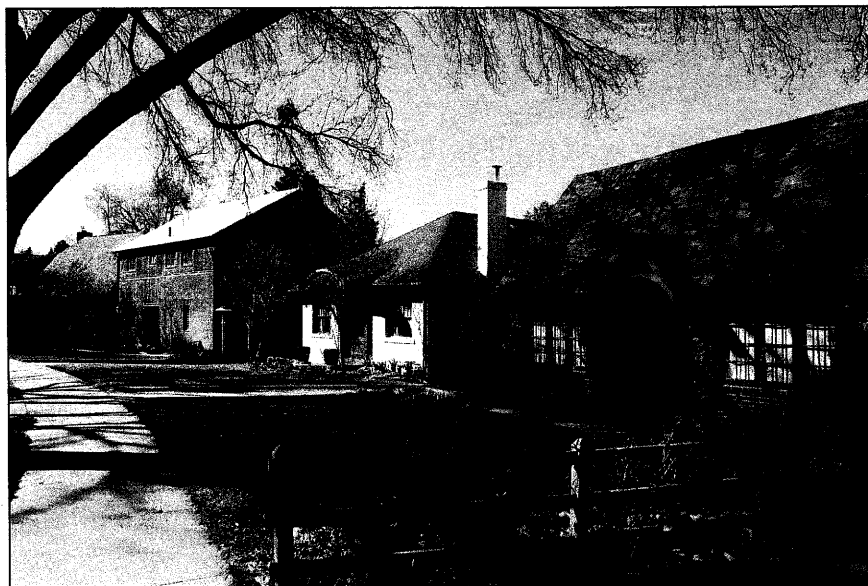
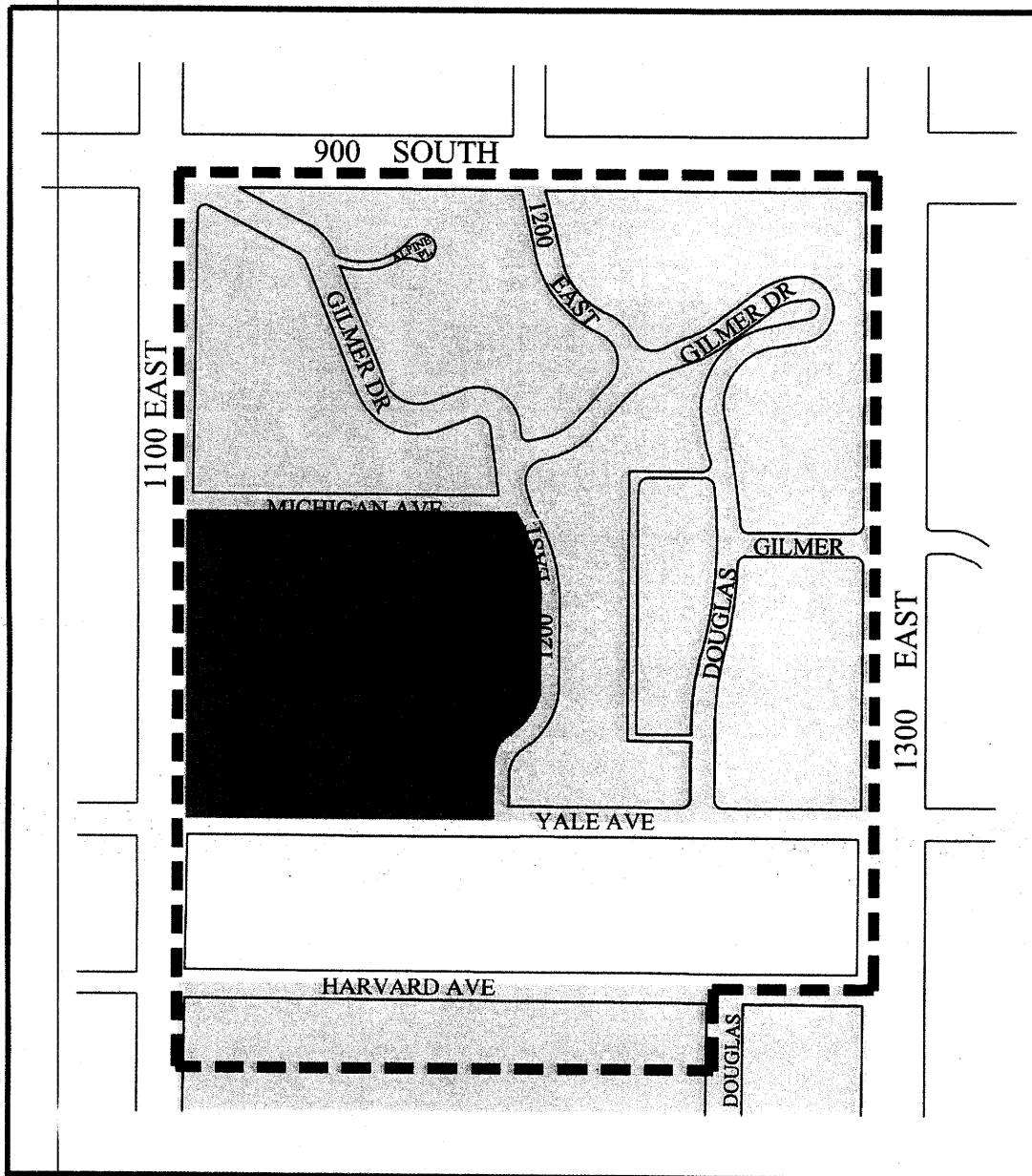


Design Standards for the Gilmer Park Historic District



Draft
July 21, 2008



GILMER PARK

Historic District

Scale 1" = 400'

Previous page: Streetscape of residences along 1200 East. Photograph by Dina Blaes, 2008.

GILMER PARK

The Gilmer Park Historic District is one of the first streetcar subdivision developments in Salt Lake City that deviated from the traditional grid pattern of the original city plats. The Gilmer Park neighborhood was developed primarily between 1909 and 1943. The first two decades of this period coincided with a number of municipal improvements, including utilities and streetcar lines that brought development opportunities to the city's east bench. Affluence and strong family ties within the neighborhood allowed development to continue even through the depression years. Because of the lack of available and buildable lots the area saw little development in the second half of the twentieth century; however, it never lost its popularity and remains one of the most desirable residential neighborhoods in the city. The visual cohesiveness of the district can be seen in its curvilinear layout, large uniformly-scaled historic residences, and lush terraced landscaping. The district features both park-like and natural green space, particularly along the Red Butte Creek. Through the years, the neighborhood has been home to many of Salt Lake's most prosperous and influential residents. The Gilmer Park Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996.¹

The neighborhood is located south and east of the earliest city limits in what was known as the Big Field Survey, an area originally set aside for agriculture. Prior to subdivision development, the majority of land was owned by two prominent families. The south one-third of the district was owned by Le Grande Young, a nephew of Brigham Young, while the north portion was owned by the Gilmer family. In 1889, one year after Salt Lake City formalized a process for subdivision development within the city, Le Grande Young filed a plat for the Park View Subdivision. The subdivision was just south of the Young estate between Yale and Harvard Avenues. Several houses built on the south side of Harvard Avenue around the turn of the century were among the first houses built within the district. In 1914, Young sold the west half of his estate to John C. and Gertrude Musser Howard. The Howards planned a grand estate with an elaborate tea garden, but plans for a large mansion never materialized. In the 1920s, John C. Howard sold off most of the land for development, and eventually deeded the remaining land to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormon Church), which built a meetinghouse at 1150 Yale Avenue in 1938.

Many of the early residents who built homes in the area had ties to the Young and Musser families. Their homes appear first on Harvard Avenue and later on the south side of upper Yale. Le Grande Young was also involved with the development of the Gilmer Park and Gilmer Square subdivisions in partnership with land owner, Mary Gilmer and her son, Jay T. Gilmer. The Gilmer family estate had been established in



The home of the Young family and later the Howard family (built circa 1890, demolished 1938).
Tax photograph, Salt Lake County Archives.



The gazebo, pond and carriage house of the former Howard estate remain a part of the landscaping of the Garden Park Ward meetinghouse. The building and grounds were rehabilitated in 2007.
Photograph by Korral Broschinsky, 2008.



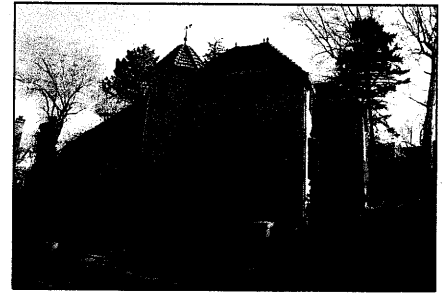
This 1909 rendering of the J. R. Gilmer home shows the Gilmer estate prior to subdivision development.
Courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

¹ Utah SHPO Staff, Liza Julien and Susan Holt. *Gilmer Park Historic District*. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1996. Available at the Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

1888 on a former fruit farm between 900 South, Yale Avenue (1080 South), 1100 East and 1400 East. In 1899, the Gilmer home and property was leased to the Salt Lake Country Club, the city's first organized golf club. After the club moved further south in 1907, Mary and Jay Gilmer organized the Gilmer Realty Company, subdivided most of the estate, and filed a plat for the Gilmer Park Subdivision in 1909. At least one portion of the subdivision was planned by Taylor Woolley, a Salt Lake architect and former apprentice to Frank Lloyd Wright. Woolley's design for Alpine Place shows curvilinear streets, irregular-shaped lots, large residences with deep setbacks and private alleys for garages. With the exception of the boundary streets, there are no straight streets within the subdivision, suggesting that the layout of Gilmer Park Subdivision was strongly influenced by the City Beautiful movement of early twentieth century's Progressive Era.²

In 1910, the Gilmer Realty Company platted the more traditional Gilmer Square Subdivision, which included the north side of Yale Avenue, the south side of Michigan Avenue, and both sides of Herbert Avenue between 1100 and 1200 East. In a *Salt Lake Tribune* advertisement, Gilmer Realty stated that some of the features of the subdivision were: a \$4,000 minimum building cost restriction; extensive street improvements including graded streets and sidewalks, city water, perfect drainage, and a streetcar line. It was considered "the last close-in residence subdivision of the better class."³ The majority of development within the Gilmer Square subdivision occurred between 1914 and 1926. In fact, the subdivision was developed earlier than Gilmer Park, possibly due to the difficulty of building on the steeper slopes near 1300 East. Gilmer Square consists mostly of bungalows, but bungalows are found throughout the district.

Unlike many subdivisions of the period, the bungalows of the Gilmer Park Historic District were not built as tract housing. No two are exactly alike. In Gilmer Park, the bungalow as a type is somewhat larger than other neighborhoods and exhibits a variety of styles, including examples of the Prairie School and Arts & Crafts movements. As the Gilmer and Young families sold off most of the lots within the district, many of Salt Lake's most prolific developers and builders stepped in to contribute to the housing stock and landscape of the neighborhood. In the late 1920s through 1943, numerous period cottages, many designed by Salt Lake's most prominent architects, appeared in the area. While the majority of cottages are brick, stucco was also a popular material, and the district includes some of the best examples in the city. The English Tudor style was predominant, but there are also exceptional examples from other period revival styles. While the highest concentration of period cottages occurs within the Gilmer Park Subdivision, and in particular along the curving streets of Gilmer Drive, period cottages appear as infill throughout the district.



Early photographs of this home at 1125 Alpine Place, built in 1927, were used to advertise the amenities of the Gilmer Park subdivision.
Photograph by Dina Blacs, 2008.



This view of 1300 East shows the variety of bungalows built in the Gilmer Park neighborhood.
Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.



An English Tudor-style period cottage built in 1926 at 929 S. 1200 East.
Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.

² AP Associates Planning and Research. *Salt Lake City Architectural/Historical Survey Central/Southern Survey Area*. Salt Lake Planning Commission and Salt Lake City Historic Landmark Committee, 1983.

³ *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 4, 1914.

The popularity of the Gilmer Park Historic District remained high even through the depression years, and development continued until the availability of suitable lots dwindled. During the 1950s and 1960s, several modern and ranch-style houses were built, mostly on the steeper topography of the Gilmer Park Subdivision. The district's only commercial building, a service station, was built at the corner of 900 South and 1300 East in the 1950s. In the 1970s, a handful of newer homes were built on the neighborhood's steepest slopes, but improvements within the district have not abated. The district's lush landscaping, high-end architecture and proximity to the city center have continued to fuel investment. Approximately fifteen percent of residences have had major addition or exterior modifications, beginning in the 1960s, but primarily in the past two decades. On the larger lots, which tend to be period cottages on irregular parcels, extensive rear additions have been the trend. For the bungalows, which tend to be on the smaller, standard-size lots, the pattern has been toward pop-top and camel-back additions. It has only been in the past few years that the neighborhood has seen demolitions of historic homes to make way for new residential construction.

From its earliest settlement as an enclave for wealthy land owners, the area has been home to many of Salt Lake's most prominent citizens. A large number of developers, realtors, builders, and architects who worked in the district also chose to live there. The list of residents through the years included those influential in business, politics, medicine, law, education and religion. Although, like much of Salt Lake City, the residents were predominantly members of the LDS Church, the neighborhood was also one of the most religiously diverse in city with leaders of all the major congregations represented. Deed restrictions limited the ethnicity and socio-economic status of early residents, and the neighborhood remains fairly homogeneous, partially because of strong familial ties dating back to the earliest families.

However, the neighborhood was never an exclusive enclave. Residents of the area also tended to have strong business associations. For example, all of the major candy companies in Salt Lake City in the early part of the twentieth century were represented by owners or employees living in the neighborhood. Ironically, the area also had a high number of dentists per capita, including a few sons of candy makers. Another example was the banker who lived on Alpine Place while several of his management staff lived nearby on 1100 East. In general, the interior of the Gilmer Park neighborhood was home to Salt Lake's more privileged, the business owners, civic leaders, and society matrons with the managerial and professional class living on the periphery. Engineers, shop managers, salespeople and office workers lived in the bungalows and cottages on 1100 and 1300 East. The district traditionally has had a high owner-occupant rate, but the smaller, standard lots were and are more likely to be rentals.⁴



This Minimal Traditional style home was built in 1951 on the upper slopes, at 1039 S. 1200 East.

Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.



The 1958 sunroom addition to the left of this 1924 English-style period cottage at 1166 Harvard Avenue has achieved historic significance in its own right.

Photograph by Korral Broschinsky, 2008.

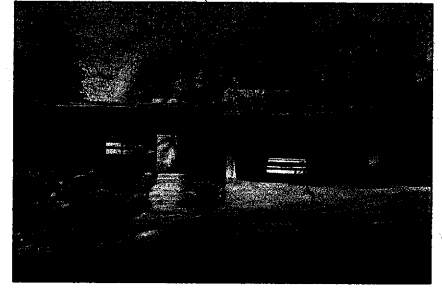


This ranch-style house at 1123 Alpine Place features an original second story. It was built in 1941.

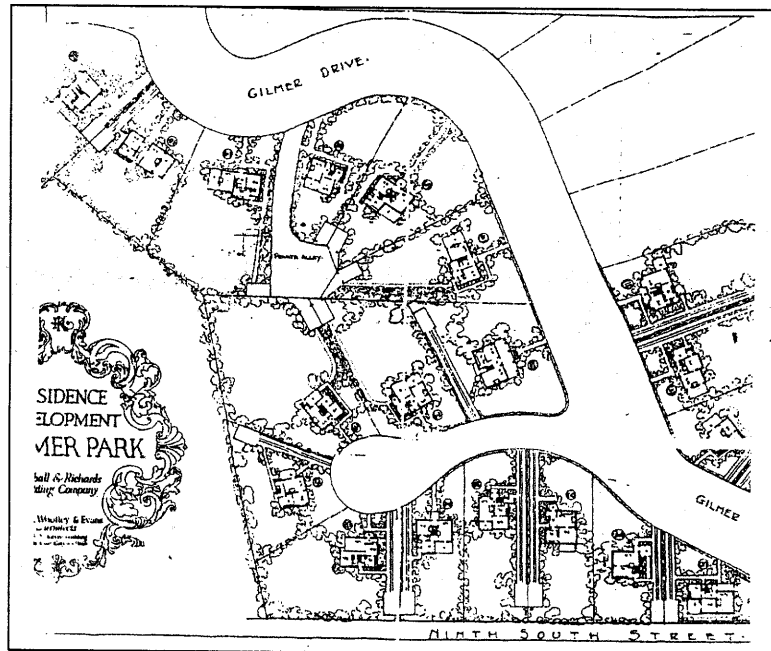
Photograph by Dina Blaes, 2008.

⁴ As indicated by city directories and census records. See Intensive Level Surveys for the district prepared in 2008.

The stability and attractiveness of the Gilmer Park Historic District have contributed to the neighborhood's ever-increasing popularity; however, the fashionable homes and lush landscaping that draw many to the neighborhood may also threaten its distinctive historic character. In the past few years, a volatile real estate market has produced a high turnover rate for many properties within the district. Considering the prized proximity to Salt Lake's city center, the neighborhood will be vulnerable to over-scale alterations and development. National trends toward higher residential square footage, including more garage space, will likely be difficult to reconcile with the topography, irregular lot size and historic residences of the Gilmer Park neighborhood, as is evident in recent tear-downs and incompatible remodeling/expansions within the district.⁵ As a significant and beautiful historic resource in Salt Lake City, the Gilmer Park Historic District is utilizing local district design review and careful attention to compatible zoning ordinances designed to preserve the area as one of the city's most unique and irreplaceable historic neighborhoods.



The Shupe home at 1203 E. Yale Avenue is one of the few modern-style residences in the district. It was designed by Salt Lake architect, George Cannon Young and built in 1963. Photograph by Korral Broschinsky, 2008.



An extant fragment of the landscape plan produced by Taylor Woolley for the Gilmer Park Subdivision showing Gilmer Drive and Alpine Place. Courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

⁵ Department of Commerce statistics on house size noted that the average square footage of a single-family home has roughly doubled in the past twenty-five years. Available at the United States Department of Commerce website.

THE GILMER PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

Development trends:

The Gilmer Park Historic District continues to receive investment in the form of renovations and additions to existing houses. It is a fully-developed area with little opportunity for new construction.

Goals for the district:

The design goals for the Gilmer Park Historic District are to preserve the unique character of the streetscapes and the historic integrity of the individual houses.

DESIGN CHARACTER

The following is a brief discussion of features that contribute to the design character of the district.

Streetscape Features

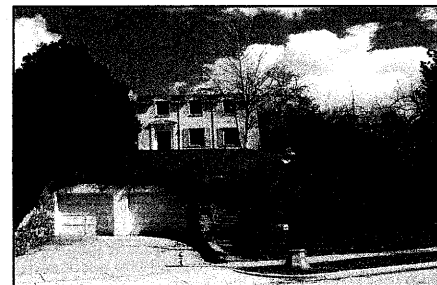
Street pattern

The Gilmer Park Historic District is located on a sloping area on the east bench of Salt Lake City and consists of many irregularly shaped blocks formed by curvilinear streets as well as areas of the more traditional narrow rectangular lots in a grid pattern. Alleys, many of which have been vacated, are found in the rectilinear blocks.

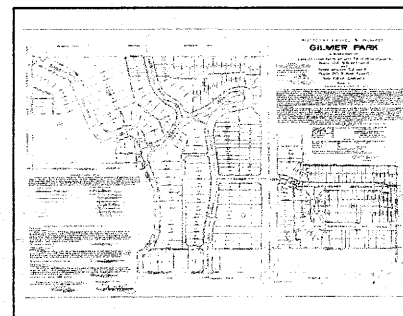
Site Design Features

Accessory Structures

Garage locations found in houses in the Gilmer Park Historic District are most likely based on the topography of the building lot. Garages may be found in the basement of the house, set to the rear of the lot accessed by a narrow driveway from the street, at street level with the house sited above or located on a rear alley.



Steep lots are frequently found in the interior section of Gilmer Park.
Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.



This 1919 Plat Map shows the street layout in the Gilmer Park subdivision.
Available at the Salt Lake County Recorder's Office.



Due to the topography of the area, many garages are located at street level with the house sited above.
Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.

DESIGN CHARACTER, continued . . .

Siting of additions

Additions in the district tend to be at the rear at or below the main roofline and therefore have had little influence on the streetscape.

Landscape Design Features

Fences and retaining walls

The steep topography of the area has led to the extensive use of retaining walls. Retaining walls are found in a variety of materials including cobblestone, sandstone, and concrete.

Natural features

The historic trees lining the curvilinear streets provide a park-like setting. Red Butte Creek runs through the area in a natural wooded environment.

Building form

The Gilmer Park Historic District primarily consists of early to mid-twentieth century residences which range from single story bungalows to various types of period cottages which tend to be larger in mass and scale.

Roof materials

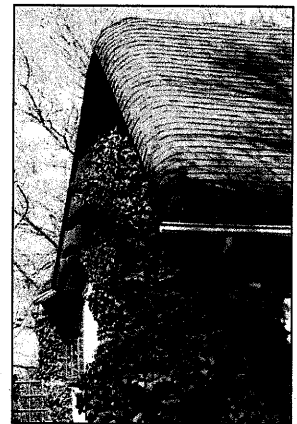
Due to the steep slope of the rooflines of period cottages and the topography of the district, roofing materials are an important visual feature. Slate, asphalt, wood and tile shingles are all historic roofing materials found on houses in the district. Cement bartile (pantile) roofs were installed in the late 1950s and early 1960s and are becoming an historic building material.

Porches

Porches found in Gilmer Park range from simple hood-delineated stoops to full-width bungalow porches. Historic porch and stoop elements are important character-defining features of the historic houses.



Retaining walls are character-defining historic features of Gilmer Park.
Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.



Rolled roofing was used to mimic the thatched roofs of English cottages.
Photograph by Dina Blaas, 2008.



This porch is the focal point of this modest clipped-gable cottage.
Photograph by Korral Broschinsky, 2008.

DESIGN CHARACTER, continued . . .

Characteristics of the Gilmer Park Historic District

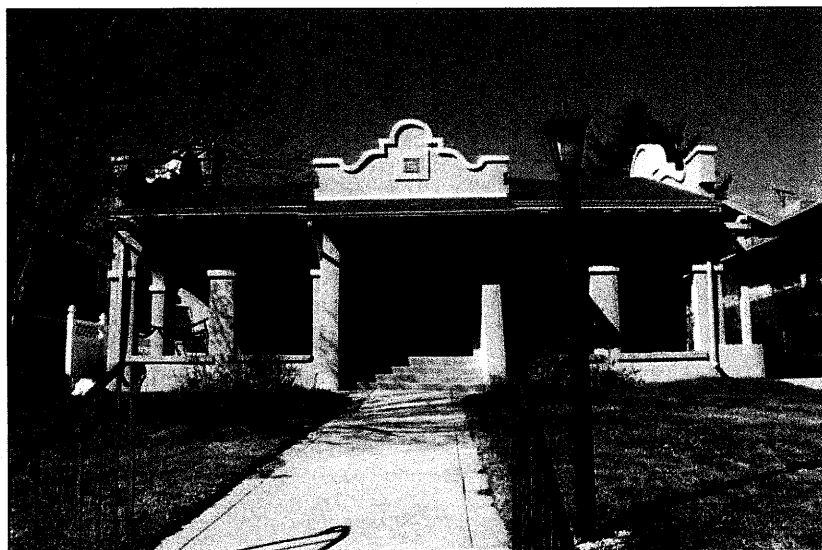
The following is a summary of key features of the district that should be respected.

- Setbacks are uniform.
- Topography varies substantially. Yards often have steep slopes. Retaining walls are found in a variety of materials including cobblestone, sandstone, and concrete.
- Street patterns are curvilinear in the central and northern sections and rectilinear along the western, eastern and southern edges.
- All the primary structures are residential with the exception of a single commercial building (a gas station) and a church.
- Garages are usually set at the rear of the lot and accessed from a rear alley or a single-car width driveway from the street. Several alleys have been vacated by the city. Because of the topography there are a number of basement garages as well as garages set at street level into the hillside with the house above on the steep lot.
- Architectural styles are predominantly bungalows and a variety of period revival cottages and may also include World War II and post-war styles.

Specific design standards that respond to the design character of the neighborhood follow on the next page.



The alley between Douglas Avenue and 1200 East provides access to garages at the rear of the houses.
 Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.



This mission bungalow is an example of the variety of architectural styles in the area.
 Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.

DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE GILMER PARK DISTRICT

Streetscape Standards

13.57 Maintain alleys where they exist.

Preserve their simple character.

Architectural Standards

Additions/Alterations

13.58 Plan an addition to be in character with the main building, in terms of size, scale and appearance.

This is particularly important with the more modest single-story bungalows. The initial structure can be overwhelmed by an inappropriate second story addition. Larger period cottages have more flexibility in terms of additions because of their bigger lot size and greater massing. Rear additions should be visually subordinate to the primary structure.

Building scale

13.59 Design new buildings to be similar in scale to those that were typical historically in the district.

Front facades should appear similar in height to those seen historically on the block. A taller portion of the building should be set back on the lot.

Building materials

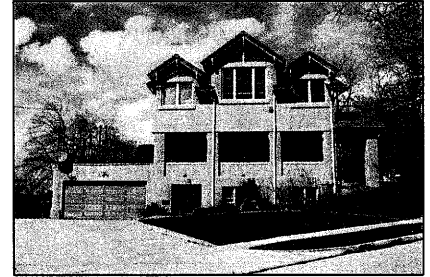
13.60 Use building materials that appear similar to those seen historically.

Historic building materials include: brick, stucco, wood and aluminum siding in ranch houses. Striated brick is used extensively. Using field stone, veneers applied with the bedding plane in a vertical position, or aluminum or vinyl siding is incompatible.

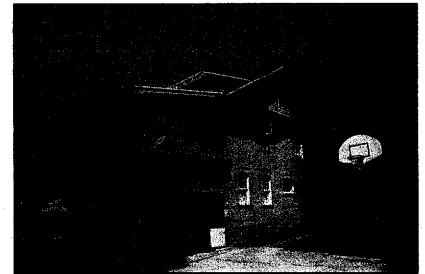
13.61 Use roofing materials that are similar in appearance to those seen historically.

Large panelized products, such as standing seam metal, should be avoided. The overall texture of a roof should be uniform and consistent throughout the building.

The design standards apply in addition to those in relevant preceding chapters, which may include Rehabilitation Standards, Standards for New Construction and General Design Standards.

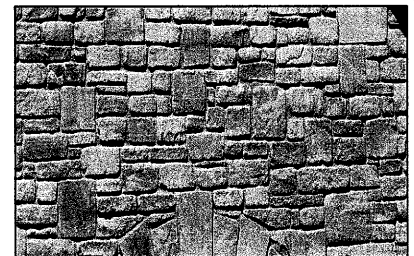


The modern addition to the 1909 Jay T. Gilmer House is not visually subordinate to the primary structure.
Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.



This shingle-covered rear addition, while substantial, does not visibly impact the façade of the primary structure.

Photograph by Korral Broschinsky, 2008.



The use of modern veneers should be avoided.

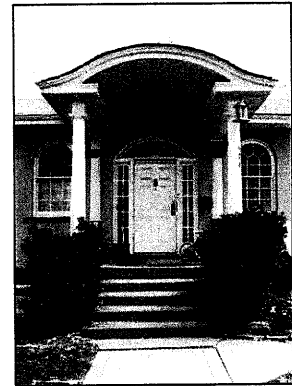
Photograph by Beatrice Lufkin, 2008.

DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE GILMER PARK DISTRICT, continued . . .

Porches

13.62 Clearly define the primary entrance to the house.

Use a porch, stoop, portico or similar one-story feature to indicate the entry. Orienting the entry to the street is preferred. Establishing entry elements such as walkways and landscape elements with the porch is preferred.



The entrance is defined by the portico, columns, flanking windows, fanlight and sidelights. Photograph by Dina Blaes, 2008.

Accessory Structures

13.63 Maintain the historic location of the garage. The pattern of locating garages as separate structures should be maintained. A few mid-century residences have attached garages.

13.64 The architectural design of the accessory structure should be compatible in design with the primary structure. Garages should be unobtrusive and not compete visually with the house.



This historic garage complements the Arts and Crafts style of the primary structure.



A uniformity of scale combined with a variety of architectural styles gives this Yale Avenue streetscape interest. Photograph by Korral Broschinsky, 2008.