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Appendix A1

Project: PICTURING MILWAUKEE

Washington Park Neighborhood

Consider this project as a beginning of a conversation. More precisely, a three-year long conversation exploring enduring values, themes, dreams and practices that capture the spirit of the Washington Park neighborhood. This conversation will involve local residents, businesses, organizations, community scholars, students and faculty and engage them in a collaborative dialog. Philosopher Hannah Arendt once said that to live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between who sit around it; the world, like every in-between, relates and separates men at the same time. That shared common world, for the purpose of this project, is Washington Park—its people, events, daily life, architecture, roads, green spaces, gardens, and the many networks of relationships that connect them. But Arendt also reminds us that this world we share between us is never interpreted as the same by each of us. Rather we all approach it from different perspectives, bring our unique worldviews and “differences of position and the resulting variety of perspectives.”

When we set out to write urban stories of Washington Park, we confronted a conceptual dilemma. What do we choose to hear amongst the rich din of voices? Do we only hear the few loud commentaries and ignore those who prefer to remain silent? How do we make sense of this thriving multicultural neighborhood without reducing and simplifying its stories? If we all see Washington Park neighborhood from diverse points of view, then what is it that we hold in common?

Mainstream commentaries and media representations of this neighborhood are woefully insufficient. Quantitative demographic numbers, property values, or more vulgarly, coarse statistical narratives of crime and revenue do not do justice to this neighborhood. These stories of Washington Park neither represent the nuanced diversity of opinions within this community nor do they solicit the life histories of a range of local residents. At the BLC field school we became intensely aware of the shortfalls of any research project that “reduces” a neighborhood and ends up narrating a single story of a place and its people.

The historical complexity of Washington Park ensured that we discovered an entangled network of myriad stories. Our stories emerged from our conversation with residents. Material culture and homes spoke to us too. Events and daily life suggested more tales. Each account came with a plot, a cast of characters, and larger contexts within which they played out. We approached the stories of Washington Park by identifying central themes around which they cohered. These themes were like plot-vortexes around which many conversations coalesced. In the section titled forum we introduce you to community voices around seven central themes that emerged during our 2014 field school: Change, Strength, Values, Dreams, Resilience, Ties, and Contact. Although the themes were common, people interpreted them from distinct vantage points, making each individual story a variation on a theme. If you search the stories of people and places in this website, you will discover that each story resonates with many of these thematic ideas.

A vibrant discussion around these themes will serve as a point of entry for our long journey. We need your feedback and engagement. We encourage this nascent conversation to become a civic or community discourse. We hope that this project will provide strangers, visitors, and neighbors something common to talk about.

How are our stories relevant for future action? We suggest two tentative answers: enhancement of grassroots power and knowledge. During the next three years we will explore if multiple stories around enduring plots can be heard in ways that are resounding and empowering. We want to find out if by sharing our knowledge about our common world we can strengthen, support, and enhance that world. We want to examine how our personal stories and public conversations may unite us as citizens.

So let our journey begin.

Arijit Sen

www.senspeaks.wordpress.com



“Washington Park Area Boundary.” Map. Milwaukee Comprehensive Plan. March 1, 2010. Accessed July 31, 2014. <http://city.milwaukee.gov/ImageLibrary/Groups/cityDCD/planning/plans/WashingtonPark/plan/WPPlan.pdf>.

WHO ARE WE?

The Buildings-Landscapes-Cultures collaborative project at UW Milwaukee and Madison introduces an interdisciplinary research track concentrating on the examination of the physical, cultural, and social aspects of our built environment. The program serves students enrolled in the UW Milwaukee and Madison campuses respectively. It involves faculty members on both campuses with diverse research and teaching interests, including urban and architectural history, cultural landscapes, urban and rural vernacular architecture, public history, and environmental.

Fieldwork is an important aspect of this program and a cross-campus fieldwork school is a special offering of this project. This summer the Buildings-Landscapes-Cultures field school provided students with an immersive experience in the field recording of the built environment and cultural landscapes and an opportunity to learn how to write history literally “from the ground up.” Students received training in site documentation (including photography, measured drawings, digital documentation, audio-visual production), historic interpretation of buildings and landscapes (focusing on how to “read” buildings within their material, political, social, cultural and economic contexts), and primary source research (including oral history, archival research, architectural analysis).



WHAT IS PROJECT: PICTURING MILWAUKEE?

We are storytellers, collecting and relaying tales of places and neighborhoods in Milwaukee. We call this idea “Picturing Milwaukee” and our objective is to conjure up –or picture– various neighborhoods of Milwaukee like designs in a wonderfully complex quilt. Individually unique and beautiful, each street is part of a larger whole and we are interested in examining how the local and the urban relate to each other – how a street fits into a larger urban narrative. Understanding this relationship between the whole and its parts is important because it shows us how individual places produce our larger world. We are the sum total of smaller units and such an understanding promotes civic belonging, allowing us to reimagine ourselves as stewards of our worlds.

Why do we tell stories? Stories are powerful not only because they connect and transfix, not only because they are accessible to all, but also because they spread. Stories produce more stories; transferred from one person to another, stories disperse across time and space. Stories produce revolutions – not the kinds that we saw in 1789 and 1917 in France and Russia or the campaign for free speech that set campuses on fire in 1964, not even the kinds we saw recently in 2011 at Tahrir Square or the Wisconsin State Capitol – although those too are born of stories of resistance and intrigue. We collect stories about morals and ethics, ones that recount honor and perseverance, or those that our neighbors and community members communicate to us – all with a moral at the end of it. We are interested in stories that become part of our speech and imaginations; stories that teach us how to behave and react to life and how to walk and to talk – those stories that in turn gently transform who we are and what we do.



Photo Credit: Danielle Burren Photography, www.dsb-photo.com

WHAT DO WE DO?

At the BLC field school, as we explore urban neighborhoods, we discover their complexity. Neighborhoods are physical locations, material artifacts of everyday life, centers of symbolic action and domestic activities, and community spaces of interaction and social life.

In 1982 Jules Prown asked, “Are there aspects of mind to be discovered in objects that differ from, complement, supplement, or contradict what can be learned from more traditional literary and behavioral sources?” Prown was referring to the importance of the material world around us in telling us stories of our culture in ways that words, texts, and traditional historical sources did not. Our study of this neighborhood begins with an analysis of the world of homes, streets, gardens, gates, and asphalt. We want to find out if the physical character of the Washington Park neighborhood may tell us something about its history that written accounts and official histories fail to describe.

In such a study mere stylistic and aesthetic categories of analysis fall short because these issues merely parrot what the canonical sources of architecture tell us. Describing a building merely by its style—Neo Classical, Italianate, or eclectic—seem less useful since these categories say nothing about how the meanings and interpretations of these buildings changed over time. Questions such as “who was the architect?” or “what is the aesthetic style of a building?” may well explain the initial context and reasons why an architect built a building. But these questions say nothing about social life in these spaces and a pittance about the experiences of those who live in these spaces. Stories of women, children, gardeners, and residents remain untold. Esoteric information about classical details and building morphologies may enhance the significance and value of the building, but they are not the sole registers of architectural connoisseurship.

Attending to this gap in our knowledge of the built environment, the BLC field school turns towards the study of cultural landscapes as a way to interpret this neighborhood. The term cultural landscape is one that is difficult to define. We use it loosely and geographers, anthropologists, and material culture scholars understand the term in different ways. Geographer Carl Sauer in his essay “The Morphology of Landscape” defines cultural landscape as “fashioned from the natural landscape by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result.” Others focus on the human experience of place rather than merely studying its physical characters. Scholars such as J. B. Jackson and Kevin Lynch draw our attention to symbolic, cultural and cognitive cues in such landscapes while Dolores Hayden and Setha Low argue that understanding cultural landscapes necessitates an exploration of how we perceive those landscapes and how such practices of spectatorship may be contested.





To us, cultural landscape is phenomena materialized in space. We define cultural landscape as the materialization of a complex relationship between an individual and her larger cultural and material contexts. Cultural landscapes need not be physical, tangible and visible. Indeed, much of what we search for may be symbolic, experiential and sensorial—invisible to our eyes. And just as we make our cultural landscapes, these landscapes influence who we are.

At the BLC field school we begin with vernacular architecture scholar Paul Groth's argument that cultural landscape studies, "focus most on the history of how people have used everyday space—buildings, rooms, streets, fields, or yards—to establish their identity, articulate their social relations, and derive cultural meaning." Groth's emphasis on relationships challenges the often-singular focus on architectural authorship and style used by architectural historians. In this field school we explore the experiences of myriad inhabitants and underscore their role in the making of this neighborhood.



Field School Participants

Ashley Marie Pollex
Blake Crow
Bridgette Binczak
Esmé Barniskis
George Ananchev
Godson Mollel
Jared Schmitz
Jessica Yester
Juliana Glassco
Leonardo Moises
Maia Stack
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Matthew Honer
Matthew J Lathrum
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Nicole Robinson, MPH/MSW
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Salman Hussain
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Teachers

Jasmine Alinder
Anna Andrezjewski
Jeffrey Klee
Michael Frisch
Judith Weiland
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Arijit Sen



PLACES

AMARANTH BAKERY AND CAFE



Aramanth Bakery and Cafe, 2014

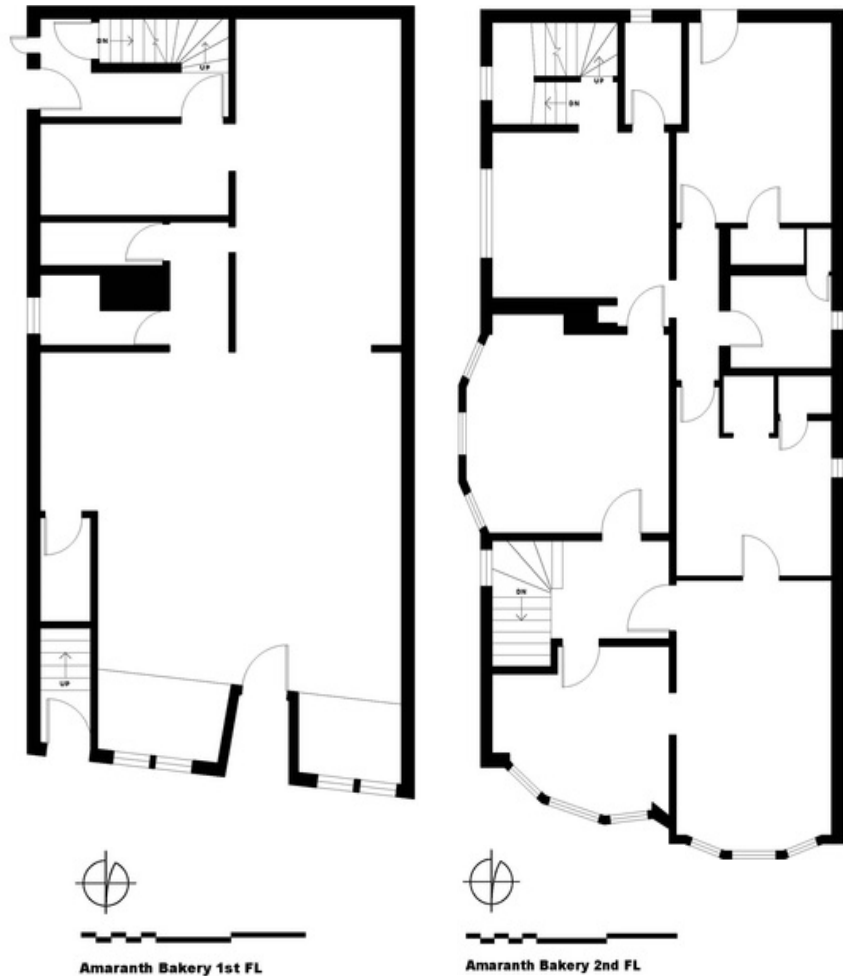
Amaranth Bakery and Cafe is located on West Lisbon Ave. The building was used by different businesses over the years, including a dentist office, general offices, and campaign election space on the second floor. The first floor was once a tavern and then a restaurant. Currently the first floor is a cafe and bakery. Tabal Chocolates and Kofi Dance Company occupy the second floor premises.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, multi-story units with residential above and commercial below became a common building type along Lisbon Avenue. The interior layout and spatial organization of such buildings are unique because they afford a variety of possibilities and uses for residents. One may use the ground level as a retail space. The glazed and transparent front façade promotes views into the building, allows store owners to display their wares, and as in the case of Amaranth Cafe, creates a well-lit, visually accessible, and public front room. Indeed contemporary customers sitting in this front space often look out into Lisbon Avenue and appreciate the view. In the past the front space was used differently. In the original floor plans a general office and a vestibule constituted a brightly lit, open and public front office zone, different from the dark interior rooms aptly titled “private offices.”

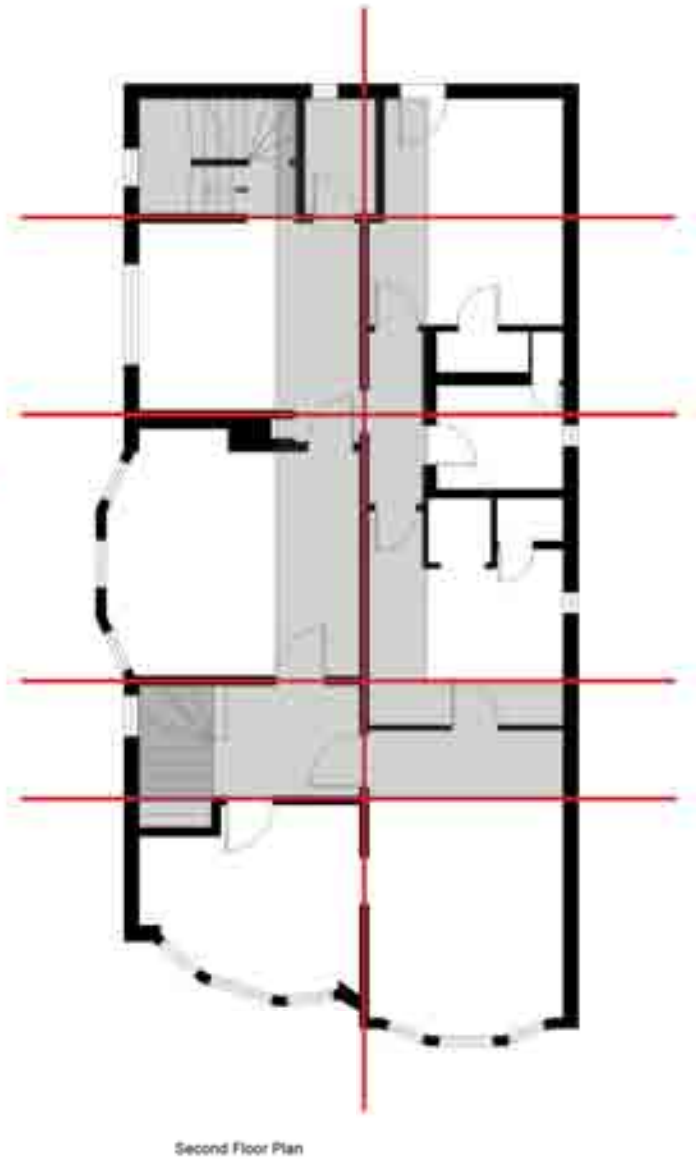
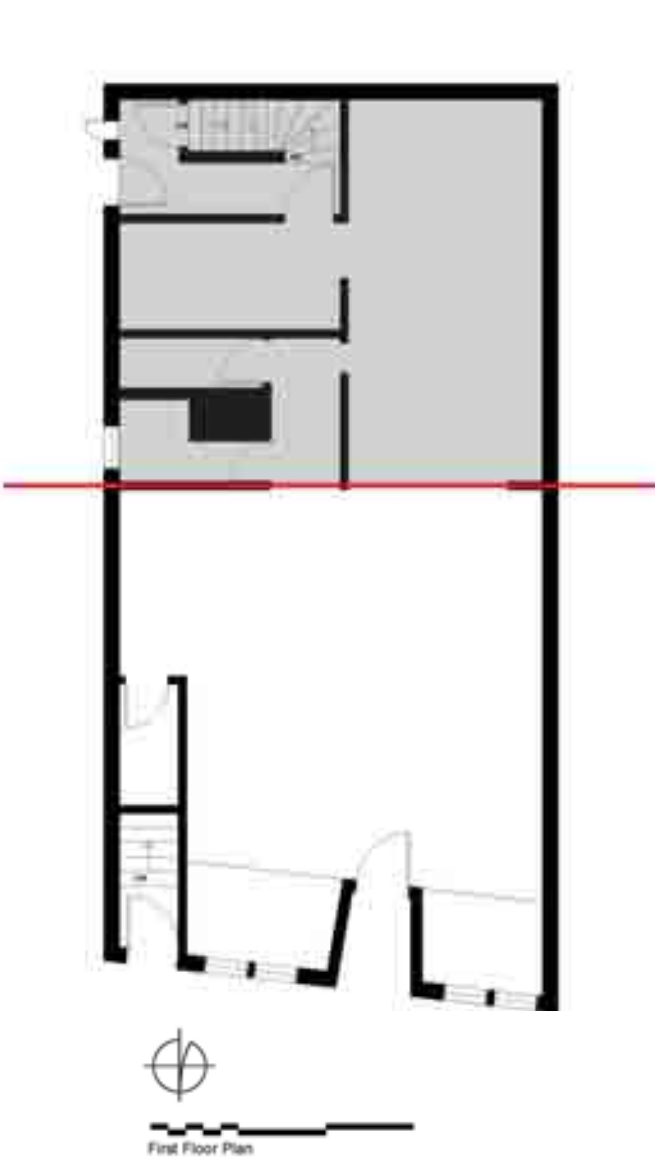
The top and bottom floors can be used and accessed independently because of the location of the stairwells. As a result, like owner of the building has the flexibility to rent off the upper floors. The projecting bay windows, parallel to Lisbon Avenue are skewed in relation to the side walls. The staircase landing cuts off these two odd-shaped front rooms from the back rooms, again suggesting a front-back spatial organization. The original plans show that the front two rooms of the second floor facing Lisbon Avenue, were used as offices. The two offices have separate entrances, however only one is used today.

The only oak finish is in the two offices, main hall, and living room suggested a more prestigious and formal front zone. The rest of the second floor was used as an apartment. The apartment consisted of a living room, kitchen, bedrooms, a balcony and back stairs laid out sequentially in a single file. The current owners made further changes to the second floor layout. Between the office and the bedroom a wall was knocked down to allow for a door. The original bedroom door has been taken out and sealed off from the living room. A new door has been put in to connect and make a hallway to the bathroom, backroom, and kitchen. These changes changed the internal circulation in the second floor and restructured the internal spatial hierarchy.

The unique bay layout of this building permits incessant change and multiple uses. During the turn of the 20th century, natural lighting was important. Many of the doors were made of glass and the left (or east) bay with its many windows was more well lit than the right (or west) bay. As a result the living room and kitchen were brighter spaces than the chambers that were private, inaccessible, and darker. However the brightness of the east side unit causes problems for Dan who makes organic chocolate. This is because Dan needs to have a cool pantry room cool. The pantry is where he stores chocolate and the room has to be in the right condition so that the chocolate stays as a bar for the end product. As a result he has plans to cover up windows, place new walls and use the darker west bay rooms in the future.



Aramanth Bakery interior.



LUDWIG VON BAUMBACH RESIDENCE

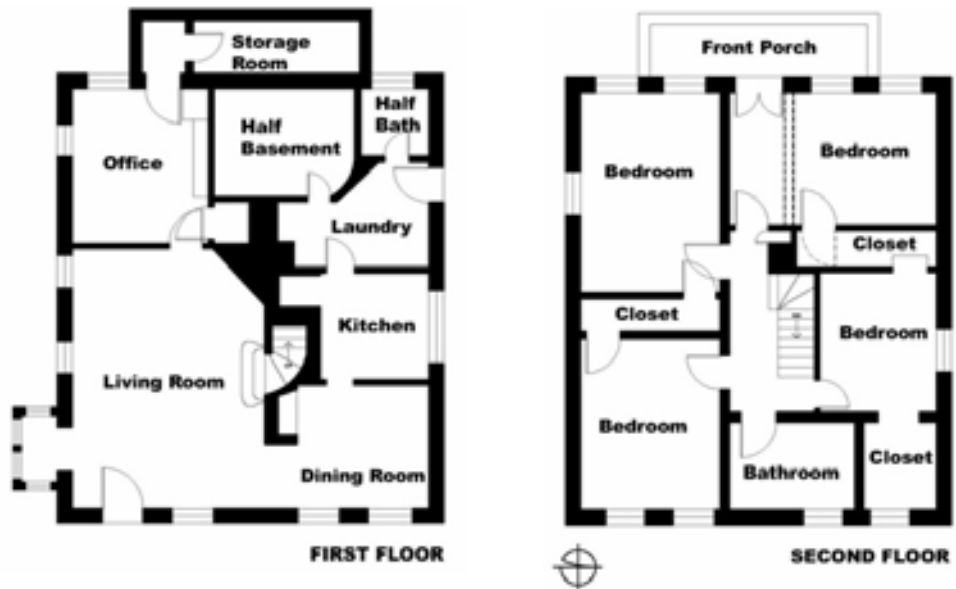


Ludwig Von Baumbach Residence, 2014

This residence is a late nineteenth century cream city brick house that has been extensively modified. According to the land title information, Ludwing Von Baumbach owned the house in 1880's, and then it changed hands in 1896, and then again in 1941, until Mike and Judith Howden purchased it in 1979.

The main entrance used to be on the second floor (not in use as an entrance nowadays), leading into a parlor room. To the right is now a wall behind which is another room. This wall has marks on it— remains of what used to be a door. These two rooms were perhaps public rooms for entertaining guests. A door, located on the wall directly opposite from the main entrance, opens into the hallway and stairs going down to the first floor. Right besides this door is a closet with a door that now swings into the parlor room. The hinge for this door shows that the door used to swing the other way— out of the parlor room. The marks of the old hinges can be seen on the other side of the door casing.

The Kiesslichs were the owners from 1896 till 1941. They added a backyard barn and a wider front porch. Kirby Goodman, the owner from 1941 to 1979, was a builder and he introduced further changes to the house. For instance, he added extensive woodwork. Some of the evidence of the original house is still observable, even if much is painted over. Other originals include an ornate fireplace and mantle in the first floor and a wooden floor upstairs.



There is a large living room on the first floor that seems to have been the main gathering place of the family. To its side is a dining room that opens into a kitchen with a service area beyond. A large backyard can be seen from the dining room and the living room. The current entrance is located at the back of the house.



Ludwig Von Baumbach Residence interior.

The Howdens purchased the house in the late 1970's. They did few changes inside the house. They restored the original outside walls, removing the blue paint and exposing the cream city bricks. The Howdens also spent considerable time working on the yard that surrounds the house, removing layers of dirty soil and planting and transforming this space into an amazing garden. The house was sold to the Cuhels in 2014.



Chimney.



Window detail.

Mike and Judith Howden, interview by Leonardo Moises and Salman Hussain, June 2014.

H. Russell Zimmermann, "The Past in our Present: A West Side Story," *Milwaukee Journal*, August 18, 1968.

FREDERICK KOENIG HOUSE



Frederick Koenig House, 2014

Legal Description: F Koenig's Subd in NE 1/4
Sec 24-7-21 Block 2 Lots
7,8,9,10,11,12 and 13

Born in Germany, Frederick Koenig immigrated to Milwaukee in 1844. He married Philippine Stephen, and they had two daughters. Koenig was the president of the Milwaukee and Brookfield Macadamized Turnpike Company. According to Dave Boucher, Koenig bought property along the Lisbon Plank Road from Franz Joseph Uhrig in 1882. He hired Henry Messmer, an architect who designed St. Casmir's Church, to design his home. A barn and stable was also built. The buildings were finished within the year.

When the city of Milwaukee decided to develop the area surrounding Lisbon Plank Road in 1897, Koenig's house was moved from its location facing north toward Lisbon Plank Road to its present location which is just south of Lisbon Avenue, facing east. Koenig decided to remodel his home and acquired the architectural services of F. W. Andree and the building services of Oscar Fromm. Andree and Fromm transformed the house from a Victorian-styled place to a mansion in the Classical Revival style. Both porches were added, along with the front porch columns. The cupola expanded along the exterior clapboard walls. The house was topped off with a flat and gabled roof. The carved garland swags, wreaths, and leaf brackets that decorated the interior clapboard walls were not custom built. Andree chose popular decorative and structural pieces such as staircases, doors, and stained glass windows from catalogs. Most of these structural and decorative elements exist in and around the house today.

As guests enter the foyer, they are impressed by the main staircase and the twenty-two feet ceiling ascension. Beyond the foyer is the dining room, but a door and wall obstruct the view. Instead, guests are drawn to the double French doors to the left, which leads them to the parlor. The parlor space was used for short visits and entertainment. The living room is adjacent to the parlor. The Koenigs and guests would have spent most of their time in the living room, since it was the only social area that had a fireplace. Nestled in the back of the house, surrounded by the foyer that led to the kitchen and the social spaces, is the library. It is the only other area that has a fireplace. This space creates privacy and invites solitude - ideal for reading, intimate conversations, and business transactions. The kitchen is in the very back of the home. This was the servant's domain. As a person moves through the home, the space changes from outward impression, the attractive foyer and parlor, to personal and household stewardship - the library and kitchen.



Frederick Koenig House interior.

The Koenig family employed a servant, Molly, who came during the day to take care of the house. Movement and space within the house reflected the class divisions of the time. A servant's movement was in the back of the house, where the kitchen and two pantries are located. The house didn't have custom built hallways to distinguish the servant spaces from the private quarters and public spaces; they were made naturally by how the interior was constructed. From the kitchen, the servant moved straight through the living room to the parlor. On the other side of the kitchen, when she served the meal, she passed the china pantry through the swinging door to the dining room. A plain staircase is just outside the kitchen. The servant would have use this stairwell to go up to the second floor bedrooms. These spaces allowed easy movement for the servant. However, the swinging door shuts naturally. This function created a wall between working class and upper class domains. Also, the pantry, side entrance, and back staircase and porch created the space that separated employer and servant.

Rigid class, spatial, occupational divides changed during the 20th century. Koenig died in 1907 and his wife passed away in 1927. Washington Park experienced a lot of growth for the next thirty to forty years. In 1930, the house was owned by Charles Litow, a realtor. He rented the place to Mrs. Lucy Carter in 1940. Twenty years later, John and Dorothea Feypel owned the house. Mr. Feypel was also in the real estate business. During the 1980s, Washington Park took a steep economic downturn. Up and coming individuals weren't moving into the area. Because of their passion for preservation, Gerry Coon and Stewart Dempsey bought the house from Norman D. Zoschke, a former chef at the Wisconsin club. They restored the walls, floors, and moldings and the exterior walls, roof, and landscape. They use the side entrance and spend most of their time in the kitchen and library. At night, they retire to the television room on the second floor. The space that the servant spent most of her time is now occupied by the owners. The Frederick Koenig house is a fine example of how the meaning and purpose of space changed over time. It is a reflection of the cultural transitions that took place in society.



Interior door.



Exterior detail.



Back door.



Staircase looking down.



Side view of Frederick Koenig House.

Doris V. Cummins, "Dempsey's Pride," *City LifeStyle*, February, 2002, news clipping, Box 1, Folder K, Landmarks and Buildings Collection, Harry H. Anderson Research Library, Milwaukee County Historical Society.

"Architects' Completed Projects," *The Milwaukee Sentinel*, January 1, 1883.

Milwaukee (Wisconsin) City Treasurer, "Tax Roll, Real Estate and Personal Property," 1920, Reel 127, Milwaukee Public Library; *Ibid.*, 1930, Reel 195;

Ibid., 1940, Reel 307; *Ibid.*, 1950, Reel 456; *Ibid.*, 1960, Reel 25; *Ibid.*, 1970, Reel 200, *Ibid.*, 1980, Reel 298.

Milwaukee City Directories, 1930, 1940, 1950, 1970, 1980, 1987-88.

BUS STOP COFFEE SHOP



Bus Stop Coffee Shop, 2014

Legal Description: E Reichertz' Subd in NE 1/4 Sec
23-7-21 Block I Lot 7

The Bus Stop Coffee shop got its name from a bus stop on Route 57, which is part of the Milwaukee County Transit System. In the 1920s, Lisbon Avenue was developing rapidly as the city of Milwaukee was expanding its borders. In 1920, at the height of this boom, Emil Doubek obtained his plumbing license. Eight years later, he started his own plumbing business. He lived above his store and made extra money by renting out apartment and business space, a typical economic strategy practiced by many Washington Park residents.

Doubek employed architect Paul Bennett, who designed the Times Cinema and Tosa Theater (now the Rosebud Cinema), to design and construct his residential and commercial space on Lisbon Avenue. The original design included two storefronts on the first floor and two apartments on the second floor. A flight of stairs to the second floor apartments was built in the middle bay of the building, separating the store and apartment unit on either side. Such a layout allowed property owners to rent out apartments and stores to multiple renters. Doubek lived right above his store. He rented out the other apartment to retirees and skilled workers. A garage was installed in the back of the building. Bennett built exterior brick walls and topped the building off with a flat roof. Construction was completed in 1929 at a cost of approximately \$16,600.

By 1930, for unknown reasons, Doubek closed his store but continued to live in his home. As industrial workers moved into the area, businesses that served their needs started to be in demand. Doubek rented out his former business space to Peggy O'Neill, who started a beauty shop. Doubek rented out the other business space to The American Auto Cleaning Supply Company. In 1940 and 1950, real estate businesses occupied one or both spaces. Ten years later, Florence E. Giguere, a housekeeper, owned the building and lived above one of the storefronts. Windshield and window maintenance shops and a photofinishing store occupied the retail spaces in later years.

The property was in disarray when Pat and Jeanette Gleason bought it in 2011. The exterior retained most of its original design but most of the interior was gutted as the Gleasons renovated the building. The niched storefront entrances were removed and the two retail spaces united into one—a hallway connects the Bus Stop Coffee Shop and Pat Gleason’s other venture, the Midwest School of Photography. The whole second floor is now the Gleason residence. The Gleasons connected the stores to their upstairs residence internally. The original work that still exists on the second floor are the hard wood floors and trim molding in the living room. A long hallway stretches from the front living room to the back kitchen area. Beyond the kitchen is the open space which is the roof of the garage. The Gleasons provide this space as an exercise area for their dogs. The building has served the community and provided living space since its construction. The public stops in and “hangs out” at the Bus Stop Coffee Shop for coffee, food, and laughter.



Sign inside Bus Stop Coffee Shop.



Outside corner detail.



Doorway looking into dining area.

Paul Bennett, Original Floor Plans, City Hall, Milwaukee.

City of Milwaukee: Department of Neighborhood Services, Premises Record, Development Center, Milwaukee.

City of Milwaukee-Assessor’s Office, PRC Summary Report-Public.

“Plumbers’ Examination in Wisconsin,” *Metal Worker, Plumber and Steam Fitter*, 94 (1), p. 291.

Milwaukee (Wisconsin) City Treasurer, “Tax Roll, Real Estate and Personal Property,” 1960, Reel 24; *Ibid.*, 1970, Reel 200, *Ibid.*, 1980, Reel 298.

Milwaukee City Directories, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980.

THE HIGHLAND BUNGALOW

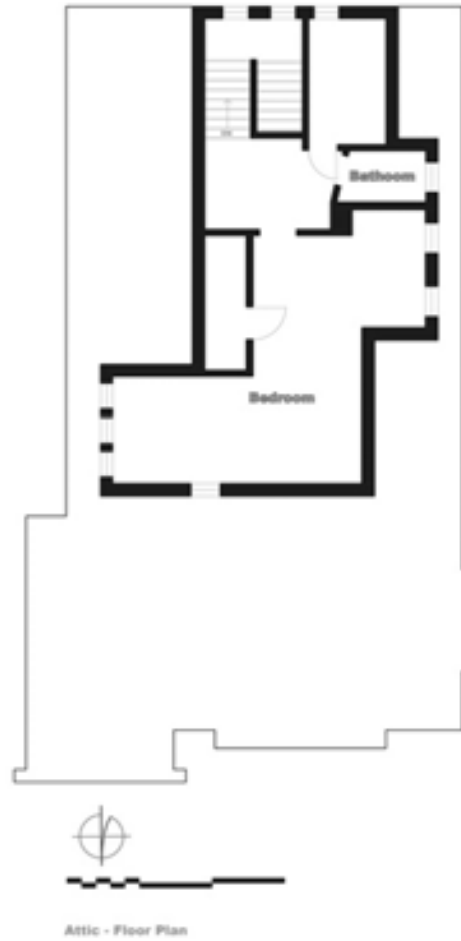


The Highland Bungalow, 2014

This 1922 bungalow is a single family unit located close to Washington Park. The interior layout clearly differentiates front and back spaces. The front areas are highly decorated with architectural details. A fire place with a wooden mantle is the central attraction of the living room. The dining room, also part of the social front of the house is architecturally ornate with wood detailing and cabinetry. Like the other front-zone rooms large windows illuminate the dining space.

A hallway connects the front spaces to a more private section of the house. We can see evidence of a door between the kitchen, and the hallway. In the kitchen we find remnants of a wall that has been partially removed. All these modifications speak of changing values and spatial hierarchy within the house.

In this back zone, we find two bedrooms, one bathroom, the stairs that lead to the attic - with a half bath, and a bedroom - and kitchen. This portion of the house is minimally ornamented reflecting a social hierarchy between the front and back zones. In 1925 a garage was added to the home and, in 1998, a fence and a deck were built on the property.



Dining area.



Interior view of entrance.

Mike and Judith Howden, interview by Leonardo Moises and Salman Hussain, June 2014.
 Home documentation by George Ananchev, Paula Chinato, Bridgette Binczak, June 2014.

WASHINGTON PARK, THE ZOO AND THE BAND SHELL



The Band Shell, 2014

The 124-acres known as Washington Park is bordered by Lloyd Street and Lisbon Avenue to the North, 40th Street to the East, Vliet Street to the South and US-40 to the West. Originally named as West Side Park, it was designed by the famous landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted in 1892, who also built the Lake Park in Milwaukee and the Central Park in New York. In 1882 the first zoo was established inside Washington Park. By 1920, according to a *Milwaukee Journal* article, the Zoo was the fifth largest in the U.S. After years of glory at this location, the zoo was moved to its current location in 1963.

The park opened its first Senior Center in 1968, followed by the rehabilitation of the boat house into a community center. The restoration of the band shell was done thanks to the efforts of Neighborhoods United for Washington Park (NUWP) and with the help of Harley-Davidson Foundation. The band shell is available for renting during Fall-Spring season. its capacity is for 8,500 people and during summers many concerts take place in the park. In 2007 the second branch of the Urban Ecology Center opened its door here.



Goethe and Schiller statue in Washington Park.



Plaque on the Band Shell.



Looking away from the Band Shell.



Side view of the Band Shell.

“History about the Washington Park Zoo, in Milwaukee, WI”, Martin Drive Neighborhood Association.
 Sarah Biondich, “Spiritual Uplift at Washington Park,” *Express Milwaukee*, May 20 2009.
 Band Shell Rentals, Go Milwaukee,

THE RAE DUPLEX



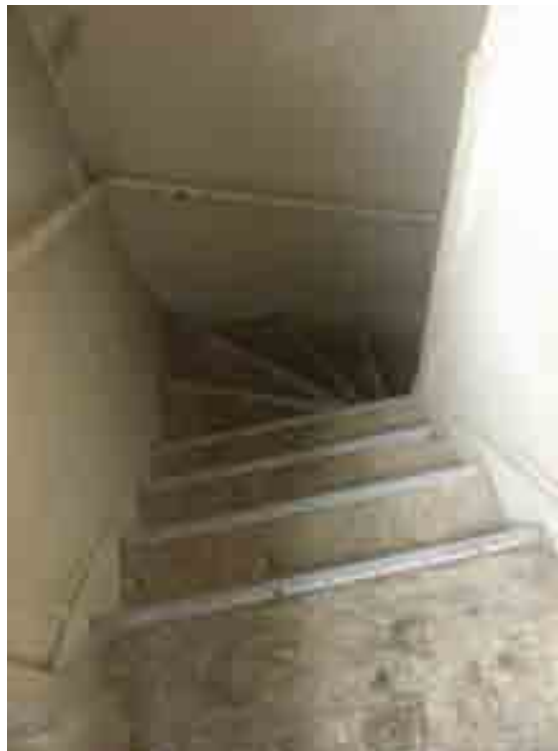
The Rae Duplex, 2014

The first Milwaukeean duplex was built in the 1880's, however it was between 1904 and 1916 that this building type came to prominence in the near-North side of the city. The duplex differs from an apartment because each unit has a private entrance, while in apartments the units have common hallways. The concentration of this typology is so high that it suggests that it may have had some cultural significance to new German upwardly mobile homeowners. The duplex was not just a place to live. It served as a rental unit too. Owners of the duplex lived on the first floor and rented out the second floor in order to generate more income.

With almost no modifications over the years, this 1909 duplex is a gable-roofed house, with wood-frame walls, and rectangular plan. The porches and balconies are important features that enable people to enjoy the outside of their houses. On the inside, the duplex shows a clear differentiation between public and private spaces via different levels of finishes and decorative trim. The front, and more formal, space has fancier wood trim, egg and dart molding in the dining room, wooden shelves with grooves for display purposes, and a built-in cabinet. The entrance to the living room once had two Ionic or Corinthian columns—today we can just see the remnants of it.



Rae Duplex interior.



Staircase going down.



The dining room connects the social spaces to the private portion of the house, where we can see the trim differentiation. Bedroom and hallways have a molded trim while the bathroom has a slightly fancier one. The kitchen leads to stairs that access the basement and the second floor. The second floor is almost identical to the first floor plan.

Rosalind Cox, interview and documentation by George Ananchev, Paula Chinato, Bridgette Binczak, June 2014.
 Shannon E. Honl, "Popular Houses of West Allis 1880-1980," Architecture Graduate Thesis, Univ. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, <<http://www.westalliswi.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/364>> (Accessed July 7, 2014)
 Thomas C. Hubka and Judith T. Kenny, "The Workers' Cottage in Milwaukee's Polish Community: Housing and the Process of Americanization, 1870-1920," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* Vol. 8, People, Power, Places (2000), pp. 33-52.

BROWN RESIDENCE



Brown Residence, 2014

Legal Description: Grant Park IN NW 1/4 SEC 24-7-21
BLOCK 7 N 7' LOT 21& S 28' LOT 22

The Brown residence was built in 1908. It has a Gambrel roof that is subdivided into four parts (each part looks like a large dormer). A large front porch under a shed roof runs the length of the house and the entry is offset to the left. The front of the house has a large bay window and veranda with rectangular metal-clad columns extending from one end to the other. Front steps lead to the porch. The home welcomes its guests through a vestibule which makes the floor plan airy and open.

The large living room offers a vantage point to the entire first floor. The two pocket doors blanketing two large sections of the living room gives the house an open floor plan and the flexibility to enclose three large spaces (living room, dining, and kitchen) on the first floor. As a result the lower floor has three parallel territorial zones running from the front to the back of the house—a front, a middle and a back bay. The public and formal areas of the house is located in the front zone. An impressive, ornate wooden staircase located in a middle bay connects to the second floor. A swing door, opens the dining space to the ornate staircase ascending to the second floor. Another door located on the side of the staircase hides a half-bath that fits partially underneath the stairs. The back bay holds the service areas such as the back staircase and kitchen.

Contrast this organization to the two bays that organize the interiors along the length of the building—a left bay with the stairs, kitchen and entrance hall and a right bay with dining, living and back stairs. The living-dining area located along the right bay, opens up to accommodate 20 or more people.

The second floor plan is more enclosed compared to the first floor. Two smaller rooms occupy spaces in the front of the house. A procession towards the back of the house points to another staircase that leads to the attic space. In the back of the house, a door leads to a balcony that is no longer in use.

The Brown residence interior is comparable to many commercially available layouts popular during the 1900s. The plan layout of the Brown residence is similar to that of the Chicago House Wrecking Co. Design #134 and Henry J. Green House in Fredonia New York available in pattern books and mail-order catalogs of the time. Both examples are considered to be of the Four-Square style. The design #134 house consisted of both front and side bay windows along with a dormer that extrudes from the roof and a massive colonial porch. The Green house closely resembles the design #134 house with a few exceptions. A closer comparison of the floor plans reveals that the Green house eliminated the pantry space to make the kitchen and dining room bigger. Other minor changes can be seen in the placement of windows and doors. Unlike the Green house and Design #134 plans, the kitchen plan for this residence doesn't line up directly with the dining room space due to the staircase and bathroom that occupy the intermediate spaces between the living room and kitchen. This change in designs makes the staircase leading to the basement and backyard space more generous.



Basement.



Light fixture.

In the 1900s this entire block was unoccupied and it wasn't until the 1910 census that the block was filled with houses. Since the house was built, at least eight families have lived in it. The owner, John Kempf, was a New York born foreman for Milwaukee Stoveworks and owned two other lots adjacent to the property. Mr. Kempf's parents were born in Germany and he lived in the house with his wife and daughter.

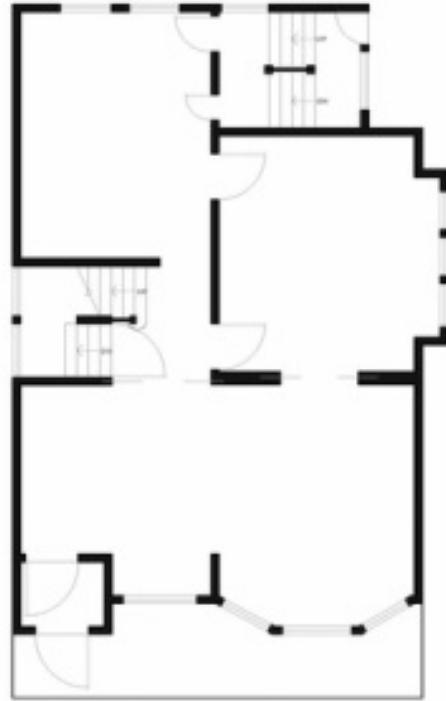
The house hasn't always looked like it does today. After 1982, Mr. and Mrs. Brown, the current owners, gradually began refurbishing the house. They replaced the aluminum siding, round metal columns in the veranda, and waffle board covering the porch. The wood panels were replaced with drywall, which allowed the rich brown door frames to stand out. The shag carpeting was removed throughout most of the house in order to give way to a natural wood flooring. The kitchen was entirely re-done in order to bring it to its current state. The couple and their family have had great moments in this house including their wedding, family celebrations, and birthdays. The architecture may describe an exterior and interior form, but the family and its lasting memories have defined the home.



Staircase.




Ulysses Brown's House 1st FL




Ulysses Brown's House 1st FL



Living room.

Ulysses & Barbara Brown, interview and documentation by Nicole Robinson, Godson Mollé and Milan Outlaw, June 2014.

COX RESIDENCE



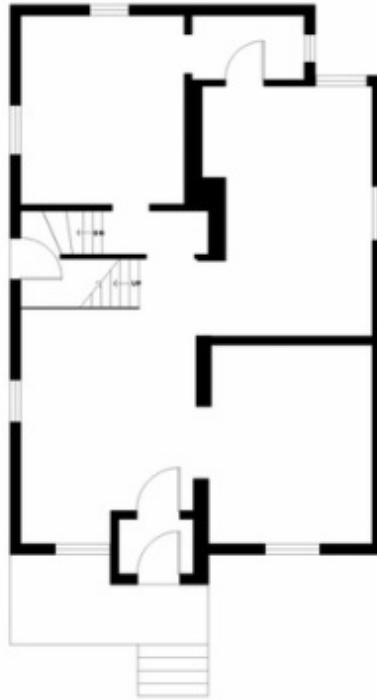
Cox Residence, 2014

Rosalind Cox takes pride in her home. The façade of the two-story home does not reveal the interesting characteristics of the interior. The front entrance has a wooden porch displaying the American flag. Upon entering her home you enter through a small hallway where jackets are hung. The first floor has two rooms with windows looking out to the street. The kitchen, a small butler pantry, and dining area are in the back of the home. Stairs in the main living area lead one to three bedrooms and one bathroom. The biggest room on the second floor has huge windows looking out to the street. Rosalind decorates her home to match the dark wood.

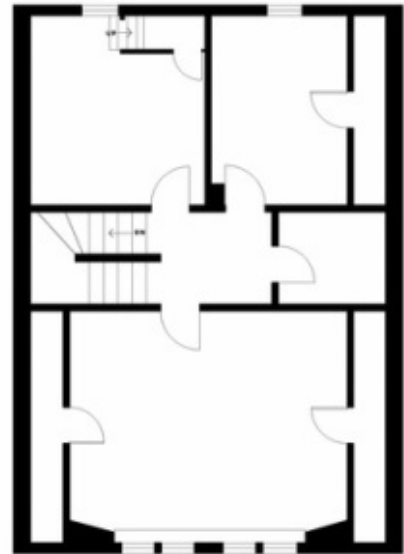
The house was built in 1900. The architect was J. Leiser. The cost of the building was \$2,200. It has been heavily renovated since its construction. Although advertised as a duplex when it was sold to Rosalind in 2005, we found no concrete evidence to support that claim. The house features a prominent central staircase that leads from the living room to the second floor. The first floor consists of a living room, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, pantry, and small entryway from a side door. The second floor has two smaller bedrooms that are currently being used as office/recreation space, a large master bedroom, and a bathroom. There is a small staircase leading to the attic, which runs the length of the house and has a small finished room in the front of the house. The house has a full, mostly unfinished basement that has been subdivided into several smaller rooms. At some point in time, a bathroom was added and a room in the southwest corner was partially finished (linoleum floor installed, interior walls painted).

Three parallel bays define the interior organization of the house. The front bay is made of the formal entrance and living space, the middle bay is made of the staircase while the back bay contains kitchen and other service spaces. These bays define a sequential interior layout that connects the front to back of the house.

The house had renovation work done by Habitat for Humanity. Most recently, a replacement fence was constructed around the side and back of the house. At some point, vinyl siding was installed, and few original wood windows remain (on the two main floors the only one left is the bathroom window). Although many of the interior walls and ceilings have been reworked/refinished, the layout of the interior does not appear to have changed significantly over time. There is a window at the back of the second floor of the house, which extends to the floor, indicating that it was originally a door. On the exterior of the building there is a corner indentation on the first floor featuring original wooden trim from what appears to have been a porch or a staircase leading up to the door on the second floor. The master bedroom runs the entire width of the front of the house, so it is very large, but we did not see evidence of any original wall dividing it in half. A tile wall and jacuzzi bathtub were installed in the northwest corner of the master bedroom at some point.



Rosalind's Current House



Rosalind's Current House 2nd FL



Doorknob detail.



Interior view.

VILLA UHRIG



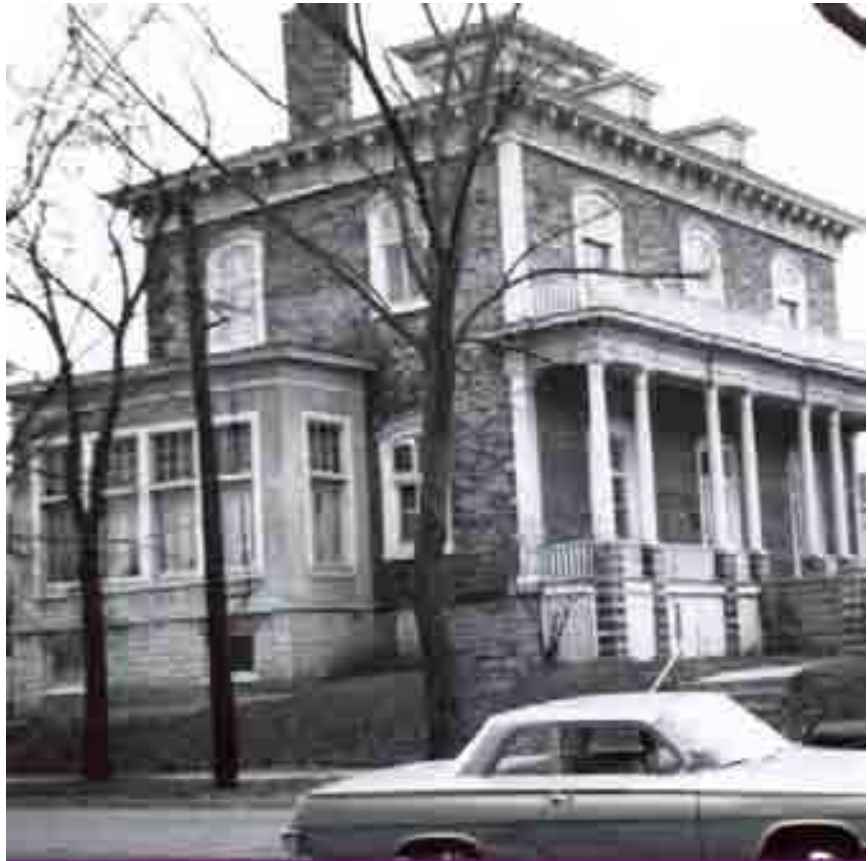
Villa Uhrig, 2014

Villa Uhrig, located at 1727 North 34th Street (between Lisbon and West Walnut) is a historic landmark built in 1853-54. The house is a two-story structure which is rectangular in shape with a 360 sq.ft. single story wing on the northwest side and a 160 sq.ft. single story wing on the southeast. The building is crowned with a hip roof and a 96 sq. ft. bracketed, rectangular cupola.

Built in an Italianate style popular in the 1850s, the villa may well be the earliest existing example of this architectural style in Milwaukee, as well as an example of a suburban summer villa of the era. Compared to its neighbors the house sits diagonally on its lot facing northwest. This is because the villa use to be part of the multi-acre summer estate which fronted the Lisbon Plank Road. The location which later came to be known as Walnut Hill was only considered a part of the city of Milwaukee in 1890s. Initially a vacation home, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, a few years after the death of Franz Joseph Uhrig in the summer of 1874, the Uhrig family moved into this villa to live here year round.

The villa's layout reflects social and usage hierarchy. The service part of the villa was sharply divided from the rest as were the working and living places of the servants. The kitchen, servants' residences, storage and cellar, and a cistern was located in the lower level. Other daily living spaces were located at the first level and the bed rooms and more private spaces on the second level. Food was served in the dining room at the first floor and usually lifted up by a dumbwaiter (a small freight elevator). The attic led to a rectangular cupola with a viewing gallery. In the nineteenth century, the panoramic view of Milwaukee's countryside from this perch must have been a popular destination for the villa residents.

By 1943 when the owners, the Lademans, left the villa, most aspects of the 20-acre estate had disappeared. Perhaps due to the economic, aesthetic, and urban forces at play—the lot was subdivided and sold, new streets were cut through the estate and the lattice garden house at the heart of the property was gone. Only the villa building remained. After the departure of the Lademans, the new owners subdivided the spaces within the villa too and rented them out to different tenants. Remnants and marks of these divisions persist. Walls subdividing the second floor rooms, additional attached baths, and faucets in the rooms demonstrates how the upper floors were subdivided and rented out to boarders.



Scanned photo of Villa Uhrig.



Fireplace.

This is how a UWM research Paper describes the Vila construction:

On a slope at the southern end of the lot, Uhrig built his mansion high on the property facing north and parallel to the Lisbon plank-road. A columned porch was attached to the front of the house. At the heart of the property was a twenty-foot tall cast iron fountain (shipped in pieces from Philadelphia by Uhrig). A gravel driveway was cut south from the Lisbon Plank Road and it then split halfway up the hill to form a large circle which swept past the front of the villa. A section of the circle - directly in front of the house - was paved with brick. The circle surrounded the fountain. The wrought iron gates of the main entrance of the property were added later when they were shipped from Uhrig's brewery in St. Louis with the iron fence and posts. Other parts of the property added to the estate later to build up an elite rural suburban mansion: a stable-barn at the far east, a brick gardener's residence at the far west, a garden pavilion at the east front and an out-house (called the "eagle house") at the back of the villa, and later came a special building for pheasants, a chicken house and a spectacular three-story-high pump house with a windmill on top. Gardening and outdoor features of the property an important component, was influenced by Downing's Idea of modern or natural style, instead of formal and geometric style of landscape design. A footpath bisected the central circle and went north from the front door, passing between two rows of lilacs, to the fountain surrounded by benches and "spreading away from this focal point were two apple orchards, numerous flower beds, gooseberries, currants and two rows of poplar trees which formed an "allee" through which Uhrig would later take his daily walks." Uhrig's intervention of the environment in this piece of land was actually his intentional motivation to shape the landscape as a suitable scene for his family's performance as elites.



Staircase area.



Doorknob detail.



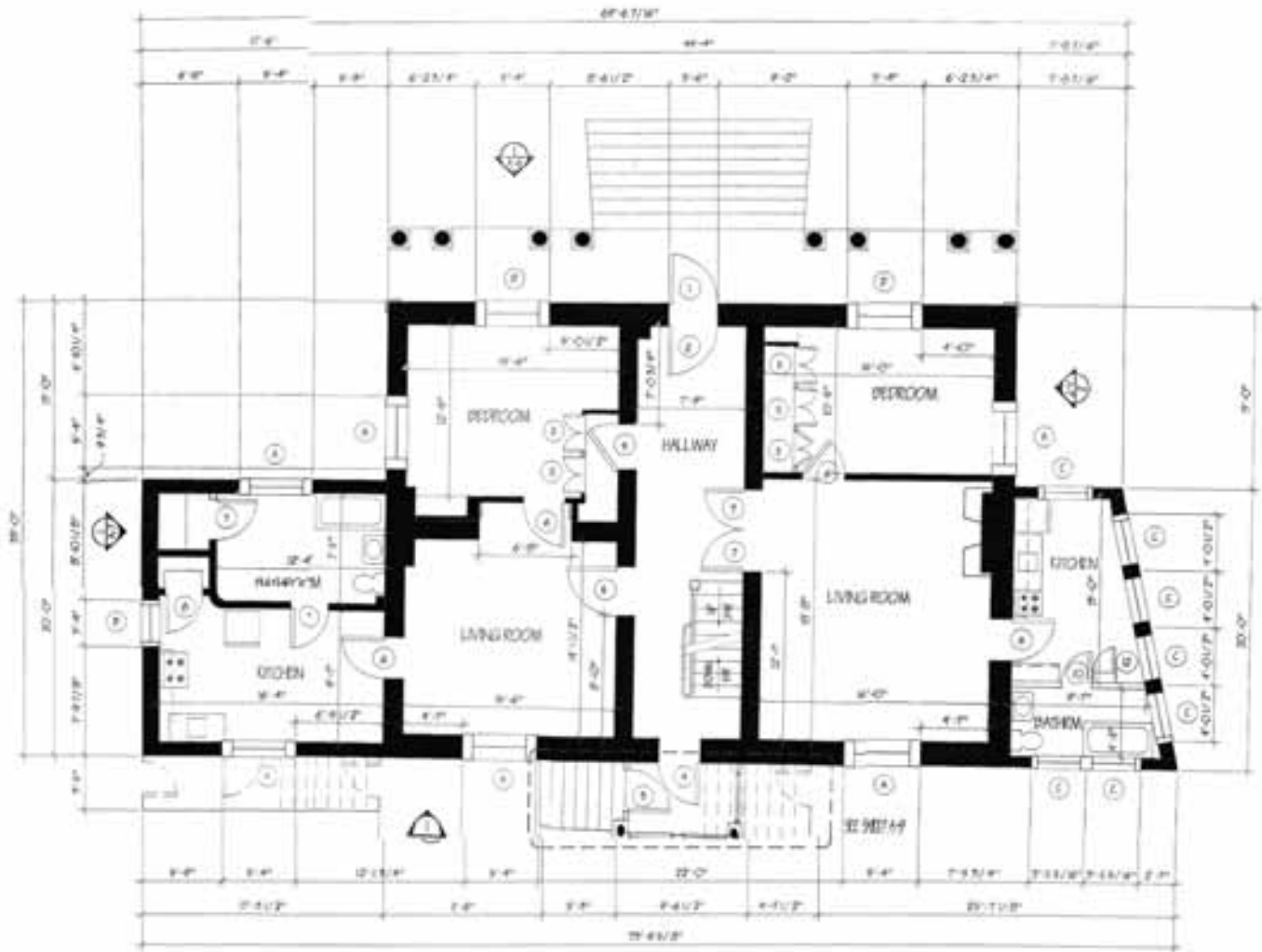
Elevation of Villa Uhrig



Front steps detail.



Light fixture.



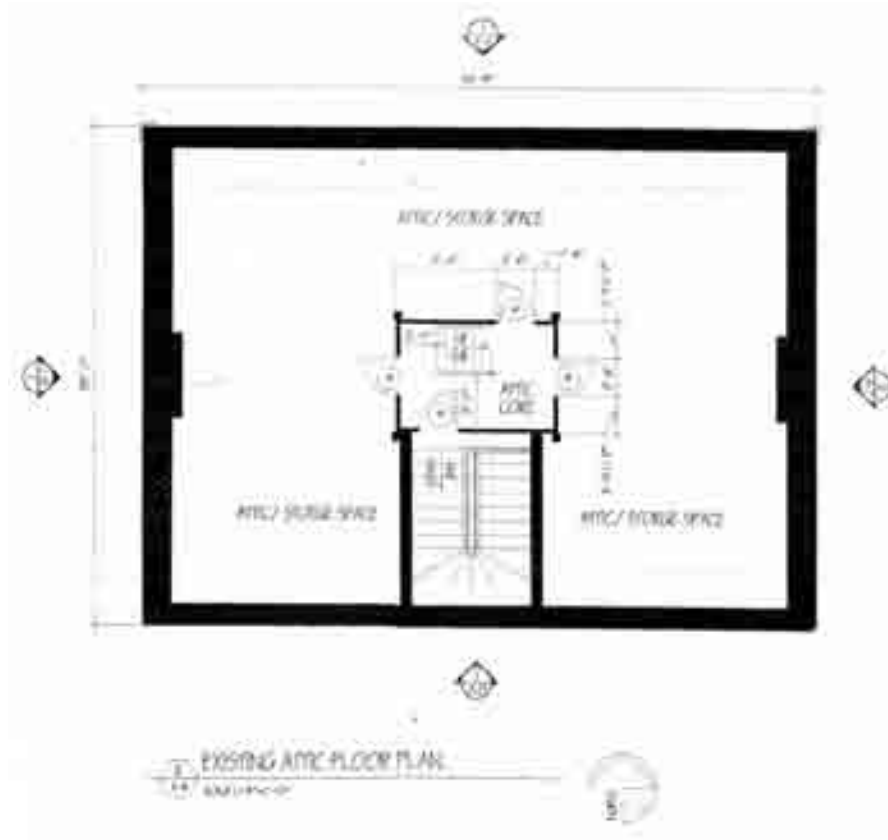
Ground floor.



Basement.



Second floor.



EXISTING ATTIC FLOOR PLAN

BOUCHER RENTAL



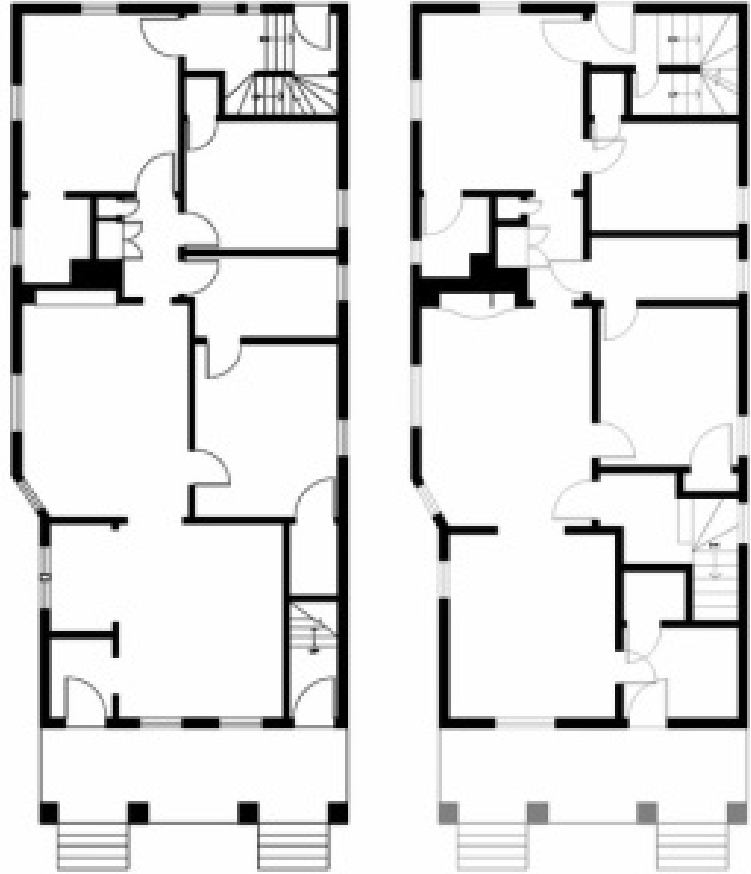
Boucher Rental, 2014

This two-story duplex was built in 1906. Its long layout fits snugly in the deep, narrow lot. A broad porch spans across the front, and each flat has its own front door. A single entrance at the back lets into a staircase which connects all the levels of the house, from basement to attic.

The two flats are nearly identical -- each arranged with a private back half, and a more public front. Detailing throughout the residences is fairly humble and finer touches, where they do exist, are limited to the front spaces. Broad, built-in banquet hutches in the dining areas have carved arabesque brackets, bead board back panels, and moulding at various levels; but then similar cabinetry in the halls leading to the kitchens have no such detail. The division of ornamentation is even more starkly illustrated where metal doorknobs are ornate on one side of the door and then plain on the other.

The attic is otherwise unfinished, but does have a small, finished room at the rear end. What looks like a gas line leads to a lamp mount, and there is a duct along the floor. The space may have been designed to serve as the sleeping quarters for a live-in servant, or some form of accommodations. Artifacts found in the space suggest that, in more recent times, it was home for a pet bird.

Only one major change was made to the property in the last century, and that was the addition of a two-car garage behind the house in 1989. Look around the interior of the house, however, and evidence of incremental changes can be found here and there: move an appliance in the kitchen and many layers of flooring are revealed, a veritable survey of the shifting fashions which the house bore witness to over the decades. Modifications are being made once again, but now toilets and vanities and everything in the kitchen is getting replaced. This flat's time for an update has clearly arrived.



Wall and ceiling renovations.

"1923: Wright's Map of Milwaukee," Milwaukee Neighborhoods: Photos and Maps 1885 - 1992. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries, December 15 2003.

Tim Richardson, interview by Matt Lathrum, June 2014.

MANNS RESIDENCE



Manns Residence, 2014

This is a large house with a long and turbulent past. Built in 1888, it is rumored to have originally belonged to one of Milwaukee's beer baron families. We found no proof of that past, however, documents do show that in 1944 the building was converted from a duplex to a four-unit house.

By the time Habitat for Humanity entered the picture in the early 2000's, it had already been abandoned by its owner for several years, but not before a staggering number of citations had piled up against it for various violations. Severe rot in the soffits and walls went straight through to the interior in places, and the windows had all been removed. Brick outlines of two different wellheads could still be seen in the basement floor where wells or sumps had once been.

After numerous critters were evicted and a fair amount of rubbish was removed, Habitat could begin renovation of the structure, but only after substantial demolition. This meant stripping the building down to the studs, tearing out the plaster walls, all the lathe boards, and the nails that had attached them. The fireplace in the front parlor was taken out and so were several floor to floor brick columns. Now they could begin to rebuild it, but this time it would become a single-family house.

The building was merely a skeleton made of lumber at this point, so turning it into a finished dwelling meant adding siding, wiring, plumbing, ductwork, insulation, drywall, doors, windows, woodwork, cabinetry, light fixtures, water heaters and furnaces. After all the work was done, it became an 8-bedroom house with 1-foot thick exterior walls, 2 bathrooms, 5 common rooms and a large open kitchen. Since the roof has new asphalt shingles and there's new vinyl siding covering the rest of the house, the house no longer looks 135 years old. In fact, the interior looks like that of a fairly new house. But visit its attic or basement and you'll get a view back to an architecturally different time, a time when basements were made of cream city brick and a house might be supported by 9" x 10" timbers.



Kitchen.



PEOPLE



Sahara Aden

In Washington Park, Sahara Aden is involved in Our Next Generation Inc., and she strives to create her own organization to help youth with self-esteem issues, an act of empathy that stems from once being confused, picked on, and in need of help. Aden was born in Kenya. She has been in Milwaukee since 2003 and has been involved in events at local neighborhood since 2005. Still in high school, she serves as an inspiration to many through her motivation to succeed and grow. Aden believes that embracing difference is crucial in order to create healthy communities. Her openness, positivity, and risk-taking have led her to create music and art of all sorts, but it remains important for her to find new things to learn and experience. She has built strong relationships with some previously guarded neighbors through acts of altruism— as simple as bringing charcoal over to a BBQ when neighbors were in need. She has reached a point with many of her neighbors where they know her and she knows them.

“You must struggle to succeed sometimes so you got to go through steps to get to where you want to go to,” Aden said while discussing her time in Kenya then coming to America. She believes you need to experience differences and learn that beauty comes in so many shapes and sizes. Without difference, the world would be boring.

Aden talked at length about how togetherness and communication generates feelings of safety and overcomes boundaries based on differences, which she believes are created and reinforced by people themselves. When she described her ideal community, she talked about empathy, communication, connection, and goals. These are things she sees in Washington Park.



Rukiya Alexander

Rukiya Alexander is Associate Director of Programming at Our Next Generation Inc., an organization providing programs that support and monitor young students.

She started there six years ago as an educational coordinator, and explains that the Our Next Generation focuses on academic engagement and development. There are different groups responsible for reading and writing improvement, preparation for high school and college, and career exploration at her organization.

When asked about the barriers of working in Washington Park, she explains that people in this neighborhood need to know more about the program and what it offers to the community. Safety issues are also another barrier. Families are not always comfortable with having their children out at night. In order to deal with these issues, Our Next Generation is continually working together with Washington Park Partners and the Urban Ecology Center.

Rukiya proudly talks about success stories of students from the programs. It is common that students volunteer their time to help others. Students are often grateful for the education and opportunities they receive and they find a way to return the support. Our Next Generation welcomes children from diverse religions, races, and cultures. The Our Next Generation campus is a second home for many children and young adults, and their inclusive, open-door policy is proof of that.



Muneer Bahauddeen

When artist Muneer Bahauddeen first moved to Washington Park, he lived above Amaranth Bakery. Now, he has moved his living space and workshop across the street into a previously derelict building that he and Amaranth owner and landlord David Boucher have worked to rehabilitate. Through bringing creativity and life to a building with a troubled past, he is redefining its role in the neighborhood. In his adapted studio, Bahuddeen makes ceramic tiles and conducts workshops where he guides participants through creating their own. But transformation takes patience, support, and trust even when finances are looking bleak. He describes his cycle of “feast” and “famine.” Through “sweat equity” -- doing odd jobs around Dave’s properties, he is able to stay afloat during the slow winter months until the next year’s demand for art picks up.

The process of converting the abandoned property into the space that he uses now has given Bahauddeen plenty of opportunity to think about the building and others like it. He now sees the layers that can be peeled back to reveal its “bones.” Rather than “demolishing” parts of a building, he has learned to view it as “dis-assembling” an intentionally designed structure. Through observations of the design and built details of the buildings in the neighborhood, he reflects on who the homes were originally for.

Muneer’s dreams are bigger than just his own personal space, and his presence in the neighborhood is immediately apparent. His distinctive ceramic tiles, and the tiles made by visitors to his workshop, can be seen in Amaranth Bakery, on a bench at the community center, in parks, and on wooden posts dotted around the community. Muneer explains that the posts, which contain visions for the community written down by its members and slipped behind handmade tiles, serve as a visual reminder of its potential and the people who care about it.



Reverend Joann Baumann

Reverend Joann Baumann has been doing what she does on a particular block of 41st Street for 18 years now. It starts with a house. A derelict property, one that's abandoned; there's drug activity and other problems, it's the scourge of the neighborhood. She keeps an eye out until eventually it's available for a song and then secures a loan for it. This is how it begins. Any improvements she can do herself, she does, such as painting and laying carpet and tile. Next she decorates the house on the cheap, and, with donated furniture, turns it into a nice home.

But then she fills them with men who are struggling to overcome drug and alcohol problems. Or men who have just been released from prison. They will be good tenants and will make good neighbors, too, she believes. "Since parole officers have had my phone number, we've rarely had an empty room."

But the fresh start these men are getting isn't just having a nice house to live in. Because that would not be enough. After all, these are individuals who have had something missing in their lives: whether it's someone who cares enough to offer some help, or having something larger to believe in, or even just having a place where they fit in that's safe. Reverend Baumann is offering all these things, and they come on the same foundation which is holding her up: faith, hard work, and a belief in positive thinking.

Struggles in her own life have helped bring her to where she is and what she's doing now. When the greatest challenges have befallen her, including her father dying when she was a young woman, the accidental death of her 19-year old son, and the running off of her fiancé of 10 years to marry another woman – she has turned to prayer. And God has provided her direction. "That night I was awakened like I was in the presence of God. The love is so intense, there is nothing in this world that compares to it. And that was a whole consciousness shift for me. I felt compelled to reach out to people nobody loved."

She worked with men in the Milwaukee jail, then began to rehab one house at a time, and now there are four houses. The latest project, an apartment building on Lisbon Avenue, is the biggest project they've taken on to date. After 20 years of doing this, Reverend Baumann continues to be invigorated by each new project she takes on. And they continue to make it through every challenge the same way: with faith and prayer, hard work, and a belief in positive thinking.



Dan Bieser

When the average customer walks into Amaranth Bakery in Washington Park and buys a bar of Tabal chocolate, he has no inkling that every step of the manufacture of that bar was carried out with care in that very building. Tucked away in spaces that customers never see, Dan Bieser is developing his “bean to bar” chocolate business. The two-story building was not designed with a commercial chocolatier in mind, so he gets creative with the spaces he has; he roasts cacao beans in the Amaranth ovens, winnows cacao nibs apart from the husks in an former coal storage room in the basement, and cools the blended chocolate in the modest kitchen and pantry space on the second floor. Bieser is passionate about the art of chocolate making, and his illustration of the process is a rich sensory experience. The deep velvety smell of roasted cacao --“like banana bread,” he suggests – the crash and crackle of the beans as they are poured and split open, the whirl of the tempering and stone-grinding machines, the slick shiny splatters of liquid chocolate as it is poured into molds, and the dark sweetness of the bars he gives us to taste make potent impressions as he takes us through the motions of his business.

At the beginning of our interview, Bieser said “I tell people, picture your Grandma’s old duplex and her kitchen, and that’s basically what we have to work in.” It wasn’t until later that we realized that he was literally picturing his own grandmother’s kitchen. Bieser’s childhood memories of spending time in their house and of visiting small businesses in the neighborhood with them reveal the deep local roots of his entrepreneurial values. Even though he did not set out expressly to return to Washington Park, the memories that shaped him led him on a path straight back there to his little kitchen on Lisbon Avenue.

When Bieser’s fledgling chocolate business outgrew his kitchen at home in Glendale, he started asking around about potential places to set up shop. Two separate people told him to talk to David Boucher, owner of Amaranth Bakery in Washington Park. Bieser walked into the bakery, Dave said he could use the space, and just like that, a new chapter for Tabal chocolate (and for the building) had begun. As Bieser’s business grows, so do his chocolate-making needs. What was already a makeshift space is now bursting at the seams with ingredients, machinery, and cooling bars of chocolate. But rather than moving to a bigger location, Bieser puts in extra work to adapt the existing space. Why? The answer is right in the name of his chocolate: TABAL, the Mayan word for relationship. While he develops his international ties, Bieser is also cultivating relationships with his neighbors Dave and Muneer, with his two part-time employees, and with other local businesses and residents as he establishes Tabal’s presence in Washington Park.



David Boucher

David Boucher, owner and operator of Amaranth Cafe, found himself working and living in Washington Park while studying at University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Knowing that he was going to be in Milwaukee for a while, he thought it would be a good idea to buy a house. Faced with high interest rates and on a graduate student income, he found the opportunity to become a home owner and landlord in the multi-unit Villa Urhig. After moving into the neighborhood in the 1990's Boucher and his wife Stephanie purchased Amaranth Cafe in 2000. Having little or no experience as bakers they began the bakery through Stephanie's interest in the biology and became familiar with the building through Boucher's job as a neighborhood planner.

Boucher's reach into the community extends past the doors of Amaranth Café. He owns the building next door, which is occupied by Express Yourself Milwaukee, a youth center focused on the Arts, and the building across the street, which is occupied by Muneer Bahaudeen, a local ceramics artist. Boucher also manages one of the community gardens in the neighborhood and rents the upstairs of his cafe to Ko-Thi Dance Company and Tabal Chocolate. His experience as a neighborhood planner and his familiarity with residents and areas of the community have allowed him to construct relationships during his time in Washington Park.

Relationships are as important as buildings and infrastructure when talking about neighborhood resilience. Boucher is focusing on building up the neighborhood by creating relationships and encouraging others to do what they do well. The relationships that he is building in Washington Park are making his community stronger by creating the social capital that brings community residents together to focus on opportunities and work against the isolation that poverty in the neighborhood has caused. His relationship with Muneer Bahaudeen and Dan Bieser of Tabal Chocolate has helped to stabilize the area by encouraging artistic expression in the neighborhood and focusing on small business development on Lisbon Ave.



Barbara and Ulysses Brown

“If you live long enough, you have many stories” says Ulysses Brown. The Browns opened up their home to the 2014 BLC Field School after several years of restoration and renovation projects at their 2,363 sq. ft. home. Built in the early 1900s, the Brown’s took down the paneling and removed colorful shag carpet put in decades earlier by previous owners to restore the original plaster and oak floors. Fully complementing the historical architecture of the house, new upgrades prepared the house for another 100 years. Mrs. Brown got her dream kitchen and Mr. Brown got his entertainment center supported by an upgraded electrical system. The Browns value the woodwork, detailing, and ceiling height in their present home. The neighborhood’s proximity to work, downtown, and recreation made Washington Park a desirable location to raise their children.

Ulysses and Barbara Brown have lived in their home for over 30 years. They are one of three remaining families who have lived in the same neighborhood block since the mid-1970s.

The Browns have many stories to share. With a VA home loan and the generosity of their realtor, the Brown’s moved into their home “very quickly”. They had two pieces of furniture and little else. From that they built an incredible life. From their wedding, which took place in the house, to hosting Mardi Gras and other family gatherings, you are invited into their home and lives.

Mr. Brown is retired and Mrs. Brown works for Veolia.



Charles Carmickle

“I’ve lived the life of ten men” says Charles Carmickle, a Louisiana native and retiree. He had worked for Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, was a music promoter to well-known R&B acts, attended both law and culinary school, and is a Vietnam veteran. He also served as the first black deputy sheriff in an all white suburb and reminds the field school students that “the history you read about, I’ve lived through it.”

Mr. Carmickle moved to the Wisconsin and the Washington Park neighborhood three years ago. He participates in several community groups and is well known on his block.

Upon moving to Milwaukee, he thought many of the people had just given up on life and the neighborhood was unlike any other he previously lived in. It was the place where he was first robbed. His home was burglarized and he had two cars stolen from him within one month. Despite this, he is well known on the block and has been successful in getting neighbors to take care of their properties, help one another, and stop negative behaviors like selling drugs. Full of wisdom and artistic voice, Mr. Carmickle states, “it’s neighbors that make neighborhoods.”

Mr. Carmickle hosts an online streaming radio show through Riverwest Public Radio titled Life.



Gerry Coon

Dr. Gerald Coon was born in Fond du Lac and has a Ph.D. in education. He's the Executive Director at the Saint Francis Children's Center on the Cardinal Stritch University campus. Coon is also an adjunct faculty member in the University's College of Business.

When he moved with his partner to Washington Park in 1988, they wanted a big, old, affordable house which could be restored. In the beginning, it was just about the house. But after 26 years, Gerry Coon, who is extremely involved in neighborhood issues, talks about the neighborhood (be more specific). Coon was part of Cooperation West Side Association and Lisbon Avenue Neighborhood Housing Development and affirms that he does what he can to make the neighborhood better.

According to him, it is impossible to live in Milwaukee, especially in Washington Park, and not be conscious of racial segregation. Yet, he believes that people should live wherever they want to and that racial integration could be achieved if people respect each other.

Dr. Coon explains that their lives center around their home, and that the upkeep of both the home and the gardens keep them occupied. He spends his free time reading about historic preservation and urban sustainability in his favorite room in the house - the library.



Rosalind Cox

Rosalind Cox has been a Milwaukee resident since she was a young woman living in the East side of Milwaukee. Starting in the late '80s she as well as her son and daughter moved into a duplex in Washington Park. The living situation they had was for her to live on the lower level and then her young adult children lived upstairs. After the kids moved out and Cox went overseas for the military, the pipes burst when winter came which led to problems for when she came back in the eighties. Since then, she moved a few houses down to the place she really considers home, in more ways than one, and has also been working to fix up her previous house on her own. She considers her move to this neighborhood was a “blessing in disguise” because she has been able to find a new identity as an active member of this community. She is currently working on projects such as community gardens for the neighborhood because she is a firm believer that being engaged in the community and beautifying the area is a positive motivation for the improvement upon mindset. As a veteran herself, Ms. Cox envisions both of her properties being donated to the community for homeless veterans because she knows what it's like to come home and all of a sudden everything is gone and she wants to help them transition.

Cox has worked incessantly to contribute to the Washington Park neighborhood. Cox works with Washington Park Partners, Washington Park's Neighborhood Improvement District (NID), and the Milwaukee Neighborhood Leadership Institute. When she first moved into the area, there was a noticeable decline in the neighborhood's well-being. Even knowing of a decline, she stayed put because she said it was her calling and has been involved with church and youth programs, helping the community grow.



Dustin Cuhel

Dustin Cuhel moved into the Ludwig Von Baumbach Residence with his partner, a young son, and their cat, Stinky. A bit of adventurer, Cuhel moved from the Lake Superior area to Minneapolis, then to Green Bay, and, finally to Milwaukee in 2005. He describes himself as having a passion for “the old, the odd, and the unusual things in life.” He collects and resells items from rummage sales and other such venues. He also works on small motorcycles and mopeds. Storage space was, thus, a key criterion in his house search, and he found this house on the internet using ‘barn’ as a keyword.

Cuhel sees himself as a newcomer with respect to Washington Park, venturing out in the neighborhood with hopes of finding rich cultural activities in the Washington Park area. He believes that the neighborhood has great potential for small businesses and hopes to contribute positively to the economy of the neighborhood.

Home prices are low in the Washington Park, making a home affordable in this neighborhood. Cuhel acknowledges that of the media image of Washington Park may be negative due to the prevalent perception of crime. He hopes that such perceptions will change as more and more people actually visit this neighborhood and participate in cultural events. He hopes to contribute to the cultural life of this neighborhood and although he hasn’t yet been able to find a suitable neighborhood association he has plans to seek them out as he settles in.

The Cuhel household is beginning to get enchanted with the house, its history and how it looks and feels, as well as the neighborhood and the Park. He loves to drive around the neighborhood and walk around the Park in front of his new home with his son.



Lamont Davis

Lamont Davis knows that simple solutions rarely solve complex problems.

Davis lives in the Washington Park neighborhood and has for his entire life. After he went to college he found himself working for an agency which made repairs on homes of the elderly in order to make them safer. Today he helps run an organization which facilitates city grants for a broad range of home improvements.

He's not satisfied with just throwing money at problems, though; because then there's a good chance they'll need money thrown at them again later. So he tries to help transform homeowners into people who know how to spot things before they become problems, into people who know how to care for their houses' vital systems, and people who are financially knowledgeable so they don't lose their homes because of bad mortgages and uninformed choices.

Another issue he is concerned with is what to do with the vacant lots scattered throughout the neighborhood. He's interested in discussing innovative approaches that could be applied. He feels that collaborations between different people and various entities are how the best solutions can be found.

Also worth more looking at, he believes, is how residences get configured when houses get restored or new housing gets built in neighborhoods like this. He thinks maybe they should be a little smaller, perhaps apartment configurations would make more sense. Whatever the best solution might be, the status quo never seems to be enough for Lamont Davis.



Stewart Dempsey

Stewart Dempsey studied horticulture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He works as a garden designer and is a business owner. Moreover, Mr. Dempsey is an art admirer and a collector of antiques. In his free time he likes to read in the library and play the piano.

Dempsey displayed his love for historic preservation when he decided to move into the Washington Park neighborhood. He remembers that his current residence was in ruins when he bought this property. However, he saw great potential in the building. Over the years Dempsey and his partner have carefully restored this house to its past glory. In a newspaper article Dempsey reflected, “Even in the dilapidated state it was in when we first saw it, we could see the original details were still here... It was easy to envision the original floor plan.”

He worked with children from his neighborhood block, often helping them repair their bikes. In return, the kids became more respectful towards him and protective towards his property. They appreciated that someone was paying attention to them. Stewart believes that mutual respect and caring is a positive force that is beneficial for the neighborhood.

Gardening is his favorite hobby. He really enjoys it when there are people over during numerous garden tours and open house events showcasing his home.

Mr. Stewart Dempsey, interview by Phyllis Reske, June 2014.

House’s long history shines through after lengthy renovation,” Journal Sentinel, August 9, 2013.



Jeanette Gleason

Jeanette Gleason was born in Chicago and grew up in Puerto Rico, where her family is from originally. When she was 23 years old, she moved back to Chicago as a bilingual young adult. She has three children. The oldest daughter is now a police officer in New York. The middle daughter lives in Chicago and is working on her psychology degree. The youngest, her son, is a barber.

Mrs. Gleason moved to Washington Park with her husband Pat Gleason. She did not know anything about the neighborhood when she arrived. Nowadays when she hears people complain about this neighborhood she argues that she never had problems here and, indeed, she likes to live here.

Jeanette and Pat Gleason own the Bus Stop Coffee Shop. She does not like to cook, so her job is to assist in the cafe kitchen and serve the customers. When asked what she likes most about working at the Bus Stop Cafe, Gleason replies that she loves to interact with people and reveals that she usually knows what her customers want to eat—even before they order. Sometimes customers will ask for “something new,” and Gleason loves the opportunity to be creative with the menu.

Living in Washington Park is a unique experience for Jeanette Gleason. When she talks about her childhood memories, she confesses that it was like living in a “bubble.” Her parents were protective and she studied in a private school. She began to learn about life when she moved to this neighborhood. She meets all kinds of people and loves to engage with individuals who enter the coffee shop. She has come to know diverse kinds of people and she likes to do what she can for them. The discovery of this world outside her “bubble” taught her important lessons about life. She has learned not to judge people by appearance and treats everyone equally.

Gleason helps her community in every possible way— making crochet hats and scarves for babies and the homeless, encouraging neighbors to clean their sidewalks, and giving free coffee to sad people.



Pat Gleason

In 2012, Pat Gleason came from Chicago with his wife to live in Washington Park. His dream was to open his own bakery where he could work downstairs and live upstairs. He found a building that piqued his interest. It was a walk-up apartment over a store — a layout that provided a convenient space for him to work downstairs and live upstairs. The couple made extensive repairs to the building. They demolished walls, bought new building materials, and fixed the roof. When Pat moved in he did not know anything about the neighborhood. He was familiar with Milwaukee and liked the location because it was near Miller Park and Interstate 94.

Pat is very careful about his products. He wants to make sure that his costumers are satisfied. As a result his bakery menu is based on what his customers like. He always prepares fresh food, preferring to cook everything instead of buying prepared food from markets. He eats everything he sells — if it's not good enough for him, he will not sell it to others.

In addition to the bakery, Pat has another passion. He loves photography and has recently opened a photography school adjoining his cafe. He hopes that local youth will attend the Midwest School of Photography and gain necessary skills in composition and digital photography.

His involvement with the community goes beyond providing good food. Pat was elected member of the board of Washington Park Partners, and is currently engaged in a collaborative effort to reduce crime and improve the community. Soft-spoken and unassuming, Pat Gleason is a true community hero.



Mike and Judith Howden

Mike and Judith Howden moved to Milwaukee from Green Bay, WI in 1968. They picked the Washington Park neighborhood for the economic and racial diversity of its residents. They had lived in this neighborhood for almost a decade before they bought a house adjoining the park. They lived in this house from late 1970s till 2013, when they moved a block away to Highland Ave, to a smaller home more suitable to their current needs.

Mike and Judith Howden are both retired social workers. Having lived in this neighborhood, they have many stories to tell about their house, about the park, about their neighborhood and their interaction with their neighbors, and about the changes they have lived through over the years. Their striking reminiscences bring the sights, smells, and sounds of the neighborhood to life as they talk about their routines around their home, Judith's flower arrangements and Mike's yard work, and anecdotes of life around Washington Park. They have also been engaged residents of the neighborhood participating in various neighborhood organization, concerned with issues that their co-residents face such as the lack of healthy food options in the area.



Lois Luglio

Lois Luglio lives in her duplex home on West Lisbon Avenue, the same house that was home to her children, to her parents and to her grandparents. The walls and surfaces of the dining room are covered with family photographs. It is a house full of one family's memories and milestones.

Lois's grandfather, Joseph Brah, moved to the Washington Park area and built the house in 1915. For many years, he lived on the first floor and operated his plumbing business out of the basement while her parents lived in the second story unit. As a young adult, Lois moved to Peru and married. She lived in Peru with her husband and children for ten years, returning to Milwaukee with them to take care of her ailing parents in the 1960s. She has been living in the family home ever since.

Her home looks directly out onto Washington Park, and family photographs reveal that the park was central in their lives. In addition to the multiple photographs taken in the park itself, the many snapshots taken of family members on the second floor porch that looks out over the park illustrate that for the Brahs and the Luglios, Washington Park was an extension of their home. Lois's stories reflect how indelibly the park's evolution over time is tied to her memories. She remembers stories from her grandparents about the days before there was a zoo, when Washington Park was an airfield. In her lifetime, she shares memories of playing in the park during all seasons, and recalls when the lagoon was expanded. She dates when she moved back to the neighborhood after her time in Peru as "the same year the zoo left the park". Lois has witnessed drastic change in her house, the park, and the neighborhood over her lifetime, but the duplex her grandfather built still exists and remains her home.



Cheryl Manns

Cheryl Manns is the mother of six: four sons who are in their twenties, a daughter who just graduated from high school, and a five year-old who has some special needs. She has spent most of her life raising them and the vast majority of that time doing it alone; she's done what had to be done, even if it meant traveling with a road construction crew for stretches of time.

When Habitat for Humanity offered to renovate an abandoned house for her, she saw a chance to pursue a dream of creating 'the family home;' and it turns out that she was up to the task. It was suggested that she create a master bedroom suite on the second floor, but she saw the wisdom of situating herself on the first floor instead so she could manage the household from there. All of her boys could reside on the second floor, she reasoned, and the space left over should be used to create a TV room and a computer room for them to share.

Family is what's most important to Ms. Manns, and the signs are everywhere to be seen. Pictures of family members are displayed, in maximum density, in different locations throughout the home. It's the main thing she talks about, and, if there were ever any doubt, it's even spelled out in words high on the wall: "Family – life's greatest blessing."

It's a cozy home. Thought has clearly gone into the decorative choices. There's even a color scheme which shifts, every so slightly, as one moves from room to room. The yard has not been overlooked, either: plants, borders, and ornaments are clear signs that this house really matters to someone.

Now the owner of her own business, Ms. Manns continues on with the hard work, and new dreams continue to emerge in her mind. She explains her idea of the family home a little further: it's a place where all the generations can go for special occasions and holidays. When asked if there's anything else she might like to improve about the house, she offers that, "the front porch could be bigger . . ." And if you ask her about her thoughts on Washington Park's future, she will describe her vision of a safer place where people are polite and cooperate with each other.



Pat Mueller

Pat Mueller lives in the Martin Drive neighborhood adjoining Washington Park. We interviewed her because of her extensive knowledge of the historic architecture of the homes and buildings surrounding Washington Park.

Spatial contagion, spillover effects, or spatial interdependence are terms social scientists and geographers use to understand how one geographic area effects, influences, or shapes another geographic area close by or far away. As Pat describes the “compactness” and physical boundaries isolating Martin Drive – she explains how these features protected the neighborhood from crime while also facilitating identity and creating a neighborhood that “you can see”.



Tim Richardson

Tim Richardson has lived in the Washington Park neighborhood since he was a child. As a teenager his two favorite activities were basketball and causing trouble. Because there were basketball courts around back then, on any given day he'd be playing the game. It was the 1980's, and there was also a lot of criminal activity. If he wasn't playing ball, he was taking part in neighborhood crime.

The people around him were getting sent to prison and the day came when he understood that he needed to live differently. He got a job in manufacturing and things were going just fine. However, someone he knew encouraged him to pursue an opportunity in social work. He got the job and found himself counseling the victims of crime. He worked with the families of murder victims, and was also on the basketball courts leading youth in regularly scheduled play. He was now a man learning what it was to help others and discovering that he actually possessed something called empathy.

When the economic downturn arrived, jobs in social work became much harder to get, and another vocation transition became inevitable. While for the past 12 years he'd been helping people to heal, now he's helping to heal houses. As a handyman in the Washington Park neighborhood, it seems that there's always work to be done.

A lot of change has occurred in the neighborhood over the years. One thing Richardson believes hurts the kids of today is that the basketball courts have been closed down. It was a good thing for young people to do with their time, and it's something he thinks they still need.



Stephanie Shipley

Stephanie Shipley has lived in Milwaukee for the last two decades. It was through her work in the nonprofit sector as a community organizer that she became acquainted with the issues pertinent to the city's West Side. It also motivated her move to the Washington Park neighborhood.

"I feel everyone is isolated right now," laments Stephanie. This realization drove and continues to drive her to create and nurture communal spaces in the neighborhood. Stephanie, and her husband David created a public space, Amaranth Bakery, where community members can gather and get to know one another. Stephanie bought the building, "because it needed to be bought". She also recognized the importance of food, the benefits of different food experiences, and the need for food adventures! Thus the bakery was born.

Preparing foods for the bakery and participating in community meetings means she finds sleep when she can. What keeps her focused and what she says helps the business stay malleable and responsive, is having a wider vision and the wider context in mind. Influenced by her years as a community organizer, she sees the benefits of having shared spaces in the smiles of the children in her neighborhood.

Carol Deptolla, "Community Rises with Amaranth Owner's Breads, Baked Goods, Journal Sentinel, March 27, 2012, (Accessed July 12, 2014).

Stephanie Shipley, interview by Milan Outlaw, June 2014.



Gregory Stanford

Retired from the Journal Sentinel as a journalist, columnist, and opinion editorialist, Gregory Stanford is an opinion leader. A native to the Washington DC area, Stanford came to Milwaukee to study journalism at Marquette University and eventually worked for The Journal and The Journal Sentinel.

His entire career was dedicated to explicating African American life in Milwaukee. His most familiar work covered corruption during Milwaukee Police Chief Brier's tenure and black-white disparities, issues that remain relevant today.

Gregory Stanford currently co-operates Ayzha Fine Arts Gallery & Boutique located at the Grand Avenue Mall in downtown Milwaukee.

Patricia Oblatz, "Gregory Stanford: Profile of Success," Milwaukee Renaissance, September 29, 2011, <http://www.milwaukeerenaissance.com/PeaceOfMind/GregoryStanfordProfileOfSuccess>, (Accessed July 7, 2014)

C-SPAN video on Poverty, Inequality and Race with Gregory Stanford, December 12, 2006, <http://www.c-span.org/video/?195797-1/poverty-inequality-race>, (Accessed July 7, 2014)

Gregory Stanford blogsite: <http://gregorystanford.blogspot.com>

Gregory Stanford, interview by Milan Outlaw, June 2014.



Gary Strothmann

Boulevard Inn was owned by a second generation of German immigrant family. Albert Gaulke and his wife Marie started this business at 4300 West Lloyd Street in 1946. Albert's daughter Joan eventually got married to Warner Strothmann, who worked part-time at Boulevard Inn after serving the United States Navy. In 1968, Warner bought the business from Albert and ran it until he had a severe stroke in 1991. One of his sons, Gary, took the lead after his father's stroke.

Gary, born in 1953, entered the business at the age of fourteen (around 1967) as a cleaning boy. He worked also as a salad boy, a busboy, and finally a manager. According to Gary, the business was very successful while having the expected crowds for both lunch and dinner. The luncheon crowd consisted mostly of managerial people from the surrounding businesses such as Miller Brewery, Harley-Davidson, and Master Lock. At night, Boulevard Inn had a dinner crowd from the surrounding "affluent" neighborhoods, such as Washington Heights, Washington Highlands, and Sherman Boulevard. For the rest of the West Siders, it was a "special occasion restaurant." In addition, families stopped to have a dessert after enjoying an evening at the theaters along North Avenue and Lisbon Avenue. People also visited the restaurant before and after the events in Washington Park across Lloyd Street. Boulevard Inn thus became "a place to go" for the people in the area.

In 1992, Boulevard Inn relocated to the East Side location at 925 East Wells Street by taking Michael Cudahy's invitation to his property, Cudahy Tower. The West Side location was immediately taken over by a night club, but the building was burned down due to arson in 1993. A new Milwaukee Public library branch has been operating at the location since 2003. Although Boulevard Inn had a big following at its East Side location, Gary sold that business to the restaurateur Joe Bartolotta in 2003. Bartolotta remodeled the restaurant and opened a new supper club of Bacchus at the location in 2004, which still operates today. Boulevard Inn, as a physical space, no longer exists. However, as one customer recalls, the memory lingers on.

Excerpt from a research paper by Yuko Nakamura, Spring 2014.

Gary Strothmann, interview by Yuko Nakamura, Milwaukee, March 2, 2014.

Barbara Stein, interview by Yuko Nakamura, Milwaukee, April 11, 2014.



Kayeng Xiong

Kayeng Xiong is a high school student who spends some of his time at Hmong American Friendship Association (H.A.F.A.) located in the Washington Park neighborhood. The H.A.F.A. center takes initiative in preserving the Hmong heritage. Xiong plays a traditional cultural instrument called the Qeej and performs traditional Hmong dances. His involvement with H.A.F.A. indicates his desire to preserve his culture for himself and for others in order to communicate and teach people about himself and Hmong culture. His experiences as an immigrant gives us an insight into what it is like to be a member of the Hmong community in this neighborhood. Mr. Xiong explains that, although there are sometimes cultural and social tensions in the neighborhood, he is hopeful that there will be positive change over time. He explained “...if everybody has a moment and isn’t so quick to judge, everybody will get along”.

Xiong volunteers at H.A.F.A. and with the Safe & Sound: Safe Places program in an effort to contribute to positive change for his generation and those to follow. He regards trash and foreclosures as signs of a neighborhood in decline and works to ameliorate such conditions. His family buys older homes, refurbishes them and rents them out. He helps his father fix up boarded up homes and maintain rental properties owned by his family.

Mindset and communication go hand in hand for Xiong and he believes it will take many years to get people together and start building a new generation and a new environment. He is still learning to settle in and learning to interact amongst other people and other cultures. Washington Park’s dynamic character, made up of many cultures old and new, provides a vital environment for newcomers and immigrants such as Xiong to create their own home. He described his ideal home and community as a place where one feels safe, has fun, and is comfortable with others. For Xiong, the neighborhood lacks some of these feelings. He envisions community as a place where people are neighborly and where there is a support system for residents in need. According to Xiong, as new immigrants, Hmongs may not communicate much outside of their own comfort zone. But he meets people of different cultures at school and says that this cross cultural experience helps him become more open minded and comfortable.



ANALYSIS

COMMUNITY TIES AND THE LEGACY OF DISRUPTIVE FORCES



An easterly facing aerial view of the Park West Freeway right-of-way in the mid 1970s, while the completion of the project was being decided on in federal court. The Sherman Boulevard and North Avenue intersection is in the bottom right corner.

Ties are made as a result of the interaction between our minds and the real world - our thoughts, feelings, and physical reactions to where we live and the surroundings, both built and living. They are closely linked with people's ideas of home or community, or how they imagine, experience, and give meaning to their living space(s). Without a doubt, the significance of the Park West Freeway project as disruptive force on Washington Park and the surrounding communities is important to consider when asking questions regarding people's lived experience of their community.

"The auto as the main method of transportation in the city should be considered an outdated, unnecessary and destructive concept". So begins the West Side Citizens Coalition's 1973 report on its opposition the Park West Freeway, a highway that was planned to cut through the north and west sides of Milwaukee from I-43 to Sherman Boulevard along North Avenue. Opposition to the planned freeway had to contend with the bureaucratic and pragmatic logic of the Expressway Commission, the state institution responsible for the planning and construction of the freeway: "The project will, without a doubt, become an aesthetic highlight in the area".

Throughout the planning phases of the Park West Freeway, the impact of the destruction of homes on the social fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods had been barely considered. “The very fact that it was more important to move cars than it was to preserve houses sends a message to the people that live there that these are not areas, houses, businesses that are held in high esteem”. Initially based on traffic congestion models, the location for the freeway was approved in the early 1960s and the Federal Highway Administration granted the “demolitions of acquired and vacated properties” to create the right-of-way for the freeway’s construction in 1966, before the project plans were even finalized. By the time the West Side Citizens Coalition filed suit in federal court in 1971, 99% of the land needed had been acquired and 1,590 homes had been cleared. However, in 1977, it was decided by the Federal Highway Administration that the freeway would not be built on the grounds that there was considerable opposition, that it would sever established neighborhoods, and that it would be of limited utility, based on Milwaukee’s freeway system at the time.

Despite not having been built, the Park West Freeway left a noticeable scar on the neighborhoods surrounding the right-of-way, both physically and socially. The most conspicuous damage done by the project was the destruction of lived space in order to make way for one reserved solely for the automobile, completely altering the landscape and the way people interact with it. The removal of almost 1,600 households had undoubtedly disrupted immeasurable social patterns and ties that had previously been integral components of the way the residents must have experienced and imagined their own neighborhoods. To this day, over 40 years later, many areas in the right-of-way remain undeveloped, prolonging the disruption of social patterns and ties that are maintained by the residents and altering their lived experience.

Making sense of any one person’s ties is a challenging prospect, one which must uncover many nuances and complexities, even contradictions and inconsistencies, but even a brief look into someone’s life can expose some intriguing ideas. Even more compelling is the experience of the newcomer or the immigrant. How do you make home in a new place? What occurs when one must update his or her idea of home? And more importantly, what is at stake? Our time spent with residents of the Washington Park neighborhood answered some of these questions and revealed how the ties that they create, maintain, and modify are interconnected with the way they experience their homes and communities.

West Side Citizens Coalition. (1973). *The Park West and What it Means to Us*. Milwaukee, WI. Author. - found in the UWM Library U.S. DOT – FHWA, WisDOT, & Milwaukee Co. Transportation Division (1973, February 22). *Draft Environmental Statement – Administrative Action for the Park Freeway and Spur*. [EIS for Park West]. Park West Redevelopment Task Force Collection (Box 3, folder 11). UWM Archives, Milwaukee, WI.

John Gurda, interviewed by George Ananchev Spring 2012.

Recent news has paid significant attention to Milwaukee's concentrated incarceration, particularly geographic areas on the north side of the city that have extremely high populations of individuals exiting and re-entering the city after being in jail or prison. Interspersed with stories about neighborhood safety and disorder were stories about incarceration and its impact on resident life and the neighborhood's physical environment, including its housing stock.

How the neighborhood is affected by mass incarceration

Neighborhood Life: Residents talked about day-to-day neighborhood life. A summary of their comments follows:

- Neighbors thank them for being in the neighborhood year after year. Some have lived in the area for several years.
- They, too, avoid certain blocks and streets because of safety reasons and because the areas are unkept.
- They almost never go to Washington Park. For some, it's too family-oriented and there is not much to do if you do not have young kids. Others prefer the smaller parks nearby.
- Rarely do they enjoy the recreation and entertainment activities that are staples in Wisconsin such as the State Fair and lake front festivals. A goal is to take more time to participate in recreation.
- Coming home after incarceration overloads the senses with all the sights, smells, and people. The transition home takes a while but with home successful transition is possible.

The challenges of re-entry and creating a home after incarceration are many. Those re-entering society are often stigmatized for being an offender; a stigma that is compounded based on the type and severity of the crime(s) committed and if the individual is low-income and a person of color. Finding a home is challenging too. Support from family and friends may help but essentially without a job or source of income and a successful history of paying rent, it is difficult to find a place to call home. Yet, Washington Park residents' suggest a home is essential to successful re-integration into society. It is essential to healing and creating a new life.

But, what is it that makes home essential? Local residents gave us some answers: It gives you stability. It's one less basic (and daily) need that you have to worry about. You feel supported by your housemates, neighbors, and society. You have a chance.

If home is important, residents' descriptions of the typical housing stock available to them as ex-offenders seem antithetical. The offenders we spoke with described the homes usually available to them as:

- Infested with roaches and rats
- Smelly, moldy, filthy, and cramped
- Missing furniture, food, and personal affects
- Hostile roommates who are at different stages of recovery
- A place where their children, family, and friends can't, shouldn't or are not allowed to visit
- A short-term placement before the next short-term placement

To learn about an innovative business and faith-based project in Washington Park to create home after incarceration, addiction, and homelessness see Reverend Joann Baumann's work. In these homes, fine craftsmanship and ample, clean spaces support recovery and balance, and reduce re-offending. Housemates and neighbors are supportive. Neighborhood life is supportive. It's a place where they have lived there long enough to shovel their neighbors' sidewalk or trim their bushes when needed. It's a place where they look outside to make sure a housemate gets out of the car and into the house safely. It's a place for a new life that contradicts the labels given to formerly incarcerated individuals.

The demand for housing for formerly incarcerated persons is high. One resident commented on the number of boarded up homes and said it was sad given the demand of new homes in this neighborhood.

FOOD SURVEY



Washington Park's food landscape is a strange combination of corner stores selling "walking tacos" to ultra-aware eateries such as Amaranth Café. A Pick'n Save grocery store provides local residents with produce and soda. Community gardens are popping up every few blocks, giving neighbors a chance to connect with their food. Is this neighborhood classifiable as a "food desert"? If not, what is it? BLC field school investigated.



According to the USDA, "low-income census tracts where a significant number or share of residents is more than 1 mile (urban) or 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket."





Community garden in an empty lot.



Deen Food Market advertisement.



Aramanth Bakery, behind the counter.



Bill the Butcher Ribs, USA exterior view.



Bus Stop Coffe Shop menu.



Pick 'n Save in Washington Park.

Further reading: Attracting Supermarkets to Inner-City Neighborhoods: Economic Development Outside the Box, Economic Development Quarterly

Map of Washington Park boundaries ("Washington Park." Map. City of Milwaukee. City of Milwaukee, n.d. Web. 2 Feb. 2014.)

From 302- <http://arch302.weebly.com/washington-park-history.html>

Map of Food Desert. Last updated May 28, 2014. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx#.U7RmsIIdWVt>

Judith Howden, interview by Leonardo Moises and Salman Hussain, June 2014.

Tim Richardson, interview by Matt Lathrum, June 2014.

Field interviews, interview by Maia Stack and Matt Lathrum, June 2014.

HOME OWNERSHIP



Habitat for Humanity work site.

Home ownership has many benefits for families, neighborhoods, and for the houses themselves. Yet, in a time with high rates of home foreclosures and unemployment, home ownership is out of reach for many families and renting is the only option. When discussing community safety and community building, several of the residents we spoke with indicated that the lack of home owners and the abundant numbers of rental units (in addition to other social issues) caused neighborhood instability and depressed housing stock. But is there more to the story? Home owners versus renters may be false dichotomy with one being good for neighborhood life and the other being bad. It seems moving less often and taking stake in the same neighborhood block, whether renting or owning, is most important.

Some older homes in the Washington Park neighborhood are boarded up, others are foreclosed, and many belong to the City. In addition, there are 3,000 city-owned empty lots. Some lots have been turned into gardens and communal spaces, others have been abandoned. The sheer number of vacant lots can affect the fabric of a neighborhood.

For additional resources and to learn more about vacant lots, visit the City of Milwaukee's Vacant Lot Handbook.



A worker at the Habitat for Humanity work site.



A vacant lot being used as a garden.



Habitat for Humanity work site.



Milwaukee Urban Gardens sign.

For the past several years, new homes have been constructed on empty lots. What role does historic preservation have as the city looks to increase home ownership and re-build parts of the central city? How can we support new and existing home owners as well as low- and middle-income home owners in maintaining their older homes?

ONE HOUSE, MANY STORIES



Historical house beckoned couple

By Fran Bauer
of The Journal Sentinel

Look back 100 years to the days when Washington Park was still the woods belonging to Ludwig von Baumbach, a wealthy German aristocrat.

Workmen lifted his house onto beams and moved it to a spot that today would be two blocks west of its first location. It still stands at what is now 1430 N. 40th St.

Parties must have filled its gracious rooms as von Baumbach, who served as Germany's consul here, entertained the countrymen he had encouraged to come to the city.

Von Baumbach died in 1883 and by the turn of the century, Ernst von Baumbach, one of his six sons, had sold the house and all of its surrounding acres. In 1901, the county turned the 150 acres it had bought from the family into West Park. Within a decade, it had been renamed Washington Park.

Meanwhile, the house, which is just across the street from the park's southeastern limits, was soon surrounded by larger neighborhood homes.

Over the years, the house slipped into disrepair, and was obscured by bushes that blocked it from view.

Became a fixation

But it held a special fascination for Judy and Michael Howden from the first moment they drove past it in 1957. In fact, the house became a fixation. Judy confessed, "One afternoon, she saw the owner come outside so she stopped to ask more about the house."

Kirby Goodman, the owner, offered her a tour. In return, she sent him a thank-you note, including her name and phone number in case he ever wanted to sell.

Two and a half years ago Goodman's son called to say that the house was for sale. The Howdens moved in the following spring and began a fascinating trip into history.

Last week, at the couple's suggestion, the Milwaukee Common Council named the house a city landmark.

As soon as the house was theirs, Michael Howden began sending out letters to all the von Baumbach family members he could locate. At first, he heard nothing.

Last summer brought the first breakthrough. A great-grandson left a note on their door, while the Howdens were away, inviting them to stop at his summer home at Elkhart Lake to visit.

Traced family's history

From old city records and talks with von Baumbach's kin as well as nearby neighbors, the couple has traced a rich slice of their area's history.

Turn to House, Page 4



Michael and Judy Howden hope to restore this old house.

Newspaper article on the Howden's interest in the Ludwig von Baumbach Residence.

A house is many things—building, property, administrative unit, part of a landscape, cultural object alive in stories, memories, and histories. It is also a home. Our project compares two stories of the owners of the Ludwig Von Baumbach residence. Through these stories we discern how this building figures in residents' daily lives in different ways. The two stories show how a house slowly becomes a repository of memories, hopes and aspirations.

In June 2014 Ludwig Von Baumbach Residence was sold. The previous owners and the new buyer tell their stories about coming upon this house and their reasons for buying it. We compare two narratives of moving into this home—first, the story of the Howdens in the late 1970s and second, the arrival of the Cuhels in 2014. The formers' stories of interactions with neighbors and their memories of spaces and traces of this neighborhood bring to light how they see themselves as part the social and cultural landscape of Washington Park neighborhood. For the sellers who lived here for decades, the Ludwig Von Baumbach residence marks a site where they cultivated plants and flowers and consolidated lifelong social relations.

For the new buyer the building is a newly acquired property— not yet a home. Priced out of the Riverwest neighborhood, the new buyer sees this house as an economically viable and profitable option. The terms with which he sees this house are functional and economical, and not so much of affective bonds and aesthetic attraction that frame the memories of the seller.

These somewhat contrasting stories of the Ludwig Von Baumbach residence tell us something about multiple ways by which we understand and define a residential building. On the one hand, economic value and media images frame the way we read the Ludwig Von Baumbach residence. On the other hand, social ties, emotional values and daily routines describe the meaning of this home.

Mike and Judith Howden, interview by Leonardo Moises and Salman Hussain, June 2014.
Dustin Cuhel, interview by Leonardo Moises and Salman Hussain, June 2014.



Newspaper article on the Ludwig von Baumbach residence.



Photo of the Ludwig von Baumbach residence.

ARCHITECTURAL CONSTRUCTIONS



We shape our homes to reflect our cultures and lifestyles. But have you ever wondered how our homes impact who we are and our perceptions of the world? An ideal single family residence and domestic life are often benchmarks used to talk about homes. Generations of Americans have striven to attain such a lifestyle where the stability and prestige of homeownership is paramount. The home has become a statement that attests to the occupiers' status of domestic life. To better understand how this type of living became so highly regarded it is helpful to look at architecture's role in influencing such an ideology. Architecture has helped to sustain and promote certain social and gender roles within and outside the home.

Exploring this notion within Milwaukee's Washington Park area we must begin by looking at the time period, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when a large majority of the homes were built in this neighborhood. Around this time designers began releasing catalogs and magazines which specialized in architectural floor plans, known as pattern books. The layouts featured were advertised as innovative ideas for all families. Such marketing attracted a large population of immigrants within Washington Park during this period. They found appeal in these house styles, viewing them as innovative, a way to conform to American lifestyle, and as testament to the affluence of both their neighborhood and families.

Although marketed as innovative designs these floor plans in actuality offered little diversity, represented a scarce majority of the United States and created a false notion of the ideal home. Life within these homes helped embed implicit gender and class roles within the household and in daily life.

The floor plan of a Washington Park home, built in the early 1900s, shows how explicit boundaries were created within the home. These boundaries influenced behavior, practices, as well as directed movement inside the residence. They produced hierarchical interior spaces that in turn influenced the resident's behavior and social roles. They allowed some to cross while prohibiting others from entering. The yellow bands show circulation and movement spaces between rooms. The gray zones show discrete interior rooms separated by various forms of boundaries. Walls are impenetrable and rigid. Doors and sliding doors are flexible since access can be controlled and monitored as desired. Stairs, hallways and bay windows act as thick boundaries that increase the complexity of the home interiors.

One overt spatial divide used in this home are the sliding pocket doors. The doors serve as a flexible boundary. When closed, the pocket doors produce two discrete spaces. When open, they unite the rooms into a larger space. If closed the doors define a formal front room and a more private interior space. Historian Gwendolyn Wright shows how such interior layout sustained gender separation within a household during the late nineteenth century. During formal events, the men occupied the front room and the women occupied the back sphere consisting of the kitchen and dining room.

Means of entering and exiting the home are often controlled. The front of the house features a large window overlooking a formal room where guests would be greeted or turned away. The back part of the house has an access for service deliveries. Whoever occupies the back zone also has access to the private upstairs bedroom where children or an elderly adult may reside. The back of the house is the domain of a caretaker who is in charge of housework and domestic labor.



A sliding pocket door in the Frederick Koenig House.



An overlooking window in the Frederick Koenig House.

GLOBALIZATION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



Dan Beiser holding cacao beans.

In economically troubled communities such as Washington Park, it can be very difficult for residents to access the financial means to leave the neighborhood, and there is a misperception that the area has nothing to offer. However, in Washington Park, connections at a global level are abundant. In addition to the immigrant communities who come from various countries, businesses, individuals, and organizations in this neighborhood are also making connections far beyond their immediate surroundings.

The Chocolate Connection

Dan Bieser, owner of Tabal chocolate, maintains global connections from his local workshop. He sources the cacao beans for his chocolate company from six different countries, and builds relationships directly with farmers in each of them. Over 60 years ago, Lois Luglio was also in the chocolate business, growing cacao beans on her husband's family farm in Peru. Back then it was not possible for chocolatiers to buy beans directly from cacao farmers the way that Dan does now. These individuals put Washington Park on the global map and contribute to the shape of the neighborhood's identity through their experiences with international cacao farming.



Organic cacao bag from Bolivia.



Chocolate bars in the mould.

The Art Connection

Artist Muneer Bahaudeen helps community members identify their visions for the neighborhood and transform these ideas into artwork. They paint ceramic tiles and place them on wooden posts that serve as “architectural talismans.” He recently traveled to Uganda through Milwaukee-based organization Grandmothers Beyond Borders and their sister organization Grandmothers Here to help grandmothers and grandchildren realize the same creative expressions for their family plots of land. Muneer's work to encourage active community engagement through art connects the urban streets of Washington Park with small family farms in rural Uganda.



Muneer Bahaudeen's art on display.



Muneer Bahaudeen's workshop.

A DIFFERENT LENS



Chair detail in Amaranth Bakery and Cafe

We experience place in myriad ways. Our views are mediated by our background, life histories, memories, technology, media, as well as our camera lenses. We have curated some photographic impressions of this neighborhood seen from the vantage points of the field school participants. Do you have images that tell a story too? Do you have photos that may give us a glimpse into your way of seeing this world? Share them with us. Send as an email.

Have Ithaca always in your mind.
Your arrival there is what you are destined for.

...

Ithaca gave you a splendid journey.
Without her you would not have set out.
She hasn't anything else to give you.
"Ithaca" by CV Cavafy

There is an eternal story that never fails to mesmerize. It is the story of coming home. Poet Constantine Cavafy wrote of Ithaca, that mythic home we all yearn for. We strive to belong. As we pack our bags to leave Washington Park are we ready to go home? What did this journey teach us? Why would our stories refuse to fall into neat categories?

In each story we have accounts of individuals striving to belong in a larger community, yet carve a space out for themselves.



Lawn ornaments at the Manns Residence.

We have stories of homes and homemakers. We exchange stories of owners, renters and developers crafting their abode, thoughtfully decorating the front rooms with careful moldings and extending the front porch or the dormers beyond their original boundaries. We remember proud homeowners decorating their front rooms and bedrooms with furnishings and mothers surrounding their world with portraits of their families, now dispersed far and wide. We photograph yard ornaments - plastic deer, woodcut flowers and flags - marking spots that residents love and claim as their own. Home is more than the nuts, bolts, joists and joints that define a shelter. It is a symbolic space of ownership, love, memories and tears. It grounds residents to a piece of land and a lifetime of memories.

Then there is that elusive community residents want to belong. Some fondly tell tales of a past long gone. Streets full of friends. Safe. Familiar. And now lost forever. The tales of loss are tales of past belongings. They are laments of a world that has changed irreversibly. Of friends who are dead, families now dispersed, and neighbors gone. But they are also tales that reflect fear of the other, the unfamiliar, and the unhomey, slowly creeping up the street onto one's doorstep. They are tales of taming that new neighbor, the young rowdy renter, the loud teenager or alien cultures cluttering the alleyways. These stories remind us that our community changes everyday and we have to constantly remake ourselves in order to belong in this ever-changing world. Many residents told us how their community has transformed. Their stories are punctuated with a wistful nostalgic moment of longing for the times when things were different. But whether these are stories of loss or reunion, discovery and nascent beginnings, they are all accounts of becoming part of a community larger than oneself.

But we are also part of an even larger world we call home. This world is made of plants, animals, sun, wind, and water. We mow our lawns, keep off the weeds, and tend our kitchen gardens. But the weeds are unrelenting. They spread outside our yards into the sidewalks and back alleys. After an afternoon of heavy thunderstorms we hear streams of rainwater overflowing across the yard into the rivulets along the dip along the alleyways. The distant rainbow marks the green canopy of Washington Park. Residents walk their dogs and children play in the neighborhood greens. A small plot next to a house is boarded off as a community garden. We are at home in this world of beauty and love, fearful of nature's might and destructive power, obsessive about our relationship to this huge ecosystem. Nature is not something outside us - it is what we make and remake everyday and it is that larger home where we belong as a community.

As we pack up our measuring tapes and interview recorders we realize that our stay here made us part of this neighborhood. We belong to this landscape of homes, community and nature. Being part of this world is irreversible.

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