



## City of Ann Arbor

### PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES — PLANNING DIVISION

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Ken Klein, Chair  
Ann Arbor Planning Commission  
City of Ann Arbor  
301 East Huron Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

July 24, 2017

Dear Chair Klein and Planning Commissioners,

On behalf of the Inglis House Study Committee, I am pleased to transmit a preliminary historic district study committee report for the Planning Commission's review.

The Inglis House Study Committee adopted this preliminary report at their meeting of July 21, 2017 and has transmitted the report to the State Historic Preservation Office and the Historic District Commission.

The committee is recommending one district consisting of the 9-acre Inglis property. A public hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 5:30pm in City Council Chambers, City Hall, 301 East Huron Street.

Should the Planning Commission wish to make comments on the preliminary report, the study committee would be happy to receive them. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jill Thacher  
City Planner/Historic Preservation Coordinator

PRELIMINARY HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT  
PROPOSED INGLIS HOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
2301 HIGHLAND ROAD  
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

Draft Approved for Distribution and Review JULY 21, 2017

## CHARGE OF THE INGLIS HOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE

The Inglis House Historic District Study Committee was established by the Ann Arbor City Council on May 1, 2017 to examine the roughly nine-acre parcel containing the Inglis House, with the final area to be determined by the committee. On June 5, 2017, the Council appointed members to the committee who are to report their findings to City Council no later than May 1, 2018. A list of members follows.

## STUDY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Bridget Bly* is a statistical analyst and a neighbor of the Inglis House. She is active in community centered activities and serves on the board of non-profit organizations such as The Penny Seats. She has a PhD in research psychology from Stanford and an undergraduate degree in History and Literature.

*Gregory W. DeVries* is a landscape architect with Quinn Evans Architects and an Ann Arbor resident. He works on preservation and design projects for heritage places within the United States and abroad. He holds a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of Michigan, a MA in cultural anthropology from the University of Florida, and a BA in Spanish from Calvin College.

*Patrick McCauley* is a graduate of the University of Michigan with a BA in History and is the co-author of *Historic Ann Arbor*. He has worked on older and historic homes for over 20 years with his family's painting business. He has restored three houses on his own since 2001, and won a Rehabilitation Award from the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission in 2007 for the rehabilitation of his 1845 Greek Revival-style house.

The study committee was assisted in its work by Jill Thacher, AICP, City Planner/Historic Preservation Coordinator with the City of Ann Arbor and Kristine Kidorf of Kidorf Preservation Consulting.

## INVENTORY

An inventory of the proposed district was included in the February 29, 1988 *City of Ann Arbor Landmarks Historic District Study Committee Final Report*. The document is on file with the Ann Arbor Planning and Development Department and at the State Historic Preservation Office. The district was designated by the City Council as an individual historic property. That designation was determined invalid in a 2001 Michigan Court of Appeals decision.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

The Inglis House Historic District is located on the south side of the Huron River, on the east edge of the University of Michigan Nichols Arboretum, in the Highlands neighborhood of Ann Arbor, about two miles east of downtown. The proposed district contains six contributing buildings, and seventeen contributing features. There is one non-contributing building and one non-contributing feature.

The district is comprised of the entire estate developed by James and Elizabeth Inglis. The J-shaped property borders Highland Road on the south and the University of Michigan's Nichols Arboretum on the north. The parcel consists of hilly terrain sloping north toward the Huron River and contains numerous mature trees and landscape elements. The three-and-a-half story tall stone French Eclectic style house is built into the highest point of the property, which is about one-third of the way north into the parcel. The house is surrounded by stone terraces and formal and informal gardens. The outbuildings on the property all sit to the south of the house and include a stone gardener's cottage, a wood frame shop and attached greenhouse, a coldhouse, and two wood garden sheds. A pumphouse is built into the hillside to the east of the house.

There are four primary landscape character areas that make up the estate. Variations in the physical landscape features and historic land uses of the property demarcate these areas and create patterns that date from the period of significance and persist today. These distinctive spaces include Approach Landscape, House Gardens, North Lawn, and Horticulture and Service Area.

### *Approach Landscape*

This area includes the arcing driveway, flanking landscaped areas, the surrounds of the gardener's cottage, the interior parking court, and the oval arrival court. The commanding view from the arrival court differs significantly from the immersive views and approach experienced from the terrace north of the house and from the paths of the Wild Garden to the east. Scattered remnants of historic trees and shrubs persist throughout this area.

From Highland Road, the asphalt paved driveway leads uphill, under a large mature oak tree and next to the stone one-and-half story tall Gardener's Cottage. The drive continues upward past a high stone wall with an opening in the wall accessing the rear of the house containing the parking court in front of the three-car garage. As the drive passes the west end of the house, it descends into a flat terrace and oval drive with commanding views over the long north lawn. Off-center from the center of the house, a grassy median comprises the center of the oval arrival court. The drive is lined with planting beds and a low stone wall. There are two stone urns in the shape of stylized pinecones on top of the wall in line with the center of the oval court.

West of the entry drive, a parking lot is located at the southwest corner of the property. The lot was constructed before 1960 by the University of Michigan when additional parking was necessary for groups of visitors. The lot is accessed from the main driveway and consists of a flat asphalt paved area surrounded by a concrete curb. The

treed land slopes up on two sides of the parking lot. The parking area is lower than the drive approach to the core of the property. Large trees and shrubs surround the parking area.

East of the entry drive, between the service driveway leading to the Horticulture and Service Area and Highland Drive, is a sloped area with mature trees and stone paths. There is a circular stone retaining wall that contains a concrete bench (bench date unknown) that used to be the center of an arch-shaped bed of formal gardens. The gardens are now grassy slopes with mature trees. Another stone path terminates in a large cube of cut stone.

### *House Gardens*

This area consists of multiple formal and informal garden spaces surrounding the house. Historic vegetation is present throughout the grounds. The House Terraces include stone patios and access routes on the north, south, and east sides of the house. South of the house, a grass panel immediately south of the house stages views of the Formal Garden, a symmetrically designed space with vertical layers of planting beds, shrubs, and trees. The flat grassy lawn area near the house is bordered on the west by the tall stone wall with arched doorway into the interior parking court. The Formal Garden extends south from the yard and is accessed by stone steps. The garden has stone walkways on both sides which have planting beds and berms on the outsides. A flat grassy lawn runs between the walkways and terminates in a stone paved patio edged by a tall stone wall with built-in stone bench. A circular fountain is comprised of a stone clad basin with four stone pillars in the center. There is a metal turtle sculpture on top of each pillar and a large stone bowl rests on the tops of the turtle's backs. A stone path leads from the formal gardens past the former orchard and to the Tennis Lawn.

The Tennis Lawn east of the Formal Garden includes a sunken court with transitional areas (formerly orchard) and viewing spaces. The former orchard is now primarily lawn on a gentle slope hedged by bushes and shrubs. Near the southeast corner there is a stone terrace with a bench under a mature oak tree overlooking the Tennis Lawn. The Tennis Lawn is separated from the transitional lawn by a stone retaining wall and steps. The lawn is a large flat grassy area lined by trees and shrubs. There are wood viewing benches on the Tennis Lawn and on the transitional lawn atop the retaining wall.

A Wild Garden was built into the slope east of the house near the loggia and north of the Tennis Lawn. This area includes winding paths and rustic stone steps, walls, fireplace, and other features within a coniferous glen. Stone steps and a path lead from the northeast house terrace through a wildflower garden (installed 1928) and into the woodland garden which slopes to the northeast. The entire area is currently under canopy cover. The stone path winds through a grove of hemlock trees. A Pumphouse for the irrigation system is built into the south hillside below the Tennis Lawn. Within this garden space, the only visible portions of the Pumphouse are the stepped concrete block walls extending out of the hillside and a solid metal door. A stone wall with a fireplace lies between the terrace east of the house and the lower sections of the Wild Garden.

### *North Lawn*

An undulating, north-sloping lawn with woodland edges makes up the northern two-thirds of the estate. The North Lawn is strategically interspersed with various trees to frame and direct views and framed by diverse woodland edges. A designed arboricultural arrangement frames the northern terminus of this landscape character area near the border with Nichols Arboretum. Borrowed views across the arboretum toward the Huron River continue to accentuate the North Lawn viewshed. A central, level area with a European beech tree form a terrace above valleys descending northeast and northwest toward the corners of the property. Hemlock trees dominate the valleys but do not continue into the arboretum, suggesting that they were intentionally planted or maintained. Historically, the center space was tended as meadow while the irregular edges offered locations for horticultural beds. The lawn also was used as a three-hole golf course and as a sledding hill by the Inglis family. The area contains numerous, intentionally planted trees and shrubs.

### *Horticulture and Service Area*

The area south of the formal gardens has been dedicated to the heritage of horticultural production and experimentation. It includes a greenhouse, sheds, cold frames, cutting and production beds. Southeast of the Formal Garden, a gravel path leads to the south end of the property which contains a rock lined herb garden and a large boxwood shrub that appears on a 1927 aerial photograph. Historic shrubs and trees remain in this area.

### *The Inglis House*

The house has an offset rectangular footprint – the east block of the house is wider than the west block. The house has a tall hip roof clad in slate with shed roof dormers. Massive stone chimneys rise from the center and east end of the house. Because it is built into the slope, the house has three levels visible on the north side and two levels visible on the south. The front or north elevation faces the circular drive and the meadow beyond. The west half of the elevation is covered with heavy ivy growth. The front porch has a steep shed roof that extends from the side of the west block of the house. The porch has stone walls and an arched entry revealing a small window beyond in the main wall of the house. The front door is at ninety degrees to the porch entry and consists of a heavy wood door with top and bottom panels with a stylized rose carving in the center of each panel. Opposite the door the porch wall has a square opening with a carved stone screen.

The first-floor openings on the west block are not visible due to a tall hedge and the thick ivy growth on the wall. Historic photographs show five narrow rectangular openings spaced equally across the wall. At the second floor, there is a window opening containing a pair of eight pane casement windows above the porch roof. A similar opening is located in the center of the wall. At the third floor there is a pair of four-over-four double-hung windows separated by a thick muntin above the entrance porch. The window opening and wall extend up slightly into the roof line. Moving westward there are four six-over-six double-hung windows spread equally across the wall. The roof has three shed roof dormers: the center dormer has a six-pane window in it, and the other two dormers have vents in the openings.

A stone path and steps lead to a lower terrace in front of the north façade of the east block of the house. Moving eastward from the entrance porch the first floor has a pair of six-over-six double-hung windows at the first floor. Above them at the second floor is a three-sided projecting bay window. The center window is a six-over-six double-hung window, the two angled side windows are four-over-four. Above this at the third floor is a set of three six-over-six double-hung windows separated by wood mullions. The next bay is east of the terrace steps and contains a four-over-four window at ground level and a six-over-six window above it. At the second floor there is a decorative wrought iron balcony. The window opening behind contains a pair of six-over-nine windows with six pane transoms above. The easternmost bay has a two-story tall rectangular, three-sided bay projecting from the first and second floors. At the first floor the front of the bay has a pair of multi-pane wood and glass doors flanked by multi-pane windows. The sides of the bay each contain multi-pane fixed windows. Between the first and second floors all three sides of the bay have a wood grid that mimics the multi-pane windows but with wood panels instead of glass. At the second floor the front of the bay has an eight-over-twelve window flanked by six-over-nine windows. The sides have fixed multi-pane windows. The bay is capped by a copper clad flared hip roof with a decorative fascia depicting vines and flowers. At the third floor the window opening has a six-over-six window flanked by four-over-four windows. The east block is capped by a steeply pitched tall hip roof. There are three arched roof dormers each containing a six-over-six window.

The stone terrace from the front of the house wraps around in front of the east elevation and terminates at a one-story tall stone wall which forms the base of the loggia above. A wall fountain is centered in the base and there is a low stone wall in front of it. Above the fountain the upper loggia wall has a tall arched opening with a decorative wrought iron railing across the bottom.

The east elevation is comprised of the main house and the end of the open loggia. The center of the main house wall is dominated by a wide external chimney that extends well above the top of the roof. Behind the chimney there is a hidden dormer with double hung windows. A wrought iron railing extends from the sides of the chimney around to the sides of the dormers. The bay north of the chimney has a pair of multi-light doors at the first floor. At the second floor there is an eight-over-twelve window and at the third floor there is an eight-over-eight window. South of the chimney there are a pair of multi-light doors at the first floor. At the second floor a quarter-round balcony with a wood railing and conical copper roof extends from the corner where the house and loggia meet. There are two separate four-over-four windows at the third floor.

Stone steps extend from the terrace up the slope in front of the east end of the loggia. The base of the loggia is a stone wall. The upper portion has a large arched opening with a decorative wrought iron railing across the bottom. A stone wall extends from the south corner of the loggia.

The house's west block of the south elevation faces the asphalt paved parking area that slopes downward to the gardener's cottage. The parking area has tall stone walls on both sides, blocking it from view from the surrounding yards. The first level of this block

has three wood paneled garage doors: two overhead and one double-leaf. At the second level there is a six-over-six window centered above each garage door.

The edge of the house's east block extends south of the west block and there is a projecting flat roof entrance porch with stone walls and openings on two sides. A six-over-six window is centered above the porch roof. There are two intersecting hip roofs in front of a wall dormer with a four-over-four window in the main house roof above the porch. A tall stone wall with an arched gate opening extends from the east edge of the porch to separate the driveway area from the lawn to the east. The portion of the house's south elevation that faces the lawn has two window openings at the first floor, one containing a set of five multi-pane casement windows, the other containing a set of three casement windows. East of the window openings there is a large opening containing a pair of multi-pane doors with multi-pane sidelights. At the upper level there is an eight-over-eight window centered above the opening containing five casement windows. Above the smaller opening there is a projecting three-sided bay window supported by brackets. The front of the bay has a carved wood panel base with a central eight-over-one window flanked by four-over-four windows. The windows are separated by carved wood pilasters. An eight-over-eight window is centered above the first floor doors. In the center of the roof there is a wider arched roof dormer containing a six-over-six window flanked by four-over-four windows. There is a smaller arched roof dormer on both sides of the central dormer that each contain a six-over-six window. The open loggia at the east end of the house has two arched openings. It is one story tall with a vaulted ceiling and separate hip roof.

The west elevation of the house is three stories tall. At the first floor there are two window openings that are hidden from view by a tall hedge. At the second floor an opening is centered on the wall that contains a pair of multi-pane casement windows. At the third floor there are two four-over-four windows.

There are a number of black iron light fixtures, most of them resembling carriage lamps, around the Inglis House, Gardener's House, and Interior Parking Court. Most are hung from brackets and a few are affixed to the wall or ceiling or on posts. They range from simple to elaborate, and all have amber glass. The most notable lamp is attached to the northwest corner of the house, and is approximately 4' tall, including the bracket.

### *Gardener's Cottage*

The stone Gardener's Cottage (also called the caretaker's house) is located within the Approach landscape character area. Its design, placement, and associated walls are integral to the arrival experience of the Inglis House. The cottage was constructed at the same time as the main house in a similar French Eclectic style. It is one-and-a-half stories tall with a steeply pitched hip roof clad in slate. It is built into the side of the hill so the east elevation is much shorter than the other three elevations.

The north elevation of the cottage creates the south edge of the driveway for the main house and faces into it. A one-story flat roof garage is built into the hill and extends out the east side of the building. It is entered through a wood panel overhead garage door. A wood panel door with a multi-pane light in the upper half is centered on the main wall.

There is an eight-over-twelve window on one side of the door and a smaller multi-light window on the other side. An arched top wood wall dormer extends through the roofline above the entrance door. It contains a group of three diamond pane windows.

The east elevation of the cottage has a central door within a gable-front "dormer" extending from the roof at ground level to a small concrete patio and paths to access the Shop/Greenhouse and other horticultural spaces to the south. A total of two arched top dormers - one on each side of the entrance - contain a pair of diamond pane casement windows.

The south elevation has two eight-over-twelve windows at the first floor and a central arched top wall dormer. The dormer contains a group of three diamond paned casement windows.

The west elevation faces the driveway. There is a central entrance door accessed from a set of stone steps and stone stoop with wrought iron railings. There is a copper clad curved hip roof hood supported by wrought iron brackets above the door. The stone wall extends into a gable front wall dormer in the center of the roof. It contains a six-over-six window. There is a six-over-nine window on each side of the door. A stone chimney extends from the center of the roof.

### *Shop/Greenhouse*

The Shop/Greenhouse lies within the Horticulture and Service Area. The wood clapboard clad shop and attached greenhouse are located on the south edge of the lawn east of the Gardener's Cottage. The building steps down the hill toward the south and west. The building has three sections of asphalt shingle clad hip roofs over the separate sections of the building. The north elevation has a tall brick external chimney next to a pair of six-pane casement windows in the center of the wall. To the west the smaller section of the building projects northward and has a paneled entrance door with multi-pane lights in the upper half. There is a small square window in the side of the entrance block.

The east elevation is comprised of three sections. The northern section is dominated by a wood panel overhead garage door with lights at the top. Moving southward the next section is lower, has a shallow hip roof and the wall has a pair of six-pane casement windows. The southern section is the end of the greenhouse which has a cement foundation and a wood framed glass wall above. The roof of the greenhouse is wood framed glass and angles as a shed roof into the adjacent building.

There is a wood cold frame constructed in front of the south elevation of the building. The wood framed glass greenhouse wall has a wood door toward the east end. The hip roofs for each portion of the building are visible behind.

The west elevation has one wide rectangular opening in the center of the building wall and the wood framed glass end of the greenhouse on a concrete foundation wall.



### *Garden Shed*

The one-story tall wood clapboard clad Garden Shed is just south of the Shop/Greenhouse, across a gravel service driveway. The building has a gable end that faces north and has a wood panel entrance door. An open trellis or lath gardening area with built-in counters, wood posts, and an open trellis roof was added to the west side of the building in 1990. The west elevation of the building is void of openings. The south side of the building overlooks the south property line and is void of openings. The east side of the building has a single four pane window in the center of the wall.

### *Peacock House/Drying Shed*

Just west of the Garden Shed is the former Peacock House that was converted to a drying shed after the Inglis' no longer had peacocks. It is a one-story tall flat roof building with a pair of wood doors in the north end. The east and west sides each have a small four-pane window in the center of the wall. The east wall has a boarded-in opening below the window, presumably a former door for the peacocks. The south end of the building is void of openings.

### *Coldhouse*

To the east of the Shop/Greenhouse, along the gravel drive is the Coldhouse. It has concrete block walls and a gable roof covered with translucent fiberglass panels. There is a door in the west end and vents in both ends.

## RESOURCE LIST

### *Historic (Contributing) Buildings*

Inglis House – 1927

Gardener's Cottage – 1927

Shop/Greenhouse – 1927, greenhouse rebuilt in 1990

Garden Shed – attached lath house added in 1990

Peacock House/Drying Shed – 1927

Pumphouse - 1927

### *Non-historic (Non-Contributing) Buildings*

Coldhouse – c. 1970)

*Historic (Contributing) Landscape Features*

Driveway Layout – 1927

Landscape Areas Flanking the Drive – 1927

Stone Walls in the Approach Area – 1927

Interior Parking Court – 1927

Oval Arrival Court – 1927

Long View from the Arrival Court over the North Lawn – 1927

Stone Walls along Entry Drive – 1927

House Terraces (north, south, and east) – 1927

South Lawn Panel – 1927

Formal Garden Paths, Lawn Panel, and Beds – 1927

Formal Garden Circular Fountain and Turtle Sculpture – 1927

South Terrace West Wall Fountain – 1927

Tennis Lawn – 1927

Transitional Lawn/Former Orchard – 1927

Wild Garden Paths, Steps, Walls, and Fireplace – 1927

North Lawn with Treed Terminus and Wooded Edges – 1927

Horticulture and Service Area Paths and Beds – 1927

*Non-Historic (Non-Contributing) Features*

Visitor Parking Lot – ca. 1959

**COUNT OF HISTORIC AND NON-HISTORIC RESOURCES**

The proposed Inglis House Historic District contains twenty-three historic (contributing) resources and two non-historic (non-contributing) resources. Ninety-two percent of the resources contribute to the district.

## BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Inglis House Historic District is comprised of one roughly J-shaped parcel of 9.0002 acres.

The boundary is more specifically described as:

BEG NE COR LOT 19 THE HIGHLANDS TH S 87 DEG 04 MIN W 384.83 LT RAD 182.7 FT SUBTENDED BY CHORD DEG 25 DEG 06 MIN LT FROM LAST COURSE 160.74 FT TH N 14 DEG 46 MIN E 81.18 FT TH 73.57 FT IN ARC CIR CURVE CONCAVE W RAD 150.54 FT CHORD N 0 DEG 46 MIN E 72.84 FT TH N 13 DEG 14 MIN W 19.57 FT TH 47.25 FT IN ARC CIR CURVE CONCAVE E RAD 140 FT CHORD N 3 DEG 33 MIN 50 SEC W 47.03 FT TH N 6 DEG 06 MIN 20 SEC E 27.22 FT TH N 89 DEG 55 MIN E 196.37 FT TH N 12 DEG 37 MIN E 97.31 FT TH N 2 DEG 15 MIN W 691.64 FT TH ALG E & W 1/4 LINE 279.4 FT TH S PAR WITH W L E 1/2 SW 1/4 1147.79 FT TH W 16.5 FT TO POB PRT SEC 27 T2S R6E

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The parcel is the entire parcel developed in 1927 by James and Elizabeth Inglis, therefore it is historically and presently associated with the Inglis House. The parcel includes landscaped areas and supporting outbuildings that were developed during the period of significance of the house. Newer single-family housing subdivisions developed in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s surround the district.

## HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT

### **Overview**

Upon their arrival in Washtenaw County in February 1824, John Allen and Elisha Walker Rumsey saw a region of rolling hills, a river with a brisk flow of water and fine, fertile land for farms. The Huron River flowed in a generally easterly direction. The uneven pace of advance and retreat of the last glacier (between 16,000 and 13,000 years ago) caused the formation of the hills seen today in Ann Arbor. These lines of hills, called moraines, run in a general northwest-southwest direction. The land in the Inglis House Historic District is part of the Outer Defiance Moraine which also contains North Campus, the Detroit Observatory, and several residence halls atop hills. The Huron River and its tributaries, are post-glacial features. The Huron River Valley was cut through the moraines after the glacier's retreat.

The property that is now associated with the Inglis House was part of a larger farm purchased by James Inglis' sister and brother-in-law Kate and Frank Smith in 1901. At that time, it was outside the Ann Arbor city limits in Ann Arbor Township. In 1924 the Smith's subdivided a portion of their farm into the Highland's Subdivision; it did not include the parcel now known as 2301 Highland Road.

In 1926 James and Elizabeth Inglis purchased the un-subdivided parcel now known as 2301 Highland Road to construct a country estate for their retirement. They hired family friend Lilburn "Woody" Woodworth to design an estate house and supporting gardener's cottage. It is not known if he designed the other outbuildings. Elizabeth designed the surrounding gardens and landscape. According to University caretakers, one of James Inglis' American Blower Company fans was installed in the house and remains to the present day.

The Inglis' moved into the completed house in 1928. The house was used for numerous Inglis family functions as James had at least three siblings and their families living nearby. Their daughter Betty was married in the house. There are many photos of the immediate and extended family using the house and grounds. James Inglis' died at age 85 in March 1950. His will stated that the house and grounds would be donated to the University of Michigan after his and Elizabeth's death for use as the President's House. However, in 1951 Elizabeth elected to give the house to the University and move to Kalamazoo with her daughter.

The University offered the house to the incoming President, Harlan Hatcher, to live in. He chose instead to live in the house on campus that had been used by the past university presidents.

In 1953 the Board of Regents approved a plan to refurbish the house into a guest house for visiting dignitaries and for small group meetings. The house was refurbished and began hosting guests in 1954 under the direction of a house hostess. The Inglis' gardener and housekeeper, Walter Stampfi and his wife, who had remained living in the gardener's cottage, stayed on to assist and care for the house and grounds. The caretaker's annual salary was paid by the Department of Landscape Architecture and the supervision of the grounds was under the direction of the Chairman of the Department of Landscape Architecture. Mrs. Stampfi died in 1969 and Mr. Stampfi retired and moved from the gardener's cottage in 1975. After his retirement Walter Chambers, the head of landscape architecture began overseeing the grounds. In the 1960s the gardens along the edges of the great lawn to the north were simplified as a cost-saving measure. The formal gardens remained intact and Elizabeth Inglis expressed her satisfaction with the care and use of the estate on her several visits (Duderstadt, p. 9).

According to *The Inglis House Estate* by Anne Duderstadt, "The house was in constant use throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The Hatchers entertained various community and campus groups and hosted many visiting dignitaries. Dr. Jonas Salk, who came to Ann Arbor in April 1955, at the time of the polio vaccine evaluation, was one of the first guests. He and his wife and three children stayed for a week in the quiet top-floor suite, originally the quarters of young James Inglis. The announcement of the vaccine's effectiveness was made from Rackham Hall, as Salk had studied virology with Dr. Thomas Francis at the University of Michigan.

Edward R. Murrow, commencement speaker at the 1961 June exercises stayed at Inglis House. Other guests included, [British historian] Arnold Toynbees, Harrison Salisbury,

editor of the New York Times, famed violinist Sir Yehudi Manuhin, and the ambassadors of Africa, Burma, New Zealand, India, Thailand and the Netherlands. In recent years, President and Mrs. Gerald Ford and the Dalai Lama have been among the many guests at Inglis House.”

In the 1980s the house and grounds showed their lack of maintenance, in particular the deterioration of the slate roof. The University primarily used the house for internal meetings during this time. In 1988 the University budgeted money to replace the slate roof, refurbish the interior of the house and restore the grounds, a renovation that was overseen by Anne Duderstadt, wife of the then-president of the University. Much of the landscape work was completed by volunteers and students. After the renovation, the house was again extensively used by the University to host meetings, events, and conduct fundraising activities. A list of events taking place there between 1992 and 1996 ran to 346 lines, and included President’s dinners, Economics Club dinners, Provost/faculty dinners, and Women’s Faculty Club luncheons. The Belgian ambassador was among many guests who stayed in the house during these years. Jonas Salk, one of the first University visitors to the house, is listed as a guest for a second time in April 1995, two months before his death. In 2017 the Board of Regents voted to sell the property.

### **James and Elizabeth Inglis**

James Inglis was born on August 15, 1864 in Detroit to Scottish immigrant parents. He was the fifth of seven children born to Dr. Richard and Agnes Lambis Inglis. Other than a brief period when the family resided in Grand Rapids, James was raised in Detroit and educated in the public school system, although he did not graduate high school. His father died when he was ten years old and he was raised by his mother and older siblings.

His first job was as an office boy for Detroit grain merchants Gillett and Hall. He then worked as an office boy for Christian H. Buhl, owner of a hardware company, and later in the Buhl and Company stockroom. At age nineteen he became the manager of the Detroit Sanitarium where he remained for three years.

After two unsuccessful attempts at starting his own business, in January 1890 he became secretary and a stockholder of the Huyett and Smith Manufacturing Company. The company manufactured blower fans, primarily for removal of wood shavings in shop settings as well as heating and ventilating equipment. The president of the company at the time was D. M. Ferry, noted Detroit businessman and industrialist. From the start James Inglis was active in management of the company. In 1895 Mr. Smith was bought out, and James Inglis was put in charge of the company which was renamed the American Blower Company. He orchestrated the company’s continued growth and he gained full control in 1917. In 1928 the company was purchased by American Radiator and Standard Sanitary Corporation. James Inglis continued to manage American Blower, which operated separately, until 1933 when he became chairman of the board but did not have an active day-to-day role in the company.

While running American Blower James Inglis took part in other business interests. In 1907, he purchased stock in the Detroit Insulated Wire Company, eventually becoming Vice President until the company was bought out.

In 1907, he began his career in banking as a director of the Michigan Savings Bank. He also became an organizer and one of twenty businessmen directors of the National Bank of Commerce in Detroit. The bank eventually merged with the Guardian National Bank of Detroit which closed in the 1933 banking crisis. That same year he was appointed a director and chairman of the newly created National Bank of Detroit for which he served for five years. He remained a bank director until 1948.

During World War I James served in Washington D.C. at the War Department first on the Storage Committee and then on the War Industries Board, as well as serving on additional committees, from April 1917 until October 1918.

In 1924, he was appointed as a director of the Federal Reserve Detroit Branch Bank. He served one year. After a year off he was reappointed in 1926 and served through 1937. During his term, he lobbied Congress to get a new building constructed for the bank at the corner of Fort and Shelby Streets in downtown Detroit.

He was one of the founders of the Detroit Board of Commerce in about 1903 and he was a member of the Detroit Economic Club. James Inglis became fond of golf and joined the Detroit Country Club in the late-1890s.

In 1903 James met and married Carrie Elizabeth Hughes. Elizabeth was born on May 8, 1878 in Fostoria, Ohio to Rev. Joseph and Nora Bash Hughes. She primarily grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana, which is where the couple was married in October. James and Carrie met in New York City where she was studying music and singing at Rutgers Presbyterian Church. The couple lived in various Detroit locations. Their first child was born in 1905 but only lived for two days. Their daughter Betty was born in 1906 and their son Jamie was born in 1910. From about 1908 they lived in a house they built on East Grand Boulevard until they moved to Ann Arbor in 1920 to Baldwin Avenue. He continued to commute to Detroit for his various business interests. In 1928 the family moved to the house on Highland Road.

According to her grandson, Doug Inglis, Elizabeth Inglis had a “love of farming, gardening and open space. She was an environmentalist before environmentalism became fashionable.” She was an advocate of organic gardening and fertilized the Inglis House gardens using compost generated on site. She organized an exhibit at the International Flower Show in New York (unknown year) which consisted of four watercolors created at Cranbrook depicting the history and decline of farmland in the United States. According to Anne Duderstadt’s *The Inglis House Estate*, Elizabeth developed a hardy northern strain of boxwood called Inglis Boxwood. She was generous with her garden clippings to neighbors and friends.

The Inglis family had many connections to the University of Michigan. In 1927, James and Elizabeth gave \$2,000 to be used for a one-year scholarship to Oxford or

Cambridge for a qualified University graduate (the Inglis Foreign Fellowship). In 1928, James Inglis became a Director of the University Musical Society, a role in which he was instrumental in raising funds for the new School of Music building. James was designated as Honorary Alumnus of the University in June of 1931. In January of 1932, Elizabeth Inglis donated \$400 to be used by the Dean of Women for emergency needs of women students. It was called "Elizabeth Inglis Emergency Fund for Women." In 1933, Elizabeth was offered a place on the Board of Governors of the Betsy Barbour House.

James died on March 16, 1950 at home. Elizabeth lived in the house for an additional year until 1951 when she deeded the property to the University of Michigan and moved to Kalamazoo with her daughter. Elizabeth died in California on October 8, 1974 at the age of 96.

### **Architecture and Landscape Architecture**

The Inglis House Historic District is a planned composition of architecture and landscape architecture pertaining to the Country Place Era of estate design. This property is the only example of this design style in Ann Arbor (1988 *City of Ann Arbor Landmarks Historic District Study Committee Final Report*). In addition, it is a rare surviving example of 1920s estates in southeast Michigan where its original architectural and landscape features that were shaped by the original owners are largely intact today. It is positioned within a context of country estates developed by leaders of industry in the decades between the 1890s to the 1930s. While modest and restrained by national examples of Country Place design, the integrity of the Inglis house architecture and landscape make the estate unique and valuable not only for its design, but for the integrated experience of place.

The context for the Inglis House is the Country Place Era in America when expanding industry led to a moneyed class who embraced the romantic notion of country life and developed rural retreats. Beginning in the 1890s in the United States and around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in southeast Michigan, the Country Place Era transformed particular locations with desirable natural qualities from agricultural lands to grand estates. The Inglis family would have known examples of similar - though more elaborate - estates of the Country Place Era including:

- 1907-1908 Cranbrook Estate, Bloomfield Hills, English Arts and Crafts-inspired design, Albert Kahn
- 1913-1915 Henry Ford Estate (Fair Lane Mansion), Dearborn, Henry and Clara Ford, English Manor House styling with aspects of Prairie Style, multiple architects
- 1922 Charles and Sarah Fisher Mansion, Detroit, English Tudor Style, George D. Mason
- 1926-1927 Edsel and Eleanor Ford Estate, Gross Pointe Shores, English Manor House, Albert Kahn
- 1926-1929 Meadowbrook Hall, Rochester Hills, Matilda Dodge Wilson, Tudor Revival

- 1927 Lawrence P. Fisher Mansion, Detroit, Lawrence Fisher, Mission Mediterranean Revival style, C. Howard Crane

The Inglis House was and is Ann Arbor's only true "country estate" as well as an architectural, and (formerly) social landmark. The district contains two unaltered examples of the French Eclectic architectural style, the large manor house and matching gardener's cottage, as well as harmonious formal and informal gardens. The stone houses with tall hipped roofs have arched roof dormers and slightly flared eaves, all indicative of the French Eclectic style.

The French Eclectic style of architecture was relatively uncommon but used in the United States from about 1915 to 1945. Contemporary to the more popular Tudor style, the French Eclectic is based on French domestic architecture such as French manor houses and farm houses. The style's identifying features include tall, steep hipped roofs, flared eaves, and stone, stucco, or brick walls. Dormers are usually arched roof, hipped or gabled.

The architect of the complex, Lilburn Lamley "Woody" Woodworth was born on October 8, 1900 in Mechanicsville, Iowa. He grew up in South Dakota and came to the University of Michigan around 1923. He graduated from U of M in 1927 with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture. He was a visiting lecturer in the U of M architecture school from at least July 1947 to June 1948. He lived in Ann Arbor until at least 1955. Not much is known at this time about his architectural career. According to the Inglis' niece Carol Spicer, when he was hired his only design had been the Arch Diack residence at the bottom of Geddes Heights (Spicer, *Ann Arbor News*, 1974). His only other known constructed work is a Barton Hills home designed in the French Provincial style for Mr. and Mrs. Wilson White (*Detroit Free Press*, September 14, 1952).

The survival of Country Place Era properties in southeast Michigan is important; however, the integrity of the original landscape in other examples is highly variable and many have been severely degraded. The close bonds between the Inglis family and the University of Michigan enabled the continuity of the landscape and architecture of this historic estate. The landscape of the Inglis House is unique. Designed by Elizabeth Inglis, an accomplished gardener and horticulturist, formal and informal gardens and landscape features surround the house. Ample acreage (9 acres) provided the house with a setting for a country manor as well as giving Elizabeth Inglis room for her gardening and botanical work.

Elizabeth Inglis shaped garden spaces at a period of transition in American planting design. Steeped in the earlier modes of classical revivalism, gradual changes occurred in the early 20th century in conjunction with the influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement and the mixed plantings of the English Cottage Garden style. The contrast of the Formal Garden with the informal Wild Garden is evidence of this shift. As a longstanding leader of the Ann Arbor Garden Club, Elizabeth Inglis was certainly familiar with and possibly knew the leading figure of garden design between the 1920s and 1940s, Ellen Biddle Shipman. While Shipman worked nationally with many residential properties, perhaps her largest concentration of commissioned work was in



the greater Detroit area. At the Inglis property, Elizabeth would have been conversant in these styles from her peers and involvement with the Ann Arbor Garden Club.

While the elemental landscape components of the Inglis House are typical of US estates of this era and of many European precedents that provided inspiration, the layout of garden spaces is uncommon and eclectic. The structure of the gardens and vistas eschew aspects of typical European (e.g. French) formalism in their relationship to the house, views from windows, and the outdoor terraces. While the structure of each garden space is coherent, often symmetrical, and carefully arranged, principal axes and views are not oriented by the primary vantages of the house or its doors and windows. This is apparent for the oval drive and grand vista over the lawn to the north which is oriented on the garage west of the house. The formal garden to the south is oriented roughly on center with the core of the house but not related to views from principal rooms. Although the grounds and gardens were planned contemporaneously and constructed in parallel with the house, the resulting configuration is entirely unique. In addition to the control of the Inglis family as client, the estate layout appears to reflect the nuanced blending of both Elizabeth Inglis as garden designer and Lilburn Woodworth as architect.

The House Gardens were founded at the onset of the establishment of the property and continued to be adapted by Elizabeth Inglis and, later, the stewards and classes of landscape architecture students from the University of Michigan. The horticultural excellence exemplified on the estate provided inspiration for generations.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISTRICT

The Inglis House Historic District is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the University Michigan; B for its association with James and Elizabeth Inglis; and criterion C as an example of the French Eclectic style of architecture and representative of a landscape design by Elizabeth Inglis, an accomplished gardener and recognized horticulturist.

The period of significance is 1927 to 1951, the date of its construction until 1951 when Elizabeth Inglis deeded the house to the University of Michigan.

### **B. That are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past.**

The Inglis House Historic District was constructed by James and Elizabeth Inglis as a country estate where they lived from 1928 through 1950. James Inglis was owner of the American Blower Company and a successful businessman born and raised in Detroit. Elizabeth was an accomplished gardener and horticulturist who developed a strain of a hardy, northern boxwood called Inglis Boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Inglis').

### **C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.**

The Inglis House Historic District is a relatively unaltered example of a French Eclectic style house and gardener's cottage surrounded by a landscape designed to enhance the setting of the house as well as facilitate Elizabeth Inglis' plant propagation and garden designs.

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APPENDIX A: Photographs



Looking southeast at front of Inglis House and oval arrival court, July 2017



Looking northeast at rear of Inglis House and Interior Parking Court, July 2017



Looking west at wild garden and east end of house, July 2017



Looking north in formal garden to rear of Inglis House, July 2017



Looking northeast at caretaker's cottage with house to left, July 2017



Looking southwest at shop and greenhouse, July 2017



Looking northeast at shop and greenhouse, July 2017



Looking southwest at garden shed and lath house, July 2017



Looking southeast at peacock house/drying shed, July 2017



Looking northeast at coldhouse, July 2017



Looking south at south lawn panel and formal garden, July 2017



Fountain, turtle sculpture, and bench at south end of formal garden, July 2017





Looking northeast at tennis lawn, July 2017



Looking north from oval arrival court out to north lawn, July 2017

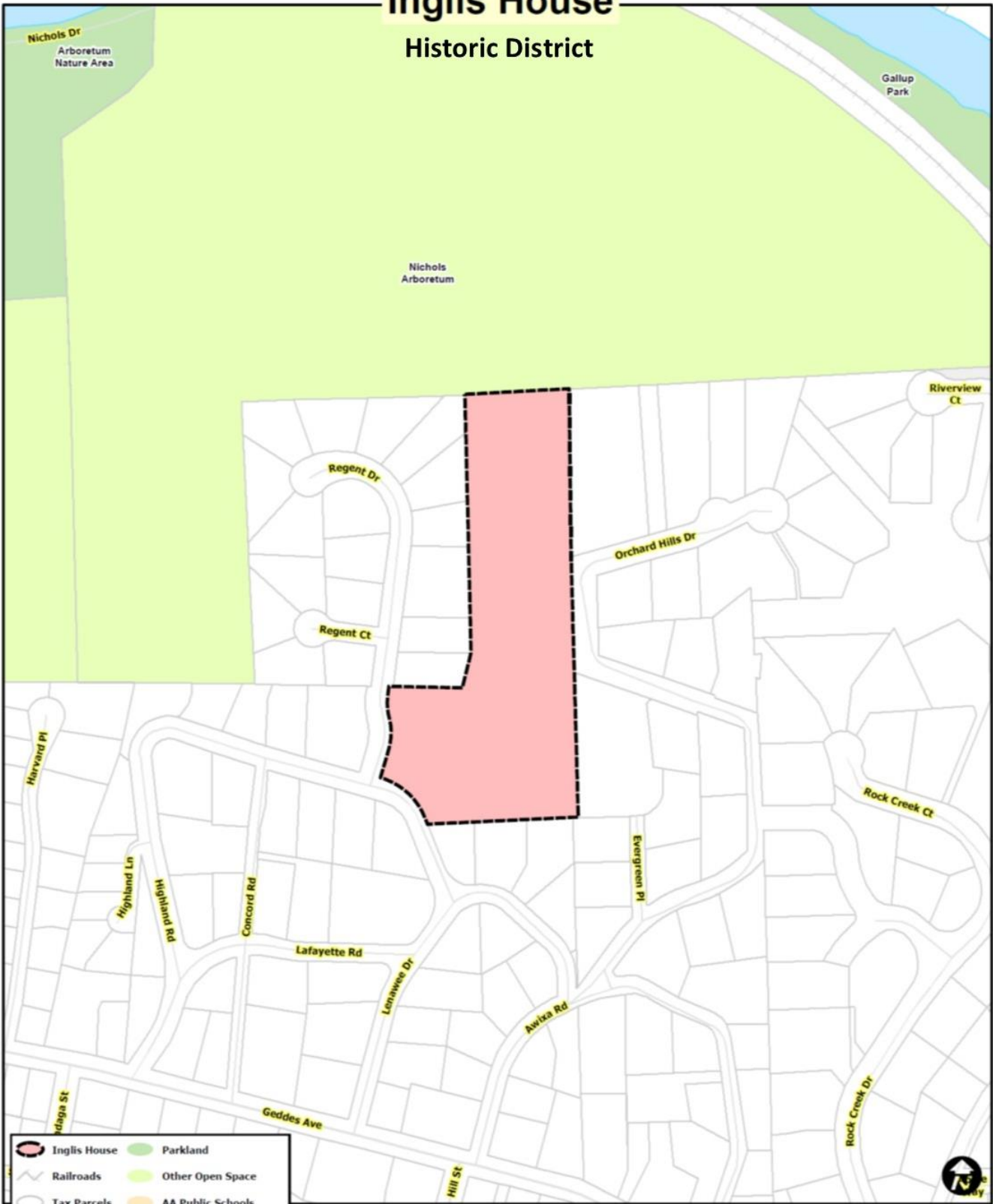


Fireplace built into east wall of wild garden, July 2017



Stone path and pumphouse in wild garden, July 2017

# Inglis House Historic District

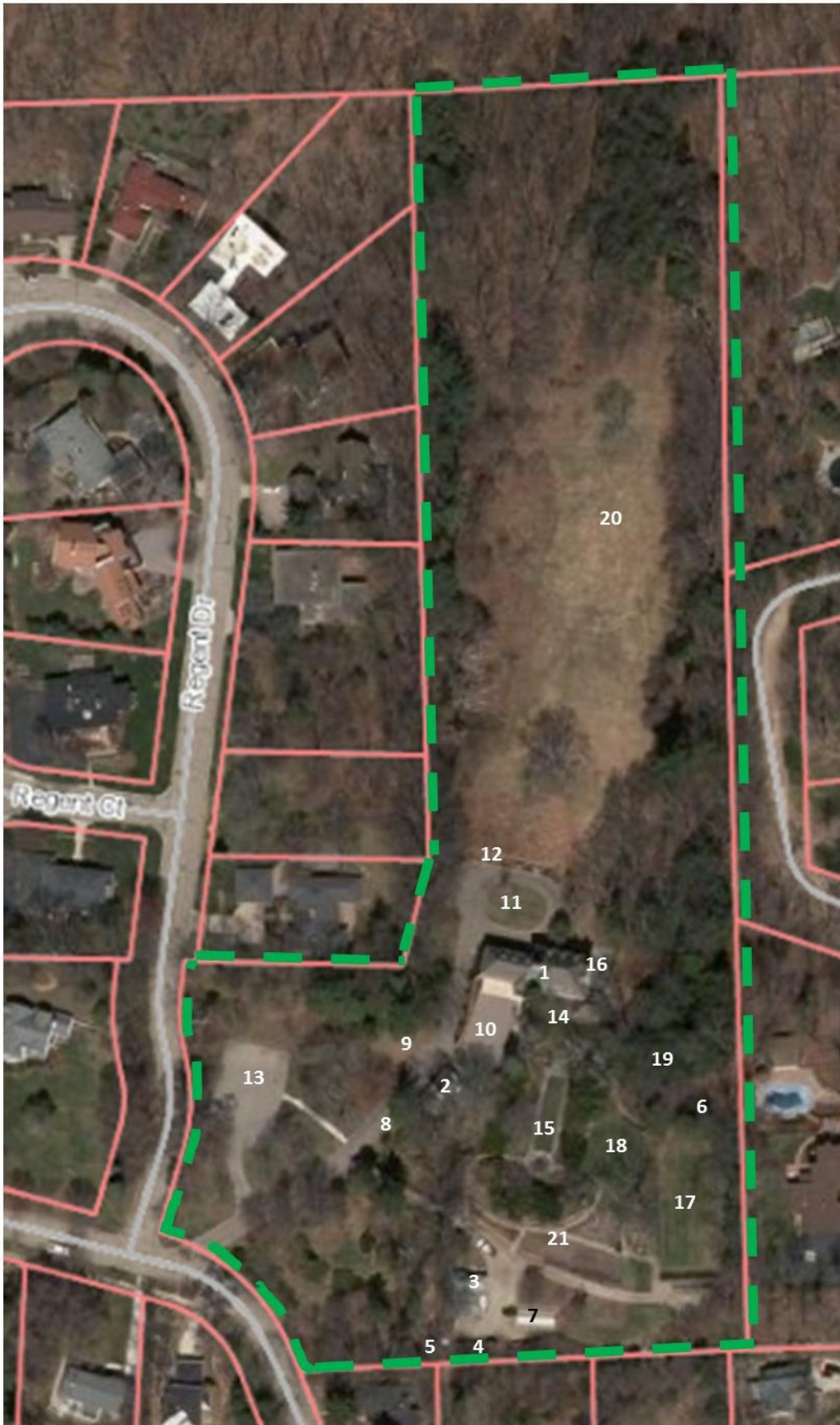


	Inglis House		Parkland
	Railroads		Other Open Space
	Tax Parcels		AA Public Schools
	University Owned Land		Huron River

--- District Boundary



Map Date: 7/20/2017  
 Any aerial imagery is circa 2015 unless otherwise noted.  
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KEY

- 1. Inglis House
- 2. Gardener's Cottage
- 3. Shop & Greenhouse
- 4. Garden Shed
- 5. Peacock House
- 6. Pumphouse
- 7. Coldhouse
- 8. Driveway
- 9. Drive landscapes
- 10. Interior parking court
- 11. Arrival court
- 12. Stone walls
- 13. Visitor parking lot
- 14. South lawn
- 15. Formal gardens
- 16. South terrace
- 17. Tennis lawn
- 18. Former orchard
- 19. Wild garden and fire-place
- 20. North lawn
- 21. Horticulture & service area

Inglis House Historic District

Site plan



 District Boundary