

REALTORS NAME PARKSIDE; RIDLEY AND PROSPECT PARK

First signs of organized real estate developments are evident in the naming and planning of three county boroughs – Parkside, Ridley Park and Prospect Park.

All residential areas – the boroughs took their names from names given by real estate companies that planned the developments. These names mark, perhaps the beginning of a trend now very much apparent throughout the county.

New home development names all have something in common. The titles are given with commercial ulterior motives and are therefore pleasant and residential sounding. A builder is not so concerned with historical nicknames for areas – he wants to sell houses. Buyers in a strictly residential area will be attracted more readily to a name like Willowdale Estates than Jones' Junction.

With this business idea probably in mind, the Parkside Real Estate Improvement Company named their home sites Parkside when they developed this area north of Chester. The name Parkside was picked appropriately because the property was adjacent to Chester Park – on the side of the Park – Parkside.

Likewise, the Ridley Park Building Association was formed on May 26, 1871 for the purpose of developing a residential area on land purchased in Ridley Township. The name Ridley was obviously taken from the township (Ridley Township was named for early settler John Simcock's home – Ridley – in Cheshire, England.) The "Park" was added to indicate a residential development.

R. Morris Copeland drew up the original plans for Ridley Park. The development's location was perhaps most influenced by the improvement of the Pennsylvania, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad. The new line brought the railroad through this area and like so many other county developments – Ridley Park grew up around the railroad station.

Prospect Park was originally known as Moores. This name is still evident – the Prospect Park railroad station is still called Moore. There's an interesting story behind this.

J.L. Moore owned most of the land over which the railroad tracks are laid. In deeding this land to the railroad on May 5, 1873, he specified that the station and the buildings built there should be known as Moore. The railroad is still bound by this deed.

Prospect Park was planned in 1875 by John Cochran and Sons. The borough was probably named for Prospect Hill – where the name is evidenced by the Prospect Hill Cemetery which has gravestones dated as early as 1811 and the Prospect Hill Baptist Church, built in 1832.