

NORTHWEST BRUNSWICK ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The Northwest Brunswick Neighborhood includes the following streets:

- Oak Street
- Gilman Avenue
- High Street
- Lincoln Street
- Cumberland Street
- Dunning Street
- Cushing Street (East side of street)

This neighborhood is one of six neighborhoods that comprise the Village Review District in Brunswick. The neighborhood is bounded to the east by the downtown commercial district (Maine Street); to the north by Route One; and to the west and south by residential areas. Union Street runs down the middle of the neighborhood and divides it into two sections: the eastern blocks end at Maine Street and the western blocks end at Cushing Street. In comparison to the other residential areas in the Village Review District, the Northwest neighborhood contains the broadest range of architectural styles and level of architectural details.

The grandest houses in the neighborhood reside along the western blocks of Cumberland and High Streets. Impressive residences dating from the mid-to-late 19th century line Cumberland Street. Superb examples of Greek Revival, Italianate and Stick Style are a testament to the wealth of the original owners and the talented craftsmen/builders in the area. Beyond these majestic houses lie several duplexes reflecting the need for housing as the textile industry prospered. Several high-style Italianate and Colonial Revival houses dating from the 1870s populate the western block of High Street indicating the later development of this street. On some properties, the ornate architectural detailing carries over onto the carriage houses.

The residences along Dunning and Oak Streets are modest both in scale and architectural details compared to those found elsewhere in the neighborhood. One-and-a-half story houses located extremely close to the road and to each other characterize Dunning Street. Over the years many houses have transformed into multi-family housing. Similarly, modest architecture characterizes Oak Street with the one notable difference being the existence of three-story multi-family

dwelling. Given this area's proximity to the mills it is logical to see a concentration of multi-family buildings.

The residential structures located east of Union Street are typically 1½ or 2 story houses situated on long narrow lots resulting in a densely developed street. Several beautifully detailed brick Greek Revival residences on Lincoln Street date to the mid-1800s and reflect the impact of the mills' prosperity on the development of local housing. The consistent small scale of the houses, the regular setback from the street and the narrow width of the street all contribute to an intimate pedestrian feel on both Gilman Avenue and Lincoln Streets.

The eastern block on Cumberland Street is predominantly residential, however there are a few institutional buildings in this area, including a church and a school. Of particular note is the Stetson Block, a two-story apartment house.

The Northwest neighborhood is a compact predominantly residential area. The streets establish a grid like pattern yet the pedestrian experience varies greatly depending upon the street and the location of the houses in relation to the street. The mix of both high-style and vernacular buildings reflects the diverse history of residents and is one of the defining characteristics of the neighborhood.



Left: The consistent setback of these houses on Cumberland Street defines a strong "edge" to the streetscape.