

History and Architectural Styles of Hyde Park

The year 1886 forecast a new era in Tampa. Staggering under the blow of yellow fever epidemics which had closed everything from hotels to cigar factories, the City of Tampa received word that Henry Bradley Plant would spend a “million dollars or more” developing Port Tampa and would build a splendid resort, the Tampa Bay Hotel, on the western bank of the Hillsborough River.ⁱ To support this development, the city agreed to extend Lafayette Street (now Kennedy) a half-mile west of the river and build a bridge at that point. It was from Jesse J. Hayden, owner of the ferry across the river, and his daughter Mrs. Donald McKay that Plant bought the land for the Tampa Bay Hotel.ⁱⁱ

In 1888 the bridge was erected, Plant extended his railroad across the river, and the cornerstone of the Tampa Bay Hotel was laid. When Plant sent out invitations to the grand opening ball in January 1891, one telegraphed reply read “Where is Tampa Bay?” Plant wired his response, “Follow the crowd.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The construction of this bridge made the area west of the river accessible to Tampa and prompted the development of Hyde Park. The hotel construction project invigorated the economy of the city and further encouraged growth west of the river.

As early as 1829, Levi Collier had farmed the area and sold vegetables to the U. S. Army outpost at Fort Brooke in downtown Tampa.^{iv} In 1838, this land passed to his daughters and their husbands, Jeanette and W. T Haskins (who returned east of the river for lack of a bridge), and Nancy and Robert Jackson. In 1886, O. H. Platt of Hyde Park, Illinois purchased 20 acres from Jackson and named the area Hyde Park.^v

Citrus groves covered much of the area west of the river, until building in Tampa’s first suburb prevailed. James M. Watrous, who built his home at 1307 Morrison Avenue in 1882, and William A. Morrison, who established a residence at 850 Newport Avenue by 1885, were early citrus growers. By 1910, all the large citrus groves had been subdivided encompassing nearly 100 acres south of Swann Avenue between Magnolia and Orleans avenues.

Hyde Park is a combination of individual subdivisions developed in a conventional grid with the major streets perpendicular to the Bayshore. In 1907, Swann and Holtsinger began filling the mud flats along the waterfront “and in 1914, Bayshore paved, but the concentration of building before 1915 did not face the Bay.”^{vi}

The main artery into the development of quarter acre lots was the 80 foot wide Hyde Park Avenue. Street car service along Swann and Rome existed as early as 1892, and along Bayshore by 1909, adding to the accessibility of Hyde Park established by the bridge and the railroad.^{vii}

Between 1913 and 1928, the area flourished. Large revival style residences continued to appear until the Florida building boom of 1924-26 ended abruptly, and the Stock Market Crash of 1929 engulfed not only Florida, but the entire nation in the Great Depression. After the Depression,

construction in Hyde Park followed the national trend toward smaller homes. Although the post World War II growth trend in Tampa was to the west and northwest, the neighborhood remained relatively stable until the shift back to near-urban living and the emerging popularity of preservation in the 1970s and 1980s stimulated a new period of development in Hyde Park.

Architectural Styles

Because development in Hyde Park did not follow a continuous pattern, the district is a mixture of styles, sizes, and ages. Nineteenth century building between 1879 and 1899 ranged through the southeast segment of the district from Plant Avenue and Hyde Park Avenue to Newport Avenue and Morrison Avenue, and represented a variety of revival styles. This random pattern continued throughout the development of the district, which remained unified by continuity in landscape, street orientation, and site relationships.

The stylistic influences in Hyde Park range from revivals (Queen Anne, Tudor, Classical, Colonial, French Second Empire and Mediterranean) to new directions in architecture (Prairie and Bungalow). Along with these styles, popular throughout the country around the turn of the century, are vernacular examples which lack academic influences, and eclectic examples which exhibit a mixture of influences.

Some of the earlier buildings of the district may be described as vernacular. Typically two story wood frame, these residences are often distinguished by carpentry details such as decorative entryways, brackets and eaves.

The **Queen Anne Revival Style** is characterized by asymmetrical massing, varied roof forms, turrets, bays and pavilions. The Queen Anne Revival Style popularized in England in the nineteenth century by Richard Norman Shaw, was based on medieval models rather than on the namesake, Queen Anne period of the early eighteenth century. In America, Queen Anne Revival freely absorbed various influences and adapted them to the needs of a newly affluent middle class. A variety of textures, materials, colors, and distinctive millwork contribute to the complexity of such Tampa examples at 341 Plant Avenue, Circa 1889 and at 801 Delaware Avenue, Circa 1911. Some Classical and Colonial Revival influences may be perceived in both buildings.



Queen Anne Revival Style

The **Tudor Revival Style** draws from elements and forms characteristic of sixteenth century England, such as the application of mock half-timbering over stucco, steeply pitched roof lines, casement windows, and dominant fireplaces and chimneys. The typically asymmetrical massing expresses the rambling interior plan. This style, which varies in scale from large estate homes to cottages, is represented at 901 Delaware Avenue.



Tudor Revival Style

The typical example of turn-of-the-century **Neo-Classical Revival Style** is characterized by symmetry, a full-height portico entry, and cornices and pediments with such classical details as egg and dart molding, dentils, modillions or fret. Since the Golden Age of Greece in the Fifth Century B. C., classical forms have been revived and reinterpreted in cycles, most remarkably in the Greek Revival, which predominated in the first half of the nineteenth century. An early example of the Neo-Classical Revival is the Taliaferro House at 305 Hyde Park Avenue, c.a. 1893. Influences of this style are found in the use of classical details in several styles, such as the Colonial Revival, Queen Anne Revival, and in simpler vernacular examples.



Neo-Classical Revival Style

The **Colonial Revival Style**, a gesture to the domestic architecture of the period leading to the American independence, emerged from the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. The references range from Dutch Colonial with gambrel roof to the dignified simplicity of the rectangular two-story American Foursquare. The typical material is horizontal wood siding. The plain lines of the symmetrical plan and façade may be broken by dormers, shutters, a balustrade, and a single story entry stoop. Simple classical details found on the exterior may be more extensive inside.



Colonial Revival Style

The **French Second Empire Revival Style** is relatively uncommon in Florida, represented in Hyde Park by a single distinguished example, the 1908 Hutchinson House at 304 Plant Avenue. The characteristic feature of this style is the high mansard roof above the second story, often covered with patterned slate and edged with a decorative iron gallery. The plan and façade are often asymmetrical, detailed with curved door and window lintels of contrasting masonry.



French Second Empire Revival Style

A style which adapted readily to the cultural heritage and the climate of Florida and became a visual history of the Florida Boom is the **Mediterranean Revival Style**. The stucco, tile and cast stone asymmetrical compositions interpreted influences ranging from Italian villas (Tuscan Revival) to Islamic-Spanish palaces (Spanish Revival), to the missions of Spanish Colonial America (Mission Revival). Loggias, arches, decorative scuppers to drain flat roofs, towers, grillwork, decorative ceramics and exposed beams may be found in all scales of residential and commercial buildings.



Mediterranean Revival Style



Mediterranean Revival Style

Alongside revival styles, architecture of this century took new directions to address the needs of a growing nation. The **Craftsman Style** expressed the middle class philosophies of suburban living, back to nature, and craftsmanship. The exposed structure as a design element, found in such distant sources as the Alps and the Orient, was introduced to Americans by the international expositions early in the century.

In 1903, California architects Greene and Greene designed the first recognized **Craftsman Style**, combining simplicity with craftsmanship, structure as a visual element, and furnishings which conformed with the architecture. Gustav Stickley applied Craftsman philosophy to his furniture designs and then to the housing needs of the middle classes by publishing scaled-down versions of the bungalow in his magazine, *THE CRAFTSMAN*. The public readily embraced his affordable bungalows, soon featured in such popular magazines as *LADIES HOME JOURNAL* and available by mail order through Sears, Roebuck and Company. Although some bungalows were the result of mass production development, the true concept of this “democratic” style was craftsmanship, harmony, simplicity of design, and association with nature.^{viii}

Exposed beams and rafters, porches for outdoor living, numerous windows, and wide eaves were typical features of the bungalow. The interior was efficiently organized with a minimum of hallways, built-in furnishings, and an important fireplace. When a second story was present, the perimeter was distinctly smaller than the first story, prompting such descriptions as “camelback” and “airplane bungalow.” Bungalow Terrace in Hyde Park is a unique example of a bungalow court, a planned development comprised only of Craftsman Style bungalows and used extensively in California.



Craftsman Style

Another new direction at the turn of the century, the **Prairie School**, grew out of the midwest where Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture became a horizontal extension of the prairie, an integration of building and site, Cantilevered eaves and terraces with planters flowed into open spaces centered about massive fireplaces. Horizontal bands of windows, contrasting horizontal trim, low roof pitch, and geometric details were distinctive features. The Leiman House, designed in 1916 by Tampa architect M. Leo Elliott, stands as a unique example of fully-developed Prairie Style in Hyde Park. However, influence of early Prairie School work also may be found in the district.



Prairie Style

Many noteworthy buildings in Hyde Park which contribute to the character and ambience of the district do not fall into an identifiable stylistic category. Other **Vernacular Style** or eclectic buildings may embody features from various styles and, while they are not readily categorized, are important elements in a district which is a compatible mixture of turn-of-the-century styles. This compatibility, created by such features as scale, massing, orientation, landscape, and materials, determines the visual significance of the district. It is the architectural significance, this visible reminder of local history and cultural heritage and this compatible ambience which makes Hyde Park worthy of preservation for present and future generations.



Vernacular Style

Purpose of the Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines for historic districts do a number of important things. They are foremost a communication tool between the Architectural Review Commission (A.R.C.) and the public, describing the context of the neighborhood in terms of its history and its architectural styles, while providing a framework or philosophy for design review. Further, they describe in some detail the building elements that are important to each architectural style in the district and suggest a variety of solutions for rehabilitation and new construction that might best preserve the neighborhood's character. Finally, the guidelines are used along with "**The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**" by the A.R.C. when reviewing construction activities in Hyde Park Historic District.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation was initially drafted in 1979. This document provides the basis for many design guidelines including that of Hyde Park. The basic philosophy of **The Standards** is best indicated in the definition of rehabilitation as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values." It implies a gentle, thoughtful process which respects the original character of each, historic building, while allowing for orderly change. **The Standards** are included in the next section for reference.