

HABS
MICH,
82-DETRO,
20-

East Ferry Avenue Historic District
East Ferry Avenue between Woodward and
Beaubien Avenues
Detroit
Wayne County
Michigan

HABS No. MI-311

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

EAST FERRY AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT

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Location: East Ferry Avenue between Woodward and Beaubien Avenues

Present Owner: Multiple owners

Present Use: Residential, institutional

Significance: The East Ferry Avenue Historic District represents a fairly intact turn-of-the-century, upper class residential area representing a variety of architectural styles popular from the 1880s through the first decades of the twentieth century. It is also significant for its later association with the black history of Detroit.

PART I HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Architects:

5510 Woodward Ave. Colonel Frank J. Hecker House - Louis Kamper, Architect.

60 East Ferry Ave., William A. Pungs House - William E. Higginbotham and William G. Malcomson, Architects.

71 East Ferry Ave., Charles Lang Free House - Wilson Eyre, Jr., Architect.

84 East Ferry, John Scott House - John Scott, Architect.

100 East Ferry, George A. Owen House - John Scott & Co., Architects.

110 East Ferry, William Jackson House - John Scott & Co., Architects (probable)

5450 John R. Street, James Murphy House - F.E. Carleton, Architect.

222 East Ferry Ave., Samuel A Sloman House - George V. Pottle, Architect.

223 East Ferry Ave., Rufus Goodell House - Rogers & McFarlane, Architects.

235 East Ferry Ave., William L. Barclay House - Mortimer L. Smith, Architect.

246 East Ferry Ave., Residence - A.E. Harley, Architect.

255 East Ferry Ave., Frank C. Hecker House - Donald & Meier, Architects.

270 East Ferry Ave., Richard H. Macauley House - John E. Mills, Architect.

295 East Ferry Ave., Henry P. Baldwin II House - John Scott & Co., Architects.

314 East Ferry Ave., Howard B. Holden House - T.J. Angel, Architect.

5461 Brush Street, William Lennane House - Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, Architects.

421 East Ferry Ave., Herbert Bassett House - William Scott, Architect (Possible).

441-443 East Ferry Avenue, Hall Improvement Co., investment property - J.I. Weinberg, Architect.

5521 Beaubien, Building erected for T.B. Rayls Co. - Baxter & O'Dell, Architects.

2. Original & Subsequent Owners:

5510 Woodward Ave - Colonel Frank J. Hecker House

Colonel Frank Joseph Hecker, at age 18, joined the Union Army. After working several years as an agent for the Union Pacific, he returned to Michigan to organize the Peninsular Car Company in Detroit. When the Hecker's left the house it was converted into a rooming house and apartment building. In 1947 the house was purchased by Smiley Brothers Music Co.: the carriage house has been converted into a recital auditorium capable of seating 200 persons.

40 East Ferry Ave., Henry G. Stevens House

Stevens speculated in real estate and owned a silver mine. The Stevens House was transferred to the University of Michigan Institute of Social and Public Administration C. 1940 and then to the Merrill-Palmer Institute in 1942.

60 East Ferry Ave., William A. Pungs House

Pungs was vice president of the Michigan Railroad Supply Co., which was organized in 1882; it merged with the Chicago Railway Equipment Company in 1899. Pungs also founded the Anderson Carriage Company, helped found and organize the Pungs

Finch Auto & Gas Engine Company and the Michigan Yacht and Power Company. In 1934 the Pungs House became the dormitory for the Merrill-Palmer Institute.

70 East Ferry Ave., Hermna Roehm House

Born in Germany, Roehm came to America in 1847. He assisted in organizing the firm of Radcliff, Roehm and Weston, Hardware, which became Roehm and Davison, in 1871, incorporated in 1901. In addition, he was president of the Detroit Carriage Company, a Presbyterian and a Republican. Roehm sold the house to Vincent D. Cliff, president of the Federal Casualty Company in 1908, and he, in turn, sold to Merrill-Palmer Institute in 1928.

71 East Ferry Ave., Charles Lang Freer House

Freer amassed a huge fortune through part ownership in the Peninsular Car Works, operating the Detroit steam forge, and controlling a large car works at Adrian. A great art devotee, he dedicated much of his life to his collections of James McNeill Whistler and other contemporary artists, and his collection of Oriental art of all types became one of the finest outside Japan. He acquired the celebrated Peacock Room, the dining room of a London residence designed by Whistler.

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

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

84 East Ferry Ave., John Scott House

Scott was a well known architect in the late nineteenth century. It is also presently owned by Merrill-Palmer Institute.

100 East Ferry Ave., George A. Owen House

George Owens owned a dry goods firm. His widow sold the property to Edward F. Rush of Alfred Rush & Sons Fruits, who transferred it to the Merrill-Palmer Institute in 1924. It houses students.

110 East Ferry Ave., William Jackson House

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

5450 John R. Street, James Murphy House

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

222 East Ferry Ave., Samuel A. Sloman House

Samuel A. Sloman, of M. Sloman and Company furs, resided here until his death in 1938. It was later owned by Violet T. Lewis of the Lewis Business School.

223 East Ferry Ave., Rufus Goodell House

Goodell was a real estate speculator.

235 East Ferry Ave., William L. Barclay House

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

246 East Ferry Ave.

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

255 East Ferry Ave., Frank C. Hecker House

Hecker was the son of Colonel Frank J. Hecker, the railroad car manufacturer, whose house is on the corner of Ferry and Woodward.

263 East Ferry Ave., William R. Croul House

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

270 East Ferry Avenue, Richard H. Macauley House

Macauley owned a wholesale millinery firm.

295 East Ferry Ave., Henry P. Baldwin II House

Baldwin was the son of a governor and a boot and shoe manufacturer, partner in Baldwin, McGraw and Company.

314 East Ferry Ave., Howard B. Holden House

It was built at a cost of \$6000 by Holden, Secretary-Treasurer of the City Concrete and Coal Company

5461 Brush Street, William Lennane House

William Lennane was a paving, sewer and concrete contractor. Because blacks were restricted from owning property west of Brush, the address was changed from 326 East Ferry to 5461 Brush in 1941 when the Detroit Association of Women's Clubs, a black women's organization, purchased the property from the Lennane heirs.

After a fire in 1976, the old entry on Ferry was covered up and is now indiscernable. The building is still owned and operated by the Detroit Association of Women's Clubs.

404 - 415 East Ferry Ave.

Similar in grading, height and scale, 414 East Ferry was connected to its neighbor when both were converted into Fairview Sanitorium in the early 1930s for the purpose of treating blacks. This medical facility was established by Dr. Robert Greenidge, the first black radiologist in the City of Detroit and one of the founders of Dunbar Hospital, Detroit's first black hospital, on Frederick.

405 East Ferry Avenue, Henry Walker Quinby House

Built for Quinby, the Secretary-Treasurer and business manager of the Detroit Free Press, at a cost of \$5,000. Joseph T. Webber, a relative of J.L. Hudson through his sisters marriage, and a department manager at J.L. Hudson Company resided in the house from 1903 until it was transferred to the Hudson-Webber Land Company in 1919, which retained the property until 1922.

420 East Ferry Avenue

Built as an investment property, it was the childhood home of Joyce Garrett. It has recently undergone rehabilitation.

421 East Ferry Avenue, Herbert Bassett House

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

429-31 East Ferry Avenue, Corbett House

Built for Sidney Corbett, Jr., a banker and broker, and his wife Katherine, Corbett sold it to J.L. Hudson in 1910. It was then sold to Louise Webber and her husband, Roscoe Jackson, then secretary-treasurer and general manager of Hudson Motor Car Company. The Helping Hand Society was housed there in the late 1920s and early 1930s, followed by the Foundation Music School, a collaborative effort between Elizabeth Johnson and Bertha Hamsbury.

441-443 East Ferry Avenue

Built for the Hall Improvement Co. as an investment property on a lot purchased from Roscoe B. Jackson & Louise Webber, his wife and relative of J.L. Hudson.

451-459 East Ferry Avenue

Built as an investment property, its historic significance derives from its association with Robert and Rosa Gragg. After they purchased the building in 1944, Mr. Gragg established his laundry and tailoring business in the basement. In 1946, Mrs. Rosa L. Gragg founded Slade-Gragg Academy of Practical Arts, which she visualized as a little "Tuskegee Institute of the North. The Slade-Gragg Academy was open to persons of all races and creeds. The Academy closed its doors in 1952, after having trained thousands of students in the practical arts. The building was then converted back to dwelling units.

3. Builder, Contractor

5450 John R. Street, James Murphy House, Henry Carew, Builder

263 East Ferry Avenue, William R. Croul House, Henry Carew, Builder.

405 East Ferry Avenue, Henry Walker Quinby House
August Dieterich & Son (possible builders).

421 East Ferry Avenue, Herbert Bassett House
W.H. Morse & Company, contractors.

B. Historic Context

The East Ferry Avenue Historic District contains 33 primary structures serving commercial, residential, and institutional uses. Located approximately two miles north of downtown between Detroit's Cultural Center on the south and deteriorating late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential areas to the north and east, the district encompasses the three blocks of East Ferry between Woodward and Beaubien. To its west is the campus of Wayne State University. The district is within the Art Center Rehabilitation Project Area, and was certified May 13, 1982.

BOUNDARIES: The district boundaries are described as follows:

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

Ferry Street first appeared in records in 1874. Named after Dexter M. Ferry, seed merchant and president of the D.M. Ferry Seed Company which had nurseries further east on Ferry Avenue, East Ferry Avenue was not developed until the late 1880s, after the subdivision was platted in 1886 and lots were sold.

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

Ferry Avenue, between Woodward Avenue and the Brush Farm line, is being laid out and graded. It will be a continuation of Ferry Street, which is opened east of Beaubien. Ferry is platting lots on both sides of the proposed avenue, and proposed making it one of the handsomest residence streets in the city. The avenue is planned to be 80 feet wide from curb to curb. Rows of shade trees will be planted on both sides of the sidewalk, and lots will be sold subject to special building restrictions, requiring all buildings to be set back 40 feet from the sidewalk, to be located upon a certain portion of the lot, and to cost not less than \$7,000. Mr. Ferry proposes to make all the above improvements, and, in addition, to pave the avenue, and have water and gas pipes and sewers laid. By compelling uniformity, he expects to develop the handsomest avenue in the city. He calculates to erect a costly residence for himself thereon.

Although D.M. Ferry never did build himself a house on this section

of East Ferry Avenue (he resided in Brush Park and moved later to a house on the southeast corner of Woodward and Fransworth) he succeeded in subdividing his land and selling off lots with building restrictions. In addition to those mentioned above, no building in Ferry's subdivision of Park Lot 41 was to be erected within three feet of the side lot line and all buildings had to be single dwelling houses built of brick, stone or hollow tile with cement face construction.

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

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

East of Brush, the character of Ferry Avenue changes to the more modest middle class single-family houses and multi-family dwellings of the early twentieth century, although three houses dating from the late nineteenth century still remain. The north side of the street, Thomas Palmer's subdivision of Part of Out-Lot 196 of the L. Beaubien Farm, was platted in 1884. As with the more modest lot sizes, the residents had more modest incomes than their neighbors one or two blocks to the west. Herber C. Bassett, travel agent, Sidney Corbett, Jr., a broker-banker, and Henry W. Quinby, secretary-treasurer and business manager of the Detroit Free Press,

were among those living on the north side of Ferry between Brush and Beaubien in the late nineteenth century. The south side of this block, meanwhile, was not platted until 1892 and not developed until the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, and then mostly by an influx of Jews. Buildings were restricted to between two to three stories, to cost not less than \$5,000 or \$7,000 if a duplex with a single entrance and appearance of a single house. A uniform 40 foot setback and five foot lot lines were imposed.

In the mid-1910s and early 1920s, the population of the blocks between John R. and Beaubien became predominately Jewish; furriers, bankers, a fruit and produce dealer, a lawyer, realtor, and salesman by profession among them. Three synagogues were in the immediate vicinity and the B'nai B'rith Community House was located at 271 E. Ferry from 1926 to 1935 (demolished).

In the first block off Woodward, the change beginning in the 1930s was towards institutional usage. The Freer Estate, shortly after the death of Charles Lang Freer in 1919, was transferred to the Merrill-Palmer Motherhood and Home Training School in 1921. By the early 1940s all of the houses on the south side of East Ferry between Woodward and John R. were owned by the Merrill-Palmer Institute, a private, non-profit educational institution nationally known for its pioneering work in the fields of child development and family life. The Merrill-Palmer Institute is in the process of transfer to Wayne State University; all of the houses have been meticulously maintained in their original condition as dormitories and offices. Other institutions moved into the neighborhood, such as the Detroit Young Men's Christian Association at 235 East Ferry in 1926 and the Elks Club (demolished).

By the mid-1930s and early 1940s, the area again experienced a population shift; this time towards blacks. Around 1940 maids, nurses, a janitor, and a tailor were among those residing on the block east of Brush.

Several notable blacks resided in the two blocks of East Ferry between John R. and Beaubien, although blacks were restricted to the block east of Brush until 1943. Health institutions, businesses, clubs and educational facilities were established by blacks primarily for use by blacks. Bailey Hospital, operated by Claude Young (nephew of Mayor Coleman Young) was housed on East Ferry (demolished); the Fairview Sanitorium of 404-412 East Ferry was owned by Dr. Robert Greenidge, the first black radiologist in the City of Detroit and one of the founders of Dunbar Hospital, Detroit's first black hospital, on Frederick Street. The founding of black medical institutions as alternatives to white hospitals was necessary because of the discrimination that existed which prohibited black doctors from treating even their own patients in "white" hospitals.

The Household Art Guild Employment Agency, directed by William H. Phillips to train blacks in the domestic trades, was located at 431 East Ferry, as was Bertha Hansbury and Mrs. Johnson's Music Foundation, the successor to the Hansbury Music School on Frederick; the Lewis Business School at 200, 222 and 263 East Ferry, directed by Violet Lewis, was staffed by blacks to train blacks; the Slade-Gragg Academy of Practical Arts at 451-459 East Ferry, a non-profit corporation, was founded by Rosa L. Gragg to provide "training and guidance of men and women in skills and trades designed to prepare them for productive and socially useful lives." She felt that the post-war demands for trained persons in the practical arts were not being met in the public facilities provided in the city of Detroit. The Slade-Gragg Academy, operating from 1946 to 1952, was opened to all races and creeds. Among its class offerings were tailoring, upholstery, dress making, and food production and service. The college was licensed to offer instruction in certain trades by the State Department of Public Institutions and was approved by the Veterans Administration for the training of Veterans.

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

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

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

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

PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

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

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

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

houses, ranging from millionaires' mansions to middle class dwellings to later multi-unit dwellings.

1. Architectural Character

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

Hecker and Kamper reportedly agreed on the design of this French Renaissance inspired by the lines and mood of the Chateau de Chenonceaux near Tours. Kamper designed all the interior detailing as well as the building itself.

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

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

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

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

Romanesque Revival style. This large two and one half story gable-roofed house is built of gray St. Lawrence marble with a round conically-roofed tower and an arcaded side porch.

70 East Ferry Avenue, Herman Roehm House (1888)

Queen Anne style. An end gable roofed, brick and red sandstone Queen Anne house with a two-level front bay window and a wide front porch with paired columns.

71 East Ferry Avenue, Charles Lang Freer House (1887)

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

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

Twelve fireplaces are situated throughout the twenty-two rooms, with an elevator from the basement to carry wood. The rooms are oriented toward the surrounding grounds. Balconies, bay windows, enclosed porches, and skylights are featured throughout the house. The lofty foyer with the two-story stairwell removed the customary barrier between floors and enhanced the beams, arches, and basketweave railing of the stairway. Many other original features of the house, innovative at the time, are total electric wiring, natural wood paneling, storage built-ins, entire walls of bookshelves, and cedar-lined drawers. The paneled walls and the ceiling beams of the house were supposedly stained by a process devised by Freer, using vinegar to rust iron and then applying the residue.

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

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

Queen Anne style with Elizabethan Revival features. A two and one-half story, cross-gable-roofed, brick house with half-timbered gables and a wide front porch supported by brick piers.

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

Romanesque Revival. A two and one-half story, gabled-hip-roofed brick and brownstone house with ornamental stone banding and marquetry, pinnacles, columned veranda wrapping around the front and an abundance of Romanesque inspired ornament.

110 East Ferry Avenue, William Jackson House (1887)

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

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

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

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

Colonial Revival style. A two and one-half story, hip-roofed, brick, asymmetrical house with twin bay windows and a side-entrance sheltered by a wooden, barrel-vaulted vestibule.

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

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

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

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

246 East Ferry Avenue, Residence (1916)

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

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

Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style. A boxy, two and one half story, high hip-roofed, brick house with a large, bowed, tuscan-columned porch across the roof; a pair of matching oriel windows at the second story separated by a panel of raised brickwork in a geometric design; and tall hip-roofed dormers on the front.

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

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

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

Queen Anne style. A large asymmetrical, two and one-half story, flank-gable-roofed, brick house with a three-story, steeply-gabled, front bay window.

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

Colonial Revival style. An asymmetrical, two and one-half story, high hip-roofed brick house with a bowed front bay window, and arched, recessed, corner entrance porch and broken pedimented dormers.

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

Arts and Crafts style. An asymmetrical, two and one-half story, flank-gabled-roofed, brick and stucco house with a projecting gabled bay, an oriel window and a deep front porch with massive stuccoed piers on the front.

5461 Brush Street, William Lennane House (1913)

Neo-Georgian style. A rectangular, asymmetrical, two and one-half story, flank-gable-roofed, brick house with typical colonial detailing at the entrance, the modillion cornice, the pedimented dormers and the ramped balustrades.

404-414 East Ferry Avenue

Both of these two and one-half story Prairie Vernacular style residential buildings were built in the second decade of the twentieth century as flats. The structure at 404 East Ferry, on the southwest corner of Brush and East Ferry, has a hip roof with dormers and gables edged with verge boards, an Elizabethan characteristic. Similar in grading, height and scale, 414 East Ferry was connected to its neighbor when both were converted into Fairview Sanitarium in the early 1930s for the purpose of treating blacks. A light sand color facing brick frame structure was added at the rear using narrow glass brick windows.

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

Queen Anne style. A two and one-half story house of brick with stone foundations. The engaged hexagonal turret with a conical roof on the east side of the front facade is an especially attractive feature of this house.

420 East Ferry Avenue, Residence (1917)

Built as an investment property with flats, this two and one-half story building with two-story bowed windows and hip roof, has recently undergone rehabilitation.

421 East Ferry Avenue, Herbert Bassett House (1887)

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

429-31 East Ferry Avenue, Corbett House (1891)

Now a multi-unit dwelling, the Corbett House exhibits late Queen Anne and early Colonia Revival features. Two and one-half stories high with a hip roof and shingled gable, the arched and squared voids, brick belt courses, and oriel windows accentuate the otherwise boxy appearance of this house.

440 East Ferry Ave., Residence (1915)

This basic box shape alludes to the Arts & Crafts style, with its intersecting roof gables, overhanging eaves, verge boards, and banded arrangement of windows in the wooden two-story shallow bay.

441-443 East Ferry Ave., Residences (1922)

In the Prairie Vernacular style, this two-story house was constructed as an investment property. It has a basic box form with a hip roof, front dormer, and a two-story porch over the entire front elevation.

448 East Ferry Ave., Residence (1914)

A two-story basic box with two-story bow windows on the east side of front facade and porch projecting from first story on west side of facade. Built to house flats, the building has a hip roof and central dormer and is of the Prairie Vernacular style.

451-59 East Ferry Ave., Residences (1913)

This Arts and Crafts style two-story brick building alludes to the stick style with projecting cross gables over two of the three entries, verge boards and exposed bracing.

Two-story bay windows flank the gable bays on their far sides; a projecting porch extends between the two bays.

Changes were made to the building to accomodate the Slade-Gragg Academy and dormitory in 1946. The three units were internally connected to function as a whole. The school closed in 1952.

5521 Beaubien, Residences (1910)

Bowed windows and crisp lines accentuate this straight forward, small scale, two story brick apartment building designed as three dwelling units.

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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Federal Agency: Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community
Development Block Grant

Project: Art Center Rehabilitation Project, including demolition
of 404 East Ferry Avenue and widening Brush Street

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