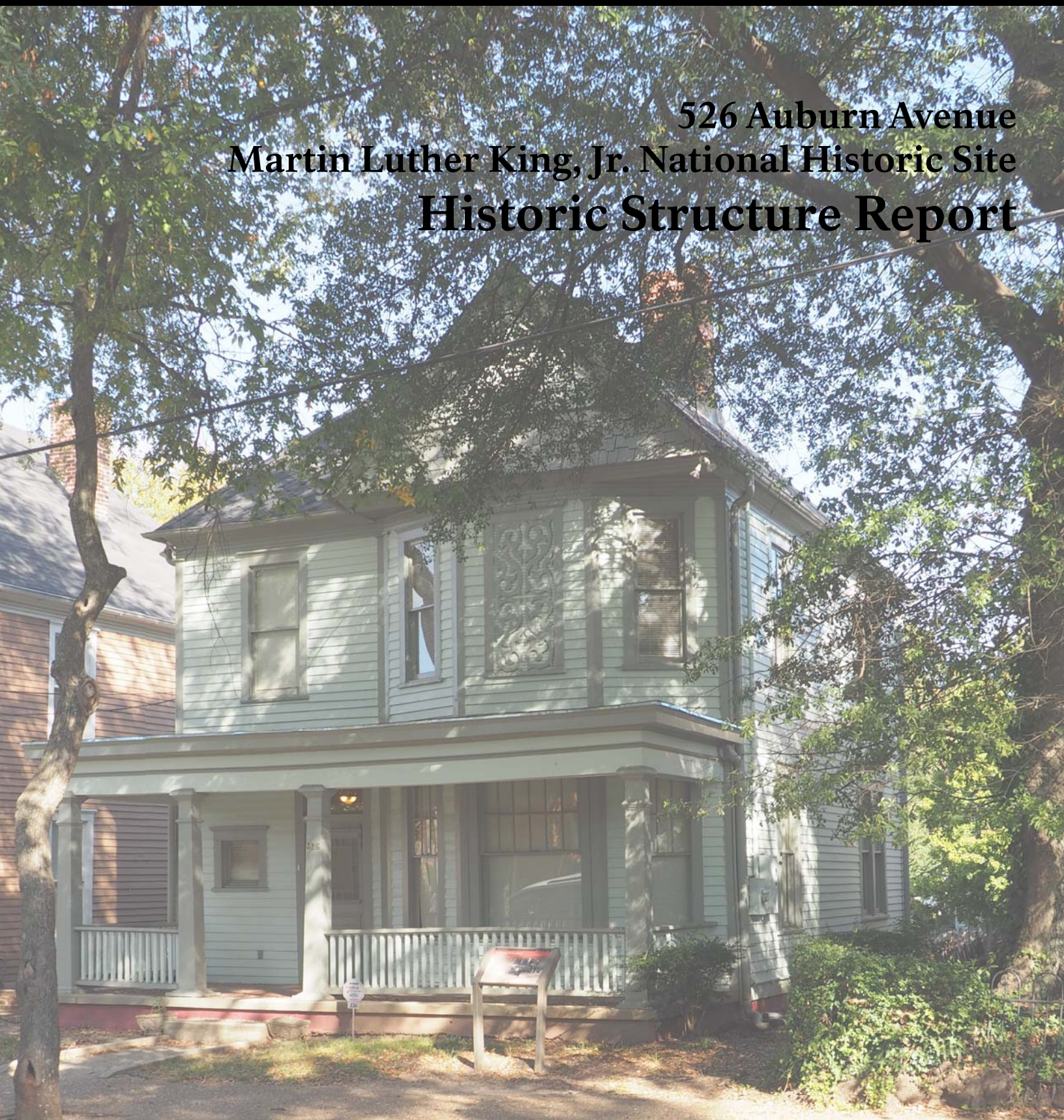




526 Auburn Avenue Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Historic Structure Report



Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science Division
Southeast Region

526 Auburn Avenue

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site

Historic Structure Report

May 2017

Prepared by:

WLA Studio

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Under the direction of

National Park Service

Southeast Regional Office

Cultural Resources, Partnerships, & Science Division



The report presented here exists in two formats. A printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeastern Regional Office of the National Park Service, and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, this report also exists in a web-based format through ParkNet, the website of the National Park Service. Please visit www.nps.gov for more information.

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About the cover: View of 526 Auburn Avenue, 2016.

526 Auburn Avenue

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site

Historic Structure Report

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Foreword

We are pleased to make available this Historic Structure Report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the historic structures and cultural landscapes of National Park Service units in the Southeast Region. A number of individuals contributed to the successful completion of this work; but we would particularly like to thank the Project Team who authored the report. The authors would like to thank the staff at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site who assisted with the project, including Chief of Interpretation, Education and Cultural Resource Management Rebecca Karcher, then Acting Facility Manager Gina Belknap, and Museum Technician Leah Berry, the Park staff who assisted with the inspection of historic structures, and Historical Architect Danita Brown, AIA and Historical Architect Jessica Kelly both of the Southeast Regional Office for their assistance. We hope that this study will prove valuable to park management in ongoing efforts to preserve the historic structure and to everyone in understanding and interpreting this unique resource.

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2017

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Management Summary

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Executive Summary

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this historic structure report (HSR) is to document the construction history and current condition of 526 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia, in the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site (MALU) and to provide recommendations for the building's treatment and use. This HSR will guide the National Park Service in the stewardship of this historic resource.

The report includes *Part I.A: Developmental History*, *Part I.B: Chronology of Development and Use*, *Part I.C: Physical Description*, and *Part II: Treatment and Use*. Part I provides a brief review of the historical development of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Birth Home Block, known historical construction, owner, and tenant information for the structure at 526 Auburn Avenue, and information about the transfer of the property to the National Park Service. A chronology of the structure's physical development and use provides information on the original core of the building. The chronology also explains how the building changed and expanded over time. This information as derived largely from physical investigations with the addition of historical documentation as available. A current physical description based on building investigations and assessment using non-destructive methods provides a systemic accounting of all features, materials, and spaces. A list of character-defining features and a summary assessment of the building's current condition are also included. Part II provides recommendations for the treatment and use of 526 Auburn Avenue.

A bibliography provides the sources of information this report references. Appendices include period plans, and a chain of title document, scaled drawings of existing conditions, and a resource location map.

Historical Overview

Atlanta began as a small town named Terminus that developed around the junction of the Southern Railway and the Western & Atlantic Railroad. Following the devastation in the south during the Civil War, the city, renamed Atlanta, became the capitol of Georgia in 1868 with a population of over 22,000 persons. In the years approaching the end of the 1800s, African Americans constituted

about 40 percent of Atlanta's population. As the population of the city grew, early urban development of Atlanta followed the routes of the rail and streetcar lines that radiated from the railroad terminal.¹

The layout of Auburn Avenue reflects Atlanta's commercial and residential growth beginning in the 1870s and the impact race relations had on urban and suburban development into the twentieth century. Race relations in Atlanta were tense at the turn of the twentieth century, and as the black middle class thrived, these relations worsened. Heightened racial tensions exacerbated by the Race Riot of 1906 resulted in the relocation of many white residents, who had originally built houses in areas such Auburn Avenue. Because Atlanta's Fourth Ward residential areas included both black and white neighborhoods, many of the blocks vacated by whites became predominantly black neighborhoods in the following decades. By 1910, many of the residences were either black-owned or rented, and Auburn Avenue thrived as a hub of black businesses, residences, and schools.²

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was born at 501 Auburn Avenue in 1929. He lived and attended school in the neighborhood until 1941 when his family relocated because of the decline of the area. The effects of the Great Depression, coupled with overcrowding, led to the dilapidation of many structures within black residential areas in Atlanta during the 1940s and 1950s. On the Birth Home Block, property owners subdivided single-family houses into boarding houses for multiple families and tenants. Many of these structures also became dilapidated because of little maintenance and absentee ownership.

The date of construction of the house at 526 Auburn Avenue is approximately 1895. The first documented resident of this house was Ms.

1. Alexa Henderson and Eugene Walker, *Sweet Auburn: The Thriving Hub of Black Atlanta 1900–1960*, (National Park Service, 1983), 1-3.

2. Robert W. Blythe, Maureen A. Carroll, and Steven H. Moffson, *Historic Resource Study, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District*, (Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 1994), 1-3; Andy Ambrose et al., *Historic Resource Study, Auburn Avenue Community of Atlanta 1865–1930, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District*, (National Park Service, 1982).

Abbie S. Knowles.³ An African American family headed by Frank and Ula (also spelled Eula) Kirk purchased the property in 1908.⁴ Ula D. Kirk deeded the property to her son-in-law Vernon A. Buck in 1939.⁵ The Kirks remained occupants in the house until 1950, after which there were numerous other tenants. Vernon Buck's grandson John Buck sold the property to the US Department of the Interior in 1984.⁶ John Buck spent much of his childhood at the house, and he and his sisters were playmates with Martin Luther King, Jr.⁷

Exterior changes to the house during the Kirk's ownership included a new roof and a rear addition. Many of the significant modifications to the house occurred as part of rehabilitation and remodeling projects in 1985 and 1994. In the late 1980s, the NPS restored the front porch to match the historic appearance it had during the period of significance.

Statement of Significance

The structure located at 526 Auburn Avenue is a contributing resource in the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic District (1974). The district became a National Historic Landmark in 1977. Public Law 96-428 created the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. This legislation "authorized a 23.78-acre park roughly bounded by Jackson Street on the west, Old Wheat Street on the north, Howell Street on the east, and the rear property lines on the south side of Edgewood Avenue."⁸ At the turn of the century, the corridor along Auburn Avenue was a focal point of inspiration nationally for black businesses

and community organizations.⁹ The MLK, Jr. National Historic District, particularly the Birth Home Block, is significant for its association with the Birth Home of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., located at 501 Auburn Avenue. At the time of Dr. King's birth, Auburn Avenue was "the scene of an industrious black community—a center of racial pride and economic prowess."¹⁰ 526 Auburn Avenue is a contributing resource to the national and local significance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District (MALU). 526 Auburn Avenue is also a good example of a historic two-story Queen Anne style residence located on the Birth Home Block.

Project Methodology

The scope of work for this HSR defined the required level of the historical research and the architectural investigation, analysis, and documentation as "limited." The scope of work specified that the consultants conduct research referring to primary-source documents and public records, with most resources derived from the MALU Archives. Readily available persons might be interviewed to answer specific questions. The NPS directed the consultants to conduct "non-destructive" building investigations.

Consultants from several disciplines including historical architects, structural engineers, and historians conducted the initial site visit for this project in September 2016 and attended a project kick-off meeting with NPS staff. Documentation of the house began in October 2016 with field drawings of the existing floor plan, notes about exterior and interior materials and architectural features, structural conditions, and digital photographs. Historic research at the MALU Archives, with the help of Archives staff, identified all available information from the park's repository. The available NPS documents provided information on the historic context of the Birth Home Block, documentation to-date of the structure, and management plans that are guiding the preservation of the park's historic resources. The project historian also conducted research at local repositories including Atlanta Fulton County Public Library, Atlanta Branch; Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and

3. Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1896, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

4. Deed books 241/194, 226/565, and 144/88, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA; MALU Archives, Series III, Division of Administration 1960-2010.

5. Deed Book 1776/199, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA ; MALU Archives, Series III, Division of Administration 1960-2010.

6. NPS, "Deed of Sale no. 8, 526 Auburn Avenue," 24 July 1984, Fulton County, GA, Deed Book 9105, page 311. Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, MALU Archives, Series III, Division of Administration 1960-2010, 1960-2010, Subseries A Park Central Files, 1968-2008, Subseries 1 Central files, 1968-2008, Box 16 Folder 22 MLK, Jr.

7. Lucy A. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report: Birth Home Block, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District*, Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 1995, 59.

8. Robert Blythe, Maureen Carroll, and Steven Moffson, "Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site," *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 1993.

9. Joseph Scott Mendinghall, "Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District (Landmark)," *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 1977.

10. Ibid.

History; Georgia State University Library; Atlanta History Center; Kenan Research Center; and Fulton County Superior Court Deeds and Records Repository.

The historical architect and staff referred to existing drawings such as Historical American Buildings Survey (HABS) recordation documents, as available, for the preliminary drawing of the existing floor plan and to inform the fieldwork. The October 2016 site investigation included thorough building investigation, comprised of an examination of construction techniques and building development, complete measurements of the existing floor plan, and digital photography. The consultants also recorded features for measured drawings. The historical architect and staff prepared the existing conditions plans based on these field investigations, and drafted them using AutoCAD.

In February 2017, the historical landscape architect and historical architect conducted a second site visit for further site and structure documentation and photo recordation of the historic landscape features. Deed research conducted at the Fulton County Courthouse at this time completed the ownership history of the property. The project historian conducted further research on 526 Auburn Avenue using online primary sources. These sources included historical texts, several academic theses, city directories, and federal census records, and articles published in numerous academic journals, such as the *Georgia Historical Quarterly*. The project historian also obtained historic photographs from the Library of Congress and the King Center Archives, as well as historic aerial images and zoning plans of the landmark district.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The 1986 *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site General Management Plan* (GMP) stated that “all vacant and tenant-occupied structures on the Birth Home Block will be acquired and rehabilitated by the National Park Service.”¹¹ The GMP also called for reselling some structures to individuals and allowing current tenants to remain in their houses at stabilized rents. The

2016 *Draft Foundation Document* for the park provides basic guidance for future planning and management decisions. The report addresses the Birth Home Block, its treatment and management. The document also identifies issues with the maintenance and preservation of the numerous historic structures in the park.¹²

The objective of the treatment recommendations included in the report is to restore the historic appearance of the building, with consideration of the exterior and interior materials and the structural integrity. The recommendations are consistent with *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site General Management Plan* and *Draft Foundation Document* directives for restoring the exterior of this property to the commemorative period, when Martin Luther King, Jr. lived on Auburn Avenue. These documents address only the exterior of the buildings. The current use of the house for law enforcement is compatible with the GMP recommendations. The recommendations in this report allow for continuing the current use of the property as headquarters for park law enforcement, or other office use.

In general, the exterior and interior of 526 Auburn Avenue are in good condition, though this structure does show signs of deterioration, and recommendations for repair are included in this document. The actions listed in the Architectural Recommendations: Interior and Structural Recommendations accomplish several goals. These goals are to achieve the recommended treatment of an exterior restored its appearance during the period of significance (1929-1941), arrest further deterioration of existing features, improve energy efficiency, and upgrade occupant comfort.

A number of the recommendations for 526 Auburn Avenue account for immediate concerns to ensure the preservation of the integrity of the historic property. Another recommendation is improving the thermal envelope of the structure and increasing energy-efficiency by updating the insulation applied in the basement, walls, and attic. The replacement of any wood compromised by rot and termite damage, particularly where the wood floor framing meets exterior basement walls, is another important recommendation to secure

11. National Park Service. General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, Atlanta, Georgia, Southeast Regional Office, 1986, iii.

12. National Park Service, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site: Draft Foundation Document*, October 2016, 4.

structural integrity. Restoration of certain site features in accordance with the cultural landscape report, and the reconstruction of the exterior wall on the east property line, are recommended improvements to rehabilitate and preserve the integrity of the historic landscape.

Also included in the consideration of treatment options are the implications of climate change. A loss of resource integrity may occur over time from conditions related to climate change and its impacts. Typically, documentation is one of the first mitigation techniques undertaken in response to deterioration. This document, which includes a historic narrative, photographs, measured drawings, and recommendations, fulfills this first step in the mitigation process.

Administrative Data

Locational Data

Building Name: 526 Auburn Avenue

Location: Birth Home Block
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site

County: Fulton County

State: Georgia

Related NPS Studies

Ambrose, Andy, Vincent Fort, Alexa Henderson, Dean Rowley, Carole Stevens and Barbara Taggart. *Historic Resource Study, Auburn Avenue Community of Atlanta, 1865-1930*. National Park Service, nd.

Blythe, Robert W., Maureen A. Carroll, and Steven H. Moffson. *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Historic Resource Study*. Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 1994.

Blythe, Robert W., Maureen A. Carroll, and Steven H. Moffson. "Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1993.

Henderson, Alexa, and Eugene Walker. *Sweet Auburn: The Thriving Hub of Black Atlanta, 1900-1960*. National Park Service, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, 1983.

Lawliss, Lucy A. *Cultural Landscape Report: Birth Home Block. Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site*. Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 1995.

National Park Service. *Alternatives Study, Completion of Resource Protection and Facility Development in Time for the 1996 Olympic Games*. Southeast Region, National Park Service, June 1991.

National Park Service. *General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, Atlanta, Georgia*, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 1986.

National Park Service. *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Draft Foundation Document*, October 2016.

Oppermann, Joseph K. *Historic Structure Report: 530 Auburn Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site*. Cultural Resources Division, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 2013.

Georgia Institute of Technology Center for Architectural Conservation, *Preliminary Architectural Reconnaissance*. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, Prepared for the National Park Service, 1983.

Real Property Information

Acquisition Date: 1984

LCS ID: 023365

Size Information

526 Auburn Avenue

Total Floor Area: 2314 square feet ±

Basement Floor Area: 1033* square feet ±

First Floor Area: 1401 square feet ±

Second Floor Area: 911 square feet ±

Roof Area: 1802 square feet ±

Number of Stories: 2

Number of Rooms: 18

Number of Bathrooms: 3

* Basement area does not include crawlspace; w/ crawlspace area is 1432 square feet

Roof areas include covered porches; porch areas are not included in floor areas.

Cultural Resource Data

National Register Status: Listed as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District in 1974. National Historic Landmark 1977. Updated documentation accepted in 1994. Boundary increased in 2001. The house is classified as contributing.

Proposed Treatment

The recommended ultimate treatment is to restore the exterior of 526 Auburn Avenue to its 1941 appearance.

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I.A Historical Background and Context

Introduction

“All men and women are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be.”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Strength to Love,” (1963)

At the time of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth, Auburn Avenue was a thriving center of commercial, social, religious, and political activity in Atlanta, Georgia. By 1930, Auburn Avenue featured a bank, six insurance companies, 14 realtors, four drugstores, two hotels, a branch library, three churches, and several restaurants and entertainment venues.¹³

Auburn Avenue’s vitality in the early 1900s earned it nationwide recognition as a site of African American entrepreneurial achievement and social status. For generations, the residential community of Auburn Avenue functioned as a stronghold of black Atlanta politics, commerce, spirituality, and social life. “Sweet Auburn” is the popularized moniker of the neighborhood; it is attributed to prominent community leader and Grand Master of the Prince Hall Masons, John Wesley Dobbs. The boundaries of the neighborhood encompass the corridor east of Peachtree, to Howell Street, and north of Auburn Avenue, to Houston Street.

The development of Wheat Street (later renamed Auburn Avenue) began as early as 1853. The original name commemorated Augustus M. Wheat, a local merchant.¹⁴ German, middle-income families were some of the first occupants of houses constructed along the Birth Home Block—the section of the Auburn Avenue neighborhood designated as the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. The immigrants who settled this area

built or moved into the houses, beginning in 1886. The demographic in the neighborhood remained consistently that of white, middle-class families until the end of the nineteenth century. By 1900, Auburn Avenue and the entire Old Fourth Ward had the highest degree of racial integration in the city. This integration was short-lived, and by 1910, the residential portion of Auburn Avenue transitioned to mostly black-occupied households.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was born on January 15, 1929, in a two-story, wood-frame house located at 501 Auburn Avenue NE. Constructed in 1895, this house features Queen Anne-style elements. Dr. King’s grandfather, Reverend Adam Daniel Williams, purchased the property in 1909. The majority of the residential architectural resources in the Birth Home Block are Victorian, Folk Victorian, or Queen Anne style. The Victorian era generally refers to the time between 1837 and 1901 (the reign of Queen Victoria in Britain), and this architectural style derived from medieval houses built during the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. The style became popular in the United States through the expansion of railroad transportation and the mass production of building materials.¹⁵ The Queen Anne style of architecture is characterized by steeply pitched irregularly shaped roofs, an asymmetrical facade, bay windows, and a high porch that may wrap around to the side of the house. Typically, Auburn Avenue houses feature the Folk Victorian style, a vernacular version of the Victorian architectural style. This style features less elaborate detailing than found in the Queen Anne counterparts in the neighborhood. The walls are usually flat planes, without projections or textured shingles. Many of the houses on Auburn Avenue have spindle work or classical detailing of the columns, balustrades, or dentils. Decorative shingles in one pattern or in combinations, as well as attic vents and ornamental details of the gable, are other common elements of this style found on residential structures on the Birth Home Block.¹⁶

13. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 1.

14. *Ibid.*, 18.

15. Angela McLean, *Martin Luther King, Jr. Landmark District Residential Design Guidelines*, (Atlanta Urban Design Commission, 1993), 32.

16. *Ibid.*, 33.

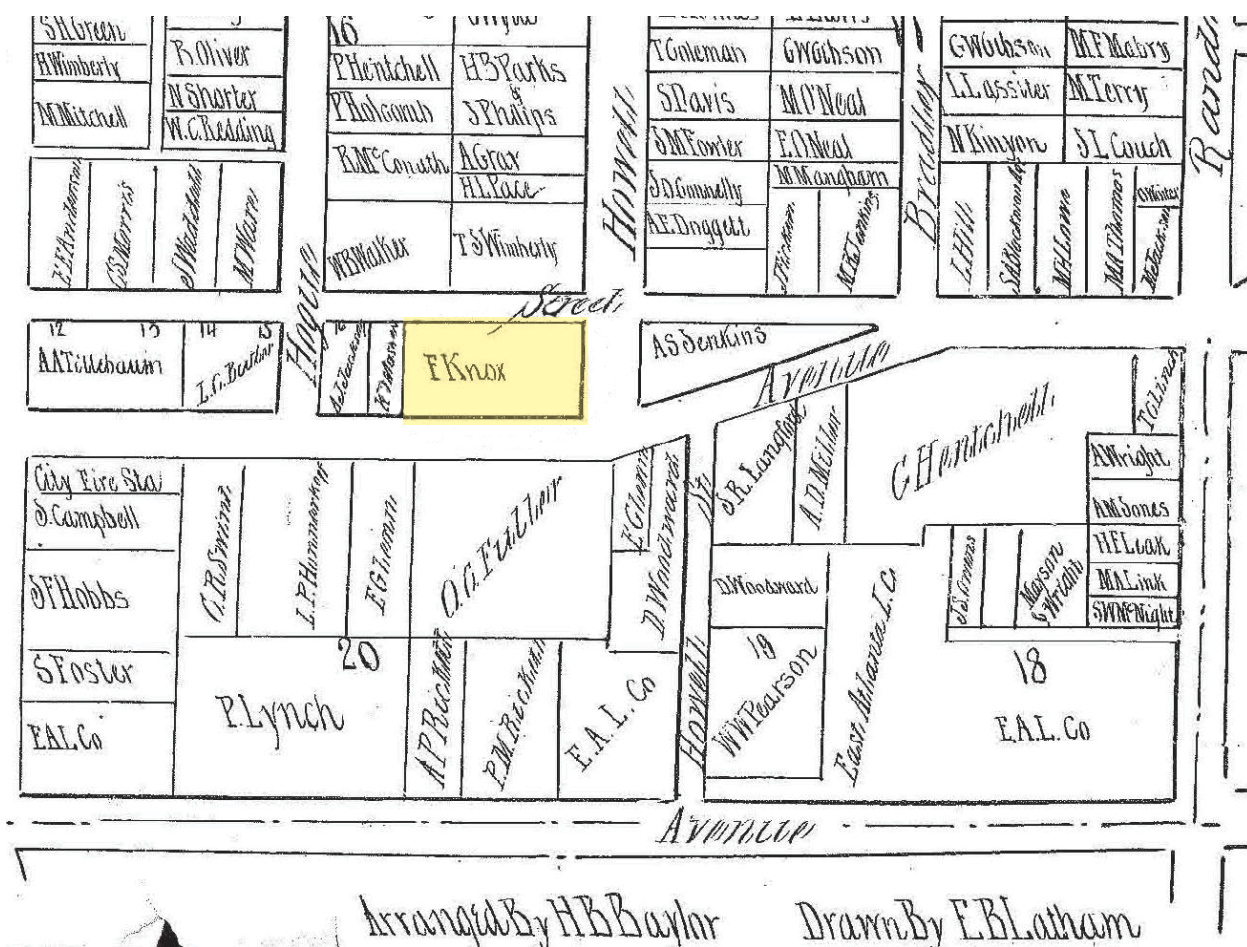


Figure 1. Baylor Atlas of 1894 showing the properties owned by Fitzhugh Knox and A. S. Jenkins (530 Auburn Avenue Historic Structure Report 2013, p. 19).

The resource within the Birth Home Block, which is the focus of this report, is located at 526 Auburn Avenue. This structure shows architectural characteristics and detailing typical of the Queen Anne style. A developer named Fitzhugh Knox constructed 526 Auburn Avenue (along with adjacent homes) near the turn of the twentieth century¹⁷ (Figure 1).

While all of the structures along Sweet Auburn originally existed as single-family dwellings for middle-income residents, only a few housed one family by the mid-1930s. Later property owners of most of the houses divided them into apartments and leased rooms to multiple tenants.

This unique community influenced the life path chosen by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to successfully lead and organize the united, nonviolent movement to challenge racism, poverty,

and the direct infringement upon civil rights.¹⁸ Dr. King's family lived on Auburn Avenue until 1941, and he lived nearby until he moved to Pennsylvania to attend Crozer Theological Seminary in 1948. Dr. King's leadership of the civil rights movement culminated with the March on Washington and his "I Have a Dream" speech, inducing the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The legislation delegitimized statewide codification of segregationist ideologies in all social, business, and civil domains of life in America. Dr. King received numerous awards, including the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of his leadership of the civil rights movement.

The roots of Dr. King's belief in equality for all people and the foundations of his social activism become more clear through the prism of the

18. Robert W. Blythe, Maureen A. Carroll, and Steven H. Moffson, *Historic Resource Study, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District*, (Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 1994), 1.

17. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 15.

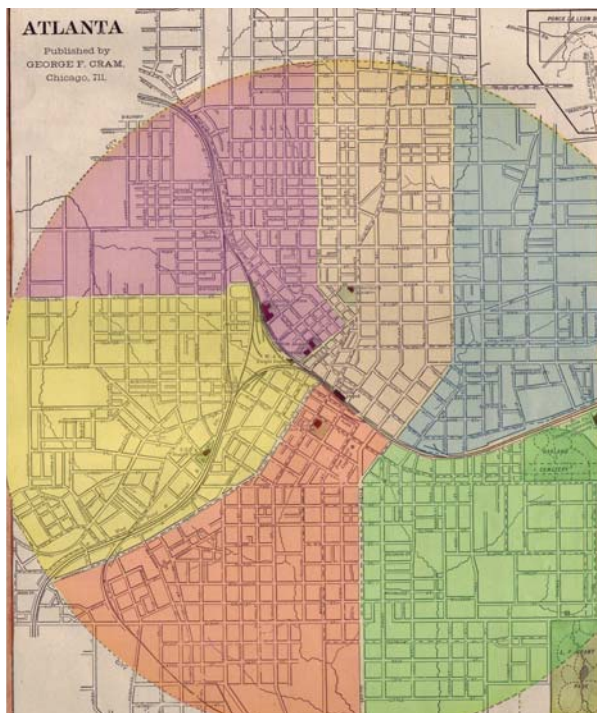


Figure 2. Map showing city limits and six wards of Atlanta. The subject of this report is located in the Old Fourth Ward, indicated on this map in blue. (Atlanta. Published by George F. Cram, Chicago, Ill. (to accompany) *Cram's atlas of the world, ancient and modern : new census edition -- indexed.*)

neighborhood where he lived as a child. Middle-class professionals, ministers, domestic laborers, and service-industry workers constituted the diverse residential society on or near Auburn Avenue. From Courtland Street to Randolph Street, black entrepreneurs owned and operated food and drug stores, movie theaters, barbershops and beauty parlors, banks, insurance companies, restaurants, newspapers, and meeting halls. Three long-established churches on Auburn Avenue and their ministers encouraged participation in spiritual, social, and civic progress from their members, creating a cohesive, tight-knit local community.¹⁹

Dr. King returned to Atlanta in 1960 and served as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, with his father, until his assassination in 1968.²⁰

Founding and Growth of Atlanta

Atlanta began as a small town named Terminus that developed around the junction of the Southern Railway and the Western & Atlantic Railroad. Developed on land ceded by the Creek Indians to the federal government on January 8, 1821,²¹ the early settlement was an industrial “boom town” with some 100 inhabitants. The town was renamed Marthasville on December 23, 1843.²² The name officially changed to Atlanta following the suggestion of city engineer J. Edgar Thomson, on December 26, 1845.²³ On December 29, 1847, local officials expanded the Atlanta city limits to one mile in every direction from the zero milepost of the Western and Atlantic Railroad in order to incorporate the surrounding territory. City officials again expanded the Atlanta city limits from one concentric mile in the 1840s to one and one-half concentric miles in the 1890s.²⁴ They expanded the city limits later to a two-mile radius after 1899 (Figure 2). By the year 1848, Atlanta’s population numbered about five hundred people, with a majority of the residents associated with the railroad.²⁵ On December 20, 1853, the state legislature created Fulton County and established Atlanta as the county seat.²⁶ On January 9, 1854, the city adopted a plan dividing the city into five wards.²⁷

In 1868, legislators amended the state constitution to make Atlanta the state capital;²⁸ and by the census of 1870, the city had a recorded overall population of over 22,000.²⁹ Between 1870 and 1900, African Americans constituted about 40 percent of the population in Atlanta.³⁰ By the 1870s, the early urban development of Atlanta

21. Alexa Henderson and Eugene Walker, *Sweet Auburn: The Thriving Hub of Black Atlanta 1900–1960*, (National Park Service, 1983), 3.

22. Henderson, *Sweet Auburn*, 3.

23. Ibid.

24. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 2.

25. E.R. Carter, *The Black Side: A Partial History of the Business, Religious, and Educational Side of the Negro in Atlanta, Georgia* (Berkeley, CA: The Bancroft Library University of California Berkeley, 1894), 16.

26. Henderson, *Sweet Auburn*, 3.

27. Ibid.

28. Jackson, Edwin L. “The Story of Georgia’s Capitols and Capital Cities,” (University of Georgia, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, 1988), n.p.

29. National Park Service, “Historical Background Essay: Atlanta’s Sweet Auburn,” *Historical American Buildings Survey no. GA-1170*, (NPS, 1981), 2.

30. NPS, “Historical Background Essay,” 3.

19. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 3.

20. Joseph K. Oppermann, *530 Auburn Avenue Historic Structure Report, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District*, (National Park Service, 2013), 17.



Figure 3. View across the railroad tracks on Whitehall Street, 1864, Atlanta, Georgia by George N. Barnard (Library of Congress, LC-DIG-cwpb-03467).

followed the routes of the rail and streetcar lines that radiated from the railroad terminal. Continued growth, spurred by the consolidation of ten rail lines in the 1890s, further established Atlanta's dominance as the center of commerce in the Southeast.³¹ Peters and Whitehall Streets were the first roads developed in the city of Atlanta along the railroad tracks at the terminal where Terminus first developed (Figure 3). They bound the present-day, local historic landmark district, Castleberry Hill. Castleberry Hill is the oldest enclave of Victorian commercial buildings that remain in the city of Atlanta, and it connects through the central business district in downtown Atlanta, via Peachtree Street, to Auburn Avenue. The Birth Home Block on Auburn Avenue exists as one of the last remnants of Victorian residential development in the city, representing one of the earliest urban development periods in Atlanta.³²

The layout of Auburn Avenue reflects Atlanta's commercial and residential growth beginning in the 1870s, as well as the changing nature of southern race relations into the twentieth century. In 1884, the Gate City Street Railroad Company constructed a streetcar line that traveled from

the central business district along Pryor Street to Wheat Street (present-day Auburn Avenue) to Jackson Street and farther north. In 1889, entrepreneur Joel Hurt operated Atlanta's first electric street railway along Edgewood Avenue, linking downtown and the suburb of Inman Park. As Auburn Avenue continued to develop, it became a major east-west thoroughfare to downtown. Granite curbs and brick sidewalks, built along the sides of Auburn Avenue, date back to as early as the 1890s. To accommodate street traffic in the commercial district, city officials established a forty-foot street width, curb to curb, that defines the historic character of present-day Birth Home Block.³³ By the mid-1890s, the majority of the single-family residences on the Birth Home Block had been constructed.³⁴ The streetcar lines on Auburn and Edgewood Avenues provided direct access to the Atlanta central business district's retail locations and employment to the west of Auburn Avenue.³⁵ Auburn Avenue, for this reason, was a highly favorable place to live in Atlanta in the late 1890s (Figure 4).

In the mid-1890s, Atlanta's Fourth Ward had not only the greatest concentration in the city of African American population; it also had the highest degree of black and white integration. Forty-six percent of the ward's population in 1896 was African American, and 26 percent of the residences in the Old Fourth Ward were located adjacent to or across from a residence of another race.³⁶ From 1884 to 1900, the racial composition of the area bounded by Old Wheat Street, Howell Street, Edgewood Avenue, and Jackson Street remained consistent at approximately 55 percent white and 45 percent African American.³⁷ On April 17, 1893, the Atlanta City Council responded to the petition to change the name of the neighborhood and renamed Wheat Street Auburn Avenue.³⁸

Reconstruction

Until the end of the Civil War in 1865, non-enslaved African Americans in the South maintained a fine balance between social progress

31. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 11.

32. *Ibid.*, 13.

33. *Ibid.*, 21.

34. *Ibid.*, 13.

35. *Ibid.*, 2.

36. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 18.

37. *Ibid.*

38. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 21.



Figure 4. A portion of Augustus Koch's bird's-eye view of Atlanta in 1892 depicting the area of study around Wheat Street including streetcar lines. (Library of Congress, 75693189).

and personal safety. In 1845, the Georgia state legislature passed an act that denied freemen skilled as masons or mechanics the right to contract their services to the public. By similar legislation, African Americans could not own or operate any business, boarding house, or restaurant. African Americans were also subject to heightened taxes and resident fees, and they could not own any real or personal property.³⁹ By 1854, movements that opposed slavery succeeded in the Western Hemisphere as several newly independent South American nations—Chile, Colombia, Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Uruguay, Argentina, and Peru—abolished the institution. In the midst of the Civil War, on New Year's Day in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation. The proclamation declared that all enslaved persons in the states of the Union were “thenceforward and forever free.”

While many citizens, especially in the northern states, rejoiced when the government declared that every citizen was free, the Union Army continued to battle the Confederacy in the Civil War in the South. In 1864, General William Tecumseh Sherman besieged and burned much of the city of Atlanta on his long march to the sea (Figure 5).

The entrepreneurial spirit of Atlanta fueled the rise of a new city from the ashes of Sherman's destruction. In early 1865, President Lincoln codified the intent of the Emancipation Proclamation by signing the Thirteenth Amendment, abolishing slavery. The Civil War ended in April 1865, and after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, Vice President Andrew Johnson assumed the presidency.⁴⁰ As the reconstruction of the city of Atlanta continued from 1865 until 1877,⁴¹ the African American population increased from 20.3 percent to 42.9 percent of the city's total population between 1860 and 1890.⁴²

Following the Civil War, the social atmosphere in Atlanta, as in other communities across the South, was often antagonistic toward black enterprise and commercial productivity. Emancipation resulted in increased competition for menial labor positions as African American workers entered the job market. Competition also increased for business owners.

40. United States Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR), *Freedom to the Free: 1863–1963 Century of Emancipation*, (Washington, D.C. 1963), <https://www.law.umaryland.edu/marshall/usccr/documents/cr11963.pdf>, 9.

41. NPS, “Historical Background Essay,” 8.

42. Ronald H. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), eBook Collection (EBSCOhost), accessed November 18, 2016, 6.

39. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 1-3.



Figure 5. Ruins of Atlanta, 1864 (Library of Congress: LC-DIG-cwpb-02226).

One year after the end of the Civil War, in 1866, African American James Tate opened a wholesale grocery on Decatur Street⁴³ at the site that is the present-day Grady Hospital. His business became hugely successful over the following year, amounting to thousands of dollars in retail goods.⁴⁴ By the late 1800s, the first large rise of black enterprise in Atlanta followed the success of Tate, often called the “Father of Black Business” (Figure 6).

Nearing the end of the 1800s, African Americans in Atlanta continued to strive for monetary success and founded many independent businesses. In 1885, most freedmen in Atlanta endeavored to make money as tailors, barbers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, and hack drivers in their own businesses, or they worked in service positions. In the 1890s, several former slaves found extraordinary success as businessmen through the companies they founded in Atlanta. For example, Alonzo Herndon became one of the first black millionaires in the nation (Figure 7). Herndon started out as a barber, and he eventually owned three successful barbershops in Atlanta. He later expanded his investments in real estate, cofounded the Atlanta Loan and Trust Company in 1891, and founded the Atlanta Mutual Life Insurance

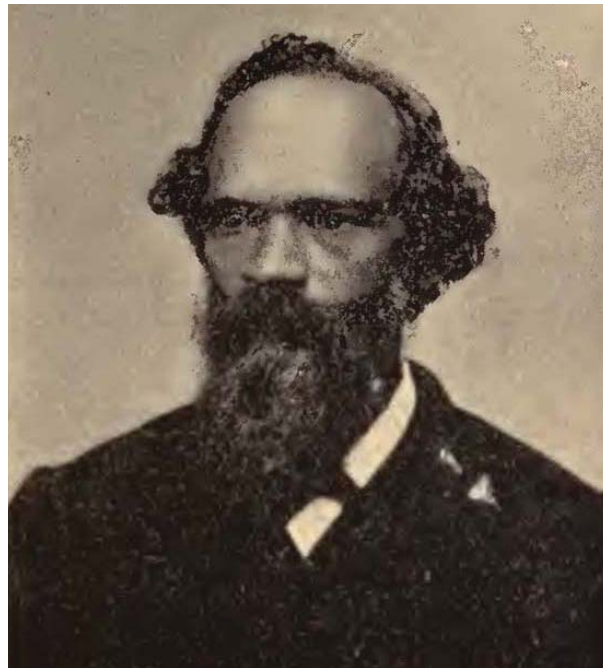


Figure 6. Photograph of James Tate (E. R. Carter, *The Black Side*, 23).

Company in 1905.⁴⁵ By the time of his death in 1927, the Atlanta Mutual Life Insurance Company held a net worth of one million dollars in assets.⁴⁶ Another example of early black entrepreneurial success was Alexander Hamilton, founder of Alexander Hamilton & Sons. Hamilton became one of the wealthiest men in the country as a contractor, serving both black and white clientele.⁴⁷ One successful enterprise located on Auburn Avenue was Herman Perry’s Service Company. Established in 1890, by 1923 the contracting and building company held a net worth of \$11,000,000 and subsidized a number of other corporations.⁴⁸ The Atlanta State Savings Bank, the first chartered African American banking institution in Georgia, was also located on Auburn Avenue. Other widely successful black enterprises in Atlanta, and particularly on Auburn Avenue, included Georgia Real Estate Loan and Trust Company, which was the first African American land company in the state of Georgia (1890), Mutual Savings and Loan Association (1925), and Citizens Trust Company (1921), which became the sixth largest black-owned bank in the nation.

Despite this success of early black enterprise in Atlanta, local and state policies in Georgia

43. Carter, *The Black Side*, 39.

44. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 1-3.

45. Ibid., 5-9.

46. NPS, “Historical Background Essay,” 8.

47. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 3-5.

48. NPS, “Historical Background Essay,” 8.



Figure 7. Alonzo Herndon with his wife, Adrienne, and son, Norris (The Herndon Foundation).

continually restricted the civil rights of African Americans and, tragically, lynching incidents peaked during this period. In 1868, African Americans could legally vote in the city of Atlanta, and it marked the beginning of state and city efforts to curtail that vote. The same year, the General Assembly passed a law that switched from a ward-based voting system to an at-large system for the election of councilmen, which undermined the vote in wards where the majority of the population was African American.⁴⁹ A few years later, President Ulysses S. Grant passed the 1871 Civil Rights Act (also termed the Ku Klux Klan Act) authorizing martial law and heavy penalties against terrorist organizations. The president successfully disbanded the second generation of the KKK but the Klan would prove to be a highly insidious and dangerous group that would continually grow in numbers over the next 50 years. From 1882 to the end of the century, the number of persons lynched per year fell below 100 only once. The total for the 18-year period was 2,743, of which about half of the victims (1,645) were African American.⁵⁰ Generally, race relations worsened during the 1890s and into the early 1900s. In Atlanta, parks featured signs that forbade admittance to African Americans. In 1892, the formal segregation of streetcars and public transportation took effect in the city of Atlanta. In

49. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, 4.

50. USSCR, *Freedom to the Free*, 71.

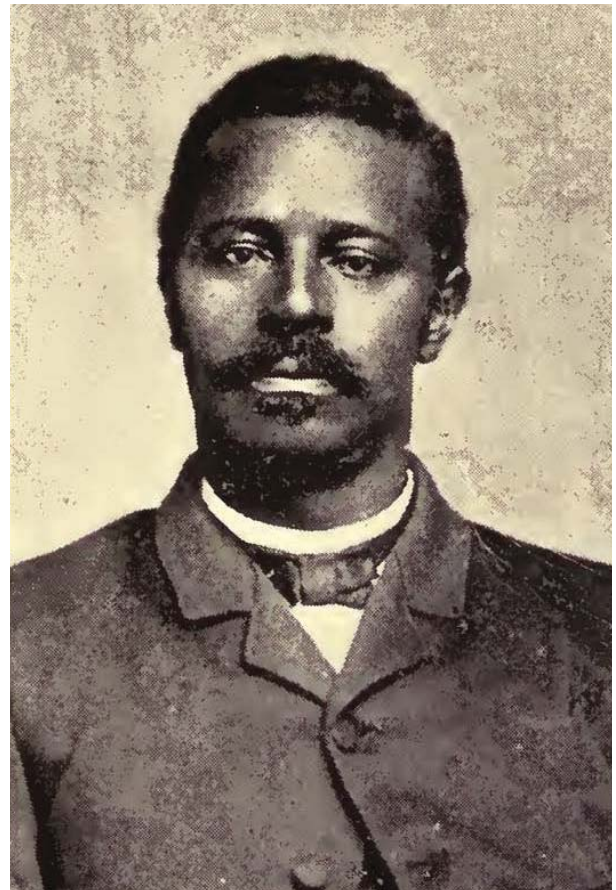


Figure 8. Photograph of Reverend N. J. Jones (E. R. Carter, *The Black Side*, 44).

1897, state policy legally barred African Americans from holding any political office in the Atlanta city government.⁵¹ With the codification of Jim Crow laws in the state by 1900, enforced segregation ranged from mandating separate accommodations in public restrooms, to the use of separate Bibles in courtrooms, to designation of separate seats on trains.⁵²

Even under these political and social injustices, African Americans in Atlanta continued to forge their own institutions and community organizations to bolster their rights as free citizens. In 1886, Reverend N. J. Jones founded the Colored Men's Protective Association to confront racial violence by organizing community support. Jones was a successful grocer in the city of Atlanta, and as a minister, he was among the most influential clergy in the state of Georgia⁵³ (Figure 8). Rev. Jones ministered at Friendship Baptist Church in Castleberry Hill,⁵⁴ the first autonomous African

51. NPS, "Historical Background Essay," 3.

52. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 1-16.

53. Carter, *The Black Side*, 40.

54. *Ibid.*, 38-40.



Figure 9. View of Morris Brown College (Library of Congress: HABS GA,61-ATLA,10A-12).

American Baptist church in Atlanta.⁵⁵ Sophia B. Packard and Harriet E. Giles founded Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, otherwise known as Spelman Seminary, in the church basement in 1881. This esteemed institution of higher learning for African American women gained international renown and became Spelman College in 1924.⁵⁶ It was the sister school to historic Morehouse College, founded in Augusta in 1867, for African American men. Morehouse relocated to Atlanta in 1879.

Founded in 1881, Morris Brown College was the first educational institution established in Georgia by and for African Americans.⁵⁷ Bethlehem A.M.E. Church (located on Auburn Avenue) helped establish the college. It was originally located on Boulevard, two blocks north of Auburn Avenue (Figure 9).⁵⁸ For years, this college was the closest institution of higher learning to the Auburn Avenue community. Donations from the African American community in Atlanta and throughout Georgia entirely funded its construction; it formally opened its doors in October 1885. There were 107 students enrolled in the first class, and the liberal arts college remains an operational historically black college and university (HBCU) in Atlanta today.⁵⁹

Established in 1847, Bethlehem A.M.E. Baptist Church, endearingly called “Big Bethel,” is a long-



Figure 10. View of the A.M.E. Bethlehem Church, “Big Bethel” (Library of Congress: HABS GA-1170-C-15).

standing cornerstone of the downtown African American Atlanta community. It is located on Auburn Avenue approaching the downtown central business district (Figure 10). Furthering the status of African American education and research was the growing influence of Atlanta University. It was founded by the American Missionary Association in 1865 as one of 11 African American institutions of higher learning.⁶⁰ The distinguished faculty has included Dr. W.E.B. Dubois and Myron Adams of Atlanta University, John Hope and Benjamin Brawley of Morehouse College, and J.W.E. Bowen of Gammon Theological Seminary.⁶¹

Atlanta was the setting for the 1895 Cotton States and International Exposition, aimed at the promotion of agriculture and new technologies of the region. It was the largest gathering in the event’s history up until that time. The event’s organizers chose Dr. Booker T. Washington to speak on behalf of the African American community. Historians refer to this speech as the “Atlanta Compromise.” According to one historian, “his emphasis on economic goals among blacks and his conciliatory posture toward southern whites made him a perfect complement to the

55. Carter, *The Black Side*, 243.

56. Spelman College, “About Us,” *Spelman College A Choice to Change the World*, accessed November 15, 2016, <http://www.spelman.edu/about-us>.

57. Carter, *The Black Side*, 45.

58. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 4-3.

59. Carter, *The Black Side*, 47.

60. Oppermann, *530 Auburn Avenue Historic Structure Report*, 10.

61. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 4-6.



Figure 11. Photograph of local Atlanta newspaper publications at the time of the 1906 race riot (<http://sweetauburn.us/rings/racriot.htm>).

‘New South’ boosterism concept that underlay the Atlanta enterprise.”⁶² Washington sought to advance the idea that the rising African American middle class would become indispensable to the economy of the New South. In his speech, Washington praised African Americans as “faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful” and countered a belief among white Southerners that the character and morality of African Americans had declined since slavery.⁶³ The most quoted line of the speech was, “In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.”⁶⁴ Though inspiring to many, Dr. Washington’s pivotal speech urging citizens to overcome racial controversies in business did little to solve the racial tensions and the mounting political restrictions to civil liberties in Atlanta and throughout the Southeast.

The influence of rising black enterprise in Atlanta nevertheless continued to reach new heights at the end of the 1800s. At this time, President McKinley appointed an African American, Henry A. Rucker, to the position of Georgia Collector of Internal Revenue. He served in this position from 1895 to 1909.⁶⁵ The Bethlehem A.M.E. Church on Auburn Avenue was the headquarters for the National Negro Business League (NNBL), which had its largest meeting in Atlanta in 1906.⁶⁶ The National Negro Bankers Association (NNBA) also held its

first meeting in conjunction with the NNBL. The Atlanta Riot of 1906 occurred just 22 days after the NNBL ended its Atlanta meeting.⁶⁷

Race Riot of 1906

The assertion of African American rights and equality upheld by the recent federal acts—the right to vote, the right to equal protection under the law, and the right to education—generally heightened racial tension in the South between 1890 and 1910. By 1894, several southern states, including Georgia, enacted segregationist laws despite substantial opposition by African Americans and some sympathetic whites.⁶⁸ In Atlanta, societal tension rose to violent proportions.

The political atmosphere in Atlanta encouraged the racial tensions leading up to the 1906 riot. As segregationist policies swept across the South, two prominent democratic nominees for political office in Atlanta—Clark Howell and Hoke Smith—used racial propaganda to boost their own political candidacies. Immediately before the riot, *The Atlanta Constitution* (of which Clark Howell was editor) and *The Atlanta Journal* (of which Hoke Smith was publisher) publicized sensationalized stories of sexual assaults on white women by African American men (Figure 11). This political propaganda denigrating and disenfranchising African Americans exacerbated societal conflict, which culminated in the devastating violence of the Atlanta Race Riot of 1906.⁶⁹ On September 22, 1906, a mob of thousands perpetrated acts of racial violence and murder in downtown Atlanta.

A mob targeted the business owners on Marietta and Decatur Streets and many African American residences; the violence lasted for four days (Figure 12).⁷⁰ Historical accounts of the number of assaults vary, but typically estimate in the hundreds. Grady Hospital admitted about three hundred patients to the emergency department the first night of the riot.⁷¹ Mayor James G.

62. Robert J. Norrell, *Up from History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 122.

63. Norrell, *Up from History*, 125.

64. Booker T. Washington, “An Address Delivered at the Opening of the Cotton States and International Exposition: by Booker T. Washington,” *Pamphlet Excerpt*, accessed October 26, 2016, <https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aap/aapaddr.html>.

65. NPS, “Historical Background Essay,” 10.

66. *Ibid.*, 9–10.

67. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 1–19.

68. USCCR, *Freedom to the Free*, 61.

69. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 1–19.

70. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, 12.

71. Barbara Taggart, “The Atlanta Race Riot of 1906 and the Black Community” (master’s thesis, Atlanta University, 1984), <http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2514&context=dissertations>, 52.



Figure 12. The international press coverage of the 1906 race riot in Atlanta. This illustration of the event was on the front page of a Paris newspaper two weeks following the riot (“Les Lynchages aux États-Unis: Massacre de Nègres à Atlanta,” *Le Petit Journal*, October 7, 1906).

Woodward brought in the state militia to restore law and order, because local police officers were ineffective in stopping the riot. The 1906 riot further fragmented the relations between races in Atlanta and influenced the increased segregation of retail and residential sectors. The 1906 riot directly affected local attitudes, resulting in a movement toward voluntary segregation.⁷² The white community enacted a boycott of African American businesses after the riot. Interestingly, in the year directly after the 1906 riot, the number of black businesses was still at a highpoint, but the number of African American businesses in downtown Atlanta decreased by a dramatic percentage over the next year. According to historical demographic studies, “[t]he growing antipathy on the part of whites toward trading with black businessmen was pushing them away from the central business district at the same time that a growing black neighborhood east of downtown, along Auburn Avenue, Houston Street, Boulevard,

Butler, and other streets in the Fourth Ward, was creating a base for the development of a black business district in that area. As black businesses declined in number in the central business district, a corresponding increase in the number of such businesses along Auburn Avenue occurred.”⁷³

Also in 1906, a large riot erupted in Springfield, Illinois—President Lincoln’s hometown—that killed six African Americans, burned numerous African American businesses and houses, and drove two thousand people from the city. The violence in Illinois, following the riot in Atlanta, spurred an urgent national forum that led to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP aimed to mobilize and protect African Americans by strengthening networks of support across the nation.⁷⁴ In resistance to the disfranchisement measures in the state of Georgia, African Americans organized the Georgia Suffrage League in June 1907.⁷⁵

On October 7, 1908, the Georgia legislature passed legislation that disfranchised African Americans in the state of Georgia.⁷⁶ By 1910, every former Confederate state had either disfranchised African Americans by constitutional amendments or deprived them of political participation by means of the political primary.⁷⁷ Racial violence continued well into the 1900s. The Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill, a federal mandate classifying lynching as a federal felony, won the support of President Warren G. Harding. Even though southern senators filibustered the measure, the bill passed in 1922. By 1938, incidents of lynching had declined steeply across the nation. Throughout the 1930s, the NAACP launched an anti-lynching campaign that combined widespread publicity about the causes and costs of lynching.

The Emerging Middle Class in Atlanta

African Americans owned property along Auburn Avenue as early as 1906. In 1909, the majority of residents along Auburn Avenue were African

73. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 1-22.

74. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 80.

75. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 3-38.

76. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 18.

77. *Ibid.*, 52.

72. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 17.



Figure 13. A typical residence in Atlanta for the emerging African American middle class, ca. 1900 (Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-08768).

American, but the surrounding neighborhood remained racially mixed. A major change occurred between 1909 and 1910, when all of the shotgun duplexes on Auburn Avenue changed from white to black tenants and several of the single-family residences were sold to African Americans.⁷⁸ As residential segregation increased, African American businesses were forced out of downtown by rising rents and increased social hostility. Due to more favorable conditions on Auburn Avenue, many African American retail establishments relocated between Courtland Street and Jackson Street. In this same period, as white residents moved off the residential east end of Auburn Avenue, successful African Americans purchased the large single-family houses (Figure 13). For example, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Birth Home was built circa 1895 and was sold to its first African American owner in 1909—Martin Luther King, Jr.’s maternal grandfather, Reverend A. D. Williams.

From 1910 to 1930, Auburn Avenue functioned as the center for African American business, institutional, and social life in Atlanta. Powerful community leaders continued to foster the growth of Auburn Avenue through the construction of several important buildings. For example, Benjamin Jefferson Davis—editor of the *Atlanta Independent*—spearheaded the development of the Odd Fellows Building on Auburn Avenue in 1911. The Odd Fellows Building, located between



Figure 14. Photograph of the Odd Fellows Building (Library of Congress, HAB5 GA,61-ATLA,1B-).

228 and 250 Auburn Avenue, became a symbol of neighborhood pride and unity. The building contained 42 offices, six stores, six lodge rooms, and an auditorium. It housed the Fulton Social Club, and it offered a meeting space for groups such as the NAACP.⁷⁹ The building remained a significant social center in the neighborhood and in Atlanta until the 1970s (Figure 14). Alonzo Herndon also constructed the Herndon Building on Auburn Avenue in 1924-1925.

Concurrent with this expansion of Auburn Avenue’s commercial and institutional life, there was a shift in African American residential development to the west side of Atlanta. In 1910, 33.5 percent of the residential population in Atlanta was black. By 1920, the Old Fourth Ward had a 65.4 percent black population.⁸⁰ The neighborhood of businesses and houses on the expanding West End of Atlanta was referred to as “Darktown” at this time.⁸¹ There were at least two reasons that influenced the decision of African American families to move away from Auburn Avenue to other parts of Atlanta. One catalyst for

78. A shotgun duplex (or double shotgun) house is a front gable structure with a party wall dividing the two halves of the building in the middle, lengthwise. Shotgun duplexes typically have two front doors with a symmetrical facade.

79. NPS, “Historical Background Essay,” 11.

80. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 2-8.

81. *Ibid.*, 2-17.



Figure 15. Photograph of the Great Atlanta Fire of 1917 (Atlanta History Center).

the migration was the tremendous fire that swept across the Old Fourth Ward north of Old Wheat Street in 1917 and destroyed a large number of houses in the area (Figure 15). The second reason for the migration was the availability of expanded housing choices for African Americans west of the city center. The construction of new housing encouraged most families to move away from Auburn Avenue and other, similarly overcrowded residential areas. A tabulation of the population growth of African Americans demonstrates the shifting social structure of Atlanta in the 1920s (Figure 16). In fact, the west side's African American population doubled in area every decade from 1920 to 1970

Decline of Sweet Auburn

The City of Atlanta adopted legislation that enforced residential segregation in Atlanta's neighborhoods in 1913,⁸² and city officials incorporated segregationist policies into the first city zoning ordinance in 1922.⁸³ Though the state supreme court declared these practices unconstitutional in 1925, the state legislature upheld the city's zoning ordinance by passing supportive legislation in 1928.⁸⁴ The following year, state politicians passed a constitutional amendment to uphold segregationist zoning ordinances.⁸⁵ In 1930, the KKK marched from Spelman College through the Auburn Avenue neighborhood in support of residential segregation.⁸⁶ Covenants containing race restrictions as conditions in deeds and real estate contracts were deemed legal under the Fourteenth Amendment until a Supreme

Court ruling in May 1948.⁸⁷ City officials also used their zoning ordinances to reinforce residential segregation. Atlanta effectively maintained the racially divided districts established in 1922 until the 1948 court ruling.⁸⁸

By the end of the 1930s, African Americans occupied 100 percent of the Birth Home Block. Additionally, only 13.3 percent of the buildings were owner-occupied, and 67.4 percent of the buildings were dilapidated.⁸⁹ By 1934, in the three census tracts that make up the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, almost 40 percent of the dwelling units were overcrowded.⁹⁰ Only seven percent of the dwelling units in the three tracts were vacant.⁹¹ All of the structures in the census tracts that comprise the present-day historic district date back to at least 1919; dilapidation of these structures continually worsened from the 1930s until the 1980s.⁹²

Between 1930 and 1940, the number of residents on Auburn Avenue who held professional or skilled occupational positions declined markedly. The occupational structure of the neighborhood shifted, and the majority of African American residents who lived along Auburn Avenue in the following decades held unskilled labor occupations. By 1950, over 45 percent of the employed residents in the current historic district were service workers or domestic servants; another 15 percent were wage laborers in unskilled jobs. In 1950, professional workers accounted for only 4.7 percent of the area's working population.⁹³ The shotgun duplexes at the corner of Auburn Avenue and Boulevard (472-488 Auburn Avenue) housed many short-term tenants who were typically employed in semi-skilled, unskilled, or service occupations.⁹⁴ Many affluent residents relocated; some families moved to more fashionable west-side

87. In *Shelly v. Kramer* and *McGhee v. Snipes*, the Supreme Court ruled "such agreements or covenants are not judicially enforceable for the reason that such enforcement would constitute state action within the prohibition of the equal protection provision of the fourteenth amendment." *Shelly v. Kramer*, 334 U.S. 1, 68 Superior court 836 (1948).

88. Bernard E. West, "Black Atlanta—Struggle for Development 1915–1925," (master's thesis, Atlanta University, 1976), 36.

89. *Ibid.*, 14.

90. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 2-26.

91. *Ibid.*

92. *Ibid.*, 2-32.

93. *Ibid.*, 2-34.

94. *Ibid.*, 2-35.

82. Henderson, "Sweet Auburn," 17.

83. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 2-14.

84. *Ibid.*

85. *Ibid.*

86. Henderson, "Sweet Auburn," 17.

POPULATION OF ATLANTA BY RACE, BY WARDS:1920

	Total		Negro Population			White Population		
	Number	Per- cent of City Total	Total	Per- cent of Ward Total	Per- cent of Negro Popula- tion	Total	Per- cent of Ward Total	Per- cent of White Popula- tion
Atlanta	200,616	100.0	62,796	31.3	100.0	137,785	68.7	100.0
Ward 1	21,722	10.8	16,715	76.9	26.1	5,002	23.1	3.6
Ward 2	25,026	12.5	5,455	21.7	8.6	19,568	78.3	13.2
Ward 3	27,307	13.1	7,207	26.3	11.4	20,098	73.7	13.5
Ward 4	21,988	10.9	14,386	65.4	22.9	7,602	34.6	5.5
Ward 5	15,684	7.8	2,972	18.3	4.9	12,711	81.7	9.3
Ward 6	27,576	13.8	7,311	26.5	11.6	20,248	74.5	13.6
Ward 7	13,175	6.6	1,100	8.3	1.7	12,073	91.7	8.8
Ward 8	15,655	7.8	1,355	8.9	2.1	14,300	91.1	13.9
Ward 9	15,195	7.5	1,090	7.1	1.7	14,103	82.9	10.3
Ward 10	10,530	5.2	3,696	35.0	5.5	6,831	65.0	4.2
Ward 11	6,738	94.3	1,509	2.2	3.5	5,249	97.8	3.9

Source: Fourteenth Census of the United States (1920) Population Vol. 3, p. 223.

Figure 16. Tabulation of the population of Atlanta in 1920. The majority of African American population was concentrated in the Fourth and Sixth Wards. (Dorothy Slade, "Evolution of Negro Areas in the City of Atlanta," Atlanta University, master's thesis, 1946).

neighborhoods. In 1941 the King family moved to a larger two-story brick house located at 193 Boulevard, in the "Bishop's Row" area, in part due to the decline of the condition of the residences along Auburn Avenue.

Although significant African American businesses and institutions, including major churches, continued to draw families back to Auburn Avenue on a regular basis, another factor contributed to the decline of the area. Namely, the subdivision of many single-family houses meant the creation of multiple-family dwellings that increased tenancy on the Birth Home Block and adjacent streets to the point of overcrowding. Developers constructed apartment houses at 509 Auburn Avenue in 1925 and at 506 Auburn Avenue in 1933. Another development that increased residential occupancy was the subdivision of 54 Howell Street into a quadraplex in 1931.⁹⁵ Though the 1950s were a time of commercial success in the neighborhood, the general decline in occupational status of the neighborhood's residents and this increased tenancy irrevocably altered the social atmosphere of Auburn Avenue.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the overcrowding in the

area encompassed by the present-day Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District worsened and became ranked highest in the city.⁹⁶ During this period, the area had a vacancy rate of only 0.8 percent in 1940, and 0.9 percent in 1950.⁹⁷ The 1950 census reports that almost half (43.6 percent) of the dwelling units in the area did not have running water or that the residence was in an overall state of dilapidation.⁹⁸ County data show the decline of Auburn Avenue and suggest that the housing issue was a significant problem in the neighborhood since the 1920s.⁹⁹ Additionally, industrial and manufacturing jobs declined, as employers relocated to different areas of the city and country. Owners sold the nearby Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill in 1957, a longtime area employer. Scripto, Inc., which had been a major employer to residents of Auburn Avenue and surrounding neighborhoods, relocated to suburban Gwinnett County in 1977. The relocation of industry, among the other aforementioned factors for decline, further destabilized the residential community of Auburn Avenue (Figure 17).¹⁰⁰

96. Ambrose, *Historic Resource Study*, 2-26.

97. *Ibid.*, 2-27.

98. *Ibid.*, 2-33.

99. *Ibid.*, 4-17.

100. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 35.

95. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 14.



Figure 17. Degradation of historic housing on Auburn Avenue pictured against the Atlanta skyline, May 15, 1982 (Georgia State University Special Collections Archives).

Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement

As Martin Luther King, Jr. grew up, he experienced the richness of social life on Auburn Avenue, but the constraints of racial prejudice and civil rights infringement also influenced his outlook. The young Martin Luther King, Jr. and his family lived on Auburn Avenue from the time he was born in 1929 until 1941 (Figure 18). During this period, the neighborhood was a vibrant center of social life and thriving enterprise. The King family witnessed the gradual changes in the neighborhood when it entered into a state of decline.

Throughout the South, civil rights advocacy relied on strong communities led by outspoken religious leaders.¹⁰¹ A new generation of southern black ministers, including Martin Luther King, Sr., Reverend Ralph David Abernathy (who mentored Martin Luther King, Jr. as a young minister), Reverend C. K. Steele, and Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, took the lead organizing protests against segregationist policies at both the local and at the national level. For example, Martin Luther King, Sr. led a large rally and march on city hall in 1935 as part of a voter registration drive and demand for voting rights.¹⁰² The King children grew up with close ties to Ebenezer Baptist Church on Auburn Avenue, where Martin Luther King, Jr. would eventually serve as co-pastor with his father (Figure 19). When asked in an interview how he became interested in civil rights, the younger King

101. Ibid., 1.

102. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, 20.



Figure 18. Photograph of Martin Luther King, Jr. as a child with his family. Clockwise: King Sr.; mother-in-law, Mrs. Jeannie C. Parks Williams; son Martin Luther Jr.; daughter, Christine; younger son, Alfred Daniel, and wife, Alberta Williams King. (Photo from the Collection of the King/Ferris Family).

responded: “My home influenced me because my father as a minister was always interested in civil rights and helping people who had been treated unjustly or unfairly. As a young college student I was concerned about segregation and I always felt that one of the important roles of a minister is leadership in getting rid of segregation and discrimination.”¹⁰³ Ebenezer Baptist Church on Auburn Avenue symbolizes Martin Luther King, Jr.’s individual efforts toward achieving racial equality and the impressive role black clergymen played in post-World War II civil rights activities. After Martin Luther King, Jr. completed his undergraduate work at Morehouse College in 1948, he studied at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. Afterwards, he attended Boston University and earned his Ph.D. in systematic theology in 1955.¹⁰⁴

103. Martin Luther King, Jr., “An Interview with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,” transcript, ca. 1964, The King Center, Archives, Atlanta, GA, accessed November 11, 2016, <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/interview-mlk>.

104. Oppermann, *530 Auburn Avenue Historic Structure Report*, 16.



Figure 19. Ebenezer Baptist Church, Auburn Avenue, Atlanta (King Center, photographic archives).

The collective effort that formed the civil rights movement lasted over a fourteen-year period between 1954 and 1968.¹⁰⁵ Legal racial segregation in public places continued after World War II throughout the South, where 70 percent of the national population of African Americans lived. In 1944, only five percent of African American adults in the South were registered voters. The NAACP spearheaded challenges to segregation and disfranchisement and remained the dominant national civil rights organization during the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁰⁶ The major focus of civil rights activists became desegregation. The effect of the widespread protests against segregation in public areas and in schools culminated in the landmark Supreme Court Case *Brown v. Board of Education* on May 17, 1954, when the Supreme Court ruled that segregation in schools was unconstitutional.¹⁰⁷ The court ruling began the painful process of desegregation throughout the South, starting with the National Guard-enforced desegregation of a high school in Little Rock, Arkansas. Oftentimes, the process of desegregation in schools during the 1950s and 1960s heightened violent racial tensions and prompted counter-protests.

Dr. King urged civil rights activists to follow the Christian doctrines of nonviolence, redemption through suffering, and love for all during the

105. Kenneth R. Janken, "The Civil Rights Movement," The National Humanities Center, accessed October 13, 2016, <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/freedom/1917beyond/essays/crm.htm>.

106. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 29.

107. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 10 U.S. 486–496 (1954).



Figure 20. Photograph of Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1964 (Library of Congress no. 99404336).

protests. Dr. King was also deeply familiar with the principles of civil disobedience articulated by Henry David Thoreau and exemplified by Mahatma Gandhi during the India independence movement. He agreed with Gandhi's use of passive resistance as the most effective means of civil disobedience to create radical change in legal policy and social structure. As the president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Dr. King rose to regional leadership in the civil rights movement (Figure 20).

Dr. King developed new strategies of protest: massive marches and nonviolent demonstrations that directly confronted the system of segregation ingrained in American society and politics. The boycott of segregated buses in Montgomery, Alabama, from 1955 to 1956 began the widespread organized protests of the civil rights movement. In May 1961, Dr. King was a central participant in meetings conducted at Ebenezer Baptist Church by the SCLC, Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and other community activist organizations to form the Freedom Ride Coordinating Committee.¹⁰⁸ Through the SCLC, Dr. King directed widespread nonviolent protests against segregation in Birmingham and Selma, Alabama; Atlanta and Albany, Georgia; St. Augustine, Florida; and elsewhere.¹⁰⁹ Dr. King and his activists elicited considerable sympathy and support when media coverage showed violent reaction to civil rights activists.

108. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 55.

109. *Ibid.*, 10.

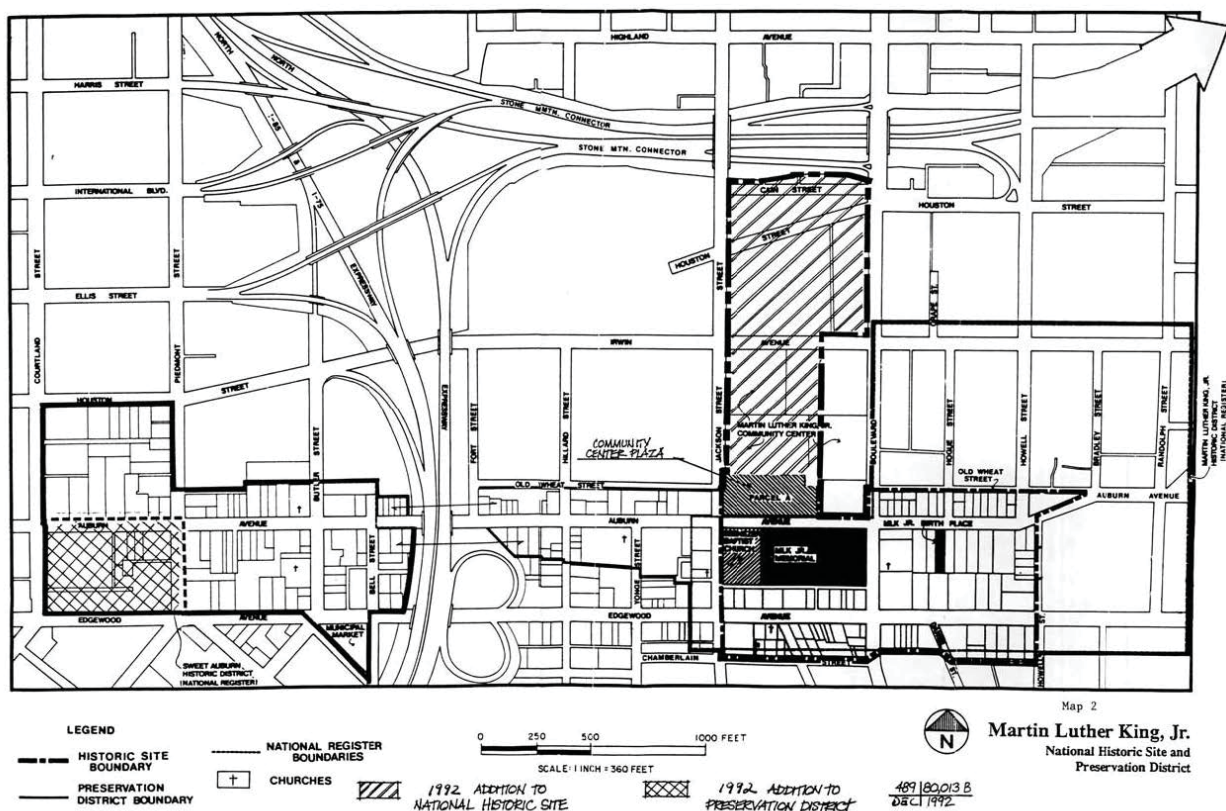


Figure 21. Map showing proposed boundary expansion area (Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, Map 2).

Several years before 1963, the NAACP began to use the motto “Free by ‘63,” alluding to the centennial anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. Other groups adopted the motto and focused more attention on the drive for equality. Sit-ins, boycotts, Freedom Rides, and local demands for inclusion in the political process pushed for progress in federal legislation, through the 1950s and early 1960s.¹¹⁰

On July 2, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law, protecting the voting rights of every citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment and the right to vote under the Fifteenth Amendment. It ended unequal application of voter registration requirements as well as racial segregation in all schools, the workplace, and facilities that served the public.

The assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. occurred at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968. King’s family and close advisors returned his body to Atlanta. His funeral procession drew many thousands of supporters who crowded along the edges of Auburn Avenue.

110. John Hope Franklin, “The Emancipation Proclamation: An Act of Justice,” *Prologue Journal*, 25, no. 2, (1993) <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1993/summer/emancipation-proclamation.html>.

Following his death, the SCLC and other black activist organizations continued civil protests. However, these organizations’ beliefs and tactics varied widely, and their subsequent campaigns did not have the powerful cohesion that generally characterized the progressive campaigns led by Dr. King.¹¹¹

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site

Ironically, the successes of the civil rights movement contributed to the decline of the Sweet Auburn commercial hub. When a separate African American commercial center was no longer necessary as a response to legal segregation, many Auburn Avenue business owners and shopkeepers closed or moved to other areas of the city. Another factor contributing to the decline of the Auburn Avenue neighborhood was the poor condition of the residences and the development of other areas of Atlanta that attracted residents and businesses.

111. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 10.

Several historic designations identify the significance of the Auburn Avenue area, though each with different boundaries. Two National Register historic districts were established in the 1970s. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District Landmark was established in 1974,¹¹² and the Sweet Auburn Historic District was established in 1976. The birth home was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976. The historic district became a local historic district, as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, in 1977. In October 1980, the National Park Service established Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site to commemorate his life and accomplishments.¹¹³ In 1989, the City of Atlanta, through the Atlanta Urban Design Commission, established the local Martin Luther King, Jr. Landmark District, consolidating two existing city preservation districts. On October 30, 1992, the NPS expanded the boundary of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District (as it is typically referred to)¹¹⁴ (Figure 21). NPS expanded the existing district boundary a second time in 1994, and a third time in 2001. In August 1983, federal legislation was adopted designating the third Monday in January as the Martin Luther King, Jr. national holiday.

The Historic District Development Corporation (HDDC) is a nonprofit community development corporation that was cofounded by Dr. King's wife, Coretta Scott King; his sister, Christine King Farris; and John Cox in 1980. It is an all-volunteer, neighborhood-based organization dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District. The HDDC is comprised of neighborhood residents, community leaders, community business people, and professional advisors. The HDDC's goal is to restore the area to the proud, economically diverse, and viable community that once existed, and to maintain its historic character while preventing displacement of long-term residents.¹¹⁵ The HDDC was active in saving many of the residential resources in the district from complete dilapidation and teardown.



Figure 22. An example of a secondary structures along Auburn Avenue, most were removed (The Georgia Tech Engineer, *The Atlanta Urban League for Social Service Among Negroes*, May 1949, Vol. 10, No.4).

In 1994, the NPS completed a historic resource study for the entire Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, followed by a 1995 cultural landscape report on the Birth Home Block. The cultural landscape report addressed the streetscape and yards within the Birth Home Block in anticipation of the expanded scope of rehabilitation planned before the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.¹¹⁶ A significant change in character along the Birth Home Block is the disappearance of commercial structures and the removal of most of its historic secondary structures. The only existing store structure that remains in the area is in the front yard of 521 Auburn Avenue. The structure is not currently a commercial use. At present, there is no active commercial structure or interpretation of this once-significant historic feature within the Birth Home Block.¹¹⁷ Several buildings within the historic district included small shops, such as the lot at 540 Auburn Avenue, which had a small store at the rear of the house and in the basement area. A historic photograph from the Atlanta History Center depicts another type of typical secondary structure, an outhouse, which existed at most of the houses along Auburn Avenue (Figure 22). With the incorporation of modern plumbing, it is understandable why these secondary structures are gone.

112. Ibid.

113. Oppermann, *530 Auburn Avenue Historic Structure Report*, 17.

114. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 35.

115. Historic District Development Corporation, "About Us," Historic District Development Corporation, accessed November 15, 2016, <https://sites.google.com/site/historicdistrictdevelopment/home>.

116. Oppermann, *530 Auburn Avenue Historic Structure Report*, 17.

117. Ibid., 17.

NPS has three pieces of legislation that have guided park preservation, management, and facility development. The *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Strategic Plan, 2006–2011* briefly summarizes each law as follows:

-Public Law 96-428 established Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site on October 10, 1980. This legislation established the original boundary of the national historic site (NHS). The boundary generally centered on a portion of Auburn Avenue that includes Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthplace, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and the immediate neighborhood.

-Public Law 102-575 (1992) modified the boundary of Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS and Preservation District. The additional land acquisitions authorized by the 1992 legislation have largely been completed, and visitor facilities have been constructed.

-Public Law 108-314 (2004) expanded the boundary to enhance emergency street access to the NHS Visitor Center and Museum. The act authorized the Secretary to exchange a vacant lot on Edgewood Avenue (comprising three small tracts) for property owned by the City of Atlanta immediately adjacent to the Visitor Center and Museum.¹¹⁸

-H.R. 2880 (introduced 2016) redesignates the Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS as the "Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park." The measure also proposes to expand the boundary to include the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge at the corner of Auburn Avenue and Hilliard Street and properties associated with Martin Luther King, Jr. on Sunset Avenue on the west side of the city.¹¹⁹

118. NPS. *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Strategic Plan*, Martin Luther King Historic Site and Preservation District, National Park Service. 2006–2011, 7.

119. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2016, H.R. 2880, 114th Congress (2016).

I.B Chronology of Development and Use

Introduction

Note: Address 526 Auburn Avenue is the Listed Classified Structure name for this property. City directories and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps list this address as 406 until the mid-1920s. After 1927, this address became 526 Auburn Avenue.

The Birth Home Block developed as the southern edge of a substantial late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century middle-class residential community. The boundary of the neighborhood extends from Jackson Street at the west, to Randolph Street at the east, to Forrest Avenue at the north. The most intact historic area of Auburn Avenue lies between Boulevard and Howell; the Birth Home Block is the current name for the neighborhood because it includes the birthplace of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Birth Home Block of Auburn Avenue contains the oldest residential resources and the highest level of historic integrity.

The Birth Home Block housed boarders and tenants starting as early as 1900, and some homes remained in the ownership of the original property owner until the mid-twentieth century. Important to note are certain gaps in the historical data in public records pertaining to the ownership history of the resources and the occupational status of residents of Auburn Avenue. Census records did not include all of the boarders during the high point of residential occupation of the structures along Auburn Avenue; the multi-tenancy of Auburn Avenue residences peaked throughout the 1930s and 1940s. City directories often do not address these boarders, particularly the weekly or monthly boarders typical among laborers and in this neighborhood. Atlanta city records are limited with respect to this data, and do not encompass the full extent of African American history.

John Lynch owned much of the area that became the Birth Home Block in the late 1800s. Lynch developed a few buildings in these blocks including a structure near the corner of Wheat and Hogue Streets. Mapping does not indicate additional

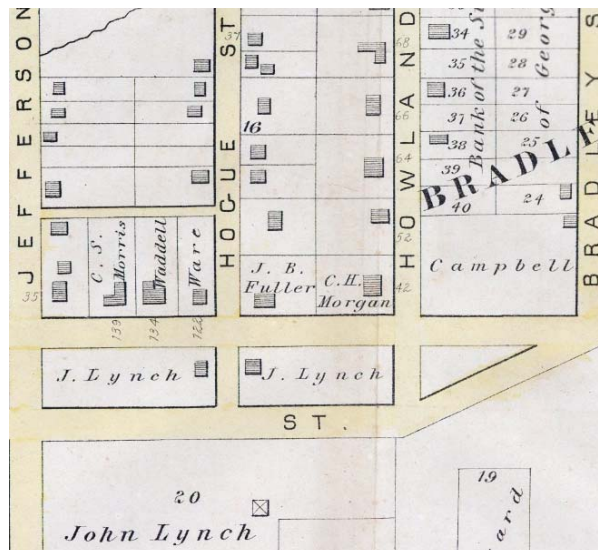


Figure 23. 1878 map showing holdings by John Lynch along Wheat Street between Hogue and Howland (now Howell) Streets. 526 Auburn Avenue is located in the middle block marked "J. Lynch." Southern and Southwestern Surveying and Publishing Company, City Atlas of Atlanta, Georgia. Available from: Emory University, <http://disc.library.emory.edu/atlantamaps/2012/10/> (accessed February 14, 2017).

structures in the lot bounded by [North and South] Wheat, Hogue, and Howland Streets (Figure 23). The height of the early development of Auburn Avenue started when the heirs of John Lynch began to divide and sell his properties on Wheat Street between Jackson and Howland Streets (now Howell) in 1880.¹²⁰ In 1894, A.S. Jenkins and H.S. Smith sold a parcel of land to a "local real estate tycoon" and developer, Fitzhugh Knox.¹²¹ Knox owned and developed the block of homes bounded by Hogue and Howell Streets, Auburn Avenue, and Old Wheat Street.

The four houses along the block at the east end of Auburn Avenue were variants of the same prototype: two-story frame dwellings with massing and features of the Queen Anne or Folk Victorian styles. Sharing the same basic building plan, they generally have a similar form but they vary in stylistic, decorative applications.¹²² Their original lots are similar in size and configuration, and the

120. Oppermann, *530 Auburn Avenue Historic Structure Report*, 19.

121. *Ibid.*, 19-20.

122. *Ibid.*, 20.

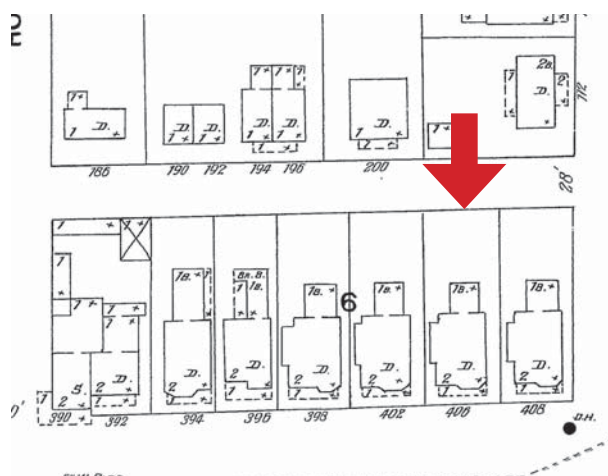


Figure 24. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Fulton County, Georgia, Auburn Avenue, 1899.

properties extended from Auburn Avenue to Old Wheat Street.¹²³

The first graphic depiction of the house at 526 Auburn Avenue is a Sanborn map from 1899 (Figure 24). The house is a two-story wood-frame structure with Queen Anne style elements.¹²⁴

Early Occupants and the Kirk Family

Appendix A, Sheet A-01 depicts the first floor house at the time of construction in c. 1895. Knox held the property as a rental for several years after construction. The first recorded occupant at this address appears in an 1896 Atlanta City Directory. Mrs. Abbie S. Knowles, a widow, occupied the residence. The directory does not note Mrs. Knowles' race, indicating that she was white as African American residential occupancy was usually indicated with a "(c)". Ms. Knowles' residence continued into 1897, but by 1898, the City Directory lists the address as vacant.¹²⁵ Ms. Knowles is mentioned in a transaction for three houses including 526 Auburn Avenue between Fitzhugh Knox and Frank W. Hall on August 17, 1899. Ms. Knowles may have mortgaged the property through Knox around this time. Frank Hall sold the property to Minnie Mills on July 21,

123. Ibid., 21.

124. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 60.

125. Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1896, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

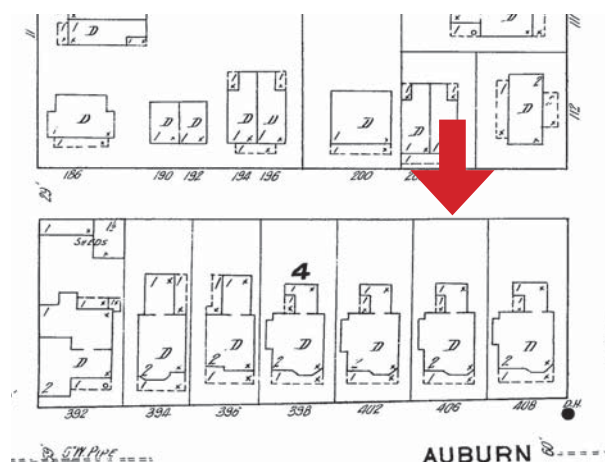


Figure 25. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Fulton County, Georgia, Auburn Avenue, 1911.

1906.¹²⁶

Despite court records of the real estate transaction of this house in 1906, the 1900 federal census lists John Mills, a doctor, as the occupant and owner of the house, with his wife, Julia.¹²⁷ The Mills' adult children also occupied the house. Their children included a daughter (name illegible) aged 21 and employed as a milliner and son, William F., aged 16.¹²⁸ Dr. Mills may have had a practice in the house as his business and residential addresses are the same in the Atlanta City Directory.¹²⁹ A 1905 city directory lists Frank and Minnie Mills as the occupants of the home. Frank is listed as a salesman at Law Brothers Company, and Minnie is listed as a saleslady at 66 Whitehall Road.¹³⁰

Minnie and Frank Mills sold the house at 526 Auburn Avenue to Ula (also spelled Eula) Kirk on November 23, 1908 for \$2,600. Ms. Kirk and her husband became the first African American occupants of the house. Frank Kirk was a janitor, and he and his family occupied the house from

126. A detailed chain of title is in Appendix B. Deed books 241/194, 226/565, and 144/88, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA; MALU Archives Series III, Division of Administration 1960-2010; Minnie Mills is the wife of William F. (Frank) Mills, son of John Mills.

127. Deed research indicates that Hall owned the property until 1906.

128. 1900 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

129. Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1903, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

130. Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1905, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

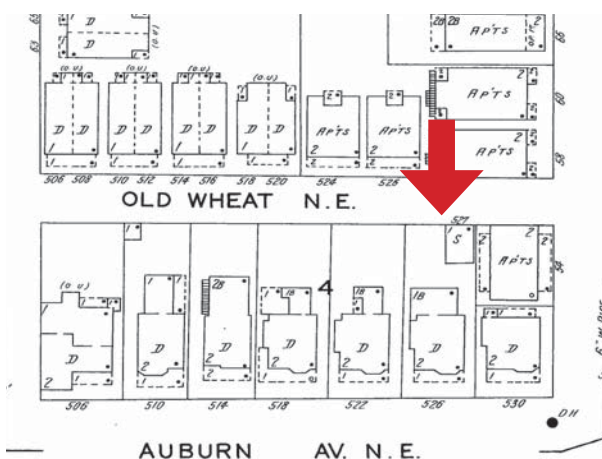


Figure 26. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Fulton County, Georgia, Auburn Avenue, 1931.

1908-1952.¹³¹ The Kirks had boarders living with them in the house as early as 1910. The 1910 census shows that the Kirks lived in the house with their two daughters Levata and Glenie. Their tenants were Ernest Killey, a trained nurse, with his wife Jennie and their daughter Ernestine.¹³² A 1911 Sanborn Map depicts the home during this period (Figure 26). The 1920 census shows the tenants under the Kirks were their daughter Etolla and her husband Charlie Maxie, their daughter Glennie and her husband Vernon Buck, their daughter Levata and her husband James Shaw, and their cousin Roy C. Boytin.¹³³

By 1931, the Kirks made an addition to the rear of the home. Existing conditions indicate this 1931 addition. Evidence includes some incongruent features such windows and the general workmanship and materials in some areas. These changes took place within the parkperiod of significance, 1929-1941, and as such, they are contributing features.¹³⁴ *Appendix A, Sheet A-02* depicts the first floor of the house c. 1931.

131. NPS, "Backs of Building Inventories for 526, 550, 540, 546 Auburn Avenue," MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management, Building Inventory Files 1972-2004, Subseries D, p. 2.

132. 1910 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

133. 1920 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

134. NPS, "526 Auburn exterior Preservation, Correspondence, 1986-1989," MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management, Building Inventory Files 1944-2010, Subseries G SERO Architecture Division Records 1974-2005, Box 4, Folder 1, p. 6.

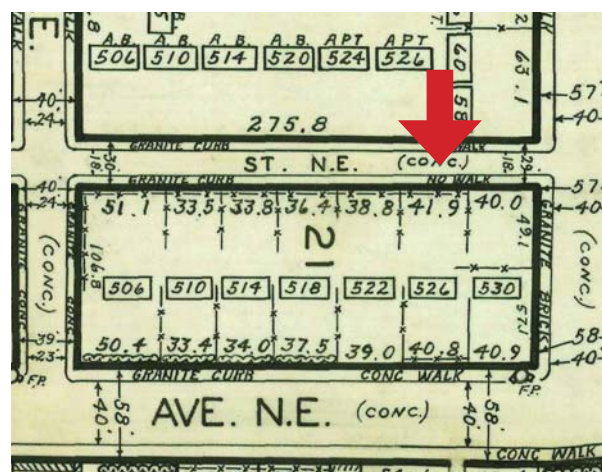


Figure 27. Cadastral Survey Map of the Birth Home Block from the 1937 (Works Progress Administration).

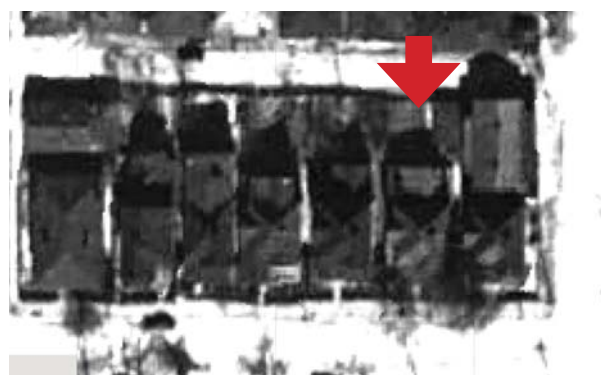


Figure 28. Aerial image of Auburn Avenue Birth-Block, 1949 (Georgia State University Special Collections).

By 1931, an outbuilding existed in the northeast corner of the lot (Figure 26). According to his grandchildren, Mr. Kirk converted this structure into a small corner store for local children and residents to purchase peanuts, soda, chips and candy.¹³⁵ Between 1925 and 1930, Kirk made several changes to the house that slightly altered the appearance of the house. The Kirks installed new roof, replacing the historic shingle roof with a composition asphalt roof. In this same period, they constructed a rear addition at the northwest corner of the house.¹³⁶ The house and the outbuilding appear on a 1937 "Cadastral Survey Map" (Figure 27). By the late 1940s, it appears that the Kirks removed the structure from the northeast corner of the site (Figure 28).

135. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 59.

136. NPS, "526 Auburn Avenue 1981-1999," MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management, Building Inventory Files 1944-2010, Subseries D Box 2, Folder 27.

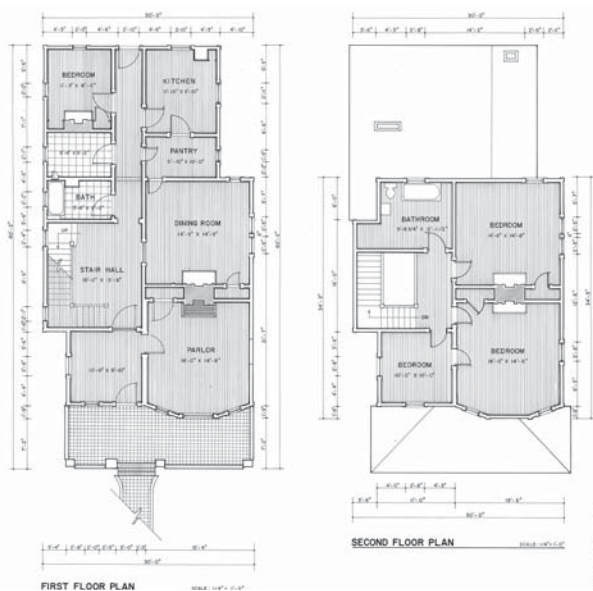


Figure 29. HABS GA,61-ATLA,51- (sheet 2 of 6) - Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, 526 Auburn Avenue (House), 526 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Fulton County, GA.

Ms. Kirk procured two loans for the property in January of 1935.¹³⁷ Ula D. Kirk conveyed the property by deed to her son-in-law Vernon D. Buck on November 20, 1939.¹³⁸ This transfer included obligation to repay the remainder of the two 1935 loans.¹³⁹ Ula and Frank Kirk were still occupants in the house until 1950, and they continued to rent portions of the house to lodgers. The 1940 census shows 10 occupants of the house including the Kirks. There were five adult couples living in this single residence. The census shows that most of the tenants worked and ranged in age from 28 to 85. Most of the occupants were laborers of some type including maids, porters and mechanics. The 1940 census valued the structure at \$2,600.¹⁴⁰ Frank Kirk passed away on November 29, 1952.¹⁴¹ The subsequent occupants of the house were: Howard Ghulson in 1955, Jesse L. Brown in 1960, Emma C. Craig in 1965, Robert Hightower in

137. Deed Book 1534/1274 and 1537/414, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA, MALU Archives Series III, Division of Administration 1960-2010.
138. Deed Book 1776/199, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA, MALU Archives, MALU Archives, Series III, Division of Administration 1960-2010.
139. Ibid.
140. 1940 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2002.
141. Georgia, Death Index, 1919-1998, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2001.



Figure 30. Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) drawing prepared in 1985 showing 518, 522, and 526 Auburn Avenue. Note the brick wall and posts on the porch at this time.

1970, and Georgiette Parks in 1980.¹⁴²

The Kirks had grandchildren who lived at 59 Boulevard, at the corner of Old Wheat Street. NPS staff conducted oral interviews with these grandchildren, Virginia Buck Prather and John Buck, while completing a cultural landscape report for the Birth Home Block. As children, Ms. Prather and Mr. Buck frequently visited the house at 526 Auburn Avenue and played with Martin Luther King, Jr.¹⁴³ Vernon Buck, Sr. passed away in October 1979, and the property passed to his children.

On July 23, 1984, the children of Vernon D. Buck, Sr. John Buck, Virginia Buck Prather, and Vernon Buck, Jr. sold the property to the US Department of the Interior and the National Park Service.¹⁴⁴ The deed entitles the United States government acquisition of the property at 526 Auburn Avenue “tract 101-04, land lot 46 of the 14th District of Fulton County by fee simple.”¹⁴⁵ After this purchase

142. NPS, “526 Auburn Avenue 1981-1999,” MALU Archives, NPS files Series V Division of Facility Management, Building Inventory Files 1944-2010, Subseries D Box 2, Folder 27.
143. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 59.
144. NPS, “Deed of Sale no. 8, 526 Auburn Avenue,” 24 July 1984, Fulton County, GA, Deed Book 9105, page 311. Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Series III, Division of Administration 1960-2010, 1960-2010, Subseries A Park Central Files, 1968-2008, Subseries 1 Central files, 1968-2008, Box 16 Folder 22 MLK, Jr.
145. Ibid.



Figure 31. Undated (c. 1985) photo of the east facade of 526 Auburn Avenue prior to exterior improvement project.

on August 3, 1984, the NPS requested that tenants vacate the premises immediately.¹⁴⁶ Today, the house serves as the NPS law enforcement headquarters for the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District.

NPS Ownership

The house at 526 Auburn Avenue is a contributing property within the National Register Historic District under Criteria A, B, and C for the events, people, and architecture that represent the environment in which Dr. King grew up. The NPS made a number of changes to the structure since 1984. The NPS commissioned Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documentation of the Birth Home Block in 1985,

146. NPS, "526 Auburn Ave, 1981-1991," MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management 1944-2010, Subseries D Building Inventory Files, 1972-2000, Box 2, Folder 27, p. 10.



Figure 32. Undated (c. 1985) south facade of 526 Auburn Avenue prior to exterior improvements. Non-historic brick porch posts have not been removed in this photo. The photo also shows a fence on the southern property line.

and these drawings document the house prior to many of these changes. The preparers of the HABS documentation recorded drawings of the facades along the block as well as a full drawing set to document the existing conditions at 526 Auburn Avenue¹⁴⁷ (Figure 29 and Figure 30).

Not long after this recordation, the NPS commissioned work for rehabilitation including selective demolition and upgrades to the structure. The rehabilitation project included improvements to the exterior, including removal of deteriorating siding and of non-historic porch features (Figure 31 and Figure 32). The NPS proposed replacement of historic fabric in-kind, replacement of missing historic fabric, and the addition of non-historic elements for stabilization. Work included "carpentry, millwork, finish hardware, glass and

147. NPS, "526 Auburn Avenue (House), 526 Auburn Avenue," National Park Service, National Architectural and Engineering Record, HABS GA, 61-ATLA, 49, 1933, 6. HABS GA, 61-ATLA, 49, 1933.



Figure 33. Undated photo of north facade prior to restoration efforts

glazing, roofing, finishes, paint; wood doors, window sashes and porch railings and posts; miscellaneous metals, gutters and downspouts, concrete footings, systems and fire stairs (Figure 33).¹⁴⁸ The project commenced in 1988. Ms. P.C. Barlow received the contract for “Preservation House Work” for this rehabilitation work.¹⁴⁹ *Appendix A, Sheet A-03* depicts the first floor plan of the building after the implementation of interior changes.

Additional work on the structure commenced in late 1989 with plans to rehabilitate the interior of the structure. Action included the following: “Remove historic and non-historic elements for the rehabilitation of the structure. Rehabilitation shall require the total demolition of all plaster work due to the amount of damage and deterioration (approx. 90% lost) [sic]; Plaster shall be replaced with gypsum drywall; doors shall be repaired and/or replaced; millwork and floors shall be repaired

148. NPS, “526 Auburn exterior Preservation, Correspondence, 1986-1989,” MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management, Building Inventory Files 1944-2010, Subseries G SERO Architecture Division Records 1974- 2005, Box 4, Folder 1, p. 1-2. According to the American Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) website, before commencing projects involving historic properties, “Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, and afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. The historic preservation review process mandated by Section 106 is outlined in regulations issued by ACHP.” At MALU, extensive projects require an additional clearance from the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

149. NPS, “Construction Contracts, 526 Auburn Avenue,” MALU Archives, Series III Division of Administration 1960-2010, Subseries A Park Central Files, 1968-2008, Box 18, Folder 20, 1988.

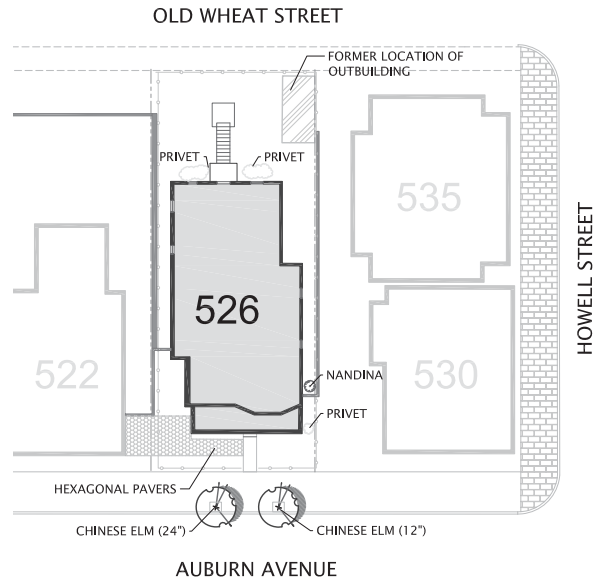


Figure 34. Site features, 526 Auburn Avenue.

and/or replaced where required to match historic fabric, or fabric which is compatible with the function of the space; electrical and plumbing fixtures, mechanical equipment and appliances shall be totally removed and replaced with new equipment and fixtures to meet codes.”¹⁵⁰

Work in the 1990s included a House Condition Assessment and Recordation by NPS staff (1992). The NPS also repaired the roof and installed architectural shingle material on the roof surface.¹⁵¹ In November of 1994, historians working for NPS submitted a work order to remodel the basement, install a new kitchen and construct a spiral staircase at 526 Auburn Avenue. A&R welding Inc. installed

150. NPS, “526 Auburn Ave Rehabilitation,” MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management, 1944-2010 Subseries I SERO Section 106 Compliance, 1982-1990, Box 2, Folder 4, 1989, p. 9.

151. NPS, “Categorical Exclusion Form, Project: Replace roof on 526 Auburn Avenue, PEPC Project Number 56866,” signed 2/22/15, 1.

a five-foot radius staircase on site for a fee of \$1950.00.¹⁵²

In May 2014, the NPS began a mold remediation project at 526 Auburn Avenue due to elevated levels of mold in the structure. The remediation project included removal of non-historic drywall from the interior of the structure and cleaning of the HVAC unit. Repairs included Storage Room 001 and Office 109 (closet). The initial project did not involve the removal of any historic fabric.¹⁵³ In the process of the mold mitigation project, the NPS discovered that the roof at 526 Auburn Avenue required emergency replacement. The roof replacement project occurred in 2015 and included removal of the existing asphalt shingles, flashing, drip cap, vent pipes, and approximately 20 linear feet of gutters. The Categorical Exclusion Form for the project notes, “the architectural shingles will be replaced in-kind due to [the] very nature of composition roll roofing. Composition roll roofing is very cheap and does not provide the protection necessary for preservation of the building that is not on a cyclic maintenance schedule.”¹⁵⁴ The NPS replaced the carpet and vinyl floor coverings in the interior of 526 Auburn Avenue in 2015. Additional improvements to the structure during this year included painting of the interior and exterior of the building and emergency pipe repairs.¹⁵⁵ In August 2015, the NPS made repairs to the exterior trim and windows of the structure. The project was extensive and included reglazing of all of the windows and replacement in-kind of deteriorated wood around windows on the structure.¹⁵⁶

152. 526 Auburn Ave “Installation of Metal Stairs,” MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management, 1944-2010 Subseries B Project Files, 1986-2002, Box 1, Folder 14 , 1994.

153. NPS, “Categorical Exclusion Form, Project: Mold remediation at building 526 Auburn Ave., PEPC Project Number: 54550,” signed 4/19/14, 1-2.

154. NPS, “Categorical Exclusion Form, Project: Replace roof on 526 Auburn Ave.,” 1.

155. NPS, “Assessment of actions having an effect on historical properties, Project Name: Replace carpet and vinyl and paint interior and exterior of 526 Auburn Avenue, PEPC Project Number: 59806, 1-5.; NPS, “Assessment of actions having an effect on historic properties, Project Name: Emergency repair of pipe at 526 Auburn Avenue, PEPC Project Number: 59469,” 1-4.

156. Jennifer Dixon to Leah Berry, RE: MLK: Exterior and Window Repair, 526 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, August 28, 2015.

Timeline

1871	Ruger's bird's-eye map of Atlanta shows little development on Wheat Street (later Auburn Avenue) east of Butler Street.
1890-1920	Brick sidewalk constructed on north side of Wheat Street, east of Howell Street.
1892	Sanborn map shows portions of Wheat Street and Old Wheat Street; the 500 block of current-day Auburn Avenue is not included.
1893	After petitions from white residents, the Atlanta City Council approves renaming Wheat Street to Auburn Avenue. Name change apparently anticipated when 1892 city directory and Sanborn map list Auburn.
7/9/1894	Fitzhugh Knox buys property on north side of Auburn Avenue between Hogue and Howell Streets.
1895	Booker T. Washington delivers the Atlanta Compromise, one of the most influential speeches on race in US history, at the Cotton States and International Exposition.
1895	The construction of 526 Auburn Avenue, owned by Fitzhugh Knox, is complete and leased to the first tenant, Abbie Knowles.
1899	First depiction of the house in a Sanborn map, identified at 526 Auburn Avenue, the two-story, single-family residence, wood frame construction, and wood shingle roof.
8/17/1899	Fitzhugh Knox sells three houses, including 526 Auburn Avenue, to Frank Hall.
1906	In a four-day race riot, incited, in part, by gubernatorial campaign and related sensationalized news stories of black crime, white mobs attack black people and property, killing dozens and physically injuring hundreds.
7/21/1906	Frank Hall sells 526 Auburn Avenue to W. Frank and Minnie Mills. W. Frank and Minnie Mills sell 526 Auburn Avenue to Frank and Ula (Eula) Kirk.
1908-1910	Most houses on this block of Auburn Avenue, formerly owned or occupied by whites, become owned or occupied by African Americans.
1911-1928	Several duplex residences constructed behind the larger houses on Auburn Avenue.
5/21/1917	Great Atlanta Fire starts a few blocks away but does not reach this block.
1920s	River stone aggregate sidewalk is set on a large portion of Auburn Avenue east to the intersection at Howell Street.
1924-27	Auburn Avenue street numbers change: 406 becomes 526 Auburn Avenue.
1925-1930	The Kirks make a number of changes to the exterior of 526 Auburn Avenue. These changes include replacement of the shingle roof with a composition asphalt roof and conversion of the outbuilding at the rear of the property into a small corner store.
1929	Martin Luther King, Jr. is born and lives at 501 Auburn Avenue.

1930	US Coast & Geodetic Survey map, prepared 1927-29 depicts Auburn Avenue.
1931	The Kirks make an addition to the rear of 526 Auburn Avenue at the northwest corner.
1932	Sanborn map shows evidence of an addition at the rear of the house, an extension of an earlier addition.
	Ula (Eula) Kirk deeds 526 Auburn Avenue to her son-in-law, Vernon D. Buck.
1940	Census shows eight additional lodgers living with the Kirks at their house.
1941	Twelve-year-old Martin Luther King, Jr. moves from his birth house at 501 Auburn Avenue.
1948	King leaves Atlanta to study at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania and at Boston University.
1949	Atlanta Negro Voters League is founded.
1952	Frank Kirk passes away.
1964	Civil Rights Act of 1964.
1968	Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinated.
1973	Maynard Jackson becomes Atlanta's first black mayor.
1974	MLK, Jr. National Register Historic District is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
1976-1977	Two National Historic Landmark districts designated in the historic neighborhood.
1979	Vernon D. Buck passes away and his children inherit the property at 526 Auburn Avenue.
1980	Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site established.
1980	Historic District Development Corporation organized.
Early 1980s	Study conducted for PBS documentary comparing Harlem and the golden era of Auburn Avenue; never produced.
1980s	Trust for Public Land begins buying properties in Auburn neighborhood.
1984	John Buck (Vernon Buck's son) sells the house to the US Department of the Interior, and the NPS acquires the property at 526 Auburn Avenue by fee simple.
1985	HABS recordation of the resources along Auburn Avenue including detailed drawings of 526 Auburn Avenue.
Late-1980s	Rehabilitation work begins at 526 Auburn Avenue including the removal of non-historic brick porch elements on the exterior and extensive interior remodeling.
1986	NPS General Management Plan for the National Historic Site.

1989	MLK, Jr. Landmark District designated by the City of Atlanta.
1994	Historic Resource Study of the National Historic Site.
1994	Remodel of basement of 526 Auburn Avenue including installation of metal spiral stair.
1995	Cultural Landscape Report on the Birth Home Block.
Mid-1990s	NPS purchases several properties in preparation for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta.
2001	National Register boundary increased.
2014	Mold remediation project and roof repair at 526 Auburn Avenue.
2015	Repairs to exterior trim and windows at 526 Auburn Avenue.

Timeline adapted from Oppermann, et al. *530 Auburn Avenue: Historic Structure Report*, 2013.

I.C Physical Description



Figure 35. South elevation.

The Old Fourth Ward and Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site

The Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS is located within the historic Old Fourth Ward, a historically mixed-use neighborhood situated 1.25 miles east of Atlanta's business district. The Old Fourth Ward developed in the late-1800s. By the 1900s, the area became an important social, economic, and cultural center for Atlanta's African American community. A large number of historically significant civic, religious, and business institutions located themselves in Old Fourth Ward, in particular in the area around Auburn Avenue, historically known as "Sweet Auburn."

Dr. King's birthplace is located at 501 Auburn Avenue. The 500 block of Auburn Avenue, between Boulevard and Howell Street, comprise the Birth Home Block. Today, the Birth Home Block retains its historic residential character and setting. The majority of the structures in the neighborhood and within the Birth Home Block currently are owner-occupied, tenant-occupied, or used and managed by the NPS. Historic houses line both sides of the 500 block of Auburn Avenue. These houses are all frame structures that occupy narrow lots. The buildings reflect a variety of architectural forms and styles, including the two-story Queen Anne-style house of King's birth and Victorian shotgun duplexes. Most of the lots on the 500 block feature shallow front yards planted in grass. Some of the yards feature shrubs and a shade tree. The houses occupy most of the lot width, leaving only



Figure 36. Front yard.

narrow side yards. Several of the houses feature wooden fences along the front property line or low retaining walls that create terraced front yards.

Auburn Avenue itself runs east west and is part of the grid system that is characteristic of the overall neighborhood. The road accommodates two-way traffic. It is forty feet wide, with parallel parking spaces on either side. Exposed aggregate concrete sidewalks, eight and a half feet wide, occupy both sides of this block of Auburn Avenue. There are low curbs consisting of Stone Mountain granite, between the sidewalks and the streets. There are overhead utility lines suspended from utility poles located near the curbs on both sides of the street.

The blocks north and east of the 500 block continue the residential character of the neighborhood. The area west of the Birth Home Block features several significant commercial and civic buildings, including the Atlanta Life Building, Bethlehem AME Church, and Butler Street YMCA.



Figure 37. North elevation, oblique view (MALU Archives, Slide 526882, April 1985)



Figure 38. North elevation, rear steps, concrete pad and pavers.



Figure 39. North elevation.



Figure 40. North (rear) yard, hexagonal pavers (MALU Archives, Slide 526866, April 1985)

526 Auburn Avenue: The Site

Located on the north side of Auburn Avenue west of Howell Street and fronted by an exposed aggregate concrete sidewalk, the house faces south (Figure 35).

Between the stone curb and sidewalk there are two Chinese elm (*Ulmus parviflora*). The house is set back from the public sidewalk, creating a small front lawn. A concrete walk and step lead to the Entry Porch. Paved with hexagonal concrete pavers, a second sidewalk directly connects the front yard of the house to 522 Auburn Avenue (Figure 36). An interpretive panel located in the front yard, “A Relaxing Atmosphere,” sits just north of the public sidewalk.

At east and west side yards, brick masonry retaining walls accommodate the sloping topography across the site and allow creation of full-height basement spaces. These walls abut both the brick foundation walls and wood siding

of the house. A low stone retaining wall separates side and rear yards of 526 and 522 Auburn Avenue (Figure 37). A stacked-stone wall is located alongside 530 Auburn Avenue and 54 Howell Street. The east and west yards include lawn areas. HVAC condensing units are set on-grade in the east side yard.

Old Wheat Street is the northern border of the rear lawn area. There is no sidewalk. A poured concrete slab acts as a footer for the wood stairs leading to the main level from the rear yard (Figure 38). Remnants of hexagonal pavers leading north from the stair, existing in 1985 photographs of the site, remain (Figure 39 and Figure 40). There are privet hedges (*Ligustrum sinsense*) along the north elevation of the house.

A Prototype House

The prototype for this house is a design initially constructed at least seven times on both sides of



Figure 41. Prototype houses, front porches along Auburn Avenue.

the 500 block of Auburn Avenue.¹⁵⁷ The prototype design is Queen Anne in form, massing and room configuration, and stock elements include stair, door, and window designs, primary and secondary baseboards, picture moldings, fireplace mantels, door and window casings, and crown moldings. The design lent itself to creation of a distinctive appearance for each address (Figure 41). Simple modification of exterior elements such as shingle cut and pattern, gable vents, door and window designs, and porch columns and balustrades, create a visual contrast and blending of architectural styles along this block of Auburn Avenue (Figure 42). Minor modifications to interior floor plans further personalized the utility of each prototype house.¹⁵⁸

526 Auburn Avenue: The House

Measured drawings depicting existing conditions for 526 Auburn Avenue appear in Appendix C of this report.

The house at 526 Auburn Avenue serves as an example of the prototype design with variations.

157. 530 Auburn Avenue Historic Structure Report, 40.

158. Ibid., Appendix B: Prototype Houses.



Figure 42. Prototype houses along Auburn Avenue.



Figure 43. South elevation.

A two-story house with basement, it includes a primary main block with a one-story north wing. Roof forms vary, with a tall hipped roof with projecting gables on the south and west elevations covering the main block. An asymmetrical gabled roof sits atop this roof. Hexagonal asphalt composite shingles cover both roofs.

The full-width, hipped roof porch dominates the primary south elevation fronting Auburn Avenue (Figure 43). Wood posts and balusters are not original, as photographs dating to the 1980s and 1985 HABS drawings and photos indicate brick columns and a low brick wall at the Entry Porch



Figure 44. South elevation (MALU Archives, Slide 526879, March 1985)



Figure 46. Front Door.

(Figure 44). A single concrete step leads up to the concrete porch deck with a quarry tile inset. Stucco covers a brick wall below the concrete deck on all elevations of the Entry Porch.

The south elevation of the house is asymmetrical, with a projecting bay to the east extending to both floors. A gable roof with a pent eave covers this projecting bay. The front door is located to the west of the bay. Original wood weatherboards remain.

A set of wooden steps and porch provide access on the north elevation to the first floor of the north



Figure 45. Typical window, exterior view.

wing. Constructed with 2 × lumber of various sizes, the porch includes a shed roof covering.¹⁵⁹ This porch and stair is similar to that shown in the 1985 HABS drawings, with the addition of vertical posts to the handrails.

Windows vary in type and size, and are asymmetrical in placement. The typical window type is a two-over-two double-hung wood window (Figure 45). Notable variations include the twelve-over-one windows of the projecting front bay and the one-over-one windows immediately above on the second floor. To the west of the front door is a single fixed-sash window. A variety of window types are found on the north wing. A round wood vent is centered in the upper gable. The three exterior doors are varied in design, and the NPS installed the elaborate front door with a frosted glass light after 1985 (Figure 46).

In plan, the main block of the house is an elongated rectangle with a projecting bay on both floors, with a connecting north wing at the first floor (Figure 47). The first floor of the main block of the house

159. Note: This report uses does not use the double prime symbol (") when describing nominal lumber sizes. An x symbol means "by" in the nominal description. Descriptions of actual lumber dimensions use the double prime symbol.

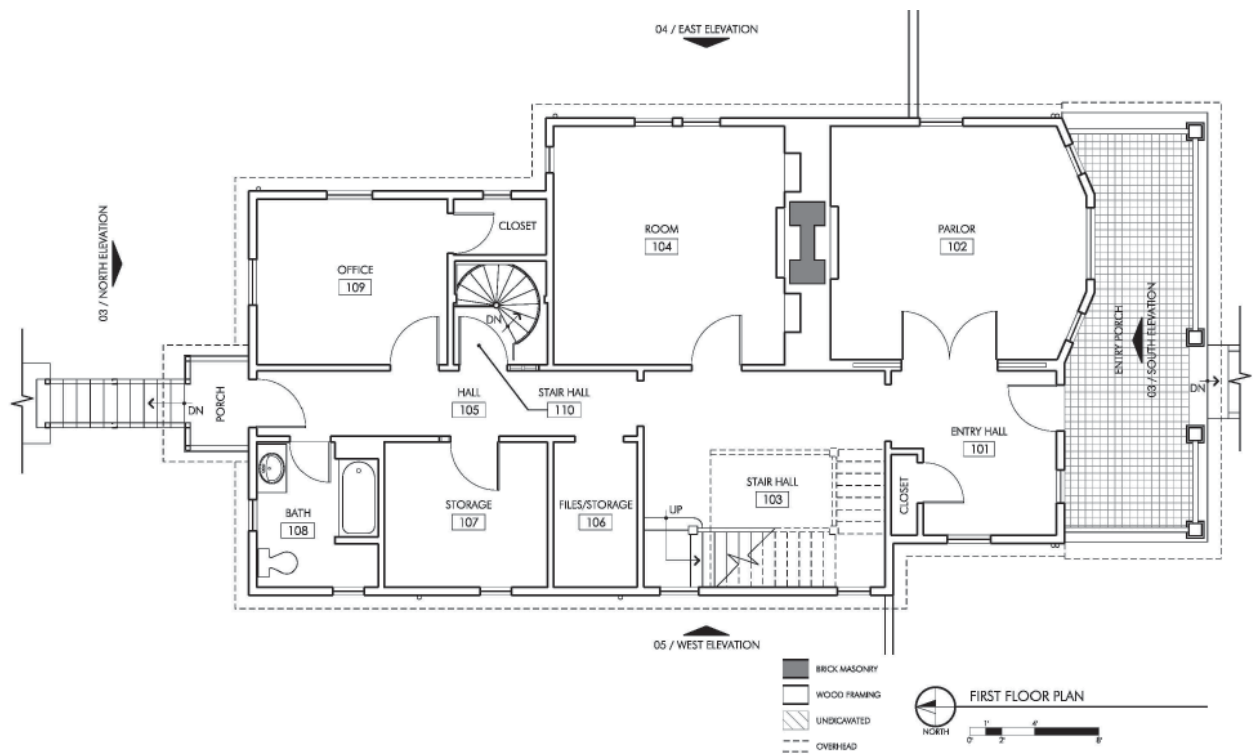


Figure 47. First floor plan (2017).

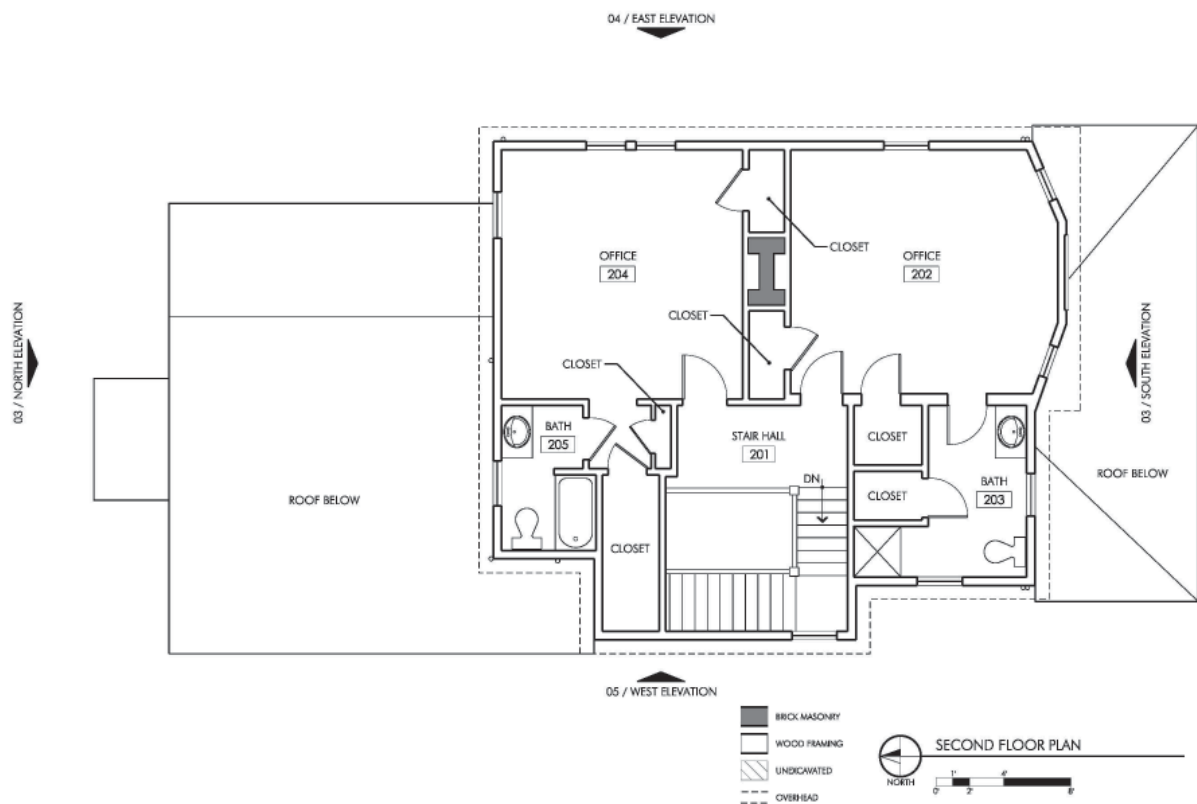


Figure 48. Second floor plan (2017).



Figure 49. Southwest corner of basement.

generally maintains its original form and layout. The front door opens into a foyer, with a large room with projecting bay to the east, with a large square room immediately to the north. North of the foyer, an offset rectangular stair hall with stair runs north-south. The NPS currently uses a hallway north of the stair hall as offices, stair hall and storage. A bathroom is located at the northwest corner of the north wing. The central hallway provides access to a small porch on the north. While the plan configuration of the main block of the house remains similar to the arrangements indicated in the 1985 HABS drawings, significant modifications to the north wing occurred during 1988–1989 and in 1994.¹⁶⁰

The two large rooms and stair hall of the second floor align with the same rooms of the first floor (Figure 48). A bathroom and two closets are located to the west of the large front room, and to the west of the large rear room, there is a vestibule leading to a rectangular closet and bathroom. The NPS has modified bathroom spaces and closets since 1985.¹⁶¹

160. Historic American Buildings Survey, Survey No. GA-2169C, Sheet 3 of 6.

161. Historic American Buildings Survey, Survey No. GA-2169C, Sheet 3 of 6.



Figure 50. Wood support frame under bearing wall running North-South.



Figure 51. Wood support frame under bearing wall.

Structural Systems

Foundation/Basement

The south portion of the full height basement is buried below grade and the portion to the north is above grade. The full height basement walls are stone or brick. Construction includes a concrete slab-on-grade throughout and concrete bulkheads at the base of the stone or brick retaining walls (Figure 49). At a point, approximately 10'-0" north of the south face of the building, there are site retaining walls that tie into east and west basement walls, allowing the grade outside to drop approximately 6'-0" south-to-north.



Figure 52. Wood support frame under bearing wall running North-South southern end. Low beam has been removed. Outline of area added for emphasis.

The floor joists and interior bearing walls from the floors above are supported in the basement by a system of timber beams. These beams are just below the floor level and bear on timber columns that bear on low timber beams approximately 3'-0" above the basement floor. The low beams of the truss bear on stone piers. The piers have extensive deterioration of the mortar resulting in some loss of stone material. This wood framing system includes wood kicker bracing (Figure 50 and Figure 51) that is part of the lateral load resisting system. In several locations the owners removed portions of the low wood beams during renovations (Figure 52 and Figure 53).

There is evidence of past water intrusion and there are no indications of active leaks; however, some of the downspout leaders at the exterior of the building immediately above the basement are damaged or are not connected to the drain system.

The site wall on the property line with 530 Auburn Avenue on the east side of the building is bowing and failing toward this property (Figure 54). A 2013 historic structure report for this adjacent does not mention the failing wall, so this may be a relatively recent condition change.

Exterior & Interior Wood-Framed Walls

At some point, the owners repurposed wood studs with sill plates below and top plates above from another location and installed them next to the south end of the basement walls. Plaster lath lines can be seen on the wide faces of the studs. This was possibly to support the ends of the floor joists, which show evidence of past termite and water



Figure 53. Wood support frame under bearing wall running North-South northern end. Low beam has been removed for door. Outline of area added for emphasis.

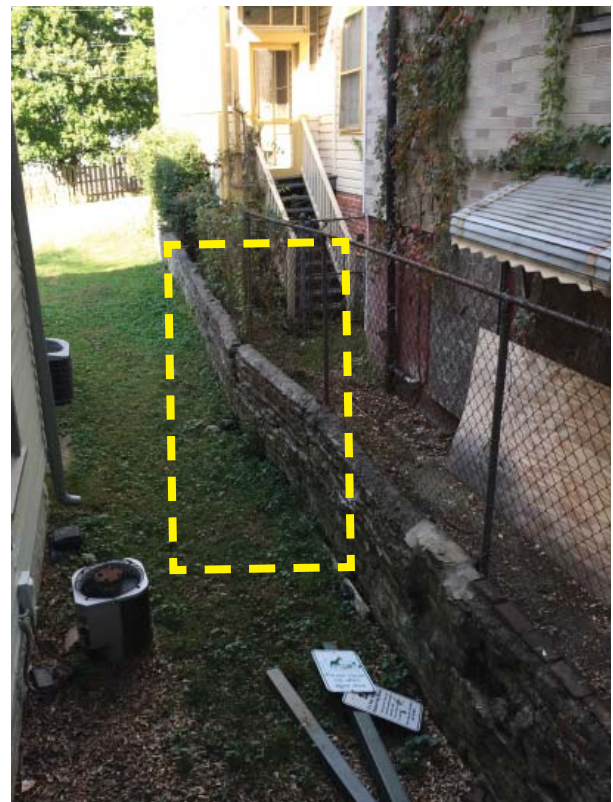


Figure 54. Property line wall on east side of property bowing. Outline of area added for emphasis.



Figure 55. Wall on northeast side of Unfinished Room 004.

damage where they bear on the brick exterior walls. In addition, there are new dimensional lumber joists sistered to the ends of a number of the joists.

To the north of the exterior retaining walls where the outside grade is lower, the wall framing in the basement level consists of brick knee walls topped with timber sill beams topped with timber posts and timber top beams. Studs infill this framing, and horizontal wood boards sheath it (Figure 55). In the Storage Room 003, the brick knee walls are much lower, and conventional wood stud framing tops the walls.

The exterior and interior walls above the basement level are wood stud framing, sheathed with wood boards at the exterior or plaster lath or drywall at the interior.

Flooring System

The floor joists run east-west and are a combination of true 2 × 8 members set at approximately 22" on center with one row of x-bridging at mid-span or 1¾" by 7¾" joists at 22" on center. The maximum span is 15'-0". The original building use was residential, but the NPS renovated and currently uses the structure for law enforcement offices. The existing joists are adequate to resist the loads applied by a residential occupancy. However, with the heavier office loads, the joists spanning the 15'-0" are overstressed by 12 percent and the deflections are greater than allowed.

The NPS likely installed the pole jacks and beams to remedy this issue. There are four locations



Figure 56. Roof framing in attic.

where seven pole jacks have been placed under wood blocking to support the floor joists above (Figure 52 and Figure 53). Three locations are in the Unfinished Room 004, and one is in Storage Room 003. One of the jacks on Unfinished Room 004 has been removed, leaving the blocking to cantilever between the remaining jack and the wood framing above, rendering it ineffective.

Roofing System

The roof is a gable and hip roof made of rough-cut rafters covered with horizontal battens that supported the original roofing. At some point, plywood sheathing was added on top of the battens. The rafters are braced by mid height knee walls kicking down to the framing below. The rafters connect to a ridge, hip beams and live valley beams that bear on support posts bearing on wall framing below (Figure 56). The roof system cantilevers over the wall of the bay at the south face of the building below to form an overhang.

Utilities

Mechanical Systems

Four fireplaces originally provided heating, two located on each floor. Additional fireplaces or stoves would have likely served the north wing of the house, including the fireplace and two chimneys shown in the 1985 HABS drawings, both since removed. Now covered with gypsum wallboard, the remaining four fireplaces are not accessible. The brick base of the remaining fireplaces and chimney are visible from the basement and the chimney is visible in the attic and extends above the roof.

Modern split-system equipment provides heating



Figure 57. East Side Yard.



Figure 58. Attic view toward south with HVAC equipment.

and air conditioning to spaces on all levels via insulated ductwork routed below the main floor and above the second floor in the attic. Condensing units are located on grade in the east side yard, (Figure 57) and air-handling units are located in Unfinished Room 004 (and in the attic) (Figure 58).

No exhaust systems are provided for bathrooms.

Electrical System

Georgia Power provides electrical service to the house, which enters from a meter located on the east elevation near the front of the house (Figure 59).

Interior lighting fixtures and other devices are modern in style, material and period of manufacture. Exterior lighting fixtures are utilitarian in style and configuration, and consist of incandescent floodlight fixtures mounted at soffits on the north, west and south elevations. A modern ceiling mounted incandescent light fixture is located at the Entry Porch.

A security and alarm system includes motion sensors, smoke detectors and control panels mounted in hallways and entrances. The operation

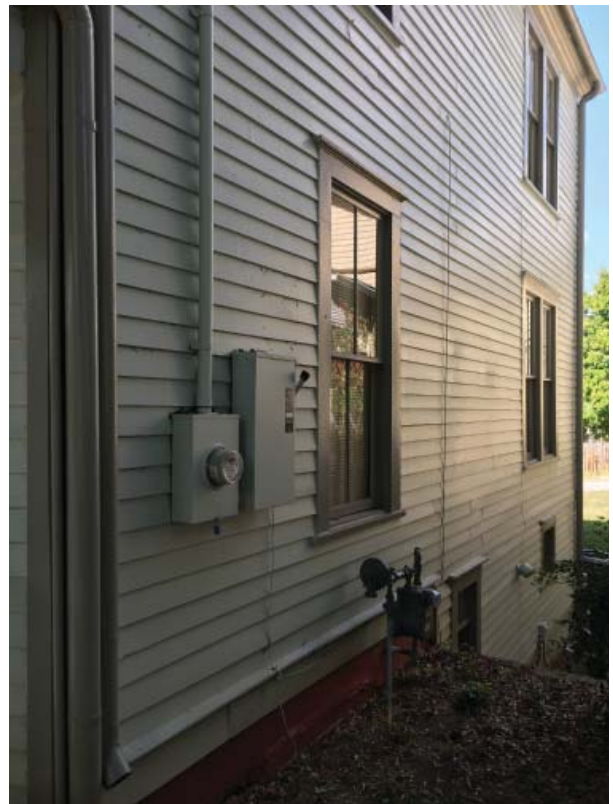


Figure 59. East elevation, Electrical and gas service.



Figure 60. Hall 002 view toward southwest.

of this system was not verified.

Plumbing System

The City of Atlanta provides water and sewage services. All fixtures, pipes and fittings located in the house are modern in style, material, and period of manufacture. Gas service is located at the southwest corner of the house.

A plastic laminate countertop located in Hall 002 includes a double-bowl kitchen sink (Figure 60).

Baths 108 and 203 include a vanity unit with an integral cast countertop and lavatory. Bath 205 includes a vanity unit with plastic laminate countertop with drop-in porcelain lavatory. Bathtubs are located in Baths 108 and 205; an acrylic shower unit is located in Bath 203.

Exterior Features

Roofs and drainage

Multiple roof forms cover the house: A hipped roof with distinctive curved wood board soffits covers the main block of the house. Secondary gabled roofs extend to the west over the Stair Hall and over the projecting bay of the south elevation. An asymmetrical gabled roof is over the north wing of the house, and a shed roof covers the first-floor stair landing at the north elevation. Diagonal



Figure 61. West elevation.

diamond composition shingles cover all roofs and were installed since 1985.

Six-inch diameter round metal gutters are located on the north, east, south and west sides of the main hipped roof and on the east and west sides of the gabled north wing, and the front porch is served by an internal gutter and two downspouts. Four and six-inch diameter downspouts direct rainwater to adjacent roofs and down to grade. Downspouts are connected to a subsurface drainage system (operation unconfirmed) at locations on the east and west elevations via flexible plastic connections, which are disconnected at the southeast corner of the house (Figure 61). Other downspouts release rainwater directly to grade. All gutters and downspouts are painted.

Chimneys

A single brick chimney is centered on the eastern slope of the main hipped roof and covered by a metal cap. The brick is exposed with evidence of mortar joint repair indicating that repair work has occurred since 1985.

Windows and Doors

Windows

Several window types date from the original construction of the house, some in original locations and configurations. A close look at existing conditions reveals the repair and replacement in some locations of the wood components, and that the condition of glass and glazing varies.

Typical window types include two-over-two double-hung wood windows that measure



Figure 62. Typical double-hung window.

approximately 2'-9" wide by 6'-5" tall at the first floor and 5'-9" tall at the second floor (Figure 62). Windows found on the gabled north wing differ in size and pattern from the main block of the house.

Variations on this typical window type are located on the east elevation in Room 104 and Office 204 where a stacked pair of narrower 2'-4" wide, two-over-two windows are located.

While windows at the primary south elevation are generally consistent in height with other elevations, their patterning and configuration differ. At the north elevation, unique windows on the main block of the house include a 1'-9" wide by 6'-0" tall one-over-one double-hung window in Room 104 and a 2'-9" wide by 5'-2" tall four-over-four double-hung window in Bath 205. The north wing of the house includes a 2'-10" wide by 5'-0" tall hybrid six-over-two double-hung window in Storage Room 001 and a 2'-6" wide by 5'-9" tall six-over-one double-hung window in Storage Room 003. At the first-floor bay, a single twelve-over-one double-hung window is flanked by two



Figure 63. South elevation.

six-over-one double-hung windows. At the second floor, immediately above, two one-over-one double hung windows, each measuring approximately 2'-0" wide by 5'-9" tall, flank a solid bay panel with decorative wood scrollwork (Figure 63).

Just west of the front door is located an original 2'-0" by 2'-0" fixed-sash window and immediately above in Bath 203, a double-hung 2'-9" by 5'-9" tall window.

Unique window types located on the east elevation include a two-over-two double-hung window 2'-0" wide by 2'-7" tall and immediately to the north a 2'-5" wide by 2'-2" tall single fixed sash window. The second floor of the north wing includes a 2'-0" wide by 2'-7" tall double hung window and a 2'-8" wide by 5'-9" tall six-over-six double hung window to the north.

At the north elevation, unique windows on the main block of the house include a 1'-9" wide by 6'-0" tall one-over-one double-hung window at the first floor and a 2'-9" wide by 5'-2" tall in Bath 205. The north wing includes a 2'-10" wide by 5'-0" tall hybrid six-over-two double-hung window in Storage Room 001 and a 2'-6" wide by 5'-9" tall



Figure 64. Front door.

window in Storage Room 003.

Windows on the west elevation include a 2'-0" wide by 2'-0" tall fixed-sash window located under the intermediate stair landing in Stair Hall 103. The first floor of the north wing includes an approximately 2'-2" wide by 2'-2" tall window opening that has been filled in with wood board siding and 2'-1" wide by 5'-9" tall one-over-one double-hung windows in both Bath 108 and Storage 107. Basement windows are two-over-one double-hung windows, both 2'-8" wide by 5'-9" tall.

Doors

The house includes three exterior doors, each different in size and design: two doors located at the first level and one at the basement.

The front entrance (south elevation) includes an original single-light transom, original wood casing and trim. This solid wood door of mortise and tenon construction measures 3'-0" wide by 7'-0" tall by 1 3/8" thick. A frosted glass half-light includes a large pane surrounded by smaller individual panes. It is topped with applied wood trim including two turned wood spindles and applied trim at the sill. A single, horizontal raised wood panel and two vertical panels are framed by wood trim. Hardware includes a mortised brass knob and



Figure 65. Entry Porch, Oblique View toward east.

escutcheon plate with opening for skeleton key, a modern mortised brass deadbolt lock, three 4" brass butt hinges, and a hydraulic closer mounted on the interior face of the door and frame. While the mortised construction of this door suggests an early 20th or late 19th century date of manufacture, this door differs in appearance from the front door shown in HABS drawings dating from 1985.¹⁶² It is not possible to confirm if this door is original to the house with available evidence (Figure 64).

Two doors provide access to the north wing of the house. At the first floor, a six raised-panel door measuring 3'-0" wide by 7'-0" tall by 1 1/2" thick, includes a modern mortised deadbolt lock, knob and escutcheon with opening for a skeleton key, and three butt hinges. At the exterior of this opening, a modern welded steel security door and frame with deadbolt lock includes insect screens. At the basement, a five raised-panel door measuring 7'-0" tall by 3'-0" wide by 1 1/2" thick includes a modern mortised deadbolt lock, three brass butt hinges and brass knob. Both doors are solid wood and of mortise and tenon construction.

Porches and Steps

The full-width, hipped roof Entry Porch located on the south elevation is original to the house, however HABS documents and historic photographs from the mid-1980s indicate that the wood porch posts and balustrades were added since 1985. A single concrete step leads to the front porch (Figure 65). The porch is paved with quarry tiles, present in 1985 photographs (Figure 66).

162. Historic American Buildings Survey, Survey No. GA-2169C, Sheet 3 of 6.



Figure 66. Entry Porch, quarry tile pavers (MALU Archives, Slide 526898, April 1985).

Providing access to the first floor of the north wing of the house, the porch located on the north elevation is similar to one shown on HABS drawings prepared in 1985, with the addition of vertical posts at the handrail.¹⁶³

Interior Features

Significant interior modifications to the house occurred during a 1988-1989 rehabilitation and remodeling project and to a lesser extent, a 1994 project. The extensive nature of this work renders identification of original doors, wood trim, and windows and their locations based solely on a visual survey difficult. Future paint analysis and selective demolition may reveal more about vintage of doors, windows, and identify interior wood trim that has been relocated, modified, or replicated.

Overall modifications include: removal of existing interior wall finishes and wood trim, including plaster walls, and replacement with gypsum wallboard; relocation of doors, windows and other interior features; modification of room configurations on all levels; and installation of replica wood base and door and window casings. All building systems, electrical, plumbing and mechanical, were replaced. Specific changes are noted in room descriptions below.

New interior finishes were also installed as part of these remodeling projects and include: ½" thick gypsum wallboard covering walls and ceilings and broadloom carpet and pad in certain rooms. All interior wood trim and walls are painted. Exceptions to these typical finish types are noted.

163. Historic American Buildings Survey, Survey No. GA-2169C, Sheet 5 of 6.



Figure 67. Storage Room 001 view toward northeast.

Storage Room 001

This 17'-11" by 8'-5" room has a 10'-0" ceiling height, remodeled after 1985 and again as part of a 1994 project (Figure 67). A 3'-0" wide by 7'-0" tall wood-cased opening connects the room to Hall 002. Constructed in 1988-1989, mechanical and plumbing chases are located along the full width of the east and west of the space. To the east, a chase was created with wood studs and ½" thick gypsum thick wallboard; to the west, double stud walls with gypsum wallboard finish create a chase. A spiral metal stair, installed in 1994, serves as the only interior connection between the Basement and First Floor.

Flooring

The concrete slab floor is covered with 12" by 12" square vinyl composition tiles.

Baseboards

4" rubber or vinyl base.

Walls

Dating to 1985 or later and modified in 1994, ½" thick gypsum wallboard covers all walls.

Ceiling

The suspended 2' by 4' acoustical tile ceiling system was installed in 1988-1989 and modified in 1994 to



Figure 68. Hall 002 view toward north.

accommodate the spiral stair installation.

Doorways

None.

Windows

The only window in the space is located on the north wall. It is a 2'-10" wide by 5'-0" six-over-two wood double-hung window of indeterminate date.

Mechanical System

Ductwork is located above the ceiling and a single supply register is centered above the window. A thermostat is located on the south wall.

Electrical System

Modern switches and electrical outlets are located in the space. A single ceiling-mounted fluorescent fixture with acrylic lens provides light. A smoke detector is mounted on the suspended ceiling.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

None.

Hall 002

The central basement hall (Figure 68) runs north to south and measures 3'-9" by 25'-0" with a ceiling height of approximately 8'-0." The central hall provides access to the backyard via a single door to the north and connects to Storage Room 003 and Unfinished Room 004 via doors and a 3'-0" wide by 7'-0" tall cased wood opening connects to Storage Room 001. Existing conditions differ from those shown in the 1985 HABS drawings and indicate the room's expansion to the south and separation from Unfinished Room 004.

Flooring

12" by 12" square vinyl composition tiles cover the concrete slab floor.

Baseboards

With the exception of a segment of the east wall with no baseboard, baseboards are flat 1 x 6 wood with a half-round wood shoe mold at the floor. These are contemporary with the hall expansion and installed after 1985.

Walls

Painted ½" thick gypsum wallboard covers all walls.

Ceiling

The suspended 2' by 4' acoustical tile ceiling system was installed during the 1998-1989 project.

Doorways

There exist four doorways in this room. A five raised-panel solid wood door of indeterminate date is located on the north wall and measures 7'-0" tall by 3'-0" wide with a 4 ½" tall concrete sill. Door hardware includes modern brass doorknob and deadbolt. 1985 HABS drawings indicate a 3'-2" wide opening with no door at this location. A modern hollow metal door and frame located on the west wall connects to Storage Room 003 and two modern pressed-wood six-panel doors with wood frames connect to Unfinished Room 004 to the south.

Wood door casings are typically 4 ½" wide by 1 1/8" thick.

Windows

None existing.

Mechanical System

Ductwork serves the space from chases located



Figure 69. Storage Room 003 view toward south.

along the east and west walls. Supply registers are mounted high on west and east walls.

Electrical System

Two surface-mounted fluorescent light fixtures with acrylic lenses provide light for the space. Duplex wall outlets are located along east and west walls. A security system control panel is mounted on the west wall adjacent to the doorway to Storage Room 003 and both smoke and motion detectors are located in the space.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

A modern base and wall cabinet is set into a 2'-2" deep niche located at the southwest end of the room. A double kitchen sink with faucet is mounted within the plastic laminate covered countertop.

A 5 ½" deep by 27 ¾" long by 39" tall gypsum wallboard enclosure obscures a brick and stone pier on the east wall.

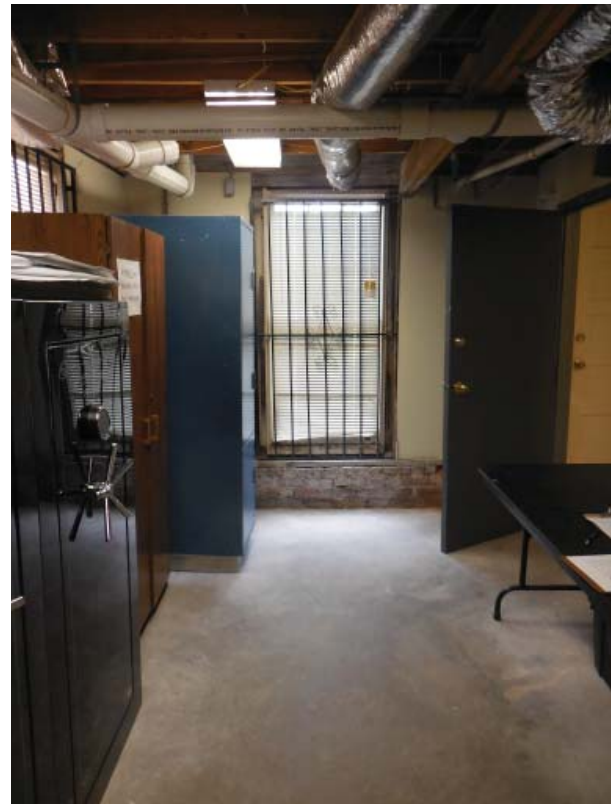


Figure 70. Storage Room 003 view toward north.

Storage Room 003

This rectangular room (Figure 69) measures 8' -8" by 18' -0" with a ceiling height of approximately 10' -0 ½" to the bottom of wood floor joists; this clearance varies at duct and beam locations (Figure 70). A brick firebox shown in 1985 HABS drawings no longer exists and room dimensions indicate expansion of this room to the south since 1985.

Flooring

The smooth-troweled concrete floor slab has no finish.

Baseboards

None.

Walls

½" thick gypsum wallboard covers all walls. Unpainted 12" tall brick foundation walls are exposed on the north and west walls below windows and gypsum board.

Ceiling

The unfinished ceiling includes exposed wood floor joists and beams, wood decking, and ductwork. Framing is modern in appearance and size.



Figure 71. Unfinished Basement view toward southwest.

Doorways

One doorway provides access to the adjacent hall to the east and measures 3'-0" wide by 7'-0" tall. This modern door is a painted hollow metal door with metal frame. Hardware includes a brass-finished mortised deadbolt lock and knob with escutcheon (Figure 70).

Windows

Three double-hung wood windows are located along the north and west walls. Metal security bars are mounted at the interior of window openings.

Finishes

Walls are painted with the exception of exposed brick foundation walls. The exposed floor framing and decking are unpainted.

Mechanical System

Exposed insulated flexible ductwork serves the space, the adjacent hallway, and first floor spaces above. Exposed piping serves Bath 108, located immediately above this space.

Electrical System

One ceiling mounted fluorescent light fixture provides light for the space and a ceiling-mounted



Figure 72. Unfinished Room 004, air handling unit.

keyless porcelain socket is unused. Motion sensors are located in this space.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

This space is used for secure storage of firearms and other equipment. Two metal safes and a gun safe are located in the space.

Unfinished Room 004

This irregularly-shaped room measures 28'-5" by 31'-3" maximum, with a ceiling height of 7'-10" to the bottom of wood floor joists; this height varies due to the irregular slope of the floor and at duct and beam locations. The south wall mirrors the first floor with its projecting bay. A brick firebox shown in 1985 HABS drawings exists; however, the room shape and size have been modified since 1985.

Structural shoring and bracing has been installed in this space. These features are described under Physical Description and Condition Assessment: Structural.



Figure 73. Unfinished Room 004 view toward east.

Flooring

The floor is a smooth-troweled concrete slab with a slight irregular slope, its date of construction not established. A level change of 10" is cast into the slab toward the south half of the room. Near the existing brick foundation walls along the south wall, a concrete footing extends approximately 1'-4" toward the interior of the space.

Baseboards

None.

Walls

2 × 4 wood stud walls enclose the north end the room and are not finished on the Unfinished Room 004 side. Exterior walls include full-height brick retaining walls to the south and at portions of the east and west walls.

West and east exterior walls include a brick foundation wall (average height above concrete floor at west wall 24", east wall 32"); the west wall with inset stacked stone piers, suggesting that the brick infill was added. A wood plate sits on top of brick foundation walls and structural wood piers span between the foundation and wood structure of the first floor. Exterior wood weatherboards are

nailed directly to the 2 × 4 wood studs that infill spaces between piers.

The brick retaining walls located at the south end of the room are in good condition. There is evidence of water infiltration, however, no indication of active leaks was observed. Wood studs located at a short section of retaining wall at the south end of the west appear to be recycled from other locations due to plaster markings, and may indicate that an additional wall finish once existed at this location (Figure 71).

No thermal insulation is installed in the space.

Ceiling

No finished ceiling exists; unpainted wood floor joists and wood floor decking are exposed overhead.

Doorways

Two modern 3'-0" wide by 7'-0" tall molded wood doors open to the space from Hall 002.

Windows

Two windows are located on the east wall of this space; to the south a two-over-two double-hung window approximately 2'-0" wide by 2'-7" tall; to the north a 2'-5" wide by 2'-2" tall single fixed sash window. Metal security bars are mounted at the interior of window openings.

Finishes

None.

Mechanical System

A floor-mounted air-handling unit providing heating and air-conditioning to first floor and basement spaces is located near the existing brick firebox (Figure 72). Conditioned air is distributed through insulated ductwork to basement and first floor spaces.

A gas-fired fifty-gallon water heater serving the entire building is located adjacent to the air handler and firebox (Figure 71, Figure 72, and Figure 73).

Electrical System

Two modern surface mounted keyless porcelain light fixtures provide light.



Figure 74. Unfinished Room 004 view toward west.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

Foam sealant has been applied to the interior of wood weatherboards along the west wall, likely as an attempt to reduce air and water infiltration. Although not evident, openings in wood weatherboards might allow insect and rodent entry (Figure 74).

Entry Hall 101

The entry hall maintains its original configuration, with the addition of a shallow closet not shown in 1985 HABS documentation. Access to a large parlor, Room 102, is through a pair of doors to the east; access to Stair Hall 103 is through a wood-cased opening to the north; and a single door serves the closet located on the north wall (Figure 75).

Flooring

Faux-stone patterned sheet vinyl flooring covers wood sub-floors. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015.

Baseboards

All walls have a 9" tall wood base with shoe molding. Profiles match baseboards found throughout the main block of the house.

Doorways

There are three doorways in this room. An exterior doorway of indeterminate date is located on the south wall (Figure 76). The interior wood casing, corner rosettes and plinth is 5" wide and matches door casings found throughout the main



Figure 75. Entry Hall 101, view toward north.



Figure 76. Entry Hall 101 view toward south.

block of the house. This door and its hardware are described under Physical Description and Condition Assessment: Doors and Windows. A



Figure 77. Entry Hall 101 oblique view toward northeast.

modern 2'-6" wide by 6'-8" tall louvered wood door provides access to the closet, and its wood casing, corner rosettes and plinth replicate profiles found elsewhere in the house (Figure 77).

The doorway on the west wall provides access to Room 102. This pair of modern 3'-5 ½" wide by 6'-10 ½" tall fifteen light wood doors is set within a frame taller than the doors which has been modified with an intermediate horizontal 2 × wood member to accept the door's height, creating a small 5 ½" false transom above the door (Figure 75).

On the north wall, access to Stair Hall 103 occurs through a 3'-6" wide by 7'-10 ½" tall cased wood opening, with door stops at jambs and head. 1985 HABS drawings indicate a door at this location.

Windows

A single square fixed-sash wood window is located to the west of the front door. A double-hung wood two-over-two window is located on the west wall. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the main block of the house.



Figure 78. Room 102 view toward southeast.



Figure 79. Room 102 view toward west.

Mechanical System

Modern floor-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space.

Electrical System

Modern switches and electrical outlets. A single modern ceiling-mounted fluorescent light fixture provides light. Alarm system devices are ceiling-mounted.



Figure 80. North wall with hearth (MALU Archives, Slide 526-12, April 1985).

Closet(s)

A single rectangular closet constructed as part of the 1988-1989 project, 1'-8" deep by 5'-0" wide is located on the north side of the room.

Other Elements

None.

Room 102 (Parlor)

This 14'-6" by 14'-0" room maintains its original configuration with a projecting bay to the south (Figure 78). The room is connected to the entry hall via a pair of doors to the west (Figure 79). Notable changes that have occurred since 1985 include: removal of grates, hearth and mirror from the fireplace and installation of a gypsum wallboard closure over the firebox; relocation of hearths between Rooms 102 and 104; and removal of a doorway to the west of the fireplace (Figure 80).

Flooring

Modern roll carpeting and pad cover wood subfloors.

Baseboards

All walls have a 9" tall wood base with shoe molding. Profiles match baseboards found elsewhere in the house.

Moldings (crown/picture rail, etc.)

A 2 ¼" tall painted wood picture rail is located on all walls of the space (Figure 78).

Ceiling

The ceiling height is 9'-10" above the finished floor.



Figure 81. Stair Hall 103 view toward north.

Doorways

A pair of modern full glass light (15 panes) doors lead to Entry Hall 101. The doors are approximately 2'-11 ½" wide by 6'-10" tall. This opening has been widened since 1985. The thickness of the door frame and adjacent wall construction suggest that a pair of pocket doors were extant prior to 1985, which was typical for the prototype house. The doorway's wood casing, corner rosettes and plinth replicate original profiles found elsewhere in the house.

Windows

Four windows are located in this space. On the east wall, a wood double-hung two-over-one window is roughly centered north to south. Located in the central bay of the south-projecting bay is a wood double-hung twelve-over-one window flanked by two six-over-one windows immediately to the east and west. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern floor-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space.

Electrical System

A modern ceiling fan with integral incandescent



Figure 82. Stair Hall 103 view from lower landing (MALU Archives, Slide 526_08, April 1985).

light fixture is roughly centered about the ceiling. A smoke detector is located on the ceiling and a motion sensor mounted above the doorway.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

Although the wood fireplace surround and hearth are original to the house, HABS drawings indicate that this hearth and the hearth located in Room 104 were swapped after 1985. HABS drawings also indicate a single closet accessed by a single door was located west of the fireplace, since removed. Historic fireplaces have been enclosed with ½" thick gypsum wallboard.

Stair Hall 103

Both this double-height 13'-5" by 15'-0" room and its winding stair maintains their original overall configurations, based on 1985 HABS drawings. The room is connected to Hall 105 to the north (Figure 81) and Entry Hall 101 to the south via cased wood openings. A doorway connects to Room 104 to the east.

Flooring

Faux-stone patterned sheet vinyl flooring cover wood subfloors. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015. Modern carpeting and pad covers wood stair treads, risers and landings.

Baseboards

A 9" tall wood baseboard with shoe molding matches profiles found throughout the main block of the house.



Figure 83. Stair Hall 103 view from second floor landing (MALU Archives, 526_01, April 1985).

Ceiling

The ceiling height is 19'-10 1/2" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A single modern full-light (divided into 15 panes) wood door measuring 3'-0" wide by 7'-0" tall leads into Room 104. The doorway's wood casing, corner rosettes and plinth replicate original profiles found elsewhere.

Windows

Two windows are located in the stair hall at the first floor, a wood double-hung two-over-two window over the first stair landing at the north corner of the room and a single fixed wood sash window under the upper landing to the south. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern floor-mounted and ceiling-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space.

Electrical System

A single modern ceiling-mounted fluorescent light fixture with acrylic lens provides light. A security system control panel is located on the east wall.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

The existing stair maintains its original plan configuration, wood turned spindles, solid wood newel posts, balusters, carpet-covered wood treads and risers, and other miscellaneous wood trim,



Figure 84. Stair Hall 103 existing stair.



Figure 85. Stair Hall 103 existing stair.



Figure 86. Room 104 existing hearth and firebox.

as shown in photographs taken prior to the 1980s remodeling projects (Figure 82, Figure 83, Figure 84, and Figure 85).

Room 104 (Dining Room)

This 14'-10" by 14'-4" room generally maintains the overall configuration as shown in 1985 HABS drawings. Changes that have occurred since 1985 include removal of grates, hearth and mirror from the fireplace and installation of a gypsum wallboard closure over the firebox, relocation of hearths between Rooms 102 and 104 (Figure 86), the removal of doors to the east and west of the fireplace, and the installation of bookshelves in existing doorways on the south wall (Figure 87). The room is connected to Stair Hall 103 through a single door to the west.

Flooring

Modern roll carpeting and pad cover wood subflooring.

Baseboards

A 9" tall wood baseboard with shoe molding matches profiles found throughout the house.



Figure 87. Room 104, view toward south.

Moldings (crown/picture rail, etc.)

A 2 ¼" tall painted wood picture rail is located on all walls of the space.

Ceiling

The ceiling height is 9'-10" above the finished floor.

Doorways

The single door is described in the entry for Stair Hall 103.

Windows

Three windows are located in this room, a pair of double-hung wood windows roughly centered about the east wall and a single double-hung wood window located at the east end of the north wall. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern floor-mounted stamped metal registers provide conditioned air to the space.

Electrical System

A modern ceiling fan, roughly centered about the space, provides light. A motion sensor is mounted on the north wall and two sensors are mounted on the ceiling of the space.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

Wood bookshelves, installed since 1985, are located to east and west of fireplace. Although the wood fireplace surround, mirror and hearth are original to the house, HABS drawings indicate that



Figure 88. Hall 105 view toward south.

this hearth and the hearth located in Room 102 were swapped after 1985. HABS drawings also indicate a single closet accessed by a single door was located west of the fireplace, since removed and replaced with bookshelves. Historic fireplaces have been enclosed with ½" thick gypsum wallboard.

Hall 105

This rectangular 4'-0" by 23'-8" hallway runs north-to-south and connects Stair Hall 103 with the rear stair connection to the basement and other intervening rooms. Although finishes, opening locations and doors have been changed, this room maintains its overall shape and size as shown in 1985 HABS drawings.

Flooring

Faux-stone patterned sheet vinyl flooring cover wood subfloors. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015.

Baseboards

The 9" tall wood baseboard with shoe molding matches baseboard profiles found throughout the house. Numerous cuts and piecing of the baseboard reflect the numerous changes to doorway locations.



Figure 89. Storage 106.

Ceiling

The ceiling height is 8'-11" from the finished floor.

Doorways

Five doors and a cased opening provide access to the north yard, Stair Hall 103 to the south as well as Storage 106, Storage 107, Bath 108, Office 109, and Stair Hall 110 (Figure 88). The wood casing, corner rosettes and plinth replicate original profiles found elsewhere in the house.

Windows

None.

Mechanical System

None.

Electrical System

Modern switches and electrical outlets are located in the space and two modern ceiling-mounted fluorescent light fixtures with acrylic lenses provide light. Alarm system devices are mounted to the ceiling and above the door on the north wall.

Closet(s)

None.



Figure 90. Storage 107 view toward west.

Other Elements

None.

Room 106

This rectangular 9'-0" by 5'-2 1/2" room connects to Hall 105 via a cased wood opening (Figure 89). This space is roughly the size and shape of a bathroom shown on 1985 HABS drawings. No plumbing fixtures remain.

Flooring

Faux-stone patterned sheet vinyl flooring cover wood subfloors. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015.

Baseboards

The 9" tall wood baseboard with shoe molding matches profiles found throughout the house.

Ceiling

The ceiling height is 9' - 1 1/2" above the finished floor.

Doorways

None existing. A cased wood opening, 3'-0" wide by 6'-7 1/4" tall, connects to the adjacent hallway. This opening's 4 1/2" wide wood casing without



Figure 91. Hall 105 view toward east toward Storage 107.

corner rosettes differs in profile from the typical casing found elsewhere in the house.

Windows

None.

Mechanical System

Modern floor-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space.

Electrical System

A single modern surface-mounted incandescent light fixture provides light to the space.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

None.

Storage 107

This rectangular room measures 9'-0" by 10'-1 ¾" and is connected to Hall 105 via a single door. The existing use is storage (Figure 90). 1985 HABS drawings indicate that this area has been reconfigured to accommodate the adjacent room, Bath 108.

Flooring

Faux-stone patterned sheet vinyl flooring covers wood subfloors. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015.

Baseboards

The 9" tall wood baseboard with shoe molding matches profiles found throughout the house.

Walls

The ceiling height is 8'-11" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A single modern full-light (divided into 15 panes) door measuring 3'-0" wide by 6'-8" tall leads into Storage 107. The opening for this door has been modified to accommodate relocation of the door to the south with the addition of a 2 × wood frame and solid plywood panel added to the north of the door opening. This work likely dates to the 1994 remodeling project (Figure 91).

Windows

One one-over-one double-hung wood window is located on the west wall of this room. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern floor-mounted stamped metal registers provide heating and cooling to the space.

Electrical System

A single, modern surface-mounted incandescent light fixture provides light to the space.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

None.

Bath 108

This rectangular 7'-6" by 9'-0" bathroom is connected to Hall 105 with a single door (Figure 92). HABS drawings prepared in 1985 indicate that this space was reconfigured as part of the 1988-1989 remodeling project. Work at that time included removal of an existing fireplace, wall and closet and construction of new wall to accommodate the new bathroom layout.



Figure 92. Bath 108 view toward west.

Flooring

1" square mosaic ceramic tiles cover the floor. A metal threshold is located at the doorway.

Baseboards

Ceramic tile cove base; at a section of the west and north walls only a wood shoe mold exists.

Walls

Evidence of past moisture infiltration exists below the window sill on the north wall.

Ceiling

The ceiling height is 9'-0" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A single 2'-6" wide by 6'-7" tall four-raised-wood-panel door provides access to Hall 105. The door's construction suggests that it may be original to the house, however, plan changes since 1985 indicate that this door has been relocated. The door has modern hardware and the wood casing, corner rosettes and plinth replicate original profiles found elsewhere in the house.

Windows

Two windows are located in this space. On the north wall, roughly centered about the wall, is a



Figure 93. Bath 108 vanity.

wood six-over-six double hung window. A wood one-over-one double hung window is located on the west wall. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern floor-mounted stamped metal registers serve conditioned air to the space. No exhaust system exists.

Electrical System

A single modern wall-mounted light fixture is mounted above the mirror above the vanity. Additional light is provided by a surface-mounted incandescent fixture roughly centered in the space.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements:

Modern plumbing fixtures include a bathtub; a vanity base cabinet with integral cast countertop and lavatory (Figure 93); and a modern toilet.

Office 109

This rectangular 10'-3½" by 11'-10" room



Figure 94. Office 109 view toward west.

currently serves as an office (Figure 94). Two doors provide access to Hall 105 and an adjacent closet. This space roughly maintains the configuration of the Kitchen space shown in HABS drawings prepared in 1985.

Flooring

Modern carpet and pad cover wood subfloors.

Baseboards

The 9" tall wood baseboard with shoe molding matches profiles found throughout the walls.

Ceiling

Ceilings are covered in gypsum wallboard; the ceiling height is 9'-2" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A single 3'-0" wide by 6'-8" tall four-raised-wood-panel door provides access to Hall 105. This mortise and tenon wood door may be original to the house, however, modifications to the door to accommodate modern door hardware and plan changes since 1985 evidence that this door has been relocated. A modern single 2'-6" wide by 6'-8" tall louvered door provides access to the closet.

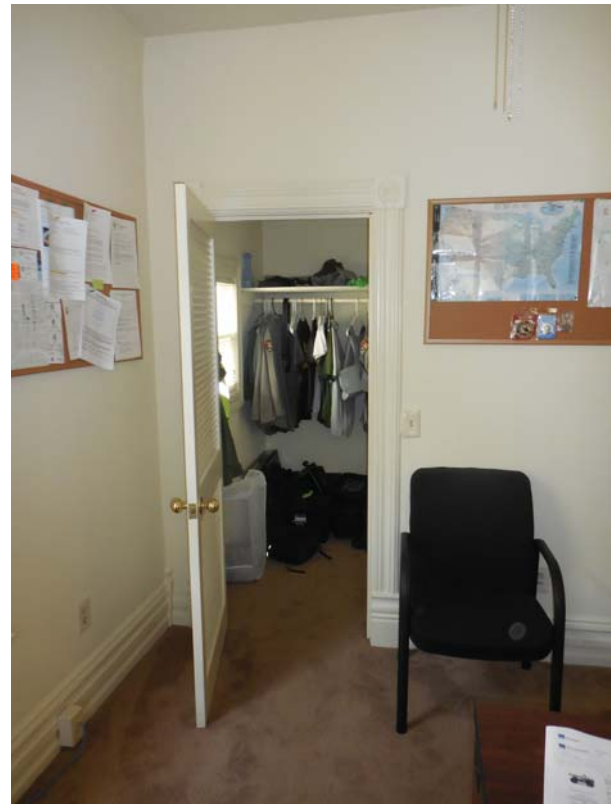


Figure 95. Office 109 view south toward closet.

Windows

Two six-over-six wood double-hung windows are located in this room, one roughly centered on the north wall, one on the east wall. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern floor-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space.

Electrical System

A modern ceiling fan with integral incandescent light fixtures is roughly centered on the ceiling.

Closet(s)

One rectangular closet serves the room, measuring 3'-6" by 5'-9" with a single two-over-two double-hung window located on the east wall (Figure 95).

Other Elements

None.

Stair Hall 110

This 6'-5" by 5'-10" room connects the first floor to the basement via a painted welded metal spiral stair installed in 1994 (Figure 96 and Figure 97). A



Figure 96. View from Hall 105 east toward Stair Hall 110.

single door connects the room to Hall 105. Slight variations in wall thicknesses and wood base design serve as evidence of this 1994 remodeling project.

Flooring

Faux-stone patterned sheet vinyl flooring cover wood subfloors. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015.

Baseboards

Two baseboard designs are found in the room. A plain 1 × wood base, 3½" tall, is located in the east half of the room and in the remainder a 9" tall wood base matching profiles found throughout the house.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling. The ceiling height is 9'-2" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A single 3'-0" by 6'-7" door provides access to this room. The opening for this door has been modified to accommodate relocation of the door to the north with the addition of a 2 × wood frame and two solid plywood panels added to the south of the



Figure 97. Stair Hall 110.



Figure 98. Electrical panel, Stair Hall 110.

door. This work likely dates to the 1994 remodeling project.

Windows

None.

Mechanical System

None.

Electrical System

The electrical panel for the house is located on the south wall (Figure 98). A single, modern surface-



Figure 99. Stair Hall 201 landing (MALU Archives, Slide 526_06, April 1985).

mounted incandescent light fixture provides light to the space.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements:

A welded metal spiral stair, installed in 1994.

Stair Hall 201

This double-height 13'-5" by 15'-0" room generally maintains its original configuration as shown in HABS drawings and historic photographs (Figure 99). The room is connected to Office 204 to the north and Office 202 to the south via two doors in original locations. A 1988-1989 remodeling project included the removal of two doorways and modification of the north wall to accommodate a new closet serving Office 204.

Flooring

Carpeting with pad over wood subfloor, stair treads, and risers.



Figure 100. Office 202 oblique view toward north (MALU Archives, Slide 526_02, April 1985).

Baseboards

The 9" wood base with shoe molding, matches existing profiles found throughout the house.

Walls

Gypsum wallboard.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling. The ceiling height is 9'-0" above the finished floor of the upper stair landing.

Doorways

Doors provide access to Offices 202 and 204.

Windows

One window is located in this space, a two-over-two wood double-hung window over the top intermediate stair landing. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern ceiling-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space. A return-air grille is located to the southwest corner of the ceiling.

Electrical System

A ceiling fan with integral incandescent light fixture is roughly centered about the space.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

The existing stair maintains its original configuration with wood turned spindle, solid



Figure 101. Office 202, view toward south.

wood newel posts, balusters, carpet-covered wood treads and risers, and wood trim.

Office 202

This square room with projecting bay measures 14'-6" by 15'-11". The original fireplace location on the north wall is covered by gypsum wallboard and the hearth and surround, as shown in HABS drawings and photographs (Figure 100) has been removed since 1985 (Figure 101).

Flooring

Modern carpeting with pad covers a wood subfloor.

Baseboards

Profiles of the existing 9" wood base with shoe mold match those found elsewhere in the house.

Moldings (crown/picture rail, etc.)

None. Photographs taken prior to the Self-Help Project indicate that a picture rail was once installed in this room.

Ceiling

The ceiling height is approximately 9'-0 ³/₄" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A four-panel 3'-0" wide by 6'-8" tall wood door provides access to Stair Hall 201. This mortise and tenon constructed door is likely located in its original location and has modern door hardware. Two 6'-0" tall by 2'-4" wide wood doors provide access to the closet and Bath 203 to the west, a 6'-8" tall by 2'-6" door provides access to the closet to the north. The wood casing, corner rosettes and

plinth of the doorways replicate original profiles found elsewhere in the house. Doorways to the closet and Bath 203 to the west were likely added or relocated from elsewhere in the house as part of the 1988-1989 remodeling project, based on configurations shown in HABS drawings.

Windows

Three windows are located in the space: On each side of the projecting bay, a one-over-one wood double-hung window and a typical two-over-two wood double hung window on the east wall, all in original locations.

Mechanical System

Modern ceiling-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space.

Electrical System

A ceiling fan with integral incandescent light fixture provides light and is roughly centered about the space. A smoke detector is mounted on the ceiling.

Closet(s)

Two closets are located in this room, a rectangular 5'-3" by 2'-1" to the north, adjacent to the original location of the fireplace and a 3'-6" by 4'-0" closet to the west, adjacent to Bath 203, added during the 1980s remodeling projects.

Other Elements

None.

Bath 203

This modern bathroom measures 10'-2 ¹/₂" by 5'-10" and accessed from Office 202 (partial view, Figure 102). This room occupies part of the space shown as a bedroom in the 1985 HABS drawings.

Flooring

2" by 2" square ceramic tile covers the floor.

Baseboards

None.

Walls

Gypsum wallboard covers walls above a 34" tall 4" square ceramic tile wainscot.

Ceiling

The ceiling height is 9'-0" above the finished floor.



Figure 102. Bath 203, vanity.



Figure 103. Bath 203, modern toilet.

Doorways

A single door provides access to Office 202 and a single door provides access to a small closet. The wood casing, corner rosettes and plinth of the doorways replicate original profiles found elsewhere in the house. Doorways to the closet and Office 202 were likely added as part of the 1988-1989 remodeling project.

Windows

Two windows are located in the space; a one-over-one wood double-hung window on the south wall and a two-over-two wood double hung window on the west wall, both are in their original locations with casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons that match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern ceiling-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space. There is no exhaust system in this space.

Electrical System

A single ceiling-mounted incandescent light fixture provides light.

Closet(s)

A small 2'-11" by 4'-0" closet is located on the north wall.

Other Elements

A mirror is mounted on the wall above the vanity.

Modern plumbing fixtures are located in the room, including, a molded acrylic shower unit, a vanity base cabinet with integral cast countertop and lavatory, and a toilet (Figure 103).

Office 204

This square room measures 14'-10" by 14'-4."

The original fireplace location on the south wall is covered by gypsum wallboard and the hearth and surround, as shown in HABS drawings, has been removed since 1985.

Flooring

Carpeting with pad covers the wood subfloor.

Baseboards

Profiles of the existing 9" wood base with shoe mold match those found elsewhere in the house.

Walls

Gypsum wallboard.

Ceiling

The ceiling height is 9'-0 ³/₄" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A four-panel 3'-0" wide by 6'-8" tall wood door provides access to Stair Hall 201 (Figure 104). This mortise and tenon constructed door is in the original location with modern door hardware. Modern louvered wood doors provide access to



Figure 104. Office 204 view toward west toward Stair Hall 201.

the two closets adjacent to Bath 205, and a modern two-panel louvered wood door opens to the closet on the south wall.

Windows

Three windows are located in this room. A ganged pair of two-over-one wood double-hung windows are located on the east wall and a two-over-two double hung window on the north wall. Wood window casings, corner rosettes, stools and aprons match those found throughout the house.

Mechanical System

Modern ceiling-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space.

Electrical System

A modern ceiling fan with integral incandescent light fixtures is roughly centered about the ceiling. A single ceiling mounted fluorescent fixture with acrylic lens serves the closet adjacent to Bath 205.

Closet(s)

Access to two adjacent closets is through an opening to a vestibule shared with Bath 205 (Figure 105). A second original closet, as shown in



Figure 105. Office 204 view toward west.

1985 HABS drawings, is located to the east of the original fireplace location.

Other Elements

A plywood attic access panel is located in the ceiling above this space (Figure 106).

Bath 205

This modern bathroom measures 8'-7 1/2" by 5'-7 1/2". A single door provides access from Office 204 (Figure 107). This space has been significantly reconfigured since 1985.

Flooring

1" square mosaic ceramic tile covers the floor.

Baseboards

Ceramic tile cove base.

Walls

Walls are covered in 1/2" thick gypsum wallboard.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling. The ceiling height is approximately 9'-0 1/4" above the finished floor.



Figure 106. Office 204, attic access panel.



Figure 107. Bath 205 view toward east.

Doorways

A single 2'-6" wide by 6'-8" tall raised-panel wood door is located on the south wall.

Windows

A single four-over-four wood double-hung window is located on the north wall of the room.

Mechanical System

Modern ceiling-mounted stamped metal registers serve heating and cooling to the space. There is no exhaust system in the space.

Electrical System

A single ceiling-mounted incandescent light fixture provides light.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

A mirror is mounted on the wall above the vanity. Modern plumbing fixtures are located in the room, including, a bathtub, a vanity base cabinet with plastic laminate countertop and lavatory, and a toilet.

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II Treatment and Use

Introduction

The house is in good condition on the exterior as well as the interior. Exceptions are noted in the conditions assessments.

A 2016 *Draft Foundation Document for Martin Luther King National Historic Site* provides basic guidance for future planning and management decisions. The report addresses the Birth Home Block, its treatment and management. A portion of significance statement for the national historic site reads, “Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site preserves the home and immediate neighborhood where Dr. King was born and lived until the age of 12, where his family life and values laid the foundation for his leadership during the American civil rights movement.”¹⁶³ The document lists the Birth Home Block cultural landscape as a “critical component of the Birth Home Block where Dr. King was born and lived until the age of 12. Significant intact features include the spatial organization, historic circulation patterns, historic views and vistas, and remnants of historic vegetation and small-scale features.”¹⁶⁴ The document identifies conditions, trends, threats, and opportunities associated with the Birth Home Block cultural landscape. Identified threats include extreme fluctuation of weather causing moisture problems and pests in Birth Home Block structures, age and deterioration of the structures, and increased residue from vehicle exhaust. The document recommends implementing the treatment recommendations noted in *Cultural Landscape Report: Birth Home Block* “in collaboration with the NPS Denver Service Center.”¹⁶⁵ The *Draft Foundation Document for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site* also identifies issues with the maintenance and preservation of the numerous historic structures at the national historic site. The document states, “the ongoing need to maintain these structures is overwhelming current management resources. . . a goal for the national historic site is to establish

a friends group to partner with and help with fundraising for projects such as maintaining historic structures.”¹⁶⁶

The use of the structure to house security staff offices is a compatible use with the foundation document recommendations. The goals of the treatment recommendations are to achieve an exterior restored to its appearance during the period of significance (1929-1941), arrest further deterioration of existing features, improve energy efficiency, and upgrade occupant comfort. Some recommendations may require more extensive modifications to existing floor plans, and might be undertaken as part of a comprehensive restoration and rehabilitation project. Per Public Law 96-438 Section 7(c), the NPS must submit plans for any construction, exterior renovation, and demolition of the structure to the Atlanta Urban Design Commission “for its review and comment in a timely fashion.”¹⁶⁷

Some recommendations may require more extensive modifications to existing floor plans, and might be undertaken as part of a comprehensive restoration project.

Laws, Regulations, and Functional Requirements

Applicable laws, regulations, and requirements that apply to the treatment recommendations include the following:

- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). This act mandates that federal agencies, including the National Park Service, take into account the effects of their actions on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment.

163. National Park Service, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site: Draft Foundation Document*, October 2016, 4.

164. *Ibid.*, 5.

165. *Ibid.*, 14-15.

166. *Ibid.*, 21.

167. *Ibid.*, 8.

- National Park Service Cultural Resources Management Guideline (Director's Order 28), which requires planning for the protection of cultural resources on park property.
- Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- International Building Code (IBC), 2015
- International Existing Building Code (IEBC), 2015
- 2015 International Plumbing Code
- 2015 International Energy Conservation Code
- NFPA 70 National Electrical Code (NEC)

The National Park Service, Denver Service Center references the 2015 IEBC as a standard. The 2015 IEBC includes the following statement in paragraph 408.1, Historic Buildings: "[t]he provisions of this code that require improvements relative to the building's existing condition or, in the case of repairs, that require improvements relative to a building's predamage condition, shall not be mandatory for historic buildings unless specifically required by this section."¹⁶⁸ Paragraph 408.2, Life safety hazards states, "[t]he provisions of this code shall apply to historic buildings judged by the building official to constitute a distinct life safety hazard."¹⁶⁹

Executive Order 13514 issued in 2009 directs all federal agencies to implement sustainable design and construction practices. For 526 Auburn Avenue, the relevant guidelines in this executive order require:

... managing existing building systems to reduce the consumption of energy, water, and materials, and identifying alternatives to renovation that reduce existing assets' deferred maintenance costs ... [and] ensuring that rehabilitation of federally owned historic buildings utilizes best practices and technologies in retrofitting to promote long

term viability of the buildings.¹⁷⁰

It is recommended that the NPS consult archeologists prior to execution of any exterior modifications that may involve potential disturbance of currently unidentified archeological resources or historic fabric.

Architectural Recommendations

- Prior to commencement of any work, conduct hazardous materials assessments; perform materials abatement as required.
- Confirm proper operation of existing subgrade drainage system and repair as required; reconnect downspouts to drainage system.
- Assess water intrusion at retaining walls at the north end of the basement; install waterproofing and/or foundation drains as required.
- Evaluate slope of existing yards for proper drainage; adjust grades as required for drainage.
- Restore yards in accordance with the Cultural Landscape Report for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.
- Based on available visual evidence, consider reconstruction of outbuilding located at the northeast corner of the backyard.
- Install termite shields and base flashing at base course of wood weatherboards.
- Rehabilitate stacked stone and brick foundation walls at the basement level.
- Perform further archival research for visual evidence of the original configuration of the front door, porch, porch balustrades, and porch columns; based on visual and physical evidence, restore these items to their original appearance.
- Perform selective demolition at the existing square window to the west of the front door to identify possible evidence of decorative glazing; restore window pending results.
- Further investigate attic and roof

168. International Code Council, 2015 International Existing Building Code, Fifth Printing, (Country Club Hills, IL: Publications, 2014).

169. Ibid.

170. "Executive Order 13514 of October 5, 2009: Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance" (Washington, D.C.: Federal Register 74, no. 194, October 8, 2009).

- configurations for evidence of chimney size and configuration at the north wing of the house. Incorporate this evidence, if any, into restoration of the top of the original brick chimney stack.
- Selectively remove sections of interior gypsum wallboard and wood trim from interior spaces to assist with identification of original window locations and sizes.
- Relocate existing windows and window sashes based on this evidence.
- Conduct paint analysis to identify historic paint and finish colors, and locations; use this evidence to assist with identification of historic door and window locations.
- Repair any damaged or rotted exterior wood.
- Paint exterior architectural features based on paint analyses.
- Assess exterior lighting requirements; replace modern fixtures with less visually obtrusive fixtures, consider use of site-mounted light fixtures.

Interior

- Confirm adequacy of existing security and fire alarm system; based on this assessment, replace or upgrade system.
- Upgrade attic insulation.
- Install rigid insulation between floor joists above unconditioned basement spaces.
- Install thermal insulation at uninsulated exterior walls in basement spaces.
- Through selective demolition, identify strategies for upgrading thermal performance of exterior walls at occupied spaces; install additional thermal insulation based on findings.
- Confirm adequacy of attic ventilation; upgrade ventilation as required.
- Clean and repair existing wood window sashes and selectively install historic hardware (as required) for proper operation.
- Conduct paint analysis. Use evidence gathered in paint analyses to help identify historic doors, windows and window components, and wood trim; consider use of paints and finishes of the historic period.
- Refinish existing wood floors based on paint and finish analyses.
- Remove modern closures at historic fireboxes; repair as required; consider restoration of fireboxes to historic designs.
- Evaluate temporary columns and bracing located in basement Storage 003 and Unfinished 004; see structural assessment.
- Upgrade heating and air-conditioning equipment to more efficient designs as equipment is replaced.
- Upgrade plumbing fixtures to high-efficiency designs as equipment is replaced.
- Consider installation of pressure-fit interior thermal windows at interior to improve thermal efficiency, comfort and reduce energy use.
- Replace incandescent and fluorescent light fixtures with high-efficiency light fixtures.
- Install occupancy sensors for lighting control.

Structural Recommendations

- Repair and repoint stone and brick exterior and interior piers in basement.
- Replace pole jacks and blocking with permanent steel and alloy columns and wood beams that are positively fastened to the wood framing above and the concrete slab below. Alternately, the pole jacks could be removed and replaced with properly designed and installed wood members sistered to each joist. Ideally this should happen in locations where the 2 × 8 joists at 22" on center are longer than 12'-6" in order to meet the International Building Code office occupancy requirements of 50 PSF live load and 15 PSF superimposed partition loads and the self-weight of the floor system.
- Investigate locations where wood floor framing meets exterior basement walls and replace, sister, or permanently shore framing where rot or termite damage has reduced capacity of members. Use pressure treated lumber where in contact with concrete, brick, or stone.
- Reinstall in kind the low beams that originally formed the timber frame and investigate if braces have also been removed at those locations in the basement. If so, replace in kind. Alternately, install new 2 × 4 @ 16" on center wood stud wall next to the brace and connect top plate to the wood framing

above and sill plate to the concrete slab below and sheath with properly designed plywood sheathing. This shear wall will augment the bracing that remains.

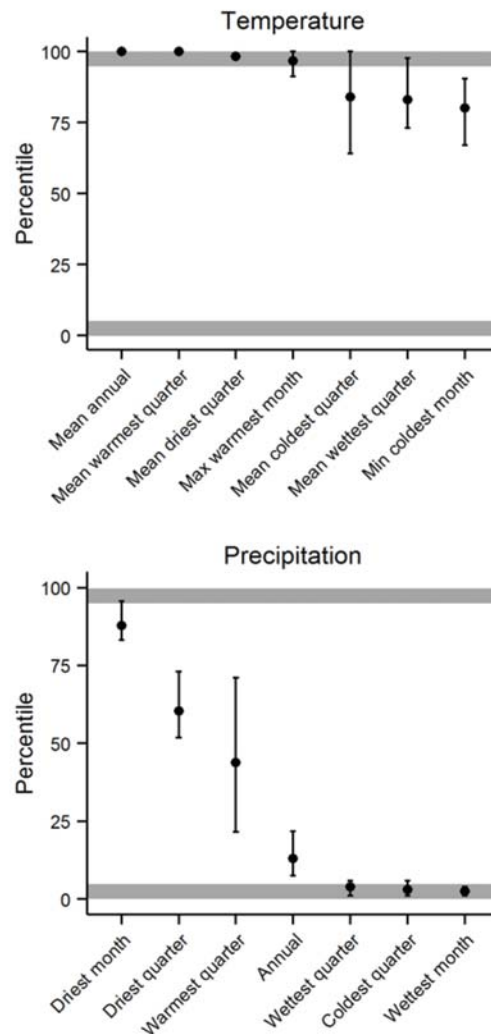
- Repair failing exterior site wall on east side of property at property line.

Climate Change

Cultural resources including historic buildings “are fixed in place or derive much of their significance from the place within which they were created. Many are non-living, and all are unique. As a result, the capacity of cultural resources to adapt to changing environments is limited.”¹⁷¹

As stated in the Director’s Policy Memorandum 14-02, “NPS cultural resource management must keep in mind that (1) cultural resources are primary sources of data regarding human interactions with climate change; and (2) changing climates affect the preservation and maintenance of cultural resources.”¹⁷²

There has not been a study on the effects of climate change on cultural resources completed by NPS for MALU,¹⁷³ but there is a brief for nearby Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (CHAT). Figure 108 depicts the results for temperature and moisture data include areas within 30 km of the CHAT boundary. (MALU is approximately 20 km south of the southern border of the CHAT park unit boundary.) This report concludes that extreme variables in the park include events with extreme warm temperatures and extreme dry precipitation rates. The brief summarizes “key points for interpreting these results...ongoing and future climate change will likely affect all aspects of park management including natural and cultural resource protection as well as park operations and visitor experience... climate change will manifest itself not only as changes in average conditions...but also as changes in particular climate events (e.g., more intense



Recent temperature and precipitation percentiles at Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (including areas within 30-km [18.6-mi] of the park’s boundary). Black dots indicate average recent percentiles across the 10, 20, and 30-year intervals (moving windows). Variables are considered “extreme” if the mean percentiles are <5th percentile or >95th percentile (i.e., the gray zones, where recent climate is pushing the limits of all observed climates since the year 1901). Black bars indicate the range of recent percentiles across 10, 20, and 30-year moving windows (larger bars indicate higher sensitivity to moving window size).

Figure 108. Figure for temperature and precipitation changes at Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.

storms, floods or drought.) Extreme climate events can cause widespread and fundamental shifts in conditions of park resources.”¹⁷⁴

A Draft Foundation Document for MALU concludes that “climate change is projected to bring more large storms as well as increases in average annual temperature and extreme heat

171. National Park Service, “Cultural Resources and Climate Change,” (n.p., 2016), accessed December 9, 2016, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/upload/06-CCRP-Cultural-Resource-Brief-FEB-2016.pdf>.

172. John B. Jarvis, February 10, 2014, 2.

173. NPS has conducted a study on the effect of climate change on visitation at MALU. See Park Visitation and Climate Change: Park-Specific Brief, “Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site: How might future warming alter visitation?” June 22, 2015.

174. National Park Service, Recent Climate Change Exposure of Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, (n.p., 2-14), <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/497296>.

events, increasing potential for flooding and damage to structures.”¹⁷⁵ The document continues, “moisture problems in the plaster of the walls, partially due to the age of the structure and the humid climate of Atlanta” may be a problem for structures such as the Birth Home, a similar aged structure to the subject of this document.¹⁷⁶

contractors should remove any of these items. Any plumbing upgrades should include testing of galvanized pipes for lead.

Implications – Adapting to Change

According to NPS documents, impacts to buildings and structures related to temperature and drought extremes include: deterioration, conflagration, and desiccation.¹⁷⁷ A loss of resource integrity may occur over time from conditions related to climate change and its impacts. Typically, documentation is one of the first mitigation techniques undertaken in response to deterioration. This document, which includes narrative, photographs, measured drawings, and recommendations, fulfill this first step in the mitigation process. This structure does show signs of previous deterioration, and recommendations for repair are included in this document. At this time, it is not anticipated that NPS needs to take action to prevent conflagration or desiccation at 526 Auburn Avenue. However, if atmospheric temperatures continue to rise, NPS should explore the need for additional mechanical equipment such as HVAC and humidity monitoring systems to maintain structural and historic integrity.

Hazardous Materials

The recordation team did not encounter or document any hazardous materials at 526 Auburn Avenue. Invasive investigation such as lead based paint testing or testing for residual lead paint were not conducted during the course of the property documentation. Due to the age of the structure, the park should assume that hazardous materials such as lead paint and asbestos may be present in the structure. Recommendations include testing for lead paint and asbestos before commencement of extensive work on the building especially prior to demolition. A team of qualified abatement

175. National Park Service, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site: Draft Foundation Document F3*, October 2016, 9-10.

176. Ibid.

177. Marcy Rockman, “An NPS Framework for Addressing Climate Change with Cultural Resources,” *The George Wright Forum* 32, no. 1 (2015), accessed December 9, 2016, <http://www.georgewright.org/321rockman.pdf>.

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Atlanta Department of Community Planning and Development

Atlanta-Fulton County Public Library's Black Studies Photographic Collection

Atlanta History Center Auburn Avenue subject files, photographic collection, maps, etc.

Federal Census records

Fulton County Property Records

Georgia State University Special Collections

MALU Archives documentary materials, maps, property files, City of Atlanta Building Permits

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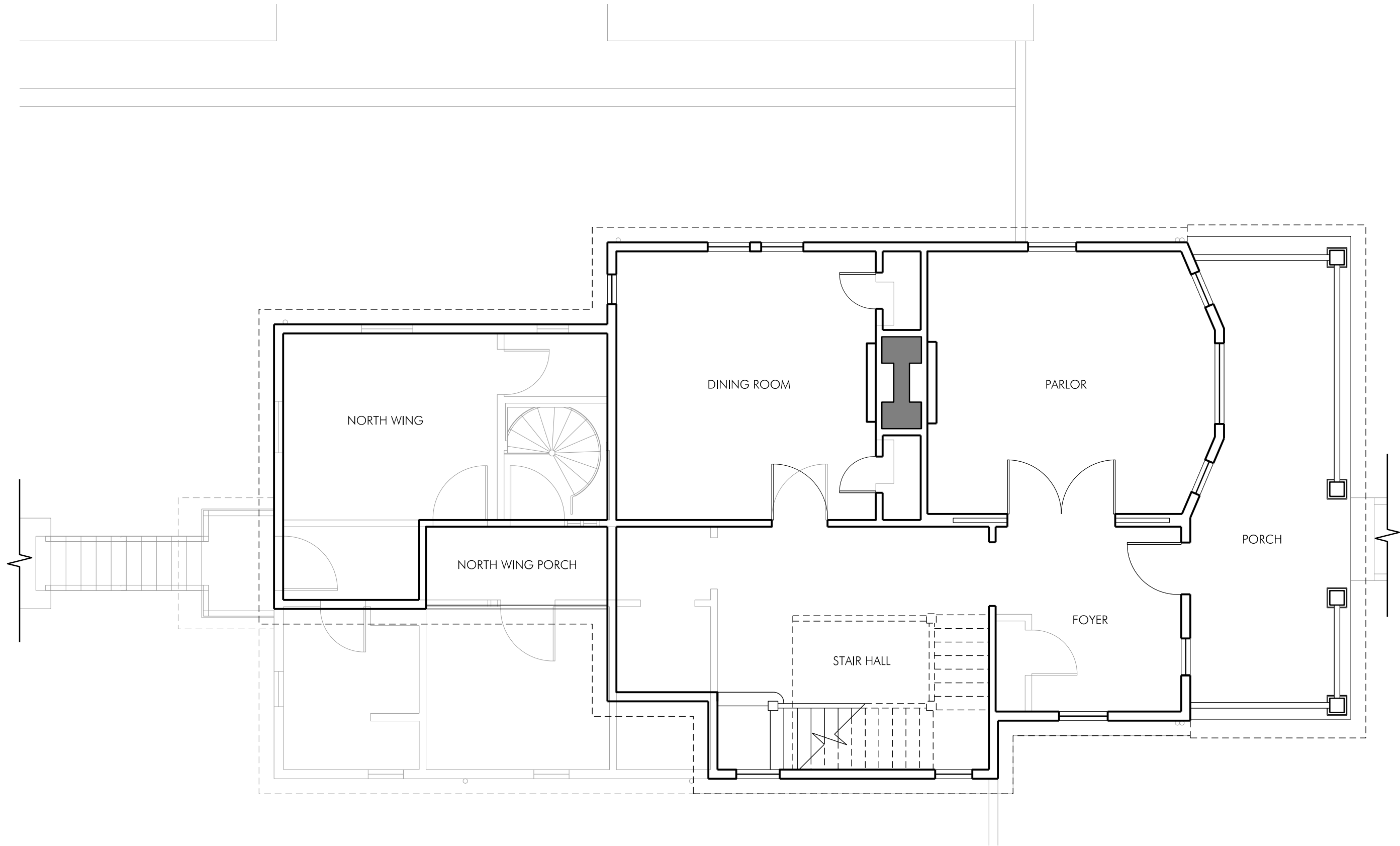
Appendix A: Period Plans

Sheet A- 1 First Floor Plan c. 1895

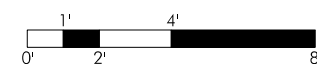
Sheet A-2: First Floor Plan c. 1931

Sheet A-3: First Floor Plan c. 1985

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FIRST FLOOR PLAN: C. 1895



LIGHT GRAY LINES REPRESENT HOUSE
CONDITIONS AS FOUND IN 2016.

SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

526 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

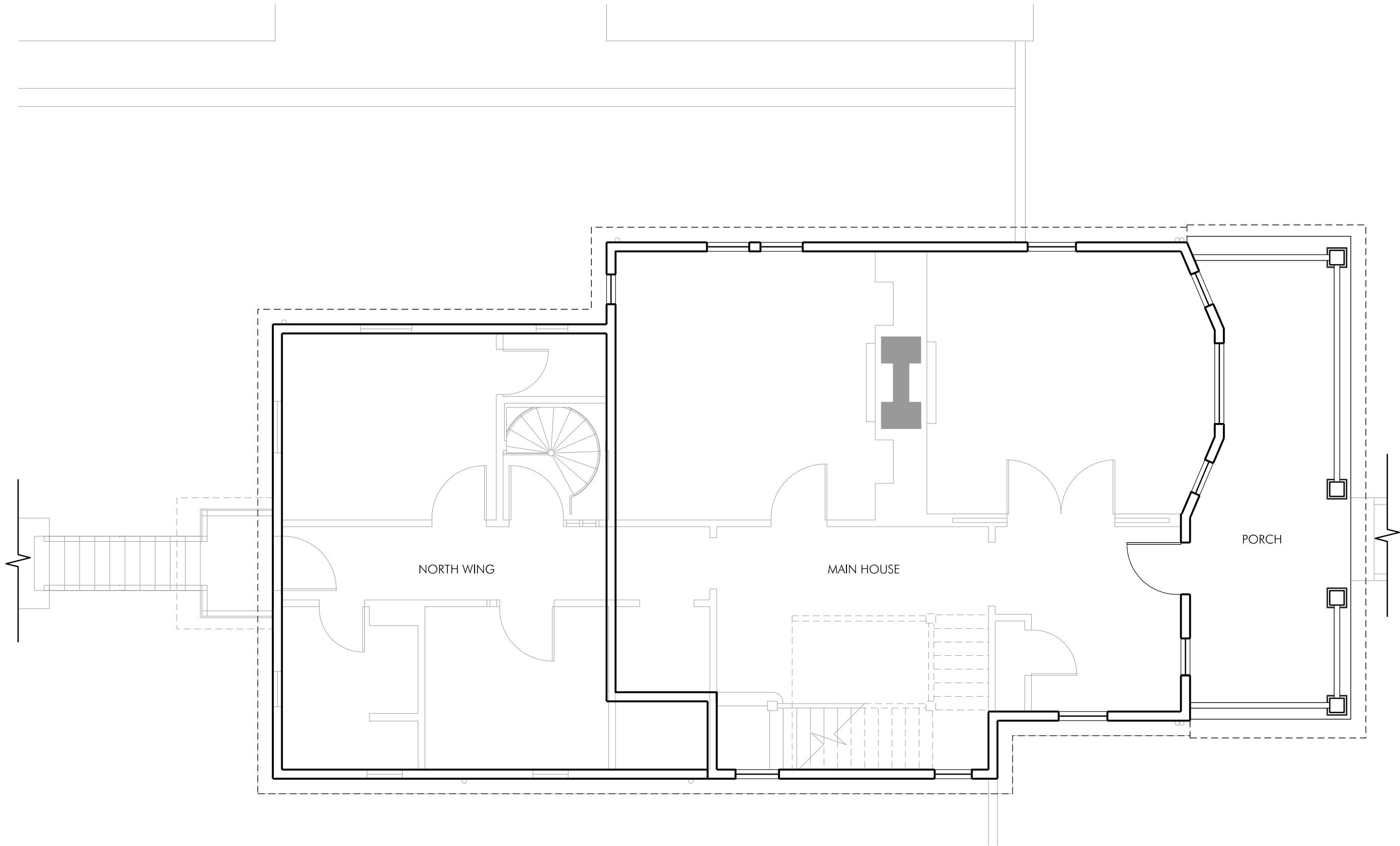
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RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

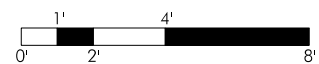
SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

APPENDIX A:

01



FIRST FLOOR PLAN: C. 1931



LIGHT GRAY LINES REPRESENT HOUSE CONDITIONS AS FOUND IN 2016.

SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

526 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

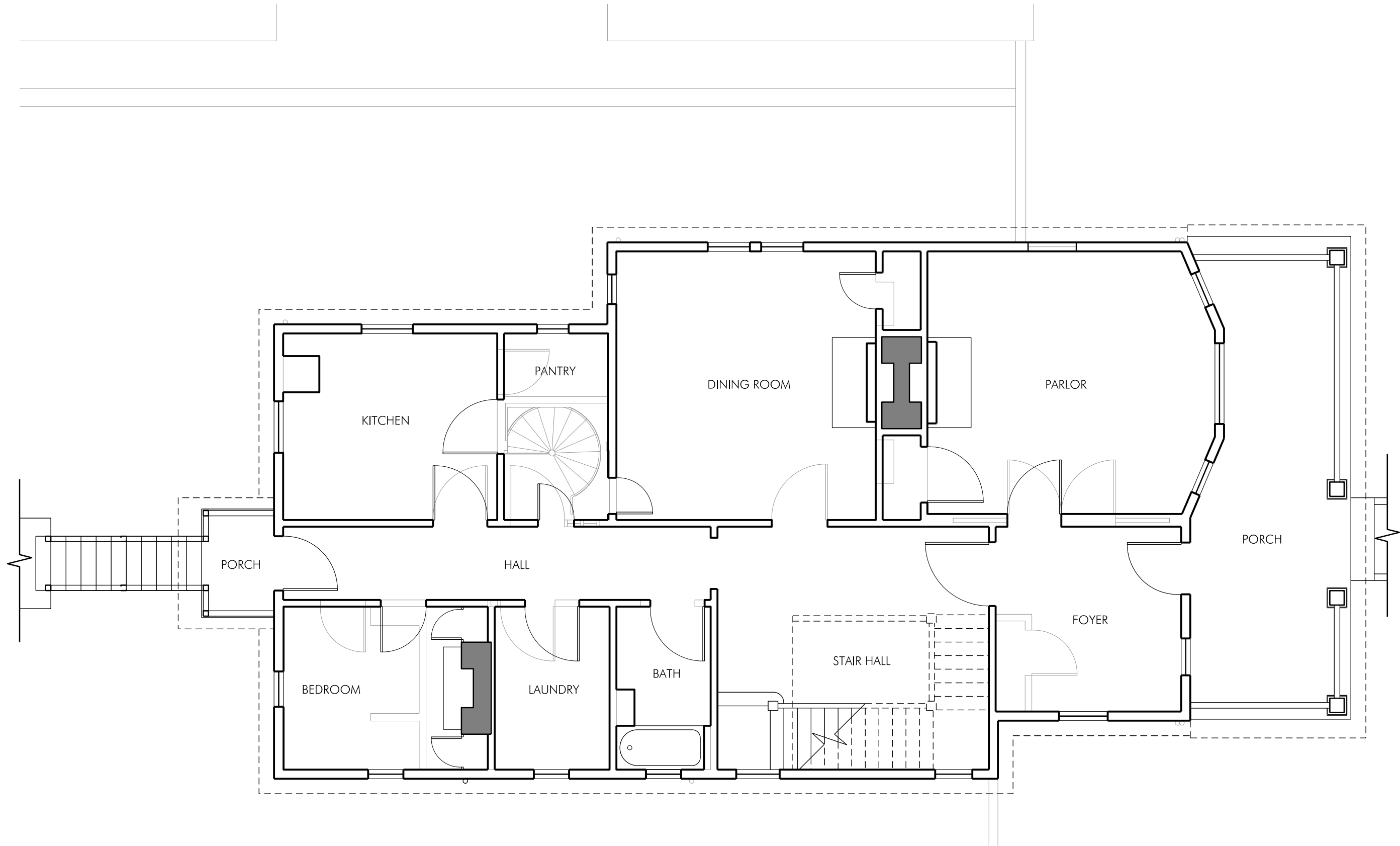
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GJC NKP
REB TFL

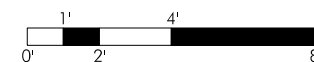
SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

APPENDIX A:

02



FIRST FLOOR PLAN: C. 1985



LIGHT GRAY LINES REPRESENT HOUSE
CONDITIONS AS FOUND IN 2016.

SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

526 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

APPENDIX A:

03

Appendix B:

Chain of Title

Chain of Title - 526 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia

Date	Book/Page	Grantee	Grantor	Notes
4/12/1895		Abby S. Knowles	Fitzhugh Knox	This apparently this deed was not properly registered, thus appears as a note in the subsequent deed (see below)
8/17/1899	167/88	Frank W. Hall	Fitzhugh Knox (Abby S. Knowles)	\$3,600
7/21/1906	226/565	Minnie Mills and W F Mills	Frank W. Hall, Executors	\$2300
11/23/1908	241/194	Ula D. Kirk	Frank and Minnie Mills	\$5,200; mortgaged \$2,300 of purchase price
11/20/1939	1776/199	Vernon A. Buck, Sr.	Ula D. Kirk	\$10; property is subject to two loans dated 1/21/1935 and 1/29/1935 (Vernon Buck was Ula D. Kirk's son-in-law)
10/1/1976		John Buck, et al.	Vernon Buck, Sr.	Vernon Buck dies, estate goes to his heirs, Ancestry.com. <i>U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014</i> [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2011.
6/23/1984	9105/311	United States of America	John F. Buck, Virginia Buck Prather, and Vernon A. Buck, Jr.	\$25,000

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Appendix C:

Documentation Plans

Sheet C-00: Basement Floor Plan

Sheet C-01: First Floor Plan

Sheet C-02: Second Floor Plan

Sheet C-03: Roof Plan

Sheet C-04: North and South Elevations

Sheet C-05: East Elevation

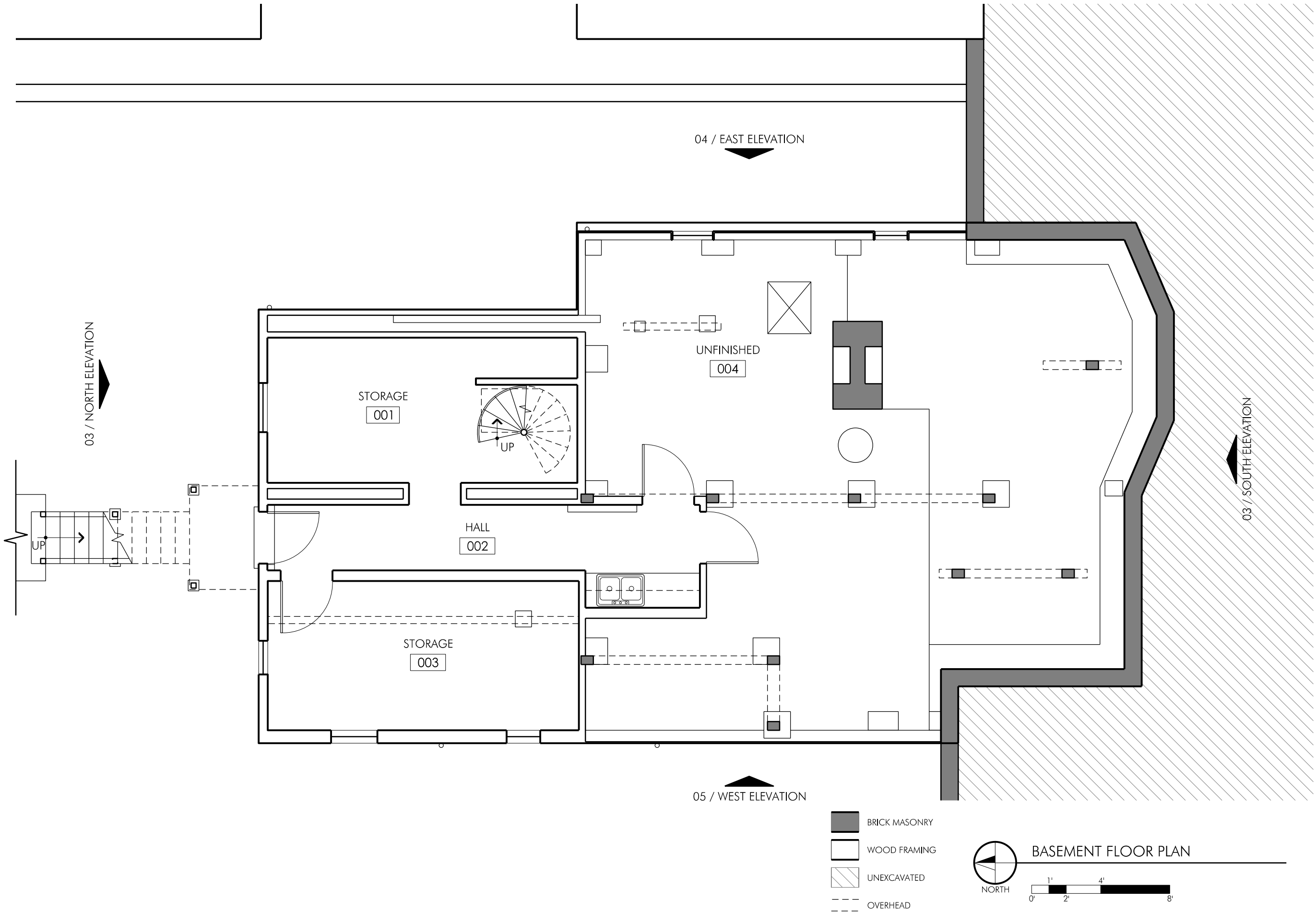
Sheet C-06: West Elevation

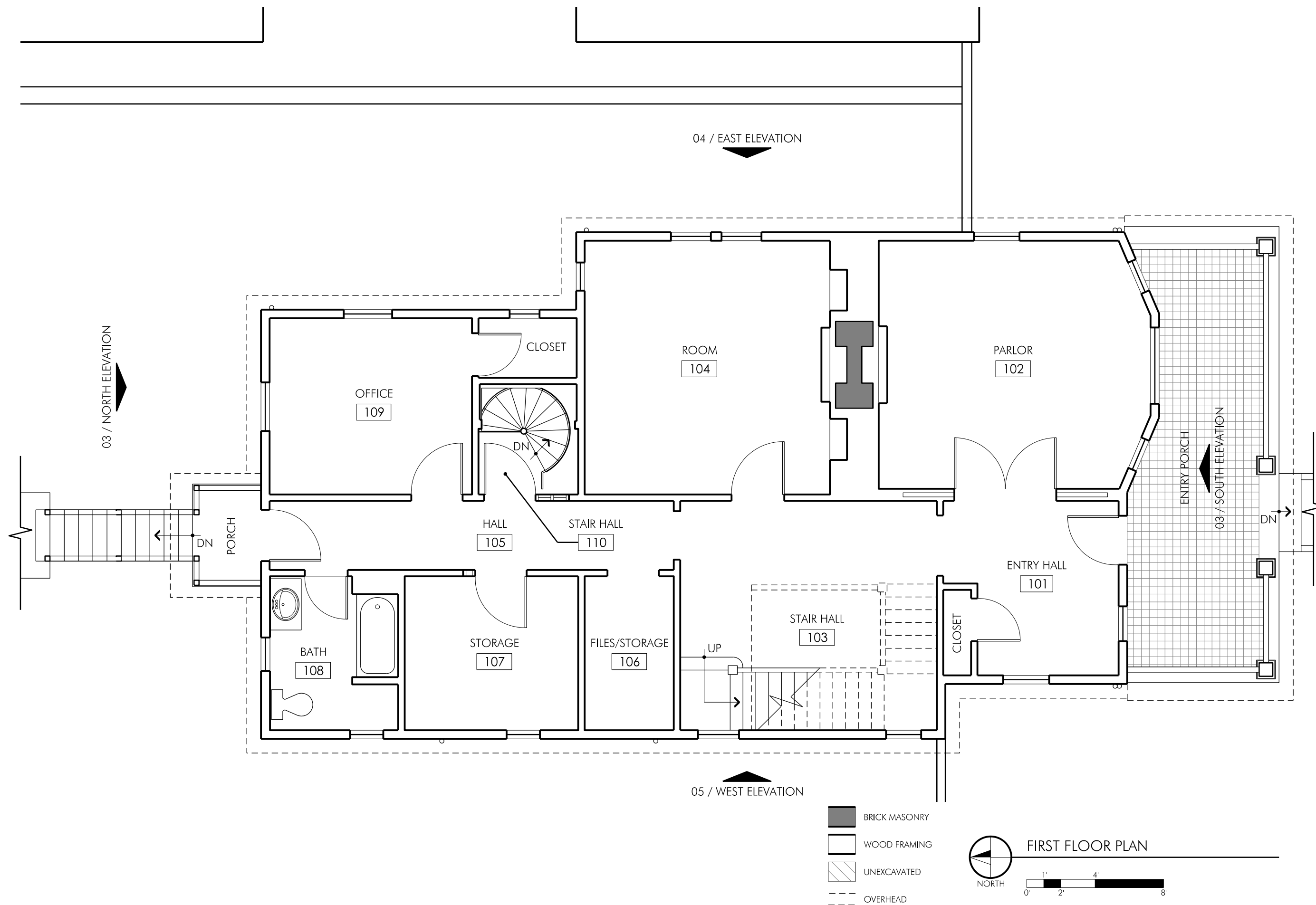
Sheet C-07: Details

Sheet C-08: Details

Sheet C-09: Details

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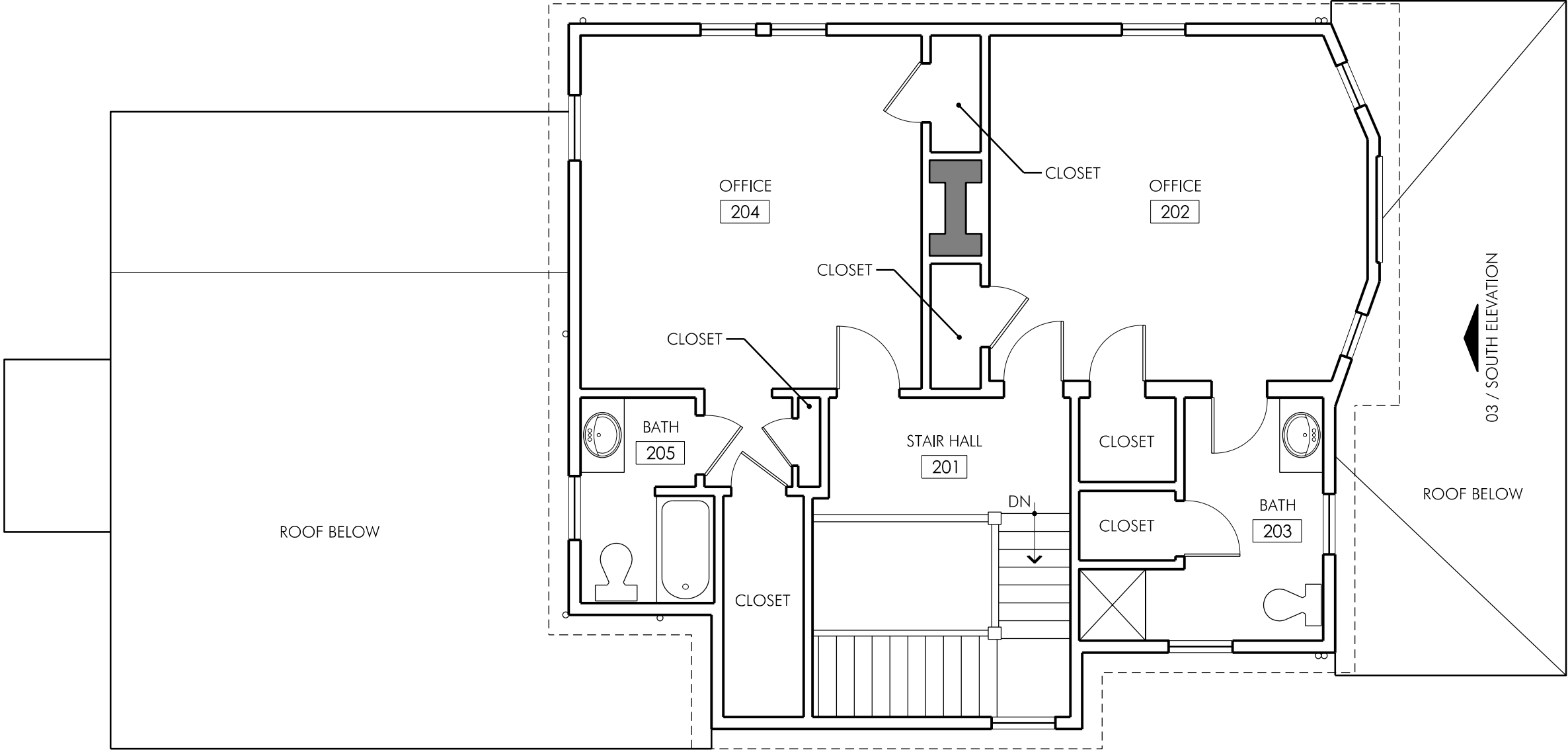


03 / NORTH ELEVATION

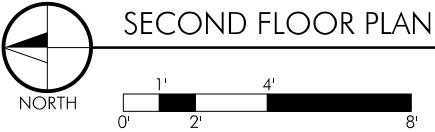
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03 / SOUTH ELEVATION

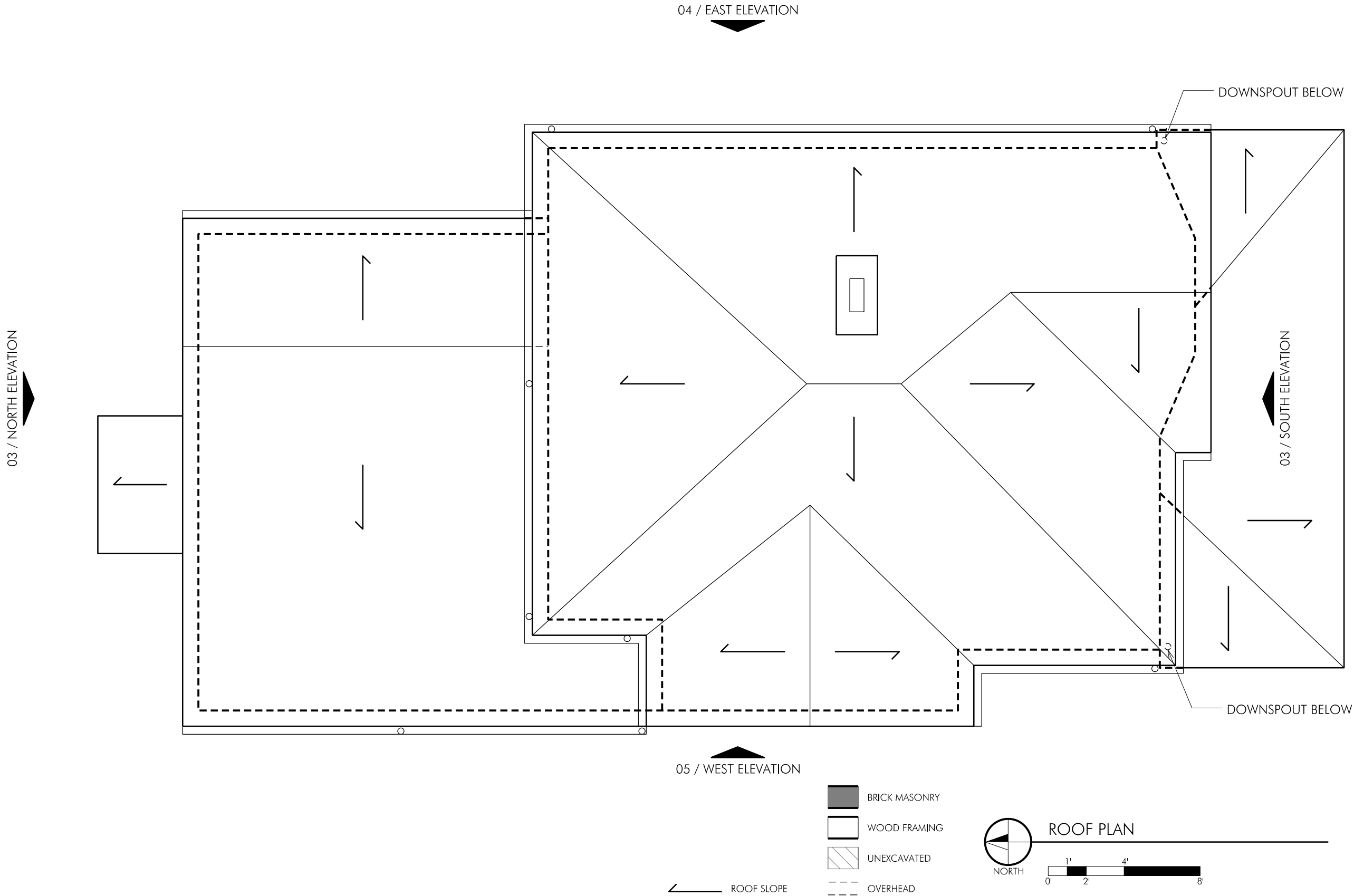
05 / WEST ELEVATION



- BRICK MASONRY
- WOOD FRAMING
- UNEXCAVATED
- OVERHEAD

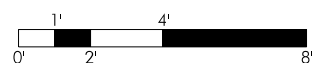


SECOND FLOOR PLAN





NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

526 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

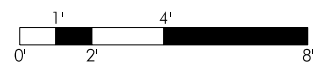
SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

APPENDIX C:

04



EAST ELEVATION



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

526 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

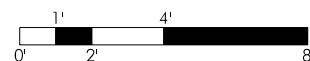
SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

APPENDIX C:

05



WEST ELEVATION



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

526 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

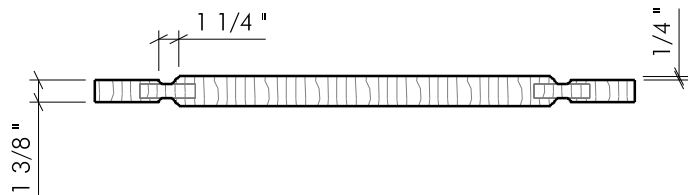
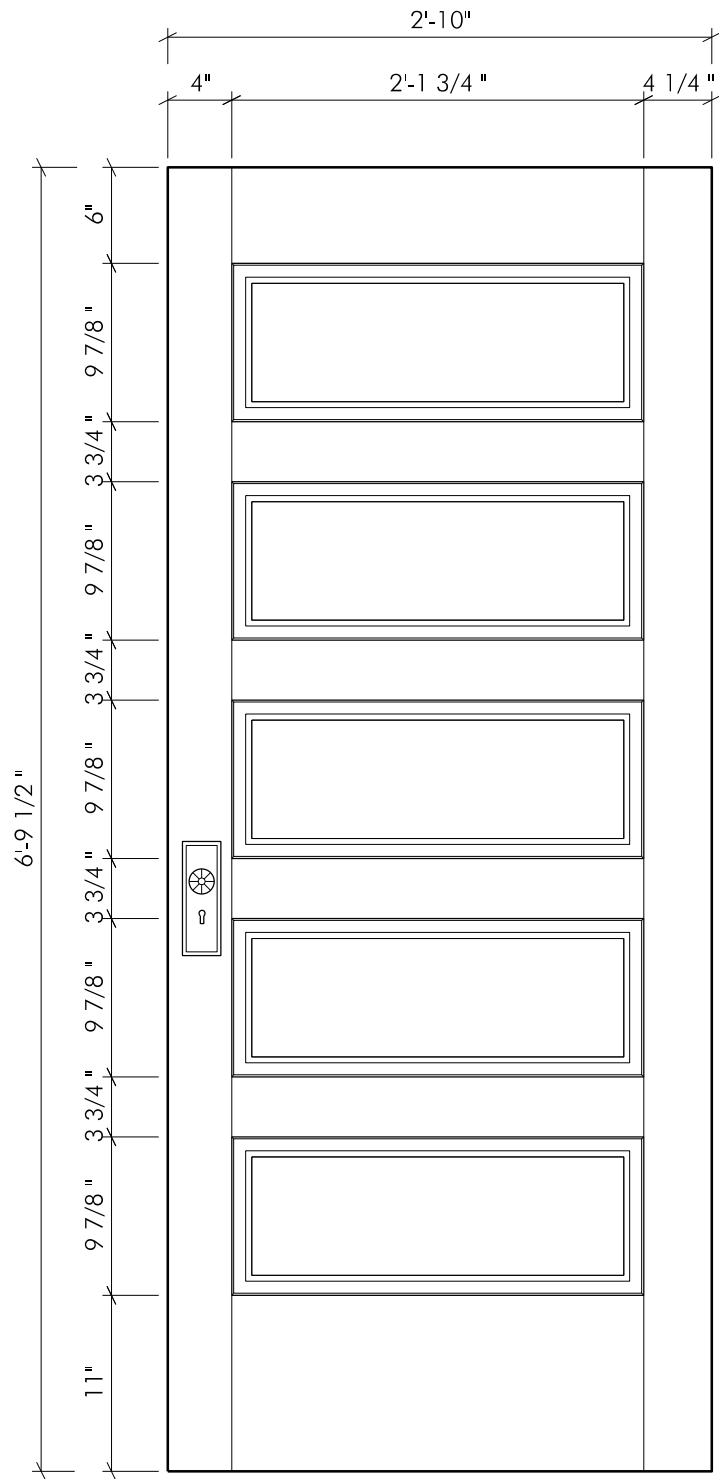
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REB TFL

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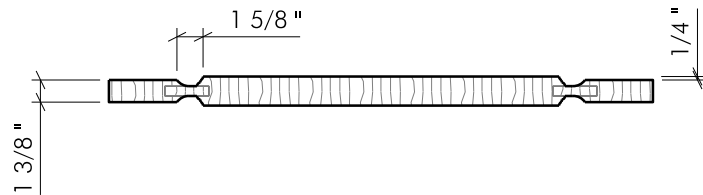
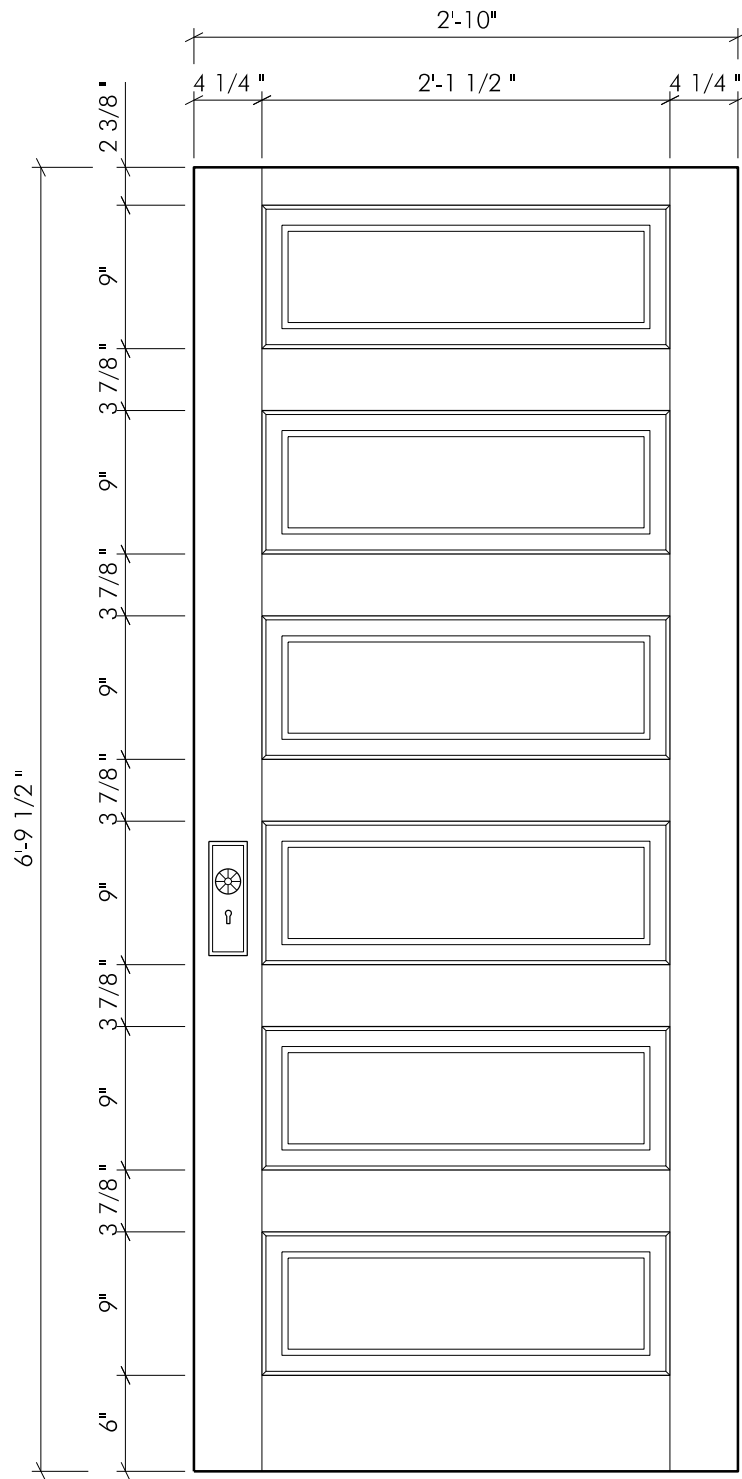
APPENDIX C:

06



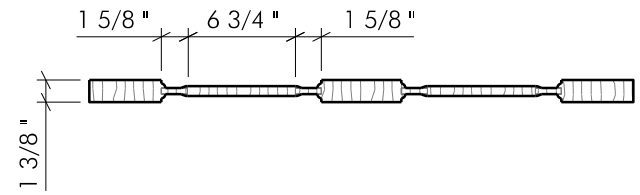
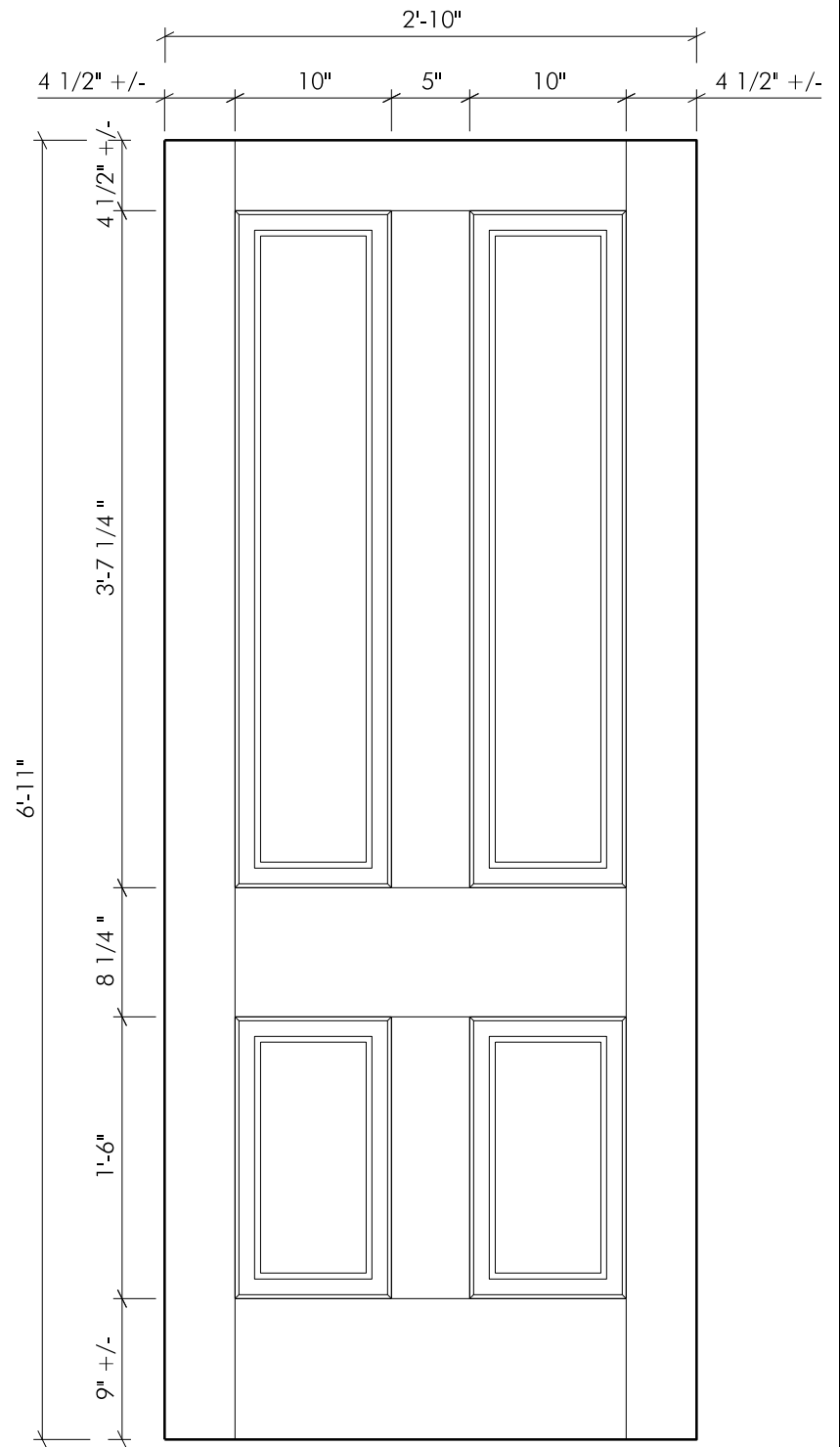
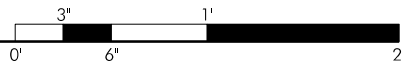
REAR DOOR
BASEMENT

SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"



REAR DOOR
MAIN FLOOR

SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"



TYP. FOUR-PANEL
INTERIOR DOOR

SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

526 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

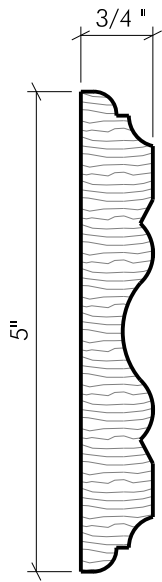
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GJC NKP
REB TFL

SCALE:
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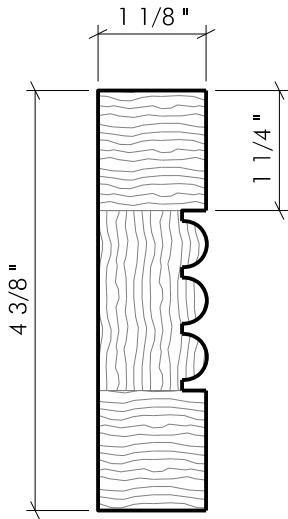
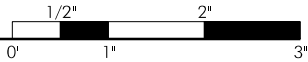
APPENDIX C:

07



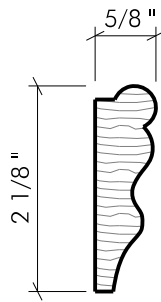
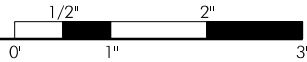
DOOR CASING
MAIN HOUSE

SCALE: 6" = 1'-0"



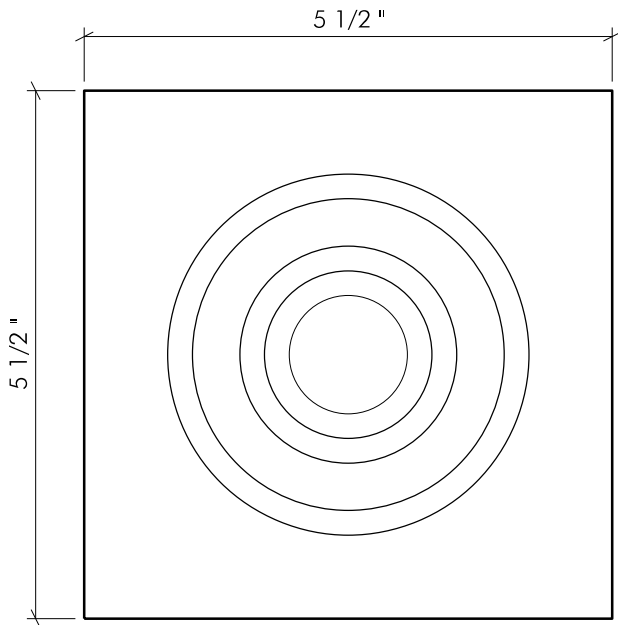
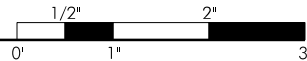
DOOR CASING
BASEMENT, ROOM 106

SCALE: 6" = 1'-0"



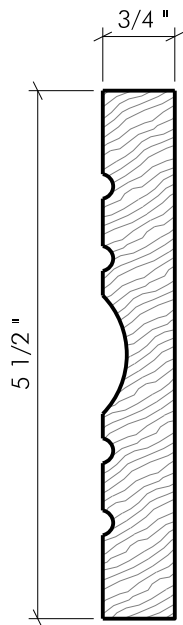
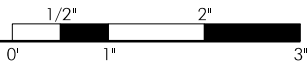
PICTURE MOLDING

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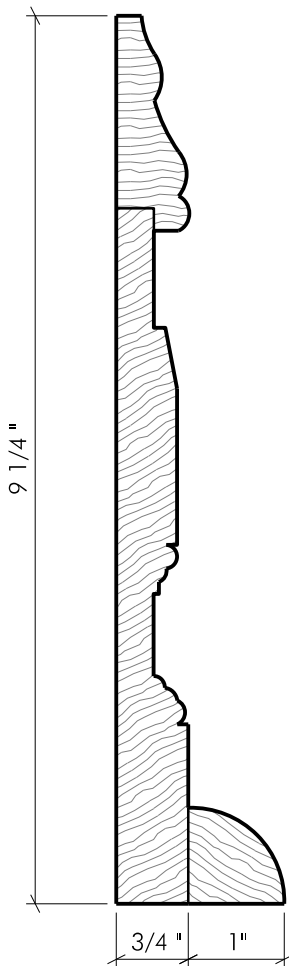
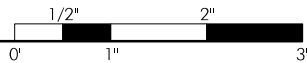
BULL'S EYE
CORNER BLOCK (ROSETTE)

SCALE: 6" = 1'-0"



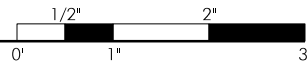
WINDOW CASING
TYPE A

SCALE: 6" = 1'-0"



TYP. BASE BOARD
MAIN LEVEL

SCALE: 6" = 1'-0"



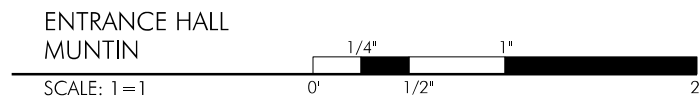
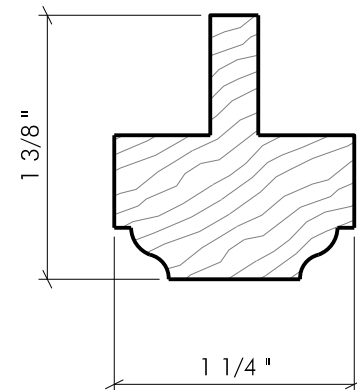
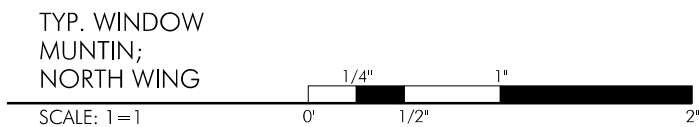
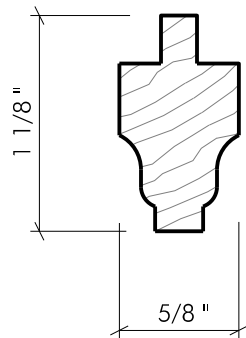
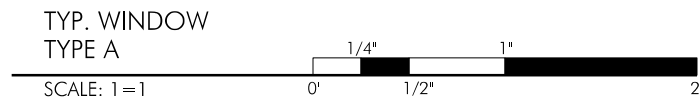
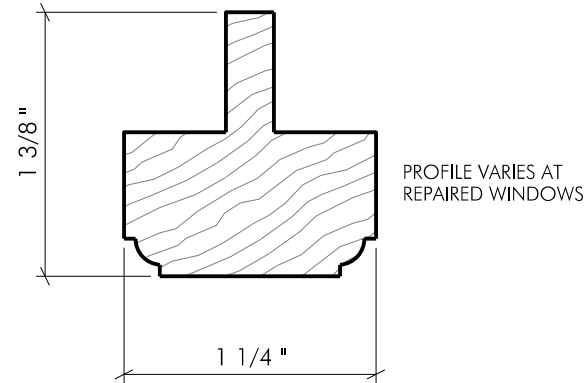
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05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

SCALE:
1 = 1

APPENDIX C:

09



Appendix D:

Resource Location Map

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Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site
450 Auburn Avenue, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30312

www.nps.gov/malu