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BUILDING SUBURBAN LIFE: ROLAND PARK, BALTIMORE AND THE REGULATION OF SPACE

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ABSTRACT

An understudied example of an early modern suburb, Roland Park, Baltimore (constructed 1891-1915) bridges the gap between the streetcar suburbs of the late nineteenth century and the tract suburbs of the mid-twentieth century. As an early modern suburb, the development of the Roland Park led to the formalization and creation of many of the social and cultural norms in addition to the landscape elements of today’s modern suburbs. This thesis examines these elements, by-products of the formation of an elite community, focusing on the regulation of Roland Park’s space in protecting it from the real and perceived negative influences of the outside world. Moreover, the thesis explores in depth the peopling of Roland Park’s built environment, a topic of great importance to the success of the community. Finally, the research places Roland Park in the larger spatial and temporal contexts of the development of other Baltimore communities, of other elite suburban developments within the United States, and the broader, global history of suburbs.
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Introduction

In a city now known more for its high murder count, civic unrest, and *The Wire*, Baltimore is often overlooked for its contributions to American society. Today it has been overshadowed by other East Coast cities in size and national influence, but a century ago Baltimore was a city of much promise. An emerging city of major commercial, manufacturing, and transportation importance and home to ethnically and architecturally diverse neighborhoods, Baltimore was in the process of being transformed into a major American city. These neighborhoods, like other urban communities across the nation, have gone through growth and decline, yet few within the city have kept their veneer intact for as long as Roland Park.

Roland Park, a small community located in the northern section of the city, has continued to maintain its image due to its principled adherence to the strong urban and landscape design principles of the Olmsted brothers, its ideal geographic proximity to the best of both the city center and the countryside, and ultimately marketing efforts heralding itself as the premier Baltimore neighborhood. Forming this image did not happen overnight and without leadership.
Figure 1. Map illustrating the location of the Roland Park circa 1915.¹

¹ “The Roland Park-Guilford District,” Box 293, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
Financed by British money and managed by Edward Bouton, a Kansas City native with previous suburban development experience, Roland Park was a rearticulation not only of the development and marketing of the suburban environment, but also of what suburban culture and life was like. The community that he built is a lynch-pin development, both in terms of its importance to planned communities and to a broader suburban history. While its claims to being the first planned suburb in the United States is dubious at best, it arguably is the first planned suburb to fully populate a highly-designed built environment with a planned and regulated social and cultural lifestyle. Moreover, founded in 1891 and completed roughly two decades later, Roland Park was constructed during a time of dynamic changes in transportation, human-environmental relations, and class relations, all of which played a role in the creation of the community. It is this unique “lifestyle” planning that is at the center of this thesis.

At the time that Roland Park was established, Baltimore was awash in a sea of great change. The city, once called “the largest village in the world” for its quaint, southern traditions and weak city government was experiencing rising immigration, increasing pollution, and unsanitary conditions. What were once minor inconveniences for wealthy Baltimoreans were rapidly becoming serious problems for those living on the edge of the expanding downtown, providing an impetus for them look elsewhere for housing. Yet at the same time, transportation innovations were reframing relative geographic distance: houses at a distance from the city were making a transition from being merely second or vacation homes to being primary residences for their owners. Though the development initially struggled to find its footing, by turn of the twentieth century Roland Park had become more than just a new suburban community; it became both an example and standard for what suburban life could be both locally and nationally.

To live in Roland Park was to live in a paradise of sorts. Restrictive covenants and roomy luxury homes ensured that one would only have the best neighbors and the most attractive homes in the region. The ample educational opportunities ensured that the children were well cared for, while a strong Country

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Club and a Women’s Club ensured that adults would have access to a rich social life as well. And for those times that one did want to travel into the city, whether for pleasure or work, there were always ample modes of transportation (railroads and streetcars first, then automobiles) to quickly whisk one into the city. The craftsmanship that went into creating these amenities raised and established a high bar for suburban development. Developers nationwide turned to Roland Park’s “experimental laboratory” and its planners for advice about how to construct their own elite suburban communities. Thus, this is not just the story of one suburban community, rather it is an examination of a larger transition absent in most accounts of suburban history: the transition from the mid-nineteenth century planned suburb to the post-World War II tract suburb. Although some chapters in this thesis deal with the fine details of Roland Park’s formation, their inclusion paints a larger picture, contextualizing not only how Roland Park was innovative but also the far-reaching effects it had on the real estate community.

Ironically, in some sense the success of Roland Park is directly tied to the negative reputation of Baltimore today. The same forces that made Roland Park so successful would pave the way for similar suburban developments leading to white-flight in the post-1968 race riot era. This hollowing out of the city’s population led to economic disinvestment within the city limits, posing significant tax revenue issues and contributing to the rise of many of the city’s present ills. In another sense, the many and varied issues of today’s suburbs (lack of diversity within neighborhoods, the environmental consequences of landscaping, housing and mortgage speculation, etcetera) have some of their origins in Roland Park through the precedents set during the building of the community. Critically understanding Roland Park’s role in Baltimore and its role in modern suburban history exposes trends about the suburban communities that Americans—and increasingly others across the globe—now inhabit.

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Chapter 1

Suburbs as a Western Trend

Within Baltimore, Roland Park has a certain allure as being the premier suburb of the region. Much of this allure comes from the community’s enduring status as being home to the members of the highest rungs of society, yet some of it too comes from Roland Park’s inaccurate and naive assertion that it is America’s (and by default the world’s) first planned suburb. This could not be further from the truth, as the roots of suburbanization reach back to the origins of human civilization itself. The word “suburb” itself is only slightly more recent; indeed the word is a combination of two Latin words: “sub,” meaning below or under and “urb,” city. The Latin meaning of suburb is reflective of early urban history; buildings constructed on the outskirts of a developed place (i.e. the first suburbs) were considered inferior places to live. Cities throughout antiquity and into the Middle Ages were rigidly defined places: defensive walls and fortifications demarcated the land that was the city and the land that was not the city. Across Europe, as urban populations grew and suburban development occurred, new city walls were constructed to encompass these populations, extending the size and legal boundaries of the city. However, with the rise of the nation-state and the subsequent decrease in regionalized war, the walls became increasingly social markers, separating the inner-city wealthy from the suburban poor.

Suburbs, in the modern sense of the word, are a relatively recent phenomenon, coinciding with industrialization and increased mobility via better transportation. The social separation of the Medieval Age was reflective of economic advantages—those who lived close to the core of the city could more readily access information, thus gaining more wealth. Moreover, it was also a political advantage; with residents being able to take advantage of city services, have a say in local governance, and as time went on, run for office.

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6 See Morris, *History of Urban Form*. 
However, with the rise of industrialization and modernity, these established practices came under siege due to their ineffectiveness, leading to two main configurations of suburban life. The Continental European concept of the suburb is similar to the opinion of suburbs in France, where the non-urban was (and still is) seen as a less-than ideal place to live.\(^7\) The English version of suburbanization blended the urban and the rural into a form of suburban development that became more desirable than either the rural or the urban.\(^8\) It is from this second strain that the first modern-day suburbs similar to Roland Park emerged. Moreover, many of the cultural, social, and design principles refined in various iterations of English suburbs provided the genesis for their American counterparts in future years.

**A Short History of English Suburbs**

In the years leading up to the Industrial Revolution, the English population was highly decentralized, with rural inhabitants greatly outnumbering urban inhabitants. Cities of this time were primarily centers of trade, where one brought labor-intensive rural products to enter into the larger global trading markets of the time. For example, the process of cloth manufacturing began on rural farms, continued in the home where the wool was refined and spun, and was transferred to cities to be dyed with colors made from imported materials before finally being traded across Europe and beyond.\(^9\) Even though cities were the primary locations of master tradesmen, the overall production of goods was limited and focused on the quality, not the quantity, of the goods. With cities small and compact in their overall size, there was little room for separate land-use sectors to form (nor was there any economic imperative for them to form) as they would in the future. In practice this meant that the rich and poor readily intermingled, with a variety of noxious trades mixed together as they had since the Middle Ages.\(^10\)

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\(^7\) Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias*, 105-107.  
\(^8\) Ibid, 78.  
\(^9\) See, for example: Heaton, *The Yorkshire Woolen and Worsted Industries*; also Girouard, *Cities and People*, 85-112.  
\(^10\) See Keene. "The Medieval Urban Landscape AD 900-1540."
The rise of factories changed the city, bringing about radical economic and social changes. Factories magnified the need for human capital, leading to the emptying of the countryside and proliferation of urban slums with poor housing conditions and health outcomes. The inhabitants of these urban slums powered the rising number of factories, significantly increasing environmental pollution as Britain shifted towards the mass production of goods. All of these factors combined to make city living unhealthier and more unpleasant than ever before.\textsuperscript{11}

The abysmal conditions of the urban poor, the governments that allowed them to occur, and the capitalist system that underlined the entire process provided fodder for Engel’s influential work, \textit{The Conditions of the Working Class in England}. In addition to highlighting the appalling conditions of the working poor in Manchester during the 1840s, he discussed how the wealthy, traveling to their business in the city center from their homes (both within elite enclaves within the city and out in the new suburbs), were oblivious to the poverty mere blocks from the roads they traveled.\textsuperscript{12} This text would eventually inspire and lead to collaborations with Karl Marx, spurring the development of Marxism and Marxist thought. However, in a more important sense, it indicates the emergence of a highly-segregated class system developing in the landscape of Manchester.

As problems increased, initially the wealthy combated this by self-segregating, moving to elite enclaves within the city.\textsuperscript{13} However, this only provided temporary relief as eventually the wealthy enclaves could no longer provide suitable protection. Because of this the wealthy began to look beyond the city to the countryside to find suitable places to live, isolating and segregating themselves far from the ills of the city.

While country manors similar to those of the Medieval Ages were suitable choices, their selection was limited and the high cost put them out of reach of much of the new emerging wealthy class. Comprised mainly of the major trading merchants and factory owners, this class sought land a few miles

\textsuperscript{12} Fishman, \textit{Bourgeois Utopias}, 83.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, 51.
outside of the city center, far enough to be away from pollution but close enough to easily travel into the city.\textsuperscript{14} The built environment of these early suburbs were highly influenced by the mystic of the countryside during this era, playing a prominent role in the rising popularity of suburbs. The physical limitations imposed by human-environment relations meant large stands of trees were a valuable—and highly regulated—commodity due to their importance to British defense (as naval stores), industry (as fuel for steam engines), and commerce (as basic building materials).\textsuperscript{15}

Initially, many of these suburbs started as communities of second homes, essentially vacation homes where weary families would relax over long weekends and holidays.\textsuperscript{16} At the same time these landscapes began to emerge in Britain, the Crown was solidifying its colonial rule over India, leading to a number of cross-cultural exchanges. Among the most influential of these exchanges, was the British copying of the architectural style of the bungalow. Developed on the subcontinent as a small, airy, one-story dwelling with highly pitched roofs and open porches, the British co-opted the word and the larger style to develop homes initially for colonial administrators and ultimately for the estimated 500,000 members of the military stationed in India.\textsuperscript{17} From the subsequent return of these colonial administrators to Britain, bungalows were introduced to British vernacular architecture with the first constructed on the Kent coast as a vacation home in 1869.\textsuperscript{18} The bungalow became popularized as fashionable architecture for all sorts of second homes, ultimately taking on cultural association with good health, higher standards of living, and the growing middle class lifestyle.\textsuperscript{19}

The rearticulation of the bungalow cottage in this manner led to its introduction into the growing British suburbs as part of the Garden City movement. From here, it eventually made its way across the Atlantic into American suburbs, where it became a staple of early modern suburban homes. While Roland

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, 87.
\textsuperscript{16} Fishman, \textit{Bourgeois Utopias}, 94.
\textsuperscript{17} King. \textit{The Bungalow}, 24 & 41.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, 65.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, 78 & 89.
Park would have few bungalows, harking back to the colonial era, the ideology which the bungalow exuded would be used by the company to market homes of different architectural styles, embracing a number of pre-industrial “nostalgic” styles such as Tudor Revival, Arts and Crafts, Georgian Revival, and Colonial Revival.\textsuperscript{20}

Gradually through the normalization of these homes and their suburban lifestyles in elite social circles, it became more acceptable for families to live in suburban homes year-round. Therein, suburban homes became to take on a new socio-religious dimension as places where as a unit, the family could bond, reconnect with God, and insulate themselves away from the moral ills and lax ethical standards of the city.\textsuperscript{21} Across industrial England, these suburbs emerged outside of cities such as Birmingham (Edgbaston), Newcastle (Jesmond), and London (Clapham) and among others, creating exclusive landscapes for the wealthy to relax and recharge. Suburban developments that could combine these various features were successful economic ventures in the mid-nineteenth century and increasingly oriented the market and public preference towards suburban developments. These suburban homes could provide the best of the countryside, at an affordable price, in an ideal geographic location, while insulating the family unit from the perils of city life. And in no city was suburban growth greater than in London.

**The Underground and London’s Decentralization**

While London had been associated with suburbs, such as Clapham across the River Thames and the Georgian squares of townhomes in the West End, since the mid-18\textsuperscript{th} century, suburbanization on a large scale did not exist until the development of railroads in and around the capital. The dense core of central London ensured that the routing of lines into the city proper would be economically costly and politically contentious, thus train termini like King’s Cross, St. Pancreas, Euston, and Paddington stations,

\textsuperscript{20} Moudry, “Gardens, Houses, and People,” 186.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid, 4 & 8.
among others, were constructed on the urban fringe. The development of these suburban stations led to the expansion of the city to meet the station, therefore restructuring London’s geography.22

In addition to being the location of major railroad termini, London was the emerging center of both global and domestic political, economic, and cultural power. These factors caused the city to rapidly expand, creating a “whirlpool effect” as H.G. Wells stated, geographically absorbing everything in its immediate environs into the larger metropolitan area.23 Within the core of the city, efficient movement became a major obstacle and although various schemes to reduce congestion were developed, traffic continued to be a major problem.24 To combat this issue, in 1854 various rail companies petitioned Parliament to endorse the development of an underground railroad that would both alleviate street traffic and connect various railroad stations together.25 This proposal developed into the Metropolitan Railway, initially linking London’s various train stations, before expanding into a larger program to connect the rapidly growing suburbs of Hammersmith and Kensington with the larger city in the late-1860s.26 The expansion marked a dramatic shift in the urban development of London, with new suburbs being tied to the expansion of a new transportation system.

23 Wells, Anticipations, 39.
26 Ibid, 37.
Proximity to the expanding Metropolitan Railway (which would become the Underground) played a vital role allowing former towns to quickly developed into fashionable London neighborhoods. With access to cheap land, subsidized transportation, and inexpensive home construction techniques, suburban homes rapidly increased. A significant population continued living in the inner-city of London throughout the nineteenth century, with the first minor population losses occurring in 1901 as London city transitioned from live-in counting houses, prevalent since the 17th century, to modern office buildings.

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29 Ibid, 236.
filled during the workday with commuters. This change mirrors the many demographic changes that would occur in American cities beginning five decades later.

**Garden and Planned Suburbs**

Towards the latter half of the nineteenth century, the chronically poor conditions for the working class and the cyclical nature of most neighborhoods demanded a more nuanced solution towards creating durable built environments. With suburban areas being swallowed whole by the city, the lack of urban planning and development restrictions jeopardized middle-class residential districts within London. Sensing an opportunity, the Metropolitan Railroad purchased thousands of acres of land along its line, developing a massive chain of suburban towns. Built over several decades, the 40-some mile-long development from London to Harrow was named Metro-Land, harkening to the appeal of both the suburbs and the city. Homes, designed in what was coined the “Stockbroker Tudor” style, revived and integrated pre-industrial, romantic architecture into their homes allowing the middle class to own a *faux* piece of manor-styled housing. Similar developments focused towards the wealthy were constructed in America, such as those along the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Main Line corridor west of Philadelphia. Although not controlled by the railroad itself, the development mimicked the overall concept of Metro-Land.

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30 Haywood, "Railways, Urban Form and Town Planning," 38.
For the lower middle and working poor classes, the Garden Suburb Movement provided solutions to the inadequate housing conditions of industrial Britain. Developed in a series of lectures and a book by Ebenezer Howard at the end of the nineteenth century, the Garden City Movement married the best of the country with the best of the city in a highly planned rural town located near the suburban edge of an existing major city. Although the plan was first published in 1902 and the first iteration of it (Letchworth Garden City) formed in 1903, the principles improved upon the unorganized chaos of urban

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33 Howard, Garden Cities of To-morrow.
development in Britain. The general plan of the Garden City used concentric circles to balance different land uses and create the most logical organization of daily life (Figure 4).

Figure 4. The idealized plan of the Garden City created by Howard to mix the city mixed with the countryside.34

Although an elite suburb like Roland Park did not necessarily take a holistic view towards planning out the built environment for all possible functions of human society, the general planning

34 Howard, Garden Cities of To-morrow, 24.
principles, especially regarding housing, provided a template for the development of the latter stages of Roland Park (discussed in further chapters). The concept of land regulation that Letchworth integrated into their community was a universal design principle that Roland Park could adopt for its own design.

Additionally, one of the motivations underlying developments like Letchworth at the turn of the twentieth century was in response to more than just poor living conditions and inadequate city planning, but rather focused on the impact of modern life on individuals. This view argued by Georg Simmel, one of the founding figures in modern Sociology, in his influential essay *The Metropolis and Mental Life* (published in 1903), articulated this unique view on the formation of urban culture. Simmel argued that the metropolis and all the overwhelming number of actors, technologies, and ultimately visual stimuli located within it produced a far different impact on urban residents than a more rural or small town landscape.

One of the by-products of these experiences is that urban residents, through the experience of “a thousand modifications,” develops a rational “organ” that protects from the “profound disruption with which the fluctuations and discontinuities of the external milieu threaten it.” 35 Rural residents, faced with far fewer disruptions in their lives, developed more emotional relations, forming a different sort of culture. At the core of this was the importance of human interactions and the formation of community, over the interests of money. 36 Developments such as Letchworth—and Roland Park to an extent—were designed to reacquaint their residents with larger communities of like-minded individuals. By attempting to merge rural lifestyle with that of the urban lifestyle, this allowed individuals to return to their roots while continuing their engagement with the modern world.

In some sense, this balance between rural and urban and the further development of this form of the built environment led to an increasing need for faster and more efficient transportation. Efficient transportation was a critical part of the design that both Lechworth and Roland Park adopted.

35 Simmel, “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” 12.
36 Ibid, 14.
Similarly, homes built in Metro-land, while tied to the expansion of the Underground also extensively relied on the car for transportation within the community, especially after the 1920s. This too would be a precursor to the decline in use of the public transportation that made the suburbs possible, leading to major problems in future decades.

These landscapes, while seemingly banal in their relationship to Roland Park, were hugely important. These suburbs were Roland Park’s direct ancestors and paved the way for the development itself. But the process of these ideas crossing the Atlantic was, as Nelson has argued, a direct by-product of F.L. Olmsted’s first trip to England in 1850. Here the gentleman farmer soon-to-be-turned father of American landscape architecture explored the English landscape, traveling south from Liverpool along the English-Welsh border to Portsmouth before ending in London. While many Americans of means took European excursions to see the sights of the Old World, Olmsted’s trip was unique in how he traveled. Not only did he cover a wide geographic range of Britain, experiencing the industrial city, the emerging suburban ring, and the ever-present countryside; he did the vast majority of the journey on-foot. This deep and extended experience with the English landscape exposed him to both the basic principles of English landscape design and planning, but also the more nascent impacts of human-designed environments on individuals and society writ large.

Upon his return to America, Olmsted turned his experience into a well-received book on his observations of the English landscape, paving the way towards becoming the designer of New York City’s Central Park. From this success, he turned towards private practice, creating landscape plans for a multitude of city parks, major institutions, wealthy individuals’ private residences, and individual communities. Thus, Roland Park can be seen directly as an outgrowth of his understanding of the English

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39 Ibid, 55.
40 Ibid, 48.
landscape genesis. Combined with Bouton’s international trips, the extensive literature he collected about Lechworth, and the Roland Park Company’s early British investors, Roland Park arguably is an English suburb in form, but an extension of American culture in function.

Through the recanting of these facts, the myth of the originality of the American suburb becomes apparent. Britain not only pioneered modern suburbs, but foreshadowed many of the problems it would create for cities decades before they would occur in American cities. Urban areas in the Northeast and Mid-West would experience these same issues, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century when rapid industrialization, coupled with rising immigrant populations, and increasing wealth led to suburbs like Roland Park. The English, which had already innovated various suburban standards such as landscape design (F.L. Olmsted’s trip), suburban architectural styles (the bungalow), and social planning (the Garden City Movement) provided perfect antecedents from which American suburban developers could draw inspiration from. Without these developments and trials, in some sense, Roland Park could not have developed into the community that it would become. By the time of its construction, “suburban” no longer meant the same as its original Latin; moreover, it had taken on an additional meaning, one in which the best elements of the city were deeply connected to nature, creating powerful landscapes in which elite families were willing to reside.

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41 F.L. Olmsted’s direct involvement with Roland Park was limited at best, with much of his time in the early 1890s spent working on the plans for the Chicago World’s Fair. Moreover, post-1895 he essentially retired from the day-to-day work of the company, before dying in 1903. Thus, the majority of planning work for Roland Park and other Baltimore projects post-1890 was led by his sons F.L. Olmsted, Jr and J.C. Olmsted, who were trained in the same style their father created. Throughout this thesis, they are collectively referred to as the Olmsted brothers or the Olmsted firm. For more information on this topic see: Harry Schalck. "Mini-revisionism in city planning history: The Planners of Roland Park." Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 29, no. 4 (1970): 347-349.
Chapter 2

American Antecedents to Roland Park

Early American Suburbs

Across the North Atlantic in the late eighteenth century, the United States was going through its own industrial development. Like their British counterparts, wealthy Americans also began moving towards the countryside, with some of the earliest North American suburbs developing in the post-Revolutionary War period. Brooklyn, only a short ferry ride across the East River from Manhattan, but still very rural in the 1780s and 1790s, is often heralded as the first notable suburban outgrowth of any American city. Informal suburbs, outgrowths of growing urban areas, during this time in American history was the norm for most cities and is reflected today by the names of individual neighborhoods or boroughs of eastern cities, which were once independent. Individual towns like Prospect Heights and Park Slope in Brooklyn were tied into the larger sphere of Manhattan; Germantown to Philadelphia; Dorchester, Allston-Brighton, and many others to Boston; and Fells Point and Camden to Baltimore are just a few examples. These early, immediate post-Revolutionary War neighboring communities were rapidly tied into the larger metropolitan areas as distinct districts of the expanding city by the early 1800s. This pattern of North American city growth led to annexations—informally and formally, socially and politically—of outlying areas quite rapidly, and with regularity that older suburbs were commonly regarded as part of the city.

43 Although Brooklyn was a distinct political entity from New York City until 1898, the origins of much of its growth are inherently tied to that of the island of Manhattan.
Wealthy Americans, following in the steps of their British counterparts, were willing to use their suburban homes not only as full-time residences but also as vacation homes as well. Similarly, the wealthiest few purchased and resided in vast country estates, often within a 10-mile radius of the city. These rural estates provided the design inspiration from which suburban landscape architecture would develop, attempting to provide (more) affordable homes to the wealthy and upper middle class, emulating country estates through their architectural design and landscaping. This concept in Baltimore is best highlighted by the construction of the 52-room, Italianate-style Guilford estate built in 1852 mimicking contemporary rural English architecture of the day (and eventually occupied by the Abell family, the publishers of *The Baltimore Sun*). From this 300-acre estate, the Roland Park Company would subdivide the land and build new homes (in the 1910s-contemporary rural English style) as part of their Guilford development, an extension of Roland Park.

**Post-Civil War Suburbs**

In the post-Civil War era, the United States entered an era of unprecedented economic expansion. With western land in abundance and political and economic power decentralized, mass suburban development similar to what was occurring in London would not be constructed until the turn of the twentieth century, as populations remained relatively low on the East coast. Americans interested in purchasing the few suburban homes built during this time period typically correlated within one of two groups, each aligning to different economic classes. The first group, the wealthy, gravitated towards exclusive planned suburbs, often for second or vacation homes. The second group, typically more middle class, gravitated towards less-elite suburbs (which were less planned and cheaper) on the outskirts of the city. For both groups, the development and expansion of the railroad and the popularization of the omnibus made more land accessible to suburban development for Americans.

As railroads nationally became more important, it became apparent that communities could be built along the lines leading out of town to gain passenger revenue, similar to London’s Metro-land. This concept was at the nexus of America’s first planned (and partially constructed) suburb, Riverside, Illinois. Financiers hoped to create a community two miles west of the Chicago city limits along the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad that would draw elites out of the city and into the suburbs. The company hired F.L. Olmsted to design the plan and was ready to begin development by 1869. The curvilinear tree-lined streets of Olmsted’s plan unfortunately were put on hold due to the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 and subsequent economic downturn. While the community would ultimately be completed, full development would not occur until the 1920s after a heavy modification of Olmsted’s plan.

Though similar developments would occur outside of Philadelphia along the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Main Line (leading to the formation of towns like Haverford and Bryn Mawr) and along the Gold Coast of Long Island, New York, elite suburban developments were slow to emerge in the 1870s and 1880s. Even with these developments, the wealthy and upper middle class largely remained in discrete, self-segregated urban neighborhoods (such as Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, Russell Hill in Manhattan, or Beacon Hill in Boston) somewhat isolated from negative factors like immigration, poor sanitation, and excessive pollution, that eventually provided the driving force behind the move towards elite suburban communities.

The second path, aimed more towards the growing middle-class, was a larger movement. Here the adoption of the omnibus (horse-pulled wagons open to the public on dedicated tracks) encouraged the expansion of the built environment. However, there were many limits of the omnibus. Through urbanized areas omnibuses shared the road with all other traffic, making them predictably slow. Relying on horses for power, there were unavoidable speed and weight restrictions, presenting economic

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47 Warner, The Urban Wilderness, 68.
49 Ibid, 390.
limitations to the overall profitability. These limitations had wide ranging impacts on the density of the developments leading to homes that while culturally “suburban” were urban in their form. The limited nature of the omnibus combined with the small size of the urban middle-class meant these suburbs were relatively small developments.

**Streetcar Suburbs**

What ultimately drove the development of mass suburbanization is the improvement of the electric streetcar in the 1880s and 1890s. Electric streetcars (and to a much more limited extent cable cars) dramatically addressed many of the problems of the omnibus, providing dedicated tracks/right-of-way for travel, speeding up the rate of travel, and solving the weight issue. The increased infrastructural cost of laying track and wires and building power plants, in addition to the cost of the engineering work, required a large amount of capital in order to create a successful line. Although expensive, streetcar lines presented a unique investment opportunity. Financiers discovered that they could buy rural land around cities at low prices, construct a capital-intensive electric streetcar line connecting the city with these rural areas, and market the rural land as now suburban, turning a profit on the sale of building lots. This money was used to repay the costs of constructing the line, while the fares of the new residents covered operating expenses and provided a steady profit for investors. In essence, this was a miniaturization of the same sorts of railroad developments previously described. These “streetcar suburbs” were prominent in Eastern cities, especially in Boston, where urban historian Sam Bass Warner documented the trend.

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53 Ibid, 32.
54 Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*, Ch. 3-5.
Suburbs like this were crowded and lightly regulated, and were an excellent opportunity for investors and for middle-class families to leave the city.

Though profitable for investors and satisfactory for a growing middle class, these suburban areas were far from ideal planned communities. Lot sizes were small, there was little architectural or landscape planning, land uses often varied, and infrastructure beyond the streetcar was little developed. While elites still had their money to shelter them, either through urban enclaves or country estates, the middle class were relegated to live in these often poorly designed and regulated urban spaces.

**Roland Park: A Hybrid Suburb**

Precursors to these garden cities, the suburban land ventures intimately tied to the expansion of the streetcar system, were the first suburban developments that Edward Bouton, the eventual General

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Manager of the Roland Park Company, would develop. After stints as a rancher in Colorado and an attempt at law school, Bouton returned to his native Kansas City and entered into the land development market in the mid-1880s. Working with a young landscape architect named George Kessler and the Jarvis-Conklin Trust Company, founded by two Kansas City financiers, he helped to form the nucleus of the community called Hyde Park, selling suburban homes to the wealthy, only three miles from the city. By using the name Hyde Park for the development, he tapped into a larger lineage of the name. Hyde Park not only had connotations to the elite Chicago neighborhood, but also to the wealthy Hudson Valley village, and the Royal Park on the west side of London. It was here that Bouton first cut his teeth on creating wealthy suburban developments.

Figure 6. Photo of Edward Bouton, the first General Manager, eventual President, and brains behind the Roland Park Company.

56 Waesche, *Crowning the Gravelly Hill*, 44-45.
58 Waesche, *Crowning the Gravelly Hill*, 49.
For unknown reasons, Bouton and the Jarvis-Conklin Trust Company parted ways with Hyde Park in the late 1880s. Jarvis-Conklin ended up working with a group of London-based financiers organized under the name Land Trust, Limited. This new group settled on purchasing the land that would become Roland Park and convinced Bouton to move to Baltimore to become the Secretary and General Manager of the new enterprise. While Roland Park is the oldest and one of the most successful articulations of this then new suburban form, a number of other communities emulate this including Shaker Heights outside of Cleveland (1905), St. Francis Woods in the hills of San Francisco (1912), and eventually the Country Club District built immediately adjacent to Hyde Park outside of Kansas City (1906).

In this sense Roland Park acts as a lynch-pin model suburb, spanning the development of both the streetcar suburb and the garden city suburb while adjusting the latter model to work in the context of the United States. The phases that the Roland Park Company developed through—from a streetcar suburb company, to an elite garden suburb, to ultimately a more mass-produced upper-middle class suburb—reflects its refinement of the lifestyle community concept that other suburban developers would copy.

Chapter 3
Elite from the Outset: Forming Roland Park

In 1891, though the United States was still a primarily rural country, urban areas were on the rise. Increasingly industrialization, new immigrants, and in-migration from rural areas were leading to large population booms for American cities. For the wealthy, cities were increasingly becoming undesirable places to live, with Baltimore being no exception to this movement. British financiers, sensing a desire for a new form of living, partnered with the Jarvis-Conklin Trust Company of Kansas City to bring elite, British-style suburbs to America. Through this they would reinvent the way Americans housed themselves, playing a pivotal role in making the suburb development as American as apple pie.

The Start—and Finish—of a Streetcar Suburb

The suburb they set out to build was not the first planned suburb in the United States, nor was it the first successfully planned suburb in Baltimore. Its original intention was solely profit based, orienting it towards the streetcar suburbs of the time. Because of this the Roland Park Company moved rapidly through various stages of development on the corporate side, from a typical suburban realty company to a major Baltimore land developer with national influence. By any measure, the early Roland Park Company was better financed and organized than most of its competitors. With this backing the company began to develop the 500-some acres of farmland into suburbs and although its initial marketing scheme would not necessarily hit its mark, it opened the door for the second marketing phase which did. For example, in 1892 the Roland Park Company ran an advertisement in German in a prominent Baltimore German-

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language newspaper, touting the many advantages of living in Roland Park over life in the city.\footnote{Scrapbook: Number 1, 1892, Box 276, No. 1, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.} With a significant number of wealthy first and second-generation German immigrants living in Baltimore during this time period, Roland Park was marketing the community towards a group that would have been traditionally isolated from the elite area of Mount Vernon. Moreover, many wealthy Germans were Jewish as well, a group that the Roland Park Company would take great legal lengths to prevent from purchasing homes in the community in future years.\footnote{Glotzer, “Exclusion in Arcadia,” 482.} This radical change in the marketing strategy of the community is indicative of the changing orientation of the Roland Park Company’s business strategy.

Equipped with ample money and the desire to mimic similar developments like Sudbrook Park, the Roland Park Company hired George Kessler, by this point a well-known landscape architect and well-known colleague of Bouton, to lay out the first stage of development.\footnote{Waesche, \textit{Crowning the Gravelly Hill}, 45-46.} Plat 1, as it came to be known, occupied the land to the east of Roland Avenue and to the west of the Stoney Run Valley.\footnote{Roland Park was developed in a series of plats, each filed with the Baltimore County courthouse before construction. See Chapter 5 for more information.}
Figure 7. Roland Park Plat Map.  

The company also began development on its own water and sewage system, an amenity that was standard and expected among the upper classes. These basic infrastructure developments established a firm basis on which Roland Park could form. However, there was a significant transportation issue that kept Roland Park from developing to its full potential.

By 1882, the rail line that would become the Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad had been completed from North Avenue in Baltimore to Towsontown, the county seat of Baltimore County, running parallel to what would in less than a decade become Roland Park.  

![Figure 8. Route of the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad.](image)

For a few years, six daily trains ran between Baltimore and Towsontown providing reliable transportation. However, by 1884 the company was insolvent and it was not until 1888 that it emerged from bankruptcy. The relative economic weakness of the railroad, in addition to the lack of other speedy

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transportation options, diminished the suburban appeal of this area, creating concern about the financial success of the development. Thus when the Roland Park Company began operations, plans were immediately drawn up for an electric streetcar line.

The sister company, named the Lake Roland Elevated Railroad, was constructed to connect the suburb with the city by electric streetcar. In the early 1890s Baltimore’s streetcar system was still in its nascent stages. Thus at the time of Roland Park’s development, it made sense to build a streetcar line to the community, taking advantage of available land and to model the community after similar streetcar suburbs in other American cities. With most of the north-south streets in the city already occupied by other streetcar lines, the company was forced to use the only remaining road, Guilford Avenue, which in addition to carrying local street traffic also was the location of a spur, at-grade rail line for a local railroad.69 A major obstacle to overcome, the company addressed this in two ways: first the company built an impressive elevated viaduct to separate streetcar traffic from the traffic below, and second the company ensure that service on the line was not only to Roland Park and a few points north, but to Walbrook (another emerging suburban neighborhood to the west).70

All told, the streetcar itself took an impressive route, starting in front of City Hall, heading north on the Guilford Avenue elevated viaduct until it crossed the Jones Falls. Upon reaching the fringe of the city at North Avenue, it returned to grade level where it split, one line heading west towards Walbrook and another working its way north to Roland Park. This second line traversed a number of small streets, due to the lack of available north-south streets, before crossing another viaduct into the small town of Hampden before splitting again. The first route bisected through the heart of Roland Park along Roland Avenue, while the other continued north along Falls Road to Lake Roland several miles north.71

69 Farrell, *Who Made All Our Streetcars Go?*, 73.
70 Ibid, 73.
71 Ibid, 74.
Figure 9. Lake Roland Elevated Railroad route, 1893. Essential to the development of Roland Park, this streetcar line ensured that residents could travel into the city via multiple modes. Once they reached the terminus of the line in downtown Baltimore, they could transfer to different lines to take them other places within the city.

This downtown-to-Roland Park streetcar line provided a second transportation backbone to reinforce the connection between the city and suburbs. Additionally, as an owned subsidiary of the

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72 Ibid, Front Cover [Streetcar route data]. Base map courtesy of Google Maps.
Roland Park Company, there existed a certain degree of reliability of its services. Moreover, the construction of the streetcar line in conjunction with a planned suburban development aligned well with other developments of the time period.

As Sam Bass Warner documented in his authoritative study on Boston’s streetcar suburbs, investors across the United States encouraged suburban development by purchasing rural land, subdividing lots, and then building streetcar lines from the city center out into the suburbs. Early Roland Park followed in this pattern especially with the development of Plat 1. From the more piecemeal architectural styles, the work needed to improve and develop infrastructure, and the issues it had in generating a profit in the early years, it is clear that the Roland Park Company lacked initial direction in how it would market the community.

**Water Pipes and Sewage Treatment: The Infrastructure of Success for Roland Park**

When the company quickly moved towards focusing on the wealthy by the late-1890s, the company had to go beyond merely marketing the plots towards wealthy residents: they had to provide an infrastructural backbone to set themselves apart from other suburban competitors. Part of this marketing and infrastructure scheme involved surrounding communities like Evergreen, Tuxedo Park, and Embla Park that were established before Roland Park.

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73 Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*, 44.
Since the railroad had been developed at the same time as the adjacent communities of Evergreen and Tuxedo Park the stations were named after those communities, instead of Roland Park. In a psychological sense, this helped reinforce the concept that Roland Park was a private entity unto itself. In a more physical sense, it created a service area for Roland Park. Evergreen became home not only to a train station, but also the power plant and coal depot. Adjacent unused lots would eventually become home to a number of commercial entities and light industries (like butchers) which were not allowed in Roland Park due to land use covenants.  

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74 Base map courtesy of Google Maps.
75 Munro, *Greater Roland Park*, 38.
Tuxedo Park had a similar fate. It too was home to a train station and businesses, in addition to the telephone exchange.76 While these buildings were critical for the day-to-day operations and the exclusivity of the community, through its ability to restrict its land use, Roland Park was to ensure these functions remained on the periphery. Additionally, as the best connected and organized community, Roland Park was able to advocate for its own best interests in ways that other communities could not.

In the early years of the company, this often meant banding together with Evergreen and Tuxedo Park to advocate for their own collective betterment.77 For example, in August 1894 all three petitioned the Baltimore County government to provide firefighting service to the area.78 Although the county recognized the need for firefighting services, the cost of purchasing the firefighting apparatus was high. Eventually the parties reached a compromise in which the county would provide chemical firefighting equipment as long as the Roland Park Company built and maintained the station building, leading to a fire company being located at the Roland Park shopping center.79

The purchase of chemical firefighting equipment is reflective of another important infrastructural development: water. Of the three communities, Roland Park was the only one with comprehensive water and sewage service; the others relied on their own cobbled together systems or used privies and wells. During this time period Baltimore City itself had no unified water system, and the lack of water was a daily inconvenience and a public health hazard for Baltimoreans of all social ranks, that suburbanites were actively avoiding.80 Thus, there was limited appeal in moving to a suburb like Tuxedo Park that had no water system, leading to difficulties in developing the community. The Roland Park

76 Munro, Greater Roland Park, 45.
77 Embla Park was developed very little during this time period; thus the community did not partake in these developments.
80 Olson, Baltimore, 249.
Company was able to capitalize on this advantage in a number of ways through marketing and comparisons with it and other suburban communities.

Unlike the fire department example, Roland Park did not work in cooperation with Tuxedo Park, instead allowing them to grapple with the issue for over a decade. Sensing an economic opportunity, a number of investors unrelated to the community formed the Tuxedo Park and Enola Park Water and Electric Light Company, and applied to Baltimore County for a franchise to lay water pipes.\textsuperscript{81} This, of course, would have been beneficial to both communities; however, residents protested since the men had no connections to Tuxedo Park. After sorting this out, a new company was formed in 1900 but again more challenges surfaced: another competing company wanted the same franchise. After several months of intense discussion, the county commissioners awarded the franchise to the community association-backed Tuxedo Park and Enola Park Water and Electric Light Company (not to be confused with the first iteration).\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{81} The Baltimore Sun, “Application for Permission to Lay Water Mains in Tuxedo Park.” June 30, 1898. Accessed via Proquest Digital Historical Newspapers.

Even after construction began in 1901, issues continued to appear, damaging the community. A major typhoid outbreak occurred in 1903 from a tainted water source sickening many children.\textsuperscript{83} By 1906, the company had entered receivership after failing to turn a profit.\textsuperscript{84} It was only in 1908 that the Roland Park Company agreed to furnish water and treat wastewater from Tuxedo Park through their own systems.\textsuperscript{85} This was not necessarily an act of generosity on behalf of the company but was more of a business decision. By 1908 Roland Park was well-regarded as “the” Baltimore suburb to live in; thus

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\textsuperscript{83} The Baltimore Sun, “No Typhoid at Embla Park.” July 14, 1903. Accessed via Proquest Digital Historical Newspapers.
\end{flushright}
letting a major public health issue fester just a few blocks from the development would have been a poor economic decision. Figure 3.2.2 highlights these developments as they occurred over time.

On the other hand, Roland Park was developed from the beginning with an advanced water system designed by one of the best sanitary engineers in the nation. In stark contrast to these other communities, Bouton hired on retainer George E. Waring, one of the nation’s most prominent sanitary engineers in the nation. Waring devised a state-of-the-art system, allowing Roland Park the boast themselves had having the best system in the region. Freshwater supplies were pumped from wells on the Baltimore Country Club grounds into underground water reservoirs where they were treated for use by residents. Conversely, waste water was pumped out of the community into a viaduct across the Jones Falls into a small sewage treatment and septic pond where the remaining effluent was dumped back into the Jones Falls.

86 Moudry, “Gardens, Houses, and People,” 64.
87 Ibid, 65.
Prospective residents of Roland Park were taken to model homes where, among other amenities featured, buyers were showed how flush toilets worked with demonstrations readily available. The Johns Hopkins University Department of Sanitary Engineering, among one of the first and most well-renowned in the nation, routinely took students on tours of the Roland Park facilities to model what effective operations looked like. Moreover, long after Roland Park had been absorbed by Baltimore City itself, residents relied on its water systems until the late 1940s, and it sewage treatment system until the early 1960s.

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Improving Roads, Improving Landscapes

While indoor plumbing and sewage treatment was key to developing the health appeal of the community, the Roland Park Company also funded and maintained its own road network. The cycling fad of the 1890s, along with the rise in automobiles—both initially centered around the upper classes—were made easier by paved roads. Bouton, understanding the importance of good roads, worked with Baltimore County and Baltimore City to create a direct city connection to Roland Park’s main street, Roland Avenue. At the northern edge of Johns Hopkins University, where Charles Street met the property of the Roland Park Company, Bouton planned an impressive boulevard, named University Parkway, which conveyed passengers directly into the heart of Roland Park.⁸⁹

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Figure 13. Map of University Parkway, which connected Roland Avenue and Charles Street (not on map, but pictured). The bridge over the Stony Run Valley connected the two previously separated roads, providing easy access into downtown Baltimore.

Landscaped with trees and a shrubbed median carrying the streetcar line, the road crossed over Stony Run Creek before merging with the preexisting Roland Avenue. Here, the landscaping continued into the heart of Roland Park, passing through the budding community, the Roland Park shopping center, and a number of private schools and institutions before entering the bucolic landscape of rural Maryland.

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University Parkway was highly landscaped in order to carry the maximum amount of traffic while retaining the natural beauty of the area. In this view, taken from the center of the generously wide median, shows the northbound roadway and streetcar tracks. Moreover, the incorporation of fencing—a feature most areas of Roland Park had little of—provided an additional barrier between the transportation linkages and the home.

The importance of this parkway, not only as an economic benefit but also a cultural benefit to the development of the community, was a significant reason Bouton constructed the road. Connecting Roland Park’s main street (Roland Avenue) to one of Baltimore’s main streets (Charles Street) provided commuters, potential buyers, and others egress into the center of the city. Geographically speaking, Stoney Run Creek provided a significant physical barrier to surmount and University Parkway provided the ideal connection. However, the landscaping also was important towards setting the image of the community far before one reached it. While this is evident in the landscaping of Roland Avenue and University Parkway, it is also apparent in the landscaping and design of Charles Street around Johns Hopkins University.

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Figure 15. A landscaped Charles Street, circa 1920. Looking north towards Roland Park and Guilford, Johns Hopkins University is on the left and the neighborhood of Charles Village on the right. The heavily landscaped boulevard, a compilation of three roads (the center a through road, and the two side access roads) provided a formal entrance into North Baltimore.  

The University, founded in 1876 by the wealthy Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Railroad baron of the same name, for several decades was located within the city limits in temporary buildings. In 1902, needing more space, the University acquired the historic Homewood Estate, the rural home of Carroll Carrollton, a prominent signer of the Declaration of Independence. A decade later the university began constructing its suburban campus in a neo-colonial architectural style similar to that of the still-standing Homewood Estate. At this same time, the University architect working with the Olmsted brothers, began to discuss plans for the landscaping of Charles Street immediately in front of campus. Bouton, sensing an opportunity to enhance the general character of the entire area, corresponded regularly with the Johns

Hopkins Committee to create a manicured urban parkway with divided medians, a separate road for local traffic, and a direct connection to University Parkway. However, the most impressive aspect of the plan was a massive, heavily landscaped traffic oval at the front gates of the University. By using the prestige of the budding University to enhance the local area further, Bouton was able to create an impressive entrance to Roland Park that continues to influence visitors to this day.

Moreover, Bouton and the Olmsted brothers realized the importance of local roads, paths, and entryways as a crucial aspect not only for its importance as a piece of transportation infrastructure and a feature of the landscape, but as a selling point for the community. Paved roads not only meant smooth driving, but the proper grading of them and the digging of drainage ditches ensured that stagnate water—and thus mosquitos and other vectors of disease—would be greatly reduced within Roland Park (Figure 16). Additionally, the paved sidewalks protected shoes and clothing while fostering a sense of community among neighbors.

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93 Holden, Charles Street, 5.
94 Ibid, 7.
Highly designed and landscaped, even the seemingly more trivial features such as roads and sidewalks were planned by the Olmsted brothers and Bouton to enhance the quality of the community.

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Paths were also a significant part of the design, especially in the hillier sections of Roland Park (Plats 2, 3, and 6). Not maintained by the Roland Park Company but officially part of the architectural plan, the paths often connected various sections of the development together, served as a service road to the backsides of houses, and provided electricity to the homes (Figure 17). Though there were complaints about the conditions of the paths (i.e. residents dumping rubbish, ashes, and other refuse), these paths continued to serve as an understated yet critical feature of the community.96

Figure 17. Sanborn Map highlighting the various paths (red lines) in Plats 2 and 3.97

96 Roland Park Civic Association, May 1909.
As critical features of the landscape, Bouton took extra care to ensure that roads were developed correctly. This effort is seen in a paper he authored for an edited volume on city planning by the National Municipal League in 1916. On the topic of good roads, he highlighted the need to see roads as part of the

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larger landscape, urging the reader to consider the width and grade of the street, the alignment of the street in regards to the topography, and the type of pavement used when constructing new roads. Here, he pulled on his twenty-five years of experience in coordinating the design of elite suburbs to share some generalities on the design and construction of roads and the importance of their maintenance.

Today, while major roads like this are today maintained by Baltimore City, the Roland Park Maintenance Company, founded a few years after the establishment of the community continues to ensure the quality of road pavement for the secondary roads and alleys of Roland Park, in addition to coordinating snow plowing with Baltimore City during the winter. These functions, today seen as mandatory municipal services, were unique to Roland Park and were a selling point that made the community desirable. The unique governance structure of Roland Park that continues to exist to this day, arises from the governmental structure of the United States.

The Political Geography of Roland Park & Baltimore City’s 1918 Annexation

The three-layered model of American government—federal, state, and local—is at the core of American governance. A community such as Roland Park presents an early and unique example of a micro-political geography below that of the local, which continues to exist throughout the country today. At the time of its founding, the federal government had no direct role in the formation of a community’s governance structure; rather, it was the structure of the state and local governments that provided the vacuum in which the Roland Park Company was allowed to construct its own political geography.

From the standpoint of political structures, Maryland’s is more similar to that of other Southern states than Northern states. The primary unit of local organization is that of the county with very few independent towns and cities. Baltimore County, where Roland Park was established, was home to under 75,000 people in 1890 spread out across the county, yet only one legal town existed. Without a readily accessible model of micro-governance, the Roland Park Company recognized they could exert

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their own power over the landscape. While the Baltimore County government was needed to approve certain aspects like the construction of University Parkway, the development of a fire department, and the granting of franchises to lay water pipes and string electrical wires, the company was left to its own devices to plan its development as it saw fit. With the county being primarily rural, the government generally approved proposals from the company without much examination, thus extending the tax base. This enabled the Roland Park Company to do as it pleased, allowing it to develop its own infrastructure, regulate its architectural styles, and in general maintain the elite veneer of the community.

Some of these regulations, while dictated by the Roland Park Company itself, were passed onto the company-sponsored Roland Park Civic League. Developed as a liaison between the company management, the maintenance company, and homeowners, the Civic League grew into a structure to enforce the legal covenants on architectural styles and land use, promote community development and growth, and fight for the protection of the community in local political issues.\textsuperscript{100} For example, when constructing University Parkway there was much controversy as to how the county government handled the eminent domain process, especially within the Civic League. Working with the Roland Park Company, the Civic League devised a plan that eventually won over the vast majority of Roland Park homeowners as documented in the company archives.\textsuperscript{101} Even with this governance structure, the company by default, still had the upper hand in negotiating on behalf of its residences as the two interests often aligned.

Due to the structure of the Maryland government, Baltimore City historically had always been a small city, with its legal boundaries typically never aligning with the edge populations and communities that considered themselves part of the city. At various times throughout the nineteenth century, the city argued for and received permission from the Maryland Legislature to expand its boundaries to better reflect the character of these urban areas. Four years prior to Roland Park’s founding

\textsuperscript{100} Moudry, “Gardens, Houses, and People,” 115.
\textsuperscript{101} Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
in 1888, Baltimore City had expanded its boundaries, drawing the line between the city and county just a few hundred yards from the southernmost land that would become Roland Park. While at the time, this land was on the edge of development, the new boundary did not extend to capture much of the suburban development that would occur throughout the subsequent years. By 1910, the city argued the need to expand its boundaries again; however this time the process was more complicated.

![Figure 19. Map of Baltimore City Annexations](image)

The proposed line of 1912 would have more than tripled the size of Baltimore City, making it politically unfeasible. The 1918 compromise line expanded the city line on all sides, but especially in the north where Roland Park was located.

Baltimore County, wise enough to see they were getting swallowed whole by the city convinced the legislature to pass a law ensuring that any annexation measures needed to be put to a popular vote in both the city and county.\textsuperscript{103} At the same time, Baltimore City proposed a plan that would have almost tripled the size of the city to encompass current and future suburban growth.\textsuperscript{104} This 1912 plan was quickly shot down as politically infeasible, but set the stage for future annexation fights.

A few years later, a more modest plan was proposed by the city extending the line to its current boundaries. Political groups within Baltimore County quickly sprung forth to defeat the measure establishing a group named the Anti-Annexation League. With this new possible round of annexation, Bouton found himself in an interesting—and powerful—position. As the general manager of the company, he could actively work to support or resist efforts depending on how he felt annexation would affect the community. To the dismay of anti-annexation groups Bouton settled on supporting the annexation for a number of reasons. First, Roland Park’s sister community, Guilford, was already split between the city and the county. Secondly, tax rates within the county were rising, while the city tax rate was rapidly falling, financially making it cheaper to live within the city.\textsuperscript{105} Combined with the antipathy residents and the Roland Park Company felt towards the County’s treatment of their tax dollars, this sweetened the deal. Thirdly, most Roland Park residence culturally saw themselves as part of Baltimore City. Being annexed would allowed them officially reside in the city and give them an additional stake in city governance. This elite landscape, filled with powerful people, had connections across political and social lines in the city, making it a valuable reason to join the city.

Bouton saw other advantages as well. Roland Park’s infrastructure was costly to build and maintain: some reports suggest that in total the company spent more than one-hundred thousand dollars to build the basic infrastructure of the community.\textsuperscript{106} Even though this infrastructure was supported by the

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid, 122-123.
\textsuperscript{104} Roland Park Civic Association, August 1908.
\textsuperscript{105} Fogelson, \textit{Bourgeois Nightmares}, 61.
residents through their use and annual fees, the ability to eventually pass these concerns off to the city and out of the hands of the company was a smart financial decision.\textsuperscript{107} Additionally, there were concerns that if the annexation measure was defeated, Baltimore City would attempt annexation again on less favorable terms than it was currently proposing.\textsuperscript{108} Although the nation-wide era of city annexation efforts was coming to a close, political-minded Roland Parkers realized what was at stake. With these reasons in mind, Bouton spent considerable effort to convince residence of the benefits by publishing a small pamphlet delivered to all Roland Park homes and authoring several editorials to \textit{The Baltimore Sun} in favor of the measure. His efforts prevailed, ultimately leading to the annexation of Roland Park and other suburban areas in 1918.

\textbf{Forming the Lifestyle Community: Education, Services, and Recreation}

Bouton also understood the need to develop things other than homes in and around Roland Park. The existing shops and industries of Evergreen, Tuxedo Park, and Embla Park provided some shopping destinations, yet there was no “high class” shopping destination in the area. To remedy this, Bouton developed one of the first suburban shopping centers in the United States. Constructed in a Tudor Revival style, it provided space for boutique shops, services, and the Roland Park Company offices. Located at the heart of Roland Park along Roland Avenue, the three-story building provided essential services to the community but was also adjacent to the fire house, community stables, and streetcar night barn (Figure 20). By grouping these facilities together and placing the shopping center at the front, the area was transformed from a mere utility area to something far more elegant.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{107} This is further complicated by a mistake integrated into the original Roland Park covenants, in essence tying the price of the annual fee to a fraction of a percent of property taxes. As property taxes remained flat or fell (supplemented by new forms of taxation) the funds of the Roland Park Maintenance Company have dried up to the point that there is very little it can do as its own independent entity.
\item \textsuperscript{108} Roland Park Civic Association, February 1916.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Arguably the first of its kind in the United States, the center provided essential services for the community (such as a pharmacy) to local residents while blending in with the larger landscape plan.

Although the shopping center fulfilled basic local needs, the elite residents of Roland Park still had to travel into the city to acquire most major goods. Mapping out the locations of advertisers in the monthly *Roland Park Review*, the community journal of the Roland Park Civic League, the vast majority of the businesses were located in Baltimore’s elite shopping district. The district, located downtown south of Mount Vernon, served as a transitional zone between the offices of the central business district and the homes to the north. Some goods—mainly perishables like milk, meat, and flowers—came from businesses located around the periphery of Roland Park.

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110 Roland Park Civic Association, May 1914.
111 Ibid.
Bouton also understood the importance of religion in the formation of community, saving several lots for various Protestant denominations to build new churches upon. Catering to the wealthy meant that business and recreation often mixed together, leading him to work with residents to develop the Baltimore Country Club and Golf Course on Roland Park Company property, in addition to sponsoring and building a home for the Roland Park Women’s Club.

While ensuring that shopping, religious, and recreation needs were met, Bouton did not neglect the importance of access to high-quality education. Various private schools established before the company was founded provided an elite education, while other institutions within the city moved out to nearby lands. Early residents, seeking an additional choice, founded the Roland Park Country School which began to fall on hard times in 1906. With closure of the school imminent at the end of the school year, Bouton and the Roland Park Company stepped in, taking management of the school over for several years. Once on a firm financial footing, it was turned over to an independent board of residents who continued to work with the company to grow the school and develop its campus in a way that would complement the prestige and beauty of the community.

While the beauty of Roland Park certainly was a selling feature, Bouton’s ability to construct and maintain water and transportation infrastructure and to create places for community to form were key to founding a successful development. Moreover, the lax political control over the community allowed Roland Park to develop various extra-legal systems (as part of the deeds and covenants) that allowed these schemes to continue after the end of direct involvement by the Roland Park Company.

112 Roland Park County School 1904 and 1906-1907, Box 203, No. 19 and 26, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
Chapter 4

Comparing Communities: Other Communities that Made Roland Park Unique

While immigration, pollution, and health concerns all drove individuals to move to Roland Park, understanding the reasons why Roland Park was more attractive than other living options is key to understanding the development’s significance in broader suburban history. This chapter aims to illustrate the wide variety of differences and disadvantages within other communities that ultimately made Roland Park successful. In addition to exploring the attraction of the high social status of the development, by expanding on Roland Park’s unequal relationship with surrounding communities, this chapter seeks to contextualize other suburbs of the time. The complete package of the Roland Park model was not the only way in which wealthy suburban developments formed; however, in the context of Baltimore it provided unique amenities no other could, while providing its inhabitants a high level of social status.

Mount Vernon, Baltimore’s Historic Elite Core

In the 1880s, Mount Vernon, the neighborhood immediately to the north of downtown Baltimore, was the elite section of the city. Close to the central business district, the elite retail district, and home to the first monument dedicated to George Washington, the area rapidly became home to the city’s upper class in the 1830s and 1840s. Here stately homes faced onto the four-individual park squares adjacent to the monument, forming an exclusive housing enclave (Figure 21).
Figure 21. Map of Mount Vernon and downtown Baltimore, 1873. The red line (author’s own annotation) is the approximate southern boundary of the neighborhood, while the Jones Falls to the east (the dark grey line) served as the eastern boundary. Eutaw Place was located to the northeast of Mount Vernon and Bolton Hill to the north.

High demand, coupled with a growing upper class, and the geographical constraints of the land led Mount Vernon to expand, giving birth to the neighborhoods of Eutaw Place and Bolton Hill. In all three neighborhoods, individually owned townhomes mixed with elite apartment homes, mansions, hotels, and public institutions each with their own architectural style. The desirability of homes in these neighborhoods revolved around their proximity to downtown, other elites, and local institutions. As the desirability of Mount Vernon ebbed and flowed over the decades, a variety of institutions formed in the district (often out of former mansions of the elites) including the Maryland Historical Society (1844), the Peabody Conservatory (1857), the Maryland Club (1857), the Peabody Library (1866), and the Enoch Pratt Free Library (1886), among many others.

While these institutions were located within a mixed-use Mount Vernon, the high demand for housing here and in other elite areas remained elevated until the 1890s. Height restrictions were enacted in 1904 to prevent the district from expanding upward, though earlier technological limitations (the lack of structural steel and safe elevators) filled this role of restricting the density of the district, ensuring that the area remained elite. Additionally, the homes generally shared access to landscaped natural areas of the neighborhood (often located in the medians of major streets) and were well positioned to gain accesses to nature with the construction of the 745-acre Druid Hill Park to the north in 1860.

Similar to Roland Park and much of north Baltimore, Mount Vernon also had its own protective barriers which varied in their effectiveness over time. Elevated above the central business district, the core industrial area, and the harbor—all located to the south—Mount Vernon was often free from excessive pollution and the hubbub of business. To the east, the Jones Falls Valley created a natural boundary that separated much of Baltimore’s immigrant, Jewish, and black community in the east from the elites in the west, hindering movement between the two. In addition to providing space for outdoor activities, Druid Hill Park greatly limited development to the north of the community. This two-sided protective boundary was enhanced with some of the developments to the west of the community. Though primarily developed in the style of rowhomes common to Baltimore, the residents were generally middle and lower class whites. Additionally, these western communities provided a buffer zone between the

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elites and the West Baltimore black community. This protective cocoon of Mount Vernon allowed the community to develop for several generations as an elite community.

In addition to this protective cocoon, F.L. Olmsted was hired throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century to develop new plans for the small urban parks of the community.\(^ {117}\) In this sense, the Mount Vernon district was continuously being improved to maintain the quality of communal spaces.

**Minorities, Land Use Problems, and Early “White Flight”**

However, significant problems emerged within Mount Vernon in the late nineteenth century. As Baltimore developed into “The Trade Queen of the South,” the central business district and industry grew, increasing pollution and other “undesirable” elements within the community.\(^ {118}\) For example, two of Baltimore’s major railroads had their primary stations abutting the community. The Baltimore and Ohio’s Mount Royal Station and the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Charles Street Station (eventually Union Station and today’s Penn Station) ensured easy access to transportation, while negatively impacting the neighborhood by increasing the number of people passing through.

At the same point, the demographics of Baltimore were beginning to shift. Former slaves, seeking better economic opportunities, began migrating into northern states and cities to find higher wages. The Great Migration, as it was known, rapidly increased the black population putting enormous stress on the housing stock available for black residents.\(^ {119}\) Simultaneously, with immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe on the rise, the number of so-called “undesirable” residents living in the city was multiplying. The most immediate impact on the elites in Mount Vernon was the movement of second-generation immigrant German Jews into Eutaw Place.

Wealthy German Jews, making their money in large-scale retail operations and trading, began to migrate out of their traditional East Baltimore neighborhood to Eutaw Place. With their newfound wealth,

\(^ {118}\) Ibid., Baltimore: The Trade Queen of the South.
\(^ {119}\) Pietila, Not in My Neighborhood, 9.
they realized that the neighborhoods they lived in did not mirror those of the elites. Jews from across
Europe, recent immigrants, and blacks all intermingled throughout Eastern Baltimore City creating a
dynamic yet distinctly non-elite area. Attempting to join elite society, wealthier Jews found themselves in
an awkward position, isolated from their American peers by their religious beliefs. While these
differences isolated them from being fully part of elite society, they continued to create their own
community spaces, building synagogues and working to elevate other Jews to their ranks, mainly in the
immigrant quarters of Eastern Baltimore and increasingly in the wealthier areas of Eutaw Place and
Bolton Hill.Obviously, for the elites living in Mount Vernon, Eutaw Place and Bolton Hill this was a
concerning negative development. Even with these issues, the elites had few other options at this time
other than moving to more desirable areas of these neighborhoods or out onto country estates. However, it
would be the migration of the black population within Baltimore that truly concerned the white elites of
these neighborhoods.

Blacks, increasing in number and restricted to their historic neighborhoods by gentlemen’s
agreements among the city’s real estate agents, found their living condition extremely cramped as other
blacks migrated into the city. Enterprising real estate agents, sensing an economic opportunity, realized
that that blacks would pay extremely high prices for homes, while whites would sell their homes at any
price when a black family moved in. Agents, realizing that massive profits could be created by flipping
entire blocks from white to black families began to engage in this process which was named
blockbusting. Although the city would respond with a number of laws to restrict home sales based upon
the preexisting race of the block, and real estate agents would temporarily discontinue this practice until
the post-World War II era, in some sense the writing was on the wall.

120 Ibid, 11.
121 Hayward, *Baltimore's Alley Houses*, 235-239.
123 Ibid, xii.
124 Boger, "The Meaning of Neighborhood in the Modern City," 236-258.
Neighborhoods could practically be turned within a matter of months from white to black, leading to significant financial loss and loss of social status. Additionally, residents had to worry about the actions of their neighbors—in the late 1890s, a number of new developments built before the 1904 height restriction and building code obstructed sunlight and views of other buildings creating animosity within the community. Moreover, Mount Vernon and other elite districts were not solely dedicated to elite homes and institutions: in a series of photos taken by the Roland Park Company to convince potential residents to buy homes in Roland Park, they highlight the sometimes-mixed land use of the area. Two photos, shown on the following pages, highlight some of the more extreme examples the company photographed.

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Figure 23. Bakery, 2000 Block North Charles Street.126

126 “The Roland Park-Guilford District,” Box 293, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
Figure 24. Tailor’s Shop, Charles Street Between 23rd and 24th Sts.127

127 “The Roland Park-Guilford District,” Box 293, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
While the residents of Mount Vernon, Eutaw Place, and Bolton Hill were protected by the size of their homes and the general elite tone of the area, between the migration of Baltimore’s Jewish and black populations it was clear that these once exclusively elite communities were not as well protected from the outside forces as they once were. With these problems emerging, the trend towards suburban homes began, and different suburban communities began to develop around Baltimore. Of the many that emerged, three—Walbrook, Sudbrook Park, and Evergreen—all were direct competitors to Roland Park.
Although older than Roland Park, the success of Roland Park to some extent depended on the emergence of these other communities; as a point of comparison for suburban planners and potential buyers.

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Walbrook: Unplanned Early Suburbia

Walbrook was Baltimore’s first major suburban district. Located on the eastern edge of Gwynn Falls Park bisecting the city-county line, this neighborhood is the closest example to a traditional streetcar suburb in Baltimore. Here, estates were purchased, platted on a gridiron fashion, and quickly sold to perspective homeowners. The speculative nature of this development was not nearly as robust as the practice in Boston due to the late introduction of electric streetcars, yet there are many similarities.

In 1889, a group of investors purchased the Walbrook estate and developed the first electric streetcar line in Baltimore to carry passengers from the city center to their suburban community. Streets were platted, and homes built and sold in a variety of architectural styles. Hotels and shopping districts developed. The Walbrook Athletic Club formed. While this sounds similar to the founding of Roland Park, the on-the-ground impact was far different. With little landscape planning to speak of or any real demarcation of the neighborhood, the Walbrook name became attached to a number of unrelated developments. Architectural styles, unregulated and quite varied, manifested themselves in larger mansions, farm homes, duplexes, multi-family homes, and apartments. Lot sizes varied too, leading to the emergence of a mixed landscape of housing styles combined with the ever present and common Baltimore rowhome. Moreover, commercial activity was unregulated leading to a mixed landscape. In short, Walbrook was an unplanned suburban district that attracted few elites to live there. The Roland Park Company knew this and capitalized on it, taking a series of pictures of homes to convince potential residents of Walbrook’s inferiority.

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130 Ibid
131 Ibid
The absence of architectural regulations, as shown in the photo, was contrasted to the highly regulated and planned Roland Park.

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132 “The Roland Park-Guilford District,” Box 293, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
Sudbrook Park: Vacation Homes and the Challenges of Marketing

While Roland Park and Guilford may be the two most famous Olmsted firm-designed residential communities in Maryland, they are far from being the only two. Sudbrook Park, founded in 1889, was the Olmsted firm’s first foray into planned suburbs in the Baltimore area. Located along the Western Maryland Railroad about seven and a half miles from the city, Sudbrook Park would prove to be the closest competitor to Roland Park in style. However, its limited success is directly related to the sum of a number of factors. The first, the distance between the city and Sudbrook Park limited the transportation methods in and out of the community to solely the railroad. The distance also meant that the commute into the city was a prolonged process taking upwards of forty-five minutes to an hour.

133 “The Roland Park-Guilford District,” Box 293, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
The second minor factor is the underlying philosophy of Sudbrook Park’s development. While it was developed as a money-making venture, the homes were marketed as both suburban homes and vacation homes. The equal emphasis on both primary and secondary homes was reflected in the construction of summer homes without kitchens and heat for use during the warm months of May through October next to year-round residences.\textsuperscript{134} The impact of marketing and construction meant that the community was the fullest during the warm months when families were on vacation. In effect, this moved Sudbrook Park from being a landscape of total suburban domesticity to a landscape of country vacation residences; this had significant long term consequences on the development of the community’s image. This landscape of leisure was further aided by the establishment of the Woodbrook Hotel, which functioned as a resort for those without homes in the community, and the Sudbrook Park Country Club, a nine-hole golf course and recreational facility aimed at this vacationing class.\textsuperscript{135}

\textsuperscript{134} Frank, \textit{Way Back When in Sudbrook Park}, 10.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid, 15.
Figure 28. F.L. Olmsted’s plan for Sudbrook Park.\textsuperscript{136} The Woodland Inn, located in the small circle bisected by the railroad, made Sudbrook Park a leisure destination, not a year-round community, with less than half of the homes constructed by 1920.

Although there were elite Baltimoreans who called Sudbrook Park their home, by the mid-1900s it was clear that Sudbrook Park had rapidly fallen by the wayside to Roland Park in terms of home sales, total residents, and image within the elite community.

**Backyard Competition: Evergreen and other North Baltimore Communities**

Though eventually enveloped by Roland Park and today seen as part of the same neighborhood, Evergreen was constructed as a distinctly different entity from Roland Park. Founded two decades before Roland Park, in terms of its planning, the suburb was laid out with tiny, narrow lots intersecting at right angles: hardly the romantic English countryside that Roland Park sought to emulate. An 1876 map shows a number of the lots sold; however, it is not clear if these names denote ownership of the lot or the actual

construction of a residence on the land (Figure 29). By 1896, Evergreen had expanded to the east into what is the W. Marlein lot on the 1876 map (Figure 30). By this time, Plat 1 of Roland Park was in the process of being developed. In addition to Evergreen, Roland Park had competition from two other directly adjacent suburban communities, Tuxedo Park and Embla Park located just to the north (Figure 31). Although these two communities would test Roland Park, Evergreen was the strongest of these other communities.

Figure 29. Evergreen, Baltimore County, 1876.\textsuperscript{137} Although Evergreen was platted by this time, little development had occurred within the community.

Figure 30. Roland Park, Plat 1 circa 1896. Evergreen has been surpassed by Roland Park at this point, not only in terms of size but in terms of residents as well.

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Located to the north, these two communities were of limited competition to Roland Park.

Lumped together with Roland Park in the 1900 Census, Evergreen had quickly begun to fade as a distinct community to the dominance of the Roland Park name, although on the ground there were many differences. Many of the problems previously discussed regarding Tuxedo Park were similar within Evergreen, including a lack of landscape planning, land use restrictions, and sewage system. In making a name for itself, the Roland Park Company sought to separate itself from other suburban competition, the ever-encroaching city, and more importantly Evergreen. The poor design of the community, in addition to the general lack of development made it inferior to Roland Park, yet its geographic proximity posed a threat.

Similar to how Tuxedo Park was utilized, Evergreen became a service area for Roland Park. In addition to essential services described in Chapter 4, this use is evident from records of the 1900 Census. Along Prospect Avenue in the original Evergreen tract, the neighborhood was a mixture of working and middle class people. The occupations include butchers, clerks, carpenters, machinists, plumbers, builders, and general laborers. Interestingly one man’s profession is listed as “Electric Light Man;” he was likely an employee of Roland Park working to keep the power plant running.

Although Roland Park tended to have wealthier residents, in the early days of Evergreen this was not always the case. Mixed in with lawyers, engineers, and stock brokers were clerks, draftsmen, and electricians. However, the easiest way to differentiate wealth is by examining the number of servants associated with a family. A random sampling of five manuscript census sheets for this area shows a significant population of servants, exposing an early dichotomy between Roland Park and Evergreen. In the Roland Park sheets, no less than 20% of the population (n=50) of each individual sheet was comprised of in-home servants, with many families having more than one servant. The two sheets for Evergreen document very few live-in servants, accounting for less than 5% of the total population of this neighboring community.
In addition to wealth, the historical record leaves other clues as to how Roland Park thought of Evergreen and other non-Roland Park Company communities. During the summers in the early 1910s, Roland Park residents organized extensive mosquito extermination campaigns. Conducted both voluntarily within Roland Park and often involuntarily in the surrounding communities, the Roland Park Civil League paid workers to drain pools of standing water, apply oil over puddles and water-filled ditches, and take surveys of the poor wastewater treatment facilities of the surrounding communities.

Similarly, in a social vein, Roland Park sought to create separate social clubs purely on the basis of wealth. For example, Evergreen was home to a small Methodist Church. However, in the development of Roland Park, a second grander Methodist church was built within the park itself for its residents.

Moreover, in 1909 Roland Park residents were solicited to assist in the development of a recreational center in Hampden, the nearby mill village to the south. The association, led by Bouton’s wife and two other Roland Park resident’s wives, not only raised money to fund education classes for all in the community but also to construct a community center to provide opportunities for self-improvement. J.B. Noel Wyatt, a prominent Baltimore architect and a Roland Park resident, personally designed the center providing the plans for publication with the appeal.

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140 Roland Park Civic Association, June 1909.
141 Ibid
142 Waesche, *Crowning the Gravelly Hill*, 68.
143 Roland Park Civic Association, June 1909.
Figure 32. Suggestions for Proposed Neighborhood House at Hampden, drawn by J.B. Noel Wyatt. Reflecting the mores of the period, ample space was provided for physical activity (both the indoor and outdoor gymnasiums) as well as cultural activities (a library and the auditorium).

The idea of an ideal community, similar to the goals of Roland Park, required spaces in which community could be built. In constructing this center, the Roland Park residents worked in conjunction with the newly established Hampden-Woodberry Neighborhood Association, one of many established

\[\text{Ibid}\]
during this time period to improve the city on the neighborhood level.\textsuperscript{145} Yet even with this spirit of cooperation, the appeal itself reeks of classism. In taking a tour of Hampden, the article states:

\dots we have had the pleasure of making a journey of discovery through some of the groups of cottages which cluster round the mills. And a “journey of discovery” it was—through a district so distinct in character and aspect from its contiguous territory [i.e. Roland Park] that it seemed hardly possible that it was not separated by a wide intervening space.\textsuperscript{146}

Attitudes such as this, while obviously problematic, pale in comparison to the treatment of ethnic and racial minorities.

**Race and Roland Park**

In an era of rampant Jim Crow laws and racism, Roland Park was developed explicitly for a white, segregationist crowd. As a wealthy community, the only racial diversity that existed in the Roland Park area came from black live-in servants. Roland Park residents, following the social decorum of the day, hired servants to work in their homes to cook, clean, and do other domestic chores. Black servants were paid lower wages providing an incentive for wealthy whites to hire them.

As Figure 4.5.1 shows, almost 9\% of Roland Park’s population in 1900 were black servants. Over half of the servants were native to Maryland, while 30\% hailed from Virginia, with the rest being born in a smattering of other states.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Birth</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Mixed Race</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY/PA/WV/SC/KS</td>
<td>5 (1 each)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total: 138 persons of color, 8.9\% of Roland Park’s population**

\textsuperscript{145} Roland Park Civic Association, December 1908.

\textsuperscript{146} Roland Park Civic Association, June 1909.
However, between 1900 and 1920, the Roland Park Company instituted a unique feature into its fledging development. In the post-Reconstruction Era, Jim Crow laws had become commonplace throughout the South restricting the newly established rights of black citizens, in essence legalizing racial discrimination. Baltimore was no exception to this; however, the city in the 1890s and 1900s was experiencing something that other Southern cities were not: mass immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. Edward Bouton, the General Manager for the Roland Park Company, understood the anxiety that minority and foreign populations created among the wealthy. In addition to a general disdain and perceived inferiority of these groups, there were economic, social, and political ramifications as well. The mixing of races sharply lowered home values, endangered families (it was thought), and had the potential to shift the political balance towards unfavorable candidates in the eyes of the wealthy. Blacks that were seen and not heard, that obeyed orders, and were both respectful and accepting of their second-class status were the “ideal” individual.

Working with his legal team and outside counsel, Bouton orchestrated the first use of restrictive covenants in the United States. By banning blacks, Jews, Eastern Europeans, and other undesirable groups he could, in good faith, advertise Roland Park as a community that would remain exclusively for elite, white families as long as the covenant was legal. Even though the outside legal counsel argued that the restriction would not be upheld in court, Bouton realized that it was not illegal to screen residents before allowing them to buy, thus preserving the racial composition of the community. By 1913, Bouton had pressed racial covenants into deeds essentially sealing Roland Park off to non-whites. While this decision would directly impact who could own homes in Roland Park, it also put pressure on home owners to hire white servants. Overall, the percentage of black live-in servants fell by 5% over this twenty-year period while the population remained relatively stable. Regardless of the

149 Ibid, 483.
150 1920 Census
reasons, by 1920 the number of live-in servants was falling. With the rise in labor-saving electric
appliances, a reduction in the cheap labor pool due to falling immigration, and the subsequent rise of
wages, servants became a luxury that some Roland Park residents no longer needed.

Moreover, there is evidence that some of the black servants actually did not live in Roland Park. For example, the 1920 Baltimore City Census seems to have doubled counted a number of black servants, listing them both as live-in residents in Roland Park and in the historically black West Baltimore neighborhood. The nature of black servant’s professions during this time often meant they worked multiple jobs for multiple families or businesses, as supported by a collection of oral histories of black female servants from 1910-1940.151

**Cross Keys: Roland Park’s Black Neighbors**

In a similar vein, a large number of black laborers relocated to the village of Cross Keys, (see Figure 4.6.1). The village, dating to the early 1800s, was built around a tavern at the intersection of Falls Road and Cold Spring Lane.152 This intersection formed the southwest corner of Roland Park, and while it may have alarmed white residents to have a black community so close to their homes, the Roland Park Company took measures to manage the potential liability.

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A small, historically black village located to the west of Roland Park, the community depended on Roland Park for much of its economic survival.

From the standpoint of the company, the topography of the site ensured that little had to be done. Being located along the edge of a river meant that the land was quite steep and twenty-five foot drop in elevation separated the western-most Roland Park house from the eastern edge of Cross Keys. Still

153 Ibid, 155.
Bouton personally took great care of this issue by ensuring new homes would be constructed in ways to hide views of Cross Keys. He additionally planted a long line of dense hedges to further hide the view.\footnote{Glotzer, “Exclusion in Arcadia,” 482-483.}

Even though Roland Park residents relied on Cross Keys for their domestic help, they were not afraid to “poke fun” at its residents or force them to comply with their wishes. Two accounts highlight this, being published in the neighborhood’s monthly newsletter. The first in May 1915 discusses Roland Park’s donation of covered rain barrels to reduce summertime mosquitos in the community. Interviewing a “respectable, yet dimwitted darkie” the author of the article backhandedly discusses the acceptance of the rain barrels in the community with the attitude that one might expect a smug, racist, and wealthy white man of the early twentieth century to possess.\footnote{Holechek, Baltimore’s Two Cross Keys Villages, 9.} The same author—with the same attitudes—in 1919 highlighted the inferiority of Cross Keys, while recognizing the symbiotic relationship the two communities had to one another.\footnote{Ibid, 8.}

The 1920 Census documents Cross Keys as having around 200 residents. Of those working, around 35% were employed with private families doing domestic work, 15% worked for other industries, and the rest were either unemployed/underemployed, retirees, or children. The unemployed/underemployed category likely worked for Roland Park families on an \textit{ad-hoc} basis depending on the seasonal needs of individual families.

In an ironic sense, Cross Keys was explicitly what Roland Park was planned to insulate its residents from. Although the company took significant measures to hide the community from the sightlines of Roland Park homes, residents hired blacks to work for them as their servants and groundsmen. The relationship between the two communities was deeper and far more complicated than just this.

As the newsletter passages illustrate Cross Keys was a pet project of Roland Park, a place for whites to help “civilize” their black neighbors. At the same point, Cross Keys was Roland Park’s den of
inequity, home to an inn that doubled as an interracial brothel until it burned in 1909 and a main
distribution point of bootlegged liquor during Prohibition.\textsuperscript{157} There were human connections as well, most
notably around the medical field, with ill blacks often being treated by the specialized medical
professionals of Roland Park.\textsuperscript{158} Conversely, Cross Key’s physician, Dr. Douglass Grant Scott, was the
first black doctor with admitting privileges at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. More nefariously, he was well
known within the Roland Park community for his skill and discretion in performing abortions for the
unwed women of the community.\textsuperscript{159}

Regardless of restrictive racial covenants, Roland Park residents regularly, and willingly, came in
contact with blacks. Thus the point of the covenants was not to keep blacks out—the homes were priced
high enough to segregate the community without mandating it in the deeds—but rather to reaffirm white
control over the black population. In the context of the other ethnic and racial communities—Jews and
Eastern Europeans mainly—the restrictive covenants served as true legal and social barriers to ensure the
community remained segregated.

In Roland Park the marriage of landscape and community planning to strict architectural
and racial covenants provided the basic framework for a successful suburb that other Baltimore
communities failed at constructing. From these covenants and through active marketing, Roland Park was
able bring into reality a community that was highly regulated, sustainable, and elite, one that would
continue to sustain itself in all regards to today.

\textsuperscript{157} Ibid, 84.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid, 74.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid, 75.
Chapter 5
Moving to Roland Park, Moving on Up

The approximately twenty-five years it took Roland Park to develop (1891-1915)\textsuperscript{160} is atypical in the short one-to-two-year duration of development in most suburbs. The two decades that were required for Roland Park to be completed is indicative not only of how Bouton organized the selling and construction of Roland Park, but also the amount of time it took to change the minds of wealthy residents to be open towards suburban living \textit{and} to the pace of change within the downtown Baltimore environment. Bouton designed Roland Park to be developed in various plats, allowing the pace of lot sales to determine the speed at which the rest of the land was developed. These plats generally conform to the overall landscape design principles of the community, yet each is reflective of the development economics of its specific development. In some sense, while Roland Park itself is one distinct community, it is made up of seven separate smaller neighborhoods. The formation of the built environment, the economic conditions of when it was constructed (both in the larger economy and for the Roland Park Company), and the individuals who decided to live there all contributed to the creation of these plats.

As a note, the numbering that each plat corresponds to does not necessarily correspond to the order in which it was constructed. Plat 1 started construction in 1891, Plat 2 around 1902, Plat 3 in 1903, Plat 6 in 1909, Plat 5 County and 5 City in 1911, and Plat 4 in 1915.\textsuperscript{161} Using the records of the 1920

\textsuperscript{160} The 1915 end date for Roland Park is somewhat arbitrary here. While Plat 4 was filed in 1915, home sales certainly continued into future years. However, because 1915 begins the final phase of construction, this seems to be a good ending point. Additionally, it is known that the Roland Park Company would begin construction of a new plat before previous ones were completed. Also see footnote below.

\textsuperscript{161} Moudry, “Gardens, Houses, and People,” 106-108, 111. A note on dates for this section: the starting year for all plats is listed as the year in which the plat maps were filed with the Baltimore County Courthouse. This is due to the fact that in order to alter a plat map, the Roland Park Company would have had to have paid to resurvey the whole plat, meaning that when plats were filed construction was imminent.
census, each plat was populated with a sampling of residents. Although there are limitations to the accuracy of the information, as a snapshot in time it illuminates the nuances of the community.

Figure 34. Roland Park Plat Map.\textsuperscript{162}

\textbf{Plat 1: Roland Park’s First Development}

The original plat, Plat 1, was designed by George Kessler. A prominent landscape architect, his previous experience with Bouton in Kansas City led to his involvement in Roland Park. As the earliest

\textsuperscript{162} Moudry, “Gardens, Houses, and People,” 211.
development of Roland Park, its built environment and residents are reflective of the original cultural image that the company sought to project. While there is some curvature to the streets, certain sections of the street network are only a slightly modified street grid. Some of this can be attributed to the nature of the site, which is bounded by three already established roads and one railroad. Additionally, the linear layout of Evergreen, sticking out like a thumb into Plat 1 did not help either.

Combined with the uncertainty over the direction of the company (i.e. to continue in the model of the streetcar suburb or to blaze a new path towards high-class suburbs) the composition of residents who purchased homes is reflective of a lower class than subsequent plats. The majority of the lots are significantly smaller than later Roland Park plats, while the architectural styles are more varied as well. Architecturally, the homes are a mixture of different styles and materials. While some homes were custom built for their owners, other were built from the planbooks and kit homes popular in this era.163 Architectural standards as set by the Roland Park Company were limited at the time—while building setbacks were required, the company allowed for a greater degree of freedom in plan selection and other features (barns, chicken coops, etc) that were common in this era.164 In this period of transition, Roland Park homes were sometimes purchased as vacation homes—a far less expensive version of the country estate—meaning that square footage of the houses varied greatly depending upon the primary intended use of the occupants (though this was limited).

Using the 1920 manuscript census, it is clear that while the residents of Plat 1 were well-off, they are not the elite of the elite that Roland Park was aiming towards in later plats. In addition to executives of smaller companies; professors, salesmen, and medical professionals all lived in Plat 1

164 Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
Figure 35. Plat 1, 1891.

Plat 1: 1891
Roland Park Residents (1920)

Transportation
1: Scarlett, VP Express Freight
10: Caples, VP Air Line RR
13: Compton, Pres. Chesapeake Steamship Co

Manufacturing
6: Mackenzie, Iron and Steel Jobber
16: Winkelman, Pres. Fertilizer Mfg Co
28: Adt, Mfg Machinery
38: Staely, Belting Mfg

Natural Resources
3: Mcelderry, Coffee broker
9: Hiss, Seed Dealer
15: Finney, Can goods broker
31: Syner, Wholesale rubber
36: May, Coal sales

Bank, Insurance, & Law
11: Musleman, Ins. Broker
14: Hall, Physician—Ins. Co
26: Clayton, Lawyer Corporate
27: Gergan, Lawyer self-practice
37: Franklin, solicitor Trust Co
39: Williams, Pres. Guarantee Co

Medical & Education
19: Clapp, Physician GP
22: Todd, Dentist
24: Hegner, Zoology Prof JHU
25: Hopkinson, Dentist
29: Lewis, Anatomy Prof JHU

Real Estate
4: Marshall, Cons. Contractor
5: Hanson, RE Agent
8: Benson, Interior Decorator Prop.
12: Jefferson, Mineral Lands RE
23: Lyon, Patent Roof Contractor
33: Montell, RE Agent

Widow, Other, Retired, None
Unknown/Not examined

Sales
18: Orleans, Sec. Fruit Packers
20: Woodward, Traveling Salesman Clothes
Of particular interest is the relationship between two of the three transportation executives. Martin Caples, a Vice President of the Air Line Railroad, lived directly across from Key Compton, the President of the Chesapeake Steamship Company. Air Line Railroad, a primarily southern railroad, held significant share of the East Coast passenger and freight travel from Miami, FL to Norfolk, VA. Compton and the Chesapeake Steamship Company operated a highly profitable and well-regarded steamship line operating between Baltimore and Norfolk carrying passengers up and down the Chesapeake Bay. Working together, the two companies collaborated to gain more passengers, allowing Air Line to claim Baltimore as its most northern-terminus, while ensuring a steady stream of passengers for Chesapeake Steamship.

Another individual to note is Charles Benson, the proprietor of an interior design company. While it may seem trivial, Benson played a very important role in the development of Roland Park, in designing the interiors of homes for new residents. In essence, turning Roland Park into a complete suburban experience was important to the wealthy individuals interested in purchasing homes. Having someone local who did not have to commute to the suburbs for consultations and who came recommended, from both the company and from neighbors, made living in Roland Park an attractive proposition. Additionally, the number of construction contractors are also indicative of this development process as well, as Guilford was concurrently under construction.

**Plat 2, 3, & 6: The Elite of the Elite**

These three plats, all to the west of Roland Avenue, are the most suburban-like and elite of the seven plats. Plats 2 and 3 are the first plats designed by the Olmsted firm—which was quite famous and doing work in Baltimore at the time—and the first to be built around the newly formed Baltimore Country Club. Using the varied, and often extreme, topography of the land to their advantage, the Olmsted brothers created semi-private lots that appealed to wealthy buyers. Additionally, with the Baltimore
Country Club and golf course immediately adjacent to these plats this land proved to be very valuable and is reflected in the makeup of the homeownership.\textsuperscript{165}

While architectural styles were regulated by the Roland Park Company from here on out, however as Moudry states “no one architect was responsible for directing the architectural planning of Roland Park,” with Moudry finding that “over one hundred architects had designed homes for lot owners.”\textsuperscript{166}

\textsuperscript{165} Mayo, “The American Country Club,” 24-44.
\textsuperscript{166} Moudry, “Gardens, Houses, and People,” 171-172.
Figure 36. Plat 2, 1902.
Figure 37. Plat 3, 1903.
Figure 38. Plat 6, 1909.
Scattered throughout all three plats are a high number of railroad executives and executives of railroad related industries, reflective of the high social status of the community and Baltimore’s dominance in the railroad industry. Plat 2 was the home to the President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the primary assistant to the President, and the main Superintendent of the railroad. Plat 6 is also home to the Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O). This clustering of railroad executives is enhanced by the presence of other railroad executives in Plat 3 and the presence of executives from major railroad supply and equipment manufacturers, in addition to coal brokers.

Also significant is the clustering of banking and insurance executives throughout these three plats. Presidents, vice presidents, and corporate lawyers all made Roland Park their home, reflecting the economic and cultural importance of this area. The company actively sought out these sorts of individuals, scouring newspaper articles for information on newly minted executives or the wealthy that might be moving to Baltimore. One such letter, written by the Roland Park Company secretary to a newly minted B&O executive, opens by introducing Roland Park as “the only suburb around Baltimore that is improved in a thoroughly up-to-date manner.” The letter goes on to highlight the specific amenities and restrictions of the neighborhood, before discussing the various payment plans the company offered. Before closing, the letter, most tellingly, refers the executive to consult seven different established B&O executives all living within Roland Park for their thoughts on the community. This pattern of using the personal and professional network of existing residents to populate Roland Park was something the company undertook regularly. Even for potential residents with no connections in Baltimore, a company directory showing model homes and listing all residents and their professions was a piece of literature regularly sent out by the company.

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167 Jemison Companies Miscellany: 1917-1968, CU 2838, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
168 Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
169 Ibid.
170 Ibid.
Plat 4, 5 County, & 5 City: High Standards for Less-than-Ideal Land

As the Roland Park Company began to complete development on the lands north of Cold Spring Lane, they turned their attention to their land holdings to the south. Significantly smaller than the plats to the north, Plats 4\footnote{Roland Park records officially detonate this plat as Plat 4A, however Plat 4B never materialized and was absorbed by Plat 5 County. In an effort to minimize confuse the author has decided to use Plat 4 in lieu of Plat 4A.}, Plat 5 County, and Plat 5 City were bisected by a number of boundaries. In addition to the physical boundaries of University Parkway, the city-county boundary line ran through Plat 5. These boundaries, in addition to the transitional nature of the built environment from urban to suburban and the lack of topographic barriers, made this area more difficult to plan.

Facing these factors, the company took a profit-oriented approach towards developing these plats. Plat 5 County was designed to be similar to Plat 1, while being better organized. Here homes are on smaller single lots, while adhering to the high architectural standards of Plats 2, 3, and 6. Consequently, the lower social standing of the occupants of these homes are reflected by their professions.

Plat 5 City and Plat 4 are essentially hybrids of Roland Park’s standards with the more traditional built environment of Baltimore. Here along University Parkway and Roland Avenue, the Roland Park Company decided to build a mixture of stylish rowhomes, duplexes, small cottages, and a few traditional single family homes. In essence the small area of available land, plus the need for the company to turn a profit encouraged a denser development. Moreover, in its planning, the development mimicked some of the general styles of the Garden City Movement. These sizes of homes were commonplace in Letchworth due to its holistic emphasis on planning for all social classes.\footnote{Miller, \textit{Letchworth}, 55.} Finally, although homes in these plats were generally smaller, they were still suburban in their character.
Figure 39. Plat 5, 1911.
Figure 40. Plat 4, 1915.
Plat 4 is unique in the sense that people with lower incomes were directly targeted for the attractive rowhomes. The emphasis on “prestigious” salesmen (automobiles and department stores) and civil servants (military and local government) reaffirms the commitment of the Roland Park Company towards a solidly middle-class clientele. Moreover, some of these prestigious salesmen had a relationship with the company, where in return for telling the Roland Park Company who had bought new cars, they received leads on residents needing new cars. Additionally, research indicates that these homes were often temporary residences for the families that resided there until their house in Roland Park or Guilford was complete.

Plat 5 has a similar social composition as Plats 2, 3, and 6. With another B&O chief engineer, the President of another steamship company, and the General Manager for the Bethlehem Steel plant at Sparrows Point, this is a continuation of the same sort of landscape that Bouton and the company sought to create.

**Making the Move from the City to the Suburbs**

The movement of individual families from Mount Vernon to Roland Park and Guilford has been little studied. While combining the records of the 1920 Census with the knowledge of how the plats developed (in the case of Roland Park) provides some way in which to assess this movement, there are a number of limitations to this approach. As previously mentioned, the suburban home movement in general changed while Roland Park was being constructed, from suburban homes being merely vacation homes to fulltime residences. In 1920 suburban vacation homes were becoming uncommon; however, vestiges of this still may have remained. Another factor of importance is an individual family’s tenure in one house which can be difficult to measure.

As an alternative to tracking residents via the census records, as utilized above, another method employing “Blue Book” social registries was developed. Starting in the 1880s, these social registries,

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173 Jemison Companies Miscellany: 1917-1968, CU 2838, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
named for their iconic blue color, identified and listed the names and address of elite families living in and around American cities. By identifying various families who listed their address in Roland Park or Guilford, previous editions of the Blue Book were consulted to identify the specific year in which families moved into Roland Park or Guilford. Additionally, the tracking process was supported by documentation from *The Baltimore Sun* and the 1890, 1900, and 1910 Censuses.

Blue Books as opposed to social registers, were far more open to a wider number of elites. “Acceptance to the Social Register,” as one paper stated “required a formal application procedure with recommendations and perhaps committee approval.” In essence, this led to a list of people that were mainly “old money” in their origin, ignoring the growing numbers of “new money” individuals who would also be living in Roland Park and Guilford.

One of the main difficulties with using the Blue Books is the limited amount of information provided about individuals. As Figure 5.4.1 show, it is possible that someone with the same name listed in 1889 and in 1920 are actually two different people.

![Figure 41. Top image from 1889 Blue Book, bottom from 1920 Blue Book. On first glance it looks like the Kirk family moved from downtown to Roland Park; however, the 1920 Kirk is the junior of 1889.](#)

In this case, while the evidence did prove that Henry Kirk, Sr. passed away before 1920, this required a significant amount of historical research. Therefore, only a select number of individuals were selected to be analyzed, based upon available records from *The Baltimore Sun*. Figure 5.4.2 highlights the specific individuals for which this method was utilized, tracking their listed addresses over the available time periods.

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174 Borchert & Borchert, "Downtown, Uptown, Out of Town," 317.
### Table 3. Movement of Families from Mount Vernon to Roland Park/Guilford: 1889-1920

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This exercise allows a better understanding of how and when individual families moved into the suburbs of Roland Park or Guilford. It is interesting how many families split their time between Mount Vernon and the suburbs. While little information exists about this phenomenon this was a point of concern for Bouton and other associates as late as 1919. Even with these concerns, it is clear that the appeal of the suburbs was enough to draw elites in from Mount Vernon and beyond. Moreover, the Roland Park Company’s efforts to draw in elite residents through the careful reading of newspapers enabled the community to sell homes to elite individuals. This strategy was successful, as there are significant differences in social classes between Plat 1 and subsequent plats as the Roland Park Company began to execute this development strategy.

176 Jemison Companies Miscellany: 1917-1968, CU 2838, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
Chapter 6

Baltimore and Beyond: The Long-Term Impacts of Roland Park

The effects of Roland Park on the history of the modern American suburb is highly understated. Understanding the context of Roland Park, the city of Baltimore, and Bouton’s role in the formation of early suburbs helps to situate American suburbs as a whole. Although the linkages between the formation of Roland Park in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and the suburbs across the country that followed afterwards may seem trivial, the connections are real.

Guilford: Roland Park 2.0

While Roland Park was a significant development in itself, Guilford, the Roland Park Company’s second development, was the suburban development that solidified the cultural impact of suburbanization nationwide. Originally started by another company, Bouton quickly worked to amalgamate the development into a Roland Park Company led-community by 1912.\footnote{Waesche, \textit{Crowning the Gravelly Hill}, 89.} Guilford not only took advantage of the best aspects of Roland Park—the pre-established institutions, infrastructure, and cultural capital—while being designed by prominent Baltimore architects and landscaped by the Olmsted’s from the beginning.\footnote{Ibid, 97.} Every detail, expertly planned by the company and previously worked through in the creation of Roland Park, meant that Guilford was an improved version of Roland Park, employing the best elements of the community into a new built environment.

The timing of Guilford’s construction, however, was less than ideal. Even though home sales were robust throughout mid-1913 and 1914, sales dropped off with the start of World War I in
Europe. The entry of the US into the war in 1917 pushed the completion of the neighborhood back even further, which was not finalized until the mid-1920s.

Figure 42. Map of Guilford, 1934. Although from 1934, this map of Guilford is unchanged from the Olmsted firm’s plan crafted during the 1910s.

Unlike Roland Park, Guilford was platted and planned to be developed as homes were sold. Typically, homes in the northern section of the development were similar in size and style to homes in Plats 2, 3, and 6; homes along the eastern and southern edges of the community were similar to homes in Plats 4 and 5 City. Much like their Roland Park counterparts, these eastern and southern areas were closer to the existing and unmanaged fabric of Baltimore.

**Bouton’s Involvement in Forest Hill Gardens**

Bouton’s success with the development of Roland Park led to increased professional opportunities for him across the nation. The largest—and most important—was Bouton’s role in the development of Forest Hills Gardens, New York. The Russell Sage Foundation, looking to “set a higher standard in the planning of suburban land…. for people of moderate means,” asked Bouton to serve as the Vice-President and General Manager of the development.\(^{180}\) While he ended up leaving the General Manager position and working as an advisor, this experience was extremely important to him. The early years of Roland Park were difficult for the company. In addition to honing in on the company’s message, Bouton had to assist in the landscaping/design of the suburbs in a picturesque manner, manage utilities/infrastructure development, and deal with stockholders.\(^{181}\) Forest Hills Gardens was a fresh start for Bouton to perfect what he had already done in Roland Park.

With the Sage Foundation funding the project to develop affordable suburbs, certain philosophies were engrained from the beginning. Similar to Roland Park, Forest Hills Gardens was to be an all-encompassing community, with all aspects of the built environment managed by the company. However, the need to keep costs low was critically important and Bouton worked with the Olmsted firm and Grosvenor Atterbury (the lead architect) to ensure that all aspects of the development were run as economically as possible commensurate with the highest craftsmanship.\(^{182}\) In practice this meant

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\(^{180}\) The Baltimore Sun, August 1909. Accessed via Proquest Digital Historical Newspapers.

\(^{181}\) Klaus, *A Modern Arcadia*, 68.

\(^{182}\) The Baltimore Sun, November 1910. Accessed via Proquest Digital Historical Newspapers.
trimming the width of streets, minimizing the setbacks of homes, and ensuring the development of more open space. The resulting community was, in essence, Bouton’s first foray into the world of middle-class commercial suburbs. Moreover, Forest Hills Gardens provided Bouton increased opportunities to network and make contacts far beyond Baltimore.

**Sharing Suburban Planning Expertise**

Bouton had immense influence within Baltimore and beyond: his ability to craft and create a suburban community made him highly sought after. Over the course of his career he attended and hosted a number of conferences related to urban planning, real estate, and zoning. In 1911 he attended the City Planning Conference in Philadelphia, in 1914 the National Association of Real Estate Exchanges of America hosted in Pittsburgh, and in 1922 a zoning conference at the American City Planning Institute in New York.\(^{183}\) Outside of conferences, he served as an advisor for number of projects. During 1913 he was associated with a venture to develop high-class suburbs outside of York, Pennsylvania and traveled to Chicago to assist in judging an urban planning competition.\(^{184}\)

With the beginning of World War I, real estate developers found themselves struggling to survive with the rationing of building material, the lack of qualified employees, and the orientation of the market towards a war economy. Using this downturn to assess their field, Bouton joined developers from across the nation at an exclusive conference named the Annual Conference of Developers of High Class Residential Property in 1917. Here Bouton met with developers from Kansas City, Queens, Toledo, the Bay Area, Omaha, Dallas, and Indianapolis to share ideas on how to increase business and further develop their communities.\(^{185}\) The conference was so successful that it became an annual event from 1917-1921 with the same core group meeting in a different city every year to share their most recent

\(^{183}\) The Baltimore Sun, May 1911, July 1914, Feb 1922. Accessed via Proquest Digital Historical Newspapers.
\(^{184}\) Ibid, February and March 1913.
\(^{185}\) Jemison Companies Miscellany: 1917-1968, CU 2838, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
developments. This working group was significant in standardizing suburban real estate practices through the sharing of information, especially in light of the massive suburban development that would occur throughout the 1920s and in the post-World War II era.

**Bouton’s Regional Influence**

Within Maryland, Bouton was an even more prominent figure. In the post-World War One era, as the country dealt with massive inflation and a sluggish economy a group of Baltimore financiers and real estate developers—including Bouton—met with then-Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover to discuss ways to stimulate the housing market. A few months later, he became an advisor and the committee chair to advise the University of Maryland’s School of Commerce on the most practical courses to be taught related to the real estate market.

Bouton also was not shy to show off the community he had developed. Looking for practical advice and examples on how to redesign the park system of the nation’s capital, the National Capital Park Commission toured Baltimore’s system in the morning and spent lunch and the afternoon touring Roland Park and Guilford. While the purpose of the trip was to see the park system, attendees considered the creation of suburbs similar to Roland Park and Guilford important to the overall development of Washington, D.C.

Moreover, he was an active citizen in further crafting Baltimore’s built environment. In addition to his assistance in planning Johns Hopkins University, he was an active member of the Municipal Arts Society, a Progressive-era social club dedicated to reforming Baltimore after the Great Fire of 1904. From this club, he would eventually play a role in the establishment of the Baltimore Museum of Art and its location just to the south of Johns Hopkins University (making it easily accessible to Roland Park). After Baltimore City’s annexation of Roland Park in 1918, he also lent his expertise to the development

of Baltimore’s first zoning code in 1923. His influence in undertakings such as this had a significant impact on both the development of Baltimore and his professional reputation.

By the mid-1920s the Roland Park Company was looking for new communities to build. Bouton turned southwards to the industrial suburbs of Dundalk, home to Sparrows Point, a massive Bethlehem Steel Company mill on the outskirts of Baltimore’s metropolitan area, where the Patapsco River met the Chesapeake Bay. Bouton had been engaged in planning a joint community for working class people prior to the war; however, the outbreak of World War I halted the project in 1916. During the war, as Sparrows Point was pressed into shipbuilding service, the government began working with the Roland Park Company to build a denser housing development for the flood of workers needed to keep the shipyards open.

Unfortunately for Bouton, within a few months of breaking ground, the war was over. With only a few homes built, the government turned the project back to the Roland Park Company. The project in disarray, Bouton quickly set out to finish the development yet continued to run into problems. By 1922, the United State Emergency Fleet Corporation, the government arm charged with constructing the community, had a variety of issues with mortgage payments that could hinder the success of the entire community. The Roland Park Company agreed to continue to underwrite these mortgages in order to ensure the community remained stable. While their efforts to support the community were successful, the overall vision for a common man’s Roland Park never materialized and this became Bouton and the Roland Park Company’s last foray into the development of working-class suburbs.

After the completion of Dundalk and Guilford in the mid-1920s the Roland Park Company worked to find new land to develop. Planning for a new community named Homeland commenced in 1924 with the Olmsted firm again at the helm. With much of the upper-class market already captured, Homeland was aimed towards upper middle and middle class families. Like its first two

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187 Ibid, 316.
188 Waesche, *Crowning the Gravelly Hill*, 114.
communities, the Roland Park Company minded the details of the development, enacting strict architectural standards and creating spaces for the community to develop. Although not similar to Roland Park in terms of social engineering, the community integrated well into the larger landscape of North Baltimore. Buoyed by the economic prosperity of the 1920s, Homeland sold quickly, leading to the planning of Northwood.

Figure 43. Map of all Roland Park Company developed communities—including Homeland and Northwood in 1934.\textsuperscript{189}

Located to the east of Homeland, planning for Northwood by the Olmsted brothers began in the late 1920s with the first homes constructed in 1930. Due to the Great Depression, home sales were never robust, and only totaled around 400 homes by the end of World War Two. Economic conditions, in addition to changing conceptions of the suburbs, stymied the development of the community into a major

development. The remaining land was sold off to other developers in the early 1950s, creating New Northwood (tract homes in the style of the era) and Northwood Shopping Plaza (one of the first modern shopping plazas in Baltimore).\textsuperscript{190}

Although not innovative, these last two communities proved that the suburban model developed by Bouton and spread around the country through the Annual Conference of High Class Residential Property, was economically viable and socially desirable. And although most of this suburban development focused on the quick money that could be made from such developments (such as Levittown), the idea of a planned “lifestyle” community continued to have a significant impact on the American landscape.

\textbf{Influence of Roland Park on Post-World War II Suburbs}

Serving as home for a period of time to James Rouse, the famous Baltimore real estate developer, Roland Park can be said to have laid the foundation for his communities of Cross Keys (developed on the former Baltimore Country Club golf course, adjacent to Roland Park) and the massive planned community of Columbia, Maryland (located between Baltimore and Washington, D.C.).\textsuperscript{191}

Although the principles underlying many of these developments occurred independent from Roland Park, Roland Park provided a physical model of the successes and failures of how to plan and develop a planned community. F.L. Olmsted Jr., who was also a part-time instructor at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, regularly taught his classes using Roland Park as an example of the nation’s premier suburb.\textsuperscript{192} The expertise developed in attracting new residents, in selecting proper architects and landscape architects, and in the everyday functions of running a suburban development company were tangible lessons for developers of all forms of suburbs. The important of minute details of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{190} Waesche, \textit{Crowning the Gravelly Hill}, 115.
\item \textsuperscript{191} Olsen, \textit{Better Places, Better Lives: A Biography of James Rouse}, 42.
\item \textsuperscript{192} Fogelson, \textit{Bourgeois Nightmares}, 63.
\end{itemize}
practical planning advice, as opposed to planning theory, were critical to forming a successful community.


Chapter 7

Governmentality and the Regulation of Roland Park

The development of Roland Park is one milestone in a number of successive attempts to regulate and order the urban world. While laws, in a variety of forms, have existed since the first cities arose, the forces at play in the real estate development leading up to Roland Park and the developments that proliferated after, inherently revolve around the privileging of one group over another, the regulation of entities within the domain of the development, and ultimately are a reflection of the social thinking of the day. Decades later, to simply explain this segregated landscape as a product of its time, is to miss a wider opportunity to contextualize this moment in urban growth that continues to dominate the landscape of metropolitan areas presently. Examining Roland Park through the lens of governmentality, this chapter contextualizes the development of Roland Park with the emergence of systemic discrimination and segregated landscapes in the housing market.

In a series of lectures on the topic of Security, Territory, and Population in the late 1970s, Michel Foucault, the eminent French philosopher and historian, spoke on the historical formation of state control over populations.\(^\text{193}\) Citing work on the development of statistics, prisons, and other innovative apparatuses, he documented the formation of systems of control, surveillance, and regulations that governments developed to assert their power over populations. These theories, grouped under the name governmentality, do not inherently need to be enacted by government, just by institutions and individuals in positions of power. The key importance of this theory is the development of institutional forms of control over populations and spaces.

With this in mind, a core theme running throughout this thesis is the autonomy that Edward Bouton and the Roland Park Company had while developing the North Baltimore region. The struggle in the early years of the company to find a unique marketing direction and ultimately the high-class,

exclusive development they settled on, developed in parallel to the creation of an apparatus of control. The top-down landscape plotting of the neighborhood, the tight regulation of the built environment through restrictive covenants, and the development of highly advanced, community infrastructure, while setting Roland Park apart from its peers, meant that the landscape was highly controlled in order to maximize profit and benefit the lives of its residents.

Of course, the landscape of Roland Park was intimately linked with the areas surrounding it, and here Bouton exerted significant influence to regulate land not controlled by the company. As early as 1902 Bouton recognized the economic potential of controlling and developing large plots of land in a unified fashion writing a letter to the Olmsted firm requesting that they draw up plans a scheme to get:

Together all of the vacant tracts of land lying between the North line of the Johns Hopkins property and Lake Roland, extending on both sides of Roland Avenue and extending as far east as Charles Street Avenue [today’s Charles Street]. My plan would be [to]...begin a very large suburban operation...[embracing] Roland Park as well as the undeveloped tracts of land.\textsuperscript{194}

Even though these plans never materialized in a unified campaign, Bouton found other ways to enhance the quality of life of the district. Bouton asked the Olmsted brothers to draw up plans for an elite private boy’s school on a plot of land owned by the company and began courting the Boy’s Latin School of Baltimore and Gilman Country School to move to Roland Park.\textsuperscript{195} Even though these plans were never executed, Bouton, on the board of Gilman, convinced the school to move to Roland Park in 1909 with J.B. Noel Wyatt, the Roland Park resident, as the architect.\textsuperscript{196}

\textsuperscript{194} “Letter Bouton to Olmsted Firm, September 5, 1902,” Box 9, No. 29, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
\textsuperscript{195} “Letter Bouton to Olmsted Firm, April 10, 1905,” Box 17, No. 10, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
\textsuperscript{196} Moudry, “Gardens, Houses, and People,” 153.
He also put efforts into the landscaping of Charles Street and Johns Hopkins University ensuring a well-landscaped entrance into the community. This control over the larger landscape becomes more significant in the larger view, especially when examining the number of projects overseen by the Olmsted firm. In addition to consulting work on the Johns Hopkins University Master Plan, the Charles Street streetscape, and the Roland Park Company’s developments, the firm worked on specific plans for Wyman Park, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the corporate campus of the Maryland Casualty Company, the 33rd Street streetscape, and St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Seminary. While the role of Bouton in these efforts is undocumented, as is the Olmsted brothers thoughts on the overall planning of this larger North Baltimore-area, the fact remains that this landscape was heavily influenced by the efforts and principles of Olmstedian planning.

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Figure 44. Areas designed by the Olmsted firm in North Baltimore.\textsuperscript{198} No. 15, Venable Park, was designed by the Olmsted brothers but coopted for use by the city as the location of a new sports stadium and two new high schools.

\textsuperscript{198} Data from: Lawliss, Loughlin, and Meier, eds. *The Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm.*
Moreover, in his efforts to build a community around the name “Roland Park” created a space with definitive boundaries and significant advantages over other communities of the time. Bouton actively worked to promote the community as a separate “district,” ultimately increasing on these efforts after the acquisition of Guilford. Here, the concept of a “Roland Park-Guilford District,” two separate communities adhering to the same high standards of development, yet integrated within the larger sphere of metropolitan Baltimore began to take root.

Figure 45. Maps illustrating the size of the Roland Park-Guilford District circa 1915.199

199 “The Roland Park-Guilford District,” Box 293, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
While many of the details of the individual streets of the neighborhoods are obscured, the boundaries of the land are overstated to include the land of the Baltimore Country Club and roughly half of the undeveloped land that would become the future Roland Park Company development of Homeland. Also of significance is the emphasis on the institutions and large landowners of this area that inherently provided protection for the community.

The impacts of these efforts are still present today in the Baltimore City administrative state: Roland Park, Guilford, Homeland and Northwood have rigidly defined neighborhood boundaries, encompassing only the homes built by the company. Yet this control of geographic boundaries was not just from the top down; power was exerted among the residents as well. While this goes against Foucault’s argument towards centralized power; the power that residents exerted on one another in some sense was centralized around the idea of keeping undesirable elements out of the community.

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200 “The Roland Park-Guilford District,” Box 293, Roland Park Company records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.
The creation of the Roland Park Civic League, first established in 1895, was a major development in expanding this power. Enforcement of restrictive covenants, initially handled by the Roland Park Company during the early stages of building, were transferred to the Civic League upon its incorporation in 1907. From Bouton’s perspective this was beneficial, as it kept the company out of the smaller matters of running the community while ensuring that the covenants would be followed due to the regulation of peers (in other words, peer pressure). Moreover, the Civic League served as a forum to promote and build the community not only within Roland Park but within the adjoining areas.

Efforts to alter the environs surrounding Roland Park were especially prominent topics within the Civic League. Mosquito reduction efforts, organized in the summers of the early 1910s by the Civic League, targeted standing water not only in Roland Park but within Evergreen, Tuxedo Park, and Cross Keys. The working class mill village of Hampton, located to the south, was recipient of a new community center, a public-private partnership between the Baltimore City Council and the philanthropic efforts of Roland Park (organized through the Civic League). Moreover, residents petitioned Bouton to pressure the Olmsted’s (who had been hired to construct a plan for the Baltimore City park system) to integrate Roland Park into the plan as a natural addition to the beauty of the city. Additionally, as members of an elite community, these residents were well-connected to money, power, and status, enabling them to advocate for themselves in the larger Baltimore metropolitan area, a position proving to be especially relevant in manners related to the annexation efforts of the city.

The development and expansion of these networks was key in fostering the prestige of Roland Park. Bouton, not native to Baltimore, had little understanding of the larger social landscape and the prominent society individuals of Baltimore upon his arrival in 1891. Through the reformation of Roland Park’s marketing and changes in how the company reached out to potential clients, subsequent plats were significantly more prestigious. These changes, especially regarding the recruitment of new homeowners,

202 Ibid, 155.
were significant. The Roland Park Company began scouring the daily newspapers to identify potential clients based upon promotions, relocations to Baltimore, business expansions, and other bits of positive news (see reference to letter in Chapter 5). The company also paid construction workers and police officers three dollars for every non-resident license plate they could remember, using the number to identify possible individuals who might be interested in living in Roland Park.

Automobile sales also played a significant role in identifying potential residents. The two automobile salesmen located in Plat 4 are reflective of larger, documented efforts by the company to identify individuals with high wealth and disposable income who could be willing to live in Roland Park. Moreover, much of the discussion at the Annual Conference of High Class Residential Property was focused on the development of good salesmen and sales techniques. Everything from commissioning city-wide industrial surveys, to hiring women salespersons, to the location of the main sales office was discussed in order to achieve the greatest sales possible for these companies. The creation of this form of surveillance state, by a private company, is a unique expression of governmentality in this period of history.

While landscapes like Roland Park lend themselves towards analysis through a Marxist lens; however, there are distinct reasons why a serious analysis through a Marxist lens would do little to further the discourse on the community. First, while the core of the previously described processes may have been money (i.e. one needed enough wealth to purchase a home), the company used these specifically to obtain the best residents possible to elevate the profile of Roland Park. Secondly, much of the literature dealing with Marxism and housing deals with spatial distribution of inequalities in urban areas, processes

203 Jemison Companies Miscellany: 1917-1968, CU 2838, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
204 Ibid.
205 Ibid.
of housing discrimination, or historical examples that are reflective of completely different modes of economic power.\textsuperscript{207}

Although elite neighborhoods of Baltimore like Eutaw Place and Bolton Hill experienced some of the characteristics of decline and underinvested neighborhoods during the 1910s and 1920s that Harvey highlights in \textit{Social Justice and the City}, the disinvestment in the community due to “white flight” to Roland Park never reached the levels of inequality he discusses. In essence, while the driving core behind Roland Park may have been money, the mechanics that made it successful moved beyond money into the regulation of individuals.

In total, these efforts not only to regulate and populate the built environment, but to create an environment of economic exclusion, while taking advantage of underlying sociological divides of the day produced the community of Roland Park. Much of the enduring success of the community can be traced back to the creation and sustainment of these methods of community building over the past century.

\textsuperscript{207} See Harvey and Chatterjee, "Absolute Rent and the Structuring of Space;" Harvey, \textit{Paris, Capital of Modernity}; and Harvey, \textit{Social Justice and the City}. 
Conclusion

This thesis attempts to place Roland Park in the broader context of intellectual suburban history and in a network of like-minded, elite suburban developers. Yet, the connection between Roland Park and broader Baltimore beyond that of Mount Vernon and other emerging suburban communities of the time has been little explored. In some sense, the sustained image of Roland Park exists not only because of the success of the community, but also in its ability to spawn similar-styled suburbs. While Guilford, the Roland Park Company’s second development is a somewhat strange place in which to end this thesis, there are real reasons to do so.

As Roland Park 2.0, Guilford can be seen as the refinement of the “ideal suburb” as created by the Roland Park Company. And in nowhere can the relationship between these communities be better seen than where Guilford meets the rest of Baltimore City. These sister communities have been tied together since their creation with one author stating:

“To be in Baltimore society now it usually is regarded as essential to live in that segment of the city bounded by University Parkway on the south, York Road on the east, Reisterstown Road on the west and as far north as the Pennsylvania line.”

Unlike Guilford, Roland Park was isolated from other communities by natural features (streams and elevation), institutions, and the countryside to the north. While Guilford shared many of these same attributes, eastern Guilford on the other hand, directly abuts Greenmount Avenue, a major Baltimore street that rungs north-south. And it is here that the by-products of these elite landscapes can be fully seen.

Architecturally speaking, along this stretch of road, the Roland Park Company built rowhomes, not only to blend in with the architecture but to also act as a wall between planned Guilford and the unplanned suburban Baltimore. While these rowhomes are different from the average Baltimore

rowhome, they do not distinguish themselves from the rowhomes built in Plat 4 of Roland Park. These rowhomes are longer in length and more in line with the urban vernacular of most of Baltimore. Moreover, in places the company did not control the abutting land, they built stone walls to keep out whatever was on the other side.

This wall mentality has extended into the transportation pattern as well. Of the six roads leading from Guilford to Greenmont Avenue, two have been closed and gated off and another two have been converted to one-way street leading out of the community. Of the remaining two, one can be considered the central road of Guilford, while the second was a preexisting road along the northern boundary of the community. Yet what is fascinating here is that these changes were made retroactively. Here the ideals of Guilford (and thus Roland Park)—isolating one from the ills of the city, creating a strong community, living in an elite neighborhood—have continued to permeate through the consciousness of these neighborhoods even to today.

![Google Streetview of the intersection of E. 35th Street and Greenmount Avenue, Baltimore.](image-url)

Figure 47. Google Streetview of the intersection of E. 35th Street and Greenmount Avenue, Baltimore. This intersection, blocked off on the Guilford side, exposed the stark reality of life in Baltimore. On the left side of the street is Guilford, isolated from the community of Waverly on the right.

In this sense, the importance of Roland Park goes beyond its importance in creating an elite community in Baltimore. Its real importance comes from the larger role that it played in ordering,
regulating, planning, and implementing the suburban built environment of the United States. From its status as a model suburb in landscape architecture education, within the larger suburban development community, in public consciousness, and the success of what it accomplished, Roland Park set the stage for suburban development in the post-World War I and II eras. Planned communities such as Columbia, Maryland have their genesis in some of the underlying principles outlined by the Roland Park Company. Thus, the story is not just about the construction of this new form of the built environment, but rather the effects of construction on the propagation of the built environment that millions of Americans live in today and conversely, that millions of Americans are currently excluded from.

Future work might focus on the further explorations of how elite communities like this were peopled and created as entities distinct from their other suburban counterparts. This lack of existing literature is reflective of the limited archival material available; however, it is indicative of why a community like Roland Park has been studied so little in the literature. Awkwardly spanning between two distinct eras of suburban development in the United States (that of the streetcar suburbs and that of the post-World War II suburbs), Roland Park exists alongside a few other well documented and named suburban developments that have been studied in depth by architectural historians. Their analysis of communities such as Shaker Heights (Cleveland), Brooklyn Heights (New York City), and the Country Club District (Kansas City) is insightful, but often fails to see the larger impacts of these communities on the national and international scales. Firmly placing and analyzing Roland Park in these scales is another direction that would be a rich area to explore in the future.
---. *Baltimore: The Trade Queen of the South*. Baltimore: John Murphy Company, 1902


Jemison Companies Miscellany: 1917-1968, CU 2838, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.


Roland Park Company Records, MS 504, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University.


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