

City of Detroit

CITY COUNCIL

Historic Designation Advisory Board

PROPOSED OAKMAN BOULEVARD HISTORIC DISTRICT

Final Report

The proposed Oakman Boulevard Historic District is located in the northwest section of Detroit. The district encompasses both sides of Oakman Boulevard from Linwood to Davison, excluding the Linwood commercial frontage. The district also encompasses both sides of Oakman Court from Linwood to Oakman, also excluding the Linwood frontage.

The proposed Oakman Boulevard Historic District is primarily residential, comprised of approximately 200 single-family houses. The district also contains some apartment buildings at the east boundary of the district, as well as the Parkman Branch Library near its east end.

BOUNDARIES: The boundaries of the proposed district are outlined in heavy black lines on the attached map, and are as follows:

Both sides of Oakman Blvd. from Linwood to Davison, excluding the Linwood commercial frontage, and

Both sides of Oakman Court from Linwood to Oakman Blvd., excluding the Linwood commercial frontage.

HISTORY: The development of Oakman Blvd. was a direct result of Detroit's industrial boom at the turn of the century. As the industrial plants continued to thrive and grow, pushing the boundaries of the city further and further out, the need for transportation and homes for the workers became apparent. The talk of an "Outer Boulevard" had been discussed by city officials since the creation of Grand Boulevard. But like Grand Boulevard city officials were not yet ready to take it any farther. And, as in the case of Grand Boulevard, Detroit's "Outer Boulevard" became the undertaking of one public-minded individual.

Robert Oakman had a vision of a great broad thoroughfare lined with miles of splendid homes, all made beautiful with trees, shrubs and flowers. He had vision of building such a highway and presenting it to the city of Detroit. In 1916, realtor and land developer Robert Oakman purchased a tract of land outside the city limits with the purpose of creating such an outer boulevard.

Oakman, a native Detroiter, was born in 1860 in the section of the city known as Corktown. Upon completion of high school, he

went to work for the Detroit Post as a "printer's devil" for \$4.50 a week. In 1884 Oakman founded a one man newspaper known as the Spectator, a socialist periodical devoted to fighting the causes of organized labor. Ironically, his newspaper viewed the selling of real estate as an "unpardonable sin." A year later in 1885, when his newspaper went bust, Oakman abandoned the idea that real estate was sinful and became a real estate agent for William Y. Hannan. Within a few short months he was buying and selling on his own account.

Robert Oakman's first land acquisition included some 40 acres in the Woodward area just north of Grand Boulevard where he made a profit of \$9,000 the first year. Oakman was farsighted enough even then to buy acreage on the outskirts of the west side. Everyone but Oakman considered this land worthless as subdivision work and thought him a fool. Unfortunately, his real estate vision was short-lived because of the economic panic of 1893, and Robert Oakman went completely broke.

With no money and in need of a job, Hazen S. Pingree, upon his election as mayor, appointed Oakman as his secretary. Oakman later went on to serve as city assessor as well as a member of the State Tax Commission. At the conclusion of these terms he obtained a position as a property purchaser for the Detroit United Railway (DUR). It was the information acquired from this job that persuaded Robert Oakman to dabble once again in Detroit's real estate market.

Oakman began by buying acreage in what was considered "away out in the country," still believing that Detroit's expansion would be westward. In 1906, upon learning that the Ford Motor Company was moving from its Piquette and Woodward plant, Oakman persuaded Ford officials to purchase the property in Highland Park on Woodward Avenue and proceeded to buy the 20 acres of land across from the proposed plant site. When the plant was built Oakman was able to subdivide the land and sell off the lots at a tremendous profit. Finally, in the twentieth century Robert Oakman began to make his mark on Detroit's real estate scene.

By 1901 Oakman's knowledge of the city's development enabled him to invest wisely in real estate. Under his leadership the Detroit United Railway began to expand its passenger service to provide transportation to those who worked outside the city limits. Oakman began purchasing tracts of land and promoting homesites in these same outlying districts. In 1917 Oakman was elected president of Detroit Water Board. It was then that his vision of a great development in northwest Detroit began. Realizing that the west side could stand a lot of development, Oakman wasn't content merely to make money by subdividing the land; he wanted to do something that would serve as a monument to himself. Oakman proposed to develop Detroit's "Outer Boulevard."

When news of Oakman's plan to build a boulevard reached the papers, news stands were besieged by real estate operators and

prospective investors all wanting to be a part of the development. To get the project started Oakman staked his entire fortune on it; soon other investors followed. However, when his largest investor pulled out, Oakman approached his good friends John F. and Horace E. Dodge, who immediately gave him a promissory note for \$225,000 to begin the project.

The project was initially called the Ford Highway because the vast subdivision was to stretch 10 miles from Woodward to Michigan Aves., or more specifically from the Ford plant in Highland Park to the Ford plant at River Rouge. The name was later changed to Oakman Highway and finally to Oakman Boulevard to reflect the man who was responsible for its development.

To carry out his project as planned, Oakman had to build through farms, houses, and barns. Profiting by the mistakes made on Grand Boulevard, Oakman was able to control the development on the boulevard. By purchasing all the land along his highway route, he was able to impose zoning restrictions that the city could not. And with few exceptions, he was able to restrict the entire 10 miles to residential sites, limiting the business and industrial institutions along the route of the boulevard. Originally Oakman had intended to extend the boulevard right to the river on the south, but he found this physically impossible because of the network of railroads near the riverfront.

One of the unique features of Oakman Boulevard was the number of imported trees from around the world. His plan was to have these trees catalogued so that students wishing to study them could do so. By 1923 Oakman had spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for roadbed and pavement for beautifying the boulevard with shrubs, trees, and flowers, making it one of Detroit's major boulevards.

From its inception Oakman Boulevard has been considered a fashionable place to live for Detroit's prosperous and upper middle class professional and business people. Many of its earlier residents left their individual impression upon some phase of Detroit's life. They included: Detroit mayors John W. Smith and Oscar B. Marx; Milton Oakman, vice-president of Robert Oakman Land and Management Co., and John H. Behnke, Secretary of Detroit Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company.

The stock market crash of 1929 brought the development of Oakman Boulevard to a halt, forcing many of its residents to share their homes with family and friends. Fortunately this practice only lasted until 1935 when Detroit's economy began to thrive once again. It was also at this time that Detroit's Jewish community began to settle in northwest Detroit. Oakman Boulevard became the home to many Jewish businessmen, including: Alick Herzberg, owner of Herzberg and Keystone Furrier and Morris Berkowitz, founder of Morris Kosher Poultry and Egg Company.

By the 1950s and 1960s blacks in Detroit had become more than one-third of the population. The northwest section of Detroit became a desirable place live. And those blacks who could afford to moved out of traditional black neighborhoods. Oakman Boulevard became the home of such notable blacks as Richard Austin, Michigan Secretary of State; Dr. Hylton, former vice-chairperson, Michigan Democratic Party; and Dr. L. Calloway.

Oakman Boulevard remains one of Detroit's most impressive thoroughfares, representing the city's residential and industrial expansion of the 1920s.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS

Parkman Library, 1726 Oakman Blvd.

Parkman Library was the 18th branch of the Detroit Library system and its largest when completed in 1931. It was the second branch to be built on the regional system, intended to serve a five mile diameter.

Detroit's branch system dates back to 1897, when the first branch was opened under the direction of the Water Department in a building in Waterworks Park. The Library Commission, established in 1881, located its first branches in the City's high schools after 1900. Then, between 1903 and 1910 the Commission opened five branches in rented storefronts. The first specially built and wholly owned branch officially opened at 285 Field in 1906. Detroit's rapid expansion in population and area was creating a need for even more branches.

In 1910, the City of Detroit accepted a gift from Andrew Carnegie, steel mogul from Pittsburgh, to build a new main library and branches. Eight branches from 1912 -1917 were built with Carnegie funds, substantially increasing the number of branch libraries. The Carnegie gift provided a shot in the arm to the Detroit library system; the City took up the cause with its own funds thereafter.

The Oakman Branch of the Detroit Public Library opened in January, 1922 in a storefront at Woodrow Wilson and Buena Vista (12846 Woodrow Wilson). The community's need for a specialized structure with more space was anticipated, resulting in the Francis Parkman Regional Branch.

The Francis Parkman Regional Branch of the Detroit Public Library opened on April 16, 1931. Its namesake, Francis Parkman (1823-1893) was an important person in American literature, particularly in the field of historical writing. He wrote extensively about the French regime in America. A Bostonian by birth and a graduate of Harvard College, Parkman was the author of many early books pertaining to the Northwest Territory, among them The Conspiracy of Pontiac (1851), Pioneers of France in the New World (1865), LaSalle (1869), Montcalm and Wolfe (1884), and Half Century of Conflict (1892).

The building that bears Parkman's name was designed in 1930 by the Detroit architectural firm of Burrowes and Eurich. Marcus R. Burrowes (1874-1953), the senior partner in the firm, was born in upstate New York but educated in Denver after his family moved there. He attended the Art Academy in Denver, Colorado, where he took up architecture. Accompanying his parents to Sarnia, Ontario, Burrowes practiced architecture there for five years before moving to Detroit in 1907. Upon arrival in Detroit he joined the firm of Stratton and Baldwin and remained with them for two years. It is likely that Burrowes was influenced by that firm's affection for the English Domestic Revival styles just coming into vogue in this country. Burrowes was a member of the Arts and Crafts Society in Detroit, a group founded to further the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement by, among others, Albert Kahn, William B. Stratton and Frank C. Baldwin.

Subsequently, Burrowes formed the firm of Burrowes and Wells with Dalton R. Wells; by 1914 Burrowes was in practice under his own name. While with Wells and then independently, Burrowes' office was located in the Trussed Concrete Building at 58 W. Lafayette. Albert Kahn was located in the same building, which must have led to friendly interaction since they both did work at Cranbrook in the second decade of the twentieth century.

Frank Eurich, Jr. (1876-1942) a Cornell University graduate from Philadelphia (Bachelors degree, 1899, Masters degree, 1900) arrived in Detroit in 1920 and became a partner of Burrowes soon after.

Burrowes and Eurich designed many fine residences in the Grosse Pointes, Bloomfield Hills, Farmington, and Detroit. Assuming that the prominent status of their clients reflected their own prominence as architects, Burrowes and Eurich had achieved a substantial level of success in the Detroit area. Among those who sought the firm's services were Ralph H. Booth, President of Booth Newspapers, of Grosse Pointe (1924), Warren S. Booth in Indian Village, Detroit, Edward B. Caulkins, Grosse Pointe Farms, and David A. Brown on E. Boston Blvd. There are also a large collection of Burrowes and Eurich - designed homes on Hamilton Drive, an extension of Hamilton Ave. north of Palmer Park. Burrowes also designed a considerable amount of the original architecture of Cranbrook, including the Greek Theatre and an addition to the Brookside School. He built his own home in Farmington Hills in 1924, naming it "Burbrook." Burrowes and Eurich also designed other types of public buildings, including a municipal building in Grosse Pointe and the Springwells Town Hall. Indeed, Burrowes' obituary claimed that he designed "more than 1000 structures in and near Detroit during his long career. Burrowes was also an active member in the Michigan Chapter of the A.I.A.; he was at one time its president.

Meanwhile, the Detroit Library Commission had become familiar with Burrowes as designer of one of the Carnegie branches, the Duffield Branch at 2507 W. Grand Blvd. in 1916. Burrowes and

Eurich were involved with other libraries prior to the Parkman commission; they designed the Gabriel Richard Branch Library at Grand River and Stoepel in Detroit and the Baldwin Library in Birmingham, Michigan (1927), both in an "English country" mode, and collaborated on the McGregor Library (1926) in Highland Park, Michigan.

Although Burrowes first presented his plans for Parkman Library to the Library Commission for approval on January 21, 1930, it was not until June 3rd of that year that the property upon which it would be built was acquired from Robert and Minnie Oakman. On June 30, 1930 Burrowes and Eurich were issued a permit for the construction of the Parkman Library. It was to be 99' wide by 201' long by 63' high and its cost of construction was to be \$173,000. Its actual cost, minus the site and equipment, was \$190,000. It had accommodations for 70,000 volumes but opened on April 17, 1931 with 30,000. T.J. Keim was the general contractor for the construction.

The style of the building was identified in contemporary accounts as "Early English" or "modified Early English." Today it is easy to see the strong influence of the English Arts and Crafts movement in the building, and especially the influence of Sir Edwin Lutyens. It was made of Bedford limestone and mixed shades of wire-cut brick. The building's high gabled roof slopes are covered in burnt clay "English" tile. Blocky humorous faces appear above the inscription, "Detroit Public Library Francis Parkman Branch," and at the ends of the hood molding above the main entrance. Drain boxes bear the initials "DLC", obviously for the Detroit Library Commission. Stone owls, symbolic of the wise, are supported on columns at the corners of the bay window to the side of the entrance portico. The stone over the east bay window bears the inscription, "Religion, Morality and Knowledge," from the Ordinance of July 13, 1787 for the government of the Northwest Territory.

The old English theme was carried through to the interior in the beamed ceilings, massive arches of buff and grey Mankato stone, and antique-finish woodwork and walls. Natural lighting was provided through the large arched windows, massed windows that ran knee-level to ceiling in the main rooms, and the smaller windows over the built-in shelves. Windows were of the casement variety, with leaded glass lights within. Artificial lighting was provided through English-style fixtures that were hung from corbels along the walls of the nonfiction room and from chains suspended from the ceiling of the Mary Conover Room. These fixtures have since been replaced with florescent lighting.

Attention to ornamental detail appears not to have suffered the Depression when Parkman Library was built. Wood beamed ceilings, Gothic friezes, pegged framing, and spectacular ram headed corbels of the nonfiction room are among the English detailing of the interior. Zig zag friezes above the arched openings leading into the lobby are what indications there are of the art deco style popular at the time.

Parkman Library was situated on a triangular site, providing two street frontages for patron parking. On the inside, all public services were located on the first floor. In plan and function, the first floor of the library contained the periodical room, nonfiction and fiction reading rooms, a reference section, staff work areas, and the librarian's office. The Mary Conover Room for Girls and Boys was named in honor of the first children's librarian in the Detroit Public Schools, in 1896. Its high barrel-vaulted plastered ceiling terminated at the eastern end by a large oriel window containing a horizontal panel of stained glass bearing the name of the room, "The Mary Conover Room for Girls and Boys," produced by the Detroit Stained Glass Company.

Stacks occupied the second floor and basement, and the third level had an assembly room with a capacity of 200 and a stage.

The notable homes on Oakman Blvd. between Linwood and Davison are impressive examples of mid-to-upper class residential architecture built between the two world wars. They range in style between the medieval revival styles, classical revival styles, French Norman, prairie, and the modern. Just a few of these houses are highlighted below.

1806 Oakman Blvd., Philip J. Endlich House, 1928.

Philip J. Endlich, civil engineer with the architectural firm of Smith Hinchman & Grylls Associates, was issued a permit for the construction of this house at the end of 1927. Because of his profession, we can assume that he or a fellow architect at SH&G designed his home. Its original cost of construction was \$14,660, a fairly substantial sum. Endlich resided at this address for over thirty years.

Mediterranean in style, the Endlich House is built of buff brick face brick. Its shallow roof is covered with pink-brown tile. Also characteristic of this style, in addition to the light coloring and tile roof, are the round arches seen over the first story French windows, the porch and the two elongated windows over the entrance on the second floor.

2005 Oakman Blvd., Charles G. Oakman House, 1928.

Charles Oakman, land developer and cousin of Robert and Milton Oakman, was the first resident at 2005 Oakman Blvd. Charles, along with his cousins, was instrumental in developing sections of northwest Detroit, particularly the Wyoming-Fenkell area. Charles also served as manager of Detroit's Central Business District Association during the 1930s.

Wesley G. Hahn, real estate developer and builder, was granted a permit to construct this Neo-Tudor house for Charles G. Oakman at an estimated cost of \$19,500 in 1928. L-shaped in plan and asymmetrical in arrangement, its steep overhanging half-timbered stucco gable dominates the front facade. The first story is

covered with rough-faced light gray stone, creating a rustic appearance. Windows are generally grouped together and subdivided into several panes. For example, the gable contains one such grouping of three windows with a single window at its apex.

2006 Oakman Blvd., Baylis H. Normile House, 1928.

Baylis H. Normile, nephew of Robert Oakman, served as vice-president and director of Robert Oakman Land and Mortgage Company. He had 2006 built for himself and his family. By 1935 Normile had become one of Detroit's well-known real estate appraisers and manufacturer representatives. This enabled him to leave his uncle's employ and form a partnership with his cousin Charles Oakman. Upon the dissolution of their partnership, he joined the firm of Daniel J. Horgan which lasted until his death. Both Baylis and Normile streets in northwest Detroit were named for him by his uncle Robert Oakman.

Yet another Medieval Revival style house, 2006 Oakman Blvd. features two stucco half-timbered gables, one over the porch and the other forming the end of the cross-gable. The rest of the house is brown brick with a slight amount of stone trim. The decorative brick chimney stack projects upward between the main pitched roof and the cross-gable; slate covers the steep roof slopes. A three-sided oriel window is centered within the second story gable. The entrance is composed of a heavy hardwood door set into a wooden frame flanked by patterned brickwork.

2056 Oakman Ave., Harry E. Heilman House, 1926.

Harry Heilman was a right-handed slugger for the Detroit Tigers for a decade and a half. Born in San Francisco in 1894, Heilman was first signed by Portland of the Pacific Coast League. Soon after, he attracted the attention of a Detroit Tiger scout. Playing the positions of outfielder and first baseman, Heilman batted only .225 and found himself back in the northwest playing with the Pacific Coast League after his first big league play in 1914. But because of his hot bat in 1915, he came back to Detroit and played here until 1929, leading the league in batting four times - in 1921, 1923, 1925 and 1927. Heilman was traded to Cincinnati and remained in baseball until 1932. Known affectionately as "Old Slug," Heilman's lifetime batting average was .342, the same as the lifetime average of his close friend, Babe Ruth. Ty Cobb, another good friend, called Heilman "one of the best two right-handed hitters in the history of baseball."

After his career in baseball, Heilman was an insurance salesman and a successful baseball broadcaster at radio station WXYT. He was informed of his election to the Hall of Fame ten days before he died of cancer in 1951 at Henry Ford Hospital.

Mr. Heilman's House was built for him in 1926. It is a handsome, substantial Jacobethan home of brick with masonry trim. The steep

slopes of the gable roof are clad in slate, as is the gable roof of the enclosed entryway. Stone quoins surround the doorway; otherwise, detail is kept to a minimum. The decorative shaft of the chimney emerges from the foremost wall of the house. Ivy and other vegetation obscure the windows facing the street.

2225 Oakman Blvd., Bennett House, 1941.

Built for Herman Bennett, a salesman, this house is one of several on Oakman Blvd. constructed by Ben Koloff, a builder. The Bennett House is basically a box in shape clad in orange brick. It is representative of other homes on Oakman Blvd. from the early 1940's that are "modern" in style. Its design takes its cue from the International Style evolving in the second quarter of the 20th century, first in Europe and then at home. Windows are placed at the corners of the second story wall, thus de-emphasizing corners as structural necessities. This technique was earlier used by Marcel Breuer and other masters of the modern movement. Glass block, popular in the 1940's and 1950's, is another modern touch to the design of the Bennett House that is utilized frequently elsewhere on Oakman Blvd.

2267 Oakman Blvd., Wesley G. Hahn House, 1922.

Wesley G. Hahn built this buff brick house for himself in 1922 at an estimated cost of construction of \$12,000. It is among the earliest houses built on the boulevard. Hahn had a real estate business and owned the Hahn Lumber and Millwork Company. He was active in the development of Oakman Blvd., having been responsible for the construction of many of its earliest and finest homes.

Symmetrical in arrangement, the front facade of the Hahn House features a circular portico with eave brackets supporting the roof overhang. French doors with semicircular transoms above flank the entrance. Above the portico at second story level is a grouping of three casement windows in a wooden oriel. Shutters flank the pairs of double hung sash windows to the sides of the central section. Two dormers with semi-round arched transoms project from the red tile hipped roof.

2340 Oakman Blvd., Novograd House, 1936.

This house was built for Frank Novogradsky, manager of the Campau Furniture Store. The Novograd House is typical of many homes on Oakman Blvd. It was built by Ben Koloff, a building contractor, in 1936. Houses with central engaged entrance towers in several different variations can be seen throughout the boulevard. This particular house is brick with the major elements, such as the tower section, bay window and foundations, in stone. It is Norman French in style, derived from the French Colonial period in Quebec. Characteristic of this style are the round towers, called tourelles, set at angles and the steep-pitched roofs. Ornamental brickwork patterns, casement windows, quoins, and

leaded mullions as seen on this house are indications of medieval revival styles characteristic of the Norman French revival style.

2383 Oakman Blvd., Nyman House, 1925.

Charles A. Nyman, department manager of M. L. Pardee and Company, was the original owner of 2383 Oakman Blvd. Nyman resident at this address until 1953 when he sold the property to Carl W. Carlson, an employee of the E. J. Becker Company. In 1958 the house was sold to its most notable resident, Alfred M. Pelham. Known as "Mr. Fix-It," Pelham made his mark on Detroit through his financial wizardry. Pelham's professional career began in Wayne County as a clerk for the County Board of Auditors. By 1941 he became Wayne County Director of Budget and Finance, thus becoming the first black man to hold such a high position in county government. It did not stop there, for Pelham went on to break down racial barriers in other professional arenas. This included: vice-president of finance at Wayne State University; city comptroller under Mayor Jerome P. Cavanagh; chairman of the board of Great Lakes Mutual Life Insurance Company; and interim president of Wayne County Community College, where he saved the college from financial destruction. Pelham has also been credited with assisting with the economic growth of the city. He was respected for creating the city's income tax system which saved Detroit from disaster during the 1960s as well as providing financial guidance to mayors Roman Gribbs and Coleman Young.

Neo-Georgian in style, the Nyman House is built of red brick with a red tile roof. It is symmetrical in arrangement; the front porch is centered on the front facade.

2481 Oakman Blvd., Henry Wiegert House, 1921.

Secretary-Treasurer of the Robert Oakman Land and Management Company and a long time friend of Robert Oakman, Henry Wiegert, the first owner of this house, was in part responsible for assisting in the financing of the development of the "old Ford Highway."

Louis Kamper, Detroit architect responsible for such landmark buildings as the Book Building, the Hecker House, and several substantial homes in Indian Village, designed this house in 1921, qualifying it as the earliest home on the boulevard. It is a high-quality Prairie/Colonial Revival home of red brick. The overhang of its shallow green tile hip roof is supported on stick-like brackets. The entrance of the house is composed of corner brick piers with engaged wooden columns and stylized brackets supporting its roof. Segmentally arched window openings flank the entrance on the first floor. The paired windows on the second story have shutters; a belt course beneath these windows stresses the horizontality of the composition and its lowness to the ground.

2874 Oakman Blvd., Rufus H. Hyde House, c. 1925.

This house was built for Rufus H. Hyde. Hyde, who served as treasurer of the William C. Roney Company for over ten years. Other residents included Aubrey Reinach sales manager of the Kelvinator Division of the Nash Kelvinator Corporation and Colonel F.C. Standiford.

The Hyde House is superlative in its use of materials for their textural qualities. "Stockbroker's Tudor" in style, it is a very substantial building covered with slate laid in a manner to emphasize its rustic appearance. Its pitched roof is intersected by a broad cross-gable extending downward to comprise the east half of the front facade. Every other course of its red-burnt brown brick protrudes, creating a rough woven texture. A smaller projecting half-timbered gable appears superimposed over half of this gable, the projection continuing downward on the second story level in patterned brickwork. This projection appears to be supported on squared wooden columns with chamfered edges and visible pegs through which the entrance is located. The stucco half-timbered upper story of the western section of the front facade contains bands of leaded casement windows.

2670 Oakman Court, Sol Schayowitz House, 1937.

Albert Diamond, a building contractor, built this buff brick international style structure in 1937 for Sol Schayowitz. The International Style reached prominence in the 1920's in Europe; Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe of Germany and Le Corbusier of France were amongst its main practitioners. It was considered to be a revolutionary style devoid of any historical references. Its recognition as an architectural movement was cemented in 1932 when the Museum of Modern Art in New York had its first architectural exhibit which defined the style.

Characteristic of the International Style, as seen on the Schayowitz House, is the lack of ornament, volumetric forms, flat roofs, smooth wall surfaces, windows that are set into the walls without reveals, and windows that turn the corners of the building. The horizontal flow of the wall surfaces are emphasized, in this case by the string courses, the metal railing on the round corner section, and the low height of the building.

2750 Oakman Court, Nathan Hack House, 1936-37.

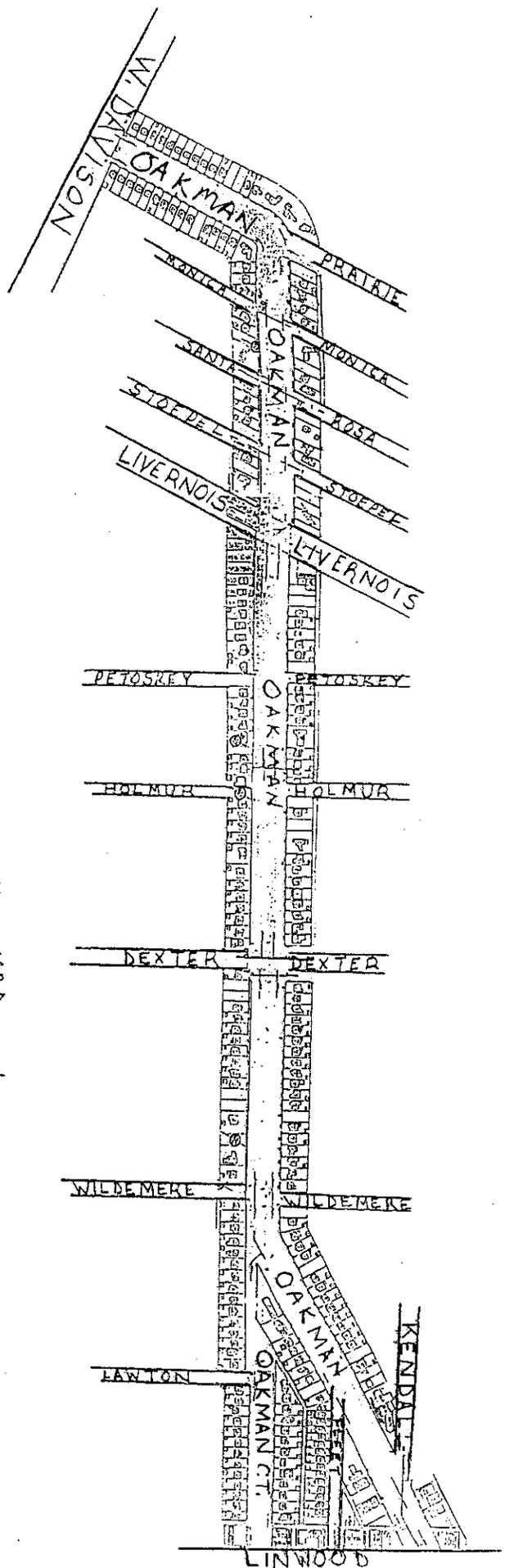
Nathan Hack, the pioneer of the orthopedic type shoe, was the original owner of 2750 Oakman Ct. Founder of the Hack Shoe Company in 1917, Hack soon became the largest manufacturer of orthopedic and corrective footwear in the country. Hack invented the shoe with corrugated soles, known as the "Ripple Sole Shoe," after he formerly retired. Ironically, it was this invention that made his company a world wide operation. The shoe design was based on World War II research seeking a method to cushion the shock as paratroopers hit the ground. Other achievements included a convalescent boot used by wounded soldiers in World War II and the Koran War; a club foot shoe and self-reliant

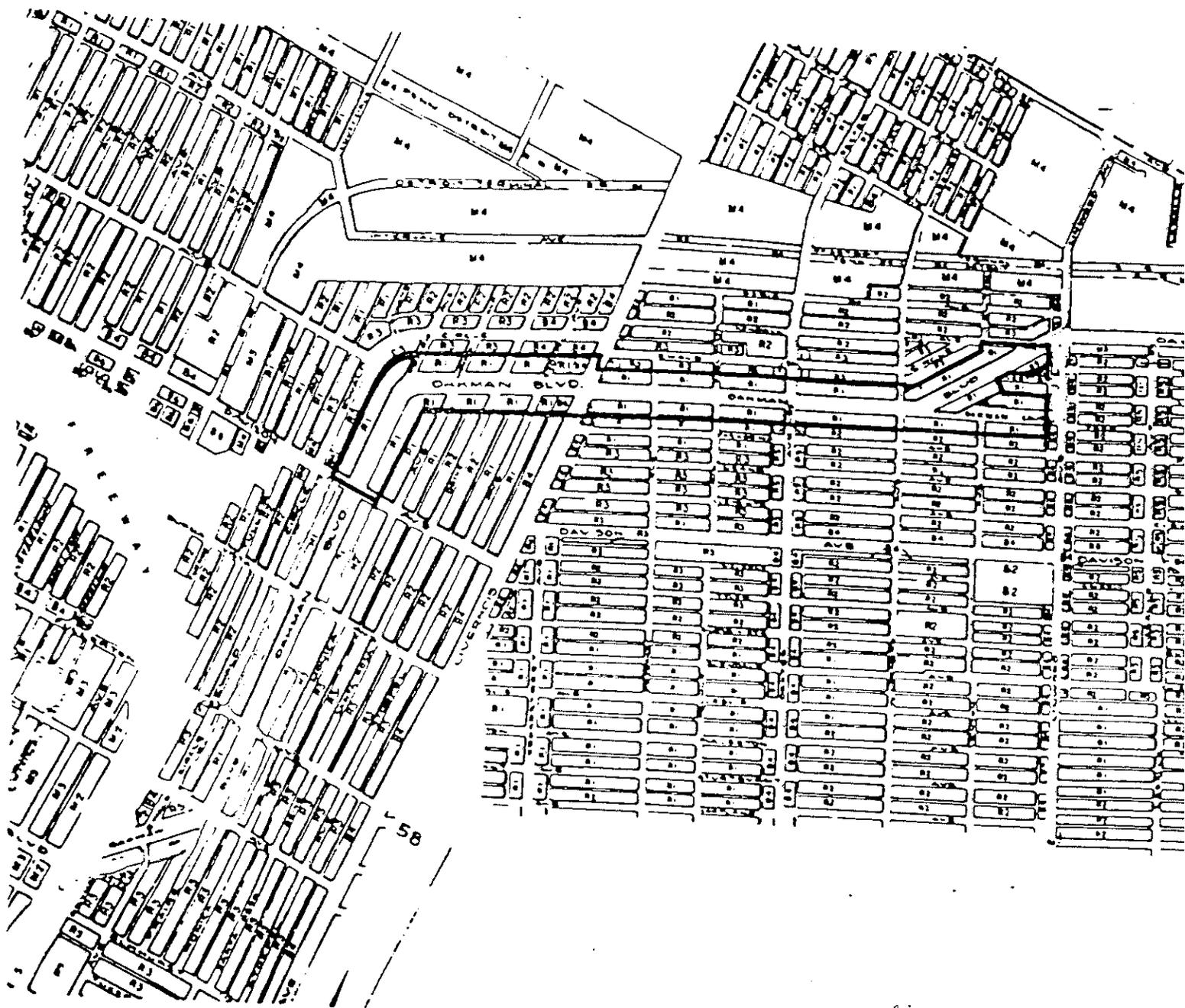
ambulator for amputees and paraplegics; as well as a new heel which enabled people to walk straight.

This Colonial Revival home has a brick first story and clapboard second story, both painted white. The 8-over-8 sash windows are framed with shutters. The gables of the second story windows rise above the roofline of the building, creating small dormers. Between the main block of the house and the garage is the simple portico, composed of simple columns supporting a triangular pediment with returns. Two dormers project from the garage.

RECOMMENDATION: The Historic Designation Advisory Board recommends that the City Council establish the Oakman Boulevard Historic District with the design treatment level of conservation. A draft ordinance for the establishment of the district is attached for the consideration of City Council.

OAKMAN BOULEVARD N
HISTORIC DISTRICT
↓





OAKMAN BLVD. HISTORIC DISTRICT

(District outlined in heavy black lines)

