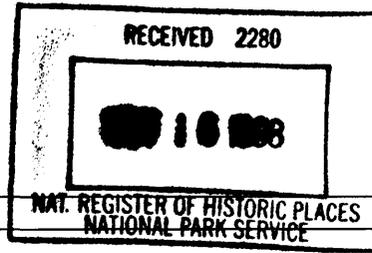


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



1523

1. Name of Property

historic name: St. Paul Avenue Historic District  
other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: 751-53 to 775-77 St. Paul Avenue, and 558 Boyd Street NA not for publication  
city or town: Memphis N/A vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Shelby code 157 zip code 38126

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Herbert L. Hays* 11/10/98  
Signature of certifying official Deputy SHPO, Tenn. Historical Comm.) Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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):

*Boyer* Signature of the Keeper  
*Edson A. Beall* Date of Action 12.17.98

**St. Paul Avenue Historic District**  
Name of Property

**Memphis, Shelby Co., TN**  
County and State

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property:** private

**Number of Resources within Property:**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

**Category of Property:** district

Contributing	Noncontributing	
11	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
11	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:** N/A

Historic Residential Resources of Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling  
DOMESTIC multiple dwelling

**Current Functions:** DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling  
DOMESTIC multiple dwelling

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:**

Colonial Revival  
Craftsman  
Queen Anne

Other Description: double shotgun

**Materials**

foundation BRICK  
roof ASPHALT SHINGLES  
walls WOOD/weatherboard  
other BRICK/porch piers

**Narrative Description**

See continuation sheets.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

**Areas of Significance**

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

ARCHITECTURE  
COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

**Period of Significance**

Ca. 1895 to ca. 1923

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Persons**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Criteria Considerations** N/A

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

See continuation sheets.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

**Bibliography**

See continuation sheet.

**Previous Documentation on File (NPS):** N/A

- 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  
# \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository:  
Tennessee Historical Commission



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### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The St. Paul Avenue Historic District is a small group of nine double-shotguns and two larger single family houses developed along St. Paul Avenue and Boyd Street between ca. 1890 and ca. 1923 to the west of Walnut Street in the City of Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee.

The resources in the district were created by two separate waves of development, one overlaying the next, that occurred over roughly a forty year span of time. As a result, the characteristics in evidence in the district today range widely between those created during its first phase of development, ca. 1890-ca. 1915, and those of the second phase, in 1923.

The original McCadden (Plat Book 2: 36; June 23, 1888) and McGrath (R 81: 338; n. d.) subdivisions had lot sizes ranging from 49' to 80' in frontage, with depths of 120 to 150 feet, running to rear alleys in mid-block. Houses were set back from the street 25 to 35 feet, with side yard setbacks ranging from 20 to 30 feet. There are two houses in the district which reflect these development characteristics, located at 764 St. Paul Avenue and 588 Boyd Avenue.

The original lot size and setback characteristics in the district changed as the area changed from primarily single-family to multi-family use. Though the area was never re-subdivided, unsold lots were combined and developed for multi-family use, to the extent allowable by building regulation within the subdivision framework. The new duplex units developed ca. 1910 (no longer extant) and those developed in 1923 redefined the setting, with front yard setbacks of only 10 feet, and side yard setbacks of approximately 7 to 10 feet.

The setting of the district is characterized by the general lack of street trees, due in part to the closeness of the duplex residences to the street. The few ornamental trees and plants in evidence surround the two formerly single-family properties in the district; the double-shotguns have been landscaped with occasional individual plantings of low ornamental shrubs and flowers.

Because it is a small area with an unusual development history, the district has only a few architectural styles and house types. Architectural styles include the Queen Anne, the Colonial Revival, and the Craftsman. Forms of traditional house types existing in the district include the Queen Anne house, the four-square, and the double-shotgun. The two larger houses in the district may be the work of prominent local architects or builders, their identity is not known. The same is true for the builder of the double-shotgun houses.

An inventory of the buildings contained within the district follows. Buildings constructed during the period of the district's significance which retain their architectural integrity are considered to contribute to its historic character and are labeled (C). Buildings which were constructed after the

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period of the district's significance or which have been so altered as to have lost their architectural character do not contribute to the significance of the district and are labeled (NC).

**INVENTORY OF PROPERTIES**

**Boyd Street**

01 558 Boyd Street (C) Two-story, three-bay, brick-veneered four-square with Colonial Revival influence, built ca. 1910-15. Complex hip and gable roof with box cornice and a gable-front dormer with a Palladian window, covered with asphalt shingles. Windows are 1/1 double-hung sashes, some in groups of two or three. Full-width, hip-roofed porch supported by columns with Scamozzi capitals, raised on cast stone bases. Entrance contains a six-panel replacement door surrounded by replacement transom and sidelights.

Garage/quarters, ca. 1910-15 and altered ca. 1955-60. Two-story, frame, three-bay, gable and shed roofs, asphalt shingles, Masonite siding, 1-1 sliding metal frame windows. (NC)

**St. Paul Avenue**

02 751-753 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Colonial Revival influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with radius-edge siding. Windows are 1/1 metal frame replacements. Full-width, double-gable-front porch supported by columns with Doric capitals. Entrances contain single-light replacement doors.

03 755-75 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Craftsman influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with a jerkinhead and exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with radius-edge siding. Windows are 1/1 metal frame replacements. Two, one-bay, gable-front porches supported by box columns raised on brick bases. Entrances contain single-light replacement doors.

04 759-761 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Craftsman influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with a jerkinhead and exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with radius-edge siding. Windows are 2/2 double-hung sashes and 1/1 metal frame replacements. Full-width, hip-roofed porch supported by box columns raised on brick bases. Entrances contain single-light replacement doors.

05 763-765 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Craftsman influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with a jerkinhead and exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with radius-edge siding. Windows are 2/2 and 1/1 metal frame replacements. Full-width, hip-roofed porch supported by box columns raised on brick bases. Entrances contain single-light replacement doors.

06 764 St. Paul Avenue (C) Two-story, four-bay, frame homestead house with Queen Anne influence, built ca. 1890-95. Complex gable and hip roof with box cornice, covered with asphalt shingles. Gable ends are enclosed and contain scalloped shingle siding. Exterior walls are covered with ogee-edged weatherboard siding. Windows are 1/1 double-hung sashes. Full-width, L-plan porch supported by turned posts with turned dowel frieze and scroll sawn brackets. Entrance contains a solid replacement door topped with a single-light transom.

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07 767-769 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Craftsman influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with a jerkinhead and exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with radius-edge siding. Windows are 1/1 double-hung sashes. Full-width, gable-front and hip-roofed porch supported by box columns raised on brick bases. Entrances contain single-light replacement doors.

08 770-772 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Craftsman influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with wide beveled siding. Windows are 6/1 double-hung sashes. Full-width, double-gable front porch supported by brick piers. Entrances contain a three-light replacement door and a multi-light door.

09 771-773 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Craftsman influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with radius-edge siding. Windows are Craftsman multi-light/1 double-hung sashes. Full-width, double-gable-front porch supported by box columns on raised brick bases. Entrances contain single-light replacement doors.

10 774-776 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Craftsman influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with wide beveled siding. Windows are Craftsman 3/1 double-hung sashes, some in pairs. Full-width, gable and hip-roofed porch supported by brick piers. Entrances contain single-light replacement doors.

11 775-777 St. Paul Avenue (C) One-story, four-bay, frame double-shotgun with Craftsman influence, built ca. 1920-25. Gable-front roof with a jerkinhead and exposed rafter tails, covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with radius-edge siding. Windows are 2/2 metal frame replacements, some in pairs. Full-width, gable and hip-roofed porch supported by box columns raised on brick bases. Entrances contain single-light replacement doors.

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### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The St. Paul Avenue Historic District is being nominated under criterion C in the area of architecture for its significant collection of double shotgun houses, and under criterion A in the area of community planning and development for its ability to demonstrate patterns in the community planning and development and redevelopment of Memphis nineteenth and twentieth century neighborhoods. The district is nominated under the registration requirements for residential properties set forth in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for Historic Residential Resources of Memphis, Shelby County, TN.

Just before the turn of the twentieth century in Memphis, Walnut Street and East Street lay at the eastern edges of the incorporated limits of the city, and the residential areas developed near the eastern limit were some of its most fashionable at that time. When its development began after 1888, the St. Paul Historic District was located at the extreme edge of the city. By 1895, the Boyd Street portion of the district was being filled with new houses, but the block of St. Paul and Walnut was not, having been developed with only one house (Polk 1895). It appears that over the next ten years, that this "edge" area of Memphis, like others during its time, was quickly surpassed by newer, more fashionable and less expensive areas for development lying to the east of the district. The "leap-frog" effect left earlier areas still not built-out, as newer areas replaced older ones in the real estate dynamics of the times.

A progressive political movement began in Memphis that gained a following among the business community in the mid-1890s; it advocated a cooperative agenda of social reform and economic development, championed by the "Committee of One Hundred," a coalition of business and social reformers. The Committee presented an agenda for the city election of 1897 called "The Greater Memphis Movement," an agenda which included the annexation of more than seven square miles of largely undeveloped suburban territory. The development of new, eastern suburbs was a pressing need, partly due to a period of rapid economic growth led by new industries. Housing was desperately needed to serve a city that would double in population between 1890 and 1900, and then double again by 1930 (Harkins 1982: 103-04).

The election of 1897 brought John J. Williams to the Mayor's office, and with him came the implementation of the agenda of the Greater Memphis Movement. The extension of the city boundaries became a reality in 1899, more than quadrupling its area.

The St. Paul Historic District stands as evidence of the transition between the "old" suburbs and the "new" at the turn of the twentieth century, and in a sense, its development as a single family subdivision was compromised by the Greater Memphis Movement and its outcomes. The middle and

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upper-income housing areas developed in the nineteenth century to the west of Walnut Street were quickly diminished in importance by new eastern subdivisions such as Annesdale-Snowden (NR 10/25/1979), Annesdale Park (NR 12/22/1978), Belvedere (Central Gardens, NR 9/9/1982). In turn, industrial development began to appear along the older railroad corridors like the Southern Railroad (former Memphis & Charleston Railroad), located only two blocks away from the St. Paul district. Nearby industries such as the Ford Motor Company assembly plant, constructed on Union Avenue between 1912 and 1915, drove demand for the development of worker housing within walking distance from the place of work.

Before ca. 1910, the area of the St. Paul Historic District was sparsely developed, with only one single family house on the street between Boyd and Walnut. Boyd Street, on the other hand, was nearly built-out with single-family dwellings, with the exception of a vacant lot at St. Paul and Boyd which remains vacant today. By 1915, however, change had begun on St. Paul Street with the development of three double shotguns (no longer extant) at 780, 782 and 784 St. Paul Street. This character remained constant until 1923, when the construction of all of the existing double shotguns was carried out by Leo Feder, Sr. The speculative development filled quickly with Anglo-American tenants, who worked as carpenters, machinists, salesmen and factory workers. The large house at 764 St. Paul Street remained in single family use at this time, as did the houses along Boyd Street.

The double-shotguns developed on St. Paul Avenue are good examples of pattern architecture, in that their general character and floor plans were constant from one pair of units to the next. However, differing treatments of roofs, window sashes, porch configurations and other elements impart variety to individual units of the assemblage. "Individualized" treatments of rental housing was not a standard practice among speculative developers. The developer's motivation for modifying the architectural treatments from one duplex to the next is not known.

In general terms, the development of single and double shotgun houses as a housing type can be traced to as early as ca. 1865 in Memphis (Hopkins 1997). The earliest examples were built speculatively as primarily owner-occupied structures, either as single units or in groups of perhaps as many as four or five. However, the shotgun was "re-invented" as a form of worker housing beginning ca. 1890 with the immigration of large numbers of former rural farm workers to the cities and towns of the South. Substantial numbers of shotgun houses, and even whole shotgun neighborhoods were developed in Memphis to provide inexpensive rental housing for workers and their families. These developments in Memphis were rarely, if ever associated with one industrial concern as "company housing", but were purely speculative in origin. While many thousands of shotgun houses once stood in Memphis, the municipal initiatives for "slum clearance" and urban renewal have left only a very few of these developments in place, the St. Paul district being one example, along with the

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Delmar-Lema Historic District (NR 3/12/1998) and the Richmond Street shotgun area, among others scattered around the city.

The general area surrounding the St. Paul Historic District saw a third period of dramatic change during the Depression era that continued in the decades following World War Two. Economic mobility afforded to working Anglo-Americans was generally not available to working African-Americans in the segregated South; and the single-family subdivisions developed in the 1950s that were affordable to working class Anglo-Americans excluded African-Americans. The double shotguns of the district entirely changed in the decade from ca. 1935 to 1945 to occupancy by African-Americans as the Anglo-Americans left the area for new housing opportunities in the eastern suburbs. Though many of the older, large single-family houses in the area were altered for use as boarding houses, the two in the St. Paul district appear to have remained in single-family occupancy, though occupied by tenants instead of owners.

The St. Paul Historic District remains today as a significant record of two major eras in the history of residential development in Memphis, each era represented in the district by particularly distinctive architectural responses to the dynamic social and economic patterns of their respective times. The district remains as a well-preserved record of changing patterns of real estate economics in Memphis and their effect on community development within the period of significance. The two larger houses of the district remain as particularly notable examples of middle class, single-family houses from the period prior to ca. 1910 when this district was developed for single-family housing, while the double-shotgun cottages are themselves notable examples of pattern housing developed when the demand for worker housing in this area of Memphis superseded single-family use.

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### **GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

#### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The property in nomination comprises all of the land in the McAdden Subdivision and McGrath Subdivision identified as parcels 2 to 6 in Block 26, and part of parcel 1 in Block 27, located in Ward 1 of the City of Memphis, as delineated on a portion of Shelby County Tax Map H-8 in heavy black line attached to this nomination.

#### **Boundary Justification**

The property in nomination comprises the largest area of contiguous properties which represent and support the historic housing development patterns of St. Paul Avenue and Boyd Street during the period of significance of ca. 1895 to 1923.

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### **PHOTOGRAPH LIST**

Photographs by: John L. Hopkins

Date: June 1998

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission

Photograph #1 of 6: View of 558 Boyd Street, looking northeast.

Photograph #2 of 6: View of the south side of St. Paul Avenue, looking southeast from 751-753 St. Paul Avenue.

Photograph #3 of 6: View of 751-753 St. Paul Avenue, looking south.

Photograph #4 of 6: View of 767-769 St. Paul Avenue, looking south.

Photograph #5 of 6: View of 764 St. Paul Avenue, looking north.

Photograph #6 of 6: View of 770 - 772 and 774-776 St. Paul Avenue, looking north.

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## PROPERTY OWNERS

558 Boyd Street: Herman Williamson

751-753 St. Paul to 755-777 St. Paul Avenue: Harold S. Buehler, Sr.  
Buehler Enterprises  
2531 Broad Avenue  
Memphis, Tennessee 38112

764 St. Paul Avenue: Bob Patterson, Trustee  
Shelby County, Tennessee  
P. O. Box 2751  
Memphis, TN 38101-2751

