

**Front Avenue, N.W.**

Front Avenue was so named because it is along the west bank of the Grand River. It was reported in the Grand Rapids *Press* of Tuesday, November 28, 1950, that Front had just been made a one-way street northbound from Fulton to Webster.

21	09/04/84 No cutoff.	7279	Riverside
33-43	09/04/84 No cutoff.	7285	Riverside 45,000 square feet.
59			
69			
71-75-79	08/11/81 No cutoff.	7038	Riverside
93-99	03/06/79	5719	Neighborhood Improvement--Bierlein
121	11/06/80	6024	Riverside--Ford Museum Project
123-25			
133-47	03/27/81 Richards Manufacturing.	6052	Riverside--Ford Museum Project
201	02/09/79 34,500 square feet.	5697	Pitsch--Howell Gilbert One cutoff.
203	<i>Expert Die. Negative in GRPL, Robinson collection.</i>		
209	02/22/79 35,696 square feet.	5704	Pitsch--Howell Gilbert 2 cutoffs.
210 Front N.W.	Ah-Nab-Awen Park.		
227-31	04/20/79	5732	Neighborhood Improvement-- Howell Gilbert

301-25            03/06/79        5717            Neighborhood Improvement--Pitsch  
24,273 square feet. No cutoff.

327-29 Front N.W. The German-American School was a 2-story frame building constructed in 1868. In 1880, the family business of Joseph Jackoboice (1824-99), established in 1856, moved into the building, making steam engines and sawmill machinery. The business was named West Side Iron Works in 1898, and specialized in woodworking machinery. The firm, by then named Monarch Road Machinery Co., built a new plant at 1363 Michigan N.E. in 1954, and by the late 1970's had moved all of its operations there. The old schoolhouse, painted a bright red with white trim in its later years, was an obvious and picturesque survivor of the urban renewal taking place around it. When Front Avenue was vacated between Pearl and Bridge for the construction of the Gerald R. Ford Museum, many heated discussions took place about razing or relocating the historic schoolhouse. The matter was settled when on Wednesday, November 11, 1981, Veterans' Day, at 9:27 a.m., the building was damaged beyond repair by a fire of suspicious but undetermined origin. A plaque on a boulder in the north lot of the Ford Museum marks the location of the old schoolhouse. At its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2006, Monarch Hydraulics was the 80<sup>th</sup>-oldest family business in the nation, predating Annheuser-Busch and the Ford Motor Co.

327-29            05/07/82        7139            *Pitsch*  
*German-American Schoolhouse. Monarch Road Machinery.*

348-54            03/11/70        3419            *Moon Construction*  
*Voigt Milling Co.*

408-14	04/15/90	8033	
411	12/30/65	2087	Velting
415	08/22/68	2815	Capitol
417-19	02/12/90	8011	
421	07/27/89	7945	
423	07/27/89	7946	
425	03/01/61	262	Velting
429	03/01/61	261	Velting
430	01/30/90	8005	

Built as Germania Hall in 1886. Later the Fraternal Order of Eagles.

500-10 05/12/61

331

P & S

**501-19 Front N.W.** The Haven-Busch Co. Manufacturers of structural steel, ornamental iron work, doors, fencing, gates, guards, partitions, railings, stairs, vault doors, and wire mesh work. In 1912, this brick building on the northwest corner of Front and First was



the Belknap Wagon Co. (Old # 37-49. Photo: 1943, First St. elevation. A company truck is getting ready to move out with a large steel light pole, perhaps destined for a nearby rail yard. Photo courtesy of Edward Reitsma, 2056 N. Eventide Dr., N.E., August 7, 2006.)

501-19

05/12/61

332

P & S

520

08/01/61

432

Dore

**521 Front N.W.** 3-story, 6-unit brick apartment building. Photos in GRPL, MDOT collection Nos. 16047-16058. (Old # 57. Photo: Morrow postcard collection, c. 1913.)



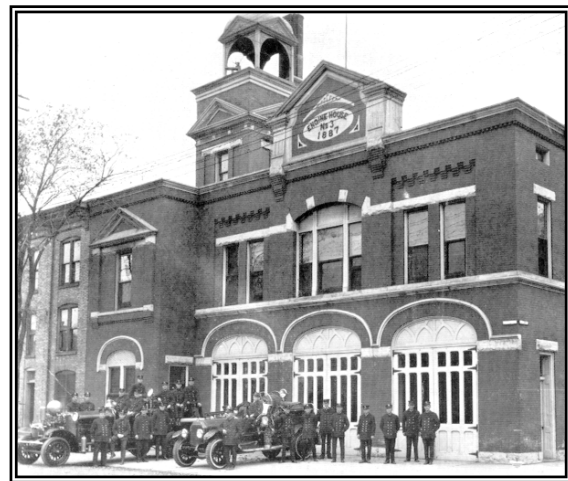
521

05/22/61

345

Dore

**523-29 Front N.W.** Engine House No. 3. Built 1887. Housed the Fire Department shops and blacksmith in the rear, off Second Street. Sold to State Highway



Department on August 23, 1960, for \$103,640; City Commission No. 10390. Station closed, June 4, 1961. Engine 3, Truck 3 moved to No. 8 Engine House. District Chief 3 moved to No. 9 Engine House. (Old # 61. Photos: left, *History, Grand Rapids Fire Department, 1844-1899*, p. 49; right, 1922 photo in *Grand Rapids Fire Department Centennial, 1950*, p. 99. )

523-29

06/13/61

370

Pitsch

524 09/27/62 1385 Kamminga & Roodvoets

530 09/27/62 1386 Kamminga & Roodvoets

537 Front N.W. Photos in GRPL, Lorensen collection and 125-HOO8652B, January 20, 1950. This house on the northwest corner of Second Street was built about 1846 with limestone quarried from the bed of the Grand River. It was the home of Ebenezer Anderson, who also constructed the city's first high school and the first streetcar line. In 1849 the house became the community's first library, with Anderson's daughter, Elizabeth, as the first librarian. In 1912 the resident was M.E. Anderson. The old house number was 73.

537 12/15/60 62 OK Wrecking

540 09/27/62 1387 Kamminga & Roodvoets

542 09/27/62 1384 Kamminga & Roodvoets

545 02/24/61 248 William G. Roodvoets

549 02/24/61 245 *William G. Roodvoets, Agent*

552-600 05/23/63 1580 *Kamminga & Roodvoets*  
*No sewer.*

553 02/24/61 242 William G. Roodvoets, Agent

556 11/02/61 602 Cooke

561 Front N.W. Photo: G.R. Real Estate Board file, November 4, 1959. The 1912 resident was Willis J. Perkins. The old house number was 95.

561 06/06/61 363 Capitol

562

570

600	03/27/92	8245	<i>Pitsch</i> <i>Fire Department training tower.</i>
606	09/10/87	7670	
606 Front N.W. Fish Ladder Park.			
609	02/06/61	224	<i>Pitsch</i>
611 Front N.W. Photo: 125-H008652E, January 20, 1950. These homes were the last reminder of the days when pioneer settlers recreated the architecture of their earlier Hudson River Valley homes on the wooded west bank of the Grand. The 1912 resident here was Michael Murphy. The old house number was 121.			
611	02/24/61	241	William G. Roodvoets, Agent
615	03/23/61	270	<i>Pitsch</i> <i>Partial photo in 125-H008652E.</i>
617	03/23/61	267	<i>Pitsch</i>
623	04/10/61	306	<i>Pitsch</i>
629-31 Front N.W. This vacant 2½-story frame dwelling was destroyed by fire on Saturday, May 21, 1966, at 1:48 a.m. It was owned by the Michigan State Highway Department.			
629-31	05/31/66	2182	<i>Jerry Cook</i>
632-34	02/26/65	1892	<i>Houting &amp; Meeusen</i> <i>No sewer.</i>



640-60            07/05/66        2201            Urban Renewal  
Shaw Building. Photo: GRPL, 125-H006039A.

641 Front N.W. Photos in GRPL, Lorensen collection and 125-H008652F, January 20, 1950. This house, built in 1846, stood on the northwest corner of Front & Fourth. The 1912 resident was Mrs. L. Martin. The old house number was 153. Mr. & Mrs. Law Valleau owned this house at the time of its purchase by the city for urban renewal. It was razed in 1966.

645                01/28/63        1520            Urban Renewal  
Church of God. Photo: GRPL, Lorensen collection.

651                10/20/62        1100            Capitol

657 Front N.W. *The Hebrew School was dedicated Sunday evening, June 23, 1918. A total of \$393 was raised at a mass meeting on Sunday, June 9, 1918, at Temple Beth Israel by those who submitted bids to participate in the new school's opening. Privileges of dedicating the building went to Samuel Solomon of 1116 Plainfield N.E., who bid \$300 for the honor of opening the auditorium and school. Charles Glaser of 236 Summer N.W. bid \$18 to raise the American flag on the school, and Mrs. Markowitz bid \$15 to raise the Zionist flag. Charles Belkin of 672 Fremont N.W. bid \$35 for the privilege of turning on the lights for the first time. A collection was taken up at the dedication for Jewish war relief.*

657                09/07/62        1381            Capitol

671 Front N.W. Photo: 125-H008652D, January 20, 1950. This great stuccoed mansion, built of river limestone blocks, stood on the southwest corner of Front & Fifth. It was originally the home of Boardman Noble, who built it in 1847. The 1912 residents were J.N. Kennedy and Mrs. H.A. Quine, indicating the house had already been divided into apartments. The old house number was 181.

671                09/07/62        1382            Capitol

672-74 voided        518              Capitol  
08/03/62        1289            Capitol  
Expert Die. Negative in GRPL, Robinson collection.

678                04/15/71        3845            Cooke

703	08/02/62	1324	Capitol
707	09/07/62	1379	Capitol
711	08/28/62	1353	Capitol
724-56	04/09/86	7488	Courtade
	55,000 square feet.		

731 Front N.W. The Eliphalet Turner House, built in 1846, is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style, although executed in stone.

741

743

750 Front N.W. Riverwalk Building. Allan Carlson built this 3-story building in 1988 for his security alarm business, Engineered Protection Service (EPS).

751

754

757	04/02/62	981	Capitol
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759	01/16/62	783	Capitol
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763-65	01/16/62	779	Capitol
	Photos: GRPL, 125-C011093 and 125-C035616.		

767	12/21/61	723	Capitol
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803-05	12/21/61	730	Capitol
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807	09/22/62	1383	Capitol
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811	02/15/62	904	Capitol
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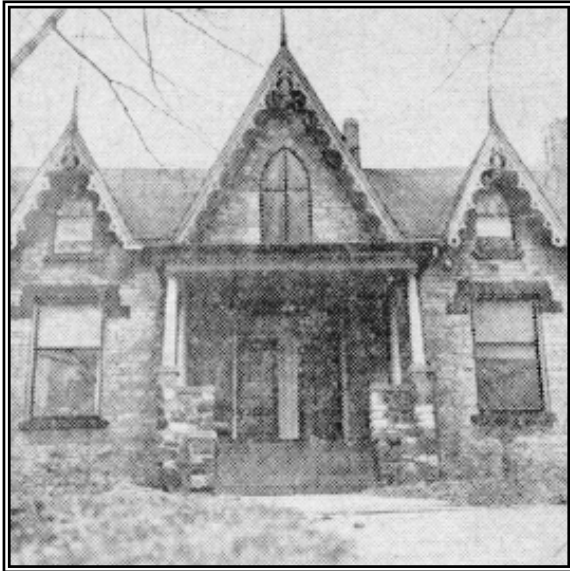
817	12/07/61	680	Capitol
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818-rear

825 Front N.W. Photo: R.E., February 24, 1960. This very plain frame house stood on the northwest corner of Front & Eighth. The 1912 resident was Mrs. C.E. Sawyer. The old house number was 285. It was the home of the Tursky family from 1919 to 1961.

825	12/26/61	754	Capitol
827	03/02/62	914	Capitol
830	05/09/73	4420	Pitsch
835	03/29/62	988	Capitol
839	01/31/62	862	Capitol
843	02/14/62	900	Capitol
847	12/07/61	679	Capitol
849	09/25/62	1415	Capitol
853	04/02/62	970	Capitol
855	11/30/61	644	Capitol
905	07/11/62	1259	Capitol
909	12/21/61	721	Capitol
911	07/10/62	1252	Capitol

**923 Front N.W.** Mrs. Arthur Kirkpatrick of 1340 Bridge N.W. was the owner of this triple-gabled cottage-style river limestone house when the city purchased it for urban renewal in 1961. Her father, Judge John W. Holcomb, a chronicler of early Grand Rapids, had owned and resided in the house for many years. The 1912 resident was Mrs. M.B. Holcomb. The house stood on the southwest corner of Front and Tenth. The old house number was 341. Photo in GRPL, Lorenson collection. (Photo: *Grand Rapids Press*, Sat., April 22, 1961.)



923

12/21/61

718

Capitol

933	09/27/62	1414	Capitol
939	07/11/62	1164	Capitol
940	11/13/62	1472	Urban Renewal--Capitol
944	04/01/63	1551	Urban Renewal
945	04/27/62	1088	Capitol
946	01/28/63	1519	Urban Renewal
949	12/06/62	1486	Capitol
950 Front N.W. Photo: R.E., September 24, 1953. This beautifully detailed house was vacant in 1912. (Old # 366.)			
950	01/17/66	2102	Urban Renewal
954-60	03/10/93	8327	<i>Bierlein (Saginaw, MI)</i> <i>James Bayne Co. 3-story commercial. Court-ordered demolition.</i>
955	12/06/62	1480	Capitol
959	05/27/62	1137	Capitol
967	12/22/61	747	Capitol
974	07/14/76	5124	Pitsch Chimney only.

1001	05/27/62	1139	Capitol
1005	08/07/62	1325	Capitol
1009	06/28/62	1210	Capitol
1017	03/26/62	932	Capitol

1019 Front N.W. Fire in a house at 1016 Scribner N.W. on Tuesday, May 22, 1962, at 2:17 p.m. caused \$8,000 exposure damage to this house, occupied by Adam Armijo. The house was owned by this time by the City of Grand Rapids. The fire spread to an unoccupied garage at 1017 Front N.W.

1019	07/06/62	1267	Capitol
1027	04/25/62	1079	Capitol
1033	04/13/62	944	Capitol
1041	04/01/63	1550	Urban Renewal
1042	08/03/62	1323	Capitol
1045	08/07/62	1306	Capitol
1046	09/26/62	1416	Capitol
1048-50	09/10/63	1645	Urban Renewal
1049			
1051	01/25/62	852	Capitol
1054			
1054-rear			
1056			
1059	05/14/62	1098	Capitol
1061	01/23/62	829	Capitol

1101	04/19/62	1064	Capitol
1103			
1104	10/23/62	1444	Capitol
1105	07/16/62	1244	Capitol
1108			
1109	03/07/62	922	Capitol
1111	04/17/62	1062	Capitol
1116			
1117	02/15/62	905	Capitol
1118	08/31/92	8293	Pitsch
	Modern Cement Products.		
1120			
1121	06/28/62	1211	Capitol
1124			
1127			
1129	06/28/62	1212	Capitol
1132	09/27/62	1396	Capitol--Urban Renewal
1133	07/30/62	1309	Capitol
	Front Avenue Gospel Chapel. Mission of Alpine Avenue Christian Reformed. Built in 1948.		
1134	09/27/62	1397	Capitol--Urban Renewal
1136	09/27/62	1398	Capitol--Urban Renewal
1137	01/16/62	784	Capitol
1138	09/27/62	1399	Capitol--Urban Renewal
1141	04/20/61	1063	Capitol
1142	09/25/62	1400	Capitol--Urban Renewal
1142-r	09/25/62	1401	Capitol--Urban Renewal

1144	09/27/62	1402	<i>Capitol--Urban Renewal</i>
1145	06/01/62	1138	Capitol
1148	09/27/62	1403	<i>Capitol--Urban Renewal</i>
1150	09/27/62	1404	<i>Capitol--Urban Renewal</i>
1152			



1211	08/30/61	481	Capitol
1213	08/30/61	482	Capitol
1214	10/25/62 City Market.	1466	Capitol
1216			
1217	08/30/61	483	Capitol
1219	11/01/61	567	Capitol
1220			
1223	08/30/61	484	Capitol
1227	08/30/61	485	Capitol
1228	03/23/62	971	Capitol
1230			
1232	08/30/61	477	Capitol
1233	08/30/61	486	Capitol
1236	11/01/61	565	Capitol
1237	11/01/61	568	Capitol
1238	08/30/61	476	Capitol
1239	10/24/61	553	Capitol
1243	01/10/62	782	Capitol
1245	08/30/61	487	Capitol
1249	11/01/61	569	Capitol
1252	11/30/61	636	Capitol
1253	08/30/61	488	Capitol
1258	05/23/62	1143	Capitol
1262	08/30/61	475	Capitol
1301	08/23/61	458	Capitol

*This was the home of Frank J. and Lucy A. Balulis and their family from about 1950 until 1961. The photo shows the family with the houses on the east side of Front in the background. Lucy and Frank are at the rear. Children from left to right are Harry, Nancy, Fran (in First Communion dress), Joy, Marilyn, and toddler Ruth.*



1309	08/23/61	459	Capitol
1312			
1313	11/01/61	564	Capitol
1315	01/24/62	797	Capitol
1319	08/23/61	460	Capitol
1321	10/24/61	552	Capitol
1325	05/14/62	1092	Capitol
1329	01/10/62	791	Capitol
1330-r	08/30/62	1292	Capitol
1331	08/23/61	461	Capitol
1336-46	08/30/61	474	Capitol
1339	06/01/62	1129	Capitol
1347	08/23/61	462	Capitol
1350	08/30/61	473	Capitol
1351	08/23/61	449	Capitol

1401	08/30/61	469	<i>Capitol</i>
1403			
1405	08/30/61	470	<i>Capitol</i>
1409	11/01/61	559	Capitol
1411	11/01/61	560	Capitol
1415	11/01/61	561	<i>Capitol</i>
1419	08/30/61	471	Capitol
1421	11/01/61	562	<i>Capitol</i>
1425	06/01/62	1134	<i>Capitol</i>

1430-1580 Front N.W. A rambling 3-story factory building long occupied this site on the east side of Front Avenue, from south of Webster Street north into what is now the Kent County Road Commission complex. A spur from the Grand Trunk R.R., later partly used by the County, ran along the river all the way behind this property nearly to Myrtle Street. In 1912, this was the Grand Rapids Hand Screw Co. and the Michigan Cabinet Co. From 1919-26, it was the Grand Rapids School Equipment Co.

1451 Front N.W. This 2-story red brick factory building housed the J. VanDuren & Co. broom factory in 1912. In 1919-26 it was the Globe Vise & Truck Co.