

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Park Hills Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

Roughly bounded by Dixie Highway, Montague Road, Breckenridge Road, Sleepy Hollow Road,
street & number and properties facing Old State Road, Arlington Road, and St. James Avenue not for publication N/A

city or town Park Hills vicinity N/A

state Kentucky code KY county Kenton code 117 zip code 41011

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Donna M. Neary, SHPO Date _____

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)		Category of Property (Check only one box)		Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously-listed resources in the count)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private	<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district	555	120
<input type="checkbox"/>	public-State	<input type="checkbox"/>	site	37	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/>	structure	7	sites
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	object		structures
				599	120
					Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)
"Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1860"

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

none

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

RELIGION/religious facility

LANDSCAPE/unoccupied land

LANDSCAPE/natural feature

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

RELIGION/religious facility

LANDSCAPE/unoccupied land

LANDSCAPE/natural feature

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial

Revival

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/

Bungalow/Craftsman

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/

American Foursquare

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Tudor Revival

EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal

MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

OTHER/Victorian cottage

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/sandstone; CONCRETE

walls BRICK; WOOD/weatherboard; SYNTHETICS/

vinyl; STUCCO

roof ASPHALT; TILE; STONE/slate

other WOOD; STONE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of person significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1924-1957

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unidentified

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 243 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	713640	4328440	3	16	713220	4326500
2	16	714280	4327580	4	16	712500	4327540
<u>N/A</u> See continuation sheet.							

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David L. Taylor, Principal

organization Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc. date June, 2007

street & number 9 Walnut Street telephone 814-849-4900

city or town Brookville state PA zip code 15825

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple owners

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 1

7. Description

The Park Hills Historic District (Photos 1-35; Figs. 1-6) consists of a mid-nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century largely residential concentration of 243 acres located northwest of the Dixie Highway (U. S. Routes 25, 42, and 127) within the city of Park Hills, in Kenton County, Kentucky. Park Hills lies in northern Kentucky immediately south of Covington, which is on the Ohio River opposite Cincinnati. The district contains a total of 719 resources, nearly all of which are single-family residences. The single-family houses are joined by some original duplexes, one church, and two suburban trolley waiting stations. With respect to the resource count which appears in Section 5, smaller dependencies, such as sheds and a diversity of small garages, are treated as uncounted landscape features. The district's various public roadways and the masonry retaining walls found throughout the district's rolling terrain are each counted collectively as two contributing structures (KEPH-747 and KEPH-748, respectively); two pairs of stone entry portals (KEPH-745 and KEPH-746) are counted as four contributing structures. A small lake (KEPH-742) behind properties facing Cleveland Avenue at the north end of the boulevarded Park Drive is counted as a contributing site and the boulevard itself (KEPH-741) as a contributing structure. Scattered throughout the district are 36 vacant lots, none of which have ever been built upon; these are treated as contributing sites within the context of the district as a whole. Of the 719 resources in the district, 599 (83%) contribute to the character of the district and 120 (17%) are non-contributing. Most noncontributing properties are so designated because they post-date the period of significance; only a few historic properties have been insensitively altered to the extent that they no longer retain sufficient integrity to be considered contributing. Approximately 90% of the properties in the district were built between the mid-1920s and 1950.

The district as a whole retains integrity in all of its composite qualities and stands as a strong, physically-cohesive concentration of individual buildings, generally of identical historic and current function, located within a geographical area whose boundaries can be readily defined by the character of the properties found within. The installation of non-historic siding or replacement window units does not necessarily preclude a property's being deemed contributing within the character of the district. When major alterations to the fenestration are evident or when major significant changes to the surface texture have occurred (e. g., the installation of perma-stone or its equivalent), or when a major non-historic addition has been constructed on a principal elevation, an evaluation of "non-contributing" is rendered. Such has occurred only in fourteen instances in the Park Hills Historic District. Integrity is most closely evaluated according to National Register Bulletin No. 15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, which states that integrity remains "if the significant form, features, and detailing are not obscured." The test of integrity also relies to a degree on the standard argument which poses the question, "If individuals from the past were to return and view the property, would they recognize it?"

The district is confined to that portion of Park Hills between the City of Covington's Devou Park on the north and northwest, additional portions of Covington on the east, the commercial area along the Dixie Highway on the southeast, and Sleepy Hollow Road, the municipal boundary between Park Hills and Ft. Wright on the west. The section of the city lying southeast of the Dixie Highway is not included within this district,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 2

since the Dixie Highway consists exclusively of non-historic properties and constitutes such a clear and definable boundary; the eligibility of that portion of Park Hills southeast of the Dixie Highway has not been determined by the SHPO.¹

The area that would become Park Hills lay along the Covington-Lexington Turnpike, which is discussed more fully in Section 8. However, the pre-development physical appearance of the nominated area was likely wooded and essentially undeveloped due to the steep terrain. A historic atlas indicates that a scattering of buildings lay along the turnpike and a few homes existed both to the northwest and southeast; no historic images of the area have been found.

The Park Hills Historic District consists of a series of interconnected residential streets, some of which intersect the Dixie Highway, which, as noted above, is a major commercial thoroughfare which bisects the city and is not included within the nominated area. The streets in the district lie northwest of the Dixie Highway and meander in a picturesque manner through the undulating terrain of the community. Included within the district are St. James Avenue, Arlington Road, Aberdeen Road, Old State Road, Hamilton Road, Terrace Drive, Amsterdam Road, Altavia Avenue, Alhambra Court, Coram Street, Emerson and Lawton Roads, Rose Circle, Audubon Road, Park Drive, Jackson Road, Breckenridge and Emerson Roads, Parkvale and Morgan Courts, Cleveland Avenue, Terrace and Park Drives, Locust Street, and Sleepy Hollow Road. Parkcrest Lane, a comparatively new street, contains a series of 1970s-1980s condominiums which by far constitute the district's largest concentration of non-contributing resources; they are clustered on a single parcel and do not materially detract from the district's otherwise strong integrity and little-altered historic character.

Rights-of-way vary throughout the district. Park Drive enjoys a 150' right-of-way at its intersection with Amsterdam Road; this expanse accommodates a landscaped boulevard (KEPH—; Fig. 4), providing an impressive entrance to that portion of the district which is characterized by significantly larger lots and more substantial homes than are found elsewhere in the district, where rights-of-way are forty to fifty feet in width.

The Park Hills Historic District is laid out in an irregular pattern, and lacks the rectilinear grid appearance which characterizes many neighborhoods. Instead, the district embraces the rambling character of the picturesque residential suburban subdivisions of the 1920s. The streets are platted without alleys, all are paved, and most have concrete curbs and sidewalks. Parking is permitted on most streets and street lighting employs cobra-head devices mounted on wooden poles with overhead wiring. A small lake (KEPH-742), less than two acres in area, is at the head of Park Drive, characteristic of the planned picturesque character of this residential suburb.

¹The area southeast of the Dixie Highway outside the proposed district includes the campus of two parochial schools and a residential neighborhood dating from the 1930s and after. The proposed Park Hills Historic District was the focus of a SHPO- and City-sponsored intensive-level cultural resource survey in 2007; the area southeast of the Dixie Highway has not undergone such an evaluation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 3

As with the rights-of-way in the Park Hills Historic District, the dimensions of the building lots vary widely. Some of the estate-scale homes along streets such as Park Drive, Cleveland Avenue, and Emerson Road occupy significantly larger tracts than do the cottages and other small houses along streets such as Aberdeen Road, Old State Road, Altavia Avenue, and St. James Road. The cottages and American Foursquares along St. James Road, for instance, have lot dimensions of 50' × 140'. Likewise, lot frontages range upwards from 40' and depths from 100' to both frontages and depths of hundreds of feet. Some of the original lots in the district have been combined and otherwise subdivided over the decades since the area was first platted, but these changes generally have occurred within the period of significance.

The Park Hills Historic District is densely built-up with very few vacant lots. Those parcels which are vacant typically occupy hillside sites and are overgrown. On nearly every street, houses exhibit a similar front yard setback. Vegetation in the district consists of lawns, mature deciduous and evergreen trees, and domestic landscaping of a nearly universal high caliber.

The topography of the Park Hills Historic District is characterized by rolling, sometimes steep, terrain throughout. The district rises significantly from the northern edge, at the foot of Montague Road at the Park Hills-Covington city line, to the area of Emerson Road, near Devou Park. In **The Green Line: The Cincinnati, Covington, and Newport Railway**, authors Terry Lehman and Earl Clark noted that the Green Line traversed a 3,500' 6.5 percent grade in its climb along Arlington Road from Covington to Park Hills (Fig. 3).²

In addition to the hundreds of residences in the district, one church and a former waiting station for the trolley are along Amsterdam Road, and the former Park Hills Elementary School (non-contributing because of alterations) is at the east end of Old State Road. The vast majority of buildings in the Park Hills Historic District are 1½ to two stories in height. Many are of balloon frame construction and are veneered in brick, while others are of solid masonry construction and are finished in brick, stucco, and half-timbering, and occasionally are trimmed in stone. The earliest foundations are of stone, primarily found in that section of the district at the east end of Amsterdam Road, in the nineteenth-century Amsterdam neighborhood. Most twentieth-century foundations within the district are of poured concrete, finished smooth; a small percentage are of rock-faced concrete block. Roof forms are divided evenly between gabled, hipped, and pyramidal; both front-facing and laterally-oriented gable roofs appear. Dutch Colonial Revival-style homes have the distinctive gambrel roof which typifies the style. Roof cladding is nearly exclusively of asphalt shingles, although a few tile roofs are found within the district and a fewer number of roofs are finished in slate. The flat-topped window form is favored throughout the district, with one-over-one or multi-light sash; some Tudor Revival-style houses employ casement windows.

²Terry W. Lehman and Earl W. Clark. **The Green Line: The Cincinnati, Newport, and Covington Railway**, Chicago: Central Electric Railfans' Association, 2000), p. 41.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 4

The properties in the Park Hills Historic District represent a variety of styles of design, spanning the decades which correspond to the Period of Significance. Some buildings reflect vernacular³ adaptations of formal styles and others were erected without reference to any particular architectural style. Some of these vernacular properties are unadorned cottages and other representatives of the 1920s “small house” movement discussed in Section 8, while others borrow minimally from the form and finish of more formally-designed domestic architecture, such as the stylized half-timbered finishes which hint at the Tudor Revival style but which are applied to the pediment of a porch of an otherwise undistinguished cottage. While the work of no specific architect has been identified in Park Hills, the sophistication of design in many of the homes, notable those along Park Drive, Cleveland Avenue, and Emerson Road, is indicative of the obvious formal training of their designers.

Most of the homes in the district are single-family residences. Interspersed with these are duplexes which, along with a variety of repetitive house types, suggest a healthy tradition of speculative building early in the district’s history, led by the speculative initiatives of the original developers themselves.

The earliest section of the district, dating from the middle decades of the nineteenth century, is found in the area of lower Amsterdam Road southwest of Montague Road, along the Park Hills-Covington municipal boundary. This area, which developed as the unincorporated village of Amsterdam, appears as a separate community in the D. J. Lake 1883 **Atlas of Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties, Kentucky**⁴ and was eventually absorbed into the City of Park Hills. It consists of nineteenth-century houses built only on the northwest side of Amsterdam Road; the opposite side of the street is vacant due to the rugged and sloping terrain. Here are several early brick and wood houses, including one with an Eastlake-style double-gallery porch on the facade, and an Italianate-style brick house, also with a double-gallery porch.

Another nineteenth-century section in the district is found along Old State Road, which predates the twentieth-century development of the majority of the district. Several vernacular houses are found along this portion of Old State Road, interspersed with domestic architecture dating from the 1920s and 1930s.

Chronologically, the style which first appears in significant numbers in Park Hills is the Colonial Revival style, born of the fervor of patriotism in the wake of the Centennial of 1876 and in full swing when Park Hills was first formally platted in the 1920s. Within the Park Hills Historic District, this style employs—with varying degrees of faithfulness—the form and detail of eighteenth-century domestic design, and incorporates both the

³When used herein, the term *vernacular* is best explained by the definition appearing in Ward Bucher’s *Dictionary of Building Preservation*: “a building built without being designed by an architect or someone with similar formal training, often based on traditional or regional forms.”

⁴D. J. Lake, **Atlas of Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties**. (1883; rpt. Mt. Vernon, Indiana: Windmill Publications, 1998), p. 34.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 5

side-passage and central-passage form, enriched by embellishments such as multi-light flat-topped windows, sometimes with jack-arch lintels, porticos, exterior shutters, and frontispiece entrances. Examples of Colonial Revival design in the district include:⁵

807 Arlington Road (KEPH-77)	1222 Amsterdam Road (KEPH-265)
1110 Old State Road (KEPH-189)	1049 Altavia Avenue (KEPH-288)
1106 Old State Road (KEPH-191)	1082 Lawton Road (KEPH-397)
1023 Hamilton Road (KEPH-193)	1026 Lawton Road (KEPH-411)
1031 Hamilton Road (KEPH-195)	1080- Emerson Road (KEPH- 622)
1045 Hamilton Road (KEPH-199)	1064 Emerson Road (KEPH- 627)
1151 Hamilton Road (KEPH-205)	1074 Jackson Road (KEPH- 543)
1157 Hamilton Road (KEPH-207)	1111 Audubon Road (KEPH- 458)
1161 Hamilton Road (KEPH-208)	1075 Montague Road (KEPH- 608)
1165 Hamilton Road (KEPH-209)	

The Dutch Colonial Revival follows most of the other design tenets of the Colonial Revival but universally includes the gambrel roof form. Dutch Colonial Revival-style properties in Park Hills include:

818 St. James Avenue (KEPH-23)	1124 Audubon Road (KEPH-512)
840 St. James Avenue (KEPH-33)	1114 Park Drive (KEPH-521)
1423 Amsterdam Road (KEPH-244)	1020 Jackson Road (KEPH-528)
1007 Rose Circle (KEPH-438)	1091 Emerson Road (KEPH-639)

Cape Cod-style houses represent another variant of the Colonial Revival style. This design mode developed in the 1930s and after, drawing its inspiration from eighteenth-century house forms from colonial-era Massachusetts. 1½ stories in height, Cape Cod-style houses typically have a laterally-oriented gable roof, a symmetrically-massed facade, and dormers along the slope of the roof. In the Park Hills Historic District, the Cape Cod house is seen at:

827 Aberdeen Drive (KEPH-104)	1151 Hamilton Road (KEPH-206)
1322 Old State Road (KEPH-164)	1012 Altavia Avenue (KEPH-319)
1035 Hamilton Road (KEPH-196)	1080 Lawton Road (KEPH-398)
1049 Hamilton Road (KEPH-200)	1057 Montague Road (KEPH-603)

The Tudor Revival style gained popularity early in the early years of the twentieth century and employed the form and finishes of English Renaissance buildings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Chief among these is the decorative--rather than structural--half-timbered finish, which appears on Tudor Revival-style homes both in large expanses of wall surfaces and in the pediments of gable ends. Some half-timbering is rectilinear, while other examples are curvilinear. Among the most popular styles in the Park Hills Historic District, the Tudor Revival

⁵Because of the sheer number of properties in this district, only representative examples of each of the styles found in the district are provided as examples.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 6

style is seen in small cottages with half-timber-finished porches as well as in estate-scale domestic architecture which is generally 2½ stories in height, considerably larger in scale than the small houses of the same period, more elaborately detailed, and set on considerably larger parcels. Examples include:

812 St. James Avenue (KEPH-20)	1121 Audubon Road (KEPH-462)
815 St. James Avenue (KEPH-50)	1124 Audubon Road (KEPH-512)
906 Arlington Road (KEPH-87)	1109 Audubon Road (KEPH-515)
1119 Old State Road (KEPH-124)	1102 Audubon Road (KEPH-516)
1221 Old State Road (KEPH-133)	1114 Park Drive (KEPH-521)
1305 Old State Road (KEPH-136)	1020 Jackson Road (KEPH-528)
1218 Old State Road (KEPH-173)	1166 Breckenridge Drive (KEPH-616)
1113 Old State Road (KEPH-213)	1091 Emerson Road (KEPH-639)
1212 Old State Road (KEPH-270)	1054 Emerson Road (KEPH-631)
1059 Altavia Avenue (KEPH-290)	1035 Emerson Road (KEPH-632)
840 Alhambra Court (KEPH-340)	1166 Cleveland Avenue (KEPH-654) 1129
1011 Lawton Road (KEPH-372)	Cleveland Avenue (KEPH-676)
1011 Rose Circle (KEPH-436)	1137 Cleveland Avenue (KEPH-677)

The Park Hills Historic District was formally platted in the 1920s, by which time the popularity of the Craftsman style was in full bloom. Among the strongest influences of this style was the English Arts-and-Crafts movement. At the same time, the “small house” movement developed--“small” being defined as a house of six or fewer rooms--and “alliances formed among architects, real estate developers, builders, social reformers, manufacturers, and public officials to encourage home ownership, standardized home building practices, and neighborhood improvements.”⁶ The Craftsman style and the small house movement of the 1920s are represented by:

831 Arlington Road (KEPH-81)	1074 Altavia Avenue (KEPH-300)
1135 Old State Road (KEPH-127)	918 Terrace Drive (KEPH-330)
1328 Old State Road (KEPH-162)	844 Alhambra Court (KEPH-339)
1200 Old State Road (KEPH-178)	838 Alhambra Court (KEPH-341)
1039 Hamilton Road (KEPH-197)	1107 Audubon Road (KEPH-456)
1051 Altavia Avenue (KEPH-289)	

Bungalows were erected throughout the district in the 1920s and 1930s, typically of brick construction, with a laterally-oriented gable roof, a dormer on the facade, and a recessed front porch. Bungalows include the houses at:

824 St. James Avenue (KEPH-26)	824 Alhambra Court (KEPH-115)
817 St. James Avenue (KEPH-49)	1123 Old State Road (KEPH-125)
841 Alhambra Court (KEPH-110)	1214 Old State Road (KEPH-174)

⁶David L. Ames and Linda Flint McCullough, **Historic Residential Suburbs—Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places**, Washington: National Park Service, 2002, p. 59.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 7

1039 Altavia Avenue (KEPH-285)
1046 Rose Circle (KEPH-424)

1044 Rose Circle (KEPH-425)
1126 Audubon Road (KEPH-511)

Appearing concomitant with Bungalows and Craftsman cottages, American Foursquares became the most ubiquitous house type built in America in the two decades after World War One. More of a house form than an architectural style, Foursquares typically exhibit a hipped- or pyramidal-roofed, blocky form, a full front porch, and dormers on the slopes of the roofs. In the Park Hills Historic District, Foursquares are seen both in modest form and in houses of a more pretentious scale and level of design sophistication. Representative examples include:

806 St. James Avenue (KEPH-17)	900 Terrace Drive (KEPH-388)
844 St. James Avenue (KEPH-35)	1008 Lawton Road (KEPH-420)
842-844 Arlington Road [double] (KEPH-88)	1012 Rose Circle (KEPH-445)
1070 Altavia Avenue (KEPH-301)	1068 Jackson Road (KEPH-545)

Extending into the mid-1950s, the Period of Significance of the Park Hills Historic district embraces the earliest years of the popularity of the Ranch style. A modern mode born in California in the 1930s, the Ranch style reached its pinnacle of popularity in the 1950s and 1960s. Incorporating an elongated single-story form with sparse detailing and either hipped or side-gable roofs, the appearance of the Ranch style in the Park Hills Historic District marks the waning of the district's Period of Significance and continues beyond the period of Significance into the 1960s, and includes the following houses dating from within the Period of Significance:

1147 Hamilton Road (KEPH-204)	1034 Lawton Road (KEPH-408)
916 Alhambra Court (KEPH-355)	1238 Audubon Road (KEPH-490)
1072 Lawton Road (KEPH-401)	

The buildings in the Park Hills Historic District are generally in good to excellent condition. The appearance of only a few properties suggests deferred maintenance, and in no case has the deteriorated condition of an individual property rendered it noncontributing to the character of the district as a whole. Alterations to the buildings in the district include the application on non-historic siding (principally vinyl), the replacement of original porch supports, and the replacement of historic window sash with new units. Some buildings exhibit additions to the rear elevations, and a very few others have additions on side elevations. Alterations to properties within the district do not occur in any significant concentration and fail to detract from the district's ability to convey its overall historic appearance during the period of significance.

Summarizing, the predominate character of the Park Hills Historic District is that of a 1920s-1950s northern Kentucky residential suburb containing modestly-detailed and -proportioned domestic architecture, along with substantial estate-scale homes, executed in wood frame and brick, and representing a variety of the architectural styles popular throughout the 1924-1957 period of significance.

The following Resource Inventory is arranged in a spreadsheet format and describes the properties found within the Park Hills Historic District. Dates of construction which appear with a range are approximate; the range

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 8

corresponds to that employed by the survey system of the Kentucky Heritage Council (the SHPO); other dates were taken from the records of the Kenton County Property Value Administrator. Under the *evaluation* column, properties considered to be contributing to the character of the district are coded "C," while those coded "NC" are non-contributing, either because they date from outside the period of significance of the district or because their integrity has been compromised by insensitive alterations. The Inventory numbers (each preceded by "KE-PH," indicating Kenton County/Park Hills and also associated with the SHPO survey system) are keyed to the map accompanying the nomination. The first survey number in the inventory is KE-PH-11, since survey sites KE-PH-1 through KE-PH-10 were outside the district boundaries.

Contained within this document on Continuation Sheets is an abbreviated inventory including the resource number, the evaluation of each property, its address, the original and current function of each, and the estimated and documented date of construction. A more extensive spreadsheet containing additional data is submitted as an Appendix.

The following codes apply to each of the columns in the spreadsheet:

eval: evaluation, contributing (C) or non-contributing (NC)
res_name: location of resource
orig_func; curr_func: original/current function, as follows: 01A: single residence; 01B: multiple dwelling; 05A: school; 06A: church; 04B: city hall; 03B: fraternal/patriotic organization; 15G: vacant land
c_date_e: estimated date of construction
c_date-d: construction date documented by PVA
meth_o: construction method
plan1: apparent plan of property
style_i1: architectural style
found_mo: foundation material
wall_o: exterior wall finish
roof_fo: roof form
roof_co: roof material

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 9

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 10

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 11

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 12

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 13

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 14

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 15

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 16

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 17

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 18

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 7 Page 19

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 20

8. Significance

Overview

The Park Hills Historic District is significant both architecturally and for its reflection of the pattern of community planning and development in northern Kentucky beginning in the 1920s. It meets National Register Criterion A for *community planning and development* as a Picturesque planned residential suburb, laid out with land use, building, cost-of-construction, and utility restrictions, and setback requirements, and actively marketed by its developers beginning in 1924. “The Picturesque suburb [of which Park Hills is an example] with its plat of curvilinear streets and roads, the product of the Romantic landscape movement, became the means by which upper-income city dwellers sought to satisfy their aspiration for a suburban home within commuting distance of the city.”⁷ The district is also significant architecturally and meets National Register Criterion C since it consists of a dense concentration of properties representing a variety of the architectural styles popular during the period of significance. The Period of Significance of the district begins in 1924, marking the platting of the Park Hills Subdivision and ends c. 1957, the estimated date of construction of the most recently-constructed of the district’s historic buildings (typified by the Ranch-style houses at 1218 and 1154 Breckenridge Drive (KEPH-613 and 618, respectively), dating from 1957.

Park Hills Historic District Meets the Registration Requirements for Historic Suburb

The Park Hills Historic District is a composite example of Property Types II and III, as described in Section II, pages 54-55 of the National Register Multiple Property Submission, “Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1960;” these are *Streetcar Suburbs, 1888-1928* and *Early Automobile Suburbs, 1908 to 1945*.

The aforementioned National Register Bulletin notes

Railroad suburbs [beginning as early as the 1830s] offered the upper and upper-middle classes an escape from the city and what historian John Stilgoe has called the “borderland,” where the rural countryside and the city, with its modern amenities, merged. . . The introduction of the first electric-powered streetcar system ushered in a new period of suburbanization. The electric streetcar, or trolley, allowed people to travel in 10 minutes as far as they could walk in 30 minutes. . . In many places, the development of real estate closely followed the introduction of streetcar lines.⁸

While streetcar usage nationally peaked in 1923—the year before the formal platting of Park Hills—and declined thereafter, the usage of the streetcar was alive and well in the suburban hills south of Covington for nearly two more decades. The Green Line, discussed in more detail below, traversed the new community as it made its way south from Covington to Ft. Wright, irrefutably contributed in an intimate fashion to the growth and development of Park Hills throughout its first decades.

⁷Ames and McCullough, *Op. Cit.*, p. 38.

⁸Ames and McClelland, *Op. Cit.*, p. 16.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 21

With the arrival of the automobile early in the twentieth century personalized travel and commuting became a reality. Henry Ford's Model-T debuted in 1908, and "the rapid adoption of the mass-produced automobile by Americans led to the creation of the automobile-oriented suburb of single-family houses on spacious lots that has become the quintessential American landscape of the twentieth century."⁹ Park Hills, with its street after street of 1920s and 1930s homes with attached and basement garages, along with detached garages at the end of driveways, clearly reflects the growth of the early automobile suburb.

The Park Hills Historic District meets the registration requirements set forth in the aforementioned National Register Bulletin focused upon historic residential suburbs. Under Criterion A, the district employs "conventions of community planning important in the history of suburbanization, such as zoning, deed restrictions, or subdivision regulations."¹⁰ The representative deeds cited herein substantiate the presence of these conventions within Park Hills.

The Bulletin continues:

A movement for the design of cohesive suburban neighborhoods in the form of residential parks and garden suburbs began to emerge in the 1890s and continued into the early decades of the twentieth century. A general plan of development, specifications and standards, and the use of deed restrictions became essential elements used by developers and designers to control house design, ensure quality, and create spatial organization suitable for fine homes in a park setting.¹¹

Clearly, the Park Hills Historic District is the embodiment of this movement.

With further reference to Criterion A, the MPS states in Section F, Page 59 that areas satisfy this Criterion if they meet one of several threshold conditions, among which are: "the neighborhood reflects an important historic trend in the development and growth of a locality or metropolitan area" and "the suburb introduced conventions of community planning important in the history of suburbanization, such as zoning, deed restrictions, or subdivision regulations." Both are true for Park Hills.

With reference to Criterion C, the district meets the registration requirements since it consists of a "collection of residential architecture [that] is an important example of a distinctive period of construction."¹² Virtually every street in the district contains properties which represent a distinctive period of construction and which reflect the stylistic preferences in domestic design throughout the period of significance. This architecture represents the change in favor from the era of mid-Victorian design to design, including the socially-engineered design of the

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ames and McClelland, **Op. Cit.**, p. 93

¹¹Ibid., p. 39.

¹²Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 22

“small house” movement, embodying the technological modernity of the twentieth century, complete with planned—as opposed to added—electrical service, indoor plumbing, and attached and integral basement garages.

The MPS continues in Section F, Page 60, that Criterion C registration applies if the “collection of residential architecture is an important example of distinctive period of construction, method of construction . . .,” or the “subdivision embodies high artistic values through its overall plan or the design of entranceways, streets, homes, and community spaces.” Clearly this is true for Park Hills as well.

With reference to the integrity of the district, the test of integrity set forth in the previously-cited National Register Bulletin is met by this district in that it “retains the spatial organization, physical components, aspects of design, and historic associations that it acquired during the period of significance.”¹³ Except for a cluster of 1970s condominiums in the center of the district and a multi-tenant complex along Amsterdam Road, the Park Hills Historic District retains its overall historic appearance, as most historic resources are little altered from the original and retain an unusually high integrity of location, materials, setting, association, workmanship, design, and feeling.

History of Park Hills

The area of Kenton County that would eventually become Park Hills was little developed throughout the entire nineteenth century. One year following Kentucky statehood, the legislature enacted provisions to authorize the clearing of a road from Frankfort to Cincinnati. This road generally followed a considerably older trail which ran along Dry Ridge and became known as George Town Road. Travelers early in the nineteenth century reported that not a single town lay between Covington and Georgetown.¹⁴ Following this older trail, the Covington and Lexington Turnpike became a nineteenth-century toll road, which led southwesterly out of Covington toward Lexington and traversed the area that would eventually be settled as Park Hills. The aforementioned 1880s atlas indicates that the area was part of Kenton County Magisterial District No. 1, depicted as only sparsely settled, primarily along the turnpike and along the state road (now Old State Road), north of the turnpike (Fig. 1). The atlas map also shows a quarry between the two roads and a scattering of houses along what is today Sleepy Hollow Road, the historic district’s western boundary; a few nineteenth-century homes remain along Old State Road; none survive along Sleepy Hollow Road. A 1940 newspaper clipping¹⁵ confirms the presence of this quarry and one other. In the mid-nineteenth century, in the area of Jackson Road and Rose Circle, a lime kiln was fired from rock quarried from the adjacent hills. In addition, Rufus Light operated a clay quarry from which he extracted material to be sold to Cincinnati’s renowned Rookwood Pottery and for years the Light family also marketed molding sand from their property on present-day Breckenridge Road.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 101

¹⁴Wayne Onkst, ed. **From Buffalo Trails to the Twenty-First Century: A Centennial History of Erlanger, Kentucky**. Erlanger: Erlanger Historical Society, 1996, p. 1.

¹⁵A dearth of information exists about the history of the community. Mrs. Richard Udry prepared a presentation for the Fort Mitchell Homemakers’ Club about Park Hills; portions of her presentation were published as “Story of Park Hills” and appeared in a local newspaper, the *Cincinnati Post* of August 8, 1940.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY

Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 23

Adjacent to the nominated area, the village of Amsterdam developed as a small settlement abutting Covington along Montague Avenue in the northern reaches of the district; present-day Amsterdam Road (originally Amsterdam Pike) leads uphill from that small neighborhood into the heart of Park Hills. The 1900 U. S. Geological Survey 15-minute quadrangle (Fig. 2) indicates little development in the area, which at that time remained rural and only lightly populated.

As Cincinnati grew, and, to a lesser extent, Covington and Newport as well, residents began to consider the attractiveness of suburban living. Completed in 1866, John Roebling's suspension bridge spanning the Ohio River provided the first dependable link between Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. Earlier trans-river conveyance had involved ferries, consistently plagued by high water, low water, or ice. Roebling's bridge changed all that and, to provide mass transportation, the Covington Street Railway was incorporated in 1864, as the bridge was under construction. Eventually becoming the Cincinnati, Covington, and Newport Railway, the line was christened the "Green" line because of the distinctive color of its rolling stock, to differentiate it from the orange equipment operated by the considerably larger Cincinnati Street Railway.

The major improvements to the former Covington-Lexington Turnpike were the brainchild of Cincinnati entrepreneur Clifford Shinkle. The president and one of the primary stockholders of the company that owned the Suspension Bridge, Shinkle was a leading proponent of the improvements to the old road and was likely responsible for the naming of the vastly-improved "Dixie Highway," which lead southward from Michigan to Florida. He was also instrumental in getting the highway routed along the old turnpike, passing through the area that would become Park Hills, through Covington, and across the Suspension Bridge into Cincinnati.

The first horse-drawn street railway cars crossed the new bridge in 1867; electrified cars began service to Covington in 1890. River towns such as Ludlow, Bellevue, Newport, and Dayton were also linked to Cincinnati, but among the greatest effects of the bridge and the birth of the local street railway system, was the opening to development of the high ground south of Covington.

With the financial success and maturity of the Cincinnati, Newport and Covington Railway came the acquisition of "new streetcars by the scores"¹⁶ and by 1900, the Green Line had more than 52 miles of line in three counties and two states, including slightly more than 24 miles of track in Kenton County. Late in 1902, the Green Line's Lewisburg line was extended out Pike and Montague Streets in Covington in its trek toward Highland and St. Mary's cemeteries near Ft. Mitchell. At Montague Street, cars passed on to private right-of-way and climbed southward on a 6.5 percent grade (Fig. 3). Park Hills would be developed on the Green Line on both sides of the former Arlington Pike, including part of this steep grade, and streetcar transportation to and from Park Hills would make the new community even more accessible to Covington, Newport, and Cincinnati. Park Hills was served faithfully by the Green Line until 1950, when streetcar service to all of northern Kentucky came to an end.

¹⁶Lehman and Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 24

Elsmere and Erlanger,¹⁷ south of Park Hills, were among the earlier suburbs to develop; both of these communities lay along the Cincinnati Southern Railroad. Erlanger was developed by a land syndicate which offered one year's free rail transportation to anyone buying a lot and building in the new community. Other communities grew up along the old turnpike, but it took the paving of the road in 1921 (likely financed through the Federal-Aid Highways Act of 1921), and its reincarnation as the Dixie Highway, to provide significant and sustained growth.

Much of the area that would become Park Hills was owned by the Light and Montague families; the naming of Montague Street reflects this early ownership.¹⁸ Other than some minor development along the Covington-Lexington Pike and along Old State Road, the area was essentially undeveloped, it being too hilly for agricultural use and, in pre-automobile days, too rugged for residential development as well. Early in the twentieth century, attorney Robert Simmons, who had grown up in the immediate area, and Edward Renz acquired a portion of the Light and Montague holdings and laid out a street now known as Audubon Road. The development of this single new street was not successful and the right-of-way was soon nearly overgrown with trees.

In 1922, Covington banker DeWitt Collins Lee, seeking a tract on which to build a new home for himself, acquired a parcel adjacent to Covington's Devou Park. The 576-acre park (eventually expanded to 704 acres) lay atop high ground overlooking the Ohio River and Cincinnati and had been presented to the city of Covington in 1910 by William J. Devou. The area was undeveloped and no city utilities were available to Lee's tract. Nonetheless, with an eye toward developing a residential subdivision, he began to acquire adjacent land, including a parcel retained by the Renz estate and another 75-acre tract. Lee and Robert Simmons, who had first laid out Audubon Road, became partners, operating as the Lee & Simmons Development Company.

D. Collins Lee (1888-1949) was a towering figure within the context of Park Hills history. While Robert Simmons was apparently an equal partner in the development company, Lee appears to have been the leader. A 1908 Centre College graduate, he was admitted to the Bar in 1911 and practiced in Covington until 1924, when he entered partnership with Simmons at Park Hills. From 1926 to 1933 he was Vice President and Trust Officer at the First National Bank of Covington, and he maintained his residence in Covington only until 1928, when, according to city directories, he built a house and moved to 1035 Emerson Road (KEPH-632), within the nominated area. Of the more than seven hundred homes built during the early years of the Park Hills development, Lee built more than two hundred as speculative ventures. He lived in the Emerson Road house until his death.¹⁹

Less is known about Robert Simmons. He was an attorney who had apparently been reared in the area, in a house built by his father on what would be come Amsterdam Road. City directories indicate that his law offices were in the First National Bank Building, home to the institution which his partner, D. Collins Lee, served as vice

¹⁷See Erlanger Proper Historic District, NR 2002.

¹⁸Historical information from the Uday clipping referenced in Footnote 7.

¹⁹National Cyclopedia of American Biography 38 (New York: James T., White & Co., 1953), p. 171-172.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 25

president. Simmons and his wife, Alma Lawton Simmons lived at 1300 Amsterdam Road on a large tract now occupied by a series of 1970s condominiums. Lawton Street, in the district, courses through the Simmons' former holdings and bears Alma Simmons' maiden name.

Returning to the developmental history of the city, Lee and Simmons continued to acquire parcels for development into residential lots, and in 1924 the company began to market these lots in a new subdivision known as Park Hills (Fig. 4). Audubon Road was among the first to be re-graded and paved; a water main was laid from Covington; and a storage facility was erected with the capacity to serve one hundred new homes. The lots along Audubon Road were completely sold before the infrastructure was completed; sale prices ranged upward from \$15 per front foot. Rose Circle was next, and also sold out immediately. Robert Simmons built roads through his own property, including a tract which he had acquired decades before from Sarah Odgen Devou, the mother of the Devou Park benefactor. The Lee & Simmons Development Company maintained an office (not extant) in the heart of their development, at the southeast corner of Amsterdam Road and Park Drive.²⁰ The site was referred to as "Park Hills Plaza."²¹

A 1926 advertisement for Park Hills in the *Cincinnati Post* boasted of eight tennis courts, a riding club, an archery club and the "proposed" golf course--all at Devou Park but immediately adjacent to Park Hills, and clearly part of its allure. The advertisement continued, "How about those children of yours? Are they getting a fair chance? Hundreds of families have purchased in Park Hills for the health and happiness of their children." In 1927, a promotional brochure proclaimed that the new community possessed "the romance of outdoor life and the great open spaces of nature are things of permanence in Park Hills." The brochure added that the city was a "paradise" for children and young people and only a four minute streetcar ride to Covington and an eight minute ride to Cincinnati.²²

Sales throughout the development were brisk, and houses, large and small, soon were under construction. Lee and Simmons planned their development to assure that it would be as attractive and accessible as possible to buyers and new residents of diverse financial positions, even financing the sale of lots to newcomers. A typical transfer is that of a parcel on St. James Road, purchased by C. E. McAtee in 1928.²³ The boilerplate "fill-in-the-blank" deed stipulates that for a period of twenty-five years after the conveyance, the lot may be used for residential purposes only. Further, only one dwelling was permitted to be built on the lot and it was to have a minimum front-yard setback of thirty feet. No house could be erected at a cost of less than \$6,000, and the plans for the house were

²⁰Williams Directory Company, **Williams' Directory of the City of Covington** (Cincinnati: Williams Directory Company, 1926-1927).

²¹"Park Hills Firefighters Got New Home 45 Years Ago," *Kentucky Post* on-line edition. <http://www.kypost.com/2002/jul/15/reis071502.html>.

²²*Ibid.*

²³Kenton County Deed Book 229, Page 645.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 26

subject to the review and approval of the Lee & Simmons Development Company. C. E. McAtee paid the developers a down payment and Lee & Simmons financed the balance of the sale price of the lot, \$2,446.26 in this case, at the rate of 6%.

St. James Road and many of the district's other streets consist of small building lots, while streets such as Park Drive, Cleveland Avenue, and Emerson and Breckenridge Roads consist of substantially larger tracts. In the case of a lot sold in 1925 at the corner of Jackson Road and Cleveland Avenue, the setback was forty-five feet, provisions were made for a garage (the only outbuilding permitted on the lot), but it had to be of the same construction as the house, and the minimum construction cost was \$12,000.²⁴

The popularity of the community grew steadily. The first meeting of a town council was held on June 13, 1926 at the residence of Dr. R. M. Rankin on Audubon Road. The following year, the community was incorporated as a city with a population of about 500. By 1930, the population had more than doubled, reaching 1,275, rising to 1,615 in 1940 and 2,577 in 1950. The first census after the end of the Period of Significance of the district occurred in 1960 and recorded a population of 4,076.

Very little institutional development is apparent in the Park Hills Historic District. The former Park Hills Elementary School (KEPH-120) at 1030 Old State Road is a non-contributing feature because of the presence of modern additions. The community never had a public high school; students attend either Dixie or Scott High School, in neighboring municipalities. Likewise, only one church is in the district, the former Evangelical Lutheran Church (KEPH-210) at Amsterdam and Hamilton Roads.

From the beginning, the demographics of Park Hills have encompassed both middle-and upper-class residents. Historic city directories for the area indicate a broad spectrum of residents in the new community. Taken from the 1927 directory,²⁵ the following list is a sampling of the walks of life of the residents:

Esther G. Aldrick, clerk, 35 Audubon Road
Arthur L. Doyle, insurance agent, 13 Alhambra Court
Joseph C. Knochelman, metalworker, Old State Road
D. Collins Lee, manager [of the Lee & Simmons Development Co.], 216 Emerson Road
Joseph M. Macke, insurance broker, B. Kenter Macke, clerk, and William Macke, circuit court clerk, 121 Jackson Road
William A. Middendorf, salesman, 103 Park Drive
Robert M. Rankin, physician, 33 Audubon Road
Anna Louise Reeves, teacher, 512 Rose Circle
Joseph A. and Michael J. Ryan, plasterers, and Marie A. Ryan, nurse, 16 Rose Circle
Edmund Shackelford Lee, banker, Cleveland Avenue
Robert Simmons, manager [of the Lee & Simmons Development Co.], Amsterdam Road; Simmons' gardener, John R. Haley, also lived on the property
John R. Bullock, real estate, Park Drive
Grattan H. Whittle, salesman, Martha H. Whittle, phone operator, Thelma M. Whittle, bookkeeper, 100 Audubon Road

²⁴Kenton County Deed Book210, Page 635.

²⁵-Williams, **Op. Cit.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 27

Edward Zeisz, banker, 5 Park Drive

Park Hills remained a popular residential community throughout the Period of Significance and remains so to this day. Development along the Dixie Highway is primarily commercial in nature and, as noted previously, is not included within the boundaries of the Park Hills Historic District. Likewise, the Covington Catholic High School, at 1600 Dixie Highway (KEPH-56), is not included. The nominated area of this suburban city retains its residential character and is a sought-after neighborhood for commuters into Covington and Cincinnati, in many respects just as it was when D. Collins Lee and Robert Simmons laid out the community in the 1920s.

Comparison of Park Hills with other Northern Kentucky Suburbs

Within the northern Kentucky region, the Park Hills Historic District stands as a distinct entity, defined by its early-twentieth-century suburban plan and its abiding character as a northern Kentucky residential suburb, including both modestly-scaled “small house” architecture and estate-scale suburban mansions. A comparable historic district in northern Kentucky is the Erlanger Proper Historic District (NR 9/6/02), south of Park Hills and also in Kenton County. Like Park Hills, Erlanger was created by a developer--in this case, a land syndicate--which ambitiously marketed its suburban building lots to Cincinnati railroad-based commuters in the late-nineteenth century, a generation before Park Hills was developed. Like Park Hills, Erlanger lies along the Dixie Highway and its major development occurred between World War One and the 1940s. Physically, Park Hills exhibits a far more picturesque setting, with rolling and even hilly terrain and winding streets; Erlanger is nearly flat and is laid out in a grid. Most of the Erlanger district is of wood construction finished in wood, while masonry finishes dominate in Park Hills. The repertoire of domestic architecture found throughout Erlanger is modest in its proportions and does not include the substantial estate-scale residential architecture found in sections of Park Hills.

In Newport, northeast of Park Hills, the Mansion Hill Historic District (NR 7/17/80; Boundary Increase 8/1/85) dates from a nearly a century earlier than Park Hills and contains houses dating from the middle and latter years of the nineteenth century, including “Bellevue,” the James Taylor mansion at 335 East Third Street, built c. 1840 in the Greek Revival style and extensively altered c. 1880. The original Mansion Hill district incorporates “a large, distinctive, and varied collection of nineteenth-century architecture considered the finest representation of the city’s most prosperous era.”²⁶ The East Newport Historic District (NR 8/25/83) dates primarily from 1865 to 1915 and is dominated by the “Newport house,” a two- to two-and-one-half-story, two-bay, side-passage house. Somewhat larger than Park Hills, the East Newport district contains nearly 1,000 properties, including six industrial properties, six churches, and one school; as noted above, Park Hills is nearly exclusively residential. Newport’s Monmouth Street Historic District (NR 7/25/96) extends for an eight-block linear area and is largely commercial in character.

Elsewhere in Kenton County, the Covington Downtown Commercial Historic District (NR 6/9/83 with boundary increases in 1991, 1996, and 2001) is commercial in character and the other Covington districts exhibit

²⁶Margaret Warminski, “Mansion Hill Historic District, Boundary Revision.” National Register nomination, 1985.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 8 Page 28

far more of an urban character than does the Park Hills Historic District, which is undeniably a suburban district.

In neighboring Boone County, west of Kenton County, the Burlington Historic District (NR 6/19/79; Boundary Reduction 8/3/05) is a rural county seat undergoing significant impact by the expansion of the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport. Laid out in the 1790s, Burlington retains both log architecture and Federal and Greek Revival-style design, while Park Hills dates from more than a century later and is characterized principally by domestic design tenets from the 1920s and thereafter.

Beyond these, other districts in the region which can be compared to Park Hills include the Boone County districts in Florence, Petersburg, and Rabbit Hash. Florence, an incorporated city, appeared only as "Florence Cross Roads" in the 1883 county atlas, but grew significantly with the improvements made to the Covington-Lexington Turnpike. Florence contains a defined central business district and residential neighborhoods, but has been severely impacted by suburban development fed by Interstate 71/75 which passes through the city's western edge. Petersburg and Rabbit Hash, conversely, are Ohio River towns which are far more rural in character than is Park Hills. Rabbit Hash is an unincorporated and irregularly-arranged village anchored by an 1830s general store (Rabbit Hash General Store, NR 1989) and Petersburg, also a river town, was anchored by a long-extinct distillery.

The above comparisons illustrate the significance of Park Hills as deriving from its picturesque suburban character, typified by meandering tree-lined streets lined with well-maintained domestic architecture spanning a 110-year history. Erlanger is less pretentious in scale and detailing than Park Hills, the Covington and Newport districts are of a far more urban character, Burlington still resembles a country county seat, and Rabbit Hash is a rural Ohio River hamlet.

Evaluation of the Significance of the Park Hills Historic District

The significance of the Park Hills Historic District is vested in its position as a late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century northern Kentucky suburb containing a densely-built-up concentration of minimally-altered historic domestic architecture dating primarily from the first six decades of the twentieth century. The core of the district consists of a carefully planned and regulated suburban subdivision of the 1920s and after, reflecting the growth of the automobile as seen in the many original basement, attached, and free-standing historic garages found throughout. With respect to Criterion C, the Park Hills Historic District contains diverse examples of the many of the styles of domestic architecture popular during the Period of Significance. Among these are the Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Craftsman, including Bungalows and Craftsman-style cottages of modest scale, along with the Ranch style. Specific examples of such buildings appear in Section 7.

Summarizing, Park Hills stands as a nearly pristine early twentieth-century residential suburb laid out by Covington land speculators whose development was guided by community land-use development restrictions and design review, including cost and building size guidelines, setback requirements, and use and building restrictions. Park Hills follows the pattern of expansion of northern Kentucky's development from the lowlands of the Ohio River basin to the flood-free uplands south of the original settlements; further, the district meets the National Register Criteria for Evaluation as a northern Kentucky suburban neighborhood containing a concentration of formally-designed and vernacular domestic architecture dating from the early twentieth century into the 1950s.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number 9 Page 29

9. Bibliography

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Public Records

Land Records, Kenton County Court House, Covington, Kentucky.

10. Geographical Data

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The area proposed for listing as the Park Hills Historic District is roughly bounded by Dixie Highway, Montague Road, Breckenridge Road, Sleepy Hollow Road, Devou Park, and the Dixie Highway (U. S. Rt. 25). However, within that roughly defined area, the district excludes those properties which front along the Dixie Highway. For the precise boundary of the district, see the scaled district sketch map, labeled "Park Hills Historic District." That map has been derived from the official records of the Kenton County Property Value Administrator.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary proposed for listing is that of a district, which has been selected to include those properties that collectively meet the Registration Requirements for the two suburban property types selected as the basis for evaluation, Streetcar Suburbs and Automobile Suburbs. This includes much of the corporate boundary of the City of Park Hills lying generally northwest of the Dixie Highway. The properties fronting on the Dixie Highway area were excluded from the district since they were constructed after the close of the Period of Significance, and do not meet the definition of the two property types. Those properties falling outside the district include a substantial modern high school campus, a modern church, and a series of modern commercial buildings. The nominated area, thus, has been limited to the historic neighborhood that contains the highest concentration of residences that meet the property type definitions and registration requirements.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number Photo Log Page 31

Photography Log

All Photographs:
Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
David L. Taylor, 2007
Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, KY

1. St. James Avenue, east side, streetscape, looking south with 836 St. James Avenue (KEPH-31) in the foreground
2. Streetscape, Old State Road, north side, looking west toward Sleepy Hollow Road, with 1406 Old State Road (KEPH-157) in the foreground, showing the 1940s-early 1950s character of this portion of the district
3. Terrace Drive, east side, streetscape, at Amsterdam Road looking south, with 914 Terrace Drive, the design of which occurs in repetition in the district (KEPH-331) in the foreground
4. Amsterdam Road streetscape, south side, looking west, with 1405 Amsterdam Road (KEPH-235) in the foreground
5. Lawton Road, streetscape, south side looking west, with the double house at 1009 Lawton Road (KEPH-371) in the foreground, showing uniform setbacks, tree lawns, mature shade trees, etc., all of which characterize many portions of the district.
6. Streetscape, Lawton Road, west side, looking west, with 1045 Lawton Road (KEPH-378) in the foreground.
7. 1082 Lawton Road, (KEPH-397), southwest perspective, looking northeast
8. Streetscape of Audubon Road at Lawton Road, looking northwest
9. Streetscape, Audubon Road, south side, looking west, with 1201 Audubon Road (KEPH-473) in foreground
10. Streetscape, Audubon Road, north side looking west, with 1133 Audubon Road, (KEPH-468) in the foreground
11. Streetscape, south side Audubon Road, looking west away from Park Drive
12. Streetscape, Park Drive, looking southeast from the Park Hills-Covington city line at Devou Park
13. 1102 Park Drive (KEPH-516), facade, looking northwest
14. Streetscape, west side Park Drive looking northwest, with 1010 Park Drive (KEPH-513) in foreground

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number Photography Log Page 32

15. Streetscape, Rose Circle, north side, at Park Drive, looking east
16. Streetscape, north side Rose Circle, looking east, with 1048 Rose Circle (KEPH-423) in the foreground
17. Bungalow at 1044 Rose Circle (KEPH-423), facade, looking north
18. Entry portal at Park Drive, looking northwest, with KEPH-514 in the background
19. Trolley wait station (part of KEPH-732) at Hamilton Road and Amsterdam Road, looking southwest
20. Streetscape, Amsterdam Road, north side, at Montague Road, looking southwest, with the district's oldest property, 1000 Amsterdam Road (KEPH-568), in the foreground
21. 1075 Montague Road (KEPH-608), facade, looking south, and showing Georgian Colonial Revival-style character of the property
22. 1166 Breckenridge (KEPH-616), facade, looking east, illustrative of the larger scale of many of the homes in this portion of the district.
23. 1148 Breckenridge Road (KEPH-619), facade, looking east
24. Emerson Road, streetscape, south side, at Breckenridge Road, looking east with 1091 Emerson Road (KEPH-639) in foreground
25. Adjacent houses (KEPH-621 and KEPH-622) at Emerson Road and Cleveland Avenue, looking west
26. 1035 Emerson Road (KEPH-632), facade, looking southeast
27. 1166 Cleveland Avenue (KEPH-654), facade, looking east
28. 1140 Cleveland Avenue (KEPH-659), northwest perspective, looking southeast, and showing overall form and finishes, portico, side wing, etc.
29. 1134 Cleveland Avenue at Jackson Road, Mt. Vernon-esque house (KEPH-660), facade, looking south
30. Streetscape, Jackson Road, with 1067 Jackson Road (KEPH-539) in the foreground, followed by 1069 Jackson Road
31. Streetscape of Cleveland Avenue, west side looking northwest with 1123 Cleveland Avenue (KEPH-674) in foreground

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number Photography Log Page 33

32. Streetscape, Hamilton Road, south side looking east, with 1039 Hamilton Road (KEPH-197) in foreground
33. 910 Arlington Road (KEPH-86), facade, looking east
34. Streetscape, Old State Road, looking northwest and showing houses predating the formal development of the neighborhood
35. Alhambra Court, streetscape of this street ending in a cul-de-sac, looking south

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number Illustrations Page 34

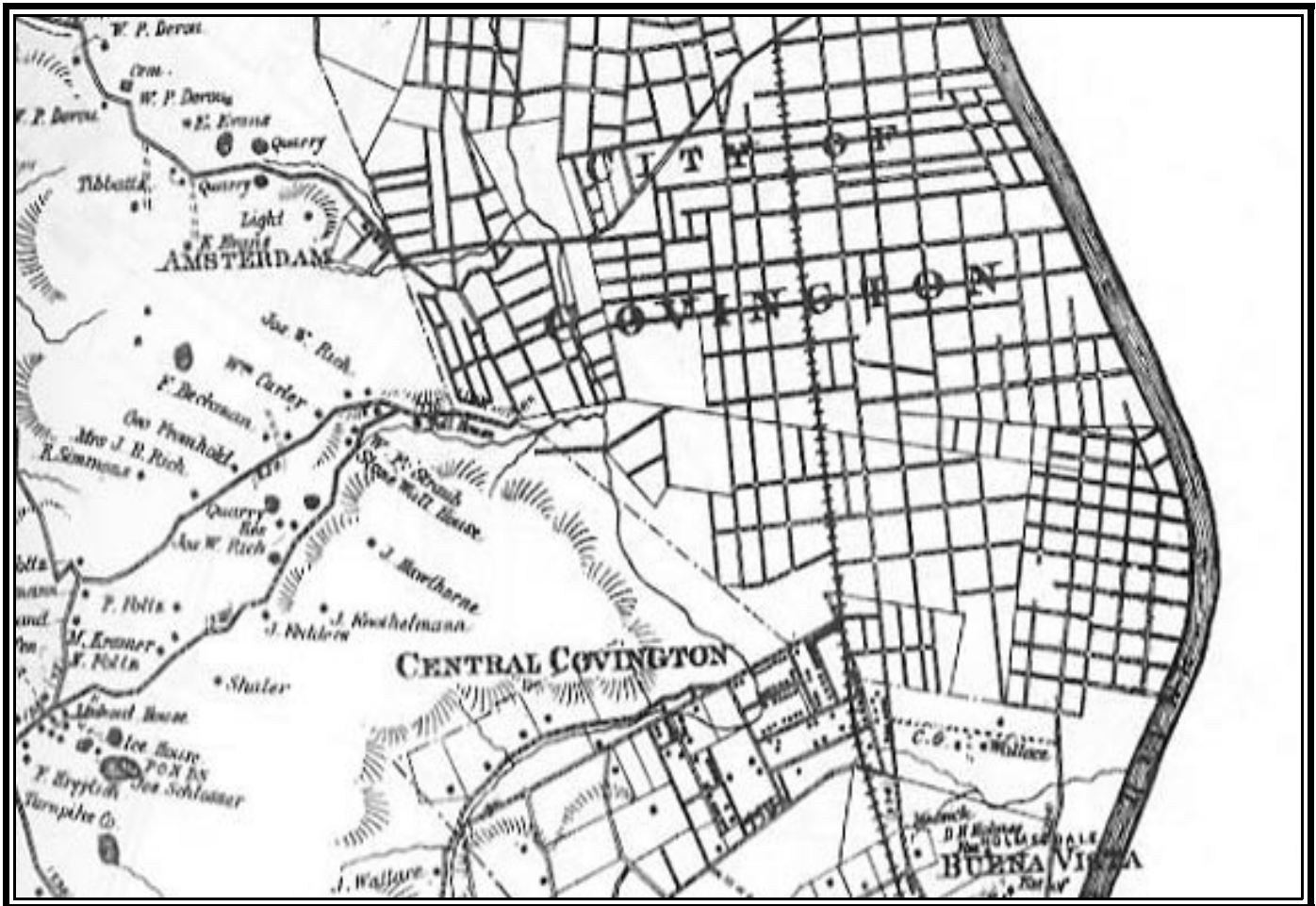


Fig. 1 The 1883 D. J. Lake Atlas of Boone, Kenton, Campbell Counties showed the area of Park Hills (at the left center of the image) to be sparsely developed, with a quarry and a scattering of homes, including that of R. Simmons; his son and namesake would be one of the developers of the city of Park Hills forty years later.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number Illustrations Page 35

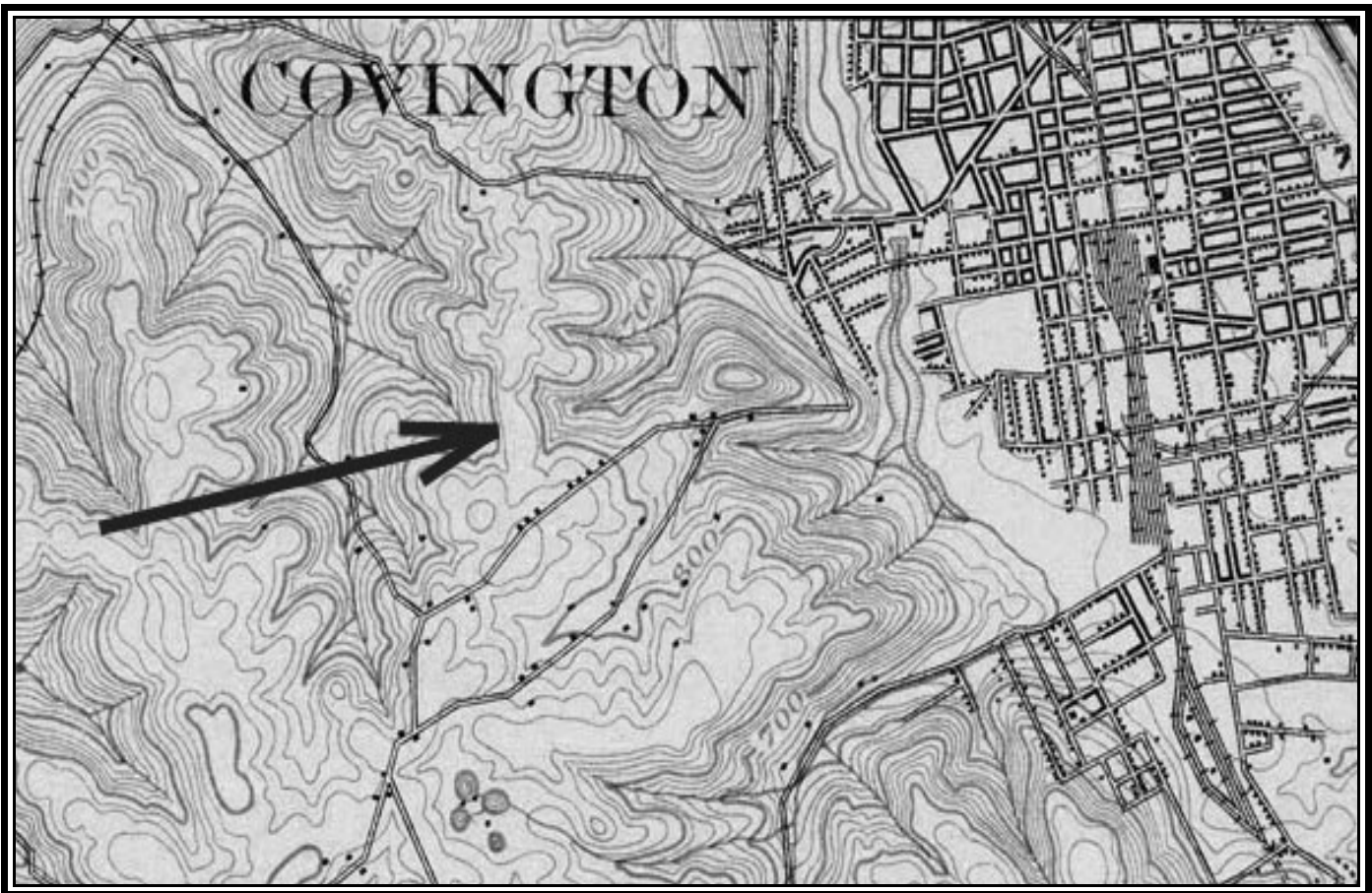


Fig. 2 This detail from the 1900 West Cincinnati 15-minute USGS Cincinnati West quadrangle map illustrates the sparseness of the settlement in the area that would become Park Hills, indicated by the superimposed arrow.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number Illustrations Page 36



Fig. 4 The entrance to Park Hills, likely on Arlington Road, ca. 1924 [from the webpage of the City of Park Hills]

Fig. 3 A trolley of the Green Line, the Cincinnati, Newport, and Covington Railway, appears in this ca. 1910 view of Arlington Pike, illustrating the undeveloped character of this area prior to the platting of the suburb by the Lee and Simmons Development Company in 1924. [Earl Clark Collection via Jack Doll, from Lehman and Clark]

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number Illustrations Page 37



Fig. 5 The intersection of Amsterdam Road and Park Drive, showing the Green line trackage, a stone waiting station, and a trolley at the left. Some homes are under construction, and much of Cleveland Avenue appears undeveloped. [Earl Clark Collection, from Lehman and Clark]

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Hills Historic District
Kenton County, KY
Historic Residential Suburbs in the
United States, 1830-1960 MPS

Section Number Illustrations Page 38

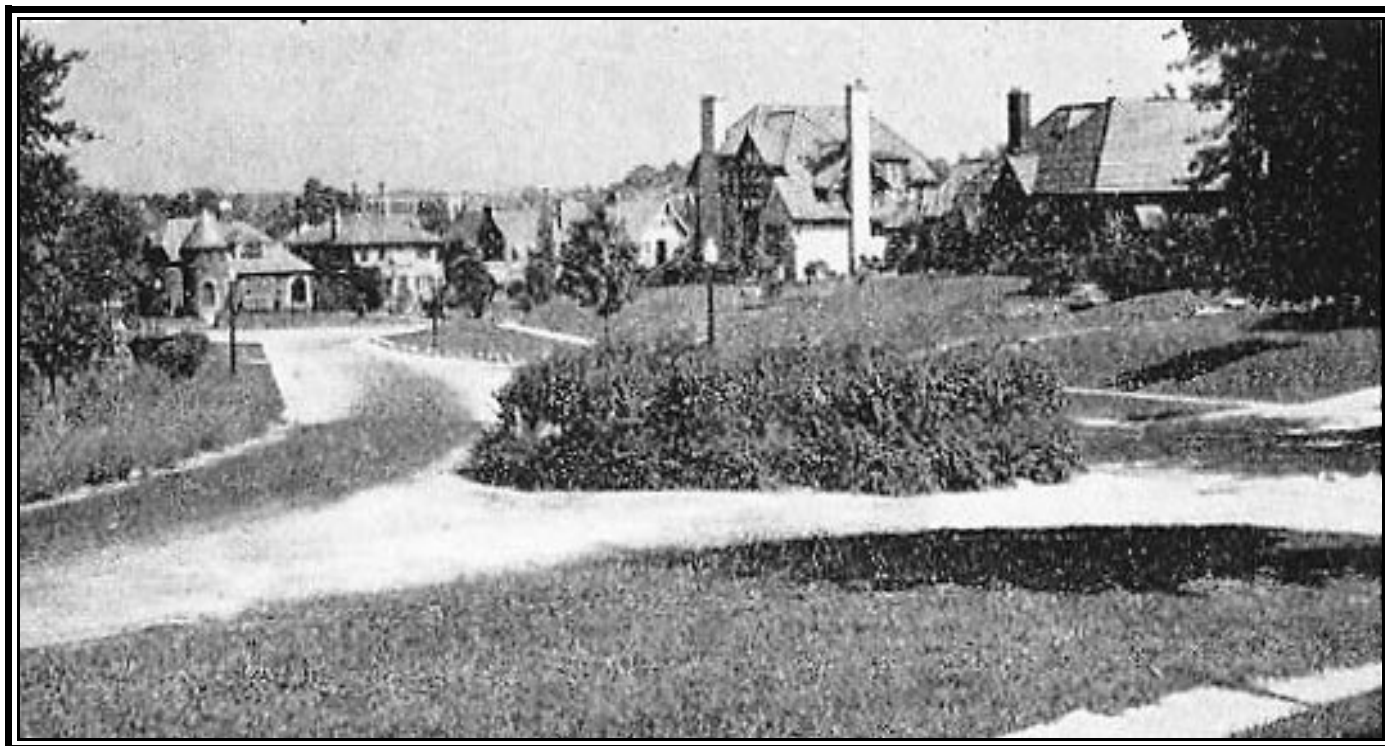


Fig. 6 The entrance to Park Hills, shown in a view published for several successive years in Williams' city directories.