

Approximate boundaries:

N-W. Lincoln Ave; **S**-W. Oklahoma Ave;
E-S. 60th St, **W**-S. 68th St

SOUTHWEST SIDE *Fairview*

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Fairview is a densely populated neighborhood that has a variety of housing styles dating from the early to mid-20th century. The northern section of the neighborhood has mainly Tudor and Cape Cod style houses interspersed with a few bungalows. The southern section has mainly Cape Cods and 1950s ranch style houses.

The topography of Fairview is flat with gently rolling hills throughout. There is significant green space at the Fairview Playfield east of the Fairview Public School and along both sides of the West Kinnickinnic River Parkway. In the northern section of the neighborhood between Lincoln and Cleveland Avenues, streets mostly follow a rectangular grid pattern. South of Cleveland, streets are winding.

The main business corridors are along South 60th Street and along West Oklahoma Avenue. See neighborhood photos below.

HISTORY

The Fairview neighborhood was once located in the unincorporated Town of Greenfield with borders of Greenfield Avenue on the north, College on the south, 27th Street on the east and 124th on the west.

Early populations

Early signs of European settlement in the area appeared just east of today's Fairview neighborhood when pioneer farmers settled along Forest Home Avenue in the middle to late 1800s. Forest Home at the time was the Janesville Plank Road, serving as a well-traveled toll road that was the only link between the developing city and the country. By the late 1800s a scattering of mainly Poles and some Germans from the Old/Historic South Side began to migrate west and south and purchase land around Forest Home Avenue.

Perhaps seeing the area as a future Milwaukee neighborhood, the city Park Commission purchased the northern half of a nearby farm to preserve forested space in 1907 and named it Jackson Park for President Andrew Jackson. Soon the area around the park began to fill up with migrating families and the Jackson Park neighborhood on Fairview's eastern border was born. As Jackson Park filled up, residents began to migrate west into today's Fairview and White Manor neighborhoods. The earliest arriving settlers purchased lots in Fairview's northern blocks. The City of Milwaukee annexed the area encompassing the three neighborhoods between 1927 and the late 1950s.

The Fairview area was very sparsely populated when the Great Depression began. In the 1930s the region had only a handful of settlers. Below is a profile of the Conrad family whose members occupied nearly an entire block in today's Fairview by 1933.

Today's neighborhood-
St. Rita's Parish on S. 60th St.



Fairview residents (1930s)

(Information from U.S. Census and other public records)

The Conrads

In 1933, the west side of a developed stretch of South 60th Street was all Conrads. Contiguous homes were owned by siblings Mary A. Conrad, Joseph P. Conrad, Katie J. Conrad, and Walter A. Conrad. And the presence of these homes suggested that this group owed a major debt to their father, Joseph B. Conrad.

Joseph B. Conrad was born in 1846 on an early homestead that his father developed on Hawley Road, not far from the family's later settlement. Joseph B.'s parents were both born in France. Early in his life he perfected his skills as a carpenter and opened a building contract business. He married Dora Mueller, the daughter of German immigrants, shortly afterwards and the couple settled on National Avenue, probably in the Walker's Point neighborhood. There Joseph B. and Dora had children Lizzie, Katie J. Joseph P., Mary Ann, Tillie J., Gertrude D, and Josephine. The two sons also became carpenters and joined their father's business. The business grew and was successful for over 35 years. At some point the contracting firm probably built houses for most of the Conrad children in today's Fairview neighborhood.

Joseph B. died in 1921 while still living on National Avenue. Only one of the six daughters ever married and none of the single daughters ever listed any occupation in the census records. In the 1930s, Katie J. Conrad was living with her sister Gertrude in a house owned by Katie. At the same time, Mary Ann was living with her sisters Josephine and Elizabeth in a house owned by Mary Ann. Joseph P. and Walter A. also owned their homes. The children's homes were all valued between \$5,000 and \$7,500 in 1930—well above the average for the time.

A few years after their father's death, Joseph P. and Walter A. left the building construction business. By 1930, Joseph was working as a body building laborer for a truck manufacturing firm. He had a wife Helen, and children Leonard, Laverne, and Ruth. Walter A. had also left the business, and by 1930 he was the foreman of (no doubt) the same truck manufacturing company where his brother worked. He had a wife Emily, and kids Walter, Claude, and Carroll.

The five single and apparently unemployed sisters probably lived off of inherited funds from their father and his business and may have been also helped by their brothers.

Post-World War II

Fairview was very late in developing any business corridors. While South 60th Street is a busy one today, this was not the case early in Fairview's history. Below is a list of businesses on South 60th in 1947 within Fairview's boundaries.

<i>Addresses on S. 60th in 1947</i>	<i>Names of businesses and organizations from the Milwaukee City Directory</i>
2500	Gregory Gebhard Riding Stables
2848	Jacob Beehelm Garden Market

<i>Addresses on S. 60th in 1947</i>	<i>Names of businesses and organizations from the Milwaukee City Directory</i>
2929	Charles Kroupa Carpenter

Summary and notes from U.S. census and other records:

- The businesses reflected the rural nature of the area in the middle of the 20th century.
- Gregory Gebhard had turned his father's farm into a riding stable by 1947. Gregory had completed college. His ancestry was Bavarian.

After World War II, veterans returning from service needed housing. The need was so great that Milwaukee County erected 50 tiny Wingfoot houses (see exampleⁱ to right) made of plywood walls a mile east of the Fairview neighborhood, at the site of today's Manitoba Park at 49th and Manitoba. The houses remained at that site well into the 1950s.

Between 1945 and the end of the 1950s, the City of Milwaukee was annexing blocks in the Fairview area. By 1955 all of the area south of Arthur had been annexed. Of the Milwaukee addresses listed in the 1955 City Directory, approximately one-third were listed as under construction. New settlers were arriving every day. Included among them were families from Yugoslavia (mostly Serbs), Holland, Germany, Poland, Mexico, and Austria.

Businesses were still slow to develop. Below is a similar story on South 60th Street in Fairview in 1955.



<i>Addresses on S. 60th in 1955</i>	<i>Names of businesses and organizations from the Milwaukee City Directory</i>
2708	Russell Shenners Building Contractor
2817	Matthew F. Burazin Mason Contractor
2900	John A. Zach Building Contractor
3038	Apartments

Summary and notes from U.S. census and other records:

- As the businesses in 1947 reflected the rural nature of Fairview, the businesses in 1955 reflected a neighborhood under fast development. See below.
- Russell Shenners, the building contractor, had worked for a sewer construction firm before opening his own business.
- Matthew F. Burazin, the mason contractor, was an immigrant from Yugoslavia. He had worked as a laborer for another construction company before opening his business.
- John A. Zach, the building contractor, started his business while still in his 20s. He was the son of German immigrants.

In 1955, the neighborhood had one family from Mexico. This would change in the next several decades.

Arrival of Latinos

Latinos (mainly Mexicans) began to settle on the near South Side in the 1920s and slowly migrated south into the Polish areas. Since the 1970s, the Mexican community spread all over the South Side, including Fairview.

A number of push-pull factors influenced the population changes. During the early 1900s Mexican immigration to the United States expanded because of worsening economic conditions in Mexico. A large wave of Mexicans also left the country during the political and economic turmoil created by the Mexican Revolution of 1910. In addition, both Mexicans and Puerto Ricans were often recruited by local industries to fill workplace needs. Beginning in 1917, the US government implemented a series of immigration restriction policies to curb the influx of Mexicans, mainly in response to local claims that Mexicans (who often worked for low wages) were taking jobs away from ‘true’ Americans.

But they found a place to fit in. Latinos—particularly Mexicans--were able to settle successfully alongside the Poles in particular because they shared so many traits in common. These included the Catholic faith, the focus on the Madonna figure, polka music traditions, similarities in childrearing and eldercare practices, and an entrepreneurial spirit. While many Puerto Ricans settled on the North Side, other Latinos from the Caribbean and Central and South America followed the Mexican migration.

Current populations (as of 2021)

Today, Fairview has just over 3,500 residents. Of these, approximately half still claim Polish or German ancestry. Over 1 in 6 are Latinos—evenly divided between those of Puerto Rican and those of Mexican ancestry. There is a scattering of African Americans, Asians (mostly Indians and Filipinos), people of multiple European backgrounds, American Indians, and mixed-race residents in the area.

The median household income in Fairview is just over \$56,000, placing the neighborhood in the middle income stratum. It is also a well-educated neighborhood with approximately one-third of the residents holding bachelor’s or graduate degrees. The occupations cited most often by adult residents are in the fields of administration, education, and sales. Almost twice the number of residents are in the fields of repair (installation, maintenance, repair) and education than their proportions in other Milwaukee areas.

Today, Fairview has two active business corridors—one on South 60th Street and the other is on West Oklahoma Avenue. Fairview has a neighborhood association with nonprofit status.

RECURRING NEARBY OUTINGS (Health conditions permitting)

In the following section the website addresses have been eliminated due to technical problems with the various ways different web browsers display PDF files. Website information on these events is available through the book *Milwaukee Area Outings on the Cheap*. See below.

WINTER FEST AT JACKSON PARK

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mid Dec., Sat. 11am-3 pm	Jackson Park, 3500 W. Forest Home Ave.	Face-painting, cocoa, crafts for kids, music, and more.	Free

JULY 4TH CELEBRATION--JACKSON

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
July 4 8am-10pm	Jackson Park, 3500 W. Forest Home Ave.	Parade, Doll Buggy, Bike & Trike, and Coaster judging, free ice cream, fireworks.	Free

MOVIES AT SOUTHGATE CINEMA

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Daily	3320 S. 30th St.	Popular movies at a Marcus Theater.	unk

ST. RITA PARISH FESTIVAL—WEST ALLIS

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mid Jul., Fri. 7-11pm, Sat. 7-11pm, Sun. 11am-5pm	6021 W. Lincoln Ave., West Allis	Festival of live music, special dinner each day, and more.	Free

SLEDDING--MCCARTY

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Winter, daytime	McCarty Park, 8214 W. Cleveland Ave.	Sledding hills for family and friends.	Free

OUTDOOR ICE SKATING—WEST ALLIS

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Winter, only when ice is 6 inches thick	McCarty Park, 8214 W. Cleveland Ave.	Ice skating for adults and children (heed "thin ice" signs).	Free

These outings are provided courtesy of MECAH Publishing. To access the book that provides nearly 600 outings—all priced under \$10—for the entire Greater Milwaukee area, go to <http://mecahmilwaukee.com/NonFiction.html>

QUOTES FROM RESIDENTS

If you are a resident of Fairview and have an interesting observation to make about your neighborhood, please send your quote to JFLanthropologist@sbcglobal.net

PHOTOS

Today's neighborhood—
Houses on S. 64th St. & W. Montana St.



Today's neighborhood-Fairview Playfield

Todays neighborhood-
Houses on S. 62nd St. & W. Hayes Ave.



Todays neighborhood-Fairview Public School



Todays neighborhood-
Businesses on S. 60th St. north of
Oklahoma Ave.



Todays neighborhood-
Houses on S. 62nd & W. Bennett Ave.





Today's neighborhood-S. 61st St & W. Kinnickinnic River Parkway

For more information on Milwaukee neighborhoods, refer to John Gurda's *Milwaukee, City of Neighborhoods* and Jill Florence Lackey's and Rick Petrie's *Germans in Milwaukee: A neighborhood history*.

Do you have great photos of this neighborhood? Are you a resident with an interesting quote about this neighborhood? Do you have recurring outings, additions, corrections, or general comments about this neighborhood? Please email your input to:
JFLanthropologist@sbcglobal.net

¹ Photo attribution: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/91/Goodyear-Wingfoot_House-1943-2.JPG