

ORDINANCE NO. (2017) - 750

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE **LILLIE STROUD ROGERS HOUSE** IN THE PLANNING JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, A HISTORIC LANDMARK

WHEREAS, the property located at 616 Method Road, Raleigh, NC, is owned by Timothy Dale Marriott; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina authorized the creation of the Raleigh Historic Development Commission for the City of Raleigh and otherwise provided for the preservation of certain historic sites and buildings by the passage of Part 3C, Chapter 160A, Article 19 of the North Carolina General Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Raleigh Historic Development Commission has made an investigation and recommended the following property be designated a historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources has made an analysis and recommendation that the following property be designated a historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, on the 5th day of September, 2017, a joint public hearing was held in the Council Chamber of the Avery C. Upchurch Municipal Complex, Raleigh, before the City Council of the City of Raleigh and the Raleigh Historic Development Commission to determine whether the hereinafter described property should be designated a historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, all requirements of Part 3C, Chapter 160A, Article 19 of the North Carolina General Statutes, preceding the adoption of this ordinance, have been complied with.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA THAT:

Section 1. The property designated as Lillie Stroud Rogers House, in the planning jurisdiction of the City of Raleigh, North Carolina, be and is declared a Raleigh Historic Landmark. Said property being more particularly described as follows:

The property located at 616 Method Road, Raleigh, NC, owned by Timothy Dale Marriott, that property described in deed book 015474, Page 02670 recorded in Wake County Registry, comprising approximately 0.14 acres.

Section 2. Those elements of the property that are integral to its historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological and/or cultural significance or any combination thereof are as follows:

The one-story primary building and the approximately 0.14 acre upon which it sits. The front-gabled bungalow with Craftsman details holds local architectural significance as a rare and intact, representative example of the modest housing built in Method in the second quarter of the twentieth century, and historical significance in documenting the evolution of Method from rural freedman's village to twentieth-century black suburb. Method, overall, is an important historic and cultural place in Raleigh's history, despite the lack of a concentration of intact historic properties.

The important architectural features of the house include its concrete front steps with buttresses, continuous brick foundation with integrated diamond-shaped vent perforations, German siding, three-light front door, six-over-one double-hung wood windows, front gable vent, bracketed eaves, exposed rafter tails, and its hip-roofed front porch with supporting battered posts on brick piers with concrete caps.

A detailed architectural description and history is found in the 2017 Raleigh Historic Designation application and report and is hereby referenced.

Section 3. No portion of the exterior features of any building, site, structure, or object (including windows, doors, walls, fences, light fixtures, signs, steps, pavement, paths, or any other appurtenant features), trees, nor above ground utility structure located on the hereinbefore described property that is designated in this ordinance may be altered, restored, moved, remodeled, or reconstructed so that a change in design, material or outer appearance occurs unless and until a certificate of appropriateness is obtained from the Raleigh Historic Development Commission or its successors; provided however that the Raleigh Planning Director or designee may approve certificates of appropriateness for minor works as listed in the Bylaws and Rules of Procedure of the Raleigh Historic Development Commission.

Section 4. No building, site, structure, or object (including windows, doors, walls, fences, light fixtures, steps, pavement, paths, signs, or any other appurtenant features), trees, nor above ground utility structure located on the hereinbefore described property that is designated in this ordinance may be demolished unless and until either approval of demolition is obtained from the Raleigh Historic Development Commission or a period of three hundred sixty-five (365) days has elapsed following final review by the Commission of a request for demolition (or any longer period of time required by N.C.G.S. 160A-400.14 as it maybe amended hereafter); provided however, that demolition may be denied by the Raleigh Historic Development Commission in the event that the State Historic Preservation Officer determines that the building, site, or structure has statewide significance as provided by N.C.G.S. 160A-400.14.

Section 5. The Raleigh Historic Development Commission shall have no jurisdiction over the interior features of the property.

Section 6. All owners and occupants of the property hereinabove described, whose identity and addresses can be ascertained by the exercise of due diligence shall be sent by certified mail a copy of this ordinance.

Section 7. This ordinance shall be indexed after the property owner's name in the grantor and grantee indexes in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Wake County.

Section 8. City administration and the Raleigh Historic Development Commission are hereby authorized and directed to have erected an appropriate sign on the site hereinabove described setting forth the fact that said site has been designated a historic landmark by action of the Raleigh Historic Development Commission and the City Council of the City of Raleigh provided, should the owners of the hereinabove described property not consent to the erection of said sign on the described premises, City administration and the Raleigh Historic Development Commission are hereby authorized and directed to have said sign located on the public right-of-way adjacent to said property.

Section 9. In the event any building, site, structure, or object designated by this ordinance is demolished in accordance with the ordinances of the City of Raleigh, this ordinance shall automatically be null and void.

Section 10. Any violation of this ordinance shall be unlawful as by law provided.

Adopted: October 3, 2017

Effective: October 3, 2017

Distribution: Department of City Planning
Development Services Department
Raleigh Historic Development Commission
Wake County Tax Assessor
Property Owner and Occupant (if not the owner)
Registrar of Deeds

Raleigh Department of City Planning
One Exchange Plaza
3rd floor
Raleigh, NC 27602
919-516-2626

www.raleighnc.gov/planning

Fee	_____
Amt Paid	_____
Check #	_____
Rec'd Date:	_____
Rec'd By:	_____
Completion Date:	_____

(Processing Fee: \$266.00 - valid until June 30, 2011 - Checks payable to the City of Raleigh.)

RALEIGH HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION

This application initiates consideration of a property for designation as a Raleigh Historic Landmark by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission (RHDC) and the Raleigh City Council. It enables evaluation of the resource to determine if it qualifies for designation. The evaluation is made by the Research Committee of the RHDC, which makes its recommendation to the full commission which in turn makes its recommendation to the City Council. Procedures for administration by the RHDC are outlined in the Raleigh City Code, Section 10-1053.

Please type if possible. Use 8-1/2" x 11" paper for supporting documentation and if additional space is needed. All materials submitted become the property of the RHDC and cannot be returned. Return completed application to the RHDC office at One Exchange Plaza, Suite 300, Raleigh or mail to:

Raleigh Historic Districts Commission
PO Box 829 Century Station
Raleigh, NC 27602

1. Name of Property (if historic name is unknown, give current name or street address):

Historic Name: Lillie Stroud Rogers House
Current Name: _____

2. Location:

Street 616 Method Road, Raleigh NC 27607-5221
Address: _____
NC PIN No.: 0794027927
(Can be obtained from <http://imaps.co.wake.nc.us/imaps/>)

3. Legal Owner of Property (If more than one, list primary contact):

Name: Timothy Dale Marriott
Address: 616 Method Road
City: Raleigh State: NC Zip: 27607-5221
Telephone No: (919) (524)-(5625) Fax No. () () -()
E-Mail: marriott@shawu.edu

4. Applicant/Contact Person (If other than owner):

Name: Cynthia de Miranda, MdM Historical Consultants for Raleigh Hist. Dev. Comm.
Address: PO Box 1399
City: Durham State: NC Zip: 27702
Telephone No: (919) (906)-(3136) Fax No. () () -()
E-Mail: cynthia@mdmhc.com

5. General Data/Site Information:

Date of Construction and major additions/alterations:
Ca. 1940

Number, type, and date of construction of outbuildings:
1 shed

Approximate lot size or acreage: .14 acres

Architect, builder, carpenter, and/or mason: unknown

Original Use: dwelling

Present Use: dwelling

6. Classification:

A. Category (check all that apply):

Building(s) Structure Object Site

B. Ownership

Private Public Local State Federal

C. Number of contributing and non-contributing resources on the property:

	Contributing	Noncontributing
Buildings	1	1
Structures	0	0
Objects	0	0

D. Previous field documentation (when and by whom):
State Historic Preservation Office, Method Survey, 1989

E. National Register of Historic Places Status:

Check One:

Entered X Date:	Nominated <input type="checkbox"/>
Determined Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Date:	Determined Not Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Date:
Nomination Not Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Removed <input type="checkbox"/> Date:
Significant changes in integrity since listing should be noted in section 10.B. below.	

7. Reason for Request: To ensure preservation of architectural fabric; to recognize significance of building.

8. Is the property income producing? Yes No x

9. Are any interior spaces being included for designation? Yes No X

10. Supporting Documentation (Attach to application on separate sheets. Please type or print):

A. Photographs/Slides:

At least *two sets of current exterior archival-grade photographic prints* (minimum print size 5"x7") of all facades of the building and at least one photo of all other contributing and non-contributing resources. If interior spaces of the property are being considered for designation, please include two sets of photos for these features. Prints may be created by using archival-grade black and white film photography and processing or digital photography. The minimum standard for a digital print is 5x7 at a resolution of 300 pixels per inch (ppi). This translates into a pixel dimension of 1950 x 1350. Digital images must be printed with an acceptable ink and paper combination as determined by the National Park Service Go to: <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/photopolicy/index.htm>. All photographs must be labeled with the name of the structure, address and date the photograph was taken with pencil or archival-approved photo pen. In addition to prints, all digital images should be submitted on a CD-R in TIF format. Any additional exterior or interior views and views of other structures on the property (color, black and white, or slides) will be helpful.

B. Boundary Map:

Please include a map showing the location of the property. A sketch map is acceptable, but please note street names and number. Any other structures on the property should also be shown. Please include a "North" arrow. Map should be no larger than 11" x 17". A tax map with boundaries marked is preferred, which can be found at: <http://imaps.co.wake.nc.us/imaps/>.

C. Architectural Significance:

Describe the property, including exterior architectural features, additions, remodelings, and alterations. Also describe significant outbuildings and landscape features. If the owner is including interior features in the nomination for the purpose of design review protection; describe them in detail and note their locations. Include a statement regarding the architectural significance of the property.

D. Historic Significance:

Note any significant events, people, and/or families associated with the property. Include all major owners. Note if the property has ever been recorded during a historic building survey by the City of Raleigh or by the NC State Historic Preservation Office. If so, who and when? (See application item 6.D.) Please include a bibliography of sources. Information regarding prior designations can be found by contacting the Survey and Planning Branch of the NC State Historic Preservation Office (NCSHPO) at 919-807-6570, 919-807-6573 or at: <http://www.hpo.dcr.state.nc.us/spbranch.htm>.

E. Special Significance Summary:

Include a one to two paragraph summary of those elements of the property that are integral to its historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological, and/or cultural importance.

Section 10A: Photographs. *All photos taken March or December 2016.*



Lillie Stroud Rogers House, 616 Method Road, Raleigh, front facade, view SW



Lillie Stroud Rogers House, 616 Method Road, Raleigh, north and rear facades, view SE



Lillie Stroud Rogers House, 616 Method Road, Raleigh, rear and south facades, view NE



Rear yard, including prefab shed, Lillie Stroud Rogers House, 616 Method Road, view N

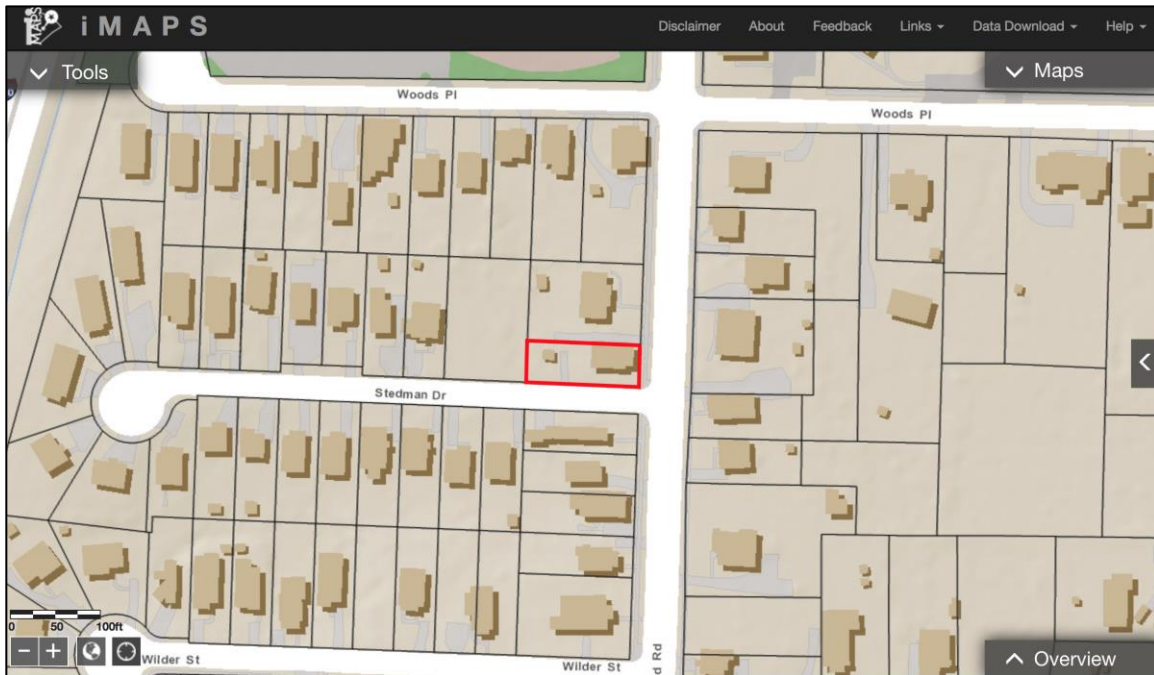


View of 616 Method Road and streetscape to the north, view SW

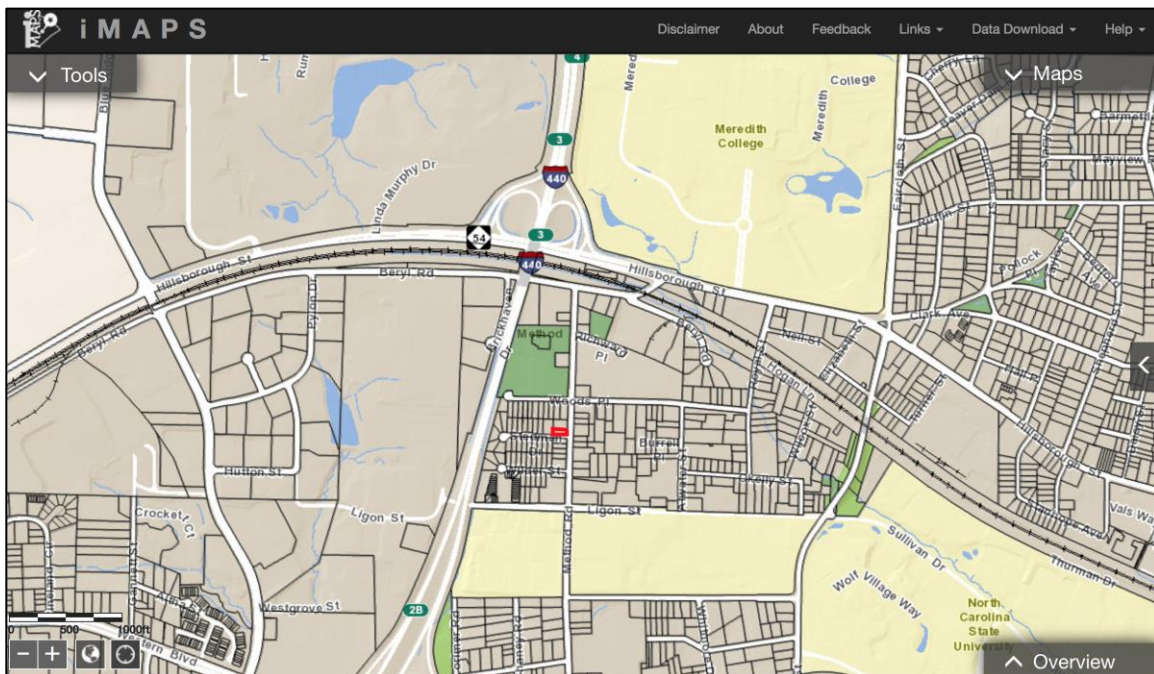


View of 616 Method Road and surrounding streetscape from opposite side of street, view W

Section 10B: Maps



Tax Map of 616 Method Road, showing proposed boundary for Local Landmark Designation. Map generated through Wake County iMAPs.



Location Map for 616 Method Road, showing location in southwest Raleigh. Map generated through Wake County iMAPs.

Section 10C: Architectural Significance

The Lillie Stroud Rogers House at 616 Method Road is an excellent and intact example of an early twentieth century dwelling built in Method as it evolved from a rural freedman's village into a black suburb of Raleigh. Few intact houses survive from this period, and a number of front-gabled bungalows like the Rogers House once lined Method Street. The house is modestly sized yet moderately stylish. It contains just two bedrooms and no wasted or minimally used space. Each room opens directly into another room so that the house lacks halls, foyers, or mudrooms save for the tiny enclosed inset porch at the rear.

Description

The house is a modestly sized front-gabled bungalow with Craftsman details on a typical Method subdivision corner parcel. It stands toward the front (east end) of the parcel with its north side tight against the north boundary of the parcel. This placement leaves a larger rear yard roughly half the length of the parcel, as well as a side yard along Stedman Drive. There is no notable landscaping, just foundation planting consisting of shrubs, particularly flanking the steps at the front porch; some trees along the west and south parcel lines; and grass in the front, rear, and side yards. A concrete sidewalk runs alongside Method Road, but there is no sidewalk at Stedman Drive. A driveway curb cut for the parcel is at Stedman Drive near the west parcel line, but there is no driveway.

A continuous brick foundation supports the dwelling, which has German siding, six-over-one double-hung wood windows, bracketed eaves, and exposed rafter tails. Battered posts on brick piers support the hip-roofed front porch. The façade is three bays wide with a slightly off-center front door flanked by paired windows. The dwelling has a double-pile depth. An interior brick stack rises near the roof ridge towards the back of the house. The original inset rear porch has been enclosed with a single-leaf door framed with vertical-groove plywood. The only apparent alterations are this enclosed porch entry at the back and the addition of metal awnings at the eaves of the porch roof, likely in the 1960s.

The interior has a compact plan. The front door enters directly into the living room, which occupies the northeast corner of the house. A wide cased opening, which once held a pair of French doors, leads into the dining room. The kitchen is directly behind, accessed through a narrower cased opening. An exterior door leads to what was originally the small inset porch at the west end of the south wall of the kitchen. Across the small porch, another door leads into an intact pantry in the southwest corner of the house.

Along the south side of the house are the two bedrooms and single bathroom. The front bedroom is accessed directly from the living room and the back bedroom from the dining room. Each room leads into the bathroom that occupies the space

between them. Original paneled doors remain in the single-leaf doorways throughout the house. Other original fixtures that remain include Art Deco-styled switch plates and brass doorknobs with rectangular faceplates. The interior, however, is not being proposed for Landmark designation.

The house has seen almost no changes. The rear porch enclosure is easily reversible and the original German siding remains inside the porch area, as do the original exterior doors at the pantry and the kitchen. There is a prefabricated plywood shed in the rear yard.

Other surviving frame houses from the period in Method have synthetic siding covering their original weatherboard or German siding. A number have had additions made.

Section 10D: Historic Significance

The October 2016 report “Residential Development in the Village of Method: A Brief Historic Context for Landmark Designation of Individual Properties” prepared for the Raleigh Historic Development Commission provides historic context for the evolution of Method from rural freedman’s village to twentieth-century black suburb. This report gives additional history directly related to the Rogers House.

Timothy Marriott, a grandson of Lillie Stroud Rogers, reports that his grandmother had the house built sometime in the 1940s. It was built by a white man named Mr. Wembley. No listing for Wembley (or various iterations of the name) could be found in the 1940 Raleigh City Directory.¹

Lillie Stroud Rogers (1885-1968) was born in North Carolina, a daughter of David Stroud and Jane O’Kelly. She lived in Wake County from at least 1920, but may have lived in Method in her childhood, too: her father, David Stroud, was a brother of Frances Stroud (1840-1862), Berry O’Kelly’s mother. Lillie married Wiley Rogers (ca. 1887- Feb 17,1940) on December 20, 1917, in Wake County. She died in 1968 while residing at 616 Method Road.²

Census records from 1920 and 1930 list Lillie and Wiley Rogers living in Wake County’s Houses Creek Township, which historically included Method. The 1930 census reports that they were renting a non-farm residence, and Wiley was working as a grocery store clerk. Both had been born in North Carolina, and Lillie attended school up to the first year of high school. Wiley had not attended school, but worked

¹ Tim Marriott, interview with the author, March 10, 2016.

² Ancestry.com, *North Carolina, Death Certificates, 1909-1976* [database on-line], Provo UT: Ancestry.com Operations, 2007; 1920, 1930, 1940 Federal Census data, viewed on Ancestry.com; David Stroud biographical timeline, Ancestry.com; Ancestry.com, *North Carolina, Marriage Records, 1741-2011* [database online], Ancestry.com Operations, 2015.

as a salesman before his employment as a grocery store clerk. The couple had three children.³

Lillie and Wiley bought the parcel at 616 Method Road in the Method Subdivision in 1928 from Elwood H. Lee, who had purchased it a few years earlier from Berry O’Kelly. While the Craftsman style and the bungalow type were both common in the 1920s, the Rogers don’t seem to have built the house in that period. The 1940 census lists Lillie as a widow renting on Old Hillsboro Road, likely in Method. This all supports the family history related by Tim Marriott, which holds that Lillie Stroud Rogers rented a house in Method near the post office before building the bungalow at 616 Method Road in her widowhood. The house remains in the family, having been passed from Lillie to her daughter Marion Stroud Rogers Marriott, and now to Timothy Marriott.⁴

Independent verification of the construction date could not be determined. Method does not appear in Sanborn fire insurance maps of Raleigh; it remained outside the city limits until the 1960s. The Wake County GIS website, however, does list the construction date as 1940. It should be noted, however, that a number of houses on Method Road and the west end of Woods Place have the date of 1940 listed on the Wake County GIS website.

If the 1940 date is indeed accurate, the late use of the Craftsman style and bungalow type may reflect the financial challenges blacks faced in building their own homes. The land was purchased twelve years before construction and plans for the house may have been settled closer to 1928, when the land was purchased, than to 1940, when the house was built.

Section 10E: Special Significance Statement

The Lillie Stroud Rogers House is significant as an intact, representative example of the modest housing built in Method in the second quarter of the twentieth century. This was a time when Raleigh suburbs were rapidly developing and Method, specifically, was evolving from a rural freedman’s village into a black residential suburb of Raleigh. Unlike most suburban development, Method was subdivided and parcels sold or passed down largely to friends and relatives of Method’s earliest settlers and property owners. Most of Method’s early dwellings have been demolished or very heavily altered. The Rogers House is a rare intact example from this period of Method’s development. Method, overall, is an important historic and cultural place in Raleigh’s history, despite the lack of a concentration of intact historic properties.

³ 1920, 1930 Federal Census data, viewed on Ancestry.com.

⁴ Berry O’Kelly to Elwood H. Lee, February 2, 1923, Wake County Deed Book 406, page 450; Elwood H. and Roxie Lee to Wiley and Lillie Rogers, February 22, 1928, Wake County Deed Book 533, page 502; Marion R. Marriott to Timothy Dale and J. E. Marriott, Jr., March 18, 1991, Wake County Deed Book 15474, page 2670.

Bibliography

De Miranda, Cynthia. "Residential Development in the Village of Method: A Brief Historical Context for Landmark Designation of Individual Properties."
Prepared for Raleigh Historic Development Commission, 2016.

Wake County Deed Records, viewable online at rod.wakegov.com.

United States Federal Census Records, viewable online at Ancestry.com.

North Carolina Death Certificates, viewable online at Ancestry.com.

North Carolina Marriage Records, viewable online at Ancestry.com.

Residential Development in the
Village of Method:
A Brief Historic Context for Landmark Designation
of Individual Properties

Prepared for
Raleigh Historic Development Commission

Prepared by
Cynthia de Miranda,
MdM Historical Consultants

December 21, 2016

Residential Development in the Village of Method: A Brief Historic Context for Landmark Designation of Individual Properties

Introduction

MdM Historical Consultants prepared this historic context for residential buildings in Method for the Raleigh Historic Development Commission. This context summarizes the physical and historical development of the residential section of the Method neighborhood in Raleigh. It can be used to provide an overall historical background and context for houses in Method and to evaluate and possibly designate such properties as Local Historic Landmarks.

Context: Residential Development in Method

Method is a neighborhood in southwest Raleigh that grew from a Reconstruction-era freedman's village outside the then-limits of the city. The settlement evolved into a black suburb with a prominent school in the first half of the twentieth century, a time marked by segregation enforced by Jim Crow laws. In 1960, the city annexed Method. The school closed in 1966, but the community persisted. Despite physical changes, including demolition of significant buildings and houses, Method remains an important historic and cultural place to the many black Raleighites who lived and attended school here. The National Register of Historic Places Nomination for the Berry O'Kelly Historic District includes history, context, and description for the school buildings and campus. This report focuses on the residential area south of the school campus.

Masonville, Save-Rent, Planktown, and Slab Town: The Origins of Method

The Method neighborhood first developed as a post-Civil War rural settlement initiated by formerly enslaved blacks. In 1872, half-brothers Jesse Mason and Isaac O'Kelly bought sixty-nine mostly wooded acres from Confederate General William Ruffin Cox of Raleigh and Edgecombe County. They began selling smaller parcels to other blacks—particularly to friends and relatives—through the 1880s.¹

A map showing the location of the sixty-nine-acre parcel has not been located and none may exist. The deed describes boundaries set in part by the rail line to the north and Rocky Branch to the southeast and mentions that Luke Yarboro, a black laborer born around 1818, was living on two acres in one corner of the sixty-nine-acre tract. A 1947 plat maps the "Luke Yarboro Tract" as a 1.9-acre parcel identified today as 717 Atwater Street. A small notch in today's north parcel line excludes a

¹ W. R. Cox and P. B. Cox to Jesse Mason and Isaac O'Kelly, Wake County Deed Book 33, page 755, recorded April 10, 1872. Grantor searches on Mason's and O'Kelly's names shows dozens of sales from each man after 1872, including names long associated with Method, such as Atwater, Wilder, and Hogan. On the relationship between Mason and O'Kelly, see Bertha Mae Edwards, *The Little Place, and the Little Girl* (New York: Carleton Press, 1974), 11.

“family grave plat” as marked on the 1947 map, probably accounting for the missing tenth of an acre.²

If Yarboro’s tract was at the southwest corner of Mason’s and O’Kelly’s purchase, the sixty-nine acre parcel would have extended roughly from present day Atwater Street to Varsity Drive on the east, and from the North Carolina Rail Road nearly down to O’Kelly Street and Rocky Branch. It is also possible that the Yarboro tract was merely *in* the southeast corner of the larger area, rather than *at* the corner. In that case, the original tract purchased from Cox may have extended down to today’s Ligon Street, traditionally the southern extent of Method. A portion of either area, just south of the Stanhope neighborhood, is marked “Masonville” on a 1922 map of areas outside Raleigh’s then-city limits. Method is labeled on the map as well, west of Masonville and east of today’s Method Road. Masonville was one of several early names for the neighborhood, as was Mason Village, Save-Rent, Planktown, and Slab Town; this map implies that “Masonville” endured for decades.³

All these names were descriptive, in some fashion, of the place. According to Bertha Maye Edwards, a granddaughter of Jesse Mason who grew up in Method, “Slab Town” described the nature of the earliest houses, none of which survive. Edwards relates in a memoir that “much of the land sold by General Cox was wooded, so these settlers used the logs and slabs for building their homes.” “Planks” were another word for the slabs, and the place was sometimes called “Planktown” as well. An archival photograph of a typical example shows a plank-log cabin with a side-gabled roof and a shed porch. This manner of construction employs logs hewn or sawn into long planks one-and-a-half to six inches thick and about six to ten inches wide. These planks or slabs were then stacked lengthwise along their narrow edges forming walls joined with notched corners. The dovetail notch was common because it created a strong connection, but to further lock and stabilize these joints, they might have been pegged to an interior post.⁴

These early slab or plank houses were built by the residents themselves. Building one’s own house and outbuildings was a common practice for white farmers from colonial times through the nineteenth century in North Carolina, and the formerly

² The deed is handwritten and difficult to read in places. The Luke Yarboro tract is described as either the northeast or southeast corner of the overall 69-acre parcel, depending on how one deciphers the writing. The Yarboro tract as the northeast corner is inconsistent, however, with the description of the rest of the parcel, which indicates that the northeast corner as a point where “the North Carolina Rail Road crosses the Rocky Branch.” This spot appears to be where today’s Beryl Road crosses the rail road, which is directly north of the east line of the former Luke Yarboro tract as depicted in a 1947 plat map.

³ C. L. Mann, “Part of Raleigh & Adjacent Lands compiled for Raleigh Planning Commission,” October 1922, Map 7.28A, Wake County Register of Deeds Office.

⁴ Bertha Maye Edwards, *The Little Place, and the Little Girl* (New York: Carlton Press, 1974), 14; Linda Simmons-Henry and Linda Harris-Edmisten, *Culture Town: Life in Raleigh’s African American Communities* (Raleigh: Raleigh Historic Districts Commission, 1993), 2-3; Catherine Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, Portable Ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 8-10.

enslaved residents of Masonville would have built all manner of farm-related structures including both simple dwellings and more elaborate plantation houses. Plank construction would have been well within the wheelhouse of Slab Town residents.⁵

While “Slab Town” conjures a picture of a village populated by these modest dwellings, “Save-Rent,” speaks to the practicality of the settlement. It describes the transformational opportunity for land and home ownership that the place offered blacks. Kelly Lally, in her architectural history of Wake County, reported that only “a significant minority” of rural black farmers owned their farmland. In 1890, there were 289 black landowners in the county outside Raleigh. Most had small holdings: roughly half owned under twenty acres and only twenty-seven owned a hundred acres or more. A ca. 1890 list of “farmers and owners of land in Wake County” compiled by Levi Branson tallies forty-seven black property owners in Houses Creek Township, where Masonville was located. Thirty-five of them, or seventy-four percent, owned less than twenty acres and the majority of those, twenty-seven people, owned less than four. Two black Houses Creek landowners possessed more than a hundred acres.⁶

In the Raleigh area, the accomplishment of property ownership was not limited to Mason’s Slab Town. At least a baker’s dozen freedman’s villages surrounded Raleigh by 1870. The city’s black population had nearly doubled from a decade earlier, as blacks moved from rural areas into cities. Oberlin was the largest of the settlements, populated by 750 people in 1880 when the *Raleigh Directory* reported that “Quite a town, composed almost entirely of colored people, has grown up a mile northwest of the city.” Oberlin’s rate of black home ownership was the highest in Raleigh Township, according to historian Richard Mattson’s study of the development of black neighborhoods in Raleigh. Ninety homeowners in Oberlin each owned between \$200 and \$500 in real estate in 1880. Like the smaller village started by Mason in Houses Creek Township to the south, it was sometimes called “Save Rent.”⁷

“Slab Town” and “Save-Rent” described the nature of the settlement, but “Masonville” and “Mason Village” honored a person rather than the place. Lewis Mason, a son of Jesse Mason, lived in the village from its establishment and was a consequential resident. “He was looked to for counsel concerning matters relating to the welfare of the village people,” noted Edwards in her memoir. “To recognize his

⁵ Bishir, 9; Renee Gledhill-Early and Joe Mobley, “Boyette Slave House,” and Catherine Bishir, “Daniel Stone Plank House,” National Register of Historic Places Nominations, both available at www.hpo.ncdcr.gov.

⁶ Kelly A. Lally and Todd Johnson, *The Historic Architecture of Wake County, North Carolina* (Raleigh: Wake County Government, 1994), 68; Levi Branson, Ed, *Branson’s Alphabetical Directory of Raleigh*, [Raleigh: L. Branson, 189?], 458-463.

⁷ Richard Mattson, “The Evolution of Raleigh’s African American Neighborhoods in the 19th and 20th Centuries” (prepared for RHDC, November 1988), 8, 10-11.

leadership, the villagers changed the name from Slab Town to Mason Village.” The younger Mason encouraged his father to buy the land and purchased property from his parents in 1875, just a few years after his marriage to Rosetta Ferrington. Lewis Mason would go on to write a history of the village.⁸

Another resident of great consequence came to live in the village in the 1870s. Berry O’Kelly was raised by relatives in Chapel Hill after the death of his mother, Frances Stroud. Upon moving to Method in the 1870s, O’Kelly lived with relatives William and Adeline Patterson. By 1880, around the age of 20, O’Kelly worked with grocer Charles N. Woods, boarding in his employer’s house alongside his family. A grocery store had been cooperatively founded in the village in 1873 and Woods eventually gained sole possession. After a few years working for him, Berry O’Kelly invested in the business and later bought out Woods altogether. The store became an important landmark and social hub in the village. In 1890, a U.S. Post Office began operating out of the store, raising the shop’s prominence while lending its name to the village: Method.⁹

From Masonville to Method: The Rural Becomes Suburban

The late-nineteenth century village was rural and agricultural. Most men farmed, either working their own land or others’ as laborers. An 1870 map of Wake County describes the farmland and agricultural products of Houses Creek Township: “Rocky and broken, dark gray soil, red subsoil. Good water. Products: Corn, wheat, oats, potatoes, peas, cotton. Wood: Oak, Hickory, pine.” Farms were small but varied in acreage. Isaac O’Kelly and Lewis Mason each owned about fifteen acres in 1880. They grew cotton as a cash crop, kept cows and chickens, and had hired hands helping them farm. Jerry Hogan had a smaller, four-acre operation, but he likewise grew cotton and kept two milking cows and some chickens. By 1880, a few men in the village worked at blacksmithing and carpentry, or as tanners and rail workers. Woods and O’Kelly, as noted, were grocers. Wives generally kept house, while single women might do domestic work in other households. Most households included nuclear families, although sometimes an in-law or niece or boarder expanded the household. There were at least 52 households in Mason’s Village in 1880, and all residents listed in the census were black or multiracial, indicated in the census as “mulatto.”¹⁰

⁸ Edwards, 14.

⁹ Ancestry.com, *1880 United States Federal Census* [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2000); Edwards, 26; Mary Ruffin Hanbury, “Berry O’Kelly Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Draft Nomination, 2016, in the files of the Raleigh Historic District Commission; Elizabeth Davis Reid Murray, “Berry O’Kelly,” Biographical entry in NCpedia.org; Lewis Mason, “A Historical Sketch of the Beginning of the Little Progressive Negro town of Method,” .

¹⁰ “Map of Wake County drawn from actual surveys of Fendol Bevers,” (Nicholas & Gorman, 1870), <https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/10462>; Edwards, 26; 1880 Federal Census, North Carolina Agricultural Schedule, Microfilm F.2.131, State Archives, Raleigh; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. (NARA microfilm publication T9, 1,454 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C, viewed online at www.ancestry.com.

As Method continued to grow, a second generation of “larger and better-built houses” went up, according to Bertha Mae Edwards. Edwards recalled that Lewis and Rosetta Mason “and their nine children, lived in one of the larger and better-built houses: a two-story seven-room dwelling with four bedrooms, kitchen, dining room, living room, two halls, two porches, and pantry, all with the dimensions typical of the rural Southern house.” Edwards wrote that other residents built similar houses, including C. H. Woods, William and Adeline Patterson, and, notably, Nelson and Annie O’Kelly. Their house was “considered the finest in the village, because of the furniture and furnishings.” It was likely built between 1883, when the couple married, and 1900, when the census shows Nelson and Annie living in Houses Creek Township with their family. It lists Nelson O’Kelly as a salesman.¹¹

While Bertha Mae Edwards recalled that by about 1906, Method was “almost completely settled,” it remained rural in character, according to maps and photographs from the early twentieth century. A 1917 map by C. L. Mann based on a soil survey of a few years earlier shows a smattering of just over two dozen buildings focused on the roads with largely open land surrounding them. A 1938 aerial shows a similar pattern, with fields extending out to the east from Method and south of the rail line. Method was well outside the city limits.¹²

Raleigh’s suburbs, meanwhile, were growing quickly in this period, driven by streetcar availability. The westward line extended along Hillsborough Street as far as Horne Street before 1910 to provide access to North Carolina State College, which was then surrounded mainly by farmland. Method was at the west end of the college, two miles outside the 1907 city limits and still a mile and a half from the end of the westward car line. Several West Raleigh suburban developments were platted north of Hillsborough Street in the this period; all were aimed at Raleigh’s burgeoning white, middle-class population. Deed restrictions ensured the homogeneity of these suburbs, dictating minimum costs for constructing a house and indicating that blacks not live in them, except as domestic employees. South of Hillsborough Street but north of the railroad, the small Stanhope neighborhood catered to working-class whites. Rows of Craftsman bungalows lined the streets there. Across the rail line was the east end of Method, the area marked on that 1922 map as “Masonville.”¹³

¹¹ Edwards, 15; Ancestry.com. *1900 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. The 1890 Federal Census records were lost in a 1921 fire.

¹² Edwards, 36; C.L. Mann, “Part of Wake County, Enlarged from Soil Survey Map,” April 1917, Wake County Register of Deeds, Raleigh; USDA Aerial Photo, Wake County, 1938, Image 14-53, downloaded from http://www2.lib.unc.edu/reference/gis/USDA/wake_1938/index.html.

¹³ Cynthia de Miranda, Heather Fearnbach, Clay Griffith, Jennifer Martin, and Sarah Woodard, “West Raleigh Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2003, <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/WA4190.pdf>, 193-195.

The manner and intent of residential development of these 1920s white suburbs was different from that of Method. Real estate investors created the white suburbs, purchasing large tracts, platting the areas, and then selling lots with or without spec houses. The entire intent was profit. Customers, meanwhile, bought based on convenience, prestige, and the promise of comfort and stability. Their ownership of cars or the presence of the streetcar made the area convenient while removing residents from the congestion of the city.

The transformation of Method from an agricultural village to a suburban neighborhood, meanwhile, was more about community upbuilding, sometimes along with profit-making. Berry O’Kelly was the neighborhood’s most successful businessman, who owned nearly four hundred acres in Method and in and around Raleigh by the 1890s. In 1919, he platted eleven acres in the south part of Method into three blocks slated for residential development. The rectilinear plat, drawn by C. L. Mann that March, divided the land into narrow parcels 45 feet wide and between 135 and 150 feet long. Woods Place and Ligon Street marked the north and south lines of the area, while Church Street, later Method Road, bordered the east edge. The west side adjoined more O’Kelly land. The plat shows two existing houses on Woods Street, one on Ligon Street, and the Oak City Baptist Church on Church Street. O’Kelly did own a real estate firm, the Acme Real Estate Company, but he appears not to have been driven completely by profit. Edwards recalls in her memoir that O’Kelly waived the rent on the house that she and her mother had been renting from him after her stepfather died. “My mother always wanted a home of her own, but she never had the good fortune to have one; now with this offer made by Mr. O’Kelly, she felt some security.” Deed restricts do not appear on the deeds related to the Method Subdivision that were examined for this report.¹⁴

Mann drew many more plats of Method for individual property owners desiring the maps for recordkeeping or to subdivide their land to distribute to heirs or sell to others. Many show several acres of land, often irregularly shaped but subdivided into tidy parcels. Some maps name the owners or recipients of parcels and a few reference deeds. Lafayette Ligon divided his land into eight parcels of roughly five acres each. Jerry Hogan’s widow Janet split their land into eleven parcels of roughly a third of an acre each for their ten children in a plat drawn in 1948. The plat also shows the existing house that Janet Hogan lived in and shows two other residences. Lewis Atwater owned a large block of land anchored at the northeast corner of Atwater Street and Woods Lane that was mapped in 1916, showing subdivision into several parcels, most fronting Woods Place. The map also lists owners of each roughly one-acre parcel. Many other plats show more typical suburban-size parcels ranging from 50 to 75 feet wide to 135 to 200 feet long.¹⁵

¹⁴ C. L. Mann, “Method Subdivision,” March 1919, Wake County Deed Office, Raleigh, NC; Edwards, 37-38.

¹⁵ These plat maps are kept at the Wake County Deed Office, Raleigh, NC. They have been inventoried and organized by Charles P. Blount IV.

The pace of transformation in Method is difficult to track because so many houses have been heavily altered or replaced and historic streetviews are difficult to come by. A number of bungalows were erected in the Method Subdivision in the second quarter of the twentieth century. They tended to be simple, front-gabled versions with modest Craftsman detailing, like the Lillie Stroud Rogers House at 616 Method Road. Many have now been either heavily altered or demolished, but the Rogers House is intact. A grandson of Lillie Stroud Rogers owns the house, and his family tradition maintains that the house was built in 1940, despite the fact that Lillie and her husband Wiley Rogers purchased the lot from Berry O’Kelly in 1928. It is possible that they selected a house plan upon purchasing the lot but did not build for twelve years due to a lack of funds or available financing for construction. It is worth noting, however, that a surprising number of dwellings along Method Road and the west end of Woods Place have construction dates of 1940 in the Wake County GIS system, leading to a conclusion that the dates may not be accurate.¹⁶

Most of the existing roadways through Method were developed early on, as seen in maps and aerial images, and helped organize the landscape of the evolving settlement. Beryl Road, named for Berry O’Kelly’s daughter and only child, extends a short way southwest from Hillsborough Street before turning west. It historically provided access into the settlement and the location of the Berry O’Kelly Store and the Method Post Office. The main thoroughfare through Method seems to always have been Method Road, which extends south from Beryl Road and appears on early maps. On the Method Subdivision map, it is labeled Church Road. Woods Lane and Ligon, Atwater, O’Kelly, and Royal streets appear to be prominent roadways in a 1938 aerial photo. Hogan Lane, Wilcox Street, and the east end of Beryl Road, where it terminates in a cul-de-sac, post-date the photograph. The 1948 map depicting the partition of Jerry Hogan’s land shows two new roadways; one is Wilcox Street and the other is Wilcox Place. Hogan Lane is not indicated, but Wilcox Street does extend southward from an area adjacent to the rail line where there was presumably a road.¹⁷

The relative lack of wealth in the community and the rural location stymied infrastructure development. The roads were dirt and not illuminated by lightposts, and Method did not have water and sewer service. Wells were common; some are marked on plat maps. For houses without a well, a neighbor in the tight-knit community could be counted on to share access to water. In a 1939 oral history with Wiley Rogers of Method, conducted by the Federal Writer’s Project, Rogers pumped water for his nearby house as he spoke. “This pump furnishes nearly every house in the village with water. It’s been here for around fifty years for just that purpose, and before that there was a well with a little house over it.” As late as 1945, only a few houses had septic tanks and pumps, according to Edward Curtis, who moved to Method that year. In 1937, some residents formed the “Method Civic League” to

¹⁶ Timothy Marriott, interview with the author, Method, March 10, 2016.

¹⁷ 1938 USDA Aerial photo; C. L. Mann, “Partition of the Land of Jerry Hogan, dec’d, by Janet Hogan, his wife, among their ten children, Method, NC,” August 1948, Wake County Deed Office, Raleigh.

advocate for the community. The organization got streetlights and, in response to a couple of house fires, received training from the fire department and established a corps of volunteer firemen. They also took care to maintain the cemetery, and named and marked all the streets in Method.¹⁸

Despite the relatively remote location and the infrastructure problems, the promise of home ownership continued to attract blacks to Method through the middle of the twentieth century. Swade Sanders purchased the new Ranch house at 615 Method Road, on land historically owned by the Atwaters, in 1959. He moved from East Raleigh when he “got a chance to buy.” The Mechanics and Farmers Bank was essential, as home prices increased, in providing financing to blacks when other banks would not. A number of houses along Woods Place and Atwater Street dating to the 1950s and 1960s survive.¹⁹

The quality of community cohesion in the settlement was another draw. Oral histories conducted for this project detail a close-knit, family-oriented suburb. Neighbors looked after each other and created opportunities for recreation and for civic involvement. In the mid-twentieth century, residents—both women and men—worked in the surrounding areas at Royal Baking Company, the Pepsi Cola bottling plant, Meredith College, in public school cafeterias, and in private households. Most walked or used the city bus for transportation. Faith was an important component of life in Method, which was home to three churches.

Method Annexed into the City of Raleigh

In 1960, the City of Raleigh annexed an area west of the city limits and south of Hillsborough Street to support extension of the beltline road that would eventually circle the city. The lands extended as far west as the Roylene Acres subdivision and south beyond Avent Ferry Road to Lake Johnson and Lake Raleigh. All of Method was included, as were several mid-twentieth-century subdivisions.²⁰

A ca. 1960 map of southwest Raleigh produced by the city’s Planning Department depicts Method’s boundaries as Hillsborough Road to the north and Ligon Street to the south; lands belonging to North Carolina State College (now North Carolina State University) bordered the neighborhood directly on its east and west ends. According to the city’s annexation study from the period, Method had 88 houses on roughly 139 parcels. The entire Method neighborhood comprised 143.2 acres; about

¹⁸ “[Not by] Bread Alone,” Folder 547, Federal Writers’ Project Papers 1936-1940, Collection 3709, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Simmons-Henry and Edmisten, 8-9.

¹⁹ Swade Sanders, interview with the author, Method, March 10, 2016; oral history relating to homebuilding, renting, and purchasing also collected by the author from a number of participants at the Method Boys to Men meeting on July 23, 2016.

²⁰ Sophie Huemer, City of Raleigh Comprehensive Planning Department, email correspondence with the author, August 30, 2016; City of Raleigh Planning Department, “Area #4: Western Boulevard,” Annexation Summary Book, Planning Department files, City of Raleigh.

a third of the neighborhood included parcels larger than five acres. Annexation provided Method with police protection, fire protection, park maintenance, street maintenance, garbage and trash collection, and water and sewer services, the latter available once residents paid for hookup.²¹

While annexation finally gave Method residents better access to infrastructure services, the Method Civic League remained active for a time. The group was instrumental in preserving the original street names of the Method neighborhood, which honor a number of original or early landowners. After annexation, the names were suddenly changed and street signs erected by the city, but the Method Civic League successfully fought for reversion back to the original names. Similarly, attempts to close the Method Post Office resulted in opposition from the community, which places great value in its history, identity, and physical environment. Method, as a place, tells part of the story of Raleigh's racially segregated past. It also tells the story of a response to the racially motivated restrictions of the Jim Crow laws and segregationist traditions of the period.

Since annexation, Method continues as a largely residential neighborhood in West Raleigh. None of the first generation of "slab houses" are known to survive, and even the second generation of houses are either gone or very heavily altered. Bungalows dating from the second quarter of the twentieth century survive but many are altered. A number of houses from the mid-century decades of the 1950s and 1960s also endure. The many alterations and replacements in the last thirty or forty years have altered the overall architectural character of Method from the period of its transformation from a rural village into a suburban neighborhood. However, a number of houses appear to retain architectural integrity. If research reveals that their construction falls within the context described here, they are likely to qualify for Local Landmark designation, based on the criteria outlined below.

Criteria for Landmark Designation

- Is the dwelling in the area known historically or marked on map produced by C.L. Mann or the City of Raleigh as Method, Masonville, or Mason's Village?

The 1960 Annexation Report map appended to this document shows the extent of the twentieth-century suburb and can be used as a legitimate boundary without additional research. Properties beyond the east boundary depicted on that map and between Rocky Branch and the rail road might qualify as being in Mason's Village or Method, but would need additional research for substantiation. Plat maps drawn by C. L. Mann that locate the parcel in Method can be used without additional research.

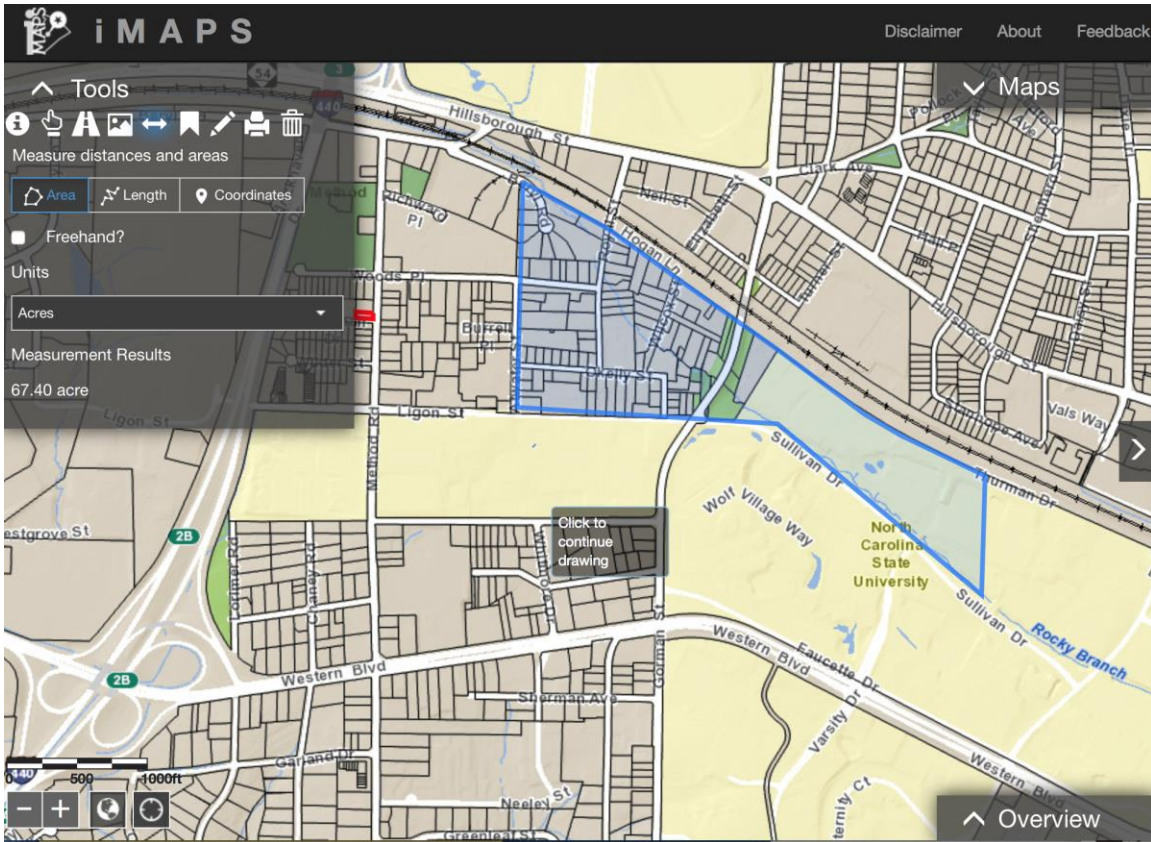
²¹ Annexation Summary.

- Does the dwelling retain architectural integrity?

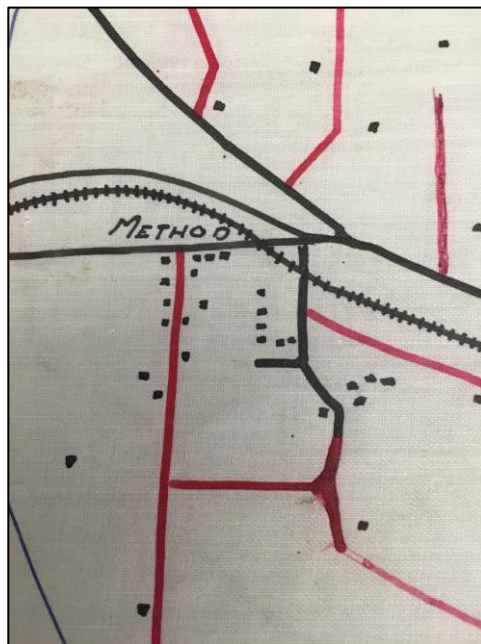
The dwelling should reflect its original architectural style and retain original massing, materials, fenestration patterns, and overall character.

- Is the dwelling in its original location in Method?
- Does the dwelling reflect some aspect of the history of the residential portion of Method from its inception as a rural farming community to its eventual development as an early-to-mid-twentieth century suburb of Raleigh?

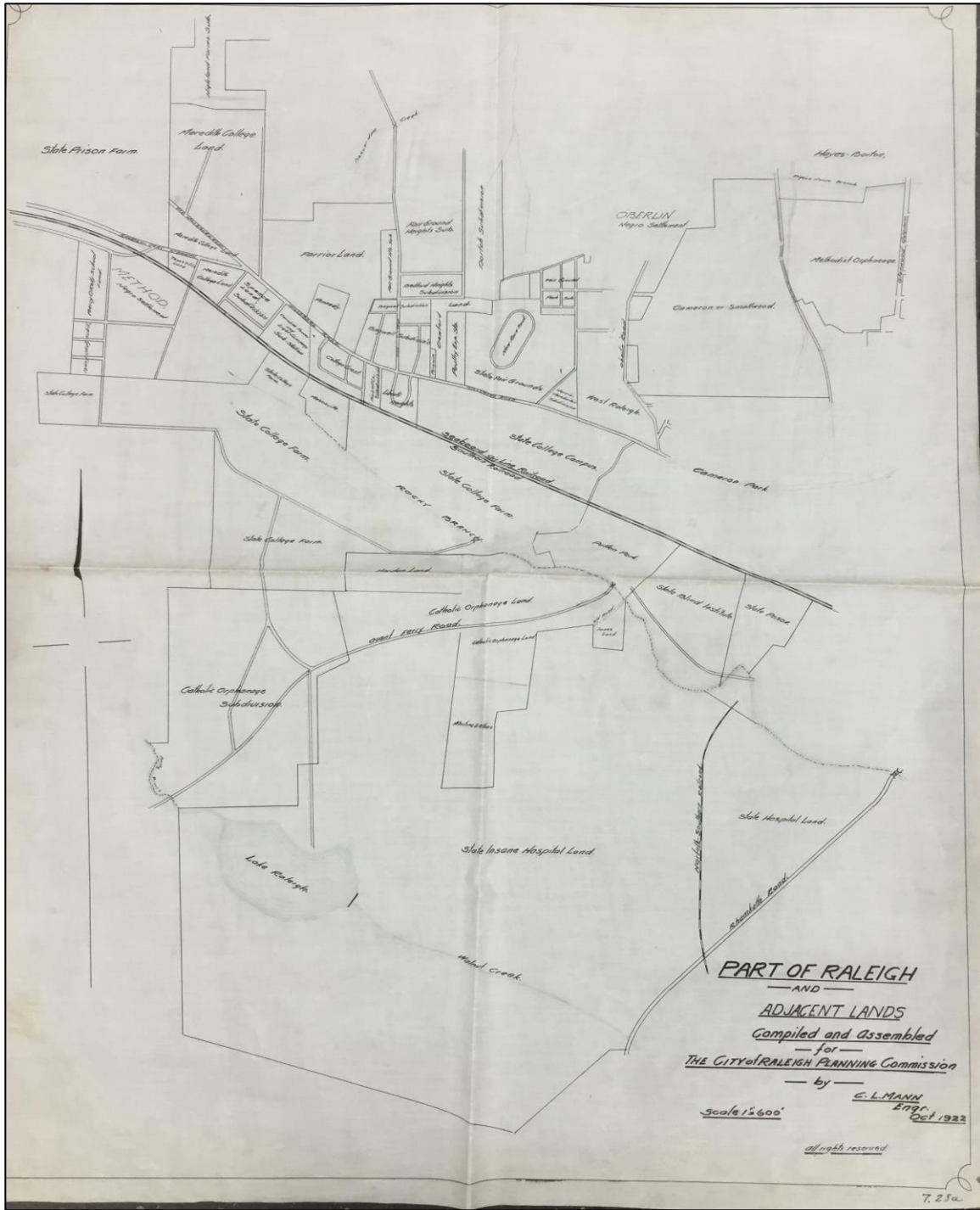
MAPS



Map showing possible extent of the land purchased by Mason & O'Kelly from Cox, prepared using Wake County iMaps.



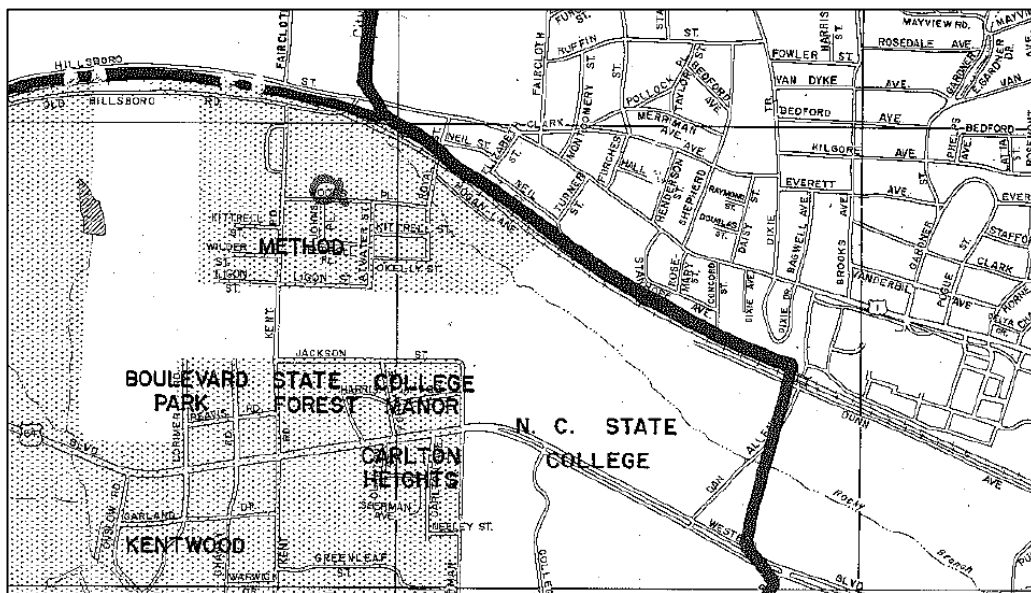
Excerpt from 1917 C. L. Mann Map of Part of Wake County



Map of Part of Raleigh showing both Method and Masonville.



Aerial of West Raleigh showing Method in the upper left quadrant, USDA Aerial Photo, Wake County, 1938, Image 14-53.



Map of Method from "Area #4: Western Boulevard," Annexation Summary Book. Planning Department files, City of Raleigh.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bishir, Catherine. *North Carolina Architecture*, Portable Ed. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Branson, Levi, Ed. *Branson's Alphabetical Directory of Raleigh*. [Raleigh: L. Branson, 189?].

Lally, Kelly A. *The Historic Architecture of Wake County, North Carolina*. Raleigh: Wake County Government, 1994.

Murray, Elizabeth Davis Reid. "Berry O'Kelly." Biographical entry in NCpedia.org

Simmons-Henry, Linda, and Linda Harris-Edmisten. *Culture Town: Life in Raleigh's African American Communities*. Raleigh: Raleigh Historic Districts Commission, 1993.

Unpublished Reports

Bishir, Catherine Bishir. "Daniel Stone Plank House." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1982. www.hpo.ncdcr.gov.

City of Raleigh Planning Department. "Area #4: Western Boulevard," Annexation Summary Book. Planning Department files, City of Raleigh.

De Miranda, Cynthia, et al. "West Raleigh Historic District." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2003. www.hpo.ncdcr.gov.

Gledhill-Early, Renee, and Joe Mobley. "Boyette Slave House." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1979. www.hpo.ncdcr.gov.

Hanbury, Mary Ruffin, "Berry O'Kelly Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Draft Nomination, 2016, in the files of the Raleigh Historic District Commission.

Mattson, Richard. "The Evolution of Raleigh's African American Neighborhoods in the 19th and 20th Centuries." Prepared for RHDC, November 1988.

"[Not by] Bread Alone." Folder 547, Federal Writers' Project Papers 1936-1940, Collection 3709. Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Maps

C. L. Mann Map Collection. Wake County Register of Deeds Office, Raleigh, NC.

"Map of Wake County drawn from actual surveys of Fendol Bevers," Nicholas & Gorman, 1870, <https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/10462>.