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MENU



## The Fan Area Historic District

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### INTRODUCTION

The Fan Area Historic District is a large late 19th and early 20th-century residential neighborhood west of Richmond's downtown commercial district. The district developed largely from c. 1890-1930, a period of general economic prosperity for the City of Richmond and one of gradual westward expansion from its commercial center.

The neighborhood is unquestionably one of the city's greatest cultural and architectural assets. Within its boundaries lies a rich, cohesive collection of historic buildings in a variety of architectural styles such as Italianate, Richardsonian Romanesque, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Bungalow, American Foursquare, Tudor Revival, Spanish Colonial, and



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*Main Street (2011)*

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### OVERVIEW

The Fan Area Historic District was primarily developed between 1890 and 1930, a period of general economic prosperity for the city of Richmond and one of gradual westward expansion from its commercial center. A large area primarily containing predominantly middle class houses of the Progressive Era, the neighborhood quickly became a fashionable address for socially conscious Richmonders and remained so until World War II. Following a period of decline and neglect that reached its nadir in the mid-20th century, the area emerged once again in the early 1960s as an appealing and increasingly “gentrified” inner city neighborhood.



*Robinson and Grove (1958)*

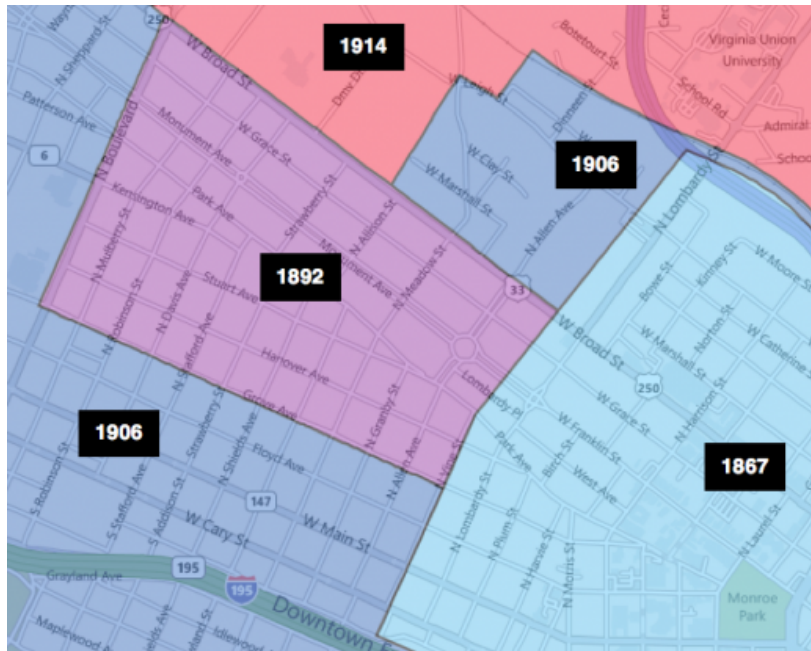
The popular name of the Fan District refers to the way in which certain streets radiate or fan westward from Monroe Park. Several of these streets originated as early 19th-century turnpikes or trade routes leading westward from Richmond like the Westham or Scuffletown Turnpike (now Park Avenue), the Westham Turnpike (now West Cary Street), Grove Avenue extended, Elwood Street extended (now West Main Street), and the Richmond Turnpike (now Broad Street). Only later were these roads integrated into a grid pattern of blocks and streets extending west as development of the area increased after 1900.



*Monroe Park (1951)*

Prior to the period of intensive late 19th-century settlement, the area had long been devoted to agricultural use and contained but a few scattered farm dwellings. These arose along the turnpikes and major roads extending westward from Richmond. The only known area of concentrated settlement was a small group of dwellings known as Scuffletown which centered on an early 19th-century tavern along what is now Park Avenue. By the mid-19th-century, however, Scuffletown no longer existed except for the tavern (which survived until 1912).

Originally situated in Henrico County, the area between Monroe Park and a line immediately west of North Lombardy Street was annexed by the city of Richmond in 1867. Now known as the Lower Fan, the area thereafter became progressively more attractive to residents and developers mainly because of the increasing availability of public transportation, water and sewerlines, and public parks. Soon after the 1870s, handsome blocks of brick rowhouses began to appear—first around Monroe Park and later along extensions of Grace and Franklin streets, and Park, Grove, and Floyd avenues.



*Dates of annexation*

The economic hardships faced by contractors and promoters after the Depression of 1893 lingered until the turn of the century. Thereafter, prosperity began to return and a boom in the real estate market encouraged speculation in the development of extensive acres of land in the Upper Fan. Architects, builders, and investors began forming partnerships and designed, built, and sold entire blocks or half-blocks of rowhouses and detached residences along extended streets. City building permit records indicate that a frenzy of building activity between 1906 and 1915 transformed the rural West End landscape into rows of urban town houses and rowhouses of distinctive character.

By the year 1930 the Fan Area had assumed the distinctive character that it possesses today: a compact, cohesive inner city neighborhood containing a variety of building types and a diversity of architectural styles and building treatments within a consistent harmonious building pattern.



*Monument Avenue (undated)*

Despite the appealing qualities of inner city life in a comfortable established neighborhood, by the 1940s and 1950s the Fan Area began suffering from a shift of population to newer neighborhoods further west. A period of decline followed in which many original single-family residences were converted to multi-family apartments and buildings suffered from general neglect and abuse.



1800 block of Hanover (1963)

During the 1970s the growth of Virginia Commonwealth University precipitated the demolition of many houses in the Lower Fan; however, the University also preserved some of the Fan's housing stock, especially on West Franklin Street, to meet specific program needs at a time when the revitalization of historic urban neighborhoods was a relatively new phenomenon.



Corner of West Franklin Street and North Laurel Avenue. (undated)

Monroe Park is on the right. The three houses on the left were torn down to build Virginia Commonwealth University's Rhoads Hall;

By the late 1960s and 1970s the Fan Area had re-emerged as a viable middle-class neighborhood largely due to the large-scale revitalization and rehabilitation of the area's remarkable building stock by residents and landlords interested in preserving the Fan Area's unique historic and architectural values.

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## EARLY HISTORY

The land comprising the present-day Fan Area Historic District was originally part of a land tract granted to William Byrd I by the British Crown in 1675. The Byrd family used the land for timber, tobacco and grazing of livestock until 1769. At this time William Byrd III, harassed by creditors, disposed of his Richmond lands by lottery, dividing the area into numbered lots and awarding them to “fortunate adventurers”, as the winners were called. Some of the winners never claimed their prizes, and others never bothered to record their deeds. An attempt was made to rectify the situation in 1781 when the legislature authorized Charles Carter to execute deeds to the lots and sell those that were never claimed. Apparently, the new owners were less than enthusiastic about their new land and the area was not immediately settled.



Map of the prize lots in Byrd's lottery (1768)

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## SCUFFLETOWN AND SYDNEY

By 1791 a community had grown up within the original Byrd tract. The area was called “Scuffletown”, the name commemorating a skirmish of January 5th, 1781 between Benedict Arnold and a local militia. The settlement amounted to little more than a tavern and a small number of houses and was much tied into traffic on the Westham Road. No longer extant, the Westham Road connected Richmond with the natural resources found in lands to the west of the town. The opening of several new roads and the James River Canal resulted in the demise of Scuffletown by the early 19th century; its tavern alone survived into the early 20th century.

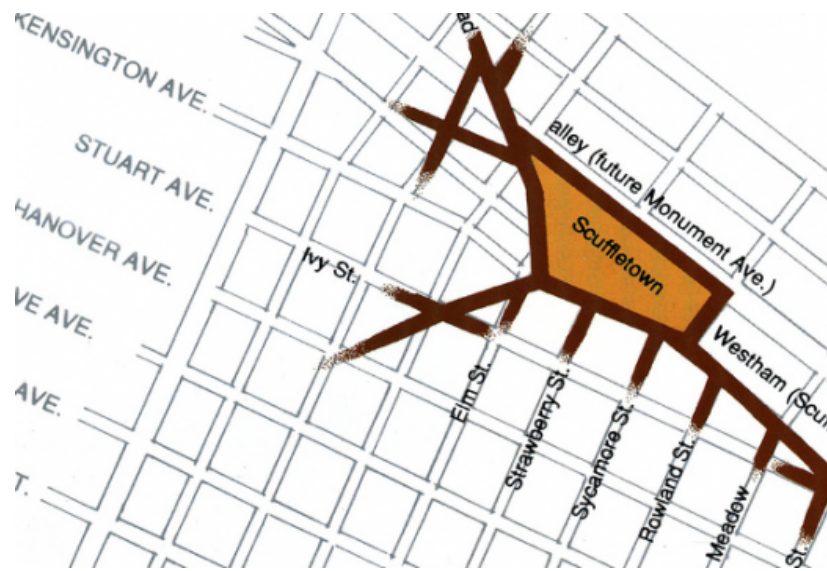


Fig. 5a The southern front of the Scuffletown Tavern that faced the Westham Road  
 Scuffletown Tavern (via Drew St. J. Carneal's Richmond's Fan District)

Beginning in the late 18th century, a number of wealthy Richmonders erected large country houses within the area surrounding Scuffletown. The Hermitage was built in the late 1790s by John Mayo; John Bell erected Bellville in circa 1811; Phillip Haxall built Columbia in circa 1817; and William Anderson constructed Warsaw a few years later. Only Columbia survives in nearly its original form, showing the affluence and taste of this small group of Richmonders who chose to live away from the town center.

The Columbia House, perhaps the Fan area's oldest house, a former Civil War hospital, and, until 1914, one of the buildings of the College of Richmond, [is profiled in the January 2012 issue of Richmond Magazine by Harry Kollatz.](#)

Besides its use as a site for fashionable country estates, the area was early considered a prime candidate for real estate speculation. One such speculator was Jacquelin Harvie who had inherited property from his father, John Harvie. The elder Harvie had purchased vast amounts of land in the near west end of Richmond, lying between what is now Park Avenue and the James River. In 1817 Jacquelin Harvie divided the land into lots to form a town called "Sydney."

Unfortunately for Harvie and his associates, the bottom fell out of the real estate market in the panic of 1819. The Town of Sydney never materialized but the project made a everlasting impact on the area. As part of Sydney's plan, streets were designated and laid out for public use and, while many of the streets would not appear until later years, they did provide the Fan Area with its first roads and plan. Remarkably, with the exception of



1142 West Grace Street (Columbia House 1817/1818)

some street names, the Harvey plan is almost identical to the present layout of the Fan Area Historic District.



Detail of Smith's 1853 Map of Henrico County (Sydney outlined at top left)

Following the Sydney fiasco, very little development occurred in the area until the 1840s when a small number of houses were erected near the bounds of Richmond. These included the country estates of the Richmond artists Edward F. Peticolas and William J. Hubard. The 1850s saw a number of frame cottages and farmhouses constructed along Main, Grove and Floyd. Two of these houses, 2221 Grove Avenue and 2226 West Main survive and show the house-type then favored by the area's residents. Both houses are of frame construction, two stories in height. While "Fox Farm", the house at 2221 Grove Avenue has been somewhat altered (as seen in 1923), 2226 West Main retains its original board-and-batten siding, which together with its front porch, constitute its most stylish features.





*Fox Farm (2221 Grove Avenue)(193x)*



It is obvious that the area was regarded as prime farm land and that the majority of its antebellum residents were content to live on smaller land tracts than that offered by William Byrd III in his lottery of 1769. The Civil War interrupted all building in the area. Moreover it left Richmonders with little cash to invest in the town's suburban expansion.

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#### *AFTER THE CIVIL WAR*

While fortifications were erected on the periphery of the present Fan Area, the neighborhood did not experience any Civil War combat. By the War's end the City of Richmond was in a sad financial state. Much of the city's tax base had been destroyed by the evacuation fire, business was virtually at a standstill, and owners of real estate could not afford higher property rates. Paced by these realities, in 1867 the city exercised its most practical and viable option; it formally annexed land and improvements bordering its corporate limits in Henrico County.

In addition to more eastern land and the islands in the James River, the corporate line was moved from east of Belvidere Street to just west of Lombardy adding in total about 8,000 people and increasing the city's size from 2.4 to 4.9 miles. The city had, in 1851, purchased western land on the site of the present day Monroe Park, so it was only natural

that the boundary would move in a westerly direction. The annexation of 1867 did, in fact, foreshadow in a modest way the future expansion of the city to encompass the present Fan Area Historic District.

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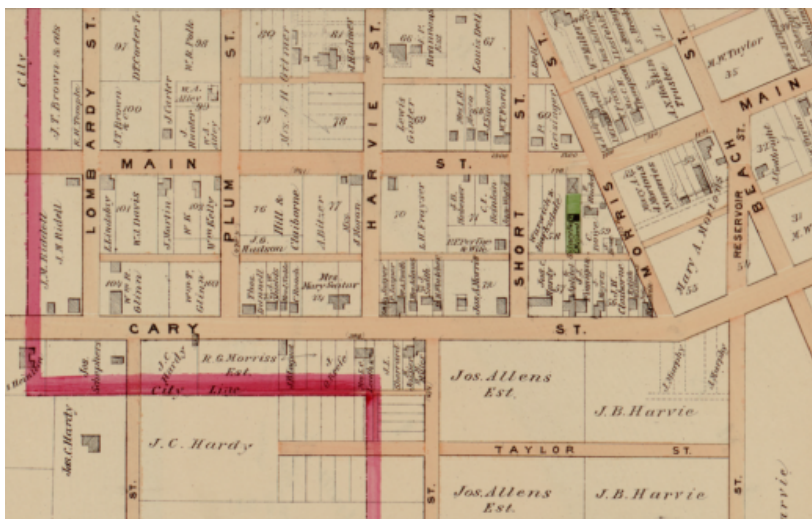
### LATE 19TH CENTURY GROWTH

During the 1870s development in Richmond, as elsewhere throughout the nation, was halted by a severe recession that began in 1873. With the bankruptcy of the New York investment firm of Jay Cooke, the collapse of the financial world forced the city's Tredegar Iron Works into receivership along with a number of smaller factories and businesses. However, by the mid-1870s Richmond's economy had virtually recovered and once again looked forward to growth and expansion. The progress made by the city in this regard was optimistically noted in the Richmond Whig and Advertiser in 1876.

*"Our provincial characteristics are fast disappearing, and we are not only advancing toward metropolitan development, but are losing our petty, narrow prejudices and becoming truly cosmopolitan ... We are no longer a village but a city."*



Detail of 1876 F.W. Beer's atlas of Richmond



Detail of 1876 F.W. Beer's atlas of Richmond

A number of factors contributed to the development of the western suburbs during the 1880s. Economically, the city was in a period of remarkable industrial growth. From three

hundred firms employing a little over 7,000 people and producing 12 million dollars worth of goods in 1880, Richmond over the next ten years grew to include 724 firms, employing 20,453 people and producing goods worth \$31 million. While tobacco contributed significantly to this total, the expansion of iron, flour milling and the paper industries were prime factors in the city's population growth. According to census reports, the city population during the decade from 1880 to 1890 rose from 63,600 to 81,388. The additional population sharply increased the demand for housing. Moreover, many of the city's older residential neighborhoods stood in the path of commercial development from an expanding central-city business district.

Once again, developers looked toward the west end as a likely area of expansion. While the parcels of land comprising the ill-fated town of Sydney were owned by many individuals, a number of investors did control large blocks of the area. John C. Shafer, a clothing merchant, owned a significant amount of land just west of Monroe Park. Shafer's own house lot consisted of four acres at the corner of Park Avenue and what would become Shafer Street. Like Shafer, businessman Charles Y. Morris chose to live in the western suburbs occupying a one-acre lot between Grove and Park Avenues at Harrison Street in 1854. Later, Morris acquired an additional three acres just across Park Avenue from his residence, his parcel running west from John Shafer's lot to Boyd Street. While William Allen did not live in the neighborhood, he did wisely amass extensive holdings west of Lombardy Street. The land holdings of these three individuals constituted the first area of the western suburbs to be developed on a large scale.



*800 block of Floyd Avenue*

With the area immediately surrounding Monroe Park thoroughly settled by 1885, the adjoining property owned by John Shafer became particularly ripe for development. In 1889 Shafer erected a striking row of five mansard-roofed dwellings on the south side of Floyd Avenue just east of Cherry Street, some of which he sold and a number which he rented. With Shafer, the development of the western suburbs through the practice of speculative building had officially begun.

After Charles Morris' death in the early 1880s, his heirs subdivided his western land holdings. While this subdivision was taking place, Harrison Street was laid out through part of the Morris property from Grove to Broad Street, and an electric trolley line was developed to the west, tying the emerging neighborhood to the downtown. The Morris heirs soon engaged a local architect, Peter J. White, to design and erect several speculative residences to be offered for sale together with vacant lots. In 1892 a small public park was established on the triangle cut off by the opening of Harrison Street and the City Council donated \$1,000.00 to the Richmond Howitzer Battalion for a statute to be erected there. Designated "Howitzer Place," the park, together with other amenities made the Morris property an especially desirable place to live.

The 58-acre parcel of land owned by the heirs of William Allen was the last of the three



*Trolley on Robinson Street (undated)*



*Howitzer Park (undated)*

Sydney tracts to be developed. Its subdivision was accelerated by the erection and dedication of a large monument to Robert E. Lee in 1890.



*Lee Monument (undated)*

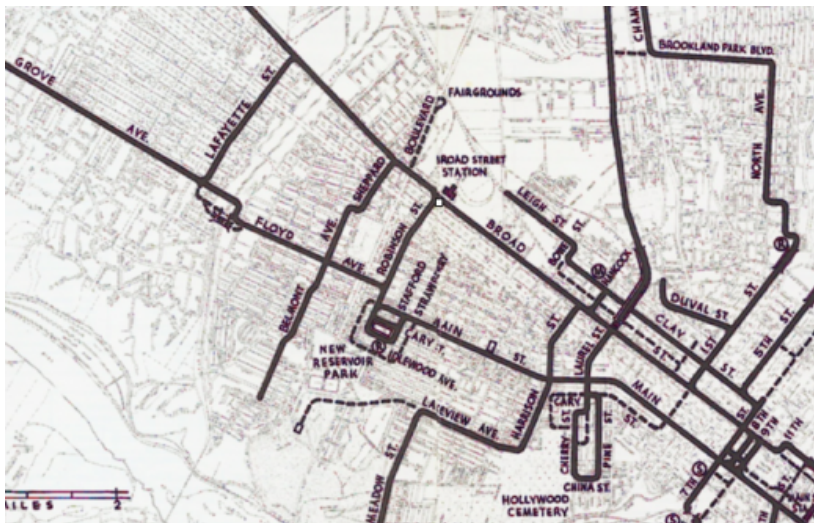
The decision by the state to erect the monument on a vacant lot of land in Henrico County was indeed controversial; critics charged that the location was selected only to promote land speculation in the west end. However, the offer by the Allen family to donate the circular plot for the statue as well as land for two grand avenues converging at

the site allowed for the monumental vista and overall effect deemed most appropriate to commemorate the revered Lee.

Two years later, in 1892, the City of Richmond annexed the Allen land as part of a 292-acre parcel, bounded on the south by Grove Avenue, on the west by Boulevard, on the north by Broad Street and on the east by the old city limits. A new political entity was created from the annexed territory and named the "Lee District." This was the city's first annexation since 1867 and the fifth in its history.

By 1895 most of the land within the Lee District had been subdivided. By far, the largest subdivision occurred within the original Allen property which now contained 433 lots. "The prices that are asked and will be obtained for those (near the Lee Monument) lots," wrote the Dispatch prophetically in April, 1882 "forbid the idea that the houses erected in that section will be anything but handsome.

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Richmond Trolley map (detail)(1930)

### RECESSION AND RECOVERY

Like the earlier recession that stifled the development of Sydney, the period from 1895 to 1900 witnessed a decline in Fan Area building precipitated by a national depression. During 1897, for example, land records indicate that no new improvements were made to Lee Ward's 292 acres. A very apt summation of the building decline in Richmond may be found in the Dispatch in 1899, "There was once 3 saying here that 'Bricks are as good as gold'. It has not been much current of late." By 1900, only five houses had been erected on the Allen property.

The year 1901, an extremely prosperous one for Richmond, signaled the end of the city's late 19th-century depression. The city achieved a manufacturing output of nearly \$56 million dollars, an increase of \$7 million dollars over the previous year. The largest industrial growth in the city took place in the iron and tobacco industries, the staple of the city's economy. With this industrial growth came a corresponding increase in the city's population which reached 85,000 by 1901.

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### GROWTH TO THE WEST

In spite of this burgeoning industrial and population growth, the corporate size of the City of Richmond had grown very little through its five annexations to 1892. By and large, Richmond's inhabitants in 1901 were squeezed onto nearly the same 4,000 acres that

accommodated her 50,000 residents in 1870. However, this density of population within the old city boundaries was to be shortlived. On three separate occasions between 1906 and 1914 Richmond annexed and consolidated enough land from surrounding Henrico and Chesterfield counties to more than double its size. Complementing the 1892 annexation of Lee Ward, the 1906 annexation brought the remainder of the present Fan Area Historic District within the city's boundaries by adding Floyd Avenue and West Main Street to the south and Vine Street to the Boulevard on the east and west.

This area, together with the 1892 annexed land south of Monument Avenue, supplied a corridor for the expansion of Richmond's rising middle-class population into the newly developed and soon-to-be-developed areas outside of the old city limits.



*Old fortifications, veterans, and Davis Monument (circa 1910)*

An examination of [the Richmond City Directories](#) for the period 1910 to 1920 confirms the middle-class development of the Fan Area, south of Monument Avenue. While Monument, and to a lesser extent, West Grace Street boasted among its residents presidents and owners of the city's major corporations and stores, the streets lying to the south of Monument included teachers, clerks, secretaries, insurance agents, book keepers, salesmen and laborers as residents. According to the 1910 census records for Richmond which detail the composition of the Fan Area households, the residences to the south of Monument were both rented and owner-occupied in about equal proportion. The typical head-of-family was a white native Virginian engaged in a middle-class profession. A large number of houses, both rented and owner occupied, had at least one servant. It is also apparent from an examination of the city's building permits that the rented properties, or "flats" were primarily duplexes or two-unit houses constructed on a scale and lot size compatible with single-owner occupied residences.

The Fan Area features a number of architect-designed schools and churches. Especially noteworthy are two schools designed by [Charles M. Robinson](#). Robinson's William Fox School of 1911 is a rare instance of the influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement on Richmond's architecture, while his Binford School of 1914 is a more typically found example of Tudor Gothic Revival educational architecture.



*William Fox School*

Like schools, churches add a welcome break to the Fan's predominantly residential pattern of development. Albert F. Hunt's three Neoclassical style churches provide a dignified and monumental presence to the Fan's streetscape: the Tabernacle Baptist Church at 1925 Grove, built in 1910; the former Westminster Presbyterian Church of 1911 at 2501 Park Avenue; and the former Monument Methodist Episcopal Church at 1801 Park Avenue.



*2501 Park Avenue*

While their architects are presently unknown, mention should be made of the Hanover Avenue Christian Church at 1723 Hanover Avenue, and the Bethlehem Lutheran Church at 1100 West Grace Street should be mentioned for their contribution to the architectural diversity of the Fan Area.

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#### *LATER DECLINE*

While the period to 1915 witnessed a tremendous boom in Fan Area building, the succeeding decades saw a modest amount of construction. Many of the single-family



1801 Park Avenue



Grove Avenue looking east (undated)

residences were built as infill on vacant lots by-passed by earlier building booms. During this period, the western-most area near the Boulevard was developed, the single-family residence giving way to much larger apartment buildings. With the removal of Richmond College to the suburbs in 1914, the property was turned over to private developers who erected apartment buildings along Grace Street on the site of the former campus.

By the year 1930 the Fan Area Historic District had assumed the distinctive character that it possesses today. It was a relatively compact, architecturally cohesive neighborhood, housing a predominately middle-class population. Around World War II, **the Fan Area began to fall into a state of decline as a viable neighborhood.** This was, in part, due to a growing exodus of its residents from the inner city to the west end and neighboring counties of Chesterfield and Henrico.

The flight was also precipitated in part by the planning policies of the City of Richmond which encouraged new land development at the expense of older inner-city neighborhoods. Noted city planner Harland Bartholomew, who drew up the city's first master plan in the early 1940s, described Richmond's catering to private land development interests as an "extravagant waste." Writing in a preliminary report on Richmond's street plan in 1942, Bartholomew observed:

*"It is apparent from population studies of Richmond and of numerous other American cities*





*Trolley on Grove Avenue (undated)*

*that these communities cannot expand indefinitely. The time has come when we must rebuild the obsolete central yeas of the city, and perhaps we will see relatively little suburban expansion hereafter."*

Unfortunately, Richmond did not heed Bartholomew's prophetic message until the early 1960s. At that time a revival began within the Fan, lead by various groups who once again promoted the neighborhood as a viable place to live. Central to that revival was the formation in 1961 of the **Fan District Association** which issued a newsletter called **The Fanfare** and sponsored **Christmas** and garden tours. About the same time, a number of other groups were formed to help revitalize the Fan Area. They included the Fan Woman's Club, the Fan Garden Club, and the Monument Avenue Preservation Society. All the above organizations, along with many smaller ones, continue to promote the continual revitalization and preservation of the Fan Area.



*FDA Garden Tour (1964)*

*"Black and white photograph of Mrs. Sam Moore (left) and Mrs. John E. Harrison Jr. discussing the Fan District Association Garden Tour; the women stand in the garden of Mr.*

and Mrs. F. Wilson Craigie; the women wear sleeveless shift dresses and hold large pleated fans; the fans were made by Mrs. Harrison to hang on the gates of 33 gardens on tour.”



Spring Garden Tour poster (undated)

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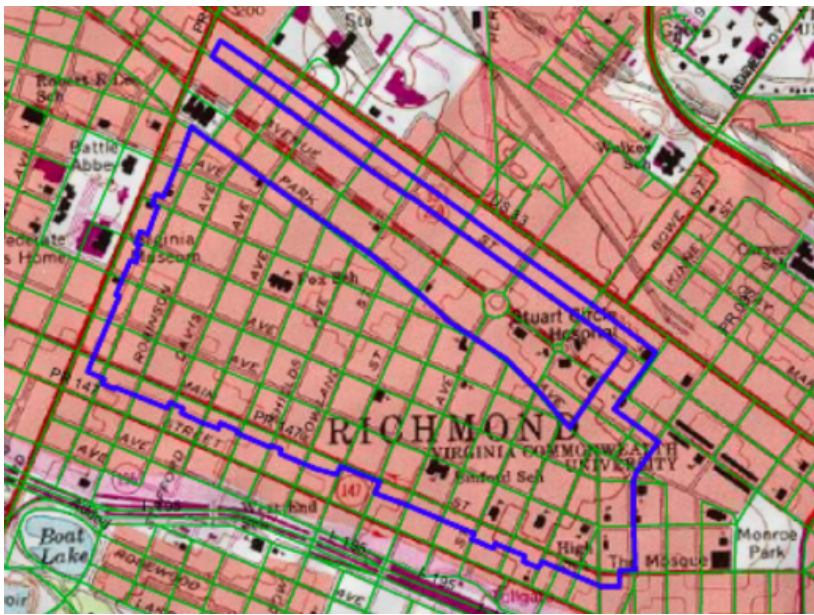
## BOUNDARIES AND MAPS

The most commonly accepted boundaries include Monroe Park to the east, Boulevard to the west, West Grace Street to the north, and West Main Street to the south.

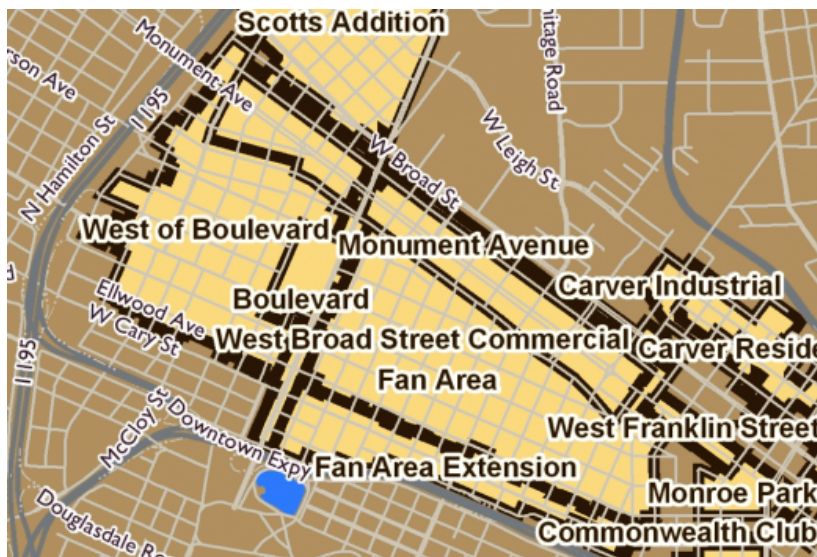
Boulevard serves as a major north-south thoroughfare in Richmond which features several large institutional buildings and apartment buildings and complexes. In contrast, the Fan Area Historic District is an east-west oriented neighborhood with few institutional buildings and mostly single-family residences. Although most of the buildings along Boulevard date to the 1920s and 1930s, a period of historical significance for the Fan Area, the buildings along Boulevard constitute a distinguishable and significant entity meriting separate historic district designation. The western boundary of the district was therefore drawn to include all historic structures that face the principal east-west streets and to exclude those buildings that face Boulevard.

The residential area south of West Main Street was excluded from the district because **it is commonly considered part of another neighborhood other than the Fan District.**

Although the Fan District's eastern boundary is considered to be Monroe Park, the historic district boundary is North Harrison Street. The three-block wide area between Monroe Park and the east side of N. Harrison Street is almost entirely devoted to contemporary academic buildings associated with Virginia Commonwealth University.



Fan Area Historic District via DHR



Fan Area Historic District via Richmond City

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## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Although most of the area is divided into a strict grid pattern of linear streets and square blocks, the name of the district alludes to the way in which certain streets radiate or fan westward from Monroe Park creating triangular parks at various intersections of both street systems. The parks and tree-lined streets tend to soften the visual impact of the district's repetitive urban streetscapes.

Despite its varied assortment of residences, apartment buildings, commercial structures, churches, and schools, the district is remarkably cohesive in nature due to the sympathetic and often repetitive scale, mass, height, building material, and ornamentation of hundreds of buildings within the district. Seemingly guided by a deliberate plan of development the district features block after block of brick town houses and row houses, mostly erected during the first two decades of the 20th century, and designed by a relatively few local architect/contractors. Within the limits of the district's strong sense of unity and cohesion, there is a sensitive variation of individual designs expressed through the various architectural styles and building treatments



*Meadow Park*

represented. Whereas the Italianate, Richardsonian Romanesque, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival styles predominate, the Bungalow, American Foursquare, Tudor Revival, Spanish Colonial, and Art Deco styles are also represented.

One of the largest, yet least altered and architecturally cohesive districts in Virginia, the Fan Area contains 2,370 contributing buildings, 435 contributing structures, 3 contributing sites, and 1 contributing object. Only 42 buildings and 53 structures are considered noncontributing.

The oldest known extant building in the district is a refined Federal-style brick dwelling located at 1142 West Grace Street. Originally known as Columbia (National Register 1982), this country house was built for Philip Haxall, a wealthy Richmond flour merchant, in 1817. The two-story Flemish-bond brick house has undergone some alterations but its essential character remains unchanged. In 1831 part of the Haxall estate, including Columbia, was purchased by the Virginia Baptist Education Society which later evolved into Richmond College. Subsequently, the house was used for academic purposes until the college moved to Richmond's Far West End in 1914.



*2221 West Main Street*

Other antebellum houses that have survived intact include: the John Whitworth House at 2221 West Main Street, a simple frame dwelling built ca. 1857, but later altered to conform to the popular Colonial Revival taste; the William W. Morien House at 2226 West Main Street, an Italianate-style board-and-batten farmhouse that has been preserved

since its construction in 1859; and a stucco house located at 2403 West Main Street which, with its paired gable end chimneys, shallow gable roof, five-bay facade, and raised basement, also predates the Civil War.



2226 West Main Street



2403 West Main Street

Other houses began to appear in the 1850s on lots that were laid out for the projected town of Sydney as early as 1817. The town never materialized due to unfavorable economic times; however, the town plat was later adopted when area development intensified. Although most of these early frame houses were later replaced by brick dwellings, a few houses built in the years just following the Civil War survive in the area today. In 1869 William Miller built a modest frame house at the corner of Floyd Avenue and N. Morris Street. Miller's neighbor and stonemason, James A. Wallen built a frame house clad in cut limestone at 218 North Harvie Street in 1871. Wallen's house has a raised basement, decorative iron porch, and pilasters across the front.

In 1875 George P. Hawes erected a simple frame house at 1107 Grove Avenue. Subsequent additions and alterations make it difficult to determine the original form of the house, but the dwelling clearly stands out from among brick rowhouses of a later era.

Other frame houses which probably predate 1900 include the simple two-story vernacular examples located at 2015, 2221, and 2420 West Main Street, 106 Strawberry Street, and 1121 Floyd Avenue. Scattered as these houses are, the area must have retained a rural character well into the 1890s.



*Floyd and Morris (William Miller House 1869)*



*1107 Grove Avenue*



*1121 Floyd Avenue*

Nearly all the dwellings in the 800 and 900 blocks of W. Grace Street and Park Avenue and the 800-1000 blocks of Floyd Avenue and W. Main Street did not survive the onslaught of modern development brought on by the expansion of Virginia Commonwealth



2015 West Main Street



2420 West Main Street

University during the 1970s. Fortunately, the houses in the 800-1000 blocks of W. Franklin Street have survived and remain an enclave of the once surrounding wealthy neighborhood (see West Franklin Street Historic District-National Register, 1972).



1326 Floyd Avenue

Two Italianate-style town houses at 1322 and 1326 Floyd Avenue are among the earliest surviving houses in the Lower Fan. The two-story flat-roofed brick houses have heavy bracketed cornices, asymmetrical three-bay facades, floor-to-ceiling height windows, and decorative iron verandahs.

Similar Lower Fan Italianate dwellings with decorative iron verandahs are seen at 1102 West Main Street and 137C Floyd Avenues, but most of the examples of the style possess frame porches with decorative sawnwork, bracketed cornices, and sometimes arched bays. Porches are either small single-bay types or they extend across the entire facade of the dwelling. Representative examples are located at 1112 and 1114 Grove Avenue, built by contractor-builder Leonidas L. Lacy in 1882 and 1884; 10-14 and 16-20 North Harrison Street, built in 1884-85; 106-108 North Harrison Street, built by the firm of Trexler and Elmore in 1888; 1303 Park Avenue built in 1885; 1102 West Main Street, built in 1886; 1403 Grove Avenue, built in 1888; and 108, 109, and 111 North Morris Street, built in 1888-89 by A.B. Chandler.

Examples of Italianate rowhouses with rectangular or semi-hexagonal projecting bays include houses at 110-114 North Harvey Street, built in 1893; 110-112 North Plum Street, built in 1895; 1106-1110 West Main Street; and 110-112 North Harrison Street which have segmental-arched windows and entrance hoods with heavy bracketed consoles. Rowhouses at 115-119 North Lombardy Street are also representative of the Italianate style, each with a heavy classical cornice and a second-story bay window. They were erected by contractor George G. Ryan in 1894, although by this date the Italianate style had generally lost its popularity.



*St. Sophia (Little Sisters of the Poor) at 1401 Floyd Avenue*

Among the most prodigious buildings in the area was the hospital of St. Sophia, Home of the Little Sisters of the Poor (National Register 1980) located at 1401 Floyd Avenue. Originally a brick house dating to the 1830s, it was enlarged in the Italianate style between 1877-1881 and further enlarged in the Second Empire style in 1896, making it an interesting evolutionary building. It now serves as the Warsaw Condominiums.

During the 1890s and early 1900s when the Queen Anne style emerged as the most fashionable and popular architectural style in America, entire blocks of buildings along the principal streets in the district were designed and built by architect-contractors for speculative purposes. Attractive to members of the middle class and conveniently located in proximity to Richmond's new electric trolley car system, these rowhouses offered a wide range of architectural diversity in design and type, many of which were eclectic creations displaying a combination of Italianate, Romanesque, and classical features.

Particularly handsome groups of these Queen Anne rowhouses are preserved along





1104-1110 Floyd Avenue



1302-1308 Floyd Avenue

blocks of Floyd, Grove, and Hanover avenues west of N.Harrison Street. Notable examples on the Floyd Avenue blocks include the houses at 1104-1110; 1302-1310, which feature stone veneer first floors and corbeled brick cornices; 1312-1316, which were built by contractors Joseph M. Newell and Thomas E. Stagg in 1896; 1317-1329, built in 1893 which feature corbeled brickwork and projecting bays with mansard or conical roofs; and 1522-1530, which exhibit alternating rounded and semi-hexagonal projecting bays, polychromatic slate mansard roofs, and decorative iron cresting.

Grove Avenue houses dating to the last decade of the 19th century include a notable block of seven brick rowhouses at 1111 through 1125. Two (1111 and 1125) were built by contractor William J. Ready in 1891 and 1893. The interposing dwellings are similar in building material and scale but feature a variety of projecting bays, roofs, dormers and decorative finishes. Each also has stained glass transoms over doors and windows.

The north side of the 1300 block of Grove Avenue contains five rowhouses built by contractor Gilbert J. Hunt in ca. 1892. Unlike the three-story houses further east, these houses are two stories in height with polygonal-roofed towers and a modest amount of exterior ornamentation. Three-story houses located at 1416 and 1418 Grove Avenue have rounded towers topped by beehive domes and windows capped by stone lintels. Built by brothers George and Thomas Newell in 1893, these houses along with the dwelling at 1420, are interposed among buildings of a later era.



*1100 block of Grove Avenue*



*Old Dominion Row (1500 block of Grove)*

The impressive Old Dominion Row in the 1500 block of Grove Avenue contains twelve two-story brick rowhouses with alternating turrets, towers, gables, and three-bay and single-bay porches with decorative sawnwork. Built by the Old Dominion Building and Loan Association in 1895 and attributed to architects B. W. Poindexter and C. K. Bryant, the row was a most ambitious construction project for the 1890s. Two other architect-designed dwellings stand in the same block at 1501 and 1503 Grove Avenue. Both were designed by Albert T. Hunt in 1895 and show the mark of individual distinction, especially 1501 with its double-arched entrance and decorative terra cotta.

Two rowhouses at 1607 and 1609 Hanover Avenue eschew the more typical Victorian house forms. Built in 1896 for investors John Garland Pollard, later governor of Virginia, and Millard F. Cox, both structures display the distinctive features of the Richardsonian Romanesque style such as decorative brick corbeling, and heavy round-arched windows and entrances. Identical houses in the same style are seen at 303 and 305 North Meadow Street.

The firm of Trexler and Elmore, which began building modest rowhouses along North Harrison Street in the 1880s, by 1895 turned to more imaginative designs for their dwellings such as that exhibited by the row of seven houses located at 1700-1710 Hanover Avenue. These buildings are similar in scale and materials; however, as an ensemble they display a variety of eclectic styles and features such that no two houses are entirely alike. There one encounters Second Empire, Gothic Revival, Romanesque



1607 and 1609 Hanover Avenue



1700-1710 Hanover Avenue

Revival, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival houses that in juxtaposition compose one of the most picturesque streetscapes in the district.

Several distinguished Queen Anne-style houses are located along Park Avenue. The 1200 block contains a row of three 2-story rowhouses faced in rough-cut stone veneer with a steeply-pitched mansard slate roof pierced by wide dormers. Each is also highlighted by a heavy classical cornice, a semi-hexagonal bay window and a porch with small marble columns and steps. English stonemason. James H. Wallen, who lived nearby at 218 N. Harvie Street, was responsible for their construction in 1895-96. Within the same block three rowhouses at 1212-1216 are unusual for their high English basements and flights of steps ascending to small arched entrances. These houses were probably designed by local architect Peter J. White in 1892.

Five detached brick town houses were built on the easternmost lots of the 1900 block of West Avenue after the street was laid out and opened for development in 1893. The identical houses at 1000, 1001, 1002, 1003, and 1005 have a row of three frieze windows across the front and a rectangular bay projection with a bay window supported by corbeled brickwork. While these houses were put up quickly within a period of one year, most of West Avenue's subsequent development occurred after 1900.

During the late 1890s the Lower Fan continued to be developed, but building activity also began to spill over into a 292-acre tract of land that the city annexed in 1892.



2107 Grove Avenue

Bounded by Grove Avenue to the south, Broad Street to the north, North Lombardy Street to the east, and Boulevard to the west, this large area then called the Lee District and later known as the Upper Fan, now comprises most of the Fan Area Historic District. Included in this new annexation were houses already constructed along West Grace Street and fashionable Monument Avenue. This area of the Upper Fan soon became one of the most elite residential neighborhoods in the city (see Monument Avenue Historic District-National Register 1970).

Among the more distinguished detached Queen Anne-style houses in the district are the following dwellings found both in the Lower and Upper Fan: 1127 West Main Street with its corner square tower capped by a pyramidal roof, central front gable before a mansard roof and recessed brick panels; 1300 Floyd Avenue built by Benjamin Black in 1889 with irregular massing, diagonal projecting bay, parapet gables, and round-arched attic windows and dormers; 1806 Grove Avenue (c. 1890); possessing a remarkably decorative facade of corbeled, gauged, and molded brick and terra cotta elements; 2107 Grove Avenue (1897), a brick house with a facade accented by stone quoins, stone bands, and a wide-arched stone and brick Romanesque arcade; 2422 Grove Avenue, a house that combines such exuberant Queen Anne details as corbeled brickwork, stained glass windows, and a semi-hexagonal bay window with turret; and the houses at 1619 Park Avenue and 2100 Hanover Avenue, both of which are fully detached dwellings on large lots with hipped roofs and typical irregular massing and roof lines.



2422 Grove Avenue

Appealing to conservative middle-class Richmonders, most of the houses built between 1900 and 1915 repeated elements of the earlier Queen Anne style like semi-hexagonal bay windows or square bay projections topped by gables, polygonal or conical roofs, while adding emergent features of the Colonial Revival such as pedimented dormers, elliptical transoms, and front porches with classical columns, cornices, and balustrades.

City building permit records indicate that a frenzy of building activity between 1906 and 1915 transformed the rural West End landscape into rows of urban town houses and rowhouses of distinctive character. Prolific builders and contracting firms such as C. W. Devis Brothers and later Davis Brothers, Inc., R. E. Elnore and Co., Davis and Archer, Adams and Sims, C. E. Lacy and Co., and individual builders such as Gilbert J. Hunt, John F. Black, Jubr~T. i?ilson, Harry C. Brown, George D. Priddy. Saaual Stowe, George O. Dahn, W. B. Adams, John T. Powers, J. C. Locknane. W. H. Crawford, Peter J. White, E. C. Woodward, and Henry Holzgrefe designed and built blocks or half-blocks of houses scattered throughout the district. No particular pattern or design appeared as the exclusive trademark of any one of these various builders. Some facade designs show the builder's originality in the combination of various stylistic influences; however, most houses share similar characteristics regardless of the builder, thereby making a particular builder's style difficult to pinpoint and evaluate.

During the same period architects were also active in designing homes, churches, and schools in the Fan Area. Carl Ruehrmund, a German-American architect; W. L. Carneal; A. F. Hunt; D. Wiley Anderson; and I. T. Skinner were the most prolific architects in the Fan Area. Some designed only individual houses here and there, while others designed entire blocks or half-blocks. A certain refined quality can usually be discerned in their works; however, each architect appears to have conformed willingly to earlier established building patterns, subordinating individual tastes and preferences to the dictates of the district's implicit urban design.

In the Fan Area as elsewhere in the city, a new architectural style, the Colonial Revival, emerged as the preferred vocabulary of builders and clients in the early 1900s. The Colonial Revival became popular nationwide as a result of renewed interest in the colonial American past. Buildings emulating the best of America's 18th-century architectural heritage began to appear in Virginia especially after the Jamestown Exposition of 1907. The Colonial Williamsburg restoration of the 1920s also helped to popularize the style. Virginians eagerly embraced a style that reminded them of their British colonial heritage.

Builders as well as architects at once became adept at giving a Georgian, Federal, or Adamesque appearance to a two- or three-story facade. Six-over-six or six-over-one sash windows were often highlighted by stone or flared brick jack arches with keystones while entrances were often flanked by sidelights and topped by elliptical fanlights with tracery. Appropriate brick patterns, rustication, and quoins as well as classical modillion and dentil cornices add texture and profile to otherwise flat facades. The ubiquitous front porch served to display Tuscan, Ionic, or Corinthian columns, a full entablature above a modillion cornice, and a turned balustrade. The slate mansard roof of most houses usually displayed one or more pedimented dormers, pedimented gables or parapets.

The 1100 block of West Franklin Street contains three good examples of the Colonial Revival. Row houses at 1125, 1133, and 1135 are each different designs incorporating many of the same elements. Excellent examples of the style are also seen in the row of houses from 2506-2514 West Grace Street. These five houses display many classical and Georgian details in their individual designs.

Grove Avenue possesses a few noteworthy Colonial Revival town houses. The house at 1701 is typical in its use of classical elements and details in correct proportion and scale; however, the houses at 1913 and 1915 are more individualistic with their panrile mansard roofs, exaggerated pedimented dormers, bracketed frieze with raised Adamesque adornments, and heavy Corinthian columns. The house at 2502 is noted for its Ionic portico with rounded corners and broken pedimented dormers, one of them in a Palladian design, with Gothic tracery. Notable Colonial Revival houses on Hanover Avenue include the house at 1605 in which the suggestion of a gambrel roof is



1701 Grove Avenue

superimposed upon the typical mansard roof. A second-story Palladian window and jack arches with keystones over first-floor windows further suggest the influence of the Colonial Revival. Selected houses in the 1800 block may all have been designed by the same architect as they have the same basic design format but differ in roof, dormer, and porch details. Each of the houses at 1826, 1827, and 1831 was built ca. 1910 and has a single-bay porch with Ionic columns, classical cornice, and turned balustrade. Each also has stone jack arches with keystones, second-story bay windows, full modillion cornice, and two pedimented dormers of various designs. Similar houses differing only in their window, dormer, and porch treatments are seen further west at 2211 and 2701 Hanover Avenue.



1809-1811 Park Avenue

A row of four unusual Colonial Revival houses at 1809, 1811, 1815, and 1817 Park Avenue represent the range of different elements associated with the style. The houses at 1809 and 1811 were probably constructed ca. 1910. They have stuccoed walls with cut stone quoins, parapeted flat roofs with broad cornices, either a bowed or giant order Ionic portico, and windows framed in broad trim.

The house at 1815 has a two-story bowed window with a third-story porch, Tuscan columned porch, fanlight openings, and a full pedimented dormer. Much simpler in nature, but more Georgian in character, the house at 1817 has a pedimented gable projection with lunette, pedimented porch, and 616 double sash windows. Davis Brothers, Inc. built and probably designed the almost identical Colonial Revival houses at



1815-1817 Park Avenue

1903, 1905, and 1909 Stuart Avenue in 1913. Well preserved examples of the style, these houses have a three-bay facade with an asymmetrical entrance highlighted by sidelights and a transom, a three-bay Ionic porch with a modillion cornice and balustraded deck, a prominent modillion cornice, and two broken pedimented dormers with round-arched windows. Somewhat different examples at 2517-2519 Stuart feature tile mansard roofs with gambrel dormers and lunettes, tripartite and second-story bay windows with stone lintels and Ionic columned porches. Built in 1911 by contractors Davis and Archer, these houses are representative of the type seen frequently in the western extent of the district.

The side streets in the district also exhibit Colonial Revival rowhouses, usually in pairs. Those at 207 and 209 N. Rowland Street, 13 and 15 Strawberry Street, 408 and 418 Strawberry Street, 106 and 108 N. Stafford Avenue, and 302 and 304 N. Stafford Avenue represent some of the best preserved examples. Each pair is individually distinctive; however, all are based on the same design format of a two-story asymmetrical facade with slate mansard roof and full-length front porch.

Colonial Revival houses that were designed to be seen in three dimensions rather than restricted to the two-dimensional rowhouse form tend to be grander and more elaborate. Most of these houses are located in the westernmost blocks of the district. The former Protestant Episcopal Home for Adults (now Mrs. Plyler's Retirement Home), designed by E. T. M. Myers of Clinton and Russell, Architects in 1908, is a good example of a large-scale Colonial Revival institutional structure.



1700 Grove Avenue

The smaller but no less handsome house at 1700 Grove is reminiscent of the Federal-style town house popular in urban centers around 1800. It is a five-course American-bond brick dwelling with a pedimented gable outlined by a heavy cast iron modillion cornice. A plain stucco frieze and water table extends across the facade, while an elliptical fanlight entrance is framed by Doric portico of beautiful proportions and details. This house is exceptional in being unlike any other in the Fan. Large originally single-family residences that can be considered Georgian Revival are found at various Fan District addresses.



1800 West Grace Street

Of these, the beautiful brick house at 1800 W. Grace is one of the most outstanding. Situated on a corner lot, the unknown architect used the two faces of the building to display such features as brick quoins, a modillion and dentil cornice, broken pedimented window heads in recessed elliptical arches, a two-story giant order Corinthian portico with balustraded deck, elliptical fanlight entrance, and a sweeping hipped roof punctured by dormers. A gable-roofed house at 2522 Grove Avenue, and a gable-roofed house at 2614 Grove Avenue, both probably built in the 1910s or 1920s, have similar details and proportions.

Although the Colonial Revival continued to dominate the selection of house styles found in the Fan Area during the first two decades of the 20th century, modern styles associated with the Arts and Crafts Movement began to appear especially on undeveloped side streets and on the westernmost blocks of principal streets. As early as 1909, Richmond builder, W. J. Ready, had erected a dwelling that was vernacular in spirit but based on the American Foursquare at 2413 Kensington Avenue. Architect I.T. Skinner, followed in 1914 with neighboring foursquare houses at 2415 and 2417. Houses of the same type are found in the 400 block of N. Davis Avenue. Probably built during the late 1910s, the eight houses from 413 to 427 are brick houses with tile roofs, central front or projecting wall dormers, paired or single 6/1 double sash windows, and those retaining porches have Tuscan columns or tapering square columns on brick piers. Three basic designs alternate along the row. Other American Foursquare examples scattered throughout the district include those at 1706, 1902, and 2211 Grove Avenue, the former two examples are infill along earlier developed blocks, 2120 and 2302 Stuart Avenue, and one at 2616 Hanover Avenue. More mature examples of the style, these houses usually have tile roofs with large hipped dormers and paired or tripartite 6/1 double sash windows. All except one have full-length porches with columns on brick piers.

Very few bungalows are found in the district, although it became a popular house type during the 1920s. By that decade, however, most of the Fan had already been developed, with the few remaining vacant lots slated for apartment buildings. A row of detached bungalows situated along the west side of the first block of North Allen Avenue is unusual for the houses' sweeping gable roofs with wide shed dormers, stucco finish, and wide porches with massive stuccoed columns and exposed rafter ends.





2215 West Main Street

Although the overwhelming majority of buildings in the district are residential, the area contains several excellent examples of late 19th-and early 20th-century commercial architecture. Mostly located along the commercial corridors of the district – West Main, North Lombardy, North Robinson, and Strawberry streets, these buildings served the commercial needs of area residents and most continue to operate as small businesses. Many of the commercial buildings along West Main Street date from the 1890s and early 1900s during which time the electric trolley line was extended up the street, thereby encouraging its commercial development.



Trolley at Main and Laurel Streets (undated)

Some of the oldest surviving commercial structures retaining their original storefronts and upper facade treatments include several brick stores at 1203, 1301, 1303, 1307, 1502, 2215 West Main Street, and 6 North Robinson Street. Each of these buildings consists of a first floor commercial storefront with tall windows, often with divided transoms above, a second floor apartment indicated by three single windows across the front, and a heavy metal or wooden bracketed cornice across the top.

Another well-preserved commercial property is located at 111 N. Lombardy Street. A wide brick building with a central entrance flanked by large plate glass windows surmounted by metal cornice, the most interesting feature of this ca. 1910 building is its stepped parapet with central recessed panel. As one would expect, corner markets are also found throughout the district.

A commercial property at 2225 Hanover Avenue has a chamfered corner entrance and Colonial Revival ornamentation especially at the second story apartment level. Brick



1203 West Main Street



1301-1307 West Main Street



6 North Robinson Street

quoins and rustication, oversized stone window jack arches with keystones, a bracketed modillion cornice, and a parapet add interest to this prominently sited property. Similarly situated at the corner of N. Robinson Street and Stuart Avenue, the Fan Market shows Art



111 North Lombardy Street

Deco influence in the diamond pattern brickwork and the brick pilasters topped by stone caps with typical Art Deco motifs. Probably built in the late 1920s, the building has undergone recent modernization.



1300 West Main Street

Two especially striking commercial structures which originally served as banks are located at 1300 W. Main Street and 2601 Floyd Avenue. Both are massive brick structures with prominent cornices and a surrounding parapet, engaged columns or pilasters flanking entrances surmounted either by a wide stained glass transom, as at 1300 W. Main, or a stone segmental-pedimented frontispiece at 2601 Floyd.

Besides residences and commercial establishments, there are four prominent schools in the district—two of which still serve the educational needs of the community.

The earliest surviving school in the district is the former Stonewall Jackson School (National Register 1984) at 1520 W. Main Street. Built in 1886-87, the two-story brick building situated on a raised stone basement is an excellent example of the Victorian Italianate style with its segmental-arched windows, bracketed cornice, corbeled brickwork, and pedimented Corinthian portico with heavy stone or metal balustrade.

Illustrative of the same style, the former Sacred Heart Catholic School at 1122 Floyd Avenue was probably built ca. 1900. It is a large hip-roofed brick building on a raised basement and decorated with brick quoins and brick and stone segmental-arched



1520 West Main Street



1122 Floyd Avenue

windows and doors.

Two early 20th-century schools are also located in the district, each building comprising a whole block. William Fox School at 2306 Hanover Avenue is the earlier of the two. Designed by [Charles M. Robinson](#) in 1911, it is a two-story hip-roofed brick building on a raised stone basement topped by louvered cupolas. Tall paired windows and broad overhanging eaves suggest the influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Quite different in design, Binford School at 1701 Floyd Avenue, is a fine example of Tudor Gothic Revival architecture. Also designed by Charles M. Robinson and erected in 1914, it features castellated parapets, a Tudor-arched stone entrance with decorative carving, and an oriel window trimmed in stone.

Strengthening the ties of neighborhood and family are the Fan Area Historic District's several prominent church buildings representing various architectural styles. Many of these churches replaced earlier structures as congregations grew; therefore, many are large structures dating from the early 20th-century. A romantic version of Victorian Gothic ecclesiastical architecture is the Hanover Avenue Christian Church (originally Allen Avenue Christian Church) at the corner of Hanover and North Allen avenues. A brick structure accented with stone bands, hood molds, castellated parapets and towers with pointed-arched openings and pinnacles, the church is a very picturesque ensemble unmatched in the district for its romantic appeal.



*Hanover and Allen Avenues*

Three churches representative of the Classical Revival or Neoclassical movement are Tabernacle Baptist Church at 1925 Grove Avenue designed by A. F. Hunt in 1910, the former Westminster Presbyterian Church built in 1911 at 2501 Park Avenue, and the former Monument Methodist Episcopal Church at 1801 Park Avenue. Each of these churches has an impressive three- or five-bay pedimented portico—either Tuscan, Corinthian, or arcaded, raised basements, parapeted gable or flat roofs, and are embellished with various classical features such as pilasters, pedimented openings, and molded cornices.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church at 1100 W. Grace Street probably dates from the late 1920s. Reminiscent of an English Perpendicular Gothic church, the brick building is adorned with carved stonework, buttresses, and a large pointed-arched stained glass window with Gothic tracery.



*Apartment buildings near Boulevard*

During the late 1910s and throughout the 1920s many apartment buildings were erected in the district, especially in the westernmost blocks of the area. Entire blocks were often devoted to apartment development, so popular was this new 20th-century type of habitation and lifestyle. The Colonial Revival continued to be the most popular building style for individual residences as well as apartment complexes. Windsor Court Apartments is a group of three three-story brick apartment buildings surrounding an open green space at 1608-1614 Grove Avenue. This complex features typical elements of the style such as a surrounding parapet, 2-story portico, jack arches with keystones, stone

watertable, and frontispiece entrances.



*1608-1614 Grove Avenue*

Another group of three apartment buildings at 2710, 2724, and 2730 W Grace Street also exhibits the Colonial Revival influence in its Flemish-bond brickwork, 2-story, 2-level giant order Ionic porticoes with turned balustrades and curious segmental-pedimented parapets. More mature Colonial or Georgian Revival designs are represented by the Ambassador Apartments at 1108 W. Franklin Street with the building's stone belt course, quoins, watertable, Adamesque window lintels, and Palladian window motif, and the apartment building at 2618 Grove Avenue with its Palladian window, Flemish-bond brickwork, brick quoins, pedimented pavilion, and fanlight.



*2705 Hanover Avenue*

Two Art Deco-style apartment buildings are located at 2705 Hanover Avenue and at 1411 Grove Avenue ("The Ritz"). Spanish Colonial apartment buildings include 1106 W. Franklin Street and 206 N. Lombardy Street. Combining the characteristics of both Colonial and Spanish Colonial revivals, the apartment buildings at 208 N. Lombardy Street, 1600 Grove Avenue, and 2712-14 Hanover Avenue represent the originality apparent in many architect's designs of the period.

After 1914 when Richmond College moved from its original setting bounded by Ryland, Broad, N. Lombardy, and W. Franklin streets, West Grace Street was extended through the grounds and most of the former academic buildings were demolished. In their place arose a block almost entirely devoted to apartment buildings representing various



1108-1110 West Grace Street

architectural styles. Millford Apartments at 1108 W. Grace Street is a brick and stucco three-story Tuscan Villa-style building with tall arcaded galleries and a hip-roofed square tower. The apartment building at 1120 W. Grace Street is representative of the Tudor Revival style with its half-timbered tall gables and eyebrow dormers, while the building at 1128 W. Grace Street is a good example of the Colonial Revival with its gambrel-roofed pavilions, pedimented dormers, oval attic windows, and frontispiece entrance.

Detailed Sanborn Insurance Company maps for the years 1924 and 1925 show the Fan Area extensively developed except for some of the westernmost blocks along the principal streets near their intersection with Boulevard. Most of these blocks were later developed with apartment complexes during the late 1920s and 1930s with a few dating from later decades.

Apartment buildings in the eastern section of the district date from this same period as well and represent either later infill or arose in the wake of demolition of earlier single-family residential structures. The removal of Richmond College further west to a rural setting it could no longer find in the Fan foreshadowed the still further westward expansion of residential development beyond Boulevard.

Along with the growing number of apartments in the Fan, many multiple-bay brick garages were constructed during the 1920s and 1930s along alleys to the rear of apartment buildings and multi-family residences. Prior to that time garages in the Fan tended to be simple single- or double-bay brick structures with flat or shed roofs and parapet sidewalls. Those located on side streets, and therefore on public display, usually feature some small amount of ornamentation.

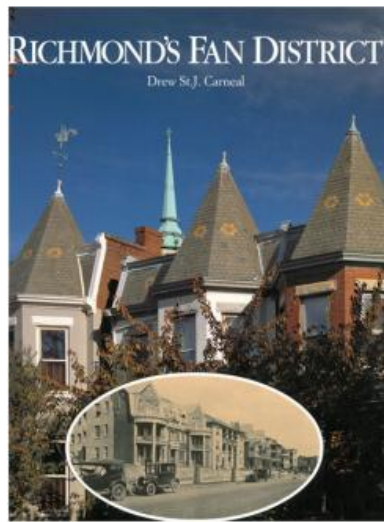
Very little modern construction has occurred in the Fan Area during the last fifty years.

[\[top\]](#)

## CREDIT AND SOURCES

The text above is almost entirely sourced from the the registration form from the [Fan Area Historic District application to the National Register of Historic Places](#). That text, dated 1985, includes much more more than is shown here. Check out the original form to learn more about the Fan Area Historic District, or read up on [any of the other sites in Richmond that are listed on the National Register](#). I have made some edits to the text, formatted it to HTML, and added the embedded media.

The information for the pre-1900 historical background, pulled from the DHR application, is largely derived from an (at the time of the DHR nomination) unpublished manuscript on the Fan by Drew St. J. Carneal. Carneal later published *Richmond's Fan District*, the definitive history of the Fan District.



All photos are by John Murden unless otherwise noted. The photo of the 2 girls looking over Main Street is by *Richmond VA Life*. Many of the b&w photos are from the *Library of Virginia's Adolph B. Rice Studio Collection*; see also the *the rest of the Library of Virginia's digitized collection* and the *Valentine Richmond History Center's online collection*. Photo of the historical marker is by *taberandrew*. The old postcards are from *VCU's Rarely Seen Richmond*. The trolley map is from *Carlton McKenney's Rails in Richmond*.

*Previous neighborhood profiles in the series:*

1. *The Union Hill Historic District*
2. *The Oakwood-Chimborazo Historic District*
3. *The Fairmount Historic District*
4. *The Church Hill North Historic District*
5. *The Highland Park Plaza Historic District*
6. *A history of the Chestnut Hill/Plateau Historic District*
7. *The Brookland Park Historic District*
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01/02/2012 at 5:15 am By [john m](#) 42

### CONVERSATION (42)

Last reply was 4 months ago



1. [Christine](#)  
[View 01/02/2012](#)  
Great article! I love the inclusion of commercial properties here. The corner market on North Robinson has always been a favorite building of mine.



2. [Lee](#)  
[View 01/02/2012](#)  
A lot of work jm, holy smokes, great read.



3. [@utensilitis](#)  
[View 01/02/2012](#)  
Amazing job on this! "@fanofthefan: The Fan Area Historic District <http://t.co/1HkocEiX> #rva"





4. [@wotbn](#)

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Would love to see this done for the Museum District! RT @fanofthefan: The Fan Area Historic District <http://t.co/CWQxo9tc> #rva



5. [@WestGraceStreet](#)

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Wow, check out the history, maps, and photos of our neighborhood at Fan of The Fan! Good info here: <http://t.co/m96NI5vv> via @fanofthefan



6. [@TimVidraEats](#)

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Agreed! That took some work! RT @utensilitis: Amazing job on this! @fanofthefan: The Fan Area Historic District <http://t.co/zLsAOE77> #rva



7. [@SaintWaitress](#)

[View 01/02/2012](#)

RT @WestGraceStreet: Wow, check out the Fan history, maps, photos at Fan of The Fan! Good info here: <http://t.co/f3z2ERwl> via @fanofthefan



8. [@historicRIC](#)

[View 01/02/2012](#)

RT @fanofthefan: @historicRIC I put together a neat look at The Fan, can you help spread the word? <http://t.co/9whfz7G6>

9. [The Fan District Hub » Blog Archive » Some Fan District history](#)

[View 01/02/2012](#)

[...] and blurbs from the Fan District's history are posted at the Fan of the Fan. Click here to visit the [...]



10. [charlie](#)

[View 01/02/2012](#)

Is that a picture of Sam Moore's (the stripclub owner) mom in that garden tour photo?



11. [@rvanews](#)

[View 01/02/2012](#)









Here's an incredibly comprehensive and interesting look at the Fan's history: <http://t.co/6L75kYl8> via @fanofthefan




12. [Eric](#)


[View 01/02/2012](#)


best book I've ever purchased from Barnes & Noble.

- 
13.  [fanofthefan](#)  
View [01/02/2012](#)  
@Eric – Drew St. J. Carneal's book is fascinating, I hope that folks reading through this are compelled to seek it out :)
- 
14.  [Josh Squires](#)  
View [01/02/2012](#)  
Long article, but very interesting. Love some of the old photographs.
- 
15.  [@mark\\_d\\_harley](#)  
View [01/02/2012](#)  
Incredible history behind the neighborhood we live in. Thanks for posting. @WestGraceStreet @fanofthefan <http://t.co/nFOgrYcT>
- 
16.  [Cynthia Oliver](#)  
View [01/02/2012](#)  
Wonderful! Just sharing my limited knowledge last night w/"New to Richmond'ers". Glad to have this to give them! Thanks, John.
- 
17.  [@GarnettsRVA](#)  
View [01/02/2012](#)  
SCUFFLETOWN!
- 
18.  [Tim Vidra](#)  
View [01/02/2012](#)  
Really enjoyed this read! As long time Richmond residents we have recently moved into the heart of the fan and are looking forward to learning more about our historic neighborhood.
- !7 Apart
- 
19. [Richmond's Historic Fan District - City-Data Forum](#)  
View [01/02/2012](#)  
[...] of Richmond's Fan District compiled by John Murden for the Fan neighborhood blog, Fan of the Fan. The Fan Area Historic District & Fan of the Fan Feel free to share your photos as [...]
- 
20.  [facebook\\_gardner.phillips](#)  
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Enjoyed it thanks for sharing
- 
21.  [@historicRIC](#)  
View [01/03/2012](#)  
Check it out! Well done, John! <http://t.co/LFLYfi8O>


22. [Tickets available for Real Richmond's VCU/Fan Alternative Eats tour < Fan of the Fan](#)  
View [01/08/2012](#)  
[...] food tour will highlight the arts, literary, and musical history of the area as well as pay heed to the Victorian architecture of The [...]
- 

23.  [barbara b](#)  
View [04/23/2012](#)  
grew up in Scuffletown! Wonderful!!!
- 

24.  [Colin](#)  
View [05/11/2012](#)  
What a great collection of pictures and stories
- 

25.  [Roger Whitfield](#)  
View [05/13/2012](#)  
As the new FDA president, this article lifts my heart and is a testament to the efforts of those trying to keep the Fan a healthy and vibrant neighborhood. Thank you Fan of the Fan.
- 

26. [New Fan District History < Fan District Association](#)  
View [05/14/2012](#)  
[...] of the Fan has posted an excellent history of the Fan District, which may be found here. Thanks to everyone who wrote this up! [...]
- 

27.  [Colin](#)  
View [05/14/2012](#)  
This is a great piece, clearly you have done a lot of research... do you think at some point you would do a "history of the Parks in the Fan?"
- 

28. [The Fan District – Area 10 - :](#)  
View [06/04/2012](#)  
[...] Click here for a very detailed history of the Fan District including photos of prominent homes in the district. [...]
- 

29. [Neighborhood gets props in USA Today's "Eleven reasons to visit Richmond" < Fan of the Fan](#)  
View [06/04/2012](#)  
[...] offer architecture that includes everything from turn of the century to modern green home building. The Fan District, named after its unique "fanning out of streets," is home to a number of pubs and [...]
-

- 
30. [Sophisticates and Wild Men: Richmond's Architects at the Turn of the Twentieth Century](#) < [Fan of the Fan](#)  
View [09/04/2012](#)  
[...] and Edwardian exuberance and originality. The interplay between these two approaches created an exciting mix of styles and buildings. Most of the works of these men [...]
- 



31. [Carol Anne Locknane Oliver](#)  
View [09/09/2012](#)  
How surprised to find James Caldwell (J.C.) Locknane as one of the builders of the Fan District! I feel that his brothers George E Locknane and John Marshall Locknane were his co-workers since they are listed as building construction workers in the censuses. The other brother Charles Russell Locknane was a mill hand at an establishment that I can't read that starts with Bl.....
- 

32. [Living in old, historic houses in The Fan for college - Help? - City-Data Forum](#)  
View [12/19/2012](#)  
[...] The Fan Area Historic District < [Fan of the Fan Enjoy](#). [...]
- 

33. [The Boulevard Historic District](#) < [West of the Boulevard News](#)  
View [12/25/2012](#)  
[...] The sale price of private residences on the Boulevard tended to be within the \$5,000 to \$7,000 price range. Research in city directories indicate that the houses were, for the most part, owned by middle-class families. Architecturally, they are similar to many dwellings found in the Fan Area Historic District. [...]
- 

34. [The Boulevard Historic District](#) < [Fan of the Fan](#)  
View [12/25/2012](#)  
[...] Fan Area Historic District [...]
- 

35. [Best place for a young 20 something - Page 2 - City-Data Forum](#)  
View [11 months ago](#)  
[...] that you would probably like: The Fan and Church Hill. Here are some pictures of the Fan: [The Fan Area Historic District](#) < [Fan of the Fan](#) The Fan is also adjacent the Museum District which has the same style. Churchill is also [...]
- 

36. [Main Street Barber and Mercantile is classic and new](#) < [Fan of the Fan](#)  
View [9 months ago](#)  
[...] Fan Area Historic District [...]
- 



37. [Larry Lanberg](#)  
View [6 months ago](#)  
I love this website. I mean, someone's gone above & beyond with the research.
-

38. [The Ginter Park Historic District - North Richmond News](#)

View 6 months ago

[...] The Fan Area Historic District [...]

39. [The Fan District \(Richmond, VA\) | Everything Richmond](#)

View 3 months ago

[...] There are various architectural styles and building treatments represented among the block after block of brick town houses and row [...]

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