

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NRHP Approved: 5/5/2025

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

 X New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Garden Apartment Complexes of Norfolk, Virginia

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Housing Development in Norfolk, 1930s-1942

Privately Developed Garden Apartment Complexes in Norfolk, 1942-1949

C. Form Prepared by:

name/title Lena McDonald and Ashlen Stump

organization Commonwealth Preservation Group

street & number 536 W. 35th Street

city or town Norfolk

state VA

zip code 23508

e-mail admin@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com

telephone 757-923-1900

date 3/28/2024

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.


Signature of certifying official
Title SHPO
DateVirginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper_____
Date of Action

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Introduction

During the early twentieth century, the availability of housing for local populations became a concern for local, state, and federal elected officials as population growth caused housing shortages in cities across the country. World War I created both challenges and opportunities for communities to attract workers to defense-related jobs that spurred local economic growth. For the first time, the federal government financed construction of housing for defense workers, such as Cradock and Truxtun, both in Portsmouth, Virginia, and designed for employees at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. The societal crises of the Great Depression brought on further public investment in provision of housing by way of New Deal agencies such as the Home Owners' Loan Corporation and the Federal Housing Administration. As property owners lost their homes to foreclosure and new construction ground to a halt, housing shortages became prevalent across the country. Relief efforts were uneven, particularly in racial terms. During the late 1930s, as the United States undertook military buildup in response to escalating international conflicts, localities such as Norfolk that were home to major military installations experienced rapid population growth that contributed to housing shortages that had begun during the earliest years of the Great Depression. In Norfolk, a combination of military and civilian leadership invested in an assortment of strategies for alleviating the housing shortages affecting both servicemembers and civilians. Civilian housing projects included neighborhoods filled with owner-occupied, single-family dwellings as well as construction of rental housing. In Norfolk, the pace of construction during and immediately after World War II, despite shortages of manpower and materials, were indicative of the extremity of the housing shortage. This Multiple Property Submission (MPS) concerns one of the era's housing types, garden apartment complexes, constructed between 1942-1949, all located south of downtown Norfolk and east of Naval Station Norfolk. Garden apartment complexes were constructed in suburban Norfolk from the 1940s onward but those that postdate 1949 are beyond the purview of the current MPS; this multiple property documentation form (MPD) may be updated at a later time to include additional complexes from earlier or later times in Norfolk's history.

Housing Development in Norfolk, 1930s-1942

Norfolk Naval Shipyard and Naval Operating Base Influence Housing Construction in the City, 1910s-1942

Understanding the history of housing provision in Norfolk during the 1940s must begin with consideration of the major role that the U.S. Navy has played in the City's development from the 1910s up to the present. Naval history in and around Norfolk actually is older than the republic itself, beginning with the privately-owned Gosport Shipyard located across the Elizabeth River in neighboring Portsmouth, Virginia. Founded in 1767 by Andrew Sprowle, the shipyard was seized by American patriots at the beginning of the Revolutionary War. Although burned by British troops in 1779, the shipyard was rebuilt after the war and has remained in continuous use since that time. The newly formed U.S. government purchased the shipyard in 1801. The shipyard is home to Drydock Number One (designated a National Historic Landmark in 1971), built in 1827 and still functional today. The shipyard played a vital role in the U.S. war effort during World War I by producing four new destroyers and repairing, refitting, and modernizing numerous older ships. The number of employees rapidly grew from 2,718 in 1914 to more than 11,200 by early 1919, just three months after the war ended.¹ Meanwhile, a new naval base, originally called Norfolk Operating Base Hampton Roads was established in 1917; the lengthy name quickly was shortened to NOB. The selected 374-acre site for the base

¹ "Shipyards: Norfolk: History: Roots," Naval Sea Systems Command, <https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/Shipyards/Norfolk/About-Us/History/Roots/#9>.

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had hosted the Jamestown Exposition of 1907, which commemorated the first landing of English colonists in Virginia in 1607; another 100 adjacent acres were purchased as well.² NOB originally consisted of “a naval training station, naval air station, submarine station, and fleet supply base.” The airfield, established at the Naval Operating Base in October 1917, was detached from NOB to become Naval Air Station (NAS) Hampton Roads, later renamed NAS Norfolk. By November 1918, upwards of 34,000 servicemembers were stationed in Norfolk. After the 1918 Armistice ended the war, NOB became the headquarters for the Fifth Naval District.³



Figure 1. Norfolk and Vicinity, Map prepared by Norfolk City Planning Commission, March 1921 Revised to April 1939. The Naval Operating Base (NOB) is at the top left of the map and Wards Corner is approximately 3 miles to the southeast. Downtown Norfolk is approximately 6 miles directly south of Wards Corner. Suburban development along the Sewell's Point Road corridor already had begun in the Wards Corner area by the 1930s and accelerated during and after World War II. Titustown (aka Titusville) was a historically Black neighborhood in an area where the population otherwise was predominately White.

² Michael Taylor and Gordon Calhoun, “Naval Station Norfolk,” *Encyclopedia Virginia*, Virginia Humanities, December 7, 2020, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/naval-station-norfolk>; Naval History and Heritage Command, “Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, Overview,” August 30, 2019, <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/organization-and-administration/installations/naval-station-norfolk.html>.

³ Deborah K. Cannan, et al., *National Historic Context for Department of Defense Installations, 1790-1940*, Vol. III of IV, prepared by R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc., for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Baltimore District, August 1995, p. 231; Naval History and Heritage Command, “Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, Overview,” August 30, 2019, <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/organization-and-administration/installations/naval-station-norfolk.html>.

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Despite the indubitable importance of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, NOB, and NAS during the war, however, the U.S. government dramatically scaled back operations at the shipyard from the late 1910s through the 1920s. By 1923, the number of employees at the naval shipyard dropped to 2,538, fewer than had been employed almost a decade earlier. A battleship modernization program, begun in 1925, kept the shipyard viable.⁴ The resultant steep decline in civilian economic activity and population loss left Norfolk struggling for several years with an unexpected housing surplus that depressed the local real estate market and a higher unemployment rate that led to population loss. The situation also soured relationships between naval commanders and City officials, business owners, and real estate developers for many years.

While the local economy largely recovered over the next decade, the sudden onset of the Great Depression in October 1929 changed circumstances both locally and nationally within just a few weeks. Unprecedented levels of unemployment swept the country and hundreds of thousands of people lost their property when they were unable to pay off liens.⁵ Following the 1932 election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the federal government commenced a relief campaign unlike any other in the nation's history. All aspects of American life, including the military branches, were targeted for a dizzying array of new programs designed to provide employment opportunities, improve living standards, offer healthcare and educational opportunities, and modernize infrastructure. Created in 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was among the most impactful agencies, alongside work-relief programs that included the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Public Works Administration (PWA), and Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Military installations were among the places where federally-funded construction projects were undertaken. Starting in 1932, a campaign at NOB completed "several clusters of permanent buildings," and, by 1937, the base had more than 375 buildings and structures.⁶ During the mid-1930s, tensions arose internationally on multiple fronts, including the spread of fascism (the roots of which began with Benito Mussolini's rise to power in Italy in 1922) with adherents across the world, the 1934 seizure of power in Germany by the National Socialist (Nazi) party, the Spanish Civil War that began in 1936, and the Japanese empire's invasion of China in 1937. Foreseeing likely U.S. involvement in the escalating bellicosity, Roosevelt's administration and military leaders began planning a buildup in military readiness. At NOB and NAS, considerably more acreage was acquired, "new buildings and piers were constructed and new runways, hangars, and ramps were built."⁷ At the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, where no major improvements had been implemented since the end of World War I, passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act in July 1933 also provided a lifeline for the local economy. Across just six years, the shipyard built and launched nine destroyers. The workload created a bright spot for local employment during the most difficult years of the Depression, with 3,819 employees on hand at the end of 1932 and a total of 7,624 by September 1939, when Nazi Germany's invasion of Poland triggered World War II.⁸

⁴ "Shipyards: Norfolk: History: Roots," Naval Sea Systems Command, <https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/Shipyards/Norfolk/About-Us/History/Roots/#9>.

⁵ During the 1930s, most home mortgages required a 50 percent down payment followed by 5-7 years of interest-only payments, after which the balance of the loan had to be paid off. With the Great Depression's mass unemployment, such loans soon became impossible for all but the most fortunate to pay off. See Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017), p. 63.

⁶ Deborah K. Cannan, et al., *National Historic Context for Department of Defense Installations, 1790-1940*, Vol. III of IV, prepared by R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc., for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Baltimore District, August 1995, p. 231.

⁷ Naval History and Heritage Command, "Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, Overview," August 30, 2019, <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/organization-and-administration/installations/naval-station-norfolk.html>.

⁸ "Shipyards: Norfolk: History: Roots," Naval Sea Systems Command, <https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/Shipyards/Norfolk/About-Us/History/Roots/#9>.

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Figure 2. 1937 Aerial View of the Wards Corner Area Showing Extent of Development along Granby Street and Sewell's Point Road (today's West Little Creek Road). The undeveloped tracts along these two roads were among the rural areas north of Norfolk that were targeted for single- and multiple-family housing developments by the early 1940s. (Image Source: Sargeant Memorial Collection, Norfolk Public Library, Photo FG 143-144)

During this same time span, a housing shortage developed in Norfolk as local real estate development companies ceased construction of properties for middle-, moderate-, and lower-income markets even as the population increased with people coming from afar in search of employment opportunities at the naval

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installations and shipyard and as the number of servicemembers based in Norfolk grew. This economic boost saved local businesses of all kinds, further adding to the number of jobseekers.⁹ For the duration of the Great Depression, however, local developers resisted construction of publicly-financed housing, which had been well-received during World War I. Their paired concerns were competition for tenants and the possibility of oversaturating the local housing market after the “temporary” defense needs were met, as had happened in the city after the 1918 Armistice. In 1940, the Norfolk Real Estate Board (NREB) and local savings and loan associations established the Norfolk Realty Board and Building Loans Committee to lobby for careful consideration of downstream ramifications of extensive new housing construction. Committee Chair John R. Sears of the Berkley Permanent Building & Loan Association and Otto Hollowell, NREB executive secretary, led the committee’s effort to work with the newly created Hampton Roads Regional Defense Council to shape the construction program. Housing intended for civilian defense workers at NOB, NAS, and the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, in particular, were identified as a type that warranted only temporary construction based on the argument that such workers were not expected to remain in Norfolk after the war ended. Two years later, the local *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot* newspaper reported that a \$30 million “dismountable” housing project had been proposed for Norfolk and Portsmouth for defense workers. Upwards of 10,000 houses could be erected quickly to meet what local realtors remained convinced was a short-term need, then easily removed after the shortage ended, thus avoiding a postwar real estate slump as had happened after 1918. Norfolk Housing Authority Executive Director Lawrence M. Cox was quoted, “the commissioners have always felt that permanent housing for defense workers in Norfolk invited a recurrence of the housing surplus after World War I.”¹⁰ It appears that, for the most part instead of the temporary dwellings, permanent construction projects moved forward, at least in Norfolk. Between January 1, 1940-June 28, 1941, 7,648 new housing units were placed under contract or completed in the city. A local newspaper reported that it ran approximately 100-125 advertisements for rooms, apartments, or houses to rent on a weekly basis. In contrast, the local employment office reported that, between January 1, 1940-June 28, 1941, the number of job seekers in Norfolk and Portsmouth had increased 50 percent, or a total of 8,097 individuals. The number of employees at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard had reached 20,893 civilian workers by this point.¹¹

At least some Norfolk residents also were skeptical of multiple-family housing complexes. The earliest garden apartment complex constructed in Norfolk was the Larchmont Village Apartments located at 5500-5511 Alson Drive, 1110-1142 Bolling Avenue, 1031-1049 Buckingham Street and 5500-5514 Monroe Place. City of Norfolk building permit records demonstrate, however, how Larchmont Village differed in several important aspects from the wartime and immediate postwar garden apartment complexes that are the subject of this Multiple Property Submission. The complex was constructed during the latter years of the Great Depression. The \$830,000-project was privately financed, as opposed to the nearly ubiquitous FHA financing that

⁹ Despite its name, the shipyard has always been located in the City of Portsmouth, Virginia. The military presence in the Hampton Roads region increased throughout the twentieth century. Today, in addition to Naval Station Norfolk and Norfolk Naval Shipyard, the following installations are in the region: Naval Air Station Oceana, Joint Expedition Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Joint Base Langley-Eustis (Langley Air Force Base and Fort Eustis), Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads, Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Coast Guard Base Portsmouth, Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fifth District, and the Virginia National Guard’s Camp Pendleton (aka State Military Reservation). Approximately 83,000 active-duty personnel are assigned to and 40,000 civilians are employed at these installations.

¹⁰ Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 32-34; Thomas C. Parramore et al., *Norfolk: The First Four Centuries*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), p. 335-336; “\$30,000,000 Housing Program for Norfolk Under Consideration,” *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, January 8, 1942, p. 1, 7. Ultimately, the anticipated loss of population in Norfolk did not occur. The sustained military presence in the city that accompanied the onset of the Cold War during the late 1940s, along with factors such as continued economic prosperity for many working- and middle-class families, rapidly changing family lifestyles, and the city’s modernization, shielded Norfolk from the economic downturn that had followed World War I.

¹¹ “Report to Palmer Gives Accurate Line on Housing,” *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, June 28, 1941, p. 4.

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characterized later garden apartment complex projects. Furthermore, the complex was built within the wealthy, well-established Larchmont neighborhood, residents of which mounted fierce opposition to the project due to concerns about potential for decline in their property values. In contrast, Norfolk's World War II-era garden apartment complexes were constructed in only lightly developed suburban areas close to the military installations and were eagerly anticipated by defense workers and military personnel in desperate need of housing. The design of Larchmont Village, however, was in keeping with typical garden apartment complexes. A total of 172 apartments comprised of 628 rooms were housed in a series of interconnected building arranged to form generous courtyards. Ownership structure also was similar, with a private entity incorporated by investors to purchase and develop the property, in this case Larchmont Village, Inc. The project architect was Raymond C. Snow of Washington DC, and the builder (and part owner) was A. Lloyd Goode Contracting Company out of Charlotte, North Carolina. Use of out-of-town design and contracting firms also was not unusual for Norfolk's garden apartment projects during the 1940s.



Figure 3. 2024 Aerial View of Larchmont Village Apartments (Image Source: Google Maps). The site plan and landscape design display character-defining features of garden apartment complexes, including ample space between buildings to provide residents with easy access to the outdoors, a parking lot concealed within the complex's interior, ample vegetation, and emphasis on walkability via a paved circulation network within the complex that also linked it to the surrounding neighborhood.

Local newspapers provided widespread coverage of the U.S. Navy's efforts to obtain suitable housing for the growing number of servicemembers stationed in Norfolk. Servicemembers of all ranks were advised not to bring their families with them when they first arrived at NOB; the search for housing often required weeks, if

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not months. Newspapers even published articles advising homeowners on how to obtain financing to pay for renovations to create rental spaces and suggestions for dividing one bedroom in half by building a stud wall covered with “imitation leather” and furnishing each space with a built-in bunk bed, cupboard, and bookshelf.¹² Finally, Vice Admiral Joseph K. Taussig, commander of NOB, succeeded in forging a better relationship with Norfolk city officials to create new housing options. City officials also were keenly aware of the housing shortage for civilian workers at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard in nearby Portsmouth as well as at other places of employment. The first break in the situation came when the Navy acquired land to build on-base housing using federal funding. Such military-only housing would help to avoid replicating the post-World War I housing crash by not adding to any potential oversupply of civilian housing. The City of Norfolk next undertook construction of a new 87-acre neighborhood, Merrimack Park, located on a peninsula just east of the base, which included 500 units ranging from single-story detached dwellings and duplexes to multiple-family apartments to house married enlisted personnel assigned to NOB. The U. S. Housing Authority financed the \$1.98 million construction cost. The first families moved into the project on July 1, 1941.¹³ A month later, the Ben Morrell project east of Hampton Boulevard on an old Army post in Norfolk created housing both for civilian and married enlisted personnel at NOB. Constructed at a cost of \$3.356 million, 1,062 units were completed by August 15, 1941, and another 300 units later were added. Also in 1941, federal agencies financed construction of 600 units of “Negro housing,” which was welcomed by acknowledged to be inadequate for addressing the need for housing in Norfolk’s Black neighborhoods.¹⁴ Still-skeptical local realtors and lenders argued that any new housing to address the current situation should be temporary in nature and deconstructed as soon as economic conditions improved.¹⁵

Taussig also committed to helping improve the infrastructure needed for the additional defense-related housing, including improving the roads connecting the city with the base.¹⁶ The necessity of improving and expanding infrastructure, particularly roads and water supplies, was reflected in the rapid rate of investment in area utilities from the late 1930s through the 1940s. The Virginia Electric and Power Company (VEPCO) spent \$4.3 million to expand its Norfolk power plant and to extend its grid in cooperation with Virginia Public Service.¹⁷ Primarily to supply the area’s expanding military installations, the federal government paid 75 percent of the cost to lay a new water main to NOB and the City of Norfolk funded the remainder. The federal government fully funded a new water supply line and pumping station for Fort Story and Camp Pendleton. The City of Norfolk further invested in rehabilitating an older pumping station and endeavoring to build a second supply line from West Neck Creek. Although the existing sewage system could handle the growing demand, most of the waste was expelled directly into streams and rivers, which prompted creation of a new Hampton Roads Sanitation District that eventually would oversee construction of wastewater treatment facilities. The Hampton Roads Regional

¹² “Home Owners... Here’s how you can help in the National Defense Program and help yourself at the same time—” *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, May 29, 1941, p. 16; “What to Do,” *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, June 4, 1943, p. 4.

¹³ “Defense Housing, Merrimack Park Project, Norfolk, Virginia,” Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C., <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017689899>; Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 36-37.

¹⁴ “Defense Housing, Ben Morrell Project, Norfolk, Virginia,” Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C., <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017689907>; Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 31-32; “Report to Palmer Gives Accurate Line on Housing,” *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, June 28, 1941, p. 4.

¹⁵ Elijah Palmer, “The Streets of Naval Station Norfolk: Admiral Taussig Boulevard,” July 14, 2016, Hampton Road Naval Museum, <https://hamptonroadsnavalmuseum.blogspot.com/2016/07/the-streets-of-naval-station-norfolk.html>; Thomas C. Parramore et al., *Norfolk: The First Four Centuries*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), p. 335-336.

¹⁶ Elijah Palmer, “The Streets of Naval Station Norfolk: Admiral Taussig Boulevard,” July 14, 2016, Hampton Road Naval Museum, <https://hamptonroadsnavalmuseum.blogspot.com/2016/07/the-streets-of-naval-station-norfolk.html>.

¹⁷ Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 36.

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Defense Council invested \$7 million in local road improvements to handle increased traffic, including along bus routes and streetcar lines used by workers commuting to NOB and the Naval Shipyard.¹⁸

Admiral Taussig also cooperated with the City of Norfolk on much-needed new road construction to handle the sudden growth in local traffic to and from NOB and a new gate at NAS. Historian Marvin W. Schlegel described how Taussig argued that federal investment in road improvement was warranted because defense workers had grown to constitute 20 percent of Norfolk's population, a much higher percentage of the civilian workforce compared to other East Coast cities with a large naval presence, such as New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. A conference hosted by the Hampton Roads Regional Defense Council included representatives from local and state government, the Army and Navy, and federal officials from the National Advisory Commission on Defense and the Public Roads Administration. The event resulted in transportation improvement funding requests that totaled \$6 million. State legislators also began working on funding mechanisms for road improvements, as did the City of Norfolk.¹⁹ The resultant construction projects improved traffic flows to military installations and, equally important, accelerated suburbanization of the Hampton Roads region by creating arterial routes that intertwined among the southeastern Virginia localities of Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, and, on Virginia's Middle Peninsula, Chesapeake, Newport News, and Yorktown.

The September 1939 onset of World War II in Europe had immediately triggered a much faster and more extensive growth rate for Norfolk and its military installations, in large part due to the job opportunities that became suddenly available. Although precise year-to-year population increases from 1938-1945 in Norfolk and their relationship to the military installations and defense industries are not known, secondary sources provide snapshots of the changes over time. For example, the decennial census recorded 129,710 residents of Norfolk in 1930, 144,332 in 1940 (representing an 11.3 percent increase over ten years), and 213,513 in 1950 (a 47 percent increase over ten years). More fine-grained numbers also have been compiled. By June 1940, the Norfolk Naval Shipyard had 11,000 civilian employees and added new employees at the rate of 1,000 per month, while NOB's leadership quickly decided to double its civilian workforce of 8,000.²⁰ NAS, meanwhile, was in the midst of a \$14 million expansion by January 1941, thus creating demand for even more workers. By June 1941, four new families were moving to Norfolk on a daily basis, a rate that grew to six families per day within just a month.²¹ The same year, the federal government proposed to construct 5,800 housing units in Norfolk and Portsmouth as only a first step toward addressing the housing shortage.²² Between 1940-1943, Norfolk's civilian population mushroomed from 144,000 to 200,000. In addition, a total of 168,000 military personnel were stationed in Norfolk at the peak of the local war effort in December 1943, while the workforce at the Norfolk Naval

¹⁸ Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p.34-35, 65; Harry Nash, "Port's Boom Gets Publicity," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, January 17, 1941, p.28.

¹⁹ Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 36-38; Elijah Palmer, "The Streets of Naval Station Norfolk: Admiral Taussig Boulevard," July 14, 2016, Hampton Road Naval Museum, <https://hamptonroadsnavalmuseum.blogspot.com/2016/07/the-streets-of-naval-station-norfolk.html>; Thomas C. Parramore et al., *Norfolk: The First Four Centuries*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), p. 336, 338. During the latter half of the twentieth century, suburbanization continued up the Middle Peninsula to reach Williamsburg as well.

²⁰ Thomas J. Wertenbaker and Marvin W. Schlegel (ed.), *Norfolk: Historic Southern Port*, 2nd edition (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press), 1962, p. 346. From the late 1930s through 1942, the disproportionately low number of Black Virginians moving to Norfolk represented an outlier in the local demographics of defense workers. In keeping with nationally-entrenched practices, most of the new jobs and housing were made available only to White workers. Even the military imposed quotas on the numbers of Black Americans permitted to enlist. See Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class, and Power in Twentieth-Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 168.

²¹ Harry Nash, "Port's Boom Gets Publicity," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, January 17, 1941, p.28; Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class, and Power in Twentieth-Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 168.

²² Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 31, 52.

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Shipyard skyrocketed to an unprecedented 42,893 workers who “repaired, altered, converted, or otherwise accomplished work on 6,850 naval vessels” and “built 101 new ships and landing craft” between 1940-1945.²³ In May of 1943, Major General Philip B. Fleming, who visited Norfolk as part of a broader trip, described the Hampton Roads region as “one of the most vital spots to the war effort in the entire country.”²⁴

The housing shortage in Norfolk, along with other Hampton Roads localities, that had begun during the 1930s became so critical that, but for the realtors’ and lenders’ joint committee led by John Sears and Otto Hollowell, local resistance among the general populace to federally-funded housing projects largely evaporated.²⁵ Lack of adequate housing had become a crisis that directly impacted everyone in Norfolk, as illustrated by rising cost of living and rising rents: “Between September 1939 and December 1941 [when the U.S. entered World War II], the cost of living in Norfolk increased by 17.9 percent,” while average household rent payments had increased 16.4 percent. Both statistics outstripped the respective national averages of 12.1 and 3.6 percent. In the Black neighborhoods of Norfolk where substandard housing had long been the norm, monthly rents increased 55 percent between 1938-1941 despite lack of any substantial improvements to the housing. In an environment where basic civil rights were not acknowledged, landlords were free to raise rents to whatever point the market would bear. Landlords also could refuse outright to rent to people they deemed undesirable, such as single women, Black families, or any other potential tenant.²⁶ Crowded living conditions also had reached an extreme point, with military commanders stating that five to six thousand enlisted men and their families lived in conditions with three to four people per room and bathrooms shared among several families, and at a monthly rental that was higher than a five-room apartment at the publicly-financed Ben Morrell development. A separate survey by the local Norfolk Homes Registration Bureau identified 26 apartments of four rooms apiece that collectively housed 58 families.²⁷

Congressional passage of the Defense Housing and Community Facilities and Services Act of 1940 (popularly known as the Lanham Act) established a federal construction program for defense-related housing in cities and towns nationwide where defense-related industries were established and at military installations with rapidly increasing numbers of personnel. The National Housing Authority, created in 1942 to consolidate assorted federal agencies with an emphasis on construction, oversaw completion of more than 800,000 new defense housing units. As happened during World War I, some of these were intended to be temporary buildings, but permanent construction also figured prominently in the NHA’s work.²⁸ In Norfolk, in addition to the aforementioned publicly-owned Merrimack Park and Ben Morrell projects, the privately-owned developments that were constructed in the first wave of defense-related housing construction included Suburban Park, Commodore Park, Glenwood Park, Lafayette Shores, Willard Park, Riverdale, and Fairmount Manor. Local

²³ “Shipyards: Norfolk: History: Roots,” Naval Sea Systems Command, <https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/Shipyards/Norfolk/About-Us/History/Roots/#9>; Thomas C. Parramore et al., *Norfolk: The First Four Centuries*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), p. 336.

²⁴ “Head of Federal Works Agency Views War Projects Here, Expresses Pride,” *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, May 17, 1943, p. 16.

²⁵ Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 52-53, 55-57.

²⁶ Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class, and Power in Twentieth-Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 169, 171.

²⁷ Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 58-59.

²⁸ Marilyn M. Harper et al., *World War II & the American Home Front, A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study*, produced by the National Historic Landmarks Program, Cultural Resources, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., October 2007, p. 43-44. The largest defense housing project was at Vanport City, Portland, Oregon, for workers at the Kaiser shipyards, with upwards of 40,000 people in need of housing. Other examples of the era’s major housing projects that were closer to Norfolk included Parkfairfax in Alexandria, Virginia, and Fairlington in Arlington County, Virginia, which were designed for federal government employees (both of these were listed in the NRHP in 1999), and Middle River in Baltimore, Maryland.

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developers still steadfastly maintained that the housing shortage would end within a few months as defense construction projects were completed and the workers moved on. Their stubborn refusal to acknowledge the housing shortage meant that most of the private developments were undertaken by out-of-town builders. Local businessman W. Bruce Shafer Jr., a produce dealer, took it upon himself to court the out-of-towners to continue working in Norfolk, drawing the ire of the joint housing committee headed by John Sears and Otto Hallowell, who continued to argue against new construction. Meanwhile, the City of Norfolk had begun construction of its own public housing projects, beginning in January 1941 by announcing a 665-unit housing project for workers at Norfolk Naval Shipyard.²⁹ The suburban, publicly-owned, 300-unit Oakleaf Park and 230-unit Roberts Park housing projects were constructed for Black defense workers, many of them newcomers to Norfolk, but did little to ease the housing crisis long endured by Black residents in Norfolk's older neighborhoods.³⁰ Local squabbling about the need for additional permanent housing continued off and on through the early 1940s, but the rate of housing construction reached a breakneck place. Shafer himself, with two investors, N. C. Wright and Oscar Smith, commenced construction of a 1,200-house development on 343 acres, and this was but one of many housing developments that were built in Norfolk during the war years.

Design of the above projects and subsequent permanent single-and multiple-family housing was profoundly influenced by housing reformers as well as architects steeped in the Modern Movement, which had its origins in European countries. As adherents to the Modern Movement in architecture fled Germany, Italy, and other countries threatened by fascism, the movement's tenets reached American shores and had a particularly long-lasting impact on architecture schools, including at the University of Virginia and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). Architects for federal housing projects used the International Style and injected Modernist tenets in terms of spatial arrangements, elements of community-oriented or common areas, street layouts, and landscape design.³¹

Additionally, the 1941 Defense Housing Insurance program's guidelines had to be used; these specified the construction materials and methods and subdivision planning practices for building wartime housing quickly and cheaply. Lessons learned from these projects informed postwar civilian housing projects for decades thereafter. Among the most famous of the post-World War II suburban neighborhoods, Levittown in Long Island, New York, was the brainchild of developer William Levitt. A lesser-known fact is that Levitt had an opportunity to test the planning and construction practices that characterized the postwar era through his experience building Oakdale Farm, which provided wartime housing for Naval Shipyard workers in Norfolk and Newport News. The newly devised construction methods and materials were integral to solving the worst of the housing shortages that occurred nationwide in cities such as Norfolk, where unprecedented ramping up of military activity spilled over to affect the civilian population and provision of services by local governments.³² Although Levitt utilized the period's newly developed construction methods and materials, his projects displayed traditional architectural designs rather than those associated with the Modern Movement.

²⁹ Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 32, 51, 78-80; Thomas C. Parramore et al., *Norfolk: The First Four Centuries*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), p. 331. As indicated by their picturesque names, these were suburban projects.

³⁰ Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class, and Power in Twentieth-Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 172; Thomas C. Parramore et al., *Norfolk: The First Four Centuries*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), p. 336; Marvin W. Schlegel, *Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II*, 2nd edition (Norfolk: The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, 1991), p. 59; Environmental Justice Policy Clinic, "Fighting Integration with Fire: World War II and Defense Housing," July 21, 2022, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f7e5cc93aee24dd48c78f08c3a5f39b2>.

³¹ Marilyn M. Harper et al., *World War II & the American Home Front, A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study*, produced by the National Historic Landmarks Program, Cultural Resources, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. October 2007, p. 43-44.

³² Marilyn M. Harper et al., *World War II & the American Home Front, A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study*, produced by the National Historic Landmarks Program, Cultural Resources, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. October 2007, p. 43-44.

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The Federal Government's Impact on Construction Financing and Design Standards

The Roosevelt Administration's first attempt to rescue the real estate industry during the Great Depression came in the form of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), which was established to purchase mortgages on the brink of foreclosure and issue new mortgages with repayment periods of 15-25 years. Payments on the new mortgages went toward both the principal and interest, which meant that the size of the debt decreased with steady payments.³³ Subject to boom-and-bust cycles for decades, the real estate industry was among the most volatile sectors in the U.S. economy long before the Great Depression years. Strategies to minimize financial risk, therefore, were built into the Roosevelt administration's housing programs from their beginning. Among these strategies was to assess the viability of extending construction financing to properties within every American metropolitan area. The HOLC hired numerous appraisers to carry out the analysis. A color-coded map of each area was created with streets and neighborhoods marked as being lower to higher risk based on local economic conditions and demographics. Areas marked with red lines were considered to have the highest risk, thus creating the term "redlining," which since the 1930s has referred to any place that is not considered to be worthy of investment. Although professional appraisers had been placed in charge of analyzing housing markets, their findings were not based solely on objective data. Nationwide, racial prejudices were imbued in their reports, especially with regard to areas occupied by Black Americans. Although Jim Crow segregation laws mandated racial separation in all of the former Confederate states, White prejudice against people of color occurred nationwide, including threats of violence toward Black people who sought to acquire property in majority-White neighborhoods. Rates of homeownership and familial wealth patterns amply demonstrated the adverse effects of these pattern on African Americans.³⁴

Passage of the National Housing Act of 1934 created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which used the HOLC redlined maps to calculate risks for extending financing for new housing construction. Redlined areas were not eligible for FHA-insured mortgages. Unlike the HOLC, the FHA was structured to offer financing for real estate developers and builders in addition to individual homeowners. To entice lenders to resume financing of housing construction, the FHA insured bank-issued mortgages with generous terms that included issuing 80 percent of acquisition cost, a 20-year repayment term, and amortized interest rates. The mortgage insurance greatly alleviated the financial risks taken on by local banks that extended construction loans. Regulations that implemented the National Housing Act also loosened requirements that had to be met by banks that offered loans, thus increasing the flow of funding for private housing development.³⁵ Effects of the new financing mechanism were significant as the Great Depression waned. Between March 1-September 30, 1940, Virginia FHA Director C. C. Barksdale reported that applications from the Hampton Roads area for FHA

³³ This lending model became so entrenched as the norm for home purchases that henceforth most home mortgages have been structured in a similar fashion up to the present day.

³⁴ Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017), p. 63-64.

³⁵ Federal Reserve History, "Redlining," June 2, 2023, <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/redlining>; Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, "FDR and Housing Legislation," no date, <https://www.fdrlibrary.org/housing>. In 1937, passage of the Wagner-Steagall Act established the Federal Public Housing Authority (FPHA; later renamed U.S. Public Housing Authority), which provided loans to state and local housing authorities. Low-interest loans covering 90 percent of construction costs with up to 60-year repayment terms prompted unprecedented construction of public housing across the country. The Norfolk Housing Authority was created on July 30, 1940, to access this program on behalf of the City. By the end of 1940, USHA had financed over 500 housing projects at a cost of \$691 million. USHA loans also helped to pay for defense workers' housing.

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financing totaled \$4 million and, by creating new housing units, would alleviate the region's growing housing shortage as local defense industries ramped up.³⁶

Another powerful influence on housing construction by the FHA came in the form of its first underwriting manual. The FHA's first administrator, James Moffett, ran the agency with the intent of minimizing risk of all kinds. Among the property types deemed risky were all types of rental housing, which were the primary type of housing occupied by lower-income families, and construction projects located in cities, which were thought to be less viable long term when compared to suburban projects. The agency embraced redlining and restrictive racial covenants on the theory that racially mixed neighborhoods and those occupied primarily by minority groups were less likely to increase in value over the long term, especially when compared to new, all-White suburban areas. In 1938, the FHA's underwriting manual stated that "infiltration of inharmonious racial groups" constituted a lending risk that could be abated by providing financing for projects with racial covenants that permitted ownership and occupancy solely by White people.³⁷

In states such as Virginia, where Jim Crow segregation was enshrined in state and local law, racial segregation in all aspects of life was the norm. The FHA's lending practices were in keeping with long-established housing occupancy patterns. At this time, all branches of the U.S. military also were segregated. Publicly-owned housing for service members and defense workers and privately-owned rental housing in Norfolk all were segregated by race. In Norfolk, the aforementioned Merrimack Park project to house married enlisted personnel assigned to NOB included 500 units ranging from single-story detached dwellings and duplexes to multiple-family apartments. The U. S. Housing Authority financed the \$1.98 million construction cost. The first families moved into the project on July 1, 1941.³⁸ A month later, the Ben Morrell project in Norfolk created housing both for civilian and married enlisted personnel at NOB. Constructed at a cost of \$3.356 million, 1,062 units were completed by August 15, 1941, and another 300 units later were added.³⁹ Both of these projects were available only to White residents. By comparison, the federal government funded construction of just 24 frame dwellings for Black occupants in Titustown (also referred to as Titusville in some historical sources) in the Wards Corner area.⁴⁰

The FHA continued to require segregated housing throughout the 1940s. A U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1948, *Shelley v. Kraemer*, rendered racially restrictive covenants intended to apply to an entire residential development unenforceable. The establishment, however, of private homeowners' associations (HOAs) provided a way to avoid integration because HOAs were given authority to approve or refuse a purchase contract. Homebuilders also added deed restrictions that specified the purchasing homeowner could not later sell their property to a person who was not White. Private owners of multiple-family rental housing also found

³⁶ "Housing Need Gets FHA Aid," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, October 17, 1940, p. 33.

³⁷ "Federal Housing Administration (FHA)," Encyclopedia.com, no date, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/economics/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/federal-housing-administration-fha>; Federal Reserve History, "Redlining," June 2, 2023, <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/redlining>; Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017), p. 64-66.

³⁸ "Defense Housing, Merrimack Park Project, Norfolk, Virginia," Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C., <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017689899>.

³⁹ "Defense Housing, Ben Morrell Project, Norfolk, Virginia," Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C., <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017689907>.

⁴⁰ Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class, and Power in Twentieth-Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 171.

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ways to avoid adhering to the Court's ruling. FHA financing of all these types of construction projects continued into the 1960s.⁴¹

In addition to creating a financially viable means to finance construction of housing projects and assuring that such projects were racially segregated, the FHA profoundly influenced the design of these dwellings. As documented and synthesized by Laura Trieschmann and Andrea Schoenfeld in the MPD entitled, "Garden Apartments, Apartment Houses and Apartment Complexes in Arlington County, Virginia: 1934-1954," the roots of FHA-mandated design requirements for garden apartments has its roots in the Small House Movement that sought to have architects design modestly-sized dwellings that included modern mechanical systems, ample natural light, and square footage sufficient to accommodate a two-parent household comfortably. The FHA's enormously influential 1936 publication, *Principles of Planning Small Houses*, drew on these design principles to feature five house plans that ranged from 500 to 900 square feet, with specifications for minimum room sizes, meant to accommodate families of three or more.⁴² The FHA drew from the resultant house plans to develop similar requirements for apartment dwellings in the 1939 publication *Architectural Planning and Procedure for Rental Housing*. Motivation for these manuals was rooted in the public interest of facilitating construction of suitable housing while also protecting the FHA's financial investments in construction projects.⁴³

The FHA's preference for suburban construction projects also evidenced itself in the agency's guidelines for designing garden apartment complexes. The agency's role often as the only source of financing construction meant that the FHA guidelines essentially became the industry standard as well. With regard to construction methods and materials, the FHA adhered to the same principles as for defense housing – efficient design, economical, yet durable, materials, and rapid construction methods that would minimize costs while quickly making new housing units available to the public. For garden apartment complexes, FHA officials also preferred sites and settings that offered some of the same amenities as found in single-family suburban developments, including ample outdoor space with attractive, low-maintenance landscaping, exterior unit entries, and opportunities to enhance natural light and cross ventilation indoors. Envisioned as the antithesis to the overcrowded, poorly maintained tenements typical of older urban areas, garden apartments were meant to offer tenants a pleasant living experience with access to modern infrastructure, mechanical systems, and amenities just as occupants of single-family dwellings enjoyed. Finally, the FHA signaled that the longstanding practices of absentee landlords, many of whom charged high rents but provided little to no maintenance of their rental properties, would not be acceptable in FHA-financed projects. Provision for housing of at least one onsite rental company employee, who would be responsible for routine maintenance and groundskeeping, was specified for garden apartment projects. In addition to providing sound housing for residents, the mandates for ongoing maintenance protected the FHA's investment in the project and its long-term, continued use.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017), p. 66-67, 70-75.

⁴² Laura Trieschmann and Andrea Schoenfeld, "Garden Apartments, Apartment Houses and Apartment Complexes in Arlington County, Virginia: 1934-1954," Multiple Property Documentation Form, February 2, 2011, Section E p. 11; U.S. Federal Housing Administration; *Principles of Planning Small Houses*, Technical Bulletin No. 4 as referenced by Trieschmann and Schoenfeld. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936), 24-33.

⁴³ Laura Trieschmann and Andrea Schoenfeld, "Garden Apartments, Apartment Houses and Apartment Complexes in Arlington County, Virginia: 1934-1954," Multiple Property Documentation Form, February 2, 2011, Section E p. 11-12; U.S. Federal Housing Administration; *Architectural Planning and Procedure for Rental Housing* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), p. 7 as referenced by Trieschmann and Schoenfeld.

⁴⁴ Laura Trieschmann and Andrea Schoenfeld, "Garden Apartments, Apartment Houses and Apartment Complexes in Arlington County, Virginia: 1934-1954," Multiple Property Documentation Form, February 2, 2011, Section E p. 10-12; "FHA Housing Requirements are Explained, *Washington Post*, 24 October 1937, R2 as referenced by Trieschmann and Schoenfeld..

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For these reasons, the FHA became the main source of financing for Norfolk's garden apartment complexes that were constructed between 1942-1949. According to a newspaper article published in mid-February of 1942, about two months after the U.S. entered the war, nearly 100 subdivisions were under review by the FHA Land Planning Division. Virginia FHA Director C. C. Barksdale reported that applications for FHA mortgages filed thus far were three times higher than the first six weeks of the preceding year, with more than 90 percent of the applications from the Hampton Roads area. Barksdale projected that construction of 1,500 new housing units was imminent and another 5,000 units would be underway within three or four months.⁴⁵ Although a comprehensive inventory of the complexes built during this period has yet to be compiled, approximately 20 projects have been identified to date. Based on newspaper coverage at the time, these projects offered much-needed and welcomed housing to Norfolk residents. Due to racial segregation, however, the benefits of these projects largely were limited to the city's White population. African Americans continued to be crowded into Norfolk's inner core, where families were subjected to substandard conditions that fell drastically short of the minimum standards the FHA required for its suburban projects.

Post-World War II Growth in Norfolk

Norfolk's housing shortage continued after World War II when, unlike the preceding war's end, the military presence at NOB, NAS, and other installations in the Hampton Roads area not only was sustained, but even increased with the onset of what became known as the Cold War between Western allies and the Soviet Union. A January 2, 1945, newspaper article reported that the S. L. Nusbaum & Company realty firm had conducted a study of the local market and found little indication of speculation amidst plans for robust postwar construction activity.⁴⁶ Approximately \$1.5 million in real estate transactions were reported either for direct use by the purchaser or for investment in new developments. Suburban commercial projects already were under way, another indication of confidence in the war's imminent end. Among the projects cited in the article was one in the vicinity of Granby Street and Sewells Point Road, where several wartime garden apartment complexes were located, where a new "junior" department store and an office for the National Bank of Commerce had just been completed. Such endeavors also indicated loosening of wartime labor and materials shortages and signaled the remarkably strong local economy.⁴⁷ October 1949, despite ongoing construction. Oceanair Apartments, with 458 units, and Lafayette Shores, with 472 units, Sussex-at-Norfolk, with 396 units, Riverpoint, with 220 units, and Riverside Terrace, with 232 units, all filled prior to completion and property managers established lengthy waiting lists for potential new tenants. Ralph E. Bush, a developer at Lafayette Shores, stated that none of the units was vacant for more than two weeks. W. Taylor Johnson, developer of Oceanair and Riverside Terrace, noted that those two projects had 83 and 60 percent occupancy, respectively, by Navy personnel and their families.⁴⁸ The following month, the housing shortage and accompanying rent increases were the topic of discussion at a November 28, 1949, City Council meeting. Joseph Baron, who had co-chaired the wartime Citizens Emergency Committee for Rent Control, presented a report on average monthly apartment rents and vacancies in Norfolk. Inquiries at fourteen larger rental properties revealed that 10 had no vacancies and just 6 vacancies were spread among the other 4 properties. The surveyed projects included Bondale Apartments, Kingsley Lane Apartments, Meadowbrook Gardens Apartments, Oakdale Homes Apartments, Riverpoint Apartments, Riverside Terrace Apartments, Sewells Park Apartments, Sussex-at-Norfolk Apartments, and Talbot Park Apartments, all of which are among the garden apartment complexes that are the subject of this

⁴⁵ "FHA Reports Applications in Area Rocket," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, February 14, 1942, p. 13.

⁴⁶ The newspaper article was published 5 months prior to the surrender of Nazi Germany in Europe and 8 months prior to Imperial Japan's defeat. By this point in the war, however, Allied confidence in eventual victory was high.

⁴⁷ "Realty Firm Reports Sales[,] Sees Postwar Era Active," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, January 2, 1945, p. 4.

⁴⁸ "'No Vacancy' Sign Out for High Rentals," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, October 20, 1949, p. 19, 27.

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MPD. Monthly rents had increased across the board due to the shortage. Although Baron urged reimposition of rent controls to address the problem, it appears that the City Council took no action in this regard.⁴⁹

The city's continued rapid suburban development and population growth had to be addressed both by utility companies and the municipal government with regard to infrastructure. For example, on May 30, 1946, the Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Company announced a \$30,000 expansion in response to demands for new service to the Ocean View area, which included the Talbot Park Apartments, Sewell's Park Apartments, and Daniels Gardens, all of which were garden apartment complexes, as well as several nearby single-family developments, such as Suburban Park and Oakdale Farms.⁵⁰ The City also routinely approved infrastructure projects to accommodate the growing population. At a meeting on May 28, 1947, the City Council appropriated \$41,899 to pay for street improvements at Riverside Terrace, a waterside garden apartment complex west of Granby High School and Talbot Park Apartments. The cost would be partially offset by increased property taxes. A few weeks later, on June 11, 1947, the Council approved installation of water mains and seven fire hydrants for the new Sussex-at-Norfolk garden apartments complex, a sewer line to service Riverside Terrace, roadway improvements between Riverside Terrace and Hariton Gardens, and acquisition of several suburban tracts to create recreational parks.⁵¹

As local population grew, the need for expanded and new schools followed suit. The City's public school system was racially segregated and appropriations for both White and Black schools were reported on in local newspapers. An example is an article that appeared on June 11, 1947, that reported the City Council approved new appropriations to complete a new elementary school in the Granby area, a \$4.125 appropriation for construction of new "Negro" schools.⁵² The "war babies" of 1942-1943 represented a 34 percent increase in the enrollment of first-grade Black and White students by 1949. The disproportionate increase in younger students was evident in other measures, too. While enrollment of students between grades 1 through 12 increased by 846 pupils between the 1947-1948 and 1948-1949 school years, 667 of those pupils were in grades 1-4. The Granby district schools, where the garden apartment complexes that are the subject of this MPS are located, were among those most affected by the population increase, along with Ocean View and Bay View. "They serve the northern part of Norfolk, and that part, as everyone knows, has seen extensive residential and apartment house growth." At this time, the U.S. Census Bureau already had calculated that Virginia's population increased 12.7 percent between 1940 and 1947. Norfolk absorbed even higher growth rates due to its military and defense industry ties. Between just 1945-1946, the national birthrate had risen sharply as servicemembers demobilized and returned to their homes to resume civilian lives.⁵³ The children born in 1946 kicked off the sustained "Baby Boom" that continued for almost twenty years and profoundly reshaped American life.

With regard to Norfolk's continued military presence, these installations grew during the postwar era. NOB and NAS became home to the Navy's Atlantic Fleet and the two installations together were renamed Naval Station Norfolk in January 1953. Over time, the installation expanded to encompass 6,200 acres and a complement of

⁴⁹ "Shortage Found in Low Rentals, Declares Baron," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, November 29, 1949, p. 23.

⁵⁰ "More 'Phones Promised to Ocean View," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, May 30, 1946, p. 5.

⁵¹ "Council Approves Personnel Bureau as Abbott Objects," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, May 28, 1947, p. 17, 26; "Council Okays School, Play Projects Here," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, June 11, 1947, p. 3. Riverside Terrace was demolished during the mid-2010s and replaced with the current Westport Apartments property. Talbot Park Apartments is extant and is described in greater detail below.

⁵² "Council Okays School, Play Projects Here," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, June 11, 1947, p. 3.

⁵³ "The War Babies are Knocking at School Doors," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, August 31, 1949, p. 6; "Virginia's Population Growth," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, October 15, 1947, p. 8.

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67,000 personnel.⁵⁴ Following the war, the number of employees at Norfolk Naval Shipyard had decreased but the shipyard remained busy with repairing and maintaining Navy ships “of every conceivable type,” and, furthermore, became a center for the unprecedented nuclear-powered supercarriers that were designed and brought online in the decades after the war.⁵⁵ Today, in addition to being the home for the Navy's largest concentration of naval forces, Naval Station Norfolk also hosts personnel from the Marine Corps, Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard, and supports significant joint missions as well.⁵⁶ The continued military presence in Norfolk, along with growth in other sectors of Norfolk's economy, created sustained demand for rental housing. Society pages in local newspapers were filled with announcements of newly arrived military officers, weddings of local women to servicemen, out-of-town guests visiting naval personnel, and social events ranging from cocktail parties to baby showers. Additionally, the advent of Veterans Administration (VA) loans for purchasing houses created an opportunity for retiring enlisted servicemembers and officers to stay in Norfolk indefinitely, a phenomenon that has continued to the present day.

⁵⁴ Naval History and Heritage Command, “Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, Overview,” August 30, 2019, <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/organization-and-administration/installations/naval-station-norfolk.html>.

⁵⁵ “Norfolk Naval Shipyard Portsmouth, VA History,” Norfolk Naval Shipyard Portsmouth, VA (Post Publishing Inc., 2024), <https://www.norfolknavalshipyardhousing.com/history>.

⁵⁶ Naval History and Heritage Command, “Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, Overview,” August 30, 2019, <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/organization-and-administration/installations/naval-station-norfolk.html>.

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Figure 4. Norfolk and Vicinity Western Section, Map Prepared by City Planning Commission, Norfolk, Virginia, June 1945 Revised to January 1951. Since 1939, Norfolk Naval Station's footprint had expanded south to Terminal Boulevard, east to Granby Street, and, via infilling wetlands, northeast to wrap around the east side of Willoughby Bay. By this time, Wards Corner had been considerably more developed. Sewell's Point Road (today's West Little Creek Road) was the spine from which 1940-1949 garden apartment complexes, as well as other suburban projects, radiated. Another node of garden apartment complexes was constructed in the vicinity of the newly completed St. Vincent De Paul Hospital, further south along Granby Street.

Privately Developed Garden Apartment Complexes in Norfolk, 1942-1949

At least twenty multiple-family, FHA-financed projects were constructed in Norfolk between 1942-1949, with at least six of those built during the postwar period. More than in other Virginia cities, such as Richmond, and the northern Virginia suburbs of Arlington County, the demand for multiple-family housing in Norfolk was supported by the high number of military servicemembers returning to civilian life. This demand was coupled with the national postwar trend of many working- and middle-class people moving to urban and suburban areas for employment.

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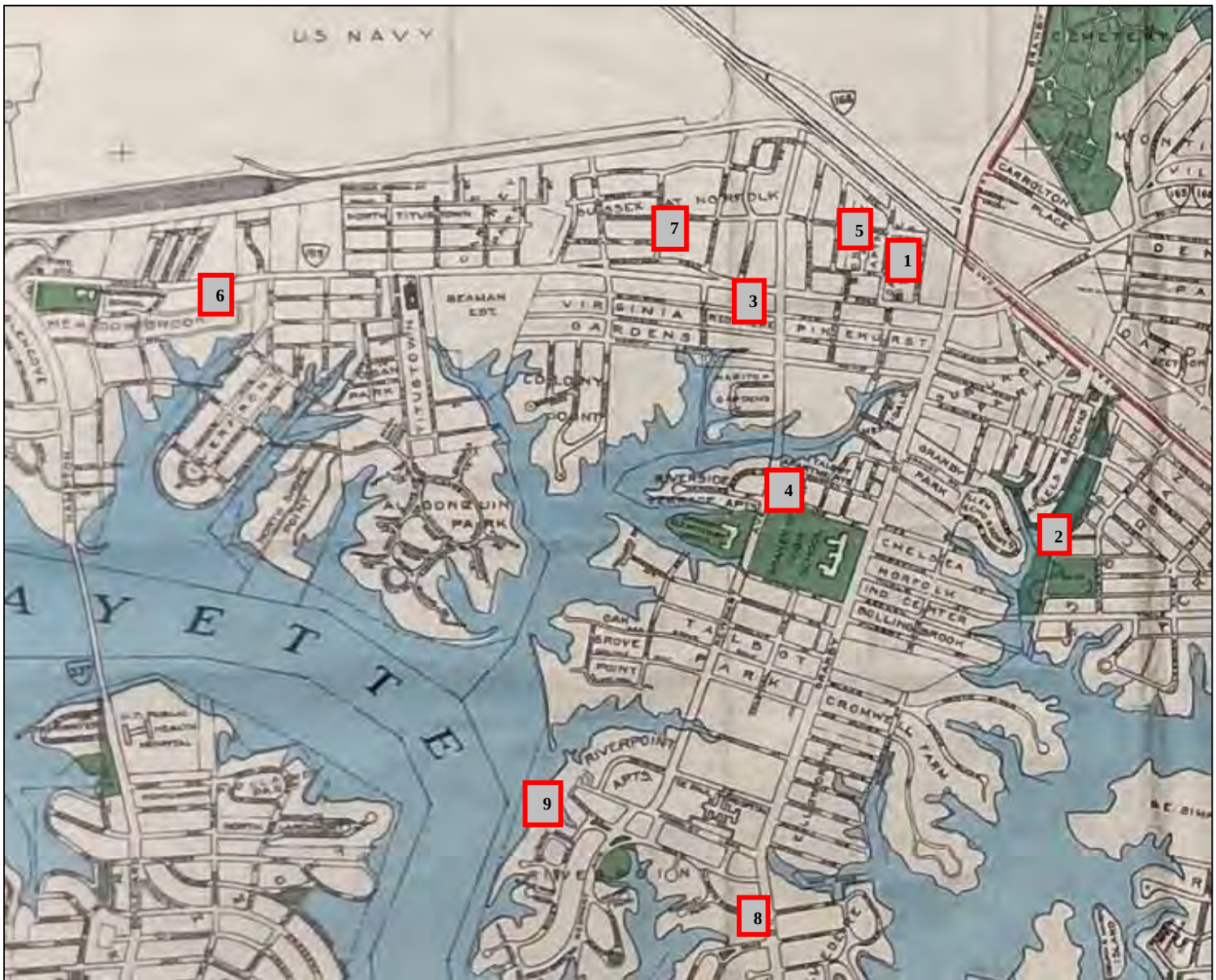


Figure 5. Norfolk and Vicinity Western Section. City Planning Commission, Norfolk, Virginia, June 1945 Revised Jan. 1951.

Locations of the extant garden apartments are marked above and are as follows: 1. Oakdale Homes Apartments (built 1942); 2. Daniels Gardens Apartments (1942-1943); 3. Sewells Park Apartments (1942-1943); 4. Talbot Park Apartments (1942-1943); 5. Bondale Apartments (1943-1944); 6. Meadowbrook Gardens Apartments (1947-1948); 7. Sussex-at-Norfolk Apartments (1947-1948); 8. Kingsley Lane Apartments (1947-1948); 9. Riverpoint Apartments (1947-1948)

The garden apartment concept focused on a higher quality of life for residents by providing well-designed living spaces in a format that allowed developers to maintain profits through inclusion of numerous multiple-unit buildings. A typical garden apartment complex's landscape design featured large interior green spaces with trees, shrubs, and gardens, courtyards, and walkways paved with concrete or decorative brick. These amenities provided an attractive and enjoyable recreational and outdoor living space for the residents. Practical concerns, such as central laundry facilities and dedicated parking sites, were addressed but their appearance was minimized through careful siting and unobtrusive design. The apartment buildings generally rose two to three stories and were arranged to maximize open outdoor areas without crowding. Individual apartment units were designed to have views of the interior green spaces rather than utilitarian resources such as parking, trash

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collection, electrical sheds, and laundry buildings. Natural light and ventilation also were prioritized in siting of the buildings and interior floor plans.

The majority of Norfolk's extant garden apartments from this period are located within a few miles of each other off of Granby Street and West Little Creek Road. Nine World War II-era garden apartment complexes are still extant in Norfolk, and each is briefly described below. Five of these were wartime projects and four were constructed during the late 1940s. Unless otherwise noted, the complexes provided housing only for White residents during the Jim Crow era. Several contemporaneous 1940s garden apartment complexes have been demolished over the years, including Bolling Square Apartments (300 units), Lafayette Shores Apartments (644 units) and Suburban Park Apartments (209 units), as well as numerous smaller examples.

Although some of Norfolk's 1940s garden apartment complexes are no longer extant, information about their scale, style, financing, and other aspects contributes to understanding of the local context within which these properties originally were constructed. For example, Riverside Terrace Apartments (FHA), located at Newport Ave. and Warren St. was built 1947-1948 at a cost of \$2,000,000 and included 232 units spread across 17 International Style buildings. The owners were Riverside, Inc. and the Chester Corp., of which W. Taylor Johnson was president, and the architect was Bernard B. Spigel. Riverside Terrace was demolished during the mid-2010s and has been replaced by a new complex called Westport Apartments, completed in 2019. Another example, Suburban Park Apartments, was built in two phases. The first phase was built in 1940-1941 and consisted of sixteen buildings designed by Hal Miller & Associates. There were eleven six-family buildings and five seven-family buildings. The buildings contained 101 apartments and the cost was \$350,000. The second phase was built in 1941-1942 and consisted of eighteen buildings. Each building contained six apartments with two on each floor, comprising a total of 108 apartments with 414 rooms. The one-bedroom units contained 3½ rooms; the two bedroom units were 4½ rooms, with the half-size room termed a dinette. The building permits were dated January 14, 1941, and also included a lockers and storage building for \$4,500. The total permit cost for the second phase was \$265,000.⁵⁷

On the following pages is information about each of the nine extant garden apartment complexes built between 1942-1949 that have been identified to date. An aerial view, brief narrative description, and current photos are provided for each property.

⁵⁷ "Permits Issued Housing Project," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, May 6, 1947, p. 1; "Name Donovan to Head Board," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, December 10, 1947, p. 17; "75 Apartments Ready in Fall, Rest of 232 by First of Year," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, May 7, 1947, p. 25; "Norfolk Gets Large Housing Project Under FHA," *Norfolk Ledger-Star*, August 17, 1940, p. 4; "101 Families to Be Housed in Apartment," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, August 17, 1940, p. 6, 14; "Suburban Park Buildings Near Completion," *Norfolk Ledger-Star*, December 31, 1940, p. 14; "Big Project Ready at Suburban Park," *Norfolk Ledger-Star*, January 11, 1941; "Building Gets Lively Start," *Norfolk Ledger-Star*, January 31, 1941, p. 1. The original plans for Suburban Park Apartments are at the Library of Virginia in Richmond. The building permits are at the Sargeant Memorial Collect, Norfolk Public Library.

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West Little Creek Road Area

Oakdale Homes Apartments, located at 124 West Little Creek Road, was an FHA-financed project built in 1942 at a total cost of \$240,000. The City of Norfolk issued its building permit along with 81 others, indicating the rapid rate of construction by that time underway. Oakdale Homes, Inc., was the corporate entity that was the property owner of record. The corporation's president, James Rosati, was based in New York City. He was among several out-of-town investors and developers who entered Norfolk's wartime real estate market due to the aforementioned hesitance of local builders and realtors to engage in new housing construction. Rosati's firm purchased a ten-acre tract formerly known as Rose Gardens and planned a complex that would include 160 units in twenty buildings. The corporation contracted the local Witten Construction Company for the engineering and construction of the project. Now called Sterling Oaks, this complex has less green space than some other 1940s garden apartment complexes in Norfolk, perhaps due to its status as an early example of the resource type in the city. Variegated roof types and a mixture of vinyl siding (which conceals the original wood siding) and brick veneer enliven the otherwise rather conventional Colonial Revival style of the buildings. Each unit has an exterior entry with a raised panel, metal door. The windows have one-over-one, vinyl sash that replaced the original sash at an unknown date. Composed of three sections, the apartment complex has a total of twenty extant buildings with eight units apiece. North of West Little Creek Road, five two-story buildings are arranged around a semicircular driveway. The seven-bay center building has a three-bay, hipped-roof porch, exterior end chimneys, and a gable roof, while its lateral wings have hipped roofs. The two gable-roofed buildings along West Little Creek Road also have exterior end chimneys along with three-bay, shed-roof porches and gable-roofed, lateral wings. The remaining two buildings in this cluster are similar to those along the road, with interior brick chimneys and a single-bay, pedimented porch, but lack lateral wings. The ten buildings in the center section of the complex replicate the variations in the front section. The rear section contains five gable-roofed buildings. Paved sidewalks interconnect the buildings.⁵⁸ Mature trees are interspersed among the buildings, and foundation plantings include evergreen shrubs and small flowerbeds. At the approximate center of the complex are a small, pyramidal-roofed, concrete block building divided by a wide central passage and a rectangular swimming pool with a concrete apron and metal railing. The property's only departure from a typical garden apartment complex is its lack of an internal parking lot, or any surface parking but for the circular drive off West Little Creek Road. Instead, most tenants appear to park on the adjacent streets.



Figure 6. Aerial View of Oakdale Home Apartments (Image Source: VCRIS VGIN Aerial)

⁵⁸ "City Building Given Boost," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, February 14, 1942, p. 4; "Rose Gardens Tract is Sold," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, February 5, 1942, p. 27; "New Housing Project Starts," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, February 12, 1942, p. 22; "Building Boom Continues with 51 More Units," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, February 12, 1942, p. 20; Sandra DeChard, 2016 architectural survey of Oakdale Homes Apartments (DHR #122-5943), Virginia Cultural Resources Information System, Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia.

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Figure 7. Representative Apartment Buildings at Oakdale Homes Apartments (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Located at 7311-7423 E. Kenmore Drive, the privately-financed **Daniels Gardens Apartments** (now known as Archers Green Apartments) were built in 1942-1943 at a total cost of \$260,000; just two years later, the complex was sold to local investors for a little over double its construction cost. The original owner was Daniels Gardens, Inc., a corporation formed by the Duffy Brothers firm in New York City, and Benjamin Daniels of Long Island was listed as the new corporation's president. The builder was Moore Operating Corporation. The complex originally consisted of 17 four-family, two-story, concrete block buildings with a total of 172 units, reportedly built at a cost of \$10,000 each. In February 1943, the local *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot* newspaper observed that approval of the complex's construction permit reflected "the recent trend to conservation of critical building materials in the construction of housing for war workers, by allowing most favorable priorities for multi-family buildings."⁵⁹ The apartment buildings were within an oblong area encompassed by the semicircular Kenmore Drive, which extended north and south of Suburban Parkway. Interestingly, three buildings along the west side of Kenmore Drive, south of Suburban Parkway, are virtually identical to the buildings within the oblong area. Based on a 1948 topographic map (at right), it appears that a total of 26 buildings had been constructed within Kenmore Drive by this time and the outer edges of Kenmore Drive also were fully developed. All of the garden apartment buildings are Colonial Revival style with a mix of red-brick veneer and vinyl siding (presumably over original wood), white trim, one-over-one vinyl replacement sash, and hipped roofs with asphalt shingle roofing. Fenestration patterns have not been altered. Each building has a centered, gable- or hipped-roof bay that shelters the entries to the four units. Enclosed by the apartment buildings are paved concrete parking lots and, in the area south of south of Suburban Parkway, a polygonal swimming pool and a fenced area that may be a dog run. Paved walkways interconnect the buildings within Kenmore Drive and concrete sidewalks line both the interior and exterior edges of the street. Mature landscaping includes ornamental and shade trees as well as foundation plantings composed of evergreen shrubs. Hipped-roof, two story buildings are centered within the complex on the north and south sides of Suburban Parkway and at the northernmost end of the complex. Although very similar in form, massing, design, and materials to the rest of the complex's buildings, the three do not appear on the 1948 topographic maps and are assumed to have been constructed at a later date. Further research is needed to ascertain the relationships among the original complex and later phases of development.



Figure 8. Inset of 1948 Norfolk North Topographic Map (Image Source: Sargeant Memorial Collection, Norfolk Public Library).



Figure 9. Aerial View of Daniels Gardens Apartments (Image Source: VCRIS VGIN Aerial)

⁵⁹ "City Building Work Reaches \$727,901," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, February 6, 1943, p.3; "Realty Firm Reports Sales[,] Sees Postwar Era Active," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, January 2, 1945, p. 4; "2 Norfolk Firms Issued Charters," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, May 9, 1942, p. 3; "Permits Granted for War Housing," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, February 4, 1943, p. 10.

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Figure 10. Representative Apartment Buildings at Daniels Gardens Apartments (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Sewells Park Apartments, located at 408 West Little Creek Rd., occupies a tract bounded by Newport Avenue, Restmere Road, and Sheryl Drive. The complex was built in 1942-1943. Composed of 28 buildings with a total of 224 units, the FHA-financed project was constructed at a total cost of \$532,000. The Alvin Realty Company, which was based in New York and headed by Alvin Bibbs Wolosoff, formed Sewells Park Inc., which included Sewells Construction Company as a partial owner, to serve as the entity holding ownership of the property in Virginia. In 1949, the S. L. Nusbaum & Company was contracted to manage the complex. Wolosoff also was an officer in another company, the Pat Corporation, along with Nat Ringler of Long Island. Through this corporate entity, the developers built Kenwol Estates in Norfolk and Portsmouth Estates in Portsmouth.⁶⁰

Sewells Park Apartments is laid out in a primarily grid plan that is broken up with curvilinear drives. Wartime exigencies may have influenced the landscape design as it is more simplistic when compared to other 1940s garden apartment projects. Sheryl Drive

bisects the complex, which considerably reduced the availability of green space, but most buildings are surrounded by a manicured lawn. Rectilinear paved walkways connect the buildings and lead to concrete sidewalks along the edges of the development. The somewhat curvilinear driveways and parking lots are paved with asphalt, with the driveways largely concealed by the apartment buildings. Most of the apartment buildings are oriented roughly parallel to West Little Creek Road. Exceptions are the three community buildings, the center building at the south end of the complex's east section, and the center building at the north end of the property's west section, all of which are perpendicular to the road. Mature trees are located along the perimeter of each section of the property, while the buildings have foundation plantings composed of evergreen shrubs. The complex retains three small community buildings; two are within the east half of the complex and one is in the west half. Two of the buildings are brick veneer with glass block windows and gable-on-hip roofs and appear to be contemporaneous with the apartment buildings. A gable-roofed, frame shed/garage with vinyl siding may have been constructed at a later time. The two-story apartment buildings display Colonial Revival stylistic influences with red-brick veneer, white trim, and, in some cases, a central bay with an intersecting gable roof and white trim suggestive of a pediment. Some buildings also have horizontal belt courses and a narrow overhang of the second story above the first story, which suggest a very slight International Style tendency toward emphasizing horizontality. The buildings are primarily brick veneer with limited use of vinyl siding (presumably over original wood siding). Currently, many of the brick-veneer buildings have been painted; it is not known if this treatment was used originally or was part of a later renovation. The windows have replacement vinyl sash, but their openings have not been altered. Each side-gable building has a central entry bay that leads to the apartment unit entries. The entry bays are shed-, gable-, or hipped-roofed and clad with vinyl siding or, in a few instances, brick veneer.



Figure 12. Aerial View of Sewells Park Apartments
(Image Source: Google Maps)



Figure 11. This classified advertisement for Sewells Park lists the modern amenities available in each unit (*Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, August 8, 1942, p. 13)

⁶⁰ "Nusbaum Firm Agents for Sewells Park Units," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, July 7, 1949, p. 25; "New Yorkers Buy 10 Acres for Housing," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, April 8, 1943, p. 14.

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Figure 13. Representative Apartment Buildings at Sewells Park Apartments (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Talbot Park Apartments, a 1942-1943, FHA-financed development, is located at 118 Warren Street on land once owned by Minton Talbot, who had developed the 800-acre Talbot Park Neighborhood during the 1920s. Talbot continued to own other tracts in the immediate vicinity. The \$627,000 total project cost for the wartime project resulted in 33 buildings of varying sizes that housed eight, sixteen, or twenty apartments. A total of 296 units were within the complex, making it the largest wartime housing project to date upon its completion. The lead developer, James Rosati of New York City, previously had undertaken construction of Oakdale Homes Apartments. As with other multifamily projects, Rosati formed a corporate entity, Talbot Park Apartments Inc., to hold ownership of the 16-acre property. Rosati served as president of the company and Fred C. Trump as secretary. Local architect Bernard B. Spigel designed the complex and the builder was Harvard Housing Corporation. Rosati submitted the project plans to City officials on November 5, 1942. Walter H. Taylor III, director of Norfolk's public works department, and J. Thompson Neely, building inspector, approved the complex plans and their respective offices issued the first set of building permits in December 1942. Despite wartime shortages of labor and materials, a local newspaper reported on June 20, 1943, that 85 families had taken up residence in the complex, before the roadways even had been completed. The Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation designated the first 200 families to move into Talbot Park Apartments and the remaining 96 apartments were set aside for defense workers. The article noted that the apartment buildings were permanent construction, rather than temporary.⁶¹



Figure 14. Aerial View of Talbot Park Apartments
(Image Source: VCRIS VGIN Aerial)

Located directly north of Granby High School, Talbot Park Apartments today is Norfolk's second-largest (behind Sussex-at-Norfolk) 1940s garden apartment complex. Spigel utilized primarily Colonial Revival stylistic attributes in his design. Traditional elements include red-brick veneer, brick quoins, white trim, semicircular, louvered roof vents, a small number of entry porches with columns, and door surrounds with pilasters. The majority of the buildings have gable or hipped roofs, although three individual buildings have flat roofs and the two largest buildings have flat-roofed lateral wings. All of the buildings have centered entry bays that lead to interior entries to the apartment units. A variety of details on the entry bays, such as quoins, molded surrounds, pediments, hipped and gabled roofs, lend variety to buildings that otherwise are quite similar in footprint and form. The flat-roofed buildings display slight International Style influence, primarily through rectilinear massing, masonry belt courses and quoins with projecting, flat courses of brickwork, and square, flat-roofed entry bays. Fenestration patterns are unaltered, although the entry bays appear to have replacement doors of different types and replacement one-over-one sash. As with other wartime garden apartments, Talbot Park Apartments features character-defining elements of garden apartment design. The buildings are dispersed across 16 acres, with the entry drive following the curve of the adjacent wetlands and an inlet from the Lafayette River. Paved walkways connect the buildings to one another and to the larger neighborhood. Mature landscaping includes grass lawns, shade trees, and foundation plantings. In lieu of parking lots, the streets are wide enough to accommodate on-street parking. The two largest buildings, at the east and west ends of the complex, have wings that create rectangular courtyards. A one-story, frame building, roughly centered within the south portion of the complex, appears to house a communal laundry.

⁶¹ "Big Apartment Plan Provides Homes for 296," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, November 5, 1942, p. 22; "\$627,000 Cost of Housing at Talbot Park," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, December 14, 1942, p. 2; "Talbot Park Apartment Project to be Completed, Filled Shortly," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, June 20, 1943, p. 3.

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Figure 15. Representative Apartment Buildings at Talbot Park Apartments (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Bondale Apartments, located at the 7600 block of Bondale Avenue originally fulfilled a wartime purpose of providing housing to relatives of wounded Navy personnel who had been sent to Norfolk to recuperate. Built in 1943-1944 at a total cost of \$750,000, the 200-unit project's construction cost was greater than that of the similarly sized Sewells Park Apartments project completed a year earlier. The complex's 17 buildings housed a total of 200 apartments, with five 8-unit buildings, eight 12-unit buildings, and four 16-unit buildings.⁶² In October 1943, C. A. Bonner chartered the Bondale Corporation to "provide housing for rent or sale, and deal in real estate connections therewith," and this entity owned the project.⁶³ According to local newspaper reports that referred to the Norfolk representative of the National Housing Agency, Frederick Gutheim, the project was financed with private capital under the National Housing Agency's auspices, likely due to its association with serving families of military casualties. Similar projects were slated for Ocean View and Portsmouth. Architect Bernard B. Spigel designed the project and the Bonner Construction Company served as the builder, of which Bertram F. Bonner was president. City Building Inspector J. Thompson Neely issued the building permits on November 4, 1943, reflecting the rapidity with which the project began, and construction was completed the following year. Local newspapers report that the complex originally included an administration building but it is not known which building served this purpose.⁶⁴



Figure 16. Aerial View of Bondale Apartments (Image Source: Google Maps)

Bondale Apartments is directly east of the Oakdale Homes Apartments, completed in 1942. The complex's landscape design demonstrates typical tenets of garden apartment design, with the buildings arranged at various angles to maximize space among them and to provide the apartments with pleasant views. The four buildings at the south end of the complex encompass the only parking lot. In the remainder of the property, narrow, paved strips provide off-street parking; on-street parking also is available. Large shade trees are scattered throughout the complex, while smaller ornamental trees and evergreen shrubs are alongside the apartment buildings. A circular flower bed adjacent to West Little Creek Road has an assortment of ornamental plantings. Frame garages have been constructed near many of the buildings; although likely not original, their small scale and utilitarian design made them unobtrusive. The buildings primarily reflect tenets of the Colonial Revival. All of the two-story buildings have brick veneer, of which approximately half are painted; it is not known if any buildings originally were painted or if paint was applied during a renovation campaign. Brick quoins are at the corners of each building and a brick water table extends along each elevation between the crawl space and first story. A centered entry porch with flanking quoins highlights each façade. The porches feature a variety of treatments, including gable, flat, and shed roofs, single and paired, square columns, denticulated friezes, and round arches or pediments. The entries have replacement, 9-light doors with flanking paneled sidelights. The windows have either single or paired sash flanked by decorative louvered shutters. Although the six-over-six vinyl sash are replacements, the window openings themselves have not been altered. The majority of buildings have side-gable roofs, while four large buildings in the complex's central section have two-story wings with flat roofs that lend an International Style influence. The gable roofs have semi-circular, louvered vents.

⁶² "17 Apartment Buildings Here to Cost \$750,000," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, October 28, 1943, p. 2. The higher construction cost for Bondale Apartments may indicate wartime inflation but additional research is needed to confirm this supposition.

⁶³ "Norfolk Firm Chartered," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, October 28, 1943, p. 3.

⁶⁴ "Kin of Navy Wounded Get New Housing," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, October 30, 1943, p. 5; "Permits Out for Navy Kin Housing Units," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, November 4, 1943, p. 2.

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Figure 17. Representative Apartment Buildings at Bondale Apartments (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Meadowbrook Gardens Apartments (now known as Parkwood Manor) is located at 7703 Major Avenue. The FHA-financed complex was built in 1947-1948 at a cost of \$1 million and included 100 units with seven buildings. While the property is located within the historically Black enclave of Titustown (sometimes called Titusville), it is not known currently if the apartments originally provided housing for Black residents. Meadowbrook Gardens Inc. was the corporate entity that owned the property and Arlington, Virginia-based Edwin T. Holland served as president. Local architect Bernard B. Spigel designed the project, while the builder, Huhleman & Kayoe, had offices in both Richmond and Washington DC.⁶⁵

Spigel deployed signature elements of the International Style to enliven the modestly-sized complex. All of the buildings are concrete block construction with red-brick veneer. Building footprints are varied to maximize opportunities for natural light and indoor ventilation and to provide green space around all of the buildings. The three largest buildings feature courtyards across their primary elevations. Major Avenue, constructed as part of the project, takes a curving route from West Little Creek Road north to Meads Road. The complex has one surface parking lot off Major Avenue that is concealed at the north end of the complex's main section. Adjacent to the lot is a two-story, square, red-brick smokestack that may be a remnant of a heating plant, but additional research is needed to confirm its historic purpose. The network of paved walkways that interconnect the building include both curvilinear and rectilinear elements in response to the site's topography. Landscaping is relatively limited, consisting primarily of shade and ornamental trees of varying size and age. The recently refreshed foundation plantings include evergreen shrubby and ornamental grasses.

Spigel designed all of the buildings in the International Style. Each building rises two stories and is constructed of concrete block faced with red-brick veneer. Horizontal courses of cast concrete, flat roofs with low parapets, and windows with paired and triple sash emphasize the horizontal massing of each building. The entrance bays are highlighted with unpainted concrete block panels and gable-roofed, one-bay porches with round columns and concrete decks. Both doors and window sash have been replaced, but the fenestration has not been altered.

According to a 2017 article, the Parkwood Manor apartments included one- and two-bedroom floorplans ranging from 615 to 769 square feet that last had been renovated in 1996, interior features include large separate dining rooms, central air and heat, insulated windows (likely vinyl sash dating to the 1996 updates), natural gas stoves and "plank" flooring and cabinets. The property also included a playground, laundry facility, and 120 parking spaces.⁶⁶



Figure 18. Aerial View of Meadowbrook Gardens Apartments (Image Source: VCRIS VGIN Aerial)



Figure 19. 1937 Aerial of Meadowbrook Gardens Apartments Site (Image Source: Sargeant Memorial Collection, Norfolk Public Library, Photo FG 143-144)

⁶⁵ "Meadowbrook Apartment Job Starts Monday," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, October 8, 1947, p. 2.

⁶⁶ Ivy Lee Rosario, "Greysteel to Sell VA Affordable Housing Portfolio," *Multi-Housing News*, November 6, 2017, <https://www.multipropertynews.com/greysteel-retained-to-sell-va-affordable-housing-portfolio/>.

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Figure 20. Representative Apartment Buildings at Parkwood Manor (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Occupying 18 acres, **Sussex-at-Norfolk** (now known as Arbor Pointe Apartments), is located at 502 Grantham Road. Like many other Norfolk apartment complexes from this period, Sussex-at-Norfolk was built with FHA-guaranteed funding. The Sussex at Norfolk Corporation was headed by Paul M. Jeffrey. Constructed in two phases, the Sussex project was permitted on February 16, 1948, for a total projected cost of \$2,225,000 and the builder was Jacob H. Brody. The project was announced in November 1947 and City officials approved the plans the following January.⁶⁷ Before developing this project, Jeffrey and Brody completed several wartime projects in the Hampton Roads region, including Hilton Village in Newport News, Westminster Homes in Chesterfield Heights, and Windsor Homes in Portsmouth. Well-known local firm S.L. Nusbaum & Company handled the property's management after it was completed.⁶⁸

Designed by architect Eugene Tucker Carlton (1900-1974), who was registered in Richmond from 1940 to 1953, Sussex-at-Norfolk is perhaps the most fully realized, and largest, extant 1940s garden apartment complex in Norfolk. The project faces Grantham Road (historically Sewells Point Road) and was linked to an adjoining housing project by the same development team. Two streets transect the site and divide it into roughly thirds: Birmingham Avenue to the south and Timothy Avenue to the north.

Curvilinear driveways lead to parking lots behind the buildings. Landscaping is limited to foundation plantings of evergreen shrubs and a few trees. The buildings are interconnected by paved walkways that also link the property to the adjacent residential neighborhoods. A total of 77 apartment buildings have four units per building, for a total of 308 apartments. The side-gable apartment buildings are attached in different configurations from linear to U-shape to L-plan. All of the buildings have brick veneer, some of which have been painted white (it is not known if the buildings originally were painted). Assorted simple brickwork accents each building, some of which have multiple courses of project stretchers, a soldier course directly beneath the eave, a single course of projecting headers, or courses of projecting headers atop and below a soldier course. Each of the buildings has a centered, single-bay entry, some of which are covered with a gable-roofed overhang with square posts and others that have only a concrete stoop with metal railings and an entry accented with a molded surround. Some of the larger buildings have three-bay, two-story porches with front-gable roofs and square columns. All of the entries have replacement, 9-light doors. Windows for living and bedroom areas have paired sash while bathrooms have narrower windows with a single sash. All of the sash are one-over-one vinyl replacement units. Fenestration otherwise has not been altered on any of the buildings. Also on the property are three historic communal laundry buildings and a later maintenance building.



Figure 21. Aerial view of Sussex-at-Norfolk (Image Source: VCRIS VGIN Aerial)



Figure 22. Architect's Drawing of Southernmost Portion of Sussex-at-Norfolk (Image Source: Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, October 8, 1948, p. 34.

⁶⁷ "308 Apartments to be Begun Soon in Huge Project," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, November 30, 1947, p. 18; "Big Apartment to be Started at Early Date," *Norfolk-Virginian-Pilot*, January 9, 1948, p. 7.

⁶⁸ Carlton designed two FHA-financed apartments in Richmond: Willa Apartments (1946) and Old-Colony Apartments (1948).

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Figure 23. Representative Apartment Buildings at Sussex-at-Norfolk (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Located Southeast of St. Vincen De Paul Hospital

Kingsley Lane Apartments (now known as Riverpoint Court Apartments) was constructed in 1947-1948 at a cost of \$300,000 on a 2.19-acre parcel. The rather small project included four apartment buildings that each house 8 units, with 2 units per floor. As with other 1940s garden apartment complexes, Kingsley Lane was owned by a corporate entity, Kingsley Road Apartment Corp. The firm Lublin, McGaughy & Associates – Architects designed the project. The small complex is located a short distance southeast of St. Vincent De Paul Hospital, a major employer in the area. The Kingsley Lane development was constructed about four years after completion of De Paul Hospital, a major new facility built during World War II by the Federal Works Agency (FWA) using Lanham Act funding. It was the largest hospital project overseen by the FWA in the southeastern region.⁶⁹ Alfred M. Lublin (1906-1960) and John B. McGaughy (1914-2002) formed their firm in 1945. Born in Germany, Lublin worked at the practice of T. L. Kaufman in New York City in 1937-1938. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve from 1942-1945. By 1945, he had moved to Norfolk and was registered to practice in Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and Washington DC. His portfolio included a bus and railway transportation terminal in Washington DC, a general hospital in Martinsville, Virginia, and a housing project for the Norfolk Redevelopment & Housing Authority.⁷⁰

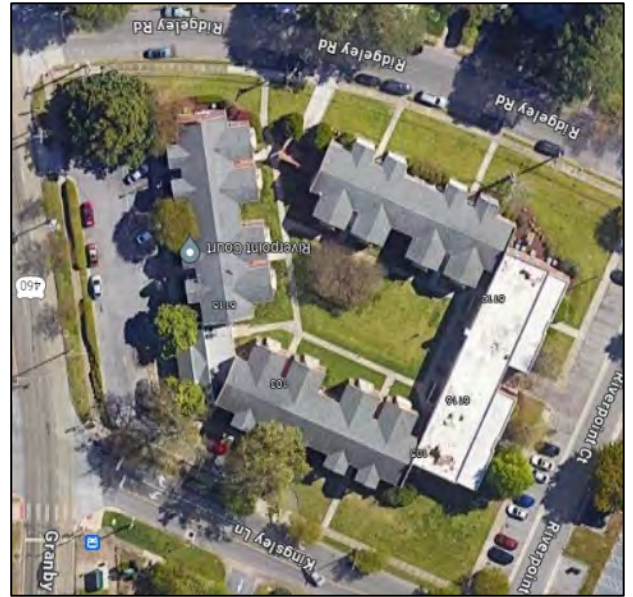


Figure 24. Aerial View of Kingsley Lane Apartments
(Image Source: Google Maps)

According to Sanborn maps, the four Kingsley Lane buildings are of concrete block construction faced with brick. All of the buildings are two stories in height and three of the four have side-gable roofs. The building that extends along Riverpoint Court has a flat roof. The buildings are designed in the Colonial Revival style with red brick veneer, white trim on windows, and stepped parapets on the end walls. The building entries have molded cast stone surrounds, an element that combines traditional Colonial Revival ornamentation with a modern material. A sense of the property's original design elements is provided through an architectural rendering that was published in a local newspaper in 1947 and a Sanborn map (Figures 25-26, below).



Figure 25. This classified advertisement for Kingsley Lane Apartments notes the property's proximity to De Paul Hospital (*Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, February 25, 1949, p. 44).

The flat-roofed building has an original notched entry way that originally led to a parking lot within the complex, but the area now is a landscaped courtyard. Narrow parking lots have been added to the periphery of the Riverpoint Court and Granby Street sides of the property. The gable-roofed, pedimented, two-story porches with square columns on the street facades of each side gable

⁶⁹ Marcus Pollard and Victoria Leonard, "De Paul Hospital Complex," Virginia Landmarks Register nomination, On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, July 2023, p. 39-40. St. Vincent De Paul Hospital was constructed between 1942-1944 and remained in continuous operation until 2021.

⁷⁰ "Lublin, Alfred M.," 1956 American Architects Directory 1st edition (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1955), p. 342. With Norfolk architect Bernard B. Spigel, Lublin, McGaughy & Associates also designed a Modern Movement civic center for Norfolk County in 1962. "Reid & Hope Constructs Four Units of Civic Center for Norfolk County," *Virginia Record* Vol. 54, No. 12 (December 1962), p. 6-7

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building are not original, but their design is compatible with the buildings' historic style. Each porch is accessed via a glass door with flanking windows, which also are not original. Similarly, two-story, gable-roofed rear extensions have been added to each side gable building. Although all exterior doors and windows have been replaced, the fenestration otherwise does not appear to have been altered. The replacement doors and windows have snap-in muntins to create the appearance of multiple lights. According to the property's leasing site, two- and three-bedroom apartments are available and range from approximately 1,160-1,500 square feet. The website's descriptions and interior photos indicate that the apartments have been renovated with new finishes, including doors, door hardware, baseboards and trim, and kitchen and bathroom cabinet, fixtures, and tiles. Due to the extent of alterations, the Kingsley Lane Apartments have fair to poor integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

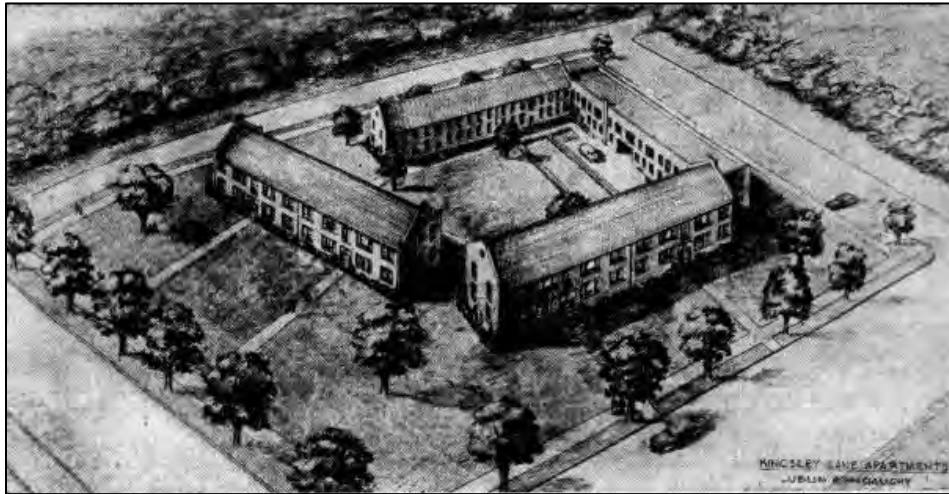


Figure 26. Architect's Drawing for Kingsley Lane Apartments (Image Source: Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, November 26, 1947, p. 29)

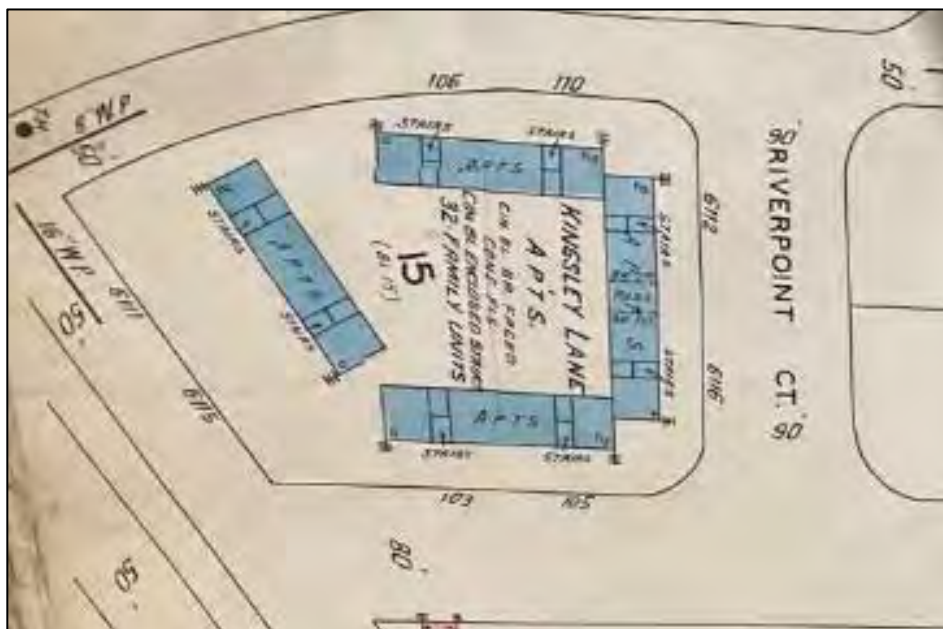


Figure 27. Sanborn Map 1929 Revised to 1957 Showing the Kingsley Lane Apartments
(Image Source: Sargeant Memorial Collection, Norfolk Public Library)

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Figure 28. Representative Apartment Buildings at Kingsley Lane Apartments (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Located West of St. Vincent De Paul Hospital

The **Riverpoint Apartments** complex, located on 18 acres at 6415 Newport Ave., was built in 1947-1948 at a cost of \$435,000 and included 220 units within eighteen buildings. The project utilized FHA financing. The owner was Riverpoint Apartments Corporation, for which the president was Ben Cohen of Baltimore, Maryland; Cohen also developed the 34-building Suburban Park Apartments during the early 1940s. The Norfolk-based architectural firm Lublin, McGaughy & Associates designed Riverpoint Apartments, while The Housing Engineering Company served as the builder. Building permits for the project were issued on August 15, 1947.⁷¹

Grouped together to allow for larger green spaces and courtyards, the buildings vary in size and footprint. As is typical of garden apartments, the complex's landscape design includes a network of paved sidewalks that interconnect the building and connect the complex to its larger neighborhood. Large shade trees and smaller crape myrtles are interspersed throughout the property, while the buildings have ornamental foundation plantings that generally consist of evergreen shrubs. Parking lots within the complex are somewhat limited. Lots are at the northeastern and southwest corners of the complex, within a three-building courtyard set back from Painter Court, and within a group of buildings between Painter Court and Kingsley Lane.

All of the apartment buildings are two stories in height and have either a side-gable, hipped, or flat roof. Variation in color palette is introduced through use of cream-colored brick veneer on some buildings, but the majority appear to have red brick walls. All feature Colonial Revival idioms typically of Virginia during the mid-twentieth century, including red brick, white trim, entries embellished with a white surround that includes multiple-light sidelights and either a molded frieze or a pediment with a plain frieze. Depending on site topography, the entries are at street level or are accessed via a concrete stoop. Most of the entries appear to have replacement, nine-light, paneled doors. A few buildings have hipped roof, one-story entry porches with decorative railings. Window openings have brick sills and soldier-brick flat arches. The sash appear to be replacement units and have one-over-one lights. Decorative shutters flank most of the windows. Fenestration otherwise appears to be as originally designed. The flat-roofed buildings feature a molded stringcourse along the facade, which serves to emphasize their horizontality. At the northeast end of the complex is a leasing office that occupies a side-gable, one-story building accessed from Newport Avenue. This resource may once have housed community or utilitarian spaces such as a laundry room.



Figure 29. Aerial View of Riverpoint Apartments
(Image Source: Google Maps)



Figure 30. Sanborn Map 1929 Revised to 1957
Showing the Riverpoint Apartments Complex
(Image Source: Sargeant Memorial Collection,
Norfolk Public Library)

⁷¹ "Riverpoint Apartments Work Starts Next Week," *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, August 7, 1947, p. 4

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Figure 31. Representative Buildings at Riverpoint Apartments (Image Source: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2024)

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Figure 32. Current Aerial View of Norfolk's Wards Corner Area (bottom center) showing the extent of post-World War II suburban development that surrounds the southern and eastern boundaries of Naval Station Norfolk (top left). Interstate 64 was constructed in multiple phases between the mid-1950s and late 1970s, while Interstate 564 was constructed between 1971-1977. The US Route 460 corridor dates to 1926 and received its current US Route designation in 1933 (Image Source: Google Maps)

F. Associated Property Types

A single property type has been identified to date that is associated with this multiple property submission: Privately-Developed Garden Apartment Complexes in Norfolk, 1942-1949. "Privately Developed" garden apartment complexes are those that were originally developed by private firms using either private lending or FHA financing, or a combination of the two.⁷² Future research and field investigations may identify additional property types that are associated with the historic themes and areas of significance described herein, at which time the MPD may be amended. Properties may be nominated to the Virginia Landmarks Register and/or the National Register of Historic Places under this MPD.

Privately-Developed Garden Apartment Complexes in Norfolk, 1942-1949

The significance, character-defining features, and registration requirements for privately-developed garden apartment complexes in Norfolk that were constructed between 1942-1949 are based on the 9 extant examples

⁷² Publicly-developed garden apartment complexes also have been constructed in Norfolk. The Norfolk Housing Authority was established in July 1940 and oversaw construction of publicly-financed housing projects, often for defense workers and military personnel. Meadowbrook Gardens Apartments was constructed in Titustown, a historically Black neighborhood in Norfolk, but information found to date indicates it was privately-owned with financing through FHA. In the future, research and identification of extant examples of 1940s public housing projects may lead to an amendment of this MPD to include such complexes.

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described herein as well as information gleaned about other developments, such as Riverside Terrace Apartments, that are no longer extant.

Description of type

The garden apartment concept offered a suburban living opportunity for families who could not afford to or were not interested in purchasing a single-family dwelling. Privately-developed, 1940s garden apartments offered a very different experience from apartment blocks and tenements in Norfolk's older neighborhoods. Through their adherence to FHA's minimum housing guidelines, the apartments included modern electrical, plumbing, and heating systems, new kitchen appliances, buildings sited to maximize natural light and views for each apartment, and ample green space around the buildings. A typical garden apartment complex's landscape design featured large interior green spaces with trees, shrubs, and gardens, courtyards, and walkways paved with concrete. Vegetation plantings generally consisted of various specimens of shade trees, such as maples and oaks, foundation plantings of various types of evergreen shrubs, flowering crape myrtle trees, and modestly-sized flower beds with annuals. These amenities provided an attractive and enjoyable recreational and outdoor living space for the residents. Practical concerns, such as central laundry facilities and dedicated parking lots, were addressed but their appearance was minimized through careful siting and unobtrusive design.

The apartment buildings generally were designed by architects in restrained versions of Colonial Revival style, which has been popular in Virginia since the 1890s. The buildings typically rise two to three stories and have brick-veneer walls, white trim, and side gable or hipped roofs. The brick walls either were unpainted red brick with pale mortar; some complexes included a mix of red-brick veneer and cream or white bricks. The veneers were generally laid in common bond, but limited decorative brickwork, such as string courses of headers and stretchers, a simple corbeled cornice, a water table, soldier-brick flat arches, and brick window sills. These elements provided visual interest without causing undue lengthening of construction time. The apartment buildings are typically rectangular in footprint. In some larger complexes, the buildings have lateral wings or, in a few instances, front or rear wings that create courtyards. Entries are typically centered on the façade and highlighted with a one-story porch featuring decorative elements such as columns, a plain frieze, and/or a gable pediment; some properties have or concrete stoops in lieu of or in addition to porches. The entry doors, for the most part, have been replaced, likely more than once, and today most often are metal doors with multiple lights. Decorative door surrounds often were deployed, typically consisting of a molded wood surround with a plain frieze or pediment, paneled sidelights, and/or cast stone. Likewise, most of the window sash have been replaced on the extant buildings, but, with the exception of Kingsley Lane Apartments, the original window openings have been retained. The replacement sash are typically vinyl units in one-over-one configurations, but inclusion of false or snap-in muntins often creates the appearance of six-over-six sash. All of the buildings have asphalt shingles. Given their 1940s construction dates during a period of widespread materials shortages, it is unlikely that the current asphalt shingles replaced higher-style materials, such as slate or tile.

Each building's entry leads to an interior hallway from which each apartment is accessed. Often the buildings have apartments on the first and second floors, requiring the inclusion of an interior staircase to access the upper level. The public corridors and stair halls are generally minimally finished and most have been renovated with new flooring, trim, stair tread materials, and handrails or balustrades that meet current building code requirements for public spaces.

Individual apartment units were designed to have views of the interior green spaces rather than utilitarian resources such as parking, trash collection, electrical sheds, and laundry buildings. Natural light and ventilation also were prioritized in siting of the buildings and layout of interior floor plans. As most of these complexes were constructed with the intention of providing housing for families, the vast majority of apartments have at

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least two bedrooms and some have three-bedroom floor plans. A living room, dinette or separate dining room, kitchen, and one bathroom comprised the remainder of the apartment. Some of the larger units have interior stairs with bedrooms on the upper floor. Interior finishes typically include various types of wood flooring in living areas, tile in bathrooms, and tile or sheet vinyl flooring in kitchens. At various times, it is likely that wall-to-wall carpeting may have been installed, particularly in bedrooms and/or living areas. Baseboards and door and window trim were mass-produced wood materials installed with butt or miter joints and typically were painted. The walls and ceilings generally are finished with gypsum wall board, although there may be examples where plaster was used, particularly during the war years when materials shortages were common. Within units that were viewed, the interior doors typically were six-panel examples, and many have been replaced over the years, as have door hardware and hinges. Kitchen cabinets and countertops often have been replaced, but some complexes, such as Talbot Park Apartments, retain at least some original cabinets. The kitchen appliances, sinks, and faucets have generally been replaced. In bathrooms, at least some of the historic floor and/or wall tile has been retained, as well as bathtubs, while sinks, toilets, and plumbing fixtures have been replaced as needed. Lighting fixtures also have been updated. Mechanical systems have replaced nonfunctional equipment as needed and to meet changing building code requirements.

Significance of type: 1942-1949 Privately-Developed Garden Apartment Complexes

The areas of significance applicable to Norfolk's 1942-1949 privately-developed garden apartments are under Criterion A (Social History; Community Planning & Development) and Criterion C (Architecture; Landscape Architecture). A property may be nominated for one or more areas of significance under this MPD. In the area of Social History, the garden apartment complexes are associated with the critical need to address housing shortages in Norfolk during World War II and in the immediate postwar years as the area's defense installations took on new importance with the onset of the Cold War. Federal, state, and local government involvement in provision of housing for military personnel and defense workers during World War II is significant in the area of Social History due to association with the Roosevelt Administration's efforts to improve housing nationwide, with the Commonwealth of Virginia's recognition of the economic and defense importance of the Hampton Roads area during the war years, and with the City of Norfolk's wide-ranging attempts to alleviate a housing shortage that began during the 1930s and was worsened by wartime exigencies. Provision of racially segregated housing was the norm as Virginia was still mired in the Jim Crow era during the 1940s and the U.S. military did not desegregate until 1948 (a process that required several years to complete). Construction of housing for Norfolk's Black residents, who had been greatly underserved for decades, was an important component of development of suburban garden apartment complexes, although complexes identified to date are not known to have provided housing for African Americans. During the war years, Black war workers and service members and their families, most of whom were newcomers to Norfolk, were typically permitted to live in these new defense-related apartment complexes. Longtime local residents continued to be concentrated in older neighborhoods near Norfolk's downtown. The Norfolk Housing Authority, established in 1940, sponsored construction of segregated public housing projects for Black and White residents from the 1940s to early 1960s. Despite gains made by the mid-twentieth century Civil Rights Movement, racial segregation in housing remained an inescapable aspect of Norfolk's housing patterns through 1968, when passage of the Fair Housing Act rendered race-based housing discrimination illegal. Additional research is needed to identify which, if any, of Norfolk's privately-developed 1940s garden apartment complexes were for Black families. Depending on each garden apartment complex's context with regard to race-based provision of housing, Social History may be an applicable area of significance. The changing lifestyles of families and expectations for suburban opportunities also factor into potential significance for a property's significance in Social History. Additional research, however, is necessary to establish the context for these trends and the direct relationship of 1940s garden apartment complexes to them.

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In the area of Community Planning & Development, construction of Norfolk's garden apartment complexes occurred within the context of a longstanding housing shortage, the need to provide housing for military personnel and defense workers, and the need to invest in public infrastructure at an unprecedented rate. The FHA played a major role in the financing of many of the garden apartment complexes identified to date, although some complexes were built with private financing. The City of Norfolk eagerly embraced federal programs that provided much-needed financing and funding for infrastructure and housing construction, despite the misgivings of the local real estate development community, who remembered how the city's real estate market had crashed after World War I. Local newspaper articles provide information about specific infrastructure projects that were constructed in response to the development of specific garden apartment complexes, providing a rare opportunity to document the intermarriage of these two important activities and how they shaped the city's physical development.

Under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Norfolk's 1942-1949 privately-developed garden apartment complexes are significant as a resource type – multiple-family housing designed and constructed in accordance with FHA guidelines and, often, through FHA financing. The garden apartment complexes have design significance for their landscape design, including spatial relationships of the buildings to other elements, such as circulation networks, parking lots, recreational and open space, and adjacent properties; the methods used to integrate circulation networks, parking lots, and utilitarian needs seamlessly into a suburban-style setting with manicured lawns and ornamental plantings; and the utilization of sight lines, plantings, and buildings to create a peaceful setting conducive to family living, quite unlike the urban-core apartment blocks that had typified the first three decades of the twentieth century in Virginia. With regard to architectural design, the complexes incorporated all of the FHA minimum guidelines for square footage per person, provision of modern electrical, plumbing, and heating systems, affordable and readily-available construction materials, and stylistic designs that were suitable for their suburban setting. In Norfolk (as in much of Virginia) the style considered most appropriate was Colonial Revival. Some architects opted to integrate aspects of International Style into their designs, too, a choice that enhanced public perception that these complexes were entirely modern in terms of amenities and functionality.

Registration Requirements for the 1942-1949 Privately-Developed Garden Apartment Complex Type

In order to be eligible for listing as part of this Multiple Property Submission in the Virginia Landmarks Register and/or National Register of Historic Places, a 1942-1949 privately developed garden apartment complex must meet at least one of the Criteria for Eligibility in one or more of the areas of significance identified in this document and have integrity to convey its significance. In general, the resource type will retain the majority of the features identified below for four or more aspects of the seven aspects of integrity: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Diminished integrity of one or two aspects of integrity, other than location, is acceptable if the balance of the property's integrity is retained as indicated below.

In order to retain integrity of **location**, the garden apartment complex must remain on its original site.

The integrity of a garden apartment complex's **setting** will include the following characteristics:

- Original spatial relationships among apartment buildings and original ratio of buildings and paved surfaces to green space within the complex;
- Surface parking lots, if originally included, will be within the complex (but not necessarily visible from public streets);
- Paved public sidewalks, if originally included, will be along the complex's perimeter, between the property boundary and adjacent streets or alleys;

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- A largely suburban residential area, although in proximity to major employers, such as military installations, hospitals, and other institutions, and/or to arterial roads associated with Norfolk's 1940s suburban development.

In order to retain integrity of **landscape design** a property:

- Should retain its original boundary. On a case-by-case basis, properties where road-widening projects and/or changing water levels have necessitated changes to the property's perimeter may have altered boundaries, as this phenomenon occurred even during the 1940s.
- Must retain the majority of its original landscape design;
- Must retain its communal green space (later additions or replacements of playground equipment, benches, and lighting are acceptable);
- Must retain its original paved circulation network (later additions to the network are acceptable; replacement of original paving materials, such as concrete with brick pavers, would erode integrity of the landscape design);
- Must retain ornamental landscaping in a manner consistent with the original design, although succession of plantings is inevitable due to limited lifespans of many species; replacement of any vegetation now considered invasive would not erode integrity of the landscape design;
- Must not have large-scale infill construction that has reduced or obscured the original landscape design and/or changed spatial relationships of original resources within the garden apartment complex;
- Must retain a surface parking lot if such a lot was part of the original landscape design; replacement of paving material due to damage and weathering would not erode integrity of materials or workmanship for the overall landscape design.

In order to retain integrity of a property's **architectural design**, a complex's buildings:

- Should retain the building footprints as achieved during the period of significance; if a building has been added onto, the original footprint should still be distinguishable and any additions must be clearly subordinate to the original building's massing and footprint;
- Must retain full visibility of primary elevation(s);
- Must retain their original spatial relationships to one another and within the complex's larger landscape design;
- Must retain character-defining attributes of their original architectural style;
- Must retain original fenestration patterns without alterations to size or shape of window or door opening, except as necessary to meet current building code requirements and/or to provide accessibility as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (discussed in greater detail below);
- Must retain original roof form.
- Must retain original interior public spaces;
- Should retain original unit interior dimensions.

Good integrity of materials means a complex's apartment buildings

- Must retain original (or near-identical replacement) mass-produced, standardized, relatively inexpensive materials prevalent during the 1940s, including poured concrete or concrete block foundations; concrete block perimeter walls with brick veneers in common bond; balloon frame load-bearing walls; wood- or aluminum-frame sash; cast concrete (aka cast stone) exterior window sills, entry steps, and other period trim; asphalt shingle roofing; dimensional lumber; wood stud framing of interior partition walls; gypsum wallboards; machine-cut baseboards, door surrounds, window sills and casing, and other trim; and glass blocks used as interior or exterior decorative elements

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- Should retain original exterior doors or, if exterior doors have been replaced due to concerns such as weathering or security, the replacement doors are sympathetic to the building's original architectural style;
- Should retain original exterior wall cladding, including ornamental embellishments or, if replacement cladding has been installed due to weathering, storm damage, or failure of the original material, such materials are of the same type and quality as the original wall cladding;
- Should retain original window sash or, if replacement sash have been installed due to weathering, storm damage, or failure of the original sash, then the replacement sash are of the same type, light pattern, and size as the original sash;
- Should retain original interior finishes such as sheetrock walls and ceilings, hardwood or tile flooring, window and door trim, and bathroom tile, or, if materials have been replaced due to damage or failure, the replacement materials must be sympathetic in style, quality, and type.
- Post-1940s abatement of exterior and interior finishes later found to be hazardous, such as asbestos and lead paint, does not automatically erode integrity of materials but is to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The following aspects of workmanship are necessary for good integrity:

- Construction methods congruous with rapid construction techniques based on standardized building plans, mass-produced materials, and replication of building footprints and apartment unit floor plans and finishes.

Integrity of feeling for a garden apartment complex will be

- Conveyed through integrity of location, setting, and design;
- Maintained through the property's continued use as multiple-family housing.

In order to retain good integrity of association, the garden apartment complex:

- Must have been built between 1942-1949 within the incorporated boundaries of the City of Norfolk at the time of construction and/or within the City's current incorporated limits;
- Must have been built to provide rental housing for Norfolk's military and civilian population outside the boundaries of the various federal and state military installations within the City's current incorporated limits;
- Must continue to provide housing for Norfolk's military and/or civilian population;
- Should retain the original property boundary, including communal green space, parking lots, and service and office buildings, except as noted above with regard to minor encroachment on property boundary due to road widening or changing water levels;
- Must retain the original apartment buildings without infill construction between the buildings.

Table 1. Common Elements of 1942-1949 Garden Apartment Complexes in Norfolk.

Element	Typical Components and Materials
Landscape design	Ample green space with paved circulation networks and parking lots concealed within the complex or provided as streetside parking No infill construction among the original buildings Siting of buildings to maximize open spaces among them and views from within the apartments
Stories	Generally, two to three stories

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Element	Typical Components and Materials
Foundation	Continuous Materials: Brick, concrete
Structural System	Balloon frame perimeter walls with brick veneer Concrete block load-bearing perimeter walls with brick veneer
Exterior Treatment	Brick veneer; limited use of cast stone, concrete, and/or stone
Roof	Roof shape varies – typically gable or hipped Materials: asphalt shingle; composite shingle
Entrances	Typically, single or double leaf; Usually wood, metal, or fiberglass
Windows	Original fenestration is present, although window sash may have been replaced. Window openings themselves are not altered. Windows range in size and typically include single and paired sash; limited use of three-part “picture” windows Materials: Vinyl (replacement sash), aluminum, wood
Additions	If additions were constructed after the period of significance, they must be clearly subordinate to the original building’s massing and footprint
Interiors	Original interior corridors must be in situ. Public staircases must be in original locations, although replacement of worn materials with like materials is acceptable. Interior floor plans, including layout of apartment units, should be retained. Common interior alterations include kitchen and bathroom remodels, removal or replacement of flooring materials such as carpeting, tile, and sheet vinyl, and/or covering of wood flooring with carpeting, entry doors to apartments and doors within units along with door hardware, paint.
Secondary Resources	Complexes may have secondary resources, but they are not required for listing. Common secondary resources include sheds, leasing offices, and laundry facilities.

Alterations that Diminish Integrity

Demolition of original service buildings, such as shared laundry facilities and utility sheds, and/or of rental management office buildings, will erode integrity of setting and design, but loss of these secondary resources is not sufficient in and of itself to render a garden apartment complex ineligible for listing under this MPD.

Expansion of parking areas at the cost of original green space and the complex’s original landscape design negatively impacts the property’s integrity of setting, design, feeling, and association. Communal green space with paved circulation networks and surface parking enclosed within the complex are character-defining features of 1942-1949 garden apartment complexes. Surface parking that has been expanded in a limited fashion and has avoided or minimized effect on the communal space and landscape design is allowable, but the diminished integrity of setting, design, feeling, and association still must be taken into account should the complex be nominated to the Virginia Landmarks Register and/or National Register of Historic Places.

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Alterations for Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other Civil Rights-Related Physical Accessibility Requirements

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended, and other federal, state, and local regulations require private property owners to include features that enhance accessibility of public accommodations, including rental housing, to persons with disabilities as defined under the law. According to the National Archives, the ADA “was the world's first comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities.”⁷³ Alterations to the overall design of garden apartment complexes, or to individual buildings or structures within the complex, that are necessary for ADA compliance cannot be used as the sole reason for the complex as a whole to be ineligible for listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and/or National Register of Historic Places, nor for classifying a building as noncontributing to the complex. Alterations that comply with ADA and are generally consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation do not, in and of themselves, erode integrity of historic resources. A property’s alterations to comply with ADA must be considered as part of the totality of its integrity much as replacement of outdated mechanical systems, lighting and plumbing fixtures, and doors and window sash are.

The following examples are intended to provide a sense of the typical exterior and interior modifications made for ADA compliance to improve physical accessibility, but does not constitute a comprehensive list of such alterations:

Exterior

- Curb cuts at sidewalks,
- Inclusion of one or more larger parking spaces in the complex’s parking lot,
- Ramps to exterior entrances,
- Widened exterior entries to accommodate assistive devices such as wheelchairs,
- Wayfinding signage to mark accessible routes and places,
- Provision of furnishings such as benches along circulation networks and at communal spaces, including playgrounds,
- Installation of equipment to allow doors to open and/or close automatically.

Interior, within public spaces,

- Widening of dwelling unit entries,
- Replacement or covering of a step with a ramp,
- Installation of a lifting device,
- Installation of visual and/or auditory cues for emergency situations, such as evacuations due to tornado or flooding.

Interior, within apartment units

- Widening of interior doors,
- Reconfiguration of kitchens and bathrooms, including changing placement of appliances, sinks, toilets, and tubs to create spaces large enough to maneuver assistive devices such as wheelchairs,
- Lowering of kitchen countertops and light switches,
- Replacement of carpeting with smooth flooring,
- Replacement of slick surfaces with nonskid surfaces,
- Replacement of a sink vanity with a pedestal sink,

⁷³ “25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act,” National Archives, July 26, 2022, <https://www.archives.gov/calendar/ada25#:~:text=Signed%20on%20July%2026%2C%201990,Lawn%20of%20the%20White%20House.>

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- Replacement of a bathtub with a walk-in/roll-in shower,
- Installation of grab bars, raised toilet seats, and shower seats,
- Installation of visual and/ or auditory cues for a doorbell.

G. Geographical Data

All of the garden apartment complexes associated with this Multiple Property Submission are located within the corporate limits of the City of Norfolk, Virginia. Reference librarian William B. Inge conducted research in July 2013 to identify 1940s garden apartment complexes in Norfolk. Seven of Norfolk's extant garden apartments from this period are located within a few miles of each other off of Granby Street and West Little Creek Road. Two complexes are located in the immediate vicinity of the former St. Vincent De Paul Hospital farther south along Granby Road. Several large garden apartments have been demolished over the years, including Bolling Square Apartments (300 units), Lafayette Shores Apartments (644 units) and Suburban Park Apartments (209 units) as well as numerous smaller examples. Nine 1942-1949 privately-developed garden apartment complexes are currently extant in Norfolk.

West Little Creek Road Area

1 Oakdale Homes Apartments- 160 Units
7601 Lankford Ave., 120-128 W. Little Creek Rd.
Built 1942 at a total cost of \$240,000
(20) 8 family buildings @ \$12,000 each
Oakdale Homes, Inc. – Owner
James Rosati- President (New York)
Witten Construction Co. – Contractor
Source: *Ledger-Dispatch*, 2/5, 2/7, 2/12, 2/14 (1942)
Sanborn V, Sheet 527

2 Daniels Gardens Apartments-(now known as Archers Green Apts.) 172 Units
7311-7423 E. Kenmore Dr.
Built 1942-43 at a total cost of \$260,000
(26) 4 family buildings @ \$10,000 each
Daniels Gardens, Inc. (New York) - Owner
Moore Operating Corp. - Contractor
Source: *Ledger-Dispatch*, Aug. 20, 1942
Sanborn V, Sheet 524

3 Sewells Park Apartments- 224 Units
408 W. Little Creek Rd., Newport Ave., Restmere Rd., Sheryl Dr.
Built 1942-43 at a total cost of \$532,000
(28) 8 family buildings @ \$19,000 each
Sewells Park, Inc. – Owner
Alvin Bibbs Wolosoff (NY) – President
Sewells Construction Co. - Contractor (affiliated with Wolosoff interests)
Source: *Ledger-Dispatch*, April 20, 1942
Sanborn V, Sheet 526

4 Talbot Park Apartments- 296 Units

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Warren, Marcy and Ralph Sts.
Built 1942-43; cost \$627,000
(33) buildings total; consisting of
(27) 8 family buildings @ \$17,000 each: \$459,000
(3) 8 family buildings @ \$18,000 each: \$54,000
(1) 16 family building: \$34,000
(2) 20 family buildings @ \$40,000 each: \$80,000
Talbot Park Apartments- Owner, under the direction of James Rosati
Bernard B. Spigel- Architect
Harvard Housing Corp. - Contractor
Sources: *Ledger-Dispatch*, Nov. 4, 1942. *Virginian-Pilot*, Nov. 5, 1942
Sanborn V, Sheet 527

5 Bondale Apartments- 200 Units
7603, 7609-7625, 7614-76724 Bondale Ave., 207-225 Bradford Ave., 206-214 Sewells Point Rd. (now W. Little Creek Rd.), 297-217 Sterling St.
Built 1943-44
Bondale Corp. - Owner
Bertram "Bert" F. Bonner- President
Bernard B. Spigel- Architect
Bonner Construction Co. – Contractor
(17) apartment buildings and (1) administration building. Total cost: \$750,000
(5) 8 family buildings @ \$29,400 ech. \$147,000
(8) 12 family buildings @ \$44,100 ech. \$352,800
(4) 16 family buildings @ \$58,800 ech. \$235,200
(1) administration building: \$15,000
Building permits issued 11-4-1943
References: LD 10-6-43, 10-28-43, 11-4-43, 11-6-43
Sanborn V, Sheet 527

6 Meadowbrook Gardens Apartments (now known as Parkwood Manor)- 100 Units
Major Ave., Meads Rd., W. Little Creek Rd.
Built 1947-48 at a cost of \$1,000,000
Meadowbrook Gardens, Inc- Owner
Edwin T. Holland- President
Bernard B. Spigel- Architect
Huhleman & Kayoe- Contractors (Richmond)
Sanborn V, Sheet 516

7 Sussex-at-Norfolk
502 Grantham Road
Built in 1947-48 at a cost of \$2,225,000
Sussex-at-Norfolk Corporation – Owner
Paul M. Jeffrey - President
Eugene Tucker Carlton - Architect
Jacob H. Brody – Builder

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DePaul Hospital Area

8 Kingsley Lane Apartments (now known as Riverpoint Court Apts.)- 32 Units
Granby St., Kingsley Lane, Riverpoint Ct.
Built 1947-48 at a cost of \$300,000
(4) apartment buildings
Kingsley Road Apartment Corp. - Owners
Lublin, McGaughy & Associates- Architects
Sanborn V, Sheet 535

Located next to DePaul Hospital

9 Riverpoint Apartments- 220 Units
Newport Ave.
Built 1947-48 at a cost of \$435,000
(18) apartment buildings
Riverpoint Apartments Corp. – Owners (Baltimore)
Ben Cohen- President
Lublin, McGaughy & Associates- Architects
The Housing Engineering Co. - Contractors
Alfred M. Lublin (1906-1960)
John B. McGaughy (1914-2002)
We have the building permits; dated August 15, 1947.
Source: VP: 12-31-47
Sanborn V, Sheet 535

1940s garden apartment complexes that are no longer extant:

Bolling Square Apartments- 300 Units
915-1034 Bolling Ave., 1008-1016 Buckingham Ave., 809-1041 Rockbridge Ave., 806-834
Westmoreland Ave.
Built 1945-46; Demolished 2005
Bolling Square, Inc. - Owner
Bonner Construction Co. – Contractor
Bertram F. Bonner – President
Bernard B. Spigel- Architect
Total cost: \$1,670,000
(23) buildings- permit cost \$875,000
(5) 8 family, (5) 16 family, (11) 12 family, (2) 24 family buildings
Administration building- \$4,000
Source: Ledger-Dispatch, September 14, 1945
Sanborn V, Sheet 532

Lafayette Shores Apartments- 644 Units
Norway Pl., Alsace Ave., Winder Dr.
Built 1948-49; Demolished circa 1990
The first section, containing 472 units, cost \$3.6 million.
A. Ray Pentecost, Jr. – Architect (his first project)

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Bush Construction Co. – Contractors
Not on Sanborn Map- Would have been on Vol. III. Have pictures.
Sources: LD: 6-11-48, VP: 6-12-48

Riverside Terrace Apartments- 232 Units
Newport Ave., Warren St.
Built 1947-48 at a cost of \$2,000,000
Riverside, Inc. and the Chester Corp. – Owners
W. Taylor Johnson- President
Bernard B. Spigel- Architect
(17) apartment buildings, (2) structures for powerhouse facilities.
We have the building permits; dated May 5, 1947, and the general site plan, revised Feb. 27, 1947, drawn by Bernard Spigel.
Source: VP: 12-31-47
Sanborn V, Sheet 536

Suburban Park Apartments- 209 Units
Cromwell Parkway, Suburban Parkway, Yorktown Dr., Midfield St.
Built 1940-42 (completed July, 1942)
Demolished 1990s
(34) buildings, 209 apartments, (4) garage/locker buildings
Suburban Park Corp. - Owner
Hal A. Miller & Associates- Architects
Hal Arluck Miller {1904-1953} Born in Montreal, Canada. U. S. Citizen {1928}. Architectural practice in Baltimore, MD.
Engineering Construction Corp. – Contractor

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Privately-developed garden apartment complexes built between 1942-1949 within the City of Norfolk were identified through a combination of research and windshield survey. Reference librarian William B. Inge conducted research in July 2013 to identify 1940s garden apartment complexes within the current corporate limits of Norfolk. Condition of these complexes later was assessed through windshield survey, at which time the complexes were recorded with representative photographs and mapped. City of Norfolk tax parcel records were reviewed to identify current property boundaries and other data. The City's building permits and land records also were reviewed to identify architects, builders, and developers. These individuals and firms were researched to ascertain their respective roles in the construction of 1940s garden apartment complexes in Norfolk. Digitized newspapers, in particular, proved to be a rich source of information about specific developments as well as the larger issues confronting Norfolk during the Great Depression, World War II, and the immediate postwar years.

Two other Multiple Property Submissions for garden apartments in Virginia, one in Arlington County and the other in the City of Richmond, were reviewed to identify general historical trends, character-defining physical aspects, and evolution of these complexes over time. Although some similar trends were identified in Norfolk, the city's key role as a locus for military activity, coupled with the presence of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, made the Norfolk different from Richmond and Arlington County in significant ways that manifested with regard to when and where Norfolk's garden apartment complexes were developed and for whom. The City's pivotal role in World War II national defense capabilities continued after the war. Within a few decades, the military installations in and around Norfolk had grown to unprecedented size and their importance in national

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defense has been undisputed up through today. The combination of FHA financing and the need to meet defense needs differentiate the context of Norfolk's garden apartment complexes from examples found in Arlington County and Richmond in many ways, as described in Section E. Registration requirements were based both on the level, period, and areas of significance identified for the privately-developed 1942-1949 garden apartment complex resource type as well as the character-defining physical features that were identified through field survey and research.

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