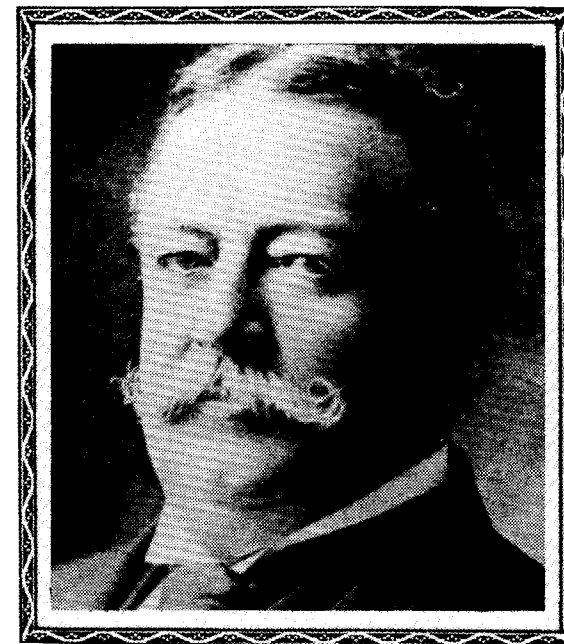


# WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

## CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1993



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
**WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
CINCINNATI, OHIO

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## SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

### Introduction

This report was prepared by a team of consultants, under the direction of Scruggs and Hammond, Inc., Landscape Architects and Planning Consultants of Columbus, Ohio. Mr. Walter H. Roch von Rochsburg, ASLA, President, of Scruggs and Hammond, Inc. served as head of the team, assisted by Kathleen V. Pendery, ASLA. The primary investigators for the project were Camille B. Fife and Thomas W. Salmon, ASLA, of The Westerly Group, Inc., Historical Landscape Architects and Planners located in Farmersburg, Indiana. Noel D. Vernon, ASLA, from Muncie, Indiana served as the project's general consultant. The contemporary survey was provided by Savage Walker & Associates, Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio. The report was planned and designed to conform to specifications provided to the consultants by representatives of the National Park Service.

While some research utilized microfilm copies of Taft correspondence in local repositories and in the Library of Congress, the project scope did not provide for extensive research in primary sources. Prior investigations conducted by previous consultants were so extensive, and of such quality, they served as the major resources for this report. Thus, the previously produced reports listed in the Bibliography are extensively referenced throughout the report.

In addition to analysis and review of existing resource material generated by the National Park Service, the consultants briefly reviewed the relevant collections of the Cincinnati Public Library (Map Division and Rare Books Division), the Cincinnati Historical Society (map, MSS and photo collections), the University of Cincinnati Library (WHT microfilm collection as well as material in the University's Archives and Rare Book Library) and of

course, the photographs and correspondence in the archives of the William Howard Taft National Historic Site.

The City of Cincinnati was able to provide the team with an early topographic map which was extremely useful. As mentioned before, limited but valuable information was also gleaned from the Library of Congress's photographic and manuscript collections.

The publications provided to the consultants to develop this report are listed in the Bibliography, Section V. Additional materials, relative to interpretive concerns, development plans for the property adjacent to the site, and other information, were also provided to the team by the NPS staff. This contributed to the documentation which was provided for the site.

The members of the staff of the William Howard Taft National Historic Site, under the able guidance of Superintendent Maryanne Gerbauckas, and later, Superintendent Kurt Topham, gave generously of their time and expertise to help advance the project. In particular, Mr. Bob Moore deserves appreciation for his assistance with the house archives, and Mr. Ray Henderson for a delightful tour and invaluable information and insight regarding the Mount Auburn neighborhood.

Overall guidance and supervision for this project was provided by Regional Cultural Landscape Architect, Mary Hughes, National Park Service, Omaha. Her expertise in the field of landscape architecture, as well as her unfailing enthusiasm and optimism were invaluable ingredients for the success of this project.

The primary purpose of the Taft house is to serve as an historic museum and The National Park Service is continuing the process of restoring the house to reflect the time period of the Taft occupation c. 1851-1877. Their decisions regarding the restoration of the main house exterior were influential in determining the

historic period as the focus for this project. These decisions were described in Bearss, Edwin C., Historic Structure Report, NPS, 1972, and are briefly summarized here.

The building exterior was restored to its c.1851-1877 appearance except for the basement of the post-1851 wing. This restoration was based upon family correspondence and other documentation and revised a former, 1970 Master Plan.

The Historic Structure Report indicated that the upper story and basement of the pre-1851 house would be used for administrative, visitor and interpretive facilities. The balance of the house was to be restored to reflect the Taft occupation c.1851-1877. In addition, the 1972 report indicated that the wing masonry would be stabilized and the formerly "restored" portions (c.1964) would be corrected to effect a more accurate restoration. Emergency stabilization contracts, 1982-85, addressed the structural failure of the east wing. Work included stabilization of the foundation, repair and replacement of deteriorated brick, restoration of the historic retaining wall, stabilization of the historic well and two cisterns, and restoration of the exterior to its appearance in the 1860's. Interior restoration began in October 1987 and was completed by September, 1988.



Brief Chronology of Taft Family and The 60 Auburn Avenue Home

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| 1793 | First land sales occur at Mount Auburn.   | 1851 | Extensive building activity occurs at 60 Auburn Avenue including: 2nd cistern, privy, 41 x 23' addition, walks. |
| 1819 | James Key purchases property at the head of Sycamore Street, builds house (area known as "Key's Hill").   | 1852 | Fanny Taft dies in June.  |
| 1838 | Mad River Road is relocated to present day Auburn Avenue. Levi Woodward and Robert McGregor Tracts are subdivided.  | 1852 | In November, retaining wall south of kitchen and widow's walk built.  |
| 1840 | Approximate date of construction of house by Hopkins or Culbertson (exact date and owner unknown).  | 1853 | Alphonso marries Louise Torrey in December.   |
| 1841 | In August, Alphonso Taft marries Fanny Phelps, returns to Cincinnati, to 4th and Vine. His home is shared with his parents, Peter Rawson and Sylvia Howard Taft, recently relocated from Vermont. | 1855 | Samuel Davenport Taft was born in February.   |
| 1843 | Charles Phelps Taft is born.  | 1856 | Samuel Taft dies in April.  |
| 1845 | Peter Rawson (Rossey) Taft II is born.  | 1857 | William Howard Taft was born on September 15.   |
| 1849 | Mount Auburn (so named since 1838) is incorporated into the City of Cincinnati.   | 1859 | Henry Waters Taft born in May.  |
| 1851 | Alphonso Taft purchases property at 60 Auburn Avenue.   | 1861 | Horace Dutton Taft is born in December.   |
|      |   | 1863 | Auburn Avenue widened 6 feet; new front walk and fence is built at 60 Auburn Avenue.                            |
|      |   | 1864 | Gas lighting is installed during the fall.  |
|      |   | 1865 | Fanny Louise Taft is born in July.  |

- 1865 Alphonso Taft becomes State Superior Court Judge in December.
- 1866 Sylvia Howard (Grandma) Taft dies in February.
- 1867 In the spring Peter Rawson Taft dies; Charlie Taft, then Rossy (PRT II) travel to Europe.
- 1869 Louise & Alphonso also travel to Europe. House is connected to city water system.
- 1870 Charlie returns to Cincinnati and joins Edward F. Noyes in practice.
- 1873 Charlie Taft marries Annie Stinton.
- 1874 William Howard Taft goes to Yale.
- 1876 Rossy (PRT II) and Matilda Hulbert marry; Alphonso becomes Secretary of State, then Attorney General; moves to Washington DC; house is rented to Mary C. Wilbur.
- 1877 Fire occurs in second story of the house. Repair and major remodeling are undertaken; Alphonso and Louise Taft return to Mount Auburn.
- 1878 Rossy and his wife separate, he returns to Auburn Avenue; Will is at home while attending Cincinnati Law School.
- 1882 Judge Alphonso Taft becomes U.S. Minister to Austria-Hungary; Will is named Collector of Internal Revenue, 1st District, Cincinnati; William Goepper leases house for 3 years; McDonalds live in and fix up stable until Goeppers take over.
- 1884 Alphonso is transferred from Vienna to St. Petersburg, Russia.
- 1885 Alphonso and Louise Taft return to U. S. in August.
- 1885 The Tafts return to 60 Auburn Avenue in October.
- 1886 In April, Alphonso & Louise Taft go to California for vacation; Will, Fanny and Horace are at home.
- 1886 Will marries Helen Herron in June; builds house in Walnut Hills.
- 1886 In October, T.H.C. Allen builds apartment house next door, north of Taft's (3-story, stone and brick); Will and Helen live in Auburn Avenue house while their house is under construction.
- 1886 Will and Helen move into their own house in November.
- 1889 Peter (Rossy) Taft dies of consumption; Schweitzers rent Auburn Avenue house; then Dickinsons rent house; Alphonso & Louise Taft move permanently to San Diego, California.

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| 1890 | William H. Taft appointed Solicitor General; Charlie Taft acts as agent for house on Auburn Avenue; property is rented to Schiffs (October).  | 1960 | Approximately 1960, the Taft Memorial Association becomes the owner.  |
| 1891 | Schiffs move out in February and Colonel Leopold Markbreit rents the house.   | 1969 | Property is designated the William Howard Taft National Historic Site; National Park Service acquires property. |
| 1891 | Alphonso dies in California in May - is laid out in house on Auburn Avenue (though still rented by Markbreit family); Louise Taft goes to Millbury, Connecticut, with her sister Delia. |      |   |
| 1896 | Markbreits vacate house; H.G. Hunnewills leases it.   |      |   |
| 1899 | Judge Thompson becomes owner.   |      |   |
| 1908 | William Howard Taft elected 27th President of the United States of America.   |      |   |
| 1912 | Colonel E. H. Ruffner becomes owner.  |      |   |
| 1930 | William Howard Taft dies on March 8.  |      |   |
| 1937 | Mrs. Louis De Bus, becomes owner (daughter of Colonel Ruffner).   |      |   |
| 1940 | E. R. Bellinger becomes owner.  |      |   |
| 1950 | E. R. Bellinger sells 3/4 of tract to Hamilton County Trustees for juvenile center.   |      |   |

### Brief History of Taft Family

Before discussing the history of the landscape at the William Howard Taft National Historic Site in Mount Auburn, it is pertinent to recall historical highlights of the Taft family whose influence eventually extended well beyond Cincinnati, to the farthest reaches of the nation and the world.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Peter Rawson Taft, progenitor of the Ohio Tafts, maintained a farm near West Townshend, Vermont. Judging from the character of his only son, Alphonso, he must have been a man of exacting standards and lofty ideals. Alphonso, who was born in 1810, graduated with a law degree from Yale in 1838 and shortly thereafter arrived in the bustling river town of Cincinnati to establish his career. By 1839, he had secured a position in a local law firm, gained admittance to the Ohio bar, and rapidly moved up to the position of partner. He was soon involved in politics, working for the election of the Harrison-Tyler ticket in 1840.<sup>1</sup>

Alphonso was enthusiastic about the opportunities available in Cincinnati. Having traveled to his parents farm two years before, he returned to Vermont in 1841 - this time to marry 19-year-old Fanny Phelps. When the newlyweds set up housekeeping in Cincinnati, they were joined by Alphonso's parents, Peter Rawson and Sylvia Howard Taft.

The house on Fourth and Vine streets in Cincinnati, which Alphonso purchased for \$3,000, was a busy place for the next ten years. Fanny and Alphonso, saw the births of five children, although only two survived infancy: Charles Phelps born in 1843 and Peter Rawson II (Rossy) born in 1845.

Throughout the decade of the 1840s, Alphonso's law career progressed rapidly. Soon, he and Fanny became known

for their interests in cultural as well as social issues. One area of particular interest to Alphonso's fertile mind was the burgeoning development of new transportation systems. Toward the end of the decade, the young lawyer became an incorporator of the Ohio & Missouri Railroad, the Marietta & Cincinnati Railroad, and a member of the board of directors of the Little Miami Railroad.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, Fanny's health seriously deteriorated in the years prior to 1851, when Alphonso Taft purchased the property on Auburn Avenue in Mount Auburn in an attempt to provide better conditions for his family.

In late June and early July of 1851, the Tafts moved to the lofty heights of their new home, which was served by the Sycamore Street horse-drawn omnibus. The air on the hill was indeed refreshing, as Alphonso's father, Peter Rawson Taft, noted in his diary on July 19th: "*Mount Auburn is a beautiful high airy place*". He found the neighbors pleasant, but the steep climb from the city objectionable.<sup>3</sup> Even the healthy environment of Mount Auburn could not save Fanny Taft. The following spring she became ill and on June 2nd she died. The bereaved husband wrote and published a memoir about his beloved wife which was distributed to family and friends.<sup>4</sup>

For Alphonso, life moved swiftly forward. Only a few months after Fanny's death, he travelled to New Haven, Connecticut, stopping to visit with a friend from his days at Yale, the Rev. Samuel Dutton. Through the Duttons, he met Louise Marie Torrey, a bright, intelligent young woman who had attended Mount Holyoke College (for one year) and had spent time teaching in New England.

Before Christmas of 1853, the 43-year old Alphonso proposed to the 25-year-old Louise Torrey. She accepted, and they were married. A new era in the Taft family life had

begun. Following their wedding at Louise's family home in Millbury, Massachusetts, the couple travelled to New York City, then back to Cincinnati, arriving after the first of the New Year. They were greeted by the Mount Auburn household: Grandpa Peter, his wife Sylvia and the two boys, Charles 10, and Rossy, 7. Louise quickly adjusted to the household routine, which included social calls on neighbors, tending to furnishings and chores, and evenings spent reading together.<sup>5</sup>

In 1855, Louise and Alphonso welcomed their first child, a son, Samuel Davenport Torrey. He died after only 14 months, a victim of whooping cough. Although saddened by the tragedy, the Tafts had only to wait until September 15, 1857 for a second stout and lusty child, William Howard Taft, to gladden their lives. In time, more would follow.<sup>6</sup> All would achieve success in the worlds of politics, law, and education, but none would rise as high as this cheerful, aggressive urchin. Destined to serve as President of the United States from 1909 to 1913, and as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1921 until 1930, he would hold the highest levels of political power in the country.

Their family grew and the Tafts welcomed Henry Waters Taft to the house on Auburn Avenue in May of 1859. In December of 1861, the year that the Civil War exploded, Horace Dutton Taft was born, the fifth child in the household (including Charles, although he was enrolled at Yale by this time). The family was completed in July of 1865, after the close of the Civil War, with the birth of their first daughter, Fanny Louise.

In December of the same year, Alphonso was appointed to serve out a three-month term on the State Superior Court. When the term expired, he ran and was elected to a three-year term in his own right, the choice of both the Republican and

Democratic parties.<sup>7</sup> This was the beginning of a long career in public service - Judge Taft was Attorney General under President Grant and minister to Austria in 1882-4 and to Russia, 1884-5.<sup>8</sup>

The legacy of the young Tafts who grew up in the house at Mount Auburn would reach far. Alphonso's eldest son, Charles Phelps Taft, graduated from Yale, then earned the J. U. D. degree at the University of Heidelberg. Returning to Cincinnati, he practiced law, and married Anna Stinton, the only daughter of the widowed David Stinton, a financially prominent Cincinnati industrialist and businessman. Together, they became extremely important civic leaders, contributing extensively to the cultural and intellectual life of the city.

Peter Rawson Taft (II) graduated from Yale in 1867 with the highest record then attained by any graduate. He also took a degree at Heidelberg, returning to practice law in Cincinnati. He died prematurely in 1888.

The extraordinary achievements of William Howard Taft, the oldest son of Louise and Alphonso to reach maturity, have already been mentioned. Their second son, Henry Waters Taft, after graduation from Yale in the class of 1880, studied law in Cincinnati and Columbia and established himself in practice in New York City where he conducted a distinguished career. He was awarded an honorary Master of Arts degree from Yale in 1905.

His brother, Horace Dutton, graduated from Yale in 1883, studied law, and was admitted to the bar. Later, he gave up law for a career in education. For three years he was a tutor of Latin at Yale, then, in 1890 he established the Taft School for Boys, first located at Pelham Manor, N.Y., (later moved to Watertown, Connecticut). In 1893, he received an honorary Master of Arts degree from Yale.

Fanny Louise, the youngest of the clan, was educated in Cincinnati and Farmington, Connecticut, completing her studies abroad in music and languages. In 1890 she married Dr. William A. Edwards, a distinguished physician and surgeon.<sup>9</sup> Descendants of all of these Taft men and women have continued to distinguish themselves in local and national politics and civic affairs.

Perhaps the true legacy which was begun at the house on Auburn Avenue is best captured in the recollection of a student of Horace Taft, who often used his own early education as an example to his young charges:

*"He never tired of talking about his boyhood and the discipline which his father and mother exercised over the family by way of their own interests which in turn became family interests. The parents read and the family read. Then followed discussion. Such a family life was a liberal and thorough education."<sup>10</sup>*

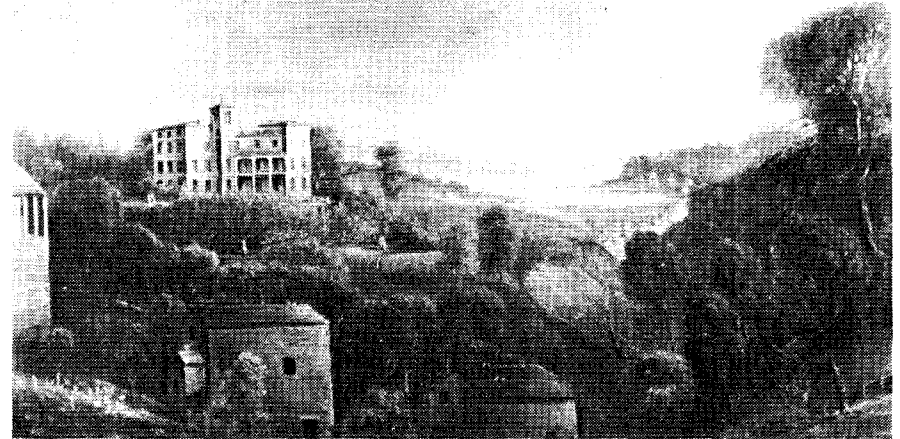
## SECTION II: HISTORICAL DATA

### Early Cincinnati, its Suburbs, and the Mount Auburn Neighborhood

In 1830, when he was considering a move west, the Reverend Lyman Beecher of Boston wrote: "*I have thought seriously of going over to Cincinnati, the London of the west.*"<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the Queen City was a bustling metropolis during the first half of the nineteenth century when Alphonso Taft first decided to make it his home.

Topography and the city's location on the busy Ohio waterway, had much to do with its status as a cosmopolitan center. First visited by explorers in 1669, it was settled in 1788 and became a city by 1819.<sup>12</sup> Waves of German and, later, Irish immigrants swelled the population, especially after 1840, when railroad construction activity attracted the latter to the river town. Alphonso Taft espoused the new industry, serving on the boards of several railroads.<sup>13</sup> Steep bluffs covered with trees and other vegetation dominated the landscape surrounding Cincinnati, as seen in an early view (shown at right).

The topography between the hills was rough and it was a long trek across the river's ancient alluvial plain to the water's edge.<sup>14</sup> The drama of these hillsides is well shown in an 1847 map (Figure B.2). By the autumn of 1848, the beginnings of suburban development appeared in the hills surrounding Cincinnati. Still quite sparsely settled, they were nonetheless becoming populated with fine homes and mansions.<sup>15</sup> The city became well known early in its history for these healthful suburban heights. As early as 1853, they were a setting for the romantic novelist, Alice Cary's, Clovernook Tales<sup>16</sup> and, by



Mount Auburn Young Ladies Institute, pastel by Frederick Crawley c. 1857.  
From a photo in the collection of the Cincinnati Historical Society.

1868, Sidney Maxwell's articles on the hills of Cincinnati had appeared in the Cincinnati Daily Gazette. Two years later they would be expanded into a popular book.<sup>17</sup> The renown of the hills continued to grow, and an 1898 map saw fit to proclaim them the "famous suburbs".<sup>18</sup>

The character of the site of William Howard Taft's boyhood home at Mount Auburn has undergone dramatic change since its first settlement in the early 1800s. In the years before 1837, when it was known as "Key's Hill" (after an early property owner), Mount Auburn was only one of several hills which formed

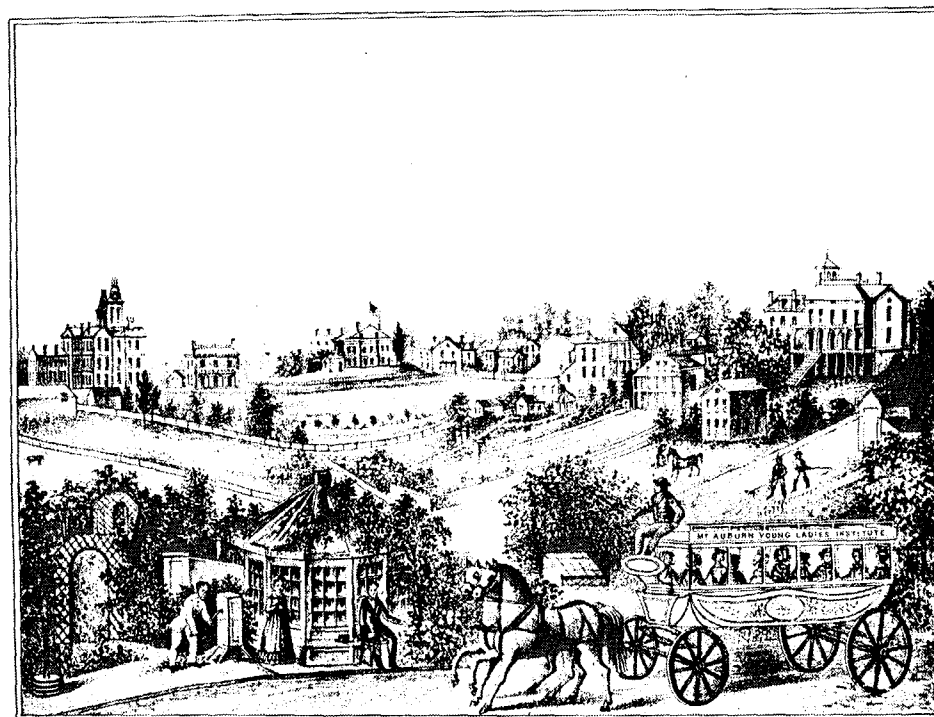
a bucolic backdrop to the frontier city which was growing along the banks of the mighty Ohio River.

By 1850, Mount Auburn was dotted with a few homes, and had become a suburb of the burgeoning city -- a cool, high, respite from the rapidly developing sprawl in the lower urban areas creeping back from the river. The house, which was later to become William Howard Taft's boyhood home, was probably constructed early in the previous decade. This home and other substantial homes built in the area were evidence of a growing trend for more prosperous Cincinnatians to move to the higher elevations of the surrounding hills.

The construction of Auburn Road (later Auburn Street, and today known as Auburn Avenue) cannot be precisely dated, but it may have been as early as 1808.<sup>19</sup> The original right-of-way was later (c. 1863) enlarged to its present width.

In 1844, the Ohio legislature created a special Road District of Millcreek Township in Hamilton County. The Road District's eastern boundary was Lebanon Turnpike, the southern boundary was the City of Cincinnati, the western boundary was the Millcreek, and the northern boundary was the section line, one mile north of the City of Cincinnati.<sup>20</sup> This commission provided a mechanism for improvement in the area prior to annexation by the City, thus easing the way for further development. In April of that year, owners in the Mount Auburn area petitioned the Road District for the following work: "*The grade established, the curbstone set ... the gutter paved four and one half feet wide,*" and other improvements. Property owners were assessed by the amount of footage they owned.<sup>21</sup> By 1849, a large portion of Mount Auburn had been incorporated into the City of Cincinnati.<sup>22</sup> With incorporation, Mount Auburn's status was altered, from one of the "liberties" (as settled areas outside the city limits were called) to one of the first hillside suburbs within

the City of Cincinnati. The Special Road District was annexed and became Ward 11. Alphonso Taft represented the City in these annexation negotiations.<sup>23</sup>



VIEW ON MOUNT AUBURN.  
FROM MOUNT AUBURN FEMALE SEMINARY

Lithograph, c. 1860, artist's view of Mount Auburn, from Mount Auburn Young Ladies Institute. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.

Present day Mount Auburn was not annexed in its entirety in 1849, only the section from Liberty Street to McMillan, from Burnet on the east to a line running north from the intersection of



Main and Liberty. Great debates about further city expansion took place as the decades moved along. By 1870, the whole of section 14 had been annexed, from Burnet on the east to the west line of the section and from McMillan Street northward to the north section line.<sup>24</sup>

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Mount Auburn possessed the best of "modern" amenities. Its main avenue, Auburn Street, was described as follows in 1870: *"It is sixty feet wide, has good sidewalks, and, since 1867, has had the Nicolson pavement, which makes it one of the finest drives in the country."*<sup>25</sup>

Another street, just north of the Taft residence was noted for its quality: *"... Southern Avenue, about fifty feet wide, and well improved to the brow of the hill that overlooks the Deercreek Valley and Lebanon Road. This is well paved and curbed, and is provided with sidewalks."*<sup>26</sup>

The Mount Auburn Young Ladies Institute, founded at Mount Auburn in 1856 and located on Auburn Street, proclaimed the school's first and foremost advantage was its location: *"Within the city limits it is only a half hour's drive distant from any of the depots and within easy call of the telegraph offices, Post Office, and stores. But being 500 feet above the level of the river, it has none of the annoyances of the city. Surrounded by beautiful residences, it looks out in every direction upon a delightful prospect, and is as free from intrusion as though it were in a quiet country village."*<sup>27</sup>

As the population grew, and notable people built their homes upon the hills, changes in the topography also occurred: *"In the vicinity of the tasteful residences of Judge Noyes, Hugh Stewart and W. H. Doane, deep ravines have been filled, and a new appearance put upon the whole locality."* The complexion of the landscape evolved from bucolic farmland scenes to more orderly

vistas: *"The residences of Mount Auburn are distinguished for their comfortable appearance and general tastefulness. ... (their owners) have consulted neatness rather than display, and cultivated flowers and shrubbery rather than sweeping lawns and extensive drives."*

<sup>28</sup>

During the period between 1851 and 1889, when the Taft family owned and occupied the house on 60 Auburn Avenue, Mount Auburn underwent great growth and development. As this occurred, the challenges of the topography were met with enthusiasm. As mentioned before, ravines were filled in many sections, but other manipulations were also common. In 1870, Mr. Maxwell noted: *"A valuable private enterprise, that will also prove a desirable public improvement, is the extensive work now being done by the Huntington brothers, at the head of Sycamore street. ... they are engaged in extending Saunders Street westwardly, and constructing a substantial stone wall, which will protect both the property and street for all time."*

The enterprise of these early developers didn't stop there: *"In addition, they are cutting down this part of the hill very considerably, and improving the general appearance of the locality in no small degree."* The Victorians, unlike today's conservation-minded planners, fully supported the concept of manipulation of the natural environment. Such efforts were enthusiastically endorsed, as they were thought to *"... contribute to the general good."*<sup>29</sup>

Considering the severity of the topography, some form of ground retention was essential in order to create terraces for gardens, walks and other outdoor activities. Typically, these retention walls were constructed of limestone, sandstone, calcite, river stone (or mud rock) and in some cases granite and schist. The walls varied in quality, depending upon their location. For example, retaining walls, such as those that grace the Burkhardt

and Taft front yards, were of ranged, quarry faced limestone ashlar, normally capped with a rubbed finish limestone or sandstone coping. Walls located on the side streets of properties, or along back yards, were not built to such exacting specifications.

<sup>30</sup>

One interesting, cost-cutting device is demonstrated in Figure A. 13. The photograph shows a very well laid retaining wall on the major street. The same ashlar turned the corner, but then became a coursed rubble wall. A common coping was laid over the entire wall.

In the early 1850s, Mount Auburn was distinguished by the development of several respected institutions: The Methodist Episcopal Church (in 1851), the Mount Auburn Baptist Church (in 1853), The Mount Auburn Young Ladies Institute (in 1856), and the German Protestant Orphan Asylum (1849, enlarged c. 1868). Later, in 1861, the Cincinnati Orphans Asylum was built at Mount Auburn. In addition, it boasted a Widows' Home, and the Mount Auburn Public School, a three-story brick edifice on the north side of nearby Southern Street, which enrolled over 300 students in 1869.<sup>31</sup>

The Mount Auburn Street Railroad was in operation by 1867. A portion of this line ran directly in front of the Taft property. Alphonso Taft had labored hard to make the railway a reality, and although it was later usurped by the Incline, it was a source of pride to the community when it was built. As a contemporary writer noted: *"The construction of this road has demonstrated the practicability of street railways over all the surrounding hills; for there will be no route, judiciously located that can meet with more obstacles in the shape of grade."*<sup>32</sup> Once again, Mount Auburn was in the forefront of nineteenth century development in Cincinnati.

Another important transportation facility which influenced the character of the Mount Auburn neighborhood was the Main Street Incline. When Judge Taft and his colleagues organized the Mount Auburn Street Railroad (begun in 1864), it was in response to difficulties experienced with the current mode of travel up Sycamore Street from downtown Cincinnati. The horse-drawn omnibus was never satisfactory. It was slow, expensive and, according to the Cincinnati Gazette, June 25, 1872: *"crowded to suffocation inside with passengers of both sexes and 'many minds' ..."*<sup>33</sup>

Again, Mount Auburn took the lead among the city's hillside communities when the Main Street Incline was opened by the Cincinnati Inclined Plane Railway Company on May 12, 1872. The bottom station was located at Mulberry and Main Streets, the upper landing atop Jackson Hill. Patterned after a similar technology pioneered in Pittsburgh, the Incline's 850 foot trip up the Main Street hill took only one and one half minutes.

By the fall of 1872, the Lookout House had been built at the summit. The two-story wooden building contained a bar and wine room on the first floor and a dance hall with refreshments on the second. Soon it became a popular gathering place where band concerts, fireworks displays, and balloon ascensions were held, especially on Sundays. What impression the boisterous Sunday visitors made on the dignified families of Mount Auburn is unknown. The Lookout House on Mount Auburn was duplicated at other Incline sites throughout the Cincinnati hills. They were unique entertainment spots in the city for 20 years.<sup>34</sup>

In 1870, the neighborhood of Mount Auburn was respected for its stability, its refined homes and families, its excellent institutions, and its services (it was supplied with both city gas and water). All of these amenities, however, did not compare to the

excellence of its views, a natural feature of the neighborhood landscape which is still present today. As Mr. Maxwell enthused: *"The altitude ... secures a pure atmosphere, while it affords in all directions beautiful landscapes. Some of the views and glimpses of the city and river from these points are of the rarest beauty. The views of the former at night, from the hights(sic) overlooking it, are almost like fairy spectacles."*<sup>35</sup>

### Character Of The Taft Site During The Historic Period (1851-1877)

#### The "Suburban Homestead"

The Taft property, during the family's occupation, from 1851 until approximately 1889, demonstrated qualities which can be associated with both rural and urban landscapes. The investigative team has coined the term "suburban homestead" to characterize the style of this landscape, examples of which could be found in nineteenth-century Cincinnati's suburbs and throughout the midwest.

The landscape surrounding the front of the Taft house, its yard, walks and street elevation, is typical of many which might be found in the residential districts of a city or even in the center of a small town. The components of such landscapes included simple but tasteful plantings at the edges of modest (but comfortable) lawns, which were dotted with trees - what Sidney Maxwell applauded as "neatness rather than display."<sup>36</sup> The front or "urbanized" part of the Taft landscape shows its conformance to the dignity of the neighborhood, through ordered herringbone-patterned brick walks; tasteful flowers and shrubs; a decorative iron fence atop a low, dressed stone wall; and a single, ornamental urn. Even the tree seats are chaste - functional for

moments out-of-doors, but unmarred by ornate trim or plantings. Thus this portion of the site and (in all probability) the "terrace" which most likely existed in the southern portion of the lot (between the 1851 addition and the Burkhardt property line) could be considered typical of vernacular nineteenth century urban residential landscapes.

Thus the Taft landscape was more modest than some other, "designer-influenced" Victorian efforts, such as those whose plans were influenced by curvilinear roads and paths popularized by the landscape architect, A. J. Downing (1815-1852). In vernacular landscapes such as the Taft's, simplicity was a virtue. As a recent landscape historian has noted, commenting on similar, nineteenth century residences:

*"Within the boundary fence, however, garden plans were very simple. Shrubs often edged the boundary as well as flower borders. ... Fruit trees abounded in the rear yards, and a few large shade trees were included in the front if there was room. Urns were about the only kind of ornamentation that would be found in these landscapes."*<sup>37</sup>

The connecting drives and walks on the Taft site are also typical of the period. In Frank Scott's 1870 treatise on *The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home Grounds*, he describes a similar situation:

*"nearly all of the lot (is located)... behind the house, the front being connected by a short, straight walk with the street and by a diverging curved walk with the basement entrance on the rear plateau, where it is supposed the kitchen and dining room are located."*<sup>38</sup>

At the Taft house, as is typical of Mount Auburn sites, the balance of the property was to the rear. This portion of the site was distinctly more rural in character. It supported ties to a farm life which were still strong in the neighborhood and in the minds

of Taft family members. It is certainly not surprising that Peter Taft, a native of a Vermont farm, took both interest in and responsibility for much of the agrarian activity which occurred on the land to the rear of the house, the largest portion of the property.

Of course, most homes of the period had to accommodate the requirements of horse-drawn transportation. However, in the city, these facilities were generally confined to a local livery stable or a small barn at the rear of an urban lot. In suburban Mount Auburn, however, the Tafts maintained not only a carriage barn with room for several horses, but facilities for a cow and (at times) a calf. In addition, there was a reasonably large garden, pasture, bee hives, a workshop, a "cow's well" and cistern, dog run and house, pigeon huts and possibly other similar facilities.

This combination of urban and rural life in a modest-sized property was highly recommended by a contemporary advisor: *"Our panacea for the town-sick business man who longs for a rural home, whether from ennui of the monotonousness of business life, or from the higher nature-loving soul that is in him, is to take country life as a famishing man should take food -- in very small quantities. From a half acre to four or five acres will afford ground enough to give all the finer pleasures of rural life."*<sup>39</sup>

With the healthful advantages of the topography, and the combined elements of urban and rural life to be found on Auburn Avenue, it is no wonder that the Tafts prospered in their "Suburban Homestead" for more than thirty years.

#### Land Conformation, Topography and Historic Grade

There are no true topographical maps of Cincinnati and its hill suburbs in existence for the 1840s, the period during which construction of the Taft house on Auburn Road (as it was then

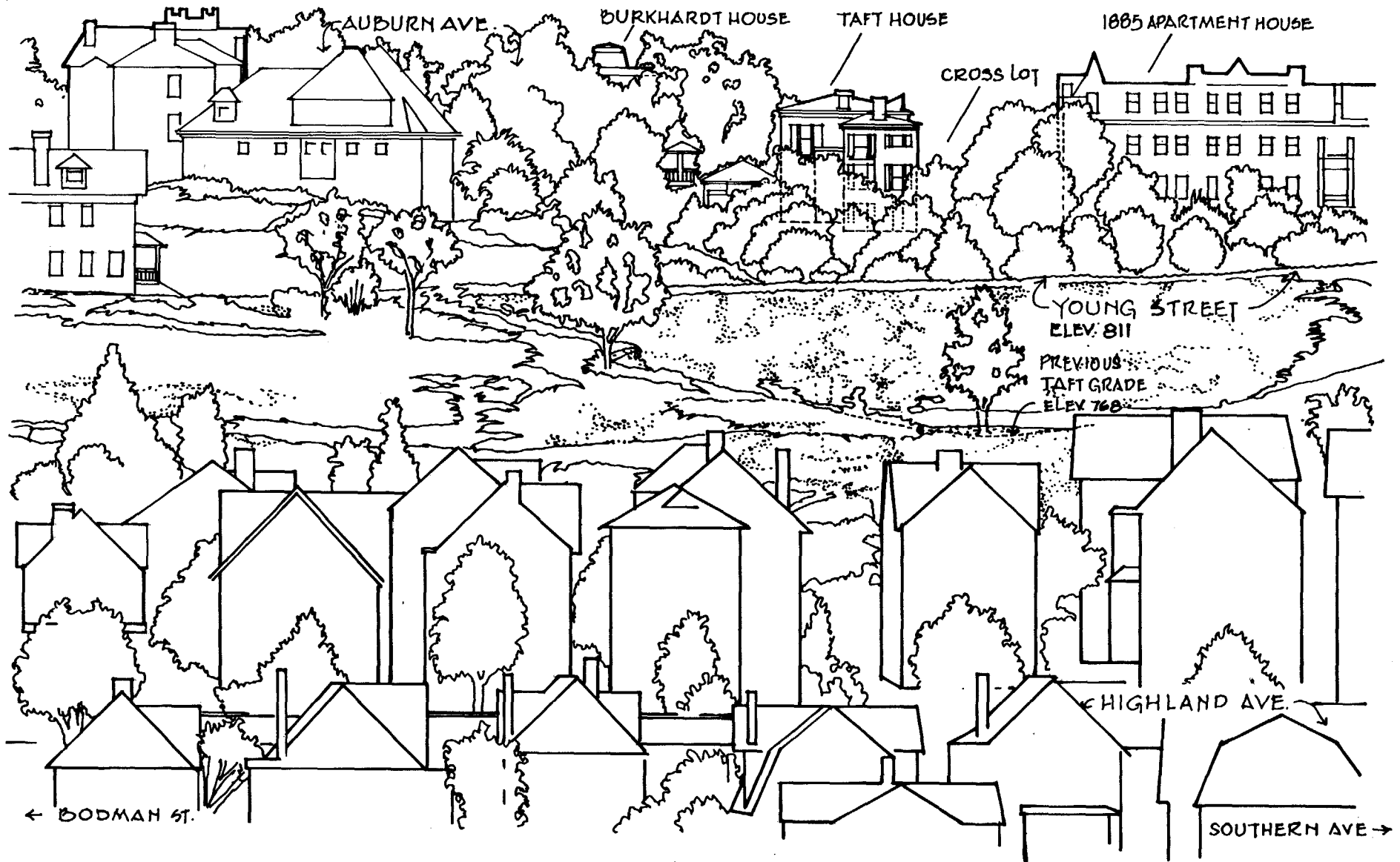
called) probably took place. An 1847 map (Figure B.2) gives one the impression of considerable elevation change through the use of hachuring symbols.<sup>40</sup> Figure B.9 also shows quite clearly (through contour lines) the great changes in elevation between the flat river basin of Cincinnati and the surrounding hills.

In spite of the great elevational change from the lower city, by the mid-nineteenth century, many of the major roads on Mount Auburn had been laid out, particularly those which were placed along the ridge or brow of the hill.<sup>41</sup> These often took advantage of corresponding high grades. For example, Auburn Avenue, from the Taft property in the south to Christ Hospital and even further north, is practically level. However, the steep hillside grades could not be totally avoided. Lots with frontages on Auburn Avenue's east side were either level, on a slight rise, or sloped gently (as far as practical) to the east. Then, within 100 feet of the road, the grade steepened and fell markedly to the low ground, about 800 feet from Auburn Avenue. Good examples of the steepness of these properties as they appeared during the 19th century can be seen today along Southern Avenue and in the Cross Lot adjacent to the Taft property.

Early lot configuration (and thus much of the neighborhood's character) was strongly affected by such topographic changes. In order to develop these lot sites for residences, it appears that material excavated for basements (and all houses had basements) was dispersed as fill on the downhill side of the property. This method offered small, level back yards which could be used for gardens, drying clothes, recreation and family relaxation. The balance of the steep, unfilled slopes were customarily used for pasture, gardens or for the cultivation of fruit trees. Later, as the properties were subdivided (and many of them were), additional fill was required to improve the downslope locations.

When the city condemned about seventy feet of the length of the Taft property for the extension of Young Street, over forty feet of fill was used as the illustration on the following page demonstrates.

A line drawing made from an enlargement of the historic photograph, Figure A.4. showing the height of fill at the extension of Young Street, from the east looking toward the rear of the Taft property. (Drawn by: The Westerly Group, Inc.) Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.



### Historic Grade at the Taft Site

An historic photograph of the Taft site (Figure A.4) is interesting because it was taken not only to display the beauty of so many of the Victorian facades, but rather the back yards of houses along the east side of Auburn Avenue. The Taft house, the apartment house to the north, the Burkhardt house and downslope ancillary structures can clearly be seen. Because of their limited dimension, very few photographs are able to adequately demonstrate changes in grade. This photograph, by contrast, does just that. But perhaps the most revealing aspect of this image is the amount of fill that is evident in the extension of Young Street from Bodman to Southern. (See Illustration, previous page). A profile map (Figure B. 10) attempts to compare original, historic grade to that of several subsequent eras. The amount of manipulation is quite apparent.

This fill is also shown on Figure B. 9. A 1912 contour map (same Figure) of the area shows the steepness of the embankment east and west, which formed the Young Street extension. Contours also show a natural drainage course down the hill, from an area on the Taft property, from the center of the lot, and beyond the eastern property line. By interpolating the "invisible" contours, the depth of fill was estimated to be between thirty-five and forty feet.

Currently available photography and archaeological evidence give very little insight into the conditions of the front yard at the Taft house. Contemporary sources reveal that the low front wall and fence were erected around 1863, when the street was widened.<sup>42</sup> It also seems apparent, from limited archaeological evidence, that some areas were disturbed and/or changed around the time of the remodeling after the 1877 fire.<sup>43</sup>

However, it appears that any such modifications in the terrain were modest.

The difficulty of determining, through archaeology or other means, the original level of the historic surface of the eastern half of the Taft property is apparent. The extreme depth of fill (even at the rear of the tremendously shortened, present property) was such that the archaeologists working at the site in 1972 were required to abandon the effort.<sup>44</sup>

This same difficulty, however, serves to demonstrate the drama of the site as it must have appeared during the historic period. As McCollough stated, in his archaeological report, the historic humus zone (considered the indicator of historic grade) was thin in the area near the south property line. Two transects, cut north-south during the archaeological investigation of the early 1970s, indicated that the original level sloped from south to north, rather dramatically, and from west to east, more gradually, but much more deeply.<sup>45</sup> It is likely that the elevated ground along the south property line contained a "terrace" which was a great concern to the Tafts in the early 1880s when their neighbor, Mrs. Burkhardt, wanted to tie into their sewer line by laying a pipe along a north-south path which lay approximately fifteen feet behind the Taft house.<sup>46</sup>

Besides providing panoramic views of Cincinnati, the long and deep eastward slope of the historic site must have provided an expansive vista, even at ground level. This generous landscape surely presented to the Taft children, during their formative years, as unfettered a panorama in the physical realm as their parents provided for their minds and characters through the world of life and letters.

During the development of the Juvenile Detention Center in the 1950s (to the south and east of the house), anywhere from 10 to 25 feet of fill was required to provide drives and parking

spaces adjacent to the buildings. Following E.R. Bellinger's purchase of the property in 1940, extensive fill was sought (much from the refuse of city road work) to cover what was possibly a wood-enclosed cesspool located midway along the north portion of the original lot.<sup>47</sup> Thus the existing property grades around the Taft home have little in common with those of the 19th century, either before or after the construction of the house.

### Walks, Paths, Circulation and Transportation Systems

The investigative team is grateful for the extensive work accomplished by Mark A. Chavez in analyzing previous documents and recommending design developments for the brick walks at the Taft site.<sup>48</sup> This publication has provided a thorough examination of this feature and is recommended for more complete examination of the topic.

According to Mr. Chavez and other investigators, herringbone-patterned brick walks were present at the site or were developed during the historic period. The front (west or main) walk, or a similar version, was probably in place when the property was purchased. This walk is very obvious in the 1868 photograph of the house (Figure A. 1). Undoubtedly, the front walk continued around the house to the north, to connect in a logical fashion with the kitchen, on the north or carriage drive side. Such a walk follows typical nineteenth century practice and would be needed to direct tradespersons and others from the front entrance to the service areas of the household.

Prior to construction of the eastern addition, there was a brick-paved piazza to the rear of the main house. This was largely demolished in the construction of the addition, but, according to McCollough's 1971 archaeological report,<sup>49</sup> a continuation of the brick walkway south of the "new" kitchen would have incorporated

the area around the well, just beyond the southeast corner. Moving out from this area and continuing due east was the "privy walk", probably a continuation of the herringbone pattern brick work which was typically present during and prior to the Taft years.<sup>50</sup> Because of the extreme disturbance of grade at the rear of the property and the lack of graphic or photographic evidence, it is impossible to determine the number and/or plan of walks which may have connected the barn(s), garden and pasture areas with the house.

Transportation systems which adjoined the site also affected its character. The street in front of the property was previously described as being 60 feet wide with Nicolson-type pavement (a wood block pavement set between thin wooden planks and covered with gravel or tar). Three-inch wide oak blocks were laid, end grain up, atop a gravel bed and three-quarter inch pine boards were laid upright to act as separators between them. The pine boards were about half the height of the oak blocks, creating narrow, three-quarter inch interstices which were filled with gravel or tar. This type of wood paving was considered much safer for horses and easier on horse shoes.<sup>51</sup>

There was evidently considerable debate about the merits of wood, stone and other paving materials for city street construction. William and Alphonso Taft discussed the subject in a correspondence during Alphonso's travels in Europe and Russia in 1884. The elder Taft wrote to his son:

*..." The making and keeping of good streets is the most discouraging task. ... a plan of paving has been very much changed since I was first in London ... there have been several changes. Now to my surprise they have returned to wood pavement ... they consider them better for the horses, than the granite. They have some asphalt as well as ... granite. But they find that in the rainy weather of which London has a great deal,*



*horses slip and fall on the asphalt while they do not slip on the wood.*"<sup>52</sup>

Perhaps he remembered the texture of the street in front of their house on Mount Auburn.

The Mount Auburn Street Railroad, which Alphonso had worked so hard to make a reality, passed directly in front of the Taft's house. Installed in 1867, the railroad brought double tracks and an atmosphere of bustling, noisy traffic to the neighborhood.

Previous Taft home researchers did not concern themselves to any great extent with ambient features such as the street and sidewalks. However, some information about the width of the historic sidewalk can be gleaned by a process of deduction: It is known that Auburn Street was 60 feet wide. This is also true today. The placement of the property's front boundary fence and wall has changed only slightly (it was moved six inches to the west in 1974 to conform to the legal property line). Therefore, one may deduce that the sidewalk's present width (12 feet) is nearly the same as the historic width. The sidewalk was composed of brick pavers laid in a herringbone pattern with stone curbs.

#### Landscape Features, Vegetation and Trees

There was no historic survey or informal plan showing the rear portion of the Taft property as it appeared during their occupation available for use in this report. In addition, the scope of this study anticipated little (if any) primary research. These facts, coupled with the change of grade and property size from the historic period, have resulted in extremely limited documentation for the agricultural and horticultural activity which occurred during the Taft years. Therefore, the investigative team researched original sources, (such as Peter Taft's diaries and journals from

1851 through 1863) to find clues to this activity which were not available in previously compiled reports.

Vegetable gardens and orchards, (as previously mentioned) were typical features of a "suburban homestead". The available documents do not mention whether or not such amenities existed and/or were productive when the Tafts moved in during the summer of 1851. The first winter's activity, however, included the family's purchase of luxuries such as oranges and chestnuts from the grocers, as well as quantities of apples -- fruit which would normally be harvested from the family's orchard.<sup>53</sup>

Three generations of the Taft family moved into the sturdy two-story house in Mount Auburn: Alphonso and his wife, Fanny; their children Charles and Peter (Rossey); and Alphonso's parents, Peter R. Taft and his wife, Sylvia Howard Taft. Peter, often called "Grandpa" in the family correspondence, took a major interest in the agrarian activities at the site, including maintaining accounts of monies spent; arranging for workmen to plant the garden, build and repair fences and barns; and all the many other tasks which were required to maintain the property. It is from the elder Taft's meticulously kept diaries, correspondence, and account books that we are able to discern information about the landscape in its early years. For example, we know that some fruit trees were planted a short time after the family's arrival, since Peter R. Taft's diary states that he "set out trees" on the property early in September of 1851.<sup>54</sup>

By the spring of 1852, Peter and the hired man were actively working on the rear portion of the lot preparing garden beds and purchasing seeds for this important aspect of the property. It seems evident, from records in Peter Taft's account books, that the crops they grew were typical of suburban gardens (or kitchen gardens) of this period. Seed purchases included beets, carrots, parsnips, onion, cabbage, peas, squash, beans and sweet

corn.<sup>55</sup> The first plantings were onions, which were set out in March of that year. Later, potatoes and tomatoes were set out, and cucumber and white bean seeds were planted.<sup>56</sup>

Several references substantiate the accommodations which the Tafts made to the steep topography of the site. In late winter of 1852, the bank south of the kitchen (in the "new" wing) was dug away, and a local man was hired to build a retaining wall, walkway and to consolidate the bank.<sup>57</sup> On June 12, 1852, Peter Taft remarked that Owen (the hired man) "terraced" the ground in the garden.<sup>58</sup> This undoubtedly referred to an area of higher elevation which must have been both south and east of the house and the new addition. Drainage in the garden area must have been of critical concern.

Nonetheless, "Grandpa's" garden appears to have been a source of joy and nourishment to the whole family as it grew each year. During that first summer on Mount Auburn, the family enjoyed a plethora of fruits and vegetables, including a crop of strawberries. At least 500 plants had been planted the previous spring.<sup>59</sup>

It seems evident that several fruit trees were prospering at the site when it was purchased. Ever the good farmer, the elder Taft noted that he trimmed apple trees during February of 1852 and set out a large one opposite the kitchen door. The plum trees were in blossom by April, and pears which Owen had planted in April were doing well by June.<sup>60</sup>

Peter Taft had a serious interest in the cultivation of fruit trees. It is evident that he was concerned with discovering the best means of propagation and growth on the site. He reproduced by hand, below his diary entry for March 2, 1851, a fascinating treatise which described a new and purportedly superior method of raising fruit trees through the planting of "scions". (See Bibliography - Footnotes).<sup>61</sup>

The location of an "orchard" on the site was proposed by McCollough, but because of the tremendous disturbances to grade at the site, there is no existing hard evidence to provide a definitive location. Available documentary evidence suggests that fruit trees were probably located at various areas around the site, perhaps clustered in small groups, at least by the time that bee-keeping was installed in the spring of 1852.

Previous researchers thought the keeping of bees was short-lived activity conducted by Peter Taft. However, new information indicates that the beehives lasted considerably longer, and that "Grandpa" Taft took pride in the annual harvest of honey. Entries throughout his diary, for the 1850s and 1860s, record gifts of honey to callers. In addition, his diary of 1860 contained a hand-copied reproduction of an ad for: "Harbisons Patent Improved Moveable Comb ... Bee Hive", including the post office address for ordering. Peter Taft also recorded the various swarms of his bees. For example, On June 13, 1861 we find the listing: "Bees swarmed first"; on June 18, "Bees swarmed second"; on the 21st, "Bees swarmed 3rd time"; on the 22nd and 23rd, he records the fourth and fifth swarms of his hive! It's hard not to interpret a triumphant note in the cryptic entry for June 24th: "Took off box honey". Additional entries concerning hive activity are recorded in 1862, including a listing in September of that year of twelve swarms, by year, and the comment: "Put bees on new stand".<sup>62</sup>

Grandpa's diary also mentions working on the grape arbor during the summer of 1852. Evidently this arbor had fallen into disarray, since Grandpa had it "righted up" in late June.<sup>63</sup> By October, grape vines had been purchased. Later diary entries and family correspondences refer to the progress of the grapes, thus we can assume this activity took place on the site, probably at the rear or side of the property.<sup>64</sup>

The vegetation located on the front portion of the property can be identified from 1868 photographs. However, it must be remembered that tree and shrub identifications based on black and white photographs cannot be absolutely definitive. This is especially true when the photographs show a winter landscape, as is the case for one of the two critical historic photographs of the Taft site.

The existence of planting beds at the front and side of the house can be detected and inferred from the c.1868 photographs (Figs A.1 and A.3). In addition, documentary evidence from the Taft correspondence confirms that certain plants were growing during the historic period. For example, in 1867, when Louise purchased the iron vase (visible in Fig. A.1), correspondence indicated that it was for "vines and verbenas".<sup>65</sup> As late as 1878, the Tafts purchased honeysuckle, chrysanthemum, geraniums, heliotropes, verbenas, ageratum, petunia, roses and other plants from Herman Haerlin Florist. This particular purchase was late in the historic era, however, as early as 1854, some of these same plants were growing in beds on the front of the property, as Louise described to her mother in March: "...*There are flower beds beside the front walk and a profusion of sweet honeysuckles and common flowers ... Portulaca.*"<sup>66</sup> Further, a letter from Louise, to her sister Delia in June of the same year mentions that the honeysuckle "*tangled with the rose bushes*" in the beds beside the front walk.<sup>67</sup>

In an 1868 view (Figure A. 1), the two major trees visible in the front yard are poplars. The evergreen placed in the "knuckle" of the walk is an Eastern Red Cedar. It is flanked, approximately fifteen feet from the front wall, by two small decorative trees which could have been dogwoods or redbuds.

There was a small caliper deciduous tree, badly shaped growing hard against the house. There was possibly a third white

poplar planted on the front lawn, several feet off the carriage drive.

The street trees, although unidentifiable in the Taft house photo, can be identified by looking at the photograph of the Burkhardt house (Figure A. 3). In this photograph, the street trees appear to be either Silver or Cut Leaf Maples. We assume that street trees on the Taft property were the same or similar varieties, from their shape. None of the shrubs shown at the front of the Taft house in 1868 are evergreen (Figure A. 1). The two small planting areas at the front of the house could possibly be planted with rose trees, which were a great favorite at the time. Gardeners of this period tended to isolate roses from other plants, we can assume that the low plants in that area are also rose bushes. Similarly, there appear to be a number of perennials behind the fence posts flanking the entrance stair and carriageway. Similar plants appear adjacent to the path that curves around the right side of the house. In the foreground of this same area a circle or oval is visible which could have been "carpet bedding".

The summer view (Figure A. 3) from the front of the Burkhardt house shows a portion of the side yard of the Taft property. Many shrubs are visible. Some of these can be identified as forsythia; an overwhelming vine appended to the lower porch is probably an ivy.

There are no clear photographs (which can be authentically identified as the Taft property) showing the fencing at the rear of the property during the Taft years. Nonetheless, several photographs (Figures A. 11, A. 12, A. 13) of similar properties in the same area indicate that wood fencing was common and would have been one of three or four representative types: four and five board horizontal fences which worked well on steep grades - carried by 4"x4" or 6"x6" upright fence posts; a solid, matched board vertical fence supported by a 2"x4" frame and 4"x4" fence

posts; an interesting vertical paling fence which features two horizontal timbers at the bottom - a fence frequently used to pen small animals (Figure A. 11).

As far as existing studies can determine, Mount Auburn was too refined, even in its more agrarian sectors, for rustic accoutrements like split rail or serpentine fences. Typically, fences constructed at the front and (some) sides of Mount Auburn properties were wrought iron, cast iron and/or stone; those more utilitarian fences located occasionally at the side and more often at the elongated rear of properties were constructed of wood or wire.

#### Historic Views, Site Ambiance and Edges/Boundaries

As the reader will recall, several contemporary commentators remarked upon the bucolic and healthful ambiance of the Mount Auburn neighborhood. The Taft property, especially during the first two decades of Taft ownership, was at the very heart of this gracious neighborhood, surrounded by impressive homes. Cool breezes wafted along the heights, scented in spring and early summer by an explosion of peach, plum, pear and apple blossoms.

The sights and sounds of children playing were certainly a part of the neighborhood ambiance, as well as the clang of trolleys, the clop of horses hooves and the rumble of carriage wheels along the wooden pavement which ran in front of the Taft home.

The Mount Auburn neighborhood was notable for its spectacular views of Cincinnati and the Ohio River. In the decades from 1851 to 1889, when the Tafts lived at the site, the City prospered. The family must have watched with pride as the lights of the city increased in number and spread in an ever-widening arc around the wharves and central business area.

It is unlikely that the Tafts possessed a clear view to the south, toward Hopkins Park, Ringgold and Prospect streets, since the taller Burkhardt house and other structures of similar date would have obstructed it. The near view from the Taft property included the gently sloped Deercreek Valley to the east. This view is partially visible in Figure A. 1, with deciduous trees in the valley forming a soft winter haze in the background, bifurcated by roads across the valley floor. The irregular horizon seen in the far background was undoubtedly the city skyline, hard up against the shore of the Ohio River.

One view, looking northeast from the carriage drive on the Taft property toward the rear of the property at 219 Southern Avenue, may be similar today to the historic period view (overlooking the growth on top of the north wall and other impediments further east). This Southern Avenue house, which dates to the Taft period or earlier, still retains much of its historic configuration, and the rear addition is situated on what must be historic grade (See Figure A. 22). Although there were large deciduous trees in 1868 which screened this view somewhat, the rear of the Southern Avenue house must have been visible during winter and perhaps during other seasons.

The most dramatic changes in the views from the house occur on the north and west. To the north, an empty lot, referred to as the Cross Lot (now owned by the National Park Service) creates a large open space which did not exist during the Taft's tenure. The home of Judge Mallon, and the apartment house which replaced it in the 1880's, helped to maintain the gentle pattern of irregularly spaced residences interspersed with greenswards of lawn and trees, typical of most streets on the brow of Mount Auburn (at least since the mid-1860s). This pattern also existed to the west and southwest of the property (see Figure B. 4) until one's gaze fell upon the more densely populated sectors

below the intersection of Auburn, Saunders and Sycamore Streets. Today, a wall of apartment houses and similar structures gives a sense of greater massing.

The current boundary edge treatments along the front and north sides of the property are the same as they were in historic times, with walls that protect these borders. The historic eastern boundary, completely gone today, would have been bordered by a utility fence (previously described), as the property sloped down toward the valley floor. The eastern boundary of the original property, incidentally, was not straight. The property line jogged back toward the house, approximately halfway between the north and south edges. Undoubtedly, similar fencing separated the rear of the Burkhardt and Taft properties. It is likely that wood or wire fences protected the northern boundary (east of the north retaining wall) as well, although the lots along Southern Avenue which abutted the Taft property were not uniformly developed until after the end of the family's occupation.

#### Changes to the Site Following the Historic Period

While the Alphonso Tafts were abroad from 1882 to 1885, a number of tenants leased the house. Although the Tafts returned and lived there for several more years, they rented it out again upon their permanent move to California in 1889. None of their renters were historically notable, hence we know little of their lifestyles or impact on the landscape development of the Taft site.

Unfortunately, the investigators could find no evidence of changes made to the site during the late 1880s and the 1890s, although the project's scope did not permit an exhaustive search. Thus, the investigators have assumed that the period of Taft-influenced site work concluded by approximately 1889.

Following Alphonso's death in 1891, Colonel Markbreit and his family occupied the house. Mrs. Taft did not return to the house on Auburn Avenue but instead moved to Connecticut where she lived with her sister. During the period of the Markbreit's occupation, Mrs. Taft was concerned that they would require extensive repairs before renewing their lease in April of 1895.<sup>68</sup> However, the Markbreits, agreed to remain for another year at the same rent. Mrs. Taft made several attempts to have friends find another tenant, but they were unsuccessful. Nonetheless, a family called the Hunnewills came forward and signed a five-year lease (after Mrs. Taft ordered the house to be painted and certain interior repairs to be made).

The house was rented to the Hunnewills until 1899, when it was leased to Judge Thompson and his wife. This event caused Mrs. Taft to write to Will enthusiastically about obtaining not only a tenant, but possibly a purchaser. Judge Thompson, like the former tenant, inquired about repairs to the property, including his concern about the Burkhardt's use of the Taft back yard to reach a sewer main on Southern Avenue. When this was resolved, Judge Thompson purchased the property and retained ownership until it was sold again in 1912. After Judge Thompson's death in 1910, Mrs. Thompson offered the property to the park commission for use as a playground. No decision was ever made, and Mrs. Thompson moved out of the house.<sup>69</sup>

During the Thompson's occupancy, a number of changes were made to the architecture which greatly impacted the building's appearance. During this period, the carriage barn and stable were demolished.

It is likely that the Young Street extension was constructed during the Thompson's tenure at the site. If so, it may explain why no mention of this dramatic change to the property's configuration was found in the Taft correspondence.

In 1912, Mrs. Thompson sold the house and lot to Colonel Ruffner, a retired army officer and a man of several distinctions, including service in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In an interview in the Cincinnati Times Star, April 24, 1935, Colonel Ruffner observed that his present hobbies were reading and raising exotic plants "I raised that grape vine from a seed", he stated as he pointed to a long vine climbing up the library window (see Figure A.6 for a depiction of this era). Colonel Ruffner died in the house in 1937. Mrs. De Bus, the Colonel's daughter, inherited the house following her father's death. She negotiated with various organizations regarding the memorialization of Taft's boyhood home, but none of the negotiations bore fruit.

The house was sold in 1940 to Mr. Elbert Bellinger, who owned the former Burkhardt property next door, with the understanding that he would offer first purchase rights to an association concerned with the idea of a Taft Memorial. Mr. Bellinger immediately set out to remedy many of the house's defects. In 1944, when the repair project was about half completed, he became ill and offered the house for sale but later changed his mind and took the property off the market.

Photographic evidence shown in Figures A.16 and A.17 indicates that the fanciful "petrifications" shown in the latter were not constructed until after 1947 and before 1958. The Historic Grounds Report, completed in 1971, states that the "petrifications" were erected by Mr. Bellinger and were not historic <sup>70</sup>. The south driveway, however, dates prior to 1947.

Research revealed that Mr. Bellinger moved certain fixtures and the ornamental limestone gate posts from the former Burkhardt property to the Taft property prior to its demolition and sale to Hamilton County for a Youth Detention Center, in approximately 1950.

Between 1950 and 1960, when a permanent lease was arranged, Mr. Bellinger negotiated with the newly formed Taft Memorial Association. In 1964, the Association began renovations to the house while Mr. Bellinger was still in residence. Renovations activities included removal of the bay windows on the house's south side and sealing of a coal chute.

In 1971, the Historic Grounds Report stated: "*The present conditions of the William Howard Taft home can only be described as very poor in terms of possibilities for thoroughgoing archaeological investigation as provided for in the contract and potential for comprehensive restoration.*" <sup>71</sup> Since 1971, additional research and archaeological investigation has been completed which assisted in bringing the site to its current condition (see Statement of Existing Conditions).

### SECTION III: FIELD SURVEY AND EXISTING DATA

#### Statement of Existing Conditions

The Taft property and house, located on Auburn Avenue, was acquired by the National Park Service in 1969. The Taft house was a forerunner of the Victorian structures which typified the historic neighborhood and established its character. Today, many of these early buildings have been demolished or dramatically altered, leaving yawning gaps in the streetscape and changing the neighborhood's character.

#### Traffic

Auburn Avenue runs north and south with a sixty foot right-of-way and twelve-foot wide sidewalks. It is a two-way treeless street which continues to be a heavily used traffic artery. Trucks, emergency vehicles, private cars, and taxicabs all contribute to the general noise, pollution and distraction. There are frequently used bus stops situated within thirty yards of the Taft house site. Christ Hospital and the Hamilton County Detention Center are both nearby, necessitating frequent emergency vehicle runs in the immediate neighborhood. Traffic signals are located at Southern Avenue on the north and Bodman Street at the base of the Auburn Avenue incline to provide safe crossing to Taft home visitors.

#### Signage and Utilities

Power poles are positioned on the eastern sidewalk of Auburn Avenue and street lights have been installed on these poles along the western curb. City ordinance signs are posted on all of

these poles. The streets surrounding the house (South Bodman and Young) are in good condition; curbs and sidewalks are in fair condition and are well lighted at night.

The utility poles on the east side of Auburn Avenue carry 440 volts. Power to the Taft house is transmitted through a riser on the pole located near the driveway gate, and conducted to the house via a distribution cabinet, located within the driveway retaining wall.

Underground electric conduits serve the uplights which illuminate the building at night and an air conditioning unit in the southeast corner of the property. Water mains in Auburn Avenue supply the house's water including the sprinkler system.

#### Topography and Drainage

Auburn Avenue is located on a north-south spine of the Mount Auburn highlands. After the steep hill climbs from the City, on Sycamore across Dorchester to Mason Street, Auburn Avenue levels out and continues thus through the Taft house area. Before the streets in the neighborhood were laid out, graded and stabilized, many natural drainages paths were discernable, especially off to the east of Auburn Avenue. For example, a drainage path used to run down the hill adjacent to the north property line. Another path existed further north, not more than 150 yards away. Over the years, these drainage paths were blocked by street extensions. Conduits replaced them, to be followed by additions of fill material and the construction of storm sewers. Storm water run-off is still very rapid on paved areas, except where there are low spots caused by insufficient or faulty

drainage runnels or catch basins. Landscaped properties in the neighborhood rarely have problems with standing water.

### Vegetation

As noted, Auburn Avenue lacks street trees in the vicinity of the Taft house property. However, there is vegetation (trees, shrubs and groundcover) in some of the spaces between buildings, becoming quite heavy in the rear yards and open spaces along the lateral streets. Dominant tree species include maple, oak, ash and hackberry. Other trees in the immediate vicinity of the Taft house include golden raintrees, mulberry and ailanthus trees.

Both the Taft site and adjacent Cross Lot are graced by mature and healthy trees including hackberry, ash, locust, and fruit trees at the rear of the house, and mulberry, coffeebean, and golden raintrees on the property's periphery. These trees make the yards seem quite "sylvan". Shrubs include a number of forsythia and spirea growing on the embankment, and locust and ailanthus adjacent to the parking lot, however, there are no shrubs or low plantings on the remainder of the site. Actually, in terms of horticulture, the front yard looks very much as it did in the historic period, although additional plant material was present historically (Figure A. 1). The two small dogwood trees planted by the National Park Service at the front of the property, are appropriate for the era. As mentioned in Section II, the trees visible in the front yard in the historic photograph appear to be dogwood or redbud. Boring samples removed from both of the mature trees (hackberry and ash) in the back yard indicated their age was 85 +/- years old.

### Paths and Drives

An asphalt driveway partially embraces the back of the house (see Survey of Existing Conditions, Appendix C.) The remainder of the property consists of lawn except for two gravel ballasted hardstands to the north of the house. The Auburn Avenue property line is retained by a three-foot-high wall of quarry-faced, ranged limestone ashlar surmounted by four-inch thick rubbed-finish sandstone caps and a wrought iron fence. The wall is interrupted by sandstone steps at its center, leading to the front porch of the house, and by two driveways. All of these openings are graced with attractive, seven-foot-high square, dressed sandstone gate posts. This wall as well as some of its gates and fences have been on the site since the 1860s. The grounds also include a number of herringbone-patterned brick paths. These walks, reconstructed by the National Park Service, do much to set off the house from a shrub-free landscape. The previously mentioned driveway (some portions over eighteen feet wide) is not currently used for vehicular circulation, nor is the short eight-foot by fifty-foot concrete drive which broaches the rise off Auburn Avenue into the site.

### Structures and Furnishings

The north driveway, protected by two five-foot-high chain link gates, is flanked on the north by five curious pylons of brick core, veneered with slabs of fossilized limestone petrifications, which was constructed after 1946 or 1947. (See Figure A. 16, Appendix, for a 1947 photograph of the front of the house). At one time, these pylons were interconnected with wrought iron fencing, and a pedestrian gate (Figure A. 17). Ceramic pots capped each of the pylons. Today, the limestone panels are detaching



from the pylon cores, the pots are gone, and only a few lengths of iron remain. The columns (which do not relate to the Taft period of occupation, nor to a possible later period of significance) now serve little purpose (Figure A. 17). A metal National Park Service project identification sign and a short flagpole are located on the north lawn of the house. The western portion of the gravel driveway has been stabilized by a contemporary limestone retaining wall (constructed within the last ten years). This wall also separates the drive and the Cross Lot. Generally, this wall replicates a low dry rubble wall which existed at the site since at least 1868. It defined the edge of the carriage drive, following grade to an unidentified point at the rear of the house. The current wall has mortared joints, is approximately two feet high, and is normal to grade for the first seventy feet then sloping to disappear into the grade. This wall serves several functions by retaining the driveway, housing the electrical cabinet and sprinkler controls for the house, and acting as a kind of stile for pedestrians to and from the apartment house parking lot, east of the Cross Lot (Figure A. 19).

A brick terrace (part of the walk system reconstructed by the NPS) was installed at the base of this rear wall and is adjacent to an airway, contained by a stepped ranged ashlar masonry wall which is topped with a stepped wrought iron fence.

An air conditioning unit on a concrete base, is positioned at the property's southeast corner. There is a four-inch by four-inch wood hitching post with an iron eye and ring at the top and a concrete horse hobble located in the lawn near the air conditioning unit. Neither the age nor origin of these objects is known (Figure A. 20). There are three small modern metal sheds on concrete pads located in the yard's opposite corner. The National Park Service staff use the sheds and immediately surrounding area to store wood and masonry rubble.

The Taft property is protected by a stout, six-foot-high chain link fence (on its eastern property line) which was probably constructed by the Detention Center. Two rather dilapidated chain link fences are located near the north and south property lines. Neither of them are Taft era amenities. The Cross Lot, now owned by the National Park Service, was the site of Judge Mallon's home during the Taft era and later, (after 1885) of the three-story apartment house (Figure A. 17) now demolished. The empty lot has been graded and seeded and is traversed by a five-foot-wide asphalt walk. The Cross Lot is bordered on the north by a foundation wall and a flight of sandstone steps which are the remains of the old apartment house (Figure A. 17). Its property line is marked by two timber cross-braced fences which separate it from Auburn Avenue and the new apartment house parking lot. The Auburn Avenue fence is interrupted by an interpretive wayside (installed by the National Park Service) which describes the various styles of domestic architecture evident in the Mount Auburn neighborhood.

### Views

Today, the extreme back of the site offers a fine vista of the house and its restored architecture. This view is particularly imposing as the house is three stories high on this side with well proportioned architectural detailing. It is most impressive when viewed from the Detention Center parking lot. Grade changes and the near proximity of the Detention Center building have, of course, destroyed the historic view, once a prominent feature of this portion of the property. This loss is irretrievable, even if plans for a new Detention Center building come to fruition.

The front view of the property from Auburn Avenue is similar to the historic view; however, excavations on the south

boundary, made to accommodate the Detention Center driveway, caused a grade change of approximately four-feet between the two properties which did not exist in historic times. Spatially, this has the effect of further isolating the Taft house from the surrounding neighborhood.

### Summary

Generally, the Taft house and surrounding landscape present a pleasing appearance that is indicative of the upgrading of the surrounding neighborhood. In its present state of restoration, the house represents its era with a natural quality. The Taft property's exterior, with the skyline of great trees framing the roof and the neat lawns and drives at ground level, provides a fitting framework for the historic material located within. The grounds, while seemingly unadorned, are in proper scale with the building (Figure A. 2).

The following recommendation section contains suggestions for landscaping treatments that will be appropriate for the historic period and also meet the needs of park management for visitor services.

## SECTION IV: OPTION ANALYSES AND RECOMMENDED OPTION FOR PRESERVATION

### Preservation Treatment Options

While developing this report, the authors, representatives of the National Park Service Regional Office, and the Historic Site staff decided that it would be beneficial to evaluate a number of possible landscape treatment options. The following paragraphs attempt to briefly evaluate each of the proposed options according to a series of criteria, including the amount of reliable historic documentation available for a particular period, the integrity of existing fabric which remains from that period, and the historical significance of the period, as well as maintenance and interpretive concerns. The proposed options were selected to provide a broad framework for evaluation of all possibilities.

### Leave The Site As It Is Today

In discussing landscape restoration, the questions of integrity, significance, and maintenance are often so difficult to resolve, that a "no action" option may seem preferable. In some cases, this option offers the possibility for later restoration when knowledge of the original material and budgets for implementation may be greater than at present. It is an attractive possibility when there are existing site features having some historic significance, but not correlating to the most appropriate period for restoration.

However, we believe the "no action" option is unrealistic at the Taft house, since its purpose is to interpret a period of history for the visiting public and its landscape obviously contains amenities highly inappropriate to the era being interpreted. Those non-historical site amenities which must remain in the landscape should be clearly interpreted for visitors by means of establishing

relational zones, barriers, or other devices. Further, concerns for the management needs of an interpretive site must also be taken into consideration.

It would be incorrect to state that the landscape could be "left alone". Some alterations to the site are unavoidable - such as removing existing storage buildings, for example, to accommodate its current use.

Obviously, documentation that explains the site's present appearance is good. It is equally obvious that there are serious problems with the historical significance of many elements, although some areas of the site contain features which date to the 1851-1877 period.

### Restore The Entire Landscape To Its Appearance During the Historic Period Of The Main Structure (1851-1877)

Documentation for this period, at least for the front of the property, is good. Two quality historic photographs show plant materials and landscape features such as tree seats, urns, and tree guards, which existed at the site in 1868.

Although more than twenty years of investigation has failed to yield a site plan for the property, researchers have combed the family diaries, correspondence, and other materials and have found references to many of the activities which took place on the landscape during the historic period. In addition, existing photographs show the rear of similar properties in the Mount Auburn area, providing examples of local precedents.

Nonetheless, while we have reasonably good information about what vegetation and structures existed at the rear portion of the landscape, we have virtually no reliable documentation to

determine where they were placed on the site. Further, the property's size reduction and the large additions of fill material to the rear of the site makes archaeological investigation of the rear portion of the original property unrealistic.

Unfortunately, limited archaeological investigation at the front of the property was inconclusive regarding alternate historic locations of walks. To our knowledge, there has been no search conducted for vegetative matter and no pollen analysis made.

Site integrity is reasonably good for the front (or Auburn Avenue) portion of the property. While fragile landscape material has not, of course, survived over a period of one hundred and twenty-five years, many features and elements are still extant in this realm of the property, including gates, fence, piers, and the approximate front grade elevation.

The rear of the property, however, presents numerous obstacles to restoration. The actual size of the lot has dramatically changed to such an extent that it is impossible to reasonably interpret its original use. The only verifiable historic materials are two trees, an ash and a hackberry, both of which are 85 (+/-) years of age, thus making them younger than the period of historic significance. The grade changes which have occurred in this portion of the site have been discussed earlier, but it may be pertinent to recall that original grade may be 10-20 feet below the present level of the site (and even deeper for portions of the original property which are not part of the National Park Service's current holdings).

Obviously, this option, if feasible, would be highly appropriate to complement the historic significance of the house, and would greatly enhance the interpretive capabilities of the site. Any opportunity to give visitors a more complete experience of the environment which influenced and shaped the early years of William Howard Taft would be desirable.

Maintenance concerns for this option, if confined to the front of the property only, would not be unreasonably difficult nor expensive. However, restoration of the original grade and/or plantings to the rear of the house would be extremely costly in terms of installation and maintenance.

**Recommended Option: Restore A Portion Of The Landscape To Its Appearance During The Historic Period Of The Main Structure (1851-1877)**

It is our recommendation to restore as much of the landscape as is feasible to its historic period appearance (c.1851-1877). For reasons of integrity and practicality, however, we recommend that only the portion of the property which retains a reasonable relationship to original grade be selected for restoration. This portion would include the entire front of the property, the north side, from the Auburn Avenue carriage entry, eastward along the north retaining wall to the property's eastern boundary, and southwestward to the northeast corner of the 1851 addition's rear brick terrace. (Note: the transition boundary, as shown on the treatment plan may be truncated at the point where it joins the new storage shed, since this is new construction.) On the southern side of the property, the area of restoration would extend from the original southwest perimeter of the site on Auburn Avenue to a north/south line extending from the southeast corner of the restored rear porch of the main residence. Within the confines of this area, every effort should be made to restore plant materials, structures, grade, and objects as they appeared during the Taft family occupancy. (See this report, "Character of the Site During the Historic Period; Landscape Features, Vegetation and Trees for specific discussion of possible flowers and plants).

This, then, would be a demonstration site for those who wish to better understand the property as it appeared during Taft's boyhood. Contemporary site elements such as the flag pole and sign would be relocated to a highly visible, appropriate spot on the Cross Lot immediately adjacent to the property. (See enclosed site restoration plan, Figure C.4).

The non-historic pillars which are located along the historic property line would be removed. The portions of iron fence which still remain should be removed but appropriately marked and stored since they may be contemporary with the Burkhardt fence.

#### Further Investigation Of North Retaining Wall

The north retaining wall, or at least that portion of it which runs from a line extending north from approximately opposite the carriageway entrance and eastward to the property boundary, is one of the few remaining site features containing original, historic fabric from the Taft era. Mark Chavez, in his *North Retaining Wall Historical Analysis and Existing Conditions Report*, thoroughly analyzed the existing wall conditions, completed initial tests for historic mortar, and made deductions about the historic fabric from previous research reports. He recommended several additional avenues of investigation which should take place before any further activity occurs.

The consultant team conducted an additional investigation of the north retaining wall area in May of 1992. A summary of the investigation results follows and a complete copy of the report is available as a separate document (see Supplemental Investigative Report of Conditions In The North Retaining Wall).

#### Summary of Conclusions: North Retaining Wall Investigative Report

The examination of the wall revealed that it was composed in large part of fill which had been placed at different times (Figure B.12). The fill material varied greatly in quality and had been added to the site by previous owners of the property over a considerable period of time. According to our investigation, the wall's disordered appearance was not caused by the collapse of a former, unified wall (once built to the present height). Instead, the conglomeration of stone, brick and concrete visible in this area appears to have been placed atop the filled bank.

At Sta. 1+34.3 individual footing stones were revealed at the lowest depth of Trench V. These were very similar in ashlar, mortar and construction to the complete footings found in Trench IV at Sta. 0+88. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that these represent portions of a single historic structure. From approximately Sta. 0+67 to Sta. 1+04, there are remnants or complete sections of the historic wall remaining, probably dating to the Taft era. In some cases this wall is overlaid with fill material, plus a mix of materials used to add-on or repair it. In some places it is totally obscured by the fill material. From this investigation, it appears that the historic wall contained an extensive footing and foundation which in some places extended as much as five feet below grade, particularly where it supported earth.

The historic wall section is marked by a row of clearly discerned vertical limestone capstones. These capstones undoubtedly represent the top of the original wall. The angle of descent of these stones is consistent with the steep decline of the original carriageway which is apparent in the historic photo of c. 1868 (Figure A.1). A rebuilt section of wall above the capstones

(Sta. 0+88), is composed of similar masonry and mortar. However, these masonry techniques were in use for a long period and this rebuilt section could have been completed at any time from the Taft era onward. (No documentary evidence has been found in the Taft correspondence to substantiate additional rebuilding episodes, thus they would seem unlikely.) It is not possible to conclusively date this section from existing evidence. However, it seems likely that the rebuilding occurred after the Taft occupation but prior to the early/mid part of this century.

The report (see Supplemental Investigative Report Of Conditions In The North Retaining Wall) concludes that there is sufficient historic period (Taft era) wall fabric to warrant its retention, repair and restoration rather than extensive demolition and rebuilding, as was previously suggested. The consulting engineer's report (see Appendix of Supplemental Investigative Report of Conditions In The North Retaining Wall) does not comment on the condition of the bank fill; however, the presence of a 60-year-old tree rooted into the bank would seem to indicate that at least the fill around the tree is stable at this time.

#### Protection and Rehabilitation Use

The investigative team also recommends that treatment plans for the rear portion of the site include protection. Protecting this area of the landscape will leave the current grade undisturbed and preserve subsurface archaeological resources for possible future study and interpretation.

Additionally, this area could be designated as an area for rehabilitative use -- a facility for interpretive wayside exhibits in the open air. Such an area would enhance the visitor's understanding of the original site topography and of typical

agrarian activities which occurred in many Mount Auburn suburban homes during the nineteenth century.

This treatment is recommended because the investigative team believes that it conforms to NPS policy by requiring minimal alteration of the landscape, although the NPS does not currently use this portion of the landscape in its historic presentation. The limited historic fabric and some contemporary elements of the rear portion of the landscape (the north retaining wall, the rear brick terrace and the grade elevation on the south side) should be retained. Intrusive features which do not possess significance in their own right should be removed.

Features which have attained significance in their own right (such as the two trees in the rear portion of the property), should be retained and identified for visitors, giving indications of their age and type.

The rehabilitative use/exhibit area should be cleared of non-historic elements such as the steel sheds and inappropriate fences which are visually distracting and do not provide for visitor safety. The air conditioning units, located on a portion of the property beyond the original Taft era property line, will be retained and sensitively screened from view.

Screening the rear property line with plant material will establish the boundary of the potential interpretive area on the east side. Other plantings on the south side will be designed to screen the adjacent property from view. Other than the two historic trees, which should remain and be replaced when necessary, the remaining rear portion of the Taft property should provide a clean slate for innovative interpretive purposes. In other words, this portion of the site would be treated in a rehabilitative manner, providing for increased safety and function of its use as an interpretive park.

As stated earlier, the rear portion of the property has lost its integrity because of massive ground manipulations. The exception to this is the area of the existing retaining wall which may have historic fabric in its lower portions. These facts provide additional rationale for this treatment recommendation. As mentioned previously, this area will be considered part of the restoration area. A separate preliminary plan, reflecting a treatment which stabilizes the historic resource and provides plantings and appropriate fences for visitor safety, is included with this report (see Appendix).

The "treatment transition boundaries", (boundary line between the restored landscape area and the area designated for rehabilitative use), should not be so subtle as to confuse or mislead the visitor. On the north edge, a "line" should define this demarcation. This line could be defined in a wayside exhibit, or by a change in vegetation. On the south edge, the transition line would end opposite the southern porch. The wicket fence (visible in the c. 1868 photograph, Fig. A.1) would end at this point, thus marking the limit of historic plantings. The nature and definition of these boundaries should be studied in greater detail as part of Title II design responsibilities.

An amendment to the Taft house Interpretive Prospectus is recommended, to allow for the study of the location and scope of the proposed wayside exhibits.

The plantings and proposed site improvements specified for the Taft house landscape restoration will serve as a good example to the Auburn Avenue community. The Taft house staff is to be commended for their support of various local historic and community groups. Following completion of the proposed restoration, the staff should be able to assist others with historic landscape preservation questions on similar properties within the neighborhood.

### Alternatives Considered But Not Recommended

#### Recreate The Appearance Of The Landscape In The 1920s

As mentioned previously, this was a period when the Taft house was in the possession of Colonel Ruffner, prior to the neighborhood's deterioration. However, events such as the Young Street extension caused major changes to the property's boundaries. Documentation for this period is sparse and we do not have any correspondence, site plans, or other definitive material available to us except for three photographs, speculatively dated between 1910 and 1930 (Figures A.5, A.6, and A.7). These photographs illustrate that both side yards of the Taft house were heavily planted with fruit trees, shrubs, annuals, and vines. These plantings and cloth awnings added to the typical landscape of that period creating a pleasant outdoor experience for the family.

However, the historical significance of this period is limited at best. The activities of Colonel Ruffner and his family, while interesting, have no relationship to any member of the Taft family. Further, restoring the landscape to its 1920s appearance would not correlate with the house as it stands today -- restored to the historic Taft occupation period (1851-1877). During the 1920s, the house displayed the configuration which followed the major remodeling of 1877. Obviously, a recreation of the 1920s landscape would create a serious anomaly. Maintenance and interpretive concerns would also be costly for this option. Finally, a complete restoration of the property to its 1920 appearance would not be possible since a portion of the acreage was sold to the County in 1950.

### Recreate The 1940-50 Landscape

Documentation for this period includes a few photographs, primarily of the front yard (Figure A.16). E. R. Bellinger, who bought the house in 1940, displayed considerable concern (Mc Collough's Historic Grounds Report, 1971) that any changes made to the house would be reversible. However, modifications made to the house's exterior and landscape during his period of ownership would be very difficult to reverse. As mentioned earlier, large amounts of fill (earth and old asphalt) were added to the rear of the Taft site with the municipality's cooperation.

Evidence from archaeological investigations indicates that walks, patios, and various driveways were installed either at this time or slightly earlier. Some of the photographs for this time period include views of front yard vegetation, however, no details, surveys, or plans are available.

Utilizing the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, it is difficult to establish a rationale for this option's historic significance. Obviously, restoring the landscape to its 1940-50 appearance would not correlate with the restored main structure. However, this option would permit the retention of the stone and brick posts which are evident at the site today, a possible benefit. A photograph from the Library of Congress collection (Figure A. 16) establishes that these additions were made after 1946 or 1947. These posts were probably installed around 1950, an age presently considered non-historic. Of course, if these posts met any National Register Criteria, overriding matters of age, they could be retained. However, in this instance, it is safe to say that these posts do not meet such criteria.

Maintenance concerns for this option are probably no more or less than they for any of the others. However, the questions of interpretation which this option presents are similar, possibly more

complicated and confusing, than for the option previously discussed.



SECTION V  
APPENDIX

### Section V: Footnotes

1. Ishbel Ross, *An American Family: The Tafts--1678 to 1964*. Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1964, pp. 5-10.
2. Ibid., pp. 3-4.
3. PRT Diary, 7/19/1851, WHT Papers, Series 11, as quoted in Edwin C. Bearss, *WHT National Historic Site, Historic Structure Report - Historical Data - Home*, NPS, October 1972.
4. Ibid., p. 13.
5. Ibid., p. 17.
6. Ishbel Ross, *An American Family: The Tafts-1678 to 1964*, p. 27.
7. Edwin C. Bearss, *WHT National Historic Site, Historic Structure Report*, NPS, 1972, p.73.
8. John T. Dallas, *Mr. Taft*, Littleton, N.H.: Courier Printing Co., 1949, p. 14.
9. Ibid., pp. 112-114.
10. Ibid, p. 54.
11. *The WPA Guide to Cincinnati*, Cincinnati Historical Society, p. 28.
12. John T. Dallas, *Mr. Taft*, p. 8.
13. "Map of the City of Cincinnati and its Famous Suburbs", 1898, Cincinnati Historical Society.
14. Luke Feck, Yesterday's Cincinnati, Miami, E. A. Seamann, 1975, p. 9.
15. "A Cincinnati Daguerreotype", Cincinnati Public Library, Rare Books Division.
16. John R. Stilgoe, *Borderland, Origins of the American Suburb*, New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, 1988, p. 56.
17. Sidney D. Maxwell, *The Suburbs of Cincinnati, Sketches Historical and Descriptive*. Cincinnati: Geo. E. Stevens & Co, 1870, Introduction.
18. "Map of the City of Cincinnati and its Famous Suburbs", 1898, Cincinnati Historical Society Map Collection.

19. Bruce Tucker, *Mount Auburn 1780-1988, A Narrative Chronicle*, MSS, Center for Neighborhood & community Studies, Univ. of Cincinnati (copy in the collection of the William Howard Taft National Historic Site) p. 42, Tucker uses as his source a "Road Book", Vol I, 7 in the Engineering Department, Cincinnati City Hall.
20. Ibid., p. 56.
21. Ibid, p. 56.
22. Map, 1930, "Annexations to City of Cincinnati, 1802-1913" (revised 1924) Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.
23. Bruce Tucker, *Mount Auburn, 1780-1988 A Narrative Chronicle*, p. 58, p. 67.
24. Sidney D. Maxwell, *The Suburbs of Cincinnati*, p. 104.
25. Ibid., p. 104.
26. Ibid., p. 105.
27. Mount Auburn Young Ladies Institute, *Mt. Auburn Index*, 1868-71, Cincinnati, Ohio 1869, p. 36.
28. Sidney D. Maxwell, *The Suburbs of Cincinnati*, p. 106.
29. Ibid., p. 114.
30. One rarely sees, even in the case of high walls, any pronounced rake. The principal was known, but evidently Mount Auburn craftsmen felt that walls in the moderate-to-low profile did not require rake. Hence today one is able to observe that many of these structures have a markedly outward tilt. If wood shoring was used to hold grade, this investigative team is not aware of it. The principal was known at that time, because wood shoring was used not only as temporary measure, but as permanent structures on railroads.
31. Sidney Maxwell, *The Suburbs of Cincinnati*, p. 124.
32. Ibid., p. 126.
33. John H. White, Jr., "The Cincinnati Inclined Plane Railway Company: The Mount Auburn Incline and the Lookout House", *The Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin*, Vol. 27, No. 1, Spring, 1969, p. 7.
34. Ibid., pp. 11-12.
35. Sidney D. Maxwell, *The Suburbs of Cincinnati*, p. 128.

36. Sidney D. Maxwell, *The Suburbs of Cincinnati*, p. 106.
37. Favretti, R. J. and J. P., *Landscapes and Gardens for Historic Buildings*, p. 62.
38. Scott, Frank J., *The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home Grounds*, p. 39.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
40. Although contour maps had been used since the seventeenth century, the tightly arranged parallel pen lines were the accepted if less than accurate, method of showing relief in ground forms on many maps. By the time of the American Civil War, engineers and surveyors had been able to make physical maps using a comprehensive method of delineation, through the use of different space and length lines to indicate the direction of the slope, its steepness (generally expressed as percentages), and other features. In Europe, contour lines had been in use since the seventeenth century for recording elevation levels, generally under water. By the 1830s, contour lines were accepted in Europe for the demonstration of an equal distance above datum (generally sea level). Chas. Singer, E. J. Holmyard, A. R. Hall & T. I. Williams, Eds., *A History of Technology*, NY/London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1958, Vol. V, pp.438-441.
41. "Map of Cincinnati", 1847, Cincinnati Public Library, Map Collection.
42. Peter Rawson Taft Diary, November 4, 1862.
43. Leslie Perry, *Archaeological Report*, 1982, p. 11.
44. Major Charles Ross McCollough, *Archaeological Investigation of Grounds*, 1972, p. 44.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
46. (Reference to come - family correspondence of 1883).
47. Major Charles Ross McCollough, *Archaeological Investigation of Grounds*, pp. 48-9.
48. Mark A. Chavez, *Brick Walks Historic Structures Report*, William Howard Taft National Historic Site, NPS, July 1988.
49. Major Charles Ross McCollough, *Archeological Investigation of Grounds*, pp. 30-31.
50. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.
51. Eric Sloane, *Our Vanishing Landscape*, New York: Wilfred Funk, Inc., 1955, p. 70.
52. Alphonso Taft to William Howard Taft, December 1884, from St. Petersburg, Russia, Folder 11, Collection of the William Howard Taft National Historic Site.

53. Peter Rawson Taft Account Books, December, 1851.
54. PRT Diary, September 4, 1851.
55. PRT Account Books, April 9, 1852.
56. PRT Diary, April, 1852 (various dates) and June 2, 1852.
57. PRT Diary, March 17 - 19, 1852.
58. PRT Diary, June 12, 1852.
59. PRT Diary, April 9, April 10, April 15; 1852.
60. PRT Diaries, February 9 & 19, 1852; April 8 & June 20, 1852.
61. The treatise is written beside the margin headings "Fruit Trees" and "Fruit Trees, How Raised". It reads, in part, "The new method of raising fruit trees by planting scions is a great consideration in the art of obtaining good fruit. It has many advantages over grafting because it is more expeditious and requires no stalk nor tree. They may be planted where they are required to stand and the labor for one day will be sufficient to plant out enough for a large orchard after the scions are obtained. The method for preparing the plant is as follows: Take the scion as for grafting and at any time after the first part of February and until the buds begin to grow considerably and dip each end of the shoot into melted pitch was or tallow and bury it in the ground, the bud uppermost while the body lies in a horizontal position and at the depth of two or three inches. We are informed that trees obtained in this way will bear in four years from the time of planting. We have no doubt of the practicability of this method of raising fruit. A gentleman in this vicinity the last season planted about twenty scions of different kinds of pears which appear to flourish. The composition he used was melted shoemakers wax ..." PRT Diary March 2, 1851.
62. PRT Diary, September 6, 1862.
63. PRT Diary, June 28, 1852.
64. PRT Diary, June 28, 1852; PRT Acct. Books, October 20, 1852.
65. Anna to Delia, Cincinnati, April 30, 1867.
66. Haerlin to Alphonso Taft, October 31, 1878, "Bills Paid by A. Taft, Oct. 1876-May 1882, WHTMA", in Taft notes, provided by Edwin Bearss, August 7, 1972; Louise T. Taft to her mother, March 20, 1854, in McCollough, Historic Grounds Report, October, 1971, p. 37.
67. Louise Taft to Delia Torrey, June 5, 1854, quoted in miscellaneous notes, supplied from WHTNHS archives.

68. Louise Taft to WHT, Nov. 20, 1894, quoted in Edwin C. Bearss, *WHT Historic Structures Report*, p. 136.

69. Edwin C. Bearss, *WHT Historic Structures Report*, p. 141.

70. Major Charles Ross McCollough, *Historic Grounds Report*, 1971, p. 45.

71. *Ibid.*, McCollough, p. 43.

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### Maps

Several repositories were consulted for this report. The most comprehensive collection was found at the Cincinnati Historical Society. Among their vast collection, approximately fifteen to twenty were consulted for this publication. Particularly helpful were:

Sewer Map (977.14C B662 1880 Map B) - Produced by Strobridge Litho Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, 1880; Shows the limit of sewer line development c. 1880.

1874 Map, (photostat, 977.14C C574W, Map C 3D); Shows streets at the rear of the property.

Plat Map, Vol.2 1924 (977.14CP fc574 MapW2) Shows property configuration (full property), as owned by Robert C. Thompson

The Cincinnati Public Library also has an excellent collection of historic maps. Many are on microfilm. For this report, early Hamilton County maps dated 1835, 1847 (2) and 1856 were helpful, as well as the Titus Atlas of 1869 and an 1891 atlas. Also consulted were the library's collection of Sanborn insurance maps, including those for 1904, those updated to 1951 and the earliest Sanborn (1887), on microfilm which, unfortunately does not contain a volume for Mount Auburn.

Sanborn and Company was contacted, and they verified that the 1887 issue did not include a volume for the Mount Auburn area - it was never produced, although it is listed on the index.

The National Cartographic Information Center was contacted for the out-of-print USGS map of the OH-KY Cincinnati, West Quad, 1898-1900 map, which was unavailable through local sources.

The Engineering Division of the City of Cincinnati was extremely helpful in providing copies of the 1912 USGS map of Cincinnati, showing the Mount Auburn, Auburn Avenue area.



### Other Primary Source Material

Although the scope of this report did not include extensive work in original documents, several repositories were consulted:

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress - For drawings, and photographs of the William Howard Taft home at Mount Auburn. The collection contained several photos, including one new to the researchers, dated 1947.

MSS Division, Library of Congress - The Papers of William Howard Taft on microfilm. Series 11, Family Diaries - In particular, the Diary of Peter Rawson Taft - I.

The University of Cincinnati, Microform Division. The Papers of William Howard Taft on microfilm are also in the collection of the University of Cincinnati, and Reel 608, Vol 8 of Series 11, which contains the Diary of Peter Rawson Taft - I was consulted for the years 1855 - 1862.

The archives of the William Howard Taft National Historic Site were consulted for various correspondence between members of the Taft family. Particularly helpful was material in folders 9 - 12. In addition, their collection of photographs was extremely useful.

**Section V: Appendix**

**Historic and Modern Photographs (Figures A.1. - A.22.)**

**Maps and Drawings (Figures B.1. - B.12.)**

**Cost Estimates: Site Restoration Treatment, Site and Cross Lot Streetscape Restoration, Cross Lot Restoration, North Retaining Wall Treatment, and Sanning Property Streetscape Restoration**

**Enclosures: Site Survey (C.1-3), Recommendations (C.4, O.1)**

FIGURE A.1: A c.1868 view of the house from Auburn Avenue. This image demonstrates that grade for the front portion of the house has been fairly stable. A low berm, running north and south behind the seated figures has been removed. Source: Collection of the William Howard Taft National Historic Site.



FIGURE A.2: A 1991 view taken from approximately the same position as the historic photograph (Figure A.1). This image demonstrates that grade behind the house has been built up and that the background is filled with mature trees. Source: The Westerly Group, Inc.

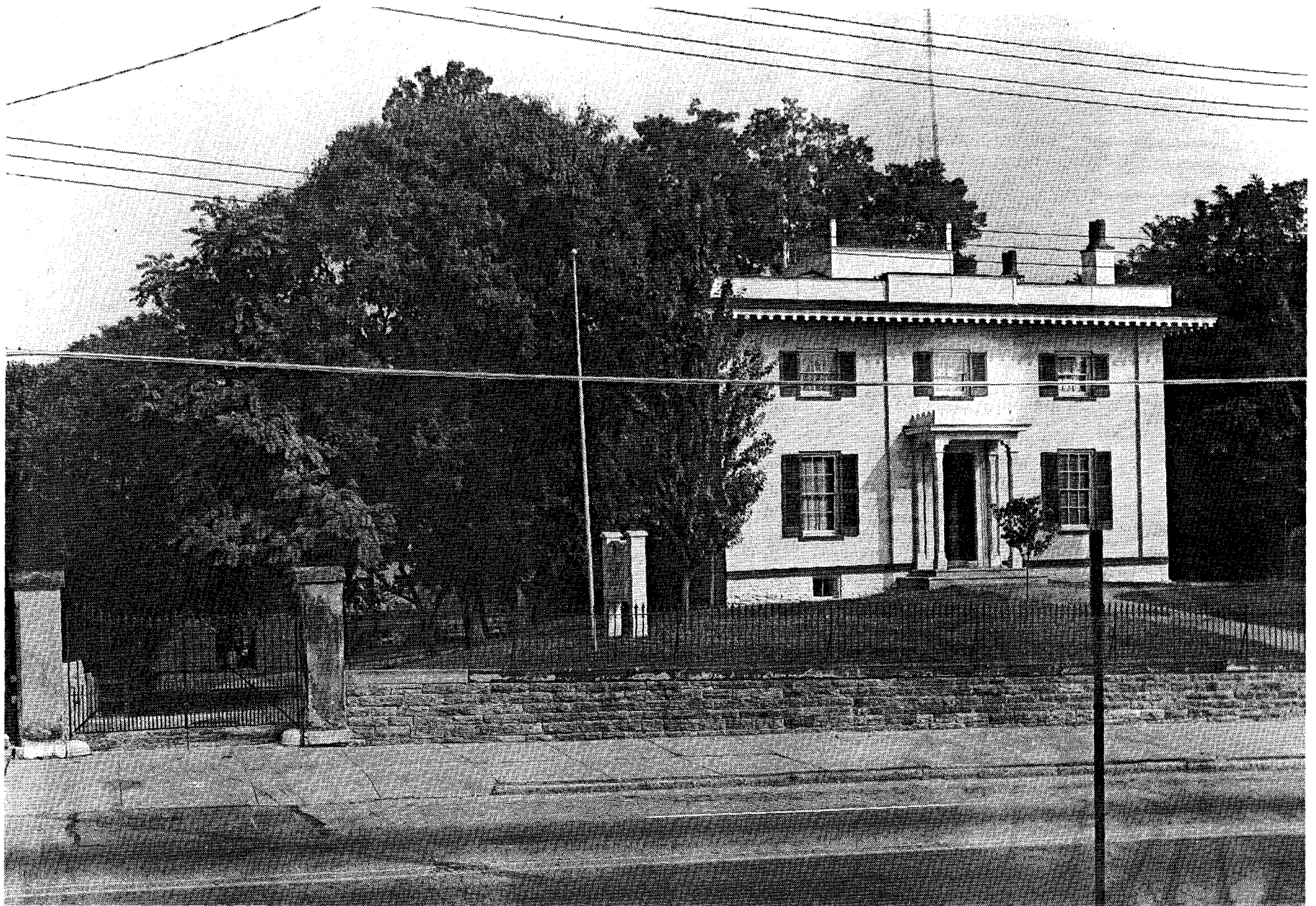


FIGURE A.3

1868 view of the lovely Italianate house owned by C. F. Burkhardt when this photograph was made c. 1868. Razed in 1950. Source: William Howard Taft National Historic Site Archives

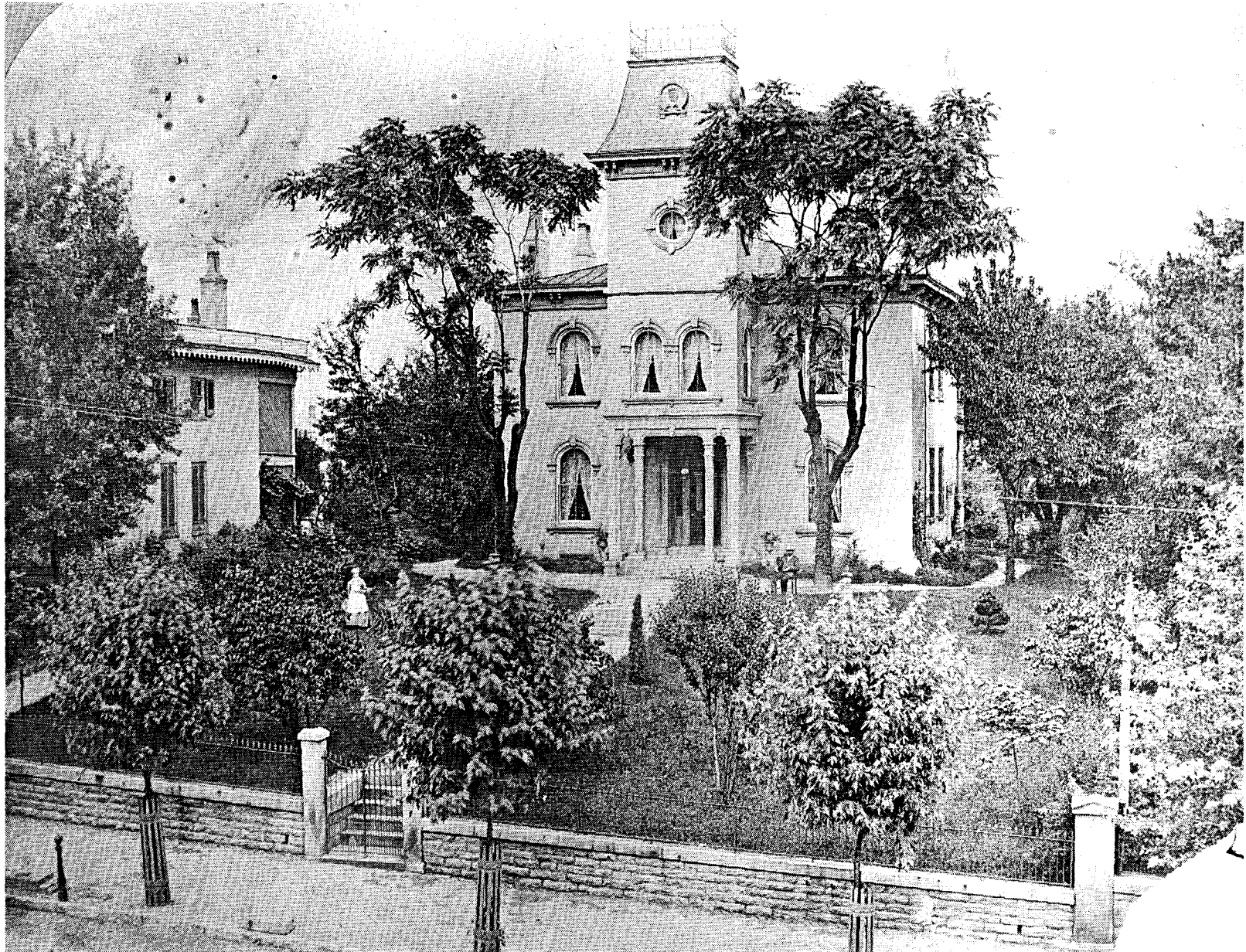


FIGURE A.4

A c. 1892 view, looking west up into the back yards of the houses on Auburn Avenue. Bodman Street is at left center and the massive fill used to extend Young Street can be seen in the upper right. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.



FIGURE A.5: A c. 1910 view of the southeast corner of the house, showing a healthy grape vine, its arbor and a brick path which allegedly led to the privy shown at right. A 1991 view of the scene shown at left. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society (right); The Westerly Group, Inc. (left).

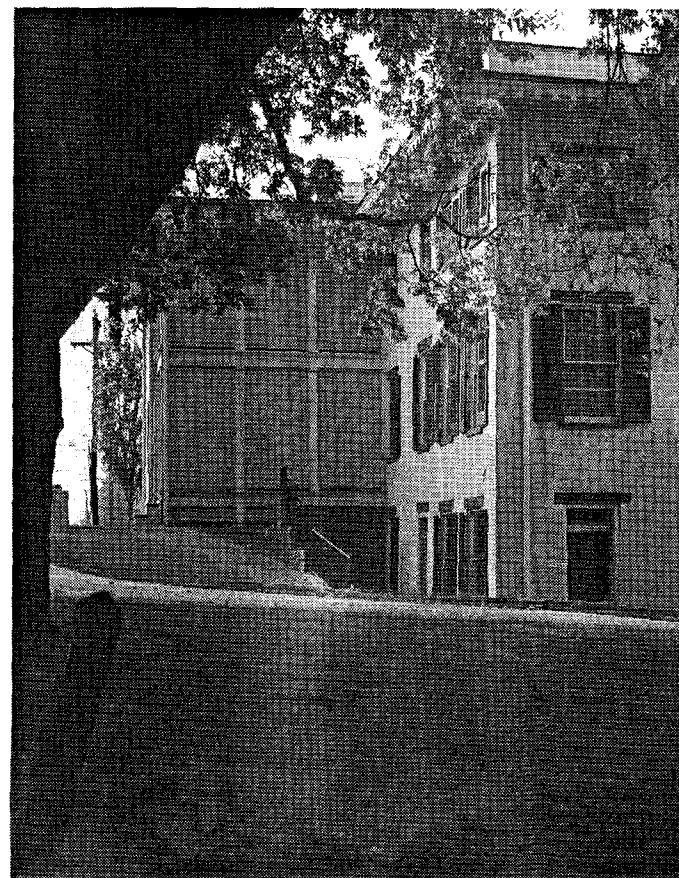


FIGURE A.6: Two c. 1910 views of the Taft house, one looking east (shown at right) and one looking west (shown at left) along the south side; Trees and extensive shrubs are visible in this sunny area. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.

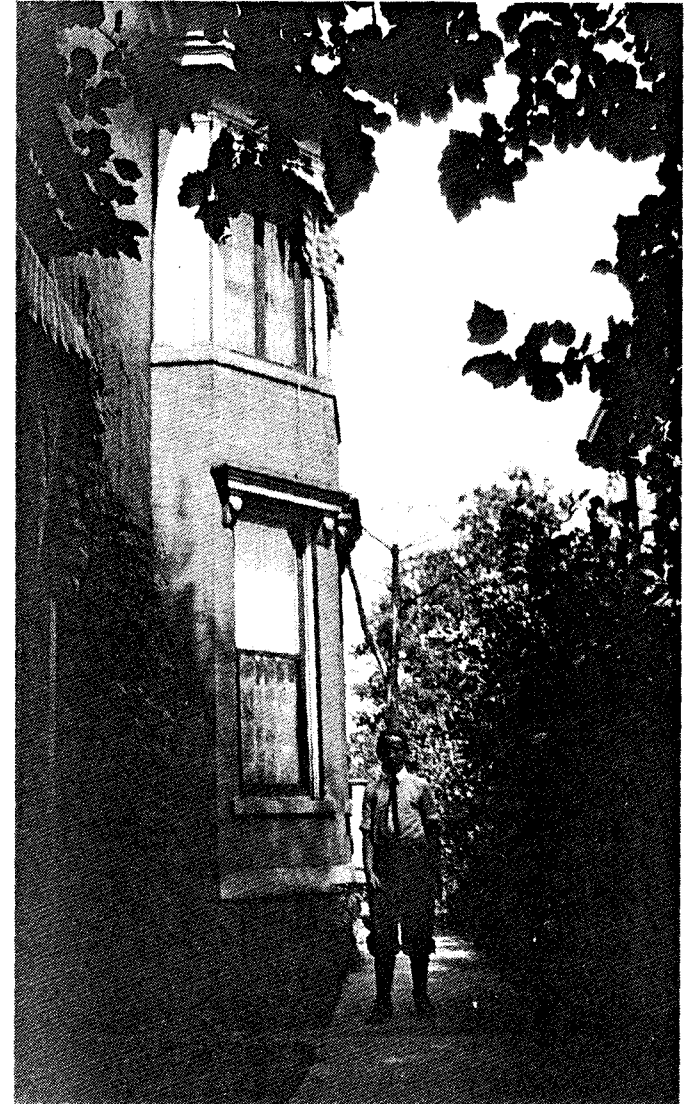




FIGURE A.7: A possible c. 1920 view of fruit trees situated on the north lawn of the house, similar to where the replacements are located today. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.



FIGURE A.8: A c. 1908 winter image of the house with a dead tree at left. The date of this photograph and the one which follows it is questionable, since the same tree is shown as live and mature in Figure A.9. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.



FIGURE A.9: A c. 1910 view of the house showing two healthy Buckeyes in the front yard and Golden Rain trees along the property line. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.



FIGURE A.10: A c. 1880 view of the Cincinnati Incline, Plane Railway Co., (before crash of 1889). Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.

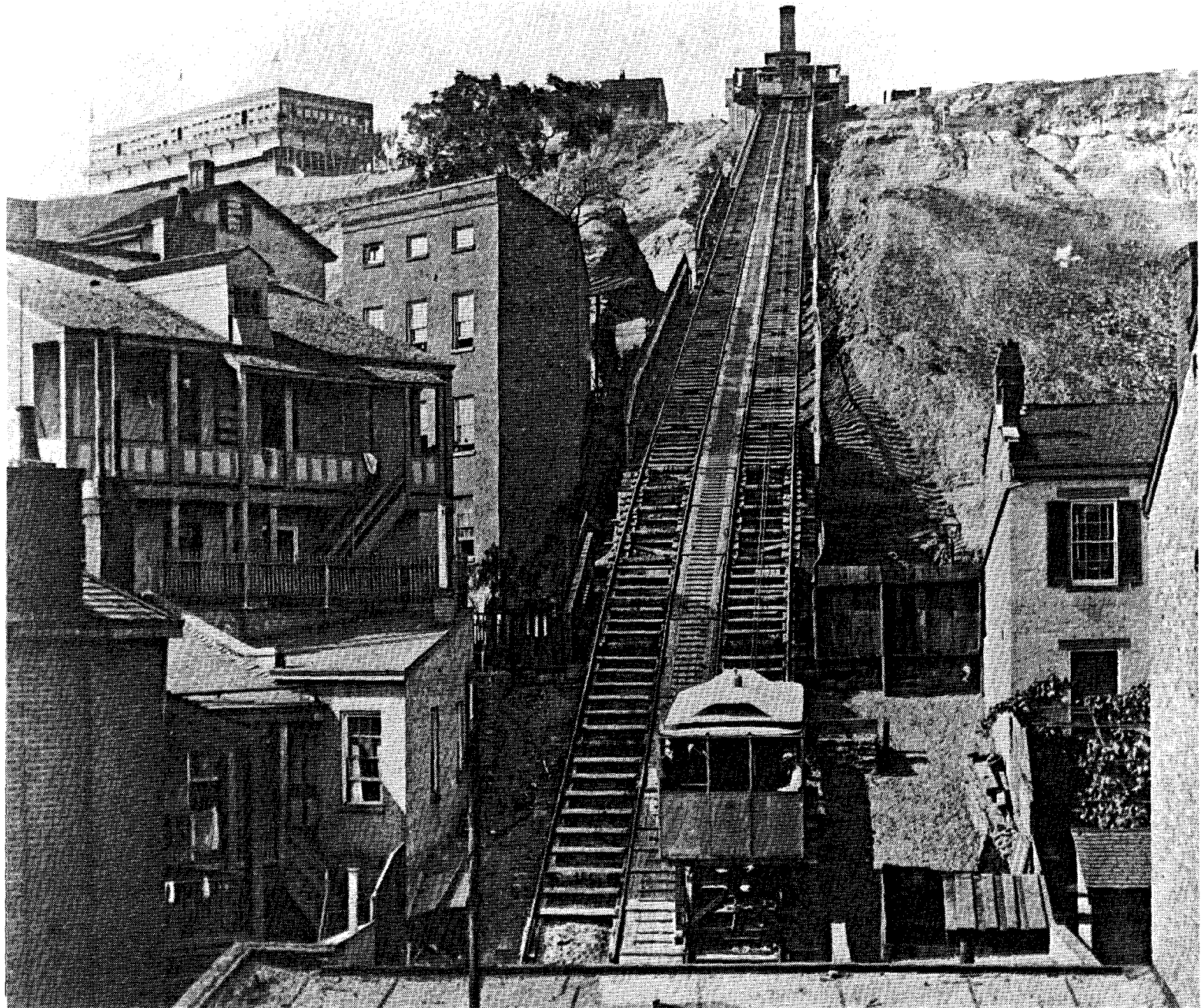


FIGURE A.11: A c. 1885-90 view of Mount Auburn back yards - It is clear from this photograph that homeowners in the Mount Auburn area maintained agrarian activities in the rear of their properties. Typical farm board fences are apparent, gardens, pasture land, fruit trees and vine culture can be detected. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.



FIGURE A.12: A c. 1885-90 Mount Auburn scene showing girls at play. This photograph also shows the extreme slope of the terrain in the vicinity of the Taft property and the typical outbuildings, fences and other backyard features. Note the vines visible behind the young woman on the left. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.



FIGURE A.13: A possible c. 1861-65 photograph that may have been taken during, or shortly after the civil war. It depicts an ornate Italianate home in Mount Auburn which displays several features similar to those found on the Taft property: Large, columnar tree protectors, a random ashlar retaining wall, limestone piers, iron fence, and decorative urn. Note the change in masonry as the retaining wall recedes away from the street and the front facade. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.

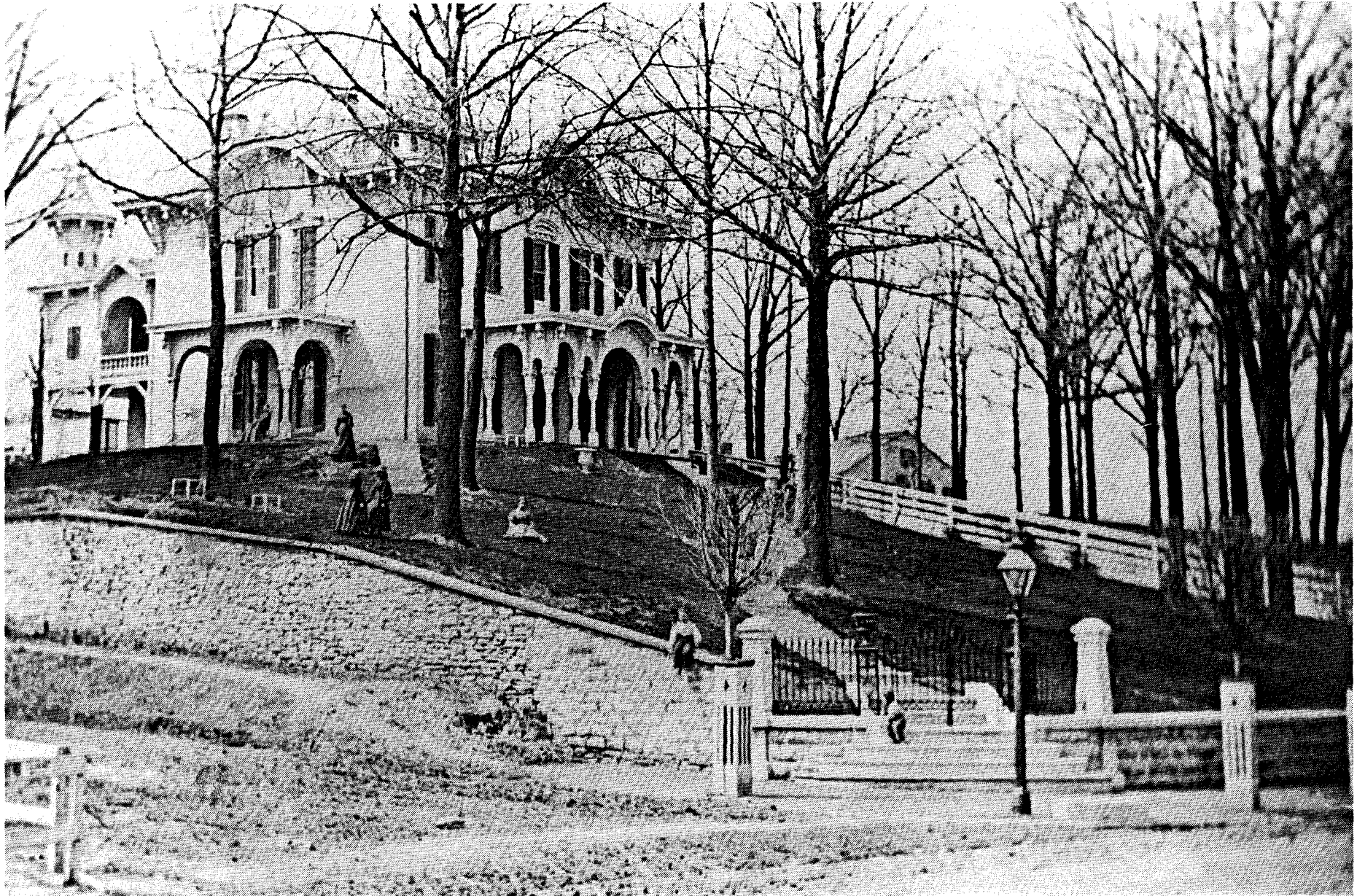


FIGURE A.14: A 1887 Mount Auburn street scene. The design of the ornate iron fence which frames the lower foreground of this photograph can still be found in Mount Auburn today. Across the street, similarly ornate iron fences, atop limestone base courses demark the stately homes which were once the pride of the neighborhood. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.





FIGURE A.15: A c. 1900 Mount Auburn street scene. Note the diversity of decorative iron fencing, limestone pillars, overhanging tree canopy and the presence of the street railway - all typical elements of the neighborhood ambiance during the years when the Taft family was in residence on Auburn Avenue. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.

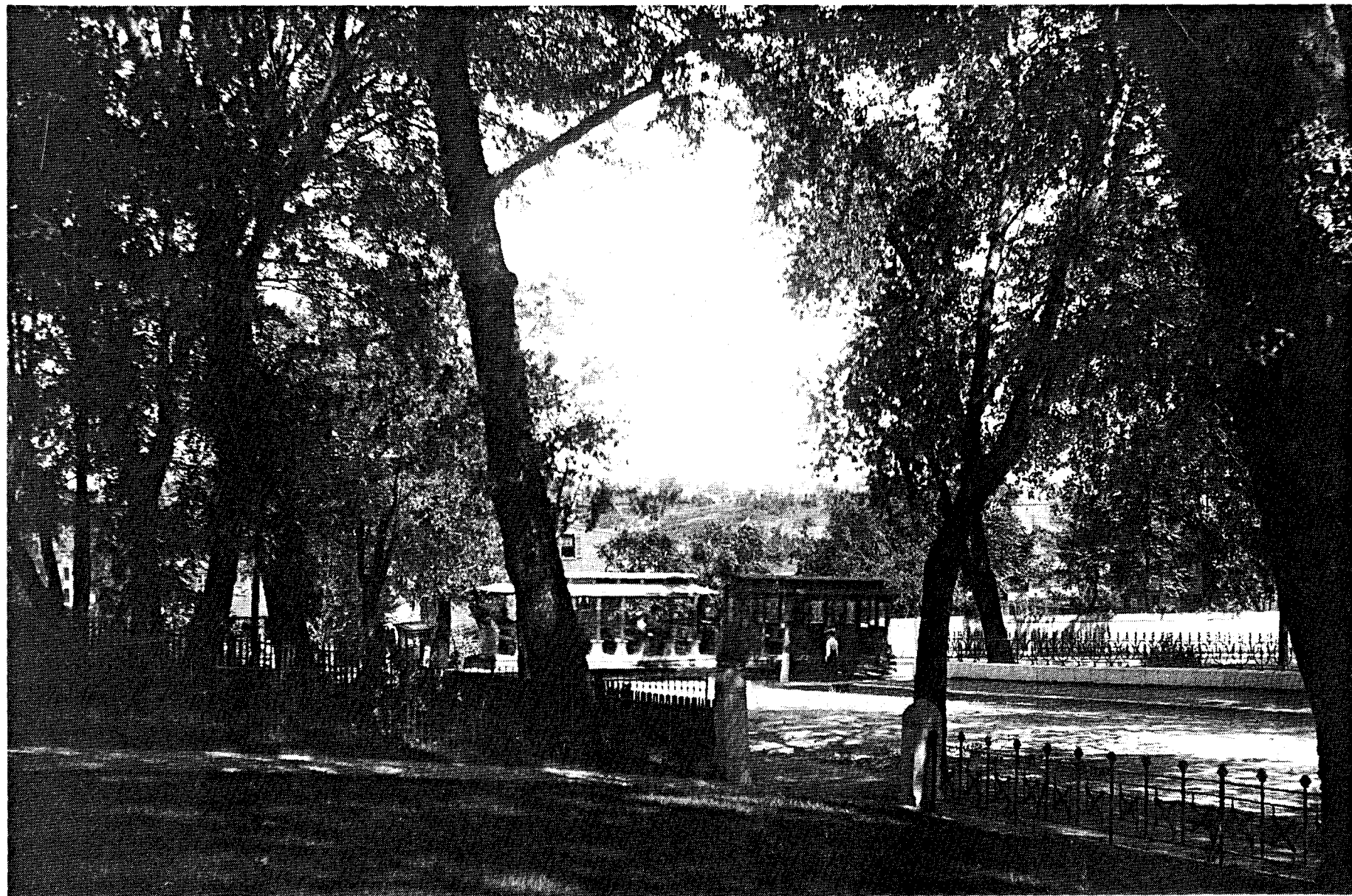


FIGURE A.16: A c.1947 view showing the front of the Taft house. Note the absence of the brick and limestone columns as seen in Figure A.19. Source: The Library of Congress, Print & Photo Division.



FIGURE A.17: A 1958-63 view of the new Detention Center driveway, the petrifications, complete with pottery and cast iron and an oblique view of the apartment house on the Cross Lot. Source: The Cincinnati Enquirer.

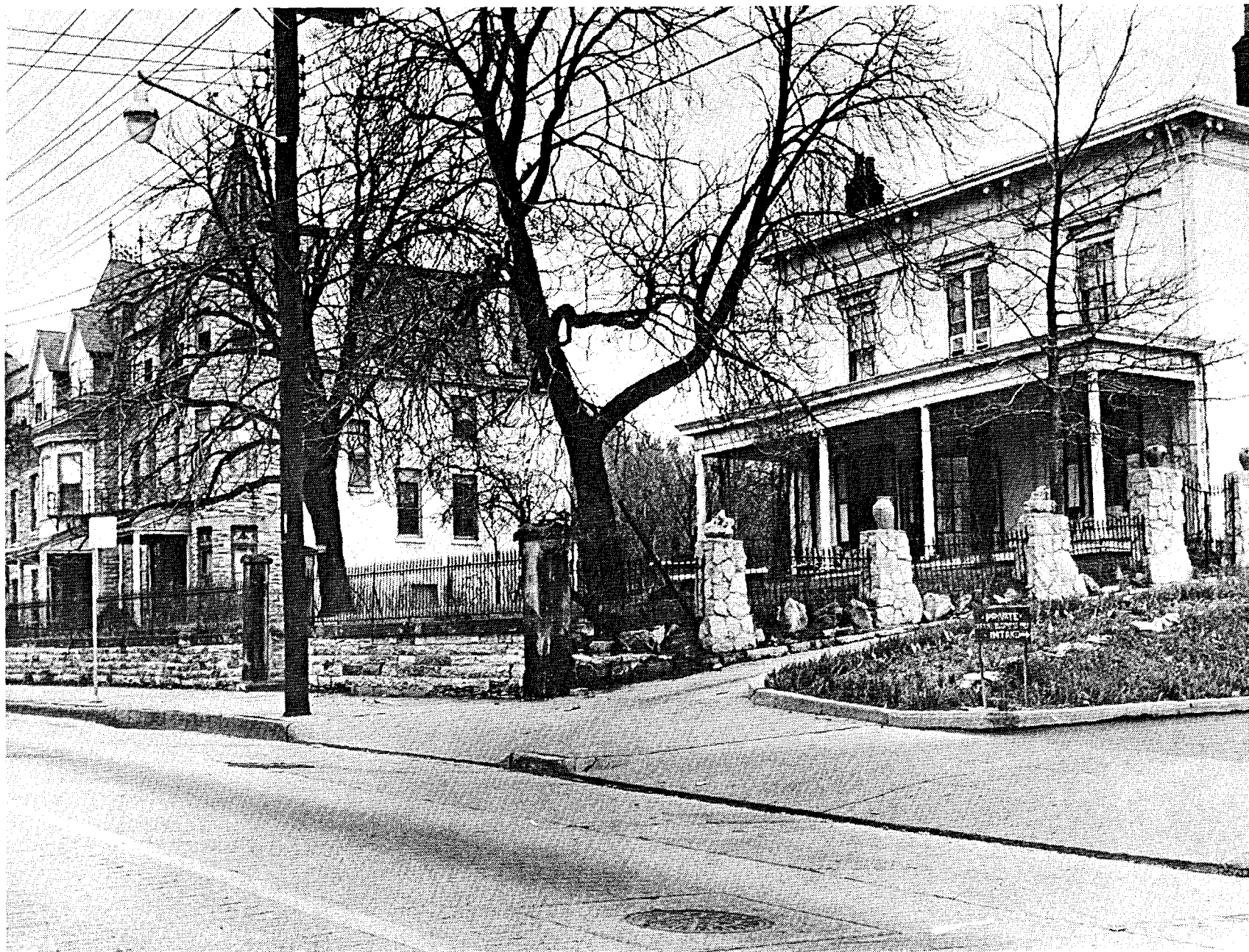


FIGURE A.18: A c.1955-60 view, looking at the southeast corner of the house, of a masonry curb, or possibly the top of a retaining wall shown at right. A 1991 view of this feature, of unknown origin, can be seen in the south drive today, shown at left. Sources: William Howard Taft National Historic Site Archives (right); The Westerly Group, Inc. (left).

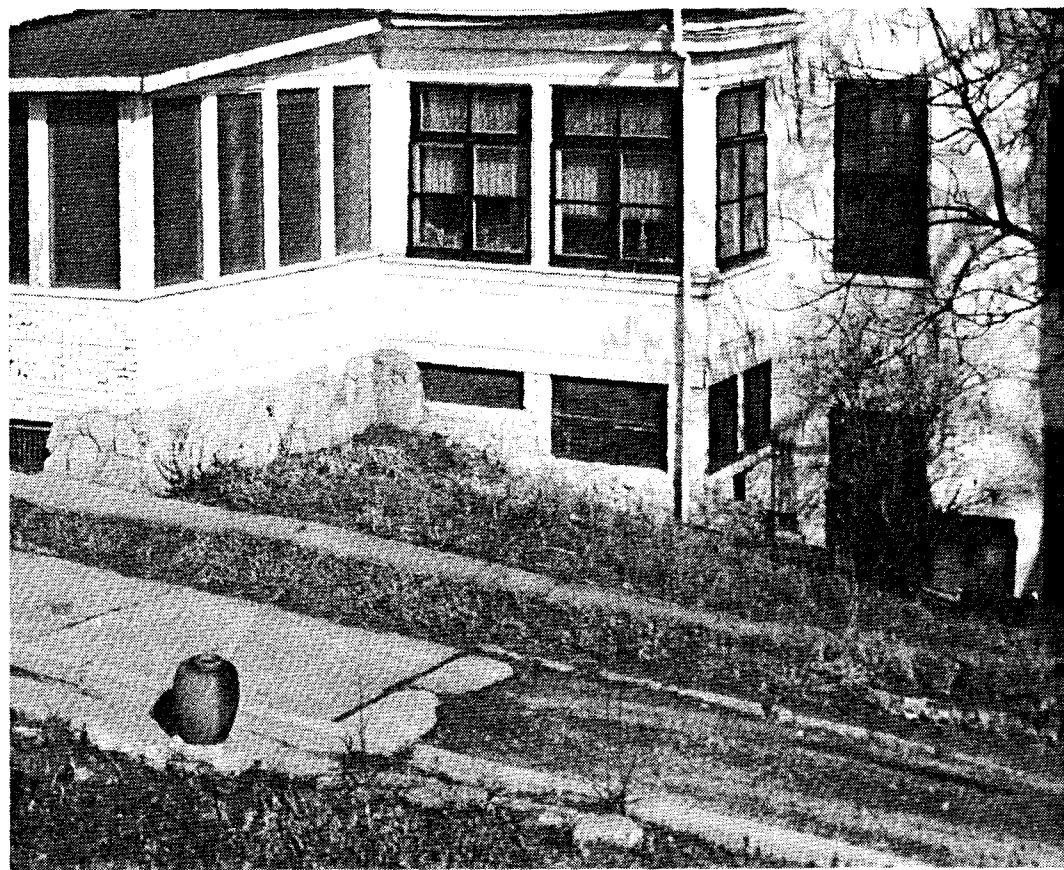


FIGURE A.19: A 1991 view, looking south from the property adjacent to the Taft Site, showing inappropriate additions to the site: a stone wall and a stile (wooden stairs) joining the Taft House and the Cross Lot. Source: The Westerly Group, Inc..

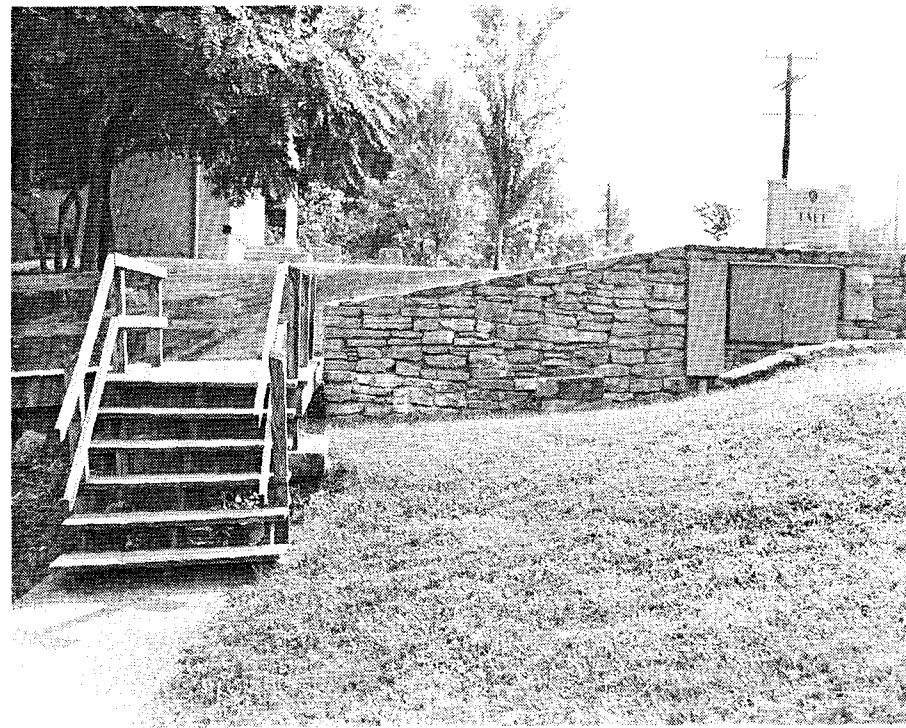


FIGURE A.20: A 1991 view (looking toward the southwest corner of the Taft house) through stone and brick features, desecrations which were placed on the site after 1946. Source: The Westerly Group, Inc..



FIGURE A.21: A 1991 view of two features at the rear of the property, a wood hitching post and a concrete horse hobble shown at left and sandstone steps let into a masonry wall, foundations from the demolished apartment house which once occupied the Cross Lot shown at right. Source: The Westerly Group, Inc..

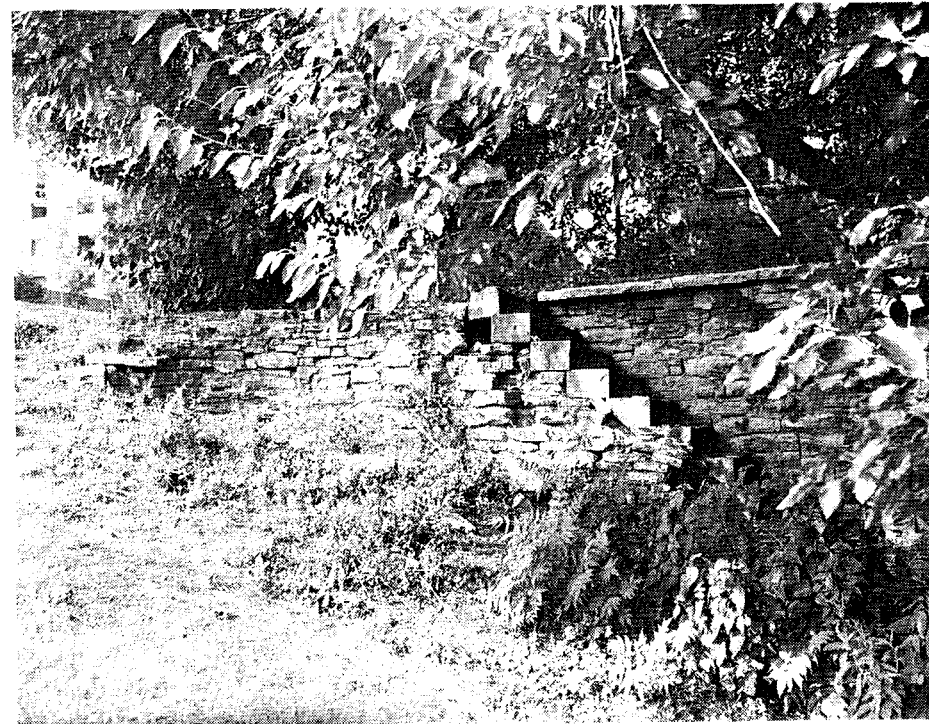
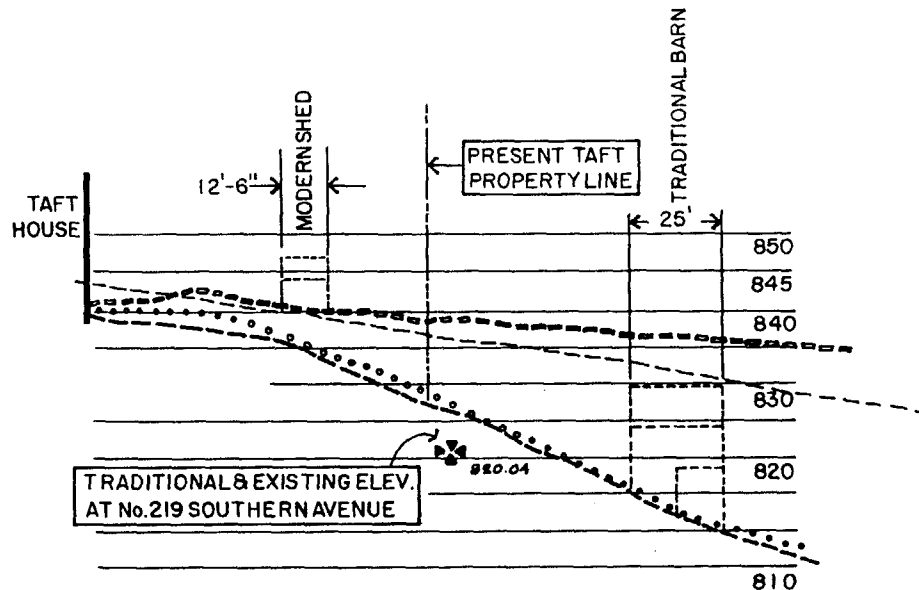


FIGURE A.22: A 1991 view of the side yard of number 219 Southern Avenue, showing portions of what might have been historic grade (fieldstone area off the walk at the foot of the staircase). This low point can be seen below our center line profile on the excerpted drawing at right. Source: The Westerly Group, Inc..



**LEGEND:**

- 1991 PROFILE AT EAST-WEST  $\phi$  - TAFT HOUSE.
- HISTORIC & PRESENT  $\phi$  OF SOUTHERN AVE.
- · - · TRADITIONAL PROFILE ON EAST-WEST  $\phi$  OF TAFT HOUSE.
- ..... c. 1912 PROFILE AT EAST-WEST  $\phi$  - TAFT HOUSE.

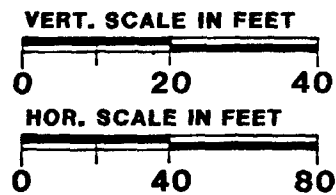




FIGURE B.1: An 1835 map of Cincinnati including Mount Auburn with what appears to be a row of infant commercial buildings along Auburn Avenue. (Redrawn by The Westerly Group, Inc.) Source: Map Collection, Cincinnati Public Library.

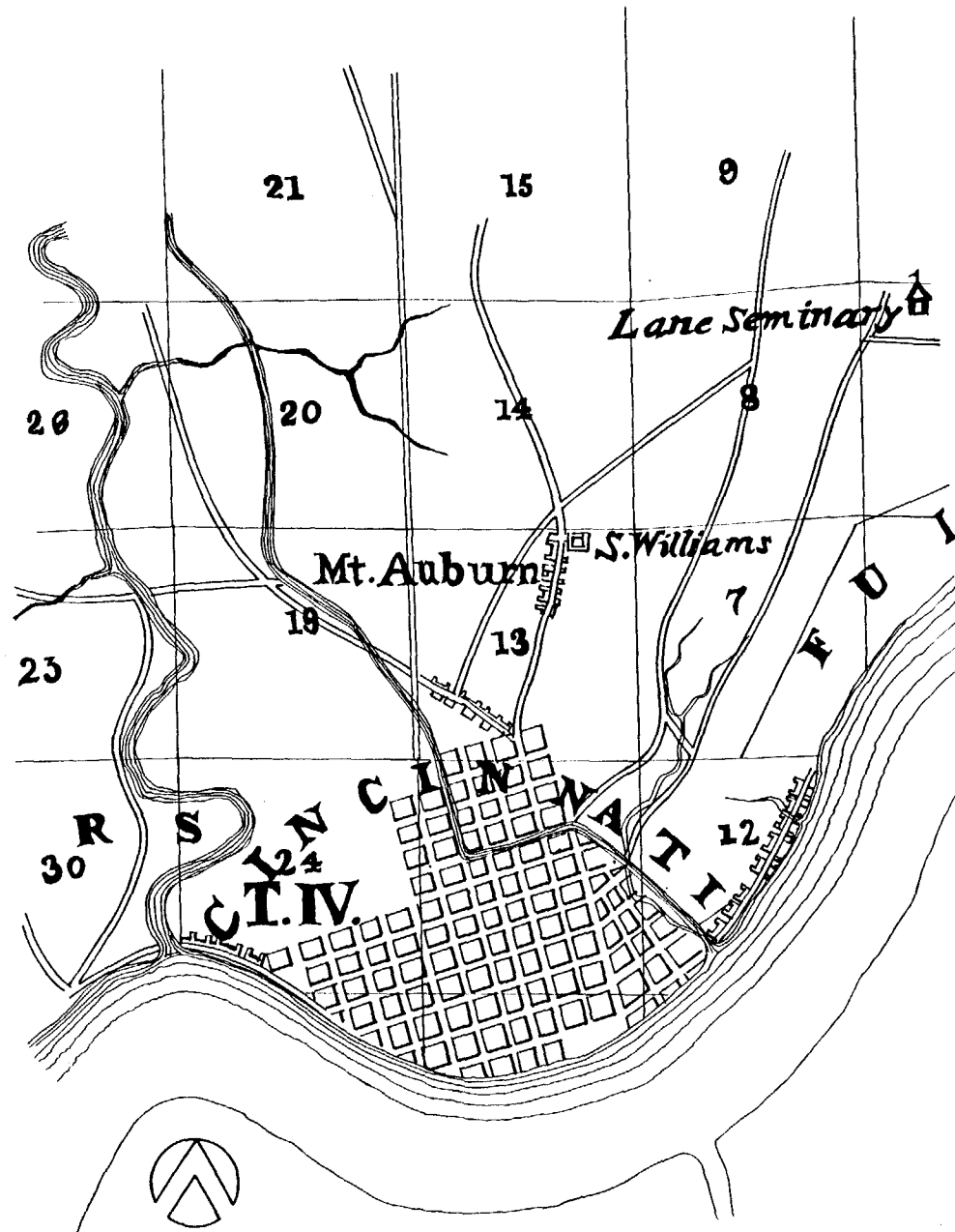


FIGURE B.2:

Map of 1847 which identifies some individual buildings in the suburbs and rural areas. Hachuring gives some indication of the great elevation differences between sections of the growing city. (Redrawn by The Westerly Group, Inc.) Source: Map Collection, Cincinnati Public Library.

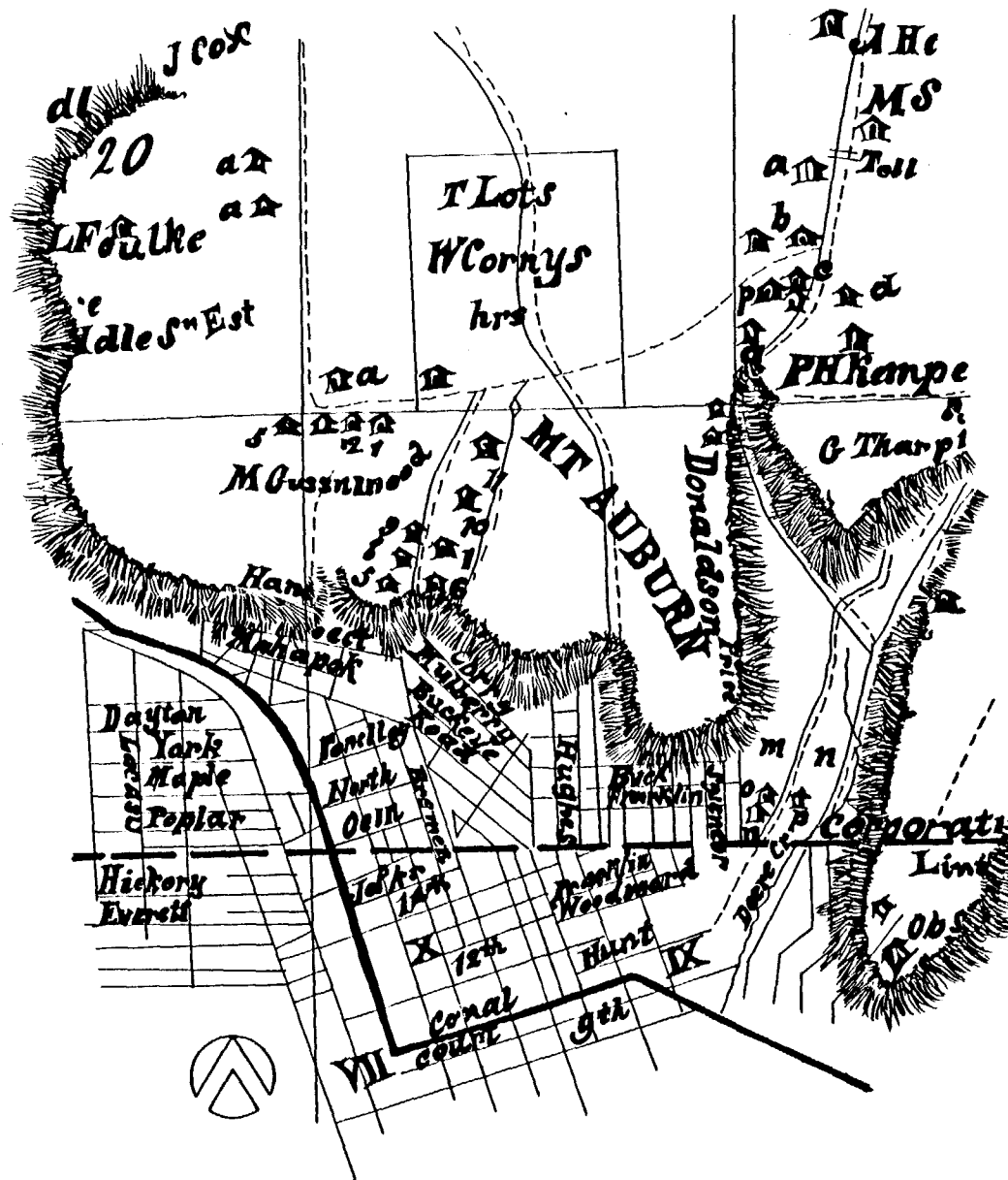


FIGURE B.3:

An 1856 map of Mount Auburn illustrating some streets and car tracks; north of the Price Subdivision we see some vestigial platting being laid out. The Taft House was within this area. (Redrawn by The Westerly Group, Inc.) Source: Map Collection, Cincinnati Public Library.



FIGURE B.4: The 1869 Titus Atlas for Mount Auburn shows the property in its entirety prior to the extension of Young Street to the north. The streetcar lines on Auburn Avenue are clearly shown. Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.

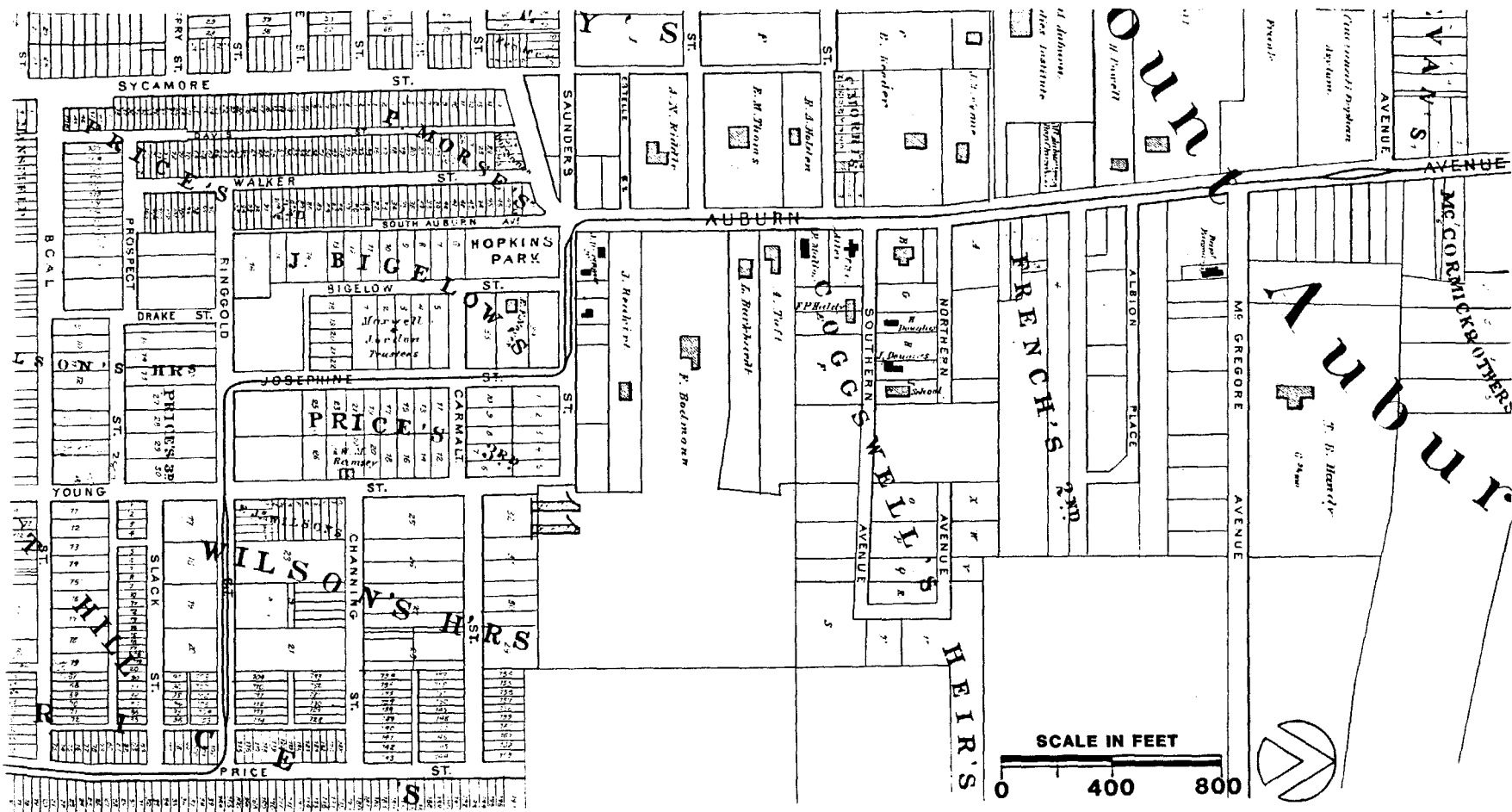


FIGURE B.5: From an 1891 Atlas of a portion of Mount Auburn, providing a plan of the Taft House with a bay window on the south side and a one and one half story barn to the east. (Redrawn by Scruggs & Hammond, Inc.) Source: Map Collection of the Cincinnati Public Library with annotations added.

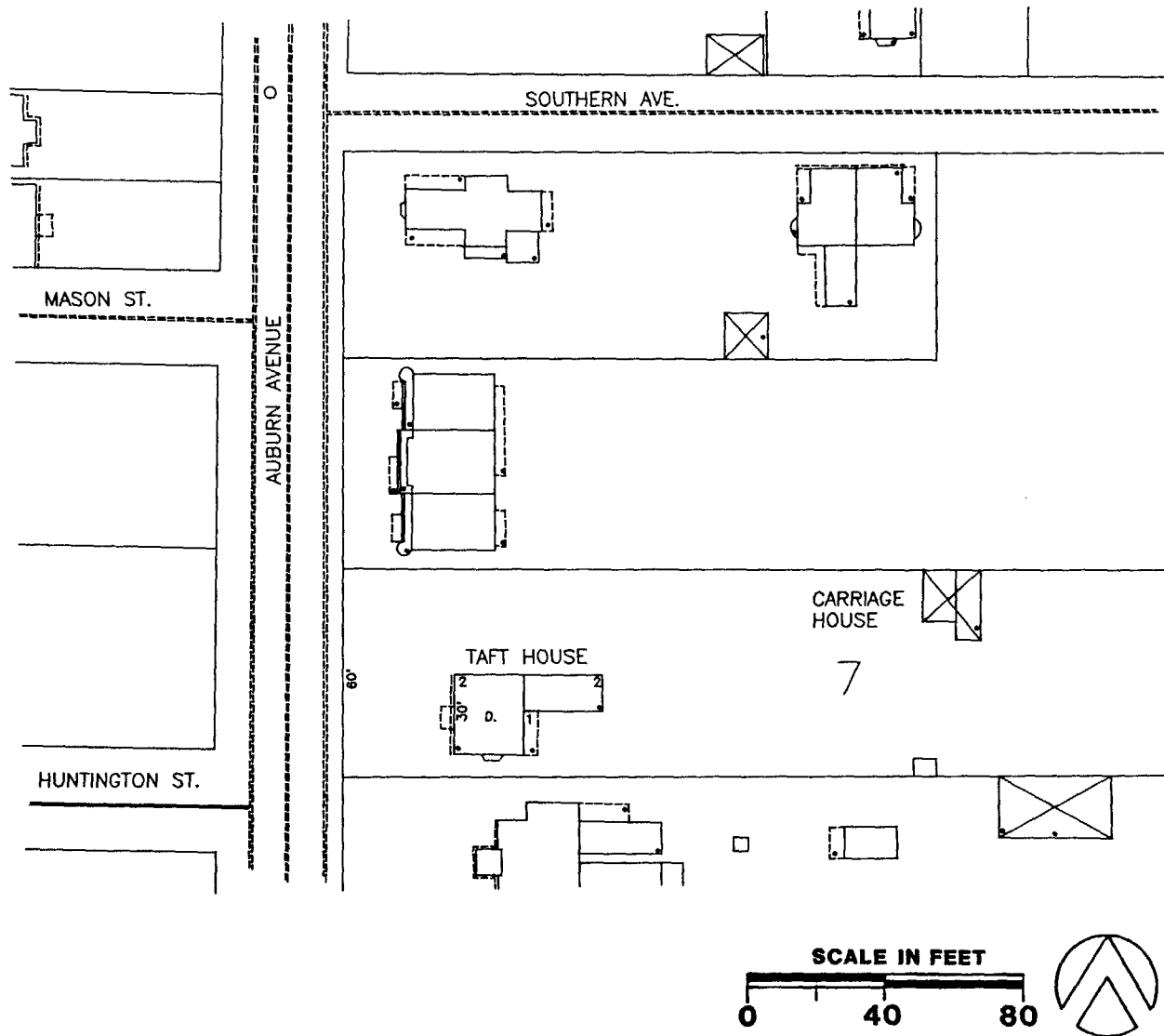


FIGURE B.6: 1900 USGS quadrant for Cincinnati, including Mount Auburn. Badly drawn on the original, the contour intervals at 15 feet do not agree with other maps of similar age. This map is valuable however, because, unlike other maps of the period it does show buildings in block form (Redrawn by The Westerly Group, Inc.) Source: USGS Historic Maps, Historical File, Topographic Division.

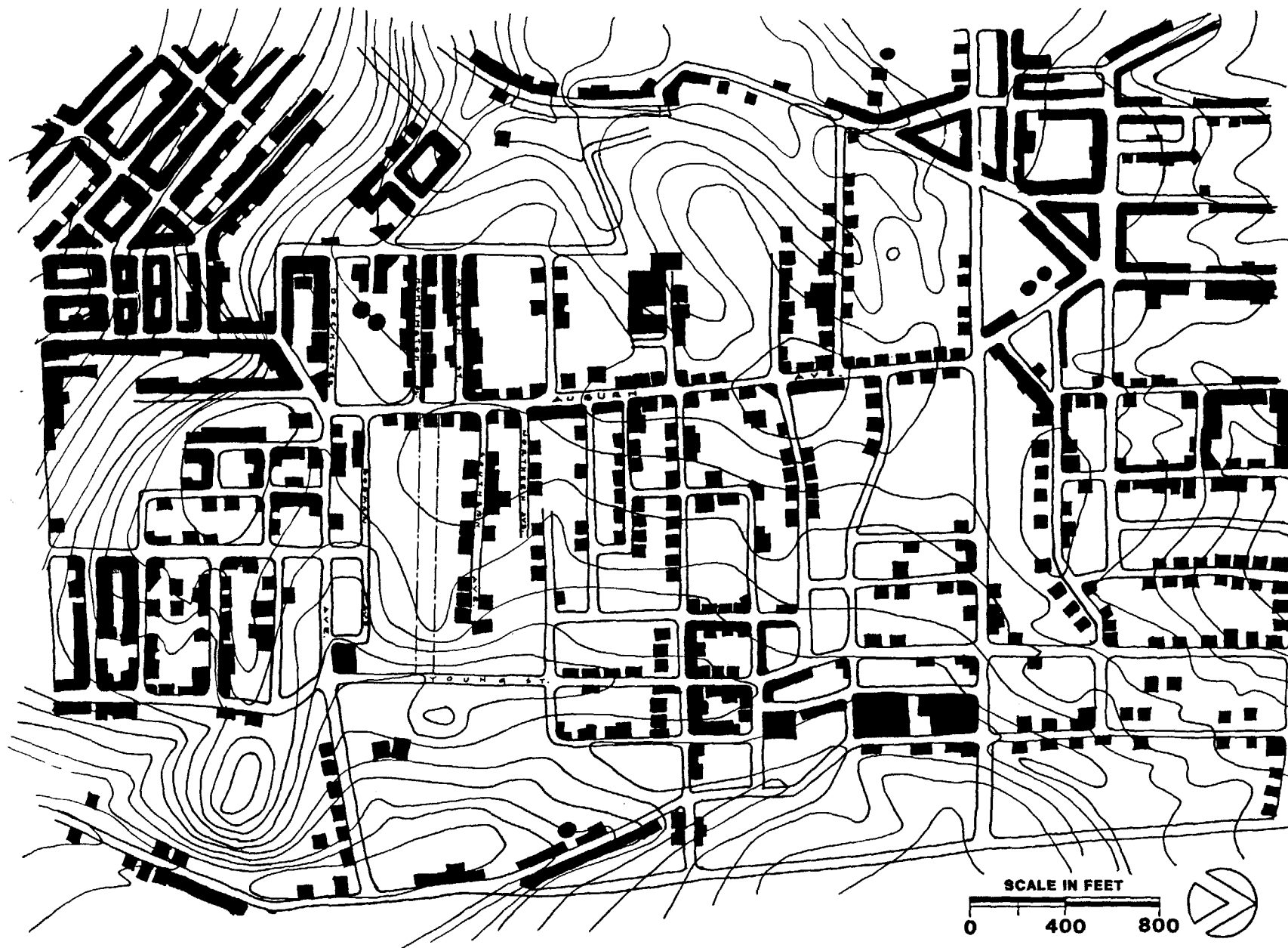


FIGURE B.7: The basis of this map is a Sanborn Atlas of 1891, with annotations added from an 1869 Atlas. The area depicted could have been a location of interest, of entertainment and of social interaction. (Redrawn by The Westerly Group, Inc.). Source: Map Collection, Cincinnati Public Library; Cincinnati Historical Society.

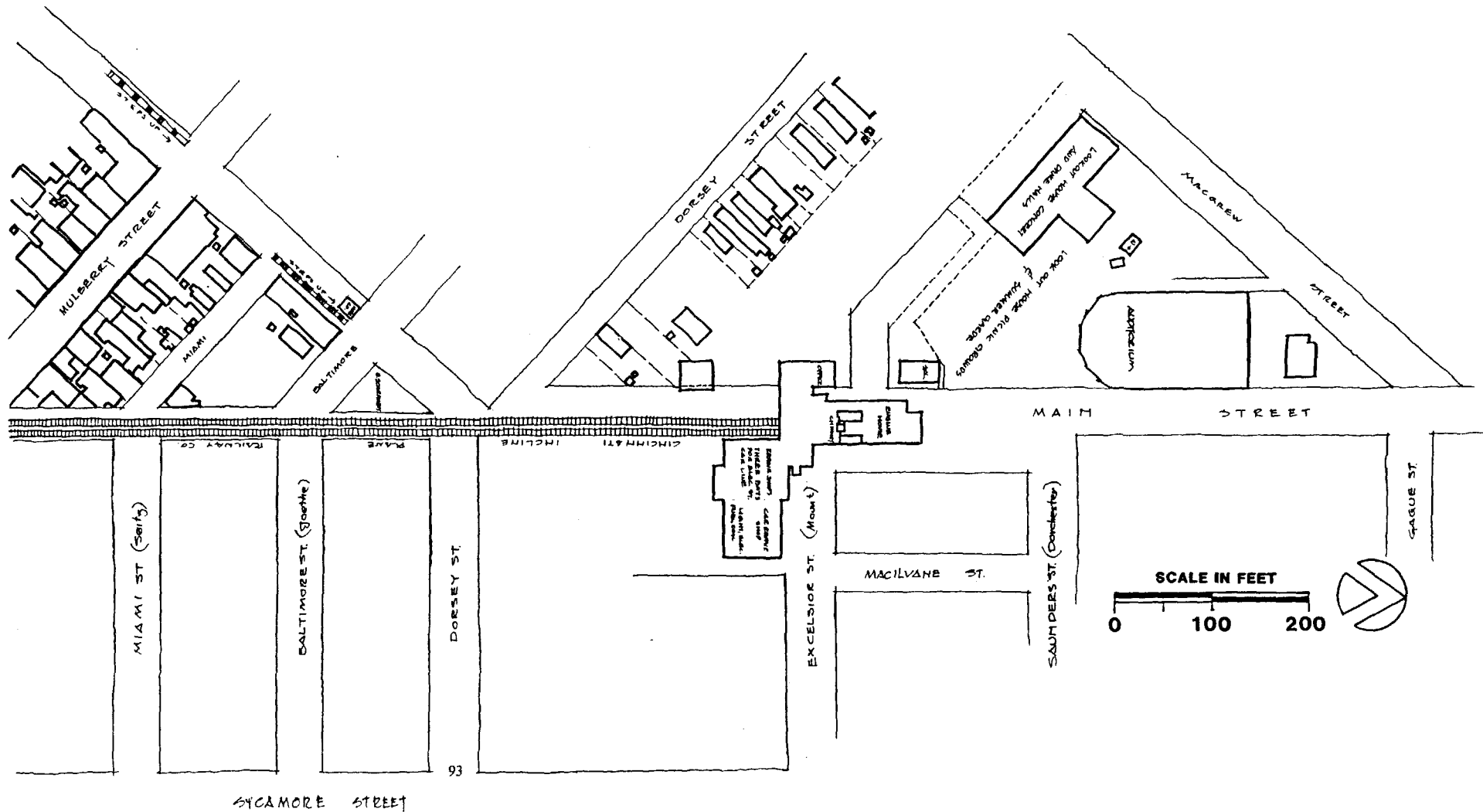


FIGURE B.8: A c. 1880 view of the Main Street Incline. Pen and ink drawing of the Main Street Incline as it appeared c. 1880. (Drawn by Scruggs & Hammond, Inc.) Source: Cincinnati Historical Society.





FIGURE B.9:

Integrated map from: 1912 Contour Map (topography); 1891 Insurance Map (configuration of buildings); 1869 Titus Atlas (base map). Contour intervals are five feet. (Drawn by The Westerly Group, Inc.) Source: Cincinnati City Hall, Planning Division; Map Collection, Cincinnati Public Library; and Cincinnati Historical Society.

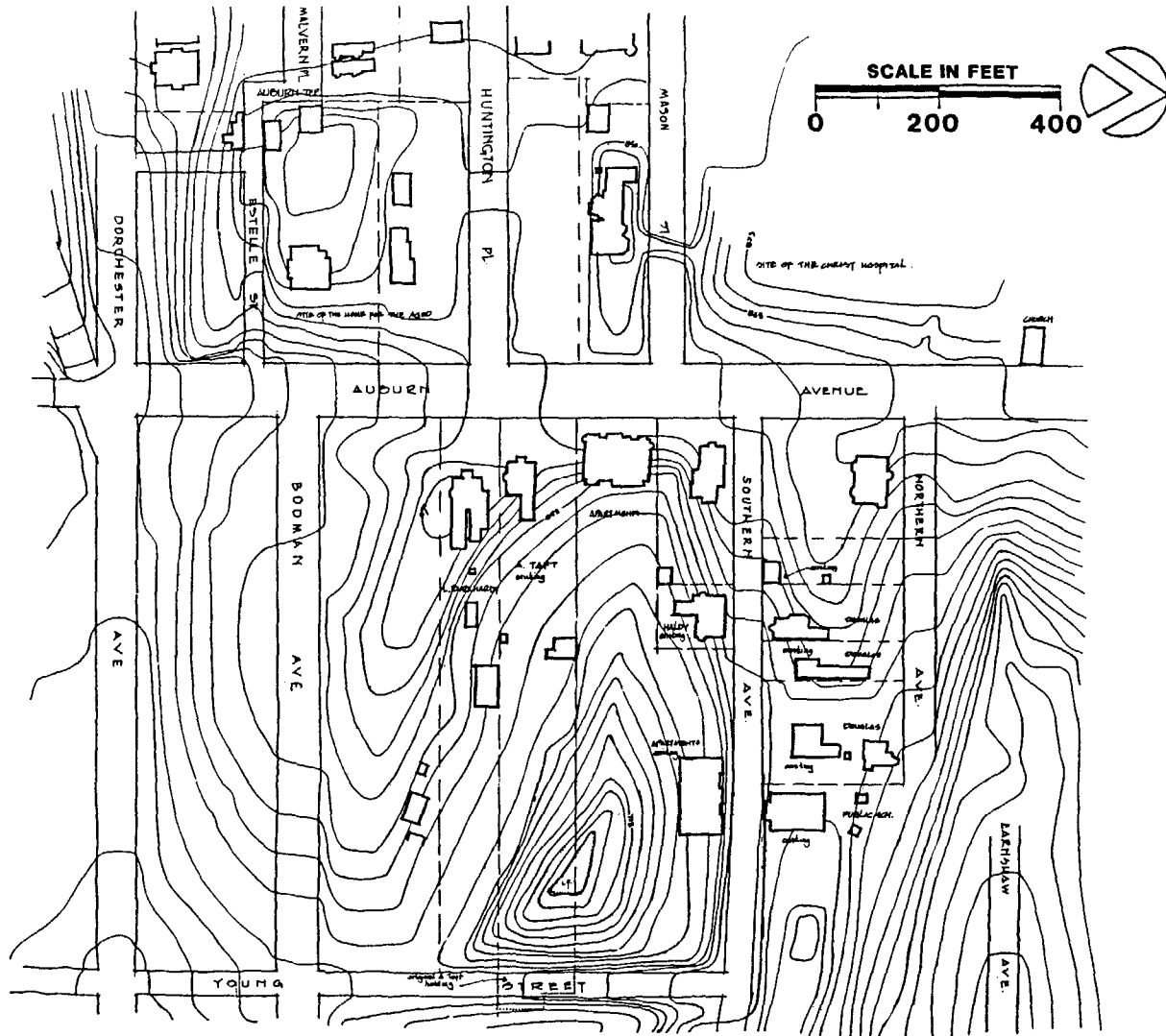


FIGURE B.10: Profiles of c. 1850, 1912 and 1991 taken along the center line of the Taft house and a profile for Southern Avenue. The vertical scale is 1" = 30' and the horizontal scale is 1" = 60'. (Drawn by The Westerly Group, Inc.)

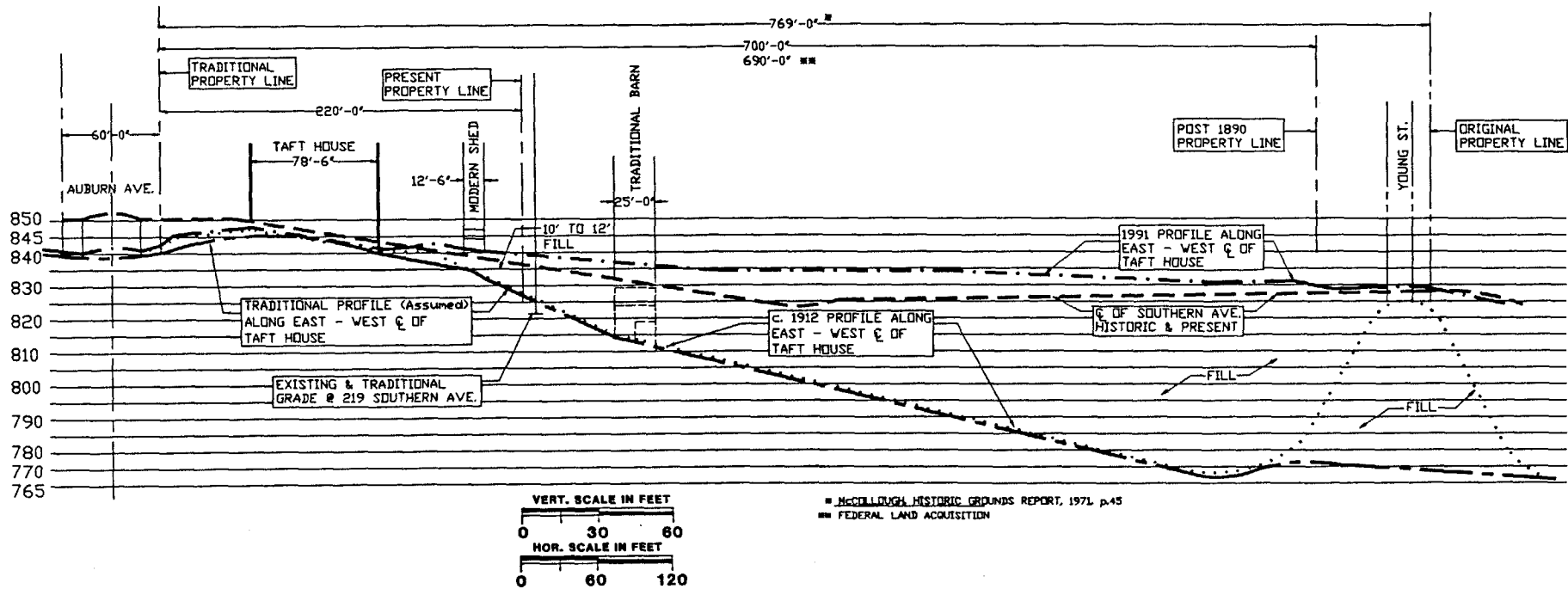


FIGURE B.11: A 1991 survey of existing site conditions. (Redrawn by Scruggs and Hammond, Inc.) Source: Savage Walker and Associates, Inc..

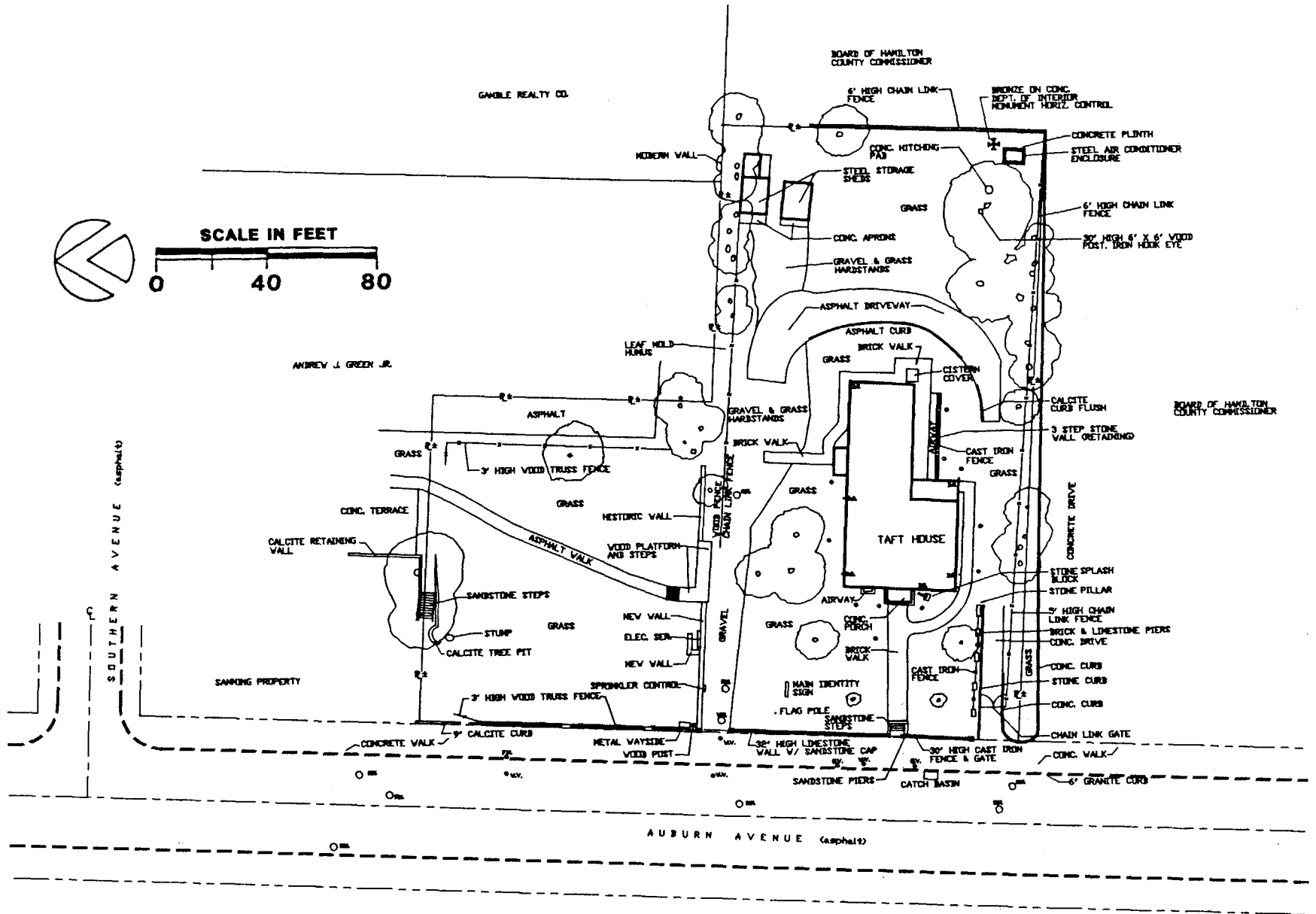
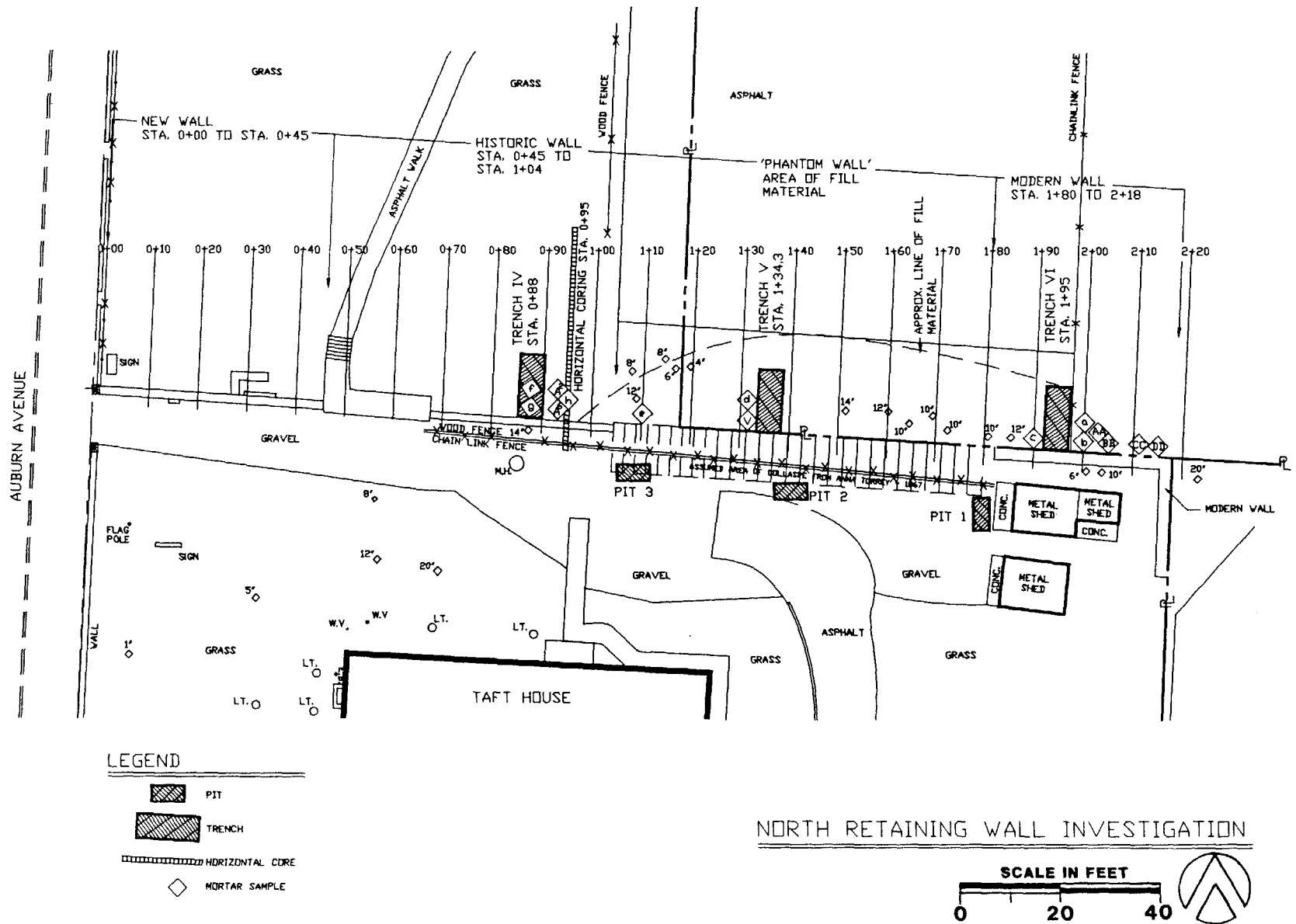


FIGURE B.12: North Retaining Wall Investigation. See Supplemental Investigative Report of Conditions In The North Retaining Wall for complete description of plan.  
 (Drawn by Scruggs and Hammond, Inc.) Source: Savage Walker and Associates, Inc..



COST ESTIMATE - CLASS C  
 WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HISTORIC SITE RESTORATION  
 September 1, 1993

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	AMT.	TOTAL
SITE PREPARATION					
1. Selective Clearing and Grubbing		LS		2,000.00	
2. Selective Clearing of Trees	5	EA	300.00	1,500.00	
3. Selective Demolition		LS		10,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					13,500.00
EARTHWORK					
4. Cut and Haul	30	CY	13.00	390.00	
5. Furnish and grade topsoil	150	CY	25.00	3,750.00	
SUB-TOTAL					4,140.00
VEHICULAR PAVEMENT					
6. Chip Sealed Drive	2400	SF	2.50	6,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					6,000.00
PEDESTRIAN PAVEMENT					
7. Brick walk on concrete slab	600	SF	12.00	7,200.00	
SUB-TOTAL					7,200.00
SITE ELEMENTS					
8. Tree Bench	3	EA	500.00	1,500.00	
9. Urn	1	EA	1,500.00	1,500.00	

COST ESTIMATE - CLASS C  
 WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HISTORIC SITE RESTORATION  
 September 1, 1993  
 page 2

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	AMT.	TOTAL
10. Shed	1	LS		22,000.00	
11. Wood Screen	20	LF	20.00	400.00	
12. Fender - limestone	2	EA	370.00	740.00	
13. Gate Stop - limestone	1	EA	350.00	350.00	
14. Wicket Fence	220	LF	16.00	3,520.00	
15. Chain Link Fence, 6' ht. (Black vinyl coated)		LS		5,300.00	
16. Chain Link Fence, 3'-6" ht. (Black vinyl coated)		LS		2,700.00	
17. Wrought Iron Fence		LS		14,000.00	
18. Lighting Allowance		LS		20,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					72,010.00
PLANTING					
19. Shrubs	220	EA	50.00	11,000.00	
20. Evergreen Tree (2 1/2" - 3" cal.)	1	EA	350.00	350.00	
21. Shade Tree (3" - 4" cal.)	5	EA	450.00	2,250.00	
22. Ornamental Tree (2" - 2 1/2" cal.)	5	EA	350.00	1,750.00	
23. Groundcover	550	SF	2.00	1,100.00	

COST ESTIMATE - CLASS C  
 WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HISTORIC SITE RESTORATION  
 September 1, 1993  
 page 3

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	AMT.	TOTAL
24. Sod	300	SY	6.00	1,800.00	
25. Recondition Lawns	200	SY	2.00	400.00	
26. Perennials	60	EA	9.00	540.00	
SUB-TOTAL					19,190.00
GENERAL CONDITIONS					12,500.00
TOTAL					134,540.00

COST ESTIMATE - CLASS C

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HISTORIC SITE AND CROSS LOT STREETScape RESTORATION

September 1, 1993

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	AMT.	TOTAL
SITE PREPARATION					
1. Selective Demolition		LS		6,500.00	
SUB-TOTAL					6,500.00
PEDESTRIAN PAVEMENT					
2. Brick Walk (on concrete slab)	2600	SF	12.00	31,200.00	
3. Granite Curb	250	LF	60.00	15,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					46,200.00
SITE ELEMENTS					
4. Tree Guard	10	EA	500.00	5,000.00	
5. Hitching Post	2	LS		3,500.00	
6. Wrought Iron Fence		LS		20,000.00	
7. Bench	1	EA	1,200.00	1,200.00	
8. Cincinnati Tree Well	10	EA	2,800.00	28,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					57,700.00
PLANTING					
9. Shade Tree (3" - 4" cal.)	10	EA	450.00	4,500.00	
SUB-TOTAL					4,500.00
GENERAL CONDITIONS					11,500.00
TOTAL					126,400.00



COST ESTIMATE - CLASS C  
 CROSS LOT RESTORATION  
 September 1, 1993

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	AMT.	TOTAL
SITE PREPARATION					
1. Selective Demolition		LS		1,500.00	
SUB-TOTAL					1,500.00
SITE ELEMENTS					
2. Wood Steps		LS		4,000.00	
3. Flagpole Relocated	1	EA	1,700.00	1,700.00	
4. Main Identity Sign	1	EA	5,600.00	5,600.00	
5. Wrought Iron Fence		LS		20,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					31,300.00
PLANTING					
6. Shrubs	40	EA	50.00	2,000.00	
7. Recondition Lawns	50	SY	2.00	100.00	
SUB-TOTAL					2,100.00
GENERAL CONDITIONS					4,500.00
TOTAL					39,400.00

COST ESTIMATE - CLASS C  
 WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HISTORIC SITE  
 NORTH RETAINING WALL TREATMENT  
 September 1, 1993

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	AMT.	TOTAL
SITE PREPARATION					
1. Selective Clearing and Grubbing		LS		1,500.00	
2. Selective Clearing of Trees	10	EA	200	2,000.00	
3. Selective Demolition		LS		1000	
SUB-TOTAL					4,500.00
EARTHWORK					
4. Cut/Haul	40	CY	13.00	520.00	
5. Furnish and grade topsoil	100	CY	25.00	2,500.00	
SUB-TOTAL					3,020.00
SITE ELEMENTS					
6. Curb	100	LF	20.00	2,000.00	
7. Erosion Control Headers	200	LF	27.00	5,400.00	
8. Barrier	125	LF	30	3,750.00	
SUB-TOTAL					11,150.00
PLANTINGS					
9. Shrub 15 gal.	20	EA	50.00	1,000.00	
10. Ornamental Tree (2" TO 2 1/2" cal.)	7	EA	450	3,150.00	

NORTH RETAINING WALL TREATMENT

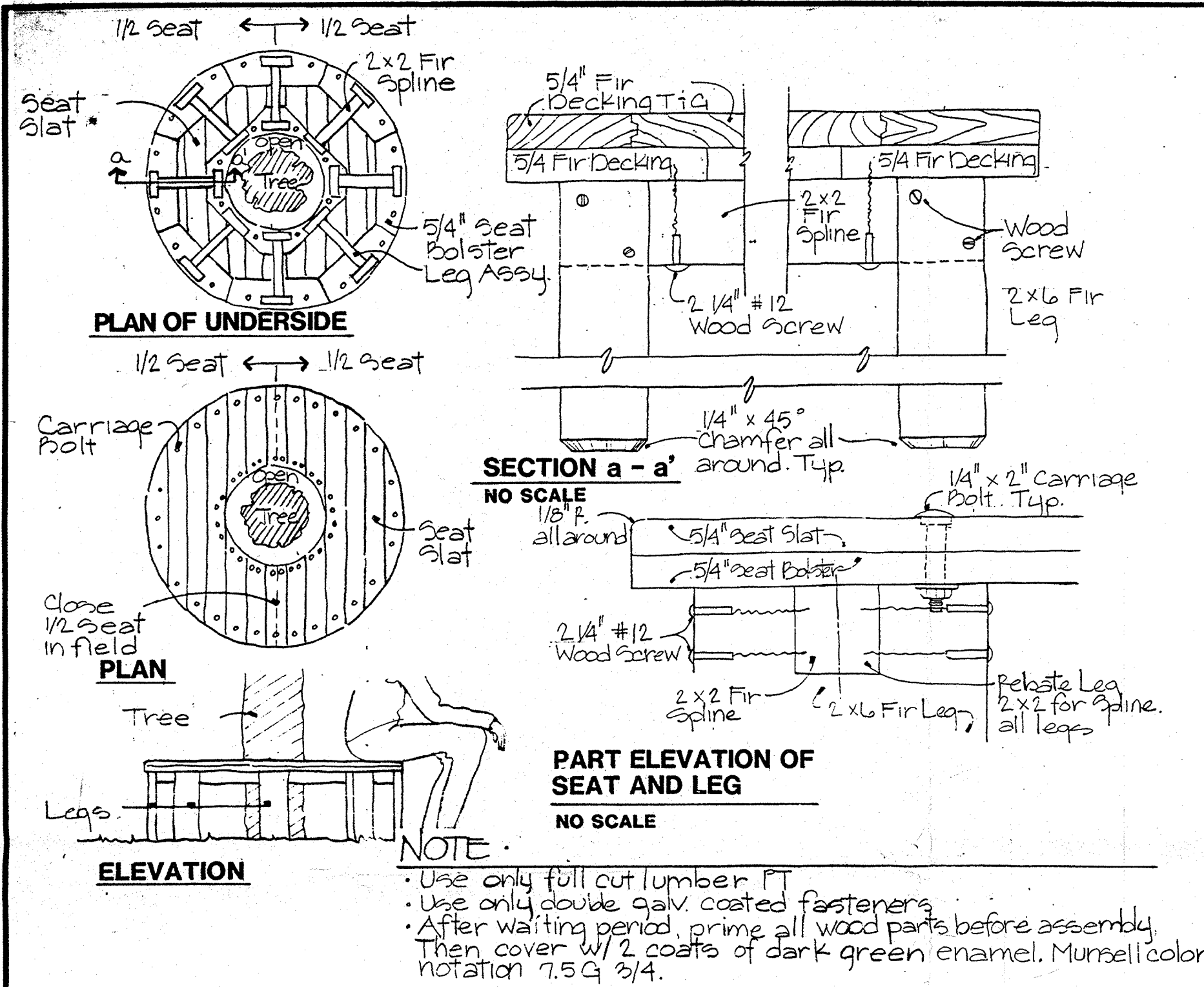
September 1, 1993

page 2

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	AMT.	TOTAL
11. Shade Tree (3" to 4" cal.)	8	EA	1100	8,800.00	
12. Groundcover	3500	SF	2	7,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					19,950.00
GENERAL CONDITIONS					2,704.00
TOTAL					41,324.00

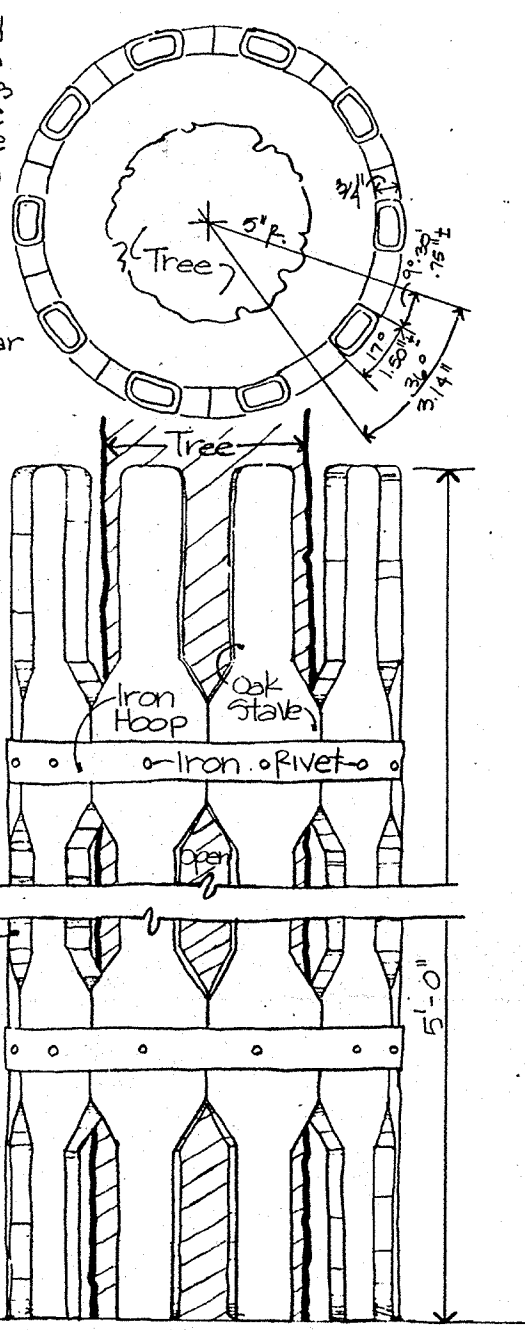
COST ESTIMATE - CLASS C  
 SANNING PROPERTY STREETScape RESTORATION  
 September 1, 1993

ITEM	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT COST	AMT.	TOTAL
SITE PREPARATION					
1. Selective Demolition		LS		3,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					3,000.00
PEDESTRIAN PAVEMENT					
2. Brick Walk	1400	SF	10.00	14,000.00	
3. Granite Curb	120	LF	60.00	7,200.00	
SUB-TOTAL					21,200.00
SITE ELEMENTS					
4. Tree Guard	5	EA	500.00	2,500.00	
5. Cincinnati Tree Well	5	EA	2,800.00	14,000.00	
SUB-TOTAL					16,500.00
PLANTINGS					
6. Shade Tree (3" - 4" cal.)	5	EA	450.00	2,250.00	
SUB-TOTAL					2,250.00
GENERAL CONDITIONS					5,500.00
TOTAL					48,450.00

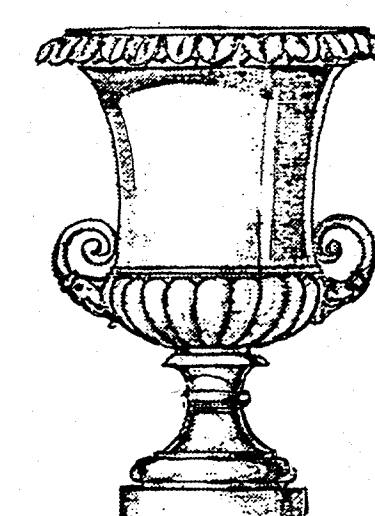


**A TREE SEAT**  
SCALE 1/2":1'-0"

These tree guards could be easily fabricated by a wood cooper. Kentucky has a number in both Louisville and Lexington. These tree protectors must have been pretty husky as they had to stand up to horses' crabs. They were removed when the trees matured. These tree guards appear to be made of wood. They are painted like a barrel except that the staves do not belly. They are not compound tapers. White oak would be the proper wood. Std. iron bands would be the only fasteners required. If these items were to be installed after the tree was planted, the cooper would have come along to band the staves in the field.

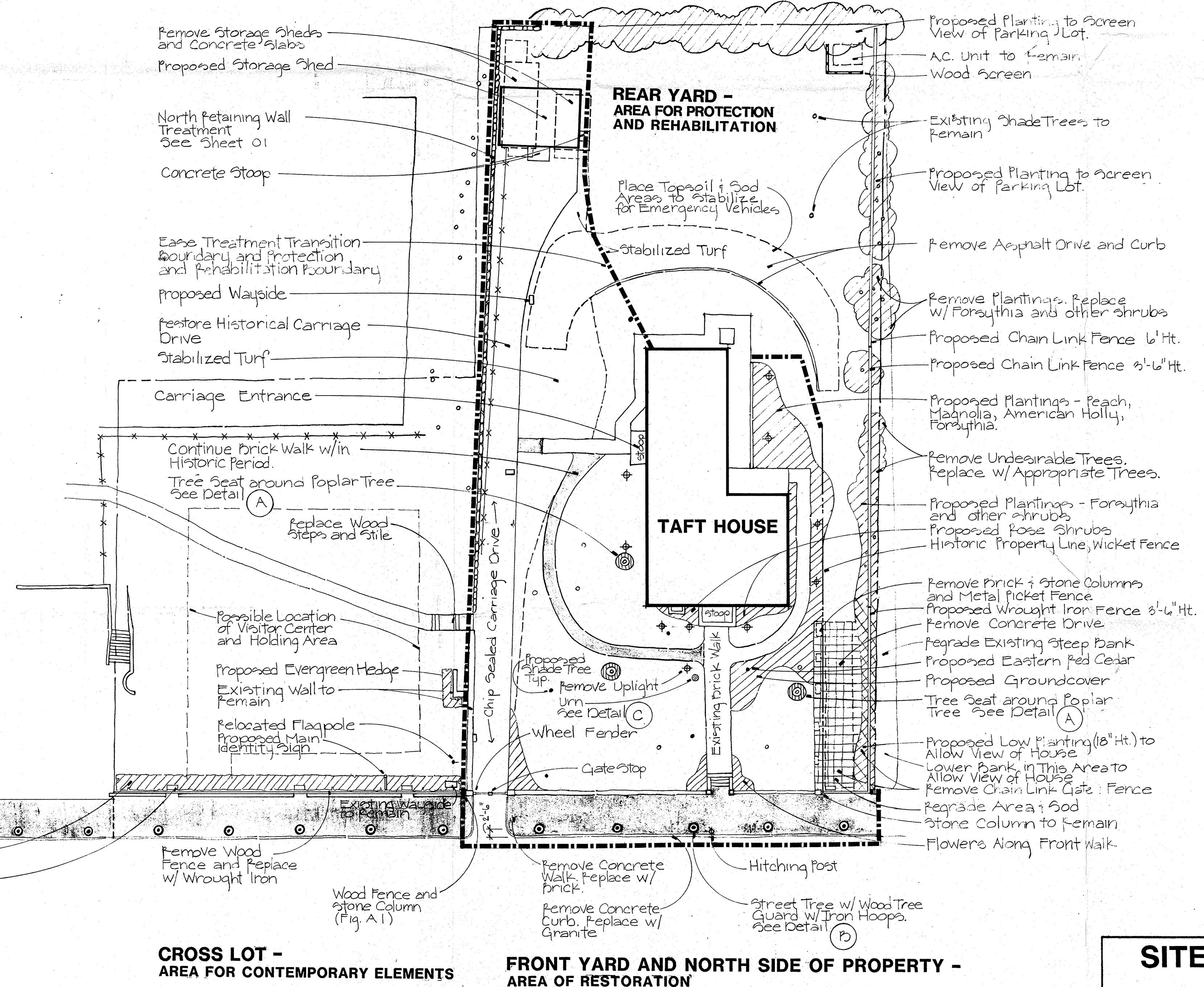


**B TREE GUARD**  
NO SCALE



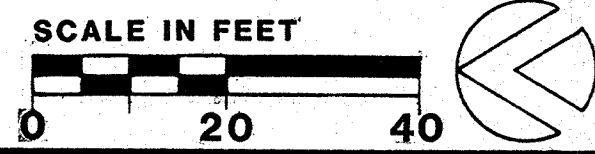
Cup shaped Iron Urn available from: Kenneth Lynch & Sons, Wilton, Conn. in lead or cast iron

**C CUP SHAPED URN**  
NO SCALE



**LEGEND**

- Treatment Transition Boundary
- Historic Property Line, Wicket Fence.
- Existing Tree
- Proposed Tree
- ▨ Proposed Low Plantings
- ▩ Proposed Plantings (Per Plan)
- ▧ Area to be Regraded
- ⊙ Tree Seating. See Detail (A)
- Tree Guard See Detail (B)
- ◇ Hitching Post.
- ⊕ Existing Site Light
- Proposed Wayside Locations

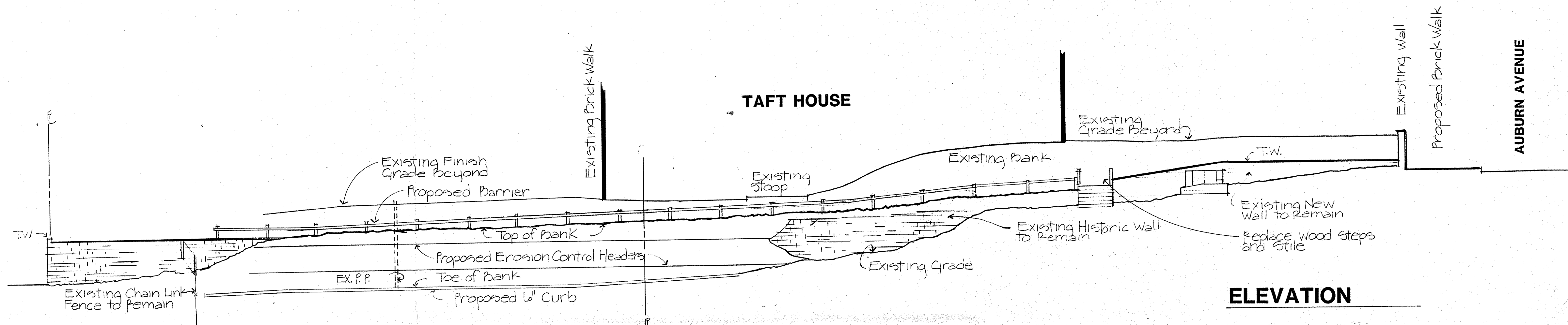


**SITE RESTORATION PLAN**

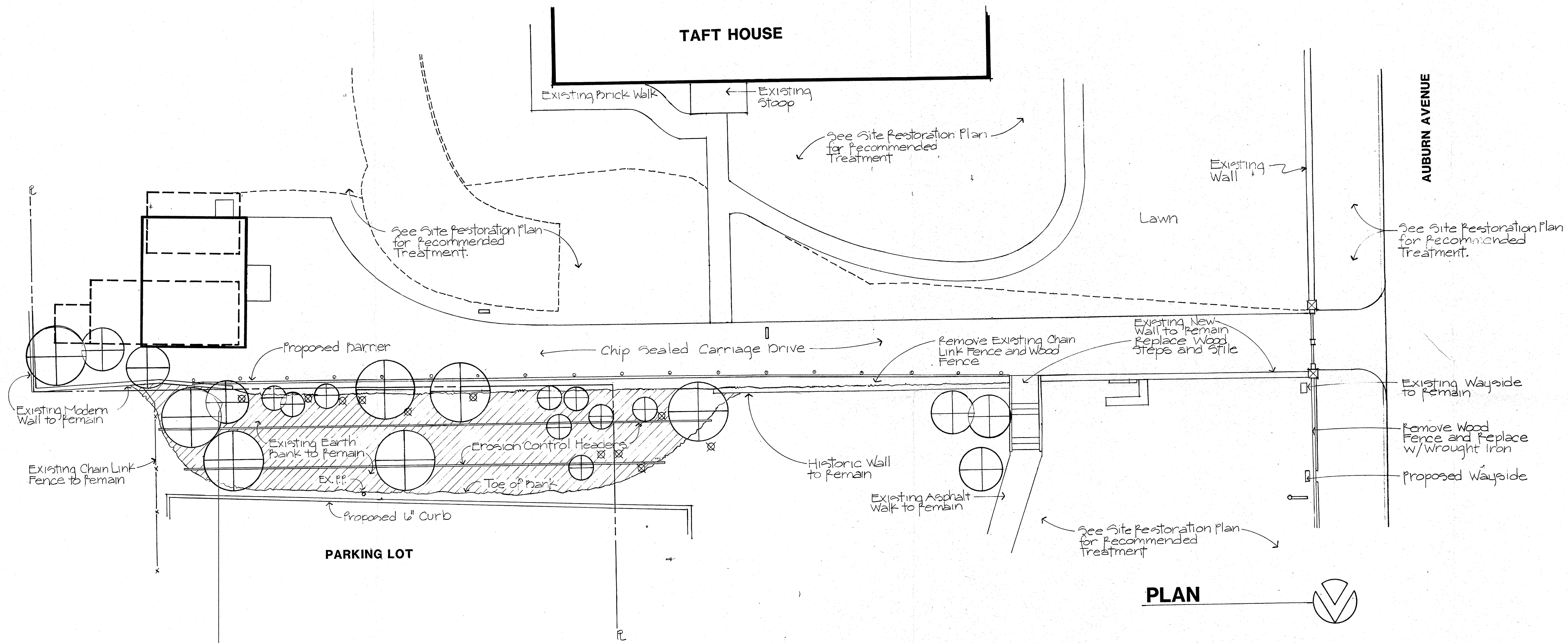
WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
CINCINNATI, OHIO

PREPARED TWS DESIGNED	DRAWING NO. 448
TWS/KVP DRAWN	30020
RVR/TWS CHECKED	SHEET <b>C1</b>
3/83 DATE	OF <b>C1</b>

448/80,020  
1 OF 5



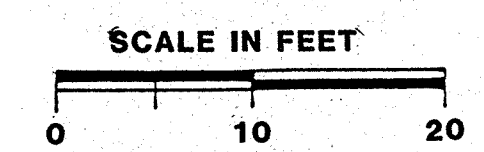
**ELEVATION**



**PLAN**

**LEGEND**

- ⊗ Existing Tree to be removed
- ⊕ 3" to 4" Cal. Shade Tree
- ⊕ 2 1/2" to 3" Cal. Ornamental Tree
- ⊕ Evergreen Shrub
- ▨ Groundcover



<b>PROPOSED RETAINING WALL TREATMENT</b>	PREPARED TWS	DRAWING NO. 448
	DESIGNED TWS	80020
WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE CINCINNATI, OHIO	DRAWN TWS/RVR	SHEET <b>01</b>
	CHECKED 3/93	OF <b>04</b>
	DATE	

448/80020  
2 OF 5

BOARD OF HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

DEED REFERENCE: REGISTERED LAND CERTIFICATE 74880  
BEARING REFERENCE: REGISTERED LAND CERTIFICATE 74880  
NOTE: PRIOR DEED REFERENCE REGISTERED LAND CERTIFICATE 73902

GAMBLE REALTY COMPANY  
D.B.4276, PG.367

ANDREW J. GREEN JR.  
D.B.4337, PG.1502

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
REGISTERED LAND CERTIFICATE NO. 74880

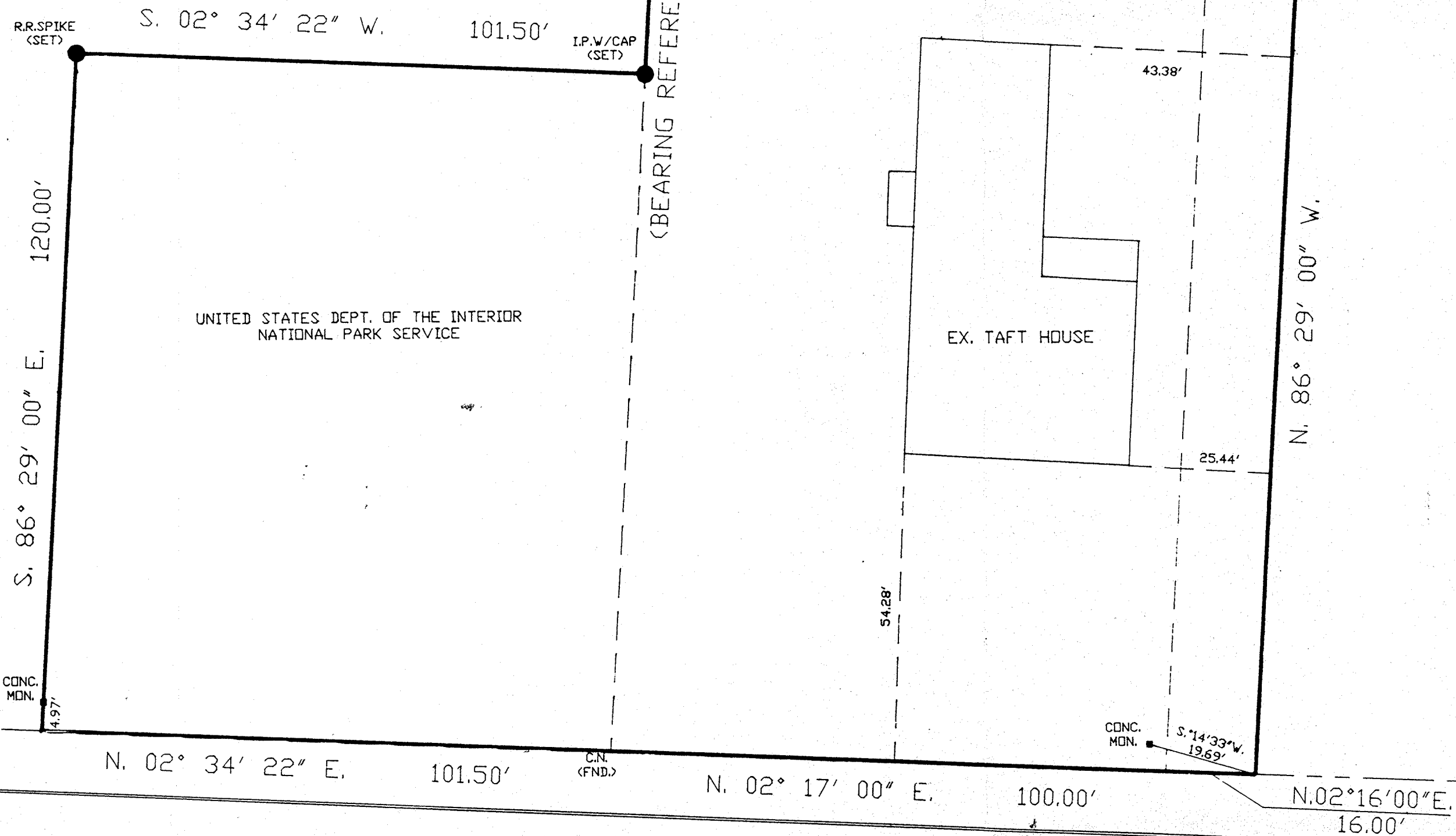
UNITED STATES DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
D.B.4402, PG.1484  
(TRACT NO. 1)

BOARD OF HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SOUTHERN (37') AVENUE

BODMANN (50') STREET

AUBURN ( 60' ) AVENUE

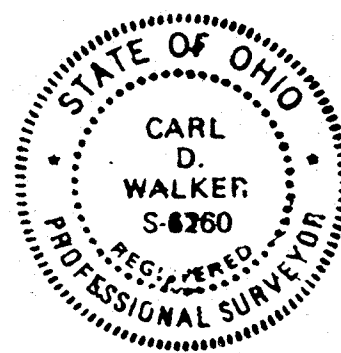


SEPTEMBER 9, 1991 JOB NO. 91099.01

**Savage Walker & Associates, Inc.**

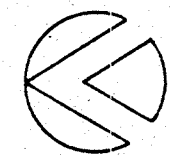
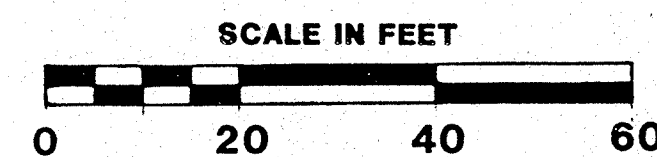
10800 Inland Center  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45241-7000  
(513) 763-7416

4440 Mt. Lake-Whitewater Rd.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45241-1521  
(513) 521-2889



*Carl D. Walker*  
 CARL D. WALKER OHIO REGISTERED  
 SURVEYOR NO. 6260

9-13-91  
 DATE:



<b>PROPERTY SURVEY 1991</b>		PREPARED	DRAWING NO
WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE CINCINNATI, OHIO		DESIGNED JT	448 80021
		DRAWN CW	SHEET <b>S1</b>
		CHECKED 9/91	OF <b>S3</b>
		DATE	

448/80020  
3 OF 5

ON MICROFILM

SOUTHERN (37') AVENUE

BODMANN (50') STREET

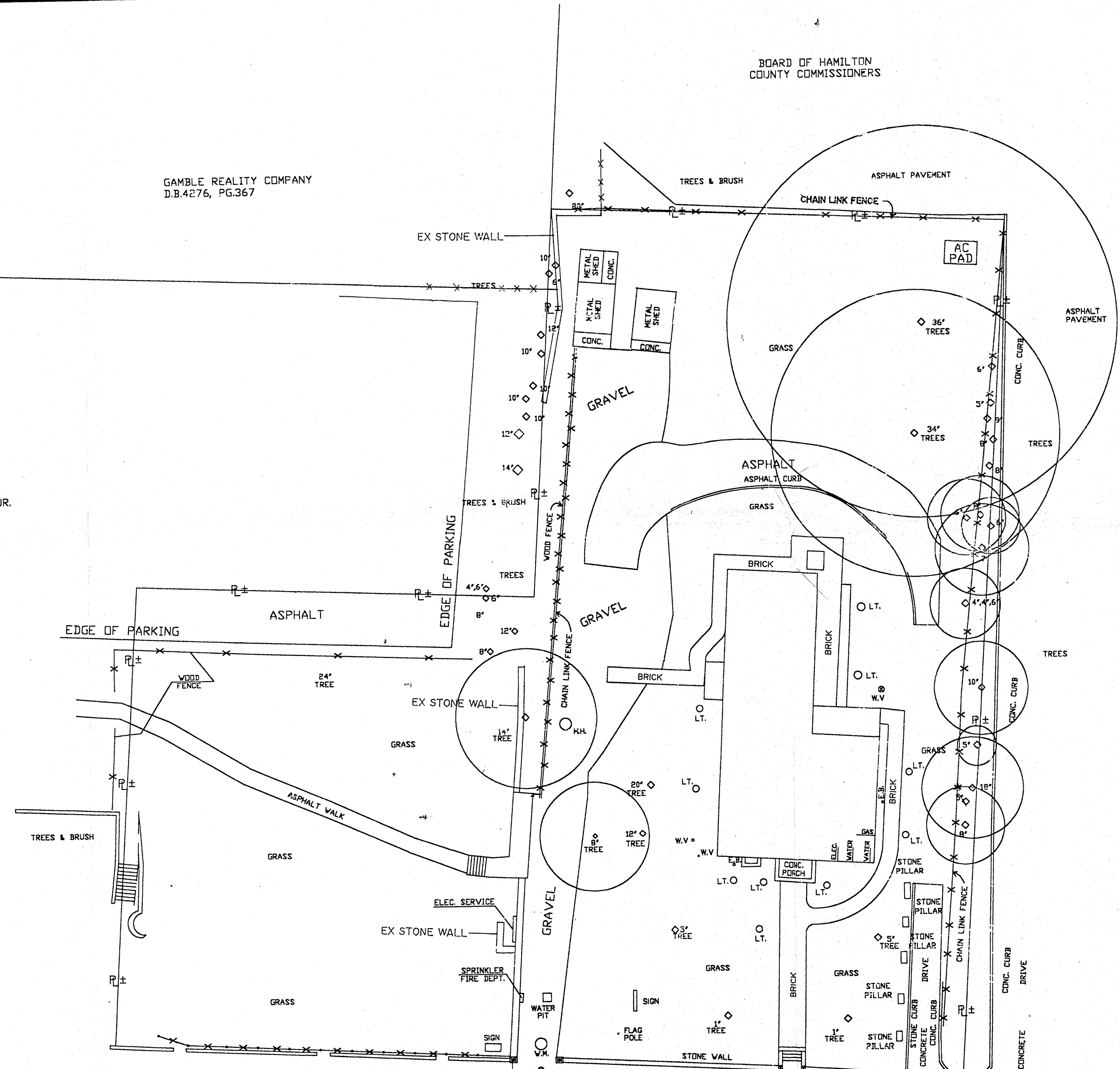
BOARD OF HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

GAMBLE REALTY COMPANY  
D.B.4276, PG.367

ANDREW J. GREEN JR.  
D.B.4397, PG.1502

BOARD OF HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM: BENCH MARK MANUAL  
CITY OF CINCINNATI  
AND  
HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO  
BENCH MARK DATUM NOTE: AS SHOWN ON MARK  
Located at Vine And McMillan Streets.  
Mark is in the NW corner, 24.5' N of  
the CL of McMillan Stj 28.1' W of the  
CL of Vine St.  
CITY OF CINCINNATI  
TRAVERSE STATION  
BENCH MARK  
SET 1950  
NO. 1615  
ELEVATION = 829.587 (1951)



AUBURN ( 60' ) AVENUE

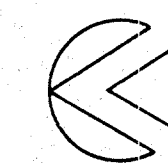
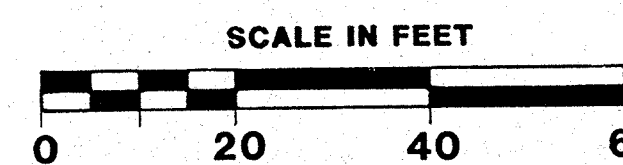
REVISED DECEMBER 12, 1992  
SEPTEMBER 9, 1991

JOB NO. 91099.01

**Savage Walker & Associates, Inc.**  
Professional Surveyors  
10800 Valley View Drive  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45241-2000  
(513) 732-7118  
4400 Glen Echo Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45241-1252  
(513) 521-2889

*Carl D. Walker*  
CARL D. WALKER OHIO REGISTERED  
SURVEYOR NO. 6260

9-13-91  
DATE:



<b>SITE PLAN 1991</b>		PREPARED	DRAWING NO.
		DESIGNED JT	448 80021
WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE CINCINNATI, OHIO		DRAWN CW	SHEET
		CHECKED 9/91	S2
		DATE	OF
			S3

ON MICROFILM

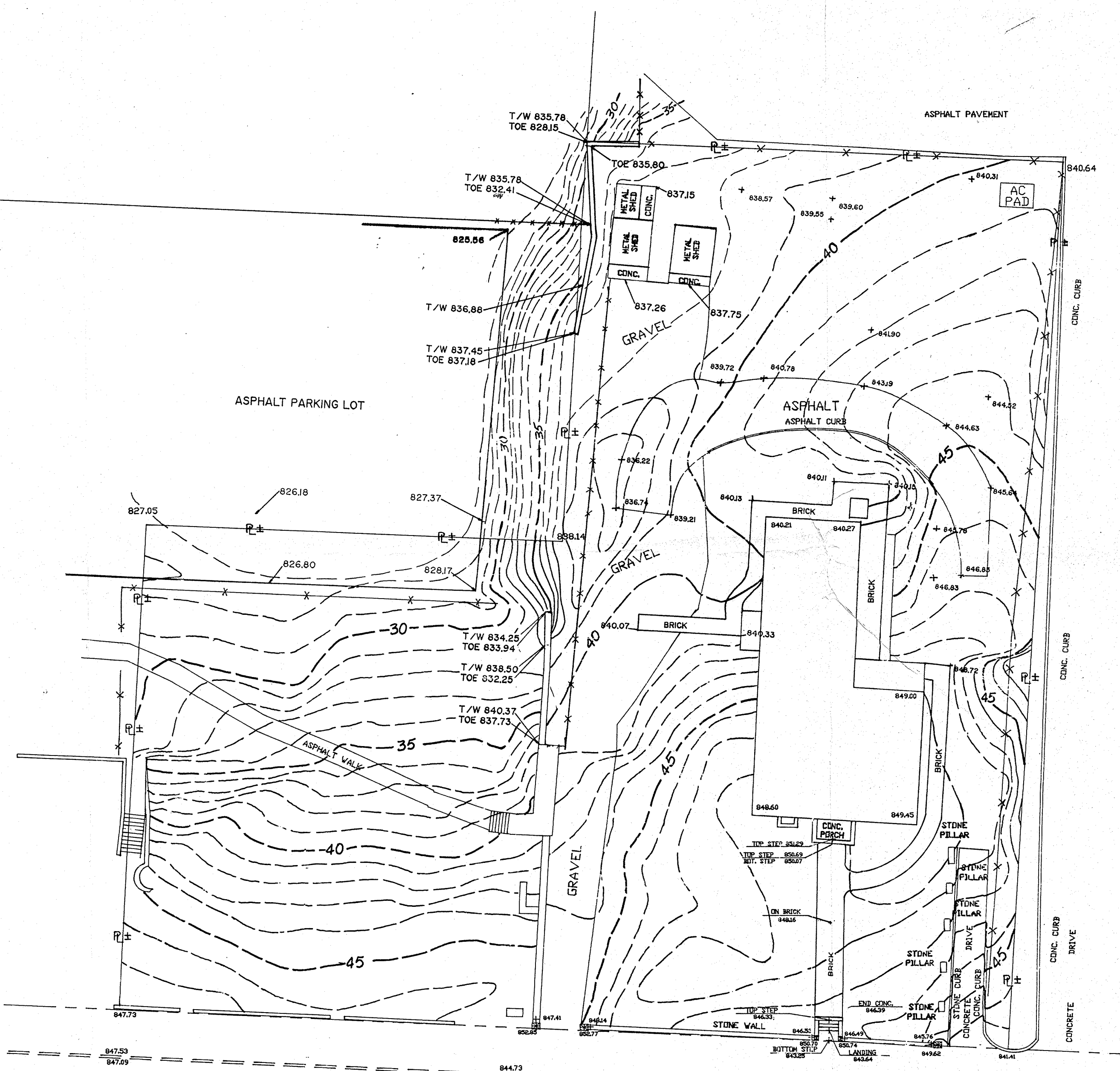
448/80020  
4 OF 5

ELJ 8/7/91

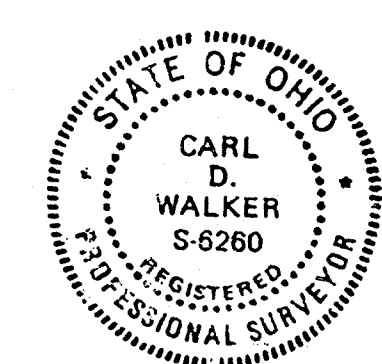


SOUTHERN (37') AVENUE

BODMANN (50') STREET



AUBURN ( 60' ) AVENUE



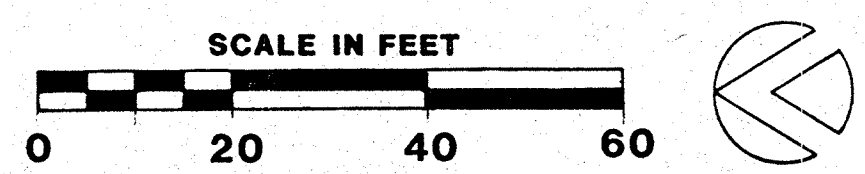
*Carl D. Walker*  
 CARL D. WALKER OHIO REGISTERED  
 SURVEYOR NO. 6260

9-13-91  
 DATE:

REVISED JANUARY 3, 1992  
 SEPTEMBER 9, 1991

JOB NO. 91099.01

**Savage Walker & Associates, Inc.**  
 17000 Belmont Drive  
 Cincinnati, Ohio 45241-2999  
 (513) 752-7218  
 FAX (513) 752-7219  
 11440 Glenview Drive  
 Cincinnati, Ohio 45241-1321  
 (513) 752-2889



448/80020  
 5 OF 5

<b>TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY 1991</b>		PREPARED	DRAWING NO.
WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE CINCINNATI, OHIO		JT DRAWN	448 80021
		CW CHECKED	SHEET <b>S3</b>
		9/91 DATE	OF <b>S3</b>

ON MICROFILM