

**FINAL  
HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT  
KEPPEL'S VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
CITY OF HOLLAND, MICHIGAN**

**Keppel's Village Study Committee  
Final Report  
May 26, 2010**



- Nearly identical construction of six remaining structures;
- Canted Brick Windows;
- Veneklassen Brick;
- Location close to Centennial Park, Hope College, Downtown;
- Association with Teunis Keppel a founding father of the City of Holland and the direct connection via inheritance to a daughter of the Albertus C. Van Raalte.
- Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics and planning in the City of Holland.

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**May 26, 2010 Executive Summary:**

The Keppel's Village Study Committee (KVSC) Final Report which follows is a culmination of review and research by staff, the committee and an intern during the fall of 2009. The KVSC unanimously concluded to recommend to Holland City Council that the seven identified as the Keppel's Village Historic District be designated as a local historic district. This district would include six contributing properties and one non contributing property.

In accordance with the provision of Michigan State statute P.A. 169 the KVSC completed and transmitted the preliminary study committee report and noticed a public hearing on April 22, 2010. At this public hearing no property owners were present, no written correspondence was received. At the close of this public hearing, although not required by statute; property owners would be noticed a second time of the Planning Commission's meeting on May 11, 2010 when the KVSC report would be on the agenda and PC would be asked for support of the proposal for district designation. Again no property owner was present nor was any written communication received from any of the property owners. The next step in this process is for consideration of the district designation by City Council.

In addition to local public hearings staff at the State Historic Preservation Office in Lansing reviews the report to assure there is adequate support to recommend historic designation and compliance with the regulations of the Michigan State statute. One comment from staff at the SHPO was received. This comment noted the presence of specific foliage and trees on the property and questioned if these plantings would be plotted as historic landscape features on the district map. The KVSC responded that the local ordinance does not regulate planting of this nature and the features would not be specifically mapped in this document.

Members of the KVSC recognize opposition to historic district designation exists and generally property owner's object to infringement of their property rights; fear of increase cost of maintenance or increase in property taxes and the additional layer of approval by the historic district commission. It is true that review according to the local historic district guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation is required for exterior alterations but not ordinary maintenance of the property. Advantages in the long term of historic district designation will protect the unique architectural and historical characteristics of the properties that stand as a testament to the history of Holland. Approaching the properties for the long term indicates they can continue to share their unique features and be a part of the vital fabric of the central city. The KVSC urges City Council to designate the properties as a historic district.

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**Final Report Submitted to City Council May 26, 2010**

**Charge of the Historic District Study Committee**

The Historic District Study Committee was appointed by the Holland City Council on October 21, 2009, pursuant to the Holland City Code of Ordinances Article XV Historic Districts and Historic District Commission, as amended. The Historic District Study Committee is a standing committee charged with conducting the duties and activities of a study committee on a short-term basis. These duties include conducting an inventory of resources, research and preparation of a preliminary historic district study committee report for a proposed historic district.

The Keppel's Village Historic District is located within the City of Holland's, National Register Holland Historic District Addition (nomination May 15, 1989) although these structures were not included under the protection of a local district previously. The structures are very distinct as each was built of Veneklassen brick, locally manufactured in West Michigan. Each structure also has the unique feature of a canted window in the side front façade of the structure. As six of the original seven identically constructed structures remain in good condition it is important to identify and designate the architectural and historical character of the houses in the City of Holland. Protection under a local historic district will retain exterior character defining features of these historical structures as detailed herewith.

**Study Committee Members**

*Monica Donnelly*, Community volunteer. Monica served for six years on the Historic District Commission and chaired the Washington Boulevard Historic District Study Committee. She attended the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions conference in Pittsburg in 2002 and attended numerous Michigan Historic Preservation Network conferences over the past decade. Monica resides in a beautifully preserved Italianate home on the prominent Washington Boulevard in the district where she has also created an infamous master Victorian garden.

*Derek Emerson*, is the Director of Events and Conferences at Hope College and was raised in Holland. He is currently the city of Holland representative on the Tulip Time Board of Directors. In addition to his undergraduate degree from Hope College, he received a Masters in Professional Writing from Western Michigan University. He and wife chose to move their family into a very old home which will keep them busy for years to come.

*Jim McKnight*, resides in the Holland Historic District and is currently serving on both the Historic District Commission; most recently as past chairman, and as a member of the Planning Commission of the City of Holland. Jim is a neighborhood advocate. Professionally Jim is an

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engineer and designer and currently is the director of special services at the Michigan Works Program for the State of Michigan.

*Jay Peters*, has been in public service for over twenty years. Jay is a native of Holland, matriculated from Hope College and began his volunteer service with the Historic District Commission serving as Chairman; lead a committee to secure the coveted All America City award for Holland in 1996, served on the Planning Commission and most recently was elected to City Council. Jay resides in the district and is a voice for neighbors, planning, sustainability, safety, culture and preservation.

*Deb Sterken*, has been active in community affairs for many years including chairing the committee to plan and construct Friendship House, a caring housing community located at Western Theological Seminary. Deb serves on the board of HomeCor, a local non-profit that assists very low income homeowners with home rehabilitation, including replacement of major appliances. Deb and her family reside in the historic home of John Cappon, President of the Cappon Bertsch Leather Company.

*Harv Vanden Bosch*, is a registered architect and has been interested in preservation for many years. A past member of the Historic District Commission, Harv and his wife at retirement moved twenty blocks closer to downtown to live a walking lifestyle in the central city neighborhood near Hope College and directly across the street from Keppel's Village.

*Leanne Van Dyk*, is the current Chairman of the Holland Historic District and is passionate about the walking community and how preservation plays a key role in healthy communities and healthy lifestyles. When Leanne is not volunteering she is the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs-Professor of Reformed Theology at Western Theological Seminary in Holland.

### **Name of the Proposed District**

Keppel's Village Historic District was named for the developer of this tract of homes, Teunis Keppel who was a compatriot of the founder of the City of Holland, Albertus Van Raalte. This was also the popular name given to this row of houses as reported in the *Ottawa County Times* at the time the houses were built.

### **Proposed Boundaries of the Historic District**

The proposed district is within Section 29, Town 5 North, Range 15 West, Block 58 of the Plat of the Village (sic) of Holland. The District consists of platted lots 1, 2 and 10 of block 58, the original plat of the village of Holland plus lot 9 except the west 10 feet, or Property Parcel Numbers: 70-16-29-379-006, 70-16-29-379-009, 70-16-29-379-010, 70-16-29-379-011, 70-16-29-379-012, 70-16-29-379-013. The proposed district is better described as the lots fronting the

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west side of Central Avenue between 13<sup>th</sup> Street and 14<sup>th</sup> Street as well as the first lots to the west of these lots on the same block on both 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> streets. The district includes the lot on the northeast corner of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue that is occupied by a duplex constructed in 1966. The proposed district boundaries are shown on the attached map.

**Boundary Justification**

The proposed boundary includes the six remaining houses constructed for Teunis Keppel and known as Keppel's Village. The boundary includes the site of the seventh house which is no longer standing since it was destroyed by fire. All six brick houses are on adjacent lots, four of the six facing Central Avenue, one house faces 14<sup>th</sup> Street and is adjacent to the others at the side and rear. The sixth house faces 13<sup>th</sup> Street and is adjacent to the others at the rear of the lot.

The Keppel's Village Historic District is located within the City of Holland's, National Register Holland Historic District Addition (nomination May 15, 1989). The properties are just outside of and not included within the City's Historic District addition as established in 1994. This portion of the City was laid out in the classic grid pattern. The west side of the block, within which the district is proposed, fronts on a primary artery street with intermixed commercial-residential-institutional buildings.

The City's established historic district east of River Avenue ends at the northeast corner of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue and extends west through the middle of the block to the north and then the boundary turns south across River Street a half block to the west. The area proposed for the Keppel's Village Historic District is two blocks south of Centennial Park and the immediate neighborhood is primarily residential with some small-scale commercial intermixed as well as community institutional uses such as churches and public buildings. The area's variety in size, scale and architectural styles contributes to the heterogeneous character of the neighborhood.

The cultural resources of the Keppel's Village District consist primarily of six nearly identical, two-story brick houses, four of which are built on adjacent lots facing Central Avenue on the west side of Central Avenue and two houses placed symmetrically around the corners facing 13<sup>th</sup> Street on the north side of the block and 14<sup>th</sup> Street on the south side of the block. There is one non-contributing house on the corner of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue that was constructed in 1966 in place of the original brick house that was destroyed by fire. The six houses are the survivors of seven that were all constructed between 1890 and 1896 using the same design or the reverse of that design. These houses appear to have been an early attempt to provide affordable housing for small shop keepers, business managers, artisans and skilled workers.

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The architecture of the buildings themselves reflects significant influence from the community's Dutch cultural heritage. Of particular note is the use of bricks from the Veneklassen brick company, a local institution and the primary source of brick for construction within fifty miles of Holland.

### **Inventory**

A photographic inventory of the proposed district was conducted in October and November of 2009. Copies of the inventory are located at the City of Holland Community and Neighborhood Services Department in City Hall, and at Eastern Michigan University Department of Geography and Geology, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

### **List of Architectural Resources**

Basic description of the primary resources which include details common to all the buildings:

All six of these houses were built to either an identical plan or a reverse of that plan.

Exterior:

Each house has a brick foundation extending approximately three feet below grade to a concrete footing with in a Michigan basement (generally defined as – A former crawl space which has been dug out, generally to a depth of 5 to 7 feet to allow a basement). The excavation begins approximately 2 feet in from the inside of the existing foundation walls in order to preserve the soundness of the existing foundation walls and footings. The foundation extends upward to a water table composed of three corbelled rows of brick. Within the water table are basement windows and often an exterior below grade door at the rear of the building. There is always one basement window centered in the façade, one below the bay, one in the end of the “L” wing, one in each side of the rear wing and two in the end of the rear wing.

The two-story portion of each building has a facade gable and is L-shaped with a very short, protruding two foot, “L” wing on the side opposite of the porch. There is one first-floor window in this wing and two second-floor windows. The façade has one wide central window on the first floor with a similar window directly above on the second floor. The façade has two angled corners on either side of the first floor with a window. These two windows each have a

corbelled corner arch above to square off the second floor. The front porch roof often obscures this corbelling on one side. The porches all have a flat roof with a short, five-foot high door from the sidewall of the second floor. The main door to the house is parallel to the façade at the rear of the porch and enters the single-story side gallery which extends back to a large rear, single-story wing. Just past the porch there is a cant sided one-story bay with corbelling at the top of the side walls forming brackets to support a square side gable roof, which return back to

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the main wall of the two-story portion of the house in a T shape. Above the single-story roof, there are two square windows in the main wall of the building. To the rear of the first floor bay there are usually two windows. Usually the rear wall of the building has two windows bracketing a central door and often a basement door off-set to one side below one of the windows. There is also a window off-set to one side in the gable end single story attic. The remaining side wall of the one-story rear wing usually has two windows.

Each exterior door and window has a soldier brick arch flush to the wall and each window has a protruding concrete or limestone sill. The first and second floor window frames are square with fine inset ornamental leaf and vine detailing in the frame head. The basement windows are sets of three, square eight by eight-inch ribbon windows. The house windows are typically one over one with the upper sash being square and the lower sash being three times the height of the upper sash. The two façade windows and the bay window are about one-third wider than the rest of the windows in the house. Originally the front door and the second floor door to the porch roof each had two arch-topped lights in the upper half. Details of each porch vary considerably from house to house. Virtually all exterior windows on the first and second floors have been fitted with aluminum storm windows. The basement windows often still retain their original wood frame storms.

### Interiors

Basically, from the front porch, there is a square twelve by twelve-foot entry hall with a bay window. Immediately to the interior side of the entry door is a parlor measuring twelve feet deep by fifteen feet wide, located in the façade. To that same side of the entry hall, extending into the "L" wing is a ten by fourteen-foot bedroom. Directly back from the entry hall, is a dining room measuring about twelve by twelve. Continuing to the rear of the house is a kitchen; originally this must have measured about twelve feet deep by twenty-four feet wide. To the side of the dining room is another twelve by twelve bedroom. There is no consistency between the houses as to the location of the stairways to the second floor or basement. The second floor usually consists of a hall at the top of the stairway with a ten by twelve bedroom to one side and a large twelve by fifteen bedroom in the façade end over the parlor. There was originally an attic above the single-story rear portion of the house with one window.

Only the entry hall, front parlor and dining room have any fine woodwork. There is usually a three-piece baseboard with ornamental quarter-turned or three-quarter turned corner beads extending about two feet above the baseboard at each corner. In these rooms the door and window casings have ornate square rosettes in each corner. The remainder of the woodwork throughout the house is plain and narrow with mitered corners.

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Originally there was a plaster arch between the front hall and the front parlor. The floors in the three entry rooms appear to be a course-grained hardwood. The remainder of the flooring seems to have been pine. The front porch ceilings are one-inch beaded boards. Upon inspection very few of the window sashes are original. Most appear to have been replaced after 1950.

Individual Description of Each Resource:

Central Avenue (formerly Market Street), north to south, west side only:

318 Central Avenue; is unique in that the first floor of the south wing has two windows; the western window is typical while the eastern window is square with small three over one panes. On the north elevation, the dining room has two windows side-by-side. The vinyl sided porch on the northeast corner has craftsman style three over one windows. This building is contributing (photos 0513, 0514) but an aluminum sided porch has been added to the west elevation that is not contributing. This rear porch has four sets of awning windows across the west elevation, two sets on the south elevation, and this addition overlaps the side of the main building so that there is a set of aluminum awning windows facing east.

The two-car pyramid roof garage in the northwest corner of the lot was built after 1902 but before 1948 and is also contributing. (photo 0516) The garage has eight-inch cedar siding and is painted white. This structure has three simple square windows and a side door. The main garage door is an overhead type replacement.

This lot features a row of shrubs and small trees along the rear lot line. There is a street tree between the sidewalk and the curb and a couple of smaller trees along the lot-line between this house and 324 Central Avenue.

324 Central Avenue; this building has a stucco sided porch on the northeast corner. The porch windows are one-over-one aluminum storms. There is a chimney to the west of the bay on the north elevation. A large fifteen by ten-foot shed dormer has been added to the west elevation of the second story on the south side of the roof peak. This dormer has two modern windows and appears to have eight-inch cedar siding painted white. A cement porch with a simple wood railing has been added to the south elevation for a door. This door was cut into the wall half-way through the western most side window. Part of the window brick-work is still visible in the wall. The original rear door in the west

elevation has been sided over with vinyl siding within the door frame. The entry to the basement stair is in the west elevation to the north of the former door opening. The building is contributing (photos 0511, 0512).



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This lot features two large maple trees along the west lot line and a large walnut on the south lot line and about 30 feet from the sidewalk. There is also an ornamental tree to the south of the facade porch steps.

330 Central Avenue; this building is the only one of the six that appears to have retained its original window sashes. These are heavily painted and do not appear to open. A unique aspect of this building is the set of three side-by-side windows for the dining room in the south elevation to the west of the bay. This building has a craftsman style brick porch on the southeast corner. This porch is constructed of wire-cut dark red brick and was modified after 1910. The porch has eight three-over-one windows on the south elevation and two either side of the door on the porch facade. There is a wood frame porch on the west façade that was added after 1902 but before 1948. The building is contributing (photos 0506, 0507, and 0509). A shed dormer has been added to the roof of the single story section of the north elevation attached to the rear of the second story. This non-contributing addition measures about ten by ten and has a single small modern window off-set on the north side. The vinyl siding is parallel to the roof line.

The lot has a two-stall, pyramid roof, wood-frame garage in the northwest corner that was built after 1902 but before 1948. This building has a mixture of windows. The original windows appear to have been three rows of two, with the individual pains measuring about six by six inches. One of the windows has been replaced by a single pain. This structure is also contributing. (photo 0510, 0608).

This lot features two street trees between the sidewalk and the curb as well as one large maple on the south lot line about half way back and one large tree on the west lot line near the southwest corner.

334 Central Avenue; this building is unique in that instead of a single window in the south wall for the dining room there is a set of two windows in one opening and there is also a similar pair for the kitchen in the south elevation. As with 330, this building has a craftsman style brick porch on the southeast corner. The foundation and four support columns are constructed of dark red, wire-cut brick and appear to have been constructed after 1914. The windows are one-over-one similar to the house windows but there are two sets of four windows on the south wall and on the façade of the porch there are two such windows to the north of the door and one to the south. A brick garage constructed identically in detail and brick type and color, to the original house was added after 1902

but prior to 1948. The two windows in the north elevation in particular match the brick detail of the house. However, the lower bricks in the wall, particularly abutting the house, are spalling. A wood frame, vinyl sided addition has been added to the west elevation of

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the garage after 1948. The small square windows in the second floor above the bay have been replaced with white vinyl siding.

A long wood frame porch was added to the west elevation after 1902 but before 1948.

This porch has a foundation of the same dark red, wire-cut brick as the front porch.

However, the siding is vinyl. The windows in this porch are tall narrow two over two, there being two in the north elevation, five in the west elevation and two in the south elevation of the porch. This building is contributing. (photos 0501, 0502, 0504)

This lot features several shrubs close to the house on the south elevation and one to the west of the garage. There are two flush-cut stumps in the south side yard between the house and the street and there is a large maple between the sidewalk and 13<sup>th</sup> Street about ten feet back from the corner of Central Avenue.

West 13<sup>th</sup> Street, south side

12 W. 13<sup>th</sup> Street; this building has a craftsman style wire-cut, dark red brick porch on the northeast corner that was constructed after 1914. The southern-most window in the east elevation of the first floor has been shortened to allow for an interior kitchen sink. The brickwork was re-done in a professional manner duplicating the masonry of the house. The window on the opposite wall (west elevation) has been boarded over and covered with vinyl siding. This structure is contributing. (photos 0517, 0520).

A two-stall, wood frame, pyramid roof garage in the southwest corner of the lot was constructed prior to 1902 and is contributing. (photos 0521, 0606)

This lot features a large maple between the sidewalk and the street near the east lot line and another large maple on the east lot line about 25 feet south of the sidewalk. To the south of this tree are two evergreens and a row of lilacs.

West 14<sup>th</sup> Street, north side

11 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street; this building is unique among the six in that the mortar was not colored to match the brick. Another aspect of the building is the three side-by-side one-over-one windows in the east elevation at the north end for the kitchen as well as a basement door opposite in the west elevation. Additionally, the remnants of a wood porch on the southeast corner are in very poor condition. There are four posts, on concrete piles, that may or may not be original and no decking has survived. The entry has a small concrete landing with steps. The porch roof is in danger of collapse and additional four-by-fours have been used to stabilize the structure. The wood porch on the north elevation was added after 1902 but before 1948. This structure is contributing. (photos 0495, 0496, 0497 and 0498). Virtually all of the windows in this building have been replaced by

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modern one-over-one sashes. The few remaining original sashes are in extremely poor condition. All of the exterior doors have also been replaced.

A one-stall, wood frame, hipped-roof garage was built after 1902 but before 1948. There is a side door in the east elevation and a window with three rows of two panes also in the east elevation. This building is contributing. (photo 0499)

There is a concrete foundation wall in the northeast corner of this lot, parallel to the street and parallel with the facade of the garage. This foundation is about twelve feet long; eight inches wide flush to the grade. It is unattested in any of the Sanborn maps therefore its function is unknown. This property features the only topography in the district. There is a one-foot drop from the flush foundation to the north.

**Non-Contributing Resource**

314 Central Avenue/6 W. 13<sup>th</sup> Street; this is a wood frame, one-story ranch duplex built in 1966.

The duplex was construed to replace the original Veneklassen brick house that was destroyed by fire. It has a pyramid roof with off-set attached garages on the west end and southeast corner. (photo 0615 This structure replaced the brick Queen Anne built by Oosting for Keppel in 1891. That house was built to the same plan as the houses at 318 and 324 Central as well as the house at 11 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street. This property was inherited by Christine Oggel (grand-daughter of Albertus Van Raalte) and in 1894 was occupied by Albert Keppel, clerk at Keppel and Sons. From 1897 to about 1902 the original house was occupied by Bastien D. Keppel, Albert's older brother, while he was serving as Ottawa County Sheriff. Oggel sold the house about 1911. The property is now in the proposed Keppel's Village historic district as it was constructed outside of the period of significance of the district as a contemporary addition. However it does sit between two contributing structures and was the location of the seventh Veneklassen brick house in this group. The lot itself is related to the historic event of the establishment of Keppel's Village (being the location of the first house) and was occupied by locally historic persons (the Keppel brothers).

**Contributing and Non-Contributing Resource Count**

The proposed Keppel's Village Historic District contains twelve resource, ten contributing historic and two non-contributing non-historic resources. 83% of the properties in the district are contributing to the Keppel's Village Historic District.

12 W. 13<sup>th</sup> Street:

brick house - contributing

wood garage – contributing

314 Central Avenue:

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wood house - non-contributing

318 Central Avenue:

brick house – contributing

wood garage – contributing

324 Central Avenue:

brick house – contributing

330 Central Avenue:

brick house – contributing

wood garage – contributing

334 Central Avenue:

brick house – contributing

11 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street:

brick house – contributing

wood garage – contributing

concrete wall - non-contributing

Contributing – six brick houses and four wood garages

Non-contributing – one wood house and one concrete wall

### **History of the Proposed District**

This proposed district is significant to Holland's architectural and historical record, and represents an important element in the physical and cultural development of the city.

### **General History of Holland**

Holland, Michigan was settled by immigrants from The Netherlands led by the Reverend Albertus C. Van Raalte. A conservative in religious matters, Van Raalte joined those who had seceded in 1834 from the state church of the Netherlands, the Dutch Reformed Church, because of its increasingly liberal theology. The seceders suffered considerable social and religious persecution and large numbers of them chose to immigrate to the New World. In 1846 the Rev. Van Raalte led a body of seceders to found a church oriented colony in America.

Arriving in New York on December 17, 1846 they proceeded westward settling in Holland, MI in February 1847. By the end of 1848 about 4000 Dutch immigrants had arrived in West Michigan. Religious dissension was not the sole cause of emigration, the potato blight of 1845 in the Netherlands contributed to the migration. Holland attracted many of those immigrants through the 1850's, and soon had several small industries including saw and grist mills, a tub factory and the Cappon-Bertsch Tannery, which began in 1857 and became the leading employer.

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The City of Holland was incorporated in 1867, with Isaac Cappon serving as the first mayor. By 1871, the Pere Marquette Railroad arrived. Disaster struck on Sunday October 8, 1871 when fire consumed a great portion of the city as fires burned in the drought-parched forests surrounding Holland and spread into the city itself, driven by high winds from the southwest.

Largely obliterated by fire and hurt by the recession following the panic of 1873, Holland nevertheless rebuilt quickly. In the late 1880's and 1890's the city saw a surging economic and population boom. During the four year period 1890-1894 the city's population grew 60% exceeding 9000 by the end of 1897.

Teunis Keppel saw the need for housing during this economic boom in the city and capitalized on the needs for workers in the community by building much needed housing in a convenient and accessible location. These structures of local brick were sturdy, utilitarian dwellings with minimal decorative features. However, each house shares the decorative detail of a facade having two angled corner windows with corbelled arches above in the first floor which give a European appearance to the general character of the district. Each house also features a cant sided, single story, gable end bay on one side which enhances this 'old world' charm.

### **Origins of Keppel's Village**

Lots 1, 2, 9 and 10, block 58 of the Original plat of the City of Holland, were apparently laid out as part of an unrecorded subdivision known as Cole's Plat. That plat is known only by reference in the deeds to these properties and is otherwise unattested in the legal records. These vacant lots, along with several others, came into the ownership of Pieter J. Oggel in about 1867 according to the tax rolls of the Village of Holland. There is no indication that any structures were built on these lots prior to the great fire of 1871, or by Oggel in the years after. Oggel was a minister, a professor at Hope College and the son-in-law of Albertus C. Van Raalte, the leader of the "Dutch Colony" in Michigan (Oggel Family File, Hope College Joint Archives). Oggel died in 1869 leaving these lots to his wife Johanna Marie Wilhelmina Van Raalte (Mina). In 1876 she married Teunis Jan Keppel, a widower with five children. Teunis Keppel immigrated to the United States as the leader of a second group of religious emigrants from the Netherlands in 1846 and joined Albertus Van Raalte's colony in 1847. Keppel was appointed an elder of the Dutch Reformed Church and remained a prominent leader to the end of his days. Keppel farmed until 1872 when he moved into Holland and started a fuel and building materials business in what was then the Village of Holland. When the city was incorporated in 1867, Keppel became the first city Marshall. (Padric Moore, Teunis Keppel Genealogy, n/d) (Elton Bruins et al, Albertus C. Van Raalte: Dutch Leader and American Patriot, )

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After Pieter Oggel died, Mina continued to pay taxes on the vacant lots on Block 58 until about 1873. In 1878 the State Auditor General seized these properties for non-payment of taxes. In 1879 Teunis Keppel paid the back taxes and took ownership of the properties. In 1888 through a series of complicated deeds (none of which were recorded until 1890) Keppel transferred the ownership of lots 9 and 10 to his wife Johanna MW Keppel (Mina Oggel) as her widow's dower from Pieter Oggel. From the Register of Deeds records it appears that these lots were to be the inheritance of Peiter and Mina Oggel's daughter, Christina.

In October of 1890, the Ottawa County Times reported that P. Oosting and Sons had begun a row of five brick houses on Market Street (now Central Avenue) between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> streets for Teunis Keppel. In August of 1895, the Ottawa County Times reported that a seventh brick house was to be added to "Keppel's Village". The mason was once again Pieter Oosting and Sons (Ottawa County Times, 1895). Teunis Keppel died in 1896, soon after the seventh house was completed.

The Oosting's utilized bricks from the Veneklassen Brick Company for the construction of all seven houses. Four of the houses were constructed to an identical house plan and the other three were constructed to a mirror image of the same plan. The brick-work is a modified garden wall bond with unique corbelled details. The foundations are brick as well. The porches were apparently wood, unenclosed and with a flat roof (Sanborn, 1896). While the Oosting's place of business was elsewhere in the City, the entire Oosting family lived directly across west 13<sup>th</sup> Street in a wood-frame house at 17 W. 13<sup>th</sup>. (City Directory, 1897) The Oostings remained prominent masons for many years and descendants still operate businesses in the area.

The various city directories report that initially six of the houses were rented while the house at 314 Central was occupied by Albert Keppel, clerk, from about 1894. By 1897 the City Directory reports that this house was then occupied by Albert's brother Bastien D. Keppel, owner of Keppel & Sons dealer in fuel, lumber, lathe and shingles. B.D. Keppel had succeeded his father as city marshal and by 1895 had been elected Ottawa County Sheriff. This house and possibly three others had been inherited by Christina J. Oggel. Teunis Keppel's daughters, Johanna Rademaker and Jennie Stouthammer were named in Teunis Keppel's will to inherit at least one each of the other houses.

The 1897 Sanborn map only shows part of the block with the northern three houses facing Central Avenue and the house on 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Only one outhouse is depicted. The 1902 Sanborn map shows all seven houses, all with outhouses, but only the house on 13<sup>th</sup> has a garage.

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**Later Development of the Village**

By 1902 Christina Oggel was listed in the City Assessment Rolls as the owner of 314, 330 and 334 Central Avenue as well as 11 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street. She sold all of these houses to separate parties in 1911. Each new owner then took up residence. Johanna Rademaker held 318 Central Avenue, as a rental property until 1908. The house at 324 Central had been sold to William Stephenson and 12 W. 13<sup>th</sup> had been purchased by Abraham Borgman in 1902. Both new owners occupied these houses. (City Directory, 1902)

The brick front porches on 12 W. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, 330 Central Avenue and 334 Central Avenue as well as the rear porch on 334 Central Avenue are all constructed of a dark red, wire-cut brick. These front porches retained the original flat roof but otherwise have a Craftsman architectural appearance in both the form of the porch walls and windows. The process for making this type of brick was not developed until sometime after 1910. The brick garage added to 334 Central was done in a sympathetic manner with the window arches matching the brick and masonry style of the house. It has not been possible to date this garage addition other than prior to 1948. The two wood frame garages also fall within this time period, as do several of the rear porches.

Evidence from the City Directories indicates that both 318 and 324 Central had become owner-occupied duplexes prior to 1914. After 1920, 330 Central was also occupied as a duplex.

Each of these houses became owner occupied prior to 1920. Sometime after about 1960 the house at 314 Central was destroyed by fire and replaced with a single-story, wood frame, ranch-style duplex. This duplex is now owned by Hope College and is used for visiting professors and students. By 1988 the remaining six houses had come into the ownership of Central Avenue Partners, LLC and were all used as rental units. This ownership was broken up between 2007 and 2009 as five of the houses had been acquired by Dr. Richard Strabbing and Dr. Boyd Kroeze. Each house was placed in a separate LLC but were all managed by Robert Strabbing as rental units. Thus five of the houses have returned to their original use.

**Significance of the Proposed District**

The Keppel's Village Historic District is significant under National Register Criterion B. for its association with the lives of persons significant in our past, and under C, for its embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type of architecture and planning.

The areas of significance are ethnic, architecture, and community and planning development. The district's primary period of significance is from 1890 to 1896, when the houses were initially constructed. The district has a secondary period of significance from 1911 to 1948. After the

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ownership changed from rental to owner-occupied, the front porches were altered, most of the rear or side porches were added and all of the garages built.

These six nearly identical houses, developed intentionally as both affordable housing and as a village, are unique for the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century period in western Michigan. The high-style elements were intended to give a sense of pride to the residents, who would have otherwise been found in structures of lesser quality. This style also clearly reflects the ethnic heritage of the Holland community both by enhancing the variety of architecture in the city and adding to the ethnic imprint by sheer quantity. The sponsorship of this development by a very prominent member of the original founding fathers of the Dutch colony further adds to the importance of the structures to local history as well as to the history of the development of the state of Michigan. The fact that all six were constructed by the same mason, whose family remains prominent, adds to the local importance of this district. Finally, the direct connection, via inheritance, to a daughter of the great leader Van Raalte himself is a critical factor arguing for the preservation of this group of buildings.

**The National Register Criteria**

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, site, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

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

*Teunis Jan Keppel was born in the Netherlands in 1823. He was associated with the Rev. H.R. Scholte Group from the Utrecht Association, a conservative branch of the Reformed Church. In 1847 Keppel was sent to the United States to inspect previously established colonies of Dutch Reformed Church immigrants to determine the suitability of these colonies for the Scholte Group. Keppel and an associate traveled first to St. Louis, Missouri, and then to Holland, Michigan in their quest. Keppel recommended the Holland colony founded by Albertus Van Raalte. Initially Keppel owned a farm in the area near Holland. He was also appointed to be an elder of the church. In 1872 he sold his farm and moved into the village of Holland to start a building supply company known as Keppel & Sons and subsequently known as Modern Hardware-Keppel Division, 65 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street until its sale and relocation to Holland Township as Modern Hardware in 2000. Keppel became the first Marshall of the City of Holland after it was incorporated. About this time Keppel was widowed and in 1876 he married the widow of Pieter Oggel, Johanna Marie Wilhelmina Van Raalte, the daughter of Albertus Van Raalte. Keppel's son Bastien followed him as city Marshall and was later elected County Sheriff. Teunis Keppel was the last survivor of the original elders of the Holland colony's Dutch Reformed Church when he*



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*died in 1896. His brick home on east 12<sup>th</sup> Street (which still stands) was built by Pieter J. Oosting and Sons, who built many of the brick homes in Holland after the great fire of 1871. Among these houses was the row of seven nearly identical houses along Central Avenue between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> streets known as "Keppel's Village". (Ottawa County Times, 1895)*

C. That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction:

*Keppel's Village represents a Nineteenth Century version of "affordable housing". This row of nearly identical, vernacular brick houses were initially rented to small shop managers, local merchants, craftsmen and widows (city directories, 1897 & 1901). Ornamental detail was kept to a minimum yet there are elements of fine workmanship in the basic design. In particular the corbelled corner arches over the two angled first floor windows on the corners of the façade give a distinct character and a feel of old world Europe charm to the houses individually and as a streetscape. The single-story canted bay on the porch elevation also has corbelling that allows the gabled-end roof to be squared off. Again, this too gives an old-world feel to the architecture. Finally the water table is also constructed by a corbel line three bricks high.*

*The three porches that were altered with wire-cut red brick are done in a 'Craftsman' style with windows from that later period. It is deduced from the fact that none of the original wall or railing and foundation materials of the porches survive that, except for the flat roof, either the original design or materials was faulty. These porch alterations, being over fifty years old have taken on a significance of their own. The garage addition to 334 Central is a different matter. This addition, except for the current door, copied the materials and even the window arches of the original structure. This too was constructed prior to 1948. The four detached wood frame garages were also constructed prior to 1948, but as with the porches, reflect the use and conditions of the later period of development and are thus less of an issue for historic preservation.*

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**Attachments:**

Map of proposed Keppel's Village Historic District

Location map of Veneklassen brick houses

Table of ownership and occupancy of the Veneklassen brick houses in proposed Keppel's Village Historic

Photographic documentation of Veneklassen brick houses in proposed Keppel's Village Historic District (12 pages)