NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8/86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 2/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Form (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 on a letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Garden Homes Historic District

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: various -- see text — N/A not for publication

city, town: Milwaukee — N/A vicinity

state: Wisconsin code: WI county: Milwaukee code: 079 zip code: 53209

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
X private	___ building(s)	93	___ buildings
___ public-Local	X district	1	___ sites
___ public-State	___ site	___	___ structures
___ public-Federal	___ structure	___	___ objects
	___ object	94	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: None

No. 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 X 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 X meets ___does not meet the National Register criteria. ___See continuation sheet.

x _____ 3/15/90

Signature of certifying official — Date

State Historic Preservation Officer- WI

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 — Beth Boland — 5/4/90

___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 — Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/Single Dwelling	Domestic/Single Dwelling
Landscape/Park	Landscape/Park
Domestic/Multiple Dwelling	Domestic/Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)	
	foundation	concrete
Colonial Revival	walls	stucco
		aluminum
	roof	asphalt
	other	wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Description

The Garden Homes Historic District, the nation's first municipally-sponsored, community-owned housing project was built between 1921 and 1923 on approximately 29 acres of flat land located four and one-half miles northwest of the city's central business district. The district, which is laid out in a fan-like subdivision of curving streets, has the character of a small village with two-story, stuccoed cottages located behind small grass lawns on irregularly-shaped lots about 40 by 120 feet in dimension. Of the 93 freestanding buildings contained in the district, eleven were originally built as two-story, two-unit double houses, while the rest were detached, single-family, five- and six-room, two-story houses. An integral part of the subdivision is Garden Homes Park, a broad, boulevard-like greenspace that separates the north- and southbound lanes of North Twenty-sixth Street between West Atkinson Avenue and West Port Sunlight Way.

Conceptually, the Garden Homes development appears to have been based primarily on the "garden city" of Letchworth, England, which was begun in 1903 as a major experiment in cooperatively-owned, working-class housing set in a carefully planned environment. Originally the streets of the Garden Homes Historic District were named after famous English examples of so-called "garden city" and "garden suburb" planning: Ealing, Hampstead, Port Sunlight, Bourneville, and Letchworth.

General Description

The Garden Homes Historic District is built-up with simply-composed, rectangular, two-story, front-gabled and side-gabled cottages that local architect William Schuchardt designed in a simplified Colonial Revival style. The major architectural feature used to differentiate the otherwise similar boxy stucco houses from one another is the one-story, covered entry porch that typically is elevated four steps above grade. All of the houses have raised basements constructed of either concrete block (used during construction in the winter) or poured concrete (used during warm weather). The exteriors of the houses were originally clad with cream-colored stucco with green or red asphalt shingle roofs. The modest detailing common to all of the houses included gable returns trimmed with crown molding, six-panel entry doors, six-over-six double-hung windows, and decorative window shutters on all but the rear elevations.

X See Continuation Sheets

A patented new building material called flaxolinum keyboard sheathing was used as an underlayment for the stucco exteriors. The material is composed of chemically-treated flax straw, seven-eighths-of-an-inch thick, with molded keyways to hold the stucco applied over it. The sheathing was touted as a superior insulator and was a labor-saver compared with the wood lath underlayment traditionally used for stucco.

Another innovative construction feature designed to increase energy efficiency was the use of spruce wood fiber insulation board, one-half inch thick for the interior wall and ceiling sheathing. It was finished with plaster veneer.

Originally the houses were centrally heated with coal/wood-burning basement furnaces that have been gradually replaced over the years with natural gas or oil-fired heating plants.

The houses were built according to nine basic exterior designs which were further varied by reversing the floor plans and/or the addition of a front gable to side-gabled models. The principal elevation of each house faces the street on which it is located. According to the architect's original drawings, the three variations of the five-room, two-bedroom model were denoted "5A, 5B, and 5F." The six variations of the six-room, three-bedroom model were simply denoted "6A, 6B, 6D, 6F, 6G, and 6H." A total of seven, five-room cottages were built, and the remainder of the 94 buildings are three-bedroom, six-room cottages. Ten of the 11, two-unit rowhouses were created by simply butting together two standard single family cottage plans. The six-room, three-bedroom models contain about 1,100 square feet and measure approximately 23' x 25' overall in plan. The five-room, two-bedroom model contains about 950 square feet and measure about 20' x 25' overall in plan.

Most of the cottages have front entries, but two models have side entries and two other models have both front and side entries that each lead to the first floor living room. Following is a description of the original appearance of each of the nine basic cottage designs in the Garden Homes district.

Model 6A is a two-story, front-gabled cottage that features a small, gabled front entry porch with an elliptically-arched ceiling. The porch roof rests on groupings of three square wooden posts at each outside corner, and the railing is composed of simple, rectangular wooden balusters. Flanking the porch are paired double-hung sash windows. The fenestration of the second story consists of two symmetrically paired double-hung windows. A louvered attic vent is centered in the gable. The other elevations are simply composed featuring windows and doors randomly placed to respond to interior needs.

Model 5A is a narrower, two-bedroom version of Model 6A described above. The major exterior difference between the two models is that the main elevation of Model 5A has two single double-hung windows on the second story rather than two sets of paired windows.

Model 6B is a two-styory, symmetrically-composed, side-gabled cottage featuring a large, flat-roofed front porch that stretches across much of the facade, sheltering a central front entry door flanked by two double-hung windows. A grouping of three square wooden posts supporting the porch roof at each outside corner is trimmed with a wooden latticework. The perimeter of the porch roof is trimmed with a cross-buck design wood railing. The fenestration of the second story consists of two bays of paired, double-hung windows trimmed with board shutters. The other elevations are simply composed of randomly-placed windows and a door that respond to interior needs.

Model 5B is a narrower, two-bedroom version of Model 6B described above. The only significant exterior difference between the two models is that Model 5B has only two double-hung windows on the second story of the main elevation rather than the paired windows found on the larger house, Model 6B.

Model 6D is a two-story, side-gabled, side-entry cottage. The first story of the main elevation facing the street features a grouping of three sash windows surmounted with a Palladian-like, semicircular wooden moulding. The second story features two regularly-spaced bays of paired, double-hung windows. The main entry, located on the front half of the side elevation features a porch identical to the one already described under Model 6A. The entry is balanced by a single double-hung window on the rear half of the elevation. Fenestration on the second floor consists of two, regularly-spaced double-hung windows. The other elevations are simply composed and feature randomly-placed windows that respond to interior needs.

Model 6F, a two-story, side-gabled unit, is unusual in that it features two prominent entry porches -- one each on the front and side -- that both lead to the living room. The first story of the elevation facing the street has a cantilevered, shed-roofed porch hood featuring a central gable with an elliptically-arched ceiling. The hood stretches across the entire facade, sheltering the central entry door and the two flanking double-hung windows. The second story features two sets of paired, double-hung windows. The side elevation features an entry porch identical to the one described under Model 6D. The entry porch is flanked by a single double-hung window on the rear half of the elevation and the second story features two regularly-spaced double-hung windows.

Model 5F, a two-story, side gabled, two-bedroom cottage, is nearly identical to Model 6F, described above, except for a minor variation in the second story fenes-tration: The main elevation of Model 5F, which is three feet narrower than the larger model, is fenestrated on the second story with a narrow, central, four-over-four double-hung window flanked by two six-over-six double-hung windows.

Model 6G, a two-story, side gabled cottage that typically features a side-entry. The main elevation facing the street is symmetrically composed of two basement sash windows and two bays of paired, double-hung sash windows on both the first and second stories. The main entry porch, identical to the one already described under Model 6B, is located on the front half of the side elevation. The porch is balanced by a single double-hung window located on the rear half of the elevation. The second story features two regularly-placed, double-hung windows. The other elevations are simply composed and feature randomly placed windows that respond to interior needs.

Model 6H is a two-story, side-gabled cottage that features a small shed-roofed entry porch on one half of the front elevation flanked by a set of paired, double-hung windows. On the second story a single double-hung window is located above the front door. The pair of double-hung windows on the second story is located directly above the identical windows on the first story.

Each cottage was built with the same basic floor plan which the architect occasionally used in a reverse form for some cottages. The interior dimensions of a typical six-room cottage measuring 22'6" x 24'6" overall in plan are:

Living room:	19'9" x 12'7"
Dining room:	11'11" x 11'3"
Kitchen	10' x 10'
Bedrooms:	12'6" x 11'8"
	11'8" x 10'6"
	10'10" x 8'10"
Bathroom:	9' x 7'

The five-room, two-bedroom cottage plan is three feet narrower, and most of the room dimensions are correspondingly smaller.

Each cottage is entered from a prominent front or side porch that opens to the living room, the largest room in the house, which accounts for about

half of the floor space on the first story. An L-shaped staircase to the second floor and a closet are located on the side wall of the living room. The two other principal first floor rooms located in the rear half of the cottage are a dining room adjacent to the living room and a kitchen. A side hall in the middle of the cottage that buffers the living room from the kitchen contains steps to the basement and a niche that originally was intended to house an ice box or refrigerator. The second floor rooms, a bathroom, and two or three bedrooms (depending on the model) are reached by means of an L-shaped staircase from the living room and are arranged around a central hall. All of the rooms in the cottages were finished with maple floors.

Over the years various alterations have been made to the exteriors of the houses. These principally have involved changes to the cladding material, the porches and the construction of rear additions. At a fairly early date, the innovative stucco system used to clad the exteriors began to fail and many of the houses are now clad in asbestos, aluminum or vinyl siding. In some cases the addition of siding has resulted in the loss of decorative elements such as the Palladian-like curved molding over the windows on cottage type 6D. Quite a number of houses have had the open porches enclosed to form a vestibule, a useful feature in a cold climate like Milwaukee where the front door opens directly into the living room. On the houses that originally had two porches off the living room, many have had one removed or else enclosed to form a small room. A few of the houses have had additions made to the rear. Generally, however, the houses in the district have maintained a fair measure of their original architectural integrity.

Despite cosmetic alterations, all 93 original cottages are still recognizable as part of a unified residential district that differs in character from the surrounding neighborhoods. All of the original cottages are designated contributing structures because collectively they represent the nation's first municipally-sponsored housing cooperative.

The following inventory of the buildings in the district contains the architect's original model numbers that correspond with the exterior descriptions above, the names of the original tenants, and a brief description of the present condition of the buildings and park. Only the original cottages in the district are included in the inventory. Small, non-original, utilitarian outbuildings such as garages and storage sheds that have been constructed in many backyards throughout the Garden Homes project over the years are not counted in the inventory because they do not contribute to either the historical or architectural significance of the district.

Descriptions of Individual Homes

N. 25th St.

Double-House
4316 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — Benedict Bovee
4322 N. 25th St. - Model 6G — Henry C. Hengstler

A juxtaposition of two basic cottage plans created this typical double house located on a prominent corner lot at the southwest corner of the subdivision. A masonry fire wall extending from the basement to the roof line separates the two frame units and is typical of the construction of all the project's double-houses. The main entry porches on both units have been enclosed, and the entire building is aluminum-sided.

Double-House
4321 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Mrs. Lydia Seignewartin
4327 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Erwin A. Wirth

This well-maintained double-house has been aluminum-sided, and the original side entry porches have been enclosed.

4330 N. 25th St. - Model 6H — William F. Stibor

This well-maintained cottage has been altered over the years with a new enclosed front porch built in 1936 and with aluminum siding added still later.

4333 N. 25th St. - Model 6A, reverse floor plan. — Reinhard Kunz

Aluminum siding was installed in 1960. Otherwise, the exterior appears intact.

4334 N. 25th St. - Model 6F with front gable — William Schaeffer

In 1932 a large exterior brick chimney for a living room fireplace was built in place of the original central front entry door, and the side entry porch was removed and replaced with a new enclosed porch. A small rear, one-story addition to the kitchen was built in 1941, and later the cottage was aluminum-sided.

4338 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — George Labeau

The original Palladian style, wooden, semicircular molding over the grouping of three windows on the first story of the main elevation was probably removed when the house was aluminum-sided. The original side entry porch has been enclosed.

4339 N. 25th St. - Model 6F with front gable, reverse plan. — Edward Stanack

The original shed-roofed front porch has been completely removed, and the front entry door was replaced with a window. The original gabled side entrance was rebuilt and enclosed, and the entire house has been aluminum-sided.

4343 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — William O. Staab

Aluminum siding was installed in 1972, and the original flat-roofed front porch was replaced with a new one.

4344 N. 25th St. - Model 6A — Joseph Unrath

The early failure of the stucco exterior prompted its removal and replacement in 1941 with the present asphalt siding. The original front porch was enclosed at the same time. Since then, apparently no additional exterior alterations have been made.

4349 N. 25th St. - Model 6F, reverse floor plan. — Paul Muencheberg

Typical of an alteration made to several of the project's dual-entrance models, the original covered front porch of this cottage has been completely removed, and the front entry door has been replaced with a window. The original side porch has been enclosed, and the exterior has been aluminum-sided.

4350 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — Richard T. Weckwerth

This cottage is particularly well-preserved and retains its original stucco, fenestration and front porch. A rear, one-story addition built in 1967 is not immediately visible from the street.

4353 N. 25th St. - Model 6D, — Herbert J. Hillborn

This well-maintained cottage has been aluminum-sided, but it retains its original side entry porch.

4356 N. 25th St. - Model 6F with front gable — Clarence O. Haeberle

This side-gable cottage has been aluminum-sided, but it is otherwise intact on the exterior.

4359 N. 25th St. - Model 6F, with front gable, reverse plan. — Marshall M. Whaling

Extensive alterations to this house include the complete removal of the original covered front porch and the replacement of the front entry door with a window. The house was aluminum-sided except for a dado of permastone veneer below the first story windows on the main elevation. The original gabled side porch on the south elevation was rebuilt and enclosed, and features a walk-out second-story porch. The second story porch door replaces the original double-hung window at that location.

4360-62 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — John M. Work

Extensive alterations have been made to this cottage beginning in 1940 when it was converted to a duplex and a large rear, two-story addition was built. At the same time a new front entry door was cut into the north half of the front elevation. The prominent Palladian-style hood molding over the central grouping of windows on the first story of the main elevation was probably removed when the house was aluminum-sided.

4365 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — Joseph Leibl

The exterior has been aluminum-sided, and the original wooden porch posts have been replaced with wrought iron uprights.

4366 N. 25th St. - Model 6H — Mrs. Josephine McFarlin

Typical of many cottages in the district, the exterior has been aluminum-sided, and the original front porch has been enclosed.

4370 N. 25th St. - Model 5A — Edwin D. Thiele

This is the best-preserved Model 5A cottage in the district featuring its original stucco, fenestration and front porch. No significant exterior alterations are visible.

4371 N. 25th St. - Model 6A, reverse floor plan. — Herman P. Griep

Other than the relatively minor alteration of enclosing the original front porch, the exterior of this cottage is in nearly original condition and is well-maintained.

4374-74A N. 25th St. - Model 6H — Altert G. Ohm

In 1931 extensive alterations were made to this cottage to convert it to a duplex. A large rear addition and a new front porch with a walk-out second story deck were built. The northernmost sash window on the second story of the main elevation was replaced with a porch door. More recently, the building was aluminum-sided.

Double-House
4377 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Jacob Hahn
4383 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Arthur M. Werba

This double-house is the symmetrical combination of two Model 6D cottages. The exterior is well-preserved and retains its original stucco and fenestration. The original side porches have been enclosed and stuccoed to match the rest of the building. According to building permits, by 1953 the unit addressed at 4383 N. 25th St. had been converted to a duplex.

4378 N. 25th St. - Model 5F — Jacob Brower

This is the best-preserved of the three model 5F cottages built in the district. The exterior retains its original stucco, fenestration, and front porch.

Double house
4384 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — Herman Peterson
2465 W. Congress - Model 6G — Glenwood H. Hubert

Located on a corner lot, this double-house has been aluminum-sided, but retains its original porches and fenestration.

Double-House
4401 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — Alfred L. Gumb
4407 N. 25th St. - Model 6G, reverse floor plan — Ray Gerhard

A few alterations have been made to this otherwise well-preserved double-house which retains its original stucco and fenestration. The original entry porch on the side of the unit addressed at 4401 N. 25th St. was enclosed and stuccoed, and the hip-roofed front porch of the other unit is a replacement for the flat-roofed original one.

4402 N. 25th St. - Model 6F — Alois Marshalek

The exterior has been aluminum-sided, and the side entry porch is a shed-roofed replacement for the gabled, original one.

4408 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — George Murphy

Aluminum siding was installed in 1978, and the original flat-roofed entry porch has been enclosed.

4414 N. 25th St. - Model 6F — Carl A. Luedke

This cottage retains its original front porch, but the exterior has been aluminum-sided.

4415 N. 25th St. - Model 6F, with front gable, reverse floor plan. — Homer Morrissette

In 1955 the original shed-roofed front porch was completely removed, and the central front door was replaced with a window. Apparently at the same time the cottage was aluminum-sided, and the original side porch was enclosed.

4419 N. 25th St. - Model 6H, reverse floor plan. — John C. Kaap

This is the district's best-preserved Model 6H cottage. The well-maintained exterior appears to be in original condition. The original, two-board wooden window shutters have been removed.

4420 N. 25th St. - Model 6H — Francis J. Simon

This well-preserved cottage retains its original stucco exterior and fenestration. The only significant exterior alteration appears to be the replacement of the original wooden porch posts with modern wrought iron columns.

4423 N. 25th St. - Model 6D, reverse floor plan. — Adolph C. Hennrich

The exterior is aluminum-sided, and the side porch is an enclosed replacement for the original one.

4424 N. 25th St. - Model 6F with front gable — Walter O. Kuehn

The exterior has been aluminum-sided.

4428 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Emil Prednik

In 1936 the original side porch was removed and replaced with an enclosed one. Recently the cottage was aluminum-sided.

4431 N. 25th St. - Model 6F with front gable. — Charles Rell

This cottage has been aluminum-sided, but is otherwise unaltered and well-maintained.

4434 N. 25th St. - Model 6A — J. C. Wood

The exterior has been aluminum-sided, and the original front porch has been removed.

Double-House
4437 N. 25th St. - Model 5B — Robert H. Dunn
4441 N. 25th St. - Model 6G — Albert R. Kasten

This is the district's only double-house formed by combining a five-room, two-bedroom cottage and a six-room, three-bedroom cottage. The exterior is well-preserved, but the original side porch of the north, six-room unit was enclosed and stuccoed, and the original flat-roofed front porch of the five-room unit was removed.

4440 N. 25th St. - Model 6F with front gable — Walter J. Arimond

This cottage has been aluminum-sided, but otherwise retains its historic character including the original porch and fenestration.

4444 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Walter Barr

The original stucco exterior has been covered with asphalt siding. The original gabled side porch has been enclosed, and the Palladian style hood molding over the front windows has been removed.

4450 N. 25th St. - Model 6A — William H. Niemann

The exterior has been aluminum-sided, and the original gabled front porch has been enclosed.

4453 N. 25th St. - Model 6F with front gable. — Alfred J. Tank

Aluminum-siding covers the original stucco, but the exterior is otherwise unaltered and well-maintained.

4456 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — George B. Niemann

This is a fine, nearly intact example of an original Garden Homes cottage. The stucco appears to be in good condition. A few minor modifications have been made to the wood trim on the front porch.

4457 N. 25th St. - Model 6D, reverse floor plan. — Christian Anderson

Early problems with the stucco veneer forced its complete removal and replacement with the present asphalt shingle siding. The cottage retains its original decorative wooden window shutters. The original front porch has been enclosed and stuccoed in a well-planned, sensitive manner and blends well with the historic character of the house.

4460 N. 25th St. - Model 6F with front gable — Frank C. Berling

A rear one-story kitchen addition, 9 1/2' x 11' in plan, was built in 1957. The original front porch roof has been removed, and the exterior is now aluminum-sided.

4465 N. 25th St. - Model 6A reverse floor plan. — Robert C. Michaelsen

Well-preserved and well-maintained, this cottage retains its original stucco and decorative, wooden, two-board window shutters. The front porch was enclosed and stuccoed in a well-planned, sensitive manner and blends well with the historic character of the house.

4466 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Mrs. Margaret A. Barr

This cottage retains nearly all of its historic exterior character, featuring original stucco and fenestration. The side porch has been enclosed and stuccoed to match the rest of the house.

4471 N. 25th St. - Model 6B — Edgar J. Seignemartin

This is a fine example of a nearly intact Model 6B cottage which retains its original stucco and fenestration and window shutters. The wooden structural members supporting the porch roof have been replaced with wrought iron.

4472 N. 25th St. - Model 6A — Frank Huber & Roland H. Lamboy

The minor alterations to this otherwise intact cottage include modern metal awnings installed at the windows on the main elevation, and the replacement of the original wooden posts that supported the porch roof with modern wrought iron substitutes.

Double-House
4476 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Peter J. Ferguson
4482 N. 25th St. - Model 6D — Moody M. Good

This is one of the best-preserved double-houses in the district. The stuccoed exterior appears to be intact. The original wooden posts supporting the porch roofs have been replaced with modern wrought iron uprights.

4477 N. 25th St. - Model 6A — Joseph J. Johann

Except for the fact that the original, small, gabled front porch has been enclosed and stuccoed, the exterior of this cottage appears to be in nearly original condition.

4481 N. 25th St. - Model 6D, reverse floor plan. Archibald J. Sehr

This is one of the best-preserved Model 6D cottages in the district with its distinctive semicircular wooden molding above the central bay of three double-hung windows on the main elevation. The stucco exterior, side porch and fenestration all appear to be original and in a very good state of preservation.

4485 N. 25th St. - Model 6F, with front gable. Russell Ricketts

This is one of the district's best-preserved Model 6F cottages with a front gable variation. Retaining its original stucco, fenestration and window shutters, the house was expanded in 1934 with a one-story, stuccoed side addition that blends well with the original two-story block.

N. 26th St.

Double-House
4340 N. 26th St. - Model 6H Max E. Barkan
4344 N. 26th St. - Model 6G Peter Ottenstein

The original small, projecting entry porches have been enclosed and stuccoed, but otherwise this double-house is well-preserved, retaining its original stucco and fenestration.

4352 N. 26th St. - Model 6F with front gable. John H. Henss

The building, now covered with modern artificial stone, has had many of its historic features removed, but its original form is still recognizable.

4356 N. 26th St. - Model 6D David Harper

In 1922 this was the first cottage to be occupied in the district. Its original tenant was the son of the city's building inspector. The exterior has been aluminum-sided.

4362 N. 26th St. - Model 6A — Oscar A. Kubnick

Steel siding was installed in 1975.

4366 N. 26th St. - Model 6D — John W. Murdock

Aluminum siding was installed in 1980.

4369 N. 26th St. - Model 6D, reverse floor plan. — George W. Altpeter

This cottage was originally occupied by the city's manager of the land annexation department. It is the district's best example of a Model 6D cottage with its prominent semicircular wooden molding above the central bay of three windows on the front elevation. The original stucco and side entry porch remain intact.

4372 N. 26th St. - Model 6F with front gable. — Leo A. Wolfshon

Aluminum siding was installed in 1976, and a small vestibule was built under the original front porch roof.

4375 N. 26th St. - Model 5B — John Frank

Composition board siding now covers the original stucco.

Double-House
4376 N. 26th St. - Model 6H — Reinhold Kraschinsky
4380 N. 26th St. - Model 6G — C. Guy Newnam

The north, stuccoed unit addressed at 4380 N. 26th St., which retains most of its historic character, was converted to a duplex in 1951 when a rear, two-story, 15' x 18' addition was built. The south half of the building, which is still a one-family unit, is aluminum-sided.

4381 N. 26th St. - Model 6A — Walter H. Mandel

A rear, one-story addition was built in 1960 to enlarge the kitchen and dining room. The exterior has been aluminum-sided, and the front porch has been enclosed.

Double-House
4387 N. 26th St. — Early T. Nigman
4389 N. 26th St. — Dennis Good

This two-story, rectangular, hip-roofed double-house, which appears to be in original condition retains its original porches, stucco and fenestration. It is unique in the district since it is not a combination of two basic cottage plans as are the other double-houses in the subdivision but an entirely original, one-of-a-kind building. The double-house is larger in size than any other structure in the district and contains four bedrooms in each unit. The building is symmetrically composed, and the first story of the main elevation features six bays of regularly-placed, double-hung windows and two flat-roofed entry porches. The second story of the main elevation features eight evenly-spaced double-hung windows. The remaining elevations are composed of randomly-placed windows and doors.

4395 N. 26th St. - Model 6A, reverse floor plan. — John Ott

The original gabled front porch roof has been removed, and the house has been aluminum-sided.

Double-House
4400 N. 26th St. - Model 6A — Theodore G. Moore
4406 N. 26th St. - Model 6A — John B. Wilkinson

This double-house is composed of a symmetrical pair of Model 6A cottages. The original, small, gabled porch roof on each unit has been removed, and the entire building was aluminum-sided.

4401 N. 26th St. - Model 5A — John L. LaCroix

A rear, one-story kitchen addition was built in 1939 and later the cottage was aluminum-sided. The original gabled front porch roof was removed.

4407 N. 26th St. - Model 6D — Edward H. Kiefer

A rear, one-story addition was built in 1960. Aluminum siding now covers the original stucco, and the original gabled side porch has been enclosed.

4414 N. 26th St. - Model 5F with front gable. — Emil L. Bauer

Steel siding was installed in 1973.

4418 N. 26th St. - Model 6D — Morris Leopold

The cottage was sided with composition board in 1953.

4424 N. 26th St. - Model 5F with front gable. — Charles A. Baker

The original front porch has been completely removed, and the front door has been replaced with a window. The house was aluminum-sided, and the original side porch has been enclosed.

Double-House
4430 N. 26th St. - Model 6G — Frederick Danner
4436 N. 26th St. - Model 6B — Sam Seelig

This double-house is the combination of a side-entrance Model 6G cottage and a front entrance Model 6B cottage.

4440 N. 26th St. - Model 6D — William J. Praefke

Aluminum siding was installed in 1982.

4444 N. 26th St. - Model 6A — Willis J. Burdick

This cottage has been asphalt-sided and a rear one-story family room addition was built in 1960.

4447 N. 26th St. - Model 6F with front gable — Andrew Matson

This cottage experienced early problems with the stucco necessitating its removal in 1935 and subsequent replacement with asphalt siding. More recently the house was resided with aluminum, and the side porch was enclosed.

4450 N. 26th St. - Model 6G — Anton F. Eggert

Aluminum siding was installed in 1981, and the roof of the original side porch has been removed.

4451 N. 26th St. - Model 6D, reverse floor plan. — Fred Hoke

Aluminum siding was installed in 1978.

4458 N. 26th St. - Model 6F with front gable. — Clarence S. Gruetzmacher

A dado of brick veneer was added to the front elevation, and the rest of the house has been aluminum-sided.

4459 N. 26th St. - Model 6A - reverse floor plan. — Edward N. Remmel

Aluminum siding was installed in 1977, and the original front porch posts have been replaced with wrought iron uprights.

4462 N. 26th St. - Model 6D — Alvin J. Wolter

The exterior is now covered with permastone.

4463 N. 26th St. - Model 6B — Herbert W. Schmidt

This house was originally a dual entry model, but like several other cottages in the district with this plan, the front door was removed and replaced with a window. The original cantilevered front porch roof is still intact. The cottage, which is now aluminum-sided, otherwise appears to be well-maintained.

4468 N. 26th St. - Model 6A with front gable. Kathy Keirnig

This is one of the best-preserved of the 16 Model 6A cottages built in the district. It retains its original stucco, fenestration and front porch roof. Modern wrought iron uprights have been substituted for the original wooden porch posts.

4469 N. 26th St. - Model 6F Herbert W. Schmidt

This was originally a dual entry model, but like several other cottages in the district with the plan, the front door was removed and replaced with a window. Although the original cantilevered front porch roof is still intact. The house, which is now aluminum-sided, otherwise appears to be well-maintained.

4472 N. 26th St. - Model 6B Fred Fantl

Aluminum siding was installed in 1981, and the front porch has been enclosed.

4473 N. 26th St. - Model 6D, reverse floor plan. Felix J. Gagnon

A dado of permastone was applied to the lower half of the first floor of the main elevation facing the street, and the remainder of the house has been aluminum-sided.

4478 N. 26th St. - Model 6F with front gable. John Ball

Although this stuccoed cottage retains much of its historic character, the front door has been replaced with a small bay window, the original side porch has been enclosed, and a small rear kitchen addition was built in 1945.

4481 N. 26th St. - Model 6A, reverse floor plan. Allen A. Bayley

Aluminum siding was installed in 1954.

4484 N. 26th St. - Model 6D, reverse floor plan. Fred Tank

Still retaining much of its historic character, this stuccoed cottage was expanded in 1959 with a rear, two-story, 12' x 12' addition. The original semicircular molding over the central bay of windows on the front elevation has been removed.

4485 N. 26th St. - Model 6G George F. Marredeth

This house appears to be in nearly original condition. The decorative window shutters have been removed, and the side entry porch has been partially enclosed.

Port Sunlight Way

2602 W. Port Sunlight Way - Model 6G Fred W. Young

Aluminum siding was installed in 1977.

2610 W. Port Sunlight Way - Model 6D with front gable John Bischof

Steel siding was installed in 1975.

2614 W. Port Sunlight Way - Model 6D Cornelius P. Holland

The original stucco was removed and replaced with aluminum siding in 1974.

Congress St.

2449 W. Congress - Model 6B Alfred E. Stiglbauer

This stuccoed cottage retains much of its historic character, but the original central front entry has been replaced with a new one on the north end of the front elevation. The original flat-roofed front porch has also been removed. A large, contemporary style, one-story, gabled addition was added to the east elevation.

2453 W. Congress - Model 6D with front gable, reverse floor plan. John H. Master

Now covered with modern, artificial stone, this cottage has lost many of its original decorative features, although the fenestration appears to be intact. Nevertheless, the overall original massing of the building is intact, its original character is still recognizable to the point that it contributes positively to maintaining the visual integrity of the district.

2457-59 W. Congress - Model 6A with reverse floor plan. Arthur W. Duehring

A rear, two-story addition was built when this cottage was converted to a duplex during 1929 and 1930. The original gabled front porch has been removed, aluminum siding was installed, and a new entry door to the second-story flat was added to the main elevation.

Garden Homes Park

Garden Homes Park, an original feature of the project, is a level, boulevard-like, curvilinear greenspace of about two acres that occupies the space between the two lanes of North Twenty-sixth Street between West Port Sunlight Way and West Atkinson Avenue. It features an assortment of mature hardwood trees that were apparently planted as part of the original landscape design. A small children's playlot is located in the southeast corner of the park. In 1974,to commemorate construction of the Garden Homes project, a bronze plaque was attached to a large boulder in the extreme southwest corner of the park.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: X nationally ___statewide ___locally

Applicable National Register Criteria X 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
Community Planning & Development	1921 - 1923 [1]	1921
Social History	1921 - 1936	

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Schuchardt, William H. [2]

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

Significance

The Garden Homes Historic District is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places because of its national significance in the areas of community planning and development and local significance to social history (criterion A). The Garden Homes housing project is historically important as perhaps the nation's first municipally-built housing development. It offered each of its working-class tenants an opportunity to purchase an equity in the project through a cooperative ownership plan. In terms of its conception and organization, the district is an interesting example of early twentieth century city planning as the first municipally-sponsored housing project of its kind to incorporate the fundamental principles of England's Garden City form of urban planning, production-line construction techniques, and patented labor-saving materials.

The Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan does not contain a specific reference to government housing projects, but it does note that Wisconsin has developed a national reputation for initiating many progressive functions in government.[3] The Garden Homes Housing Project, which initiated the concept of municipally-built cooperative housing, is one such function. As the first municipally-built public housing cooperative, Garden Homes began a nationwide tradition of providing low-cost, government-backed housing that continues to this day. The period of significance is 1921-1936, which spans the years from the construction of the 93 original buildings and park between 1921-1923, until the dissolution of the Garden Homes Company housing cooperative in 1936.

X See Continuation Pages

Historical Background

The ranks of America's working-class swelled with the tides of immigrants that poured into the country during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The nation's industries reveled in an abundant supply of labor that helped to transform America into an industrial giant. While many industries offered steady employment, wages were often low, leaving families with little disposable income for housing. Still, eager job-seekers flocked to large manufacturing centers like Milwaukee, creating a serious shortage of affordable, decent, working-class housing. The nation's housing problems were addressed as early as the 1890s when Congress held the first hearings on slums and urban blight. Although the hearings created national awareness of housing problems, no Federal or local government programs resulted.[4]

Between 1913 and 1917 alone, Milwaukee's population increased by 79,000. During the same time period, there was a net increase of only 6,100 dwellings in the city, resulting in an estimated shortage of 7,000 housing units.[5]

The Garden Homes housing project, which was built to ease Milwaukee's housing shortage, can trace its origins to the city's 1910 municipal election of the nation's first Socialist mayor, Emil Seidel. Socialists also won 21 of the city's 25 aldermanic posts in the election. One of the planks of the Socialist platform was the construction of city-built, low-cost homes for workers. Seidel told the Milwaukee electorate, "We do not expect to usher in the cooperative commonwealth in one or five years, but we do intend to do all our limited means permit to make Milwaukee a better place to live in. We shall not disappoint the working people."[6]

Although Seidel failed to make public housing in Milwaukee a reality before his defeat in the 1912 election, the city's second Socialist mayor, Daniel W. Hoan, elected in 1916, succeeded. Mayor Hoan created a housing commission to tackle the city's housing shortage which was worsened by the moratorium on new housing construction during America's involvement in World War I. In September of 1918, while the First World War was still raging in Europe, the chairman of Milwaukee's housing commission, William H. Schuchardt, went to Washington, D.C. in an effort to obtain Federal assistance to construct new public housing in Milwaukee. For the first time in U.S. history, Federal government aid for housing construction was made available to manufacturing centers that could prove that a lack of working-class housing was hindering the production of war materials. Because Milwaukee could not prove such a relationship, the request for Federal aid was denied. Furthermore, the Federal government authorities decided that Milwaukee's

housing shortage existed long before World War I. Eventually, the Federal government built about 30,000 units of war-time housing -- about half of which were dormitories or barracks -- but none was built in Milwaukee. Most of the units that were built elsewhere were not completed until after the 1918 Armistice, and all were sold rather than maintained as public housing.[7]

A lack of adequate working-class housing became one of the key community issues in Milwaukee. According to a newspaper report in 1920, several prominent Milwaukee business leaders believed that the local housing shortage had reached a critical stage, and immediate action was imperative. "The housing question is one of the most momentous the city has before it," said Walter Davidson, the president of Milwaukee's Harley-Davidson motorcycle manufacturing company. John W. Peterson of the Richardson Phoenix Company agreed, and said, "The housing question is the biggest thing in Milwaukee. You cannot get industries to come here if the workers cannot get homes. Lack of homes will strangle the city's growth as certainly as the sun rises and sets."[8]

After World War I, Milwaukee's housing commission proposed a municipally-sponsored, low-cost, cooperative housing project to ease the local housing shortage. Under the commission's plan, called the Garden Homes Project, occupants would not own their homes initially; instead, they would purchase housing corporation common stock equal to the value of a house. The tenants would pay for their stock by making a 10% downpayment and subsequent monthly payments spread over twenty years. The payments were to cover interest, taxes, upkeep and other fixed costs. Tenants would also receive life insurance benefits and an annual five percent cumulative dividend on their equity. The initial cost of the project was to be financed through the sale of preferred stock carrying a 5% per annum cumulative dividend, which would be purchased by city and county governments, and other interested investors. As the occupants of the houses paid on their common stock (only occupants of the houses could hold common stock), the preferred stock would be retired. It was expected that after about 20 years all of the preferred stock would be retired and the property would be wholly owned by the residents who at that time could elect to disband the housing corporation and convert the development to individual ownership.[9]

The financing plan was based on a prototype from England where about 60 cooperative housing associations had been established by 1919.[10] Cooperative housing was promoted by English author Ebenezer Howard whose highly influential book published in 1900, Garden Cities of Tomorrow, was the basis for the plan of Letchworth, England, the first true, totally planned cooperative community.

In 1919 at the urging of Mayor Hoan and his housing commission, legislation was enacted by the State of Wisconsin that for the first time in U.S. history allowed the creation of public housing corporations whose stock would be owned by local government and private individuals. The Garden Homes Company was formally incorporated under this enabling legislation in 1921.[11]

Commenting on the new cooperative housing legislation in 1919, housing commission member William George Bruce said, "I feel committed to the cooperative plan on which this law is based. It is unique in that it encourages the collective spirit rather than the individual spirit among home owners. It is said that this is too idealistic. I do not believe this, and it is up to this commission to prove that this plan is practical, that it will work. The [Garden Homes] company itself should be the contractor. Every possible element of profit should be squeezed out. I do not believe we will have any trouble in selling the stock. This is not a question of charity, of making a donation. It is an investment for the benefit of the entire community. Milwaukee needs more homes and more homeowners."[12]

The six charter officers of the Garden Homes Company were prominent Milwaukee business and government leaders: William George Bruce, a noted publisher; Nat Stone, president of a large department store; Daniel W. Hoan, Milwaukee mayor; Fred Vogel, Jr., an entrepreneur; Benjamin W. Reynolds, an attorney; and William D. Harper, City building inspector.

By 1922 the members of the Garden Homes board of directors were: president Galbraith Miller, Jr., a manufacturer; vice-president William H. Schuchardt, a planner, architect, and manufacturer; secretary William H. Harper, city building inspector; and treasurer Herman Fehr, a banker. Directors at large were Clifford L. McMillen, a real estate agent; Edward Kiefer, a representative of organized labor; William E. McCarty, chairman of the county board of supervisors; John Maple, an entrepreneur; and Frank J. Harder, a real estate agent.[13]

The main objectives of the Garden Homes housing cooperative as stated in the housing corporation's original prospectus were:

1. To promote the economic erection, cooperative ownership and administration of healthful homes.

2. To place said homes in areas platted in accordance with the best ideas of city planning so as to provide the greatest utility as well as healthful conditions and attractive surroundings.

3. To encourage the occupation of modest homes at cost and within the means of those who now cannot acquire and retain their own homes.

4. To avoid the dangers that too frequently accompany the individual ownership of houses and speculative building devoid of public spirit.

5. To harmonize and join the interests of resident and investor by an equitable use of the profit arising from the increase of values and the careful use of property.

6. To provide ample space for playgrounds and recreation for both old and young.

7. To provide an opportunity for intensive gardening under instruction, thus maintaining the home in part by this means.[14]

The Garden Homes housing project was intended to provide homes for families earning a modest $1,200-$1,500 per year in 1920.[15]

Raising funds through the sale of preferred stock proved difficult for the housing corporation, delaying construction. Some local politicians were reluctant to appropriate city funds for the plan because they charged it did not guarantee individual ownership of the homes. According to a Milwaukee Sentinel report, some opposed the plan because it "hinted something strongly of Sovietism."[16] The Garden Homes Project also faced initial competition from a plan endorsed by Milwaukee's Association of Commerce that called for large local businesses to build working-class housing and offer the homes for sale to employees. Homebuyers would be required to make a 30% downpayment and finance the balance through a building and loan association. The Association of Commerce built about 30 houses in 1920 at sites scattered throughout the Milwaukee area. The association's housing plan did not address the social, urban planning, and profit issues raised by the Garden Homes proposal. A merger, proposed by Mayor Hoan, of the Garden Homes Company with the Association of Commerce's Housing Committee was rejected by the association because the two groups had widely divergent plans of operation, according to Association of Commerce president Walter Carlson.[17] Economic considerations apparently forced the dissolution of the Association's housing committee late in 1920, prompting Chalver B. Traver, assistant secretary of the Association

to make the following statement: "We will give as much cooperation to the municipal project [Garden Homes] as the backers want. We believe that it is in a better position to carry out the plans for which it was formed than any other organization.[18] In reality, the Association of Commerce simply ran out of money and enthusiasm for building working-class housing. In December, 1920 Commerce Association president Walter Carlson said, "The association is ready to turn the housing problem over to the city, I think. Manufacturers have got all they can do in financing themselves and are not looking with favor on proposals to advance big sums of money [on low-cost, working-class housing] on which they will get no interest. Furthermore, if the money could be obtained, there would be no one to buy the houses. Ask any workingman today to go into a deal to buy a home and see what he says.[19] The situation indicates a failing market, and there is no home buying."

Despite the apparent downturn in local economic conditions, the Garden Homes planners proceeded with their project. Start-up financing totaling $177,300 was secured through the sale of preferred stock. City and county governments made initial investments of $50,000 each and 38 local business leaders represented by the Association of Commerce invested a combined total of $77,300 along with a pledge to eventually invest $300,000.[20]

On July 25, 1921, the Garden Homes Corp. purchased for about $28,000 the 29 acres of farmland known as the Groelling tract on which the development stands today. The property, which was several blocks outside the city's northern limits at the time, is bounded today by West Ruby Avenue, North Teutonia Avenue, West Atkinson Avenue, and North Twenty-seventh Street. The Milwaukee Housing Commission also considered two other locations for the project: One site was near Jackson Park on the city's southwest side on a vacant tract of land known as the Mitchell Farm, and the other was at the northern city limits on a large tract of undeveloped land on East Hampton Avenue near the Milwaukee River.[21] Originally 162 units were planned for the initial phase of the development, but only 105 living units contained in 93 freestanding buildings were actually constructed between 1921 and 1923.[22] This was apparently because of a shortfall in capital that had been pledged by the Milwaukee Association of Commerce. Despite a $300,000 pledge, Association members purchased only $77,000 worth of Garden Homes preferred stock by 1924. City building inspector William D. Harper subsequently criticized the Association, saying, "Failure of the commerce association to fulfill its pledge reveals a lack of civic pride on the part of the merchants and manufacturers who are members of that organization. The Garden Homes Company is promoting a project which is not only in the interest of people who are financially unable to obtain homes at prevailing high prices, but a move that is in the interest of business and Milwaukee generally. The lack of

[financial support] is undoubtedly due to the fact that the stock pays only five percent [interest] and merchants and manufacturers can realize a far greater return on their investments."[23] Because of the shortfall in investment capital from the private sector, Harper asked the Milwaukee Common Council to invest an additional $150,000 in Garden Homes preferred stock. By the end of 1924, the city and county governments had invested a total of $412,000 in the Garden Homes Project.

Mayor Hoan presided over the groundbreaking ceremonies for the project on September 22, 1921. On Wednesday, November 1, 1922, David Harper, the son of the city's building inspector, became the first occupant of the Garden Homes Project. His cottage was located at 4356 North Twenty-sixth Street.[24]

There were about 700 applicants for the 105 units that were ultimately built. The applicants included many union leaders and city employees. In 1921 Mayor Hoan said that the units would be sold only to individuals who could not otherwise afford a home. Hoan also suggested that corporations with large numbers of employees seeking project housing should loan money to the Garden Homes Corp. in order to expand the development.[25]

It was the intention of the Garden Homes board of directors to select the families or individuals most in need of housing to live in the project. A tenants' committee created to screen the applicants consisted of: Galbraith Miller, Jr., Edward Kiefer, H. H. Jacobs, William E. McCarthy, and J. V. Maple, all directors of the Garden Homes Company. Home-seekers were requested to complete a questionnaire with personal data such as age, marital status, race, nationality [apparently a citizenship question], number and ages of any dependents, length of residence in the city, annual income, work history, rent expenditures, three personal references, and the amount of any premium(s) paid on any life and health insurance. Applicants were also required to state why they were dissatisfied with where they had been living. Reportedly, the last question on the application was, "Do you own any property in Milwaukee and where is it located?" Tenants' committee member H. H. Jacobs said that after reviewing the questionnaires, the field of applicants would be narrowed to about twice the number of available homes. "Our next step will [then] be a personal investigation of the prospective tenants."[26] Applicants who had personal savings in excess of $1500 were rejected and urged to purchase a home through the private sector.

The houses in the development were built according to the designs of Milwaukee architect William H. Schuchardt, who donated his professional services and was a member of the board of directors of the Garden Homes Corporation. Schuchardt's designs for the Garden Homes cottages no doubt were influenced by his 1911 visit to garden cities in England and Germany.

The homes were built at a cost of about $4,500 each, which was about 25% less than the cost of a comparable new house in the city at that time. Construction costs were cut by using a standardized plan and production line techniques at the building site. The homes were constructed in consecutive order, and each crew of tradesmen progressed from one house to the next, performing virtually the same job each time. Because of the heavy municipal involvement in the project, some city construction equipment was used to further defray costs. The city's building inspector, William Harper, served as construction superintendent.[27]

Garden Homes, with its cooperative ownership plan, became the focus of intense public debate in the city. Before, during, and after construction, the project was opposed by many business leaders, the local real estate board, and politicians. In addition to the fact that the project undercut the prices of comparable houses built by private enterprise, some business leaders were irked that Garden Homes construction workers were paid high union scale wages at a time when Milwaukee was generally considered a non-union or "open shop town." Others feared that a Socialist success at Garden Homes would bolster the Socialist party platform with the Milwaukee electorate.[28]

Shortly after the 105 houses in the Garden Homes project were completed and occupied, the development encountered some major difficulties. Annexation of the Garden Homes subdivision and surrounding land to the City of Milwaukee from the Town of Wauwatosa and the Town of Milwaukee proved to be one of the most publicized and controversial cases in the history of the City's land annexation program. The Garden Homes case was the focal point of a dispute rooted in a 30-year-old law that had virtually paralyzed the City's annexation efforts. Until 1892 the City of Milwaukee or any other incorporated municipality in the state could annex adjacent unincorporated territory by act of the State Legislature, which was a relatively simple procedure. The state constitution was amended, however, in 1892 to effectively prohibit the state legislature from annexing territory to municipalities. Subsequently a new law was passed requiring that any annexation process be initiated by a petition which had to be signed by the owners of at least one-half of the acreage involved in the subject territory. Proper submission of the petition necessitated a vote on the proposed annexation by residents in the subject area. Because the vote was considered a binding referendum, the decision of the electorate would then become law. Annexation under the 1892 law became a highly technical, complicated and cumbersome procedure. As a result, very little territory was added to the City of Milwaukee between the end of 1891 and 1923, a period during which the population of the city nearly doubled.[28]

Because apparently there was not a suitable location for the Garden Homes project within the city limits, the project planners purchased a site outside Milwaukee with the intention of annexing it to the city. Construction of the project began before the area, lying partly in the Town of Wauwatosa and partly in the Town of Milwaukee, was formally annexed to the city. The two townships subsequently tried to legally block the annexation by filing three separate lawsuits. The legal battles delayed street improvements in the Garden Homes project for months. Long after the first houses in the project were occupied, the streets were still a muddy quagmire.[29]

The Garden Homes area, a total of 229 acres, was formally annexed to the City of Milwaukee on January 28, 1924, touching off the most-publicized and decisive lawsuit of the three. Filed by Fred Zweifel, who owned 55 acres in the annexed territory, the suit alleged the following: (1) The true owners of the 30-acre Garden Homes project did not sign the petition for annexation. (2) The boundaries of the total 229-acre parcel were not properly described by meets and bounds as required by law. (3) The annexation of the tract constituted the taking of property without due process of law. (4) Many of the signatures on the petition for annexation were obtained by coercion. (5) The annexation doubled the city tax rate in the subject area imposing a financial burden on the property owners. Assistant city attorney Mark A. Kline, who handled annexation matters for the city, said the suit was aimed at "hindering the city annexation project in its entirety." But he said he was "certain no court or judge will ever see it in that light. The city will file its answer, and the court can decide."[30]

The case was of such importance that it eventually reached the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which, on December 7, 1925, upheld the decision of a lower court that the annexation was legal. "This decision is final and settles the question of the annexation of Garden Homes to the city," said Kline.[31] The favorable court ruling paved the way for a vigorous but controversial annexation program by the city that resulted in a nearly threefold increase in the land area of Milwaukee by 1960.

More problems developed in 1925 when the city assessed the project's residents between $300 and $750 each for street and storm sewer improvements. The residents angrily protested the assessment claiming misrepresentation of the actual cost of their homes. Many Garden Homes residents were also unhappy with the cooperative ownership plan because the money they spent on private improvements to their homes could be lost unless individual ownership was adopted. A few residents moved out of the project in protest. On March 11, 1925, a Milwaukee Journal newspaper article appeared with the title: "Garden Homes Losing Charm, Many Residents Leaving 'Utopia' to Evade Assessment." The

article reported that George Altpeter, chief of the city annexation division, who lived in the Garden Homes development from its beginning, said "Seventy-five percent of the inhabitants will pull away and sell their stock if the special assessment is enforced." Altpeter apparently summed up the opinions of many Garden Homes residents when he said, "We feel that the corporation has not been sufficiently frank with us and that the demand now for a special street improvement payment is not according to our contract. We understood that street, sewer and other work was included in the original contract, as part of the payment we have been making. Now they tell us it is extra. I for one am greatly disappointed and sorry I went into the corporation. I know that others feel the same about it. I want my house and lot to be in my own name, not in the name of a corporation in which I am a mere stockholder."[32]

William H. Schuchardt, the designer of the project and the vice-president of the Garden Homes Corp., expressed his disillusionment with the situation at that time and said, "I am through striving to do something helpful for anybody. It is a most thankless job. I have given time and money to the Garden Homes Corporation, and now there is most unwarranted grumbling. Everybody knows that street improvements are special assessments that must be paid, no matter where one lives. The Garden Homes Corp. is in a most excellent condition; the company has fulfilled every promise it ever made and intends to do so to the end."[33]

A few days later in another newspaper article, Charles B. Whitnall, one of the founders of the Garden Homes Co. defended the project saying that it "is the only cooperative housing project in the United States, and its possibilities are great. Within a couple of years," he said, "with paved streets and [final landscaping] it will be one of the most beautiful communities in the country."[34] Whitnall admitted that some mistakes may have been made, but that the project was still a good value for the money that residents were being asked to pay. The street assessment would have required an additional $7 per month from each house in the project, but that amount was reportedly beyond the means of many of the residents. Despite the reported widespread dissatisfaction, a vote in March, 1925 showed that Garden Homes' residents were split over the controversy with 38 in favor of individual ownership of the project's homes, 32 in favor of continuing the original cooperative ownership plan, and the others unsure.[35] Later it was reported that many of the Garden Homes residents wanted individual titles to their properties in order to sell them at their appreciated values. The single family houses which had cost about $4,500 each to build in 1922-23 were estimated to be worth about double that amount by 1925.[36]

Responding to the tenants' demands, in June of 1925 the state legislature enacted the Garden Homes Law Amendment which permitted the sale of the project's homes instead of leasing them. On Friday, July 17, 1925, the Garden Homes Co. board of directors formally decided to disband the cooperative ownership of the development and convert the project to individual ownership. Tenants were given the opportunity to purchase their homes at prices between $4,700 and $5,500. Comparable houses in the city at that time reportedly cost considerably more. Tenants who were not immediately able to purchase on the conditions outlined by the Garden Homes Co. were given the option of continuing their rental contract until they were able to take advantage of the purchase proposal. Several vacant lots on North Teutonia Avenue that were owned by the housing company were also sold at "reasonable prices."[37]

With the change to individual ownership the Garden Homes Corporation functioned only to sell the housing stock and pay off all loans -- a problem-plagued process which took more than ten years. Both state and Federal governments demanded that the housing corporation pay taxes on the profits earned from the sale of the houses. The issue was settled in 1933 when a Federal Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the Garden Homes Co. and reversed a Federal tax assessment of $27,500. The Garden Homes Co., however, did not recover $14,000 in legal fees. On October 31, 1933, the city and county were paid the balances on the loans they made to the corporation. On February 20, 1936, the Garden Homes Co. went out of existence when the final distribution of the corporation's surplus funds was made to the 105 owners in the subdivision. Between 1934 and 1936 each of the owners received a total of about $221 in refunds. After purchasing their homes, many residents did indeed sell them. By the late 1930's only about 40% of the original tenants still lived in the subdivision. Despite its problems, the Garden Homes Co. always remained financially solvent. Property taxes and special assessments were always paid to the city. Loans were repaid in a timely manner to both the city and county with 5% interest, and the bank loans were repaid with 6% interest.[38] Emil Seidel, the city's first Socialist mayor, who initially proposed cooperative housing, purchased a Garden Homes cottage at 4431 N. 25th St. in the late 1920s after the development was privatized.[39]

The streets in the Garden Homes subdivision, which had originally been named after English housing developments, were renamed in the late 1920s to conform with neighboring city streets: Ealing became W. Congress St., Hampstead became North 25th St., and the two traffic lanes surrounding the central park, Letchworth and Bourneville, were renamed North 26th St. Today, only one short street in the district, W. Port Sunlight Way, still retains its original name.

Social History

The Garden Homes housing project is historically significant as the nation's first municipally-built, public housing cooperative. The development was intended as an experiment to ease a working-class housing shortage and to generally improve the quality of city life. Garden Homes is a pivotal development in the history of municipal government involvement in providing housing. However, because Garden Homes was a municipally-controlled cooperative housing venture, it differs radically from the government-subsidized rental projects and special financing programs commonly associated with public housing efforts today.

Garden Homes was apparently America's first and last major experiment in municipally-built cooperative housing, earning it a unique place in the history of American public housing. From its beginning, Garden Homes was described as a municipal project. Referring to Garden Homes, Milwaukee Mayor Daniel W. Hoan, under whose administration the project was built, wrote in 1936 that "Milwaukee was the first city in the United States to sponsor a municipal and cooperative venture to build as a demonstration over one hundred individual homes."[40] Mayor Hoan tried to stimulate national interest in cooperative housing. He was a key figure on the National Committee on Cooperative Housing which made a recommendation to Congress in 1922 to seriously consider cooperative housing similar to the Garden Homes project to alleviate low-income housing shortages. The recommendation apparently had little effect. It was not until the Great Depression in the 1930s that widespread national interest in public housing revived, although a few low-rent apartment buildings had been constructed by the City of New York during the late 1920s. Cooperative housing was apparently never seriously considered during the embryonic period of American public housing policy in the early 1930s. In 1934 a program of direct Federal construction of low-rent housing projects, primarily in slum areas, resulted in about 60 new projects being built across the nation. This program ran into local opposition and was reworked into the Public Housing Program by the passage of the United States Housing Act of 1937, which more or less forms the basis of the current system of U.S. public housing. There was no public involvement in building housing in Milwaukee after the Garden Homes project until 1936, when the Federal government built and operated Parklawn, a cluster of low-rent apartment buildings on the city's northwest side. Now operated by the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee, Parklawn is an early example of the type of public housing projects built throughout the country since the 1930s that were intended to be operated by local governments with Federal subsidies. There are currently more than 5,000 units of public housing in Milwaukee.

Milwaukee's progressive housing practices, exemplified by Garden Homes, were instrumental in attracting the favorable attention of the Federal Resettlement Administration, which selected Milwaukee as one of four cities out of a field of 52 nationwide in which to develop a large, suburban, experimental, greenbelt, new town project during the late 1930s. Built at a cost of about $10 million this vast project, known as Greendale, created a carefully planned new community in suburban Milwaukee that incorporated Garden City design concepts, standardized plans, and mass production construction techniques. Unlike Garden Homes, of course, Greendale is a model town that features a large residential district, a business center, school districts, churches, and police and fire stations. In selecting the Milwaukee area for the project, the Federal government stated that, "Milwaukee was outstanding by virtue of its very efficient planning department."[41]

Perhaps the most outstanding aspect of the Garden Homes project was its cooperative ownership plan that strove to put home ownership within the reach of low-income working people who could not otherwise afford a home. Cooperatives had been formed previously in Milwaukee and other large cities so that tenants could purchase their own upper-class apartment buildings, but Garden Homes was America's first low-income, working-class cooperative of new, detached, single-family and duplex houses.

According to the original prospectus of the Garden Homes Company, the cooperative ownership plan carried many potential benefits for the occupants that included the following:

1. The member gets a home at a rental not higher and probably less than elsewhere and is encouraged to take care of it by having the twelfth month's rent remitted, less the cost of repairs.

2. The member gets a house with a garden, and plenty of fresh air, a house well built and sanitary, with some individuality, in which he can take pride. He lives in a neighborhood where all are equally desirous of keeping up the property.

3. Economies will be effected through wholesale buying of land and materials, building houses in numbers, efficient management, saving in legal expenses, and the elimination of speculative profit.

4. The member can invest his savings in the company at 5 percent.

5. The unearned increment goes to benefit all the resident members, for with increase in values, they will get either a dividend on rent or pay rent below market value.

6. The member secures practically all the surplus profits after fixed charges are paid, in the form of a dividend on his rent or in reduction in the amount the member must pay in common stock.

7. The member lives in a social atmosphere, with new and vital interests, and collects friendships in the community. He has a mutual interest in common recreation facilities, playgrounds, halls, etc.

8. Ownership is common, not individual, thus providing security from the risk of loss if a resident has to leave, as he has no liability beyond his shares.

9. If on account of sickness or because he is compelled by circumstances to give up his residence and move elsewhere, his contract provides that the company must purchase his paid up common stock at its par value less any damage he may have inflicted upon the residence.[42]

The Garden Homes Company was essentially a municipally-controlled private corporation because city and county governments were its two major preferred stockholders. The Wisconsin statute that enabled the creation of housing cooperatives, Chapter 402 of the 1919 Laws of Wisconsin, states: "If the city or county shall be the holder of any stock of such [cooperative housing] corporation, the common council of the city and board of supervisors of the county shall designate some person who shall vote the shares held by them."[43]

The cooperative ownership plan was more than a creative financing package. It was also aimed at curbing urban blight and enhancing the quality of city life by giving city government more control over long-term planning and maintenance of the neighborhood. Even the interiors of project houses were held to maintenance standards set by the city's housing corporation. Under the legislation that created housing cooperatives, no new plat for cooperative housing could be adopted until approved by the public land commission or city planning commission of the city in which the property was located. The legislation also stated that a proposed housing cooperative needed the approval of the local health department or health officer to assure that the location would be "healthful" for the tenants. The living units also were required to have "adequate air and light," although no specific technical requirements were listed.[44] According to the original plan, the city government was to be involved in the administration of the Garden Homes

project for at least twenty years or until each resident had accumulated stock equal to the value of his or her house. The city officials had apparently hoped that the Garden Homes Project would serve as a model in terms of design, zoning and operation for additional public and private housing cooperatives, but none were ever built.

Theoretically, the cooperative ownership plan had considerable merit. The tenant-owners gained by the absence of speculative profits that ordinarily went to outside investors. Maintenance costs were projected to be lower than rental apartments because the occupants were expected to do some of the work themselves and take a greater interest in the property. The housing corporation hoped that by providing instruction in gardening techniques, residents might learn new skills that could be put to use in beautifying the neighborhood. Ownership in the form of stock was touted to be more liquid than a traditional, individual deed. The housing corporation guaranteed to purchase at par value the paid-up common stock of any tenant wishing to leave the development, supposedly eliminating the inconvenience and potential loss of equity sometimes associated with selling a house.

Financially, the Garden Homes Project appeared to be an early success, and it was generally agreed that the houses were an excellent value. Socially, the housing corporation hoped to build a sense of community pride and well-being for low-income residents. Ultimately, the cooperative ownership plan was the downfall of the project. About half of the Garden Homes residents, many of whom wanted to sell their homes at appreciated values, rebelled at what they felt was a paternalistic system and forced the privatization of the development in 1926. The residents' demands for privatization were undoubtedly bolstered by considerable local political and business opposition to socialized housing.

Prior to the Garden Homes experiment, private industry made several notable attempts to construct planned developments of working-class housing. The community of Pullman, Illinois, was a large development of detached and semi-detached rental units built on Chicago's far south side beginning in 1893 by railroad equipment manufacturer George Pullman for his factory workers. But as a rental development, it did nothing to promote home ownership for the working-class. Kohler, Wisconsin, was a planned community of detached, single-family rental houses built by the Kohler Company for its employees beginning in 1917. Designed along the lines of the English Garden suburbs, Kohler, too, was completely controlled by its corporate owner. Both of these were essentially company towns.

Garden Homes was the only large-scale public development of detached single family and duplex homes ever built under a cooperative ownership plan in America. More common were private cooperative apartments which were a phenomena of the 1920s principally organized by private associations of high-end rental tenants. The number of apartment units built under cooperative ownership is not known, but in 1924 the National Association of Real Estate Boards established a "Cooperative Division" for realtors who were involved in cooperative real estate transactions. The division had 95 members from 11 cities at its peak but was discontinued in 1930. Political squabbling, unscrupulous promoters and untenable financial structures brought many of the cooperatives into discredit during the Great Depression of the 1930s. A number of the original cooperative apartments are still in existence today around the country, including Milwaukee's venerable Abbot Row Corporation, which was established in 1924 by the tenants of the rowhouses at 1019-43 East Ogden Avenue.

Community Planning and Design

The Garden Homes Housing Project is also an example of early community planning based on the significant "garden suburb" and "garden city" forms of town planning that developed in England during the late nineteenth century.

As a bold experiment in community planning, the Garden Homes project was a reaction by Milwaukee's elected Socialist municipal government to the inadequate and crowded living conditions faced by low-income city dwellers.

In terms of its overall design, Garden Homes represents an outstanding solution to the problem of providing economical, functional and aesthetically-pleasing moderate-income housing. Individually, each of the Garden Homes cottages is architecturally undistinguished, but as an assemblage they comprise a picturesque, working-class village with a decidedly European character that is unlike any other residential neighborhood in the city. Although all of the cottages have the same basic floor plan and were site-built utilizing a mass production approach, Garden Homes nevertheless manages to be an architecturally-interesting project with exteriors that were deftly and economically varied to avoid a banal, institutional appearance.

In terms of its planning, Garden Homes is philosophically based on English models of so-called "garden-style" urban planning. The Garden Homes designers named the streets of the housing project after the English housing developments that inspired them: Bourneville, Ealing, Hampstead, Port Sunlight, and Letchworth.

One of the earliest writings on city planning that influenced the Garden Homes designers was the 1898 book entitled "Garden Cities of Today," written by English author Ebenezer Howard. Howard coined the term "garden city," which he defined as a "town designed for healthy living and industry; of a size that makes possible a full measure of social life, but not larger; surrounded by a rural belt; the whole of the land being in public ownership or held in trust for the community."[45] The principles of city planning that Howard outlined in his book were later applied in 1903 to the building of Letchworth, which was England's first "garden city." Letchworth became a model of city planning studied by planners around the world and was highly influential in the planning of Milwaukee's Garden Homes housing project. Howard's book proposed a new social system of cooperatively-owned housing developments as well as a new approach for urban design.

The ideals of the English Garden City movement overlapped with those of the City Beautiful movement in America, which began during the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 and addressed the problems of haphazard city development. American interest in Howard's ideas lead in 1906 to the creation of the Garden Cities Association of America. The group drew tentative plans for the construction of a series of garden communities to house 375,000 families in Long Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, but not a single house was ever constructed. Although the association published a journal, The Village[46], it never garnered widespread support and was dissolved in 1921.

Milwaukee's Garden Homes housing project built in 1921-1923 has been virtually ignored in historical accounts of the American Garden City movement. Many historians regard Radburn, New Jersey, begun in 1928 as the first American Garden City.[47] Radburn, with its 1,500 residents and approximately 960 dwellings, was larger than Garden Homes and included an impressive inventory of facilities for residents including two swimming pools, five basketball courts, and two summer houses. Unlike Garden Homes, Radburn was never a cooperative, and thus it lacked an important feature of Howard's Garden City plan.

One of Howard's major technical innovations in the planning of Letchworth, later copied by many housing projects including Garden Homes in Milwaukee, was his conception of the "Grand Avenue," which is a belt of green space or parkland dividing the town into two separate zones. In Milwaukee the Garden Homes project is divided by a boulevard-like park on North Twenty-sixth Street. Originally the traffic lane on the south side of the park was named Letchworth Place probably to reflect the original model for the park's design.

Howard was highly critical of traditional city development. His "garden city" concept was not intended to be a suburban development but rather a more livable and productive urban community. This, too, was a goal of the Garden Homes planners. Population was to be limited to the number originally planned for the area. New communities were to be founded as soon as the existing land and houses were fully occupied. To limit the internal growth of the city and stop encroachments from neighboring urban developments, Howard's Garden City concept provided for a permanent belt of open, agricultural land around the perimeter of the community. To further maintain control of the community, ownership and control of the town was vested with the municipality itself. Initially, Garden Homes was surrounded by a belt of open agricultural land. This property, because it was not owned by the Garden Homes Housing Corporation, could not be preserved as in the English model and was eventually privately developed with single family tract homes on a gridiron street plan. It is not known what plans, if any, the Garden Homes designers had for the vacant land.

Much of Ebenezer Howard's work was based on the English "garden" concept of town planning which began to take shape during the middle of the nineteenth century as a reaction by social reformers against the planless and squalid working-class industrial towns that were built during the early years of the Industrial Revolution. The English garden developments represented a new vision of working-class life in a planned, controlled environment combining the advantages of town and country, but set in an essentially rural environment. The early "garden" developments, which were similar in many respects to Milwaukee's Garden Homes project, were characterized by two-story, detached and semi-detached houses located on spacious lots landscaped with grass lawns and gardens. Streets were often laid out in a curvilinear plan to respect the native trees and the natural contours of the land. A park was often an integral part of the garden developments.

Some of the early garden developments were built by large firms as rental housing for their workers. Later, the government and private housing cooperatives built large working-class developments. Bromborough Pool on the Wirral peninsula, begun in 1853 by Price's Patent Candle Co., is regarded as one of the earliest garden village developments. It is a small housing development numbering 76 units which were notable for their time in being either semi-detached or in rows of four with front and rear gardens. The overall site plan included large open areas, which was remarkable for a working-class housing development at that time.

The first true garden suburb was Bedford Park, designed by architect Richard Norman Shaw between 1875 and 1881 near the city of London. The houses were situated on winding, tree-lined roads which produced a rural atmosphere that was almost unique in suburban housing of the period.[49]

The English housing developments for which the other streets in the Garden Homes project were named (Bourneville, Port Sunlight, Ealing, and Hampstead) were among the most successful and most studied examples of the so-called "garden" concept of city planning. A pamphlet published in 1922 to promote Garden Homes idealized the English developments stating, "Nowhere in Milwaukee are there such charming localities as Port Sunlight, Bourneville, Letchworth, and Hampstead Gardens."[50] Bourneville was begun in 1893 next to George Cadbury's chocolate factory near Birmingham, England. Houses there were built six to the acre on streets laid out along the natural contours of the land. An important new planning principle was introduced by the requirement that the houses could not cover more than a quarter of the area of the plot and they were picturesquely sited along winding roads, crescents, closes, and cul-de-sacs. Two basic three-bedroom plans were offered.[51]

Port Sunlight was begun in 1888 for employees of the Lever Soap Factory near Liverpool, England. The development was planned to provide variety in contrast to the common gridiron street planning system, an essential element of Garden Homes as well. The 720 houses in Port Sunlight, built in modified Dutch and Elizabethan Revival styles, were either semi-detached or built in groups of four or six separated by open spaces. Frontages of 18 feet and densities of eight units to the acre compared favorably with contemporary suburban working-class housing. Two main plans were built: one with a 182-square-foot kitchen--living-room and three bedrooms and the other slightly larger with an additional parlor of 156 square feet and a fourth bedroom.[52]

Ealing was a western garden suburb of London which was described in 1881 by one writer as one of several new suburbs that featured "fair dwellings and picturesque retreats which form that lovely fringe -- the suburban homes of London."[53]

Hampstead was another garden suburb designed by the architects Parker and Unwin around 1905. The original intent of the development was that it should reintegrate the social classes, which suburbanization had earlier divided. Hampstead provided houses for working-class, middle-class, and professional people. Accordingly, prices for the houses varied widely. The houses were built of silver-gray brick with red brick trim and white window sashes. Balustraded balconies were intended to bring their occupants close to nature. Located on irregular lots on wide roads, cul-de-sacs, closed courts and

quadrangles built around a green, the development was another major attempt to break the monotony of densely built housing on gridiron street plans.[54] The garden planning movement ultimately became the basis for today's familiar suburban subdivision developments.

The Garden Homes project, although it failed as a community-owned cooperative, proved that through effective planning, low-cost housing could be built in an attractive and healthful environment. The project is also a reminder of Milwaukee's progressive Socialist municipal government. In spite of some political squabbling, Garden Homes demonstrated that direct government involvement in housing production was feasible and in some cases very desirable when the private sector was unable to meet immediate housing needs. Despite being forced to disband, the Garden Homes housing corporation always remained financially solvent demonstrating, a least in the short-run, that publicly assisted housing developments could be administered without waste and graft. Ultimately Garden Homes probably paved the way for greater public acceptance of the new Federal government sponsored low-income housing that was built in Milwaukee during the late 1930's. Milwaukee, at that time, was one of the first cities in the nation to show an interest in the possibilities of Federally-assisted public housing.

The Garden Homes cottages are architecturally interesting as thoughtfully planned, economical, working-class houses that incorporate energy conservation, low maintenance, and efficient interiors. The two-story, stuccoed Garden Homes cottages reflect the English cottage style that was common in the British Garden Cities that architect William Schuchardt visited in 1911. Unlike the old English styles favored in Great Britain, the Garden Homes cottages feature American Colonial Revival style exterior details such as the eliptically-shaped porch ceilings on models 5A, 6A, 5F and 6F. The entry porches, which are the most significant exterior architectural features of the cottages, were apparently designed to evoke the architecture and character of much larger and more expensive homes of the period -- probably much to the satisfaction of the original owners. One of the major goals of the Garden Homes planners was to provide low income housing that the residents would be proud to own and maintain. Architect William Schuchardt skillfully and economically designed nine basic exteriors that gave the cottages individuality and a picturesque character. Mass production techniques and a standardized floor plan kept building costs low.

From a purely technical standpoint, Garden Homes is an exercise in American ingenuity. Garden Homes was not the nation's first example of mass produced housing, but the use of energy and labor-saving materials to reduce costs placed the Garden Homes cottages far ahead of their time. Of particular

note was the use of a patented new material called flaxolinum keyboard sheathing as an underlayment for the exterior stucco. Made of flax straw, with molded keyways to hold the stucco applied over it, the material was apparently first used on the Garden Homes project. It was significant in that it served as both lath and insulation and was installed in large panels, thus speeding construction time over the conventional wood stick lathe and stucco technology used at the time. The material, its improper installation, or both might have been responsible for the delamination of the stucco on some of the cottages within a few decades after they were completed.

However, after more than sixty-five years, many of the cottages still retain their original stucco exteriors. Flaxolinum keyboard sheathing is apparently no longer made, although it is remarkably similar to a modern sheathing material with the trade name "graylite," which is commonly used in residential construction. The interior walls and ceilings were sheathed with another new, energy and labor saving material called spruce wood fiber insulation board, one-half-inch thick, which was finished with a skim coat of plaster veneer. This technique is similar to the present system of gypsum board finished with plaster veneer that was introduced during the late 1930's.

The Designer, William H. Schuchardt

William Herbert Schuchardt, the designer of the cottages in the Garden Homes Housing Project, was a well-known Milwaukee architect and industrialist during the first quarter of the twentieth century. William Schuchardt and his twin brother, Carl W., were born in Milwaukee on April 28, 1874. Their mother, Rosalie (Winkler), was a Milwaukee native, and their father, Louis, was a German immigrant who worked for an uncle's banking firm in New York City (Schuchardt and Gebhardt) before coming to Milwaukee. Louis later worked for more than forty years as an accountant/auditing clerk for Milwaukee's Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company.[55] The Schuchardt family lived for many years on the city's near north side at 324 West Cherry Street (razed) before moving in 1893 to a Queen Anne-style frame house that is still standing at 941 North Twenty-ninth Street. William also had another brother, Rudolph F.

William Schuchardt attended city public schools, and later studied at the University of Wisconsin in Madison between 1891 and 1893. He finished his college studies in architecture at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1895. After college, Schuchardt traveled throughout Europe for about a year and visited England, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. Returning to America in 1896, Schuchardt worked

briefly as a draftsman for Richard E. Schmidt in Chicago.[56] In 1897 Schuchardt worked as a draftsman for the well-known Milwaukee architect Alexander Eschweiler. During the early years of his career Schuchardt lived with his family at 941 North Twenty-ninth Street. In 1898 the Milwaukee City Directory lists Schuchardt as an architect, although it is known that he primarily worked at that time in Philadelphia for the architectural firm of Cope and Stewardson.[57] His design work from that date remains unknown. In 1900 Schuchardt apparently returned to Milwaukee and worked as a draftsman for architect Elmer Grey. The following year Schuchardt formed a partnership with the established Milwaukee society architect, Howland Russel. Their office was located in the 300 block of East Mason Street in the city's central business district (razed). Schuchardt's name disappeared from the 1902 and 1903 City Directories, and it is believed that during those years he had returned to the East Coast to work for several different architectural firms. Returning to Milwaukee in 1904, Schuchardt opened his own architectural practice in Room 716 of the Goldsmith Building, which was located on the southwest corner of West Wisconsin Avenue and North Jefferson Street (razed). During this period he designed many expensive residences in the period revival styles popular at that time including: the Loyal Durand residence (1906) located at 2212 North Lake Drive; the Augustus F. Chapman residence (1907) located at 2426 North Terrace Avenue; the Howard Greene residence (1907) located at 2025 North Lake Drive; and the Heilbrouner residence (1908) located at 2950 North Shepard Avenue.[58] In 1909 Schuchardt moved his office to 734 North Jefferson Street in the city's central business district (razed). Schuchardt married Gertrude Nunnemacher on Nov. 1, 1911, and he subsequently moved out of the family house in 1912 and into a large Colonial Revival-style house built in 1890 that is still standing at 930 East Knapp Street.

One of the largest buildings Schuchardt designed in the Milwaukee area is the Neo-Gothic-style Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1905 West Wisconsin Avenue, constructed in 1915. That same year Schuchardt formed a partnership with Walter W. Judell. An example of the partnership's design work is the Harrison Green residence (1917) located at 2671 North Wahl Avenue. In 1917 the firm moved to 734 N. Water Street in the city's central business district. The onset of America's involvement in World War I marked a turning point in Schuchardt's career. Building construction came to an abrupt halt in Milwaukee as the nation concentrated on the production of goods for the war effort. With little architectural work available, in June of 1918, Schuchardt took a job as the Vice-President, Secretary, and General Manager of Pelton Steel Co., a south side Milwaukee steel casting firm that employed about 200 workers in the production of military-related goods.[59] In addition to his position at Pelton Steel, between 1919 and 1921 Schuchardt served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Western Iron Stores Co. located at 555 North

Plankinton Avenue (razed). Schuchardt's partnership with Judell was apparently dissolved after they designed the Theodore F. Vogel residence in 1919 which is located at 2219 North Lake Drive. Around 1918 Schuchardt also began to assume duties on a public housing commission created by Milwaukee Mayor Daniel W. Hoan to study the city's working-class housing shortage, a condition that was worsened by the World War I construction lull.

Schuchardt was a staunch supporter of cooperatively-owned or so-called co-partnership housing. Writing in an annual Milwaukee building inspector's report published about 1920 Schuchardt stated, "Co-partnership housing has come to stay in Europe because it offers the wage earners a better bargain than any other scheme yet proposed. Co-partnership housing in Europe is a success, and labor leaders, philanthropists, and employers look forward confidently to a time when tenements and ugly monotonous workingmen's districts will be considered convincing evidences of barbarism. The remarkable results achieved by these co-partnership housing corporations hold a clear and unevadable challenge to us in America. Will we accept the challenge or confess ourselves unequal to the task? What will we in Milwaukee do about it? Have we adequate vision, have we sufficient initiative and the desire for better things or will we be content to merely muddle along?"[60] Schuchardt's interest in cooperative housing dates to at least 1911 when he made a trip to England and Germany to study several housing cooperatives based on the planning principles advocated by Ebenezer Howard in his 1901 book, Garden Cities of Tomorrow. Schuchardt's European trip undoubtedly influenced his earliest-known design work for a Garden City-type development, an entry that was submitted in 1913 to the City Club of Chicago's international competition to address inadequacies in residential land use planning.[61]

Schuchardt was one of the key figures in the development of the Garden Homes Housing Project in Milwaukee, the nation's first municipally-sponsored, cooperatively-owned housing development. In 1921 Schuchardt designed the nine basic cottage prototypes that comprise the 93-building Garden Homes Housing Project, which was built between 1921 and 1923. Schuchardt became president of the board of directors of the Garden Homes Co., which was created by state legislation to oversee the administration of the housing project.

Schuchardt was a civic-minded individual who also served in Milwaukee as secretary of the Columbia Hospital Board of directors, and as a trustee of the former Milwaukee Downer College between 1912 and 1925. An avid art collector, Schuchardt was a director of Milwaukee's Layton Art Gallery (defunct) between 1915 and 1925, and the Milwaukee Art Institute (razed) from 1910 to 1925. In memory of his wife, Gertrude, who died in 1919, Schuchardt donated to the Milwaukee Art Institute his collection of etchings that included works by

major artists such as Rembrandt, Millet, Corot, Whistler, and Durer.[62] This collection has since passed to the successor institution, the Milwaukee Art Museum. In 1923 the widowed Schuchardt moved out of the large house at 930 East Knapp Street and back into the family home at 941 North Twenty-ninth Street with his mother, Rosalie. By 1924 Schuchardt had left his job with Pelton Steel to become the vice-president of Durant Manufacturing Co., a builder of counting machines located at 1929 North Buffum Street. In that same year Schuchardt was appointed by the Common Council to the Milwaukee Public Land Commission, of which he became president.

In 1925 Schuchardt's dream of a model cooperative housing project was shattered when dissatisfied Garden Homes' residents demanded and won individual ownership of their houses. Responding to criticism of the project, Schuchardt was quoted as saying, "I am through trying to do something helpful for anybody." Two years later in 1927 at the age of 53, Schuchardt left Milwaukee and was never again active in Milwaukee public or professional circles. His mother, Rosalie, went to live with another son, Carl W., who lived at 3508 North Prospect Avenue in suburban Shorewood, and the family house at 941 North Twenty-ninth Street was apparently sold.[63]

After leaving Milwaukee, Schuchardt briefly became a Professor of City Planning at his alma mater, Cornell University. Nine years after the death of his first wife, Schuchardt married Mildred Fraser on Nov. 17, 1928. By 1929 he had moved to Southern California where he worked with architects David Allison and Sumner Spaulding for about 12 years. Schuchardt served on the Los Angeles City Plan Commission between 1938 and 1948, and he was on the Board of Governors of the Los Angeles County Museum between 1944 and at least 1955. He was elected an honorary member of the American Institute of Planners in 1949. Schuchardt died at the age of 84 on Thursday, April 17, 1958. His last known home address was in Arcadia, California, an eastern suburb of Los Angeles.[64]

FOOTNOTES

(Note: Footnote entries for the Milwaukee Leader, Milwaukee Journal, Milwaukee Sentinel, Milwaukee Telegram, and Wisconsin News do not have page numbers because they were clippings found without page numbers at the City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau in the "Housing" microfilm collection.)

[1]Milwaukee Journal, Feb. 20, 1938.

[2]Donald F. Schwamb, Milwaukee County Landmarks and Architectural Record (Unpublished manuscript compiled for the Dept. of City Development), p. 33.

[3]Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan, Vol. I (Madison: State Historical Society, 1986), Government chapter, pp. 1-2.

[4]A Decent Home. The Report of the President's Committee on Urban Housing (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 54.

[5]Milwaukee Sentinel, April 20, 1919.

[6]H. Russell Austin, The Milwaukee Story (Milwaukee: The Milwaukee Journal, 1946), p. 170.

[7]A Decent Home, p. 54.

[8]Milwaukee Journal, March 4, 1920.

[9]A Few Facts About Housing (Pamphlet published by Milwaukee Housing Commission, ca. 1920), pp. 17-23.

[10]Milwaukee Leader, May 13, 1919.

[11]Articles of Organization, Garden Homes Corporation (City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau Library collection).

[12]Milwaukee Journal, March 4, 1920.

[13]Milwaukee Journal, April 23, 1922.

[14]Garden Homes Co. Prospectus (City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau Library collection).

[15]Milwaukee Journal, June 24, 1921.

[16]Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 9, 1920.

[17]Wisconsin News, Dec. 8, 1920.

[18]Milwaukee Leader, Nov. 11, 1920.

[19]Wisconsin News, Dec. 8, 1920.

[20]Garden Homes Housing Project. Unpublished Manuscript by Helen Terry from Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau, pp. 2-3.

[21]Milwaukee Leader, Dec. 13, 1919.

[22]Milwaukee Sentinel, June 16, 1922.

[23]Milwaukee Leader, Nov. 26, 1924.

[24]Milwaukee Journal, Nov. 1, 1922.

[25]Milwaukee Leader, Sept. 10, 1921.

[26]Milwaukee Leader, Sept. 30, 1924.

[27]Helen Terry, Garden Homes Housing Project (Unpublished manuscript written for Milwaukee Municipal Reference Library, 1934), p. 6.

[28]Milwaukee Journal, May 25, 1919; Annexation Activities of the City of Milwaukee, unpublished manuscript by Arthur W. Werba, c. 1927 from Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau, pp. 1-10.

[29]Milwaukee Journal, Feb. 20, 1938.

[30]City of Milwaukee Annexation Map, Dept. of City Development reference collection; Milwaukee Journal, Feb. 26, 1924.

[31]Milwaukee Journal, Dec. 8, 1925.

[32]Milwaukee Journal, March 11, 1925.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., March 17, 1925.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid., Feb. 20, 1938.

[37]Milwaukee Leader, July 17, 1925.

[38]Milwaukee Journal, Feb. 20, 1938.

[39]H. Russell Austin, The Milwaukee Story, p. 171; Milwaukee City Directories, 1925-1930.

[40]Milwaukee Telegram, Nov. 5, 1922.

[41]Kerstein, Edward. Milwaukee's All American Mayor. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., pp. 115-116.

[42]Garden Homes Co. Prospectus.

[43]Laws of Wisconsin, 1919. (n.p., an official record of the Wisconsin State Legislature), p. 590.

[44]Ibid., p. 588.

[45]Ebenezer Howard, Garden Cities of Tomorrow (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1946), p. 26.

[46]Daniel Schaffer, Garden Cities for America (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), p. 149.

[47]Carol A. Christensen, The American Garden City and the New Towns Movement (Ann Arbor, Michigan: U. MI. Research Press, 1986), p. 2.

[48]John Burnett, A Social History of Housing (London: David and Charles, 1971), p. 177.

[49]Ibid., p. 202.

[50]A Few Facts About Housing, p. 17.

[51]John Burnett, A Social History of Housing, pp. 179-180.

[52]Ibid., pp. 178-179.

[53]Ibid., p. 189.

[54]Ibid., pp. 203-204

[55]William George Bruce, History of Milwaukee, Vol. III (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1922), p. 767.

[56]American Architects Directory (New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1955), p. 492.

[57]Ibid.

[58]Milwaukee Building Permits.

[59]Bruce, History of Milwaukee, Vol. III, p. 767.

[60]A Few Facts About Housing, p. 14.

[61]Alfred Yeomans, City Residential Land Develoment (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916).

[62]Bruce, History of Milwaukee, Vol. III, p. 768.

[63]Milwaukee City Directories.

[64]American Architects Directory, p. 492; Who Was Who in America, Vol. 3 (Chicago: A. H. Marquis Co., 1960), p. 764; Milwaukee Journal, April 18, 1958, p. 2, part 2.

Archeological Potential

No systematic survey has been undertaken within the Garden Homes Historic District boundaries and no archeological deposits have been reported, therefore the likelihood of significant archeological deposits remains unassessed.

Preservation Activity

The nomination of the Garden Homes Historic District is part of an ongoing systematic architectural and historical survey project in the City of Milwaukee. The nomination is only one element in the identification, evaluation and registration of significant cultural resources in the city and is part of the overall resource planning and preservation process. The nomination enjoys the support of the Garden Homes Neighborhood Association.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS): ____ See continuation sheet

___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
X Local government
___University
___Other
Specific repository:
Historic Preservation Commission
809 North Broadway
Milwaukee, WI 53202

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 16 acres

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	1/6	4/2/3/0/0/0	4/7/7/1/7/8/0	B	1/6	4/2/3/0/0/0	4/7/7/2/0/4/0
C	1/6	4/2/3/1/8/0	4/7/7/2/0/3/0	D	1/6	4/2/3/2/8/0	4/7/7/1/8/4/0
				E	1/6	4/2/3/1/6/0	4/7/7/1/6/2/0

___ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

X See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

X See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Jakubovich/Les Vollmert
organization Dept. of City Development Date December 6, 1989
street & number 809 North Broadway telephone (414) 223-5705
city or town Milwaukee state WI zip code 53202

REFERENCES

Books

American Architects Directory. New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1955.

Austin, H. Russell. The Milwaukee Story. Milwaukee: The Milwaukee Journal, 1946.

Bruce, William George. History of Milwaukee, Vol. III. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1922.

Burnett, John. A Social History of Housing. London: David and Charles, 1971.

Christensen, Carol A. The American Garden City and the New Towns Movement. Ann Arbor, Michigan: U. MI. Research Press, 1986.

Colean, Miles L. American Housing. New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1944.

Creese, Walter L. The Search for Environment. The Garden City: Before and After. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1966.

A Decent Home. The Report of President's Committee on Urban Housing. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969.

Howard, Ebenezer. Garden Cities of Tomorrow. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1946.

Kerstein, Edward. Milwaukee's All-American Mayor. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1965.

Laws of Wisconsin, 1919. Official record of the State Legislature.

Schaffer, Daniel. Garden Cities for America. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982.

Schnapper, M. B. Public Housing in America. New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1939.

Still, Bayrd. Milwaukee. The History of a City. Madison, Wisconsin: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1948.

Who Was Who in America, Vol. 3 Chicago: A. N. Marquis Co., 1960.

Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan. Madison, Wisconsin: State Historical Society, 1986.

Yeomans, Alfred B. City Residential Land Development. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916.

Periodicals

Milwaukee City Directories, 1885-1930.

Milwaukee Journal. May 25, 1919; March 4, 1920; April 23, 1922; June 24, 1921; Sept. 7, 1921; Nov. 1, 1922; Feb. 26, 1924; March 11, 1925; Feb. 20, 1938; April 18, 1958; Dec. 8, 1925.

Milwaukee Leader. May 13, 1919; Dec. 13, 1919; Nov. 11, 1920; Sept. 10, 1921; Sept. 30, 1924; Nov. 26, 1924; July 17, 1925.

Milwaukee Sentinel. Sept. 9, 1920; June 16, 1922.

Milwaukee Telegram. Nov. 5, 1922.

Wisconsin News. Dec. 8, 1920.

Pamphlets

A Few Facts About Housing. Pamphlet published by Milwaukee Housing Commission, ca. 1920. City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau collection.

Report of the Housing Commission. Pamphlet issued by the Milwaukee Housing Commission in 1918. City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau Collection.

Unpublished Manuscripts

Cady, David Barry. The Influence of the Garden City Ideal on American Housing and Planning Reform. 1900-1940. Doctoral thesis submitted to the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, June, 1970.

Schwamb, Donald F. Milwaukee County Landmarks and Architectural Record. Unpublished manuscript compiled for the Department of City Development.

Terry, Helen. Garden Homes Housing Project. Unpublished manuscript, 1934. City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau Collection.

Werba, Arthur W. Annexation Activities of the City of Milwaukee. Unpublished manuscript, c. 1927. City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau Collection.

Miscellaneous Sources

Articles of Organization, Garden Homes Housing Corporation. City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau Collection.

City of Milwaukee Annexation Map. Department of City Development files.

City of Milwaukee Building Permits.

Garden Homes Blueprints. Principal elevation of each Garden Homes cottage. Milwaukee County Historical Society Reference Library, Blueprint Collection.

Garden Homes Company Prospectus. c. 1920. Pamphlet, City of Milwaukee Legislative Reference Bureau Collection.

Milwaukee County Historical Society Reference Library photograph collection, Garden Homes file.

Milwaukee Public Library Local History Room photograph collection. Garden Homes file.

Boundary Description

The boundary description for the Garden Homes Historic District is as follows:

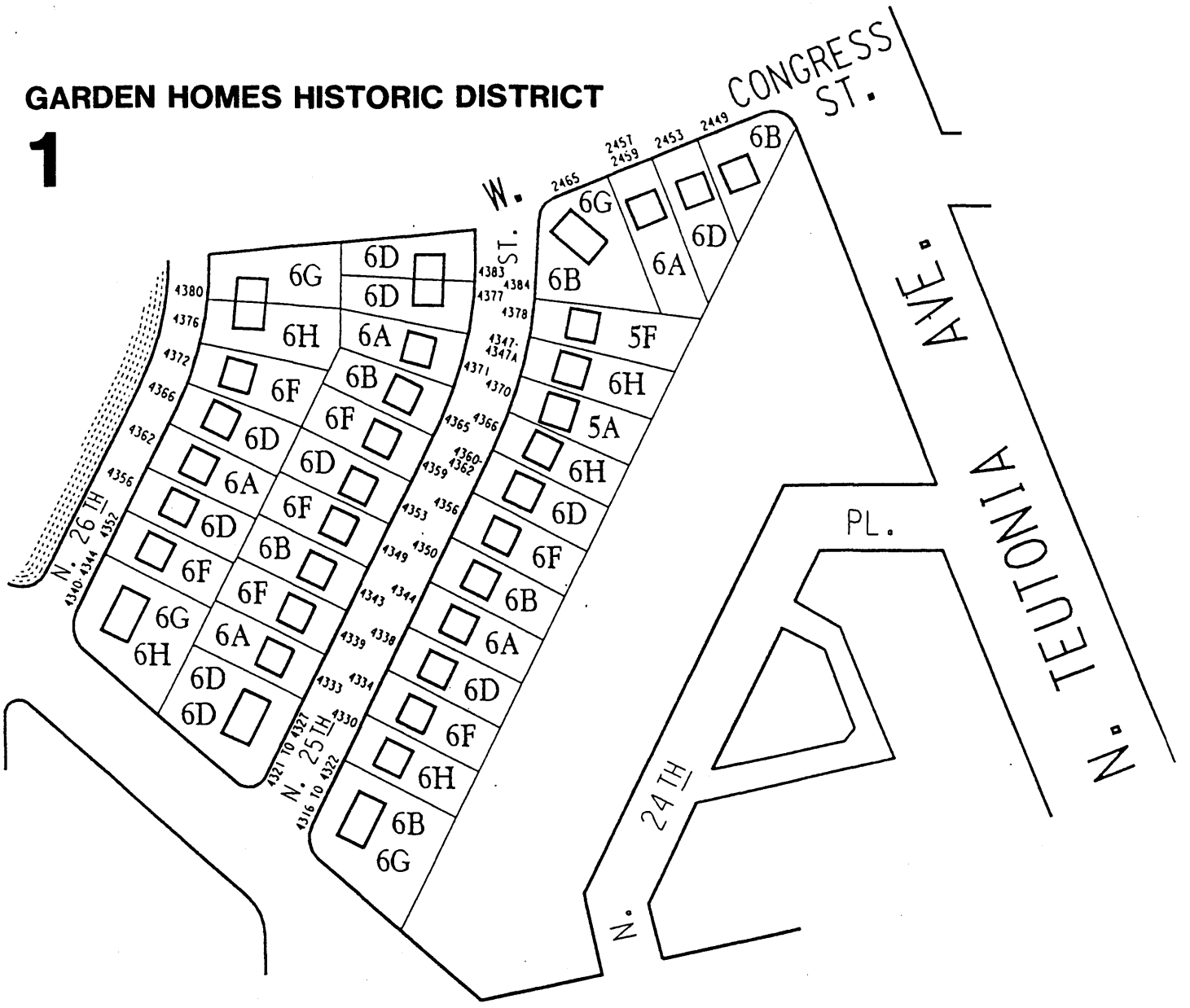
Beginning at the intersection of the north curb line of Wesst Atkinson Avenue and the east property line of 4316-4322 North Twenty-fifth Street; then northeasterly along the rear prooperty lines of 4316 to 4378 North 25th Street and 2449 to 2459 West Congress Avenue to the intersection of the south curb line of West Congress Avenue and the west curb line of North Teutonia Avenue; then west to the intersection of a line projected from the rear property line of 4402 North Twenty-fifth Street; then northwesterly along the rear property line of 4402 to 4482 North Twenty-fifth Street to the south curb line of West Ruby Avenue; then west to the rear property line of 4485 North Twenty-sixth Street; then south along the rear property line of 4485 to 4447 North Twenty-sixth Street and the west property line of 2614 West Port Sunlight Way, then across West Port Sunlight Way and along the rear property lines of 4407 to 4369 North Twenty-sixth Street to the north curb line of West Atkinson Avenue, then southeasterly to the point of beginning in the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin.

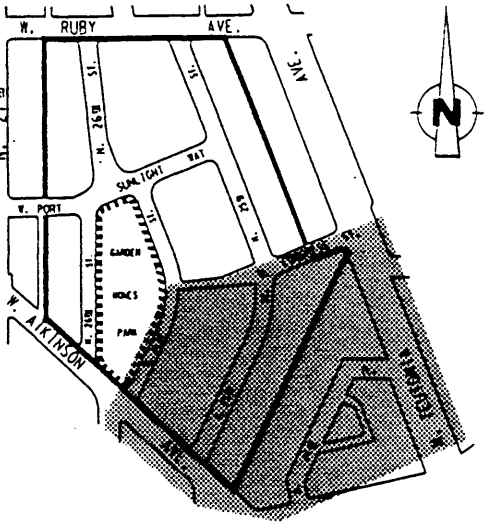
Boundary Justification

The district encompasses all 105 original units in the Garden Homes project and is distinguished from its environs by the visual cohesiveness of its village-like atmosphere of small, stuccoed, two-story cottages of uniform design located on a curving, semi-radial street plan arranged around a central boulevard-like park. The adjacent neighborhoods stand in sharp contrast to the district and are composed of mid-twentieth century, ranch style, single-story, tract houses located on a gridiron street plan.

GARDEN HOMES HISTORIC DISTRICT

1



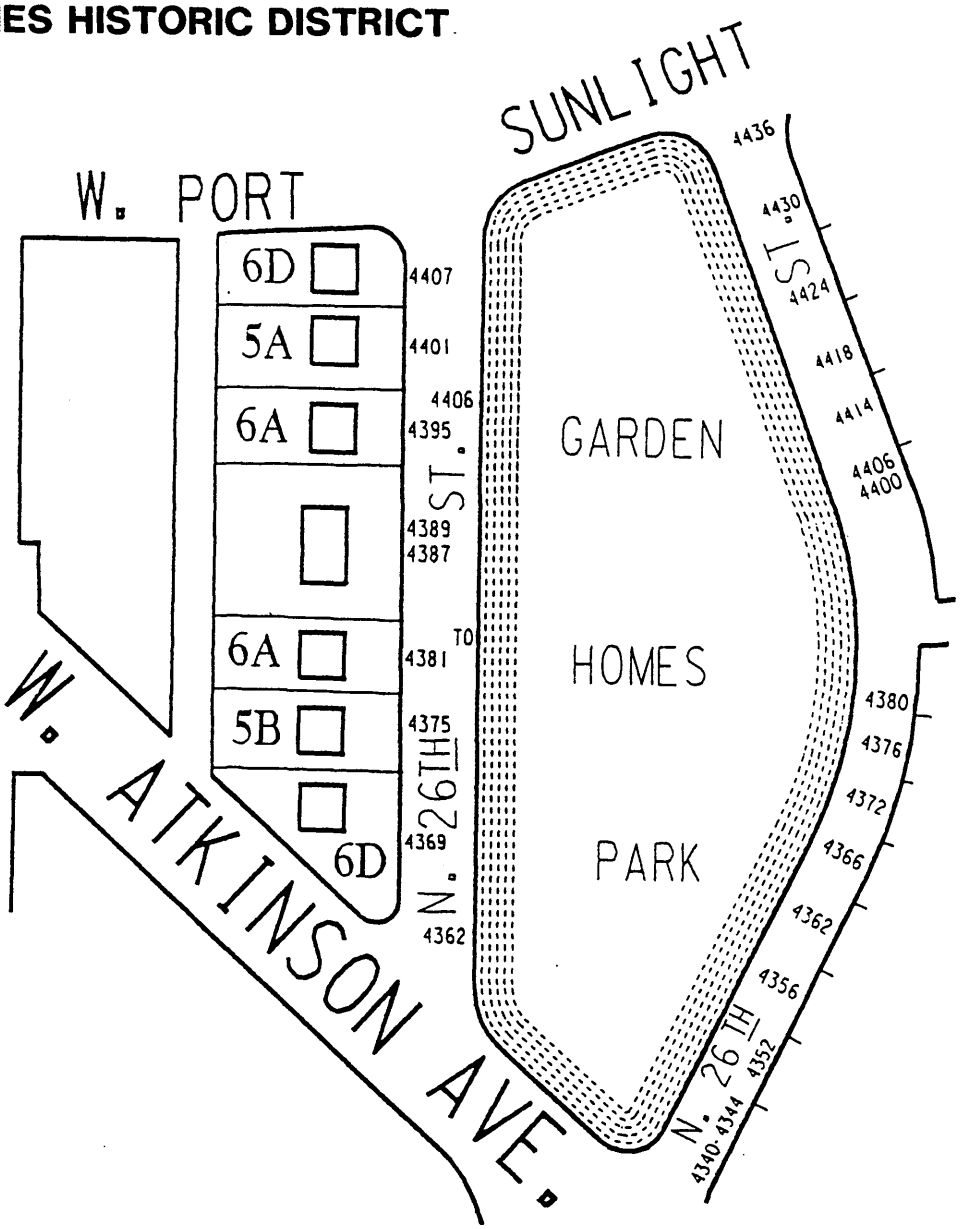


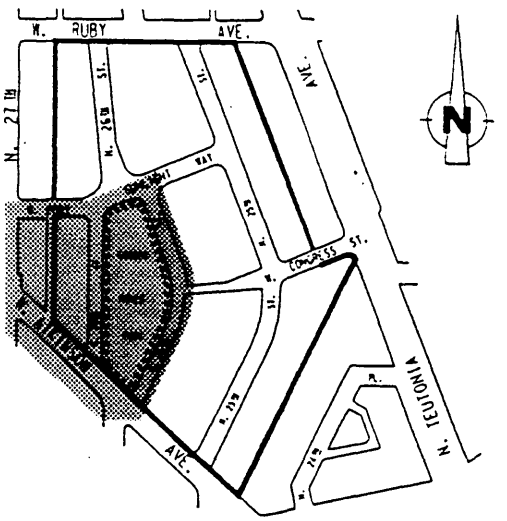
NUMBER AND LETTER NEXT TO EACH UNIT DENOTES ARCHITECT'S MODEL NUMBER DESCRIBED IN DETAIL IN SECTION 7 OF THE NRHP REGISTRATION FORM

NO SCALE

GARDEN HOMES HISTORIC DISTRICT

2



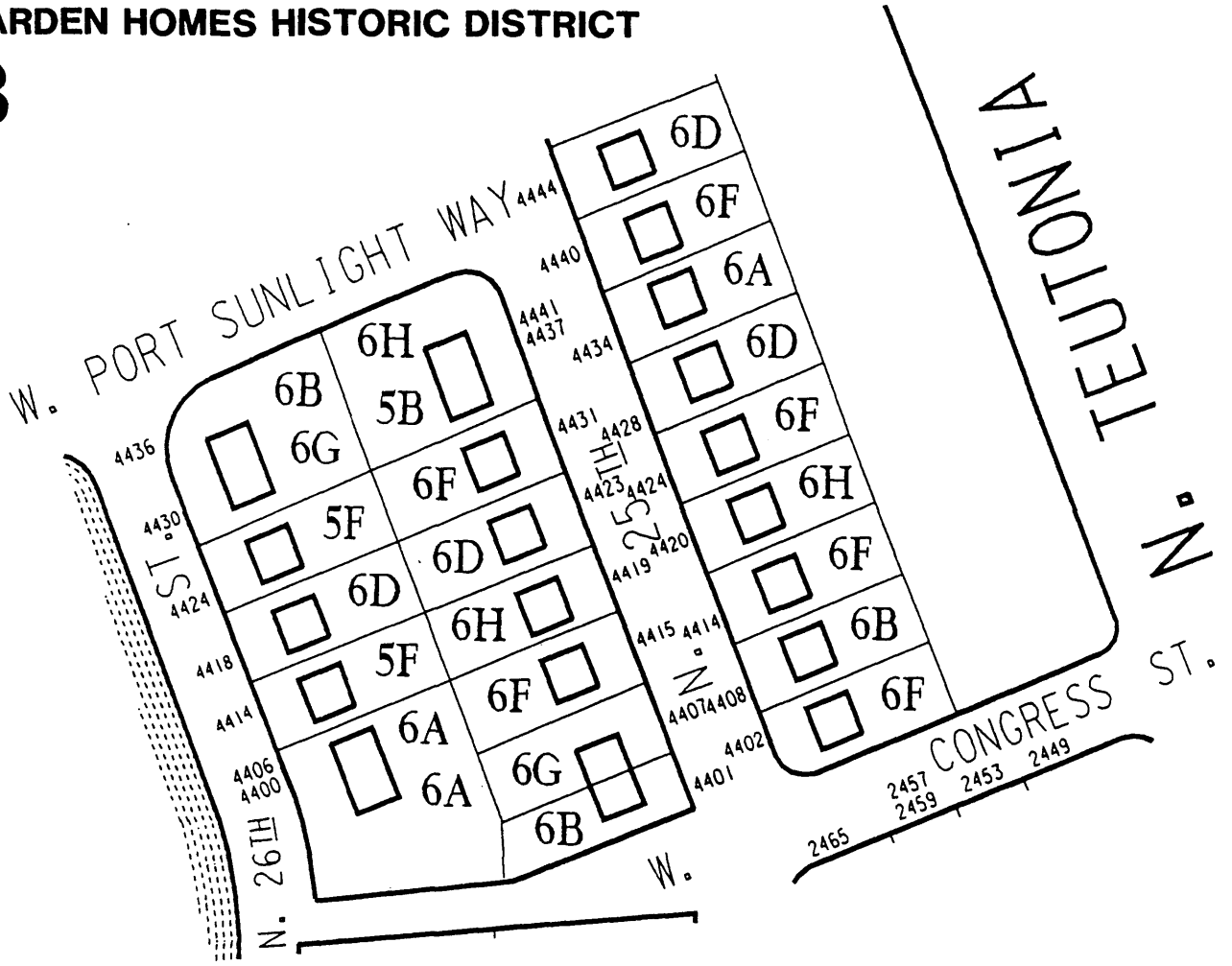


NUMBER AND LETTER NEXT TO EACH UNIT DENOTES ARCHITECT'S MODEL NUMBER DESCRIBED IN DETAIL IN SECTION 7 OF THE NRHP REGISTRATION FORM

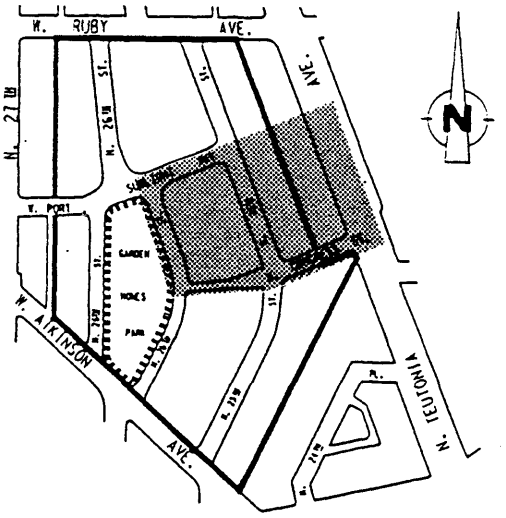
NO SCALE

GARDEN HOMES HISTORIC DISTRICT

3



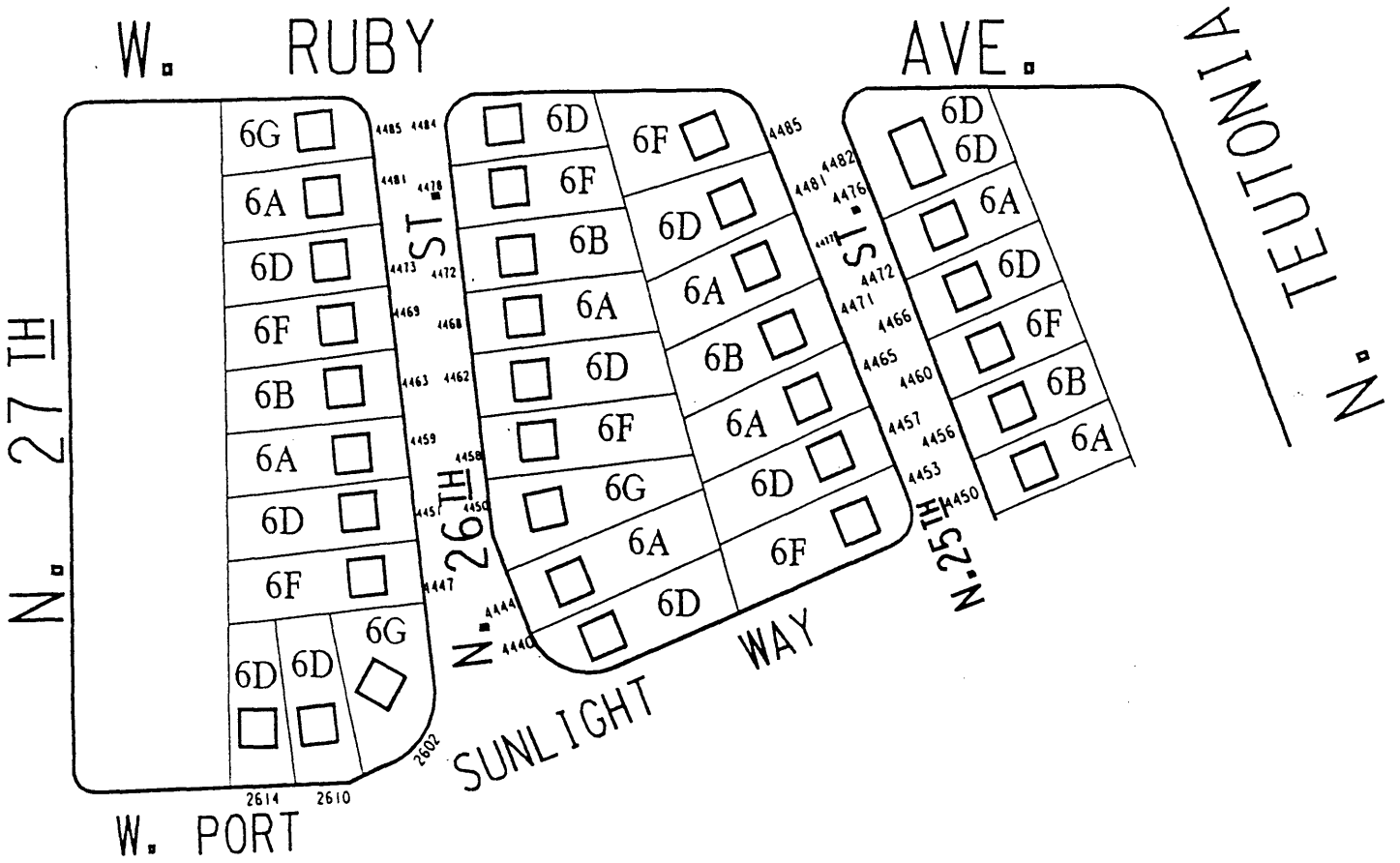
NUMBER AND LETTER NEXT TO EACH UNIT DENOTES ARCHITECT'S MODEL NUMBER DESCRIBED IN DETAIL IN SECTION 7 OF THE NRHP REGISTRATION FORM

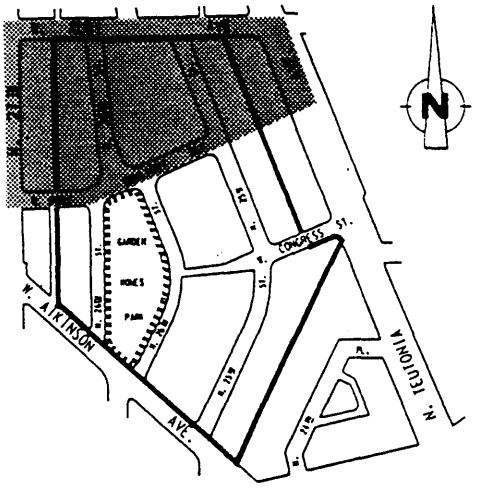


NO SCALE

GARDEN HOMES HISTORIC DISTRICT

4

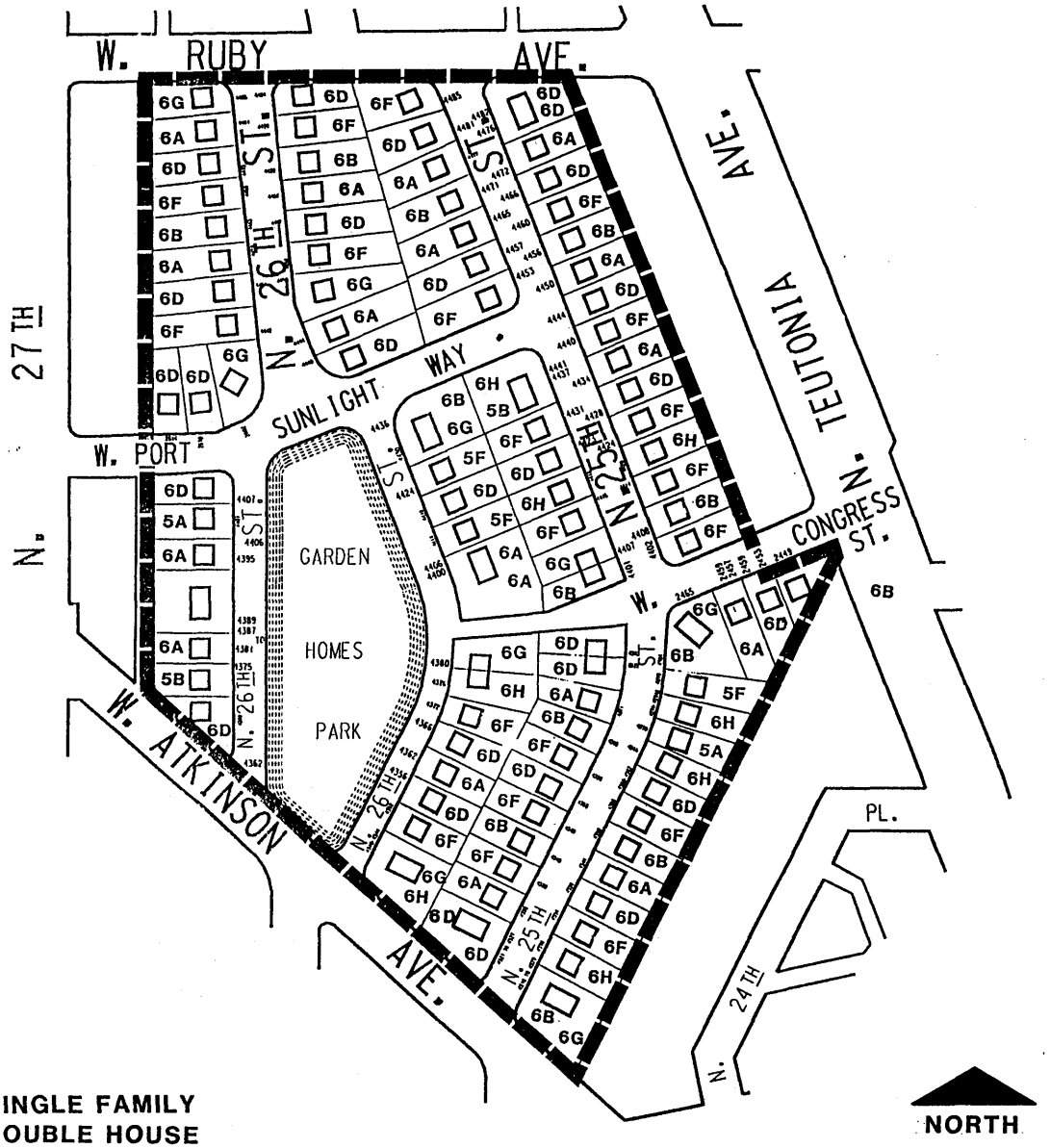




NUMBER AND LETTER NEXT TO EACH UNIT DENOTES ARCHITECT'S MODEL NUMBER DESCRIBED IN DETAIL IN SECTION 7 OF THE NRHP REGISTRATION FORM

NO SCALE

GARDEN HOMES HISTORIC DISTRICT



□ = SINGLE FAMILY
□= DOUBLE HOUSE

NUMBER AND LETTER NEXT TO EACH UNIT
DENOTES ARCHITECTS MODEL NUMBER DESCRIBED
IN DETAIL IN SECTION 7 OF THE NRHP REGISTRATION FORM

105 ORIGINAL UNITS
93 ORIGINAL FREESTANDING BUILDINGS