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THE PRESERVATION OF THE CHESTERFIELD HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD

By

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A PLAN B PAPER

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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School of Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture

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PLAN B ADVISOR: PROFESSOR PAUL NOLL

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY

City neighborhoods exist in a variety of economic, social, geographic and physical compositions. They may be defined to include the open spaces, the systems of streets, sidewalks and other public right of ways, various community facilities, the buildings, and most importantly, the people. As neighborhoods are never static, uncertainty must be recognized as changes in land use and in-migration may alter the character of the area.

Over its life time, nearly every neighborhood experiences change. Neighborhoods have been characterized as having a life cycle of identifiable stages of decline. This cycle can be categorized into five stages: 1) healthy, viable neighborhoods; 2) incipient decline; 3) already declining; 4) accelerated decline; 5) abandonment. It is recognized that even declining neighborhoods have pockets of strengths that can be readily identified and expanded to create a self-managing neighborhood with normal investment and reinvestment patterns. With the cooperation of neighborhood residents, along with local government officials, these special strengths and resources can be identified to aid in restoring the declining neighborhoods.

By using a local neighborhood as an example of this scenario, this paper will identify the major features and problems associated with neighborhood decline and suggest and evaluate a solution to aid in its preservation.

BACKGROUND

One of the most difficult problems facing inner cities has been the task of maintaining both decent homes and neighborhoods for its residents. Ever since New York City passed its first Tenement House Law in 1887, communities have been actively implementing programs and laws designed to alleviate the negative externalities which affect housing and neighborhoods.

During the 1950's and 1960's governmental policy for urban housing and neighborhood dealing was to clear designated areas and start over again. The Housing Act of 1949, whose goal was to provide a decent home for every American, allowed the federal government to pay up to two thirds of the project's cost to acquire land and to clear and prepare the site. As a result, the architectural integrity of the structures and, as a result, the cohesiveness of the neighborhoods were disregarded. As urban renewal projects removed the historical areas of the inner cities and attempted to provide for a more attractive environment, whether these projects were deemed a success or a failure, they often accomplished one thing for certain: The removal of a portion of the history and some of the finest architectural examples from the community. However,

Today the emphasis is on public participation and rehabilitation. It is recognized that neighborhood dealing is a slow and longer process that can be arrested and the neighborhoods stabilized with appropriate intervention.

However, public participation may require identifying the real program for the particular neighborhood now in place, evaluating the subjective perceptions of the residents and identifying their real problems and needs which exist. But even this guarantee cannot, but it does allow the planner to identify and address the real issues confronting the neighborhood.

PURPOSE

To fully understand the current and features that exist in a changing neighborhood, a basic knowledge of the different components, and how these components interline, or have an impact upon each other, must be identified and understood.

The primary objective of this report is to examine each neighborhood by analyzing the historical, physical and social characteristics that affect it. Once these characteristics are identified, a preservation technique will be recommended that meets the needs of the neighborhood. The neighborhood chosen for study is Dexter-Field Hills located in East Lansing.

Research will be conducted by the following methods:

- 1) Visiting the site to make observations concerning the physical make up of the area.
- 2) Interviewing local officials, architects, and neighborhood residents.
- 3) Reviewing governmental data such as census and economic data.

to their knowledge gained through textbooks, magazines and other available references.

ORGANIZATION

Following the introduction, this report will be divided into four sections. They consist of the following:

Background, which will include, the analysis the neighborhood situation and current conditions.

Description of Problems - an identification of the specific problems that were brought forth in the one background chapter.

Alternative Actions - a listing and description of alternatives to correct the problems identified.

Recommendation - a study of the solution which best fits the neighborhood's needs.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

Planners have long placed great emphasis on the importance of collecting data for the purpose of determining the existing conditions and the past and future trends of land use development. It is critical to have a thorough understanding of how an area has evolved and what currently exists before any major decisions are made to influence public policy.

This chapter will outline some of the key elements that make up the Chesterfield Hills subdivision. Two major types of information will be identified: quantifiable data, which can be used in technical analysis, and more subjective data, which will be used to verbally detail some of the neighborhood characteristics. There will be particular attention paid to the housing units and their existing conditions. Also presented will be a brief synopsis describing the setting of the neighborhood.

SETTING

Due to the strong emphasis on the local schools, neighborhoods over the years in East Lansing have become distinguished by the names of their elementary schools which serve them. Until recently, the Central Elementary School met the educational needs of a population located in the heart of East Lansing which contains the city's oldest subdivision platted in 1887. The school building was built in 1911, with alterations and expansions subsequently added at later dates. In 1984, to cut back on costs, the East Lansing Board of Education closed the school.

The Central neighborhood is defined as being wedged between Michigan and Grand River Avenues and extending westward to the East Lansing city limits. It is bisected by Harrison Road and is anchored by the Central School building located in the eastern most portion of the neighborhood. The major subdivisions are the Delta Triangle, Chesterfield Hills, and Remington. The subdivision of interest for this report is Chesterfield Hills.

The adjacent subdivisions will only be of concern insofar as they impact on Chesterfield Hills.

Chesterfield Hills is located west of Harrison Road, between Michigan and Grand River Avenue. Surrounding the subdivision are a variety of land uses which may affect the neighborhood both positively and negatively. To the west of Chesterfield Hills are the Oakley and Oak Ridge subdivisions which contain detached single family residential dwellings. South of Michigan Avenue is a complex of dormitories which houses M.B.U. undergraduate students. Along Harrison Road are restaurants, taverns, small commercial establishments, and detached single family residential dwellings. North of Grand River Avenue is the Glencairn neighborhood which contains detached single family residential dwellings.

Developed in separate phases, Chesterfield Hills I (the southern portion) was platted in 1916 and Chesterfield II (the northern portion) was platted in 1927. (See maps I and II). This subdivision represented East Lansing's first break from rectangular lots and straight streets since it was designed to complement the existing contours of the land. Together the plattings covered 33.04 acres and contained 161 lots and 112 houses. It is characterized by a tortuous street layout, intersection islands, rolling hills, large mature trees and six street lights in total. A small neighborhood park, the size of three lots, is situated in the middle of the subdivision.

ZONING

With the exception of the neighborhood park, Chesterfield Hills is zoned "RM-2" which is a medium density, single-family residential district. For this zoning district the permitted uses are single-family residential, retail, private and parochial schools and public parks. This low performing zone exists in a cluster located in the middle of the neighborhood and is not used for parking in the southeast corner of the subdivision on Michigan Avenue.

The areas to the north and west are also zoned "RM-2". South of Chesterfield Hills, across Michigan Avenue, is zoned University District. East of the neighborhood, along Harrison Road and further into the Delta Triangle, is zoned "B-2" and "RM-32".

"B-2", which is Retail Sales District, permits shops, service centers, restaurants, general offices, hotels, etc.

"RM-32", which is High Density Multiple Family Residential District, permits single and two-family dwellings and multiple dwellings containing four units or less. Dwellings containing five units or more are also permitted, but are subject to site

7120

40.2-

CITY OF EAST LANSING,

INGHAM COUNTY,

MICHIGAN

Scale 1 in = 100 ft.

Colman and Harding
Construction Engrs.
506 Barlow Bldg.
Detroit.
Blaine T. Linn
5/24/1923

above plat and sub-
sion is hereby subjected
to future agreements
concerning same shall
be deemed by these pro-
prietors hereto described
that quarter and
and, and the heirs, executors
administrators and as-
sents of them to wit:
of the proprietors
grant to and for
use of the public on
the right of way
of the near right (B)
of lots 239 to 243 and
245 inclusive the
lot (B) east of lots
243, 244 to 251, 252 to 259,
260 to 266, 266 to 276 to
inclusive and the
lot (B) east of lots
276 to 284 285 and 289,
290 to 299, 300 to 309
each line above on
plat for the purpose
of installing main lines
for remaining or placing
meters, or for telegraph,
high electric light or
power, or things usually
or installed in a
alley, with the right
to use the space at any
time to and over said
of land for the use
above set forth.

Said proprietors for
1871. Their heirs
further agree
kind or dis-
whatsoever (except
necessary fences or
lines dividing said lots)
never be built or placed
said strip or any
there of, so that
strip shall be for
any of access for
the purpose

Said proprietors in
this plat agree
to the easement
indeed the same upon
loss of the record of
plat for the purpose
giving public notice to
subsequent purchasers
for assistance of the

[illegible]

Office of Mc County Treasurer, Ingham County, Michigan.
I hereby certify that there are no tax liens or titles
held by the State on the land hereinafter described, and
that there are no tax liens or titles held by individual
on said lands for the five years preceding the 1st of
Jan 1919, and that the taxes for
said period of five years are paid, as shown by
the records of this office.

*This certificate does not apply to taxes, if any, now or
of collection by Township, City or Village collecting a*

Friday A. Schreyer
This plot was approved on the first day of J.

L. Bonclerth, Judge
of the Superior County

Frieda A. Schmidt

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct reproduction of the plat recorded in this office of the Registrar of Deeds, Michigan County, Michigan. Thos. Smith, Reg. Registrar of Deeds, Michigan County, Michigan.

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That _____
 of the County of _____ and State of _____ has granted the land
 embraced in the annexed plat to be to _____
 to be known as: _____
 County, Mo. and that the persons and heirs as shown on and that
 are hereby designated to the use of the project.
 Witness my hand and seal this _____ day of _____
 A. D. 19____
 Agent and Clerk in the Presence of _____

3. at the plot herein plotted is a corner one and has four corner markers, consisting of iron pins one inch in diameter and a chain is also long have been placed in the ground at 100 feet intervals from "O" as thereon shown at all angles in the corners of the land plotted, and at all intersections of streets or streets and alleys.

Blaine T. Child

This plan was approved by the City Council
Ordinance, 1934-22, Council, which at a meeting held, 11/24/29
..... 22 BA Faurne
City Council

Case of Deborah [initials]
On this 2nd day of February 1872 before me, a
Notary Public in and for the County of DeKalb, State of Georgia, appeared the above
named Deborah [initials] and Deborah [initials] his wife
to me to be the persons who executed the above Declaration,
and acknowledge the same to be their free act and deed.
[initials] and [initials] and both of them

New house construction gained momentum after the war ended. In 1957, a period of about ten years, slightly over 70 post World War II houses were erected. The majority of these houses were built around the turn of the decade. These houses were scattered evenly on the remaining parcels of land located in both portions of the neighborhood. Quite often, the remaining parcels of land were in groups of two to four lots. Since this time no construction of new houses has occurred, only alterations and additions have been made to the existing ones.

Size of Houses

Several observations can be made regarding the sizes of the houses. The aggregate totals for the houses classified as small (under 1400 square feet), medium (1400 to 1800 square feet), and large (1800 square feet and more) is quite balanced. (See table 3). In other words, no single size category was the most popular for home builders as a variety of sizes are evident. Spatially however, a grouping of sizes does exist, as the locale of the different size houses is ascertainable. (See map 4). The periphery, consisting of Grand River and Michigan Avenues and Harrison Road attracts smaller houses, while the larger houses were built mostly in the interior blocks of the neighborhood.

Lots which face Grand River and Michigan Avenues, and are adjacent to the development along Harrison Road, generally contain smaller houses. This pattern is stronger along Grand River Avenue and in the northern portion of the strip parallel to Harrison Road than along Michigan Avenue. This may partially be explained by the historical development of the neighborhood. A large number of houses along Michigan Avenue were built early when traffic along the major streets did not pose an inconvenience. The houses along Grand River Avenue and near Harrison Road were built during the latter part of the development process, at a time when automobile travel was more common, thus posing a greater threat of noise and safety. As a result, these areas became undesirable and attracted those who were only willing or able to build smaller houses.

Moderate sized houses are scattered throughout, with no area possessing a majority of them.

Large houses are found primarily in the interior portions of the neighborhood. There are slightly more larger houses in the southern portion of the neighborhood than the northern, but in both areas many large houses are situated on double lots. Also, in the southern portion, large houses tend to be clustered in groups, while in the northern part they are generally individually scattered throughout.

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02

03

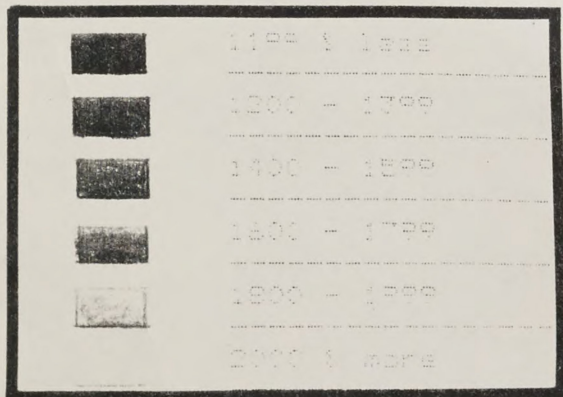
SIZE OF UNITS



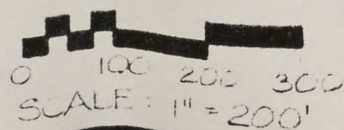
MICHIGAN AVENUE

BRODY COMPLEX

SIZE - (SQ. FT.)



CHESTERFIELD HILLS



plan approval.

DATES OF CONSTRUCTION, SIZES AND ASSESSED VALUES

Data relating the dates of construction, size and assessed value of the houses was obtained from the Div. of East Landings' Assessment Office. The assessments were done in 1934, with no adjustments made to alter the assessed value which has, however, occurred since then.

Dates of Construction

Dates of construction of the houses range from 1917 to 1937. (See Table I). Although the earliest houses were built exclusively in the southern portion of the neighborhood, the overall development pattern is generally evenly distributed throughout. (See map C).

After the southern portion of the neighborhood was platted in 1912, the construction of houses began. A total of 22 houses were built by 1920. The spatial distribution of these early houses reveals a scattered pattern of development, with no specific location or size of site being preferable.

During the 1920's the development in the neighborhood went back with the character of the roaring 20's. New house construction escalated after the northern half of Chesterfield Hills was platted in 1922, nearly doubling the area available for development. A total of 34 houses were built in the first half of the 1920's and 28 houses were built in the second half. The spatial distribution during this time shows a scattered and equal pattern of development between the two phases. The only two areas that indicate a lack of desirability are: 1) the line on Grand River Avenue that are not close to a street leading into the subdivision, and 2) the cluster of lots near the Grand River and Harrison Road intersection. However, even these two areas show increased development.

The Great Depression causes a dramatic decrease in construction during the first half of the 1930's. New house construction dropped from 28 in the last half of the 1920's to only 11 during the first half of the 1930's. Almost all of these houses were built in the northern portion of the neighborhood.

Construction picked up during the last half of the 1930's only to decline again in the early 1940's during World War II. Thirteen houses were built in the last half of the 1930's compared to only 12 during the first half of the 1940's. Once again, the spatial distribution of the development was evenly spread throughout the entire neighborhood.

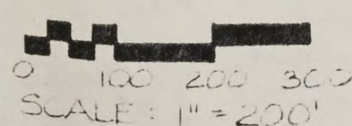
3 AGE OF UNITS



MICHIGAN AVENUE
BRODY COMPLEX

	1917 - 1920
	1921 - 1925
	1926 - 1930
	1931 - 1935
	1936 - 1940
	1941 - 1945
	After 1945

CHESTERFIELD HILLS



Values of Houses

Values of houses were obtained by doubling the assessed values for 1981. These values were grouped into six categories, ranging from less than \$30,000, to \$90,000 and above. (See table 4). The categories are identified in \$10,000 increments. Overall, the largest category of houses fall into the \$60,000 to \$80,000 range, and as might be expected, the two extreme categories (less than \$30,000 and \$90,000 and above) contain the fewest houses.

Since the value of houses are typically a reflection of their location and size, it is not surprising to note a pattern demonstrating this exists in Chesterfield Hills. (See map 5). Houses along major arterials and adjacent to non-residential land use tend to have values lower than houses that are located in the interior of the neighborhood.

Values along both Grand River and Michigan Avenue are mostly below \$60,000, with about half the houses along Grand River Avenue valued below \$50,000. The geographic area near the Grand River Avenue and Harrison Road intersection also contains a large cluster of houses valued relatively low. There are no houses in this specific area valued beyond the \$70,000 range.

The strip of houses adjacent to the houses on Cowley Street are valued mostly in the \$50,000 and \$70,000 range, with the northern end of the strip being valued slightly higher than the southern.

Blocks situated in the interior of the subdivision contain houses that are almost exclusively valued above \$60,000. Each of these blocks contain at least four houses valued above \$60,000. The block in which the park is located contains the greatest number of higher priced houses, with ten houses valued over \$80,000 - half of which are valued over \$90,000.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

A total of eleven architectural styles are readily identifiable in Chesterfield Hills. (See table 5). A house was identified as a particular style if it contained the basic composition and features, or if it exhibited the major feature(s) of a particular style. As a result many of the houses identified are what a purist would call a "hybridization" of a style. The styles identified include American Four-squares, Bungalow, Cape Cod, Colonial, Dutch, Dutch Colonial, French, Georgian, Italianate, Italian Villa, Ranch, Roman Classical and Tudor. Some of these include "revival" styles but are only referred to by their basic name. It should be noted that the two story, post World War II house which resembles the colonial was not classified as any style.



5 VALUE OF UNITS



This wide variety of styles can be accounted for by two reasons. First the houses were built over a time period spanning five decades which included changes in tastes, living styles and processes, normal and Depression eras. Second, the houses were customed built or designed for a particular purchaser. Thus the specific tastes of each individual or family was architecturally satisfied. Consequently the neighborhood may appear to be a bit eclectic with no theme or style prevailing.

By analyzing the styles we can determine which styles were popular during certain time periods and which styles were constructed in specific areas. The first study will discuss the styles by area, and the second study will analyze the different styles by their geographic locations.

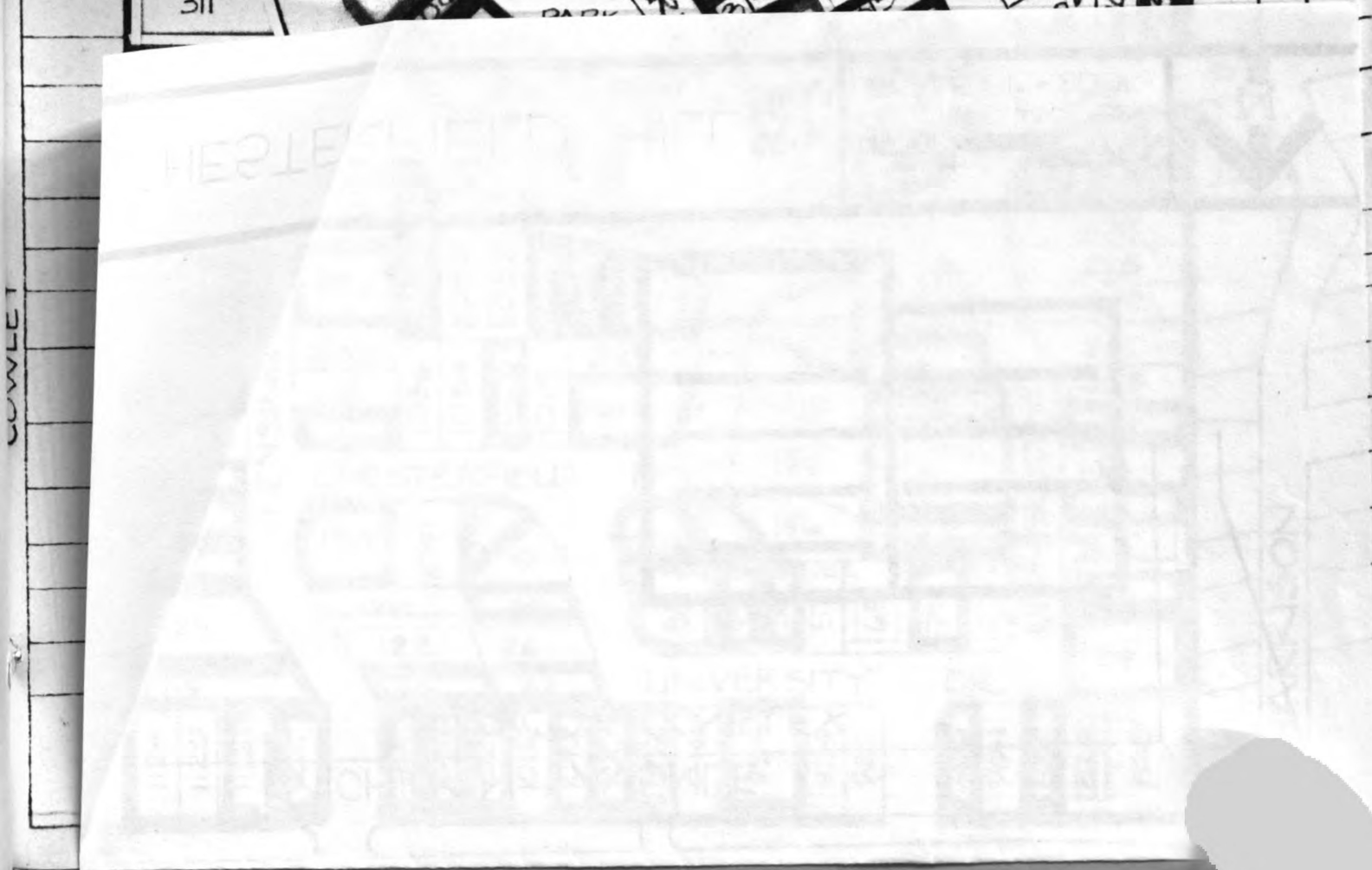
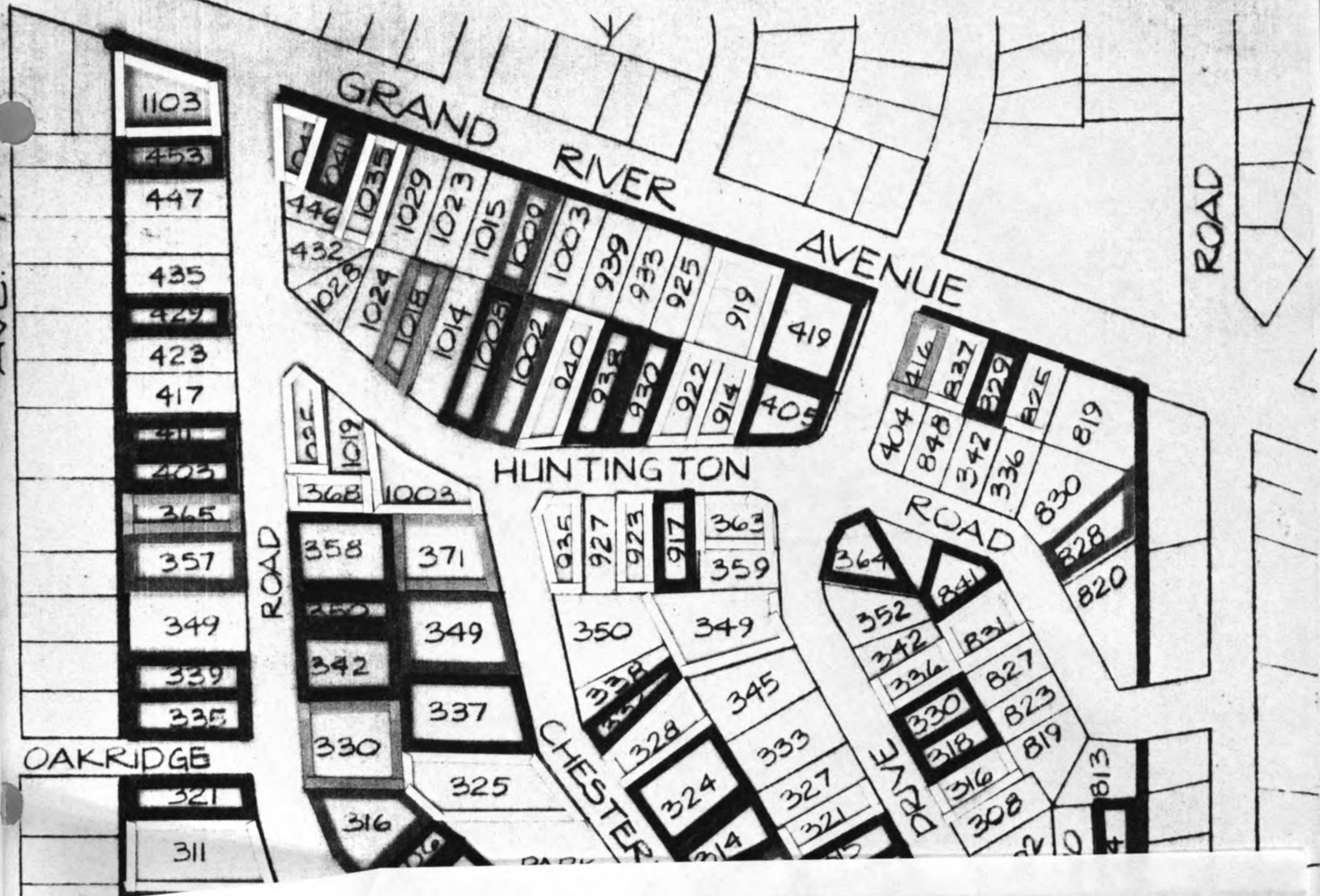
Styles by Era

For the first few years of development (1920 and before) the identifiable styles consisted primarily of Colonial, Dutch Colonial, bungalow and four square. Of these four styles, none could be considered most popular. Each one was used roughly as development was scattered throughout the southern part of the neighborhood.

During the 1920s, as development expanded northward toward Grand River Avenue, some of the original styles were discontinued and new styles were introduced. By the early to mid 1920's, American Foursquare and bungalow houses were no longer being built. Colonial development continued at the same pace, and Dutch Colonial construction increased in popularity, reaching its peak in the mid to late 1920's. The new styles introduced in the latter part of the 1920's included Georgian, Cape Cod and Tudor. Of these styles, Tudor was the most popular. More Tudors (25) were built in the latter half of the 1920's than all other styles combined.

During the depression of the 1930's, construction was greatly reduced, along with the variety of styles. Dutch Colonials were no longer being built. The overwhelming popular style was Colonial, with Cape Cod, Tudor and Georgian being much less popular. Although never really numerically popular, Cape Cod reached its popularity in the late 1930's.

After World War II when construction picked up again, none of the original styles were built. The new era popular styles which fell into which will be arbitrarily identified as three styles. They are: 1) the ranch style, 2) a two story, slightly remodeling the shape of a colonial, and 3) no style. Of the three, only the ranch style was considered for examination.



Styles by Geographical Location

Since some architectural styles were popular only during certain eras, a racial distribution in the neighborhood is evident. (See Overlay 1). Styles that were popular only during the early stages of the neighborhood's development, namely bungalow and American Four-square, are all located in the southern portion of the neighborhood. Styles that were popular in both the early stage and the rapid growth period of the 1920's, namely Dutch Colonial and Colonial, are scattered evenly throughout. Styles which gained popularity in the late 1920's, namely Tudor and Georgian, are almost exclusively located in the northern portion of the neighborhood. The Cape Cod, popular in the late 1920's and 1930's, and the ranch, popular after World War II, are both found throughout the neighborhood. Examples of colonial styles, namely Italian Villa, Italianate, and Roman Classicism are all found in the southern portion, even though they were built throughout the 1920's.

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF HOUSES AND YARDS

The exterior analysis of the units was done by separately evaluating the houses on the structure which is visible from the street, and the front yards. The analysis was arrived at by making field observations this spring. The exterior of the houses were identified as having shortcomings if alterations were present that were architecturally inconsistent to the original structure, paint colors that were too bold or unattractive, or general maintenance problems such as a bad roof or peeling paint. (See Overlay 2). The yards were identified as having problems if the landscaping was minimal or non-existent, or overgrown. (See Overlay 3).

Condition of Houses

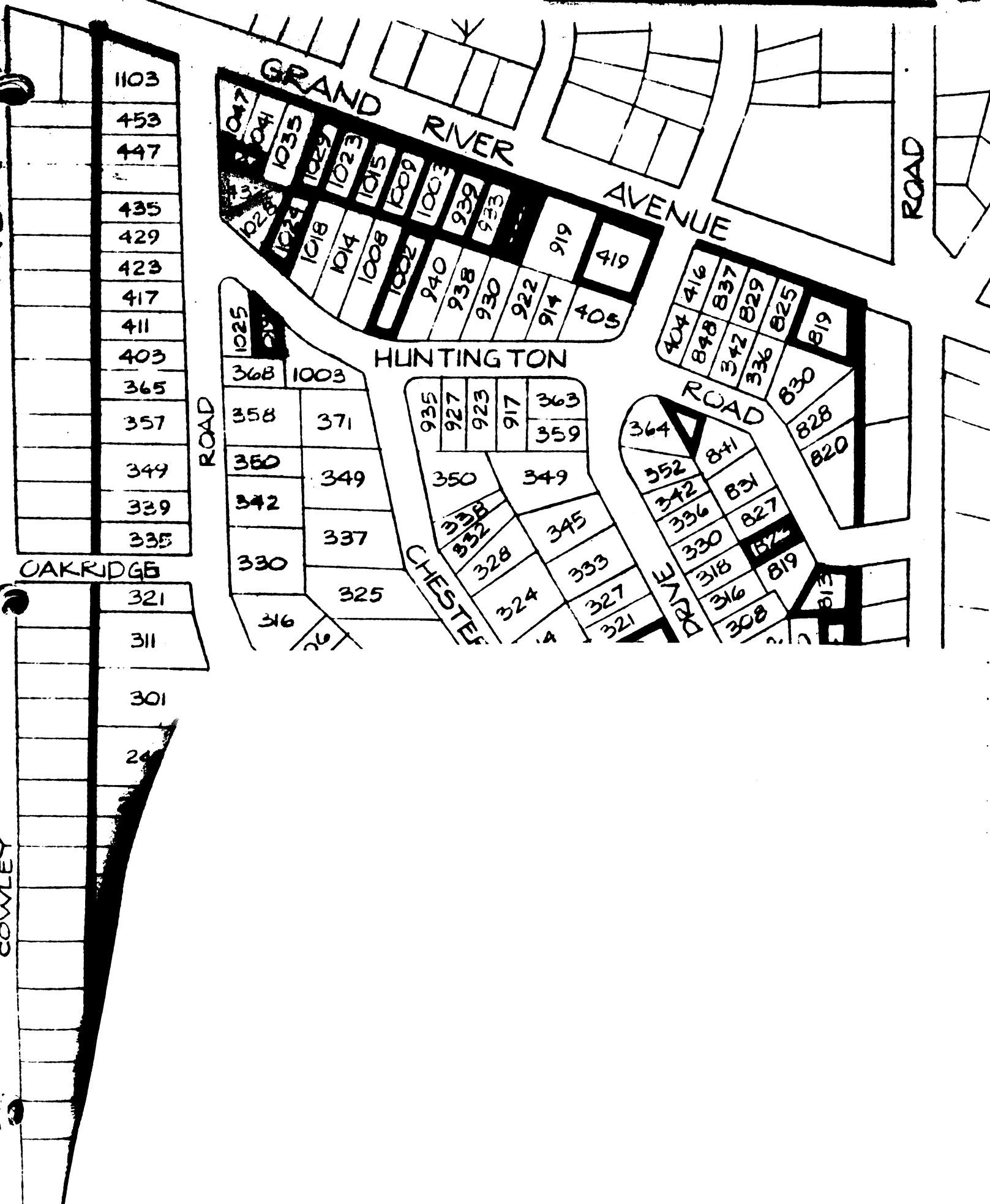
Architectural alterations and paint problems were minimal, with only three and six being identified respectively. However, houses with maintenance problems are more plentiful. These houses are primarily located along Michigan and Grand River Avenues, and in the southern and eastern portions of the neighborhood. Except for the eastern most portion, maintenance problems were almost non-existent in the northern half of the subdivision.

Several conclusions can be made when analyzing the maintenance problems of the houses.

- 1) Houses are almost exclusively priced under \$70,000
- 2) In the southern half of the neighborhood, over 10 percent



MAINTENANCE 2



of the houses identified as needing maintenance were built during the two decades preceding the depression era.

3) In the northern half, all age groups are represented as needing maintenance, particularly post World War II houses along Grand River Avenue.

4) Size of the houses show no difference.

Condition of Yards

Landscaping problems are evenly distributed throughout the entire neighborhood. About 1/4 of the houses were identified as either lacking or having overgrown landscaping. All sizes, values, and ages are representative of this shortcoming.

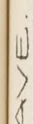
RENTAL HOUSING

Houses were classified as rental if they are as licensed by the City of East Lansing. A total of 30 units, or less than 15 percent of the total housing supply, is rental. See table 2). If the 30 units, 9 are located on both Grand River and Michigan Avenues, while the remaining 17 are distributed randomly throughout the interior portion. (See overlay 4 or map 3). Since it is recognized that particular externalities can cause a housing unit to convert to rental in the interior of the neighborhood as opposed to on Grand River and Michigan Avenues, this analysis will investigate only the patterns that exist relating to the rental units located in the interior of the neighborhood. The study will be analyzed in relation to age, style, size, value, and condition of the houses and yards.

The most common houses to convert to rental are houses built before 1920, or after 1940. For houses built during the 1920's, the time that the highest rate of construction occurred, only two rental conversions exist.

Architectural styles of rental housing is limited. Five 1920 houses that were converted to rental units consist of two bungalows, one Colonial, one Dutch Colonial, and one four square. However it should be noted that the four square was built as a duplex, thus it should not be classified as a conversion. None of the seven houses converted after 1940 can be identified as any particular style. Some styles, such as Tudor, Georgian, and Cape Cod, have had no conversions.

Sizes of rental houses are distributed to categories under 2000 square feet. No single category dominates the rental market.



BRODY COMPLEX

RENTAL UNITS

0 100 200 300
SCALE: 1" = 200'



Prices of rental houses are quite limited. These houses ranged from \$50,000 to \$80,000. With the exception of one rental unit, a bungalow on two lots, all rental units are on single lots. According to the assessors data, a single lot is typically assessed around \$6,000, implying a single lot would sell for about \$12,000. Consequently, the additional costs and taxes for a larger lot may make it a disincentive for a landlord to purchase since the costs probably would not be recoverable in the rental market.

Of the 14 houses identified as rental in the interior of the neighborhood, 7 have problems associated with the physical conditions of their structure or yard. Of the 7 units, 4 were built before 1920.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

The public domain is the public right of way owned by the City of East Lansing. The condition of the public domain consists of the evaluation of the streets and sidewalks, street tree plantings, and parking on streets.

The streets and sidewalks are all in a degree of disrepair. The sidewalks are in worse shape with many sections being badly pitted and cracked.

Only six locations are void of tree plantings along the streets. (See overlay 3). These voids are relatively short, consisting of only one or two lots. Four of the six non-tree areas are located on street corners.

Parking takes place on streets at several locations in the southern and eastern portions of the neighborhood. (See overlay 3). The most prominent street with parking problems is University Drive, with four strips being identified. Three of the strips on University Drive are near the houses along Michigan Avenue, suggesting that the residents residing in houses along Michigan Avenue are using the street to park in.

PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS

Residents currently have mixed feelings about the future of their neighborhood. Although many positive features exist and are readily recognized, two major concerns have been expressed recently by neighborhood leaders. They are the close proximity of the high density student rental in the Delta Triangle and the closing of the Central Elementary School.

Concern over the high density rental housing has been voiced on numerous occasions. Residents feel that the boundary line

between Chesterfield Hills and the Delta Triangle, which is Harrison Road, will prove to be timely and that soon the rental market will spill over into Chesterfield Hills. Statistics provided by the City of East Lansing and the Bureau of U.S. Census have indicated that some blocks have already shown increases in the number and percentage of rental units.

Exact reasons for these concerns are difficult to pinpoint. Comparisons have been made between the Delta Triangle and Cedar Village. At a meeting in East Lansing's City Hall, one neighborhood leader stated that Cedar Village is so densely populated that when parties occur, not even the law enforcement officers can control them. With the high density during that currently exists in the Delta Triangle, it is perceived that the same situation will soon exist there too. Another resident voiced her concern over the lack of maintenance and adequate parking spaces provided, along with the changing integrity and character of the neighborhood which usually accompanies rental properties.

The school closing has created two concerns to neighborhood residents. First, the neighborhood has lost an identity, and second, the loss of a selling point for the neighborhood.

To an outsider, it could be argued that the new school the children now attend would better facilitate the needs of the students. However, some parents in the Central neighborhood Association disagree. They say Central School was better because it provided more personal contact and allowed for more participation by the parents. As the president of the neighborhood association stated, Central School was the closest thing to a private school that a public school system could provide. She further stated that her family, like many others in the neighborhood, chose to move into Chesterfield Hills as opposed to any other neighborhood for this reason alone.

These concerns about the rental market and the school closing can have a number of effects on the neighborhood. To begin with, the neighborhood may experience a transitional period in which its past image is questioned. Evidence relating to this already exists. When surveying the neighborhood, 12 houses were identified with "for sale" signs in their front yards. This consisted of approximately seven percent of the housing stock. Even though it was in spring, which is a popular time to sell, the total is still high for a stable neighborhood. Furthermore, neighborhood residents have cited two things about the real estate market in their neighborhood. First, the length of time a house takes to sell on the market has increased in the last couple of years, and second, real estate agents have confidentially told them that Chesterfield Hills has become a "risky" neighborhood for a prospective homebuyer to invest in.

Other effects, such as lower house values, the difficulty of attracting new residents, and less pride being taken in the upkeep of the houses on their owners, are too early to detect.

TABLE 1 - AGE OF UNITS

AGE OF UNITS	LOCATION OF UNITS				TOTAL	ACCUM. %
	NICH AVE	S.R. AVE	S. CHEST	N. CHEST		
1917 - 1920	3	0	15	1	22	10
1921 - 1925	2	3	17	5	34	27
1926 - 1930	4	2	17	27	57	54
1931 - 1935	1	0	1	8	10	58
1936 - 1940	0	1	2	12	29	73
1941 - 1945	1	0	5	5	13	79
After 1945	2	6	23	14	45	100
TOTAL	20	12	63	60		

TABLE 2 - RENTAL UNITS

AGE OF
RENTAL UNITS

1917 - 1920	1	0	4	1	6
1921 - 1925	3	1	1	0	5
1926 - 1930	2	2	0	1	5
1931 - 1935	0	0	0	0	0
1936 - 1940	0	1	0	0	1
1941 - 1945	1	0	0	3	4
After 1945	1	4	4	0	9
TOTAL	8	8	9	5	30

TABLE 3 - SIZE OF UNITS

SIZE OF UNITS	LOCATION OF UNITS				TOTAL
	MICH. AVE	E.P. AVE	E. CHEST	N. CHEST	
1199 & less	2	5	12	4	23
1200 - 1399	4	5	17	22	50
1400 - 1599	5	9	20	16	49
1600 - 1799	2	3	15	13	33
1800 - 1999	2	2	11	10	25
2000 & more	3	0	18	13	34
TOTAL	20	19	93	80	212

TABLE 4 - VALUE OF UNITS

VALUE OF UNITS					
\$49,999 & less	2	2	6	3	26
\$50,000 - 59,999	2	3	17	12	44
\$60,000 - 69,999	2	3	22	27	64
\$70,000 - 79,999	0	1	19	21	41
\$80,000 - 89,999	1	0	13	9	23
\$90,000 & more	0	0	6	8	14
TOTAL	20	19	93	80	212

TABLE 5 - ARCHITECTURAL STYLES OF UNITS

STYLE	DATES OF CONSTRUCTION							TOTAL
	17-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46 +	
AM FREQUARE	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	6
BUNGALOW	4	3	0	1	0	0	0	8
CAPE COD	0	1	3	0	5	2	0	11
COLONIAL	4	7	5	6	10	2	0	34
DUTCH/RANCH	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
DUTCH COLON	4	5	5	1	0	0	0	15
GEORGIAN	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	4
ITALIAN	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	4
RANCH	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	9
ROY CLASSIM	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
TUDOR	0	4	25	2	2	0	0	33
TOTAL	17	22	43	11	20	4	8	125

CHAPTER THREE

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Problems identified in the neighborhood are both physical and attitudinal in nature. These problems are consistent with declining neighborhoods. When reviewing some of the characteristics of a declining neighborhood the following is mentioned: outward signs of deferral of maintenance and repair, residential units beginning to convert to rental, large numbers of houses are put on the real estate market and disinvestment begins to accelerate. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the problems and show how they relate to a declining neighborhood.

The most visible problems are the physical deterioration of the houses and yards. This was documented in the maintenance and landscaping portions of the background chapter. Landscaping problems consisted of about 1/4 of the total housing stock. Lack of maintenance of houses were also plentiful with a large percentage of these houses being relatively old, often constructed prior to the depression.

Rental conversions also appears to be taking its toll on the neighborhood. Of the 30 houses licensed, it was demonstrated that the houses most likely to convert were built prior to 1925 and after 1940. Two theories may explain this. The houses built after 1940 often lack any architectural significance. Styles similar to these houses are found all over the community. Therefore, for these houses, the supply is not limited and the demand is not so great. However, houses built prior to 1925, often exhibited an architectural identity that is no longer found in the more recently built houses. It is also recognized that the older a house is, the more burdensome the maintenance needs are going to be. Thus it may be concluded that maintenance, rather than supply and demand may be the deterrent to homeowners for the older houses.

The final major problem is the deterioration of the attitudes of the neighborhood residents as well as the community as a whole. This stems from a fear of uncertainty and a lack of confidence in the future of the neighborhood. In addition to some of the testimony of the local residents, the most overt sign of attitudinal decline is the number of houses that have "for sale"

signs in their yards. These houses, while characteristic of a declining neighborhood, represent a potential for a great deal of change to take place. For instance, if half the houses currently on the market were to convert to rental, the rental market would increase by 25 percent in just one year. If the trend continues, a drastic change in the character of the neighborhood is inevitable.

Consequently, to address these problems, preservation tools must be implemented to address both the physical and psychological needs of the neighborhood. Furthermore, it is imperative that the programs selected be ones that can be implemented soon because signs of decline are already visible.

CHAPTER FOUR

ALTERNATIVE ACTION

The purpose of this chapter is to list the different strategies that are available to address all or parts of the problems listed in chapter three. Each alternative action will be followed by its advantages and disadvantages.

1) DESIGNATE THE NEIGHBORHOOD AS A HISTORIC DISTRICT

A historic district ordinance regulates exterior development of a building or site which occurs in a designated area.

Advantages

- regulates the exterior physical changes that can occur.
- stabilizes and improves property values.
- restores confidence in the neighborhood.
- attracts residents into the neighborhood who are concerned about their physical surroundings.
- not costly to city.

Disadvantage

- puts restrictions on homeowners since alterations are subject to approval by a reviewing committee.
- may attract landlords since rental properties in a historic district are eligible for a 25 percent investment tax credit for substantial rehabilitation of income producing properties.
- low income families are sometimes displaced due to increased property values and taxes.

2) DIRECT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS INTO AREA

Capital improvements include both visible and non-visible changes in the public domain. This is usually designed to improve

deficient services and to stimulate private investment into the neighborhood. Visible improvements include streetlight rehabilitations, street repaving, new sidewalks, curbs and gutters. Non-visible improvements include upgrading the existing utility systems.

Advantages

- make the area more attractive to current and future residents.
- reassure the residents that the city has not disregarded the neighborhood.

Disadvantage

- costs would almost be too great to justify.
- would not address the housing needs such as deterioration.
- the time it would take to include the project in the C.I.P. and implement it would be at least four years, thus allowing changes to take place in the meantime.

3) IMPLEMENT HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Designate Chesterfield Hills as a target neighborhood for financial assistance for home improvements. Financial assistance includes either a low interest loan or an outright grant to neighborhood residents. Financial assistance for these programs is usually based on family income.

Advantages

- aid in the physical preservation of the neighborhood.
- assist low-income residents.
- upgrade housing stock.

disadvantages

- costly to implement and administer.
- most families would not qualify with income test.
- it would only solve the problem temporarily, as rehabilitation and maintenance are an ongoing process.
- most people associate targeted rehabilitation programs with already declining neighborhoods that are not self-managing, thus it may perpetuate the perception that Chesterfield Hills is declining.

4) DEAD END STREETS LEADING TO HARRISON ROAD

Dead end Oak Street and Huntington Drive at the eastern limits of Chesterfield Hills.

Advantages

- help intensify the boundary between the Delta Triangle and Chesterfield Hills
- further isolating the neighborhood may aid in pronouncing its identity.

Disadvantages

- costly to the city to implement - involves the demolition and reconstruction of curbing, paving and storm sewers, along with putting in landscaping.
- cause additional traffic on University Drive.
- rerouting of traffic will cause an inconvenience to Chesterfield Hills residents who use Harrison Road.
- does not directly affect housing needs.

5) DOWN ZONE THE AREA TO THE EAST

Zone the area along Harrison Road and in the Delta Triangle a district that limits the allowable density.

Advantage

- alleviates the pressures and negative externalities on Chesterfield Hills.
- prevents the neighboring Delta Triangle from changing too drastically.

Disadvantage

- the impact would take a long time to notice.
- would not directly address the needs of Chesterfield Hills.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the alternative that was selected to address the needs of the neighborhood. The description will include how it works, what the enabling legislation permits, and how other communities have used it.

Historic District Designation

To be successful in preservation effort, it is critical to establish a legal framework for residents to use to control the forces that threaten their neighborhood. As pointed out in the previous chapter, while some preservation tools address certain issues of concern, others remain ignored.

When evaluating the needs of the neighborhood, it is recommended that historic designation be implemented. Historic districts have a proven track record of restoring confidence in neighborhoods, as well as promoting an awareness of the need to preserve and maintain older structures. Furthermore, they aid in projecting a self-managing image for the neighborhoods. By not relying strictly on outside assistance, the neighborhoods can appear to be self-contained and self-sufficient.

A historic district ordinance regulates in detail any development that may occur in a designated area. As one of the oldest types of locally-initiated programs designed to preserve residential neighborhoods, residents have used the ordinance to manage change, to protect and enhance environmental qualities, and to counteract the power of private developers and speculators.

In recent years historic preservation has gained in popularity. No longer are historic preservation districts limited to neighborhoods with irreplaceable buildings or historical value, but rather because of its environmental quality. For example, The Old West Side Neighborhood of Ann Arbor, Michigan consists of only 43 percent single-family dwellings with only 22 percent of the houses built prior to 1940. This neighborhood was designated

because it has character, amenities, and unusual features that its residents considered worthy of saving. By giving the neighborhood a distinct identity, defining its boundaries, and encouraging residents not to alter its architectural style, a renewed confidence emerges.

As to what neighborhoods can be possible candidates for designation, no definitive answer can be given. Most successful historic districts are said to contain special features such as:

- Neighborhoods which have clearly defined boundaries, unusual topography, or other qualities that distinguish it from the rest of the community.
- A housing stock with special features or characteristics, making it unusual or particularly desirable.
- A favorable location, near a central city, waterfront, university, etc.
- An expectation that positive rehabilitation and change will take place.

Historic Preservation is essentially a program that caters to middle- and upper-income people. Consequently the negative side effect that sometimes occurs is the displacement of low- and moderate-income families due to the increase in property values and taxes. However, some communities are making provisions to address this problem, but implementing programs to ensure that displacement does not happen.

Michigan Enabling Legislation

Act number 169, passed in 1970, provides for the establishment of historic districts at the local level of government. The act allows local governments to establish districts to meet the community's own goals and needs.

A historic district is defined as an area, or group of areas not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, created by a local unit for the purpose of this act. Local units of government have the powers to regulate the construction, alteration, repair, moving and demolition of historic structures. No mention is made in act 169 as to what constitutes a historic structure, but officials at the Michigan Department of State, Bureau of History said they were considering anything built prior to 1940.

The purpose of the ordinance lists five objectives:

- 1) Safeguard the heritage of the local unit by preserving a district in a local government which reflects elements of

its cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history.

- 2) Stabilize and improve property values in such district.
- 3) Foster civic beauty.
- 4) Strengthen the local economy.
- 5) Promote the use of historic district for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the local unit and the state.

Once a historic district is established in a community, a historic district commission consisting of 3 to 7 people is appointed to review applications for building permits in designated historic districts for the impact on the district. The commission is allowed to make decisions relating to features on the exterior of the structure and shall not consider interior arrangements. Criteria is based on:

- 1) The historical or architectural value and significance of the structure and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area.
- 2) The relationship of the exterior architectural features of such structure to the rest of the structure and to the surrounding area.
- 3) The general compatibility of exterior design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.
- 4) Any other factor, including aesthetic, which it deems to be pertinent.

How Michigan Cities Have Used The Ordinance

In the State of Michigan, there are currently 23 local historic district designations. They include both residential neighborhoods and business districts.

When reviewing some of the ordinances it was found that most of them kept the criteria for design very general as to allow for flexibility. For instance, the City of Brighton's ordinance states that the new design should be "...in a way as to contribute to the quality and character of the area." The Village of Franklin's ordinance is also general, requiring the new design to be within the "relationship of the exterior architectural features...to the rest of the structures in the surrounding area."

As far as "what" features of the structure would be reviewed, very few of the ordinances stated anything specific. The City of Holmeaze gave one of the most detailed description by defining structure and stating what would be regulated. Structure was defined as "any building, site (including significant trees) fences, walls and signs within a Historic Preservation District or Historic landmark." It further stated that it would regulate: "excavation, demolition of any structure, moving of any structure, painting of any structure, removal of an architectural feature, construction and erection of any structure, alteration, and changes in land use."

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