

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 90000104

Date Listed: 02/22/90

Doyle Avenue Historic District  
Property Name

Providence  
County

RI  
State

N/A  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*Betty L. Savage*  
Signature of the Keeper

2-22-90  
Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

**Section 8: Level of Significance**

"Local" was inadvertently not checked, but is justified as the applicable level of significance in the text of the statement of significance.

This information was confirmed with Pam Kennedy, RISHPO, by telephone on the date of listing.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

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National Park Service

JAN 09 1990

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 Doyle Avenue Historic District

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ n/a not for publication

city, town Providence n/a vicinity

state Rhode Island code R.I. county Providence code 007 zip code 02906

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>73</u>	<u>8</u> buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>73</u>	<u>8</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 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.

Fredrick Williamson  
Signature of certifying official

3 Jan 1990  
Date

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission  
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:

- 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:)

Beth A. Savage  
Signature of the Keeper

2/22/90  
Date of Action

Jon  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
COMMERCIAL/shops  
MUNICIPAL/fire station

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
COMMERCIAL/offices  
COMMERCIAL/shops

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN  
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK  
walls WOOD  
BRICK  
roof ASPHALT  
other \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Doyle Avenue Historic District is located on the East Side of Providence and north of the College Hill National Historic Landmark District. It is a linear, urban neighborhood comprised of sixty-eight principal structures: all but three are residential. Sixty-four of these structures were constructed between 1860 and 1920--with the construction of ancillary buildings continuing after this period of significance. Many of these structures were built on speculation, those on the south side of Doyle Avenue on land leased from the city's Dexter Donation Commission. Most of these structures were multi-family residences.

Bridging the area between two major transportation routes, North Main Street (west) and Hope Street (east), the district consists of the buildings fronting on Doyle Avenue, plus two on the west side of Camp Street (which bisects the district), three on the west side of Proctor Place (which runs off Doyle Avenue), and one on North Main Street at Doyle Avenue.

The repetition of building forms, the consistency of their orientation to the street, and relatively narrow lot width along with the steep east-west slope of the terrain, give the district a distinct identity and homogeneity that set it apart from its environs.

Within the district the land declines steeply from east to west, from Hope Street to North Main Street. This creates impressive vistas and a distinct sense of place in this linear district as one travels westward on Doyle Avenue.

The buildings in the district are principally wood-frame, side-hall-plan dwellings of predominantly 2½ stories with 1½-story and 3½-story structures also represented. Within the district are expressions of restrained mid- and late Victorian architectural styles, including Second Empire, Italianate, Eastlake and Queen Anne with several transitional Colonial Revival structures.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7.2

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Houses on Doyle Avenue and Proctor Place are rectangular - massed with gable end to the street, are sited on narrow lots, and, with few exceptions, are set just back from the sidewalk line to accommodate a front stoop or porch. This uniformity of setback, building orientation, mass, and age, as well as the relatively steep slope of the terrain from Hope Street to North Main Street create the principal character-defining elements of the district. Vegetation is generally restricted to minor plantings at the front of dwellings with scattered street trees. In addition, many buildings have retaining walls of stone or concrete at the sidewalk line.

Despite the effects of limited maintenance, some unsympathetic alterations, and the spot loss of buildings resulting in interruptions to the general building pattern, the district retains the integrity of its dense mid- to late nineteenth-century character.

## INVENTORY

The following is an inventory of structures within the Doyle Avenue Historic District. Unless otherwise noted, all buildings are of two-and-one-half stories and of wood-frame construction. Three principal building types have been identified in this district, and have been designated "A", "B" and "C".

Type A is a prominent style in the district and continued to be built more or less unaltered about 1860 until about 1900. It is a 2-family house with end-gable roof, a two-bay facade, a two-story front bay window, and, usually, a single door leading to a stair hall set under a hood supported on consoles.

Type B houses are a somewhat later variation of Type A, with semi-hexagonal bay window and either a one- or two-story full-width porch replacing the hooded entrance or a single-bay entrance portico instead of the doorhood. Type B may also have variations such as a side projection or a cross-gable roof.

Type C is the triple-decker, the most common form of multiple-family housing in Providence between 1900 and 1930. The triple-decker is a full three-story (or three and one-half story) dwelling with one unit per floor. It is usually larger than the other types, but with similar plans. Its most prominent feature

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.3

is the full-height porch on the front accompanied by a full-height bay window. There are only five triple-deckers in the district, an indication of the area having been substantially developed prior to the triple-decker's common usage.

Vacant lots are listed at the end of the inventory. Attribution of historic names to properties is based on historic maps and deed information. In cases where the historic name cannot be determined, properties are simply designated by building type, i.e., House.

In general, all buildings constructed during the period of significance, defined as 1860 to 1920, are considered to be contributing unless their integrity has been lost. Early twentieth-century concrete-block garages, dated through historic maps and style, are included as contributing buildings because they document adjustments made to accommodate the automobile and because they have survived with very few alterations.

An (NC) denotes a non-contributing structure. Five principal structures have been designated as non-contributing. Four of these (37 Doyle, 66 Doyle, 151 Doyle and 155 Doyle) were constructed after the period of significance for the district. One building, at 73 Camp Street, has been designated non-contributing because later alterations have substantially altered the original appearance of the building.

## CAMP STREET

- 62- House (c. 1895). Type B with Queen Anne detailing,  
64 shallow front porch and elaborate detail and panel work in the porch pediment and gable. The house is similar to 97-99 and 160 Doyle Avenue. This house is sited on land originally owned by the Dexter Commission, and first sold to a private owner in 1920.
- 70 House (c. 1882). A 2½-story late Italianate residence with square mass, mansard roof below a decked roof, symmetrical three-bay facade with slightly projecting, single-bay entrance pavilion, and hooded paired windows. This house is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.4

## Camp Street (cont.)

sited on land originally owned by the Dexter Commission and first sold to a private owner in 1920.

NC Garage (1954): A single-bay masonry structure with a flat roof.

73 Ross Brothers Druggists (between 1908-1918). A 2-story  
NC commercial structure with a brick veneer first floor, and frame second floor containing residences and a shallow gable roof to Camp Street. The original windows and corner entrance to the commercial area have been replaced. A one-story cinder block addition was added to the east in 1949, creating additional commercial space along Doyle Avenue. These later alterations have substantially altered the original appearance of the building. George A. and James W. Ross were druggists who lived at 65 Camp Street.

## DOYLE AVENUE

14- House (c. 1903). Type C structure with synthetic siding  
16 and new one-story porch. Built by William F. Condon of Condon Bros., carpenters and builders, as income-producing property.

18- House (between 1900-1908). Type C structure with  
20 clapboard and shingle exterior. Built for Mamie Silverstein, widow. Later alterations have been made to the porch.

22- House (1900-1908). Type C structure with a 2-story porch  
24 with decked roof, three entrances, and clapboard and shingle exterior. Built by Frank W. and Knight D. Cheney as income-producing property.

28 House (1881). Type B structure with a one-story porch. Later alterations include asbestos shingle siding and a garage inserted at the basement level.

29- House (c. 1900). Type B structure with Queen Anne

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.5

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

- 31 detailing in the gable. This structure was built on land leased from the Dexter Commission which retained ownership until 1955.
- 32- Houses (1917). Two Type C structures with restrained  
34 Colonial Revival trim. The front structure, 32-34, has a  
32A- two-story porch with decked roof and semi-octagonal bay  
34A on the east side. The building to the rear, 32A-34A, has a  
one-story porch and no side bays. Both structures were  
built for Rebecca Goldstein in 1917 as income-producing  
property.
- 33 Thomas Collins House (c. 1875). Type A structure with  
Italianate detail, one-story L-shaped porch, and bell-cast  
mansard roof. This building is on land originally leased  
from the Dexter Commission. Thomas Collins was the first to  
lease the property from the Commission. The land was first  
sold to a private owner in 1930.
- 37 Ephraim Rosen House (1933). Barker and Turoff architects;  
NC Jacob Meyer & Sons, Inc., builder. A 1-story rectangular  
building with low gable roof and projecting gabled center  
pavilion. Ephraim Rosen, the owner of a confectionary on  
Charles Street, bought the land in 1934 from the Dexter  
Commission.
- 38 House (1879). Kenneth D. Forbes, builder. Type A  
structure with a mansard roof, projecting side wing to the  
east, and a single bay one-story porch. This house was  
built as income-producing property for Edward Kearins (see  
28 Doyle Avenue).
- 41- Jesse B. Sweet House (1887). Robert Patterson, builder. A  
43 2½-story Queen Anne residence with irregular massing, gable  
to street, prominent three-story tower, clapboard walls and  
shingled gables and one-story front porch with decked roof  
and later alterations. Jesse B. Sweet owned a dry goods  
store at 125 Canal Street with his brother John. The land  
was first leased in 1871 from the Dexter Commission and sold  
to a private owner in 1930.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.6

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

- 42 House (1882, 1895). Type A structure with additional two-story bay on the west side and a single-bay front porch. This house was built for Edward Kerins (see 28 Doyle Avenue).
- 46- Mary E. Bliss House (pre-1875). Type A structure with  
48 Italianate detail, and broad one-story front porch.
- Garage (between 1918-1937). A 1-story, 2-bay concrete block structure with pyramidal roof.
- 47 House (1890). Type B structure with Queen Anne detailing, one-story porch, cross gables, and single-story bay. This house was built as income-producing property for Benjamin F. Almy, who owned a cotton and waste paper stock mill at 72 Canal Street. The land was first sold to a private owner in 1927 by the Dexter Commission.
- 49- House (between 1882-1895). Type B structure with elaborate  
51 Queen Anne detailing, and a broad one-story porch with decked roof. Queen Anne detail. The house sits on Dexter Commission land leased to Benjamin F. Almy (see 47 Doyle Avenue) in 1871, and first sold to private owners in 1960. This is the second structure on the property; the first appeared prior to 1871 and disappeared before 1882.
- 50 John A. Hopkins House (1870). Type A structure with Italianate detail, a single entrance below a bracketed hood, a three bay facade and clapboard walls. This is one of the earliest and simplest houses on the avenue lacking the projecting bay window found on many of the later buildings. John A. Hopkins, a machinist, resided here.
- 52- William Urghart House (1875, 1893). Type A house, with a  
54 one-story porch with decked roof and Italianate details. In 1893, Edward I. Nickerson, architect, designed additions, including porches and doorways. William Urghart was a carpenter/builder. Josephine M. Walling owned the house in 1893 and commissioned the Nickerson work.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.7

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

- 53 House (1874). William Urghart, builder. Type A structure with Italianate detail and with entrance and one-story porch with decked roof on the west side. The house sits on land leased from the Dexter Commission in 1871 by Benjamin F. Almy (see 47 Doyle Avenue) and was first sold to a private owner in 1956.
- 56 Frank Merry House (1872). A 1½-story Italianate residence with square mass and bell-cast mansard roof below a low-hip roof, one-story bay window, roof dormers, and a boldly carved door hood. There is a later two-story addition on the west side. A fire in 1989 caused extensive damage to the interior and the mansard roof, although the roof shape and location of dormers is still identifiable. A dormer on the east elevation escaped damage and could be used to replicate the missing windows.
- 59 House (c. 1875). Type A structure with Italianate detail and a hooded double door entry. Later artificial shingles have been added. The land was originally leased from the Dexter Commission and sold in 1949 to a private owner.
- Carriage House (c. 1890). A 1½-story, 3-bay, frame structure with gable roof, center pediment, and cupola.
- 61- Willard Haskell House (1875). A double house of the Type A  
63 format with two double-door entrances placed side by side under a single-story double porch and a single mansard roof. The land was originally leased from the Dexter Commission by Willard Haskell, who owned a jewelry factory at 95 Pine Street. The land was first sold to a private owner in 1925.
- 62 House (c. 1875). Type A structure with a one-story porch, Italianate detail, and rear ell. Edwin A. Burgess built the house on speculation. He owned a textile factory on North Main Street and lived on Prospect Street.
- 66 Edmund J. Sydlowski House (1942). A 2-story Neo-Georgian  
NC residence with low-hip roof and stone and vinyl covering. Edmund Sydlowski was a physician.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.8

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

- 67 Josiah H. Haskell House (c. 1875). Type A structure with Italianate detail. The house is on land originally leased from the Dexter Commission by Josiah Haskell, who worked for W. Haskell & Co. at 95 Pine Street. It was first sold to a private owner in 1925.
- 69 & Josiah Haskell House and Willard Haskell House (1877).  
75 Type A houses with Eastlake detailing. These two houses are mirror images of one another. (See 61-63 and 67 Doyle Avenue). Both properties were first sold to a private owner in 1925.
- 72 Michael Fitzgerald House (1871). A variant of Type A house with square mass and deck-on-hip roof. Single story bay window and porch entrance on first floor and 3-bay window across the second floor. A steep pediment is centered on each elevation of the structure. The transition from the horizontal cornice and entablature of the raking cornice is made in a smooth curve. Fitzgerald, who lived here, was a jewelry manufacturer whose business was located on 38 Friendship Street.
- Garage (between 1918-1937). A 1-story, 2-bay concrete block structure with pyramidal roof.
- 76 D.W. Reeves House (c. 1871). Similar to 56 Doyle Avenue. D. W. Reeves (1838-1900) was the nationally renowned band leader of the American Band, headquartered in the Arnold Block at 54 North Main Street, now razed. Reeves lived here for most of his professional career, from 1872 to 1900. Prior to 1894, this house was known as 58 Doyle Avenue. This is the only building extant in Providence associated with Reeves.
- 80- Sarah E. Reeves House (1901). Type B structure with Queen  
82 Anne and Colonial Revival detailing. The front gable projects out flush with the front of the bay-window and is supported on bold brackets above the one-story porch. The house also has a cutaway bay beneath a cross gable to the west side. Sarah Reeves, who was the widow of D.W. Reeves

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.9

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

and resided at 76 Doyle Avenue, built this house as income-producing property.

84½ E.F. Haskell House (1875). Type A structure with Italianate details, a mansard roof below a deck-on-hip roof, and hooded entrance. This house originally sat at the front of the lot but was moved to the back half of the lot c. 1901.

84- James H. Dean House (c. 1901). Type B structure with  
86 Queen Anne details, a two-story porch and two entrances. James H. Dean lived at this address and was a lieutenant at Hose Company #17 at 653 North Main Street. (q.v.)

88 Phebe G. Gamwell House (between 1872-1875). Type A structure with Greek Revival detail, a two-story rectangular bay window, and single-bay porch. Phebe G. Gamwell was the wife of Albert A. Gamwell, principal of the Fountain Street Grammar School. They resided at this address.

Garage (between 1918-1937). A 1-story, 2-bay concrete block structure with pyramidal roof.

95 Thomas Bligh House (1895). Type A structure with Italianate detail, single-story bay window and hooded entrance with double doors. Bligh was the owner of a liquor business at 59 South Main Street. The land for the house was leased from the Dexter Commission and first sold to a private owner in 1955.

Carriage House (c. 1895). A 1½-story frame structure with two-bay facade, transverse gable roof with a dormer and cupola.

97- House (c. 1895). Type B structure similar to 160 Doyle  
99 Avenue and 62-64 Camp Street. This lot was originally part of the Dexter Commission property, and was first sold to a private owner in 1920.

108 John H. Thompson House (1878). A foursquare 2½-story structure set on a high foundation with a deck-on-mansard

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.10

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

roof, 5-bay symmetrical facade, 2 roof dormers across the facade, and 4 along the flanks. This property remained in the possession of John H. Thompson, manager of Allen's Print Works, until 1887 when it came under the ownership of the Rhode Island Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The Assessor's Map of 1936 gives to the building the title "The Doyle."

119- Abel W. Tripp House (c. 1875). Type A structure with  
121 Italianate detail and a rear ell. There is no bay window on the facade, and the porch has been removed. Abel Tripp was co-owner and manager of the Providence Power Cement Drain Pipe Company on North Main Street. Abel W. Tripp leased this land in 1873 from the Dexter Commission, which sold the land to a private owner in 1955.

House (c. 1882). A 1½-story, frame Italianate cottage with rectangular mass, gable roof with shed dormers, five-bay facade and center entrance. A small porch extends over the center 3 bays.

NC Garage (c. 1918-1937). A 1 story, 1 bay concrete block structure with a gable roof, later covered with stucco and asphalt shingles.

120- Matteson House (1868, 1892). H.E. Barney, builder. A  
122 2½-story, frame, gable-end-to-street structure with a high foundation in which is the principal entrance and above which is a two-story bay window. The entrance porch is later, possibly dating to the time of the 1892 additions to the rear of the building. Documentary evidence suggests that this is the earliest structure on the street. George W.R. Matteson was the owner of the building while Corey Matteson, a machinist, lived here.

125 Thomas Prestwick House (1874). Type A structure with Italianate detail and double door entrance below an elaborate hood. Thomas Prestwick leased the property from the Dexter Commission in 1873. Prestwick, a jeweler, resided here. The Dexter Commission first sold the land to a private owner in 1960.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.11

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

- 127 House (between 1900-1908). A 1½-story frame residence with gable roof, two entrances and a one story bay window. The house is set to the rear of 129 Doyle Avenue.
- NC Garage (post 1937). A 1 story, 2-bay concrete block structure with gable roof.
- 129 Duncan Grant House (between 1875-1882). A 2½-story Stick Style residence, with L-shaped mass and irregular roof line with elaborate shingle and stick work in the gable. Duncan Grant was a carpenter and built this as an income-producing property. Originally Dexter Commission property, the land was first sold to a private owner in 1959.
- 130 William H. Pike House (c. 1883, 1895, 1908 et seq.). A 2½-story rectangular frame structure with a deck-on-hip roof; the three bay entrance elevation is to the west side with a center porch. Extensive alterations in 1895 and 1908 added a major wing to the rear of the structure and brick veneer was added to the street front after 1937, at which time it appears that the fenestration pattern was altered and the entrance was relocated to the basement level of the front elevation. William H. Pike was a carpenter who built this house as an income producing property. In 1895 Charles P. and Catherine M. Darling acquired the property to use as their residence and carried out extensive renovations. Charles Darling owned a manufacturing company on Charles Street.
- 131- John Gay House (1880). An Italianate double house similar  
133 to 61-63 Doyle Avenue with a double hood over the entrance. John Gay, a carpenter, built this house as income producing property on Dexter Commission land sold in 1955 to a private owner.
- 132- Catherine M. Darling House (between 1900-1908). Type B  
134 structure with cross gables and a one-story decked porch, later enclosed. Catherine M. Darling lived at 130 Doyle; this was an income producing property.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.12

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

- 137 Huldah Walling House (1875). Type A structure with Italianate-Stick Style detail, double-door entrance and one-story porch, one-story rectangular bay window and long side porch. The second-story three-part window over the bay is hooded. Additions were made to the side and rear of the structure in 1880. Huldah Walling, the wife of Nelson Walling, a boot and shoe dealer, lived at this address. This was Dexter Commission land, first sold to a private owner in 1925.
- 138- Sarah M. Brightman House (c. 1895). Type B structure with  
140 Queen Anne detailing, cross gables, three-story tower with an octagonal roof, and a temple-front porch. Sarah Brightman owned this as income-producing property.
- 141 Charles L. and Henry R. Rogers House (1880). Type A structure with Italianate detail and hooded double door entrance. Charles and Henry Rogers were brothers who leased this land from the Dexter Commission and worked as assistant superintendents at the American Screw Company. Henry Rogers lived at this address. This land was first sold to a private owner in 1962.
- 142 William O. Dyer House (c. 1895). Type B structure with Queen Anne detailing and a slightly bowed bay window with Craftsman style stained glass on the west side. The porch was added in 1914. William O. Dyer, a salesman, lived at this address.
- Garage (between 1918-1937). A 1-story, 2-bay concrete block structure with a transverse gable roof.
- 145 House (c. 1875). Type A structure with Italianate detailing and arched windows in the double doors. This property was leased from the Dexter Commission, which first sold it to a private owner in 1926.
- 144- Juliet A. Seymour House (c. 1890). Type B structure with  
146 Queen Anne detail and two-story porch. Juliet Seymour owned the property from 1890 to 1920 but never lived there.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.13

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## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

Garage (between 1918-1937). A one-story 4 bay concrete block structure with hip roof.

148- Pierce Doran House (1889). John Doran, builder. Type B  
150 structure with one-story decked porch and an additional 2-story bay on the west side. Pierce Doran, a grocer, lived here.

Carriage House (c. 1890). A 1½-story, 4-bay frame structure with gable roof cupola.

149 House (c. 1875). Type A structure with Italianate detail and hooded entrance. The house is sited on the back of the lot; another structure with a similar footprint occupied the front of the lot but has been razed.

151 NC House (1989). Double house with two-story rectangular  
& bays below a transverse gable roof and on each side of a  
155 NC recessed center entrance. Two identical attached double houses stand at the rear of the lot. This land was first sold to a private owner in 1956.

152- Job S. Weedon House (1893). Allan MacDonald, builder.  
154 Type B structure with Queen Anne detailing, cross gables, cut shingles in the gables and bay windows, and single story porch with turned posts. Job S. Weedon, a silversmith, resided here.

157 House (c. 1875). Type A structure with Italianate detail and hooded entrance. This was originally Dexter Commission property, and first sold to a private owner in 1986.

158 Anna B. Grant House (1889). Type A with Queen Anne detailing and a hooded entrance. The date is substantiated by period maps but physical and stylistic evidence suggests that the house could be earlier since it is similar to 157 Doyle Avenue. Anne Grant owned this as income-producing property, but lived at 129 Doyle Avenue.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.14

## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

- 160- Margaret Grant House (c. 1895). Type B structure with  
162 Queen Anne detailing and elaborate panel work in the gable,  
similar to houses at 62-64 Camp Street and 97-99 Doyle  
Avenue. Margaret Grant owned the property from 1889 to  
1916.
- 161- Samuel Richards House (1875). A 2½-story frame residence  
163 with rectangular mass and transverse gable, 7-bay facade,  
and central single-bay, one-story porch. The Reverend  
Samuel Richards lived on Waterman Street and leased this  
land from the Dexter Commission as income-producing  
property. It is unclear when the land was first sold to a  
private owner, but city maps show the land belonging to the  
City of Providence as late as 1918.
- 164- Charles A. Mann Machine Shop (between 1882-1895). A 2-story  
166 frame structure, with rectangular mass and shallow gable  
roof to the street. There is a large double door in the  
center of the facade and a hoist at the peak of the gable.  
The structure sits to the back of the lot. Charles A. Mann  
was a machinist who manufactured jewelers' lathes and also  
lived at this address.
- 168- George H. Pike House (1897). Type B structure with Queen  
170 Anne detailing, an unusual coved cornice, and a prismatic 2-  
story bay window on the east side. George H. Pike resided  
here in 1898.
- 172- George H. Pike House (1901). Type B structure with Queen  
174 Anne detailing and prismatic bay on the west side. This  
house is similar in plan to Pike's earlier house at 168-  
170, but reversed in plan.
- Garage (between 1918-1937). A 1-story, 4-bay concrete brick  
structure with hipped roof.
- 178 Samuel B. Prentice House (1899). A 2½-story, clapboard-and-  
shingle, transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival residence  
of rectangular mass, with a curved front tower with conical  
roof, a broad one-story porch with groups of three Tuscan  
columns at the corners, transverse gable roof, and Palladian

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7.15

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## Doyle Avenue (cont.)

window on the west side. The house sits back from the street with a generous front lawn and relates more closely in character and orientation to development on Hope Street or on Doyle Avenue east of Hope Street. Samuel B. Prentice was a salesman and lived at this address.

## NORTH MAIN STREET

653 Niagara Engine Company #5 (1867). A 2-story, stone-trimmed brick structure with a slate deck-on-hip roof. The first story was partly rebuilt in the 1960s with a modern storefront in place of an earlier one. This storefront, set off from the upper story by a cast-stone lintel, has a central entrance recess and large vertical-mullioned display windows on the front and part of each side. Above the lintel is a Gothic arch marking the location of an original central doorway surmounted by a single arched doorway on the first floor and a tripartite arched window on the second floor. The building is trimmed with a rusticated granite base and a brownstone belt course. The window and doorway arches are composed of alternating granite and brownstone radiating voussoirs. Heavy wooden brackets support the eaves. On the north side of the structure is a 3-story hose-drying tower, also of brick and topped by stone and brick corbels supporting a squat, slate, deck-on-hip roof. One of the earliest structures built during the city's post-Civil War municipal improvements campaign, this was one of four new engine houses built to accommodate the change from hand-engines to steam power.

## PROCTOR PLACE

1, 3 & 5 Samuel Proctor Houses (1882). Type A structures with Italianate detail and hooded entrances. Proctor subdivided the 9000 square foot lot at 161-163 Doyle Avenue to create at least five additional lots on Proctor Place (then called Doyle Place). He proceeded to build at least five residences on speculation, of which four remain. Three of these on the west side of Proctor Place are included in the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 7.16

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Proctor Place (cont.)

district while the fourth on the east side has lost its character-defining elements. It is unclear when this land was sold to a private owner, but city maps have the City of Providence as owner as late as 1918.

VACANT LOTS

Doyle Avenue: 10-12, 124-126-128, 147

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

ARCHITECTURE  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
PERFORMING ARTS

1860-1920

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Reeves, David Wallis

Architect/Builder

Multiple

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Doyle Avenue Historic District contains an important record of urban residential development on the east side of Providence from 1860 to 1920. The buildings in the district retain the integrity of its dense mid- to late nineteenth-century character. The district's buildings document the evolution of urban working- and middle-class multiple family residences in southern New England's between 1860 and 1920, featuring Second Empire, Italianate and Queen Anne inspired buildings. The historical pattern of property ownership in the district is highly unusual because originally land was leased rather than sold to house owners. The district encompasses land that was once part of the Dexter Donation to the City of Providence for the benefit of the poor. Doyle Avenue was named for Thomas A. Doyle, Mayor of Providence and Chairman of the Dexter Commission at the time the district was developed. In addition, the district has significance as the home of D. W. Reeves, (1838-1900) bandleader and composer, who built and lived in the house at 76 Doyle Avenue for most of his professional career. Reeves led the nationally-known American Brass Band during the last third of the nineteenth century, the height of the popularity of brass bands.

**HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

When Providence was first settled in the mid- to late 1600s, the upper slopes of College Hill were used primarily as agricultural land and woodlots. This pattern of land use continued for two centuries, as prosperous families assembled large tracts of land. Early roads, such as the seventeenth-century Towne (now North Main) Street, extended along the edge of the area, but until the late eighteenth century few roads crossed the area north of what is now Olney Street. Horse Pasture Lane, laid out in 1791, was later named Camp Street to commemorate the Revolutionary-era camp of Count Rochambeau to which it led.

See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings  
Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

R.I. Historical Preservation  
Commission

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property c. 12 acres

UTM References

A 19 300680 4634560  
Zone Easting Northing

C 19 299790 4634340

B 19 300630 4634370  
Zone Easting Northing

D 19 299380 4634500

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amy S. Jordan, Director of Education

organization Providence Preservation Society date November, 1989

street & number 21 Meeting Street telephone 401-831-7440

city or town Providence state Rhode Island zip code 02903

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8.2

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In Providence, as elsewhere, the early part of the nineteenth century was accompanied intensive road building. Private turnpike companies constructed many of the roads linking communities. In 1825, one such company built the "East Turnpike to Pawtucket," an extension of Hope Street beyond Olney Street paralleling North Main Street. In 1875, this toll road became a public road and was known variously as East Street and East Avenue until around the turn of the century, when its entire Providence length became Hope Street.

The earliest-settled part of Doyle Avenue is near North Main Street. The street rises sharply nearly 150 feet to Hope Street. The northeast corner of Hope Street and Doyle Avenue is the second highest elevation in the city, at 206 feet.

Doyle Avenue crosses property once owned by the descendants of Jeremiah Brown, (1715-1740/1) a great-grandson of Chad Brown, one of the early settlers of Providence. Jeremiah's only child Mary Brown Howell (1740-1801), wife of David Howell (1747-1824), inherited the property. The land, referred to in Dexter Commission records as the Dwight Lands, passed to the Howell daughters, Mary Howell Shaw (1779-1811) and Waitstill Howell Dexter (1776-1819), wife of Ebenezer Knight Dexter (1773-1824), U.S. Marshall during the War of 1812 and owner of large parcels of Providence land. Outliving his wife and only child, E.K. Dexter bequeathed his estate, which included several parcels of land, to the City of Providence in 1824 for the benefit of the poor. Among these parcels was the southern half of the Howell Lands, inherited by his wife. Ebenezer Dexter's will did not place any usage restrictions on the Howell Lands as he did with certain other parcels, such as the Dexter Parade (adjacent to the Cranston Street Armory) and the Dexter Asylum Farm (now part of athletic facilities at Brown University).

This property remained unused until the northern half passed to Mrs. Shaw's grandsons, Frank W. (1832-1909) and Knight D. Cheney (1837-1907), mill owners of Manchester, Connecticut. The industrial and commercial development of the Randall Square area to the southwest of Doyle Avenue in the mid- to late nineteenth century provided an incentive for the development of the Lippitt Hill and Doyle Avenue areas. Most of the early development at

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8.3

Lippitt Hill and Randall Square was demolished between the late 1950s and early 1970s.

The Cheney family wanted to develop the land and in 1864 suggested construction of a road from North Main Street to Hope Street, along the boundary line between the Dexter Donation and Shaw/Cheney properties. The Commissioners of the Dexter Donation consented to the construction of the street on March 2, 1865. The Cheney land on the north side of Doyle from North Main to Hope Street was platted in 1865 by Cushing and DeWitt. In 1869, the Commission agreed to lease portions of the Dexter land "at such rates as they may deem expedient" and in 1870, the Dexter Donation lands on Doyle Avenue from North Main to Hope were platted by C.E. Paine. By October 1870, the street had been named Doyle Avenue for Thomas A. Doyle, Mayor of Providence and Chairman of the Dexter Commission (1864-9, 1870-81 and 1884-6). All leases were written for an initial period of forty years; rent was fixed for a term of ten years. Conditions imposed by the leases prohibited the sale of intoxicating liquors, required the lessee to pay the Dexter Donation an amount equivalent to the property tax, and empowered the Commissioners to appraise and to purchase improvements at the expiration of the lease. While building on leased land is a common feature of development in other cities, the Dexter Commission's decision to lease was unusual in the history of Providence, and was presumably designed to provide continuing revenues.

The introduction of public utilities further spurred the development of the area. Gas mains were installed "from North Main Street to the house above Camp Street" in 1871 and extended to Hope Street in 1873. Water pipes were laid in 1872, and sewer lines were installed in April, 1893. Access to public transportation was important for the development of the area as few properties included carriage houses or stables. By 1864, regular horse car service was offered along North Main Street to Pawtucket. In 1884, Camp Street became a horse railroad route. The Union Railroad Company began operating a horse railroad line along Hope Street as far as Olney Street in 1867, but the extension of the route along East (later Hope) Street beyond Doyle occurred between 1895 and 1908.

It is quite possible that Mayor Thomas Doyle, for whom the street is named, had a hand in shaping Doyle Avenue. Doyle was

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8.4

particularly concerned with city planning issues. In his 1872 inaugural address, he had criticized private developers for laying out streets that did not connect with existing thoroughfares, forcing the City to spend large sums to connect, widen and straighten streets at a later date. In his capacity as the head of the Dexter Commission, it is likely that Doyle encouraged the laying out of Doyle Avenue so that it connected with existing thoroughfares and had ample width to allow ease of travel.

Additional city services were introduced to Doyle Avenue in the 1870's with the construction of the Thomas A. Doyle Grammar School in 1876. The school, also named after Mayor Doyle, was constructed at 83 Doyle Avenue on the present site of the East Side Apartments, just outside the boundary of the Doyle Avenue district. Enlarged between 1882 and 1895, the school served the neighborhood well into this century until it was demolished in 1967.

An urban middle and working class neighborhood, Doyle Avenue was home to clerks, teachers, carpenters, salesmen, machinists and laborers. In 1896, the Providence City Directory listing included 25 clerks, 12 teachers, 9 each carpenters and machinists, 7 each salesmen and laborers, 3 firemen and 2 policemen. The 1896 residents also included a physician, a dentist, a lawyer, a civil engineer, and 2 pharmacists. There were also 2 artists, a reporter, a photographer, and 3 musicians, including noted band leader D. W. Reeves.

Reeves was in some ways the forerunner of John Philip Sousa, who said of Reeves "He made me everything I am..." and called him "the father of band music in America." Reeves came to Providence in 1866 to lead the American Brass Band. Under his direction the Band became famous throughout the country. Reeves also helped to organize the first Providence Symphony Orchestra in the 1870s, conducted Gilmore's band at the Chicago World's Fair, and presented operettas at the Park Garden in Providence. His "Second Regiment March" is still part of the brass band repertoire. Reeves lived at 76 Doyle Avenue from 1872 to 1900 with his wife, Sarah. After his death in 1900, she built 80-82 Doyle Avenue next door as income property.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8.5

The original combination of owner-occupied and income property in the district appears to differ little from the current pattern of property ownership. As in the case of Sarah Reeves, property owners living on Doyle Avenue often constructed or purchased additional houses as income-producing property.

Conflicting records make it difficult to determine the exact date of the first sale of Dexter Donation property, but it is clear that the lots were sold gradually over the years. Land on Proctor Place may have been sold to the Rev. Samuel Richards as early as 1886, though maps show the City of Providence as owner as late as 1918. Tax assessors records indicate that the ownership of lots at 62-64 Camp, 70 Camp, and 97-99 Doyle transferred from the City of Providence to private owners in 1920. The greatest number of lots were sold during the 1920s, and several lots were sold during the 1950s. This clustering of sales may reflect the expiration of leases in those decades. Tax assessor's records indicate that the last lot to be sold by the Dexter Commission was 157 Doyle in 1986.

## ARCHITECTURE

The buildings in the Doyle Avenue historic district are primarily two- and three- family dwellings, typical of those built in southern New England's urban middle- and working-class neighborhoods between 1860 and 1920. At present, there are only three principal structures in the district that are not multiple-family residences. These include a former machine shop, a commercial-residential structure (designated non-contributing due to later alterations) and a former city fire station. Ancillary buildings still exist behind many buildings, including two barn/carriage houses at 39 and 95 Doyle and ten utilitarian garages constructed primarily between 1918 and 1937.

During the 1870s, the two-family house format began to evolve. The standard house of this type had an end-gable roof, a two-bay facade and a two-story bay window with a side hall plan. The side-hall plan adapted easily to the two-family use through repetition of the same plan on each floor. The earliest houses had a single door under a hood supported on consoles, which led to a stairhall that served both units. Later houses of the type were larger and had more elaborate details. These houses had separate entrances to each unit. By 1900, the multiple family

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8.6

house had evolved into the triple decker, a common house form in Providence.

These three variations of the multiple family house can be found in the Doyle Avenue Historic District, documenting the evolution of working and middle class domestic vernacular architecture in southern New England between 1860 and 1920. These three variations, here designated A, B and C, are described in greater detail in the Inventory. The district includes 27 Type A houses, 17 Type B houses and 5 Type C houses. The majority of the development in the 1870's and 1880's was clustered on Doyle between North Main and Camp Streets and on the south side of Doyle at the western end of the section of Doyle between Camp and Hope Street. In the 1880's and 1890's, development spread to the north side of Doyle between Camp and Hope Street as sewer lines were installed and public transportation was extended out Hope Street to Pawtucket. The five triple-deckers or type C buildings are clustered on the north side of Doyle near North Main Street.

Among the best examples of Type A structures are 42 Doyle, 50 Doyle, 67 Doyle, 95 Doyle, and 141 Doyle. Good examples of Type B can be found at 29-31 Doyle, 84-86 Doyle and 172-174 Doyle. The best example of Type C in the district is 22-24 Doyle, which includes separate entrances to all three units on the front elevation.

There are two principal architectural styles represented in the district. Second Empire-Italianate buildings have a mansard or gable roof, and ornate brackets at the cornice lines and on door hoods. They are generally covered entirely by clapboard with substantial corner boards, sometimes expressed as pilasters. These structures frequently have double-door entries with transom lights above. The other dominant style is Queen Anne. These structures have more complex roof forms, often with cross gables, and varying types of panel work and cut shingles in the gables. Little change from the prior style is evident in the fenestration although these all have semi-octagonal bays with one-and-one-half story porches across the remainder of the facades and, generally, separate doorways to each living unit.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 9.1

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Records; Commissioners of the Dexter Donation 1825-1889, Nos. 1-2.

Sampson, Murdock & Co. Providence House Directories. 1860-1920.

Woodward, Wm McKenzie and Sanderson, Edward F. Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Providence, RI, 1986.

MAPS

Cushing & DeWitt. Plat of Houses Belonging to F.W. & K.D. Cheney in the City of Providence, 1865.

Hopkins, G.M. Plat Book of the City of Providence, Rhode Island, 1918.

Hopkins, G.M. Atlas of the City of Providence, RI and Environs, 1937.

Paine, C.E. Plat of Lots Belonging to the City of Providence on Doyle Avenue and other Streets, October, 1870.

Richards, L.J. and Co. Atlas of the City of Providence, Rhode Island. 1908.

Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 10 Page 10.2

The northwest corner of the Doyle Avenue Historic District begins at the northwest corner of plat 8 lot 058. The boundary follows the northern edge of lot 058 to lot 443. It then extends northerly along the western boundary of lot 443 to the northwest corner of this lot. It then extends northeasterly along the northern boundaries of lots 443, 056, 405, 226, 252, 253, 254, 255, 208, 203, 209, 264, 257, 260, 167, 210, and 138 to the northeast corner of lot 261 and then southeasterly to the southeast corner of this same lot. The boundary continues northeasterly to the southwest corner of lot 057, then northwesterly to the northwest corner of this lot and then follows the lot line along the northern boundary of this lot. to the northwestern corner of lot 057, where it turns northeasterly and follows the northern boundary of lot 057. The boundary crosses Camp street and follows the northern boundary of lot 137 to the northeast corner of the lot. It then proceeds north along the western boundary of lot 168 to the northwest corner of the lot. It then follows the northern boundaries for lots 168, 174, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280 and 281 to the northeast corner of lot 281, turning south and following the eastern boundary of lot 281 to Doyle Avenue. It proceeds southwesterly along Doyle Avenue, turning south to meet the northeast corner of lot 262 and continue along the eastern boundaries of lots 262, 283, 367 and 289 to the southeast corner of lot 289. It then continues southwesterly along the boundaries of lots 289, 243, 242, 371, 240, 239, 238, 237, 236, 235 and 234 to the southwest corner of lot 234. It continues northwesterly along the lot line to the northwest corner of lot 234 and continues across Doyle Avenue to lot 137, continuing across Camp Street to the southeast corner of lot 057. It turns southwest along the eastern boundaries of lots 229 and 230 to the southeast corner of lot 230, turning to the southwest to follow the southern boundaries of lots 230, 245, and 228. It continues northwesterly along the lot line to the northwest corner of lot 228, turning southwesterly along Doyle Avenue to the northeast corner of lot 223. It then proceeds southeasterly to the southeast corner of plat 8 lot 223 and then turns southwesterly and follows the southern boundaries of lots 223, 222, 221, 220, 219, 218, 217, 216, 215, 214, 213, and 212 to the southwest corner of lot 212. It turns northwesterly to follow the western boundary of lot 212, continuing across Doyle Avenue to lot 252. It then follows the southern boundaries of lots 252, 226, 405, 056, 443 and 058 along Doyle Avenue westerly to the southwest

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 10 Page 10.3

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corner of lot 058 where the boundary turns northeast along lot 058 to return to the point of origin at the northwest corner of this lot. In 1908, the Dexter Commission began to sell lots it had been leasing, perhaps to increase the capital of the Dexter Donation. Many of the lots were sold during the 1920's and the City sold the last lot to a private owner in 1986.

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary has been drawn to encompass the concentration of mid to late nineteenth century residential structures along Doyle Avenue between North Main Street and Hope Street. These major streets have historically marked the western and eastern boundaries of the neighborhood.

The eastern end of Doyle Avenue, from Hope Street to Elmgrove Avenue, was developed later and larger lots were platted, creating a different streetscape from the part of Doyle Avenue developed earlier. To the north of the district, Pleasant Street was not developed to any extent until after 1895. Areas south and west of the district bear little resemblance to their appearance at the end of the nineteenth century. The University Heights housing complex encompasses Bacon Street, formerly to the south of Doyle Avenue, and the University Heights Shopping Center, create a visual contrast with the residences along Doyle Avenue.

There are five areas where demolition has interrupted the building pattern; these have been excluded from the district. The first is on the south side of Doyle Avenue from Hope Street to Proctor Place. Here, a YMCA and its parking lot replace several earlier houses. Secondly, the southeast corner of Doyle Avenue and Camp Street has been cleared of two houses and planted as a park connected to the Martin Luther King, Jr., Elementary School to the south of the district. Moving westward, the East Side Apartments on the south side of Doyle replace the Public School, while opposite those on the north side a late twentieth century apartment complex at 94-98 Doyle replace two buildings. Lastly, the University Heights Shopping Center, at the southeast corner of Doyle and South Main Street, creates an open area at the western terminus of the district. In addition to buildings on Doyle Avenue, the district includes seven buildings which have

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 10.4

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a strong visual connection to Doyle Avenue, including 1, 3, and 5 Proctor Place, 62-64, 70 and 73 Camp Street and 653 North Main Street.