

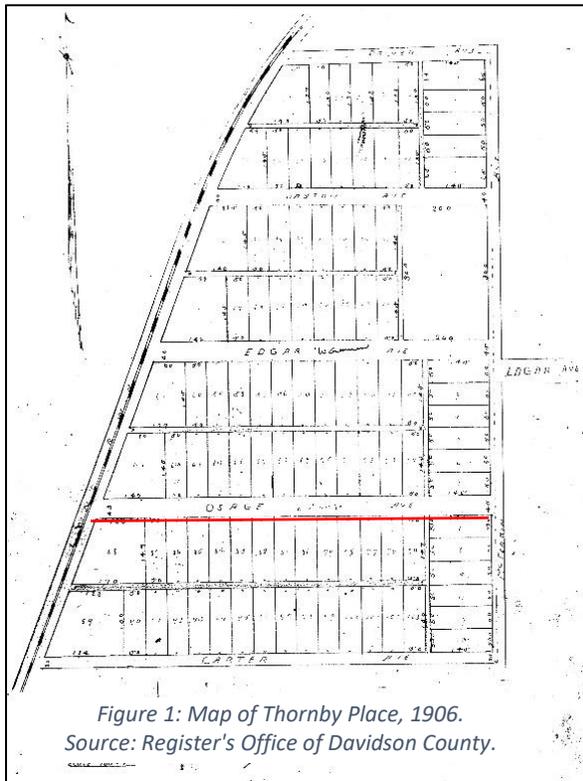
METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY



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: October 14, 2020  
Re: BL2020-463

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 Sharpe Ave between McFerrin Ave and CSX Railroad to “West Sharpe Ave.” (Proposal Number 2020M-003SR-001). \*Exhibit attached at end of report.



Originally called “Osage Avenue,” the subject portion of Sharpe Avenue was platted in 1906 as part of Thornby Place, running east-west between the L & N railroad and McFerrin Avenue (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> According to the advertisement for the “Grand Auction Sale” of Thornby Place scheduled for May 7, 1906, the 103 lots were owned by a “non-resident,” later identified as Mr. B.F. Shields, and “all lay high, having a perfect and commanding view of the whole city, and are only a short distance from the Woodland and Gallatin street car line.”<sup>2</sup>

Although the street was platted as “Osage,” beginning in 1907, the road appears in the street and avenue guide of Nashville city directories as “Sage,” running from McFerrin Avenue west to the L&N railroad, the second road south of Mile End (Douglas).<sup>3</sup> Osage Street already existed in North Nashville, so perhaps this informal change

<sup>1</sup> Map of Thornby Place, recorded May 10, 1906, Plat book 332, page 3.

<sup>2</sup> “Grand Auction Sale: Thornby Place (Eastland),” *Nashville Banner*, Saturday, April 28, 1906, 4.

“Withdraw Lots from Auction,” *Nashville Banner*, Tuesday, May 8, 1906, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Nashville City Directory, 1907.

was made to clear up confusion, as records or legislation officially changing the name from Osage to Sage have not been located. The change did not last long - 1917 marks the last appearance of Sage in the street guide and 1918 marks the new appearance of Osage in East Nashville, from McFerrin Avenue west to the L&N railroad, the first road north of Petway (note: Osage is more than one street north of Petway).<sup>4</sup> The entry for Osage in East Nashville remained unchanged until 1940 when the entry added a mention of the “irregular numbers” along the street where the addresses were out of numerical sequence.<sup>5</sup>

In 1941, the City of Nashville changed the name of Osage Street to Sharpe Avenue.<sup>6</sup> The name change made perfect sense as a portion of “Sharpe Avenue” was already located on the east side of McFerrin Avenue, about one-half block south of Osage. This section of Sharpe Avenue was platted by the Jones and Bradford Subdivision and the W.H. Hyronemus Addition around the time of Thornby Place. In 1905, the Jones and Bradford Subdivision, which divided land between McFerrin Avenue and Gallatin Pike into a mixture of narrow lots and larger block-sized lots, included the segment of road running between McFerrin Avenue and Gallatin Pike that would become Sharpe Avenue.<sup>7</sup> The Jones and Bradford plan showed the road as “original alley 20-ft” with two adjacent 15-ft sections “given for street” along the north and south (Figure 2).<sup>8</sup> The Plan of W.H. Hyronemus Addition, platted in 1906, subdivided the Jones and Bradford lots located on the south side of Sharpe Avenue, labeled only as a “street” on the plat.<sup>9</sup> By the time the property was available for auction, the street bore the name “Sharpe” (Figure 3).<sup>10</sup> Later versions of Jones and Bradford labeled the road “Sharpe” on the recorded plats.<sup>11</sup>

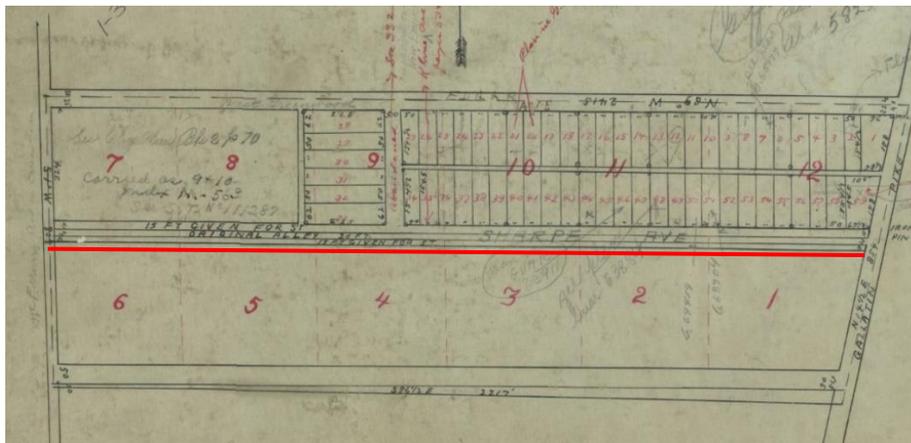


Figure 2: Jones and Bradford Subdivision, 1905. Source: Metropolitan Planning Department.

<sup>4</sup> Nashville City Directory, 1917 and 1918.

<sup>5</sup> Nashville City Directory, 1940. Addresses along Sharpe were in numerical order by publication of the 1951 City Directory, if not earlier.

<sup>6</sup> Ordinance No. 1526, approved by Mayor Thomas L. Cummings, on October 14, 1941, authorized the change of Osage Street to Sharpe Avenue, from McFerrin to L&N Railroad.

<sup>7</sup> Map of Jones and Bradford’s Subdivision of Land in the 18<sup>th</sup> District, recorded April 5, 1905, Plat book 161, page 142.

<sup>8</sup> Undated notations call the road “West Sharpe” on the plat available through the Register of Deeds portal and “Sharpe” on the scanned plat book (shown).

<sup>9</sup> Plan of W.H. Hyronemus Addition, recorded March 14, 1906 in Plat book 161, page 174.

<sup>10</sup> “Gallatin Road Boulevard: 43 Lots at Auction,” *Nashville American*, Sunday, April 29, 1906, 20.

<sup>11</sup> Map of Jones and Bradford: Plat book 332, page 42, recorded May 20, 1907, and Plat book 332, page 53, recorded September 4, 1907. Both plats drawn in April 1906 to shift lots and abandon a cross street.

29  
THE NASHVILLE AMERICAN, SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 1906.

# Gallatin Road Boulevard

## 43 LOTS AT AUCTION

On the Premises  
**Wednesday, May 2, 1906, at 2 P. M.**

We are authorized by the owners to subdivide that beautiful plat of land, set with a magnificent growth of alfalfa clover, fronting on the GALLATIN ROAD BOULEVARD and also BAILEY and SHARPE AVENUES, with the WOODLAND and GALLATIN CAR LINE passing by the property.

SHARPE & HORN, YARBROUGH-DAVIS REAL ESTATE CO. and WILLIAMS, HAYES & CO., Agents

Figure 3: "Gallatin Road Boulevard: 43 Lots at Auction," Nashville American, April 29, 1906. Source: Newspapers.com.

Prior to development on the west side of Gallatin, an older section of Sharpe Avenue existed on the east side of Gallatin, near the home of Dr. Johnivy Sharpe (11/29/1832 - 4/30/1897), the presumed namesake for the road. According to the 1890 city directory, Johnivy M. Sharpe lived on Sharpe Avenue, near the intersection with Weakley Avenue.<sup>12</sup> The southern "half width" (25 feet) of Sharpe Avenue, from Gallatin Pike to Weakley Avenue, appears on the 1890 plat for J.B. Hancock's East End Addition.<sup>13</sup> The northern half (20 feet) of Sharpe Avenue, from Gallatin Pike to North 14<sup>th</sup> Street (by then, formerly Weakley), appears on the 1906 plat for E.T. Brown's Subdivision of Sharpe Lands (Figure 4).<sup>14</sup> The home of "Dr. Sharpe" appears on the large eastern lot.<sup>15</sup> Dr. Johnivy Monroe (J. M.) Sharpe had a variety of interests and skills that he put to use at various times throughout his life.<sup>16</sup> Trained as an educator and minister, he served as president of the Female College at Franklin, helped found West End Methodist Church, and served as chaplain of the state penitentiary. He also had a successful career as a merchant, notably with Rhea, Smith & Co. He served as treasurer and president of the Edgefield & Nashville Manufacturing Company and worked for the Cumberland Iron and Wire Works. Dr. Sharpe lived in Mexico for about six years, overseeing his investment in Mexican silver mines. He also served as Magistrate for the 18th Civil District. Dr. Sharpe married Kate Hammond in

<sup>12</sup> This author did not examine city directories older than 1890. Sharpe Avenue does not appear in the 1890 city directory, but Rev. Johnivy M. Sharpe is listed as residing on Sharpe at the corner with Weakley. At the time, Weakley ran north-south.

<sup>13</sup> Map of J.B. Hancock's East End Addition, recorded April 26, 1890, Plat book 57, page 133. The road could be older than 1890, of course.

<sup>14</sup> E.T. Brown's Subdivision of Sharpe Lands, recorded October 16, 1906, Plat book 332, page 7.

<sup>15</sup> The "Plan of Greenway" will subdivide this lot in 1916. The house also appears on a plat recorded with the conveyance of adjacent property, from Samuel Prichitt to J.M. Sharpe, recorded June 12, 1885, Deed book 89, page 371.

<sup>16</sup> "The End of a Varied Career," *Nashville Banner*, Friday, April 30, 1897, 2.

1856 and together they had five children, with four living at the time of his death: Mora H. Sharpe, Nannie Sharpe, Carrie Sharpe Jordan, and Dr. E. L. Sharpe.

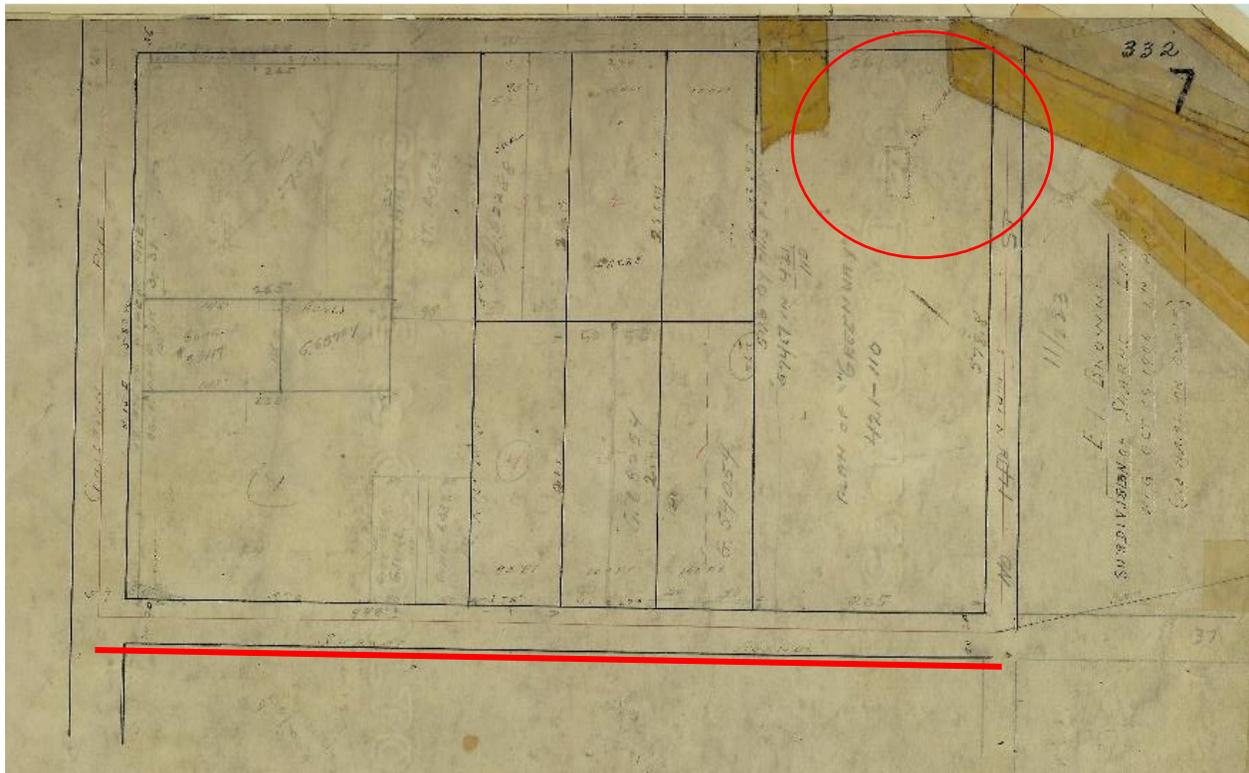


Figure 4: E.T. Brown's Subdivision of Sharpe Lands, 1906. Sharpe Avenue and Dr. Sharpe's House noted.  
Source: Metropolitan Planning Department.

East of North 14th Street, Sharpe Avenue was known as “Weakley Avenue.”<sup>17</sup> The block between Gallatin Road and North 14th Street was known as Sharpe or Weakley at various points, but in 1936, the City of Nashville changed the name of Weakley Avenue to Sharpe Avenue.<sup>18</sup>

By 1940, Sharpe Avenue ran easterly from McFerrin Avenue to the intersection with Gallatin Road and continued to Manchester Avenue. The 1941 name change from Osage to Sharpe captured the western section of the road between the L&N railroad and McFerrin. Entries for Osage and Sharpe in the 1942 city directory reflected the name change for both streets. The entry for Osage stated, “changed to Sharpe av,” and the entry for Sharpe Avenue noted the expansion of the street from L&N railroad east to Manchester Avenue.<sup>19</sup>

Although the construction of Ellington Parkway disrupted the street grid around McFerrin Avenue, lots on the subject portion of Sharpe Avenue remained unchanged.

<sup>17</sup> Map of Weakley Home Place, Eastland, plat dated April 11, 1902, recorded June 2, 1904, Plat book 161, page 131. Initially platted as a 47-foot wide street with 3-feet reserved along the north line, the plat showed Weakley Avenue running from North 14th Street to Chapel Street/Lindsley Avenue.

<sup>18</sup> Ordinance No. 1026, approved by Mayor Hilary E. Howse on October 7, 1936, authorized the name change.

<sup>19</sup> City Directory, 1942.

