on-the-Hill at 1524 Summit Avenue designed in 1912-13 by Emmanuel Masqueray, architect of the St. Paul Cathedral, is one of the most distinguished churches built in the area during this time.

The greatest period of development in District 14 occurred between 1915 and the late 1920's. Almost all available land was built up with the exception of the areas north and west of the intersection of Jefferson and Edgecumbe, the west side of Fairview, south of Wellesley, and the area south of Jefferson and west of Mt. Curve. A number of houses built during this time exemplify Prairie and Craftsman styles. The Craftsman bungalow at 1577 Fairmount, built in 1917, is one of the area's finest. The Eric Fridholm House at 151 S. Woodlawn Avenue, built in 1923, is one of the best examples of the Prairie style. Several Spanish and Mission Revival inspired bungalow courts were also built in the mid-1920's, including those at 1406 Grand Avenue, 93-97 and 336-338 S. Cleveland Avenue. Of historical significance is the house at 2092 Sargent Avenue owned by



37. 1774 W. Stanford Avenue, House, 1922, designed by Percy Dwight Bentley. This house features a Spanish inspired design. (Photo by Gary Phelps)

William T. Francis, Minnesota's first black attorney to be admitted to the bar. Numerous episodes of harassment by area residents who wanted him to move were recorded, including an effort by the Cretin Improvement Association to purchase his home. He later became Minister Resident and Consul General to Liberia in 1927. Also dating from the boom years of Macalester-Groveland's development are the impressive late Gothic Revival style Fairmount Avenue United Methodist Church built in 1917, the one story Randolph Heights School at 348 S. Hamline Avenue built at the same time, and the massive brick Tri-State Telegraph and Telephone Exchange built in 1922 at 397 S. Fairview Avenue.

Although Macalester-Groveland was extensively developed by 1930, a few of the area's landmark buildings had yet to be constructed. A beloved local attraction is the exuberant Streamlined Moderne

Grandview Theater at 1830 Grand, built in 1933 and expanded in 1937. A unique house of the same vintage is the Metal Experimental House at 265 S. Woodlawn Avenue, built as part of an experiment following the Chicago Century of Progress Exposition of 1933. Perhaps the most outstanding building constructed in the area since World War II is the Mount Zion Temple at 1300 W. Summit. It is both historically significant as the first Jewish congregation in the city and as one of the last works of internationally famous architect Erich Mendelsohn.

Following is a list buildings which have been designated as historic sites, followed by a list of sites the Historic Sites Survey staff believes are eligible for designation by the National Register of Historic Places and/or the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, and a list of additional sites of major significance. The accompanying map indicates their approximate locations. It is also suggested that consideration be given to extending the existing National Register and St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission Historic Hill Districts west along Summit Avenue to Mississippi River Boulevard and that St. Paul Seminary be designated as an historic district.

DISTRICT 14

Sites Already Designated

1. 1600 W. Grand Avenue, Old Main at Macalester College
2. 375 S. Mount Curve Boulevard, Frederick Spangenberg House
3. 2022 W. Summit Avenue, Beebe House

Sites Eligible for Designation

4. 123 S. Cambridge Street, Frank Harlowe House
5. 161 S. Cambridge Street, David W. McCourt House
6. 1830 W. Grand Avenue, Grandview Theater
- SW 7. 1300 W. Summit Avenue, Mount Zion Temple
- SW 8. 1524 W. Summit Avenue, St. Paul's Church-on-the-Hill
- SW 9. 1936 W. Summit Avenue, Victor Ingemann House
10. 151 S. Woodlawn Avenue, Eric Fridholm House

Additional Sites of Major Significance

11. 93-97 S. Cleveland Avenue, Bungalow Court
12. 202 S. Cleveland Avenue, David Edwards House
13. 336-338 S. Cleveland Avenue, Bungalow Court
14. 1523 W. Fairmount Avenue, Fairmount Avenue United Methodist Church
15. 1577 W. Fairmount Avenue, House
16. 397 S. Fairview Avenue, Tri-State Telephone Exchange
17. 1240 W. Goodrich Avenue, Shadycrest
18. 1262 W. Grand Avenue, House
19. 1406 W. Grand Avenue, Bungalow Court
20. 1600 W. Grand Avenue, Macalester College Gymnasium and Wallace Hall

21. 348 S. Hamline Avenue, Randolph Heights School
22. 2074 W. Jefferson Avenue, House
23. 1737 W. Lincoln Avenue, House
24. 2116 W. Lincoln Avenue, House
25. 1227 W. Randolph Avenue, Charles Petzold House
26. 2092 W. Sargent Avenue, William T. Francis House
- SW 27. 2010 W. Summit Avenue, Frederick and Edith Crosby House
28. 196 S. Vernon Street, Goewey House
29. 265 S. Woodlawn Avenue, Metal Experimental House

Potential Historic Districts

- 2260 W. Summit Avenue, St. Paul Seminary Buildings and Chapel
- SW Potential expansion of Historic Hill District west along Summit Avenue

MAP 14

DISTRICT 14

