

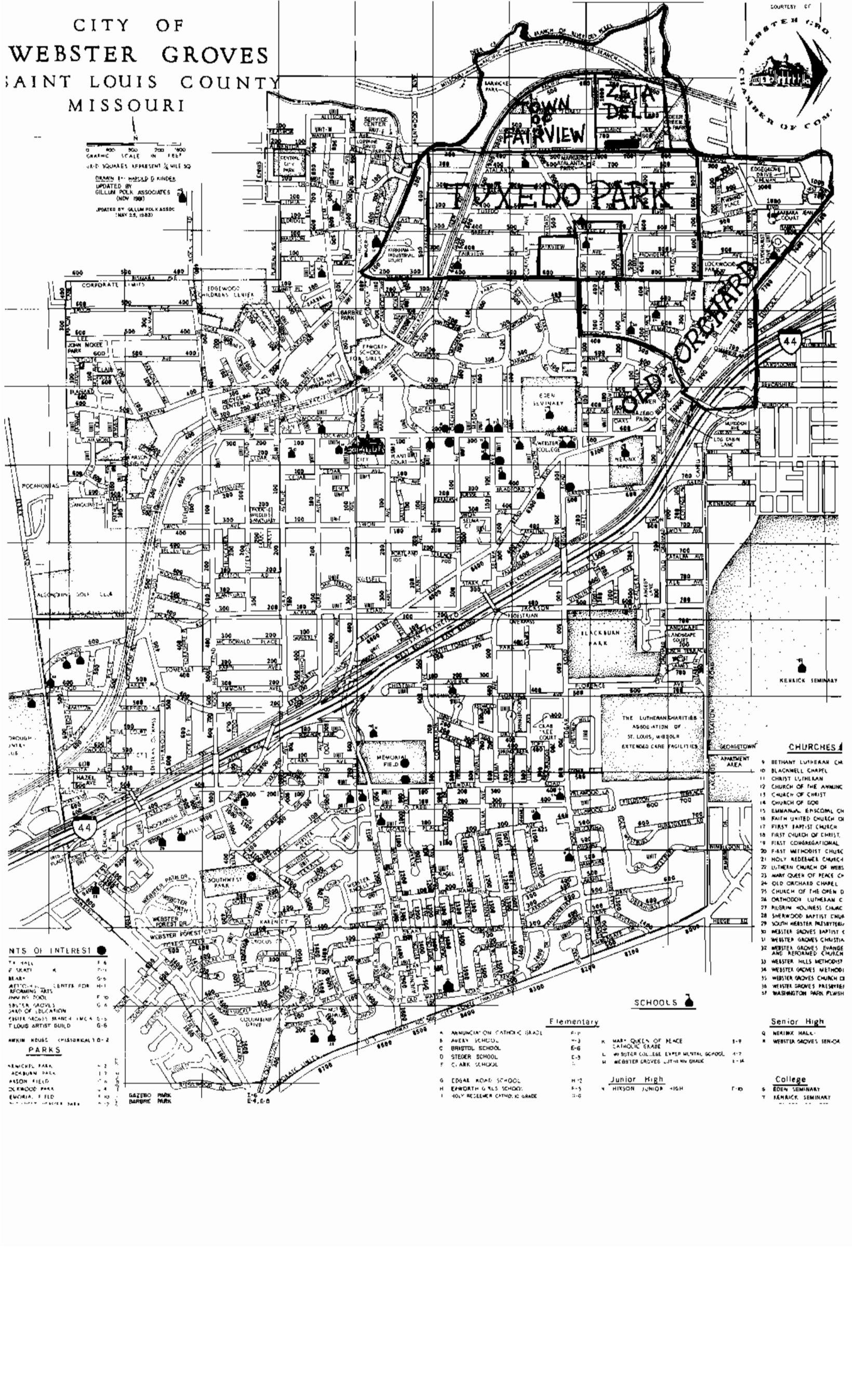
AN HISTORIC SURVEY
OF THE MARSHALL AVENUE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
IN WEBSTER GROVES

CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES SAINT LOUIS COUNTY MISSOURI



GRAPHIC SCALE IN FEET
1" = 200' SQUARES APPARENT 1/4 MILE SQ

DRAWN BY HAROLD D. KINDEL
UPDATED BY GILLIAM POLK ASSOCIATES (NOV 1980)
PRINTED BY GILLIAM POLK ASSOC (MAY 24, 1982)



- POINTS OF INTEREST**
- F-6 TR. HALL
 - F-6 TR. HALL
 - K-6 BRARY
 - G-6 BRARY
 - H-11 REFORMING ARTS CENTER FOR
 - F-10 JENNIS TOWER
 - G-6 WEBSTER GROVES
 - G-6 BOARD OF EDUCATION
 - G-6 WEBSTER GROVES BRANCH IMCA
 - G-6 FLOUS ARTIST BUILD

- PARKS**
- 2 KENICKS PARK
 - 1-7 ACKBURN PARK
 - 7-6 ARSON FIELD
 - 4-4 DEERWOOD PARK
 - 1-10 EUCORIA FIELD
 - 1-7 GAZEBO PARK
 - 1-7 BARRE PARK

Elementary

- A ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC GRADE
- B AVERY SCHOOL
- C BRISTOL SCHOOL
- D STEGER SCHOOL
- F C. ARK SCHOOL
- G EDGAR ROBE SCHOOL
- H EPWORTH G. RLS. SCHOOL
- I HOLY RECEMER CATHOLIC GRADE

Junior High

- K MARY QUEEN OF PEACE
- L WEBSTER COLLEGE EXPER. MENTAL SCHOOL
- M WEBSTER GROVES LUTHERAN GRADE
- N HIXSON JUNIOR HIGH

SCHOOLS

CHURCHES

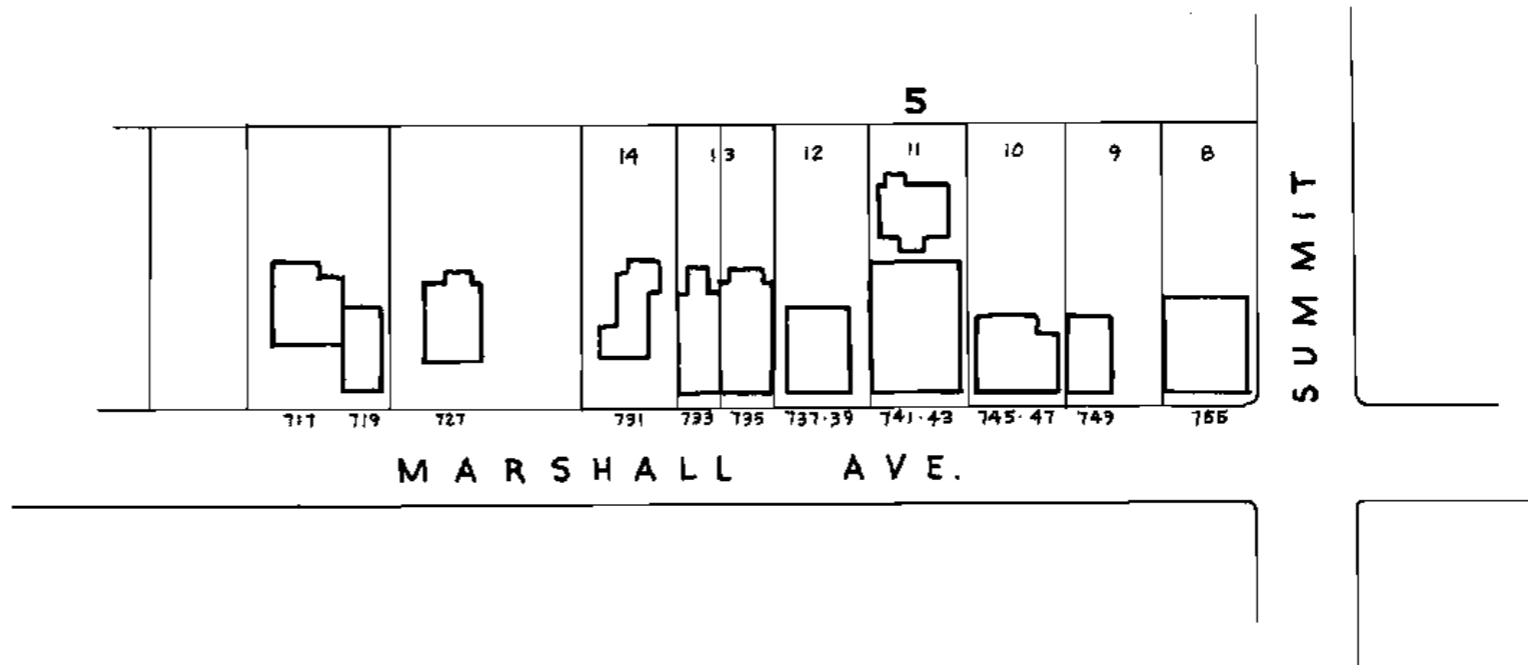
- 9 BETHANY LUTHERAN CH
- 10 BLACKWELL CHAPEL
- 11 CHRIST LUTHERAN
- 12 CHURCH OF THE ANNUNG
- 13 CHURCH OF CHRIST
- 14 CHURCH OF GOD
- 15 EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CH
- 16 FAITH UNITED CHURCH CH
- 17 FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
- 18 FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST
- 19 FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
- 20 FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
- 21 HOLY REDEMER CHURCH
- 22 LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WEBS
- 23 MARY QUEEN OF PEACE CH
- 24 OLD ORCHARD CHAPEL
- 25 CHURCH OF THE OPEN D
- 26 ORTHODOX LUTHERAN C
- 27 PILGRIM HOLINESS CHURC
- 28 SHERWOOD BAPTIST CHUR
- 29 SOUTH WEBSTER PRESBYTERI
- 30 WEBSTER GROVES BAPTIST C
- 31 WEBSTER GROVES CHRISTIA
- 32 WEBSTER GROVES EVANGEL
- 33 WEBSTER HILLS METHODIST
- 34 WEBSTER GROVES METHODIS
- 35 WEBSTER GROVES CHURCH D
- 36 WEBSTER GROVES PRESBYTER
- 37 WASHINGTON PARK PLWASH

Senior High

- Q WEBSTER HALL
- R WEBSTER GROVES SENIOR

College

- S EDEN SEMINARY
- T KENIAK SEMINARY



MARSHALL AVENUE BUSINESS DISTRICT
WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI



1" = 100'

Back in the days when the City of Webster Groves was divided into four wards, the northeast section of the city was known as the Bloody Fourth Ward.¹ The Bloody Fourth was made up of the community of Old Orchard including several subdivisions developed by the Joy Brothers, the large real estate development known as Tuxedo Park, an early subdivision called the Town of Fairview and other small subdivisions north of Webster Park and Oakwood Avenue and east of Webster Park and Shady Avenue (now called Brentwood Boulevard).² Old Orchard and Tuxedo Park grew up as commuter communities around the Old Orchard Station on the Frisco Railroad and the Tuxedo Park Station on the Missouri Pacific. They were both annexed by the City of Webster Groves in 1897, one year after the city had incorporated.³ The residents of Old Orchard and Tuxedo Park were furious and for almost twenty years they tried to secede from Webster. They resented being taxed to pay for water, sewers, gas, electricity, streets and sidewalks that were installed first in central Webster and Webster Park. They did not want those improvements for themselves. They treasured their rural innocence, their fenced pastures and their spring water.⁴

Today the area is all built up, civilized, urbanized. It is all residential except for the large commercial area along Big Bend Boulevard, still called Old Orchard, and a small, half block of commercial buildings on Marshall Avenue at Summit which resembles a western ghost town. This survey will examine that half block of buildings to see why history put them there.



745, 747 and 749 Marshall Avenue today.

The subdivision now known as Zeta Dell lies north of Marshall Avenue and east of the subdivision called the Town of Fairview.⁵ It is 25 acres in the southeast corner of a Spanish Land Grant given to Therese Barois and Francis Brazeau.⁶ Henri Picotte, an early member of the American Fur Company,⁷ bought the 25 acres and gave it to his daughter, Celeste, before the Civil War.⁸ Celeste married Dr. Louis Tousard Pim, a prominent St. Louis physician, a student and partner of Dr. Joseph N. McDowell. During the Civil War, Pim established and had charge of the hospital system of the South.⁹ The Pims built a summer home on their 25 acres near the Missouri Pacific Railroad but after Prim's death in 1888, Celeste Pim created the Zeta Dell Subdivision in 1890 and sold all the land. Summit Avenue north of Marshall Avenue was originally called Celeste.¹⁰

Also in 1890, the Tuxedo Park Land and Improvement Company, with Lilburn G. McNair as the president, subdivided the two hundred acres south of Marshall Avenue, calling it Tuxedo Park and advertising it as a beautiful commuter suburb.¹¹ The brochure, called "Leaves of Tuxedo", praised the new Queen Anne style, white stone, Tuxedo Park station. It had forty daily trains to and from Union Station. McNair arranged for free excursions on the train to see Tuxedo Park with its \$500 lots that could be purchased for only ten dollars down and ten dollars a month. The exclusive subdivision had deed restrictions which prohibited saloons, stores and groceries but there was free delivery from the city.¹²

The new houses going up and the deed restrictions in the large subdivisions, Tuxedo Park and the many Old Orchard subdivisions being developed by Edward and Justin Joy, created a market for small convenience stores, confectionaries, where there were no deed restrictions. Zeta Dell had no deed restrictions.¹³

In 1890 Clement and Elizabeth Foster bought Lot 9 of Block 5 of Zeta Dell and built a simple two-story frame building, a store on the first floor with living quarters above.¹⁴ For years it was known as Burney's Confectionary, owned by Charles and Nellie Burney.¹⁵ It sat right on Marshall Avenue, a dirt road along the property line between the original Spanish land grants and running from the old Fairview Station east to Deer Creek and the Big Bend Road.¹⁶

The 1890 Plat of Celeste Pim's Zeta Dell subdivision shows a station where Celeste Avenue, now Summit Avenue, meets the Missouri Pacific Railroad.¹⁷ Tracks were laid north from this point to Creve Coeur Lake in 1881, and the small board and batten Lake Junction Station was built at the junction where the Creve Coeur Branch broke off from the main line of the Missouri Pacific Railroad.¹⁸ For many years it was a flag stop. Trains slowed down as they approached the wooden shelter and if the engineer saw anyone waiting at the station he stopped and the passenger bought a

ticket on the train.¹⁹ During the 1920's the station was busy enough to require a ticket agent, Charles W. Bonnell.²⁰ Whether busy or not, the station generated foot traffic on Summit Avenue.



Site of Lake Junction Station at the end of Summit Avenue, today.

In 1893 Sidney and Elizabeth Bickley built a two-story brick building on Lot 12 of Block 5 of Zeta Dell.²¹ Dolen's Grocery Store occupied the first floor and there was an apartment upstairs.²² Still is.

Then in 1897 the Manchester Electric Streetcar Line was laid down the middle of Summit Avenue and northeast over a viaduct to Maplewood.²³ At the other end of Summit it turned west onto Lockwood Avenue and ran through Kirkwood to Meramec

Highlands, but its more important orientation was toward the northeast and Maplewood. Maplewood was a large commercial area and it was close. People from Tuxedo Park rode the Manchester Line to Maplewood to shop or to work more often than they went to the commercial area of Webster Groves.²⁴ A streetcar stop and shelter at Marshall Avenue and Summit created a strong potential market for convenience stores in Zeta Dell.



Hughs Grocery (later Hackmann's Groceries and Meats), 745 and 747 Marshall Avenue, built 1905 and Burney's Confectionary, 749 Marshall Avenue, built 1890. Photograph taken 1962, courtesy of Bob Wood.

In 1905 Claude and Mary Hughs built a two-story brick building with a Victorian cast iron storefront on Lot 10 of Block 5.²⁵ They opened a grocery store on the first floor and lived upstairs.²⁶ And in 1909 Dr. Horace Van Nort bought Lot 13 and built a small one-story frame drugstore.²⁷

And that was Marshall Avenue at Summit near the Lake Junction flag stop, from the turn of the century until the 1920's; two groceries, a confectionary and a drugstore. Mothers sent their children to Dolen's Grocery Store with a shopping list and a wagon and Mr. Dolen filled each list and gave each child a hot dog. Dr. Van Nort mixed prescriptions and sold ice cream. And the Burneys who had the confectionary sold penny candy and knew all the children by name. The Manchester Streetcar Line had a shelter at the stop on the southwest corner of Marshall and Summit and boys sold newspapers there. Men pitched horseshoes in the vacant lot on the northwest corner of Marshall and Summit. Children went down to the Deer Creek Branch of the River Des Peres to ice skate in winter and to catch crawdads in summer. They watched the men from the Missouri Pacific construct the 1912 Bridge over Deer Creek. Every evening they played stickball in the middle of the dirt road until the street lights came on.²⁸

Children went to the Tuxedo Park School and when Tuxedo Park had a school picnic the school band led a parade of children, parents and teachers down Atalanta to Summit where they got on chartered streetcars decorated with flags and bunting and rode to Forest Park.²⁹



Peter White's house, 731 Marshall Avenue, built 1903, also Dr. Horace Van Nort's Drugstore, 733 Marshall Avenue, built 1909. Photograph taken 1962, courtesy of Bob Wood.

Peter and Mary White had a frame house on lot 14 of Block 5 of Zeta Dell just west of where Van Nort built his drugstore. Peter White played the saxophone for the Powhatten Theater Orchestra in Maplewood and the neighbors loved to hear him practice. Bret Callicott lived in the large brick house west of the Whites. Callicott was a mail sorter on the Missouri Pacific Railroad and every Christmas he set up electric trains in his basement and neighborhood children came to watch. West of Callicott's the Robyns had a small, old, frame house and west of them the Connelys had a small farm with a big barn and sold milk.³⁰



Bret Callicott's house, 727 Marshall Avenue, built 1910. Photograph taken 1962, courtesy of Bob Wood.

Most families had a shotgun in case of fire. If there was a fire at night, like the one at Callicott's, someone ran out in the backyard and fired his shotgun in the air and all the neighbors came running with buckets. It would take almost an hour for someone to jump on a horse and ride into Old Orchard and return with the volunteer fire department.³¹

In the 1920's the commercial bustle along Marshall Avenue began to expand. In 1909 Zeta Dell and the Town of Fairview on the north side of Marshall were incorporated into Webster Groves.³² In 1913 Oliver Hackmann moved into Claude Hughs building with the cast iron front and the covered wood sidewalk.³³ Hackmann's Groceries and Meats became an institution. Mr. Hackmann took orders over the phone, extended credit and delivered in his old black van until he died in the late 1960's.³⁴



Gebelien's Dry Goods Store, 753 and 755 Marshall Avenue, built 1922. Photograph taken in 1962, courtesy of Bob Wood.

In 1922, Charles M. Gebelien built a dry goods store with an apartment above on the northwest corner of Summit and Marshall, where men used to play horseshoes.³⁵ Gebelien sold fabric, notions, hats and women's clothes through the 1940's.³⁶ Mack, the barber, had a barbershop in the west half of the building.³⁷

In 1924, Charles Burney had a gasoline pump installed on the sidewalk in front of his confectionary shop.³⁸ Automobiles were appearing.



Old Robyn house, 717 Marshall Avenue, built 1909 and Conway's Confectionary, 719 Marshall Avenue, built 1925. Photograph taken 1962, courtesy of Bob Wood.

In 1925 Burdette and Caroline Conway were living in the little Robyn house at 717 Marshall Avenue and they had a small, one-story, brick store added onto the east side of their house - Conway's Confectionary.³⁹

In 1926, Floyd Wood built a two-story, brick drugstore with an apartment upstairs at 735 Marshall Avenue.⁴⁰ Wood was fresh out of pharmacy school. In those days all prescriptions were mixed by hand and fifteen prescriptions in one day was a good day.⁴¹



Goldstein's Piggley Wiggley Grocery Store, 741 and 743 Marshall Avenue, built 1927. Photograph taken 1962, courtesy Bob Wood.

In 1927, L. Goldstein built a large one-story building between Dolen's Grocery Store and Hackmann's Groceries and Meats.⁴² It was a Piggley Wiggley Grocery Store⁴³ and that filled in the block.

In 1929 Louis Rothlesberger had Van Nort's Drug Store altered for a barbershop and shoe repair shop.⁴⁴

During the Depression George Benne opened a grocery store where Dolen's Grocery had been at 739 Marshall. Benne was living where Peter White had lived, 731 Marshall,⁴⁵ and in 1935 he built the large grocery store across the street at 748 Marshall that is now Geggus's Market.⁴⁶ This grocery store is in the Tuxedo Park Subdivision where there are deed restrictions against commercial buildings but it is up to

property owners within a subdivision to take any deed restriction violations to the civil court and apparently no one felt strongly enough against Benne's Grocery to do so.⁴⁷

A tavern where Dolen and Benne had been at 739 Marshall sold sandwiches and 3-2 beer during the 1930's and 1940's.⁴⁸



Floyd Wood's Pharmacy in the old Piggley Wiggley Store, 743 Marshall Avenue. Photograph taken in the 1940's courtesy of Webster Groves Historical Society.



Interior of Floyd Wood's Pharmacy, 743 Marshall Avenue. Photograph taken in 1950's, courtesy of Bob Wood.

Floyd Wood moved his drugstore into the old Piggley Wiggley at 743 Marshall in the 1930's.⁴⁹ George Werner had a hardware store in Wood's old drugstore, 735 Marshall during the thirties and forties.⁵⁰ In 1949, Milton Graubner and his son-in-law, Fred Berger, bought out Werner and operated Graubner-Berger Hardware there until 1979. There was a dentist's office upstairs.⁵¹



Old Van Hort Drug Store, 733 Marshall Avenue, Graubner Berger Hardware Store, 735 Marshall Avenue, built 1926 for Floyd Wood, and 737 and 739 Marshall Avenue, built 1893. Photograph taken 1962, courtesy Bob Wood.

The Missouri Pacific removed the old Lake Junction Station in 1937,⁵² but there was still much foot traffic in the area because the Manchester streetcar was an important commuter facility through World War II.⁵³ However, around 1950 the streetcars stopped running.⁵⁴ The bus company purchased the viaduct over Deer Creek and used it until it became unsafe and was torn down in the 1970's.⁵⁵ Automobiles, shopping centers and supermarkets took customers away from these convenient neighborhood stores. Zoning would not permit more stores or parking lots.⁵⁶

As each business closed Bob Wood, the son of Floyd Wood, both of whom were pharmacists, bought the building and in the 1950's and early sixties he owned the entire row of buildings.⁵⁷ He rented some of the storefronts as apartments. Antique shops came and went. He sold all the buildings in the late sixties.⁵⁸

The buildings are all owner occupied now. Most of the owners are contractors or artisans. This commercial row of buildings is ideal for these businesses because they have low overhead and contractors do not need an impressive public appearance.

The area seems eligible to be designated a local historic district. Lack of economic growth has protected these buildings from extensive modernization. They have an air of history, frozen time. Inside one sees pressed tin ceilings and hardwood floors. However, the present owners, although their "adjusted basis" (the depreciated property value calculated for tax purposes) is significantly low, may have little need for tax credits for restoration and find the Department of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation too restrictive. The important task for the Webster Groves Historic Preservation Commission will be to help property owners appreciate the history and the architectural characteristics of their typical vernacular buildings and find simple, inexpensive ways to preserve or restore their nostalgic charm.

Prepared by the Historic Section of the St. Louis County
Department of Parks and Recreation

with funding from the Missouri State Historic Preservation Program
and the St. Louis County Community Development Program

NOTES

1. Captain Tom Gibson, Memories of the Old Home Town, (Webster Groves: The Webster News Times, 1946), p. 105.
2. Plat Book of St. Louis County, Missouri, (Des Moines, Iowa: Northwest Publishing Co., 1909), pp. 58 and 59.
3. Webster Groves Ordinance #64, May 29, 1897.
4. "Old Orchard", Kate Moody Collection located at the Missouri Historical Society.
5. Plat Book of St. Louis County, Missouri, 1909, pp. 58 and 59.
6. C. Thomas Uhlmann, Atlas of St. Louis County, Missouri, (St. Louis: Julius Hutawa, 1862), Township 44 Range 6 East of the 5th Principal Meridian.
7. Ibid.
William Hyde and Howard Conard, Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis, (St. Louis: The Southern History Company, 1899), pp. 1736-1738, "Pim, Louis Tousard".
8. Julius Pitzman, Atlas of St. Louis City and County, (St. Louis: 1878), "Webster Groves".
9. William Hyde and Howard Conard, Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis, pp. 1736-1738, "Pim, Louis Tousard".
10. St. Louis County Plat Book 2, p. 96, located in Recorder of Deeds' Office.
11. St. Louis County Plat Book 2, p. 95.
St. Louis County Plat Book 3, p. 10.
12. "Leaves of Tuxedo," a brochure located in the archives of the Missouri Historical Society, (St. Louis, Tuxedo Park Land and Improvement Co., 1890).
13. St. Louis County Deed Book 48, p. 154, located in the Recorder of Deeds' Office.
14. St. Louis County Deed Book 48, p. 154.
St. Louis County Deed Book 51, p. 254.
15. Conversations with Jim McMillan, 10 Jefferson Road and Grace Wifley, c/o Mrs. Donald Maness, 835 Renee Lane.
16. Julius Pitzman, Atlas of St. Louis City and County, (St. Louis: 1878), "Webster Groves."
17. St. Louis County Plat Book 2, p. 96.
18. Conversation with Walter Fussner, Public Relations Department, Missouri Pacific Railway Company, 13th and Olive.
19. Conversation with Jim McMillan.
20. Missouri Pacific Railroad Train Schedule, 1925, in collection of Walter Fussner, Missouri Pacific Railway Company.

21. St. Louis County Deed Book 69, p. 100.
St. Louis County Deed Book 70, p. 228.
22. Conversations with Jim McMillan and Grace Wifley.
23. "Growth and Improvements", Kate Moody Collection.
24. Conversation with Jim McMillan.
25. St. Louis County Deed Book 162, p. 72.
26. Conversation with Grace Wifley.
27. St. Louis County Deed Book 223, p. 582.
28. Conversation with Jim McMillan.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Webster Groves City Ordinance #797, April 19, 1909.
33. Photograph owned by Bob Wood, Wood Drugs, 10702 Manchester Road, taken 1962, says "Hackmann Groceries and Meats, Established 1913."
34. Conversation with Bob Wagner, 737 Marshall Avenue.
35. Webster Groves Building Permit #1850.
36. Conversation with Bob Wood.
37. Ibid.
38. Webster Groves Building Permit #2301.
39. Webster Groves Building Permit #3091.
Conversation with Jim McMillan.
40. Webster Groves Building Permit #3670.
41. Conversation with Bob Wood.
42. Webster Groves Building Permit #3977.
43. Conversation with Bob Wood.
44. Webster Groves Building Permit #4634.
45. Conversations with Bob Wood and Jim McMillan.
46. Webster Groves Building Permit #5403.

47. Conversation with Mary Lou Miller, City Clerk of Webster Groves.
48. Conversation with Mrs. Fred Berger, 8826 Laclede Station Road.
49. Conversation with Bob Wood.
50. Conversation with Mrs. Fred Berger.
51. Ibid.
52. "Missouri Pacific Railway Company Bridges and Buildings Inventory", from Walter Fussner.
53. Conversation with Mrs. Allen Goodloe, 108 S. Rock Hill Road.
54. Conversation with Mrs. Gerald Rogers, 545 Lee Avenue.
55. Conversation with Mary Lou Miller.
56. Webster Groves Zoning Map, 1956, located in City Clerk's Office.
57. Conversation with Bob Wood.
58. Conversation with Bob Wagner.