

WASHINGTON DC

CLEVELAND PARK

HISTORIC DISTRICT

OAK VIEW

D.C.

Former suburban residence of Ex. Pres. Cleveland

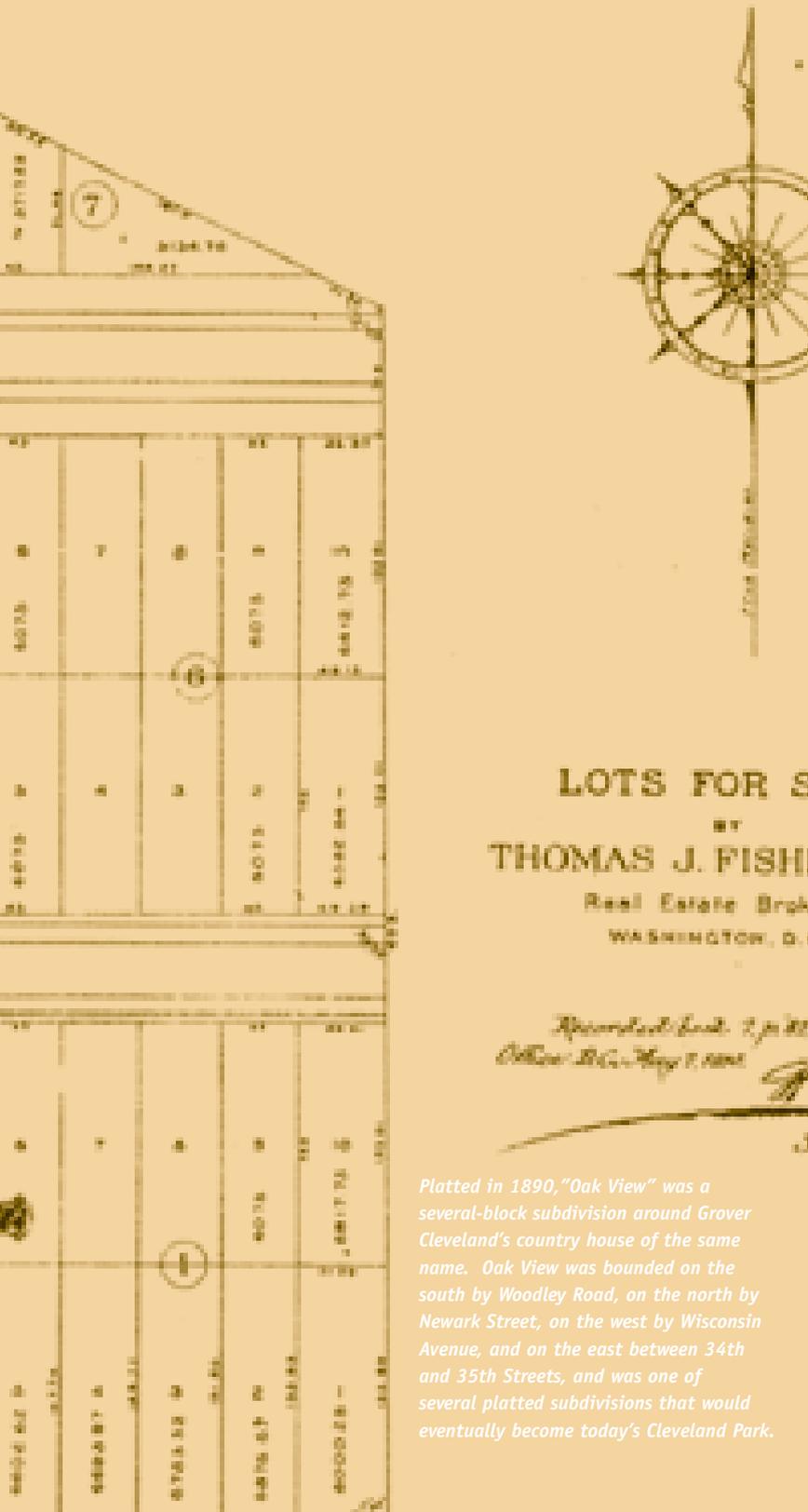
Surveyed
April 1890

By

Edwin A. Green
839 F Street
Washington

SCALE

1" = 100'



Platted in 1890, "Oak View" was a several-block subdivision around Grover Cleveland's country house of the same name. Oak View was bounded on the south by Woodley Road, on the north by Newark Street, on the west by Wisconsin Avenue, and on the east between 34th and 35th Streets, and was one of several platted subdivisions that would eventually become today's Cleveland Park.

CLEVELAND PARK

HISTORIC DISTRICT

"Cleveland Park is the prettiest suburb of Washington... there is every blessing of fresh country air, plenty of elbow room, woods and fields, peacefulness, coolness in summer and comfort in winter." These words, written to describe Cleveland Park in a May 1903 *Washington Times* article, ring remarkably true today. The tree-shaded streets of this suburb-in-the-city are lined with a variety of turn-of-the-century frame houses, whose generous front porches offer cooling breezes and still serve as outdoor rooms and neighborhood gathering places. The streets themselves follow the natural contours of the terrain, rising in a modified grid between the area's elevational lowpoint at the edge of Rock Creek valley, to its highpoint at Mount St. Alban. Within this densely developed residential core with mixed-use commercial development along the arteries, Cleveland Park is also home to the Melvin Hazen Park and several large estates whose surrounding acreage contribute to the bucolic setting of the historic district. Cleveland Park is named after President Grover Cleveland whose country house, Oak View, stood in the heart of the burgeoning suburb before falling victim to demolition in 1927.

The Cleveland Park Historic District lies between Wisconsin Avenue on the west, Connecticut Avenue on the east, Klinge Valley on the south, and Tilden Street on the north. Served by a metro stop, the neighborhood contains a cohesive collection of single-family residences, apartment buildings, a vibrant commercial corridor with stores and restaurants, schools, a library, fire station and other amenities.



View of north side of Ashley Terrace, circa 1904. The first homes on this tranquil dead-end street above Connecticut Avenue enjoyed uninterrupted views east to Rock Creek and beyond.

Collection of Kathleen Sinclair Wood.

WASHINGTON DC

CLEVELAND PARK

HISTORIC DISTRICT

HISTORY OF THE SUBDIVISION

The historic district, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, has local and national significance as an early “streetcar suburb” of Washington. The district features a picturesque street plan resulting from the planning work of the landscape architecture firm of Frederick Law Olmsted, and an impressive array of architecture with individually designed buildings offering a variety of styles in vogue between 1890 and 1930. In addition, Cleveland Park retains some estates that preceded the area’s suburban growth and survive as integral components of the neighborhood today.

Cleveland Park as we know it consists of a set of independent subdivisions, platted in a series of phases, beginning in the early 1890s, and laid out in an effort to capitalize on the existence of the new electric streetcar lines on present-day Wisconsin and Connecticut Avenues. Prior to the growth of these streetcar lines, the area around and including Cleveland Park was unplatted, rural territory not easily accessible to the city, but home to a scattering of 18th and 19th century estates, including that of the eponymous Grover Cleveland. However, as the population of Washington continued to increase following the Civil War, and residential development began pushing itself beyond the city limits at Boundary Street (Florida Avenue), the former farmland of Washington County became attractive to speculative real estate developers.

The earliest of these subdivisions, labeled Oak View (platted 1890), and Cleveland Heights (platted circa 1890), west of today’s Reno Road were laid out in response to the extension of the Georgetown and Tenallytown (Tenleytown) streetcar line along Wisconsin Avenue. This line, chartered in 1888 from Georgetown to Tenleytown, was extended in 1890 north to Bethesda across the Maryland line, and later to Rockville. While this line ultimately served as a major catalyst for suburban development along its Maryland route, these first two Cleveland Park subdivisions did not initially progress beyond the paper stage.

The ultimate success of today’s Cleveland Park was due not to its proximity to the Georgetown-Tenleytown streetcar along Wisconsin Avenue, but to the opening up of the Rock Creek Railway line along Connecticut Avenue in 1892. Prior to



View of Connecticut looking west across the road between today’s Newark and Ordway Streets, including the present site of the Uptown Theater. This circa 1904 view shows several of the early houses of Cleveland Park. A stone quarry on the site provided stone for the foundations of the first houses in the suburb. Collection of Robert Truax.

1890, the area north of Rock Creek remained remote and inaccessible due to the steep ravines of Rock Creek and the Klinge Valley and was thus not practical for development. By 1890, however, in his effort to provide transportation to his “model” suburb in Chevy Chase, developer and later Senator from Nevada, Francis Griffith Newlands established the Rock Creek Railway Company and began laying the tracks for a streetcar line on land he had purchased as part of his grand development scheme. Newlands’ company, the Chevy Chase Land Company, constructed the five-mile stretch of Connecticut Avenue from Calvert Street north to Chevy Chase Lake in Montgomery County, Maryland, thereby opening up the entire length of Connecticut Avenue for future development.

The construction of Connecticut Avenue beginning at today’s Calvert Street, not only included cutting the thoroughfare over heavily wooded and stream-cut terrain, laying the tracks, and building the roadbed, but also involved the daunting task of erecting the bridges across Rock Creek at Calvert Street and across the Klinge Valley. A huge engineering feat, these two bridges were substantial iron structures erected at great expense and to great acclaim. By September 1892, construction of Connecticut Avenue and its bridges was complete. Streetcar service opened between Calvert Street and Chevy Chase Lake with scheduled stops at the National Zoo. Within two years, a new stop at Cleveland Park would be added along the Connecticut Avenue corridor and to the Rock Creek Railway streetcar’s route.

Background image: After significantly altering the mid-19th-century stone house known as Forrest Hill, Grover Cleveland and his wife, Frances renamed the property Oak View for the property’s surrounding view. Despite this designation, the property was popularly dubbed “Red Top” for its encompassing and steeply pitched hipped roof, which along with the turrets and towers, was painted red. From Oak View Grover Cleveland commuted each day to the White House.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.



The Connecticut Avenue Bridge over Kingle Valley is perceived as the southern gateway to Cleveland Park. The first bridge on the site was a steel trestle bridge, built by the Chevy Chase Land Company in 1891. The existing bridge, erected in 1931 on the 1891 abutments, was designed in the Art Deco style by nationally noted architect Paul Cret.

Photo by Kathleen Sinclair Wood, 1988.

DEVELOPMENT OF CLEVELAND PARK

The first real estate speculators to seize the development opportunity offered by the construction of Connecticut Avenue and the Rock Creek Railway was the team of Thomas Waggaman and John and Ella Sherman. In May of 1894 Thomas Waggaman purchased 400 acres of ground between Wisconsin and Connecticut Avenues, north of Woodley Road, with the idea of “transforming all that garden spot of the District into conveniently arranged building lots.” Together, the realtors formed the Cleveland Park Company with Thomas Waggaman as the principal financier and John Sherman as president. John Sherman’s wife, Ella Sherman, an artist, was involved in the Cleveland Park Company from its inception, and was actively engaged in the design of a significant number of the suburb’s houses after 1902.

The company’s first subdivision, “Cleveland Park,” proved immediately successful. Cleveland Park included Newark Street between 33rd Street and Wisconsin Avenue, and Ordway Street (then called Omaha Street) from 34th Street to 36th Street. Laid out in a grid pattern, the blocks were divided into lots, having 25-foot street frontages and rang-

ing in depth from 80 to 210 feet. The subdivision was enhanced by a 10-acre “reservation” surrounding the 18th-century estate of Rosedale. The grid plan was established in accordance with the 1888 “Act to Regulate the Subdivision of Land Within the District of Columbia,” which required that new subdivisions beyond the city limits conform to the “General Plan of the City of Washington.”

Despite its conventional grid plan, John Sherman had a vision for Cleveland Park that went beyond the more typical pattern of speculative development. Clearly inspired by the new suburb of Chevy Chase, and modeling its own subdivision after it, the Cleveland Park Company hired a team of noted architects to prepare unique designs for houses in the subdivision, at the same time that it set about establishing the principal infrastructure, such as streets, water and gas mains, sewers, and electricity. The improvement company went even further by designing and building community amenities. In particular, the Company erected a streetcar waiting station (the Lodge) and community center, a stable for residents’ horses and carriages, and a Chemical Engine House (fire station) on Newark Street, with space for the police.

Initial lot sales of “Cleveland Park” were high, and within the first year, John Sherman and Thomas Waggaman purchased additional land adjacent to “Cleveland Park,”



This photograph, taken from the east side of Connecticut Avenue at Newark Street, appeared in a 1904 real estate brochure for Cleveland Park, published by Moore and Hill, exclusive real estate agents for the Cleveland Park Company. The building at the left side of photograph (site of the present Cleveland Park Library) was built in 1898 and served as a heated streetcar waiting station and community meeting center until it was destroyed by fire in 1912. Collection of Robert A. Truax.

ARCHITECTURE

Background image: The development of Cleveland Park, begun in 1894, reflects the influence of two drastically different urban planning philosophies in Washington for the layout of streets beyond the original city limits. The first platted subdivision continued the grid system of L'Enfant's plan. The second phase of development followed a more "picturesque" layout as shown here on the 1897 Permanent Highway Plan for the District of Columbia.

calling it "The Connecticut Avenue and Northern Additions to Cleveland Park." This tract, located east of 33rd Street, encompassed all of today's Highland Place, extended down Newark Street to Connecticut Avenue, and included lower Macomb Street from Ross Place to the crest of the hill overlooking Rock Creek. Unlike the grid system established for the streets west of 33rd Street, the streets in this section, east of 33rd Street, followed the earlier property lines and natural contours of the land.

The change in street plan from that of a strict grid for the "Cleveland Park" subdivision, to that of a more "picturesque" layout with curvilinear streets and irregular blocks corresponded with a study being conducted for the extension of streets in the area west of Rock Creek by the renowned landscape architecture firm of Frederick Law Olmsted. The result of the Olmsted firm's work was the Permanent Highway Plan for the District of Columbia, first published in 1897. This plan, which followed Olmsted's suburban planning principles, provided for gently winding streets that conformed to the natural contours of the land. The planning idea not only provided for a more Romantic street layout, but was cheaper, prevented land erosion, and provided a natural setting for residential building. In Cleveland Park, the streets east of 34th Street and north of Newark Street are hilly and curvilinear, clearly reflecting the influence of the Olmsted's study, while those streets west of 34th Street and laid out just one year before, followed the earlier decision to continue the standard grid pattern of the federal city.



Built in 1894, this house at 3607 Newark Street was the first house constructed as part of the residential subdivision of Cleveland Park. It was built by Richard J. Beall, Jr., descendant of Ninian Beall, who held the original 18th-century patent on the land.

The first houses built in Cleveland Park were located near the Rosedale "reservation," which consisted of the 18th-century frame dwelling and its associated domestic outbuildings, and a surviving two-acre tract of land. The houses surrounding the estate occupied two or three of the platted lots and were intended as permanent, year-round residences. These gracious first homes,

set well back from the street with ample front lawns, served as architectural models for the community and established the high quality design standards and architectural character for future house construction.

Beginning in 1895 until 1904, the Cleveland Park Company hired four architects, in succession, to design one-of-a-kind houses on commission: Paul Pelz and his partner Frederick W. Carlyle, Frederick Bennett Pyle, Waddy Butler Wood, and Robert Thompson Head. Each of these well-established and talented architects from various design backgrounds brought with them stylistic preferences that give Cleveland Park its great eclecticism, character, and charm that has endured for decades. Indeed, a walk through the tranquil residential streets of Cleveland Park and a glimpse at the exquisite houses confirms the 1903 perception that Cleveland Park is "the prettiest suburb of Washington."

By far, the longest-employed and most prolific of these four architects was Robert Thompson Head. Head was a carpenter/builder from Leesburg, Virginia, who came to Washington in 1888 as a draftsman, and opened his own architecture practice in 1892. By 1897, Head was working

This rustic bridge over Newark Street in Cleveland Park once connected a section of today's Reno Road (called Bridge Street) to a path leading to the streetcar station on Connecticut Avenue. Collection of Kathleen Sinclair Wood.





This house at 3440 34th Place, built in 1895, was designed by the architectural firm of Pelz and Carlyle. Paul Pelz, known nationally for his design of the Library of Congress building, worked in conjunction with F.W. Carlyle in Cleveland Park, designing the suburb's earliest residences.

In 1897, architect Waddy Butler Wood designed this Mission style house on Newark Street. Considered a brilliant designer with an eccentric personality, Wood is most known today for his many Georgian Revival town houses in the District. In Cleveland Park, however, Wood explored a more organic architecture, befitting the bucolic setting of the new suburb.

Frederick Bennett Pyle, a prolific rowhouse architect in Washington, worked in Cleveland Park for the Cleveland Park Company first in 1896, and then again between 1904 and 1908. His earlier houses, such as this one at 3100 Highland Place, are all reflective of the emerging Colonial Revival-style.

This Newark Street house, designed by Robert Thompson Head in 1898, was built on speculation by the Cleveland Park Company and purchased for \$8,000 by the honorable Judge J.H. McGowan. A 1903 Washington Times article notes that the house “. . . never fails to attract passers-by.”

Photos by Kathleen Sinclair Wood, 1988.

in Cleveland Park as the new suburb's principal architect, designing residences on commission for individual lot owners, as well as on speculation for Cleveland Park president, John Sherman. In addition to single-family dwellings, Head designed the chemical fire engine building and the Lodge, both built by the Cleveland Park Company as community amenities.

In 1901, Robert Thompson Head gave up the practice of architecture and moved to New York, leaving the Cleveland Park Company without an in-house architect. It appears that beginning at that time, John Sherman's wife, Ella Sherman assumed the role of company architect. Although not professionally trained, Ella Sherman was an artist and had worked with the Company architects, thereby teaching herself the trade. While reproducing many of their design ideas, Ella Sherman developed an aesthetic of her own, and successfully carried on the company trade mark of quality-built houses.

By 1903, Cleveland Park was home to 60 unique, architect-designed houses. A well-illustrated promotional brochure on the suburb, published in 1904 by real estate agents, Moore and Hill, Inc., extols the benefits of Cleveland Park, emphasizing the high quality of house construction:

“You should see the desirable and artistic homes we offer in this beautiful suburb. These attractive homes we offer have all been planned and designed especially for the park, and have been carefully and honestly built. They are recognized as the most beautiful and artistic homes in the District. In fact, they are known and spoken of far beyond the limits of the District for their beauty and originality.”

Quality construction came then, as now, with a price tag. Houses in Cleveland Park ranged from \$5,000 to \$8,000—very expensive for the day—not including the cost of the lot. The developers of Cleveland Park sought to attract buyers to the new suburb, not only by advertising its bucolic nature and its unique architecture, but by highlighting its proximity to nearby attractions and amenities, such as the National Cathedral and its associated schools (St. Albans and the Cathedral School for Girls). The area's growing employment opportunities, found at the newly opened National Bureau of Standards and the Geophysical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institute and the U.S. Geological Survey, were also emphasized to lure potential buyers. Many of the early residents were scientists, indicating that Cleveland Park did indeed attract buyers for its location near these institutions. In particular, Lyman Briggs, later director of the Bureau of Standards, Arthur L. Day, director of the Geophysical Laboratory, and Admiral Robert E. Perry resided in the quiet suburb.

In 1905, in the midst of what appeared to be a successful and flourishing development, the Cleveland Park Company suffered an irreversible setback. Thomas Waggaman, the principal financier of the Company, filed for bankruptcy, and was forced to sell his land. Cleveland Park, previously limited to



At the turn of the century, this Newark Street house was home to Lieutenant Commander Peary, “the famous Arctic Explorer,” as noted in the 1904 real estate brochure on Cleveland Park.

Collection of Kathleen Sinclair Wood.

individual lot sale and house construction, was now ripe for speculative building. Several developers moved in, at first



Following the collapse of the Cleveland Park Company in 1905, more modest-sized houses were built, altering the suburb's tradition of large and free-standing single-family homes. These duplexes at 3021-3027 Newark Street, to the left of 2957, were constructed in 1905 by developer John L. Warren, and designed by Ella Bennett Sherman of the bankrupt Cleveland Park Company.

Collection of Kathleen Sinclair Wood.

progressively filling in the empty lots of “Cleveland Park” left unfinished by the Cleveland Park Company, and later expanding into the subdivisions of “Oak View” and “Cleveland Heights.”

In 1912, W.C. and A.N. Miller came into Cleveland Park, bringing with them a comprehensive and community-based development approach like the one upon which the suburb was founded. The Miller brothers, who spent their adolescence as residents on Highland Place, clearly had a paternalistic attitude about Cleveland Park, which they later transferred to their development of Wesley Heights and Spring Valley. In particular, in addition to the concentrations of houses they built on Woodley Road, and along 34th and 35th Streets, the Millers financed the construction of

The Cleveland Park Club, which is still active today, was founded in 1922 by a small group of residents as a neighborhood social club. Club members originally held Tuesday evening gatherings to watch movies, discuss books, host dramatic productions, dance or socialize.



the Cleveland Park Congregational Church, while their sister, Agnes Miller, further promoted a sense of community when she deeded her house to the local Cleveland Park Club.

Although the development of Cleveland Park was essentially complete by the 1930s, the innovative tradition of design in the suburb did not end then. Locally and nationally known architects continued to design individual houses on commission in Cleveland Park, giving the neighborhood even greater design appeal. Tucked between the large turn-of-the-century frame houses and compatible with them are several icons of modern residential design. In 1937, Waldron Faulkner introduced the first of these with the design of his own house at

Collection of Robert A. Truax.

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This award-winning row of three contemporary houses on 36th Street, designed by local architect Winthrop Faulkner in 1979, forms a small residential complex with a shared garden and swimming pool.



The Connecticut Avenue firehouse, designed by Municipal Architect Snowden Ashford and built in 1916, was the first building constructed to face Connecticut Avenue in Cleveland Park. Built to house motorized vehicles rather than horse-drawn pumps, the building's construction marked the beginning of the development of Connecticut Avenue as an important commercial strip. Similarly, its domestic scale and the Colonial Revival style of the building had a strong influence on the design and construction of the buildings that followed.

3415 36th Street, while his architect sons, Avery and Winthrop Faulkner contributed their own modern houses to the streetscape. On Rowland Place, occupying a wooded corner lot, is a 1940s International Style house designed by William Lescaze; and on Ordway Street, there is a discreet 1962 house by I.M. Pei.

As the residential core of Cleveland Park was filling to capacity, the construction of support services along Connecticut Avenue was just beginning. The Connecticut Avenue firehouse, built in 1916, was the first building constructed to face this stretch of the grand avenue, and, as the city debated the future of zoning in the nation's capital over the next few years, would remain in isolated splendor. In 1920, four years after the first comprehensive zoning law in the U.S. was enacted in New York City, Congress passed legislation enabling the District to follow New York's lead. This first D.C. Zoning law, which provided control over Height, Area and Use of buildings, specifically identified Connecticut Avenue as a mixed-use area. The avenue was zoned predominantly for residential apartments with four clearly designated shopping precincts, the first of which was Cleveland Park (Van Ness, Fessenden Street and Chevy Chase were the other named precincts).

The enactment of the city's first zoning law clearly shaped Connecticut Avenue's future. Soon to complement the firehouse in Cleveland Park were several apartment buildings and small shops. The infusion of commercial development that followed over the next decade gave Cleveland Park its independence from the city and granted the neighborhood a self-sufficiency that continues to characterize it today.

The first shop in Cleveland Park, the Monterey Pharmacy, opened in 1923 in the Monterey Apartment building at the corner of Connecticut Avenue and Porter Street. Within three years, the 3300 block of Connecticut Avenue was home to several grocery stores, two gas stations, a hairdresser and a confectioner store. In 1930-31, local developers Shannon and Luchs introduced a new and innovative commercial complex into Cleveland Park and the city by designing and constructing the "Park and Shop" building in the block between Ordway and Porter Streets on the east side of Connecticut Avenue. Designed to include shops, parking spaces, a gas station and "automobile laundry," the "Park and Shop" building clearly recognized the importance of the automobile and the need to provide convenience to the shopper driving an automobile.

Most of the buildings in the 3500 block of Connecticut Avenue, including the "Park and Shop," reflect a traditional Colonial Revival-style aesthetic that was inspired by the 1916 firehouse. The 3400 block, however, represents a different stylistic trend. On that block, a significant collection of commercial Art Deco buildings are arrayed to either side of the block's Art Deco masterpiece of 1936: the Uptown Theater.

Background image: Designed by Arthur B. Heaton, the "Park and Shop" opened in 1931 and survives as Washington's pioneering example of a planned neighborhood retail center. The Park and Shop complex, consisting of a series of connected shops arranged in an L-shape around a parking court, offered off-street parking to enhance convenience and market appeal. The residents of Cleveland Park were no longer dependent upon the city for food, or on the streetcar for delivery.

Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

The Uptown Theater opened in October 1936 with a gala affair. A District Commissioner noted that, "This new theater, modern in every respect, is a testimonial to the growth of this marvelous boulevard and also the growth of the movie industry." Today, the Uptown survives as the largest single movie theater in the District, and though it draws crowds from across the city, it remains a neighborhood institution.

Photo by Kathleen Sinclair Wood, 1988.



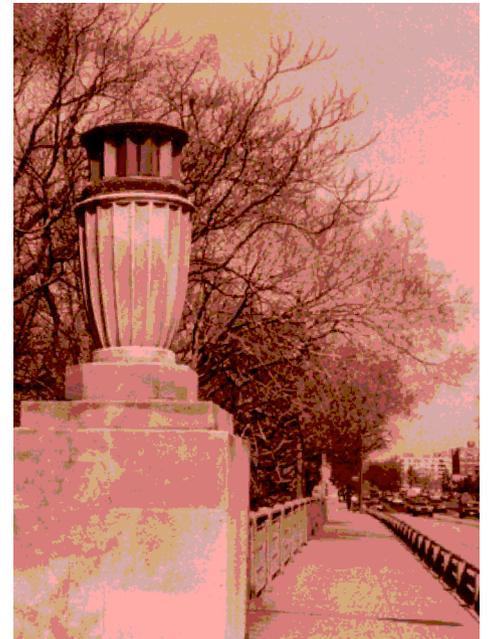
Built by Warner Brothers and designed by noted theater architect John Jacob Zink, the Uptown Theater survives as the last of the large movie houses still in use in the District.

Designed as a neighborhood theater, the Uptown was smaller than most downtown theaters, and was not intended as a "first-run" house. However, it was intended to be up-to-date in all features from the air conditioning and the light fixtures to the exterior Art Deco design with flashing neon lights and etched glass windows.

In addition to its commercial buildings, Connecticut Avenue in Cleveland Park boasts several large apartment buildings. The first apartment building in the neighborhood was constructed in 1919 at 3520 Connecticut Avenue, on the same block as the firehouse and stylistically compatible to it. Built by local developer, Harry Wardman, this four-story brick building set the pattern for most of the other apartment buildings that followed along the mixed-use Connecticut Avenue strip. By the mid-1920s, however, several new apartment building trends—including garden apartments and suburban-style apartments—were being introduced in Cleveland Park, giving the area an eclectic

mix of multi-family building types and styles. The Cleveland Park, a series of six free-standing buildings constructed in 1924-25 along Porter Street,

was the first garden apartment complex built in Washington. The Cleveland Park was followed by Tilden Gardens, a co-operative, suburban-style apartment house, consisting of 200 units, and noted for its unique landscaping and its triangular site at Connecticut Avenue, just north of Porter Street; by the imposing Medieval Revival-style Broadmoor, set well back on its extensive five-acre site; and by Sedgwick Gardens, a 1932 apartment which, upon its completion, was quickly dubbed the "Queen of Connecticut Avenue."



Two pairs of fluted urns, set upon massive stone bases, flank either end of the Art Deco Klinge Valley bridge. Like the ancient portals of old, these urns, with their beveled glass lanterns, beckon one over the steep ravine below.

Photo by Kathleen Sinclair Wood, 1988.



The Broadmoor Apartments, completed 1930.



Tilden Gardens, completed 1930.



Sedgwick Gardens, completed 1932.



Rosedale, located on present-day Newark Street, was built circa 1794 by General Uriah Forrest. Forrest constructed the house as a permanent residence, ultimately foregoing the comforts of a house in town to indulge his wife's passion for horticulture. Rosedale is a rare surviving example of an 18th-century vernacular farmhouse in Washington.

Courtesy of the Washington Historical Society.

ESTATES AND SUMMER HOUSES

While the late 19th-century developers of Cleveland Park were quick to embrace innovative technology (the electric streetcar) and progressive urban planning principles (curvilinear street systems and retention of natural topography), they were also respectful of the past, taking measures to preserve the area's existing buildings and thus a slice of the city's early history.

Prior to its subdivision, Cleveland Park was home to several large estates, all of which had evolved from the 18th-century property known as Rosedale. Rosedale was built circa 1794 on a 998-acre tract of land west of Rock Creek, known as Pretty Prospect and located in then Montgomery County, Maryland.

In 1720, the land was granted to Colonel Ninian Beall, and in 1790, was acquired by General Uriah Forrest and Colonel Benjamin Stoddert. General Forrest, merchant, landowner and later mayor of Georgetown, moved to a small stone cottage (built circa 1740) at Pretty Prospect in 1793.

Twin Oaks was built in 1888-89 as a summer residence by Washington lawyer, Gardiner Greene Hubbard. One of Hubbard's daughters married Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, and another one married Charles J. Bell, the banker and cousin of the inventor. Twin Oaks, which served as a summer gathering place for the extended Hubbard family, survives as the one remaining example of late 19th-century summer house architecture in northwest Washington.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.





The buildings on the large estate known as Tregaron were designed from 1912 to 1914 by Charles Adam Platt, the premier architect of the Country House Movement in America. Platt collaborated with Ellen Biddle Shipman, who provided planting plans for the gardens and grounds. Their design was based largely on Beaux Arts principles, aligning the buildings and formal garden in axial relationships to each other, relying on design principles to optimize views and vistas. Tregaron is currently the home of the Washington International School.

Photo by Kathleen Sinclair Wood.

In 1794, Forrest, inspired by his wife's love for the country, bought out Stoddert, and erected a two-story frame house in front of the existing stone cottage, and renamed the property Rosedale.

In 1865, the Rosedale tract was subdivided when Mrs. John Green, daughter of General Uriah Forrest, gave her son George Forrest Green 23 acres of the large tract. On this land in 1868, the Greens built "a roomy stone dwelling" and named the property Forrest Hill. In 1886, during his first presidential term, Grover Cleveland bought Forrest Hill. Upon his purchase of the property, the president remodeled the stone house into a fanciful Victorian mansion and renamed it Oak View.

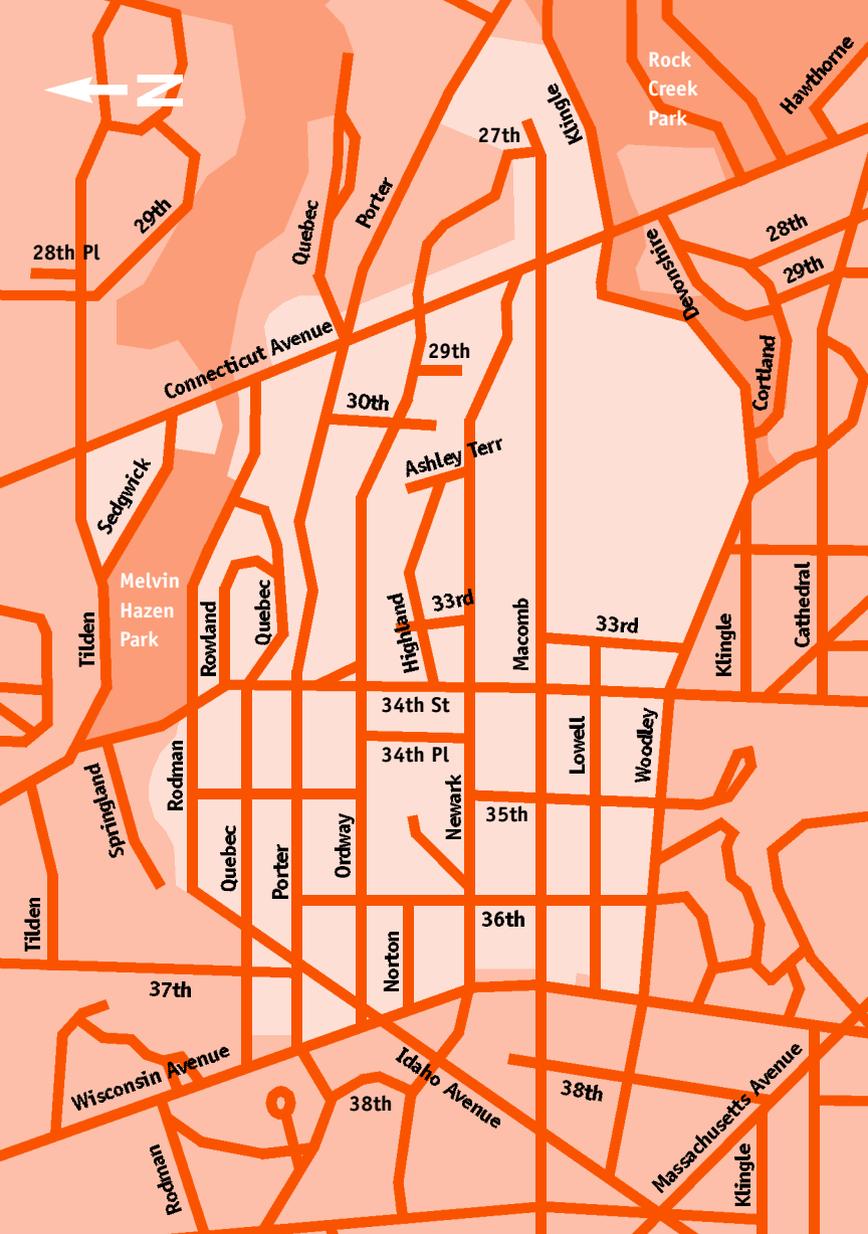
In 1889, after losing the presidential election following his first term, Grover Cleveland sold his 26-acre Oak View to Francis Newlands, developer of Chevy Chase, who within several years turned the property around again. During this time, Cleveland's former estate was subdivided, leaving the house and approximately two acres surrounding it, while the rest was platted into a residential subdivision, forming part

of what would eventually become today's Cleveland Park. The house and two acres were purchased by Washington architect Robert I. Fleming, who lived at the house until his death in 1907. After Fleming's wife died in 1928, Oak View was sold and demolished, while its stone was reputedly incorporated into the retaining walls, entrance gate and steps of the 1928 Georgian house built on the site.

Around the same time that Grover Cleveland was seeking refuge from the city, other Washingtonians were doing the same. In the 1880s, Gardiner Greene Hubbard, a wealthy Washington lawyer and founder of the National Geographic Society, purchased a tract of land between today's Woodley Road and Macomb Street on which he eventually built an extensive and early, Colonial Revival-style summer house which he named Twin Oaks. Modeled after the grand estates of Newport, Rhode Island and designed by the Boston architectural firm of Allen and Kenway, the gracious 26-room Twin Oaks commands its site high on a hill above the residential neighborhood.

In 1911, James Parmalee, an Ohio financier who was looking to build a year-round country house, bought a 20-acre tract of the Twin Oaks property. Parmalee hired architect Charles Adam Platt, the premier country house architect in America to design Platt's only known residential commission in Washington. The house, now known as Tregaron, was originally named "The Causeway" by Parmalee, in reference to the long, stone bridge or causeway that leads to the mansion house from Klinge Road. After Parmalee and his wife died, Ambassador Joseph Davies and his wife, Marjorie Merriweather Post, purchased the site, and renamed the property Tregaron after the village in Wales where Davies' mother was born.

The last country estate in Cleveland Park was built in 1914, on a five-acre tract of land on the east side of Connecticut Avenue majestically overlooking Rock Creek Park. This house, called the Homestead, or La Quinta was designed by architect Frederick Pyle, whose work was well known in Cleveland Park. The Homestead was the residence of prominent merchant and philanthropist David Joseph Kaufman and his wife Clara J. Luchs Kaufman. Since 1945, the property has served as a residence for the Indian Ambassador to the United States.



CLEVELAND PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Cleveland Park Historic District
Kimberly Prothro Williams
Sponsored by the D.C. Preservation League
Brochure design by Hennessey, Ink

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