

ALLEN PARK VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL
(Allen Park Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center)
Southfield Expressway & Outer Drive
Allen Park
Wayne County
Michigan

HABS No. MI-427

HABS
MI-427

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ALLEN PARK VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL (Allen Park Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center)

HABS No. MI-427

- Location:** Southfield Expressway and Outer Drive
Allen Park, Wayne County, Michigan
USGS Dearborn quadrangle
- Present Owner:** U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20420
- Present Use:** Largely vacant; a small outpatient clinic still operates in first floor of Building 1, Unit D.
- Significance:** The Allen Park Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital, now known as the Allen Park Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, served as a hospital for U.S. veterans from its opening in 1939 to the present. The hospital reflects the influence of the Georgian Revival style on hospital architecture, and VA hospitals in particular, in the early to mid-twentieth century. The hospital was formally recognized for its historic and architectural significance in 1980 when it was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. According to the nomination form, the Allen Park facility

...is significant in architectural and medical history at the national level and meets National Register criterion under A and C. The hospital complex forms a part of the thematic group of 50 Veterans hospitals developed by the Veterans Bureau (later the Veterans Administration) between 1920 and 1946, to provide acute and long-term medical treatment of American veterans. This hospital network constituted one of the most ambitious and one of the most advanced health care delivery systems in the world. The Veterans Administration Medical Center in Allen Park reflects the rigorous planning methodology and design policies which underlie the system.¹

The hospital complex includes many buildings, each one necessary to run a large-scale medical facility and provide the highest levels of care and comfort for patients. Included at the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital were support facilities and buildings such as the kitchen, dining

¹ Mollenhoff, Gjore J. and Karen R. Tupek, "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form for Allen Park Veterans Administration Medical Center," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1980, p. 8.1.

hall, auditorium, boiler house, laundry building, and housing for employees. Each space and building had a specific role in the overall administration of the hospital complex and contributed to its successful daily operation. Furthermore, the change in the uses reflected modifications in hospital management and the shift in the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital's needs.

The additions and alterations to the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital reflected the larger trends in medical treatment and the VA's efforts to accommodate them. These additions and interior alterations depict how the VA incorporated new and developing medical technologies, the development of medical specialties, and current approaches to treatment into the Allen Park facility to provide the most current methods of patient care.

The Allen Park Veterans Hospital was constructed, expanded, and regularly altered for the benefit of America's veterans. The dedication to incorporating the most recent trends in medical care, the most up-to-date medical technology and equipment, and the provision of physical and mental support for patients at Allen Park is evidenced in the changes that continually occurred at the complex.

PART I. NARRATIVE HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Introduction

The Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital is located on a triangular 38.9-acre parcel of land between Southfield Expressway, Outer Drive and Snow Road in the City of Allen Park, Michigan. The complex is composed of nineteen buildings, including a hospital building, support facilities, and research laboratories. The first hospital building and support facilities were completed in 1939 with all of the components necessary to operate a sophisticated medical facility designed to provide a wide range of services. The first buildings in the complex included a large hospital building with kitchen, dining hall, patient wards, staff offices, a garage, boiler house, engineering shops, and staff housing. Substantial additions were completed in 1947 and 1960, expanding the capacity of the hospital.

The Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital is one of dozens of veterans hospitals across the country built during the second quarter of the twentieth century by the Veterans Administration, presently the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital is typical of these hospitals in its use of a standardized plan with Georgian Revival exterior details.

Veterans Administration Hospitals

In 1920, Congress passed the First Langley Bill authorizing the Treasury Department to erect new hospitals for the medical care of veterans. Medical care for veterans occurred previously at various military hospitals, at spaces leased by the Public Health Service in private hospitals, and at the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. Congress established the Veterans Bureau in 1921 and subsequently passed the Second Langley Bill giving the Veterans Bureau the direct authority to construct hospitals.²

President Harding appointed Colonel Charles R. Forbes as the first Director of the Veterans Bureau. Until 1923, all designs were produced through the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. In that year, however, responsibility was transferred to the Construction Division of the Veterans Bureau, headed by Colonel Louis H. Tripp. Tripp's position as Chief of the Construction Division entailed a number of responsibilities that included the inspection of potential sites, preparation of plans, awarding and administration of contracts, and general supervision of the buildings.³

² U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *VA History in Brief: What It Is, Was, and Does* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), n.p.

³ "Officials of the Veterans' Administration," *The Federal Architect* 13, no. 1 (October 1944) : 19.

In 1930, the various federal agencies that dealt with veterans' issues, including the Bureau of Pensions, the Veterans Bureau, and the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, were combined, creating the Veterans Administration (VA). President Hoover selected General Frank T. Hines as Administrator and Colonel Tripp as the Director of the Construction Service for the new agency. Tripp was assisted by Herbert Baruch, Assistant to the Director; Joseph A. Fahy, Chief of Project Supervision; Herbert W. Gardner, Chief of the Maintenance and Operations Division; and William R. Talbott, Technical Division Architect.⁴

By 1944, there were ninety-three veterans' hospitals in the United States with a total of 62,749 beds. Of the ninety-three facilities, fifty-one were general medical and surgical hospitals, thirteen were tubercular hospitals, and twenty-nine were neuropsychiatric hospitals. Some of the hospitals offered a combination of services. For example, tubercular cases were treated in general medical and surgical hospitals as well as the tubercular hospitals.

In 1945, General Omar N. Bradley replaced General Hines as Administrator of the Veterans Administration. During the 1940s, the number of veterans needing services increased to 15 million due to the Second World War. Due to the high number of veterans seeking services, facilities were unable to meet the demand and many veterans had to be placed on waiting lists for beds. From 1944 to 1950, existing hospitals were expanded and new facilities were constructed, increasing the total number of hospitals from ninety-three to 151.⁵

The Vietnam War produced the largest numbers of disabled and "walking" disabled veterans of any previous war or conflict. Many veterans of the Vietnam conflict suffered readjustment problems, increasing the need for both long and short-term psychological facilities. In addition, specialized clinics were needed to treat the various cancers attributed to Agent Orange exposure.⁶

History of the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital

In 1935, the Federal Board of Hospitalization recommended that a Veterans Administration General Medical and Surgical Hospital be constructed in the Detroit area. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an order for its construction on March 19, 1936, and Congress appropriated \$1.4 million for construction and equipment costs.⁷

Henry and Clara Ford donated the land on which the hospital was built to the United States government on April 7, 1937. The deed ceded the 38.93-acre parcel of land with the contingency that the Veterans Administration erect a medical facility on the grounds and, in the event that the

⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁵ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *VA History in Brief*, 16.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁷ "Dearborn Veterans Administration Hospital," (Dedication Pamphlet) 7 April 1937, n.p.

facility was closed or ceased to be used as a hospital, the land would revert to the Ford family heirs.⁸

The site met the Veterans Administration's requirements for a general medical and surgical facility. The acreage permitted the construction of buildings in a campus-like setting, was located near a major thoroughfare that had bus line service, and was not adjacent to a railroad right-of-way.⁹ Most importantly, it was located in an area with a large population of veterans. According to records of the League of Women Voters for Allen Park, after World War I, many returning veterans purchased lots in Allen Park and built small, brick residences, making this area an ideal location for a veteran's hospital.¹⁰

On July 27, 1937, a groundbreaking ceremony took place at the site of the hospital. Present at the dedication were Henry and Clara Ford and many local, state, and national leaders. Henry Ford helped move the first ceremonial shovel of dirt.¹¹ The construction contract in the amount of \$1,112,000 was awarded a week later to the Cooper-Little Construction Company of Detroit.¹² A month into construction, work was halted by a strike called by the Building Trades Council. The Council charged that Cooper-Little Construction Company was hiring non-union workers and passing over the large number of employable veterans within their ranks. That issue was eventually resolved and work proceeded.¹³

The first structures to be completed were Building 10, the Boiler House (MI-427-E), and Building 12, the Garage (MI-427-G), which were finished in late 1938. A steel water tank (later demolished) was completed in January 1939. Building 1, the main hospital building (MI-427-A), Building 7, the Nurses' Quarters (MI-427-C), and Building 8, the Attendants' Quarters (MI-427-D), were completed in February and March, 1939.¹⁴

The dedication ceremony was held on June 20, 1939, after being rescheduled from the original April date due to Henry Ford's ill health.¹⁵ Attending the Dedication ceremony were Ford, Brigadier General Frank T. Hines, Administrator of Veterans Affairs, the Governor of Michigan, and an even larger list of notables than had attended the groundbreaking ceremony. Reverend H.

⁸ Quit Claim Deed between Henry and Clara Ford and the United States of America, 7 April 1937. Wayne County Recorder of Deeds Office, Liber 4878, Folio 632-633.

⁹ "Hospital Sites," *The Federal Architect* 13, no. 1 (October 1944) : 24.

¹⁰ League of Women Voters Correspondence, 1956. On file at Allen Park Public Library.

¹¹ "Dearborn Veterans Administration Hospital," n.p.

¹² "Contract Let for Hospital," *Dearborn Independent*, 16 July 1937.

¹³ "Construction at Hospital Halted Early by Strike." *Dearborn Independent*, 26 August 1937.

¹⁴ F. H. Dryden, Assistant Administrator for Construction Supply and Real Estate to Dr. Thomas P. Crane, Hospital Manager, 21 September 1949. On file at Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Detroit, Michigan.

¹⁵ Edward Andrzejewski, oral interview by E. Madeleine Scheerer, January 2002. Allen Park, Michigan.

W. Hartman, State Chaplain of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, gave the Invocation and Reverend Father William P. Schulte, Former National Chaplain of the 48th battalion gave the benediction.¹⁶

The first patients were admitted to the new 351-bed facility on April 15, 1939. These included Oscar Waal, John Bauer, Jadala Nehr, Patrick Duffy, Eddie Copple, George Lalond, Edward Mailhot, Glenn McCormick, William A. Nichols, Loren Palmer, Frank Quinn, and Henry Jeski. Eddie Copple was the first patient to die in the facility on April 19, 1939.¹⁷

Construction continued after the first patients were admitted. Building 6, the Director's Quarters (MI-427-B), Building 13, the original Laundry building (MI-427-H), and Building 14, Duplex Staff Quarters (MI-427-I), were completed by October 1939.¹⁸ Plans for the site dated 1937 show Buildings 6 and 14 on the opposite side of the campus from where they were built, along a road leading eastward from Building 7.¹⁹ Building 9, while shown on the plans, was never constructed.

Buildings 1, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, and 14 comprised the original campus but the growing number of soldiers requiring hospital services during World War II necessitated additions to the facility. In January 1944, the addition of 110 emergency beds was authorized at the hospital.²⁰ These beds were most likely crowded into the existing wards and placed in the day rooms.

Building 18, the Warehouse (MI-427-J), was erected in late 1944 to provide additional storage space. On January 19, 1945, F.H. McGraw and Company of Hartford, Connecticut, was awarded the contract for construction of two, ten-story wing additions to the hospital. Although the company had bid \$2,998,447, Congress felt the estimate was too low and allotted an additional \$320,000²¹ The F. H. McGraw Company would go on to construct the War Memorial Pool at Tusawilla Park in Ocala, Florida, and the Paducah, Kentucky, Diffusion Plant in 1950.²² The two new wings, known as Units B and C, increased the hospital's capacity from approximately 460 to 1,450 beds.²³ The wings were completed in late 1947 and service was initiated immediately. Tuberculosis patients were housed on four floors of the wings with four to five patients per ward. The stay for a tubercular patient was approximately two years and, after a

¹⁶ "Dearborn Veterans Administration Hospital," n.p.

¹⁷ Veterans Administration Memorandum from Clinical Clerk to Mr. Hines, 27 October 1939. On file at Dingell Medical Center, Detroit, Michigan.

¹⁸ Dryden letter to Crane, 21 September 1949.

¹⁹ U.S. Veterans Administration, Site Plan 1937. On file at Dingell Medical Center, Detroit, Michigan.

²⁰ U.S. Veterans Administration, "V.A. Hospital No. 135, Dearborn, Michigan Additions and Betterments, Annual Appropriations," n.p. On file at U.S. Veterans Administration Collection, Washington, D.C.

²¹ "3 Million is Low Bid on Addition to Vets' Hospital," *Dearborn Independent*, 19 January 1945.

²² USEC (United States Enrichment Corporation), "USEC Facilities, Paducah Plant History,"

http://www.usec.com/v2001_02/HTML/Facilities_PaducahHistory.asp.

²³ "\$3,000,000 Addition for Veteran's Hospital," *Dearborn Independent*, 7 September 1945.

seven-month isolation period, they were allowed to re-enter the general population.²⁴ In addition, Building 22, the Auditorium, Canteen and Retail Building (MI-427-L), and Building 23, the Occupational Therapy Shops (MI-427-M) were completed in April 1947.²⁵

At least five quonset huts were moved onto the property in 1947 in the current location of Building 31, Animal Research (MI-427-O), and Building 67, Research (MI-427-Q). These structures were sold and relocated off the premises in 1951.²⁶ Building 19, the original Cafeteria and later the Kitchen, Chapel, and Office building (MI-427-K), was also finished late in 1947 and Building 11, the new Laundry Building (MI-427-F), was finished in July of 1947.²⁷ From 1944-1948, other alterations and additions were made to Building 1. These included the installation of electric elevators, cafeteria equipment, and refrigerator equipment. The facility's net worth with existing buildings, additions, and improvements over the period 1938 to 1949 totaled \$6,688,514.²⁸

In 1953, interior alterations were made in Buildings 1 and 19 to convert parts of the hospital to tubercular wards. In addition to reducing the numbers of patients per floor, the dining hall in Building 19 was divided between tubercular and general medical and surgical patients that same year.²⁹

The year 1960 brought about the completion of Units D and E, the last major construction activity at the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital. During the construction, the ambulatory care facility was expanded (this unit was again renovated in 1985). Acting on President Kennedy's 1963 directive that 2,000 beds be opened for the care of chronically ill and aging veterans, and President Johnson's call for 4,000 beds, the Allen Park facility opened its Nursing Home Care Unit in 1966. The unit was located on the top floor of the main building with thirty-six beds, and its capacity was increased to seventy-two beds in 1970.³⁰

In the mid-1980s, the Veterans Administration determined that the Allen Park facility was in need of extensive restoration and rehabilitation. In 1985, a study investigated several alternatives, including renovating the Allen Park facility, relocating to a new facility in Detroit,

²⁴ Andrzejewski, 2002.

²⁵ Dryden letter to Crane, 21 September 1949.

²⁶ U.S. Veterans Administration, Standard Form 114 Revised: Sale of Government Property, Invitation, Bid, and Acceptance, Veterans Administration Hospital, Southfield and Outer Drive, Dearborn, Michigan, 18 July 1951 : 2. On file at Dingell Medical Center Collection, Detroit, Michigan.

²⁷ Dryden letter to Crane, 21 September 1949.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ U.S. Veterans Administration, Floor Plans, Building 19, Second floor, 1953. On file at Dingell Medical Center, Detroit, Michigan.

³⁰ U.S. Veterans Administration, "Tour Book - Veterans Administration 1930-1980, 50th Golden Anniversary VA Medical Center, Allen Park, Michigan," Detroit, 1980, n.p.

or a combination of these two plans. The study concluded that the majority of employees at the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital lived in Detroit (476 employees) and Dearborn (144 employees), while very few actually lived in Allen Park (eighty-nine employees). They further concluded that the abandonment of the Allen Park facility would adversely affect the City of Allen Park's real estate values. The study indicated that, although the site was removed from the business centers of Dearborn and Allen Park and did not relate "functionally to the business fabric of either community," it still held "symbolic importance" for the City of Allen Park. As a result, the study recommended that the Veterans Administration pursue the "split facility" alternative.³¹

With support from Congressman John D. Dingell, the Veterans Administration erected a new facility in Detroit and continues to maintain a small outpatient clinic at the Allen Park facility. The clinic operates in a portion of Unit D two days a week, and is slated to be closed in 2002. The rest of the Allen Park facility closed in 1996 when the new \$250 million replacement facility was opened in Detroit. The new Dingell Veterans Affairs Medical Center was built in a mall configuration with three buildings surrounding an atrium with skylights. The facility is equipped with 134 hospital beds, eighty-four nursing care beds, and extensive research facilities.³² The fate of the Allen Park complex was decided with the passage of the Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act in 2000. This Act established the terms for demolishing the Allen Park complex by the Ford Motor Company, for which the company will be reimbursed \$14 million. After the demolition, the VA will abandon the property and it will revert to Ford ownership as stipulated in the original Quit Claim deed.³³

Allen Park Services

Patients at the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital had access to general, emergency, long-term, rehabilitative, and psychiatric care. Specialty services were provided through dental, nutrition, allergy, audiology and speech, dermatology, and other clinics. Shortly after World War II, the hospital developed a long-term affiliation with the Wayne State University College of Medicine. By 1959 the residency program had provided training to fifty-nine resident physicians, 174 medical students, 202 nurses, seventy-four allied health professionals, four dentists, and one administrative resident.³⁴

³¹ U.S. Veterans Administration, "Feasibility Study – Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital," Washington, D.C.: U.S. Veterans Administration, November 1985, n.p.

³² U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Facilities Directory: John D. Dingell VA Medical Center," <http://www.va.gov/sta/guide/facility.asp?ID=41>.

³³ Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, "Briefing Material on Proposed Demolition of Allen Park VAMC," <http://www.achp.gov/news-vamcbrief.html>.

³⁴ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Allen Park Veterans Medical Center History," In *Golden Anniversary History*, 1978, n.p. On file at Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Facilities Management, Washington, D.C.

The volunteer services division of the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital was an essential element in the care and treatment of ill and disabled veterans. Originally headquartered in the VA's Detroit Regional Office, the volunteer services division was fully operational at the Allen Park hospital when it opened in 1939. In addition to organizing recreational activities and social functions for the patients, the volunteer services division, using organized volunteers from such groups as the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion, focused on sustaining morale and follow-up care of the veterans.³⁵

Art was an important part of the Allen Park facility's rehabilitation program. Often outside artists volunteered their time and expertise in teaching art classes. These included ceramics, painting, and sculpting. On some occasions, patients who had been schooled in painting offered their services in teaching painting techniques to their fellow patients. Art was also used to decorate many spaces at the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital. James McBride, a patient at the hospital during the late 1940s and early 1950s, painted a number of murals throughout the hospital during his stay. McBride, a house painter from South Bend, Indiana, reportedly painted his murals as a way of thanking the staff at the facility.³⁶

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Veterans Administration Hospitals

William Talbott, the Technical Division Architect, and Charles Forbes, the first Director of the Veterans Bureau, supervised an architectural staff whose role was to develop basic floor plans for General Medical and Surgical, Tubercular, and Neuropsychiatric hospitals. These floor plans were designed to ensure the most economical arrangement of floor space while providing optimal operating conditions.³⁷ Borrowing the customary design concept used by the military since the nineteenth century, Forbes developed designs for hospitals with standardized plans and designs. However, Forbes also sought to build VA facilities that were sensitive to their locations, with the exterior design influenced by local history and architecture so that they would be visually compatible with the surrounding community.³⁸ That requirement assured communities that their property values would not decline and promoted positive interaction between the hospital and community residents. The standardized, although not identical, designs developed for VA hospitals were used from 1921 through 1949 for both interiors and exteriors. However,

³⁵ Andrzejewski, 2002.

³⁶ Andrzejewski, 2002.

³⁷ "Officials of the Veterans Administration," *The Federal Architect* 13, no. 1 (October 1944) : 21.

³⁸ Gjore J. Mollenhoff, Karen R. Tupek, and Sandra Webb. "National Register Nomination Form Veterans Administration Medical Center, White River Junction, Vermont," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1980.

the need for modernization and expansion led to changes in the hospital interiors while the exteriors retained their original design.

The VA relied on "Revival" styles, much like other federal construction at the time. Most popular for VA hospitals was the Georgian Revival style. There were thirty-five VA hospitals built in the Georgian Revival style, all with red brick facades, and often with dormer windows and columns. They were all designed with formal entrances elevated above the ground, often through a colonnaded portico. Decorative features repeated on the facades included gable end bulls-eye windows, belt courses, swags, and garlands.³⁹ The use of this style and of these architectural details is evident at the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital.

Other Revival styles were also used, and were chosen to blend with the regional architecture; for instance, the Spanish Colonial Revival style was used in Amarillo, Texas, and the French Colonial Revival style was used in Alexandria, Louisiana. The application of facade ornamentation was intended to beautify an otherwise functional building and "did not distract from the plan nor compromise its efficiency, but rather married the concepts of conformity and diversity, a characteristic of the United States itself."⁴⁰

Equally important as the design was site location. The selection process for the location of a future hospital site involved several key issues including the number of veterans within the area, the type of facility needed, the spatial needs of the necessary facility, availability of federal lands, and requests by local communities. Owing to the limited transportation networks of the early twentieth century, the presence of a public transportation system was a key factor. Other requirements included a paved highway preferably with a bus route, a quiet neighborhood setting, and distance from existing railroads.⁴¹

Architecture and Landscape Design at the Allen Park Veterans Hospital

The Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital is representative of the typical hospital built by the VA in the second quarter of the twentieth century in its size, form, style, and layout. It was built using the Georgian Revival style, the most common style for VA facilities. Like other VA hospitals, the main hospital building at Allen Park was built on an H-shaped plan and incorporated details to address the issues of fire safety and sanitary design through the use of modern materials such as steel, structural clay tile, terrazzo, and ceramic tile.

The buildings on the complex are nearly all constructed with brick edifices with limestone details. The ornamentation consists of limestone water tables, belt courses, cornices, and

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ "Hospital Sites," *The Federal Architect* 13, no. 1 (October 1944) : 24.

window sills. Other common features, typical of Georgian Revival architecture, include pedimented entrances, dormer windows, and an overall symmetry in design.

In addition, the main hospital building includes decorative elements such as the grand columned entrance, elevated limestone base, limestone garlands, and bulls-eye windows.

The interior finishes of each building provided smooth, easy to clean surfaces to prevent the accumulation of dust and other waste throughout the hospital and outbuildings.

With each successive addition to the hospital building, the Georgian Revival style was maintained. Units B and C, completed in 1947 and Units D and E, in 1960, all reflect the initial construction materials and architectural style of the hospital. These additions continue the use of brick facades, elevated limestone bases, limestone quoins, and symmetrical arrangements and fenestration.

The landscape design was integral to the original hospital plan. Prior to donation of the property, the land was undeveloped. The grounds were meticulously planned with many new plantings as well as some existing trees left in place, in particular, a grove on the southwest lawn. Most of the buildings were planted with shrubs around the perimeter, many of which survive today.

Ornamental landscape features include a large fan-shaped concrete planter that provides a transition from the front of the hospital to the lawn beyond. On the lawn, a flagstone path leads to a concrete flagpole, erected soon after the first buildings were completed. Plans from 1939, 1940, and 1949 show a small reflecting pool at the far western corner of the lot, but this has since been removed.

Although the identity of a landscape architect(s) for the Allen Park Veteran's Hospital is not known, it is apparent from the strongly axial plan and formal design that then-current Georgian Revival landscape design principles were a strong influence. Only a portion of the original design plan was ever installed, including the trees planted along the allee and the segmental planting beds.

Additional landscaping was planned for Building 1, but it is unknown whether these plans were carried out. Two *parterres* were planned around the main entrance with brick walkways and ornamental plantings. These spaces are currently covered with grass and enclosed within a limestone balustrade that extends from the front walkway to the westernmost corners of Unit A's exterior. Curved drives with concrete planters and street lighting, in place by 1939, completed the landscape design.

While it is possible that professional landscape architects and planners outside of the Veterans Administration Construction Division were employed to develop the layout of the complex, no references to specific Landscape Architects and Planers were found.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This complex was recorded by URS Corporation, Gaithersburg, Maryland, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, from January to March of 2002. Architectural Historians Amy Barnes, Anne Brockett, and Caleb Christopher completed the fieldwork for this project in January 2002. The photographer was Andrew Baugnet and the Historian was E. Madeleine Scheerer. The project was reviewed by Fred Holycross and Mark R. Edwards.

As stipulated in the deed in which Henry and Clara Ford donated the land on which the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital is located, when the property ceases to be used as a veterans hospital, the land is to revert in ownership to the Ford family heirs. Since inpatient and outpatient veteran medical service is now provided at the John D. Dingell Veterans Administration Hospital in Detroit, which opened in 1996, and the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital ceased all operations in 2002, the land is to be turned over to the Ford Motor Land Development Corporation (FMLDC) in compliance with the original deed. A Congressional appropriation of \$14 million, to be disbursed to the FMLDC over a seven-year period beginning in 2002, was designated for the demolition of the Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital complex.

PART IV. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

"3 Million is Low Bid on Addition to Vets' Hospital." *Dearborn Independent*, 19 January 1945.

"\$3,000,000 Addition for Veteran's Hospital" *Dearborn Independent*, 7 September 1945.

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. "Briefing Material on Proposed Demolition of Allen Park VAMC." <http://www.achp.gov/news-vamcbrief.html>. Accessed 12 September 2002.

Allen Park Veterans Administration Medical Center. "25th Anniversary, Veterans Administration Hospital, Dearborn, Michigan," 1964.

Allen Parker – Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital Internal Newspaper. Allen Park, Michigan, n.d.

American College of Physicians. "The Role of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Geriatric Care." *Annals of Internal Medicine* 115, no. 11 (1 December 1991) : 896-900.

Anderson, Thomas J. *A History of Southgate and Detroit's Downriver Area*. Southgate, Michigan: City of Southgate and the Wayne County Library System, 1963.

Architectural Drawings on file at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Facilities Management, Washington, D.C.

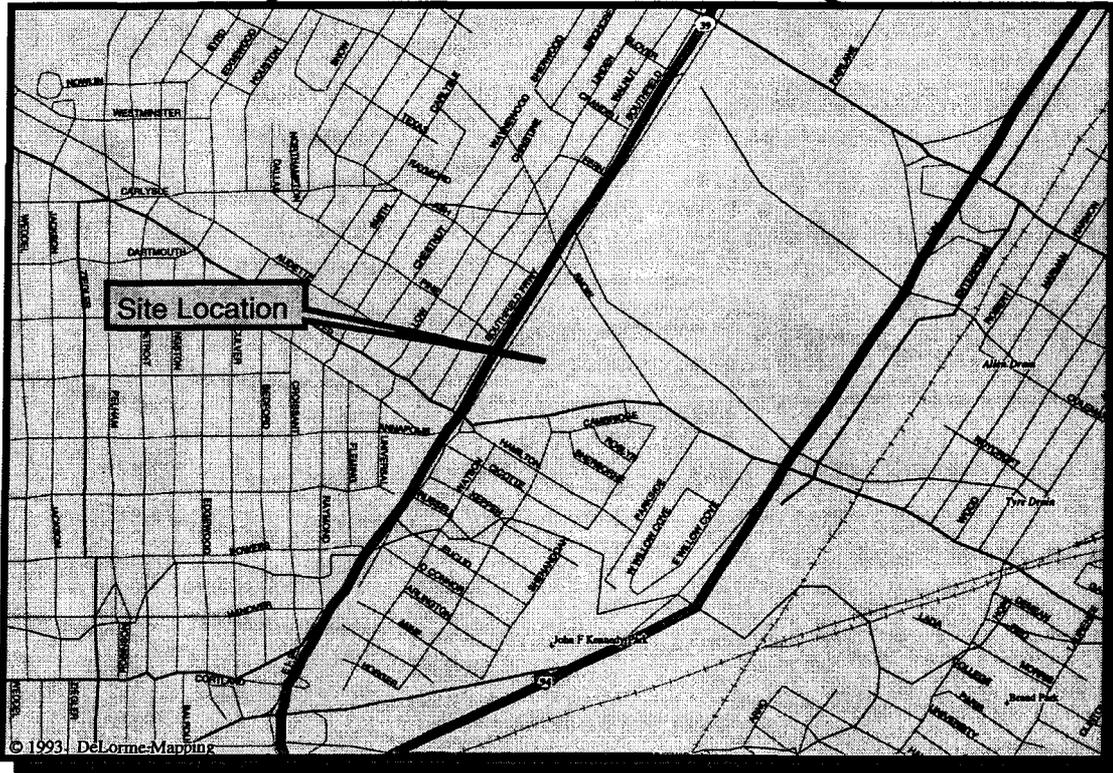
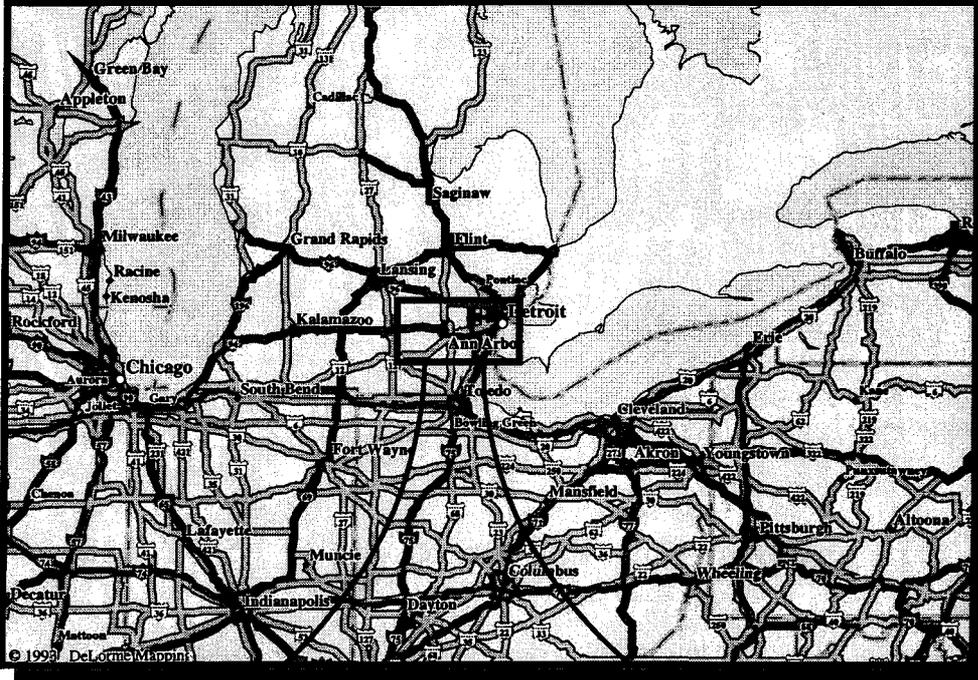
- Architectural Drawings on file at the John D. Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Medical Media Production Services, Detroit, Michigan.
- Andrzejewski, Edward. Interview by E Madeleine Scheerer, January 2002. Tape recording. Allen Park, Michigan.
- Belden, H. *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Wayne, Michigan*. Chicago: H. Belden & Company, 1876.
- Burton, Clarence M. *City of Detroit, Michigan 1701-1922*. Detroit: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922.
- Caitlin, George B. and George N. Fuller, eds. *Volume Three Containing Local History of Detroit and Wayne County*, vol. 3 of *Historic Michigan, Land of Great Lakes*. Dayton: National Historical Association Inc., 1928.
- Caldwell, Mark. *The Last Crusade: The War on Consumption 1862-1954*. New York: Atheneum, 1988.
- Carley, Rachel. *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture*. New York: Roundtable Press, 1997.
- Ching, Francis D.K. *Building Construction Illustrated*, 2d ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1997.
- "Construction at Hospital Halted Early by Strike." *Dearborn Independent*, 26 August 1937.
- "Contract Let for Hospital." *Dearborn Independent*, 16 July 1937.
- Cranston, Alan. "Psychology in the Veterans Administration: A Storied History, a Vital Future." *American Psychologist* 41, no. 9 (September 1986) : 990-995.
- "Dearborn Veterans Administration Hospital." (Dedication Pamphlet) 7 April 1937.
- Diner, Steven. *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era*. New York: Hill & Wang 1998.
- "Disabled Vets Not to be Forgotten." *Dearborn Independent*, 31 January 1947.
- Ecorse Township Vertical File. Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan.
- Farmer, Silas. *The History of Detroit and Michigan*. Detroit: S. Farmer & Company, 1889.
- Federal Architect* 13, no. 1 (October 1944). Entire issue dedicated to Veterans Hospital design and construction.
- Fisher, Elliott and H. Gilbert Welch. "The Future of the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care System." *Journal of the American Medical Association* 273, no. 8 (22 February 1995) : 651-655.
- Flint, Jerry. "Hospitals Without Patients." *Forbes Magazine*, 12 September 1994, 140-43.

- “Ford Breaks Ground for Hospital: Work Begins on \$1,112,000 Unit at City’s Border, Motor Magnate Shares Honors with Boy of Eleven, Fords Donated Beautiful Site.” *Dearborn Independent*, 10 July 1937.
- Hill, Barbara L. *The Quiet Campaign: A History of the Veterans Administration Hospital at Battle Creek, Michigan*, 2d ed. Battle Creek, Michigan: B. L. Hill, 1973.
- Hoke, John Ray, Jr., ed. *Architectural Graphic Standards*, 9th ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994.
- Knisley, Anne. “Patients’ Lives Enriched at Veterans Hospital.” *The Mellus (Mich.) Newspapers*, 28 February 1979.
- “Know Your Town.” Lansing, Michigan: League of Women Voters of Michigan, 1956. On file at Allen Park Public Library.
- Kozaryn, Linda D. “VA Transforms Health Care.” *American Forces Information Service News Articles*, 27 December 2000.
- League of Women Voters of Michigan. Box No. 14 – Allen Park Branch Collection. Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan, 1924-1985.
- Lehman, Esther. “A Survey of Educational Needs of Residents of the Nursing Home Care Unit, Veterans Administration Hospital, Allen Park, Michigan.” Allen Park, Michigan: Nursing Home Care Unit, Veterans Administration Hospital, n.d.
- “Lesinski Backs Plan to Enlarge Federal Hospital.” *Dearborn Independent*, 8 July 1938.
- Lindsay, Cotton M. *Veterans Hospitals: An Economic Analysis of Government Enterprises*. Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991.
- Melvindale (Mich.) News*, 23 June 1937.
- Mesa, Christine P. “The Architectural Set.” Unpublished document on file at Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Facilities Management, Washington, D.C., 1980.
- Michigan Gazetteer*. Detroit: American Historical Publications, 1991.
- Mollenhoff, Gjore J. and Karen R. Tupek.. “National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, Allen Park Veterans Administration Medical Center.” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1980.
- Mollenhoff, Gjore J., Karen R. Tupek, and Sandra Webb. “National Register Nomination Form, Veterans Administration Medical Center, White River Junction, Vermont.” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1980.
- Photograph Collection on file at the John D. Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Medical Media Production Services, Detroit, Michigan.

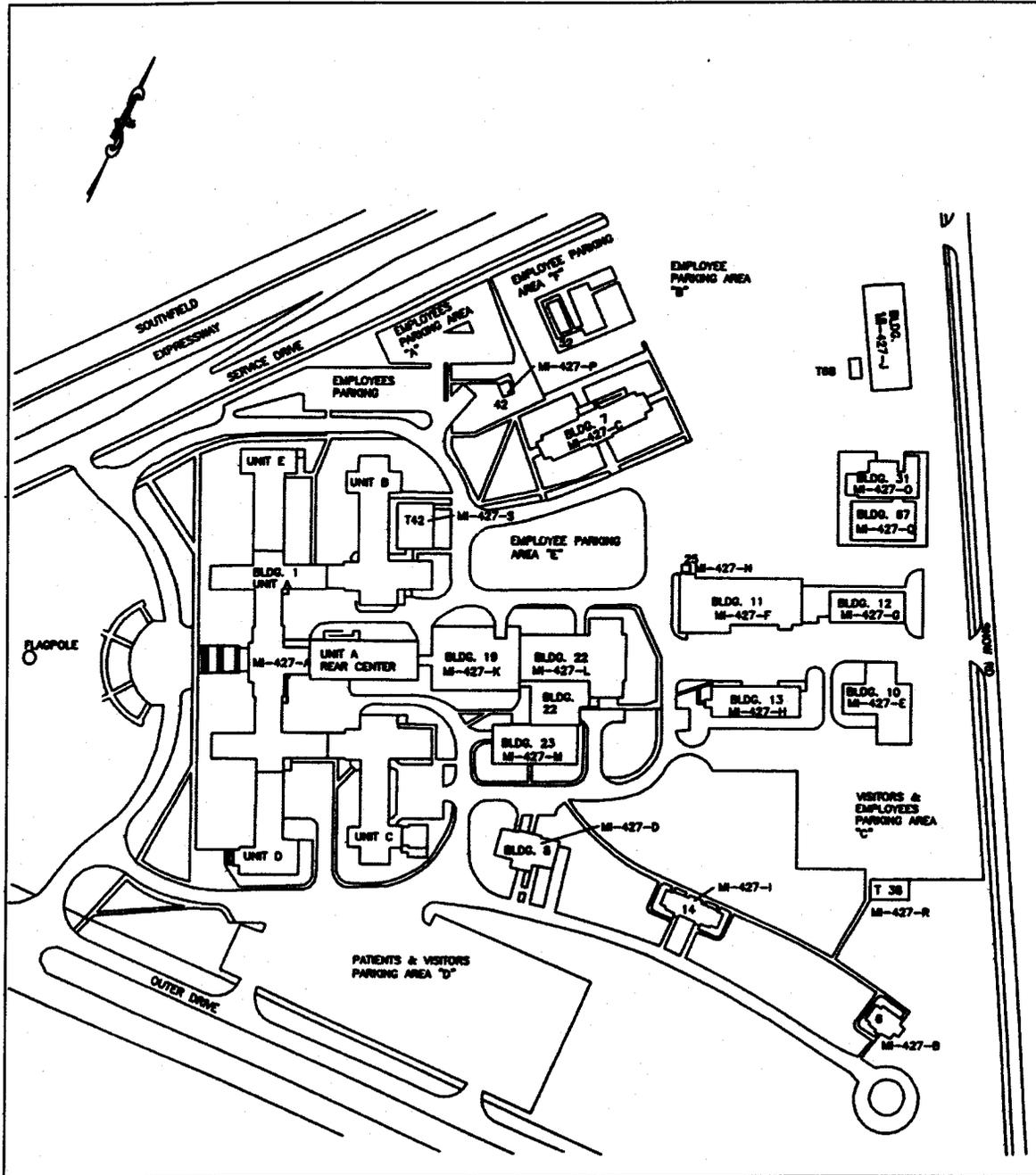
- Photograph Collection on file at the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Facilities Management, Washington, D.C.
- “Planning Techniques No. 11: Tuberculosis Sanitariums.” *Architectural Forum* 70 (March 1939).
- “Public Health Service Information Sheet 2000.” Allen Park, Michigan, 1980. On file at the Dingell Medical Center, Detroit, Michigan.
- Quit Claim Deed between Henry and Clara Ford and the United States of America, 7 April 1937. Wayne County Recorder of Deeds Office, Liber 4878, Folio 632-633.
- Risse, Guenter. *Mending Bodies, Saving Souls: A History of Hospitals*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Rosenberg, Charles. *The Care of Strangers: The Rise of America's Hospital System*. New York: Basic Books, 1987.
- Rosenberg, Norman and Emily Rosenberg. *In Our Times: America Since World War II*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995.
- Scott, Gene. *Detroit Beginnings: Early Villages and Old Neighborhoods*. Detroit: 300 Tricentennial Publications Project, 2001.
- Stevens, Rosemary. *In Sickness and in Wealth: American Hospitals in the Twentieth Century*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.
- Susman, Warren. *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.
- Taylor, H. *Compendium of History and Biography of the City of Detroit and Wayne County*. Chicago: H. Taylor & Company, 1909.
- “To Open Hospital Bids June 1st.” *Dearborn Independent*, 9 April 1937
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. *70 Years of VA History*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, n.d.
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. “Facilities Directory: John D. Dingell VA Medical Center.” <http://www.va.gov/sta/guide/facility.asp?ID=41>. Accessed 12 September 2002.
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. *VA History in Brief: What It Is, Was, and Does*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997.
- U.S. Enrichment Corporation, A Global Energy Company. “USEC Facilities, Paducah Plant History.” http://www.usec.com/v2001_02/HTML/Facilities_PaducahHistory.asp. Accessed 11 September 2002.
- U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. *Report of the Consultants on Hospitalization Appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury to Provide Additional Hospital Facilities*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1923.

- U.S. Veterans Administration. "Allen Park Veterans Medical Center History." In *Golden Anniversary History*, 1978. On file at Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Facilities Management, Washington, D.C.
- U.S. Veterans Administration. Correspondence re: Allen Park Medical Center, 1929-1978. On file at John D. Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Information and Media Section, Detroit, Michigan.
- U.S. Veterans Administration. "Dedication: United States Veterans Administration facility, Southfield Road and Outer Drive, Dearborn, Michigan," 1939. On file at John D. Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Information and Media Section, Detroit, Michigan.
- U.S. Veterans Administration. "Feasibility Study – Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Veterans Administration, November 1985. On file at John D. Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Information and Media Section, Detroit, Michigan.
- United States Veterans Administration. *History of VA Medical Center, Allen Park, Michigan*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, n.d. On file at Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Facilities Management, Washington, D.C.
- U.S. Veterans Administration. Standard Form 114 Revised: Sale of Government Property, Invitation, Bid, and Acceptance, Veterans Administration Hospital, Southfield and Outer Drive, Dearborn, Michigan, 18 July 1951. On file at John D. Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Information and Media Section, Detroit, Michigan.
- U.S. Veterans Administration. "Tour Book – Veterans Administration 1930-1980, 50th Golden Anniversary VA Medical Center, Allen Park, Michigan." Detroit, 1980. On file at John D. Dingell Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Information and Media Section, Detroit, Michigan.
- U.S. Veterans Administration. "VA Hospital No. 135, Dearborn, Michigan Additions and Betterments, Annual Appropriations." On file at United States Veterans Administration Office of Facilities Management, Washington, D.C.
- "Veterans Visit Dearborn" *Dearborn Independent*, 7 February 1947.
- "VA Hospital Here Holds Open House for Public, Sunday" *Dearborn Independent*, 9 May 1947.
- Wright, Orrin. *Allen Park Heritage: Story of a City 1776-1976*. Allen Park, Michigan: Heritage Committee of the Allen Park Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Location Map

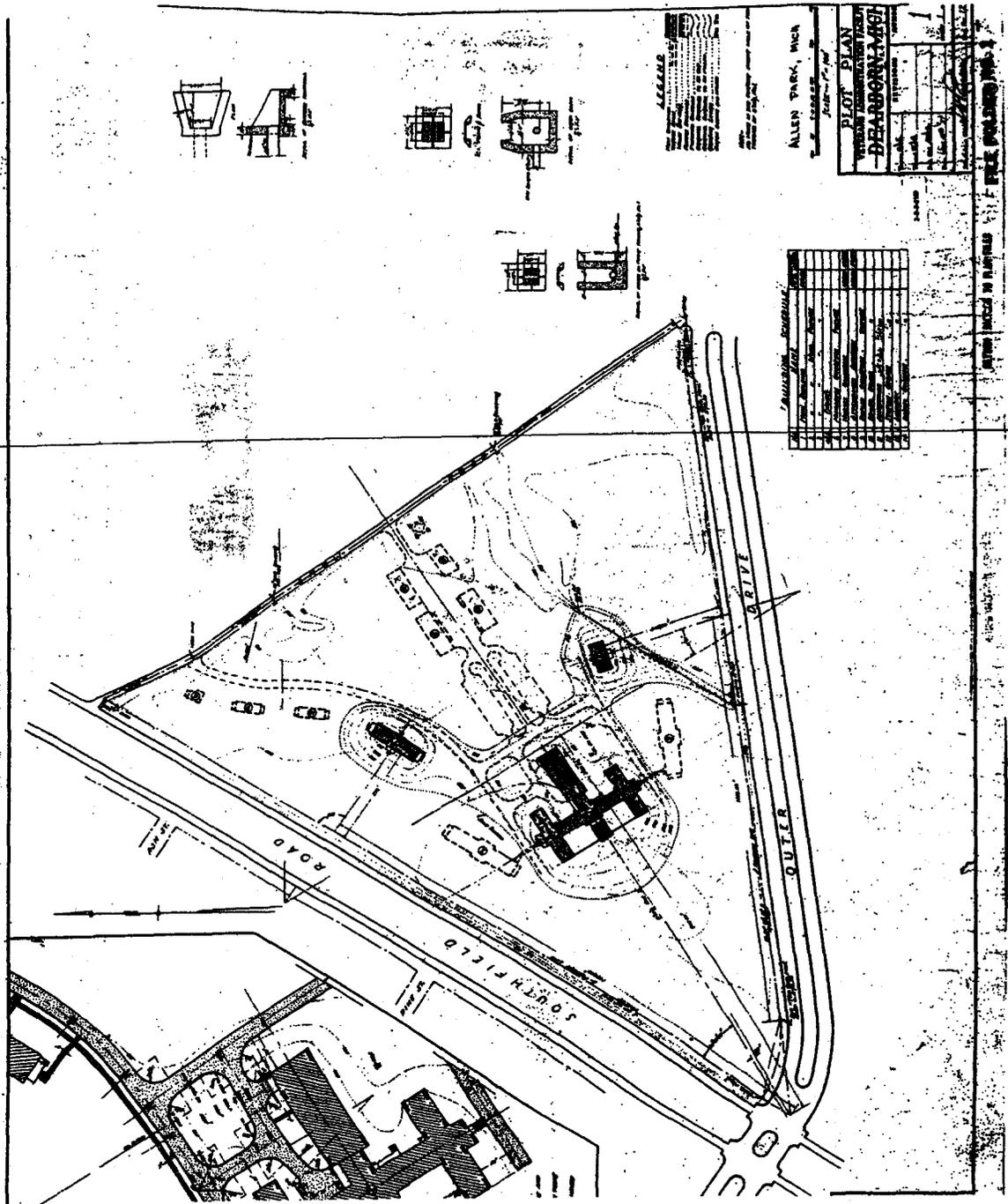


Site Plan

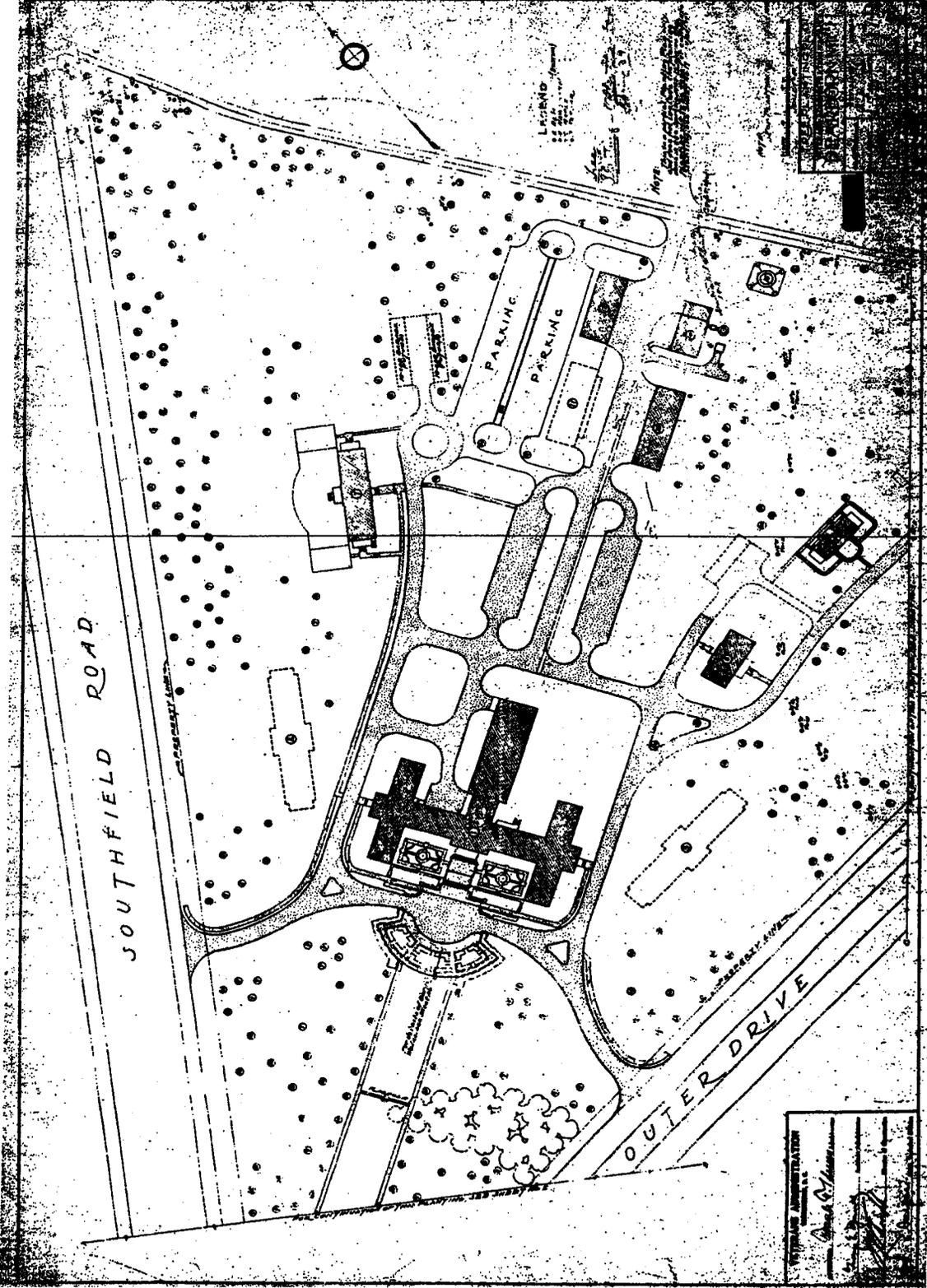


ALLEN PARK VETERANS
ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL
HABS No. MI-427
(Page 19)

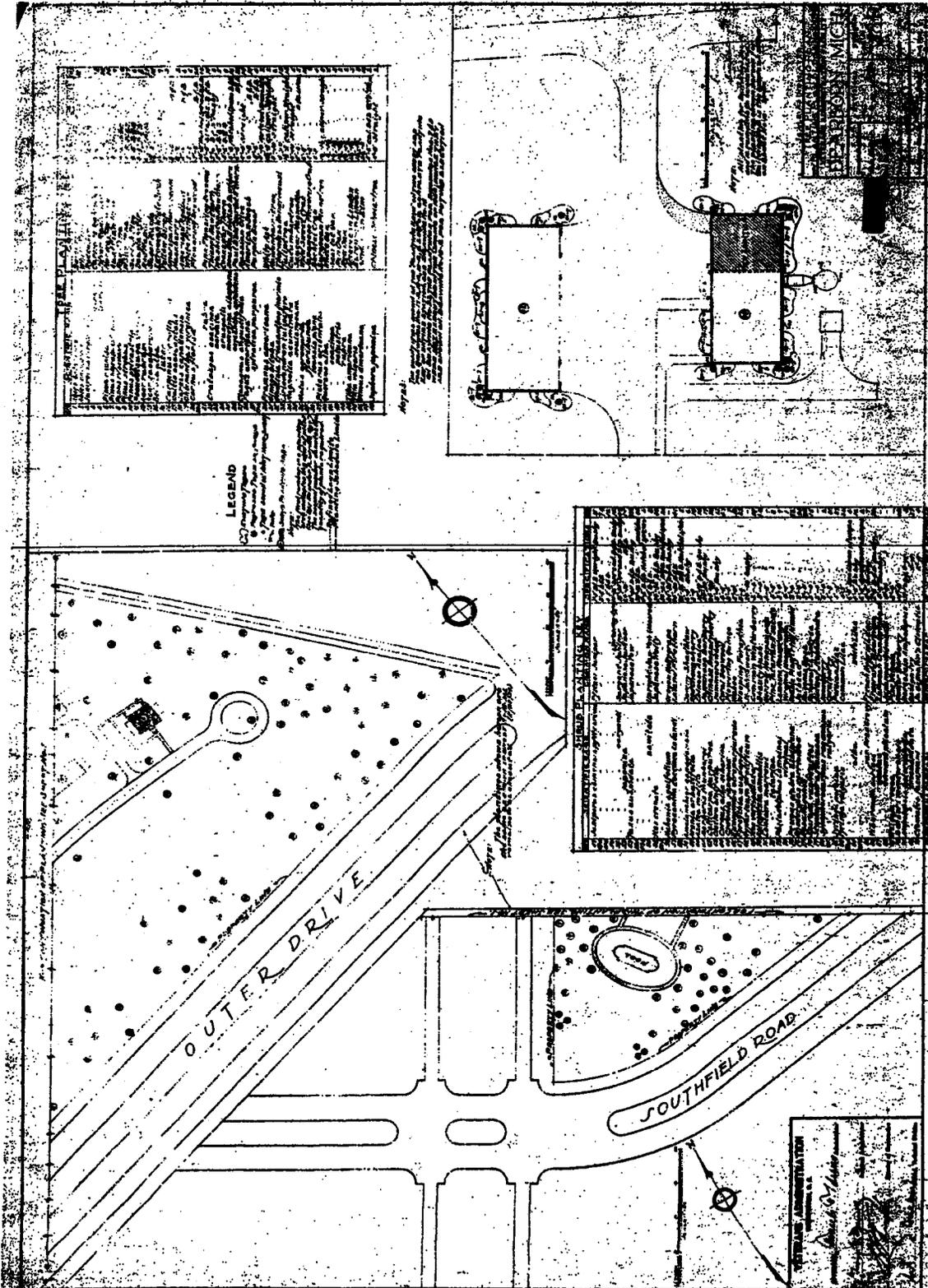
Reduced Copy of Historic Site Plan, dated April 15, 1939



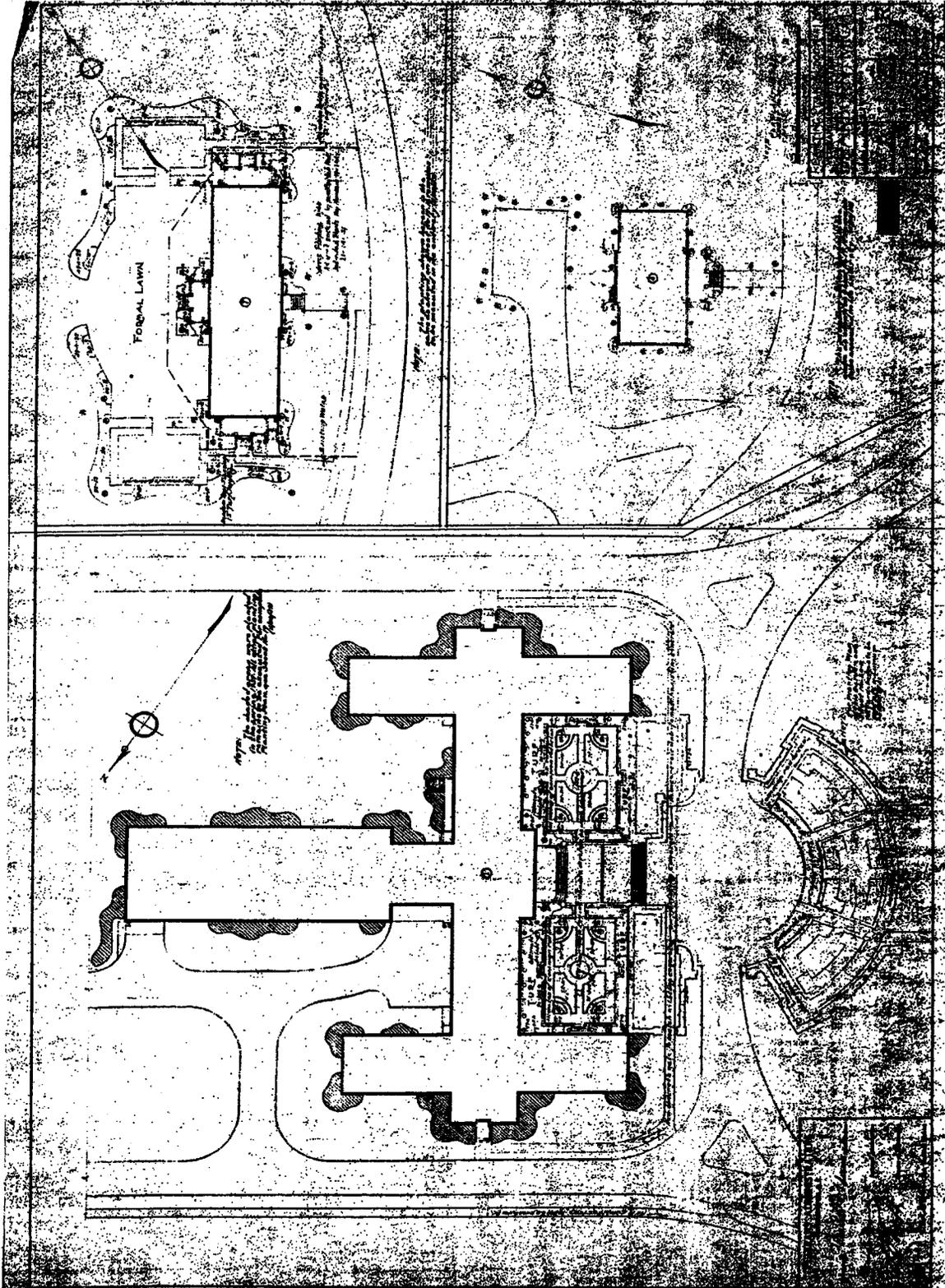
Reduced Copy of Historic Landscape Plan, dated February 10, 1940



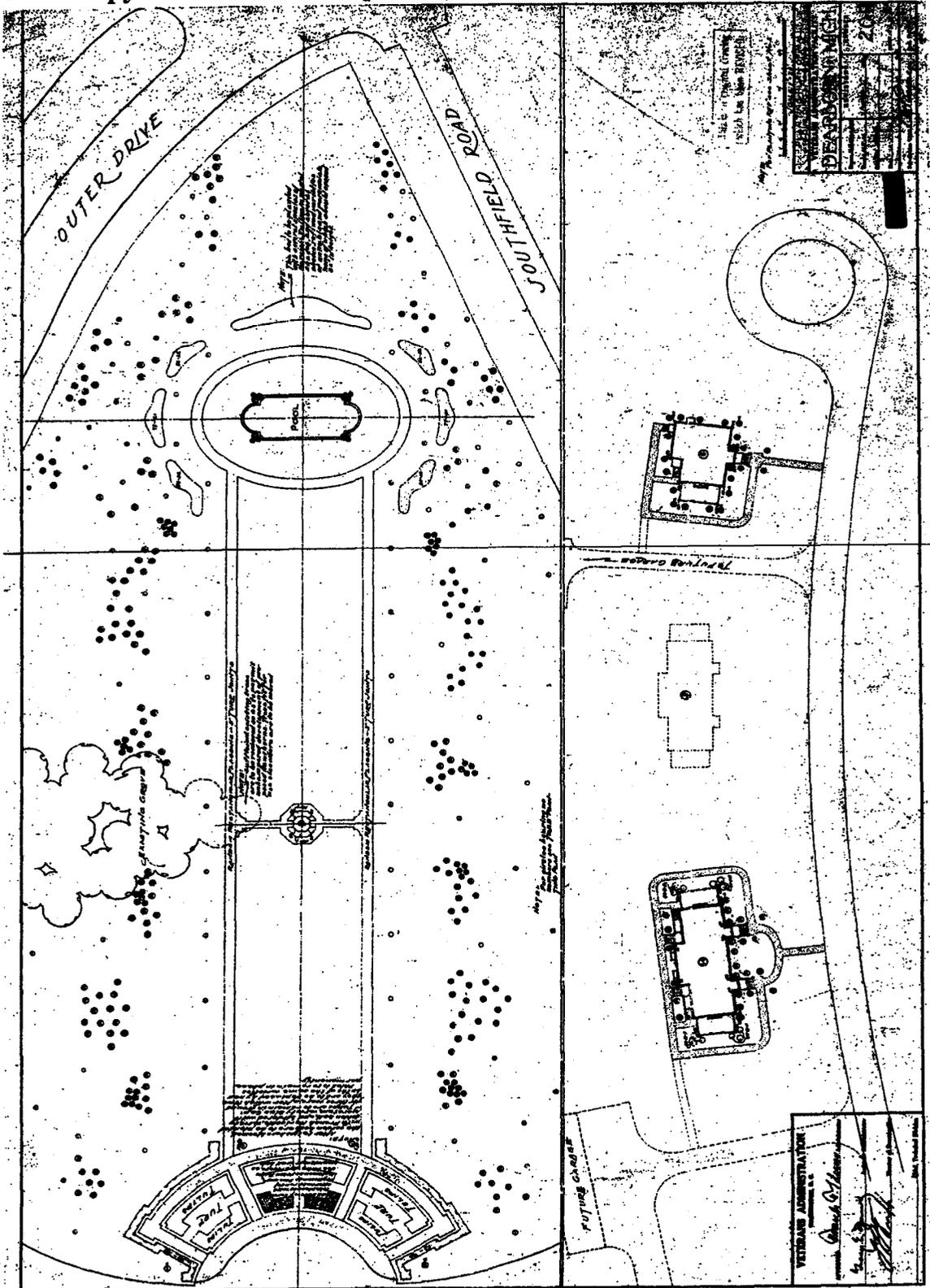
Reduced Copy of Historic Landscape Plan, dated February 10, 1940



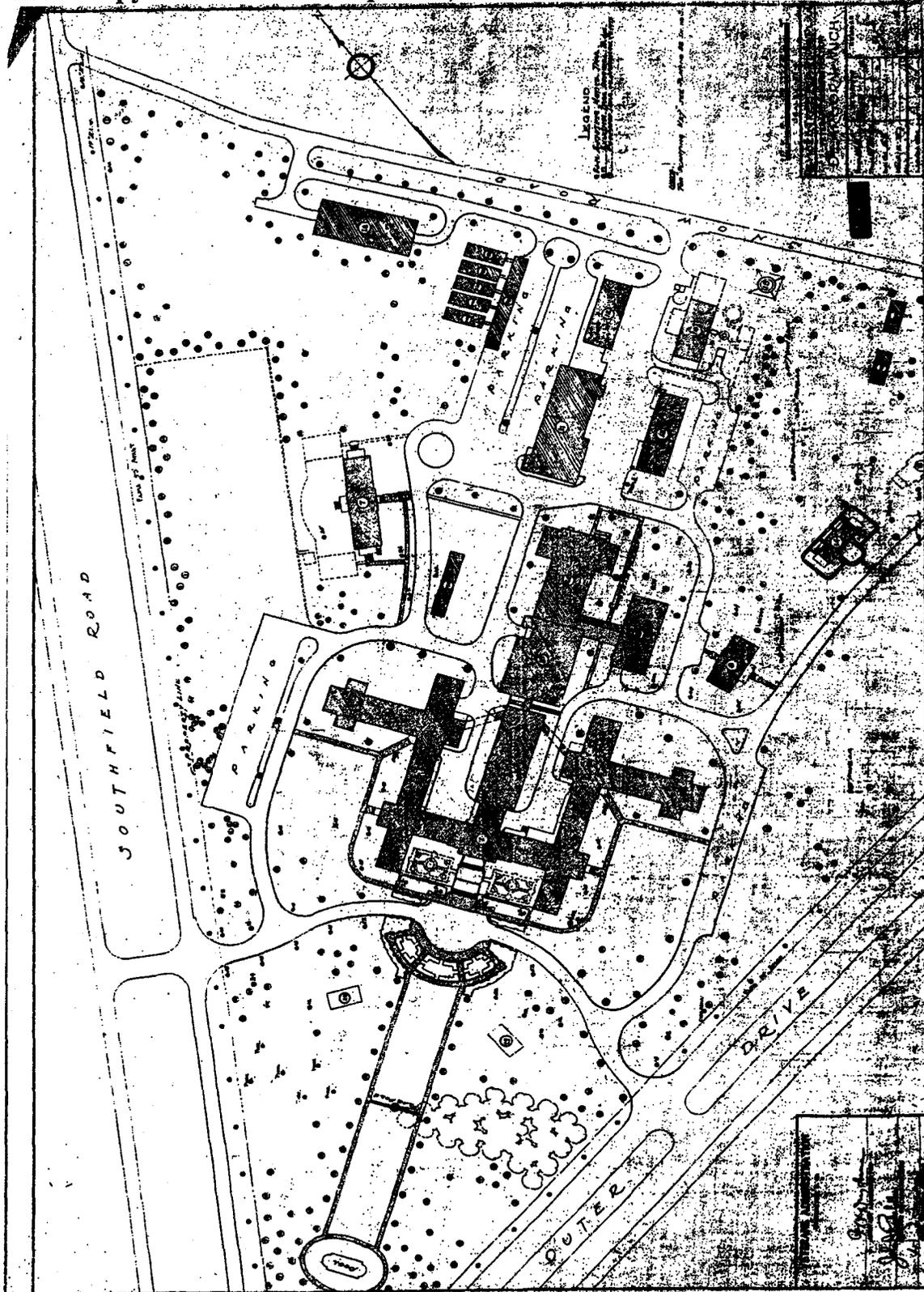
Reduced Copy of Historic Landscape Plan, dated February 10, 1940



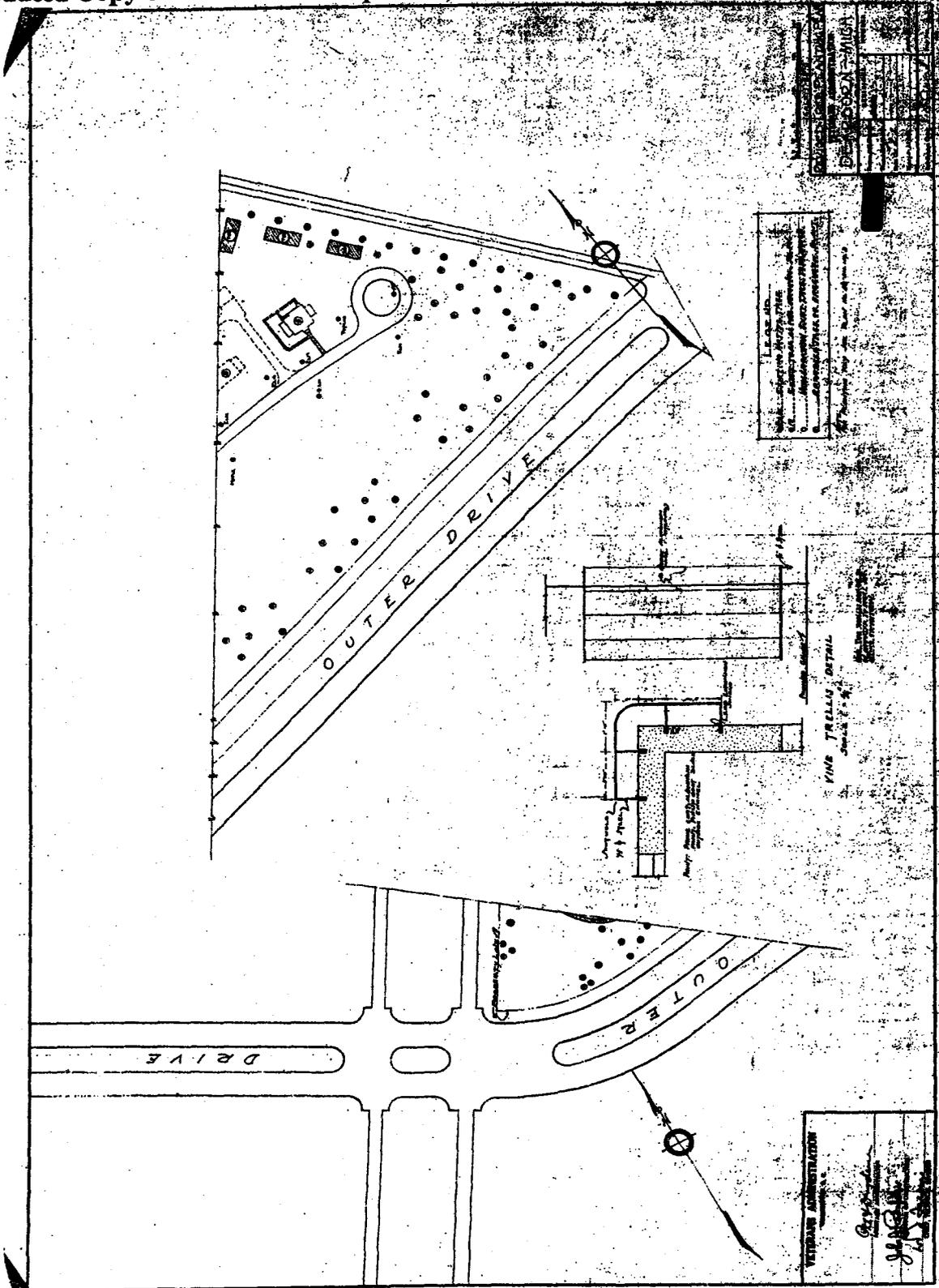
Reduced Copy of Historic Landscape Plan, dated February 10, 1940



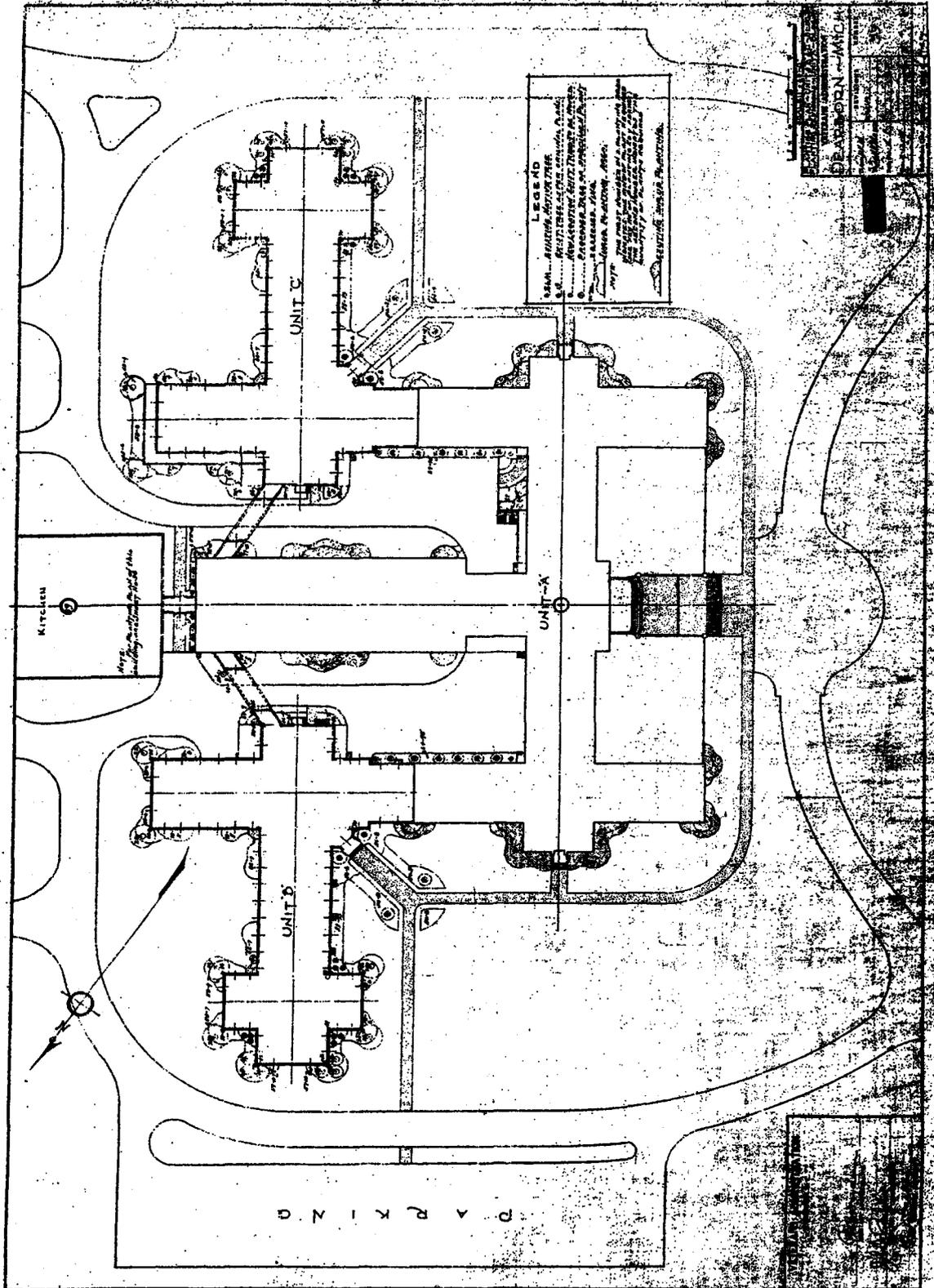
Reduced Copy of Historic Landscape Plan, dated June 25, 1941



Reduced Copy of Historic Landscape Plan, dated 1949



Reduced Copy of Historic Landscape Plan, dated June 28, 1944



Reduced Copy of Historic Landscape Plan, dated June 28, 1944

