

City of Detroit

CITY COUNCIL

Historic Designation Advisory Board

PROPOSED EAST FERRY AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT

FINAL REPORT

The proposed East Ferry Avenue Historic District contains 33 primary structures serving commercial, residential, and institutional uses. Located approximately two miles north of downtown between Detroit's Cultural Center on the south and deteriorating late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential areas to the north and east, the proposed district encompasses the three blocks of East Ferry between Woodward and Beaubien. To its west is the campus of Wayne State University. The proposed district is within the Art Center Rehabilitation Project Area.

BOUNDARIES: The proposed district boundaries are outlined in black on the attached map, and are described as follows:

Beginning at the point located at the intersection of the centerline of Woodward Avenue and the southern boundary of Lot 26 of D. M. Ferry's Subdivision of Park Lot 41 (L.10 P.4 WCR) extended westward, thence north along the centerline of Woodward to the northern boundary of Lot 1 of said subdivision extended west; thence east along the north boundary of said lot, continuing along the centerline of the east-west alley between East Palmer and East Ferry Avenues to its intersection with the centerline of Beaubien; thence south along the centerline of Beaubien to its intersection with the east-west alley between East Kirby and East Ferry Avenues; thence west along the centerline of said alley and continuing along the southern boundary of Lot 26 of the aforementioned subdivision (extended westward) to the point of beginning.

HISTORY: The East Ferry Avenue Historic District is significant for a fairly intact, turn of the century, upperclass residential streetscape illustrating a variety of architectural styles popular from the 1880s through the first decades of the twentieth century, as well as for its later association with black history in the city of Detroit. Ferry Street first appeared in records in 1874. Named after Dexter M. Ferry, seed merchant and president of the D.M. Ferry Seed Company which had nurseries further east on Ferry Avenue, East Ferry Avenue was not developed until the late 1880s, after the subdivision was platted in 1886 and lots were sold.

An article appearing in the Detroit News on March 26, 1887, related that,

Ferry Avenue, between Woodward Avenue and the Brush farm line, is being laid out and graded. It will be a continuation of Ferry Street, which is opened east of Beaubien. Ferry is platting lots on both sides of the proposed avenue, and proposed making it one of the handsomest residence streets in the city. The avenue is planned to be 80 feet wide from curb to curb. Rows of shade trees will be planted on both sides of the sidewalk, and lots will be sold subject to special building restrictions, requiring all buildings to be set back 40 feet from the sidewalk, to be located upon a certain

portion of the lot, and to cost not less than \$7,000. Mr. Ferry proposes to make all the above improvements, and, in addition, to pave the avenue, and have water and gas pipes and sewers laid. By compelling uniformity, he expects to develop the handsomest avenue in the city. He calculates to erect a costly residence for himself thereon.

Although D. M. Ferry never did build himself a house on this section of East Ferry Avenue (he resided in Brush Park and moved later to a house on the southeast corner of Woodward and Farnsworth) he succeeded in subdividing his land and selling off lots with building restrictions. In addition to those mentioned above, no building in Ferry's subdivision of Park Lot 41 was to be erected within three feet of the side lot line and all buildings had to be single dwelling houses built of brick, stone or hollow tile with cement face construction.

At that time Woodward Avenue was Detroit's finest residential street and was being lined with the imposing mansions of the city's merchant and manufacturing elite. Residential development had reached the vicinity of Ferry Avenue by the middle of the prosperous 1880s; the lots facing Woodward were being held for speculation or offered for sale at very high prices. Built on one such lot was the Hecker House on the northeast corner of Woodward and Ferry. Built at the then fantastic cost of \$47,000, it was one of Detroit's most fabulous mansions and the home of one of her most notable citizens, Colonel Frank J. Hecker.

On the other hand, the land on the first blocks off Woodward was considerably less expensive but was still considered to be a fashionable place to live. As a result, the side streets off Woodward were quickly settled in the late 1880s and 1890s by prosperous middle and upper middle class professionals and businessmen. Charles Lang Freer, part owner of the Peninsular Car Company, built his shingle style home on East Ferry to occupy two lots. William A. Pungs, the vice-president of the Michigan Railroad Supply Company; John Scott, an architect; William Jackson, president of the Michigan State Telephone Company; Rufus Goodell, real estate speculator, and Frank C. Hecker, son of Frank J. Hecker, were among the first to reside on East Ferry Avenue between Woodward and the Brush Farm line (about two-thirds of the way between John R. and Brush). After the first block of Ferry Avenue was filled, new houses were constructed in the second block between John R. and Brush. The eastern one-third of this block was part of Brush's subdivision of a part of the Brush Farm, transferred to Alfred E. Brush in 1892 and platted in that same year. The lots in this subdivision are considerably narrower than those in Ferry's subdivision; but setback, lot line, and height restrictions were imposed, as well as a minimal cost of construction.

East of Brush, the character of Ferry Avenue changes to the more modest middle class single-family houses and multi-family dwellings of the early twentieth century, although three houses dating from the late nineteenth century still remain. The north side of the street, Thomas Palmer's subdivision of Part of Out Lot 196 of the L. Beaubien Farm, was platted in 1884. As with the more modest lot sizes, the residents had more modest incomes than their neighbors one or two blocks to the west. Heber C. Bassett, travel agent, Sidney Corbett, Jr., a broker-banker, and Henry W. Quinby, secretary-treasurer and business manager of the Detroit Free Press, were among those living on the north side of Ferry between Brush and Beaubien in the late nineteenth century. The south side of this block, meanwhile, was not platted until 1892 and not developed until the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, and then mostly by an influx of Jews. Buildings were restricted

Mrs. Gragg was and is involved in the betterment of all facets of life for blacks. She was president of the Detroit Association of Colored Women's Clubs; during her tenure the Lennane property on the corner of Brush and Ferry was purchased by the Association. Because blacks were restricted from residing west of Brush and east of Woodward on Ferry, the address was changed from Ferry to Brush. The Graggs mortgaged their own house and car for the down payment on what became the Association of Women's Club at 5461 Brush. Among the Association of Women's Clubs' activities when Mrs. Gragg became president of the National Association of Women's Clubs (1958-62) was the push for legislation designating the Frederick Douglass House in Anacostia, Washington, D.C. as a National Historic Site operated by the National Park Service. The National Association of Women's Clubs had maintained the home for over 46 years. The Detroit chapter is still involved with charitable activities and scholarships for the education of blacks.

Another organization on Ferry, Omega Psi Phi, contributed significantly to the history of blacks on the street. Established at Howard University in 1911, Omega Psi Phi was the first national Greek letter fraternity established at a Negro university. A local chapter was established in Detroit in 1923; the undergraduate chapter at Wayne State University began fifteen years later. Its house at 235 East Ferry was purchased in 1942.

Before Fritz established his Funeral Home at 246 East Ferry in 1948, the Mediterranean style house was the residence of the Reverend Dr. James Jones, nationally known as Prophet Jones. Fritz's Funeral Home is still in operation today.

The pioneering efforts of several notable blacks on just these two blocks between John R. and Beaubien beginning in the late 1930s is indicative of the necessity for establishment of alternate institutions and facilities to serve blacks. Some of these institutions, businesses, and clubs remain; several of their buildings remain.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Whereas the Hecker House on Woodward Avenue manifests the more opulent standard of living of Detroit's wealthiest residents at the turn of the century, the residences on East Ferry Avenue between Woodward and Beaubien exemplify the upper middle-class ideal in domestic elegance in the last years of the 1880s and 1890s and the changing styles of the early twentieth century. The houses are sited fairly close together, set well back from the street on relatively small lots. Many still retain the matching carriage house that was constructed with the house. Generally the residences between Woodward and John R. and those on the north sides of Ferry between John R. and Beaubien are similar in appearance in that they are compact multi-gabled, Queen Anne dwellings of brick and sandstone with bay windows or turrets and wide front porches. The detailing is primarily derived from Romanesque and Tudor Revival sources. The south side of the block between John R. and Beaubien remained mostly vacant for several decades after the rest of the street was developed, until the 1905-25 period. As a result, they contrast sharply with the other houses on East Ferry Avenue in that they are examples of the more academically correct Colonial Revival and Mediterranean styles of the twentieth century. The construction of these large and expensive houses is a testament to the continued popularity of East Ferry Avenue as a fashionable residential area up to the 1920s.

The houses in the district are also significant as representatives of some of the least altered residential work of Detroit's leading architects of the late nineteenth century. Some of these architects include John Scott, the architect of the Wayne County Building (1902) who constructed his own house at 84 East Ferry, and Mortimer L. Smith, architect of the Woodward Avenue Baptist Church (1887).

Other notable firms whose architecture is represented on East Ferry are Malcomson & Higginbotham, who are often associated with their distinguished Romanesque Revival churches; Donaldson & Meier, noted for the extraordinary skyscraper, the David Stott Building (1929), and Smith, Hinchman, & Grylls, architect of the Guardian Building. The houses on East Ferry Avenue represent an important, but frequently forgotten, part of the work of these and other nineteenth and early twentieth century architect, as, although not their largest or most important commissions, most architects of the period prospered by designing residences for upper middle class patrons. East Ferry Avenue preserves an interesting array of these houses, ranging from millionaires' mansions to middle class dwellings to later multi-unit dwellings.

1. 5510 Woodward Avenue, Colonel Frank J. Hecker House (1888-91)

Colonel Frank Joseph Hecker, at age 18, joined the Union Army. After working several years as an agent for the Union Pacific Railroad, he returned to Michigan to organize the Peninsular Car Company in Detroit. Hecker's wealth and the architectural talents of Louis Kamper, a German-American architect practicing in Detroit, were combined to produce this French Renaissance mansion on the corner of Woodward and East Ferry. Hecker and Kamper reportedly agreed on the design for the Hecker mansion which was inspired by the lines and mood of the Chateau de Chenonceaux near Tours, both men feeling that Detroit needed more architectural cognizance of her French historical roots. Kamper designed all the interior detailing as well as the building itself. When the Hecker's left the house it was converted into a rooming house and apartment building. In 1947 the house was purchased by Smiley Brothers Music Company; the carriage house has been converted into a recital auditorium capable of seating 200 persons.

The house, built at a cost of \$47,000, was built of Indiana limestone and has a steep gray slate roof. There are 49 rooms in the three-story main structure and service buildings, containing more than a dozen Egyptian Nubian marble and onyx fireplaces. Lavish interior detail and furnishing are apparent throughout; all floors have elaborate parquet designs varying from room to room. In the center of the house is a colonnaded reception room from which a grand staircase rises to a 12 foot high stained glass window at the landing. Wood paneling also varies room to room. Most of the original interior detail is intact today.

2. 40 East Ferry Avenue, Henry G. Stevens House (1913)

Early twentieth century with Colonial Revival and English cottage features. A symmetrical facade with a massive classical doorway faces Woodward Avenue (the house had a Woodward address when built) on this two-and one-half story, multi-gabled, stuccoed house with wide overhanging eaves. There is a matching two-story garage to the rear. The Park Shelton Apartments Garage, which is located in the former front yard of the Stevens House, is a two-story building of Art Moderne design built in 1935. Stevens speculated in real estate and owned a silver mine.

Stevens House contd.

The Stevens House was transferred to the University of Michigan Institute of Social and Public Administration c. 1940 and then to Merrill-Palmer in 1942

3. 60 East Ferry Avenue, William A. Pungs House (1891)

Romanesque Revival style; William G. Malcomson (1853-1937) and William E. Higginbotham (1858-1923) architects. This large two and one-half story gable-roofed house is built of gray St. Lawrence marble with a round conically-roofed tower and an arcaded side porch. There is a matching carriage house at the rear. Pungs was vice president of the Michigan Railroad Supply Company, which organized in 1882; it merged with the Chicago Railway Equipment Company in 1899. Pungs also founded the Anderson Carriage Company, helped found and organize the Pungs-Finch Auto and Gas Engine Company and the Michigan Yacht and Power Company. In 1934 the Pungs house became the dormitory for the Merrill-Palmer Institute.

4. 70 East Ferry Avenue, Herman Roehm House (1888)

Queen Anne style. An end-gable-roofed, brick and red sandstone Queen Anne house with a two-level front bay window and a wide front porch with paired columns. Born in Germany, Roehm came to America in 1847. He assisted in organizing the firm of Radcliff, Roehm and Weston, hardware, which became Roehm & Davison in 1871, incorporated in 1901. In addition, he was president of the Detroit Carriage Company, a Presbyterian and a Republican. Roehm sold the house to Vincent D. Cliff, president of the Federal Casualty Company in 1908, and he, in turn, sold to Merrill-Palmer Institute in 1928.

5. 71 East Ferry Avenue, Charles Lang Freer House (1887), Wilson Eyre, Jr., architect

Quite possibly the finest example of the Shingle Style of architecture in Michigan, the Charles Lang Freer House, built in 1887, reflects both the Queen Anne style and the influence of Henry Hobson Richardson. Wilson Eyre, Jr., of Philadelphia, was a recognized master of the Shingle Style when he was contracted by Freer to design this house.

The exterior of the two and one-half story Shingle Style building displays work of heavy stone on the lower story; Freer imported the stone from New York State. The upper one and one-half stories are faced with closely spaced and dark stained shingles, starting at the top of the first story mullion and transept windows and ending with graceful lifts at the eaves. The house is a general pyramidal composition with emphasized horizontal lines. It has a front gable and high end chimneys which are constructed of the same stone as the first story, lending a striking contrast of texture between the stone and the shingles.

Twelve fireplaces are situated throughout the twenty-two rooms, with an elevator from the basement to carry wood. The rooms are oriented toward the surrounding grounds. Balconies, bay windows, enclosed porches, and skylights are featured throughout the house. The lofty foyer with the two-story stair-

well removed the customary barrier between floors and enhanced the beams, arches, and basketweave railing of the stairway. Many other original features of the house, innovative at the time, are total electric wiring, natural wood paneling, storage built-ins, entire walls of bookshelves, and cedar-lined drawers. The paneled walls and the ceiling beams of the house were supposedly stained by a process devised by Freer, using vinegar to rust iron and then applying the residue.

A carriage house-stable combination was connected to the main house by a roofed passageway. Enlargement of the carriage house in 1906 provided room for Whistler's famous Peacock Room, brought here from London, England.

Freer had amassed a huge fortune through part ownership in the Peninsular Car Works, operating the Detroit steam forge, and controlling a large car works at Adrian. A great art devotee, he dedicated much of his life to his collections of James McNeill Whistler and other contemporary artists, and his collection of Oriental art of all types became one of the finest outside Japan. He acquired the celebrated Peacock Room, the dining room of a London residence designed by Whistler. It was paneled in Spanish leather and honey-combed with walnut shelves to hold an assortment of porcelain. It was dismantled and installed in Freer's home.

In 1906 a formal deed of gift was executed bequeathing Freer's entire art collection to the nation upon completion of the building to house it at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Charles Freer died September 25, 1919. The Freer Gallery was opened to the public shortly thereafter.

Today the house serves an entirely different purpose. Since 1921 the building has been the property of the Merrill-Palmer Institute of Human Development and Family Life. The Institute is one of the most advanced schools in the country and its influence is world-wide. The school is dedicated to "the study and better understanding of man from infancy to old age."

6. 84 East Ferry, John Scott House (1886-87)

Queen Anne style with Elizabethan Revival features. John Scott, architect. A two and one-half story, cross-gable-roofed, brick house with half-timbered gables and a wide front porch supported by brick piers. Scott was a well-known Detroit architect in the late nineteenth century. It is also presently owned by Merrill-Palmer Institute.

7. 100 East Ferry, George A. Owen House (1886-87)

Romanesque Revival. John Scott and Company, architects. A two and one-half story, gabled-hip-roofed brick and brownstone house with ornamental stone banding and marquetry, pinnacles, columned veranda wrapping around the front and an abundance of Romanesque inspired ornament. Owen owned a dry goods firm.

Owen's widow sold the property to Edward T. Rush of Alfred Rush & Sons-Fruits, who transferred it to the Merrill-Palmer Institute in 1924. It used to house students.

8. 110 East Ferry Avenue, William Jackson House (1887)

Queen Anne style; probably John Scott and Company, architects. A two and one-half story, multi-gabled, brick house with an octagonal corner tower, rockfaced red sandstone trim, a Romanesque style door porch and elaborate foliated carving surrounding a projecting woman's head in the front gable. There is a matching carriage house at the rear.

Jackson was active in the early telephone industry in Michigan, as the president of the Michigan State Telephone Company. He was also president of the Municipal Lighting Commission under Mayor H. S. Pingree from 1893 to 1894. After two successive owners, the Jackson House was sold to Merrill-Palmer in 1925 and was used as a staff residence. Your Heritage House, a children's fine arts museum, now occupies this former residence.

9. 5450 John R. Street, James Murphy House (1910)

Neo-Georgian style; F. E. Carleton, architect, Henry Carew, builder. A symmetrical, rectangular, two and one-half story, flank-gable-roofed, brick house with typical Colonial Revival features such as quoins; key-stones inset in the windowheads; shallow barrel-roofed dormers; lunette windows in the end gables; and a modillion cornice. A modern vestibule has been built at the entrance and the two-level side porch has been enclosed with glass block.

Michael J. Murphy, president of the Murphy Chair Company, purchased this property in 1909 from D. M. Ferry, Jr., although his brother, James Murphy, the treasurer of the Chair Company, resided in the house. The Murphy estate sold the property to Violet T. Lewis in the 1940s. It was here that she began the Lewis Business School for the training of blacks.

10. 222 East Ferry Avenue, Samuel A. Sloman House (1914)

Neo-Georgian style; George V. Pottle, architect. A two and one-half story, hip-roofed, brick, asymmetrical house with twin bay windows and a side-entrance sheltered by a wooden, barrel-vaulted vestibule. Samuel A. Sloman, of M. Sloman & Company, furs, resided here until his death in 1938. It was later owned by Violet Lewis of the Lewis Business College.

11. 223 East Ferry Avenue, Rufus Goodell House (1890-91)

Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival; Rogers & McFarlane, architects. A two and one-half story, multi-gabled, brick-and-brownstone house with a three-story round corner tower and a wide front porch with Romanesque post. Goodell was a real estate speculator. There is an outstanding matching carriage house to the rear, with a two-story conical roofed turret projecting through the steeply sloped roof.

12. 235 East Ferry Avenue, William L. Barclay House (1891)

Queen Anne style with Romanesque details; Mortimer L. Smith, architect. A two and one-half story, end-gable-roofed, brick house with an off-center recessed entrance surmounted by a second-story arched loggia and flanked by a round, three-story, corner tower.

The property was transferred to the Detroit YMCA in 1926 by its second owner; it housed the Hudson School for Boys in the 1930s. The YMCA sold the property to the Nu Omega Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in 1942.

13. 246 East Ferry Avenue, Residence (1916), A. E. Harley, architect.

Charles Steinberg Ho.

Italian Villa Revival style; an asymmetrical two and one-half story, hip-roofed, buff brick house with Spanish tile roofing, classical stone window enframements with projecting molded caps, barrel-roofed dormers and an arcaded side loggia (now enclosed). There is a matching garage to the rear.

The home of the Fritz Funeral Home since 1948, Prophet Jones, a nationally known black religious figure, previously resided there.

Steinberg, of Frank + Steinberg, State Loan Office

14. 255 East Ferry Avenue, Frank C. Hecker House (1893)

Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style; Donaldson & Meier, architects. A boxy, two and one-half story, high hip-roofed, brick house with a large, bowed, tuscan-columned porch across the roof; a pair of matching oriel windows at the second story separated by a panel of raised brickwork in a geometric design; and tall hip-roofed dormers on the front. Hecker was the son of Col. Frank J. Hecker, the railroad car manufacturer, whose house is on the corner of Ferry and Woodward.

15. 263 East Ferry Avenue, William R. Croul House (1891)

Queen Anne style with French Renaissance detailing; Henry Carew, builder. An asymmetrical two and one-half story, tall hipped-roof, brick and rock-faced brownstone house with a bowed front bay, classical pilasters between the first floor windows, and an unusual diaper work freize of raised bricks between the first and second floors.

Croul was president and manager of the Riverside Storage and Cartage Company, president and director of the Detroit Cobalt Mining Company, and director of Detroit Fire and Marine Insurance Company. Lewis Business College, owned and directed by Violet Lewis for the instruction of blacks, purchased the building in 1960. It is now owned by the Center for Creative Studies.

16. 270 East Ferry Avenue, Richard H. Macauley House (1899)

Queen Anne style; Joseph E. Mills, architect. A large asymmetrical, two and one-half story, flank-gable-roofed, brick house with a three-story, steeply-gabled, front bay window. Macauley owned a wholesale millinery firm.

17. 295 East Ferry Avenue, Henry P. Baldwin II House (1893)

Colonial Revival style; John Scott and Company, architects. An asymmetrical, two and one-half story, high hip-roofed brick house with a bowed front bay window, an arcaded, recessed, corner entrance porch and broken pedimented dormers. Baldwin was the son of a governor and a boot and shoe manufacturer, partner in Baldwin, McGraw and Company.

18. 314 East Ferry Avenue, Howard B. Holden House (1913)

Arts and Crafts style; T. J. Angel, architect. An asymmetrical, two and one-half story, flank-gable-roofed, brick and stucco house with a projecting gabled bay, an oriel window and a deep front porch with massive stuccoed piers on the front. It was built at a cost of \$6,000 by Holden, secretary-treasurer of the City Concrete and Coal Company.

19. 5461 Brush Street, William Lennane House (1913)

Neo-Georgian style; Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, architects. A rectangular, asymmetrical, two and one-half story, flank-gable-roofed, brick house with typical colonial detailing at the entrance, the modillion cornice, the pedimented dormers and the ramped balustrades. William Lennane was a paving, sewer, and concrete contractor. The address was changed from 326 East Ferry to 5461 Brush in 1941 when the Detroit Association of Women's Clubs, a black women's organization, purchased the property from the Lennane heirs because blacks were restricted from owning property west of Brush. After a fire in 1976, the old entry on Ferry was covered up and is now indiscernable. The building is still owned and operated by the Detroit Association of Women's Clubs.

20. 404-414 East Ferry Avenue

Both of these two and one-half story Prairie Vernacular style residential buildings were built in the second decade of the twentieth century as flats. The structure at 404 East Ferry, on the southwest corner of Brush and East Ferry, has a hip roof with dormers and gables edged with verge boards, an Elizabethian characteristic. Similar in grading, height and scale, 414 East Ferry was connected to its neighbor when both were converted into Fairview Sanitarium in the early 1930s for the purpose of treating blacks. This medical facility was established by Dr. Robert Greenidge, the first black radiologist in the city of Detroit and one of the founders of Dunbar Hospital, Detroit's first black hospital on Frederick.

21. 405 East Ferry Avenue, Henry Walker Quinby House (1895)

Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style; August Dieterich & Son, builders(?). A two and one-half story house of brick with stone foundations was built for Quinby, the secretary-treasurer and business manager of the Detroit Free Press, at a cost of \$5,000. Joseph T. Webber, a relative of J.L. Hudson through his sister's marriage, and a department manager at J.L. Hudson Company, resided in the house from 1903 until it was transferred to the Hudson-Webber Land Company in 1919, which retained the property until 1922.

The engaged hexagonal turret with a conical roof on the east side of the front facade is an especially attractive feature of this house.

22. 420 East Ferry Avenue, Residence (1917)

Built as an investment property with flats, this two and one-half story Prairie Vernacular style building with two-story bowed windows and hip roof, was the girlhood home of Joyce Garrett. It has recently undergone rehabilitation.

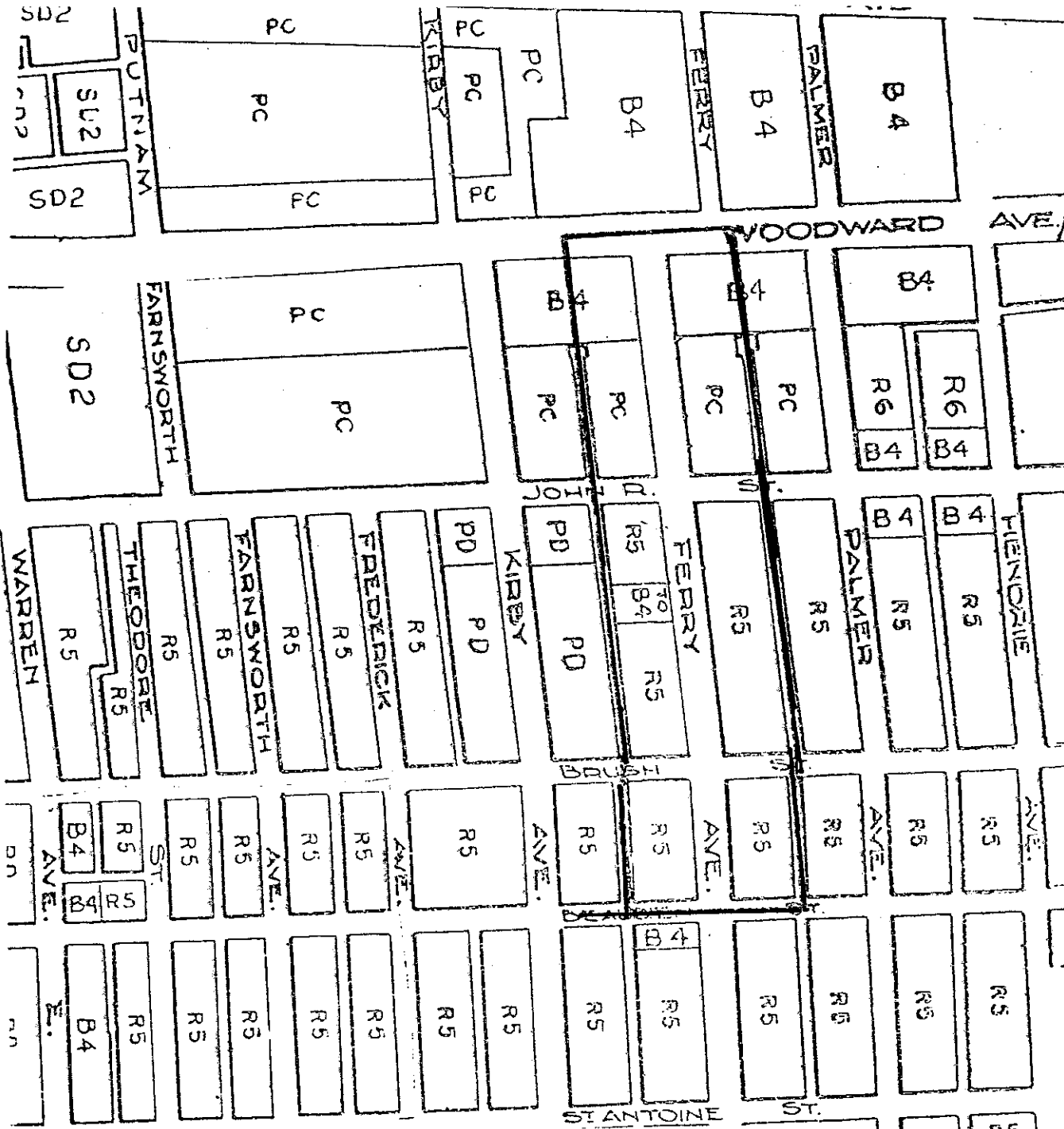
23. 421 East Ferry Avenue, Herber Bassett House (1887)

Stick/Queen Anne style; W. H. Morse & Company, contractors; William Scott possible architect. This two and one-half story house originally belonging to Herber Bassett, a travel agent, was the first house built on the third block of East Ferry off Woodward. Its multi-textured and multi-colored surfaces -- the now brown diamond-shaped tin panels on the second story, the orange brick on the first story, the light gray rough stone of the foundation, and the wood shingles and verge boards over the gables -- combined with the varying sizes and shapes of fenestration, the multi-faceted arrangement of the projecting facade surfaces and bays, and the wrap-around porch towards the east, result in a superb example of a late nineteenth century Victorian home of modest size.

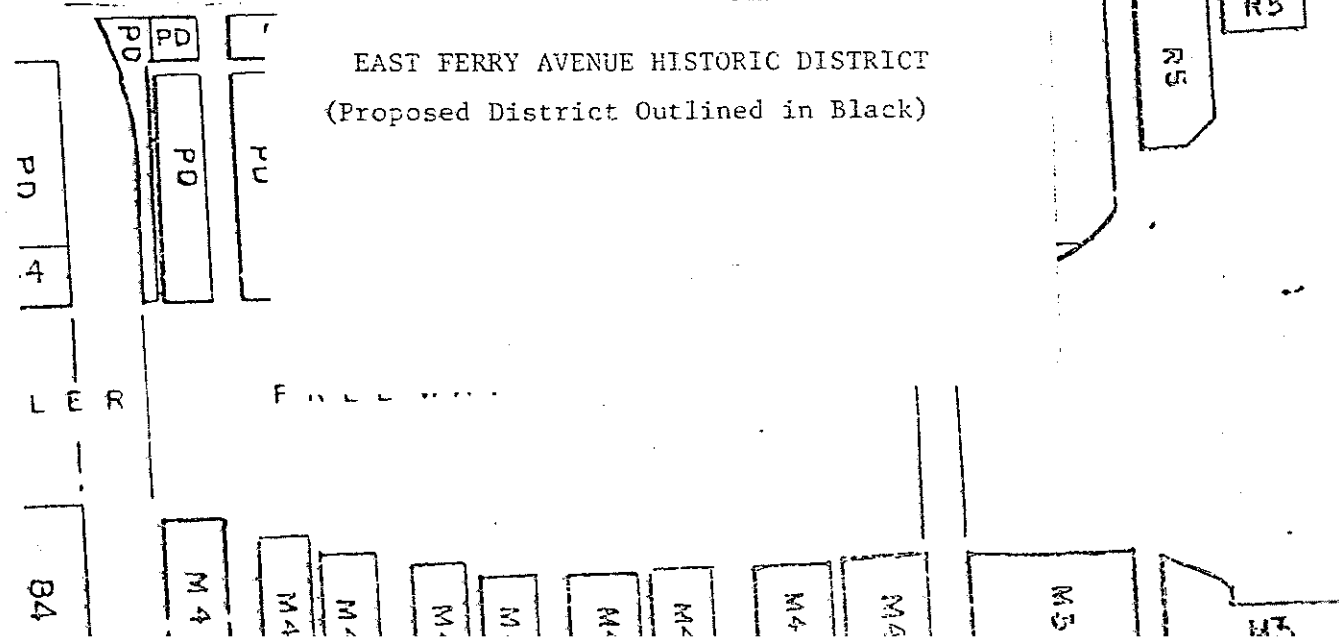
Bassett sold his home to Joseph L. Hudson, of department store fame, in 1909; he sold it to the J. L. Hudson Company in 1912 and it was occupied by James B. Webber. The Hudson-Webber Land Company sold it to Grant B. Cicotte, a clerk in the city assessor's office, in 1925. It has had a succession of owners since Mr. Cicotte lost the property in a foreclosure in 1939.

24. 429-31 East Ferry Avenue, Corbett House (1891), M. Blay & Son, contractors

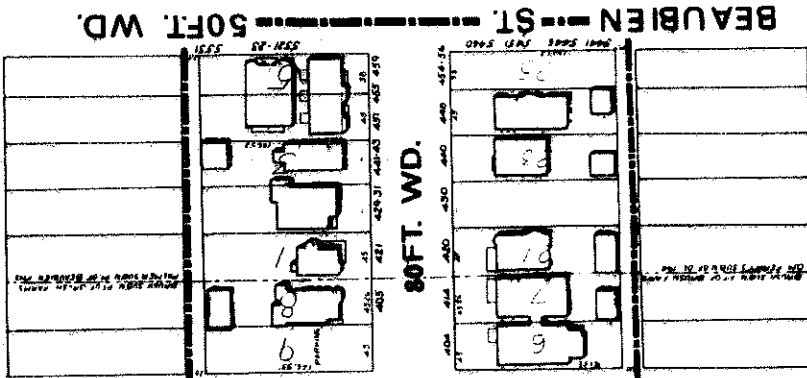
Now a multi-unit dwelling, the Corbett House exhibits late Queen Anne and early Colonial Revival features. Two and one-half stories high with a hip roof and shingled gable, the arched and squared voids, brick belt courses, and oriel windows accentuate the otherwise boxy appearance of this house, built for Sidney Corbett, Jr., banker and broker, and his wife, Katherine. Corbett sold it to J. L. Hudson in 1910, who sold it to Louise Webber and her husband, Roscoe Jackson, then secretary-treasurer and general manager of Hudson Motor Car Company. The Helping Hand Society was housed there in the late 1920s and early 1930s, followed by the Foundation Music School, a collaborative effort between Elizabeth Johnson and Bertha Hansbury.



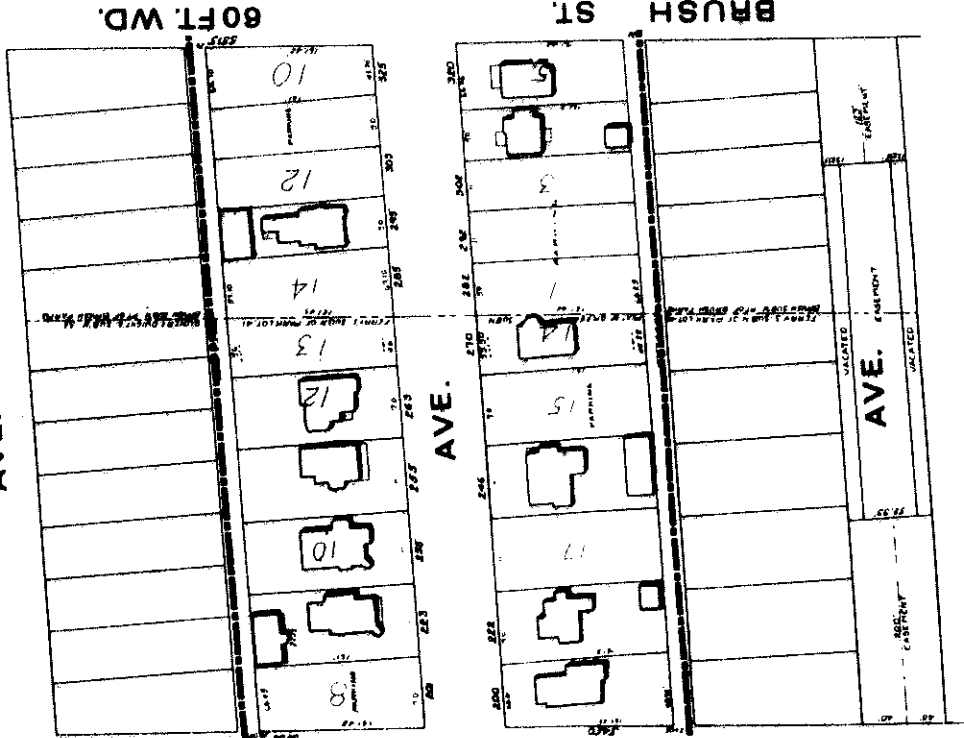
EAST FERRY AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT
 (Proposed District Outlined in Black)



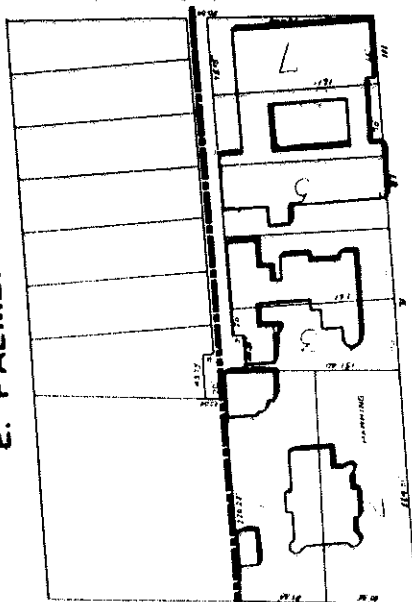
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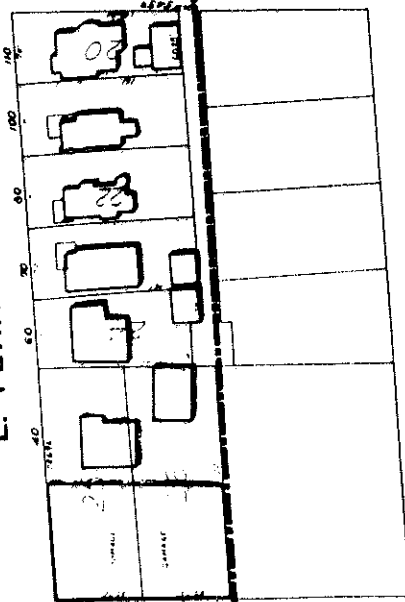
AVE.



E. PALMER



E. FERRY



E. KIRBY

EAST FERRY HISTORIC DISTRICT



SCALE: 1" = 40' 0"

REVISED 12/82
2/82

0300

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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City of Detroit

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Final Report

Addition to the East Ferry Avenue Historic District 578, 582, and 590 E. Ferry Avenue and 5536 St. Antoine

By a resolution dated June 28, 2016, the Detroit City Council charged the Historic Designation Advisory Board (HDAB), a study committee, with the official study of the proposed Third Baptist /B'nai Israel/Hayes Historic District in accordance with Chapter 25 of the 1984 Detroit City Code and the Michigan Local Historic Districts Act. On July 14, 2016, the Historic Designation Advisory Board requested that the proposed Third Baptist /B'nai Israel/Hayes Historic district be added to the East Ferry Avenue Historic District, designated in 1981.

The proposed addition to the East Ferry Avenue Historic District adds four buildings —two residential buildings, a religious structure, and an educational structure —to the original thirty-three building district. Included are, on the south side of East Ferry Avenue between Beaubien and St. Antoine Streets, 578, 582, and 590 E. Ferry, and, on the northeastern corner of St. Antoine and East Ferry, Golightly Educational Center, originally known as Balch School, at 5536 St. Antoine.

Located in the Art Center District of Midtown in Detroit; the four buildings are among a cluster of existing historic buildings and districts, including the original East Ferry Avenue Historic District, Kirby Avenue Historic District, D.M. Ferry Superintendent's House Historic District, and Tushiyah United Hebrew School/Scott Memorial Methodist Church, that share common developmental, architectural and ethnic patterns. The proposed addition to the East Ferry Avenue Historic District is approximately two and one-half miles north of the point of origin at Campus Martius, in the center of downtown Detroit.

Boundaries:

The boundaries of the proposed Addition to the East Ferry Avenue Historic District are shown in bold lines on the attached map, and are as follows:

Beginning at a point located at the centerline of East Ferry Avenue at its intersection with the centerline of Beaubien, thence east along said centerline of E. Ferry to its intersection with the centerline of the I-75 Service Drive; thence north along said centerline of Service Drive to its intersection with the centerline of E. Palmer; thence east along said centerline of E. Palmer to its intersection with the centerline of St. Antoine; thence south along the centerline of St. Antoine to its intersection with the centerline of the alley running east-west between the south side of E. Ferry and the north side of E. Kirby; thence west along said centerline of alley to its intersection with Beaubien; thence north along said centerline of Beaubien to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification: The boundaries extend from the East Ferry Historic District as designated in 1981 to include four additional historic properties. The attached condo units at 500-520 E. Ferry and the fenced, vacant lots between the condo units and 578 E. Ferry are non-contributing.

History: Statement of Significance:

The East Ferry Avenue Historic District is significant as an intact, turn of the century, upper class residential streetscape illustrating a variety of architectural styles popular from the 1880s through the first decades of the twentieth century, as well as for its later associations with Jewish and African American history in the City of Detroit. The addition of the four buildings fit well within this framework

The congregations of B'nai Israel Synagogue and Third Baptist Church represent the religious and ethnic history and historical development patterns of the Upper Hastings Street neighborhood in Detroit, now referred to as the Arts Center area of Midtown. Designed as single-family dwellings in 1890 by the same architect, Edward A. Walsh, the single-family dwellings at 578 and 590 East Ferry are among several substantial, late-nineteenth century houses still present on East Ferry Avenue between Woodward and St. Antoine. Number 578 E. Ferry is related to the area's Jewish history as it served as Congregation B'nai Israel's place of worship from 1913-1924, before its new synagogue was erected at 582 E. Ferry. B'nai Israel was the third oldest Jewish congregation formed in the city of Detroit and one of those associated with Rabbi Judah Levin, Detroit's most important Orthodox rabbi. Third Baptist Church, founded in 1931, purchased the religious building from the B'nai Israel congregation in 1935 and has remained there to this day.

The house at 578 E. Ferry was purchased in 1940 by Ernest and Carrie Hayes, a couple from Atlanta whose history is emblematic of other African Americans moving to Detroit in the late

1930s and early 1940s and establishing themselves in homes, institutions and businesses. The house at 590 E. Ferry became a Finnish Cooperative boarding house in the 1920s and then the Grand Central Hotel, owned and operated by George S. James, an African American, in the 1930s and 40s. Balch School represents the first elementary school built in Detroit on the platoon system, and the first with a swimming pool and specialized rooms for community use. Its presence is another reflection of the dramatic demographic shift of Detroit's Jewish population from Detroit's near east side to Northwest Detroit followed by the corresponding influx and movement of African Americans. Balch School is also significant as another of Malcomson & Higginbotham's monumental architectural designs in the Collegiate Gothic style.

578 & 590 E. Ferry Avenue

In 1886, a portion of the Antoine Beaubien Farm was subdivided into the D.M. Ferry Subdivision. Dexter M. Ferry, president and founder of the D.M. Ferry Seed Company, also owned a portion of the subdivision between St. Antoine and Hastings. Both areas contained his fields that produced vegetables and flowers for his seeds, which were sold worldwide. Throughout the 1880s the first residential dwellings appeared on E. Ferry, west of Beaubien closer to Woodward Avenue. However, the area to the east of Beaubien was not platted until 1892, and most lots not developed until the second decade of the 20th century. The Dexter M. Ferry's Superintendent's House at 612 E. Ferry and the houses at 578 and 590 E. Ferry were exceptions.

Building permit numbers 1191 and 1703 were issued to E.A. Walsh & Son approximately three months apart in 1890, for the construction of the two two-story brick dwellings measuring 38' x 58' at 590 (220) East Ferry Avenue and at 578 (208), the former estimated to cost \$8,000 and the latter \$9,000.¹ Their architect, Edward A. Walsh, was in business by 1889 as E.A. Walsh & Son (Joseph J.), architect and superintendent.² A two-story brick barn at the rear of 578 E. Ferry was built under permit #2167 issued on December 22, 1892 to E. E. Hamy.

George L. Beecher (1862-1919) was the first occupant of the house at 578 E. Ferry. He moved to his newly built house at 7475 Woodward at E. Ferry, designed by H.J. Maxwell Grylls, shortly after it was completed in 1894. John F. Peters, a lawyer, then resided in the house at 578 E. Ferry, and was joined by Sophie L. Case, the widow of Julian M. Case, by 1902, according to Polk's City of Detroit directories. Mr. Peters was the administrator of Mrs. Case's estate. By 1911, only Mrs. Case is listed as living in the house, and, as listed in 1913, the home was then occupied by a "Jewish Church," beginning its association with B'nai Israel.

Residing at 590 E. Ferry Avenue in 1892 was Charles L. Clark, who was in the insurance and real estate business. Henry C. Penny, Jr., also in insurance, lived there after the turn of the century. As Detroit expanded outward with the industrialization of the city and its population grew accordingly, many of the grand houses within the Grand Boulevard were subdivided into apartments and single-occupancy rooming houses. Such was the case with 590 E. Ferry.

¹ City of Detroit, Building permit #1191, August 8, 1890; #1703, October 24, 1890. The house numbers, used prior to 1921, are noted in parenthesis.

² Robert Budd Ross, George Byron Catlin, Clarence Burton, *Landmarks of Wayne County and Detroit*, Brookhaven Press, 2000, 201.

A network of Finnish cooperative food-distribution facilities, boarding houses and hotels was established under the Northern States Cooperative league in the early 20th century, located primarily around the needs of immigrant mining communities in the Midwest. With the industrialization of urban areas and Finnish men relocating for employment, some co-operatives were established in cities like Detroit and Cleveland. The Cooperative Toivo Company of Michigan, located at 291 Winder Street, was founded in 1919, and the house at 590 E. Ferry was one such facility operated by them as a boarding house and the Independent Club in the 1920s. By the late 1930s, the property was sold to George Seymore James, the proprietor of the Grand Central Hotel. The hotel offered “Quiet, Modern and Homelike rooms by the day or week” and had a “modern dining room.”³ James was an African American entrepreneur of dubious reputation, according to a *Detroit Free Press* article full of racial innuendo regarding his invention and marketing of a ticket printer.⁴ James also owned the Grand Central Billiard Hall at 3030 Hastings Street.

After 1910 most of the properties in the area of the two houses were developed with multiple-unit buildings designed for less affluent middle class occupants, primarily Jews of Eastern Europe descent escaping the shtetles of Poland and Russia. At this time, the Eastern European Jewish population, whose primarily language was Yiddish, did not assimilate well with the previous Jewish generation of German Jews. Thus, Eastern European Jews tended to cluster together, carving out their own community filled with like ancestry and homeland affiliations.

The Jewish population of Detroit grew from 30,000 in 1910 to approximately 80,000 in 1916. Prior to this, most Jews lived south of Forest Avenue. After 1910, the Jews moved northward to create a dense community known as the Upper Hastings neighborhood. The area experienced a construction boom as a result of the influx of Eastern European Jews, and many Jewish builders built the new, multi-unit housing. Most of the newcomers were practicing Orthodox Jews who observed specific dietary laws and religious practices, one of which banned on the use of technology on the Sabbath and holy days. Consequently, Orthodox Jews needed to live within walking distance of their synagogues. The vacant lot that stood empty between 578 and 590 E. Ferry Avenue was finally built upon in 1924 by Congregation B’nai Israel.

B’nai Israel

Congregation B’nai Israel, incorporated on June 19, 1871, was Detroit’s third oldest Jewish congregation, after Beth El (1850) and Shaary Zedek (1861). First holding services in a rented house and later in Funke’s Hall on Macomb Street, the small congregation built its first synagogue on Macomb between St. Antoine and Beaubien, around 1878. Its constitution “provided for a board of trustees [sic] cantor and sexton, but not for a rabbi.”⁵ Its members were Orthodox Jews from Poland and, as stipulated by the Constitution, that “the form of prayer to be read . . . shall be agreeable to the forms, customs and regulations of Minhag Polen,”⁶ meaning according to the Polish/Lithuanian/Prague text.

³ Ernest Borden, *Detroit’s Paradise Valley*, 2003, 19.

⁴ Jack Pickering, “Mystery Machine’s Promotion Has Mumbo-Jumbo Aspects”, *Detroit Free Press*, Jan 7, 1940, 7.

⁵ Allen A. Warsen, *The Detroit Jewish Community from the Founding of Congregation Beth El to the founding of the Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit*, Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, June 1980, 20: 2, 12.

⁶ Morris Garrett, *The Development of Jewish Education in Detroit*, JHS, 5:2, 7.

B'nai Israel moved to its second permanent structure on East Ferry near Hastings in 1913, Located in what was originally built as a private home at 578 E. Ferry Avenue, the congregation turned this home into a synagogue, where they met for eleven years until 1924, when the new synagogue was completed next door at 582 East Ferry. Rabbi Judah (Yahuda) Lieb Levin (1862 - 1927) became its first settled clergyman. Rabbi Levin helped support the needs of the Jewish community in Detroit during a period when it was experiencing tremendous growth. He was referred to in an article in the *Journal of the Jewish Historical Society* as, “unquestionably, the most outstanding Orthodox rabbi of the first quarter of this [sic] century . . .”⁷

One of four Orthodox rabbis in Detroit in the early 20th century, Rabbi Levin was born in 1862 in Trab, Vilna Province, in the Russian Empire. He was ordained as a rabbi by the prestigious Yeshivah of Volozhin, Lithuania, and arrived in Detroit in 1897 after serving in Rochester, NY, returning to Russia, and, questioning the future of the Jewish religion there, permanently relocated to the United States. From New Haven, Connecticut, Levin was invited to come to Detroit to preside over several pulpits, alternating from one week to the next. He arranged several Orthodox congregations, including Beth Abraham, Beth Jacob, B'nai Israel, and Shaarey Zedek, into a formal federation known as the United Hebrew Congregations of Detroit.

In 1914, Rabbi Levin established Yeshivah Beth Yehudah, which has grown into “the largest all-day Jewish school system in Michigan, providing quality Torah-based and secular educational programs for almost 100 years.”⁸ Importantly, he also became one of the founders of Mizrachi, the religious Zionist movement. Although Beth Yehudah became his spiritual home, Levin’s family became influential stalwarts of Congregation Sharrey Zedek, where he officiated between 1897 and 1904, presiding over the construction of its synagogue on Winder Street, completed in 1903.

Rabbi Levin, a brilliant man by all accounts, was an inventor by vocation and was issued three patents for an adding/subtracting, or calculating, machine, a model of which was placed on permanent exhibit at the Smithsonian Institute. He and his family lived in an apartment at 636-38 East Ferry for over ten years while he was attending the religious needs of the Jewish community. Highly regarded in Jewish circles, Levin had many non-Orthodox and non-Jewish friends; his outstanding reputation preceded him. The *Jewish News*, upon his death in 1926, reported, “Rabbi Levin was one of the leading, most respected and best loved figures in this country. His funeral was the largest in the history of the Jewish community.”⁹ Eight thousand people came out for it.

B'nai Israel then was one of four synagogues located in the Upper Hastings neighborhood. It was built under permit #40880 issued to Congregation B'nai Israel on June 18, 1924. Its estimated cost of construction was listed as \$131,000. The congregation remained at that location for only a few more years.

Neighborhood institutions that catered to Jews, Balch School, a Detroit public school, and Tushiyah United Hebrew School, had an important role in educating the community’s Jewish children.

⁷ Op cit, Warsen, 17.

⁸ Detroit Yeshiva History, <https://www.yby.org/about-us/history/>

⁹ “Detroit Jewry Mourns Loss of Rabbi Judah L. Levin, Scholar and Sage” *Detroit Jewish News*, April, 1926, 2.

Eastern European Jews arriving in America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries eagerly relied on public schools for the education and assimilation needs of their children, and Hebrew schools for the teachings of Judaism after regular school hours.

As the Jewish population became more affluent in its adopted country and city, its members built more spacious houses in new subdivisions opening up in the northwestern portions of the city. The Upper Hastings area remained a largely Jewish community from 1910 until the late 1930s, while during the 1930s the area began changing to an African American community.

Congregation B'nai Israel relocated to 12650 Linwood Avenue on the city's northwest side in 1930. Rabbi Israel Flam moved B'nai Israel to a refurbished garage on 10 Mile and Evergreen before the congregation eventually moved into a new building at 15400 W. 10 Mile Road. By 1938 the building at 582 East Ferry was occupied by Third Baptist Church, and still is today.

Third Baptist Church

Third Baptist Church was formed in 1931 when it split off of the Mount Olive Baptist Church then located at 9760 Woodward Avenue. The Reverend C. E. Askew founded the new church. On the 4th Sunday of October 1935 at 10:00 a.m., 150 members marched from the Garfield Bar on Garfield between Beaubien and St. Antoine to 582 E. Ferry, the new home of Third Baptist Church. It began with approximately 500 members and was chartered as a separate entity from its mother church.

The church at 582 East Ferry continued to provide services within the community, such as providing clothing, food, counseling, and other type of assistance, as the Jewish establishment had before it. Its successful growth at 582 E. Ferry was celebrated with a mortgage burning on September 30, 1953.

Served by several dynamic pastors, the Rev. C. E. Askew, originally from North Carolina, served for eighteen years (1931-1949); Rev. Henry L. Davis for nine years (1949-58); Rev. Samuel J. Williams was pastor for thirty-two years (1959-1991). Among the accomplishments of the Rev. Williams' time was a renewed interest in Christian education. Rev. X.O. Roby, Jr. became pastor in 2013 and is currently serving.

The Rev. Williams was chaplain at Tuskegee Institute when Mayor Coleman A. Young, former City Councilman Ernest Brown, and former Congressman Charles Diggs were stationed there during World War II. Rev. Williams, a prominent Christian educator, wrote several books about the teachings of Christianity. He earned his master's degree in theology from American Baptist Theology Seminary. After completing the chaplaincy course at Harvard University, Rev. Williams served at various military bases in the country before going to Tuskegee. After his military service, Rev. Williams returned to Denver as a pastor before settling in Detroit in 1947. In addition to his pastoral duties, he served as executive director of a training program affiliated with the United Auto Workers and was president of the S.J. Williams School of Religion on McClellan on Detroit's east side.

Ernest and Carrie Hayes House, 578 E. Ferry

Circa 1940, the house at 578 E. Ferry, used until 1924 as the synagogue of Congregation B'nai Israel and then a boarding and apartment house, became home to Ernest and Carrie Hayes. Carrie was the daughter of former slaves who settled in Dublin, Georgia, after the Civil War, according

to her beloved granddaughter, Joan Whitfield. Carrie's father, who escaped slavery during the Civil War, "went into the woods sometime during the Civil War and came out when it was over."¹⁰

By the time the Hayes moved to Detroit from Atlanta and into the house at 578 E. Ferry, it was in need of repair.¹¹ Ernest Hayes was a master brick mason, plaster and carpenter who worked at Ford Motor Company. Carrie carried on her work in quest for freedom and equality that began at the Wheat Street Baptist Church in the Fourth Ward of Atlanta while under the leadership of Rev. William Holmes Borders, Sr. According to Ms. Whitfield, the Hayes' "were a part of the warm relationships enjoyed by the African American and Jewish communities during the Hay Day of 'Black Bottom and Paradise Valley.'" Ernest Hayes died in 1963; Carrie passed away in 1965. Her grand nieces, Joan Whitfield and Carolyn Robinson, are the present owners who desire to one day restore the house to its former glory.

Balch School

Goldberg Athletic Field was chosen as the site for a school to be erected in 1920 on the east side on Saint Antoine between Ferry and Palmer Avenues, to the west of the field. The school was planned with twenty-two rooms and a seating capacity of over 1000 students at a cost of \$656,712. Occupied in September of 1921, Balch School was named in honor of George W. Balch, superintendent of Western Union, headquartered in Rochester, New York, who in 1878 assisted in organizing the Michigan Bell Telephone Company in Detroit. Among the public offices he held in Detroit were alderman (1870-71), president of the Detroit Common Council (1871), and member of the Detroit Board of Education (1874-77, President 1875-77) and Board of Health. He was also one of the incorporators of the Detroit Museum of Art.

Balch School opened as a kindergarten through eighth grade platoon school, the first in Detroit designed especially for the platoon system. A platoon school utilized homerooms for regular subjects half of the school day and required the movement of pupils to rooms for specialized classes, such as science, art, and music, the other half of the day, so that every room was utilized all of the time. People came from places as far away as England, Denmark, India, Palestine, and Japan, and well as nearly every state in the union to see this school and how it worked. In addition, Balch was, up to that point, the first and only elementary school in the city to be planned and constructed with a swimming pool and the first equipped with rooms for community activities. In keeping with the desire to marry city parks and recreation fields with school facilities, Goldberg Field became the playground for the school as well as the community.

Originally ninety-six percent Jewish, the demographics of Balch School changed when the Jewish population began to migrate to Northwest Detroit. African Americans soon moved into the community and attended Balch School. A 1936 survey affirmed this demographic shift, identifying ninety-six percent of the 1320 pupils as African American. An "Opportunity Room" was inaugurated, an open window room was established for students with health needs in 1928, and a

¹⁰ Joan Whitfield, *Carrie Rozier Hayes, An enormously Authentic Cultural and Historic Life Richly well lived*, July 2015-Oct 26, 2015. Unpublished MS.

¹¹ Ibid.

special education room was opened in 1932. Balch School was built as a fully developed school building that incorporated the most innovative thinking on the incorporation of curricular, health and safety, and communal usage in school design. Erected at the later end of the era of yearly contracts with the Detroit Board of Education, its notoriety represented the apex of the partnership of Malcomson & Higginbotham.

Architecture

The three buildings, 578, 582, and 590 E. Ferry Avenue, are located on the eastern end of east Ferry Avenue, between Beaubien and St. Antoine Streets. East Ferry Avenue is an east-west, primarily residential street that begins at Woodward Avenue and ends one full block east of the proposed district expansion, at the Chrysler Service Drive, I-75. Characteristic of properties along East Ferry Avenue are the broad lawns between the curb and concrete public sidewalks planted with trees. The late-Victorian houses and early-twentieth century duplexes, flats and terraces generally share a common setback, with narrow side lots. Changes in use and occupancy, and demolition that has taken place over the years have altered the late-nineteenth/early twentieth century streetscape, but infill housing has retained many features alluding to the architecture of the adjacent historic districts. The former synagogue, completed in 1924, occupies the lot between the two Queen Anne houses, erected in 1890.

578 E. Ferry Avenue

The House at 578 E. Ferry is a two and one-half story brick, rectangular building on a high basement with multiple roof shapes. Its front façade has been refaced in brick but many of the original Queen Anne features remain, particularly the wooden elements and details above its eaves and the northwestern tower. The east and center bays have been altered to accommodate the change from a single-family dwelling to one of multiple units, and re-bricked, resulting in a flat wall surface with a single entry centered on each floor. The original porch, likely very ornate with Queen Anne detailing, has been replaced with a two-story porch between plain, square brick piers. An addition was built to the rear of the house.

The front dormer and corner tower provide light into the attic story with regular arrangements of windows; some of the original double-hung, subdivided wooden sashes still exist on the tower but have otherwise been replaced. Above the fenestration and ornamental woodwork of the projecting balcony with its flared roof is the lower half of the slate-faced gable. Above, in the wooden, upper portion of the gable beneath the molded cornice, is a potpourri of detailing, including a heraldic crest, festoons and rosettes, above a band of ornamental zigzag. The northeast corner tower sports a not-quite onion shaped domed roof, its pointed apex capped in metal. Beneath it is the original patterned brick, brownstone sills and belt course, and, between the first floor windows, a section of fieldstone.

590 E. Ferry Avenue

This building, like its neighbor at 578 E. Ferry, are both characterized by multiple roof shapes, types of fenestration, materials, colors and surface treatments, at a high degree of artistry, but 590 E. Ferry retains most of its original architectural features. It is presently undergoing restoration to its exterior.

The house was built as a single family residence in the Queen Anne style, is brick, two-and one-half-stories tall with multiple roof shapes, set on a high basement. However, in addition to its original dimensions (38' x 58') it still retains its original brick front façade, including the porch

with its set-back double-door entrance opening, three-sided shallow bay window, engaged octagonal tower, and balconet. Its many different sized window openings appear unaltered; most windows are of the double-hung sash variety. The large window featured on the second story has a round-arched divided light above its lower sash.

The red slate-faced gable above the eaves has a row of three small windows with subdivided upper sashes. The gable above it projects outward on brackets; it is faced with a pattern of red and gray slate shingles. Detail in raised brick, brownstone and wood can be seen throughout the various elevations.

Third Baptist Church, 582 E. Ferry Avenue

The building now known as Third Baptist Church, erected in 1924 by Congregation B'nai Israel, is situated on the lot between the two Late Victorian houses. Three stories in height, the light-brown brick building features a symmetrical, classically influenced façade and has a flat roof that is not visible from the street. It sits on a raised basement and has a high parapet. Detailing consists of largely of brick laid in stack bond, sometimes slightly raised, and sometimes set off by stone corners.

Its façade, 40' wide by 40' tall, is composed of three bays, the central bay containing the double-doored entrance and fan light above within a slightly raised brick arch with a large keystone. A rise of six steps between the stair-walls lead up to a shallow landing before three more steps lead to the front doors. The entrance is flanked by a narrow window with transom and then a lantern above. Above the large arch is the upper level, set off from the entrance section by a continuous cornice that serves as a sill to a deeply set arcade of five round-arched windows with divided lights, springing from brick pilasters. A blind oculus is centered in the parapet wall of the central bay.

The slightly projecting outer bays each contain a single entrance door at the ground floor and, above them, a tall, narrow opening containing two windows with divided lights separated by a solid panel between them. The western door has a ramp leading to it. Above the continuous belt course is, in each of the projecting outer bays, a tablet with Roman numerals indicating the Ten Commandments that rises above the coping.

Common brick was used on the sides and rear elevation of the religious building; the rear features two fire escapes.

George Washington Balch School, 5536 St. Antoine

Balch School, now known as Golightly Education Center, presents a broad, symmetrically arranged facade facing west toward St. Antoine Street. It occupies an entire block on the north side of East Ferry Avenue, with the Walter P. Chrysler Service Drive arcing around it on the east. Built in 1920, it is a flat-roofed, rectangular, three-story building of monumental appearance. Fenestrated, recessed wall sections of three bays each flank a central entrance tower, and are anchored by mostly unfenestrated end pavilions. The mottled orange and brown common bond brick building is decorated by numerous stone belt courses, especially prevalent on the central Tudor-arched entrance and clock tower. A rear addition was constructed circa 1949 and the

building was extended further rearward circa 2002. The building's level of historic integrity remains high.

The main feature of its front façade is the projecting central tower bay, articulated in four stages, topped with stylized coping atop the parapet. The molded stringcourse beneath the parapet is interrupted at regular intervals by small, carved, figural blocks. The large, round clock is set in a stone panel with tabs; its face bears roman numerals. Shallow, buttress-like elements project upward from the bottom stage, framing the three stories of windows between them. The year that the building was constructed, 1920, is incised on the cornerstone to the right of the entrance. The wide, recessed, triple door entrance at the ground floor level is surrounded by a limestone embrasure, and surmounted by three, multi-light, wood-framed transom panels following the shape of the double, compound, Tudor arch. Sandwiched within the double, molded arch is the original name of the school, "George Washington Balch School," carved in stylized lettering. The masonry panel above the arch is enriched with carved Gothic tracery, medallions, scrolls and floral details, rising in the center to include a medallion bearing rosettes. Small busts at the corners of the entrance and the other ornamental, carved detail appear to be the work of Corrado Parducci, a Detroit sculptural artist whose work appears on many prominent Detroit buildings of this period.

The elevations lower to a single tall story housing an auditorium on the south elevation, and a gymnasium on the north elevation. The words, "AUDITORIUM" and "GYMNASIUM," are carved in deep relief in ribbon-like scrolls amongst sinuous vegetal motifs above their respective arched entrances. The pool, housed in a single-story section on the rear elevation, is next to the gymnasium.

Criteria

The proposed historic district meets the first, second and third criterion contained in section 25-2-2:

- (1) Sites, buildings, structures, or archeological sites where cultural, social, spiritual, economic, political or architectural history of the community, city, state or nation is particularly reflected or exemplified.
- (2) Sites, buildings, structures, or archeological sites which are identified with historic personages or with important events in community, city, state or national history.
- (3) Buildings or structures which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural specimen, inherently valuable as a representation of a period, style or method of construction.

Composition of the Historic Designation Advisory Board

The Historic Designation Advisory Board has nine appointed members and three *ex-officio* members, all residents of Detroit. The appointed members are: Kwaku Atara, Melanie A. Bazil, Keith A. Dye, Zené Fogel-Gibson, Theresa Holder-Hagood, Calvin Jackson, Victoria Byrd-Olivier and Kari Smith. The *ex-officio* members who may be represented by members of their staff, are Director of Historical Department, the Director of the City Planning Commission, and the director of the Planning and Development Department.

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**East Ferry Avenue Historic District
with boundaries of proposed addition marked in heavy black lines.**