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## 7 DESCRIPTION

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#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Washburn-Fair Oaks "Mansion" District is comprised of seven buildings which are situated adjacent to the northwestern boundary of Washburn-Fair Oaks Park in south Minneapolis. Because of its location near to the central business district of Minneapolis as well as its relative environmental/geographic separation from the working community, this area was chosen by several of the first generation prominent Minneapolitans for the construction of their large mansion-type residences. Unfortunately, these first generation mansions (with the exception of the E.A. Merrill House) were razed during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Those which exist today are former residences of the second generation of the city's prominent businessmen, millowners, financiers, etc.

The first generation mansions were replaced by the park itself, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the First Christian Church, and the Fair Oaks Apartments. The park comprises what was formerly the two block (ten acre) site of the William D. Washburn Mansion, constructed in 1883 and razed in 1924. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts now occupies another two block (ten acre) site upon which pioneer miller Dorilus Morrison had erected his Villa Rosa in 1858 (razed 1911). The Clinton Morrison mansion to the immediate east of the Villa Rosa was constructed in 1873 and razed for the construction of the Fair Oaks Apartments in 1936. The former C.A. Pillsbury house was constructed in 1883 across Twenty-second Street from the present Pillsbury Houses; it was razed in 1937, leaving the land vacant until the construction of the First Christian Church in 1954.

The second generation mansions which remain comprise a tightly-knit complex of seven buildings, separated by no intrusive elements. All have retained a high degree of original design integrity although functions have been changed from residential to commercial and institutional. Each buildings may be said to be a good representation of the architectural styles of the era: the two Crosby Houses and the Farrington House are examples of the Georgian Revival mode; the two Pillsbury Houses are examples of the Medieval Revival mode; the Gale House is Renaissance Revival in conception; and the Merrill House represents the fanciful complexities of the late Victorian "brownstone" era.

#### LUTHER FARRINGTON HOUSE - 2100 Stevens Avenue South

Constructed in 1906 by building contractors Pike and Cook according to designs by Minneapolis architect William Channing Whitney, the Luther Farrington House is a two and one-half storey brick residence. It is executed in the Georgian Revival mode popular at the turn of the century, and features a dormered gambrel roof, end chimneys, formal entrance portico, and symmetrical facade arrangement. The building, which measures approximately seventy feet by thirtyeight feet (a forty by ten foot addition was made to the rear of the building in 1931), is set approximately forty feet back from the street on a spacious lot. The Farrington House was erected at a cost of \$19,000. It has been adapted for use by the Minneapolis Hearing Society, which purchased the property in 1960; the exterior and much of the interior retains original design integrity.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1884-1912	BUILDER/ARCH	HITECT	
<u>X</u> 1900-			POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)
1700-1799 X_1800-1899		ÉNGINEERING EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	MUSIC PHILOSOPHY	THEATER TRANSPORTATION
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#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Washburn-Fair Oaks "Mansion" District contains a significant concentration of residences built at the turn of the century by the second generation of Minneapolis' prominent developers. These residences exemplify the fashionable stylistic modes of architecture of the period and were designed by important local architects: four of the designs are by William Channing Whitney, two by Ernest Kennedy, and one by the firm of Hewitt and Brown. The buildings and grounds have retained a significant degree of integrity although the uses of the buildings have changed from residential to commercial and institutional.

The following is a brief summary of significant historical figures involved in the development of the district:

(1) Mrs. Florence A Pettibone purchased the block which was platted as Pond and Pettibone's Addition in 1903. This block now contains the two Pillsbury Houses, the two Crosby Houses, and the Farrington House. Of importance is the covenants placed on the property which restricted the Pillsburys, Crosbys, and Farringtons in the development of their properties. (These covenants no longer apply as they were not renewed after their forty-year restriction period.)

The covenant, which was placed in the deeds at the time Mrs. Pettibone sold the undeveloped property, reads as follows:

If each or any of said lots are improved or built upon, at any time during said period of ten (10) years, at the same time shall not be improved or built upon during said period except in the manner following, and not otherwise, to wit --

- 1. By the erection of a new modern dwelling-house, at a cost of not less than ten thousand (10,000) dollars, the outer walls of which shall be of stone, stone veneer, brick or brick veneer; but this shall not prevent the erection of stables, or other buildings in connection with said dwelling-house.
- 2. Said dwelling house is not to be what is known as a double house, apartment house or flat building, nor of any character or description except that of a private residence, and not more than one dwelling-house is to be erected on each lot.

(see continuation sheet - page 6)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Building Permits, Minneapolis Department of Inspections.

Atwater, Isaac, History of Minneapolis, 1893.

Torbert, Donald, Significant Architecture in the History of Minneapolis, 1969.

Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, <u>Washburn-Fair Oaks: A Study for Preservation</u>, 1976.

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Washburn-Fair Oaks "Mansion" District

CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER 7	PAGE 1	

JOHN CROSBY HOUSE - 2104 Stevens Avenue South

Constructed in 1904 by building contractor C.F. Haglin according to designs by Minneapolis architect William Channing Whitney, the John Crosby House is a two and one half storey red brick veneer residence. It is executed in the Georgian Revival mode, and although it features many characteristic Georgian design motifs, the principal facade is assymmetrical in nature. This facade has a wooden columned portico which is centrally placed on the first storey. To the left (south) of the entry bay a gable rises to the third (attic) level; to the right are two dormers. The Crosby House is placed approximately forty feet back from the street on a sloping lot; it measures forty feet by forty-four feet in plan. (In 1916 an eighteen by eighteen addition was made to the rear of the dwelling; This addition is sheathed in brick veneer similar to that used in the main structure.) Construction cost was initally \$14,000.

The John Crosby House is one of four residences in a cluster which were owned and occupied by the Northwestern Theological Seminary (after purchase from original owners) until 1969. At that time the properties were acquired by the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts. In 1969 the John Crosby House was converted from a single-family type dwelling into a dormitory. It is now owned and occupied by the Chrysalis Center. No alterations have been made to the exterior of the building.

#### CAROLINE CROSBY HOUSE - 2105 First Avenue South

Constructed in 1906 by building contractor C.F. Haglin according to designs by Minneapolis architect William Channing Whitney, the Caroline Crosby House is a two and one half storey red brick residence. It is immediately across from the rear of the John Crosby House and is strongly related in terms of materials, scale, and the implementation of the Georgian Revival mode. The principal facade is symmetrical with a central Ionic portico supporting an unpedimented architrave with iron balustrade. The entry door is flanked by sidelights. First and second storey windows throughout are of a six-over-one pane configuration. Directly above the central portico is a large Palladian window. At the roof level, the central bay is highlighted by a pedimented gable with inset round window. This is flanked on either side by a dormer with broken pediment and round arched window. Eave lines are dentillated throughout.

The Caroline Crosby House measures approximately forty-two feet by fiftyseven feet and is set approximately forty feet back from the street on its lot. It was erected at a cost of \$17,000. In 1951 the single-family dwelling was converted into a rooming house, and later occupied by the Children's Theatre Company. It is presently owned by Carmichael-Lynch Advertising, Inc. and is used as offices. The exterior of the Caroline Crosby House remains in an unaltered state.

(see continuation sheet - page 2)

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Washburn-Fair Oaks "Mansion" District

CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	7	PAGE <sup>2</sup>
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CHARLES S. PILLSBURY HOUSE - 100 East Twenty-second Street

Constructed at a cost of \$300,000 in 1912 by the H.N. Leighton Company according to designs by Minneapolis architects Hewitt and Brown, the Charles S. Pillsbury House is a two and one half storey mansion of reinforced concrete and random-jointed gray Bedford limestone. It is situated on a prominent corner lot; the building measures approximately eighty-seven feet by seventy-eight feet. The design is representative of the English Gothic style influences which experienced a revival in American domestic architecture between the 1890s and the 1920s.

The grounds surrounding the Pillsbury residence are enclosed on two sides by a low balustraded wall of stone. Two lions with shields guard the main entrance in the wall atop tall, stone pillars. The exterior is further enhanced by two scrolled buttress arches and lanterns of wrought iron which appear at the secondary entrance to the grounds.

A three-storey entrance bay is centrally located on the building's facade. The round-arched door, which features grille work, is covered by a small porch. The rounded roof of the porch is supported by columns and, over the entablature the semi-circular eave space, displays a cartouche and bas-relief. Above the porch a polygonal bay window projects and is topped by a parapet wall. A shaped gable completes the entrance bay.

Each of the three stories of the Pillsbury residence is delineated from the next by a horizontal string course. At one corner of the building a singlestorey polygonal bay with grouped windows is topped by a parapet wall featuring bas-relief panels.

The large leaded windows of the first and second stories are divided by transoms and mullions and contain painted glass medallions from 17th century castles and churches. The windows on the upper half-storey feature hood molds.

The roof of the residence is of the broadside gabled type with numerous secondary gables occurring around the structure. These gables are straightsided with single steps at each of the lower corners. At the roof-ends, polygonal chimney stacks rise between twin gables.

The interiors of the Pillsbury mansion were designed by Charles Duveen of London. They feature an abundance of fine imported woods and decorative glass panes, carved and painted by hand craftsmen. Particularly distinctive are the carved quarter-sawn oak staircase in the vestibule and the massive carved oak fireplace in the reception room to the right of the entrance hall. The floors throughout the first storey are of pegged teakwood. In the library a sculptured stone fireplace from London dates to the Great Fire of London in 1660.

(see continuation sheet - page 3)

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Washburn-Fair Oaks "Mansi	ion" District				
CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	7	PAGE	3	

The majority of the glass panes and medallions reflect biblical scenes and Christian symbolism. All are hand painted.

The Charles S. Pillsbury House was later occupied by the Northwestern Theological Seminary. It was acquired in 1969 by the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts. The present owners are Carmichael-Lynch Advertising, Inc. who have converted the building into office use. The interiors, as well as the exterior, have been carefully preserved.

### ALFRED F. PILLSBURY HOUSE - 116 East Twenty-second Street

Constructed at a cost of \$135,000 in 1903 by F.G. McMillan according to designs of architect Ernest Kennedy, the Alfred F. Pillsbury House is a two and one half storey mansion of local rock-faced limestone. It is situated on a prominent corner lot; and the building itself measures approximately seventy feet by fifty-seven feet.

The Pillsbury House reflects the English Tudor Gothic style which enjoyed renewed popularity in American domestic architecture from the early 1880s through the 1920s. This influence is most apparent by the projecting bays and gables which are repeated in the exterior composition.

The facade of the mansion is articulated by a projecting two-storey entrance bay topped by a balustrade. This bay is set slightly off-center producing an asymmetrical effect, often characteristic of English Gothic. On the main storey two four-center pointed arches are set perpendicular to each other and form an entry way, one leading to the door and the other to a terrace.

The abundance of window space is a prominent feature of the Pillsbury house. The windows are either single cross windows or groupings of windows. The upper section of each is leaded into twenty-five tiny lights. The windows are framed by moldings. String courses, the transoms and the mullions of the windows tie the elements of the structure into a unified whole that is simple, solid and dignified.

The roof of the structure is of the broadside gabled type. The gable ends are straight-sided with the exception of a single step, or "elbow," at each of the lower corners. An end chimney of clustered rectangular shafts rises from one of the gable ends. In addition to the main roof gables, other gables of various sizes and shapes interrupt the cornice molding. A gable over the entrance bay resembles those of the main roof. Dormers on both sides of the entrance gable are round-arched and crested by pinnacle ornaments.

Few permanent changes have been made within the interior of the house and, in spite of its adaptation from residential to office use, the house retains its spacious elegance without sacrificing the warmth and intimacy of the interior spaces.

(see continuation sheet - page 4)

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The Alfred Pillsbury House, along with the Charles Pillsbury House and the John and Caroline Crosby Houses, was occupied by the Northwestern Theological Seminary for twenty-eight years beginning in 1941. In 1969 these four houses were purchased by the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts. The Alfred Pillsbury House is now owned and occupied by The Hodne/Stageberg Partners, Inc./Architects and Planners, and serves as offices and design studios. With the exception of the enclosure of the porte-cochere, the exterior retains original design integrity.

#### EDWARD C. GALE HOUSE - 2115 Stevens Avenue South

The Edward C. Gale House is situated on a prominent corner lot affording an unobstructed view of Washburn-Fair Oaks Park. Although there exists no building permit for the construction of the house, it is estimated that it was built in 1912, as Mr. Gale is listed in the 1913 City Directories as living at this address; also there is no available record as to the name of the building contractor or the cost of the construction. The architect, however, is known to be Ernest Kennedy (architect of the Alfred Pillsbury House).

The Gale House is an example of the Renaissance Revival style, although assymmetrical in plan and facade treatment. It is constructed of buff Bedford limestone which has been cut into rectangular blocks. The principal entry is located on the Stevens Avenue facade, and is graced by a columned portico with balustraded balcony. The Twenty-second Street facade boasts full-storey round arched windows on the first level; small balconies supported by ornamental stone brackets are found at the second floor level. Windows, with the exception of the large arched windows on the Twenty-second Street facade are rectangular and capped with trabeated cornices. A low hipped roof over the attic storey is hidden by a stone balustrade.

The Gale House remained as a single-family residence until the deaths of both Mr. and Mrs. Gale in 1943. At that time the property was purchased by the American Association of University Women. A low one-storey addition was made to the rear of the buildings in 1962, however, this does not impair the external appearance from either Twenty-second Street or Stevens Avenue. The building is excellently maintained and has retained a great deal of original design integrity.

#### EUGENE A MERRILL HOUSE - 2116 Second Avenue South

Constructed in 1884 by A.C. Robinson and Company according to designs by Minneapolis architect William Channing Whitney, the E.A. Merrill House is an imposing two and one half storey towered red sandstone mansion executed in the French Renaissance/Chateauesque style. It is situated on a prominent corner lot

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which slopes to the north, a feature together with the high rusticated and battered basement, adds great emphasis on the verticality of the house. Prominent features of the design are the recessed principal entry which is reached via an off-set staircase to a balustraded deck and low basket-arch, a three storey polygonal tower with crennelations and spire-like roof, windows with heavy stone lintels (and in several cases, stone mullions which separate a large lower pane from a smaller transom), inset panels of stone with carved foliate patterns, dormers and gables with stone copings, fluted/clustered chimneys, and slate roof. The house is assymmetrical in plan and measures approximately fifty feet by sixtyseven feet.

Constructed at a cost of \$10,000 the Merrill House remained a single family residence until the early 1950s when it was converted into a rest home. More recently, the building has functioned as an art gallery (1973-4) and as general rental property. A carriage house of similar design and construction was formerly located at the northwest corner of the lot to the rear of the main dwelling; this was demolished in 1963. The exterior and much of the interior plan and decorative treatment (woodwork, fireplaces, stained glass, etc.) remains in a relatively unaltered state.

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Washburn-Fair Oaks "Mansion" District

CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	8	PAGE 6	

3. The building lines of the main body of the house, that may be erected on each of Lots one (1), five (5), six (6) and ten (10) respectively, shall be distant not less than forty (40) feet from the line dividing such lot from the street running north and south in front of such lot, and not less than thirty-five (35) feet from the line dividing such lot from the street running each and west at the side of such lot, and not less than twenty (20) feet from the line dividing such lot from the adjoining lots of said addition, and every porch, bay, wing, terrace, or other projection or part of said house, shall be distant not less than twenty-five (25) feet from the line dividing such lot from the street running north and south in front of said lot, and not less than twenty (20) feet from the lines dividing said lot from the adjoining lots of said addition.

The building lines of the main body of said house, that may be erected or built on each of Lots two (2) three (3), four (4), seven (7), eight (8), and nine (9) in said addition shall be distant not less than thirty (30) feet from the line dividing such lot from the street in front of such lot, and distant from the side lines of such lot, and distant not less than fifteen (15) feet from the side and rear lines of such lot. But this shall not prevent the owner of two or more adjoining lots of said addition from using said adjoining lot as one tract or house-site, not prevent such owner from erecting on such tract or house-site, one dwelling-house of the character and description herein set forth, providing that other restrictions and conditions herein set forth are observed.

(2) William Channing Whitney was in partnership with James C. Plant during the time when the E.A. Merrill House was designed. Whitney assumed his own practice in 1885 and continued to be active until his death in 1945 at the age of 94. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts in 1888, president from 1894-96, and headed its building committee for 25 years. Whitney was best known for the design of mansions for prominent members of Minneapolis and Saint Paul society (estimated between 40 and 50); the majority of these designs were in the Georgian Revival mode.

(3) Ernest Kennedy is credited with the designs of the Alfred Pillsbury House and the Edward C. Gale House. He graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1888 and attended the Sorbonne in Paris, the Berlin Polytechnic and the Munich Polytechnic. In 1898 he entered private practice and became known as a mansion builder.

(4) Edwin Brown was a partner to Edwin Hewitt in the architectural firm of Hewitt and Brown. Brown attended Harvard and was a president of the Minneapolis chapter of the Minnesota Society of Architects.

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Washburn-Fair Oaks "Mansion" District

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(5) Edwin Hewitt attended the University of Minnesota and MIT and completed his education at the L'ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. His partnership with Edwin Brown lasted from 1911 to 1930 and their firm became known for large fireproof buildings of reinforced concrete and stone, many of which are executed in the Medieval Revival mode.

(6) Luther H. Farrington was involved in the wholesale grocery business, being at different times a clerk, buyer, and treasurer of various companies, one of which was Winston, Farrington, and Company.

(7) John Crosby attended Yale and Harvard, receiving his degrees in law from Harvard Law School. In 1889 he became legal advisor to the Washburn-Crosby Company, which later became General Mills. He was appointed president of this company in 1917. He was active in city government and was a director of the Northwestern National Bank.

(8) Caroline Crosby was the sister of John Crosby. She graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1902 after which she became an active social worker and pioneer in the settlement house movement. She later became president of the State Conference on the State Board of Control and the Children's Protective Society.

(9) Charles S. Pillsbury was the son of C.A. Pillsbury founder of the Pillsbury Milling Company, one of the major producers of flour in the United States. When C.A. Pillsbury died, he left his mansion to his twin sons, Charles S. and John S. John S. won possession of the mansion through a toss of a coin, enabling Charles S. to later construct his Medieval Revival mansion across Twentysecond Street.

(10) Alfred F. Pillsbury was the only son of Governor John S. Pillsbury. He had been educated as a lawyer and began a career in the Pillsbury Flour Milling Company as early as 1896. Pillsbury was an avid art collector and active member of the Minneapolis Park Board, the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts, and trustee of the Minneapolis Symphony.

(11) Edward C. Gale was a graduate of the Harvard Law School, and practiced in Minneapolis under the name of the firm of Snyder, Gale and Richards. He was active in civic affairs, Library Board, and the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts. In 1892 he married Sarah Pillsbury, daughter of Governor John S. Pillsbury.

(12) Eugene A. Merrill came to Minneapolis in 1875 and practiced law successfully until he left his legal practice to set up the Minnesota Loan and Trust Company. In addition, Merrill was director of the Minnesota Title Insurance Company.

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CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	4	PAGE	8	

Listing of Owners:

John Crosby House Chrysalis Center 2104 Stevens Avenue South Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Luther Farrington House Minneapolis Hearing Society 2100 Stevens Avenue South Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Edward C. Gale House American Association of University Women 2115 Stevens Avenue South Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Eugene A. Merrill House A.R. Segal 2853 Glenhurst Avenue Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416

Alfred F. Pillsbury House The Hodne/Stageberg Partners, Inc. 116 East Twenty-second Street Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Charles S. Pillsbury House Carmichael-Lynch Advertising, Inc. 100 East Twenty-second Street Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Caroline Crosby House Carmichael-Lynch Advertising, Inc. 100 East Twenty-second Street Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

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