



## The Gardens of Ashley Street A Self-Guided Walking Tour



### ***Welcome to Ashley Street!***

Ashley Street is one of the most historic streets in Hartford's Asylum Hill neighborhood. Located at the base of the hill that gives the neighborhood its name, it is home to a diverse group of people who wouldn't live anywhere else.

### ***Uniquely Hartford***

The first houses were built in the 1870s by Franklin Smith (8 Ashley), and these are the brick Italiante houses on the north side of the street at the east end near Garden Street. They also include one around the corner at 221 Garden Street. Frederick Mahl then developed the south side of the street in the 1890s, building six brick Queen Anne style homes. Both developers gave this part of Ashley Street its distinctive look and feel, creating a unique space within Asylum Hill.

### ***A Green Renaissance***

In 2012, the residents combined their efforts to beautify this block with some of the most extraordinary front yard gardens in the city. They were joined by 14 professional landscape designers who volunteered their time and resources to help design and install these gardens. These are truly urban gardens, and they stand as examples of what can be done in Hartford.

### ***Enjoy ...***

The gardens are here for everyone to enjoy, but please remember that these are private homes. Parking is available on the street as it is around the neighborhood. Please note posted restrictions.



**The Gardens of Ashley Street**

- |                             |                       |                       |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| SSP - Sigourney Square Park | 6 - 22 Ashley Street  | 12 - 35 Ashley Street |
| 1 - 54 Ashley Street        | 7 - 18 Ashley Street  | 13 - 39 Ashley Street |
| 2 - 50 Ashley Street        | 8 - 8 Ashley Street   | 14 - 43 Ashley Street |
| 3 - 48 Ashley Street        | 9 - 21 Ashley Street  | 15 - 47 Ashley Street |
| 4 - 38 Ashley Street        | 10 - 25 Ashley Street |                       |
| 5 - 34 Ashley Street        | 11 - 31 Ashley Street |                       |

**NINA Homes**

- A - 207 Garden Street
- B - 51 Ashley Street
- C - 55 Ashley Street

**Other Gardens**

- x - 107 Ashley Street
- y - 98 Ashley Street
- z - 102 Huntington Street



## Sigourney Square Park



We recommend you begin your tour at Sigourney Square Park. Although it's a block away from the gardens, it's worth the extra walk.

Sigourney Square Park is the quintessential urban park – right down to the rumor of an old abandoned cemetery somewhere on the grounds. It is rightfully the centerpiece of the neighborhood.



The park was created in the mid-1890s, the last open part of what had been the city's Town Farm. It has changed over the years as the neighborhood has changed around it – originally, it was a pastoral park, intended mostly for strolling, but it has since evolved into a much more active park, with

playspaces for children and exercise equipment for adults.

Ashley Street forms the southern border of the park, making it easy to get to and from the Gardens. See the map in the center of this booklet for directions

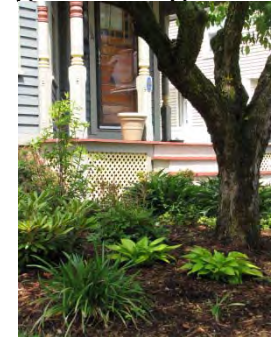
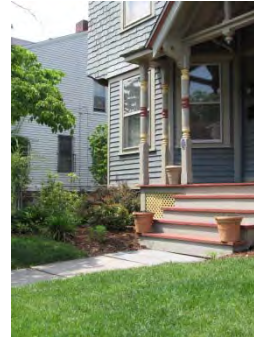


### 54 Ashley Street

#### The McCreary-McFadden House

This house was originally owned by Howard McCreary, a stenographer for Aetna Life Insurance Company. It was built circa 1890. The current owner, a Hartford firefighter, restored the home to its original Victorian look and feel.

*Designer: Dana Woods, Stonehedge Landscaping  
Winner of the 2012 Landscape Design Challenge.*



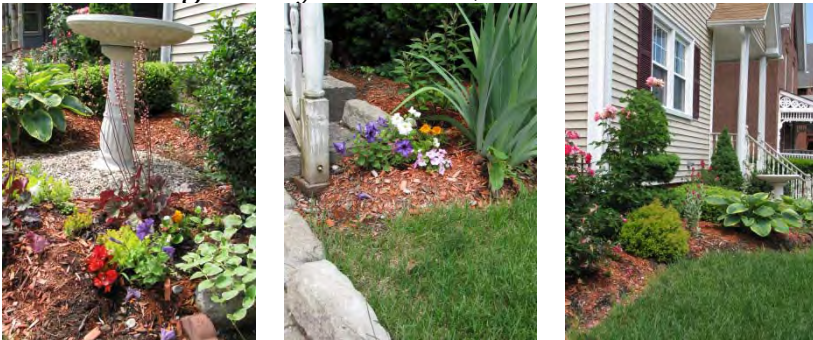




**50 Ashley Street  
The Green-Clarke House**

The original owner of this house, Henry Green, worked for the Aetna Electric Company before forming his own company with a partner. An early experimenter with X-rays, he developed focusing tubes that allowed Hartford physicians to be among the first in the US to use X-rays as a diagnostic tool.

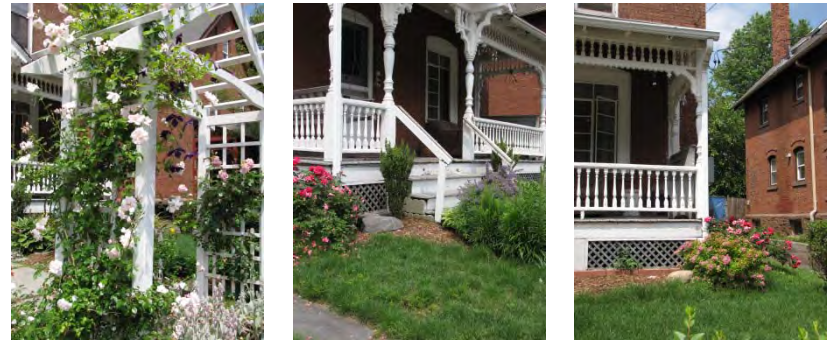
*Designer: Cynthia Todd, The Dirt Salon*



**48 Ashley Street  
The Hull-Mendes House**

Andrew Hull was a Civil War veteran – he had been a sergeant in Company A of the 12<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Volunteers. After the war, he ran a meat market. He died here in 1895, cause of death “paralysis of the brain.”

*Designer: Christine Jones, Landscape Restorations and Renovations*







**38 Ashley Street**  
**The Dibble-Mein House**

William Dibble served as superintendent of the State Capitol for 12 years, prior to which he had been a deputy sheriff in Hartford County. The current owner is a former City councilperson and town registrar, and he remains active in the community.

*Designer: Richard Rosiello, Rosiello Designs*



**34 Ashley Street**  
**The Davis-Cassidy House**

The original owner, Cortland Davis, was a railroad conductor. The current owner is a strong proponent of urban gardening, and her garden includes vegetables as well as flowers.

*Designer: Jennifer Cassidy*





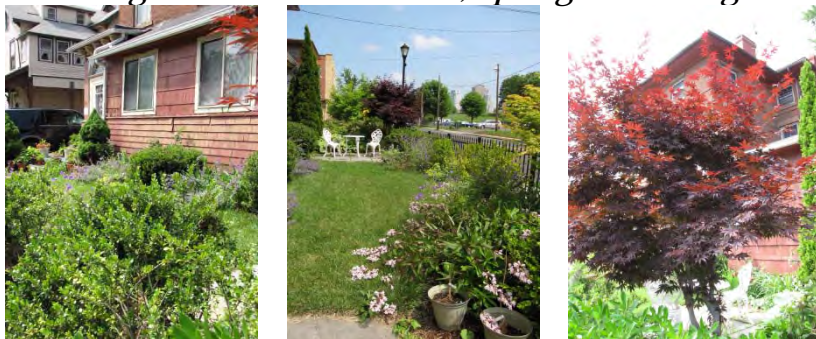


**22 Ashley Street**

**The Kingsley-Watson House**

Kendrick Kingsley, an early owner of this home, was a grocer in Hartford who lost his business to a fire in March 1899. This house is one of three brick Italianates and is one of the first houses built on Ashley Street.

*Designer: Catherine Cooke, Spring Lake Design*

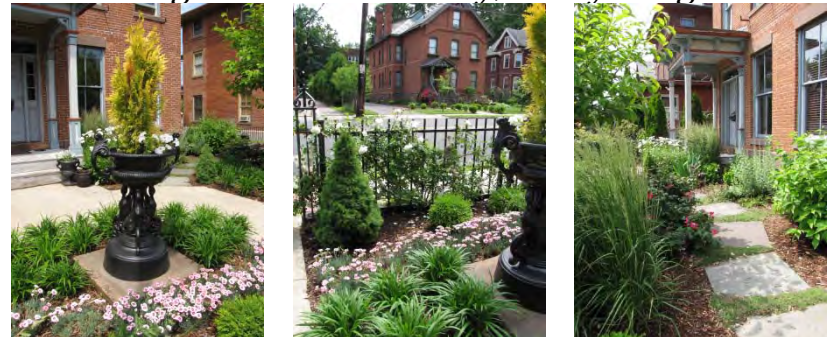


**18 Ashley Street**

**The Asian Market House**

The second brick Italianate on Ashley, this home was converted into a pharmacy in the late 1890s and even served as a post office substation in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It has since been restored to a residence, but its sunken first floor parlor preserves its commercial history.

*Designer: Lelaneia Dubay, Dubay Designs*







**8 Ashley Street**

**The Franklin Smith House**

The third of three brick Italianates, this house was built by – and was likely home to – Franklin Smith, a well-respected builder who laid out Ashley Street and built several homes in the vicinity of this house. Smith also had a hand in the construction of the Asylum Hill Congregational Church.

*Designer: Amy Schuster, Stone House Design*

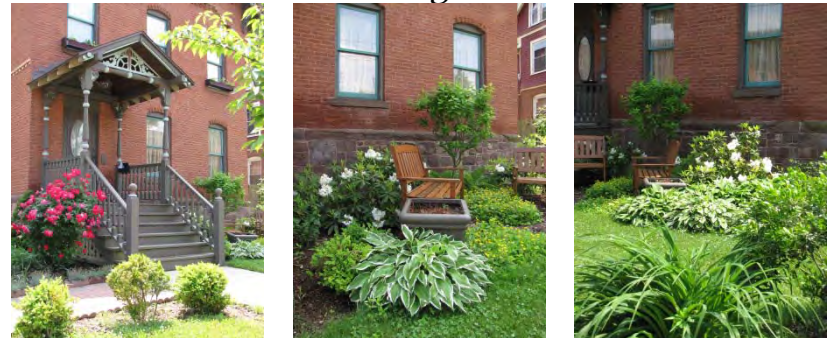


**21 Ashley Street**

**The Victorian Lady**

This home was originally located at 47 Sigourney Street, across from Aetna and next to the Lincoln Culinary Institute. In 2004, the home received national media attention when it was saved from demolition and moved to this location. It has been an office, conference center, and automotive claims center, but it is now once again a single-family residence.

*Designer: Clemence Corriveau, Ecological Landscape Design*







**25 Ashley Street**

**The McConville-Walker House**

William J. McConville was a prominent Republican politician who lived here through 1899. He served as a clerk in the Connecticut House and Senate and as Hartford Police Court judge before being elected City Attorney. He moved to Wethersfield Avenue shortly after the death of his mother-in-law, and he continued to be active in Hartford politics until his death in 1914.

*Designer: Mark Fisher, The Garden Room*

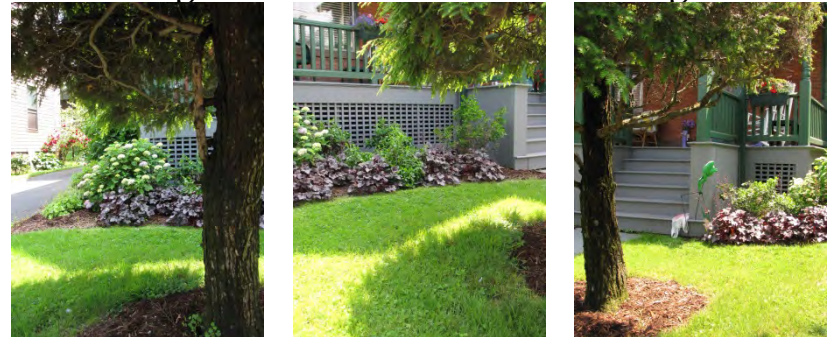


**31 Ashley Street**

**The Smith-Simcic House**

F. Webb Smith was in the carting business, and his experience here served him well during the Civil War, when he was appointed superintendent of his regiment's baggage train. Smith died at the age of 49, weighing 335 pounds. At his death, his house was valued at \$6,545.40 – the appraisal was conducted by his neighbors William Dibble (38) and Andrew Hull (48).

*Designer: Matthew Pafford, MJP Designs*







**35 Ashley Street**

**The Fox-Lenhoff-Saur House**

Three generations of Lenhoffs called this house home. Charles and Rebecca bought the house from the Foxes in 1902. Their son Moses was a professional baseball player in the early 1900s, playing for the Royal Typewriter team (among others). His son Charles went to West Point and served in World War II, and his other son John was an announcer for local radio station WTIC.

*Designer: Dede Delaney, Redtwig Garden Design*

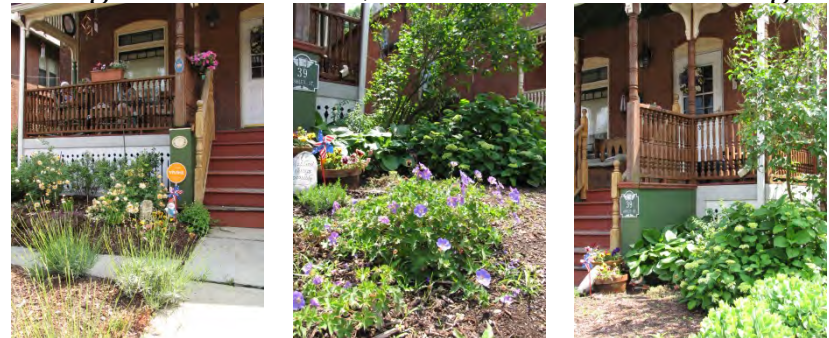


**39 Ashley Street**

**The Campbell-Kirkley-Bey House**

This house has had a political orientation from the beginning. Its first owner, A. Storrs Campbell, was a lawyer who served as a Hartford City Alderman before moving to Enfield, which he then represented in the Connecticut General Assembly. The current owner, Marie Kirkley-Bey, represented her district in the General Assembly for 20 years before retiring in 2012.

*Designer: M J McCabe, M J McCabe – Garden Design*



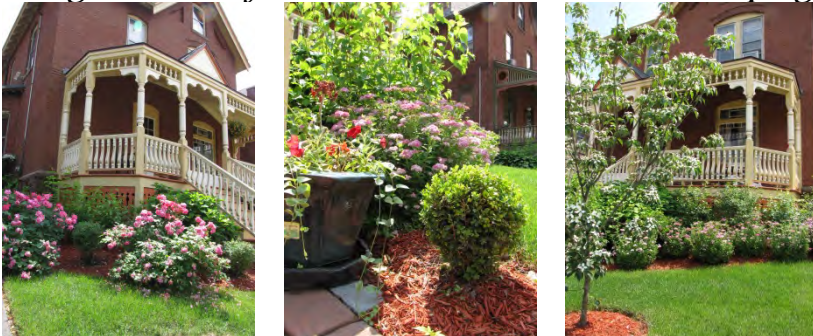




**43 Ashley Street**  
**The Peck-Rivera House**

This house is one of 10 homes on Ashley Street designed and built by Frederick Mahl, a prolific Hartford developer who built these homes in the early to mid-1890s. These homes are distinguished by their porch designs, which alternate along the south side of the street, and the recessed triangles in the front gables, which is a Mahl trademark.

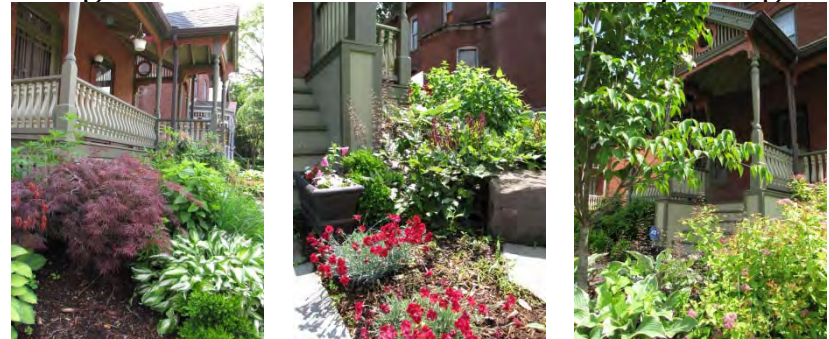
*Designer: Jeffrey Gebrian & Four Seasons Landscaping*



**47 Ashley Street**  
**The Simonds-Mira House**

The first occupant of this house was Stillman Simonds, a traveling salesman whose daughter Julia married Edward Steele, a Hartford City Councilman. The wedding was held at the house, and it apparently distracted Steele from his duties on Council – he was disciplined by the Council for a minor infraction before the Council presented him with a silver tea set as a wedding present.

*Designer: Laura Rock, Laura Rock Landscape Designs*





## **NINA Homes**

Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (NINA) has been at work in the Asylum Hill neighborhood since 2003. Its goal is to revitalize the neighborhood through the rehabilitation and restoration of blighted historic houses. NINA is currently at work on three projects on Ashley Street:

*207 Garden Street*



This mixed use building is an important anchor for the neighborhood. NINA is restoring it as commercial, office, and residential space. The vacant lot next door will serve as off-street parking for this building.

*51 Ashley Street*



Another of Frederick Mahl's houses on the street, NINA is restoring it as a single-family home.

*55 Ashley Street*



This house is unique for its "fish scale" shingles. NINA is also restoring it as a single-family home.



## Other Notable Gardens

Along the way to and from Sigourney Square Park, there are a few other gardens you might want to take note of:



**107 Ashley Street**  
The most recent addition to “Gardens of Ashley,” this garden represents our first effort to expand the success of the Ashley Street gardens.



**98 Ashley Street**  
One of the first private gardens on Ashley Street, it is designed entirely by the homeowner. The backyard is even more extraordinary.



**102 Huntington Street**  
Visible from Ashley Street, this rear yard garden is remarkable for the tallest stand of bamboo in the neighborhood.

## Sponsors

*Major sponsorship for the Gardens on Ashley Street provided by*



*General support for this event provided by*

AHNA

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The Friends of Sigourney  
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*Support for the Grand Re-opening of Sigourney Square  
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aetna<sup>SM</sup>



Matt Ritter

*Guidebook published by*

**NINA**  
*Revitalizing Asylum Hill*

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