

City of Detroit

CITY COUNCIL HISTORIC DESIGNATION ADVISORY BOARD

204 City-County Building
Detroit, Michigan 48226

(313) 224-3487

Proposed Russell Woods-Sullivan Historic District

Final Report

By a resolution dated November 4, 1998, the Detroit City Council charged the Historic Designation Advisory Board, a study committee, with the official study of the proposed Russell Woods-Sullivan Historic District in accordance with Chapter 25 of the 1984 Detroit City Code and the Michigan Local Historic Districts Act.

The proposed Russell Woods-Sullivan Area Historic District is located in the northwest section of the city of Detroit approximately five miles from downtown. The proposed district lies in the heart of Detroit's expressway system, located between the Jeffries, Davison, Lodge and Ford Freeways. The Russell Woods-Sullivan Area Subdivision district is primarily residential, consisting of slightly over 1000 single family houses, two-family houses, and a limited number of other multi-unit dwellings, all within a thirty-two block area. The district also contains commercial buildings along its Dexter and Davison boundaries. Located in the west end of the community is Russell Woods Park, which serves as a gathering place for many activities in the neighborhood.

Boundaries: The boundaries of the proposed district are outlined in heavy black on the attached map, and are as follows:

On the north, a line beginning at a point at the intersection of the centerline of Waverly Avenue and the centerline extended northward of the north-south alley between Livernois Avenue and Broadstreet Boulevard; thence east along the centerline of Waverly Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Broadstreet Boulevard; thence north along the centerline of Broadstreet Boulevard to its intersection with the centerline of West Davison Avenue, thence east along said centerline of West Davison Avenue to its intersection with the centerline extended northward of the north-south alley between Broadstreet Boulevard and Petoskey Avenue; thence south along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the centerline of the east-west alley between West Davison and Waverly Avenue; thence east along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the centerline of Petoskey Avenue; thence south along the centerline of Petoskey Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Waverly Avenue; thence east along the centerline of Waverly Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Holmur Avenue; thence north along centerline of Holmur Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of West Davison

Avenue; thence east along said centerline of West Davison Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Dexter Boulevard; thence south along said centerline of Dexter Boulevard to its intersection with the centerline of Waverly Avenue; thence east along said centerline of Waverly Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of the north-south alley lying between Dexter Boulevard and Wildemere Avenue;

On the east, the centerline of the north-south alley lying between Dexter Boulevard and Wildemere Avenue.

On the south, a line beginning at a point, that point being the intersection of the centerline of the north-south alley lying between Dexter Boulevard and Wildemere Avenue with the southern boundary, extended eastward and westward, of Lot 36 of Linwood Heights Subdivision (L.35, P.6); thence westerly along said southern boundary of Lot 36 to its intersection with the centerline of Dexter Boulevard; thence north along the centerline of Dexter Boulevard to its intersection with the southern boundary of the Daniel Sullivan's Dexter Blvd. #1 Subdivision (L.55, P.53); thence westerly along the southern boundary of the Daniel Sullivan's Dexter Blvd. #1 Subdivision (L.55, P.53) and continuing along the southern boundary of the Russell Woods Subdivision (L.34, P.3) to its intersection with the centerline of the north-south alley between Broadstreet Boulevard and Martindale Avenue; thence south along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the south line of Lot 336, extended east and west, of Brown and Babcock's Subdivision (L.16, P.15); thence west along said lot line as extended to its intersection with the centerline of Broadstreet Avenue; thence north along said centerline of Broadstreet Boulevard to its intersection with the south lot line of Lot 20 of Brown and Babcock's Subdivision (L.16, P.15), as extended east and west; thence west along said south line of Lot 20 to its intersection with the centerline of the north-south alley between Cascade Avenue and Broadstreet Boulevard; thence north along the centerline of said alley to its intersection with the centerline of the east-west alley lying between Cortland Avenue and Elmhurst Avenue and adjacent to the northwest corner of Lot 17 of Brown and Babcock's Subdivision (L. 16, P.15); thence west along said alley to its intersection with a line 192 feet west of the east lot line of Out Lot 8 of Joseph Yerkes Subdivision of the Northerly part of Fractional 1/4 Sec. 30, T.T.A.T. (L.3, P.38) as extended north and south; thence north along said line to its intersection with the southern boundary of the Russell Woods Subdivision (L.34, P.3); thence westerly along the southern boundary of the Russell Woods Subdivision (L.34, P.3) to its intersection with the centerline of the north-south alley lying between Livernois Avenue and Broadstreet Boulevard and immediately adjacent to the rear of the lots fronting on the east side of Livernois Avenue, and

On the west, the centerline of the north-south alley directly south of Livernois Avenue.

History: The Russell Woods - Sullivan Area consists of two subdivisions platted nine years apart by two different developers. The first, Russell Woods, included property bounded by

Livernois, Davison, Cortland and the west side of Petoskey Avenue. The property was platted in 1916 and sold to the Russell Woods Company, founded by Henry Russel and Charles H. L'Hommedieu. The second phase of development began with the property on the east side of Petoskey Avenue and extended eastward to Dexter Boulevard. This tract of land was platted in 1925, and developed as a separate area by Daniel Sullivan.

Henry Russel was a prominent corporate attorney whose professional and business career thrived along with Detroit's industrial growth and expansion. Born in Detroit in 1852, Russel attended Detroit public schools. He graduated from the University of Michigan with honors in 1873. Two years later in 1875, he received his law degree. Russel started his professional career working in the law office of Alfred Russell, one of the city's most noted attorneys. Throughout the greater part of his career Russel devoted his attention to the area of corporate law. In 1877, he was appointed assistant attorney of the Michigan Central Railroad Company by George V. N. Lothrop, then general counsel for the railroad company. In 1912, Russel was appointed vice president of the Michigan Central Railroad Company. Determined to give more time to the city's efforts to expand the rail lines, Russel resigned his partnership from the law firm of Russel, Campbell, Bulkley and Ledyard.

According to early newspaper accounts, "Mr. Russel had much to do with the making of the railroad map in Michigan, particularly in the neighborhood of Detroit." He understood that, in order for Detroit to become a center of industry, trackage had to be provided on which to conduct its transportation operations. Under his leadership, the Michigan Central Railroad began the construction of the Detroit Railroad belt line which resulted in the opening up of new manufacturing areas along several of its routes. Russel was instrumental in the development of the city's southwestern manufacturing district, which at the time was considered one of Detroit's choicest industrial locations.

Henry Russel played a primary role in the establishment of several business enterprises which had a direct bearing upon the history and development of the city and region. He served as president of the Olds Motor Company, president of the Cass Farm Company, director of the Michigan State Telephone Company, and director of the River Rouge Improvement Company. Throughout his business career, Russel acquired large tracts of farm land for future speculative purposes. In 1916, he and his former law partner, Charles H. L'Hommedieu, established the Russell Woods Company.

Daniel A. Sullivan and his brother Jeremiah were the developers of the Sullivan's Subdivision. Born in Ireland in 1843, Daniel Sullivan was brought to America when his family immigrated to New York in 1847; they settled in Detroit two years later. Although his obituary described him as a "retired farmer and real estate operator," Daniel Sullivan graduated from Detroit College with a degree in literature. He began his professional career as a clerk with the Western Union

Telegraph Company; he later entered the wholesale grocery business and was employed by the National Grocery Company. In 1916, Daniel Sullivan became a partner in the firm of Sullivan

and Driggs, which specialized in food products.

Jeremiah Sullivan was born in Detroit on the family farm located at Dexter and Davison. It appears that the family farm became the foundation of the brothers' real estate dealings in the area. According to his obituary, Jeremiah was a realtor who "spent many years operating and buying and selling farms in that section of the city."

The Russell Woods-Sullivan Area reflects Detroit suburban settlement patterns as the city boundaries continue to push in a northwest direction. While most of the houses in the Russell Woods area were built in the 1920s and 1930s, the houses in the Sullivan area were not constructed until the 1930s and 1940s. The houses in the area represent several architectural styles of the period, including Neo-Tudor, Colonial Revival, and Moderne. Many of the city's more established contractors and developers acquired lots in the area. The list of contractors who built houses in the Russell Woods and Sullivan subdivisions included Charles A. Owen, Miller Storm and Walter O. Briggs. Leslie F. Crane, president of L. F. Crane Company, purchased sixty lots in the Sullivan Subdivision, making him the largest investor in the area.

From its inception the Russell Woods-Sullivan area has been considered a desirable place to live for Detroit's middle class. Initially, Anglo and Jewish families purchased houses in the area; however, by the late-1950s many of the original residents had moved to the suburbs. African Americans began to move into the northwest section of Detroit, and into the Russell Woods-Sullivan neighborhood by the late 1950s. The area has a remarkable history which is similar to many of the early residential developments in Detroit. Located in the heart of the city, the Russell Woods-Sullivan Area continues to provide an atmosphere of peaceful spaciousness for urban residents, many of whom have made a positive impact upon our city. They include Dudley Randall, Poet Laureate of Detroit and founder of Broadside Press; Carl Owen, internationally known artist; Brazeal Dennard, composer and founder of Brazeal Dennard Chorale; and Florence Ballard, Diana Ross and Mary Wilson, former members of the "Supremes."

Physical Description: The Russell Woods/Sullivan Area consists of a tree-lined grid system of streets comprised of eight north-south streets between Cortland Avenue and West Davison intersected by four east-west streets and two major commercial thoroughfares, Dexter Boulevard and Livernois Avenue. Russell Woods Park, a rectangular city park featuring winding walkways and mature trees, is located between Old Mill, Broadstreet, Leslie and Fullerton in the western end of the neighborhood. With the exception of Broadstreet Boulevard, the residential structures in the area face the north-south streets with garages, where they exist, reached by means of a side driveway; most of the alleys are now closed. On Broadstreet Boulevard, where the street is wider and house lots are larger, houses face Broadstreet, an east-west thoroughfare. On its southern end are Winterhalter School and Broadstreet Presbyterian Church, both anchors in the community.

The residential buildings in Russell Woods are among the finest examples of middle class, builder-designed residential architecture in the City of Detroit erected between 1920 and 1949.

Their designs often combine practical, modern floor plans with an Arts and Crafts aesthetic that result in superb vernacular building types from that period. While most of the buildings are single-family residences, two-flat residences and income properties are common on Cortland, Buena Vista, Tyler and Waverly Avenue, and some multiple-unit dwellings exist on the corners of Petoskey Avenue and the southern end of Broadstreet.

The following are just a few examples from the approximately 1000 buildings within the Russell Woods-Sullivan Area:

12121 Broadstreet - Winterhalter Elementary School

Winterhalter Elementary School is located in the southwest corner of Cortland Avenue and Broadstreet. It is significant as representative of the Detroit Board of Education's school building program in the 1920's based on the recently adopted "Platoon" curriculum system. This was the first time that a municipality specifically designed a school building program to accommodate the students' curriculum and it was nationally recognized as innovative and progressive. It is named after Rear Admiral Albert Gustavus Winterhalter, Commander of the United States naval Asiatic Fleet under President Wilson. He was a Detroit native, born October 6, 1856.

The school opened its doors to students in 1922, with an enrollment of 385 students. Winterhalter functioned as a kindergarten through eighth grade school during its early years, but changed in 1929 to a K-6 school due to the opening of Tappen Intermediate School nearby. Overcrowding at Winterhalter continued intermittently, except during the Depression, through the 1950's. Through its early years and into the fifties, Winterhalter was attended by a majority of middle class, ethnically mixed Caucasian children, many being the children of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, who were either working in the auto industry or industries serving that industry or in retail industries serving the hourly wage-earner. Jewish enrollment increased steadily and peaked in the forties and fifties at 80%. By 1960, the Jewish enrollment at Winterhalter declined dramatically as Jewish families left the community *en masse*. They settled in the nearby suburbs of Southfield and Oak Park. Middle class African American families gradually replaced them in the Russell Woods/Sullivan Area. In 1970, Winterhalter was converted to a Junior High School and in recent years changed back to a PK-8.

Malcolmson & Higginbotham, Detroit's preeminent designers of schools, was the architectural firm responsible for the Jacobethan Revival design of Winterhalter School. Max Bartholomew was the contractor for its construction, completed in 1922 (Permit #20680, 7/19/21).

Malcolmson & Higginbotham was also responsible for an addition in 1924 that completed the Broadstreet elevation and added a conservatory to the original structure as well as a small "T" shaped addition behind the main structure that incorporated additional classrooms, a gymnasium and an auditorium. Wakely Kushner Associates of St. Clair Shores added a two-story middle school addition in 1971 which extended the "T" shaped plan, incorporating additional classroom space and new gymnasiums, changing the 1924 gymnasium and auditorium to a library and assembly room respectively.

The original structure and the 1924 addition are laid-up in reddish-brown American or common bond with Indiana Limestone trim. The 1971 addition is of stretcher bond veneer with limestone trim. The main or Broadstreet elevation, which rests on a raised basement with a beveled limestone belt course, is a two-story, side gabled plan with flanking parapet wall and flat-roofed wings. The central portion has parapeted gables with limestone coping. The roof line boasts Art Stone chimney pots and a clay tile roof.

The front facade of the structure is eleven bays wide. The central seven bays are separated by brick double buttresses. Those bays contain windows with limestone mullions and, on the first floor, segmentally arched tops. Between the first and second story windows are spandrels containing brick and multi-colored tile decoration. In the center bay, above the tile work, is a panel in relief which reads: "Admiral Winterhalter School". The end walls of the Broadstreet facade, facing Cortland Avenue at one end and a surface parking lot at the other, are three bays wide. The central portion is composed of a projecting wall gable with limestone Tudor-arched recessed entry with strap work and belt course in limestone. Windows framed by limestone mullions and plain limestone lintels finish the second story. Flanking this gable are multiple windows set in aluminum with continuous limestones sills, limestone belt courses surmounted by a parapet well with corbeled brick framed in limestone - all topped with limestone coping. Limestone quoins complete each corner of these elevations. In the east end, set in the tudor arch, is a relief-carved date stone which reads "A.D. 1921".

The rear elevation of the Broadstreet structure continues the theme of the main and side elevations with groups of multiple windows set in aluminum, wall quoins, belt coursing sills, lintels and quoining in limestone. The condition of the building is excellent. All windows have been replaced with dark aluminum frames and sash.

The modern 1971 one- and two-story addition, built on a concrete slab, provides eleven more class rooms and special purpose rooms. It is irregular in plan and is generally characterized by unadorned parapeted brick veneer stretcher courses of brick with a recessed entrance and windows with limestone sills, lintels and coping.

12804 Broadstreet - Louis LaMed House

Benjamin Koloff, a builder, was issued permit #26057 on Sept. 16, 1935 to build this 38' x 36' residence for Louis LaMed at an estimated construction cost of \$8,000. La Med, a noted businessman and Jewish philanthropist, founded the Louis LaMed Foundation in 1940 to stimulate creativity in Hebrew and Yiddish. In 1954, he established a professorship in Jewish Studies at Wayne State University. LaMed sold the house in the 1940's.

The LaMed house is a substantial two-story, Neo-Norman style brick building with a rough stone entrance turret. It is characterized by a second floor with elements that jut up into the hipped roof, among them the conical roof of the angled entrance turret and the dormers of the flanking sections and side elevations. Asymmetrical in massing, window arrangement, and plan, the house is approached by a winding front walkway. In plan, the house is basically a side-facing

"L" with the three-sided turret occupying the angle where the legs of the "L" join. Windows are multi-paned. The three-sided bay to the right of the entrance contains three elongated windows on its front face and one on each of its sides.

3760-62 Buena Vista - Ross House

Each of the Supremes, Diana Ross, Florence Ballard, and Mary Wilson, bought a \$35,000 house for her family on Buena Vista in the Russell Woods-Sullivan Area in 1965. The Ross family house, at 3760-62 Buena Vista, is a two-family flat built in 1940 (permit #26640, 11/8/39) at an estimated cost of \$12,000. The two-story building is basically square with a hipped roof. The two-story entrance bay with raised brick quoins projects outward and is crowned by a gable rising above the roof eaves. An elaborate chimney rises above the roof line on the east. The house is fenestrated with multi-paned metal casement windows.

Before it was associated with the famous singer, the house was owned by Yetta Aiken, wife of Samuel Aiken, a builder.

4283 Cortland - James House

This two-story residence on Cortland has one of the few full stone front facades in the Russell Woods neighborhood. After the Russell Woods Company sold the property to Russell and Clare James, the house was built in 1927 by the Miller-Storm Company (permit #11/30/27) at an estimated construction cost of \$7,500. Miller-Storm Company, a local construction company with offices on nearby Livernois Avenue, built a number of dwellings in this neighborhood, often in the Neo-Tudor vernacular style. The James sold the house in 1934.

The James House is a vernacular Neo-Tudor moderately scaled dwelling with characteristic multiple steep peaked gables. The entire front facade is clad in a veneer of coursed stone. An arched doorway framed by brick voussoirs stands prominently under the foremost gable. A large stone chimney with chimney pots juts out above the gabled roof line. Long, narrow multi-pane casement windows are arranged in groups to the left of the entrance. The side elevations are not as elaborate as the front; the first floor is clad in natural brick veneer and the second floor is clapboard.

12246 Dexter - Dime Savings Bank

This building, erected in 1926, was one of about a dozen branch offices of the Dime Savings Bank. The Dime Savings Bank, chartered May 1, 1884, absorbed the Merchants National Bank to become the Bank of Michigan in 1929. In January, 1930 it was taken over by the Detroit Bankers Company. This building is significant as an example of a local branch bank that served a growing community at a time of expansion and then crisis in the Michigan and national economy, and originally housed the banking facility and five offices. Permit #17771, issued on September 20, 1926, listed its estimated cost of construction as \$50,000. A dentist, a drug store, a physician and a Jewish Folk School occupied other space in the building by 1939. Now vacant, the building was last occupied by the Universal House of Prayer.

Two stories in height, the brick and stone Dime Savings Bank building is on the corner of Cortland Avenue and Dexter Boulevard. It has a corner entrance; above the large rectangular entry is a lintel and sculpted shield. A secondary door is located to the south next to a single classical pilaster. Most of the large rectangular storefront windows are boarded.

12305 Dexter - Mogen Abraham Congregation, Yeshivah Beth Yehuda

Alexander Kohner, Detroit architect with the firm of Kohner & Payne, designed this building in 1954 for the Mogen Abraham Congregation, which shared it with Yeshivah Beth Yehuda until 1964 when it was purchased by the Detroit Public Schools. Today it is home to the Dexter Career Center. The building was built at an estimated cost of \$125,000 in 1954 (permit #25755, 3/9/54).

Architecturally, the building is an asymmetrical, single story two part structure of buff colored brick-faced cinder block with an L-shaped plan and flat roofs. It occupies a corner lot, bounded closely on three sides by streets and an alley. The fourth side is attached to a larger building by an enclosed corridor. The two street facades have Art Moderne-style elements, including smooth-faced tan brick cladding between two raised stone wrap-around belt courses in the smaller section. The larger section of the building has two sets of three tall vertical openings filled with cinder block, with a single stone sill running along the facade above a masonry foundation. The sets are separated by narrow horizontal openings. The main entryway with double doors is recessed with a low stoop in front and a flat cantilevered roof overhang.

12837 Dexter - Congregation Beth Shmuel

This property is one that reflects the presence and culture of the Jewish population in the Russell Woods-Sullivan area. The Congregation Beth Shmuel was first organized in 1926. Rabbi Yoseph Ben-Zion Rabinowitz came from the Eastern European town of Berezo to Baltimore, Maryland to conduct High Holy Day services in that year. The Jews of Detroit convinced the Rabbi to form a congregation, and the first services were conducted in a rented hall above a store at 8915 Twelfth Street. In 1932 the congregation bought a house at 1736 Blaine, and in 1948 it built a new synagogue at 12837 Dexter Boulevard. Built at an estimated cost of \$73,500 (permit #6016, 10/3/47), the building, measuring 84' x 92', had seven hundred seats sufficient for almost all of its 400 families. It had a library of nearly 3,000 volumes, a modern mikveh (ritual bath) and a social hall. The congregation remained at this location until 1959, when the congregation Beth Shmuel disbanded and Rabbi Rabinowitz moved to Israel where he formed a new congregation of the same name. The building was sold in 1959 to the Congregation Dovid Ben Nuchim, which remained there until 1965. Today, the building belongs to the Greater New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church.

The building itself is a one story poured concrete and concrete block structure covered in buff-colored brick with cast stone sills, coping, and architrave. It is asymmetrical in plan, with a central entrance composed of four doors. The area to the right of the main entrance door is a semi-circular volume that curves around the corner; incised in a stone band encircling this section is the Commandment, *Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor As Thy Self*. The roof of the

building is flat, and multi-light windows are throughout the facade.

4000 Fullerton- Usher House

Morris Usher, a "driver", was the first owner of this Art Moderne style house. He was issued permit #53801 on February 4, 1941 for its construction at an estimated cost of \$10,000. It is a large house, measuring 34'6" x 43', with an attached garage on the side street, an unusual feature for the neighborhood. Faced in yellowish-brown brick with a low hip roof, the Usher house is the best representation of the Moderne style in Russell Woods, featuring the characteristic corner windows and metal casements set flush to the walls, the round volume of the left bay juxtaposed with the main block of the house, and the narrow simple columns. Glass block is used to fill openings in the curved balcony projection.

4851 Fullerton - Topolewski House

The Topolewski House represents a modest vernacular Neo-Tudor style common to several Detroit middle-class neighborhoods that developed in the 1920s. It has a complex arrangement of roof shapes - the jerkin-headed gabled porch roof, the steep full-story gable over the right half of the facade that extends out from a shallow hipped roof, and the main hipped roof of the house. Windows are arranged in groupings of one to four, and most are of the double-hung sash variety. This particular house is brick, with a small section of half-timbered stucco at second story level behind the steeply peaked gable of the right section of the house.

Only one family has lived in this house since builder Solomon L. Trigg sold it to Richard V. Topolewski (1892-1960) in 1928. Trigg was a Russian-born engineer and builder who also built houses in the historic Palmer Woods area of Detroit. Katherine L. and Richard V. Topolewski, of Polish descent, had seven sons and one daughter who grew up in the house. After working for Federal Screw Works through the 1920s, Topolewski founded the Top Screw and Nut Company in 1933 and sold auto parts to Chrysler Corporation. After World War II, he co-owned Popular and Special Nut Company in Ferndale with his sons. His son James still lives in the house today.

4300 Glendale - Webster House

Many handsome, good quality, small-scale wooden buildings were erected on Glendale, distinguishing it from the other streets in the Russell Woods-Sullivan Area. Built in 1925-26 by the C.E. Reichle Co. of 8751 Grand River Avenue, a real estate company, the building at 4300 Glendale was first owned by Willard J. Webster, a dry cleaner (permit #32675, 4/5/24). As soon as 1926 it was sold to Victor Wise of Wise Tire and Battery Service, and then, in 1941, it was sold to George Edwards, director of the Detroit City Housing Commission. Rabbi Jacob Brown of the Yeshiva Beth Yehuda Congregation purchased the house in 1956. It has had several owners since.

The exterior siding of this house is of painted wood shingles in an alternating uneven pattern. The two-story residence is asymmetrical in arrangement. It features a steeply pitched asphalt covered jerkin head roof. A single end-wall chimney is located on the west elevation. The front entrance is arched and located to the left of four closely grouped twelve-over twelve leaded glass

windows. Three second story facade window are six-over-six double hung sash windows, spaced closely together. Painted decorative wood shutters occupy the second story facade windows. The driveway entrance is canopied by a small gabled roof; the detached garage at the rear of the lot also has a jerkin head roof.

4340 Glendale - Hoffmann House

This one and one-half story bungalow with side gable roof features wood shingle cladding, a front facade chimney of coursed ashlar with substantial clay chimney pots, and an arched entry in a projecting gabled section. The curved pedimental porch hood and "small cottage look" in general are late Arts and Crafts in character. The detached garage is designed in a similar manner. William A. Hoffmann, a realtor, and his wife Wilhelmina owned the house from 1926 until the 1940s, when they sold it to Bert Ruby, a wrestling promoter, and his wife Irene, after which there were several further owners. (Permit #70422, 7/31/25)

4096 Leslie - Mandell House

Located in Sullivan's Dexter Boulevard Subdivision, the Neo-Tudor house at 4096 Leslie was built in 1939 (permit #6303, 10/25/38) at an estimated cost of \$13,000, for Bella Mandell, wife of Charles H. Mandell of the Eagle Dairy Products Company. It is a substantial two-and-one-half-story brick house on a corner lot. Characteristic of Neo-Tudor domestic architecture is the pattered brickwork, here seen as infill in timbering in the roof slope extending from the frontal gable over the entrance, the half-timbered and stuccoed gables, elongated casement windows arranged in groups, and oriel and box windows.

12617 Old Mill Place - Schumaker House

Edward Schumaker, a locomotive engineer, was the first owner of the house at 12617 Old Mill Place, built in 1928 at an estimated cost of \$10,500. It is a two-story, multi-colored brick veneer single-family dwelling with stone trim and decorative brick herringbone patterning. Openings are filled with casement windows and the stone entry surround bears a carved keystone. The house has a hip roof with a two-story gable over the front entrance that extends out over the side driveway, creating an archway leading to the garage at the rear of the lot. The garage was designed to accord with the house.

13137-41 Petoskey - 4203-05 Tyler

This building is one of only a handful of buildings containing more than two housing units in the Russell Woods/Sullivan neighborhood. It was built by John St. John, a building contractor, who, with his wife Effie, acquired the property in 1928. He was issued permit #43562 on May 1, 1928 for the construction of this five-unit terrace building for an estimated construction cost of \$22,000. The St. Johns resided in one of the units from 1934 to 1938. The Briggs Development company purchased the property in 1938, and it has had further owners since. This five-unit brick terrace has a twin one block south 4203-05 Buena Vista and 12835-39-41 Petoskey.

Both are two stories tall in a Lombard Italian Renaissance Revival style. The brick is multi-colored, laid-up in stretcher bond with random projecting bricks. The subject building consists of

two large units fronting on the east-west street, Tyler Avenue, and entered through a large one story projecting arcaded porch. The arches are carried on barley-twist masonry columns with composite capitals of an Early Christian character. Square brick piers carry the arches at the corners. Over the outer arches of the front elevation are located two masonry rondels. Windows flanking the portico are of the multi-paned, metal casement variety. A large arched french door opens onto a balconet in the Petoskey elevation of this front block, and a tall chimney projects from the relatively shallow hipped roof that covers these two frontal units.

The side, or Petoskey Avenue, elevation is much simpler in its stylistic detail. It has three units with separate entrances; the two closest to the corner are arched. The fenestration is similar to that of the front, or Tyler, elevation, and a separate hipped roof covers the three side units

3761 Sturtevant - Waterfall House

This asymmetrical, picturesque house is identical to the residence at 3765 Fullerton; both were built by Edward J. Mason, a builder. It is a two-story rough brick and coursed stone French Colonial/Norman Revival house which is square in plan with a side-facing gable roof and side chimney; the end wall of the gable is clad in horizontal siding. The off-center entrance is through a diminutive stone tower capped with a conical roof with flared eaves and narrow stepped windows of stained glass in diamond muntins. A second story multi-faceted roofed oriel window containing three double hung sash windows rests over the horizontal grouping of five leaded glass casement windows. The right corner of the front facade has a small buttress, a decorative motif that contributes to its picturesque, medieval character.

Thornton E. Waterfall, vice President of the Mathews Company, and his wife, Mary, were the first owners of the house (permit #65834, Sept. 25, 1925), residing in it between 1930 and 1937. It was subsequently owned by Eugene H. Laster and his wife Bessie; he was vice president/treasure of Natural Lighting Company, electrical contractors, and later owner of Lastar Electric Company. From the 1960s until 1995, Melvin D. Webb, a representative of the International UAW-CIO, and his wife Ollie owned the house.

4020 Sturtevant - Siegel House

This two-story building is similar to several others on this block that exhibit exquisite leaded and stained glass in a variety of window arrangements. A multitude of roof shapes, surface planes, and materials—particularly multi-colored patterned brick and stone—add to the interest and complexity of the design of these houses. At 4020 Sturtevant, a stained glass rosette window is located in the center gable, while an arched window is located on the left gable. Other interesting features of this house, as well as several others on this street, are the iron awning frame located on the front porch and the stone corner buttress walls.

Max Schwartz, charter member of the Metropolitan Builders Association of Detroit and a member of the National Association of Builders, built this house in 1936 at an estimated cost of \$10,000 (permit #38226, 8/26/36). In 1937, the house was sold to Abraham and Ester Siegel, who lived there until 1952. Mr. Siegel was president of Siegel Iron & Metal Company,

Incorporated, which scrapped most of the famous steamers of the Detroit and Cleveland Navigation Company.

4891 Sturtevant - King House

This building, constructed in 1926 at an estimated cost of \$14,000 under permit #2278 issued to Thomas King, is unusual in the neighborhood for its Mediterranean Revival style. Its exterior walls are yellow stucco over cinder block, and a red asphalt shingle roof now covers the intersecting gabled roof. The entrance section is one-story tall with a side-facing gable while, to its right, the rest of the house is two stories. Decorative features in the Mediterranean style include the round arched arcade with French doors separated by spiral columns, the tile over the arcaded area, and the arched front door. Deeply set narrow casement windows also contribute to the style. The estimated cost of construction of this 32'x41' single family residence was \$14,000, substantially higher than others on Sturtevant. Thomas King was president and vice-president of the Thomas King Company, a plastering contractor.

3711 Tyler (13139 Dexter Blvd.) - El Morada Apartments

This building is one of the few well-maintained examples of Spanish/Moorish Eclectic apartment buildings in Detroit. The style flourished in the 1920s in many large cities in the United States and represents the romanticism and prosperity of this decade in Detroit. It is the only large-scale apartment building in the Russell Woods/Sullivan neighborhood, a community which reflects Detroit development patterns from 1916 to 1949. The name, "El Morada", is Spanish for "the mansion".

El Morada Apartments was erected under permit #44492 issued to builder and owner Edward J. Mason on May 17, 1928. It is a four story building with twenty-nine apartments and four stores, built at a cost of \$65,000. El Morada was first occupied in 1929. Although no architect is listed on the permit, the building is similar in form and detail to similar apartments designed by the Detroit architectural firm of Wiedmaier and Gay in the late 1920s. Mason sold the building once it was completed to Harry and Helen Farbstein. Helen Farbstein was vice-president of Wineman Realty Company; they and a subsequent owner lost the property to foreclosure in the 1930s. Dorothy Kovan, wife of Samuel C. Kovan, an attorney with Abstract Title Guaranty Co., owned the property for thirty-seven years, and it has had two owners since.

The tenant make-up of El Morada is reflective of the population shifts in Detroit in the twentieth century. In the early years, residents were mostly single men and women and married couples, including Wallace W. and Lillian Cooper, who owned the Wallace Cooper Drug Store at 13141 Dexter, located in the building. In addition to Wallace Drugs, two other shops in the building in the 1930s were Julius Weisman Meats and Charles Ketterer Cleaners at 13137 and 13139 Dexter, respectively. During the 1940s and 50s, many of the residents were Jewish, mirroring the ethnic make-up of the adjacent Sullivan Area neighborhood. During the 1960s, when many Jewish families in the Sullivan Area relocated to the suburbs, so too a number of Jewish residents of the El Morada. In the 1970s, students appear in the city directories along with elderly Jewish retirees and others. They were gradually replaced with African Americans.

The overall dimensions of the El Morada are 100' long x 68' wide x 58' high for a total of 214,000 cubic feet. The building is four stories tall with a raised basement. Its footprint is a U-plan. The walls of the building are common bond brick. The brick on the northeast and northwest elevations is of a distinctive orange-red hue in varying shades of dark and light. The brick on the south elevation is a standard red-brown, and on the back in the courtyard is buff color. Detailing includes corbeled rounded blind arches in the corner towers and projecting bays. There are corbeled lancet arches over some windows, and at the roof line a parapet wall adds to the profile of the building with its variety of treatments, including curvilinear Mission style, crenelation and gables. Cement and tile decorative vents and corbeled ledges of rustic stone randomly dot the walls. Over the door of the main entrance is a banner of concrete inscribed with the building's name, "El Morada". The storefronts are concrete with Mission-style round arch indentations over the window bays for signage. The short wall base at the bottom of the display window bays is of decorative tile in muted natural tones of green and gold, contributing an Arts and Crafts look, with an occasional light colored tile with a Spanish motif. Double-hung sash windows, organized by floor, were replaced in the 1980s with dark aluminum sash.

4310 Waverly Avenue - McCoy House

This Neo-Dutch Colonial was constructed in 1924 by the Brownwell Corporation for Walter L. McCoy, a manager at Capper & Capper, a mens clothing store, for an estimated cost of \$3,300 (#50399, 10/10/24). Since the early 1930s many owners and renters have occupied the property. One-and-a-half-stories tall, this single-family frame structure features a side-facing gambrel roof with a broad shed dormer containing two pairs of double-hung six over one sash windows extending from the top slope of the frontal ridge of the gambrel. The first floor is sided with wide clapboard; the second is shingled. The semi-circular hood above the front door springs from craftsmen-style brackets. To its left is a grouping of three six-over-one double-hung sash windows.

Criteria: The proposed historic district would appear to meet two of the criteria contained in Chapter 25: Section 25-1-1: Sites, building, 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. Section 25-2-2: Sites, buildings, structures, or archeological sites which are identified with historic personages or with important events in community, city, state or national history.

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: Russell L. Baltimore, Melanie A. Bazil, Gordon P. Bugbee, Beulah Croxford, De Witt Dykes, Lucile Cruz Gajec, Marie M. Gardner, Calvin Jackson, and Florence (Peggy) LaRose. The ex-officio members, who are frequently represented by members of their staff are: Maud Lyon; the Director of the City Planning Commission, Marsha Bruhn; and the Director of the Planning and Development Department, Paul Bernard.

RECOMMENDATION: The Historic Designation Advisory Board recommends that City Council adopt an ordinance of designation for the proposed historic district, with the design treatment level of "conservation." A draft ordinance is attached for City Council's consideration.

Bibliography

- Arnold, Amy, Bund, Salley, and Schulte, Matthew, *Historic American Building Survey, El Morada Apartments, 3711 Tyler St., Detroit, Michigan*, Eastern Michigan University Graduate Historic Preservation Program, 1996. (Complete report available in the Historic Designation Advisory Board offices).
- Bowyer, John, Paquette, John, and Richards, Heather, *Historic American Building Survey, Winterhalter School (Detroit Public School)*, Eastern Michigan University Graduate Historic Preservation Program, 1996. (Complete report available in the Historic Designation Advisory Board offices).
- City of Detroit, Building & Safety Engineering Department, Building Permits.
- Eastern Michigan University, *Russell Woods/Sullivan Area*, Phase I, Phase II, Phase III, prepared as part of the "Documenting Historic Structures Course, Ted Ligibel, Project Director, EMU, 1996, 1997, 1998.
- Parks, Thomas A. Parks, Homes of Distinction, Detroit, nd.
- "Success in Eight Easy Lessons: the Supremes One Year Later," Detroit Free Press, Jan. 30, 1966.

Proposed Russell Woods - Sullivan Area

Historic District

(boundaries outlined in heavy black)

1"=400'

