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TWINBROOK – A “DO-IT-YOURSELF” COMMUNITY

Construction of the first homes in the Twinbrook subdivision was announced on the front page of the *Montgomery County Sentinel* on September 25th 1947. The fact that these homes could be expanded was emphasized. A spokesman for the developer explained that the new houses “will be of different styles and sizes, with a two-bedroom 1½ story frame dwelling predominating and so designed that two bedrooms and bath can be added later to the unfinished second floor.”¹ Leaving the attic unfinished was both a shrewd business decision and the prescient appreciation of a new trend in American home ownership in the postwar era – the adoption of a “do-it-yourself” home improvement ethic. As Twinbrook grew, the “do-it-yourself” ethic embodied in the architecture permeated every aspect of community life.

The purpose of this paper is to document the history of home improvement in Twinbrook through a variety of methods as part of a larger comprehensive effort to document the historical importance of this postwar housing development.² In the context of historic preservation, the issue of remodeling immediately raises concerns about the integrity of the resource. The interplay between remodeling and the integrity of historic properties has been much debated in recent years. Although eligibility for designation on the National Register requires that a property retain key exterior materials dating from the

¹ “Viers Mill Road to Get Many New Homes Next Year” *Montgomery County Sentinel*, September 25, 1947, page 1.

² The project was conducted by graduate students in Professor Richard W. Longstreth’s course “Historic Preservation: Principals and Methods” spring 2008, American Studies Department, George Washington University.

period of significance, this requirement has often been suspended in the case of modest housing. Changes in exterior siding materials, for example, has not disqualified individual homes from contributing to the overall architectural significance of a company town providing that other changes have not fundamentally altered the basic shape and size of the dwelling. One expert has argued that the proper emphasis should be on aspects of form, massing, materials, and interior spaces.³

Over the past six decades, the vast majority of the homes in Twinbrook have been expanded and altered (both inside and out). While most retain their original features and footprint to a greater or lesser degree, some have been changed extensively. While the issue of integrity is integral to the determination of architectural significance, the purpose of this paper is not to make value judgments about the integrity of individual houses or of the community as a whole, but simply to document research about the historical resource. While it is hoped that this information may be useful in providing a context in which the issue of integrity can be determined, that debate is best left to others. There is no doubt, however, that the expanded and altered homes of Twinbrook clearly reflect the “do-it-yourself” ethic which, in a surprisingly short period of time, transformed what might have otherwise been an anonymous post-war housing development into a tightly knit, progressive community.

1. The “Do-It-Yourself” Ethic.

Since the beginning of time people have been adapting their dwellings to suit their needs and emphasize their individuality. Indeed it could be said that human beings have

³ Alison K. Hoagland, “Industrial Housing and Vinyl Siding: Historical Significance Flexibly Applied”, in *Preservation of What, For Whom?: A Critical Look at Historical Significance*: held at Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland, March 20-22, 1997, Michael A. Tomlan, editor, Ithaca, NY: the National Council for Preservation Education, 1998, at page 21.

an innate psychological need to order the spaces they inhabit. In America, the origins of both modern consumer culture and the reactionary “do-it-yourself” home improvement ethic can be traced to an explosion in home ownership, standardization of building trades and techniques, the availability of mass-produced goods, including tools and building materials, and an interest in economizing and self-sufficiency, which all began to coalesce at the beginning of the 20th century.

The phrase “do-it-yourself” first appeared in an October 1912 article in *Suburban Life* which encouraged men to do their own interior painting instead of hiring professionals. The term has since become synonymous with making or fixing things in the home on one’s own rather than purchasing them or hiring professionals. While the “do-it-yourself” ethic shares certain similarities with the more organized rebellion against mass production embodied by the Arts and Crafts movement, there are significant important differences. The “do-it-yourself” movement emphasized independence and self-sufficiency as opposed to the preservation and emulation of traditional methods. Most importantly, the “do-it-yourself” movement embraced, rather than rejected, modernization and mass production techniques, albeit on a personalized level.

While increasing standardization of building materials, tools and techniques facilitated the growth in “do-it-yourself” home improvement, the “do-it-yourself” movement truly came of age during the building boom following World War II. In an effort to keep building costs low and housing affordable, developers of post war “starter homes” designed and marketed them as being “expandable” to accommodate growing families. War veterans in particular had developed the skills and confidence necessary to make home improvements on their own. Manufacturers and retailers catered to this new

trend by designing and selling amateur-friendly products, including standardized lumber, drywall, siding, and other building materials. Publications such as *Popular Mechanics*, *House and Home*, and *Good House Keeping*, provided regular features on “do-it-yourself” projects and ideas. Best known among an extensive array of “how-to” publications was a line of books created by Sunset Books, based on articles derived from the pages of *Sunset Magazine*, and the *Popular Science Encyclopedia*.

Typical “do-it-yourself” projects included finishing attics and basements, building or enclosing carports, adding screened porches, constructing patios and decks, and outfitting fallout shelters. Other projects included painting, and decorating, basic plumbing and wiring, and carpentry projects such as building tables, installing shelving, building stereo and television cabinets, and organizing storage areas. Any aspect of the built home environment was fair game for the “do-it-yourselfer”. Capitalizing on the impatience many veterans felt with respect to the lack of housing in the early post-war era, the May 1951 issue of *Popular Mechanics* magazine declared confidently “Want a house? Then build it yourself as I did!” (Figure 1).

The virtues of the “do-it-yourself” home improvement ethic included individual expression, economy and self-satisfaction. By the mid-1950s, “do-it-yourself” home improvement was firmly established as an accepted domestic leisure activity, engaged in not only by the “handyman” husband, but by the entire family.⁴

2. “Do-It-Yourself” in Twinbrook.

The homes in Twinbrook were designed with the expectation that they would be expanded to meet the needs of growing families. An early advertisement described the

⁴ For a history of the “Do-It-Yourself” movement, see Carolyn Goldstein, Do It Yourself: Home Improvement in 20th Century America, New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1998.

new homes as “expandable”. According to the developers, the homes in Twinbrook were “just what you have been looking for, room enough now for your present needs. May be easily and economically made into a three or four bedroom, or two bath house.”⁵ The one and one-half story Levittown Ranch type, with its shed dormer and gabled ends, featured an unfinished attic which was meant to be expanded. (Figure 2). The Cape Cod, Ranch and Split Level types also easily lent themselves to expansion either through adding shed dormers, raising the roof, or through building one or two-story side or back additions.⁶ While certain models included completed second floors (such as the homes in the Halpine Village area developed in 1957) homes with unfinished “expandable” attic space were being advertised as late as 1958 in the Twinbrook Forest subdivision.⁷

Zoning regulations did not deter home expansion in Twinbrook. The single family residences in Twinbrook were (and remain) zoned R-60, which provides for a minimum lot size of 6000 sq. ft., with maximum lot coverage of 35% including accessory buildings. The front setback is 25 feet from the right-of-way, while the side and rear setbacks are eight and twenty feet respectively. The maximum height of the house is 35 feet, measured to the mid-point of the eaves and the peak. The combination of a large lot size and a relatively small house footprint (homes in the original sections of Twinbrook were typically under 1000 square feet in size⁸) means that there is plenty of room for horizontal and vertical expansion within the existing zoning parameters.

⁵ *The Washington Post*, September __ 1948.

⁶ For a summary of Twinbrook housing types, see *Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan (Draft), Appendix 3: Twinbrook Typologies*, City of Rockville, Department of Community Planning and Development Services, 2008.

⁷ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, __ 1958.

⁸ The Cape Cod was advertised at 40' 6" by 23' 3" or about 950 square feet. *The Washington Post*, September __ 1948.

The history of how homes in Twinbrook were altered and expanded can be illustrated in a number of different ways. The story of how the Bentleys altered their home at 13301 Okinawa to meet their changing family needs shows how the “do-it-yourself” home improvement ethic was manifested in Twinbrook.

Frederick K. Bentley, Jr. a WWII Navy pilot and engineer at the Norfolk Naval Yard purchased one of the first homes in Twinbrook in 1948 in anticipation of his marriage to the future Georgia Bentley (the couple married in 1949). 13301 Okinawa Avenue was a two-bedroom Cape Cod model with an expandable attic. The \$9,900 purchase price was financed by a mortgage through the GI Bill with payments of \$49 per month. According to Georgia Bentley, when they moved into the house, the stairway to the attic was roughed in, but there was no flooring in the attic other than a few planks of wood. The attic was a completely unfinished space useful only for minimal storage. The house was set on a cinderblock foundation with a small crawl space but no basement. The utilities (hot water, furnace, and electrical panel) were located in a small storage closet off the modestly-sized kitchen.

The Bentleys raised seven children at 13301 Okinawa, the first of which was born in April 1950. To accommodate their growing family, the Bentleys expanded their house in three separate phases. Each expansion was a major “do-it-yourself” project designed by Mr. Bentley and completed by the Bentleys themselves with only minimal help from professionals. In 1953, with three young children, the Bentleys raised the roof of their home and added a bathroom and two bedrooms to the new second floor. Professionals were hired to raise the roof and to do the electrical and plumbing – but Mr. and Mrs. Bentley did everything else themselves, including installing dry wall, plastering, and

painting. The couple borrowed \$1000 to cover their out-of-pocket costs, which they promptly repaid.

In 1955, with another child in the household, the Bentleys decided to dig a full basement under their house. This would allow them to add additional living space, relocate the utilities, and expand their small kitchen. They hired a contractor to help with the digging and another to do the concrete work for the new foundation. Georgia Bentley recalls that while the excavation was underway, it started to rain and they needed to install an emergency sump pump to keep the new basement from flooding and the dirt walls from collapsing. She vividly recalls standing in muddy boots in the basement with the house resting on jacks above her. After the work was finished, the Bentleys moved their water heater and furnace, which had been located in a utility room adjoining the kitchen, downstairs into the new basement, and enlarged their kitchen by removing the walls to the former utility closet. They finished the rest of the new basement as a recreation room for their growing children by tiling the floor and installing “knotty-pine” paneling on the walls. An exterior access way behind the kitchen represents the point of entry for digging the basement. Again the Bentleys borrowed \$1000 to cover their expenses for this project, which they promptly paid back. According to Georgia Bentley, only one other neighbor on their street has dug a basement. (In the same year as they dug their basement, the Bentleys also helped to dig the new Twinbrook community pool – they could obviously bring a lot of personal experience to that community project.)

With three more children in the house, in 1962 the Bentleys added a two story addition, and opened up one of the original first floor bedrooms to expand the living room. The coat closet became a hallway to the new addition. Georgia Bentley recalls

that they hired the neighborhood boys to dig the foundation, and that she got a hernia from lifting pieces of plywood to the second floor. A porch was also added at this time. As with the other projects, Mr. Bentley drew up the plans himself – no architect was involved. Contractors were hired to do the electrical work and perhaps the roof, but the Bentleys and their children did all of the finish work. Supplies were purchased on a running account with Fisher’s Lumberyard.⁹

The Bentleys were not the only Twinbrook residents busy remodeling their home in the 1950s. By 1951 more than 300 families had purchased homes in Twinbrook and 63 more houses were planned.¹⁰ An active Homemakers Club was already established, with members providing advice on a wide range of “do-it-yourself” remodeling and decorating projects. Homeowners did not wait long to begin remodeling their “expandable” homes. The first reported building permits for additions to homes in Twinbrook were issued in August 1950, to erect a porch at 13200 Ardennes Avenue and for additions to two homes on Midway Avenue.¹¹ In May 1954, the *Montgomery County Sentinel* reported that in the month of April, building permits were issued for ten Twinbrook homes: 5715 Denfield Road (attic); 13102 Atlantic Avenue (attic); 214 East Montgomery Avenue (porch); 13117 Ardennes Avenue (carport); 202 Cedar Lane (attic); 1119 Veirs Mill Road (porch enclosure); 5908 Vandegrift Avenue (garage); 5710 Stilwell (porch); 4801 Broadbrook Court (utility shed); and 13207 Ardennes (porch).¹²

⁹ Interview with Georgia Bentley, February 26, 2008.

¹⁰ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, April 26, 1951, p. 1.

¹¹ “Building Permits Issued”, *Montgomery County Sentinel*, September 7, 1950, p. __. “Albert and Elizabeth ____, 13200 Ardennes Avenue, Twinbrook – to erect porch; Douglas C. Donley, 13207 Midway – to add to house; Thomas T. Pape, 13212 Midway – to add to house.”

¹² *Montgomery County Sentinel* “\$385,000 New Houses for E. Rockville” May 6, 1954, p. 1. The *Sentinel* also reported that Geeraert Construction “will erect 10 \$5,500 and 22 \$6,000 dwellings in Twinbrook Forest at a cost of \$187,000.”

The interest in remodeling was reflected in the *Twinbrook Life* newsletter (published beginning in 1954) which included suggestions for home remodeling projects, or, as one “Design for Living” column put it, ideas of “what can be done with a Twinbrook house.”¹³ Do-it-yourself projects showcased in *Twinbrook Life* included building partitions to separate kitchen and dining room areas, adding kitchen counter space, installing paneling and shelving, building wall cabinets, creating a split log mantel piece, constructing a built-in desk, outfitting a closet as a “phone room and study”, and recessing a television set under the living room staircase.¹⁴ These projects point out some of the ways homeowners responded to the new design features of Twinbrook homes. Judging from the scope of these projects, some homeowners did not embrace the open floor plan and felt that there was a lack of kitchen counter space and general storage space. By creating separations between functional spaces, finding creative ways to increase storage and create more efficient uses of limited kitchen counter space, Twinbrook residents adapted their homes to meet their needs.

Early issues of *Twinbrook Life* also featured outdoor projects, including building a pergola and patio, as well as advice on landscaping and yard maintenance; how-to advice (including exterior painting, cleaning a fireplace chimney, and even how to fix a television set, and other practical do-it-yourself advice). A March 1956 article in *Twinbrook Life* described an eight-session Civil Defense course offered for Twinbrook residents, the final class of which “involves the preparation of shelters for use in this area.”¹⁵ Stories about the trials and tribulations of homeownership were also featured in

¹³ *Twinbrook Life*, April 26, 1955, p. 4.

¹⁴ See *Twinbrook Life*, January 27, 1955; February 25, 1955; and April 26, 1955.

¹⁵ “CD Classes Begin”, *Twinbrook Life*, March 1956, p. 6.

early issues of *Twinbrook Life*.¹⁶ Advertisers in *Twinbrook Life* included McIntyre Hardware, Abode Hardware (which advertised “do-it-yourself kits”) and from contractors such as Hearn Insulation and Improvement (offering insulation, replacement windows, awnings, patio covers and storm windows) which offered to provide “unique solutions to Twinbrook problems.”¹⁷

Interest in remodeling projects was capitalized on to raise money for community projects. In June 1953, the Homemakers Club organized an “Attic Tour” fundraising event “to acquaint homeowners with methods of finishing their attics.” For fifty cents, neighbors could tour the finished attics in ten Twinbrook homes: 13008 and 13004 Atlantic Avenue; 5706 Crawford Avenue; 5902 Lemay Road; 5814 Wainwright Avenue; 13115 Ardennes Avenue; 305 and 307 Patton Avenue; and 401 Cedar Lane.¹⁸ The event netted \$77.60 for the pre-school recreational program. The “Attic Tour” fundraisers appear to have continued through out the 1950s. A “Twinbrook Life” column in January 1958 comments that these “Attic Tours” are “Twinbrooks unique way of making a profit from neighborly nosiness.”¹⁹

Home remodeling was clearly a growth industry in Twinbrook. An ad in the *Montgomery County Sentinel* in March 1951 by Wilbur P. Davis, Building Contractor (formerly Engineer with U.S. Navy) boasted “Look What We Can Do” and listed a wide variety of repair and home improvement projects, as well as “chicken house” and “pig and pet pens” -- “No job too small, just give us a call”.²⁰ Other building supply businesses included Fisher Lumber, Rockville Fuel and Feed (a concrete supplier) and

¹⁶ See for example *Twinbrook Life*, October 15, 1954; January 27, 1955; and June 29, 1955.

¹⁷ *Twinbrook Life* February 25, 1955.

¹⁸ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, “Twinbrook Attic Tour Scheduled Sunday Afternoon” June 4, 1953, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, “Twinbrook Life”, January 9, 1958.

Wire Hardware Company.²¹ Paving Supply and Equipment Company, owned by Harris H. Thomson, provided free grading for the new Twinbrook pool in 1955²² – an example of creative marketing by a construction contractor. Hardware stores, including McIntyre Hardware in the new Twinbrook Shopping Center (which opened in 1956), offered paint, wallpaper and tools to complete most home improvement projects. Others offered materials to create simple furniture. In one ad, Leland L. Fisher Inc. urged readers to “Make Your Own ‘MODERN FURNITURE’” by fixing wrought iron legs onto flush doors – “available in various sizes from our stock.”²³ (Figure 3). Hechinger’s, a new type of “do-it-yourself hardware supermarket” chain, opened on the new Rockville bypass in 1957.²⁴

Some members of the local construction industry also held influential political positions, a potential conflict of interest that today would be carefully scrutinized. J. Lamar Kelly, the mayor of Rockville from 1946 to 1952, during the period of initial development of Twinbrook, was the owner of Standard Supplies, a building construction supply business. Whether there was any relation between Clyde W. Milor Plumbing and Heating, which advertised regularly in the *Montgomery County Sentinel* in the early 1950s, and J. Warren Milor, who served on the city council from 1952-54, is not known.²⁵

Twinbrook homes served as models for “do-it-yourself” home improvement projects for the Montgomery County region. The house at 327 Broadwood Drive in

²⁰ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, March 29, 1951, p. ___.

²¹ Correspondence with Eileen McGuckian, Peerless Rockville, February 26, 2008.

²² *Montgomery County Sentinel*, June 23, p. 1.

²³ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, March 18, 1954, p. 8.

²⁴ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, May 30, 1957.

²⁵ Correspondence with Eileen McGuckian, Peerless Rockville, March 24, 2008.

Twinbrook was featured as part of a decorating series – “Interiors with Ideas” in the October 13, 1955 issue of the *Montgomery County Sentinel*. Extolling the do-it-yourself ethic, the article reported that by using their own labor, ideas and inexpensive materials, the owners “have made their house look like the work of a high priced professional decorator”. Both husband and wife painted walls and their brick fireplace, built a divider to separate the dining room from the kitchen, built a “breakfast bar”, installed shelves for appliances, and created floor coverings and furniture for their home – “all done in their spare time.”²⁶

Home improvement projects not only made a house a home, saved money, and gave satisfaction to the homeowner. These projects also provided an opportunity for teaching children useful practical skills. In announcing that several Twinbrook boys had earned 4H awards, the “Twinbrook Life” columnist noted that the children had acquired skills in electrical wiring and home improvement by helping their parents with projects around their homes. Charles Linkow of Denfield “qualified for his award as a result of the carpentry, painting, papering and tiling he did as his father’s assistant in the completion of their attic.” Robert Graham of Okinawa Avenue helped built a recreation room in the basement of his family home.²⁷

Not only were “do-it-yourself” projects a new form of leisure activity in themselves, but they also provided an opportunity for neighborhood get-togethers and social gatherings. In June of 1956, for example, Frank Eckers held a “porch-warming” party to celebrate the completion of a screen porch addition to his house in North Twin

²⁶ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, “Twinbrook Home Shows Fruit of Owners Talent”, October 13, 1955, p. B1.

²⁷ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, “Twinbrook Life”, December 8, 1955, p. 3.

Brook which he “built with his own hands.” The clever invitation featured a picture of the screen porch covered with snow, and the words “Let’s Warm this Up”.²⁸

The “do-it-yourself” ethic was a key part of building the Twinbrook community. As early as 1952, Twinbrook residents were being recruited for projects to improve the community. A Twinbrook Life column in the *Montgomery County Sentinel* informed readers:

On Saturday afternoon, June 14, there will be a ‘work-day’ at the Recreation Area to build sand boxes, a wooden playhouse, and anything else that can be fashioned from the scrap lumber Messrs. Gingery and Gearheart (sic) have been kind enough to donate. All men who are interested please come and bring your own equipment. Nails will be furnished.²⁹

In the summer of 1955, volunteers helped build the Twinbrook community pool. Even the neighborhood children got involved, cutting wire ties to hold the concrete reinforcements in place.³⁰ The project was not without difficulties but was finally completed successfully.

The writer of a decorating column for the *Montgomery County Sentinel* enthusiastically declared 1955 as the “great year of the Do-It-Yourself”. “Husbands, wives and even children worked evenings and weekends to accomplish what they could not afford to have done professionally, and have the satisfaction of having done it themselves.”³¹ This “do-it-yourself” ethic permeated every aspect of community life in Twinbrook. Driveways, sidewalks, street improvements, swimming pools, school playgrounds, tree-planting – every physical aspect of Twinbrook life became a

²⁸ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, “Twinbrook Life” June 21, 1956, p. A-2.

²⁹ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, “Twin Brook”, June 9, 1952, p. 11.

³⁰ *Montgomery County Sentinel*, “Twinbrook Life”, July 7, 1955. p. ___.

³¹ Adele Chidaked, “Interiors with Ideas: Do-It-Yourself Leading 1955 Decorating Trends”, *Montgomery County Sentinel*, December 29, 1955, p. B-1.

community “do-it-yourself” project, with residents volunteering their talents and skills to improve their community.

3. Twinbrook Today.

The homes in Twinbrook and the people who live in them have continued to change over the years. Twinbrook neighborhood housing statistics compiled in April 2005 indicate that there are 3,391 single family homes in Twinbrook. While 63% of homes are owned by married households, 23% are one-person households. The average household size is now 2.8. This represents a substantial demographic shift from the large families with young children that predominated in the 1950s.

Despite these shrinking demographics, the size of Twinbrook homes continues to grow. Only 653 (19.25%) of the Twinbrook homes are under 1000 square feet in size, while 632 (18.6%) are over 1500 square feet. The majority of homes (62.15%) range between 1000 and 1500 square feet in size. During the period from 2000 to 2005, 270 (8%) of the homes in Twinbrook were expanded. The size of these additions ranged from under 100 square feet to over 3000 square feet, with most falling in the 100 to 1000 square foot range. One massive addition on Leahy Drive comprised 4321 square feet. These additions run the gamut from decks and porches to substantial two-story additions.

³² No longer can Twinbrook be described as a neighborhood “notable for its rhythmic rows of nearly identical houses”.³³

An Exterior Additions and Remodeling Survey was designed by the author and conducted by members of the George Washington University research team in February

³² “Twinbrook Neighborhood Housing Statistics” and “Twinbrook Building Sizes from Tax Records April 2005” from Twinbrook Neighborhood Study: Summary of Research Resources, City of Rockville, provided by Cindy Kebba, Historic Preservation Planner, City of Rockville, February 5, 2008.

³³ Barbara Kalabinski, “*Twinbrook: The History*” Goucher College, Frederick Maryland, 1998.

and March 2008. The results indicate that the exteriors of the vast majority of Twinbrook homes have been altered to varying degrees. The results of this survey are attached as an addendum to this paper. Figure 4 shows the streets which were included in the survey. The results of the Exterior Survey show that a vast majority of exteriors in Twinbrook have been modified in some way. Eighty-eight percent of the surveyed homes in Twinbrook have had at least modest alterations, such as gutters and downspouts. Seventy-six percent have had their original siding replaced, often with vinyl or aluminum. Residing often occurs in connection with additions or expansions, where the older siding is replaced to provide a uniform look. Where residing is evident, the original two-tone, two material siding (knotty pine and asbestos cement shingles) has usually been replaced with uniform siding treatments. Good examples of original siding do exist however. (Figure 5). Replacement windows are evident on 61% of homes surveyed. Most of these replacement windows do not maintain the design of the original windows, which were typically aluminum or steel casement windows. Many newer windows are double hung and bay windows have replaced many living room windows. (Figure 6). Even so, it is still possible to find intact examples of living room “window-walls” on some early Cape Cod models. (Figure 7).

The Exterior Survey also confirmed the expansion of Twinbrook homes. One-third of the home surveyed were identified as having visible one or two-story additions. Open space on Twinbrook residential lots has also be reduced as a result of home improvements. Detached sheds were observed in the back yards of 30% of Twinbrook

homes, and 63% of Twinbrook homes have fenced yards. Decks, patios, and landscaping have individualized the appearance of many Twinbrook homes.³⁴

A review of real estate listings in the Twinbrook neighborhood gives a glimpse into the current state of interior spaces of Twinbrook homes. A survey of real estate listings available online in February and March 2008 identified 35 homes for sale in Twinbrook. Many of these listings include interior photographs. Several include “virtual tours” of the listed property. Most of the listed homes reflect substantial interior remodeling. Typical interior alterations include painting (including painted brick fireplace mantels and painted paneling), finished second stories, second bathrooms, and remodeled kitchens (often with new cabinets, countertops and appliances). Some feature one or two-story additions. One particularly good example is the listing for 13313 Okinawa Avenue, a 1950 Cape Cod model, which includes a virtual tour on the interior and exterior. Another good listing is 6000 Lemay Road, a Levittown Ranch type built in 1952, with a virtual tour. The listing for 5908 Ridgeway provides a floor plan. The original four room first floor is readily discernable, as is the finished attic and expansive rear one story addition. (Figure 8).

4. Conclusion

The homes in Twinbrook were purposefully designed to be able to be adapted to the changing needs of Twinbrook residents. The history of Twinbrook is about the adoption of this “do-it-yourself” ethic both on an individual and a community level. The Twinbrook of today reflects the physical reality of the “do-it-yourself” home improvement ethic which came of age in the post-WWII era.

³⁴ It would be interesting, but beyond the scope of this paper, to investigate to what degree the types of alterations being made to Twinbrook homes reflect demographic and cultural changes over time.

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**Results of Exterior Additions and Remodeling Survey
Twinbrook Subdivision, Rockville Maryland
Conducted February and March 2008**

Street: Atlantic Avenue

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	41
Gutters:	41
Shutters:	17
Replacement Siding:	31
Missing Elements:	19
Replacement Windows:	19
Stoops and Railings:	23
Fences:	29
Sheds:	17
Garages and Carports:	9
One Story Additions (side):	11
One Story Additions (back):	5
Two Story Additions:	2
Porches:	6
Dormers:	2
Decks:	2
Other: Lamp post	1

Street: Vandegrift (Atlantic to Ardennes)

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	45
Gutters:	41
Shutters:	43
Replacement Siding:	41
Missing Elements:	28
Replacement Windows:	32
Stoops and Railings:	11
Fences:	32
Sheds:	10
Garages and Carports:	3
One Story Additions (side):	7
One Story Additions (back):	6
Two Story Additions:	6
Porches:	10
Dormers:	4
Decks:	3
Other:	0

Street: Vandegrift (Ardennes to LeMay)

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	27
Gutters:	25

Shutters:	11
Replacement Siding:	19
Missing Elements:	15
Replacement Windows:	18
Stoops and Railings:	13
Fences:	22
Sheds:	11
Garages and Carports:	2
One Story Additions (side):	1
One Story Additions (back):	5
Two Story Additions:	4
Porches:	6
Dormers:	2
Decks:	3
Other: Awnings 2; Mailbox 2	

Street: **LeMay (Vandegrif to Ardennes)**

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	<u>63</u>
Gutters:	56
Shutters:	30
Replacement Siding:	51
Missing Elements:	39
Replacement Windows:	50
Stoops and Railings:	29
Fences:	36
Sheds:	22
Garages and Carports:	2
One Story Additions (side):	5
One Story Additions (back):	7
Two Story Additions:	12
Porches:	9
Dormers:	9
Decks:	3
Other: Lamp posts 2; Awnings 5; Mailboxes 7	

Street: **Marcia Lane and Marcia Court**

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	<u>43</u>
Gutters:	36
Shutters:	8
Replacement Siding:	30
Missing Elements:	1
Replacement Windows:	19
Stoops and Railings:	20
Fences:	30
Sheds:	14
Garages and Carports:	16

One Story Additions (side):	0
One Story Additions (back):	3
Two Story Additions:	0
Porches:	5
Dormers:	0
Decks:	1
Other: (See notes)	

Street: **Castleford Avenue**

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	<u>8</u>
Gutters:	6
Shutters:	6
Replacement Siding:	7
Missing Elements:	0
Replacement Windows:	4
Stoops and Railings:	3
Fences:	1
Sheds:	2
Garages and Carports:	2
One Story Additions (side):	0
One Story Additions (back):	0
Two Story Additions:	0
Porches:	1
Dormers:	0
Decks:	0
Other:	0

Street: **Farragut Avenue**

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	<u>20</u>
Gutters:	12
Shutters:	10
Replacement Siding:	10
Missing Elements:	0
Replacement Windows:	8
Stoops and Railings:	8
Fences:	10
Sheds:	1
Garages and Carports:	7
One Story Additions (side):	8
One Story Additions (back):	0
Two Story Additions:	1
Porches:	3
Dormers:	0
Decks:	3
Other:	0

Street: **Carl Avenue**

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	<u>18</u>
Gutters:	16

Shutters:	3
Replacement Siding:	12
Missing Elements:	0
Replacement Windows:	12
Stoops and Railings:	13
Fences:	7
Sheds:	2
Garages and Carports:	1
One Story Additions (side):	0
One Story Additions (back):	1
Two Story Additions:	1
Porches:	3
Dormers:	0
Decks:	3
Other:	0

TOTALS
Street: **All**

<u>Houses Surveyed:</u>	<u>265</u>
Gutters:	233
Shutters:	128
Replacement Siding:	201
Missing Elements:	102
Replacement Windows:	162
Stoops and Railings:	120
Fences:	167
Sheds:	79
Garages and Carports:	42
One Story Additions (side):	32
One Story Additions (back):	26
Two Story Additions:	25
Porches:	43
Dormers:	17
Decks:	18
Other: Lamp posts 3; Awnings 7; Mailboxes 9	