21. Cramer-Parsons House

52-54 East Lorain

6. Specific Address or Location

52-54 East Lorain

6a. Lot, Section or VMD Number

0900076102018

7. City or Village

Oberlin

9. U.T.M. Reference

Quadrangle Name: Oberlin

17 398229 4572158

Easting Northing

10. Classification: Building

11. On National Register? NO

13. Part of Established Hist. Dist? NO

14. Other Designation (NR or Local)

15. Other Designation (NR or Local)

16. Thematic Associations:

AGRICULTURE

EDUCATION

Civil War

c. 1870 1/6. Alteration Date(s) c. 1904

18. Style Class and Design

Element Queen Anne

Dominant No academic style - Vernacular

18a. Style of Addition or Elements(s)

19. Architect or Engineer

20. Contractor or Builder

21. Building Type or Plan

22. Original Use, if apparent

Single Dwelling Double

23. Present Use

Multiple Dwelling

24. Ownership Private

25. Owner's Name & Address, if known

26. Property Acreage 1.37

27. Other Surveys

28. No. of Stories Two story

29. Basement? Yes

30. Foundation Material Stone bearing

31. Wall Construction Balloon/western/platform frame

32. Roof Type Gable

33. Roof Material Asphalt shingle

34. Exterior Wall Material(s)

Asbestos/asphalt siding Wood shingle

35. Plan Shape Irregular

36. Changes associated with 17/17b Dates:

17a. Original/Most significant construct

17b. Substantial alteration/addition

37. Window Type(s)

1 over 1

38. Building Dimensions

39. Endangered? NO

By What?

40. Chimney Placement

Multiple random

41. Distance from & Frontage on Road

40' approx

42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features (Continued on Reverse if Necessary)

Two markedly different architectural styles divide this building into two portions - what appears as half an elaborate, pink Queen Anne house on the west, and a more plain, green, vernacular side hallway house on the east - which seem to have been at some point joined. The main (south) facade of the building includes the Queen Anne portion on the left and the side hallway house on the right. The latter projects further forward due to the presence of a two-story front addition, which has a cinder block rather than stonework foundation - the roofline of this addition's south-facing gable sits slightly lower than that of the original roof, forming a sort of double gable. In line with the side hallway building plan, the front door is located at the extreme left of the house. A wood entablature and fluted pilasters surround this door, which has a large window with 15 lights. To the right of the door are 3 1/2 double hung windows in the first story, and 4 above these in the second. The front south-facing gable has boxed cornices, while the second is not readily visible. The east elevation includes only the green side hallway house. A set of wood stairs decorates continued...

43. History and Significance (Continue on Reverse if necessary)

Though it has not been determined when or how this property came by its unusual combination of architectural styles, the house in some form seems to have been constructed at some point before 1873, when the address first appears in the city directory. The first known resident was Mrs. Mary Cramer, who according to the census lived in Oberlin by 1870, possibly at this location. Mary Cramer had three daughters, Mary Melissa, Olivia, who attended the Oberlin Conservatory from 1869-70, and Lucy M., who studied at the OC Preparatory Department as well as the conservatory between 1870 and 1873. By 1877, Ralzman (also spelled Ralzman) Parsons, a farmer, and his family had commenced a long occupancy. Born in Connecticut and residing for much of his early life in New York, Ralzman Parsons seems

44. Description of Environment and Outbuildings (See #52)

This building is located close to the center of town on a two-lane road with quite a bit of traffic. A church is next door, and there is an alleyway with some parking to the rear. The lot also contains a two-door garage (with one door painted pink and the other green) as well as a carriage house to the north of the building.

45. Sources of Information


46. Prepared By: Patricia Murphy

47. Organization: Oberlin Heritage Center


49. PIR Reviewer:

50. PIR Review Date:
| 1. No. | LOR-1905-21 |
| 2. County | Lorain |
| 3. Historic or Other Name(s) | Cramer-Parsons House |

54. Farmstead Plan:

- **Door Selection:** Two doors symmetrical
- **Door Position:** Altered
- **Orientation:** Multiple facade orientation
- **Symmetry:** Multiple symmetrical arrangement

8. Site Plan with North Arrow:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E. Lorain</th>
<th>North</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>N</td>
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Report Associated With Project:

NADB #: [Image]
by a wood trellis leads to a metal screen door at left in the second story. The first story contains 1 narrow rectangular window and 3 1/1 double hung windows; above those in the second story are 3 more 1/1 double hung windows. Facing south again, the main facade of the pink Queen Anne portion features a one-story front porch on the left, with 4 turned spindle posts supporting a flat roof, and turned balusters linking them to frame the steps and doorway. A large rectangular window with several small square lights surrounding a larger central pane, divided by a mullion down the center, is located to the left of the 3-paneled wood front door, which has a small 3-paneled window in the upper fourth. To the right of the porch, set slightly back, a cutaway bay extends up for two stories, with 1/1 double hung windows in each of the three sides in both stories. A narrow section adjoins this bay and the side hallway. Since the Queen Anne architecture abruptly ends, giving the impression of a house cut in half, the bay has a tower-like appearance. The west elevation includes only the pink Queen Anne section. At right, the one-story portion behind the porch juts out from the rest of the house; it contains a smaller version of the window to the left of the door, with smaller square lights framing a large central light. Left of this and set back, the first story of the two-story portion has 3 1/1 double hung windows, and the second story has four. In the north elevation, at the back of the building, the two portions are most overtly connected, by means of an added back entry in the center with vertical wood siding. This addition includes identical screen doors leading to each portion, as well as a 4-panel wood door in between, with a transom with two lights above, topped by a flat hood.

43. History and Significance (Cont')

To have relocated his family from Lagrange to Oberlin in 1874. Ralysman and his wife Esther Bianta (nee Nobles) had four children, son Zavalah and daughters Justitia, Villette, and Antoinette Corrine, called Nettie. By 1880, Ralysman's elderly parents also resided with the family; at that time his father David was 93 and his mother Harriet was 87. David Parsons passed away in 1882, with Harriet following him four years after. All of Ralysman's children attended some branch of Oberlin College. Zavalah studied at the Preparatory Department from 1871-73; in 1872, he contracted the measles, ruining his eyesight and health. A year later in 1873, he was married to Mary E. Blanchard. Justicia attended the Preparatory Department and the College sporadically between 1871 and 1877. In 1880, she continued to live at home and worked in bookkeeping until her marriage to Alfred Samuel Sakellar in 1883. Villette Parsons graduated from the College in 1888. In 1894, she married John Sakellar, his father's cousin. In 1899, Nettie graduated from the Oberlin School of Commerce, as a graduate of both OHS and the Oberlin in the mid-1940s. He had long been afflicted with a family disease, and from Lagrange to Oberlin in 1874. Ralysman's wife, Esther, continued living here in 1902, but by 1904 she had moved out of the house, it is after the departure of the Parsons family that the house was permanently divided into a duplex with two addresses: the 1904 city directory lists 54 and 52 East Lorain at this location, where previous directories had recorded only 54. The Sanborn fire insurance maps seem to have been behind the city directories, with both the 1904 and 1911 versions including just the 54 address; by 1911, however, the floor plan appears divided into two sections on the maps. Possibly, then, around the turn of the century, with the end of the single-family Parsons occupancy, was when the house was somehow altered to yield its current state of incongruent architectural styles. In 1904, the city directory lists A. L. Werner, a cutter, his wife Mary C. and their daughter Marjorie at 52 and W. S. Firestone, a life insurance agent, his wife Marjorie and a Camille Firestone at 54. By 1908, two different families had moved in. John E. McKeen, his wife Emily E. and their children Edith Elliot (OH 1911) and Sidney E. lived at 52. McKeen had a wealth of experience working in education, and was doing university extension work as the state manager for the Interstate School of Correspondence moving to Oberlin in 1908. He was instrumental in starting the Oberlin Summer School of Methods for teachers in 1909, serving as superintendent. The Askews resided just next door to the McKeans at number 54 by 1908. Harry S. Askew worked as a salesmen at a furniture store; he and his wife Hattie E. had two daughters, Vida Larone, who attended the Oberlin Conservatory in 1907, and Mabel Beatrice, a student at Oberlin College, from which she graduated as a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Mabel went on to a career in education, serving as teacher and principal at Prospect Street school and as principal of the junior high school in Oberlin by 1924. The McKeans and Askews both lived in this house through 1910, but by 1916 different residents occupied each address. A Mrs. Elizabeth H. Willson was listed at 52 and a W. A. Humm at 54. W. A. Humm owned greenhouses on East Lorain starting in 1916 which the 1924 publication edition of the Oberlin News described as 'modern and progressive.' They do a general greenhouse business, and besides the growing of plants and flowers of all kinds- make a specialty of catering to those who are interested in the horticulture of plants. 'Humm had moved out of the house by 1920, but Elizabeth Willson stayed on in 52. By then she seemed to be serving as landlady for that portion of the house, letting rooms to three other residents: Peter Tramko, a clerk for Gibson Brothers; George Landig, a student; and Milan H. Avery, retired from his job as a painter. Avery was twice divorced, from his first wife, Emily Glover around 1899, and from his second wife, Emma Augusta Matthews, at some point before 1920. Avery, a Civil War veteran of the 86th Ohio Infantry and 2nd Ohio Cavalry, died in 1922. Elizabeth Willson probably resided at 52 into the 1920s before departing for her daughter's home in Pennsylvania, where she died in 1925. Next door to Mrs. Willson and her tenants in 1920 lived a tailor, Samuel Zipper, his wife Bess and two children. By 1927 the West family resided at 52 and the Herros family at 54. Theodore H. West, a clerk at the post office, and his wife Gladys lived here through 1933; G. P. Herros, the proprietor of the Campus Restaurant, his wife Gretchen and one child had moved on by then, with John S. Diekhoff, an instructor at Oberlin College, and his wife Vera moving in next to the Wests in 1933. The Diekhoffs resided at 54 until 1940. Theodore West had sold 52 to a fellow post office clerk, Clarence Berg, by 1935. Clarence's wife, Hildreth Barone Berg, was a graduate of both OHS and the Oberlin Business College; she served as clerk at the Oberlin Draft Board during WWII. In 1937 52 sat vacant, with Walter C. Carpenter and his wife Ann taking residency there the next year. Their daughter Jean Ann was born in 1938. After the Diekhoffs departed 54 in 1940, Joseph R. Reichard, another Oberlin College instructor, moved in with his wife Anita. The Reichards resided here through 1942. In 1943 Mrs. Frank Schubert occupied 52 for at least two years. By 1948 both addresses had new residents. John Sakellar, his wife Nancy and their two children, John and Susan, lived at 52 by then, moving in with his parents at 66 N. Pleasant later that year. Sakellar, a graduate of OHS (1939) and former student at the Oberlin School of Commerce, helped his father Gust with the management of the Campus Restaurant upon returning to Oberlin in the mid-1940s. He had long been afflicted with a kidney ailment, and after suffering from an acute attack in August of 1948 died at age 26. The Kohut family resided at 54 next to the Sakellars in 1948, including Joseph W. Kohut, a bodyman for Mazza Pontiac Sales and Service, his wife Jean and one child. By 1956, the Phelps family occupied 52. Dowden C. Phelps, a machine operator, his wife Louise and their three children continued to live here through 1961. Erwin A. Albers and his wife Marcella lived in 54 in 1956; by 1961, Marcella Albers resided here alone, working as an inspector for General Ind. Charles Woodrum, his wife Patricia and their three children were the residents of 52 by 1970. Next door to the Woodrums in 54 lived Carl Pease, a farmer, his five children, and wife Marcella, possibly the former Marcella Albers (widow of Erwin?) who lived here in 1961. Carl Pease continued to be listed at 54 until 1991.
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<th>1. No.</th>
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<td>5. Historic or Other Name(s)</td>
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45. Sources (Con’t)