

Country Club Addition Neighborhood Historical Survey and Report



Prepared for the City of Topeka, Kansas

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Introduction

The City of Topeka contracted with Susan Jezak Ford in September 2017 to conduct an intensive-level survey of historic resources in approximately seven blocks in the west portion of the Country Club Addition neighborhood. The surveyed area was selected by the City of Topeka with support of the neighborhood residents. The area contains a significant collection of pre- and post-World War II homes.¹ The neighborhood is located approximately two miles southwest of the Kansas Capitol. The Country Club Place Addition was platted in 1924 (Figure 2.) The survey also included a row of houses on the west side of SW Western Avenue in the Quinton and Steele's Addition, platted in 1887.

The purpose of the survey was to:

- Document the resources within the neighborhood;
- To understand the history of the neighborhood and its ties to the development of Topeka; and
- To determine which properties are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as part of a potential historic district.

The Country Club Addition survey area covers an area west of SW Topeka Boulevard, south of SW 24th Street, the west frontage of SW Western Avenue and the south frontage of SW Merriam Court (Figure 1.) The survey includes 53 residential properties built between 1926 and 1968. All of these houses, except for the Crittenton Home at 2601 SW Western Avenue, were built as single-family homes and all remain so today. Approximately 30 properties (56%), have ancillary structures, such as an unattached garage or a shed.

Products from this survey project include:

- 1) Survey inventory forms for the principal structures within the survey area boundaries. All forms have been entered online into the Kansas Historic Resource Inventory (KHRI);
- 2) This project report including a methodology discussion and a survey summary compiling information from the survey forms and discussing construction date, form type and style. Style and form type definitions are based on those in *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia Savage McAlester and the National Register Bulletin 16, "How to Complete the National Register Form."
- 3) A recommendation by the author in consultation with the KHPO for a National Register Historic District.
- 4) Two public presentations to introduce the project and to discuss findings to the property owners.

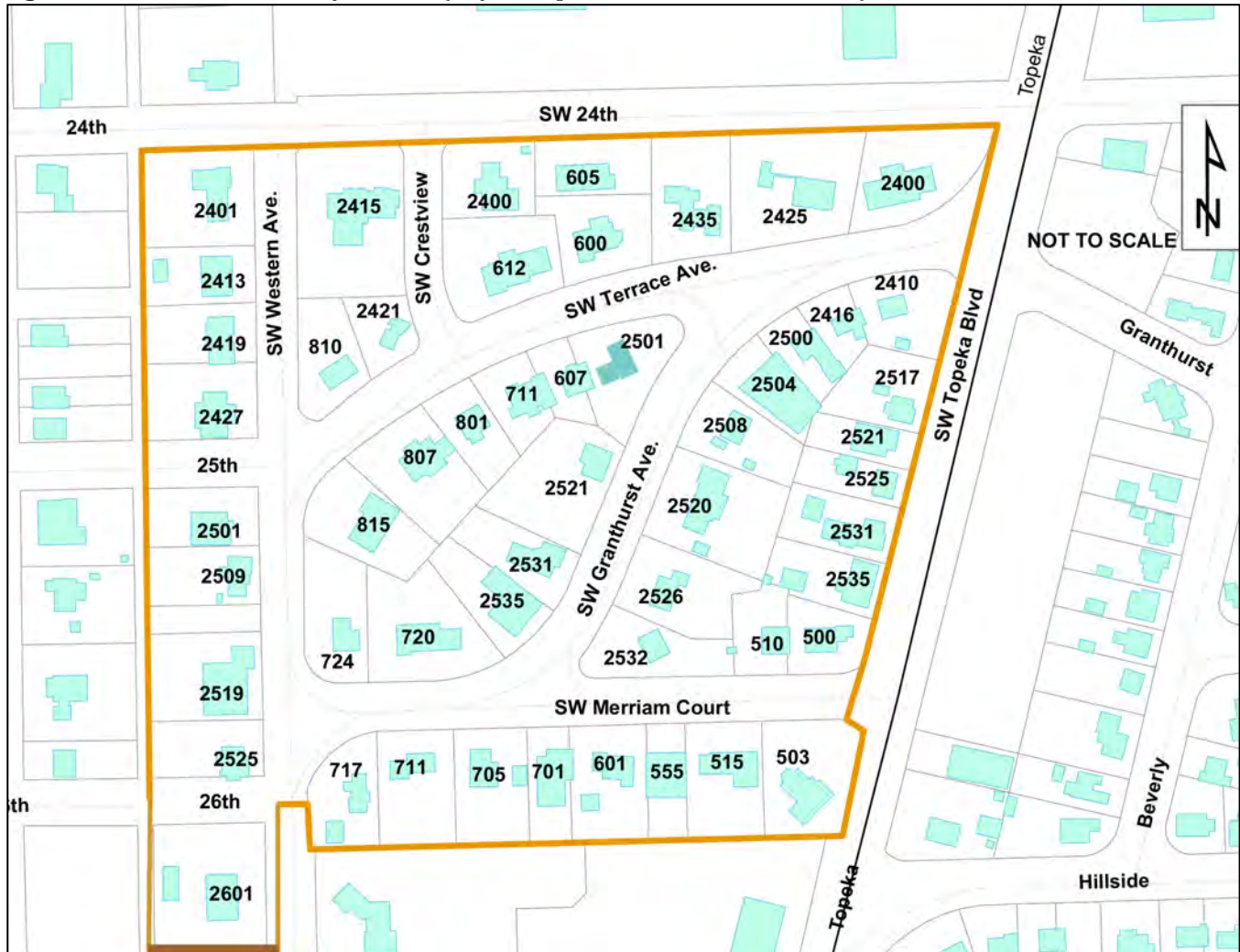
Susan Jezak Ford served as the prime consultant for this project, conducting the field survey, entering the information into the KHRI database, analyzing the data and preparing the survey report. Photographer Brad Finch served as a sub-contractor. City of Topeka planner Tim Paris assisted with the public meetings.

¹ The east portion of the Country Club Addition is primarily smaller, post-World War II residences. The area has far less architectural integrity than the surveyed blocks.

An introductory public meeting was held on October 9, 2017 at Grace United Methodist Church, 2727 SW Western Avenue. Thirteen neighborhood residents representing eight properties attended the meeting. Tim Paris and Susan Ford discussed the project and answered questions. Five property owners gave permission for the consultant to walk on their driveways or enter their backyards.

A final neighborhood meeting was held on May 7, 2018 at Grace United Methodist Church.

Figure 1. Boundaries of surveyed area. (City of Topeka and Susan Jezak Ford.)



Methodology

The Country Club Addition Neighborhood Historical Survey was conducted according to the methods outlined in the Kansas Historic Preservation Office's (KHPO) "HPF Products Manual" and the National Register Bulletin 24, "Guidelines for Local Survey: A Basis for Preservation Planning." Resources were evaluated in accordance with National Register Bulletin 15, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation."

Historical property research began in October 2017. Country Club residents Rhonda and Ron Cathey, who had already found building permits and City Directory information for many of the Country Club houses, as well as a few newspaper articles, provided an excellent base of information. Susan Ford supplemented the Catheys' research with information from additional City Directories, Fire Insurance maps from 1913 and 1950 and aerial photographs. Shawnee County Tax Assessor records also provided approximate construction dates. These dates were verified against City Directory information.

Field survey began in November 2017. Each property in the neighborhood was viewed by the consultant, who recorded notes on materials, forms and architectural details. The consultant photographed each building for her own records. Photographer Brad Finch took high-resolution photographs of each building in late December 2017, meeting the standards for survey set forth by the KHPO.

All information was entered into an Excel spreadsheet and loaded into the KHRI database. The database included a physical description of each building, historical information, statement of condition and owner information. Each house was assigned a style based on form, materials and construction date. The most recent edition of *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia Savage McAlester provided reference for house styles. The consultant proofread each inventory in the KHRI database. Downsized photographs and site plans were added to each inventory. Finally, each house was reviewed for integrity and eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as contributing to a potential historic district. After review by Amanda Loughlin, KHPO survey coordinator, survey forms were edited and altered as needed for approval. All inventories were approved January 22, 2018.

Topeka History

In the winter of 1854, Cyrus K. Holliday and Charles Robinson traveled 25 miles west of Lawrence along the Kansas River in search of a new town site for a second Kansas colony. They were looking for a site close to river transportation and an appropriate distance from the town of Lawrence. Upon finding an ideal location on a low bluff that would accommodate a wharf, they convinced other members of the New England Emigrant Aid Company to form a town company. The group agreed on the name of Topeka for the new town. The Territorial Legislature incorporated Topeka as a city on February 14, 1857. The town's population reached 450 that year with several citizens moving there from the nearby diminishing town of Tecumseh. When the county seat was transferred from Tecumseh to Topeka, Topeka's population rose to 512 in 1858.² On March 26, 1861, the State Legislature passed an act designating Topeka as the permanent location of the State capital.³

Topeka's population grew to more than 5000 by 1870.⁴ By 1880, the number of residents had tripled to 15,452 and the city had more than 35,000 residents by 1890. New streetcar lines stretching south from downtown facilitated the development of new neighborhoods for the growing population. During this period, the city platted 69 new subdivisions, including College Hill and Highland Park southwest and southeast of downtown, Lowman Hill southwest of downtown and Quinton Heights south of downtown near Topeka Avenue.⁵ By the end of the 1800s, Topeka Avenue extended approximately 20 blocks south of the Kansas River to the southern city limits.

Topeka, as well as the rest of the country, experienced an economic depression in the 1890s, which brought a temporary halt to development. The city recovered and by 1910 the population had reached 43,684.⁶ The city's status as the state capital, its location as the hub of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway and its diverse industries of agriculture, health care and manufacturing all likely contributed to its growth in the early 1900s.

The mid-1920s was an especially busy year for the construction industry in Topeka. Nine annexations expanded the city's limits during this time, creating room for new developments.⁷ Most of the residential construction during this era, however, filled gaps in or between older neighborhoods.⁸ Country Club Place, platted in 1924, created 15 irregular blocks between the Quinton Heights subdivision and Kansas Avenue. Initial development of the neighborhood was likely intended to attract Topeka's upper- and middle-class residents, who were increasingly moving from neighborhoods near the state capitol to outlying developments, such as the Westboro neighborhood in the southwest portion of the city. According to historians Douglass

² James R. Shortridge, *Cities on the Plains* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2004), 73.

³ William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883). Accessed online at <http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/shawnee/shawnee-co-p1.html#TOC>.

⁴ *The WPA Guide to 1930s Kansas* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1984) 279.

⁵ Sally Schwenk, Kerry Davis & Cathy Ambler, National Register of Historic Places National Register Nomination Form, "College Avenue Historic District," 2007, 72.

⁶ Rosin Preservation, "Auburndale Phase I Historic Resources Survey," July 2017.

⁷ Schwenk, Davis & Ambler, 74.

⁸ Douglass W. Wallace and Roy D. Bird, "Witness of the Times" *The Bulletin of the Shawnee County Historical Society*, No. 53, 4 July 1976, 244.

Wallace and Roy Bird, no other development in Topeka symbolized wealth or selectivity. The Westboro tract, developed in 1927, included houses in a variety of styles designed to create a striking effect.⁹

The Great Depression and midwestern droughts had a negative effect on Topeka in the 1930s, stopping nearly all growth. The Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway moved manufacturing and service facilities out of the city. Although the company headquarters remained, Topeka had lost its national status as a railroad town. The city's recovery came through a diversification of industries related to World War II, including the establishment of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company plant in 1944.¹⁰

After the war, increasing use of the automobile expanded suburban residential development in the 1950s and 1960s. The city's population boomed from 78,791 in 1950 to almost 120,000 in 1960.¹¹ The population growth was accompanied by residential and commercial construction that spread into farmland that surrounded Topeka.¹² Country Club Place's large lots, landscaping and location just two miles from downtown were likely attractions for those seeking a new home. Twenty-six of the 53 homes in the surveyed area—nearly 50 percent—were built after World War II between 1948 and 1968.

The surveyed neighborhood has remained stable and well maintained in the decades since the 1960s. A few of the houses in the Country Club West area are now rentals but remain as single-family dwellings. Traffic has increased on main streets surrounding the neighborhood—SW 24th and SW 27th Streets, as well as SW Topeka Boulevard, officially renamed from Topeka Avenue in the 1980s. The area is a well-preserved historic enclave within the capital city.

⁹ Wallace and Bird, 244.

¹⁰ Schwenk, Davis & Ambler, 75.

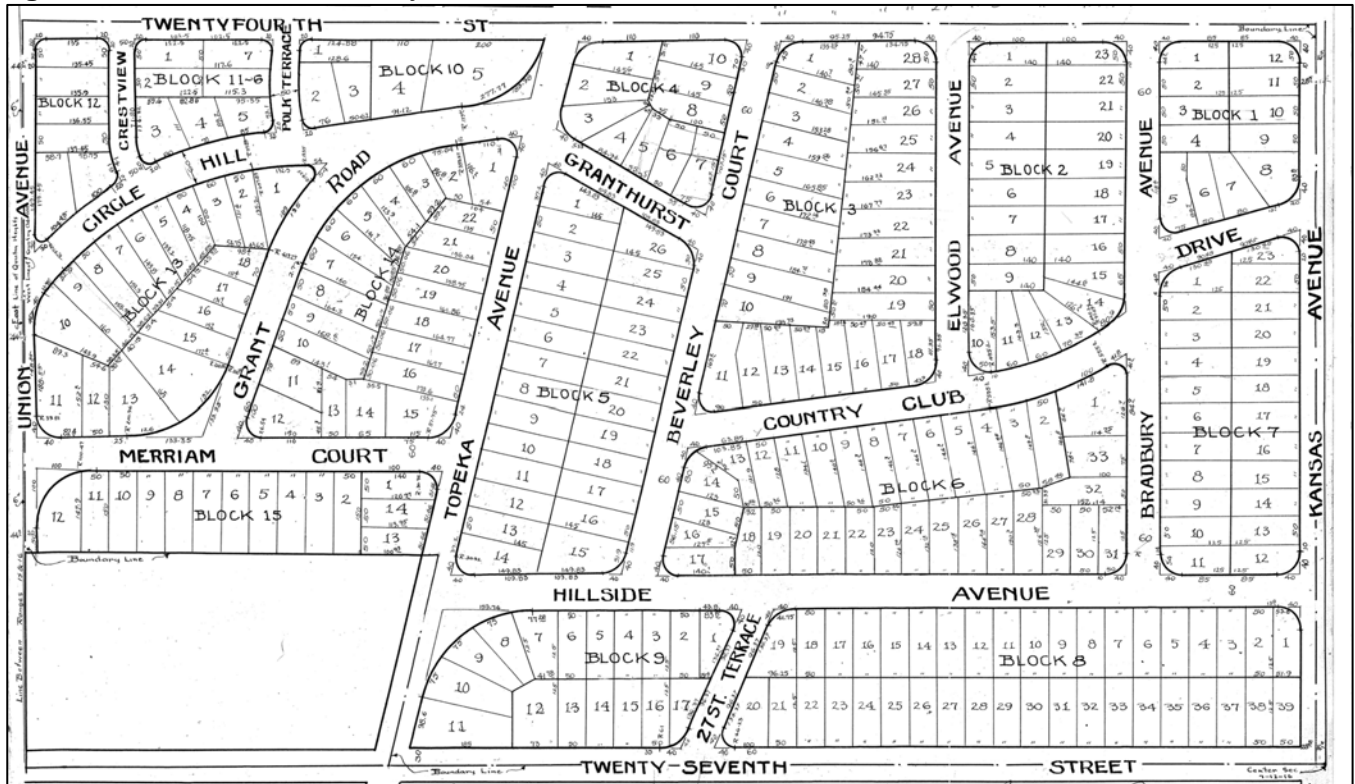
¹¹ Rosin, 14.

¹² Schwenk, Davis & Ambler, 76.

History of the Surveyed Area

The Country Club Place addition was surveyed and platted in 1924 by the Central Trust Company of Topeka¹³ (Figure 2.) The plat included 15 irregular blocks south of 24th Street, east of Union (now SW Western) Avenue, west of Kansas Avenue and north of 27th Street, except for the southwest corner, which ended at the lots south of Merriam Court. The Topeka City Planning Commission approved the survey on August 28, 1924 and by the Topeka Board of Commissioners on August 28, 1924.

Figure 2. Plat of the entire Country Club Place subdivision, 1924.



The west portion of the Country Club Place subdivision retains much of its original configuration. Polk Terrace extending south of 24th Street was eventually closed. Many of the streets were renamed in 1938, according to city records. Circle Hill became SW Terrace Avenue, Grant Road became SW Granthurst Avenue and Union Avenue became SW Western Avenue.

The curvilinear streets and irregular lots, probably the work of a landscape designer, broke with earlier trends of neighborhood development along a regular street grid. J.C. Nichols developed similar layouts in Kansas City during the early 1900s. The layout of the Country Club development put few lots facing north winter winds and located most of the house sites facing in toward the new neighborhood. The blocks originally contained more and smaller lots than today. For example, Block 13, surrounded by SW Terrace Avenue, SW Western Avenue and SW Granthurst

¹³ The plat was approved by the Topeka City Planning Commission August 28, 1924 and by the Topeka Board of Commissioners August 29, 1924. No information was discovered about the landscape designer.

Avenue, was platted with 18 house sites but 11 houses were built. Block 14, bordered by SW Granthurst Avenue, SW Topeka Boulevard and SW Merriam Court, was platted with 22 lots but 15 houses were built.

The Country Club Place plat was signed by J.R. Burrow, president, and Chester Woodward, secretary, of the Central Trust Company.¹⁴ The Central Trust Company was chartered April 8, 1914 by several individuals who had a controlling interest in the Central National Bank and Trust Company. J.R. Burrow served as the President of both financial institutions.¹⁵ Burrow served as Kansas Secretary of State from 1903 to 1907. As a resident of Smith Center, he founded the First National Bank of Smith Center. He eventually served as president or on the board of many Kansas financial institutions, including banks in Agra, Bellaire, Osage City, Portis and Athis.¹⁶ Burrow died in 1931. Chester Woodward was a Topeka financier and philanthropist who established himself in the banking industry during the first decades of the 1900s. He entered the farm loan business in the early 1900s and in 1919 became the secretary of the Merriam Mortgage Company. When the Merriam Company merged with the Central National Bank and Trust Company of Topeka in 1920, he served as the company's vice-president until he resigned in 1928. He continued to serve as president of the Topeka Morris Plan Company, a national loan and investment company, until his death in 1940.¹⁷

The surveyed area also includes eight houses on SW Western Avenue on the east edge of the Quinton and Steeles subdivision, most built between 1950 and 1968. Now referred to as the Quinton Heights Steele neighborhood, the area was historically named Quinton Heights. The boundaries were 21st Street on the north, 27th Street on the south, SW Washburn Avenue on the west and SW Western Avenue on the east. According to City of Topeka, Quinton Heights was platted in 1887 and annexed into the corporate limits in 1905. The neighborhood was touted in a 1909 article as one of southwest Topeka's new and desirable neighborhoods. "People are coming more and more to recognize this as one of the coming residence sections of Topeka. What was the first of the Topeka boom additions is rapidly becoming one of the nicest portions of Topeka."¹⁸ The area's location near the Topeka Country Club likely contributed to its desirability. The article goes on to state, "Just south of Quinton Heights is the Country club, one of the most fashionable of Topeka's clubs. It is to the Country club that fashionable Topeka people go during the summer. The popularity of golf in Topeka is due to the Country club."¹⁹

¹⁴ "J.R. Burrows" appears on the plat, but the name J.R. Burrow appears in several records as the president of the Central Trust Company.

¹⁵ Richard Pankratz and Cornelia Wyman, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, "Central National Bank," 6 January 1976.

¹⁶ *Biennial Report of the Bank Commissioners, Volumes 14-15*, 566. Accessed online 17 January 2018 at <https://books.google.com/books?id=xtEzAQAAAJ&pg=RA1-PA566&lpg=RA1-PA566&dq=jr+burrows+topeka&source=bl&ots=FrmHnMzLUD&sig=yd43CEIA-NICRIWSIY4EI0udfxE&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjH8LncyfHYAhVLS6wKHUNZA9oQ6AEINjAC#v=onepage&q=jr%20burrows%20topeka&f=false>.

¹⁷ Martha Hagedorn-Krass, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, "Chester B. Woodward House," 8 May 1992.

¹⁸ "Southwest Part Of City Booming" *The Topeka Daily Capital*, 27 February 1909, 89.

¹⁹ *Ibid*,

The surveyed area contains one home that may predate the Country Club Place plat, 2425 SW Granthurst (Figure 3.) A dwelling appears in the northeast corner of the area in the 1898 atlas as belonging to Mary Bradbury (Figure 4.) E.H. and Mary Bradbury came to Topeka in 1873 and made their home south of the Shawnee County fairgrounds near Topeka Avenue.²⁰ The house at 2425 SW Granthurst may be the Bradbury house. The house's style and construction are consistent with pre-1900 construction. An interview with Ruth Mohler makes note of "an old farmhouse" in the northeast portion of the Country Club addition.²¹ It first appears on a city map in 1935 and first appears in 1935-37 City Directories as 520 Circle Hill, home of Robert and Trissa Merrick.

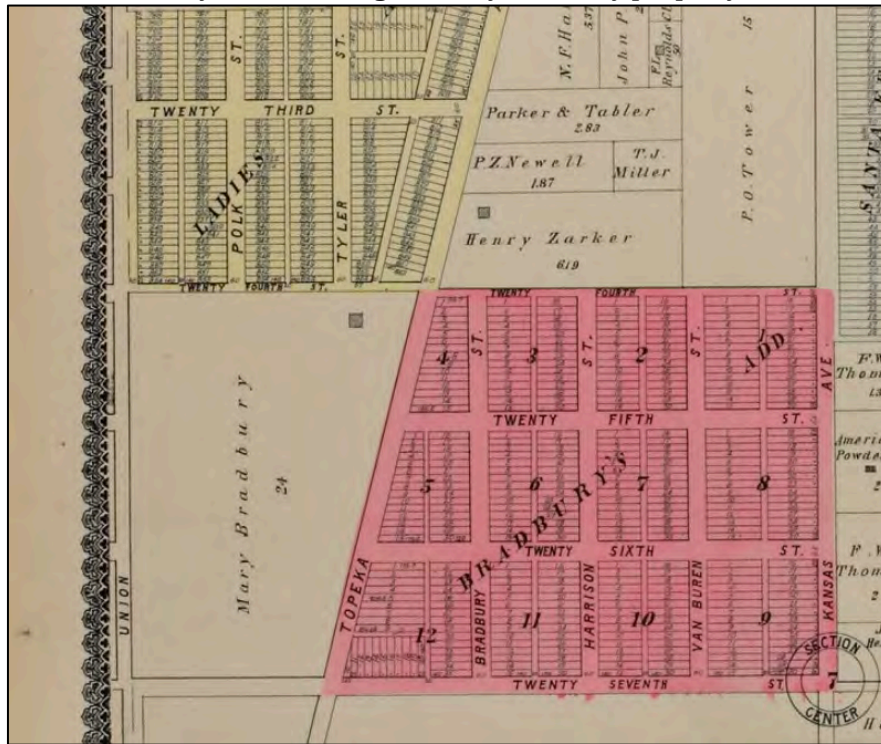
Figure 3. The E.H. and Mary Bradbury house at 2425 SW Granthurst.



²⁰ "E.H. Bradbury Is Dead," *Topeka Journal*, 7 January 1928.

²¹ James H. Ransom, "Building on Her Reputation; From Home-Maker to Home-Builder; A Brief History of Ruth McClintock Mohler," Presented to the Jayhawker Club, 21 January 1998.

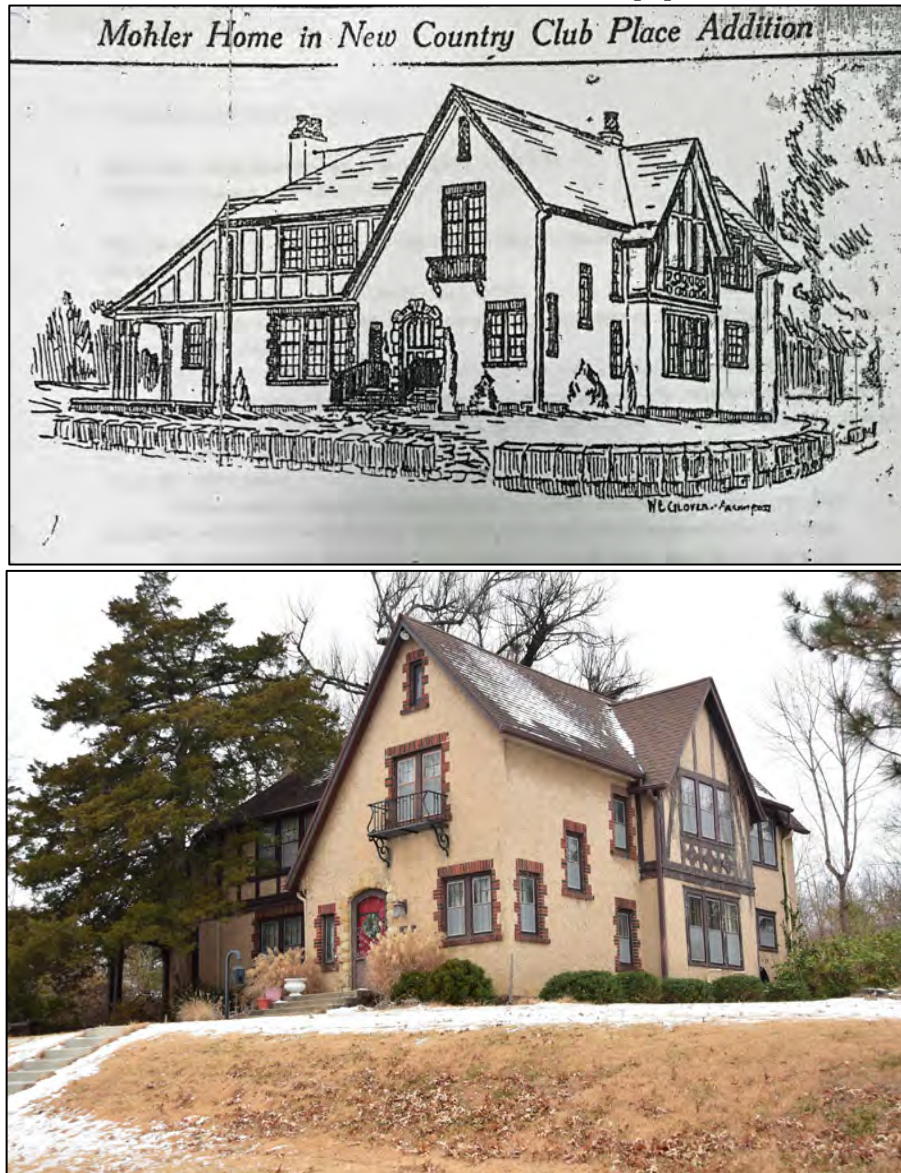
Figure 4. The 1898 Shawnee County atlas showing the Mary Bradbury property.



The first new house built in the Country Club addition was the prominent J.C. and Ruth Mohler home near the entrance to the neighborhood at 2501 SW Granthurst Avenue, designed by architect W.E. Glover (Figure 5.) The house was built in 1926 and, according the building permit, valued at \$10,000. Jake Mohler served as secretary of the state board of agriculture and Ruth Mohler was a Topeka home builder. The Tudor Revival house, the sixth built by Mrs. Mohler in Topeka, featured an entrance surrounded by native stone, exterior rough-hewn half timbers and textured stucco. The interior included a south living room sunk two feet below the entrance, a south attached garage, north dining room, three bedrooms and a sleeping porch. The Mohlers initially offered the house for sale but instead kept it as their own home.²²

²² "Mohler Home in New Country Club Place Addition," *Topeka Daily State Journal*, 9 November 1926, 6.

Figure 5. The Mohler home, 2501 SW Granthurst Ave., in a 1926 newspaper article and in 2017.



Ruth McClintock Mohler (1881-1956) grew up in Topeka as a daughter of a well-to-do couple, surgeon Dr. John McClintock and his wife, Ray.²³ Ruth was educated at Bethany College. By the 1920s, she was settled into her domestic life, married to Jake Mohler and the mother of three children—two sons in college and a 10-year-old daughter. She began building her business of developing property, building her first houses in Topeka in 1925 on land she purchased on the edge of town. She grew proficient in buying land and building, employing architects and foremen to fulfill her plans. She referred to her own Country Club house as designed in the English Country Cottage style, likely influenced by her travels abroad. The construction of the house served as a promotional springboard for her new business. She advertised a public open house at the Granthurst Avenue home that was attended by 2500 Topekan.²⁴

²³ *Principal Women Of America* (London: The Mitre Press, 1932) 88.

²⁴ Ransom.

Mohler built 12 houses in the Country Club neighborhood between 1926 and 1940, including two houses for her sisters. For Gertrude Whitcomb, she built a brick Tudor Revival house at 810 SW Terrace Avenue in 1929 valued at \$8000 (Figure 6.) For Helen McClintock, she built a Spanish Eclectic house at 2421 SW Crestview Street in 1937, valued at \$4800 (Figure 7.)

Figure 6. Gertrude Whitcomb house, 810 SW Terrace Ave.



Figure 7. Helen McClintock house, 2421 SW Crestview Street, 2017.



Development was initially slow in the neighborhood, with only four houses built in the surveyed area before 1930. An advertisement from the Brosius Investment and Neiswanger Investment companies promoted home ownership in the area as a way to improve one's status and as affordable for "anyone who earns an average salary." The ad, which has a photograph of the neighborhood showing only the Mohler house, goes on to state, "The modest down payment and equally modest weekly or monthly sums are no barrier—if you have the determination to step out of the class of weaklings who claim they never can get anywhere." (Figure 8.)²⁵ The advertisement may have indicated a shift from trying to appeal to upper-middle-class residents to reaching for those who wanted to be upper middle class.

²⁵ "Observe the Monkey Wrench," undated newspaper advertisement.

Figure 8. Circa 1927 newspaper advertisement, source unknown.

"THERE ARE three degrees in the intelligence of mankind."

To the first belong those who understand things for themselves by virtue of their own natural endowments; to the second, those who have at least the wit to discern what others understand; to the third, those who neither understand things for themselves nor yet through the demonstrations which others afford them.

The first are rare and excellent, since they are the incentive and generative class; the second are of merit, since if not actually productive, they are at least reproductive; the third, being neither one or the other, but mere parasites who prey for their existence upon the other two, are entirely worthless."—Sabatini.

Observe the Monkey Wrench

If you would know the value of a good bottom jaw ---

Many people are halted in their progress forward by a vain desire to start each new venture in a grand manner. If they cannot start grandly, they make no start at all.

It occurs to all of us now and then that we should build a home of our own—to create an obligation, as it were, to absorb a part of our earnings and set up an estate against our old age. However, instead of securing a building site and putting aside \$1.00 or \$5.00 or \$10.00 a week—10% of our income—we postpone the act with the excuse that such small sums will never get us anywhere. We wait for a mythical happening—the death of an aunt, a bonus, a lucky break. These favorable turns of fortune are seldom realized, or if they are, some other use is found for the money.

Thousands of folk in Topeka have paid for homes they do not own. The landlord, each month, collects a sum, which, if properly applied, would build and equip a home of their own. Many reliable companies would build a house to suit if you owned the site—and allow you to pay for it in monthly sums no greater than the rent you are now paying. ¶ Why won't everyone set aside a given amount, above necessities, to insure this certain independence? Because it takes the courage necessary to start with small sums and the persistence to stick to a resolution.

Many people say, "I would rather do nothing than not do the thing right." So they live out their lives without venturing anything, and children are deprived of opportunities which are easily within the reach of their parents. ¶ There is no single element in the entire scheme of beautiful Country Club Place that prevents anyone who earns an average salary from acquiring an ideal site for their future home. The modest down payment and equally modest weekly or monthly sums are no barrier—if you have the determination to step out of the class of weaklings who claim they never can get anywhere. ¶ Representatives are on the property daily. If you have no mode of conveyance, phone 4945 or 2-8321 and an automobile will call for you and show you the property. There will be no obligations on your part.



A view in Country Club Place—an addition distinguished by its varied topography and fine elevations. Drive out Topeka Avenue to the addition today. Inspect the property—decide for yourself!—Our prices are low—Our terms will surprise you.

Brosius Investment Co.
National Subdividers

Neiswanger Investment Co.
Co-operating Agents

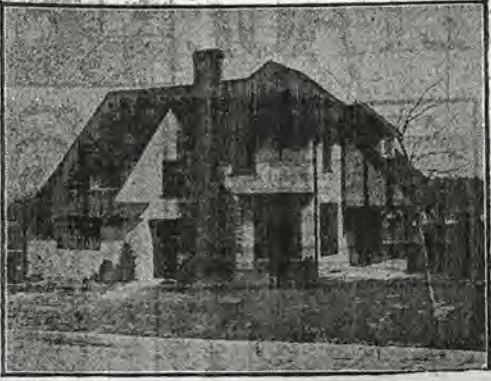
Salesmen on the Tract Every Day to Show You

Home construction all but declined or stopped across the country during the Great Depression and early 1940s, but 20 additional houses were built in the surveyed area before the onset of World War II in 1942. At least one of these homes, 2504 SW Granthurst, was probably built on speculation. The home appeared in an advertisement in the *Topeka Daily State Journal* in May 1930 but first appears in the 1933 City Directory as occupied by Robert and Marjoire Owthwaite

(Figure 9.) Two of the area's homes—2500 SW Granthurst and 2532 SW Granthurst built in 1931 and 1933—can be attributed to the Garlinghouse Company.²⁶

Figure 9. Advertisement for 2504 SW Granthurst in 1930 and house in 2017.

FOR SALE—REAL ESTATE FOR SALE—REAL ESTATE



OPEN FROM 2 UNTIL 9 P. M.

Beautiful English Type House
2504 Grant Road—Country Club Place

This splendid house is a quality product, complete to the last detail and beautifully finished. 4 bedrooms, 3 tiled baths, gas heating plant, two-car heated garage, 85 ft. frontage, sodded and landscaped.

ATTRACTIVE ENGLISH COTTAGE
1254 Randolph Avenue

There are five rooms, the large living room having three outside exposures. The bath is tiled, gas furnace, garage. A quality home at a popular price.

We invite you to inspect and compare.

NEISWANGER INV. CO., REALTORS
Stormont Building Phones 2-8243, 2-4160



The former Florence Crittenton Home was built in 1930 at 2601 SW Western Avenue (Figure 10.) The first Crittenton Agency was established in Topeka in 1900 on Jewell Street. A home was located in the Quinton Heights neighborhood by 1909.²⁷ The Florence Crittenton Home is listed at this location in City Directories as early as 1921. Notice of the construction of a new home appeared in Kansas Construction News in 1930. The article stated that the three-story brick and concrete building would cost \$26,000.²⁸ The Florence Crittenton home provided residential services to pregnant or troubled teenage girls. It offered health care, educational services and counseling. The facility was licensed to care for 20 girls: 15 troubled teens ages 13 to 17 and five pregnant girls.²⁹ The house served as Crittenton Home until 2003.

²⁶ The L.F. Garlinghouse Company, established in Topeka in 1907, promoted house plan designs through the distribution of plan books. Plan #2210 is at 2500 SW Granthurst and plan #1246 is at 2532 SW Granthurst. "Bungalow Homes for the Nation," Shawnee County Historical Bulletin No. 83 (2008).

²⁷ Mrs. John McFarland, "For Many, A Home Away From Home" *Topeka Magazine*, December 1976, 34-37.

²⁸ Kansas Construction News, 22 March 1930.

²⁹ Mrs. John McFarland.

Figure 10. 2601 SW Western.

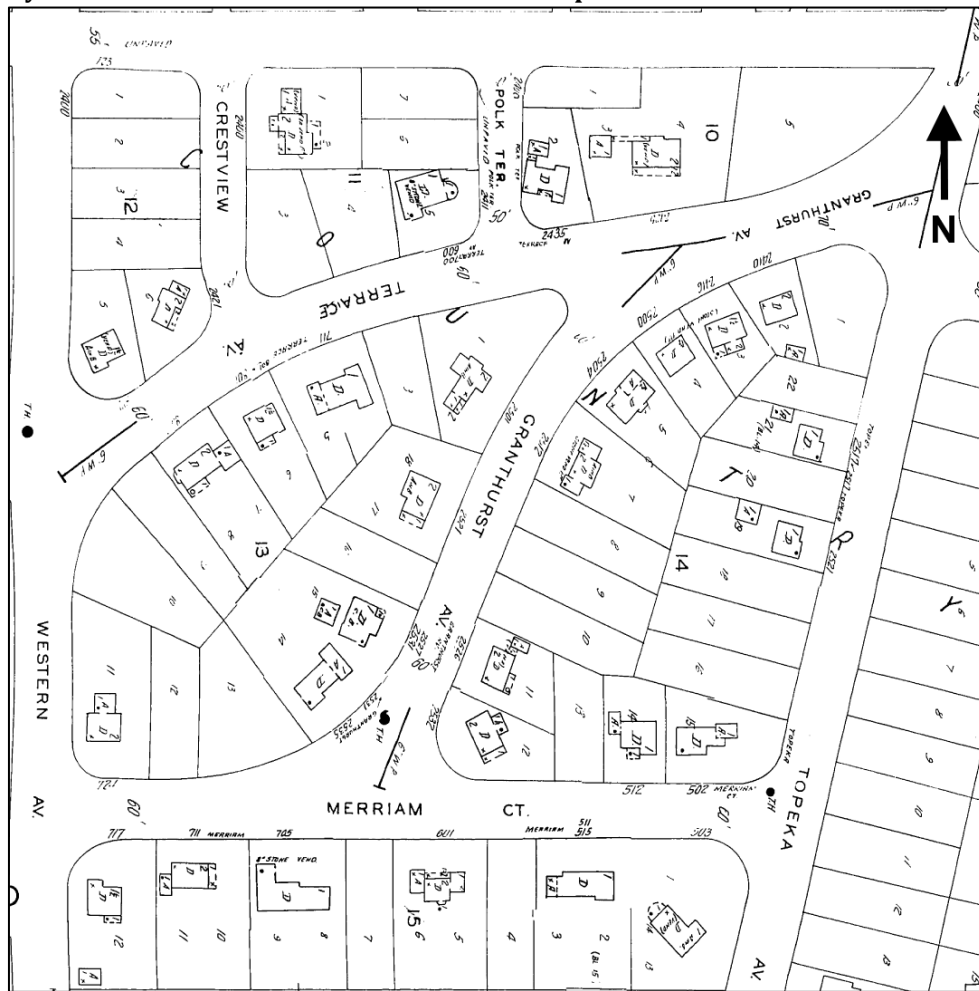


An aerial photograph taken for the City of Topeka in 1942 shows houses on about half of the lots on the inner streets of the surveyed area (Figure 11.) No construction occurred in the area between 1943 and 1948. The 1950 Sanborn map shows little change in the neighborhood's density (Figure 12.)

Figure 11. Aerial photograph of the Country Club West area, 1942.



Figure 12. Surveyed area on 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance map.



The number of houses in the surveyed area nearly doubled between 1948 and 1959. Two houses were built in 1948, two in 1949, and 17 in the 1950s. The neighborhood's location just two miles from downtown and near the Topeka Country Club likely proved to be an attraction for new homeowners. The curving streets and maturing landscaping could also have drawn in buyers who were looking for a developed setting for their new homes.

The 1950s also brought new houses to two unoccupied streets within the surveyed area—SW Topeka Avenue and SW Western Avenue. Four of the five west lots in the 2500 block of Topeka Avenue were built on in the early 1950s. The first house, a Ranch at 2535 SW Topeka, was built in 1950. Three houses were built in 1955 at 2517, 2525 and 2531. The final house was built in 1966 at 2521. The location on a busy thoroughfare may have initially been unattractive to homeowners. The 1950s Topeka Avenue houses were smaller and simpler than most of those located in the neighborhood's interior, indicating perhaps a lower sale price for the lots.

Five of the seven historic houses on SW Western Avenue were built in the 1950s. According to Gerald Graves, who grew up in the area and recently purchased a house on the street, African Americans were not allowed to buy homes in the Country Club Place addition in the 1950s. Western Avenue, located in the Quinton Heights plat, was available to upper- and middle-class black families. The street was desirable, he states, for affluent African Americans who wanted to live very close to one of Topeka's most desirable neighborhoods.³⁰ A sampling of the street's initial owner occupations—clergy, DuPont employee, owner of an electric company—provides evidence of this. The last historic house built in the surveyed area was the substantial 1968 Ranch home of Donald and Earlene Redmon at 2519 SW Western Avenue. After serving in the Korean War, Donald Redmon began working with his father, Fred, building houses. He became Topeka's first licensed African-American electrical contractor and went on to build several commercial buildings.³¹

Just five houses were built on vacant lots in the surveyed area in the 1960s. Two were small houses built at 701 and 555 SW Merriam Court in 1962 and 1963. A substantial Ranch house was built for John and Ruthie Arthur at 2520 SW Granthurst in 1965. In 1966, the last house was added to those facing SW Topeka Avenue at 2521. In 1968, Donald and Earlene Redmon built the neighborhood's last historic home at 2519 SW Western (Figure 24.) Three houses were built in the surveyed area after 1968: 815 SW Terrace in 1976, 605 SW 24th Street in 1978 and 2501 SW Western in 1998.

The first residents of the surveyed area worked in middle- to upper-middle-class professions. Occupations listed in city directories identify initial and later homeowners as a mix of management positions, attorneys, company owners, professionals and employees of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway. The stability of these jobs almost certainly contributed to the excellent maintenance of the neighborhood's historic homes.

Figure 13. Estimated date of construction of primary resources.

Era	Total Built
1926-1929	4
1930-1942	20
1942-1947	0
1948-1959	21
1960-1968	5
1970-present	3

³⁰ Gerald Graves, telephone conversation with author, 10 January 2018.

³¹ Donald Redmon Obituary, *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 25 December 2016. Accessed online 8 February 2018 at <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/cjonline/obituary.aspx?pid=183206739>.

Survey Findings

Architectural Styles and Materials

All of the surveyed houses, except for the Florence Crittenton Home, were constructed as single dwellings and all are single-family homes today. The development of the neighborhood is clearly reflected in architectural styles from the five decades of the 1920s through the 1960s, beginning with homes built in Revival styles and ending with Ranch houses. Materials were traditional. Most houses were of frame construction with siding of wood, brick or stone.³² A handful of houses have stucco or concrete siding. Surveyed ancillary structures included 23 detached garages or sheds.

Three of the four earliest houses were built before 1930 in Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival, styles quite popular in the 1920s. The neighborhood also has one Craftsman home, a slightly old-fashioned style for the time (Figure 14.)

Figure 14. The 1929 Bernardo and Minnie Wegele residence at 2525 SW Western has textured concrete block cladding in the first story.



Revival styles dominated the pre-World War II era, especially the symmetrical Colonial Revival style. Eight Colonial Revival homes were built in the surveyed area during this time, including the 1932 James and Freda Lippitt house at 2532 SW Granthurst and the 1936 H. Bernard and Jane Fink house at 711 SW Merriam Court, designed by T.R. Griest and built by Ruth Mohler (Figure

³² Two houses are shown on the 1950 Sanborn map as masonry construction: 2531 SW Granthurst (concrete) and 2532 SW Granthurst (stone.) Eleven of the 53 resources have synthetic or asbestos siding added after initial construction.

15.) Two of the area's Colonial Revival homes—2500 SW Granthurst and 2532 SW Granthurst—can be attributed to the Garlinghouse Company.

Figure 15. Examples of Colonial Revival, 2532 SW Granthurst built in 1933, and 711 SW Merriam Court built in 1936.



Three Tudor Revival homes, such as the 1930 Earl and Kathryn Jones house (Figure 16) at 801 SW Terrace joined the earlier houses in this style with their prominent front gables, multi-paned windows and use of decorative stone. Construction during this time also included examples of combined styles, such as the Milton and Montie Fuller house at 807 SW Terrace, with a two-story Neoclassical porch but with a clear Colonial Revival form (Figure 17.) The Helen McClintock home built in 1937 (Figure 7) has a Spanish Eclectic appearance but a form that nods to Tudor Revival. The 1936 Forest and Helen Loveland residence, 2526 SW Granthurst, displays a steep French Eclectic roof and arched wall dormers, but retains the symmetry of the Colonial Revival style (Figure 18.) The 1937 Joseph and Odett Brelsford house at 503 SW Merriam Court almost defies architectural classification, displaying an early Ranch form but also including spare Minimal Traditional eaves and a curved Art Moderne sunporch (Figure 19.)

Figure 16. 801 SW Terrace built in 1930.



Figure 17. 807 SW Terrace, built in 1937 by Charles Trueblood.



Figure 18. 2526 SW Granthurst, built in 1936 by Ruth Mohler.



Figure 19. 503 SW Merriam Court.



Two examples of modern house styles that later dominated the neighborhood were built before World War II. The area's first Ranch house was built at 515 SW Merriam Court in 1941 (Figure 20) and a Minimal Traditional house was built in 1942 at 2435 SW Granthurst Avenue (Figure 21.) Both are early examples of forms that would become very popular in the Country Club neighborhood, as well as across the country.

Figure 20. 515 SW Merriam Court.



Figure 21. 2435 SW Granthurst Avenue.



After World War II, the modern Minimal Traditional and Ranch styles multiplied throughout the surveyed area. In all, 10 houses were built in the Minimal Traditional style and 22 houses were built in the Ranch style in the neighborhood.³³ The forms clearly diverged from historic designs. Both styles were readily available in pattern books and were easily built due to their use of building materials with standard measurements.

The compact Minimal Traditional house promoted simplicity, giving the owner plenty of interior space with the appearance of a small house. The 1955 George and Isabel Wells house at 2413 SW Western is a late example of style with a tidy appearance (Figure 22.) No Minimal Traditional houses were built in the area after 1955.

Figure 22. 2413 SW Western Avenue.



The sprawling Ranch style was clearly a modern look that accommodated the family automobile with an attached garage. The Ranch could be modest, like the house at 515 Merriam Court, (Figure 20) or much grander. The surveyed area has two examples of outstanding Ranch homes. Willis and Dorothy Lundgren's 1955 house at 2415 SW Crestview was designed by architect William Suerk and built by Mr. Lundgren's company, J.A. Lundgren & Son Construction Company. The house has cypress siding, multi-paned casement windows and a striking north façade with a north entrance patio, (Figure 23.) The last historic house built in the surveyed area is the impressive 1968 Ranch home of Donald and Earlene Redmon at 2519 SW Western. The house features a center courtyard behind a front tile screen, casement windows with diamond panes and red stone siding (Figure 24.) The house remained with the Redmon family in 2018.

³³ This count includes 2401 SW Western Avenue, built as a Ranch but later expanded to a Split-Level.

Figure 23. 2415 SW Crestview.



Figure 24. 2519 SW Western.



Eligibility

The architectural integrity of each primary resource determined eligibility for individual listing in the National or Kansas Registers or as a contributing building to a potential historic district. Houses with the highest architectural integrity—retaining significant original form and materials—were determined to be individually eligible. Houses with minimal loss of integrity—some replacements of original windows, for example—but that retain most of their historic appearance, were determined to be contributing structures. Contributing buildings are less significant and may have less architectural integrity than individually eligible buildings, but in association with other buildings in the area, they are representative examples of historic building types. Considered in thematic groups or as districts, contributing buildings may be eligible for the Kansas or National Registers. Buildings determined as non-contributing to a historic district suffer from a severe loss of integrity. The most common reason for a house in the surveyed area to be considered as non-contributing is the application of non-historic siding and the removal of all historic windows.³⁴

No resources in the surveyed area are currently listed in the National or Kansas Registers. In the survey of 53 resources, 14 were evaluated as eligible for individual listing in the National or Kansas Registers due to their architectural significance. In addition, 20 were evaluated as contributing structures.³⁵

The following properties are considered potentially eligible for individual listing in the National Register by the KHPO staff:³⁶

- J.C. & Ruth Mohler House, 2501 SW Granthurst;
- Gertrude Whitcomb House, 810 SW Terrace;
- Earl & Kathryn Jones House, 801 SW Terrace;
- Florence Crittenton Home, 2601 SW Western
- James & Freda Lippit House, 2532 SW Granthurst;
- Robert & Trissa Merrick House, 2425 SW Granthurst;
- Forest & Helen Loveland House, 2526 SW Granthurst;
- Helen McClintock House, 2421 SW Crestview;
- Milton & Montie Fuller House, 807 SW Terrace;
- Leslie & Helen Overhelman House; 600 SW Terrace;
- Jas. DePriest House, 2427 SW Western;
- Walter & Bernice Luttrell House, 612 SW Terrace;
- Willis & Dorothy Lundgren House, 2415 SW Crestview;
- Donald & Earlene Redmon House, 2519 SW Western.

³⁴ The removal of non-historic siding may change the status of a resource from non-contributing to contributing.

³⁵ Only the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Register program through the National Park Service can make final recommendations as to historic designation and the definition of potential historic districts.

³⁶ Interior photos and more information about each building's significance may be needed to help support eligibility.

The following properties are considered eligible as contributing to a potential historic district by the KHPO staff:

- Frank & Edith Moyer House, 2508 SW Granthurst;
- Charles & Alta Putt House, 2500 SW Granthurst;
- Robert & Marcia Clark House, 2416 SW Granthurst;
- Emily Gault House, 717 SW Merriam;
- Joseph & Odett Brelsford House, 503 SW Merriam;
- Peter & Carmen Weber House, 724 SW Merriam;
- Harold & Eulalie Granberry House, 515 SW Merriam;
- Frank & Mable Smith House, 705 SW Merriam;
- Richard & Hazel May House, 2535 SW Granthurst;
- Chris & Marie Henriksen House, 500 SW Merriam;
- Cecil & Pearl Collier House, 510 SW Merriam;
- William & Ernestine Nowlan House, 711 SW Terrace;
- Dean & Basil Wilds House, 2400 SW Granthurst;
- Louis & Sadie Gleichenhaus House, 720 SW Merriam;
- George & Isabel Wells House, 2413 SW Western;
- Webster Reese House, 2517 SW Topeka;
- Thomas & Malissa Lovell House, 2419 SW Western;
- Richard & Olga Holberg House, 701 SW Merriam;
- Willard & Velma Bellinger House, 555 SW Merriam;
- John & Ruthie Arthur House, 2520 SW Granthurst.

Historic District Recommendation

A historic district is a group of buildings united historically by plan or physical development. Buildings within a district must be contiguous. In a historic district, at least 51 percent of the buildings must be considered as contributing structures. The buildings must fall within a period of significance. A period of significance is the length of time when a district attained the characteristics that qualify it for National Register listing. The recommended period of significance for the surveyed area is 1926-1968, beginning with the construction of the J.C. and Ruth Mohler house at 2501 SW Granthurst Avenue and ending with the construction of the last historic house, the Donald and Earlene Redmon house at 2519 SW Western Avenue.

The survey recommends a historic district consisting of the entire surveyed neighborhood of 53 houses. Thirty-four of these resources are considered individually eligible or as contributing to a potential historic district. The surveyed area is a cohesive neighborhood. Nearly 65 percent the houses are considered as eligible or contributing structures. Several of the non-contributing structures have the potential to have their status changed with the removal of non-historic siding. A map of the proposed district with individually eligible and contributing resources identified can be seen in Figure 25. Individually eligible properties are also considered as contributing resources to a potential historic district.

Country Club Addition Neighborhood Survey Report



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