

On The Trail of the Ghost Library November-December 1987

(In the September issue, we started you on a tour of the seven sites around Kensington that were considered as possible locations for the Kensington Park Library. As noted last time, you may drive by one of the sites every day. Or you may LIVE ON one of them. In Part One of this article, we described the library's actual home and noted that two sites not chosen were on Knowles closer to Beach Drive and along Warner Street. In this issue, we'll go further a field and finish the tour.)

To visit the fourth proposed library site, you will have to cross Connecticut Avenue. Go down by the Safeway and the Kensington Town Hall. The county planning staff felt that the terrain of the site "would lend itself very well for development," but that site was too far away from the Garrett Park community. In 1964 you would have seen two "frame buildings which are about ready to collapse." While both were, alas, later aided in collapsing, they would now, in today's real estate climate, be lovingly preserved as worthy examples of Victorian domestic architecture. Today part of the Bakery, Confectionery, and Tobacco Workers Union building occupies proposed library site Number Four.

Now cross back over Connecticut Avenue to just south of the former Kensington Elementary School (now the Housing Opportunities Commission). The planning staff liked the terrain of this site adjacent to the school, but felt that it was also too far from the Garrett Park area.

The sixth site was not popular with the planning staff for three major reasons: entirely residential development around it, a large drainage ditch, and poor traffic circulation. The site extended from the south side of Clearbrook Lane across Dresden, two house lots west of where Wildwood Road meets Dresden. If you live in one of the newer houses in this part of Dresden or Clear brook, you are probably living on what "might-have-been" the Kensington Library!

The seventh and final site would have been most convenient for swimmer at Cedarbrook Club, as it was just south of Cedarbrook at the bend on Cedar Lane. It was too small for a library, however, without the acquisition of adjacent property. Like sites Number Four and Five, it was also too far away from the center of the proposed service area. And, anyway, who wants dripping wet swimsuits in a library?

So back to 4201 Knowles Avenue, not the planning staff's first choice, but at least among the top three. It is a pleasant site, located on a knoll on Knowles Avenue, and surrounded by trees.

Happy Ghost-Library Hunting!

–Martha Lawrenz