

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 500-24 Bellefontaine Ave.

N/A not for publication

city or town Kansas City

N/A vicinity

state Missouri

code MO

county Jackson

code 095

zip code 64124

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide X local

Mark A. Miles
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO

DECEMBER 22, 2010
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Name of Property

Jackson Count, MO
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
10	0	buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
10	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Limestone

walls: Brick

roof: Synthetic

other: _____

Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Name of Property

Jackson Count, MO
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Community Planning & Development

Architecture

Period of Significance

1889-1909

Significant Dates

1889-90

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
☒ Other

Name of repository: Kansas City Landmarks Commission

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District

Jackson County, MO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.29 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>366230</u>	<u>4329834</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

3 Zone Easting Northing

2
 Zone Easting Northing

4 Zone Easting Northing

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bradley Wolf

organization City of Kansas City, MO

date 6/21/2010

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state MO

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs.**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name	multiple
------	----------

street & number

telephone

city or town

state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District encompasses ten contributing Queen Anne houses located on the west side of Bellefontaine Ave. just north of Independence Boulevard in the Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood of Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri. The district is located approximately two miles northeast of the city's central business district in a neighborhood that developed between 1887 and 1940. The two-story brick houses were all built in 1889-90 as speculative houses for Charles K. Baker on the Richmond Place Plat.¹ Each house sits on elongated lots with most having a driveway that leads to the rear of the property. The rectangular shaped brick dwellings are nearly identical in form with numerous common features including a hipped roof, projecting gables with bay windows over the entrances, "fanning" details in the gable ends, and double hung 1/1 windows. Porch design varies, reflecting changes that occurred to the buildings during the district's 1889-1909 period of significance. There are no accessory buildings (i.e. garages or carriage houses) in the district boundaries. The Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District clearly communicates information about the middle-class residences built in Kansas City's growing neighborhoods during the early 1890s. Standing amid vacant lots to the north and a commercial area to the south, these buildings present a cohesive streetscape that distinctly recalls Kansas City's late nineteenth Century Neighborhoods.

ELABORATION

Setting

Each of the ten buildings that form the Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District occupies a parcel of land 36 feet wide and 147.5 feet deep. Grassy lawns surround the houses. The houses are set back 18 feet from the public sidewalk. Concrete steps and a concrete front walk connect each house to the sidewalk. The property at the rear slopes gradually down approximately five feet to the rear of the parcels, where it steeply drops to Chestnut Ave., which leads into the East Bottoms industrial area. There are no garages or other outbuildings on the property.

The Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood, which includes the Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District, is located northeast of Kansas City's Central Business District in what is commonly known as the "Historic Northeast" area of Kansas City. The Scarritt Point Neighborhood and Scarritt Point North and South Historic Districts (NR 1/1/1997) were developed in the 1880s and were centered around Kansas City's prestigious parks and boulevard system, including Gladstone, Independence and Benton Boulevard. Kansas City's most prominent architects designed the mansions along the boulevards for the most prominent civic leaders of the time. (See Figure 1: General Location Map).

¹ Richmond Place was platted in 1884 by developers Col. Samuel F. Scott and George Wittich.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

Design

The ten buildings in the district share commonalities of design, massing, and materials, and represent the adaption of the Queen Anne style to narrow urban lots. All of the houses have rectangular plans augmented by bays and projections, as was characteristic of the Queen Anne style. Limestone foundations support brick walls. All of the houses have hipped roofs with composition shingles. All have wood trim detailed cornices and projecting bays. The building interiors also reflect residential design of the period including plaster walls and ceilings. The buildings also retain extensive wood trim including baseboards, chair rails, wide window and door surrounds and some spindlework. See figures 12, 13, and 14 for typical floor plans.

Integrity

The buildings in the district retain the feeling of a cohesive grouping, even though there have been some alterations. Alterations to the buildings include porches that were historically altered (over 50 years ago), driveways between some houses, and replacement of some windows and doors, though no openings have been altered. While these alterations have some impact on character, they do not compromise the overall feel of the district. All of the properties retain their original rooflines and configuration, second story bay windows, masonry walls, dentiled moldings, and decorative fanlights in the gable ends.

Individual Property Descriptions

500 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

Located at the north end of the district, the building at 500 Bellefontaine has the distinctive hipped roof with a lower cross gable that is common in over fifty percent of Queen Anne residences.² The brick masonry house has a rectangular footprint that is augmented by a oriel window on the second story of the primary (east) façade with 1/1 double hung wood sash windows. Additional non-character defining aspects of the massing include a two-story addition with shed roof and brick and asbestos shingle siding on the rear (west) elevation. The house has a limestone foundation and a full basement.

The hipped roof is clad in composition shingles and the eaves are lined with a dentiled cornice. The front pedimented gable has a decorative fan design around the small 1/1/ double hung windows. Two interior brick chimneys are located on the south elevation. The secondary elevations of the house have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The front porch has three rusticated limestone square posts supporting a flat topped hipped roof. The porch is encircled by a low stone wall of square limestone blocks. The porch floor is concrete and has limestone steps leading up from the sidewalk. This porch was added by 1909 according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of that year. The house originally had

² Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985, p. 263.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

just a portico in front of the door according to the 1896 Sanborn Map. (See Figure 2) To the north of the bay window on the second floor is a wood door with an aluminum storm door that leads onto the porch roof. The door opening has a rusticated limestone lintel. The first story of the east façade features an elliptical arched window with a rusticated limestone surround. The window is a large fixed pane with decorative stained glass in the arched portion of the window.

There is a brick driveway located along the south elevation of the house. The ground slopes down significantly to Chestnut Trafficway on the west side of the property. A six foot wood privacy fence is located on the north side of the property.

504 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 504 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen at 500 Bellefontaine, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows. At the rear of the house is a two story shed roof addition with vinyl lap siding.

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The house varies from its neighbors in the design of its porch. The porch has non-original (post 1940) Corinthian columns supporting a flat top hipped roof. The porch floor is concrete and concrete steps connect it to the sidewalk. The 1896 Sanborn Map indicates a full-width one-story porch, and the 1940 tax assessor photograph (See figure 3) showed wood turned columns and spindle work. This indicates that some of the current porch details are of more recent vintage. To the north of the bay window on the second floor is a 1/1 double hung window with a stone sill and lintel. The first story of the front façade has a rectangular fixed pane window with stone sill surmounted by a rectangular stained glass window. The front door is a raised panel door with a stained glass transom.

There is a gravel driveway located along the south elevation of the house.

506 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 506 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen on neighboring houses, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The front porch has three non-original wood square posts with wood coffered bases supporting a shed roof. The porch floor is concrete with concrete steps leading from the sidewalk. This porch was added by 1909 according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of that year. The house originally had just a portico in front of the door according to the 1896 Sanborn Map. The 1940 Tax Assessor photograph indicated decorative spindlework (see Figure 4). To the north of the oriel on the second floor is a 1/1/ double hung window with stone sill and lintel. The first story of the front façade features an elliptical arched window with a rusticated limestone surround. The window is a large fixed pane with decorative stained glass in the arch. The front door is a non-original wood slab and the transom is currently covered in plywood.

There is a concrete and gravel driveway along the south elevation of the house.

510 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 510 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen on neighboring houses, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows. At the rear of the house is a two story shed roof addition with lap siding.

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The front porch has two limestone posts supporting a flat top hipped roof. The porch is encircled by a limestone balustrade with a rectangular cap and balusters. The porch floor is concrete with limestone steps leading to the sidewalk. The 1896 Sanborn Map indicates a full width one story porch and the 1940 tax assessor photographs indicates the current porch configuration. (See figure 5) To the north of the oriel window on the second floor is a 1/1/ double hung window with a stone sill and lintel. The first story of the front façade has a rectangular fixed pane window with stone sill surmounted by a rectangular stained glass window. The front door is a flat slab door with transom.

There is a concrete driveway located along the south elevation of the house.

512 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 512 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen on neighboring houses, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows. At the rear of the house is a two story shed roof addition with brick and asbestos shingle siding.

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The full width porch is partially covered over the front entrance. The flat roof is supported by square brick posts. The entire porch is encircled by a brick wall with limestone cap. The porch floor is concrete and has limestone steps leading from the sidewalk. The porch was added by 1909 according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of that year. The house originally had just a portico over the entrance according to the earlier Sanborn. (See Figure 6) To the north of the second story oriel is a 1/1 double hung window with a limestone lintel and sill. The first story of the front façade features an elliptical arched window with a rusticated limestone surround. The window is a large fixed pane with decorative stained glass in the arch.

A brick driveway lines the south elevation of the house.

514 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 514 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen on neighboring houses, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows. At the rear of the house is a two story shed roof addition with lap siding.

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The porch has two limestone posts supporting a flat top hipped roof. The porch is encircled by a limestone balustrade with a rectangular cap and balusters. The porch floor is concrete and has limestone steps leading from the sidewalk. The 1896 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map indicates a full-width one story porch and the 1840 tax assessor photograph indicates the current configuration. (See figure 7) To the north of the second story oriel window is a 1/1 double hung window with stone sill and lintel. The first story of the front façade has a rectangular fixed pane window with stone sill surmounted by a rectangular stained glass window. The front door is a raised panel steel door with a transom covered by plywood.

There is a concrete drive along the south line of the property.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

516 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 516 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen on neighboring houses, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows.

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The full width front porch is partially covered over the front entrance, with two square limestone posts supporting the shed roof. The porch is encircled by a limestone wall and limestone cap. The porch floor is concrete with limestone steps leading from the sidewalk. The first story of the porch was added by 1909 according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of that year. The house originally had just a portico at the entrance according to an earlier Sanborn Map. The second story porch pictured in the 1940 tax assessor photograph was removed in 2008. (See Figure 8) To the north of the second story oriel window is a 1/1 double hung window with stone sill and lintel. The first story of the front façade features an elliptical arched window with a rusticated limestone surround. The window is currently boarded over.

There is a brick driveway along the south property line.

518 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 518 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen on neighboring houses, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows. On the south elevation is a recessed on story addition with flat roof and lap siding.

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The front porch has two brick posts supporting a shed roof. The porch is encircled by a brick balustrade with a limestone cap. The porch floor is concrete with limestone steps leading from the sidewalk. The 1896 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map indicates a full width one story porch, and the 1940 tax assessor photograph indicates the roof line was altered from a flat roof to a shed roof. (See Figure 9) To the north of the second story oriel window is a 1/1 double hung window with stone sill and lintel. The first story of the front façade has a

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

rectangular fixed pane window with stone sill surmounted by a rectangular stained glass window. The front door is a raised panel door with a transom covered by a glass aluminum storm.

There is a concrete driveway along the south elevation of the house.

522 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 522 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen on neighboring houses, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows.

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

The full width front porch has two square limestone posts supporting a shed roof. The porch is encircled by a limestone wall with limestone cap. The porch floor is concrete with concrete steps leading from the sidewalk. The first story of the porch has had few changes according to the 1896 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map and the 1940 tax assessor photograph. (See figure 10) To the north of the second story oriel is a 1/1 double hung window with a limestone lintel and sill. The first story of the front façade features an elliptical arched window with a rusticated limestone surround. The window is a large fixed pane with decorative stained glass in the arch. The front entrance is covered by a full view storm window.

There is a brick driveway along the south property line.

524 Bellefontaine Avenue, constructed 1890, contributing

The house at 522 Bellefontaine has many of the same elements seen on neighboring houses, including a hipped roof with a lower cross gable. This brick house with stone foundation and full basement also has a rectangular footprint augmented by a slightly projecting cross gable and second story oriel window. The oriel has 1/1 double hung wood sash windows.

This house also shares many decorative details with its neighbors including a dentiled cornice and decorative fanning around the window in the pedimented gable end. There are two interior brick chimneys on the south elevation. Secondary elevations have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows with segmental arch openings and stone sills.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
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The two story front porch has two full height Doric columns supporting a shed roof. The first story of the porch is encircled by a brick balustrade with a rectangular limestone cap and the second story has a non-original wood balustrade with rectangular wood balusters. The porch floor is concrete with concrete steps leading from the sidewalk. The porch was added sometime before 1909 according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map and the 1940 tax assessor's photographs. The 1896 Sanborn Map indicates a full width one story porch. (See Figure 11) The porch is an example of the Colonial Revival alterations that occurred on many Victorian buildings in Kansas City during the early twentieth century. This porch is a significant feature in that it illustrates the natural evolution of these homes as individual owners added to the existing dwelling to individualize properties to their own tastes. While this is a significant addition, this building still retains its relationship to the character of the neighboring buildings through its form and visible Victorian details. The first story of the front façade has a rectangular fixed pane window with stone sill surmounted by a rectangular stained glass window (currently boarded over). The front entry is currently boarded.

There is a concrete drive along the south elevation of the house.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

Summary

The Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District in the 500 Block of Bellefontaine, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri is locally significant under Criterion A of the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT and under Criterion C for the area of ARCHITECTURE. The district consists of ten buildings constructed in 1890 by Charles K. Baker on the Richmond Place subdivision platted for Colonel Samuel F. Scott and George Wittich in 1884. The Bellefontaine Avenue houses were speculative buildings whose construction was influenced by several factors, including the establishment of a streetcar line on Independence Avenue in 1885 and the planning for the Kansas City parks and boulevard system, the plan of which was formally adopted in 1893. The parks plan spurred development in anticipation of its construction. The district is a rare surviving example of the speculative middle class residential construction that occurred in Kansas City's burgeoning Scarrit Point neighborhood during the late 1880s. In the 1880s and 1890s, speculative builders in Kansas City would buy two or three lots and build residences often of duplicate design, but large scale development was rare. The Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District is a rare example in Kansas City of a builder repeating a similar design ten times. Though the porches on the houses have been altered over time to meet individual needs of occupants, the repetitive pattern of design is still evident. The period of significance for the district is 1890 to 1909, the date of construction for the houses to the last significant alteration on the house at 524 Bellefontaine.

Elaboration

By the 1880s, Kansas City was beginning its third major building boom since the Civil War, and industry was expanding into once residential neighborhoods. Early Kansas City neighborhoods, like Quality Hill (NR 7/7/1978), that were once the pride of Kansas City found themselves at the very edge of manufacturing, processing and meat-packing operations. During this time the wealthy of Kansas City moved east and built estates away from the city center to escape the dirt and polluted air, but also to be close to Independence, the county seat. The area of the Bellefontaine Historic District was annexed by the city in 1885, and at the same time Bernard Corrigan, the early entrepreneur of the streetcar lines in Kansas City, extended the Independence Avenue line east to Cleveland Avenue, thus making the area that would become known as the "Northeast" neighborhoods of Kansas City open to development for the lower and middle classes, not just the wealthy. (See figure 15 for map showing neighborhood and streetcar line.)

As development was starting to accelerate, the Kansas City Parks Department was making progress toward creating a "City Beautiful" parks and boulevard system. The parks board hired landscape architect George Kessler to design a system of parks connected by boulevards. One area in the northeast of Kansas City served as the major starting point to that system, North Terrace Park and the intersection of St. John Avenue and Benton Boulevard. It is located in an area east of downtown near Reverend Nathan Scarritt's old homestead. The growing "Scarritt Point" neighborhood was favored by the leading citizens of Kansas City who had begun building large estates. These estates would grow along the tree lined boulevards, like Gladstone and Benton, developed in Kessler's parks and boulevard plan. The complete development of the

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

Scarritt Point neighborhood was a direct result of the progress of the parks and boulevard system in the area and the quest of affluent Kansas Citians to find new, more fashionable residences. (See Figure 16 for early map of the parks and boulevard plan.

From 1870 to 1900, Kansas City witnessed the extensive effects of the railroad and subsequent population boom. As the population jumped from 25,000 in 1870 to nearly 165,000 in 1900, the city limits more than doubled. The city also saw the introduction of telephones with local and long distance service, electric street lights and public sewers. These new amenities also served to promote a speculative building boom in which properties often traded hands multiple times in one day, with all parties making tidy profits. Many out-of-state speculators were involved, nearly all netting a profit from Kansas City's skyrocketing land values. By late 1888, however, the bottom fell out of the real estate market. Fortunes were lost overnight as land values plummeted below even a reasonable price. Even then, few buyers could be found. Confidence in land values in Kansas City remained shaky for the next twenty years.

It was during the peak of the speculative craze that Colonel Samuel F. Scott and George Wittich platted Richmond Place adjacent to D.O. Smart's Addition. George E. Wittich was the president of the Missouri & Mexico Mining Company, and most likely the financial backer of the subdivision. Colonel Samuel F. Scott was a veteran of the Civil War and a well known real estate developer. He platted twenty-three subdivisions in Kansas City between 1884 and 1886. He later served as Postmaster for Kansas City in 1898. Speculators, like Scott and Wittich, would market lots to builders to construct middle class housing that could take advantage of expanding amenities and proximity to streetcar lines such as the one on Independence Avenue just south of the Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District.

The Richmond Place subdivision straddled the dividing line between the Pendleton Heights and Scarritt Point neighborhoods. Pendleton Heights, to the west, was a neighborhood of mixed working class and middle class housing. To the east was Scarritt Point, a neighborhood of mansions and estates. The Richmond Place subdivision was envisioned as a small plat of residences for middle class professionals such as clerks and doctors.

Wittichn and Scott never built on the lots, instead selling them to out-of-state speculators George M. Brinkerhoff and Edward T. Oliver of Springfield, Illinois. In 1889, they sold the property to Charles K. Baker, also of Springfield. Baker, after building the 10 houses, sold the properties to a group of local investors, Elias and Herbert A. Culver of the North Arkansas Lumber Company, and John M. Rood, an local investor and entrepreneur. The group used the houses as rental properties, since the real estate market had bottomed out by this time. The group rented to bookkeepers, managers, auditors, and other professionals. According to the 1900 Federal Census, many of these professionals also employed servants that shared the premises.

In 1896, Elias Culver moved to Springfield, Missouri and by the early 1900s, the properties were sold to existing renters or new investors. Te character of the neighborhood slowly changed as upper and middle class families moved south to new developments, such as the Country Club District, in the 1920s. Also, new immigrant groups, such as Italian immigrants that had moved into the Pendleton Heights neighborhood to the west of the district, began moving further east.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

By the late 20th Century, white flight and disinvestment in the city's core had lead many of the properties to fall into disrepair. Recently, new owners have begun the rehabilitation of these unique properties in Kansas City.

Architecture and Development

Research did not reveal the identity of the architect that designed the homes in the Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District. It is possible that Charles K. Baker used plans from a published pattern book. It was also common during this time for contractors to assume the role of architect. So, the houses in the district may reflect the design work of Baker's contractor. Regardless of the source, the houses distinctly evoke the residential architecture popular among middle-class homeowners in the 1880s and 1890s.

The houses on Bellefontaine Avenue exemplify the Victorian residential style adapted to urban lots in Kansas City. Unlike the Queen Anne style "Rowhouse Building" on 34th and Main streets (NR listed 5/22/1978), that create a sense texture and variety in attached dwellings, the buildings in the Bellefontaine Avenue were essentially a tract of 10 identical houses with two slightly variant design details. In footprint, roofline, and interior layout, the buildings were the same. Additionally, decorative details such as the use of stone lentils, dentiled cornices, three-sided oriel windows, and fan details in the pedimented cross gables, provided a uniform appearance that is still evident today. The only original variation in design was the alternating use of full width and partial width porches, and the first floor fenestration pattern which alternated round arch and flat topped fixed windows with stained glass transoms. As the developers sold off the properties in the district in the early 1900s, property owners individualized their homes, primarily by modifying the front porch and making small additions to the rear of the properties, often by infilling the back porch. The majority of porch modifications were made in the early 20th Century and it is for this reason that the period of significance extends to 1909. These changes are seen as significant alterations in the district that provide individual distinction without obscuring the significant features of this small-scale tract house development.

The adoption of the Queen Anne style in Kansas City is not uncommon in the neighborhoods that developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, notably in areas near the central business district or adjacent to streetcar lines. Real estate developers of the time often adopted popular styles seen in pattern books and periodicals like *Scientific America*. In fact, the July 1897 edition features a high-style Queen Anne residence in Kansas City at 508 Garfield Avenue (Robert Beatty Residence, Kansas City Register, 6/17/1982).³ Though more elaborately detailed, the Beatty house shares many common characteristics with the Queen Anne houses on Bellefontaine, including a tall narrow massing, hipped roof, and projecting front gable. The houses also share the use of stone for detailing, decorative pedimented cross gables, and use of stained glass transoms in first-story windows.

While the buildings are good representative examples of middle-class Victorian houses in Kansas City, their significance may lie in their pattern of development. As noted earlier in the

³ Eugene Mitchell. *American Victorian*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, p. 11.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

text, the 1870s and 1880s saw a boom in speculative real estate development that caused a price balloon. While many were investing in real estate at a large scale, few were building on large tracts. Scott and Wittich, who platted the land on which the district was constructed, are good examples of this. In a two year period the partners platted some 23 small subdivisions, but rarely constructed buildings on the properties.

Until the early 20th century, the typical pattern of residential construction in Kansas City was small scale (one to six lots) in larger platted subdivisions. An individual builder often used a limited number of designs or stylistic elements, but neighborhoods were developed by a mix of builders so a pattern rarely emerged. Builder Joseph M. Courtney is a good example of this. Courtney was a prolific builder of Queen Anne style houses in Kansas City. He built five brick Queen Anne houses of similar style on Grand Avenue in the Union Hill Neighborhood, four houses of the style on the 2800 Block of Holmes, and five others on Montgall (now demolished). Courtney would alternate two patterns of brick Queen Anne style homes, but his largest known grouping was six lots. Examples of development of more than six lots in late nineteenth century neighborhoods in Kansas City is rare, and the Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District may be one of the largest single-builder development from the period.

Though small in comparison to early-to-mid-twentieth century residential developments in Kansas City, the Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District aptly represents a pattern of development that would later be standard in the city—single builder/developer, larger in scale, and repetitive in design. While all ten of the buildings have seen some modification over time, the repetitive pattern of design can be easily seen in the projecting pedimented cross gables, second story oriels and low pitched porch roofs. The uniform setback, lack of vegetation in the front yard, and uniformity of lot size emphasize this pattern. This uniform, larger block development did not occur with any regularity in Kansas City until the first half of the twentieth century with developers such as Arthur King, Napoleon Dibble, and J.C. Nichols. These developers took the pattern established in small subdivisions such as Bellefontaine Avenue and expanded the idea to encompass entire blocks and neighborhoods.

Conclusion

The ten houses in the Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District represent an intact streetscape of speculative houses constructed by a single builder/developer in Kansas City. Though small in comparison to twentieth century residential developments by single developers, this grouping is one of the largest of its type from the late 19th century. Since their construction in 1889-90, they have been a unique feature on the streetscape of the 500 block of Bellefontaine Avenue, distinguished by their cohesive form, massing, and architectural details.

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

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Section number 10/ Photo Log Page 14

Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

Verbal Boundary Description

The district is located on the west side of Bellefontaine Avenue north of Independence Boulevard and includes the properties in the following legal description: Lots 12 through 18, Block 2, and West ½ of vacated Alley, Richmond Place, a subdivision in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

Boundary Description

The description encompasses all ten Queen Anne style homes built by Charles Baker in 1890 on the lots purchased by Mr. Baker in the Richmond Place subdivision, platted in 1884. Buildings to the west of the district were demolished when Chestnut was widened. To the east is the Scarritt Point South Historic District, and to the north and south are scattered residential and commercial properties. While some of the adjacent properties were constructed during the district's period of significance, they do not show the cohesive design elements displayed in the district boundaries, nor are they related to developer Charles Baker.

Photo Log

The following information is consistent for all photographs:

- 1 Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
- 2 Jackson County, Missouri
- 3 Photographer: Bradley Wolf (BW) and John Morris (JM)
- 4 March 21, 2009
- 5 Photographic CD retained by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources

The following information is applicable to specific photographs:

Photograph #1 (BW): 500 Block of Bellefontaine looking south from 500 Bellefontaine

Photograph #2 (BW): 500 Block of Bellefontaine looking north from 524 Bellefontaine

Photograph #3 (BW) : 500 Bellefontaine Ave.

Photograph #4 (BW): 524 Bellefontaine Ave.

Photograph #5(JM): 522 Bellefontaine interior second story staircase

Photograph #6 (JM) :522 Bellefontaine interior front foyer

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

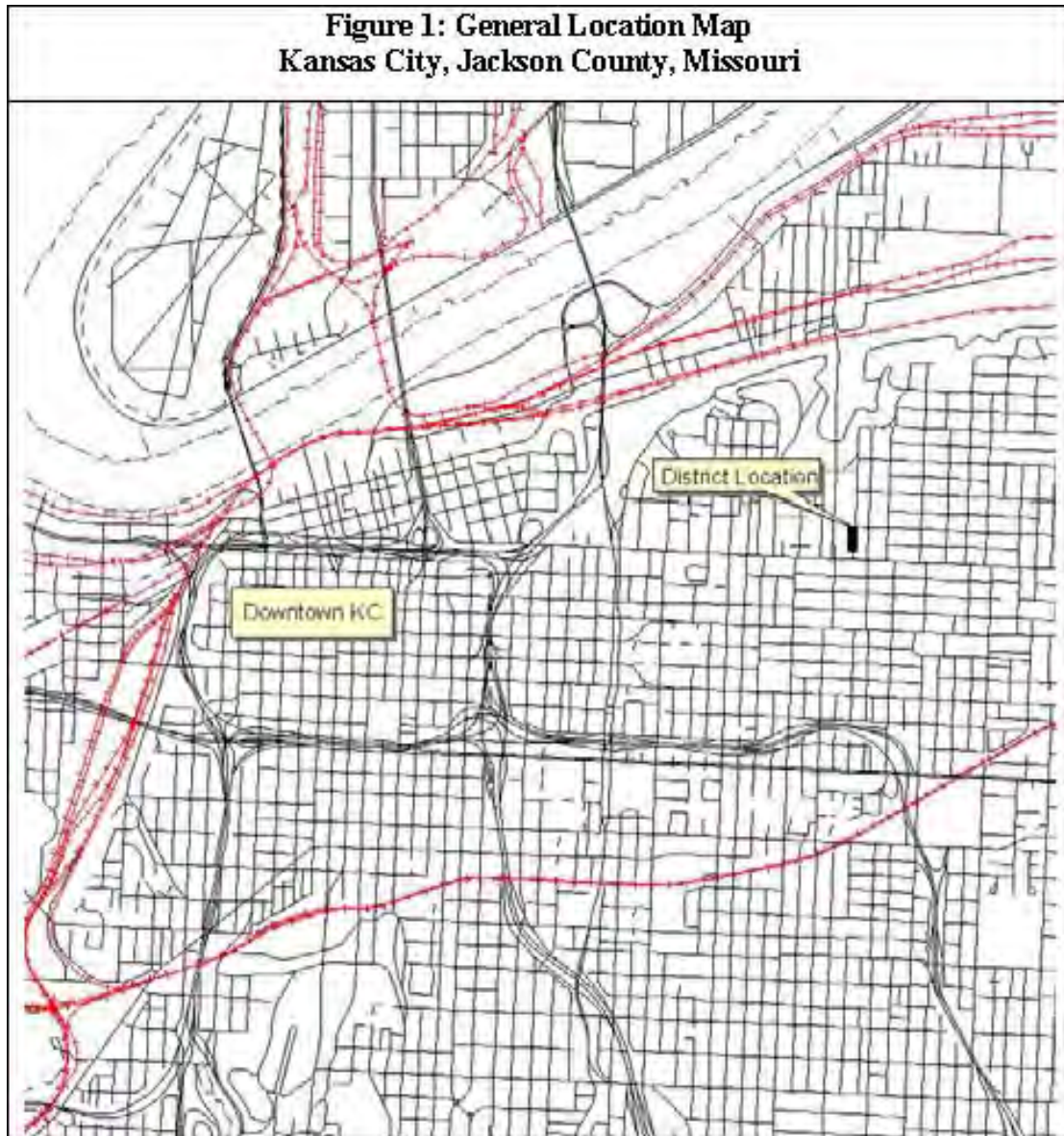
Figure Log:

1. General Location Map, Kansas City, Jackson County
2. 500 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
3. 504 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
4. 506 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
5. 510 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
6. 512 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
7. 514 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
8. 516 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
9. 518 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
10. 522 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
11. 524 Bellefontaine, 1940 tax assessor photos and 1896 Sanborn Map
12. 1st Floor Plan of 522 Bellefontaine
13. 2nd Floor Plan of 522 Bellefontaine
14. Basement Plan of 522 Bellefontaine
15. 1886 Hopkins Atlas of Kansas City, inset showing location of district.
16. 1893 Park and Boulevard Plan

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri



Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

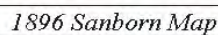
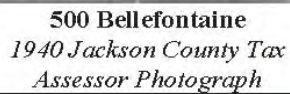


Figure 2: 500 Bellefontaine

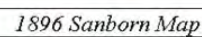
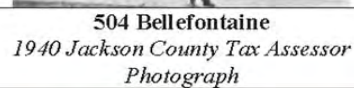


Figure 3: 504 Bellefontaine

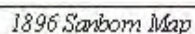
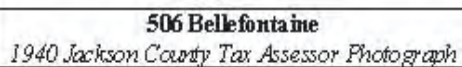


Figure 4: 506 Bellefontaine

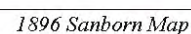
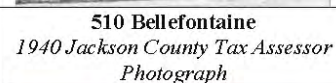


Figure 5: 510 Bellefontaine

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri



512 Bellefontaine
1940 Jackson County Tax Assessor Photograph



1896 Sanborn Map

Figure 6: 512 Bellefontaine



514 Bellefontaine
1940 Jackson County Tax Assessor Photograph

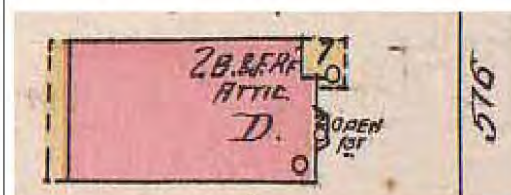


1896 Sanborn Map

Figure 7: 514 Bellefontaine



516 Bellefontaine
1940 Jackson County Tax Assessor Photograph



1896 Sanborn Map

Figure 8: 516 Bellefontaine



518 Bellefontaine
1940 Jackson County Tax Assessor Photograph



1896 Sanborn Map

Figure 9: 518 Bellefontaine

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri



522 Bellefontaine
1940 Jackson County Tax Assessor Photograph

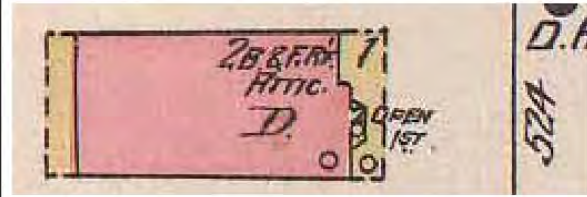


1896 Sanborn Map

Figure 10: 522 Bellefontaine



524 Bellefontaine
1940 Jackson County Tax Assessor Photograph



1896 Sanborn Map

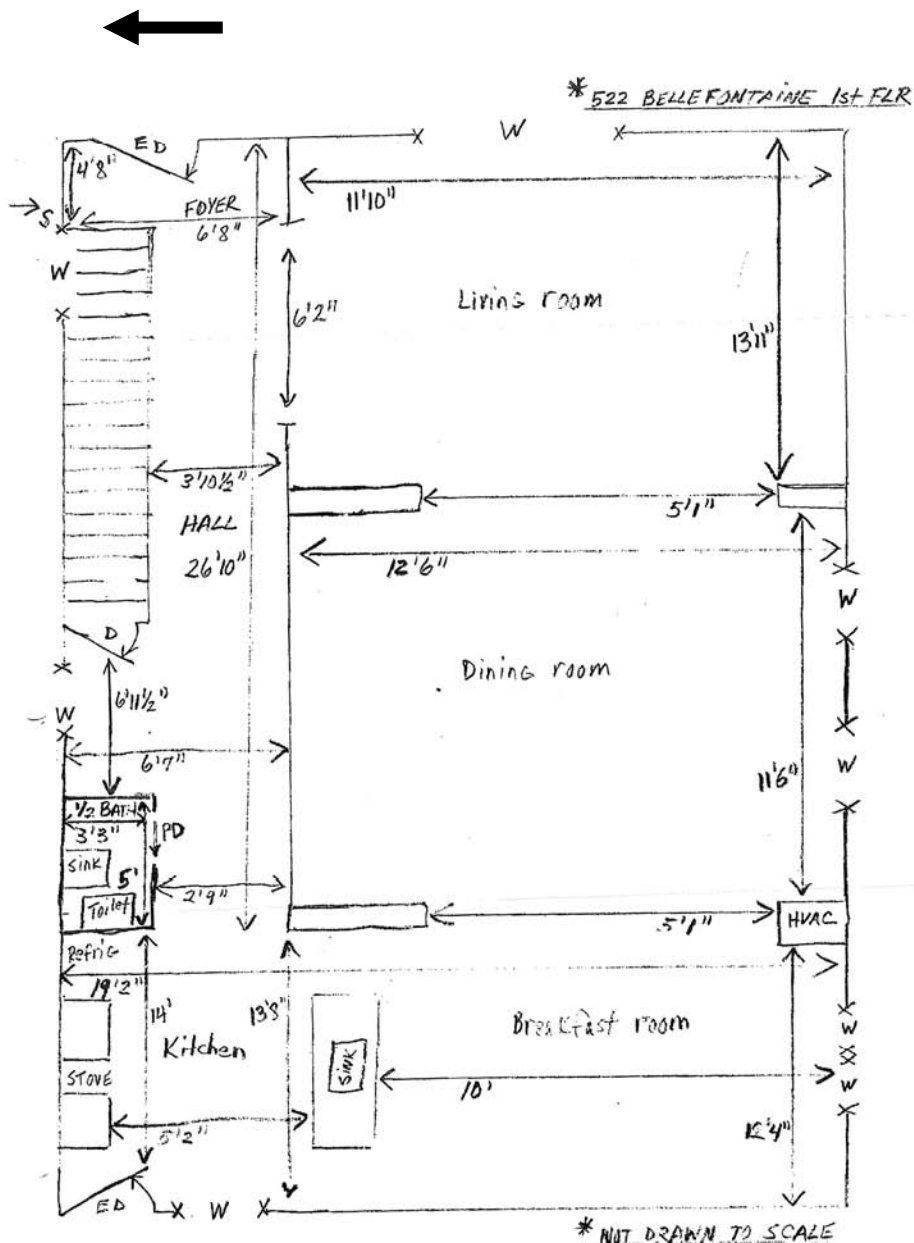
Figure 11: 524 Bellefontaine

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

Figure 12: 1st Floor Plan of 522 Bellefontaine (This is a typical floor plan for all the buildings)
(not to scale)

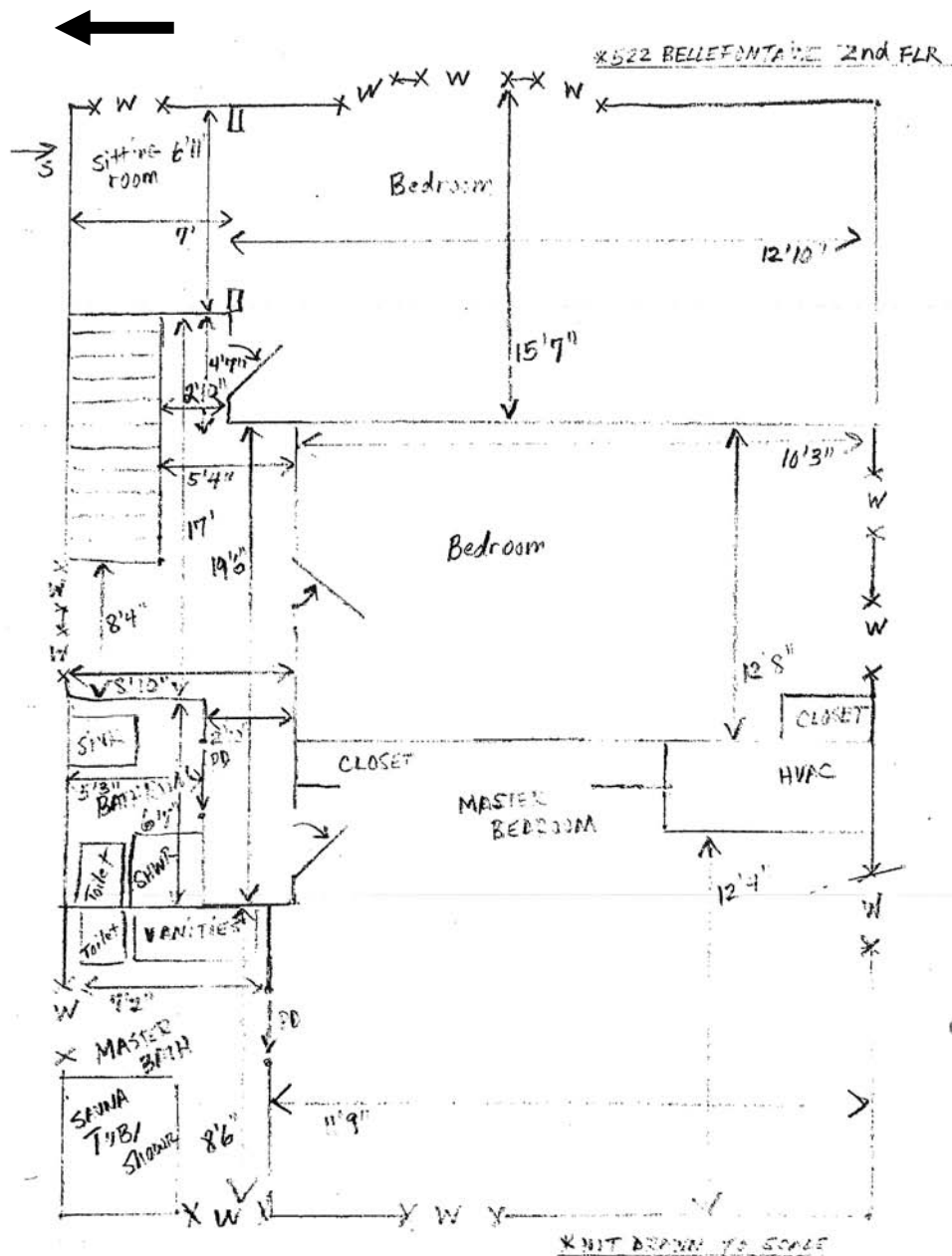


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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

Figure 13: 2nd Floor Plan of 522 Bellefontaine (This is a typical floor plan for all the buildings)
(not to scale)

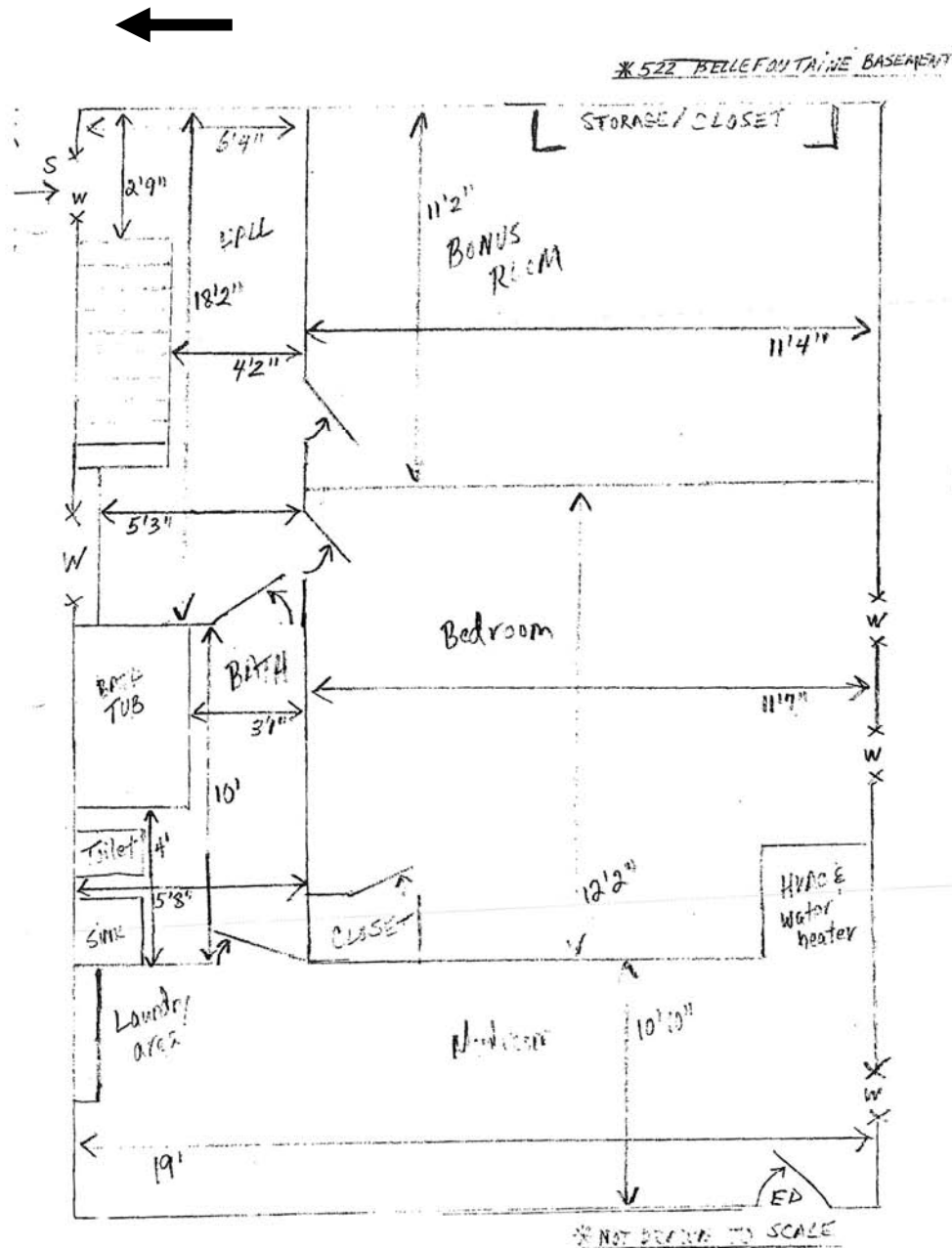


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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

Figure 14: Basement Plan of 522 Bellefontaine (This is a typical floor plan for all the buildings)
(not to scale)



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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

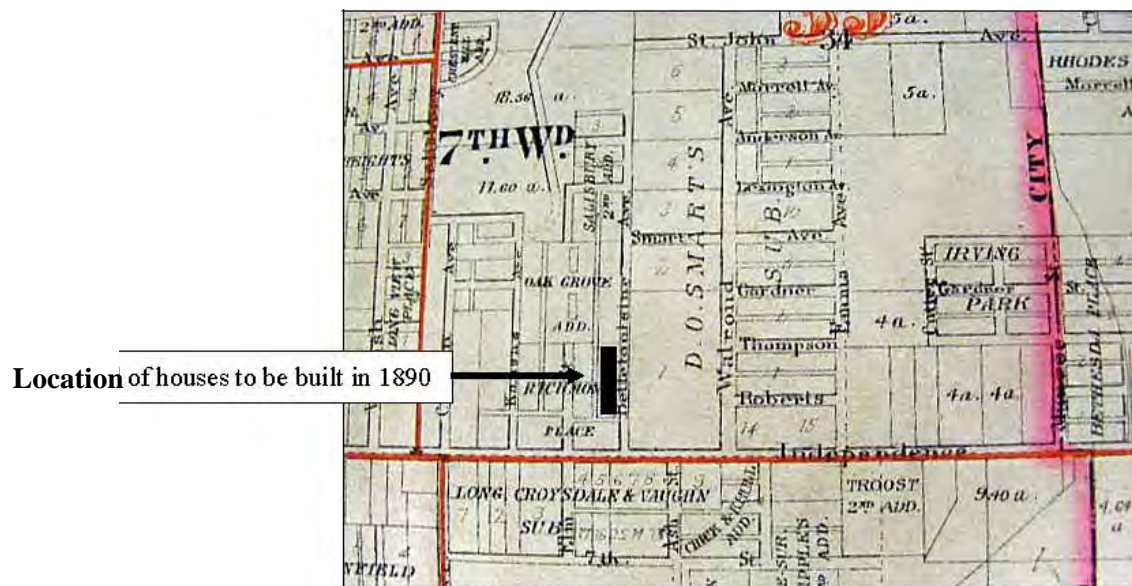


Figure 15: 1886 Hopkins Atlas of Kansas City
(The dotted line along Independence Ave is the streetcar line)

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Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Jackson County, Missouri

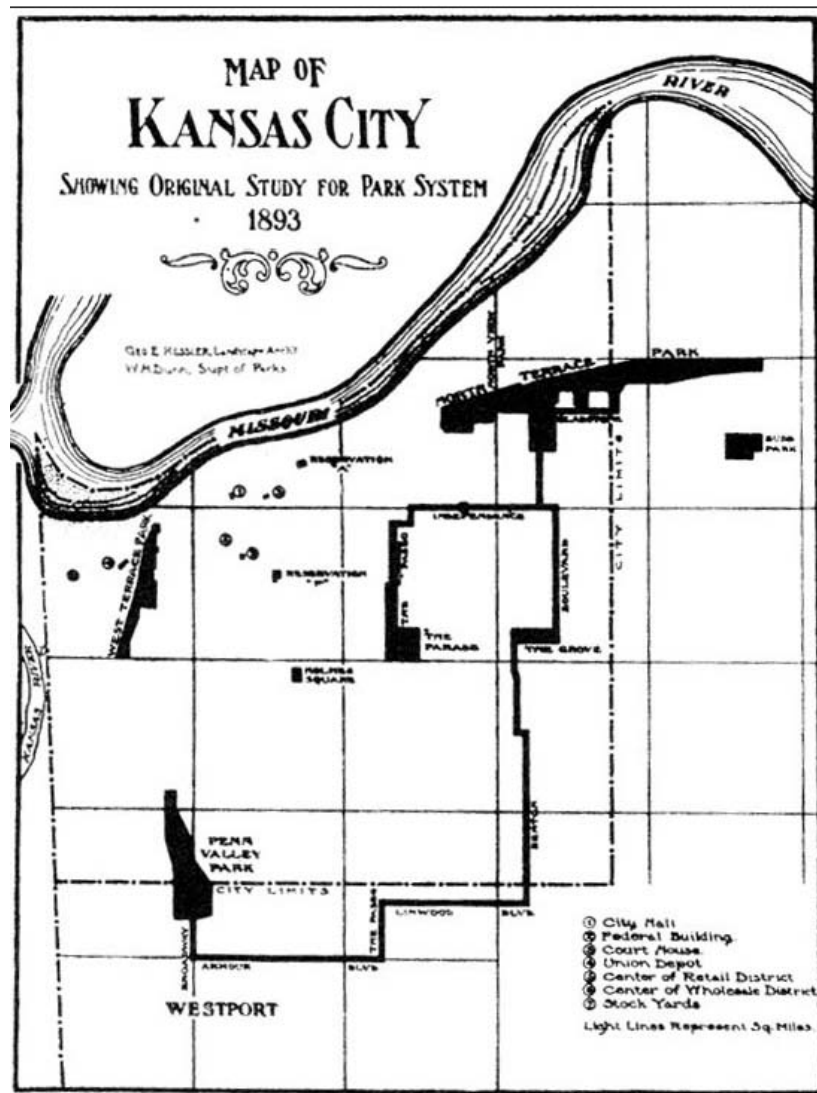


Figure 16: 1893 Park and Boulevard Plan

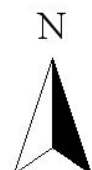
(Note: Independence and Gladstone Boulevards, one block from the district were part of the original plan)
25



Bellefontaine Ave Historic District
500 - 24 Bellefontaine Ave
Kansas City, Jackson County
Missouri

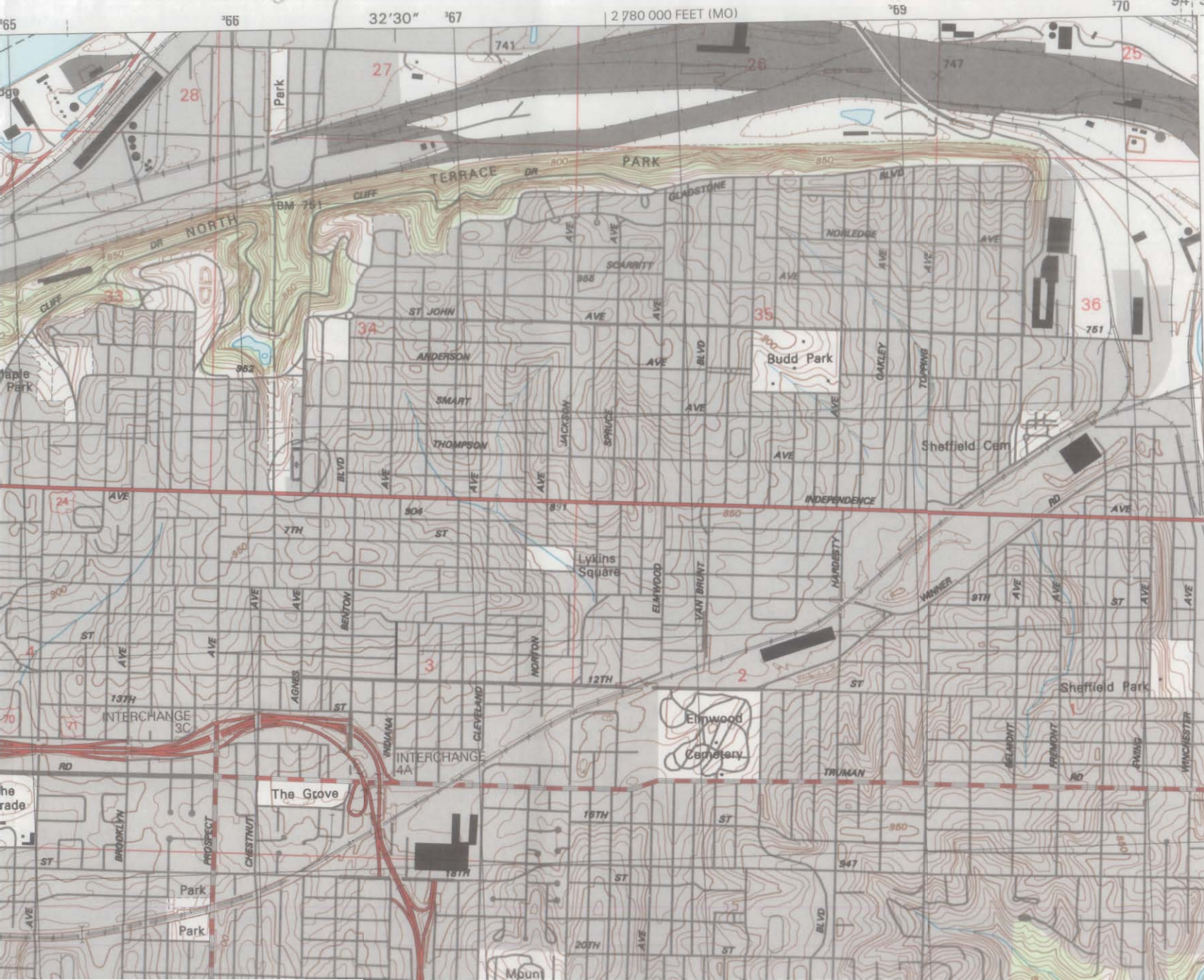
10 0 10 20 Meters

Note: All buildings are contributing



Bellefontaine Avenue Historic District
Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri
15/366230/4329934
Kansas City Quadrangle

KANSAS CITY QUADRANGLE
MISSOURI-KANSAS
7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



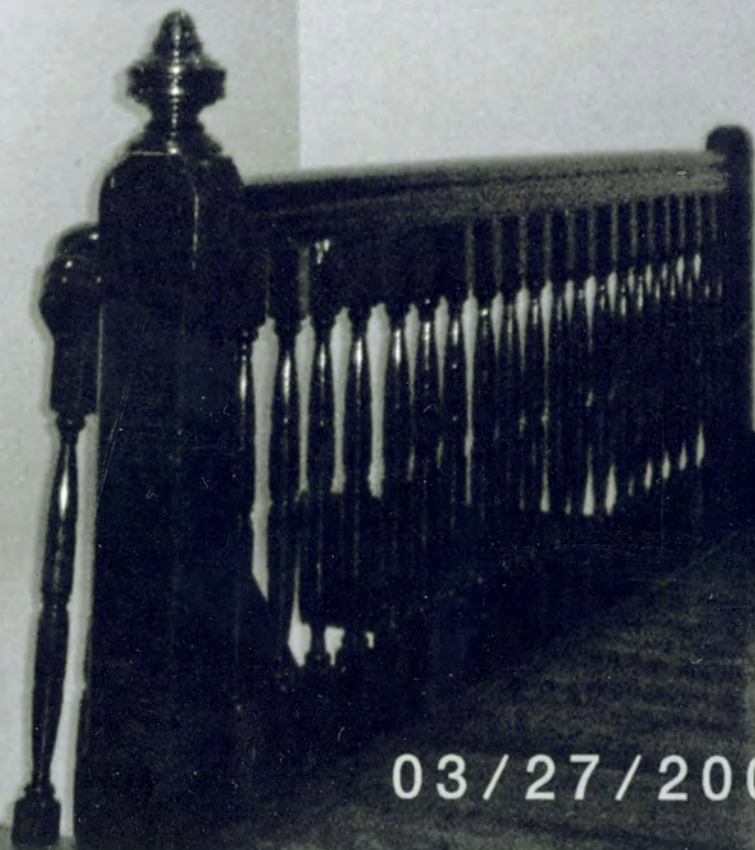
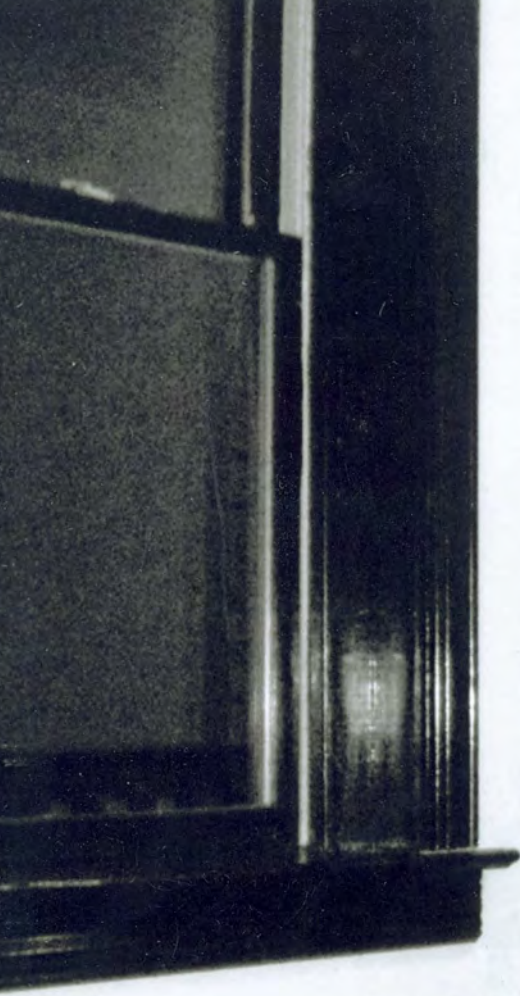








528



03/27/2008



03/27/2