

# City of Detroit

## CITY COUNCIL

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### PROPOSED HUBBARD FARMS HISTORIC DISTRICT

#### Final Report

The proposed Hubbard Farms Historic District is located in Southwest Detroit approximately 2-1/2 miles from downtown. It is composed of approximately three hundred buildings located along the principal north-west streets of W. Grand Blvd., Vinewood, Hubbard, Scotten and Clark; the major east-west commercial thoroughfare, W. Vernor Highway; and the secondary east-west streets, Bagley, Porter and Lafayette. Clark Park is the major open space in Hubbard Farms; two schools and the Western YMCA are situated across the street from the park. The proposed historic district is composed primarily of residential buildings, with commercial uses on W. Vernor and institutional uses on Vernor, W. Grand Blvd., Scotten and Clark. Its significant architecture spans the years from 1870 through 1930.

**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:** The boundaries of the proposed district are as shown on the attached map and are as follows:

On the north, W. Vernor Highway;

On the east, W. Grand Boulevard;

On the south, W. Lafayette Boulevard;

On the west, Clark Street.

**HISTORY:** The area now referred to as Hubbard Farms was formerly in the Township of Springwells. Originally a Pottawatomie Indian village, the area was rich in Indian burial mounds. In the 1830's, one such mound was opened by a party of explorers, including Bela Hubbard, who found an abundant deposit of human bones, arrow heads, stone axes, and other relics. Hubbard also reported that on the north bank of the Detroit River just below Fort Wayne was an elliptical or circular earthwork, evidentially an ancient fortification.

The French granted Springwells to Robert Navarre, Jr. in the 1700's. They called it "Belle Fontaine", or "Beautiful Springs," because of the natural springs located near the present site of Fort Wayne. These natural springs furnished an ample supply of water for General Hull's troops, encamped there during the War of 1812. Clark's Mineral Springs Baths on the north side of Fort between Clark and Scotten lasted well into the second decade of the twentieth century. The earliest English

name given to the area was "Spring Hill", and it was officially named Springwells Township by an act of the state legislature on April 12, 1827.

Springwells Township was initially settled by the French, the granting of lands following the pattern usual in the Detroit area. The proposed Hubbard Farms Historic District occupies parts of five private claims, or French ribbon farms. The easternmost was the Alexis Campau Farm, which extends from the east side of Vinewood to 25th St. The United States government confirmed the rights to P.C. 78 for the heirs of Alexis Campau in 1811. The Alexis Campau Farm was one of two farms granted to members of the prominent Campau family in the Hubbard Farms area. Much of the A. Campau Farm was sold to Bela Hubbard in 1853 by James Harper and Magdelaine Vernette Campau, his wife.

Private Claim 77, which includes the west side of Vinewood and both sides of Hubbard, was confirmed to Whitmore Knaggs by the United States government on Dec. 28, 1807. The Knaggs' arrival in Detroit was contemporary with the acquisition of Canada and the Northwest Territory by the English. Whitmore Knaggs' parents came to Detroit under English rule and lived at Fort Detroit. They entered the fur trade, with Mrs. Knaggs, of Dutch ancestry, running the store. Whitmore Knaggs, born in 1763, was one of six children. He became conversant in English, Dutch, French, and five Indian tribe dialects and was also quite familiar with the habits and customs of the Native Americans. Consequently, he became invaluable to the British generals in the Territory - St. Clair, Hull, and Winchester. During the War of 1812, he was a militiaman who became a prisoner of war. He later served as chief interpreter to General Cass, then an Indian agent.

When Knaggs married Josette Labadie, daughter of Pierre Descompte, he was then living in a log cabin on the 300 acre Knaggs Farm in Springwells that he purchased from a Frenchman named Gobelie. He built his frame house of logs and clapboard around 1790; it stood near the corner of River St. and Swain. Whitmore Knaggs died in 1826, leaving four sons and one daughter; his wife died in 1840.

The Knaggs Farm, then around two miles from the western limit of Detroit, was sold to Thomas Hubbard of Hamilton, New York, in 1835; he bought it for his son, Bela (1814-1896) who needed to come west to find a "milder" climate for his health. Bela Hubbard was a graduate of Hamilton College. After his arrival in Detroit, Bela opened a real estate office. He lived in the Knaggs house for years with his first wife, Sarah. While his main line of work was with Hubbard and King, a lumber and real estate company, he accomplished many other things in his lifetime.

In 1837, Bela Hubbard was appointed assistant geologist of the State Geological Survey under Douglass Houghton. Hubbard became an author, writing extensively on the geography, topography, and

geology of the south shore of Lake Superior, and publishing a book on the subject in 1846 with W.A. Burt. Obviously a man of many interests, he was admitted to the Michigan bar in 1842. He was one of the organizers of the State Agricultural Society in 1849, a member of the Young Men's Society of Detroit and its president in 1845, one of the organizers of the American Association of Geologists and Naturalists, the forerunner of the present American Association for the Advancement of Science. As a student of the early history of Michigan, he was keenly interested in the history of the French period on the Great Lakes. Hubbard wrote Memorials of a Half-Century, published in 1888.

Hubbard was familiar with the publications of Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852), the leading landscape architect and architectural theorist of the time who wrote about picturesque Italian villas and landscaping. When it came time to build a retirement home, Bela Hubbard, nature-lover at heart, had a vision of a Romantic villa surrounded by semi-natural parks and gardens. By 1853, he had asked Alexander Jackson Davis, architect and disciple of Andrew Jackson Downing, to design an Italian Villa. In addition, he persuaded his friend and brother-in-law, John C. Braughman, and another friend, Christopher Reeve, to commission designs from Davis. Hubbard's estate occupied eighteen acres between Fort and the river and included, in addition to the house, a small pond, a garden, an orchard, curving drives and walks. He and his wife named the estate "Vinewood". Vinewood Avenue, a roadway lined with overgrown trees and native grape vines, was named after the estate when it was laid out in 1856. Indian Avenue was named as such in 1856 because it crossed a ridge which abounded in Indian graves, but was later renamed Hubbard.

Hubbard was a civic minded individual who contributed to making Detroit a more beautiful place. Among his civic endeavors, he commissioned four statues of Marquette, Richard, LaSalle and Cadillac for the Detroit City Hall; these now stand near the former St. Andrews Episcopal Church on the Wayne State University campus. In his later years, Bela was involved with the creation of the boulevard around the city, and at his own expense built a road running north from Fort Street which he deeded to the City of Detroit in 1887 to become part of West Grand Boulevard. An enthusiastic patron of the arts, Hubbard was one of the founders of the Detroit Museum of Art.

Hubbard died on June 13, 1896 at his home on Vinewood. His villa was demolished in 1933 to make way for the construction of the Miriam Memorial Branch of Grace Hospital.

Braughman's Italian villa on Fort next to Hubbard's was also completed in 1856. It was better known for its second owner, Daniel Scotten, the tobacco magnate who moved there in 1864. The grounds of the Braughman-Scotten estate lay between Vinewood and Hubbard Avenue south of Porter and reaching towards Fort. The

densely wooded lot was reportedly full of flowers. Scotten Avenue was named after Daniel Scotten in 1867.

Daniel Scotten, a Scot born in Norfolk, England in 1819, came to Detroit in 1853 at the age of 34, and took a job in the tobacco business with Isaac Miller. In 1861 he moved to a partnership with Granger and Lovett and after Granger left it became Scotten, Lovett & Co. until 1877. The firm moved from Cadillac Square to W. Fort Street in 1878, where it erected one of the largest tobacco factories then in the United States, the Hiawatha Tobacco Works. In 1882, Scotten became sole owner. The company employed 1000-1200 men and women in 1896.

In addition to his position as a tobacco magnate, Scotten was a real estate entrepreneur. He platted his first subdivision in 1866 and owned a number properties, including the Hotel Cadillac, brick blocks on Gratiot, Grand River, 12th Street, West Fort, and stores on Jefferson. He also owned several dwellings and platted 27 subdivisions into 2481 lots. Scotten also owned significant amounts of farmland across the river around Sandwich, where he grazed cattle.

Scotten had a reputation as being eccentric. He did not believe in typical philanthropic efforts; instead, he expressed his generosity more directly. He raised turkeys on his property and gave them away, along with firewood, dry goods, clothes and flour. His benefactors called him "Uncle Daniel". He expressed his philanthropic philosophy on his death bed when he was quoted as saying, "Am I going to give Detroit anything?... No, sir, nothing to the City. I have been giving to my people all my life." Scotten had one daughter, Elizabeth; when he died in 1899 he left an estate reported as worth \$7 million.

To the west of the Knaggs/Hubbard Farm was the Jean-Baptiste Campau Farm, or Private Claim 563. The U.S. government reconfirmed the grant of 137.6 acres in 1811. The farm was subdivided in 1852 for the heirs of J.B. Campau, and subsequently sold, primarily in the 1870's and 1880's, to a number of individuals who further subdivided the property into house lots.

The two westernmost claims, P.C. 583 and P.C. 47, comprising approximately 377 acres, were confirmed to Jacob Visger in 1807 by the U.S. government. In the proposed district, the breadth of P.C. 583 is the same as that of Clark Park, while P.C. 47 is between McKinstry and Clark.

John P. Clark, known for promoting the fishing business along the Detroit and Maumee Rivers, was best known in Detroit as a shipbuilder, owner and founder of the Clark Dry Dock Company, and land developer. He was born in 1808 in New York, and his family moved to Ohio when he was still a young boy. Not having much interest in school, Clark began his business career at an early age in Toledo, Ohio where he earned 50 cents a week fishing on the banks of the Maumee River. Within ten years, Clark was

shipping large quantities of catfish to New Orleans, becoming the largest distributor of catfish outside the state of Louisiana. Seeing the rivers as much more than giant fishing ponds, Clark began to build his vast fortune on the waterways of the region.

In 1833 Clark purchased a steam barge and started a towing service on the Great Lakes. In 1838, Clark moved to Detroit and started his shipbuilding business. He began by buying and selling small schooners and within two years he was selling craft of all kinds. In 1850 Clark founded the Clark Dry Dock Company at Springwells where he built a large number of steam and sail vessels including the Jay Cook, Alaska, Pearl, Gazelle, and Riverside. By the late 1860's Clark Dry Dock had become part of the Detroit Dry Dock Company after a merger.

Clark spent the last twenty years of his life developing much of the land he had acquired earlier in his career. Clark's knowledge of the city's development enabled him to invest wisely in real estate. Already one of the richest men in the state, Clark wanted to do something that would benefit the people of Detroit while also memorializing himself. Upon his death in 1888, he deeded the parcel of land known as Clark Grove to the city for a park. According to the will the city would receive only half of the parcel of land called Clark Grove and would have to purchase the remaining half with the following provisions: all the native timber was to remain except where walkways and drives were constructed and the beaver dam was to remain and kept in its present condition. The city was to pay the executors of the estate "a fair price" for the other half of the parcel. The land was to be used as a public park and would forever be named the John P. Clark Park. If the city could not live up to the conditions of the will, the land would revert to the Clark heirs.

In 1891, Detroit's City Council voted to accept the terms of the gift, and appropriated \$46,000 for the purchase of the land and another \$10,000 for improvements to the park. The superintendent of Detroit's Parks and Boulevard Commission, John Elstrom, was responsible for development. The park land was 1,950 feet long, 337 feet wide, and 18 inches below street level forming a natural basin of drainage at the foot of Lafayette Street. It was rectangular, contained 24 acres and was bounded by Dix (Vernor), Scotten, Clark, and Lafayette. According to an 1891 newspaper article, "Clark Park was the only tract of forest timber left in the city. The park was home to a variety of trees including oak, elm, hickory, ash, and hawthorne, measuring 60 feet tall ...many being over 200 years old."

Utilizing the park's natural resources and abiding by the provisions of Clark's will, Elstrom did very little to interfere with its natural beauty. According to the diagram he submitted to the Park Commission, Clark Park would consist of a series of winding walkways which would allow a person to travel throughout the entire park. These walks would be 10 ft. wide and surfaced with gravel; no carriages would be allowed in the park. At the

intersection of these walks would be circular spaces of about 20 ft. over which shelters would be erected. To deal with the drainage problem, the waterways would be directed toward the site of a geyser fountain which would also form the supply for a canal system. Clark Park was opened to the public at the turn of the century.

The park underwent its first major renovation in 1910 and continued to change as the community changed. Over the years trees and other foliage have been removed to create softball fields and playgrounds. Today only a few trees remain at the south end of Clark Park. It continues to serve as a major recreational area for the people of southwest Detroit.

The Hubbard Farms area was incorporated into the City of Detroit around 1885. Horse-drawn and electric trolleys served the area in the late nineteenth century, providing easy access to the central city. The Dix Avenue Railway was approved in 1886 and its route was from the intersection of Baker (now Bagley) and 24th Streets to Dix Road (now Vernor), continuing along Dix Road to the City limits. There was also a Springwells Citizen's Railway (1873) and a Grand Trunk Junction Street Railway Co. The Springwells Line came under the auspices of the Detroit Railway in 1895.

Because property was subdivided by different individuals and sold as house lots at different times under different restrictions, a great variety of building types became available to serve the differing needs of people. No one ethnic group originally dominated Hubbard Farms; in fact, its occupancy reflected the different waves of immigration in Detroit throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Knaggs, Hubbard, Scotten, Ferrand and other early residents were of northern European descent; German and Irish names are common in the late 19th century city directories and Eastern European names appear occasionally after World War I. The area today has a cultural identification with Detroit's Hispanic community.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:** Hubbard Farms is a mixed-use community with architecture spanning the years from approximately 1870 through the first quarter of the 20th century. Although the Romantic villas designed by Alexander Jackson Davis have long since been demolished, the neighborhood that has grown up since possesses a rich architectural legacy, from Italianate cottages to bungalows. The buildings described below are intended as a representative sample.

**1. YMCA, Western Branch, 1601 Clark, 1927.**

Between 1910 and 1920 Detroit's population doubled to well over a million. As new communities began to develop and grow, so did the need for some form of organized recreation for the city's young boys and men. The creation of what became known as the Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) grew out of concern by the city's church community as a desire to "promote religious, moral and social welfare of the young men of this city..." The YMCA saw as its objective the responsibility to improve the spiritual and intellectual conditions of the city's young.

By the early 1920's the population of the city's west side had grown to 178,000. The Western Branch of Detroit's YMCA opened in April, 1919 as the city's second community branch. Originally located in an office building at 532 Scotten Avenue, the Western "Y" became a focal point of the community. Soon the office on Scotten was no longer adequate. By the mid-1920's the YMCA Executive Board was soliciting donations for the construction of a new building, to be known as the Western Branch. This goal was accomplished through a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Edsel Ford of \$750,000, providing for the complete cost of a new building.

On March 28, 1927 permit #26230 was issued to the architectural firm of Malcomson and Higginbotham for the construction of the YMCA Western Branch. The dedication was held on April 15, 1928.

Malcomson and Higginbotham were a Detroit architectural firm known for their favored status with the Detroit Board of Education. The substantial four-story brown brick YMCA building has a Spanish Romanesque feel to its detailing. The facade is basically arranged in three sections. Its two-story central projecting section is roofed with clay tiles; second story round-arched windows are paired; their shared impost block resembles a column capital and they share a brick column. A spandrel of masonrylozenge grillework gracefully completes the lower portion of this window arrangement; masonry window surrounds are seen on the first story of the projecting section and the second story of the remainder of the front facade. Stone is utilized for the basement level, belt courses between the first and second story, window surrounds of second story of the outer sections, windows above the portals, and first story portals with tympanums above which are the words "YOUNG MENS CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION". "BOY'S ENTRANCE" and "MEN'S ENTRANCE" are over their respective doorways. Modern aluminum doors have replaced the originals.

The two outer sections of the front facade that project from the recessed mass of the building are also interestingly arranged, especially near the top. Masonry balconets project beneath the sets of three round-arched windows that are outlined in stone and have shields and colored tile in their tympanums at fifth-story level. Much of the same detail can be seen on the side elevations. A brick arcaded corbel table beneath the copper gutters of the central section completes the composition.

## 2. Maybury School, 4400 Porter at Clark, 1910.

The Maybury School, located at the northwest corner of Porter and Clark, was named for William Cotter Maybury, a native Detroitier who was born in 1848. A graduate of the University of Michigan Law School, Maybury began his law practice in 1870, and by 1876 he was elected as Detroit's city attorney. In 1881 Maybury was elected professor of jurisprudence of the Michigan College of Medicine.

William Maybury embarked upon a political career in 1883 when he was elected to Congress from Michigan's first congressional district. He served on the Ways and Means Committee where he was instrumental in securing the bill which allowed for the construction of the Belle Isle bridge. In 1888, Maybury returned to Detroit and reassociated himself with the law firm of Conely, Maybury, & Lucking. In 1897 he joined the prestigious firm of Lucking, Emmons, and Helfman. That same year Hazen S. Pingree, then mayor of Detroit, was elected governor of the state, and William Maybury was chosen to succeed Pingree. Maybury proved to be a popular mayor, being elected to serve two consecutive terms from 1897 to 1905. William C. Maybury died three years later in 1908.

A permit was issued to the Detroit Board of Education in 1910 for the construction of the William Cotter Maybury Elementary School. The eighteen room building, costing \$68,000 and accommodating 780 pupils, opened for classes on April 17, 1911.

The building was considered "advanced" at the time of construction. At Maybury, the kindergarten was an integral part of the plan. Rooms were provided for manual training and domestic science classes, then progressive features of Detroit's educational program. The installation of a central vacuum cleaning system was another innovation in classroom design.

In 1929 the school underwent renovation. The rooms which were formerly used for manual training and domestic science were converted into separate gymnasiums, while the largest classroom became the auditorium. The school underwent extensive rehabilitation once again in 1961-62.

In style, Maybury School's Beaux Arts design harkens back to the classicism of Rome. While it is not an especially large building, the school appears monumental due to its architectural

design. The use of light-colored brick, even with minimal masonry trim, refers back to stone public buildings of ancient times.

Two and one-half stories tall, the upper stories are supported on a high rusticated basement. The center of each elevation projects, making up the entrance pavilion on the front, or Clark Street facade; the projecting sections on the side elevations are fenestrated and the entrances are on their sides. Rusticated pilasters flank the projecting pavilions, rising two stories to the broad entablature supporting the pediment. A classical attic tops the whole building. The modillion cornices are rolled metal. To the sides of the pavilions on the front and side elevations are rows of double hung sash windows with rectangular transoms above. Separating the first and second story windows is classically inspired grillework. Over the trabeated porticos is a round-arched window arrangement, becoming the only arched system in the composition.

### 3. 1155-61 Clark, 1902.

Hugo Bloquelle, architect, built this 4 unit building for Charles Staebler in 1902-03. Staebler ran a saloon and restaurant called Staebler's Hall on Beaubien at the time.

This 2 and one-half story red brick building can be classified as late Victorian eclectic, even at the late date it was built, because it contains features of several Victorian styles: the Second Empire style in its slate mansard roof; Queen Anne in the stylized sunbursts over second story windows; Romanesque Revival in the round arches of the entrances and the treatment of the gable in the attic; and Classical Revival in the pediment and the columns of the wooden porch. The result is a very unusual and interesting architectural composition.

### 4. 1451 Clark, Wrock House, 1907.

This house was built by William H. Wrock and his wife, Hulda, in 1907, and it was owned by the Wrock family into the 1980's. Mr. Wrock was a partner in the Wrock & Watson Insurance Co., with offices downtown on Griswold. The estimated cost of construction of the house was \$3600. Killean and Robertshaw (John Robertshaw and John H. Killean) were the contractors. The Wrock family owned this home into the 1980's.

The Wrock House is a two and one-half single-story vernacular house that incorporates details from many different styles popular in the latter quarter of the 19th century. Its overall form was very popular in Detroit in the first decade of the 20th century; examples can also be seen in the Woodbridge Historic District. This particular house has elements of Queen Anne, such as the conically roofed engaged tower, Stick Style, as seen in the brackets supporting the tower, the English Revival style, as seen in the half-timbering and pebble aggregate of the gable, and

the Colonial Revival, as seen on the porch and denticulated cornice.

#### 5. Clark Park, Women's Rest Room

This small scale building is indicative of the character and quality of the early permanent buildings in Clark Park. Now vacant, it once served as the women's rest room. Below the splayed water table are colorful random fieldstone foundations; above the water table are the buff brick walls of the one story building. The steeply hipped roof is crowned by a four-sided ventilated cupola with a hip roof that is flat on top. The narrow entrance opening is flanked by a round-arched window opening with raised stone molding above the voussoirs. The porch walls are stone like the foundations, and support two short columns bearing the inscription "WOMEN" with a swag to either side. A gablet with an ocular opening is above the porch.

#### 6. Western High School, 1500 Scotten, 1937.

The first public high school to be built on the city's west side was appropriately named Western. The school opened its doors for students for the first time in 1898. Along with Central and Eastern High Schools, Western became the third secondary school in the city.

As the city's population began to shift and development of the city's west side began, Western High School faced growing pains. By 1907 an addition was made to the rear to accommodate the increase in students. A second addition was built in 1924. Within four years Western enrollment was over 2300 students in a building designed to serve only 1500. To alleviate the overflow the school temporarily stopped the admission of ninth graders.

On February 25, 1935, Western was destroyed by fire. All that was left was the swimming pool and boys' gymnasium. The faculty met at Cass Technical High School and made plans to find a temporary facility. Within twenty-four hours students were notified that classes would be held at Cass Tech. The Western students were maintained as a separate unit while attending Cass. During the two years spent at Cass, Western High was able to maintain an enrollment of over 1200. By the summer of 1937 a new building was completed and by September of that same year Western had more than 2300 students attending Detroit's newest school.

Georgian in style, Western High School was built at an approximate cost of \$1,250,000 to plans by the architectural firm of Malcolmson and Higginbotham. Because of the size of the site space was limited and landscaping was kept to a minimum. The proximity to Clark Park was ideal and gave Western High School a campus like atmosphere, as well as providing athletic opportunities for the school.

Western High School is a long three-story Georgian Revival institutional building with a projecting central pavilion that is the focus of the design. The pavilion features large smooth blocks of regularly laid limestone facing its first story and a row of six smooth stone pilasters bearing an entablature applied to the second and third stories. Between the pilasters are large multi-paned windows, one per bay, with stone keystones and balconets. Above the modillion cornice, a wooden belfry is centered on the ridge of the shallow gabled roof. Deep entrance openings in the central pavilion occur at its corners as three-sided one-story appendages with brick and stone parapets with cartouches on each face.

The flanking wings of Western High are less ornate in appearance, but attractively carry through the Georgian idiom. Although brick, the first story is separated from the second by a stone string course, and windows throughout are multi-paned. Those on the first and second stories have stone keystones. While the rooflines of the wings are slightly lower than the central pavilion, the modillion cornice is carried throughout. A modern addition is located to the north.

#### 7. 1256 Scotten, Beck House, 1904.

Frederick Construction Co. built the house for Wm. G. Beck, a saloon and billiard hall keeper (located at 400 Scotten). Frederick was a stone, concrete contractor; note fieldstone foundations and cut stone porch foundations. Estimated cost of construction was \$4000.

The Beck House has a Romanesque feel, due to the heavy stone foundations that appear to anchor it to the ground, the triple round-arched windows, and the stone trimmed square brick columns that support the overhang of the recessed entrance. The fishscale-shingled cross-gable at attic level on the south end of the front facade is offset by the bay with the five-sided roof to its north.

#### 8. Yorba Hotel, 4020 W. Lafayette Blvd., 1923.

The Yorba Hotel was constructed in 1923 (permit #79926) at an estimated cost of construction of just under \$200,000 by the Detroit architectural firm of Pollmer and Ropes for Samuel Plotkin, a Russian born Jew who came to Detroit in 1906. Plotkin built and managed several hotels in Detroit and Pontiac, the Yorba being one of them.

The Yorba stands as a landmark as seen from the Fisher Freeway near the Clark Street exit. The most recognizable feature of the building is the large sign supported on a metal structure that says "HOTEL YORBA". The edifice is four-stories tall with a resurfaced first story and brick above. Its facade consists of a wide central section separated from the flanking sections by narrow strips of quoins. It is symmetrical; double-hung sash

windows occupy the upper three stories; the windows at first floor level have been modified.

The outstanding feature of the exterior of the Yorba is the entrance. A pair of wooden doors is flanked by single wooden doors; above the double doors is a segmental pediment over the lintel that bears an insignia set into a crest. Stained leaded milk glass is set into the three-part wooden frame above the doors. To the sides of the entrance are tall columns bearing the frieze that is inscribed with the name, "HOTEL YORBA."

9. 1455 Vinewood, Ferrand House, c. 1871.

The Ferrand House is the oldest documented house in the Hubbard Farms district. Bela Hubbard sold the property upon which this house stands to Eutrope Ferrand in 1871. Several mortgages to Daniel Scotten are taken soon after. It was held in the Ferrand family until 1957. Eutrope Ferrand was a florist who had his nursery on his property on Vinewood. He also had an encaustic tile company named after himself. In 1871-72 CD, Ferrand was the proprietor of the Fort St. Greenhouses and Gardens at the corner of 24th and Fort.

In style, the Ferrand House combines elements of the Italianate and the later Colonial Revival. The Ferrand House is a painted brick, one and one-half story building with a cross-gable roof. A later addition, the large classically inspired porch with its entablature bearing triglyphs and metopes wraps around to the south side of the building to shelter the second entrance on the side as well as the main entrance on the front facade. To the north of the main entrance is the large bay window containing three elongated double hung sash segmentally arched window openings with large keystones. The continuous sill and molded course between the windows of the bay just below impost block level tie the bay together. Simple Italianate brackets support the overhang of the roof eaves and a Palladian window arrangement punctures the front gable.

10. 1541-49 Vinewood, 1900.

Thomas R. Ginn (1893-1949) whose own home was one of these units, was a general contractor who built several factories and buildings in Detroit at the turn of the century. He retired from the building contracting business in 1928, and was vice-president of Ginn Chevrolet. Goodenow & Ginn also designed "The Murray," a 7-unit two-story building at 4004 Porter in the Hubbard Farms district, in the same year.

These rowhouses were built at an estimated cost of \$10,000. Ginn purchased the property on October 3, 1900 and received permit #822 on October 26 of that same year for its construction. It was kept in the Ginn family until 1984, when it was sold to its present owner.

The four units were designed as three sections, the outer sections almost identical, resulting in a symmetrical overall composition and a very attractive arrangement of forms, most strikingly above the eaves. The two-story bays of the outermost sections rise through the roof into a five-sided brick dormer with overhanging eaves, with windows in three faces. Lozenge patterned brick work separates it from the story below. Moving towards the center along the main steeply pitched roof is small, wood sided dormer jutting upward with a steep hip roof with considerable overhang. The central section above the eaves contains a large wood-sided cross gable that is punctured by two relatively small square windows. Eaves beneath this half are supported on paired brackets.

Entrances on the outer sections are made grand by their stone entablatures with ocular openings above. A large projecting wooden porch runs along the whole central section, containing two entrances. As in "The Murray," Goodenow & Ginn showed considerable skill in this building in creating attached units with variety and individuality.

11. 1482-84 Vinewood, c. 1875.

Collins B. Hubbard, an heir of Bela, owned this property and most likely had this house built, since it had transferred to George R. Angell in 1898. Prior to that, Edward C. Fowler, clerk with Black Hardware Co., resided there in 1882; John McGregor Jr. of McGregor and Sons, marine boiler Works, lived there in the early 1890's.

The Second Empire style house is 1-1/2 stories tall, a full story within the mansard roof. Piercing the mansard on the front elevation are two pedimented, elongated double-hung sash windows. More of these can be seen on the south elevation as well. The northern section of the mansard projects, forming the porch roof; pendants hang at its corners. At the ridge of the mansard is a box cornice; the wide denticulated entablature beneath the cornice under the roof eaves also bears brackets supporting the roof.

On the first story to the south of the entrances are two elongated double hung sash windows with a molded panel beneath. The building has been altered by the addition of a more recent porch and a second front entrance. However, it still retains much of its original character.

12. 1051 Vinewood, Sagendorph House, 1908.

Arthur H. Sagendorph was an agent for the Union News Company when he hired Edwin W. Gregory as the architect of his new home. Gregory, although he lived in Pontiac, had an office in Detroit and was designing other houses in New Center at about the same time.

The Sagendorph House was built in 1908 at an estimated cost of construction of \$4500. While its full width porch creates the appearance of a larger house, it is only 28'x 42' in size. In style, the home is in English Revival, with the stucco second and attic story bearing decorative half-timbering. Its steeply pitched roof with frontal gable has very wide overhangs. The first story is brick, and together with the solid looking brick porch piers, porch walls, and foundations, acts to give the house the appearance of weightiness. There is a bowed window to the south side of the front facade.

**13. 1071 Hubbard, Walker-Sumner House, 1899.**

Frederick A.C. Walker was employed by Walter, Krausmann & Kuhn (dry goods, carpets, shoes, ladies and men's furnishings, 86-88 Gratiot Ave.) when he was issued permit #286 on April 18, 1899 for the construction of this house at an estimated cost of \$4000. Walker sold the property to Carl and Frances Sumner in 1906. They owned the Sumner Furniture Company, located on Michigan and Fourth; Carl Sumner was the secretary/treasurer. The business closed during the Depression.

The house was sold out of the Sumner family in 1978 and bought back in 1982 by the grandson of the Sumners; it is now occupied by 3rd and 4th generation Sumners.

The Walker-Sumner House has a fake brick shingle front facade while the clapboard has been restored at the sides and rear. At the southeast corner of the front facade is an engaged three-story conical tower. The third stage of which is frame and fenestrated all around with double hung sash windows. The main roof over the house is hipped, with an intersecting gable forming the shingled dormer over the northern section of the front facade. At second story level beneath this gable is a stylized corner bracket, a projecting three-sided bay window, and a door. The Colonial porch with its pediment over the entrance part occupies the width of the front facade, minus the tower. A jerkin-headed roof over a section of the south elevation is further evidence of the variety of roof forms, window arrangements and materials utilized in the design of this very handsome Queen Anne house.

**14. 1250 Hubbard, Whitedel Apts., 1928**

A permit for the construction for an apartment building was taken out in 1926 with Charles Agree listed as the architect. Agree was the architect of the Vanity Ballroom and many other theatres and apartment buildings of the 1920's and 30's in Detroit. White and Delehanty were listed as the owners. This permit was apparently cancelled, and different owners received a permit for the construction of the building. Given its appearance, the plans by Agree may have been used by the new owners. Also, the name of the building is obviously derived from White and Delehanty.

Early occupants included Henry Hornbacher, a clerk; Rudolph Kraffert, a draftsman, and Lafayette Lanford, driver.

Castellated parapet walls, towerlike sections, and varying heights provide an interesting silhouette to the Whitedel Apartment building. Windows are generally set deep into wall surfaces, the courtyard entrance is cloister-like, and, with the stepped arcaded corbel table, chevron patterns, and other decorative detailing in brick, contribute to the Spanish medieval character of the building.

**15. 1513 Hubbard, Barks House, c. 1877.**

This house was probably built by Harlow Banks, who purchased the property in 1876. He was in the insurance business. He sold it to Chester B. Turner in 1884, a machinist, who kept it in his family until 1954.

The House is a substantial brick Victorian eclectic building with a steep pitched roof with intersecting gables. It displays Carpenter Gothic and Stick Style detailing as evidenced by the sawn wood ornament of the verge board and openwork of the porch. The porch wraps around to the south side. Decorative window hoods of stone rest above the set of triple windows on the second story. The frieze detailing of the three-sided bay with arched windows on the north side of the facade continues into the porch frieze, resulting in a sense of horizontal continuity. Wooden double doors with a transom above allows entry into the house. There is a secondary entrance on the south elevation.

The 1-1/2 story house in the rear of the Barks House was constructed just a few years after, judging from its Eastlake detail, such as its turned porch columns supporting the jigsaw ornament of the shed roofed porch. It was most likely built as a rental or a grandmother's house.

**16. 4118 Bagley, 1895.**

William A. Lempke, carpenter, built this Queen Anne cottage, in 1895 (permit #440) at a cost of \$800. George Soellner, in the real estate business, resided at 425 Hubbard and owned this property.

This small frame 1-1/2 story "worker's cottage" with cross gable roof is classified as Queen Anne with Eastlake decorative detail because of its turned and cutout wood ornament and spindlework on the porch. A stylized sunburst is seen in the roof gable. Brackets support the overhang of the frontal roof gable. It measures 22'x 54' in size.

**17. 451 W. Grand Blvd., Filling Station, 1927, 1929 addn.**

Wilson Brothers Oil Co. was issued permit #30980 on June 17, 1927 for the construction of a brick filling station measuring 12'x

22' x 15' at a cost of \$2000. Two years later, that company received a permit to construct a brick "greasing palace" at a cost of \$1,200 measuring 20'x 23'x 14'. Henry Ruen was the owner of the property from 1927 until 1946, when the property transferred to Wilson Oil Corp. Albert Broome is listed as the station manager in the 1928 Detroit City Directory. In 1941 a cement block and brick tile addition was constructed.

According to Dan Vierja in Fill Er Up (1985), this filling station would be classified as a "domestic style" station, designed to fit into the adjoining neighborhood in a "friendly" sort of way. Other types of "domestic style" stations might have been the picturesque rustic version or the adobe (southwestern) version.

The one-story building has a hipped roof, the body of the building being about half the size of the roof. Its remaining overhang forms a drive through, or porte cochere fronting on the Boulevard. The white glazed brick with green trim was meant to display a clean, sanitary look, even though the activity within, such as pumping gas and changing oil, was by nature dirty. Square white piers are highlighted with green glazed brick near their tops, and diamond shaped patterns provided simple ornamentation. The window on the south elevation has a broad segmental arch with keystone. Diamond shaped glaze tiles are set in its blind transom. To the north of this section was the "greasing palace."

While "domestic style" stations could be seen across the country, they, and older gas stations in general, are now a vanishing breed. This one no longer fulfills its original function.

18. 347 West Grand Blvd., West Grand Blvd. Apts., 1905.

Adam Burkhieser and Son, mason, contractors and builders, were issued permit #506 on April 18, 1905 to construct this two story brick veneer apartment building at a cost of \$14,500. It was owned by John S. Christa and Henry Christa, and remained in the Christa family until 1958.

Colonial revival in style, this two story 8-unit building features a monumental colonnaded portico. The four two-story columns facing the Boulevard and an identical one on Porter rest on massive plinths and support the pedimental roof. Balconies to the second floor apartments are created between the columns. Flanking the colonnade at the corners of the Boulevard elevation and adjoining side of the south (Porter) elevation are bowed sections. Detail is in the colonial mode, ie. the modillion cornice and the keystones in splayed lintels. The columns are fluted and bear Corinthian capitals.

19. 315 W. Grand Blvd., Wood House, 1897.

Hugh J. Wood, attorney with Greenslade Oil Co., was issued permit #937 to construct this two story dwelling at a cost of \$3500. Andrew C. Wood, owner of the property, was also with the Greenslade Oil Co., with its works on 23rd and Michigan Central Rail Road and offices on Jefferson Ave. downtown. The property was transferred to the Andrew C. Wood Realty Co. in 1907. The Wood House was later home to Lorina Parsons' Gray Tower School of Arts from approximately 1920 to 1940.

The house itself is a two and 1/2 story formed stone turn-of-the-century Queen Anne style building with a cross-gable roof. A three-story engaged tower with flat roof is at the southeast corner of the edifice. Beneath the arched window in the gable section of the front facade in a three sided bay window at second story level. A Classically inspired porch with ionic columns and pediment roof over the entrance wraps around to the north elevation, the wrap around section with a conical roof.

20. **330 W. Grand Blvd., Aijalon Missionary Baptist Church, 1892**  
and later, formerly Immanuel Presbyterian Church.

Immanuel Presbyterian Church was organized in March 1888 as a Sabbath School under the direction of an exploration committee of the Presbyterian Alliance. Early meetings of the society were held at Baker's Hall located on the corner of what was then Baker Street (now Bagley) near Eighteenth. The society's 42 members agreed to take the name the Baker Street Presbyterian Church.

Under the advice of the Alliance, Baker Street Presbyterian appointed the Rev. J. F. Summerville as its pastor, and purchased several lots on the corner of W. Grand Blvd. and Porter for \$6,800. Fort Street Presbyterian Church then agreed to build a chapel, costing approximately \$8,000 and present it to the Baker Street Church. They commissioned the architectural firm of Badgley & Nicklas of Cleveland, Ohio to design the chapel. Upon completion, the cost had increased to \$1300. The chapel cornerstone was laid on September 20, 1892, and the name was changed to Immanuel Presbyterian Church.

Rev. Summerville retired after the completion of the chapel, and Rev. Robert A. Carnahan immediately accepted the call for a new pastor. When he arrived, he found a church that was heavily in debt and a membership that was faltering. Rev. Carnahan set his goal to make Immanuel a strong and leading member of the Presbyterian family in Detroit. It was under his leadership that Immanuel gained the reputation of being the "church with a heart."

Within the first year of his leadership, Rev. Carnahan put the church's debt to rest and more than doubled its membership. He practiced his philosophy of aiding the city's poor, regardless of their "nationality, creed, color, or previous condition of servitude," and within a few short months the congregation of Immanuel was supporting 362 families and had given temporary

assistance to over 525 other families, in various forms including giving coal and wood for warmth, as well as clothing and food staples. Rev. Carnahan felt that the purpose of a church was to carry forward both spiritual and material interests of our society to those in need. Immanuel Presbyterian Church came into prominence as a result of their relief mission work, which began in December, 1893 ended two years later. A large sanctuary located on the corner of the property was added to the chapel after the turn of the century.

Immanuel Presbyterian Church was designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style generally characterized by round arches, short towers, use of stone for a weighty effect, broad roof planes, and a variety of irregular window arrangements. Foliated decoration on column capitals or sparingly on belt courses is also common.

This church is brick with stone foundations and trim. Its main entrance is through a huge round arch; above is a monumental round arched traceried window. Flanking that arrangement are short fenestrated conical towers. To the south of this main section are two secondary entrances, both recessed through round arches. A square tower with a pyramidal roof anchors the southwest corner of the chapel building.

**21. 4300 W. Vernor, Riverside Lodge, 1894**

This three-story, five bay Richardsonian Romanesque building was constructed as the Riverside Lodge No. 303 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in 1894. W.W. Wilkinson, a builder, built it as a double store and hall at an estimated cost of \$7,000. Although the first story has been altered, the original arched entrance in the center of the front facade and basic arrangements of the storefronts are still intact. Elongated three-part windows occupy the second story; pairs of short double-hung sash windows occupy the third story between the raised pilasters. Round buttresses project above the roof line. Ornamentation is in the form of raised brick blind panels; the inscription, "ODD FELLOWS HALL, RIVERSIDE LODGE, 303, I.O.O.F., 1894" is inscribed in the masonry tablet above the middle second story window.

**22. 4200-4222 W. Vernor, 1895, 1907.**

This two-story brick commercial row is actually two adjoining buildings. One or both were built for Charles M. Wesch, a saloon keeper whose saloon occupied the corner store. The easternmost building, the older of the two, may have been built in 1895 by W. Reich for Wesch at a cost of \$6000. In addition to the saloon, the building housed a contractor. Above the stores were dwelling units. This building has segmentally arched windows on the second story and a decorative wooden cornice with brackets at its corners. (Cast iron column holding up the overhang of the second story at the corner.) Its storefronts have been altered.

The adjoining building is also two stories tall with a wooden denticulated cornice. Its parapet walls have raised corners, stepping up in the center to bear a tablet void of inscription. Two 3-sided bay windows are flanked by single double-hung sash ones. Iron balconets were a more recent addition. This building may have been built by Wesch in 1907, as several mortgages were taken out then and mechanics liens were recorded. Some of its former uses were as a bazaar and the Bell Theatre (1909-21). This row of commercial buildings is typical of what was seen up and down Vernor in the late 19th-20th century.

**23. 4138 W. Vernor, LASED, 1925.**

This building was originally built for the Wayne County and Home Savings Bank in 1925 at an estimated cost of construction of \$30,000. That bank became Peoples Wayne County Bank in 1928; Peoples fell victim to the Depression and its assets were liquidated. The building was sold to the Ford Rouge Employees Federal Credit Union in 1948, then the Michigan Credit Union League in 1954. It became a branch of Manufacturers Bank before it was sold to LASED, Latin Americans for Social and Economic Development, on August 14, 1969.

The building is typical of bank architecture of the 1920's in that it was set on a corner lot with a monumental entrance facing the corner, was built of light colored stone, in this case beige limestone, and often made use of a classical vocabulary. Banking halls rising through two stories were common, and expressed on the exterior by tall entrances and windows.

On this building, the corner entrance is flanked by columns with decorative capitals. The stylized pedimented portico is trimmed with denticulation. Above the round arch over the entrance is carved entwined foliated ornament. More denticulation circumscribes the entire parapet wall on the south and west elevations, beneath which are large round-arched windows with common pilasters.

**24. 3900 W. Vernor, Church of Christ**

The Church of Christ building entered on Vinewood at street level through a set of wooden double doors. Judging from the fenestration of this elevation, two sets of stairs rise in opposite directions up to the main story, as the building is set on very high brick foundations. The porch roof above the Vinewood entrance is English cottage style in appearance, displaying wooden openwork and a vergeboard supported on stick-like brackets. The cross gable roof ends with very large stuccoed and half-timbered gables on the Vernor and Vinewood elevations that are pierced with a centered pair of windows. Windows on the other levels have raised brick window hoods; the main window opening containing a grouping of three double-hung sash windows. In general, the building does not appear to be ecclesiastic from the exterior; it appears quite domestic.

25. **Bowen Library, 3648 W. Vernor, 1912.**

The Bowen Branch of the Detroit Public Library, located at 3648 West Vernor, was named for prominent attorney and library commission member Herbert Bowen. Originally designated Branch #3 when it opened in Western High School in 1900, the branch moved to 464 Dix in 1907 and to the present building on December 28, 1912. The Bowen Branch was one of several Carnegie branch libraries in Detroit.

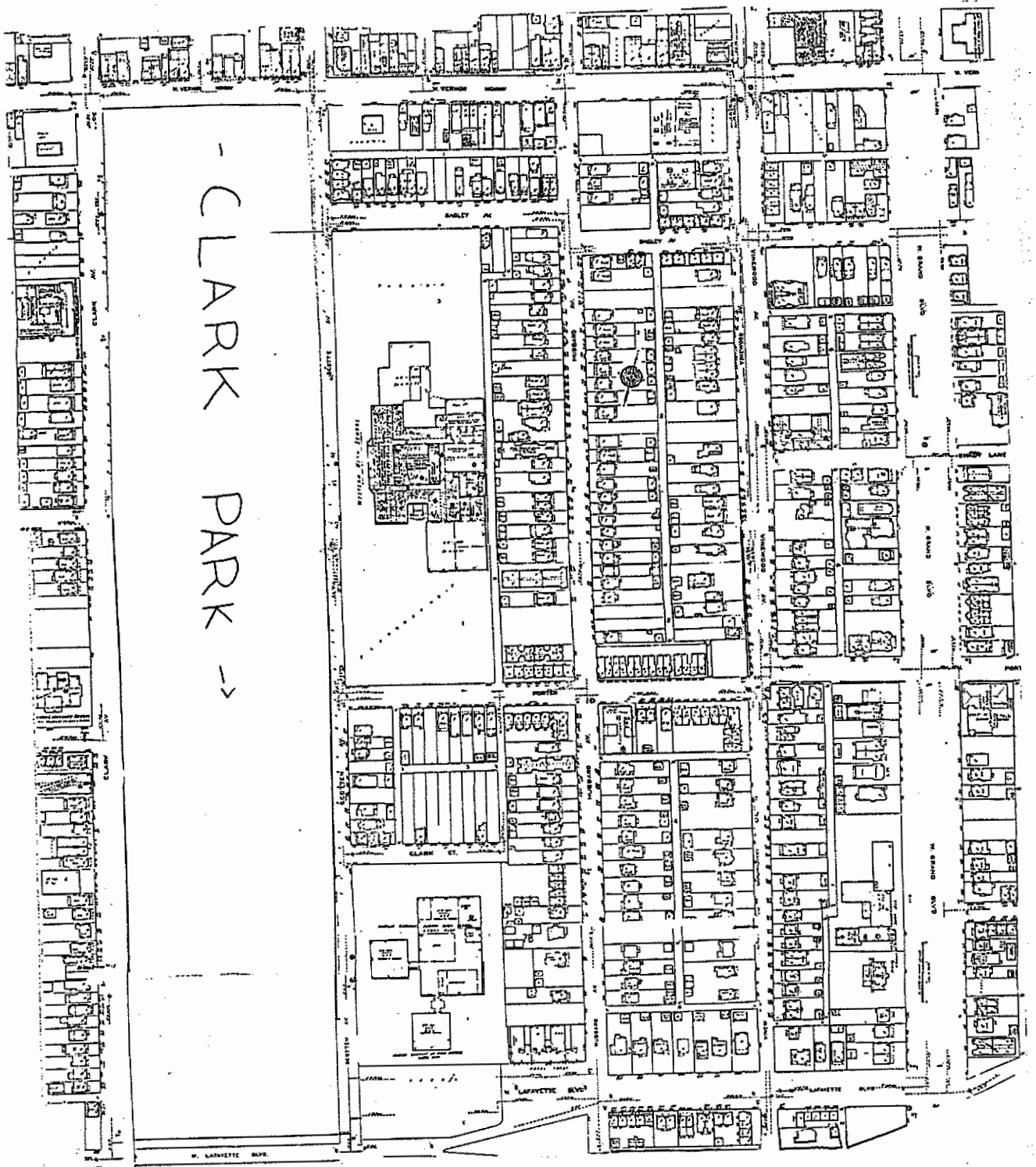
At the turn of the century multimillionaire steel industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie offered \$750,000 for the construction of a main library and branches to expand Detroit's library system. However, because of Carnegie's oppressive labor policies it was not until 1910 that Detroit's City Council accepted the gift. According to the agreement the city was responsible for acquisition of land and books and the maintenance of the libraries. A \$40,000 limit was placed on each branch and local architects were to be selected from a pool of Detroit's finest. However, Carnegie's representative in Detroit was not impressed with the Detroit architects, feeling that they lacked experience with the speciality of library design. Examples from other cities were provided, and the Detroit architects produced acceptable and even distinguished designs.

Four of the eight Carnegie-built branch libraries in Detroit are on the Grand Boulevard. They represent Detroit's participation in a significant phase in expansion of public library systems in America.

The Bowen Library was designed by William B. Stratton, a Detroit architect important for his involvement in the Arts and Crafts movement. Bowen Library was designed in the English Collegiate style. Its exterior walls are buff Ohio stone and red vitrified brick; its multiple hipped roof was originally slate. Bowen Library is not elaborate in its detail, most of which was executed in stone. The entrance is understated, being tucked into the intersection of two wings. Its scale and simplicity fill its corner location in the Hubbard Farms community with dignity.

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





HUBBARD FARMS HISTORIC DISTRICT  
AS DESIGNATED, 1993  
DETROIT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

