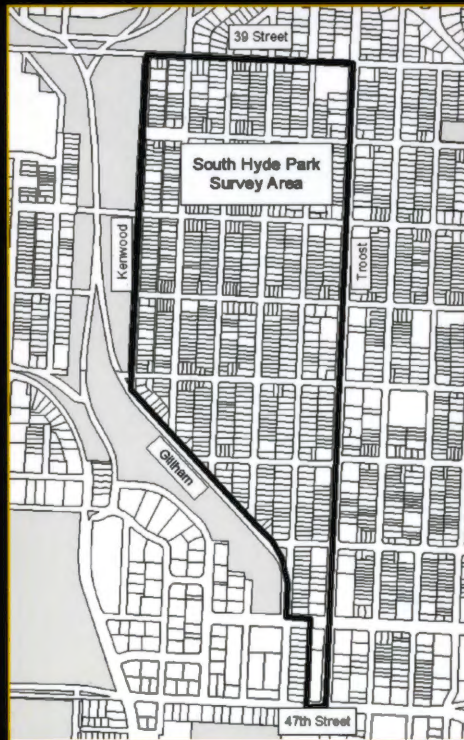


See National Register of  
Historic Places Nomination

**South Hyde Park  
Historic District**

For context and significance  
of district.



# **A Study to Determine the National Register Eligibility of Properties in South Hyde Park Kansas City, Missouri**

**December 2001**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

South Hyde Park is located in an area that was platted and developed by numerous residents during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a streetcar suburb of Kansas City, Missouri. South Hyde Park's 827 parcels occupy 29 blocks bounded by five major thoroughfares: East 39<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, Troost Avenue on the east, Kenwood Avenue on the west, Gillham Road to the southwest, and Brush Creek Boulevard on the south.<sup>1</sup> Houses, apartments, and a limited number of commercial buildings characterize the neighborhood.

The Planning, Preservation and Urban Design Division of the City Planning and Development Department of Kansas City, Missouri completed a survey to assess the existing resources and the possibility of pursuing designation of South Hyde Park as a historic district to the *National Register of Historic Places* or the *Kansas City Register of Historic Places*.

Methodology of the study consisted of: 1) establishing boundaries of the South Hyde Park survey area by use of the *Historic Resources Survey Plan for Kansas City, Missouri*; 2) a field inspection of the historic integrity of all properties in the area as *excellent*, *good* or *poor*; 3) collecting existing data on the history and architecture of the area; 4) analysis of the data gathered by historic integrity, date of construction, original building use/function, architectural style/property type, and architect; and 5) application of *National Register* criteria for evaluation of significance of the district under *Criterion A* for community planning and development and *Criterion C* for architecture.

Findings from the study concluded that:

1. The majority of the structures in South Hyde Park have historic integrity with:
  - 70% in good integrity
  - 19% of the buildings in excellent integrity
  - 6% in poor integrity
2. The development of South Hyde Park took place over four decades beginning around 1890 and ending about 1929, with a majority (62%) of construction completed between 1900 to 1909.
3. The "original" building function in South Hyde Park was predominantly for single-family residences (85%) followed by multi-family residences (11%) then commercial use (2%).
4. Architectural styles in South Hyde Park are very diverse with the Kansas City Shirtwaist having a leading presence.
5. Architects/builders in South Hyde Park vary widely with the extremely popular Kansas City builder N.W. Dible constructing most of the structures (39 dwellings).

South Hyde Park as a district is eligible for nomination to both the *National Register of Historic Places* and the *Kansas City Register of Historic Places* district. Several distinct properties within South Hyde Park have the potential to be individually nominated to both the *National Register of Historic Places* and the *Kansas City Register of Historic Places*.

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<sup>1</sup> The survey includes the 4600 block of Troost (2 properties) due to its historic relevance as Landsdowne subdivision and for surveying purposes.



# INTRODUCTION

The residents of South Hyde Park, Kansas City, Missouri contacted the Planning, Preservation and Urban Design Division of the City Planning and Development Department of Kansas City, Missouri in the mid 1990s to complete a survey for assessing the existing resources and the possibility of pursuing designation of the area as a historic district to the *National Register of Historic Places* or the *Kansas City Register of Historic Places*. Listing on the National Register is an essential step for property owners to qualify for the 20% federal and 25% Missouri historic preservation tax credits for rehabilitation work that complies with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties*.<sup>2</sup>

South Hyde Park is located in the central part of Kansas City, Missouri in an area that was platted and developed as a streetcar suburb for middle and working class homes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. South Hyde Park's 827 parcels occupy 29 blocks bounded by five thoroughfares: East 39<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, Troost Avenue on the east, Kenwood Avenue on the west, Gillham Road to the southwest, and Brush Creek Boulevard on the south. The neighborhood is characterized by small properties (houses), a mixture of small and medium sized multi-family buildings (apartments), and a limited number of large multiple purpose buildings (commercial).

The study area lies immediately south of Hyde Park Historic District (Central Hyde Park), a *National Register of Historic Places* district since 1980. Hyde Park developed slightly earlier than South Hyde Park and the lots and houses are larger and the architectural design is of different character. Immediately west of the study area is Rockhill Historic District, a *Kansas City Register of Historic Places* district since 1980. At the same time that South Hyde Park was developing, a well-known Kansas City businessman, William Rockhill Nelson, built this neighborhood where some of Kansas City's wealthiest citizens built exquisite homes on very large wooded lots.

An historic district that meets the criteria for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* is a district possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. Residential or commercial areas, central business districts, industrial complexes, or large landscaped parks are a few examples of what might constitute a district.

A district may also contain individual resources that although linked by association or function were separated geographically during the period of significance, such as discontinuous archeological sites or a canal system with manmade segments interconnected by natural bodies of water. A district may contain discontinuous elements only where the historic interrelationship of a group of resources does not depend on visual continuity and physical proximity.

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<sup>2</sup> To receive additional information on tax credits contact Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Department.

**Figure 1: South Hyde Park Survey Boundary**



# METHODOLOGY

## Boundary Selection

South Hyde Park survey boundaries were established using guiding principles from the *Historic Resources Survey Plan for Kansas City, Missouri*. The selected boundaries encompass a single area of land containing a significant concentration of buildings, sites, structures, and/or objects that form the district. Taken as a whole, South Hyde Park represents a residential neighborhood that illustrates the growth and evolution of the city and conveys a sense of architectural cohesiveness through its design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association.

With boundaries laid out, work on the South Hyde Park survey began in 1996 and continued until 2001. The City of Kansas City, Missouri's Landmarks Commission Administrator, Bradley Wolf, and contractors, Lonnie Clark, Dana Cloud, and Nicole Cook, along with several South Hyde Park residents, carried out survey activities including:

1. Field inspection of all properties in the area.
2. Collection of existing data on the history and architecture of the area.
3. Analysis of the data gathered.
4. Application of National Register criteria for evaluation of significance.

## Field Survey

An intensive field inspection of all properties within the 29-block area recorded modifications (both incompatible and compatible) to identify the physical development of South Hyde Park. To document substantial changes that affect a property's historic integrity, surveyors took 35 mm black and white photographs for comparison with previous photographs and other historic documents.

All properties eligible for listing on the National Register, whether as contributing elements to a historic district or for individual significance, must retain sufficient historic integrity to embody the period of time in which they are significant. The surveyors inspected and evaluated each of the structures in South Hyde Park using the *Kansas City Historical Resources Survey Form* prepared by the Kansas City Landmarks Commission. Features such as exterior materials and window and door treatments received primary attention.

Each building received an integrity rating of *Excellent*, *Good*, or *Poor* based largely on how much of the building's original design, workmanship, exterior materials and overall appeal of a past period of time were unaltered. The integrity criteria for location, setting and association were considered to be identical for all buildings in the survey area. The following criteria provided a basis for rating historic integrity:

*Excellent:*

- A majority of the building's openings (doors and windows) were unaltered or altered in an appropriate manner using similar materials, sizes, and profiles as original building elements.
- Later additions were made to a secondary facade in an appropriate manner respecting the materials, scale and character of the original building.
- Front porch intact.
- Exterior cladding material had not been altered.
- Major decorative elements were intact.
- The overall character of the building had been preserved.
- The building may be individually eligible for listing on *National Register of Historic Places*.

*Good:*

- A majority of the building's openings (such as doors and windows) were altered in an appropriate manner using new materials and profiles, although the size of the openings remained unaffected.
- Later additions were made to a secondary and/or front facade in an appropriate manner respecting the materials, scale and character of the original building.
- Front porch largely intact.
- Exterior cladding material had not been altered.
- Major decorative elements were intact.
- Alterations to the building are reversible and the historic character of the property could be easily restored.
- The historic character of the building is moderately compromised.
- The building would contribute to an historic district, and/or it might be independently eligible to the *National Register of Historic Places* if restored in conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

*Poor:*

- A majority of the building's openings (such as doors and windows) were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles and sizes.
- Later additions do not respect the materials, scale, or character of the original building.
- Front porch substantially altered or missing.
- Exterior materials were altered.
- Alterations are irreversible or would be extremely difficult, costly, and possibly physically damaging to the building to reverse.
- The building is in jeopardy of physical deterioration due to a lack of maintenance.
- The overall historic character of the building is considerably compromised.
- Further investigation after removal of non-historic materials and alterations may reveal that the structure might retain greater architectural integrity and therefore should be re-evaluated.



## **Collection of Data**

Sources of existing historical and architectural information on South Hyde Park included:

1. Kansas City, Missouri building and water permits
2. Jackson County Recorder of Deeds
3. Tuttle & Pikes Atlas of Kansas City and Vicinity, 1907 edition
4. Atlas of Kansas City, Missouri, 1886 and 1891 editions
5. Kansas City, Missouri City Directories
6. Jackson County Tax Assessors 1940s photographs
7. *Historic Resources Survey Plan of Kansas City, Missouri*
8. *Hyde Park Historic District National Register of Historic Places Inventory and Nomination Form*

Additional contextual information was provided by Virginia and Lee McAlester's architectural guidebook, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, and the *National Register Bulletin: How To Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation & How to Complete the National Register*. Microsoft Access 2000 was used to synthesize and analyze the data.

## **Data Analysis**

The surveyors analyzed data within five categories to identify a contiguous historic district and/or individual properties that are potentially eligible for National Register listing. The categories are:

1. Historic integrity
2. Date of construction
3. Original building use/function
4. Architectural style/property type
5. Architect

The "Findings" portion of this report contains a detailed description of the results of the analyses from these five categories.

## **Criteria for Evaluation of Significance**

Evaluation of historic district eligibility was based on the *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* published by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. In addition to retaining the integrity of their historic architectural design, properties listed on the *National Register of Historic Places* must meet certain historic significance criteria. Historic significance is defined as the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture of a community, a state or the nation. To be listed on the National Register, properties must have significance in at least one of the following areas:

- *Criterion A:* Association with events, activities or broad patterns of history.
- *Criterion B:* Association with the lives of persons significant in a community's past.
- *Criterion C:* Embody distinctive characteristics of construction, or represent the work of a master or possess high artistic values.
- *Criterion D:* Have yielded, or be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

A thorough review of South Hyde Park, using the above criteria, found this district to meet:

- *Criterion A:* COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: as a pattern of events or a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community. The period of significance for South Hyde Park begins in 1890 and ends in 1929 as a Kansas City, Missouri suburban neighborhood of traditional homes for middle and working class families.
- *Criterion C:* ARCHITECTURE: embodying distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. 786 South Hyde Park buildings reflect the "stylistic eclecticism" popular during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Taken as whole, contributing properties within the study area illustrate very well a variety of architectural styles.

The district's significance and historic integrity were used to determine the boundaries. Using standards from the *National Register Bulletin: How To Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, the following factors were also considered:

1. *visual barriers* that mark a change in the historic character of the area or that break the continuity of the district, such as new construction, highways, or development of a different character;
2. *visual changes* in the character of the area due to different architectural styles, types or periods, or to a decline in the concentration of contributing resources;
3. *boundaries at a specific time* in history, such as the original city limits or the legally recorded boundaries of a housing subdivision, estate, or ranch; and
4. *clearly differentiated patterns* of historic development, such as commercial verses residential or industrial.

## FINDINGS

### Integrity

In accordance with methods to evaluate the integrity of property in the *National Register Bulletin 15*, the South Hyde Park district retains its integrity as a whole with a majority of its components making up the district's historic character. Of the 786 existing buildings in the survey area, 740 are contributing while 46 do not contribute to the district's significance due to substantial alterations or disassociation with the historic context of the district. 43 properties, for example, are noncontributing because they exist today as vacant lots. Noncontributing properties also include buildings that retain few basic features that define its original character.

Buildings contribute because of their importance in illustrating a particular architectural style or construction technique and retain the majority of their physical features that constitute that style or technique. Even buildings that have lost some material or detail can be contributing if they retain the majority of their features that illustrate their style.

As a whole, 89 percent of the buildings received a rating of *excellent* or *good* with many of the alterations consisting of inappropriate, yet reversible, window and door replacements. A minority of the buildings, 6 percent, had modifications that compromised architectural integrity enough to receive a *poor* rating.

**Figure 2: Level of Historic Integrity**

Integrity Rating	Number	Percent
Good	580	70%
Excellent	156	19%
Poor	50	06%
Vacant Lot	43	05%

## History

Surveyors categorized South Hyde Park buildings by date of construction. The dates of additions and alterations were not considered as a contributing factor in the indexing process. Based on its original construction date, each building sorted into a decade as follows:

- *1890 to 1899* - Kansas City's population jumped from 25,000 in 1870 to nearly 165,000 in 1900, which brought about the first decade of construction in South Hyde Park. During this time, the City more than doubled in size using the streetcars as a vehicle for its expansion. The unpleasantness of Kansas City's developing industrial district, coupled with a deficiency of space, influenced residents to relocate farther south. As a result, Kansas City annexed the area surrounding South Hyde Park in 1897.

During this era the city also began a beautification effort aimed at improving the physical nature of the city. Gillham Road, which forms the western boundary of the survey area, is significant in the field of landscape design as an excellent example of an extended boulevard/parkway system. In the field of community planning, Gillham Road is significant as a textbook example of a turn-of-the-century experiment in laying out residential areas around parks. The renowned Landscape Architect, George E. Kessler, prepared general plans for improvements along the southern most portion of Gillham Road. As a result, Gillham Park was created to offer residents of adjacent South Hyde Park 10-acres of grassy open space, playing fields, wading pools and other recreational amenities.

- *1900 to 1909* - South Hyde Park experienced tremendous popularity. This was a time when developers and individuals constructed a majority of the buildings. During this decade entrepreneurs built small businesses and tall apartment hotels along Troost, the eastern most boundary of the survey area. This development constituted Kansas City's first outlying shopping center. The corner of Linwood and Troost, for example, was widely know as the "Crossroads of America"—as the heart of the "Heart of America." The Troost Avenue streetcar route, which the City extended to East 48<sup>th</sup> Street by 1907, provided convenient access for citizens desiring newer homes on the urban fringe.
- *1910 to 1919* - Construction in South Hyde Park continued at roughly half the pace of construction as the previous decade because nearly all the property had been developed.
- *1920 to 1929* - South Hyde Park development came to an end during the "Roaring Twenties" because no available property remained. Most of the growth in Kansas City began moving south of Brush Creek in the pattern of upscale neighborhood districts initiated by renowned Kansas City builder J.C. Nichols.
- *1930 to 1939 and 1940 to 1949* - By the time the stock market crashed in 1929, which set off the Great Depression, construction in South Hyde Park was no longer a viable option because nearly 100 percent of the land had been developed.
- *1950 to Present* - At the time of writing this report, 1951 was the cut-off date for National Register eligibility. Property construction dates of this period are non-contributing.

**Figure 3: Dates of Construction**

<b>Year of Construction</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1890-1899	19	02%
1900-1909	518	62%
1910-1919	202	24%
1920-1929	72	09%
1930-1939	3	<01%
1940-1949	3	<01%
1950-2001	10	01%
NA	2	<01%



Generally, the pattern of development of South Hyde Park grew from east to west. The district originally began as many small platted subdivisions such as:

- Garland
- Gillham Court
- Highlands
- Landsdowne
- Lee Smith and Beadles
- Sunny Slope
- Tate Park
- Troost
- Vanderbilt Place

There are very few commercial intrusions in the residential core of the survey area, with only few neighborhood businesses and religious institutions located mostly along Harrison Avenue. Along the eastern boundary of the survey area, Troost Avenue exhibits the remnants of a mixed-use neighborhood that developed in this vicinity.

### Original Building Function

The third portion of analysis examined original building function using the National Register sub-categories for "Function and Use," published in the *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, published by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Surveyors identified thirteen categories of building function. Historical records from Kansas City, Missouri building and water permits provided base information regarding original building functions.

**Figure 4: Original Building Function and Use**

Original Building Function and Use	Number	Percent
Single Dwelling	704	85%
Multiple Dwelling	88	11%
Commercial	19	02%
Unknown	4	<01%
Multiple Dwelling/Commerce	5	<01%
Religious Facility	4	<01%
Filling Station	2	<01%
Fire Station	1	<01%
Institutional Service Organization	1	<01%
Warehouse	1	<01%

Single-family residences made up the majority of South Hyde Park's original land use, distantly followed by multi-family residences, and then neighborhood businesses and churches.

### Architectural Style/Property Type

The National Register Categories for "Architectural Classification" from the *National Register Bulletin 16A* were used for this analysis. A visual examination of South Hyde Park determined the architectural classification for each building. Distinctive styles noticeable in the housing stock include the Kansas City Shirtwaist, Bungalow, Prairie, Craftsman, Shotgun, Cottage, Tudor, Shingle, Foursquare, and Colonial and Dutch Colonial Revival. The prevailing styles associated with the apartment buildings include Classical Revival (Colonnaded), Neoclassical, Craftsman, and Tapestry Brick. Styles visible on the commercial structures include Craftsman, Classical Revival, and Spanish Eclectic. Many of the "Commercial Blocks" did not exhibit any particular style.

**Figure 5: Architectural Style**

Architectural Style	Number	Percent
Prairie Style Kansas City Shirtwaist	324	41%
Bungalow	140	18%
Craftsman	58	07%
Bungalow Style Craftsman	48	06%
Other	40	05%
Classical Revival	32	04%
American Foursquare	21	03%
Cottage	17	02%
Shotgun	19	02%
Prairie	15	02%
Kansas City Shirtwaist	11	01%
Colonial Revival	10	01%
Dutch Colonial	8	01%
Folk Victorian	8	01%
Tapestry Brick	8	01%
Modern	8	01%
Queen Anne	7	<01%
Vernacular	5	<01%
Tudor	4	<01%
Ranch	4	<01%
Shingle	4	<01%
Italian Renaissance	4	<01%

A general uniformity in massing, size and building materials is present among the district's housing stock and apartment buildings. Most of the houses are rectangular in shape, two-and-one-half stories in height, and constructed of brick, stone, stucco, and wood with stone basements. Most of the apartments, as well as commercial buildings, are rectangular in shape, three to four stories in height and constructed of brick and wood.

### Architect/Builders

The list of architect/builders in South Hyde Park includes some of Kansas City's most prominent, which were drawn to build there primarily during the early twentieth centuries. Most notable among them were Napoleon Dible, Nelle E. Peters, Ben Hart, and Albert Owen & Charles Payson.

**Figure 6: Architect/Builders**

Architect/Builder	Number
N.W. Dible	39
J.A. Shilling	13
C.T. Houlehan	12
C.H. Luce	12
S.R. Frink	8
N.E. Peters	7
R. Frazer	6
C.H. Wells	6
Owen & Payson	5
V.H. & J.B. Primm	5
B.F. Hart	3

Most of the work of these architect/builders cluster in locations throughout South Hyde Park. No buildings in South Hyde Park's district have been determined individually eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* or the *Kansas City Register of Historic Places* as representative works of a particular architect. Surveyors could not find any architect/builder for 301 buildings. Additionally, surveyors did not examine South Hyde Park's history for notable citizens that may have resided there throughout the last 110 years.

## CONCLUSION

Of the 786 buildings and 43 sites, 740 appear to contribute to South Hyde Park's ability to meet criteria requirements for the *National Register of Historic Places* or the *Kansas City Register of Historic Places* as a potential historic district. Vacant lots, as well as a majority of the properties in poor condition, are considered noncontributing. Furthermore, several individual properties have been identified as potentially eligible for registry because they meet a number of criteria requirements on their own.

The potential South Hyde Park Historic District boundaries, and the potential individual property nominations, are as follows:

Historic District:

- South Hyde Park—(*Criteria A and C*) various possible boundaries include:
  1. The 29 blocks of South Hyde Park including all the properties along Troost Avenue from the 3900 block to the 4500 block.
  2. The 29 blocks of South Hyde Park not including all the properties along Troost Avenue from the 3900 block to the 4500 block.
  3. The 29 blocks of South Hyde Park including only the residential properties along Troost Avenue from the 3900 block to the 4500 block.

Individual Property Eligibility:

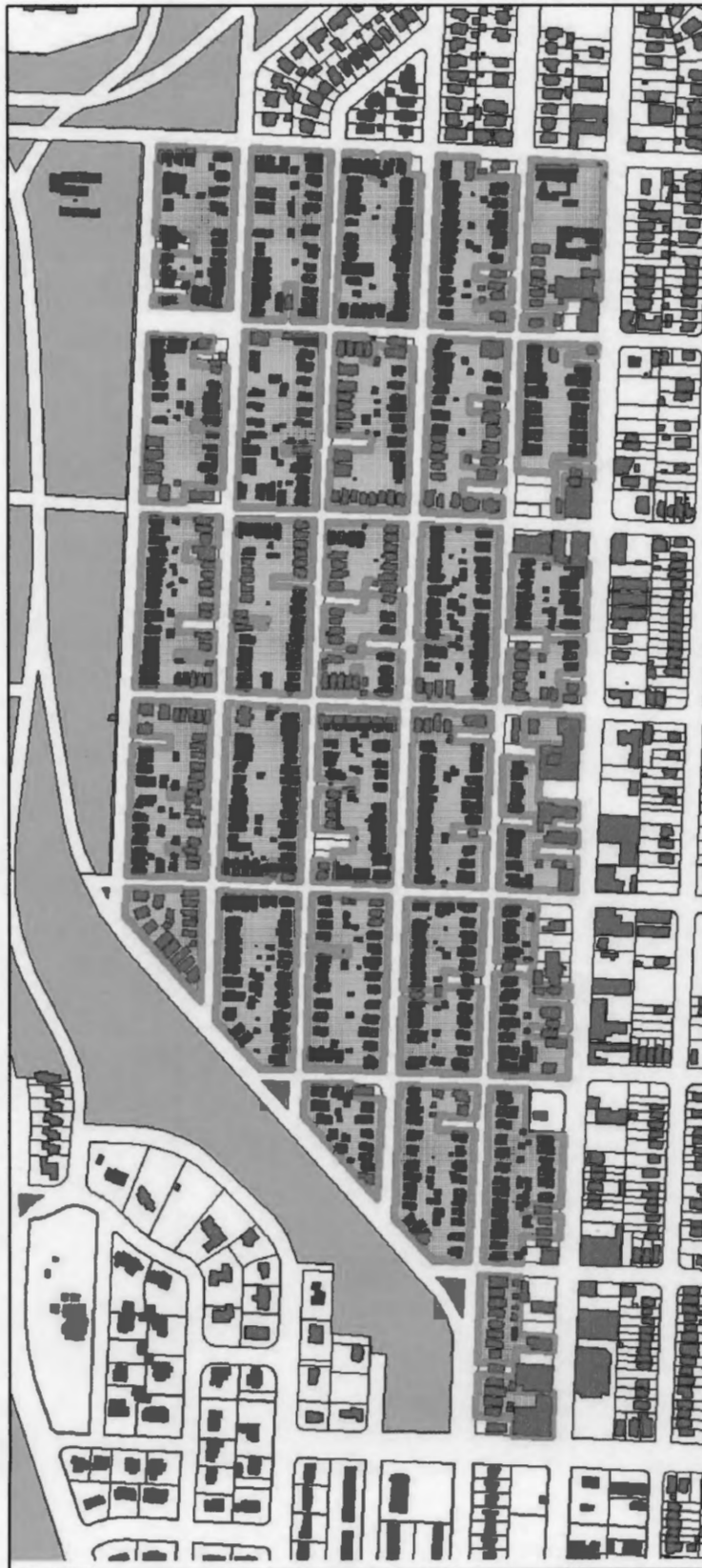
- 4304 Troost Avenue—Firehouse (*Criteria C: Architecture, and A: Government, and Community Planning and Development*)
- 3901 Harrison Street—St. James (The Less) Church (*Criteria C: Architecture*)\*
- 3909 Harrison Street—St. James Rectory (*Criteria C: Architecture*)\*
- 4000 Harrison Street—First Church of the United Brethren (*Criteria C: Architecture*)\*
- 4101 Harrison Street—Immanuel Presbyterian Church (*Criteria C: Architecture*)\*
- 3934 Troost Avenue—St. James Recreational Center (*Criteria C: Architecture, and A: Social History*)\*

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\* Appears on the Religious Property Survey of Kansas City, Missouri



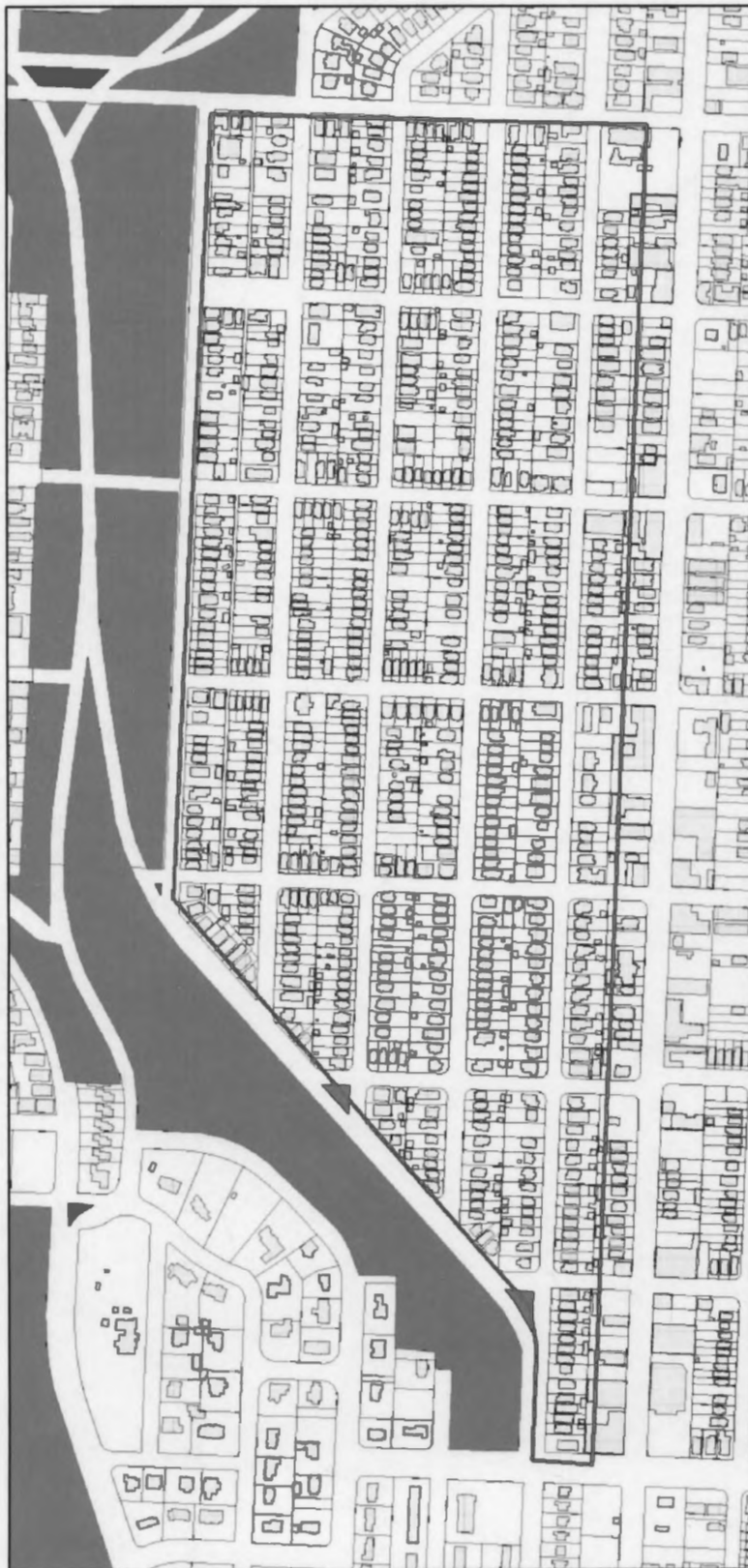
**Figure 7: Potential Contributing Properties**  
(Highlighted in red areas)



**Figure 8: South Hyde Park Boundary Proposal #1**  
(Entire Neighborhood including Troost)



**Figure 9: South Hyde Park Boundary Proposal #2**  
(Neighborhood not including Troost)



**Figure 10: South Hyde Park Boundary Proposal #3**  
(Neighborhood including residential properties on Troost)

