

SHED STYLE RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE IN ATHENS, GEORGIA:  
ESTABLISHING HISTORIC CONTEXT AND CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

by

ANDERS ELAINE YOUNT

(Under the Direction of Cari Goetcheus)

ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to place Shed Style residential architecture in a larger historic context, and in doing so, serve as a helpful reference text for future research. This historic context addresses both the history of residential architecture and suburban development in the United States, as well as the architectural history of the Shed Style. This thesis will also provide a list of Character Defining Features, with the intention that they be useful for the future identification and preservation of historic Shed Style resources. Their applicability is demonstrated through a survey of three Case Study neighborhoods located in eastern Athens-Clarke County, which are seen as representative of larger suburban trends occurring nationally. This thesis concludes with an analysis of the survey findings, as well as proposals for future areas of research, and contemplations about the various preservation opportunities and challenges facing Shed Style residential architecture.

INDEX WORDS: Residential Architecture, Suburban Architecture, Modern Architecture, Architectural History, Historic Preservation, Shed Style, 1970s Contemporary, Cedar-Sided Geometric, Rustic Modern

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Overview

Dwellings represent perhaps the most fundamental unit of the built environment, appearing throughout the course of human civilization. Every society has produced its own form of housing, responding to their respective cultural needs, climate conditions, and material resources. Consequently, the history of domestic architecture is a vast and complex area of study. In the United States alone, there are innumerable residential building typologies, styles, and settings that have emerged over time. Each is a unique reflection of the people that created it and represents the sum of many interrelated parts. Studying residential architecture can help inform a larger picture, and, at the same time, the larger picture can also help make sense of a specific, singular residential form. Understanding the historic context of a particular residential form or style is crucial to evaluating its cultural significance, identifying features, and preservation needs.

Few architectural trends have made a more striking impression in the United States than the nationwide phenomenon of suburbanization after the Second World War. American families abandoned urban life en masse, following the dream of homeownership to large tract house developments in the fledgling suburbs. An entirely new cultural landscape emerged, giving way to a multitude of new residential forms and styles. Perhaps the most ubiquitous house type that appeared during this period was the Ranch house, which has become

emblematic of mid-century suburban life in the United States. As these resources have approached and exceeded the 50-year age threshold for consideration as historic resources, the Ranch house has received considerable scholarship and documentation in recent years, such as *The Ranch House in Georgia: Guidelines for Evaluation*, published by New South Associates in 2010. This publication places Georgia's Ranch houses in a larger, national context to better understand their regional significance. *The Ranch House in Georgia* also provides a helpful visual index of different Ranch house subtypes, stylistic variations, and character defining features to help preservationists better identify and evaluate Ranch houses as historic resources.

Despite the dominance of the Ranch house in popular memory and present preservation scholarship, there were several different house types and styles that emerged in American subdivisions contemporaneously during the mid-twentieth century, becoming increasingly common by the end of the 1960s. This includes house types such as the Split-Level, Bi-Level, Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story, and Shed Style. These house types, however, have not received the same degree of scholarship that has been dedicated to the Ranch house in recent years. Many of these house types and styles appeared towards the end of the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, and have either recently passed or will soon pass the 50-year benchmark for preservation. Consequently, there is a pressing need to better understand the historical and cultural significance of these different resources.

In many ways, the Split-Level, Split-Foyer, and Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story house types play on somewhat familiar architectural styles, similar to those present on a variety of Ranch houses. Split-Levels and Split-Foyers can be found with Colonial Revival, Plain or

Contemporary elements. Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story houses are typically some form of revival style, often Colonial Revival or Neoclassical, and occasionally Tudor Revival or Mediterranean. The Shed Style house, on the other hand, presents a pronounced departure from traditional residential aesthetics commonly associated with twentieth century American subdivisions.

Also referred to as Cedar-Sided Geometric or 1970s Contemporary houses, Shed Style houses are typically clad in smooth planes of wooden siding, oriented horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. The roofline is composed of several intersecting shed roof lines, meeting at different slopes and directions to create a dramatic and angular form. The stylistic elements on the exterior are minimal to none, and the walls are punctuated by large windows. The visual impact and stylistic character are instilled in the form of the building. First appearing in the 1960s, Shed Style houses peaked in popularity during the 1970s.

This exceptionally modern residential form did not appear randomly or without precedent. While the Shed Style houses built in subdivisions for the average American consumer were likely selected from plan books or constructed by local developers and contractors, the Shed Style can be traced to several different historical architectural precedents, including high style Modernism, Regionalism, Colonial-era vernacular New England Architecture, and Shingle Style architecture, among others. Understanding the architectural provenance of the Shed Style will help better establish its larger cultural and historical significance.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a helpful reference text concerning the architectural history of the Shed Style house. In doing so, this thesis will seek to identify



important Character Defining Features that will assist in the identification, evaluation, and preservation of Shed Style residential architecture, using the housing stock in Athens-Clarke County as a source for case studies. The primary research question this thesis will seek to answer is: *What is the larger historical context and architectural provenance of the Shed Style residential form that became popular in American subdivisions during the 1970s, and what character defining features are necessary for the identification, evaluation, and long-term preservation of Shed Style houses and their associated subdivisions, both as individual resources and as cultural landscapes, as they approach the fifty-year threshold for consideration as historic resources?*

## **Methodology**

Chapters Two and Three will attempt to establish the larger context for the history of residential subdivisions and Shed Style architecture in the United States. This historic context will be addressed in two parts. Chapter Two will focus on this history of residential architecture and suburban development in the United States, and Chapter Three will discuss the various architectural inputs that led to the eventual emergence of Shed Style architecture in the 1960s.

In Chapter Four, these histories will help inform a list of Character Defining Features, which will be used to conduct surveys of three different Case Study neighborhoods in Athens-Clarke County. Chapter Four will also provide a brief developmental history of Athens-Clarke County, addressing the history of suburbanization in the area and establishing a context for the local emergence of Shed Style architecture. This developmental history, along with cursory windshield level surveys, will be used to identify suitable Case Study neighborhoods that

possess a high concentration of Shed Style buildings. These individual neighborhoods will each receive a brief developmental history and an assessment of existing conditions in addition to the survey.

In Chapter Five, the results of the Case Study neighborhood surveys will be summarized and subject to a detailed analysis. The survey findings and analysis will be used to inform the conclusions and recommendations reached in Chapter Six. Chapter Six will also outline potential areas for future research concerning Shed Style residential architecture.

## **Structure**

The research and findings of this thesis will be presented as follows:

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY OF AMERICAN SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT will address the emergence of the American subdivisions as a unique cultural landscape, created by unique social and technological circumstances. This chapter will also provide a brief overview of several important residential typologies and styles that were popular suburban housing options, beginning in the 1930s and continuing through the late mid-twentieth century.

CHAPTER 3: ANTECEDENTS AND EMERGENCE OF SHED STYLE ARCHITECTURE will provide a detailed and thorough history of Shed Style architecture, profiling the different architectural inputs that contributed to its eventual emergence. This chapter will also profile high style, architect designed examples of the Shed Style, as well as popular versions that were distributed through popular magazines and plan books. The historic research conducted in this chapter will help better inform the Character Defining Features established in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDIES AND APPLICATION will establish Character Defining Features based on the historic research conducted in Chapter Three, in combination with present-day style guides and SHPO resources that address the Shed Style. This chapter will also provide a brief developmental history of Athens-Clarke County, creating a larger historical context for suburbanization in the area during the twentieth century. This developmental history will help aid in the selection of three Case Study neighborhoods. This chapter will provide a brief developmental history and assessment of current conditions for each Case Study neighborhood, concluding in a survey based on the established Character Defining Features.

CHAPTER 5: SURVEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS will provide a detailed analysis and breakdown of the survey findings. These findings will be described in narrative form, as well as in charts and graphics to visually represent the survey findings. This Chapter will conclude with an analysis of the survey findings, assessing the neighborhoods individually and comparatively.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS will synthesize key findings from the historic research conducted in Chapters Two and Three. It will also summarize the Character Defining Features and survey results presented in Chapters Four and Five. Compiling this information, Chapter Six will reassess the original Research Question, and evaluate to what extent it was answered. Chapter Six will also discuss potential areas for future research, as well as preservation challenges and opportunities facing Shed Style residential architecture.

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORY OF AMERICAN SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

#### Genesis of the American Suburb, 1815-1920

There are a number of important and interrelated forces that helped shape suburban growth in the United States. Perhaps the most pivotal agent was the Industrial Revolution, beginning in Great Britain in the early-eighteenth century. Exalting principles of science and reason as the keys to human progress, Enlightenment values fostered a “congenial intellectual environment for scientists and tinkerers,” which set the stage for the Industrial Revolution.<sup>1</sup> Among the most significant technological advancements was the invention of the steam engine, which gradually eliminated dependency on the traditional power sources of wind, water, and horses. Steam powered engines improved mining techniques, feeding the increased demand for coal, a crucial energy source and raw material for the production of iron. New mechanical devices transformed the means of production, particularly in the textile industry, which introduced water and steam powered weaving devices. Large factory buildings emerged to house industrial machinery, becoming beacons of production and employment as urban populations increased and industrial cities expanded.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context*, (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), 128.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew White, “The Industrial Revolution,” British Library, last modified Oct 14, 2009, accessed Feb 10, 2021, <https://www.bl.uk/georgian-britain/articles/the-industrial-revolution#>

By the end of the eighteenth century, industrialization began in earnest in the United States. Aided by the knowledge of British immigrant Samuel Slater, textile mills began appearing in New England, where they had plentiful access to waterways for power and urban centers for labor. Cotton production increased dramatically following Eli Whitney's introduction of the cotton gin in 1793, which helped supply the raw materials for textile mills in the Northeast and in Europe.<sup>3</sup> While the southern states were slow to industrialize, economically dependent on slave labor and large-scale agricultural production, industrialization was quick to take hold in the Northeast, drastically transforming the urban landscape in the process.

According to historian Kenneth T. Jackson in *Crabgrass Frontier*, the pre-industrial world was dominated by a particular urban model, which he refers to as the "walking city." Jackson defines the walking city as one where the "easiest, cheapest, and most common method of getting about was by foot."<sup>4</sup> Jackson notes that even the most populous cities of the pre-industrial world were built at a walkable scale out of practical necessity. Consequently, these cities were dense and congested, with narrow streets and small lot sizes. Land-use functions were interspersed with one another, with residential, commercial, and civic structures all in close proximity. The most affluent residents were typically clustered towards the city center, while poor and working-class residents were often confined to small alleys and side streets or pushed towards the outer boundaries of the city.<sup>5</sup> As Jackson points out, the areas furthest from the city center were often the poorest and most neglected. He noted that,

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<sup>3</sup> Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture*, 128.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1985), 13.

<sup>5</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 14-15.

historically, the suburbs were considered inferior to the city, even as slums, and the word often carried “strong pejorative connotations.”<sup>6</sup>

The Industrial Revolution, however, created a unique set of circumstances that would encourage the large-scale development of suburban areas and reverse any negative cultural associations they carried. Beginning with steam powered ferries and rail in the early nineteenth century, eventually culminating with the personal automobile nearly a century later, improved transportation technologies eliminated the physical constraint of walking distance. According to Jackson, this new spatial mobility led to the undoing of the pre-industrial walking city, enabling an “exodus that would turn cities ‘inside out’,” as those who had the economic means began to sequester themselves away from the increasingly industrial core.<sup>7</sup> What emerged was the phenomenon of suburbanization, which Jackson defines as “the systematic growth of fringe areas at a pace more rapid than that of core cities,” accompanied by a “lifestyle involving a daily commute to jobs in the center.”<sup>8</sup>

One of the earliest means of commuter transit was the steam powered ferry, which enabled the rapid growth of Brooklyn as a suburb of New York City. Beginning in 1814, ferry services were established to shuttle people across the East River between Manhattan and Brooklyn. Largely agricultural up to that point, the introduction of a ferry system transformed Brooklyn into a suburban destination for middle-class families. Noting that there were limited middle-class housing options in Manhattan, Jackson describes how the suburbs in Brooklyn

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<sup>6</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 16.

<sup>7</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 20.

<sup>8</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 13.

provided “pleasant homes, access to Manhattan, and general middle-class ambiance,” which “attracted those who sought respite from the extraordinary bustle and congestion of Gotham.”<sup>9</sup> With a population of less than 5,000 in 1810, Brooklyn grew rapidly over the next several decades, reaching nearly 100,000 residents by 1850.<sup>10</sup> According to Jackson, the various ferry lines carried an estimated 100,000 commuters across the East River every day by 1860, and the daily journey from city to suburb became increasingly commonplace.

The next major transportation innovation was steam powered rail, first implemented domestically by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in 1830. Initially built for long-distance transportation of goods and materials, rail lines quickly determined there was profit to be made in establishing stops between small villages and nearby cities for passenger transit.<sup>11</sup> As rail lines began to expand outward from urban centers, connecting cities to nearby villages, real estate speculation followed. By the mid-nineteenth century, American cities were seeing a considerable increase in the development of commuter suburbs and residential communities along peripheral rail lines. Jackson points to the growth of Westchester County, located north of New York City, as an example of this trend. Between 1850 and 1960, Westchester County experienced a population increase of 75 percent, as rail lines connected the city to new suburban developments that “sprang up in Rye, Tarrytown, and New Rochelle.” Presenting another example of this trend, Jackson notes that by 1859, Philadelphia had “more than forty trains...making commuter stops in the northwestern suburb of Germantown.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 27-28.

<sup>10</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 27.

<sup>11</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places*, (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2002), 16.

<sup>12</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 35-37.

In addition to the purely technical and mechanical advancements that enabled the outward trajectory of suburbanization, there were a number of important cultural and intellectual trends that promoted the desirability of the suburban lifestyle for American homeowners. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, Jackson notes that the average urban household was often also a place of business and production, weakening the distinction between private and public spaces. In the wake of industrialization, the means of production were removed from the home, relocated to mills and factories. Work and commerce were suddenly severed from domestic life, and the expectation was that men would leave the home during the day for work. As a result, popular conceptions of the domestic sphere became increasingly “isolated and feminized,” as women were expected to create a wholesome and nurturing family environment, insulated from the demoralizing forces of the outside world.<sup>13</sup>

As Jackson describes, the “single-family dwelling became the paragon of middle-class housing...the goal to which every decent family aspired.” While this domestic lifestyle was highly idealized and economically unrealistic for poor or working-class families, the cult of domesticity that developed during the nineteenth century placed new value on the private household as a moral institution.<sup>14</sup> One leading proponent of this idea was Catharine Beecher, who wrote and theorized extensively about domestic life in America. Beecher gained national popularity after her 1841 publication *Treatise of Domestic Economy*, which provided a thorough and expansive examination of domestic life and homemaking. Among a myriad of topics, Beecher gives considerable attention to domestic architecture, advocating for

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<sup>13</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 47-49.

<sup>14</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 47-49.



practically designed cottages with traditional stylistic elements, situated in a landscape that emulated an idyllic, rural setting.<sup>15</sup> According to Jackson, Beecher used her “immense influence to popularize the desirability of a bucolic and quiet family life.”<sup>16</sup> Beecher’s work and its popularity speaks to changing cultural conceptions of what American domestic life should be, both in terms of physical setting and moralistic function.

As the patterns of daily life began to change and domestic values shifted in response to industrialization, there were also a number of intellectual and artistic movements that proved especially influential during the course of early suburbanization. Born in Europe during the eighteenth century, Romanticism emerged as an important foil to Enlightenment thought, emphasizing the subjective and spiritual over science and empirical order. In *Landscape Design: A Cultural and Architectural History*, Elizabeth Barlow Rogers describes Romanticism as a “spiritual counterbalance to the scientific rationalism of the Enlightenment,” which often manifested itself physically in the “relationship between landscape and political and intellectual philosophy.”<sup>17</sup> Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a figurehead of the Romantic movement, was highly critical of the ornate, manicured Baroque gardens that were imbued with Renaissance and Enlightenment ideals. In *A History of American Architecture*, Mark Gelernter cites the trope of the “noble savage,” who lived “in the grace of nature...uncorrupted by society” as a central theme in Rousseau’s work. According to Gelernter, Rousseau viewed civilization as an imposition that separated us from the natural world, incumbering man’s

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<sup>15</sup> Catharine Beecher, *A Treatise of Domestic Economy*, (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1845): 273-274, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/21829/21829-h/21829-h.htm>

<sup>16</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 63.

<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, *Landscape Design: A Cultural and Architectural History*, (New York, NY: Abrams, 2001), 233.

natural instincts and intuitions.<sup>18</sup> Many notable contemporaries echoed these sentiments, as did poet William Wordsworth, who was a widely popular and influential Romantic figure. According to Rogers, Wordsworth valued the human experiences of emotion and feeling over dry, intellectual discourse. For Wordsworth, “nature unadorned” was a source of spiritual inspiration, serving as a “powerful moral force, teacher, and guide.”<sup>19</sup>

Thoroughly demonstrated in Rogers’ writing, the intellectual currents of Rousseau and Wordsworth’s work were evident in garden and landscape design practices in Europe, reflected in the work of notable figures such as Lancelot “Capability” Brown, William Gilpin, and Humphry Repton, among others. What they produced was a much more natural, organic treatment of the landscape.<sup>20</sup> Referencing the compositional quality of “boldly projecting outcrops of rock...compositional groupings of trees, and other such attributes,” William Gilpin was the first to refer to landscapes as Picturesque, treating them as two-dimensional scenes that could be manipulated for artistic value. Gilpin’s writings on the Picturesque were widely circulated and proved especially influential to contemporary and future landscape gardeners. As Rogers explains, Gilpin was “not excited by wild nature as such, but rather by nature as seen through the filter of art,” and he was not opposed to manufacturing the rugged and wild features necessary to produce the desired Picturesque quality.<sup>21</sup>

Introducing rolling hills and curving lines, bound by wild, untamed edges, the naturalistic quality of Romantic and Picturesque garden aesthetics gained popular favor in

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<sup>18</sup> Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture*, 101.

<sup>19</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 277-278.

<sup>20</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 233-257.

<sup>21</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 252-253.

England and Europe by the end of the eighteenth century. In reality, however, these seemingly naturalistic scenes were no less intentional or contrived than the formal Baroque gardens Romanticism had rejected, and they were a continued source of debate among intellectuals and professional gardeners.<sup>22</sup> While the merits of Romanticism and the Picturesque aesthetic were contested within intellectual circles, they went on to experience considerable popularity in the United States. Exploring why these trends became popular in the United States, Rogers pays special attention to the work of President Thomas Jefferson, who maintained a decidedly pastoral vision for future generations of Americans. Wary of what he saw as the deleterious and demoralizing effects of industrialized cities he'd seen visiting Europe, Jefferson envisioned a "society of 'genuine virtue' in which men preserved their freedom by turning the immense and potentially fruitful wilderness into independently owned farms." Although the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 provided seemingly boundless land for Jefferson's agrarian vision, Rogers notes that Jefferson's "pastoralism and antiurbanism...were inconsistent with the growth of an independent manufacturing economy in America."<sup>23</sup>

In *Crabgrass Frontier*, Jackson also addresses the intellectual tradition of anti-urbanism in the United States. According to Jackson, "many talented writers testified to the magnetic quality of the American metropolis," celebrating the "economic growth and material progress that urbanization helped make possible." Simultaneously, however, American cities were often portrayed as "a symbol of problems and of evil," marred by suffering and sin. Meanwhile, "American politicians gloried in the frontier tradition," which they proclaimed to be "the

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<sup>22</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 247-256.

<sup>23</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 267-270.

nation's best hope for the future."<sup>24</sup> Jackson and Rogers both point to this peculiar duality in contemporary attitudes towards industrialization in nineteenth century America. While industrial manufacturing afforded citizens new material comforts and economic opportunities, the consequences of industrialization transformed the urban landscape in complex and problematic ways, fueling negative attitudes towards urban life. As urban populations swelled to meet industrial labor demands, the fabric of American cities buckled under the strain. Living conditions becoming increasingly crowded and unsanitary, and issues of pollution and congestion were further exacerbated. New modes of transportation allowed people to escape to fledgling suburbs, giving them the ability to simultaneously reap the financial profits of industrialization while maintaining the supposed moral benefits of an artificial pastoralism.

Speaking to the anti-urban ethos that already existed in the United States, Romanticism and the Picturesque landscape were well-suited to the growing sentiment that the semi-rural, suburban homestead was a moral institution, shielded from the negative influences of industrial civilization. Andrew Jackson Downing was one of the first people to translate the principles of Romanticism and the Picturesque to a specifically suburban, American setting. In 1841, Downing published *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, which gained widespread popularity as an informative and accessible guide to Picturesque landscape design practices. According to Rogers, Downing's *Treatise* established his reputation as a "horticultural authority and tastemaker" for American audiences.<sup>25</sup> In addition to his *Treatise* on Picturesque landscape design, Downing also wrote extensively about domestic architecture,

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<sup>24</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 68-69.

<sup>25</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 328.

most notable in his 1842 *Cottage Residences* and 1850 *The Architecture of Country Houses*.

Throughout his work, Downing advocated for specific house types and styles that he deemed appropriate for a Picturesque setting.<sup>26</sup>

Borrowing heavily from Englishman John Claudius Loudon's 1839 *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture*, Downing presented readers with three main house types: the cottage, farmhouse, and villa. Jackson notes that the cottage and farmhouse were both somewhat utilitarian in nature, intended for middle class homeowners, while the villa was typically more spacious and elaborate, reserved for those who had the means to afford it.<sup>27</sup>

Discussing Downing's work at length in *Architecture and Suburbia*, John Archer notes that Downing paid special consideration to the role of architectural style, in addition to house type. Pointing to Downing's work in *Cottage Residences*, Archer notes that Downing favored the Gothic and Italian revival styles over Classical or Greek designs.<sup>28</sup> In *The Architecture of Country Homes*, Downing describes how the Picturesque finds beauty in "irregularity, and a partial want of proportion and symmetry," whereas "the purest Greek architecture...are at once highly symmetrical and beautiful."<sup>29</sup> According to Downing, the irregular massing and intricate ornamentation of Gothic and Italian revival styles were better suited to the Picturesque

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<sup>26</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 63-65.

<sup>27</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 64.

<sup>28</sup> John Archer, *Architecture and Suburbia: From English Villa to American Dream House, 1690-2000*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 185.

<sup>29</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses; Including Designs for Cottages, Farm-Houses, and Villas*, (New York, NY: D. Appleton & Co., 1850), 221.

aesthetic and rural scenery than the decidedly inorganic symmetry and formality of classical architecture.<sup>30</sup>



Figure 1: Design 148, "Rural Gothic Villa," published in *The Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850; Picture taken from *Architecture and Suburbia*, John Archer, page 191.

Accompanying his work on Picturesque landscape design and domestic architecture, Downing also proposed a model for a "rural village." Archer notes that Downing's use of the word "rural" indicates a suburban residential setting, in that it was "not a genuinely rustic

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<sup>30</sup> Archer, *Architecture and Suburbia*, 185.

environment or one economically dependent on agricultural production."<sup>31</sup> Downing's vision involved a large open, park space in the center of the village, surrounded by large residential lots, each at least one hundred feet wide. The streets were intended to be wide and well landscaped, "bordered with elms or maples," contributing to a rural, Picturesque feeling. Unfortunately, Downing died prematurely in a steam ship accident in 1852, and his suburban village was never realized. However, Archer notes that his rural village idea was significant for "prefiguring so many suburban developments in its low density and elevated clientele."<sup>32</sup>

Shortly after Downing's untimely death, his friend and contemporary Alexander Jackson Davis embarked on the task of helping design Llewellyn Park, a planned Picturesque community in West Orange, New Jersey. Described by Kenneth T. Jackson as "the most prolific architect of his generation," Davis was famous for his 1837 publication *Rural Residences*, which is considered to be the first collection of house plans published in the United States.<sup>33</sup> Like his contemporaries, Davis was well trained in the Romantic and Picturesque aesthetics, and his personal writing reveals a spiritual reverence for nature and the physical world.<sup>34</sup> His professional work demonstrates a preference for the asymmetrical and irregular qualities of revival styles such as Gothic and Italianate, and Davis was critical of domestic architecture that lacked an aesthetic relationship with its site.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Archer, *Architecture and Suburbia*, 178.

<sup>32</sup> Archer, *Architecture and Suburbia*, 179.

<sup>33</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 77.

<sup>34</sup> Richard Guy Wilson, "Idealism and the Origin of the First American Suburb: Llewellyn Park, New Jersey," *The American Art Journal* 11, no. 3 (1979): 79-81.

<sup>35</sup> "Guide to the Alexander Jackson Davis Architectural Drawing Collection 1827-1884," New-York Historical Society Museum & Library, last modified July 27, 2018, accessed Feb 10, 2021, <http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/davis/bioghists.html>

Recruited by wealthy drug salesman Llewellyn S. Haskell, Davis would help design and construct Llewellyn Park over the next several years, creating what is often considered to be the first planned subdivision in the United States, and an important benchmark in the history of suburban development. Although a businessman by profession, Haskell maintained somewhat radical and unconventional beliefs, belonging to a religious sect known as the Perfectionists, who “believed that by correct living they might attain the perfect existence on earth.”<sup>36</sup> An admirer of the natural world, Haskell began purchasing undeveloped land outside of New York City in West Orange, New Jersey, beginning in the early 1850s. Situated in the foothills of Orange Mountains, the land was “heavily wooded, with rolling hills and clear streams,” located just “thirteen rail miles from New York City.”<sup>37</sup> The professional collaboration between Davis and Haskell proved to be successful and productive, and the neighborhood they created marked the advent of a novel residential landscape. Implementing the tenets of the Picturesque aesthetic, Llewellyn Park incorporated curved, undulating roadways that “followed the natural contour of the land,” standing in stark contrast to the rectilinear urban grid in New York City. Lots in the neighborhood were large, averaging over three acres, and the landscape design was left to the decision of the owner, although “every effort was made to harmonize each site with the natural fall and character of the land.” In the center of the community was the Ramble, a natural open space with pedestrian footpaths, essentially functioning as a private park for residents<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 77.

<sup>37</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 77.

<sup>38</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 77-78.





Figure 2: Andrew Jackson Downing, "North Western Part of Llewellyn Park, Orange, NJ," 1859; Image from the Cornell University Library, Digital Collections, RMC2012\_0004, <https://digital.library.cornell.edu/catalog/ss:575484>

Although met with great fanfare and regarded as an exemplar of Picturesque landscape design, Llewellyn Park was not an accessible version of suburban life. Gated off from the general public, Llewellyn Park was an exclusive community for wealthy businessmen and professionals who could afford the cost of real estate and daily commutes to and from the city. To maintain the deliberately rural and residential character of the neighborhood, industry and commerce were strictly forbidden.<sup>39</sup> The economic foundations of Llewellyn Park were firmly rooted in New York City, and the functions of the neighborhood were strictly domestic and recreational. Examining the restricted land uses within Llewellyn Park, John Archer makes light

<sup>39</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 77-78.

of a certain duality in Llewellyn Park, pointing out that while “every aspect of Llewellyn Park seemed to suggest harmony with nature...any productive use of the land was prohibited.”<sup>40</sup> Both Jackson and Archer note that the foundations of Llewellyn Park are rooted in the conceit of a natural, Picturesque environment that, in reality, is entirely staged and deliberately non-functional.

While Llewellyn Park is often regarded as the first planned subdivision, clearly inspired by the Picturesque movement and the work of Andrew Jackson Downing, it was not necessarily unique. Very quickly, Picturesque suburbs began appearing around urban areas across the country. Renowned for their work designing Central Park and Prospect Park, both of which punctuated the urban grid of New York City with idyllic Picturesque landscapes, professional partners Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux designed numerous suburban neighborhoods on the outskirts of major urban centers in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Of the sixteen neighborhoods they designed, Kenneth T. Jackson points to Riverside, a suburb outside of Chicago, as their most influential.<sup>41</sup> Situated on a 1,600 acre site just eleven miles outside of the city, Riverside was positioned on an existing rail line that would allow for an easy commute to and from the city.<sup>42</sup> The design created for Riverside echoes Alexander Jackson Davis’ work in Llewellyn Park and speaks to the influence of Andrew Jackson Downing, incorporating Picturesque features such as curved roadways, designated park spaces, and irregular, naturalistic landscape design schemes.<sup>43</sup> The average lot size was large, and houses

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<sup>40</sup> Archer, *Architecture and Suburbia*, 223.

<sup>41</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 79.

<sup>42</sup> Jane Roy Brown, “Olmsted and Vaux’s Riverside: Pitching In to Preserve a Historic Landscape,” *View*, no. 13 (2013): 23.

<sup>43</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 80.

were required to be set-back from the road by at least 30 feet to ensure a “sense of openness.” Additionally, homeowners were required to maintain their gardens, ensuring that the visual impact of the scenery suggested “prosperity and elegance.”<sup>44</sup>



Figure 3: Olmsted, Vaux & Co., “General Plan of Riverside,” 1869; Image from The Frederick law Olmsted Society of Riverside, <https://www.olmstedsociety.org/resources/maps-of-riverside/>

Commenting on the overall impact and influence of these neighborhoods, Kenneth T. Jackson makes sure to note that Llewellyn Park and Riverside are only two examples of the many “other communities that started out as semiutopian ventures.” What makes them unique is the amount of publicity and attention they received at the time. According to Jackson, these

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<sup>44</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 80.

neighborhoods helped “set the sociological and architectural pattern for hundreds of communities that developed in the twentieth century.” These semi-rural planned subdivisions offered the best of both worlds to those who could afford it, marrying the tranquility of the countryside with the necessity of nearby urban amenities.<sup>45</sup>

For middle- and working-class people, however, the dream of a semi-rural homestead was more than just a train ride away. In fact, it would take a series of technological advancements in transportation and construction technologies to make suburban life a possibility for the average middle- or working-class consumer. In *Crabgrass Frontier*, Kenneth T. Jackson cites two major technological innovations as the primary means by which middle and working-class families were able to migrate outward into the fledgling realm of suburbia. First was the electric streetcar, which drastically improved upon its predecessors, the horsecar and the cable car.<sup>46</sup> Second was the advent of the balloon frame, a new building construction method that relied on machine-made hardware and eliminated the necessity of heavy timber frames, which required specialized tools, skillsets, and experienced craftsmen.<sup>47</sup>

The advent of the electric streetcar took place during a time of immense technological change, all occurring in quick succession in the decades following the Civil War. Jackson points to inventions such as the telephone, the phonograph, the electric light, the fountain pen, and even the zipper as just a few among many that marked the transition from steam to electricity. According to Jackson, however, none of these had as great an impact on the American

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<sup>45</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 84-86.

<sup>46</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 118.

<sup>47</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 125.

landscape than the streetcar.<sup>48</sup> First introduced in 1867, the cable car relied on large steam engines that moved a cable, carrying a trolley car along with it. Operated by a conductor and a lever brake system, the cable car ran at a constant speed and could carry heavy loads, even up steep inclines.<sup>49</sup> Jackson notes that the cable car was a welcome alternative to the existing horsecar system, which relied on the mechanical power of horses. Horsecar passengers were often horrified by the treatment of the horses they relied on, which were routinely overworked and abused, even to the point of death. According to Jackson, approximately 15,000 horses died annually in New York City, and their carcasses were often left in the street where they had fallen. An additional point of frustration was the sheer amount of manure that was deposited on city streets, averaging 10 pounds per horse, per day.<sup>50</sup>

Although a welcome improvement over the cruelty and filth of the horsecar, cable cars were not without their own limitations. Jackson notes that they were expensive to construct and maintain, making it difficult to produce adequate revenue to cover the cost. Additionally, cable cars were not energy efficient, particularly on inclines. They also proved to be difficult to operate and were prone to mechanical failures, which could have disastrous consequences for pedestrians or other vehicles in the path of an oncoming cable car that was unable to engage its braking system.<sup>51</sup> The advent of the electric streetcar offered commuters an alternative that was faster, cleaner, and more affordable. Powered by a motor receiving electrical current, typically from overhead wires, electric streetcars did not require the invasive underground

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<sup>48</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 103.

<sup>49</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 104.

<sup>50</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 106-107.

<sup>51</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 105.

cable systems necessary for cable cars, making them easier and cheaper to build. The trolleys themselves were larger than the average cable car or horsecar, allowing more passengers and thus decreasing the cost per passenger and fare rates.<sup>52</sup>

Gaining popularity by the turn of the century, Jackson describes how “the American people embraced the trolley with extraordinary rapidity and enthusiasm,” noting the dramatic increase from 1,260 miles of electric streetcar lines in 1890 to 30,000 in 1903.<sup>53</sup> Priced at a 5-cent flat rate, electric streetcars effectively dismantled the spatial barriers of urban areas. Average people could afford to explore new parts of the city that had previously been unreachable, and pleasure rides were a common past time on weekends and holidays.<sup>54</sup> Responding to the arrival of these new potential consumers, recreational and leisure ventures became common features at the end of streetcar lines, such as parks, beaches, and resorts. According to Jackson, one of the most significant leisure businesses to emerge along streetcar lines were amusement parks, which began appearing on the edges of major urban areas by the turn of the century, such as the iconic Coney Island in Brooklyn. Jackson describes how the advent of amusement parks represented “physical expressions of the new importance of leisure in the life of urban families,” and “provided an escape to fantasy world that was far removed from the humdrum existence of everyday life.”<sup>55</sup> More than ever before, average middle- and working-class city dwellers had access to affordable transportation networks, granting them unprecedented physical freedom to explore or escape the city.

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<sup>52</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 109.

<sup>53</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 111.

<sup>54</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 112.

<sup>55</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 112.



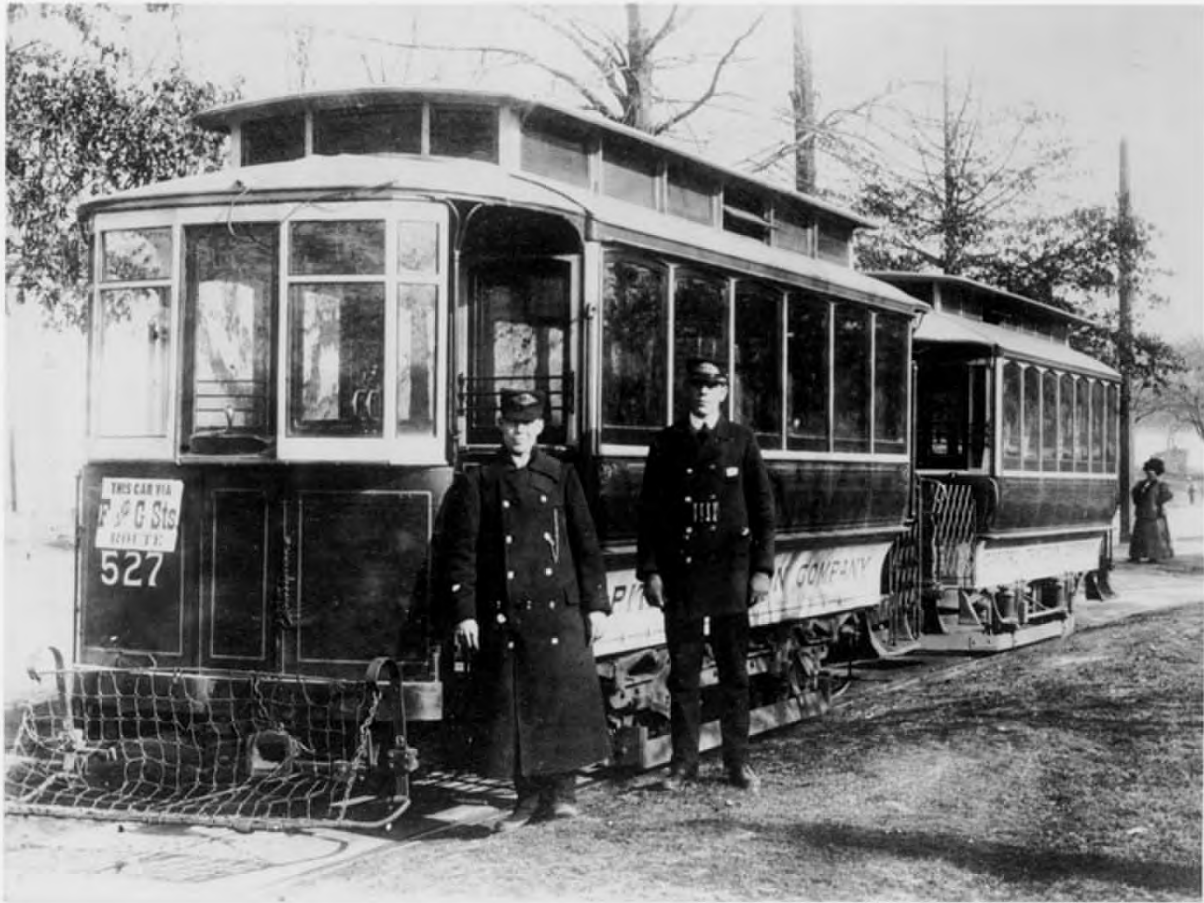


Figure 4: "Motorman and conductor of a Capital Traction Company streetcar," Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division; Image taken from the Smithsonian Institute, National Museum of American History, Behring Center, <https://americanhistory.si.edu/america-on-the-move/streetcar-city>

Making the idea of a daily commute both a practical and financial possibility, the electric streetcar facilitated suburban growth at a much larger scale and made it accessible for a wider swath of American families. According to Jackson, the relationship between electric streetcar lines and residential development followed a similar general pattern. Initially streetcar lines were built to connect smaller, outlying villages with nearby urban centers. Quickly, these outlier villages grew, and new residential development followed. Seeing the potential for profit, land speculators and businessmen bought large tracts of undeveloped farmland along

streetcar lines, creating new residential neighborhoods for would-be commuters.<sup>56</sup> Jackson points to several different factors that encouraged and facilitated suburban growth along streetcar lines. For one, electric streetcars were fast and affordable. Commuters could travel a significant distance in a reasonable amount of time, for a reasonable amount of money. Additionally, the undeveloped agricultural land along streetcar lines was exceptionally cheap. In the late nineteenth century, the United States was in a state of “sustained agricultural depression,” during which the profit margin for American farmers continued to dwindle and the value of their land decreased substantially. For many farmers, especially those on the periphery of settled areas and transportation corridors, the value of their land as real estate exceeded its agricultural profitability, and it made sense to sell.<sup>57</sup> This financial incentive provided suburbia with ample space to grow, and the newly constructed network of electric streetcar lines provided ready access.

The second major technological advancement to facilitate the construction of new, large-scale suburban neighborhoods was the advent of the balloon frame, and later the platform frame. For centuries prior, American builders relied primarily on heavy-timber frame construction methods, which had been inherited from Europe. Heavy-timber framing required large, heavy pieces of lumber to serve as posts and beams, which were then secured by interlocking mortise-and-tenon joints. This construction method was both labor and skill intensive, requiring considerable physical power and specialized craftsmanship.<sup>58</sup> First

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<sup>56</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 119.

<sup>57</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 129.

<sup>58</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 124-125.



introduced in the upper Midwest in the early nineteenth century, the balloon frame eliminated the need for large timber pieces and heavy corner posts, replacing them with slender 2-by-4 wooden posts spaced 16 inches apart, fastened by machine-made nails to create a platform with vertical and horizontal integrity. The balloon frame method required less manpower or technical know-how, and utilized machine-made materials that were cost-effective, uniform, and readily available. A balloon frame structure could be constructed with as few as two people, with limited technical expertise, using only simple hand tools. Ultimately, the balloon frame was faster, easier, and cheaper.<sup>59</sup>

According to Jackson, the confluence of new transportation technologies, affordable land, and streamlined construction methods transformed home building “from a specialized craft into an industry.”<sup>60</sup> People no longer had to rely on architects or skilled craftsmen to design and construct their homes. In addition to architect-produced pattern books, popular magazines, such as the *Ladies’ Home Journal* and *The House Beautiful*, among others, began to feature model home designs, distributing the newly affordable prospect of home ownership nationwide. The influence of these publications quickly superseded traditional pattern books, and they catered their content to middle class audiences. Readers were exposed to a wide variety of modestly priced house types and styles, often accompanied by detailed floor plans and instructions that could be executed by local contractors. While upper class consumers might continue to commission professional architects for their suburban residences, producing high style designs with ornate decorative materials and expensive construction methods,

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<sup>59</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 126-127.

<sup>60</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 127.

middle class consumers could now find attainable renditions of the suburban dream in popular magazines.<sup>61</sup>

Empowered by newfound physical mobility, increased purchasing power, and the prospect of personal choice, middle class homeowners flocked to newly developed streetcar suburbs, relocating to the periphery of urban areas across the United States. The physical form of the streetcar suburbs differed from earlier rail suburbs in significant ways. Unlike the large, Picturesque lots in neighborhoods like Llewellyn Park or Riverside, streetcar suburbs were far more compact. Jackson notes that the average lot in a streetcar suburb was just one-tenth of an acre, which effectively belied the popular image of “rural charm” that the suburbs were supposed to offer. Financially, smaller parcels helped to ensure that land remained affordable enough to attract new homeowners with limited disposable income.<sup>62</sup> Dense neighborhoods were also a physical necessity, as commuters required ease of access to streetcar lines, and in turn, streetcar lines needed high ridership to ensure profitability. While the streetcar effectively eliminated the factor of walkability in the distance between the suburbs and the urban core, walkability remained a limiting factor in the distance between a commuter’s home and their means of transportation.<sup>63</sup> Because of these practical limitations, streetcar suburbs were typically platted in a rectilinear pattern, and homes were concentrated “within a five- or 10-minute walk of the streetcar line.” Unlike exclusive railroad suburbs such as Llewellyn Park, which were characterized by large lots and strict land use regulations that prohibited

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<sup>61</sup> Leland M. Roth and Amanda C. Roth Clark, *American Architecture: A History*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2016), 344.

<sup>62</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 136.

<sup>63</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 136.

commercial activity, the dense streetcar suburbs hosted a wider variety of residential options and more commercial activity. At major streetcar stops and intersections, businesses and public amenities appeared to meet the needs of the surrounding community. For those that couldn't afford a single-family dwelling, multi-story apartment buildings emerged as a more affordable option that also helped to further increase density.<sup>64</sup>

With distinct differences in overall form, streetcar suburbs also deviated from earlier iterations in the new architectural styles that became popular. For a variety of reasons, popular tastes began to shift dramatically by the end of the nineteenth century. Studying middle class tastes and preferences during this time, Lizabeth A. Cohen asserts that around 1885, "popular magazines, home decorations manuals and architectural journals revealed a gradual but dramatic rejection of the cluttered spaces of the Victorian home," instead favoring the aesthetics of the Colonial Revival style and the Arts and Crafts movement.<sup>65</sup> The rising popularity of the Colonial Revival style can be attributed to changing attitudes towards urban life, particularly in reaction to growing immigrant communities in American cities.

Studying the growth of streetcar suburbs around Boston, Sam Bass Warner, Jr. notes that American industry and manufacturing attracted immigrants seeking new economic opportunities, often driven from their home countries due to "famine and hardship."<sup>66</sup> In the midst of the rapid cultural and technological changes wrought by industrialization, the

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<sup>64</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 20.

<sup>65</sup> Lizabeth A. Cohen, "Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915," *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), 263.

<sup>66</sup> Sam Bass Warner, Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston (1870-1900)*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978): 10.

changing demographic composition of urban areas contributed to feelings of “uncertainty and confusion” in the midst of larger social transformations. In reaction to this rapid social change, many Americans turned to nationalism and nativism, “in which the world could be thought of as containing only one’s own group and ‘the others’.” Many immigrant communities were confronted with open hostility, including “job discrimination, ethnic politics...racist stereotypes,” and frequent acts of violence.<sup>67</sup> Sam Bass Warner, Jr. describes how increased industrialization and immigration worked in tandem, feeding a “sentimental, backward-looking, quality,” searching for an “old American tradition — the rural ideal,” which ultimately manifested in the creation of the modern American suburb.<sup>68</sup> According to Lizabeth A. Cohen, these nativist, anti-immigrant sentiments corresponded with the increased popularity of the Colonial Revival aesthetic in American architecture. In particular, the Colonial Revival style was seen as a welcome alternative to Gothic-revival and any Gothic-adjacent European architectural styles, which were viewed as too closely related to Catholicism, and in turn, too closely associated with European immigrants.<sup>69</sup>

The popularity of the Colonial Revival style spoke to an increasingly narrow, Anglo-centric view of American identity, and recreations of colonial-era kitchens became popular public displays, most notably at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition.<sup>70</sup> Motivated by undercurrents of xenophobia and anti-immigrant prejudices, the Colonial Revival aesthetic

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<sup>67</sup> Warner, Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs*, 10.

<sup>68</sup> Warner, Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs*, 11-14.

<sup>69</sup> Cohen, “Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915,” 263-264.

<sup>70</sup> Cohen, “Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915,” 263-264.

created a nostalgia for an American past that was more myth than reality. Studying the popularity of recreational colonial kitchens in depth, Abigail Carroll argues that they were “theatrical spaces” that romanticized America’s colonial past, “emphasizing the spiritual and physical rewards of hard work while hiding the actual labor,” allowing visitors to engage in “the performance of national identity.”<sup>71</sup> Much like the contrived pastoralism of early American suburbs, Carroll notes that colonial kitchens were “deeply paradoxical.” The nostalgia for Colonial era life stood in stark contrast to the realities of industrialization and the rapid modernization of American life.<sup>72</sup> Elizabeth A. Cohen’s study of middle-class consumer preferences during this period also speaks to the preoccupation with a mythologized, colonial-era past, despite the realities of urban industrialization. Middle class homes around the turn of the century were commonly decorated in the Colonial Revival style, but the items themselves were “store-bought mass-produced objects,” made possible by industrialization, and the purchasing power afforded by “an expanded economy and the mechanized means of production.”<sup>73</sup> While the Colonial Revival style may have been popular at this time, fulfilling some nationalistic sentimentality sought out as a way to cope with rapid change and uncertainty, American life at the turn of the century was hardly reminiscent of the Colonial era, and popular, romantic conceptions of the Colonial era past were themselves a conceit.

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<sup>71</sup> Abigail Carroll, “Of Kettles and Cranes: Colonial Revival Kitchens and the Performance of National Identity,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 43, no. 4 (2009): 337.

<sup>72</sup> Carroll, “Of Kettles and Cranes: Colonial Revival Kitchens and the Performance of National Identity,” 343-344.

<sup>73</sup> Cohen, “Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915,” 262-263.



Figure 5: "A New England kitchen. A hundred years ago," ca. 1876; Image from the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006691541/>

In addition to the Colonial Revival, the American Craftsman style became increasingly popular with middle class consumers by the end of the nineteenth century. An extension of the European Arts and Crafts Movement, the Craftsman style was characterized by "natural materials such as wood, shingle and greenery, exposed structural elements...and open, flexible spaces."<sup>74</sup> Inspired by the works of A.W. Pugin and John Ruskin, the English Arts and Crafts Movement originated in the mid-nineteenth century as an aesthetic and philosophical movement that emphasized the importance of authentic materials, traditional workmanship

<sup>74</sup> Cohen, "Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915," 264.

and skilled handcrafts. Promoted by cultural figure William Morris, particularly through his own residence, the Red House, designed and built by architect Phillip Webb in 1859, the English Arts and Crafts Movement quickly found popularity in the United States.<sup>75</sup>

One key proponent of the Arts and Crafts in the United States was Gustav Stickley, a skilled craftsmen and furniture maker from Wisconsin. Following a formative trip to Europe in 1898, Stickley returned to the United States and began publishing *The Craftsman* magazine, which ran from 1901 to 1916. According to Paul Duchscherer, *The Craftsman* became a “nationally prominent mouthpiece for progressive Arts and Crafts ideals” and the design aesthetic. In addition to furniture designs and interior decorative arts, *The Craftsman* also featured the work of different architects designing in the Arts and Crafts style, showcasing “photographs, drawings, and floorplans of houses.”<sup>76</sup> While *The Craftsman* was popular in its own right, larger publications, such as *The Ladies’ Home Journal*, often featured selected works from the magazine and helped circulate the aesthetic to a much larger consumer base.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Paul Duchscherer, *The Bungalow: America’s Arts and Crafts Home*, (New York, NY: Penguin Studio, 1995), 2-7.

<sup>76</sup> Duchscherer, *The Bungalow*, 7-8.

<sup>77</sup> Leland M. Roth and Amanda C. Roth Clark, *American Architecture*, 344.



Figure 6: "Craftsman Shingled Cottage, No. 187," in *The Craftsman*, Vol. 26, May 2, 1914; Image taken from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries, Digitized Collection, <https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/ARRWB573UFDPYK8Q/pages/AQPR5UWMJVXTRO8Y>

According to Lizabeth A. Cohen, the popularity of the Craftsman style in the United States was part of a larger cultural reaction to urbanism and industrialization. Cohen notes that the "Arts and Crafts style satisfied the anti-industrial instincts of many middle-class Americans," creating a warm, rustic domestic reprieve from city life.<sup>78</sup> In reality, however, the popularity and

<sup>78</sup> Cohen, "Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915," 264.



attainability of the Arts and Crafts style was just as paradoxical and contradictory as the historical artifice of the Colonial Revival. While the Arts and Crafts philosophy may have emphasized the importance of traditional craftsmanship, the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States was made affordable and accessible via mechanization and mass production. The industrialization that the Arts and Crafts movement rebuked was the same force that made it a feasible design preference for average American consumers. Although the American Craftsman and Colonial Revival styles became exceptionally popular in the early twentieth century, they were just two among a myriad of other options. The nationwide distribution of architectural patterns books and popular home magazines exposed readers to a wide variety of styles, including Victorian-era Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, Stick, and Shingle, among others. These more traditional styles did not suddenly disappear, and the turn of the century was a period of notable architectural eclecticism.<sup>79</sup>

In addition to the wide variety of architectural styles that were available, there were also a number of important suburban house types that emerged in conjunction with streetcar suburbs. Moving beyond Downing's cottage, farmhouse, and villa paradigm, the physical form and interior plan of American single-family dwellings underwent a significant transformation. Part of this transformation is related to the reformist mentality of the Progressive Era, which roughly corresponded with the development of middle-class streetcar suburbs.<sup>80</sup> A varied and a diverse movement, the Progressive Era encompassed a number of different reform initiatives, including issues such as women's suffrage, prohibition, and anti-corruption efforts.

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<sup>79</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 54.

<sup>80</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 56.

Fundamentally, however, the Progressive Era was a multi-faceted response to a myriad of problems caused by rapid industrialization and urbanization.

Jacob Riis, made famous for his 1890 work, *How the Other Half Lives*, was an influential Progressive era figure who drew attention to the poor living conditions of working-class immigrants in New York City tenements. Despite repeated instances of blatant racism and bigotry in Riis' writing, particularly in reference to Black, Chinese, Jewish, Southern European, and Eastern European peoples, Riis' work brought considerable attention to the plight of the working poor in New York City. Especially alarmed by the rates of overcrowding and unsanitary living conditions, Riis was adamant about the need for housing reform as both a medical and moral imperative, emphasizing the importance of sunlight and fresh air.<sup>81</sup> Confronting similar issues in Chicago, Jane Addams founded the Hull House in 1889, which served as a community resource center for poor immigrant communities living in the west side of the city. Inspired by European settlement houses, the Hull House offered a wide variety of services, such as English language classes, childcare accommodations, and job training. Among many other reform efforts, Addams successfully campaigned for improved urban sanitation systems.<sup>82</sup> In 1910, Addams wrote about installing several trash incinerators near Hull House, noting that inadequate waste management systems in years prior had contributed to illness and death among residents, particularly young children.<sup>83</sup> While Riis and Addams were both focused on

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<sup>81</sup> Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York*, (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1957), 215.

<sup>82</sup> Debra Michals, "Jane Addams (1860-1935)," National Women's History Museum, last modified 2017, accessed Feb 10, 2021, <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/jane-addams>

<sup>83</sup> Jane Addams, "Jane Addams Offers an Example of Municipal Housekeeping in Chicago, 1910," in *Major Problems in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, ed. Leon Fink (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2001), 425.

the living conditions of poor, immigrant communities living in urban tenements, the Progressive era also had an impact on the development of suburban architecture and interior domestic spaces.

According to Mark Gelernter, although the Progressive Movement was itself a product of the middle class, and while middle class families “had personally benefitted economically from the Industrial Revolution,” most people “remained ambivalent towards the cities...seeking the suburbs whenever possible.” For suburban progressives, small, practical dwellings would have been the most appealing, opting for “cozy domestic settings” over “extravagant displays of power and wealth.”<sup>84</sup> Similarly, the National Register Bulletin on Historic Residential Suburbs points to the influence of Progressive idealism in the section on “The Practical Suburban House,” which emerged between 1890 and 1920. More specifically, the Progressive mentality emphasized “simplicity and efficiency,” and “house designs that reflected less hierarchical relationships, technological innovations, and a more informal and relaxed lifestyle.” Important new technologies that emerged during this time were indoor plumbing, hot water systems, and electricity. Because these new technologies increased price, “the reduction of floor space and the use of standardized plans helped offset the rising cost of home construction.”<sup>85</sup>

Discussing the types of interior spaces that emerged in Progressive Era single-family dwellings, Thomas C. Hubka and Judith T. Kenny describe how traditionally, working-class homes were small and utilitarian, consisting of “multi-functional major rooms with little

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<sup>84</sup> Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture*, 211.

<sup>85</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 56.

architectural differentiation between spaces.” By 1900, however, interior floor plans for working-class Americans became increasingly complex, with several different rooms, each with designated and specific uses.<sup>86</sup> Focusing specifically on the changes in working-class households, it would stand to reason that similar transformation had already occurred or were occurring in middle class households as well. According to Hubka and Kenny, there were a series of new, specific room types and domestic amenities that emerged during the Progressive era, which “collectively define a threshold for the acquisition of middle-class housing standards.” This list includes the three-fixture bath, the dining room, new kitchen technologies, access to public utilities and services, the private bedroom, the storage closet, the front porch, and eventually, a garage. The sum of these interior spaces creates something Hubka and Kenny refer to as “The Progressive Era Plan,” which is fundamentally a formulaic “five-to-six-room-with-bath configuration” that was implemented in a number of different single- and multi-family building types in the early twentieth century. While Hubka and Kenny point to a variety of different residential building types that incorporated the “Progressive Era Plan,” they note that the bungalow, commonly agreed upon as the “the era’s most popular house...the picturesque poster-child of single family housing,” was an important manifestation of the very specific and formulaic interior spaces they defined in their research.<sup>87</sup>

Relatively unknown at the turn of the century, bungalows were being constructed in the thousands by 1910. In the span of just a decade, the bungalow would emerge as “the ideal

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<sup>86</sup> Thomas C. Hubka and Judith T. Kenny, “Examining the American Dream: Housing Standards and the Emergence of a National Housing Culture, 1900-1930,” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13, no. 1 (2006): 55.

<sup>87</sup> Thomas C. Hubka and Judith T. Kenny, “Examining the American Dream: Housing Standards and the Emergence of a National Housing Culture, 1900-1930,” 55-59.

suburban home" in the United States.<sup>88</sup> First appearing in the United States in the late nineteenth century, the historical originals of the bungalow are obscure and complex. Explored in depth by Clay Lancaster, the term 'bungalow' originated in India, and is derived from the Bengali word "*bānglā*, meaning a low house with galleries or porches all around." First encountered by the British in the seventeenth century, early descriptions of the bungalow describe a strictly utilitarian structure, made from clay bricks and a low-pitch thatch roof, with an open verandah on all sides. Designed to maximize airflow and provide some degree of climate control in a tropical environment, early bungalows were perfunctory in nature, built strictly out of necessity.<sup>89</sup> According to Lancaster, the first self-described bungalow in England was a vacation home, built at a seaside resort in 1869. Over the next several decades, bungalows became popular options for vacation getaways and country homes, and the term "bungalow" becomes increasingly abstracted from its original meaning.<sup>90</sup> By the time bungalows achieved popularity in the United States, the term had become increasingly vague and malleable, and was "frequently used to designate the small American home from about 1880 to the 1930's," and even occasionally "supplanted the word cottage."<sup>91</sup>

Almost fully detached from the origins of their own nomenclature, bungalows became massively popular in the suburban United States between 1900 and 1930. Discussing the dissemination of bungalows in America in *The Comfortable Home*, Alan Gowans describes how the meaning of the term "bungalow" became increasingly murky, in part because the building

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<sup>88</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 56.

<sup>89</sup> Clay Lancaster, *The American Bungalow: 1880-1930*, (New York, NY: Abbeville Press, 1985), 19.

<sup>90</sup> Lancaster, *The American Bungalow*, 34-39.

<sup>91</sup> Clay Lancaster, "The American Bungalow," *The Art Bulletin* 40, no. 3 (1958): 239.

did not have a strictly associated style, and only had a loosely defined physical form. Although most commonly tied to the Arts & Crafts Movement and the Craftsman style, bungalows were “found with ornament from any and every style—Colonial, Classical, Shingle, Spanish,” and could be found in a variety of different sizes, with many different interior floorplans. While bungalows retained certain key elements of the original form, notably the low-pitched roof, the one to one and a half story height, and the incorporation of a verandah, American bungalows proved to be incredibly flexible otherwise. With a highly variable physical form and expansive stylistic influences, common conceptions of the bungalow house type became increasingly nebulous and imprecise. This abstraction allowed the bungalow to transform into something that was “thought of as ‘American’,” and wholly unique to the residential makeup of the United States.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable Home: North American Suburban Architecture 1890-1930*, (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1986), 75-79.

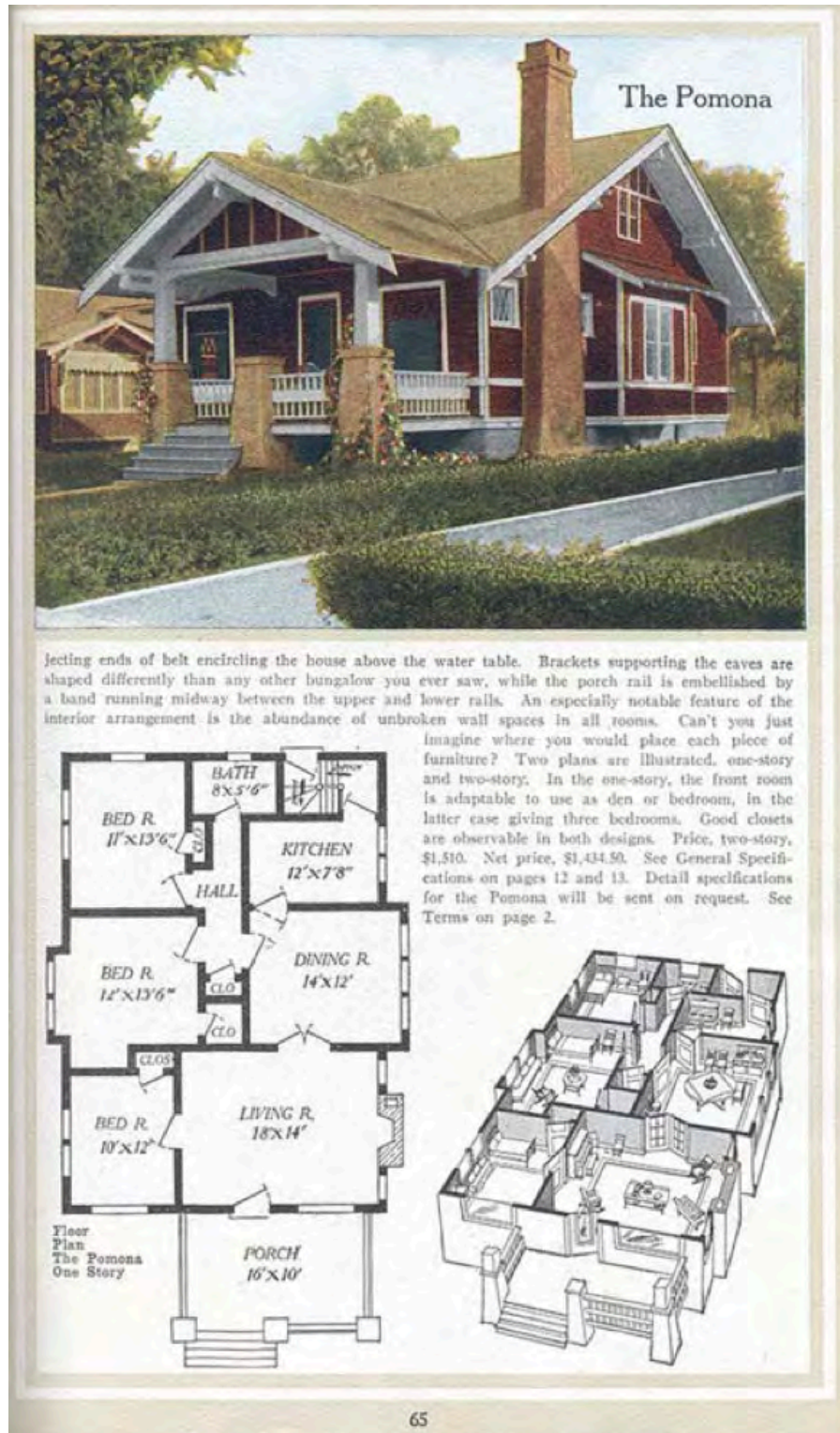


Figure 7: Example of a bungalow floorplan; "The Pomona," Aladdin Homes, The Aladdin Company, No. 29, 1917; Image from Central Michigan University, Clarke Historic Library, Aladdin Company Archive, [https://www.cmich.edu/library/clarke/ResearchResources/Michigan\\_Material\\_Local/Bay\\_City\\_Aladdin\\_Co/Documents/1917\\_annual\\_sales\\_catalog.pdf](https://www.cmich.edu/library/clarke/ResearchResources/Michigan_Material_Local/Bay_City_Aladdin_Co/Documents/1917_annual_sales_catalog.pdf)



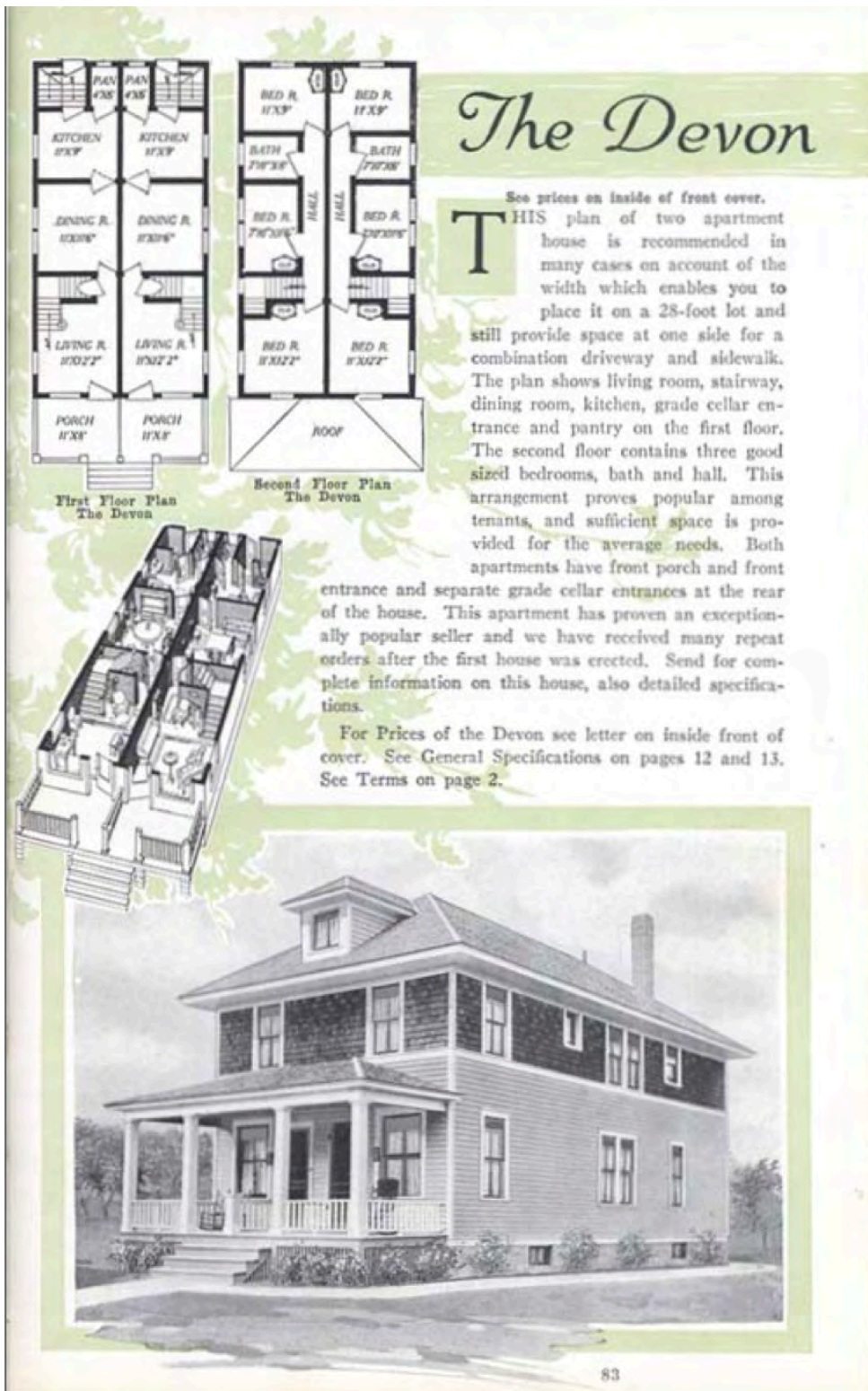


Figure 8: Example of an American foursquare floorplan; "The Devon," Aladdin Homes, The Aladdin Company, No. 30, 1918; Image from Central Michigan University, Clarke Historic Library, Aladdin Company Archive, [https://www.cmich.edu/library/clarke/ResearchResources/Michigan\\_Material\\_Local/Bay\\_City\\_Aladdin\\_Co/Documents/1918\\_annual\\_sales\\_catalog.pdf](https://www.cmich.edu/library/clarke/ResearchResources/Michigan_Material_Local/Bay_City_Aladdin_Co/Documents/1918_annual_sales_catalog.pdf)



In addition to the many different iterations of the American bungalow, the American Foursquare emerged as an important and popular alternative. Like the bungalow, the American Foursquare reached the height of its popularity between 1900 and 1930 and was characterized by a two-story form with an approximately square footprint. Studying the importance of the American Foursquare as a new suburban residential form, Evelyn Montgomery notes that the American Foursquare had a fairly consistent interior layout, and the “core of the square house was a centralized, looped circulation pattern through four main spaces located in the corners.” According to Montgomery, this interior plan was part of the larger transition away from “highly regimented Victorian plans, which emphasized the separations of public and private activities,” and the American Foursquare offered a “more open arrangement” of the interior, with less emphasis on the hierarchy of formal and informal spaces. Like the bungalow, American Foursquare houses could be used as the backdrop for a wide variety of architectural styles, making them adaptable to different consumer tastes.<sup>93</sup>

Both the bungalow and the American Foursquare received considerable advertisement in nationwide periodicals, most notably in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, which, according to Kenneth T. Jackson, was the “most successful magazine not only in the United States but in the world during the first quarter of the twentieth century,” achieving a circulation of over two million by 1919. Edited by an man named Edward Bok, the *Ladies' Home Journal* helped advance Bok's personal conceptions of the ideal home, wherein the woman stayed home and managed the domestic sphere, which harkened back to Catherine Beecher's *Treatise on*

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<sup>93</sup> Evelyn Montgomery, “Beyond the American Foursquare: The Square House in Period Perspective,” *Buildings & Landscapes* 25, no. 2 (2018): 48-49.

*Domestic Life* and the feminization of the domestic sphere. Regressive gender roles aside, Bok tailored the magazine's content to middle-class audiences and made new forms of residential architecture accessible to a wider audience. Insistent on the importance of up-to-date bathroom and kitchen equipment, reflecting changing standards and expectations for domestic life in the United States, Bok began publishing house plans in 1895, ranging in price from \$1,500 to \$5,000. Despite backlash from professional architects who argued the *Ladies' Home Journal* was eating into their potential business, Bok continued to make illustrated house plans and detailed cost estimates available to the masses.<sup>94</sup>

In addition to the featured house plans and cost estimates published in popular magazines, such as the *Ladies' Home Journal* or *Craftsman*, several companies began offering mail-order, prefabricated house kits, which arrived with all the necessary parts in tow. Of the many different companies that existed, Montgomery Ward, Aladdin, and the Sears, Roebuck, and Company, were among the most prolific in their distribution of mail-order houses, and contributed significantly to the widespread construction of bungalows and American Foursquares.<sup>95</sup> In 1908, Sears, Roebuck and Company published its first illustrated home catalogue, the *Book of Modern Homes and Building Plans*, which "featured twenty-two designs priced between \$650 and \$2,500."<sup>96</sup> Studying the success of Sears, Roebuck, and Company, Amanda Cooke and Avi Friedman cite the efficiency as a key component of the pre-fabricated home business' success. According to their research, Sears, Roebuck, and Company used

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<sup>94</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 186.

<sup>95</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 56.

<sup>96</sup> Amanda Cooke and Avi Friedman, "Ahead of Their Time: The Sears Catalogue Prefabricated Houses," *Journal of Design History* 14, no. 1 (2001): 54.

vertical integration as a way to increase profitability and efficiency, and the company “chose to purchase its own factories rather than subcontracting to other manufacturers.” Upon purchase, the building materials were delivered via train, which was “safe and relatively inexpensive.” Customers received a detailed list of the building materials, which were delivered in stages coinciding with the construction process. This process was “designed for maximum flexibility with minimum cost to the company and to the customer.”<sup>97</sup>

Marketed for their ease, efficiency, and low cost, prefabricated houses were also popular for their flexibility, allowing customers to make physical and material edits. According to Cooke and Friedman, the ability “to modify their house plans and materials was very important to the marketing of the houses,” and “made clients feel that they were buying a personalized house, rather than one that was made for just anyone.”<sup>98</sup> Although the component parts were all uniform and mass produced, the houses they created were varied and customizable, allowing potential homeowners a wealth of different options. House types and styles could be mixed and matched, and oftentimes a single house would feature an amalgamation of different stylistic features.<sup>99</sup> While many homeowners still opted to purchase home built by local contractors or developers, the mail-order, prefab housing industry was an important force in the development of suburban American in the early twentieth century, both influencing and reflecting popular consumer tastes in their illustrated magazines.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Amanda Cooke and Avi Friedman, “Ahead of Their Time: The Sears Catalogue Prefabricated Houses,” 54-57.

<sup>98</sup> Amanda Cooke and Avi Friedman, “Ahead of Their Time: The Sears Catalogue Prefabricated Houses,” 59.

<sup>99</sup> Amanda Cooke and Avi Friedman, “Ahead of Their Time: The Sears Catalogue Prefabricated Houses,” 61.

<sup>100</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 56.

## Suburbs After the Automobile, 1920-1960

Although early versions of the personal automobile appear as early as the 1860s, it wasn't until the early twentieth century that they became a practical option for American consumers. For roughly a half-century, personal automobiles represented a small, niche market, and achieved greater popularity in Europe than the United States. Although there were several American automobile manufacturers by the turn of the century, they were largely considered a novelty item and most Americans continued to rely on some form of rail for their daily commutes.<sup>101</sup> By the end of the First World War, however, the personal automobile would become the preferred means of transportation for those who could afford it. In 1908, Henry Ford introduced the Model T, popularly coined 'Tin Lizzy.' An exceptionally simple and rudimentary iteration of the modern automobile, Kenneth T. Jackson notes that Ford did little to revolutionize the technology of the automobile itself. According to Jackson, "Henry Ford did not invent the gasoline-powered engine, and he made no important technological contribution to early automotive technology. He did not even originate the idea of an economical car for the average man."<sup>102</sup>

What made Henry Ford's Model T so revolutionary had little to do with the technology or mechanics of the actual vehicle. Rather, his great contribution was the method of production he implemented to build the Model T. Rather than having a group of workers construct each automobile one by one, piece by piece, Ford organized his workers in an assembly line. In this system, individual workers performed small, specific tasks over and over again, reducing "the

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<sup>101</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 157-158.

<sup>102</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 159-160.

work process to the simplest possible steps.” This assembly method allowed Ford to reduce the cost of the vehicle, while simultaneously increasing the wages of his workers.

Acknowledging that the monotony and tedium of assembly line work was detrimental to employee morale, Ford incentivized workers with higher wages, using increased pay as leverage to ensure loyalty and productivity. Should workers unionize or go on strike, the simple, repetitive nature of assembly line work meant workers were essentially expendable, and the promise of higher wages guaranteed an eager labor pool to draw from.<sup>103</sup>

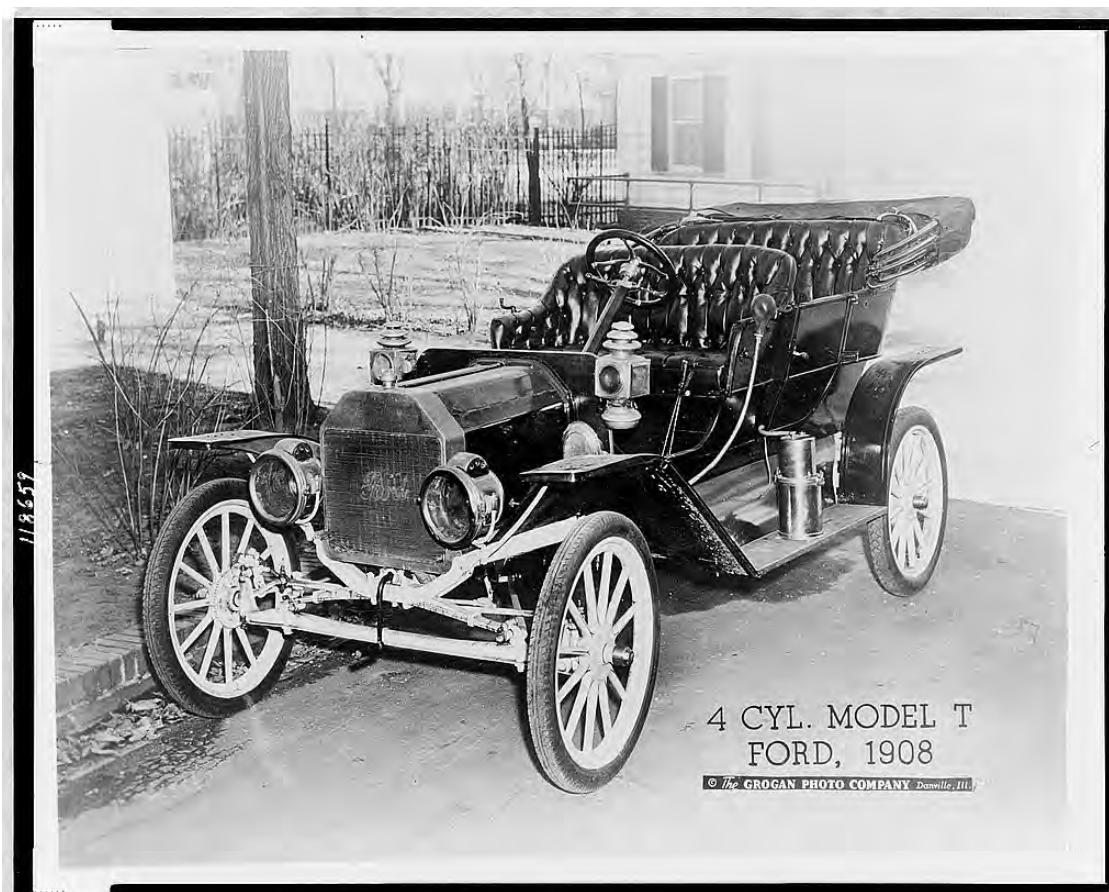


Figure 9: "4 cyl. Model T Ford, 1908;" Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, <https://www.loc.gov/item/97512745/>

<sup>103</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 160-161.

Establishing a power dynamic that encouraged an efficient and obedient work force, higher wages for Ford employees also created a new customer base for Ford vehicles. Intended to be attainable for all Americans, the price of the Model T dropped from \$950 to \$290 by 1924. By the following year, "Ford was turning out nine thousand cars per day, or one every ten seconds," and by 1927, half of all the cars in existence had been manufactured by Ford, and the "ownership of an automobile had reached the point of being an essential part of normal middle-class life."<sup>104</sup> While Ford was not the only major car manufacturer in the United States at the time, Ford's assembly line helped revolutionize the automobile industry and made the prospect of personal car ownership a reality for millions of Americans.

By 1925, there were more than seventeen million cars in use in the United States. This massive increase in private vehicle ownership faced a pressing obstacle in the quality of American roads. According to Jackson, a "coalition" of private interest groups emerged in the 1920s to lobby for public funds in order to improve roadways at the taxpayer's expense, representing "tire manufacturers and dealers, parts suppliers, oil companies, service-station owners, road builders and land developers." These industries successfully pressured elected officials into using tax dollars as funding for roadways. While the personal automobile was a private means of transportation, the creation of car-friendly roadways was treated as a public infrastructure project.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 160-162.

<sup>105</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 163-165.

Electric streetcars, meanwhile, were classified as private businesses rather than as public systems, and they were left vulnerable to the forces of the private market. Inflation increased operating fees, but streetcar companies were repeatedly prevented from increasing the standard 5 cent fare. As companies became less profitable, they could not generate enough surplus funding to adequately maintain or improve existing systems. As private automobiles ate away at their potential riders, Jackson describes how electric streetcars were caught in “a vicious cycle in which aging equipment and reduced services were accompanied by falling ridership.”<sup>106</sup> With many streetcar companies approaching bankruptcy, General Motors created a “subsidiary corporation to buy nearly bankrupt streetcar systems,” replacing trolley cars with busses and slowly dismantling electric streetcar systems across the country over the next 30 years. According to Jackson, popular attitudes were beginning to turn on the electric streetcar, and there was a growing consensus that the “automobile represented the best of modern civilization while the trolley was simply an old-fashioned obstacle to progress.” Met with minimal resistance, America’s most successful form of mass transit was dismantled in favor of the newly introduced private automobile, and there was little debate about the potential for any negative ramifications in the pursuit of an auto-centric lifestyle.<sup>107</sup>

Venturing into the unknown, the transition towards an auto-centric society drastically altered the course of suburbanization and developmental patterns in the United States. Fundamentally, motor vehicles provided greater latitude in the ways that people could move through space. While streetcars represented a massive advancement in transportation

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<sup>106</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 168-170.

<sup>107</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 168-170.

technologies, shattering the barrier between point a and b, they were confined to the predetermined course of their track. Motor vehicles, on the other hand, could theoretically move in any direction, given the terrain was traversable. According to Jackson, the “real significance of the motor vehicle lay in its ability to move laterally and perpendicular to the fixed tracks, and thus open up land for settlement previously regarded as too remote.” The cost of land in these previously unreachable areas was low, allowing for larger lot sizes and lower density developments.<sup>108</sup>

Deviating from the dense, rectilinear streetcar suburbs that developed in the decades prior, post-automobile suburbs took on different developmental patterns due to a variety of factors, including influential new landscape design and planning practices that had become popular in the United States at the time. One especially important force was the legacy of the City Beautiful Movement, which emerged in the United States in the 1890s. Directly inspired by Haussmann’s comprehensive redesign of Paris in the mid-nineteenth century, the City Beautiful Movement was characterized by large-scale, “monumental planning” initiatives that sought to revitalize American cities. One of the first iterations of the City Beautiful Movement in the United States was The World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, held in 1893. Organized by architect Daniel Burnham, the Chicago World’s Fair drew heavily on Beaux Arts neoclassical architecture and formal landscape planning, exemplifying several key features of the City Beautiful Movement. Burnham’s “White City” was widely celebrated, not only for the grandeur of the austere, neoclassical architecture, but also for the comprehensive planning scheme that

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<sup>108</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 181.



implemented strong axial and radial lines, which intersected to create public plazas and consciously designed vistas.<sup>109</sup>



Figure 10: "III. Chicago – Columbian Expo., 1892," photographed by Frances Benjamin Johnston, 1892; Image from the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2021636189/>

The success of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair encouraged the widespread adoption of City Beautiful principles across the United States over the next several decades. Daniel Burnham was commissioned to draft new plans for urban centers across the country, including Chicago, San Francisco, and Cleveland. A host of important architects and planners, Burnham

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<sup>109</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 368.

among them, worked to implement and expand upon Pierre L'Enfant's original plan for Washington D.C., and the so-called McMillan Plan was an important example of the comprehensive planning schemes celebrated by the City Beautiful Movement.<sup>110</sup> While major American urban centers were being transformed, the City Beautiful Movement also impacted the design of residential subdivisions in several important ways. One of the major impacts of the City Beautiful Movement was the push for cohesive designs and coordinated transportation systems, incorporating features like landscaped boulevards, neighborhood parks, and extended utility infrastructures.<sup>111</sup> Beyond the Beaux Arts neoclassicism and formal landscape design principles of the City Beautiful aesthetic, the City Beautiful Movement helped encourage the critical transition towards large-scale municipal and regional planning initiatives in the United States.

According to Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, the turn towards regional planning took hold in the United States in the early twentieth century. She describes how the "generation of visionary reformers that came of age during World War I in America grasped just how profoundly industrialization was transforming society," recognizing that regional planning was "now a necessity." Influenced by the work of Patrick Geddes, the "pioneer of regional-scale urban planning," many American professionals and intellectuals began to consider the city center and the surrounding metropolitan area as a "complex and evolving social organism."<sup>112</sup> Facing a pressing housing shortage after the First World War, this new regional-scale perspective, in

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<sup>110</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 368-369.

<sup>111</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 39.

<sup>112</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 417.

combination with the Progressive Era reform mentality, the impacts of the City Beautiful Movement, and the wealth of land made accessible via the automobile, created an environment open to experimentation with new suburban planning models and housing solutions.<sup>113</sup> One particularly influential form of regional planning was the English Garden City model, a utopian vision proposed by Ebenezer Howard at the turn of the century. Described in detail in his 1902 *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, Howard's vision involved small cities designed in a series of concentric boundary rings, with public buildings, parks, and commercial spaces in the center. The interior rings would host residential spaces, while the outermost rings would be reserved for industry and agriculture. Howard's primary goal was to create unified and cohesive neighborhoods that provided residents with access to fresh air and greenspace, a welcome alternative to overcrowded and congested industrial cities.<sup>114</sup>

An important example of regional planning initiatives and the use of the Garden City model in the United States was the 1928 plan for Radburn, New Jersey. Advertised as a "Town for the Motor Age," Radburn combined the principles of the Garden City model with the realities of the automobile age.<sup>115</sup> Positioned along the Erie Railroad, 16 miles outside of New York City, Radburn was intended to combine the best features of rail access, automotive accommodations, and walkability. Borrowing Olmstead and Vaux's use of above and below grade separation for different circulation systems in Central Park, Radburn was designed to provide safety for walkers and drivers alike. Originally designed to have three interconnected

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<sup>113</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 417.

<sup>114</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 41-42.

<sup>115</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 46.

neighborhoods, Radburn was projected to house approximately 30,000 people once completed. Each of these three neighborhoods was composed of 'superblocks,' in which the houses created a barrier around a large, interior greenspace. Individual houses were positioned around cul-de-sacs, which provided automotive access. The homes then faced the greenspace on the opposite side, which could be navigated by a network of footpaths.<sup>116</sup> Unfortunately, Radburn's industrious plans for the future were cut short by the 1929 stock market crash. By the onset of the Great Depression, only two of the superblocks had been completed, and the surrounding land was foreclosed on. Despite the incomplete legacy of the Radburn plan, the possibility of Garden Cities in the United States remained influential.<sup>117</sup>



Figure 11: "Plan of Northwest & Southwest Residential Districts," Clarence S. Stein and Henry Wright, 1929; Image from *Landscape Design*, Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, page 421

<sup>116</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 47.

<sup>117</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 421.

While new home construction and suburban development was largely put on hold during the early years of the Great Depression, architects and planners continued to experiment with new ideas, particularly regarding the car. According to Kenneth T. Jackson, influential modern architects like Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier regarded the personal car as a “revolutionary liberating force,” freeing people from the crowded confines of the city.<sup>118</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright, in particular, saw decentralization as the future of development in the United States. Recognizing the widespread adoption of personal automobiles and the abundance of undeveloped land, Wright saw the possibility for a “complete redistribution” of the American population. Wright’s vision of the future was an “anti-urban utopia” called Broadacre City, where every family home was situated on its own private acre of land. Unlike the utopian communalism of the Garden City model, Broadacre City was decidedly individualistic and “celebrated individual freedom.” While Broadacre City never manifested physically, Wright’s self-described Usonian vision for the suburban future of the United States was highly influential.<sup>119</sup>

In the wake of the 1929 stock market crash and onset of the Great Depression, construction in the United States came to an immediate halt. According to Kenneth T. Jackson, approximately 883,000 homes were built per year between 1922 and 1929.<sup>120</sup> In the five-year period between 1928 and 1933, however, “the construction of residential property fell by 95 percent.” Meanwhile, foreclosures peaked at nearly 1,000 per day, and “half of all home

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<sup>118</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 175.

<sup>119</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 422.

<sup>120</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 175.

mortgages in the United States were technically in default.” In the face of such dire circumstances, Jackson asserts that the American people were more willing to accept large-scale governmental intervention to help repair the economy than ever before, and popular attitudes towards big government started to “shift in a fundamental way.” Recognizing the crises facing the housing market and the individual homeowners facing foreclosure, President Franklin D. Roosevelt experimented with a number of different solutions as part of the New Deal.<sup>121</sup>

Borrowing from the Garden City model, President Roosevelt established the Greenbelt Town Program under the New Deal. Located in Greenbelt, Maryland, Greenhills, Ohio, and Greendale, Wisconsin, the plans for these new cities were administered by Rexford Tugwell, who is described as an “ardent disciple of Ebenezer Howard.”<sup>122</sup> Quoted by Kenneth T. Jackson, Tugwell’s goal was to create new communities outside of the cities, draw city dwellers out to them, and then demolish the vacated urban slums to create park space. Each Greenbelt town was intended to house 10,000 people and was intended to provide “decent housing and a high level of social and educational services...surrounded by a belt of open land,” hence the name ‘Greenbelt.’ Unfortunately, the Greenbelt Town Program faced considerable political backlash due to high construction costs, and the program was cancelled by 1938.<sup>123</sup>

While the Greenbelt Town Program failed to take hold, there were several important pieces of legislation under the New Deal that helped reinvigorate the housing market in the

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<sup>121</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 191-195.

<sup>122</sup> Rogers, *Landscape Design*, 422.

<sup>123</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 194.

wake of the Great Depression. In 1933, President Roosevelt established the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) to protect home ownership. The HOLC helped refinance mortgages for people facing foreclosure and offered loans to help former residents repurchase homes that had been foreclosed on. According to Jackson, the most important impact of the HOLC was the introduction of long-term mortgages.<sup>124</sup> The widespread use of long-term mortgages was a new phenomenon in the United States, and in the nineteenth century, "families were expected to purchase home outright," and there was considerable stigma surrounding loans. After the First World War, mortgages became more common, but they were typically five to ten years in length. Under the HOLC, the average rate of a home mortgage was extended to an average of twenty years.<sup>125</sup>

The next crucial piece of legislation aimed at repairing the housing market was the National Housing Act of 1934, which established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). The FHA provided federal loan insurance in order to help potential homeowners acquire larger loans, decreasing the amount of funding necessary for the initial down payment to less than 10% of the loan total. The FHA also extended mortgages to thirty years and put a cap on interest rates.<sup>126</sup> In addition to decreasing the amount of on-hand financing necessary for homeownership, the FHA also established important development standards for residential developments. In addition to seven minimum standards, which included factors such as adequate demand, suitable topography and environment, access to transportation networks,

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<sup>124</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 196.

<sup>125</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 196-197.

<sup>126</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 204-205.



installation of public utilities, and compliance with local zoning codes, the FHA also established a series of “desirable standards” for subdivision designs. These so-called “desirable standards” borrowed heavily from past precedents, including Garden Cities, the City Beautiful Movement, and the Picturesque design of railroad suburbs in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>127</sup> These design guidelines encouraged the “elimination of sharp corners and dangerous intersections,” and the construction of “long blocks that eliminated unnecessary streets.” The incorporation of parks and playgrounds was considered desirable, as were “features that add to the privacy and attractiveness of the community.” Within the FHA, it was understood that curvilinear street patterns offered numerous advantages, and “provided greater privacy and visual interest; could be adapted to greater variations in topography...and, by eliminating the need for dangerous four-way intersections, provided a safer environment.”<sup>128</sup> These FHA subdivision standards helped establish the curvilinear subdivision plan as the new standard for residential developments moving forward.

The FHA also established important building standards for individual dwellings. In 1936, the FHA published five basic house types in *Planning Small Houses*. Intended to be efficient and affordable, these house plans eliminated “nonessential spaces...and unnecessary items that would add to their cost.” Kitchens were equipped with modern appliances “to increase domestic efficiency.” By 1940, the FHA’s house plans had greater flexibility, and could be found in a variety of different sizes, layouts, and materials. Greater attention was placed on the setting of the house, taking into considerations factors such as “orientation to sunlight,

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<sup>127</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 48-51.

<sup>128</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 48-51.



prevailing winds, and view.” FHA design principles encouraged houses with similar shapes and styles to be clustered around cul-de-sacs, using “varying elements of exteriors design in ways that avoided repetition and gave the neighborhood an interesting and pleasing character.”<sup>129</sup>

New Deal programs like the Home Owners Loan Corporation and the Federal Housing Administration helped the housing market recover substantially after the onset of the Great Depression. Towards the end of the decade, housing sales began to increase substantially, climbing from 93,000 in 1933 to 530,000 in 1940.<sup>130</sup> The FHA, in particular, helped establish the foundations for the so-called “tract” housing that would become standard after the Second World War. After the onset of the war, the United States government extended existing New Deal housing programs to address their present needs. In 1941, the National Housing Act was expanded to include Defense Housing Insurance, which provided incentives for workers to migrate to areas that were “designated critical for defense and defense purposes.” The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly referred to as the GI Bill, provided returning veterans with “guarantees on home mortgages,” and also permitted them to use their “benefits in place of cash...eliminating the down payment on a new house altogether.”<sup>131</sup> During and after the war, marriage and birth rates began to increase considerably. Jackson notes that benefit packages for the wives and children of enlisted men offered a practical financial incentive to get married and start a family. Meanwhile, the emotional anxiety and mortal uncertainty of war inspired many to have “good-bye babies” before deployment.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 61-62.

<sup>130</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 205.

<sup>131</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 31.

<sup>132</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 232.

After the war, returning servicemen and their growing families faced a shortage of new housing stock to accommodate them. Approximately six million servicemen returned home to their families, bringing with them the financial security and the backing of federal programs needed to purchase single-family homes. These factors contributed to the “largest building boom in the Nation’s history, almost all of it concentrated in the suburbs.”<sup>133</sup> For the housing industry in the United States, the 1940s and 1950s were a period of unprecedented growth, especially for large companies. According to Kenneth T. Jackson, residential construction in the United States had traditionally been “highly fragmented in comparison with other industries...dominated by small and poorly organized house builders.” The massive demand for housing after the war helped consolidate the industry, and by 1949, “70 percent of new homes were constructed by only 10 percent of the firms.” Meanwhile, by 1955, “subdivisions accounted for more than three-quarters of all new housing in metropolitan areas.”<sup>134</sup> By the mid-twentieth century, the housing industry in the United States was transforming to meet the needs of the post-war economy. Large-scale subdivisions became the standard model for residential life, and large building firms emerged to construct them.

One of the most influential building firms to emerge in the post-war era was Levitt and Sons, family-owned business run by Abraham Levitt and his two sons. Kenneth T. Jackson points to them as the “family that had the greatest impact on postwar housing in the United States...who ultimately built 140,000 houses and turned a cottage industry into a major manufacturing process.” Levitt and Sons were able to perfect their rapid-pace construction

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<sup>133</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 65.

<sup>134</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 233.

methods while being contracted by the government to construct thousands of war worker's homes during the war. Working in Norfolk, Virginia, Levitt and Sons built 2,350 houses in the early 1940s, where they "learned how to lay dozens of concrete foundations in a single day and to preassemble uniform walls and roofs." Fine-tuning their construction techniques while working on government contracts, Levitt and Sons pivoted their streamlined methods to the private housing market. Acquiring 4,000 acres of former farmland on Long Island in 1946, Levitt and Sons were about to embark on "the biggest private housing project in American history."<sup>135</sup>

Originally called Island Trees, the subdivision Levitt and Sons planned to build would become one of the most influential residential models produced in the post-war period. Renamed Levittown, a name now permanently associated with suburbia, Levitt and Son's new subdivision would eventually contain over 17,500 houses and 82,000 residents.<sup>136</sup> The key to Levittown's success was the streamlined construction process Levitt and Sons had fine-tuned on earlier projects. Describing their construction methods in detail, Kenneth T. Jackson notes that Levitt and Sons relied heavily on the benefits of vertical integration and assembly line-like processes. Once the land was cleared, construction materials were dropped off in 60-foot intervals, and "the construction process itself was divided into twenty-seven distinct steps."<sup>137</sup> Individual crews were trained to do one of these twenty-seven steps, moving from house to house in quick succession. The Levitt and Sons firm also preassembled all the component parts

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<sup>135</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 234.

<sup>136</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 65.

<sup>137</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 234.

as much as they could, and the firm “made its own concrete, grew its own timber, and cut its own lumber.” At the height of their speed, “more than thirty houses went up each day” in Levittown.<sup>138</sup>



Figure 12: “Early Capes,” Thomas Airviews, ca. 1947, Levittown Public Library, Levittown History Collection; Image form New York Heritage Digital Collections, <https://nyheritage.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15281coll37/id/7/rec/49>

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<sup>138</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 234-235.



**Type 1**  
**"Lookout"**



**Type 2**  
**"Mariner"**



**Type 3**  
**"Point Pleasant"**



**Type 4**  
**"Green Hills"**



**Type 5**  
**"Snug Harbor"**

*Cape Cods*

*Levittown, New York*

*1947-1948*

Figure 13: "Cape Cod Model Names," Levitt Homes, 1947-1948; Levittown Public Library, Levittown History Collection; Image from New York Heritage Digital Collections, <https://nyheritage.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15281coll37/id/32/rec/21>

The houses in Levittown were small, uniform Cape Cod cottages that averaged roughly 750 square feet of living space, situated on 60-by-100-foot lots. The standard model had two bedrooms, “with easy expansion possibilities upstairs in the unfinished attic or outward into the yard.” Intended to be economical, Jackson describes these small Cape Cod cottages as “down-to-earth and unpretentious,” offering “the best shelter at the least price.” According to Jackson, Levittown’s Cape Cods were “as basic to post World War II suburban development as the Model T had been to the automobile.” The overall design of the subdivision borrowed from the earlier Federal Housing Administration guidelines, adopting curvilinear street patterns, planting trees to create a more park-like appearance, and also incorporating important community facilities, such as park spaces, sport fields, and swimming pools.<sup>139</sup> Although Levittown faced considerable backlash from professional architects and planners, who rejected the repetitive “cookie-cutter” aesthetic, Levittown was a “huge popular success where it counted—in the marketplace.”<sup>140</sup>

Capitalizing on the popularity of the Levittown, Levitt and Sons built two more iterations of the neighborhood, first in the 1950s and again in the 1960s. Recognizing the success of Levitt and Sons’ model, building firms adopted similar methods in metropolitan areas across the country. Over the next two decades, Kenneth T. Jackson describes how residential suburban developments typically shared five common characteristics. First was “peripheral location,” and second was “their relatively low density.” Residential suburbs needed considerable space to situate single-family dwellings in a way that was appealing to potential

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<sup>139</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 235-236.

<sup>140</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 236.

customers. Large subdivisions and sizeable lots were only possible on the outskirts of developed areas. The third common characteristic of “the postwar suburbs was their architectural similarity.” In order to keep costs low and streamline production, most builders offered somewhere around “a half-dozen basic house plans,” and suburban developments often displayed an obvious level of “monotony and repetition.” The fourth key feature of the post-war suburbs was that “easy availability and its reduced suggestion of wealth.” Taking into consideration the reduced price of construction and the various government assistance programs that encourage homeownership, even for average Americans “it was quite simply cheaper to buy new housing in the suburbs” than rent in the city. The fifth and final key feature outlined by Jackson is the “economic and racial homogeneity” of the post-war suburbs.<sup>141</sup>

Under the New Deal, the HOLC and the FHA both exercised discriminatory practices against racial, ethnic, and religious minorities, particularly the black community. Financial assistance from the government was not extended to black families the way it was extended to white families during the Great Depression, and black people faced much greater obstacles in the pursuit of single-family home ownership. In the 1930s and 1940s, the FHA went so far as to encourage subdivisions to issue neighborhood covenants that limited the racial or ethnic diversity of the neighborhood, effectively excluding people who weren’t white.<sup>142</sup> FHA policies compounded the problems facing racial and ethnic communities by refusing to extend financing to areas with higher non-white populations. Houses stood vacant due to lack of financing, which in turn devalued the inner-city homes of black and brown people who had

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<sup>141</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 238-241.

<sup>142</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 207-208.

been excluded from access to the suburbs. In effect, a vast majority of post-war suburban developments were racially segregated, and non-white communities were relegated to older, inner-city neighborhoods that the government was increasingly inclined to disregard as 'slums.'<sup>143</sup> According to Jackson, by 1960, "not a single one of the Long Island Levittown's 82,000 residents was black," and the Levitt and Sons firm "publicly and officially refused to sell to blacks for two decades after the war." Zoning code was used to further ensure the racial and economic homogeneity of the suburbs in the 1950s and 60s, as single-family zoning codes often prohibited "apartments, factories, and 'blight'," which Jackson points to as euphemisms for minorities groups and lower-income people.<sup>144</sup>

Due to the unfortunate consequences of racism and segregation in the United States, post-war suburbanization was a phenomenon experienced primarily by white Americans. Despite the fact that large segments of the general population were barred access due to prejudice, the notion of suburban life proved to be a compelling and pervasive cultural force in the United States, especially after the Second World War. In addition to the many financial incentives that helped enable single-family homeownership after the war, there were a number of other concurrent factors that helped solidify the cultural dominance of suburban life in the United States by mid-twentieth century and give post-war suburbs their distinctive physical characteristics. A key change after the Second World War was the expansion of roadway systems and automotive infrastructure in the United States, as well as rapidly increasing rates of car ownership among average Americans.

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<sup>143</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 213-214.

<sup>144</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 241-242.



In 1939, the New York World's Fair displayed "Futurama," a massive, interactive model of what the American landscape might look like in twenty-five years. Designed by Norman Bel Geddes and funded by General Motors, "Futurama" was a detailed model displaying a complex, multi-lane roadway system of "superhighways," with features such as "elevated freeways" and "expressway traffic moving at 100 miles per hour." Visited by over five million people in total, "Futurama" offered viewers a glimpse into what might lay ahead. According to Kenneth T. Jackson, "the promise of a national system of impressive roadways attracted a diverse group of lobbyists," including material industries such as oil, rubber and asphalt, as well as car manufactures, car dealers, and construction industries.<sup>145</sup> Bolstered by the Cold War strategy of "Defense through Decentralization," which theorized that more people would survive a nuclear attack if the nation's population wasn't concentrated in large cities, the nation was fully engaged in the creation of a national highway and interstate system by the 1950s. One of the most critical pieces of legislation, the Interstate Highway Act, was passed in 1956, under the Eisenhower administration. This laid the groundwork for a "41,000-mile (eventually expanded to 42,500-mile) system, with the federal government paying for 90 percent of the cost." This massive expansion of road networks further encouraged the trend of decentralization and allowed for increased suburban development, even further out into the periphery. Lamented by Jackson, the Interstate Highway Act "helped continue the downward spiral of public transportation and virtually guaranteed that future urban growth would perpetuate a centerless sprawl."<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 248.

<sup>146</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 248-249.

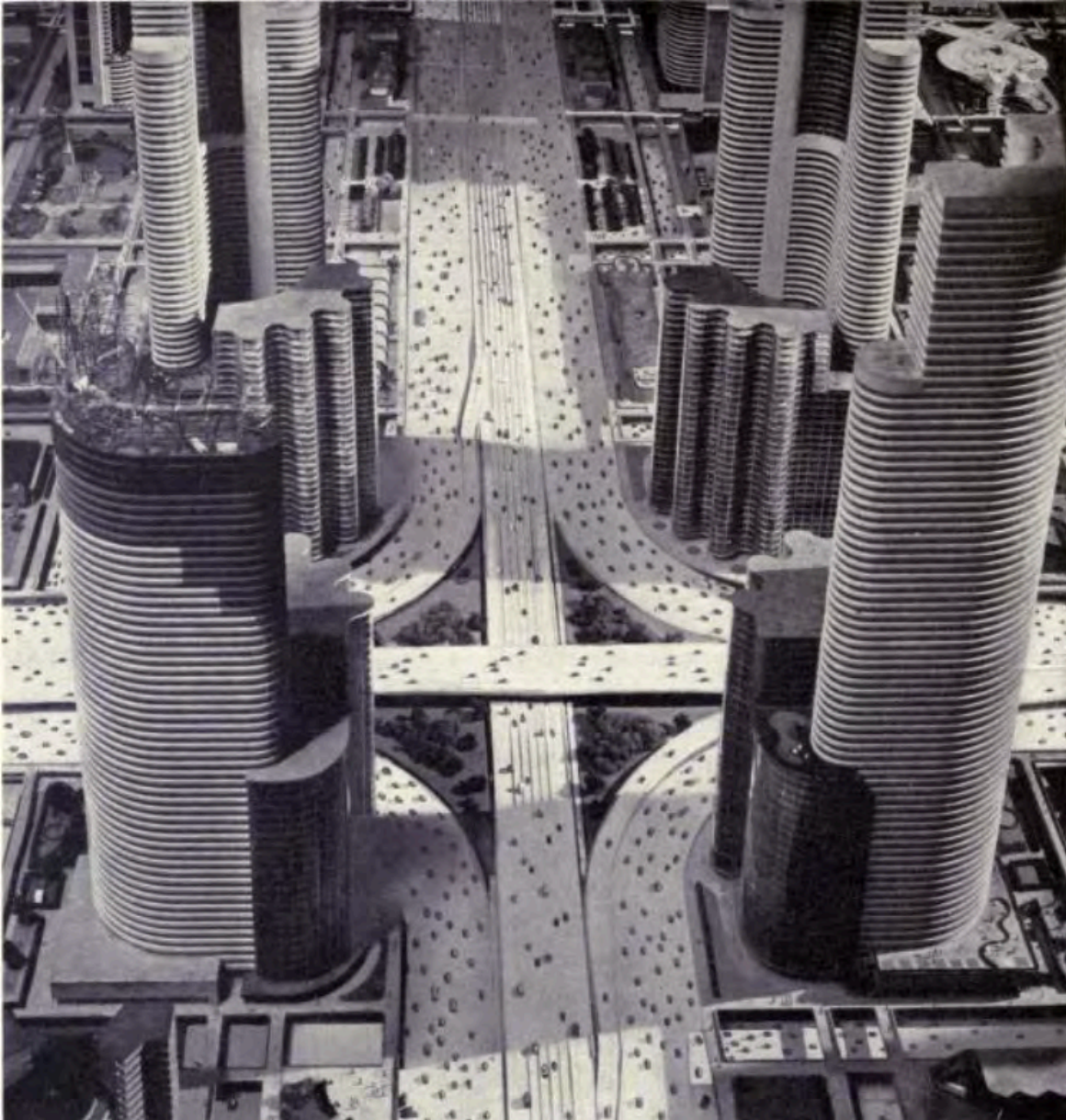


Figure 14: "Futura Photo" by Richard Garrison, *Magic Motorways*, Norman Bel Geddes, page 240; Image from <https://archive.org/details/magicmotorways00geddrich/page/240/mode/2up?view=theater>

As highway networks spread outwards across the country, the residential subdivisions that followed were typically "large, self-contained" developments, and residents were "dependent on the automobile for virtually all aspects of daily living."<sup>147</sup> By the late 1950s,

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<sup>147</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 24.

nearly 60 percent of American families owned a car, and the gap would narrow quickly over the coming years.<sup>148</sup> While there were some skeptics, the transition towards an auto-centric lifestyle was widely celebrated at the time. Aside from the car, Americans were exposed to a number of new technologies after the Second World War. By the late 1960s, nearly 90 percent of American families had a television, and the Cold War's space race was moving ahead at full speed. These new technologies were widely heralded as successes of the Modern Era, and there was a widespread assumption that they would improve the conditions of everyday life.<sup>149</sup> This acceptance of modernity, technology, and the explicit reliance on the personal automobile created significant changes in the types of residential architecture that became popular in the 1950s and 60s. In particular, the Ranch house would emerge as one of the most ubiquitous house types in American history, emblematic of mid-century suburbanization and domestic architecture in the United States.

By the mid-twentieth century, the Ranch house had fully supplanted the bungalow and the cape cod cottage as the most prevalent and familiar residential form in the United States. First gaining traction in California during the early twentieth century, the American Ranch was an amalgamation of different vernacular and high-style architectural influences, pulling inspiration from diverse, even disparate, sources. The term 'ranch' is descended "from the Spanish word *rancho*, or small farm," and the origins of midcentury ranch house are inextricably linked to the history of the American West.<sup>150</sup> After the War of Mexican

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<sup>148</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 247.

<sup>149</sup> Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture*, 263.

<sup>150</sup> Thomas C. Hubka, "The American Ranch House: Traditional Design Method in Modern Popular Culture," *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 7, no. 1 (1995): 34.

Independence in 1821, control of California was transferred to Mexico from Spain, ending nearly three centuries of Spanish colonial occupation. The architecture in California reflected both Spanish and Mexican vernacular architectural traditions, incorporating different forms and materials. Spanish colonial architecture was structured around the hacienda, a building that was typically “one-story in height and featured inward-facing orientations,” with the rooms wrapping around an interior courtyard. Interior spaces opened to the courtyard under a “corredor,” a covered walkway that also served as porch space.<sup>151</sup> In California, this form was adapted to suit the availability of local materials, borrowing the adobe brick walls and clay roof tiles that were characteristic of Mexican vernacular architecture in the southwest.<sup>152</sup>

When California became a territory of the United States following the Mexican-American War in 1848, many Americans were exposed to Spanish and Mexican architecture for the first time. California’s adobe ranchos gained considerable popularity, and “their lack of classical symmetry and exotic architectural features...evoked a carefree and romantic image of the state’s Spanish and Mexican past.” Captivated by this new landscape and its foreign architecture, many American architects began experimenting with traditional rancho form around the turn of the century. An early example of this was the Bandini House, built by architects Greene and Greene in 1903. Mirroring the California ranchos, the Bandini House was U-shaped, and the building was wrapped around an interior courtyard with a covered ‘corredor.’ Greene and Greene wrapped the building in board-and-batten siding, used

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<sup>151</sup> Patrick Sullivan, Mary Beth Reed, and Tracey Fedor, *The Ranch House in Georgia: Guidelines for Evaluation* (Stone Mountain, GA: New South Associates, 2010), 5.

<sup>152</sup> Patrick Sullivan, Mary Beth Reed, and Tracey Fedor, *The Ranch House in Georgia*, 5.

irregular stone to construct the chimney, and supported the courtyard corredor with rough-cut timber, which all worked to create the “rustic and unpretentious character of the property.”<sup>153</sup>

A key proponent of the early American Ranch was Cliff May, who designed numerous ranch houses around San Diego and Los Angeles beginning in the 1930s. A native Californian, May had a lifetime of exposure to the Spanish and Mexican architecture of his home state, and while he was never trained as a professional architect, his house designs were crucial to the growing popularity of the American ranch. Although working with a traditional residential form, May embraced certain aspects of modernity through his work. While his early designs show clear nods to traditional ornamentation and rustic materials, his later designs employ more minimalistic interior spaces, with less overt stylistic reference to Mexican or Spanish Colonial architecture. Another important innovation of May’s work was the incorporation of the garage into his floorplan and overall design, “showing his recognition of the evolving relationship between the Ranch House and the automobile.”<sup>154</sup> Discussing May’s legacy in California John Mack Faragher notes that “Although May himself did not participate in building tract ranch houses—preferring to design site-specific houses for wealthy clients—he licensed his designs to large-scale developers for reproduction by the thousands.” He also released a collection of house designs called *Western Ranch Houses* in 1946, which was published by *Sunset* magazine, “one of the most influential builder’s books of the postwar era.”<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Patrick Sullivan, Mary Beth Reed, and Tracey Fedor, *The Ranch House in Georgia*, 7-8.

<sup>154</sup> Patrick Sullivan, Mary Beth Reed, and Tracey Fedor, *The Ranch House in Georgia*, 10-11.

<sup>155</sup> John Mack Faragher, “Bungalow and Ranch House: The Architectural Backwash of California,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2001): 170-171.



Figure 15: "Cliff May, residence [Cliff May #3]," photograph by Maynard L. Parker, ca. 1943; Image from The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Garden, Digital Library, <https://hdl.huntington.org/digital/collection/p15150coll5/id/8120>

By the late 1940s, the new California ranch house had achieved a new level of national recognition and popularity. Faragher cites a 1946 survey conducted by *Better Home and Gardens*, which found that "the typical American wanted more space and favored 'the low, rambling style called Ranch House which has come out of the Southwest'."<sup>156</sup> By 1949, even Levitt and Sons had begun modifying their standard Cape Cod plans to emulate the long, low profile of the western ranch.<sup>157</sup> In general, ranch houses across the United States shared several

<sup>156</sup> Faragher, "Bungalow and Ranch House: The Architectural Backwash of California," 171.

<sup>157</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 66.

key characteristics in terms of their overall form, regardless of their exterior architectural style. One of their principles features was a long, low one-story main block, with a distinctly horizontal, rectangular massing. Interior plans could vary considerably, but typically the living room, kitchen, and dining room were all clustered together on one side of the structure, with a generally open floor plan. On the opposite side of the house, private bedrooms were clustered together, accessible via a long, narrow hallway. Another important feature was the incorporation of the carport or garage, which became a standard element of ranch house facades.<sup>158</sup>

In terms of architectural style, ranch houses also varied significantly. While the traditional Spanish Colonial style remained popular, there was considerable experimentation with architectural style and the ranch house. One important style that emerged alongside the ranch house was the Contemporary style, which adopted many of the design principles of high style Modernism and applied them to the standard American ranch. The Contemporary style ranch was absent any references to historic architecture or decorative elements, instead focusing on clean lines, strong geometric forms, and minimalistic design.<sup>159</sup> In addition to the Spanish Colonial and the Contemporary styles, ranch houses could also be found with Colonial Revival and classical architectural features, appealing to more traditional tastes. This stylistic malleability meant the basic ranch house form could be tailored to suit many different individual preferences. While the ranch was not the only house type being built in residential

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<sup>158</sup> Patrick Sullivan, Mary Beth Reed, and Tracey Fedor, *The Ranch House in Georgia*, 40.

<sup>159</sup> Patrick Sullivan, Mary Beth Reed, and Tracey Fedor, *The Ranch House in Georgia*, 17.

suburbs during this time, the ranch house prevailed as the dominant type from the 1940s and on through the 1960s.<sup>160</sup>

Alongside the Ranch house and large-scale tract housing, there were new landscape practices that gave residential subdivisions specific qualities. Suburban landscapes were largely ubiquitous. Houses typically had a front lawn, a space viewable by the public, and back yard, which was a private space. The front lawn was typically grass, with small landscape plantings on the periphery, perhaps interspersed with the occasional tree. On one side, there would be a driveway that led to the carport or garage, as well as a small pathway that led to the main entrance. Discussing the history of the Ranch house landscape in detail, landscape architect and historian Catherine Howett notes that elements of these landscapes “represented the diffusion of California style eastward to other parts of the country.”<sup>161</sup> She points to the popularity of the juniper tree as a good example of the widespread cultural impact of the California Ranch. According to Howett, the juniper tree was “apparently among the most popular of the many species of Asian evergreens hybridized and propagated by California nurseries after the war; then marketed nationally as ‘adaptable to virtually every North American climate’.” Howett goes on to cite Russell Lynes’ thoughts on Ranch houses and subdivisions, describing the feeling that “these postwar suburbs all looked alike, no matter what part of the country you were in.” According to Howett, Lynes “blamed this marked erosion of regional differences in architectural taste — and, by implication, landscape tastes as

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<sup>160</sup> National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 67.

<sup>161</sup> Catherine Howett, “After the ‘Other’ War: Landscapes of Home, North and South,” in *The Architecture of Landscape, 1940-1960*, ed. Mark Treib (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 159-160.



well — primarily on the mobility of postwar suburbanites,” which contributed to a larger “process of homogenization.”<sup>162</sup>

By the 1950s and 1960s, however, Howett notes that the impact of the Modern movement began to effect popular trends in residential landscape design. Howett cites multiple illustrated depictions of Contemporary mid-century homes published in popular magazines and journals, emphasizing that the “houses are set within densely wooded landscapes,” and “appear to be immersed within — and to some extent dominated by — a ‘natural’ landscape.”<sup>163</sup> In addition to the influence of Modernism, Howett also sees this transition towards more “natural” landscape designs as a continuation of “those conventions of ‘irregular’ design made popular by the English landscape gardening school of the eighteenth century and adapted in nineteenth-century American practice,” which became the “conventions of romantic and picturesque suburban planning.” Combined with the California Ranch ethos of indoor-outdoor living, “the new imagery of a cabinlike house nestled within a natural woodland — in other words, more trees, closer to the house, had become an acceptable stylistic variation.” Howett goes on to note that this transition to more heavily wooded lots and more naturalistic landscaped designs “was lent still more authority” by the nationwide environmental movement that began in the 1960s.<sup>164</sup> This transition to more naturalistic suburban landscape designs was an important trend in subdivisions throughout the country during the late mid-century.

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<sup>162</sup> Howett, “After the ‘Other’ War: Landscapes of Home, North and South,” 160.

<sup>163</sup> Howett, “After the ‘Other’ War: Landscapes of Home, North and South,” 171-174.

<sup>164</sup> Howett, “After the ‘Other’ War: Landscapes of Home, North and South,” 176-177.

## Summary

By the onset of the First World War, the American suburbs had undergone a series of radical transformations. Initially regarded as little more than the hinterland, the Industrial Revolution unleashed a powerful series of push-pull factors that encouraged wealthy Americans to seek refuge in the rural periphery. As large mills and factories emerged to house growing industry, the urban landscape began to change dramatically. Just as cities were beginning to become crowded and congested, the physical parameters of the traditional “walking city” were permanently shattered by the advent of steam powered ferries and rail. In response to the changing urban landscape, popular conceptions of the ideal domestic setting began to shift. The Industrial Revolution effectively removed the means of production from the home, and the domestic realm became increasingly feminized and insulated from the outside world. Meanwhile, Romanticism and the Picturesque movement celebrated the supposed physical and moral benefits of a rural, bucolic lifestyle, which reinforced existing currents of Jeffersonian anti-urbanism in the United States. For those who could afford the cost of commuting via rail, high-end suburban neighborhoods like Llewellyn Park and Riverside began appearing on the periphery of major urban areas by the mid-nineteenth century.

In the decades following the Civil War, several technological innovations accelerated the tide of suburbanization. Balloon frame construction systems and standardized, mass-produced hardware helped lower the financial and technical barriers to home building. New transportation technologies like the cable car and the electric streetcar granted average working- and middle-class Americans the ability to easily and cheaply reach suburban areas. As

streetcar lines radiated outward, large-scale residential development followed, opening the doors for a suburban migration of middle- and working-class Americans in the final few decades of the nineteenth century. Popular, nationally distributed domestic magazines exposed the average American to a wide variety of house types and styles. These options were typically accompanied by detailed plans and instructions, undercutting the need for a professional architect to draft a well-design home. Combined with new construction methods, mass produced materials, affordable land, and growing streetcar networks, the physical and economic barriers to single family homeownership were lower than they had ever previously been.

Faced with the newfound possibility of owning a single-family home in the suburbs, middle-class consumer preferences helped dictate the character of the developing streetcar suburbs. The rapid rate of industrialization, urbanization and demographic changes created considerable anxiety about social and cultural changes. Responding to these forces, popular preferences began to shift considerably in the late nineteenth century. Motivated in part by growing sentiments of xenophobia and Anglo-centric nationalism, the Colonial Revival style carried connotations of bucolic pastoralism and mythologized narratives of an idyllic past, which appealed to those struggling to cope with the tumult of the present. Concurrently, the English Arts and Crafts Movement also gained traction in the United States. Emphasizing skilled craftsmanship and natural materials, the Arts and Crafts aesthetic provided an aesthetic foil to industrialization and mass production. Both the Colonial Revival and the Arts and Crafts became popular suburban architectural styles by the turn of the century, speaking to a widespread desire to mask, if not fully reject, the forces of industrialization and urbanization in

the domestic sphere. In truth, however, the attainability and popularity of these styles was only made possible by the same forces of industrialization that they symbolically rejected.

In addition to new architectural styles, new suburban building types were developed to suit popular demands and fill the undeveloped tracts of streetcar suburbs. Responding to the many different social changes and challenges caused by rapid industrialization and urbanization, the Progressive Era was marked by diverse and varied reform efforts that sought to improve the human condition at the turn of the century. Figures like Jacob Riis and Jane Addams brought attention to the poor living conditions of factory workers living in urban tenements, and popular attitudes towards domestic spaces began to change. New standards for residential accommodations emerged, and suburban houses were expected have several key features, manifested in modest, practically designed house plans with differentiated interior rooms with designated functions. The everyday acts of living, eating, and sleeping were relegated to separate rooms. Meanwhile, kitchens were expected to have the newest appliances, and the three-piece bathroom became typical. The house types that emerged alongside these new standards were the American iteration of the bungalow and the American foursquare. Their interior plans both offered the various interior spaces expected in a Progressive Era home, and their exteriors were essentially a blank canvas that could be wrapped in the prospective homeowner's preferred style.

The bungalow and the American foursquare became fixtures of suburban residential architecture in the early twentieth century across the United States, promoted by popular domestic magazines and home journals that maintained widespread circulation. Capitalizing on the growing market for single family dwellings, several companies began offering

prefabricated, mail-order homes at a range of prices suitable for middle- and working-class budgets. Focusing on affordability and efficiency, prefabricated houses could be selected from a magazine and shipped directly to the buyer via rail, delivered with all the necessary parts and detailed instructions for local contractors. Using their preferred home model as a base, buyers could often modify interior floor plans and tailor stylistic elements to their own preferences. Despite the reliance on mass produced materials, mail-order homes could assume a highly individualized character, and the ability for personalization contributed to their popularity.

In roughly a century, the suburbs had been transformed several times over. Single family homeownership was a possibility for more Americans than ever before, and suburban development was occurring at an unprecedented scale. Even in the face of these substantial changes, however, streetcar suburbs would soon be eclipsed by the widespread introduction of the personal automobile and the fundamental restructuring of the American landscape that followed. Beginning in the 1920s, the American suburbs embark on another series of radical transformations, developing many of the key characteristics of their modern form.

After the First World War, the suburban landscape in the United States continued to expand outward from American cities, and the process accelerated substantially. Henry Ford's assembly line enabled the mass production of affordable personal automobiles, and Americans were eager to embrace the automotive age. As millions of Americans purchased their first vehicles, powerful corporate lobbyists formed to promote the interests of automotive manufacturers and related industries. Recognizing the need for improved road networks to accommodate car ownership, the corporate lobbyists successfully pressed the government to provide public funding for improved roadways. Meanwhile, the electric streetcar industry faced

dwindling profit margins, a lack of sorely needed government intervention, and a hostile private marketplace. The transition to an auto-centric lifestyle allowed Americans to essentially fill in the gaps between streetcar lines, and the residential developments that followed took on a new form. Whereas streetcar suburbs were dense and rectilinear, ensuring walkability to the streetcar lines, automobile suburbs were able to adopt lower densities and larger lot sizes.

The developmental patterns of automobile suburbs were influenced by several important planning movements that emerged around the turn of the century. The City Beautiful Movement gained momentum after the success of the White City at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, borrowing heavily from Baroque planning principles and Beaux Arts classicism. Many cities began implementing large-scale, comprehensive planning efforts, and many new subdivisions adopted elements from the City Beautiful Movement. Meanwhile, the next generation of American planners began to reassess the American landscape as a complex ecosystem of interconnected parts, and there was an important transition towards regional-scale thinking. Between the City Beautiful Movement, Progressive Era reformism, and regional planning efforts, there was a new level of experimentation with suburban residential developments and forms.

An influential suburban model in the United States was the English Garden City, a utopian vision created by Ebenezer Howard. The Garden City model was intended to provide its citizens with ample greenspace and clean air and relied on use-specific zoning to ensure the separation of residential neighborhoods, civic spaces, and industry. Howard's Garden City Model directly influenced the 1928 plan for Radburn, New Jersey. Although cut short by the Great Depression, Radburn was intended to be a large-scale residential suburban development

designed to accommodate an auto-centric lifestyle. Even after the Great Depression halted construction, utopian visions of the future remained compelling. Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City envisioned a radical decentralization of American society, where every household had a car and a single-family home on their own private acre of land.

In the early years of the Great Depression, the housing market in the United States was in a state of crisis. Construction had come to an abrupt halt, and homeowners were facing default and foreclosure in huge numbers. Under the New Deal, the Roosevelt administration experimented with several different solutions to repair the housing market and assist homeowners. Under the Greenbelt Town Program, three towns were built in the United States that borrowed directly from the Garden City model. While this program was ultimately scrapped due to political backlash, the New Deal also helped establish several critical government programs and agencies that encouraged increased homeownership. The Home Owners Loan Corporation introduced long-term mortgages and helped refinance mortgages for people facing foreclosure. The 1934 national Housing Act established the Federal Housing Administration, which decreased the requirements for down payments and capped interest rates. The Federal Housing Administration also established clear standards and guidelines for residential subdivisions and individual houses. Subdivisions were encouraged to adopt curvilinear street patterns with deliberate landscaping and greenspace, referencing the precedents established by the Picturesque, City Beautiful Movement, and Garden Cities. Individual houses were designed to be affordable and efficient, eliminating nonessential spaces and decorative features in favor of modern home appliances.

By the onset of the Second World War, the housing market had begun to make a substantial recovery. In an effort to address wartime needs, the United States government continued to provide significant government intervention to support the housing market. The GI Bill provided important economic incentives for returning veterans to purchase new homes, and there was an immediate increase in demand for new housing stock after the war. The post-war construction boom transformed suburban America, and large-scale tract housing became the new developmental model. Firms like Levitt and Sons perfected new construction methods, applying an assembly line-like process to home construction. Following FHA guidelines, Levitt and Sons' Levittown was a massive private housing development that proved massively successful with American consumers. Dotted with modest, economical Cape Cod cottages, subdivisions like Levittown gave way to the so-called 'cookie cutter' aesthetic often associated with the suburbs.

Although suburban life was an option for unprecedented numbers of American families, it is important to note that subdivisions like Levittown were often off-limits to minority groups. The FHA and HOLC did not extend the same economic incentives to minority families as they did white families, and subdivisions often wrote discriminatory rules into their neighborhood covenants that barred non-white families from homeownership. Meanwhile, local zoning codes were used to limit permitted land uses and prevent multi-family developments or non-residential buildings. The overall effect of these policies was to create suburban neighborhoods that were overwhelmingly homogenous, both in terms of race and economics.



Despite these prejudicial restrictions, suburban life remained extremely appealing to many Americans and the suburbs continued to grow. A crucial element of this continued growth was the expansion of roadway systems after the Second World War. Partially inspired by the massive popularity of the "Futurama" exhibit at the 1939 New York World's Fair, there was a growing push for the United States to develop a comprehensive highway and interstate system to accommodate automotive travel. Under the Eisenhower Administration, the 1956 Interstate Highway Act provided government funding for a massive overhaul of American roads. Allowing for increased decentralization, the residential subdivisions that followed were spread out and self-contained, and the patterns of day-to-day life became increasingly dependent on the personal car.

Coinciding with the transition towards an increasingly auto-centric lifestyle and the decentralization of the American landscape, there were also significant changes in terms of popular house typologies at this time. By the late 1940s, the Ranch house quickly took the place of the bungalow and the Cape Cod as the most popular suburban house type in the mid-century. Originating in California, the American ranch was based on the vernacular 'rancho' form, a composite of Spanish Colonial and traditional Mexican architecture that emerged in the nineteenth century. The traditional 'rancho' was a one-story, U-shaped building, often made out of adobe, which wrapped around a private courtyard. By the early twentieth century, many American architects had begun to experiment with the ranch house, borrowing elements of the traditional form while adapting it to suit a more modern lifestyle. By the 1930s and 1940s, these new American ranch houses were gaining attention nationwide. In addition to their

romantic associations with the West, many consumers were drawn to the spacious designs and open interior plans.

While the American Ranch often retained traditional western and Spanish Colonial decorative elements, ranch houses could be found in a variety of architectural styles. One important architectural style that developed alongside the ranch was the Contemporary style, which reflected Modernist principles of minimalism and strong geometric forms over historical references or overt decoration. The ability of the ranch house to assume different styles helped broaden its general appeal, and it remained the most prevalent suburban house types through the 1960s. Initially, the growing popularity of the Ranch created repetitive, ubiquitous suburban landscapes. However, the impact of Modernism and the environmental movement during the 1950s and 1960s inspired a transition to more naturalistic landscape design practices, which resulted in more heavily wooded lots and the retention of more natural landscape qualities.

## CHAPTER 3

### ANTECEDENTS AND EMERGENCE OF SHED STYLE ARCHITECTURE

The Shed Style emerged in earnest in the early 1960s, ushered in by a new generation of Modernist architects during the late mid-century, including figures such as Charles Moore and Robert Venturi, among others. Shed Style architecture is a remarkable synthesis of different architectural forms and styles, with influences spanning several centuries, ranging from Colonial-era vernacular buildings to high style Modernism. To date, there is limited academic writing that helps explain this history in full. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a thorough and comprehensive history of the architectural antecedents that helped influence and shape Shed Style architecture through the 1960s and 1970s.

Fundamentally, Shed Style architecture is an extension of the history of timber-clad architecture in the United States. Early generations of English settlers constructed timber-frame and timber-clad buildings in the New World, relying on traditional folk knowledge dating back to the medieval period. Lumber was plentiful, and wood construction was standard in colonial settlements on the eastern coast of the United States. House forms were utilitarian by nature, firmly rooted in functionality. In the northeast, homes were anchored by a large chimney that provided heat, while steeply pitched roofs helped shed the weight of snow during the winter.

In the late 1800s, northeastern colonial architecture became a source of inspiration for the Shingle style, which was an offshoot of the popular Queen Anne style. The Queen Anne style was already a revival style of sorts, borrowing elements from medieval and Gothic

architecture, such as half-timbering and second floor cantilevers. As the Queen Anne style became popular in the United States, designs began to incorporate elements from traditional, colonial-era architecture built by early European settlers, tailoring the revival elements to American history. This amalgamation of revival styles resulted in the Shingle style, which was a popular architectural style for coastal vacation homes in the northeast.

In the 1930s, these historic forms and styles began to attract the attention of high style Modernists in the United States, particularly in the Cape Cod region. Within the Modern movement, there was growing disillusionment with Modernism's lack of context. Many Modernists were beginning to experiment with regionalism, exploring vernacular architectural forms and materials that would speak to a building's context and sense of space. This experimentation was inherited by the next generation of architects, and in the early 1960s, several late Modernist architects began working in early iterations of the Shed Style. One of the most notable projects often classified as an archetypal example of the Shed Style was the residential architecture built at Sea Ranch in California during the 1960s. The impact of Sea Ranch will be discussed in detail later in Chapter Three.

By the late 1960s, Shed Style buildings began appearing in popular home magazines, such as *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Sunset* magazine. These features were often accompanied by construction plans that interested builders could order directly from the magazine. Shed Style architecture was advertised as a good option for primary and secondary homes, and they were often noted for their affordability, visual appeal, and open interior floorplans.

## Vernacular Colonial Architecture in New England

When English settlers reached the eastern seaboard in the early seventeenth century, they brought with them their own Old World building techniques and vernacular building types. Because timber was plentiful, they were able to recreate familiar English buildings in the American colonies, making several key adaptations to better accommodate local climate conditions. According to Leland M. Roth and Amanda C. Roth Clark, settlers in New England built cottages “according to prevailing English vernacular traditions,” using heavy timber frames and half-timbering.<sup>165</sup> However, Roth and Clark note that “Such half-timbered cottages proved much too sensitive to the extremes of New England weather...The exposed frame moved too much through thermal expansion and contraction, and cracks opened up between the frame and the wattle-and-daub panels. The solution was to cover the frame with a wind-tight skin of narrow clapboards or split shingles.”<sup>166</sup>

In her canonical text, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Virginia Savage McAlester covers Colonial-era architecture in different regions across the present-day United States, which she classifies as “Pre-Railroad.” According to McAlester, early colonial houses in New England reflected the “commonest folk forms in 17th-century England,” echoing Roth and Clark’s assessment. McAlester describes these earlier colonial homes as “primarily linear-plan houses having heavy timber frames covered with boards or shingles.” These houses were typically one room deep and one or two-stories high, with a large central chimney. Overtime, rear additions and larger footprints gave rise to the iconic Cape Cod and saltbox house types

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<sup>165</sup> Leland M. Roth and Amanda C. Roth Clark, *American Architecture*, 50.

<sup>166</sup> Leland M. Roth and Amanda C. Roth Clark, *American Architecture*, 50.

that are commonly associated with colonial architecture in New England. McAlester provides several examples of houses that reflect this period, and notes that several of them are “without stylistic detailing.”<sup>167</sup> Because these buildings were built out of necessity, they had a utilitarian nature. The emphasis was on functionality, ensuring that the building could retain heat and survive the elements, not aesthetics. Whether encased in wood shingles or boards, the exteriors of these early colonial-era buildings were austere and plain. The siding was tightly packed to ensure that the walls could retain heat and repel water.<sup>168</sup>

In keeping with the exterior walls, roof structures and materials were built for functionality. As Roth and Clarke point out, traditional English thatch roofs “reacted poorly to the New England climate, tending to rot.” As a result, settlers in New England instead utilized wood shingles as a common roofing material.<sup>169</sup> Roof pitches were steep, likely a response to the harsh winter climate and snowfall in New England, helping shed the weight of heavy snow accumulation that could potentially damage the roof structure. Of additional note, the roof overhangs on the front and side facades tended to be small or flush with the exterior. Other hallmark features present on English colonial homes included a large central chimney, which was crucial to provide heat for surrounding rooms, as well as a second-floor overhang, wherein the second floor was cantilevered past the edge of the first-floor wall. This area beneath this overhang often featured small decorative elements such as brackets or pendants.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture* (New York City, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2020) 121-123.

<sup>168</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 119.

<sup>169</sup> Leland M. Roth and Amanda C. Roth Clark, *American Architecture*, 50.

<sup>170</sup> “Architectural Style Guide,” Historic New England, accessed September 2, 2021, <https://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/for-homeowners-communities/your-old-or-historic-home/architectural-style-guide/>

Architectural historian Hugh Morrison cites the Scotch-Boardman House, in Saugus, Massachusetts and the Whitman House, in Farmington, Connecticut, as good examples of colonial era architecture in New England. Both buildings have very thin, dense strips of wood siding on their exteriors, and steeply pitched roofs that appear to be made of square wooden shingles. According to Morrison, the Scotch-Boardman House is a good example of the traditional saltbox house types, which features a steep, pronounced roof slope on the rear of the building, which was “common on houses with added lean-tos” on the back end of the original structure. The building has a large, central chimney. The roof is flush with the exterior on the side facades, and there is minimal overhang above the front façade. The building also features a small second-floor cantilever that projects over the first floor on the front façade. The Whitman House is similar in overall form and appearance, with a steeply pitched roof that has a large, pronounced extension on the back end to cover a “big lean-to at the rear,” as well as a large central chimney. The building also features a second-floor cantilever above the first floor, however unlike the Scotch-Boardman House, the Whitman House has decorative pendants hanging down from beneath the cantilever. Another notable difference is the presence of small roof eaves under the gables on the side facades.<sup>171</sup> Although the Whitman House only possesses of few decorative features, and the Scotch-Boardman House is absent any, their overall appearance is visually striking and easily recognizable.

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<sup>171</sup> Morrison, *Early American Architecture*, 55-57.



Figure 16: "Scotch House, Saugus, Mass.," Merrimack Postcard Co.; Image from Historic New England, <https://www.historicnewengland.org/explore/collections-access/gusn/354661/>

The Scotch-Boardman House and Whitman House are both relatively simple in their form and appearance. However, there are also several examples that illustrate how colonial New England houses could deviate from these rudimentary forms and change over time, becoming more physically and visually complex while still maintaining their distinctively post-medieval appearance. The John Ward House, built in the late seventeenth century in Salem, Massachusetts, is a good example of a building that was more complex than the basic, unadorned saltbox. The building has cantilevers on multiple facades, and the front façade is asymmetrical. The front of the building features two large gable projections with steeply pitched roofs, making the overall form and appearance more complex than a standard saltbox.<sup>172</sup> Another example of a complex colonial era home is the Turner House, more

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<sup>172</sup> Morrison, *Early American Architecture*, 62-63.



commonly known as the House of the Seven Gables, also built in Salem, Massachusetts in the late seventeenth century. Originally a simple structure (one room deep, two rooms wide, and two stories tall), the house received numerous additions and alterations over time. The result was a house with multiple wings and an irregular footprint, with seven gables spread across its various facades, several of which intersected one another. However, these irregularities do not detract from the building's overall appearance. Rather, as Morrison describes it, they make the home "more picturesque and complex," evoking elements of Gothic revival architecture from Europe.<sup>173</sup>

These vernacular colonial structures, whether simple or complex, had a significant impact on the course of American architecture moving forward. They were especially influential for architectural styles that emerged in the mid and late nineteenth century, such as the Queen Anne and Shingle Style. These colonial homes from New England and their architectural descendants would also prove impactful on modern architects in the early and mid-twentieth century.

### **Gothic Revival, Stick Style, and Queen Anne**

By the mid-nineteenth century, individuals like Andrew Jackson Downing and Alexander Jackson Davis popularized the architectural aesthetics of the Romantic and Picturesque movements in the United States. As discussed in Chapter Two, the Italianate and Gothic Revival styles became popular options for rural and suburban residences, appealing to

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<sup>173</sup> Morrison, *Early American Architecture*, 64.

changing conceptions of the domestic ideal, which emphasized themes of an idyllic, bucolic lifestyle removed from urban centers. According to architectural historian Vincent Scully, the influence of individuals like Downing and the larger Picturesque movement were crucial to the later advancement of Shingle Style architecture in the United States. As Scully describes it, "Downing is important to us because he decisively established the principles of asymmetrical, picturesque design in America and thereby laid the foundation for a whole new sequence of experiments in planning and spatial organization." By popularizing the Gothic Revival and the Italianate, Downing and contemporaries like Davis helped set the stage for the architectural styles that followed, specifically the Stick and Shingle styles of the late nineteenth century, which were both formally identified and defined by Scully in the 1950s.

For the purposes of this chapter, the Gothic Revival style will be discussed in terms of how it influenced subsequent architectural styles that became popular in the late nineteenth century, specifically in terms of building forms and materials. According to McAlester, the Gothic Revival began in England in 1749, "when Sir Horace Walpole, a wealthy dilettante, began remodeling his country house in the Medieval style, complete with battlements and multiple pointed-arch windows."<sup>174</sup> Borrowing from medieval English architectural precedents dating back to the twelfth century, the Gothic Revival style emerged as a popular alternative to Classical-inspired architecture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the United States, early examples of Gothic Revival architecture began appearing around the turn of the century, and initially the style was used almost exclusively for churches and religious structures. By the

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<sup>174</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 270.

1830s, fully realized Gothic Revival residential buildings began to appear in the United States, and some of the earliest examples were designed by Alexander Jackson Davis and Andrew Jackson Downing. Generally, the Gothic Revival style as it relates to residential architecture is characterized by several key attributes, including steeply pitched roof lines (often with multiple gable projections), highly ornate, decorative wooden vergeboards in gables, elaborate porch supports, and pointed, lancet arches with decorative tracery (often in the form of windows or porch supports). Gothic Revival houses could be symmetrical or asymmetrical and were typically upwards of one and one-half stories tall. Although there are numerous examples made with brick and stone, wood siding was the most common exterior material in the United States. Wood siding could be found in several different orientations, including horizontal, vertical, and diagonal. The Gothic Revival remained popular through the 1860s, after which examples were relatively rare.<sup>175</sup> However, the Gothic Revival continued to influence the course of American residential architecture well after its peak in popularity, having direct influence on the emergence of the Stick and Shingle styles.

In his extensive and thorough history, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style: Architectural Theory and Design from Richardson to the Origins of Wright*, Vincent Scully points to the influence of Andrew Jackson Downing and Alexander Jackson Davis, highlighting their work with Picturesque and Romantic styles. Scully notes that both architects began to experiment with wood as an exterior material with unique and desirable aesthetic qualities, contributing to the emergence of the Stick Style. In one example, Downing published two

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<sup>175</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 267-268.

different versions of the same house in *Cottage Residences*, with one illustration showing the building made of masonry and one showing the building made of wood. According to Scully, "The wooden house is sided vertically and therefore appears much more vertical in its proportions than the masonry version, although the proportions are actually the same." Scully notes that Downing began to appreciate the "positive aesthetic qualities in wooden frame structures," asserting that this transition was important "because a feeling for the wood frame vertically sheathed as a light, thin skeleton of sticks was to become a basic factor in the development of the mid-century domestic style."<sup>176</sup> Put simply, this emphasis on the wooden exterior as a piece of aesthetic value was fundamental to the development of the Stick Style. Unlike the earlier colonial-era Cape Cods and Saltboxes, wherein the use of wood as an exterior material was largely a matter of convenience and utility, the advent of the Stick Style helped transform wood siding into a decorative material with aesthetic value.

Like the Gothic Revival that preceded it, Stick Style houses typically have steeply pitched roofs, often with multiple gable projections, and decorative trusses or vergeboards in gable peaks. One of the main distinguishing features of the Stick Style is the elaborate use of wood siding, which can be oriented vertically, horizontally, or diagonally, and is often arranged in decorative geometric patterns. According to McAlester, "The Stick is a transitional style that links the preceding Gothic Revival with the subsequent Queen Anne; all three styles are free adaptations of Medieval English building traditions." However, "the Stick style stressed the wall surface *itself* as a decorative element rather than merely as a plane with the principle

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<sup>176</sup> Vincent J. Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style: Architectural Theory and Design from Richardson to the Origins of Wright*, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1971) xxxviii.

decorative detailing applied at the doors, windows, or cornices." McAlester also notes that "The emphasis on patterned wood walls seen in the Stick style was developed further still in the succeeding Queen Anne style." McAlester dates the Stick Style from 1860 to 1890, overlapping with the end of the Gothic Revival and the beginnings of the Queen Anne in the United States.<sup>177</sup>



Figure 17: Example of a Stick Style house; Miller House, Wichita Kansas, ca. 1878; Photo from *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Virginia Savage McAlester, page 342

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<sup>177</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 333-334.

Emerging in the United States around 1880, the Queen Anne style was first introduced by English architect Richard Norman Shaw. McAlester notes that the name itself is a sort of anachronism, as the style draws heavily on Elizabethan and Jacobean influences from the late Medieval period, whereas Queen Anne's lifetime coincided with more formal Renaissance styles. The Queen Anne style draws heavily on medieval architectural themes, incorporating elements such as half-timbering and asymmetrical, irregular massing. Roof lines were steep and complex, often containing many different roof types on one structure, featuring multiple hipped and gabled projections. Corner turrets and bay windows are also common features on Queen Anne houses. McAlester notes that the exterior materials are often very ornate, and "Differing wall textures are a hallmark of Queen Anne houses." Masonry walls often featured decorative patterns, while wood sided houses incorporate elaborate shingle patterns to add texture to exterior walls. Porches were especially ornate, incorporating decorative brackets and spandrels with intricate spindlework.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 345-350.





Figure 18: Example of a Queen Anne Style house; Williams-Erwin House, Waxahachie, Texas, 1893; Photo from *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Virginia Savage McAlester, page 353

Over time, the Queen Anne style in the United States began to take on uniquely American attributes, incorporating elements of classical and colonial architectural styles, which McAlester refers to as a “free classical adaptation.”<sup>179</sup> Scully also elaborates on this fact, pointing to the influence of American architect Henry Hobson Richardson. According to Scully, Richardson was one of the earliest American architects to experiment with the Queen Anne style. He was especially well-known for the Watts Sherman House, built in Newport, Rhode

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<sup>179</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 370.

Island in 1874. According to Scully, Richardson's design for the Watts Sherman House was "a partial Americanization of Shaw's Queen Anne." Although the house was a clear and direct interpretation of an English manor house, there were aspects of the structure that were implicitly American. One of these key divergences was in Richardson's use of shingles. Whereas Shaw often incorporated tiles as an exterior material, Scully points out that "English tiles were difficult to manufacture in America." Instead, Richardson used shingles, which Scully calls a "native but generally neglected substitute," but nonetheless a "practical substitute."<sup>180</sup> Scully goes on to say that "shingles were without a doubt an Americanization of Shaw's tiles." After Richardson's successful use of the Queen Anne style in the United States, "the field of experiment was open to the new generation as a whole." Scully notes that the next generation of architects was influenced by the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, which inspired renewed interest in American colonial architecture.<sup>181</sup> It was this amalgamation of styles and influences that would help give way to the Shingle Style, which emerged in the 1880s.

In this context, the importance of the Gothic Revival and the Stick Style lies in the intentional use of wooden exteriors. Influential figures like Downing, a leading proponent of the Gothic Revival style, began to reassess to the aesthetic value of wood as an exterior material. No longer defined by practicality or utility, wooden siding was embraced as a deliberate and intentional design choice. This transition was furthered by the subsequent Stick Style, wherein the wooden exteriors became the primary decorative element, and the orientation of the wood siding assumed a new significance. The Queen Anne, although

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<sup>180</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 14-15.

<sup>181</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 4.



fundamentally a British revival style, was important for helping inspire a generation of American architects to experiment with residential architecture. This period eventually gave way to the Shingle Style, which incorporated elements of the Queen Anne with colonial American architecture, creating an innovative and uniquely American architectural style.

### **The Shingle Style**

In explaining the connection between the Queen Anne and the Shingle Style, Scully argues that the popularity of the Queen Anne, which drew on the history of English architecture, inspired Americans to reconsider their own architectural past. As he puts it, "As the Queen Anne purportedly revived vernacular English domestic architecture of several centuries past, it began to be related in the minds of Americans to their colonial building of one hundred to two hundred years before." This overarching sentimentality for the colonial era coincided with the 1876 Centennial, which celebrated the 100-year anniversary of the United States. As described previously in Chapter Two, the 1876 Centennial fostered a sense of nostalgia for America's colonial past, which drew on popular conceptions of patriotism and national identity. According to Scully, "The Queen Anne thus rode into America on a wave of nostalgia, and that nostalgia was a new and suddenly poignant American longing to recall its 17th- and 18th-century past."<sup>182</sup> Scully goes on to note that this led to increased interest in northeastern coastal towns in places like Rhode Island and Massachusetts, saying "The growing popularity of seaside vacations...began by the early 1870's to focus attention upon the resort

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<sup>182</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 22.

towns, many of which had changed very little since colonial days." In these places, "the call of the picturesque and the romantic could easily be strengthened by a growing appreciation of the ancient architecture to be found there."<sup>183</sup>

Notable architects began to experiment with colonial era architecture. Scully points to Charles Follen McKim, of McKim, Mead, & White, as an example. In 1872, McKim restored an 18th century house in Newport, and decorated the interior in what Scully calls "imitation colonial." This project received considerable attention, and photographs of his designs were published in an 1874 publication called the *New York Sketch Book*. According to Scully, "These rooms by McKim must be considered the first actual example of the use of 18th-century forms in the 70's, either in restoration or in new work."<sup>184</sup> Throughout the 1870s, Colonial architecture was repeatedly profiled in popular journals and magazines. In 1874, *Harper's* magazine published several pieces highlighting seaside towns such as Newport, Marblehead, and Portsmouth. Scully describes how these articles helped illustrate "the atmosphere created by the old houses of the town and makes it clear that historical values and old associations had much to do with their appeal." Scully speculates that this appeal speaks to a desire for simplicity and "perhaps a longing for escape from an industrial civilization grown complex and brutal."<sup>185</sup> Scully's point echoes arguments explored in Chapter Two, which framed the popularity of the Colonial Revival style as a cultural reaction to the social stresses of urbanization and industrialization in the late nineteenth century. However, Scully expands upon

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<sup>183</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 24.

<sup>184</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 25.

<sup>185</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 27-28.

this argument as it concerns the creation of the Shingle Style. According to Scully, this facet of the Colonial Revival “had a dual nature: it was nostalgic and antiquarian, but it was also sincerely re-creative, born of a profound need and fed by new broadenings of picturesque vision.” Based on Scully’s assessment, the Shingle Style was an important amalgamation of larger cultural and philosophical trends, and “these influences were temporarily united into the intellectual and aesthetic basis for a new domestic architecture.”<sup>186</sup>

Of additional importance was the seaside locale that was characteristic of the Shingle Style. McAlester notes that “The style began and reached its highest expression in seaside resorts of the northeastern states,” and “Fashionable summer destinations such as Newport, Cape Cod, eastern Long Island, and coastal Maine had numerous architect-designed cottages in the style.”<sup>187</sup> Rooted in the longing for a rural, bucolic escape from city-life, Scully notes that “The insistent suburban evocation of a lost agrarian simplicity remained a constant factor, directly related to the simplified life of the shore or the country suburb.” For this reason, “the role of the simplest and least pretentious buildings cannot be overestimated. It is natural that some of the most significant aspects of the new architecture should be found in the smallest cottages.”<sup>188</sup> Essentially, Scully argues that the informality of a seaside, vacation setting created more room for experimentation, leading to the eventual maturation of the Shingle Style.

By the 1880s, fully realized examples of the Shingle Style began to appear. Important practitioners of this style included architects such as Henry Hobson Richardson and William

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<sup>186</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 32-33.

<sup>187</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 374.

<sup>188</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 88.

Ralph Emerson, as well as the firms Peabody and Stearns, Lamb and Rich, and McKim, Mead, & White, among others. McAlester describes the basic characteristics of the Shingle Style as follows: "Wall cladding and roofing of continuous wood shingles...shingled walls without interruption at corner...asymmetrical façade with irregular, steeply pitched roof line; roofs usually have intersecting cross gables and multi-level eaves; commonly with extensive porches." In addition to gables and hipped roofs, Shingle Style houses also frequently incorporate gambrel roof lines, which is a reference to Dutch colonial architectural forms, as well as turrets, likely a carryover from the Queen Anne. McAlester notes that the Shingle Style is generally more minimalistic than its predecessors. According to McAlester, "Unlike most of the 19th-century styles that preceded it, the Shingle does not emphasize decorative detailing at doors, windows, cornices, porches, or on wall surfaces. Instead, it aims for the effect of a complex shape enclosed within a smooth surface (the shingled exterior) which unified the irregular outline of the house."<sup>189</sup> Unlike the Gothic Revival, Stick, and Queen Anne styles, which were all decidedly ornate in terms of small, decorative elements, the Shingle Style's primary point of emphasis was the overall form of the building.

A good early example of the Shingle Style is the Stoughton House, built by H. H. Richardson in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1882-83. The building illustrates many of the characteristics outline by McAlester. The building is asymmetrical and irregular, featuring several intersecting roof lines. On the front façade alone, there is a hipped roof line on the right, a large front facing gable on the left, and a conical turret offset to the left of the main

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<sup>189</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 373-374.

entrance. The main entrance is recessed, situated underneath a wide, concave front verandah. The windows are large, but relatively simple, with a 12/1 pane pattern. The second floor underneath the front facing gable has a small cantilever above the first floor, reminiscent of the medieval carryover observed on traditional colonial era cottages. The complex form of the building is wrapped in uninterrupted shingle siding. The façade is somewhat austere, unincumbered by superfluous decorative features. This building received considerable attention at the time, and Scully refers to the Stoughton House as a "masterpiece of the new architecture," citing the building's "coherent design" and "bulging shingled surfaces."<sup>190</sup>



Figure 19: "Mary Fiske Stoughton House, 90 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Middlesex County, MA," Historic American Buildings Survey; Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, <https://www.loc.gov/item/ma0255/>

<sup>190</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 96.

Another important example of the Shingle Style was the house known as “Kraggsyde,” built by Peabody and Stearns in 1882-84, located in Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts. Built as a summer cottage for a wealthy client, Kraggsyde was aptly named, as it was built on top of a large “rocky crag” near the coast. The foundation is made from large pieces of stone, and the house above is wrapped in shingles. The overall massing of the building is highly irregular, featuring multiple intersecting rooflines, verandahs, and towers. The front drive and main entrance are situated underneath a massive Syrian arch, which spans the entire driveway and is more than a story tall. Although very different from the Stoughton House in appearance, both houses feature key elements of the Shingle Style, and both are considered by Scully to be masterpieces of the Shingle Style. Despite the complex and dramatic design, Kraggsyde does not have any excessive exterior decorative elements. Like the Stoughton House, the visual impact and emphasis of the building is related to the overall form.



Figure 20: “George Nixon Black House, Kraggsyde, Smith Point, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Mass., undated;” Image from Digital Commonwealth, Massachusetts Collections Online, <https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth-oai:bz60dr749>

One the most important firms that operated in the Shingle Style was McKim, Mead, & White. Though they are most often recognized for their work in the classically inspired Beaux-Arts, the McKim, Mead, & White firm designed several important examples of the Shed Style during the 1880s. One such example is the McCormick House, built in Richfield Springs, New York in 1880-81. The McCormick House features a large, front facing gable with an octagonal porch projection on the front-left corner. The massive roof slopes of the large gable are intersected by tall brick chimneys. The first floor is spanned by a wide, open verandah, which wraps around the left side underneath the octagonal projection. This porch pattern is mirrored closely on the second floor as well. The foundation is made of stone, while the main structure is encased in rustic wooden shingles. According to Scully, "The McCormick House, it must be admitted, is peculiarly McKim, Mead, and White's own. Its lightness of scale and its creative combination of gable front, porch pavilions, and structural and textural vitality form the basis for their best cottage building in the early 80's."<sup>191</sup> Unlike Kraggsyde, which was especially complex, the overall form of the McCormick House is much simpler. However, this simplicity does not detract from the visual impact of the building, and the home's large gable is especially striking.

In 1887, McKim, Mead, & White replicated the broad front gable of the McCormick House on another project, the Low House, built in Bristol, Rhode Island in 1887. However, overall shape of the Low House is a much more simplified and abstracted shape than the preceding McCormick House. The entire mass of the Low House is contained beneath one

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<sup>191</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 136-137.



large gable roof line, giving the building an austere, triangular profile. While there are chimneys that pierce the roof slope, there are no notable projections or contrasting roof lines. The drama and impact of the building is rooted in its monumental simplicity.



Figure 21: "W.G. Low House," photograph by Nicholas Romano, 1887; Image from the Rhode Island School of Design, Digital Commons, 1939 Rhode Island Architecture Exhibition, [https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/archives\\_1939riarchitectureexhibition/131/](https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/archives_1939riarchitectureexhibition/131/)

McAlester refers to the Low House as a "landmark example" of the Shingle Style,<sup>192</sup> and Scully refers to it as "archetypal." Scully uses especially strong language when discussing the Low House, saying it "was like the chthonic apparition of a tremendous and hitherto unsuspected local force: a giant out of this earth. It was one enormous gesture, one

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<sup>192</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 378.



fundamental act.”<sup>193</sup> Scully also notes that the Low House was built towards the tail end of the popularity of the Shingle Style, remarking that “Its archaically powerful gable of wood, like some prototypal form from the beginnings of design, was almost immediately to be abandoned for the more conventionally conceived columns and pediments of McKim, Mead, and White’s later buildings.”<sup>194</sup>

Beginning in the 1890s, the Shingle Style began to fade from popularity. McAlester notes that the Shingle Style was never especially widespread, largely limited to commissioned, architect-designed buildings in northeastern vacation towns.<sup>195</sup> After the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago, which was widely celebrated for the Beaux-Arts aesthetic of the ‘White City,’ more classically inspired architectural trends became popular. Scully, taking a critical stance, says “the late 19th-century École des Beaux-Arts, militated toward an eclectic, unoriginal, and pretentious kind of design.”<sup>196</sup> Consequently, the experimental qualities of the Shingle Style fell out of favor.

## Modern Architecture in Europe

By the late nineteenth century, Beaux-Arts classicism was the dominant architectural style in the United States and Europe. By the turn of the century, however, there were a multitude of architects and architectural movements that diverged from the traditional, classically inspired themes of the Beaux-Arts. Recounting the history of Modern architecture

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<sup>193</sup> Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style Today or The Historian’s Revenge* (New York City, New York: George Braziller, 1974) 4.

<sup>194</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 153.

<sup>195</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 374.

<sup>196</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style*, 156.

requires the synthesis of several complex competing and converging forces, all of which contributed to establishment of formal, high style Modernism. For the purposes of this Chapter, the history of early Modernism will be cursory, and consequently simplified and somewhat reductive. However, it is important to understand the history of Modernism and its eventual arrival in the United States in order to fully contextualize the emergence of the Shed Style in the 1960s.

In the United States, the first hints of modernism were found in the 1880s and 1890s, after the advent of the skyscraper. A modern building by nature, facilitated by new materials and technologies, skyscrapers became an important canvas for early American modernism, evident in the work of the Chicago School. Chicago School architects tended to emphasize the building's construction system, drawing attention to the metal frame and the curtain wall exterior, which was punctuated by large glass windows. Architect Louis Sullivan was especially innovative and experimental. Sullivan often employed ornate terracotta exteriors with organic, naturalistic patterns, intentionally lacking any clear association with classical architecture or the Beaux-Arts.<sup>197</sup> However, the overwhelmingly classical aesthetic of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and Burnham's White City in Chicago were indicative of the fact the Beaux-Arts style was still dominant in the United States by the turn of the century.<sup>198</sup>

The next substantial deviation in the United States was the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, who developed a new domestic architecture called the Prairie style around the turn of the

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<sup>197</sup> William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture, Since 1900* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1996) 47-49.

<sup>198</sup> Michael Fazio, Marian Moffett, Lawrence Wodehouse, *Buildings Across Time: An Introduction to World Architecture* (Boston, Massachusetts: McGraw-Hill, 2014) 451.

century. A former student of Louis Sullivan, the Prairie style was new both in terms of aesthetic and spatial arrangement. According to McAlester, it was “one of the few indigenous American styles,” and Wright was unusual for his focus on “the problems of domestic architecture rather than public buildings.”<sup>199</sup> The term “Prairie” is a reference to regional setting, named for the mid-western prairies, characterized by gently sloping hills and grassy flatlands. To mirror this geographic quality, Prairie style houses were long and low, with strong horizontal lines and flat roofs. Wright aimed to “break the box,” and his spatial arrangements emphasized cross-breezes and plans where “living spaces flow smoothly from one area to another.”<sup>200</sup> In 1910, Wright visited Europe and published the *Wasmuth Volumes*, which helped disperse his work and philosophy to European audiences and influenced early European modernists.<sup>201</sup>



Figure 22: Example of Frank Lloyd Wright’s work in the Prairie Style; “Frederick C. Robie House, 5757 Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, Cook County, IL,” Historic American Buildings Survey; Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.il0039.photos/?sp=3>

<sup>199</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 552.

<sup>200</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 459-463.

<sup>201</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 129.

In Europe, there had been several important alternatives to Beaux-Arts formalism. One of the earliest examples was the Art Nouveau, which emerged in the 1880s and 1890s. Art Nouveau architecture often featured modern materials, such as glass and iron, juxtaposed against organic, naturalistic design schemes, often featuring floral, plant-like motifs.<sup>202</sup> By the 1890s, the Jugendstil and Vienna Secession also appeared as divergent architectural movements. In 1895, Otto Wagner published *Modern Architektur*, which expressed an “admiration for modern techniques and materials,” inspired by “the sensation of a new age of industrialism and engineering.” According to architectural historian William J. R. Curtis, author of *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, Wagner’s work under the Vienna Secession was in a “different world from that of Art Nouveau, a world in which a nuts and bolts rationality and a stable and dignified order have replaced the dynamic tendrils and curvaceous effects.”<sup>203</sup> Accompanied by architects such as Josef Hoffman and Adolf Loos, the Vienna Secession demonstrated a shift towards “rectilinear and volumetric simplification,” with increasingly minimalistic exteriors, absent overt ornamentation. In 1908, Loos published a treatise called “Ornament and Crime,” which rejected the use of ornamentation entirely. According to Loos, ornamentation was a relic of the past, summed up by his proclaimed maxim: “the evolution of culture marches with the elimination of ornament from useful objects.”<sup>204</sup> Loos’ aversion to exterior ornamentation would ultimately become one of the hallmark characteristics of modern architecture moving forward.

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<sup>202</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 426.

<sup>203</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 66-67.

<sup>204</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 68-71.

Another important precursor to Modernism was the German Werkbund, which was established in 1907 by Hermann Muthesius. According to Curtis, the German Werkbund was in part a reaction to the forces of mechanization and industrialization, particularly in terms of how those forces related to the arts. As Curtis puts it, the Werkbund and other contemporary architectural movements were part of a philosophical reckoning with the Machine Age, viewing mechanization as an “essential motor to the forward march of history, requiring an appropriate expression in architecture and design.” Muthesius and the German Werkbund were preoccupied with German identity and the creation of “Kulture,” seeking to create a “unified style to replace the confectionary of nineteenth-century eclecticism.” In seeking this “Kulture,” Muthesius maintained a belief in the potential of industrialization and standardization to help achieve this goal.<sup>205</sup> A prominent example of work done in the spirit of the German Werkbund was the Berlin AEG Turbine Factory, designed by Peter Behrens in 1907. As described by Curtis, the AEG Turbine Factory was a minimalistic temple-front building, combining “abstracted classical vocabulary and straightforward structural skeletons,” creating an overall “character of a temple dedicated to some industrial cult.”<sup>206</sup> While the German Werkbund was effectively ended by the First World War, it would prove influential to the Modernist movement that emerged during the interwar period.

While nearly the whole of mainland Europe was engaged in the brutality of trench warfare during the First World War, the Netherlands maintained a neutral position and did not engage in battle. This allowed for a “gradual maturation of pre-war ideas such as was scarcely

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<sup>205</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 99-100.

<sup>206</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 100-102.

possible elsewhere in Europe.” The movement that emerged during this period was De Stijl, which translates to “The Style.” De Stijl drew heavily on the geometric abstraction present in Cubism and modern art, particularly the work of Piet Mondrian, who was famous for a painting style that featured “black, white, and primary colours with the simplest rectangular geometries.” According to Curtis, these qualities made it “all the easier to think of translating such qualities into the shapes of a functioning architecture, where walls, floor planes, roof, or windows might have an analogous formal character to the elements in the paintings,” marking a “complete break with axial schemata of Beaux-Arts classicism.”<sup>207</sup> De Stijl architects were also inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright, paying close attention to “the spatial character and the vocabulary of hovering and intersecting planes” present in Wright’s work. By the time the First World War had ended, De Stijl had achieved “a vocabulary in which simple geometrical forms, rectilinear grids, and intersecting planes were indeed part of a shared style; moreover, it was a style which seemed to have an almost universal application from painting to typography, to sculpture, to furniture design, to architecture.”<sup>208</sup>

In discussing how these different movements helped shape the course of high style, canonical Modernism that emerged in the 1920s, Curtis says the following:

Each of these architects was seeking in his own way to give form to his poetic reactions to the technological and social realities of his time; each had grown up in the dusk of Art Nouveau and had been exposed to the ideas of Rationalism and the Deutscher Werkbund; each too had imbibed spiritual conceptions of the typical and of abstraction. Moreover, each had learned crucial lessons from the

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<sup>207</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 149-153.

<sup>208</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 155.

stripped classicism of the first decade of the century, and from the syntax of Cubism...In turn, each architect had experienced the traumas of the First World War, and optimistically hoped to encourage a new world to rise out of the ashes.<sup>209</sup>

The high style Modernism that emerged in the 1920s was exemplified by the works of individuals such as Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Walter Gropius, among others. The Bauhaus and the International Style, both manifestations of Modernism, were each the result of a complex synthesis of earlier philosophical and architectural movements that had pushed against the classical overtures of the Beaux-Arts.



Figure 23: Example of the German Werkbund architecture, "Peter Behrens, Turbine Factory, 1909-1910;" Image from the Khan Academy, <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-1010/architecture-design/international-style/a/peter-behrens-turbine-factory>

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<sup>209</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 159.





Figure 24: Example of De Stijl architecture, "1924, Schröder House, Utrecht, the Netherlands, Gerrit Rietveld;" Image from <http://architecture-history.org/schools/DE%20STIJL.html>

One of the most prominent and influential Modernists who emerged during the 1920s was Charles Edouard Jeanneret, more commonly known as Le Corbusier. As a young adult, Le Corbusier studied under Auguste Perret and Peter Behrens, through whom he was exposed to reinforced concrete and the influence of the German Werkbund's emphasis on mechanization. In 1920, Le Corbusier founded a publication called *L'Esprit Nouveau*, meaning 'The New Spirit,' in which he began to articulate his unique philosophy regarding Modernism and Modern architecture.<sup>210</sup> In 1926, Le Corbusier outlined his "Five Points Toward a New Architecture," which were as follow:

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<sup>210</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 163-168.



- 1) The supports (pilotis) are precisely calculated, spaced regularly, and used to elevate the first floor off the damp ground.
- 2) The flat roof or roof garden is used for domestic purposes such as gardening, play, and relation — thereby recovering all the built-upon ground for outdoor activities.
- 3) The interior walls, independent of the support system, can be arranged in a free plan.
- 4) The horizontal windows, made possible by the support system, assure even illumination from wall to wall and admit eight times as much light as a vertically placed window of equal area.
- 5) The façade, also independent of the structural supports, can be freely designed.<sup>211</sup>

These five principles are evident throughout Le Corbusier's work. One of Le Corbusier's most famous works, Villa Savoye, clearly reflects these five core tenants. Built in Poissy in 1929-1931, Villa Savoye is lifted off the ground and placed on concrete pilotis. The roof is flat and features an upper-level, open-air terrace in the center of the building. The interior floor plan is highly irregular, and it is not contingent upon the building's overall support system. The facades are smooth, unadorned white walls, punctuated by long, ribbon windows. The exterior façades, although regular and nearly identical, are not dependent on the structural system.<sup>212</sup> Le Corbusier's work also features interior finishes that reflect an "enthusiasm for industrial products," incorporating elements such as simple metal pipe railing, industrial light fixtures, and plain ceramic tile floors.<sup>213</sup> According to Curtis, Le Corbusier had essentially "established

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<sup>211</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 479.

<sup>212</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 478-479.

<sup>213</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 479.

an entire architectural system, blending logical, structural, and intuitive rules: a set of 'type-forms,' capable of numerous variations and combinations."<sup>214</sup>



Figure 25: "Le Corbusier, Villa Savoye, Poissy, France," photo by Pedro Kok; Image from *Cornell Journal of Architecture*, Issue 11, <https://cornelljournalofarchitecture.cornell.edu/issue/issue-11>

In interwar Germany, Walter Gropius and the Bauhaus emerged as extremely important and influential proponents of Modernism. Gropius had been trained under the German Werkbund, and he maintained belief in the "necessity for reuniting aesthetic sensibility and utilitarian design." Unlike the Werkbund, however, there was less emphasis on the role of mass production initially. In part, this was due to what Curtis refers to as an "odd marriage" between the "old Academy of Fine Arts and a Kunstgewerberschule (School of Applied Arts)," with the "eventual aim of a regeneration of German visual culture through a fusion of art and craft."<sup>215</sup> However, over time, the emphasis on hand crafts "shifted to handicraft as a means of making

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<sup>214</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 181.

<sup>215</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 183-185.

prototypes for industrial production.” This transition towards the industrial was made in part to address ongoing financial hardships facing the Bauhaus, while also finding an “appropriate resolution of the relationship of art to the machine.” The Bauhaus was also subject to repeated criticisms for the overtly Bohemian and eccentric lifestyles of its instructors and students, so much so that the campus eventually relocated from Weimar to Dessau in 1925.<sup>216</sup> According to Curtis, this gave Gropius the opportunity to design a new building for the Bauhaus, which gave him an opportunity to “carry out his new architectural ideas,” which Curtis describes as a sort of “hotchpotch of ideas derived from Futurism, the Deutscher Werkbund, and De Stijl.”<sup>217</sup>

The new Bauhaus building had an asymmetrical footprint that resembled a pinwheel, with multiple wings radiating out from one central point. Each wing had a different purpose, which is clearly expressed in their design. The interior finishing, such as furniture and lighting fixtures, were designed by students of the Bauhaus, making the building a complete and unified expression of the Bauhaus.<sup>218</sup> The new Bauhaus building was an important milestone in the larger history of Modern architecture, Curtis notes that it “marked a major step in the maturing system of forms that many other architects were beginning to adopt.”<sup>219</sup> However, due to the rise of Nazism in Germany, Gropius resigned from the school in 1928. In 1930, Mies van der Rohe, a well-known practitioner of the German Werkbund and significant Modernist, was made head of the Bauhaus. By 1932, the Nazis entered Dessau and were quick to target the Bauhaus, which they closed that year on the grounds of “Communism, decadence, and

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<sup>216</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 483-484.

<sup>217</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 194-195.

<sup>218</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 484.

<sup>219</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 196.

subversion.”<sup>220</sup> Fleeing the rising tide of Nazism, Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and many of their colleagues immigrated to the United States in the late 1930s, bringing “their pedagogical methods and concepts with them.”<sup>221</sup>



Figure 26: Image of the Bauhaus School, designed by Walter Gropius, “Bauhaus Dessau,” photograph by Yvonne Tenschert, 2011; Image from the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, <http://news.getty.edu/keepingitmoderngrants2017.htm>

## Regional Modernism

In the United States, European Modernism began to gain traction in the 1920s, especially on the west coast, with a notable concentration in and around Los Angeles,

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<sup>220</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 485.

<sup>221</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 199.

California. This was primarily the result of two Viennese architects who came to the United States to work for Frank Lloyd Wright: Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra. Schindler and Neutra both designed in a decidedly Modern style and were well known for their domestic designs.<sup>222</sup> However, despite their successes, Curtis notes that Modern architecture had not yet fully matured in the United States, and "The most probing modern work was carried out far away from the cultural opinion-makers of the East Coast, under somewhat eccentric patronage."<sup>223</sup> In short, Modernism had not yet become a mainstream phenomenon in the United States. This is evidence by the fact that "The Beaux-Arts system of education remained virtually unchallenged in America until the 1930s." According to Curtis, "it was the arrival of Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, and Marcel Breuer towards the end of the decade which set the scene for the growth of a modern architectural educational establishment after the Second World War."<sup>224</sup>

Walter Gropius arrived in the United States in 1937 after being asked to act as director for the Department of Architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. He was soon joined by architect Marcel Breuer, a former instructor at Bauhaus.<sup>225</sup> According to architectural historian Kevin D. Murphy, Gropius and his family were immediately taken with colonial New England architecture. As they settled into their new locale, they passed over a Beacon Hill townhouse in favor of a "vernacular late eighteenth-century house" outside the city. While Gropius was planning the eventual construction of their own house, Walter and his wife, Ise,

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<sup>222</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 232.

<sup>223</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 239.

<sup>224</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 239.

<sup>225</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 397.

travelled throughout New England and absorbed the colonial architecture of New England. According to Murphy, "The predominant wood construction of the region was relatively unfamiliar to Gropius," and "Walter admired how American buildings had adapted English Georgian forms by replacing brick with wood...He also appreciated the accommodations New England buildings had made to the changeable climate, with both frigid winters and sweltering summers."<sup>226</sup> Murphy points out that Gropius' attention to vernacular colonial architecture likely stemmed from "the need to make the new style [Bauhaus] palatable by allying it with regional architecture and by incorporating traditional design elements."<sup>227</sup>



Figure 27: Image of Walter Gropius' home in Lincoln, Massachusetts, "Gropius House," unknown photographer; Image from 20<sup>th</sup> Century Architecture, <http://architecture-history.org/architects/architects/GROPIUS/OBJECTS/1937.%20Gropius%20House.%20LINCOLN.%20MASSACHUSETTS.%20USA.html>

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<sup>226</sup> Kevin D. Murphy, "The Vernacular Moment: Eleanor Raymond, Walter Gropius, and New England Modernism between the Wars," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 70, no. 3 (2011): 319-320.

<sup>227</sup> Murphy, "The Vernacular Moment," 310.

Gropius' appreciation for vernacular New England architecture is apparent in the home he designed for his family in Lincoln. Referred to as the Lincoln House, Gropius' design "adapted the 1920s modernist aesthetic to local building practices." In particular, "He clad the exterior in wood...and coated it with white lead paint, the color he so admired on early New England houses." One key difference in Gropius' adaptation and traditional examples was the orientation of the wood siding, which "he used vertically rather than horizontally." In 1955, Gropius discussed the Lincoln House in *The Scope of Architecture* saying, "I made it a point to absorb into my own conception those features of the New England architectural tradition that I found still alive and adequate. The fusion of the regional spirit with a contemporary approach to design produced a house I would never have built in Europe."<sup>228</sup> Writing to his Bauhaus colleague Marcel Breuer, Gropius described his new architectural surroundings in very favorable terms, saying "fine wooden houses in the Colonial style, painted white...will delight you as much as they do me. In their simplicity, functionality, and uniformity they are completely in our line."<sup>229</sup>

After Gropius and his family settled in Massachusetts, they were soon host to a cadre of European artists and architects, including Marcel Breuer and others. They also encountered a generation of young Americans who had embraced Modernism and had been experimenting with Modern architecture up and down the Outer Cape. Peter McMahon and Christine Cipriani document this novel community in *Cape Cod Modern*, providing valuable insight into how this

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<sup>228</sup> Murphy, "The Vernacular Moment," 320-321.

<sup>229</sup> Peter McMahon and Christine Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern: Midcentury Architecture and Community on the Outer Cape*, (New York City, New York: Metropolis Books, 2014) 150.



network of European and American Modernists were influenced by the architecture of Cape Cod's past, and how they impacted the architecture of Cape Cod's future. According to McMahon and Cipriani, "The result of this ferment is a body of work unlike any other, a regional modernism that fused Bauhaus ideals and postwar innovations with the building traditions of Cape Cod fishing towns."<sup>230</sup> This confluence of high style Modernism and vernacular New England architecture was one of several factors contributing to the eventual emergence of the Shed Style in the 1960s.

Like Gropius, Marcel Breuer found himself smitten with the vernacular architecture he encountered in New England. Breuer had begun studying at the Bauhaus school in 1920. At the age of 18, he was the school's youngest student. By 1925, Breuer was promoted to "*Jungmeister*, or young master, and been made head of the cabinetmaking workshop." Both a Modernist and a Hungarian-born Jew, Breuer was forced to flee Nazi Germany in the late 1930s. After Gropius was installed as director at Harvard's Department of Architecture, he recruited Breuer to join him "in teaching a modified version of the Bauhaus curriculum."<sup>231</sup> Like Gropius, Breuer too began to incorporate elements of the regional vernacular into his architecture. In 1941, Breuer was commissioned to design a vacation home for the Chamberlain family. According to McMahon and Cipriani, the Chamberlain Cottage demonstrates "Breuer's interest in the possibilities of traditional American wood framing," which had "exterior stud walls skinned inside and out with tongue-and-groove siding," oriented vertically on the building's exterior. Rather than paint the building white as Gropius had done

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<sup>230</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 15.

<sup>231</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 147-150.



on his Lincoln house, Breuer instead clear-stained “the vertical fir siding to highlight its natural texture and grain.”<sup>232</sup> Elements of the Chamberlain Cottage can be seen in Breuer’s design for his own home in New Canaan, Connecticut in 1948, which also featured vertically oriented, unpainted wooden siding.



Figure 28: Marcel Breuer's Chamberlin House, 1941, unknown photographer; Image from *Cape Cod Modern*, Peter McMahon and Christine Cipriani, page 153

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<sup>232</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 151-153.

In addition to Gropius and Breuer, there were numerous other European modernists who gathered in Cape Cod. This unique concentration of European modernists can be attributed to artistic and philosophical trends that were already well underway in the area, bolstered by Gropius' direct connection to Harvard's Architecture Department and Design School. At Harvard, Gropius encountered student Jack Phillips, a member of a wealthy American family who had inherited a substantial land holding on Cape Cod, near the towns of Wellfleet and Truro. In 1938, Phillips designed and built a studio space on Newcomb Hollow Beach. This building had a simple, rectangular footprint and a single shed roof line, which "echoed the gentle slope of the surrounding sand dunes."<sup>233</sup> The eastern wall was the tallest point of the shed roof, made of a glass window wall that faced the ocean. The rest of the building's exterior was wrapped in vertical wood siding. Though a relatively simple building, it had a clear and purposeful modern aesthetic.<sup>234</sup> Phillips' next building, also built in 1938, was the Paper Palace, roughly a mile south of his studio. According to McMahon and Cipriani, Phillips' design clearly incorporates "cubist forms inspired by European high modernism," modified to reflect "the local tradition of recycling." Phillips' design is novel in that it used reclaimed lumber and an exterior material called Homasote, "a pressed board of pulped paper and newspaper." This residence became a "social nexus" for the intellectual and artistic community on Cape Cod.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 43-45.

<sup>234</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 45.

<sup>235</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 48.

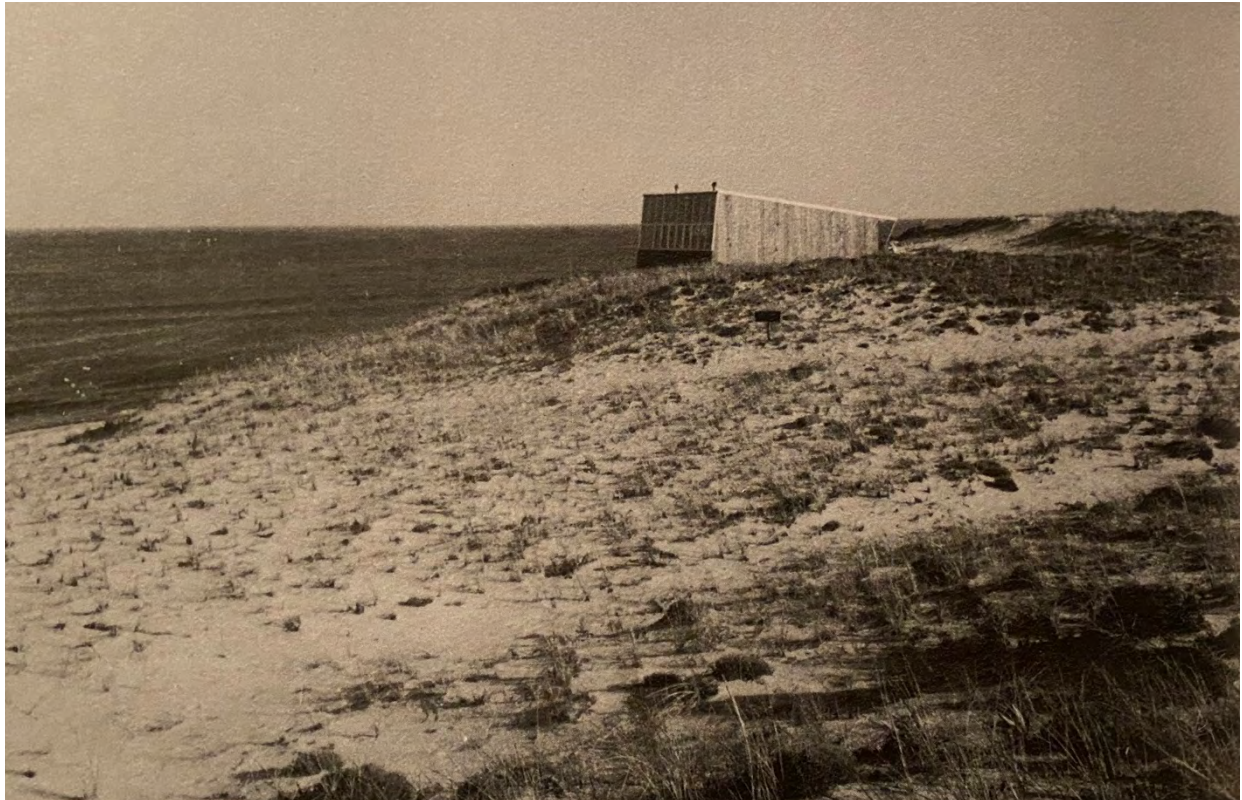


Figure 29: Jack Phillips' Studio, 1938, Wellfleet, Massachusetts, photographer unknown; Image from *Cape Cod Modern*, Peter McMahon and Christine Cipriani, page 48

Other significant European modernists who found their way to Cape Cod include Russian architect Serge Chermayeff and Finnish architect Olav Hammarström. Chermayeff and his family arrived in Lincoln, Massachusetts in 1940, where they spent time living with the Gropius family. In the early 1940s, Chermayeff and his family were invited to the Paper Palace by architect Peter Harnden. Soon after, they began renting a cabin from Phillips, which they purchased in 1944. Although the cabin was remote and rustic, it "immediately became an informal architect's hostel, hosting Walter and Ise Gropius an, on occasion, Eero and Lily Saarinen." It also served Chermayeff as a "laboratory for design experiments." Originally a

rather common example of a Cape Cod cottage, Chermayeff made numerous additions to the original structure over time, to the point that the original structure was unrecognizable.<sup>236</sup>

Hammarström first came to Cape Cod to visit soon-to-be wife Marianne Strengell, a Finnish American textile designer who had previously visited the area to stay with the Saarinen family. A former employee of renowned Finnish architect Alvar Aalto, Hammarström was not a student of the Bauhaus. Rather, Hammarström was more closely aligned with a unique strain of Scandinavian Modernism. In 1952, Hammarström built a home near Wellfleet for himself and Strengell. The home was composed of two main wings, offset at a 35-degree angle, which were connected by an open breezeway. The exterior walls were made of "spruce stained dark with creosote," giving it a quality that "blends quietly with the bark of the pitch pines around it." Although there is less reference to New England colonial architecture in Hammarström's design, it is notable for the special attention paid to the surrounding landscape, as it was deliberately sited "so that it displaced only one tree," and intentionally camouflaged to mimic its surroundings.<sup>237</sup>

It is important to note that the convergence of Modernism and vernacular architecture on Cape Cod coincided with a burgeoning trend towards regional Modernism that was occurring internationally. Though this turn towards regionalism would not fully mature until the mid-century, there were earlier practitioners who made deliberate attempts to combine Modern architectural design with regional and vernacular influences. One such individual was Finnish architect Alvar Aalto, whose work demonstrates an amalgam of influences. According

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<sup>236</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 123-125.

<sup>237</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 188-196.



to Curtis, Aalto “passed through a simplified classicism of his own before absorbing the lessons of the international modern movement...in the late 1920s.” Additionally, Aalto was influenced by the work of Swedish architect Erik Gunnar Asplund, who gained attention for his Woodland Chapel, built between 1918 and 1920. The Woodland Chapel was a cemetery building, which Curtis describes as an “ingenious blend of classical temple and Nordic hut,” containing a “combination of primary geometries, classical archetypes, vernacular inspirations and natural analogies.”<sup>238</sup> Discussing the significance of this building and Aalto’s work in the history of Modern architecture, Curtis says the following:

Theoretically modernism rejects National Romanticism and neo-classicism, but it is probably truer to say that it pushed underground certain of the impulses which had created these tendencies. When both Asplund and Aalto attempted to sensitize modern architecture to their respective cultural and geographical conditions of the 1930s, some of these subterranean streams resurfaced, but in a new form.<sup>239</sup>

Discussing Aalto’s career more specifically, Curtis pays special attention to Villa Mairea as a good example of his ability to synthesize multiple influences, blending high style modernism and regional traditions. Built between 1938 and 1941, Aalto was given permission by his clients to treat the home as an experiment, which gave him an “opportunity to pull together many of the themes which had been preoccupying him in recent years, but which he had not always been able to introduce into actual buildings.” Curtis refers to the resulting building as “Romantic Modernism,” incorporating “the Finnish vernacular tradition and the

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<sup>238</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 145-146.

<sup>239</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 146.

regional demands of climate and landscape.” The result was an L-shaped building that “recalled, loosely, Finnish farm buildings with ‘semi-courtyards’.”<sup>240</sup> The rear courtyard, which traditionally would have protected livestock from harsh weather, created a private outdoor space that Aalto outfitted with a curvilinear pool and sauna. The building’s exterior featured plain white stucco walls, punctuated with projections clad in vertical wood siding. Discussing the impact of Aalto’s work at Villa Mairea, Curtis says, “It was to examples like this that post-war architects could turn, in their own attempt at breaking with the increasingly restrictive bondage of received formulae, and in their own quest for an authentic synthesis of the local and the international, the ancient and the modern.”<sup>241</sup>



Figure 30: Villa Mairea, Alvar Aalto, Noormarkku, Finland; Photo by Ninara;  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villa\\_Mairea#/media/File:4Y1A7841\\_Alvar\\_Aalto,\\_Finland\\_\(26710745140\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villa_Mairea#/media/File:4Y1A7841_Alvar_Aalto,_Finland_(26710745140).jpg)

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<sup>240</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 346.

<sup>241</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 348-349.

In the United States, there were trends towards regionalism and vernacular architecture emerging at this point separate from Gropius and the network of intellectuals frequenting Cape Cod. Kevin D. Murphy points to Eleanor Raymond, an American Modernist educated at the Cambridge School in Massachusetts. Raymond was a student of American architectural history and wrote extensively about American architecture in its most common form. Her 1931 essay *Early Domestic American Architecture in Pennsylvania* was a study “on the relationship between historic and modern architecture,” and Raymond intentionally skirted the state’s more famous buildings in favor of smaller, common examples of vernacular architecture that were ubiquitous throughout the state, paying special attention to “the barns, spring houses, smoke houses, and bake houses that she recorded in photographs.” According to Murphy, these buildings spoke to Raymond’s Modernist sensibilities because their fundamental purpose was functionality and utility, not ornamentation.<sup>242</sup> Similar to Gropius, but conceived independently, Raymond incorporated vernacular New England building traditions into Modern design. In 1932, Raymond designed the Raymond-Kingsbury House for her sister and her sister’s partner in Belmont, a suburb of Boston. Murphy describes this building as “the complete assimilation of New England vernacular architecture by European modernism.” An overtly geometric, Modern form, composed of “geometric volumes,” the building’s exterior material was made of rough-cut matched boards, painted a muted grey-green color. According to Murphy, “This earthy color, a conscious departure from the white used on the European modernist houses...confirmed the relationship between the building and its setting. Matched boards

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<sup>242</sup> Murphy, “The Vernacular Moment,” 309-311.

carried associations not only with the organicism of nature, however, but also with the traditional American architecture that Raymond studied and admired."<sup>243</sup>



Figure 31: "Raymond-Kingsbury House, Belmont, Mass., 1932," Historic New England; Image from Kevin D. Murphy, "The Vernacular Moment: Eleanor Raymond, Walter Gropius, and New England Modernism Between the Wars," in the *Journal of Architectural Historians* Vol. 70, no. 3, page 318

An especially important figure to experiment with regionalism during this period was architect Louis Kahn. Born in Russia in 1901, Louis Kahn and his family immigrated to the United States in 1905. He attended the architectural program at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received a traditional Beaux-Arts education.<sup>244</sup> By the 1920s and 30s, however, Kahn began to experiment with Modernism, which was spreading beyond Europe. In *The Houses of*

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<sup>243</sup> Murphy, "The Vernacular Moment," 318-319.

<sup>244</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 535.



*Louis Kahn*, written by George H. Marcus and William Whitaker, it is noted that Kahn designed several homesteads in New Jersey that were strictly modern, showing “near total adherence to the austerity of the International Style,” and Kahn’s “increasing knowledge of Le Corbusier was evident.”<sup>245</sup> However, within just a few years, Kahn began to deviate from the strict formality of Modernism in several important ways. In particular,

The period between 1937 and 1942 had reshaped Kahn’s thinking profoundly as he found in the buildings of Philadelphia architects, many of whom he knew and worked with, a new understanding of modernism that responded to the specifics of place. Kahn’s Philadelphia colleagues believed that local building traditions were essential to producing a modern work.<sup>246</sup>

One of Kahn’s colleagues in Philadelphia was Kenneth Mackenzie Day, who demonstrated a notable “sensitivity to local building traditions.” The Marshall Cole House, built in New Hope in 1936, is a clearly Modern building with obvious geometric massing. However, it is clad in “naturally finished wood siding, laid vertically and flush to the frame,” with accents made from “local stone.”<sup>247</sup> Similarly, Kahn designed a home for Jesse and Ruth Oser, built in Elkins Park between 1940 and 1942. In this design, Kahn “employed naturally treated wood...chose locally quarried stone...and related the house carefully to its site.”<sup>248</sup> Just as Gropius had found inspiration from the vernacular architecture of New England, Kahn found inspiration in the vernacular architecture in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. By the 1940s, Kahn had become familiar with Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer, and Kahn had worked with many of their

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<sup>245</sup> George H. Marcus and William Whitaker, *The Houses of Louis Kahn*, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2013) 24.

<sup>246</sup> Marcus and Whitaker, *The Houses of Louis Kahn*, 27.

<sup>247</sup> Marcus and Whitaker, *The Houses of Louis Kahn*, 27.

<sup>248</sup> Marcus and Whitaker, *The Houses of Louis Kahn* 24.

students who had trained under that at them Harvard architecture program. In 1947, Kahn formed a friendship with Vincent Scully, who had recently finished his studies on Shingle Style architecture. That same year, Kahn accepted a position as a professor of architecture at Yale University, where he would remain for the next decade, after which he would teach at the University of Pennsylvania. In the late 1950s, Kahn taught a guest studio at Princeton, where he would encounter Charles Moore and Robert Venturi.<sup>249</sup>



Figure 32: "Kenneth Mackenzie Day, architect, Marshall Cole House, New Hope, 1934-36," from *Architectural Record*, July 1938; Image taken from *The Houses of Louis Kahn*, George H. Marcus and William Whitaker, page 27

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<sup>249</sup> Kevin P. Keim, *An Architectural Life: Memoirs & Memories of Charles W. Moore* (Boston, Massachusetts: A Bulfinch Press Book, 1996) 64.

## Late Mid-Century Modernism

By the mid-twentieth century, criticisms of Modernism were gaining traction, and there was growing emphasis on architecture's relation to setting and context. Beginning in the late 1920s, the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) had served as one of the leading proponents of Modernism in the world. However, the organization was dissolved in the 1950s due to internal dissention. In 1953, an assemblage of architects that referred to themselves as 'Team X' gathered in southern France to discuss the limitations and constraints of Modernism, eventually giving way to movements such as Brutalism and Structuralism. By the 1960s and 1970s, Robert Venturi and Charles Moore had emerged as important Modernists, eventually becoming leaders of the Post-Modern movement. These architects, regardless of what they would call their eventual architectural philosophy, were all influenced in some way by the turn towards regionalism that had begun in the 1930s and 1940s. Moving forward, there was far greater attention given to the setting and context of architectural design than had been encouraged under Modernism.<sup>250</sup>

By 1950s, Le Corbusier, who had been perhaps one of the most dogmatic Modernists in previous decades, had himself turned away from Modernism's ahistorical slant. Curtis notes that, beginning in 1945, Le Corbusier's work was driven by "a sense of primitivism, and by a deliberate cultivation of ancient associations." Perhaps disillusioned by the violence and destruction wrought by modern technology during the Second World War, Le Corbusier's work in the post-war period marks a dramatic departure from his earlier work.<sup>251</sup> One particularly

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<sup>250</sup> Fazio, et al., *Buildings Across Time*, 515-525.

<sup>251</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 417-419.

demonstrative example is the Chapel of Notre-Dame-du-Haut at Ronchamp, built between 1950 and 1954. The Chapel at Ronchamp has an irregular, asymmetrical footprint. The concrete walls are curved, giving the building an organic quality. Curtis notes that the roof has a “complex curvature” that comes to sharp point on one side, resting “uneasily on convex and concave battered-rubble walls punctuated by irregular openings.” Between the walls and the roofline, there is a small ribbon window that illuminates the interior. Absent his characteristic Five Points, the overall effect of Le Corbusier’s design gives the building a chthonic, cave-like feeling.<sup>252</sup> This nod to something more primitive is in reference to the location’s significance as a pilgrimage site, dating back to pre-Christian times. While initial receptions to the Chapel at Ronchamp were not favorable, it is remembered as one of his most significant works. In the context of Modernism and regionalism, it is important because it demonstrates a clear and deliberate attempt to address the building’s physical context and the history of place.

In the United States, experimentations with regional Modernism continued throughout the mid-twentieth century. On the east coast, the community of artists and intellectuals who had settled in Cape Cod remained active and continued to embrace regional elements into their work. As McMahon and Cipriani astutely put it, “modernism was the victim of its own success: it had become the new orthodoxy.” As Modernism began to fracture, “the generation coming of age in the 1960s and ’70s took pieces of modernism’s remnants and ran in different directions.”<sup>253</sup> A later addition to the Cape Cod scene was Maurice K. Smith, an architect from New Zealand. Smith immigrated to the United States in 1952 to study architecture at the

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<sup>252</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 419-420.

<sup>253</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 219-220.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). During his first summer in America, he visited Cape Cod and stayed at Chermayeff's studio, where he rubbed elbows with other architects and intellectuals. In 1958, Smith became a faculty member at MIT and "stayed for 40 years, exploring his fascinations with vernacular methods of planning and construction."<sup>254</sup> Smith became a proponent of "incomplete buildings," which were intended to grow and change over time. Part of his intention was for "architecture to be fully participatory, free of hierarchy and restraint — to invite alteration by the user." The houses Smith designed were incredibly complex, composed of "multiple levels, irregular perimeters, and a great variety of spatial experiences." His personal residence at Harvard was built in 1966 and is still considered a "work in progress."<sup>255</sup> The house is clad in wood siding, punctuated by windows of many different shapes, sizes, and patterns. The roof line is composed by innumerable shed roofs, which are situated at different pitches and in different directions.

In 1968, two of Smith's students found their own way to Cape Cod. That year, Steve Leff and Toby Hanks were hired to build a summer home in Wellfleet for Peter Swiggart, a philosophy professor at Brandeis University. Their design is similar to Smith's personal residence, but much more restrained. Made entirely of salvaged materials, the main exterior of the home is clad in horizontal wood siding, while the basement is made of concrete blocks. The windows, also salvaged, vary in shape, size, and pattern. The roofline is composed of multiple intersecting shed roof lines, and there are multiple decks and porches positioned at different levels. McMahon and Cipriani describe Leff and Hank's design, saying, "The result is a

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<sup>254</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 220-221.

<sup>255</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 223.



complex assemblage of cozy nooks and exciting vertical spaces. Every bedroom has its own tree-house-like balcony, set high among the leaves, and the multitude of shed roofs gives the house a chaotic profile.”<sup>256</sup> Although examples of the Shed Style that appeared in residential subdivisions have not yet been discussed, it is worth noting that Leff and Hank’s design at Wellfleet bears a striking resemblance to suburban adaptations of the Shed Style (to be discussed in greater detail at a later point).



Figure 33: “Maurice K. Smith, Smith House, Harvard, Massachusetts (begun 1966),” photographer unknown; Image from *Cape Cod Modern*, Peter McMahon and Christine Cipriani, page 223

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<sup>256</sup> McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 222-225.

Edward Larrabee Barnes is another figure of note whose work combined elements of Modernism and vernacular architecture. Barnes was among the first generation of American architects to study the new Bauhaus under Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer at Harvard.<sup>257</sup> In 1959, Barnes began construction for the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts campus on the coast of Deer Isle, Maine.<sup>258</sup> According to a brief summary of his career published by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) following his posthumous nomination for the 2007 AIA Gold Medal, Barnes' work is "remembered for fusing Modernism with vernacular architecture and understated design."<sup>259</sup>

Barnes' design for the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts is generally considered a significant departure from formal, high style Modernism, and the "buildings were module-based designs referencing barn-like vernacular buildings, ornamented only by their inherent geometric forms and their siting on campus."<sup>260</sup> The buildings are situated on wooden platforms connected by walkways, which rise and fall with the topography. This creates the sensation that the campus is "seeming to float above the forest floor."<sup>261</sup> The overall site plan and circulation patterns can be "likened to a village connected by streets."<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 398.

<sup>258</sup> "Haystack Mountain School of Crafts," National Register of Historic Places, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, November 18, 2005 <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/1a4e1e7b-72b1-46e4-bbeb-fc469b28d2a1>

<sup>259</sup> Russell Boniface, "Edward Larrabee Barnes, FAIA, Selected for 2007 AIA Gold Medal," accessed September 2, 2021, [http://info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek06/1208/1208n\\_gold.htm](http://info.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek06/1208/1208n_gold.htm)

<sup>260</sup> Haystack Mountain School of Crafts," National Register of Historic Places.

<sup>261</sup> Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, "Architecture," accessed September 2, 2021 <https://www.haystack-mtn.org/about/#architecture>

<sup>262</sup> Haystack Mountain School of Crafts," National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 34: Model of the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, by Edward Larrabee Barnes; Image from the Modern Museum of Art, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/1046>



Figure 35: A view of the Haystack Mountain School, "The weathered shingles and deck of haystack," photograph by Jonathan Laurence; Image from "A World Apart," by Isaac Kestenbaum, *Maine. Magazine*, <https://www.themainemag.com/1630-a-world-apart/#close>



The buildings vary in size and shape, but they all share a simple rectangular footprint. A majority of the original 26 buildings feature a single, steeply pitched shed roof line. Several of the larger buildings feature a steep shed roof that then intersects with a flat pitch roof. The building's exteriors are clad in cedar shingles, and the wood used to construct the buildings was gathered on site. The color palette is a set of muted greys, greens, and browns, mirroring the surrounding landscape. The buildings all feature large, single pane windows that face outwards towards the water. In 1989, Robert Campbell profiled Barnes' design for *Architecture: the AIA Journal*. His writing, quoted extensively in the site's National Register Nomination, says the following about the significance of the Haystack Mountain School:

It was designed at a moment when many leading American architects – Rudolph, Franzen, Johansen, Breuer, Saarinen, for example – were tending towards elaborate sculptural form as a means of relieving the monotony of the International style. Haystack was a conscious reaction against that trend and an influential one.

Haystack's simplicity, its natural materials, its clean-cut angular shapes, its vernacular reference, its attitude of leaving nature untouched – all those qualities exercised an influence that was immediate and strong but remains largely unrecognized. A whole generation of shed-roof American buildings, starting with MLTW's Sea Ranch in California, belongs in some degree to a tradition begun by Ed Barnes at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts.<sup>263</sup>

Barnes' design for the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts demonstrates a clear attention to vernacular and regional architecture, reflected in his choice of materials and the building's deliberately simple, straightforward designs. It also shows a conscious effort to respect and adapt to the existing landscape.

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<sup>263</sup> Haystack Mountain School of Crafts," National Register of Historic Places.

In 1966, Robert Venturi published *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, his "gentle manifesto." According to Curtis, the sentiments expressed in *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* were "the reflections of a decade...and a handbook of sensibility for a generation bored by the blandness of what they called 'orthodox modern architecture.'" In it, Venturi argues against the simplicity and purist rigidity of Modernism. He advocates for something new, something that is more complicated and meaningful. Venturi says the following:

Architects can no longer afford to be intimidated by the puritanically moral language of orthodox Modern architecture. I like elements which are hybrid rather than "pure," compromising rather than "clean," distorted rather than "straightforward," ambiguous rather than "articulated,"...I am for messy vitality over obvious unity.

I am for richness of meaning rather than clarity of meaning; for the implicit function as well as the explicit function. I prefer "both-and" to "either-or," black and white, and sometimes gray, to black and white. A valid architecture evokes many levels of meaning and combination of focus: its space and its elements become readable and workable in several ways at once.

But an architecture of complexity and contradiction has a special obligation toward the whole: its truth must be in its totality or its implications of totality. It must embody the difficult unity of inclusion rather than the easy unity of exclusion. More is not less.<sup>264</sup>

According to Venturi, Modernism became too singularly focused, and "puritanically advocated the separation and exclusion of elements, rather than the inclusion of various requirements and their juxtapositions." As a result, "Modern architects with few exceptions eschewed

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<sup>264</sup> Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, 22-23.

ambiguity."<sup>265</sup> Taking aim at Mies van der Rohe's motto "Less is more," Venturi asserts that this doctrine "bemoans complexity," going so far as to say that Mies' "exquisite pavilions have had valuable implications for architecture, but their selectiveness of content and language is their limitation as well as their strength." Venturi also notes that his intention is not to discourage simplicity, but to encourage "inner complexity" and ward off blandness.<sup>266</sup> Venturi pays special attention to the works of individuals such as Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, and Louis Kahn as examples of Modern architects who did not shy away from complicated, nuanced designs.

Robert Venturi studied architecture at Princeton under the direction of Jean Labatut, who was trained in the Beaux-Arts. As a young architect, Venturi worked for Louis Kahn, who proved especially influential. According to Curtis, Kahn "stood out like a sentinel of ancient sense and principle...He encouraged a respect for the past and an understanding of the role of *ideas* in architectural expression. His pupils were presented with a very different diet from their Harvard contemporaries, who laboured under the inheritance of Gropius."<sup>267</sup> Three years before he published *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, Venturi built a home for his mother, the Vanna Venturi House, in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania. The Vanna Venturi house seems to demonstrate some of the idea expressed in *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*. According to Mark Gelernter, Venturi was employing shapes that carried obvious symbolic meaning, on the basis of "familiarity and convention." For example, "A prominent gable means 'house'." The large, front facing gable on the Vanna Venturi House is a simple

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<sup>265</sup> Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1966) 23-24.

<sup>266</sup> Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, 24-25.

<sup>267</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture*, 560.

form, but it is laden with meaning and cultural associations. In his design, Venturi “refers so explicitly to a traditional gable roof house form that it almost parodies the idea. The gable has become the entire house.”<sup>268</sup> This simple form is actually quite complex in terms of the ideas behind the design and the historical associations it evokes. Venturi’s use of ornament is also worth noting. As described by Gelernter, “Defiantly challenging the Modernist prohibition against applied decoration and ornament, Venturi ran a thin horizontal band around the building, and sprang a false and broken arch over the entry.” Additionally, Venturi positioned a horizontal beam underneath the false arch, which “carries its weight according to an entirely different structural principle.”<sup>269</sup> In a purposefully obvious way, the arch and beam placement is a clear contradiction.



Figure 36: “Vanna Venturi House in Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,” photograph by Carol M. Highsmith; Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Online Catalog, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011631329/>

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<sup>268</sup> Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture*, 285-287.

<sup>269</sup> Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture*, 287.

Another important proponent of Modernism and Regionalism was Charles Moore, a friend and colleague of Robert Venturi. Like Venturi, Moore was also trained under Labatut's Beaux-Arts curriculum at Princeton during graduate school. In Kevin P. Keim's biography of Moore, *An Architectural Life* (written with direct input from Moore himself), Keim notes that Moore had always shown a preoccupation with history.<sup>270</sup> His doctoral dissertation was a study on the history of water as an architectural theme, and the "idea of absorbing history and using the past to enrich contemporary design was at the heart of his work."<sup>271</sup> In *The Shingle Style Today*, Vincent Scully asserts that Moore was also familiar with his work on architectural history, which had a lasting impact on his work. According to Scully, "Moore has volunteered the information (as few do) that he had read my publications of the Stick and Shingle Style...and so became interested in their possibilities at an early date."<sup>272</sup>

Like Venturi, Moore was critical of Modernism and its limitations. As a post-doctoral fellow, Moore spent a year working for Louis Kahn, who had a tremendous impact on Moore's architectural philosophy. In particular, "The purity of form and discipline of geometry were essential, as was Kahn's willingness to draw from historic form and precedent."<sup>273</sup> Before his time in graduate school at Princeton, Moore had spent some time living in California, where he was exposed to the Bay Region architectural style, which was a complex amalgam of different cultural and aesthetic influences.<sup>274</sup> After his post-doctoral work was finished, Moore returned to California and settled in Berkeley. It was there that he established his first architectural firm,

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<sup>270</sup> Keim, *An Architectural Life*, 55.

<sup>271</sup> Keim, *An Architectural Life*, 61.

<sup>272</sup> Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style Today or The Historian's Revenge*, 17.

<sup>273</sup> Keim, *An Architectural Life*, 64-65.

<sup>274</sup> Keim, *An Architectural Life*, 27.

Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull, and Whitaker (MLTW), alongside Donlyn Lyndon, William Turnbull, and Richard Whitaker. In 1962, MLTW was recruited by real estate developers Castle and Cook to help design a new residential community in northern California, called Sea Ranch. Although this firm was short-lived, disbanding in 1965, Moore's time at Sea Ranch resulted in some of his most enduring and influential work.<sup>275</sup>

## Sea Ranch

The creation of Sea Ranch occurred during a time in which California was seeing an immense uptick in development. As discussed briefly in Chapter Two, California saw a substantial increase in suburban development beginning in the early twentieth century. California architect Cliff May transformed the vernacular ranchero into the iconic Ranch house, which quickly became a ubiquitous domestic form nationwide. Architectural historian Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher places Sea Ranch in a larger context of suburban development in California. While many "suburban communities of mass-produced homes were derided for cookie-cutter monocultural sameness," there were several who were trying to "break this mold" by pursuing "projects embracing progressive social values that were equated with both modern architectural and modern approaches to the particularities of site."<sup>276</sup> The post-war developmental boom "offered abundant opportunities for developers, architects, and urban designers to experiment with local versions of the New Town or Garden City planning model."

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<sup>275</sup> Keim, *An Architectural Life*, 86-87.

<sup>276</sup> Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher, "Architecture for Progressive Living," in *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, ed. Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker (San Francisco, California: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2018) 27.

An early example of this trend was the Mutual Housing Association (MHA), established in the mid-1940s by a group of musicians. According to Fletcher, several of these musicians played in an orchestra at Taliesin, where they had been “exposed to Frank Lloyd Wright’s architectural vision for ‘ex-urban’ living, Broadacre City...Loosely based on the Garden City model.” The MHA’s plans called for a communal residential co-op, called Crestwood Hills, that was to be “racially and religiously integrated.” The homes were designed by Modernist architects, such as A. Quincy Jones and Whitney Smith, with site plans designed by landscape architect Garrett Eckbo.<sup>277</sup>

According to Fletcher, Sea Ranch was created in this tradition of progressive planning practices and communal values. The site for Sea Ranch was selected by Alfred “Al” Boeke in 1960. By this time, Boeke had already established his career as an architect and residential planner, having previously worked on New Town projects (born from the Garden City Movement), and for Modern architect Richard Neutra. By this time, he was working for Castle & Cooke, a real estate development and investment firm owned by Dole Pineapple Company. The site for Sea Ranch was a 10-mile-long, 1-mile-deep strip of land on the coast of Northern California, that was used as a sheep ranch. According to Fletcher, “the land consisted of craggy shoreline, a series of meadows delineated by rows of windswept Monterey cypress trees, and...a dense forest backed by the Gualala River.” Recognizing the challenges of managing a large, ecologically complex site, Boeke hired landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, “as well as land, water, and wind experts.” Halprin was also familiar with New Town

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<sup>277</sup> Fletcher, “Architecture for Progressive Living,” 28-30.

philosophies, and ecologically sound land stewardship was central to his plans for Sea Ranch. Together, Boeke and Halprin intended for Sea Ranch to be hinged on an ethos of “living lightly on the land,” built using “indigenous materials” that were in keeping with the surrounding environment.<sup>278</sup> In order to ensure future development adhered to the principles evoked during its founding, Boeke enlisted a lawyer to draft covenants, conditions, & restrictions (CC&Rs), which mandated “that the highest priority of a property owner in The Sea Ranch is to preserve the character of the development’s natural environment.”<sup>279</sup> Apart from the unique architecture that would be built there, Sea Ranch is also notable for its comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to landscape management.

Halprin’s design for Sea Ranch “prioritized the maintenance of large swaths of meadow, identified as shared spaces, and relegated buildings to their edges.” As Fletcher notes, Halprin’s plan was “an antithesis to the waterfront view.” Rather than build homes with an ocean front view, Halprin positioned them curved around the perimeter of the shared meadow space, which helped ensure “visual access to the ocean for all.” In addition to Halprin, Boeke recruited architect Joseph Esherick, the newly formed MLTW firm, and designer Barbara Stauffacher Solomon.<sup>280</sup> Joseph Esherick designed a general store, restaurant, and several single-family residences at Sea Ranch. The Sea Ranch General Store featured a single shed roofline and was clad in vertically oriented wood siding. The entrance was embellished by a large, graphic cartoon depiction of a ram’s horns, designed by Barbara Stauffacher Solomon as

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<sup>278</sup> Fletcher, “Architecture for Progressive Living,” 30-31.

<sup>279</sup> Fletcher, “Architecture for Progressive Living,” 33.

<sup>280</sup> Fletcher, “Architecture for Progressive Living,” 31-32.



a logo for Sea Ranch. Discussing the thought process for her design, Solomon recalls that her “first impression of The Sea Ranch had been sheep. And for a long time, they kept a shepherd and some sheep...They needed a logo, and the ram’s head also looked like a wave.”<sup>281</sup> This logo also appears on the entryway marker building (designed by Esherick) and various pamphlets and brochures.<sup>282</sup> A 1965 brochure designed by Solomon features another version of the cartoon ram, whose wool coat is made of small ocean waves.<sup>283</sup> Solomon’s designs demonstrate a clever incorporation of the landscape’s physical features and pastoral history.



Figure 37: Image showing The Sea Ranch General Store with the ram’s head logo designed by Barbara Stauffacher Solomon; Photograph by George Homsey, ca. 1968; Image from Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker, *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, page 55

<sup>281</sup> Barbara Stauffacher Solomon, “Barbara Stauffacher Solomon,” in *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, ed. Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker (San Francisco, California: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2018) 53-55.

<sup>282</sup> Joseph Becker, “Building in Place,” in *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, ed. Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker (San Francisco, California: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2018) 134.

<sup>283</sup> Solomon, “Barbara Stauffacher Solomon,” 57.



Figure 38: "Graphic from The Sea Ranch brochure," designed Barbara Stauffacher Solomon, ca. 1965; Image from Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker, *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, page 57

In addition to the Sea Ranch General Store, Esherick also designed a series of single-family residences called the "Hedgerow Houses." The name is a reference to the rows of cypress trees present on the site. According to architectural historian Joseph Becker, "the landscape offered very little protection for the thousands of sheep. To manage the livestock, ranchers had planted rows of cypress trees running perpendicular to the coast...with the densely planted trees offering shelter from the persistent northwest winds that whipped across the site." Esherick's design was conscious of this historic landscape pattern, and his "houses

were purposefully blended into the existing hedgerows and clustered close together."<sup>284</sup>

Esherick also used the environment as a source of inspiration for his designs. According to

Becker:

The sloping roof angles mimicked the natural geometry of the windblown cypress, architectural details like roof and window eaves were eliminated so that they wouldn't catch the wind, and unfinished shingle siding blended the structures into the natural environment. The designs strove to minimize not only the ecological footprint, but the visual one.<sup>285</sup>

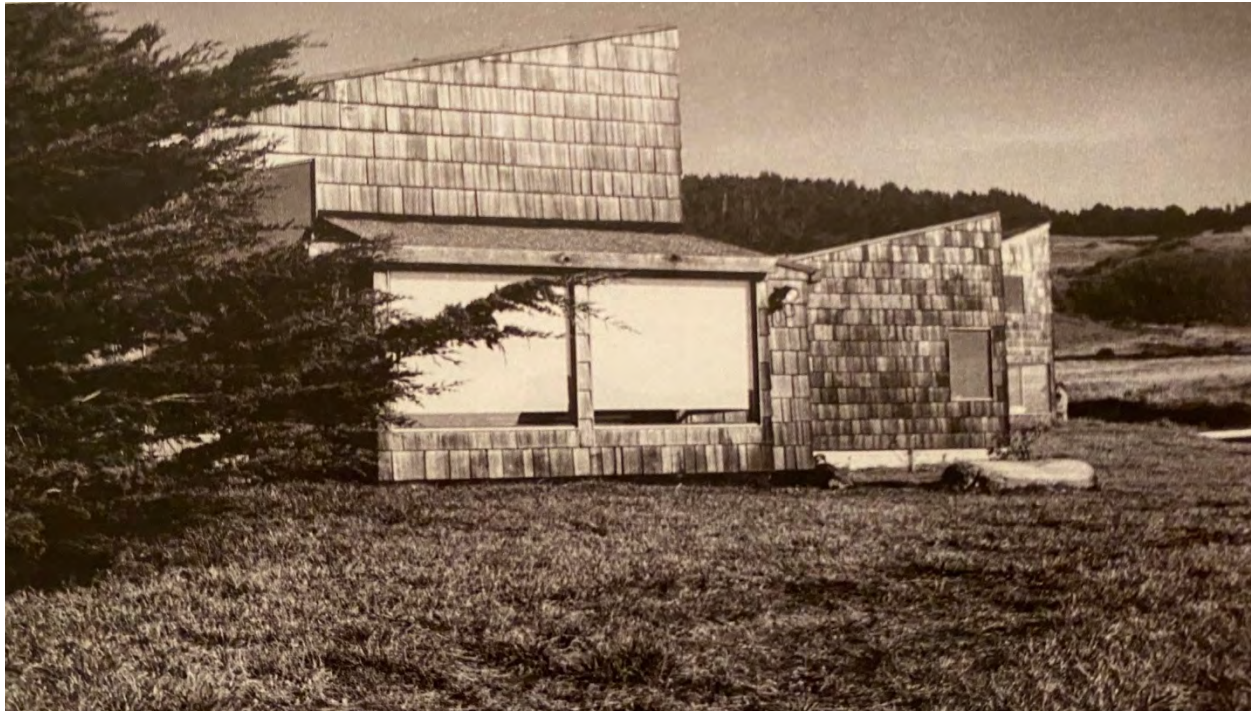


Figure 39: Hedgerow Houses, by Joseph Esherick and Associates, 1966; Unknown photographer, ca. 1968; Image from Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker, *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, page 135

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<sup>284</sup> Becker, "Building in Place," 134-135.

<sup>285</sup> Becker, "Building in Place," 135.



As part of the CC&Rs, buildings in Sea Ranch were subject to review by the Design Review Committee, which helped ensure the preservation of a unified vision and “preventing homes from becoming too visually incongruous with the site.” A key rule was the “mandate to keep all structures unpainted, and sided with weathering wood native to the locale.”<sup>286</sup>

Becker notes that Esherick was a member of the Second Bay Tradition, which was part of an architectural movement unique to the Bay Area in Northern California.<sup>287</sup> According to Lester Walker, “The Bay Region style is a continuing idiom” with several distinct phases. The First Bay Region Style, which lasted from roughly 1910 to 1930, mixed elements from “Craftsman, Swiss Chalet, some Queen Anne and Art Nouveau Styles with a Japanese influence in detailing.”<sup>288</sup> This style is characteristic in the work of people such as Charles and Henry Greene and Bernard Maybeck, and the style possessed “wildly expressionistic and creative” qualities. The Second Bay Region Style, which occurred between the 1940s and 1960s, borrowed elements from Modernism and tempered the eclecticism of the First Bay style.<sup>289</sup> The synthesis of these styles “resulted in a simple, yet elegant regional Modern architectural style endemic to the Bay Area. The resultant buildings are characterized by wood cladding, large expanses of glass, overhanging eaves, and flat or low-pitched roof forms.”<sup>290</sup> According to an Historic Context Statement by preservationist Mary Brown, entitled “San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970,” Esherick in particular was

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<sup>286</sup> Becker, “Building in Place,” 136-137.

<sup>287</sup> Becker, “Building in Place,” 134.

<sup>288</sup> Lester Walker, *American Homes: The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Domestic Architecture*, (New York City, New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 1996) 192.

<sup>289</sup> Walker, *American Homes*, 193.

<sup>290</sup> Mary Brown, *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970*, Historic Context Statement, (San Francisco City and County Planning Department, 2020) 172.

"influential in bridging the Second and Third Bay Traditions."<sup>291</sup> According to Brown, the Third Bay Tradition emerged in the 1960s and was largely the result of Moore, Esherick, and Halprin's work at Sea Ranch. Brown notes that "design elements associated with the Third Bay Tradition include wood shingle cladding, plain wood siding, and shed roof forms."<sup>292</sup> Similarly, Walker cites both Esherick and Moore as important figures in "the revitalization of the Bay Region Style" and advent of the Third Bay Region Style.<sup>293</sup>

Moore and MLTW were hired to design a communal housing building called "Condominium One," which "combined living spaces for ten units around a central courtyard." According to Becker, Condominium One was designed to reflect its environment, and the building "emerged from the landscape like a continuation of the ragged coastal cliffs as they met the blond grass of the bluff above." Becker also notes that the emphasis on communal living spoke to the Sea Ranch mentality of having a minimal impact on the land. By concentrating living units in one building, they were in turn "reducing strain on the landscape." Condominiums also addressed the issue of affordability and made life at Sea Ranch accessible to different income levels and demographics.<sup>294</sup> Condominium One is clad in vertical wood siding, and the main body is encompassed by a large, single shed roof pitch that appears to mirror the slope of the landscape. There are also several tall projecting blocks, with shed roofs facing perpendicular to the roof of the main body. The exterior walls are punctuated by large windows, and the shed roofs have numerous skylights. These windows not only light the

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<sup>291</sup> Brown, *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design*, 108.

<sup>292</sup> Brown, *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design*, 133.

<sup>293</sup> Walker, *American Homes*, 194.

<sup>294</sup> Becker, "Building in Place," 135-136.

interior, but also provide viewsheds that reinforce the overall emphasis on the surrounding landscape. In his biography of Charles Moore, Keim quotes William Turnbull, Jr. of MLTW, recording his memories of the site and the building's design. Turnbull says the following:

Our site, a promontory point, was actually a fault block with earthquake cracks running both north and south of us and out to sea. The rock arches and sea caves were the visible manifestations of the forces of nature. The ground itself sloped toward the water and the top of the site was a rocky outcrop, the stub of an old sea stack eroded over the millenniums. All this was covered by very short grazed grass and no trees.

Historically the site at the turn of the century had been the location of a small cluster of buildings servicing a log-loading chute and was called Black Point. Timber cut along the coast was milled and sent down a high line to small coastal schooners and steamers to be carried to San Francisco for construction. In 1907 there was actually a telephone on the premises, but all that was left for us were some old foundations and a beautifully weathered barn.

We took our clue from the simplicity and appropriateness of the barn. Condominium I was formed around two courtyards: one to shelter the inhabitants and one to corral the cars. The units were organized as far as possible to enjoy the views of the white water up and down the coast with less emphasis on looking directly out to sea with the glare of the western sun.

The construction technique of heavy timber framing evolved after much heated discussion, with Chuck's [Charles Moore's] point of view finally carrying the day. Because of budgetary constraints, we were cautious and wanted to stick with the proven economies of stud and plywood construction. Chuck was convinced that with local timber resources we could build just as economically in heavy timber frame, and he was right...

We had elected to cover our single-wall construction with vertical redwood boards which matched the barn and Esherick's store.<sup>295</sup>

Turnbull's recollections indicate an incredibly deliberate and sensitive approach to the landscape and its history. MLTW was finely attuned to the site's physical and social history. Beyond focusing on the geomorphology and ecology of the site, they also made note of previous human interactions with the landscape. In mimicking the historic barn on the property, they were making a clear reference to vernacular architecture and the site's history.



Figure 40: Photograph of the Black Point Barn with Condominium One in the background, by Morley Baer, 1965; Image from Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker, *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, page 126

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<sup>295</sup> Keim, *An Architectural Life*, 85-86.



Figure 41: "MLTW, Condominium One, 1965," photograph by Morley Baer, 1966; Image from Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker, *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, page 136

Donlyn Lyndon, also of MLTW, demonstrates a similar attitude to Turnbull's. In his recollection of Sea Ranch and Condominium One, Lyndon points out that the site was "not a piece of native wilderness. This is a place that had been managed for centuries. First by the indigenous Pomo people, and then by lumberers and exploiters of various sorts, and then ranch people." According to Lyndon, the involved parties at Sea Ranch "shared a sense of engagement with the place that these various other peoples had brought to it, and they loved



its character...The now very popular 'sense of place' phrase was not so common then, but was central to our concerns." He goes on to note that the general ethos at Sea Ranch was supposed "to instill stewardship" of the land, "not to tidy the place up." The landscape was the driving force, and the materials used "were also to be of the place, allowing the landscape to be the dominant influence."<sup>296</sup>



Figure 42: Image showing the surrounding landscape at Sea Ranch, "MLTW, Condominium One, 1965," photograph by Morley Baer, 1965 Image from Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker, *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, page 128

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<sup>296</sup> Donlyn Lyndon, "Donlyn Lyndon," in *The Sea Ranch: Architecture, Environment, and Idealism*, ed. Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher and Joseph Becker (San Francisco, California: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2018) 101.

Becker describes Condominium One as an exceptional example of a “vernacular-modern aesthetic,” marking a transition point between the Second and Third Bay Traditions. According to Becker, Condominium One was “an advance in the merging of vernacular, regional, and modern forms.”<sup>297</sup> He goes on to say the following:

With the strict adhesion to unfinished redwood and cypress siding, a massing of simple volumes, and shed roofs that mimicked the agricultural barn while serving to mitigate the prevailing winds, The Sea Ranch constituted an evolution of the Bay Region styles into something new.<sup>298</sup>

Describing the success of MLTW’s Condominium One, Keim notes that the design “had a stunning impact, both nationally and internationally.” According to Keim, MLTW’s work at Sea Ranch “shifted the focus of an entire generation who were influenced by its implicit respect of the vernacular and its environment, its embrace of the ordinary and common, but also its expansion into a whole new aesthetic.”<sup>299</sup> In 1991, MLTW was awarded the AIA Twenty-Five-Year Award for Condominium One “in recognition of its lasting impact on design.” The AIA award said the following:

Timeless and enduring, the condominium at Sea Ranch seems to grow naturally from the rocky, windswept coast of northern California, a triumph of innovation and tradition. Echoing the gentle pitch of the surrounding cliffs and the simple geometry of the local farm buildings, the angled roofs time the wind, at once binding the buildings to the rugged landscape and to the history of the region. Energy efficient, environmentally sensitive, profoundly conscious of the natural

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<sup>297</sup> Becker, “Building in Place,” 137.

<sup>298</sup> Becker, “Building in Place,” 137.

<sup>299</sup> Keim, *An Architectural Life*, 87.

drama of its coastal site, they have formed an alliance of architecture and nature that has inspired and captivated a generation of architects.<sup>300</sup>

While Condominium One was not the only building the members of MLTW designed at Sea Ranch, its impact was the most significant, and its influence has been the most enduring.

Writing about Condominium One and its impact for the *Journal of Architectural Education*, Donlyn Lyndon notes that the success of the vernacular modern aesthetic developed at Sea Ranch is counterintuitive to the actual intention of Sea Ranch and Condominium One. For the architects:

That the "Sea Ranch Style" was borrowed quite literally and used in many places far afield was for us a flattering disappointment. We intended to make a way of building for that special place, not for general consumption, and had hoped that others would do likewise.<sup>301</sup>

Condominium One was a specific design that was curated for a specific purpose and place. The design was intimately connected to the landscape and its history. The fact that the aesthetic they created was so readily adopted by the mainstream undermines their reason for creating it in the first place.

### **The New Shingle Style**

In 1973, Vincent Scully delivered a lecture at Columbia University discussing the lasting impact of the Shingle Style. As described by Scully, "This book is about the influence of the

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<sup>300</sup> Keim, *An Architectural Life*, 87.

<sup>301</sup> Donlyn Lyndon, "The Sea Ranch: Qualified Vernacular," *Journal of Architectural Education* 63, no. 1 (2009): 85.

Shingle Style of the 1880s on a number of American architects over the past fifteen years," especially in terms of the single-family house.<sup>302</sup> According to Scully, contemporary residential architecture owed a debt to the Shingle and Stick styles. As stated previously, Scully was quick to note that Charles Moore was familiar with his work on the Stick and Shingle Styles.

Discussing Moore's work, Scully says that "the development of his work significantly reflects many subsidiary American and European influences toward the new Shingle Style."<sup>303</sup>

Addressing the use of wooden boards rather than shingles, Scully notes that "shingles are no longer an inexpensive cladding material," thus contemporary architects are less inclined to use them. Scully draws attention to Moore's design for the Stern House, built in 1969. According to Scully, "the double-height spaces and the strong diagonals may recall those of the Shingle Style, but the effect, like that of the boarded exterior, remains tighter, sharper, and more tense."<sup>304</sup>

Scully also discusses Moore's design for the P. M. Koltz House, completed in 1971. The Koltz House is clad in vertical wood siding, and has multiple intersecting shed roof lines. The walls are punctuated by large, single-pane windows. Scully describes how the various parts of the Koltz House "remain separate, nervously articulated, sharp-edged in their thin boarding, and as varied as possible...dragged marvelously up the hill as by the stretched roof plane." According to Scully, Moore's design is reminiscent of the Shingle Style's characteristic "tendency to design in picturesque pieces, to put the composition of the house as a whole

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<sup>302</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style Today*, 1-2.

<sup>303</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style Today*, 17.

<sup>304</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style Today*, 18-19.



together out of bits.”<sup>305</sup> Whether Moore would have agreed with Scully’s analysis is unknown, but Scully’s examination of contemporary architecture and the influence of the Shingle Style helps place these happenings in a larger historical context.



Figure 43: “P. M. Koltz House, by Charles Moore, 1970-71,” photographer unknown; Image from Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style Today or The Historian’s Revenge*

Another example Scully points to is Hardy, Holzman, and Pfeiffer’s Hadley House, build in Martha’s Vineyard in 1968. The Hadley House is wrapped in wooden shingle siding and has a multitude of intersecting shed and gable roof lines. The walls are punctuated by large, single-pane windows. There is a semi-circular, second-story porch on one side, which projects

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<sup>305</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style Today*, 19-20.

outward without any supporting structures underneath. Scully compares the Hadley House to William Ralph Emerson's 1885 House at Bar Harbor, Maine, a traditional example of Shingle Style architecture. Scully sees a parallel between the round lighthouse structure on the House at Bar Harbor, which has been "literally chopped into the single open terrace" on the Hadley House. Although Scully's assessment of the Hadley House is not necessarily positive (he repeatedly describes the building as "nervous" and "less optimistic" than its predecessors), he helps place the building in a larger historical context, drawing important parallels between the contemporary building and the Shingle Style architecture of the past.<sup>306</sup>



Figure 44: "Hadley House, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, by Hardy, Holzman and Pfeiffer, 1968," photographer unknown; Image from Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style Today or The Historian's Revenge*

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<sup>306</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style Today*, 21-22.



Scully also points to several examples of contemporary architecture that are derivative of McKim, Mead, & White's Low House, built in 1887. Scully points to George Nelson's 1957 Spaeth House in East Hampton, New York. Like the Low House, the Spaeth House is contained under one expansive gable roof line. According to Scully, Nelson "simply lets McKim, Mead and White roll over him...He obviously feels no anxiety or resentment and is not tempted to compete." Although Scully derides Nelson's design as weaker than the original, he describes it as an obvious and straightforward homage to the Low House.<sup>307</sup> Nelson was not alone in his adaptation of the Low House. According to Scully, Venturi's home for his mother, the Vanna Venturi House, was influenced by the Low House. Additionally, Robert Stern's 1966 Wiseman House in Montauk has clear references to the Low House. Like the Vanna Venturi House, Stern borrows the large Low House gable and splits it down the center. In a more obvious reference to the Low House, the Wiseman House is wrapped in shingle siding.<sup>308</sup>

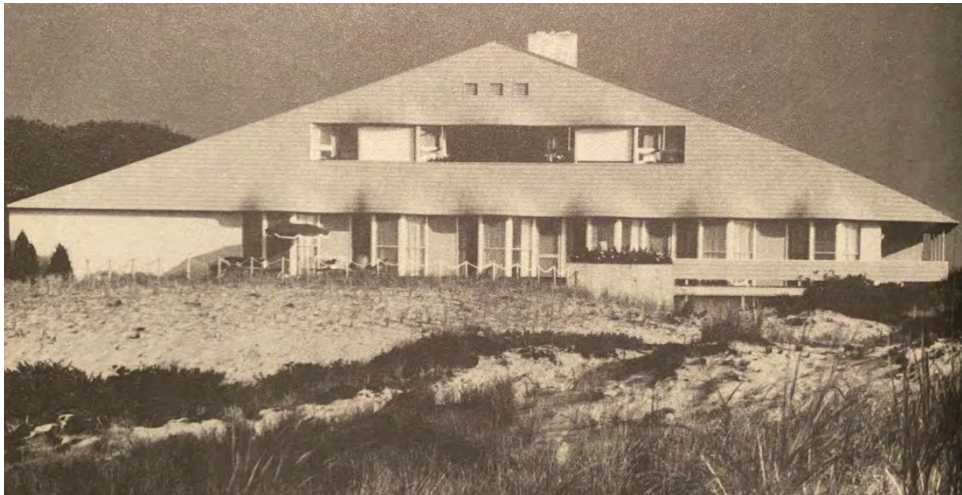


Figure 45: "Otto Spaeth House, East Hampton, New York, by Nelson and Chadwick, 1957," photographer unknown; Image from Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style Today or The Historian's Revenge*

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<sup>307</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style Today*, 26.

<sup>308</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style Today*, 32-33.

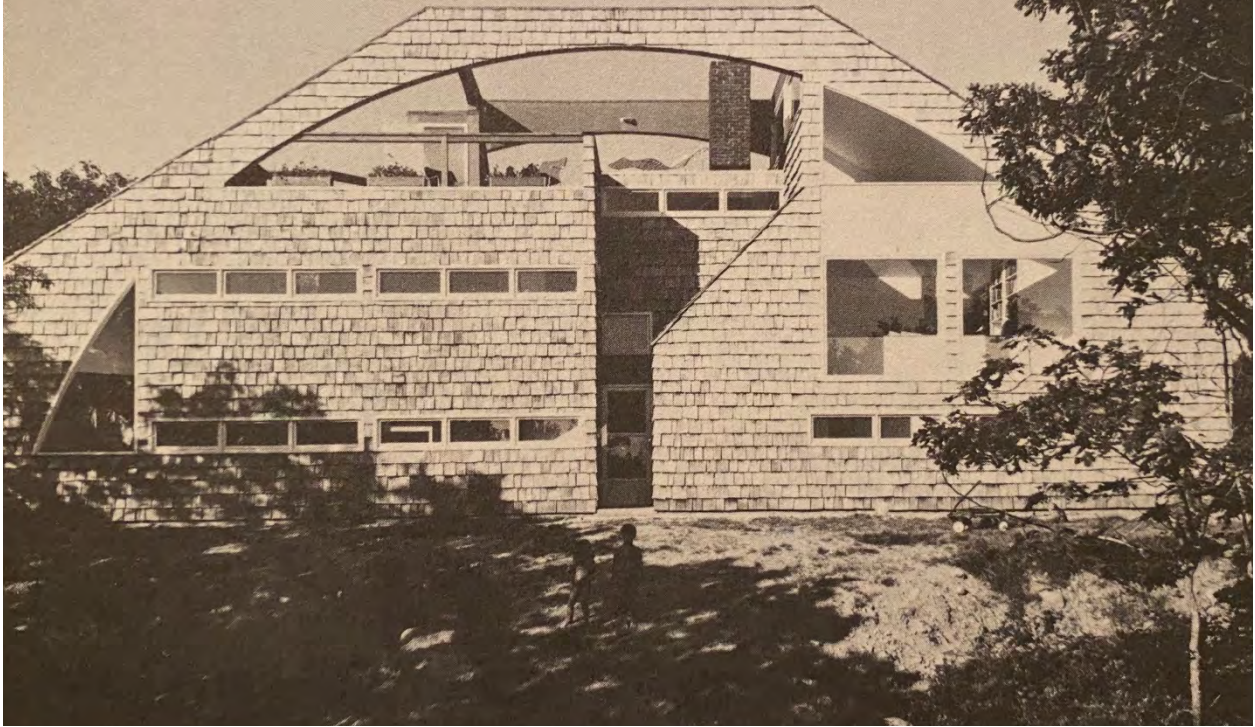


Figure 46: "Wiseman House, Montauk, New York, by Stern and Hagmann, 1966-67," photographer unknown; Image from Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style Today or The Historian's Revenge*

One of the final examples discussed by Scully are Venturi's Trubek and Wislocki Houses in Nantucket, built between 1971 and 1972. Scully notes that Nantucket, in particular, was laden with Shingle Style architecture and colonial imagery, and Venturi's project was essentially surrounded by history. Of all the examples discussed, Scully is the most celebratory of these. Positioned "side by side on a bluff above the bay at Pocomo," the two houses are small and rustic. They are wrapped in shingle siding and have steeply pitched gable roofs, emphasizing their verticality. According to Scully, the Trubek and Wislocki Houses represent a successful example of "what modern architects have always said they most wanted: a true vernacular



architecture — common, buildable, traditional in the deepest sense, and of piercing symbolic power.”<sup>309</sup>

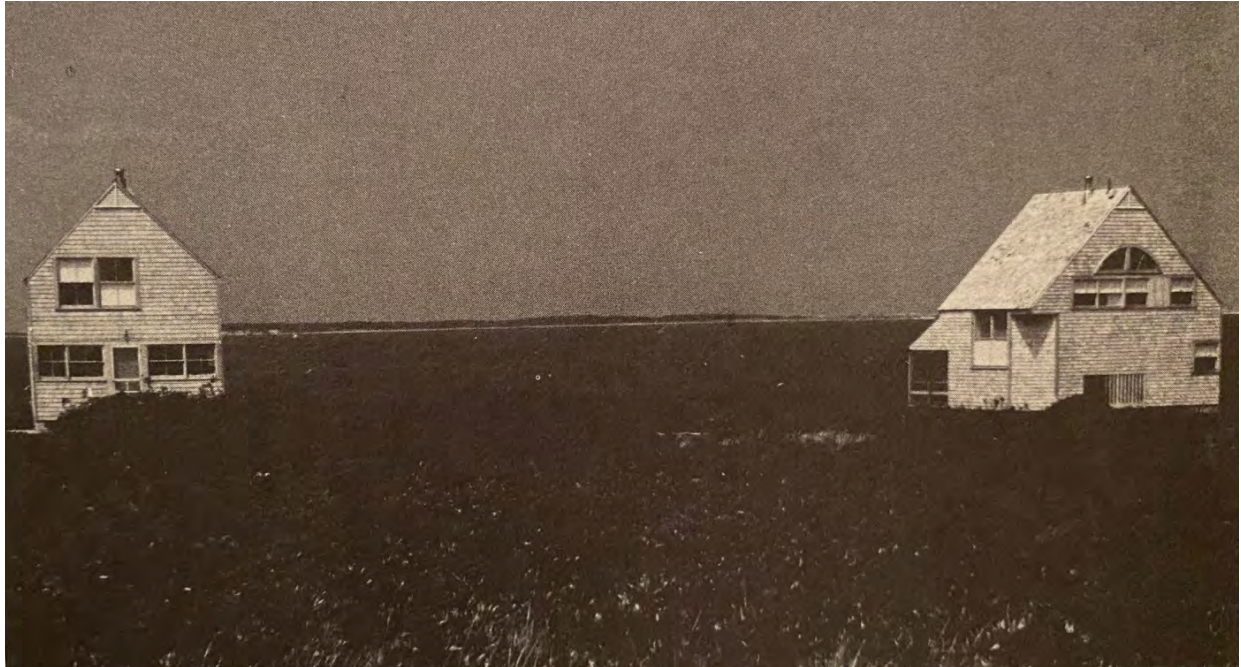


Figure 47: “Trubek (right) and Wislocki Houses, Nantucket, Massachusetts, by Venturi and Rauch, 1971-82. View in landscape.” Photographer unknown; Image from Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style Today or The Historian’s Revenge*

By focusing on this particular blend of Modernism, regionalism, and vernacular influences in contemporary architecture, and tying it back to the influence of the Shingle Style, Vincent Scully helps further contextualize the unique architectural synthesis that was happening at the time. It is important to note, however, that his focus was entirely on bespoke buildings designed by professional architects. The same can be said for the various examples included in Chapter Three thus far. The examples discussed in Cape Cod and Sea Ranch were designed by professional architects, who represented the forefront of Modernism in the 1960s and 1970s. By the late 1960s, contractors and residential developers had begun emulating this innovative

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<sup>309</sup> Scully, *The Shingle Style Today*, 35-36.

style in suburban developments across the United States. These examples were often built by contractors, based on architectural plans published widely circulate pattern books and magazines. This spread will be discussed in greater detail in the following section.

### **Popular Appearance of the Shed Style**

At this point, it is worth taking a moment to note that there is no formal, agreed upon name for the architectural style being discussed in this thesis. Vincent Scully used the phrase 'new Shingle Style,' as does Lester Walker, but that fails to fully capture the varied and complex history of contributing architectural influences. The 'Third Bay Tradition' term is also used, but that is only appropriate for those examples that appeared on the West Coast in the Bay Area, which is too geographically limiting, excluding contemporaneous examples from elsewhere in the country. The Georgia State Historic Preservation Office uses the term 'Cedar Sided Geometric,' which is only apt for those buildings that do in fact have cedar siding. Other sources use the larger, umbrella term '1970s Contemporary,' but this is not nearly descriptive or specific enough. For the purposes of this thesis, I have chosen to adopt the phrase 'Shed Style,' which is another commonly used moniker. Virginia Savage McAlester employs the term 'Shed Style,' which effectively conveys the fundamental shape of the building, without being too narrow or too vague. 'Cedar Sided Geometric' is too restrictive in terms of material, and '1970s Contemporary' leaves too much room for interpretation. 'Shed Style' seems to capture the most basic quality of this architectural style, which is the prominent use of shed roofs (although the incorporation of gable and flat roofs does occur), and it does not limit the style based on materials or location.

By the mid- to late 1960s, Shed Style house designs had begun to appear in widely distributed magazines and pattern books, such as the *Better Homes & Gardens* and *Sunset* magazines. Examples of Shed Style houses can be found from the mid-1960s through the early 1980s, at which point they began to fade in popularity.<sup>310</sup> Widely distributed magazines published building plans that could be purchased by readers, helping increase the visibility and popularity of Shed Style houses. In April 1966, *Better Homes and Gardens* published an article by Noel Seney and Richard Kruse, featuring a design by architect Claude Miquelle, executed by builder Emil Hanslin in New Seabury, on Cape Cod. The main body of the building is situated under a gable roof, which is extended on one side to cover the main entrance and garage. The building is wrapped in shingle siding, and the article describes how “Cedar shingles and rough-sawn plywood siding on garage nicely relate the house to its wooded environment.” The home is advertised as a practical and economical floorplan, with a large living area and ample deck space to encourage indoor-outdoor living. The article notes that the “design and materials should be simple, so almost any local builder could construct and sell the house at a moderate price.” The article also includes references for interested builders who wished to purchase the plans.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 650.

<sup>311</sup> Noel Seney and Richard Kruse, “A 1,580-Square-Foot House — By the Editors of *Better Homes and Gardens*,” *Better Homes and Gardens* (Meredith Publishing Company, April, 1966) 60-61.

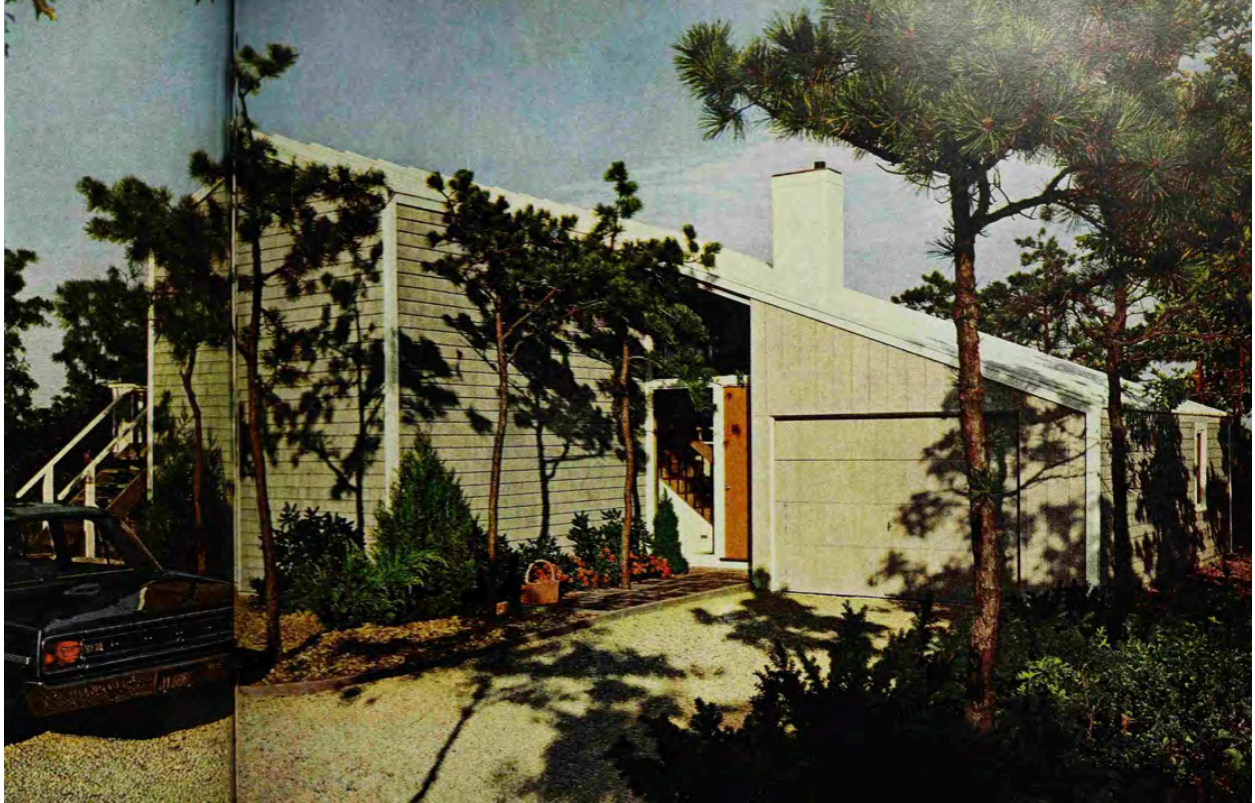


Figure 48: Image showing a home with elements of Shed Style architecture; Designed by architect Claude Miquelle and built by Emil Hanslin; Featured in "A 1,580-sqaure-foot House — By the Editors of Better Homes and Gardens," by Noel Seney and Richard Kruse, in *Better Homes and Gardens*, April, 1966, page 144

In September 1969, *Better Homes and Gardens* published an article speculating about the types of homes they anticipated would be popular the following decade, called "These Houses Set a Style Standard for the '70s." In it, they present readers with eighteen different houses, representing a wide variety of house types and styles. Several of these homes demonstrate characteristics typical of Shed Style houses. While they do not use the term 'Shed Style,' they do highlight examples that feature shed roof lines. In it, they direct reader attention to those examples, saying "Look at our houses with shed roofs, for example. This type of roof is one of the oldest and simplest ever used. But when it's combined with several newer details,



the shed works to create a house with a surprisingly fresh appearance.”<sup>312</sup> Elaborating further, the article describes the appeal of “old-fashioned shingles on advanced-looking houses,” which offer the “desired rustic mood” on a modern home.<sup>313</sup> While they don’t use the exact phrase, the combination of shed roof lines, rustic shingle or wood board siding, and contemporary design elements is indicative of the Shed Style.



Figure 49: Clipping showing the different house types and styles predicted to be popular in the 1970s, featuring several Shed Style examples; Featured in “These Houses set a Style Standard for the ‘70s,” in *Better Homes and Gardens*, September, 1969

<sup>312</sup> “These Houses Set a Style Standard for the ‘70s,” *Better Homes and Gardens* (Meredith Publishing Company, September, 1969) 80.

<sup>313</sup> “These Houses Set a Style Standard for the ‘70s,” 82.

In January 1970, *Better Homes and Gardens* published an article by Noel Seney, the magazine's Building Editor, called "More-for-your-money houses." In the article, Seney displayed three separate home plans, which were advertised for their affordability. According to the article, "You'll notice some recurring items such as precut lumber, rough and prefinished wall surfaces, and inexpensive but good-looking building materials. All can help save costs, increase quality, and give you a 'more for your money' house." The first home featured in this article has elements that are indicative of the Shed Style, including a shed roof, vertical wood siding, and large windows. The article celebrates this choice in siding, saying "The natural beauty of the wood radiates a feeling of strength and warmth." Additionally, the large single pane windows on the building's exterior helps create an "unrestricted outdoor view" of the wooded landscape, which is reinforced by the presence of a large, wrap-around deck. For interested readers, plans for the building are available for purchase through the magazine.<sup>314</sup>

That same year, on the cover of the August edition, they featured a sketch of a Shed Style home. The sketch shows a building with multiple intersecting shed roof lines, horizontal wood siding, and large single-pane windows. On the front façade, there is a clerestory window positioned in the space between the rear and front shed roofs, suggesting that the interior space is lofted and lit from above. On the left side of the front façade, beneath a shed roof that

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<sup>314</sup> Noel Seney, "More-for-your-money houses," *Better Homes and Gardens* (Meredith Publishing Company, January, 1970) 36-37.



is situated perpendicular to the main block, there is a fixed pane window with a diagonal top sill, matching the slope of the roof pitch.<sup>315</sup>



Figure 50: Shed Style building designed by Dick Knecht; Photograph by Reynolds and Associates; Featured in "More-for-your-money houses" by Noel Seney and Jerry Pinkham, in *Better Homes and Gardens*, January, 1970

In February of 1973, *Better Homes and Gardens* published an article by Architectural Editor Stephen Mead, entitled "Four Fine Houses that Beat Those Sky-High Prices," which features a Shed Style house as an option for readers. Limited to houses that could be custom-built for less than \$35,000 (at the time), the Shed Style house included as an example was

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<sup>315</sup> Cover Illustration, *Better Homes and Gardens* (Meredith Publishing Company, August, 1970).

designed by architect Lawrence Horowitz, and plans were available for readers to purchase. The article notes that the plan has an “open-space” floorplan, with fewer interior walls between living spaces. It also notes that the living room has a “vaulted ceiling, roof skylights and wraparound windows.” The bedrooms also feature tall, vertically oriented windows that allow for ample light, and the offset intersection of two shed rooflines created space for a clerestory window. The article also highlights the use of materials, saying, “Outside, rust-colored, vertical grooved cedar siding is teamed up with green-trimmed rain gutters to gently merge the house and its surroundings.”<sup>316</sup>

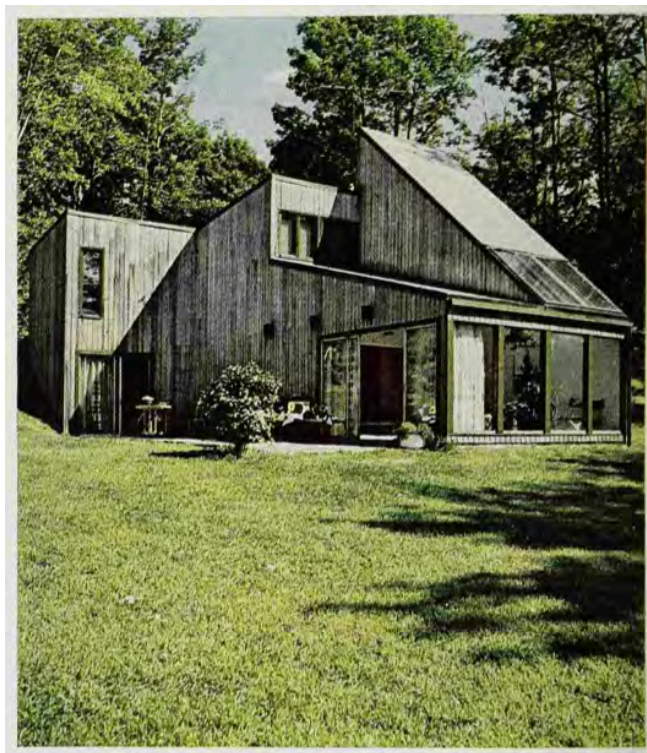


Figure 51: Example of a Shed Style home, designed by Lawrence Horowitz; Photograph by Bill Maris; Featured in “Four Fine Houses that Beat Those Sky-High Prices,” by Stephen Mead, in *Better Homes and Gardens*, February, 1973

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<sup>316</sup> Stephen Mead, “Four Fine Houses That Beat Those Sky-High Prices,” *Better Homes and Gardens* (Meredith Publishing Company, February, 1973) 50.



In February 1975, *Better Homes and Gardens* showcased several homes in "How to get the house you want," which were shown as examples of how couples could save money and get better results by building their own homes. Two of the examples they profiled have hallmark Shed Style characteristics, including multiple intersecting shed roofs, wood board or shingle siding, and large windows. The first example was built in Sudbury, Massachusetts for Mr. and Mrs. Scope, who "wanted an open plan and distinctive contemporary styling." The home features multiple dramatic shed roof lines and vertically oriented wood siding. This home also features vaulted interior spaces and clerestory windows, which help maximize natural light. Vaulted interior spaces and open, second-floor lofts "create dramatic vistas throughout the house."<sup>317</sup>



Figure 52: Shed Style house in Sudbury, Massachusetts; Photographed by Bill Maris; Featured in "How to get the house you want," in *Better Homes and Gardens*, February, 1975

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<sup>317</sup> "How to get the house you want," *Better Homes and Gardens* (Meredith Publishing Company, February, 1975) 32-33.

Another example with characteristic Shed Style features is the Lyon's family house in Portland, Oregon. The home also features multiple shed roof lines and a clerestory, but rather than wood it is wrapped in shingle siding. According to the article, "the Lyons firmly rejected the idea that choosing a contemporary house means that everything in it has to be chrome and glass." The shingle siding is a deep brown color, which adds a warm, rustic quality to the building's contemporary design.<sup>318</sup>



Figure 53: Shed Style building in Portland, Oregon, designed by York/Yodogawa; Photographed by John Fulker; Featured in "How to get the house you want," in *Better Homes and Gardens*, February, 1975

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<sup>318</sup> "How to get the house you want," 36-37.

In 1975, *Sunset* published a special publication called *Cabins & Vacation Houses*. Although not intended for full-time residences, many of the vacation homes presented are examples of the Shed Style. While, like *Better Homes and Gardens*, they don't directly use the phrase, several of the examples deemed appropriate for cold climates and heavy snow loads demonstrate elements characteristic of the Shed Style. One example, designed by architects Ehrlich, Heft, and Rominger, features a steeply pitched gable roof to help shed snow accumulation. The exterior material is vertically oriented wood, which emphasizes the verticality of the structure. The walls are punctuated by large single pane windows, some of which have diagonal upper sills that match the pitch of the roof line.<sup>319</sup>



Figure 54: Shed Style vacation home, designed by Ehrlich/Heft/Rominger; Photographer unknown; Featured in *Cabins & Vacation Houses* by Sunset, page 23

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<sup>319</sup> *Cabins & Vacation Houses*, Sunset Building, Remodeling & Home Design Books (Menlo Park, California: Lane Publishing Company, 1975) 23.



Another example, designed by architects Ratcliff, Slama, and Cadwalader, is a “tri-story cabin,” with three different interior levels. The building is encompassed by multiple intersecting, steeply pitched shed roofs. This house is notable because the exterior cedar boards are oriented diagonally, following the pitch of the respective roofline above.<sup>320</sup>

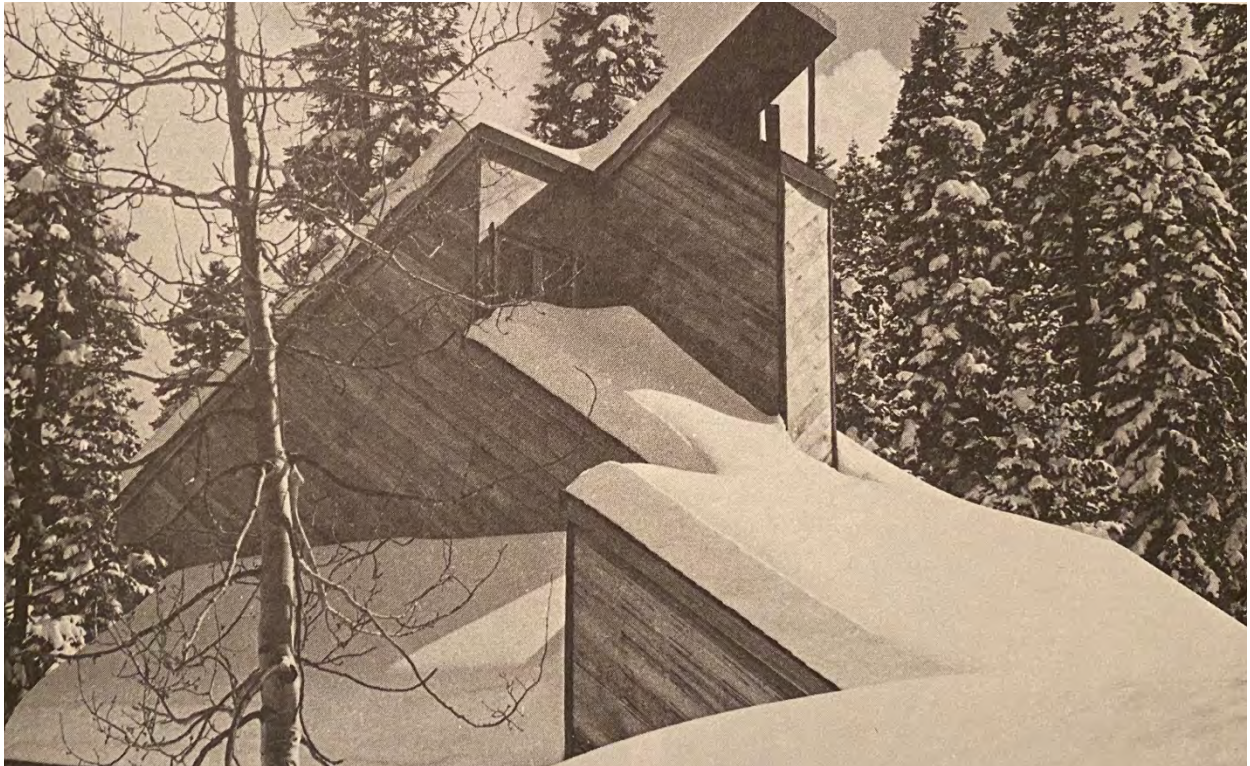


Figure 55: Shed Style vacation home, designed by Ratcliff/Slama/Cadwalader; Photographer unknown; Featured in *Cabins & Vacation Homes* by Sunset, page 23

This publication pays special attention to energy efficiency and the utilization of natural resources, suggesting that homeowners pursue alternative energy sources such as solar power. According to the text, “Solar energy’s nonpolluting character and energy-conserving aspects attract those homeowners whose utility bills have been skyrocketing.”<sup>321</sup> The publication also

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<sup>320</sup> *Cabins & Vacation Houses*, 23.

<sup>321</sup> *Cabins & Vacation Houses*, 8.

encourages builders to build near natural water sources, such as streams or springs, so long as the water is clean. The emphasis on natural resources and alternative energy sources is a notable feature of Shed Style architecture, and it is worth noting that Shed Style's popularity coincided with the energy crisis during the 1970s.<sup>322</sup> According to Virginia McAlester, "The vertical shed shapes with high clerestory windows could facilitate passive solar cooling, an important tenet of early energy conservation." However, McAlester goes on to note that "By the 1980s, Shed, along with the activism of the 1970s, was fading away and being replaced by traditional styled houses."<sup>323</sup> This decline in popularity is also attributed to long-term maintenance problems facing Shed Style buildings, particularly the costly maintenance and repairs necessary to care for and maintain their wooden exteriors.<sup>324</sup>

During the 1960s and 1970s, Shed Style houses also made appearances in mass media, including commercials and magazine ads that were selling other products. For example, Harveys Bristol Cream Sherry ran an ad in the 1970s that showed two couples enjoying sherry together after a day of skiing. At the beginning of the ad, it zooms in on a Shed Style building, situated on a snowy, wooded hillside. The building in the shot has several intersecting shed rooflines, and the front façade has numerous large, single pane windows. On the front façade, the windows above the first floor have slanted window heads to match the pitch of the roof.<sup>325</sup> While the house is not directly addressed in the commercial, it is implied that it is a ski lodge or

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<sup>322</sup> "Shed, 1965-1985," Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, accessed September 1, 2021 <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/shed>

<sup>323</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 650.

<sup>324</sup> "Shed, 1965-1985," <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/shed>

<sup>325</sup> "I Love 70's Commercials Vol 1-10 Compilation," YouTube video, 43:30. Posted by "haikarate4," December 10, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4tkOnUGpyE>

vacation home. The fact that this style of home was chosen to air in a commercial that was selling an otherwise unrelated product speaks to its popular appeal and the average consumer's ability to recognize this specific style of residential architecture.

Placing the popularity of the Shed Style in a larger historical context, the popular dissemination and recreation of the Shed Style mirrors the popularity of the Contemporary Ranch in the 1950s and 1960s. Contemporary Ranches synthesized high style Modernist design principles, recreating them for the average consumer. The popular adoption of Shed Style architecture in the late 1960s and through 1970s followed a similar pattern, again borrowing from high style Modernism and reproducing it in a way that was accessible to the average consumer. In this sense, the developer and contractor-built versions of the Shed Style could be seen as a continuation of the Contemporary style that emerged in the 1950s.

## **Summary**

Most discussions of Shed Style architecture are sure to cite the impact of Charles Moore's work at Sea Ranch, which is often viewed as the most significant and first fully realized expression of the Shed Style. The enduring influence of Moore's work at Sea Ranch is undoubtedly one of the main contributing factors to the nationwide spread of Shed Style architecture and its eventual appearance in large residential subdivisions. However, Charles Moore and Sea Ranch represented only one part of a much longer history, with varied and complex influences.

Beginning in the colonial-era, settlers in New England found themselves with an abundance of wood, which was well suited to their inherited vernacular building types and

techniques. Timber-frame buildings with wooden boards or shingle siding became standard in New England. These buildings were simple and austere, with a clear emphasis on utility and warmth. Rooms were clustered around a large, central chimney, and steep roofs helped shed excess snow accumulation. In the mid-nineteenth century, there was a growing interest in the aesthetic value of timber-clad architecture. Andrew Jackson Downing and Alexander Jackson Davis, American proponents of the Gothic Revival, both experimented with wooden exteriors. No longer a matter of pure utility, the use of wood was a deliberate aesthetic choice. This trend was carried on by the Stick Style, which placed even greater emphasis on wooden siding as a decorative element. In the late nineteenth century, the Queen Anne style became popular in the United States. The Queen Anne style was a British revival style, which drew heavily on medieval and vernacular influences. The popularity of the Queen Anne style in the United States coincided with the American centennial of 1876, which inspired many Americans to reconsider their own colonial past as a source of inspiration. By the 1880s, the Queen Anne had given way to the Shingle Style, which borrowed heavily from vernacular colonial architecture in New England, most notably through the use of wooden shingles as a prominent exterior feature. The Shingle Style was predominantly popular with upper-class clients building seaside vacation homes, and they were designed almost exclusively by professional architects. Buildings were typically asymmetrical and featured irregular massing, and they varied in complexity. One particularly influential example was McKim, Mead, & White's Low House, which featured a large, low gable that contained the entirety of the building. This particular building would prove especially influential to a later generations of Modernists in the mid-twentieth century.



While the United States remained largely enraptured by the influence of Beaux-Arts classicism, European architecture in the early twentieth century saw considerable deviation. The Art Nouveau, Vienna Secession, German Werkbund, and De Stijl all contributed to the emergence of high style Modernism by the 1920s, manifested in institutions such as the Bauhaus. However, the rise of Nazi Germany the following decade forced Modernists to flee, and many found their way to the United States during the 1930s and 1940s. Walter Gropius, former head of the Bauhaus, accepted a position at Harvard, where he would help transform the traditional Beaux-Arts curriculum and advance Modernism in the United States. Upon his arrival, Gropius found himself taken by vernacular architecture of New England, and he was soon followed by colleagues such as Marcel Breuer. These European Modernists were welcomed by a generation of young American architects and intellectuals who had already begun their own experiments with Modernism, built in remote areas on Cape Cod. Gropius and Breuer both began to experiment with vernacular forms and regional materials, embracing wooden exteriors and shed roofs. Concurrently, there were a number of architects in the United States who were also experimenting with vernacular architecture, regional forms, and local materials. Eleanor Raymond, who paid special attention to vernacular barn structures in Pennsylvania, also created an amalgamation of Modernism and the vernacular, independently from Gropius and the Cape Cod community. Louis Kahn, who was trained in the Beaux-Arts in America and worked out of the Philadelphia area, also began to incorporate local materials and wooden exteriors on otherwise Modern buildings. This unique synthesis of high style Modernism and vernacular architecture occurring in the United States was indicative of a larger

movement occurring internationally, evident in the work of individuals such as Le Corbusier and Alvar Aalto.

This incorporation of regionalism and vernacular architecture proved especially influential to the generation of Modernist architects that emerged in the 1960s. Robert Venturi and Charles Moore were both critical of Modernism's disregard for history and context, and they both pursued work that challenged the Modernist philosophy. Venturi's house for his mother, the Vanna Venturi house, had clear references to the McKim, Mead, and White's Low House, utilizing a large front-facing gable. This gable also referenced larger cultural associations with the single-family home and residential architecture. Additionally, his use of ornamentation on the front façade did not fit the mold of Modernism, and the broken arch and beam above the main entrance were deliberately contradictory elements. Venturi's 1966 *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* represented a formal break from Modernism, encouraging others to embrace more nuanced and complex approaches to architecture.

Charles Moore, a colleague of Robert Venturi, also took a divergent approach to architecture. Moore demonstrated a clear appreciation for architectural history throughout his academic career and was familiar with Scully's work documenting the Stick and Shingle styles. Prior to graduate school, Moore worked in California, where he was immersed in the Bay Region tradition, an eclectic architectural style with many different influences. After returning to graduate school, Moore studied under Louis Kahn as part of his post-doctoral work. Moore was particularly inspired by Kahn's willingness to embrace historic forms and traditions, incorporating these elements into his work. By the early 1960s, Moore had returned to California, where he started his own architectural firm, MLTW. In 1962, MLTW was hired by Al

Boeke to work at the new Sea Ranch development in northern California. Al Boeke was a student of the New Town and Garden City Movements, and he had worked under influential Modernists such as Richard Neutra. At Sea Ranch, he assembled a team of artists and architects to build an intentional, planned community that respected the landscape above all else. Architects were encouraged to use local, 'indigenous' materials, and special care was given to ensure that the natural environment was preserved and protected. Bound by a strict set of covenants, conditions, and restrictions, it was mandated that buildings be respectful and reflective of their site, and they were to remain unpainted, with the natural wood exposed.

The buildings at Sea Ranch took on a distinct appearance, marrying the sharp angular forms of Modernism with rustic wood board and shingle exteriors. Architect Joseph Esherick's 'Hedgerow Houses' mirrored the clusters of cypress trees planted by sheep herders, and their shingle siding helped them blend in with their surroundings. Charles Moore and MLTW designed Condominium One, a multi-family residential building that contained ten separate living spaces, oriented around a central courtyard. This design spoke to the communal nature of Sea Ranch, and the density of a multi-family dwelling also helped reduce the physical impact on the surrounding environment. Condominium One is clad in vertical wood siding and is composed of several conjoined blocks with intersecting shed roof lines, giving the building a complex profile. MLTW's design for the building mirrored elements of an historic barn that was on the property, which featured a long, dramatic gable roof lines and vertical wood siding. In addition to paying respect to the landscape, MLTW's design also shows a clear reverence for vernacular, utilitarian architecture. Joseph Esherick and Charles Moore were both students of the Bay Area Tradition. Their work at Sea Ranch, and the unique architectural style that

emerged there, is often considered an extension of the Bay Area Tradition, marking the formation of the Third Bay Tradition. Sea Ranch represents a clear and compelling marriage between Modernism, environmentalism, local materials, history, and vernacular forms. Sea Ranch proved to be a popular success, and it was not long before popular magazines and plan books began to advertise contemporary residential buildings that borrowed heavily from the Sea Ranch aesthetic.

Architectural Historic Vincent Scully saw the events at Sea Ranch as part of a larger, nationwide trend in Modern architecture. According to Scully, Modern architects were beginning to draw inspiration from Shingle Style architecture, incorporating elements of the Shingle Style's characteristic form, which featured steep gable and shed rooflines. Scully sees the transition away from shingle siding as a result of pricing, noting that wooden shingles were no longer an affordable option. Shingle siding, which had historically been used out of necessity, was now an expensive, specialty product, thus making it less common. Scully cites numerous examples, drawing parallels between contemporary architecture and historic Shingle Style examples. Scully also pays special attention to McKim, Mead, and White's 1887 Low House, which he argues is an especially influential example of Shingle Style architecture. Scully points to the work of Venturi and others as indicative of the Low House's influence. Scully also notes the influence of vernacular seaside architecture on Modern iterations of the Shingle Style.

By the late 1960s, popular magazines and plan books began featuring residential architecture that borrowed heavily from Cape Cod Modernism, the Third Bay Tradition, and Sea Ranch aesthetics that emerged in previous years. *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Sunset* both featured houses that displayed elements of Shed Style architecture through the late

1960s and 1970s. These homes typically featured the characteristic blend of sleek, Modern forms and rustic wooden exteriors, with dramatic shed and gable roof lines. These homes were often advertised for their affordability, emphasizing the low cost of precut lumber. There was also a great deal of emphasis on the incorporation of open floorplans and lofted interior spaces, which was noted to be a form of passive solar climate control, thus further reducing the overall living expenses associated with Shed Style architecture. While these magazines often featured architect designed examples, articles also offered mail-order home plans that readers could purchase and then have built by a local contractor. These magazines undoubtedly contributed to the nationwide spread and popularity of Shed Style architecture during the 1970s.

By the 1980s, however, the popularity of Shed Style architecture steadily declined. This was partly due to the resurgence of more traditional domestic architectural styles, specifically those with classical and colonial elements. The decline in popularity can also be attributed to the long-term maintenance challenges facing Shed Style buildings and their wooden exteriors.

## CHAPTER 4

### CASE STUDIES AND APPLICATION

#### Methodology

Using the history of residential suburban development established in Chapter Two and the architectural history of Shed Style residential architecture discussed in Chapter Three, Chapter Four will establish a list of Character Defining Features that can be used to better identify and survey Shed Style houses, ultimately assisting in their long-term preservation. These Character Defining Features will draw on the architectural history established in Chapter Three. They will also be based on important secondary sources, such as architectural style guides and handbooks, as well as information gathered from various State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) websites. These Character Defining Features will be outlined and described in detail in the following section.

Based on the history of suburban residential development explored in Chapter Two and Shed Style's popularity between the late 1960s and early 1980s, Chapter Four will select three suburban neighborhoods in Athens-Clarke County to be used as Case Studies. These neighborhoods were selected based on their period of development, their physical location in relation to Athens-Clarke County's developmental history, and a preliminary assessment of a substantial proportion of Shed Style residential buildings relative to other types and styles. Chapter Four will provide a brief developmental history for each of these three neighborhoods, using academic sources, as well as information available through the Athens-Clarke County

Clerk of Courts Deed Room and Tax Assessor records. It will also include an overview of their current conditions, and a survey based on the established Character Defining Features.

Chapter Four will conclude with a summary of the survey findings for each neighborhood, quantifying the proportion of Shed Style buildings to non-Shed Style Buildings in each neighborhood, as well as the rate of occurrence of different Shed Style Character Defining Features in each neighborhood. These findings will then be used to conduct an analysis of the three Case Study neighborhoods in Chapter Five.

### **Character Defining Features and Case Study Selection**

The purpose of Chapter Three was to place the Shed Style in a larger historical context, exploring the different architectural inputs and antecedents that contributed to its emergence and nationwide spread. Additionally, the historic research compiled in Chapter Three will help inform observations regarding the various physical and stylistic elements necessary to define Shed Style's Character Defining Features. As stated in the National Parks Service's *Preservation Brief 17*, it is key to "identify those features or elements that give the building its *visual character* and that should be taken into account in order to preserve them to the maximum extent possible." The Brief outlines a "Three-Step Process to Identify A Building's Visual Character," which includes the following: Step 1, Identify the Overall Visual Aspects; Step 2, Identify the Visual Character at Close Range; and Step 3, Identify the Visual Character of the Interior Spaces, Features, and Finishes.<sup>326</sup> Steps 2 and 3 are not feasible in the scope of this

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<sup>326</sup> Lee H. Nelson, "Preservation Briefs 17, Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.



thesis, but Step 1 is applicable and effective. Step 1 emphasizes the following visual elements: setting, shape, roof, projections, openings, and materials. The following assessments are made based on general knowledge gathered during the research process.

Speaking in very general terms, the Shed Style buildings observed in Chapter 3 were found in natural settings that reflected the surrounding landscape, whether that be dense woods, marshlands, or windswept grasses. Among the various architects discussed, there seemed to be a shared desire to have as little adverse impact on the landscape as possible. The shapes of the different Shed Style examples discussed in Chapter Three are a bit more inconsistent, but generally they were complex and asymmetrical. The individual parts are simple shapes, but the ways in which the different parts of the buildings are arranged can create very complex combinations. In terms of roofs and roof features, shed roof lines are a characteristic feature of Shed Style architecture, as the name would imply. Additionally, there are numerous examples with gabled roof lines. Though not always, Shed Style houses often feature many intersecting shed and/or gable roof lines, which create complex and irregular roof lines. Chimneys are typically understated and are often wrapped in the same siding as the main structure (likely as a cost saving measure). Commonly observed projections include porches and balconies, which speak to an emphasis on the home's ability to interact with nature. Recessed features also often include porches, balconies, and entryways. In terms of frequently observed openings on Shed Style buildings, there are a number of different window types that appear repeatedly. Shed projections often feature clerestory windows, which presumably light a lofted interior space. Additionally, there are often large, single pane windows and tall, vertical single pane windows. Occasionally, window heads will be slanted to match the pitch of

the roof above. Doorways are often (although not always) guarded, tucked away behind one of the different masses that composes the larger building. And finally, the exterior materials are typically made of wooden board or shingle siding. High style examples were keen on sourcing their wood from local resources, using lumber that was native to the area. Popular, contractor-built examples are more likely to use precut wooden boards or wooden shingles, but they may also use T1-11 plywood as a cheaper and more easily available alternative.

In Virginia Savage McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*, widely regarded as a foundational text in identifying American architectural styles, McAlester identifies the Shed Style as a home "of bold diagonals, counterpointed shapes, and multiples massing." Rather than relying on decorative features, "The form of the house imparts its style." According to McAlester, the basic identifying features include the following, "Shed-roof forms, generally multi-directional and occasionally coupled with a gable roof; wood wall cladding (vertical, diagonal, horizontal, or shingles), occasionally with brick veneer; smooth roof-wall junction commonly with little or no overhang; asymmetrical." Going into greater detail, McAlester says:

...The shed roof is often multi-directional and used in ways that give the effect of colliding geometric shapes. The front door and entry area is generally inconspicuous, and may even be obscured.

There is little added exterior detail; elaborations are primarily simple window variations. There are few window openings on walls that face public areas and those that occur are generally quite varied and asymmetrically placed. As in the Contemporary, large fixed panes of plate glass are typically used; these are generally set flush with the exterior wall. Ribbons of clerestory windows are found high on facades or above lower roof forms, often operable for ventilation. Lower windows are often composed of vertical sections with a tall, narrow upper pane above a

short lower pane. Window tops are either flat or slope with the angle of the roof. Elaborations include a “boxed” enframingent that partially surrounds a window grouping, and deep box-bay windows (sometimes called saddlebags).

Typically no more than a single board is used as a cornice at the roof-wall junction. The chimney is typically rectangular, unelaborated, and often clad in wood or plywood. Tall metal chimney flues may be exposed and extended above the chimney cap.

The architects who originated the style generally preferred wood-shingle wall cladding, but later interpretations of the style often used wood board siding (applied either horizontally, vertically, or diagonally), T1-11 plywood (that imitated wood siding), and/or brick veneer.<sup>327</sup>

McAlester also illustrates the concept of the “slipped gable,” wherein the two gable slopes are offset to create two converging shed roof lines instead. The vertical plane created by this “slip” is often used as the location for clerestory windows.<sup>328</sup>

In addition to McAlester’s assessment of the Shed Style, Washington State’s Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP, which functions as the SHPO) has a helpful webpage that offers a brief history of the Shed Style and lists some of its key features. They date the Shed Style from 1965 to 1985 and note that the frequent use of clerestories was popular as a “passive-solar design,” especially during the 1970s energy crisis.<sup>329</sup> Summarizing the Shed Style’s physical features, the DAHP says the following:

Exterior walls are usually covered with flush board siding, applied horizontally, vertically, or even diagonally to follow the lines of the shed roof. Builder examples often used T1-11 siding, while high style examples are clad with cedar shingles. The junctions of the roofs and walls are smooth

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<sup>327</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 649.

<sup>328</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 650.

<sup>329</sup> “Shed, 1965-1985,” Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/shed>

and simple, with little or no overhang. Most Shed Style buildings are 1 to 1½ stories tall. Entrances are often recessed and obscured from the street and windows tend to be a variety of sizes and shapes. Long narrow windows installed vertically or horizontally are common, as well as windows that are angled to follow the slope of the roof line.<sup>330</sup>

Similarly, Alaska's Department of Natural Resources (DNR, which serves as the SHPO) has a webpage that addresses the Shed Style. Alaska's DNR dates the Shed Style from 1970-1985, noting that it became popular "in Alaska during the 1970s." They also note the use of south facing clerestories as a passive solar measure, citing the energy crisis of the 1970s. Alaska's DNR describes the Shed Style in terms of Primary and Secondary Stylistic Features. Primary stylistic features include the following: "Overall asymmetrical with strong lines; Mixed massing; Busy roofline; One to two stories; Intersecting gables and/or shed roofs; Seamless roof and wall intersection; Asymmetrical placement of windows; Recessed or obscured door." Secondary stylistic features include, "Long and geometric windows; Clerestory; Brick and stone veneers inserted as cladding; Large interior volumes of space; Clad in wood, T1-11, stone veneer or brick veneer; Blank wall surfaces."<sup>331</sup> Unlike McAlester and Washington State, the character defining features defined by the Alaska DNR place less emphasis on the exterior material, listing it as a secondary feature.

Based on observations made throughout Chapter Three, McAlester's assessment in *A Field Guide to American Houses*, and information available from the Washington State and Alaska SHPO websites, an aggregate list of Character Defining Features will be produced and

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<sup>330</sup> "Shed, 1965-1985," <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/shed>

<sup>331</sup> "Shed (1970-1985)," Alaska Department of Natural Resources, accessed September 1, 2021  
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/styleguide/shed.htm>

used to document and assess the three Case Study neighborhoods. This list includes the following fifteen elements:

- 1) Irregular/asymmetrical footprint
- 2) Multiple, intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms
- 3) Multiple Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines
  - a) Often, but not always, oriented perpendicular to one another
- 4) Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite (such as T1-11) siding
  - a) Can be oriented vertically, horizontally, and diagonally
- 5) Small-scale brick or stone exterior features
- 6) Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections
- 7) Austere, unadorned wall surfaces
- 8) Asymmetrical window placement
- 9) Large, single pane windows
  - a) Can be tall and vertical
- 10) Clerestory windows
- 11) Slanted window heads to match roof pitch
- 12) Articulated window bays
  - a) Can be recessed, framed, or projecting 'box bays'
- 13) Recessed and/or guarded entryway
- 14) Porches and second-story balconies
- 15) Natural landscape features
  - a) Including topography and vegetation

The three Case Study neighborhoods were selected based on their location relative to the developmental history of Athens-Clarke County (discussed in greater detail in the next section). All three of the neighborhoods were built between 1965 and 1985 in eastern Athens-Clarke County. They are all located in formerly rural areas where there were large tracts of undeveloped land, and they represent a later wave of suburban development throughout the periphery. These specific neighborhoods were selected based on a preliminary windshield-level survey, which indicated a high concentration of Shed Style buildings. These neighborhoods have several characteristics typical of residential suburbs built around this time, such as the exclusive presence of single-family residences, large lots, and a curvilinear street pattern.

### **Developmental History of Athens-Clarke County, to 1985**

Prior to white settlement in the area, present-day Georgia and Athens-Clarke County were inhabited by various groups of Native American peoples, who lived in small chiefdoms.<sup>332</sup> In the 1540s, Hernando de Soto led a group of Spanish explorers through Georgia's interior. The initial wave of European exploration in the sixteenth century exposed native peoples to foreign pathogens, such as smallpox and measles, and had a devastating impact on Native American communities.<sup>333</sup> It is estimated that these diseases killed 90% of the native population during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the wake of this devastating

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<sup>332</sup> Claudio Suant, "Creek Indians," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, last modified August 25, 2020, accessed September 1, 2021 <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/creek-indians/>

<sup>333</sup> Frances Taliaferro Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke County* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2009) 3.

population loss, the Native American population began to recover by the late seventeenth century, eventually creating new tribal systems.<sup>334</sup> At the time of English settlement, the Piedmont region was part of the Creek nation's territory, and north Georgia belonged to the Cherokee nation. Athens-Clarke County was located along the north-south boundary between the two nations, serving as a site for trade and conflict between the two groups.<sup>335</sup>

In 1732, King George II chartered the colony of Georgia, formed from lands formerly belonging to the South Carolina colony. The following year, General James Oglethorpe established the city of Savannah at the mouth of the Savannah River.<sup>336</sup> Initially, English settlement was limited the coast and lands along the southern bank of the Savannah River. English settlers actively engaged in trade with the Creeks, offering manufactured goods in exchange for deerskins. By the 1750s, Savannah was exporting an estimated 60,000 deerskins each year.<sup>337</sup> The nature of this relationship was undoubtedly abusive and exploitative, and the Native American tribes found themselves in financial debt to the English by the 1770s. To settle this debt, Creek and Cherokee leaders ceded 674,000 acres of interior land to the English in 1773.<sup>338</sup> This was one of a series of land cessions that would eventually dispossess the Creek and Cherokee peoples of all their land in Georgia, culminating with their forced removal on the Trail of Tears in 1830s.

The 1773 land cession was followed by an increase in white settlement in Georgia's interior and Piedmont region, with settlers arriving from coastal Georgia and nearby states,

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<sup>334</sup> Suant, "Creek Indians," <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/creek-indians/>

<sup>335</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 5.

<sup>336</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 4.

<sup>337</sup> Suant, "Creek Indians," <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/creek-indians/>

<sup>338</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 5.



including Virginia and the Carolinas. This wave of white settlement was interrupted by the Revolutionary War in 1775, during which “Tory fought Rebel; British fought colonists; Cherokee battled neutral Cherokee; Creek fought Cherokee; and white settlers engaged in riotous conflicts for various causes with shifting alliances.” Settlement in the area began again following the end of the conflict in the early 1780s, facilitated by a large cession of Cherokee land along the Oconee River in 1784. This new territory was divided into two new counties, Franklin and Washington. Franklin was subsequently subdivided to create Jackson County in 1796. Jackson County was then subdivided in 1801, creating Clarke County.<sup>339</sup>

To encourage settlement in the area, the state offered large tracts of land for minimal costs, offering one thousand acres at three shillings per acre. Additionally, Revolutionary War veterans were granted large land holdings in gratitude for their service. As a result, “The piedmont filled rapidly as settlers cleared the forests and opened the land to agriculture.” One of the earliest white settlements in the area was Cedar Shoals on the Oconee River, a pioneer settlement that marked the present-day location of Athens. In 1800, Daniel Easley purchased 693 acres of land along the Oconee River, near the Cedar Shoals settlement. There, he “built a race and a mill, where he ground cornmeal and flour and produced sawed wood.”<sup>340</sup> In 1785, the state assembly chartered the University of Georgia, with Abraham Baldwin serving as the first president. The state appointed a delegation with the task of selecting the location for the new university. During their tour, they encountered Easley and visited his property at Cedar Shoals, which was chosen as the ideal site for the University of Georgia, and John Milledge

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<sup>339</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 6.

<sup>340</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 8-9.

purchased 633 acres of Easley's land to donate to the University. The location of the future University was named Athens, and building began shortly thereafter.<sup>341</sup>

As the University of Georgia began to take shape, Athens also grew. By 1806, there were "an estimated seventeen families, ten framed dwellings, and four stores" in town. That year, Athens was officially incorporated by the state legislature.<sup>342</sup> Outside of the University, Athens' landscape and economy was dominated by agricultural life. By 1810, there were an estimated 2,500 enslaved people in Clarke County, a substantial portion of the county's total 7,628 residents, and the number of large-scale planters doubled between 1802 and 1810.<sup>343</sup> Athens continued to grow through the mid-nineteenth century. By 1860, there were 11,218 people living in Clarke County, of which 5,660 were enslaved people. The main agricultural goods produced on plantations and farms in the area included cotton, as well as "tobacco, corn, wheat" and livestock.<sup>344</sup> By the early 1830s, there were three cotton mills on the Oconee River, which purchased cotton from nearby plantations to produce textiles. The first of these was the Athens Manufacturing Company, which built a factory "about five miles south of town on the lower end of a half-mile-long shoals on the north fork of the Oconee River." To accommodate the mill's work force, a mill village called Whitehall formed, with "houses, stores, and other facilities for the labor force."<sup>345</sup> In order to better distribute these manufactured goods out of Clarke County, investors began pushing for the extension of rail into Athens. Prior to the 1840s, the nearest rail lines ended in Crawfordville and Greensboro. For goods and

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<sup>341</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 11-13.

<sup>342</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 16.

<sup>343</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 24-26.

<sup>344</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 30-33.

<sup>345</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 47-48.

passengers coming and going from Athens, the space between was travelled via horse-drawn coaches. In 1841, a rail line reached Athens and stopped at Carr's Hill, just east of town and across the Oconee River.<sup>346</sup> With the exception of rural plantations, farms, and the few mill villages, settlement in the Athens-Clarke County area was largely concentrated around the University and close to town. The surrounding area remained rural and largely undeveloped.

Unlike many other cities and towns in Georgia, Athens emerged from the Civil War physically unscathed. Despite the economic uncertainty caused by the abolition of slavery and the end of plantation-based agriculture, Athens' economy recovered relatively quickly. By 1866, the University had resumed operations, and enrollment was increasing.<sup>347</sup> The population steadily increased during the late nineteenth century, reaching 12,941 people in Clarke County by 1870. In 1882, Bell Telephone installed lines in Athens, and in 1885, Athens' city council voted to make improvements to local roadways, paving roads with brick and granite blocks.<sup>348</sup> By the turn of the century, transportation networks throughout the county expanded. Outside of Athens proper, there were a number of small settlements in Clarke County, including Allentown, Barbersville, McNutt's Creek, Tuckston, and Winterville. Winterville emerged as a small depot town in the mid-nineteenth century and was incorporated in 1904. By 1920, Winterville was home to 510 people, hosting "five general stores, one drugstore, a bank, two garages, two cotton gins, two grist mills, good country doctors, and an annual Winterville Community Fair."<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>346</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 52-53.

<sup>347</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 108.

<sup>348</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 126-127.

<sup>349</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 139-144.

In town, the first passenger streetcars arrived in 1888, running along "Broad, College, Clayton, Lumpkin, Hancock, Pulaski, Prince, and Milledge," effectively covering Athens' downtown core. Initially pulled by mules, Athens' streetcar system was purchased by E. G. Harris and quickly electrified. Harris then extended the streetcar system, reaching Boulevard, Prince Avenue, and Barber Street. Harris' Athens Park and Improvement Company purchased a 300-acre plot of land for a large residential development. Subdivided lots along the streetcar lines were quickly developed with "large Queen Anne and Gothic Revival houses," creating "Athens' first 'streetcar subdivision'." By 1900, Clarke County's population had grown to 17,708, with 10,245 of those residents living within Athens city limits.<sup>350</sup> Additional suburban neighborhoods that appeared around this time included Cobbham, Bloomfield, Cloverhurst, and Normaltown.<sup>351</sup> The introduction of the personal automobile in the 1920s hastened suburbanization in Athens and Clarke County, but the Great Depression during 1930s put a damper on residential development and stalled Athens' economy.<sup>352</sup> Following the Great Depression, Athens' economy again recovered quickly. World War II veterans utilized the GI Bill, which caused a rapid increase in enrollment at the University of Georgia and a subsequent population increase in Athens and Clarke County.<sup>353</sup>

Meanwhile, new businesses came to town, such as Dairy Pak, Gold Kist, General Time, and Westinghouse. These new businesses brought with them executives and management, who needed new housing. The first ranch house subdivision in Athens was Beechwood Hills,

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<sup>350</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 145-146.

<sup>351</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 146-154.

<sup>352</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 182-183.

<sup>353</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 189.

built along the Oconee River, down Baxter Street and off “a newly extended road, West Lake Drive.” According to Frances Taliaferro Thomas, “Roads were not even paved in the new subdivision of Beachwood when local real estate agents began selling large lots for home to incoming executives.” The development of Beechwood Hills corresponds with larger national trends, and “The ranch-style house came in vogue in Athens thanks to an increasing dependence on the automobile.”<sup>354</sup> As Thomas notes:

Just as the Boulevard and Bloomfield sections were Athens streetcar suburbs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, now Beechwood became one of the city’s first modern suburbs made possible by the mobility afforded by the automobile. Buyers could move out and spread out on wide lots in low-pitched, rambling brick houses that features such amenities as built-in garages, and private outdoor living areas to the rear...<sup>355</sup>

Around this time, Athens was continuing to see considerable population growth. In 1960, Clarke County had a population of 45,363 people, 31,355 of whom lived in Athens.<sup>356</sup> By 1970, “the combined population of the city and county increased over 40 percent,” and Athens was growing rapidly. By the 1960s, east Athens was seeing substantial growth, and there were multiple new Ranch house subdivisions constructed around this time, including University Heights, Green Acres, Cedar Creek, and Clarkedale. These neighborhoods are all visible in a 1967 aerial photograph, which shows them each in development (Figure 56). Growth on the east side of town was so significant that it required the construction of multiple public schools to accommodate the growing population, including Patti Hilsman Middle School in 1965,

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<sup>354</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 198-199.

<sup>355</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 199.

<sup>356</sup> United States Census. *Number of Inhabitants, Georgia*.

<https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1960/population-volume-1/vol-01-12-c.pdf>

Barnett Shoals Elementary in 1969, and Cedar Shoals High School in 1971.<sup>357</sup> These neighborhoods and schools were soon followed by neighborhood shopping centers and other commercial resources for nearby residents.

One of the fundamental necessities for these residential subdivisions was the availability of large tracts of undeveloped land. As a result, suburban developments tended to appear in successive rings, moving outward from the dense, urban core. Up until the mid-twentieth century, eastern Clarke County was largely undeveloped and had a rural, agricultural character. This changed dramatically beginning in the 1960s, when eastern Clarke County began to rapidly suburbanize. By the 1970s and 1980s, residential subdivisions in the eastern Clarke County were located further out in the periphery. This wave of suburban development includes the three case study neighborhoods that will be surveyed for their high concentration of Shed Style residential buildings. These neighborhoods include Waverly Woods, Snapfinger Woods, and Ansley Park. Waverly Woods is present in a 1973 aerial photograph, and Snapfinger Woods and Ansley Park are both visible in a 1980 aerial photograph (see Figures 57 and 58).

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<sup>357</sup> Thomas, *A Portrait of Historic Athens & Clarke*, 206.

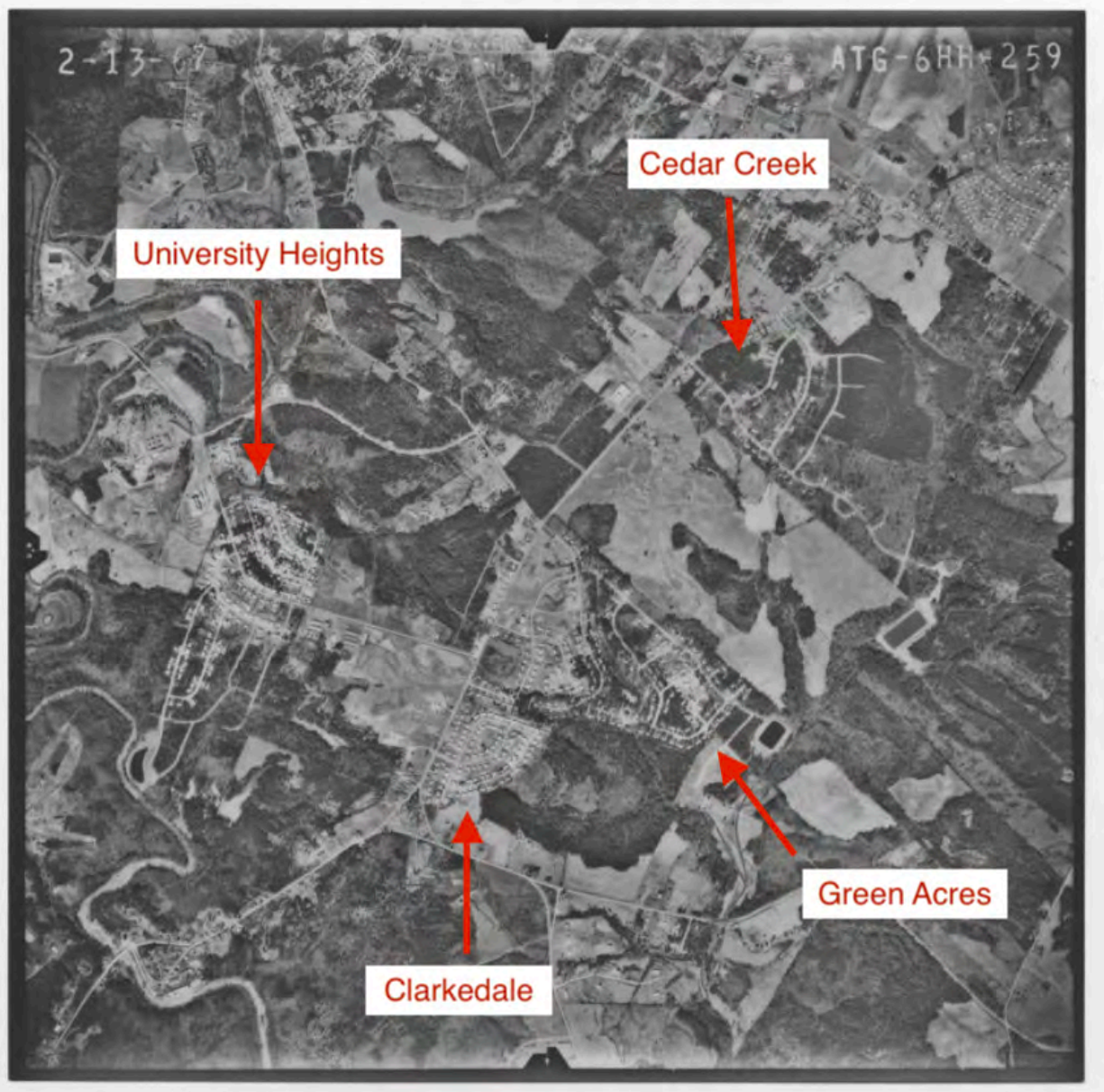


Figure 56: 1967 aerial photograph showing east Athens residential subdivisions; Photo from the Georgia Aerial Photographs collection, available through the Digital Library of Georgia at <http://dbs.galib.uga.edu/gaph/html/>; Labels created by author





Figure 57: 1973 aerial photograph showing the Waverly Woods subdivision; Photo from the Georgia Aerial Photographs collection, available through the Digital Library of Georgia at <http://dbs.galib.uga.edu/gaph/html/>; Labels created by author

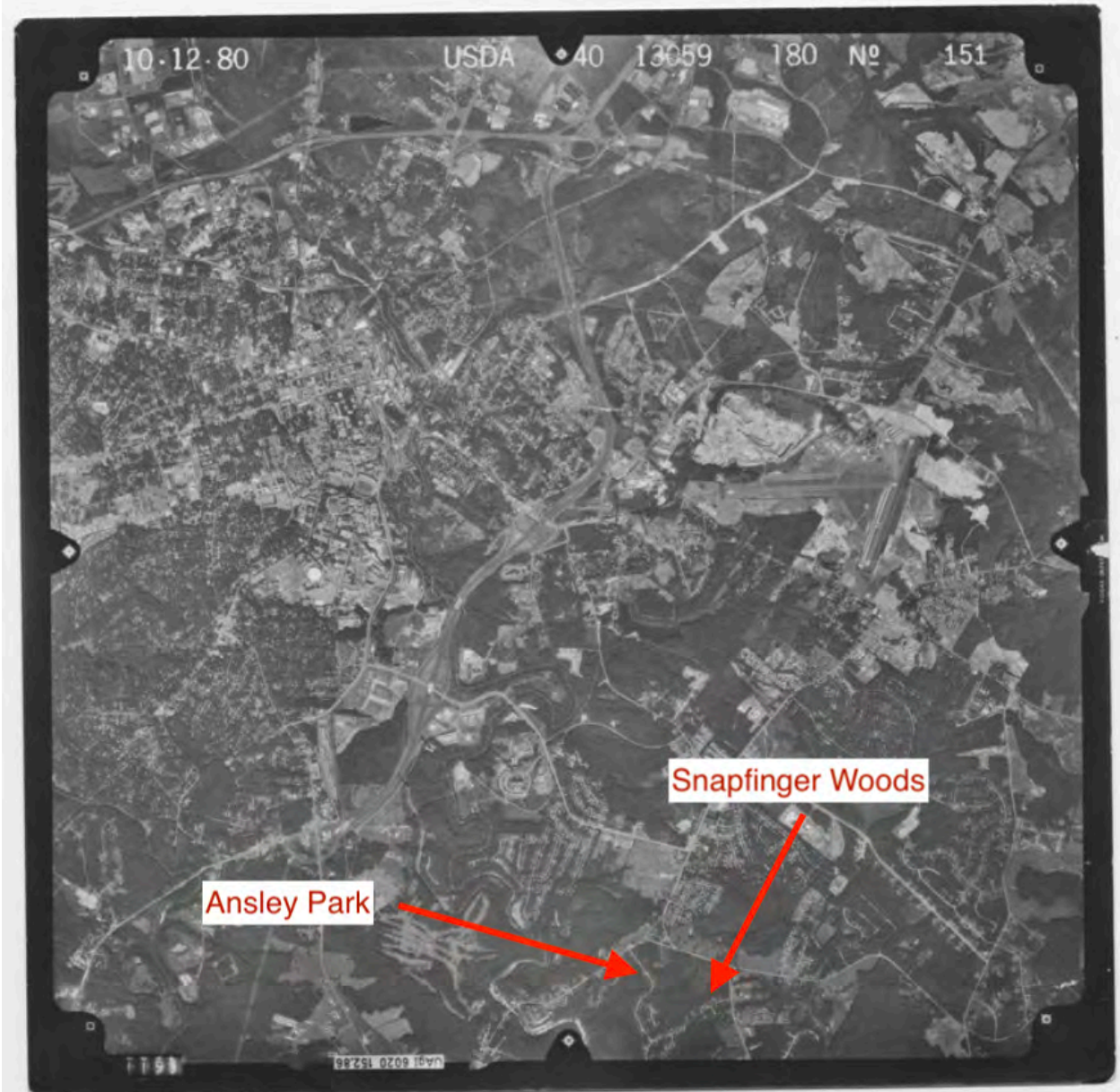


Figure 58: 1980 aerial photograph showing the Snapfinger Woods and Ansley Park subdivisions; Photo from the Georgia Aerial Photographs collection, available through the Digital Library of Georgia at <http://dbs.galib.uga.edu/gaph/html/>; Labels created by author

## Case Study One: Waverly Woods

### Developmental History

As discussed in the developmental history of Athens-Clarke County, Waverly Woods was one of the several suburbs that began to appear on the undeveloped periphery in the eastern half of the county. Development in Waverly Woods began in the late 1960s and lasted through the mid to late 1970s. In 1967, Section I of Waverly Woods was illustrated in a plat map. This section fronted Whit Davis Road to the west and contained 22 parcels. The interior neighborhood roads were given names that referenced natural features, including Shady Grove Drive, Great Oak Drive, Longview Drive, and Tamarack Drive (Tamarack is common name for the American Larch tree). Land along the north and east sections of the Waverly Woods parcels are labeled as "Future Development."<sup>358</sup> On June 8, 1972, surveyor J. R. Holland of Landmark Engineering Corporation created a plat map for Section II of Waverly Woods, which contained 77 parcels. Section II of the neighborhood extended the existing streets and added Deertree Drive and Great Oak Court, which both continued the environmental naming theme.<sup>359</sup>

In May of 1973, a Declaration of Protective Covenants was made by Southern Realty of Athens, Inc., who is referred to as the "owner of that subdivisions known as Waverly Woods."

These Protective Covenants contained the following provisions:

1. LAND USE AND BUILDING TYPE. No lot shall be used except for residential purposes. No building shall be erected, altered, placed, or permitted to remain on any lot other than detached single-family dwelling not to exceed two and one-half stories in height...

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<sup>358</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 10, page 91.

<sup>359</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 13, page 323.

2. ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL. No building shall be erected, placed or altered on any lot until the construction plans and specifications and a plan showing the locations of the structure have been approved by the architectural control committee as to quality of workmanship and materials, harmony of external design with existing grade elevations. Said architectural control committee to be named by Developer...

3. DWELLING COST, QUALITY AND SIZE. No dwelling shall be permitted on any lot at a cost of less than \$20,000.00 based upon cost level prevailing on the date these covenants are recorded...The ground floor area of the main structure, exclusive of one-story open porches and garages, shall not be less than 1600 square feet...

4. BUILDING LOCATION. No building shall be located on any lot nearer to the front lot line or nearer to the side street line than the minimum building set-back lines shown on the recorded plat...no building situated on an interior lot shall be located nearer than 30 feet to the front lot line or nearer than 15 feet to an interior lot line...

5. CARPORTS AND GARAGES. All carports and garages must be attached to the main structure unless otherwise permitted by the Architectural Control Committee. There shall be no open carport facing the street.

6. EASEMENTS. Easements for installation of maintenance of utilities and drainage facilities are reserved as shown on the recorded plat.<sup>360</sup>

Covenants 7 through 16 prohibit the following: nuisances, temporary structures, mobile homes, miscellaneous equipment, signs, oil and mining operations, livestock and poultry, garbage and refuse, sub-dividing of lots, and the obstruction of sight lines along roadways.<sup>361</sup> Covenant 17 outlines the structure of the "ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE." According to Declaration of Protective Covenants, "The architectural control committee was to be

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<sup>360</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 380, page 639.

<sup>361</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 380, page 639.

composed of three persons: an architect and two representatives of Southern Realty of Athens, Inc., all to be named by the Developer.” The Declaration of Protective Covenants, “these protective covenants shall become effective immediately and run with the land and shall be binding on all persons claiming under and through said owners until October 1, 1995, at which time said covenants any be extended or terminated in whole or in part.”<sup>362</sup> The signature of the President of Southern Realty of Athens, Inc. is illegible. However, in Baxter C. Crane, Jr.’s obituary, he is noted to have been the broker for Southern Realty and Crane Properties.<sup>363</sup> Based on an interview and oral history provided by Ashley Hill, Paul Dennis “Denny” Hill built several of the homes in the Waverly Woods subdivision.<sup>364</sup> See Appendix D for the full transcript of this interview.

Not included in the 1967 or 1972 Plat Maps are those houses located along Whit Davis Road. However, based on Tax Assessor information available online through qPublic, they are considered part of the Waverly Woods subdivision.<sup>365</sup> It is possible that they were part of the neighborhood’s original plan, and are included on a separate Section map or individual plat maps, which were not recovered during the research process. They may have also been constructed separately or at a later date and subsequently grouped with the adjacent Waverly Woods subdivisions.

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<sup>362</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 380, page 639.

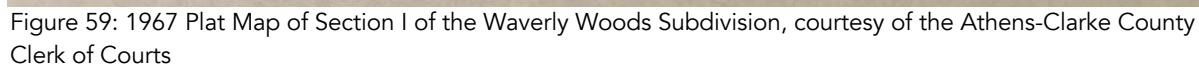
<sup>363</sup> “Baxter Crawford Crane, 1941-2019.” Accessed September 1, 2021.

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/onlineathens/name/baxter-crane-obituary?pid=193793670>

<sup>364</sup> Interview with Ashley Hill, conducted by Anders Yount via telephone, November 12, 2021.

<sup>365</sup> Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, qPublic.net, <https://qpublic.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=630&LayerID=11199&PageTypeID=1>









## Current Conditions

The Waverly Woods Subdivision is located off Whit Davis Road, in southeastern Athens-Clarke County. Whit David Road forms the western boundary of the neighborhoods. On the opposite side of the road, there are several large parcels with single-family residential buildings. On the south and east, Waverly Woods is bordered by the Woods of Habersham subdivision, which, according to Tax Assessor records, was built between the mid-1990s and early 2000s.<sup>366</sup> To the north, Waverly Woods is bound by Old Lexington Road and the Olde Lexington Gardens subdivision, which was developed in the late 1990s and early 2000s.<sup>367</sup> At the intersection of Whit Davis Road and Old Lexington Road, opposite the northwest portion of Waverly Woods, is Whit Davis Elementary School, built in 1990.<sup>368</sup> This elementary school was likely built to accommodate the substantial population growth occurring in that area, on account of the multiple large residential subdivisions being developed there.

The neighborhood entrance features a divided two-lane road. In the center, there is a small, wooded parcel with a sign that reads "WAVERLY WOODS." Behind the sign, there is a wooden gazebo with a square stone structure beneath, which appears to be a well (if this is a well, it is unknown if it is functional or decorative). Behind the gazebo, the remainder of the dividing parcel is wooded. The roads are paved with asphalt, and there are no painted street

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<sup>366</sup> Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, qPublic.net, <https://qpublic.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=630&LayerID=11199&PageTypeID=4&PageID=4601&KeyValue=244C5%20A007>

<sup>367</sup> Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, qPublic.net, <https://qpublic.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=630&LayerID=11199&PageTypeID=4&PageID=4601&KeyValue=244C4%20C013>

<sup>368</sup> Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, qPublic.net, <https://qpublic.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=630&LayerID=11199&PageTypeID=4&PageID=4601&KeyValue=244%20%20%20%20010L>



lines. There are no curbs or sidewalks within the neighborhood's interior. The houses fronting Whit Davis Road do have curbs and sidewalks, which are likely owned and maintained by the city. Along Shady Grove Drive, there are several lots with grass lawns. However, a majority of the neighborhood is wooded, and most lots have either partially or fully wooded yards. This gives the neighborhood's landscape a distinctly naturalistic quality.

There are no visible utility poles or power lines running through the neighborhood, which suggests that they were buried at the time of development. This contributes to the overall natural and vegetative feeling of the neighborhood's forested landscape. The naturalistic landscape design quality observed in Waverly Woods is indicative of the late mid-century suburban design trends identified by Catherine Howett, discussed in Chapter Two.

A vast majority of the buildings observed within this neighborhood date to the 1970s and early 1980s (excepting one home built in 2002). Represented house types include Ranch houses, Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story houses, Split-Level houses, Shed Style houses, and other 1970s contemporary house types. Below is an assortment of images that help illustrate the various house types and styles observed in the neighborhood. Some of these pictures were taken by members of the University of Georgia's FindIt Program, an architectural survey program operated by Eric Reisman out of the College of Environment & Design's Center for Community Design & Preservation, directed by Jennifer Lewis. Other pictures were taken from the Tax Assessor's website, which is available through qPublic, and from Google Street View.

### Survey Process

To conduct a survey of the Waverly Woods Subdivision, it was necessary to obtain photographs of every home in the neighborhood, as visible from the public right-of-way. For Waverly Woods, these photographs were taken by field surveyors from the UGA FindIt Program. Images available from the Athens-Clarke County Tax Assessor and Google Street View were used to supplement those photographs when necessary.

The established Character Defining Features were organized into a spreadsheet. The address of each home in the neighborhood was recorded. Excluding those houses that were identified as Ranch houses, Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story houses, or Split-Level houses, the remaining houses were then assessed based on the list of Character Defining Features. For each Character Defining Feature a home possessed, it received a tally mark in the column of the corresponding feature. The orientation of the exterior wood siding was also recorded. This information was then used to calculate the frequency of the various Character Defining Features. See Appendix A: Survey Findings for Waverly Woods.

A summary of these findings is included in the Survey Findings and Analysis section at the end of Chapter Four. This summary will be used to conduct a comparative analysis of the three Case Study neighborhoods in Chapter Five.



Figure 61: 225 Tamarack Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Waverly Woods Subdivision; photo from the UGA FindIt Program

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Small-scale brick or stone exterior features; Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; Porches and second-story balconies; and Natural landscape features.



Figure 62: 150 Longview Dr; an example of Shed Style house in the Waverly Woods Subdivision; photo from the Athens-Clarke County Tax Assessor

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented vertically and diagonally); Small-scale brick or stone exterior features; Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Slanted window heads; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 63: 196 Deertree Drive; an example of Shed Style house in the Waverly Woods Subdivision; photo from the UGA FindIt Program

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Small-scale brick or stone exterior features; Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Slanted window heads; Articulated window bays; and a Recessed and/or guarded entryway.





Figure 64: 220 Shady Grove Drive; an example of a Ranch house in the Waverly Woods Subdivision; photo from the UGA FindIt Program





Figure 65: 161 Deertree Drive; an example of a Split-Level house in the Waverly Woods Subdivision; photo from the UGA FindIt Program





Figure 66: 110 Longview Dr; an example of a Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story house in the Waverly Woods Subdivision; photo from the UGA FindIt Program





Figure 67: 300 Great Oak Dr; an example of a 1970s house with an unidentified type or style; photo from the UGA FindIt Program

## Case Study Two: Snapfinger Woods

### Developmental History

As discussed in the developmental history of Athens-Clarke County, Snapfinger Woods was one of the several suburbs that began to appear on the undeveloped periphery in the eastern half of the county. Development in Snapfinger Woods began in the mid-1970s and lasted through the mid-1980s. On November 3, 1975, the Landmark Engineering Corporation conducted a survey and created a Plat Map for Section I of Snapfinger Woods. This section of the neighborhood was located off Barnett Shoals Road and contained 20 parcels. The roads illustrated include Snapfinger Drive and two culs-de-sac, Woodcreek Place and Snapfinger Court.<sup>369</sup> On November 8, 1976, the Landmark Engineering Corporation illustrated a Plat Map for Section II of Snapfinger Woods, which was connected to Section I via Snapfinger Drive. This Plat Map shows 34 parcels, and the addition of the side street Gibbons Way, and its cul-de-sac Gibbons Place.<sup>370</sup> Section III, created by the Landmark Engineering Corporation on June 29, 1978, shows a continuation of Snapfinger Drive, with 15 additional parcels.<sup>371</sup> On March 15, 1983, the Landmark Engineering Corporation illustrated the plat map for Section IV of Snapfinger Woods. Section IV contained 15 parcels and continued along Snapfinger Drive. It also shows an additional cul-de-sac, Snapfinger Way.<sup>372</sup> The Plat Map for Section V was created by Ben McLeroy & Associates, Inc. on June 14, 1984. Section V contained 9 parcels on Snapfinger Way. The land east of these parcels is labeled as "Future Development."<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 15, page 215.

<sup>370</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 16, page 49.

<sup>371</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 17, page 48.

<sup>372</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 19, page 245.

<sup>373</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 21, page 212.

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1975, Panola Development, Inc. published a Declaration of Protective Covenants for Section I of the Snapfinger Woods subdivision. Panola Development, Inc. is referred to as the "owner of that property known as Section I, SNAPPFINGER WOODS, Clarke County."<sup>374</sup> These Protective Covenants contained the following provisions:

1. LAND USE AND BUILDING TYPE. No lot shall be used except for residential purposes. No building shall be erected, altered, placed or permitted to remain on any lot other than one detached single-family dwelling...
2. ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL. No building shall be erected, placed or altered on any lot until the construction plans and specifications and a plat showing location of the structure have been approved by the Architectural Control Committee as to quality of workmanship and materials, harmony of external design with existing structures, and as to location with respect to topography and finish grade elevation...
3. DWELLING COST, QUALITY AND SIZE. No dwelling shall be built on any lot at a cost of less than \$24,000.00 based upon cost levels prevailing on the date these covenants are filed for record...The ground floor area of the main structure, exclusive of one-story open porches and garages, shall not be less than 1,200 square feet to a one-story dwelling, no less than 800 square feet for a dwelling of more than one story.
4. BUILDING LOCATION. No building shall be located on any lot nearer to the front line or nearer to the side street line than the minimum building set-back lines shown on the recorded plat...
5. LOT AREA AND WIDTH. No dwelling shall be erected or placed on any lot having a width of less than 80 feet at the minimum building set-back line, nor shall any dwelling be erected or placed on any lot having an area of less than 12,000 square feet.

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<sup>374</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 393, page 511.

6. EASEMENTS. Easements for installation and maintenance of utilities and drainage facilities are reserved as shown on said plat...<sup>375</sup>

Covenants 7 through 15 prohibit the following: nuisances, temporary structures, oil and mining operations, above ground tanks, signs, livestock and poultry, garbage and refuse, sewage disposal, and the obstruction of sight lines along roadways.<sup>376</sup> Covenant 16 outlines the structure of the "ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE." According to Declaration of Protective Covenants, "The Architectural Control Committee is composed of PAUL D. HILL, BAXTER C. CRANE, JR., and RICHARD SORENSON." The Declaration of Protective Covenants declares that "These covenants are to run with the land and shall be binding on all parties and all persons claiming under them for a period of 25 years from the date the covenants are recorded." On the final page, the Declaration of Protective Covenants is signed by the President of Panola Development, Inc., Paul D. Hill.<sup>377</sup>

According to the interview and oral history provided by Ashley Hill, son of Paul "Denny" Hill, Paul Hill was the primary developer and builder in the Snapfinger Woods subdivision. His business was vertically integrated, and Paul Hill acted as the sole developer and builder. He purchased the raw land, managed the zoning process, laid out the street patterns, subdivided the lots, and acted a general contractor during the construction process. According to Ashley, his father maintained an extensive architectural library and spent considerable time at his drafting table designing houses. To his knowledge, about half of the neighborhood was built speculatively, while the other half was built specifically for clients who

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<sup>375</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 393, page 511.

<sup>376</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 393, page 511.

<sup>377</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 393, page 511.

had purchased property in the neighborhood. According to Ashley Hill, Paul Hill was one of the first developers in Athens to employ the Shed Style. This decision was a conscious choice to do something innovative and new in the area, setting him apart from other developers at the time. The heavily wooded character of Snapfinger Woods was also standard practice for Paul Hill, and across the many different neighborhoods he developed, he always tended to leave existing trees intact.<sup>378</sup> See Appendix D for the full transcript of this interview.

On November 7, 1976, Panola Development, Inc. issued another Declaration of Protective Covenants for Section II of the Snapfinger Woods subdivision. The provisions and language presented in this Declaration of Protective Covenants are identical to those in the Declaration of Protective Covenants written for Section I.<sup>379</sup> Presumably, they are also the same for Sections III, IV, and V, however these were not retrieved during the research process.

While the Snapfinger Woods subdivision has remained intact and largely unaltered, there have been several extension and connections made with surrounding suburban developments. Initially, this was limited to Ansley Park, located to the North of Snapfinger Woods. This neighborhood was built in the late 1970s and early 1980s and will be discussed in greater detail in the following Case Study section. The other adjacent subdivisions include Rivercrest Commons (southwest of Snapfinger Woods), and the Villas at Snapfinger and Wakefield (north of Snapfinger Woods). These subdivisions were developed in the mid to late 1990s and early 2000s, and they do not possess the same architectural character, landscape features, or lot sizes present in Snapfinger Woods, nor are they composed exclusively of single-

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<sup>378</sup> Interview with Ashley Hill, conducted by Anders Yount via telephone, November 12, 2021.

<sup>379</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 395, page 752.

family residences. Based on deed records available through Athens-Clarke County's qPublic website, the land containing the Villas at Snapfinger and Wakefield was formerly owned by Crane-Sorenson Inc., and was sold during the late 1980s or early 1990s. This is true of Rivercrest Commons as well, who purchased land from Crane-Sorenson, Inc in the early 2000s. Presumably, Crane-Sorenson, Inc. takes its namesake from Baxter C. Crane, Jr. and Richard Sorenson, who are referenced in Snapfinger Woods' Declaration of Protective Covenants. These extensions were not included in the Survey Process for Snapfinger Woods.



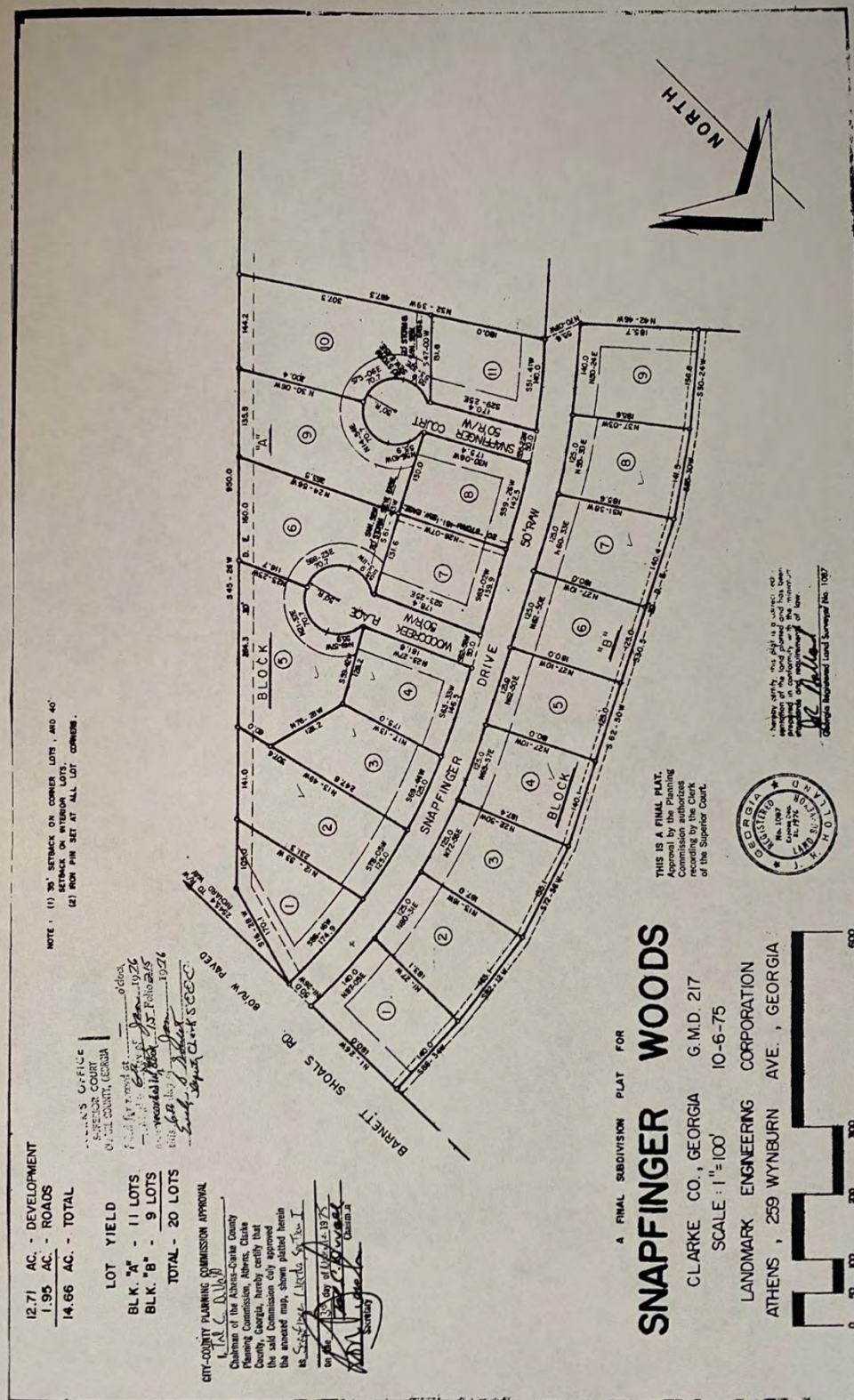


Figure 68: 1975 Plat Map for Section I of the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision, courtesy of the Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts



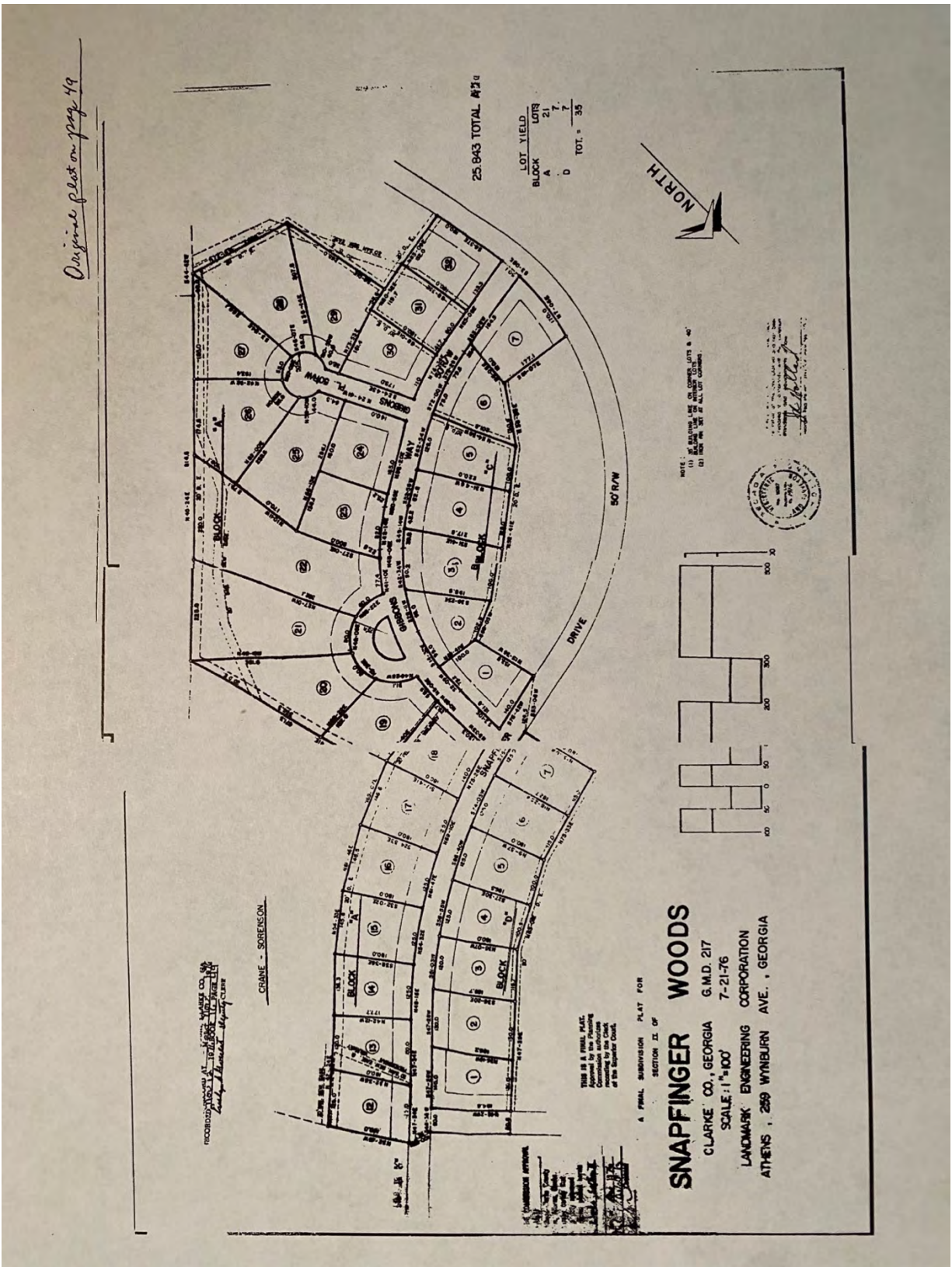
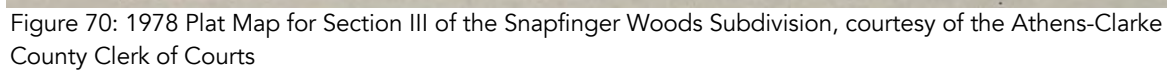


Figure 69: 1976 Plat Map for Section II of the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision, courtesy of the Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts







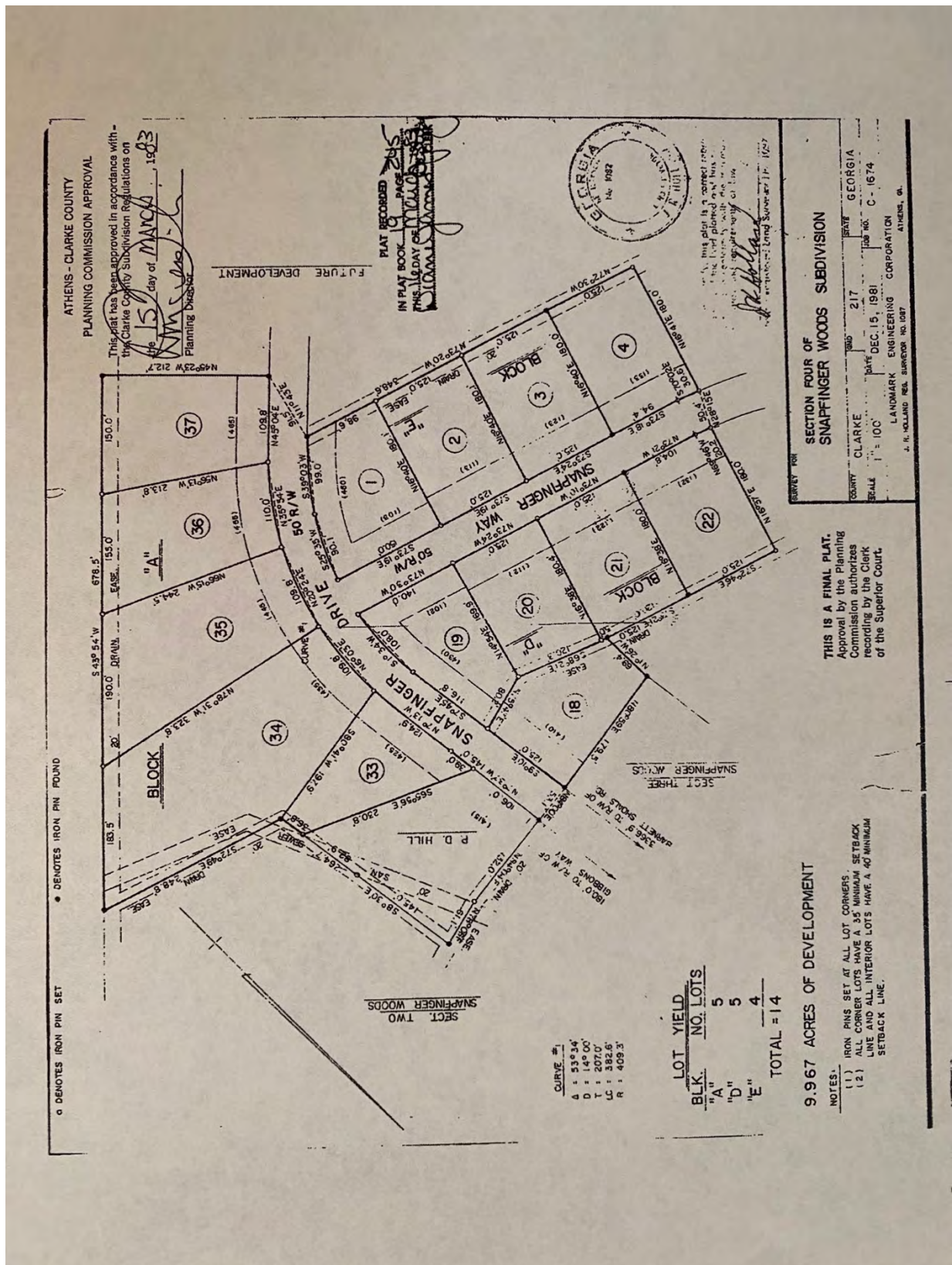


Figure 71: 1983 Plat Map for Section IV of the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision, courtesy of the Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts



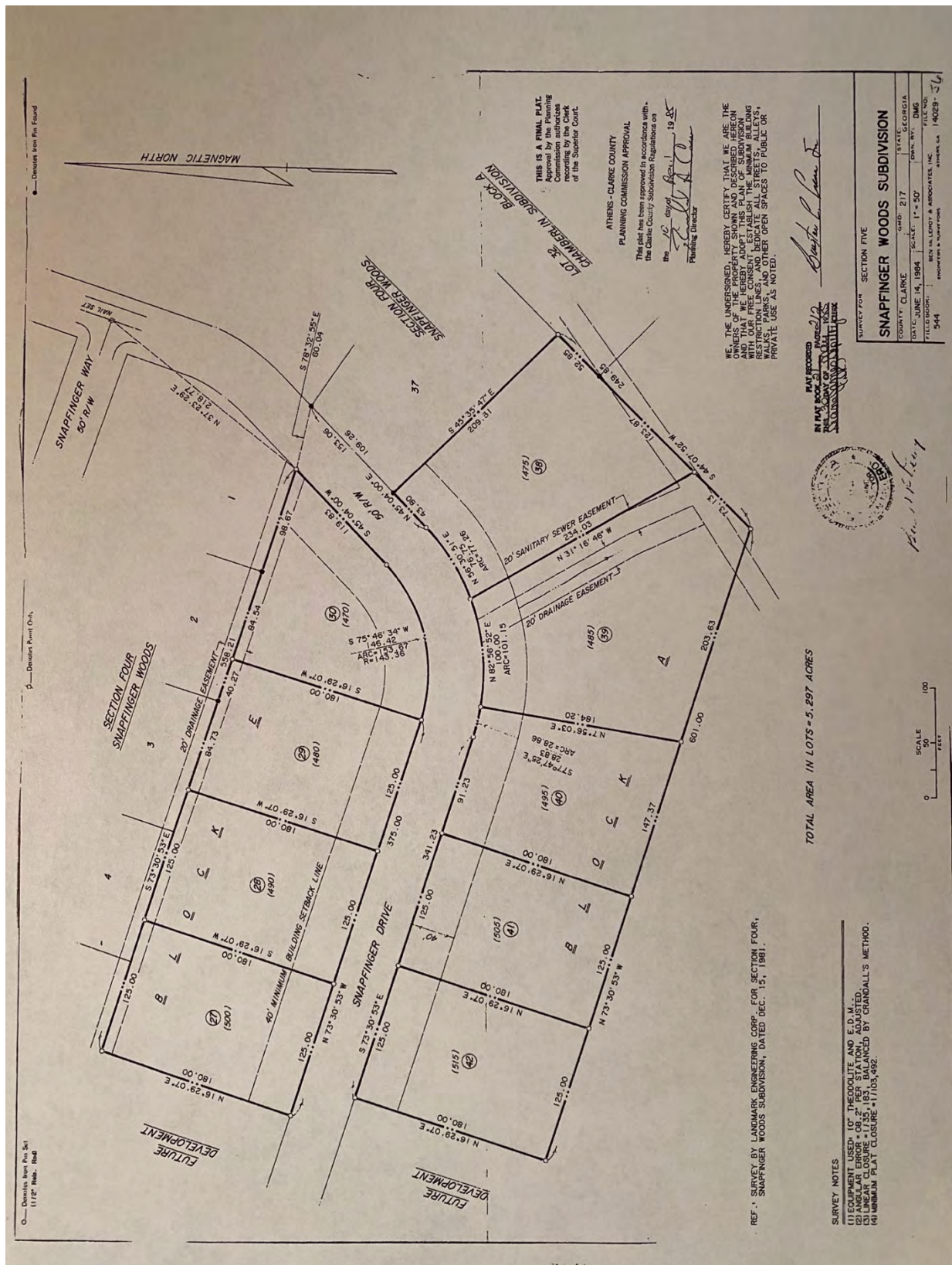


Figure 72: 1984 Plat Map for Section V of the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision, courtesy of the Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts

### Current Conditions

The Snapfinger Woods subdivision is located off Barnett Shoals Road, in southeastern Athens-Clarke County. Barnett Shoals Road forms the east boundary of the neighborhood. On the opposite side of the road, there are several large parcels with single-family residential buildings. The south boundary of the neighborhood is composed on one historic single-family residence (3098 Barnett Shoals Road), an undeveloped parcel owned by Athens-Clarke County, several undeveloped parcels located in the back of the Chamberlin subdivision, and two large undeveloped parcels owned by Crane-Sorenson, Inc. Crane-Sorenson, Inc. owns an additional undeveloped property on the west boundary of the neighborhood, which runs along the edge of the North Oconee River. Rivercrest Commons is located on the southwest edge of Snapfinger Woods, containing a mixture of single-family residences and townhomes. North of Snapfinger Woods are Ansley Park, Wakefield, and the Villas at Snapfinger.

The neighborhood entrance is located on Barnett Shoals Road. It features a small, wooden sign that reads "SNAPFINGER WOODS." The roads are paved with asphalt, and there are no painted street lines. There are small, sloped curbs on either side of the road. The first four parcels on either side beyond the main entrance are flat and feature grass lawns. Beyond that point, however, the topography changes substantially, and the landscape becomes much hillier, with steep slopes in certain areas, and the lots are much more heavily wooded. This gives the neighborhood's landscape a distinctly naturalistic quality.

There are no visible utility poles or power lines running through the neighborhood, which suggests that they were buried at the time of development. This contributes to the overall natural and vegetative feeling of the neighborhood's forested landscape. The

naturalistic landscape design quality observed in Snapfinger Woods is indicative of the late mid-century suburban design trends identified by Catherine Howett, discussed in Chapter Two.

A vast majority of the buildings observed within this neighborhood date between the mid-1970s and early 1980s (excepting a small cluster of homes built at the end of Snapfinger Way in the early 2000s). Represented house types include Ranch houses, Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story houses, Shed Style houses, and other unidentified 1970s house types, a majority being Shed Style houses. Below is an assortment of images that help illustrate the various house types and styles observed in the neighborhood. A majority of these images were taken by the author. Other pictures were taken from the Tax Assessor's website, which is available through qPublic, and from Google Street View.

### Survey Process

To conduct a survey of the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision, it was necessary to obtain photographs of every home in the neighborhood, as visible from the public right-of-way. For Snapfinger Woods, these photographs were taken by the author. Images available from the Athens-Clarke County Tax Assessor and Google Street View were used to supplement those photographs when necessary.

The established Character Defining Features were organized into a spreadsheet. The address of each home in the neighborhood was recorded. Excluding those houses that were identified as Ranch houses, Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story houses, or Split-Level houses, the remaining houses were then assessed based on the list of Character Defining Features. For each Character Defining Feature a home possessed, it received a tally mark in the column of the corresponding feature. The orientation of the exterior wood siding was also recorded. This information was then used to calculate the frequency of the various Character Defining Features. See Appendix B: Survey Findings for Snapfinger Woods.

A summary of these findings is included in the Survey Findings and Analysis section at the end of Chapter Four. This summary will be used to conduct a comparative analysis of the three Case Study neighborhoods in Chapter Five.





Figure 73: 265 Snapfinger Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally, vertically, and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 74: 270 Snapfinger Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 75: 495 Snapfinger Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; Porches and/or second-story balconies; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 76: 250 Snapfinger Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms;

Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood

composite siding (oriented diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall

intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single

pane windows; Clerestory windows; Slanted window heads; Articulated window bays; and

Natural landscape features.





Figure 77: 365 Snapfinger Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms;

Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall

intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Slanted window heads; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 78: 435 Snapfinger Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms;

Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented vertically); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall

intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 79: 155 Gibbons Way; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms;  
Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (Shingle); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections;  
Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; Porches and/or second-story balconies; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 80: 180 Gibbons Way; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; Porches and/or second-story balconies; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 81: 125 Gibbons Way; an example of a Shed Style house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features: Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented vertically); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; Porches and/or second-story balconies; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 82: 100 Snapfinger Drive; an example of an unidentified house type (appears to be a 1970s rendition of a gabled ell cottage) in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author





Figure 83: 115 Snapfinger Drive; an example of a Ranch house in the Snapfinger Woods Subdivision; photo taken by author

## Case Study Three: Ansley Park

### Developmental History

As discussed in the developmental history of Athens-Clarke County, Ansley Park was one of the several suburbs that began to appear on the undeveloped periphery in the eastern half of the county. Development in Ansley Park began in the mid-1970s and lasted through the mid-1980s. On May 17, 1976, the Landmark Engineering Corporation conducted a survey and created a Plat Map for Section I of the Ansley Park subdivision. This section of the neighborhood was located off Whitehall Road and illustrated to include 15 parcels. The road shown on the plat map is called Ansley Drive.<sup>380</sup> On November 8, 1976, Landmark Engineering Corporation produced a plat map for Section II of Ansley Park, which extended Ansley Drive and contained 25 parcels.<sup>381</sup> On September 12, 1977, Landmark Engineering Corporation produced a plat map of Section III, which added a cul-de-sac off Ansley Drive, on a street called Flannigans Place. This section contained an additional 10 parcels.<sup>382</sup> The plat map for Section IV, also produced by Landmark Engineering Corporation, was completed on May 29, 1978. Section IV contained 14 parcels, located on Sorenson Way, which was an offshoot of Ansley Drive, and Sorenson Place, a cul-de-sac off Sorenson Way.<sup>383</sup>

On January 7, 1979, Panola Development, Inc. issued a Declaration of Protective Covenants for Section IV of Ansley Park (presumably there were Declaration of Protective Covenants issued for each section of Ansley Park, but these were not retrieved during the

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<sup>380</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 15, page 295.

<sup>381</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 16, page 48.

<sup>382</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 16, page 238.

<sup>383</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Plat Book 17, page 47.

research process). Panola Development, Inc. is referred to as the "owner of that property known as Section IV, ANSLEY PARK, Clarke County."<sup>384</sup> These Protective Covenants contained the following provisions:

1. LAND USE AND BUILDING TYPE. No lot shall be used, except for residential purposes. No building shall be erected, altered, placed or permitted to remain on any lot other than one detached single-family dwelling...
2. ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL. No building shall be erected, placed or altered on any lot until the construction plans and specifications and a plat showing location of the structure have been approved by the Architectural Control Committee as to quality of workmanship and materials, harmony of external design with existing structures, and as to location with respect to topography and finish grade elevation...
3. DWELLING COST, QUALITY AND SIZE. No dwelling shall be built on any lot at a cost of less than \$15,000.00 based upon cost levels prevailing on the date these covenants are filed for record...The ground floor area of the main structure, exclusive of one-story open porches and garages, shall not be less than 900 square feet to a one-story dwelling, no less than 400 square feet for a dwelling of more than one story.
- BUILDING LOCATION. No building shall be located on the lot nearer to the front line or nearer to the side street line than the minimum building setback lines as shown on the recorded plat...
5. LOT AREA AND WIDTH. No dwelling shall be erected or placed on any lot having a width of less than 60 feet at the minimum building setback line, nor shall any dwelling be erected or placed on any lot having an area of less than 12,000 square feet.
6. EASEMENTS. Easements for installation and maintenance of utilities and drainage facilities are reserved as shown on said plat...<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 410, page 700.

<sup>385</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 410, page 700.



Covenants 7 through 15 prohibit the following: nuisances, temporary structures, oil and mining operations, above ground tanks, signs, livestock and poultry, garbage and refuse, sewage disposal, and the obstruction of sight lines along roadways<sup>386</sup> Covenant 16 outlines the structure of the "ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE." According to Declaration of Protective Covenants, "The Architectural Control Committee is composed of PAUL D. HILL." The Declaration of Protective Covenants declares that "These covenants are to run with the land and shall be binding on all parties and all persons claiming under them for a period of 25 years from the date the covenants are recorded." On the final page, the Declaration of Protective Covenants is signed by the President of Panola Development, Inc., Paul D. Hill.<sup>387</sup>

According to Ashley Hill, Paul Hill also acted as the primary developer and builder in the Ansley Park subdivision.<sup>388</sup> See Appendix D for the full transcript of this interview. Ansley Park and Snapfinger Woods were developed at roughly the same time and in close proximity to one another. The similarities and differences between these two neighborhoods will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five, but it is worth quickly noting that they share many commonalities, including the incorporation of Shed Style architecture and natural landscape features.

Based on dates available from the Athens-Clarke County Tax Assessor, there were two extensions made to Ansley Park in the mid-1990s. These extensions are two culs-de-sac on the west side of Ansley Drive, Beth Court and Rachel Way. Beth Court contains 8 parcels, and

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<sup>386</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 410, page 700.

<sup>387</sup> Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts, Deed Room, Deed Book 410, page 700.

<sup>388</sup> Interview with Ashley Hill, conducted by Anders Yount via telephone, November 12, 2021.

Rachel Way contains 12 parcels. These culs-de-sac do not resemble the architectural style, building types, or landscape characteristics of the Ansley Park subdivision. At an unknown point, Ansley Drive was extended south, where it met an extension of the Snapfinger Woods subdivision made in the late 1990s, connecting the two neighborhoods. The parcels along this extension are large and undeveloped, excepting on property at the west end of the road. These extensions were not included in the Survey Process for Ansley Park.

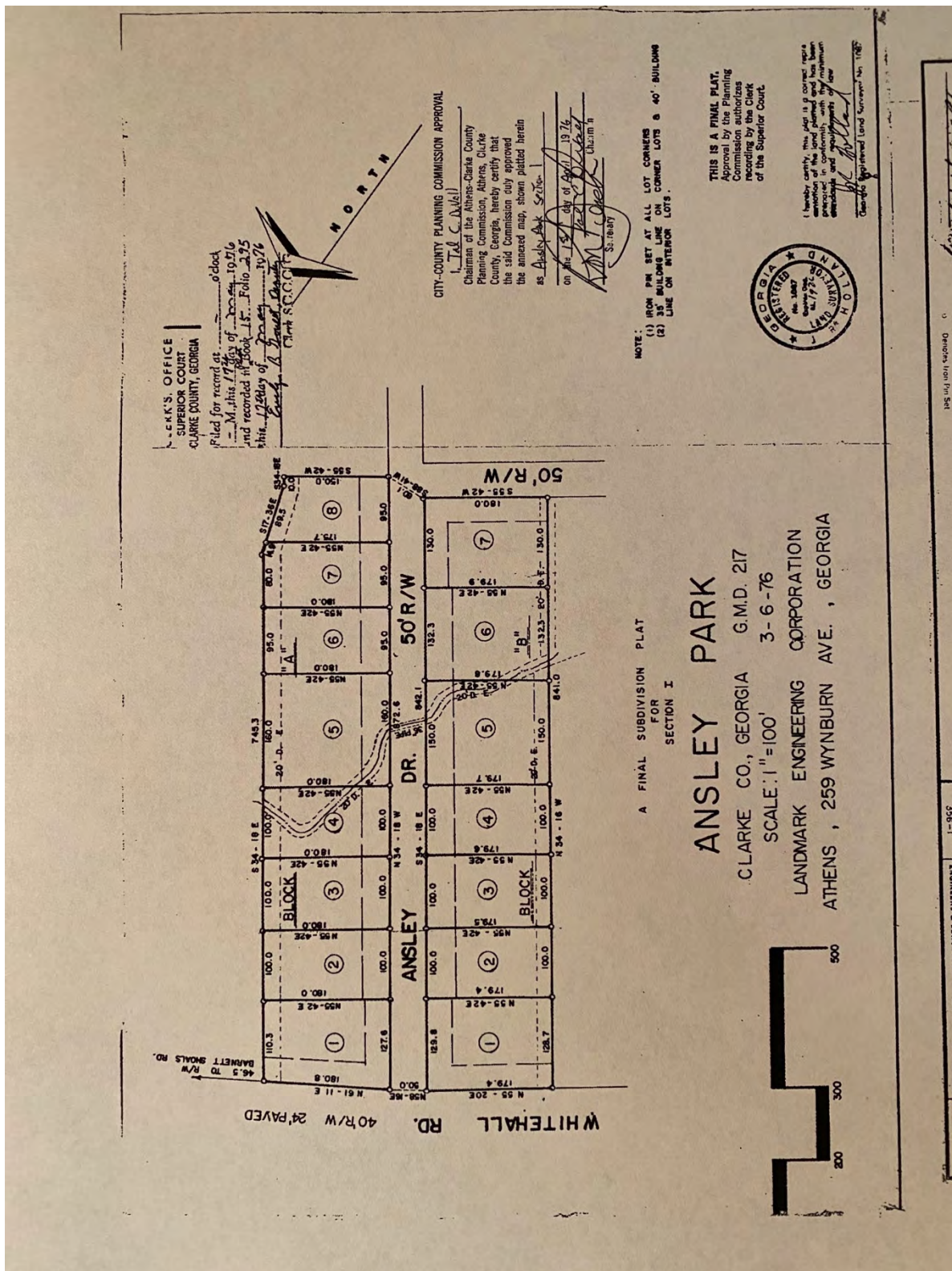


Figure 84: 1976 Plat Map for Section I of the Ansley Park Subdivision, courtesy of the Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts



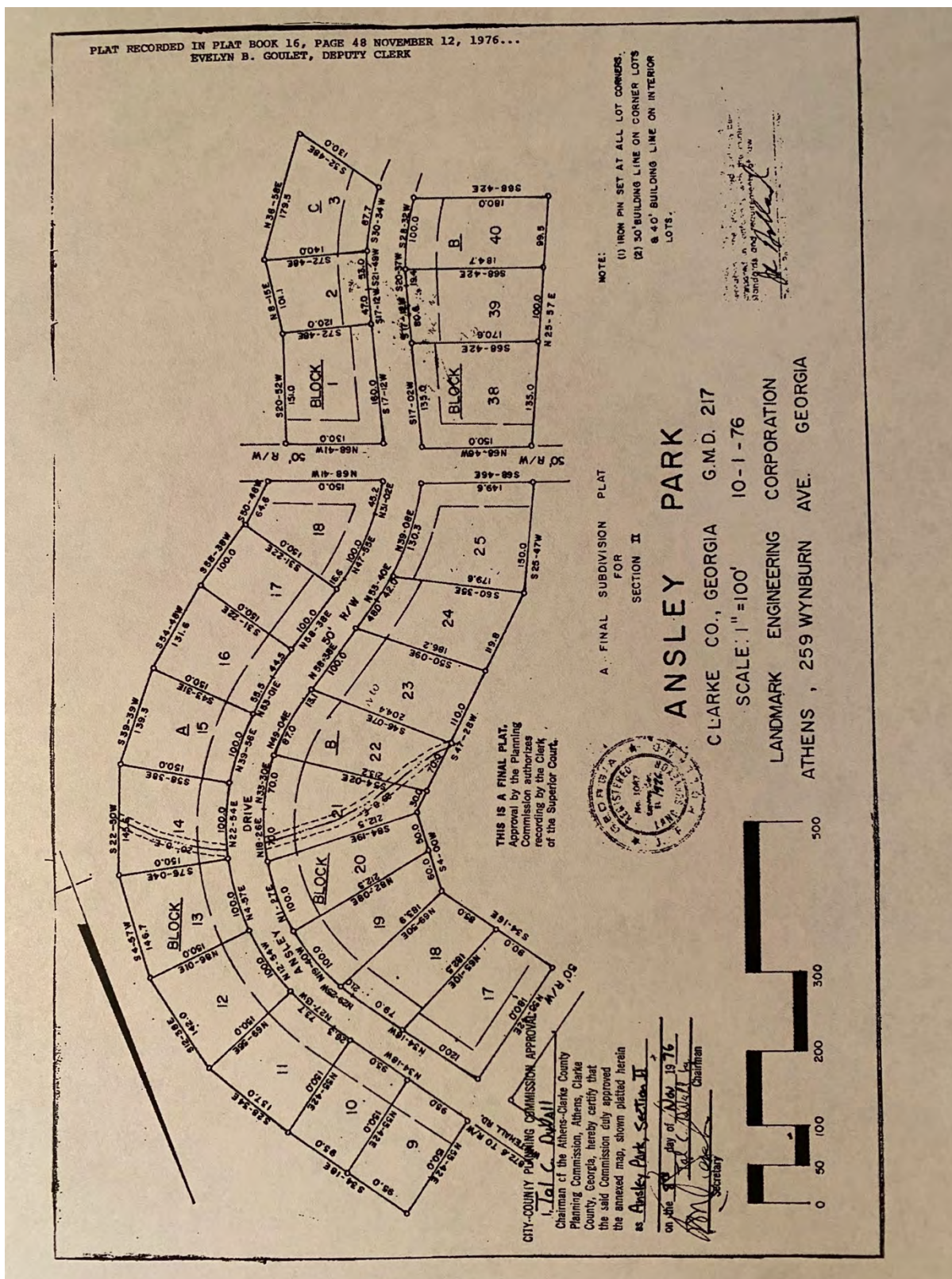


Figure 85: 1976 Plat Map for Section II of the Ansley Park Subdivision, courtesy of the Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts



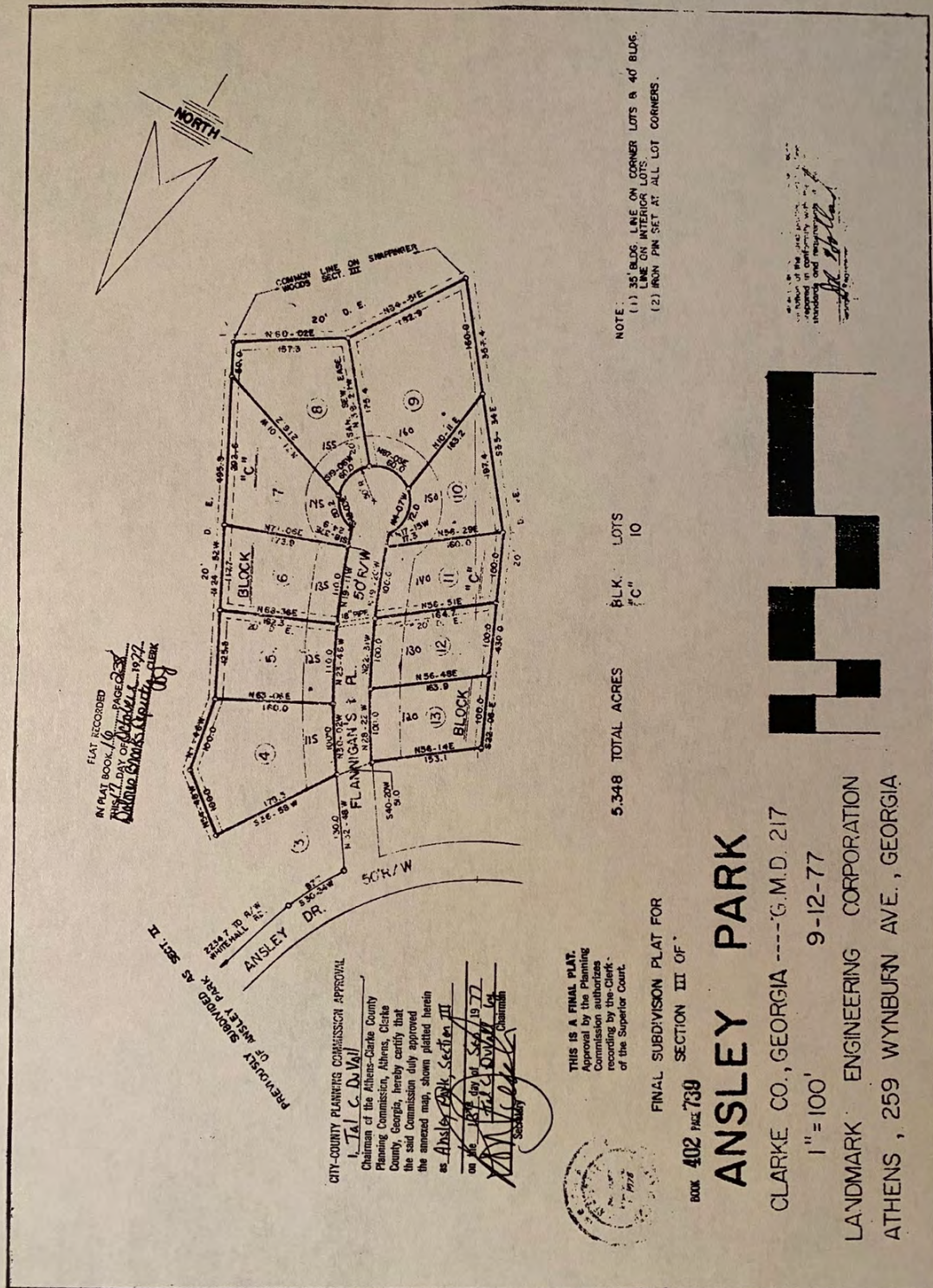


Figure 86: 1977 Plat Map for Section III of the Ansley Park Subdivision, courtesy of the Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts



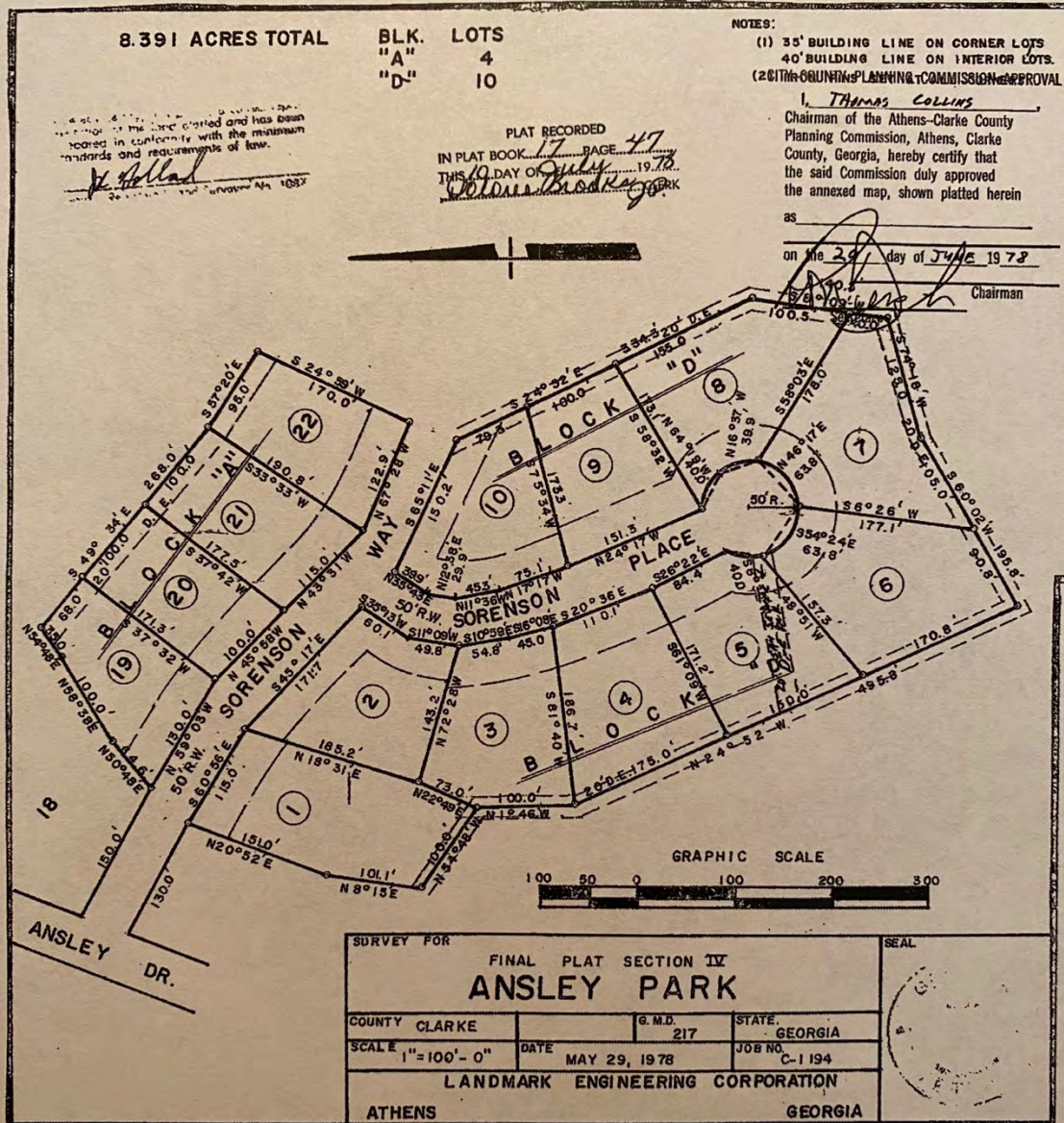


Figure 87: 1978 Plat Map for Section IV of the Ansley Park Subdivision, courtesy of the Athens-Clarke County Clerk of Courts



## Current Conditions

The Ansley Park subdivision is located off Whitehall Road, in southeastern Athens-Clarke County. Whitehall Road acts as the north boundary of the neighborhood. On the east, the neighborhood borders the Wakefield and Villas at Snapfinger. To the south, Ansley Park is bordered by Snapfinger Woods. To the east, there are two large undeveloped parcels, and a large townhome development called Whitehall Village, which was built in the mid-2000s and 2010s. The main entrance of the neighborhood is located off Whitehall Road. There is no visible signage. The roads are paved with asphalt, and there are no painted street lines. There are several large speed tables spread through the neighborhoods. There are small, sloped curbs on either side of the road. The topography has gentle slopes, but no especially steep hills. A majority of the lawns are wooded and do not have grass. This gives the neighborhood's landscape a distinctly naturalistic quality.

There are no visible utility poles or power lines running through the neighborhood, which suggests that they were buried at the time of development. This contributes to the overall natural and vegetative feeling of the neighborhood's forested landscape. The naturalistic landscape design quality observed in Ansley Park is indicative of the late mid-century suburban design trends identified by Catherine Howett, discussed in Chapter Two.

A vast majority of the buildings observed within this neighborhood date between the mid-1970s and early 1980s (excepting those homes located on the Beth Court and Rachel Way culs-de-sac extensions). Represented house types include Ranch houses and Shed Style houses, a majority being Ranch houses. Below is an assortment of images that help illustrate the various house types and styles observed in the neighborhood. A majority of these images

were taken by the author. Other pictures were taken from the Tax Assessor's website, which is available through qPublic, and from Google Street View.

### Survey Process

To conduct a survey of the Ansley Park Subdivision, it was necessary to obtain photographs of every home in the neighborhood, as visible from the public right-of-way. For Ansley Park, these photographs were taken by the author. Images available from the Athens-Clarke County Tax Assessor and Google Street View were used to supplement those photographs when necessary.

The established Character Defining Features were organized into a spreadsheet. The address of each home in the neighborhood was recorded. Excluding those houses that were identified as Ranch houses, Mid-Twentieth Century Two-Story houses, or Split-Level houses, the remaining houses were then assessed based on the list of Character Defining Features. For each Character Defining Feature a home possessed, it received a tally mark in the column of the corresponding feature. The orientation of the exterior wood siding was also recorded. This information was then used to calculate the frequency of the various Character Defining Features. See Appendix C: Survey Findings for Ansley Park.

A summary of these findings is included in the Survey Findings and Analysis section at the end of Chapter Four. This summary will be used to conduct a comparative analysis of the three Case Study neighborhoods in Chapter Five.



Figure 88: 125 Flannigans Place; an example of a Shed Style house in the Ansley Park Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features: Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Slanted window heads; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 89: 330 Ansley Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Ansley Park Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features: Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 90: 185 Sorenson Way; an example of a Shed Style house in the Ansley Park Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features: Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Slanted window heads; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 91: 260 Ansley Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Ansley Park Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features: Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Articulated window bays; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 92: 210 Ansley Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Ansley Park Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms;

Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and

seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window

placement; Large, single pane windows; Clerestory windows; Slanted window heads;

Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 93: 170 Ansley Drive; an example of a Shed Style house in the Ansley Park Subdivision; photo taken by author

This example possesses the following Character Defining Features:

Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; Multiple intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (oriented horizontally and diagonally); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Asymmetrical window placement; Large, single pane windows; Slanted window heads; Articulated window bays; Recessed and/or guarded entryway; and Natural landscape features.





Figure 94: 285 Ansley Drive; an example of a Ranch house in the Ansley Park Subdivision; photo taken by author





Figure 95: 170 Sorenson Way; an example of a Ranch house in the Ansley Park Subdivision; photo taken by author



## Summary

Using the architectural research conducted in Chapter Three, supplemented by present-day style guides and SHPO resources, Chapter Four outlined a list of fifteen Character Defining Features. These Character Defining Features are important tools for the identification and preservation of Shed Style residential resources.

Chapter Four also provided a brief developmental history of Athens-Clarke County. This developmental history, which mirrored larger national trends in the history of suburban residential development explored in Chapter Two, aided in the selection of three Case Study neighborhoods. These Case Study neighborhoods were selected based on their period of development, their location in Athens-Clarke County, and a windshield assessment of the presence of Shed Style architecture.

Following the selection of these three Case Study neighborhoods (Waverly Woods, Snapfinger Woods, and Ansley Park), each neighborhood was surveyed using the fifteen Character Defining Features established in Chapter Four. The survey process involved taking two to three pictures of every residence in each Case Study neighborhood from the public right-of-way. These pictures were then used to assess the number of Shed Style buildings in each neighborhood, and the rate of occurrence of the various Character Defining Features. These survey findings were initially recorded in a spreadsheet (See Appendices A, B, and C). These survey findings will be used to conduct a detailed breakdown and analysis in Chapter Five.

The survey findings for each Character Defining Feature in the Case Study neighborhoods are summarized in bullet point form below:

Waverly Woods

- Of the 103 houses surveyed as part of the Waverly Woods neighborhood, there are 32 homes that could be considered Shed Style or having elements of Shed Style
  - o The remaining house types were primarily ranch houses and mid-twentieth century two stories
- *Of those 32 identified as Shed Style:*
  - o 28 have an irregular, asymmetrical footprint
  - o 28 have intersecting masses and geometric forms
  - o 30 have shed, gable, and/or slipped gable roof lines
  - o 28 have wooden siding, while the remaining 4 have wooden shingle siding.
  - o 18 have small stone and brick exterior elements
    - Typically in the form of half walls or panels between windows
  - o 26 have minimal roof eave overhang and smooth wall intersections
  - o 29 have unadorned surfaces
  - o 28 have asymmetrical window placements
  - o 22 have large single pane windows
  - o 16 have clerestory windows
  - o 5 have slanted window heads
  - o 15 have articulated window bays
    - Including recessed windows bays, framed window bays, and projecting box bays
  - o 21 have recessed or guarded entryways
  - o 9 have porches or balconies that were visible on the front facade
  - o 4 are situated on parcels with a sloped topography
  - o 20 are on lots that were heavily vegetated or forested

### Snapfinger Woods

- Of the 88 houses surveyed in the Snapfinger Woods neighborhoods, there are 70 homes that could be considered Shed Style or having elements of Shed Style
  - o The remaining house types are primarily ranch houses, mid-century two-stories, and eclectic 1970s homes that do not resemble Shed Style architecture
- *Of those 70 identified as Shed Style:*
  - o 52 have an irregular, asymmetrical footprint
  - o 54 have intersecting masses and geometric forms
  - o 64 have shed, gable, and/or slipped gable roof lines
    - The exceptions are examples with flat roofs
  - o 68 have wooden siding, while the remaining 2 have wooden shingle siding
  - o 5 have small stone and brick exterior elements
    - Typically in the form of half walls or panels between windows
  - o 63 have minimal roof eave overhang and smooth wall intersections
  - o 67 have unadorned surfaces
  - o 57 have asymmetrical window placements
  - o 51 have large single pane windows
  - o 26 have clerestory windows
  - o 12 have slanted window heads
  - o 46 have articulated window bays
    - Including recessed windows bays, framed window bays, and projecting box bays
  - o 48 have recessed or guarded entryways
  - o 25 have porches or balconies that were visible on the front façade
  - o 51 are situated on parcels with a sloped topography
  - o 61 are on lots that were heavily vegetated or forested

### Ansley Park

- Of the 65 houses surveyed in the Ansley Park neighborhood, there are 26 homes that could be considered Shed Style or having elements of Shed Style
  - o The remaining house types are primarily Ranch houses with Rustic style features
- *Of those 26 identified as Shed Style:*
  - o 4 have an irregular, asymmetrical footprint
    - A vast majority of the Shed Style buildings in Ansley Park had uniform rectangular footprints
  - o 22 have intersecting masses and geometric forms
  - o 26 have shed, gable, and/or slipped gable roof lines
  - o 26 have wooden siding
  - o 1 has small stone and brick exterior elements
  - o 24 have minimal roof eave overhang and smooth wall intersections
  - o 25 have unadorned surfaces
  - o 20 have asymmetrical window placements
  - o 15 have large single pane windows
  - o 16 have clerestory windows
  - o 14 have slanted window heads
  - o 18 have articulated window bays
    - Including recessed windows bays, framed window bays, and projecting box bays
  - o 11 have recessed or guarded entryways
  - o None had large porches or balconies visible from the front façade
  - o 14 are situated on parcels with a sloped topography
  - o 17 are on lots that were heavily vegetated or forested

## CHAPTER 5

### SURVEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Using the summary of the survey findings presented in Chapter Four, Table 1 was created to provide a simple breakdown showing the number of each Character Defining Feature present in the three Case Study neighborhoods. The first column of Table 1 has numbers 1-15, corresponding with the list of Character Defining Features established in Chapter Four. In the top row, each neighborhood is listed with the number of Shed Style houses in the neighborhood in parenthesis. In each row below is the number of Shed Style houses in that neighborhood that contained each Character Defining Feature.

Feature	Waverly Woods (32)	Snapfinger Woods (70)	Ansley Park (26)
1	28	52	4
2	28	54	22
3	30	64	26
4	32	70	26
5	18	5	1
6	26	63	24
7	29	67	25
8	28	57	20
9	22	51	15
10	16	26	16
11	5	12	14
12	15	46	18
13	21	48	11
14	9	25	0
15	20	61	17

Table 1: Number of examples present for each Character Defining Feature in the three Case Study neighborhoods; created by author



Survey Findings

In the Waverly Woods subdivision, Shed Style houses accounted for approximately 31% of the houses in the neighborhood. Listed in order of frequency, the Character Defining Features are as follows: Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (100%); Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines (94%); Austere, unadorned wall surfaces (90%); Irregular/asymmetrical footprint (88%); Multiple, intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms (88%); Asymmetrical window placement (88%); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections (81%); Large, single pane windows (69%); Recessed or guarded entryways (66%); Natural landscape features (62%); Small-scale brick or stone elements (56%); Clerestory windows (50%); Articulated window bays (47%); Porches and/or second-story balconies (28%); and Slanted window heads (16%).

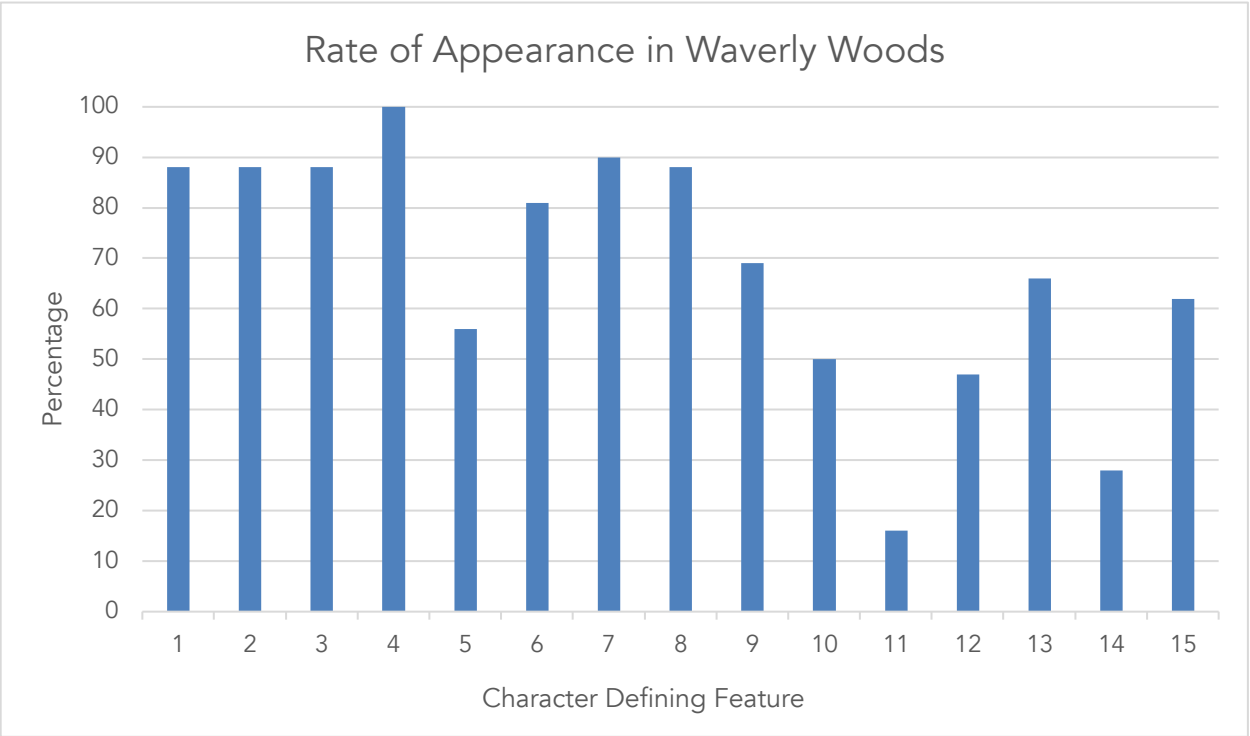


Table 2: Rate of Appearance per Character Defining Feature in Waverly Woods; created by author

In the Snapfinger Woods subdivision, Shed Style houses accounted for approximately 80% of houses in the neighborhood. Listed in order of frequency, the Character Defining Features are as follows: Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (100%); Austere, unadorned wall surfaces (96%); Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines (91%); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections (90%); Natural landscape features (87%); Asymmetrical window placement (81%); Multiple, intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms (77%); Irregular/asymmetrical footprint (74%); Large, single pane windows (73%); Recessed or guarded entryways (69%); Articulated window bays (66%); Clerestory windows (37%); Porches and/or second-story balconies (36%); Slanted window heads (17%); and Small-scale brick or stone elements (7%).

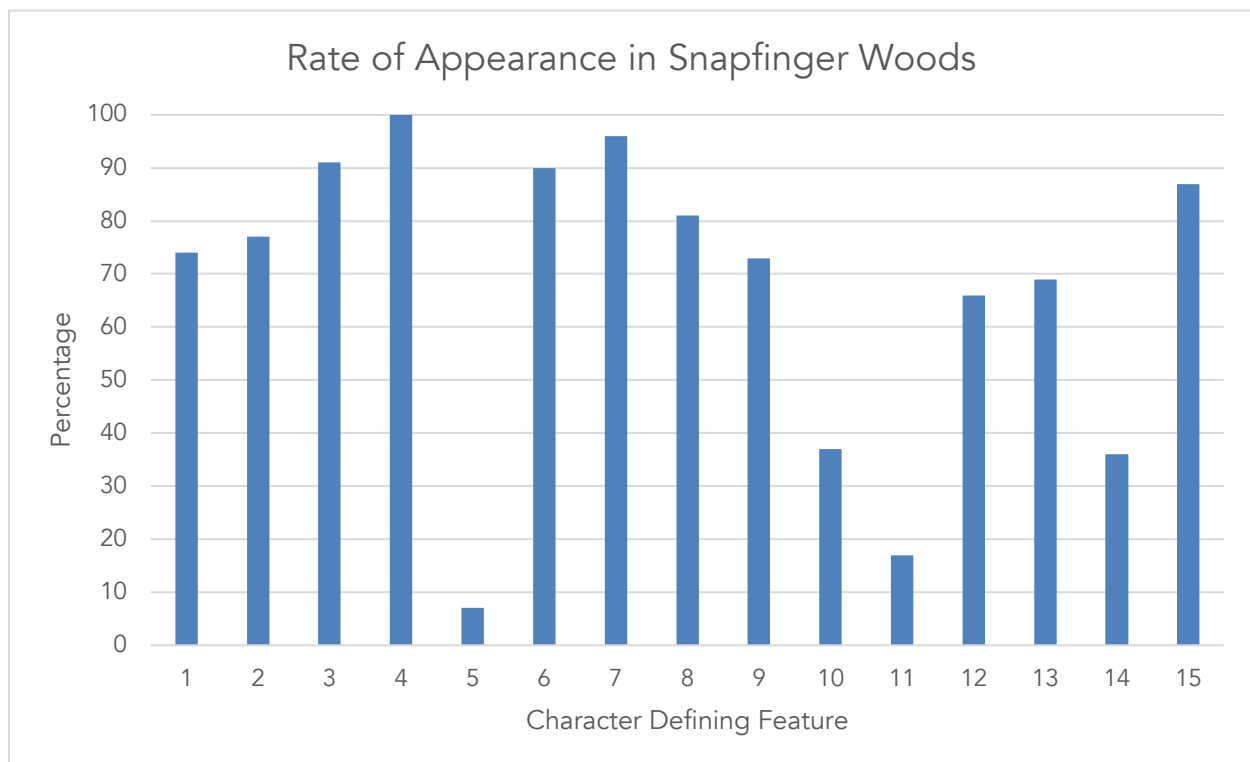


Table 3: Rate of Appearance per Character Defining Feature in Snapfinger Woods; created by author

In the Ansley Park subdivision, Shed Style houses accounted for approximately 40% of houses in the neighborhood. Listed in order of frequency, the Character Defining Features are as follows: Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (100%); Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines (100%); Austere, unadorned wall surfaces (96%); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections (92%); Multiple, intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms (85%); Asymmetrical window placement (77%); Articulated window bays (69%); Natural landscape features (65%); Clerestory windows (62%); Large, single pane windows (58%); Slanted window heads (54%); Recessed or guarded entryways (42%); Irregular/asymmetrical footprint (15%); Small-scale brick or stone elements (3%); and Porches and/or second-story balconies (0%).

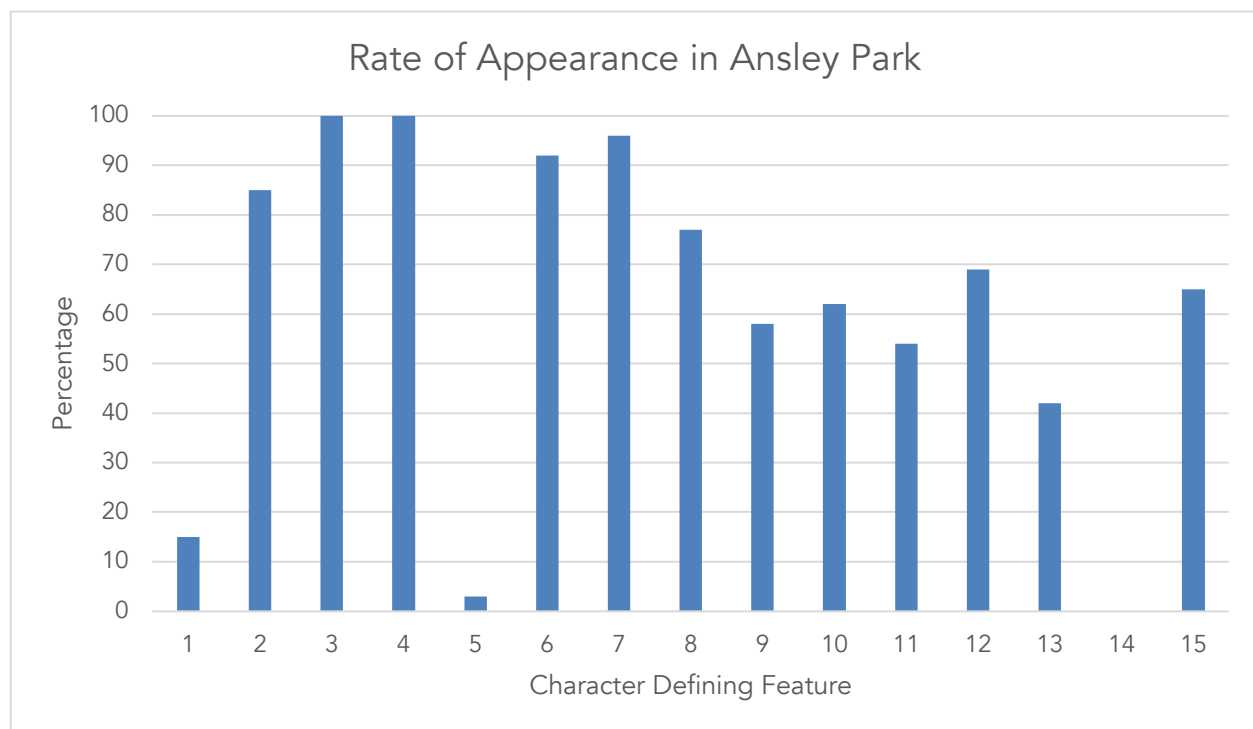


Table 4: Rate of Appearance per Character Defining Feature in Ansley Park; created by author

In total, the rate of appearance for each Character Defining Feature across the three Case Study neighborhoods was as follows: Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding was universal among all surveyed Shed Style houses, accounting for 100% of all identified resources; 95% of all houses surveyed displayed Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; 94% of all houses surveyed had Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; 88% of all houses had Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; 82% of all houses had Asymmetrical window placement; 81% of all houses had Multiple, intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms; 76% of all houses had Natural landscape features; 69% of all houses had Large, single pane windows; 66% of all houses had an Irregular/asymmetrical footprint; 63% of all houses had a Recessed or guarded entryway; 62% of all houses had Articulated window bays; 45% of all houses had Clerestory windows; 27% of all houses had Porches and/or second-story balconies; 24% of all houses had Slanted window heads; 19% of all houses had Small-scale brick or stone elements.

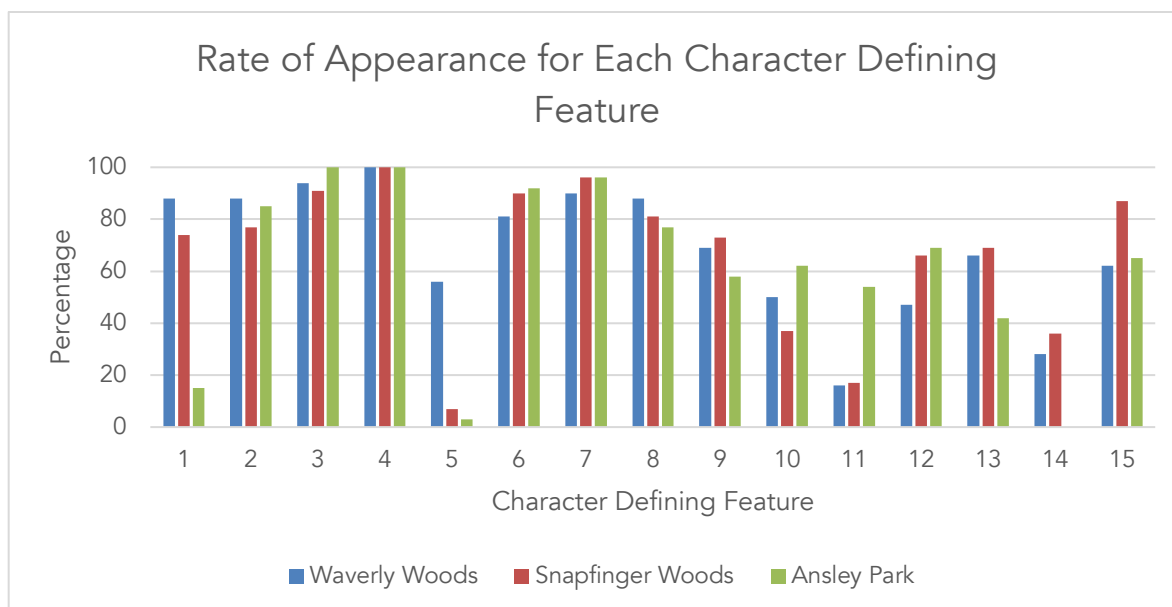


Table 5: Rate of Appearance per Character Defining feature for each Case Study neighborhood; created by author

## Analysis of Survey Finding

Of the three neighborhoods, Snapfinger Woods had the highest rate of Shed Style houses relative to other house types and styles, at 80%. Ansley Park had the second highest rate (40%), and Waverly Woods had the third (31%). All three neighborhoods had high rates (above 80%) of the following: Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding; Multi-directional Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines; Austere, unadorned wall surfaces; Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections; and Multiple, intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms.

Waverly Woods and Snapfinger Woods both displayed a higher rate of Irregular/asymmetrical footprints, at 88% and 74%, respectively. In Ansley Park, however, the footprints were largely rectangular, and Irregular/asymmetrical footprints were only found on 15% of the surveyed Shed Style houses. It is possible that this is the result of the smaller building footprint requirement stated in Ansley Park's Declaration of Protective Covenants. In Ansley Park, the building footprint minimums were 900 square feet for one-story buildings, and 400 square feet for two-story buildings. In Snapfinger Woods, the building footprint minimums were 1,200 square feet for one-story buildings, and 800 square feet for two-story buildings. In Waverly Woods, building footprint minimums were 1,600 square feet for one-story buildings, and 1,000 square feet for two-story buildings. The homes in Snapfinger Woods and Waverly Woods were required to be much larger than those in Ansley Park, so there was probably more flexibility in selecting buildings with dynamic, complex footprints.



Another notable difference between the three neighborhoods is the occurrence of Small-scale brick or stone features. In Waverly Woods, Small-scale brick or stone features were found on 56% of surveyed Shed Style houses, while there were only 5 examples found in Snapfinger Woods, and 1 in Ansley Park. It is possible that this inconsistency is the result of when these subdivisions were developed. Waverly Woods was the earliest of the three Case Study neighborhoods, and it is possible that the higher presence of Small-scale brick or stone features marks a transitional phase between more traditional house types and styles and the Shed Style. It is also possible that this material difference is related to cost and/or availability at the time of construction. Perhaps, developers and builders used these small-scale stone and brick elements to increase the visual appeal of the home and drive up the sale price. More research and additional contemporary examples would be needed to clarify the possible reasons for this discrepancy.

Waverly Woods and Ansley Park both displayed a lower occurrence of Natural Landscape Features, at 62% and 65%, respectively, compared to 87% in Snapfinger Woods. This is likely the result of different topographical qualities between the three Case Study neighborhoods. Ansley Park has gentle slopes, and Waverly Woods is largely flat. These topographical features are better suited to grassy lawns and open yard spaces. Snapfinger Woods, on the other hand, varies between gentle slopes and steep hills. These more extreme topographies are less well-suited to grassy lawns, and the landscape is often more heavily wooded and natural in Snapfinger Woods. Additionally, the cost of selectively removing trees is more expensive than clear-cutting a property. This suggests that the decision to leave large quantities of trees in place was a deliberate design choice, and not strictly a matter of cost or

convenience. In general, across the three Case Study neighborhoods, there does appear to be a common trend towards the more naturalistic landscape design practices that became popular beginning in the 1950s and 1960s, and on through the late mid-century, as discussed in Chapter Two. Considering the increased cost associated with selectively cutting trees and burying utility lines, it is apparent that the implementation of the more naturalistic landscape designs was an intentional choice made by the developer. Keeping in mind that large portions of these neighborhoods were built speculatively, the decision to incorporate such a deliberately naturalistic landscape character speaks to the popularity of this trend at the time these subdivisions were developed.

Slanted window heads were the most prevalent in Ansley Park, where they were documented on 54% of the surveyed houses, compared to 17% in Waverly Woods and 17% in Snapfinger. It is important to note, however, that the surveyed resources were only viewed from the public right-of-way. It is possible that there are additional examples in all three Case Study neighborhoods that have Slanted window heads on rear facades. The same is true of Porches and/or second-floor balconies. All three neighborhoods showed low rates of Porches and balconies, but it is likely that there are numerous instances in which surveyed buildings had porches or balconies on their rear facades that were not visible from the public right-of-way.

It is also possible that there are numerous window patterns and configurations that were not visible from the public right-of-way. Ansley Park had the highest rate of Clerestory windows (62%) and Articulated window bays (69%). In Waverly Woods, 50% of the surveyed buildings had Clerestory windows, and 47% had Articulated window bays. In Snapfinger Woods, 37% had Clerestory windows, and 66% had Articulated window bays. 58% of the

surveyed buildings in Ansley Park had large, single pane windows, compared to 73% in Snapfinger Woods and 69% in Waverly Woods. However, without access to private property and the ability to document the rear facades of these buildings, it is impossible to know if these figures are accurate.

An additional topic worth discussion is the occurrence of repeated house types and floorplans. While it is possible that some of the surveyed houses were architect designed, particularly those in Waverly Woods and Snapfinger Woods, it is more likely that a majority were borrowed from pattern books or designed by developers. Those houses that were taken from pattern books are likely to be repeated, especially in neighborhoods that have a high concentration of a particular style, such as Shed Style. This is evident in Ansley Park, where a number of the Shed Style houses are nearly identical, with only a few minor differences (see Figure 88: 125 Flannigans Place and Figure 90: 185 Sorenson Way). This is also likely the explanation for the consistency of features documented in Ansley Park as opposed to Waverly Woods or Snapfinger Woods.

The homes in Waverly Woods and Snapfinger Woods demonstrate a more diverse sample of Shed Style homes. This is likely due, in part, to the size and cost requirements established in their respective Protective Covenants. While it is likely that many of the examples in Waverly Woods and Snapfinger Woods were built as spec homes, meaning they were speculative construction and not built for a specific buyer, it is also likely that some of the homes in these neighborhoods were designed to meet the needs of specific buyers, who worked alongside the developer or a consulting architect to create unique house plans (this has been confirmed for Snapfinger Woods by Ashley Hill). While more research is needed to

determine the extent of speculative development versus buyer-specific plans in these neighborhoods, it is possible that this could contribute to the wider variety of Shed Style resources observed in Waverly Woods and Snapfinger Woods. The homes in Ansley Park, however, are much more regular in form and appearance, and it is likely that the developer either purchased and built a limited number of plans or offered prospective buyers a limited number of plans to choose from. This resulted in more consistent survey results based on the Character Defining Features in Ansley Park than in the other two Case Study neighborhoods.

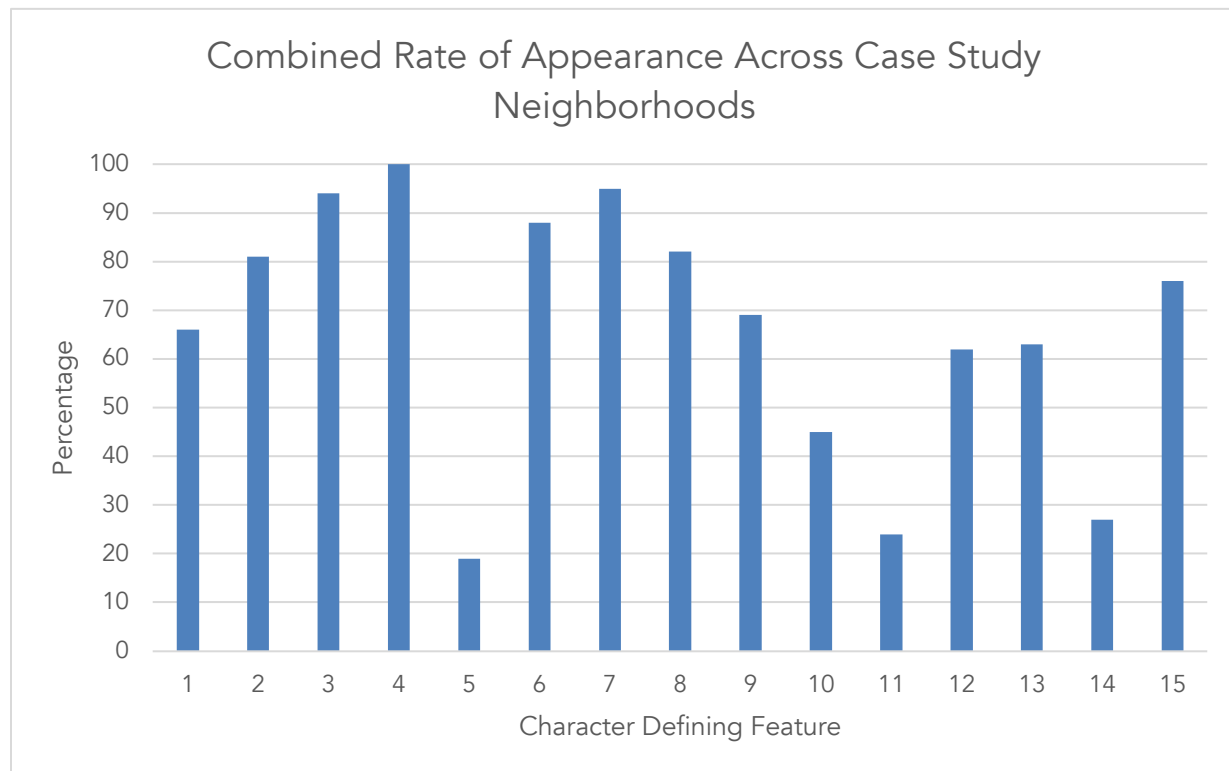


Table 6: Combined Rate of Appearance Across Case Study Neighborhoods; created by author

The determined rate of occurrence for each Character Defining Feature in the three Case Study neighborhoods was used to establish a combined rate of occurrence for each Character Defining Feature across the Case Study neighborhoods. This data was used to establish a list of primary, secondary, and tertiary Character Defining Features. Primary

Character Defining Features were determined to be very consistent, occurring in over 75% of the surveyed resources. These Character Defining Features include the following: Wood, wood shingle, or wood composite siding (100%); Austere, unadorned wall surfaces (95%); Shed, gable, or slipped gable roof lines (94%); Minimal to no eave returns and seamless wall intersections (88%); Asymmetrical window placement (82%); Multiple, intersecting masses with bold, geometric forms (81%); and Natural landscape features (76%). Secondary Character Defining Features were determined to be moderately consistent, occurring in between 50% and 75% of surveyed resources. These Character Defining Features include the following: Large, single pane windows (69%); Irregular, asymmetrical footprint (66%); Recessed and/or guarded entryway (63%); and Articulated window bays (62%). Tertiary Character Defining Features were determined to be inconsistent, occurring in less than 50% of surveyed resources. These Character Defining Features include the following: Clerestory windows (45%); Porches and/or second-story balconies (27%); Slanted window heads to match roof pitch (24%); and Small-scale brick or stone exterior features (19%).



## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

High style examples of the Shed Style appeared in earnest in the 1960s, most notably in the work of Charles Moore, MLTW, and Joseph Esherick at Sea Ranch. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, Shed Style houses began appearing in popular magazines, advertising mail-order plans for local builders and contractors. While many of the early, high style examples have already passed the fifty-year threshold for preservation, there is a wave of contractor and developer built Shed Style houses dating to 1970s and 1980s that will soon need preservation tools and strategies. This thesis hopes to serve as a helpful reference text to better aid the future identification and preservation of Shed Style residential architecture.

#### Conclusions

The stated purpose of this thesis was to address the following research question: *What is the larger historical context and architectural provenance of the Shed Style residential form that became popular in American subdivisions during the 1970s, and what character defining features are necessary for the identification, evaluation, and long-term preservation of Shed Style houses and their associated subdivisions, both as individual resources and as cultural landscapes, as they approach the fifty-year threshold for consideration as historic resources?*

Answering this question involved a thorough literature review to establish an historic context for the emergence of Shed Style architecture in the 1960s. This was addressed in two

separate chapters, Chapter Two and Chapter Three. Chapter Two provides a comprehensive overview of the history of residential developments and domestic architecture in the United States. This chapter pays special attention to the various cultural and technological conditions that contributed the origins and evolution of large-scale residential subdivisions and discusses the different residential building styles and typologies that emerged over time. This chapter was intended to help place Shed Style residential architecture in the larger historic context of American suburbanization. Chapter Three outlines the architectural history of Shed Style architecture, which involved a complex synthesis of different high style, vernacular, and regional influences. Shed Style architecture is an amalgam of several different, and even occasionally contrary, stylistics and philosophical inputs. The purpose of this chapter was to provide a thorough explanation of the different precursors and antecedents of the Shed Style, thereby better contextualizing it and establishing its architectural history.

Chapter Three also profiled popular appearances of Shed Style architecture in nationally distributed magazines and home journals. In conjunction with high style examples, these popular examples were examined to help establish a working list of Character Defining Features in Chapter Four. In addition to observations made in Chapter Three, Chapter Four also consulted popular style guides and State Historic Preservation Offices for additional input. Using this research as a foundation, Chapter Four established a list of fifteen Character Defining Features. Chapter Four then selected three Case Study neighborhoods that would be surveyed using the Character Defining Features. These Case Study neighborhoods were selected in part based on a brief developmental history of Athens-Clarke County, which noted the substantial growth in the eastern half of the county beginning in the mid-twentieth century.

The development in eastern Athens-Clarke County during and after the mid-twentieth century reflected larger developmental patterns occurring nationally, which saw a growing dependence on the private automobile, and the gradual decentralization of residential subdivisions further away from the urban core. Within eastern Athens-Clarke County, the three Case Study neighborhoods were then selected based on a preliminary windshield level survey, which sought to identify neighborhoods with relatively high concentrations of homes with elements of Shed Style architecture. The three neighborhoods selected as Case Studies were Waverly Woods, Snapfinger Woods, and Ansley Park. Chapter Four provided a brief developmental history of each Case Study neighborhood, which was then followed by a neighborhood survey using the Character Defining Features. These Character Defining Features were counted and quantified based on their rate of occurrence in the neighborhood.

Chapter Five provided a detailed breakdown of the survey findings. The number of appearances for each Character Defining Feature was counted and recorded. Using this number relative to the total number of Shed Style houses in the given Case Study neighborhood, a percentage was determined for each Character Defining Feature, indicating its rate of appearance within the neighborhood. These Character Defining Features were then listed in order of appearance for each neighborhood. The rate of occurrence of Character Defining Features was depicted in individual bar graphs for each neighborhood, as well as a joint bar graph, showing all three Case Study neighborhoods side-by-side. Chapter Five concluded with an analysis of the survey findings, which noted significant similarities and differences between the three neighborhoods and discussed possible explanations for these patterns. The survey and subsequent analysis were intended to demonstrate the applicability

of the Character Defining Features for the identification of Shed Style residential buildings, which is a necessary step in their long-term preservation.

I believe that I have successfully answered the stated research question. However, one area that deserves further research and consideration is the assessment of Shed Style subdivisions as cultural landscapes. As discussed in Chapter Two, there was a general trend towards more naturalistic landscape designs in residential suburbs that appeared in mid-twentieth century, coinciding with the popular influences of Modernism, as well as the environmental movement that emerged in the 1960s. Based on the Survey Findings gathered in the Case Study neighborhoods, there do appear to be several commonalities in their landscape design characteristics that mirror larger, nationwide trends, including the retention of natural topographic and vegetative features, as well as the use of buried utility lines. However, without a more robust historic context addressing late mid-century residential landscape design and planning practices, it is difficult to fully assess or evaluate Shed Style subdivisions as cultural landscapes. Further research is necessary to better address this subject.

## **Recommendations**

Recommendations include future research opportunities regarding Shed Style architecture, as well as potential preservation opportunities and challenges. As discussed earlier, there is more research needed to properly evaluate Shed Style subdivisions as cultural landscapes. An additional area for future research is the occurrence of the Shed Style outside of single-family residential architecture. This thesis focused solely on Shed Style architecture as it appeared in single-family residential subdivisions. However, as was demonstrated in Sea

Ranch, the Shed Style could be and was applied to different building types with different uses and functions. These potential building types include, but are not limited to, multi-family residential buildings, commercial buildings, recreational buildings, and institutional buildings. There are several examples of Shed Style architecture in Athens, Georgia that are not single-family residential buildings, which could be studied for a more comprehensive understanding of Shed Style architecture. These examples include the Fernbank Condominiums (located at 140 Fernbank Court, off Riverbend Road), the ABC Package Store (located at 2303 West Broad Street), the Odum School of Ecology (located on the University of Georgia campus, at 140 East Green Street), and the Thrive Interactive Medicine office (located at 2080 Prince Avenue). To fully understand the historic significance of Shed Style architecture, it is necessary to better understand how it was used beyond single-family residential architecture.

There is also room for additional research concerning the individual architects, firms, developers, and contractors who frequently operated in the Shed Style, and why they chose to do so. It could have been a matter of personal preference, or it could have been an attempt to appeal to popular tastes at the time. The matter of popular tastes also deserves further research, and several sources noted that the occurrence and popularity of Shed Style architecture coincided with the rise of environmentalism in the mid-century, and the later energy crisis of the 1970s. On this same note, it is also worth further investigating what types of individuals chose to live in these neighborhoods, analyzing aspects such as racial and economic demographics, age, gender, and occupation.

Additionally, the significance of Shed Style interiors also deserves more intensive research and analysis. While this thesis focused on those Character Defining Features visible on



the exteriors of Shed Style resources, there are undoubtedly a number of important interior design schemes and aesthetic elements that appeared consistently in Shed Style houses. Shed Style resources are more than just their exterior design elements, and a better understanding of the buildings' interiors is critical to their long-term preservation.

Preservation opportunities for Shed Style architecture include better and more thorough surveys of Shed Style examples, which ultimately contribute to a larger body of knowledge concerning Shed Style architecture. An additional preservation opportunity is the potential for the individual listing of architecturally significant examples, as well as the potential for districting of Shed Style residential subdivisions as significant cultural landscapes that reflect a specific architectural style and developmental period. Another important opportunity for the preservation of Shed Style architecture is for preservation professionals and academics to establish a shared nomenclature. While this thesis has borrowed the term Shed Style, which is among the more commonly used monikers, there are other options that are perhaps more descriptive and better suited. However, regardless of what title is chosen, there is a pressing need for professional and academics to reach a consensus about what to call Shed Style architecture.

Preservation challenges for Shed Style architecture include material decay and material replacements over time. Many of the earliest high style examples of the Shed Style, particularly Sea Ranch in California, were built in arid, western climates. They were subject to less rain and moisture, and were also built with locally sourced redwood, which is especially resilient. As the style spread nationwide, however, it was employed in climates that were far less favorable to the high amount of exposed wood. The southeast, in particular, is warm and humid, with

frequent rainfall. As a result, the wooden exteriors of Shed Style buildings in this region are likely subject to higher rates of rot and material failure. Consequently, routine maintenance and regular inspections are crucial to the long-term preservation of Shed Style buildings. Important measures include planning for the replacement of the exterior siding approximately once every 40 to 50 years. This is an expensive measure, but it would be infrequent, likely only occurring once or twice during the span of a lifelong occupancy. It is also important to pick an appropriate type of wood, particularly one that is rot resistant, such as cedar. More frequent maintenance measures might include staining or painting the wood at regular intervals to ensure it is better protected and will last longer. Owners must also be wary of wood damage caused by insects, specifically termites, carpenter bees, and wood beetles. In addition to being rot resistant, cedar is also more resistant to insect damage than other lumber options.

There are other important preventative measures that could be taken to prevent water damage and material decay over time. One option is to raise the bottom of the wood siding off the ground by a small measure (approximately 6 to 12 inches) to prevent rising damp and water damage. Another possible strategy is the selective cutting of trees directly around the building (ideally without compromising the heavily wooded feeling of the landscape). Cutting trees would increase sunlight and allow the house to dry faster after heavy rain periods. Additionally, this would prevent organic material from being deposited on the roof, while also limiting the possibility of animals getting onto the roof and causing physical damage.

Areas that have incurred material decay would need to be repaired or replaced. For the Shed Style in particular, which is characterized by its wooden exteriors, inappropriate replacement materials would be especially detrimental to the overall architectural integrity of a

Shed Style building. It is critical that owners replace their siding with architecturally appropriate materials, rather than synthetic options such as vinyl or cement fiberboard.

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Address	Irregular/asymmetrical footprint	Intersecting masses and geometric forms	Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines	Wood or Wood Composite Siding	Siding Orientation	Shingle Siding	Brick and/or stone accents	Minimal eave returns and wall intersections	Unadorned wall surfaces	Asymmetrical window placement	Large, fixed pane windows	Clerestory Windows	Slanted window heads	Articulated Window Bays	Recessed/Guarded Entry	Porches and/or Balconies	Sloped Topography	Natural Vegetation
1305 Whit Davis Rd																		
1335 Whit Davis Rd																		
105 Tamarack Dr																		
100 Tamarack Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X				X	X			X
1415 Whit Davis Rd																		
1435 Whit Davis Rd																		
1455 Whit Davis Rd	X	X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X					X		X	X
1475 Whit Davis Rd																		
178 Great Oak Dr																		
170 Great Oak Dr																		
168 Great Oak Dr																		
160 Great Oak Dr																		
208 Great Oak Dr																		
210 Great Oak Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X			X	X	X			X
220 Great Oak Dr																		
240 Great Oak Dr																		
250 Great Oak Dr																		
1635 Whit Davis Rd																		
165 Great Oak Dr																		
175 Great Oak Dr																		
200 Shady Grove Dr																		
211 Great Oak Dr																		
110 Longview Dr																		
235 Great Oak Dr																		
245 Great Oak Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X		X						
265 Great Oak Dr			X			X												X
285 Great Oak Dr	X	X	X			X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			X
260 Great Oak Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal		X	X	X									X
270 Great Oak Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal		X	X		X	X				X	X		X
280 Great Oak Dr																		
300 Great Oak Dr																		
302 Great Oak Dr																		
310 Great Oak Dr																		
320 Great Oak Dr																		
330 Great Oak Dr																		
335 Great Oak Dr																		
142 Great Oak Ct	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal				X	X								X
192 Great Oak Ct																		
197 Great Oak Ct																		
147 Great Oak Ct																		
315 Great Oak Dr																		
305 Great Oak Dr																		
118 Deertree Dr																		
126 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
142 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
150 Deertree Dr																		
158 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X	X			X			
166 Deertree Dr	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X				X	X		X
174 Deertree Dr				X	Vertical			X	X	X		X			X			
180 Deertree Dr																		
196 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			
113 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X	X			X				
125 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
137 Deertree Dr				X	Vertical				X	X	X					X	X	X
145 Deertree Dr	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X
153 Deertree Dr																		
161 Deertree Dr																		
169 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical		X					X						
177 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X				X			
185 Deertree Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical			X	X	X	X	X						
199 Deertree Dr																		
120 Longview Dr																		
130 Longview Dr																		
140 Longview Dr																		
150 Longview Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
160 Longview Dr																		
170 Longview Dr																		
180 Longview Dr																		
190 Longview Dr																		
125 Longview Dr																		
135 Longview Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X				X			X
145 Longview Dr			X	X	Horizontal		X	X	X	X	X			X	X			
165 Longview Dr																		
175 Longview Dr																		
185 Longview Dr																		
210 Shady Grove Dr																		
220 Shady Grove Dr																		
230 Shady Grove Dr																		
240 Shady Grove Dr																		
250 Shady Grove Dr																		
225 Shady Grove Dr																		
235 Shady Grove Dr																		
245 Shady Grove Dr																		
255 Shady Grove Dr																		
165 Great Oak Dr																		
145 Great Oak Dr																		
180 Tamarack Dr																		
160 Tamarack Dr																		
140 Tamarack Dr																		
210 Deertree Dr																		
275 Tamarack Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X		X	X		X	X			X
265 Tamarack Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X		X	X	X	X		X				X
255 Tamarack Dr																		
235 Tamarack Dr																		
225 Tamarack Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X
215 Tamarack Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical		X	X	X	X	X							
205 Tamarack Dr																		
195 Tamarack Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical			X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X
185 Tamarack Dr																		
175 Tamarack Dr																		
155 Tamarack Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
135 Tamarack Dr																		
115 Tamarack Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X				X				X



Address	Irregular/asymmetrical footprint	Intersecting masses and geometric forms	Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines	Wood or Wood Composite Siding	Siding Orientation	Shingle Siding	Brick and/or stone accents	Minimal eave returns and wall intersections	Unadorned wall surfaces	Asymmetrical window placement	Large, fixed pane windows	Clerestory windows	Slanted window heads	Articulated Window Bays	Recessed/Guarded Entry	Porches and/or Balconies	Sloped Topography	Natural Vegetation
100 Snapfinger Dr																		
110 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X		X		
120 Snapfinger Dr			X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X		X			X	X			
130 Snapfinger Dr				X	Vertical			X	X		X			X	X	X		X
140 Snapfinger Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal, Vertical		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
150 Snapfinger Dr	X		X	X	Horizontal		X	X	X		X			X	X			
160 Snapfinger Dr			X	X	Horizontal, Vertical			X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X
170 Snapfinger Dr			X	X	Horizontal		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
180 Snapfinger Dr				X	Vertical			X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X
105 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Vertical, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X	X		
115 snapfinger Dr																		
125 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Diagonal		X	X	X	X				X	X			
135 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical			X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X
155 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical		X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X
165 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Diagonal				X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
215 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical				X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
157 Woodcreek Pl	X	X	X	X	Vertical			X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
152 Woodcreek Pl																		
157 Snapfinger Ct	X	X	X	X	Horizontal		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X
152 Snapfinger Ct																		
220 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X					X	X	X	X
230 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X				X	X			X
240 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X
250 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Diagonal			X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X
260 Snapfinger Dr			X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X
270 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X		X		X			X
280 Snapfinger Dr																		
225 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
235 Snapfinger Dr																		
245 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X						X	X
255 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X				X			X	X
265 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Vertical, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X			X
105 Gibbons Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
115 Gibbons Way	X	X	X	X	Vertical, Diagonal			X	X	X	X		X			X		X
125 Gibbons Way				X	Vertical			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
135 Gibbons Way				X	Diagonal			X	X	X	X					X	X	X
145 Gibbons Way	NOT VISIBLE																	
155 Gibbons Way	X	X	X	Shingle	Shingle	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
165 Gibbons Way			X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X			X
175 Gibbons Pl	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
195 Gibbons Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
117 Gibbons Pl																		
157 Gibbons Pl	X	X	X	X	Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
199 Gibbons Pl	X	X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X	X				X		X	X
152 Gibbons Pl			X	Shingle	Shingle	X		X	X	X	X					X	X	X
122 Gibbons Pl		X	X	X	Diagonal			X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X
190 Gibbons Way																		
180 Gibbons Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
170 Gibbons Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X
160 Gibbons Way			X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal													
150 Gibbons Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X			X	X
130 Gibbons Way		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X		X				X			
110 Gibbons Way																		
315 Snapfinger Dr																		
325 Snapfinger Dr																		
345 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal													
355 Snapfinger Dr			X	X	Horizontal													
365 Snapfinger Dr	X	X		X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
310 Snapfinger Dr																		
320 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal				X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
330 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
340 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
350 Snapfinger Dr			X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
360 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
370 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X
380 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
390 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X					X	X	X
400 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
425 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
435 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Vertical			X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X
430 Snapfinger Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X		X				X		X	X
112 Snapfinger Way				X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X				X			X	X
122 Snapfinger Way				X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X		X		X				X	X
132 Snapfinger Way																		
142 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X
152 Snapfinger Way																		
162 Snapfinger Way																		
163 Snapfinger Way																		
143 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X		X					X
133 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X				X		X	X
123 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X		X						X	X
113 Snapfinger Way			X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X			X	X
103 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
465 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Vertical			X	X	X	X	X			X		X	X
475 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X
495 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
500 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X
515 Snapfinger Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X

Appendix B: Survey Results for Snapfinger Woods

Address	Irregular/asymmetrical footprint	Intersecting masses and geometric forms	Shed, Gable, and/or Slipped Gable roof lines	Wood or Wood Composite Siding	Siding Orientation	Shingle Siding	Brick and/or stone accents	Minimal eave returns and wall intersections	Unadorned wall surfaces	Asymmetrical window placement	Large, fixed pane windows	Clerestory Windows	Slanted window heads	Articulated Window Bays	Recessed/Guarded Entry	Porches and/or Balconies	Sloped Topography	Natural Vegetation
110 Ansley Dr																		
120 Ansley Dr																		
130 Ansley Dr			X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal				X		X							
140 Ansley Dr																		
150 Ansley Dr																		
160 Ansley Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X
170 Ansley Dr																		
115 Ansley Dr																		
125 Ansley Dr																		
135 Ansley Dr																		
155 Ansley Dr																		
165 Ansley Dr																		
175 Ansley Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
185 Ansley Dr																		
120 Beth Ct																		
130 Beth Ct																		
140 Beth Ct																		
145 Beth Ct																		
135 Beth Ct																		
125 Beth Ct																		
115 Beth Ct																		
210 Ansley Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
220 Ansley Dr																		
230 Ansley Dr																		
240 Ansley Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
250 Ansley Dr			X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X								
260 Ansley Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
270 Ansley Dr				X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X					X			
280 Ansley Dr																		
290 Ansley Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X		X						X
205 Ansley Dr																		
215 Ansley Dr																		
225 Ansley Dr																		
235 Ansley Dr																		
245 Ansley Dr	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
249 Ansley Dr				X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X		X				X	X
255 Ansley Dr																		
265 Ansley Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
275 Ansley Dr																		
285 Ansley Dr																		
110 Rachel Way																		
120 Rachel Way																		
130 Rahcel Way																		
140 Rachel Way																		
150 Rachel Way																		
160 Rachel Way																		
170 Rahcel Way																		
175 Rachel Way																		
165 Rahcel Way																		
155 Rachel Way																		
135 Rahcel way																		
125 Rachel way																		
310 Ansley Dr																		
320 Ansley Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X
330 Ansley Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X					X		X	X
340 Ansley Dr		X	X	X	Horizontal				X	X				X			X	X
315 Ansley Dr																		
325 Ansley Dr			X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X					X			X	X
180 Sorenson Way	X	X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X			X		X				X
170 Sorenson Way																		
166 Sorenson Way																		
160 Sorenson Way		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
185 Sorenson Way		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
175 Sorenson Way		X	X	X	Horizontal			X	X			X						
111 Sorenson Pl		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
171 Sorenson Pl																		
191 Sorenson Pl		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X			X		X				X
199 Sorenson Pl		X	X	X	Horizontal													
194 Sorenson Pl								X	X					X				
184 Sorenson Pl		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
164 Sorenson Pl																		
124 Sorenson Pl																		
105 Flannigans Pl																		
115 Flannigans Pl																		
125 Flannigans Pl		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
135 Flannigans Pl																		
145 Flannigans Pl																		
155 Flannigans Pl																		
160 Flannigans Pl																		
150 Flannigans Pl																		
140 Flannigans Pl																		
130 Flannigans Pl		X	X	X	Horizontal, Diagonal			X	X	X		X						
120 Flannignas Pl																		
110 Flannignas Pl																		

Appendix C: Survey Results for Ansley Park

## Appendix D: Interview with Ashley Hill

- 1) Why did your father zero in on this particular house type/style? Was it a matter of personal preference or was he appealing to specific customer base?**

My father was a very creative builder. He was always looking for way to differentiate himself from other things going on in the market. Oftentimes, he was a leader in the Athens marketplace in terms of building and developing. For example, there was a time in Athens when subdivisions did not have large or elaborate entryways. He was one of the first to add large entrance ways with stone features, and others began to follow. He was always looking for a way to be innovative and different. In Snapfinger Woods, he was a leader in the use of that style. It helped differentiate himself from other developers. He had an extensive personal library of architectural books. That particular style of architecture was new and cutting-edge at the time.

- 2) I know that he was President of the Panola Development, Inc. and played a role in the creation of Snapfinger Woods and Ansley Park. Was he also involved with Waverly Woods?**

He operated many different corporations and several different business entities. New projects typically had a new legal entity.

He did build several homes in Waverly Woods, but he was not the primary developer.

- 3) Did he frequently work with Baxter Crane and Richard Sorenson?**

They did work together occasionally over the years. They were contemporaries in the same line of work in the same town. They were both important figures in the single-family residential development world of Athens, Georgia and worked together occasionally, but were not necessarily business partners or frequent collaborators.

- 4) What other subdivisions and buildings was he involved in? Did they contain other house types and styles?**

He also developed nearby neighborhoods Ashton Place and Ansley Park (Ashton and Ansley are both nods to Ashley Hill's first name). He was the primary developer and builder at Ashton Place. He was also the primary developer at River Bottom, High Ridge, Wood Haven, Georgian Hills, Sedgefield, and Oak Grove.

He designed in many different building types and styles. Oak Grove is a strong example of his work. My father and I developed Oak Grove together. Oak Grove was inspired by the principles of New Urbanism and incorporated a number of different house types and styles. We were inspired by historic neighborhoods, and their appeal was tied to the variety of house types and style. You might see a Federal house next to a Victorian house. These old communities were built without covenants, which allowed for more variation. Modern covenants create the 'cookie-cutter' look, with the same-sized brick, and the same square footage. Old neighborhoods did not have these restrictions, which created more organic, beautiful streetscapes. My father and I tried to recreate this feeling in Oak Grove, using a wide variety of building types, styles, and sizes.

Oak Grove was featured on both the NPR Morning Edition and the Fox News Channel soon after it was created, reaching an audience of 18 million people. This common appeal was a good sign that it was the right thing to do.

**5) Do you know where your father sourced his home plans?**

Generally, and specifically for Snapfinger Woods, he did a lot of that work himself. He had his own drafting table, where he did a lot of his own drawing and design work. He did a lot of his own drafting work.

**6) In Snapfinger Woods, what degree were spec homes and what degree were buyer specific?**

Generally, 50/50. He always built a certain number of spec homes, but he was also always working with buyers directly to create unique designs. He occasionally worked off preexisting floorplans, but he always changed things between houses to make them unique. He never just took a set of plans and built them, he always changed things between houses. He did lot of the design work himself.

**7) Did they use a specific/particular builder in and between different subdivisions?**

He was completely vertically integrated. He found the raw land, where he could visualize the neighborhood. He would find the property and design the layout of the subdivision, and he would get the zoning done. He would develop the street patterns and the lots, and he would build the houses. He acted as the general contractor and built all of the houses. Early on in his career, such as during the early phases of Snapfinger, he would physically help build the houses, working on framing, trim work, or whatever needed doing. He himself did a lot of the physical labor early on.

**8) What influenced the decision to leave the lots wooded? Why did they choose to put utilities underground?**

That was just something he always did. One time, many years ago, received an award from the University of Georgia related to saving trees. That's just what he always did. That's the way he loved to build and develop. Oak Grove had small, dense lots, but you will still see a lot of trees that were left during the building process.

As for the underground utility lines, it cost a lot more money to put them underground, but it made the community a lot more attractive.