



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historical Commission
Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission
Sunnyside in Sevier Park
3000 Granny White Pike
Nashville, Tennessee 37204
Telephone: (615) 862-7970

To: Metropolitan Council
From: Metropolitan Historical Commission, Staff
Date: March 30, 2021
Re: BL2021-681

An ordinance to amend the Geographic Information Systems Street and Alley Centerline Layer for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, by renaming a portion of Division Street from 8th Avenue South to 9th Avenue South to “Old Division Street.” (Proposal Number 2021M-001SR-001).

Division Street is one of the older suburban streets in Davidson County. The road appears on several plats recorded between the 1850s and 1870, including McNairy’s Plan of West Nashville, which could be the earliest plat of the street.¹ Here, the 50-foot wide Division Street serves as the southwestern boundary of the plan, running from the Middle Franklin Turnpike (now 12th Avenue South) northwest to an unnamed avenue, likely Mulberry Street (now 16th Avenue South) (Figure 1).²

By 1860, according to a map of the City of Nashville and Edgefield, dwellings and other structures had been built throughout the McNairy addition, and Division Street continued southeast from this development, across the Middle Franklin Turnpike, to an intersection with

¹ A plat showing the Addition to Nashville from McNairy, Kirkman, and Porter was recorded in Deed Book 9, pages 322-333, on January 11, 1847. In later plats, Division Street will run along the southwestern boundary of the property, but this plat does not show a street at that location yet. The plat shows the N.A. McNairy mansion located on a large lot situated south of Demonbreun Street. Nathaniel McNairy died in September 1851. The plat was updated, with the addition of Division Street and the subdivision of the mansion lot, by the McNairy Plan of West Nashville Property, recorded in Chancery Court Plat Book 1, page 15. R.C. McNairy et al vs. Wm. H. McNairy et al, November Term, 1852, Chancery Court Minute Book C, pages 135-138.

² Mulberry Street was renamed Belmont Avenue on June 10, 1880, Minute Book 3, page 381. It was then renamed 16th Avenue South by Ordinance No. 090 on December 22, 1904, Minute Book 11, page 390.

Spruce Street (now 8th Avenue South)/Franklin Turnpike (Figure 2).³ At the time, approximately one block of the road was located within the corporation limits of the City of Nashville. Through annexations in 1870 and 1880, property north of Division Street was incorporated into the city limits, and in 1889, property south of the road was included within the corporate limits.⁴ Until all property alongside Division Street was contained within the corporation limits, Division Street coincidentally served as the dividing line between the City of Nashville to the north and Davidson County to the south.⁵



Figure 1: McNairy's Plan of West Nashville Property. Source: Metropolitan Government Archives.

³ “City of Nashville and Edgefield, Davidson County, Tennessee” Haydon & Booth Publishers, 1860. Also available online through Tennessee State Library and Archives: <https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll23/id/249/> accessed March 24, 2021.

⁴ “Swipe into the past...Historical maps of Nashville,” Metro Planning Department :<<https://nashville.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=c14ec64626244f6d975c94c2f190edb1>> accessed March 26, 2021.

⁵ See Wilbur F. Foster’s 1871 Map of Davidson County Tennessee, available online through Tennessee State Library and Archives: <https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll23/id/348/rec/2> accessed March 25, 2021.

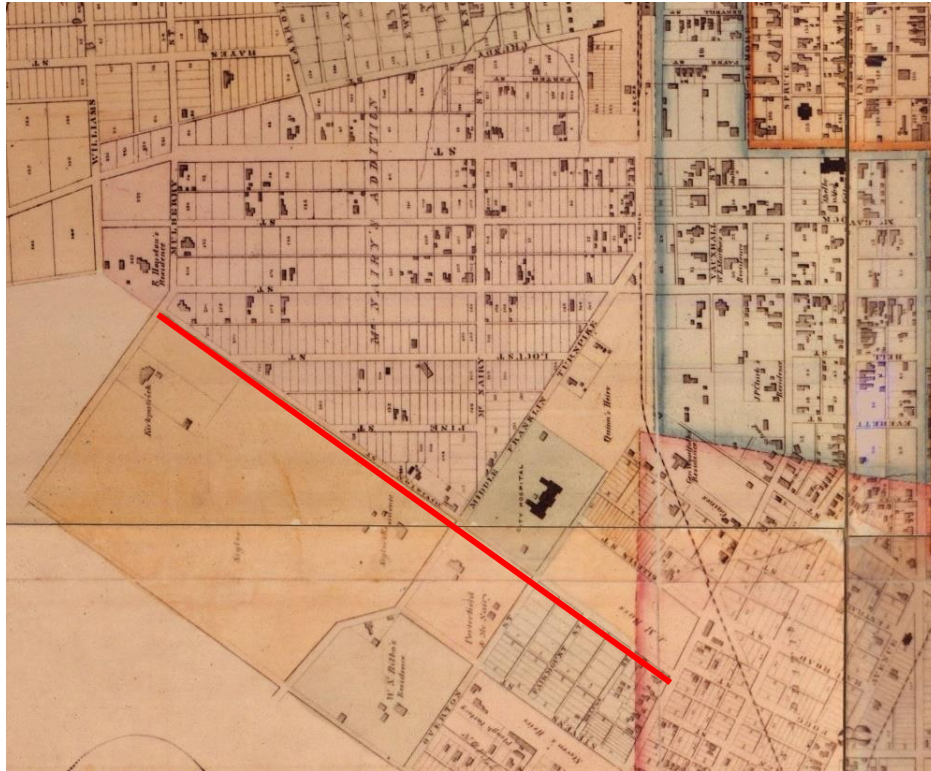


Figure 2: City of Nashville and Edgefield, 1860. Source: Metropolitan Historical Commission.

Division Street appears in the Nashville City Directory by 1867, listed as running “north-west from Spruce—Corporation Line.”⁶ As mentioned earlier, portions of Division Street, running between Spruce Street (now 8th Avenue South) and the Middle Franklin Turnpike (now 12th Avenue South), appeared on several additional plats, including those recorded in 1870 such as Bass First Addition and the Subdivision of the Lunatic Asylum Property (Figure 3).⁷ The original plat subdividing the Asylum Property (“City Hospital” on the 1860 map shown in Figure 2) reserved a section of property along Division Street for the Governor’s Mansion. This reserved area was eventually subdivided into lots in 1887.⁸

⁶ King’s Nashville City Directory, 1867, 44. The portion of Division Street running southwest from 17th Avenue South to Broadway was previously called Shields. The street name was changed on January 8, 1891, Minute Book 6, page 385.

⁷ Bass First Addition, recorded June 2, 1870, Plat Book 21, page 114. Subdivision of the Lunatic Asylum Property, recorded December 7, 187, Plat Book 21, page 117.

⁸The subdivision of the mansion lot was recorded alongside the original plat on April 15, 1887. The section of the road east of 12th Avenue South likely predates the section adjacent to McNairy’s West Nashville Plan.

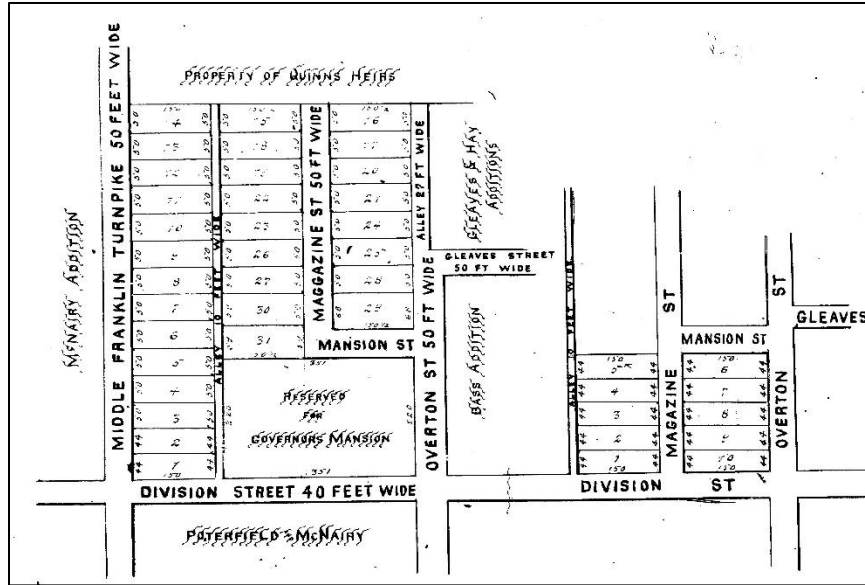


Figure 3: Subdivision of Lunatic Asylum Property, 1870/1887. Source: Register of Deeds.

A segment of Division Street, from 8th Avenue South to Overton Street, near the subject portion, was realigned as part of the Edgehill Urban Renewal Project, Contract E-11E.⁹ Plats for lots around the realigned roadway were recorded in 1973, including the plat for Edgehill Estates, Section 67, which shows “Old Division Street” located between 8th Avenue South and 9th Avenue South (Figure 4).¹⁰ This is the same portion of Division Street currently proposed for renaming.

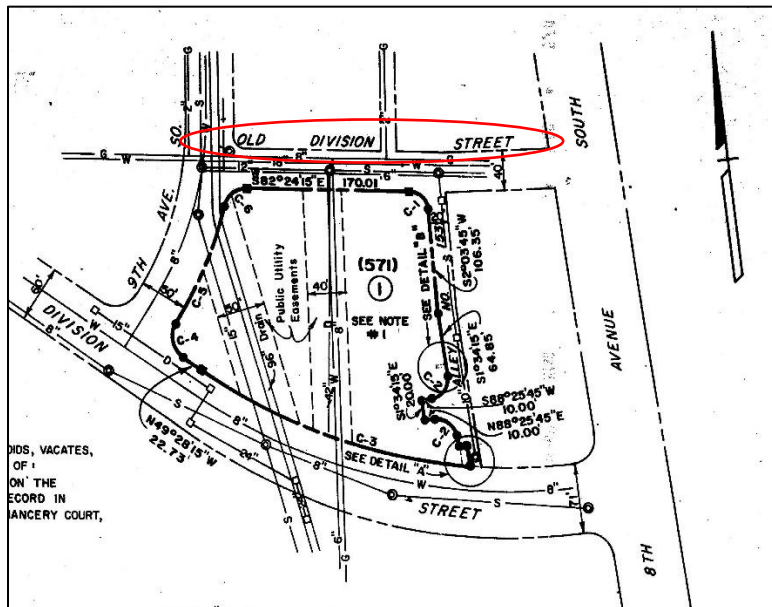


Figure 4: Edgehill Estates, Section 67, 1973. Source: Register of Deeds.

⁹ Correspondence with Metro Public Works, March 22, 2021.

¹⁰ Edgehill Estates, Section 67, recorded May 8, 1973, Plat Book 4595, page 179.