

Gaskin Avenue Neighborhood  
~~East Ward Street~~ Bounded by Dart Street, the CSX  
Douglas Railroad, Pearl and Madison Avenues, and  
Coffee County Wilson and Gordon Streets.  
Georgia

HABS No. GA-<sup>2347</sup>~~2234~~

HABS  
GA  
35-DOUG,  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Southeast Region  
Department of the Interior  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

GASKIN AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD

HABS  
GA  
35-DOUG,  
1-

2347  
HABS No. GA-2234

Location: Bounded by Dart Street to the east, the CSX Railroad to the south, Pearl and Madison Avenues to the west, and Wilson and Gordon Streets to the north. Douglas, Coffee County, Georgia

U.S.G.S. Douglas Quadrangle (7.5)

Zone 17

Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:

<u>Northing</u>	<u>Easting</u>
3488640	324300
3487300	325655
3486830	325545
3486860	324300

Present Owner: Multiple owners

Present Occupant: Mixture of Owner/Tenant occupancy

Present Use: Primarily single family dwellings, with a few governmental and religious buildings.

Significance: The Gaskin Avenue Historic District is significant in the area of architecture for its large, intact collection of historic homes constructed from the 1890s through the 1940s that represent the major architectural styles and house types constructed throughout this area of the State during the late-nineteenth century through the early-twentieth century. The district also is significant in the area of community planning and development for its representation of middle class residential development in Douglas. The district also is significant in the area of landscape architecture as a representative example of late-nineteenth through early-twentieth century residential landscaping in Georgia communities characterized by tree lined streets bordered by curbs and sidewalks with uniformly set back houses and informally landscaped front yards.

Description:

The Gaskin Avenue Historic District is a large residential area of approximately 200 acres, located north and east of downtown Douglas, Georgia. The district developed concurrently with the downtown area, which experienced its greatest period of growth beginning in the late-nineteenth century with the advent of rail service to Douglas.

The Gaskin Avenue Historic District is laid out in a grid pattern, which is a continuation of the pattern of development within the downtown district. This grid pattern was originally laid out in 1854, with the founding of the community of Douglas, and was centered around the focal point of the community, the courthouse square (1).

The two primary east-west corridors emanating from the courthouse square are Ward and Ashley Streets, which are also the primary east-west routes within the Gaskin Avenue Historic District. The earliest development in the Gaskin Avenue Historic District developed along these two streets, and along the primary north-south corridor, Gaskin Avenue (2). Today, some of the oldest and most stylistic residences within the district are observed along these streets. Among the high styles of turn-of-the-century architecture that are represented include Queen Anne, Neo-Classical Revival and Italian Renaissance Revival.

In addition to the above noted styles, the Gaskin Avenue Historic District also contains many examples of Craftsman Bungalows that were constructed from the 1920s through the 1930s. These buildings are found throughout the district, and are clearly representative of a move from the more ornate to the practical. Also noted within the Gaskin Avenue Historic District are a number of more modest examples of architecture, particularly examples of vernacular buildings. Many of these residences developed along the north side of the district along Madison Avenue and in the area between Jackson and Gordon Streets, as well as on the south side of the district between the railroad tracks and Ethel Street. Among the examples of

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(1) National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Downtown Douglas Historic District, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, 1993, p. 3.

(2) National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Gaskin Avenue Historic District, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, 1993, p. 3.

vernacular architecture that are noted include the Central Hallway house type and the Georgian Cottage.

Several historic community buildings are also extant throughout the Gaskin Avenue Historic District. These include the c. 1930s Colonial Revival style St. Paul Catholic Church located on the northwest corner of East Ward Street and North Coweta Avenue, the c. 1930s former Douglas Hospital located on East Ward Street at Dewey Avenue and the c. 1930s Craftsman style Douglas Woman's Club located on North Coffee Avenue at Sellers Street. In addition, several non-historic community buildings have been constructed within the Gaskin Avenue Historic District. The First Baptist Church of Douglas located on East Ward Street and North Gaskin Avenue, and the Coffee County Commissioners Office located on East Ward Street and Dewey Avenue are examples of non-historic buildings that have been added to the district since the historic period.

Landscaping also is a very important aspect of the Gaskin Avenue Historic District. The majority of the landscaping found in the district is typical of the type of residential landscaping commonly found in many southern residential communities that developed between the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. This includes the tree-lined streets and uniformly set-back houses with front yards bordered by curbs and sidewalks (3).

#### History:

As stated previously, the Gaskin Avenue Historic District developed concurrently with the downtown area, beginning in the late-nineteenth century with the advent of the railroad. Prior to the establishment of rail service to Douglas in 1895, the community was primarily agriculturally oriented, with small businesses that supported this agricultural activity. However, in the decade prior to the advent of the railroad, local businessmen also began to see the profitability from the abundance of pine forests in the area. As a result, several lumber and turpentine businesses began to develop. With the advent of the railroad, these businesses flourished such that Douglas and Coffee County soon became the world leader in naval stores production (4).

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(3) Ibid. p. 4.

(4) National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Downtown Douglas Historic District, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, 1993, p. 11.

As economic growth occurred, various other types of businesses began to develop throughout the community. These included the Coffee County Bank and the Douglas Hotel (5). Additionally, the production of tobacco in the area surrounding Douglas became the region's second most important export as rail service provided access to market centers throughout the state. Increased business activity also prompted municipal improvements such as the installation of street lights and water lines, and the paving of roads and sidewalks (6).

As commercial activity progressed in Douglas, so too did the development of nearby residential areas, most particularly the Gaskin Avenue Historic District. The larger, most ornate residences built along Gaskin Avenue were home to some of the community's most prosperous citizens; those who made their fortunes from the naval stores industry or the tobacco industry (7). Other more modest residences within the district provided homes for citizens of more moderate incomes. The Gaskin Avenue Historic District also contains one c. 1930s church, a c. 1930s former hospital and the c. 1930s Craftsman style Douglas Woman's Club.

Today, the Gaskin Avenue Historic District continues to be a thriving residential neighborhood. While some of the residences along East Ward Street have been converted to office space for legal or medical services, most of the buildings within the district are still used as residences, and are owner occupied.

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(5) Ibid, p. 11.

(6) Ibid.

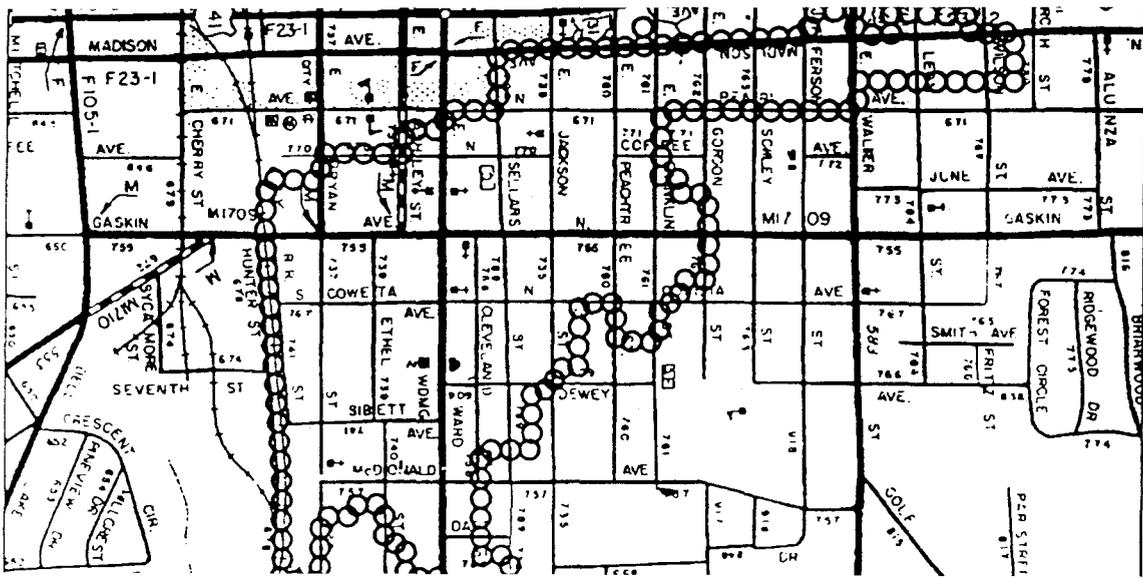
(7) Ibid.

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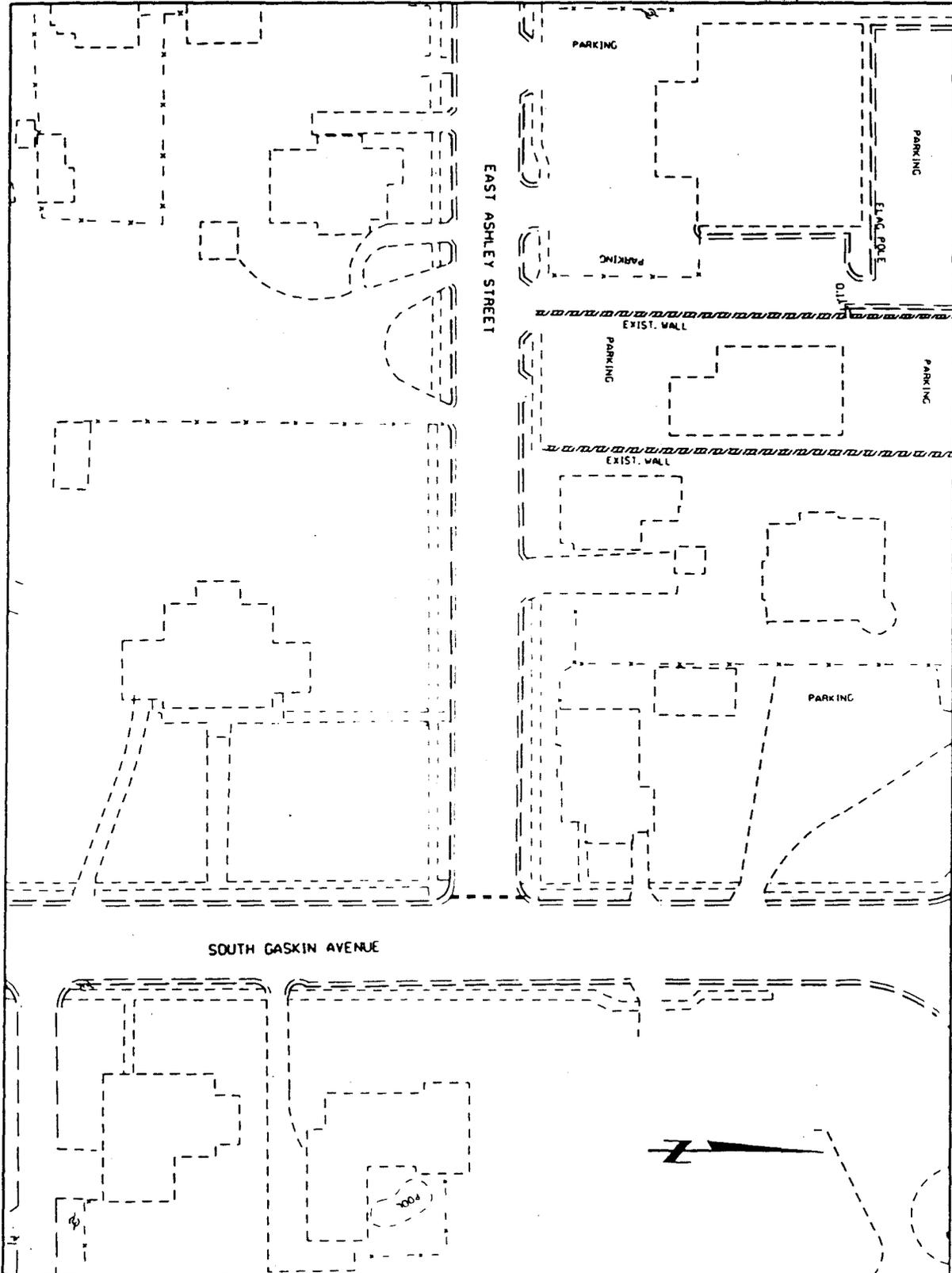
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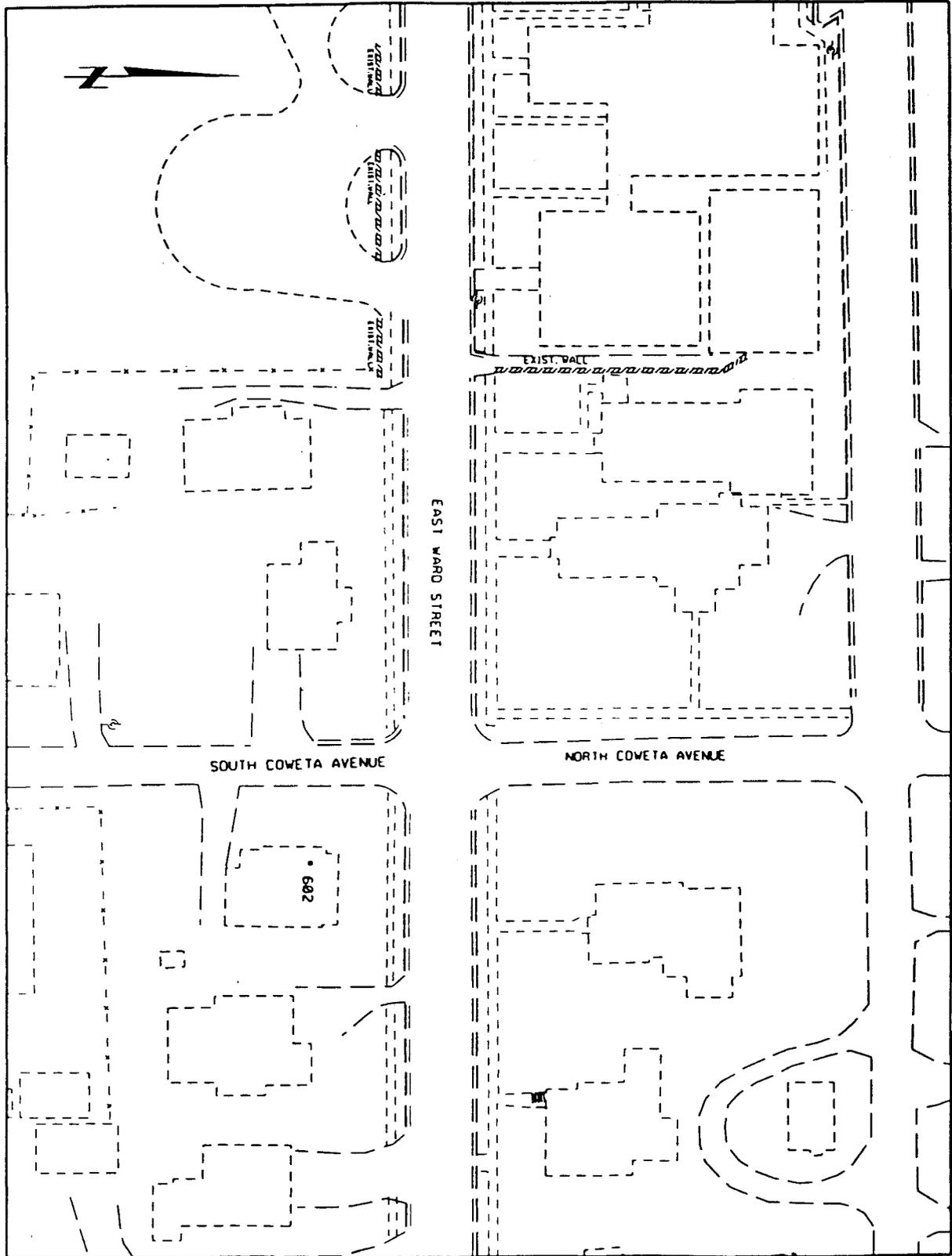
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Downtown Douglas Historic District, 1993.

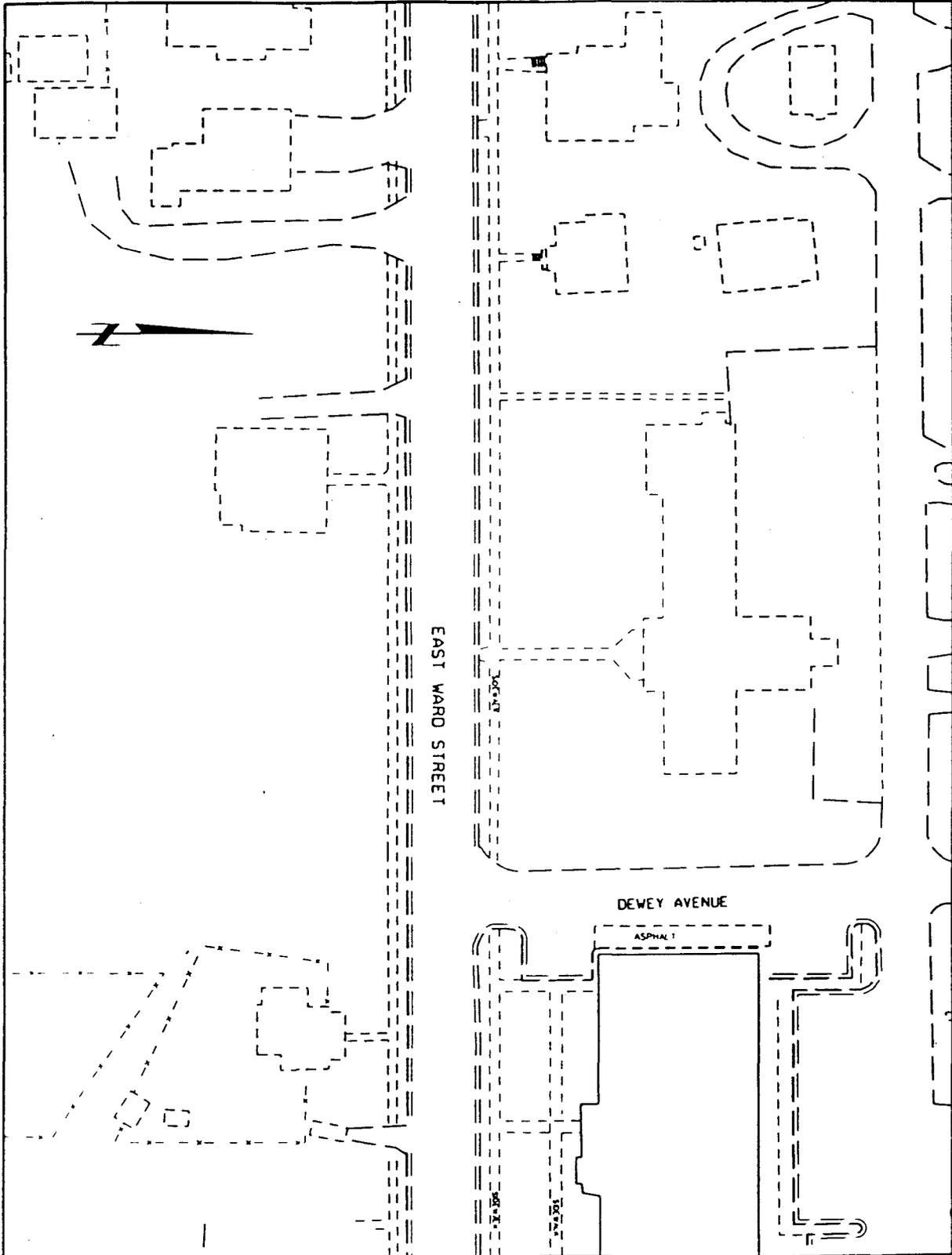
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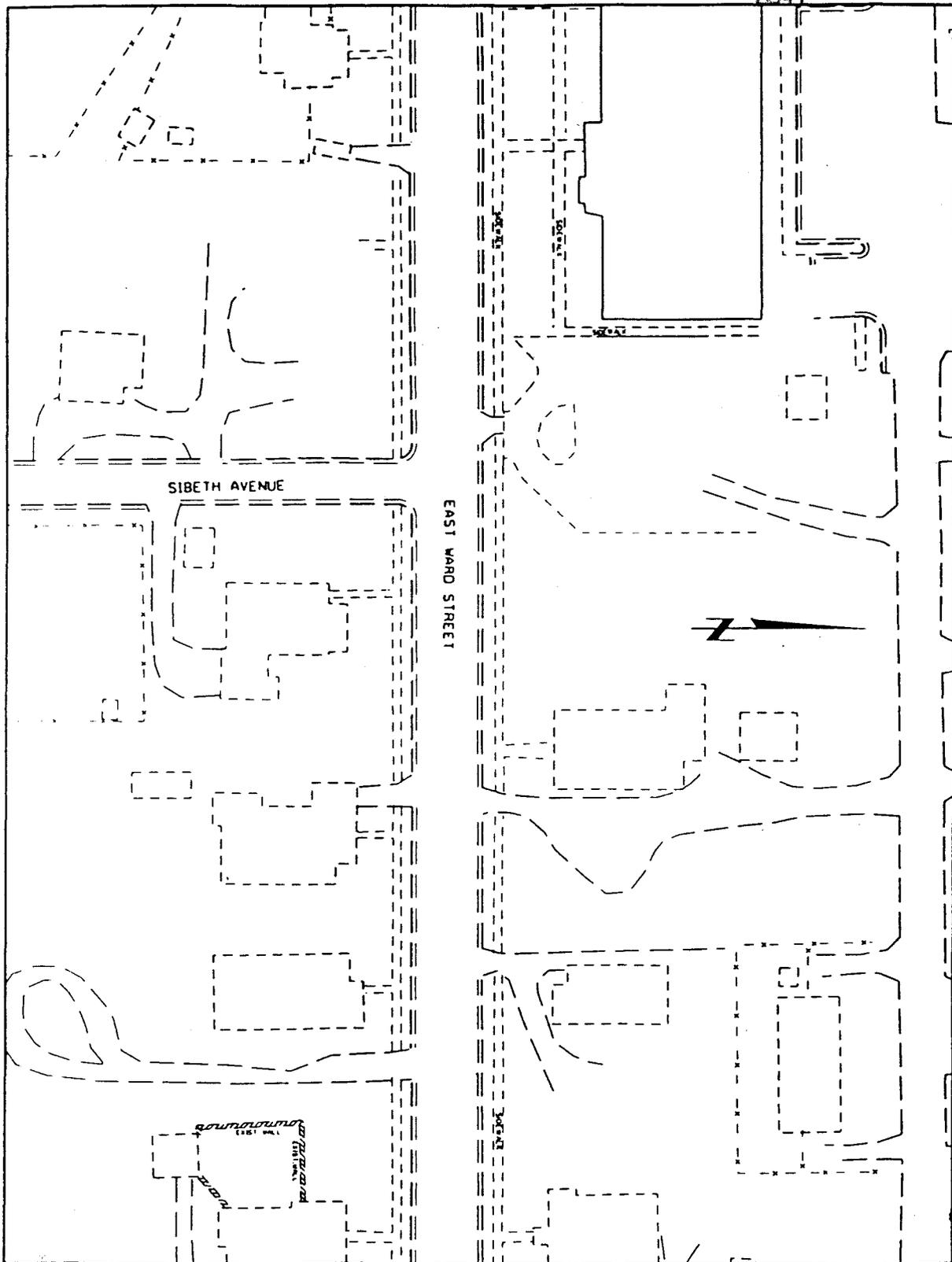


GASKIN AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD  
HABS No. GA-2284 (Page 7)

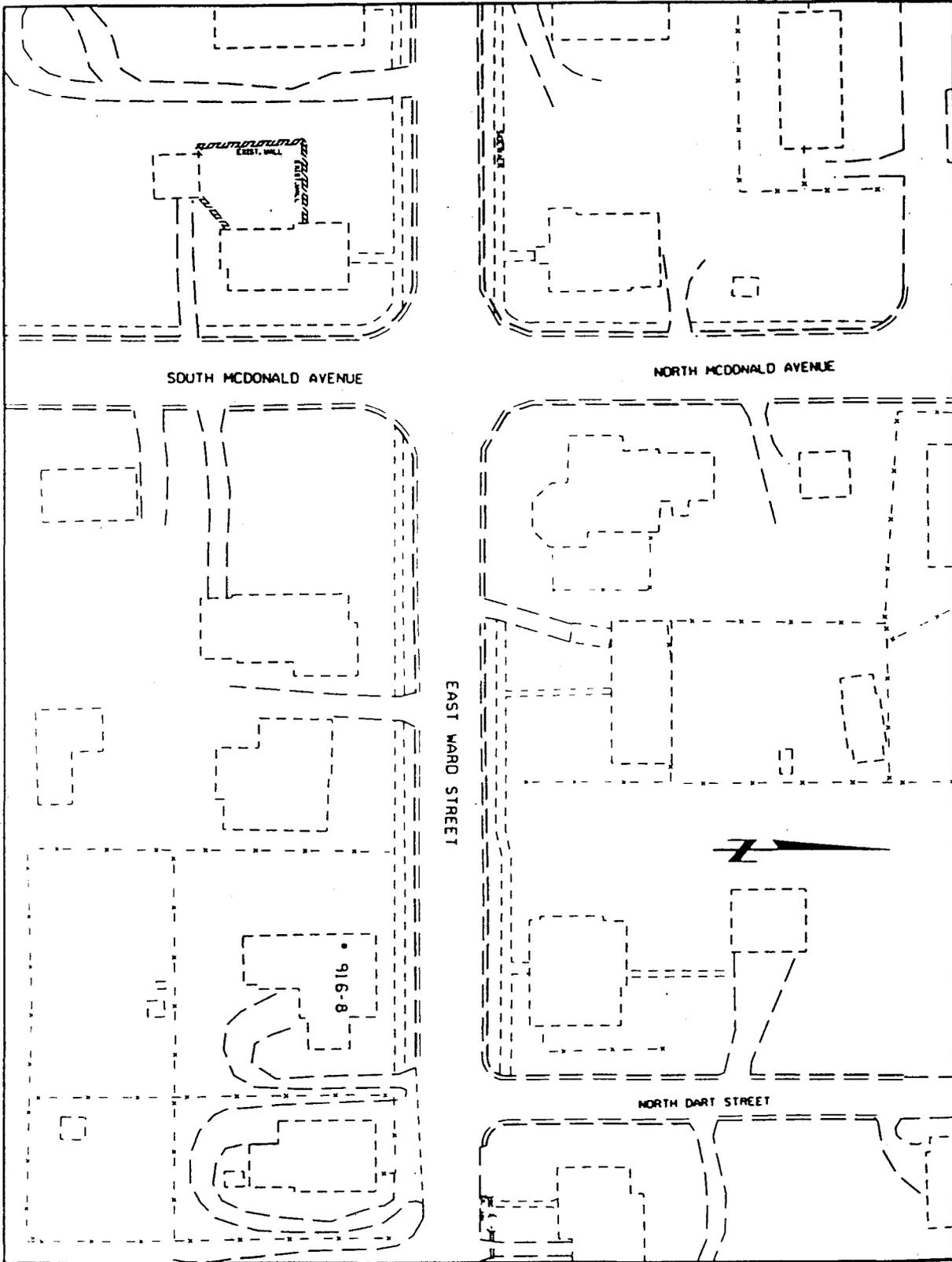








GASKIN AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD  
HABS No. GA-2294 (Page 11)



GASKIN AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD  
HABS No. GA-2294 (Page 12)

