

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Poinciana Flats
Other names/site number: The Poinciana Apartments
Name of related multiple property listing:
Apartment Buildings in Ohio Urban Centers, 1870-1970

2. Location

Street & number: 3522 Reading Road
City or town: Cincinnati State: OH County: Hamilton
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
 A ___ B C ___ D

Barbara Ewer 4/21/2014
DSHPO Inventory & Registration
Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date
Ohio Historic Preservation Office (Ohio Historical Society)
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official: _____ Date
Title : _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. 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: _____)

Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

6/5/2014
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian/Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, STONE: Limestone, METAL: Iron, Aluminum, ASPHALT

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Poinciana Flats is a 1908, Queen Anne style, four-story streetcar suburb apartment building executed as a Court Apartment Building subtype, as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPD), *Apartment Buildings in Ohio Urban Centers, 1870-1970* (Reference Number 64501112, listed 06/21/2011). The building features an irregular U-shaped plan and a deep, narrow courtyard (Photos 1 – 9). Built of brick bearing masonry¹ on a high ashlar limestone foundation laid in random courses with wood floor-framing, the Poinciana holds 44 apartments of similar layout.

The variegated orange-brown brick exterior features a corbelled brick cornice, darker brick quoins and angled turrets at the corners that reflect a Romanesque Revival influence. The Poinciana is located in the South Avondale neighborhood of Cincinnati, prominently sited at the northeast corner of Reading Road and Hutchins Avenue (Figure 1). The building faces west on a .56-acre and abuts the sidewalk on the west and south elevations. The courtyard is enclosed by an original ornamental iron fence on a limestone curb and gateway formed by square brick piers with limestone bases and caps. More recent iron fencing lines the concrete walkways through the courtyard to the three primary entrances. A surface parking lot is located to the rear of the building, accessible by Hutchins Avenue. The larger setting is mixed residential, commercial area with surface parking lots and institutional buildings. Four other examples of suburban apartments stand nearby on Reading Road. Despite replacement of doors and windows, altered primary entries, and interior renovation of apartments, the building retains sufficient historic integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

¹ The 1904, updated through 1930, Sanborn Fire Insurance map indicates that the building is brick bearing, with exterior wall thickness varying from twelve inches to 16 inches.

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Narrative Description

The Poinciana typifies the Streetcar Suburb Apartment property type with an irregular U-shaped plan and a deep, narrow courtyard that opens up for light and ventilation (Figure 3). This imposing building is essentially 16-bays-wide and 9-bays-deep, with a horizontal facade emphasis. The center courtyard elevation has eight bays, while the side courtyard elevations each have ten bays, one of which is angled. Built of variegated orange-brown brick, all elevations share similar details, with the exception of the northeastern corner of the building, which lacks ornamentation altogether. The building is sheltered by a flat roof.

Typical of the Queen Anne style, the wall surfaces are the primary decorative elements of the building; the Poinciana's exuberantly modeled exterior showcases a variety of colors and surface textures. A limestone water table separates the raised ashlar foundation from the warm brick running-bond walls above. The limestone window sills and limestone cornices that cap the primary entries and the open porch bays add visual interest. The avoidance of flat surfaces, typical of the Queen Anne style, is achieved by the use of bays and wall projections and by the Poinciana's embrace of Romanesque Revival style characteristics, namely the angled turrets, brick quoins and corbelled cornice.

The apartment is articulated in the Court Apartment Building form, expressed through the overall shape and layout of the building, which allows for multiple visible elevations. The Poinciana's recessed building footprint creates three courtyard facades, each with their own entrance. These elevations are highly sculpted with full-height angled bays and three-story square projecting bays with open porches. Typical of the Queen Anne, these three facades are asymmetrical, and the fenestration pattern is irregular, but balanced. The windows have stone sills; dark brown brick trim in the shape of quoins; aluminum replacement single sashes with screens and/or storm windows.

The long, 16-bay-wide Hutchins Avenue (south) elevation is composed of a series of wall projections. Recessed balconies with steel and wood decks and ornamental iron railings, are nestled in between the angled and squared projections (Photo 6). Square open porches are centered in the last bay. The majority of the doors that provide access to the balconies are historic. Additional entrances are located on this side. The same brickwork details found on the courtyard facades also decorate this elevation.

Each courtyard entrance is dramatized by an open porch with a flat cornice capped with limestone, delicate metal scrollwork and red and white mosaic floors. The original door openings have been filled in with brick and metal, and the doorways have glass block transoms and painted metal replacement doors. The entrance on the front-facing courtyard façade has a limestone plaque that announces the name, "Poinciana," in incised letters (Photo 8).

The north side elevation is 13-bays-wide, and has a three-story square projecting bay with open porches. The first nine bays of this elevation share the beautiful warm orange-brown brick surface and detailing as the courtyard and south side elevations, yet the last four bays are red brick and lack ornamentation. This corner portion of the building, which also spans five bays at the rear elevation, has an attic story above. The fenestration pattern of this corner of the Poinciana is varied and window openings have limestone lintels and sills. Further, this corner of the building rests upon a rubble foundation (Photo 3). A fire in 1911 caused enough damage for

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the Poinciana's owner, Krug Realty Company, to receive a \$45,000 insurance settlement and twelve of the tenants also received settlements ("Avondale Fire Insurance"). It is likely that this rear corner of the building was the damaged section, and dates to circa 1911. The remaining six bays of the rear (east) elevation share the details seen on the other elevations—square open porches, an angled full-height bay and elegant brickwork. Rear porches are another feature that contributes to the Poinciana's identity as a Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building.

Alterations outside of the period of significance include the replacement windows and doors, and modifications to the three primary entries. The altered corner that spans the rear of the side (north) elevation and the rear (west) elevation occurred during the period of significance. Additionally, an elevator tower was added on this rear corner circa 1998; however, it connects only the basement and attic and was never made operational. At the ends of the building that face Reading Road window openings have been filled in and a door opening has been punched in below.

Interior Description. The three primary entries lead into foyers that are finished with red and white mosaic tile floors and painted plaster walls (Photos 10 - 13). These public spaces have painted wood open-stringer staircases with turned spindles, square newel posts and vinyl tread guards. Typical of the property type, each of the three primary stairhalls provides access to four walkup apartments per floor. A single public hall on either side of the building is another common feature of this subtype found in this example. The apartments retain the original door surrounds, which include transoms. Each apartment also has access to a back stairway of wood construction and painted brick walls (Photo 14). Most of the back stairs retain an original solid bead board balustrade, but some have later pipe railings.

The Poinciana hold 44 apartments; most units have three bedrooms but there are also 4 four-bedroom units and 8 two-bedroom units (Figure 3). Streetcar Suburb Apartment Buildings usually contain more than fifteen apartments and Court Apartment Buildings generally contain 25 to 54 units apartments. With 44 apartments, the Poinciana exceeds the typical size of Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building, but as a Court Apartment Building it is typical in its number of units.

The interior floor plan remains intact although the apartments have been thoroughly renovated and little historic fabric remains (Photo 15). The apartment floors are a mix of carpet, wood and vinyl tile; originally the floors were wood (*Cincinnati Enquirer*, Jan. 25, 1916). As typical with Court Apartment Buildings, the Poinciana's units are symmetrically arranged on either side of a solid interior center wall. The units have a linear plan with a string of modest sized rooms accessed via a long, narrow hallway. In general the kitchens are large enough to be considered eat-in kitchens. The bedrooms have closets and every unit has either a linen closet or hall closet. The primary entry doors generally open into the living room. The units that face Hutchins Avenue have recessed balconies, located off a bedroom or living room. All other units have an open porch, generally located off a living room. The open porches afford some privacy as the balustrades are solid. Although the layout of the units do not allow for cross ventilation, the number of window openings and bays provide an abundance of natural light.

Setting. As an example of a Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building the important features of the setting are its location on a large corner lot on a major streetcar route along Reading Road. The building's footprint takes up almost the entirety of the parcel it was constructed upon; at least a

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portion of the building meets the property line of every side.² The building meets the sidewalk on the west and south sides. This close physical proximity to the street is a key registration requirement for Streetcar Suburb Apartment Buildings, as outline in the MPD. As required for Court Apartment Buildings, the Poinciana's site is free from other classes of buildings, rests on multiple lots, and the courtyard remains a highly visible from the street. The original gateway and fence along Reading Road (Photo 7) visually and physically separate this imposing apartment building from the sidewalk—an integral aspect to the Court subtype design scheme. Formal entryways located along a central axis, as incorporated in the Poinciana's design, is another feature of the Court Apartment Building subtype. The sidewalks appear to be in the historic locations, yet more recent iron fencing lines these concrete walkways.³

The setting of the immediate area has experienced demolition and creation of surface parking lots. Research indicates that when the Poinciana was constructed the area along Reading Road was transitioning from large dwellings on spacious parcels to a densely built commercial area. Today the two-block stretch of the western side of Reading is comprised of surface parking lots, fast food restaurants and a strip mall. On the eastern side of the street, the block between Hutchins and Rockdale, is now a circa 1980s strip mall. The next block south, between Rockdale and Windham, is comprised of a circa 1980s, one-story concrete block childcare facility, abutting a surface parking lot. At the corner of Windham and Reading stands the last early 20th century commercial building from this once thriving district.

The area along Reading Road to the north of the Poinciana retains most of its historic fabric. Directly to the north of the Poinciana, located at 3540 Reading, is a circa 1930s, altered one-story brick commercial building that houses a supermarket. This commercial building is indicated on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, updated in circa 1940. Directly to the north of that is a parking lot. The next two blocks north, on both the east and west sides of the street, remain mostly intact. Along the eastern side of Reading, found in succession are the Southern Baptist Church (circa 1900), historically the Avondale Synagogue, a Carnegie Library (1913), and then another courtyard apartment building, the Alameda Flats (circa 1905). The western side of the street is lined with large residences; it appears that two are no longer standing. The 1922 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map indicates to the east (rear) of the Poinciana, along Hutchins Avenue, were two-story single-family dwellings along both sides of the street. This area remains mostly intact, with just a handful of vacant lots along Hutchins.

Integrity. The Poinciana has undergone minor alterations and retains its exterior form and Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival architectural details. Exterior alterations outside of the period of significance include the replacement windows and doors, modifications to the three primary entries, and the added elevator tower. A handful of window and door openings at the ends of the building that face Reading Road have been modified. The alteration to the northeast corner of the building occurred during the period of significance, and is not considered to impact

² A 1920 *Cincinnati Enquirer* article concerns the outrage of the neighbor to the north who erected "Avondale's noted spite fence. . . . in retaliation for the construction of the flat building" so close to her property line ("Real Estate and Building"). In 1920 a nine room brick single family dwelling was located on the property. When the 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map was update in circa 1940, the commercial building had already replaced the dwelling, obscuring the view of the Poinciana.

³ The addition of contemporary fencing along the sidewalks that connect the street to the primary entries is a trend seen with other Court Apartment Buildings in Avondale, including the Crescent Court, located at 3719 Reading Road, and the Ambassador, located at 722-724 Gholson Avenue. The additional fencing barricades off the courtyard; segmenting it into small unattainable spaces.

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the integrity of the building. The interior retains its three public foyers with wood open-stringer staircases. While a circa 1970s renovation stripped the individual units of most historic fabric, the apartments retain their original layout and the building overall still reflects its original plan.

The Poinciana retains the essential physical features and a sufficient level of integrity to represent its importance as a Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building designed as a Court Apartment Building. The Poinciana exhibits all of the Court Apartment Building characteristics identified in the MPD, including cubic massing, walkup staircases, public foyers and halls. The windows and bays replaced the light wells typically found in Streetcar Suburb Apartment Buildings. But other Streetcar Suburb Apartment features employed in the Poinciana's design include the horizontal façade emphasis, repetition of bays, use of turrets, and porches. Further, the Poinciana retains a significant degree of stylistic integrity; which is also a MPD requirement.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1908 to 1949

Significant Dates

1908

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Statement of Significance Summary

Completed in 1908, the Poinciana is eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPD), *Apartment Buildings in Ohio Urban Centers, 1870-1970*.

The Poinciana clearly reflects significance within the historic contexts developed in the MPD including: "Streetcar Suburb Apartments in Ohio Urban Centers, 1890-1930, Early Middle Class Apartments in Ohio, and Suburban Apartments in Ohio Urban Centers, 1910-1945". The Poinciana is cited as one of several upper- and middle-class suburban apartments built around 1900 along Reading Road, a major streetcar artery in Avondale (Gordon, E 37). It is a significant example of the Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building and Court Apartment Building subtypes and meets the integrity threshold for individual eligibility established in the MPD registration requirements.

As an example of a Streetcar Suburb Apartment, the Poinciana is locally significant for its role in providing multi-family living to middle-class residents in Avondale, an emerging inner-ring suburb that was in close proximity to public transport and shopping at the time of its construction. As a Court Apartment, the Poinciana is significant as representing the development of multi-family, high-density residential buildings designed and located specifically to meet the housing needs of the growing numbers of middle-class residents during the early 20th century in Avondale, a suburb of Cincinnati. It is also a material representation of the greatest construction boom of multi-family dwellings in Avondale, a broad trend that swept the United States from 1900 to 1965. Additionally, the Poinciana reflects the broad pattern of suburban development associated with Avondale's second major wave of construction that resulted from the migration of the Jewish middle-class from Cincinnati's West End to Avondale.

The Court Apartment became the dominant housing type reflecting the growth, development and diversity of Cincinnati's suburbs. The Poinciana is locally significant in the area of Architecture as an intact example of a 1908 Queen Anne style Court Apartment Building, representing the ideal relation between building mass and configuration in order to minimize costs while maximizing light and air.

The Poinciana's period of significance is from 1908, the date of its construction, to 1949, reflecting the streetcar era in Avondale. The streetcar route "Winton Place" ceased operation in 1949. This route ran from downtown's Fourth and Walnut to Reading Road to Clinton Springs Avenue where it turned west, continuing along Mitchell Avenue to Winton and then to Spring Grove Avenue (*Cincinnati and Vicinity*, 175).

Narrative Statement of Significance

History of Avondale Avondale evolved as a single village, but over the years the movement of different social, economic, and ethnic groups in and out of the community altered and eventually fragmented its identity. Today Avondale is essentially split into two separate neighborhoods, North and South Avondale (often referred to simply as Avondale). Avondale is bounded on the north by the City of St. Bernard and Avon Field Golf Course, on the east by the City of Norwood and the I-71 expressway, on the south by Walnut Hills and Corryville, and on the west by Clifton. Glenwood Avenue delineates the boundary between North Avondale and

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South Avondale. Avondale is located approximately five miles north of downtown Cincinnati and occupies 800-acres.

Avondale's first wave of construction began in the 1830s when businessmen began building large homes on extensive parcels and commuting to work in the city. As more wealthy Cincinnatians began to construct suburban residences, Avondale landholders further divided their large holdings for sale as residential lots. Examples are Jonathan Dayton, who subdivided his property in 1846 and James Corry, who subdivided a tract he called Locust Grove soon after (Gigliero & Overmyer, 380).

Cincinnati merchants and manufacturers continued to move to Avondale and build large dwellings on expansive lots, a trend that was seen in several other nearby communities, including Clifton, Mt. Auburn, and Walnut Hills. Beginning in 1870, the City of Cincinnati sought to annex a number of communities, including Avondale, in hopes of regaining some of its population and the associated tax income that had been migrating to the suburbs. Despite initial opposition, annexation afforded some benefits to Avondale residents. With the improved police and fire protection that Cincinnati provided the suburb became generally a safer, more pleasant place to live (Gigliero & Overmyer, 381).

These improvements generated a substantial number of new residential subdivisions, among them that of Wayne, Krohn, Wilson, and the Avondale and the Cincinnati & Avondale syndicates, comprising two or three hundred acres. This was followed by the subdivision of over a hundred acres of the original Woodward property. (See Figure 4. 1869 Titus map.) In 1892, Robert Mitchell began to develop the Rose Hill subdivision to the north (*Commercial Gazette*, May 24, 1892).

In 1869, the land on which the Poinciana was eventually built was owned by D. Gallup (Figure 4). Albert Barnes Voorheis (1843–1916), a banker, and Isaac Mack (unknown–1894), a clothing manufacturer, recorded the Mack-Voorheis subdivision in 1892. Mack died in 1894, and the land was not transferred again until 1904, when Voorheis purchased Edgar Mack's share (Edgar was presumably a son, although not mentioned in Mack's obituary). The Hamilton County Auditor mistakenly lists the Poinciana's construction date as 1900. However, a 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows (Figure 5) undeveloped land at the future site of the Poinciana. It is thought that the land was undeveloped until the construction of the Poinciana in 1908.

In 1889, streetcar routes began to be electrified (Stradling, 68). The Thompson Houston Company was hired to electrify the Avondale route in 1890 and built a generating station at the corner of Reading Road and McMillan to furnish power (Wagner & Wright, 111). C. S. Mendenhall's *Standard Guide Map of Cincinnati*, published in 1903, shows that the "Winton Place" route was already running along Reading Road. The combination of transportation improvements, a growing population, and annexations of outlying neighborhoods by the city spurred an exodus to the hilltops.⁴ As stated by History Professor David Stradling, "The electric

⁴ By end of the nineteenth century, electric trolleys radiated out of the city basin to the newly formed suburbs, which also allowed businesses to move from the basin to the suburbs. As history professor David Stradling states in *Cincinnati: from River City to Highway Metropolis*, Cincinnati needed these transportation systems to accommodate its rapidly growing population. By 1911, the Cincinnati Traction Company had unified the many streetcar lines into one system (Figure 5). The city's population climbed from 296,908 in 1890 to 325,902 in 1900; 363,591 in 1910; 401,247 in 1920; and by 1940 there were 455,610 Cincinnatians (30).

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streetcar not only reflected the growth of all of these more distant places, but also encouraged it. Streets with trolley lines developed more intensely than those without, as business districts and apartment buildings thrived on the easy access provided by the streetcars" (69).

By the early 20th century this fast and inexpensive mode of transportation allowed less affluent residents to settle in newer, less expensive subdivisions in southern Avondale. Upper- and middle-class suburban apartments began to appear along Reading Road, a major thoroughfare in Avondale, specifically the Cumberland (808 Cleveland Avenue, 1890), a unique dumbbell-plan, six-flat apartment building (now clad in aluminum siding) and the Somerset (802-814 Blair Avenue, 1896), a 24-unit four-story Queen Anne style building designed by Joseph Steinkamp for the Emery brothers (Gordon, E 37). These new developments resulted in a community development pattern shift away from large single family residences built on spacious lots to the construction of high density suburban apartment buildings. The construction of the massive 56-unit, Haddon Hall (NR# 82003582, listed in 1982), designed by Joseph Steinkamp for the Emery Brothers in 1900, marks the beginning of Avondale's second significant wave of construction and development.

The Poinciana is cited in the MPD as one of several upper- and middle-class Streetcar Suburb Apartments built around 1900 along Reading Road, a major streetcar artery in Avondale (Gordon, E 37). The Poinciana reflects the evolution of multi-family residential buildings located specifically to meet the needs of the growing middle-class moving into Avondale. The Poinciana's location would have provided access to convenient and affordable transportation, shopping and services within a short walk. The streetcar would have accommodated residents as they commuted from work to home. The 1920 census indicates that the majority of the tenants that lived in the Poinciana were in the service sector; there were several stenographers, retailers and salesmen listed. As stated in the MPD, "Residents working in the newly expanding service sector were generally not well paid, so they sought inexpensive housing in areas of the city with easy access to public transportation" (Gordon, E 12). As a Streetcar Suburb Apartment, the Poinciana is significant for providing multi-family living to middle-class residents in Avondale, an emerging inner-ring suburb, that was in close proximity to public transport and shopping.

In addition to the convenience of its location along the streetcar line, the Poinciana was sited on a prominent corner on the northern edge of Avondale's business district. A 1932 survey of Cincinnati's neighborhood business districts ranked Avondale as one of the city's "very best residential districts" (Gigliano & Overmyer, 391). With a population of 22,900, Avondale was thriving (Miller, 47). By the late 1920s the business center, located along Reading Road near the intersection of Rockdale Avenue, had 41 businesses located between Windham and Hutchins Avenues (Gigliano & Overmyer, 391). According to *The Bicentennial Guide to Greater Cincinnati; A Portrait of Two Hundred Years*:

[R]esidents of nearby apartment buildings sustained a lively neighborhood trade that consisted of three groceries, three delicatessens, three confectioners, two shoemakers, two fruit markets, two barbershops, a door wreath company, hardware store, tinner, dry cleaner, and a bank (391).

The Poinciana and Avondale's other suburban apartment buildings, made this desirable neighborhood more accessible to the growing middle- and upper-middle classes. The majority of Avondale's population for most of the 19th century was merchant-class Protestant of English

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or German ancestry. Only a small number of its inhabitants were middle or lower class, and only 8-10% was black. Beginning in the 1890s, however, well-to-do German Jewish families began moving into the northern part of Avondale (Giglierano & Overmyer, 380), as they were often not welcomed in the exclusive social circles that dominated other wealthy suburbs like Clifton. And in regards to the growing professional class, it is stated in *The Bicentennial Guide to Greater Cincinnati: A Portrait of Two Hundred Years*, that:

Haddon Hall Apartments, 3814 Reading Road, is one of the earlier, large apartment buildings put up to provide attractive housing for such families, near public transportation and the center of the suburban neighborhood. Erected around 1900 by the Emery family, the massive 4-story gambrel roofed structure was designed by Joseph Steinkamp. . . . to blend with Avondale's mansions (385).

As Avondale's population and popularity grew, so did the number of fashionable middle- and upper-middle class apartment buildings along Reading Road and intersecting streets. Examples include the New Avondale Apartments (1926), a massive U-plan courtyard apartment building located at 916-920 Burton Avenue. The Rosedale (1926), a Samuel Hannaford & Sons design located at 3543-49 Washington Avenue. Fenway Hall (1929), at 603-613 Forest Avenue, is a Jacobethan-style example that combines the Court and Block Apartment plans. Located at 686 Gholson Avenue (circa 1925) is Gholson Apartments, a well-maintained three-story, brick U-plan building. The Commodore (1928), at 3637-3639 Reading Road is another example that combines the Court and Block apartment plans. This vacant building is located on over an acre. Greenwood Court (circa 1925), another U-plan located at 725 Greenwood Avenue, retains a fountain in its courtyard, but the building has been altered. Balconies facing the court have been removed, and an addition off the rear (south) elevation has altered the original H-plan footprint. The Rose Hill Apartments (1930), located on a rise at 3896 Reading Road, catered to upper-middle class residents.

By 1940, Cincinnati's suburbs defined the city's outer ring. Suburban Apartment Buildings, specifically Court Apartment Buildings, were built in abundance during this time frame, and even surpassed single-family construction in Cincinnati (Gordon, E 38). The Court Apartment became the dominant housing type reflecting Cincinnati's growth and suburban development.

Opportunistic developers met the increasing housing demand in Avondale by building high-density multi-family housing in close proximity to transportation lines. Between 1904 and 1908,⁵ the Krug Realty Company purchased lots 76 and 77 of the Mack-Voorheis subdivision and erected the Poinciana. The building first appeared in the 1908 city directory under the "Public Buildings, Flats, Etc." section (79); however, no units were occupied. From a December 23, 1908 classified ad it is known that the apartment building was "just finished" (*Cincinnati Enquirer*). The building is referred to as the "New Poinciana" in classified ads from 1908 to at

⁵ An attempt to validate this thesis through deed research was made; however, no deeds were located from the 1904 transfer to Albert B. Voorheis to the Krug Realty Company selling the Poinciana in 1967. The thesis that the Krug Realty Company erected the Poinciana is based on several 1908 classified ads with the Krug Realty Company listed as the contact, and newspaper articles as early as 1910 that mention Krug as the owner. Further, the Krug Realty Company erected at least two other apartment buildings in Cincinnati.

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least 1916, but appears as the "Poinciana" or "Poinciana Flats" in the city directory and in other media accounts.

Philip Krug (unknown–1928) founded the Krug Realty Company in 1883. The company's first known development project was "The Krug" (1895), a 29-unit apartment building located at 2716 Woodburn Avenue in Cincinnati's inner-ring neighborhood Walnut Hills. Historic preservationist and former Senior City Planner for the City of Cincinnati, Adrienne Cowden, notes in the "Woodlawn Avenue NBD Historic District Designation Report" that this undertaking was a "speculative real estate venture [and that] the construction of a second apartment building at 2714 Woodburn Avenue in 1903 suggests the investment was a successful one" (5).

The Poinciana is thought to be the third apartment building constructed by the Krug Realty Company. The Poinciana is the largest of the three apartment buildings, which suggests that the other two buildings were successful investments. It appears that the Krug Realty Company was formed in response to the speculative building market; and is locally significant as it represents larger independent apartment developers who were attracted to the investment opportunities of larger scale rental housing.⁶ In regards the Krug Realty Company's impact, it is stated in the MPD, that "realtors and real estate companies played a central role in apartment development. . . the Krug Realty Company. . . built two grand apartments in Walnut Hills" (Gordon, E 28).

Philip Krug's personal real estate holdings in Cincinnati included the Mecca Saloon, located on Walnut Street, and three buildings at the northeast corner of Oliver and Linn Street, all purchased in 1909 ("Real Estate and Building"). He also served as president of the Hernacourt Brewing Company from approximately 1888 to at least 1905, when Krug was re-elected president for another term ("Men and Matters"). Herancourt is thought to be Cincinnati's first brewer of lager beer to employ a cellar where the beer could be stored through the summer months (Cowden, 5). Krug was also a director and largest shareholder of the Amanda Consolidated Gold Mining Company. The company was incorporated in 1900 and owned ten acres of "gold mining land" located in Colorado Springs, Colorado ("Amanda: Stockholders Anxious").

After Krug's death in 1928, his son, Carl F. H. Krug, became president of the company, until his death in 1943, after which, his family continued to manage the realty company until at least the late 1960s.

Although a 1908 classified ad describes the building as offering "high-class 4 & 5 room apartments" (*Cincinnati Enquirer*), the Poinciana's intended market were middle-class residents. The 1910 United States Federal Census, where 36 Poinciana resident households were identified, supports this thesis. This sampling includes middle-class tradesmen, businessmen and a handful of professionals. The tenants (only heads of households and spouses were considered) ranged from their early 20s to late 70s. There were four widows and two widowers identified. The majority of the households had offspring; thirteen of the households had children under the age of eighteen, ten other households had adult progeny living with them. Additionally, nine households employed servants and seven households rented rooms to lodgers. The majority of the tenants were born in the United States. Most were native Ohioans, but others were from Indiana, Iowa, Mississippi and New York. Seventeen of the tenants were

⁶ For more background regarding the financing of apartment buildings and the shift from individuals to corporations as apartment developers, please see the MPD.

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born in Germany, and 28 tenants were children of immigrants from Germany, Russia and Poland. It is presumed that a significant population of the residents was Jewish based on Yiddish being the mother tongue of at least a third of the Poinciana's residents and/or parents of residents (United States Federal Census, 1920).

The Poinciana reflects the broad pattern of suburban development associated with the migration of the Jewish population from Cincinnati's West End to Avondale. The Poinciana and other suburban apartment buildings provided housing for the growing Jewish middle-class in Avondale, allowing the community to become more diverse. These new residents included many Eastern European Jews, particularly following a general exodus of the Jewish population from the declining West End in the early twentieth century, would profoundly change the character of the community. Between the 1920s and the end of World War II, Avondale was known as the "gilded ghetto" with Jewish inhabitants making up 60% of the suburb's total population. A variety of Jewish institutions and businesses, many of which originated in the old Jewish neighborhoods of the West End, also took up residence in Avondale at this time (Gigliano & Overmyer, 381-382).⁷ The Poinciana is a physical reminder of Avondale's transition from an upper-class suburb to a more architecturally and socio-economically diverse neighborhood.

In addition to census and city directory research indicating that the Poinciana housed middle-class residents, it has been observed that certain design aspects of the Court Apartment Building correlate with the class of the intended user. For instance, buildings intended for the upper-class afforded more opportunities for light and ventilation, including wider courtyards. Often upper-class apartments offered dining rooms, maids' quarters and ornate formal entries and the MPD identified upper-class apartments as having six to ten rooms.

For comparison, the Alameda, approximately a block and a half north of the Poinciana, designed to attract upper-class residents, has large skylights in the upper floor halls to allow natural light to flood the space. Each unit in this building historically had multiple balustraded windows that would have opened to allow in light and air. The layout of each unit spans at least two elevations of the building, allowing for cross ventilation. Both natural light and ventilation were sought after amenities, and an abundance of both would have been a luxury for residents. Additionally, the Alameda is a refined Beaux Arts style building. Beaux Arts style buildings were designed to impress and were often a display of wealth. The choice of this architectural style for the Alameda likely was to reflect the affluence of the intended class of occupants.

Erected to house middle-class residents, the Poinciana, in contrast to the Alameda, is almost fortress-like in scale. Although there are few Queen Anne style Court Apartments in Cincinnati, the style was frequently employed for the design for other domestic and commercial buildings in Avondale and in Cincinnati in general. The combination of a narrow courtyard and the four-story height reduces the opportunity for natural light into the interior of the building. The living rooms generally have one window. Additionally, the linear layout of the rooms accessed via a long, narrow hallway, limits natural light and ventilation. The five-room units and simple public spaces are other indicators that the Poinciana's intended users were middle-class.

⁷ The following is a sampling of former Avondale Jewish institutions: Synagogue of Sh'erith Ahabeth, 3212 Reading Road; Isaac M. Wise Center, 3202 Reading Road; The Jewish Hospital of Cincinnati, 3200 Burnet Avenue; Keneseth Israel Synagogue, 3504 Washington Avenue; Louis Feinberh Synagogue, 3556 Reading Road; Isaac M. Wise Temple-Center, 3771-3733 Reading Road, North Avondale Synagogue, and 3870 Reading Road (Gigliano & Overmyer, 386-392).

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The trend of suburban apartment buildings as a desirable housing option continued after World War I. However, by 1930 Avondale's second wave of development stopped, with the construction of Rose Hill Apartments, which is thought to be the last Court Apartment built in Avondale. After the depressed 1930s and World War II, Americans once again rekindled their ambition to own automobiles, a desire that was sparked in the 1920s. The growing preference for automobile travel meant falling fares from decreased streetcar ridership, and political pressure to remove lines that were viewed as obtrusive by auto owners. The first line to be discontinued in Avondale was the "Highland/Auburn" route in 1947, followed by the "Zoo-Gilbert" and "Winton Place" routes in 1949, and then the "Vine Burnet" route in 1950. By 1951, Cincinnati's streetcar era was a memory. The City of Cincinnati recognized the impending demise of the streetcar system. In 1948, the City's Planning Commission completed the *Metropolitan Master Plan*, which envisioned a new type of city, "one reliant on limited-access highways to relieve traffic congestion and spur growth" (Stradling, 127). The highway projects envisioned in the 1940s, the Millcreek Expressway and the Northeastern Expressway, which eventually became sections of Interstates 75 and 71, spurred remarkable growth on Cincinnati's fringe, and determined that the suburbs would be reliant on the automobile.

After World War II, the development pattern and the population of Avondale began to transition as the Jewish community began to move out of the community to Amberley Village. Through the 1950, 60s and 70s property values experienced a downward spiral as land use changed and population density increased substantially in Avondale. It became common for large single family dwellings to be subdivided into apartments. In addition to the subdivision of dwellings, the increase of rental housing resulted from the development of vacant land which had been zoned for high-density apartment development. This transition affected the character of the Avondale as green space on residential side streets was replaced with large multi-unit apartment buildings.⁸ After the Krug Realty Company sold the Poinciana in 1967, the property transferred eleven times before the current owners purchased the property in 2012.

The Poinciana, built before the proliferation of motor vehicles, is significant within its historic contexts for its role in providing multi-family living to middle-class residents in an emerging inner ring suburb that was in close proximity to public transport and shopping. With the discontinuation of the streetcar system, this significant phase of Avondale's developmental history was over. The discontinuation of the "Winton Place" route in 1949 marks the closing date of the Poinciana's period of significance, as the era in which it was conceived and constructed came to an end.

The Poinciana's Architectural Significance

The Poinciana is also eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture as a locally significant example of a Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building⁹ executed as a Court Apartment Building.¹⁰ The Poinciana retains a high degree of integrity, including

⁸ For more information concerning Avondale's land use pattern change from 1930 to 1970 see the "North Avondale Community Master Plan," published in 1970.

⁹ Please see the MPD for a discussion of Cincinnati's Streetcar Suburb Apartment Buildings.

¹⁰ In addition to Haddon Hall there are two individually listed Court Apartment Buildings in Walnut Hills, and like Haddon Hall, both are Emery/Steinkamp collaborations. Alexandra Apartments (circa 1900), located at 921 William Howard Taft Road, was listed in 1997 (NR# 97001223). This design was built around a series of courtyards. The Verona Apartments (1906), located at 2356 Park Avenue, was listed in

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stylistic integrity and the key diagnostic features and aspects defined in the MPD, which contribute to the importance of the Poinciana as two identifiable apartment building subtypes.

As an example of the Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building, the Poinciana sufficiently retains the physical features and level of integrity to serve as an example of this subtype, specifically it exhibits nearly all of the important characteristics identified in the MPD, including construction circa 1890-1910, prominently sited on a large corner lot along an historic streetcar route in a neighborhood at the perimeter of the central city, and its physical proximity to the street. The building lacks two Streetcar Suburb Apartment features: rear or side light wells, and multiple entrances and vestibules on a long wall. Because the Poinciana was designed as a Court Apartment, the light wells were replaced with windows and bays to maximize light and air. The multiple entrances along a wall were replaced with more formal entryways along a central axis, as is common with Court Apartments.

The Poinciana exhibits all of the characteristics identified in the MPD for Court Apartment Buildings. It is stated in the MPD that, "In instances where fountains, gates, and decorative iron and masonry fences were integral to the design scheme, they should be present, even if no longer used" (Gordon, F11). The Poinciana retains its historic fencing and gate along the front (west) of the property. Although additional fencing has been added inside the courtyard, it is not highly visible from the street. Representative of Court Apartment Buildings, the Poinciana retains cubic symmetry and a balanced fenestration, formal entryways along a central axis, walkups, and public halls, which contribute to its importance as an identifiable Court Apartment Building. The Poinciana spans multiple lots, its site is free from other classes of buildings, and the courtyard remains highly visible from the street.

Although there are other Queen Anne style Streetcar Suburb Apartment Buildings, such as the Somerset (1896), located at 802-814 Blair Avenue, this style appears to be more atypical for Court Apartment Buildings. By 1900 the Queen Anne style was losing dominance as a popular architectural style, but persisted up until circa 1910. The Roanoke (1900), located at 359 Ludlow in Clifton, has Queen Anne style characteristics, specifically its spindlework porches. The Roanoke was the only other Queen Anne style Court Apartment identified and it does not have the exuberant detailing of the Poinciana.

Conclusion The Poinciana Flats meets National Register Criteria A and C, as a locally significant representation of the Streetcar Suburb Apartment and Court subtypes as identified in the MPD, *Apartment Buildings in Ohio Urban Centers, 1870-1970*. The Poinciana clearly reflects significance within the historic contexts "Streetcar Suburb Apartments in Ohio Urban Centers, 1890-1930," specifically "Early Middle Class Apartments," and "Suburban Apartments in Ohio Urban Centers, 1910-1945," as identified and defined in the MPD.

The Poinciana meets Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development under the broad theme of transportation for its association with high-density suburban apartment development in Avondale during the era of the electric streetcar in the early 20th century. The Poinciana is cited as one of several upper- and middle-class suburban apartments built around 1900 along Reading Road, a major streetcar artery in Avondale (Gordon, E 37). Further, the Poinciana reflects the broad pattern of suburban development associated with the migration of

2008 (NR # 08000625). This U-plan apartment building houses 49 six-room apartments on a spacious 1.5 acre lot. Please see the MPD for a more in-depth discussion of Cincinnati's Court Apartment Buildings.

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the Jewish professional class from Cincinnati's West End to Avondale during the early 20th century. The building is also significant as a material representation of the greatest construction boom of multi-family dwellings in Avondale, a broad trend that swept the United States from 1900 to 1965.

Additionally, the Poinciana is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a fine example of a Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building executed as a Court Apartment, an iconic subtype. The Poinciana sufficiently retains the physical features and level of integrity to serve as an example of these subtypes. As a Streetcar Suburb Apartment Building, the Poinciana retains the important features of its setting, including location on a large corner lot on a major streetcar route, its footprint takes up almost the entirety of the parcel it was constructed upon, and the building meets the sidewalk on the west and south sides. Other Streetcar Suburb Apartment features include the horizontal façade emphasis, repetition of bays, use of turrets, porches, and 44 units, making it a relatively large example.

The Court design was the first to incorporate open space as an integral part of the site. As such, the MPD requires Court Apartment to have sites free from other classes of buildings, resting on multiple lots, and a grassy open courtyard that remains highly visible from the street. The Poinciana meets these requirements. Additionally, the original gateway and fence along Reading Road visually and physically separate this imposing apartment building from the sidewalk. It also retains its overall irregular U-shape, cubic massing, walkup staircases, and public halls and foyers. The windows and bays replaced the light wells typically found in Streetcar Suburb Apartment Buildings as to allow for more light and ventilation. Finally, the Poinciana retains a significant degree of stylistic integrity; which is also a MPD requirement.

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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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.56

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- 1. Zone: 16 Easting: 716911 Northing: 4335921
- 2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Poinciana Flats is located within the corporate limits of Cincinnati. It includes, in its entirety, Parcel Number 108-0001-0080-00 of the Hamilton County Auditor's records. The nominated area comprises .56-acre. (See Figure 2 for boundary map.)

Boundary Justification

The boundary contains all the property historically and presently associated with the Poinciana Apartments.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Bobbie McTurner, Architectural Historian and Beth Sullebarger, Principal
organization: Sullebarger Associates
street & number: 1080 Morse Avenue
city or town: Glendale state: OH zip code: 45246-3830
e-mail sullebarger@fuse.net
telephone: (513)772-1088
date: July 30, 2013

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Figure 1. Location map

Figure 2. Boundary map

Figure 3. First floor plan, typical, and photo key

Figure 4. 1869 *Titus'* map of Avondale

Figure 5. 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Cincinnati, updated to 1940

Figure 6. 1922 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Cincinnati

Photo Log

Name of Property: The Poinciana Flats

City or Vicinity: Cincinnati

County: Hamilton

State: Ohio

Photographer: Randall E. Birkhead, 6301 Delphos Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45213

Date Photographed: May and July 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 15. Front (west) and south (side) elevations, looking northeast
- 2 of 15. Front (west) elevation, looking east
- 3 of 15. Side (north) and front (west) elevations, looking southeast
- 4 of 15. Rear (east) and side (north) elevations, looking southwest
- 5 of 15. Rear (east) and side (south) elevations, looking northwest
- 6 of 15. Side (south) elevation, balcony detail, looking northeast
- 7 of 15. Front gateway detail, looking east
- 8 of 15. South courtyard entrance, looking south
- 9 of 15. Center and north courtyard entrance, looking northeast
- 10 of 15. Entrance vestibule (typical), looking south
- 11 of 15. Stairhall (typical), looking west toward entrance
- 12 of 15. Stairhall, looking south toward apartment entrances
- 13 of 15. Stairhall, looking north toward front
- 14 of 15. Back stair (typical), looking north
- 15 of 15. Living room (typical), looking south toward balcony door

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National Park Service

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

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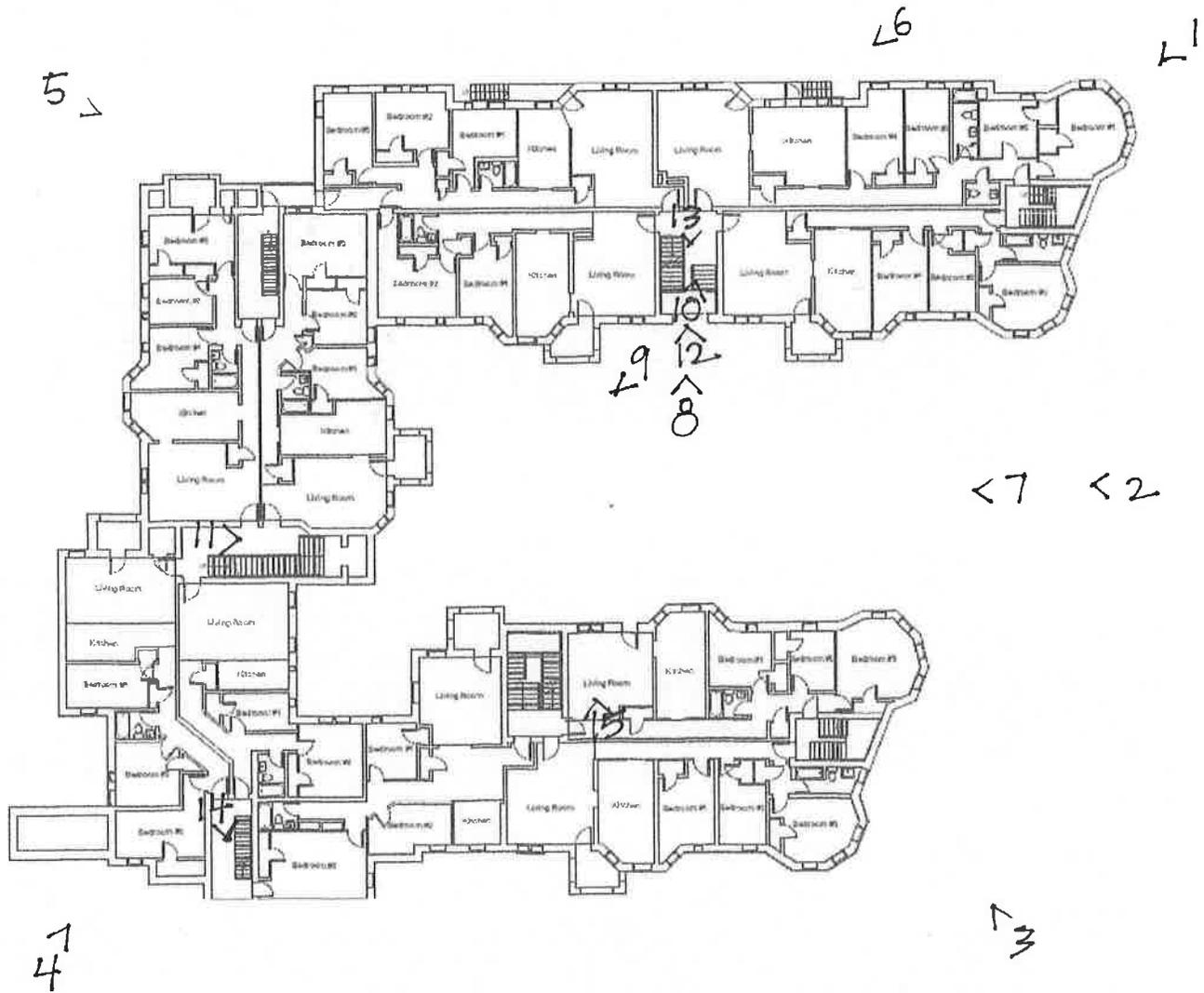


Figure 3. First floor plan, typical, and photo key

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National Park Service

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Figure 4: 1869 Titus' map of Avondale, future site of the Poinciana Flats indicated

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County and State
Apartment Buildings in Ohio Urban Centers (1870-1970)
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 29

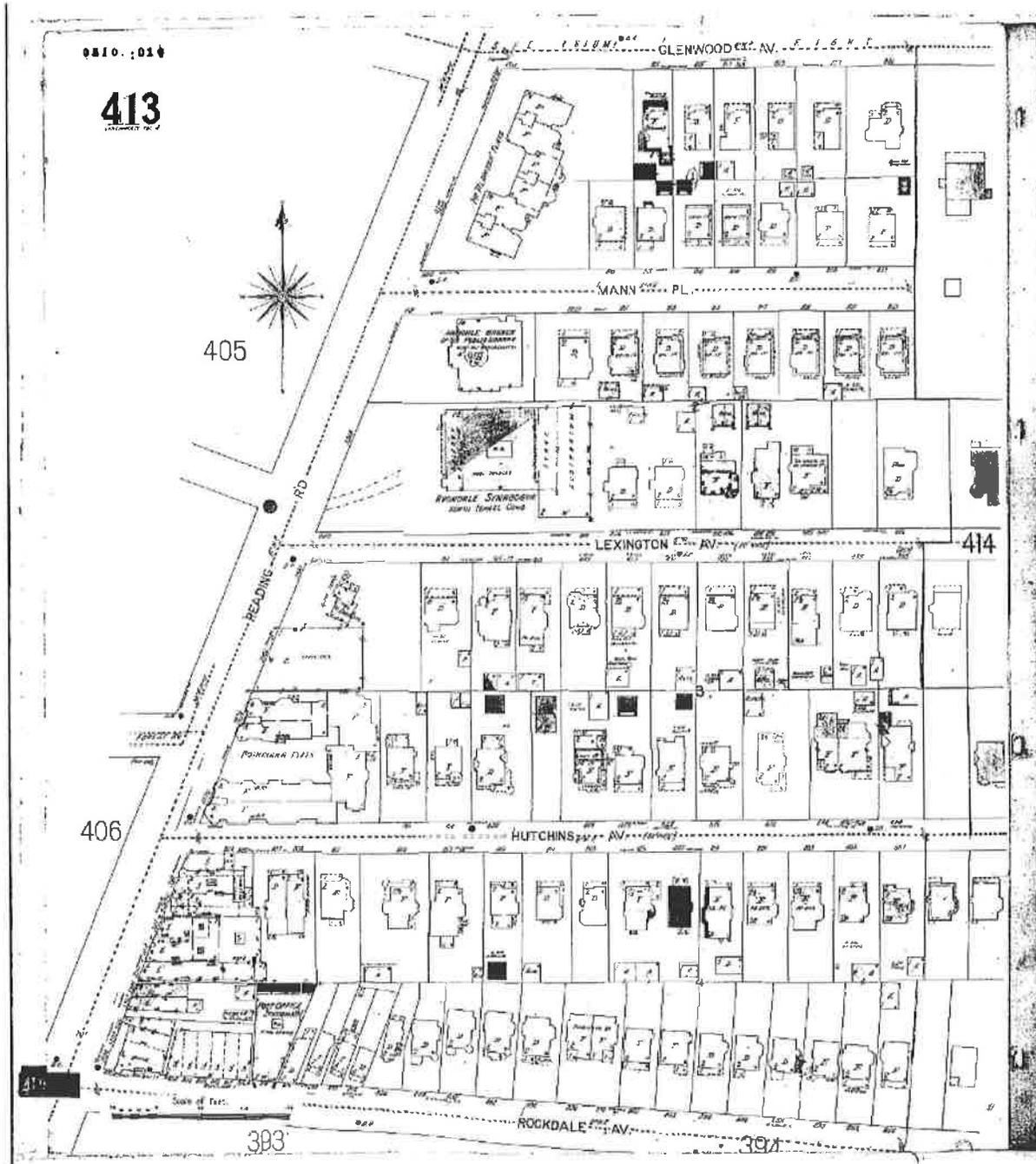


Figure 5: 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Cincinnati, updated to 1940, showing the Poinciana Flats

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National Park Service

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Apartment Buildings in Ohio Urban Centers (1870-1970)

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

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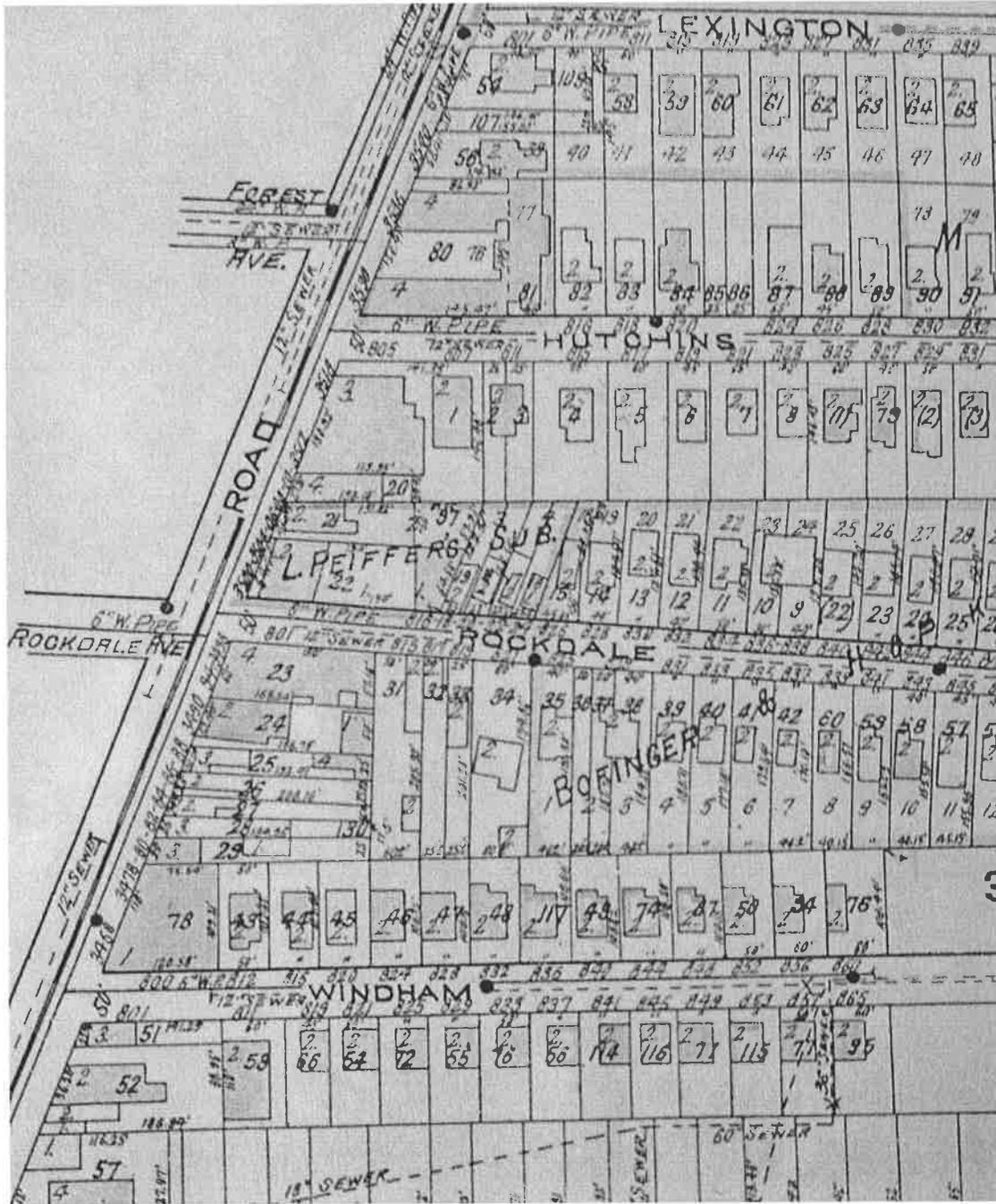
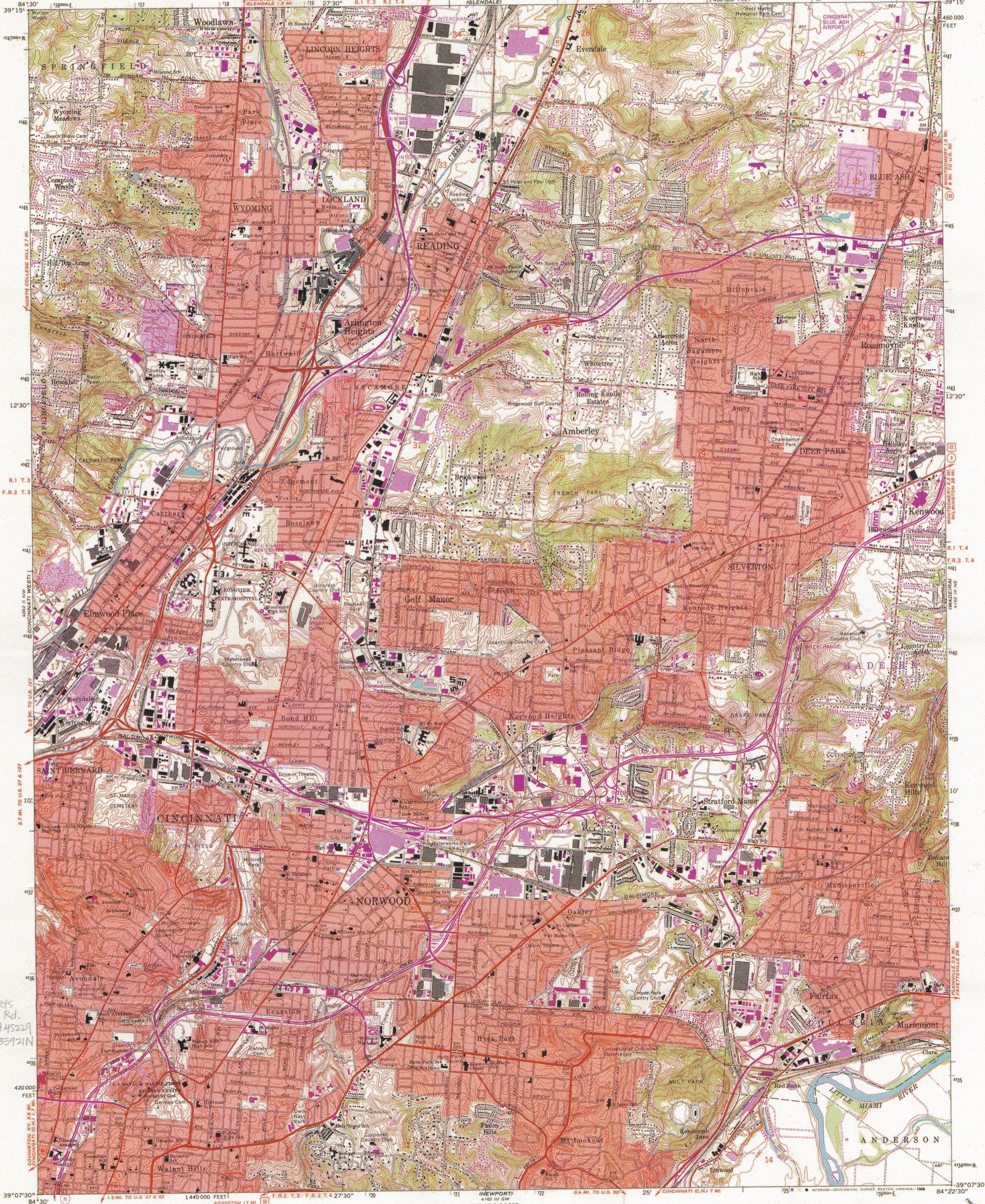
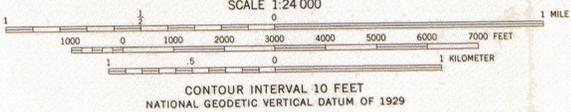
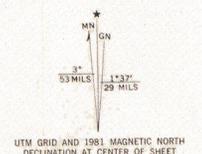


Figure 6: 1922 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Cincinnati, showing the Poinciana Flats near the intersection of Reading Road and Forest Avenue



Poinciana Flats
3522 Reading Rd.
Cincinnati OH 45229
16 716911E 4385921N

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, USCE, and City of Cincinnati
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1949 and in part by City of Cincinnati. Field checked
1953. Revised 1961
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Ohio
coordinate system, south zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse
Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue. 1927 North
American Datum. To place on the predicted North American
Datum 1983 move the projection lines 3 meters south and
6 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Area east of the Little Miami River lies within the Virginia Military
District. Area west of the Little Miami River lies within the Between
the Miamis. Land lines based on the Great Miami River Base. Dotted
land lines established by private subdivision of the Symmes Purchase
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the
National or State reservations shown on this map



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty Light-duty
Medium-duty Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

CINCINNATI EAST, OHIO
39084-B4-TF-024
1961
PHOTOREVISED 1981
DMA 4162 III NW-SERIES V852

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation
with State of Ohio agencies from aerial photographs taken 1979
and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1981
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

NOV 23 1988
REPRODUCTION COPY





NO
LOITERING

NO
LOITERING



DRUG FREE ZONE
NO LOITERING
NO DRUGS
NO ALCOHOL
NO WEAPONS
NO EXCESSIVE LOUING











POINCIANA



CIANA











