

City of Detroit

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Proposed Palmer Park Apartment Buildings Local Historic District Final Report

By a resolution dated February 16, 2012, the Detroit City Council charged the Historic Designation Advisory Board, a study committee, with the official study of the proposed Palmer Park Apartment Buildings Local Historic District in accordance with Chapter 25 of the 1984 Detroit City Code and the Michigan Local Historic Districts Act.

The proposed Palmer Park Apartment Buildings Local Historic District is located adjacent to Woodward Avenue approximately seven miles northwest of downtown Detroit. It is bounded by Covington Drive on the north and east, Pontchartrain Boulevard on the west, and West McNichols Road on the south.

The proposed district consists of a triangular neighborhood containing a total of 65 contributing buildings: 57 apartment buildings, five religious buildings, two two-family flats, and one commercial or industrial building. No noncontributing structures have been identified. The proposed district is significant primarily for its high-style architecture in a diverse range of styles. Construction dates span five decades, with the earliest apartment buildings built in the 1920s, and development continuing into the 1960s. The period of significance for the proposed district is from 1925 to 1963, including the construction dates of all the buildings in the district.

The Palmer Park Apartment Building Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. It included buildings built in the 1920s and 30s. In 2005 the National Register district was expanded to include apartment buildings dating from the late 1930s to the 1960s. This study report is based on text from two National Register of Historic Places Registration Forms, updated to reflect survey work conducted by the Historic Designation Advisory Board in 2004 and 2012.

BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of the proposed Palmer Park Apartment Buildings Local Historic District are outlined in black on the attached map, and are as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of Woodward Avenue and Merton Roads; thence west along the centerline of Merton Road to the centerline of the alley west of Woodward Avenue; thence south along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the centerline of the alley between Merton Road and West McNichols Road; thence west along the centerline of said alley to the south property line of 17122-17142 Second Avenue; thence west along said property line to the centerline of Second Avenue; thence south along said centerline to the intersection of the centerlines of Second and McNichols Road; thence west along the centerline of McNichols Road to the west property line of 642 McNichols Road; thence north along said property line to the centerline of the alley between Merton and McNichols Road; thence west along the centerline of said alley to the centerline of the alley east of Third Avenue; thence south along said centerline to the centerline of McNichols Road; thence west said centerline to the intersection of the centerline of McNichols Road and Third Avenue; thence north along the centerline Third Avenue to the intersection of centerlines of Third Avenue and Merton; thence west along the centerline of Merton to the east property line of 831-841 Merton; thence south along said property line to the centerline of the alley between Merton and McNichols Road; thence west along the centerline of said alley between to the alley east of Pontchartrain Boulevard; thence north along said alley to the centerline of Merton; thence north along the west property line of 1000 Merton to the centerline of the alley west of Manderson Road; thence north along said centerline to the west property line of 17765 Manderson Road; thence north along said property line to the centerline of Covington Drive; thence east along said centerline to the centerline of Woodward Avenue; thence south along said centerline to the beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the Palmer Park Apartments Historic District comprise all apartment buildings, condominiums, cooperatives, townhouses and duplexes roughly bounded by Pontchartrain Boulevard, Covington Drive, and West McNichols Road. The district also includes the commercial buildings located along McNichols Road between Second and Third Avenues. Palmer Park itself, a city park to the north and east, the city of Highland Park to the south, and a neighborhood of detached residential homes to the west form a clearly delineated set of boundaries.

HISTORY

Thomas Palmer, Jr., a businessman and later Senator, inherited land in the area now known as Palmer Park from his sister, Julia Witherell, in 1876. At the time, the land was mostly wooded. Palmer and his wife, Elizabeth, gradually became two of the wealthiest and most socially prominent people in Detroit. After setting aside a portion for parkland, in 1912 Palmer subdivided his property, with streets laid out in narrow, English New Town-style mews, in order to develop it. Thomas Palmer died in 1913, however, and Elizabeth Palmer donated the land to the Detroit Women's Club, who sold the land to a variety of developers to fund an endowment for the Merrill-Palmer Institute.

Residential development began in Palmer Park during the mid-1920s. Influenced by the suburban housing trend of the period, the neighborhood was laid out with gently curving streets on large parcels of land. Apartment buildings, designed by prominent Detroit architects to accommodate middle- and upper-middle-class residents, were built throughout the neighborhood.

The first building, the Walbri Court Apartments designed by Albert Kahn, was completed and opened in 1925. The buildings that soon followed were designed in a variety of styles ranging from English Tudor to Spanish Colonial to Art Deco. Two apartment buildings built during the 1920s and 1930s—the Delmar Apartments at 17111 Second Avenue and the Raleigh Apartments at 17110 Third Avenue are both located on the corners with their south façades facing McNichols Road. These buildings differ from the other apartments in the district because they were designed with commercial storefronts. These storefronts face McNichols Road and are an important aspect of the commercial streetscape there. The Delmar, built in 1925, and the Raleigh, built in 1926, were both designed in the Neo-Georgian style and built by Harry J. Pelavin. Pelavin immigrated to the United States from the eastern Ukraine prior to World War I with other family members, including his brothers Morris and Samuel, who were builders of apartment buildings throughout Detroit prior to the Depression. The earliest residents of these two apartment buildings were working people, professionals, retirees and widows.

The development of Palmer Park was interrupted by the Great Depression. Construction of apartment buildings resumed in the mid-1930s, encouraged by the National Housing Act of 1934, created to stimulate private investment in housing. The act established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which set national standards for the home building industry and authorized Federal insurance for privately financed mortgages for homes, housing subdivisions, and rental housing. The standards set by the FHA promoted economical and efficient architectural designs for housing that coincided with the popularity of European Modernism and

the Art Moderne. The richly detailed designs of the 1920s were replaced by designs with clean strong lines, large windows, flat roofs and plain wall surfaces.

The Balmoral Apartments at 361 Covington and the Fairlane Apartments at 381 Covington were both built in 1937 by the Uptown Land Company. Both structures were designed by architect Robert West in the Art Moderne style and are representative of the then-new developments in apartment building design. The Balmoral was the first building in the area to use corner casement windows. The Balmoral along with West's later buildings in Palmer Park was recognizable for his repeated use of corner casement windows that allowed for increased sunlight and fresh air in the building's apartments.

World War II created a new trend in apartment house design dictated largely by wartime restrictions and lack of critical building material. Influenced by the Garden City planned communities, new "gardens apartment" projects were developed in the 1940s. These new apartment buildings were typically two- and three-story, multiple family structures. They were built in a variety of plans ranging from simple, repetitive townhouses to u-shape, set-back buildings with garden court apartments. Guided by FHA standards, the units were arranged to afford privacy, sunlight and fresh air. The garden court apartments provided separation from the street traffic with many providing balconies overlooking landscaped gardens and grounds. Apartment buildings erected during this period include the Parkway Terrace at 641-711 Covington, Merton terrace at 631 -711 Merton, Palmer Court Apartments at 941-1001 Merton and the Park Plaza Apartments at 825 Whitmore.

Projects in Palmer Park approved by the FHA's Large Scale Rental Housing Division include the Hampshire House at 885 Covington and the Cambridge House at 931 Covington, built together in 1949. These two buildings match each other in simplicity of design with horizontal lines and casement windows. Another FHA-approved project is the Palmer Park Terrace built in 1943 at 672-740 Merton, a long, simple but elegant row of townhouses containing thirty-two apartments.

Many architects adapted to the new trends. Wiedmaier and Gay, who had once designed many of the eclectic apartment buildings of the 1920s in Palmer Park, now designed Modernistic buildings including the Carole Jean Apartments of 1949 at 17524 Third and the Rosemore Apartments of 1948 at 17450-17452 Third. Another FHA-approved project was The Slater Apartments designed by Wiedmaier and Gay in 1947 at 653-701 Whitmore. This building, with its elaborate two-story wood-framed main entranceway, is an excellent example of the Modernistic style combined with elements of Scandinavian design introduced by Eliel Saarinen at Cranbrook.

The Manor House Apartments at 660 Whitmore, designed by architect Paul Tildes and constructed in 1949 in the prevailing Modernistic style, has simple horizontal lines. It was built with enclosed porches with jalousie windows, a rooftop sun deck, and underground parking; it was the first to have a circular drive to the front entrance. The building at 850 Whitmore, designed by Isadore M. Lewis and built in 1952, further develops the tradition of casement windows with a new design featuring a single large fixed pane of glass flanked by operable casement windows, arrangement reminiscent of Chicago-style windows.

Development was interrupted during the Great Depression and again during World War II, but increased dramatically in the later 1940s. Many new apartment buildings inspired by the

American Garden Movement were designed for Palmer Park. Commercial buildings were located on the periphery of the neighborhood along the north side of McNichols Road and religious structures were built in the heart of the neighborhood. This newer development is significant to the district as an example of a high-density urban community developing according to the popular suburban planning concepts of the period. The majority of the of the newer (1940s) structures were built by Jewish builders and developers as the Jewish community moved to the northwest edge of the city of Detroit away from its older settlement closer to the center of the city.

The majority of apartment buildings in the Palmer Park Historic District were built by some of Detroit's most prominent Jewish builders. By the 1920s, the center of Jewish population had relocated to the area around Twelfth and Dexter Streets on Detroit's west side. During the 1930s and 1940s, Jews began to move to the developing northwest section of Detroit bounded by Eight Mile Road on the north, Woodward Avenue on the east, Greenfield Road on the west and McNichols Road on the south. Unlike the earlier area with Jewish residences that often consisted of small houses or flats in tightly packed neighborhoods, the new areas in the northwest had spacious homes on large lots with driveways and gardens. Palmer Park, located in the eastern edge of that part of the city, attracted those middle- and upper-middle class Jews who wished to reside in apartments without the maintenance worries of a house.

Many of the late 1920s eclectic apartment buildings in Palmer Park were built by Jewish builders and developers. The Luxor, the Trocadero and the El Dorado were built by the Levine Brothers; the LaVogue was built by David Weingarden; the Coronado, the Arlyne and 959 Whitmore by Saul Katz; the Sarasota by Harry Applebaum; the Madrid Court by Richard Cohen. As more members of the Jewish community move to northwest Detroit after the Depression, Jewish builders continued to be the main developers of multi-family structures in Palmer Park.

The Slater Apartments at 653-701 Whitmore and the Parkway Terrace at 641-711 Covington were both built in 1948 by Harry Slatkin Builders, Inc. Harry Slatkin immigrated to Cincinnati from Russia in 1909 as a cabinetmaker. He moved to Detroit to work in the auto plants and in 1911 formed his own construction firm that eventually became one of the largest in the city. He was also well-known in the Jewish community as the owner of the Dexter Theatre on Dexter Boulevard and as a co-owner with his son Joseph of Dexter Chevrolet, the first Jewish-owned car dealership in Detroit. His daughter was married to Lester Satovsky who owned the Lester Building Company and who built the townhouses at 17435-17527 Manderson in 1944 and the Shelbourne Apartments at 17765 Manderson in 1957. Lester Satovsky began his career as a builder working with his father Sam Satovsky. Satovsky and Sons, Inc. constructed the Merton Road Apartments at 1000 Merton in 1946; Sam and his wife Stella moved into Apartment #8 in that structure from their previous home on Chicago Boulevard.

Practical Home Builders, Inc. built at least two of the apartment buildings in the Palmer Park district. The Derby Garden Apartments at 810-818 Whitmore was built in 1951 and the Merton House Apartments at 820 Merton was constructed in 1962. Practical Home Builders was founded in 1942 by Samuel Hechtman in partnership with Jack Sylvan and Nathan Goldin. Hechtman was born in Poland in 1905 and immigrated to Detroit in 1911 with his parents. He graduated from the Detroit College of Law in 1928 and, after a number of unsuccessful business ventures, entered the building construction business at the age of 34. Practical Home Builders began building apartment buildings during the war and eventually became one of the largest

residential building organizations in Michigan. By 1956 the company had built about 7,500 housing units, including thousands of single-family houses, throughout metropolitan Detroit.

Another Jewish builder, and one of Detroit's most prominent real estate developers, was Louis H. Schostak, who became one of Palmer Park's leading figures in the 1950s. In 1955 Schostak, together with David Tann, president of Congress Tool and Die, and Nathan Fishman of Star Steel, built the Covington Arms at 333 Covington. Tired of maintaining large houses and grounds, the trio decided to erect one of the first cooperative apartment buildings in the city. The Covington Arms was designed by architect Paul Tilds with sixteen luxury units ranging from 1,800 to 2,400 square feet, each designed to the specifications of the unit's owner. Each apartment had a library, a heated jalousie-enclosed porch, air conditioning and access to indoor parking. Schostak, Tann and Fishman's personal apartments were all located on the top floor. Tann's apartment reportedly had marble floors, a see-through fireplace and Japanese Shoji doors at each end. Louis Blumburg, president of Blumburg Brothers Insurance Company, Daniel A. Laven, president of Central Heating Company and William Boesky, well known owner of Boesky's Deli and the Brass Rail Chop House, were among the first apartment owners in the building. Louis Schostak, one of the founders of Schostak Brothers and Company, would also be instrumental in the construction of Temple Israel in Palmer Park. Schostak Brothers would go on to develop much of the city of Southfield, a major area of Jewish migration during the 1960s. Schostak Brothers continues today as one of Michigan's largest real estate companies. Owned by third-generation family members, the company has currently undertaken the renovation of historic Merchants Row in downtown Detroit.

The Jewish community began moving out of the Palmer Park area in the 1970s, relocating to suburbs north of Detroit, especially in Southfield, Oak Park and Bloomfield Hills. This continuing migration northward to the newer suburbs is part of the ongoing movement that has transpired since the 1920s and before. As the Jewish community relocated, Palmer Park became the center of the gay community in Detroit.

Religious Buildings

The religious structures in the proposed Palmer Park Apartment Buildings Local Historic District reflect the evolution in populations of the neighborhood and the broader area on Detroit's northwest side from the 1920s to the 1950s-60s and the present. The first church constructed in the district during the 1920s represents the early white Protestant population of the neighborhood. As the surrounding neighborhoods became culturally diverse, and as the district developed with larger lots available for construction, it became the home of widely different denominations reflecting the changes in the area's population.

Five religious structures were built in the Palmer Park district between the 1920s and the 1950s. The first was the Palmer Park Presbyterian Church located at 642 West McNichols, established on March 27, 1921. The local firm of Lane, Davenport and Peterson (Horace H. Lane, Harold D. Davenport, and Arthur A. Peterson) reportedly specialized in school design according to the Grass Lake Public School National Register Nomination (Grass Lake, Jackson County). On January 9, 1972 the church merged with Highland Park Presbyterian Church to become Park United Presbyterian Church with the merged congregation housed in Highland Park. Grace Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, an African American denomination, purchased the church building on McNichols in that year and continues to occupy the structure.

The next church to be built in the Palmer Park district was the Fifth Church of Christ, Scientist on the southwest corner of Whitmore and Second in 1938. The church was designed in the Georgian Revival style by the architectural firm of Derrick and Gambler. Robert O. Derrick excelled in the design of Georgian Revival buildings, having previously designed the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan as a replica of Independence Hall and other important colonial buildings. He had also designed the Punch and Judy Theatre Building in 1930 in Grosse Pointe Farms and Grosse Pointe Farms Water Filtration Plant in 1931. Sometime during the mid-1930s he partnered with Branson Van Leer Gamber, though little is known regarding their other commissions. The Fifth Church of Christ Scientist occupied the structure until 1980 when it was acquired by Detroit Unity Temple to house the Unity Institute for Holistic Living.

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church was founded in 1936 at the Detroit home of Gust Petropoulos, 274 Nevada. The church was originally named The Greek Orthodox Church of the North Side. The first church services were held in a building at 242 Victor. In 1937, the congregation purchased a former bank at the corner of Tuxedo and Hamilton streets and converted the building into a church. It was at this time the name of the church was officially changed to St. Nicholas Hellenic Orthodox Church. The rapid growth in membership eventually resulted in the necessity to find a larger facility. In 1943, land was purchased in the Palmer Park area at 17400 Second. Architect Alexander K. Eugenides was hired to draw plans for the first phase of the building program. Construction of the lower level was completed in 1951. The building was designed by architect Harold Fisher Wand and was completed under the supervision of Louis Christopoulos, chairman of the building committee. The church was consecrated during a three-day observance, May 1-3, 1953. Designed in the Byzantine style, the interior of the church contained icons painted by George Gliatas and Constantine Yioussis. Church membership continued to grow and in 1968, a recreation facility including thirteen Sunday School classrooms was added to the structure. By the 1990s, most of the congregation had moved out to the northern suburbs. St. Nicholas purchased land in Troy when a new church facility was constructed at 760 W. Wattles. The new St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church was consecrated on May 19, 1996. The church at 17400 Second is now the home to a congregation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The Detroit Unity Association, part of the non-denominational Unity, a worldwide Christian organization, began construction of Unity Temple in 1951. The complex was built in sections over the next five years. Designed by Arnold & Fuger in the style of Art Deco classicism and constructed by Jacob Strobel & Sons, the building was dedicated in 1956 with the representatives attending from throughout the country including Lowell Fillmore, son of the founders of Unity. The complex includes a 1,500 seat sanctuary, classrooms, library, small auditorium and bookstore.

Temple Israel was founded in 1941 by Rabbi Leon Fram, the head of a group that split from the congregation of Temple Beth-El, Detroit's oldest Jewish congregation, to start a Reform congregation. Rabbi Fram had previously been an associate rabbi at Temple Beth El where he had been extremely active in liberal causes including labor and politics. The new Temple Israel began holding services at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Although liberal in beliefs, the temple was more traditional than Beth El, and began to revive ceremonies such as bar mitzvahs and the use of Hebrew in services. Temple Israel soon became one of Detroit's largest Jewish congregations with many of its members living in the Palmer Park area. By the late 1940s the

congregation was ready to build its new synagogue at 17400 Manderson Road with Louis Schostak as chairman of the Building Committee. The synagogue was a vast complex, built in stages between 1949 and 1961 and designed by architect William E. Kapp. Kapp was a well-known designer with the firm of Smith, Hinchman and Grylls in the 1920s who designed the Music Hall and Meadowbrook Hall in Rochester while with that firm. He went on his own after 1941; designs by his own firm included the Detroit Historical Museum and several public libraries. The first section of Temple Israel, dedicated in 1951, contained an auditorium, offices and social facilities. The dedication extended over four days and was attended by Mayor Albert Cobo and Governor G. Mennen Williams. By the time of completion in 1961 the complex had added a school, chapel, youth hall and library. By the 1970s, the Jewish population had begun to migrate out to the newer suburbs beyond the city's borders. In 1970-71 membership roster of the Temple Israel's Men's Club listed the majority of its members as living in Southfield. In 1979, Temple Israel left the building on Manderson Road for a new synagogue constructed in West Bloomfield. The complex is now owned by Saint Paul Life and Praise Center.

The Palmer Park district continues to be densely populated with almost all of the apartment buildings retaining a high occupancy percentage. The majority of apartment buildings and garden courts are well maintained, and renovation is planned for the apartment buildings that are vacant. Buildings such as the Covington Arms at 333 Covington and the Park Plaza Apartments at 825 Whitmore retain an atmosphere of charm and exclusiveness.

The five religious structures include a wide range of denominations from a Jewish synagogue to a Greek Orthodox church. The buildings are all located on spacious lots in the center of the district. The styles vary from the Neo-Gothic Palmer Park Presbyterian Church built in 1925 to the monumental Moderne Temple Israel built in 1951. Three of the buildings, the Neo-Georgian Fifth Church of Christ Scientist, the Byzantine St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and the Moderne Temple Unity, are all located at the Intersection of Second Avenue and Whitmore Road and present a visually striking collection of religious structures of varying styles. All five structures are in use and well-maintained by their current congregations.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

Alwyne Drive

17437 Alwyne - (c. 1925). This wide, single-story industrial building is unique to the district in terms of form, massing, and use, but its Mediterranean Revival harmonizes with the area's apartment buildings.

17481 Alwyne - (c. 1945). This Neo-Tudor building is (along with its neighbor, 17487 Alwyne) one of only two detached houses in the district.

17487 Alwyne - (c. 1945). This hip-roofed building is another of two detached houses in the district.

Covington Drive

225 Covington: Palmer Lodge - (1925; Weidmaier and Gay, architect). This Tudor Revival structure features dark red brick, an irregular footprint, and complex roofline.

303 Covington - (1963). Three-story with one story below ground, L-shaped, brick and steel, apartment building designed in the Miesian Modern style with a flat roof, exposed steel supports and expansive glass windows. The apartments open onto extended balconies that overlook a sunken garden. The building was originally built with fifteen units.

333 Covington: Covington Arms - (1953; Paul Tilds, architect). Five-story, brick and limestone trimmed, Modernistic apartment building with enclosed garage. The building was designed and built as one of Detroit's first cooperative apartment buildings with sixteen-luxury units custom designed for each individual owner. Each unit has an enclosed porch that originally had jalousie windows. A circular drive leads to the covered masonry porch entrance in front of a recessed marble wall with the name Covington Arms scripted in raised letters to the east of the aluminum and glass doors. The building has three-part, white aluminum windows that have replaced the original windows.

361 Covington: The Balmoral - (1937; Robert West, architect). Four-story, yellow and orange brick, cinder block and steel frame, Moderne apartment building. The Balmoral was built at the same time as its sister building, the Fairlane, which is located next door. Both apartment buildings were originally built with twenty-four apartments. The front façade of the Balmoral has rusticated stone on the first floor up to the water table. The main entrance is framed with a smooth, squared compound limestone door surround that encloses the original wood and glass double doors. A limestone relief featuring a stylized partial sunburst is located in the center at the top of the building. The Balmoral was the first building in the Palmer Park district to use corner casement windows. These corner windows sit on alternating bands of brick and limestone, which together with the plain wall surface accentuate the streamlined appearance of the building. The building was a stepping stone to 950 Whitmore, designed by West in 1939.

381 Covington: The Fairlane - (1937; Robert West, architect). Four-story, yellow and orange brick, cinder block and steel frame, Moderne apartment building. Built together with the Balmoral next door, the Fairlane is similar in design but simpler in detail. Although the Fairlane has typical multi-pane casement windows on the east and west façades, the casement windows of the front façade contain vertical single-panes of glass. Like the Balmoral, the front façade has rusticated stone on the first floor up to the water table, but only on the east side of the façade. The single door entrance is off center and is surrounded by a wall expanse composed of bands of brick detailing that jut out slightly from the building. A second floor balcony with a limestone framed doorway sits above the first floor entrance.

641-711 Covington: Parkway Apartments - (1948; Harry Slatkin, builder). Two-story, brick. Colonial Revival style townhouses built with 47 units. The building decoration includes porticos, pediments, shutters, multiple pane windows, rounded windows and a variety of Colonial Revival style doorways.

731 Covington: Florentine East Apartments - (c. 1925). This four-story, Tudor Revival building is clad in brick, with decorative half timbering and vergeboards in wood. A high, fenestrated basement is clad in stone, with a Gothic-arched stone surround highlighting the main entrance.

757 Covington: Florentine West Apartments - (c. 1925). This is a rectangular, four-story building in the Mediterranean Revival style.

885 Covington: Hampshire House - (1949). Four-story, L-shaped, brick apartment building. This FHA-approved project was built together with the Cambridge House, located next door, and is an excellent example of postwar housing. The building, built with 56 units, has rows of large casement windows that highlight the horizontality of the building. The main entrance is covered with a metal canopy supported by multiple metal poles.

931 Covington: Cambridge House - (1949) Four-story, L-shaped, brick apartment building. This FHA-approved project is a sister to the Hampshire House, located next door, and is almost identical in design. The building, built with 71 units, also features horizontal bands of multi-pane casement windows. The off-centered main entrance is surrounded by white marble slabs and is covered with a narrow, streamlined, aluminum canopy.

1001 Covington: Walbri Court Apartments - (1925; Albert Kahn, architect). This building was designed in the Collegiate Gothic style.

1019-1065 Covington (also 17664-17688 Manderson) - (1945; Park Homes, Inc., builder). Two-story, brick, gable-roofed Modern townhouses. This apartment complex contains two sections: 1019-1065 Covington that contains 16 units, and 17664-17688 Manderson that contains eight units. Constructed by Park Homes, Inc., the row houses are simple in design with covered porches and wood sash, multi-pane windows.

Manderson Road

17400 Manderson: Temple Israel/Saint Paul Life and Praise Center - (1949, William Kapp, architect). A monumental steel and concrete Art Moderne synagogue composed of three geometrically diverse sections that include a rotunda, Egyptian temple-inspired main entrance, auditorium, school, library and offices. The image of the Star of David can be faintly seen on the rotunda that had once displayed the emblem. It has been removed by the new congregation and replaced by a crucifix. Numerous heads of lions are visible in the copper cornice of the rotunda.

17435-17529 Manderson - (1944; Lester Satovsky, builder). A long row of two-story, brick, Colonial Revival townhouses containing nineteen units, this hip-roofed, apartment building features double-hung, multiple pane windows and covered entrances.

17535 Manderson - (1950; Ira J. Spoon, builder). Two-story, orange brick, Modern apartment building built with ten units. This symmetrical horizontally oriented building features large, multiple pane casement windows. The building entrance has a large porch that sits on a permastone base covered with a modern metal canopy. The canopy is supported by concrete formations and metal poles. The main entrance is a wood door set back and enclosed in an elaborate wood frame with patterned glass whose configuration is similar to the Saarinen-inspired entrance at 653-701 Whitmore. The main porch is flanked by two private porches with wood-framed entrances that compliment the main entrance in design.

17655 Manderson - This four-story, eclectic revival building is four stories tall and clad in yellow brick

17664 Manderson (also known as 1019-1065 Covington) - (c.1965). This broad, two-story apartment building features Colonial Revival influence, though it is much less elaborate in style than older buildings within the proposed district.

17673 Manderson - This Mediterranean Revival building bears round arches and polychromatic clay tile roof accents.

17701 Manderson: Gilbert Apartments / now Boyce Apartments - (1937; Robert West, architect). This small, brick building is Art Deco in style.

17765 Manderson: Shelbourne Apartments - (1947; Sam Satovsky, builder). A two and one-half story, yellow brick, U-shaped, garden court apartment building that exhibits a serene atmosphere with landscaped court and private porches with cloth awnings and decorative metal railings. The main entrance exhibits Moderne style elements with double wood doors set between glass block walls. Three vertical rows of rectangular windows over the main entrance light the interior lobby. The doors of the porches on both sides of the main entrance have wood-framed entrances similar in design to the porches at 17535 Manderson.

West McNichols Road

642 W. McNichols: Palmer Park Presbyterian Church/Grace Christian Methodist Episcopal Church - (1925; Lane, Davenport & Peterson, architects). A rectangular, brick, Neo-Gothic church. The front façade contains a central bay flanked by two buttress-like elements that contain the double door entrance set within a segmental arch-headed recess and a large traceried pointed-arch above. The side elevations are six bays long with one pointed-arch window in each bay. A two-story orange brick addition sits behind the church.

Merton Road

225 Merton: La Vogue Apartments - (1929; Cyril Schley, architect). The elaborate façade of this eclectic revival building is adorned with spiral columns, corbelled brickwork, and green clay tile accents.

250 Merton: Merton Apartments - (1926). This Romano-Tuscan building bears festooned stone panels.

255-265 Merton - (1951; Wiedmaier & Gay, architects). This two and one-half story, U-shaped, brick, Neo-Colonial style, garden court apartment building was originally built with eighteen units. The building has a hipped roof and decorative detailing including dentils, brackets, quoins and shutters.

275 Merton: Coronado Apartments - (1948; Weidmaier and Gay, architect). This Moorish Revival and Art Deco building is four stories high and features orange yellow brick with chevron and lozenge patterns.

325 Merton - This building, with an irregular footprint and asymmetrical façade, had Mediterranean detailing, such as clay tile roof accents.

361 Merton - This Tudor Revival-style building features decorative half-timbering and crenellated parapets.

377-395 Merton (also 17122-17142 Second) - Boulevard Terrace - (1945; Park Homes, Inc., builder). Two-story, brick, V-shaped, Colonial Revival townhouses constructed with 12 units. The building has perma-stone detailing and covered porches.

631-711 Merton: Merton Terrace - (1944) This long, two-story, brick, Neo-Classical style apartment building was built with nine sections; each section containing four units for a building total of thirty-six units. Each section has its own entrance with each doorway designed with different decorative detailing including broken pediments, flat crowns, sidelights, shutters and covered porticos. A few of the sections have perma-stone accenting the second floor. The center section is composed of perma-stone with a two-story, pedimented central portico supported by four square columns.

672-740 Merton: Palmer Park Terrace - (1943; Park Homes, Inc., builder). This long, two-story, brick, Neo-Classical style apartment building was an FHA-approved project constructed with eight sections; each section containing four units for a building total of 32 units. The sections are divided by either two-story wood pilasters or brick quoins. Each section has its own recessed entrance with matching doors with entablatures. The main section has a two-story central portico supported by four, square columns.

820 Merton: Merton House Apartments - (1962; Practical Home Builders). A two and one-half story, U-shaped, brick and cobblestone. Modern style apartment building that has covered galleries with decorative metal railings overlooking a sunken garden. The first floor gallery has an accordion-fold entry canopy supported by steel pipe columns. The building has large Miesian-inspired windows facing the sunken garden and horizontal sliding windows throughout the remainder of the building. Some units have balconies with horizontal sliding glass doors and decorative metal railings.

831-841 Merton: Blair House - (1962; Joseph Savin, architect). A two and one-half story, brick and concrete block, H-shaped, apartment building. This building, designed in the Miesian Modern style, was designed with various types of apartments ranging from efficiencies to two-story townhouses. The apartments overlooked a shaded, sunken garden in both front and rear. A roof sun deck was accessible to all tenants. Large pane glass windows are now covered with plywood.

941-1001 Merton: Palmer Court Apartments - (1949) A two and one-half story, buff brick, irregular shaped, garden court apartment building designed with thirty-two units. The building has three garden courts and numerous private balconies with decorative metal railings, some with cloth awnings. Each court has two entrances to the building that have modern brick side-walls.

1000 Merton: Merton Road Apartments - (1945; Sam Satovsky, builder). A two and one-half story, white brick, U-shaped, garden court apartment building designed with nineteen units. The building is similar in design to the Palmer Court Apartments, located across Merton Road. The building features numerous private balconies with decorative metal railings and metal awnings.

Second Avenue

17111 Second: Delmar Apartments - (1925; Harry Pelavin, builder) A four and one-half story, U-shaped, red brick, Neo-Georgian apartment building. The building sits on the northwest corner of Second and McNichols with the central courtyard facing Second and six commercial storefronts facing McNichols. The building has terra cotta detailing above the denticulated cornice and frequently surrounding windows. Masonry belt courses and banding unify the building horizontally.

17400 Second: St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church / now The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints - (1949; Harold Fisher, architect). A cruciform, buff brick, Byzantine style church. The church has an octagonal dome with a metal roof. The main body of the church has a gabled roof with Roman tile. The entrance has three open marble-lined arches with double wood doors. The tympanum of the arches display the Greek cross; the middle arch also has an inscription in Greek. The building has double arched windows with geometric patterns.

17500-17550 Second (also 387-409 Covington and 398-420 Whitmore) - (1947; Park Homes, Inc., builder). Two-story, brick, Colonial Revival townhouses. Similar in design to the Boulevard Terrace at 377-395 Merton and constructed by the same builder, this U-shaped twenty-four unit apartment building faces Covington, Second and Whitmore. Each unit has an individual entrance with some entrances featuring covered porches supported by slender wood posts while others have entablatures with broken pediment.

17505 Second: Temple Unity - (1951; Arnold & Fuger, architects). Rectangular, brick and marble clad church. The structure emphasizes the streamlined elements of the Moderne style in the vertical detailing of the main entrance facing Third and in the long, vertical windows of the auditorium. The windows of the south façade have an unusual patterned framework with heavy, square spandrels set in a fluted embrasure.

Third Avenue

17110 Third: Raleigh Apartments - (1926; Harry Pelavin, builder). Four and one-half story, red brick, Neo-Georgian style apartment building. The building sits on the northeast corner of Third and McNichols with the main entrance facing Third and three commercial storefronts facing McNichols. The masonry water table and foundation are now painted. The main entrance is composed of a single door with sidelights and transom in an elaborate applied masonry door surround with Adamesque detailing.

17450-17452 Third (also known as 761 Whitmore): Rosemor Apartments / now Metropolitan Apartments - (1948; Wiedmaier & Gay, architects). Two and one-half story, white brick, irregular shaped, garden court apartment building. This thirty-unit apartment building has two entrances that open onto the court and an entrance that opens onto Whitmore. The wood door surrounds are flat entablatures with sidelights and transom.

17524 Third: Carole Jean Apartments - (1949; Wiedmaier & Gay, architects). Four and one-half story, brick, L-shaped, Moderne style apartment building. The apartment building was built

by Harry Lichterman and named for his wife, Carole Jean. Built with 20 apartments, the building has horizontal bands of windows and corner windows separated by bands of brickwork.

Whitmore Road

300 Whitmore: Whitmore Plaza Apartments - (1928; Weidmaier and Gay, architect). This building displays Art Deco and Moorish Revival influences.

601 Whitmore (also 17524 Second): Fifth Church of Christ Scientist / now Unity Institute for Holistic Living - (1938; Derrick & Gamble, architects). This red brick, Neo-Georgian style church has a massive brick portico with three rounded arches that lead to the main entrance. Classical detailing includes doors in entablatures with broken triangular pediments and urn, long multi-paned windows with fanlights, elliptical windows and quoins. A louvered steeple rises above the main entry.

653-701 Whitmore: Slater Apartments / now Whitmore Place Apartments - (1947; Wiedmaier & Gay, architects). Two and one-half story, brick, Moderne style apartment building. This FHA-approved project was built by Harry Slatkin with twenty-nine units. Sections of the building are set back to allow for more light. The building is simply designed with horizontal stone banding and corner windows. The east and west building entrances are set back in the corners. The entrances are covered with a metal awning supported by metal poles. Three vertical rows of small pane awning windows are set in permastone located above both entrances. The center entrance is an elaborate two-story wood-framed doorway influenced by Saarinen design that contains a single off-center wood door and nine large panes of textured glass.

660 Whitmore: Manor House Apartments - (1949; Paul Tilds, architect). Four and one-half story, yellow brick Moderne-style apartment building. The most prominent feature of this massive luxury apartment building is the horizontal rows of jalousie porches. The entrance is located in the center of the building at the foot of a four-story recessed brick bay that contains three vertical rows of small wood awning windows. The glass entrance door is covered by a streamlined aluminum canopy supported by decorative aluminum grates.

700 Whitmore - This Beaux Arts-style building is four stories on a high, fenestrated basement. It is clad in red brick and bears a flat roof.

730 Whitmore - This four story Tudor Revival building features an irregular footprint and a complex roof shape clad in slate.

750 Whitmore - This Collegiate Gothic building is four stories, with a flat roof, and sits on a high, fenestrated basement. Its windows are wooden sash.

810-818 Whitmore (also 811-819 Covington): Derby Gardens - (1951; Practical Home Builders). Four two-story, brick, Moderne-style apartment buildings. These four buildings, containing thirty-two units, are constructed symmetrically around a landscaped garden court and connected by a metal breezeway that has round skylights. Architectural features include awning windows, glass block and wood-framed entrances with textured glass that open onto the court.

825 Whitmore: Park Plaza Apartments - (1944; Isadore M. Lewis, architect). Two and one-half story, yellow brick, U-shaped, garden court apartment building. This twenty-five unit apartment building has a single wood-framed entrance accessible through the landscaped

courtyard and constructed with glass block to allow natural light into the lobby. The building has corner windows and a few private porches.

843 Whitmore: Alwyne Lane Apartments - (1926). This building displays Beaux Arts details.

850 Whitmore - (1952; Isadore M. Lewis, architect). Five-story, light brick, U-shaped, forty-four unit, Moderne apartment building. The building features horizontal bands of metal casement windows. The building entrance has aluminum doors and sits in the center of the building under a heavy aluminum canopy with curved edges.

900 Whitmore - (1938; Robert West, architect). This building displays a degree of Bauhaus-influenced Modernism.

925 Whitmore - (1930s). This four-story Mediterranean Revival building features round arches and a clay tile roof.

950 Whitmore - (1930s). With metal corner casement windows and orange brickwork with horizontal string courses, this Streamline-style building is similar to 951 Whitmore, located across the street.

951 Whitmore - (1930s). String courses and metal casement windows give this four-story, orange brick apartment building a Streamline-like appearance.

980 Whitmore - (1930s). Despite a profusion of right angles, this four-story, orange brick apartment building displays a Streamline influence, with glass block sidelights at its front entrance and decorative brickwork.

951 Whitmore - (late 1920s; Saul Katz, architect).

999 Whitmore - (1937). This Streamline-style building features a unique stucco finish.

CRITERIA

The proposed historic district meets all four criteria contained in Section 25-2-2: (1) Sites, buildings, structures, or archeological sites where cultural, social, spiritual, economic, political or architectural history of the community, city, state or nation is particularly reflected or exemplified; (2) Sites, buildings, structures, or archeological sites which are identified with historic personages or with important events in community, city, state or national history; (3) Buildings or structures which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural specimen, inherently valuable as a representation of a period, style or method of construction, and (4) Notable work(s) of a master designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age.

COMPOSITION OF THE HISTORIC DESIGNATION ADVISORY BOARD

The Historic Designation Advisory Board has nine appointed members and three *ex-officio* members, all residents of Detroit. The appointed members are: Kwaku Atara, Melanie A. Bazil, Robert Cosgrove, Keith A. Dye, Zene' Frances Fogel-Gibson, Edward Francis, Calvin Jackson, Harriet Johnson and Doris Rhea. The *ex-officio* members who may be represented by members of their staff, are Director of Historical Department, the Director of the City Planning Commission, and the Director of the Planning and Development Department.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Proposed Palmer Park Apartment Buildings Historic District



— Parcel Boundary

— Proposed Historic District Boundary