



A Photo Essay of Hazelwood: housing stock from past to present

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Table of Contents

- 2 Introduction
- 3 Maps
- 4 Sylvan Avenue
- 5 Pattern Book Housing
- 6 More Pattern Book Housing
- 7 Things that aren't there anymore
- 8 More things that aren't there anymore
- 9 Mainstreet Changes
- 10 2nd Ave. at Flowers Ave. looking North
- 11 More views from 2nd. @ Flowers
- 12 Rowhouses in Hazelwood
- 13 Where Can We Go From Here?
- 14 Photographic Citations
- 15 Acknowledgments





Introduction



The neighborhood of Hazelwood lies on the backdrop of a rich history. I began this project with the goal of exploring how housing began in Hazelwood during the late 19th century, how it transformed through time up to the present, and to learn from the past to guide Hazelwood into the future. Through viewing changes in the character of housing and the business corridor over time, one can get a clearer notion of how to react to varying economic conditions, and to adjust and rebuild accordingly.

I started out by familiarizing myself with the neighborhood. Juanita Sanchez guided my colleague, Andrew Aurand, and myself, on a driving tour of Hazelwood. At the time, she was working in conjunction with the Hazelwood Initiative.

The next task that I undertook was finding old pictures of Hazelwood for my comparative format. I thought that it would be interesting to visually compare housing stock in the past with their condition today. I first placed an ad in the Hazelwood Initiative newsletter, asking residents to loan me any pictures that they might have of their house or business in the area.

I then proceeded to search for pictures at the University of Pittsburgh archives in Point Breeze, where I had the pleasure of working with Miriam Meislik, one of their curators. I emailed her a list of streets, and I hoped to get pictures anywhere from 1900 to the present. After a few days Miriam worked her magic and I went out to see what she had found for me. She had located some wonderful glass-plate negatives from the old City of Pittsburgh Photographers collection. It was with her help that I was able to make my ideas come to fruition. After that, through research and working on the computer with Adobe Photoshop and Pagemaker, my original idea of a housing stock survey has come to life.

Later on Andrew drove me around so that I could shoot pictures that correspond with the archival photographs. I tried my best to get the same shot as possible with respect to the original City Photographer photos. However, some of the buildings were wiped out with the growth and expansion of the mills (J&L and later LTV), and instead brownfields lie in place of buildings.



Hazelwood With Respect to the City



**City of Pittsburgh
Neighborhoods
1990 Census Tracts**

- CD Eligible
- ▬ Wards
- Hazelwood+Glen Hazel

Maps were taken from the City of Pittsburgh Planning Department website:
<http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/>

Hazelwood With Respect to Surrounding Neighborhoods



Sylvan Avenue

looking North from
Hazelwood Avenue



1909

a



1910

b



2001

c

Sylvan Avenue was a beautiful, tree-lined residential street. Photograph "a" shows the street in the summer of 1909, before it was paved. Photo "b" was taken soon after the paving was completed at the beginning of 1910. Photograph "c" shows the now closed Gladstone Middle School off to the right. Some of the original turn-of-the century housing remains on the left-hand side of the street, closest to Hazelwood Avenue. However, many are in need of repairs.



a

a

b

c

c

d

a

e

a

Pattern Book Housing



b

1912

Looking Northwest at Glenwood Ave. & Trowbridge St.



c

2001

In the 19th century, masses of immigrants came to Pittsburgh from Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. People arrived with a rich collective memory, and many skilled craftsmen added to the shaping of Pittsburgh's neighborhoods. They brought with them an attention to detail, which added a richness and individuality to their neighborhoods¹.

Today, one of the overlooked qualities of Hazelwood is the strength of its existing housing stock. The majority of the housing throughout Hazelwood predates WWII. Many beautiful turn-of-the-century houses, as well as more modest masonry constructed single-family dwellings and row houses from the 1930s and 1940s are intertwined within the fabric of Hazelwood.

Additionally, potential homeowners can purchase more square footage for their dollar in the area. Real estate is very affordable in Hazelwood, as compared to other neighborhoods throughout the City of Pittsburgh.² The neighborhood is also within close proximity to Downtown, the Pittsburgh Technology Center along Second Avenue, and the healthcare and academic hub of Oakland. For this reason many students, young professionals, and new families are trickling into Hazelwood. (continued on pg. 6)

Pattern Book Housing ~ Continued

A young man who bought a beautiful 3-story Roman Brick house with a slate roof on Winston Street, stated that his house had laid boarded up and vacant for several years before he purchased and restored it. He was attracted to the intimate nature of his street, and the well-kept houses surrounding his own.

In fact, all of the houses on his block contain lovely sidewalks or stairs leading up to their porches³. This follows the mode of pattern book houses, creating an indoor-outdoor, public-private space for the residents. Porches promote socializing, between both residents within the home as well as with neighbors. Early developers built up neighborhood blocks, using a handful of basic structures that were then individualized to the tastes of buyers⁴. Later with time, residents made additional changes adding to the unique quality of each home. Each house on the block was also laid out on an orthogonal⁵ grid. Likewise, common façade fenestration⁶ and proportions of the front, side and backyards, were implemented for each parcel.

¹Notes from lecture 17 - 1 March 2000 – in David Lewis’ “Urban Design” course at Carnegie Mellon University.

² As a result of reviewing the Allegheny County Real Estate web page: www.county.allegheny.pa.us

³ see figure 2

⁴ “Pattern book houses” are houses from the late 19th to early 20th centuries that are built of the same frames, but have slightly different exterior detailing. For instance, the siding of the house, or the brick color, might be different from house to house. These types of buildings are typically found in older inner-ring city neighborhoods and out to the streetcar suburbs.

⁵ An “orthogonal” grid is based on right (90 degree) angles.

⁶ The design and placement of windows and doors in a building.

⁷ The “public right-of-way” typically includes the sidewalks, streets, and space for utility poles on the edge of one’s property.

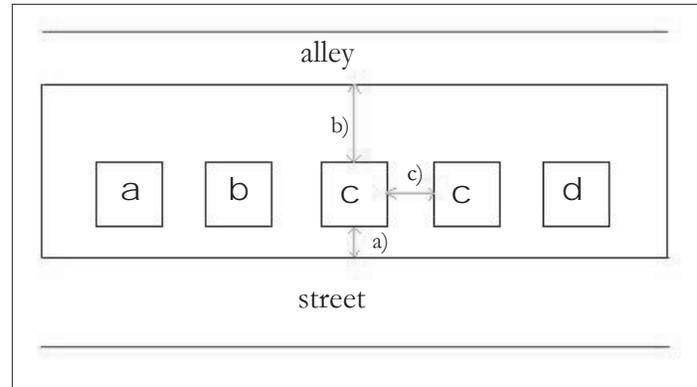


figure 1 ~ Plan
Common Dimensions in a Block of Pattern Book Housing

- a) front yard
- b) back yard
- c) side yard

The letters a,b,c... on photo “a” on page 7 correspond to those on the plan in figure 1. Each letter designates a single basic structural pattern within a block of pattern book houses.

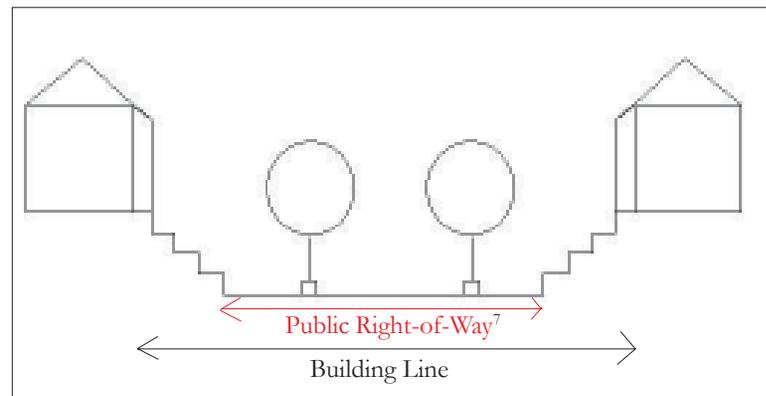


figure 2
Street Section

Among the streets of pattern book housing in Hazelwood, a few 1950s FHA homes were plopped down inbetween the late 19th c. homes. This is an example of infill architecture during the days of bulldozer renewal.



a



Things That Aren't There Anymore



a Rutherglen at 2nd Ave
1933

Unfortunately many buildings in Hazelwood were eliminated with the expansion of the steel mills, namely J&L, and later LTV. This woodframe rowhouse is an example of typical worker housing during the early 20th century.



More things that aren't there anymore



a closed
down
grocery

1933
a

4264 2nd Ave. at Rutherglen St.



a soda fountain/
pharmacy

1933
b

4300 2nd Ave. at Rutherglen St.



19th century
mansions once
owned by the first
grouping of
Hazelwood
residents, that of
the wealthy who
sought escape
from the city

1928
c

Irvine St., from 20ft. Away looking N.



Modest
worker
row
houses
and an
old Esso
gas
station

d
1934

91 Hazelwood Ave. at Kansas St.



e
2001
Hazelwood
Ave. at 2nd
Ave looking
beyond
where #91
would have
been



Mainstreet Changes: changes in the business corridor



a

4826 2nd Ave. looking North

1935



1972

b

4900 Block of 2nd Ave.



c

4826 2nd Ave. looking North

2001

Photo "a" reveals a dry cleaners, the Hazelwood variety store, and other businesses behind the street-car in this bustling glimpse into the 1930s. Photo "c" is not as vibrant as the first, but a bakery and a liquor store were in operation in the 1970s. Finally, today's picture is once again more barren. Many buildings have been demolished, leaving behind vacant lots. The majority of the storefronts also lie vacant today, although a beauty salon and a pizzeria are catering to the demands of the local clientele.





a

1957



b

1972

2nd Ave. at Flowers St. looking North

The G.C. Murphy's five and dime is shown in these pictures reveals a stark difference between the vigour of the 1950s and the barren, abandoned feel of today's streetscape. G.C. Murphy's stores use to be located in practically every Pittsburgh neighborhood, whereas only a handful remain today. Sadly the anchor store in Downtown Pittsburgh will soon be closing its doors due to bankruptcy. The 2001 photo "c" reveals the boarded-up facade of the once thriving building. About two years ago a couple was looking into purchasing the building. They sought to convert it into an antique auction gallery, with their residence on the third and fourth floors. I aided their process by producing plans for the building. However, the structure had extensive water damage and pigeon waste throughout, in addition to needing a new roof. Sadly their idea never came to fruition, presumably because the costs of redoing the building outweighed its value.



c

2001

More Views From 2nd Ave. @ Flowers



a
2001 IOOF detail on the
2nd Ave. facade



1933
c

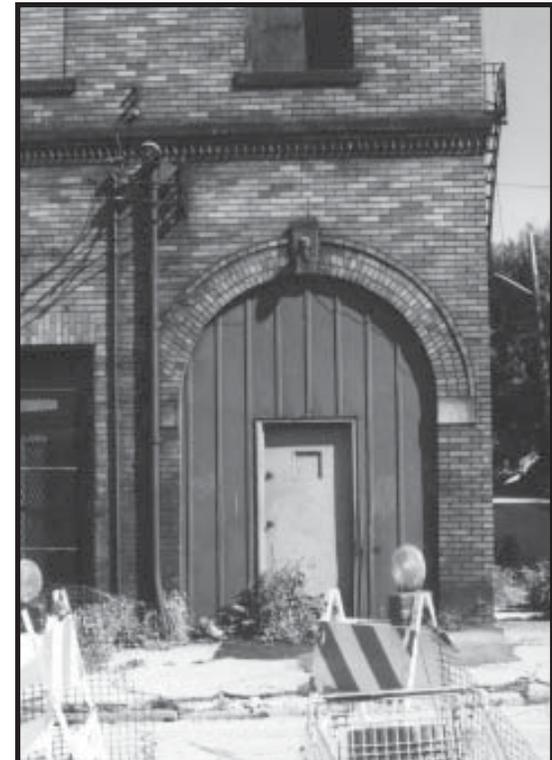
IOOF entrance on Flowers

Here are four more views of the G.C. Murphy's building. The two photos on the right-hand side of the page show the entrance to the Independent Order of the Odd Fellows (IOOF) Lodge. It was a fraternal organization similar to the Mason's society. Many such groups were brought to the U.S. from Europe in the late 19th century, fulfilling the social needs of immigrant workers.



2001
G. C. Murphy's
Building at 2nd
Ave. and Flowers

b



2001

d

Rowhouses in Hazelwood: from quaint to shoddy



a Chaplin Street



b Tecumseh Street



c
Glenwood Avenue

Several of the rowhouses in Hazelwood are in need of repairs. Both photos "a" and "c" reveal boarded up windows and an atmosphere of neglect. The rowhouses in photo "b", however, are in much better condition than the previous two. The "b" inhabitants were permanent, long-time residents as opposed to the transient residents of the housing in "a" and "c", leading to the abandoned feel captured in the pictures.



Where Can We Go From Here?

Hazelwood still needs a lot of work, but people are making a difference. This can be seen by a few opposite ends of the spectrum.



a

Glenwood Ave. @ E. Elizabeth St. looking NE



b

200 Block of Winston St. where 5 properties are up for sale and one lot lies vacant



c Langhorn St.

All of these shots are from August and September 2001. Photo "a" reveals a turn of the century home that is in need of some exterior repairs; it shows that the building has been weathered with time. With a little work, though, improvements can be made. Look at photos "d" and "e", for example, where a beautiful late 19th c. house with a mansard roof is being restored. Along with the charming house in photo "c", both homes prove that change can happen for the better. e

d



119 E.Elizabeth St. ~ view a

119 E.Elizabeth St. ~ view b



Appendix A:
Photograph Citations

pg. #	# on pg.	Image Source	Collection #	Collection Name	Image #	Image Description	Image Date
4	a	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	09-1445	Sylvan Ave @ Hzwd Ave lkg N	10/14/1909
4	b	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	10-1577	Sylvan Ave @ Hzwd Ave lkg N	3/29/1910
5	b	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	12-2768	Glenwood Ave @ Trowbridge St	8/12/1912
7	mesh	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	33-18254	2nd Ave @ Rutherglen St-rowhs left	4/11/1933
7	mesh	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	33-18250	3rd Ave @ Rutherglen St-rowhs right	4/11/1933
8	b	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	33-18247	4th Ave @ Rutherglen St- 4300 2nd. Av	4/11/1933
8	a	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	33-18248	5th Ave @ Rutherglen St-skinlss weiners	4/11/1933
11	c	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	33-18517	Rowers Ave @ Osprey Wy, SW comer, lkg N	6/13/1933
8	d	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	34-22220	91 Hazelwood Ave lkg W @ Kansas St.	11/26/1934
9	a	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	35-25683	in front of 4826 Hzwd Ave lkg W	7/30/1935
10	a	Archives Service Ctr	71:5	Pgh City Photographer	57-100825	2nd Ave @ Flowers	7/2/1957
8	c & cover	CLP-Main-PA Room	71:6	Pgh City Photographer	6478	Irvine St., from 20ft. Away lkg N.	4/20/1928
10	b	CLP-Hzwd Brnch	n/a	n/a	3186	GC Murphy's 2nd @ Flowers	4/1972
9	c	CLP-Hzwd Brnch	n/a	n/a	3184	4900 block of 2nd Ave	4/1972
13	d	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	119 E. Elizabeth St.-1	8/2001
13	e	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	119 E. Elizabeth St.-2	8/2001
11	b	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	GC Murphy's 2nd @ Flowers	8/2001
11	d	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	IOOF entrance at Flowers	8/2001
11	a	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	IOOF 2nd Ave. detail	8/2001
4	c	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	Sylvan Ave. looking N	8/2001
10	c	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	2nd Ave. at Flowers looking SE	8/2001
9	b	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	4826 2nd Ave.	8/2001
12	a	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	Chaplin Street	8/2001
13	a	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	E. Elizabeth St. at Glenwood Ave.-1	8/2001
6	a	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	FHA hm on Winston	8/2001
12	c	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	Glenwood Ave. Rowhouse	8/2001
8	e	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	Hazelwood Ave. at 2nd. Ave.	8/2001
13	c	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	Langhorn Street	8/2001
5	a	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	300 Block of Winston St. lkg N	8/2001
13	b	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	Winston 200 blk lkg SW	8/2001
5	c	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	Trowbridge St.	8/2001
12	b	Joanna Beres	COPC	Hazelwood Pix	n/a	Tecumseh St.	8/2001



Acknowledgments

Several factors inspired me to develop this photo-essay exploration of the housing stock in Hazelwood. Studying architecture, urban design and historic preservation, at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh have allowed me to learn about the social concerns that shape the formation of the built environment and cities. Understanding how a community functions via social interaction is key to facilitating change.

Finally, Professor Joel Tarr, of Carnegie Mellon University's History Department, gave me the opportunity to examine his unpublished report on the genesis and change of Hazelwood. It was entitled: "Growth, Stability, and Decline in an Urban Area: One Hundred Years of Hazelwood. His paper examined the life cycle of an urban area with respect to industrial development.

The age of men smoking cigars, standing around a desk making decisions behind closed doors simply doesn't work in this day and age. It is necessary to involve community residents as much as possible in efforts to revitalize and shape the paths for future growth. This is the goal of the University of Pittsburgh's COPC (Community Outreach Partnership Center), involving the Oakland and Hazelwood neighborhoods, for which I created this housing study.

I would also like to thank the following for their unending support, guidance, and inspiration:

Dr. Sabina Deitrick, Dr. Carolyn Carson, Dr. E.K.Muller, Miriam Meislik, David Lewis FAIA AICP, Dr. Diane Shaw, Andrew Aurand and especially my mother, Mary Ellen Beres.





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