
BEACON HILL HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT



CITY OF SEATTLE
DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS

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INTRODUCTION

Beacon Hill is a long north-south trending ridge extending from about Dearborn Street on the north to just beyond Roxbury Street on the south. On its western boundary, where the tideflats once extended, is Interstate 5. On the east, the hill extends to Rainier Avenue South and south of Hanford Street, to the approximate location of Martin Luther King Jr. Way. At its highest, Beacon Hill is 350 feet in elevation.

Although close to Seattle's original Pioneer Square settlement, Beacon Hill developed somewhat later than other areas near downtown. This is partly because Beacon Hill is cut off from the rest of Seattle and downtown by a steep hillside on its western slope. Elliott Bay's original shoreline was just west of Beacon Hill and approximates the route of Airport Way South. Starting in the 1890s, the tideflats north of the Duwamish River were filled to create lands for industrial expansion. Beacon Hill's east hillside slopes more gently down to the Rainier Valley. Beacon Hill once extended farther north to connect with the south extent of First Hill, but the Dearborn and Jackson Street regrades removed the portion of the hill that blocked the growth of the Rainier Valley. The José Rizal Bridge at 12th Avenue South connects Beacon Hill with the eastern portion of the International District to the north. In addition to its topography, highway construction starting in the 1960s has also contributed to the neighborhood's relative isolation. It is interesting to compare Beacon Hill with Queen Anne Hill, which developed early-on as an attractive residential area for upper and middle income families, while Beacon Hill has remained an ethnically diverse, low-to-middle income community.

This context statement focuses on the north Beacon Hill area from the José Rizal Bridge on the north to include Jefferson Park on the south, with an approximate south boundary of South Snoqualmie Street, Columbian Way, and South Alaska Street (see map). The western boundary is I-5 and on the east, the approximate boundary is Rainier Avenue on the north to the intersection of Rainier Avenue, Cheasty Boulevard, and Martin Luther King Jr. Way. South of this intersection, the eastern boundary of the area is Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

PREHISTORY AND PIONEER SETTLEMENT (TO 1879)

Native American Use

Prior to the Euro-American settlement of Puget Sound, the Duwamish tribe had a village called Tal-tal-kus at the approximate location of Airport Way South and South Spokane Street. This village included five medium-sized, cedar longhouses (History Link). The Indians subsisted on salmon and steelhead from the Duwamish River, shellfish, and potatoes. Along the shore of Beacon Hill, there was a sand spit at the edge of the easternmost mouth of the Duwamish River called Tuxpac'tEb, which means a "place for setting things out." Another Duwamish Indian village, called Djidjila'letch or "little crossing over place" was located in the Pioneer Square area, north and west of Beacon Hill (Waterman 2001, 61). They named the village Djidjila'letch, "the place to pass over," because it offered a convenient route between the mouth of the Duwamps (Duwamish) River and Lake Washington on the east.

According to one pioneer historian, Sophie Frye Bass, an Indian burial place was located on small hill near Beach Road at the foot of the Beacon Hill bluff (Bass 1937, 99). An Indian trail from Lake Washington to the Duwamish River crossed south Beacon Hill at approximately where Cloverdale Street is today (Buerge n.d., 8). Another Indian trail went from Pioneer Square to Renton along the Rainier Valley, the general route of Rainier Avenue South today. The lake people of the Duwamish tribe had a major village along Lake Washington at Renton.

Early Settlers

The first Euro-American settlers came to the Puget Sound area in the 1850s seeking suitable land for farming and to log the area's extensive forests, and they envisioned future towns and cities in the region.

During the summer of 1850, John Cornelius Holgate, a young man from Iowa who had moved to Oregon, explored the Puget Sound area. He hired two Indians to paddle and guide him around the area, including along the Duwamish River. After traveling to southern Oregon to seek gold, he returned to King County in the spring of 1853 with Edward and Abbie Jane Hanford and their family and relatives.

On September 14, 1851, King County's first white settlers, Luther M. Collins, Henry Van Asselt, Jacob Maple (or Mapel) and his son Samuel Maple (Mapel) arrived at the mouth of the Duwamish River. They selected claims about three miles up the river on September 16.

Henry Van Asselt filed the first claim on Beacon Hill in 1851. This was filed under the Donation Land Claim Act. The federal Oregon Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 encouraged settlement in the Oregon Territory, which extended from California to Canada. This act allowed settlers who became residents of the territory prior to December 1, 1850 to claim 320 acres if single and 640 acres if married. Those who arrived after December 1, 1850 could homestead 160 acres if single and 320 acres if married. They were required to clear, cultivate, and occupy the land for four years. (The federal Preemption Act allowed a person who claimed land to purchase it from the U.S. government for \$1.25 an acre after two years' residence. In 1854, this requirement was reduced to one year.)

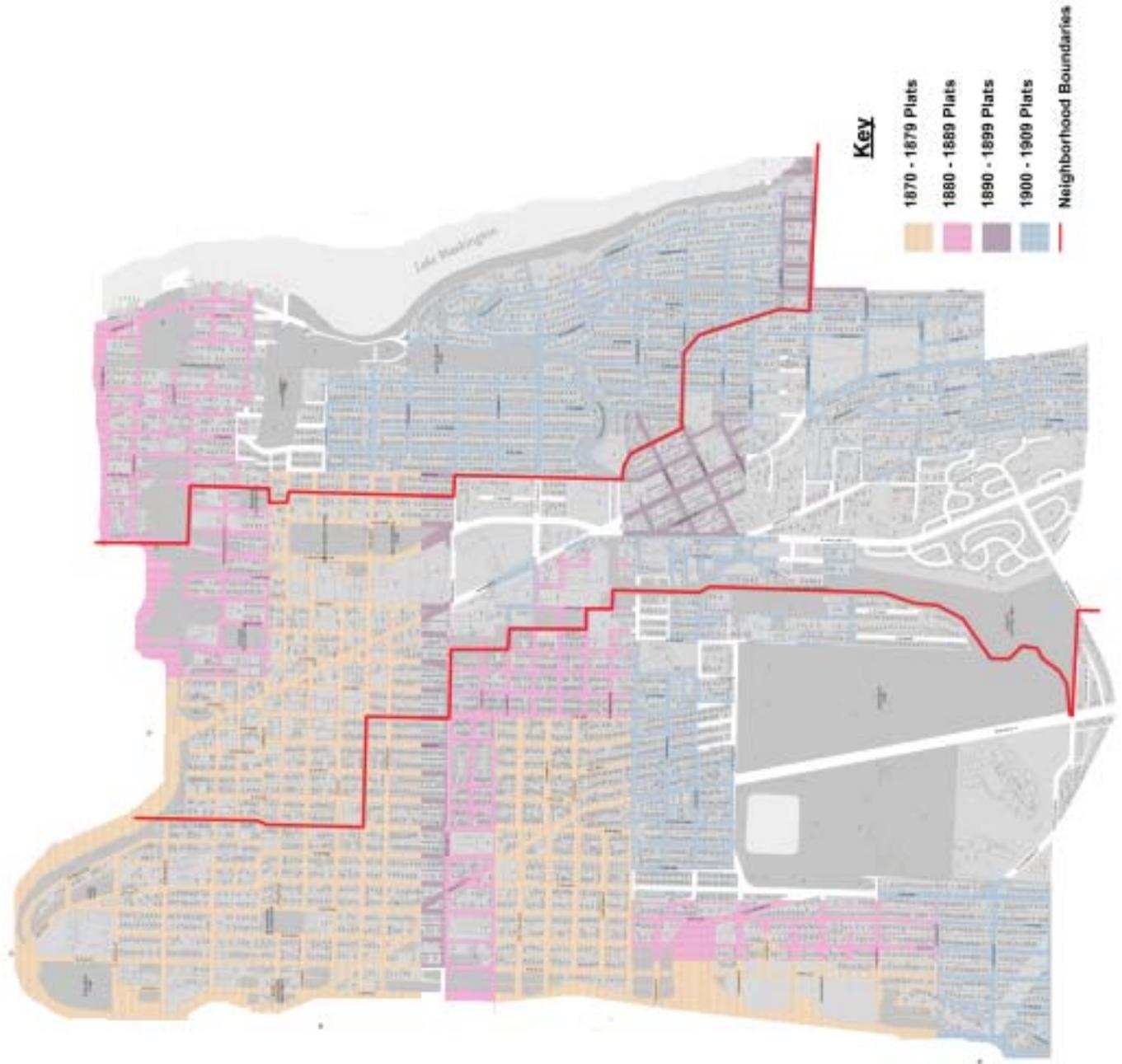
Henry Van Asselt filed a 360-acre claim at the south end of Beacon Hill near Boeing Field. Jacob and Samuel Maple (or Mapel) filed claims on Beacon Hill to the north of Van Asselt's. Although Beacon Hill was originally called "Maple Hill," it was apparently not named for the Mapel family (Lange, personal communication, September 4, 2003). Apparently John Wesley Mapel, another of Jacob's sons, joined the family in Seattle in 1862, and he officially changed the spelling of the family name from "Mapel" to "Maple." John Wesley Maple taught at King County's first school, located near where Boeing Field is today (Seattle Times, 10/29/1951).

In 1853, John C. Holgate and his brothers-in-law, Edward and John Hanford, arrived in Seattle and took claims on the north end of Maple Hill. They cut timber in the area until the Indian War of 1855-56, when the Native Americans drove the settlers away and destroyed their buildings. Maple Hill was also called Holgate and Hanford Hill (Bass 1937, 94). The Indian War slowed the development of the hill. However, the Military Road between Seattle and Olympia was built in 1860, partly as a result of the Indian War.

Many of the street names on Beacon Hill reflect the names of the early settlers. Two examples are Holgate and Hanford streets.

Plat Map

Beacon Hill (left),
 North Rainier Valley (central),
 Mount Baker (right) Neighborhoods



The following Donation Land Claims were filed in the Beacon Hill area.

- David S. Maynard Donation Land Claim No. 43 – north end of Beacon Hill to between 13th & 14th avenues
- John C. Holgate Donation Land Claim No. 41 – south line Bayview Street, east line 30th Avenue
- Edward Hanford Donation Land Claim No. 44 – north line Bayview Street, south line Hanford, east line 30th Avenue
- John J. Moss Donation Land Claim No. 45 – north line Hanford Street, south line south of Dakota Street
- Luther M. Collins Donation Land Claim No. 40 – south of Snoqualmie Street.

Early Transportation and Platting

The first road in King County crossed Beacon Hill and was known as Road No. 1. It followed the line of today's Beacon Avenue from Chicago Street on the south to Hanford on the north, then the general route of Cheasty Boulevard to Rainier Avenue. The road then wound around the hills to Yesler Way and Seattle's waterfront. It crossed the claims of Horton, Van Asselt, Hanford and others (Phelps 1978, 97). It shows as "county road" on early maps. Although there was some building along the early roads on Beacon Hill, most of the development took place later after the area was platted.

Another early road was Beach or River Road, which ran along foot of Beacon Hill bluff (east of today's Airport Way) and south along Duwamish River. It was either built in 1850s (Bass 1937, 98) or in 1862 (Phelps 1978, 98).

Military Road was authorized and financed by the U.S. Congress, and in 1854 the Washington territorial legislature petitioned to have it built. The section from Olympia to Fort Steilacoom to Seattle was completed in 1860 and the portion from Seattle to Bellingham in 1863 (Phelps 1978, 97-98). Military Road traversed the western edge of Beacon Hill along the tideflats, and then cut over Beacon Hill (Bass 1937, 99). It may have followed the route of today's Columbian Way uphill. Apparently, the settlers used the Beach Road route during summer months, and traveled a roadway on top of Beacon Hill during the winter (Phelps, 1978, 98-99).

After Seattle lost the bid for the West Coast terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad to Tacoma in 1873, the indefatigable Seattleites decided to build their own railroad. Starting in 1874, the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad built its rail line just west of Beach Road. This line, which had grand ambitions judging from its name, terminated at the Newcastle coal mines near Renton in 1877-1878. The transcontinental Northern Pacific Railroad reached Seattle in 1884. The eventual location of Seattle's main industrial area was on the tideflats immediately west of Beacon Hill, and the proximity to railroad line was instrumental in the future industrial development of this area.

In 1869, the City of Seattle incorporated, with a south boundary of Atlantic Street, so that the original city did not include much of Beacon Hill except its northernmost tip. The city's north boundary was Howell Street. (King County was created much earlier, on December 22, 1852, by an act of the Oregon Territorial Legislature. The county seat was Seattle.)

One of the first to purchase property in the Beacon Hill area was Charles Plummer, who bought land at the north end of the hill from Doctor David S. Maynard in 1860. Plummer came to Seattle in 1853 and he owned a general store at First and Main and served as the town's postmaster for a time. He also invested in a sawmill on the Black River, a livery stable, and a brickyard in Seattle. Plummer built one of Seattle's largest hotels, the Conklin House and invested in a considerable amount of real estate in Seattle. He died in 1866 (Seattle Times, 10/11/1959). Later, in 1876, some of his property was platted as Plummer's Addition.

Riley's Addition to South Seattle.

200' 1 inch.

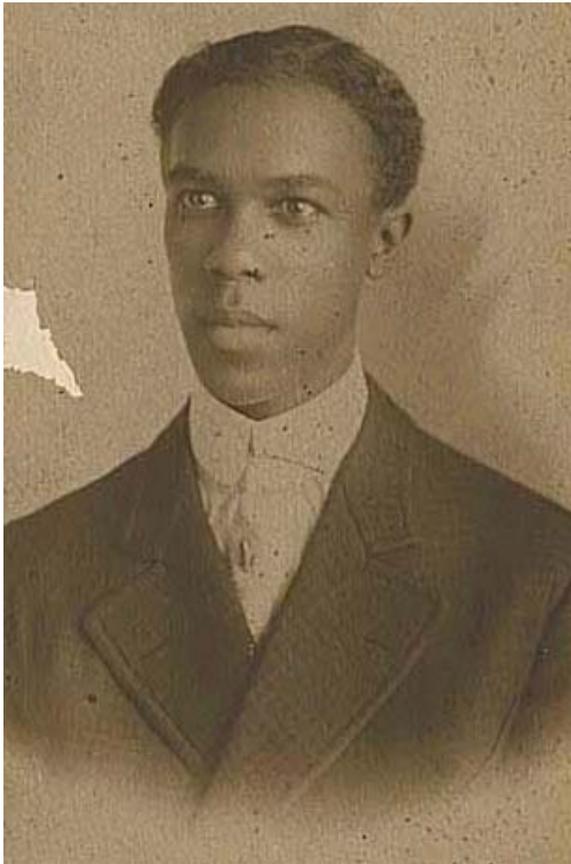


Belonging to and laid out by Geo. P. Riley, and others of Bullard, Oregon, lying in S.W. 1/4 of Sec 5 in T.24 N. R. 4 E. being part of E. Hanford's Donation Claim No 44, and is the East half of the 6 Acre tract, conveyed by E. Hanford and wife to L. C. Fuller in Deed, dated August 6th 1869, lots 48 & 120 ft. Alloys 16 ft.

State of Oregon,
County of Multnomah }
On this 21st day of February A. D. 1871 personally appeared before me the undersigned, a Commissioner of Deeds for Washington Territory, George P. Riley, William Brown, John Hurstington, John Donaldson, Edward S. Simmons, Charles Gilbert, George Lusitney, George Thomas, James H. Givens, Charles Howard, Mary H. Carr, Anna Rodney, George Washington, Philip Francis who are personally known to me, and acknowledged to me that they as tenants in common of the lands embraced by the above plat of Riley's Addition to South Seattle in Pierce County W. T. have surveyed and laid off said Addition for the purposes in said plat specified.
Witness James H. Givens his mark Philip J. Francis Geo. P. Riley Pres.
John H. Fioke } George Washington his mark Mary H. Carr by prayers William Brown W. Sec.
J. Hurstington Charles Howard Edward S. Simmons Secy.
John Donaldson Charles Gilbert
S. Gross } George Thomas by proxy Anna Rodney
George Lusitney
A witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year last above written.
A. S. Gross, Commissioner of Deeds for Wash. Terri. 1871

Filed for Record, Apr. 13th 1871 at 9 o'clock A. M. G. Kellogg, Auditor.
Recorded in the Records of King County, Wash. Territory, in Vol. 4, of Deeds on page 580 Re recorded

Plat map of Riley's Addition. Source: King County Recorder's Office.



Photograph of George Wright, grandson of George Riley.
Source: Black Heritage Society of Washington State, Inc.

Much of the north portion of Beacon Hill was platted from 1869 to 1878 in anticipation of the arrival of the transcontinental railroad that did not reach Seattle until 1883. The early plats included Judkins Addition (1869), Hanford's Addition (1869), J.J. Moss 1st Addition to South Seattle (1870), Central Seattle platted by E.L. Smith (1870), Riley's Addition to South Seattle (1871), Seattle Homestead platted by Hugh McAleer (1875), Joseph Kinnear's Addition (1876), Kidd's Addition (1876), and T. Hanford's Additions to South Seattle (1878). Although a considerable area was platted in the 1870s, it was many years before Beacon Hill saw much development. This was due, in part, to the physical isolation of Beacon Hill from the rest of Seattle.

In the early days, a few African Americans owned property on Beacon Hill. George Riley, originally from Boston, was the president of the Workingmen's Joint Stock Association. A group of 15 Portland, Oregon residents, including Riley, formed this organization in 1869 to pool funds for the purchase of real estate. Mr. Riley came to Seattle and purchased the eastern half of the 320-acre Hanford Donation Claim (four blocks) on behalf of the association in 1869. Both Riley's Addition to South Seattle and a second purchase of eight more blocks (Riley's Addition to Riley's Addition to South Seattle) were filed in 1875 (Mumford 1980, 105).

Only two members of the association moved to Seattle, Philip Francis and John Donaldson (Mumford 1980, 106). George Wright, Mr. Riley's grandson, built a six-room house on the last unsold lot of Riley's holdings in 1911. This house was on the 2700 block of 21st Avenue South and still stood in 1980. Most association members remained in Portland and eventually sold their Beacon Hill property (Mumford 1980, 107).

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF BEACON HILL (1880-1899)

In 1886, a roadway was constructed on pilings west of Beach Road and essentially replaced Beach Road. This became known as the Grant Street bridge and was named for Ulysses S. Grant (Bass 1937, 101). The Grant Street bridge extended from Jackson Street to South Seattle and was Seattle's first timber trestle bridge (Phelps 1978, 35). This route was later Seattle Boulevard and is now Airport Way and 9th Street (Bass 1937, 102).

Other street names on Beacon Hill also reflect early settlers or their dreams. Lander Street was named for Judge Edward Lander (1816-1907), a justice of the Territorial Supreme Court. College Street abutted a parcel labeled "College Grounds," which was given to Father Prefontaine (1838-1909) by his friend Joseph McNaught. McNaught platted a large area on Beacon Hill, and Father Prefontaine hoped to establish a college in this area of south Seattle. Father Prefontaine founded Seattle's first Catholic church. The college envisioned by Joseph McNaught was never built.



1881 view from Beacon Hill (Dearborn and Twelfth Avenue South) looking northwest towards downtown Seattle. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, A. Curtis 17047, UW2297.



2003 photograph of the National Register listed Turner-Koepf residence. Photograph by Carol Tobin.



2003 photograph of Katie Black's Garden City Park. Photograph by Carol Tobin.

McKee's 1894 map shows a secondary road extending from Hanford Street on the approximate line of Beacon Avenue South to the small settlement known as Van Asselt, where Henry Van Asselt filed his early claim.

As in the 1870s, the platting of the north part of the hill continued at a rapid pace. Most of the area north of today's Jefferson Park and some areas to the west of the park were platted by 1890. Very few houses were built on the hill until the 1890s. Today only a few pre-1900 single family buildings survive. These are generally scattered on the north end of the hill between 12th and 17th avenues South.

The area of Beacon Hill south to Hanford Street was annexed to the City of Seattle in 1883. The portion of Beacon Hill west of 16th Avenue South to Andover Street extending west to the tideflats of the Duwamish River was also annexed in the same year.

Early Beacon Hill Residents

Several prominent families moved to Beacon Hill during the 1880s and 1890s. One of these was Judge Edward A. Turner, who is said to have built the first house on Beacon Hill. Judge Turner, a newspaperman and real estate developer from Maine, purchased five acres near today's Jefferson Park. He and his wife Estelle built a simple Italianate house about one hundred yards west of its current location in 1883. Frederick Koepf, chief draftsman in the City Engineer's office, purchased the house in 1898. Koepf remodeled the house in a Queen Anne style, adding a pyramidal turret, leaded windows, and other details. When Beacon Avenue was regraded in about 1907, the house was moved to 2336 15th Avenue South. The building was sold to the Jefferson Park Ladies Improvement Club in 1923. The Jefferson Park Ladies Improvement Club, established in 1912 (Merrell 2002, 6), was one of the first women's organizations in Seattle. In 1977, the Jefferson Park Ladies Improvement Club gave the house to the Washington State Federation of Garden Clubs for use as its headquarters (Inventory Form BH001, 2001). The Turner-Koepf residence was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

M. Harwood Young, a Union Army veteran and representative of New England and Northwest Investment Company of Boston, moved to the Beacon Hill area in 1889. Young came to Seattle as an investor with an interest in building Seattle's streetcar system. Mr. Young gave Beacon Hill its name. It recalls the well-known exclusive Beacon Hill neighborhood in Boston, which is quite different from Seattle's working class Beacon Hill. Young built a house at north end of the hill, and he named the street in front of his house Massachusetts Street in honor of his home state. His house is no longer extant and was near the site of the U.S. Marine Hospital.

Frank D. Black (1854-1919) came to Seattle from Detroit in 1892. He was a member of Seattle Hardware Company's Board of Directors. In 1895, he ran as a Republican candidate for mayor. He resigned after two weeks in office for alleged health reasons and because he preferred to be private citizen. In addition to real estate and Seattle Hardware, Black was involved in the lumber business and Alaskan fish trade. Black purchased three acres on Beacon Hill. In 1892, he built a Swiss chalet style house designed by Seattle architect John Parkinson at 1319 12th Avenue South.

The prominent site has a spectacular view of downtown Seattle and Elliott Bay. He developed his property further in about 1914, including cobble retaining walls and stairs, a beehive-shaped cobble milk cooler, a cobble gatehouse, gateposts, and a Japanese garden. The Japanese garden was developed for his wife, Katie Black. The property remained in the Black family until the Depression, and it was divided into six apartments during World War II. The distinctive Swiss chalet style house was considerably altered over the years and was demolished in 1985. The cobblestone gate lodge and garden, now Katie Black's Garden City Park, still remain. The gatehouse and property are designated as a Seattle landmark. Frank D. Black plotted Claremont Home Tracts in the Rainier Valley in 1904. In 1892, he gave some of his property in the Rainier Valley to Eliza Quigley, the Black family's former governess.

In addition to the African Americans in the Riley Additions on Beacon Hill, there were other black residents in the Beacon Hill area. Brittain and Lizzie Oxendine came to Seattle in 1889 and lived in a house on 11th Avenue South. Some African American families also lived in houseboats on the water lots at the foot of Beacon Hill. These included Joseph and Belle Bennett and Ben Angelle (Mumford 1980, 107). There were a few houseboats in this area, which provided inexpensive housing prior to the filling of the tideflats.



2003 photograph of the cobblestone Katie Black's Garden City Park gatehouse. Photograph by Carol Tobin.



1904 photograph of the Beacon Hill School under construction. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, A. Curtis, 04328.



2003 photograph of the Beacon Hill School. Photograph by Carol Tobin.



1906 photograph of the former Hill Brickyard located on Beacon Hill. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, A. Curtis, 00497.

Public and Institutional

As with other neighborhoods, the streetcar lines developed on Beacon Hill stimulated early growth on the area. The first Beacon Hill line, constructed in the early 1890s, was one of Harwood Young's business interests. It ran on 12th Avenue South to South Hanford Street. It was later extended to South Spokane Street. Beacon Hill streetcar service ended in 1941, when buses replaced streetcars on the route.

The Beacon Hill line was operated by the Union Trunk Line, which incorporated in 1890. The route ran south on Broadway from James Street to Main Street, then to 12th Avenue South. It ran south along 12th to South Massachusetts Street, then east to 14th Avenue South, and south on 14th to College Street (Blanchard, 1966, 54-55).

The Grant Street Electric Railway ran along the west side of Beacon Hill. Fred E. Sander obtained a franchise in 1891 (Blanchard 1966, 59). The route ran from 3rd Avenue and Yesler Way to 8th Street (Maynard Avenue) and south to Grant Street (now 9th Avenue South and Airport Way) and south on Grant to city limits. The south end of the streetcar line paralleled the Northern Pacific Railroad and Columbia & Puget Sound right-of-way into Seattle. The Grant Street line opened in 1892 and connected with the Valley Street Railway to the south (Blanchard 1966, 59-60).

To the east of Beacon Hill, J.K. Edmiston began to construct the electric railway along the Rainier Valley in 1889, and the route was completed to Columbia City by 1891. This opened up the Rainier Valley and the east slope of Beacon Hill to development.

Following the 1893 Depression, there was a slowdown in platting activity in Seattle as a whole, including Beacon Hill.

Beacon Hill's early commercial districts developed along the streetcar line on Beacon Avenue South at the intersection of 15th Avenue South, which became known as "The Junction," and South Hanford Street. Hanford continued to be the city limits until 1907 when the rest of Beacon Hill was annexed.

In 1892, the Seattle School Board purchased the Beacon Hill school site at 2045 14th Ave South, and the first building was constructed in 1899. This two-room hipped roof structure, which was considerably altered over the years, was destroyed by a fire in 1988. The main portion of the current school building, designed by architects Saunders & Lawton, was built in 1904. Today the building is owned and occupied by El Centro de la Raza, which has used the building since 1972.

Early Industry

Most of the early industry in the Beacon Hill area was located on the tideflats, just west of Beacon Hill. The proximity of Seattle's industrial area affected the type of housing constructed on Beacon Hill, where modest working-class dwellings predominated. The 1893 Sanborn Insurance Map shows that Grant Street, on the edge of tideflats, had several slaughter houses. These included Frye & Brune Slaughter House, J. C. Masel & Sons Slaughter House, and Carstens Brothers Slaughter House. The Seattle and Puget Sound Packing Company was also in this area. These buildings were located just west of Beacon Hill at about Holgate Street (then Pine Street). The Seattle Brewing & Malt- ing Company's Bottling Works (formerly Claussen Brewing Company) was just south of the slaughter- houses. The Bayview Brewery was on Beach Road at approximately Hanford Street.

In south Seattle during the 1890s, south of where Spokane Street is today, the industries included the Newell Mill and Manufacturing Company's Planing Mill. A brick manufacturing company was also located near Dearborn Street and Rainier Avenue South by this time.

Early Jefferson Park History

The property that later became Jefferson Park was acquired as a possible university site. Initially section 16 of every township was set aside for schools, and Jefferson Park is in the west half of section 16-24-04. However, the selected site for the original location of the University of Washington was in down- town Seattle on property donated by Arthur Denny.

A city hospital for persons with contagious diseases, primarily smallpox, was built on the southwest por- tion of the land in 1892. This became known as the "pest house." The hospital closed in 1914, and pa- tients were moved to the Firlands Sanitarium in Shoreline, north of Seattle.

The state sold 235 acres of its land to the City of Seattle in 1898 to help pay for the move of the Uni- versity of Washington to its current site. The city land on Beacon Hill was intended to be used for reservoirs and a cemetery.



Ca. 1898 photograph by Anders Beer Wilse of the Elliott Bay tideflats from Beacon Hill. Source: PEMCO Webster & Stevens Collection, Museum of History & Industry, Seattle; All Rights Reserved.

Infrastructure

In 1881, the privately owned Spring Hill Water Company began supplying water to Seattle's business district and nearby residential areas. The company's first spring was on First Hill and also drew from sources as far south as Beacon Hill. In 1886, the company constructed a pumping station on Lake Washington, at the end of Holgate Street (today's Colman Park). The first reservoir on Beacon Hill was also constructed in 1886 (Merrell 2002, 14).

During the Seattle Fire in 1889, the fire department, which relied on the water supply from the Spring Hill Water Company, ran out of water to fight the devastating fire. Shortly after this debacle, in 1890, Seattle voters approved the purchase of the Spring Hill Water Company and the establishment of a public water system.

In 1899 Seattle signed a contract to build the Cedar River Pipeline No. 1. This pipeline, which was completed in 1901, entered the city near Spokane Street and Beacon Avenue and ran north along Beacon Avenue to 14th Avenue South, then west on Holgate Street, and then north 13th Avenue South to Judkins Street.



1906 photograph of a sluicing underway to regrade Beacon Hill. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW5016.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (1900-1919)

Early 20th Century Development

Prior to 1900, there was relatively little development on Beacon Hill except on its north end closest to downtown. The late 19th and early 20th century was a boom period for Seattle, and the city grew from a population of 42,837 in 1890 to 237,174 in 1910. During the early years of the 20th century, a number of single-family dwellings were built on Beacon Hill, including some larger houses along the edge of the west side of hill. Many of these, including the earlier Frank D. Black house and other view properties, were demolished to make way for apartment or condominium development starting in the 1960s.

By 1908, the Beacon Hill streetcar route extended south as far as Lander Street (1908 Baists).

Eugene Semple was the last territorial governor of Washington Territory and a member of the first Harbor Line Commission (1890). Semple organized the Seattle and Lake Washington Waterways Company in 1894, which began to dredge the Duwamish River in 1895 and subsequently filled some tidelands (1895-1897) (Bagley 1916, 358). Semple was an instigator in the plan for a south ship canal through Beacon Hill to Lake Washington, proposed at the approximate location of Hanford Street. Among the problems with this route were the regular flooding of the Duwamish River valley and potential navigation problems between city-bound and canal-bound traffic (Phelps 1978, 61-62). Work began on the south canal in 1895 (Bagley 1916, 384). In 1897, a landslide on Beacon Hill stopped the construction, and the project was abandoned.

The tidelands west of Beacon Hill were eventually filled with soil from other regrades. In 1901, bids called for the removal of earth from Beacon Hill and the filling of tidelands (Phelps 1978, 62). This was the precursor to the Jackson Street and Dearborn Street regrades at the north end of Beacon Hill



1906 photograph of a house being moved during the Beacon Hill regrade. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, A. Curtis 07254-1.

Early real estate promoters viewed Beacon Hill as a barrier between downtown Seattle and the Rainier Valley and believed that the north end of Beacon Hill blocked the growth of the Rainier Valley. City Engineer R.H. Thomson proposed the removal of a portion of the ridge between First Hill and Beacon Hill. The initial plans called for a tunnel in the vicinity of Jackson Street and 9th Avenue. However, regrading was determined to be of greater benefit to a larger area (Phelps 1978, 21-22). The regrades of Jackson and Dearborn streets at north end of the hill took place from 1907 to 1910. These regrades involved the moving of houses and a school.

The city signed a contract for the regrading activity with Lewis & Riley in 1907. (Mr. Lewis owned inaccessible property in the Rainier Valley.) Together the Jackson and Dearborn Street regrades covered an area of 125 acres (56 city blocks). The largest cut in the Jackson Street regrade was 85 feet at 9th and Jackson, where the grade was reduced from over 15% to just over 5%. The Dearborn Street grade was reduced from 19% to 3%, with a cut of 112 feet at 12th Avenue South (Phelps 1978, 22). The Jackson and Dearborn Street regrades were completed by late 1909 (Phelps 1978, 39). The route along the Rainier Valley was practically level.

The Old South School was destroyed in 1909 as part of the Jackson Street regrade. Later, in 1921, the Bailey Gatzert School was built at 12th Avenue South and South Weller Street. Quite a few houses were moved as a result of the regrades (Eleanor Winslow). Dearborn Street was named for Ralph W. Dearborn, a real estate agent who sold tideland properties (Dorpat II, 201). The long shed and tower of the Hill Brick Company was destroyed in the Dearborn Street regrade but the business survived.

Using material from the Jackson and Dearborn Street regrades, the tidelands west of Beacon Hill were filled in, creating 4th Avenue South and adding 80 acres to Seattle's business district (Phelps 1978, 22). Water for sluicing the regraded material came from the Beacon Hill Reservoir supplemented by an auxiliary supply from the pumping station at the foot of Holgate Street on Lake Washington. This was the old city water works, which had been abandoned by this time. The contractors also built a pump house at the foot of Connecticut Street just west of Beacon Hill (Phelps 1978, 23).



1906 photograph of recently moved houses resting on cribbing pending their move to their final destination during the Beacon Hill regrade. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, A. Curtis 07254.

The steel open spandrel arched bridge at 12th and Dearborn was part of the Dearborn Street project and provided the only connection with the north portion of Beacon Hill (Phelps 1978, 39). The 12th Avenue South Bridge/José Rizal Bridge reconnected Beacon Hill with the south end of First Hill after the Dearborn Street cut in 1909. This bridge opened to traffic in 1912. It was a steel bridge with temporary wooden approaches on 12th Avenue South, which was also regraded at this time. In 1917 a mudslide on Beacon Hill destroyed the wooden approach on the south end of the bridge, and the entire bridge structure shifted to the north. Subsequently, the city raised the entire bridge and reconstructed it on secure foundations (Phelps 1978, 39). The south approach was rebuilt again in 1924. In 1981, the bridge was renamed to honor Philippine national hero, Dr. José Protazio Rizal y Mercado Alonso.

During the first decade of the 20th century, several African American families lived in the north Beacon Hill area. Sandy Moss lived on the north end of Beacon Hill at 11th Avenue South and Charles Street and witnessed the Dearborn Street regrade (History Link, Moss Interview). Her father bought one of the houses on 12th Avenue South and moved it to 11th Avenue South and Charles Street. This house was eventually condemned due to the undermining of hill by the brickyard located between 12th Avenue South and Rainier Avenue and Weller and Dearborn streets.

Residential Development

As shown on the 1904 Sanborn insurance map, most of the north end of Beacon Hill had been developed by the turn of the century with scattered small wood-frame houses. By 1908, the Rainier Improvement Company owned a large parcel north of Jefferson Park and south of Hanford Street between 14th and 16th avenues.

By 1916, the north portion of Beacon Hill had filled in, mostly with small wood-frame houses covering about half the land area. The Sacred Heart Orphanage was on the south side of the 12th Avenue South bridge, immediately north of the Frank Black house, which occupied a full block just above the edge of the hill (Sanborn 1916).

However, by 1916 there was minimal development south of Walker Street and west of 13th Avenue South. South of Forest Street, there was very little development west of 14th Avenue South. The area between 18th and 23rd avenues and between Walker and Bayview streets was also relatively undeveloped. The houses were smaller south of Bayview Street (Sanborn 1916).



2003 photograph of the Beacon Hill First Baptist Church, formerly the Beacon Hill Congregational Church (1910), designed by prominent Seattle architect, Ellsworth Storey. Photograph by Carol Tobin.



1913 view looking out over Beacon Hill. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW5017.

On the top of Beacon Hill, the area north of McClellan Street between about 12th and 17th avenues South experienced quite a bit of development from 1900-1920; however, it is the one area of the hill that includes properties built during virtually every decade from pre-1900 to the 1960s (Property by decade map).

Institutional/Public

By 1905, a fire station was located on the corner of Massachusetts Street and 14th Avenue South. The main buildings at the Beacon Hill Elementary School were built in 1904, designed by Saunders & Lawton, based on a model school plan by James Stephen. Two substantial additions, a north block and a connecting north-south wing, designed by School District architect Edgar Blair, were constructed in 1912.

The Beacon Hill Congregational Church (now Beacon Hill First Baptist) at 16th Ave South and South Forest Street is the oldest church on Beacon Hill. The congregation was established in 1903, and the Craftsman style frame church building was designed by prominent Seattle architect, Ellsworth Storey, in 1910.

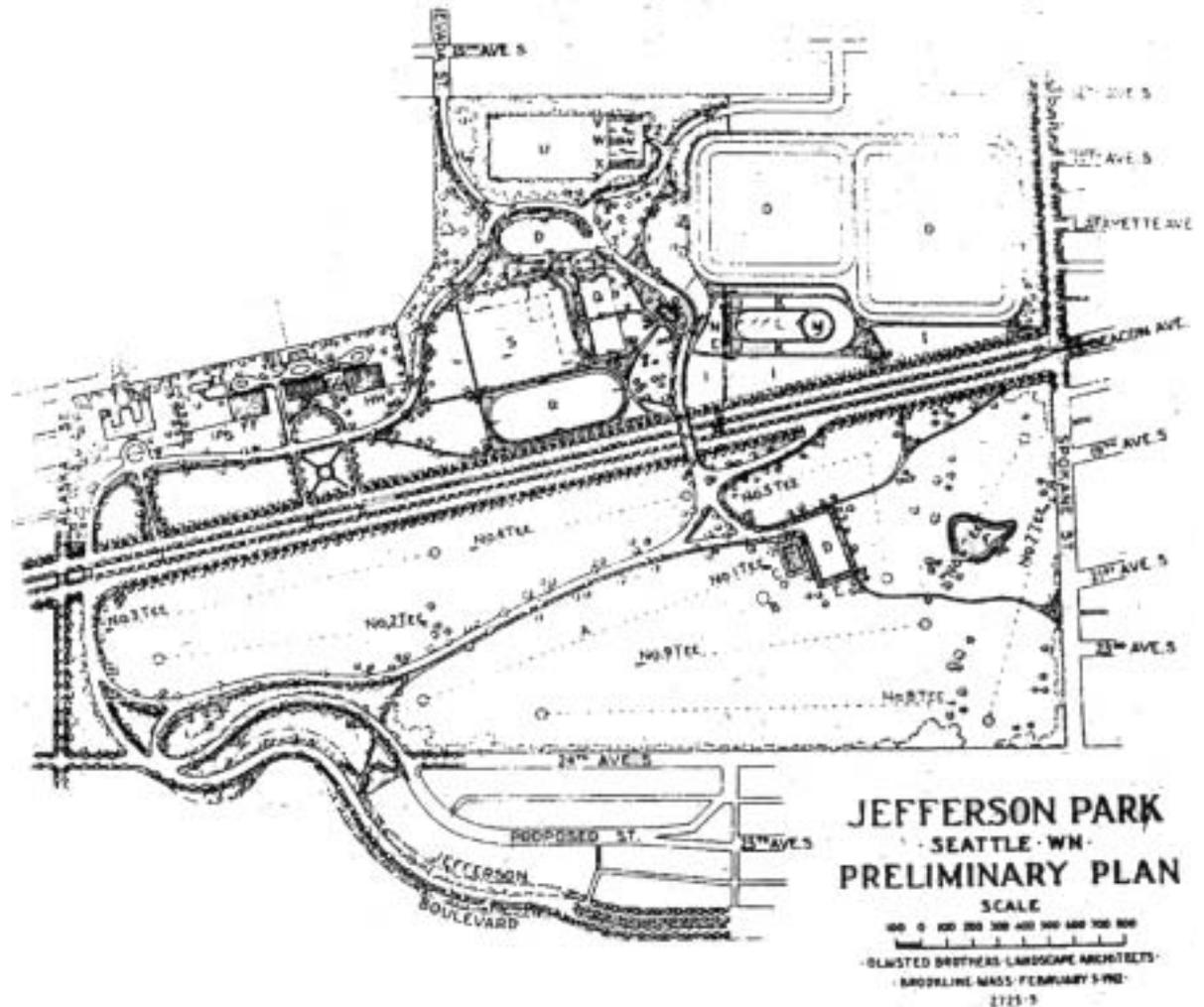
An Italian Catholic School was located on the west side of 12th Avenue South between Judkins and Norman Streets by 1915.

Before the construction of the larger reservoirs at Jefferson Park, there was a small city reservoir between Holgate and Plum streets and 13th and 14th avenues in the location of today's playground north of the Beacon Hill Elementary School. In 1908, the Cedar River Pipeline No. 2 was constructed along Beacon Avenue adjacent to the No. 1 pipeline.

Seattle City Ordinance No. 17863 (1908) authorized the construction of two reservoirs on Beacon Hill. These were built in 1910-1911 and included the north reservoir with a 61 million gallon capacity and the south reservoir with a 49-million gallon capacity. A small gatehouse adjacent to the reservoirs is still standing (Merrell 2002, 15-16). City Engineer R.H. Thomson was involved in the design of the reservoirs and gatehouse.

Commercial and Industrial Development

Limited commercial development of small stores along Beacon Avenue South continued during this time, although few commercial buildings remain from this period. Mayor Hiram Gill proposed the "largest house of prostitution in the world" located on the west side of Beacon Hill along the tideflats. This large wood-frame structure was built on pilings in about 1910 and was a major factor in the recall of Mayor Gill.



Original Olmsted plan for Jefferson Park. Source: Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation.

In about 1904, some of the uses on the now partially filled tidelands on the west side of Beacon Hill included Pacific Sheet Metal Works (foot of Atlantic Street) and Capital Milling Company's Warehouse and Flour Mill, just south of Grand Street (1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map). The Seattle Brewing and Malting Company's Bottling Works, predecessor of the Rainier Brewery, was located at the foot of Holgate Street. Seattle Brewing & Malting Company's Bay View Branch Brewery was located at 9th Avenue South and Hanford Street, the location of the former Rainier Brewery for many years.

To the south along the tideflats were Seattle Barrel Company and Seattle & Puget Sound Packing Company Pickling Works. The slaughter houses were still located in the area from Plum Street to about College Street. J.P. Carman Company's Cigar Box factory was located south of College Street in this growing industrial district. W. J. Bernard Company's Soap Factory was south of Bay View, and Hibbard Stewart Company, wool pullery, was on Lander Street. The roads between the tideflats and the Beacon Hill ridge in this area were mostly shown on the Sanborn map as "impassible." The Lohse Brick Company brickyard was located at the foot of Forest Street. The Hill Brick Company continued to operate on eastern slope of Beacon Hill.

Jefferson Park and Cheasty Boulevard

In 1909, the City of Seattle transferred 137 acres of the future Jefferson Park east of Beacon Avenue to the Park Department. In the same year, the City constructed a stockade, also known as the "Lazy Husbands Ranch," to house jail inmates on the park property. This facility was for inmates serving short sentences, and they worked at the prison farm to clear land for the park.

In 1903, the well-known Olmsted Brothers landscape architects of Brookline, Massachusetts included Beacon Hill Park (the future Jefferson Park) in the park system proposed in their first report to the Seattle park commissioners. In 1912, the Olmsted Brothers produced a more detailed plan for the park. This plan envisioned a multi-use park with a golf course on the east side of Beacon Avenue. The golf course is the part of the park today that shows the most Olmsted influence, although it is an 18-hole course instead of the nine-hole course proposed by the Olmsteds. Other reflections of the Olmsted legacy include the rows of trees and the center strip along Beacon Avenue, and some of the pedestrian pathways (Merrell 2002, 21). Also in 1912, there was a second transfer of land to the city's park system. The park was first called Beacon Hill Park, and it was renamed after Thomas Jefferson.

E.C. Cheasty and Sherwood Gillespy promoted Jefferson Park as the site for Seattle's first municipal golf course. Cheasty served on Seattle's Park Board from 1907 to 1910 and 1912 to 1914. The golf course in Jefferson Park opened to the public in May 1915. The first golf clubhouse, a wood-frame, U-shaped building, was located on the west side of Beacon Avenue and was destroyed by fire in 1919. (A new clubhouse was completed by 1920.) In 1917, golf enthusiasts established the Jefferson Park Golf Club. The Jefferson Park Golf Course was the first public golf course west of the Mississippi River. It was one of only 35 municipally owned courses in the U.S. in 1917 (Sound Transit 1999, 115).

In 1918, the City began construction of an emergency hospital for patients with venereal disease and unwed pregnant mothers. Construction was stopped due to community opposition, which included Beacon Hill resident Frank D. Black and the Jefferson Park Ladies Improvement Club. Following a land exchange, which added 40 acres to the park, the hospital was completed. In 1918, the stockade was closed and burned, as was the pesthouse. A nine-hole golf course west of Beacon Avenue opened on the new park property in the spring of 1923.

The Olmsted Brothers report to the Park Commissioners in 1903 included preliminary proposals for Cheasty Boulevard and Beacon Avenue in addition to Jefferson Park as part of Seattle's overall system of parks and boulevards. The plans for a boulevard to connect Jefferson Park with Mount Baker Boulevard preceded the Olmsted Brothers' Jefferson Park Plan, issued in 1912. City Engineer R.H. Thomson laid out a plan for "City Park Boulevard" in 1909. Initial construction took place in 1910, and the roadway was later called Jefferson Boulevard. In 1914, it was renamed in honor of Parks Commissioner E.C. Cheasty, who died that year (Cheasty Landmark Nomination 2002).

Cheasty Boulevard was regraded and paved in 1928 by the Seattle Streets and Sewers Department. (Cheasty is more appropriately termed a parkway than a boulevard, according to the Olmsted Brothers' definitions.) (Cheasty Landmark Nomination 2002)

World War I and Liberty Court Housing

During World War I, Seattle was a center for shipbuilding at such yards as Skinner & Eddy, Seattle Construction and Dry Dock Company, J.F. Duthie and Ames Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company. These were all located in Seattle's south harbor, west of Beacon Hill. There was a severe housing shortage in Seattle during the war. In 1918, the Skinner and Eddy Corporation, the largest shipyard in Seattle at that time, built 136 housing units on Beacon Hill to house shipyard workers. This was the Liberty Court project at 14th Avenue South and South Lander Street. This apartment complex has been extensively remodeled and still exists as the Westview Apartments. It was known as the Lago Vista Apartments until recently (Sound Transit 1999, 114).

Commercial Development

1920s DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDINGS (1920-1929)

The 1920s was a relatively stable period for Seattle and a time of much construction on Beacon Hill as in other parts of the city. Most of the older commercial and apartment buildings on the hill and quite a few single-family houses date from this time. This was a period when many neighborhoods, including Beacon Hill, began to develop their distinctive identities. The city's growth was spreading north and south during this decade and reached areas like Beacon Hill at this time.

Before 1929, the trolley streetcar service along Beacon Avenue ended at Spokane Street. In 1929, with increased residential growth of the areas south of Jefferson Park, a shuttle bus connected the south end of the streetcar line with areas to the south as far as 39th Avenue South and South Cambridge Street. This made Jefferson Park and the golf course more accessible from the south. During the 1920s, the ownership of automobiles became more common, and garages were added to many single-family houses. However, the streetcar lines were also extensively used at this time.

The largest concentration of commercial buildings was located along Beacon Avenue at the intersection of South Hanford Street. During the 1920s, most new commercial buildings were simple brick-clad vernacular structures, sometimes including terra cotta details. Buildings at this intersection that date from the 1920s include the Price-Rite Grocery, Hanford Street Grocery & Bakery, and the Cora M. Graham store building.

The 1925 two-story brick clad Price-Rite grocery building, now Hen Sen Herb Company, located at 3013 Beacon Avenue South, was one of the early mixed use commercial and apartment buildings in the area. The one-story Hanford Street Grocery and Bakery, constructed in 1927, is one of three similar brick clad buildings at the intersection of Hanford and Beacon. Also at this intersection, the 1926 Cora M. Graham store was designed for developer Frederick Anhalt by William Whitely in an Art Deco inspired style.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Beacon Hill had a lively commercial district with five grocery stores, four drug stores, three bakeries, and a couple of meat markets. Three Brothers Dye Works at 3210 Beacon Avenue South near Hanford Street was one of Seattle's largest carpet cleaning businesses. Neighborhood residents did all their daily shopping on Beacon Hill (Pete Caso interview, 6/12/2003).



Cleveland High School. Source: Museum of History and Industry, Seattle. All Rights Reserved.



1939 photograph of the Beacon Theatre, formerly Gray Goose Theatre, at 2352 Beacon Avenue South. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW14659.

In 1928, a two-story brick-clad mixed commercial and apartment building was constructed on the southeast corner of 14th Avenue South and South Walker Street. This building has served as a grocery store for many years and has been owned and operated by Japanese and Chinese families since the 1930s. It was the Toyo Grocery in 1937 and now houses Asian Express, a grocery store. It is an example of the long presence of Asian Americans in the Beacon Hill neighborhood.

The Gray Goose Theatre, located at 2352 Beacon Avenue South, was a half-timbered Tudor Revival style building constructed in about 1923. It later became known as the Beacon Theatre. The theatre was demolished in 1964.

Residential Development

Several apartment buildings were built on Beacon Hill during the 1920s. The Jefferson Park Apartments at 1756 South Spokane Street is a three-story brick building in a prominent location directly across from Jefferson Park. This building was constructed in 1925 and designed by engineer, J.M. Baird. The Lander Apartments, 2541 15th Avenue South, is a two-story brick-clad apartment building built in 1929 for H.A. Behrens. It was designed by Seattle architect William J. Jones and is situated at the intersection of 15th Avenue South and South Lander Street.

Most of the single family houses south of McClellan Street to Jefferson Park were built from 1910 to 1929. In the 1920s, more development occurred on the south end of Beacon Hill, in the areas south of Jefferson Park

Boeing field was completed in 1928 in the industrial area west of Beacon Hill.

Public/Institutional

On the south end of Beacon Hill, the prominently situated Cleveland High School, designed by school architect Floyd Naramore, opened in 1927. It originally housed grades 7 through 12 and drew students from Beacon Hill, Georgetown and South Park. This 20th century Georgian style building was the last of three high schools in Seattle designed by Naramore. The building is a Seattle landmark.

Fire Station No. 13 at Spokane Street and Beacon Avenue, designed by Daniel R. Huntington, opened in 1928. It replaced the earlier wood-frame structure at 14th Avenue South and South Atlantic Street located at the north end of Beacon Hill. By the late 1920s, the Jefferson Park station was a more central location for the fire station because of the development of the south Beacon Hill area. In its design, Fire Station No. 13 reflects a mixture of Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival and Neoclassical Revival features.

Starting in about 1919, Jefferson Park was the favored location for the annual Japanese-American Language School picnic. These picnics continued until 1941, the year before the internment of Seattle's Japanese-American citizens.

In 1929, the old comfort station was replaced with a brick shelter house constructed near the ballfield. This was the predecessor of the Jefferson Park Community Center.

DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR II (1930-1945)

The building boom of the 1920s ended with the Depression, but some new construction occurred in the early 1930s. During this period, quite a bit of major public construction took place through the Works Progress Administration and other federal programs.

World War II brought dramatic changes to Seattle and Beacon Hill. The Japanese-Americans that had begun to move to the hill in the 1920s and 1930s were sent to internment camps in Idaho and California. There was a boom in airplane construction during the war that led to considerable expansion of the Boeing Company. Large numbers of military personnel came to Seattle during the war, as did workers for the defense industry. Because of Beacon Hill's proximity to Boeing, it was a logical location for the construction of wartime housing, both public and private. Seattle's Housing Authority was formed during the 1930s, and built two major housing projects on Beacon Hill, Rainier Vista and Holly Park.



1933 photograph of the former United States Marine Hospital, a prominent visual landmark on Beacon Hill designed by the Seattle architects Bebb & Gould and John Graham, Sr. Today this building functions as office space for Amazon.com. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW4658.

1930s Development and Buildings

During the early 1930s before the full impact of the Depression set in, a few apartment and commercial buildings were completed. One of these was the Lora Apartments, designed by Seattle architect William H. Whiteley, and completed in 1930. The three story brick-clad building is located at 2810 16th Avenue South.

The Treat-U-Rite Building at the intersection of Beacon Avenue South and South McClellan Street was designed by Seattle Architect Edward L. Merritt and completed in 1931. It was built for Julius Germonpré, a Belgian immigrant who opened the Treat-U-Rite Meat Market in 1931 and operated the store until his retirement in the 1940s. This small brick building is typical of the one-story commercial block buildings on Beacon Hill and in other Seattle neighborhoods. The brick-clad commercial and apartment building at 3318-20 Beacon Avenue South was built in 1930 and now houses Day Moon Press. Its location reflects the extension of Beacon Hill's commercial district to the south, just north of Jefferson Park.



1933 aerial photograph of the former United States Marine Hospital. Note the residences along the lower portion of the photograph as well as Beacon Hill's proximity to downtown Seattle. Source: PEMCO Webster & Stevens Collection, Museum of History & Industry, Seattle; All Rights Reserved.

The St. Peter Catholic Church at 2807 15th Avenue South, designed by C. Frank Mahon, was completed in 1931. This brick building has a modern character with decorative elements evocative of more traditional church architecture. A two-story parish house is adjacent to the church and was designed and built at the same time as the church.

By far the most important building constructed on Beacon Hill during the 1930s was the 16-story U.S. Marine Hospital, designed by well-known Seattle architects, Bebb & Gould and John Graham, Sr. This building is one of Seattle's finest examples of Modernistic architecture, and its prominent siting on the north end of Beacon Hill overlooking downtown Seattle, adds to its significance. The hospital opened in 1933 in the location where M. Harwood Young had built his home in 1889. The U.S Marine Hospital was built to replace a private marine hospital in Port Townsend. The U.S. government closed the hospital and the public health service system in 1981, and the hospital was subsequently operated as the Pacific Medical Center. It now houses the offices of Amazon.com. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a Seattle landmark.

One controversial issue on Beacon Hill was the 1932 rezoning of the former Frank D. Black house for use as a group home, known as the Ruth Home. This was accomplished despite the opposition of the Mount Baker Park Improvement Club, which opposed any group homes or similar facilities in and near the Mount Baker neighborhood.

During the Depression, the shantytown of Hooverville was located south of downtown on the site of the old Skinner and Eddy shipyard, not far from Beacon Hill. In 1938, the City passed a resolution addressing the problem of shacks on Beacon Hill, because shacks were being used as inexpensive housing during the Depression (Mount Baker Scrapbook, 2/1/1939). This foreshadows the controversial tent city, which was located on the west slope of Beacon Hill in recent years.

In Jefferson Park, several WPA projects were undertaken. The Jefferson Park Golf Course Clubhouse was constructed in 1935-1936 with financial assistance from the Public Works Administration. This brick and wood-clad structure reflects some Colonial Revival style features and replaced the earlier smaller wood-frame clubhouse. In 1935, the Seattle Department of Water Works purchased 44 acres of reservoir property from the Parks Department to offset the funding shortfall during the Depression.



1935 photograph of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), and State Department of Public Welfare, Division of Relief Office Building on Beacon Hill. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW20857z.

Much of the residential development of the area of Beacon Hill south of Spokane Street occurred during the 1940s and reflects the wartime housing boom associated with the area's proximity to Boeing and the shipyards (Property by decade map). Much of the new housing built during the war was located close to the military industries in the industrial area.

Diversity on Beacon Hill

The Japanese came to Seattle as part of the second wave of Asian immigration to Washington State. The Chinese were the first group to come to the Northwest and were recruited to work on railroad construction and in logging camps and canneries starting in the 1860s. Beginning in the 1880s, Japanese immigrants came to work on farms, in logging operations, and in canneries in Washington State. Most of the Chinese and Japanese immigrants in Seattle lived in areas known as Chinatown and Japantown, which comprise today's International District.



1934 pre-cast concrete slabs being set along Beacon Avenue South for the streetcar tracks. This WERA project provided work for numerous individuals in a time when work was scarce. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW20653z.

As long as the Japanese and Chinese remained in downtown areas (Chinatown and Japantown), they could remain acceptable to the general population of Seattle, which was made up primarily of people of Euro-American descent. Once they moved to areas like Beacon Hill and the Central District, discrimination was common. This movement of the Japanese-Americans and Chinese-Americans out of the south downtown area began about 1920. Asian-Americans, particularly those with families, were interested in moving to residential neighborhoods, and Beacon Hill was close to their core area on the southeast edge of downtown.

Over the years, several federal and state laws restricted the immigration and land ownership of Asian immigrants. The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 between Japan and the U.S. prohibited emigration of Japanese laborers to the United States. The Immigration Act of 1924 further excluded Japanese from entering the United States. The State of Washington enacted alien land laws, starting at the time of statehood in 1889, which prohibited land ownership by aliens unless they could prove that they were intending to become U.S. citizens. Additional state laws were adopted from 1921 to 1923 that prohibited Asians from leasing, renting and sharecropping of land.

Frank Miyamoto was a long time faculty member at the University of Washington and served as chairman of the Sociology Department. In about 1920, Frank Miyamoto's family moved to Beacon Hill, which was then an almost totally white middle class and lower middle class neighborhood. Only two other Japanese families lived there at the time. Some people made it unpleasant for the family (Densho, Miyamoto interview, 1998). Frank went to Japanese Language School after regular school. He attended the Language School's Undo-Kai annual outdoor event often held at Jefferson Park, which included running races and prizes. ("Undo-Kai" means to exercise as a group.) Miyamoto was appointed to a faculty position at the University of Washington prior to World War II. He was interned at Tule Lake in California and was eventually rehired at the University of Washington after the war.

The Kokugo Gakko (Japanese Language School) located at 1414 South Weller Street was organized in 1902. It was the first Japanese language school established in the U.S. The school building, located just north of Beacon Hill, is a Western style building, designed by Japanese architect S. Shimuzu, which opened in 1913. Japanese children, including Frank Miyamoto, walked from the International District, Beacon Hill and the Central District to the language school for after-school classes. Despite some alterations, the building is extremely significant to the Japanese-American community in Seattle. It was listed in the National Register in 1982 (Dubrow 2002, 106-125).

During the 1930s, quite a few Japanese immigrants moved to Beacon Hill (Merrell 2002, 8). Beacon Hill was affordable, and it was a working-class neighborhood that lacked the restrictive covenants found in many more exclusive areas, including Mount Baker. Among those who moved to Beacon Hill was the Itoi family. Monica 'Kazuko' Itoi Sone has written of her experience growing up as a Japanese-American in Seattle, in her book, *Nisei Daughter*. The Itoi family moved to Beacon Hill in about 1939 or 1940 and lived in a house at 1332 14th Avenue South (Sone 1953, 143). This simple American Foursquare style house is extant but has been substantially altered.



1934 streetcar track being laid along Beacon Avenue South. Note residences along avenue. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW20654z.

Because quite a few Japanese families lived on Beacon Hill, the Japanese-Americans commonly used the park for picnics and for the annual Undo-Kai, Japanese-American Language School picnics. Others who attended the language school picnics included Monica Itoi Sone, Yoshi Miyauchi, George Kodama, and Sam Shoji (whose mother was a flower-arranging expert). The Japanese Golf Association held its annual tournament at Jefferson Park in 1931 (Merrell 2002, 9).

There was discrimination against the Japanese and concern about their use of Jefferson Park. Carl Gustofson Hasselberg, who was known as the “Mayor of Beacon Hill,” urged the elimination of the picnic grounds. In 1942, following the internment of the Japanese, the park’s picnic grounds were closed and destroyed after the army leased the park for a recreation camp.

On February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9022, which called for the evacuation and internment of Japanese in prescribed military areas of the U.S. In March of 1942, General John L. DeWitt designated the western third of the Pacific Coast states as a military area from which all persons of Japanese ancestry were excluded. Initially, Japanese-Americans from the Seattle area were sent to Camp Harmony, the Puyallup Assembly Center on the Western Washington fairgrounds. Most Japanese from the Seattle area went to the Minidoka internment camp in Idaho and some were sent to Tule Lake in California.

During the 1920s and 1930s, some economically successful Chinese families moved to residential neighborhoods outside Chinatown, mostly to the Central District and a few to north Beacon Hill (Chew 1994, 140 and Taylor 1994, 115). Other areas were unavailable because restrictive covenants prohibited the sales of houses to nonwhites.

Only about seven Chinese families lived on Beacon Hill during the 1930s. Six of these were Lew families on north Beacon Hill; the Ng family lived near 18th Avenue South and South Hanford Street (Chin 1977, 103).

Many first-generation Chinese women worked in the garment or laundry business. Black Bear Manufacturing Company on Rainier Avenue was one of largest employers of Chinese garment workers (Chew 1994, 147). Other sewing factories that employed many Chinese American women included Far West Garments (also in the Rainier Valley), Seattle Glove Company in the International District, Seattle Quilt Manufacturing Company, Roffe, Sunset, and other factories in downtown Seattle. Chinese women also worked with their husbands in hand laundries that were located throughout the city (Chew 2003, personal communication).

During World War II, many Chinese-Americans were able to enter the mainstream work force and earn decent wages. They took over many stores left by Japanese-Americans. In 1943, the Chinese Exclusion laws were repealed. The trend to move out of Chinatown accelerated after World War II to areas like Beacon Hill (Chin 1977, 103). At that time the restrictive covenants were still in effect in many other Seattle neighborhoods.

The Filipinos were part of the third wave of Asian immigration to Washington State and came to Seattle starting about 1920. Since the Philippines were an American colony following the 1898 Spanish-American War, Filipinos were considered U.S. nationals, a status just below full citizenship. This allowed Filipinos to migrate anywhere within the United States. They came to Washington to work in agriculture or in salmon fisheries (Klinge, 3). Initially, Filipinos also settled in the south downtown area, near Chinatown and Japantown. Most Filipino families did not move to the Beacon Hill area until after World War II.

Because of the proximity of north Beacon Hill to the Italian community in “Garlic Gulch” at the north end of the Rainier Valley, some Italian families moved to the Beacon Hill area. The heart of “Garlic Gulch” was centered on Rainier Avenue and Atlantic Street. Some of the Italians lived on the east slope of the hill, near “Garlic Gulch.” Some owned businesses on the hill, including Joe Petricelli who operated a tile business at 22nd Avenue South between Hanford Street and Stevens Street. The Western Tile Company owned by the Simone family started on Beacon Hill (Pete Caso interview, 6/12/2003). Joe Beluchi and his family lived on South Hanford Street. Adolph and Adella Caso were immigrants from Tuscany who came to Seattle in about 1912 and lived at 1708 20th Avenue South and later at 3117 22nd Avenue South (Pete Caso interview, 6/12/2003).

A few black families lived on Beacon Hill during the 1920s and 1930s, including the Axum family (Ruth Barrett interview, 2001).

Public Housing

The federal government formed the National Housing Authority in 1937. Subsequently, in 1939 the Washington State legislature passed enabling legislation to authorize cities and counties to create housing authorities in Washington. Jesse Epstein (1911-1989) became chairman of the board of the Seattle Housing Authority in 1939 and later resigned to become its executive director. The Federal Lanham Act, enacted in October 1940, authorized the federal government to provide wartime housing in areas with declared housing shortages. In cooperation with federal agencies, the Seattle Housing Authority built about 6,000 units of wartime housing under the Lanham Act. Most was temporary housing, and only three permanent garden communities of High Point, Holly Park and Rainier Vista continued in long-term use by the Seattle Housing Authority after the war. Two of these projects, Rainier Vista and Holly Park, were in the Beacon Hill area.

Seattle experienced substantial wartime housing shortages during World War II. African Americans crowded into the Jackson, Madison and Cherry street area or moved to new temporary housing projects such as Duwamish Bend Homes and Yesler Terrace (Taylor 1994, 169). Unlike most other major cities, Seattle did not segregate blacks in its public housing projects. This was primarily due to Jesse Epstein, the director of the Seattle Housing Authority. Yesler Terrace, Seattle's first public housing project opened in 1940. (Taylor 1994, 169)

Located on the eastern flank of Beacon Hill along the Rainier Valley, the housing project of Rainier Vista, designed by B. Marcus Priteca and Arrigo M. Young, was constructed in 1941-1942. The City of Seattle purchased the property in about 1930; the land had been owned for many years by J.M Sears and his estate. Rainier Vista was built by the U.S. Housing Authority in cooperation with the Seattle Housing Authority to house workers at Boeing and other defense industries located in the Duwamish Valley. Starting in 1953, it housed low income families. Rainier Vista covered 64.7 acres and featured a curvilinear street plan with 481 housing units in 222 buildings (Rainier Vista Landmark Nomination, 2000). Rainier Vista was the home to architect Benjamin McAdoo and his wife Thelma while he studied at the University of Washington. The architect began his practice in kitchen of his apartment there in 1947 (Mumford 1993, 127). Rainier Vista has recently been razed for redevelopment.

Holly Park, located on the south flank of Beacon Hill was Seattle's second largest housing project and was completed in 1943. It included 900 units for war workers, and later became general public housing. Starting in 1996, Holly Park has been given a new look as a mixed-income, new urbanist community known as New Holly, based on designs by Weinstein/Copeland Architects.

Jefferson Park during World War II

During the war, Jefferson Park was developed as the location of anti-aircraft batteries and a substantial military recreation center. The military camp occupied the southern portion of the park, and was in an advantageous location due to its proximity to Boeing and the shipyards. The recreational camp covered more than 50 acres and included more than 40 buildings (Merrell 2002, 30). The army returned the property to the city in 1946, and the city auctioned off most of the buildings. The Beacon Hill Community Club requested that the funds from the sale of the buildings be set aside for construction of a fieldhouse at the park, but this never took place (Merrell 2002, 33).

The use of the lawn area at Jefferson Park for lawn bowling began during the war, and two new bowling greens were built at the park in 1948-1949.

INTO THE MODERN AGE: POST-WORLD WAR II DEVELOPMENT (1946-1963)

Public/Institutional

Two major post-war projects on Beacon Hill were sited on property that was part of Jefferson Park and part of the Army recreation center during the war.

The City of Seattle deeded 44 acres on the highest point of Beacon Hill for a new veterans hospital. The hospital was dedicated on April 15, 1951 and the construction cost was \$6.3 million. The hospital was designed by architects Naramore Bain Brady & Johanson. A new research wing opened in 1967, and the facility was renovated and a new wing added in 1985 (Veterans Association Puget Sound News, Summer 2001).

A new school to serve the growing residential neighborhood south of Jefferson Park was proposed at the south end of the park in 1954. The property included the western eight acres of the hospital site and six acres not used for the park. The School District and the Seattle Park Department signed a joint use agreement for the school. The new Asa Mercer Junior High School, designed by architect John W. Maloney, opened in 1957.

After World War II, the lively business district on Beacon Hill started to fade, with increasing competition from malls, automobile-oriented development along Rainier Avenue, and the demise of the neighborhood grocery store.

There were many other changes at Jefferson Park in the post-war years. Through a 1948 Seattle Park Improvement Bond, the nine-hole golf course was reconstructed and the first driving range was built south of the golf clubhouse. New lawn bowling greens were installed, and the Lawn Bowling Clubhouse was established in an existing building on the site.

In 1947, the Fir State Golf Club was established by a racially-mixed group for black golfers. This allowed the black golfers who played at Jefferson Park to compete in tournaments.



1951 photograph of the rear of the Veterans Hospital. Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson designed the building. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, DM3460.



1951 photograph of the waiting room in the Veterans Hospital. Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, DM3463.



Undated photograph of Lonnie Shields playing golf. Mr. Shields was one of the first members of the Fir State Golf Club. Source: Black Heritage Society of Washington State, Inc.

More recent changes to the park included moving the short nine to the driving range in 1955. Golf Director P.M. Masterson & landscape architect C.M. Beardsley participated in the new design. A new lawn bowling clubhouse (financed by Forward Thrust funds) opened in September 1970, and a new field house, also Forward Thrust funded, opened in 1972. A citywide horticultural facility built in 1990 eliminated two baseball fields and a former skating rink/warehouse building. In 1995, Municipal Golf of Seattle took over operation of the city's golf courses.

Ethnic Population

In the years following World War II, Beacon Hill became a diverse, racially mixed community. Ethnic groups on the hill included blacks, whites, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Latinos, and Southeast Asians, among others. The combination of the lack of restrictive real estate covenants, relatively low cost housing, and a general attitude of racial tolerance, compared to more exclusive neighborhoods like Mount Baker, created an attractive atmosphere for a multi-ethnic community (Sound Transit 1999, 114).

Roberto Maestas, founder and executive director of El Centro, lived in the Georgetown area in the mid-1950s. He attended Cleveland High School and was the only Chicano at the school at that time. Roberto was befriended by the Italian families and their children who lived on Beacon Hill and in Georgetown.

Today Beacon Hill has the largest Asian population outside the International District and has benefited from its proximity to the International District. Some Italian families remain in the area, despite the demise of "Garlic Gulch" in recent years. During the I-90 construction in the 1970s and 1980s, the historic Italian neighborhood at the north end of the Rainier Valley lost most of its businesses and many of its houses.

Some Japanese-Americans returned to Beacon Hill after the war, and quite a few Chinese-American families moved to the area as well. Dr. Eugene Ko decided to set up his practice on Beacon Hill in 1956 because Chinese families were moving into the neighborhood, and there were already two Chinese doctors in the Chinatown area. Richard Lew Kay started working as a pharmacist on Beacon Hill in 1959.

There was still discrimination against Asians in Seattle, and it was challenging for Asian professionals to find professional work in Seattle. Hong Y Chin was trained as a pilot, but in 1945 he bought a grocery store on Beacon Hill when he was unable to find work at Boeing (Chew 1994, 81-86).

Although initially some Chinese-Americans moved to the Central Area, racial conflicts in that neighborhood caused the Chinese to move away from the Central Area to Beacon Hill and the Jefferson Park area (Chin 1973, 45). Since the mid-1960s, several Chinese speaking physicians and related services have become established in the Beacon Hill area (Chin 1977, 108).

Similar to the Chinese-Americans, Filipinos moved from the International District to the Central Area. During World War II, Filipino men served in World War II and lived in some of the housing projects in southeast Seattle. Despite the lack of restrictive real estate covenants, much of Beacon Hill was still a closed neighborhood to Filipinos and other minorities until the open housing ordinances of the 1960s, which precluded housing discrimination on the basis of race.

As the blacks moved into the Central Area, the Asian groups, including the Filipinos, moved to other neighborhoods such as Beacon Hill. Some Filipinos that moved to Beacon Hill worked for Boeing (Cordova interview, August 7, 2003). Most Filipinos moved to the south portion of Beacon Hill and the Rainier Valley.

The Filipino community concentrated in areas near their churches, including the Filipino Methodist Church, which has now merged into the Beacon United Methodist Church, at 7301 Beacon Avenue South. Examples of Filipino-owned businesses on Beacon Hill include Manila Videos, Inay's Kitchen, Cucina Filipino, and Ernesto Rios Hair Design.

African Americans began to move to Beacon Hill in the 1950s and 1960s since it was one of the few areas of Seattle where the black population could expand outside the Central Area without running into widespread discrimination (Sale 1976, 218).

Quite a few single family houses and some apartments on the east slope of Beacon Hill and the west side of the north Rainier Valley were constructed between 1950 and 1962. Most of the houses from this period are in a ranch style. Scattered new construction in the area continues today.



1949 photograph of the Serbian Hall located at 4352 15th Avenue South in Beacon Hill near Jefferson Park. Source: PEMCO Webster & Stevens Collection, Museum of History & Industry, Seattle. All Rights Reserved.

During the 1960s, the construction of Interstate 5 along Beacon Hill's west side accentuated the neighborhood's isolation from the rest of Seattle. Some houses and commercial structures were demolished for the freeway construction, but this did not have a major effect on the core of Beacon Hill. The section of Interstate 5 from Seattle to Tacoma was completed by 1967.

In the fall of 1972, the neighborhood Beacon Hill Elementary School was closed and awaiting demolition when it was occupied by a group of Chicanos led by Roberto Maestas. These activists protested the defunding of English and adult education programs at South Seattle Community College. After finally securing City Council support, Maestas and his group founded El Centro De la Raza, which has been located in the old school building ever since. El Centro has reached out to many ethnic communities in the area to develop into a multicultural center in the heart of Beacon Hill. In 1999, El Centro purchased the school property for \$1.3 million and continues to lease space to other nonprofit organizations.

There were few Chicanos in the Beacon Hill neighborhood prior to the occupation of the school in 1972. There was a Mexican restaurant, La Hacienda, which provided food during the occupation (Maestas interview, August 7, 2003). Following the establishment of El Centro, more Latinos moved to Beacon Hill.

The Seattle School District constructed four new elementary schools on Beacon Hill in 1971, the new Beacon Hill, Kimball, Dearborn Park and Maple elementary schools

In 1997, the North Beacon Hill Planning Association formed to develop a neighborhood plan for the North Beacon Hill Urban Village. The North Beacon Hill Residential Urban Village was designated in Seattle's 1994 Comprehensive Plan. The residential urban village emphasized housing opportunities in a mixed-use neighborhood centered on Beacon Avenue. The neighborhood plan included recommendations for an improved business district, enhanced pedestrian and transit access, a new library, diversity in housing types, and appropriate improvements to Jefferson Park. This plan was adopted in 1999.

The Seattle Transportation Department constructed a landscaped median on Beacon Avenue in 1999 and moved through-traffic lanes to the east side of the street and developed the west side for parking. In 2004, a Sound Transit station to serve Beacon Hill is being constructed at Lander Street, just south of El Centro.

Among the businesses on Beacon Hill today, there is a preponderance of hair salons and dentists, many under Asian ownership.



1967 aerial view of Interstate 5 construction at the north end of Beacon Hill. Source: Staff Photographer Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Museum of History and Industry. Seattle. All Rights Reserved.

CONCLUSION

Beacon Hill is a mixed neighborhood that is predominantly residential in character. Because the development of Beacon Hill occurred over time, the current mix of development includes buildings from every decade since the 1890s. Few of the oldest houses survive, and most of the remaining older buildings are single family residences, with a few apartments and vernacular commercial buildings. The street network, including Beacon Avenue, Cheasty Boulevard, and Columbian Way, has affected the layout of the community, but the physical isolation of the hill has played a more central role in defining its character. Beacon Hill is very diverse in its ethnic makeup today, and the area includes buildings associated with the Asian, Chicano, and Italian-American communities in Seattle. The presence of Jefferson Park in a key location on the hill has a substantial effect on the area.

Important themes to be addressed in a survey of the North Beacon Hill area include ethnic heritage, architecture, landscape architecture, health/medicine, and transportation. Since there are relatively few architect-designed houses in the area, the survey will address vernacular house types and structures associated with the various ethnic groups that have lived and worked in the neighborhood.

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