

METROPOLITAN
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

To: Metropolitan Council
From: Metropolitan Historical Commission, Staff
Date: October 29, 2018
Re: BL2018-1344

An ordinance to amend the Geographic Information Systems Street and Alley Centerline Layer for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, by changing the name of Douglas Street and an Unnamed Right-of-Way to “Madison Station Boulevard.” (Proposal Number 2018M-004SR-001)

Background Information: The subject roadway, Douglas Street, is located in Madison, just west of Gallatin Pike and south of Old Hickory Boulevard [Figure 1]. Although it is between 80 and 100 years old, the origins for the road are much older and relate to the historic center of activity in Madison. Douglas Street and cross-streets Madison Street and Woodruff Street are located on land once owned by prominent Madisonian, Charles E. Woodruff; Douglas and Woodruff Streets are likely named for him and his descendants.

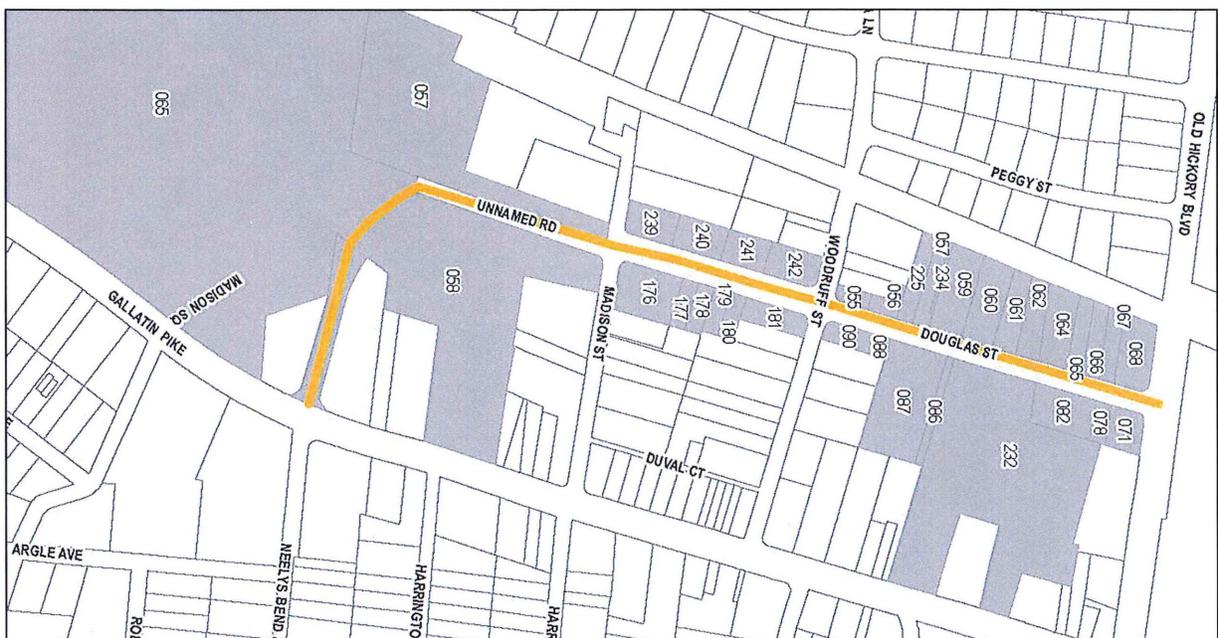


Figure 1: Exhibit produced by Metro Planning Department, 2018M-004SR-001. Gray shading identifies affected parcels.

Woodruff purchased the property in 1850 from the area's namesake, Madison Stratton. Railroad tracks would soon run along the property, serviced by the Madison Station railroad stop on the Woodruff property. The Madison Station railroad stop would be a center of activity for the area, and Madison Street (aka Madison Station Road and Madison Avenue), the road leading from Gallatin Pike to the station, appears on early maps of the area. Guy Alan Bockmon, author of *Madison Station*, describes:

In a deed registered on 14 September 1850, Madison Stratton sold to Charles E. Woodruff the land upon which would be erected Madison Station and across part of which would be cleared Depot Lane, since renamed Madison Street. ... On the east side of the tracks upon which would run the trains of cars of both the E&K [Edgefield & Kentucky] and the L&N [Louisville & Nashville] line, someone, presumably Madison Stratton, sited and built Madison Station. ... By 21 May 1857, the date of charter of Madison Station Post Office, traffic was moving through the station at mile 177.94.¹

According to Bockmon, Charles E. Woodruff was the wealthiest man in the area for decades. He was a farmer and merchant, operating a successful grocery on his property along Gallatin Pike, at the intersection of the road leading to Madison Station. While this same property appears on Foster's 1871 map, along with the road leading from Gallatin Pike to Madison Station, by this time his son William H. Woodruff was operating the family store [Figure 2].² In 1900, William H. and his wife T.A. Woodruff, sold the family store to E.R. Doolittle, who would also become an influential Madisonian.³

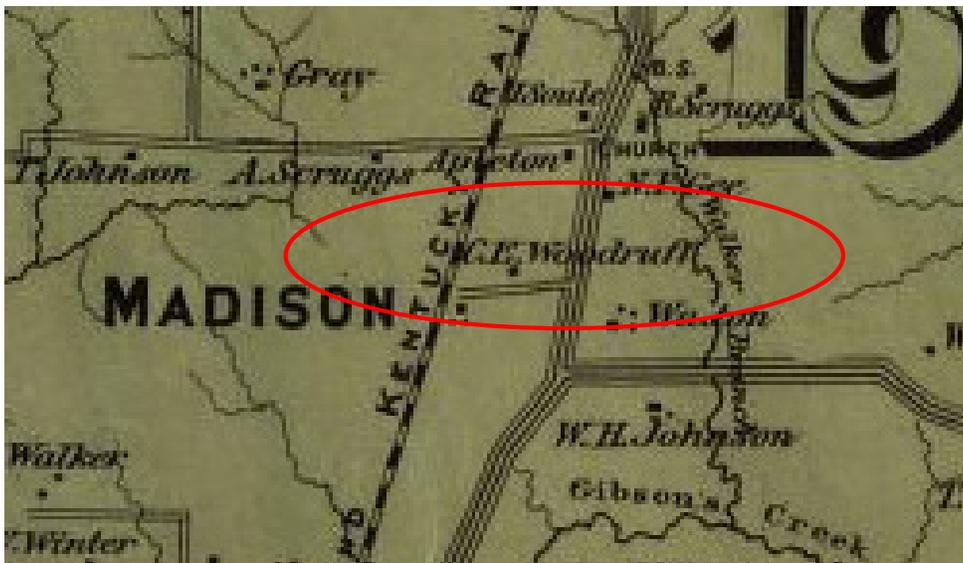


Figure 2: "Map of Davidson County Tennessee, from actual surveys made by order of the county court of Davidson County," 1871, Surveyed and Mapped by Wilbur F. Foster.

¹ Guy Alan Bockmon, *Madison Station* (Franklin, TN: Hillsboro Press 1997), 59.

² "Map of Davidson County Tennessee, from actual surveys made by order of the county court of Davidson County," 1871, available online through the Library of Congress, accessed 30 May 2017 <<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3963d.la000870/>>.

³ Bockmon, 103.

Bockmon reports that Sarah Elizabeth Woodruff, a daughter of Charles E. Woodruff, married William Bennett “W.B.” Douglas (aka Douglass, the historical record contains both spellings), who was born in Saundersville, Tennessee.⁴ In 1892, Charles E. Woodruff conveyed to Sarah a portion of his property,

‘Being situated at Madison Station Beginning at a point in the center of the Gallatin Turnpike where the road to Madison Station intersects said Turnpike,’ west to the railroad then north to ‘the North side of a 24 foot lane crossing the railroad on a bridge...’ The property lines continued around others, skirted south of ‘the School House lot’ to the Turnpike and thence south to the beginning. The ‘lane crossing the railroad’ would become Woodruff Street.⁵

In 1893, Charles E. Woodruff conveyed six acres to son William H. Woodruff “near the north end of the Depot Grounds at Madison Station.”⁶ Historical Commission staff did not complete detailed genealogy research for the Woodruff family, or deed research for all affected parcels, but staff was able to determine that Sarah Elizabeth Woodruff Douglass and W.B. Douglass eventually settled in Franklin, Kentucky, where W.B. would become president of the Franklin Kentucky Mills at Gallatin, Tennessee, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Franklin Kentucky Mills at Franklin.⁷ Mary “Elizabeth” Douglass, their daughter, married Wendell H. Levine and settled in Nashville, where Wendell was an attorney in partnership with his brother Alfred at Levine & Levine.⁸ These relationships connect the names of Woodruff and Douglas streets and the Douglas-Levine Subdivision to the Woodruff, Douglass, and Levine families.

Today, while the area contains a mix of property types, most of the remaining residential structures date from the 1930s.

Douglas Street: Douglas Street was platted by the *Douglas-Levine Subdivision*, recorded on May 6, 1924 [Figure 3].⁹ The Douglas-Levine plat shows Douglas Street, with a width of 50 to 50.4 feet, running northward from its terminus at a “Road” along the southern border of the subdivision, crossing Woodruff Street, and continuing north about 650 feet.¹⁰ Gallatin Pike and L&N Railroad serve as the east and west boundaries of the subdivision, respectively.

⁴ “W.B. Douglass Dies in Franklin, KY,” *Nashville Tennessean*, Wednesday Morning, 18 June 1930, 3.

⁵ Bockmon, 83, citing Deed Book 178, pages 82-3, RODC.

⁶ Bockmon, 83, citing Deed Book 174, page 412, RODC.

⁷ “W.B. Douglass Dies in Franklin, KY,” *Nashville Tennessean*, Wednesday Morning, 18 June 1930, 3.

⁸ *1916 City Directory*, Marshall-Bruce-Polk Company Publishers, Nashville, TN, 427.

⁹ *Douglas-Levine Subdivision*. Drawn by S.M. McMurray Engineering Co., April 1924. Recorded on May 6, 1924, Plat Book 547, page 44, RODC.

¹⁰ Measurements estimated according to lot size. The “Road” is the road currently known as Madison Street.

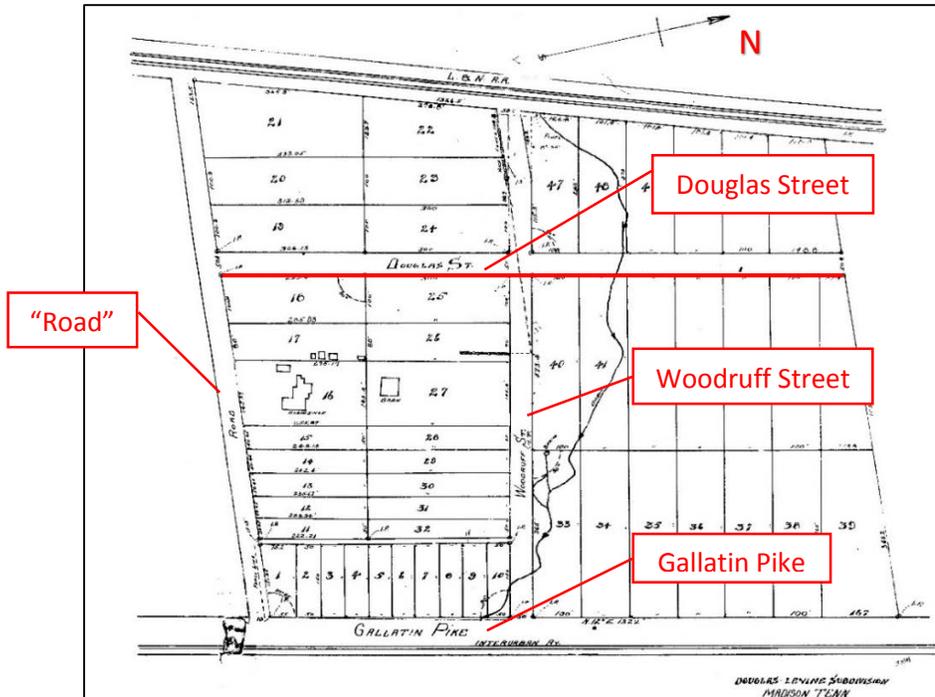


Figure 3: Douglas-Levine Subdivision, 1924.

The *Map Showing Subdivision of the West Part of N.V. Cox Home Place at Madison*, surveyed by Erle Drake, County Surveyor, on April 19, 1933, shows the continuation of Douglas from the northern terminus shown on the Douglas-Levine plat, northward about 388 feet to its terminus with Old Hickory Boulevard [Figure 4].¹¹ Here, Drake has drawn Douglas with a consistent width of 50 feet. The “Road” shown on the Douglas-Levine plat is now labeled as Madison Station Road. Again, Gallatin Pike and L&N Railroad serve as east and west boundaries for the development.

¹¹ Measurements estimated according to lot size. Recorded in Chancery Court Plat Book 3, page 24 and also Misc. Plat Book 2, page 148. Exact dates unknown.

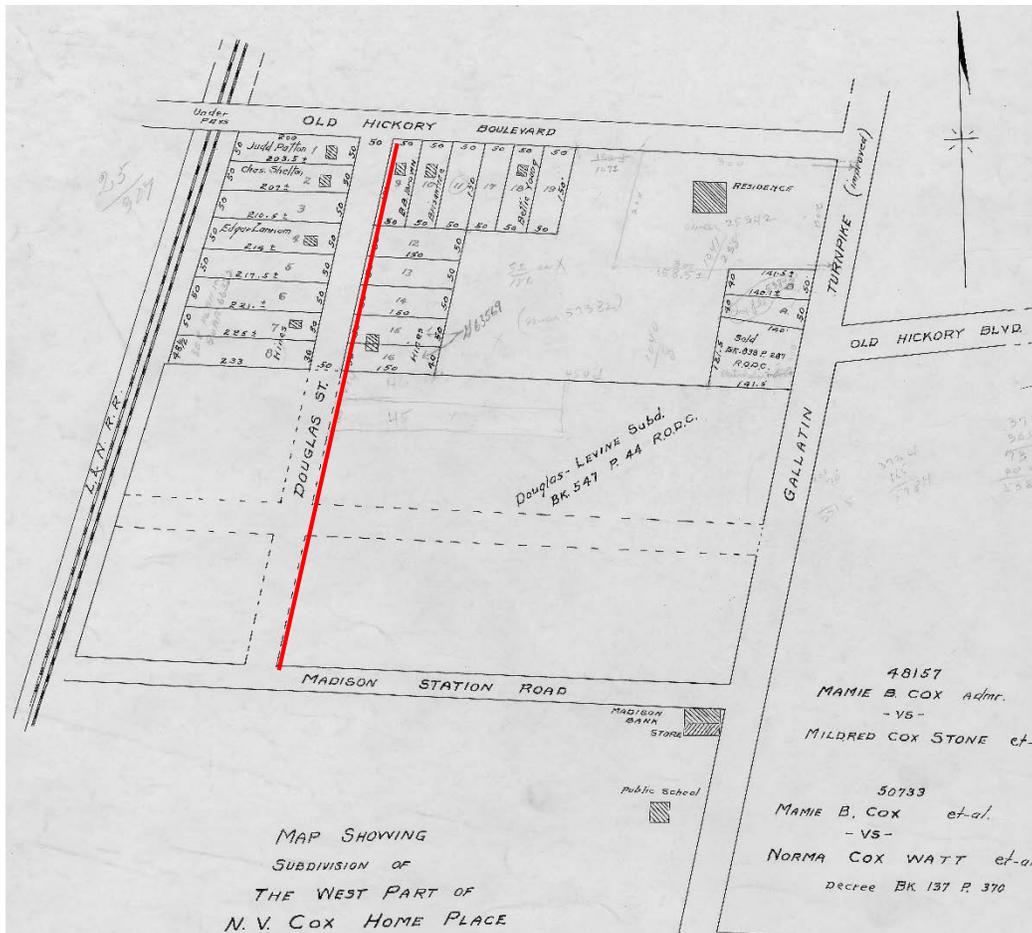


Figure 4: Map Showing Subdivision of the west part of N.V. Cox Home Place, 1933

The Quarterly County Court of Davidson County did not accept Douglas Street as a county road until October 1935.¹² By this action, which also ordered the placement of Douglas Street on the District Road System, Douglas Street officially ran from Madison Avenue, also known as Madison Station Road, to Woodruff Street, a distance of about 616.13 feet, or 0.12 mile.¹³

At its meeting in January 1936, the Quarterly Court approved the northward continuation of Douglas Street, from Woodruff Street to Old Hickory Boulevard, a distance of about 1035 feet,

¹² Douglas Street does not appear in the Davidson County Highway Commission's 1931 Code Book, which is the oldest of the code books in the collection of the Metropolitan Government Archives. The "List of pikes and roads comprising the road system of Davidson County as shown on road map adopted by County Court in 1919, and supplement road map adopted by County Court at its July Term, 1931," which begins on page 39 of the 1931 Code, contains comprehensive updates to the 1919 General Road Map of Davidson County. Douglas Street appears in the next code book, which was published in 1936.

¹³ Davidson County Highway Commission, 1936 Code Book, page 40. The source length for Douglas Street, also known as Project 11-CQ, was provided by subdivision plan. See also, Davidson County Court Minute Book T, page 404, October 7, 1935. Measurement units differ by source: Code Book uses miles, Quarterly Court uses feet.

or 0.2 mile, under the condition that “property owners deposit with the Highway Commission during the month of January 1936, the sum of \$400.00, to take care of drainage, as set out in the report attached, of the Engineer, to said petition.”¹⁴ The next fall, in October 1937, when the Quarterly Court reviewed appropriations to the Davidson County Highway Commission for the district road fund, the list of projects to be funded included Douglas Street and Woodruff Street. The appropriation allotted \$1,250.00 for Douglas Street, from Woodruff Street to Halls Lane (aka Old Hickory Boulevard), and \$750.00 for Woodruff Street, from “present terminus” to Gallatin Pike.¹⁵ Along with reviewing legislation to cover the appropriation to the Davidson County Highway Commission, the Quarterly Court also heard legislation to cover approval for the acceptance of county roads, resolving:

That upon recommendation of the Davidson County Highway Commission, that the following roads be accepted for construction of these roads, along the lines set out, to serve the general public of the County...

1. Woodruff Street, 11th Dist. From its present terminus to the Gallatin Pike, a distance of about 365 feet.
2. Douglas Street, 11th Dist. From Woodruff Street to Halls Lane, a distance of about 1103 feet. ...

Be it Further resolved, that the above named roads be accepted, and that Woodruff Street, Douglas Street ... within the limits set out, be placed on the District Road System ...¹⁶

When the Davidson County Highway Commission issued its 1940 Code Book, which was effective January 2, 1940, Douglas Street was essentially complete and as it appears today. Douglas Street now measured 0.33 mile in its entirety, running from its southern terminus at Madison Street to its northern terminus with Old Hickory Boulevard.¹⁷

Unnamed Road: The subject “Unnamed Road” appears as a “private roadway” on the plat of *Section One of Madison South Central* recorded on August 17, 1970 [Figure 5].¹⁸ The roadway appears to be the same tract of land described as Tract II, “Being a 50 foot private roadway connecting Tract No. 1 hereinabove described with the south margin of Madison Street,” in a warranty deed transferring property from Madison Square Shopping Center, Inc., to Chemical Securities Company in July 1965.¹⁹ This area, which contains about 0.68 acres, is likely the same property conveyed by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County (for the use and benefit of the Metropolitan Board of Education) to Madison Square Shopping Center, Inc., in February 1965.²⁰

¹⁴ Davidson County Court Minute Book T, page 425, January 6, 1936.

¹⁵ Davidson County Court Minute Book V, page 15, October Term 1937. The appropriation was for the Quarter ending January 31, 1938.

¹⁶ Davidson County Court Minute Book V, Page 17, October Term 1937.

¹⁷ Davidson County Highway Commission, 1940 Code Book, page 39.

¹⁸ Plat Book 4350, page 155, RODC.

¹⁹ Recorded July 1, 1965 in Book 3908, page 3, RODC.

²⁰ Recorded on February 2, 1965 in Book 3856, page 267; rerecorded on February 10, 1965 in Book 3859, page 132, RODC.

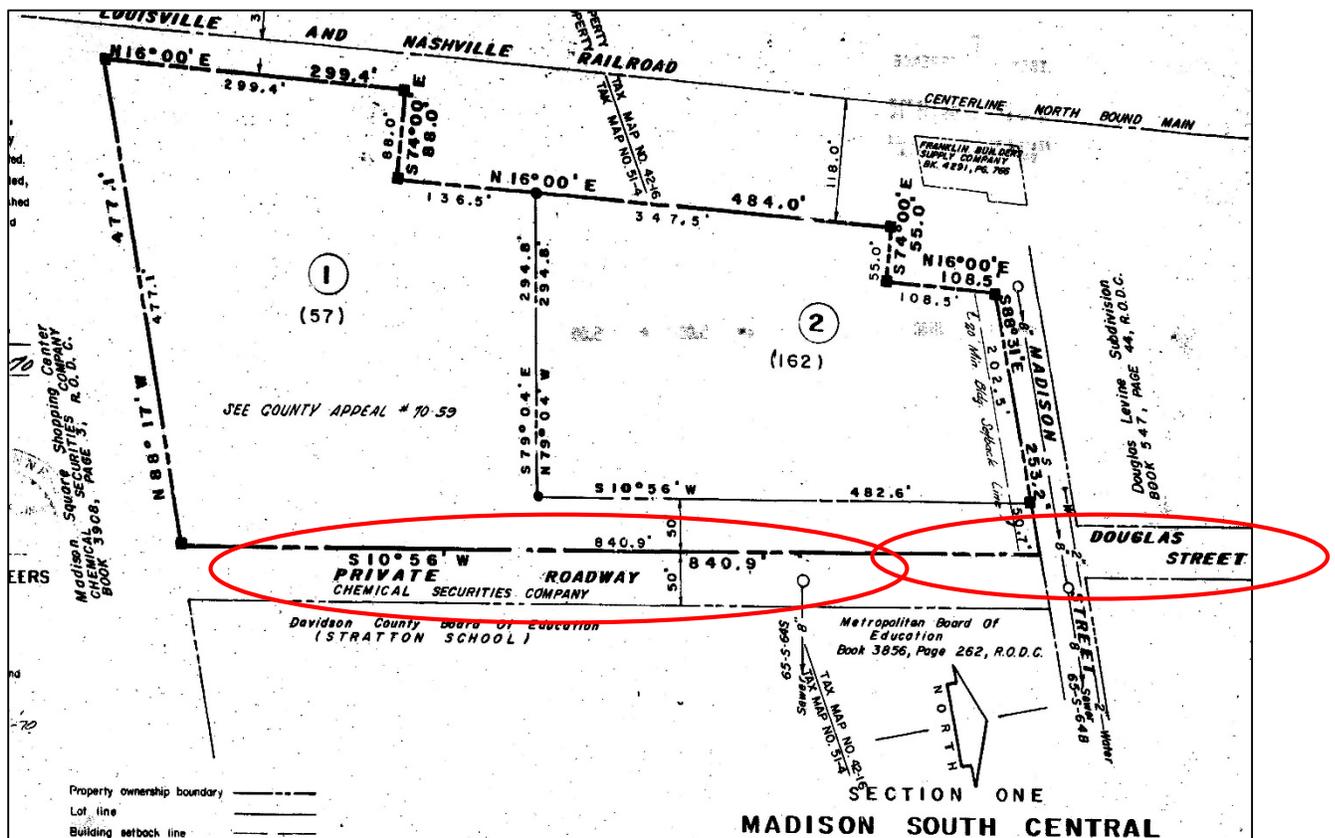


Figure 5: Section One, Madison South Central, 1970.

Additional Information (Madison Street and Woodruff Street): The origin of Douglas Street is connected to the history of Madison Street and Woodruff Street. Madison Street is, essentially, the former Madison Station Road that led from Gallatin Pike to the Madison Station railroad station; it was also known as Madison Avenue. However, like Douglas, it is possible that its formal designation by the Quarterly Court may have lagged behind its actual construction. On April 7, 1924, the Quarterly Court of Davidson County accepted Madison Avenue as a county road and ordered its placement on the road map, “Beginning at a point on the Gallatin Pike, near Doolittle’s Store, and running in a westerly direction 10 feet each side of a dividing line, for a distance of approximately 1100 feet to Madison Station.”²¹ The road was then recorded in the Davidson County Highway Commission’s 1931 Code Book as a “new” street running 0.2 mile from Gallatin Pike to Madison Station.²² There does not appear to be an official legislative order changing the name of Madison Avenue to Madison Street. Rather, the 1936 Code Book uses “Street,” noting Madison Street as running 0.36 mile from Mrs. Crittendon’s to Madison Station,

²¹ Davidson County Court Minute Book O, page 220, April 7, 1924. Case begins on page 220, but code books cite page 222.

²² Davidson County Highway Commission, 1931 Code Book, page 29. Madison Avenue is recorded as Project 11-AT.

with previous names given as Harris Avenue and Madison Avenue.²³ Currently, this road is known as Madison Street on the west side of Gallatin Pike and Harris Street on the east side of Gallatin Pike, in the Crittendon Estates, although both segments were briefly known as Madison Street in the 1940s.

Woodruff Street, like Douglas Street, appears on the plat for the *Douglas-Levine Subdivision* [Figure 3], and similar to Douglas Street, the Quarterly Court approved its development in two phases. The Quarterly Court accepted Woodruff Street, “from Douglas St. easterly for about 373.4 ft.,” as a county road and ordered its placement on the District Road System in October 1935.²⁴ In October 1937, as reported earlier, the court approved expansion of Woodruff all the way to Gallatin Pike, increasing the length of the road from 0.07 to 0.14 mile.²⁵

Summary:

Douglas Street and an Unnamed Road comprise the subject roadway proposed for renaming. Douglas Street was platted in 1924, accepted as a county road for placement on the General Road Map of Davidson County in October 1935, and extended in October 1937. The Unnamed Road has served as a private roadway.

²³ Davidson County Highway Commission, 1936 Code Book, page 41. Handwritten edits have changed Project 11-AT, the original code for Madison Avenue, to 11-DP, which is how it will appear in subsequent code books. Other edits by the entry for Douglas Street have corrected Madison Avenue to Madison Street, along with changing the end point of Douglas from Woodruff to Old Hickory Boulevard (page 40).

²⁴ Davidson County Court Minute Book T, page 404, October 7, 1935.

²⁵ Davidson County Highway Commission, 1936 Code Book, page 42. The source length for Woodruff Street, also known as Project 11-CP, was provided by subdivision plan.