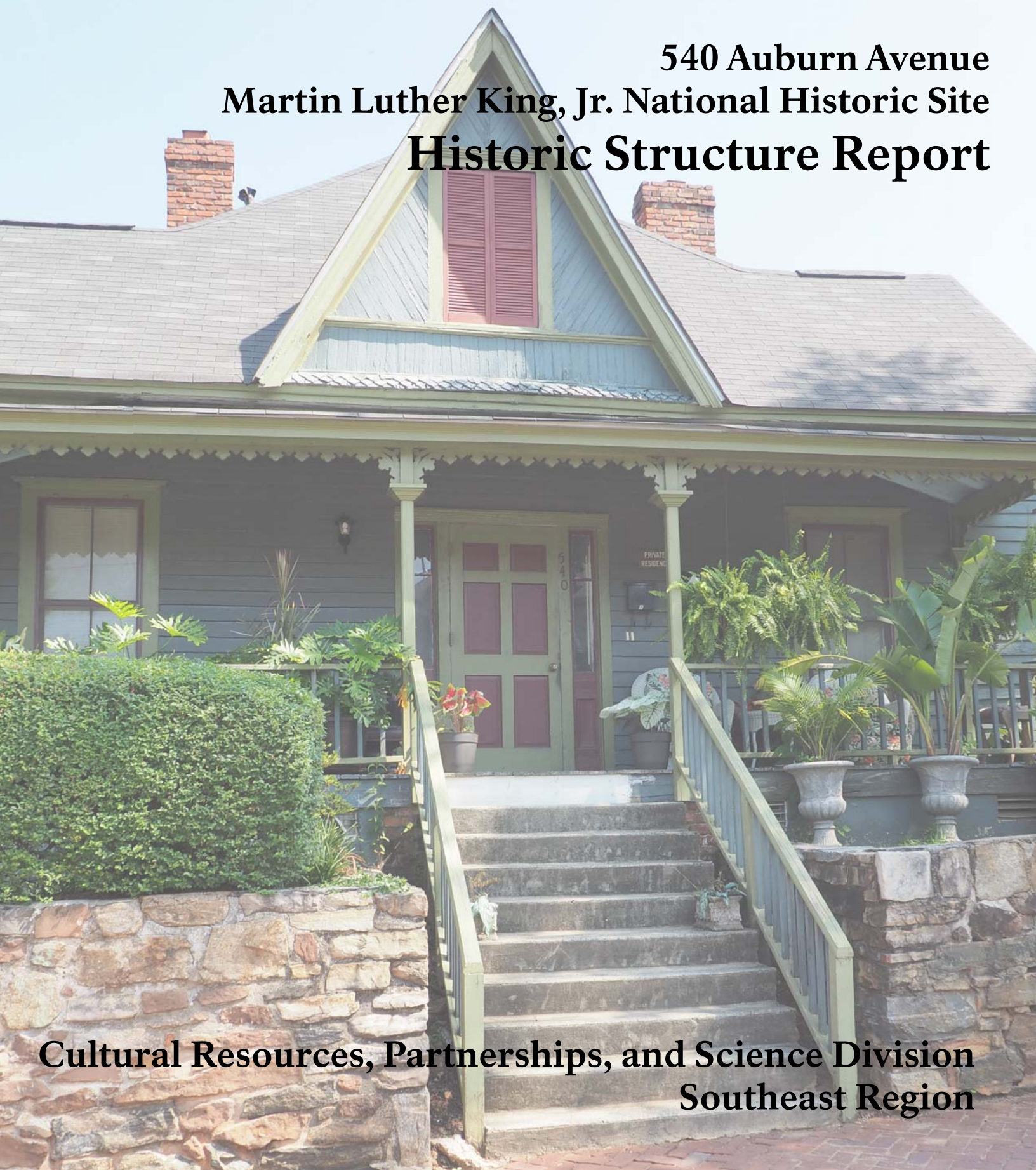




540 Auburn Avenue Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Historic Structure Report



Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science Division
Southeast Region

540 Auburn Avenue

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site

Historic Structure Report

May 2017

Prepared by:

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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 540 Auburn Avenue, 2016.

540 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.

Dan Scheidt, Chief
Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division
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2017

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 540 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 includes a brief review of the historical development of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Birth Home Block, known historical information about the construction, owners, and tenants of 540 Auburn Avenue and 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 derives 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 540 Auburn Avenue.

A bibliography provides the sources of information this report references. Appendices include period plans, a chain of title, scaled drawings of the existing floor plans, period plans, 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 as 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 540 Auburn Avenue is approximately 1890. The developer of this house and the two structures east

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).

was Alfred S. Jenkins a pharmacist and grocer.³ Jenkins ran a store out of a nearby adjacent property (550 Auburn Avenue.)⁴ After Jenkins died in 1910, the property remained in the ownership of the Jenkins family until Edward Krick bought it in 1963.⁵ During both the Jenkins and Krick periods of ownership, numerous tenants, many of whom were long-term, occupied the house. Ebenezer Baptist Church purchased the house in 1978 and the Trust for Public Land purchased it in 1981, before acquisition of the property by the US Department of the Interior.⁶

Exterior changes to the house during the Jenkins ownership included several changes to the form of the structure and adjacent buildings. A secondary structure built circa 1925 at this address served as a neighborhood store for many years.⁷ Many of the significant modifications to the house occurred as part of rehabilitation and remodeling projects in the 1980s and 1990s including demolition of steps and an enclosure on the north side of the building.

Statement of Significance

The structure located at 540 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 The MLK, Jr. National Historic District and particularly, the Birth Home Block, is significant for its association with Dr. Martin

Luther King, Jr.’s Birth Home 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.”⁹ 540 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). This property and others include “side-yard retaining walls to hold the grade of the front yard even with Auburn Avenue.”¹⁰ The contiguous stone retaining walls, historic brick sidewalk, and wide 40-foot road width are significant historic landscape features that define the character of the east end of the Birth Home Block. 540 Auburn Avenue is a 37' × 57' one-story, three-bay, T-plan dwelling with a rear addition and a complex hip roof. The three-bay porch includes chamfered posts and jigsaw trim. The structure’s distinctive features of the Folk Victorian style include pointed-top gothic windows in the east and west gable ends.

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 NPS requested that the consultants conduct research referring to primary- and secondary-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 instructed the consultants 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

3. Deed book O3/436, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

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

5. Deed book 7051/344, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

6. Deed book 9222/448, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA; NPS, “540 Auburn Ave, 1980-1984, 1990,” MALU Archives, Series V Division Of Facility Management, 1944-2010, Sub-Series D Building Inventory Files 1972-2004, Box 3, Folder 2.

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, 110.

8. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. “Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site.”

Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, 1993.

9. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. “Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District (Landmark).” National Park Service, 1977.

10. Ibid., 56.

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 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 Historic 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 during this site visit. 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 and 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 540 Auburn Avenue using online primary sources. These sources included historical texts, several academic theses, city directories, 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 MALU 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 *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Draft Foundation Document* 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 at 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 previous planning document directives for restoring the exterior of this property to the period when Martin Luther King, Jr. lived on Auburn Avenue. The previous plans address only the exterior of the buildings and the current use of the house as a tenant occupied residential structure is compatible with the GMP recommendations. The recommendations in this report allow for continuation of the current use of the property as a house available for lease to the public.

In general, the exterior and interior of 540 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 to 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 540 Auburn Avenue account for immediate concerns to ensure the preservation of the integrity of the historic property. Prioritization of the restoration of the primary facades at the south and west elevations is recommended. Another recommendation is

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.

improving the thermal envelope of the structure and increasing energy-efficiency by updating the insulation applied in the basement and exterior walls. In the case of 540 Auburn Avenue, improving thermal performance of exterior walls includes selective demolition and the installation of pressure-fit interior thermal windows, as recommended. The replacement of any wood compromised by rot and the repair of the piers located to the interior of the building footprint are other important recommended actions to secure structural integrity. Another recommendation is the restoration of certain site features in accordance to the *Cultural Landscape Report*, and the reconstruction of the exterior wall on the west property line, to restore and preserve the integrity of the historic landscape. A unique feature of this building is the historic component of a neighborhood store at the west elevation. Further archival research is necessary to determine the historic configuration of the store formerly located at the west elevation and to restore the original doors, windows, and signage as appropriate.

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

<i>Building Name:</i>	540 Auburn Avenue
<i>Location:</i>	Birth Home Block Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site
<i>County:</i>	Fulton County
<i>State:</i>	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: 1983¹³

LCS ID: 023368

Size Information

540 Auburn Avenue

Total Floor Area: 1490 square feet ±

Basement Floor Area: 1318* square feet ±

First Floor Area: 1490 square feet ±

Second Floor Area: 0

Roof Area: 1868 square feet ±

Number of Stories: 1

Number of Rooms: 13

Number of Bathrooms: 2

* Basement area does not include crawlspace; w/ crawlspace area is 1490 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 540 Auburn Avenue to its appearance during the period of significance (1929-1941).

13. Fulton County tax records show an acquisition date of 1/29/88 for addresses 540, 546, and 550 Auburn Avenue, but park records have the deed listed as 3/30/1983 (NPS, MALU Archives, Series III Division of Administration 1960-2010, Subseries A park Central files, 1968-2008, Subseries 1 Central Files, 1968-2008 Box 15, Folder 22, MLK, Jr. Deed No. 1-540, 546, 550 Auburn Avenue, 1982-83).

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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.¹⁴

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.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ 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.¹⁷

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

15. *Ibid.*, 18.

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

17. *Ibid.*, 33.

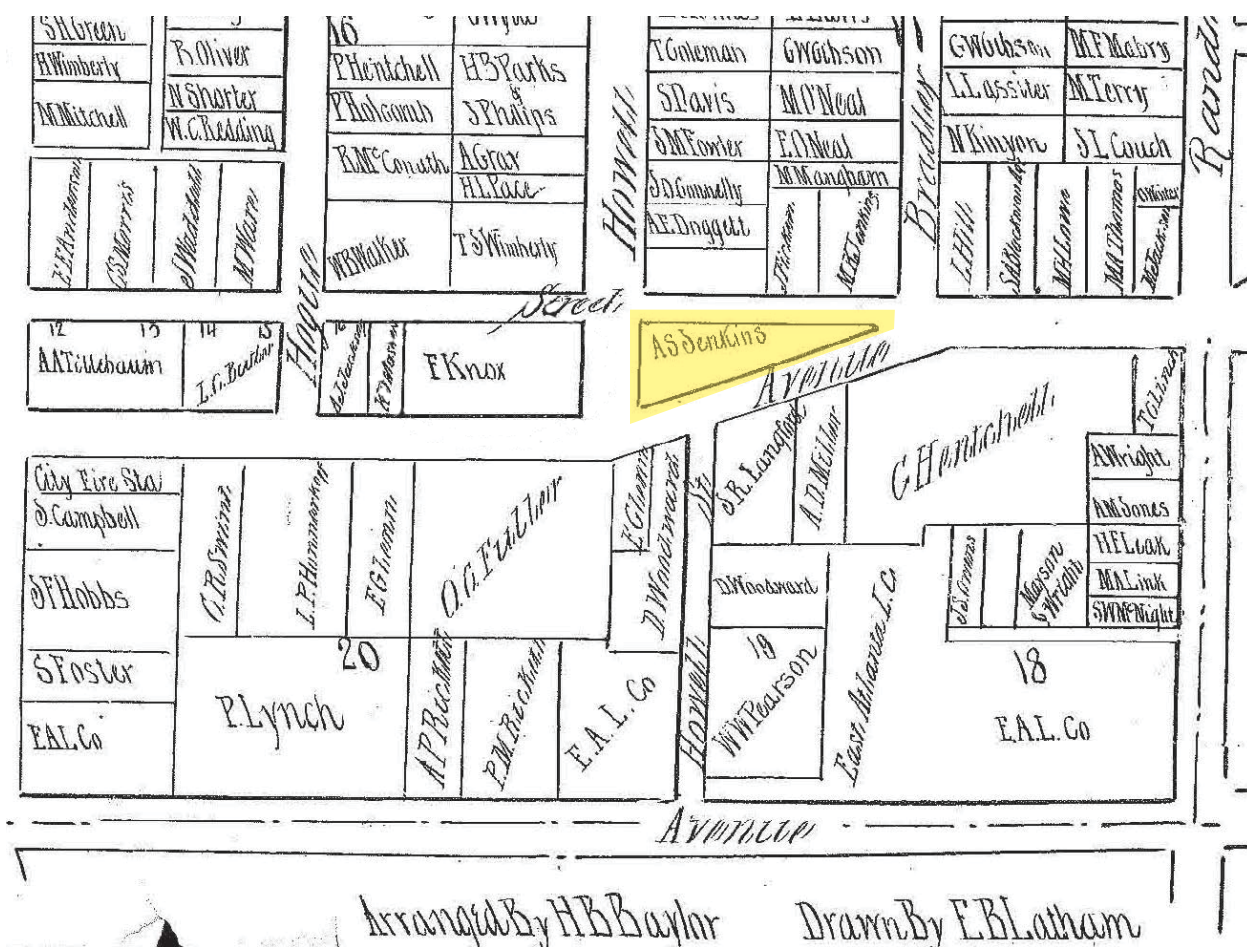


Figure 1. Baylor Atlas of 1894 showing the properties owned by Fitzhugh Knox and A. S. Jenkins (Atlanta History Center).

The resource within the Birth Home Block, which is the focus of this report, is located at 540 Auburn Avenue. This building is a one-story Folk Victorian gable and front wing house. The resources analyzed in this report typically remained under sole proprietorship of the Jenkins family as depicted in the 1894 Baylor Atlas, until the mid-1900s (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 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

18. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 1.

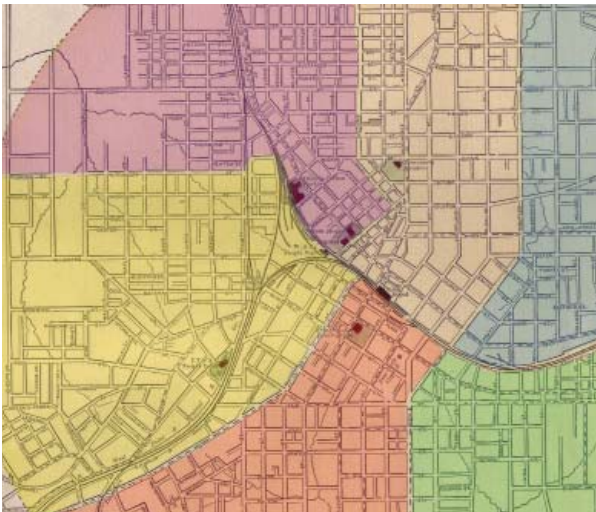


Figure 2. Map showing city limits and six wards of Atlanta. The subject of this report is located in the Old Fourth Ward, indicated on this map in blue. (Atlanta. Published by George F. Cram, Chicago, Ill. (to accompany) Cram's atlas of the world, ancient and modern : new census edition -- indexed).

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 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

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.

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

19. Ibid., 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.

21. Henderson, *Sweet Auburn*, 3.

22. Ibid.



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

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 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

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.

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



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).

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



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

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.

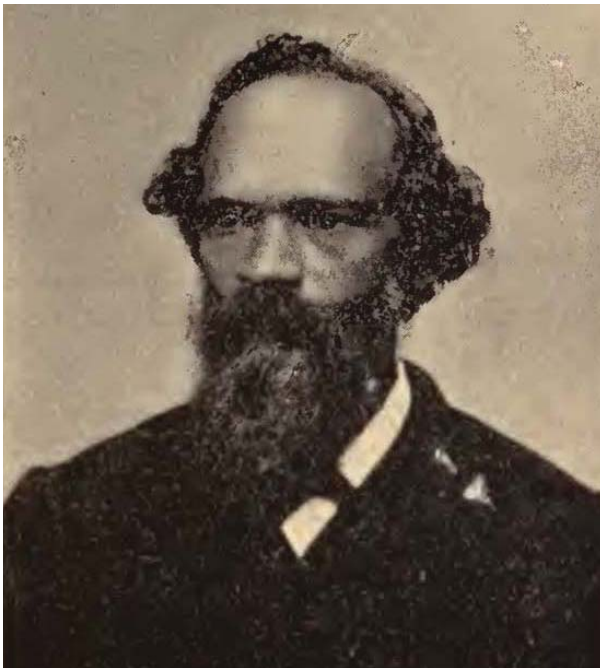


Figure 6. Photograph of James Tate (E. R. Carter, *The Black Side*, 23).

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. 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

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

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



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

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 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

45. Ibid., 5-9.

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

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

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

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 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 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.

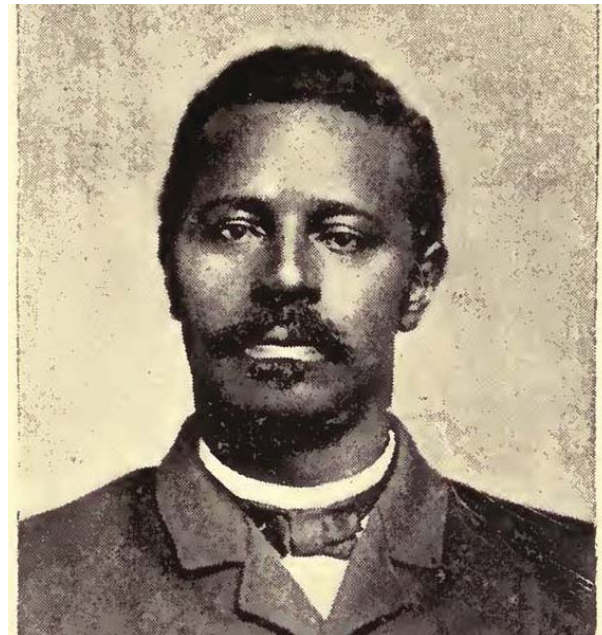


Figure 8. Photograph of Reverend N. J. Jones (E. R. Carter, *The Black Side*, 44).

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 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

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

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

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

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

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

54. Ibid., 38-40.

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.



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

Boulevard, two blocks north of Auburn Avenue⁵⁸ (Figure 9). 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-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

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

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 ‘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

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>.



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

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.

65. NPS, "Historical Background Essay," 10.

66. Ibid., 9–10.

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

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



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).

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

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

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. 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 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-

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

71. Barbara Tagger, “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.

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

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.

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.



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

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 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



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



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

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 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

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

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

81. *Ibid.*, 2-17.

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	7.5	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).

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

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

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

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

86. Henderson, "Sweet Auburn," 17.

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.

82. Henderson, "Sweet Auburn," 17.

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

84. *Ibid.*

85. *Ibid.*

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 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



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

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

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

91. *Ibid.*

92. *Ibid.*, 2-32.

93. *Ibid.*, 2-34.

94. *Ibid.*, 2-35.

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

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.

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 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



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).

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

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

101. Ibid., 1.

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

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.

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.



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

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 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,

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).

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.

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

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

109. *Ibid.*, 10.

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>.

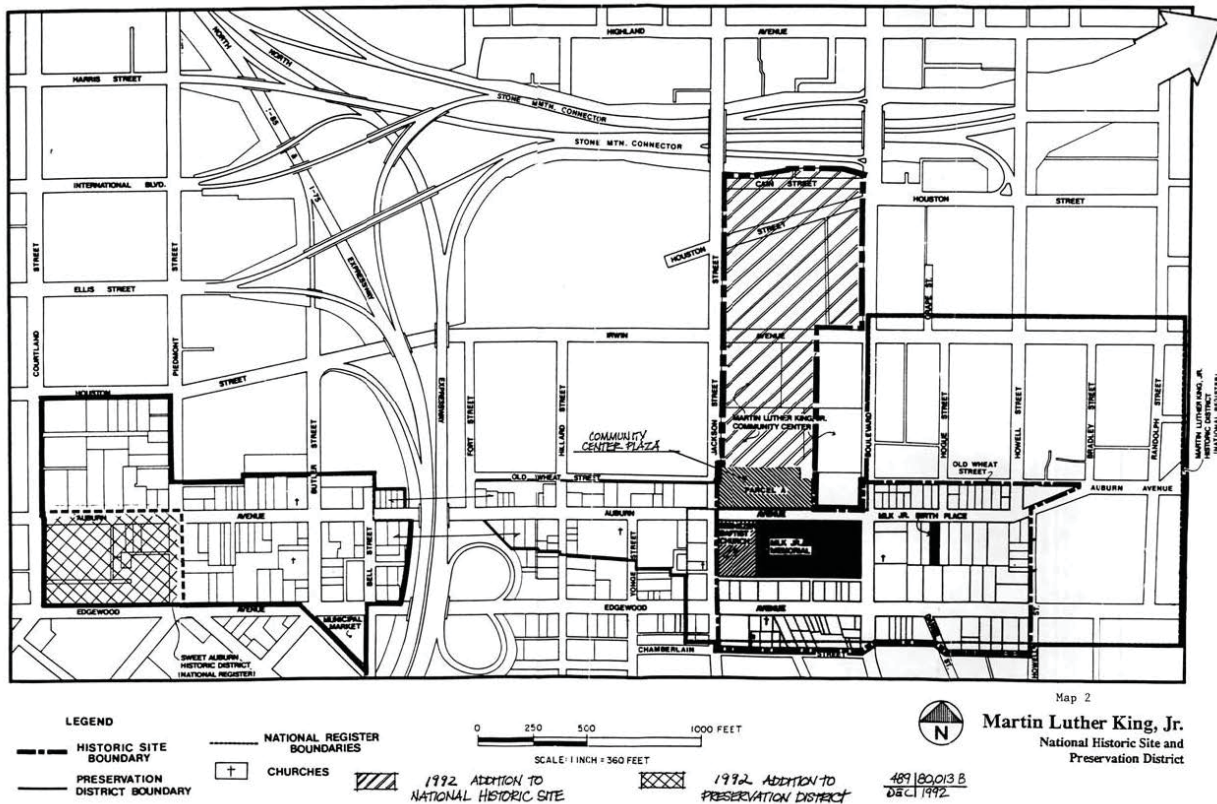


Figure 21. Map showing proposed boundary expansion area (Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, Map 2).

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. 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.

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

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

112. Ibid.



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).

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.

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 store is no longer used for commercial purposes. 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, including 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.

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

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.

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).

II.B Chronology of Development and Use

Introduction

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.¹²⁰ 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 houses 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 structures in the triangular-shaped lot (“triangle block”) bounded by [North and South] Wheat and Howland Streets (Figure 23). The height of the early development of Auburn Avenue started when

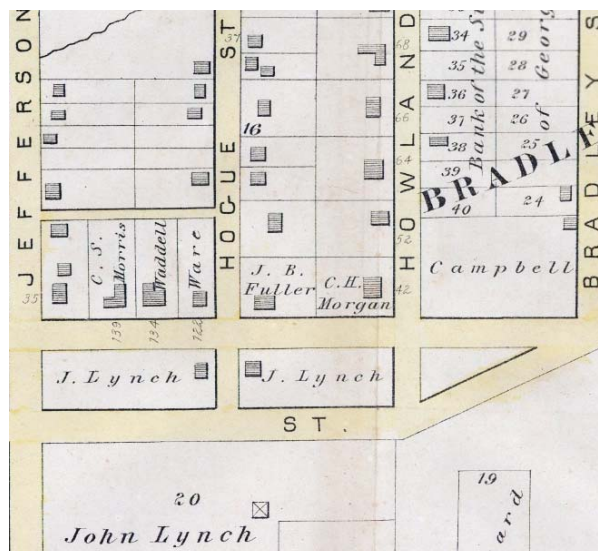


Figure 23. 1878 map showing holdings by John Lynch along Wheat Street between Hogue and Howland (now Howell) Streets. 540 Auburn Avenue is located in the eastern triangular shaped block. Southern and Southwestern Surveying and Publishing Company, City Atlas of Atlanta, Georgia. Available from: Emory University, <http://disc.library.emory.edu/atlantamaps/2012/10/> (accessed February 14, 2017).

the heirs of John Lynch began to divide and sell his properties on Wheat Street between Jackson and Howland Streets (now Howell) in 1880.¹²¹

Initial Construction

Note: Address 540 Auburn Avenue is the Listed Classified Structure name for this property. City directories and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps list this address as 418 until the mid-1920s. After 1927, this address became 540 Auburn Avenue.

Alfred S. Jenkins was one of the first people to purchase from the Lynch heirs. Jenkins sold several blocks of property in 1894 to Fitzhugh Knox, an early Atlanta real estate tycoon.¹²² Jenkins purchased the triangle block in 1880 from Mary Goldsmith, and he began to develop the triangular block bounded by Wheat, Old Wheat, and Howell

120. Blythe, *Historic Resource Study*, 32.

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

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

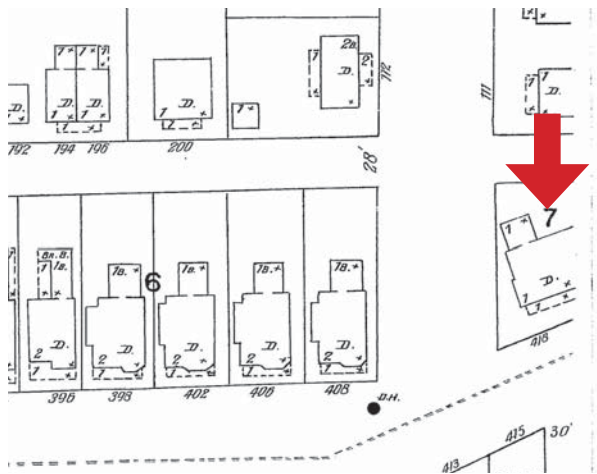


Figure 24. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Fulton County, Georgia, Auburn Avenue, 1899.

Streets.¹²³ The Baylor Atlas from 1894 (Figure 1) recorded the property owners of portions of Auburn Avenue, formerly named Wheat Street, and the street running parallel to it at the north, Old Wheat Street. A.S. Jenkin's ownership is recorded on this map. Jenkins (1842-1910) was a native of Gwinnett County, Georgia, and lived with his wife Mildred (Millie) on Wheat Street as early as 1891.¹²⁴ By 1899, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps depict this block of Auburn Avenue, and address 540 (listed on the map as 418) is the only triangle block property included. The map does not include any land east of 540 (Figure 24). Jenkins was the sole property owner of the lots that comprise the triangle block at the east end of Auburn Avenue since circa 1890 until he sold the property to his son in 1899.¹²⁵ The elder Jenkins died in 1910.¹²⁶ Neither Alfred or Matthew Jenkins ever occupied the house at 540 Auburn Avenue.

The building at 540 Auburn is a one-story wood-frame Folk Victorian structure with clapboard siding, built in simple vernacular form with

123. Goldsmith owned the property in 1880, and she purchased it May of 1880 from GW Adair. Deed research did not reveal the title prior to Adair. The deed notes "lots numbers fifteen and sixteen of the subdivision of the Goldsmith property as sold by GW Adair on the fifth day of May 1880." Goldsmith may have been related to Fitzhugh Knox. Deed book O3/436, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

124. "AS" Jenkins is listed as a resident at 370 Wheat Street. Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1891.

125. Deed book 145/514, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

126. Alfred, Mildred and Matthew Jenkins are all buried at nearby Oakland Cemetery. R.L. Grizzle, Atlanta Georgia Oakland Cemetery Records, 1773-1999, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 1999.

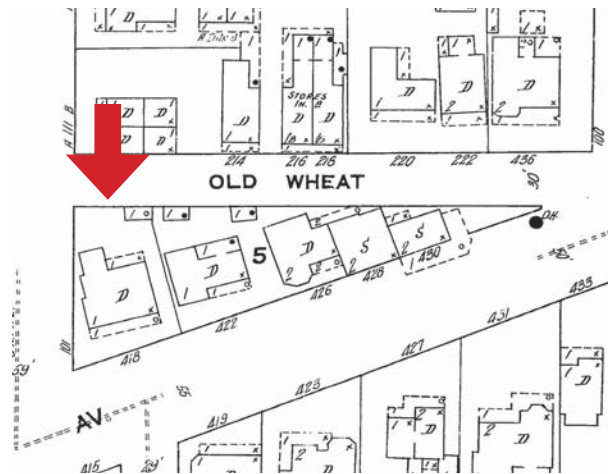


Figure 25. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Fulton County, Georgia, Auburn Avenue, 1911.

elaborate ornamental details on the front porch.¹²⁷ The house is a duplex along the block at the east end of Auburn Avenue. The structure is a variant of a prototype common to this area: frame dwellings with massing and features of the Queen Anne or Folk Victorian styles. The date of construction of the 540 Auburn Avenue structure is circa 1890.

Jenkins Family Ownership

From 1880 until 1963, Alfred S. Jenkins, his son, Matthew and heirs owned the entirety of the triangle block framed by Auburn Avenue, Old Wheat Street and Howell Street.¹²⁸ The elder Jenkins was a pharmacist and a grocer, as listed in the 1892 Atlanta City Directory, with a business address at 428-430 Auburn Avenue. This directory also lists his residence at 426 Auburn Avenue.¹²⁹ The 1905 Atlanta City Directory lists his pharmacy at 426 Auburn Avenue.¹³⁰

Research conducted during the production of cultural landscape report for the Birth Home Block concluded that development of this triangle block helped shape the streetscape of the east end of the district. According to the report, "to create a level piece of ground, a granite retaining wall was constructed along Auburn Avenue and Howell Street (date unknown) which raised the ground

127. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 108.

128. Deed book 4009/325, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

129. Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1892, 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.

level of the triangle on these two sides three to four feet above the sidewalk grade.”¹³¹

Appendix A, Sheet A-01 depicts the footprint of the house in circa 1899.

Early Tenants of 540 Auburn Avenue

Initially, the elder Jenkins rented this house to a number of short-term occupants, all white.¹³² The 1896 city directory lists the resident as G.W. Sentell, a carpenter.¹³³ Tenancy changed by 1899, and J.R. Brooks lived in the house.¹³⁴ The 1900 census lists Lenny Crissey as the head of the house. Crissey was a carriage driver, and he lived there with his children and wife, Nottie.¹³⁵ The Crisseys had two children, Christian and Horace, ages seven and 12. Nottie’s sister, Ida Grover, also shared the house.¹³⁶ Grover was a dressmaker. There are additional tenants listed in the census data. Robert Bridges, a cabinet maker and his wife Mary shared the residence.¹³⁷ By 1902, C.W. Mills occupied the house.¹³⁸ Oscar J. and Ida Morgan resided the house with John T. and Caroline Reese and James J. and Mildred Robertson in 1905. A city directory also lists Guy U. Summers as a boarder at the address.¹³⁹ In 1908, at least two couples shared the house including Willie T. (carpenter), Lillie Sorrough, her husband Oscar (foreman), and Josephine Washington. Consistent with trends in the surrounding neighborhoods, the tenants shifted to African American occupants sometime around 1910.

The 1910 census lists the Sims family as occupants of the house. Temple Sims, a seamstress, lived in

the residence with three of her four children and a grandchild.¹⁴⁰ The Sims children included Odena (16), Roy (11), Hazle (5), and granddaughter Helen Peach (3).¹⁴¹

A multi-family group of tenants occupied the house by the 1920 census. Ed R. Mattox, a porter, occupied the house in 1920 with his wife Nora. Other tenants included Sawyer and Matilda Brooks, Roy Sims, and Willie Getson.¹⁴² While the 1920 census does not list Ms. Sims as a resident, a city directory lists her as living at 418 Auburn Avenue in 1923.¹⁴³ Reverend Robert B. Carr, Fletcher Colvin (a mail carrier), and M.B. Fountain (a teacher at Morris Brown University) listed this address as their residence in 1923.¹⁴⁴

Hattie Johnson was a cook and a laundress, and she lived in the house for nearly 10 years from the mid-1920s to the early 1930s. The 1930 census lists Ms. Johnson as the head of household. Her lodgers included Percy and Lucy Fambro, Arthur and Lorene Grier, their daughter Dorilee, William and Bessy Berry and their daughter Mildred.¹⁴⁵

The head of the house listed in the April 1, 1940 census was Bailey Keaton, who occupied the house since 1935. He was a barber, and the tenants at that time were Mrs. Fannie Bell, a washerwoman, and her three daughters aged nine to 14.¹⁴⁶

Physical Changes to the House and Lot

Between 1900 and 1911, the elder Jenkins added a rear porch to the house (Figure 25). Mapping from 1911 shows a small structure in the

131. Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 104.

132. 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.

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

134. Atlanta City Directory, 1899, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

135. 1900 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4, Ancestry.com, [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012..

136. Ibid.

137. Ibid.

138. Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory 1902, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

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

140. Ms. Sim’s and children are listed as “mulatto” in the 1910 census data. 1910 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4,” Ancestry.com [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

141. 1910 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4,” Ancestry.com [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

142. 1920 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4, Ancestry.com [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

143. Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory 1923, Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

144. Ibid.

145. 1930 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 4, Ancestry.com [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

146. 1940 United States Federal Census, Atlanta City Ward 5, Tract F-29, Ancestry.com [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

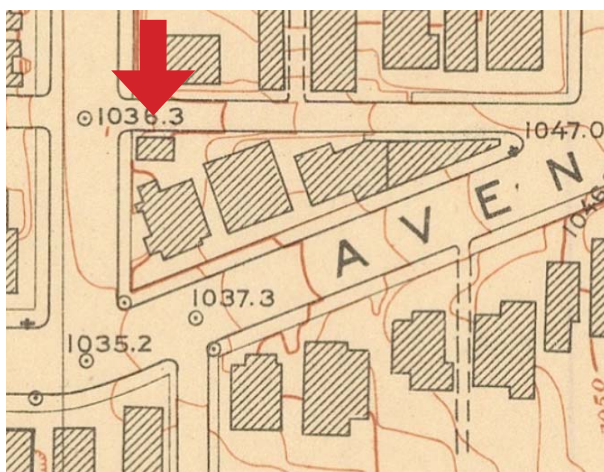


Figure 26. 1928 Map showing building footprints and topography on Auburn Avenue (accessed online from Emory University, <http://disc.library.emory.edu/atlantamaps/1928-atlanta-city-map/>).

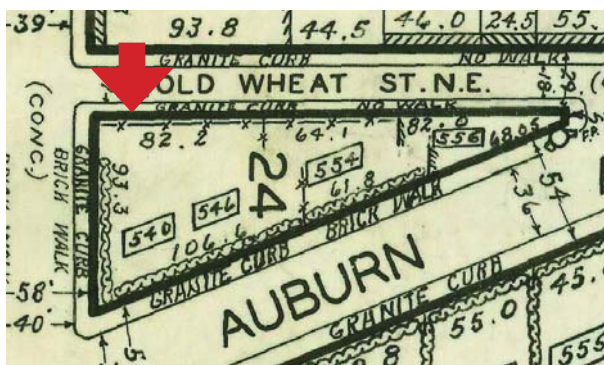


Figure 28. Cadastral Survey Map of the Birth Home Block, 1937 (Works Progress Administration).

northeast corner of the site, likely an outhouse. Historic mapping shows evidence that before 1928, Matthew Jenkins added a room to the Howell Street elevation close to the south side of the building (Figure 26). The owner partially enclosed a portion of the rear porch between 1926 and 1932.¹⁴⁷ *Appendix A, Sheet A-02* depicts the footprint of the house in c. 1931, with these additions. Jenkins later removed this addition between 1932 and 1953. The 1928 map and a 1931 Sanborn map indicate that Jenkins constructed an outbuilding at the northwest corner of the site (Figure 27 and Figure 28). City directories list a store at this address (53 Howell Street) through 1942.¹⁴⁸ The store also appears on an aerial photograph of the block, recorded in 1949 (Figure 29).

147. 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.

148. This address appears in a 1978 deed, but the date of demolition is unknown. Deed Book 7051/344, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.; Lawliss, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 110.

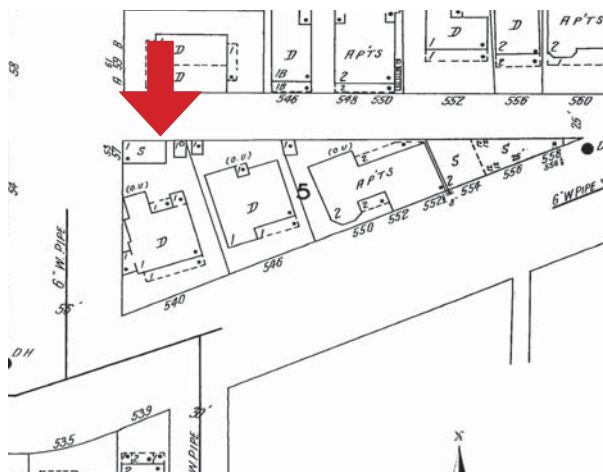


Figure 27. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Fulton County, Georgia, Auburn Avenue, 1931.

A building inventory conducted in the 1980s concluded that the division of the house into one, five-room and two, two-room apartments occurred prior to 1953. The owner also converted the store building into a single-family residence after 1953.¹⁴⁹ The date of the removal of the outbuildings is unknown.

Krick Ownership

The house remained in the ownership of the Jenkins family well into the twentieth century, until 1963, when Edward Krick purchased the property and continued to lease the house to tenants.¹⁵⁰ Krick operated a grocery on this same block in the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁵¹ There is little documentation to changes made to the house during the Krick ownership period.

Ola T. Smith, a widowed cook and laundress occupied the house as a long time tenant from the 1950s until the early 1960s. Following Smith, a widowed maid, Bertha S. Loyal, occupied the house until the early 1970s.¹⁵² The tenant of the house between 1970 and 1975 was Annie

149. 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.

150. A detailed Chain of Title is located in Appendix B. Deed Book 4009/325, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

151. *Ibid.*, 2.

152. Anne Huston and Dean Rowley, "National Historic Site Resource Inventory and Survey, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site," NHS 14 46 12 144, MALU Archives, 1982.

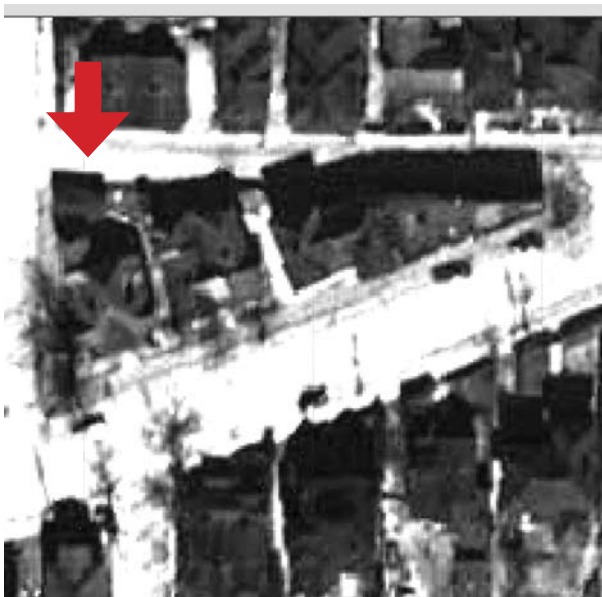


Figure 29. Aerial image of Auburn Avenue Birth-Block, 1949 (Georgia State University Special Collections).

Manning.¹⁵³ Census data does not record the tenant between the year 1975 and 1980. The house was vacant in 1980.¹⁵⁴

In an effort to revitalize and stabilize the Birth Home Block, Ebenezer Baptist Church began acquiring dilapidated houses in the area in the late 1970s. On September 12, 1978, Edward Krick sold the house to Ebenezer Baptist Church.¹⁵⁵ The church in turn sold the house to the Trust for Public Land (TPL) on January 12, 1981.¹⁵⁶ TPL was working toward plans to establish the national historic site. According to an interview with former TPL president Martin Rosen, the organization spent a time in Atlanta examining property records and purchasing key parcels to help protect resources on the Birth Home Block. The organization stopped demolition permits for dilapidated houses with the vision of making “this a historic district, to display the best of Reverend King’s neighborhood when it was alive



Figure 30. 540 Auburn Avenue prior to rehabilitation efforts (undated photo).

and vibrant.”¹⁵⁷ Efforts to stabilize the house and upgrade it for future residential use commenced.¹⁵⁸

NPS and Trust for Public Land Changes HUD Self Help Grant 1981

The Atlanta Historic District Development Corporation (HDDC) and the King Center obtained a grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to fund architectural rehabilitation plans to repair the dilapidated state of several houses on the Birth Home Block. The rehabilitation project included addresses 540, 546, 550, 568 and 568-A Auburn Avenue. The sponsors for this project included HDDC whose mission is to “facilitate the preservation, revitalization and non-displacement of residents in the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic District.”¹⁵⁹ TPL granted HDDC a preservation easement prior to the commencement of this work.¹⁶⁰

153. NPS, “540 Auburn Ave, 1980-1984, 1990,” MALU Archives, Series V Division Of Facility Management, 1944-2010, Sub-Series D Building Inventory Files 1972-2004, Box 3, Folder 2.

154. Ibid.

155. Deed book 7051/344, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

156. Deed book 9222/448, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

157. Martin J. Rosen, “Trust for Public Land Founding Member and President, 1972-1997: the Ethics and Practice of Land Conservation,” interview by Carl Wilemsen, Online Archive of California, 2009, accessed February 02, 2017, <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/view?docId=kt1199n4bs&query=&brand=oac4>.

158. NPS, “540 Auburn Ave, 1980-1984, 1990,” MALU Archives, Series V Division Of Facility Management, 1944-2010, Sub-Series D Building Inventory Files 1972-2004, Box 3, Folder 2.

159. “HDDC,” accessed December 13, 2016, <https://sites.google.com/site/historicdistrictdevelopment/>.

160. NPS, “Retirement of Land Records, Martin Luther King, Jr., Deeds 1 and 2,” MALU Archives, Series III Division of Administration 1960-2010 Subseries A, Park Central Files, 1968-2008, Subseries 1 Central Files, 1968-2008 Box 15, Folder 22, MLK, Jr. Deed No. 1-540, 546, 550 Auburn Ave., 1982-83.



Figure 31. Undated photo of 540 Auburn Avenue during implementation of Self-Help recommendations.

The rehabilitation plans for 540 Auburn Avenue involved extensive renovations to both the interior and exterior of the structure. Prior to the rehabilitation, photographic evidence shows that the house was in extremely poor condition from decades of neglect, thus recommendations included in the Martin Luther King Historic District, Self Help Project documents are extensive¹⁶¹ (Figure 30). Recommendations include the following:

Interior Recommendations

- Demolition of existing plaster and lath on walls and ceilings in the entire house.
- Removal and salvage of all existing interior doors, windows, and interior trim.
- Removal of all existing electrical conduit, water lines, DWV, and gas lines.
- Demolition of selected interior partitions.

General Exterior Recommendations

- Retention (repair/replacement as needed) of exterior trim and clapboard.
- Removal of existing sawn decorative trim on front porch and use as a template for new trim.
- Replacement of all exterior doors and windows to match originals.
- Removal of existing roofing and installation of sheathing and asbestos roll roofing with flashing.
- Removal of existing cedar shakes, installation of flashing.
- Installation of new sawn decorative cedar shingles to match originals.

¹⁶¹. The term "Self-Help Project" refers to these plans throughout this HSR.



Figure 32. Undated photo of 540 Auburn Avenue during implementation of Self-Help recommendations.

- Demolition of existing porch and rebuild to match original.
- Replacement of attic shutters to match original with mesh screen on interior.
- Installation of 1" galvanized drip edge on all roof edges.

Exterior Recommendations – West Elevation

- Replacement of clapboards at corners.
- Replacement of soffit and fascia trim to match original.
- Replacement of corner boards.
- Repointing of existing brick pier.
- Infill of brick piers with concrete block with stucco.
- Relocation of gas meter from under house to exterior crawl space.
- Addition of stucco.

Exterior Recommendations – North Elevation

- Replacement soffit, fascia and trim to match original.
- Installation of new exterior window.
- Replacement of clapboard in select locations.
- Rebuild of existing brick piers, infill with concrete blocks with stucco.



Figure 33. Undated photo of 540 Auburn Avenue after renovation.

- Replacement of cornerboards.
- Replacement of sill.
- Rebuild of existing concrete block wall on new footing.
- Removal of existing door and frame and infill with clapboard.
- Removal of rear steps.
- Repointing of existing brick piers.

Exterior Recommendations – Northeast Elevation

- Removal of existing porch roofing and installation of new sheathing and asbestos roll roofing.
- Installation of flashing under clapboard.
- Installation of new exterior windows.
- Replacement of deteriorated clapboard.
- Replacement of double edge joist in this section, sister existing studs to connect to sill.

Planning for the execution of the Self-Help plans occurred over the subsequent years beginning in 1982¹⁶² (Figure 31 and Figure 32). After the completion of the rehabilitation improvements in the mid- to late 1980s, the structure has remained in its current form (Figure 33).

162. 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).



Figure 34. 1983 HABS Drawings of conditions at 540 and 540 Auburn Avenue.

The NPS acquired the structures on the triangle block in 1983.¹⁶³ In 1985, the Washington, D.C. Office of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the NPS Southeast Regional Office undertook recordation of sites associated with the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. The project recorded the interrelationship of residential, commercial and religious architecture of the Birth Home Block and sites associated with Dr. King."¹⁶⁴ This project documented the front facades of addresses 472-550 Auburn Avenue. The sheet depicting 540 Auburn Avenue also shows Howell Street and the address to the west, 530 Auburn Avenue (Figure 34).

The NPS purchased the preservation easement for these properties from HDDC in 1986.¹⁶⁵ Rehabilitation efforts continued under the NPS. In 1987 and 1989, the NPS planned for the restoration of a portion of the stone wall in front of all of the properties within the triangular block along Auburn Avenue (addresses 540, 546, and 550.) This project included rehabilitation of the stone retaining wall and brick sidewalk that run along the south property lines adjacent to the public right-of-way and Auburn Avenue.¹⁶⁶ Construction

163. NPS, "Retirement of Land Records, Martin Luther King, Jr., Deeds 1 and 2," MALU Archives, Series III Division of Administration 1960-2010 Subseries A, Park Central Files, 1968-2008, Subseries 1 Central Files, 1968-2008 Box 15, Folder 22, MLK, Jr. Deed No. 1-540, 546, 550 Auburn Ave., 1982-83.

164. NPS, "472-550 Auburn Avenue & 39 Boulevard Avenue, 472-550 Auburn Avenue & 39 Boulevard Avenue," National Park Service, National Architectural and Engineering Record, HABS GA, 61-ATLA, 49, 1933, 6.

165. Deed book 10325/411, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Fulton County, GA.

166. "440, 446, 550 Auburn Preservation, Stone Wall Sidewalk," MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management, 1944-2010, Subseries I SERO Section 106 Compliance, 1982-1990 Box 2 Folder 1, 1989.

E T



Figure 35. Site evolution of “triangle properties” 540, 546, and 550 Auburn Avenue.

of the stone wall was to match “historic fabric” complete with drainage behind the wall. The NPS proposed a brick walkway set in sand on a mortar or concrete base.¹⁶⁷ Archeologists consulted prior to the project recommended archeological monitoring during the construction project due to the potential disturbance of “currently unidentified archeological resources or historic fabric.”¹⁶⁸

540 Auburn Avenue was listed in the National Register of Historic places in 1994. Changes to the site continued in 1994, when the NPS planned for the reintroduction of hedges and a fence at address 540 Auburn Avenue.¹⁶⁹ The 1937 Cadastral Survey provided the hedge and fence locations. According to correspondence with the State Historic Preservation Office, “because of a lack of documentation on the exact type of fence present during the historic period” the type of fence proposed in the rear yard proposed was based on

findings in the cultural landscape report.¹⁷⁰

In 1989, NPS began a project to repair deteriorated wood, re-caulk and repaint the exterior of the building.¹⁷¹ The NPS made additional repairs to the structure in 1993 with the repair of the roof and installation of central heating and air conditioning.¹⁷² The NPS repainted the structure in 2005.

The NPS began a mold remediation project in apartment A of 540 Auburn Avenue in 2014 due to “high levels of molds” in the basement,

167. Ibid., 5-7.

168. Ibid., 16-17.

169. Deputy Associate Regional Director, Cultural Resources, Southeast Region to Superintendent, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, April 11, 1994.

170. Paul B. Hartwig to Dr. Elizabeth Lyon, February 3, 1994.

171. “440, 446, 550 Auburn Preservation, Stone Wall Sidewalk,” MALU Archives, Series V Division of Facility Management, 1944-2010, Subseries I SERO Section 106 Compliance, 1982-1990, Box 1, Folder 15, 1987; “540 546 550 Auburn Board Replacement, Repainting,” Series V Division of Facility Management, 1944-2010 Subseries I SERO Section 106 Compliance, 1982-1990 Box 2 Folder 5, 1989.

172. Deputy Associate Regional Director, Cultural Resources, Southeast Region to Superintendent, Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS, MALU-93-22, Subject: Section 106 Clearance, June 16, 1993.

board, framing, and mechanical equipment.¹⁷⁴ The NPS sought environmental clearance for a project to provide ventilation for the clothes dryers in both apartments at 540 Auburn Avenue. This project included drilling two holes in the masonry of the structure under the deck.¹⁷⁵ In 2015, the NPS sought approval for the addition of a new door to the basement level of the structure. According to the application, “the bottom door, facing Howell Street was replaced due to emergency repairs (extensive rot caused security concerns), however, it was not initially replaced in-kind.”¹⁷⁶ This installation was temporary and did not meet preservation standards for replacement of materials in-kind. The NPS has ordered a door meeting Secretary of the Interior Standards for preservation.

Appendix A, Sheet A-03 depicts the first floor plan of the house in c. 1982. Figure 35 depicts the evolution of building footprints and site features at addresses 540-550 Auburn Avenue. The full-size version graphic is provided, to scale, in *Appendix A, Sheet A-04*.

174. Ibid.

175. NPS, “Assessment of Actions Having an Effect on Historic Properties, Drill 2 holes in masonry at 540 Auburn Avenue, PEPC Project Number 46564,” January 7, 2014.

176. NPS, “Assessment of Actions Having an Effect on Historic Properties, Replace door on 540 Auburn Avenue, PEPC Project Number: 60335,” September 16, 2015.

Timeline

1871	Ruger's bird's-eye map of Atlanta shows little development on Wheat Street (later Auburn Avenue) east of Butler Street.
1880	A.S. Jenkins purchases property along the triangle block on Wheat Street from Mary Goldsmith.
1890	A.S. Jenkins constructs buildings on Wheat Street (including 540 Auburn Avenue.)
1890-1920	Brick sidewalk constructed on north side of Wheat Street, east of Howell Street.
1891	A.S. Jenkins lives on Wheat Street.
1893	After petitions from 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 Avenue.
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.
1899	First depiction of a portion of the house in a Sanborn map, identified at 540 Auburn Avenue; the 500 block of current-day Auburn Avenue, east of 540, is not included.
1900	Census data shows that the house at 540 Auburn Avenue is tenant occupied.
1900-1910	A.S. Jenkins adds a porch to the rear of 540 Auburn Avenue.
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.
1908-1910	Most houses on this block of Auburn Avenue, formerly owned or occupied by whites, become owned or occupied by African Americans.
1910	A.S. Jenkins dies.
1910-1920s	Hattie Johnson is a tenant at 540 Auburn Avenue.
1911	Sanborn map shows house footprints omitted from the 1899 map, including 540, 546, and 550 Auburn Avenue and the triangle lot at 554-558 Auburn Avenue.
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.
ca. 1922	Matthew Jenkins constructs a triangular shaped flat-iron building at the intersection of Old Wheat and Auburn Avenue.
1924-27	Auburn Avenue street numbers change: 418 becomes 540 Auburn Avenue.

1926-1932	Matthew Jenkins partially encloses a portion of the rear porch at 540 Auburn Avenue.
1928	Matthew Jenkins adds a room to the south side of 540 Auburn Avenue, facing Howell Street.
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.
1932	Sanborn map shows Auburn Avenue.
1930s-1960s	Ola Smith is a tenant at 540 Auburn Avenue.
1932-1953	Matthew Jenkins removes the addition facing Howell Street at 540 Auburn Avenue during this period. The house is subdivided into one five-room and two two-room apartments prior to 1953. 53 Howell Street is listed as a store in the Atlanta City Directory through 1942 and the store is converted into a single-family residence after 1953.
1941	Twelve-year-old Martin Luther King, Jr. moves from his birth home 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.
1956	Matthew Jenkins dies and Ruth Jenkins Vickery inherits the property.
1963	Edward Krick purchases addresses 540, 546, and 550 Auburn Avenue.
1964	Civil Rights Act of 1964 passes.
1968	Martin Luther King, Jr. is 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.
1976-77	Two National Historic Landmark districts designated in the historic neighborhood.
9/12/1978	Edward Krick sells 540 Auburn Avenue to Ebenezer Baptist Church.
1980	Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site established.
1980	Historic District Development Corporation organized.
1980s	Trust for Public Land (TPL) begins buying properties in Auburn neighborhood.
1/12/1981	Trust for Public Land purchases 540 Auburn Avenue from Ebenezer Baptist Church.

1980s	Self-Help plan recommendations implemented to rehabilitate; building becomes a leased duplex residence.
1985	HABS recordation of the resources along Auburn Avenue, including facade drawings of 540 Auburn Avenue.
1986	General Management Plan for the National Historic Site.
3/30/1983	NPS purchases 540 Auburn Avenue from TPL.
1989	MLK, Jr. Landmark District designated by the City of Atlanta..
1994	Historic Resource Study of the National Historic Site.
1995	Cultural Landscape Report for the Birth Home Block.
Mid-1990s	The NPS purchases several properties in preparation for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta.
2001	National Register boundary increased.

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

I.C Physical Description

Auburn Avenue and the Old Fourth Ward

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site 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-nineteenth century. 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 the occasional shade tree. The houses occupy most of the lot width, leaving only 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 approximately 40 feet wide, with parallel parking spaces on either side. Brick sidewalks, 7.5 feet wide, occupy both sides of this part of the 500 block of Auburn Avenue. There are low curbs consisting of Stone Mountain granite, between the sidewalks and the streets. There are



Figure 36. Entire block, including 540, 546, and 550 Auburn Avenue; view toward northeast.



Figure 37. West elevation.

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 A.M.E. Church, and Butler Street YMCA.

540 Auburn Avenue: The Site

Located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Auburn Avenue and Howell Street, its lot bounded by Old Wheat Street to the north, the house faces south, fronted by a stacked stone retaining wall and modern brick sidewalk (Figure 36). Poured concrete steps lead up to the front porch from a recess in the stone wall. At the east end of the front porch, a small concrete pad serves



Figure 38. Wood picket fence, west elevation.

as a landing for wood steps leading up to the porch. The house and front porch is set back from the stone wall, creating a level front yard, covered with grass. Foundation plantings exist along the west end of the front porch, and privet hedges are planted along the stone wall. A mature tree is located to the west of the house in the front yard.

The stone retaining wall and brick sidewalk continues north along Howell Street (Figure 37). This wall is discontinuous along this side yard, allowing for access to the basement of the house from a concrete slab. Further to the north, the stone wall continues at a lower height due to the cross slope on the site. A mature tree grows at the northwest corner of the west yard. A roughly 4'-9" tall wood picket fence (Figure 38), unpainted, runs north from the house.

The rear yard, covered with grass, extends eastward along Old Wheat Street. No sidewalk exists. The wood picket fence continues eastward toward the adjacent lot, and a hinged gate swings outward toward the street. Two mature trees grow between the fence and granite curb. A poured concrete pad serves as a landing for wood steps leading up to the rear porch (Figure 39).



Figure 39. Site, north elevation of house, view toward south.



Figure 40. East elevation, oblique view, view toward north.

The structure at 540 Auburn Avenue shares its 11'-2" wide east yard, covered with grass, with the adjacent house. HVAC condensing units, set on-grade, are in the yard (Figure 40).

540 Auburn Avenue: The House

Measured drawings depicting existing conditions at 540 Auburn Avenue are located in Appendix C of this report.



Figure 41. South elevation, porch and gable.

The one-story house (with partial basement) at 540 Auburn Avenue houses two residential apartments. It is a wood frame house with a variety of roof forms. The hipped, almost pyramidal, main roof is truncated at the north elevation above the rear porch. Secondary gabled roofs extend from this roof to the west and east over both apartments. A single gable faces south, centered over the front porch and stairs, and an additional gabled roof covers the bedroom at the northwest corner. All roofs are covered with modern rectangular asphalt composition shingles.

The almost full-width hipped-roof front porch dominates the primary south elevation facing Auburn Avenue. While dimensionally slightly asymmetrical, the porch, associated steps, and tall central south-facing gable with wood louver and wood shingles create the impression of a symmetrical design. Although largely reconstructed as part of the Self-Help Project, the porch retains much of the original form, size, location and design (Figure 41).

The asymmetrical west elevation includes a gable with a decorative wood louvered vent over the projecting bay of the living room (Figure 42). Wood weatherboards with a 5-inch exposure cover walls above a stucco covered concrete block foundation wall with brick piers to the north. Roughly centered on the main block of the house is a basement entrance. At the north elevation, a gabled wing houses a bedroom, and a low shed roof covers small rooms and a closet located in a small projecting wing to the east. Weatherboards cover the truncated rear pyramid form of the main block, and a full sized double hung window reveals the large volume of the unfinished attic space



Figure 42. West elevation, oblique view toward southeast.



Figure 43. East elevation and yard, oblique view toward southwest.

beyond. The east elevation features an east-facing gable over the living room. Stuccoed concrete block walls infill spaces between brick piers below the weatherboards (Figure 43).

The house is asymmetrical in plan. The square main block of the house includes a projecting bay to the west, a projecting wing to the north houses a bedroom, and a small wing at the northeast corner houses a closet. An open rear porch extends northward from the main block of the house.

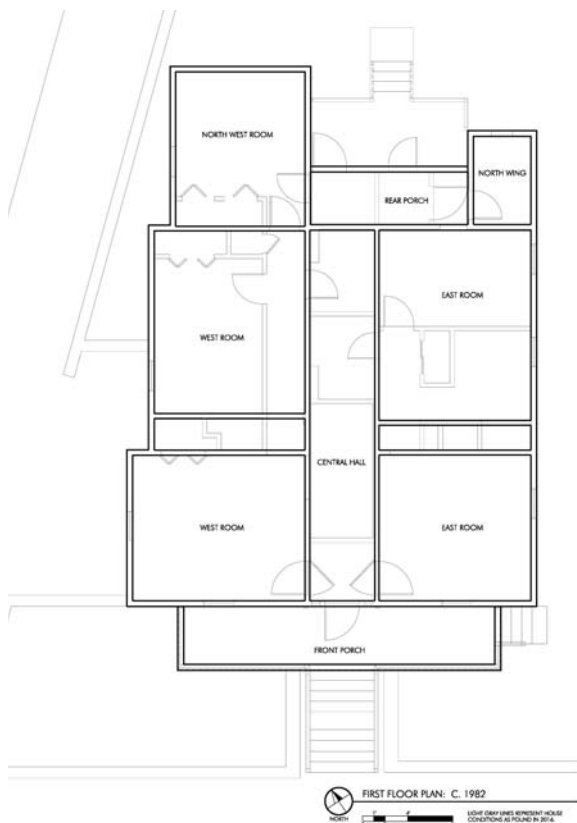


Figure 44. Conjectural first floor plan (1982).

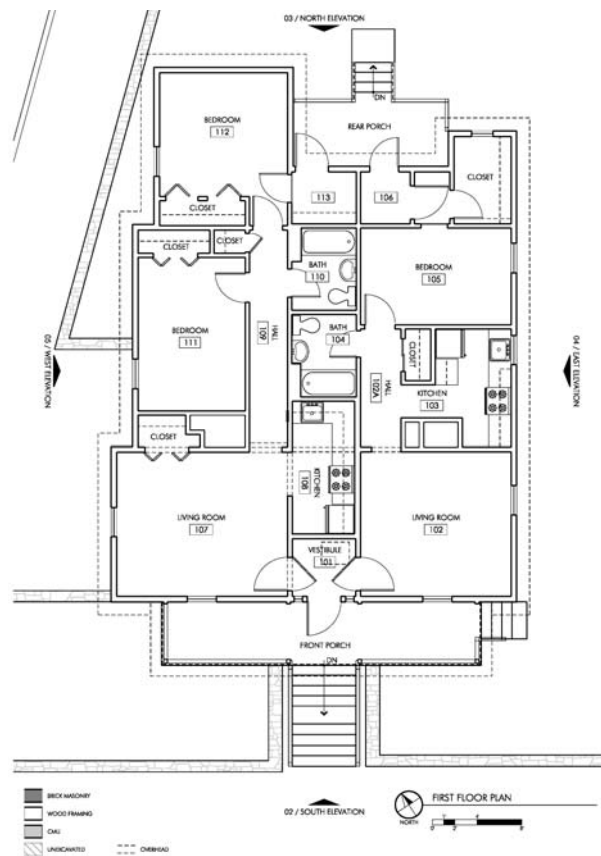


Figure 45. As-found main floor plan (2017).

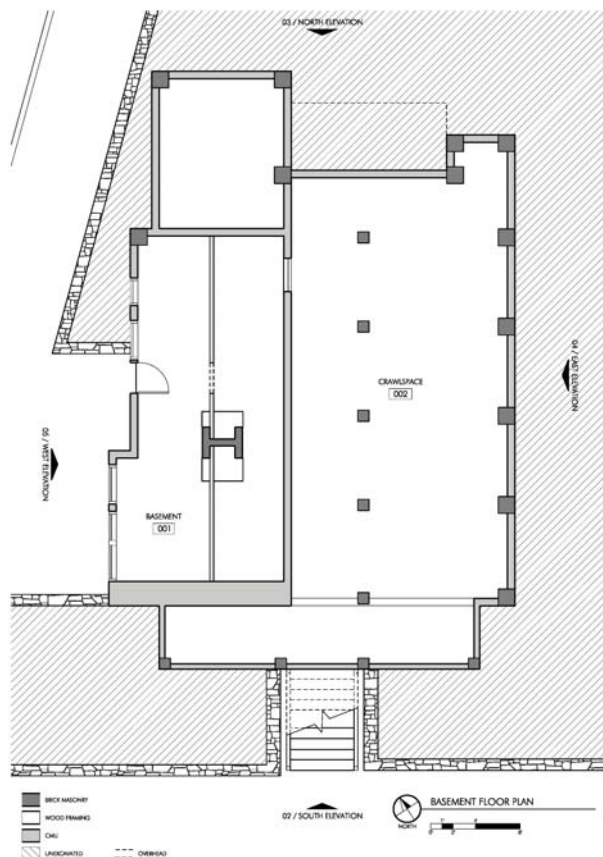


Figure 46. As-found basement plan (2017).

As shown in the 1982 Self-Help Project demolition plans, the original plan of the house included a central hallway running north-to-south with four rooms opening directly to the hallway. The secondary wing to the northwest and a smaller room located to the northeast both opened directly to a rear porch, since demolished and reconstructed (Figure 44).

Presently the front door opens directly into a square vestibule, with doors leading into living rooms of the two residential apartments. To the west, the living room connects directly to a small kitchen to the east, to the north a hallway connecting to two bedrooms and a bathroom. Bedrooms are located to the north and west of the hallway, and access to a rear porch is through a small laundry room from the north bedroom (Figure 45).

From the vestibule, the easternmost apartment's living room connects to a hallway providing access to the kitchen, bath, and bedroom to the north. Access to a rear porch occurs through a small room from the bedroom. Bathrooms for both apartments and the kitchen and laundry room for the western



Figure 47. Undermined and deteriorated pier in crawlspace.



Figure 48. Base of chimney in basement showing failing brick and mortar.

apartment fit within a central bay the width of the entry vestibule.

The basement is located below the western half of the house, and it is enclosed with unfinished concrete block walls. Window and door openings to the west are infilled with wood board closures and framing, and a modern flush wood door provides entrance. There are no existing ceiling or floor finishes (Figure 46).



Figure 49. Cracked wall at north west corner of site wall. Northern segment is overturning, causing crack at the western face of the wall at the corner.

All original interior plaster wall and ceiling finishes, wood lath, wood door and window trim, and most floor finishes were removed as part of the Self-Help Project. Original fireplaces remain behind gypsum wallboard finishes, and chimneys extend above the main roof.

Structural Systems

Foundation/Basement

The east side of the building is denoted as Crawlspace 002, and is supported by brick piers around the perimeter with concrete masonry unit (CMU) infill sections. The interior is supported by mortared brick or mortared CMU piers approximately 10'-0" apart. Those piers support a beam running north-south located midway between the east wall and the wall separating the crawlspace from the basement area. Two piers close to the door to the basement level are tilting, possibly caused by the excavation of the area near the door or by what could be erosion from water (Figure 47). However, there was no sign of water at the time of visit. The west side of the building denoted as Basement 001 is a full height basement consisting of mortared CMU walls with a door and windows to the exterior. A concrete slab on grade



Figure 50. Roof framing in attic, view toward south west corner. Kickers attach to mid height of rafters.

forms the floor. On top of the west wall is a 7 ½" tall by 3 ¼" wide wood beam that acts a header over the door and windows. Between Basement 001 and Crawlspace 002 is a full height CMU basement wall that is retaining approximately 5'-0" of grade. Centrally located in the space is a brick chimney, with visibly failing mortar and brick at the base (Figure 48).

A mortared stacked stone wall runs along the sidewalk on the south side of the building and wraps the corner around the west side and turns to meet the west wall of the building. The wall retains a maximum of 6'-0" of soil to create the front yard. At the northwest corner of the wall, there are full depth cracks (Figure 49) that indicated an overturning failure of the northern most segment of the wall. It is unclear as to the cause of the failure. There is a tree above the wall, with roots that may have adversely affected the wall. Alternatively, the drainage plane, which allows water behind the wall to drain out, has failed or was not installed at the time of construction. The south facing portion of the site wall to the west of the front stairs also shows signs of cracking due to outward pressure from the backfill. At the concrete stair that connects the front porch to the sidewalk, there are signs of water erosion on each side that is undermining the stairs.

There is standing water outside the perimeter wall near the air conditioning units on the east side of the building. There is erosion and minor undermining of the front steps.

The front porch floor is constructed of wood joists, beams, and tongue and groove deck boards supported by brick and CMU knee walls. The



Figure 51. Roof framing in attic with missing collar tie.

roof is 2 × 4 rafters supported by beams on 4 × 4 wood columns.¹⁷⁷ The porches are connected to the building with ledgers nailed to the building framing. The steps are wood stringers and treads with wood railings and posts. At both porches, there is wood in contact with the ground that does not appear to be pressure treated. The wood stringers and post at the east side of the front porch and at the rear porch are in contact with the ground.

Exterior & Interior Walls

In the basement level, a load bearing stud wall of 2 × 4 members at 16" on center with no blocking supports the floor framing above. Studs are missing at two locations with the double top plate spanning the gap to support the joists above.

The wall framing above the basement level is also 2 × 4 member framing at 16" on center.

Flooring System

The floor joists run east-west and are 2 × 6 members set at 16" on center with no bridging.

177. 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 52. Brick firebox base in Basement 001.



Figure 53. Chimney.



Figure 54. Electric service and meter, east elevation.

Roofing System

The roof is a gable and hip roof made of rafters supporting battens covered with plywood sheathing. The rafters are $4 \times 2 \frac{3}{4}$ " at 32" on center with $2 \times 3 \frac{3}{4}$ " kickers at each rafter. The kickers are let-into the rafter at mid-height and the joint covered with a wood plate (Figure 50). They bear at the loadbearing wall running north-south at the center line of the building. Two of the three longest rafters at the center of the building have collar ties approximately 3'-0" below the ridge, while one is missing (Figure 51). The rafter system connects to the ridge, as well as hip beams and live valley beams that bear on support posts bearing on wall framing below.

Utilities

Mechanical System

Four fireplaces originally provided heating for the house. Their fireboxes covered with gypsum wallboard, these fireplaces are no longer operational. The brick bases of the fireplaces and chimney are visible from the basement and crawlspace and in the attic (Figure 52). Both chimneys extend above the roof (Figure 53).



Figure 55. Typical bathroom fixtures.

Remnants of gas pipes indicate that space heaters once provided heat. Gas service enters the building at the north end of the west elevation.

All-new mechanical systems were installed during the Self-Help Project. Modern split-system equipment provides heating and air conditioning to spaces on all levels via insulated ductwork routed above the ceiling; stamped-metal supply registers serve living spaces below. Condensing units are located on grade in the east side yard and air-handling units are located in attic spaces.

Electrical System

Georgia Power provides electrical service. This overhead service enters the house from a meter located on the east elevation near the front of the house (Figure 54).

All lighting fixtures and other devices are modern in style, material and period of manufacture, and consistent with the Self-Help Project construction period. Later additions include updated ceiling fans in bedrooms. A single modern wall-mounted light fixture provides light for the front porch.

Cable television and telephone service enters via



Figure 56. Typical double-hung window, east elevation.

overhead wires at the west elevation of the house. A satellite television dish is mounted on the east elevation.

No monitored security or fire alarm system was observed. Battery-powered smoke alarms are located in both apartments, their operation unconfirmed.

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 and consistent with the work specified in Self-Help Project documents.

Two exterior hose bibs provide water service and are mounted at the east and west elevations.

Kitchens each include a single-bowl stainless steel sink. Bathrooms include a wall-mounted porcelain lavatory, toilet, and bathtub, all modern in design. Typical fixture designs are consistent with the Self-Help Project (Figure 55).



Figure 57. South Elevation, front door.

Exterior Features

Roofs and drainage

Multiple roof forms cover the house: A hipped, almost pyramidal roof covers the main block of the house, and is truncated at the north elevation above the rear porch. Secondary gabled roofs extend from this roof to the west and east over the Living Room spaces of both apartments. A single gable faces south, centered over the front porch and stairs, and an additional gabled roof covers the bedroom at the northwest corner. A shallow-slope hipped roof covers the front porch. A low-sloped shed roof is located at the north elevation.

Rectangular asphalt composition shingles cover all roofs and attic vents are mounted at roof ridges.

No gutters or downspouts exist; projecting eaves shed rainwater away from exterior walls to grade to be dispersed.

Chimneys

The two brick chimneys are roughly centered north to south on the main block of the house and extend above the roof. The brick is exposed with a corbelled detail at the top, with a clay flue extending above. Erosion of mortar joints is visible on chimneys above the roof.



Figure 58. West Elevation.

Windows and Doors

Windows

Typical windows are two-over-two double-hung wood windows that measure approximately 2'-8" wide by 5'-5" tall (Figure 56). Most windows remain in their original locations. One exception is located on the north elevation: A smaller two-over-two double-hung wood window measuring 1'-11" wide by 3'-0" tall window is located under the shed roof to the east.

All windows include exterior-mounted wood-framed insect screens attached to window frames with metal clips and hooks at the head and metal hook and loop closures accessible from the interior.

Exterior window trim is consistent throughout: Flat 4 ½" to 5" wide by 1" wood boards at jambs and head with a wood sill and a decorative cap with drip at the window head set on a wood molding nailed to the face of the flat wood trim. Interior trim design, installed as part of the Self-Help project, is also consistent throughout the house: Flat ¾" deep by 3 ½" wide wood casings at window jamb and head with a 5/8" deep sill with ¾" deep by 3 ¼" apron below.

Doors

The house includes four exterior doors: Three doors located at the first level and one at the basement level. All existing doors were scheduled as new doors as part of the 1980s Self-Help project. All doors are painted.

The main entrance door and frame (south elevation) retains portions of its original overall



Figure 59. South Elevation (MALU Archives, Slide 540_14, April 1985).

configuration, design and location, based on photographs dating to the mid-1980s (Figure 57). This 3'-0" wide by 6'-11" tall by 1 3/4" thick raised six-panel solid wood door is set into a 5'-4" wide opening including two 9" wide solid wood and glass sidelights. 3 3/4" width flat wood casing is used for trim with a wood cap and crown molding at the top of the opening. Glass sidelights include one wood muntin.

Weatherboards have been cut and reassembled above the front door opening, suggesting that this opening was reconfigured at an undetermined date. The 1982 Self-Help Project drawings do not address this modification.

Two modern raised six-panel solid-wood doors provide access to the rear porch. A 2'-to 6" wide by 6'-8" by 1 3/4" thick tall door opens out to the rear porch from Room 106 (added since completion of the Self-Help project). A 3'-0" wide by 6'-8" by 1 3/4" thick door opens onto the rear porch from Room 113.

A single modern flush-wood 2'-8" wide by 6'-0" tall by 1 3/4" thick door opens inward to room Basement 001. This modern door is set in a 2x wood frame mounted in an opening that pre-dates the Self-Help Project, and includes a modern lockset, brass kick plate on the exterior, and three painted hinges (Figure 58).

Porches and Steps

Reconstructed as part of the Self-Help project, the asymmetrical hipped roof front porch generally keeps the original porch form, size, location and design (Figure 59).



Figure 60. Front porch, detail, view toward east.



Figure 61. Concrete steps and stone wall, south elevation.



Figure 62. Rear porch, north elevation.

The front porch is at first-floor level on the south elevation. The 1 ½" by 3 ½" hipped wood roof joists and ¾" by 3 ½" roof deck are exposed to below. The cornice around the east, south and west sides of the ceiling is created from a 1" by 12" soffit board nailed to extended rafter ends that are covered by a 1" by 6" wood fascia with a 4" crown mold nailed to the fascia. The roof is covered with rectangular asphalt composite shingles with a metal drip edge. Decorative scrollwork, cut from 2x wood, runs between wood posts and the face of the house underneath a 1 ½" by 5 ½" beam. The four porch posts are 3 ½" by 3 ½" wood and are chamfered above the top of the wood railing and include trim cut from 1 ¼" wood with a crown molding, underneath the decorative scrollwork (Figure 60).

Porch railings are constructed with a chamfered 1 ½" deep by 3 ½" wide top rail, a 1 ½" deep by 3 ½" wide bottom rail with 1 ½" by 1 ½" balusters at roughly 6" on center.

The porch floor of 5 ½" by 1 ½" wood tongue-and-groove boards is set approximately 1'-9" above grade (this varies across the south elevation). It is accessed from the sidewalk by nine cast 5'-8 ½" wide concrete steps and from the east by four 3'-4" wide wood steps. The concrete step risers vary in depth from 11" to 11 1/2" with an intermediate 19 ½" deep landing. Riser heights vary from 6 ¾" to 7 ½" tall (Figure 61). The wood steps to the east were added since 1983. Both concrete and wood steps share a wood railing design with the porch.

The roofless rear porch is at floor level at the north elevation (Figure 62). A 30" high painted wood railing exists along the east and north of the porch, and is constructed with a 1 ½" deep by 3



Figure 63. North Elevation, after completion of Self-Help Project (MALU Archives, Slide 540_27).

½" wide (2 × 4) wood bottom rail, 1 ½" by 1 ½" wood balusters set at roughly 6" on center, and a chamfered 1 ½" deep wood top rail. 3 ½" by 3 ½" wood corner and end posts have eased top edges and extend roughly 3 ½" above the top rail. The completion of this porch followed the completion of the Self-Help project (Figure 63).

The porch floor is raised approximately 2'-4" above grade and accessed by five 3'-2 ¾" wide steps roughly centered about the north side of the porch. The treads vary in depth from 10 ½" to 10 ¾" and risers are typically 7" tall. The porch floor is made of 5 ½" wide by 1 ½" deep tongue and groove wood boards running north to south. The skirt board at the porch perimeter measures 7 ½" tall by ¾" deep.

Interior Features

Self-Help Project

Significant interior modifications to the house occurred during the Self-Help Project and to a lesser extent, later repair and remodeling projects. 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 the vintage and location of original doors, windows and walls.

Notable Self-Help project alterations included: Removal of existing interior wall finishes and wood trim, including all plaster walls; removal and replacement of doors and other interior features; modification of room configurations; and installation of new electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems throughout.



Figure 64. Basement 001 view toward west.



Figure 66. Masonry fireplace structure.

Interior Finishes

New interior finishes were also installed at this time and include: ½" thick gypsum wallboard covering walls and ceilings; painted flat 1×4 wood window and door casings; flat 1×6 wood baseboards; and broadloom carpet with pad installed over existing or new wood subflooring. No decorative wood moldings remain and all wood trim, doors, and windows are painted. Exceptions to these typical finish types are noted in the following individual room descriptions.



Figure 65. Basement 001 view toward north, crawlspace access to right.

Basement 001

Accessed directly from the exterior to the west, this partially finished basement room measures 14'-11" at its widest by 31'-0" and currently used for storage. Located approximately mid-room and running north to south, the installation of a wood stud wall with no finish materials was likely to limit deflection of floors above (Figure 64). The Self-Help project work reconfigured this room through the removal of existing non-structural partitions.

Flooring

The smooth-troweled concrete floor slab is unfinished. The top of the slab is located approximately 5" above the concrete walk outside the existing door opening.

Baseboards

None existing.

Walls

Exposed CMU are located on all walls.

Ceiling

There are no finished ceilings, and wood floor joists, beams and wood floor deck are exposed to below. The ceiling height measures 6'-9" from the



Figure 67. Basement 001, view toward north, masonry fireplace base in foreground.

concrete slab to bottom of exposed wood joists. Batt fiberglass insulation fills the cavities between floor joists.

Doorways

A single modern wood door provides access to this space from the west. An opening in the CMU wall to the east provides access to the adjacent crawlspace (Figure 65).

Windows

None existing. Existing openings in the west wall are framed with 2×6 wood and covered with tongue and groove wood boards.

Finishes

Exposed walls, floors and ceilings are unfinished. Traces of paint and other finish materials cover the brick firebox base (Figure 66).

Mechanical System

Two 40-gallon gas water heaters serving the apartment units are vented by a flue to through the roof above. This space is not air-conditioned or heated.



Figure 68. Crawlspace 002.

Electrical System

Mounted to floor joists, keyless porcelain socket light fixtures with exposed incandescent lightbulbs provide light to the space.

Closet (s)

None existing.

Other Elements

The original masonry fireplace base is roughly centered in the space (Figure 67).

Crawlspace 002

This unfinished and partially excavated crawlspace contains intermediate brick piers supporting wood floor joists and beams, and is bounded by CMU and brick piers and infill panels at its perimeter. Routed through the space are plumbing and gas pipes and miscellaneous electrical, CATV, and telephone wires. The floor of this area is unfinished, exposed soil. An opening from the adjacent Basement 001 provides access (Figure 68).

Flooring

None existing.



Figure 69. Vestibule 101.

Baseboards

None existing.

Walls:

No interior walls exist.

Ceiling:

There are no finished ceilings and wood floor joists, beams and wood floor decking are exposed to below. Craft-paper backed fiberglass batt insulation fills cavities between floor joists. The crawlspace height varies.

Doorways

None.

Windows

None.

Mechanical System

None.

Electrical System

None.

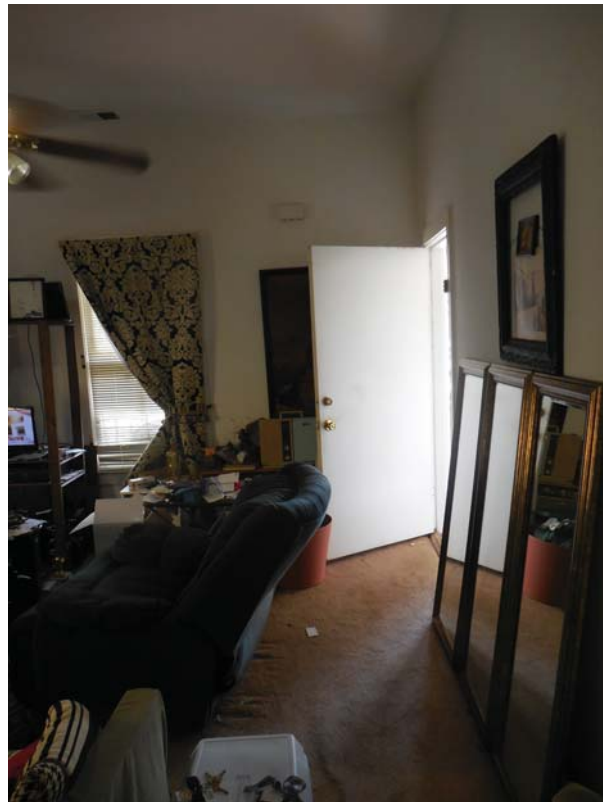


Figure 70. Living Room 102.

Closet (s)

None.

Vestibule 101

This 5'-8 ½" by 5'-2" vestibule provides access to both apartments. The addition of a wall to the north during the Self-Help remodeling project created this space; the front door originally opened directly into a central hallway (Figure 69).

Flooring

3 ½" width wood tongue-and-groove floor boards cover the floor.

Baseboards

1 × 6 wood base with 1" quarter round.

Moldings (crown/picture rail, etc.)

None existing.

Ceiling

The ceiling is covered with ½" thick gypsum wallboard and a plywood attic access panel is located above the space. The ceiling height is 9'-11 ½" above the finished floor.



Figure 71. Hall 102A, view toward north.

Doorways

Centered in the south wall, is the front door to the house; to the east and west are 3'-0" wide by 6'-8" tall modern flush wood doors with screened wood doors, providing access to each apartment.

Windows

None.

Mechanical System

None.

Electrical System

Two surface-mounted incandescent fixtures provide light to the space.

Closet (s)

None.

Other Elements

None.

Living Room 102

This 13'-6" by 12'-11 ½" room connects to Hall 102A through an opening on the north wall and a door to Vestibule 101, and roughly preserves the original size and shape of the original room (Figure 70).

Baseboards

All walls have a 1x6 wood baseboard with a shoe mold.

Ceiling

Ceilings are covered in gypsum wallboard; the ceiling height is 9'-10" above the finished floor.

Doorways

One 3'-0" by 6'-8" solid-core flush wood door provides access from Vestibule 101 and includes a modern deadbolt and knob set with brass finish. A screened door is mounted to the exterior of the frame. An opening in the north wall opens to Hall 102A.

Windows

Two-over-two double-hung wood windows are located on the south and east walls and measure approximately 2'-8" wide by 5'-5" tall.

Mechanical System

Air-conditioning ductwork is located above the ceiling. Stamped metal supply registers are roughly centered about windows in the space and provide conditioned air to the space.

Electrical System

A ceiling fan with integral incandescent light fixtures provides lighting. A wall-mounted doorbell is located on the south wall.

Closet (s)

None.

Other Elements

None.

Hall 102A

Measuring 3'-7 ½" by 10'-7" this hallway is oriented north to south and connects Living Room 102 to Kitchen 103, Bath 104 and Bedroom 105 (Figure 71).

Baseboards

All walls include a 1x6 wood baseboard.

Ceiling

½" thick gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling; the ceiling height is 9'-10" above the finished floor.

Doorways

Two flush wood hollow-core doors provide access



Figure 72. Kitchen 103, view toward south.

to Bath 104 and Bedroom 105. A double sliding door serves a single closet.

Windows

None.

Mechanical System

A ceiling mounted stamped-metal return register is located near the middle of the space; and a wall-mounted thermostat located on the east wall.

Electrical System

The electrical panel for the apartment is located on the west wall. A single ceiling-mounted incandescent light fixture provides light and a ceiling-mounted smoke alarm is located in the room.

Closet(s)

One closet, 2'-3 ½" by 4'-8" is accessed through a pair of 1'-6" wide by 6'-8" tall sliding doors. The closet includes a clothes rod and shelf.

Other Elements

None.



Figure 73. Bath 104, view toward west.

Kitchen 103

Accessed from east from Hall 102A, this room measures 6'-9" by 10'-6" and runs north to south (Figure 72).

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. A metal threshold is located at the entrance to the room.

Baseboards

1×6 wood with 1" quarter round shoe molding.

Ceiling

½" thick gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling. The ceiling height is 9'-10" above the finished floor.

Doorways

None.

Windows

A single double hung window is centered above the sink at the northeast corner of the room.



Figure 74. Bedroom 105, view toward northeast.

Mechanical System

Ductwork is located above the ceiling with ceiling-mounted stamped-metal supply registers.

Electrical System

A ceiling-mounted fluorescent fixture provides light.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

Modern wood veneer kitchen base and wall cabinets with plastic laminate countertops are located along the east and west walls, and a modern single-bowl stainless steel kitchen sink is located to the east. Appliances include a modern refrigerator, range and range vent hood.

Bath 104

This bathroom serves the easternmost apartment and measures 5'-9 1/2" by 7'-4 3/4". The space is accessed from Hall 102A through a single door (Figure 73).

Flooring

Wood subfloors are covered in faux-stone

patterned sheet vinyl flooring and a metal threshold is located at the entrance to the room. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015.

Baseboards

1 × 6 wood with 1" quarter round shoe molding is located on all walls.

Ceiling

1/2" thick gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling at a height of 10'-0" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A 2'-8" wide by 6'-8" flush wood door with modern brass finish lockset and two painted hinges provides access.

Windows

None.

Mechanical System

Plumbing fixtures located in the space include a modern wall-hung lavatory, toilet and bathtub. No exhaust system exists.

Electrical System

A single wall-mounted incandescent light fixture is centered over the lavatory and mirror.

Closet(s)

None.

Other Elements

A modern wall-mounted mirrored medicine cabinet is centered over the lavatory.

Bedroom 105

This rectangular room measures 13' 5 3/4" by 8'-8" and a small open vestibule is located to the north, serving a closet and Room 106. Access to the adjacent Hall 102A occurs directly through a door and access to the rear porch through the open vestibule and Room 106 (Figure 74).

Baseboards

All walls include a 1x6 wood base.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling with a height of 9'-10 1/2" above the bedroom finished floor; 7'-5" height in the open vestibule to north.



Figure 75. Bedroom 105, closet, view toward northeast.

Doorways

Three doors are located in the space, all flush hollow-core wood doors: A 2'-8" wide by 6'-8" tall door with privacy lock from Hall 102A, a 2'-6" wide by 6'-8" door to a closet, and a 3'-0" wide by 6'-8" door from Room 106.

Windows

A 2'-10" wide by 5'-0" two-over-two wood double-hung window is located on the east wall.

Mechanical System

Ductwork is located above the ceiling. A single stamped-metal supply air-conditioning register is centered above the window.

Electrical System

A ceiling fan with integral incandescent light fixtures provides light to the space.

Closet(s)

A single closet measuring 5' 1 1/2" by 7'-10" is accessed through a 2'-6" wide by 6'-8" wide flush wood door. The closet's ceiling varies in height, sloping down from south to north (Figure 75).

Other Elements

None.



Figure 76. Room 106, view toward northwest.



Figure 77. Living Room 107, view toward east.

Room 106

This small room, 4'-4 1/2" by 4'-9", serves as a vestibule between the rear porch and Bedroom 105. Self-Help project drawings and period photographs do not indicate construction of a rear porch or door; their construction followed the completion of the project (Figure 76).

Baseboards

1 x 6 painted wood.



Figure 78. Kitchen 108, view toward north.

Ceiling

½" thick gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling, with a height of 7'-5" above finished floor.

Doorways

A 2'-6" wide by 6'-8" tall 6-raised-panel solid wood door opens out to the rear porch. The installation of this door followed the completion of the Self-Help project. Door hardware includes a modern brass-finish entry lockset and three painted hinges. A 3'-0" wide by 6'-8" tall flush wood door opens into Bedroom 105. Door hardware includes a modern brass passage set and two hinges.

Windows

None.

Electrical System

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

Closet(s)

None.

Living Room 107

This 15'-3 ½" by 12'-11" room connects to Hall 109 through an opening on the north wall, to Kitchen 108, and via a door to Vestibule 101, and

roughly preserves the original size and shape of the original room (Figure 77).

Baseboards

All walls include a 1×6 wood base is located on all walls.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling at a height of 9'-10" above the finished floor.

Doorways

One 3'-0" by 6'-8" solid-core flush wood door includes a modern deadbolt and knob set with brass finish. A screened door is mounted to the exterior of the frame.

Windows

A two-over-two double-hung wood window is located on both south and west walls and measures approximately 2'-8" wide by 5'-5" tall.

Mechanical System

Ductwork is located above the ceiling. Stamped metal supply registers are roughly centered about windows in the space.

Electrical System

A ceiling fan with an integral incandescent light fixture provides light to the space. A wall-mounted doorbell is located on the south wall.

Closet(s)

One closet, 4'-3" by 2'-10" is accessed through a pair of folding doors, 2'-0" wide by 6'-8" tall.

Other Elements

None.

Kitchen 108

Accessed from the east directly from Living Room 107, this room measures 5'-7" by 11'-10 ½" (Figure 78).

Flooring

Faux-stone patterned sheet vinyl flooring covers wood subflooring. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015. A metal threshold is located at the entrance to the room.



Figure 79. Hall 109, view toward north.

Baseboards

1 × 6 wood with 1" quarter round shoe molding is located on all walls.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling at a height of 9'-10" above the finished floor.

Doorways

None.

Windows

None existing.

Mechanical System

Ductwork is located above the ceiling and ceiling-mounted stamped-metal registers provide conditioned air to the space.

Electrical System

A single modern ceiling-mounted fluorescent light fixture with acrylic lens provides light to the space.

Closet(s)

None existing.

Other Elements

Modern wood kitchen base and wall cabinets with



Figure 80. Bath 110, view toward east.

plastic laminate countertops and backsplashes are located along the east and north walls. A modern single-bowl stainless steel kitchen sink is located to the north. Appliances include a modern refrigerator, range and range vent hood.

Hall 109

Measuring 3'-5" by 19'-11 ½" this hallway is oriented north to south and connects Living Room 107 to Bath 110, Bedroom 111 and Bedroom 112 (Figure 79).

Baseboards

All walls include a 1 × 6 wood baseboard with no shoe mold.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling at a height of 9'-11" above the finished floor.

Doorways

This room includes four doorways. All doors are flush hollow-core wood doors and include a 2'-8" wide by 6'-8" tall door opening to Bedroom 112 to the north, a 2'-8" wide by 6'-8" tall door opening to Bedroom 111 to the west, a 1'-8" wide by 6'-8" tall door opening from a small closet to the west, and a



Figure 81. Bedroom 111, view toward northeast.

2'-6" wide by 6'-8" tall door opening to Bath 110 to the east.

Windows

None exist.

Finishes

Gypsum wallboard surfaces, wood trim and doors are painted.

Mechanical System

Ductwork is located above the ceiling and a return-air register draws air to an attic mounted air handling unit. A thermostat is located on the east wall.

Electrical System

The electrical panel for the apartment is located on the east wall. Two ceiling-mounted incandescent fixture provides light and a ceiling-mounted smoke alarm is located in the space.

Closet(s)

One closet, 2'-9" by 2'-1", is located to the east.

Other Elements

None.

Bath 110

This bathroom serves the westernmost apartment and measures 5'-9 ½" by 7'-4 ¾". The room is accessed from Hall 109 to the west (Figure 80).

Flooring

Faux-stone patterned sheet vinyl covers wood sub-flooring. There is a metal threshold at the entrance to the room. This flooring is modern in design and manufacture and was installed in 2014 or 2015.

Baseboards

All walls include a 1 × 6 wood baseboard with 1" quarter round shoe molding.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling at a height of 10'-0" above the finished floor.

Doorways

A 2'-8" wide by 6'-8" flush wood door with modern brass finish lockset with bath function and two painted hinges provides access.

Windows

None exist.

Mechanical System

No exhaust system exists for this room.

Electrical System

A modern wall mounted incandescent light fixture is centered over the lavatory and medicine cabinet.

Closet(s)

None exist.

Other Elements

Plumbing fixtures include a modern pedestal lavatory, toilet and bathtub. A wall-mounted mirrored metal medicine cabinet is centered over the lavatory and an additional wall-mounted cabinet is mounted over the toilet.

Bedroom 111

Hall 109 to the east provides access to this rectangular 9'-7" by 13'-9" bedroom (Figure 81).

Baseboards

All walls include a 1 × 6 wood baseboard.



Figure 82. Bedroom 112, view toward southeast.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling at a height of 9'-10 5/8" above the finished floor.

Doorways

There are two doorways located in this room: A 2'-8" wide by 6'-8" tall flush wood door with privacy lock from Hall 109 and a pair of 2'-0" wide by 6'-8" tall folding doors at the single closet.

Windows

A 2'-10" wide by 5'-0" two-over-two wood double-hung window is located on the west wall.

Mechanical System

Ductwork is located above the ceiling. A single stamped-metal supply register provides heating and cooling.

Electrical System

A ceiling fan with integral incandescent light fixtures provides light to the space.

Closet(s)

One closet is located to the north, measuring 6'-5" by 2'-1".



Figure 83. Room 113, view toward east.

Other Elements

None.

Bedroom 112

This square 11'-6" by 11'-1" bedroom is accessed from Hall 109 to the south (Figure 82).

Baseboards

A 1 × 6 wood baseboard is located on all walls.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling at a height of 9'-10 5/8" above the finished floor.

Doorways

Four doorways are located in the space: A 2'-8" wide by 6'-8" tall flush wood door with privacy lock opening from Hall 109, a flush wood 2'-6" wide by 6'-8' tall door opening from Room 113, and two separate 2'-10" wide by 6'-8" tall folding doors opening from the single closet.

Windows

A 2'-10" wide by 5'-0" two-over-two wood double-hung window is located on the west wall.

Mechanical System

Ductwork is located above the ceiling. A single

stamped-metal supply register provides heating and cooling.

Electrical System

A ceiling fan with integral incandescent light fixtures provides light to the space.

Closet(s)

One closet is located to the south, measuring 7'-8" by 2'-3", and is accessed through two folding doors.

Room 113

This small 5'-11" by 4'-8" vestibule connects Bedroom 112 to the rear porch and serves as a laundry room for the apartment (Figure 83).

Flooring

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

Baseboards

All walls include 1 × 6 wood with 1" quarter round shoe molding.

Ceiling

Gypsum wallboard covers the ceiling, at a height of 7'-6" above the finished floor.

Doorways

Two doorways are located in this space. A 2'-6" wide by 6'-8" tall 6-raised-panel solid wood door opens out to the rear porch. Door hardware includes a modern brass-finish entry lockset and three painted hinges. A 2'-6" wide by 6'-8" tall flush wood door opens into Bedroom 112. Door hardware includes a modern brass passage set and two hinges.

Windows

None exist.

Mechanical System

None.

Electrical System

A single ceiling-mounted incandescent light fixture provides light.

Closet(s)

None exist.

Other Elements

A residential-type clothes washer and dryer are located in this space. Two full-width wood shelves are mounted above the clothes dryer on the south wall.

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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.

The 2016 *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Draft Foundation Document* 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 park 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.”¹⁷⁸ 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.”¹⁷⁹ The document identifies conditions, trends, threats, and opportunities associated with the Birth Home Block cultural landscape and its features. 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 the cultural landscape report for the Birth Home Block “in collaboration with the NPS Denver Service Center.”¹⁸⁰ The document 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.”¹⁸¹

The use of the structure as part of the residential leasing program is a compatible use with the *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Draft Foundation Document* recommendations. Recommendations in the document specifically address the residential leasing program as a burden on staff time. The document recommends the development of a residential/commercial leasing plan “to identify strategies and alternatives for management of these properties such as the sale of the properties with stipulations and/or hiring a management company.”¹⁸²

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 construction, exterior renovation, and demolition of this structure to the Atlanta Urban Design Commission “for its review and comment in a timely fashion.”¹⁸³

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

Laws, Regulations, and Functional Requirements

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

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

179. *Ibid.*, 5.

180. *Ibid.*, 14-15.

181. *Ibid.*, 21.

182. *Ibid.*

183. *Ibid.*, 8.

- 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.
- 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."¹⁸⁴ 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."¹⁸⁵

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.¹⁸⁶

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

- Prioritize historic restoration work at primary facades, to the south and west.
- Prior to commencement of any work, conduct hazardous materials assessments and perform materials abatement as required.
- Assess installation of gutters and downspouts at secondary elevations to improve drainage and reduce moisture in crawlspace.
- Evaluate slope of existing yards for proper drainage; adjust grades as required for drainage.
- Restore yards in accordance with the cultural landscape report.
- Install termite shields and base flashing at base course of wood weatherboards.
- Perform further archival research for visual evidence of the original configuration of the front door, porch, porch balustrades, and porch columns.
- Perform further archival research for visual evidence of the original configuration of the basement "store" at the west elevation, restore original windows, doors and signage as appropriate.
- Conduct paint analysis to identify historic paint and finish colors, 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

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

185. Ibid.

186. "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).

on paint analyses.

- Assess exterior lighting requirements; replace modern fixtures with less visually obtrusive fixtures, consider use of site-mounted light fixtures for improved security.
- Install vapor barriers over exposed soil in crawlspaces to control moisture.
- Install sealant and perform repairs as required to reduce air infiltration and limit rodent and insect infestations.
- Assess current insect and rodent control protocols, revise or implement new as required.

Interior

- Confirm adequacy of existing security and fire alarm system; based on this assessment, replace or upgrade system.
- Upgrade attic insulation.
- Reinstall and upgrade thermal insulation below conditioned 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 a limited paint analysis of window sashes, exterior doors, and door frames. 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.
- Remove modern closures at historic fireboxes; repair as required; consider restoration of fireboxes to historic designs.
- 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 sensing lighting controls.

Structural Recommendations

- Regrade crawlspace near basement door to provide full support for piers, compacting the soil. Or provide a concrete or CMU bulkhead wall that will allow the grade to be lowered near the door and that is designed to restrain the soil and support the pier loads.
- Repair the interior piers in the crawlspace.
- Repoint brick exterior piers around perimeter of building.
- Repair brick and repoint interior chimney.
- Replace missing studs in load bearing wall in basement, or create openings with properly designed headers.
- Replace rotten wood post at rear porch steps and replace all exterior wood in contact with the ground with wood that has been pressure treated for ground contact.
- Repair failing exterior site wall on west side of property by demolishing the affected area and rebuilding. Design replacement rubble wall to resist the applied loads and install drainage plane to prevent build-up of water.
- Replace missing collar tie in attic.

Climate Change

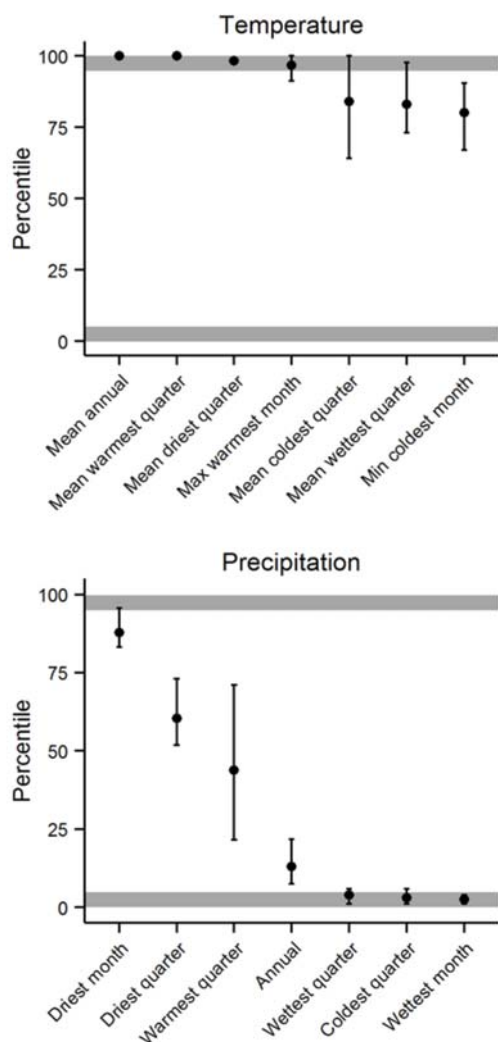
Cultural resources including historic buildings “are fixed in place or derive much of their significance from the place within which they were created. Many are non-living, and all are unique. As a result, the capacity of cultural resources to adapt to changing environments is limited.”¹⁸⁷

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.”¹⁸⁸

There has not been a study on the effects of

187. 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>.

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



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

climate change on cultural resources completed by NPS for MALU,¹⁸⁹ but there is a brief for nearby Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (CHAT). Figure 84 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

189. 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.

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 storms, floods or drought.) Extreme climate events can cause widespread and fundamental shifts in conditions of park resources."¹⁹⁰

MALU's Draft Foundation Document concludes that "climate change is projected to bring more large storms as well as increases in average annual temperature and extreme heat events, increasing potential for flooding and damage to structures."¹⁹¹ 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.¹⁹²

Implications – Adapting to Change

According to NPS documents, impacts to buildings and structures related to temperature and drought extremes include: deterioration, conflagration, and desiccation.¹⁹³ 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, fulfills this first step in the mitigation process. This structure does show signs of previous deterioration, and recommendations for repair are included in this

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

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

192. Ibid.

193. 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>.

document. At this time, it is not anticipated that NPS needs to take action to prevent conflagration or desiccation at 540 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 540 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 contractors should remove any of these items. Any plumbing upgrades should include testing of galvanized pipes for lead.

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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

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Fulton County, Atlanta, Georgia

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Appendix A: Period Plans

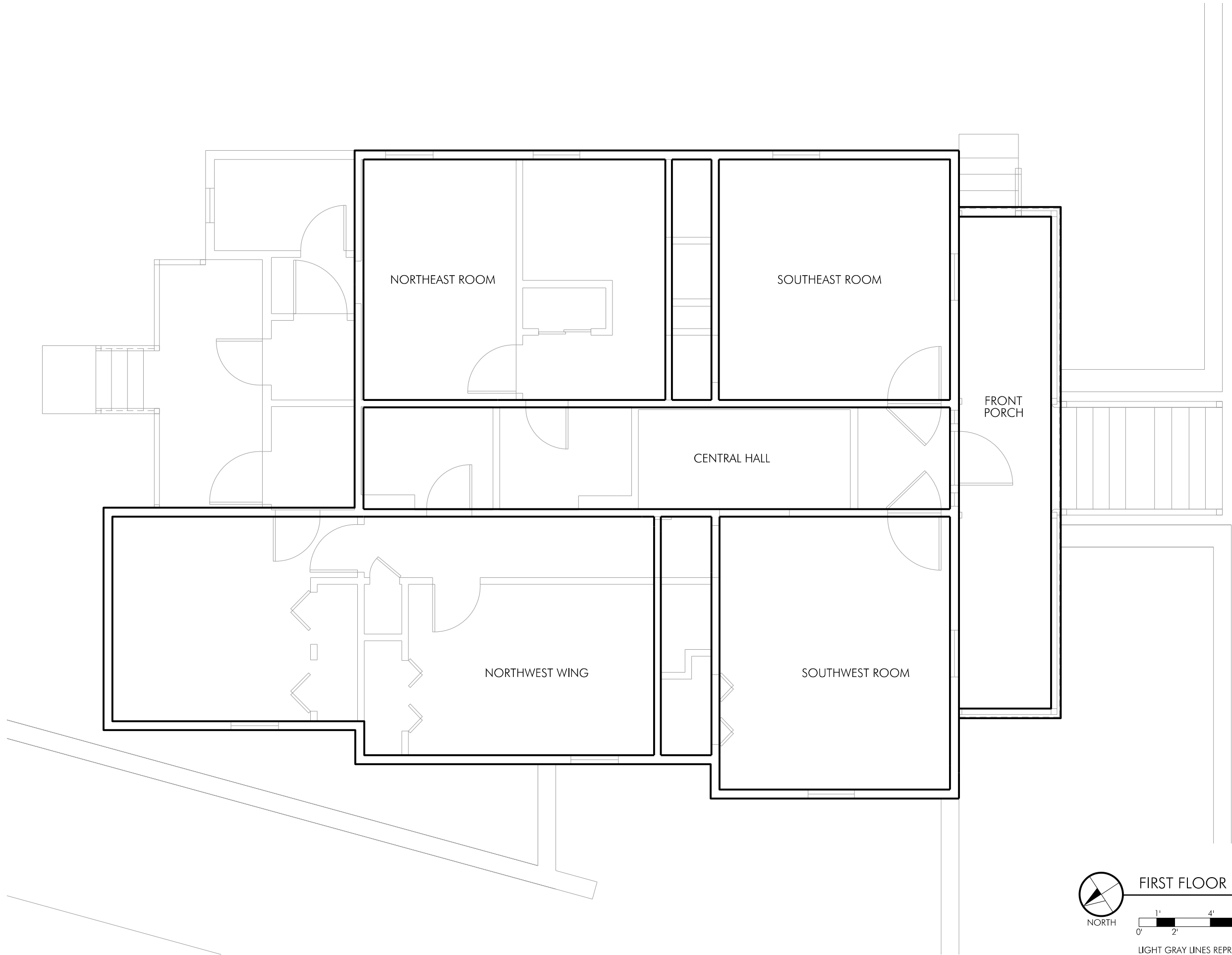
Sheet A-01: First Floor Plan c. 1899

Sheet A-02: First Floor Plan c. 1931

Sheet A-03: First Floor Plan c. 1982

Sheet A-04: Site Evolution Plan

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FIRST FLOOR PLAN: C. 1899



LIGHT GRAY LINES REPRESENT HOUSE
CONDITIONS AS FOUND IN 2016.

SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

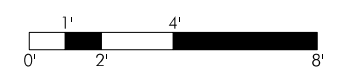
SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

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

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

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

APPENDIX A:

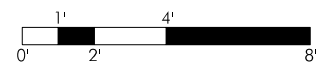
02



CONJECTURAL PLAN BASED ON 1982 "MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. HISTORIC DISTRICT SELF-HELP PROJECT" DEMOLITION DRAWINGS.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN: C. 1982



LIGHT GRAY LINES REPRESENT HOUSE CONDITIONS AS FOUND IN 2016.

SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

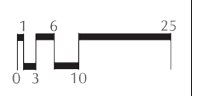
SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

APPENDIX A:

03



PROPERTY LINE	---
HISTORIC FENCE	--- EXISTING --- NON-EXISTING
EXISTING WALL	---
HISTORIC FOOTPRINT	--- c.1911 --- c.1922
EXISTING FOOTPRINT	---
HISTORIC LANDSCAPE FEATURE	---



Appendix B: Chain of Title

CHAIN OF TITLE

540, 546, 550 Auburn Avenue

Date	Book/Page	Grantee	Grantor	Notes
5/5/1880		Mary J. Goldsmith	G.W. Adair	
12/22/1880	O3/436	Alfred S. Jenkins	Mary J. Goldsmith	(Recorded November 14, 1889) \$236; "lots 15 & 16 of the Goldsmith property"
2/2/1899	134/337	Matthew K. Jenkins	Alfred S. Jenkins	Conveyance is made subject to a deed given to Mary Gabriella Cammack on 2/1/1899 to secure a loan of \$1000
6/7/1902	145/514	Matthew K. Jenkins	Alfred S. Jenkins	Reference to loans dated 3/1/1902 and Feb 1899, notes that Alfred S. Jenkins and Mildred Jenkins may occupy a home on the lot free of rent for the rest of their natural lives
2/6/1956		Ruth Jenkins Vickery	Matthew K. Jenkins	Assumed Quit Claim Deed; Matthew Jenkins passes away, deed not located in Fulton County Court records
2/8/1963	4009/325	Edward Krick	Mrs. Ruth Jenkins Vickery	Ruth Vickery was Matthew Jenkins daughter
9/12/1978	7051/344	Ebenezer Baptist Church	Edward Krick	Addresses in this sale are listed as 540, 546, 552.5, 554, 556, 556.5 Auburn Ave and 53, 57 Howell Ave
1/12/1980	9222/488	Trust for Public Land	Ebenezer Baptist Church	Memorandum of Option for Purchase
1/12/1981		Trust for Public Land	Ebenezer Baptist Church	Warranty Deed

Date	Book/Page	Grantee	Grantor	Notes
12/21/1981	8041/498	Historic District Development Corporation	Trust for Public Land	Preservation Easement
1/18/1982		United States of America	Trust for Public Land	Easement Rights
3/30/1983		United States of America	Trust for Public Land	Warranty Deed "Filed 1/18/1982"
10/23/1984		United States of America	Historic District Development Corporation	Lease for 546 and 550 Auburn Avenue, includes repairs to structures (may have been lease of easement?)
9/16/1986	10325/411	United States of America	Historic District Development Corporation	Fee Simple for Preservation Easement

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Appendix C:

Documentation Plans

Sheet C-00: Basement Floor Plan

Sheet C-01: First Floor Plan

Sheet C-02: Roof Plan

Sheet C-03: South Elevation

Sheet C-04: North Elevation

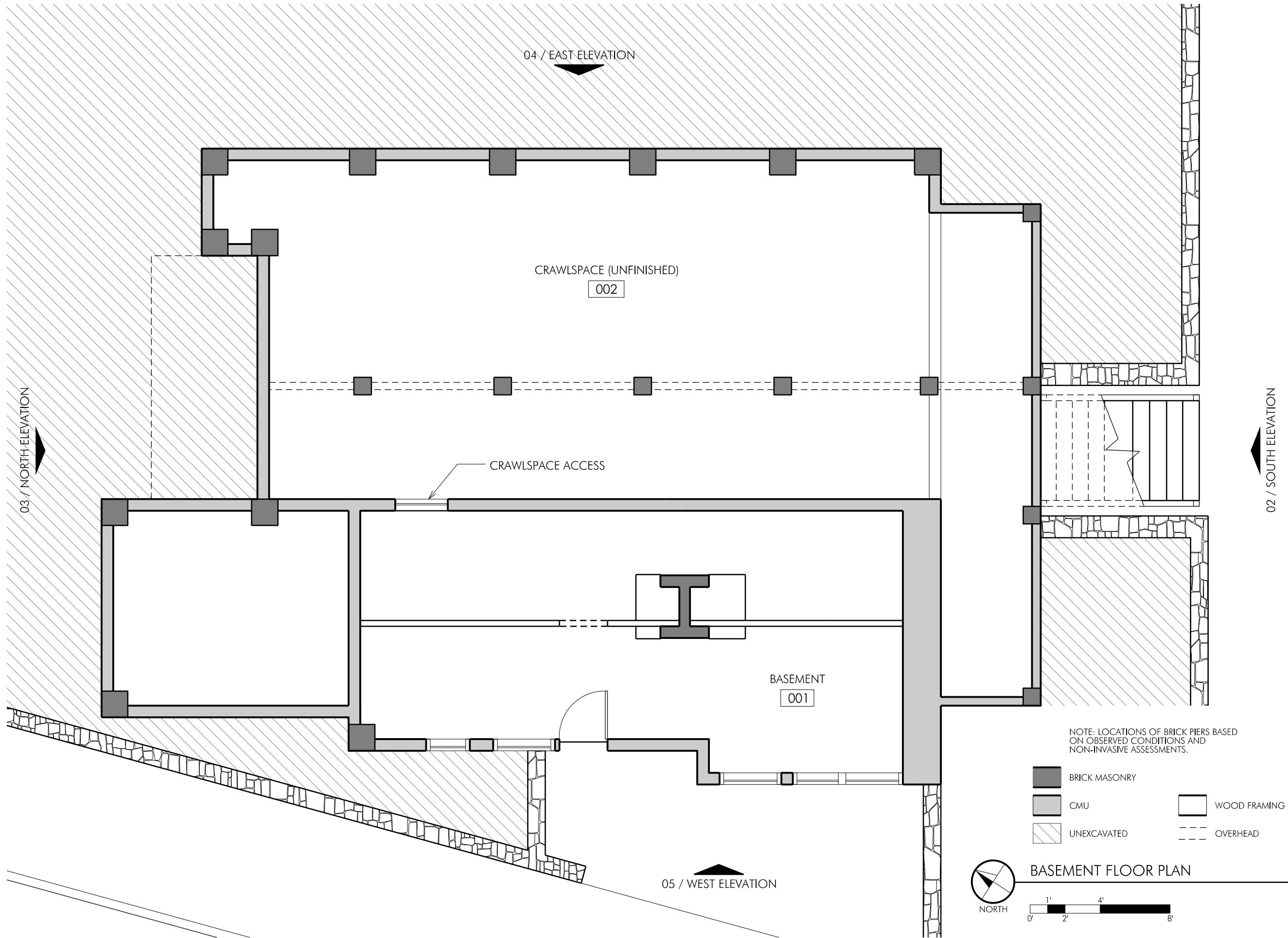
Sheet C-05: East Elevation

Sheet C-06: West Elevation

Sheet C-07: Details

Sheet C-08: Details

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SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

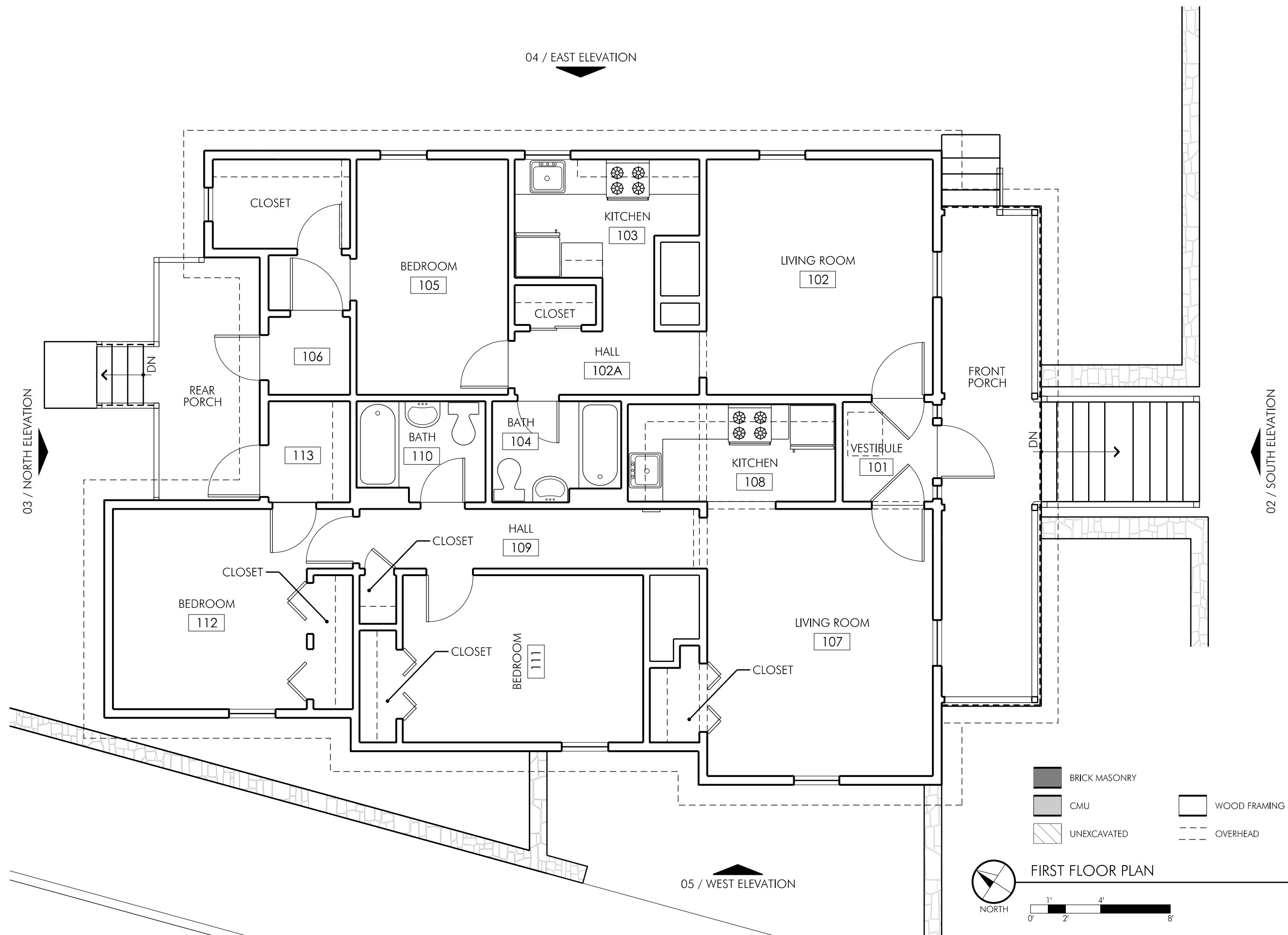
DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

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

APPENDIX C:

00

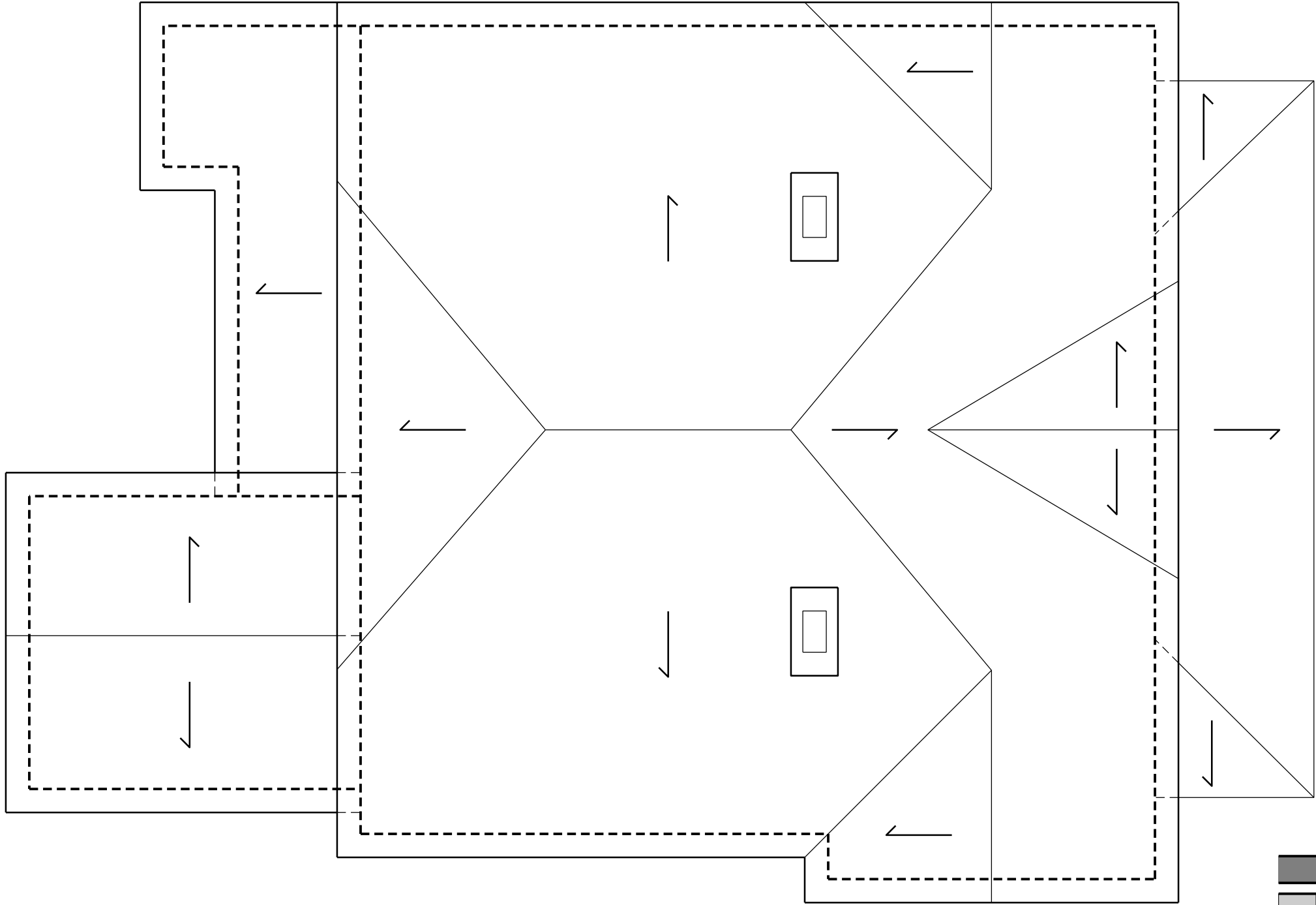


03 / NORTH ELEVATION

04 / EAST ELEVATION

02 / SOUTH ELEVATION

05 / WEST ELEVATION



- BRICK MASONRY
- CMU
- UNEXCAVATED
- ROOF SLOPE
- WOOD FRAMING
- OVERHEAD



ROOF PLAN



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

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

APPENDIX C:

02



SOUTH ELEVATION



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

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

APPENDIX C:

03



NORTH ELEVATION



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

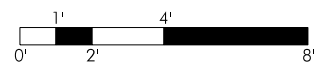
SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

APPENDIX C:

04



EAST ELEVATION



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

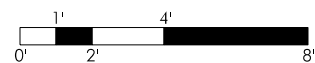
SCALE:
3/16" = 1'-0"

APPENDIX C:

05



WEST ELEVATION



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

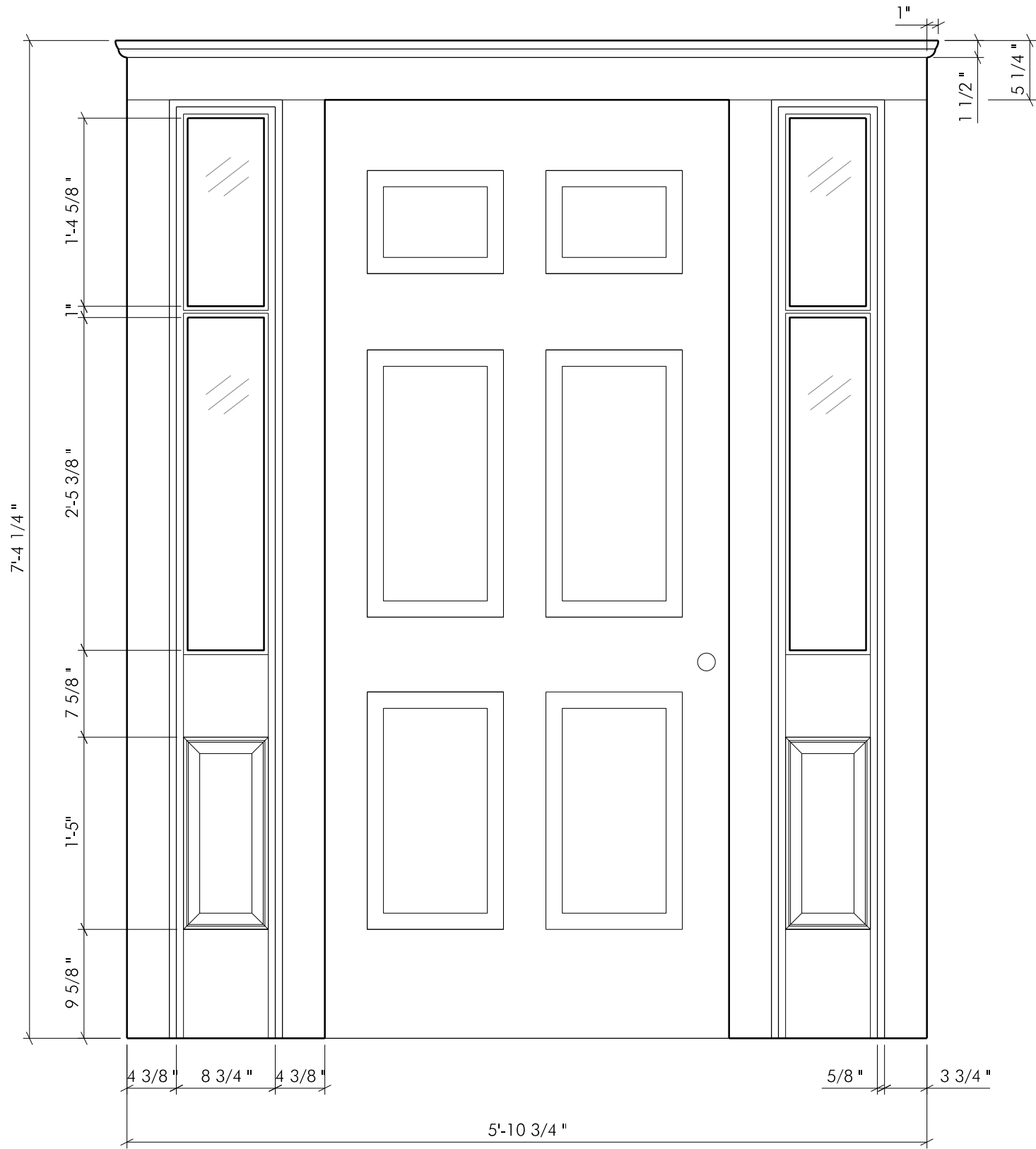
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05.19.2017

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GJC NKP
REB TFL

SCALE:
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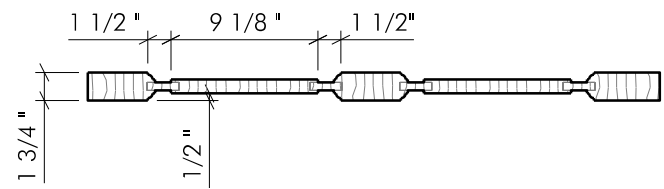
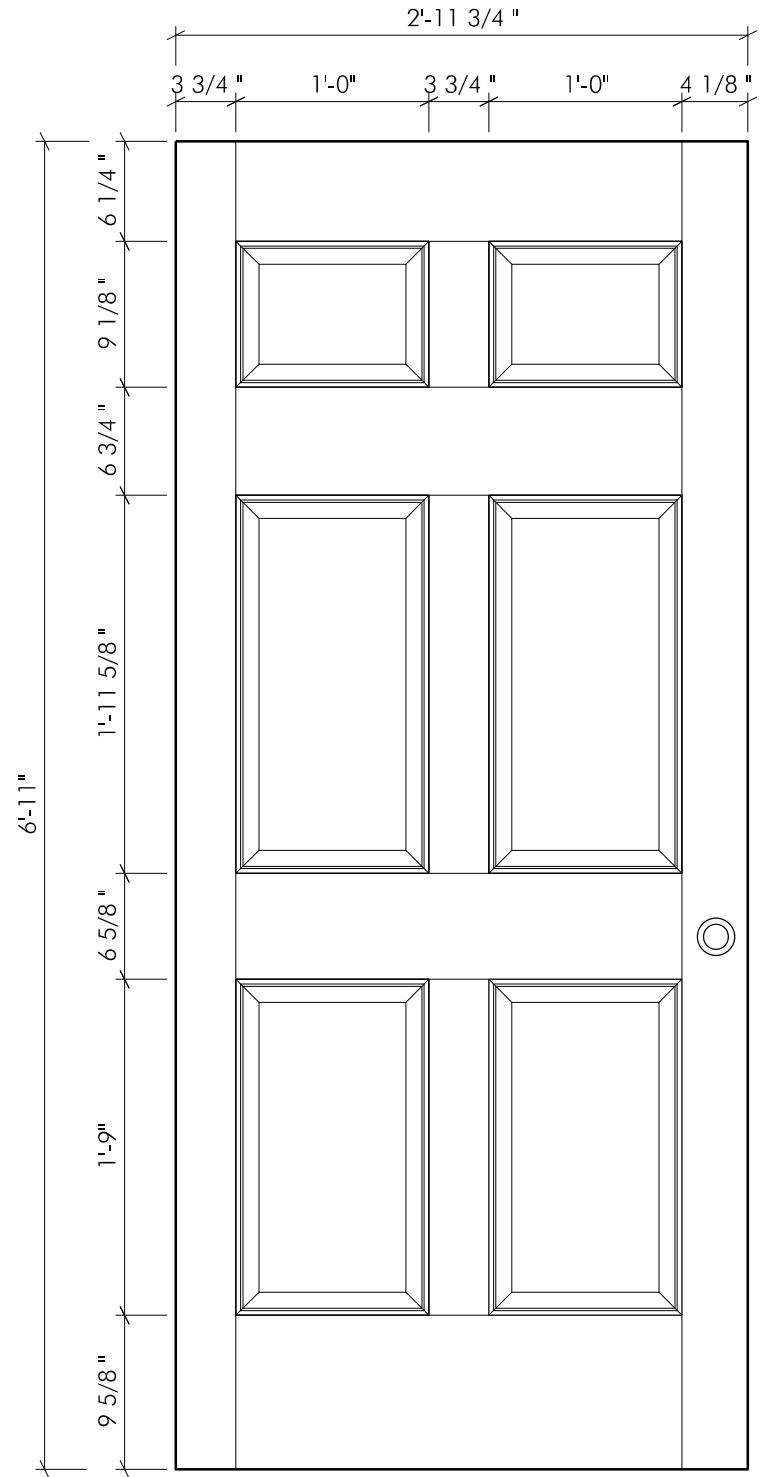
APPENDIX C:

06



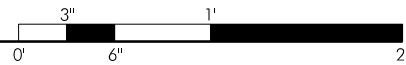
FRONT DOOR VESTIBULE SIDELIGHTS

SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"



FOUR-PANEL
FRONT DOOR

SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"



SURBER BARBER CHOATE
+ HERTLEIN ARCHITECTS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

540 AUBURN AVENUE
FULTON COUNTY, GA

DATE:
05.19.2017

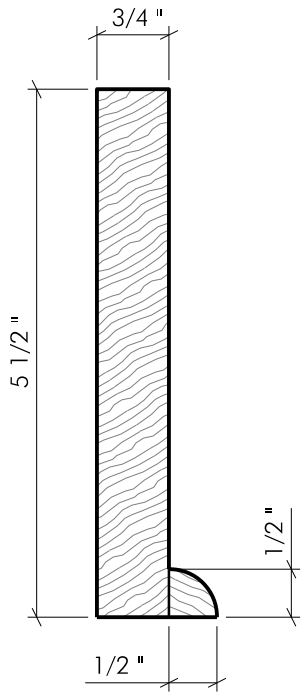
RECORDED BY:
GJC NKP
REB TFL

SCALE:
1" = 1'-0"

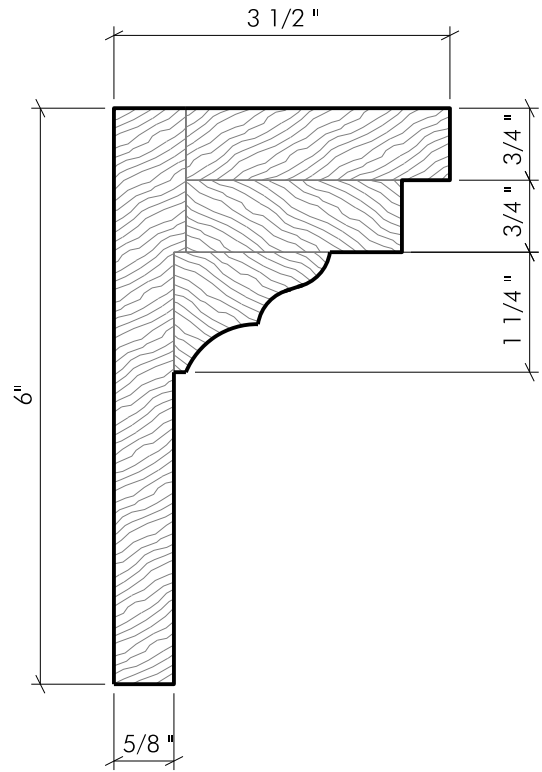
APPENDIX C:

07

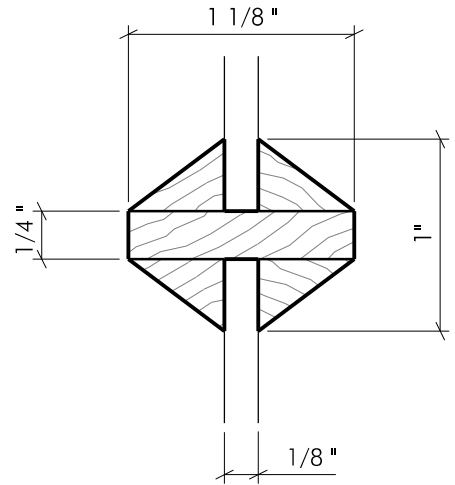
TYP. BASE BOARD
SCALE: 6" = 1'-0"



EXTERIOR WINDOW CASING
SCALE: 6" = 1'-0"



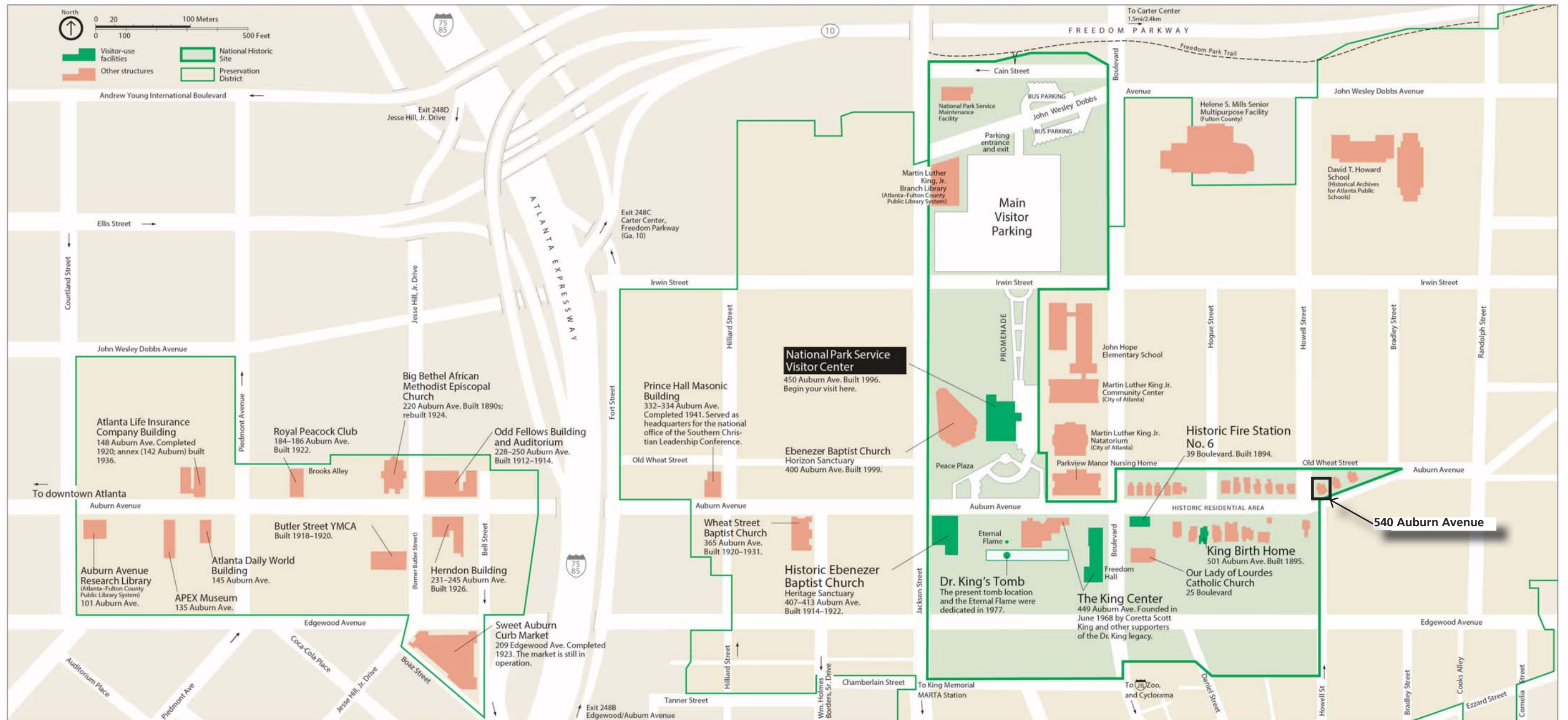
FRONT DOOR
VESTIBULE MUNTIN
SCALE: 1 = 1



Appendix D:

Resource Location Map

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Map of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site with 540 Auburn Avenue noted. Adapted from National Park Service Park Map, Harpers Ferry Center.

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

www.nps.gov/malu