

LANDMARKSLETTER

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THE EDGE OF THE VILLE INTEGRATION HISTORIC DISTRICT, PART II

CONTINUED FROM VOL. 55 NO. 2. SUMMER 2025.

By Andrew Weil and Katie Graebe



St. Louis Public Service Company Streetcar 1874, N. Sarah Street, in front of St. Matthew the Apostle Catholic Church. Source: Dorrill Studio, 1941
Courtesy of Missouri Historical Society Online Collections

We left the story of the Ville integration Historic District in the 1920s on the cusp of a major demographic shift. Despite the hard lines of segregation that were intended to keep African American residents from settling in the blocks of the District, black residents continued to flout these restrictions by simply ignoring them.

The 1930 census presents an interesting picture of the black population that was challenging the boundaries of segregation at the edges of the District during the Depression. Black residents represented over 19% of District occupants in 1930 compared with 5% in 1920 (*Figures 1 & 2*).¹ This represents a 280% increase in one decade.

A slight majority of the black residents who were living in the District (beyond the legal limits of African American settlement) in 1930 were recent immigrants from the



Can you guess which building this image is from? See Elements article on page 22.

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¹ U.S. Census 1920, 1930

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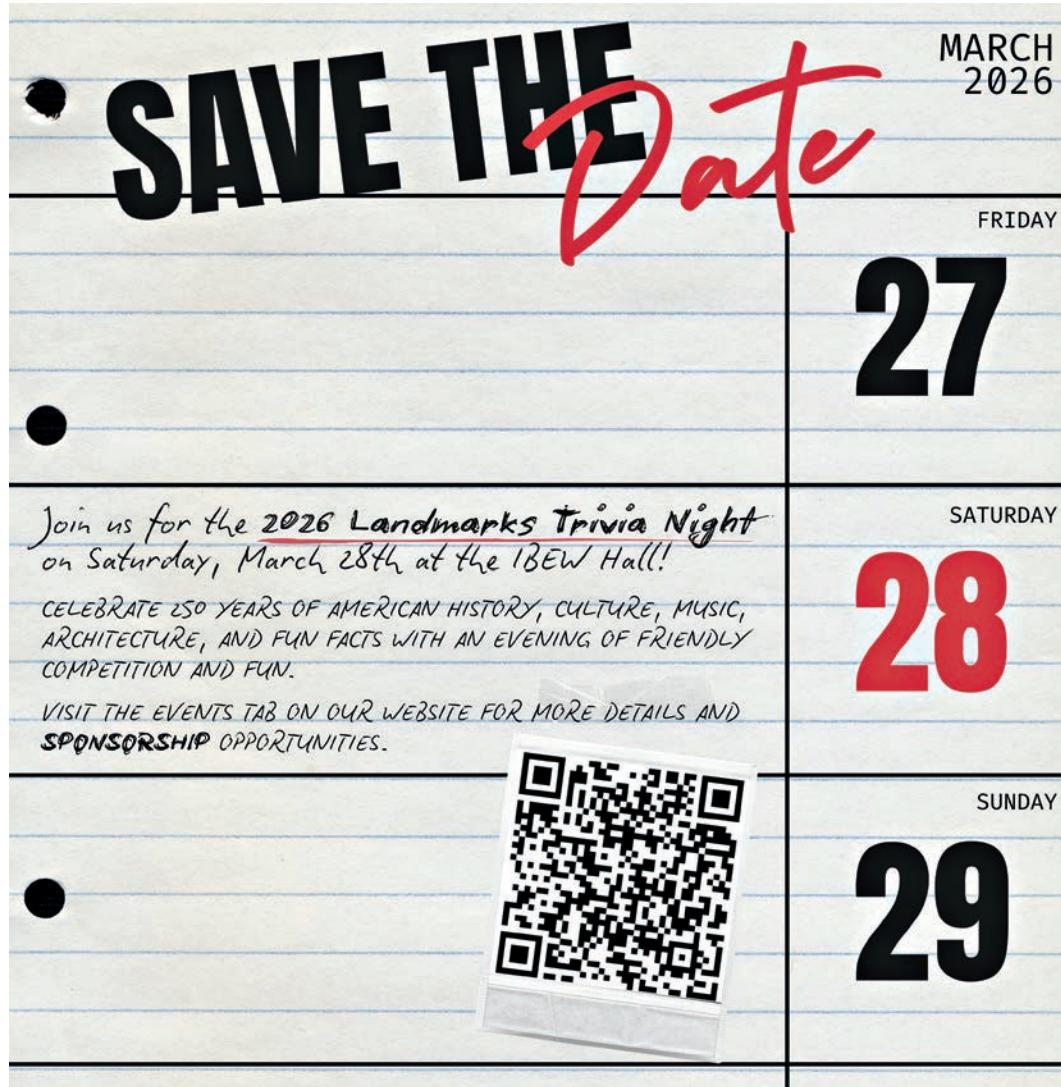
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LANDMARKS ANNUAL TRIVIA NIGHT



Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2026

Time: 6:00 - 10:00 PM | doors at 6:15 PM, trivia at 7 PM

Location: IBEW Local 1, 5850 Elizabeth Ave, St. Louis, MO 63110

Trivia: 8 Rounds of general trivia

Games: Dead/Alive, Heads/Tails, Bonus Round

Theme: Made in the USA

Tickets: \$240 early | \$280 late

Hey folks!

If you haven't considered an end-of-the-year donation to Landmarks Association, we would really appreciate it. Follow the instructions on the mailer we sent out, call the office, donate through our website, or use this QR code to go straight to our donation page.





LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

As you may have heard, this issue of the “Landmarks Letter” will be my last. My departure from Landmarks Association is bittersweet, but the time has come for me to step aside to pursue new opportunities. Advancing the mission of this organization, shoulder to shoulder with our staff and board, has truly been a privilege. I am grateful to the board for entrusting me with this leadership position and to all the people who helped me survive and later to thrive in the role.

My decision to leave was not born of any dissatisfaction with Landmarks Association or my position therein. Quite the contrary; I love the cause, staff and board as well as all the wonderful friends I have made along the way. After nineteen years of dedicated service, it is my sincere hope that my efforts have been worthy of the position I held and of the organization’s storied history.

Some of you will remember that I became director as the country struggled to climb out of the Great Recession. Looking back, I don’t know how we made it through those extremely lean years. I used to lie awake thinking about how I was going to be the one in charge when the venerable organization folded. I didn’t want that fate for Landmarks and I certainly didn’t want it on my professional record! Through dedication, austerity, sacrifice, luck, and the generosity of the St. Louis community, Landmarks managed to weather the storm.

Today the organization is in a strong position. This strength flows from excellent staff, a passionate and strategically built board, an important mission, and an institutional track record that the community finds worthy of support.

Because of this strength, I have complete confidence that Landmarks will continue to grow and thrive under new leadership.

While I am returning to life as a “civilian” in preservation matters, I have no intention of quitting the field. I will remain active in preservation causes in St. Louis and am excited to announce that I am under contract to write a book! Tentatively titled “Fortified St. Louis: The Defensive Architecture of a Strategic American City and Surroundings 1175-1865.” The book will examine the architecture that protected the region during times of conflict, the historical contexts that necessitated fortification, and the people who designed, built, and used the structures. I am proud to be working with the Missouri Historical Society Press as publisher; look for the book on shelves in 2028.

Look for *me* around town on the lecture circuit and at future Landmarks events!
Best wishes to you all, and thanks again for your nineteen years of support and friendship.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew B. Weil".

Andrew B. Weil
Executive Director



Figure 1: 1920 Census Map. District Outlined in Red. Pink Houses are White Households, Blue Houses are Black Households.



Figure 2: 1930 Census Map. District Outlined in Red. Pink Houses are White Households, Blue Houses are Black Households. Orange Houses are Mixed Households.

South who reflect the patterns of the Great Migration.² One explanation for this might be that these people were later arrivals who came to St. Louis when circumscribed black neighborhoods like the Ville were already bursting at the seams. It is plausible that there simply wasn't anywhere for them to go within the restricted black areas of the city. While activism and open defiance of segregation played an important role in breaking down race-based residential boundaries in St. Louis, another significant factor was simple population pressure from Great Migration immigrants. Many newspaper articles of the day decry the overcrowding in "negro districts" and the fact of the matter was that the size of the black neighborhoods was insufficient to accommodate the population's need.

In the District between 1920-1930, African American homeownership was on the rise, though modestly so. In 1920,

black homeowners represented just under 2% of homeowners in the District.³ In 1930, blacks represented nearly 7% of homeowners in the District.⁴ Examining homeownership within racial cohorts, out of 91 black households in 1930, 8% owned their homes; the rest rented. In comparison, out of 381 white households, 25% owned their homes.

One important reason for this disparity in homeownership was referenced by the unnamed oral history participant who was quoted in part one of this article. She recalled that "... financing was most difficult to obtain" for blacks in the area in the 1920s.⁵ This observation remained true for many decades to come and reflected the fact that the St. Louis Real Estate Exchange maintained a firm prohibition on the sale of homes to blacks in

² U.S. Census 1930

³ Ibid., 1920

⁴ Ibid., 1930

⁵ Toft, 1975, p. 13



4215 Kennerly Avenue



4275 Kennerly Avenue - Home of Arthur A. and William Jones

restricted white areas.⁶ Realtors who sold property to blacks in designated white areas stood to lose their licenses.⁷ These prohibitions on practice also had major implications for mortgage lending.

Mortgage lending and associated mortgage insurance was an enormous barrier for homeownership for black citizens in both majority black and integrated neighborhoods.⁸ Insurance companies followed the recommendations of real estate agents regarding the risk of mortgage loans; lending to black people was considered to be very high risk.⁹

In 1933 the perception of race-based lending risk was codified by the policies of the recently created Federal Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC), followed a year later by those of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1934.¹⁰ According to historian Richard Rothstein, the FHA, the ubiquitous provider of mortgage insurance for would-be homeowners, would not underwrite loans “in racially mixed neighborhoods or even in white neighborhoods near black ones, that might possibly integrate in the future.”¹¹

Despite the seemingly insurmountable obstacles to black home ownership in the District home ownership somehow remained an attainable goal. Some notable examples of District

homes that were owned by black families in the 1930s include the aforementioned buildings at 4215 and 4275 Kennerly Avenue (*Photos above*). The latter was owned by Arthur A. and William Jones (father and son). Interestingly, the home was valued at \$12,000, which is on the extreme high end of the price spectrum for the neighborhood; most homes were valued at half that price.¹²

This high valuation for an otherwise unremarkable property may suggest that the Joneses purchased the home using what was known as a “contract sale”. Because it was almost impossible for blacks to get mortgage insurance (especially for homes in restricted white neighborhoods), real estate firms often mitigated the risk of an uninsured mortgage in creatively insidious ways.

One popular method was to inflate the price of the property with a risk premium and sell it using what amounted to a rent-to-own (unamortized) agreement under which no equity accrued from monthly payments.¹³ Such agreements allowed the buyer to take title to the property after a mutually agreed period of time had elapsed and/or a fixed number of payments had been made. But, if the terms of the mortgage agreement were not met by the buyer (i.e. a missed payment), the property could simply be repossessed by the seller with no equity value owed.¹⁴

While the existence of such an arrangement has not been proven for the Jones family at 4275 Kennerly, the circumstantial

⁶ Gordon, 2008. p. 84

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Rothstein, 2017. p. 65

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 64-65

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² U.S. Census 1930

¹³ Rothstein, 2017. p. 96

¹⁴ Ibid.

Continued on pg. 6 >

evidence of a contract sale based on the elevated valuation is intriguing.

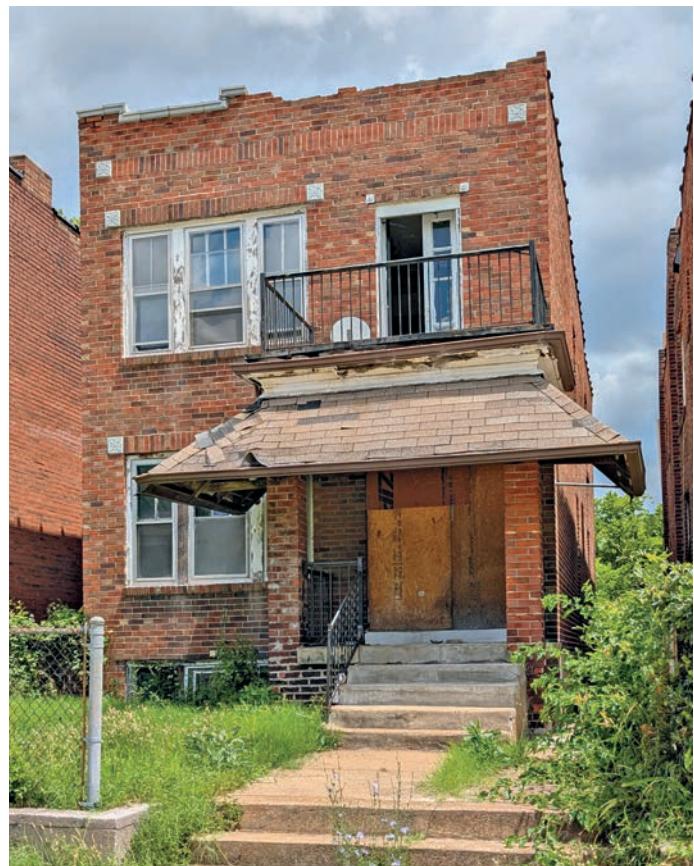
Illustrative of the housing and employment landscape in the neighborhood at the time, ten adults (representing three households) occupied the Jones's two-family flat in 1930. Born in Georgia, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Alabama, Kansas and Missouri respectively, only half of the adult residents of the building were employed, working as paperhangers, a railroad chef, a maid and a janitor respectively.¹⁵ The fact that the other half of the adults in the household were without work in 1930 is consistent with the grim employment situation for residents in the Ville during the Depression.¹⁶

One occupation that was Depression-resistant was the high-status job of teacher. In 1930, six African American teachers called the District home, which is not surprising given the concentration of black schools in the Ville. Indeed, because of this concentration, students could attend primary school through post-secondary education all within the neighborhood.¹⁷

The six black teachers living in the District in 1930 clustered along Kennerly.¹⁸ An example can be found in 48-year-old public school teacher John Wilkerson who lived with his wife Alice at 4265 Kennerly (*Photo top right*). The census indicates that John and his parents were all born in Illinois whereas Alice, recorded as "at home", hailed from Mississippi.¹⁹ The Wilkersons shared the two-family flat with George and Mamie Black. The Blacks were migrants from Georgia who worked as a janitor and laundress respectively.

Illustrating the economic or class diversity of the Ville in which the MPD states that "[L]ocal lore relates that the businessman lived next door to the manual laborer. . .", just five doors down from George and Mamie Black was the home of attorney Frank W. Clegg.²⁰ *The St. Louis Negro Directory* of 1934 recorded Clegg residing at 4247 Kennerly (historically the address was 4255 Kennerly) (*Photo lower right*).²¹ Clegg was the first black member of the Missouri State Legislature.²² He served St. Louis' 3rd Congressional District from 1931 through 1932 and worked as a defense attorney in St. Louis for fifty years.²³

In 1940, the African American population of the District had increased from 19% (in 1930) to 22% (n=405, N=1,450). While the distribution of black households along St. Louis Avenue had remained essentially the same, the population along Kennerly had continued to expand into more formerly white homes to the east as well as homes northward along



4265 Kennerly Avenue - Home of John and Alice Wilkerson



4247 Kennerly Avenue - Home of Frank W. Clegg

Whittier (*Figure 3*).²⁴

During the decade 1930 through 1940 in which this population increase occurred, the giant Homer G. Phillips Hospital complex (NR 1982) was announced, constructed, and opened (in 1937); it occupies an entire block bordering the southern edge of the District along Kennerly.²⁵

With St. Louis' only African American hospital on the

¹⁵ U.S. Census, 1930

¹⁶ Bradley et. al. 2011. Section E: p. 19

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ U. S. Census 1930

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Bradley et. al. 2011 Section F: p. 12; *The St. Louis Negro Directory*, 1934.

²¹ *The St. Louis Negro Directory*, 1934.

²² *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, "Attorney Frank W. Clegg to be Buried in Texas" 31 December, 1964

²³ Gary R. Kremer and Antonio F. Holland, "Missouri's Black Heritage" University of MO Press; Columbia, Missouri. 1993 p. 242.

²⁴ U.S. Census 1940

²⁵ Mary M. Stiritz and Carolyn Hewes Toft, National Register of Historic Places Nomination: "Homer G. Phillips Hospital." Washington, D.C.; US Department of the Interior/National Parks Service, 1982, p. 2



Figure 3: 1940 Census Map. District Outlined in Red. Pink Houses are White Households, Blue Houses are Black Households. Orange Houses are Mixed Households.

District's doorstep, healthcare workers, specifically black nurses, begin to show up where their presence had not previously been recorded. In 1940 there were six African American nurses living in the District.²⁶ While it can't be stated with certainty, it is likely that they had trained and worked at Homer G. Phillips Hospital. "Homer G." as it was known was renowned as one of only two black medical schools in the country and operated an accredited nursing school from 1938-1946.²⁷

One of these nurses was Leola J. Caldwell, a 28-year-old woman from Mississippi who lived with her husband Harold in the four-family flat at 4235 Kennerly (*Photo top right*).²⁸ Leola worked at Homer G. Phillips and Harold worked as a chauffeur. Another hospital worker who lived in the District was William Grayson. He served as the Chief Clerk at Homer G. and rented a portion of 4157 Kennerly along with his wife Thelma and ten other people (*Photo lower right*).²⁹

INTEGRATING DISTRICT; INTEGRATING BUILDINGS, 1940-1950

The 1940 census reveals a new phenomenon of black "pioneer households" which begin to appear in the interior of the District where no blacks had previously lived. While the geographical distances of these households from the established black presences along Kennerly and St. Louis Avenue can be measured in blocks, the symbolic distance from these enclaves is vast.

Not only were black households beginning to move into these formerly segregated blocks, blacks and whites were beginning to live under the same roof. Census research identified four examples of integrated housing units within the interior of the steadily integrating District in 1940; all four survive. They are 4227 Maffitt, 4270 Maffitt, 4278 St. Louis Avenue and 4251 Maffitt (*Photos on page 8*). An overview of these households reveals names and other details of these residents whose living situation,



4235 Kennerly Avenue – Home of Leola and Harold Caldwell



4235 Kennerly Avenue – Home of William and Thelma Grayson

²⁶ U.S. Census, 1940

²⁷ Mary M. Stiritz and Carolyn Hewes Toft; 1982, p. 2

²⁸ U.S. Census 1940

²⁹ Ibid.



4227 Maffitt – Home of John and Maery Right shared with Jans McAuliffe and Paul and Jean Newman



4270 Maffitt – Home of Joe and Helen Snider shared with Ralph and Irene Kinsika



4278 St. Louis Avenue – Home of Tillie and Ellen Brandt shared with William and Alberta Landgrave



4251 Maffitt – Home of Elmer and Marie Schulte shared with Chloe and Ethel Hafner, and Robert and Margaret Clark

at least as compared with the rest of the District and city at large, was highly unusual for the time. It also illustrates the seriousness of the impacts of the lingering Great Depression on employment for a sample of District residents both white and black.

An example of a racially mixed multi-family housing unit in 1940 can be found at 4227 Maffitt (*Photo left*) where the family of African Americans John (37) and Maery (32) Right and their two school age sons shared the building with two white families. John was born in Tennessee, but Maery and their two children were born in Missouri. The Right's children were enrolled in Sumner High School and an unspecified elementary school respectively. John was a barber by trade but is listed as unemployed.

The white families with which they shared a roof were those of widow Jans McAuliffe (63) and her two adult children Mary (34) and James (25). Jans was born in Northern Ireland and the children in Missouri. All of working age, they are listed as having trades, but no work. They shared a portion of the flat with the family of Paul (27) and Jean (28) Newman and their two young children. Like the rest of the adults in the flat, they are listed as unemployed.

A similar situation can be found in the integrated two-family flat at 4270 Maffitt where Joe (25) and Helen (23) Snider (black) shared a roof with the family of Ralph (40) and Irene (35) Kinsika (white) and their four children (*Photo left*). Again, the effect of the Depression on both white and black residents is illustrated by the fact that the men have trades (truck driver and telegraph agent respectively), but not employment.

Yet another example of an integrated building in the District can be found in the two-family flat at 4278 St. Louis Avenue (*Photo left*) where the household of sisters Tillie (67) and Ellen (70) Brandt (black) are recorded sharing the building with the extended family of William (31) and Alberta (39) Landgrave (white). None of the adults in the home are employed.

Finally, 4251 Maffitt further illustrates an overcrowded, unemployed and integrated living situation in the District (*Photo left*). This two-family flat had been subdivided into three units that housed the white families of Elmer (36) and Marie (42) Schulte and their young son as well as Chloe (38) and Ethel (17) Hafner. It also housed the black household of Robert (39) and Margaret (32) Clark who were born in Texas and Missouri respectively. None of the six working-age adults were employed.³⁰

The aforementioned "pioneer" household buildings (two black, four integrated) were investigated because they stood out in the census analysis as being the only residences housing African Americans in the interior of the District in 1940 (*Figure 3 on page 7*). While the sample size is small, the residents of these four extant buildings (and two demolished black households) illustrate at least three relevant historical patterns and strongly hint at a fourth. These patterns and potential patterns are: 1. High rates of unemployment in the neighborhood irrespective of race during the Great Depression. 2. Gradual geographic integration of restricted white blocks. 3. Integration of multi-family buildings. 4. The possibility of intentional, deliberate integration via one of the tactics that collectively became known as "blockbusting".

First, the impact of the Great Depression on both black and

white residents of the neighborhood can be seen in the fact all of the 19 working-age, able-bodied residents of the integrated flats, irrespective of race, were recorded as unemployed.

Second, these households are occupied by black families who moved away from the established areas of black settlement in the District into interior blocks that previously had been occupied entirely by whites. This settlement pattern represents a departure from the gradual expansion of black population along the District's fringes seen in previous decades. It also shows an overt disregard for the St. Louis Real Estate Exchange's prohibition on renting to African Americans on restricted, majority white blocks.³¹

Third, in 1940 black residents were not only beginning to integrate the interior of the District geographically, they were also integrating the multi-family buildings themselves. Six District buildings were investigated because the 1940 census showed their occupants to be racial outliers, either black or integrated, to settlement patterns documented in previous censuses. Sixty-six percent of these outliers were integrated two-family flats.

Fourth, according to the MPD: "[Residents of the Ville] . . . tried various means to break out of . . . geographical confinement. One strategy was a practice known as 'flipping', in which a Caucasian or light-complexioned African-American would purchase property from a white homeowner as a straw party and then transfer it with a quit-claim deed to the real [black] purchaser of the property."³² This was one strategy that by the 1940s historian John Wright asserts was increasingly common in St. Louis and a "proven way to force the integration of all-white blocks."³³

The unusual integrated flats in the District may just be illustrative of people who rejected segregation and lived their lives accordingly. They may also be reflective of proactive civil disobedience in which black and white households colluded to flout racial restrictions in the hopes of precipitating legal battles. They could also reflect a blockbusting strategy that was pursued by white real estate speculators for nefarious purposes.

As described by historian Richard Rothstein, segregation created "opportunities for speculators and real estate agents to collude in blockbusting . . ." through ". . . a scheme in which speculators bought properties in borderline black/white areas; rented or sold them to African Americans . . . ; persuaded white families residing in these areas that their neighborhoods were turning into African American slums and that values would soon fall precipitously; and then purchased homes from panicked whites for less than their worth."³⁴

Whatever strategies of proactive integration and/or blockbusting were occurring in the neighborhood, change was coming. The decade 1940-1950 saw a rapid demographic shift within District boundaries and by 1950, it had become a majority black neighborhood.³⁵

³⁰ Bradley et. al. 2011. Section E: p. 12-13

³¹ Bradley et. al. 2011. Section E: p. 23

³² John A. Wright, Sr. "The Ville, Black American Series, (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2001), 113.

³³ Rothstein 2017. p. 95

³⁴ U.S. Census 1950

Continued on pg. 10 >

1933-1950: CHANGING POLICIES, CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

An overarching theme in the urban history of St. Louis has been the westward migration of population. Summarized by James Neal Primm as a “... grim sequence of settlement, growth, maturity, blight, and rot” that characterizes St. Louisans’ propensity for building and subsequently abandoning perfectly good neighborhoods over the course of mere decades.³⁶

During the “Prosperity Decade” of the 1920s, the trend of ex-urban migration from St. Louis City to St. Louis County more than doubled the County’s population (rising from 100,737 residents to 211,593 in 1930).³⁷ From 1935 through 1940, 80% of new construction in the St. Louis metropolitan area was already occurring outside the city limits and the Post-War housing crisis and subsequent development boom hadn’t even begun yet.³⁸ During the same period, the City’s population continued to grow, but it would drop for the first time in history between 1930 and 1940. Between 1940 and 1950 it resumed modest growth for the last time adding approximately 40,000 residents. This increase can be primarily attributed to an influx of “rural blacks and whites attracted by war industries and cheap slum rents.”³⁹

In 1942, the issue of city population movement was described by St. Louis’ City Plan Commission, under the direction of planner Harland Bartholomew, as “... a wave-like action from east to west.”⁴⁰ As the City Planner, Bartholomew was in an excellent position to measure this trend and the roles that race played in it. Bartholomew had served as Planner since 1919 while simultaneously operating his own planning firm, which rose to international prominence and left an indelible mark on American cities in the decades straddling World War II.⁴¹

In 1931, while working for St. Louis’ and enjoying growing national prominence, Bartholomew was selected to chair the Committee on Subdivision Development for President Herbert Hoover’s Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership.⁴² The report that Bartholomew’s committee generated for the conference (and thus the President) recommended, among other things, that new neighborhood plans should include racial exclusion clauses in their founding documents.⁴³ It continued to explain that such clauses would benefit by being modeled along the lines of ones that Bartholomew had had a hand in developing for “... Eastern and Northern cities which have experienced an influx of colored people...”⁴⁴

Bartholomew’s committee asserted that racial restrictions

would help both developers and homeowners by making neighborhoods more attractive to buyers while ensuring that home values would be insulated from “... the deteriorating influence of undesirable neighbors.”⁴⁵

The “Eastern and Northern cities” referenced in Bartholomew’s report no doubt included St. Louis, which was grappling with the Great Migration in real time.

Bartholomew was by no means unique in his endorsement of housing segregation, but he was in a highly influential position. The recommendations of his committee and the findings of Hoover’s larger 1931 conference found their way into the overtly racist policies of the federal Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) when they were created by the Roosevelt Administration in 1933 and 1934 respectively.⁴⁶

Both HOLC and the FHA were products of the New Deal and were intended to help Depression Era homeowners avoid foreclosure and assist first-time home buyers to obtain affordable mortgages respectively.⁴⁷ In order to evaluate the risk of refinancing existing mortgages, the HOLC relied upon the assessments of local real estate agents like the members of the aforementioned St. Louis Real Estate Exchange, who were required by their bylaws to maintain segregated neighborhoods.⁴⁸

Similarly, the FHA, which provided mortgage insurance to lenders so that they would be protected against losses from defaults (thus making home mortgages more affordable for buyers) used race in its risk assessments.⁴⁹ According to historian Richard Rothstein, “[T]he FHA judged that properties would probably be too risky for insurance if they were in racially mixed neighborhoods or even in white neighborhoods near to black ones that might possibly integrate in the future.”⁵⁰

Not to be left out, the Veterans Administration joined these other agencies in addressing housing issues after WWII. As part of the “GI Bill” also known as the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, the VA began to guarantee mortgage loans for servicemen.⁵¹ To create continuity across federal programs, the VA simply adopted the FHA’s discriminatory policies for evaluating risk and thus built race into its lending policies as well.⁵²

In the 1930s-1950s (and beyond) the demographics of the Ville and the nominated District exemplified the “risky” characteristics (*Figure 4, page 11; Figure 5, page 12*) that these ubiquitous federal programs sought to avoid. As a result HOLC refinancing of existing mortgages and both FHA and VA insurance for new mortgages were difficult to obtain if not entirely inaccessible for both black *and* white residents of these areas.

³⁶ Primm 1998, p. 445

³⁷ Ibid.; Missouri Census Data Center viewed on 6/5/25 <https://mcdc.missouri.edu/population-estimates/historical.html>

³⁸ Primm, 1998, p. 445

³⁹ Ibid., p. 475

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 445

⁴¹ E. F. Porter and Jean Gosebrink, “Harland Bartholomew” (St. Louis: St. Louis Public Library and Landmarks Association of St. Louis, 1990) p. 10-13

⁴² Rothstein 2017 p. 61 and 82

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 83

⁴⁶ Ibid., 63-64

⁴⁷ Rothstein 2017, p. 63

⁴⁸ Ibid., 64

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Department of Veterans Affairs “Legislative History of the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program” p. 1-2. Viewed at: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/home loans/documents/docs/history.pdf>

⁵² Rothstein 2017. p. 70

1937 Home Owners' Loan Corporation "Residential Security Maps"

Nominated District Boundary

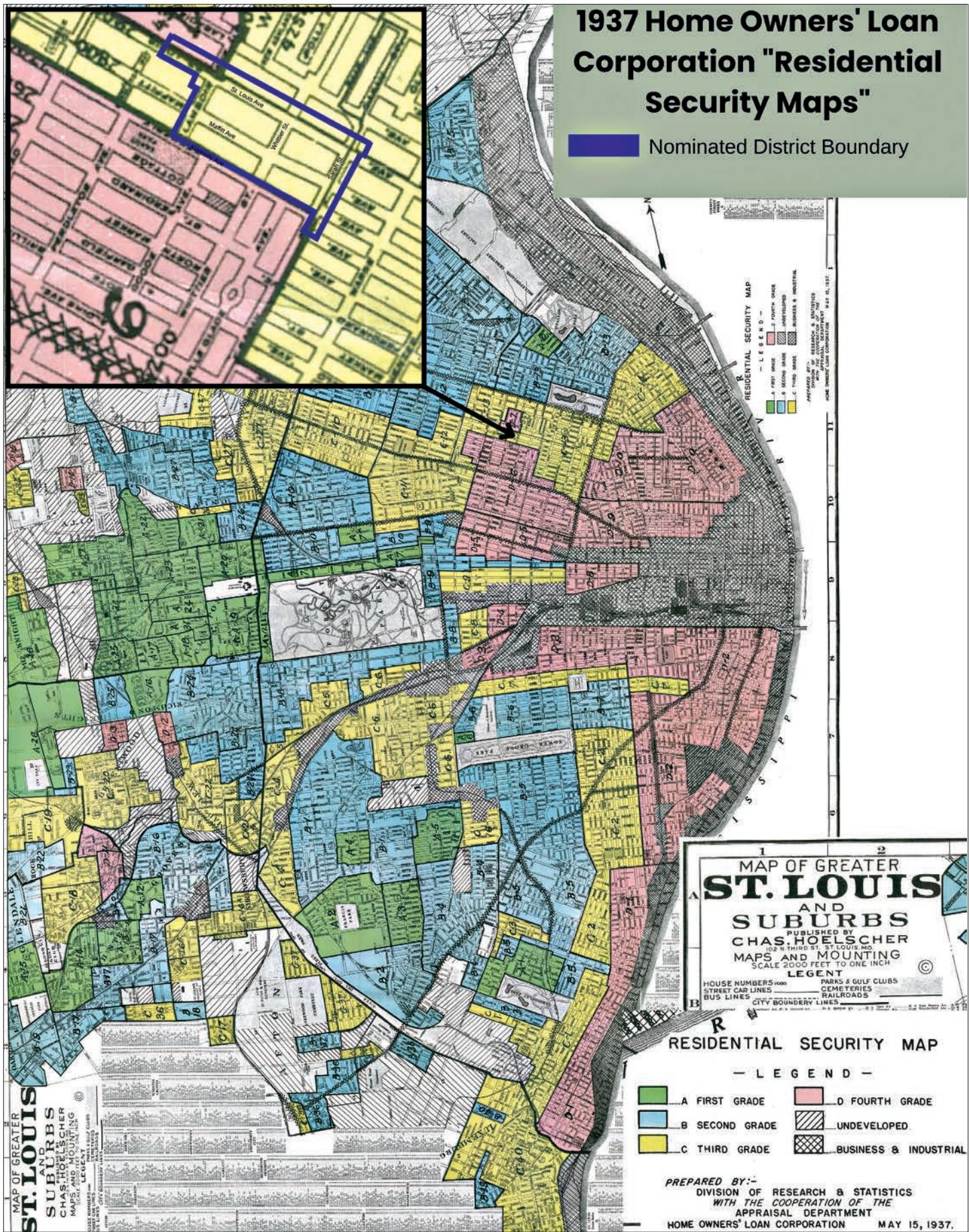


Figure 4: 1937 "Residential Security Map" generated by the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC).
Red Areas are Considered Highest Risk and are Dominated by Black Households

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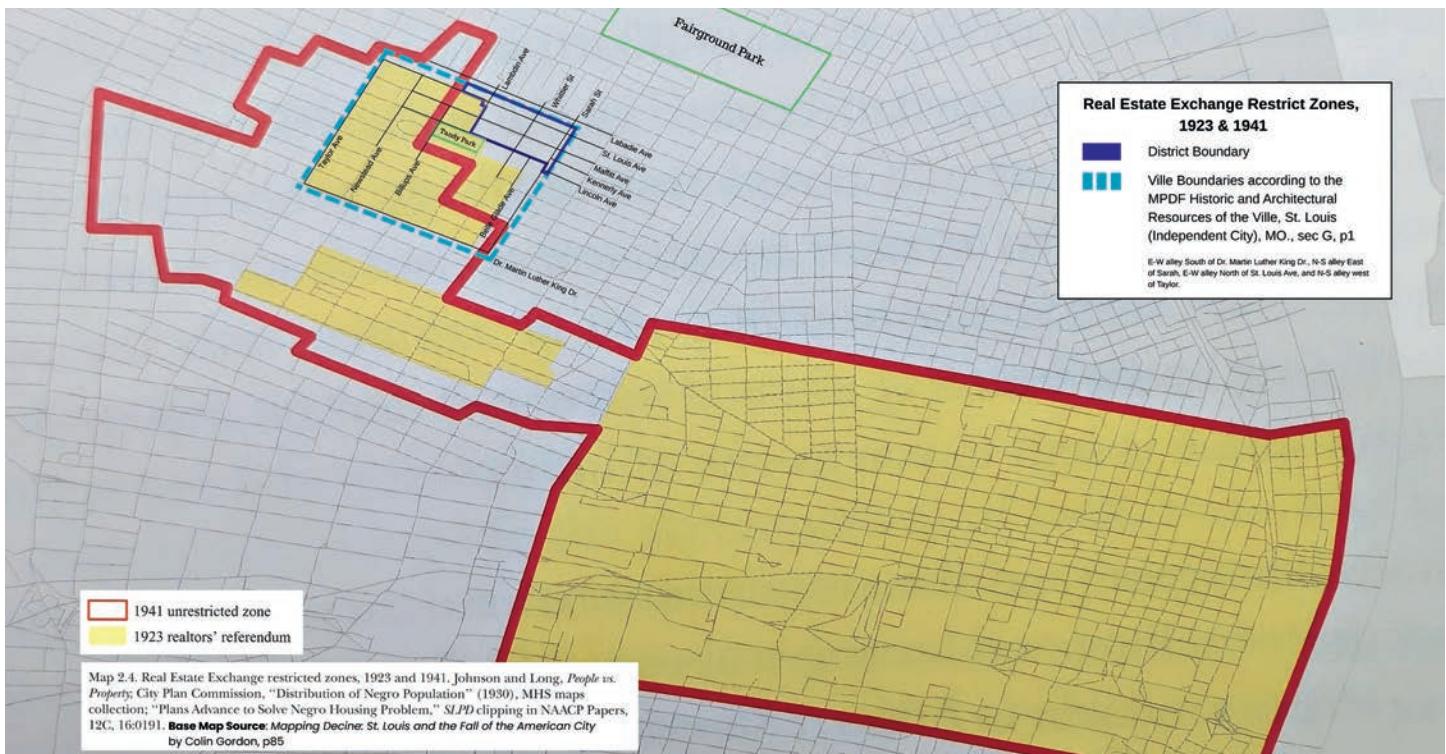


Figure 5: Real Estate Exchange Restricted Zones, 1923 and 1941. The blue dashed line is the Ville neighborhood. The yellow areas are unrestricted zones available for black settlement in 1923. The areas outlined in red were available for black settlement in 1941.

THE EDGE OF THE VILLE *Continued from page 11*

Reenforcing and incentivizing the migration of St. Louisans to the County, the development-lending and mortgage insurance offered by the FHA beginning in the 1930s focused on supporting new "whites only" suburbs.⁵³ Indeed the Agency's underwriting manual advised banks against lending in older urban areas stating that "older properties . . . have a tendency to accelerate the rate of transition to lower class occupancy."⁵⁴ Being both an older urban area and one both occupied in part by blacks *and* adjacent to the heavily African American blocks of the Ville, the District and the Ville at large were effectively ineligible for these valuable federal programs.

In contrast with the integrating blocks of the District, which had been relegated to the status a virtual credit desert by the mid-1940s, was the efflorescence of newly developing suburbs of St. Louis County. "Protected" by whites-only covenants that were required by the FHA development loans that financed them and eminently affordable due to construction costs and mortgages that were subsidized by the federal government, white city-dwellers had ample financial incentive to leave.⁵⁵

INTEGRATION OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS AND SHELLEY V. KRAEMER

In the late 1940s, two additional race-related policy changes, one of great local importance and one of national significance, had implications for demographic change in the District. In Septem-

ber, 1947, Archbishop Cardinal Joseph Ritter integrated the Archdiocese of St. Louis.⁵⁶ Less than a year later the Supreme Court ruled in *Shelley V. Kraemer* that enforcing race-based restrictive housing covenants was unconstitutional.⁵⁷

At the southeast corner of the District is the St. Matthew The Apostle Parish complex. Founded in 1893 on the site of the present church at 2705 N. Sarah Street largely to serve a growing Irish immigrant population, the church was a cultural anchor for white residents of the District throughout the period of significance.⁵⁸ In the early 20th century, it was a parish rooted in a strong sense of Irish identity and united by the close connection between religion and the Irish Nationalist Movement.⁵⁹ In the Irish parishes of St. Louis like St. Matthews, the church was integral to the functioning of the community as a center of social, educational, political, recreational, and spiritual life.⁶⁰

Associated with the Sisters of St. Joseph, the sisters lived in the St. Matthews convent building (extant) at 4120 Maffitt and taught neighborhood children in the parish school (*Photo. facing page*).⁶¹ The school was large with enrollment approaching 700 pupils in the 1910s. The censuses record the nun's presence on Maffitt listing an average population of 12 women variably

⁵⁶ "How Cardinal Ritter's Firm Hand Led St. Louis Catholic Schools to Integrate in 1947". *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 21 September, 2023

⁵⁷ Eric Sandweiss, "St. Louis, The Evolution of an Urban Landscape" Temple University Press, Philadelphia PA: 2001: p. 234

⁵⁸ Mimi Stiritz et.al. United States Department of Interior, National Parks Service. National Register of Historic Places Nomination St. Matthews Parish Complex. 4/4/86. P. 1

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.1

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., 65

⁵⁴ Quoted in Rothstein 2017. P. 65

⁵⁵ Rothstein, p. 72



St. Matthews convent at 4120 Maffitt Avenue

described as “inmates” or “sisters” through the decades; their occupations as teachers remains consistent.⁶²

Resistance of parishioners to integration of the neighborhood was remembered in an oral history recounted by an African American resident who moved to Kennerly Avenue in the vicinity of the parish complex in the 1920s. She remembered that her family’s presence was “. . . met with opposition from the Irish residents. Threats were made against our lives.”⁶³ She continued saying “[T]here was no doubt about it, we were considered intruders by members of the St. Matthews Parish . . .”⁶⁴

By 1940, those “intruders” had moved into all but one of the homes along Kennerly between Lambdin and N. Sarah Street including the homes at 4123 and 4127 Kennerly which abut the rear of the Church (*Photo right and page 14*). The two-family flats were occupied by the same sets of extended African American families in both 1940 and 1950.⁶⁵

In 1940, the census records the family of African American police officer James Wintersmith (35) and his wife Sherley (31) and their two sons as well as Raymond (34) and Harriette (31) Collins, their son and a lodger at 4127. No occupation was listed for Raymond. Next door at 4123 were the families of Joseph (50) and Bettie (49) Green as well as Hobart (42) and Jennie (36) Howard and Thomas Crenshaw who was Jennie’s father.⁶⁶ Joseph



4127 Maffitt – Home of James and Sherley Wintersmith and Raymond and Harriette Collins

⁶² U.S. Census, 1910-1950

⁶³ Toft, 1975. p. 13

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ U.S. Census, 1940-1950

⁶⁶ U.S. Census, 1940

Continued on pg. 14 >



4123 Maffitt – Home of Joseph and Bettie Green and Hobart and Jennie Howard with Thomas Crenshaw

THE EDGE OF THE VILLE *Continued from page 13*

except Raymond Collins was recorded as working as a mail handler, Jennie Howard was a teacher at the William Parrish Curtis School (a black school), Crenshaw was recorded as a Pullman porter, and James Wintersmith had been promoted from police officer to detective.

In 1947, Cardinal Ritter announced that the Archdiocese would integrate both churches and diocesan schools.⁶⁸ This announcement came eight years before *Brown V. Board of Education* ruled school segregation unconstitutional and was met with surprise and consternation from many St. Louis Catholics. Protests erupted immediately and according to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* within days “700 parish school parents resolved to take Ritter to court.”⁶⁹ Ritter swiftly countered the parishioners’ gambit with the nuclear threat of excommunication and integration moved forward as planned.⁷⁰

The website of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish records that

integration of the parish occurred under the leadership of Fr. Walter Craig, who served as pastor from 1949 to 1954.⁷¹ As the website succinctly put it, at this time “[M]any families in the St. Matthews neighborhood moved west to the suburbs.”⁷²

In May of 1948, the Supreme Court ruled on the case of *Shelley V Kraemer*. This case, which originated in St. Louis, was brought by a white resident who sued to block the sale of a neighboring home to a black couple on the basis of a race-restricted covenant. The justices ruled unanimously that such covenants could not be enforced by the courts without violating the 14th Amendment of the Constitution.⁷³

While restrictive practices did not evaporate overnight, the enforceability of the doctrine of “separate but equal” that underpinned such practices was mortally wounded. The day after the decision was rendered, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* reported the concomitant demise of seven active cases in St. Louis that sought to exclude blacks from neighborhoods with race restrictions.⁷⁴

The same day (May 4, 1948) the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported that 417 “block areas” would be affected by the ruling.⁷⁵ Attorney George L. Vaughn who had prevailed in the Shelley case diplomatically stated that he didn’t think there would be “any great rush of colored people to live in white neighborhoods, but that the decision would give them [blacks] a chance to have a better life.”⁷⁶

John C. Clark, executive secretary of the Urban League, had a somewhat different perspective. When asked about local “real estate men” who asserted that the Shelley ruling would have “little effect locally,” Clark laconically replied that such men “oversimplified” the ruling’s implications.⁷⁷ Unlike the “real estate men,” Clark was already thinking about what the future would look like now that blacks were able to live in neighborhoods of their own choosing. He summarized the situation stating that now, “[T]he chief task of both negroes and whites . . . will be to work out problems arising from the decision with as little friction as possible.”⁷⁸

In the District, the 1950 census reflected the net effect of the ways that blacks and whites were working out those “problems.” Given the powerful incentives whites were being offered to move to the suburbs, widespread racial prejudice, and a lack of legal grounds on which white residents could block integration, nearly half the white residents (46%) of the District that were recorded in 1940 simply left in the ensuing decade.

Between 1940 and 1950, the white population of the District declined from a 78% majority to a 44% minority (*Figure 3, page 7; Figure 6, page 15*).⁷⁹ Conversely, the percentage of District’s black population overall doubled from a 22% minority to a 56% majority (*Figure 3, page 7; Figure 6, page 15*). In raw numbers,

⁷¹ <http://stmatthewtheapostle.org/AboutUs/history.php>

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Rothstein 2017. p. 85

⁷⁴ Margaret Bush Wilson, United States Department of Interior, National Parks Service. National Register of Historic Places Nomination, “The Shelley House”. 1987. p. 5

⁷⁵ “417 Block Areas Here Affected by Racial Ruling” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 4 May, 1948

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ U.S. Census 1940 and 1950



Figure 6: 1950 Census Map. District Outlined in Red. Pink Houses are White Households, Blue Houses are Black Households. Orange Houses are Mixed Households.

“... in 1950 the District was a black-majority, but thoroughly integrated neighborhood.”

between 1940 and 1950, 672 white people left the District and 576 additional black residents moved into the homes that whites vacated.⁸⁰

After undergoing a gradual process of extralegal integration primarily around the District's edges throughout most of the period of significance, the convergence of the many factors previously described “broke the dam” of segregation by 1950. In that year, the census revealed a fully integrated neighborhood with the new majority black population that was distributed throughout buildings on every block (*Figure 6*).

Despite the very real phenomenon of “white flight” that the District illustrates, it cannot be assumed that all white residents supported racial housing restrictions. While many certainly did, there is evidence that others disagreed with the policies. It's worth remembering that the exclusionary covenant that provoked *Shelley v. Kraemer* was not signed by a quarter of the Shelley's white neighbors.⁸¹ In the District, while many whites fled, others stayed and adapted.

For example, between 1940 and 1950, the number of integrated buildings in the District, where a white family and a black family shared a single roof, increased by 475% (from four households to twenty three; *Figure 6*).⁸² This phenomenon seems to indicate that at least a subset of District whites and blacks were dealing with integration as John C. Clark had hoped; with “as little friction as possible.”

The 1960 census, when it is released, will have much to say

about how long the trend held, but in 1950 the District was a black-majority, but thoroughly *integrated* neighborhood.

CONCLUSION

The nominated District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because it meets the requirements set forth in the multiple property document **Historic and Architectural Resources of The Ville, St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri**” (NR 1999- amended 2011) (“the MPD”).⁸³ The District is eligible for listing in the National Register at the local level of significance under **Criterion A: ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black, and COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT** using the MPD's **Context III: “The Ville as the Product of Residential Segregation Policies 1910-1950”**. The District embodies the registration requirements of **Associated Property Type #4: “Groups of Residences/Districts.”** The District is eligible for listing because its buildings quite literally housed populations of residents that collectively embodied broad patterns of the history of race and community development in St. Louis. Specifically, District demographics evince patterns of settlement that are particularly relevant to the City's African American ethnic heritage. Throughout the period of significance (1910-1950) District occupancy illustrates both the constraints of race-based housing restrictions at the edge of the Ville and the gradual, then sudden, process by which those restrictions degraded and ultimately collapsed in the decade 1940-1950.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Margaret Bush Wilson 1987, p. 3.

⁸² U.S. Census 1940, 1950

⁸³ Betsy Bradley et. al., 2011

FOR THE RECORD: AN OVERVIEW OF LANDMARKS' PRESERVATION-LENDING AND 'BRICK AND MORTAR' WORK

By Andrew Weil

Landmarks' mission instructs us to preserve, enhance, and promote the architectural heritage of St. Louis. This mission is pursued in many ways, but perhaps the most satisfying projects are the ones where we have "skin in the game."

Landmarks Association's involvement with purchasing, owning, rehabilitating/stabilizing, and selling real estate appears to have begun in 1961 with the Chatillon-Demenil Mansion. After convincing the Federal Highway Department to spare the property from demolition, Landmarks acquired the mansion and grounds with a \$40k grant from Union Electric Corporation. The organization then embarked upon a three-year capital campaign to fund the rehabilitation of the property led by board member Chapin Newhard with restoration architectural plans by Landmarks' Board President Gerhardt Kramer.

Without knowing *how* the building would eventually be used, restoration work got underway in 1964, and the building opened to the public in 1965. At the time, a decision was made to turn the home into a museum rather than sell it as a residence.



Chatillon-Demenil Mansion

Landmarks formed a new nonprofit corporation (The Chatillon-Demenil House Foundation) for this purpose and gave the building to the Corporation to own and operate.

Building on this success, in 1967, Landmarks Association took over operation of the Eugene Field House Museum from the Board of Education. Between 1967 and 1969 a committee led by Landmarks and community partners like the Questers and Stix, Baer & Fuller planned and executed a major program of renovation that included a new heating system, roof, and interior restoration work. In 1981, operation of the home was turned over to the newly formed Eugene Field House Foundation.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the organization was very active in both advocacy and brick and mortar work in Soulard, "Bohemian Hill" and Lasalle Park. For an overview of these efforts I submit the following excerpt from an article by longtime Director Carolyn Toft. The full text can be found on our website: https://www.landmarks-stl.org/architecture/bohemian_hill/

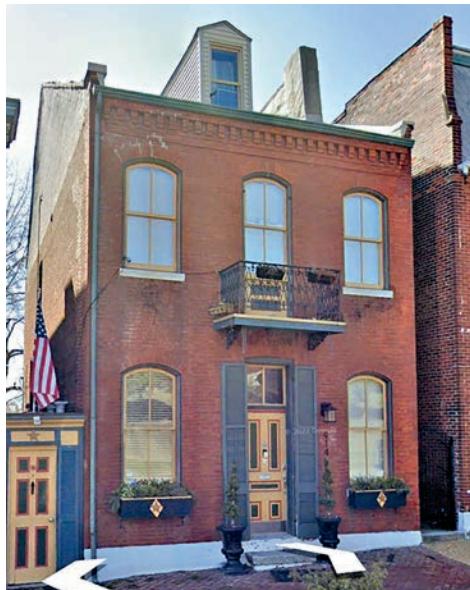
... Kitty-corner from St. John Nepomuk Church on the near south side lies what is left of Bohemian Hill. Once home to 19th century eastern European immigrants, the neighborhood in the 1950s was subjected to the twin assaults of urban renewal for Darst-Webbe public housing (razed 1999) and clearance for merging interstate highways. Soon, the truncated adjoining neighborhoods of Soulard and Lafayette Square were experiencing substantial deterioration and abandonment.

Fortunately, a handful of far-sighted preservationists acquired property, put together neighborhood organizations and enlisted the help of the Missouri State Office of Historic Preservation, Landmarks and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. By the end of 1972, successful National Register nominations had been completed for Soulard, Lafayette Square and the St. John Nepomuk parish complex and both Landmarks and the National Trust were contributing money to revolving fund activities.

Next, LANDMARKS and SNIA (Soulard Neighborhood Improvement Association, later Youth, Education & Health in Soulard, YEHS) took on the lingering Urban Renewal project in LaSalle Park (the corporate headquarters of Ralston Purina). After a brief period of confrontation, Ralston and the City administration were convinced to redirect the project (located adjacent to Soulard and Lafayette Square) from clearance to



1869 S. 10th Street



914 Russell Boulevard



2004 S. 11th Street

rehabilitation. Ralston even donated the bedraggled High Victorian house at 911 Park to Landmarks for a Bi-Centennial project! This dramatic modification earned Ralston seven pages in a prestigious 1978 publication, "Business and Preservation". For the project, company's redevelopment team led by Fred Perabo would go on to receive the national George S. Dively Award for corporate leadership in 1984."

Landmarks stabilized the building Ralston-Purina gifted it at 911 Park Avenue and then sold it to a private buyer. When Ralston Purina donated the house, the company also donated \$2,500 (approximately \$13,000 today) to Landmarks "for a revolving fund". If this wasn't the origin of the revolving fund that we have revived over the last ten years, it certainly was an important addition to the war chest.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, Landmarks used its revolving fund (known as such because money "revolves" out to restore a building and "revolves" back in to be used for the next project following a sale) to stabilize and rehabilitate multiple buildings in Soulard including 914 Russell Boulevard, 2004 S. 11th Street and a home that had partially collapsed at 1869 S. 10th Street.

In the 1980s, the organization paused the use of the revolving fund and decided to focus substantial efforts on research, architectural surveys, and NR nominations. Federal tax reforms passed in 1981 and 1986 created the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit that has been so critical to preservation efforts in St. Louis. In response to these policy initiatives, Landmarks worked to qualify as many buildings as possible for the new incentives by listing properties and neighborhoods in the National Register. However, the revolving fund retained a line on the organization's books.

Landmarks' mission instructs us to preserve, enhance, and promote the architectural heritage of St. Louis.

FAST FORWARD 27 YEARS.

I was hired as a researcher in 2007 by Carolyn Toft, who had been Executive Director since 1970s. A year before I was hired, the south wall of the Mullanphy Emigrant home at 1609 N. 14th Street collapsed during a strong storm. Old North St. Louis Restoration Group (ONSLG) began raising funds to help with stabilization efforts. Landmarks agreed to make a forgivable loan of \$5,000 to the effort which drew \$2,500 from very limited organizational reserves, as well as \$2,500 in proceeds from a fundraiser we held.



Mullanphy Emigrant Home at 1609 N. 14th Street

This fundraiser was largely organized by Landmarks researcher Lindsey Derrington, who is now the Executive Director of Preservation Austin. The fundraiser featured three bands consisting of my band at the time "The Bearded Babies,"

Continued on pg. 18 >



2801 Magnolia before renovation



2801 Magnolia after renovation

This building won a Most Enhanced Award in 2018.

FOR THE RECORD *Continued from page 17*

my sometimes band at the time “The Red Headed Strangers” and my friends’ band “The Monads.” All three performed at 3159 Cherokee Street in the building that is now STL Stylehouse. The ONSLRG fundraising effort succeeded, and the south wall of the building was rebuilt and remained stable for another 17 years. ONSLRG ultimately sold the building and, under new ownership, it burned to the ground in 2023.

When I took over as executive director in 2011, the organization was in difficult financial straits following the “Great Recession”. I wanted to find a way to create a new program that would be attractive to members and donors who wanted to see Landmarks participate directly in rehabilitation projects again. The “Revolving Fund” line on our monthly financial reports had always piqued my interest, but it was just an artifact of prior activities.

I felt strongly that the organization should be providing material support for the preservation of buildings. I also knew that we didn’t have the staff or resources to manage costly and time-consuming rehabilitation projects. In consultation with board members like Matt Ghio, Stephen Acree, Kevin Kelleher, Bill Seibert and David Lott, we estimated that while we couldn’t manage construction projects, Landmarks could manage a loan program to help others or to intervene in emergencies.

In 2014, I wrote a letter of inquiry to the Robert J. Trulaske Jr. Family Foundation. I wanted to restart Landmarks revolving fund as a lending program on a pilot basis and asked the Foundation for \$100,000 in seed money. The idea was that the loans could be used as gap-financing for tax credit-supported rehabilitations, funds for stabilization to keep buildings from falling down while rehabilitation plans came into focus, or other worthy needs as they arose. The Foundation agreed to give us \$75,000 if we raised \$25,000 to match it. Through support from our members, we raised the needed match. This money is now held in a designated

account that is only used for lending purposes.

Our first loan with the new program went to East Fox Homes (a collaboration between Lutheran Development Group and RISE Community Housing) for the rehabilitation of a magnificent, but severely deteriorated shell of a building at 2801 Magnolia. After a complete rehabilitation, this building won a Most Enhanced Award in 2018.

Also in 2016, Landmarks gave a loan to support the rehabilitation of the Bakers’ Union Building at 2615 Winnebago. This art-deco building had been vacant for years due to a major design flaw. The entirety of the flat roof drained to a single downspout. The downspout had become clogged and an entire summer’s worth of rain had pooled on the roof ultimately resulting in a catastrophic collapse.

Landmarks’ loan was used to repair the roof so that insurance money held in escrow would be released to support full rehabilitation.

In 2018, Landmarks made a large loan to Lutheran Development Group to support its renovation of two buildings that used to be part of the Concordia Lutheran Seminary in Gravois Park. These major buildings were rehabilitated as the Eagle College Preparatory School (now Momentum Academy) at 3630 Ohio and the Intersect Arts Academy at 3636 Texas Avenue. Intersect won a Most Enhanced Award in 2019 and was a popular component of our Preservation Month tours that summer.

In 2019, Landmarks lent itself money to support the rehabilitation of our office space at 1805 S. 9th Street. This project has been discussed at great length in previous newsletters so I will simply say that without Landmarks’ intervention, our office buildings would have been lost.

No lending occurred during the height of the COVID years, but in 2023, Saint Louis University decided to demolish two significant buildings at 3221-25 Olive Street in Midtown. The



Intersect Arts Academy at 3636 Texas Avenue



Landmarks office at 1805 S. 9th Street



Eagle College Preparatory School (now Momentum Academy) at 3630 Ohio



3221-25 Olive Street in Midtown before renovation

buildings were to be turned into a vacant lot for which the University had no future use. The reason given for the costly demolitions by then University President Fred Pestello was that he didn't like to look at the buildings . . .

After a significant period of community activism and negotiations involving Landmarks' staff, board (special thanks to Julius Hunter), University leadership and potential developers, the Kranzberg Arts Foundation (KAF) offered to purchase and rehabilitate the buildings. The University agreed but insisted upon a very accelerated timeline for the sale of the properties. To meet that timeline, KAF and Landmarks reached a deal that allowed KAF to swiftly close on the buildings at the beginning of 2024. The deal involved using the entirety of Landmarks loan fund and the allocation of a LARGE amount of other organizational resources to the effort. These funds remain committed to this project until 2029 and the properties have been fully rehabilitated and reopened as The Key Burger Bar and Boogie event space in fall 2025.

In the spring of 2025, Landmarks was approached by representatives of the LaSalle Park Neighborhood Association, Sean Spencer with Tower Grove Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation, and Peter Hoffman with Legal Services of Eastern Missouri. The LaSalle Park Neighborhood was in the process of suing a problem-property owner for her demolition-by-neglect of a fabulous corner building at 1000 Morrison Avenue; they needed an entity to take on its stabilization.

Back in the 1970s, the building had served as Ralston-Purina's sales office for the buildings Landmarks convinced it to stabilize in LaSalle Park (see the beginning of this article). Purina, which has an abiding commitment to downtown and the neighborhoods surrounding its corporate campus, offered a major grant if LaSalle Park could find a capable nonprofit to take ownership of the building and pursue stabilization. Landmarks

Continued on pg. 20 >



1000 Morrison Avenue c1976



1000 Morrison Avenue, Summer 2025

FOR THE RECORD *Continued from page 19*

agreed to be that entity and took ownership of the building in October of 2025. This project brings the organization back to Lasalle Park after 50 years and we are proud to announce that stabilization is underway.

While the details of the Morrison project were finalized, I submitted another grant request to the Robert J. Trulaske Jr. Family Foundation (RJTFF) to help Landmarks grow its capacity to make loans for preservation priorities. Based on the organization's track record and agreeing with our assessment that there is enormous need, the Foundation agreed to fund our latest request.

I am proud to announce that the RJTFF has awarded Landmarks Association \$150,000 to add to its preservation loan fund principle in 2026. The Foundation has been very generous to Landmarks through the years and we are eternally grateful for all the ways its support has allowed us to pursue our mission. Aside from supporting Landmarks' and historic preservation initiatives, the Foundation supports many worthy priorities in the St. Louis Region including natural resource conservation and environmental justice and equality. Simply put, the Robert J. Trulaske Jr. Family Foundation plays an enormous role in making St. Louis a more equitable, interesting, and sustainable community.

“The Foundation has been very generous to Landmarks through the years and we are eternally grateful for all the ways its support has allowed us to pursue our mission.”



As you can see, the ways that Landmarks has contributed to “brick-and-mortar” preservation efforts through the decades are substantial. We are proud that each project has saved important buildings through unique community collaborations and funding partnerships. This work will continue. Stay tuned for updates on 1000 Morrison as stabilization proceeds and please know that Landmarks continually works to increase its capacity to provide meaningful financial support for historic preservation. As always, we welcome your support!

HONORING THE DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS BEHIND THE BRAMBILA ARCHITECTURAL LIBRARY CATALOGUE

Landmarks is grateful to recognize the hard work of the volunteers who have contributed their time and expertise to make the Brambila Architectural Library possible! Over 300 hours were donated by six volunteers who meticulously sorted and rehoused collection. They cataloged the materials on Airtable databases to make the library collections accessible on the website. Their behind-the-scenes work ensures that researchers, students, and community members can easily access and navigate this important resource.

Elaine Miller, Janice Weil, and Linda Holdinghaus did a great job both intellectually and physically arranging the library's books. Using the Airtable database, they cataloged over 1,000 titles. **Peter Wollenberg** rehoused and organized Landmarks archival materials. Through his careful work, these materials are now preserved in 17 well-organized archival boxes. **Michael Shepley** viewed/listened to the AV materials, even running down a reel-to-reel player. He sorted the collection and added it to the Airtable database. **Tom Poelker** created standardized, subject headings so hundreds of research files can be located and put to good use. **Phoebe Love** rehoused the Heritage/St. Louis, an important 1970s survey, into 14 archival boxes, with new, clear labeling. She then tackled the slide collections, rehousing them in new polypropylene pages and 14 binders where they are ready for sorting and scanning.

These dedicated volunteers exemplify what it means to support Landmarks' mission. Their generosity not only advances our archival and library initiatives but also reinforces the spirit of community stewardship that is central to preserving our shared architectural heritage.

To all our volunteers—thank you. Your time, passion, and commitment are invaluable, and we are deeply grateful for all that you have done.



Elaine Miller and Kris Smith



Phoebe Love



Tom Poelker



Janice Weil

TEMPLE ISRAEL

By Andrew Weil

The element on the front page is a section of glass mosaic that adorns the torah ark in the former Temple Israel building at 5001 Washington Avenue. Constructed for congregation Temple Israel between 1907-1908, this massive classical revival temple was designed by Tom P. Barnett, of the preeminent St. Louis firm Barnett, Haynes & Barnett. The period during which the temple was designed and broke ground overlapped substantially with the beginning of the firm's work on the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis a few blocks to the east on Lindell.

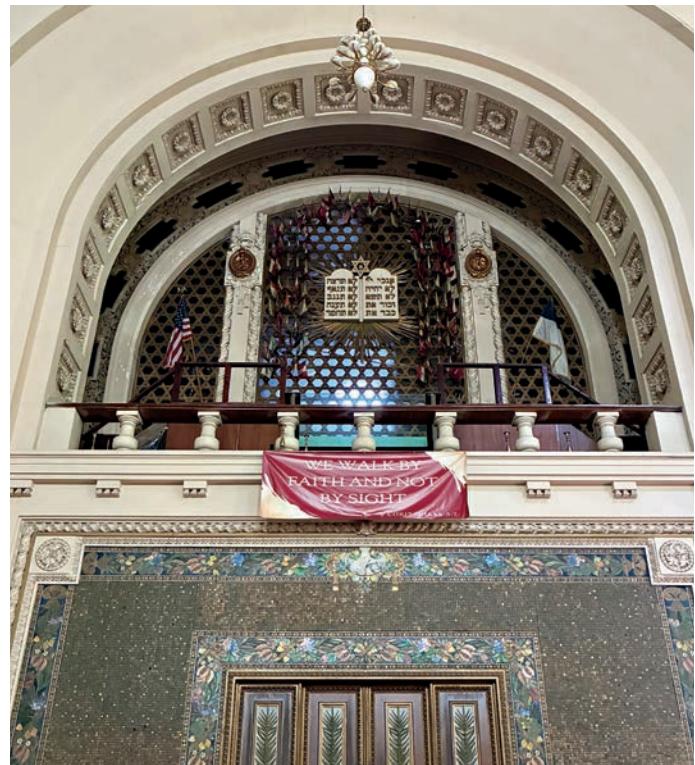
The scale of the building is truly stunning; the Corinthian columns on the Washington façade are fifty-three feet tall! The *St. Louis Globe Democrat* (9/17/1908) described the wall behind the bimah (the central platform where services are conducted) where the ark and Torah are located, in the following manner:

[A] most artistic paneling of glass mosaic is placed around the enclosure within the wall for the 'ark of the covenant.' This mosaic is unlike anything that has ever been done in the West. Like some wonderful woven rug . . . this gold and iridescent mosaic changes with every change of the light and air. It never appears alike on any two days and its opalescent hues vary as the spectator stands in different parts of the building."

This description is as accurate today as it was more than a century ago. Unfortunately, to date, I have been unable to identify the artist who executed the beautiful mosaics! If you know the answer, please help us crack the case. They were not executed by the Emil Frei Company or the Ravenna Mosaic Company (which Frei incorporated in 1923). This is interesting considering Frei's capabilities and the firm's relationship with Barnett, Haynes & Barnett. I consulted with Nicholas Frei of Emil Frei & Associates on this question, and he suggested that the Art Nouveau style and the iridescent glass is reminiscent of Tiffany Favrlie glass, but noted that the Gorham Company, a competitor of Tiffany, was also operating in St. Louis at the time.

The temple building is an integral component of the Holy Corners National Register Historic District. Comprised of nine buildings total, the five with religious associations are singled out as being of primary significance by the National Register. These are Second Baptist Church (abandoned and deteriorating like multiple buildings owned by entities associated with Dr. Gupreet Padda), St. John's Methodist (the fabulous Link Gallery and Auditorium), Temple Israel (Angelic Temple of Deliverance), the Tuscan Temple and the First Church of Christ Scientist (which are both still occupied by their original owners).

The National Register nomination was authored in 1975 by



Stunning Mosaics Surround the Bronze Doors of the Torah Ark

none other than Landmarks' longtime board member William G. Seibert and longtime friend (and former staff member!) Mimi Stiritz. The name of the district is derived from the presence of multiple high-profile religious buildings that grace the corners at the intersections of Kingshighway, Westminster Place and McPherson Avenues.

In a less enlightened community, the physical proximity of these institutions might have led their congregations to look inward to the safety of their hallowed halls and familiarity of their dogma, but quite the opposite happened at Holy Corners. Instead of reenforcing tribalism, the cluster of buildings became a metaphor for the ecumenical movement in St. Louis and the broader country. Indeed, the institutions embraced each other from the outset with the First Church of Christ, Scientist (475 N. Kingshighway, Mauran, Russell & Garden, 1904) hosting the services of Temple Israel's congregation while their temple was being built.

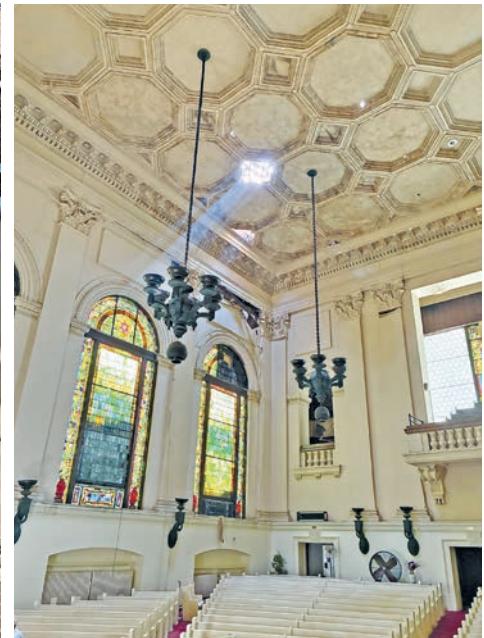
As the nomination notes, with nazism ascendent in Europe in the 1930s, the Christians and Jews of Holy Corners launched "a trail-blazing experiment in defiance of contemporary attitudes . . ." by founding an interfaith initiative known as the "Holy



Mosaics Surrounding the Torah Ark



Landmarks Board Member Bill Seibert Illustrates the scale of the columns.



Coffered Sanctuary Ceiling with Hole from May Tornado

Corners Fellowship".

Inaugurated by Methodist Bishop Ivan Lee Holt (pastor of St. John's Methodist) the fellowship began with an invitation to the men of Temple Israel and Second Baptist to join his congregation for an annual dinner. Led by Holt, Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman and Reverend M. Ashby Jones, the legacy of interfaith dialogue, learning and cooperation persisted through the coming war and decades beyond.

Unfortunately, the May, 2025 tornado had a severe impact on adjacent neighborhoods and damaged the buildings of Holy Corners. Both St. Johns (Link Gallery) and Temple Israel (Angelic Temple of Deliverance) suffered damage to their roofs. The Angelic Temple, itself now a 50-year steward of the building, was unfortunately not protected against Acts of God for insurance purposes.

Landmarks and others have been trying to help the church's pastors to chart a path forward that can at least patch the sanctuary roof against winter. We worked with the *St. Louis Jewish Light*, to publish an article about the situation this past October in a (successful) attempt to garner interest among the descendant congregation of Temple Israel in St. Louis County. Many people have donated to restore the roof after seeing this article and provided interesting memories of the building as comments on the donation page (link follows).

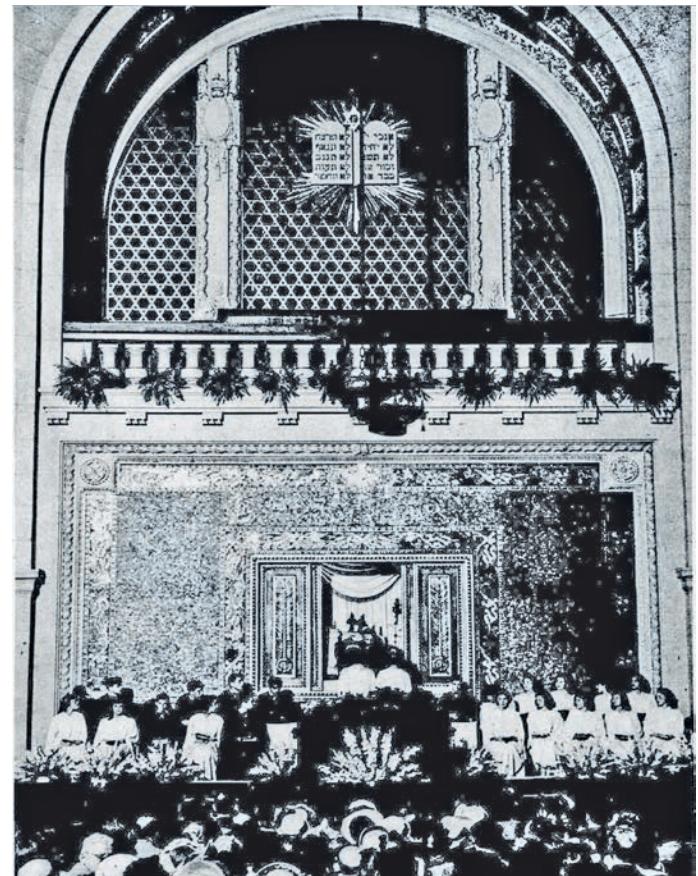
Landmarks has introduced the pastors to a potential grant opportunity through the National Trust for Historic Preservation and also spoken directly with Department of Interior and FEMA staff about the building putting them in touch with Pastor Andre Downing. Unfortunately, it is safe to say that there will be no federal assistance forthcoming in time to address the building's urgent needs, if it comes at all.

We continue to explore options to help this building and other landmarks impacted by the tornado. We encourage all our members to remember that while the tornado has disappeared from the front page, its aftermath remains a persistent humanitar-

ian and preservation concern.

To donate to the repair of the roof at Temple Israel, visit: <https://givebutter.com/6sYr8V>

The City of St. Louis also has resources for those who wish to volunteer their time or make donations for tornado relief at the following link: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/recovery/tornado-2025/give/index.cfm>



Rabbi Isserman and a Confirmation Class, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 1948

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: RICK ROSEN

By Andrew Weil

Born 1948 in south St. Louis County to parents who immigrated to the metropolis of St. Louis from Hartford, Connecticut, Rick moved to University City in the early 1950s.

In the early 1960s, the U. City Loop was beginning to lose some of its luster as a premium shopping district. Rick became interested in urban planning by witnessing the changes in the fortunes of the neighborhood unfold and by paying attention as the community wrestled with ways that it could address the issue.

When Rick was a child and young adult, many of St. Louis' most consequential urban renewal projects unfolded; it was a ripe time for a precocious kid to develop an interest in how cities evolve. One salient issue that he recalls from that time was the debate about how to develop the "Gateway Mall" and the "downtown of the future".

In high school, Rick monitored development and planning proposals and intuitively knew that the larger context of downtown, its history, architecture, and the ways that people interacted with it, needed to be considered in the planning process. Seeing an opportunity to make a contribution, as a teenager Rick took it upon himself to walk the streets of downtown creating a fastidious hand-drawn map that he hoped would be helpful to decision-makers.

After graduating from U. City High School, Rick attended the University of Pennsylvania and moved to Philadelphia where he studied architecture and urban studies. The summer after his freshman year, he returned to St. Louis to work a summer job with the prominent architectural firm of Schwarz & Van Hoefen. He arrived just in time to ride the last Hodiamont streetcar service on May 21, 1966.

Schwarz & Van Hoefen was deeply involved with the mid-century reimagining of downtown. In 1954, its antecedent firm (Russell, Mullgardt, Schwarz & Van Hoefen) published the first plan that called for an expansion of the existing plaza system eastward from the Civil Courts Building all the way to what would become the Arch Grounds. When Rick arrived, the firm's Mansion House Center had just been completed and the young college student found himself immersed in the mid-century transformation of St. Louis' central business district.

Living in Philadelphia and traveling the cities of the East Coast, Rick clearly saw how the proximity of stable, desirable residential districts to a central business district was predictive of downtown vibrancy. Unfortunately, such a relationship no longer existed in St. Louis in part because of the constant westward



migration of population and in part because of the misguided clearance efforts that intentionally isolated downtown from residential districts. He wanted to get involved in rectifying this condition using planning and architecture to recreate a lively downtown. In his words he passionately wanted Downtown St. Louis to be a place where "people from all walks of life cross paths."

Rick remembers that he "probably crossed paths with Landmarks Association" in the late 1960s, but it wasn't until the early 70s that he began to develop a relationship with the organization.

In furtherance of his desire to advance his vision for St. Louis, around 1973 Rick wrote a grant application to the National

Endowment for the Arts for a program called "City Options". He was concerned about anchor businesses like Saks 5th Avenue and the Women's Exchange leaving the Central West End (CWE) and what that might spell for the future of the neighborhood. His proposal laid out a development strategy using the neighborhood as a workshop for ideas that could be extrapolated to the city at large. The hope was that sound urban planning would not only stem the tide of disinvestment that was plaguing the community but position the neighborhood to revitalize and grow its capacity for mixed-use urban vitality.

Rick chose the CWE because he saw the neighborhood as a microcosm of a downtown; its retail, restaurant, residential, office, institutional, hospitality and recreational amenities were largely intact. Despite all of these advantages, Rick felt that what was missing was a vision for the future, particularly with regard to creating a diversity of housing options. At this time, he joined Landmarks Association and began to delve deeply into the inner workings of the city that "turned out to be the laboratory in which [he] studied American urban history...and [that] became the most important part of his education".

While Rick didn't get the grant, his passion for St. Louis could not be extinguished and he followed it to California (of all places) where he pursued a master's degree in urban planning at UCLA.

1997 Rick returned to his hometown and almost immediately became involved with a new organization called "Metropolis St. Louis". At the time, Metropolis was spearheading efforts to encourage people to explore and patronize city businesses and neighborhoods, including downtown. Metropolis' catchy slogan was "The City is Back; Back the City". Among these efforts was a fledgling downtown walking tour program. Rick had previously

been leading tours of downtown Los Angeles, so he was already an experienced guide. In St. Louis, however, his decades of research and passion for the community quickly differentiated him as a premier ambassador for the architecture of downtown.

Through subsequent decades, the leadership of the tour program changed hands, but stalwart volunteers like Rick helped to keep it staffed and operating through tumultuous times. He and the other volunteers knew how important it was for St. Louis to have knowledgeable guides to introduce visitors (from here and abroad) to the beauty, significance, and potential of downtown.

Around 2015, it became apparent that Revitalize St. Louis (which had taken over the program from Metropolis years earlier) needed some administrative assistance and Rick and Revitalize's Leslie Proud asked if Landmarks wanted to get involved. It was an obvious partnership that quickly led to Landmarks taking the program under its wing entirely.

For more than 50 years, Rick has been a valued supporter of Landmarks Association and for twenty-five seasons, he has volunteered as a downtown walking tour guide. Even in the high-visibility heat of a St. Louis summer, Rick cheerfully schleps through downtown sharing his overflowing enthusiasm and encyclopedic knowledge with curious visitors.



Rick Rosen introducing guests to the history of the International Fur Exchange Building

Thanks for all that you do for St. Louis Rick and thanks for being a Landmarks volunteer!

THANK YOU TO OUR TOP FUNDRAISER SPONSORS!

We'd like to highlight the following businesses that chose to sponsor our annual Savor the Past, Celebrate the Future event this year at the Capital level:



Mackey Mitchell Architects is a nationally renowned architectural firm dedicated to crafting spaces that elevate the human experience. They partner with colleges, universities, and communities to create places that support, belonging, wellbeing, and learning. Their studios in St. Louis, Dallas, and Asheville serve clients nationwide.



Missouri Athletic Club is a private club in St. Louis that has created social experiences in athletic, dining and business activities since 1903. They blend the warmth of a social club with the distinction of an exclusive private club, grounded in tradition, enrichment, and meaningful connection.



Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis is the largest funder of the arts in St. Louis, transforming it into a more vibrant, creative community. More than a funder, they are a passionate advocate, a true partner, and a leading catalyst for positive change in the arts and culture sector.



Rothschild Development and Management are a property management group in St. Louis that offers commercial properties for lease throughout the Central Corridor. Although the majority of their current tenants are smaller retail and food and beverage operations, their roster of commercial properties could also be ideal for medical, office, manufacturing and warehouse tenants.

We couldn't do what we do without your continued support!

DO YOU LOVE ST LOUIS HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE?

BECOME A DOWNTOWN TOUR GUIDE FOR LANDMARKS ASSOCIATION OF ST. LOUIS

By Ilissa Staadeker

Bean ambassador for St. Louis and share your knowledge and passion with others by becoming a volunteer tour guide for Landmarks Association's Downtown Walking Tours. Tours are offered Saturday mornings, April through October for groups limited to 15 people. Volunteer guides are given extensive training and materials to pair with their own knowledge of the area to craft their tour. Groups are a mix of residents and visitors who are interested in the architecture, history and culture of our fair city.

Landmarks Association handles all administration so Guides can focus on giving the tours. Guides are usually scheduled only

one or two Saturday mornings per month. Each tour group is limited to just 15 people, allowing for lots of interaction. Tours last approximately two hours and cover about two miles at a leisurely pace.

If you enjoy history, architecture and engaging with people, check out our Tours Website and complete our Volunteer Interest form. Or simply call our Tours number **314-690-3140** and ask to have one of our Guide trainers contact you.



“This experience lets me make a contribution to this great community.”



Tour guide Rick Rosen and group visiting the Old Cathedral



Tour guide Glenn Glenn Sprich and group visiting the Old Post Office interior



Downtown East Tour - Dred and Harriet Scott statue on the south lawn of the Old Courthouse

“Becoming a tour guide was a great way to expand my knowledge and also gain an opportunity to learn more about the details of our city. I was amazed at how much information I didn’t know about our city’s buildings and the history.”



Warren and Sharon Hoffmann Lead the Downtown West Tour

“One of the great things about being a tour guide is meeting some very interesting people—actually from all over the world. The best thanks you receive is having someone say—“I’ve lived in the area my whole life and I never knew that was there. I had no idea.”

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AUGUST 13, 2025 – DECEMBER 10, 2025

DEAR FRIENDS,

As you know, Landmarks Association relies heavily on the support of our membership to meet our humble financial needs. We would like to thank you for your continuing support, and encourage you to pass this newsletter along to a friend with an invitation to join! Becoming a member is easy. Visit www.landmarks-stl.org and click on the "Join/Renew" tab.

Thank you!

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Thank you to all our 2025 Walking Tour Guides for sharing your time, enthusiasm, and expertise with the community!

Your commitment brings St. Louis's history to life and makes our programs possible.

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Warren & Sharon Hoffmann
Charlie Lubiewski
Nancy McGee
Rich Mueller
Glenn Sprich
Rick Rosen

GUIDES-IN-TRAINING:

David Boll
Julian Bush
Carol Howard
William Kuehling
Nick Schmitt



Tour Guide Bill Kuehling and guests



Guests and Tour Guide Nancy McGee

We're truly grateful for all you do.