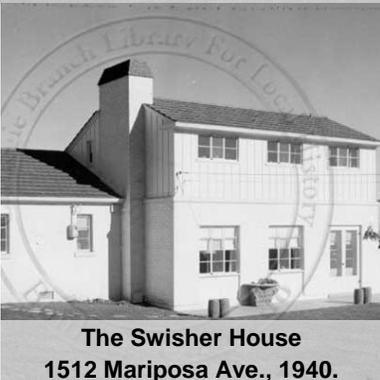
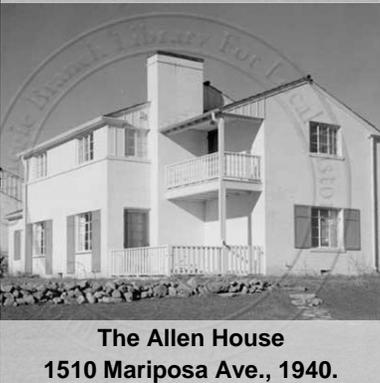
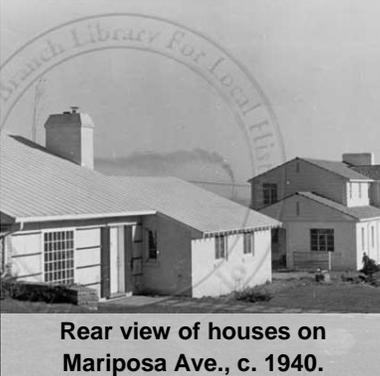
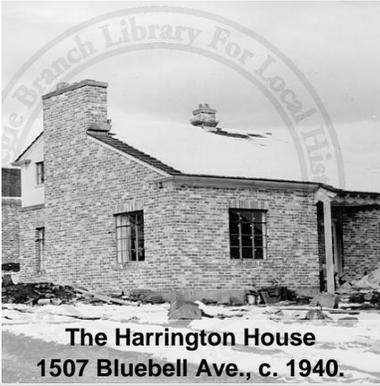


# Floral Park Historic District

## Designated in 1978



Floral Park was designated as Boulder's first historic district in 1978 – only 39 years after its development. The land was initially platted by David Dobbins in 1906, who named the area in honor of his wife, Flora. In 1939, the one-block area was purchased by eight University of Colorado professors who each acquired one of the properties with the intention to create a privately owned community housing project hired local architect James Hunter to design the project. The residences represent the first planned-unit development in the state and preceded all other similar developments in Colorado by at least 30 years. A newspaper article described the development as a collection of houses that “all face on a common court, which [was] landscaped to provide a large garden and recreation facilities.” The group acquired approval from the City of Boulder to vacate the alleyways, while a drawing was held to decide who would own which lot. At the same time, an easement was obtained from each family for the creation of the central commons area.

Architect James M. Hunter, then employed by the G. H. Huntington architectural firm was hired to design the houses and the project aroused such a great deal of curiosity during its construction that traffic on weekends was often bumper-to-bumper along Mariposa Avenue. According to James Hunter, many of Boulder's citizens associated "communist overtones" with the project and it was sometimes referred to as the “Red Square.” The original eight families even created a set of “working rules” which outlined the boundaries and intent of the common space, and they agreed not to alter the exterior of the houses to an extent that would jeopardize the architectural unity of the place. The concept behind this Floral Park development was certainly a novelty for its time.

The district today includes the original eight houses and the community garage. The one-block district is bounded by 15<sup>th</sup> street, Mariposa Ave., 16<sup>th</sup> St., and Bluebell Ave. The district's period of Significance is 1939-1940, when the houses were constructed.



## Historic District Highlights

- All eight houses were built using an adaptation of the Monterey Revival architectural style. The residences are a mix of one-story, one and one-half story, and two-story brick and frame construction.
- Some of the white painted brick walls include salvaged brick from the recently demolished State Preparatory School, the predecessor of the current Boulder High School building.
- The planned interior courtyard included a shared detached one-story parking garage.
- Hunter took six months to complete his design for the eight residences and commons landscaping plan. He described the architecture as being drawn from a variety of sources - "the roof slope was in the style of the University buildings, while detailing was culled from Williamsburg, and molding was in the Colonial style."
- Hunter retired from active practice in 1973 and died in 1983 at the age of 73. He lived much of his life in the residence he designed for himself and his family at 1505 Mariposa Avenue – which is located directly across the street from the Floral Park Historic District.
- Upon completions of the houses in 1940, the original eight families created a “gentlepersons’ agreement” that reaffirmed boundaries and rules. Today, homeowners continue to abide by these rules in addition to the City of Boulder Design Guidelines.



**The Allen House,  
1510 Mariposa Ave., 2013.**



**View into the Commons, 2013.**



**The Community Garage, 2013.**



**The Harrington House,  
1507 Bluebell Ave., 2013.**



City of Boulder  
Floral Park Historic District  
Encompasses the block bounded by Bluebell Ave.,  
15th St., Mariposa Ave., and 16th St.

Changes to designated properties including individual landmarks and those located within historic districts require review and approval through a Landmark Alteration Certificate. The alterations must meet the City of Boulder’s *General Design Guidelines* and district-specific guidelines, if applicable. For more information please visit [www.floralparkboulder.weebly.com](http://www.floralparkboulder.weebly.com), the city’s website at [www.bouldercolorado.gov/historic-preservation](http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/historic-preservation), or contact:

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Information provided by [www.floralparkboulder.weebly.com](http://www.floralparkboulder.weebly.com), Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board Memorandum dated Sept. 21, 1977, the Daily Camera, and by the Boulder Carnegie Library for Public History.