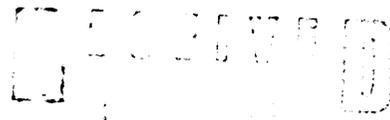


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name PARADISE BLOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number High Avenue East, 402, 406, 408, 410, 414, not for publication
city, town Oskaloosa 418, 501-714 vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Mahaska code 123 zip code 52577

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public and building/district/site/structure/object, and numerical entries for contributing/noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: Architectural & Historical Resources of Oskaloosa, IA
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 2

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: State Historical Society of Iowa
Date: 1/14/91
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[checked] entered in the National Register.
[] See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register. [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register.
[] other, (explain:)
Signature of the Keeper: Beth Boland
Date of Action: 12/13/91

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

RELIGION/Religious Structure

RELIGION/Religious Structure

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian

foundation

Stone

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals

walls

Weatherboard

Late 19th & 20th Century American

Brick

Movements

roof

Asphalt Shingles

other

Stone

Stucco

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Paradise Block Historic District contains the best collection of late 19th and early 20th residential design extant in the city of Oskaloosa. The significant houses, buildings and structures were constructed between 1853 and 1917. The district is located along High Avenue East, between 3rd and 7th Streets. The neighborhood is basically flat, with the houses on the north side of the street built at street level, while those on the south are slightly higher than the street and sidewalk. To the west and south, the land is flat, to the north and east there is a gentle downhill slope east to 11th Street. Paradise Block is easily located on maps, as it is made up of several long, undivided blocks to the east of the Public Square. These have traditionally be the site of fine homes, and have been known for over a century as "Paradise Block."

High Avenue was one of four streets in town originally laid out 80' wide (the four streets which intersected at the corners of the Public Square), all of the others being 66'. Like many Iowa residential streets, High was lined with elm trees for decades. While the loss of this tree cover due to Dutch Elm disease was serious, new trees, many of them maples, were planted in the 1960s, and the street again presents a broad tree-lined vista.

High runs across the north side of the square and has always been the major east/ west street in the community. In the business district, it was along High that the largest, most important brick commercial blocks were built. When street cars were introduced in 1883, the newspaper mentioned that six trips a day were made from the end of the Avenue to Oskaloosa College, and that "...High Street is the only street covered in the city...." High Avenue was also one of the first streets to be paved. On 25 February 1892 the Herald noted "About one-half million brick are piled up on East High for the brick paving to be done...."

The area known as Paradise Block extended east from 3rd Street (originally called Monroe). Unlike some neighborhoods it did not grow all at once. It is actually composed of several additions to the city: East Addition, Smith's Block, Bennett's Block, and Seever's Addition.

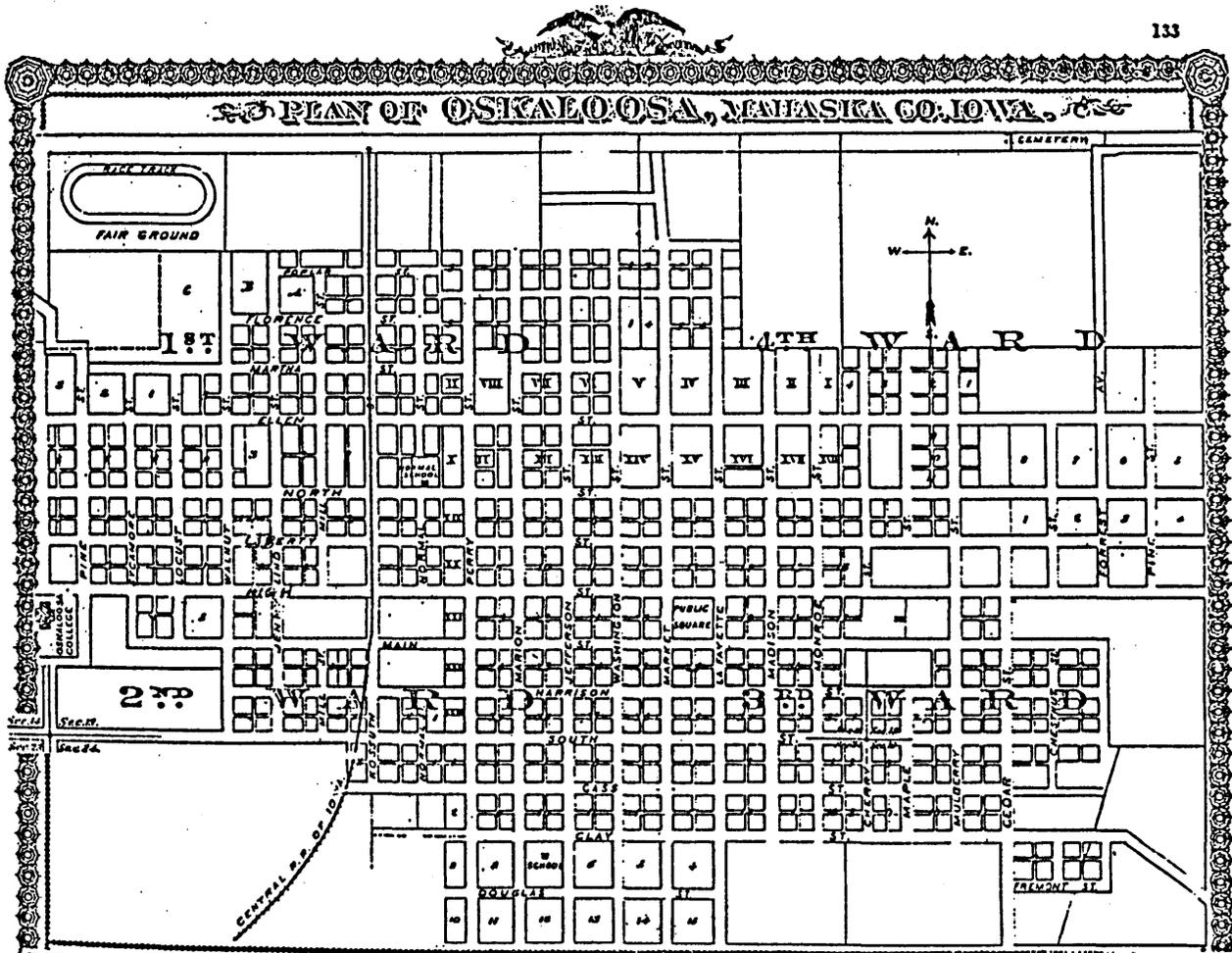
See continuation sheet

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This map from the 1875 Andreas Atlas clearly shows
the Paradise Block area beginning two blocks east
of the Public Square.

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Forty-three buildings, structures and sites are included in the Paradise Block Historic District. Of these, twenty-six are residences, two are churches, twelve are garages, two are brick driveways, and one is a vacant lot. Thirty-five of these are considered contributing to the district (including nine key structures), and eight are non-contributing. The non-contributing sites consist of the vacant lot, two houses and a garage that were constructed after 1935, and four historic houses altered by new wide siding and loss of significant architectural elements. The contributing structures within the district were constructed between 1853 and 1917, with the majority of these (fifteen) being built between 1880 and 1900. All of the houses were built as single family dwellings and most are of wood frame construction (five are brick, one is built of stone, and one is stucco over wood). Of the churches, one is brick, while the other is stucco.

On the south side of the street the district begins at 3rd Street and extends east four blocks to 7th. However, on the north side of the street, the district actually starts at 4th. The houses on the north side of the 400 block have been replaced by two large new brick buildings: A Presbyterian Church and the telephone company. The north side of High Avenue features larger lots than on the south, and it is along the north side that the earliest houses are found.

The oldest residence in Paradise Block is the Smith-Johnson house (#11, key structure) at 713 High Avenue East (NRHP). It was constructed for William T. Smith in 1853, the same year he became the first mayor of Oskaloosa. A simple vernacular brick with stone lintels, flat roof, and denticulated cornice, it consists of three blocks of varying height. There are four different floor levels, with steps leading up or down between the various first floor rooms.

The Seeberger-Loring-Kilburn residence (#2, key structure, NRHP) at 509 High Avenue was constructed in 1859, with a second story added by 1869. It is a good example of Italianate design, with a low pitched hip roof, bracketed cornice and simple hood molds. In 1916, a two story solarium was added on the east, and a pergola on the west, both designed by Frank E. Wetherell. Though modern in design, the additions blend well with the original structure.

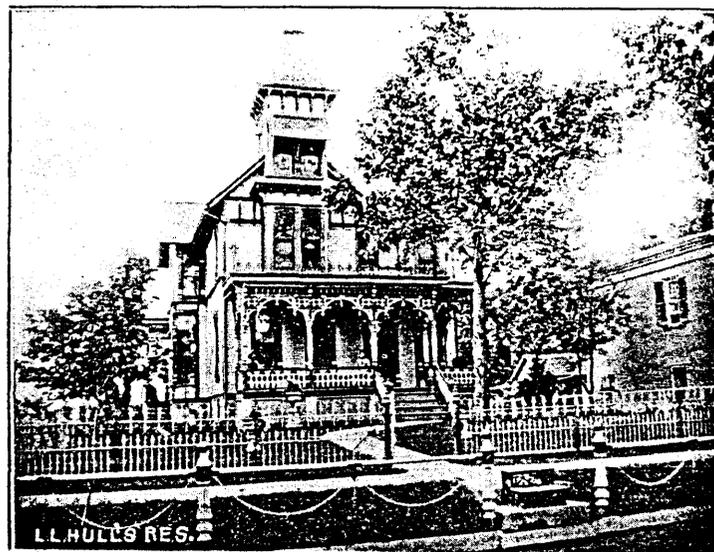
While it is known that houses were constructed along High Avenue during the 1860s and '70s, no examples appear extant. The vacant lot at 517 (#4) was the site of the H.L. Spencer residence until it was demolished in 1983 following a fire. It was a particularly fine example of the Italianate style, with a 20th century porch that had been designed by Frank Wetherell.

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The 1880s brought changes to the Paradise Block area. The Gospel Ridge School had been located on the south side of High, just east of 3rd (the area was called "Gospel Ridge" because so many churches were located on the slight rise just south and east of the Public Square). In 1881 H.W. McNeill purchased the Gospel Ridge School lots. Within a few years two frame Italianate houses (#26 and #27) were built on these lots. In August 1883 the Herald noted that H.L. Spencer was having a large iron fountain installed, and the following month, "Judge Johnson (who had purchased the William T. Smith house) has much improved his residence by removal of the brick wall and erecting a handsome iron fence." Portions of that iron fence are still in place. The same issue carried a paragraph about C.W. Tracy's proposed brick house on East High (#25). It said that John Waggoner had the contract for the house, to cost \$4,000.

In 1886 L.L. Hull purchased the west half of Judge Johnson's lot and had a two story frame house with tower constructed (#10). This was pictured in the Oskaloosa Times Souvenir in 1896. It was remodeled in 1913 when a new Neo-Classical porch was added and the tower removed.



L.L. Hull Residence, 711 High Avenue, 1886
1896 photograph

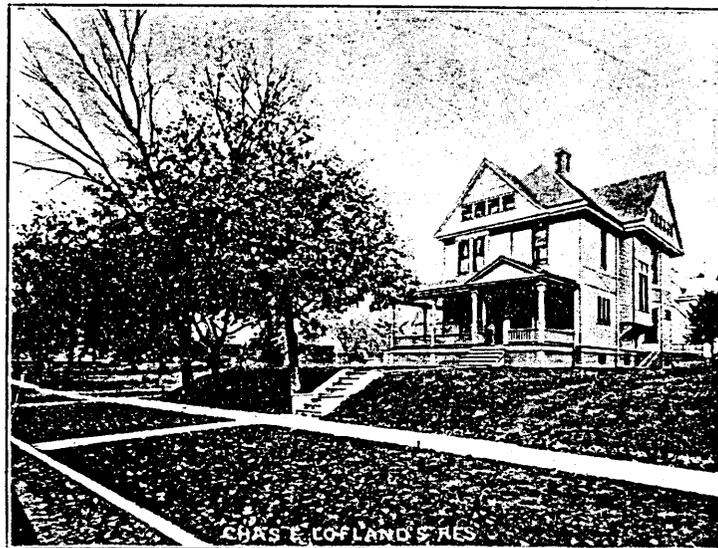
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Between 1890 and 1900, eleven of the houses in the historic district were built. These ranged in size from a one and one-half story frame cottage with Queen Anne details (#18), to the elegant two and one-half story limestone residence of Benjamin Wightman, later the home of W.H. Kalbach (#3, key structure) that was designed by Des Moines architect Henry Leibbe. Another architect designed house is found at 712 High Avenue, the J.B. McCurdy residence (#13) by Frank Wetherell. This Queen Anne style house with Neo-Classical details has been greatly altered during recent remodeling and is not longer considered an eligible structure. The other houses from the 1890s are primarily two and one-half story frame, most with wide porches across the facade. The Bazil Dutton residence at 613 (#7, key structure), and the Charles Lofland residence at 614 (#16, key structure), share a common design element, a broad belt course between the first and second floors. 609 (#6) appears to have been similar but has been covered with new wide siding. The Lofland house was featured in the 1896 Times Souvenir. Both the Dutton and Lofland houses retain a high degree of integrity.



Charles Lofland Residence, 614 High Avenue, c.1890-95
1896 photograph

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The first decade of the 20th century saw the construction of three houses in the district. A typical Four Square with broad porch across the front is found at 402 (#30). A larger example of Four Square design at 706 High Avenue (#14) features a Neo-Classical porch. Both of these Four Squares have been covered with new, narrow, siding. The house at 512 (#21, key structure) is an interesting combination of wood shingles and stucco with simulated half-timbering. It was constructed in 1904.

The 'teens saw a flurry of new construction, the addition of two new building types, and several remodelings. Two popular new styles, Bungalow and Prairie, were represented by houses at 610 and 510 High Avenue. The George Kalbach bungalow at 610 (#17), from 1912, combined brick and clapboard to emphasize texture, with the broad gables and heavy porch typical of the style. On the same side of the street, 510 (#22), is a brick Prairie influenced house from 1917. It is the only example of this type of design on the block, but it blends in in terms of shape, mass and material. Around 1915 a stucco covered house was built at 709 (#9) during this decade. The simplicity of design is a sharp contrast to the frame Hull house next door.

Two churches were constructed near the west end of the district in 1912 and 1914. The First Church of Christ Scientist (#29, key structure) from 1912 is located on the south side of the street at 406 High Avenue. It is a Neo-Classical single story stucco covered church that was designed by Chicago architect S.S. Beman. Next to the church on the east is a brick alley that is a contributing structure. Diagonally across the street, on the NE corner of 4th and High (501 High Avenue), is St. Paul Congregational Church (#1, key structure) from 1914. It was designed by William O. Morck of Indianapolis. This is a two story brick Neo-Classical structure, complete with projecting portico, and shallow dome. Neither of these churches appears out of place. Though somewhat larger than the residences in the block, they blend in visually in terms of style and material.

During this decade, the auto garage is introduced into the district as a new building type. The annual Herald Farm Edition made note of progress and changes in the town as well as country. In the 1914 edition it mentioned a new garage at the Sheppard residence (520 High Avenue, #18a). The approach to the garage is a brick drive (#18b, contributing structure) along the east side of the Queen Anne cottage. No date has been established for the paving of this drive, though the land for it shows up in the abstract for the first time in 1897. The 1915 Farm Edition noted the construction of a garage for W.H. Kalbach.

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Kalbach had purchased the Wightman house at 515 High Avenue East (#2). The unusual fact about this garage is that it is built on the property line and shared equally with the owner of the lot facing A Avenue East. This is quite apparent, even today. It is painted two different colors, and a chain link fence adjoins it in the middle on both the east and west sides. Because of this joint ownership, the boundary line for the district has been drawn around the garage to the south, eliminating it. The same is true for a garage of the same vintage behind 506 High Avenue (#23). This garage was shared by four property owners!



Shared garage at 515 High Avenue East

Between 1917 and the late 1930s there appears to have been no new construction in the Paradise Block historic district. Just before World War II an English cottage was built on the south side of the street at 702 High Avenue (#15). In the 1960s the brick ranch style house was built at 603 High Avenue (#3). These houses are considered to be non-contributing due to date of construction, style, and material.

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Though the houses in Paradise Block were originally built as single family dwellings, many have now been converted into apartments. There is a mix of single and multi-family use. Many houses in the district have remained relatively unchanged over the years, such as the Wightman house (#3). Others, such as the Hull residence (#10), were altered early in this century, well within the period of significance for this district. Nine houses in the district have been covered with modern siding in recent years. In five cases, the siding applied is narrow, approximating the original, and is non-intrusive. In four cases however, the siding is either wide, or has been applied in such a manner that original decorative elements have been removed, and the integrity of the house adversely affected. Porches and windows have also been changed in some instances during this remodeling process. Residences which have been substantially altered through the application of siding, loss of porches, and altered fenestration are considered non-contributing in the district. The integrity requirements established in the Multiple Property Document have been observed in this nomination.

Twelve garages are among the buildings in this district. Eleven of these were constructed during the period of significance and are considered contributing. One is a modern building that is non-contributing. In all cases, the garages are located at the rear of the lots and are visually unobtrusive. They should be considered secondary, rather than primary, buildings in the district.

The brick alley (#28) next to the First Church of Christ Scientist, and the brick driveway (#18a) at 520 High Avenue are both contributing structures. They represent the strong brick paving tradition, not only in Paradise Block, but all of Oskaloosa. It has not been determined exactly when the brick paving on High Avenue was replaced and/or covered. Few brick streets remain in Oskaloosa today.

This project has focused on the exteriors of the houses and buildings in the Paradise Block area, with little or no research on interiors. In addition, no attempt was made to identify potential archeological sites during this survey/nomination. Such sites may exist in the Paradise Block Historic District, and an archeological survey of Oskaloosa should be undertaken in the future.

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KEY STRUCTURES

# 1	501 High Avenue East	St. Paul Congregational Church
# 2	509 High Avenue East	Seeberger-Loring-Kilburn Res. (NRHP)
# 3	515 High Avenue East	Benjamin Wightman (W.H. Kalbach) Res.
# 7	613 High Avenue East	Bazil Dutton Residence
#10	711 High Avenue East	L.L. Hull Residence
#11	713 High Avenue East	Smith-Johnson Residence (NRHP)
#16	614 High Avenue East	Charles Lofland Residence
#21	512 High Avenue East	George Martin Residence
#29	406 High Avenue East	1st Church of Christ Scientist

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

# 8	703 High Avenue East	Residence
# 9	709 High Avenue East	Residence
# 9a	709 High Avenue East	Garage
#10a	711 High Avenue East	Garage
#11a	713 High Avenue East	Garage
#14	706 High Avenue East	R.K. Davis Residence
#14a	706 High Avenue East	Garage
#17	610 High Avenue East	George Kalbach Residence
#18	520 High Avenue East	C.C. Sheppard Residence
#18a	520 High Avenue East	Garage
#18b	520 High Avenue East	Brick Driveway
#19	518 High Avenue East	Residence
#19a	518 High Avenue East	Garage
#20a	516 High Avenue East	Garage
#21a	512 High Avenue East	Garage
#22	510 High Avenue East	B.L. Bunker Residence
#23	506 High Avenue East	Residence
#24	504 High Avenue East	Dr. J.C. Barringer Residence
#24a	504 High Avenue East	Garage
#25	418 High Avenue East	C.W. Tracy Residence
#25a	418 High Avenue East	Garage
#26	414 High Avenue East	Residence
#27	410 High Avenue East	Residence
#27a	410 High Avenue East	Garage
#28	N/S Alley E of Blk 17	Brick Alley
#30	402 High Avenue East	Residence

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NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

# 4	517 High Avenue East	Vacant lot, site of Spencer House
# 5	603 High Avenue East	Ranch House
# 6	609 High Avenue East	Residence
#12	714 High Avenue East	Residence
#13	712 High Avenue East	J.B. McCurdy Residence
#15	702 High Avenue East	English Cottage
#16a	614 High Avenue East	Garage
#20	516 High Avenue East	Residence

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USGS Map 41092 (C6): Oskaloosa Quad

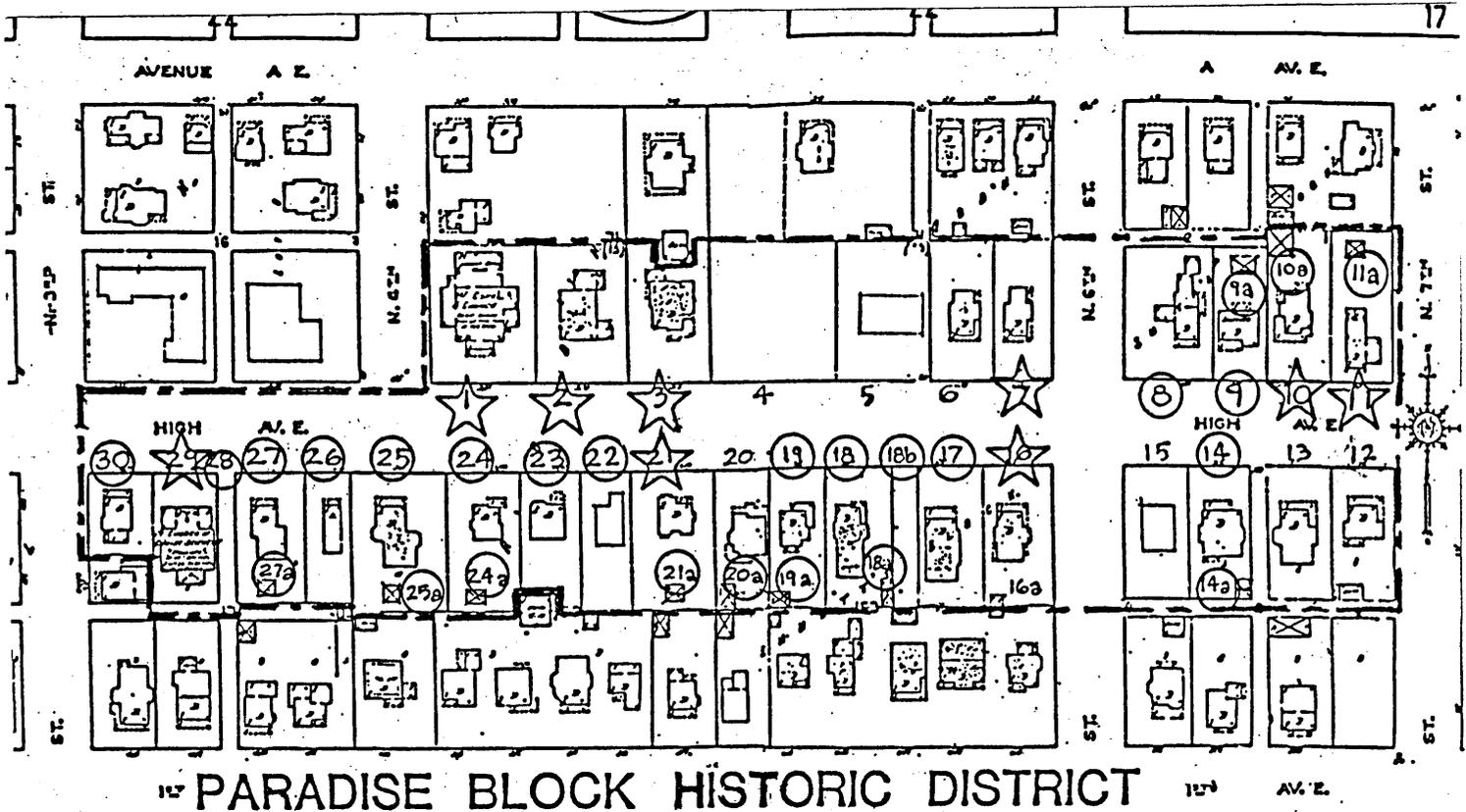
Circle shows location of Paradise Block Historic District.

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Map showing site numbers & classification.



Key Structure



Contributing Structure

20

Non-Contributing Structure



Garage

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over his block, and built a brick wall along the east and south sides of the house. This part of Oskaloosa is shown on maps as "Smith's Block." Though there may have been other small houses in the immediate area, the Smith-Johnson house was the first substantial dwelling in Paradise Block. Today it marks the eastern boundary of the district.

Semira was not the first to use the term Paradise Block. An 1886 newspaper article had mentioned a house under construction "nearly opposite Paradise Block," and other sources are said to have used the term as early as 1865. It was well recognized in the 19th century as a prestigious neighborhood.

Not long after Mayor William T. Smith built his house, another brick house was constructed two blocks to the west, the Seeberger-Loring-Kilburn house at 509 High Avenue (#2), also listed on the National Register. This house was said to have been built as a single story structure originally, and added onto a few years later. The difference in the brickwork is readily apparent. It is a good example of a bracketed Italianate house. An unusual feature is the use of oval windows at the attic level. This device is somewhat similar to the round windows found in the John Vorhees house (NRHP, approximately ten miles NW of Oskaloosa on the Pella Road) from 1871.

These two brick houses set the standard for residences in Paradise Block. The next house that can be documented was a large frame Italianate originally built for Cary Cooper, but purchased by H.L. Spencer in 1881. It was located at 517 High Avenue (#4), two lots east of the Seeberger-Loring house, on a spacious lot that ran all the way through the block to A Avenue. News articles through the years document the changes to this house, a fountain in 1883, a wrap-around porch in the early 20th century. The Spencer family was very active in the community (he was a wholesale grocer). When Mr. Spencer died, his wife commissioned the Des Moines architectural firm of Proudfoot and Bird to design a chapel in his memory on the William Penn College campus. The Spencer residence was demolished in 1983 following a fire, leaving a large green space in the middle of the district.

In 1881 H.W. McNeill, of the Iowa Coal Company and Consolidated Coal, purchased the Gospel Ridge School lots on the south side of High Avenue and opened residential development of that area. The houses constructed there were vernacular Italianate style residences. These were fairly late examples of the style. Sites #26 and 27 (414 and 410 High Avenue) both feature hip roofs with bracketed cornices. The brackets on #26 are more scroll-like, and the windows have a slight pedimented framing.

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TOP: 414 High Avenue East (#26), c.1881
BOTTOM: C.W. Tracy residence, 418 High Avenue East (#25), 1883



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Immediately next door east at 418 High Avenue (#25), C.W. Tracy had a two story brick Italianate house built in 1883. Tracy was a civil engineer who served as the county surveyor. The Tracy house was larger than the two frame ones, and was said to cost \$4,000. It was rectangular in shape with a truncated hip roof, bracketed cornice, and two story bay windows on both the east and west elevations. All three of these Italianate houses received new front porches by 1917. The porches are broad and heavy, reflecting the Craftsman/Bungalow influence. The railing along the Tracy porch roof features the diagonal star pattern often seen in windows of public buildings during the first two decades of this century. (The Oskaloosa Public Library has this treatment.)

L.L. Hull's house at 711 High (#10) must have been considered quite elegant at the time it was built in 1886. The delicate porch and tower gave it much different feeling than the Smith-Johnson house next door. Historic photographs show that the two houses shared the iron fence that Johnson had erected in 1883. Some of the trees planted by Smith are also shown in the photograph. The 1913 Neo-Classical porch altered the original appearance, but it was in harmony with other "new" porches and buildings constructed in the neighborhood about the same time.

The true decade of development for Paradise Block occurred in the 1890s when eleven houses were constructed. These houses represented a broad range of sizes, materials, and styles. The Queen Anne cottage at 520 High Avenue (#18) is the smallest of these, but it shows a wonderful attention to detail. The gable ends are bracketed and shingled, with a rising sun motif just below the second floor windows. A belt course of vertical boards runs around the house between the first and second floors, and an identical belt course is found between the foundation and first floor windows. The porch on this house has recently been removed, and it has not been determined what the new owner's plans are.

Two larger houses nearby have a similar treatment between floors, #16, the Lofland house at 614 High Avenue, and #7, the Bazil Dutton house across the street at 613. Bazil Dutton was a well-known contractor in Oskaloosa, the partner of Henry Wetherell (father of architect Frank Wetherell). There are a number of houses in town with this vertical board (and occasionally paneled) belt course treatment. While there has been no documentation located proving that Dutton was responsible for these, it has long been believed that these were the work of one builder, and since his own home is so adorned, it is highly possible

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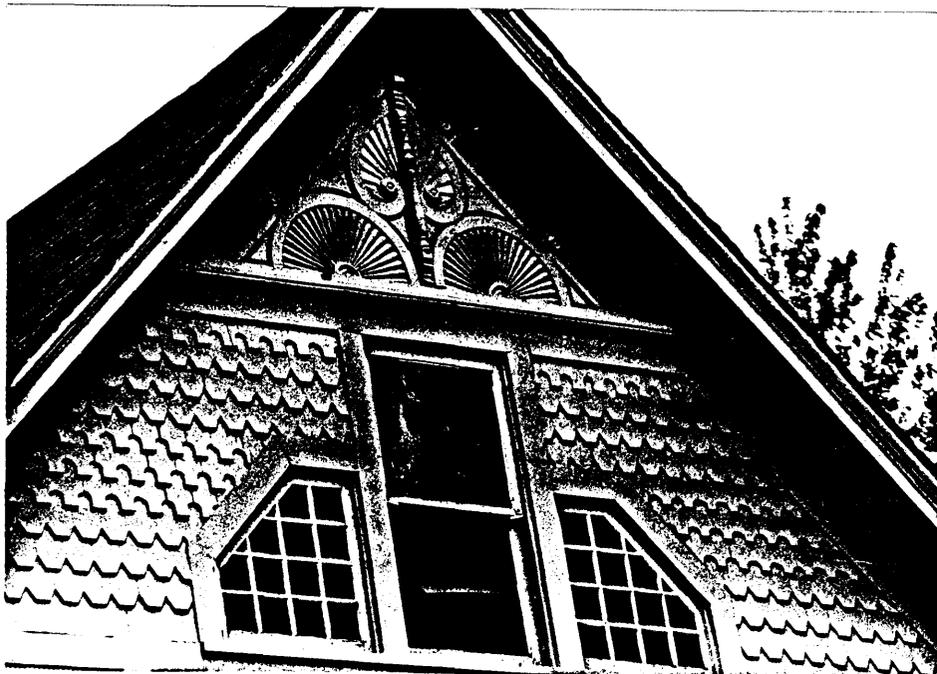
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TOP: 520 High Avenue East (#18), c.1890-1900
BOTTOM: Basil Dutton residence, 613 High Avenue East (#7), c.1895



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that these can be attributed to Dutton. The belt course was a simple, but very effective decorative element. It was sometimes combined with decorative shingles in the gables, other times the gables will have a stick style pattern, or series of panels. The detail of the Dutton gable shows a mock Palladian window, the two side windows with small panes of colored glass. The Dutton and Lofland houses are particularly good examples of this house type and are key structures.

A large Queen Anne style house was built near the end of the decade at 712 High Avenue (#13). The J.B. McCurdy house was said to be the work of Frank Wetherell. It is representative of his large residences from the 1890s (see the "Works of Frank E. Wetherell: 1892-1931" context). He favored a hip roof plan with projecting gables, often with Palladian windows in the gable ends. Side elevations might have bowed or bay windows, and there would be a wrap-around veranda across the front which featured classical porch posts. The McCurdy house was a prime example of this type. In unaltered condition it would have been a key structure in this district, and probably would have been nominated individually as part of the Wetherell context. Unfortunately, recent renovations (new windows, closing in of windows, new doors, new siding) make this a non-contributing structure.

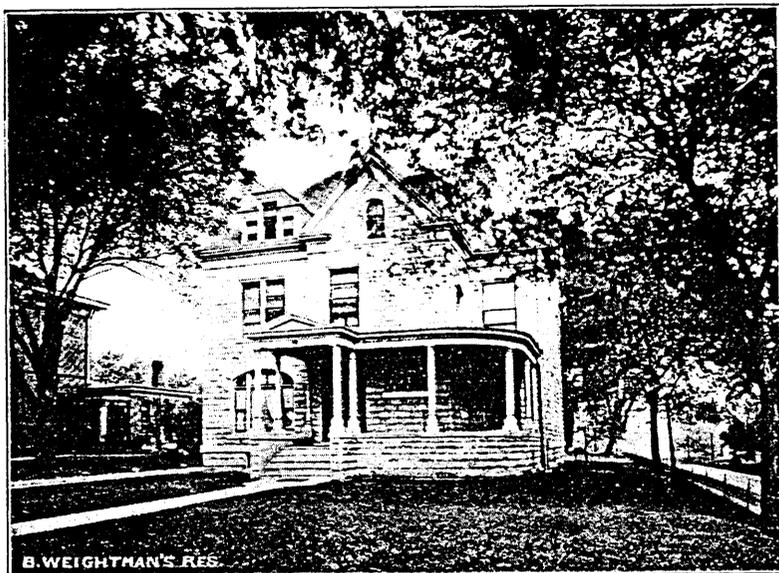
The most impressive house of the 1890s was the Benjamin Wightman (later the W.H. Kalbach) house at 515 High Avenue (#3) which remains basically unchanged today. This two and one-half story house of Bedford limestone was designed by Des Moines architect Henry Liebbe (of Foster and Liebbe) in 1893. While it features the hip roof and gables often associated with the Queen Anne style, it has a heavier feeling, due in part, to the use of rusticated stone. Neo-Classical details on the house include cornice returns and classical columns on the porch. It was a fine addition to the north side of the street, located between the Seeberger-Loring and H.L. Spencer houses. As befits a residence of this caliber, there was a cornerstone placed. The unusual aspect is that the stone does not make note of the architect, but of the local builder, George H. Carlon.

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Benjamin Wightman (W.H. Kalbach) residence, 515 High Avenue East (#3)
TOP: Historic view from 1896. BOTTOM: Cornerstone.



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Construction continued in Paradise Block as Oskaloosa moved into the twentieth century. The first decade saw construction of two large frame houses, one at 402 High Avenue (#30) and the other at 706 (#14). #30 is a typical Four Square design with dormer window and heavy porch across the front. #14 is appears more rectangular than square, has broad eaves, and clustered classical porch columns resting on brick piers. There is much more of a horizontal emphasis in the design of #14, perhaps an influence of the evolving Prairie School. Between these two, also on the south side of the street, a two and one-half story shingle and stucco house was built at 512 (#21) in 1904. It is an eclectic blend of popular styles, the steeply pitched gables and stuccoed half-timbering of Tudor Revival, the alternating wide/narrow/wide courses of wood shingles and exposed rafter ends of Craftsman houses, and a cameo window from Neo-Classical designs. It works quite well as a total design and is considered a key structure. Not long after the house was constructed, a garage was built to the rear. It is typical of the early 20th century garages found in Paradise Block and is a good contributing structure.



512 High Avenue East (#21), 1904
Note garage to rear.

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The automobile arrived in Oskaloosa during this decade. Livery stables were replaced by auto garages (both sales and service), and gas stations appeared on corners. The "Great White Way" was built through Oskaloosa in 1913-14, the way literally marked by six foot wide bands of white paint on poles. New street lights were installed along the way as well. High Avenue was the route of the Great White Way through town. Garages began appearing behind many of the houses in Paradise Block. Sometimes they matched the design of the house, but most often they were simple hip roof structures with wide doors. The brick driveway (#18b) and alley (#28) may also date from this decade. These are representative of the brick paving that was found throughout Oskaloosa's major streets. High Avenue East was one of the earliest streets paved, reflecting the importance of the neighborhood.

From the earliest period, churches had been built to the east and southeast of the Public Square in Oskaloosa. The Springer map from 1890 showed five within two blocks of Paradise Block. In 1912, a church was built on High Avenue itself, the First Church of Christ Scientist at 406 (#29). Designed by Chicago architect S.S. Beman, this was a church of modest proportions, a single story stucco structure, with projecting classical portico of Doric columns. It featured a stylized entablature, and a lunette in the pediment. Though larger than the surrounding houses, the scale and proportion were close to residential, and the material (stucco) was used on at least one house in the area. The use might be different, but the building blended into the neighborhood.

Two years later, a second church was built diagonally across the street at 501 High Avenue (#1). St. Paul's Congregational was a larger church, built of brick. Neo-Classical in design, it was designed by Wm. O. Morck of Indianapolis with a boldly projecting portico and a shallow dome. While the Christian Science Church featured a portico with rather subdued Doric columns, the Congregational Church featured more slender fluted columns with elegant Corinthian capitals. Like the Christian Science Church however, the Congregational Church is of a scale, proportion, and building material that blends into the residential environment. The corner location allows it to present a secondary facade, creating a more dominant appearance than the church across the street, but it is not over-powering. The design of the two churches is echoed on many of the houses in the use of Neo-Classical columns on the porches. There is almost a rhythm established by these columns and porches down both sides of the street.

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TOP: 1st Church of Christ Scientist, 406 High Avenue (#29), 1912
BOTTOM: St. Paul's Congregational Church, 501 High Avenue (#1), 1914



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Two houses representing two new styles were built along High Avenue during this decade as well. George Kalbach's bungalow at 610 (#17) was a typical example of the style. One and one-half stories with a combination of wood frame and brick, it featured broad gables with wide eaves, and a broad, heavy porch across the facade. This house sets between two houses from the 1890s, the two and one-half story Lofland residence, and the little Queen Anne cottage with the brick driveway. It is not visually intrusive in its setting.

At 510 High Avenue is a brick Prairie influenced house (#22). Built in 1917, it was the last house constructed in Paradise Block until after the Great Depression. The style would appear to be too modern to fit into the neighborhood, however, like the churches, the scale and building material are similar to other houses in the block and a common setback from the street helps this house blend into its environment.

Looking down Paradise Block from either 3rd Street or 7th Street, you see a neighborhood of houses reflecting the typical styles and materials used in Oskaloosa from the 1850s to W.W. I. One of the oldest houses in town established Paradise Block, and still anchors the eastern end. Two churches are located near the western boundary of the district, blending with the residences, and serving as a transition to the business district immediately west. As you walk or drive along High Avenue East, there is a sense of time and place, a sense of a special neighborhood that Semira Hobbs Phillips and her contemporaries called "Paradise Block."

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the point of intersection of the right of way along the east side of 3rd Street North and the north side of High Avenue East, thence east approximately 322' to the right of way on the east side of 4th Street North; thence north 136'6" to the rear property line of Lot 7, East Add.; thence east, following the north property line of the houses facing High Avenue East, until reaching a garage located on Lot 4 of Lot 5, East Add., thence south 12'2", east 24'4", north 12'2", thence continuing east as before, along north property lines of houses facing High Avenue East, until reaching the west right of way of 7th Street North; thence south approximately 320' to the south property line of Lot 1, Blk 2, Seevers Add.; thence west along the south property line of the lots facing High Avenue East, until reaching a garage located on the E 1/2 of Lot 11, East Add., thence north 13'5", west 23'3", south 13'5", thence continuing west as before, along south property line of houses facing High Avenue East, until reaching the east right of way of 3rd Street North; thence north 160' to the point of beginning.

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10. Geographical Data

UTM References

- A. 15/530060/4571380
- B. 15/530160/4571440
- C. 15/530440/4571440
- D. 15/530440/4571360
- E. 15/530040/4571370

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PHOTOGRAPHS: PARADISE BLOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT

All photographs included in this nomination of the Paradise Block Historic District, Oskaloosa, Iowa, were taken by Patricia Pierce Patterson. Photos #5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 19, and 21 were taken in March 1989. All other photos in this nomination were taken in May 1990. An on-site visit by the consultant in June 1991 verified that these photographs are still accurate. The negatives are in the files of the State Historical Society, Bureau of Historic Preservation, Des Moines, Iowa.

- # 1 North side 400 block High Avenue East: two new buildings, Presbyterian Church, Telephone Co.
Looking NE
- # 2 North side 500 block, Congregational Church
Looking NE
- # 3 Detail: Congregational Church
Looking NE
- # 4 North side 500 block, Seeberger-Loring-Kilburn house, Wightman (Kalbach) house behind trees.
Looking NE
- # 5 Seeberger-Loring-Kilburn house (NRHP)
509 High Avenue East
Looking NW
- # 6 Benjamin Wightman (W.H. Kalbach) house
515 High Avenue East
Looking NW
- # 7 Detail: Porch of Wightman (Kalbach) house
Looking NE
- # 8 North side 600 block, 609 and 613
Looking NE
- # 9 Detail: Gable decoration, 613 High Avenue East
Looking NE
- #10 North side 700 block, Smith-Johnson iron fence
Looking NW

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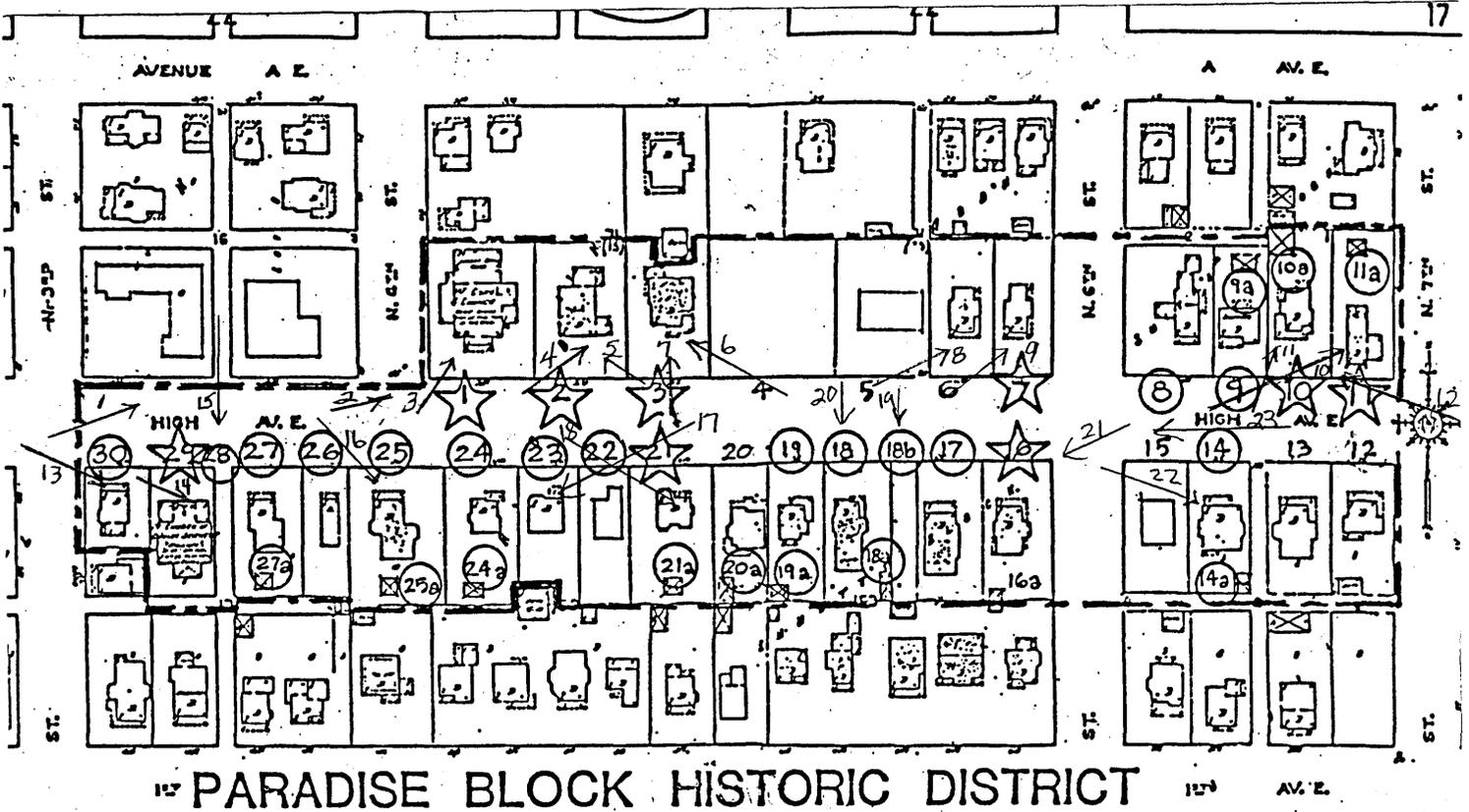
- #11 Detail: Front gable, L.L. Hull house
711 High Avenue East.
Looking NE
- #12 Smith-Johnson house, 713 High Avenue East.
Looking NE
- #13 South side 400 block, High Avenue East.
402 High Avenue
Looking SE
- #14 First Church of Christ Scientist
406 High Avenue East
Looking SE
- #15 Brick alley between 406 and 410 High Avenue East.
Looking S
- #16 South side 400 block
Tracy house in foreground
Looking SE
- #17 South side 500 block
510, 506, and 504
Looking SW
- #18 South side 500 block
510, 512, and 516
Looking SE
- #19 Brick driveway, 520 High Avenue East
Looking S
- #20 Detail: Gable decoration, 520 High Avenue East
Looking S
- #21 South side 600 block, Lofland house in foreground.
Looking SW
- #22 South side 700 block.
Looking SE
- #23 View of High Avenue East from 7th Street.
Looking due W

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Map showing camera angles.