

**United States Department of 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 an 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 Sunset Hills Historic District
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	Bounded by Owen Parkway, Regent Street, Larkin Street, and Hillcrest Drive	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Madison	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI county Dane	code 025	zip code 53705

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

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 the property is:

___ entered in the National Register.

___ See continuation sheet.

___ determined eligible for the National Register.

___ See continuation sheet.

___ determined not eligible for the National Register.

___ See continuation sheet.

___ removed from the National Register.

___ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

X private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

X building(s)
district
structure
site
object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
91	3 buildings
1	sites
	structures
	objects
92	3 total

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources

previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls Weatherboard

Sandstone

roof ASPHALT

other BRICK

Narrative Description

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

Sunset Hills Historic District
Name of Property

Dane
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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 persons 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 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

Period of Significance

1955-1978

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kaeser, William V.
Fritz Jr., Herb

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Sunset Hills Historic District	Dane	Wisconsin
Name of Property	County and State	

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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 32.5 acres MOL

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	301100	4771040
	Zone	Easting	Northing

3	16	301300	4770600
	Zone	Easting	Northing

2	16	301300	4771030
	Zone	Easting	Northing

4	16	301020	4770660
	Zone	Easting	Northing

☐ 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	Timothy F. Heggland/Consultant for the City of Madison	Date	June 19, 2014
organization		telephone	608-795-2650
street & number	6391 Hillsandwood Rd.	zip code	53560
city or town	Mazomanie	state	WI

Sunset Hills Historic District	Dane	Wisconsin
Name of Property	County and State	

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Various, See Separate Sheets			date
organization				telephone
street & number				zip code
city or town	state	WI		

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 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 Reduction Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 1

Description:

The Sunset Hills Historic District is a residential subdivision located on the near west side of the city of Madison that was first offered for sale in late 1953, it consists of a single site, the entire platted subdivision of Sunset Hills, and it contains 94 single family Contemporary Style, Ranch Style, and Wrightian Style houses that, for the most part, were built between 1955 and 1978.¹ These house are all architect-designed and they comprise the finest collection of Modern Movement single family residences dating from this period to be found in the city of Madison. The north and west sides of the district are located directly across Regent Street and Owen Parkway from the City of Madison's Hoyt Park, the district's south side fronts on Hillcrest Drive and lies opposite the slightly older and equally wide Pilgrim Village subdivision, and the district's east side fronts on Larkin St. and lies opposite the City of Madison's Reservoir Park and several large unplatted lots. The edges of the district that consisted of pre-existing streets (Larkin St., Regent St., and Hillcrest Dr.) are mostly straight but the streets within the district itself are a mixture of curvilinear and straight and most of the houses in the district face inward onto these streets and most occupy irregular-shaped, heavily wooded lots of varying sizes.

The Sunset Hills subdivision was still located within the Town of Madison when it was platted by its owner, the First Wisconsin Trust Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in August of 1941, and the plat was surveyed by Arthur E. Ziegenhagen, who may also have been its designer as well.² Thanks to the entrance of the United States into World War II a few months later, however, nothing was done to develop this subdivision until 1953, when it was put on the market by Willis E. Gifford, Jr., who had purchased it from the First Wisconsin Trust Company in 1946 and who had earlier developed the adjacent Pilgrim Village subdivision in 1939. Pilgrim Village is a 60-lot plat that is located directly to the south of the Sunset Hills subdivision and was also owned by the First Wisconsin Trust Company of Milwaukee, who had it platted in December of 1939, and it was developed by Gifford later in 1940. Comparing the Sunset Hills subdivision with the somewhat smaller Pilgrim Village reveals a number of similarities, which is not surprising when one considers that they were both platted for the same owner and developed by the same developer. Like Sunset Hills, Pilgrim Village is also a residential subdivision comprised of single family residences and both of these subdivisions are partially bounded by linear pre-existing streets and by pre-existing lots. The streets within the subdivisions' boundaries are both linear and curvilinear, and two of them, Alden Drive and Standish Court, were actually continued northward from Pilgrim Village into the boundaries of Sunset Hills when Sunset Hills was platted in 1941. In addition, most of the houses in both subdivisions face inward onto curvilinear streets and most occupy irregular-shaped lots of varying sizes. Another feature that Gifford's two subdivisions both shared was the presence of a design committee in each subdivision that had veto power over designs that would be built within their boundaries. Nevertheless, despite these

¹ Madison is the capitol of the state of Wisconsin and its population in 2010 was 233,209.

² Plat map of Sunset Hills. Dane County Register of Deeds, Madison, Wisconsin.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 2

similarities, the end results were very different. All the houses within Pilgrim Village were mandated by Gifford to be of Colonial Revival design and these houses and their lots were considerably less expensive than those in Sunset Hills. In Sunset Hills, all the houses were specifically mandated by Gifford to be architect-designed and their designs were restricted to “homes of contemporary and modern design, but there are no restrictions as to size or cost. Architectural beauty, residential privacy is essential here.”³

Both of Gifford’s subdivisions are situated on what is now considered to be the near west side of the city of Madison and they are part of the third wave of residential suburban development that expanded westward from Madison’s historic downtown core, which is located on an isthmus that is situated between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona. The first wave of these suburbs began in the 1890s, when University Heights (University Heights Historic District-NRHP 1982) and Wingra Park (Wingra Park Historic District-NRHP 1999) were developed just to the west of the University of Wisconsin campus of that day. Both of these suburbs were high-end streetcar suburbs that were located near the end of this particular streetcar line, however, and development of the lands located further to the west of them did not really begin until automobile ownership became more common just before the start of World War I. This new phenomenon led to a second wave of subdivision platting and to the development of the village of Shorewood Hills, located along the south shore of Lake Mendota and north of Sunset Hills beginning in 1914 and expanded in 1924 (College Hills Historic District-NRHP 2002 and Shorewood Historic District-NRHP 2002), and to the development of the Nakoma Subdivision (Nakoma Historic District-NRHP 1998), which is located to the south of Sunset Hills and which was begun in 1915 overlooking the shores of Lake Wingra. Nevertheless, despite the success of these new plats, the land located in between Shorewood Hills and Nakoma where Sunset Hills and Pilgrim Village are now located continued to given over primarily to small scale agriculture pursuits until the end of the Depression, when platting activity resumed once again. Willis Gifford’s Pilgrim Village subdivision was one of the first of the third wave of new suburbs that were developed at this time in order to address the demand for new housing that the Depression had suppressed.

The 99-lot Sunset Hills plat is located on a heavily wooded hilltop site that lies immediately adjacent to a smaller parcel of land that constitutes one of the highest points on Madison’s west side.⁴ This parcel had been purchased by the City of Madison in 1925 as the site of a new 6,000,000 gallon high-service concrete water reservoir that was designed to serve customers on the west side of the city. This reservoir was built in 1926 and its site is known as Reservoir Park. The west side of this parcel faces onto Larkin Street, which runs south from its intersection with the east-west-running Regent Street, and Sunset Hills is situated on the west side of Larkin Street opposite Reservoir Park. Sunset Hills is also located on the south side of Regent Street as well and on the west side of the winding

³ *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 10, 1956, Sec. 2, p. 5.

⁴ Although there were originally 99 lots in the district, several houses actually occupy more than one lot, so there are only 94 parcels in the district today.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 3

Owen Parkway (which is actually a continuation of Regent Street) and it lies opposite to and immediately south of Hoyt Park, which was developed by the City of Madison in the early 1930s using CWA and WPA funding.

By the time that lots finally went on sale in Sunset Hills late in 1953, this subdivision was totally surrounded by other previously developed subdivisions and by Hoyt and Reservoir parks, and its moderately hilly terrain was still heavily wooded at this time, and its largely natural state was respected and incorporated into the design of the new subdivision and was actually one of the plat's prime selling points.

Unlike the other subdivisions that surrounded them, which were laid out utilizing traditional urban gridiron plans, both Pilgrim Village and Sunset Hills made use of curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs, characteristics that are typical of subdivisions that were designed to meet the new FHA standards of the day. Four streets are actually located inside the boundaries of the Sunset Hills Historic District and they are both linear and curvilinear in design. Both the linear Priscilla Lane and the curvilinear Plymouth Circle are wholly contained within the district itself and the majority of the district's houses face onto these two streets. The other two streets, Alden Drive and Standish Court, are continued into the district from the adjacent earlier Pilgrim Village subdivision and Standish Court culminates in a cul-de-sac within the district's boundaries while Alden Drive intersects with Plymouth Circle. The west side of the district faces onto Owen Parkway and towards Hoyt Park, the district is separated from the park's grounds by tall wooden fencing, and the houses on this side of the district face inward into the district and do not overlook the park. The same is not true for those houses in the district that face north onto Regent Street, however, because these houses all overlook Hoyt Park, which is located on the opposite side of Regent Street. Likewise, all of the houses on the south side of the district face south directly onto Hillcrest Drive, but all but three of the district's houses that are located on the east, or Larkin Street side of the district, face inward onto either Priscilla Lane or Plymouth Circle rather than onto Larkin Street itself.

The home owners in the district relied on privately owned automobiles for transportation into and out of the district when the district was first developed and this is still true today.⁵ The most direct automobile access to Sunset Hills, both historically and today, is via Regent Street, which runs west from the historic downtown core of the city and along the south side of University Heights and the north side of Resurrection Cemetery to and through Hoyt Park. Additional access from University Avenue, a much larger east-west-running thoroughfare that runs west from the downtown several blocks north of Sunset Hills, is via either Farley Avenue or S. Franklin Avenue, both of which intersect with University Avenue and then run south and intersect with Regent Street, three and two blocks, respectively, to the east of Larkin Street and Sunset Hills. Still more access to the district is

⁵ The nearest public transportation is via two city bus lines that runs either up N. Franklin Ave. to Bluff Street six blocks to the north of the district or up Speedway Road and out Mineral Point Road, two blocks to the south.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 4

via the east-west running Hillcrest Drive, which runs along the south edge of the district and which intersects with the northeast-southwest-west running Speedway Road-Mineral Point Road to the east and the north-south-running Midvale Boulevard to the west, both of which are also major west side transportation routes. Nevertheless, despite being located within several blocks of major thoroughfares, the district's internal street pattern serves only the district itself and automobiles do not drive through the district on their way to other destinations.

The four blocks within the Sunset Hills Historic District all have irregular shapes, thanks to the curvilinear street plan that prevails in this subdivision, and the lots within the district vary in size and shape as a result. The smallest of these lots are rectilinear in plan and measure 115-feet-deep by 70-feet-wide, but most of the district's lots are larger than this and many also have an irregular shape. Setbacks are not truly uniform within the district, although all of the district's houses are set well back from the concrete curbs and gutters that edge all of the district's streets. These streets are paved with concrete, and they were put in by the developer, as were sewer and water connections. There are no sidewalks in the district.

As was noted earlier, the district still retained a heavy tree cover consisting of mostly mature deciduous trees such as maples and oaks when it was platted in 1941, and much of that tree cover is still intact and has grown still taller during the 73 years since the plat was drawn. As a result, almost all of the lots in the district still contain mature shade trees today regardless of the amount of landscaping that has taken place elsewhere on these lots. This landscaping exhibits a variety of approaches to landscape design that is almost as individualistic as the designs of the houses themselves. Many of the houses in the district have front yards consisting of mowed lawns and these yards are further ornamented with shrubs, specimen trees, foundation plantings, and quite often, naturalistic stone work. Other front yards, though, have a much less obviously landscaped, more natural appearance, and this is especially true of the rear yards of many of the district's houses, which tend to be heavily shaded and more informally landscaped than the front yards.

Willis E. Gilmore, Jr., the developer, of Sunset Hills, mandated that every house in the district be architect-designed and the custom-built houses that these architects produced range from one to two-stories in height, many of them have irregular plans, and some of them are of considerable size. Most of these houses were built between 1955 and 1968 and it is not surprising, given the individuality of architectural expression that characterized this period, that the designs of these houses exhibit a number of different architectural trends. Thirteen of these houses are examples of the Ranch Style, and this number also includes examples of the Split-Level variant and Raised Ranch or Bi-Level variant as well. Another five of the district's houses are good examples of Wrightian Style design, which is not surprising when one considers that many of the architects whose work is found in the district owed at least a part of their training to time spent in Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Fellowship. The largest number of houses in the district, however, are its seventy-six examples of the Contemporary Style,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 5

these being houses for which better defined stylistic attributions still need to be devised. Nevertheless, despite the individuality of the designs in the district, its overall appearance is essentially harmonious due in large degree to the fact that the exteriors of these houses all utilize natural materials such as wood, stone, and brick, or various combinations of them; the number of district houses that are partially or completely sheathed in vertical wooden boards being especially notable. The exteriors of these houses have colors that for the most part represent the natural colors of the materials used and where wood has been used it has usually been stained or painted in various shades of brown or sometimes a pale blue. In addition, regardless of their architectural styles, all of the district's houses have attached garages or carports and there are no sheds or other kinds of detached outbuildings present.

The fact that such an individualistic group of house designs manage to coexist together in relative harmony is perhaps partly attributable to the fact that from the beginning the subdivision had a design committee that had veto power over designs that they felt did not meet standards or, possibly, were too extreme to be good neighbors. These standards, however, seem to have been based less on inhibiting individualism than on ensuring that whatever was built reflected the very high standards of design and workmanship that prevail in the district.

Fortunately, the combination of good design and high quality construction, coupled with a location near to the University of Wisconsin campus and to the downtown, has meant that the district still continues to attract the same mix of elite business, university, and professional home owners today that characterized the original owners in the district. Integrity levels in the district are also exceptionally high. For instance, so far as is known, no house in the district has been resided unless it has been to replace deteriorated original exterior material with the same material. In addition, those additions that have been added on to houses in the district have almost always been attached to the rear of the house and have usually taken the form of four-season porches, sunrooms, or kitchen extensions. The very few houses where additions can be seen from the public road have all been undertaken with great sensitivity to the original design and they have even sometimes been designed by the house's original architects.

Consequently, the district's historic appearance is still very much intact today. All of the lots in the district have been built upon and the only likely threat to the integrity of the district is the possibility that some of the smallest houses in the district might be torn down to make room for larger ones. The period of significance of the district extends from 1955, when the first houses in the district were built, until 1978, when the last of the nine houses that were built in the district in the 1970s was completed. Only three more houses were built in the district in the years that followed (1984, 1987, and 2005, respectively) and they are too new to meet NRHP eligibility criteria even though they too are architect-designed and are equal in quality to the ones that preceded them.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 6

INVENTORY

The following inventory lists every building in the district along with the names of the original owners, the construction date, the address, and also the resource's contributing (C) or non-contributing (NC) status. The abbreviations given below for architectural styles are the same abbreviations used by the Wisconsin Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation. These are as follows:

CON = Contemporary

RA = Ranch

WR = Wrightian

C	106	Alden Dr.	John & Alpha Brady House	1956/1964	CON
C	109	Alden Dr.	Dr. Carlos & Milagros Lamar Jr. House	1965	CON
C	110	Alden Dr.	Thomas & Naomi Fiedler House	1959	CON
C	113	Alden Dr.	Prof. Lola R. Pierstoff House	1970	CON
C	114	Alden Dr.	Orla & Dorothy Miller House	1956	CON
C	117	Alden Dr.	Dr. Aaron & Marion Galonski House	1961	CON
C	118	Alden Dr.	M. Jack & Patty Glasser House	1956	CON
C	122	Alden Dr.	Albert & Era Holmes House	1966/1982	CON
C	3902	Hillcrest Dr.	Howard & Dorothy Skillrud House	1963	RA
C	3906	Hillcrest Dr.	Donald & Margaret Isabella House	1963	CON
C	3910	Hillcrest Dr.	Allen & Lee Peck House	1963	CON
C	3918	Hillcrest Dr.	Robert & Katherine Siebel House	1958	CON
C	3922	Hillcrest Dr.	Robert & Fita Glassner House	1962	RA
C	4002	Hillcrest Dr.	Dwayne & Barbara Ohmen House	1960	CON
C	4006	Hillcrest Dr.	Oscar & Mary Torgeson House	1955	RA
C	4010	Hillcrest Dr.	Melvin & Iola Reppen House	1955	CON
C	134	Larkin St.	Prof. Willard & Shirley Mueller House	1958	RA
NC	138	Larkin St.	Prof. Bruce & Elizabeth Murray House	1984	CON
C	142	Larkin St.	John & Virginia Mesch House	1955	RA
C	3901	Plymouth Cir.	Merlin & Norma Benniger House	1962	CON
C	3902	Plymouth Cir.	Dr. Frank & June Larson House	1957	CON
C	3909	Plymouth Cir.	William & Virginia Hendrickson House	1958	CON
C	3910	Plymouth Cir.	John & Aryce Guimond House	1963	CON
C	3912	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Robert & Rita Elsom House	1960/2011	WR
C	3913	Plymouth Cir.	William & Dorothy Schweitzer House	1958	CON
C	3917	Plymouth Cir.	Mrs. Sara B. Sweet House	1957	CON
C	3918	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. John Cassida House	1962	CON
C	3921	Plymouth Cir.	Dr. Farrell & Marjorie Golden House	1960	RA
C	3922	Plymouth Cir.	Stanley & Adele Sparr House	1957	WR

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 7

C	3925	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Ugo & Ingrid Camerini House	1964	WR
C	3926	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Gerald & Alice Mueller House	1957	CON
C	3930	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Austin & Elizabeth Ranney House	1964	CON
C	3933	Plymouth Cir.	Oscar & Eleanore Damman House	1960	CON
C	3934	Plymouth Cir.	George & Helen Vukelich House	1956	CON
C	3938	Plymouth Cir.	Dr. Edmund & Patricia Liebl House	1960	CON
C	3941	Plymouth Cir.	Irving & Dorothy Levy House	1962	CON
C	3942	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Walter & Marylu Rauschenbush House	1963	CON
C	3946	Plymouth Cir.	William & Barbara McCormick House	1964	CON
C	3950	Plymouth Cir.	Hoyt Park Builders Spec House	1964	CON
C	3954	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Leonard & Marilyn Ross House	1964	CON
C	3958	Plymouth Cir.	Allen & Alice Strang House	1965	CON
C	3959	Plymouth Cir.	Gerald & Joyce Bartell House	1957	CON
C	3960	Plymouth Cir.	Robert & June Klein House	1960	CON
C	3964	Plymouth Cir.	Phillip & Anne Curtin House	1958	CON
C	3968	Plymouth Cir.	Clement & Darleen Lyckberg House	1977	RA
C	3971	Plymouth Cir.	Joe & Bessie Frank House	1957	CON
C	3972	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Robert & Jean Sachs House	1957	WR
C	3975	Plymouth Cir.	Charles & Eunice Eikel Jr. House	1961	CON
C	3976	Plymouth Cir.	Dr. Charles & Janice Reed House	1964	CON
C	3979	Plymouth Cir.	John & Mary Anne Quinn House	1958	RA
C	3980	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Marvin P. Miracle House	1971	CON
C	3983	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Reinhold & Anneliese Grimm House	1968	CON
C	3984	Plymouth Cir.	Hoyt Park Builders Spec. House	1964	CON
C	3987	Plymouth Cir.	Robert & Beverly Hebl House	1960	CON
C	3988	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. T. C. & Phyllis Huang House	1966	CON
C	3990	Plymouth Cir.	Jack & Geraldine Netboy House	1963	WR
C	3991	Plymouth Cir.	Brooks & Bessie Rickard House	1960	CON
C	3994	Plymouth Cir.	Howard & Helen Stark House	1959	RA
C	3995	Plymouth Cir.	Temple Beth El Parish House	1962	CON
C	3998	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Sydney & Euna Staniforth House	1968	CON
C	3999	Plymouth Cir.	Prof. Chu & Vera Wang House	1960	RA
C	3901	Priscilla Lane	Robert & Lynn Berman House	1967	CON
C	3902	Priscilla Lane	Robert & Suzanne Cashin House	1968	CON
C	3905	Priscilla Lane	Robert & Harriet Dewa House	1958	CON
C	3906	Priscilla Lane	Macky & Miriam Gaberman House	1960	RA
C	3910	Priscilla Lane	Prof. William & Marlene Glade Jr. House	1967	CON
C	3913	Priscilla Lane	Mrs. Elizabeth M. Ranney House	1976	CON
C	3914	Priscilla Lane	Prof. Herman & Lorraine Brockhaus House	1962	CON

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 8

C	3917	Priscilla Lane	Edwin & Donna Stein House	1975	CON
C	3918	Priscilla Lane	David & Lois Bollinger House	1966	CON
C	3921	Priscilla Lane	Clement & Darleen Lyckberg House	1975	CON
C	3922	Priscilla Lane	Thomas & Shirley Pearson House	1955	CON
C	3925	Priscilla Lane	Herbert & Ethelyn Eickner House	1964	CON
C	3926	Priscilla Lane	Prof. Gerald & Elaine Nadler House	1964	CON
C	3929	Priscilla Lane	Prof. Shun Cheng House	1968	CON
C	3930	Priscilla Lane	John & Kathryn Smick House	1956	CON
C	3905	Regent St.	Prof. Geln & Ria Cain House	1968	CON
C	3909	Regent St.	Louis & Esther Wagner House	1961/2010	CON
C	3913	Regent St.	Jerome & Rose Pasdo House	1978	CON
NC	3917	Regent St.	Fred & Hilda Parfrey House	1987	CON
C	3925	Regent St.	Prof. William & Betsy Tishler House	1972	CON
C	3933	Regent St.	Joseph & Ellen Checota House	1971	CON
C	3937	Regent St.	Sunset Hills Corporation House	1963	CON
NC	101	Standish Court	Susan Scholbrock House	2005	CON
C	102	Standish Court	Ralph & Jennelyn Timmons House	1964	CON
C	105	Standish Court	Dr. Arvin & Sybil Weinstein House	1961	CON
C	106	Standish Court	Dr. William & Margaret Schmitz House	1965	RA
C	109	Standish Court	Prof. Edwin & Kathryn Larson House	1956	CON
C	110	Standish Court	Louis & Edith Milan House	1958	CON
C	113	Standish Court	Donald & Marion Anderson House	1967	CON
C	114	Standish Court	Robert & Devonne Bussan House	1960	RA
C	121	Standish Court	Dr. George & Virginia Oosterhaus House	1957	CON

Wrightian

As the name implies, Wrightian style buildings are ones whose designs, if not actually by Frank Lloyd Wright himself, are close in spirit and in appearance to those designed by him. The term "Wrightian" is relatively new and does not yet enjoy universal scholarly currency, partly because Wright himself was so protean and varied a designer that it is hard to place limits on what to include or leave out. Suffice it to say that at this point in time, a "Wrightian" building is one having a close physical resemblance to existing Wright-designed buildings of whatever period but especially those built after 1930.

There are several fine examples of the style in the district and the best of these are listed below.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 9

AHI# 222577	3912 Plymouth Circle	Prof. Robert & Rita Elsom House	1961
AHI# 222611	3925 Plymouth Circle	Prof. Ugo & Ingrid Camerini House	1964
AHI# 110543	3972 Plymouth Circle	Prof. Robert & Jean Sachs House	1957 ⁶
AHI# 222594	3990 Plymouth Circle	Jack & Geraldine Netboy House	1963

Ranch Style

As the name implies, the inspiration for today's modern Ranch Style houses came from the vernacular houses that could once be found on historic ranches located in the nation's southwestern states and especially in California. In the 1930s, California architects such as William Wurster and Cliff May transformed these vernacular designs into a modern idiom that became known as the Western Ranch House; an idiom whose growing popularity owed much to the publishing activities of *Sunset Magazine*. In addition, the Prairie School Style houses of Frank Lloyd Wright, with their low, ground-hugging appearance, hipped roofs, and wide, overhanging eaves, were another important source of inspiration. By the beginning of World War II, house catalogs featuring Ranch Style designs had begun to appear, and after the war ended, the Ranch Style was quickly embraced by builders all over the country and the style soon evolved into the ubiquitous single family residential form that can now be found in most of the nation's mid-20th century suburbs.

Ranch Style houses are one-story-tall, they typically have either rectangular, L-shaped, or U-shaped plans and most examples also have attached garages as well or at least a carport, and these automobile-related elements typically face the street. In addition, examples of this style also share a number of other common characteristics. "Asymmetrical one-story shapes with low-pitched roof predominate. Three common roof forms are used: the hipped version is probably the most common, followed by the cross-gabled, and finally, side-gabled examples. There is usually a moderate or wide eave overhang. This may be either boxed or open, with the rafters exposed as in Craftsman houses. Both wooden or brick wall cladding are used, sometimes in combination. Builders frequently add modest bits of traditional detailing, usually loosely based on Spanish or English Colonial precedents. Decorative iron or wooden porch supports and decorative shutters are the most common. Ribbon windows are frequent as are large picture windows in living areas."⁷

Ranch Style houses come in a variety of sizes and they also utilize a variety of cladding materials, including either wood, steel, or aluminum clapboards, and brick or stone, and many examples combine two or even three of these materials. The district's best examples are listed below.

AHI# 222543	3979 Plymouth Circle	John & Mary Anne Quinn House	1958
-------------	----------------------	------------------------------	------

⁶ This house was designed by Madison architect William V. Kaeser.

⁷ McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984, p. 479.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 10

AHI# 110545	3994 Plymouth Circle	Howard & Helen Stark House	1959 ⁸
AHI# 222600	106 Standish Ct.	Dr. William & Margaret Schmitz House	1965
AHI# 222569	114 Standish Ct.	Robert & Devona Bussan House	1960

In addition to the houses listed above, a subtype of Ranch Style houses also exists whose designs are characterized by their adaptation to hilly sites. These examples, sometimes called either “Raised Ranches” or “Bi-Level” designs, maintain the same one-story-tall profile of the previous examples but their automobile garage(s) are located in a partially exposed portion of their basement story. These garage openings are typically located on the main façade and face the street, although they sometimes face to the side as well, depending on the site. Note, however, that these houses should not be confused with the Split Level examples that will be discussed next. This subtype still has all of its principal living spaces located on just one floor; only the garage, utility rooms, and perhaps a recreation room, are located in the basement story. The district’s best and most intact example of this subset is listed below.

AHI# 222463	4006 Hillcrest Dr.	Oscar & Mary Torgeson House	1955
-------------	--------------------	-----------------------------	------

Split Level

Split Level style houses are another subtype of the Ranch Style that “retained the horizontal lines, low-pitched roof, and overhanging eaves of the Ranch house, but added a two-story unit intercepted at mid-height by a one-story wing to make three floor levels of interior space. ... Families were felt to need three types of interior spaces: quiet living areas, noisy living and service areas, and sleeping areas. The Split-level form made it possible to locate these on separate levels. The lower level usually housed the garage and commonly, the “noisy” family room with its television, which was becoming a universal possession. The mid-level wing contained the “quiet” living areas and the upper level, the bedrooms.”⁹

The district’s best and most intact Split Level example is listed below:

AHI# 222547	3921 Plymouth Circle	Dr. Farrell & Marjorie Golden House	1960
-------------	----------------------	-------------------------------------	------

Contemporary Style:

The Contemporary Style is a provisional term that is applied to buildings that typically were built after World War II and that are truly modern in inspiration and owe nothing to past designs or historic examples. Unfortunately, because the scholarly effort that will eventually categorize these buildings into separate styles is still in its infancy, it is easier to identify Contemporary Style buildings of

⁸ This house was designed by Madison architect William V. Kaeser.

⁹ McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984, p. 481.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 11

architectural merit than it is to categorize them.

The district contains many of the finest Contemporary Style houses that were built in Madison between 1955 and 1978. All of these houses were architect-designed and not surprisingly, most of them were designed by prominent Madison architects and these architects and the buildings they designed are discussed in the Architects section that follows. The best of these Contemporary Style houses are listed below in two separate groups.

The first group comprises a subset of the Contemporary Style for which a provisional definition has already been proposed. These are flat-roofed one-story houses, a subtype that “is a derivation of the earlier International Style and houses of this subtype [that] are sometimes referred to as American International. They resemble the International Style in having flat roofs and no decorative detailing, but lack the stark white stucco wall surfaces, which are usually replaced by various combinations of wood, brick, or stone.”¹⁰

Most of the examples of this group in the district appear to owe a debt to the wood-clad International Style designs of the Madison architectural firm of Beatty & Strang and also to the Usonian designs of Frank Lloyd Wright and the best of the district’s examples are listed below.

AHI# 222462	4010 Hillcrest Dr.	Melvin & Iola Reppen House	1955
AHI# 222587	3901 Plymouth Circle	Merlin & Norma Benninger House	1962
AHI# 222505	3902 Plymouth Circle	Dr. Frank & June Larson House	1957 ¹¹
AHI# 222610	3954 Plymouth Circle	Prof. Leonard & Marilyn Ross House	1964
AHI# 222544	3971 Plymouth Circle	Joe & Bessie Frank House	1957
AHI# 222637	3933 Regent St.	Joseph & Ellen Checota House	1971

The second group consists of the other Contemporary Style single family residences that are as yet unclassified in terms of subtypes. Many of the best of these houses are the known work of prominent Madison architects, but for now, the works of these individual architects is best studied within the context of these architect’s personal development. For instance, the early works of William V. Kaeser and Herb Fritz, Jr. both reflect the influence of the flat-roof subtype described above, but their later work is more individualistic and reflects the separate paths that these two fine architects chose to follow. The majority of the district’s Contemporary Style houses, however, are the work of still unidentified architects and designers. These buildings represent many different design strategies, but all of them meet the same criteria that the buildings discussed previously in other stylistic categories had to meet; they have architectural significance and they have integrity.

¹⁰ McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *Op. Cit.*, p. 482.

¹¹ This house was designed by Madison designer Donald J. Reppen.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 7 Page 12

Especially fine district examples of this second group are listed below.

AHI# 222653	138 Larkin St.	Prof. Bruce & Elizabeth Murray House	1984
AHI# 222576	3933 Plymouth Circle	Oscar & Eleanore Damman House	1960
AHI# 222585	3941 Plymouth Circle	Irving & Dorothy Levy House	1962 ¹²
AHI# 222574	3975 Plymouth Circle	Charles & Eunice Eikel House	1961
AHI# 222573	3987 Plymouth Circle	Robert & Beverly Hebl House	1960
AHI# 222635	3998 Plymouth Circle	Prof. Sydney & Euna Staniforth House	1968
AHI# 222620	3914 Priscilla Lane	Prof. Herman & Lorraine Brockhaus House	1962
AHI# 222547	3921 Priscilla Lane	Clem & Darleen Lyckberg House	1975
AHI# 222601	3925 Priscilla Lane	Herbert & Ethelyn Eickner House	1964
AHI# 222638	3925 Regent St.	Prof. William & Betsy Tishler House	1972
AHI# 222643	3937 Regent St.	Sunset Hills Corporation House	1963
AHI# 222493	121 Standish Ct.	Dr. George & Virginia Oosterhaus House	1957

¹² This house was designed by Madison architect Robert A. Rosenthal.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Significance:

The Sunset Hills Historic District contains the largest and finest concentration of architecturally important and intact Modern Movement Style single family residences built in Madison during the period of significance, but mostly in the ten-year period from 1955 to 1965. The district contains 94 houses, all of which are architect designed and several of which are the work of some of the finest architects who practiced in Madison and elsewhere in the state during the 1950s and 1960s. The city of Madison and the neighboring village of Shorewood Hills both contain many other equally fine examples of architect-designed single family residences that were also built during this period but these houses are scattered throughout the city and the village. In Sunset Hills, however, it is possible to experience the full range of the best residential architectural design that was being produced in Madison during this period.

The Sunset Hills Historic District is believed to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under NRHP Criterion C (architecture) at the local level of significance and it was identified as a potential historic district having local significance under National Register (NR) Criterion C (Architecture) by the City of Madison's Near West Side Neighborhoods Intensive Survey, which was undertaken in 2012-2013.¹³ Research was undertaken to assess the potential for nominating the district to the NRHP utilizing the NR significance area of Architecture, a theme which is also identified in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP). This research centered on evaluating the resources within the District utilizing the Contemporary Style subsection of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP.¹⁴ The results of this research is detailed below and shows that the Sunset Hills Historic District is locally significant under NR Criterion C as an architecturally significant collection of single family residences that together constitute a well-defined and visually distinct geographic and historic entity within the boundaries of the city of Madison.

The Sunset Hills Historic District includes the whole of the Sunset Hills Subdivision plat, which was first platted by its owner, the First Wisconsin Trust Company of Milwaukee, in 1941 on heavily wooded land located immediately to the south of the recently developed Hoyt Park, which at that time lay outside the city of Madison's corporate boundaries. The entrance of the United States into World War II in that same year, however, put a stop to any development activity and the plat languished until July of 1946, when Willis E. Gifford, Jr., who had previously developed the adjacent plat of Pilgrim Village for the First Wisconsin Trust Company in 1939, purchased the land from the Trust and

¹³ Heggland, Timothy F. *City of Madison Near West Side Neighborhoods Intensive Survey*. Madison: City of Madison, 2013. Copy on file at the Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI.

¹⁴ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. 2, p. 2-37 (Architecture).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 2

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

proceeded to develop the plat. Gifford's first attempt to develop this plat was a proposal to build apartments on this land but permission was denied after protests came from single family residential homeowners in neighboring plats, including Pilgrim Village. Consequently, Gifford decided to reinvent the subdivision as an exclusive residential subdivision in 1953. All of the subdivision's new single family houses would be architect-designed, they would be Contemporary in style, and the designs had to be submitted to Gifford's Sunset Hills Corp. for approval.

Three of the first houses built in this new subdivision were designed by noted Racine, Wisconsin architect John Randal McDonald (3922 and 3930 Priscilla Lane and 3934 Plymouth Circle), and these houses set the tone for what was to follow. Three-fourths of the houses that were subsequently built in this subdivision were constructed between 1955 and 1964, and they include houses designed by such well known local architects as William V. Kaeser (3942, 3972, 3976 and 3994 Plymouth Circle and 102 and 105 Standish Ct.) and Herb Fritz, Jr. (3918 and 3964 Plymouth Circle). The district also contains three fine houses designed by district resident Elizabeth Mackey Ranney as well, who was one of just three licensed women architects in Wisconsin during the 1960s and 1970s.

Because the houses in this subdivision were both expensive and architect-designed, the district is also something of a showcase for the building trades. These houses represent the best workmanship of which these builders were capable and the materials they used were also of excellent quality as well and as a result, the district's resources are still in excellent condition today, they are highly intact, and they sell quickly and for a premium when they occasionally appear on the market.

History:

The National Register of Historic Places has recently published a National Register Bulletin entitled *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation For the National Register of Historic Places*.¹⁵ This bulletin, which was developed in tandem with a national multiple property listing entitled "Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1960, MPS," was intended to develop a nationwide context within which to evaluate and nominate residential historic districts and other suburban resources to the National Register of Historic Places. The Sunset Hills Historic District NRHP nomination has utilized this context and the nomination itself has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines that are found in the Documentation and Registration section of this bulletin. The history of the near west side of the city of Madison, which includes Sunset Hills, has also recently been documented from its beginnings in the 1850's up until 1972 in the *City of Madison Near West Side*

¹⁵ Ames, David L. and Linda Flint McClelland. *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation For the National Register of Historic Places*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2002.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Neighborhoods Intensive Survey Report, which was completed in 2013.¹⁶ This survey looked briefly at the physical growth of the survey area in the years prior to 1931 but it concentrated mostly on the years that followed up until 1972, this being the period during which the survey area attained its present appearance. Consequently, this nomination will not attempt to cover ground that has been traveled before. Instead, the history that follows will take a general look at the physical growth of the city as it pertains to the history of the district and it will then discuss the history of the district itself.

The land that now comprises the district was originally a part of the Town of Madison and the lands in the area surrounding it were given over almost entirely to agricultural pursuits until the second decade of the twentieth century. The earliest suburban development in this area occurred in the mid-1850s in a portion of the Town where three stone quarries that supplied much of the Madison sandstone that was used to build the city's finest early buildings were then located. This modest sized development was located along University Avenue, which runs from Madison's downtown westward past the University of Wisconsin campus and parallel with the tracks of the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad, which were laid in 1854, and this thoroughfare is still one of the most important thoroughfares on Madison's west side today. Two small plats were established in the quarry area in the 1850s, "Lakeland" in 1855, and "Quarrytown" in 1863. This development activity probably represented an attempt to capitalize on the hope that the industrial activity generated by the area's stone quarries would be enhanced by the presence of the new railroad line and the new Sauk Road that ran just to the north of them. If so, this hope proved to be largely unfounded. These pioneer suburban plats remained essentially undeveloped until after the end of World War I. The 1890 Plat Book of Dane County, for instance, shows that even by that date there were only four buildings located in the Quarrytown Plat.¹⁷ Nevertheless, these early development efforts represented the first attempts to develop the lands lying west of the city and they were precursors of what was to come.

Two other events of a more permanent nature that occurred in the 1850s and early 1860's also served to turn the city of Madison's attention to those lands located to the west of it. In 1857, the city's need for a new cemetery resulted in the acquisition of 80 acres of land located two miles outside of the city limits as the site of a new cemetery. This was Forest Hills Cemetery, which is located at the corner of the three-way intersection formed by today's Regent Street, Highland Avenue, and Speedway Road (then known as the Mineral Point Road), and this was followed by the development of a separate cemetery on the other side of Speedway Road for Madison's Catholic citizens in 1863, which was first called Calvary Cemetery and is now known as Resurrection Cemetery. These cemeteries are located two blocks to the east of Sunset Hills and visiting them would have been the first experience that most nineteenth century Madisonians would have had of the lands that were located to the west of the city.

¹⁶ Heggland, Timothy F. Op. Cit.

¹⁷ *Plat Book of Dane County, Wisconsin*. Minneapolis: C. M. Foote & J. W. Henion. 1890, p. 211

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Yet another event that was to have a more direct impact on what would eventually become Sunset Hills was the purchase in 1892 of a fourteen-acre parcel of hilltop land located just one block to the west of the Calvary Cemetery that featured magnificent views that looked out towards the west end of Lake Mendota. The purchaser of this parcel was Prof. Edward T. Owen, a professor of French at the UW who was also a land developer and whose dream it was to create a public pleasure drive across this parcel that could be linked with drives developed by others that crossed other sections to form a rural carriage drive that would stretch twelve miles from the downtown to various beauty spots located to the west of the city. Owen's self-funded portion of this drive, which connected Mineral Point Road with Regent St., subsequently became known as Owen Parkway and the apex of the parcel of land that he purchased was long known as Sunset Point because of the beautiful west-facing views that were visible from it. This parcel subsequently became the westernmost part of Hoyt Park and that portion of the public road that runs through the park is still named Owen Parkway today.

At the same time, the growth of the city of Madison's population during the 1890s was leading to the creation of the city's first suburbs, of which the near west side plats of Wingra Park (1889) and University Heights (1893) were the first to cater to the more affluent members of the community. These were streetcar suburbs, so-called because of their proximity to streetcar lines that enabled new suburban homeowners to commute to their places of business in the downtown section of the city and at the rapidly expanding University of Wisconsin campus. Such proximity was critical to the success of these plats because in the pre-automobile era even middle class families seldom had a horse and carriage of their own. Thus, families seeking to locate out in any of the new suburbs could usually do so only if the breadwinners of the family had some form of public transportation to take them to their places of work, nearly all of which were then still located downtown. Since streetcars were then Madison's only form of public transportation, reasonable proximity to one of the city's streetcar lines was essential. Streetcars also brought the citizens of the city out to its two cemeteries as well, beginning in 1897, when the local electric streetcar company constructed a new line that ran westward along Regent Street to a terminus at the foot of Speedway Road and the Forest Hill and Calvary cemeteries. The impact that this new line was to have on the future of what is now the near west side of the city can hardly be overestimated.

The 1897 cemetery addition, a 1.5 mile extension terminating at Forest Hill Cemetery, suddenly opened up 722 additional acres of prime land for development. The new line was a boon for already platted suburbs of Wingra Park and University Heights and sparked the beginning of extensive construction in both places. The *Madison Democrat* estimated that the streetcar line immediately enhanced the value of nearby property by 10 to 45 percent.¹⁸

These suburbs did not achieve real success until after 1903, however, when their annexation to the city

¹⁸ Mollenhoff, David V. *Madison: A History of the Formative Years* —(2nd Edition). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003, p. 194.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 5

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

finally supplied homeowners with such city services as sewers, water, gas, electricity, concrete streets and sidewalks, and a new school (Randall Elementary School). Once these services became available, suburban development on the west side of the city steadily increased.

Despite the gradual westward growth of the city, though, most of the land located around and including Sunset Hills was still rural at the turn of the century and was given over to agricultural pursuits and persons living in this area were still only occasional visitors to the city itself. Access to this land was provided by the area's two principal historic roads; the Sauk Road (University Avenue), and the Mineral Point Road (today's Speedway Road and Mineral Point Road), both of which had been in existence since at least the 1850s.

The presence of these two roads notwithstanding, however, historic plat maps of the Town of Madison show that even as late as 1911 most of the land in the survey area was still divided into farms or into parcels of several acres or more, although the same maps also show that by 1911 the city of Madison was slowly but inexorably growing westward towards these farms.¹⁹ By 1911, new platting activity had brought the city's boundaries to within two blocks of what would become Sunset Hills; the new west side subdivisions of Mercer's Park, Highland Park, and College Park having encompassed almost all of the land that is bounded by Allen Street, University Avenue, Regent Street, and N. Franklin Avenue. Other new subdivisions were also beginning to be platted just to the south along Monroe Street by this time as well and these plats were extending the city in a southwest direction. Then, in 1912, John C. McKenna and his University Bay Land Company platted the first part of the new subdivision of College Hills directly across University Avenue from the survey area's Quarrytown Plat, this up-scale subdivision being the original portion of what would soon become the village of Shorewood Hills. Three years later, in 1915, McKenna platted his first addition to the original College Hills plat as well and in this was the same year the Madison Realty Co. platted the original portion of its own up-scale Nakoma Subdivision, which was located on both sides of the historic Verona Road to the south of the survey area.²⁰ Thus, by 1915, large new subdivisions had been developed just to the north and south of the area where Sunset Hills would be located and it was to be only a year before this development activity spread into the survey area itself.

What made this suburban expansion possible at this point in time was the growth of automobile ownership and the advent of motorized buses in the city. As was noted above, the city's streetcar lines had been extended as far west as Forest Hills Cemetery in 1897, but this was as far as they would ever go.

¹⁹ *Standard Historical Atlas of Dane County, Wisconsin*. Madison: Cantwell Printing Co., 1911, pp. 30, 56-57. These same maps also show that these new subdivisions were then still undeveloped insofar as any actual house building was concerned, but that would soon change.

²⁰ The portion of the Verona Road that ran through Nakoma was renamed Nakoma Road by the Madison Realty Co. while the portion that lay to the east of it had been renamed Monroe Street when the subdivision of Wingra Park was developed.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

The new suburbs that were being developed at this time still lacked the necessary population density that could make new westward extensions of the lines of this privately owned transportation system profitable.

By 1915, it was clear that the city's rapidly growing numbers of gasoline-powered automobiles represented the future of transportation in the city and it was this new reality that would drive future suburban expansion, both in Madison and elsewhere. College Hills and Nakoma, for instance, had both been designed from the start to be attractive to home owners that intended to commute to and from work in the downtown part of the city using their own automobile. It was also not a coincidence that all the new suburbs that had been built to the west of University Heights and to the southwest of Wingra Park prior to 1915 were laid out adjacent to either University Avenue, Regent Street, or Monroe Street. These, after all, were the three principal arterial streets that funneled both horse-drawn conveyances and the city's ever increasing numbers of gasoline-powered automobiles, buses, and trucks from the downtown to the west side of the city and beyond at this time and any developer who hoped to make his west side suburb a success had to be able to offer potential home builders ready access either to these streets or to comparable ones.

It was this proximity to an already existing transportation route that probably accounted for the creation of the first new subdivision located in the area between Nakoma and Shorewood Hills where Sunset Hills is located. This was the University Park Addition, which was platted in June of 1916 by the Dane Co. and others, and which was bounded by University Ave. to the north, N. Blackhawk Ave. to the west, Stevens St. to the south, and the west edge of what is today's Quarry Park to the east. Much more important to the future of this area was its second new subdivision, the West Wingra Addition, which was platted in December of 1916 by Otto E. Toepfer, Jr. This new subdivision was the first part of the future suburb of Westmorland to be platted and it represented Toepfer's first subdivision of a 60-acre parcel of former farm land bordering on and located west of Mineral Point Road that he had purchased in 1899.²¹

Very little additional platting activity would take place in this area until after World War I, however, and demand for new housing here did not actually revive until 1925, when the small Findlay Park Addition was platted as a replat of portions of the 1850's era Quarrytown and Lakeland plats. Even so, the City of Madison was already planning for the future at this time. In that same year the City decided to purchase a hilltop parcel of land in 1925 that was located two blocks south of Regent St. between Glenway St. (then called Parker Dr.) and Larkin Street as the site of a new high-service water reservoir. This 6,000,000 gallon concrete reservoir was designed to serve customers on the west side of the city and it was built in 1926 and was then covered by soil that was graded and seeded and it is still in operation today and its site is known as Reservoir Park.²² In March of that same year, Otto Toepfer Jr., platted a First Addition to his

²¹ *Westmorland: A Great Place To Live*. Madison: Westmorland Neighborhood Assoc., 2011, pp. 17-19.

²² Smith, Leon A. *Historical Sketch and Present Facilities of the Madison Waterworks*. Madison: City of Madison Water Department, 1955, pp. 30-31 (illustrated).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 7

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

original West Wingra Addition, which consisted of a small 23-lot 6-acre expansion to the north of the original plat. Later in the same year, Toepfer sold much of the remaining unplatted acreage he owned to A. O. Paunack. Paunack, a Madison banker and land developer, had previously been a partner in the Highland Park Co., which had developed the Highland Park subdivision located just west of today's West High School in 1906. Paunack then took the land he had acquired from Toepfer and platted it as the Westmorland Subdivision in November of 1926. In June of 1928, Toepfer and Paunack collaborated on the platting of the First Addition to Westmorland. By this time, Paunack had created the Westmorland Company and was its president, and this new plat consisted of 20 lots that lay just to the east of the original plat.²³ Westmorland would ultimately become the first large scale new suburb to be built in the area and by 1928 its owners had platted two more additions to the original plat. All of this platting activity and ancillary development work took place during the heady days of the stock market boom that occurred in the late 1920s, but success in the real estate development business is as much a matter of timing as it is of location.

The pace of house building on the former farmland owned by Toepfer was slow. While newspaper ads placed in 1927 and 1928 attempted to attract more homebuilders to the area, the Stock Market Crash in October 1929, and the Depression that followed virtually stopped construction. By the end of 1929, fewer than 20 homes had been built on 276 lots that had been created.²⁴

Nevertheless, Westmorland was the first real suburb to be developed in the area west of what were then the city of Madison's western boundaries

The Depression effectively put a stop to new platting activity in this area and only one small new plat was recorded between 1929 and 1938. One very important event that did take place in this area during the 1930s, though, was the creation of Hoyt Park. The City of Madison had earlier purchased an already existing 24-acre stone quarry for its own use in 1890. This quarry was located in the southern part of the Quarrytown Plat and it abutted the 14-acre parcel of that land that had been purchased in 1892 by Prof. Edward T. Owen. Owen subsequently donated his parcel, which included the lookout spot known as Sunset Point, to the Madison Park & Pleasure Drive Association, which would finally turn over all of its property to the City in 1931 to be managed by the new Madison Park Commission. A year later, in 1932, the City decided to close the stone quarry it owned, combine it with the parcel that had been donated by Owen, and turn it all into a public park. The new park was named Frank W. Hoyt Park in honor of a man who had been one of the most important leaders of the Madison Park & Pleasure Drive Association. Developing this new park became possible when the various Federal programs that were designed to alleviate unemployment came into being. By the end of 1934, CWA-funded workers had completed the new shelter house in the park and had built the first of the numerous stone open fireplaces that are

²³ *Westmorland: A Great Place To Live*. Op. Cit, p. 21.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 19.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 8

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

scattered throughout the park and by the end of 1936, the landscaping of the park and the construction of a toilet building had also been completed under the WPA program. The completed park was administered by the Madison Parks Commission even though the park itself was still located outside the city boundaries at this time and it quickly became a popular picnicking spot that made Madisonians more familiar with this still rural area.

Other west side events that had an impact on the future of the area at this time included the growth of the University of Wisconsin during the 1930s and also the growth of various Federal and State governmental agencies during this period such as the new U.S. Forest Products Laboratory, which was built on the west edge of the UW campus in 1932. The housing needs of the staffs of these large institutions created a demand for housing on the west side of the city that filled all the available houses in the already platted portions of the near west side and this demand would ultimately only be met by the creation of new residential plats that would come into being once the Depression ended. This same demand for housing was ameliorated somewhat by the growth of the lines of the Madison Bus Company. By 1938, bus service to the near west side was available from the downtown to both Shorewood Hills (via University Ave.), and to Nakoma (via Allen St., Commonwealth Ave., Monroe St., and Nakoma Rd.) and it would only be a matter of time before these lines would be joined by others serving the west side of the city.

One of the first of the new plats to be developed in the area between Shorewood Hills and Nakoma at the end of the Depression was the Pilgrim Village subdivision, which is located immediately to the south of Sunset Hills and which is bounded on the west by Westmorland Boulevard, on the north by Hillcrest Drive, on the east by Larkin Street, and on the south by lots that fronted on Mineral Point Road but which were not part of this plat. This subdivision was platted by its owner, the First Wisconsin Trust Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in December of 1939, and it contained 60 lots, most of which faced inward into the subdivision and were located on curvilinear streets (Hammersly Road, Standish Court, and Alden Drive), that were largely contained within the boundaries of the subdivision itself. Why a Milwaukee company decided to invest in land development in Madison at this time is not certain but the answer may have something to do with the person that subsequently developed the subdivision. This was Willis E. Gifford, Jr. (1899-1987), a Milwaukee-based real estate developer who had been born in Augusta, Michigan and who was the son of Willis E. Gifford, Sr. Willis E. Gifford, Sr. was born in New York City in 1867 and after marrying and moving to Michigan, where his son was born, he and his family then moved to Madison, Wisconsin, and his first work there was as a salesman selling road graders and other machinery throughout the state. During this period he also became affiliated with the Elkhart Bridge & Iron Co. of Elkhart, Indiana, as an agent for that company, and soon thereafter he became a successful independent bridge contractor with close ties to this company, a business arrangement lasted until 1931.²⁵

²⁵ Cordes, Edwin G. Historic American Engineering Record (Sprague Bridge (9th Street Bridge): HAER No. WI-57. Madison, Mead & Hunt, March, 1989, p. 5.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 9

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Gifford's son, Willis E. Gifford, Jr., attended Lincoln Elementary School and Madison High School in Madison and after enlisting in the Army in World War I, he subsequently returned to Madison and enrolled in the UW's College of Engineering, but left before graduation. He then married Hazel Snir and the new couple would remain married for the rest of their lives.

Gifford entered business as a bond and securities broker and did so well at his work that in 1926 he built an architect-designed house for his family in the village of Shorewood Hills, just west of Madison.²⁶ Shortly after the stock market crash in 1929, however, Gifford sold his new house and left the area. He moved first to Chicago and then to Milwaukee where he worked briefly for the E. A. Pierce Company before founding his own firm, the Gifford Trading Company in 1933. Specializing in bonds and securities, the business was in operation less than five years. Gifford then became a real-estate developer in partnership with his father. They built housing projects in Granville, Port Washington, Sheboygan, and Milwaukee during the late 1930s, purchasing large tracts of undeveloped land and platting it into small lots on which they erected modest, low-cost houses. The operation was known as "Pilgrim Houses" after the quasi-colonial style used in most of the residences.

Gifford started his first housing venture in Madison after he bought a large parcel for a low price. According to Gifford, a Milwaukee banker called him one day to inquire if he would like to look at some land on the far west side of [the] city [of Madison]. Recognizing the potential for development in the area and the exceptionally good terms which the banker offered, Gifford purchased the land and created two subdivisions. One, laid out in small lots, was named Pilgrim Village. The other with larger lots designed to appeal to more affluent buyers, he called Sunset Village [sic].²⁷

The Gifford's "Pilgrim Houses" developments usually consisted of from 26 to 28 single family dwellings situated on 40 or 60-foot by 120-foot lots that cost around \$200.00, and the houses erected on these lots were small and typically sold for around \$2,700.00.²⁸ Gifford, Jr.'s Pilgrim Village subdivision, however, was larger than his previous ones and the houses that were built there, which cost between \$4799.00 and \$6000.00 were also more expensive, which may reflect the fact that the business and building climate in Madison had improved by 1940. Nevertheless, Gifford played it safe by adhering to the preferences that the FHA's guidelines had established, which favored curvilinear

²⁶ This large Norman Revival Style house was designed by Law, Law, and Potter, it is located at 3441 Crestwood Dr., and it is listed as a contributing resource in the NRHP-listed Shorewood Historic District.

²⁷ Hamilton, Mary Jane. "The Builder's Company Concrete Block Plant," in *Frank Lloyd Wright and Madison: Eight Decades of Artistic and Social Interaction*, ed. by Paul Sprague, Madison: Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1990, p. 173.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 176, footnote 3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 10

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

street plans, cul-de-sacs, and modest size houses. In order to ensure a harmonious development, Gifford also established a design review committee that had a veto power over submitted designs and he further mandated that all houses in Pilgrim Village be designed in the Colonial Revival style, which style had also already proved to meet with FHA approval. Work on this new subdivision continued throughout 1940 and it proved to be a complete success, which probably explains why the First Wisconsin Trust Company decided to go ahead with the platting of the larger Sunset Hills Subdivision in August of 1941.

The Sunset Hills plat was drawn by A. E. Ziegenhagen, a Milwaukee surveyor, it contained 99 lots, and its layout was, at least conceptually, not much different than the Pilgrim Village subdivision that it abutted. Here too, streets within the newer subdivision were all or partly curvilinear, and lots were mostly irregular in size and faced inward into the plat. Sunset Hills also had the additional advantage of having a location that adjoined Hoyt Park on two of its four sides and Reservoir Park on a third, it was located five blocks west of West High School, and it was also largely surrounded by earlier subdivisions, which meant that city sewer, water, and gas connections already existed and that its streets could connect to an already established street system. Unfortunately, timing was once again a crucial determinant and the entrance of the United States into World War II later in 1941 prevented anything further from happening in Sunset Hills until after the war was over.

Once the war ended, Gifford lost no time in purchasing the Sunset Hills subdivision from the First Wisconsin Trust Company for \$15,043.00 in July of 1946.²⁹ Even so, Gifford did not move forward immediately with development work in his new purchase, perhaps because he was waiting for land prices to increase, but also because of other Madison projects he was involved in. One of these was the establishment of the "Builder's Company", a concrete block manufacturing plant and building supplies company located on 18½-acres of rural land that Gifford had purchased in the south part of the Town of Madison in 1945 at a price of \$500.00 per acre. This land was located adjacent to a spur of the Illinois Central Railroad and Gifford paid for it by mortgaging his remaining holdings in Pilgrim Village.³⁰ Gifford's new company was incorporated in 1947 and a fascinating sidelight to this story is that in 1946 he approached Frank Lloyd Wright to design the plant and its offices.³¹ Nothing came of this project, and the plant was subsequently erected without Wright's involvement, but it foretold an interest on Gifford's part in modern styles of architecture that was to manifest itself in other ways in the future.

In 1950, Gifford apparently decided to benefit from the pressing need for more rental units in Madison that existed at that time by petitioning the Madison City Council for permission to rezone 34 lots on

²⁹ "West Subdivision Sold for \$15,043." *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 12, 1946, Section 2, p. 11.

³⁰ This plant is no longer extant and its site is now occupied by the Nakoma Plaza Shopping Center.

³¹ Hamilton, Mary Jane. Op. Cit, pp. 173-177.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 11

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

the east side of Sunset Hills from 34 single-family dwelling units to 100 multi-family dwelling units instead. This would have resulted in a rectangular strip of land 280-feet-wide along the east or Larkin Street side of the subdivision that stretched from Hillcrest Drive north to Regent Street, and Alden Drive would have been continued further through the subdivision from Plymouth Circle north to Regent Street.³² Fortunately, opposition from single family home owners in neighboring subdivisions, including Gifford's own Pilgrim Village, resulted in the City Council's rejection of this proposal.³³

Undaunted, Gifford then set about reimagining Sunset Hills as showcase for the best contemporary residential design in Madison. Where this interest in modern design came from is a matter of conjecture but it appears to have been at least partially influenced by Gifford's earlier encounter with Frank Lloyd Wright and it may have also been influence by Gifford's own realization that design trends were changing after the war. Whatever the cause, Gifford was committed enough to the new designs to hire former Taliesin Fellowship member Cary Caraway to design his own fine Wrightian Style house in 1950, which is located in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, an up-scale suburb of Milwaukee.³⁴

Gifford then entered into a working relationship with Racine architect John Randal McDonald (1922-2003), who had graduated first from the University of Wisconsin and then from Yale University with a Master of Architecture degree. Although he was never actually affiliated with Frank Lloyd Wright, much of McDonald's work bears a strong organic style influence that was clearly indebted to Wright. Even so, McDonald found his own successful path within this idiom and he continued to design many outstanding buildings of his own until shortly before his death in Florida in 2003. Exactly what McDonald's role in the development of Sunset Hills was is not known but he is listed as the "design supervisor" in an early ad for the subdivision, which lists the lot prices as ranging from \$1995.00 to \$3995.00 and notes that the subdivision is "Highly restricted for Residences of Contemporary and Modern Architecture."³⁵ In addition, he appeared in print as a spokesman for the plat as well.

Houses in the new Sunset Hills area will be related to the hillside which they will adorn and to each other in architectural style, though not necessarily in price level, a Racine designer said Tuesday. "The opportunity to take part in the overall design of a single hillside area, such as that in West Madison, offers and unusual opportunity to a designer," said John Randal McDonald, of Racine.

³² "Multi-Family Units Sought in Sunset Hills." *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 29, 1950, Sec. 1, p. 12.

³³ "Three Proposed Zone Changes Rejected." *Wisconsin State Journal*, August 26, 1950, Sec. 1, p. 2. See also: "Neighbors Oppose Gifford Petition." *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 7, 1950, Sec. 2, p. 10; "Home Owners Hit Zoning Plan." *Wisconsin State Journal*, August 12, 1950, Sec. 2, p. 1.

³⁴ This excellent, stone-clad, Wrightian style house is located at 5961 N. Shore Drive in Whitefish Bay (AHI# 162941).

³⁵ *Wisconsin State Journal*, September 20, 1953, Sec. 2, p. 9. This ad also contains a map of the plat.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 12

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Houses will probably range in price from \$15,000 to \$75,000 or more, he said, with many economies possible through simplicity of design which utilizes natural materials and openness of living. Fourteen of the 99 lots in the area of Regent and Larkin sts. have been reserved, according to Philip L. Siegel, owner of Badger Realty Service, which has exclusive listing of the area. Restrictions in the deeds will require purchasers of lots to submit house plans to the Sunset Hills Corp. for approval. Members of the approving committee will be Atty. Art May, president of the corporation, Robert Taplick, treasurer, and McDonald. At least three houses are to be built on the area this fall, with the possibility of more, Siegel said. Houses are to be constructed by Jevne and Jevne; Art Way, and Pat Lucey of Badger Realty.³⁶

By October of 1953, a map of Sunset Hills contained in a newspaper ad for the new subdivision showed that as of that date 16 lots had been sold.³⁷ Construction activity in the district began in 1954 and by 1956, at least nine houses had been completed in the plat and a total of 26 had been completed by 1958. Sales were undoubtedly helped by the City of Madison's decision to build a new elementary school adjacent to Hoyt Park on Regent Street just one block to the east of Sunset Hills in 1956, but the real reason for the success of the plat lay in the fact that the city of Madison was booming in the 1950s and much of this growth was driven by the expansion of existing organizations and by the creation of new ones that were located on Madison's west side. Chief among these was the University of Wisconsin, whose near west side campus was continually expanding westward in this period. In addition, new institutions were also being created in the vicinity of the campus as well, such as the new Veterans Administration Hospital, which is located at the west end of the UW campus some nine blocks from Sunset Hills and which was opened in 1951. Private institutions were also expanding or were being created at this time as well, such as the Credit Union National Association (CUNA), a mutual insurance company headquartered in Madison that in 1960 moved from its old building on the east side of the city, which had been built in 1950, into the first building of what today is a campus of its own on Mineral Point Road. Also significant was the movement of professional offices from the downtown area into new suburban office developments such as the buildings in Doctor's Park, which was developed in 1954-55 and is located across the street from the Veterans Hospital, and the group of new office buildings built in 1960-1964 adjacent to the newly built Hilldale Shopping Center and are located on N. Midvale Boulevard, both of which were located within nine blocks of Sunset Hills.

Gifford's insistence on Sunset Hills being a neighborhood of custom-built architect-designed single

³⁶ "Designer Tells Plans for Houses in New Sector." *Wisconsin State Journal*, September 16, 1953, Sec. 2, p. 6. In addition to his place on the original approving committee, McDonald also designed three of the first houses to be built in the new subdivision: the George & Helen Vukelich House at 3934 Plymouth Circle in 1955, the Thomas C. & Shirley Pearson House at 3922 Priscilla Lane in 1956; and the John V. & Kathryn Smick House at 3930 Priscilla Lane, also in 1956.

³⁷ *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 11, 1953, Sec. 2, p. 7.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 13

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

family homes ensured that most of his customers would be from the professional classes and from the upper echelon of the University of Wisconsin and events were to bear this out. Twenty-seven of the original owners of the district's houses were University of Wisconsin professors or upper level administrators, nine others were doctors and dentists, while still others included the managing director of CUNA, business owners, upper level corporate executives, attorneys, architects and scientists, and the district still continues to attract comparable owners today. As these persons realized, secluded and heavily wooded Sunset Hills had an ideal location that was close to the downtown, close to places of work, and close to schools, churches, shopping centers, and parks. Of course, Gifford's insistence on design exclusivity also meant that the growth of the district would be gradual, but even so, 67 of the 94 houses in the district were completed by 1964, 10 years after the first house was built, and by 1978 all but three of the houses in the district were complete and occupied.

Today, the Sunset Hills Historic District is still almost completely unchanged from its appearance in 1978 and this impression is heightened by the generally very high degree of integrity that the district's buildings display and the excellent maintenance they continue to receive. The district is still a highly valued residential neighborhood today, and it continues to be a distinctive mid-twentieth century enclave whose appearance is markedly different from the much larger cluster of historic residential neighborhoods that surround it.

Architecture:

The Sunset Hills Historic District is locally significant under NRHP Criterion C (Architecture) because it contains Madison's most significant and concentrated collection of fine, intact, architect-designed single family Post World War II residences. All of the district's buildings were architect-designed, a requirement that was mandated by the subdivision's developer, the designs were subject to approval by a review board, and a number are the known work of several of the finest architects who practiced in Madison and elsewhere in Wisconsin during the period of significance. These houses were designed for a sophisticated clientele that was made up largely of Madison's professional and educational elite, and the houses that these owners built are especially notable for illustrating the wide range of design choices that were available to them between 1955, when the first houses in the district were built, and 1978, when the last major group of houses in the district were completed.

All but three of the district's 94 houses were built between 1955 and 1978 and almost 75% of them were built in 1964 or before and are now 50-years-old or older. Most of these are examples of styles that are not discussed in the CRMP and which even today do not have commonly accepted definitions. The authors of the CRMP, which was written in 1986, acknowledged this problem in their discussion of buildings constructed from 1950 to the present, which they called "Contemporary Style" buildings, and which the National Register of Historic Places calls "Modern Movement" buildings.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 14

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Contemporary architecture cannot be defined or described in the manner of other preceding stylistic movements. “Contemporary” can be used to designate any twentieth century building of distinction and potential interest, whose identity or features cannot be ascribed to styles and forms discussed in this report. Although architectural historians have invented names for some contemporary schools of architecture (i.e., Brutalism, The New Formalism, Neo-Expressionism, Late Modernism, Post-Modernism, etc.), buildings of these genres are not of sufficient age, and generally do not have widely-recognized and understood scholarly value, to be evaluated for significance according to National Register criterion. Other widely accepted terms for mid-twentieth century residential architecture such as “ranch house,” “tract home,” and “split-level,” refer to buildings generally not surveyed in the Wisconsin program. As with contemporary schools of architecture, a terminology will likely be adopted as scholarship develops and as these buildings reach 50 years of age.³⁸

That these post-war buildings cannot yet be placed within accepted architectural stylistic categories and in some cases are less than 50-years-old does not mean that they are ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, though. The “House and Yard” chapter of the context developed by the authors of the *National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs* specifically discusses “The Contemporary House,” and by extension, it acknowledges that such buildings can be eligible for NRHP-listing, depending on their age and the degree of architectural distinction that they possess. This context begins its discussion of post-World War II residences with “The Suburban Ranch House,” of which there are several fine examples in the Sunset Hills Historic District.

The suburban Ranch house of the 1950s reflected modern consumer preferences and growing incomes. With its low, horizontal silhouette and rambling floor plan, the house type reflected the nation’s growing fascination with the lifestyle of the West Coast and the changing functional needs of families. ... Picture windows, broad chimneys, horizontal bands of windows, basement recreational rooms, and exterior terraces or patios became distinguishing features of the forward looking yet lower cost suburban home. ... In the 1950s, as families grew larger and children became teenagers, households moved up to larger Ranch houses, offering more space and privacy. With the introduction of television and inexpensive, high-fidelity phonographs, increasing noise levels created a demand for greater separation of activities and soundproof zones. The split-level house provided increased privacy through the location of bedrooms on an upper level a half story above the main living area and an all-

³⁸ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. 2, p. 2-37 (Architecture).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 15

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

purpose recreation room on a lower level. The Ranch house in various configurations., including the split-level, continued as the dominant suburban house well into the 1960s.³⁹

Typically, though, suburban Ranch houses were builder's houses and their designs were usually based to a large degree on purchased plans. Architect-designed, custom-built Ranch Style houses such as the ones found in the district, were the exception. Contemporary Style houses built during this same period, on the other hand, were mostly custom-built and they typically required the services of an architect in order to make them a reality. The important role of the architect in the creation of the Contemporary Style has also been noted by the authors of the *National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs* in their discussion of "The Contemporary House."

The influence of Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, Richard J. Neutra, Mies van der Rohe, and other modernists inspired many architects to look to new solutions for livable homes using modern materials of glass, steel, and concrete, and principals of organic design that utilized cantilevered forms, glass curtain walls, and post-and-beam construction. The contemporary home featured the integration of the indoor and outdoor living area and open floor plans, which allowed a sense of flowing space. Characteristics such as masonry hearth walls, patios and terraces, carports, and transparent walls of sliding glass doors and floor-to-ceiling windows became hallmarks of the contemporary residential design.⁴⁰

All of these characteristics can be found in abundance in the houses that architects designed in Sunset Hills. Indeed, many houses in the district appear forward thinking even today, 50 years or more after they were built. The designs of these houses vary considerably. Some are elaborations on Ranch Style and Split-Level style themes, others display a strong Wrightian sensibility, while many others represent an architect's personal interpretation of Contemporary Style thinking. They are united, however, by their exterior cladding, which invariably consists of natural materials such brick, stone, and wood, or combinations of these materials. In addition, the placement of these houses on their typically irregular sites displays topographical sensitivity and reflects the fact that their architects adapted the houses to suit their sites rather than the other way around.

What follows is a listing of the identified architects in the district and their works and this is followed by a listing of the most important of the contractors who built these houses and their identified works. Leading the way are the works of such notable local architects as William V. Kaeser and Herb Fritz, Jr., but most are the works of others whose careers have not yet been evaluated documented or evaluated.

³⁹ Ames, David L. and Linda Flint McClelland. Op. Cit., pp. 66-67.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 67.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 16

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Architects:

William V. Kaeser:

William V. Kaeser (1906-1994) was born into a family of Swiss descent who farmed in Greenville, Illinois. Graduating from Greenville High School in 1924, he spent the summers between 1927 and 1931, working as a draftsman in the architectural office of Frank Riley in Madison while attending the University of Illinois, from which he graduated in 1931. In the fall of 1931, Kaeser went to MIT, from which he graduated with a masters degree in architecture in 1932. Kaeser then went to work again for Riley from 1932 - 1933. He then joined a group of architects and planners at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1933, and produced a regional plan for Madison, WI. In 1935, Kaeser set up his own practice in Madison. While establishing his practice, Kaeser also worked part time as a city planner for the City of Madison from 1935 until 1938, but from 1938 onward and until shortly before his death, Kaeser was in active practice as an architect, working almost entirely within the modernist idiom. In 1951, Kaeser affiliated with Arthur McLeod, a structural engineer, in the firm of Kaeser & McLeod, later Kaeser, McLeod, & Weston.

During his long career here Kaeser produced buildings of many types, but he was best known for his residential work, which comprises some of Madison's finest modern residential architecture. Kaeser's earliest residential work was inspired by the International Style but most of his later residential projects, were influenced by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. Kaeser, however, was more successful in finding his own style within this powerful idiom than were most of those who followed the same path.

District buildings by William V. Kaeser and Kaeser & McLeod

AHI# 110543	Prof. Robert & Jean Sachs House	3972 Plymouth Circle.	1957 ⁴¹
AHI# 110545	Howard E. & Helen Stark House	3994 Plymouth Circle	1959 ⁴²
AHI# 113145	Dr. Arvin & Sybil Weinstein House	105 Standish Court	1961 ⁴³
AHI# 110542	Prof. Walter & Marylu Rauschenbush House	3942 Plymouth Circle	1962 ⁴⁴
AHI# 110544	Dr. Charles E. & Janice Reed House	3976 Plymouth Circle	1964 ⁴⁵
AHI# 113144	Ralph D. & Jennelyn Timmons House	102 Standish Court	1964 ⁴⁶

⁴¹ Biebl, Anne E. *The Residential Architecture of William V. Kaeser*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1985, UW Master's Thesis, pp. 102-103, 187.

⁴² Architect's Files. City of Madison Department of Planning and Development, office of the Historic Preservation Planner.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 17

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Joseph J. Weiler (Weiler & Strang)

The building in the district that was associated with Joseph J. Weiler was built while he was a partner in the firm of Weiler & Strang. Joseph J. Weiler (1904-ca.1987) was born in Vincennes, Indiana in 1904 and he received his degree from the University of Illinois. Weiler came to Madison in 1929, to work at the firm of Law, Law, and Potter as an architect and an engineer. After 1929, however, Weiler's name disappears from the Madison City Directory until 1937, when he is again listed as a structural engineer with the same firm, a position he kept until 1943, when he is listed as an architect with BOW (?), possibly a governmental agency involved in wartime construction. In 1944, Weiler affiliated with Allen J. Strang in the Madison architectural firm of Weiler and Strang, which soon became one of the busiest firms in the city.⁴⁷ This firm later became Weiler, Strang, McMullin and Associates when Roger E. McMullin (1916-) joined the firm. Weiler and Strang (now Strang Assoc.) has since produced many of Madison's best post-war buildings.

Besides the custom-designed buildings designed by Weiler & Strang, the firm also worked in the early 1950s with Madison builder Marshall Erdman, then the principal in the Erdman-Preiss Lumber Co., to produce a line of pre-fabricated houses known as the "U-Form-It" houses, which came in several different plans.

District building by Weiler & Strang

AHI# 222642 Prof. Lola R. Pierstoff House	113 Alden Drive	1970 ⁴⁸
---	-----------------	--------------------

Herb Fritz, Jr.

Herbert Fritz, Jr. (1915-1998) was, along with William V. Kaeser, one of the few successful Madison-area architects who were deeply influenced by their direct or indirect associations with Frank Lloyd Wright. Fritz was born in Sioux City, Iowa in 1915 to Herbert Fritz, Sr. and Mary Larson Fritz. Herbert Fritz, Sr. was a respected architectural draftsman who by 1915 had worked in many of the most respected architectural offices in the Midwest. In 1913, Fritz was working in the offices of Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin, and it was there that he met his future wife, Mary Larson, who was the daughter of Wright's stonemason, Alfred Larson. The pre-existing connection of the Fritz-Larson union with Frank Lloyd Wright would eventually lead to the younger Fritz becoming, in 1938, a member of the Taliesin Fellowship after spending a year of study at the Art Institute's school in

⁴⁶ Architect's Files. City of Madison Department of Planning and Development, office of the Historic Preservation Planner.

⁴⁷ *Wisconsin State Journal*: July 14, 1945, p. 6.

⁴⁸ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 18

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Chicago, a year at the UW, and two years (1936-1937) working in the Madison office of architect William V. Kaeser. From 1938-1941, Fritz studied at Taliesin, and in 1941, he purchased an adjoining farm that he named "Hilltop Farm." This new property would become Fritz' first architectural commission after lighting burned the farmhouse down in 1942 and it remained his home ever after.

Gradually, Fritz created a career for himself as a designer, mostly of houses at first. In 1959, however, Fritz became a registered architect with help from Wright. Subsequently, Fritz became "recognized as an important local architect who completed several hundred residential and commercial projects in the Madison area, throughout Wisconsin, and elsewhere in the country. His independent career began with the design and execution of his own home at Hilltop after the fire, and slowly expanded, first within a small group of artists and intellectuals in the Madison area, later with Marshall Erdman and other developers on larger residential projects and substantial commercial undertakings."⁴⁹ Fritz died at Hilltop Farm in 1998.⁵⁰

District buildings by Herb Fritz, Jr.:

AHI# 222545 Phillip D. & Anne Curtin House	3964 Plymouth Circle	1958 ⁵¹
AHI# 222584 Prof. John Cassida House	3918 Plymouth Circle	1962 ⁵²

Donald J. Reppen:

Donald James Reppen (1922-2002) was born in Lodi, Wisconsin in 1922, but later moved to Madison with his family. He graduated from West High School in 1940 and served in the army in World War II. After returning, he attended the University of Wisconsin and earned a degree in Art Education in 1949. Reppen subsequently taught art at both Emerson and Cherokee schools but in 1951, Reppen and his first wife, Mary Reppen, who was also an art teacher, designed and built their own Contemporary Style house at 2801 Sylvan Ave. The success of this venture led Reppen, who was self-taught, to design some 50 more houses and small commercial buildings in Madison and elsewhere in the following decades and several of these are located in the project area. That Reppen could do so was because he advertised himself as a designer, not an architect, which meant that he was limited to designing buildings of a certain size and type, this being a path that was followed by many future architects including Herb Fritz, Jr. The houses that Reppen designed were all in the Contemporary Style and they show him to have been a more than competent designer. Eventually, this work also

⁴⁹ Dowling, Jill. "A Taliesin Apprenticeship: The Architectural Career of Herbert Fritz, Jr." *Historic Madison: A Journal of the Four Lakes Region*: Vol. XIV: 1997, p. 8.

⁵⁰ "Noted Architect, Wright Protégé Herb Fritz Dies." *Madison Capital Times*. Nov. 23, 1998. Obituary of Herb Fritz, Jr.

⁵¹ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

⁵² Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 19

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

fostered his interest in interior design as well and by 1963, Reppen had become a member of the American Institute of Interior Designers and he and his first wife were both working together as interior designers from their home.⁵³ In the years that followed, Reppen's firm, Donald J. Reppen and Assoc., became one of Madison's best known interior decorating firms and he eventually stopped designing buildings and concentrated instead on interior design. Reppen died in Madison in 2002.⁵⁴

District buildings by Donald J. Reppen:

AHI# 222505	Dr. Frank C. & June Larson House	3902 Plymouth Circle	1956 ⁵⁵
AHI# 222494	Prof. Edwin M. & Kathryn Larsen House	109 Standish Court	1956 ⁵⁶
AHI# 222524	Louis & Edith Milan House	110 Standish Court	1958 ⁵⁷

Jack W. Klund

A full biography of Jack Klund still needs to be developed but he is believed to have spent most of his professional career in Madison. Klund attended the University of Wisconsin for three years, then served in the Navy during World War II. After the war he attended the University of Illinois for three more years, graduating from the latter in 1948 with a degree in architecture. After graduation he worked in the Madison offices of John J. Flad and Assoc. until 1953, when he joined the firm of Gausewitz and Cashin.⁵⁸ By 1956, though, Klund had started his own firm, Jack Klund & Assoc., and he is believed to have been the principal in this firm for several more decades, during which he produced a wide range of commercial, public, and residential buildings in Madison and elsewhere. He joined the AIA in 1963 and he is still a member of the AIA today and is living in Green Valley, Arizona.

District building by Jack W. Klund:

AHI# 222546	Dr. Edmund & Patricia Liebl House	3938 Plymouth Circle	1960 ⁵⁹
-------------	-----------------------------------	----------------------	--------------------

⁵³ *Wisconsin State Journal*: September 22, 1963, Sec. 6, p. 1.

⁵⁴ *Wisconsin State Journal*: October 1, 2002, p. B4 (obituary of Donald James Reppen).

⁵⁵ "Teak Furniture Distinguishes The Larson Home." *The Capital Times*, June 24, 1965, p. 21 (illustrated).

⁵⁶ The current (2014) owner of the house has the original blueprints.

⁵⁷ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

⁵⁸ *Wisconsin State Journal*: July 31, 1953, Sec. 2, p. 2.

⁵⁹ Conversation with the original (also the current) owners.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 20

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Robert C. Cashin:

Robert Charles Cashin (1926-2003) was born in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, on October 30, 1926 and he graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a B. S. degree in architectural engineering in 1949. He then moved to Madison, Wisconsin, and worked as a draftsman for John J. Flad until 1952, when he formed a partnership with Charles H. Gausewitz (Gausewitz and Cashin).⁶⁰ This firm lasted until 1960, when Cashin started his own firm, Cashin & Assoc.⁶¹ By 1968, this firm had become Cashin & Goodwin and in 1974, Cashin moved to Phoenix, Arizona to practice architecture for the Sentry Insurance Co. of Stevens Point, Wisconsin, and he finished his career in Phoenix with the Scottsdale Insurance Co. and retired there in 1996.⁶²

Most of the buildings that Cashin designed while in partnership with Gausewitz were located in Madison and elsewhere in the southern half of the state and they were typical of a successful architectural practice and consisted of a mix of mostly Contemporary Style commercial and public buildings. The two houses he designed in the district, however, are both fine Contemporary Style houses and one of them was designed for himself and his family, while the other, the Gerald & Joyce Bartell House, is the largest and one of the finest houses built in the district.

District buildings by Robert C. Cashin:

AHI# 222502	Gerald A. and Joyce Bartell House	3959 Plymouth Circle	1957 ⁶³
AHI# 222632	Robert C. & Suzanne Cashin House	3902 Priscilla Lane	1968 ⁶⁴

Robert A. Rosenthal:

Robert Allen Rosenthal (1936-) was born in Chicago in 1932. Rosenthal enrolled in the University of Illinois and graduated from that institution with a Bachelor's degree in Architecture in 1955. In 1960, Rosenthal moved to Madison and designed a five-building apartment complex that is located at the end of Catalpa Court in the Burr Oaks Plat.⁶⁵ From 1962 to 1965 he was a partner in the firm of Fritz, Rosentahl and Assocs., which, in 1964, designed a 35-unit apartment building located in the 1800 block between Beld and S. Park streets.⁶⁶ In 1965, Rosenthal opened his own office, Robert Rosenthal

⁶⁰ *Wisconsin State Journal*: November 9, 1952, p. 16.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, October 27, 1960, Sec. 3, p. 4.

⁶² *The Arizona Republic* (Phoenix). August 5, 2003 (obituary of Robert C. Cashin).

⁶³ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*.

⁶⁵ *Wisconsin State Journal*: June 12, 1960, Sec. 2, p. 7 (illustrated).

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, April 15, 1964, p. 2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 21

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Assoc., which in that same year designed a 56-home suburban development known as Meadowood East that was comprised of 25 different house models, all of which were designed by his firm.⁶⁷ In 1967, Rosenthal moved to La Jolla, California and he opened a new office there that specialized in designing healthcare buildings. Later, he became regional vice-president of American Medical Buildings (AMB) and in 1988 he led the buy-out of AMB's West Coast division, which resulted in the formation of Pacific Medical Buildings, of which Rosenthal is still the executive chairman today.

District buildings by Robert A. Rosenthal:

AHI# 222583	Temple Beth El Parish House	3995 Plymouth Circle	1962 ⁶⁸
AHI# 222597	John P. & Aryce Guimond House	3910 Plymouth Circle	1963 ⁶⁹
AHI# 222585	Irving E. & Dorothy Levy House	3941 Plymouth Circle	1963 ⁷⁰

Elizabeth Mackay Ranney:

Too little is known today about the work of Elizabeth MacKay Ranney, who was the only registered woman architect in Madison in the 1960's and early 1970's and one of just three in Wisconsin during this same period. Ranney was born in Connecticut and studied art history at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts. After graduation she enrolled in the architecture program at Yale University and became the first woman to graduate from that program.⁷¹ Her subsequent career was influenced by the places she lived with her first husband, J. Austin Ranney, a nationally known professor of political science who taught at the University of Illinois from 1947 to 1963 and at the University of Wisconsin from 1963 to 1976. Ranney's first work was done in Illinois but her later work was mostly in the Madison area. In 1964 she designed a fine Contemporary Style house located at 3930 Plymouth Circle for herself, her then husband, and their four sons, and subsequently she designed a number of houses for James Martin, a prominent Madison builder.⁷² So far, all of Ranney's identified work is residential in nature and it is all of high quality and is Contemporary in style. Ranney died in Madison in May of 1987.

⁶⁷ *Wisconsin State Journal*. January 22, 1966, p. 43 (illustrated). See also: *Wisconsin State Journal*: July 16, 1967, Parade of Homes Section, p. 12.

⁶⁸ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Interview with the owner (2014).

⁷¹ Matheson, Helen. "She Feels Her Profession's Invisible." *Wisconsin State Journal*: May 29, 1973, Sec. 2, p. 1.

⁷² *Wisconsin State Journal*: July 13, 1969, Parade of Homes Section, p. 41.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 22

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

District buildings by Elizabeth MacKay Ranney:

AHI# 222596	Prof. J. Austin & Elizabeth Ranney House	3930 Plymouth Circle	1964 ⁷³
AHI# 222651	Prof. Marvin P. Miracle House	3980 Plymouth Circle	1971 ⁷⁴
AHI# 222647	Elizabeth MacKay Ranney House	3913 Priscilla Lane	1976 ⁷⁵

Herbert N. DeLevie:

Herbert N. DeLevie (1934-1989) was born in Rheine, Germany, in 1934. DeLevie and his family subsequently moved to Holland to escape religious persecution and they spent the World War II years there in hiding. After the war, the family returned to Germany and then returned to Holland once again before finally emigrating to the United States in 1949, and to Madison in 1950. DeLevie graduated from West High School in 1951 and enrolled at the UW. An encounter with Frank Lloyd Wright resulted in DeLevie's being accepted as an apprentice at Taliesin, where he studied for two years before joining the army and serving in Korea. After this war, DeLevie moved to Los Angeles and practiced architecture there, among other things, until returning to Madison in 1964, where he set up an architectural practice of his own. In 1976, DeLevie formed DeLevie and Assocs. and he ran this firm until his death in Madison in 1989.⁷⁶ DeLevie's studies at Taliesin ensured that his buildings would look like no one else's and his body of work contains some of Madison's finest Contemporary Style buildings, most of which are single family residences and one of which is located in the district and which is believed to be individually eligible for listing in the National Register.

District building by Herbert N. DeLevie:

AHI# 222621	Robert A. & Lynn Berman House	3901 Priscilla Lane	1967 ⁷⁷
-------------	-------------------------------	---------------------	--------------------

Edward A. Solner:

Edward Adam Solner (1934-) was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1934. Solner attended several colleges and universities before ultimately graduating from the University of Illinois in 1957. He subsequently moved to Madison and was a partner in the firm of Knudson, Solner, & King from 1963 until 1969,

⁷³ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories. See also: Matheson, Helen. Op. Cit.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ <www.wisconsinhistory.org/HolocaustSurvivors/DeLevie.asp>

⁷⁷ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 23

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

when he organized his own firm; Edward A. Solner & Assocs.⁷⁸ Solner is still the principal in this firm today, which is located in Middleton, Wisconsin.

District buildings by Edward A. Solner:

AHI# 222631	Charles & Eddie Engman Jr. House	3909 Priscilla Lane	1968 ⁷⁹
AHI# 222628	Prof. Glen & Ria Cain House	3905 Regent Street	1968 ⁸⁰

Krueger, Kraft & Associates

The principals in the firm of Krueger, Kraft & Assoc. were Lloyd O. Krueger, architect, and Robert C. Kraft, Mechanical Engineer. Lloyd Oscar Krueger (1921-????) was born in Grinnell, Iowa on June 11, 1921 and he was educated at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Michigan, from the latter of which he graduated in 1949 after first having served in the U.S. Army Air Force in World War II. Before forming his own firm in Madison in 1961 with Robert Kraft, Krueger was an architect in the architectural firm of Siberz-Purcell-Cuthbert in Madison and was responsible for the design of several buildings on the Edgewood College campus in Madison, including a dorm building and chapel (1957, classroom building (1959), and gymnasium (1961).⁸¹ Krueger was still in practice in Madison in 1985 as a principal in a successor firm, Krueger Shutter & Assoc. with Richard C. Shutter, and the firm was producing designs for both private and public buildings, including the University of Wisconsin Pharmacy Building.⁸²

District building by Krueger, Kraft & Assoc.

AHI# 222607	Prof. Gerald & Elaine Nadler House	3926 Priscilla Lane	1964 ⁸³
-------------	------------------------------------	---------------------	--------------------

John Randal McDonald

John Randal McDonald (1922-2003) was born in Milwaukee in 1922. McDonald was educated in the public schools of that city and after graduation, attended the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, where he received a BS degree in Art. McDonald then served as an officer in the Navy during World War II and after completing his tour of duty he married Josephine Elholm of Racine, Wisconsin, in

⁷⁸ *American Architects Directory*. New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1970, p. 860.

⁷⁹ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Koyl, George S. (ed.) *American Architects Directory*. New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1962, p. 395.

⁸² Wisconsin Society of Architects. *Construction Industry Handbook. Wisconsin Architect*, February, 1981, p. D15.

⁸³ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 24

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

1945. Soon thereafter, McDonald enrolled in the architecture program at Yale University, from which he graduated with a Masters degree. He and his wife then returned to Racine where he established a successful architecture practice that concentrated on producing primarily residential designs in a style that was markedly influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright. In 1963, McDonald moved his practice to Florida and established a new office in Boca Raton. Subsequently, McDonald also opened a second office in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, and he produced hundreds of designs for residences, churches, banks, and office buildings up until his death in 2003.⁸⁴ These buildings were located all over the country and at least three of his earlier single family residences are located within the Sunset Hills subdivision. These houses were the early fruits of a plan in which he perhaps would have designed a substantially larger number of houses in this plat, but only the first three are known to have been built.⁸⁵

District buildings by John Randal McDonald.

AHI# 222526	George & Helen Vukelich House	3934 Plymouth Circle	1955 ⁸⁶
AHI# 222541	Thomas C. & Shirley Pearson House	3922 Priscilla Lane	1956 ⁸⁷
AHI# 222518	John V. & Kathryn Smick House	3930 Priscilla Lane	1956 ⁸⁸

Builders:

Joe Daniels Construction Co.

Joseph Daniels, Sr. established the Joe Daniels Construction Co. in 1953 and this firm is still managed by his son today. From modest beginnings, this firm has grown to become one of Madison's larger construction firms and it has also achieved an enviable reputation for high quality work in the process. In the early stages of its development the firm was best known for its residential work and several of these projects are located within the survey area and are listed below. Today, however, the firm is best known for much larger commercial and institutional projects such as the recently completed renovation of the Wisconsin State Capitol building in Madison.

⁸⁴ Cane, David A. "Of Land, Sea, Sky, and Vision: The Architecture of John Randal McDonald." Lambertville, NJ: *Modernism Magazine*, Winter, 1999, pp. 50-56.

⁸⁵ "Designer Tells Plans for Houses in New Sector." *Wisconsin State Journal*: September 16, 1953, Sec. 2, p. 6.

⁸⁶ John Randal McDonald Collection, 1949-2001. Wisconsin Historical Society, Archives Division, Madison, WI.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 25

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

District building by Joe Daniels Construction Co.

AHI# 222583	Temple Beth El Parish House	3995 Plymouth Circle	1962 ⁸⁹
-------------	-----------------------------	----------------------	--------------------

Dohm Construction Co.

Gerald F. Dohm (1926-2011) was born in Madison on October 20, 1926. He enlisted in the Army Air Corp in 1944. At the end of the war he went to work as a carpenter foreman but he was soon recalled to serve in the Korean War. After his discharge he resumed his career as a carpenter and started his own firm, Dohm Construction Co., which became one of the city's premiere home building and remodeling firms. He also became a developer as well and developed the Cloverdale and Park Lawn Place subdivisions and also the Parkwood Hills and Park Towne developments. Dohm was also active as a board member of the National Association of Home Builders and of other professional organizations. Dohm died in Madison on September 13, 2011.

District buildings by Dohm Construction Co.

AHI# 222540	Thomas & Naomi Fiedler House	110 Alden Dr.	1959 ⁹⁰
AHI# 222546	Dr. Edmund & Patricia Liebl House	3938 Plymouth Circle	1960 ⁹¹
AHI# 222584	Prof. John Cassida House	3918 Plymouth Circle	1962 ⁹²
AHI# 222594	Jack & Geraldine Netboy House	3990 Plymouth Circle	1963 ⁹³
AHI# 222622	Allen J. & Alice Strang House	3958 Plymouth Circle	1965 ⁹⁴
AHI# 222618	Donald & Marion Anderson House	113 Standish Court	1967 ⁹⁵
AHI# 222642	Prof. Lola R. Pierstoff House	113 Alden Dr.	1970 ⁹⁶

Note: No biographical information has yet been found for the following builders.

Leonard Jenness (Jenness Construction Co.)

AHI# 222518	John & Kathryn Smick House	3930 Priscilla Lane	1956 ⁹⁷
-------------	----------------------------	---------------------	--------------------

⁸⁹ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories. This house was designed by Robert A. Rosenthal.

⁹⁰ Ibid. This house was designed by Donald J. Reppen.

⁹¹ Ibid. The architect was Jack Klund.

⁹² Ibid. The architect was Herb Fritz, Jr.

⁹³ Ibid. The architect was Robert A. Rosenthal.

⁹⁴ Ibid. The architect was Allen J. Strang.

⁹⁵ Ibid. A. E. Inc. of Madison was the architect.

⁹⁶ Ibid. The architects were Weiler & Strang.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 26

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Harold Bewick

AHI# 222574 Charles & Eunice Eikel Jr. House	3975 Plymouth Circle	1961 ⁹⁸
--	----------------------	--------------------

Robert R. Shaw

AHI# 22541 Thomas & Shirley Pearson House	3922 Priscilla Lane	1955 ⁹⁹
AHI# 222502 Gerald & Joyce Bartell House	3959 Plymouth Circle	1957 ¹⁰⁰
AHI# 222586 Prof. Gerald & Alice Mueller House	3926 Plymouth Circle	1957 ¹⁰¹
AHI# 110545 Howard & Helen Stark House	3994 Plymouth Circle	1959 ¹⁰²
AHI# 222581 Dr. Aaron & Marion Galonski House	117 Alden Dr.	1961 ¹⁰³
AHI# 222596 Prof. Austin & Elizabeth Ranney House	3930 Plymouth Circle	1964 ¹⁰⁴

Hanson Construction Co. (Burt Hanson)

AHI# 110542 Prof. Walter & Marylu Raushenbush House	3942 Plymouth Circle	1962 ¹⁰⁵
AHI# 110544 Dr. Charles & Janice Reed House	3976 Plymouth Circle	1964 ¹⁰⁶
AHI# 113144 Ralph & Jennelyn Timmons House	102 Standish Court	1964 ¹⁰⁷
AHI# 222635 Prof. Sydney & Euna Staniforth House	3998 Plymouth Circle	1968 ¹⁰⁸

Dean Rischmueller

AHI# 222571 Prof. Chu & Vera Wang House	3999 Plymouth Circle	1960 ¹⁰⁹
AHI# 222542 Macky & Miriam Gaberman House	3906 Priscilla Lane	1960 ¹¹⁰

⁹⁷ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories. The architect was John Randal McDonald.

⁹⁸ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

⁹⁹ Ibid. The architect was John Randal McDonald.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. The architects were Gausewitz & Cashin.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid. The architect was William V. Kaeser.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. The architect was Elizabeth Ranney.

¹⁰⁵ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories. The architect was William V. Kaeser.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. The architect was William V. Kaeser.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. The architect was William V. Kaeser.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 27
Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

AHI# 222607	Prof. Gerald & Elaine Nadler House	3926 Priscilla Lane	1964 ¹¹¹
AHI# 222609	Prof. T. C. & Phyllis Huang House	3988 Plymouth Circle	1966 ¹¹²
AHI# 222633	Prof. Reinhold & Anneliese Grimm House	3983 Plymouth Circle	1968 ¹¹³

In addition to the independent builders listed above it appears that Willis E. Gifford, Jr., the developer of Sunset Hills, had one or more contracting firms of his own that were active in building in Sunset Hills. During the early part of this period (1959-68), Gifford was a Milwaukee resident and the first of these firms (Wisconsin Builders, Inc.) was also a Milwaukee firm. His Hoyt Park Construction Co., however, appears to have built exclusively in Madison. The identified houses these firms built in the district are listed below.

Wisconsin Builders, Inc.¹¹⁴

AHI# 222579	Dwaine & Barbara Ohmen House	4002 Hillcrest Dr.	1960 ¹¹⁵
AHI# 222576	Oscar & Eleanore Damman House	3933 Plymouth Circle	1960 ¹¹⁶
AHI# 222575	Robert & June Klein House	3960 Plymouth Circle	1960 ¹¹⁷
AHI# 222572	Brooks & Bessie Rickard House	3991 Plymouth Circle	1960 ¹¹⁸
AHI# 222569	Robert & Devone Bussan House	114 Standish Court	1960 ¹¹⁹

Hoyt Park Construction Co. (aka Hoyt Park Builders, Inc.)¹²⁰

AHI# 222598	Howard & Dorothy Skillrud House	3902 Hillcrest Dr.	1963 ¹²¹
AHI# 222602	Donald & Margaret Isabella House	3906 Hillcrest Dr.	1963 ¹²²
AHI# 222589	Allen & Lee Peck House	3910 Hillcrest Dr.	1963 ¹²³
AHI# 222597	John & Aryce Guimond House	3910 Plymouth Circle	1963 ¹²⁴

¹¹⁰ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

¹¹¹ Ibid. The architects were Krueger, Kraft & Assoc.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ "Milwaukee Firm Gets \$128,000 Building Permits." *The Capital Times*, Dec. 8. 1959, p. 6.

¹¹⁵ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ This firm was liquidated by Willis E. Gifford, Jr. in 1968.

¹²¹ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid. The architect was Robert A. Rosenthal.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 28

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

AHI# 222611	Prof. Ugo & Ingrid Camerini House	3925 Plymouth Circle	1964 ¹²⁵
AHI# 222641	Hoyt Park Builders Spec. House	3950 Plymouth Circle	1964 ¹²⁶
AHI# 222610	Prof. Leonard & Marilyn Ross House	3954 Plymouth Circle	1964 ¹²⁷
AHI# 222640	Hoyt Park Builders Spec House	3984 Plymouth Circle	1964 ¹²⁸
AHI# 222601	Herbert & Ethelyn Eickner House	3925 Priscilla Lane	1964 ¹²⁹

Conclusion:

The Sunset Hills Historic District is therefore believed to be eligible for inclusion in the NRHP at the local level for its architectural significance as a highly intact ensemble of architect-designed Post World War II single family residences that is clearly visually distinct from the surrounding historic residential neighborhood and because it contains individual buildings of considerable architectural merit. The buildings in the district are especially notable within their local context for being excellent and frequently outstanding examples of the various facets of the Modern Movements styles that they represent. They are also notable for being larger and much more expensive than houses in neighboring areas, for their associations with locally notable owners, and for their high degree of integrity. Collectively these houses represent the finest group of Contemporary Style single family residences that were built in the city of Madison during the period of significance and their significance is greatly enhanced by their high degree of integrity and their very well-maintained state.

Criteria Consideration G:

As was noted earlier, almost 75% of the houses in the Sunset Hills Historic District were built either in or prior to 1964 and are thus 50-years-old or older. All but three of the remaining houses were built between 1965 and 1978 and these houses are also all architect-designed, they were built to the same high standards as the houses that preceded them, and they represent the continuation and culmination of the district's historic plan. They therefore satisfy the requirements set forth in *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years*, which states that:

In instances where these later buildings make up only a small part of the district, and reflect the architectural and historic significance of the district, they can be considered integral parts of

¹²⁵ City of Madison Assessor's Records, City of Madison Building Permits, and Madison City Directories.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 29

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

the district (and contributing resources) without showing exceptional importance of either the district or the less-than-50-year-old buildings.¹³⁰

This is also echoed in the National Register Bulletin *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation For the National Register of Historic Places*, which states that:

As a general rule, a majority of resources must be at least 50 years of age, before the district as a whole can be considered to meet the 50-year guideline. The nomination of a suburban neighborhood whose design was begun and substantially completed more than 50 years ago, although some resources within the district were built within the last 50 years, does not require a justification of exceptional significance.¹³¹

Preservation Activity:

The Sunset Hills Historic District is fortunate in that it has been able to recently attract owners who take pride in their historic houses and have, in some cases, restored them. In addition, the City of Madison's Historic Preservation Commission has been active in educating owners of historic resources in Madison as to the importance and value of historic preservation, including acting as the sponsor of this nomination.

Archeological Potential

The extent of any archeological remains in the district is conjectural at this time. No information regarding possible prehistoric remains in this area was found in the course of this research. Furthermore, it is likely that any remains of pre-European cultures that may once have been located within the district would have been greatly disturbed by the building activity associated with the subsequent development of the area.

Acknowledgment

This project has been funded with the assistance of a grant-in-aid from the Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended. Historic Preservation grants-in-aid are administered in Wisconsin in conjunction with the National Register of Historic Places program by the Division of Historic Preservation of the Wisconsin

¹³⁰ Sherfy, Marcella and W. Ray Luce. *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years*. U.S Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 1979 (revised 1990;1996).

¹³¹ Ames, David L. and Linda Flint McClelland. Op. Cit, p. 111.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 30

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Historical Society. However, the contents and opinions contained in this nomination do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the National Park Service or the Wisconsin Historical Society.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Major Bibliographical References:

American Architects Directory. New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1970.

Ames, David L. and Linda Flint McClelland. *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation For the National Register of Historic Places*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2002.

Architect's Files. City of Madison Department of Planning and Development, office of the Historic Preservation Planner.

Biebl, Anne E. *The Residential Architecture of William V. Kaeser*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1985, UW Master's Thesis.

City of Madison Assessor's Records.

City of Madison Building Permits.

Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society. Architect's Vertical Files.

Hamilton, Mary Jane. "The Builder's Company Concrete Block Plant," in *Frank Lloyd Wright and Madison: Eight Decades of Artistic and Social Interaction*, ed. by Paul Sprague, Madison: Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1990.

Heggland, Timothy F. *City of Madison Near West Side Neighborhoods Intensive Survey*. Madison: City of Madison, 2013.

Koyl, George S. (ed.) *American Architects Directory*. New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1962.

Madison City Directories.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

John Randal McDonald Collection, 1949-2001. Wisconsin Historical Society Archives Division, Madison, WI.

Mollenhoff, David V. *Madison: A History of the Formative Years* —(2nd Edition). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Major Bibliographical References Cont.:

Sherfy, Marcella and W. Ray Luce. *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years*. U.S Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 1979 (revised 1990;1996).

Westmorland: A Great Place To Live. Madison: Westmorland Neighborhood Assoc., 2011.

Wisconsin Society of Architects Directories. Construction Industry Handbook. *Wisconsin Architect*, February, 1981.

Wisconsin State Journal. Various issues.

Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986 (3 vols.).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description:

The district boundaries begin at a point on the S curbline of Regent St. that corresponds to the NE corner of the lot associated with 3901 Regent St. The line then turns 90° and continues S along the W curbline of Larkin St. to the SE corner of the lot associated with 3902 Hillcrest Dr. The line then turns 90° and continues W along the N curbline of Hillcrest Dr. to a point that corresponds to the SW corner of the lot associated with 4010 Hillcrest Dr. The line then turns 60° and continues N until reaching the NW corner of the lot associated with 3954 Plymouth Circle. The line then turns 20° and continues in a NNE direction until reaching the NW corner of the lot associated with 3937 Regent St. The line then turns 65° and continues E along the S curbline of Regent Street until reaching the POB.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the district enclose all the land that has historically been associated with the district's resources.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section photos Page 1

Items a-d are the same for photos 1 – 26.

Photo 1

- a) Sunset Hills Historic District
- b) Madison, Dane County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Heggland, April 27, 2014
- d) Wisconsin Historical Society
- e) Plymouth Circle, General View looking W
- f) Photo 1 of 26

Photo 2

- e) Standish Court, General View looking N
- f) Photo 2 of 26

Photo 3

- e) 102 Standish Court, View looking NW
- f) Photo 3 of 26

Photo 4

- e) 105 Standish Court, View looking NE
- f) Photo 4 of 26

Photo 5

- e) 106 Standish Court, View looking W
- f) Photo 5 of 26

Photo 6

- e) 110 Standish Court, View looking SW
- f) Photo 6 of 26

Photo 7

- e) 113 Alden Drive, View looking E
- f) Photo 7 of 26

Photo 8

- e) 3980 Plymouth Circle, View looking SSW
- f) Photo 8 of 26

Photo 9

- e) 3971 Plymouth Circle, View looking N
- f) Photo 9 of 26

Photo 10

- e) 3964 Plymouth Circle, View looking W
- f) Photo 10 of 26

Photo 11

- e) 3959 Plymouth Circle, View looking E
- f) Photo 11 of 26

Photo 12

- e) 3941 Plymouth Circle, View looking N
- f) Photo 12 of 26

Photo 13

- e) 3954 Plymouth Circle, View looking W
- f) Photo 13 of 26

Photo 14

- e) 3925 Plymouth Circle, View looking SSE
- f) Photo 14 of 26

Photo 15

- e) 3930 Plymouth Circle, View looking NNW
- f) Photo 15 of 26

Photo 16

- e) 3918 Plymouth Circle, View looking N
- f) Photo 16 of 26

Photo 17

- e) 3912 Plymouth Circle, View looking N
- f) Photo 17 of 26

Photo 18

- e) 3909 Plymouth Circle, View looking S
- f) Photo 18 of 26

Photo 19

- e) 3902 Plymouth Circle, View looking N
- f) Photo 19 of 26

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sunset Hills Historic District
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section photos Page 2

Photo 20

e) 3901 Plymouth Circle, View looking SW

f) Photo 20 of 26

Photo 21

e) 3902 Priscilla Lane, View looking NNE

f) Photo 21 of 26

Photo 22

e) 3901 Priscilla Lane, View looking SW

f) Photo 22 of 26

Photo 23

e) 3922 Priscilla Lane, View looking N

f) Photo 23 of 26

Photo 24

e) 3930 Priscilla Lane, View looking NW

f) Photo 24 of 26

Photo 25

e) 3917 Regent Street, View looking S

f) Photo 25 of 26

Photo 26

e) 3925 Regent Street, View looking S

f) Photo 26 of 26

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 1

___Insert Figures

___End Figures