

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

CHATHAM VILLAGE

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Chatham Village

Other Name/Site Number: N/A

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Bounded by Virginia Ave., Bigam St., Woodruff St., Saw Mill Run Blvd., and Olympia Rd. Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Pittsburgh Vicinity: N/A

State: PA County: Allegheny Code: 003 Zip Code: 15211

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property
Building(s):
District: X
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property
Contributing
209
1
1
211

Noncontributing
Buildings
Sites
Structures
Objects
0 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 53

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830 to 1960, MPS

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4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ____ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ____ Entered in the National Register _____
- ____ Determined eligible for the National Register _____
- ____ Determined not eligible for the National Register _____
- ____ Removed from the National Register _____
- ____ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	DOMESTIC LANDSCAPE RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT SOCIAL COMMERCE	Sub:	Multiple Dwelling Park, Plaza Sports facility Clubhouse Specialty store
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Current:	DOMESTIC LANDSCAPE RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT SOCIAL COMMERCE	Sub:	Multiple Dwelling Park, Plaza Sports facility Clubhouse Specialty Store
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7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals
Colonial Revival (Georgian Revival)

MATERIALS:

Foundation:	Brick
Walls:	Brick
Roof:	Slate
Other:	Metal

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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Chatham Village¹ is a planned garden community located in the Mt. Washington neighborhood less than two miles southwest of downtown Pittsburgh. The forty-six acre historic district is an historic designed landscape (one contributing site) that includes the grounds, gardens, courtyards, and a wooded greenbelt that forms the overall site plan as laid out in the 1930s. The district includes 209 contributing buildings, most of which were constructed between 1932 and 1936 and reflect a unified program of Georgian Revival architecture, and a set of tennis courts (one contributing structure), which reflect the recreational aspect of the community's design. There are no noncontributing resources. The district includes the former Thomas Bigham House (1849), renamed Chatham Hall when it was renovated in 1936 for use as a community clubhouse with additional renovations taking place in 1992. The construction of the remaining contributing buildings proceeded in three phases from 1932 to 1956. The initial construction began in 1932 and included twenty-six groups of attached dwellings, one store building, two tool sheds, two garage compounds, and one garage compound with attached tool shed. An additional store building was built in 1933. The second phase of construction occurred in 1936 and included fourteen groups of attached dwellings, one tool shed, and one garage compound with an attached tool shed.

The final phase occurred in 1956 with the construction of Chatham Manor, a multiple-family apartment building and garage compound with an attached tool shed. The hillside site was laid out as a superblock having an outlying wooded greenbelt, perimeter roads, and centrally located developed areas where housing in the form of attached dwellings were interconnected and arranged in the sloping topography to form courts that afforded a quiet setting and privacy for residents. Each dwelling faced onto a landscaped courtyard that provided private gardens enclosed by hedges, central open lawns with shrubbery and trees, and pedestrian walkways. The landscape was terraced and the houses arranged at varying grades to accommodate the steeply sloping topography, an innovation in house design and construction. An elaborate system of brick parapets, stairways, and walls, designed to complement the Georgian Revival architecture, further unified the overall site and provided pedestrian access in the terraced portions of the site, including the walkways leading from the garage compounds to the residential courts. Curvilinear roads were placed along the perimeter of the developed areas separating them from the surrounding greenbelt, Chatham Wood to the south and east, and Pittsburgh's Olympia Park below the bluff to the west. Other landscape features that add to the historical significance and integrity of the overall contributing site include hiking trails, tennis and basketball courts, ball fields, sandboxes, picnic areas, a playground, and Chatham Wood. The site has exceptional integrity, the buildings and grounds in the historic district are well preserved and have very closely retained their original appearance by the strict design review process of the community

¹ David Vater, "Chatham Village Historic District," National Register documentation, 1996, Section 7, pp. 1-4. The entire description that forms Section 7 of this National Historic Landmark nomination was prepared by David Vater, and is taken from the 1996 National Register nomination for Chatham Village. The appearance of the community and the condition of the resources, have not changed since the date of the National Register listing. In addition to minor editorial changes, a section entitled, "Integrity," has been added and the number of contributing resources has been revised to better reflect the national significance of the property in community planning, landscape architecture, and architecture. The revised count includes one contributing site to recognize the significance of the overall site plan and its landscape design, including the gardens and grounds, courtyards, and Chatham Woods. It also includes the tennis courts as one contributing structure and changes the number of contributing buildings from 52 to 209 to recognize the 197 attached dwellings as individual resources rather than as elements making up 40 separate groups.

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association² and by a long-standing policy of common maintenance of buildings and grounds.³

Although Chatham Village was constructed in three phases, the general design concepts for the buildings and landscaping were repeated in each phase to give a visual unity to the entire development. A consistent building setback line was used along streets, and matching street trees and hedges were planted to unify the development. Since 1932 the buildings were constructed of similar materials in the Georgian Revival style with some French Eclectic style touches.⁴ Building clusters repeat similar massing and roof lines, but randomly alternate hipped and gable roof forms for variety. A consistent vocabulary of architectural details including double-hung-sash windows, French doors, wrought-iron porches, cast-stone ornamental coat-of-arms, light fixtures, decorative brickwork, slate roofs, and other details give the development a distinctly unified campus feel. The architecture of Chatham Village is distinguished in its subtle use of symmetry. Several imaginary axes run through the layout, sometimes centered on sidewalks and steps, resulting in opposite houses being set like bookend twins. The terracing of the hilly site adds variety to the building groups while the extensive landscaping, large garden courts, continuous hedgerows, common greens, and surrounding greenbelt buffer contribute to the pervasive Garden City identity which distinguishes this development from the adjoining neighborhood streets.

The community context of the Mt. Washington area is that of a district of residential streets which were built and settled in the late nineteenth century. The houses are typically single family homes, tightly aligned along a grid of hilly streets, with minimal side or front yards. The homes were generally constructed one at a time by each single owner and their builder. There is a variety of styles and exterior materials include wood siding, aluminum siding, brick, insul-brick, and stone. Chatham Village presents a significant contrast to the existing neighborhoods which surround it, and is visually distinguished from adjoining properties as it is set apart on its own hillside ridge. At Chatham Village the roads were not layed [sic] out in a grid, but run in a curvilinear fashion which follows the contours of the hillsides. Roads were laid out to form loops facilitating internal traffic but offering no shortcut to through traffic. Speed bumps are currently used to further slowdown local traffic. The orientation of the houses is faced toward the landscaped parks at the center of each cluster of buildings. Front doors open onto private garden courts rather than on nearby roads. Living rooms view the green not the street. Kitchens and the service side of the houses face the streets.

The one hundred ninety-seven dwellings include two, three, and four bedroom units that are attached in groups of two to eight units. There are ninety-one two-bedroom units, ninety-nine three-bedroom units, and seven four-bedroom units. Units of differing sizes were combined in each group with the exception of the four-bedroom units which occurred only in the 1936 portion of the site south of Bigham Road. The buildings rise from two to three and a half stories above the grade of the perimeter streets. Homes ordinarily contain a full basement, a first floor with living room, dining room, kitchen, and a second floor with two or three bedrooms, bath, and linen closet. A few homes have a third floor and contain four bedrooms and two baths. All

² Chatham Village Homes, Inc., *Rules and Regulations:1960 - 1990 and Guidelines for Renovations*, September, 1990.

³ Chatham Village Homes, Inc., *By-Laws*, 1960 - 1986.

⁴ Walter C. Kidney, *Landmark Architecture, Pittsburgh and Allegheny County* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1985), 204. The style of Chatham Village is Georgian Revival. The French Eclectic style touches occur in the roof shapes of the store and tool shed buildings, and the plank doors of the tool sheds.

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dwellings have basements, in some units a part of the basement is used as a recreation room, in others for a garage.

The houses were designed in the Georgian Revival style. They are not reconstructions of period homes, but are generally a 1930s simplified interpretation of the Georgian style. Homes are constructed of a red-range brick [over wood frame] that is detailed with brick dentils at cornices and chimney caps, and rowlock window sills. The slate roofs have steeply pitched gables and hips of various heights and slopes. Gutters, flashings and downspouts are weathered copper. Exterior doors are multi-lite glazed wood doors, and are all painted dark green. Windows are all multi-lite wood sash and are all painted ivory. Most are six-over-six double hung, supplemented by fixed lites and casements. Different window groupings lend interest to the restrained, Georgian Revival style facades. Other important details are small wood balconies accessed by French doors on the street side of most houses, and the flat-roofed porches of various sizes provided at the entry doors of some units. Green-painted ornamental iron work is used for railings and porch supports which have a criss-crossed pattern with small elliptical bosses at their intersection. Other entries have limestone entablatures surrounding the doorway. Integral garages are recessed into the facade by an alcove that also contains a basement entry door. All homes are separated by soundproof concrete block walls from basement to roof.

The cast stone coats of arms used as ornaments, recall Pittsburgh's history.⁵ Chatham Village was named in honor of William Pitt (1708 - 1778), the Earl of Chatham, who served as the British Secretary for Colonial Affairs in 1757, and for whom the City of Pittsburgh is named. Other ornamental crests represent George Washington (1732 - 1799) and the family of the Marquis Duquesne (1700-1778). The Colonial period also provided the street names as the Penn family is recalled in Pennridge Road and the Washington family's ancestral home, Sulgrave Manor is recalled in Sulgrave Road.⁶

Where the slope permits, seventy-six integral garages were located in the basements of housing units. These are accessed by short driveways or in private cul-de-sacs. An additional one hundred thirty-two garages are grouped together into compounds. The garage compounds have flat roofs, exterior brick walls, and dark green painted wood paneled sectional overhead doors. Garage compounds have only one driveway entrance to serve as many as twenty-four garages that share maneuvering space. The garage compounds were designed with some Georgian Revival style details including brick buttresses, arched doorways, stone caps, and wrought iron lanterns.

Among the buildings in Chatham Village are six tiny but imaginative gardener's tool sheds. Their design concept follows a long tradition of creating picturesque and sometimes elaborate garden folly structures. The six tool sheds are all built of brick with slate roofs to harmonize with the surrounding homes, each are of different shape and have individual distinguishing characteristics. The tool sheds are Georgian Revival style and some have French Eclectic style features. One is a tall tower with hipped roof, one an octagon with hipped roof, one is cylindrical shaped with a conical roof, one has an open gazebo with hipped roof, one is rectangular with a steeply gabled roof, and one is a cube with a tall pyramidal roof. Most have decorative copper or wooden rooftop finials. Some have hand-adzed solid oak lintels above the

⁵ C. V. Starrett, "Colorful History of Pittsburgh Symbolized in Village Names" *Chatham Village News*, October 10, 1982, pg. 4.

⁶ Mary Mendenhall Perkins, "A June Day at Sulgrave Manor," *Art and Archaeology*.(March 1923): 139-143.

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doors. All but one, have heavy V-grooved plank doors and most have wrought iron thumb latches. One has ornamental wrought iron strap hinges.⁷

The exterior appearance of the buildings remains essentially the same as when they were built. Since its inception, a policy of common exterior maintenance has resulted in consistent repair to all of the buildings in the community. Exterior alterations by residents have never been permitted. Storm windows have been added to protect the original wooden windows. Improved electrical service, underground cable TV and other improvements have been undertaken to provide contemporary amenities without diminishing the historic character. Multiple interior improvements, principally to kitchens, bathrooms, and a few flagstone patio areas, have been undertaken by residents after review and approval by the cooperative.

The social center for Chatham Village is a clubhouse facility now known as Chatham Hall (originally the Thomas Bigham House). It can be described as a Greek Revival style residence of 1849. Facing southwest is a two-story element that contains the original living spaces of the Bigham family. The leg of the "T", extending to the southeast is an ell comprised of two stories plus an attic, and originally contained servants' rooms and kitchen. As a functioning homestead, various outbuildings stood nearby to support the household. These included a corn crib, carriage house, barn and privy.⁸ None of these outbuildings remain.

The south elevation of the building, today facing the picnic grounds, was originally the front of the house. The exterior walls are smooth red brick. The brickwork is laid up to be tied back by header bricks at every seventh course. The front facade is symmetrical and is divided into three bays by two offsets which run from grade to roof. The brickwork of the center section rises up and is capped by a low sloping pediment characteristic of the Greek Revival style. The remainder of the roof is hipped and contains twin chimneys. There is a gable roof on the ell extending to the rear of the building. As originally built the house had a prominent lower roofed portico aligned to the center portion of the facade. The portico had four square wooden columns and two pilasters all with squared capitals and bases. This supported a very deep architrave surmounted by a railing of classical turned wooden balusters.⁹ The original portico was later replaced with a wider wood porch with four wood columns. The second porch was removed in 1938 and was replaced by a wrought iron porch, and a metal fire escape was added in 1950. Although the house has been renovated on several occasions, most of the interior of the 'family' wing remains unaltered, including the principal staircase, standing and running trim, window and door casings, ornamental plasterwork ceilings, and several marble mantelpieces. The exterior of the house is original with the exception of the porches and a few doors and windows in the ell. In 1935 the cellar was excavated into a full basement. A new heating system, toilet rooms, and hardwood floors were added. A five-bay, two-story wooden porch with metal fire stair was added on the southeast face as part of 1992 renovations which included an updated kitchen and accessible powder room. The plan has a center hall on the first and second floor. The first floor has a kitchen, dining room, ballroom, and parlor; the second floor has four meeting rooms that were formerly bedrooms.

⁷ David Vater, "Our Delightful Follies," *Chatham Village Times* (November 1994): 6-7.

⁸ Melville Bigham Stout, "Family Notes," May, 1977. Manuscript among family papers of Mrs. Mary Gibson of Upper St. Clair, PA.

⁹ The description of the former porch was derived from three old photographs among family papers of Mrs. Mary Gibson of Upper St. Clair, PA.

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The commercial area of Chatham Village, located at the northwest and southwest corners of the intersection of Bigham Street and Virginia Avenue, includes two one-story store buildings housing seven tenants. The buildings were constructed in 1932 and 1933 in the Georgian Revival style with some French Eclectic style touches, and are in a scale compatible with the neighboring homes and use the same materials of red brick and slate roofs. The larger building, at the southwest street corner, has two massive chimneys giving the building a picturesque effect, and a well concealed flat roofed portion at the rear. The tall hipped slate roofs have metal finials at each peak. Windows and doors are generally similar to the housing groups, however larger glass angled display windows originally faced Bigham Street at recessed shop entrances. The center portion of the larger building was altered in 1950 to accommodate a continuous glass storefront for the Union Supply Company. The glazed storefront was removed in the 1980s and replaced with wood siding and residential scale windows. Some large window openings were also bricked-in. The store fronts of the commercial buildings bear the most alterations in appearance of any part of the buildings in Chatham Village, but enough of the original appearance is evident to easily distinguish the few altered portions.

The three-story, nineteen-unit Chatham Manor apartment building sits on the high point of the site at the southeast corner of the intersection of Virginia Avenue and Bigham Street immediately opposite the commercial buildings. It is also a simplified Georgian Revival style building of red brick and has a stone trimmed entrance, flat roof, and wooden double hung windows similar to those in the townhouses. Each floor has apartment units off a central corridor and there is elevator service. There are three apartment types. Each has a large living/dining room, kitchen, bath, one bedroom, and sliding double door closet space. The building also contains a laundry room, and additional storage areas in the basement.

The landscape development of Chatham Village can best be described by recognizing that the buildings and the landforms were set to interlock into a comprehensive environment of terraces. The buildings engage the terrain in a succession of low walls. The site plan separates automobiles from pedestrians by placing the rear, basement level of the dwellings at the road grade homes and by locating roads along the perimeter of the area developed with housing. The inner landscaped courts are exclusively pedestrian spaces. The community's original landscape development of the housing area included the planting of ten acres of lawns, three miles of hedges, nearly four thousand shrubs, more than five thousand square yards of ground cover, and nearly five hundred trees. In addition, a naturally wooded greenbelt surrounded the community on three sides and a recreation area was developed to include a large open sloping lawn, three tennis courts, a mushball field, volleyball field, basketball court, and a children's playground with play equipment. There is also a designated area for vegetable gardens.

As a living garden, the grounds have inevitably undergone some changes. A number of elms were killed by Dutch elm disease, and several large oaks fell in windstorms. Driveway hedges on the service side of Pennridge and Olympia were removed. In 1936 a new pedestrian scale lighting system was installed in the first phase garden courtyards and cast-iron boulevard poles which were relocated to street areas. The flagpole was added in 1945. The rose garden dates from 1952. Playground equipment and the drinking fountain are newer replacements. Some additional off street parking was added on the east side of Sulgrave Road. In 1986 a replanting of site trees was executed using the original blueprints as a guide, under the direction of GWSM, the successor firm of the original landscape architects. Exterior courtyard lighting was replaced in 1991 with nearly matching custom fixtures.

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Chatham Wood, the community's twenty-five-acre greenbelt, covers more than half of the total land area of the planned community. Its steep, hillsides are covered with virgin woodland which have never been cleared since colonial settlement, and have been kept undeveloped to this day. Chatham Wood contains a number of towering oak trees estimated to exceed two hundred years in age, and provides an important recreational resource for the residents of Chatham Village and a preserved habitat for native plants, animals, and birds unique in its close proximity to downtown Pittsburgh. Chatham Wood is interlaced with two miles of graded trails and contains a picnic grove, cliff-faced ravine, waterfall, two streams, three wooden footbridges, and a water garden. The greenbelt also serves to buffer the community and to preserve views from the residential area.

In 1936 under the direction of landscape architect Theodore Kohankie, over two thousand trees and shrubs were planted to supplement the native growth in Chatham Wood. Of the forty varieties of trees selected, practically all of them were native to the western Pennsylvania hillsides. The few alterations to Chatham Wood include the installation of a perimeter chain link fence in 1936 to protect the woodlands, the construction of a double fireplace of rough-faced, random-shaped stone with two metal grates and a tall stone chimney in the picnic grove in 1938; and the replacement of the wooden footbridges, most recently in 1994.

Integrity

Chatham Village retains an extraordinary degree of integrity to its historic location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, association and setting. The community remains intact and in use as intended by the designers, and continues under the single ownership of a resident's cooperative, Chatham Village Homes, Inc. The protective greenbelt and superblocs continue to define the historic community boundary. Of particular importance, the superblocs and interior parks still operate as designed, removing pedestrian traffic from the vehicular traffic on the periphery. The substantially built brick row houses with slate roofs show exceptional integrity to their original construction. Restrictions governing outward changes to the buildings have maintained complete integrity to the original appearance of the Chatham Village dwellings. The landscape design remains intact to an unusual degree as well. Many of the original plantings of deciduous trees, hedges, shrubs and groundcover continue to thrive under the constant care of the full-time grounds crew. Standing in the interior greens of Chatham Village, the integrity of feeling and association to the original intent of the designers is unmistakable. The sense of an American village prevails, and the community continues to operate as a neighborhood entity. The far-sightedness of the Buhl Foundation in designating a large amount of the hillside site as a greenbelt has preserved the peaceful setting of Chatham Village despite intense development of the Mt. Washington section of Pittsburgh. Much of the land adjoining Chatham Village on the north and east had been previously subdivided and developed c.1900; many of these houses, seen in photos taken during the construction of Chatham Village, are still standing today. Viewed from the air, these houses contrast markedly with the grouped hillside homes around interior greens, illustrating the difference between traditional profit-motivated urban planning tied to frontage along the gridiron street plan and the innovative social-minded plan of Chatham Village.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
 Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National
 Register Criteria:

A X B C X D

Criteria Considerations
 (Exceptions):

A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria:

Criteria 1 and 4

NHL Theme(s):

I. Peopling Places
 III. Expressing Cultural Values

Areas of Significance:

Community Planning and Development
 Architecture
 Landscape Architecture
 Social History
 Politics/Government

Period(s) of Significance:

c. 1929-1956

Significant Dates:

1932
 1936
 1956

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Phase 1 (1932): Stein, Clarence S., Wright, Henry-Planners; Ingham, Charles T., Boyd, William T. – Architects; Griswold, Ralph E. – Landscape Architect
 Phase 2 (1936): Wright, Henry-Planner; Ingham, Charles T., Boyd, William T. - Architects; Kohankie, Theodore M. – Landscape Architect
 Phase 3 (1956): Bigger, Frederick – Planner; Ingham, Boyd & Pratt – Architect; Griswold, Winters & Swain – Landscape Architect.

Historic Contexts:

XVI. Architecture
 M. Period Revivals (1870-1940)
 1. Georgian (1870-1920)
 V. Historic District
 W. Regional and Urban Planning
 2. Suburban Areas
 XVII. Landscape Architecture

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The community of Chatham Village, planned and built between 1929 and 1956, is significant under National Historic Landmark Criterion 1 (Events) for its association with the efforts of private organizations and philanthropic foundations in the early twentieth century to promote social reform and improvement in the housing of moderate-income Americans based on the principles of the English Garden City planning. As a successful prototype for multiple family housing and subdivision design, Chatham Village played a pivotal role in the development of regional and urban community planning and the history of suburbanization in the United States. It exerted substantial influence on federal housing policy of the 1930s and the design of private and government funded large-scale community development from the Depression through the post-WWII era. Chatham Village's distinctive design was based on the ideals of the English Garden City movement, including single ownership and the protective greenbelt of undeveloped land. The design reflected the Radburn Idea, which town planners Clarence S. Stein and Henry Wright had developed at Radburn, New Jersey, several years earlier.¹⁰ Elements central to the Radburn Idea -- the use of superblocks with interior parks, the design of "reverse-front" houses, and the separation of automobile and pedestrian traffic -- were refined at Chatham Village. The result was a highly successful and attractive comprehensive plan for a moderately-priced yet spacious rental residential community built at a relatively high density; this achievement advanced the cause of housing reform and neighborhood planning and demonstrated the feasibility of large-scale residential development at a critical time in the nation's economic and social history.

Chatham Village's significance on a national scale is further supported by the Buhl Foundation's model of planning that, based on a detailed preliminary study of local housing needs and conditions, targeted a specific moderate-income group -- the clerical workers of Pittsburgh -- and developed a successful strategy for creating a safe and attractive community of moderate-cost rental homes. The foundation's potential for success lay in its ability to construct housing at a relatively high density and retain single ownership of the entire community with the purpose of protecting their real estate investment and providing a program of long-term management. Cost-savings were realized through several means: 1) the acquisition of a hillside site that, although conveniently located close to downtown Pittsburgh, was considered unsuitable for development and therefore relatively inexpensive; 2) the use of the superblock as the basis of site design to reduce the construction costs for roads and utilities and to ensure a park-like setting; and 3) the high-density development of an innovative house type -- the row house group arranged to form private garden courts and fit the site's sloping topography. The successful use of the superblock as a basis for neighborhood planning and the grouping of attached dwellings in a garden environment, demonstrated at Chatham Village, formed an ideal prototype for high-density residential development.

At the time of the highly influential President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership in 1931, the preliminary planning for Chatham Village was complete and construction ready to proceed. Chatham Village received substantial attention and praise by several committees, including the committee on large-scale operations, which included the foundation's preliminary study in its published report. Immediately acclaimed as a model for neighborhood planning, Chatham Village influenced the first public housing developments

¹⁰ Radburn, New Jersey, is concurrently being considered for NHL designation.

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constructed under the Public Works Administration and the three greenbelt communities, built by the Resettlement Administration. Its most far-reaching and long-lasting influence on federal housing policy and the growth of American suburbs was on the large-scale rental housing program of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which was established by the National Housing Act of 1934.¹¹ One of the new agency's most important missions was to encourage private investment in the construction of both single-family and multiple-family residences through a program of mortgage insurance and national standards for the design of neighborhoods and house designs. To government officials concerned with stimulating the home building industry and bringing long-term stability to the real estate market during the Great Depression, planned communities for moderate-income families, such as Radburn and Chatham Village, not only provided models for attractive, livable communities but also promised sound, reasonable returns for developers and private investors. In the mid-1930s, the garden-apartment community prototype, idealized at Chatham Village, was adopted by the Federal Housing Administration's Large-scale Rental Housing Division, triggering substantial private investment and influencing the availability of garden apartment-style subdivisions in metropolitan areas of the United States for several decades. Chatham Village has provided an enduring legacy, having drawn international attention and having been revisited by successive generations of designers. Its influence continued into the second half of the twentieth century, affecting both the conceptual planning and physical design of the "new towns" of the 1960s, such as Reston, Virginia, and Columbia, Maryland, and the widespread acceptance of the planned unit development (PUD) as a basis for suburban planning.

Chatham Village is also significant under National Historic Landmark Criterion 4 as the third and final influential project resulting from the highly-creative, ten-year collaboration of planner-architects Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, members of the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA). Chatham Village built upon Stein and Wright's earlier projects, Sunnyside Gardens, on Long Island and Radburn, New Jersey, both built through the collaboration of the RPAA for the City Housing Corporation. The Buhl Foundation hired Stein and Wright to assist with the site design and act as technical consultants to a team of local designers consisting initially of architects Charles T. Ingham and William T. Boyd, and landscape architect, Ralph E. Griswold.

Chatham Village is nationally significant as a hallmark of American garden city planning, one which strongly influenced the character and expansion of suburban America and gave tangible form to the concept that moderate income Americans could attain the ideal of suburban living in a well-planned neighborhood of attached rental homes. Distinctive and exceptional for the high artistic quality and unity of its overall design, Chatham Village represents the remarkable period between the two world wars of the twentieth century when innovative community planning flourished in the United States through the collaboration of highly trained designers representing the professions of planning, architecture, landscape architecture, and engineering. To form a high-density, garden community attractive and affordable to Pittsburgh's clerical workforce, the houses were constructed in attached groups, based on Wright's exhaustive cost-analysis studies and a two-year preliminary study of local housing needs and conditions by the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Pittsburgh. Committed to long-term ownership and management, the Buhl Foundation had the buildings constructed of brick and slate to ensure their durability and long-term real estate value. These construction materials added to the modest yet detailed elegance of the Georgian Revival architectural style that extended from the grouped row

¹¹ 47 Stat. 725; 48 Stat. 1246.

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houses to the shopping center and also provided a unifying theme for the development of grounds with their walled terraces, stairways, gateways, and paths. The carefully detailing and unified program of architectural elements at Chatham Village, reflect the strengthening interest in the Colonial Revival as an appropriate source of design for American housing during the 1920s and 1930s, and demonstrate the competency and artistic talents of Pittsburgh architects Ingham and Boyd. The formal landscape development of the grounds drew upon European precedents and the Beaux Arts training of Stein, who acted as a technical consultant, and Ralph Griswold, a prominent landscape architect who was one of the first in his profession to win the Prix de Rome and study landscape design at the American Academy in Rome.

The distinctive planning and design elements introduced at Chatham Village produced an ideal suburban development affordable for moderate-income residents. Built during a time of rapid technological change, the “reverse-front” orientation of house groups, facing open courtyards in the interior of each superblock, evoked the comfort of a traditional Colonial village or town. The meticulously designed and maintained grounds with terraced greens and courtyards dramatically enhanced the village atmosphere and provided the healthy environment thought to be necessary for modern living. Henry Wright’s innovative “reverse-front” design of the houses, in which service rooms face the street and living rooms face the interior park, turned the focus of the community inward, away from the noise and activity of surrounding development. Chatham Village’s innovations in architectural design included further exploration of the design of the “reverse-front” row house to accommodate entrances on various levels, incorporate lower-level garages, provide variations in design from house to house, and stagger the arrangement of floor levels and roof lines. The key to achieving lower construction costs, and perhaps the designers’ greatest contribution to American subdivision design, lay in the ingenuous way that row house groups were arranged and adjusted to conform to the irregular, sloping site, thereby making the fullest use of land for residential use while leaving substantial acreage open for landscaped grounds, gardens, recreational facilities, and a naturalistic park.

Peopling Places: Community and Neighborhood

The planned community of Chatham Village was conceived as a philanthropic project by the Buhl Foundation of Pittsburgh, to provide high-quality housing for moderate-income working families; a response to the growing national problem of insufficient low and middle-income housing supplies and the unplanned growth of cities. Planners Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, who had demonstrated their cost-saving innovative community designs at Sunnyside Gardens (1924) and Radburn, N.J. (1928), based on the planning and community theories of the Regional Planning Association of America, fit well with the philanthropic intentions of the Foundation. Although housing reforms associated with the Progressive Movement had effectively improved basic housing needs through building codes and zoning, the additional construction costs associated with these improvements made low-income housing unprofitable for the commercial building industry. Through the same period, a growing middle class sought escape from the deepening squalor associated with the slums and industrial concentrations of the cities. The speculative real estate market was rapidly developing the edges of already over-crowded cities with monotonous grid-iron rows of tightly packed houses, an equally unappealing solution for housing low to mid-level working class families.

The plan for Chatham Village combined many of the physical elements and community-building theory associated with the Garden City movement of England. Additionally, the community was

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planned to provide a continuous source of income for the Foundation through rental returns, resulting in the Foundation's commitment to quality construction and continuous maintenance. Improved with cost-saving features demonstrated at Sunnyside Gardens and Radburn, particularly the superb block with interior green and attached group housing, Chatham Village achieved a healthy and desirable community environment for moderate-income working families.

The Great Depression of the 1930s proved the financial soundness of Buhl Foundation's single ownership of the whole community and the initial investment in quality construction and environment. While Sunnyside and Radburn faltered financially, Chatham Village continued to produce a return on the Foundation's investment. Low-income displaced families benefited from federal government "greenbelt" towns modeled on the designs of Stein and Wright, including features specific to Chatham Village such as single ownership and attached group housing. In the late 1930s, the Federal Housing Administration eagerly adopted the garden apartment template of Chatham Village as a desirable solution for large-scale rental housing. It was eventually adopted as well by public housing authorities, however with a dramatic loss of the original intent, which proved to be a failure.

The product of two of America's most forward-looking town-planners, Henry Wright and Clarence Stein, Chatham Village reflected planning principles and practices that would have far-reaching influence on suburbanization in the United States during the twentieth century. Foremost was the shaping of a model for high-density neighborhood planning that integrated moderately priced rental housing in a spacious park-like setting and offered community facilities that included playgrounds, a shopping center, community building, and a greenbelt park. Second was the demonstration of practices of real estate development that encompassed the ideas of preliminary studies and cost-analysis, master planning, large-scale operations, long-term management, as well as collaborative design that combined the talents of community planners, engineers, architects, and landscape architects.

Chatham Village followed a decade of progress in the design of comfortable, small homes and in search of solutions for neighborhood planning by professional groups of planners, architects, and landscape architects; real estate developers and community builders; philanthropists; and community-based Better Homes organizations. By the 1920s the use of professional designers, building standards, planning controls, and deed restrictions, became widespread for upper middle income suburbs modeled after developer Edward Bouton's Roland Park or J. C. Nichols's "country club" suburbs. Apart from the successful communities built during World War I through the short-lived Emergency Fleet Corporation and the United States Housing Corporation, few lower and moderate-income neighborhoods attained the "garden" ideal or the park-like setting of more expensive neighborhoods.

Members of the RPAA, supporters of the Russell Sage Foundation-sponsored New York Regional Plan, and others seeking to reform the living conditions of lower and moderate income Americans, looked to the English garden cities of Unwin and Parker and the American garden-city influenced examples including Forest Hills Garden on Long Island, Mariemont near Cincinnati, and World War I-era communities such as Yorkship in Camden, New Jersey, and Seaside Village in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The town plan of Radburn, New Jersey, begun in 1928 for the City Housing Corporation by Stein and Wright in collaboration with other members of the RPAA, combined many of the design and community-building ideas associated with the

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Garden City movement in England with cost-saving innovations aimed at producing a healthy and desirable community environment for middle-income American families. Radburn built upon the RPAA's experience and success in designing Sunnyside Gardens on Long Island, a community in which row houses were interconnected and grouped to form pleasing entry courts and a central interior green with private gardens and common recreational facilities, and gave material form to the Neighborhood Unit formula developed by Clarence Perry (*Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs*, 1929).

The Radburn Idea had a lasting influence on American community and neighborhood design, most tangibly on the Resettlement Administration's "greenbelt" towns and New Towns of the 1960s. Furthermore, as a demonstration of both the efficiencies and economies of large-scale planning and the Neighborhood Unit formula, two concepts examined and overwhelmingly endorsed by the 1931 President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, Radburn would have far-reaching influence on the construction practices and the standards for neighborhood design established in the mid-1930s by the new Federal Housing Administration (FHA) for the approval of FHA-insured mortgages. Drawing from their experience at Radburn and applying the garden-city concept to the design of a moderate-cost rental community, Stein and Wright further advanced the efficiencies of large-scale construction, particularly as it related to the arrangement and design of small, attached garden homes and apartments at Chatham Village. Although its construction was hardly underway, Chatham Village received favorable attention at the 1931 housing conference in large part due to the two-year preliminary study prepared for the Buhl Foundation by the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Pittsburgh and its innovations in planning large-scale residential communities for moderate income Americans.

Expressing Cultural Values: The Automobile, Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Subdivision Design

The Chatham Village plan was designed to respond to the needs and values of the growing middle class in the United States, particularly those that made up Pittsburgh's clerical workforce in the late 1920s. Rising construction costs following World War I accelerated the already deepening crises of affordable housing stock. Speculative subdivisions, aimed at producing the most profit on the least amount of land, were increasingly monotonous. The tightly packed houses provided only the minimum of amenities considered necessary for quality of life, sunlight, fresh air, open space, and accommodation for, and safety from, the automobile.

Like its predecessor Radburn, the "Town for the Motor Age," Chatham Village was designed specifically to accommodate increasing automobile ownership and use, while at the same time maintain suburban values for safe, quiet, and convenient neighborhoods. The plan allowed the separation of automobiles and pedestrians through the development of interior courts that provided private entrances and gardens, common walkways, and landscaped grounds. Automobile traffic was limited to single-use that formed the periphery of each superblock. The community's roadways were curvilinear and narrow, designed to follow the site's hillside topography and slow the speed of traffic. The central courtyards and paths provided play spaces free of traffic, and provided pedestrian access to neighborhood homes, garage compounds, the hillside park, and nearby commercial center. Additionally, the landscaped greens were designed to provide sunlight, fresh air and a park-like setting for residents of the surrounding homes.

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The architecture of the Chatham Village house groups was also designed to appeal to middle class values. The grouping of row houses was key to the affordability of the new community, but also served to define and enhance the enclosed interior courts. The Georgian Revival architectural style was not elaborate but was sufficiently elegant to imply some level of status. Equally important, the house groups were set into the hillside on a series of terraces, creating exceptional visual interest and avoiding the monotony more typically associated with urban row houses. The “reverse-front” design of the Chatham Village dwellings, a complete reversal of the typical arrangement of houses to front the street, placed the front of the house toward the quiet interior park and away from the street-side hustle, dirt and danger of traffic. The service (kitchen) side, or rear of the house, faced toward the street or service court, with many having a basement level garage.

Chatham Village successfully included all of those elements considered necessary for the emerging middle class – the open space with light and air, safety, automobile accommodation, and modern conveniences, park-like setting, and recreational facilities. Most importantly, Chatham Village was successful in including these while maintaining costs at a level affordable to the working families yearning to escape the city. Through exhaustive cost-analysis of large-scale construction including land purchasing, building design, construction cost, and infrastructure placement, site planners Stein and Wright were able to realize construction savings that allowed the incorporation of desired amenities without causing the need to increase construction costs and raise rents.

The Chatham Village “garden court” design continues to represent an expression of the American cultural value placed on open space and gracious living for middle class families. The design elements introduced and advanced at Chatham Village, such as superblock planing, a community greenbelt, and large-scale methods of design and construction, would influence the early policies and practices of the Federal Housing Administration’s large-scale rental housing program and provide a model for FHA-approved, privately-funded “garden apartment” complexes, which would provide a continuing source of affordable, high-density housing with at least some associated open space, for generations of low and middle class Americans.

Historic Context

The historic significance of the Chatham Village community lies in the growth of American cities, the expansion of the middle class, and the evolution of suburban development beginning in the mid-nineteenth century and continuing through the first half of the twentieth century. The housing needs for upper middle income families in the suburbs had long been met through the “progressive” designs of individuals such as Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and Calvert Vaux, and Andrew Jackson Downing, among others, a housing crisis for lower income families came to a head following WWI. Rising construction costs after the war made affordable housing unprofitable for the established residential building industry.¹² However, experiments with community building by federal government agencies during the war, as well as the successful “New Towns” and “Garden Cities” developed in Europe and Great Britain, laid the groundwork for solutions to the post-war housing crises. A generation of architects, landscape architects, city planners, and engineers were influenced by the designs of Olmsted and Vaux, the community

¹² Roy Lubove, *Community Planning in the 1920s: The Contribution of the Regional Planning Association of America* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963), 17-18; This book is a detailed discussion of the factors which influenced the development of the regional and community planning ideas of the RPAA.

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vision of Ebenezer Howard's Garden Cities, and the evolving planning theories of the early twentieth century. The resulting work of these men and women, represented in the planned communities of Sunnyside, Radburn, Chatham Village, the Resettlement Administration's greenbelt towns, and Baldwin Hills Village, influenced city planning and suburban design in the United States and elsewhere throughout the twentieth century.

In the United States, the migration of the upper middle-class to designed subdivisions beyond city limits began in the second half of the nineteenth century. Specifically designed for wealthy families, these early developments often employed the curvilinear street pattern, community parks, and building restrictions found in many modern subdivisions.¹³ Significant projects from this period include Olmsted and Vaux's Riverside, Illinois (1869) and Llewellyn Haskell's Llewellyn Park, New Jersey (1857).

Throughout the late nineteenth century, as suburban design for the wealthy focused on large lots and healthy surroundings, working class housing suffered the degradations of the speculative market. In the United States, government action to ensure "healthy" housing for the poor was limited to restrictive building codes that tended to increase building costs. While these measures improved building construction they did little to improve the environment in which low and middle-income families lived.¹⁴

In Europe and Great Britain a more active government approach to meeting low-income housing needs was developing, described as "constructive" rather than "restrictive" legislation, "including public housing, municipal land purchase, low-interest loans to individuals and limited-dividend companies, and tax exemptions..."¹⁵ Planners were influenced by the writings of Camillo Sitte of Austria (1889) and Ebenezer Howard in Great Britain (1898). Howard's social reform plan, laid out in his treatise, *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (republished in 1902 as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*), envisioned the establishment of planned satellite cities surrounded by an agricultural greenbelt, known as Garden Cities, which would be community-owned (non-speculative), provide employment for a diverse population, and be limited in size. Such cities would create a "new" (traditional) sense of community through planning. Construction of several new towns based on Howard's community-building theory began quickly, although privately funded. Designed by Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker, the English Garden Cities of Letchworth (1902), Hampstead Gardens (1905), and Welwyn (1919) had a lasting impact on city planning both in Great Britain and the United States. In addition to the use of Howard's concept of a self-contained satellite town, Unwin and Parker established the use of the super-block subdivision with groupings of houses designed in a unified architectural style, sited on cul-de-sacs that provided privacy from the busier main streets.¹⁶

The influence of the English Garden City movement in the United States was more sporadic. Unwin's 1909 publication *Town Planning in Practice*, which explained much of his planning and

¹³ Donald A. Krueckeberg, ed., *Introduction to Planning History in the United States* (New Brunswick, NJ: The Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 1983), 28-29.

¹⁴ Lubove, *Community Planning in the 1920s*, 18.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* Lubove's Chapter 2, pp. 17-29 is a detailed discussion of the relative effects of restrictive vs. constructive legislation on housing quality and supply in the U.S. in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

¹⁶ David Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2003), 41-43. Also Raymond Unwin, *Town Planning in Practice*, 1909, Reprint (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994), contains a complete discussion of the English Garden City designs.

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design theory through the example of his Garden Cities, and subsequent speaking tours through the U.S. served as a resource for American planners, architects and landscape architects. New communities reflecting the influence of English Garden Cities included Forest Hills Gardens, New York (1909-1911), a privately funded community for low-income families, and Kingsport, Tennessee (1915) and Mariemont, Ohio (1923) both designed by John Nolen.¹⁷ The majority of working-class subdivisions during this period however, was based on speculative profit and continued the sprawling expansion of the cities where industrial employment was centered, with rows of identical, closely spaced bungalows and duplexes built on narrow lots within a rectangular grid of cross-streets.

A pivotal period of Garden City-influenced building in the United States occurred during World War I when government agencies funded the construction of defense housing communities. In addition to the direct influence of Unwin's 1909 book describing his town plans, architect Frederick Ackerman traveled to England to study the Garden Cities of Unwin and Parker and the defense worker communities of the British government. The resulting American planned communities, including Yorkship in Camden, New Jersey and Seaside Village in Bridgeport, Connecticut, were designed by groups of planners, architects, landscape architects, and engineers, and financed by the federal government through the United States Housing Authority and the Emergency Fleet Corporation.¹⁸ Designed specifically for the working class employed in defense industries, these communities demonstrated the possibilities for collaborative planning and "constructive" government action, considered necessary components in the construction of new communities and the improvement of lower and middle class housing.¹⁹

Collaborative planning, developed through Garden City theory and the American defense-housing crisis, found application as well in the evolution of city and regional planning. The problems of rapidly expanding cities without plans had become a focus of attention following the Chicago's 1893 Columbian Exposition. The elegant Beaux-Arts design of the fair grounds and buildings, through the supervision of Chicago architect Daniel Burnham and landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., ignited an American desire for orderly city function and growth. Burnham's 1906 *Plan for Chicago* marked the beginning of an era dedicated to developing city growth-planning strategies, which culminated in the publication of the *Regional Survey of New York and its Environs* (1929). However, these plans did not successfully address the issues of privately funded speculative building and the lack of decent working class housing. In the United States, housing needs reached crisis proportions following WWI when rising construction costs resulted in the collapse of the speculative housing industry.

In 1923, an eclectic group of professionals dedicated to the idea of truly "regional" planning gathered to form the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA). Included among the founding members were architects Clarence Stein and Fred Ackerman, landscape architect Henry Wright, social theorists Benton MacKaye and Lewis Mumford, and real estate investor/philanthropist Alexander M. Bing. Unhappy with the focus of the city-centered regional plans being developed, the RPAA's Preamble described their vision:

¹⁷ See Walter L. Creese, *The Search for Environment, The Garden City: Before and After* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 302, for a discussion of the influence of the British Garden City on the planned communities of John Nolen.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 302-03.

¹⁹ Lubove, *Community Planning in the 1920s*, 17.

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A regional plan calls for new population centers, where natural resources will be preserved for the community, where industry may be conducted efficiently, and where an adequate equipment of houses, gardens, and recreation grounds will ensure a healthy and stimulating environment.²⁰

The RPAA's regional vision sought to change the social organization of urban versus rural areas, combining the diverse components of both urban and rural community in smaller centers spread throughout a region.²¹ Rather than continuing what they saw as unhealthy and unattractive speculative growth around the industrial city centers, members of the RPAA envisioned the development of new towns within a region, which would support their own populations through the establishment of local industrial employment. Not limited to New Town development only, their vision included also the redesign of city-edge developments and reconstruction of blighted neighborhoods within the city through comprehensive planning.²² RPAA members believed that planned neighborhoods in the city and the city suburbs could successfully combine quality housing, open space and affordability.

Reduced construction costs, suggested first by Unwin in his use of cul-de-sacs and attached houses, and later refined by Henry Wright in exhaustive cost-analysis studies, were central to the various community designs. To include the "adequate equipment" in all of these environments, innovative planning free from restrictive zoning and built on a large-scale (rather than the piecemeal building of speculative builders) could potentially reduce overall costs, producing a quality community or neighborhood for low or moderate income families.

Primary to the philosophy of the RPAA was the suggestion that the post-war housing shortage was a crisis of funding, not a crisis of supply.²³ The example of successes by the government-funded planned communities both in English and U.S. defense housing convinced members of the RPAA that a stable source of funding or credit, combined with their vision of detailed comprehensive planning and construction cost savings, could result in attractive, healthy, and safe housing for Americans in the low and middle income brackets.

In order to demonstrate their planning theory, the RPAA established the City Housing Corporation, a limited dividend corporation dedicated to the construction of affordable housing and Garden City style community planning. Their two planned communities, Sunnyside Gardens (1924) and Radburn (1928), demonstrated and refined many of the RPAA ideas, but Radburn in particular established a precedent for comprehensive community design. What eventually became known as the "Radburn Idea" encompassed a number of design elements previously utilized in various developments, but at Radburn these were synthesized into a unified town plan. Of particular importance were the super-blocks with cul-de-sacs and interior landscaped parks, the neighborhood unit based on the number of children required to support an elementary school,²⁴ and a hierarchy of road uses. New concepts included the reverse-front house with integrated garage, and pedestrian pathways. The "Town for the Motor Age" was

²⁰ The Regional Planning Association of America, Preamble, June 8, 1923, box 10, file 12, The Clarence Stein Collection, Rare Book and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

²¹ For a complete understanding of the RPAA vision see Roy Lubove, *Community Planning in the 1920s: The Contribution of the Regional Planning Association of America* (Pittsburgh, PA: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963).

²² Wright, *Rehousing Urban America*, 12.

²³ Lubove, *Community Planning in the 1920s*, 73.

²⁴ Clarence S. Stein, *Toward New Towns for America* (New York, NY: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1957), 50-51; as suggested by Clarence Perry, *Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs*, vol. 7, 1929.

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sited 12 miles from New York City, near a planned highway and rail line providing easy access to the mid-level employment of most of the residents. Although the designers intended Radburn to be a fully self-sufficient commercial and industrial town of 25,000 in the vein of a true Garden City, that dream was never realized. With the 1934 bankruptcy of the City Housing Corporation, a consequence of the Great Depression, Radburn and Sunnyside effectively highlighted the RPAA suggestion that the housing industry would only remain stable through a government or foundation backed source of funds or mortgage credit.

Although sharing a common vision for community development and social reform, Clarence S. Stein (1882- 1975) and Henry Wright (1878-1936) came from very different professional backgrounds and training. Stein, a graduate of Cornell's architecture program, had European training in Beaux-Arts principles of design and had worked for Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue early in his career and helped design the formal City Beautiful plan for Tyrone, New Mexico and the fair grounds for the 1912 San Diego exposition. Wright, on the other hand, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, worked initially for landscape architect and planner George E. Kessler in Kansas City and St. Louis. Wright's early experience was influenced by the naturalistic traditions of American landscape architecture and dominated by a search for innovative solutions for suburban housing. During World War I, he worked on government-sponsored defense housing for the Emergency Fleet Corporation of the U.S. Shipping Board, and in the 1920s developed several attractive and innovative apartment houses in St. Louis.

Although Stein and Wright remained friends, their professional paths diverged in 1934, when Wright formed the Housing Guild with housing reformer Catherine Bauer and others, and devoted his energies to teaching at Columbia. During the last years of his life, Wright advanced his theories of large-scale, low-income housing based on his RPAA experience and the new European precedents, publishing them in *Rehousing Urban America* (1935). Stein continued to promote garden-city planning and during the 1930s provided technical assistance in the creation of Greenbelt (NHL) and the other greenbelt communities built by Rex Tugwell's Resettlement Administration. Stein was instrumental in the creation of Hillside Homes, a massive multi-story housing community in New York City, one of the first housing communities supported by the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), and later Baldwin Hills Village (NHL), Los Angeles, a large-scale community of apartments and homes having a highly artistic garden city plan, which was privately financed through FHA-approved and insured loans. Stein remained an advocate for garden-city planning and the Radburn plan, publishing *Toward New Towns for America* (1951) first in England and several years later *America* (1957).

Radburn was the fullest expression of Stein and Wright's "extraordinary ten-year collaboration" and the result of the "collaborative genius" that characterized the membership within the RPAA, according to Cornell University professor K. Carlyle Parsons, an RPAA-scholar and the editor of the Clarence Stein Papers. RPAA's "inner-core" included Clarence Stein, "the organizer and manager;" Benton MacKaye, "the conservationist;" Alexander Bing, "the developer-builder;" Lewis Mumford, "the writer;" and Henry Wright, "the analyst" and a "powerful stimulus to clear thinking by RPAA members. Other members included Robert Kohn, Stuart Chase, Charles Whitaker, Robert Bruere, Frederick Ackerman, Catherine Bauer, Henry Churchill, and Albert Mayer.²⁵

²⁵ K. Carlyle Parsons, "The Collaborative Genius: The Regional Planning Association of America," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 60, no. 4 (Autumn 1994): 463, 472.

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According to Parsons, Radburn's genius stemmed from the interaction of various subgroups within RPAA, each of which Stein was a member:

MacKaye, Mumford, Stein, and Wright advocated building new communities in urban regions as part of a strategy of urban dispersion, expansion, and rebuilding; Stein and Wright invented new forms of large-scale community layout and design; Ackerman, Stein, Wright and Bing developed many economies in affordable housing and financing systems, to make housing sales to families of moderate means easier; MacKaye Mumford, Wright, and Stein formulated new concepts for the structure of large urban regions in which open space preservation would guide urban growth; Ackerman, Bing, Stein, and, later, Catherine Bauer, advocated greater equity in housing production, location, and design; and several RPAA members, Stein, Kohn, Whitaker, and, later, Mumford and Bauer, recommended specific new state and national planning and housing policies and the laws to implement them.²⁶

The Depression served as a catalyst for significant additional experimentation with the Radburn Idea. In 1932, under contract with the privately funded Buhl Foundation, Stein and Wright began construction of their final private collaboration, a planned community called Chatham Village at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Combining their exhaustive construction cost analysis with the Radburn principles of central open space, reverse-front housing, pedestrian safety, and automobile accommodation, the design successfully demonstrated the economic feasibility and livability of high-density attached housing for lower-income residents.²⁷ Retained under single ownership by the foundation and maintained as a rental community, Chatham Village avoided the financial instability of individual sale experienced at Sunnyside and Radburn. Chatham Village also included the rare, and possibly the first, use in the United States of a protective greenbelt around much of the developed property.

The Radburn Idea and the cost-savings demonstrated at Chatham Village influenced President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal response to the growing numbers of displaced families during the Depression. The Resettlement Administration undertook the design and construction of a series of "greenbelt" towns beginning in 1935, a first in government-funded housing for low-income families. Probably the most comprehensive use of the regional and community planning theory of the RPAA and the technical achievements of Radburn and Chatham Village, only three greenbelt towns were actually completed, Greenbelt, Maryland, Greenhills, Ohio, and Greendale, Wisconsin. Stein and Wright served on the planning staff for two of the projects; their Garden City style approach to community planning as well as their solutions to health and safety were particularly apparent in the design of Greenbelt, Maryland, the largest and most complete of the three towns.²⁸ The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), another federal New Deal response operating on a regional scale, was also impacted by the Radburn experiment.²⁹

²⁶ Parsons, "Collaborative Genius," 463.

²⁷ Henry Wright wrote numerous articles and reports on his analysis of housing costs, including "Summary and Further Development of 'A Housing Research' for the Consideration of Illinois," 1932; "Costs of Housing," in *Architectural Forum*, March 1932; and "Comparative Cost Studies of New Group Dwellings," in *Architectural Record* 71 (March 1932).

²⁸ Elizabeth Jo Lampl, "Greenbelt, Maryland Historic District," NHL documentation (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1996), 23.

²⁹ Eugenie Ladner Birch, "Radburn and the American Planning Movement: The Persistence of an Idea," *Introduction to Planning History in the United States*, Donald A. Krueckeberg, ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: The Center for

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Of more far reaching importance was the contribution of Stein and Wright's three projects -- Sunnyside Gardens, Radburn, and Chatham Village-- to the design of American suburbs through their demonstration of the Neighborhood Unit formula and innovative methods of large-scale residential development. The broader housing and financial reforms brought about by the National Housing Act of 1934 and the creation of the Federal Housing Administration were influenced more by Radburn's innovative demonstration of large-scale residential planning for moderate and lower income Americans than by the Radburn Idea as a planning model to imitate with its organization into superblocks and its innovative reverse-front homes. Two events -- the development of the New York Regional Plan and the 1931 President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership -- would draw national attention to Sunnyside, Radburn, and Chatham Village and provide the channels through which the theories of the RPAA would exert its influence on the mainstream of American community planning and suburbanization.

The New York Regional Plan

The development of Radburn was coordinated with the New York Regional Plan, independently being prepared by the Russell Sage Foundation through the leadership of Frederic Delano and Thomas Adams, and others. Adams, who directed the extensive study and edited the multi-volume survey and plan, searched for models for suburban development in the growing metropolitan region as well as nationwide; he was particularly interested in promoting the Neighborhood Unit concept Clarence Perry had developed for the Russell Sage Foundation. His own study on "The Problems of Planning Unbuilt Areas," appeared in the seventh volume of the *Regional Survey, Neighborhood and Community Planning* (1929), and recognized Radburn's outstanding qualities. Through his many influential writings and his participation in the 1931 President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, Adams provided analyses of the merits of Radburn, establishing it as a model for American neighborhood planning and praising its innovative accommodation of the automobile. Although Adams, an internationally recognized planner, was successful in gaining support for Neighborhood Unit planning, he failed to attract national support for the Radburn Idea as a basis for future subdivision design in the United States.³⁰

Stein and Wright gave physical form to Perry's theoretical concept of the neighborhood unit and advanced it by responding to the nation's growing concern about the impact of the automobile on neighborhood safety. Although not a member of the RPAA, Clarence Perry worked for the Russell Sage Foundation and was a resident of Forest Hills Gardens on which he based his original concept. He was present at the RPAA meeting where the preliminary planning for Radburn took place, and he freely drew upon its example as a model of his Neighborhood Unit concept in his 1929 monograph, "The Neighborhood Unit," which was published in the seventh volume of the *Regional Survey*. Perry's formula called for communities large enough to support an elementary school, preferably about 160 acres with 10 percent reserved for recreation and park space. Interior streets were to be no wider than required for their use with cul-de-sacs and

Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 1983), 129.

³⁰ Thomas Adams, *The Building of the City: The Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs*, vol. 2. (New York: Committee on the Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs, 1931); "Problems of Planning Unbuilt Areas," Monograph Three, *Neighborhood and Community Planning*, vol. 7, *The Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs* (New York: Regional Plan Association, 1929); *The Design of Residential Areas*, Harvard Planning Series (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934).

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side streets being relatively narrow. Community facilities were to be centrally located, and a shopping district was to be located on the edge of the community where neighborhood streets joined the main arterials.³¹

In *The Building of the City* (1931), the concluding volume of the Regional Plan, Thomas Adams acknowledged the plan of Radburn as an “independent, but none the less significant, contribution” to the regional plan, and indicated that Stein and Wright had prepared the plan (which appeared as figure 15, page 134) in consultation with himself (Adams) “representing the Regional Plan.” Radburn was depicted as a community “where art and nature combine to make good living conditions.” Like many reformers of his time, Adams believed that building sites should be large enough to permit adequate air and light; surroundings should be agreeable in character and free of harmful or dangerous influences; housing should be attractive, well-designed, and unified in character; transportation should be available nearby; and there should be space for healthy recreation. Among the communities the Regional Survey recognized as models of suburban planning were Radburn, New Jersey, Kohler in Wisconsin, Roland Park in Baltimore, Forest Hills Gardens on Long Island, Mariemont near Cincinnati, the Country Club District of Kansas City, and Lawrence Farms outside New York City.³²

Adams envisioned the New York City region as offering many opportunities for the creation of new towns where “large open tracts of land” were combined with good transportation facilities. Radburn represented such a new town developed outside the periphery of the existing center of population. Adams summarized the principles that should be followed in planning new towns: adjustment of plan to the natural features; the arrangement of a highway and street system that provided for “speed of through movement, the utmost degree of accessibility for local movement and the safety of pedestrians;” the design of streets to obtain “the proper orientation of buildings ... to suit different needs and obtain economy of development;” the organization of space into areas serving different functions; the selection and planning of open spaces for parks, playgrounds, parkways, and athletic fields; control over the heights and densities of buildings; and developing the town as a unit “with its distinctive parts harmonized in a consistent and well-balanced whole.”³³

Praising Radburn’s innovative plan, Adams wrote:

The Radburn plan is exceptional as an illustration of original treatment of a system of streets, pedestrian walks and parks. This special treatment has been introduced for the major purposes of separating pedestrian from vehicular traffic and combining the pedestrian ways with the park system. It proves the need of new forms of design to fit in with the needs of motor vehicles and to obtain safety for pedestrians. It shows the defect of the rectangular street plan, in which all streets are used for through traffic, under modern conditions.³⁴

President’s Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership

³¹ Clarence A. Perry, “The Neighborhood Unit,” Monograph One, *Neighborhood and Community Planning*, vol.7, *Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs* (New York: New York Regional Plan, 1929), 88-89. Several sources acknowledge the RPAA’s interaction with Perry during the planning of Radburn: Gillette, 426; Mumford, “Introduction,” in *Toward New Towns for America* by Clarence Stein, 15; Parsons, “Collaborative Genius,” 475.

³² Adams, *The Building of the City*, 5 and 78.

³³ *Ibid.*, 568, 570-71.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 571. Adams’ report carried a full-page copy of the Radburn Plan in color, figure 15, p. 134.

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When the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership convened in December of 1931, the plans for Chatham Village were complete and construction about to begin despite the worsening economic conditions brought about by the Great Depression. A strong ally of private industry, President Herbert Hoover had long promoted better housing in America and, while serving as the U.S. Secretary of Commerce in the 1920s, served as the national president of the Better Homes for America, Inc. With the deepening recession, the faltering condition of the nation's home building industry raised increasing concern. The purpose of the 1931 conference was to consider ways of improving housing for a broad spectrum of Americans, developing a sound and lasting system of home financing, and bringing stability to real estate values. Private industry, public agencies, and professional organizations were all well represented. The conference brought together several thousand participants including the nation's leading experts in home financing, neighborhood planning, zoning, home design and construction, domestic science, and methods of prefabrication, including a number of those who, including Thomas Adams, Henry Wright, and Frederick Ackerman, had been involved in the development of Radburn.

Stein and Wright's work at Radburn figured prominently in the committee discussions and final recommendations, gaining praise and considerable attention from the committees on city planning and zoning, subdivision design, large-scale operations, house design, housing and community, and landscape planning and planting, whose reports and recommendations were published in various volumes of the proceedings published in 1932. Based on its neighborhood design, spacious grounds, recreational opportunities, and comfortable living arrangements, Chatham Village also received favorable attention. Of particular interest was the community's demonstration that large-scale housing be based on a preliminary study of economic factors and utilize methods to reduce the costs of land acquisition, economize on construction costs, and Such considerations were timely given the conference's focus on solving the nation's housing problem by stimulating the private building industry, lowering housing costs, and ensuring that American homes be comfortable, convenient, and located in a safe, attractive, and healthy neighborhood setting.³⁵

Foremost was the conference's overwhelming endorsement of Clarence Perry's Neighborhood Unit Formula and the recommendations for broad-sweeping implementation of zoning or private deed restrictions to ensure that neighborhoods maintained their value and domestic land use. Of great interest was the economics of planning housing in groups and large-scale operations. The *Architectural Record* reported that the conference housing committees all concluded "that planned neighborhoods are essential to good housing -- planned neighborhoods within the framework of the city plan and the regional plan...The very idea of home ownership means permanence, stability, [and] security. The best security for home ownership is a high standard dwelling located in a desirable neighborhood, protected against deteriorating influences."³⁶

Much of what was discussed and concluded at the President's conference found its way into the institutional guidelines governing subdivision development and large-scale operations compiled by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). The FHA, created by the 1934 National Housing Act, established a framework for federal government-insured mortgage loans, providing the

³⁵ John M. Gries and James Ford, ed., *President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership*, vols. 1-7 (Washington, DC: National Capital Press, 1932).

³⁶ *Architectural Record* 71 (January 1932): 41, as quoted in Gillette pp. 427 and 441, en. 24.

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investment security sought by private banks and investors. Mortgage security, an important component in the community building vision of the RPAA, actually served to jump-start the commercial, profit-driven building industry.

As Perry's concept found widespread acceptance in the planning profession, Chatham Village and Radburn became fixed in the minds of American designers as communities worthy of emulation. The ideal presented by Radburn, with its accommodation of residents from varying income levels and its mix of privately owned homes and rental apartments, remained out of reach of most private developers in the 1930s. This was due to a complex set of factors, including the depressed economic conditions, existing land use policies, the lack of private capital, and the structure of the nation's new home mortgage system. Stein and Wright's ideal for a community of large-scale rental housing, which was carried out in the first two stages of Chatham Village, demonstrated the advantages of garden-city planning and reflected many features of Clarence Perry's theory of neighborhood unit planning. It furthermore demonstrated the efficient organization of space, economies of materials, and the reduced costs inherent in the planning and collaborative design of a community where small attached dwellings were arranged in attractive and convenient groupings with access to private gardens, common walkways and grounds, and a naturalistic greenbelt. Chatham Village, furthermore, demonstrated the high artistic quality attainable through the collaborative design process that relied on the specialized talents of town planners, engineers, architects, and landscape architects.

The example of Chatham Village, presented first as a set of documents at the 1931 housing conference and later as a highly acclaimed model of community design, influenced American housing policy in the following decade. Its greatest impact was on the rise of privately financed subdivisions and large-scale rental communities made possible through FHA-insured mortgages. Evidence of its success also helped fuel the strong debate over public housing for low-income Americans and the redevelopment of blighted areas, which would occupy planners and public officials for decades to come. Acceptance of the superblock as a unit of neighborhood planning with the essential provisions for sunlight, fresh air, open space, comfortable and convenient housing, and recreation, so successfully achieved at Radburn and Chatham Village, would figure importantly in public housing policy and become intermingled with the influences of European examples of large-scale residential development.

The conference encouraged the construction of housing on a large scale for both rental housing in single and multiple family dwellings, and owner-occupied dwellings. The Committee on Large-Scale Operations, chaired by Alfred K. Stern, Director of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, examined the design and economics of multi-story apartment houses, such as Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments in Chicago, which Stern's foundation had designed to provide moderate priced housing for African American families; the grouped row houses of several World War I-era defense housing communities, Sunnyside Gardens, and Chatham Village; as well as the efficiently arranged small houses designed by Stein, Wright and Ackerman at Radburn. Large-scale operations, with their inherent economy, were recommended for the construction of neighborhoods of single-family homes as well as communities of rental housing. The committee report noted the advantages of the grouped row houses at Chatham Village in providing an independent dwelling with its own private yard and included a preliminary report of the housing needs and economic factors on which the community's planning was based. Chatham Village was praised for its demonstration of—

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Improved methods of planning of [sic.] a complete community; construction of substantial character on a basis which has attracted large-scale builders; the use of difficult site conditions which are common to other unused tracts, available for large-scale operations in localities convenient to clerical workers, and; rentals which make these dwellings available to such workers with incomes insufficient to secure other new dwellings of equal quality.³⁷

The FHA encouraged large-scale operations, where development was financed and carried out under the direction of an “operative builder,” who arranged for the purchase of land, the design of the subdivision plat, and the design and construction of the houses. Such builders hired architects, engineers, and landscape architects, as well as masons, carpenters, and other artisans to carry out the work. Such large-scale operations offered a “broader and more profitable use of capital” and permitted the “introduction of industrial methods that resulted in savings in overhead, construction, and merchandising costs.” Developers were able to achieve the plan in a consistent and harmonious manner, and in addition develop “commercial services such as retail stores and gasoline stations necessary to the life of the new community.”³⁸

The example of Chatham Village directly influenced the FHA’s program of large-scale rental housing in the mid-1930s, providing a model for sound financial investment that was attractive to large insurance companies and limited dividend corporations having money to invest and a formula for the large-scale planning of moderate cost housing according to garden-city principles. Features characteristic of American garden-city planning derived from the example of Sunnyside, Radburn, and Chatham Village -- the organization of superblocks, the grouping of attached dwellings interspersed with garden courts, landscape improvements such as plantings of shrubs and trees the availability of community facilities such as neighborhood shopping centers, community buildings, recreational areas and parks -- would become the basis for mortgage insurance and loan approval for garden apartment communities such as Colonial Village (1935) and the Buckingham Community (1935), in Arlington, Virginia, and later Baldwin Hills Village in Los Angeles, and Hancock Village on the Boston -- Brookline boundary in Massachusetts.

An article in the *Architectural Forum* in February 1938, “Large-scale Housing: Its past, Its New Status, Its Problems, Its Possibilities,” recognized the formative influence of Sunnyside, Chatham Village, and Radburn on the combined efforts of private enterprise and the FHA to stimulate the construction of large scale rental housing through the expanding role of limited dividend companies and operative builders. The success of early FHA-approved projects, such as Colonial Village and the Buckingham Community, measured in terms of high occupancy and low rents, was attributed to their departure from ordinary home building practices. Although the confidence in rental housing over privately-owned homes was in large part necessitated by the economic instability of the Depression, the magazine editors envisioned such communities would continue to fill a critical gap in the nation’s housing needs and serve as a preliminary step toward broadening home ownership. The article stated:

³⁷ For the Report of the Committee on Large-Scale Operations see John M. Gries and James Ford, ed., *Slums, Large-scale Operations, and Decentralization*, vol. 3, President’s Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership (Washington, DC: National Capital Press, 1932), 66-95 and 96-105. The quotation comes from Appendix I, “Experience with Large-Scale Operations,” 100. The preliminary report of the study prepared for the Buhl Foundation by the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Pittsburgh was included as Appendix VI, “Housing Problems of Salaried Workers,” 138-42.

³⁸ FHA, *Planning Neighborhoods for Small Houses*, Technical Bulletin No. 5, (Washington, DC: July 1, 1936), 8-9.

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They were treated as investment properties; they were built for rent; and instead of being aimed at the shrinking market of the above-average income group, they were aimed at the growing below-average income group: a market which will probably continue to increase for some time to come.... The experience of pioneer large scale developments clearly indicates that this approach to housing is a sound one. That it will work and work successfully in isolated instances has been demonstrated over and over again. But the aggregate of this experience is not in itself sufficient evidence that the large-scale approach can be applied generally. Whether it can will depend upon two things: its ability to attract sponsors and capital, and to reach and satisfy a market.³⁹

Further evidence of the FHA program as a direct outgrowth of the garden-city principles as promoted by the RPAA and expressed at Radburn and Chatham, lies in the leading role of FHA architect Henry Klaber in formulating the architectural standards for the program and working closely with operative builders such as Gustave Ring and Allie Freed. A close friend and former classmate of Stein's, Klaber was one of the founding members of the RPAA and served the committee on large-scale operations at the 1931 President's conference. As the architect of Michigan Avenue Garden Apartments in Chicago, a philanthropic project of the Rosenwald Foundation, and one of the leading architects working for the PWA under Robert D. Kohn in 1933-34, Klaber had considerable knowledge and experience in utilizing economies of scale and lowering the costs of large-scale housing while maintaining the qualities associated with garden-city planning. Economist Miles Colean, who directed the large-scale housing program, gave Klaber considerable freedom in setting the standards, evaluating cost analyses and financing plans, recommending design changes, phasing construction plans, and granting final approval for the privately funded and financed large-scale projects that qualified for FHA- approved, federally-insured private mortgages. FHA's small house program, which encouraged the private construction of neighborhoods of small family-owned homes, failed to gain momentum until the late 1930s when the down payment required for home ownership was reduced and the period for loan amortization extended. The large-scale rental housing program, on the other hand, quickly attracted investors among large and financially healthy insurance companies and limited dividend corporations. Begun in 1935, Colonial Village and Buckingham Community in Arlington, Virginia, were the first of dozens of large-scale projects approved by the FHA in the 1930s.⁴⁰

Much of later American suburban subdivision development planning was directly influenced by the FHA guidelines established in the 1930s. Although the plans were clearly improved by the planning elements demonstrated at Radburn and Chatham Village, the focus of real estate development continued to be profit-driven, generally exclusive of the lower classes, and devoid of regional vision. The integrated community vision of the Radburn and Chatham Village designers, with incorporated diverse land-uses and a focus on neighborhood interaction, was lost to the over-riding emphasis on stable property values. Later experimental communities, including Baldwin Hills Village, Los Angeles, California (1941) with Clarence Stein as consultant, Reston, Virginia (1961), and Columbia, Maryland (1963), would confirm the

³⁹ "Large Scale Housing: Its Past, Its New Status, Its Problems, Its Possibilities," *Architectural Forum* 68, no. 2 (February 1938): 113.

⁴⁰ Ames and McClelland, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 49-51, 62-63; Linda Flint McClelland, "Gardens for Suburbia – The Colonial Revival, Community Planning, and the National Housing Act of 1934," unpublished paper, presented at the Colonial Revival in America Conference, Charlottesville, Virginia, 17 November 2000.

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viability of the economic and social theories developed by the RPAA and the community values and continuing appeal inherent in the Radburn Idea and Perry's Neighborhood Unit Formula.

Peopling Places

Post-industrial revolution urban overcrowding and decay initiated the first migration of upper class families to commuter suburbs on the rural edges of the city. These early experiments with suburban design were influenced by the romantic, naturalistic ideals of landscape designers such as Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., Calvert Vaux, and Andrew Jackson Downing. The curving streets following natural topography and large building lots with landscaping were designed to improve the physical and mental health of the occupants. Such developments were also designed to be exclusive of the lower classes. Working class families were unable to afford the large lots and houses. They could not afford the transportation costs from such suburbs to their industrial employment located in the urban centers.

Beginning around 1890, the streetcar provided the cheap transportation necessary for the working and middle class movement to the city's edge. Speculative builders quickly subdivided the land along the established "gridiron" street plan into endless rows of narrow lots, known as "streetcar suburbs." But costs were only kept within the moderate range by reducing lot widths, allowing more and more houses to be squeezed into increasingly undesirable neighborhoods lacking light, air and open space. This plan served equally well for the speculative development fueled by the increased availability of the automobile following WWI, which spurred renewed subdivision on the ever-expanding edges of the city.⁴¹

Appalled by the unplanned and unhealthy growth of the American city, the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA), established in 1923, proposed dramatic reorganization of urban growth through a planned regional approach. Planned "new towns" would house low and middle class workers, complete with de-centralized regional industries, commercial centers, educational and recreational facilities. Drawing upon the social theory of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City concept, Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker's physical Garden City experiments in England, Henry Wright's community plans in Missouri (1910s), and the successes of the U.S. government's defense housing communities constructed during WWI, the RPAA sought to develop their own demonstration Garden Cities. Through the City Housing Corporation, a limited dividend corporation funded by private investments, Sunnyside Gardens in New York City (1924) and Radburn, New Jersey (1928) were constructed, according to the detailed plans and designs of RPAA core members Clarence Stein and Henry Wright. Although neither Sunnyside nor Radburn achieved the ideal of the Garden City, both served to demonstrate evolving theories of city, subdivision, and regional planning as well as applying innovative features which provided affordable, quality middle class housing.

The Buhl Foundation was established in 1927, funded with a bequest of thirteen million dollars by department store owner Henry Buhl Jr. (1848-1927). Founded specifically to help the people of Pittsburgh, the construction of Chatham Village was the Foundation's initial project. Dr. Charles F. Lewis, the first director of the Buhl Foundation, described the development of Chatham Village as "an effort to build a new kind of community for a new and finer kind of urban living."⁴² Funded entirely by the Foundation, the project served a dual purpose for the

⁴¹ Peter G. Rowe, *Making a Middle Landscape* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991), 3-4.

⁴² "Three Elements in Ideals and Ideas of Chatham Village," *Chatham Village News*, October 19, 1932. p. 1, as cited

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Foundation, first as an attempt to improve the standard of available housing for moderate-income families in Pittsburgh, and secondly, the project was additionally developed “as a for-profit venture, managed as a long range investment without undue risk to its principal so that the income from the investment would fund the Foundation’s other philanthropic programs.”⁴³

Beginning in 1929 with the planning stage, Chatham Village would be the last privately funded collaboration of Stein and Wright in which their planning and design theories were demonstrated. According to Stein, “the success of Chatham Village was in large part due to two years of preliminary study.”⁴⁴ In addition to research into funding new community construction such as that of the City Housing Corporation, the Buhl Foundation had a survey of Pittsburgh’s housing market and needs prepared by the University of Pittsburgh, Bureau of Business Research.⁴⁵ Although, like the City Housing Corporation at Radburn, the Foundation found that their target population of lower middle class workers preferred detached single-family homes, Wright and Stein’s site analysis revealed construction costs of individual houses would be too high. Henry Wright had been at the forefront, particularly at Sunnyside Gardens, of solutions to housing problems through the development of cost-saving house plans. His recommendations for group housing, kept under the single-ownership of the Foundation, were pivotal in the final innovative plan for Chatham Village.⁴⁶

Many of the individual elements of Chatham Village were previously used in earlier innovative community plans, particularly at Radburn, however this community on the edge of the city of Pittsburgh was the first in the United States to include a protective greenbelt of undeveloped land. As a part of a subdivision specifically geared toward lower-income residents, the luxury of readily available open-space (in addition to the interior greens) was made possible by dramatic cost-savings in the large-scale construction of attached group housing and the resourceful use of hillside (cheap) land. Like Radburn, savings were also realized through the use of the superblock plan, reducing infrastructure construction costs of roads and utilities.

Perhaps most significant to the continued success of the Chatham Village community was the decision of the Buhl Foundation to retain single ownership rather than to sell the individual dwellings as at Sunnyside and Radburn. Built during the height of the Depression, and cognizant of the difficulties of the homeowners at Sunnyside and Radburn, Dr. Lewis of the Buhl Foundation decided that the whole of Chatham Village would remain in Foundation ownership. Dwellings would be rented at rates affordable for “moderate-income clerical workers,” their target population.⁴⁷ This decision motivated the Foundation to construct the houses with materials requiring low maintenance such as brick, slate, and copper, in addition to emphasizing the quality landscape setting of the buildings. Although more expensive at the outset, the long-term commitment allowed the Foundation to invest more initially with an eye to a return on that investment over several decades of ownership. Their investment was not misplaced; Chatham

in Vater, “Chatham Village Historic District,” National Register documentation (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1996), Section 8, p. 2.

⁴³ Vater, “Chatham Village Historic District,” National Register documentation (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1996), Section 8, page 2.

⁴⁴ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 75.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Henry Wright, *Rehousing Urban America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1935), 46-50; according to Stein, “Henry took lead” in the planning of Chatham Village (Phase I, 1929), The Clarence Stein Collection, Box 1, binder (pencil notation in his list of projects), Rare Books and Manuscripts Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

⁴⁷ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 80.

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Village has had 100% occupancy since its beginning, prompting Stein to note in 1956: “Experience at Chatham Village demonstrated, as compared with Sunnyside, the fallacy of the American faith, almost a religious belief, in what is called “home ownership.”⁴⁸

The Buhl Foundation sold the Chatham Village property to Chatham Village Homes, Inc. a resident’s cooperative, in 1960. Still under the single-ownership of the Association, residents do not receive title to the house in which they live; they instead purchase a membership in the Association.⁴⁹

The Chatham Village plan served as a significant influence on the federally funded “greenbelt” towns constructed by Roosevelt’s Resettlement Administration beginning in 1935. Both Stein and Wright were employed as planning consultants by the federal government. Incorporating several elements of the Chatham Village plan not found at Radburn, the town of Greenbelt, Maryland was the first and most complete of the government’s planned communities. In particular, the Garden City concept suggested by Howard in 1898, that the Garden City should be held under single or associative (community) ownership to remove the speculative nature of development and reduce the cost of greater amenities for all class levels. The federal government retained ownership of the town of Greenbelt for nineteen years. In 1952, ownership was transferred to the Greenbelt Veterans Housing Corporation, a non-profit organization of resident members.⁵⁰ Also, Greenbelt, like Chatham Village, employed a Garden City-style greenbelt of open land surrounding the community. And finally, the attached group housing at Chatham Village had proven its worth in construction cost-savings; designed for very low-income displaced families, group housing was necessarily used at Greenbelt as well.

As members of the RPAA and proponents of sane regional planning, Stein and Wright were hopeful that their community concepts would be repeated throughout the United States. Writing in 1933, Stein noted:

The same idea (as on open farmland at Radburn) of safety, large common open spaces and complete community equipment should be applied not only to the building of the outskirts of the city and the partially developed sections as it was at Chatham Village in Pittsburgh, but also to the rebuilding of the older blighted areas. Anything less than the building of complete neighborhood communities is pure waste.⁵¹

To some degree Stein’s plea was answered in the following decades by a variety of garden court communities across the U.S., additionally stimulated by the FHA’s Large Scale Housing Division. According to a 1950 Buhl Foundation report, Chatham Village was indeed “A Demonstration Widely Copied:”

Travis G. Walsh, then vice-chairman of the committee on industrial relations of the American Institute of Architects, in 1939 told a national housing conference: “Chatham

⁴⁸ Ibid., 85.

⁴⁹ Vater, “Chatham Village Historic District,” NR documentation (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1996), section 8, pg. 4.

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Jo Lampl, “Greenbelt, Maryland Historic District,” NHL documentation (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1996), 45.

⁵¹ Clarence S. Stein, “Housing and the Depression,” *The Octagon*, no. 6 (June 1933): 5; The Clarence Stein Collection, box 4, file 3, Rare Books and Manuscripts Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

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Village is a forerunner of much of the multiple-dwelling type of development that is country-wide today.” Many of the large-scale communities built throughout the country by leading life insurance companies have been influenced by the Chatham Village precedent. Speaking of the first huge developments of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, William Stanley Parker, chairman of a committee of the American Institute of Architects, said: “The Metropolitan is blazing the trail which The Buhl Foundation started at Chatham Village.” In announcing, in 1946, the John Hancock Mutual Company’s delightful development in Brookline, Mass, *The Christian Science Monitor* reported that the complete pattern would be “similar in many respects to such outstanding model communities as Chatham Village in Pittsburgh.” Many of the finest communities built under “Title Two” insured mortgages of the Federal Housing Administration have closely followed the Chatham example and in some cases have had the full benefit of whatever counsel the Foundation could give from its experience.⁵²

Additional examples of planned communities influenced by the Chatham Village plan were noted in Vater’s 1996 National Register documentation:⁵³

Several communities throughout the country were patterned after Chatham Village with its notable financial reputation as a dependable, long-term investment. Among the visitors and observers of Chatham Village’s success were groups of bankers from New York, investment specialists from the great insurance companies of the east, trust fund administrators from the mid-west, and government housing administrators.⁵⁴ They borrowed ideas from Chatham Village for their projects. Clarence S. Stein planned Hillside Homes in 1935 in the northern Bronx, NY as moderate cost rental housing with four story units for one thousand four hundred sixteen families, playground and community center, with landscaped courtyards remote from street traffic.⁵⁵ Buckingham Community in Arlington, VA of 1937 planned by Henry Wright provided rental housing for one thousand fourteen families on approximately one hundred acres[,] Colonial Village in Arlington, VA, of 1935 - 37 designed by Harvey Warwick provided nine hundred seventy-four attached rental homes[,] The Falklands in Silver Spring, MD, of 1937, 1938 designed by Louis Justement provided attached homes in garden setting for four hundred seventy-nine families.⁵⁶ Olentangy Village, near Columbus, OH of 1938 planned by Raymond C. Snow provided attached housing with garden courts for four hundred three families on sixty-seven acres. Wyvernwood, Los Angeles, CA of 1940 provided two story attached homes facing inward on garden courts for one thousand one hundred two families on seventy acres, with winding streets, underground utilities, and a rental basis.

⁵² “The Buhl Foundation Report for the period Ended June 30, 1950,” 80-81, The Clarence Stein Collection, box 1, file 39, Rare Books and Manuscripts Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

⁵³ Vater, “Chatham Village Historic District,” section 8, page 6.

⁵⁴ The names of bankers and insurance company executives are recorded in the “Chatham Village Guestbook” in the archives of Chatham Village Homes, Inc. See also the article by David Vater “Les Visitur Celebre!” in *Chatham Village Times* (January 1997): 3-5; See also “Bankers View Housing Plan” *Pittsburgh Press*, October 25, 1936, for list of bankers representing half a billion dollars of investment funds who visited Chatham Village to study it as an example of model housing as a secure investment.

⁵⁵ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 1951 [no page cited].

⁵⁶ Several similar communities are listed in “Large Scale Housing, Its Past, Its New Status, Its Problems, Its Possibilities,” *Architectural Forum* (February 1938): 110-124.

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Baldwin Hills Village, Los Angeles, CA, now known as the Village Green, of 1940-41 planned by Reginald Johnson, Robert Alexander, and Clarence Stein with landscape architects Fred Barlow and Fred Edmonson was a rental garden home complex of six hundred twenty-seven units on eighty acres with a large central green.⁵⁷

Although elements of the Chatham Village plan appear in the garden apartment-style public housing of the 1960s, these often did not achieve Stein's vision of "complete neighborhood communities" in the "rebuilding of the older blighted areas."⁵⁸ A recent article in *The Washington Post Magazine* described the "urban renewal" public housing project known as Kentucky Courts.⁵⁹ Built in 1960 and consisting of two sites, the "three-story garden apartment buildings would surround interior courtyards, so that the 'front' doors would open on the courtyards and the 'rear' doors on the street."⁶⁰ Although the design appeared sound, like so many other public housing projects Kentucky Courts did not fit into the older Washington neighborhood it had replaced; and lacking the maintenance commitment of its owner (the Washington, DC public housing authority) it fell into disrepair, to be demolished in 2001.

Expressing Cultural Values

The emerging American middle class of the 1920s found improvements to their lifestyle, particularly the automobile, becoming more available and affordable to them. The freedom to move away from the crowded city provided by the automobile was stifled however, by the profit-driven nature of subdivision development after WWI. With rising housing costs came diminishing quality of construction, design and setting. The Buhl Foundation sought to provide the kind of quality housing and atmosphere desired by middle class working families, recently demonstrated at Sunnyside and Radburn by the City Housing Corporation. Through their detailed planning focused on reducing costs in construction and long-term maintenance, the Foundation could provide at Chatham Village, quality housing at a comparable cost to that of the speculative builders, but in a safe, attractive, and healthful setting usually reserved for the upper classes.

Beginning in 1929, the Foundation carefully surveyed the housing needs of the Pittsburgh area in order to provide the kind of accommodation their target moderate-income population would happily occupy.⁶¹ Their responses centered on safety from automobiles, affordability, health, and modern convenience. As found prior to construction at Radburn, the respondents in Pittsburgh also indicated that the single-family detached house was their dwelling of choice.⁶² Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, who formulated the site plans for Chatham Village, discovered however that construction of freestanding houses on the hillside site would be too expensive for the target population of clerical workers. "On the other hand, row houses, based on the Sunnyside experience, could be built for about two thousand dollars less per house."⁶³

⁵⁷ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 1951 [no page cited].

⁵⁸ Clarence S. Stein, "Housing and the Depression," *The Octagon*, no. 6 (June 1933): 5, The Clarence Stein Collection, box 4, file 3, Rare Books and Manuscripts Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

⁵⁹ Jim Myers, "Requiem for Kentucky Courts," *The Washington Post Magazine*, July 1, 2001.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁶¹ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 75.

⁶² Wright, *Rehousing Urban America*, 42.

⁶³ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 75.

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For Wright, attached group housing held the key to producing affordable, desirable communities for the emerging middle class. His exhaustive cost-analysis of middle class housing types was recorded in his 1935 book *Rehousing Urban America*. Under the chapter heading “A Case for Group Housing,” Wright described how the qualities of good housing sought by American families could be achieved through thoughtful planning and the use of grouped houses:

Our criteria [for housing] are of a more general and deep-lying sort. They must be found by observing certain human needs common to everybody, whether the families be large or small, and whether the people be young or old. For instance, every household requires good light and ventilation. The best means of securing this will be by some kind of *shallow plan*. Good light and good view, as well as the need for open recreation space, require massed spaces of open land. Since urban land is necessarily expensive, the purchase of additional quantities of it is to be avoided. The natural expedient then is to “borrow” vacant land that is useless because of its location. This can be done by rearrangement of the plan, eliminating dark side yards and alleys. This arrangement in turn leads naturally to building the houses themselves in closed groups or rows.⁶⁴

The decision by the Buhl Foundation to follow the recommendations of Wright and Stein concerning the construction of grouped row houses actually determined the financial stability of the project, built and occupied at the height of the Depression. Believing that row houses would be difficult to sell, the Foundation determined to retain single-ownership of the entire community and pursue a rental policy.⁶⁵ The Foundation’s commitment to quality and maintenance, considered necessary to ensure a return on their investment, was instrumental in the long-term success and integrity of the community.⁶⁶

The grouped row houses at Chatham Village determined its distinctive design; a neighborhood community plan which would address the needs of the families intended to occupy them. Foremost on everyone’s list was affordability. Wright had established the cost-savings in the construction of attached dwellings through his analysis at Sunnyside Gardens, particularly by the use of continuous foundations, shared walls, and “continuous erection processes.”⁶⁷ Additional savings at Chatham Village were realized through creative use of the hillside site. Rather than having to grade individual house sites, the planners found the grouped rows allowed for large-scale grading of terraces with the foundations serving as retaining walls.⁶⁸ As had been previously demonstrated at Radburn, the plan for large “superblocks” with peripheral roads produced savings in construction costs through reduced investment in infrastructure for road paving and utilities. Wright noted in 1932 that, “...the most efficient row units could be heated by gas usually available only to people of larger incomes and the electric service company will place all wires underground (an improvement not usually applied in detached house communities even of relatively expensive grade).”⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Wright, *Rehousing Urban America*, 29.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁶⁶ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 84-85.

⁶⁷ Wright, *Rehousing Urban America*, 30.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁶⁹ Henry Wright, “Summary and Further Development of ‘A Housing Research’ for the Consideration of the Temporary Housing Commission of Illinois,” 1932, 43-45, Henry Wright Papers, box 3, Rare Books and Manuscripts Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

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Affordability, while meeting the rising expectations of the American middle class, was further ensured by the farsighted vision of the Buhl Foundation itself. Their long-term commitment to housing mid to lower-income families and to realizing modest investment returns from the project dictated greater initial investment in high-quality materials such as brick, slate, and copper. These materials not only reduced building maintenance costs, they resulted in housing with an elegant appearance. According to Stein, the 100% initial investment in the project, along with lower management and maintenance costs under single ownership, allowed rents to remain reasonable while averaging over 4% net return on the investment.⁷⁰ And best of all, they maintained a 100% occupancy rate, a sure indication that Chatham Village fulfilled the cultural values of the aspiring middle class.

Chatham Village's hillside site served well in the execution of the plan to secure a safe environment in which the pedestrian and automobile would be completely separated. Following lower contours of the hillside around the superblocks, the peripheral roads Olympia, Sulgrave, Bigham, and Penridge provided automobile access to the garage space on the service side basement level of the houses. For the up-hill side houses not provided with basement-level garages (see cross-section view, Stein p. 79), garage compounds were conveniently located, and according to Stein, "found satisfactory in spite of the American habit of keeping a car in the house as some European farmers keep their cattle."⁷¹ The courtyard interiors, located on the higher terraced levels, were provided with pedestrian pathways connecting all the houses of the Chatham Village neighborhood, as well as allowing safe access to the garage compounds and the commercial area at the northeast corner of the development.

Open space, light, and air considered necessary for healthy living in "modern" America was provided through the enclosed courtyards created by the surrounding house groups. The interior open space of the courts was the manifestation of Wright's "borrowed vacant land," removed from the traditional house lot's narrow side yards. Shallow, two-room deep dwellings assured light and air to every room in the house. More than just a source of air and light, the fine landscaping of the interior courts was significant to the Chatham Village neighborhood character, described by Vater in his 1996 National Register documentation,

...the landscape identity of the model community was created from the ground up by one of the region's most gifted landscape architects, and defined a new interpretation for the role of greenery and outdoor space in urban life. [Ralph E.] Griswold's interpretations of the Garden City concept supplied the pervasive "garden" character for the neighborhood, as a seamless setting of this planned community. The landscaping in Chatham Village is put to work to define the many different degrees of privacy needed to make such an innovative and compact layout of homes into a pleasurable community. Spaciousness is also enhanced by the plantings which seem to extend the modest physical dimensions. The importance of these many gardens is that they allow a daily contact with

⁷⁰ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 78-80. The success of the Buhl Foundation's 100% investment in high quality moderate-income housing appears to have demonstrated the validity of the 'constructive housing' premise of the RPAA, that quality low and middle class housing would only be constructed with the stable funding source and long-term investment of the government or a foundation such as the Buhl Foundation. Speculative builders, who sought immediate profit rather than long-term investment, were limited only by the 'restrictive' housing codes and zoning associated with Progressive Era reforms for minimal quality assurance. See Roy Lubove, *Community Planning in the 1920s*, 17-29, for a complete discussion.

⁷¹ Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 76.

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nature and provide open space for light, air, and recreation. The horticultural contributions were one of the strong points of the design and resulted in one of the most harmoniously landscaped neighborhoods in the city.⁷²

Hedges, shrubs and trees assured some measure of privacy, enhanced by the various levels of the terraces. Landscape features such as the quaintly designed garden sheds, gazebos, brick and stone walls, and the profuse flowering plants created an elegant atmosphere that mirrored the Georgian Revival styled house groups.

The group housing at Chatham Village reduced costs, improved infrastructure, and freed-up open space. However, the higher density of the row houses, according to Wright approximately 128 units rather than 78-84 detached houses, was achieved without a loss of interior living space.⁷³ Houses were available in two, three, or four bedroom sizes, each with the modern interior conveniences middle class American families had grown to expect as standard in housing, including electric kitchen, full bath, laundry, and many with a basement garage.

Like the houses of Radburn, the “reverse-front” house plan was employed at Chatham Village, described by Wright as “the house with two fronts, one for convenient service, the other for peaceful living...”⁷⁴ The plan placed the living areas (living room, dining room, and bedrooms) of the house on the reposeful garden side, and the service areas (kitchen, laundry, and garage) on the street side. The positioning of the various rooms made the best use of the site plan as well, placing rear garages (away from the pedestrian side) along the peripheral roads, and front doors toward the pedestrian walkways. With their fronts turned toward the central green, street noise was all but eliminated on the interior; on the exterior, it evoked the image of a “traditional” colonial American village. Peter Rowe, in analyzing modern housing, described this image creation in architecture as “spatiotemporal masks,”

Allusions to other times and other eras, amid contemporary circumstances, certainly blur the impact of the present, allowing notions of continuity to be reestablished and even traditional values to be reawakened.⁷⁵

In the rapidly changing world of the early twentieth century, the allusion to pre-industrial values was a real source of comfort. Despite increased middle class reliance and demand for technological improvements, yearning for a “simpler time” influenced the value placed on open-air, healthy environments and the return to living in “the country.”

Vater portrayed the significance of the Chatham Village architecture in his 1996 National Register documentation,⁷⁶

The architecture at Chatham Village, with all of its domestic thoughtfulness quietly fulfills its role as good decent housing. With more than two hundred families housed on less than fifteen acres, the sheer volume of buildings rendered

⁷² Vater, “Chatham Village Historic District,” 1996, section 8, page 7.

⁷³ Wright, *Rehousing Urban America*, 48. Descriptions of house plans included in Wright’s discussion note the Chatham Village houses were 20 ½ feet wide and 26-28 feet deep, while houses at Radburn were 18 ½ feet wide, with a smaller third bedroom (see p. 49).

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁷⁵ Peter G. Rowe, *Modernity and Housing* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1993), 33.

⁷⁶ Vater, “Chatham Village Historic District,” 1996, section 8, pg. 9.

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in a more assertive manner could easily have been too much. At Chatham Village the architecture by intention takes a secondary role to the more persuasive sense of overall harmony. The architecture becomes the stately background to the light, air, and gardens of the Garden City concept. The subtle mastery of the architecture at Chatham Village lies in the cumulative benefit of its successful interrelationship with the planning and landscape design. It should be judged as a comprehensive development on a neighborhood scale.

In 1940, Ingham & Boyd were awarded medals by the American Institute of Architects and the Fifth Pan-American Congress of Architects for their architectural designs. In 1976 Chatham Village was awarded a national design award by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.⁷⁷ In 1976, when the American Institute of Architects selected the proudest achievements of American Architecture over the past two hundred years, Chatham Village was one of three sites selected in Western Pennsylvania - the others being Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater and Henry H. Richardson's Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail.⁷⁸

The neighborhood continuity, open space and quiet of the interior courts, as well as protection from future unplanned development at Chatham Village was ensured by the permanent protection of a "greenbelt" of undeveloped land and an adjoining county park. In a nod to the Garden City concept of the protective agricultural greenbelt, the Buhl Foundation designated approximately twenty-five acres of very steep wooded land as "Chatham Wood." It served not only as a buffer from encroaching development, but also as a recreation area for residents. Free time for recreation was a new concept enjoyed by middle class workers. Seen as an important component of healthy living, common recreational facilities were constructed adjoining the southern end of the community, the level ground achieved by dumping fill from the hillside grading for the houses on an area at the head of the Woods. Tennis and basketball courts, playgrounds, common gardens, a picnic area, and two miles of walking paths through the woods were provided to meet the recreational needs of Chatham Village residents. The original Bigham family farmhouse (c.1840), which overlooked Chatham Wood, was converted for use as a community center and continues in that capacity today (2001).

The Chatham Village plan had drawn on the modern concepts of housing developed previously at Sunnyside and Radburn, but established new precedents that would influence later projects like Greenbelt and Baldwin Hills. Lewis Mumford, a founding member of the RPAA, wrote in his 1951 introduction to the first edition of Stein's *Toward New Towns for America*:

What he [Stein] and Wright demonstrated are not forms to be copied, but a spirit to be assimilated and carried further, a method of integration to be perfected, a body of tradition to be modified and transmitted – and in time transmuted into new forms that will reflect the needs and desires and hopes of another age.⁷⁹

Through the adoption of design elements of Chatham Village, the Federal Housing Administration's Large Scale Housing Division influenced the standards for "garden apartment"

⁷⁷ "National Design Award," *Pittsburgh Press*, November 10, 1976, p. 19.

⁷⁸ David Vater, *Chatham Village: A Bibliography*. Pittsburgh: PA: privately published, 1994), 81.

⁷⁹ Lewis Mumford, "Introduction," in Stein, *Toward New Towns for America*, 17.

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complexes,⁸⁰ a continuing source of affordable, high-density housing with at least some associated open space, occupied by low and middle class Americans. A list of other communities that followed the Chatham Village example of garden courts and surrounding greenbelts appears in the Peopling Places discussion above. The Chatham Village “garden court” design continues to represent an expression of the American cultural value placed on open space and gracious living for middle class families.

⁸⁰ Ames and McClelland, *Historic Residential Suburbs*, 47-51.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other Agency
- Federal Agency (NPS)
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository):

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 46.4

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	583385	4476300
B	17	583800	4476020
C	17	583240	4475440
D	17	583000	4475600

Verbal Boundary Description:

The legal description of the property follows:

Parcel 1: Begin at south-west corner of the intersection of Virginia Avenue and Bigham Street N8°55'10"E 446.67' thence R=185.00' A=77.18' thence S8°04'50"E 90.87' thence N8°55'10"E 132.50' thence S81°04'50"E 402.37' thence N43°09'00"E 451.34' thence R=1535' A=208.16' thence N35°22'49"E 606.28' thence R=1105' A=615.54' thence R=688' A=282.99' thence S89°08'09"E 72.59' thence S50°02'50"E 644.45' thence N54°49'10"E 287.27' thence N51°22'10" 240.49' thence N27°52'10"E 76.00' thence N55°32' 10"E 26.39' thence N81°32'10"E 22.49' thence N13°02'10"E 566.46' thence S78°51'40"E 392.72' thence N13°04'20"E 969.98' thence S78°51'40"E 513.16' to meet beginning point, an area of 45.716 acres.

Parcel 2: Begin at south-east corner of the intersection of Virginia Avenue and Bigham Street S78°51'40"E 200.15' thence N8°55'10"E 63.64' thence S81°04'50"E 100.00' thence N8°55'10"E 138.31' thence S81°04'50"E 100.00' thence N8°55'10"E 209.71' to meet beginning point, an area of 0.628 acres.

Parcel 3: Begin at north-west corner of the intersection of Virginia Avenue and Bigham Street S18°51'40"E 23.853' thence N8°55'10"E 50.00' thence S78°51'40"E 23.853' thence N8°55'10"E 50.00' to meet beginning point, an area of 0.027 acres.

The three parcels total 46.371 acres and shall be interconnected to be contiguous across adjoining roadways by lines parallel to nearest parcel corners.

Boundary Justification:

These boundaries follow the original plan established by the Buhl Foundation and include the land and resources developed according to the plan. The boundaries have not changed since the establishment of Chatham Village. The nominated historic district includes all of the resources associated with the historic development of Chatham Village.

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DESIGNATED A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
April 5, 2005