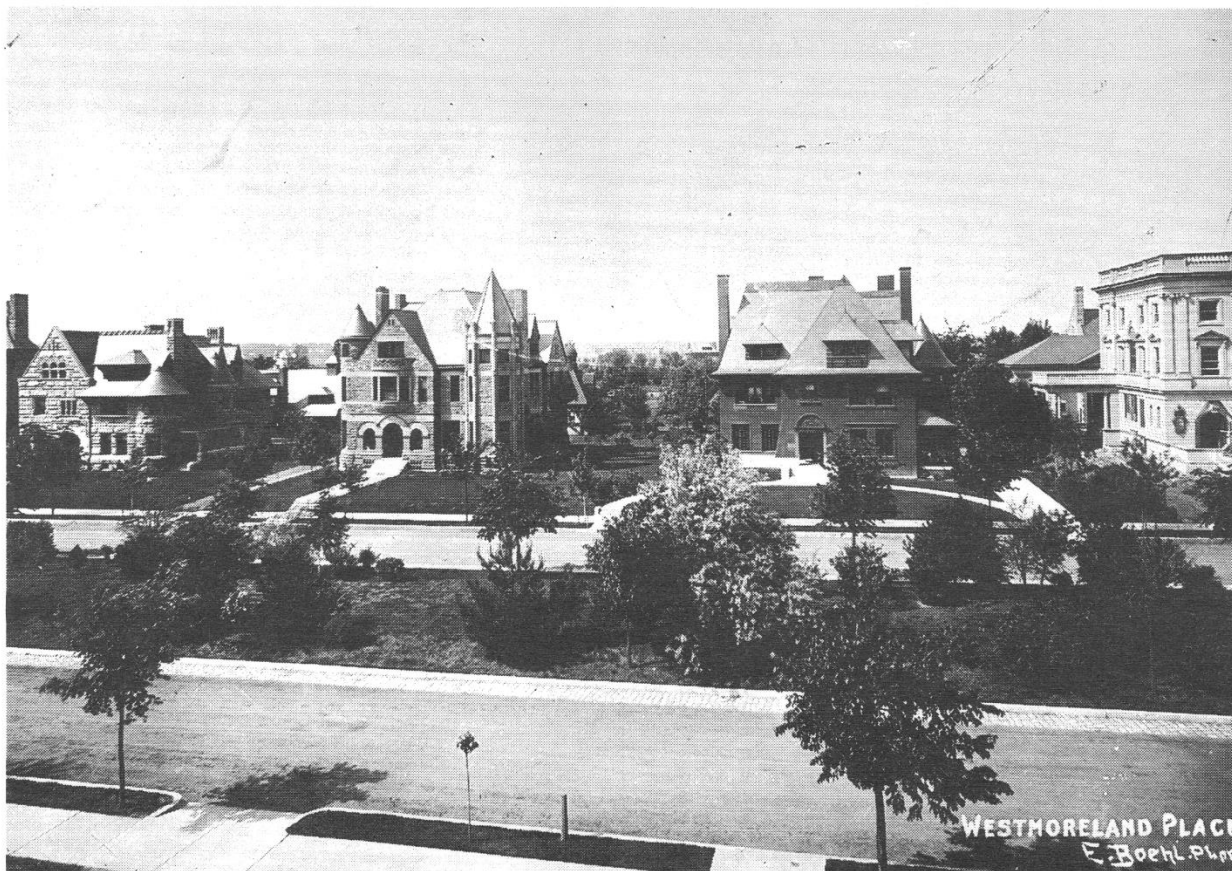


# Central West End/ DeBaliviere Place



*Private places, such as Westmoreland Place, shown here, formed the original core of the Central West End neighborhood. The success of Westmoreland and Portland places, platted in the 1880s, led to the creation of other private streets in the area. Emil Boehl photograph, c. 1900. Missouri Historical Society Photograph and Print Collection.*

What happens when a city's wealthy citizens try to create an upper-class urban enclave, isolated from noise, pollution and other urban problems? In the 19th century, St. Louis' business and social elites discovered that this was no easy task. Each time they attempted to insulate themselves from St. Louis' industries and transportation systems, the very products they had helped to create, the city managed to creep up on them. As St. Louis spread rapidly westward from the Mississippi, the wealthy stayed just ahead of it, leaving behind their once bucolic neighborhoods at Chouteau's Pond, Lucas Place, Lafayette Park and Vandeventer Place.

By the late 19th century, the city's western edge became St. Louis' final setting for an upper-class enclave. It was here, in this largely rural section of the city adjacent to the still undeveloped Forest Park, where those who had made their fortunes in distilling, flour milling, chemicals, iron and steel,

textiles, utilities, tobacco and shoe manufacturing built palatial mansions in the most extensive cluster of private places in St. Louis: Portland and Westmoreland places, Fullerton's Westminster Place, Kingsbury Place, Washington Terrace, Pershing Place, Hortense Place and Lenox Place. Along with Lindell Boulevard, they formed the original core of the Central West End.

Residents of these private streets were determined to avoid the mistakes of earlier years. Much as their predecessors had done, they used strict covenants to govern and protect their enclaves "in perpetuity." Annual fees helped pay for street, sidewalk and center-parkway maintenance and street lighting. Minimum costs for houses were specified (\$7,000 for Westmoreland Place, \$6,000 for Portland Place and \$10,000 for Hortense Place and Westminster Place). Yet residents also used their wealth and influence to control the surrounding

*(Essay continued on back cover)*

In 1974, the area of the Central West End bounded roughly by Lindell on the south, Westminster and Washington on the north, Boyle on the east and DeBaliviere on the west was designated as the Central West End City Historic District. It is one of 12 local historic districts in St. Louis created to maintain both the architectural and social heritage of designated neighborhoods.

**1. Portland Place and Westmoreland Place**  
**North of Forest Park between Kingshighway and Union boulevards**

Portland Place and Westmoreland Place were developed in the late 1880s and 1890s by the Forest Park Improvement Association. The first of the neighborhood's private places designed as exclusive residential oases for St. Louis' business and political elites, Portland and Westmoreland places were planned by St. Louis' city engineer, Julius Pitzman. The neighborhood's private places have helped attract visitors and new residents to the Central West End.

**2. Washington Terrace and Kingsbury Place**  
**North of Forest Park between Union Boulevard and Clara Avenue**

Washington Terrace and Kingsbury Place were opened for development by the Bell Realty Company in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The clock tower at the Union Boulevard entrance to Washington Terrace was designed by Harvey Ellis, while Thomas P. Barnett designed the beaux-arts gateway at the Union Boulevard

entrance to Kingsbury Place. Appealing to wealthy families' desire to escape the city's industrial pollution, early advertisements promised a location free from the "smoke and noxious gases generated and thrown out by factories."

**3. DeBaliviere Place Redevelopment Area**  
**Bounded by Pershing Avenue and Delmar Boulevard, DeBaliviere Avenue and Union Boulevard**

Considered the western anchor of the neighborhood's extensive redevelopment efforts, DeBaliviere Place was developed by Leon Strauss and his Pantheon Corporation between 1979 and 1988.

DeBaliviere Place was St. Louis' first large-scale renovation project by a private real estate development company. It includes about 1,500 units, a mixture of town houses, condominiums and rental units.

**4. "Holy Corners"**  
**Kingshighway at the intersections of Washington and McPherson avenues and Westminster Place**

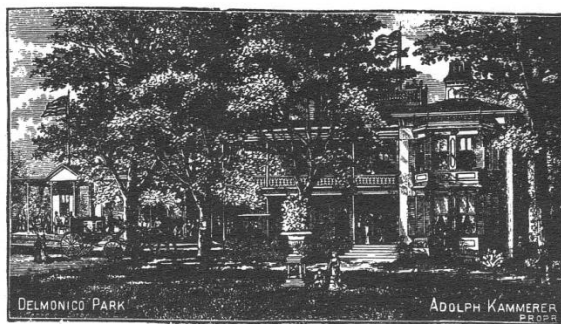
The Central West End's many historic institutions have helped stabilize the neighborhood. A prime example is the cluster of buildings on Kingshighway known as "Holy Corners," so named because most are religious institutions.

In 1903, St. John's Methodist Church on Washington Avenue was designed by St. Louis architect Theodore Link, who also designed Union Station. The former Second Baptist Church on McPherson Avenue is now home to the Life Cathedral Baptist Church. Across the street from Life Cathedral, the former Temple Israel is now the Angelic Temple of Deliverance. At Westminster Place, the First Church of Christ, built in 1904, housed the first Christian Science congregation west of the Mississippi. The Tuscan Temple, built in 1907 and 1908 at Westminster Place, continues to serve as headquarters for the Tuscan Lodge No. 360 A.F. & A.

*Left: To appeal to its upper-class neighbors, the Delmonico Park Restaurant at Olive Street (now Delmar Boulevard) and Union Boulevard was advertised as a "resort" that was "patronized by the best people of the City." Drawing from the Missouri State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1883-4 (St. Louis: R.L. Polk & Co., 1884). Missouri Historical Society Library.*

*Right: This cluster of buildings on Kingshighway Boulevard, known as "Holy Corners," has been a source of stability for the community since the turn of the century. This 1935 photograph, looking south from Temple Israel (now the Angelic Temple of Deliverance), shows St. John's Methodist Church on the right and Second Baptist Church (now Life Cathedral Baptist) on the left. Photograph by W.C. Persons. Missouri Historical Society Photograph and Print Collection.*

ST. L. AND BUSINESS DIRECTORY. ST. L. 881  
**Delmonico Park Restaurant**



ADOLPH KAMMERER, Proprietor,

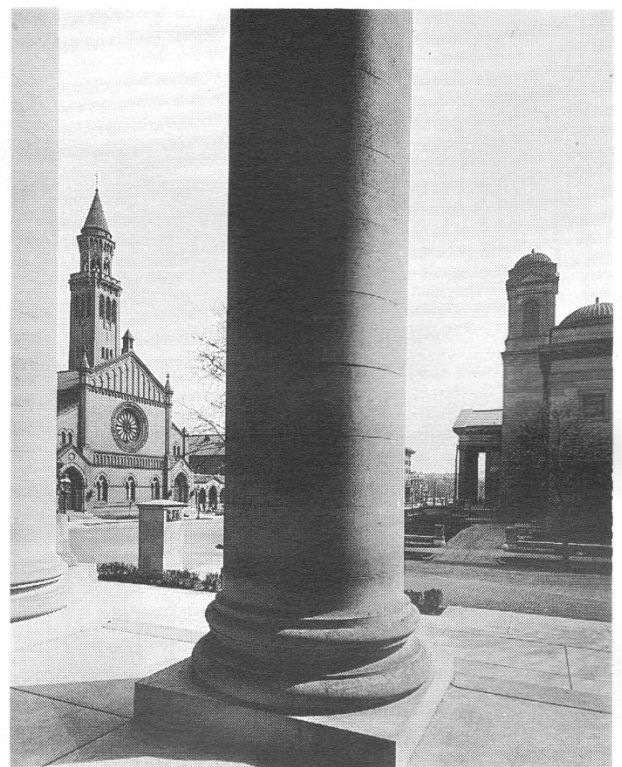
Corner Olive and Union Avenues,

**ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.**

**The Finest and Most Elegantly Kept Place**

IN THE CITY,

AND AN EXCELLENT PLACE FOR A GOOD DRIVE  
 AND AN ENJOYABLE SUPPER.



**5. Trinity Episcopal Church**

**Euclid and Washington avenues**

Founded in 1900, this church relocated to the Central West End in 1910. An important community gathering point, Trinity Episcopal is heavily involved in neighborhood programs, including educational and recreational activities for young people. Its location in the Olive/Washington "Triangle" neighborhood has served as an important anchor for the neighborhood.

**6. Second Presbyterian Church**

**Westminster Place and Taylor Avenue**

The congregation, organized in 1838, first built a church at Fifth and Walnut streets in 1840, relocated to 17th Street and Lucas Place in 1870 and built its Romanesque Revival church in the Central West End at the turn of the century. Theodore Link designed its main sanctuary. Like Trinity Episcopal, Second Presbyterian has been very active in neighborhood preservation efforts and provides important social services to the community.

**7. Euclid Avenue Business District**

**Between Delmar Boulevard and Forest Park Avenue**

The Central West End's major business district is actually three commercial nodes, each with its own story. Today Euclid Avenue features restaurants and shops catering to a mix of neighborhood residents, other St. Louisans and out-of-town tourists.

In the early 20th century, the Euclid/McPherson area was the major shopping district for its wealthy neighbors. By the 1950s, it had evolved into St. Louis' "Greenwich Village" and by the late 1970s also featured stores devoted

to the counterculture.

For years the Maryland Plaza area was THE premier shopping area in St. Louis until its most famous tenants, Saks Fifth Avenue and Montaldo's, moved to Plaza Frontenac in the 1970s. The Maryland Plaza Redevelopment Corporation has overseen much of the renovation on Maryland Plaza west of Euclid.

The Euclid and Laclede section developed as a neighborhood shopping area as the nearby Washington University Medical Center expanded.

**8. Hortense Place and Lenox Place**

**Between Pershing and McPherson avenues, west (Hortense Place) and east (Lenox Place) of Euclid Avenue**

Hortense Place was established in 1900 by Jacob Goldman, a cotton manufacturer who decided to create his own private place after being refused admittance to Portland and Westmoreland places because he was Jewish. Goldman named the street after his daughter Hortense. The more modest Lenox Place was developed in 1903. Many of its original inhabitants were the children of Westmoreland and Portland Place residents.

**9. Chase Hotel building and Park Plaza**

**Apartment Complex**

**Kingshighway between Lindell Boulevard and Maryland Plaza**

The Chase Hotel, dating from 1922, and the Park Plaza Hotel, designed in 1929, were St. Louis' premier hotels and luxury apartments in the mid-20th century.

Combined in 1961 as the Chase-Park Plaza, by the 1970s, the complex employed over 1,000 people and hosted 15,000 conventioners. In the popular Chase Club, St. Louisans heard entertainers like Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett.

By the 1980s, the hotel complex was losing out to new and renovated hotels downtown. In 1989, the Chase Hotel closed. The recently renovated Park Plaza has been converted to luxury apartments and offices.

*(Tour continued on page 6)*

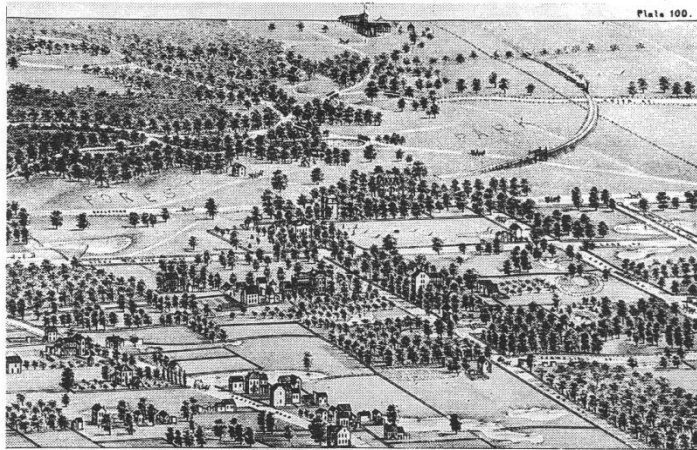
**Top left:** *Euclid Avenue's historic business district has featured specialty shops and dining establishments since the early 20th century. The building with the awning is now Left Bank Books. Across Euclid Avenue is the current home of Rothschild's Antiques. Both stores have been at their present locations since the mid-1970s. Photograph by Dr. William G. Swekosky, 1914. Missouri Historical Society Photograph and Print Collection.*

**Bottom left:** *By the 1980s, the Central West End had become a popular citywide night spot. In 1983, up to 50,000 people filled this intersection of Euclid Avenue and Maryland Plaza for the neighborhood's annual Halloween festivities. Photograph courtesy of the West End Word.*

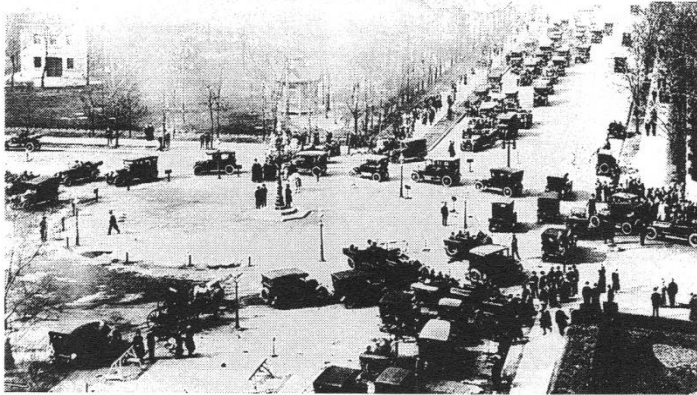
**Right:** *This 1935 photograph shows a ward at Children's Hospital, now part of the Washington University Medical Center. The medical center, through the Washington University Medical Center Redevelopment Corporation, has played a major role in the revitalization of the Central West End. From the Archives and Rare Books Collections of the Washington University School of Medicine Library.*



# WHERE WE LIVE

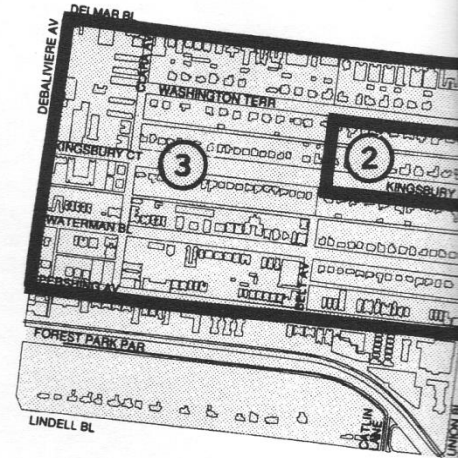


**Top:** This 1875 topographical survey drawing, looking west from what is now the southern section of the Central West End, shows a largely undeveloped area east of Forest Park. The region shown here now includes the Washington University Medical Center and the southern portion of the Euclid Avenue business strip. From Richard J. Compton and Camille N. Dry, *Pictorial St. Louis* (St. Louis: Compton & Co., 1876). Missouri Historical Society Library.



**Middle:** The intersection of Kingshighway and Lindell boulevards was the scene of the city's annual Easter parade for many years. This photograph, taken in 1916, shows the famous "roundabout," later removed. Photograph courtesy of the St. Louis Community Development Agency.

**Bottom:** Late-19th-century advertisements for lots in Kingsbury Place, such as this one, featured the development's proximity to Forest Park. Poster, c. 1885. Missouri Historical Society Archives.



## Central West End and DeBaliviere Place



**KINGSBURY FOREST PARK ADDITION**

**122 Choice Lots AT AUCTION THURSDAY JUNE 14<sup>TH</sup>**

**On the Premises at 2.30 P.M.**

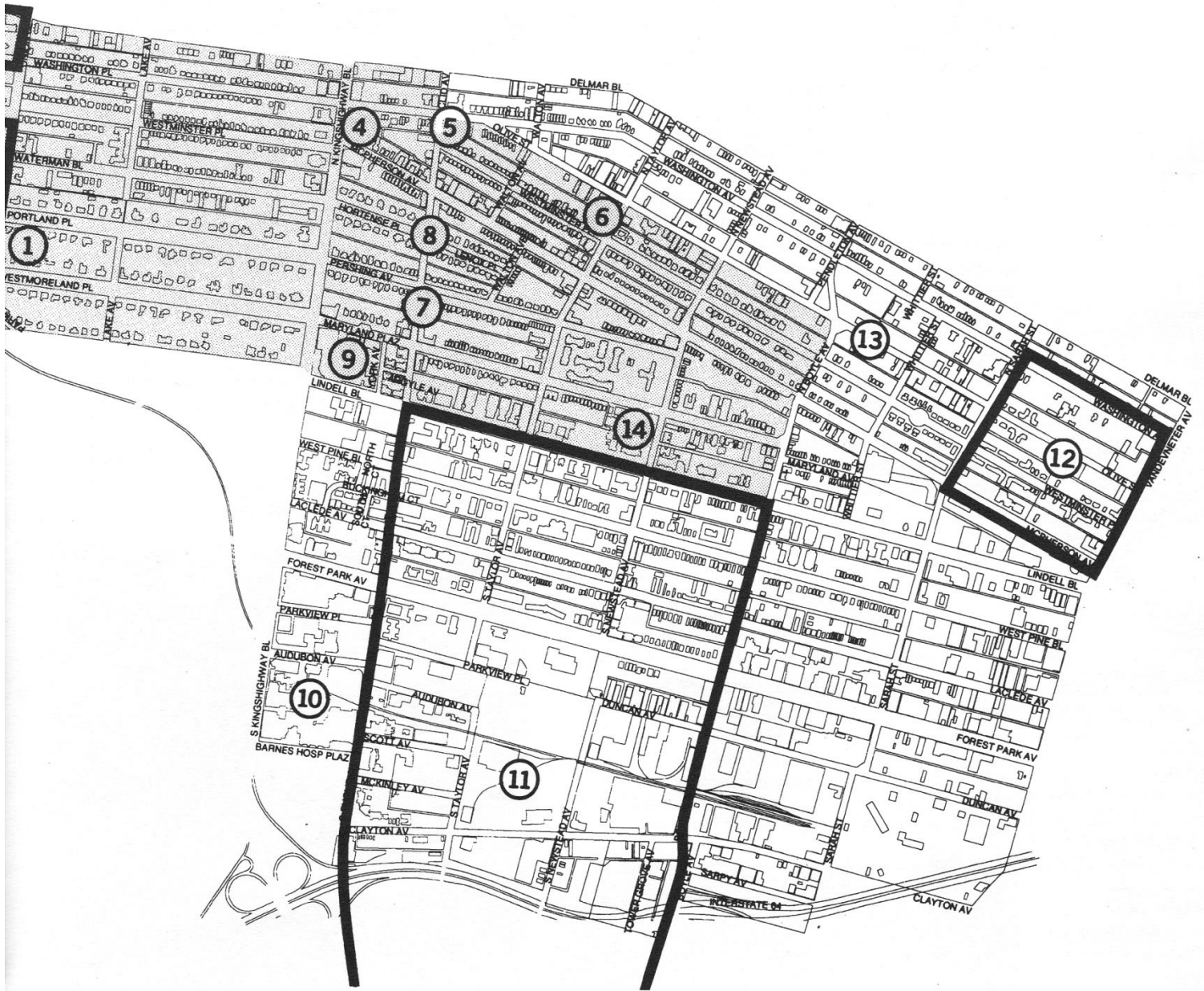
**TERMS!**  
ONE-FOURTH CASH.  
Balance in one, two and three years, with six per cent. interest, payable annually, secured by deed of trust on the property. \$25 to be paid on bidding off each lot.

**LANHAM & VOORHIS, Auctioneers.**

**JAMES M. CARPENTER**  
REAL ESTATE AGENT. 312 N. SIXTH ST.

# Central West End/DeBaliviere Place

## TOUR MAP



Central West End City Historic District      Redevelopment Areas

**10. Washington University Medical Center  
Kingshighway between Forest Park Avenue and Interstate 64  
(Highway 40)**

Washington University Medical Center has been an important stabilizing force in the Central West End since the World War I era, when the Washington University Medical School moved to its present site from Locust and 18th streets, the new Barnes Hospital opened, and St. Louis Children's Hospital relocated from Jefferson Avenue. In the late 1920s, Jewish Hospital moved from Delmar and Union boulevards, and the medical complex has been expanding ever since.

A turning point for the neighborhood came in the 1970s, when Washington University Medical Center chose to stay at its present site rather than relocate to St. Louis County. Today, Barnes, Jewish and Children's hospitals are part of a newly merged health system that also includes Christian Health Services and Missouri Baptist Healthcare System/Missouri Baptist Medical Center.

**11. Washington University Medical Center  
Redevelopment Corporation Area  
Bounded roughly by Lindell Boulevard on the north, Manchester  
Avenue south of Interstate 64 (Highway 40) on the south,  
Kingshighway Boulevard and Euclid Avenue on the west and  
Boyle Avenue on the east**

Formed in 1974, the Washington University Medical Center Redevelopment Corporation was formed to upgrade and stabilize 38 square blocks in the medical center's surrounding neighborhood.

The corporation buys up dilapidated or underused properties and sells them to developers, helps relocate displaced residents and works with the city to improve streets and lighting and make other improvements.

One example is Laclede Place, a two-block area in the 4300 and 4400 block of Laclede Avenue to the west and east of Newstead Avenue. Other projects provide housing for low-income families and senior citizens and apartments to accommodate the needs of disabled residents.

**12. Westminster Place Redevelopment Area  
Bounded roughly by Washington Avenue and Olive Street on the  
north, McPherson Avenue on the south, Boyle Avenue on the  
west and Vandeventer Avenue on the east**

The newest large-scale redevelopment project in the Central West End was developed by Richard D. Baron and his St. Louis-based McCormack Baron and

Associates, whose renovated buildings have also been important to the redevelopment of the Shaw neighborhood and Soulard as well as urban areas across the country.

The Westminster Place residential project, begun in 1986, includes rental units, condominiums and single-family homes. The two blocks of Olive Boulevard and Westminster Place between Vandeventer and Boyle avenues are showcases for this development.

Immediately to the west is the historic Fullerton's Westminster Place. The poet T.S. Eliot's parents lived at 4446 Westminster Place; two blocks to the west, at 4633 Westminster Place, is the former apartment of playwright Tennessee Williams. Novelist Kate Chopin lived at nearby 4232 McPherson Avenue.

**13. Gaslight Square site  
Olive Street between Whittier Street and Boyle Avenue**

Rising from the ruins of the devastating February 1959 tornado that ripped through sections of the Central West End and north St. Louis, Gaslight Square became St. Louis' premier hot spot in the 1960s. The district was home to the Crystal Palace, the Golden Eagle saloon, Smokey Joe's Grecian Terrace restaurant, the Laughing Buddha coffeehouse, Gaslight Bar, Jimmy Masucci's Opera House, the Three Fountains restaurant in the historic Musical Arts Building and other entertainment and dining establishments.

Many St. Louisans theorize about why Gaslight Square had declined by the 1970s. Most agree that the tight parking and a rise in crime in the surrounding area

*Left: New City School, a private elementary school, first opened its doors in 1969 at the First Unitarian Church at the corner of Waterman and Kingshighway boulevards. Along with Crossroads School, New City School, now in the old Mary Institute building at Waterman and Lake, has helped attract families to the Central West End. Photograph courtesy of New City School.*

*Right: T.S. Eliot's parents, Henry Ware Eliot and Charlotte Stearns Eliot, lived at 4446 Westminster Place, the large brick house in the foreground, from 1905 to 1919. The 4300 and 4400 blocks of Westminster Place, lined with turn-of-the-century mansions, were created as a private enclave called Fullerton's Westminster Place. Missouri Historical Society Photograph and Print Collection.*



drove many customers away. Today boarded-up buildings and vacant lots are all that remain.

#### 14. Cathedral of St. Louis (New Cathedral)

4431 Lindell Boulevard at Newstead Avenue

Along with the Central West End's private places and the Euclid Avenue shopping district, the Cathedral of St. Louis is a major stopping point for out-of-town visitors and St. Louisans alike. The presence of the mother church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. Louis has helped regenerate the Lindell Boulevard area.

In 1896, Archbishop John Kain bought the present site at Lindell and Newstead to replace the old cathedral at the riverfront, and a new parish was organized. The architectural firm Barnett, Haynes & Barnett was hired to design the new edifice. Groundbreaking ceremonies finally got underway in 1907, and a cornerstone was laid the following year. The New Cathedral was completed in 1914, when it received its title, Cathedral of St. Louis.

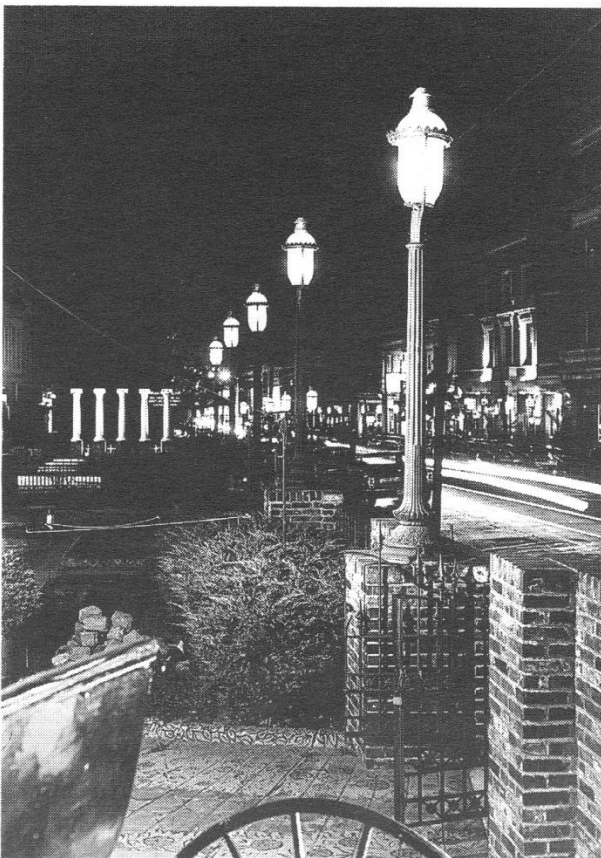
The Byzantine and Romanesque cathedral features a 227-foot dome and one of the most outstanding collections of mosaics in the Western Hemisphere.

Additional information is available at the Missouri Historical Society Library and Collections Center, 225 S. Skinker Blvd. Of particular interest see

Goell, Suzanne, ed. *The Days and Nights of the Central West End*. St. Louis: Virginia Publishing Company, 1991.

Hunter, Julius K. *Kingsbury Place: The First Two Hundred Years*. St. Louis: The C.V. Mosby Company, 1982.

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*History and Architecture of America's Premier Private Streets, 1888-1988*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1988.

Levitt, Rachele L., ed. *Cities Reborn*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute, c. 1987.

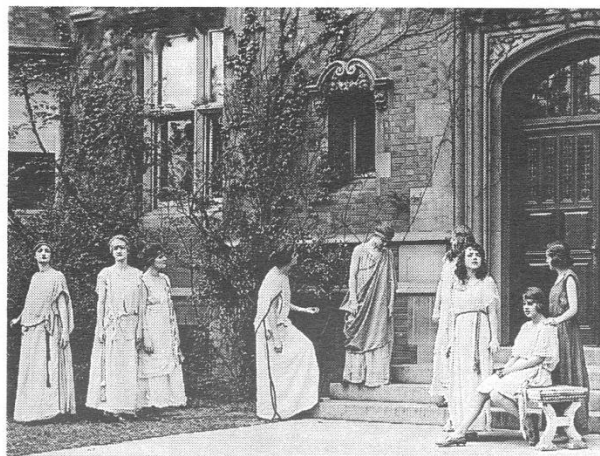
McConachie, Scot. 1976. The "Big Cinch": A Business Elite in the Life of a City: St. Louis, 1895-1915. Ph.D. diss., Washington University.

Toft, Carolyn Hewes. *St. Louis Landmarks and Historic Districts*. St. Louis: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, 1988.

Wayman, Norbury L. *History of St. Louis Neighborhoods: Central West End*. St. Louis: St. Louis Community Development Agency, 1980.

Special thanks to Jack Byrne, David Koch and Barbara Quinn of the Central West End Association; Jeffrey L. Fister of the *West End Word*; Jeffrey Drane Kimbrell; Mary Bartley; aldermen Dan McGuire, Terry Kennedy and Joe Roddy; Urban League block leaders O.G. Harris and Charlotte Lawton; Tom Hoerr and Michelle Swatek of New City School; Anne Spencer of Crossroads School; Richard D. Baron of McCormack Baron & Associates, Inc.; Gene Kilgen of the Washington University Medical Center Redevelopment Corporation; John Roach, former vice president of Pantheon Corporation; Nancy Ferrell of the Community Development Agency; Judy Woolsey of the Mills Group; Anne McAlpin of Mary Institute; Paul Anderson of the Archives and Rare Book Collections of the Washington University School of Medicine Library; Mary Lou Storment of Saint Louis Cathedral School; Rev. William Chapman, former rector of Trinity Episcopal Church; Rev. James T. Telthorst of the Cathedral of St. Louis; Karen Duffy; Peter Rothschild; Barry Leibman; Lucy Vassia; Shirley Hunt; Joyce Littlefield; Kris Runberg Smith; Kathy Corbett; Eric Sandweiss; Mary Seematter; Duane Snedekker; Deborah Brown; and Charles Brown.

*Where We Live: Central West End and DeBaliviere Place* was researched and written by Elizabeth Metzger Armstrong and Carolyn Roedel and designed by Tracy Ritter.



**Left:** Gaslight Square, Olive Street, looking east from Boyle Avenue. At its height in the early 1960s, Gaslight Square was the hottest dining, music and entertainment spot in St. Louis. The Smothers Brothers, a new comedy team, played here. Conventioneers and tourists poured into the area. Today its former venues are boarded-up buildings or empty lots. Photograph, 1966. Missouri Historical Society Photograph and Print Collection.

**Right:** Students prepare for a Greek play on the steps of Mary Institute's former Lake Avenue campus. Today, Mary Institute, combined with the St. Louis Country Day School, is located at Ladue and Warson roads. Its Lake Avenue building is now home to New City School. Photograph, c. 1925. From the Mary Institute Archives of Mary Institute and St. Louis Country Day School.

(Essay continued from front cover)

environment. In the absence of zoning restrictions (St. Louis did not get its first zoning code until 1918), they bought the adjacent Rock Island Railroad yards to set aside for luxury apartments and hotels and made certain that the Wabash Railroad did not lay aboveground tracks or allow railroad-related industries in the vicinity.

This arrangement worked for more than half a century. From the end of the 19th century to the post-World War II years, St. Louis' wealthy families were comfortably concentrated here, and they dominated the social tone and commercial life of the neighborhood. Siblings and cousins built homes on adjacent lots, while parents built homes for their adult children.

By World War I, the neighborhood began to change as the city's middle classes also moved west. Electrified streetcars and commuter trains made both Forest Park and the West End neighborhood accessible to these families, and modest single-family homes and multifamily apartment buildings soon filled the area, providing a friendly buffer for their wealthy neighbors. As early as 1885, real estate ads offered land in the area east of Forest Park with promises of property "that never depreciates" because of its proximity to the park, major streetcar lines and the wealthy enclaves nearby.

Until the late 1950s, the Central West End was predominantly a white upper- and middle-class neighborhood. Following the 1948 *Shelley v. Kraemer* U.S. Supreme Court decision stating that racially restrictive covenants could not be enforced by state courts, African Americans began moving into areas of St. Louis that had previously been closed to them. This court case, combined with large-scale urban renewal programs and the resulting shortage of housing, radically changed the racial makeup of the neighborhood. By 1960, African Americans made up 30 percent of the population. (Today that figure is about 38 percent.)

As the newspapers ran stories about "creeping blight" and "increased crime in the mansion areas," many middle-class and affluent residents sought sanctuary in St. Louis County.

However, the story doesn't end here. The Central West End is no longer an area dominated by wealthy families trying to shut their eyes on the rest of the city. Today the Central West End is an economically and racially diverse community whose residents celebrate urban living and work hard to stabilize and maintain what they consider to be the most vibrant area in St. Louis.

As in many other St. Louis neighborhoods, security is an important issue. Neighborhood block captains are working closely with their aldermen and precinct police. As part of a special tax district, property owners in one section of the neighborhood have voted to increase their taxes to pay for supplementary security patrols.

As the properties have aged, neighborhood improvement plans are addressing the problems of derelict and vacant buildings. Since the 1970s, individuals committed to urban living, along with large-scale redevelopment projects, have helped renovate, upgrade or replace these properties.

Although the area has a mix of rental and owner properties, the shortage of affordable housing is an important issue for moderate- and low-income families and senior citizens on fixed incomes, who have watched neighborhood housing prices rise since the 1980s. Moreover, many families in the area who are looking for alternatives to public schools find that private education is not always available or affordable.

Yet even with these problems, most who live here agree they would not choose to live anywhere else. Like the St. Louis elites who created the original neighborhood, today's Central West Enders are firm believers in taking control of their environment to make it a better place for everyone who lives here.

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This neighborhood brochure was prepared as part of the Where We Live program, coordinated by the Missouri Historical Society with media sponsorship from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and KWMU Radio. The current monthly brochure may be picked up at the Missouri Historical Society and at any branch of the St. Louis Public Library and the St. Louis County Library. Available back issues may be purchased for \$1.00 at the Museum Shop in the Missouri History Museum and at the Missouri Historical Society's Library and Collection Center. For information call 746-4599.

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