

Plymouth Complex Individual Landmark Draft Designation Report (20-LANDMARK-0002)



**Metro Historic Landmarks and
Preservation Districts Commission**

March 19, 2020

Table of Contents

<i>Case Information</i>	2
Individual Landmark	2
20-LANDMARK-0002	2
<i>Property Description</i>	2
Location and Key Elements	2
Building Descriptions	4
<i>Historic Context</i>	15
History of the Plymouth Complex	15
People of the Plymouth Complex	26
Otto D. Mock, AIA	32
<i>Statement of Significance</i>	34
Historic Significance	34
Archaeological Significance	34
<i>Integrity Assessment</i>	35
<i>Boundary Justification</i>	43
<i>Sources of Information</i>	44

Case Information

Individual Landmark

As defined by the Louisville Metro Code of Ordinances (LMCO) 32.250, an Individual Landmark is “a structure or site, including prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, designated as a local historic landmark by the Commission as provided in this subchapter or by action prior to the effect of this subchapter. A landmark structure or site is one of significant importance to the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation and which represents irreplaceable distinctive architectural features or historical associations that represent the historic character of the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation.”

20-LANDMARK-0002

This case was initiated by a request from members of the Plymouth Congregational Church, the property owners, to conduct a review of the complex for designation consideration. With the revised Landmarks Ordinance effective on August 8, 2019, the processing of this request is now subject to the Individual Designation requirements in LMCO Section 32.260(J) though LMCO Section 32.260(R).

Property Description

Location and Key Elements

The Plymouth Complex is located at 1626 W. Chestnut Street and 1630 W. Chestnut Street in Louisville, Kentucky at the southeast corner of S. 17th and W. Chestnut Streets. The property is situated in the Russell neighborhood one block north of Roosevelt-Perry Elementary School, one block south of the Russell Apartments (formerly Harvey C. Russell Junior High School), across Plymouth Court from Sheppard Park, and four lots west of the Baptized Pentecostal Church complex (formerly Third Presbyterian Church).

The Plymouth Complex is comprised of two parcels totaling 0.2744 acres. There is a single building on each parcel (**Figure 1** and **Table 1**). The Complex was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 as contributing buildings to the Russell Historic District (**Table 1**). Both buildings were specifically highlighted in the nomination form as an indicator of African American development in the neighborhood (Allgeier 1979).



Figure 1. Aerial View of the Subject Property with a Building Key for Table 1 (LOJIC).

Table 1. Structures/Resources on the Subject Property.

As Identified on Figure 1	Name of Structure/Resource	Historic Use/Function	Construction Date	Listed on the National Register
1	Plymouth Congregational Church	Church	1929	Yes
2	Plymouth Settlement House	Dormitory, meeting/classroom space	1917	Yes

Building Descriptions

Building 1 (Plymouth Congregational Church):

The Plymouth Congregational Church is a masonry structure originally constructed in 1929 in the Gothic Revival style. It is a rectangular shape with a front gabled roof. The main roof is clad in asphalt shingles. There are shed roofed portions of the building on the rear and front bell tower, which are clad in a roofing membrane. The building is constructed of glazed brick on the front and west side elevation with a red brick on the east and rear elevations. All brick is laid in a common bond course pattern with a poured concrete foundation. The building contains a full basement and two stories above ground. The front yard features a wide entry walkway that leads to the public sidewalk. The front yard is enclosed with a concrete retaining wall.

The front façade, or north elevation, of the building features a central gable with a tower on the west side and vertical detail on the east side (**Figure 2** and **Figure 3**). The gable section has a thin concrete cornice line a concrete cross detail. The middle level of the gable section contains ornate gothic style stained glass windows with concrete detailing. The stained glass designs are similar yet have subtly different details in each. The first floor level of the gable section is comprised of a concrete arch with a tablet above that reads, "Plymouth Congregational Church." The arch is flanked by gothic style concrete detailing. The entry contains a pair of ¼ lite wood doors with stained glass windows. Concrete stairs lead to the front walkway.



Figure 2. Front façade, or north elevation, of Building 1, the Plymouth Congregational Church, looking south.

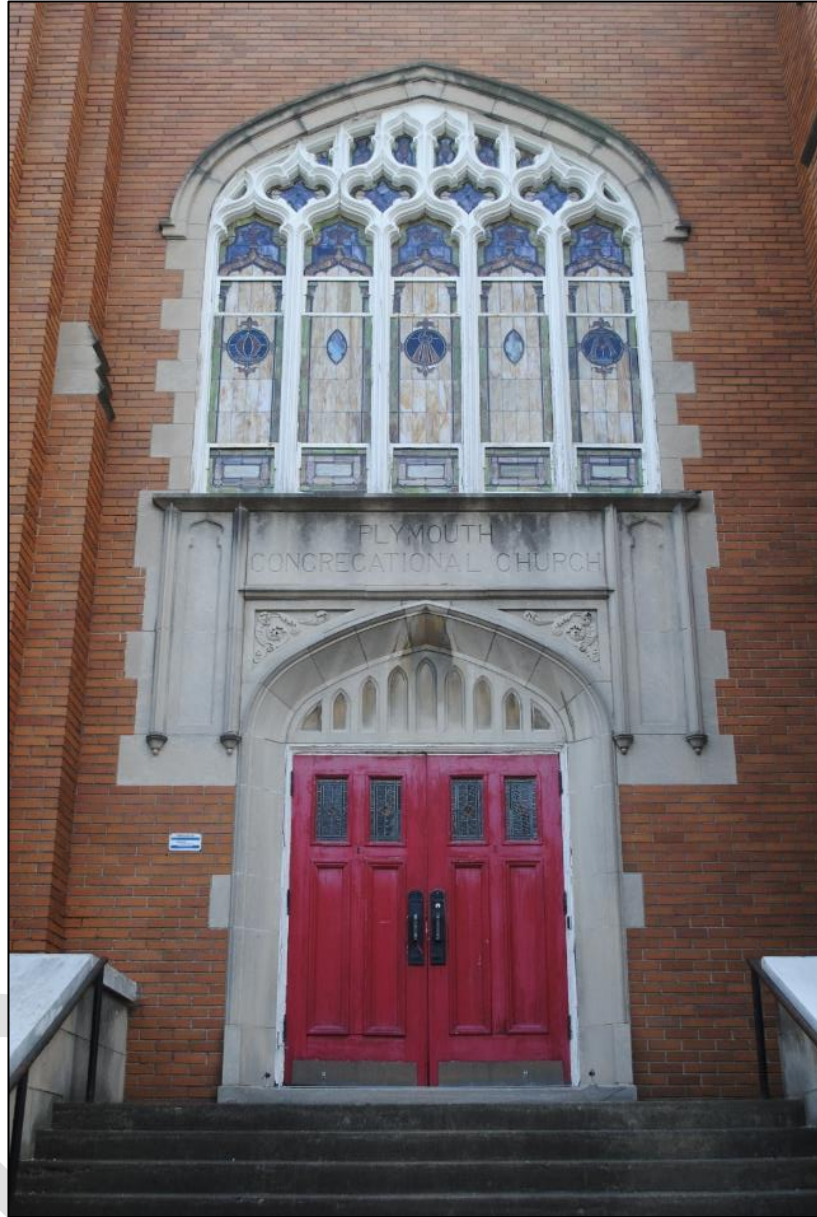


Figure 3. Front façade detail of Building 1, looking south.

West of the front gable section is the west tower, which is the bell tower (**Figure 2** and **Figure 4**). It has a shed roof behind the decorative parapet. The roof is clad in a roofing membrane. The tower contains decorative gothic arches that are open for the bell. The corners of the tower are comprised of buttresses with concrete gothic style detailing. Each story of the tower contains a stained glass window on all elevations of the tower. The lowest level of the tower features arched stained glass windows. East of the front gable section is a vertical detail that raises above the roof line with decorative concrete detailing at the top. The vertical detail also contains buttressing that matches the bell tower. East of the vertical detail are stained glass windows on each story. The cornerstone of the church is located at the northeastern corner and reads, “Plymouth Congregational Church A.D.—1929” (**Figure 5**).



Figure 4. North and west elevations of Building 1, looking southeast.



Figure 5. Detail of the corner stone on the north elevation of Building 1, looking south.

The east and west elevations of the Building 1 are very similar except for the side entrances and the rear portions (**Figure 6** and **Figure 7**). Both side elevations contain five bays separated by buttresses. The first bay is comprised of double hung stained glass windows. The next four bays contain an arched window opening with stained glass windows. The rear portion of the east elevation is only one-story tall with a shed roof clad in roofing membrane. The northeast corner of the one-story portion has a castellated parapet wall with a brick chimney. An entry door faces north with concrete entry stairs. The windows are steel casement windows with stationary sidelights and transoms. There are also steel casement basement windows. The second story, east elevation wall, located above the one-story portion, is clad in shake shingles.



Figure 6. Front (north) portion of the east elevation of Building 1, looking southwest.



Figure 7. Rear (south) portion of the east elevation of Building 1, looking west.

The south, or rear, elevation has a central front gable with a wooden circular vent (**Figure 8**). Below that is an arched stained glass window flanked by buttresses. There are steel casement windows on this elevation like the other elevations. There is a one-story portion on the east side and a two-story portion with a shed roof on the west side. The west side contained a parapet wall and brick chimney.



Figure 8. South, or rear, elevation of Building 1, looking northeast.

The east and west elevations of the Building 1 are very similar except for the side entrances and the rear portions (**Figure 9** and **Figure 10**). Both side elevations contain five bays separated by buttresses. The first bay is comprised of double hung stained glass windows. The next four bays contain an arched window opening with stained glass windows. The rear portion of the east elevation is two stories tall with a shed roof clad in roofing membrane. This portion of the building contains a stairwell and the windows on the east elevation are staggered to provide light. One of the openings is infilled with brick that matches the rest of the building. It is unclear if this was done originally as a design feature or if this was a window that was converted later. There are three steel entry doors located on the west elevation of the building. These doors are not original. One of the door openings, the southernmost, appears to be original as it has a header that matches the surrounding windows. The other door openings were likely added for better access.



Figure 9. The north and west elevations of Building 1, looking southeast.



Figure 10. The south and west elevations of Building 1, looking northeast.

Building 2 (Plymouth Settlement House):

This is a three-story masonry structure, originally constructed in 1917 in an institutional Craftsman style. It is a four bay building with a shallow shed roof clad in a roofing membrane. There is a parapet wall capped in concrete with two decorative arched details on the front. The building is constructed of brick in a common bond and a poured concrete foundation. The front yard features a series of concrete walkways and ramps for entry. A small wall extends across the exposed portions of yard (**Figure 11**).

The front façade, or north elevation, of the building is asymmetrical with four bays (**Figure 11**). The west three bays are situated closer to the street than the easternmost bay, which is reset. The easternmost bay contains double steel entry doors with a canvas awning above, which reads, “Plymouth Settlement House.” There are 1/1 double hung wood windows above. This portion of the building is a stairwell. The west three bays are more symmetrical in design with a central entry door and window flanked by pairs of 1/1 double hung wood windows. the second floor contains pairs of similar windows and the third floor has two windows in the center with single windows on either side. The cornice line is subtly detailed with varying depths of brick detailing. The two decorative arched details contain a subtle corbeling below. The cornerstone of the settlement house is located at the northeastern corner. The north facing portion reads, “Plymouth Settlement House A.D. 1917,” and the east facing portion reads, “Lafon Allen Chairman, Mrs. J.B. Speed Treas., E.G. Harris Pastor” (**Figure 12**).



Figure 11. Front façade, or north elevation, of Building 2, the Plymouth Settlement House, looking south.



Figure 12. Detail of the corner stone on the north and east elevations of Building 2.

The east elevation features a solid brick wall on the northern side, which contains the stairwell (**Figure 13** and **Figure 14**). The southern portion of the elevation is inset and is comprised of 2/2 double hung wood windows on the second story with steel casement windows on the first story. There is a door also on this elevation with an awning above and metal stairs. A brick chimney extends up from the southeast corner of the building.



Figure 13. East elevation of Building 2, looking west.



Figure 14. East elevation of Building 2, looking west.

The south, or rear, elevation features a metal fire escape from the third story as well as two 2/2 double hung wood windows (**Figure 15**). There are no window or door openings on the first or second story. There is basement at grade. The west elevation of the building is comprised of a series of 2/2 double hung windows on all stories of the building including the basement (**Figure 16**). There is an exit door on the second story with metal stairs. Chain link fencing is located between Building 1 and Building 2 to protect a series of HVAC units that are located there.



Figure 15. South, or rear, elevation of Building 2, looking north.



Figure 16. West elevation of Building 2, looking south.

Historic Context

History of the Plymouth Complex

The church was formed in 1877 as a Congregational Methodist Church after a split from the Center Street Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church to follow Rev. E.B. Martin. However, the church quickly transitioned to a Congregationalist Church and began meeting in a home on Jefferson Street between 9th and 10th Streets. Congregationalist churches believed in congregational governance and autonomy over ecclesiastical autonomy. Under the leadership of Rev. Spencer Snell, they purchased an older synagogue on Jefferson Street and moved to that location. However, the congregation was not growing. Its early pastors after Rev. Snell included Rev. George Marion McClellan, Rev. Smith, and Rev. William Johnson. In 1891, the American Missionary Association (AMA) sent Rev. Everett G. Harris, a graduate of Howard University, to Louisville to work with the congregation. Rev. Harris persuaded the AMA to purchase a lot of land at the corner of W. Chestnut and S. 17th Streets and erect a frame church (**Figure 17**) (Berry 1981; Plymouth Congregational Church 1941; Anderson 2017). The 1905 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the frame church on the property (**Figure 18**). In 1893, Rev. Harris married Rachel Davis, a librarian at the Western Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library, which is among the first African American libraries with a formally trained, all African American staff (Berry 1981).



Figure 17. Undated photograph of the first Plymouth Congregational Church building at 1626 W. Chestnut Street (now addressed as 1630 W. Chestnut Street) (photo from Plymouth Congregational Church).

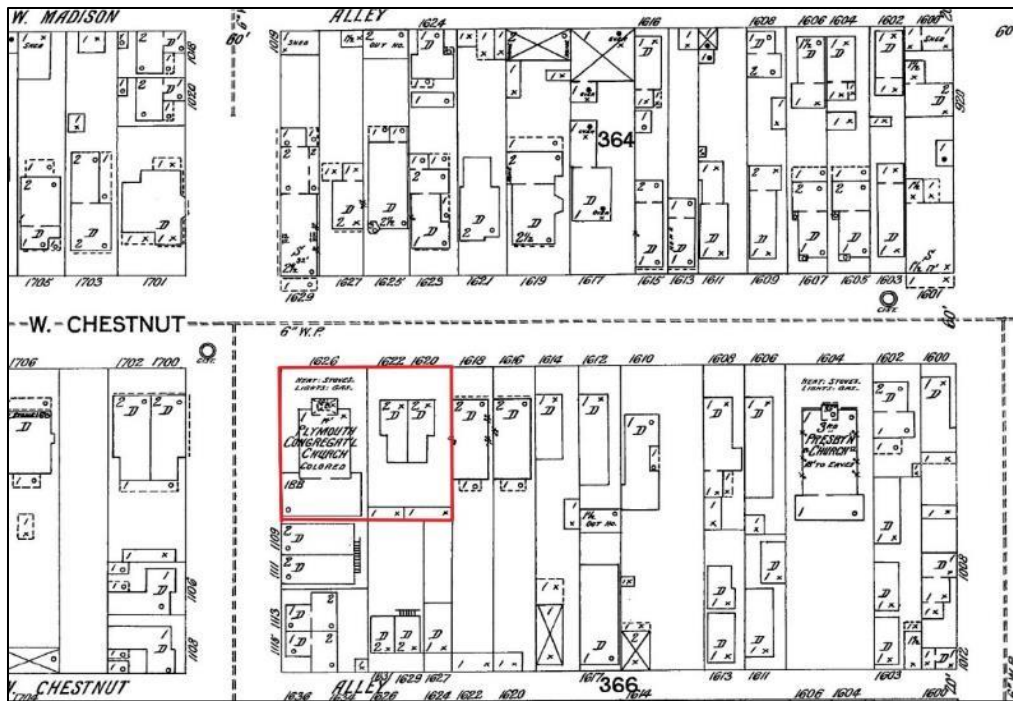


Figure 18. 1905 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Vol. 1, Sheet 47) showing the first Plymouth Congregational Church building and former dwellings where the settlement house (Building 2) would be constructed to the east (red box).

Rev. Harris and a small group of congregants grew the church membership to 114 in 1904 and 174 in 1908. While the congregation was growing, it was a slow growth at first as the Russell Neighborhood was not predominately African American in population at the time. It was not until 1917, when the United States Supreme Court ruled against a Louisville ordinance that prohibited the sale of real estate to African Americans in white-majority neighborhoods and vice versa (*Buchanan v. Warley*), that more African Americans moved west. Rev. Harris led social ministry to the African American community, especially the developing Russell Neighborhood where his church was located. He worked closely with domestic workers and established a Sunday school for children in the neighborhood. In 1911, Rev. Harris publicly announced his idea to establish a settlement house as an extension of this social ministry. Settlement houses were important institutions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the United States. Chicago's Hull House is one of the best-known examples. Typically, settlement houses were established by women's colleges, churches, seminaries, or other Christian associations in neighborhoods with large immigrant or African American populations. Much of the outreach was to children and mothers with daycare nurseries, playgrounds, kindergartens, enrichment classes, and other activities (Berry 1986; Reiff, et al. 2005).

Between 1914 and 1917, Rev. Harris raised money from white supporters, the Welfare League, and benefit events to build the \$20,000 structure. The Advisory Committee for the planning and construction included Lafon Allen, Mrs. J.B. Speed, Mrs. William R. Belknap, Mrs. Alfred Brandeis, Mrs. William S. Culbertson, Samuel H. Moon, Clarence R. Mengel, Louis H. Wymond, John W. Barr, and Rueben Post Halleck (*Courier-Journal* 1916). The Plymouth Settlement House was designed to accommodate many kinds of services and activities (**Figure 19**). There was a

small auditorium that was also used a gymnasium, meeting rooms, a kitchen, and a dormitory. The dormitory specifically housed employed African American women from 1917 through the 1950s. According to a 1922 *Louisville Leader* article, “Very often the serving girl receives such low wages that she must rent a cheap room which may not have the best surroundings. It is often hard for these low-paid workers to have a home which they may keep up moral and physical cleanliness, which may easily be neglected. To help these girls the Plymouth Settlement House maintains a dormitory for them, where there are facilities for bathing, cooking, washing, and ironing. A Matron aids in guiding the recreation of these young women in wholesome and helpful paths” (*Louisville Leader* 1922).

The settlement house contained an employment agency and offered classes as well as after-school programs and clubs. Its space accommodated many community meetings and forums as well as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, concerts, plays, and move nights. The church’s Sunday school and Vacation Bible School were also held there. Furthermore, the settlement house sent social workers to make home visits in the community. Plymouth Settlement House was a Louisville Community Chest organization, which was a 1920s predecessor of Metro United Way and helped raise money for smaller charitable organizations in the city (**Figure 20**) (Berry 1981; Plymouth Congregational Church 1941; Anderson 2017). While modeled after other successful settlement houses across the United States, Plymouth was unique in that it was “a black-owned and directed social welfare agency” (Berry 1981).



Figure 19. Undated photograph (circa 1910s-1920s) of the Plymouth Settlement House, known as Building 2, on the left (The General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church).



Figure 20. 1947 *Courier-Journal* ad for the Plymouth Settlement House to encourage donations to the Louisville Community Chest (*Courier-Journal* 1947).

As the congregation continued to grow, in 1920, Rev. Harris wrote, “The most urgent need is a new building in which to worship, the present building being a small frame structure built many years ago, and altogether inadequate for the growing congregation” (Plymouth Congregational Church 1941). Again the congregation turned to a group of affluent supporters, both white and African American, for help with fundraising, among them were Mrs. J.B. Speed, Dr. James Bond, Attila Cox, Mrs. W.R. Belknap, J. Graham Brown, Judge R.W. Bingham, Senator F.M. Sackett, E.C. Malone, Dr. R.W. Oliver, Rev. Charles Welch, Y.R. Altsheler, Dean R.L. McCready, Mrs. Elliott Callahan, Professor R.P. Halleck, Mrs. Alvin T. Hert, Mrs. Helm Bruce, Wade Sheltman, H.J. Angermier, C.C. Stoll, Col. Fred Levy, C.R. Mengel, Theodore Aherns, Col. P.H. Callahan, Dinwiddie Lampton, Paul Burlingame, Capt. C.F. Huhlein, Rev. C.H. Hemphill, N.W. Funk, Rev. E.L. Powell, H.J. Caperton, and W.F. Axton. They raised the first \$500 in 1924, and by 1927 they had \$14,545 raised. In 1928, they began an intensive campaign, which brought a total of \$47,099 and architect Otto D. Mock was tasked with drawing the plans. The Congregational Church Building Society gave a \$7,000 grant and \$7,000 loan to the church, which was built for \$65,000 (Plymouth Congregational Church 1941; *Courier-Journal* 1929) (**Figure 21**). The 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the footprints of the church (Building 1) and settlement house (Building 2) (**Figure 22**).



Figure 21. Undated photograph (circa 1940s) of the Plymouth Congregation Church, known as Building 1 (photo from Plymouth Congregational Church).

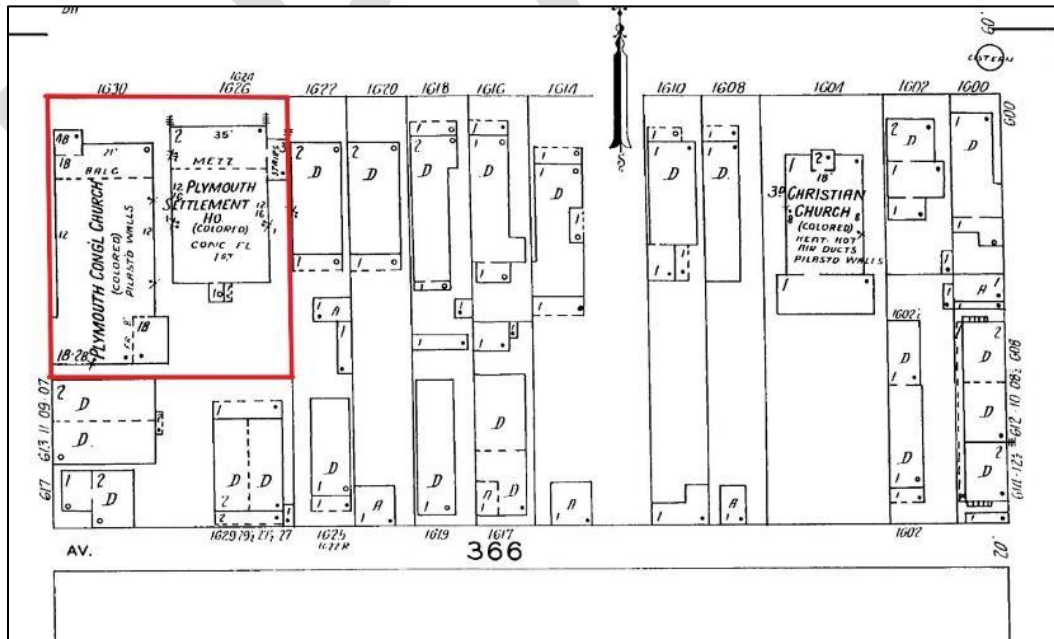


Figure 22. 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Vol. 2 West, Sheet 31w) showing the footprints of Building 1 and Building 2 (red box).

By 1930, the congregation was worshipping in its new building and had achieved a level of stability. Furthermore, the members of the church tended to be “the intellectual elite of black Louisville” (Berry 1981). Mae Street Kidd said that Plymouth, “has one of the highest levels of education of any church in Louisville, black or white. We have a lot of professional people in our congregation—doctors, lawyers, businesspeople, government workers, but mostly teachers” (Hall 2015). Postal workers were among the congregants as it was a highly respected position for African Americans in the twentieth century. According to Lyman T. Johnson, many of the congregants had been educated at Fisk University or Clark Atlanta University, both of which were founded by northern Congregationalists after the Civil War (Hall 1988). Many members of the church were also members of the Louisville Urban League and the Louisville chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The stability of the congregation allowed Rev. Harris to focus on developing programs to meet the needs of the community. According to a 1941 Annual Report by the Church, Harris presented the "New Plymouth" at the 1929 dedication of the new building. The “New Plymouth” was

1. A church which develops proper race pride and home ownership.
2. A church which reaches 58,000 people annually and seeks through its various departments to make them law-abiding good and industrious citizens.
3. A church which fosters the splendid relations now existing between the white and colored people of our city, and which stresses the program of inter-racial cooperation and promotes good will and racial fellowship.
4. An institutional church working in line with Plymouth Settlement House, teaching domestic art and science, that our people may be more reliable, polite and competent workers.
5. A plant located in the center of the largest Negro settlement in the city, well situated for the care of young people and children whose mothers must work everyday for a living.
6. A church whose membership is open to all Christians regardless of form and creed.
7. A church that has been and will continue to be self-supporting (Plymouth Congregational Church 1941).

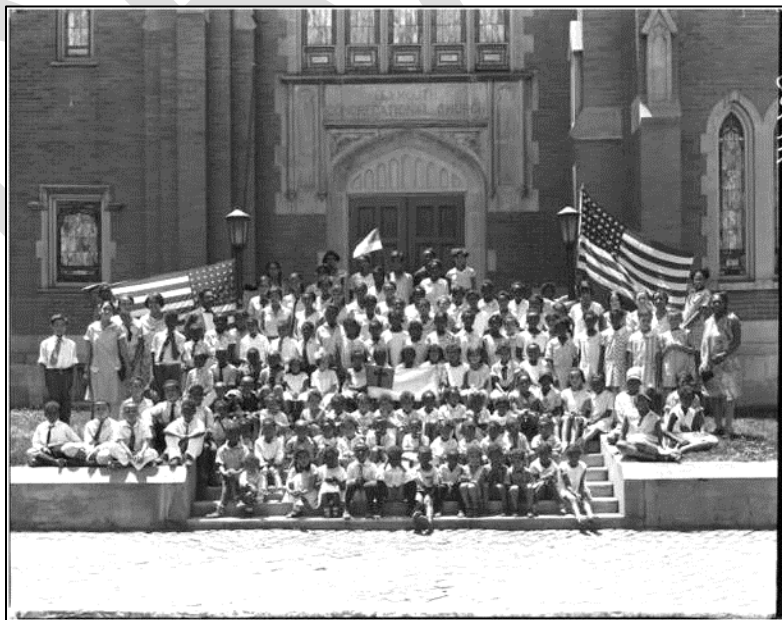


Figure 23. 1930 Photograph of children at Plymouth Congregational Church, likely for Vacation Bible School (University of Louisville Photographic Archives).

Rev. Harris remained active in Louisville until his death in 1936 at the age of 69. Outside of his duties at Plymouth, he was involved in many secular and religious organizations. He was a board member of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, an organization that sought to improve race relations and elevate the status of African Americans. He also served on the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and was President of the Board of Directors of the Colored Orphans' Homes. According to Berry, "It was Harris, who through his own effort, kept the doors of the Orphans' Home open. With a borrowed mule, he plowed, planted, cultivated and harvested the garden that helped to maintain the home. The resources of the Plymouth Settlement House, once built, were used for the training of the children who were taken the five blocks three times a week for classes and Sunday School" (Berry 1981).

After Rev. Harris's death, and following the 1937 Flood, Rev. Theodore S. Ledbetter was named as the new pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church. Rev. Ledbetter had been Dean of Men and College Minister at Tillotson College in Austin, Texas. Ledbetter's pastorate spanned 1937 to 1947. During this time, Rev. Ledbetter approached the Church Building Society to reduce the \$5,130 remaining on the mortgage from the construction of the church. The Society agreed to remove \$2,000 from the debt owed, so a Debt Clearance Campaign was established at Plymouth. The committee, which consisted of G.D. Wilson, James Bryant, V.L. Cooper, J. Everett Harris, Sallie F. Lively, C.G. Morton, Atwood S. Wilson, and a team of lieutenant canvassers. By 1941, they had raised the amount due and paid off the church's mortgage. In 1945, Rev. Ledbetter was one of three speakers at the Louisville Area Interracial Goodwill Conference where he emphasized that working with the youth population can affect change in race relations. Rev. Ledbetter is credited with growing the congregation to over 400 members and expanding the services at the Plymouth Settlement House to include activities for high school and college students. He also created a Junior Church and afternoon Bible study at the settlement house. During Rev. Ledbetter's pastorate, many public talks were held at Plymouth by a number of organizations including the NAACP, Bluegrass State Medical Society, American Birth Control League, Workers' Alliance, and Order of the Eastern Star (Duncan 1945; *Courier-Journal* 1938; *Courier-Journal* 1940; *Courier-Journal* 1941; *Courier-Journal* 1944; *Courier-Journal* 1946; Smith, et al. 2015; Anderson 2017; Plymouth Congregational Church 1941).

From 1947 to 1966, Rev. Aurelius D. Pinckney pastored the church (**Figure 24**), during which time the commitment to the Russell Neighborhood and to its youth continued to grow. A preschool nursery program, cultural exchange program, and camp program were established at the Plymouth Settlement House. Rev. Pinckney was the first moderator of the Kentucky-Indiana Conference of the United Church of Christ, which was established in 1957 by the merger of the Congregational-Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Churches. During his tenure, many public talks were held at Plymouth by several organizations including the NAACP, Louisville Pan-Hellenic Council, Kentucky Council on Human Relations, and Louisville Urban League. In 1960, the Kentucky State Conference of the NAACP held a three-day conference on civil rights topics (sit-ins, voting, housing, education, and labor) at Plymouth Congregational Church. Dr. D.E. King, pastor of Zion Baptist Church, was the keynote speaker (Plymouth Congregational Church 1941; Anderson 2017; *Courier-Journal* 1963; *Courier-Journal* 10 November 1958; *Courier-Journal* 1954; *Courier-Journal* 1955; *Courier-Journal* 1959; *Courier-Journal* 29 April 1960; *Courier-Journal* 30 April 1960).



Figure 24. 1941 photograph of the front (north) elevations of the Plymouth Settlement House (Building 2) and the Plymouth Congregational Church (Building 1) (Plymouth Congregational Church 1941).

In 1956, under the pastorate of Rev. Pinckney, the Plymouth Settlement House incorporated and established a board of directors. While members of the Plymouth congregation were still involved, they were not solely responsible for running the settlement house. The organization saw several executive directors. It appears that the position was one that opened doors and many of the executive directors left for roles that further advanced their careers. Some of the executive directors include Charles H. Henderson (1957-1961), Sherman Dix (1961-1963), James A. Schmidt (1963-1966), Jesse P. Warders (1966), Morris F.X. Jeff, Jr. (1966-1972). Meanwhile the church received a new pastor, Rev. Dr. Benjamin Berry, who served from 1966 to 1968. Berry was not pastor for long, but from *Courier-Journal* letters to the editor, he was clearly passionate about civil rights and saw the church as a vital participant. Berry left his position to earn a doctorate in history from Case Western Reserve University. His dissertation title was “Plymouth Settlement House and The Development of Black Louisville, 1900-1930” (Anderson 2017; Edelen 2008; Berry 1967; Berry 1968).

During the pastorate of Rev. Berry and his successor Rev. Robinson, Morris F.X. Jeff, Jr. was the executive director of the Plymouth Settlement House. He was a catholic, and thus, not part of the Plymouth congregation. During his tenure, Jeff fought for the rights of African Americans. Through the settlement house, he organized opposition to housing segregation laws, voter registration drives, campaigns to encourage landlords to bring their buildings up to code, and free adult education courses led by Chester Grundy. Jeff once said, “In the years since I have been here, Plymouth Settlement House has become seen as an agency that is competent and committed to the needs of serving black people. We are the only settlement house established by black people for black people” (Kentucky Commission on Human Rights n.d.; *Courier-Journal* 1970; Woolley 1970; *Courier-Journal* 1971; *Courier-Journal* 1966; Moore 1968).

On May 27, 1968, a rally of 350-400 people took place at 28th and Greenwood, in the Parkland Neighborhood to the east of Chickasaw, to protest the arrests of Charles Thomas and Manfred G. Reid who were arrested by white police officers under what were perceived as racist circumstances. During the rally, an altercation broke out between attendees and police officers. The incident escalated into a full-fledged riot in the West End that lasted for almost a week. Looting and shooting occurred, buildings were burned, two teenagers were killed, and 472 people were arrested. Six units of the National Guard were ordered to Louisville to stop the riots. Rev. Berry and Morris Jeff were among the members of the community called to help with “Operation Cool-It,” which was an effort from the Human Relations Commission as well as other groups and individuals to slow the anger and violence. Others involved were Rev. A.D. King, Senator Georgia Powers Davis, Kentucky Christian Leadership Conference president Rev. Leo Lesser, and Presbyterian Community Center’s Rev. Irvin Moxley (Notable Kentucky African Americans Database n.d.; Moore 1968).

Rev. Jonathan Robinson served as pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church from 1969 to 1977, and he worked with the River Regional Outreach Programs, which aided individuals with mental health needs. Furthermore, he was active in many community initiatives aimed at improving education. As a result, the church restored its Vacation Bible School and increased its youth programming. Rev. Robinson left Plymouth to accept a position in Boston (Anderson 2017). From 1978 to 1992, Rev. Dr. E. Alexander Campbell served as pastor. He was involved in Urban Renewal Center projects in the Russell Neighborhood, including the renewal program of the settlement house (renamed the Plymouth Community Renewal Center), as well as other important community ministries. Rev. Campbell was the first pastor to become an executive director of the settlement house. Abby Fife, a retired teacher and principal of Eastern High School, ran the center’s educational programs (Anderson 2017; Porter 1989). In 1993, the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) documented portions of the Russell Neighborhood that were affected by Urban Renewal. Plymouth Congregational Church and Plymouth Settlement House (Plymouth Community Renewal Center) were both photographed (**Figure 25** and **Figure 26**).



Figure 25. 1993 HABS photograph of the front (north) elevations of the Plymouth Settlement House, known as Building 2, and the Plymouth Congregational Church, known as Building 1 (Historic American Building Survey 1993).



Figure 26. 1993 HABS photograph of the west elevation of the Plymouth Congregational Church, known as Building 1 (Historic American Building Survey 1993).

From 1993 to 1998, Rev. Dr. Barry E. Brandon served as pastor of Plymouth. He created weekly day and evening Bible classes and served as chaplain to the Louisville Fire Department. According to Anderson, “the church split over important doctrinal differences during Rev. Brandon’s tenure, and he resigned as pastor to find a new church in Louisville” (Anderson 2017). Then over the next five years (1998-2003), Plymouth had four interim pastors: 1998-2000, long-time members Norman Moxley and Timothy Dreher were co-interim pastors; 2000-2002, Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr. and Pastor Dreher were co-interim pastors; 2002-2003, Rev. Dr. Donna Morton was the church’s first female pastor (Anderson 2017).

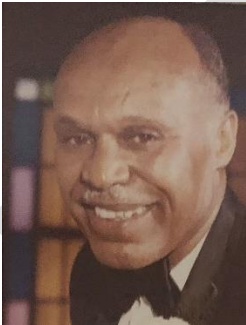

Rev. Altonnette Hawkins was pastor of Plymouth from 2003 to 2011, and her tenure was notable for its community outreach. The church introduced an HIV/AIDS ministry with free testing. Furthermore, Rev. Hawkins served on several community boards and operated a mentoring program for female pastors. However, during this time, the congregation was losing members. With a decreasing membership, the church also saw a decrease in funds. Thus, Plymouth could no longer afford full time pastors. During this time, Rev. Carl Hines, Jr. served as interim pastor until 2014 when Rev. Gregory Wright began his tenure as part time pastor. Rev. Wright oversaw

numerous capital improvements at the church and settlement house as well as led outreach efforts like a food pantry and coffee house, which were operated in the settlement house. Furthermore, Rev. Wright was active in civic discussions about the revitalization of the Russell Neighborhood (Anderson 2017). Rev. Wright retired from Plymouth Congregational Church in 2019.

People of the Plymouth Complex



Plymouth Congregational Church is known for its congregation comprised of middle- and upper-class, well-educated African Americans. The Plymouth Settlement House has always been associated with the church; however, its social service mission allowed it to be even more connected to the Russell Neighborhood and City of Louisville as a whole. Many of the people associated with the church and settlement house were prominent citizens in Louisville with noteworthy achievements in the city and Commonwealth as a whole. However, there are some individuals whose period of significant contribution is closely associated with their roles at the Plymouth Complex. These individuals have an entire lifetime of contribution to study and associate with the church or the settlement house. Below is an alphabetical list of those individuals with a brief biography to illustrate their impact on the Plymouth Complex, the city, and/or the Commonwealth (**Table 3**).

Table 3. Individuals Associated with the Plymouth Complex with brief biographies.

Name	Brief Biography
<p>Joseph Primas Bowers (b. 1919 d. 1978)</p> 	<p>Educator, community leader, Post Office Executive, Plymouth Church trustee, Plymouth Settlement House Treasurer. Bowers was teacher in North Carolina before joining the Army during World War II. Bowers was the Director of Finances for the U.S. Postal Service in Louisville. He was also a self-employed tax consultant and bookkeeper with many of his clients coming from the church. Because of his financial acumen, Bowers was a trustee for the church, helping with its finances. He was also the board treasurer for the settlement house. Bowers was very active in both the church and settlement house and his family is still active there (<i>Courier-Journal</i> 1978; Jones 2020). Photo from Carrye Jones.</p>
<p>Abby (Hughes) Fife (b. 1922 d. 2010)</p> 	<p>Educator, community leader, Plymouth Settlement House Education Director. Fife was a teacher a Western Junior High School who became principal of Eastern High School as well as supervising principal of the Learn More, Earn More adult education program provided by Louisville Board of Education. Upon her retirement, her volunteer work at the Plymouth Settlement House became a job as Education Director. She developed the after-school tutorial program and the remediation program from students with learning disabilities (<i>Courier-Journal</i> 1966; <i>Courier-Journal</i> 1967; <i>Courier-Journal</i> 2010; Porter 1989; Wilson 1993). Photo from Wilson 1993.</p>

Name	Brief Biography
<p>Rachel (Davis) Harris (b. 1869 d. 1969)</p> 	<p>Librarian, educator, community leader. Harris was the first African American woman library director in Kentucky when she was children's librarian at the Louisville Western Colored Branch Library. She later became manager of the Eastern Colored Branch Library and assisted with the development of the Georgetown Colored Branch Library and Lincoln Institute Library. When Thomas Fountain Blue died in 1935, Harris became the director of the Louisville Public Library Colored Department. She was the wife of Rev. Everett G. Harris and helped grow the congregation (Notable Kentucky African Americans Database). Photo from Louisville Free Public Library n.d.</p>
<p>Carl R. Hines, Sr. (b. 1931 d. 2016)</p> 	<p>Legislator, community leader, Plymouth Church trustee. Hines served the 43rd legislative district in the Kentucky House of Representatives from 1976 to 1986. In 1986, Hines lead the movement to change the wording of "My Old Kentucky Home" to remove racist language. A similar resolution was also introduced by Georgia Davis Powers in the Kentucky State Senate. The resolution was adopted by both chambers. Hines was a trustee for the Plymouth Congregational Church and his family is still active there (Notable Kentucky African Americans Database). Photo from <i>Courier-Journal</i> 2016.</p>
<p>Morris F.X. Jeff, Jr. (b. 1938 d. 2003)</p> 	<p>Social worker, community leader, activist, Plymouth Settlement House Executive Director. Jeff was executive director of the settlement house from 1966 to 1972. According to the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights, "He was a licensed clinician and a widely respected expert on a number of subjects including transracial adoption, black-on-black violence, welfare reform, reparation, manhood development, cultural diversity, the middle passage, rites of passage programs, Kemetic (Egyptian) culture, and African spirituality." Photo from Kentucky Commission on Human Rights.</p>
<p>Lyman T. Johnson (b. 1906 d. 1997)</p> 	<p>Educator, civil rights leader, community leader, Plymouth Church trustee. Johnson was best known for challenging the Day Law so that he could attend the University of Kentucky, which in 1949, he became the first African American student there. As a teacher at Central High School, he fought racial discrimination, including unequal teacher pay. He also fought to desegregate neighborhoods, swimming pools, schools, and restaurants in Louisville. Johnson was very active in the Plymouth Congregational Church (Kentucky Commission on Human Rights). Photo from Kentucky Commission on Human Rights.</p>

Name	Brief Biography
<p>Mae (Jones) Street Kidd (b. 1904 d. 1999)</p> 	<p>Legislator, community leader, Plymouth Church trustee. Kidd served the 41st legislative district in the Kentucky House of Representatives from 1968 to 1984. She is probably best known for sponsoring legislation to provide open and low-income housing in Kentucky. One of these bills, officially named the “Representative Mae Kidd Street Housing Bill,” created the Kentucky Housing Corporation in 1972. Kidd also sponsored legislation to make Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday a state holiday. She organized the first Louisville Urban League Guild in 1948 and was past president of the Lincoln Foundation. Kidd was very active in the Plymouth Congregational Church (Kentucky Commission on Human Rights). Photo from Kentucky Commission on Human Rights.</p>
<p>Dr. Maurice F. Rabb, Sr. (b. 1902 d. 1982)</p> 	<p>First Louisville African American anesthesiologist, community leader, Civil Rights activist, Plymouth Church trustee. Dr. Rabb first practiced medicine in Shelbyville. Then he and his family moved to Louisville in 1946. He had to fight to be trained as an anesthesiologist at the General Hospital (now University Hospital) and practiced at the Red Cross Hospital, Jewish Hospital, Veteran’s Hospital, and St. Joseph Infirmary. Dr. Rabb fought against segregation of restaurants, theaters, housing, and jobs. He was a national board member of the NAACP for 12 years and vice president of the local brand of the NAACP. Dr. Rabb was very active in the Plymouth Congregational Church (<i>Courier-Journal</i> 1982; <i>The Crisis</i> 1980). Photo from <i>The Crisis</i> 1980.</p>
<p>Ellen Lowe (Bullock) Taylor (b. 1874 d. 1960)</p> 	<p>Educator, community leader, activist, Plymouth Settlement House board member. While not a member of the Plymouth Congregational Church, Taylor was an active board member of the Plymouth Settlement House. She was also on the board of the Colored Orphans Home Society for 37 years, which was run for a time by Rev. Everett G. Harris. She wrote histories of the Colored Orphans Home Society and the Plymouth Settlement House. Taylor was active in many other educational and community organizations. She was also a principal and teacher for the Louisville Colored Schools for a number of years (Mattingly 2019). Photo from <i>Courier-Journal</i> 1953.</p>
<p>Bertha (Simmons) Whedbee (b. 1876 d. 1960)</p>	<p>First Louisville African American female police officer, community leader, activist, Plymouth Church trustee. In 1901, Whedbee became one of five graduates from the first training class of the Colored Kindergarten Association, an auxiliary to the Louisville Free Kindergarten Association. Whedbee was active in many local causes and is frequently called a suffragette. In 1922, she became Louisville’s first African</p>

Name	Brief Biography
	<p>American female police officer. She was married to Dr. Ellis D. Whedbee. Whedbee is listed among the first congregants to support Rev. Harris in his efforts to grow the church and to actively contribute to its growth (Mattingly 2019). Photo from Aubespain et al. 2011.</p>
<p>Dr. Ellis D. Whedbee (b. 1863 d. 1940)</p>	<p>Doctor, community leader, activist, Plymouth Church trustee. Dr. Whedbee graduated from Fisk University with a medical degree. He was part of a group of African American men who established the People's Drug Co. in 1895 at 10th and Madison Streets. The drugstore was owned by African Americans so they could service African Americans. Furthermore, he was one of the founders of Louisville's Red Cross Hospital in 1899. The hospital allowed African Americans to be treated by African Americans doctors and nurses as they were not allowed to practice in the city's other hospitals. He was married to Bertha (Simmons) Whedbee. Dr. Whedbee used his connections in the community to grow the church congregation and grow the Red Cross Hospital simultaneously (Mattingly 2019; Kleber 2001).</p>
<p>Atwood S. Wilson (b. 1895 d. 1967)</p> 	<p>Chemist, educator, civil rights leader, community leader, Sunday School superintendent at Plymouth Church, Plymouth Settlement House Board Chairman. He was the first principal of Madison Junior High School (later Russell Junior High School) and then principal of Central High School. He was secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Negro Educational Association (KNEA) from 1922-1942. He chaired the organization's merger committee, which led integration of KNEA and Kentucky Education Association (KEA). Wilson was a trustee on the board of the Louisville Free Public Library, and in 1948, he presented the resolution that abolished segregation at the main library building. Wilson was very active in both the Church and Settlement House and his family is still active there (Notable Kentucky African Americans Database). Photo from Jefferson County Public Schools 1952.</p>

There are many more members of the Plymouth Congregational Church and Settlement House board who should be mentioned. Their contributions to the community are not as well known or as well documented as the individuals listed above; however, they also played important roles. The Complex likely influenced the lives of these individuals and vice versa. The individuals on this list, while important, did not have a period of significant contribution associated with their roles

at the Plymouth Complex. Furthermore, some of the individuals on this list are still living, so their period of significant contribution is ongoing. This list is a sample of known individuals and their professions (**Table 4**).

Table 4. Individuals Associated with the Plymouth Complex by profession.

Profession	Name
Architect	Eric Williams
Attorney	Charles W. Anderson, Jr.
	William C. Brummel, Jr.
	Judge Denise (Guess) Clayton
	David Dearing
	J. Earl Dearing
	Harry S. McAlpin
	Cheryl (Bright) Prince
	D. Billye (Bowers) Sanders
Business Professional/Executive	Joseph Primas Bowers
	Jomare Bowers-Mizzel
	Andrew Bright
	Kirk Bright
	William C. Brummell, Sr.
	Pruitt Owsley Sweeney, Jr.
	Arthur M. Walters
	Rosalind Winstead
Cartographer	Robert L. DeSha
Doctor	Dr. Theodore R. Boalware
	Dr. Joseph Bowers
	Dr. Andrew J. Bright
	Dr. Edgar T. Dennis
	Dr. J.A. Gay
	Dr. J.M. Hammons
	Dr. Maurice F. Rabb, Jr.
	Dr. P.O. Sweeney
	Dr. James Augustus Taylor
	Dr. Welby Winstead
	Dr. C. Milton Young, Jr.
Educator	Carrie Elizabeth Alexander
	Faye (Ford) Anderson
	Georgia (Jetton) Baughman

Profession	Name
	Madge (Irwin) Boalware
	Beulah (Haskins) Bolan
	Dr. James Bond
	Thomas M. Bond
	Margaret (Hampton) Bowers
	Artemesia (Winkfield) Brummell
	Vernon Cooper
	Nannie (Board) Crume
	Virgil (Perry) Ford
	Cordelia (Hemmons) Freeman
	Catherine (Blackwell) Gordon
	Mildred (Williams) Griffin
	J. Waymon Hackett
	L.J. Harper, Jr.
	Carrye (Bowers) Jones
	Wilson Lovett
	W.B. Matthews
	George Marion McClellan
	Thomas H. McNeil, Sr.
	Clifford M.H. Morton
	Jewell (Miller) Rabb
	William A. Tisdale, Jr.
	Clearese (McDaniel) Tyree
	Ida Mai (Johnson) Whedbee
	Melville Whedbee
	George D. Wilson
	Gertrude (Holmes) Wilson
	Clarence Young
Journalist	Felicia Henderson
Postal Worker	James B. Bryant, Sr.
	Fred D. Dooley
	Percy A. Lively, Sr.
	P. Montes McCrary, Jr.
	Roger Rowan, Jr.
	John A. Starks
	James C. Williams

Profession	Name
	Cyrus O. Wilson
	George S. Wise
	Chester J. Wright

Otto D. Mock, AIA

Otto Davis Mock was born on May 13, 1893 to Rubin and Mary (Hicks) Mock, in Hardin County, Kentucky (**Figure 26**). Mock graduated from Manuel Training High School in Louisville and attended the University of Kentucky for one year. He apprenticed with G. Palmer Graves of New York and Henry Walters of Louisville. From 1910-1920, Mock was chief draftsman for Brinton B. Davis in Louisville. In 1921, he was a draftsman for Clifford Shoppel & Co. Architects in Evansville, Indiana. Mock commenced practicing architecture in February 1922. From 1937-1939 he was chief draftsman for Churchill & Gillig in Lexington, Kentucky for a U.S. Post Office building. From 1939-1942 he was also chief draftsman for Wischmeyer, Arrasmith & Elswick in Louisville. From 1945 until his death on February 12, 1958, Mock was a partner in Fred Elswick & Associates, which included Elswick, Mock, and his son Kenneth D. Mock. According to his *Courier-Journal* obituary, Mock was working on designs for the state fairgrounds when he died (Mock 1946; *Courier-Journal* 14 February 1958). Otto D. Mock designed several notable buildings throughout Jefferson County. The table below includes some of his known work; however, it is not a comprehensive list (**Table 5**).



Image 26. Photograph of Otto D. Mock (University of Louisville Photographic Archives).

Table 5. Buildings designed by Otto D. Mock.

Name of Building	Address	Architectural Style	Date of Construction
Crescent Hill Baptist Church	2810 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, KY	Classical Revival	ca. 1924
First and Broadway Realty Company	100 E. Broadway, Louisville, KY	Eclectic	ca. 1927
Cedar Grove Court and Terrace—development of several buildings	Northwestern Parkway between 35 th and 36 th Streets	Craftsman, Tudor Revival, and Spanish Eclectic	ca. 1927
Parkland Masonic Temple	1304 S. 28 th Street, Louisville, KY	Classical Revival	ca. 1927
Tudor Demo House	2810 Rainbow Drive, Louisville, KY	Tudor Revival	ca. 1928

Name of Building	Address	Architectural Style	Date of Construction
Wildwood Farm	3901 Axton Lane, Goshen, KY	Colonial Revival	ca. 1929
Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church	3548 Taylor Boulevard, Louisville, KY	Spanish Eclectic	ca. 1929
Third Lutheran Church	1864 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, KY	Gothic Revival	ca. 1931

Otto D. Mock's architectural designs typically used revival styles like Tudor, Classical, Colonial and Spanish. The majority of his work is masonry with some frame elements. There has not been much information published on Mock's life or body of work, so there is no comprehensive list of his architectural designs. The design for the Plymouth Congregation Church uses elements of Gothic Revival as well as glazed brick, which Mock used in some of his Tudor Revival and Spanish Eclectic buildings. The Third Lutheran Church, which Mock designed two years after Plymouth, has many of the same Gothic details as Plymouth but with red brick and a larger massing.

Statement of Significance

Historic Significance

The Plymouth Complex was constructed in the Russell Neighborhood by African Americans for African Americans. The Russell Neighborhood was established in the mid to late 19th century for mostly white residents. Russell was a fashionable neighborhood for many families. However, as residential areas south and east of Louisville grew in size and popularity, many white families began moving out of the neighborhood as early as the 1890s. African American professionals first purchased the larger homes on the major east-west streets, but the other streets were more gradual in their population shift. One indication of the rapid influx of African American families in the Russell Neighborhood was the establishment of the Plymouth Settlement House. Rev. E.G. Harris was smart to select 17th and Chestnut Streets for the location of the Plymouth Congregational Church. He saw that the area was changing in population, but he also saw those populations that he felt were being left behind—lower income African Americans. In 1917, the church opened the Plymouth Settlement House as living quarters for working African American women, as a place for wholesome entertainment and education for children and adults, and as a social work facility that could help those lower income families. As the settlement house grew in its importance to the neighborhood so did the Plymouth Congregational Church. Throughout the years both played a significant role in the Russell Neighborhood, city of Louisville, and the Commonwealth by promoting the advancement of African Americans and putting programs and initiatives in place to see this occur.

Plymouth Congregational Church is known for its congregation comprised of middle- and upper-class, well-educated African Americans. These are people who sought higher education when there were not many opportunities to do so. Despite the Jim Crow-era laws, they were successful in their careers and lives. The Plymouth Settlement House has always been associated with the church; however, its social service mission allowed it to be even more connected to the Russell Neighborhood and City of Louisville as a whole. Many of the people associated with the church and settlement house were prominent citizens in Louisville with noteworthy achievements in the city and Commonwealth as a whole. However, there are some individuals whose period of significant contribution is closely associated with their roles at the Plymouth Complex. These individuals have an entire lifetime of contribution to study and associate with the church or the settlement house. These individuals include Abby Fife, Rachel Harris, Carl R. Hines, Sr., Morris F.X. Jeff, Jr., Lyman T. Johnson, Mae Street Kidd, Dr. Maurice Rabb, Ellen Lowe Taylor, Bertha Whedbee, Dr. Ellis D. Whedbee, and Atwood S. Wilson. There are many more people who are associated with the Plymouth Complex, but their roles are either not related to their period of significant contribution or they are still living, so their period of significant contribution is ongoing.

Archaeological Significance

The Plymouth Complex has potential to contain archaeological resources. The Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show that there has been a fair amount of development and redevelopment on the property between 1892 and 1941, as buildings were constructed and demolished and then newer buildings constructed. Even in such conditions, significant archaeological resources have been found in Louisville (Pollack 2008). The 1892 and 1905 maps show a couple possible privies in an

area that appears to have not been covered with a building, and thus it is possible that privy vault features from the late 1800s to early 1900s could be preserved. It is also possible some water cisterns could be present, as they most certainly would have been present historically. It appears that most of the earlier buildings were built over by the construction of later buildings, but it is possible that some remnants from those buildings such as foundations could be preserved. Overall, the archaeological potential of the property is fair given the amount of development and redevelopment, with the possibility that a privy or cistern feature could be present. If such a feature could be found, it could possibly be significant since there have been few investigations of religious sites in Louisville, the most notable of which was the extensive work done at the Cathedral of the Assumption (Mansberger 1990; Mansberger 1995).

Integrity Assessment

As defined by the LMCO 32.250, integrity is “The authenticity of a structure or site’s historic integrity evidenced by survival of physical characteristics that existed during the structure or site’s historic or prehistoric period. To retain historic integrity a site must possess some of the following aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association.” Note that the integrity as applied by the Landmarks Ordinance is for the exterior of the structure since that is the extent of regulation if designated.

The Plymouth Complex retains its integrity in *location* and *association* to support the historic significance of the structure as it relates to its association with the Russell Neighborhood. The site has not changed much since the construction of Building 1 in 1929. The complex retains a moderate level of integrity in *feeling* and *setting* because of demolition and new construction that has occurred east and north of the buildings. Comparing the 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map to a LOJIC map (**Figure 27** and **Figure 28**), the changes that have occurred around the Plymouth Complex are evident. However, these changes are not so drastic to say the complex has lost its integrity in *feeling* and *setting*.

Building 1 and Building 2 retain a high level of integrity in *design*, *materials*, and *workmanship* to support the historic significance of the structures as it relates to the Plymouth Congregation. Building 1 has had little alteration on the exterior except for the steel doors that have been added on the west elevation (**Figure 29**, **Figure 30**, **Figure 31**, and **Figure 32**). It appears that two of the door openings are original while the middle door opening was originally a window. It is unclear what the original doors looked like. However, these changes are in keeping with the overall design and materials of the building. Thus, they retain a high level of integrity. On Building 2 three windows have been converted to doors for emergency egress requirements. The central doors on the front façade were originally two sets of double doors. They are now a window and one set of double doors. Furthermore, a concrete ramp has been added to the front yard (**Figure 33** and **Figure 34**). However, these changes are in keeping with the overall design and materials of the building. Thus, they retain a high level of integrity.

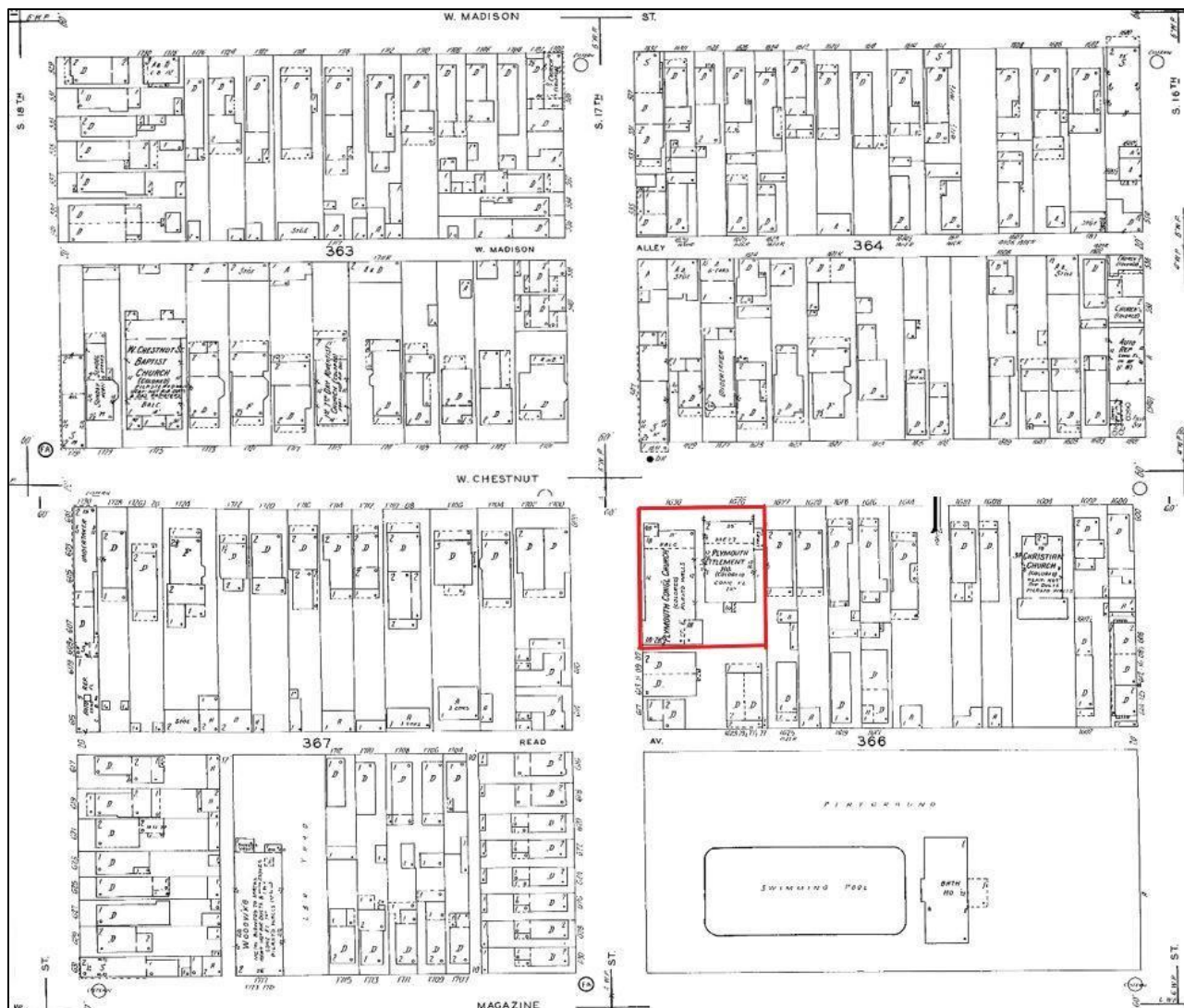


Figure 27. 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Vol. 2 West, Sheet 27w and 31w) showing the footprints of Building 1 and Building 2 (red box) and the surrounding context.

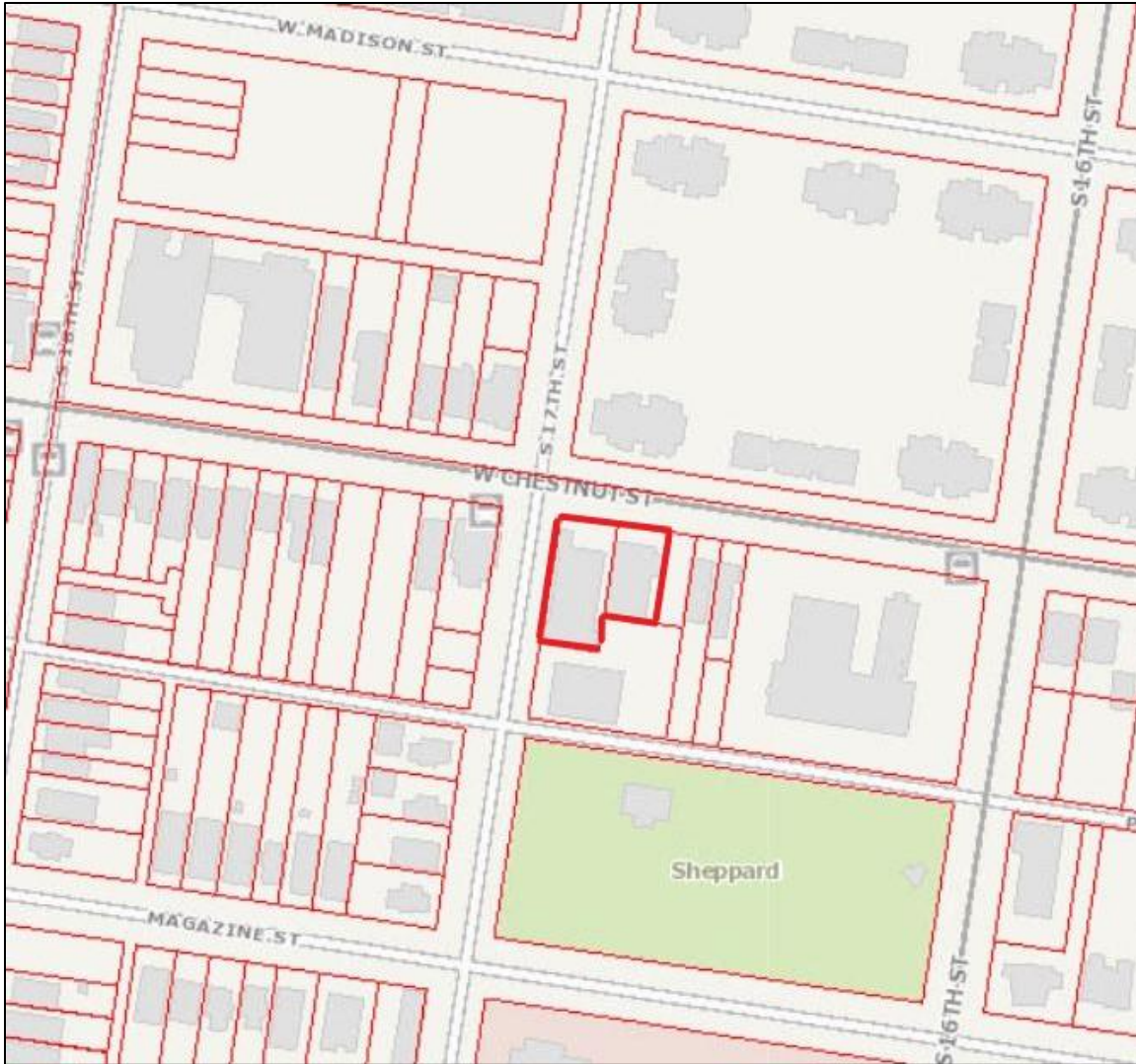


Figure 28. LOJIC map showing the footprints of Building 1 and Building 2 (red box) and the surrounding context.



Figure 29. Undated photograph (circa 1940s) of the Plymouth Congregation Church, known as Building 1 (photo from Plymouth Congregational Church).



Figure 30. Front façade, or north elevation, of Building 1, the Plymouth Congregational Church, looking south.



Figure 31. 1977 photograph of the west elevation of Building 1 (Preservation Alliance 1977).



Figure 32. North and west elevations of Building 1, looking southeast.



Figure 33. Undated photograph (circa 1910s-1920s) of the Plymouth Settlement House, known as Building 2, on the left (The General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church).



Figure 34. Front façade, or north elevation, of Building 2, the Plymouth Settlement House, looking south.

Designation Criteria Analysis

In consideration of a potential designation of an Individual Landmark, LMCO 32.250 defines an Individual Landmark structure or site as “one of significant importance to the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation and which represents irreplaceable distinctive architectural features or historical associations that represent the historic character of the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation.”

In accordance with LMCO 32.260(O), considering the designation of any area, site, or structure in Louisville Metro as an Individual Landmark, the Commission shall apply the following criteria with respect to such structure, site, or area. An Individual Landmark shall possess sufficient integrity to meet criterion (a) and one or more of the other criteria (b) through (e).

A) Its character, interest, or value as part of the development or heritage of the city, the Commonwealth, or the United States.

The Russell Neighborhood was established in the mid to late 19th century for mostly white residents. The major east-west streets, like Chestnut and Walnut (now Muhammad Ali Blvd.), had the large, expensive residences while the numbered streets contained smaller, working-class residences. Furthermore, the alleys were known to have shotgun style homes and tenements for the African Americans who worked in the larger houses. Russell was a fashionable neighborhood for many families. However, as residential areas south and east of Louisville grew in size and popularity, many white families began moving out of the neighborhood as early as the 1890s. According to the Russell Historic District National Register nomination, “The area evolved through a normal process of white abandonment and black replacement. This phenomenon, however, occurred early in the century, with the black community well established in Russell as early as 1925” (Allgeier 1979). African American professionals first purchased the larger homes on the major east-west streets, but the other streets were more gradual in their population shift.

One indication of the rapid influx of African American families in the Russell Neighborhood was the establishment of the Plymouth Settlement House. Rev. E.G. Harris was smart to select 17th and Chestnut Streets for the location of the Plymouth Congregational Church. He saw that the area was changing in population, but he also saw those populations that he felt were being left behind—lower income African Americans. In 1917, the church opened the settlement house as living quarters for working African American women, as a place for wholesome entertainment and education for children and adults, and as a social work facility that could help those lower income families. As the settlement house grew in its importance to the neighborhood so did the Plymouth Congregational Church. Both have contributed significantly to the neighborhood and the city as a whole throughout the years.

B) Its location as a site of a significant historic event.

While many important events were held at the Plymouth Complex, there are no singularly significant historic events that give the site its historic significance.

C) Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, the commonwealth, or the nation.

In consideration of significance associated with a person or persons, the evaluation relates to whether an individual's period of significant contribution or productivity occurred while residing or occupying a building, structure, or site.

Plymouth Congregational Church is known for its congregation comprised of middle- and upper-class, well-educated African Americans. The Plymouth Settlement House has always been associated with the church; however, its social service mission allowed it to be even more connected to the Russell Neighborhood and City of Louisville as a whole. Many of the people associated with the church and settlement house were prominent citizens in Louisville with noteworthy achievements in the city and Commonwealth as a whole. Those individuals whose period of significant contribution is associated with their roles at the Plymouth Complex include Abby Fife, Rachel Harris, Carl R. Hines, Sr., Morris F.X. Jeff, Jr., Lyman T. Johnson, Mae Street Kidd, Dr. Maurice Rabb, Ellen Lowe Taylor, Bertha Whedbee, Dr. Ellis D. Whedbee, and Atwood S. Wilson. There are many more people who are associated with the Plymouth Complex, but their roles are either not related to their period of significant contribution or they are still living, so their period of significant contribution is ongoing.

D) Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen; or its embodiment of a significant architectural innovation; or its identification as the work of an architect, landscape architect, or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation.

Building 1 was designed in a modern Gothic Revival style while Building 2 was designed in an institutional Craftsman Style. However, these buildings are not significant for their architectural style.

The buildings do not represent a significant architectural innovation.

Building 1 was designed by Otto D. Mock, but the architect of Building 2 is unknown. While Mock was an active architect in Louisville with a number of interesting designs, Building 1 is not significant for its association with him.

E) Its historic significance is based on its association with an underrepresented history within the city, the Commonwealth, or the nation and broadens our understanding of these underrepresented histories.

In consideration of significance associated with underrepresented histories, the evaluation relates to inclusion and telling a comprehensive history.

The Plymouth Complex is part of underrepresented history in the city. As a historically African American church in a historically African American neighborhood, there is not a lot commonly known. Furthermore, the Plymouth Settlement House was established by the church to benefit African Americans. General settlement house movement history is not widely known much less a

settlement house with this history, which is quite unique. As a whole, African American resources are historically underrepresented Metro Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission. There are only six African American resources on the Individual Landmarks list: Chestnut Street YMCA/Knights of Pythias, Church of Our Merciful Savior, Eastern Branch Library, Mary D. Hill School, Seelbach-Parrish House, and Western Branch Library. One preservation district, Limerick, contains historically African American resources.

Boundary Justification

The property proposed for designation is located at 1626 W. Chestnut Street and 1630 W. Chestnut Street. According to the Jefferson County Property Evaluation Administrator (PVA), the properties (parcel numbers 013F01630000 and 013F01030000) contain a total 0.2744 acres of land. The proposed boundaries for the Plymouth Complex Individual Landmark designation area are represented on the LOJIC map below (**Figure 35**). The designation boundary is outlined in blue and includes the entire parcels on which Building 1 and Building 2 are situated. The history of these two buildings is intertwined and dependent on one another.

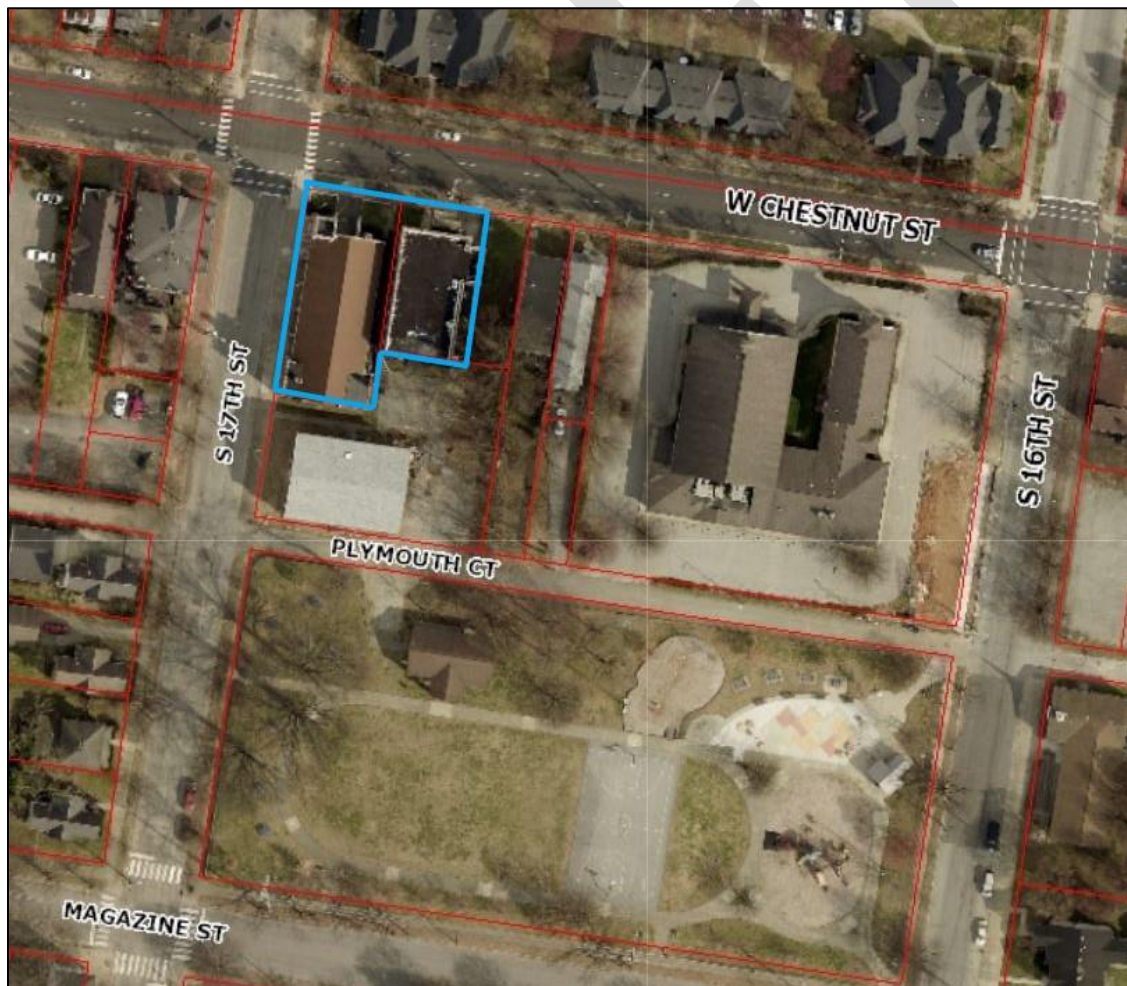


Figure 35. LOJIC aerial showing location of the designation boundary for the Plymouth Complex in blue.

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