D 8. Significance

Introduction

It should be acknowledged that a very extensive and well researched study of Old North Davis was completed by John Lofland in 1999. Presented as a walking guide, it also contains a detailed history of the neighborhood, a careful analysis of its physical layout and cultural landscape, and a description of architectural characteristics and individual properties. The information that follows is drawn heavily from this invaluable source as well as from original source documents.[1]

The Old North Davis Historic District is eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources under Criteria A and C. Old North is a neighborhood that developed between the 1910s and 1950s on the northern periphery of the town of Davis which had been established in 1868. Although Davis was not densely populated in the first decades of the 20th century, with remaining available land in the urban core, the establishment of Bowers Addition and the northward extension of the street system that it forced represent the city's first experience of suburbanization. It is an important chapter in the growth and development of the community. In addition Old North is an interesting example of the way in which a national phenomenon, usually associated with large metropolitan areas, was embodied in a small, rural community. Important for its association with community development, Old North also is an a well preserved example of organization of space that characterizes suburban design, including the arrangement of streets, the size and location of housing lots, the siting of dwellings, and the disposition of common space and landscape features. It retains a comprehensive collection of residential building types and architectural styles that exemplify the small town, University Farm era of Davis' history, before Davis became a major university center. A diversity of architectural styles within the neighborhood reflects the popular tastes of the period. Spanning three major decades of build out, the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s, the varied types of residential dwellings are unified by their scale, massing, form and relationship to each other along uniform streets with relatively narrow lots. [2]

Old North incorporates the city's first modern subdivision; the only such subdivision developed within the original city limits. It retains a high degree of integrity in its layout and design, historic building stock, and its landscape. In many ways Old North Davis is a time piece which retains not only the historic fabric, but the setting, feeling and association of an idealized small, mid-century American town neighborhood. It is a strongly identifiable entity with a visually recognizable character that distinguishes it from adjacent residential and commercial development.

The blocks between 5th and 6th Streets, added to the city as a part of the General Plan of 1871, although fully realized on paper, did not become a reality until several decades later. The USGS map of 1905 shows the north-south streets of the town barely extending beyond 5th Street in an erratic pattern.[3] An article in the *Davis Enterprise* in February, 1913, noted that the grading of streets from 5th through to 7th Streets necessitated the removal of fences along 6th Street that were blocking the way. In the blocks between 6th and 7th Streets, platted by C.W. Bowers in 1913 as the Bowers Addition subdivision, the division of lots, site improvement and construction all began shortly after approval of the plat map. Despite the disparity in the creation of the block tiers, the neighborhood developed simultaneously in the 1910s. With the exception of the Haussler home, a farm residence belonging to an early Davis farmer and associated with the agricultural history of the area, there are no remaining buildings that pre-date 1913.

The majority of buildings (65%) were designed and built prior to 1940. The district contains excellent examples of one, one and one-half story California Bungalows (1913-1925), Period Revival Styles (1920-1935), and a number of homes built in the style that Lee McAlester has termed "minimalist traditional" (1935-1950).[4] With the possible exception of the so-called Pedder bungalows, built by one of the developers of the Bowers Addition, there are no architects directly associated with the district. However, there are at least eight contactor/builders between the 1914 and 1936 who dominated the construction business in Davis. E.S McBride, the owner of Davis Lumber Company, kept an account of homes completed in Davis between 1911 and 1938 which is known as the "Little Black Book."[5] It is unclear what McBride's purpose in keeping this record was, but the book lists houses built (by owner, not address) and the name of the contractor. Of 397 houses that he lists, approximately 217 were built by eight contractors, the most prolific being McGuire and Jensen (no first names or initials are given) who worked both separately and in partnership over the entire period from 1914 to 1938. Assuming that McBride may not have actually recorded every residential construction project in town, this still represents a large number of houses and suggests that these local builders exercised considerable influence in the selection of plans. While the simplicity of many Davis houses, including those in Old North, is sometimes attributed to the income levels and/or frugality of the homeowners, it is also possible that the repetition of

house forms, decorative motifs, and style preferences, may have reflected the builders' stock of patterns and models, the contractor's taste and the potential of certain houses for economies in construction. It is noticeable that certain house forms are repeated with only moderate variation in the designs.[6]

Criterion A: Suburban Subdivision Development
Old North Davis as a Typical Early Suburban Development

History and Development

In October, 1912, the Davis Enterprise broke the news that a "major" land deal had been culminated which had important implication for the future of the city. A group of local investors, including JB Anderson, local banker and the first mayor of the City, and CW Bowers, a local horse breeder, with other partners, had acquired 280 acres of the Harby Tract just north of the existing city limits. The purpose of the acquisition was to have the acreage surveyed into small tracts and to place them on the market, which the paper opined, "… ought to prove a nice thing for the town as there ought to quite a number of comfortable homes spring up thereon." [7]

The first of these promised "small tracts" was the Bowers Addition, encompassing five blocks north of 6th Street. While the subdivision and sale of tracts of land for residential development was nothing new, by the early 20th Century this traditional enterprise had begun to exhibit new characteristic that distinguished it from earlier land transactions and patterns of development. Sometimes called the "Subdivider Stage" of suburban development, it is characterized by individual developers who not only bought and sold land, but who began to maintain control over many aspects the physical design, layout, and character of housing that could be developed within a tract. They also took over many of the aspects of development that previously had been assigned to municipal authority, such as the grading of streets, paving, provision of utilities and, depending on income of the target buyers, introduction of various amenities. This stage of suburban development is, depending on locale, usually associated with the period from 1870 to 1920, although in California it generally starts a little later.[8] By the standards of the day, Bowers Addition was an ambitious undertaking. It was comparable in size to several developments in the nearby and much larger City of Sacramento, such as Curtis Oaks and West Curtis Oaks, suburban subdivisions south of central Sacramento, established in the same period of time as Bowers.[9]

Bowers Addition was an early planned subdivision which in many ways belongs to this "Subdivider Stage" of suburban development. Now an integral part of the "old" Davis central core, at the time of its creation, the Addition and the adjacent blocks forged new territory on the agricultural fringe of the town. In its *Context and Guidelines for Evaluating America's Historic Suburbs*, the National Park Service defines suburbanization at its most basic level as a demographic shift in population to the edge of the city. Drawing on the work of urban historian, Robert Fishman, suburbanization is characterized by farmland near the city which is acquired, planned, and developed by developers for single family houses set in the greenery of an open park-like setting.[10] If suburbanization involves the insertion of a new residential neighborhood between the established town core and the agricultural land outside its municipal limits, then Bowers Addition, and to a lesser degree the 500 block of Old North, represents a small town version of a trend that gained great momentum in the 1910s and 1920s through out the country.

In larger metropolitan areas, housing tracts platted at the edge of the city were in part driven by the desire to escape crowded living conditions, and in part by innovations in transportation technology, first the trolley and later, the automobile, that allowed greater geographic separation between home and work. In a small rural community, such as Davis, neither overcrowding nor transports (the central commercial district was still an easy walk from Old North) were major factors in the expansion of the town to its northern edge. However, the appeal of the Bowers Addition derived from the same perceived benefits that inspired suburban development in more metropolitan environments. These included designed layout, street and utility improvements, regulation of building, financing assistance (long-term mortgages and time payments were not readily available from either banking or government sources in the early 20th century) and restriction on who could live in the neighborhood. Bowers addition offered all of these "modern" and up-to-date advantages which it advertised prolifically to prospective buyers.[11] Sidewalks were installed throughout the subdivision, drainage was assured, curbs and gutters constructed, streets graded, alleys cut for automobile access, and trees planted at the developer's expense. This was in a context where the main commercial street in town was still ten years away from paving. The covenants for Bowers Addition established uniform setbacks, forbid outhouses and barns (outbuildings were still not unfamiliar in the middle of town), and required a minimum $1500 investment in any house constructed. In addition, as the Enterprise so unapologetically put it "…only white people will be sold to..."[12] These deed covenants and restriction were a means, prior to the institution of municipal zoning, by which developers could restrict land use and establish building standards in a neighborhood. These had the effect of assuring potential buyers that the economic and physical standards which were being marketed would be maintained over time.

Figure 1. A typical ad that appeared in the Davis Enterprise touting the benefits of locating in the new subdivision.

Although the 500 block of Old North was not a planned subdivision, having been platted as a part of the 1871 City Plan, its development appears to have followed fairly closely on the model of Bowers Addition. Houses are of a similar type and quality, standard setbacks are generally observed, the streets were graded by the developers of Bowers Addition as part of an agreement to provide level grade and access to the downtown.[13] Some of the congruence between the two tiers of blocks that now make up the Old North is explained by the fact that the Bowers Addition was developed more extensively in the 1910s and early 1920's than the lower blocks. The Sanborn Insurance Maps for 1921 and 1933 demonstrate that the 600 blocks were much more densely built up than the blocks closer to the downtown. This may have helped establish precedents for development, especially since the Bowers Addition was considered to be one of the most attractive neighborhoods in town. Also, later development meant that ideas such as uniform setback, landscaping, and adherence to building standards had gained much wider currency both because of widespread publicity and public education and because of the observable success of many of the earlier subdivisions which had adhered to these principals.

Streetscape

The National Park Service' Guidelines for Context for suburban developments emphasizes the importance of the subdivision physical layout and design which provided the setting for the houses that constitute the subdivisions architectural element. While the architectural continuity, linkage and design of it buildings are important, they derive a part of their importance from the coherency of the setting in which they are placed.

The street layout of Bowers addition follows the grid pattern that characterizes the rest of the downtown. While subdividers in this period were experimenting with more curvilinear street designs derived from the work of Fredrick Law Olmsted and the later Garden City movement, it was not unusual for suburban subdividers to utilize the more traditional form of street organization. What distinguished the Bowers Addition were the developers grading of the street and the installation of cement sidewalks and curbs. As noted above, this was at a time when such amenities were almost unknown in the rest of the city. Lofland points out that many of curbs in Old North bear the date of their installation carved into the cement. Building lots were removed from the street not only by the sidewalk, but by the insertion of a planting strip between the curb and street. This organization creates what today we would call a "pedestrian Friendly" environment which makes it easy to move about the neighborhood on foot, protects the pedestrian from direct contact with the street, and visually links the house lots.

It was the intent of the developers of Bowers to provide a full range of infrastructure to prospective buyers. The installation of landscaping in this period was something generally associated with affluent, prestige subdivision developments. Pedder's provision of 300 Black Acacia trees for street planting and the interest they occasioned in the local press indicates that this type of amenity was far from the norm. The creation of a "public landscape" not only lent prestige to the area, but played a crucial role in establishing its setting and feeling. Photographs from 1939 and 1942 show neatly maintained, well landscaped rows of modest

homes with a growing canopy of street and yard planted trees. John Lofland points out that many of the yard trees, planted by individual home owners, are species trees of importance that have gained recognition from the City as Landmark Trees.[14]

Now mature, these trees form a wide canopy that stretches across the streets in summer, creating an uninterrupted shaded allee extending the full length of most blocks. Deciduous, they allow the maximum of sun light into yards during the foggy Valley winter. Setbacks allowed for ample landscaping in front yard areas and these additional plantings contribute to a park-like-streetscape. Although Old North does not include a park, it is directly adjacent to the City's central park.

One of the most interesting features of the Bowers addition is the service alleys. Initially intended to serve utilitarian purposes, and probably to cut down on the cost of the curb cuts that driveways necessitate, the alleys have taken on a character of their own. The only other neighborhood in the city that has rear lot alleys is the University area. As John Lofland points out, the alleys now provide access to the increasing number of rear offices and added units, have acquired landscaping, both intentional and unintentional, and function to soften the look and feel of the area. In several cases, there are good examples of original, single car garages along these rear throughways.

Figure 2 The tree plantings along the public strip between the street and sidewalk create a sheltered environment.

Criterion C: Old North Davis Bungalow Architecture
Craftsman Bungalow and Period Revival Styles

From early in the 20th century Davis neighborhoods were increasingly filled with Craftsman inspired residences that utilized rustic materials, simple lines, horizontally emphasized forms and eschewed the "senseless ornamentation" of the Victorian period. The most popular term for describing the range of architectural forms inspired by Arts and Crafts philosophy and aesthetics was a "bungalow." Although the term was applied to a wide variety of different types, it usually indicated a relatively unpretentious dwelling.[15] By the end of WWI the term came to be widely applied to revival style houses that carried on the emphasis on simplicity and craftsmanship, but reinterpreted it through the imitation of vernacular European cottages and American Colonial antecedents. However, both the pre and post-war bungalow shared in common small scale, economy of plan, and an emphasis on hand craftsmanship or its appearance.

A great deal has been written regarding the social philosophy, aesthetic ideals and architectural goals of the Arts and Crafts Movement in both England and America. Rooted in the anti-industrial writings of William Morris and John Ruskin, the Arts and Crafts Movement looked back to pre-industrial society in which work was characterized by hand craftsmanship, the social integration of labor, and freedom from the tedium and alienation of modern factory production. Although, the movement was always diverse and included individuals and groups with differing emphasis, most of the Arts and Crafts Movement shared a

desire to improve both working conditions and the aesthetic standards of society as a whole. Handcrafted objects produced in guild-like settings would provide workers with meaningful productive activities and fraternal association in the work place. In turn the "simple," but elegant objects that they produced would improve the aesthetic and spiritual conditions within the home. For most movement adherents this translated into a preference for straight forward design in both buildings and artifacts, the use and exposure of natural materials, and simplicity in form, and limited embellishment. In contrast to their English counterparts whose thought was imbued with a strong strain of socialism and anti-industrialism, American Arts and Crafts advocates thought it possible to produce pleasing forms in factory situations using labor saving machinery. They tended to emphasize the aesthetic, rather than the social side of the movement, believing that "good taste," thoughtful design, and minimal ornamentation could result in a simplified, contemplative life unencumbered by superficiality.

Two of Morris's most important American disciples, Elbert Hubbard and Gustav Stickley did a great deal to spread and popularize Morris' and Ruskin's ideas on this side of the Atlantic. From his Roycroft Colony in East Aurora, New York, Hubbard published books and a journal entitled *The Philistine.* Gustav Stickley, in addition to manufacturing a distinctive line of craftsman furniture, established the highly influential *Craftsman* magazine in 1901. The *Craftsman* carried articles, model house plans, photographs and drawings of the work of Arts and Crafts architects and builders. In addition to publicizing the work of well-known, high style architects, the *Craftsman* featured many modest habitations intended to be affordable to those of limited means. Articles such as "A Six-Room Bungalow: Inexpensive, Comfortable and Attractive" (1913), were typically accompanied by detailed descriptions, floor plans and elevations, and cost estimates. Professional publications, such as the *California Architect and Engineer,* circulated the work of Greene and Greene and other California architects to a wide audience of architects, contractors and builders, at the same time that it featured model plans and sponsored competitions for small house designs.[16]

Another significant element in spreading the architectural philosophy of the Arts and Crafts movement was the many pattern and "how to" building books that proliferated from the turn of the century. Daniel Reiff in his study of pattern book houses found that between 1900 and 1940 "the demand for catalogs from which one could order house plans seems to have been insatiable." Acknowledging that his study is far from definitive, Reiff located at least seventy-five different companies that offered residential plans for sale on a nation-wide basis.[17] In California any number of this type of pattern book/catalogue were available. The Bungalow Craft Company of Los Angeles offered a catalogue of *Popular Homes*, while the Delux Building Company, also of LA, offered several catalogues including *Kozy-homes* (1914) a catalogue which featured the "small bungalow in it high development." They also offered *The Draftsman* (1920) a book on the bungalow "showing the latest advanced designs" of interest to builders, architects and contractors. Their *Plan-Kraft* catalogue (1912) offered plans for Swiss Chalet and Japaneseque (sic) Style bungalows. Not infrequently these catalogues were distributed and even published by building supply and materials producers who stamped them with their own imprint. Gladding, McBean, the terra cotta manufacturer located in Lincoln, just outside Sacramento, published a catalogue of brick house models derived from a 1917 competition sponsored by the company, the *Architect* magazine and the San Francisco chapter of the AIA. Similarly, Paraffine Paint Company produced a catalogue of bungalows for distribution at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exhibit. An earlier edition of this catalogue was advertised in the *Architect and Engineer* and sent free of charge to interested parties.

In *Moralism and the Modern Home*, architectural historian, Gwendolyn Wright, observed that architects were rarely directly involved in the design of middle and working class housing, instead concentrating their practices on upper class residential commissions and large commercial and civic projects. Indirectly however, some smaller bungalows were designed by architects who developed plans for catalogue companies, or produced their own catalogues with small house plans available by mail order. Robert Winter has identified at least two Los Angeles area architects, Alfred Heineman and Ross Montgomery, whose work appeared in bungalow catalogues. The architectural firm of Wolfe and McKenzie in San Jose provided ninety-eight house plans with measurements and half-tone photographs (1907) that could be ordered.[18] In the 1920's this trend accelerated with the encouragement of the AIA, whose Small Plan Bureau published a number of architect designed patterns.

Pattern books were available to builders and contractors from a variety of sources. Professional publications, as noted above, advertised pattern books along with information for ordering. Individual house patterns often appeared in local newspapers; every Saturday the Sacramento Union published an elevation and floor plan in its real estate pages. Local building material firms often made collections of model homes elevations and floor plans available free to their customers.

The residences in Old North Davis were derived from models and pattern books such as these. While many houses were based on pattern book plans, most residences represent a combination of pattern book inspiration, builder and owner preferences, and locally available materials. Carleton Winslow, the well-known Los Angeles architect, ventured the opinion that few houses were actually built exactly to the standard plan. He observed that all too often "Mrs. Smith thinks the house will get more sunlight if the house is turned over, and she needs a breakfast room…."[19]

Although there is wide variation in the design and appearance of Craftsman and Bungalow houses their common characteristics have been well described by Robert Winter, Loren Bricker and Judy Treame in the context statement they prepared for the residential architecture of Pasadena; a description that is applicable to the small pre-WWI bungalows of Old North. Whether one

or two-stories, the houses exhibited an informal character. They rarely had central entry halls, emphasized the living room as the most important social and family space, and had an adjoining dining room that although physically separated by a full or half wall, was usually visually accessible from the living room. The kitchen was designed, according to Gwendolyn Wright, to incorporate the latest features in home sanitation and efficiency.[20] Short halls connected to small, functional bedrooms and the bathroom.

On the exterior, shallowly pitched gable roofs were the general rule, sometimes varied by the use of gambrels. Gables could be front facing or oriented to the side thus presenting a large expanse of sloping roof to the street. Front facing gables were frequently embellished with decorative vents, stickwork or bracketing details. Double or multiple front facing gables also were common. House proportions were wide and low, "effectively conveying a gravity-bound character to the dwelling." Houses almost invariably included a wide, façade spanning, covered or cut-in porch. Porches and entries were supported on thickened and battered posts and piers. It is interesting that while stone, brick and clinker brick were commonly used for stairs, porches and chimneys in pre-WWI bungalows, they are largely absent in Davis homes of this period. However, exposed rafters and knee brace brackets are commonly employed, although not generally with decorative embellishment, and there are no examples of Craftsman bungalows with elaborate joinery or complex bracketing.

In the period following World War I, there was a marked change in taste. The broad roof, horizontally oriented bungalow gave way to a preference for houses that imitated the vernacular housing styles of England, France, the Mediterranean and Colonial New England. There are many reasons for this interest in the "cottages" of Europe and the eastern seaboard. The war left a bitter aftertaste in which there was nostalgia for simpler times and ways of life. Increases in the numbers of practicing architects in the 1920's led to interest in breaking into the lower end of the housing market, which experienced a boom during this decade. Many of these professionals looked to vernacular housing types for "small house" models, leading to a flurry of architectural travel books that featured Cotswold cottages and Andulsian farm houses. In California, the Panama California Exposition of 1915 in San Diego focused attention on Spanish and Mediterranean architecture as a style especially suited to California's climate and landscape. Finally, rising building materials cost, especially for wood products, and the much larger share of building cost absorbed by the new infrastructures of furnaces, hot water heaters, full electrical etc. favored styles that could be executed on a small scale and that could effectively use less costly stucco and brick materials.

With the exception of Mediterranean types, these houses often exhibit multi-height, steeply pitched roofs. Extended and swooping gable ends are often applied to entries or along street facing facades. Casement windows were favored over the double hung cottage windows that characterize most earlier bungalows. Large spanning porches were abandoned in favor of small stoops, or porches cut into a corner of the house and framed by arches. These houses, often quite simple in design, depend on one or two decorative details to convey their particular vernacular precedent. Diamond shaped leaded entryway windows, faux dove cotes, and faux half-timbering were intended to evoke an English cottage, while arched window openings and terra cotta vents bespoke a Mediterranean orientation. Although very distinct in appearance from pre-World War I Craftsman Bungalows, these houses were often described by the same term and are seen by many architectural historians as a continuation of the earlier tradition. By the 1920s, the term "bungalow" had come less to signify a clear architectural style than to refer more generally to all small houses. [21]

<u>Bungalows and Revivals in Old North Davis</u>

The Old North tracts belong to what is sometimes called the "subdivider" stage of suburban development. Although the developer provided the tract layout and infrastructure, they did not build and market individual houses. In the case of Bowers Addition, lots were sold by the developers, and in the 500 hundred block, by individual land owners who split their holdings into uniform city lots and sold them. Lots were sold to individual owners who then contracted to have a house constructed. It was not uncommon for developers to assist buyers by making plans or plan books available and recommending contractors and this may have been the case in Davis. As suggested earlier, local contractors also may have played a significant role in producing plans for their clients. The repetition of certain house designs with minor modifications suggests that this may well have been the case in Old North. The one exception to the separation of land sale and house construction is the Pedder Bungalows. They also are exceptional in that they are uniformly designed houses, possibly designed by a San Francisco architect. All constructed in 1919 according to tax records and McBride's Black Book, there are several examples in Bowers Addition, as well as in other parts of town.[22]

Both the pre-war Craftsman Bungalow and the post-war Revival Styles are well represented in Old North Davis, with similar numbers of each type surviving. This mixture of pre and post WWI versions of the "bungalow" is not uncommon in early 20th century residential neighborhoods and reflects the slower pace of development in this period of time. Although lots in newly opened tracts sold out within a few months, housing construction often lagged by several years. This may be due to the need of lot buyers to accumulate the necessary funds to construct a house, or it may reflect the speculative nature of many of these early transactions with first buyers merely holding property in expectation of increases in value. In January of 1913 the Enterprise

announced that within the first four days of the opening of the Bowers subdivision one-fifth the 100 lots had been sold, but six months later, in July, it reported that only three houses were under construction.[23]

The most common house type in Old North is commonly termed the California Bungalow. A modest dwelling, based on a simplification of the high style Craftsman house, it was a one or one-and-one-half story building, rectangular in plan, with low massing, as discussed above. Of the many interpretation of the style, there are two basic bungalow types that enjoyed great popularity in Old North, as well as other parts of Davis. The first is the front-facing gable house. These houses are characterized by a single or double gable projecting toward the street, with wide gable overhangs usually supported by knee brace brackets or exposed purlins, with exposed rafter tails. Almost all front facing gables are trimmed with a facia, and a few exhibit simple lattice venting that serves a practical as well as a decorative purpose. Front-facing gable houses more frequently had partial projecting or cut-in, rather than full length porches, but porch roofs were consistently supported on heavy piers with straight or battered posts. In addition, the front facing, or projecting gable house form is typical of the simplest “vernacular” bungalows in the subdivision.

Also very popular were side gable bungalows. The turning of the roof slope to the street presents a broad surface plane which is usually broken by one or more dormers. There are two predominant dormer types which are distinguished by their roof shape. Many side gabled bungalows have a large, gabled dormer projecting prominently from the center of roof. A variation on this treatment is found in the bungalow with a front facing roof slope punctuated by a low, shed roof dormer. This dormer usually exhibits exposed rafters and may have either attic vents or a decoratively paned window. These houses are almost always symmetrically arranged, with a central entry door, matching flanking windows, evenly distributed battered porch posts and a centrally located exterior stair.

The majority of houses constructed after WWI in old North were executed in either the Colonial or English Cottage Revival Styles with some Mediterranean revivals. Most are simple in both form and detail. They are typical “small houses” promoted through pattern books such as those published by the Small House Bureau and popular magazines. Typical Colonial Revivals in the neighborhood are rectangular or L-shape in plan and rely heavily on window treatment and front entry pediments to convey their stylistic intent. English cottage revivals are more varied in form, with multiple height roofs, both cut-in and projecting entries, leaded windows, and asymmetrical, exaggerated gable ends (sometime called cat slides). While different in form and appearance than the pre-WWI California Bungalows, they fit well into the neighborhood. They carry on a tradition of craftsmanship, a reliance on vernacular forms, and are representative of the more amorphous bungalow concept as it was embodied in the 1920’s and 30’s.

In the late 1930’s the highly stylized revival form began to give way to simplification. What emerged in this period is a style that is known as Minimal Traditional. Lee McAlester describes this as a “compromise” that reflects the form of traditional Eclectic houses, but lacks decorative detailing.[24] Another way of understanding these houses is as a precursor of the popular post WWII Ranch House. While these small houses are more compact than the rambling ranch, they explored many of the forms that would later be associated with that style, including a horizontal emphasis expressed in low pitched roofs, horizontal windows, and long covered porches that extended along the front façade over low cement slab floors. There are a good number of the late ‘30’s and early ‘40’s houses in Old North. Although not architecturally as appealing as the bungalows of the earlier decades, they represent a common house style and are an integral part of the neighborhood.

The houses, regardless of style, share in common characteristics of small size, straight forward design, and modest embellishment. In the streetscape they present themselves as relatively uniform in form and massing. The district contains many excellent examples of “builder” houses, derived from popular pattern books and stock plans that were widely available in the period. These residences are representative of the range of individual and local design variation and adaptation that produced distinctive homes and neighborhoods based on widely available, standard plans and models.

In its architecture Old North possesses a visual coherence that conveys the feeling of an early 20th century middle class neighborhood. Street widths, separation of street and sidewalks, residential set backs, dense tree plantings, and the absence of obvious intrusions, distinguish the area from both downtown and smaller subdivisions found in the University neighborhood. The neighborhood provides a full range of bungalow types with the exception of architect designed high-style mansions.

Period of Significance

The period of significance of the Old North Davis Historic District is 1910-1950, and encompasses the period of its active development. Development of the area began in 1913 at which time the lots were surveyed and the streets were laid out. The first construction was commenced in 1913. The Sanborn Map of 1952 shows the area at virtually complete build out. The houses developed in Old North between the opening of the Bowers Addition subdivision and its completion in the early 1950’s represent the evolution of the bungalow style from the height of its popularity in the 1910-20 period, through its

embodiment in more simplified and revival style forms in the 1930's, and its devolution into the beginnings of the ranch style which would come to dominate the domestic building of the next decade.

Integrity

The Old North Historic District possesses a substantial level of integrity. The original design of the area established in the plats of 1871 and 1913 remain unaltered. The streets and alleys retain their original alignment and design and the developer and owner planted street tree canopy has matured and is a significant aspect of the district setting. The streetscape of the subdivision contributes to its integrity of design, setting, feeling and association.

Of the 138 buildings within the district a majority, 76% were constructed during the period of significance, between 1913 and 1950. All of the buildings within the area are residential, with the exception of two churches and the school administration building. The majority are single family dwellings, some with rear cottages or offices. All of the buildings within the proposed district boundaries were surveyed for alterations visible from the street. Both the Sanborn Maps and the 1933 tax record were used to compare the footprints of the building.

The most common alteration to houses is the replacement of the original wood shingle roof with composition shingles. A number of houses have undergone this type of material replacement. In most cases the composition material does not detract from the appearance of the houses and does not obscure the original design intent. Although roofs were often a dominant element in bungalow homes of the craftsman and revival types, the texture, coloration and general appearance of the composition roofing material is compatible. Since roofing materials are reversible, this type of alteration was not considered to significantly impact the integrity of the building where there were not other notable changes. Window replacements were not widespread, although there are several cases in which aluminum sliders have been substituted for the original wood or metal frame windows. A single or small number of change-outs off the publicly exposed facades were not evaluated as significantly impairing integrity. However, wholesale removal of original fenestration, especially on front facades was viewed as a significant alteration.

While the maintenance and condition of a building can affect its appearance, deteriorating conditions that do not materially impair or remove important elements of the building were not considered to have an effect on integrity.

Methodology:

Methodology is discussed in detail at the beginning of the report.

ENDNOTES

[1] Lofland, John. *Old North Davis: Guide to Walking a Traditional Neighborhood*. (Woodland: Yolo County Historical Society, 1999).
[2] Ames, David. *Draft Context and Guidelines for Evaluating American's Historic Suburbs for the National Register of Historic Places.* (Washington DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1998.) p.98-99.
[3] Lofland, John. *Old North Davis.*, p.54
[4] McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1986), 478-479.
[5] McBride, E.S., "Little Black Book, manuscript in the collection of the Hattie Weber Museum. The book consists of typed lists of homes constructed in each year with the name of the builder. A testimony to the small town aspect of Davis at this time, there are no addresses. McBride knowing personally who owned or lived in each house.
[6] Although it was beyond the time and scope of this study, a study that links individual owners, addresses and contractors would provide interesting information regarding the influence of contractors and design and local architectural preferences.
[7] *Davis Enterprise* , October 19, 1912.
[8] Ames, David, p.51.
[9] Roland, Carol. West Curtis Oaks Historical Resources (2003). Unpublished context statement and survey in the files of the City of Sacramento, Planning Department.

[10] Fishman, Robert. *Bourgeois Utopias: the Rise and Fall of Suburbs*. (New York: Basic Books, 1987) p.5
[11] Through out 1910-11the developers ran weekly advertisements in the newspaper. Their advertising efforts were supplemented by the papers enthusiastic editor who wrote numerous articles praising the development and its effect on upgrading the city.
[12] *Davis Enterprise* July 12,1913, p.1
[13] Lofland, p.58.
[14] Ibid.p 23
[15] Winter, Robert. *American Bungalow Style,* New York: Simon and Shuster, 1996, p.10
[16]Anonymous. "The Bungalow," *California Architect and Engineer* 25 (1911), p. 55.
[17] Reiff, Daniel D. *Houses from Books: Treatises, Pattern Books and Catalogues in American Architecture, 1738-1950*, (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000) p.149.
[18] Winter, p.10.
[19] Anonymous. "With the Architects," *California Architect and Engineer* (1930) p.109.
[20]Wright, Gwendolyn. *Moralism and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago 1873-1913.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) p.170.
[21] Winter, p.10
[22] *Davis Enterprise*, March 25, 1913. p. 2
[23] Ibid. January 25, 1913, p.1 and July 12, 1913, p 2
[24] McAlester, Lee. p.477.