

September 14, 2009

Dear Commissioners,

I write to offer my opinion about the proposed expansion plans for 2021 Van Hise Avenue. I am the owner of 2010 Van Hise Ave., which faces the property in question, and have consulted with my neighbors about the scope and impact of the proposed expansion, plans which have been posted on the internet.

Let me say that I believe property owners should be able to modify their homes within reason in our area: modern families have needs that are different from those of families 70 or 80 years ago, which was when these homes were built. I would also like to say that, as a neighbor, I am reluctant to challenge or oppose the plans of those who have decided to join us in our neighborhood, since one of the virtues of our neighborhood is its welcoming spirit.

My neighbors, Larry and Linda, who live directly east of 2021 Van Hise will be presenting information at the hearing today about the character of Prairie architecture and its significance in University Heights. Their findings suggest that the expansion of the façade will make dramatic changes to the classic Prairie footprint and front of the property, and that this change would represent an architectural loss to the neighborhood. I have concerns about such a loss. In the spirit of cooperation, then, I would like propose that modifications be made to these plans in order to preserve the character of this important landmark – modifications that would reduce the total front-facing mass of the building onto Van Hise.

We live in a unique neighborhood, one that I prize for its conviviality and community spirit. When my family and I purchased our home last year on Van Hise, we were drawn to this quality of the neighborhood, and to the deliberate way in which expansions to the historical homes have been managed. Indeed, this considered approach to updating contributes to the value of all the homes in the area, which is partly what motivated us to purchase a home on this block.

I look forward to welcoming our new neighbors at 2021 and to seeing that all appropriate accommodations are made for their desire to expand their property.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Witmore
2010 Van Hise Ave.

Hello, I'm Lawrence Shriberg. My wife Linda and I have lived next door to 2021 Van Hise since 1976.

Linda and I are speaking on behalf of ourselves and for neighbors in the three other homes closest to 2021 Van Hise, known in historical context as the Sellery house. Two of our families have been residents on this 2000 block of Van Hise Avenue since the 1970s and the other two families have moved into the neighborhood within the past five years. We have met as a group and we have had individual discussions with several of the other four families on this block. Anecdotally, I can report that the views of the three neighbors with whom I was able to talk are similar to the views of the four families who have registered against the proposed expansion. These other neighbors are against this plan essentially for the same reasons my wife will present. It is important to underscore that the neighborhood welcomes new young families that give vitality to the neighborhood. We want to make it very clear that the concerns we have about the planned addition are based solely on architectural considerations.

On behalf of ourselves and our neighbors we thank the Landmark Commission for its very effective work in preserving the integrity of our historic neighborhood. As with so many residents, Linda and I have elected to stay in our home rather than relocate elsewhere in the Madison area precisely because of the architectural values the Commission seeks to preserve.

Our group also thanks our Alder, Shiva Bidar-Sielaff, who has provided her procedural guidance, and to the president of the Regent Neighborhood Association, Darsi Foss, for her support.

My wife will now present the collective concerns of the neighbors about the proposed expansion of 2021 Van Hise. These concerns are divided into two considerations: the proposed expansion in the historical context of prairie-style houses, and the proposed expansion in relation to physical characteristics of all other houses that comprise the 2000 block neighborhood of Van Hise Avenue.

Thank you,

Lawrence D. Shriberg
2015 Van Hise Avenue

Hello. My name is Linda Shriberg. My husband, Larry, and I live at 2015 Van Hise Avenue, the house directly east of, and the closest residence to the Sellery House, 2021 Van Hise Avenue. I represent ourselves and other neighbors on our block who are close to or who face the Sellery House. On behalf of all of us, I wish to thank Rebecca Cnare and Bill Fruhling for their review of the proposed plans to renovate and expand the Sellery House.

Now, I will make a brief presentation to communicate our views.

Individually and collectively, we had the perception that the proposed plans were not right for our neighborhood. In an effort to clarify these perceptions and register specific concerns, I took it upon myself to do some research about Prairie-style architecture and the history of the Sellery House.

In doing so, I identified online the building after which the Sellery House was constructed: the Schultz home in Winnetka, Illinois. The Schultz Residence was built in 1907. The Sellery House was built in 1910.

The Schultz Residence was designed by George W. Maher, a well-known architect who, with Frank Lloyd Wright and others, was a pioneer of the Prairie School of Architecture. The style is described in books of architecture, in the guide for the Walking Tour in the University Heights Historic District, and in Cnare's July 22nd *Note to the Madison Landmarks Commission*. Although the Sellery House was not itself designed by Maher, it is considered "one of the most individualistic Prairie School houses in University Heights" (Heggland & Rankin, *The University Heights Historic District: A Walking Tour*, 1987).

On Pages 1 and 2 in your packets, please find photographs of the Sellery House and the Schultz Residence and note how closely they resemble each other.

(For a picture of the Sellery House, see:

http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_xEJEWB9AclQ/Sph3KN1tfI/AAAAAAAAACHQ/HUA-eKg2k2M/s1600-h/11Sellery01.jpg

For a picture of the Schultz Residence, see:

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/34748725@N00/3675833705/sizes/l/ \)](http://www.flickr.com/photos/34748725@N00/3675833705/sizes/l/)

While conducting my research, I learned that an addition was made to the Schultz Residence in 2005 by TR Knapp Architects in Illinois. This was a one-story addition to the back of the house that cannot be seen from the front of the house, thereby preserving the view of the original façade. In fact, the addition and renovation was given the 2005 Historic Preservation Award by the Village of Winnetka. On Page 3 (http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_va5YQYKj0k8/SY3wSpKUzII/AAAAAAAAAF8/BB6ahugffFA/s1600-h/WarwickAfter.jpg), you can see a picture of that expansion and how compatible it is with the style of the original structure.

Because I could not see all parts of the Schultz addition from the photograph, I telephoned the architect, Tom Knapp, this past Friday morning to ask two questions:

- The first question pertained to the size of the expansion/addition. Mr. Knapp informed me that an existing bedroom was expanded, and a kitchen/breakfast room with a screened sun porch, a mudroom, and a powder room were added. Altogether, this came to about 1,200 square feet – just under the 1,500 square feet of living space that has been proposed for the two-story addition to the Sellery House.
- The second question asked if there is a garage on the property and, if so, where? Mr. Knapp told me that a driveway by the side of the Schultz Residence leads to an unattached garage in the back.

After comparing the original and remodeled Schultz Residence with Mr. Goddard's plans for the expansion and re-design of the Sellery House, our group of neighbors is now better able to articulate its concerns. We posit that the proposed plans for the additional two-story living space and the attached 2-car garage compromise the historical integrity of Prairie-style architecture for both the Sellery House and for our neighborhood. Our concerns primarily have to do with design and size that can be summed up in 2 considerations:

1. The proposed expansion of the façade doubles the length of the original façade. There is a two-story structure attached to the Schultz Residence. It is not clear whether that structure was part of the original residence (so integrated and compatible is it with the larger portion of the house), or whether it was added on some years later. Whatever the case, the façade of that structure appears to be about 25% of the size of the original façade – significantly smaller than the proposed living space and garage addition to the Sellery House which would that façade twice the size of the existing facade. The Sellery House has been the anchor of Prairie-style houses for our block and on the Walking Tour in University Heights. Your packets include pictures of four other Prairie-style houses that are on the Walking Tour; the addresses and years of construction of the houses are indicated. We note that none of these houses has had extensive changes to their facades, nor do they have attached surface-level 2-car garages.
2. Your packet includes pictures of seven houses closest to the Sellery House on the 2000 block of Van Hise Avenue, four on the south side and three on the north side. House S1 is adjacent to the Sellery House. The photographs provide a comparison between the sizes, facades, and garage/driveway configurations of these other houses on this block in comparison to the current Sellery House and to its proposed expansion. We also are furnishing the committee with one set of colored photographs that provide additional information on some of the houses near the Sellery House.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Shriberg

14 September 2009




Selley House

FRONT VIEW OF HOUSE

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Schultz Residence



Achultz Residence Expansion/Renovation

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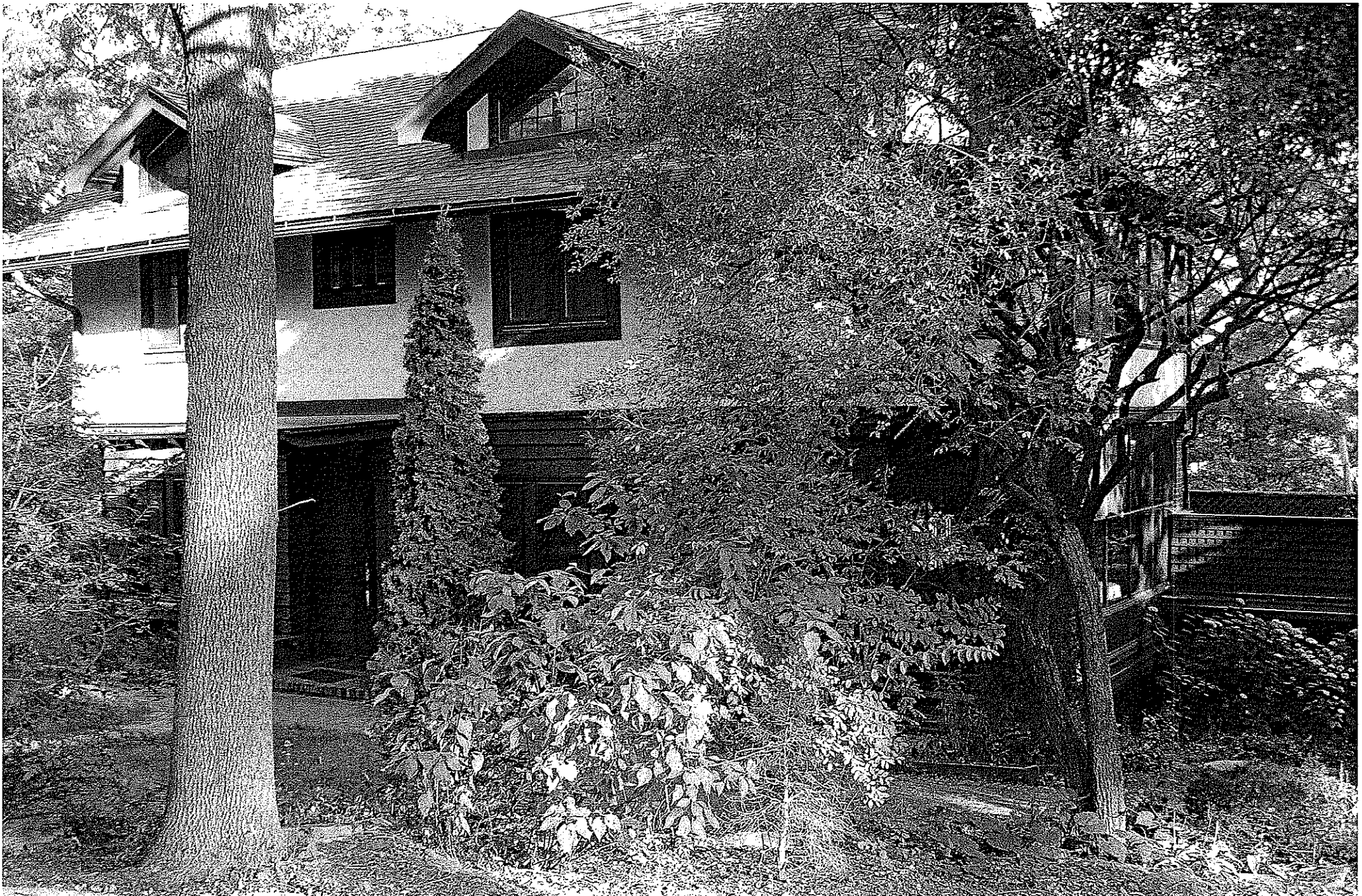
1713 Chadbourne



1717 Summit



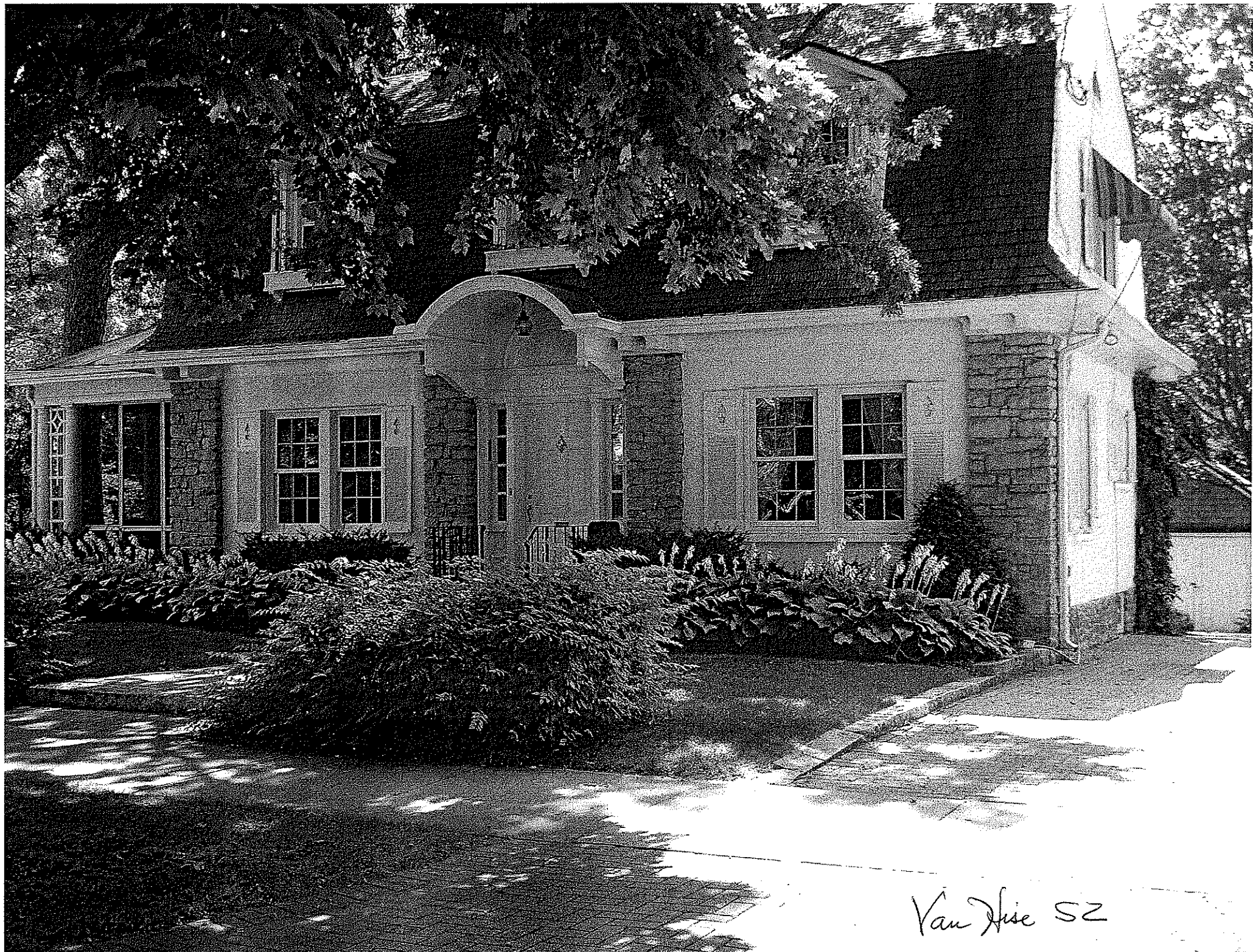
2017 Kendall



2014 Chamberlain



VanHise St



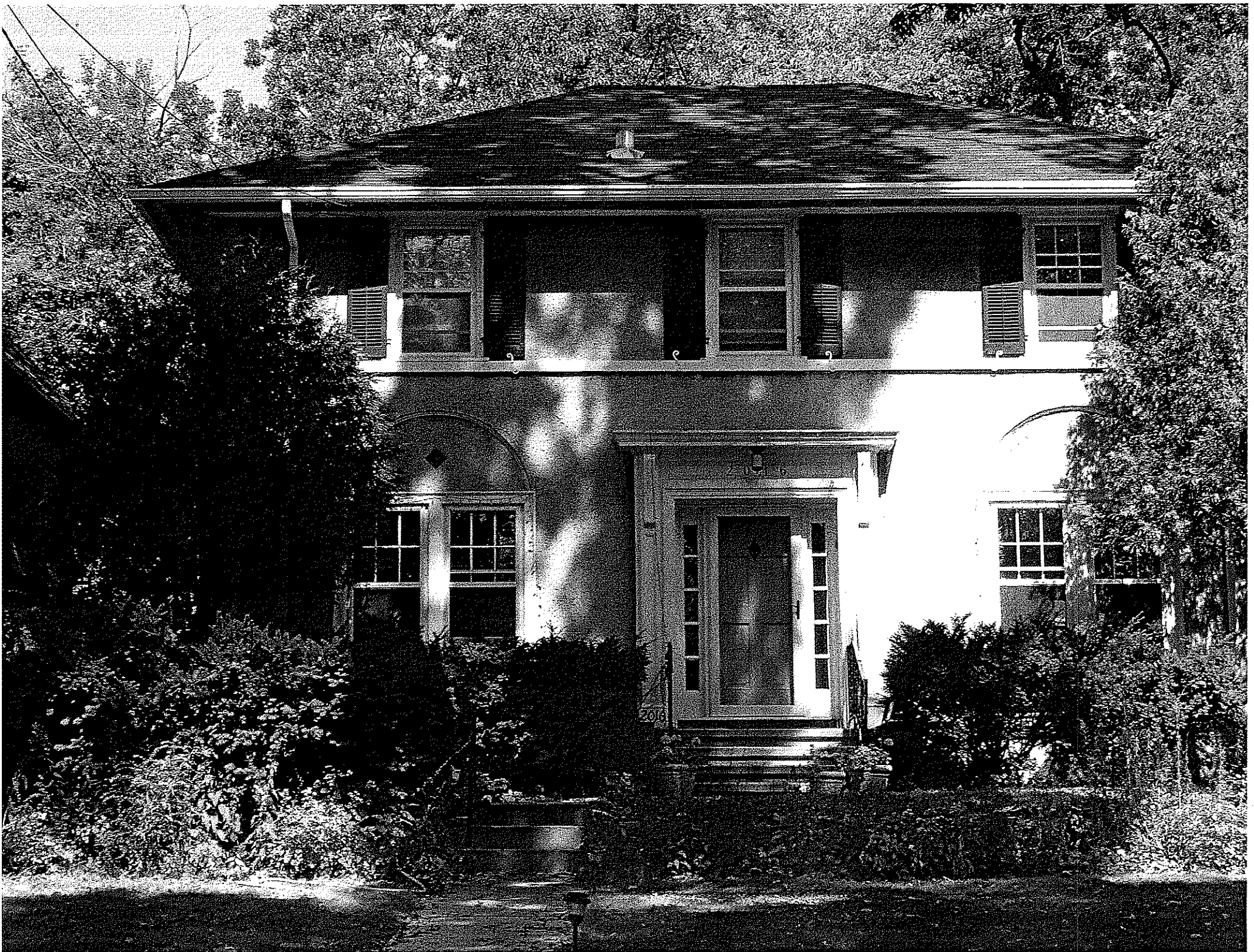
Van Hise SZ



Van Hise SB



Van Hise 54



Van Hise #3 N1



Van Hise NR



Van Nise N3