

Lynn Josse's Notes on Holly Hills Survey
11/23/2013

The Holly Hills survey's final report recommended two historic districts per this map:



Approximate boundaries of proposed Holly Hills District (left) and Grand Dover Park District (right)

Within the Holly Hills district as proposed, there are two vacant lots, both noncontributing parking lots. One is at the southwest corner of Wilmington and Leona, and the other is at the southwest corner of Wilmington and Livingston.

Summaries of significance

Holly Hills

The Holly Hills Historic District (left) is recommended for listing in the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development, and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Holly Hills was designed as a picturesque suburban retreat inspired by the glamour of revival-style houses of silent film stars. The original Holly Hills subdivision and the related subdivisions that sprang up around it exemplify an automobile age single-family neighborhood. The National Register Bulletin on historic suburbs will be used to assess significance as an example of a suburban development.

Under Criterion C, Holly Hills includes some of the city's finest examples of Revival architecture from the 1920s-1940s. The architecture of the neighborhood is consistent and exemplary; it also is used very consciously to reinforce the image of Holly Hills.

The proposed boundaries will likely be somewhat smaller than those proposed in the survey in order to eliminate some streets that are related by development pattern but may not meet the Criterion C criteria.

Grand-Dover Park

Grand-Dover Park (right) is a single subdivision recommended for listing under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development, and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The district is an example of a single development that depended on the availability of transit (a new bus route) and automobiles; the district is developed over a span of a few years and meets the National Register's criteria as a historic suburb. It is one of St. Louis' most important bungalow neighborhoods, showing a consistency in design and scale that not often found in St. Louis. The residential buildings are extraordinarily intact, and together provide an exemplary collection illustrating the style and form of the bungalow as interpreted locally.

One-story Revival

This type catches most of the buildings of one to 1½ stories that may take the same basic plan as a bungalow or gingerbread house, and elaborate the façade with revival or cottage-related detailing. These houses are usually built with a rectangular massed plan under either a gabled roof or an intersecting gable roof (with a side gable fronting a perpendicular main ridge).



3823 Dover

Two-story Revival

This type can be further broken down into massed 2-story colonial and classical revival, which typically have simple roofs and relatively flat facades; and more romantic revivals which tend to have complex and often steeper rooflines and more complex footprints. This type also includes a small number of notable mansions along Holly Hills.



3815 Holly Hills



3873 Federer

Final Report

to the City of St. Louis Cultural Resources Office
of the Planning and Urban Design Agency

Holly Hills Historic Survey
for the area bounded by
Bates Street, South Grand Boulevard,
Holly Hills Avenue and Morgan Ford Road

Submitted by

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Summary of Project Methodology

Archival Research

During the research phase, the team looked up building permits and *St. Louis Daily Record* permit summaries for each pre-1970 building in the survey area. Those lacking clear permit records were compared to historic maps. In some cases, U. S. census records and City of St. Louis Engineering cards were consulted. Subdivision research was based on original plat maps filed with the Recorder of Deeds.

Microsoft Access Database

With the Microsoft Access database provided by the Cultural Resource Office, we created separate entry forms for building permits and *St. Louis Daily Record* entries. After adding additional fields for useful information, archival and descriptive data was entered and thumbnail photographs were linked.

Field Work

Each building in the survey area was photographed; these photographs were later reduced to black and white small-dimension images for linkage to the database. Field inventory forms were completed and verified for each primary building in the survey area. Finally, a survey of outbuildings completed the necessary field data collection.

Mapping

Mapping is coordinated with the City of St. Louis' ArcView system. At the time of this report, City mapping resources are not available; the map will be completed by the end of 2009.

Reporting

Two interim reports have been submitted, per contract, as well as this final report.

Final Product

This report is turned in with CD-ROMS containing all digital images and a copy of the survey database.

Holly Hills Property Types

	Number of examples
Single family residential property types	
Gabled Ell	33
Shotgun	12
One story simple massed plan	290
Two story front gable	27
Parapet Front	9
Bungalow/bungaloid	312
One story Revival	161
Two story Revival	168
Two story Foursquare/craftsman	36
“Gingerbread”	68
One story compact Modern	64
Multi-unit residential property types	
Duplex (Double House)	15
Two-Family Flat	245
Four-Family Flat	45
Walk-Up (4 family)	20
Commercial	
Corner Entrance Commercial	4
One-Part Commercial Block	7
Two-Part Commercial Block	9
Other	
unassigned due to recent date	35
altered	16
Other types or unidentified	48
Total	1624

Gabled Ell

Within the survey area, this simple Victorian form appears most often as a single story vernacular frame building in the earliest subdivisions of the neighborhood. Historically these generally had shed-roofed porches in the elbow of the “L,” almost all of which are now filled in. Two-story examples often predate the platted subdivisions and most require further research.



4142 Concordia

Shotgun

This subtype includes the classic shotgun as well as those with entrances in small rear ells. Both frame and brick examples are found in the survey area. The City’s Preservation Plan defines the classic shotgun:

Shotgun houses are single-story buildings with narrow front facades. There is no interior hallway: each room leads directly into the one behind it.



4104 Fillmore.

One story simple massed plan

This property type predominates in the subdivisions at the northwest corner of the Holly Hills survey area. Most examples are simple vernacular houses of one or 1 ½ stories, usually frame buildings with medium pitched front gabled roofs. Porches can be either full-width, inset at corners, or single bay. Most porches on frame examples have been rebuilt.



4141 Burgen

Two-story front gable

This property type is based in the Victorian-era upright (two-story shotgun) type. Most of these are deemed “Late Victorian” in style. We also use the term to include wider composite forms and gambrel fronts found in the 20th century.



4176 Burgen

Parapet front

From the City of St. Louis Preservation Plan:

The Shaped Parapet Single Family is a brick one-story house type with a front shaped parapet. Popular between 1900 and 1920, it has a narrow two or three bay front façade. The earliest examples have recessed entries and Romanesque Revival detail; later houses had a small one-story porch. A distinctive feature of these houses is the use of decorative or glazed bricks to enliven the front façade.

The survey area includes nine examples of single family houses with front parapet walls, including a rare frame two-story example at 3948 Bates.



3948 Bates



4147 Burgen

Bungalow/bungaloid

The most common form of bungalow in the Holly Hills survey area is side-gabled with a gabled front dormer. There is typically a full-width front porch with either a gable or low-pitched shed roof. Bungalows typically reflect the Craftsman style with an emphasis on informal planning and horizontality. The great majority of examples in the survey area are brick.



3639 Bellerive



6133 Newport



6209 Leona

Two-story Foursquare/Craftsman

The foursquare is a well-known house type; in the City of St. Louis these typically are constructed with brick facades and hipped roofs. In this survey we have grouped it with two-story Craftsman style houses with similar proportions.



6125 South Grand



3948 Federer

“Gingerbread”

This property type corresponds to the “Neo-Tudor Revival Style” defined in the City’s Preservation Plan. Early examples often have elements of Arts and Crafts design, and later examples integrate details from the Moderne style; across the spectrum they generally conform to the description in the city’s Preservation Plan:

Neo-Tudor Revival refers to a one-story vernacular house type, constructed in the 1930's and 40's, that has certain elements of Tudor Revival houses, combined

with the hand-crafted look of Arts and Crafts design. These houses are usually one, or one and a half stories, with a front, steeply-pitched gable roof. They combine a variety of stone and brick detail, and usually display a high, catslide roof over the entry with a decorative false chimney at one side.

This example at 6025 Leona exemplifies the use of limestone trim against a colorful variegated brick façade. In this example, the prominent front chimney is shifted to the right bay and the attic window is covered with a metal awning.



6025 Leona

One-story compact Modern

These are later infill buildings, usually concrete block construction with brick or concrete brick veneer on concrete foundations, dating from the late 1940s through the early 1960s. Many gain decorative effect from the use of imitation stone veneer. Most have simple rectangular plans with shallow pitched hip or gablet roofs.



5637 Leona

Duplex (Double House)

Within the survey area there are fifteen double houses, most from the 1920s and the 1950s. These can share the characteristics of other styles and types; their only defining characteristic is the presence of two dwelling units on the same story.



3972 Bates

Two-family Flat

This property type is the same as that defined in the City' Preservation Plan, as follows:

A popular house type during the late 19th, and early 20th century was the two-family flat. A flat is defined as a residential building with more than one dwelling unit, each having a separate individual entry. In most buildings, a door on the front facade opens directly into the first floor apartment, while a separate door on the same facade accesses the upper floor unit by an interior stair.

Within the survey area there are a number of two-family flats with full-width porches and individual hoods over the two front doors. The building at 3652 Bowen, below, is a good example. Most common, however, is a full-width porch that is fully roofed, as at 3914 Fillmore, below. This stands in contrast to parts of the city developed earlier, where a single bay porch would be the most common configuration.



3652 Bowen



3914 Fillmore

Four-Family Flat

Four-family flats may exhibit Craftsman and Tudor characteristics, or may be simple front parapet buildings with minimal ornamentation.



3666 Bates

Walk-Up

Walk-up apartment buildings were ubiquitous in St. Louis during the first two decades of the twentieth century. In most parts of the city, walk-ups are no more than two stories in height. Four-family examples are symmetrical buildings, typically 3 bays wide with an entrance at grade and a stair window between stories above the entrance. Within the survey area, larger apartment buildings are typically built as multiple-entry walk-ups rather than with internal hallways.



3804 Wilmington: four-family walk-up



3610 Iron : Multiple-entry walk-up

One-Part Commercial Block

For the purposes of this survey, this property type refers to a single story commercial building without a corner entrance. With only a few exceptions, storefronts in the district have been modernized, indicating the shift from product-based sales to service and residential uses in the same spaces. In most cases, though, integrity is maintained by the retention of original form, exterior materials, and detailing.



4025 Wilmington

Two-Part Commercial Block

For the purposes of this survey, this property type refers to a building with commercial uses on the first story below one or two floors of office or residential units. In some cases the only difference between this type and the corner entrance subtype, below, may be the placement of the entry.



3606 Bates

Corner Entrance Commercial



4101 Bowen

Altered

Within the survey area some properties are altered to the point that their original type is no longer evidenced on the exterior.

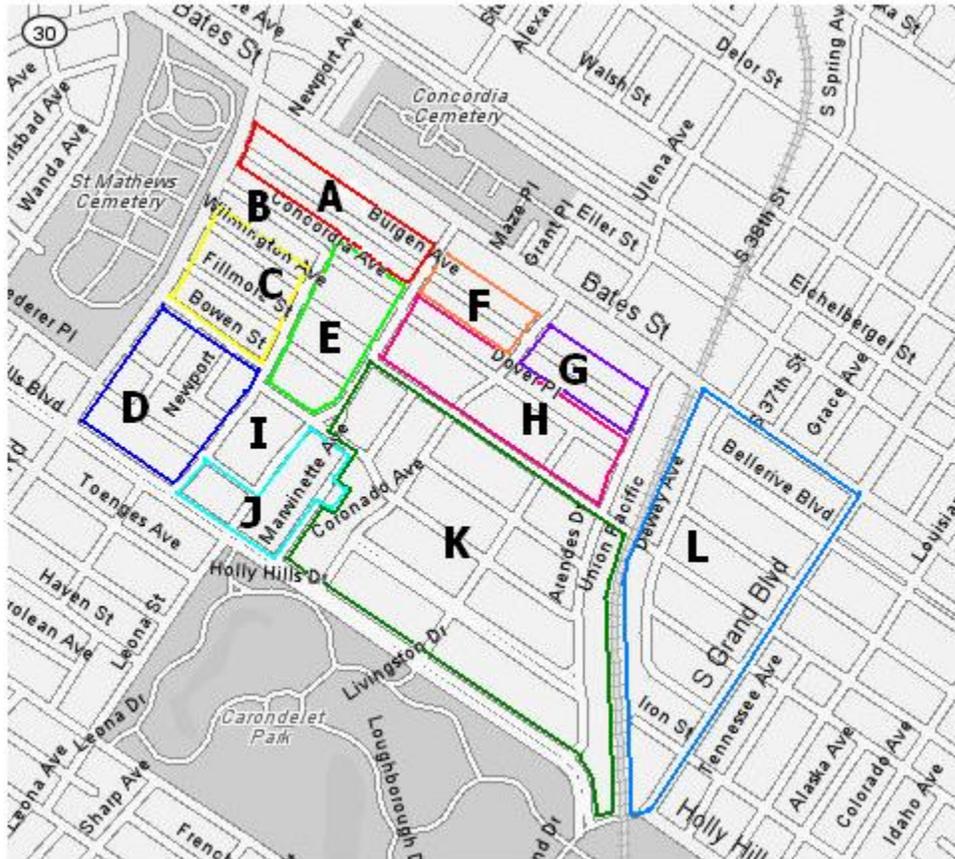
Unassigned due to recent date

Many buildings in the survey area (including all of the post-1970 buildings and many from the 1960-1970 decade) are not classified into a type due to their recent dates. Because these properties would usually not be contributing to a potential district and often have little in common with other buildings in the survey area, no type is assigned.

Other property types

In addition to the common property types listed above, there are a number of churches, schools, and service stations. These institutional building types are not classified according to plan or vernacular type because there are only a handful of examples in the survey area.

Area map with subdivisions and dates



- A. Burgen Place (1909)
- B. Concordia Heights Addition – platted by 1905 (plat not found)
- C. John F. McDermott’s Gramercy Park Subdivision (1925)
- D. Carondelet Parkview (1925)
- E. Park Side (1921)
- F. Leona Place (1923)
- G. Coronado Place (1929)
- H. Holly Hills No. 2 (1924)
- I. Woerner School Block
- J. West Holly Hills (1933)
- K. Holly Hills (1923)
- L. Grand Dover Park (1923)

South Side of Bates between Union Pacific and Morgan Ford is generally listed as private subdivisions of US Surveys of the Carondelet Common Fields (no recorded plat found)

Potential Historic Districts

Integrity

Within the survey area, integrity is judged using the guidelines in the National Register Bulletin “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation” and further refined in the bulletin “Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places.” Both bulletins offer guidance on evaluating individual resources as well as potential districts.

There is no more difficult integrity issue facing historic districts today than the impact of replacement siding on frame buildings. In the City of St. Louis, where the oldest remaining neighborhoods are constructed primarily of brick, this issue has yet to be fully confronted. This survey may mark the first extensive investigation and evaluation of frame subdivisions within the City.

The National Register offers both general and specific direction for evaluating integrity in such circumstances.

From “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” section VIII:

If the historic *exterior* building material is covered by non-historic material (such as modern siding), the property can still be eligible if the significant form, features, and detailing are not obscured.

More specific guidance is found in “Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places:”

In general, houses may be classified as contributing resources where new siding:

- 1) visually imitates the historic material;
- 2) has been thoughtfully applied without destroying and obscuring significant details; and
- 3) is not accompanied by other alterations that substantially or cumulatively affect the building's historic character.

With these standards in mind, our determination is that a majority of frame buildings in the survey area do not possess sufficient integrity to convey their historic significance. As a result, sections of the survey area containing a high concentration of frame buildings will not be eligible for National Register listing.

Recommendations

In our opinion, the best approach to listing in the National Register of Historic Places is to create two separate historic districts.

The first, Grand Dover Park, would take in the subdivision east of the railroad tracks. In addition to capturing all of the original Grand Dover subdivision, which is bound together by a common development history and architectural style, this district could include the apartment building on Iron just south of the subdivision.

The second proposed district, Holly Hills, would include all of the eligible area west of the tracks. Although some of the non-Federer blocks of the neighborhood may be less architecturally and historically significant and overall have less integrity, these subdivisions tell a useful story about the influence of Federer's work and about the neighborhood as a whole. For some blocks that might not be individually significant, this is the only opportunity for listing. A Holly Hills district could also include resources south of the survey boundary on the west side of Carondelet Park. This area has not yet been surveyed, but is historically and architecturally connected with the Holly Hills subdivisions.



Approximate boundaries of proposed Holly Hills District (left) and Grand Dover Park District (right)

Context and Significance

Carondelet Era

The Holly Hills survey area covers more than 45 city blocks within the former Carondelet common fields, land jointly managed and farmed by the villagers of the settlement of Carondelet.

Frenchman Clement Delor De Treget founded the village of Carondelet in 1767, about five miles south of the three year-old fur trading post of St. Louis. Though the early Carondelet settlement hugged the Mississippi, the villagers laid out a large common field on a plateau just west and northwest of the village. The fields began on the west boundary of the original settlement, the ridge that is today Michigan Avenue and Virginia Avenue. The western border of the common fields evolved into Morgan Ford Road.

By 1850, St. Louis boasted a population of more than 74,000, with four and one-half square miles within its city limits, and settlement spilling beyond its limits. By comparison, Carondelet was chartered in 1851 as an independent city with a population of only 1,200 residents. Though Carondelet had allowed for the sale of the common fields, there was little pressure to develop them.

The earliest streets in the survey area followed lines established by the parallel common fields. By 1865 Morgan Ford and Bates (then Pennsylvania) were on the map, and Wilmington cut a stair-step pattern along present-day Holly Hills Boulevard and Wilmington.

City of St. Louis era

Carondelet and its former common fields were annexed by the City of St. Louis in 1870. In 1875, the city purchased 180 acres along the southern boundary of the survey area to establish a city park. Carondelet Park was created (along with O'Fallon and Forest Parks) as part of a tremendous expansion of the city park system. It was also consistent with the extension of services into the recently annexed areas.

The Pitzman New Atlas of 1878 contains two valuable pieces of information about the survey area. It confirms that parcels in the survey area had been sold to about 20 owners. (A small section in the northeast had even been platted into a grid of blocks that were never developed.) The atlas also shows Glaise Creek, sometimes referred to as Carondelet Creek, crossing the eastern half of the survey area.

Hopkins Atlas of 1883 further documents the division of the land. It also shows that there had been minimal, if any, development. Only a few structures stood in the survey area. Four years later the *Post-Dispatch* noted the minimal development in the area, stating, "Part of this unblocked territory has been given up to the cultivation of garden

produce.”¹ With few structures and only part of the land being farmed, many parcels within the survey appear to have been owned by speculators.

Land consolidation: the impact of the railroad

The path toward scattered, perhaps fractured, development halted when railroad magnate Jay Gould began to purchase acreage north of Carondelet Park. By the late 1880s, ownership of most of the survey area had been consolidated. In the spring of 1887, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported Gould’s plans for the area with the headlines, “A Gould Scheme, Plan for an industrial village in Carondelet projected, hundreds of acres near the park bought under cover.”

The *Post* outlined and described the acreage Gould was purchasing, which included most of the Holly Hills survey area: “North of the park there is a large tract of land, some 500 to 600 acres, which has never been laid out in blocks,…” According to the *Post*, by the spring of 1887, Gould had purchased “...land bounded by Kansas Street [later renamed Holly Hills] on the south, Morgan Ford Road on the west, Bates street on the north and Grand Avenue on the east” (the same boundaries as the survey area). Within the survey area, it appears that the railroad property only reached west of Leona along Bates Street..

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch described Gould’s plans:

On these broad acres the Gould people propose to erect buildings for occupation by their workmen and for shops. They propose to build an industrial village, light, airy houses, shops and accessories. It is said something like the town of Pullman is the idea Mr. Gould has outlined to his agents, a town with as little self-government as possible. The idea is to form the greatest barrier to the inroads of the labor organizations, and to prevent strikes. It was the outgrowth of the troubles last spring on the Gould system. During that time the strikers had possession of the shops at DeSoto and Pacific, and were charged with considerable wrecking. It was easier to control the crowd in St. Louis at the shops on Ewing Avenue, and an official of the Missouri Pacific said shortly after the subsidence of the trouble, that Mr. Gould had determined to concentrate the shops at some point in or near the city.

While the company town was never built, a new railroad line was constructed to connect the Missouri Pacific and Iron Mountain lines, two railroads that Gould had acquired around 1880. The *Post-Dispatch* stated, “Most of the right of way, even if it was through city property, was donated to the company, and much of it was acquired for a song.” It further stated, “One of the most valuable rights granted to this company by the ordinance was the right of way through Carondelet Park.”

¹ 4/11/1887.

In 1888, the Oak Hill Branch of the Missouri Pacific laid tracks through the park, building a roadway bridge with late Victorian iron railings. Through the Holly Hills survey area, the new tracks followed the curving bed of Glaise Creek, which made an arc beginning at Bates Street two blocks west of Grand, and sweeping south to Grand at Holly Hills, and then through Carondelet Park.

Though Gould never carried out his townbuilding plans, he had inadvertently stopped piecemeal development in much of the survey area, and created a coherent property for large scale improvement later. The path of the railroad itself also became a defining feature in the development of future subdivisions.

Context 1: Community Planning and Development - Suburbanization

The earliest development in the area occurred along the western end in land not acquired by Gould, and along the northern border west of the railroad tracks. The property at the western end of the survey area was developed sporadically, with truck farms and small dwellings popping up in the late 19th and into the early 20th century. The Lilienkamp family are shown as property owners in that district in the Pitzman New Atlas of St. Louis published in 1878. By 1905 their property extended to Holly Hills on the south, Morgan Ford on the west, approximately Bowen on the north side, and an irregular line near Leona on the east.

Census records indicate that the Lilienkamp family were gardeners or truck farmers, one of several families farming along this stretch of Morgan Ford.. The patriarch was a native of Prussia and the matriarch of Hannover. The frame dwelling at 6114 Morgan Ford Road dates to the Lilienkamp ownership. By 1910, Frederick Lilienkamp, Sr., had passed away, but his sons were still farming.

The extension of the Cherokee streetcar line down Gravois near the turn of the century spurred subdivisions all along its length.² Within the survey area, the earliest platted subdivisions are those closest to Gravois: Concordia Heights (1905 or earlier; plat not found) and Burgen Place (1909), both just east of Morgan Ford. Located well outside of the City's "fire line," frame construction was legal. Most of the earliest subdivisions in the survey area were built up with modest frame dwellings between about 1905 – 1920.

The Federer Developments: Grand-Dover Park

The Holly Hills neighborhood is best known for its concentration of bungalows and revival-style dwellings in neat subdivisions. The largest and best known of these are the ones developed and sold by the Federer Realty Company.³ Sale of the undeveloped tract owned by Missouri Pacific enabled the realtor-developers to create coherent

² Norbury Wayman, *History of St. Louis Neighborhoods: Morganford*.

³ The Federer Company was averse to holding property in its own name. For example, Holly Hills was owned by bookkeeper George J. Wibbelsman, whose name appears on the plat and deed of restriction.

communities with distinctive styles.

The developers William Federer, Don Livingston and Gus Arendes created plans for sophisticated neighborhoods that incorporated suburban concepts while enjoying the amenities of urban life and urban design. Both Federer and Arendes were founders of Jefferson-Gravois Bank. Federer had entered the real estate business in 1914, and would eventually develop 40 subdivisions in the city and county and serve on the City Zoning Committee. The real estate career of Arendes, the son of a St. Louis Police Commissioner, was cut short by his suicide in 1930. Don A. Livingston, who had been in the automobile business, joined Federer and Arendes in developing the Gould tract.

The *Carondelet News* detailed the first subdivision the trio of developers planned in the Gould Tract. Grand-Dover Park would cover 50 acres and be three-sided -- bounded by Bates Street on the north, Grand Boulevard (or Grand-Kingshighway) on the east, and the arc of the Missouri-Pacific tracks at the west and south. Grand-Dover Park would consist of 300 lots.

The neighborhood is based on a grid pattern, with roughly rectangular blocks. The blocks are divided by alleys. The lots had terraced front lawns, and garages facing the alleys. Some houses also featured suburban-style driveway accesses to the garages.

The design of Grand-Dover Park extended the parkway on Bellerive (see below) from Grand to the western edge of the subdivision. The extension of the parkway is narrower than the original parkway east of Grand, however it was planted with rows of tall-growing sycamores matching the 1907 boulevard system. Bellerive Boulevard with its tree-lined parkway created an elegant focal point in Grand-Dover Park.

Another feature is Hoover Way, a pedestrian right-of-way that cuts the subdivision in half, extending from the north border of Grand-Dover Park to its southernmost street. City streets signs have always marked Hoover Way, and it makes the neighborhood, with its long blocks, much more walkable.

In urban style, the area was designed for mixed uses. While large single family homes lined Bellerive and portions of other streets, the neighborhood also offered two and four family flats. According to *The Carondelet News*, “The number and character of the new bungalows and flats nearing completion also have been a source of surprise and comment.”⁴ An advertisement celebrated the success of Grand-Dover Park, reading “An Achievement, Federer Realty Co. Announce [sic] The Completion of improvements ...in...Grand-Dover Park ‘The Subdivision Beautiful.’ ”⁵ The ad noted that the tract was subdivided, sold out, and completely improved in eleven months. Fred Pitzman of Pitzman & Sons, Engineers was quoted: “AN UNPARALLELED ACHIEVEMENT IN ST. LOUIS SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT.”

⁴ of 11/16/1923

⁵ 11/30/1923

The Federer Developments: Holly Hills

While work was progressing on Grand-Dover Park, the trio of developers devised another plan, even grander, for their acreage facing Carondelet Park. They were brainstorming at the Coronado Hotel on Lindell Boulevard at Spring Avenue when they came up with a unique approach to building up the 91 acre tract -- to capture the glamour and popularity of Hollywood, of sun-drenched California, and the new movie stars as portrayed in the silent films.⁶

“Hollywood was the rage in the 1920’s. It had a sheen, a glamour,” Dory Federer Potts, daughter of William Federer, explained. Federer hoped that “a little of Hollywood’s glamour would rub off on Holly Hills.”

The developers combined Hollywood and Beverly Hills for the name Holly Hills. They named streets in the proposed subdivision -- Arendes, Livingston and Federer -- for themselves. The first names of the developers’ wives -- MARie Federer, WINifred Livingston and JeanETTE Arendes -- were combined to name another street, Marwinette. Since the developers had dreamed up plans for the subdivision at the old Coronado Hotel, they named another street Coronado. Street names Bates, Dover and Fillmore were all held over from the Carondelet grid, where east-west streets were named in alphabetical order.

Like Grand-Dover Park, the plan for Holly Hills was based on a grid pattern. Both Holly Hills Boulevard, facing the park, and Federer Place featured tree-lined parkways down the center of the streets. They were the elegant focal points of the community and were lined by the largest, and most distinctive, single family homes. Other streets were lined by smaller houses, bungalows, flats, and a few apartment buildings.

Alleys, lined by garages, divided the rectangular blocks. Some houses on Holly Hills and Federer Place also had driveways. A pedestrian walkway cut through the longest block and created a shortcut from Federer Place to Carondelet Park.

Before construction could begin, the undulating landscape had to be smoothed. A private picnic and beer garden at the western edge of the property featured a pond that had to be filled.⁷ Laborers using mules pulling slips leveled the land, filling in small ponds, and building up the bank along the railway.

Advertisements in local papers boasted the quality of life the new Holly Hills subdivision would offer. One read simply “Holly Hills, “Just a Little Bit O’ Heaven..”⁸ Another

⁶ Dory Federer Potts, interviewed by NiNi Harris, June 21, 1990.

⁷ Interview with William Dunphy by NiNi Harris, January 25 1999.

⁸ *Carondelet News* 11/16/1923.

Federer Realty ad promoted the area as “The California of St. Louis.”⁹ The ad encouraged readers to see a presentation at two South City theaters about the new subdivision, entitled “The Cornfields of Yesterday as the Dream City of Today.” The prices of ground in Holly Hills were listed at \$40.00 per front foot and up.

Another advertisement trumpeted Holly Hills as “One of St. Louis’ choicest restricted subdivisions.”¹⁰ Potential buyers could read that term in a number of different ways. A deed of restrictions regulated minimum building costs and frontages, prohibited frame buildings, and disallowed industrial uses. The subdivision was also intended to be racially restrictive, with strong language requiring the forfeiture of any property leased or sold to “any person or persons not of the Caucasian race.”¹¹

As the Great Depression wore on, some home owners in the glamorous Holly Hills subdivision had difficulty making their house payments. The children of William Federer remember that bartering often replaced cash transactions. A barber who had bought in the area started visiting the Federer home at 3863 Holly Hills to trim the Federer boys’ hair. Mr. Federer subtracted the cost of the haircuts from the barber’s house payments. The local pharmacist and grocer gave Marie Federer bills, which were then put toward those businessmen’s payments.¹²

Mass Transit

The developers promoted the extension of mass transit service to the neighborhood to make both the Grand-Dover Park and Holly Hills subdivisions more marketable.¹³ In an era when business executives depended on public transportation to get to their offices downtown, the nearest streetcar line was the Carondelet line. A mile walk to the streetcar discouraged sales of home sites. Holly Hills’ promoters subsidized a bus route to serve the area.

The *Carondelet News* of November 9, 1923, announced a new bus line placed in operation to serve the Grand-Dover Park and Carondelet Park areas. The article stated, “Fifteen buses were placed in service Sunday between Carondelet Park and Eads Bridge, via Grand and Washington boulevards.” The buses were double deckers with 28 seats on the lower deck and 39 on the open, top deck. The new buses boasted rubber instead of metal settings for the springs making them an easier ride, more knee room, and larger windows. Every 12 minutes from 6:36 a.m. to 11:36 p.m. on weekdays buses left Carondelet Park. The article explained that the new line supplied “quick convenient and very much desired transportation service for residents along Grand Boulevard in the vast district adjacent thereto...”

⁹ *Carondelet News*, 12/7/1923.

¹⁰ *Diamond Jubilee of the German St. Vincent’s Orphan Society 1850-1925*, 148.

¹¹ Deed of Restrictions, Book 3965 page 360, City of St. Louis Recorder of Deeds.

¹² Joan Federer Lawder and Dory Federer Potts, daughters of William Federer, interviewed by NiNi Harris. June 21, 1990.

¹³ *Ibid.*

A week later, the *Carondelet News* reported “New Bus Line Factor In Sale of Holly Hills Lots.”¹⁴ The article began,

The past week has been an active one in Holly Hills, according to the Federer Realty Co. The People’s Motor Bus Line, which started operation two weeks ago has helped this tract from a transportation viewpoint. A large number of visitors and purchasers have availed themselves of this modern and convenient transportation innovation to visit Holly Hills.

Context 2: Community Planning and Development – Planned Boulevard system

Planned improvements by the City of St. Louis make the southern and eastern edges of the survey area part of a distinctive boulevard system that is unique in the city. This section of the corridor was determined by the pre-existing route of Grand Avenue and the boundaries of Carondelet Park.

The Civic League’s *Plan For Saint Louis*, published in 1907, was the first major publication of a proposed emerald necklace of boulevards that would hook together existing parks and proposed new parks. One section of boulevard was to wind through what was open land or truck gardens of the former Carondelet common fields to South Kingshighway. The proposal would lead to boulevards lining both the east and south sides of the survey area.

The boulevard would begin at the site of a new, seven acre park that overlooked the Mississippi from Chouteau’s Bluff (now Bellerive Park). The section from the park west to South Grand Boulevard was originally known as Kingshighway Southeast (later Bellerive Boulevard). From Kingshighway south to Carondelet Park, Grand Avenue would be known as Grand Kingshighway, and boast wide tree-lawns planted to grow a canopy over the street. At the park, the boulevard would turn west, bordering the north side of Carondelet Park, and have a parkway plus tree-lawn. Originally that stretch, later Holly Hills Boulevard, was named Kingshighway Southwest.

West of the Holly Hills area, the boulevard wound like a creek, through a series of wedge-shaped parks known as Christy Park, connecting to South Kingshighway.

German-American landscape architect George Kessler, who designed Kansas City’s emerald necklace, acted as a consultant in developing the St. Louis plan. The plan bore resemblance to emerald necklaces proposed for both Chicago and Cleveland.

While much of the proposed park and boulevard system was not developed, the plan influenced the development of Bellerive, Grand and Holly Hills Boulevards as impressive streets -- lined with trees, deep setbacks, and large homes -- that enhance the entire area.

¹⁴ 11/16/1923

Context 3: Architecture

The survey area can be divided into two distinct architectural families: streets and subdivisions where frame construction dominates, and streets and subdivisions that are overwhelmingly brick. In the northwest blocks of the survey area, frame is the main structural material. These inexpensive vernacular massed-plan houses, usually with gable fronts, line the western sections of Burgen, Concordia, Fillmore and Bowen (and dot Bates intermittently from the railroad to Morgan Ford). These streets may be no less historically significant than the brick developments, but generations of alterations to siding and window trim detract from the neighborhood's integrity. The blocks of vernacular frame construction are not eligible for National Register listing and will not be considered in the discussion of architectural contexts.

The remainder of the survey area, constructed primarily of load-bearing brick, are typically more expensive homes that nodded to popular styles of the 1920s - 30s. The homes, flats and commercial buildings in Grand-Dover Park were almost entirely constructed by 1930, and generally followed the most popular architectural philosophy of the 1920s -- the Arts & Crafts Movement. The expansive porches, abundant windows and sun rooms, and the local, natural materials promoted by the movement were incorporated into the designs of bungalows, homes, flats and commercial buildings throughout the subdivision, giving Grand-Dover Park a distinctive character and feel.

In Holly Hills, Federer wanted the grand streets of the new subdivision to have a unique character with new houses that reflect English estate homes, German castles and country cottages -- revival styles that were so popular with the movie stars. (Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and Mary Pickford's "PickFair" was fashioned after an English Estate.) Some homes featured fountains off of living rooms or dining rooms, perhaps inspired by the California home of cowboy star Tom Mix. Some of the later homes showed the influence of the Art Deco style.

According to Federer's children, the architect Roy O. Chaffee, whose portfolio included country estates in west St. Louis County, developed building specifications for residences and garages in the subdivision.¹⁵ He directed the masons to lay the bricks in an uneven pattern. Roofs were to be of slate or ceramic tiles. The architectural firms of Charles L. Thurston, Dan Mullen, O. J. Popp, F. G. Avis, A. & Arthur Stauder, and Helfensteller, Hirsch & Watson were among those designing homes in the new Holly Hills subdivision.

Other builders picked up some of the cues established by the earlier developments. The 3800 block of Dover is split between Federer's Holly Hills No. 2 on the south side and Coronado Place on the north side of the block. The Coronado Place development, beginning in 1929, includes some of the most daring small houses in the neighborhood,

¹⁵ Joan Federer Lawder and Dory Federer Potts, daughters of William Federer, interviewed by NiNi Harris. June 21, 1990.

picking up on Tudor, Mediterranean and even Mission detailing to create a row of small architectural gems .