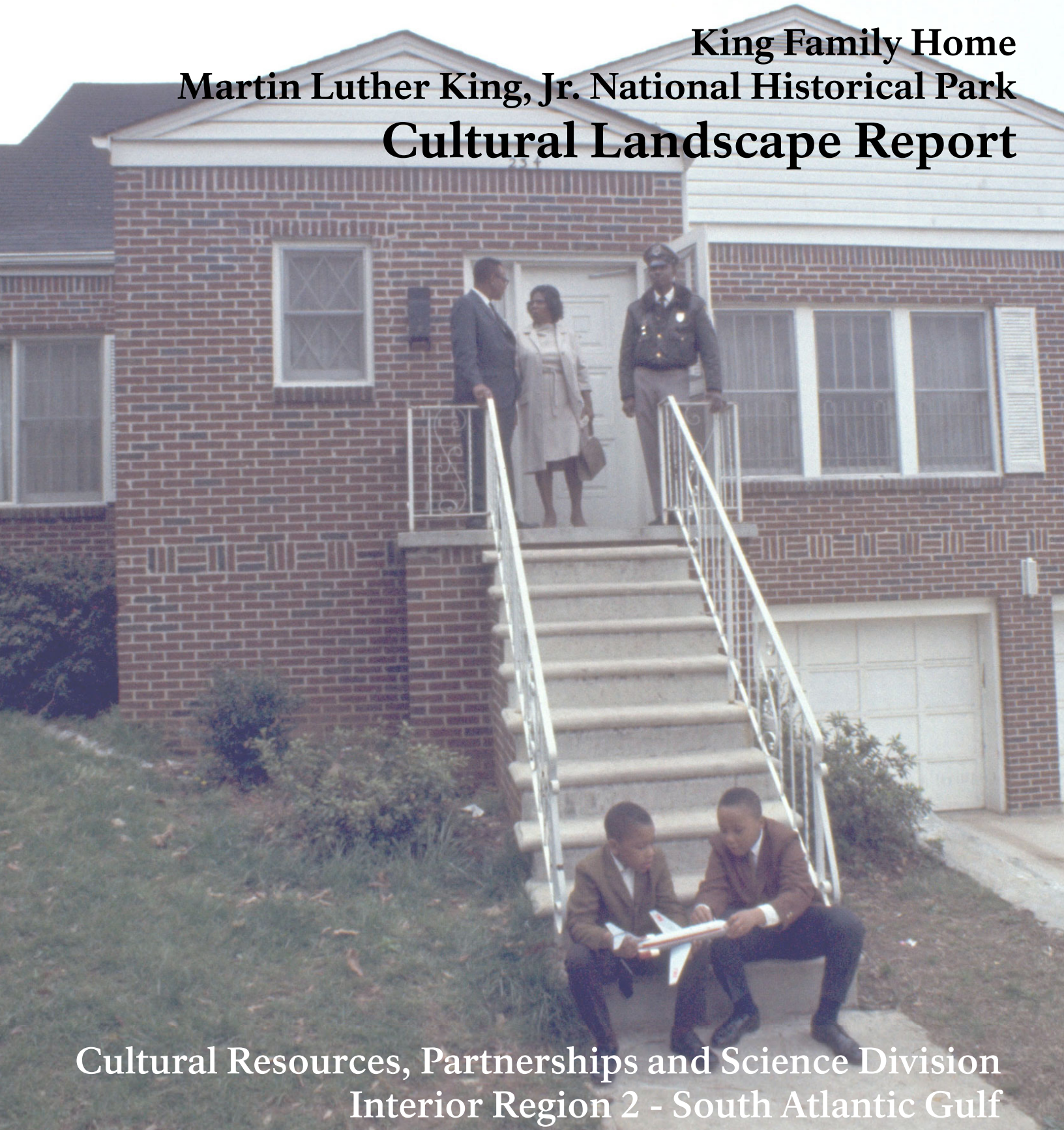




King Family Home Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Cultural Landscape Report



Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division
Interior Region 2 - South Atlantic Gulf

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

King Family Home

Cultural Landscape Report

January 2022
Prepared by:
WLA Studio

Under the direction of
National Park Service
Interior Region 2 - South Atlantic Gulf
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.

**Research and Science Branch
National Park Service: Interior Region 2 -
South Atlantic Gulf
National Park Service
100 Alabama Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404)507-5847**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
450 Auburn Avenue, NE
Atlanta, GA 30312**

www.nps.gov/MALU

About the cover: April 1968 photo of the King Family Home. (Source: © Flip Schulke.)

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park King Family Home Cultural Landscape Report

Approved by : **JUDY FORTE**

Superintendent, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

Digitally signed by JUDY FORTE
Date: 2022.02.03 20:39:24 -05'00'

Date

Recommended by : **CYNTHIA WALTON**

Chief, Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division, Interior Region 2 - South Atlantic Gulf

Digitally signed by CYNTHIA WALTON
Date: 2022.02.16 08:36:56 -05'00'

Date

Recommended by : **LANCE
HATTEN**

Lance Hatten, Deputy Regional Director, Interior Region 2 - South Atlantic Gulf

Digitally signed by LANCE
HATTEN
Date: 2022.02.22
15:48:15 -05'00'

Date

Approved by : **CHRISTOPHER ABBETT**

for Acting Regional Director, Interior Region 2 - South Atlantic Gulf

Digitally signed by CHRISTOPHER ABBETT
Date: 2022.02.28 14:58:09 -05'00'

Date

Page intentionally left blank

Table of Contents

Foreword	xvii
Introduction	1
Management Summary.....	1
Historical Overview	3
Scope of Work and Methodology.....	6
Site Investigation Summary.....	7
Description of Study Boundaries	7
Summary of Findings.....	7
Significance.....	7
Treatment.....	9
Recommendations for Further Study	10
Site History	11
Introduction	11
Native American History Prior to 1821	11
Paleoindian Period (ca. 15,000 – 8,000 BCE)	11
Archaic Period (8,000 BCE – 1,000 BCE).....	12
Woodland Period (1,000 BCE – 1,000 CE).....	12
Mississippian Period (800 CE – 1600 CE)	12
Changes within Native American Society.....	13
European American and African American Settlement of Atlanta Area (1821-1865).....	16
Early European American Settlement	16
Atlanta.....	16
Atlanta in the Civil War	19
Post-Civil War Atlanta and the Development of Vine City (1865 – 1933)	21
Atlanta’s Black Community Development	21
Post-Reconstruction Development of West Atlanta	24
Segregation and Atlanta.....	32
Summary of Ownership Prior to the Development of the King Family Home Site.....	34
Family Background and Birth of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott.....	38
Landscape Summary (1865-1933)	39
The Cowan and Gideons Period (1933-1964)	40
Vine City Community Development	40
Development of the Site at 234 Sunset Avenue	42
Eva and Alonzo Cowan	46
Charles and Jeannette Gideons	51
Martin Luther King, Jr.	52
Coretta Scott	54
Family Life Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King	55
Landscape Summary (1933-1964)	61

The King Family Period 1 (1964-1972)	65
Vine City in the 1960s.....	65
The King Family 1964-1972.....	69
Establishment of The King Center.....	91
Landscape Summary (1964-1972)	99
The King Family Period 2 (1972-2004)	103
Vine City at the End of the Twentieth Century.....	103
The King Children	104
The King Family Home after The King Center	105
Landscape Summary (1972-2004)	107
The King Family Period 3 (2004-2019)	111
Vine City	111
Landscape Summary (2004-2019)	111
The National Park Service Period (2019).....	113
Landscape Summary (2019).....	113

Existing Conditions 117

Introduction	117
Natural Systems and Features	118
Climate	118
Soils	119
Spatial Organization	119
Sunset Avenue	119
Land Use	124
Cultural Traditions.....	124
Cluster Arrangement.....	124
Circulation	125
Vehicular	125
Pedestrian	126
Topography	131
Vegetation	133
Buildings and Structures.....	141
Buildings	141
Structures.....	146
Views and Vistas	153
Small-Scale Features	154
Fences.....	154
Metal Play Set	157
Wood Landscape Edging.....	158
Concrete Apron	158
Other Small-Scale Features	159

Analysis and Evaluation..... 165

Introduction	165
National Register Status	166
Statement of Significance.....	167
Park Significance	168

Period of Significance	169
Analysis of Landscape Characteristics	169
Natural Systems and Features	169
Spatial Organization	170
Land Use	170
Cultural Traditions	171
Cluster Arrangement.....	172
Circulation	174
Topography.....	177
Vegetation	178
Buildings and Structures.....	184
Views and Vistas	190
Small-Scale Features.....	192
Evaluation of Landscape Integrity.....	194
Location	194
Setting	194
Design.....	196
Materials.....	196
Workmanship.....	197
Feeling	197
Association.....	197
Summary.....	197
Cultural Landscape Features Table	198

Treatment Recommendations..... 201

Introduction	201
Management Summary.....	201
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Foundation Document, August 2017 (Draft Update document, August 2021)	201
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site: General Management Plan, February 1986 & Long-Range Interpretive Plan, December 2011	203
National Historic Preservation Act	203
Executive Order 11593	203
Executive Order 13006	204
Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.....	204
Director’s Order-28	205
International Existing Building Code	206
Accessibility.....	206
Planning for Resiliency (Response to Natural Hazards).....	207
Treatment Philosophy	209
Primary Landscape Treatment: Rehabilitation	210
Treatment Concept	211
General Treatment Issues.....	211
Treatment Objectives and Tasks	212
Recommendations for Further Research.....	223
Preservation Maintenance Plan	223
Call for Public Assistance.....	223
National Register Nomination	223
Cultural Landscape Inventory	223
King Family Home Archeological Resources	223

Historic Furnishings Plan	223
Interior Finishes Plan	223
Bibliography	227
Appendix A. Historic Drawings	239
Appendix B. Existing Condition Recordation Drawings and Historic Evolution	
Drawings	255
Historic American Buildings Survey, GA-199, March 2021	255
Historic American Buildings Survey, Daniel DeSousa, Massing Models, March 2021	255
Appendix C. Tree Inspection Report	283
Appendix D. Site Accessibility Overview	293
Applicable Codes & Standards	293
Accessible Parking	293
Passenger Loading Zones.....	293
Accessible Routes	293
Protruding Objects	294
Ramps.....	294
Elevators & Platform Lifts.....	294
Doors & Gates	294
Clear Width	294
Thresholds.....	294
Additional Requirements	294
Appendix E. Author Statement Regarding Johnson Publishing Company Images	295
Appendix F. Links to Referenced Photographs.....	297

List of Figures

Cover:	April 1968 photo of the King Family Home	ii
Introduction		1
Figure 1.1.	Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is located east of downtown Atlanta	8
Figure 1.2.	The King Family Home location.....	8
Site History		11
Figure 2.1.	Artist’s depiction of an opening in the Piedmont Woodland, circa 1775	14
Figure 2.2.	1872 map of Atlanta showing the city limits and the “J. B. Jett” Plat at Land Lot 110	18
Figure 2.3.	1864 map of west side of Atlanta showing Proctor’s Creek, Confederate fortifications, and the city magazine	19
Figure 2.4.	A portion of an 1870 map of Atlanta, showing what would become Vine City.	22
Figure 2.5.	A portion of an 1874 map showing Atlanta’s ward system after increasing the limits of the city from 1 to 1.5 miles.....	23
Figure 2.6.	1892 Birdseye view of Atlanta with Vine City	26
Figure 2.7.	1890 view of the greenhouses at Wachendorff Brothers Nursery.....	26
Figure 2.8.	Edward A. Wachendorff House (1880-1892), 303 Sunset Avenue (left) and Charles Wachendorff House (1905), 293 Sunset Avenue (right).....	27
Figure 2.9.	Edward Wachendorff House (1903), 283 Sunset Avenue	27
Figure 2.10.	1906 map showing ownership of property around Sunset Avenue.....	27
Figure 2.11.	1906 plat map showing subdivision of the Candler Estate with Sunset Avenue as the western border.....	29
Figure 2.12.	A portion of 1902 <i>Map of Atlanta, Georgia</i> showing the Lines of the Georgia Railway and Electric Company	30
Figure 2.13.	Advertisement for houses and lots for sale at the northwest corner of Simpson Street and Sunset Avenue.....	31
Figure 2.14.	Location of the property that is now the King Family Home indicated in red on <i>City Atlas of Atlanta, Georgia</i>	35
Figure 2.15.	Location of what would become the King Family Home indicated in red on Kauffman’s 1906 <i>Map of Atlanta</i>	36
Figure 2.16.	1911 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of 142 Sunset Avenue with what would become the King Family Home	36
Figure 2.17.	1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing development along Sunset Avenue, with the future site of the King Family Home indicated in red.....	37
Figure 2.18.	Helen White & Eugene Marcus Martin House (1926), 250 Sunset Avenue NW	37
Figure 2.19.	Fred Armon Toomer House (1927), 240 Sunset Avenue NW.....	37
Figure 2.20.	A portion of a 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing Sunset Amusement Park.....	41

Figure 2.21. Approximate first-floor plan of 1933 house (future King Family Home) produced by HABS.....	44
Figure 2.22. Approximate basement level plan of 1933 house (future King Family Home) produced by HABS.....	44
Figure 2.23. Chester R. Elliott House (1935), 911 Highland Terrace NE, Atlanta.	45
Figure 2.24. W. C. Hodnett House (1929), 1740 N. Pelham Road NE, Atlanta	45
Figure 2.25. Eva L. Cowan, 1952	46
Figure 2.26. 1938 map of Sunset Avenue depicting site conditions including a brick walk with granite curb and asphalt street.....	47
Figure 2.27. 1949 aerial view of the house located at 234 Sunset Avenue, with a detached garage (red arrow) and possible terrace (blue arrow).....	48
Figure 2.28. Approximate first-floor plan of the house (future King Family Home) with the solarium addition produced by HABS.....	49
Figure 2.29. Jackson Apartments (1949), 220 Sunset Avenue NW	50
Figure 2.30. Charles L. Gideons, 1950. (Source: Booker T. Washington Evening High School Yearbook, 1950	52
Figure 2.31. Portion of a 1962 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing the house at 234 Sunset Avenue	53
Figure 2.32. Coretta Scott King and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with their first child Yolanda, 1956..	56
Figure 2.33. Portrait of Martin Luther King III, 1968	57
Figure 2.34. 1962 Photo of Martin (age 4), Yolanda (age 6), Mrs. King, and Dexter (age 18 months).....	59
Figure 2.35. 1968 photo of Bernice King. (Source: Stanford University. Libraries.....	60
Figure 2.36. Photo of Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King, Jr. during protests in Vine City, 1966.....	65
Figure 2.37. 1970 map showing Vine City buildings considered “structurally deficient” (1/2 black dots) and “structurally deficient to a degree warranting clearance” (black dots). The King Family Home is outlined in red	66
Figure 2.38. December 1965 view of a large tree in the Toomer residence yard, located at 240 Sunset Avenue NW.....	68
Figure 2.39. December 1965 still image of multi-family housing in Vine City.....	68
Figure 2.40. A1 First Floor Plan, Work Schedule, 12/1964, Joseph W Robinson, Designer.....	71
Figure 2.41. A2 Foundation Plan, Window & Door Schedules, 12/1964, Joseph W Robinson, Designer.....	71
Figure 2.42. First-floor plan of 1965 house.....	72
Figure 2.43. Basement level plan of 1965 house.....	73
Figure 2.44. Photograph of Yolanda King signing for a floral arrangement during the funeral for her father, April 1968. Note the established pink flowering tree blooming in the northeast corner of the front yard (upper left corner of photo).....	76
Figure 2.45. Image of Martin Luther King III and a police officer standing in front of the King Family Home, April 1968	77
Figure 2.46. Image of Martin Luther King III and Dexter King sitting on the front steps of the King Family Home, April 1968	77

Figure 2.47. Enlarged Plot Plan from A2 Foundation Plan, Window & Door Schedules, 12/1964, Joseph W Robinson, Designer	78
Figure 2.48. Joseph W. Robinson, FAIA, NOMA	79
Figure 2.49. A photo of the King family, taken in 1968	80
Figure 2.50. December 1965 view facing south on Sunset Avenue. Image is across the street from the King Family Home	82
Figure 2.51. December 1965 view facing north on Sunset Avenue. Camera operator is standing just off the curb from the King Family Home	82
Figure 2.52. December 1965 view of southeast property corner, showing terminus of new chain link fence	83
Figure 2.53. December 1965 view toward southern property border from across Sunset Avenue. Property line trees are apparent	84
Figure 2.54. December 1965 view of the front yard, facing west	85
Figure 2.55. December 1965 view of the front yard, facing east	86
Figure 2.56. December 1965 view of the front yard and driveway, facing northeast.....	86
Figure 2.57. December 1965 view of the front yard, facing southeast.....	87
Figure 2.58. December 1965 view of front planting bed, facing northeast, showing brick border on north side of driveway	87
Figure 2.59. December 1965 view looking northwest from the sidewalk	88
Figure 2.60. December 1965 still image of Bernice King sitting on the stone retaining wall next to the concrete planter.....	89
Figure 2.61. Undated photograph of Martin Luther King, Jr. in front of the King Family Home.....	90
Figure 2.63. Coretta Scott King with friends and family including Martin Luther King III, Alfred Daniel King, Ralph David Abernathy, and Jesse Jackson planning the funeral from her bedroom, April 1968.....	90
Figure 2.64. Photo of Coretta Scott King in front yard of King Family Home in prior to the second house renovation in 1968, showing east façade of house.....	92
Figure 2.65. Martin Luther King III (on mower) and Dexter (starting mower) in front yard, 1970	93
Figure 2.66. Photo of Martin Luther King III washing the family car showing garage and east façade of the house, 1970	94
Figure 2.67. A3 Alterations & Additions, Basement Floor Plan	95
Figure 2.68. Approximate first-floor plan of 1968 house	96
Figure 2.69. Approximate basement level plan of 1965 house.....	97
Figure 2.70. Image of Mrs. King in her office, 1968	98
Figure 2.71. View from Vine City of the Georgia Dome under construction in the late-1990	103
Figure 2.72. A low-quality image from a 1988 historic resource survey, showing the King Family Home	107
Figure 2.73. 1976 photo of Dexter King.....	112
Existing Conditions	117
Figure 3.1. Façade and north elevations of the house, facing southwest. Visible are the front yard and driveway	117
Figure 3.2. Aerial view of the King Family Home showing setback from Sunset Avenue	119

Figure 3.3.	The asphalt driveway north of the front yard, facing northeast.....	120
Figure 3.4.	The primary entrance to the main floor of the residence is a set of stairs and walkway that connect to the driveway	120
Figure 3.5.	A secondary entrance to the main floor of the residence is a set of stairs on the north elevation of the building.....	120
Figure 3.6.	The lower floor of the residence can be accessed through the garage door (right) or the exterior door (center).....	121
Figure 3.7.	The back yard of the residence is mostly turf grass areas and hardscape.....	121
Figure 3.8.	View from the north side of the residence looking west	122
Figure 3.9.	Mature canopy tree defines the overhead plane in the back yard	122
Figure 3.10.	Mature canopy trees define the overhead plane of the front yard area.....	123
Figure 3.11.	Heavily pruned street trees on Sunset Ave screen the view of the front of the residence from the southeast.....	123
Figure 3.12.	View of the asphalt driveway on the northeast section of the property	125
Figure 3.13.	View of the driveway as it continues to the north side of the residence.....	125
Figure 3.14.	View of the concrete curb along edge of driveway, facing northeast	126
Figure 3.15.	View of Dunkirk Street, located south of the property, and the alley, located west of the property, facing northeast.....	127
Figure 3.16.	Concrete step leading to basement entry door, facing south.....	127
Figure 3.17.	Three concrete risers with decorative metal handrails connect to a concrete walkway, facing south	128
Figure 3.18.	View of the curved concrete walkway from the front landing	128
Figure 3.19.	View of concrete patio from playground equipment in rear yard, facing east.....	129
Figure 3.20.	View facing north along Sunset Avenue at the intersection with Dunkirk Street.....	130
Figure 3.21.	View facing southwest showing how the natural grade has been excavated to accommodate the asphalt driveway and residence	131
Figure 3.22.	View facing southeast of the stone retaining wall, which holds the grade between front turf grass area and driveway.....	132
Figure 3.23.	View facing north of the stone retaining wall, which holds the grade between front turf grass area and sidewalk	132
Figure 3.24.	Turf grass is planted between landscape beds in the front yard.....	133
Figure 3.25.	The Canadian hemlock is centrally located in the front yard (foreground).....	134
Figure 3.26.	Water oaks in front of the property, located in the right-of-way on Sunset Ave.....	134
Figure 3.27.	View of trees along southern property boundary with poison ivy and English ivy growing on two of the trees (indicated), facing west.	135
Figure 3.28.	Pyracantha (foreground) and wax leaf privet (background, against fence) on the southern fence line of the property.....	135
Figure 3.29.	Foundation plantings along façade	136
Figure 3.30.	Foundation plantings by the front entry stairs.....	136
Figure 3.31.	Convex Japanese holly by the front entry stair	138
Figure 3.32.	Japanese andromeda located in the rear yard along western property line.....	138
Figure 3.33.	Azalea (Kurume hybrid) by the front entry stair	138

Figure 3.34. View facing east of liriop, which lines the landscape beds in many areas of the front yard (center).....	139
Figure 3.35. Unidentified annual bulbs, liriop, and hosta, planted near the light in the front yard.....	140
Figure 3.36. Hosta located near the front walkway.....	140
Figure 3.37. Landscape bed on the northeast corner of the site	140
Figure 3.38. Longitudinal perspective section cut through house from front to rear, showing complex roof structure construction and general organization of linear interior spaces along a central corridor on the first floor and a room-to-room pattern in the basement areas.....	141
Figure 3.39. Façade of the house, facing west.....	142
Figure 3.40. View facing southwest of the nine concrete risers with decorative metal railing that lead to a concrete landing at the main entrance of the residence.....	142
Figure 3.41. North and west elevations, facing southeast from rear yard.	143
Figure 3.42. View facing east of the brick and concrete staircase located on the north side entrance of the residence.....	143
Figure 3.43. Oblique view facing northeast of the southwest corner of the residence.....	144
Figure 3.44. View facing northeast of the south elevation showing cross-gable roof of main house rising above the south elevation one-story low slope extension.....	144
Figure 3.45. Western portion of the stone retaining wall, which lines the south side of the driveway	148
Figure 3.46. View of retaining wall, facing southeast toward Sunset Avenue	148
Figure 3.47. View of retaining wall lining the sidewalk on Sunset Avenue, facing north.....	149
Figure 3.48. Concrete apron/swale on the south side of the house, facing west.....	149
Figure 3.49. A small roofed projection prevents water from entering the garden level window well on the north elevation of the residence.....	149
Figure 3.50. Window was enclosed with plywood and flashing between June and October 2019 to reduce the amount of water ingress to the basement and the window well area..	149
Figure 3.51. Metal sided shed in rear yard	150
Figure 3.52. View facing northeast of the power pole and overhead residential electrical service in the northeast corner of the site	151
Figure 3.53. HVAC Unit located inside cage structure on north elevation.....	151
Figure 3.54. Nonfunctioning HVAC unit located in rear yard, facing south	151
Figure 3.55. View toward the King Family Home from Sunset Avenue, facing west.....	152
Figure 3.56. View toward the King Family Home from the sidewalk, facing west	152
Figure 3.57. View toward Sunset Avenue from the front steps of the King Family Home, facing east	153
Figure 3.58. View facing northeast toward the back of the house from Dunkirk Street is obscured by fencing.....	153
Figure 3.59. Decorative detail of the anodized aluminum pike fence lining the north and south sides of the front yard, facing north	154
Figure 3.60. Anodized aluminum pike fence on the south side of the front yard, facing north	154

Figure 3.61. Wood privacy fence in the back yard has been modified, likely for privacy or security, on the western boundary of the property, facing west	155
Figure 3.62. Chain link fence along south side of the property, facing east.....	156
Figure 3.63. View of the chain link fence near the southwest property corner, facing northeast....	156
Figure 3.64. Metal play set in the back yard originally held two swings and a seesaw, now missing.....	157
Figure 3.65. Raised landscape beds constructed from landscape timbers in the back yard.....	158
Figure 3.66. Concrete apron on west side of the house (rear yard), facing south	158
Figure 3.67. View of the concrete apron on south side of the house, facing east	158
Figure 3.68. View of the concrete apron on the east (front) side of the house, facing south	159
Figure 3.69. View of the concrete swale in the front yard, which now contains a temporary drainage pipe	159
Figure 3.70. Lamp post in the front yard is located west of the stone retaining wall.....	160
Figure 3.71. Plastic landscape edging in the front yard	160
Figure 3.72. Group of stones at terminus of stone retaining wall near southeast property corner .	161
Figure 3.73. View of the sump pump and mailbox at the basement entry door	161
Figure 3.74. Cast concrete planters placed on the stone retaining wall near the steps to the driveway	161
Figure 3.75. Pot and security sign located near the front steps	161
Figure 3.76. Trash and recycling receptacles, located on the north side of the property	161
Figure 3.77. Because concrete apron and swale no longer direct water away from the house foundation, the NPS has added drain pipes to direct water toward Sunset Avenue....	161

Analysis and Evaluation..... 165

Figure 4.1. 1972 aerial view of the King Family Home showing the cluster arrangement of the site	173
Figure 4.2. 2020 aerial view of the King Family Home showing the cluster arrangement of the site	173
Figure 4.3. Enlargement of a portion of a 1968 photo showing the concrete curb located at the northeast corner of the house and an asphalt walk leading to the rear yard	174
Figure 4.4. 1976 photo of Dexter King in the driveway of the King Family Home	175
Figure 4.5. April 1968 image of the façade of the house, facing west.....	180
Figure 4.6. April 1968 photo of the façade of the house, facing west	181
Figure 4.7. 1965 image of the King children playing in the front yard	182
Figure 4.8. 1968 photo looking toward Sunset Avenue showing the pink blooming tree in the northeast property corner	182
Figure 4.9. 1965 image of Bernice King with planter and chrysanthemums.....	183
Figure 4.10. The house and retaining wall are intact at the site	186
Figure 4.11. Example of similar wall construction at the ruins of First St. Mark A.M.E. Church, located in the English Avenue neighborhood, just north of Vine City.	187
Figure 4.12. Portion of a photo from April 1968 and current view of above ground power line servicing the house	188
Figure 4.13. View of window well prior to plywood structure construction.....	189

Figure 4.14. View of King Family Home from the east side of Sunset Avenue.....	191
Figure 4.15. View of the King Family Home from the sidewalk on the west side of Sunset Avenue.....	191
Figure 4.16. View of Sunset Avenue from the front entry stair.....	192
Figure 4.17. 1962 Sanborn Map and 2020 aerial photograph showing changes in neighborhood setting	195
Treatment Recommendations.....	201
Figure 5.1. Example of a modular suspended pavement system that supports hardscape, accommodates tree root growth, and promotes stormwater infiltration	214
Figure 5.2. View of installation of a modular suspended pavement system.....	214
Figure 5.3. View of potential additional drainage behind existing retaining wall	216

Page intentionally left blank

Foreword

We are pleased to make available this cultural landscape report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the landscapes and historic structures of National Park Service units in Interior Region 2. A number of individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank the staff at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park for their assistance throughout the process. We hope this study will be a useful tool for park management in continuing efforts to preserve the historic structure and to others interested in the significance of the park's many cultural resources.

Barbara Judy, Branch Chief
Park Historic Architecture and Cultural Landscapes Stewardship
National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office
Interior Regions 1 (Kentucky), 2, and 4 (Mississippi and Louisiana)
January 2022

Page intentionally left blank

Introduction

Management Summary

This Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) is for the King Family Home, a 0.2796-acre unit of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park (MALU) in Fulton County, Georgia. The site is located in Land Lot 110, Fourteenth District, Fulton County at 234 Sunset Avenue NW. Coretta Scott King purchased the property in 1964, and it was the single-family residence and place of business for members of the King family from 1965 to 2004. In January 2019, the National Park Service (NPS) assumed management of the King Family Home and surrounding landscape.

Public Law 96-428 on October 10, 1980 established Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. This act states that the “national historic site shall consist of that real property in the city of Atlanta, Georgia, within the boundary generally depicted on the map entitled ‘Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site Boundary Map’ . . . together with the property known as 234 Sunset Avenue, Northwest.”¹ For years, Representative John Lewis pushed to upgrade federal protections for the national historic site and reclassify it to a national historical park. The United States Senate passed a bill that Representative Lewis introduced in December 2017. In January 2018, President Donald Trump signed into law H.R. 267, which redesignated the park as Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park (MALU).² A boundary expansion in the redesignation included The King Family Home.

No management documents have been completed for the King Family Home, but Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) recordation, a historic structure report (HSR), and an oral history collection are being produced concurrently with this CLR. Most park management documents predate the NPS acquisition of the property. Interior Region 2 staff are updating MALU’s

foundation document concurrent with this CLR.³ The national historical park’s draft foundation document significance statement reads:

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park preserves the King Family Home where Martin Luther King, Jr. lived with his family during the 1960s. It was here that he and Coretta Scott King continued their work in social justice as part of the expanding Civil Rights Movement and Mrs. King established the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center known today as the King Center.⁴

The King Family Home was administratively listed in the National Register of Historic Places when Congress established the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park (36 CFR 60.1(b0(1))). The National Park Service has not yet documented the building through preparation of a National Register form. The State Historic Preservation Office has not determined the eligibility of the resource, but a May 2020 historic context study for the King Family Home supports the historic themes this CLR proposes for the resource (see Summary of Findings / Significance).⁵ The Georgia State Historic Preservation Office provided review and concurrence for the historic context study.

The King Family Home is located within the city of Atlanta Sunset Avenue Historic District. The Atlanta City Council established this district on May 16, 2011 as an overlay historic district. The Sunset Avenue Historic District is comprised of an approximately thirty-five-acre residential area that developed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and early-twentieth century northwest

1. “A Bill to Establish the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for Other Purposes,” Pub. L. No. 96-428 (1980).
2. John Lewis, “Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2017,” Pub. L. No. 115-108 (2017).

3. Draft language from the August 2021 document is included herein. This language may be updated as additional versions are available.
4. National Park Service, “Foundation Document Update (Draft), Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park” (Atlanta, GA: National Park Service, Interior Region 2), August 2021, 9.
5. Clarissa Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, “How They Lived, An Historic Context Study of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Life Home at 234 Sunset Avenue and Maynard H. Jackson Family Home at 220 Sunset Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia c. 1934-2004,” April 2020.

of downtown Atlanta. The district is located wholly within the historic bounds of the Vine City neighborhood.

The rest of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park lies within the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, a National Historic Landmark. Park managers will undertake a National Register amendment for the subject property, which may result in it being incorporated into the existing National Historic Landmark District.

An August 2021 foundation document update draft, which was underway during the production of this CLR, includes language for the King Family Home. It states that the King Family Home is “The home where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. Coretta Scott King moved with their children in 1965 and Dr. King’s family continued to live after his tragic assassination in Memphis, TN. The National Park Service owns the King Family Home.”⁶ The draft document lists the King Family Home as a fundamental resource, stating:

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. Coretta Scott King purchased the home at 234 Sunset Avenue in October 1964. Their chosen location in the working-class neighborhood of Vine City near downtown Atlanta reflects Dr. King’s commitment to address the universal injustices that plagued the working class and poor. The 1930s home was renovated twice under the direction of Mrs. King to meet their needs as a family with four young children and accommodate Dr. King’s commitment to his work—once prior to moving in and again after Dr. King’s death. The home included offices that supported the work of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and other organizations as well as spaces where he and Mrs. King hosted gatherings for prominent civil rights leaders. It provided a critical function during segregation because most public

gathering spaces were off limits to African Americans.⁷

Summary of Planning Documents Pre-Dating NPS Acquisition of the King Family Home

The King Family Home is not one of the resources referenced in MALU’s 1986 general management plan. However, the document describes interpretive themes and programs that can apply to the King Family Home. The document states “Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site and Preservation District [now National Historical Park] commemorates the life of Dr. King.”⁸ The general management plan focuses on the Auburn Avenue district and the cultural resources associated with Dr. King in the neighborhood. The 2017 foundation document lists the King Family Home as a “related resource” as the NPS approved that document prior to its acquisition of the King Family Home site. The appendix of the approved foundation document identifies the need for site and building documentation and an appropriate preservation treatment strategy.⁹

A 2011 long range interpretive plan (LRIP) offers specific proposals for interpretation of the site, including the following themes

This was the final residence of Dr. King and where Dr. King sought refuge and enjoyed time with his family.

Dr. King also conducted Southern Christian Leadership Conference business from this home.

Mrs. Coretta Scott King received visitors here the day after her husband was killed, and she

6. National Park Service, “Foundation Document Update (Draft), Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park,” 3.

7. National Park Service, “Foundation Document Update (Draft), Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park,” 5.

8. National Park Service, *General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District*, Atlanta, Georgia (Atlanta, Georgia: Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, 1986), 49.

9. National Park Service, “Foundation Document, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site” (Washington, D.C., August 2017), 8, 37.

continued to live here until shortly before her death.¹⁰

Any updates to the LRIP will likely expand these themes to include the establishment of The King Center at the King Family Home.

Long-term recommendations from the 2011 plan include: a historic structure report, historic furnishings report, cultural landscape report, oral history interviews, paint and wall treatment analysis, integrated pest management plan, fire and security protection plan, and installation of a climate control (heating and air conditioning system).¹¹ Many of these recommendations are underway or are about to begin.

Historical Overview

The cultural and environmental history of this area of Georgia dates back millennia. For many generations, Native Americans, most recently the Muscogee (Creek) peoples, lived in and around the lands upon which this residence was built. The United States government, in conjunction with the state government of Georgia, forced the ceding of this land through a series of armed conflicts, treaties, and removal policies. By 1821, the land was available for settlement, and emigrants mostly of English, Scottish, and Irish heritage began to occupy the area.

The area that would become the west side of Atlanta began as a stagecoach stop called White Hall by 1835. The area continued to grow with the introduction of new rail lines in the area. “Terminus” became a junction for the Southern Railway and the Western and Atlantic Railroad. The area was renamed Marthasville in 1843, and two years later it was renamed Atlanta. Fulton County was subsequently formed in 1856 from DeKalb County. The population was largely white with few enslaved African Americans. Restrictive legislation regarding ownership, employment,

and freedom of movement denied employment opportunities and freedom of movement for free Black residents. Atlanta evolved to reflect the general political and social character of the antebellum South even though the city’s economy was not solely reliant upon a plantation economy. A plantation system based on the enslavement of African Americans and support of “states’ rights” served as the cornerstones of political and economic life in the South. Adherence to these societal lynch pins resulted in the outbreak of the Civil War in the 1860s.

Martin Luther King, Jr.’s great-grandfather Willis Williams was born before Emancipation as an enslaved person “on the Williams Plantation in Penfield, Greene County, Georgia, owned by William Nelson Williams.”¹² Willis Williams was a minister, but as an enslaved person, “he could not actively preach in a church.”¹³ Willis was married to Lucrecia “Creecy” Daniel Williams, who was also likely enslaved by the Williams Family. Willis and Creecy Williams continued to live in Greene County and worked as sharecroppers until Willis died in 1874. Research did not reveal additional information about the lives of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s other great-grandparents. His maternal grandmother’s parents, William and Fanny Parks, were both born in the 1820s in Georgia, presumably enslaved. His paternal grandmother’s parents, Jim Long and Jane Linsey, were born in Henry County, Georgia, which is where his grandfather, James Albert King, met Delia Linsey, who he married in 1895.¹⁴ Coretta Scott King’s maternal and paternal grandparents were both born before Emancipation and were likely enslaved as well. Research did not reveal much information beyond their names. According to federal census records, her paternal great-grandparents were both born in Alabama as were her maternal great-grandparents.¹⁵ Her family, including her grandparents Willis and Delia Scott, became

10. Harpers Ferry Center Interpretive Planning, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site staff, and partners, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2011), 90.
11. Harpers Ferry Center Interpretive Planning, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site staff, and partners, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan*, 91.

12. “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Supplemental Material” (Atlanta, GA, n.d.), 2, National Archives, <https://www.archives.gov/files/atlanta/education/resources-by-state/images/mlk-supplemental.pdf>.
13. “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Supplemental Material,” 2.
14. National Archives at Atlanta, “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr.,” 2, http://friendsnas.org/education/S4_civilRights/Roots_of_MLK.pdf.
15. Ancestry.com, “1900 United States Federal Census,” 2004, <https://search.ancestry.com>.

landowners in Perry County, Alabama, soon after the Civil War, where “Land ownership was the symbol of respect, matching in importance as the passport to freedom only by the commitment to higher education.”¹⁶

On the eve of the Civil War, Atlanta had multiple railroad lines running through it that transported agricultural goods and textiles to and from all over the country. As an important transportation hub and manufacturing city, Atlanta became central in the supply chain of the Confederate Army. As the United States Army (US Army) pressed deep into Georgia in 1864, they burned bridges and tore up railroad tracks. During the summer of 1864, James B. McPherson and the Army of the Tennessee followed the spine of the Georgia Railroad towards Atlanta. By July, US Army troops had razed several sections of the northern portion of the Georgia Railroad, severely disrupting critical Confederate communication and supply links. When Atlanta fell to US Army forces, the Confederate supply trains were successfully disrupted. US Army troops destroyed much of the city.

After the war, as Atlanta rebuilt, many formerly enslaved African Americans moved to the city and began to establish settlements and neighborhoods. Building on community bonds through mutual aid and self-empowerment, the Black population of Atlanta increased from just over twenty percent in 1860 to nearly forty-three percent in 1890.¹⁷ African Americans in Atlanta established their own religious, social, and educational institutions. The west side of Atlanta soon became a hub for African American education with the formation of Morris Brown College, Atlanta University, and Spelman College, which would eventually become a part of the Atlanta University Center.

The son of Willis and Creecy Williams was Adam Daniel (A. D.) Williams, Martin Luther King, Jr.’s maternal grandfather. He was born in Greene County where his parents lived and farmed, and he moved to Atlanta in 1893. According to a study of Dr. King’s genealogy, “In 1894, one year after

moving to Atlanta, A. D. became the second pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church on Auburn Avenue.”¹⁸

City leaders recognized the need to expand the Atlanta’s city limits to include areas developing outside the city core. The west side of Atlanta was included in the expansion and was known as Atlanta’s Fifth Ward by 1874. The Fifth Ward had a concentrated African American population. Transportation systems began to expand as population growth continued to push the city limits of Atlanta outward. George Adair and Richard Peters, real estate developers, became involved in the development of streetcar service “as a marketing tool for suburban development.”¹⁹

Racial tensions heightened in the South between 1890 and 1910. Fueled by racial propaganda and sensationalized stories, the Atlanta Race Riot occurred in 1906. This riot further reinforced racial segregation in the city, and many in the Black community retreated “into their highly stratified social enclaves.”²⁰ The area now known as Vine City began to develop as one of these predominately African American communities.

The area bounded by Simpson Street (present-day Joseph E. Boone Boulevard NW), Davis Street (Northside Drive), West Hunter Street (Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard), and Ashby Street (Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard) was originally home to emigrants of European descent. Philip Breitenbucher and the Wachendorff family were among the early residents of the area. Large landowners subdivided their properties into smaller residential lots once the streetcar system began to increase property values in the area. In 1905, Asa G. Candler subdivided his estate into residential parcels along the east side of Sunset Avenue and Vine Street. Developers proposed residential development on the west side of Sunset Avenue as early as 1907. City directories from the

16. Barbara Reynolds, *Chicago Tribune*, January 11, 1976, 17–42.

17. Ronald H. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 6.

18. “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Supplemental Material,” 2–3.

19. New South Associates, “Historic Streetcar Systems in Georgia: Context and Inventory” (Georgia Department of Transportation, January 31, 2012), 23.

20. Allison Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 164.

early 1900s show the area had a mix of both Black and white residents residing on Sunset Avenue.²¹

The Breitenbucher family eventually subdivided their lot, which was located on the west side of Sunset Avenue. Developers constructed single-family homes on the block. Eva and Alonzo Cowan purchased the lot at address 234 Sunset Avenue NW and built a brick home there around 1934. The Cowans added gardens to the site, which won praise in the local newspaper. Local educational leader Dr. Charles Gideons and his wife Jannette purchased the home in 1957. The Gideons' daughters sold the property to Coretta Scott King in October 1964.

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s (born Michael King) life was intertwined with the historical development of Atlanta, specifically its role in African American community life and community affairs.²² The son of Alberta and Martin Luther King, Sr., Martin Luther King, Jr. was born into a segregated southern city. After spending his childhood in the Auburn Avenue neighborhood and attending high school and college in Atlanta, Martin Luther King, Jr. left Atlanta to continue his education in Pennsylvania and then Boston. He met Coretta Scott, a student from Perry County, Alabama, in Boston.²³ Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott fell in love and decided to marry. After he received his doctorate, the young family moved to Montgomery, Alabama, where Martin Luther King, Jr. became minister of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and assumed a prominent role in a local civil rights movement that received national attention. After successfully protesting segregation on Montgomery's bus system, the family relocated to Atlanta, where Dr. King became leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Coalition (SCLC). The family lived in a rented house on Johnson Avenue in Atlanta's Old Fourth Ward. Eventually, Coretta Scott King purchased the property at 234 Sunset Avenue NW. She hired Atlanta architect and family friend, Joseph W. Robinson, to draw plans

to remodel the house for her family. Plans included a new kitchen, larger bedrooms for the children, and a basement and garage. The family moved to the King Family Home in April 1965 following the extensive remodel. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his family were now national figures in the civil rights movement with their domestic life centered in Atlanta and their house in Vine City.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968. Coretta Scott King received hundreds of visitors at the King Family Home in the days and weeks afterward. Mrs. King began the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center in January 1969 with the aim of continuing her work in the movement. She remodeled her house to accommodate offices for the center. She always envisioned a memorial to be located on Auburn Avenue, the site of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birth home and his "spiritual home" at Ebenezer Baptist Church. However, her initial planning efforts took place at her new office located in the basement level of the King Family Home. Coretta Scott King announced the development of an Institute for Non-Violent Social Change and affiliated programs at Atlanta University. These dual efforts eventually merged into the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change (The King Center). Though Coretta Scott King's personal office occupied the basement office for decades, The King Center's headquarters relocated to 220 Sunset Avenue NW and then to the Interdenominational Theological Center at the Atlanta University Center Campus. The administrative offices moved to a house located at 503 Auburn Avenue in 1977. The King Center administrative, exhibit, and library building opened in 1981, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and the Freedom Complex, located at 449 Auburn Avenue NE, were formally dedicated on January 15, 1982. These facilities continue to house The King Center today.²⁴

Coretta Scott King lived in the King Family Home until 2004. Her children departed from the house to attend college and start their own careers. After Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination, the King Family Home served as the place where Coretta Scott King received dignitaries, friends, and celebrities who visited to offer their condolences. It

21. Ancestry.com, Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1907 (Atlanta, GA: Foote & Davies Co. and Joseph W. Hill, 1907).

22. This report refers to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as Martin Luther King, Jr. or Dr. King unless his name is in a direct quotation.

23. This report refers to Coretta Scott King as Coretta Scott prior to her marriage and Coretta Scott King or Mrs. King thereafter (unless her name is in a direct quotation).

24. Lloyd Davis, "History of the King Center: Twenty-Five Year Legacy of Accomplishment," 40.

was the “house where we grew up” to the four King children.²⁵

The King Family Home remained a keeping place for the King estate until the National Park Foundation purchased the property in January 2019. The nonprofit immediately transferred the property to the National Park Service.

The site history section of this report organizes the site into periods of development. These periods reflect changes in ownership and management of the site.

These periods are:

- Native American History Prior to 1821
- European and African American Settlement of the Atlanta Area (1821 – 1865)
- Post-Civil War Atlanta and the Development of Vine City (1865 – 1933)
- The Cowan and Gideons Period (1933 – 1964)
- The King Family Period 1 (1964 – 1972)
- The King Family Period 2 (1972 – 2004)
- The King Family Period 3 (2004 – 2019)
- The National Park Service Period (2019 – Present)

Scope of Work and Methodology

As stated in the project’s statement of work, the CLR will (1) describe the historical development of the area; (2) document the existing site conditions; (3) provide analysis of the landscape’s potential National Register significance; (4) identify character defining features; (5) determine appropriate treatment strategies; and (6) develop treatment recommendations that facilitate preservation of these resources, address park management concerns, and inform ongoing and proposed management decisions.

The site history included in this report gives an overview of the King Family Home and its site. Research for the site history included consultation of both primary and secondary sources of information. The existing conditions section

provides a comprehensive description of cultural landscape features, including natural and cultural resources. The inventory includes information gathered during various site visits by project team members between June 2019 and January 2021. The analysis and evaluation section uses criteria developed by the National Register of Historic Places and the *Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* to evaluate the historic integrity of existing landscape resources. The section on treatment recommendations provides guidance for future management decisions related to the site’s historic landscape resources.

Sources, repositories, and related studies include:

- “How They Lived: An Historic Context Study of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Life Home at 234 Sunset Avenue and Maynard H. Jackson Family Home at 220 Atlanta, Georgia,” Clarissa Myrick-Harris, OWA Institute, 2020
- Schulke (Flip) Photographic Archive, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin
- Bob Fitch Photography Archive, Stanford Libraries
- Getty and Associated Press Images
- Fulton County Superior Court Deed and Records Room
- Autobiographies and biographies of the King family members
- Management documents provided by Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Site, Atlanta, Georgia
- Atlanta History Center, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta, Georgia
- Digital Library of Georgia, photographs and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps
- Georgia State Library Special Collections Library
- University of Georgia, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library
- University of Georgia, Map Library
- University of Georgia, Brown Media Archives and Peabody Awards Collection
- Atlanta University Center Consortium, Robert W. Woodruff Library
- Ancestry.com: Atlanta City Directories and various primary sources
- Newspapers.com: various primary sources and articles

25. Dexter Scott King and Ralph Wiley, *Growing Up King: An Intimate Memoir* (New York: Warner Books, 2003), 5.

- Site and architectural documentation by WLA Studio, RATIO Architects, the National Park Service Historic Preservation Training Center (HPTC), and HABS
- Condition assessments of the building and structures by HPTC (fall 2019)

Using information gathered during site documentation field work, this CLR identifies landscape characteristics and associated features that contribute to the historic significance of the site. This CLR compares the historic condition of the resource with its current condition to evaluate its historic integrity.

Site Investigation Summary

The project team conducted an initial site visit to MALU and the King Family Home during the summer of 2019. In October 2019, HABS, HPTC, WLA Studio, and RATIO Architects convened at the site for further investigation and documentation. HABS conducted a laser scan of the building, which provided point cloud data to inform the measured drawings, including the base map for site drawings. HABS also documented the building using large format digital photography. The research conducted for the CLR, HSR, and the HABS history was shared among the project team. The consultant team made subsequent visits throughout 2019 and into 2021 to assess site features and site issues.

Description of Study Boundaries

The King Family Home is located on a rectangular tract of land at 234 Sunset Avenue NW in Atlanta, Georgia. The property is bounded by Sunset Avenue NW (east boundary), 240 Sunset Avenue NW (Parcel 14 01100003084, north boundary), an unnamed alley (west boundary), and an unnamed street, sometimes referred to as Dunkirk Street NW on historic maps (south boundary). The property is parcel number 14 01100003022, and it measures 0.2796 acres.

The property contains the remaining landscape features associated with the use of the site by the King family, who owned the property until 2019. Existing features include the house, circulation features, a stone retaining wall, vegetation, a play

structure, a metal sided utility shed, and various small-scale features. Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2 illustrate the location of the King Family Home.

Summary of Findings

Significance

The National Park Service has not yet documented the property through preparation of a National Register form.²⁶ As stated previously, the national historical park completed a historic context study for this resource in 2018. That report established the associated historic themes for the property. The findings of this CLR concur with the documentation in the historic context study, which establishes the following:

The King Family Home is significant under Criteria A and B. Areas of significance including Ethnic Heritage, Black and Social History.

Criterion A includes properties “that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.” As such, the King Family Home is nationally significant for its association with the development of the civil rights movement in the United States.

The King Family Home served several different capacities between 1964-1972, pivotal years within the civil rights movement, including:

- **A community hub for civil rights work:** When Martin Luther King, Jr. was home in Atlanta, the house served as a space for his associates to meet and discuss civil rights issues. Though most of Dr. King’s official business took place at the SCLC offices in Atlanta, informal visits by dignitaries, visiting journalists, and leaders of the social movement took place at the King Family Home, making it a hub for civil and human rights activism during the last three years of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s life.

26. The Family Home was administratively listed in the National Register of Historic Places when Congress established the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park (36 CFR 60.1(b0(1))).

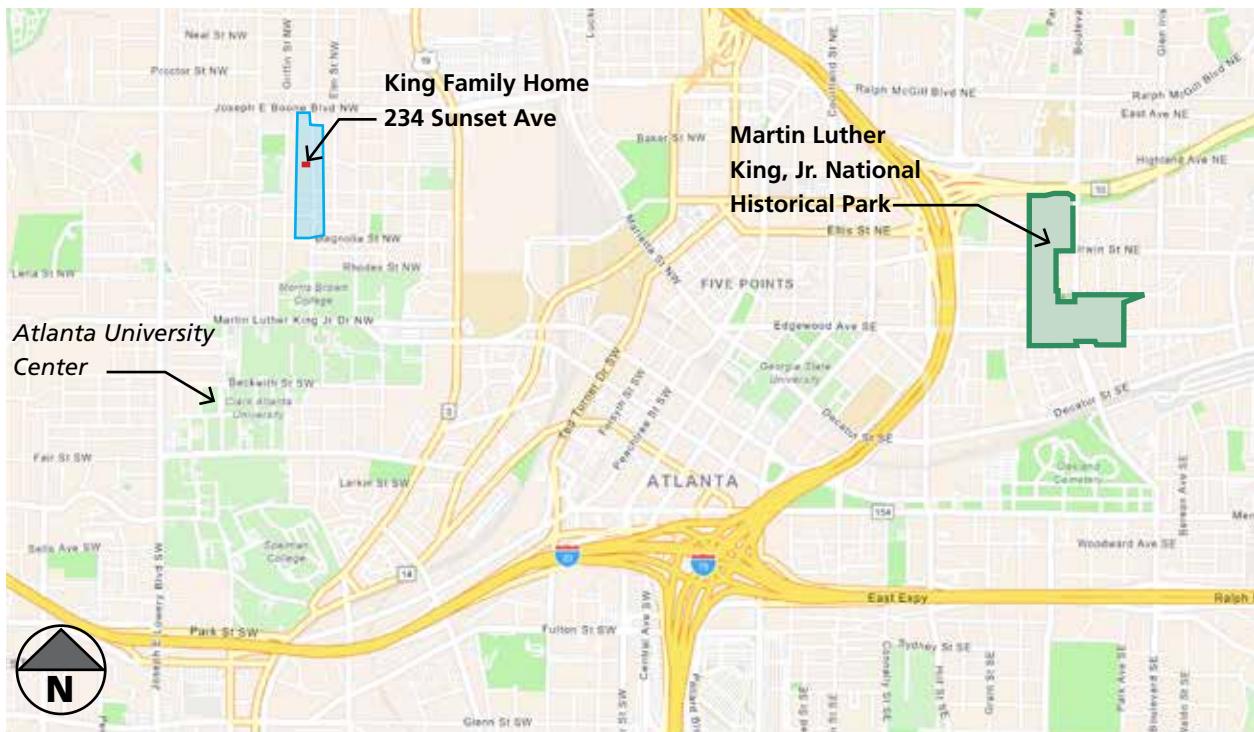


Figure 1.1. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is located east of downtown Atlanta. The King Family Home is located west-northwest of park in the neighborhood Vine City at 234 Sunset Avenue, NW, which is north of the Atlanta University Center. The Sunset Avenue Historic District is indicated in blue. (Source: ArcGIS Online, 2021.)



Figure 1.2. The King Family Home location (indicated in green). (Source: ArcGIS Online, 2021.)

- **A headquarters for The King Center for Nonviolent Change:** Coretta Scott King had her office and established The King Center in the basement of the house in 1968. Mrs. King and her associates conducted day to day operations and official business for The King Center in the basement of the house until the offices relocated in 1972. Mrs. King continued her life of civil and human rights activism for nearly four decades.

The King Family Home is also locally significant under Criterion A as part of the Vine City community, a historically African American neighborhood home to several well-known community and civil rights leaders.

Criterion B includes properties “that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.” The King Family Home is nationally significant as the home of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was an American civil rights leader and co-founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Coretta Scott King was an American civil rights leader and founder of The King Center for Nonviolent Change. She purchased the King Family Home in 1964. Mrs. King worked with architect Joseph W. Robinson to renovate the house and property. During the renovations, Dr. King accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway. The King family moved into their newly renovated home in the Vine City neighborhood of Atlanta in the spring of 1965. Dr. King lived in the house until 1968 when he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Mrs. King renovated the house again in 1968 after the assassination of her husband to accommodate a basement office for the newly founded Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center (later The King Center for Nonviolent Change). The administrative offices for The King Center were headquartered at 234 Sunset Avenue NW until 1972. Mrs. King maintained a personal office in the basement of the King Family Home, and the house was her primary residence until 2004.

Under Criterion Consideration G, some of the landscape features associated with Coretta Scott King have been constructed or altered since 1971, and thus do not meet the fifty-year age criteria

for historic significance. However, due to their association with Coretta Scott King and the Sunset Avenue property and surrounding community, they are considered as achieving significance to the cultural landscape.

A period of significance is established through national register documentation, which involves consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, Federal Preservation Office, and the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places. This report uses a provisional or proposed period of significance for evaluation of character defining features. The provisional or proposed period of significance is 1964 through 2004. This period begins when the King family purchased the property and ends when Coretta Scott King moved out of the King Family Home.²⁷

Treatment

The national historical park has not determined an ultimate use for the King Family Home. A long range interpretive plan for the resources is funded as of 2021, but the NPS has not completed that document. Park documents indicate that it will eventually be open to the public, but the national historical park has not determined the details for visitation (e.g. parking, capacity, hours of operation, site access, etc.) While considering the applicable laws, agreements, and policies, recommendations in this CLR aim to preserve the historic character of the site to allow for interpretive use of the cultural landscape.

The recommended treatment of the King Family Home cultural landscape is rehabilitation, which will provide measures to protect and stabilize the property and maintain its existing form and

27. The national historical park’s staff have requested that the cultural landscape report focus on an interpretive period of 1964 to 1972. Future interpretive plans might focus on this period and may consider two periods of interpretation of history for the King Family Home: 1964-1972 (as a *primary interpretive period*, starting when Coretta Scott King purchased the King Family Home and ending when the administrative offices of The King Center moved out of the King Family Home) and 1972-2004 (as a *secondary interpretive period*, starting when the administrative offices of The King Center moved out of the King Family Home and ending when Coretta Scott King moved out of the King Family Home). The emphasis on these periods is to be determined. The consideration of character defining features for this document relies on the full proposed period of significance 1964-2004.

integrity. Rehabilitation will improve the general overall appearance, functionality, and natural resiliency of the site.

General recommendations include:

- Preserve, maintain, and manage all contributing features of the King Family Home cultural landscape.
- Provide for visitor arrival and wayfinding at the site once an ultimate use and visitation plan has been established for the site.
- Undertake a full accessibility evaluation for the site once an ultimate use and visitation plan has been established for the site.
- Consider changes to the vegetation and hardscape at the property to more accurately represent the period of significance.
- Document all future changes to the landscape through drawings, photographs, and notes.

Recommendations for Further Study

As stated previously, the King Family Home is administratively listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The national historical park should consider either amending the existing nomination for the park to include this resource or completing a stand-alone nomination for the King Family Home.

The HSR for the King Family Home recommends that the national historical park complete an interior finishes treatment plan, a historic furnishings report, an exterior paint analysis, thermal scanning for moisture, and selective mortar analysis for the house. If possible, the consultants completing the historic furnishings report may want to consider including analysis of several cultural landscape features. These features include: the luminaire on the lamp post, the metal sided utility shed, and the play set. This furnishings document may be able to identify sources for replacement parts and equipment for these features. The NPS may want to consider adding an analysis of the paint located on the stone retaining wall and concrete curb at the site to the scope of the interior finishes analysis. Though these finishes are on the exterior of the site, dating the paint on these features will possibly identify a date of paint application and determine whether the painted finish is a contributing feature to the cultural landscape.

Site History

Introduction

The King Family Home is located in Land Lot 110, Fourteenth District, Fulton County, Georgia, at 234 Sunset Avenue NW. The surrounding area is a largely African American neighborhood known as Vine City, situated north of the Atlanta University Center and west of Atlanta's Central Business District and major downtown buildings such as the World Congress Center and Mercedes Benz Stadium.

The area encompassing the King Family Home contains tributaries to Proctor Creek, which feeds into the Chattahoochee River. Native Americans who lived and hunted in the Georgia Piedmont occupied this area for millennia. Before the Civil War, the area was largely undeveloped. Before Vine City became a predominantly Black neighborhood, German and French Americans developed residences and businesses in the area. African Americans built and lived in many of the residences along the 200 and 300 block of Sunset Avenue NW.

The King family moved to this residence in 1965, shortly after the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded Martin Luther King, Jr. the Nobel Peace Prize. The Kings chose this predominantly African American neighborhood, which was home to a diverse range of socio-economic groups, for its proximity to Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) office and extended family. Sunset Avenue was already home to several social, educational, and business leaders in Atlanta's African American community.

Native American History

Prior to 1821

Paleoindian Period (ca. 15,000 – 8,000 BCE)

For thousands of years before European colonization of southeastern North America, Native Americans inhabited the area now known as the Piedmont region of Georgia. Here, in the rolling foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains on the banks of the Chattahoochee River, a dynamic

and ecologically abundant landscape supplied generations of Native Americans a place to develop extensive cultural traditions related to kinship, religion, trade, warfare, and use of natural resources. Over millennia, these traditions evolved, adapting to both environmental and societal changes.

The earliest groups of nomadic hunters and gathers to reach the southern portions of North America migrated from the Alaska Yukon area.²⁸ Archeologists note that these groups lived in small, highly mobile social units, known as bands. In the Southeast, Native Americans depended on hunting smaller game such as caribou and deer as well as gathering a wide range of edible plants.²⁹ Specialized tools for hunting smaller fauna began to emerge in southeastern North America, and a migratory pattern of living persisted amongst the people who inhabited this region.³⁰ Archeologists are unsure of the initial date of human occupation of the Georgia Piedmont. One study states, "While sites and assemblages are widespread after 13,500 years ago, and evidence suggesting even older occupations has been found at several sites, we still do not know when people entered the region."³¹

Most of the archeological data for the Piedmont region during the pre-contact period derives from a model describing Paleoindian settlement in the Georgia Piedmont from the Oconee River watershed. Within this study area, "Early Paleoindian sites were located primarily in the floodplain, with the remainder of the sites at the uplands edge . . . by Late Paleoindian Dalton times populations were using upland areas more

-
28. Marti Gerdes, Scott Messer, and Tommy Jones, "Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Historic Resource Study" (National Park Service, Cultural Resources Division, Southeast Regional Office, February 2007), 7–8.
 29. Stephen Carmody, "'From Foraging to Food Production on the Southern Cumberland Plateau of Alabama and Tennessee'" (PhD Dissertation, Knoxville, University of Tennessee, 2014).
 30. Gerdes, Messer, and Jones, "Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Historic Resource Study," 8.
 31. "NPS Archeology Program: The Earliest Americans Theme Study," accessed November 19, 2018, <https://www.nps.gov/archeology/pubs/nhleam/E-Southeast.htm>.

frequently. A concentration of Paleoindian sites at shoals is also evident.”³²

Archaic Period (8,000 BCE – 1,000 BCE)

A period of climatic warming occurred during the transition between the Paleoindian and Archaic periods, resulting in widespread environmental changes. In southeastern North America, pine and scrub hardwoods began to dominate upland areas.³³ The Archaic period Native Americans who occupied northern Georgia continued a nomadic hunter-gatherer mode of living despite the changes to the environment. As such, there is little evidence of agricultural development during this period, but there is evidence of seasonal settlements during the Early Archaic period.³⁴ By the Middle Archaic period, “semi-permanent base camps along water courses became common,” which influenced the development of trade networks.³⁵ Late Archaic archeological sites are much more numerous than those of earlier periods, likely due to the development of larger, more densely occupied settlements. Residential sites grew in size while nomadic territories became smaller.³⁶ Social alliances and trade developed among regional groups. Pottery, especially cookware, is more widely characteristic of the Woodland period, but it began to appear in what would become Georgia during the Late Archaic period.

Woodland Period (1,000 BCE – 1,000 CE)

The Woodland period is marked by an increase use of ceramic vessels. Innovations in pottery included the use of non-fiber tempering materials, the development of coiling and burnishing technique to build vessels, and the pointing or rounding of vessel bases. People began to concentrate in river valleys and along the Coastal Plain. They used more pottery, constructed earth mounds for burial,

and began to cultivate and store more plants.³⁷ The climate during this period became more consistent with the current climate.

By about 100 BCE, southeastern Native Americans began settling in small villages. The villages featured clusters of circular post buildings, which groups often sited near alluvial plains and at the confluence of major rivers. Native Americans based subsistence practices on new food sources as well as established cultivation of food crops. According to one study, “Throughout the Woodland period there was a growing reliance on domesticated plants, especially maize, beans, and squash . . . but hunting, fishing, and gathering continued as supplements to agriculture.”³⁸ Native American groups began to establish civic-ceremonial centers, including the mound complexes at Ocmulgee (Macon) and Etowah (Bartow County) in Georgia.

Mississippian Period (800 CE – 1600 CE)

An influential cultural florescence called the Mississippian period developed in the Mississippi Valley and spread throughout the Southeast beginning around 800 CE.³⁹ In general, Mississippian societies developed socially stratified chiefdoms characterized by extensive agricultural production, centralized and fortified towns, complex religious practices, long-distance trade, and chiefs that possessed the ability to direct large numbers of people to conduct war or construct massive earthworks.⁴⁰ The Mississippians who populated the Southeast “tended to build their capitals near the edge of the province [Coastal Plain region], near its juncture with the Piedmont.”⁴¹

Within a few hundred years, however, due to a combination of factors including “overpopulation, depletion of soil fertility due to intensive agriculture, shortages of wood resulting from deforestation, climate change (the ‘Little Ice Age’), [and] warfare” many Mississippian chiefdoms

32. David G Anderson et al., “Paleoindian and Early Archaic in the Lower Southeast: A View from Georgia,” 1994, 16.

33. David G. Anderson and Glen T. Hanson, “Early Archaic Settlement in the Southeastern United States: A Case Study from the Savannah River Valley,” *American Antiquity* 53, no. 2 (1988): 262–86.

34. Gerdes, Messer, and Jones, “Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Historic Resource Study,” 8.

35. Ibid.

36. Kenneth Sassaman, *Early Pottery in the Southeast: Tradition and Innovation in Cooking Technology* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993).

37. Judith A. Bense, *Archaeology of the Southeastern United States* (San Diego: California Academic Press, 1994), 130.

38. Gerdes, Messer, and Jones, “Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Historic Resource Study,” 8.

39. Eric E. Bowne, *Mound Sites of the Ancient South: A Guide to the Mississippian Chiefdoms* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013), 3.

40. Bowne, *Mound Sites*, 3.

41. Bowne, *Mound Sites*, 13.

collapsed.⁴² Native Americans in the region had established, or were in the process of establishing, a new “multicultural and multilingual” social order when the Spanish began their conquest of the Southeast in the sixteenth century.⁴³

Changes within Native American Society

The Spanish encountered these new groups as they navigated through the panhandle of Florida and into southwest Georgia and beyond. They engaged with Native Americans through trade and cooperation as well as combat and pillage. No matter the type of engagement, these interactions exposed Native Americans to European diseases for which they had no immunity. The diseases swept through Native American settlements, decimating local populations and shattering social cohesion. The recently reorganized Late Mississippian chiefdoms had collapsed by the time Britain and France began colonizing portions of North America during the seventeenth century. In the aftermath of the collapse of the chiefdoms, Native Americans developed new societies including the Muscogee (Creek) Confederacy. The region that became Atlanta was part of this coalition’s lands.

The Muscogee (Creek) Confederacy

Totaling around 8,000 in 1730, the Muscogee (Creek) population rose throughout the 1700s. By the late-eighteenth century, “73 towns, ranging in size from as few as 10 to 20 families to more than 200 families, comprised the ‘Creek Confederacy’—48 Upper Creek towns and 25 Lower Creek, in total about 15,000-20,000 people.”⁴⁴ These towns spread across an expansive swath of territory, encompassing large parts of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida.⁴⁵ Tribes included the Chickasaw, Alabama, Koasati, Apalachee, Ochese, Tallapoosa, Abeika (or Abihka), Ocfuskee,

Hitchiti-Mikasuki, Muskogee, and some Choctaw. The Muscogee (Creek) extensively interacted with European and American emigrants throughout their territory. There was a significant Native American village and trading center on the Chattahoochee River called *Pakanahuli* (meaning Standing Peach Tree). According to one scholar,

It is very likely that the village extended along the southeast bank of the Chattahoochee for some distance north and south of the mouth of Peachtree Creek and back eastwardly along Peachtree and Nancy creeks . . . Certainly Standing Peachtree was strategically located for travel and for trading with the [American] Indians. It was on the frontier between the Creek and the Cherokee nations and was a point of entry into the Cherokee nation for the licensed white traders who were permitted to enter the Indian country or traffic with them. The location was convenient too for river traffic.⁴⁶

Most of the written descriptions of the Muscogee (Creek) territory during the 1700s come from travelers of European descent, and many wrote about the unspoiled watercourses that ran through the region. According to a history of this period, “Without exception, literate white travelers who wrote about what they saw as they passed through [Muscogee] Creek country eulogizes these streams for their clarity and pure waters.”⁴⁷ In his travel through the northern portion of the Muscogee (Creek) territory, Indian agent Benjamin Hawkins observed the overstory species of the Piedmont forests and noted American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*), beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), various oaks (*Quercus* spp.), and pines (*Pinus* spp.)⁴⁸ The trees in these forests were significantly larger in the eighteenth century, “in areas not previously cleared and cultivated by prehistoric Indians, the deciduous trees were very large. They were sometimes 6, 8, or

42. Reed F. Noss, *Forgotten Grasslands of the South: Natural History and Conservation* (Washington DC: Island Press, 2013), 65.

43. Charles Hudson, *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun: Hernando de Soto and the South’s Ancient Chiefdoms* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997), 30.

44. Robbie Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 31.

45. Claudio Saunt, *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1816* (Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge Press, 1999), 12.

46. Franklin Miller Garrett, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1820s-1870s, vol. I* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988).

47. Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World*, 2003), 33.

48. Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World*, 42–43.

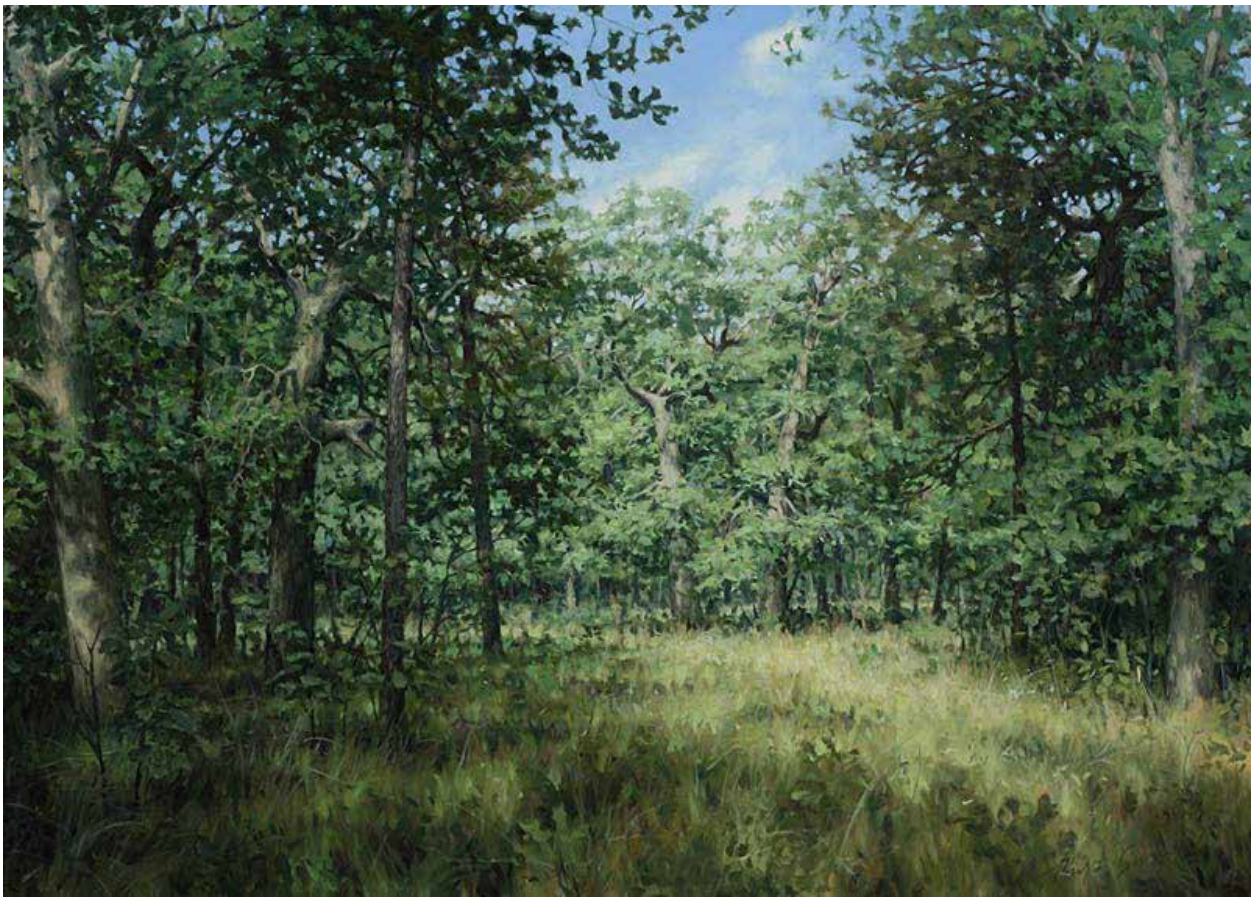


Figure 2.1. Artist's depiction of an opening in the Piedmont Woodland, circa 1775. (Source: Philip Juras, *Piedmont Woodland Opening* c. 1775. April 2010. Oil on Canvas, 30"x 42".)

even 11 feet in diameter with branches spreading 100 feet from side to side. . . . The ‘inexpressible grandeur’ of these trees left many naturalists groping for words” (Figure 2.1).⁴⁹ William Bartram described the Chattahoochee River valley he encountered in his travels,

The land rises from the river with sublime [magnificence], gradually retreating by flights or steps one behind and above the other, in beautiful theatrical order, each step or terrace holding up a level plain; and as we travel back from the river the steps are higher, and the corresponding levels are more and more expansive; the ascents produce grand high forests, and the plains present to view a delightful varied landscape, consisting of extensive grassy fields, detached groves of

high forest trees, and clumps of lower trees, evergreen shrubs and herbage; green knolls, with serpentine, wavy, glittering brooks coursing through the green plains, and dark promontories, or obtuse projections of the side-long acclivities . . .⁵⁰

Standing Peachtree was located six miles northwest of what is now downtown Atlanta, where “the river could be forded there at least part of the year.”⁵¹ Trading routes used by the Muscogee (Creek)

49. Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World*, 47.

50. “William Bartram, 1739-1823. Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws; Containing An Account of the Soil and Natural Productions of Those Regions, Together with Observations on the Manners of the Indians. Embellished with Copper-Plates.,” 393–94, accessed October 2, 2018, <https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/bartram/bartram.html>.

51. Tommy Jones, “Atlanta’s Indian Trails,” accessed February 12, 2020, http://tomitronics.com/indian_trails/indexB.html.

people and their trading partners crisscrossed the area that is now Vine City. Sand Town Trail, which ran roughly east to west, and a trail to Coweta converged near the headwaters of Proctor Creek, which feeds into the Chattahoochee. An established trail led north to the Stone Mountain Trail, which connected Standing Peachtree with the Hightower Trail at Rock Bridge in the east.⁵²

Colonization and European settlement of Georgia came through a series of treaties with the Muscogee (Creek) and Cherokee peoples. In Georgia, the process of land seizure by European Americans from the Native Americans took over one hundred years. This process began in 1733 with the founding of the Georgia Colony in Savannah. Subsequent removal and treaties pushed the Native Americans further westward as Europeans demanded access to more land to establish settlements, farms, and plantations. To justify the land grab, from the beginning of the colonial enterprise, European powers spoke of a policy of “civilization” of Native Americans rather than engaging them in outright conflict.⁵³ Early European American emigrants sought to convert native peoples to Christianity, Western concepts of property ownership, and other non-indigenous modes of economy and social relations. According to historian William Anderson, “On the surface the original goal of the ‘civilizing’ policy seemed generous and philanthropic; beneath the surface, however, the policy represented a new attempt to wrest the Indians’ land from them.”⁵⁴

Throughout the colonization process, relations between Europeans and the Muscogee (Creek) and between factions of the Muscogee (Creek) varied and evolved.

In the early nineteenth century, there were two factions within the [Muscogee] Creek Nation. The more militant group came primarily from the Upper [Muscogee] Creek

towns located along the Alabama, Tombigbee, Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers in Alabama; their warriors became known as the Hostile Red Sticks. Most of the [Muscogee] Creeks in the Lower [Muscogee] Creek towns along the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers were less combative, having interacted more with the white traders, settlers and Indian agents.⁵⁵

As part of a continuum of hostilities since European invasion, the division resulted in the outbreak of civil war between two factions in 1813.⁵⁶ While the reasons for the conflict were numerous and complex, “in broad terms, the Creek Civil War was a clash between those building a capitalist nation-state and those fighting against it.”⁵⁷ Soon, the United States, which the Muscogee (Creek) had generally supported during the American Revolution, became involved, waging war on the traditionalists and their Black allies.⁵⁸ With the support of the United States military, the war ended with the defeat of the traditionalist faction at Horseshoe Bend.

By 1827, as a result of these treaties and others signed in subsequent years, the Muscogee (Creek) occupied only a fraction of their former territory—a small area straddling the Alabama-Georgia border. These treaties marked the end of the Muscogee (Creek) control of the region, a region occupied by Native Americans for over ten thousand years.

The United States government passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830. Though the Federal government offered land and money to the Muscogee (Creek) and other Native American groups in exchange for the land, it also maintained the right to forcibly remove any Native American

52. Jones, “Atlanta’s Indian Trails.”

53. Though seemingly more benevolently intentioned than removal, civilization required the complete reorganization of native society (a new gendered division of labor, subsisting as yeoman on smaller parcels of land, etc.) that historians have accurately characterized as cultural genocide.

54. William L. Anderson, “Introduction,” in *Cherokee Removal: Before and After*, ed. William L. Anderson (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), viii.

55. Susan K. Barnard and Grace M. Schwartzman, “Tecumseh and the Creek Indian War of 1813-1814 in North Georgia,” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 3 (1998): 489–90.

56. Beth Wheeler Byrd, “Horseshoe Bend National Military Park Cultural Landscape Report” (National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 2013), 13.

57. Cameron Shriver, “Reflecting on Justice 200 Years after the Creek Civil War,” *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective*, accessed September 21, 2018, <https://origins.osu.edu/milestones/september-2013-reflecting-justice-200-years-after-creek-civil-war>.

58. Saunt, *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1816*, 270.

unwilling to leave the area. Many Muscogee (Creek) resisted through the 1830s, resulting in armed conflicts in southern Alabama and Georgia, but ultimately Federal authorities forced those who remained to leave their homeland for reservations west of the Mississippi. The forced relocations of the Muscogee (Creek), Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw resulted in thousands of deaths both during the migration and soon after arriving at the new settlements in the West.

European American and African American Settlement of Atlanta Area (1821-1865)

Early European American Settlement

European American emigrants began streaming into the region between the Ocmulgee and Chattahoochee rivers, establishing farms, communities, towns, and counties after the Treaty of Indian Springs in 1821. DeKalb County was created in 1822 from portions of Henry, Fayette, and Gwinnett Counties. According to Cathy Carpenter's history of Fulton County, "By 1822, white settlers from counties to the east of Fulton and from neighboring states began moving into the area. Most were of English, Scottish, and Irish heritage, with a few Moravians and Jews."⁵⁹ The discovery of gold north of the Chattahoochee also spurred growth in the area. A push to build railroads through northern Georgia to connect to southern cotton towns became another instigator of development. The 1830 Federal census for DeKalb County listed 8,388 white persons, 1,666 enslaved Black persons, and 18 free Black residents.⁶⁰

The land that became west Atlanta grew out of an area called White Hall, which was owned by Charner Humphries. Humphries purchased fourteen acres near a well-traveled trade route close to what is now West End Atlanta, which was then located at the intersection of Sand Town and Newnan (or Coweta) trails. White Hall (or Whitehall) "in its heyday was a tavern, stage coach

stop, post office, and election precinct."⁶¹ White Hall became a hub of activity and trade and a stop for United States postal carriers "effective June 9, 1835, with Charner Humphries as Postmaster."⁶²

Atlanta

Planning for a railroad line connecting the Piedmont region of Georgia with points north to the Tennessee River and south to the fall line town of Macon began in the mid-1830s.⁶³ According to Andy Ambrose's history of Atlanta, "In 1837, engineers for the Western and Atlantic Railroad (a state-sponsored project) staked out a point on a ridge about seven miles east of the Chattahoochee River as the southern end of a rail line they planned to build south from Chattanooga, Tennessee."⁶⁴ The end of this new railroad line became known as "Terminus," which became a junction for the Southern Railway and the Western and Atlantic Railroad. The settlement grew and was renamed Marthasville on December 23, 1843. The town was renamed again two years later to Atlanta. Ambrose writes that, "Supposedly a feminine version of the word Atlantic, the name was first used by John Edgar Thomson, chief engineer of the Georgia Railroad, to designate his railroad's local depot."⁶⁵ By 1846, the Macon & Western, Georgia, and Atlantic & Western railroads formed a junction, and residential and commercial development began to form around the hub.⁶⁶ The city incorporated with limits at one mile in each direction from the Western & Atlantic zero mile marker in 1847.

Early Atlanta had a different character from other areas in the South, much of which was dominated by small settlements located between large

59. Cathy Carpenter, "Fulton County," Text, New Georgia Encyclopedia, July 9, 2018, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/counties-cities-neighborhoods/fulton-county>.

60. Allison Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 16.

61. Franklin Miller Garrett, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1820s-1870s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 129.

62. Garrett, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1820s-1870s*, 1988, 1:130.

63. Steve Storey, "Railroads," New Georgia Encyclopedia, accessed September 27, 2018, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/business-economy/railroads>.

64. Andy Ambrose, "Atlanta," Text, New Georgia Encyclopedia, June 12, 2019, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/counties-cities-neighborhoods/atlanta>.

65. Ambrose, "Atlanta."

66. Robert W. Blythe, Maureen A. Carroll, and Steven H. Moffson, "Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Historic Resource Study" (Atlanta, GA: National Park Service, Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Regional Office, 1994).

agricultural plantations. It also had a different racial composition than many other urban centers in the antebellum South. According to historian Allison Dorsey, “Within the confines of antebellum Atlanta, African Americans were scattered, few in number, and heavily controlled. Enslaved or free, African Americans in the city experienced life on the extreme margins of white society, oppressed by a rigid legal code, social exclusion, and white racism.”⁶⁷ The 1830 DeKalb County census counted roughly ten thousand people. Around eighty-five percent of the population was white, and fifteen percent were enslaved persons of African descent. There were only eighteen free Black residents.⁶⁸ Atlanta “was not a city typified by a large population of urban slaves engaged in ‘quasi-autonomous’ relations with white society.”⁶⁹ The smaller enslaved population was due to Atlanta’s business-based economy and a population that included many entrepreneurs and merchants dependent on railroads instead of an established planter class.⁷⁰ Dorsey writes, “Few Georgians in the up-country owned as many as ten slaves, and the vast majority of slaveholders had fewer than five. Even though the cotton boom of the 1850s encouraged farmers to invest in cotton production to supplement their income, most did so by relying upon free white farm laborers rather than by purchasing additional slaves.”⁷¹

In other Georgia cities such as Savannah and Augusta, nearly one-third of the population was Black and mostly enslaved individuals.⁷² The number of Black residents in Atlanta increased over time but remained small compared to other cities in the South. By the 1850 Federal census, Atlanta “housed some 2,572 residents. There were 493 slaves in the city, almost 20 percent of the total population. . . . The bulk of these slaves were employed in domestic labor and probably

lived with or nearby their owners. The growing service industry, specifically the two hotels in the city, employed another large group; each hotel owner had more than twenty slaves. The railroad industry and traditional slave ‘professions’ of blacksmith, wheelwright, and carpenter occupied the remaining slaves.”⁷³

Fulton County was created from the western half of DeKalb County in December 1853, and Atlanta became the county seat. A newly formed city council appropriated funds for a city hall and county courthouse.⁷⁴ Soon thereafter, city officials adopted a plan dividing the city into five wards. Just before the Civil War, there were 1,914 Black and 7,615 white residents in Atlanta. According to Dorsey, “The slave population was dispersed throughout the city rather than concentrated in a slave quarter or square though the largest group (725) lived in the fifth ward,” located on the west side of downtown.⁷⁵ The number of free Black residents in Atlanta was relatively small. In 1850 there were nineteen free African Americans enumerated in the Federal census, and by 1860 that number had risen to twenty-five.⁷⁶ By comparison, in Charleston, the census enumerated 3,861 free African Americans in 1850 and 3,237 in 1860.⁷⁷ Because of the severe limits on the Black population in Atlanta and the few Black landholders in the city limits before the Civil War, there were few established Black social groups or Black-owned commercial enterprises within the city. Exceptions included religious congregations like the group that grew into Bethel AME Church, located in Atlanta’s Fourth Ward.

In 1845, the state legislature of Georgia passed an act that denied free Black laborers skilled as masons or mechanics the right to contract their services to the public. According to Dorsey, “Atlanta was very invested in limiting the number of free blacks residing within the city and passed

67. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 15.

68. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 16; “Ancestry.Com - 1830 United States Federal Census,” accessed August 23, 2019, <https://www.ancestry.com/>.

69. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 15.

70. Wendy Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 7, 15.

71. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 16.

72. Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta*, 7.

73. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 16.

74. Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta*, 11.

75. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 17.

76. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 21.

77. “Charleston’s Free People of Color – Special Collections,” accessed October 4, 2019, <https://speccoll.cofc.edu/charlestons-free-people-of-color/>.

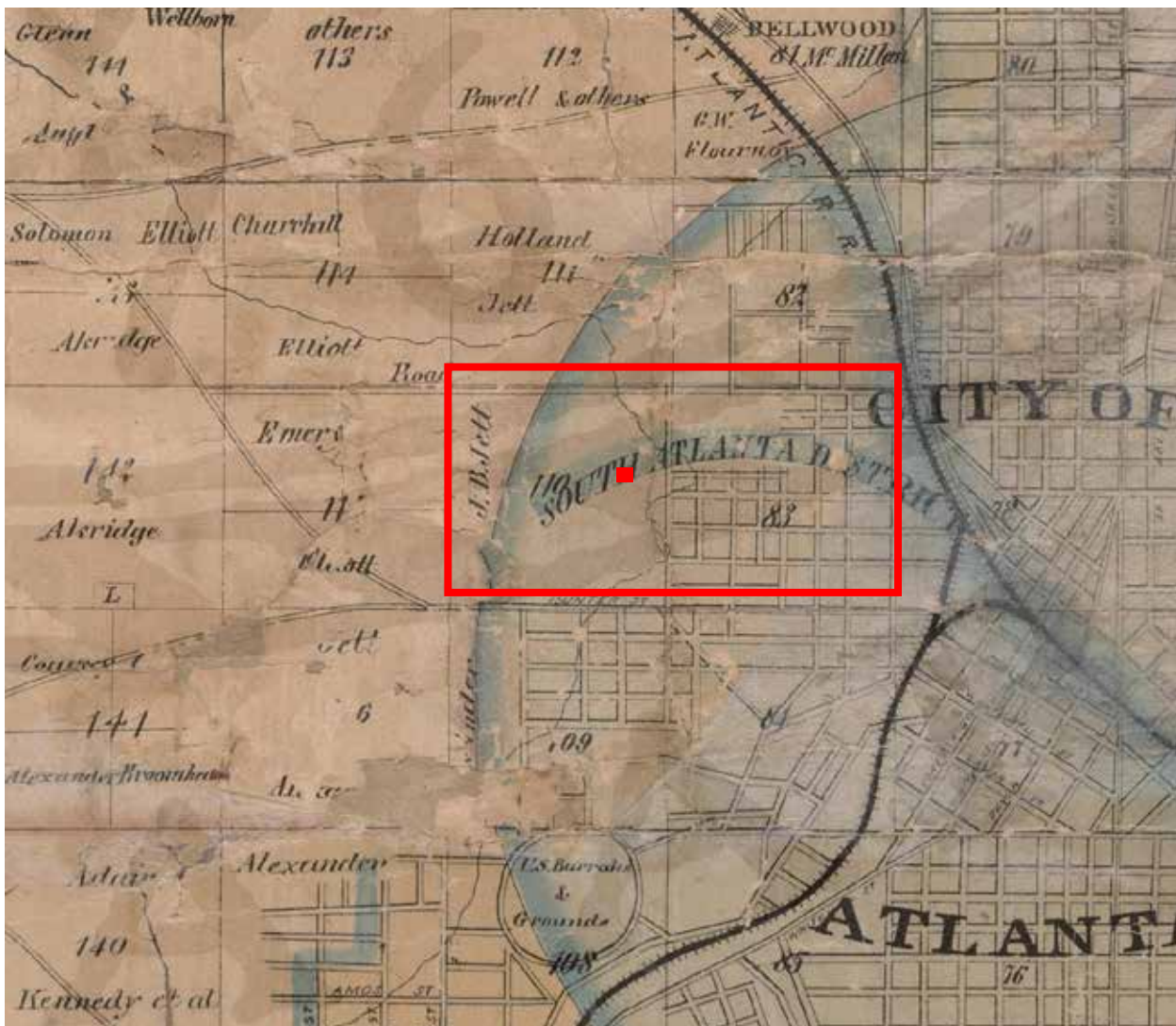


Figure 2.2. 1872 map of Atlanta showing the city limits and the “J. B. Jett” Plat at Land Lot 110. The area inside the red rectangle would become Vine City. The red square indicates the future location of the King Family Home. (Source: Georgia Archives, “Map of Fulton County, Georgia, compiled and arranged from Original and Actual Surveys and from the County Records by Daniel Pittman”.)

restrictive legislation to control the population.”⁷⁸ African Americans could not own or operate any business, boarding house, or restaurant. This population was also subject to heightened taxes and resident fees as high as \$1,000, and they could not own any real or personal property.⁷⁹ These regulations applied to both enslaved and free Black residents. As Dorsey observes, “Such legislation suggests that blacks in Atlanta, attempting to make some life for themselves beyond the restrictions of slavery, were indeed selling goods, hiring

themselves out, and living out.”⁸⁰ These types of legislation and restrictions demonstrate the threat white Atlantans felt from the potential accumulation of personal wealth and freedom by the Black population. Local ordinances and codes restricted everything from dress to public gatherings, which “required legal surveillance by a white marshal.”⁸¹ In 1859, free Black residents of Atlanta were required to pay the city a tax of \$200 within the first ten days that they arrived in the city. Failure to register could result in “arrest and hire at public auction.”⁸²

78. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 21.

79. Andy Ambrose et al., “Historic Resource Study: Auburn Avenue Community of Atlanta, 1865-1930” (Atlanta, GA: Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, 1982), 1-3. Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta*, 9-10.

80. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 19.

81. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 21.

82. Ralph B. Flanders, “The Free Negro in Ante-Bellum Georgia,” *The North Carolina Historical Review* 9, no. 3 (1932): 265.



Figure 2.3. 1864 map of west side of Atlanta showing Proctor's Creek, Confederate fortifications, and the city magazine (indicated with a red arrow). (Source: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division <https://www.loc.gov/item/gvhs01.vhs00311/>.)

In the years before the Civil War, much of the area on the west side of downtown Atlanta was rural farmland owned by a few large landholders. James Alston Jett (1796-1876) owned Land Lot 110, a portion of which was outside the city limits. Jett's original farm was located on "Land Lot 109 near the present intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and James P. Brawley Drive."⁸³ Mapping indicates that Jett's heirs kept ownership of the portions of Land Lot 110 into the 1870s (Figure 2.2). The city street grid had extended east of Land Lot 110 to Land Lot 83, and the area contained a city powder magazine as early as 1855.⁸⁴ As Atlanta prepared for an attack from United States Army (US Army) forces during the Civil War, Confederate forces constructed fortifications around the powder magazine (Figure 2.3).

Atlanta in the Civil War

Atlanta had multiple railroad lines running through the city that facilitated the transportation of agricultural goods and textiles to and from all over the country on the eve of the Civil War. As an important transportation hub and manufacturing city, Atlanta was an important component of the supply chain of the Confederate Army. During the war, both United States and Confederate strategists understood that southern railroads would be an important strategic military target. This fact led Georgia's Governor Joseph E. Brown to create two new militias whose sole purpose was to guard the train lines.⁸⁵ In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln had claimed he fought the war to preserve the United States, but after the proclamation "the elimination of slavery became a second major

83. Tommy Jones, "Hammonds House," accessed July 7, 2020, https://tomitronics.com/old_buildings/hammonds%20house/index.html.

84. Garrett, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1820s-1870s*, 1988, 1:388.

85. William Scaife and William Harris Bragg, *Joe Brown's Pets: The Georgia Militia, 1861-1865* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004), 22.

goal of the war.”⁸⁶ While many rejoiced that every citizen was free, the US Army continued to battle the Confederacy in the South.

As the US Army pressed deep into Georgia, they burned bridges and destroyed railroad tracks. During the summer of 1864, James B. McPherson and the Army of the Tennessee followed the spine of the Georgia Railroad toward Atlanta. By July, US Army troops had razed several sections of the northern portion of the Georgia Railroad, severely disrupting critical Confederate communication and supply links.

During the Civil War, Black men and women migrated into Atlanta. The first wave was enslaved persons who were forced to aid in the Confederate defense of Atlanta. General Joseph E. Johnston called for a force of twelve thousand African Americans to serve as wagon drivers and cooks.⁸⁷ “The impressment of 12,000 slaves was a fantastic number, constituting a small army of laborers.”⁸⁸ First Confederate, then US Army troops quartered in the city, and the total population exploded in Atlanta. “By July 1862 Atlanta’s population had nearly doubled and stood at roughly seventeen thousand including soldiers and assorted government personnel. Over the next eighteen months the city’s growth rate declined, but still far exceeded normal peacetime levels. Estimates of the city’s population in 1863 ranged between eighteen thousand and twenty thousand.”⁸⁹ Wealthy white families first migrated to Atlanta for safety as US Army troops pushed southward, then moved further south with Confederate lines. Some enslaved persons were forced to move with their families, while others remained at homesteads or plantations.⁹⁰ The Confederate Army continued to force free Black men, refugees from the war, and impressed enslaved persons to support the

war effort in hospitals, digging trenches, and constructing fortifications. In November 1863, there were 2,523 enslaved persons and 11 free Black persons listed in the Atlanta tax digest, but this may have been an underestimate.⁹¹

The battle to capture Bald Hill, the highest ground between Decatur and Atlanta, began on the morning of July 21, 1864. This event would eventually be known as The Battle of Atlanta.⁹² In later correspondence, Confederate General Patrick Cleburne would claim that the fight for Bald Hill was the “bitterest fight” of his life.⁹³ During the Battle of Atlanta, both sides suffered significant casualties. On July 22 alone, over 3,299 US Army and 3,800 Confederate troops were killed.⁹⁴ This staggering loss of life included a significant number of Confederate officers, including generals, colonels, and other regimental officers. Atlanta officially fell on September 2, 1864, when Mayor James M. Calhoun surrendered the city.⁹⁵ General William Tecumseh Sherman arrived shortly thereafter and made Atlanta his headquarters. The northern press used the victories of the Atlanta Campaign to bolster Lincoln’s appearance as a strong commander-in-chief and made the end of the war seem imminent. With the fall of Atlanta to United States forces, the Confederate supply trains were successfully disrupted. According to popular opinion in the North, it would only be a matter of time before the Confederacy fell as a result.

In Atlanta, Sherman ordered “families or noncombatants” to leave the city, with provisions that they could take their servants (white or Black) with them, provided they did not use force. However, “Black residents were not given the option of departure. Able-bodied black males were pressed to remain in the city where, as per Sherman’s instructions, ‘they may be employed by our quarter master.’”⁹⁶ The US Army often employed Black women who did not leave with their former slave-owners as domestic workers.

86. William J. Cooper Jr., Thomas E. Terrill, and Christopher Childers, *The American South: A History*, Fifth Edition, vol. I (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), 397.

87. Colin Edward Woodward, *Marching Masters: Slavery, Race, and the Confederate Army during the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014), 75, muse.jhu.edu/book/28770.

88. Woodward, *Marching Masters: Slavery, Race, and the Confederate Army during the Civil War*, 75–76.

89. Clarence L. Mohr, *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 193.

90. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 31.

91. Mohr, *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia*, 194.

92. Earl J. Hess, *Civil War Infantry Tactics: Training, Combat, and Small-Unit Effectiveness* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015), 101.

93. Gary Ecelbarger, *The Day Dixie Died: The Battle of Atlanta* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2010), 47.

94. Ecelbarger, *The Day Dixie Died*, 212-13.

95. Robert Scott Davis, *Civil War Atlanta* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2011), 75.

96. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 32.

Within eight months of the Battle for Atlanta, Confederate General Robert E. Lee signed terms of surrender at Appomattox Court House. Dorsey writes that, “Black Atlantans would play a significant role in rebuilding the city from the ground up after the war, though they would also continue to face resistance to their freedom and to the idea of their citizenship from Atlanta’s white population.”⁹⁷

Post-Civil War Atlanta and the Development of Vine City (1865 – 1933)

Atlanta’s Black Community Development

Rev. E. R. Carter wrote in his 1894 book *The Black Side*, “After the Southern Cause had been lost and the country became quiet, the negro then realized that he must act for himself. Standing alone, possessing nothing, he closed his eyes to the past to open them to the dawn of a new day.”⁹⁸ An entrepreneurial spirit in Atlanta fueled the city’s recovery from the destruction of the Civil War. The United States Congress codified the intent of the Emancipation Proclamation by passing the Thirteenth Amendment through Fifteenth Amendments, abolishing slavery and extending citizenship to include African Americans. President Lincoln signed the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands Bill in March 1865, which established a Federal organization to assist freed African Americans and Unionist whites in the South and to provide food, housing, medical aid, and educational facilities. The presence of the Freedmen’s Bureau office in Atlanta and the availability of work enticed many new residents to the city. Staffed by US Army officers, the new agency became part of the War Department. According to historian William Dobak, “Wherever soldiers were stationed, safeguarding government buildings and supplies was an important part of their duties, for nineteenth-century Americans were quick to appropriate for themselves whatever might be described as public, whether movable goods or real estate. As a result, soldiers in many

black regiments spent most of their time as sentinels during the months after the Confederate surrender.”⁹⁹ In July 1865, the 136th and 138th Regiments of the United States Colored Infantry were formed in Atlanta for this purpose.

In Atlanta, the Black population more than doubled in twenty years. There were 9,554 African American residents in 1860, and by 1880, there were 21,079, making up 43.7 percent of the population.¹⁰⁰ In 1870, the city street grid had extended west of the Western Railroad and Atlantic Railroad, and Ward 1 included the area north of Hunter Street. An 1870 map shows the area west of Vine and north of Hunter streets as a contiguous piece of land, not subdivided by roads. City property included a large parcel west of downtown with a powder magazine (Figure 2.4). The city powder magazine was the location “wherein all explosives brought into the city were required by law to be stored . . . The original road to the Powder Magazine was via the present Magnolia Street, until 1885 known as Magazine Street.”¹⁰¹ Increases in both Black and white populations motivated the city to expand its boundary through annexation, and by 1874, most of the area that became Vine City was within the city limits and part of Atlanta’s First and Fifth Wards (Figure 2.5). The city annexed this area into its boundary in stages. The 1847 city boundary reached just east of Maple Street. An 1866 annexation extended the city boundary to Chestnut Street and included Sunset Avenue. By 1889, the area west of Ashby Street was included in the city limits.¹⁰²

Dana White writes that, “A virtual reordering of its residential structure took place during Reconstruction. Instead of the ‘back-yard residence pattern’ of Old South cities, black residents in Atlanta formed what sociologist

97. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 28.

98. E. R. Carter, *The Black Side: A Partial History of the Business, Religion, and Educational Side of the Negro in Atlanta, GA* (Atlanta, GA, 1894).

99. William A. Dobak, *Freedom by the Sword: The U.S. Colored Troops 1862-1867*, CMH Pub 30-24-1 (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2011), 459.

100. Dana F. White, “The Black Sides of Atlanta: A Geography of Expansion and Containment, 1870-1870,” *Atlanta Historical Journal* 26, no. 2-3 (Summer-Fall 1982): 211.; Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Atlanta*, 7.

101. Garrett, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1820s-1870s*, 2011, 388.

102. *Annexation Map of Atlanta*, n.d., n.d., Digital Collections, Georgia State University Library, <https://digitalcollections.library.gsu.edu/digital/collection/atlmaps/id/155/rec/1>.

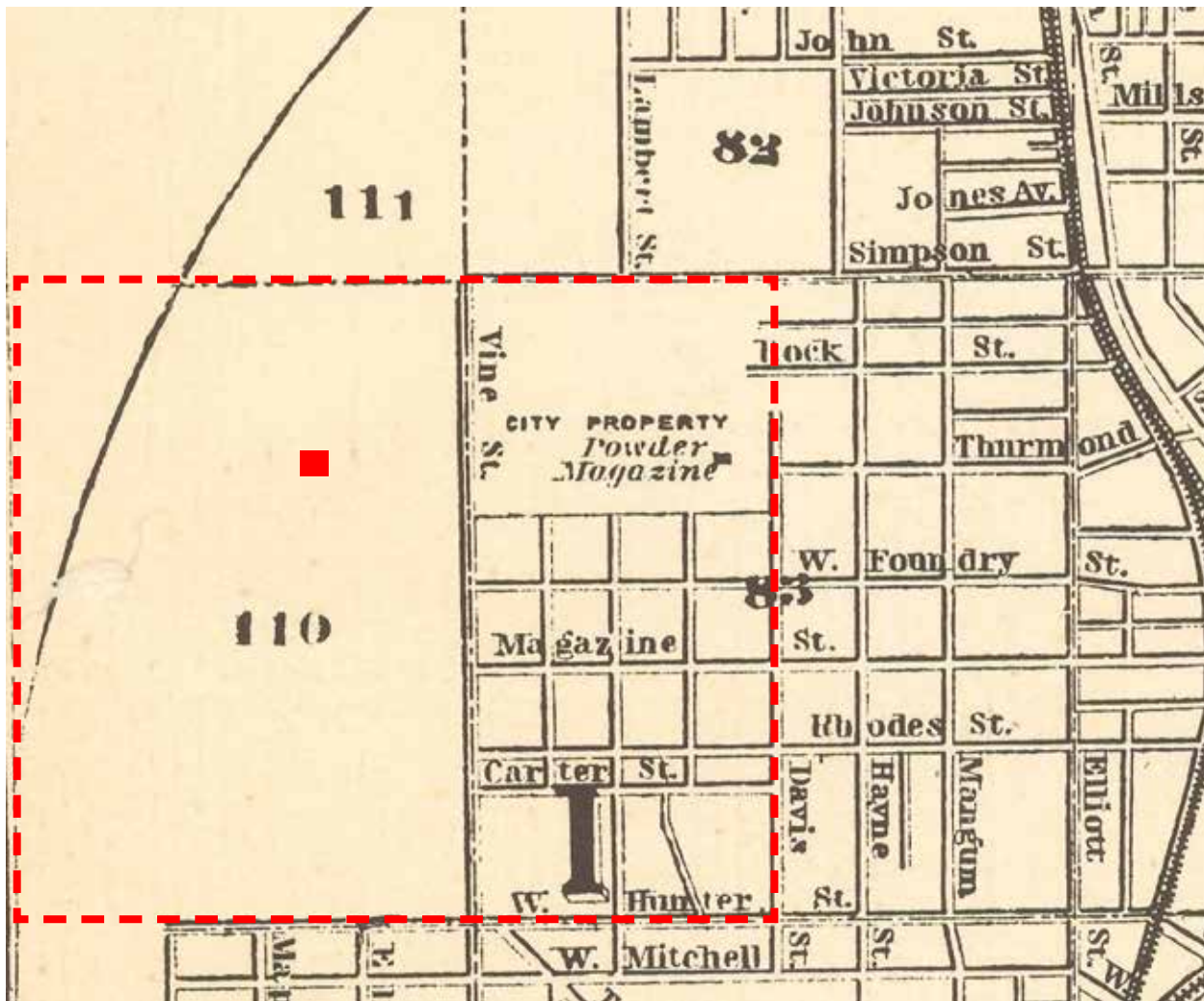


Figure 2.4. A portion of an 1870 map of Atlanta, showing what would become Vine City. The city street grid does not extend past Vine Street north of West Hunter Street. This map also shows the location of a powder magazine in what would become Vine City. (Source: Atlanta-Fulton Public Library Digital Collection, Georgia State University, AFPL_M0041.)

Charles S. Johnson later described as ‘urban clusters’” because much of the urban fabric of Atlanta was destroyed during the war.¹⁰³ Several predominantly Black residential clusters had developed near the city center by the 1880s. The three largest Black-majority communities were Jennings town, Shermantown, and Summerhill, which had Black populations ranging from seventy-seven to ninety-one percent.¹⁰⁴ Many of the dwellings in these communities formerly housed enslaved persons, and the buildings had suffered extensive damage during the war. William Jennings, a landowner with extensive holdings, began selling land, set on high ground

later known as Diamond Hill, to Black buyers.¹⁰⁵ According to Allison Dorsey, Jennings town “was the largest cluster, housing cluster, housing 2,490 African Americans.”¹⁰⁶ The area was located south of Hunter Street (later Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. NW). There were at least three Black churches located in Jennings town, and a smaller Black settlement had developed north of Hunter Street, which had a Black church as well by 1880. Missionary institutions began establishing educational resources for African Americans in Jennings town, and the west side of Atlanta soon became the educational hub for Black residents. Meanwhile, Auburn Avenue, located east of

103. White, “The Black Sides of Atlanta: A Geography of Expansion and Containment, 1970-1870,” 208.
 104. Harold Thompson, Jr., *A Most Stirring and Significant Episode: Religion and the Rise and Fall of Prohibition in Black Atlanta, 1865-1887* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 49–50.

105. Thompson, Jr., *A Most Stirring and Significant Episode: Religion and the Rise and Fall of Prohibition in Black Atlanta, 1865-1887*, 50.
 106. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 50.

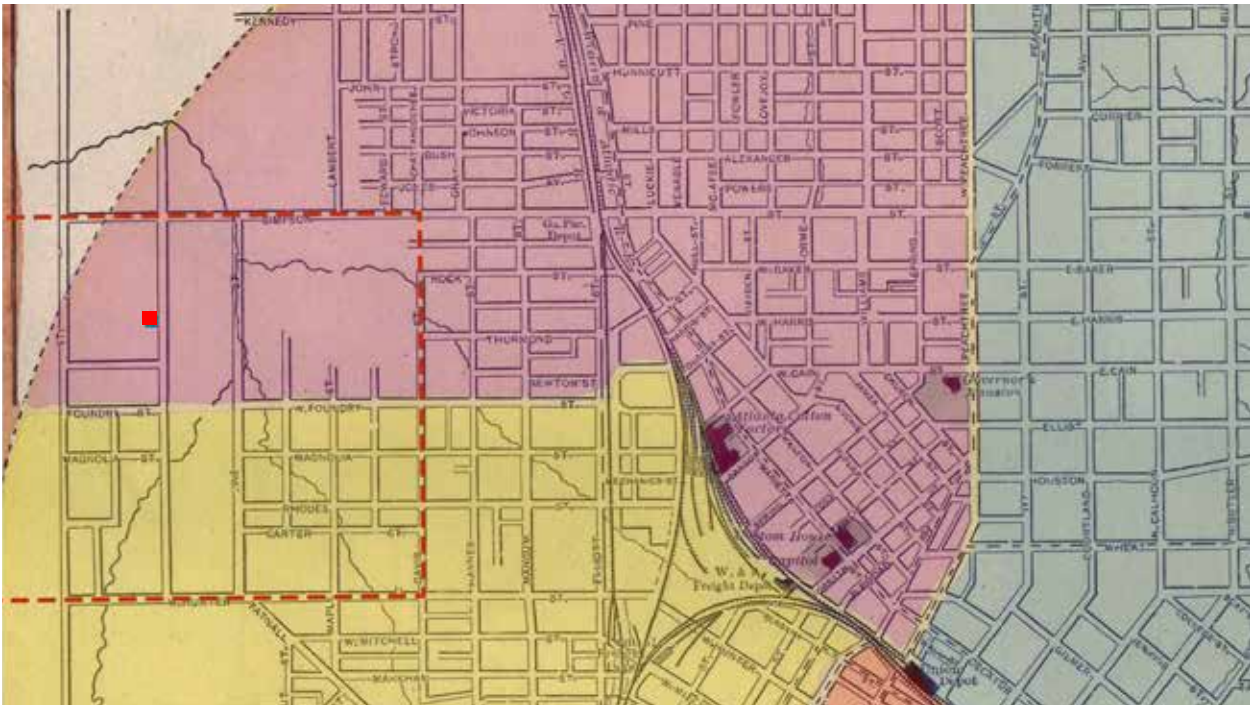


Figure 2.5. A portion of an 1874 map showing Atlanta's ward system after increasing the limits of the city from 1 to 1.5 miles, with the area that would become Vine City indicated. The grid system of streets has started to extend past Sunset Avenue at this point. The red dot represents the approximate future location of the King Family Home. (Source: Jolomo, 1874 Atlanta Wards, 2006 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Atlanta-wards-1874.jpg>, accessed May 29, 2020.)

downtown, began to develop into a major business center for Black Atlanta.

The American Missionary Association [AMA] was a northern-based abolitionist group that aimed to promote education for African Americans while promoting Christian values. The group established Atlanta University in 1865, and “Beginning in 1869, the AMA missionaries on the Atlanta University Board of Trustees purchased most of the lots in this area (which were occupied by Black tenants) from private parties and assumed ownership.”¹⁰⁷ The original school buildings constructed on “Diamond Hill” later became part of Morris Brown College, which was established in 1881. Clark College (later Clark University), founded in 1869, relocated to a property at Whitehall and McDaniel Street.¹⁰⁸ In 1881, Sophia B. Packard and Harriet E. Giles founded Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary (later Spelman College) in the basement of Friendship Baptist Church on the west side of Atlanta. The college relocated to a site south of Atlanta University, occupying nine acres and five frame

buildings in 1883.¹⁰⁹ An institute formerly located in Augusta, Georgia, changed its name to Atlanta Baptist Seminary (later Morehouse College) and moved to a four-acre campus near downtown Atlanta in 1879. The institution moved to a location west of downtown, near Atlanta University in 1885.¹¹⁰

The social atmosphere in Atlanta, as in other communities across the South, was still antagonistic toward Black enterprise and commercial productivity. Emancipation resulted in increased competition for labor positions as African American workers entered the job market. The number of Black-owned businesses increased as well. African Americans opening stores included James Tate, who opened a wholesale grocery on Decatur Street.¹¹¹ His business became hugely successful, selling thousands of dollars in retail

107. Joseph O. Jewell, *Race, Social Reform and the Making of a Middle Class: The American Missionary Association and Black Atlanta, 1870-1900* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), 78.

108. Clark Atlanta University, “CAU History,” accessed May 11, 2020, <https://www.cau.edu/history.html>.

109. Spelman College, “Spelman History in Brief | Spelman College,” accessed May 11, 2020, <https://www.spelman.edu/about-us/history-in-brief>.

110. Morehouse College, “Morehouse College | Morehouse Legacy,” accessed May 11, 2020, <https://www.morehouse.edu/about/legacy.html>.

111. Carter, *The Black Side: A Partial History of the Business, Religion, and Educational Side of the Negro in Atlanta, GA*, 39.

goods.¹¹² Tate is often referred to as Atlanta’s “father of black business.”¹¹³ Many African American business owners in Atlanta flourished in the late 1880s and into the 1890s. Alonzo Herndon found extraordinary success through the businesses he started in Atlanta and reportedly became one of the first Black millionaires in the nation. Herndon began as a barber and eventually owned three successful barbershops in Atlanta. He later expanded his investments to real estate, cofounded the Atlanta Loan and Trust Company, and founded the Atlanta Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1905.¹¹⁴ Though Herndon’s businesses were located in downtown and east of Atlanta, he and his wife elected to build their home on the west side of downtown. According to National Register of Historic Places documentation, “Built adjacent to Atlanta University overlooking the city from the west, the house she [Adrienne Herndon] designed contained every comfort for the family as well as an elaborate setting for entertaining. The Herndon’s new home, valued at \$40,000, promised to be one of Atlanta’s showplaces and was described by contemporary sources as beautiful and one of the most noteworthy objects in Atlanta.”¹¹⁵ African Americans in Atlanta continued to form their own institutions and community organizations. For example, in 1886, Reverend N. J. Jones, a minister of the first autonomous African American Baptist church in Atlanta, founded the Colored Men’s Protective Association to combat racial violence by organizing community support.¹¹⁶

Post-Reconstruction Development of West Atlanta

The layout of Vine City 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. The city had a recorded population of over twenty-

two thousand by the 1870 Federal census.¹¹⁷ The citizens of Atlanta had largely reconstructed the city’s transportation system after the Civil War, and railroads once again ran through and around the city. Population growth continued to push the city limits of Atlanta outward to a radius of three miles. Two Atlanta businessmen identified a solution for the growing need for public transportation to the newly annexed areas. George Adair and Richard Peters “purchased the original charter and franchise of the Atlanta Street Railway Company . . . the two men became heavily involved in real estate and viewed streetcar service as a marketing tool for suburban development of their property in the north and southwest sections of the city.”¹¹⁸

The first streetcar line to the West End suburb of Atlanta was completed in 1870. Adair began to advertise residential lots near the intersection of Sunset Avenue and Simpson Street, within a comfortable walking distance of his new streetcar line. Though a financial depression slowed the initial sale of these lots, they eventually sold in the 1880s.¹¹⁹ Additional residential enclaves and streetcar lines developed west of the city center as the appeal of streetcar travel increased. Lines followed Hunter Street (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive) and Magnolia Street west of the city. According to Pamela Flores, “Whereas a line on Peachtree [Street] was considered essential to residential development for Atlanta’s upper class in the northern corridor, the east-west connections, in conjunction with the mills, pulled working class settlement into these areas.”¹²⁰ The gridded street system continued further west into newly developed areas in response to development pressures.

Before its development as a largely African American neighborhood, emigrants of European descent established the area north of Atlanta University as a residential enclave (Figure 2.6). Two of these families included Edward A. Wachendorff, a German immigrant, and Phillip

112. Ambrose et al., “Historic Resource Study: Auburn Avenue Community of Atlanta, 1865-1930,” 1-3.

113. “Oakland Remembers World War I: James Edward Tate, Jr. – Oakland Cemetery,” accessed July 6, 2020, <https://oaklandcemetery.com/oakland-remembers-world-war-i-james-edward-tate-jr/>.

114. National Park Service, “Historical Background Essay: Atlanta’s Sweet Auburn,” 1981, 8.

115. Frank Miele, “Herndon Home” (National Historic Landmark Nomination, June 19, 1998), 18.

116. Carter, *The Black Side: A Partial History of the Business, Religion, and Educational Side of the Negro in Atlanta, GA*, 38-40.

117. National Park Service, “Historical Background Essay: Atlanta’s Sweet Auburn,” 2.

118. New South Associates, “Historic Streetcar Systems in Georgia: Context and Inventory” (Georgia Department of Transportation, January 31, 2012), 23.

119. Don L. Klima, “Breaking Out: Streetcars and Suburban Development, 1872-1900,” *The Atlanta Historical Journal* 26, no. 2-3 (Summer-Fall 1982): 74.

120. Pamela Flores, “Designation Report for the Sunset Avenue Historic District,” 2011, City of Atlanta.

Breitenbucher, a native of France. Wachendorff was born in Germany in 1838, and he moved to the United States after learning the florist business. He moved to Atlanta in 1878, where he “found a tract of ten acres of land admirably suited to his purpose.”¹²¹ This tract was located between Vine Street and Sunset Avenue, with the northern property boundary being Simpson Street. Wachendorff died in 1896, and his two sons, Charles and Edward, continued the business under the name Wachendorff Brothers. The offices for the business were located at 480 Simpson Street. The Wachendorff nursery was in business until 1949, and many local historians believe their gardens and greenhouses are what gave Vine City its name (Figure 2.7). The Wachendorff family built three residences on the east side of Sunset Avenue, near the intersection with Simpson Street. Two of the Wachendorff houses later served as the Peoria J. (P.J.) Woods Center for Senior Citizens and the Blind (originally the Metropolitan Atlanta Association for the Colored Blind), which occupied the houses from 1943 until early 2007. When the center opened in the mid-1940s, “it was the first facility in the South for black blind people.”¹²² Rev. Joseph E. Boone later directed the center.

Among the earliest buildings along Sunset Avenue was the brick cottage built for Edward A. Wachendorff sometime between 1880 and 1892. This house sat at the southeast corner of Sunset Avenue and Simpson Street (Joseph E. Boone Boulevard) until 1960 and now stands at 303 Sunset Avenue (Figure 2.8).¹²³ Surviving

evidence suggests that the house reflected the Folk Victorian style of the period, applying limited stylistic elements associated with the Italianate, Stick, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival styles to vernacular forms. Wachendorff’s sons built houses to the south during the 1900s including the Edward Wachendorff House (1903), a Colonial Revival cottage at 283 Sunset Avenue NW, and the Charles Wachendorff House (1905), a Queen Anne cottage at 293 Sunset Avenue NW (Figure 2.9).¹²⁴ These houses survive today and reflect popular styles and forms produced for the middle class at the turn of the twentieth century and appear to have been representative of the houses built in Vine City during the 1900s.¹²⁵

Philip Breitenbucher was a US Army veteran and a native of the Alsace region of France. He moved to Atlanta and became a wealthy merchant and property holder. He also served on the Atlanta City Council.¹²⁶ A 1906 map depicting the area shows that Philip Breitenbucher owned the entire block between Sunset Avenue and Griffin from Foundry Street to just north of Thurmond (Figure 2.10). The map shows a streetcar line along Magnolia Avenue to the south. The line originates at Atlanta Terminal Station, travels west along Mitchell Street, north along Davis Street, then west along Magnolia Street, before ending at Chestnut Street.¹²⁷ Other large Vine City landowners in Vine City on the map include E. Wachendorff, John Ryan, and Atlanta University.

121. Lucian Lamar Knight, *A Standard History of Georgia and Georgians*, vol. 6 (Chicago, IL: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1917).

122. Carol Reuben, “Food Baskets Are Gifts to Blind at Center Party,” *Atlanta Constitution*, December 25, 1980.

123. Edward & Bertha Wachendorff’s address was 166 W. Simpson Street in 1886, 170 W. Simpson from 1887 to 1891, 502 W. Simpson from 1892 to 1923. The property was renumbered 678 Simpson Street NW about 1927. About 1960, the Gulf Oil Company purchased the property for the construction of a service station fronting Simpson Street. It donated the house to the Metropolitan Association for the Blind, which had occupied the Charles Wachendorff House at 293 Sunset since 1951. The Hudgins House Moving Company moved the house south to 303 Sunset Avenue, adjacent to 293 Sunset, and the two houses were dedicated as a community center for blind African Americans (later known as the P. J. Woods Center for the Blind and Senior Citizens) in November 1960. “Association for the Blind Dedicates Home,” *Atlanta Constitution*, 7 November 1960, 12.

124. Clarissa Myrick-Harris, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Life Home at 234 Sunset Avenue and Maynard H. Jackson Family Home at 220 Sunset Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia c. 1934 – 2004* (Atlanta: OWA Institute, 2020), 12.

125. Other comparable houses include 146 Sunset (altered), 156 Sunset, 207 Sunset, 215 Sunset (altered), and 237 Sunset (altered).

126. “Philip Breitenbucher (1842-1916) - Find A Grave,” accessed July 10, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55852653/philip-breitenbucher>.

127. O. F. Kauffman, *Map of the City of Atlanta* (Atlanta, GA: O. F. Kauffman, C. E., 1906), Emory University, <http://disc.library.emory.edu/atlantamaps/1906-atlanta-city-map/>.

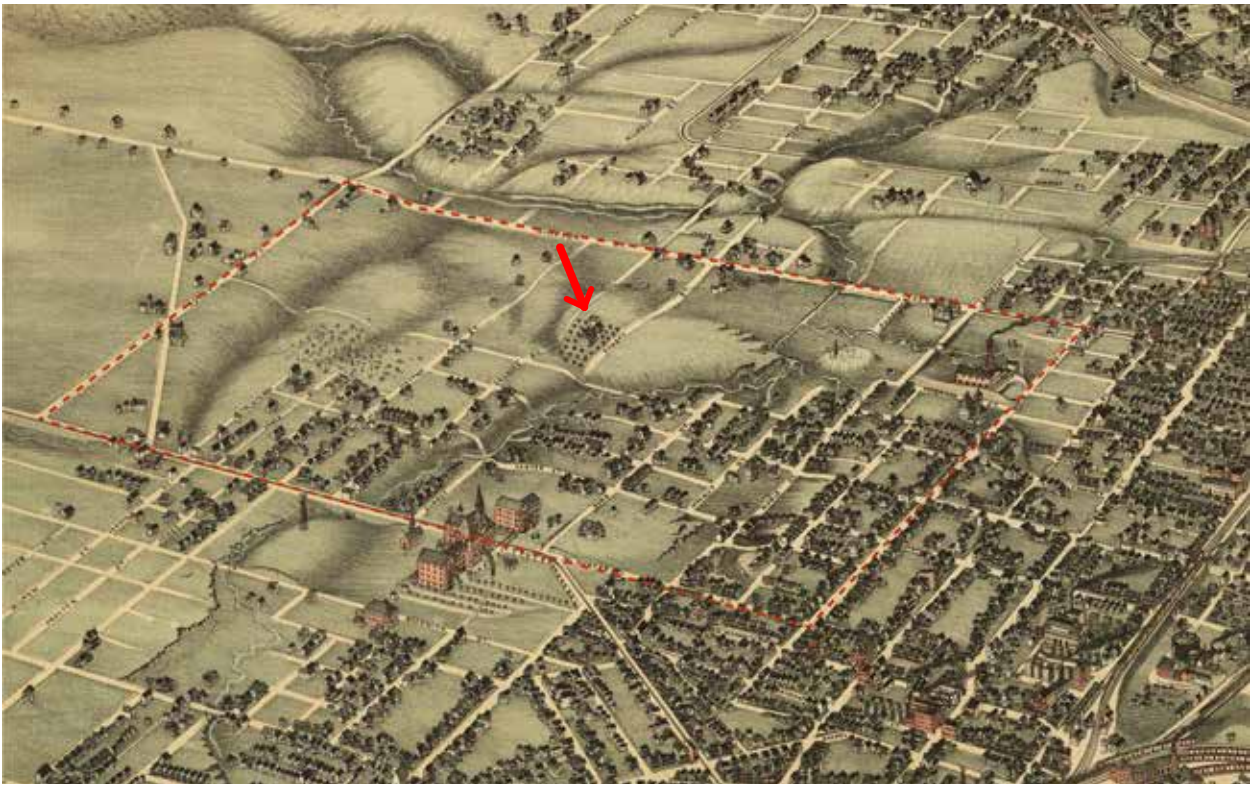


Figure 2.6. 1892 Birdseye view of Atlanta with Vine City delineated in red. The Wachendorff property is established by this point, with buildings depicted, and the Breitenbucher estate is drawn on this illustration (indicated with red arrow), but the area west of these developments appears to be fairly rural. (Source: Library of Congress, Koch, Augustus, Hughes Litho. Co, and Saunders And Kline. Bird's eye view of Atlanta, Fulton Co., State capital, Georgia. [https://www.loc.gov/item/75693189/.](https://www.loc.gov/item/75693189/))

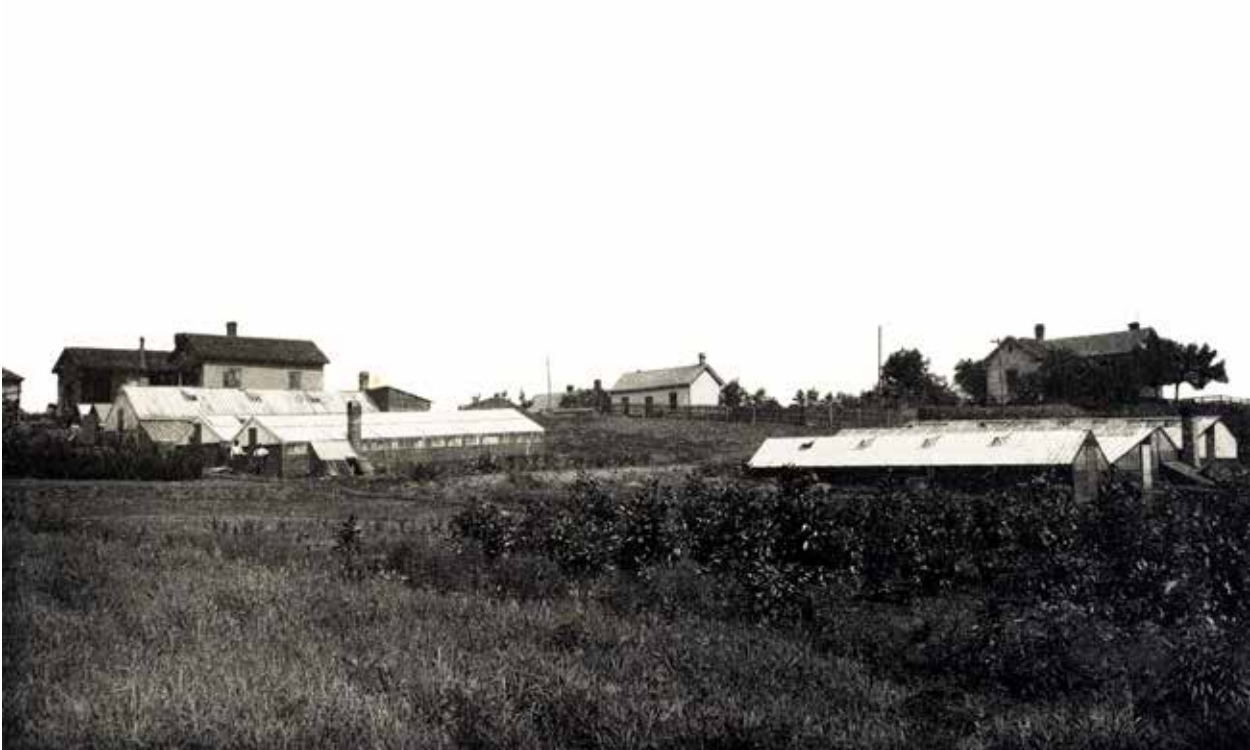


Figure 2.7. 1890 view of the greenhouses at Wachendorff Brothers Nursery. (Source: Atlanta History Photograph Collection, Keenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center.)



Figure 2.8. Edward A. Wachendorff House (1880-1892), 303 Sunset Avenue (left) and Charles Wachendorff House (1905), 293 Sunset Avenue (right). (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

Figure 2.9. Edward Wachendorff House (1903), 283 Sunset Avenue. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 2.10. 1906 map showing ownership of property around Sunset Avenue. Note Philip Breitenbucher and Wachendorff Brothers as large landholders. (Source: Kauffman's Map of the City of Atlanta, 1906, Emory University, <http://disc.library.emory.edu/atlantamaps/1906-atlanta-city-map/>.)

A plat map of the Asa G. Candler estate produced in 1905 shows one of the first large subdivisions of land in what would become Vine City. The subdivision is bounded by Magnolia Street, Sunset Avenue, Thurmond, and Walnut Street. There are larger plats shown that do not appear to be part of the planned real estate development, but all the area between Thurmond and Lester streets between Sunset Avenue and Elm Street is divided into 30- to 40-foot-wide lots with alleys located at the rear of the lots. The lots vary in depth from 120 to 160 feet (Figure 2.11).¹²⁸

As the streetcar system expanded west of the city, real estate became more valuable, and landholders like Candler began subdividing and selling land for residential development (Figure 2.12). Advertisements from the turn of the century tout their developments' proximity to the streetcar lines on Magnolia and Simpson streets. Advertisements included claims like, "we have positive assurance of the Georgia railroad and the Electric authorities that the car line will be extended this summer out Simpson street to Sunset Ave, thence Sunset Ave, one block to Magnolia, making a loupe [*sic*], It is practically the same as being on the car line now, as they will be running by early fall."¹²⁹ Areas west of Sunset Avenue began to be subdivided into individual lots just after the turn of the twentieth century. A 1907 plat map shows the land bounded by Chestnut, Foundry, Griffin, and Simpson divided into ninety-five lots with cross streets and alleys. The lots range in price from \$250 and \$500, with the corner lots located on Simpson being listed as the most expensive. A 1907 real estate advertisement describes Sunset Avenue lots and houses for sale,

Eight houses and twelve lots corner Simpson Street and Sunset Avenue . . . these cottages are built of the very best material, large rooms, cabinet mantels, tile hearths, gas with nice fixtures, water, porcelain sinks in kitchens, etc. Sidewalk on Simpson street, streets well lighted . . . This property lies within the one mile circle, is elevated, not crowded up (Figure 2.13).¹³⁰

128. G. E. Kauffman, *Map of the Asa G. Candler Property Situated in The City of Atlanta in Land Lots 83 & 110*, Plat, 80 feet = 1 in (Forrest and George Adair, real Estate Dealers, January 1905), Plat Book 2, Page 45, Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.

129. Sanders and Conway, "At Auction, Saturday June 8, 3 P. M.," January 19, 1907, Map Collection, Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.

130. Sanders and Conway, "At Auction, Saturday June 8, 3 P. M."

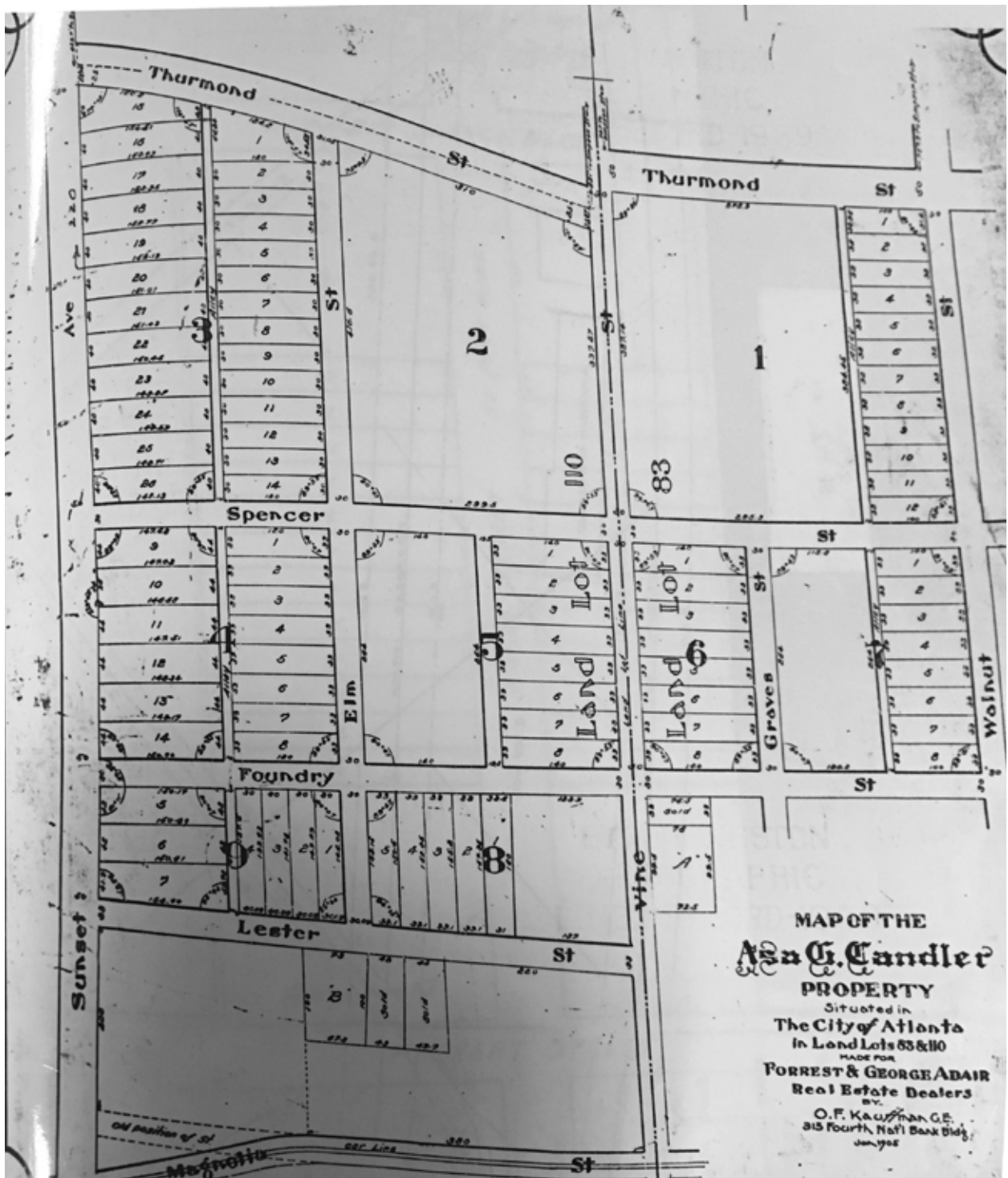


Figure 2.11. 1906 plat map showing subdivision of the Candler Estate with Sunset Avenue as the western border. (Source: Fulton County Supreme Court Deed Room.)

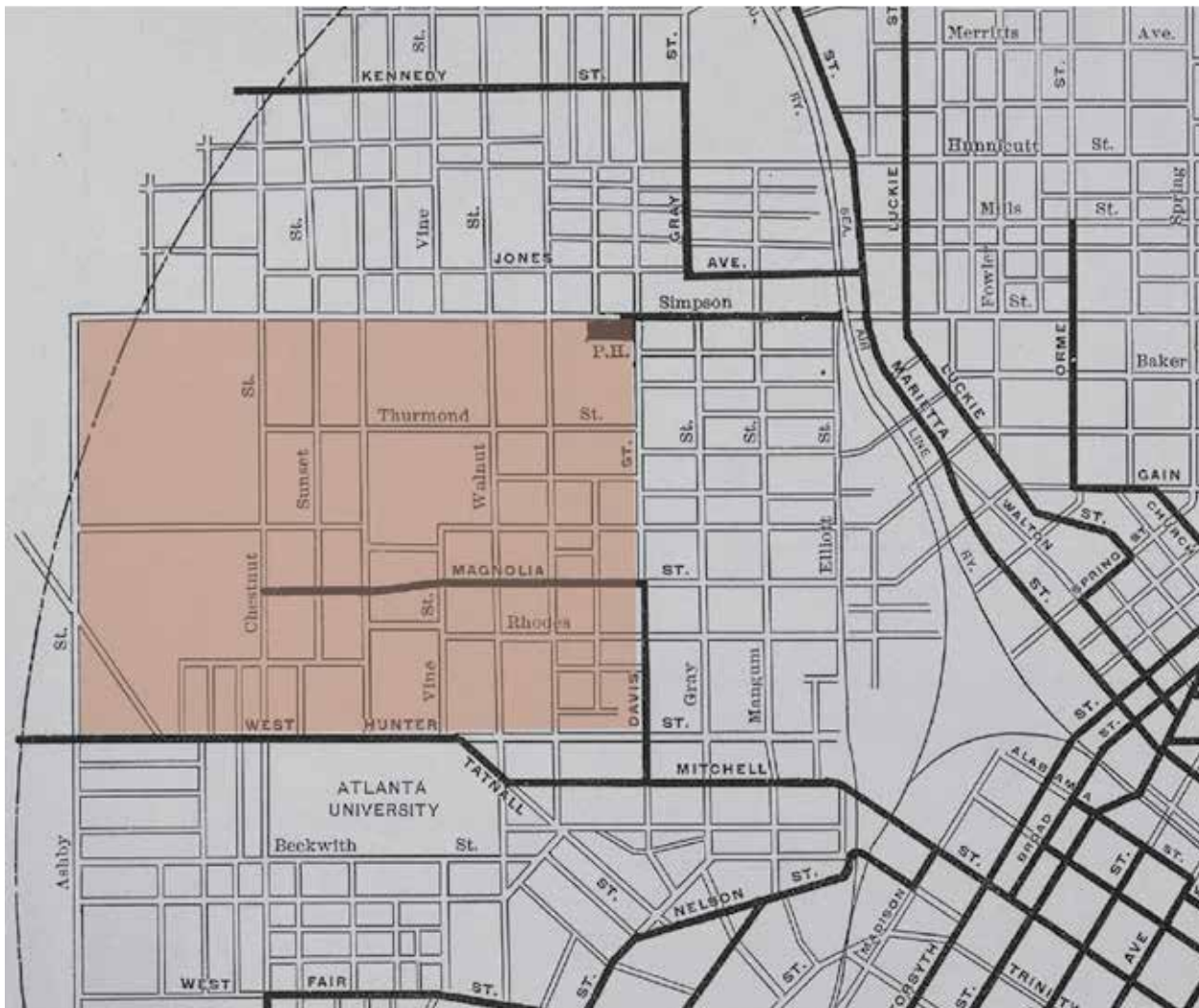
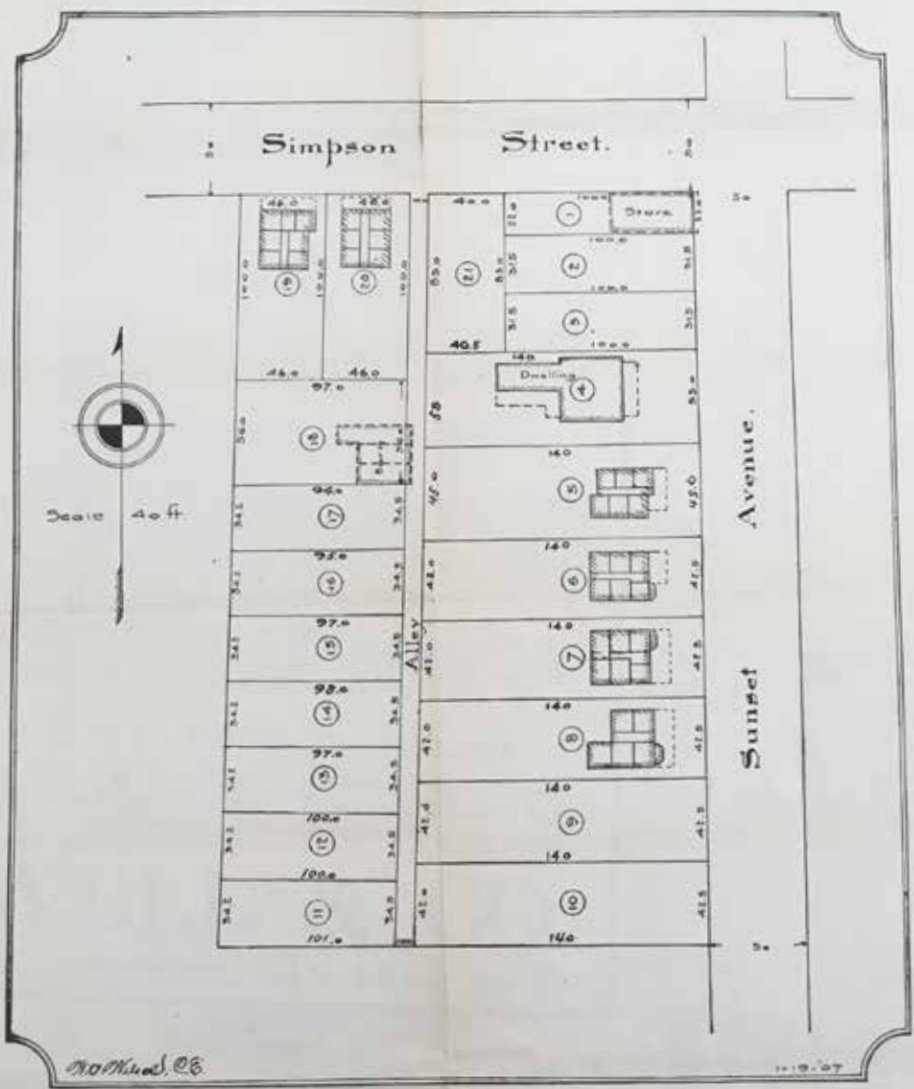


Figure 2.12. A portion of 1902 *Map of Atlanta, Georgia* showing the Lines of the Georgia Railway and Electric Company, with Vine City indicated. (Source: Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection, The University of Texas at Austin, http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/street_railway/1902/, accessed May 29, 2020.)

AT AUCTION

Saturday June 8th, 3 P. M.



Eight houses and twelve lots corner Simpson Street and Sunset Avenue. Five brand new five room cottages and one with six rooms on lots 42x140. These cottages are built of the very best material, large rooms, cabinet mantels, tile hearths, gas with nice fixtures, water, porcelain sinks in kitchen, etc. Sidewalk down on Simpson street, streets well lighted. We have one large 2-story 4-room house on lot 53x140, and a store on corner on a lot 22x100, we also have 12 lots varying in size, which we will sell as per plat. If you want a well built cottage home these should appeal to you, as they occupy an eminence overlooking the entire western half of the city.

TERMS.—We will sell the cottages and sites for \$400 each and \$25 per month. The 2-story for \$500 cash and \$30 per month, 7 per cent interest payable on or before. The lots we will sell for 1-4 cash balance 1 1/2 and 3 years, 7 per cent on or before. Will allow 5 per cent discount on any sale for all cash.

Time, as good, time will be allowed for examination of same.

\$50 Given Away.

At close of sale we will give away \$10 and \$5 gold coins. Every person who attends sale whether you buy anything or not will be allowed to draw.

J. W. FERGUSON,
Auctioneer.

LOCATION.—Take Magnolia car get off at Sunset Ave. and go north one short block or take River car and get off at Griffin street and go south two short blocks. We have the positive assurance of the Georgia Railroad and Electric authorities that the car line will be extended this summer out Simpson street to Sunset Ave. thence Sunset Ave. one block to Magnolia, making a loop. It is practically the same as being on the car line now, as they will be running by early fall.

Listen To The Facts ¹/_a Minute!

This property lies within the one mile circle, is elevated, not crowded, up. Great crowds have been going out three and four miles, and in some instances 7 and 8 miles and buying 50x150 feet lots for \$300 to \$400—away off the car line. What are our houses and lots worth in comparison with these COUNTRY LOTS? And yet we are not expecting fancy prices at this sale. Houses will be open all day on date of sale for inspection.

For further information apply at our office.

SANDERS & CONWAY,
412 PETERS BLDG.

Figure 2.13. Advertisement for houses and lots for sale at the northwest corner of Simpson Street and Sunset Avenue. (Source: Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.)

Segregation and Atlanta

The Rise of Black Businesses and the Race Riot of 1906

Despite the success of early Black enterprise and education in Atlanta, local and state policies in Georgia continually restricted the civil rights of African Americans. Incidents of lynching peaked during this period. In 1868, African Americans could legally vote in the city of Atlanta, but that same year, the Georgia General Assembly passed a law that altered the voting system. The new regulation switched from a ward-based voting system to an at-large system for the election of councilmen, which undermined the votes in wards where the majority of the population was African American.¹³¹ In Atlanta, parks featured signs that forbade admittance to Black residents. The formal segregation of streetcars and public transportation took effect in the city in 1892. A new state policy was enacted in 1897 that barred African Americans from holding any political office in the Atlanta city government.¹³² 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 the designation of separate seats on trains and streetcars.¹³³

African Americans constituted about forty percent of the population in Atlanta between 1870 and 1900.¹³⁴ Black-owned businesses were established to meet the need of the growing population as the formerly enslaved began to accumulate capital. While many Black men established businesses as barbers, grocers, restaurant and boardinghouse owners, “African American women found fewer job opportunities as a result of their gender and their race.”¹³⁵ Wage jobs in manufacturing, which were just starting to open to Black men, were largely out of reach for Black women. The Black professional class mostly consisted of teachers, professors, and ministers, though there were several Black doctors and dentists in Atlanta prior to the turn of the twentieth century.

The development of African American businesses and neighborhoods and 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. Several southern states, including Georgia, enacted segregation laws by 1894. In Atlanta, the political atmosphere and social tensions rose to violent proportions. Two prominent democratic nominees for Governor of Georgia—Clark Howell and Hoke Smith—used racial propaganda to boost their political candidacies. *The Atlanta Constitution* (edited by Clark Howell) and *The Atlanta Journal* (published by Hoke Smith) published sensationalized stories of sexual assaults on white women by Black men. This political propaganda eventually culminated in the devastating violence of the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot. A white mob perpetrated acts of violence and murder in downtown Atlanta on September 22, 1906. The mob targeted the business owners and their patrons on Marietta and Decatur Streets and many African American residences. The violence lasted for four days.¹³⁶ Though much of the violence associated with the 1906 riot was concentrated in the east side of Atlanta, residents of the west side of the city were on high alert. According to Dorsey’s history of Atlanta, “Black college professors and administrators armed themselves and patrolled the grounds of Morehouse and Spelman. Other men from the West Side ordered their wives and children to the safety of the brick walls of the colleges while they remained at home armed and waiting.”¹³⁷

Mayor James G. Woodward brought in the state militia to restore order. At the end of the riot, the city coroner reported that the death toll was at least twelve people, ten African Americans and two white men. The African American community also suffered tens of thousands of dollars in property damage.¹³⁸ The 1906 riot further fragmented the relations between races in Atlanta and influenced the increased segregation of retail establishments and residential areas. According to Ronald Bayor’s history of Atlanta, “The reaction from most of the white community, including the progressive

131. Ronald H. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 4.

132. National Park Service, “Historical Background Essay: Atlanta’s Sweet Auburn,” 3.

133. Ambrose et al., “Historic Resource Study: Auburn Avenue Community of Atlanta, 1865-1930,” 1–16.

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

135. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 41–42.

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

137. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 161.

138. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 161.

element, was to segregate blacks even more than before and to eliminate the black vote.”¹³⁹ The reaction of the Black community was “to further retreat into their highly stratified social enclaves.”¹⁴⁰

Atlanta was not alone in its racial violence. A large riot erupted in Springfield, Illinois that killed six African Americans, burned numerous African American businesses and houses, and drove two thousand people from the city also in 1906. The violence in Illinois, following the riot in Atlanta, spurred an urgent nationwide 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. At the local level, “even with their limited voting strength, black Atlantans were still able to express their grievances and bargain for some redress through bond, tax, recall, and other special-election voting as well as in general elections . . . Atlanta’s blacks were clearly not passive in the face of white hostility and resistance to change.”¹⁴¹

Establishment of the West Side as Atlanta’s Black Enclave

Historian and sociologist W. E. B. DuBois, who lived in Atlanta and taught at Atlanta University, described predominantly Black neighborhoods and their effect on Black Atlantans in his 1911 article *The Social Evolution of the Black South*. He stated, “This segregation is growing, and its growth involves two things true in all evolution processes, namely, greater differentiation and greater integration . . . in the sense of stronger self consciousness, more harmonious working together with a broader field for such co-operation.” He continued to describe the life of Black residents of Atlanta and their almost complete segregation from white people. DuBois continued, “Now such a situation means more than mere separation from white people; it means, as I have intimated before,

not simply separation but organized provision for the service of this colored group.”¹⁴²

Several factors led to the increased density of African Americans on the west side of Atlanta and in Vine City. The Atlanta City Council passed housing segregation ordinances in 1913 and 1917, though these codes were eventually deemed unconstitutional.¹⁴³ 1917 also marked the year of a fire that devastated “more than 300 acres and 1,938 buildings” in the Fourth Ward area on the east side of Atlanta.¹⁴⁴ Though the fire spared much of the business district along Auburn Avenue, thousands of African Americans were left homeless, which increased pressure for new Black housing. New residential development meant that small business clusters were established in adjacent areas.

Contractors purchased and developed large tracts of land in the streetcar suburbs of Atlanta beginning in the 1920s, and they “designed and constructed new and substantial homes and neighborhoods for blacks on the city’s West Side.”¹⁴⁵ These developers included Heman E. Perry, an African American insurance agent and associate of Alonzo Herndon, who expanded into the real estate business. Perry “secured approximately seventeen acres of swamp and sagefield west of downtown Atlanta and close to Atlanta University . . . with the goal of developing a major black residential subdivision.”¹⁴⁶ Perry’s company went on to purchase several hundred acres west of downtown. The company sold part of the property in 1922 to the city as a site for Atlanta’s first Black public high school, Booker T. Washington High School. Houses in the newly developed subdivision around the high school ranged in prices from \$3,000 to \$8,000 and included what was described as “all the amenities of paved streets, water, electricity, and gas.

139. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, 16.

140. Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*, 164.

141. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*, 17.

142. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Social Evolution of the Black South* (Washington, D.C.: American Negro Monographs Co, 1911), 7–8.

143. White, “The Black Sides of Atlanta: A Geography of Expansion and Containment, 1970-1870,” 215.

144. Curt Holman, “How Well Do You Know Atlanta’s Historically Black Neighborhoods?,” *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, March 4, 2016, <https://www.ajc.com/lifestyles/how-well-you-know-atlanta-historically-black-neighborhoods/XI5oFU29Clqhw24Sw7w9QJ/>.

145. White, “The Black Sides of Atlanta: A Geography of Expansion and Containment, 1970-1870,” 218.

146. Alexa Henderson, “Heman E. Perry and Black Enterprise in Atlanta, 1908-1925,” *The Business History Review* 61, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 226.

According to several assessments, ‘the opening of the Westside was the greatest single contribution to the improvement of living conditions in Atlanta for Negroes made in 25 years.’”¹⁴⁷

Booker T. Washington High School opened in west Atlanta in 1924. Located just west of Vine City, the school soon became an important part of Black life in Atlanta. The school building, designed by Eugene C. Wachendorff of Vine City, was four stories built in a medieval-eclectic style.¹⁴⁸ According to the National Register nomination for the school, “it was built as part of Atlanta’s school improvement program supported by a bond issue that created sixteen schools in the early 1920s. Its inclusion in the program was a result of political pressure from the black community.”¹⁴⁹

With the exception of the Breitenbucher heirs, nearly every resident living on Sunset Avenue north of West Hunter Street and south of Thurmond Street was African American by 1920.¹⁵⁰ Historians note that the park-neighborhood trend that developed in Atlanta promoted racial separation. Historian LeAnn Lands notes that the development of park-like neighborhoods such as Inman Park, Druid Hills, and Ansley Park was intend for “white elites.”¹⁵¹ Codification of these practices included a 1922 city council decision to introduce “racial classifications” into the land-use zoning plan for the city.¹⁵² The architects of this plan defended the racial zoning, stating “Care has been taken to prevent discrimination and to provide adequate space for the expansion of the housing areas of each race without encroaching on the areas now occupied by the other.”¹⁵³ Vine City became one of the neighborhoods zoned for Black residents.

Summary of Ownership Prior to the Development of the King Family Home Site

Early maps of Atlanta indicate the property that would become address 234 Sunset Avenue was owned by J. B. Jett, the heir of James Alston Jett, a large landholder in west Atlanta. A *City Atlas of Atlanta* from 1878 shows privately-owned properties on Simpson Street and on the east side of Sunset Avenue, but these lot lines do not extend south toward what would eventually be Spencer Street (Figure 2.14). Philip Breitenbucher had purchased the southern portion of the block located between Sunset Avenue and Griffin Street by 1892, with Foundry Street as the southern border of his property (Figure 2.15). His house appears in an 1892 aerial rendering of Atlanta (Figure 2.6). The 1892 City Directory lists Breitenbucher’s address as 142 Sunset Avenue.¹⁵⁴ This location is the first listing for Breitenbucher on Sunset Avenue. Breitenbucher’s sons George and Emil built their homes on this same block in 1905 and 1910, however, these dwellings are not shown on a 1911 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of the property (Figure 2.16). The family held on to the property until it was subdivided and marketed for sale. Deed records indicate that the Breitenbuchers subdivided their property in 1926. A 1929 survey of Atlanta and a 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance map show developed lots north of the original Breitenbucher estate (at that time listed as 186 Sunset Avenue), with what would become address 234 Sunset Avenue still undeveloped (Figure 2.17).¹⁵⁵ The house at 234 Sunset Avenue would be constructed sometime between the production of the 1932 Sanborn map and the following year.

147. Henderson, “Heman E. Perry and Black Enterprise in Atlanta, 1908-1925,” 228.

148. “Atlanta, GA : Booker T. Washington High School,” accessed October 1, 2019, <https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/city-planning/office-of-design/urban-design-commission/booker-t-washington-high-school>.

149. Kenneth H. Thomas, “National Register Nomination for Booker T. Washington High School,” 1986.

150. Ancestry.com, *Atlanta City Directory, 1920*, vol. XLIII (Atlanta, GA: Atlanta City Directory Co., 1920), 655.

151. LeeAnn Lands, *The Culture of Property: Race Class, and Housing Landscapes in Atlanta, 1880-1950* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 5.

152. Lands, *The Culture of Property: Race Class, and Housing Landscapes in Atlanta, 1880-1950*, 6.

153. City of Atlanta Planning Commission, “The Atlanta Zone Plan,” 1922, 10.

154. *Atlanta City Directory* (Atlanta, GA, 1892), <https://www.ancestry.com/>.

155. Emory University, Rose Library: Historic Map Collection, City of Atlanta: Sheet 21. Construction Department, William A. Hansell, Chief; S.P. Floore, Topographic Engineer in charge. Topography by C.W. Crisp. Control by U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and City of Atlanta Mapping Division. Surveyed in 1929. Williams & Heintz Co., Wash, D.C.

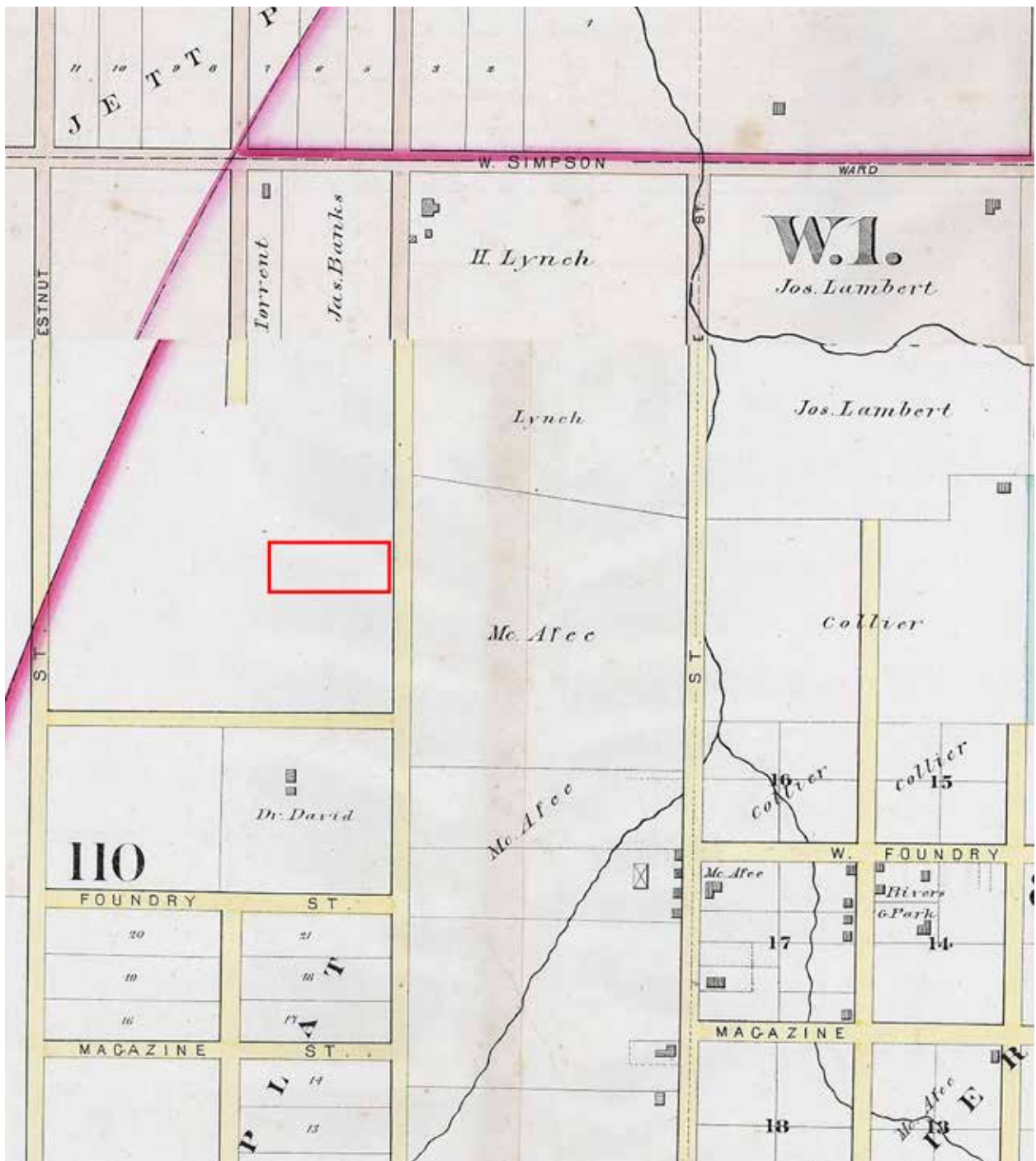


Figure 2.14. Location of the property that is now the King Family Home indicated in red on *City Atlas of Atlanta, Georgia*. Southern and Southwestern Surveying and Publishing Company, 1878. (Two maps from the Atlas are merged here to show project area). Note: ownership of the area where the King Family Home was eventually developed is not indicated on the map. (Source: Emory University Libraries, Digital Scholarship Commons, <http://disc.library.emory.edu/atlantamaps/2012/10/>.)

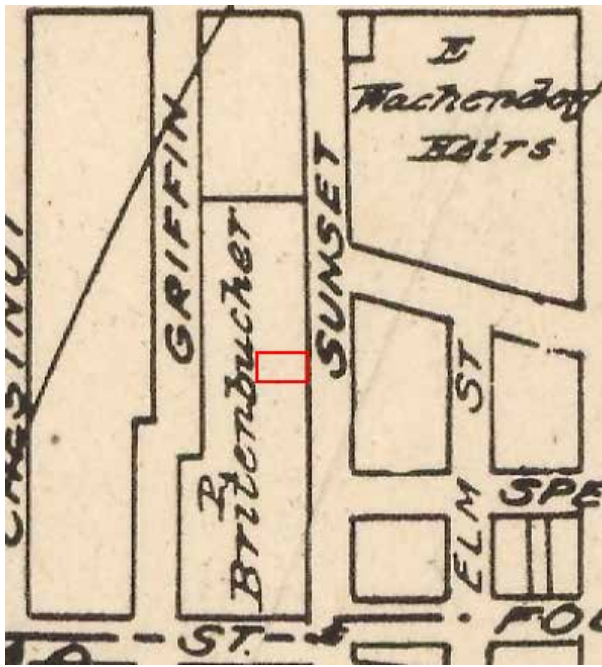


Figure 2.15. Location of what would become the King Family Home indicated in red on Kauffman's 1906 *Map of Atlanta*. (Source: Emory University Libraries, Digital Scholarship Commons, <http://disc.library.emory.edu/atlantamaps/1906-atlanta-city-map/>.)

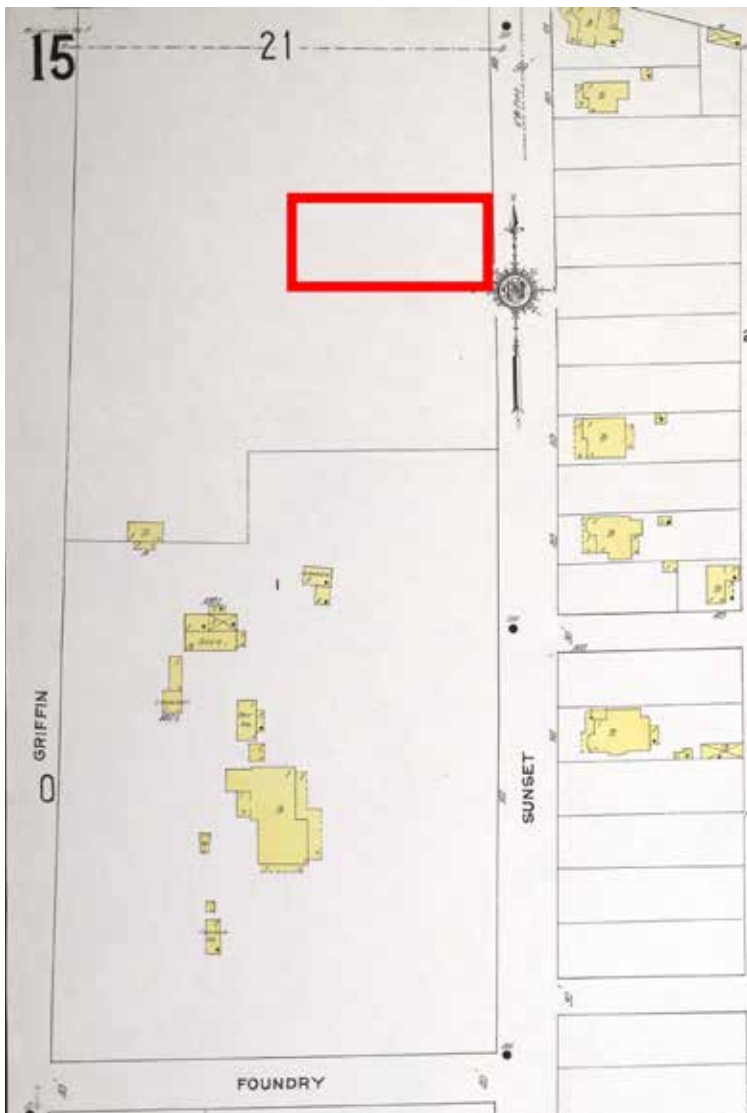


Figure 2.16. 1911 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of 142 Sunset Avenue with what would become the King Family Home indicated in red. (Source: Library of Congress, http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3924am.g3924am_g01378191101.)

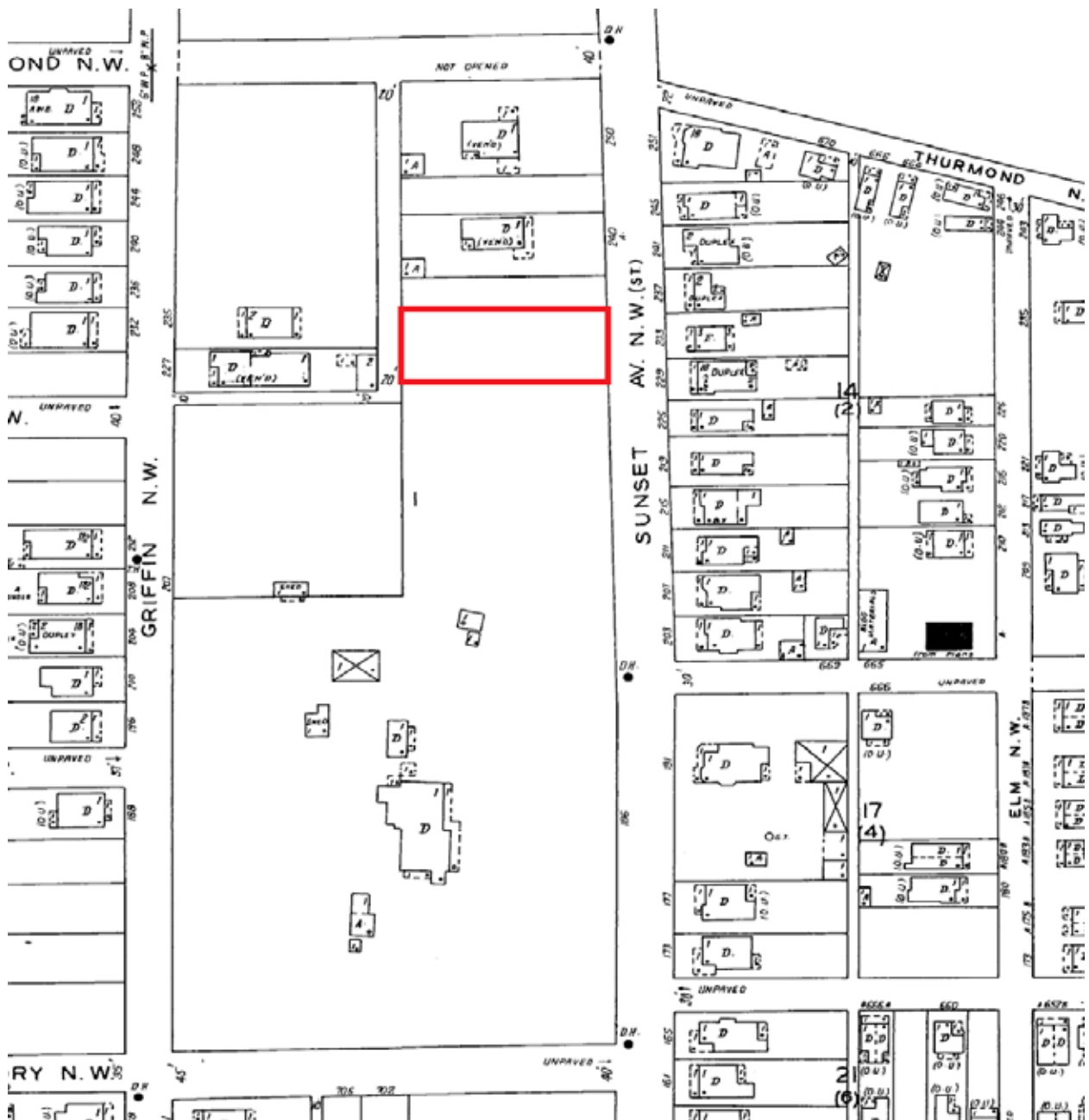


Figure 2.17. 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing development along Sunset Avenue, with the future site of the King Family Home indicated in red. (Source: Proquest Digitized Sanborn Maps.)



Figure 2.18. Helen White & Eugene Marcus Martin House (1926), 250 Sunset Avenue NW. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 2.19. Fred Armon Toomer House (1927), 240 Sunset Avenue NW. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

The 1910s and 1920s saw Vine City’s transition to a majority African American neighborhood. Architecturally, the area included many bungalows and a few American Foursquare houses. Bungalows ranged from minimal vernacular houses to comfortable middle-class dwellings reflecting the Craftsman style. The two houses immediately north of the house at 234 Sunset Avenue, both built by employees of the Atlanta Life Insurance Company, reflect the comfortable, brick-veneered houses built in Vine City by African American business professionals during the late-1920s. The Helen White & Eugene Marcus Martin House (1926) at 250 Sunset Avenue NW reflects a simple Colonial Revival treatment with its symmetrical façade, brick exterior, front terrace, and central entry porch beneath a wide gable (Figure 2.18). A porch to the north of the front wing is balanced by a porte-cochère on the south. The Fred Armon Toomer House (1927) at 240 Sunset Avenue NW is a bungalow featuring four-over-one windows, a porch with square brick piers, and an unusual porte-cochère topped by an asymmetrical gable with a concave south slope (Figure 2.19).¹⁵⁶

Family Background and Birth of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott

The King Family and Atlanta

Martin Luther King, Jr. (née Michael King) was born to Alberta Williams King and Martin Luther King, Sr. on January 15, 1929. He was born at the Williams / King house located at 501 Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia. Willis Williams, Martin Luther King, Jr.’s great-grandfather, had been “a slave on the Williams Plantation in Penfield, Greene County, Georgia, owned by William Nelson Williams.”¹⁵⁷ Willis Williams was a minister, but as an enslaved person, “he could not actively preach in a church.”¹⁵⁸ Willis was married to Lucrecia “Creecy” Daniel Williams, who was also likely enslaved by the Williams Family. Willis and Creecy Williams continued to live in Greene County and worked as sharecroppers until Willis’ death in 1874. King’s maternal grandmother’s parents William and Fanny Parks were both born

in the 1820s in Georgia, presumably enslaved. His paternal grandmother’s parents, Jim Long and Jane Linsey, were born in Henry County, Georgia, where his grandfather James Albert King met Delia Linsey and married in 1895.¹⁵⁹

Martin Luther King, Jr.’s maternal grandfather, Adam Daniel (A. D.) Williams was born in Greene County, Georgia, where his parents lived and farmed. He moved to Atlanta in 1893. According to a history of the family, “In 1894, one year after moving to Atlanta, A. D. became the second pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church on Auburn Avenue.”¹⁶⁰ Their only child was Alberta Christine, born on September 13, 1903. A. D. Williams rose in prominence as a leader of Black Atlanta. It was in Atlanta’s burgeoning African American middle class, that the Williamses raised Alberta. “She was sent to the best available schools and college and was, in general, protected from the worst blights of discrimination.”¹⁶¹

Martin Luther King, Sr., also referred to as “Daddy King,” was “a sharecropper’s son” who had “met brutalities firsthand, and had begun to strike back at an early age.”¹⁶² He moved to Atlanta to pursue education and employment. There he met and married Alberta Williams and took on the role of heir to Pastor Williams’ church and civil rights work. Martin Luther King, Sr. was a pastor at Auburn Avenue’s Ebenezer Baptist Church and president of the NAACP in Atlanta. The Kings married in 1926 and had three children, Willie Christine King (Ferris), Martin Luther King, Jr., and Alfred Daniel Williams King.

With a finger on the pulse of Black Atlanta, Martin Luther King, Sr. participated in and became a leader of the civil rights movement in his city. He “engaged in personal acts of political dissent, such as riding the ‘whites only’ City Hall elevator to reach the voter registrar’s office” and served

156. Clarissa Myrick-Harris, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 26.

157. “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Supplemental Material” (Atlanta, GA, n.d.), 2, National Archives, <https://www.archives.gov/files/atlanta/education/resources-by-state/images/mlk-supplemental.pdf>.

158. “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Supplemental Material,” 2.

159. National Archives at Atlanta, “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr.,” 2, http://friendsnas.org/education/S4_civilRights/Roots_of_MLK.pdf.

160. “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Supplemental Material,” 2–3.

161. Clayborne E. Carson, ed., *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 1998), 3.

162. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 4.

as a leader not only in the NAACP but also in the Atlanta Civic and Political League.¹⁶³

The Scott Family in Rural Alabama

Edyth Scott Bagley, Coretta Scott's sister, stated of their family, "We were blessed with industrious and courageous parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. . . . Their indomitable sense of purpose and their deep desire for justice was carefully passed from generation to generation until it came to rest in full measure on my sister, Coretta."¹⁶⁴ According to Federal census records, Coretta Scott's paternal great-grandparents were both born in Alabama as were her maternal great-grandparents.¹⁶⁵ Willis Scott, Coretta Scott's great grandfather, "settled down right where [he] had always lived," and like many of the formerly enslaved, he adopted the surname of the owner of the plantation on which he lived.¹⁶⁶ Coretta Scott's family became landowners in Perry County soon after the Civil War, where "Land ownership was the symbol of respect, matching in importance as the passport to freedom only by the commitment to higher education."¹⁶⁷ Willis married a woman named Delia, and the Scotts "occupied a farm at the northern end of Perry County near the community of Heiberger."¹⁶⁸ The couple had nine children, including Jefferson Scott, Coretta Scott's paternal grandfather who eventually married Cora McLaughlin. Jefferson and Cora Scott owned three hundred acres near Marion, Alabama.¹⁶⁹ Obadiah "Obie" Scott, Coretta Scott's father, was born in 1899, one of thirteen children.

Bernice McMurry, Coretta Scott's mother, was born in 1905 to Martin McMurry and Molly Smith McMurry, who were also landholders. Born in 1862, Martin McMurry was the "son of a slave woman and a white slave holder. His

mother was part African American and part Native American."¹⁷⁰ Bernice McMurry and Obadiah Scott married in 1921 and gave birth to their daughters Edythe in 1925 and Coretta on April 27, 1927. Great-grandmother Delia was the midwife at their births.¹⁷¹ Son Obadiah "Obie" was born in 1930. The Scott family differed from many other African American families in Black Belt Alabama because of their family's history of land ownership. Edyth Scott Bagley said of her parents, "Growing up as they did, without the necessity of showing deference to white people our parents learned to believe in themselves, their own worth, and their ability to determine their own destiny."¹⁷²

Landscape Summary (1865-1933)

Research does not reveal much information about the site that would become 234 Sunset Avenue before 1933. Philip Breitenbucher had purchased a portion of the former Jett estate and constructed a house by 1892 on the block between Sunset Avenue and Griffin Street (sometimes labeled Granger Street), north of Foundry Street. By 1911, the estate included a house and at least eight outbuildings. The area that would become 234 Sunset Avenue may have been a farm or pasture area. New streetcar lines prompted suburban development west of the city in the early-1900s, and developers began to subdivide the lots along Sunset Avenue between Foundry and Simpson streets. Many of those who built houses on this block were African American educators and civic leaders. Asa Candler subdivided the east side of Sunset Avenue into developable lots by the early 1910s, and this block was fully developed by 1932. Eventually, the Breitenbuchers moved off Sunset Avenue, and developers subdivided the remaining acreage of their former estate. There was a 20-foot-wide alley running behind the 200 block of the west side of Sunset Avenue from Thurmond Street to the former Breitenbucher property line by 1932. With the exception of the former Breitenbucher house, the setting of a single-family residential neighborhood with modest houses was established by 1933.

163. Stanford University, "King, Martin Luther, Sr.," The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, June 12, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/king-martin-luther-sr>.

164. Edyth Scott Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012), 6.

165. Ancestry.com, "1900 United States Federal Census," 2004, <https://search.ancestry.com>.

166. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 5.

167. Barbara Reynolds, *Chicago Tribune*, January 11, 1976, 17-42.

168. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 5.

169. Coretta Scott King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Revised (New York: Puffin Books, 1993), 19.

170. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 10.

171. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 18.

172. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 19.

The Cowan and Gideons Period (1933-1964)

Vine City Community Development

Businesses catering to Black patrons began to flourish on the west side of Atlanta along with Black residential development. Though Auburn Avenue retained its status as the center for Black economic life, Black-owned businesses including Amos Drug Store, Young's Artistic Barber Shop, and Ashby Theatre opened on the west side.¹⁷³ Sunset Amusement Park opened in the Vine City neighborhood in 1926. This facility was an amusement park "just for blacks, on Magnolia and Sunset, [with] an enclosed park with a roller-coaster and Ferris wheel."¹⁷⁴ Sunset Amusement Park featured a dance hall where performances could cater to the all-Black crowd. City directories list the amusement park address as 690 Magnolia Street. A 1930s Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows the layout of the site, located at the southwest corner of Magnolia Street and Sunset Avenue, with a roller coaster, dance hall, and concession area. The park closed between 1938 and 1939, with the dance hall later serving as a casino and later as a dry-cleaning business (Figure 2.20).¹⁷⁵

Black buyers purchased existing properties and built new houses on lots subdivided from the Breitenbucher and Wachendorff estates on Sunset Avenue. The Breitenbucher family left the neighborhood when Philip Breitenbucher's wife died in 1935. Middle class African Americans began to settle near and on the former estate. For example, Eugene and Helen Martin built a large bungalow at 250 Sunset Avenue NW in 1926. Eugene Martin, who worked at Alonzo Herndon's Atlanta Life Insurance Company, was the national vice president of the NAACP.¹⁷⁶ Vine City included mostly single-family residences by the 1930s, which housed a range of socio-economic classes. Frequently, homeowners near Sunset Avenue attached businesses such as laundries and stores to

their houses.¹⁷⁷ On the blocks surrounding Sunset Avenue, occupations listed for residents in the 1935 City Directory range from laborers and domestics, to porters, laundresses, watchmen, insurance sales, and barbers.¹⁷⁸

The academic institutions located on the southern edge of Vine City influenced the lives of its residents. Atlanta University ran a "laboratory school," which local children attended. Students included Martin Luther King, Jr., who attended the school for seventh and ninth grade. (King skipped eighth grade.) Many children from the neighborhood later attended Booker T. Washington High School.

Living conditions within Vine City varied. According to historian Clarissa Myrick-Harris,

The number of Vine City residents living in poverty in substandard housing was always substantial, increasing during the Great Depression of the 1930s and in the majority by the 1960s as a result of urban renewal, absentee landlords, and the movement of middle class black Atlantans to attractive subdivisions further west. However, the close proximity to the higher education institutions of the Atlanta University Center and a number of black churches . . . prompted some of the city's most prominent citizens to remain. These educators, doctors, ministers, and successful business people built or bought existing homes in the Vine City community, especially on the prestigious southernmost blocks of Sunset Avenue. Some of these families remained in the community for decades in spite of the declining environment around them.¹⁷⁹

The Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) began constructing public housing for low-income residents during a period of "slum clearance" in the 1940s. AHA constructed John Eagan Homes

173. Holman, "How Well Do You Know Atlanta's Historically Black Neighborhoods?"

174. Linda Dahl, *Morning Glory: A Biography of Mary Lou Williams* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing, 2012), 11.

175. Ancestry.com, *Atlanta City Directory, 1927-1948*, (Atlanta, GA: Atlanta City Directory Co., 1927-1948).

176. City of Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development and Pamela Flores, "Designation Report for Sunset Avenue Historic District," 2011, 10.

177. City of Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development and Flores, "Designation Report for Sunset Avenue Historic District."

178. Ancestry.com, *Atlanta City Directory, 1935*.

179. Clarissa Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 21.

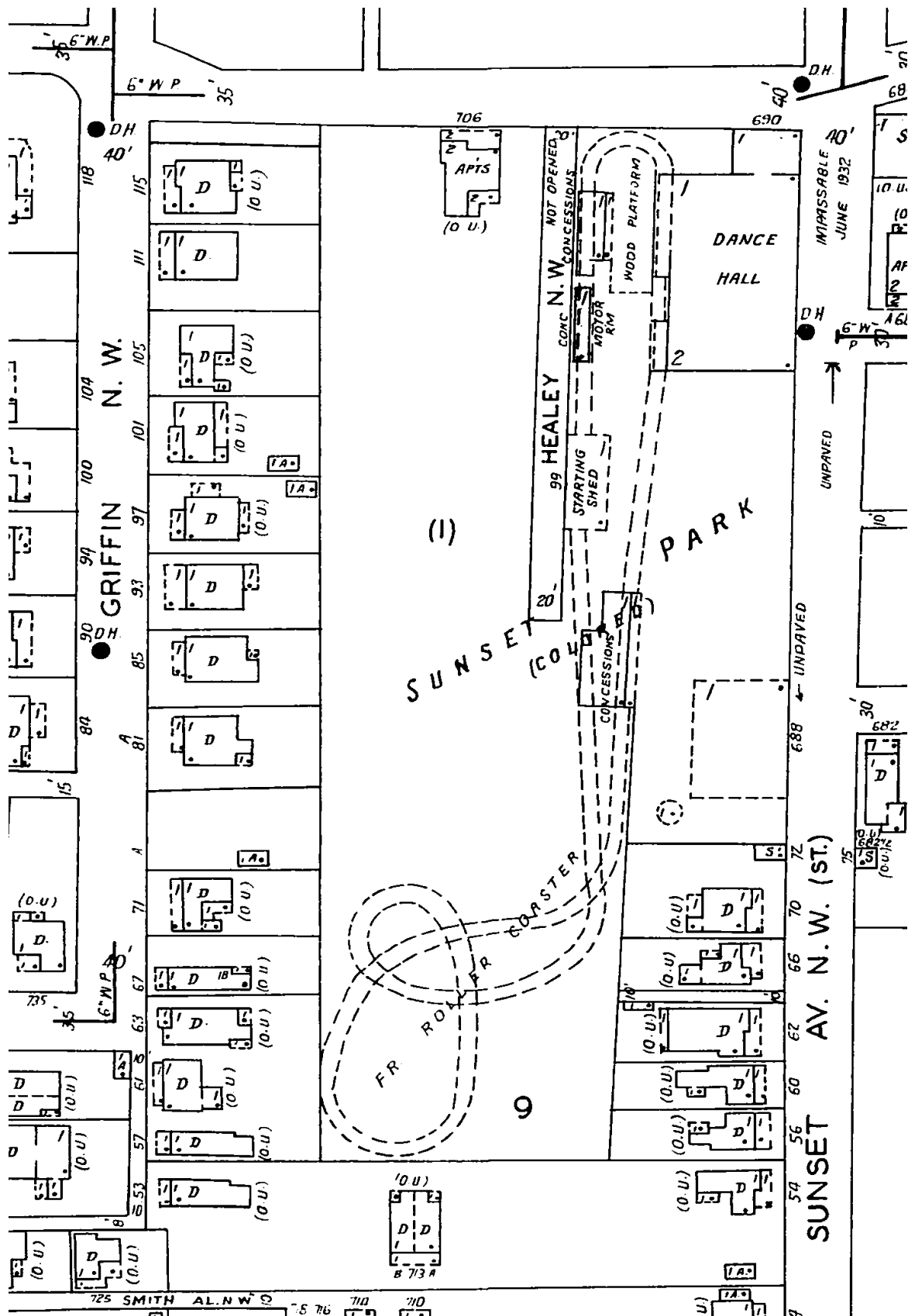


Figure 2.20. A portion of a 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing Sunset Amusement Park. (Source: Proquest Digitized Sanborn Maps.)

in Vine City between 1940 and 1941, exclusively for Black families. According to a history of AHA, the organization “conducted surveys to determine the areas of most need of slum clearance, the rent amounts that the low income families could afford, and the sizes of families in need of sanitary and safe housing. The clearance sites selected by AHA were the city’s worst slum areas . . . 79 percent of the units lacked either an inside bathroom or inside running water or both.”¹⁸⁰ The agency proposed the construction of several complexes as a result, including Egan Homes. The 548-unit Egan Homes complex occupied 21.8 acres between Ashby and Chestnut streets, north of Hunter Street.¹⁸¹ The complex housed low-income tenants until its redevelopment in the 2000s into Magnolia Park, a mixed-income community.

Organizations that supported the community and its residents existed in Vine City. The former Breitenbucher house became the West Side Health Center in 1945. The county constructed a new clinic facility in 1954 at the site, which they named Neighborhood Union Health Center. The Vine City Foundation, formed in the mid-1960s, supported childcare, a medical clinic, a food co-op, and vocational training. Its founder, Mrs. Helen Howard, noted, “its aim is to develop a power base in the slum community so that residents have a chance to break away from hopelessness and start making decisions for themselves.”¹⁸² Civic leaders marched on city hall in 1963 and “presented Mayor [Ivan] Allen with *The City Must Provide*, a pamphlet calling for the provision of community facilities, including over sixty paved sidewalks, twenty traffic lights, and fourteen street sewage systems.”¹⁸³

Development of the Site at 234 Sunset Avenue

The house at 234 Sunset Avenue was constructed sometime between 1932 and 1933. Deed records indicate that Eva (Lumpkin) Cowan purchased the property from the heirs of Philip Breitenbucher on November 1, 1932. The deed describes the property as “being Lot 1 and the South Thirty Three (33) feet of Lot 2, according to plat of the subdivision of the property of Philip Breitenbucher Estate, made on March 30, 1926.”¹⁸⁴ The lot is vacant on the 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance map (date of survey unknown), but the house was occupied by March 1933.¹⁸⁵ Atlanta newspapers did not list individual building permits during this period, only total number and cost of permitted improvements.

The United States economy was in steep decline from 1929 to 1933, with the house’s construction occurring during the nadir of the Great Depression. The house’s construction predated the major financial reforms and New Deal programs implemented in the mid-1930s to stabilize the economy and bring the United States out of the depression. These changes included the National Housing Act of 1934, which created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), although FHA mortgages were usually unavailable to African Americans until the practice of redlining was made illegal by the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

The use of salvaged materials may have helped to save costs and may reflect the economic constraints of the Great Depression. The original north and south gables and the first-floor ceilings are framed in part with salvaged lumber bearing lath and plaster marks or evidence of paint finishes. This lumber shows a range of oxidized colors and a few pieces show signs of past fire damage, likely sustained in the buildings from which they were salvaged. Some of the wall and roof sheathing visible within the attic appears to be pieced together from boards of varying lengths and widths. The use of salvaged lumber in construction

180. Atlanta Housing, “AH History,” *Atlanta Housing Authority* (blog), accessed May 14, 2020, <https://www.atlantahousing.org/about-us/ah-history/>.

181. Atlanta Housing, “John J. Eagan Homes and Magnolia Park Records,” n.d., 2.

182. “Who Says Poor Don’t Help Themselves?” (The Georgia Bulletin, November 9, 1967), Harry G. Lefever Papers, Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.

183. Stephen Tuck, *Beyond Atlanta: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Georgia, 1940-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 229.

184. “Loan Deed,” November 1, 1932, Book 1363/Page 424, Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.

185. At this time, the date of survey for this Sanborn Map is unclear; Vol. 1 is dated 1931, while Vol. 2, 3, and 4 are dated 1932. It is possible that the survey was completed in the spring or summer of 1932 and that construction of the house began in the fall.

was common in the nineteenth century and was not unusual into the early twentieth century.

At the time of the house's construction, the surrounding Vine City neighborhood presented a varied architectural character. Houses ranged from modest, vernacular shotgun cottages to the high-style Classical Revival Alonzo Herndon House (1910) at 587 University Place, built for Atlanta's first Black millionaire. Most of the neighborhood's houses were of wood-frame construction.

House Design (circa 1932-1933)

The house appears to have originally contained approximately 2,190 square feet (gross) on the main floor, with six rooms: a living room, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms, and one bathroom. Though no known historical photos exist from this period, architectural historians have translated renovation drawings and point cloud data from a laser scan of the house into approximate floor plans and sections (Figure 2.21 and Figure 2.22). It is unclear whether the original house included any basement space; most of the area below the first floor appears to have been crawl space and the attic was unfinished. In 2021, a Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) team produced three-dimensional models showing a conjectural initial construction of the house and site. These drawings are included in Appendix B.

The plan as originally built resembled several designs published in the late 1920s and 1930s.¹⁸⁶ The house's front wing followed the "English Cottage" form, featuring a cross-gabled massing and a chimney on the front façade, while the rear wing was more consistent with a bungalow plan, with rooms opening off a central double-loaded corridor.¹⁸⁷ Houses of similar plan are documented in Georgia in the early 1930s.¹⁸⁸ (For more information about the architectural context of the original house, see the *King Family Home Historic Structure Report*.)

The original 1933 construction of the house reflects a subset of the Tudor Revival style termed "English Vernacular Revival" in contemporary analysis of Georgia's historic architecture. This style was popular across the United States between the World Wars and was used mainly for residential buildings in newly developing suburban neighborhoods. In Georgia, the English Vernacular house incorporated Tudor Revival elements like half-timbering, asymmetrical massing, stone accents, and gables with a roof line that sweeps outward in a concave extension at one side, often sheltering the main entrance.¹⁸⁹

While no twin houses of the same design have been located to date, several existing English Cottages in Atlanta appear to be remarkably similar to the house's original appearance (Figure 2.23 and Figure 2.24). The house's design and architectural expression appear to have been unusual in the Vine City area.

186. The plan is very similar to several designs including "Picturesque Brick Bungalow, Design No. 6-B-18-A" in The Architects' Small House Service Bureau, *Face Brick Homes* (Chicago: American Face Brick Association, 1931), 16.

187. *Georgia Historic Preservation Handbook* (The Fox Theatre Institute, 2012), 61-62, accessed February 6, 2020, https://www.georgiitrust.org/wp-content/uploads/georgia_historic_preservation_handbook.pdf.

188. The Dessie E. & Furman E. McHugh House (circa 1932-1934), 235 King Avenue, Athens, GA, is a variation on the same basic plan.

189. *Georgia Historic Preservation Handbook* (The Fox Theatre Institute, 2012), 81, accessed February 6, 2020, https://www.georgiitrust.org/wp-content/uploads/georgia_historic_preservation_handbook.pdf.

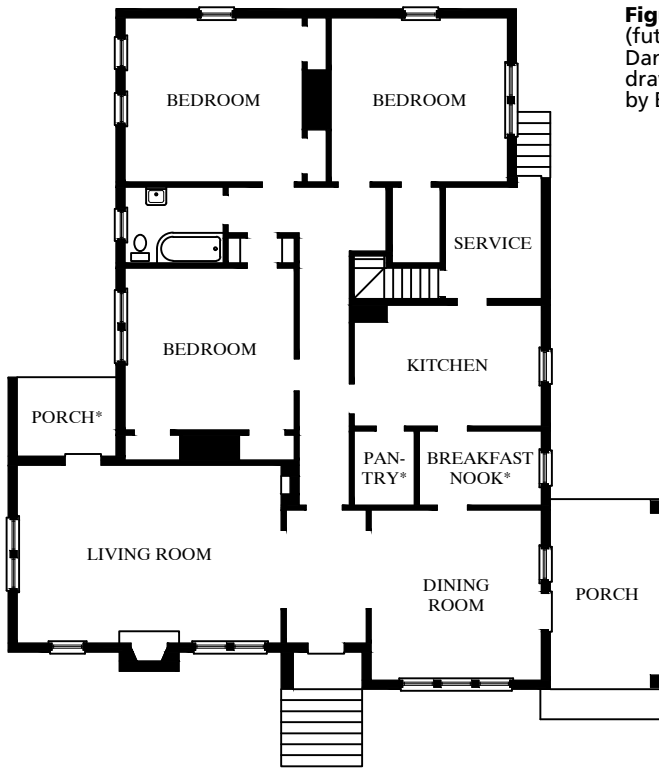


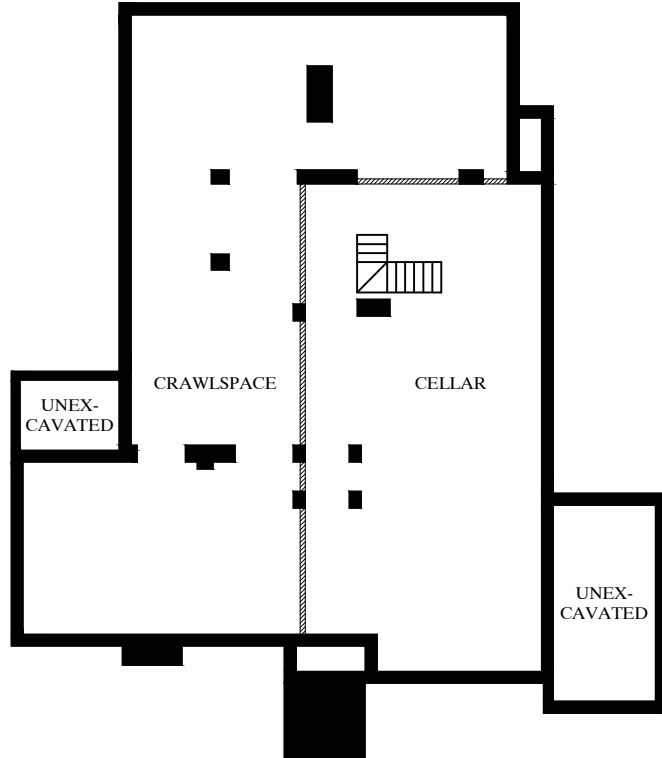
Figure 2.21. Approximate first-floor plan of 1933 house (future King Family Home) produced by HABS. (Source: Daniel DeSousa HABS, based on physical evidence and 1964 drawings by J. W. Robinson and analysis of HABS laser scan by Ben Ross, RATIO Architects.)

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION (CA. 1932-33)

1/16"=1'-0"

1:192

Figure 2.22. Approximate basement level plan of 1933 house (future King Family Home) produced by HABS. (Source: Daniel DeSousa HABS, based on physical evidence and 1964 drawings by J. W. Robinson and analysis of HABS laser scan by Ben Ross, RATIO Architects.)



BASEMENT PLAN
ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION (CA. 1932-33)

1/16"=1'-0"

1:192

NOTE: ASTERISK (*) INDICATES CONJECTURAL ROOM DESIGNATIONS.

OTHER CONJECTURAL ELEMENTS SHOWN IN THESE PLANS INCLUDE:

- SERVICE ROOM AND REAR STEPS TO GRADE
- SIZE AND LOCATIONS OF WINDOWS IN THE KITCHEN AND BREAKFAST NOOK
- CONFIGURATION OF CELLAR STAIRS
- LOCATIONS OF SUPPORTING PIERS IN BASEMENT PLAN
- DIAGONALLY HATCHED PARTITIONS IN BASEMENT PLAN INDICATE MAXIMUM EXTENT OF POSSIBLE CELLAR AREA



Figure 2.23. Chester R. Elliott House (1935), 911 Highland Terrace NE, Atlanta. The right-hand three bays appear to be a close match to the King Family Home's original appearance. (Source: Realtor.com, 2019.)

Five unequal bays appear to have divided the façade of the original house. The wider north bay projected forward and contained a bank of three windows. The south bay contained a window or door opening, with a projecting exterior chimney in the next bay. There was a pair of two windows in the bay north of the chimney. The front entrance was placed between this bay and the projecting north bay. The door may have been sheltered by a small porch or an enclosed vestibule flush with the face of the north bay. The main roof was side-gabled, with a front gable over the projecting north bay and a hipped roof over the rear wing. Smaller side-gabled extensions of the main roof projected from the east part of each gable, aligning with the east face of the roof. The south extension sheltered the end of the living room, while the north extension covered a porch opening off the dining room. The front gable on the façade and the south gable over the living room both appear to have had concave extensions to one side, a common feature of English Vernacular Revival houses. The front gable's extension sheltered the main entrance, while that of the south gable covered a small room west of the living room. In addition to the chimney on the front elevation, the house featured three interior chimneys, one in the kitchen and the other two in the walls of the three bedrooms.

At the north elevation, the front wing presented a gable end. The gable was clad in a plaster-like board overlaid with a grid of wooden battens suggesting half-timbering. A smaller gabled extension covering the east bay housed a porch off the dining room. Within the porch, a window and door opened off the dining room. The treatment



Figure 2.24. W. C. Hodnett House (1929), 1740 N. Pelham Road NE, Atlanta. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

of the west bay is not documented, but it likely included a window into the possible breakfast nook and windows in the kitchen. The two bays of the west (bedroom) wing included what is now the utility room and the guest bedroom. The original roof appears to have descended below the main eave line to shelter the bump-out formed by the utility room. The west bay featured a pair of four-over-one windows. The west (rear) elevation appears to have been divided into two bays, with a single window roughly centered in each bay.

At the south elevation, the front wing presented a gable end. The main gable was likely clad like the north gable. The smaller gabled extension housing the living room, with a small room to the west under the concave extension, was clad in brick for its full height. The east bay contained a pair of four-over-one windows in the living room. The west bay contained a smaller window opening with a higher sill. The west (bedroom) wing was divided into three bays. The east bay likely contained one or more windows in the southeast bedroom. The center bay contained a single window in the bathroom, presumably having its sill above the level of the surviving tile wainscot.

The house was clad in variegated red brick with a textured finish. A belt course at the first-floor line was formed by a basketweave band consisting of alternating squares of three horizontal bricks and three vertical bricks. The top of the walls along the eave lines appear to have been accented by a soldier-course band. Sloped, projecting rowlock courses formed the windowsills. The house's original standard window unit appears to have

been a four-over-one double-hung window. The eave line appears to have been marked by a flat board forming a simple frieze and mounting point for the gutters, with no overhang. The south gable extension appears to retain its original wooden fascia, composed of a flat board with an applied molded backband along the upper edge. The roof appears to have originally been covered with black composition “thick butt” shingles, a style popular in the 1930s and intended to evoke the appearance of slate.¹⁹⁰

The interior of the house appears to have featured flat plaster walls and ceilings in all rooms. Most rooms appear to have been fitted with tongue-and-groove oak flooring. Interior woodwork followed a Craftsman style profile with wide, flat casings accented by a square backband molding with a narrow ogee profile at the interior edge. Woodwork of this style was widely used in residential interiors from the 1910s through the 1930s. Interior doors appear to have been two-panel doors with wide plywood panels, a type popular from the 1910s through the 1940s.

Eva and Alonzo Cowan

The Cowan family occupied the house from 1932 or 1933 until 1957. The Cowans moved to the house from nearby Simpson Street. Alonzo/Alonzo Baker Cowan, Eva (Lumpkin) Cowan, and Eva’s mother Irene (Sanders) Lumpkin resided at the house by March 28, 1933. On that date Irene Lumpkin, who had lived with her daughter and son-in-law since at least 1930, died at Grady Hospital. A newspaper notice published on March 30, 1933 listed her as a resident of 234 Sunset Avenue.¹⁹¹ Lumpkin’s death certificate listed her residence as residence 234 “SunSert” [sic]. City directories first list 234 Sunset Avenue as an address in 1934. It is shown as the residence of Alonzo B. and Eva L. Cowan. Mr. Cowan’s occupation is listed as chauffeur in 1934.

Subsequent city directories list his occupation as watchman for the Coca Cola company and then



Figure 2.25. Eva L. Cowan, 1952. (Source: Booker T. Washington Evening High School Yearbook, 1953 Accessed online Ancestry.com.)

as a driver.¹⁹² The 1940 Federal census lists Mr. Cowan, age 46, as a driver for “U.S. Mail” and Eva Cowan, age 40, as a public school teacher, working at Booker T. Washington High School (Figure 2.25). The census lists the value of the Cowan’s house at \$6,000.

In 1940, the Cowans had a lodger, Mattie Gather, age 17, living with them. Miss Gather does not have an occupation listed, so she may have been a student at a nearby school or university.¹⁹³ The Cowan family was active in area social clubs and churches as noted in newspaper notices in *Atlanta Daily World*, Atlanta’s African American daily newspaper. Club notices in the newspaper list the Cowans as hosts for gatherings of the Congregational Church Social Club, the Arena Art Club, and the Royal Ten Social Club.¹⁹⁴ Articles in *Atlanta Daily World* and *Atlanta Constitution* reveal that the Cowan’s had an interest in gardening. One article describes the house as “pleasantly pretty with cut flowers and ferns,” and in 1941, Mrs.

190. *The Catalog of Johns-Manville Building Materials* (Johns-Manville Corporation, 1932), 14-15; *Are You Going to Build or Repair* (East Walpole, MA: Bird & Son, Inc., 1935), 8-9.

191. “(Colored),” *Atlanta Constitution*, March 30, 1933, 16.

192. Atlanta City Directory Company’s Atlanta Suburban Directory (DeKalb and Fulton Counties), Atlanta: Atlanta City Directory Co., 1934, 1938, 1940. University of Georgia Map and Government Information Library.

193. 1940 United States Census, Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia, digital image s. v. “Alonzo Cowan,” Ancestry.com.

194. “Church News,” *Atlanta Daily World* August 8, 1943, 2; “Club News,” *Atlanta Daily World* January 22, 1938; “Royal Ten Social Club,” *Atlanta Daily World* May 31, 1942.

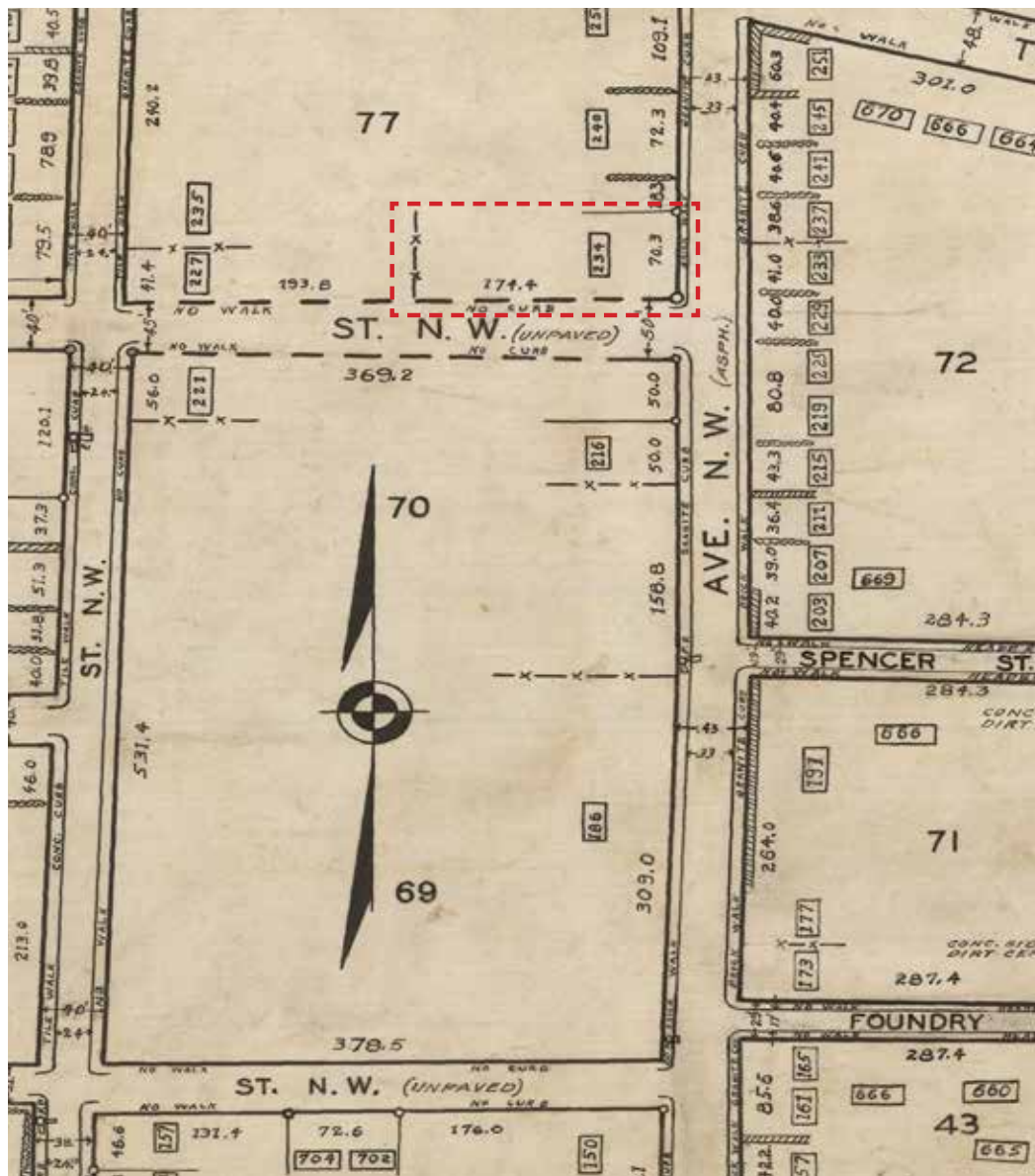


Figure 2.26. 1938 map of Sunset Avenue depicting site conditions including a brick walk with granite curb and asphalt street. Note: Dunkirk Street is unpaved at this time, and there is a fence in the rear yard of the house located at 234 Sunset Avenue. (Source: acs_wpa_td13_sheet6, Works Progress Administration of Georgia Atlanta Maps, Georgia State University.)

Cowan won a ten-dollar prize, for third place in an *Atlanta Constitution* garden competition.¹⁹⁵ Alonzo Cowan died in 1953. His funeral took place at First Congregational Church, and his viewing took place at their house on Sunset Avenue NW. The funeral was presided over by E. W. McEwen and M. L. King (presumably Martin Luther King, Sr.)¹⁹⁶

195. "Mrs. A.B. Cowan Hostess," *Atlanta Daily World* January 17, 1937; Sarah Dunbar, "Final Prize Winners in Contest Announced," *Atlanta Constitution* October 19, 1941, 16.

196. "Funeral Notices (Colored)," *Atlanta Constitution*, December 3, 1953. The association between the Cowan family and Martin Luther King, Sr. is unknown since they attended First Congregational Church, and King was the pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

Mrs. Cowan retired from teaching in 1952.¹⁹⁷ She resided at the house until the house sold in 1957. A real estate advertisement for the house in *Atlanta Daily World* describes the house as "seven room brick, clean and neat as a pen [*sic*], closets in every room, hardwood floors throughout. A beautiful solarium in this house, large spacious rooms, large spacious lot. A wonderful home. (A perfect Buy.)"¹⁹⁸

197. *The Torch (Booker T. Washington Evening High School Yearbook)* (Atlanta, GA, 1953), 12.

198. "Ad - Glass Realty Company," *Atlanta Daily World*, January 13, 1957.



Figure 2.27. 1949 aerial view of the house located at 234 Sunset Avenue, with a detached garage (red arrow) and possible terrace (blue arrow). (Source: Planning Atlanta - A New City in the Making, 1949 Aerial Mosaic and Photographs, Georgia State University Library, asa043l.)

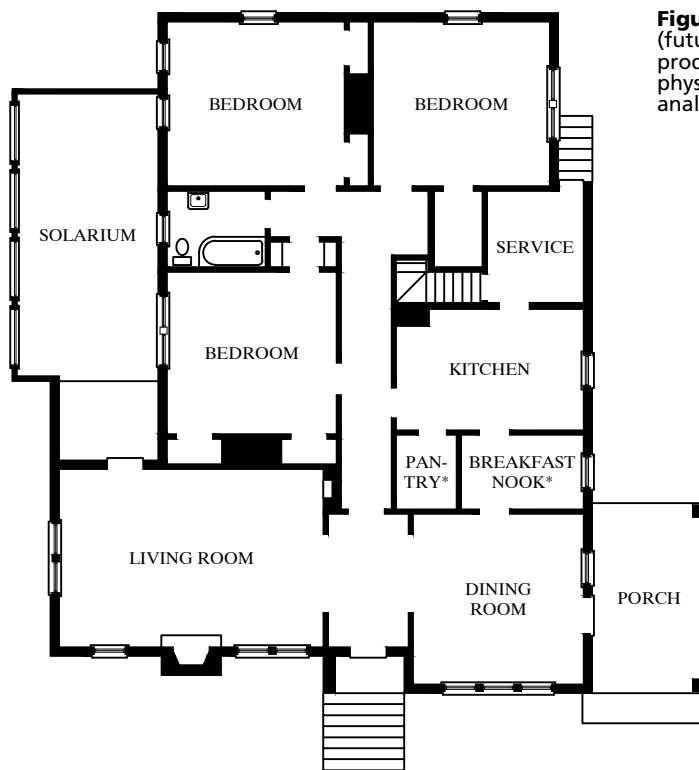


Figure 2.28. Approximate first-floor plan of the house (future King Family Home) with the solarium addition produced by HABS. (Source: Daniel DeSousa HABS, based on physical evidence and 1964 drawings by J. W. Robinson and analysis of HABS laser scan by Ben Ross, RATIO Architects.)

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SOLARIUM ADDITION (CA. 1952-55)

1/16"=1'-0"

1:192

The Cowan Period Site

Aerial photographs and a Works Progress Administration map depict the site at 234 Sunset Avenue during the Cowan's occupation (Figure 2.26 and Figure 2.27). The house at 234 Sunset Avenue did not feature any recorded hedges or other property boundary markers, but there was a fence located along the rear of the property. Dunkirk Street, located south of the property, was unpaved with no walk or curb. The Works Progress Administration Map shows the features located in the city right of way as well as property and fence lines. The sidewalk paralleling the street is paved with brick and had a granite curb by 1938. Sunset Avenue is paved. Dunkirk Street is noted as unpaved and the alley is not depicted on the map. A fence line exists on the west property line. Figure 2.28 depicts an approximate layout of the first floor of the house.

The neighborhood saw limited development on unbuilt lots from the 1930s into the 1960s, but there was construction activity adjacent to the house at 234 Sunset Avenue. Civil rights activist

and pastor Rev. Maynard Holbrook Jackson, Sr. constructed a three-story apartment building at 220 Sunset Avenue in 1949 (Figure 2.29). The Jackson Apartments reflect the stripped-down aesthetics of the late-1940s and early-1950s.¹⁹⁹ Rev. Jackson was the pastor of Friendship Baptist Church, "Atlanta's oldest autonomous black church," which was associated with the founding of Atlanta University, Morehouse College, and Spelman College.²⁰⁰ Rev. Maynard Jackson and his wife Dr. Irene Dobbs Jackson were key figures in Atlanta's early civil rights movement of the 1930s through 1950s. The couple lived on the second floor of the building with their six children, and the income produced from renting the remaining portions of the building helped support their income.²⁰¹ Maynard Holbrook Jackson, Jr. was one of the Jackson children; he later became

199. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 45-46, 54.

200. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 6.

201. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 45.



Figure 2.29. Jackson Apartments (1949), 220 Sunset Avenue NW. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

mayor of Atlanta. Irene Jackson studied abroad in France (earning her doctoral degree) after her husband passed away in 1953 and then returned to 220 Sunset Avenue NW in 1958. During her time abroad, she corresponded with Martin Luther King, Jr. about the civil rights movement in America and the struggle for Africans abroad in France.²⁰² Dr. Jackson remained active in Atlanta’s civil rights movement, serving a pivotal role in desegregating the Atlanta Library System—a predecessor of the peaceful tactics that would “end segregation in the city’s stores, restaurants and other public facilities. The strategy used to integrate the library system was a crucial precursor and model that the leaders and foot soldiers of the Atlanta Student Movement could learn from and build upon in the months and years to come.”²⁰³ Dr. Jackson lived at the apartment until 1961.²⁰⁴

Aerial photography from this period is difficult to read, but it does show the patterns of spatial

organization and circulation on the site. The house is oriented towards Sunset Avenue with setback from the street similar to the adjacent house located to its north. The site includes two buildings: the primary residence and a detached garage. These buildings are connected by a driveway. The driveway enters the site from Sunset Avenue near the northeast corner of the property. The aerial photograph appears to show a triangular shaped planting area in the northeast corner of the property, formed by the drive and either a fence or hedge line along the northern property border. The driveway skirts the northern property line and occupies the space between the porch on the north side of the house and the property border and west to the rear yard and detached garage. The rear yard apparently includes either a concrete paved or natural surface area for parking and / or turning around at about the midpoint of the west elevation of the house. There is a walkway in the front yard leading from the driveway at the front of the house to the front entry. It travels roughly southwest from the driveway and curves towards a patio area near the entry. It is unknown if this patio / entry area was raised or at grade. A small oak tree may be present in the 1949 aerial, as there is a dark

202. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 50–51.

203. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 52–53.

204. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 53.

circular shape in the rear yard near the location of an existing water oak tree. There appear to be hedge rows along the rear property line, the north property line, and the south property line. It is difficult to discern what type of vegetation is in the front yard, but there appear to be planting beds and at least one formalized planting area near the front sidewalk. Historic documentation notes that Mrs. Cowan was a gardener, and these may have been the planting beds for her ferns and cut flowers. In the adjacent yard to the north, there is a fence that stretches from the southern house façade to the north property line of the house. Dunkirk Avenue is obscured or unpaved in the 1949 aerial, and the alley on the west side of the site appears to be unpaved. A 1955 aerial shows Dunkirk Street as a somewhat informal vehicular circulation route between the apartment building at address 220 Sunset Avenue and the southern property border. The area between Dunkirk Street and the house appears to be vegetated.

Solarium Addition (circa 1952-1955)

The Cowan family commissioned the construction of a solarium, sunroom, or sun porch addition along the south side of the house sometime between 1952 and 1955. A 1949 aerial photograph may show signs of a terrace at this location (Figure 2.27). Two 1952 aerial photographs have low resolution; one appears to show this area the same color as the back yard, while the other registers it as a lighter color like that of the driveway, in contrast with the dark roof of the house. A low resolution 1955 aerial appears to show the existing shed roof of the addition.²⁰⁵ The January 1957 realty listings for the house describe the room as a “beautiful solarium.”²⁰⁶ The Cowans appear to have accessed the solarium from a door in the west wall of the living room (Figure 2.28). This door opened into a small space under the west extension of the south gable. This space may have originally been an enclosed room or an exterior porch. Spaces of this type became common during the first half of the twentieth century, providing a sunny living space that could be enjoyed in cooler weather. The east wall is clad in notched vertical board siding, a treatment not documented elsewhere on the house. There is no photographic evidence of what the solarium looked like. Its construction may

have necessitated building a short retaining wall between Dunkirk Street and the house foundation. It is unknown if that wall dates to the solarium addition or later landscape modifications made by the King family.

Charles and Jeannette Gideons

Charles Lewis and Jeannette W. (sometimes spelled Janette) Gideons purchased the house at 234 Sunset Avenue on February 25, 1957.²⁰⁷ Dr. Charles Gideons was a native of Atlanta, born in 1897. Educated at Clark College and Atlanta University, Gideons was an educator and administrator for the Atlanta School System including Booker T. Washington Evening School, David T. Howard High School, and Carver Vocational School (Figure 2.30). Gideons received an honorary degree from Monrovia University in Liberia.²⁰⁸ The Gideons had two adult daughters by the time they bought the house on Sunset Avenue. Juanita Hawkins later lived in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and June Tiller later moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Gideons received an award from Allen Temple AME Church in April 1957 for his “community church and civic activities.”²⁰⁹ Dr. Gideons died from heart failure soon thereafter. Granddaughter Crystal Tiller Washington remembers the viewing took place in the “front room” of the house.²¹⁰ The funeral was attended by hundreds of mourners including former students and colleagues.²¹¹ Soon after his death, Atlanta Public Schools named Charles L. Gideons Elementary (now Kindezi at Gideons Elementary School) in his honor. Jeanette Gideons passed away in 1962. Her heirs owned the house until the King family purchased the property in 1964. In the interim years, Howard and Fannie B. Dobbs rented the house.²¹²

207. “Warranty Deed,” February 25, 1957, Book 3196/Page 520, Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.

208. “Services for Dr. Charles L. Gideons, Atlanta Educator, Planned Today,” *Atlanta Constitution*, May 8, 1957, 25.

209. “Charles Gideon, Atlanta Educator Receives Honors,” *Atlanta Daily World*, April 30, 1957, 1.

210. Crystal Tiller Washington, 234 Sunset Avenue, Atlanta, interview by Madie Fischetti, January 12, 2020.

211. T. J. Flanigan, “Funeral Rites are Paid Dr. Charles Gideons Here,” *Atlanta Daily World*, May 9, 1957, 1; “Funeral Notices,” *Atlanta Daily World*, May 7, 1957, 4.

212. *Atlanta City Directory Company’s Atlanta Suburban Directory* (DeKalb and Fulton Counties), Atlanta: Atlanta City Directory Co., 1963. Accessed at University of Georgia Map and Government Information Library.

205. USDA Historical Aerial Photographs, “1955 Aerial Photograph,” 1955, www.historicaerials.com.

206. “Extra,” *Atlanta Daily World*, January 13, 1957; “Extra,” *Atlanta Daily World*, January 20, 1957.



Figure 2.30. Charles L. Gideons, 1950. (Source: Booker T. Washington Evening High School Yearbook, 1950. Accessed online Ancestry.com.)

The Gideons Period Site

It does not appear that the Gideons changed much at the site during their occupancy of the house at 234 Sunset Avenue. The driveway has a similar orientation in a low resolution 1960 aerial photograph as the 1949 aerial image.²¹³ The image shows that Dunkirk Street was more heavily used by vehicular traffic because the vegetated area along the southern property line is not as wide as it was in 1949. The western property boundary may have been lined with trees. A hedged border appears to occupy the northern property line in the rear yard. There appears to be a tree in the front yard, which is consistent with conditions in the mid-1960s. A 1962 Sanborn map shows the house much as it appeared in the 1949 aerial (Figure 2.31). Crystal Tiller Washington remembers that the driveway was unpaved or maybe paved with pea gravel.²¹⁴ In her memories of the neighborhood, Ms. Tiller recalls that there were vendors who would walk around and sell items to neighborhood residents. Her family referred to one man as the “Peanut Man.” He would use the alley to access the backs of the houses and shout out to neighbors

213. USDA Historical Aerial Photographs, “1960 Aerial Photograph,” 1960, www.historicaerials.com.

214. Washington, 234 Sunset Avenue, Atlanta.

“PEANUTS!”²¹⁵ Ms. Patricia Latimore, assistant to Mrs. King, believes this individual may have been a resident at the P. J. Woods Center for Senior Citizens and the Blind, which was located on the block from 1943 to 2007. She noted that these residents often sold items in the neighborhood.²¹⁶

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Childhood and Education

While the Black enclave of Vine City continued to attract Black educators and budding civil rights activists, on Atlanta’s east side, a young Martin Luther King, Jr. was beginning his formative years on Auburn Avenue. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s family lived just a block away from Ebenezer Baptist Church during his early years, and it was the center of their family and work lives. “Sweet Auburn” was Atlanta’s premier Black neighborhood, a self-contained hub of businesses, residences, churches, and civic institutions. It was home to both working- and middle-class African Americans. Of the Auburn Avenue Community, King said:

The community in which I was born was quite ordinary in terms of social status. No one in our community had attained any great wealth. Most of the Negroes in my hometown who had attained wealth lived in a section of town known as ‘Hunter Hills.’ The community was characterized with a sort of unsophisticated simplicity. No one was in the extremely poor class. It is probably fair to call the people of this community of those of average income. It was a wholesome community, notwithstanding the fact that none of us were ever considered members of the “upper-upper class.”²¹⁷

215. Washington, 234 Sunset Avenue, Atlanta.

216. Bernice King and Patricia Latimore, 234 Sunset Avenue, interview by Madie Fischetti, May 22, 2020.

217. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 2.

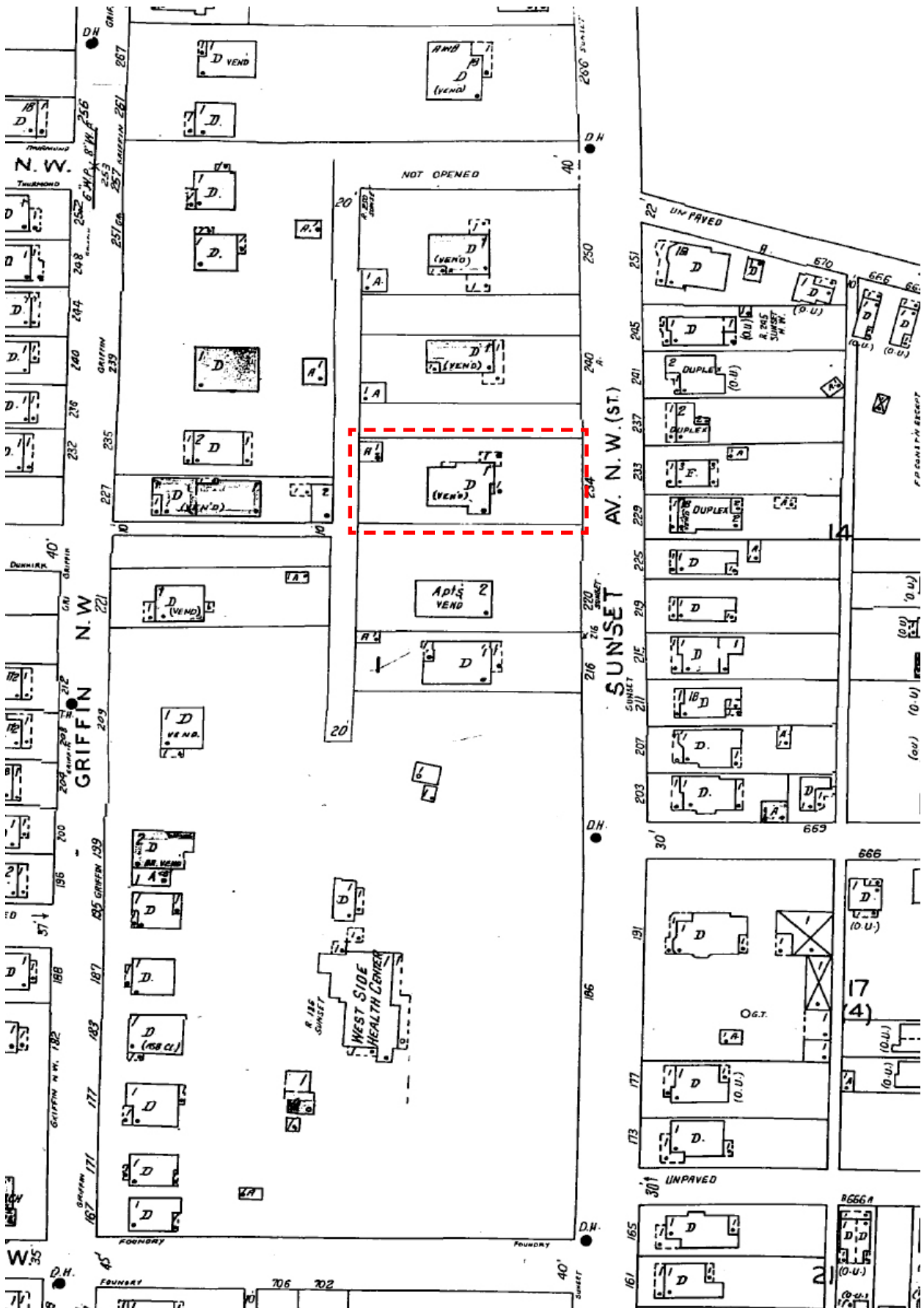


Figure 2.31. Portion of a 1962 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing the house at 234 Sunset Avenue. (Source: ProQuest Digital Sanborn Maps.)

The realities of segregation in Atlanta influenced Martin Luther King, Jr. from an early age. He stated, “There was a pretty strict system of segregation in Atlanta. For a long, long time I could not go swimming, until there was a Negro YMCA. A Negro child in Atlanta could not go to any public park. I could not go to the so-called white schools. In many of the stores downtown, I couldn’t go to a lunch counter to buy a hamburger or a cup of coffee.”²¹⁸ Martin Luther King, Jr. rode in the rear section of Atlanta’s segregated buses in high school from the Fourth Ward (east of downtown) to Booker T. Washington High School, located west of the city center. He excelled in high school but later determined that his education in the Atlanta’s segregated school system was inferior to that of his college classmates.²¹⁹

At the age of fifteen, Martin Luther King, Jr. entered Morehouse College in Atlanta. He thrived in the college environment despite a rocky start at the college due to his young age. Martin Luther King, Jr. considered becoming a physician and an attorney, both professions which he believed would offer him an opportunity to serve people.²²⁰ Influenced by the president of Morehouse, Benjamin Mays, Martin Luther King, Jr. eventually decided to pursue ministry, following in the footsteps of his father and maternal grandfather. He graduated from Morehouse with a degree in sociology at the age of nineteen and entered seminary in September 1948.

Martin Luther King, Jr. moved to Chester, Pennsylvania to enter Crozer Theological Seminary. He desired to move out of the segregated South and study at an integrated seminary in the Northeast. At Crozer Theological Seminary, “King could pursue an independent life, relish the excitement of intellectual discovery, enjoy the freedom to seek and question without fatherly intrusion. Here for the first time he could truly be a man on his own.”²²¹ Martin Luther King, Jr. was intense in his studies, his appearance, and his

punctual attendance in class.²²² According to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, “King was drawn to the school’s unorthodox reputation and liberal theological leanings. It was at Crozer that King strengthened his commitment to the Christian social gospel, developed his initial interest in Gandhian ideas, was first exposed to pacifism, and developed his ideas about nonviolence as a method of social reform.”²²³ He was one of the few Black students at Crozer, and the student body elected Martin Luther King, Jr. their president, and he graduated class valedictorian. Martin Luther King, Jr. furthered his education by attending Boston University, which he entered in September 1951. There he studied philosophy and theology under Edgar S. Brightman and L. Harold DeWolf. It was in Boston that Martin Luther King, Jr. met and fell in love with Coretta Scott, a soprano voice student at the New England Conservatory in Boston.

Coretta Scott

Childhood and Education

Coretta Scott’s father Obadiah owned truck hauling and sawmill businesses in addition to farming during Coretta’s childhood. Urged by his wife Bernice Scott to seek better economic opportunity and educational choices for their family, Obadiah briefly left for Detroit but returned to Alabama as the Great Depression and the economic downturn limited financial mobility for Black workers in the North.²²⁴ The family was consistently under threat by racist terrorists during Coretta’s childhood. The family’s home and their businesses were torched and destroyed, and Mr. Scott was vulnerable to bodily harm and murder. Obadiah Scott opened a neighborhood general store after two of his businesses burned, likely at the hands of arsonists. Despite the uncertainty of their circumstances, Bernice McMurry Scott instilled a sense of independence in her daughters. Coretta Scott King noted her mother stressed, “If you get an education and try to be somebody, you won’t have to depend on anyone—not even a

218. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 8.

219. Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Penguin, 1982), 16.

220. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 16; Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 14.

221. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 22.

222. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 22–23; Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 17.

223. Stanford University, “Crozer Theological Seminary,” The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, April 27, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/crozer-theological-seminary>.

224. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 23.

man.”²²⁵ Even with hardship, Obadiah and Bernice were determined to offer the children the best education in the area. The children began their education after their fifth birthdays, walking to and from a Rosenwald School located three miles from their house.²²⁶ Edyth and Coretta then attended Lincoln Normal School in Marion, Alabama. The school, founded by the American Missionary Association, introduced Coretta Scott to the world of music and peace activism.²²⁷ She entered at age twelve and continued at Lincoln Normal School through high school graduation. She graduated as class valedictorian.

Coretta Scott followed her sister Edythe to Antioch College in Ohio, which had recently integrated. Edythe stated that “Antioch and Lincoln were similar in many respects. Both were progressive in nature and sought to maintain themselves as laboratories of inquiry, freedom, and democracy.”²²⁸ Her experience at the college reinforced her love of music, and her interaction with the largely white community there gave her a “new self-assurance . . . preparing [her] for the role [she] was to play as the wife of Martin Luther King, Jr., and for [her] part in the Movement he led.”²²⁹ Her musical talent earned her a spot at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.

Mary Powell, a native of Atlanta, was the first to introduce Coretta Scott to a doctoral student from Atlanta, Martin Luther King, Jr. Early letters between the couple reveal that they discussed a range of intellectual topics, including economics and political activism.²³⁰ Biographer Clayborne Carson states that Coretta Scott “was more of an activist than Martin,” when they met, with active memberships in the NAACP and the campus Race

Relations and Civil Liberties Committees.²³¹ “Their intellectual and political compatibility helped deepen their relationship.”²³² After a cool reception from his parents, Coretta Scott became endeared to the family, and the couple announced their engagement in the *Atlanta Daily World*, Atlanta’s premier African American newspaper, in the spring of 1953.²³³ Coretta Scott changed her major at the Conservatory from performing arts to “music education with a voice major, so [she] could teach wherever [the couple] lived instead of having to travel all over the country giving concerts.”²³⁴ She had decided, “Wherever Martin lives, I will live there too. Whatever he does, I will be involved in it.”²³⁵

Family Life | Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King

The Kings wed in June 1953 at Obadiah and Bernice Scott’s house in Alabama. The couple rented a four-room apartment in Boston, within walking distance of the New England Conservatory since they both needed to complete coursework.²³⁶ Coretta Scott King was busy with her education, and she noted in her biography that “Martin was wonderful about doing the housework.”²³⁷ Upon completion of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s coursework and Coretta Scott King’s graduation from the Conservatory, he accepted a position as a pastor at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Martin Luther King, Jr. had fulfilled the residential requirements for his doctoral degree, but he decided to complete his thesis while serving as a pastor.²³⁸ Despite much trepidation about moving back to the South with its segregation and Jim Crow laws, the young couple relocated to Montgomery in 1954. Martin Luther King, Jr. noted, “We came to the conclusion that we had something of a moral obligation to return [to the South]—at least for a few years.”²³⁹ The Kings lived in the church parsonage, located eight blocks

225. Coretta Scott King and Barbara Reynolds, *Coretta: My Life, My Love, My Legacy* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2017), 13.

226. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 54. Constructed throughout rural areas in the South for African American children, Rosenwald Schools were funded by the Julius Rosenwald Fund in the early-twentieth century.

227. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 18–20.

228. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 67.

229. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 43.

230. Martin Luther King Jr., “To Coretta Scott,” July 18, 1952, The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/coretta-scott>; Clayborne E. Carson, *Martin’s Dream* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 199.

231. Carson, *Martin’s Dream*, 200–201.

232. Carson, *Martin’s Dream*, 202.

233. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 45.

234. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 67.

235. *Ibid.*

236. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 102; King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 85.

237. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 86.

238. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 41.

239. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 44.



Figure 2.32. Coretta Scott King and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with their first child Yolanda, 1956. (Source: Jet Magazine, April 12, 1956 – permission pending, see Appendix E.)

from the church in Montgomery. Coretta Scott King gave birth to their first child in November 1955, Yolanda Denise, nicknamed “Yoki” (Figure 2.32).

Montgomery

Dexter Avenue Baptist Church’s members were influential, “largely professionals and faculty members of Alabama State College.”²⁴⁰ Martin Luther King, Jr. appreciated the congregation’s intellectual leanings and demanded members of his church play an active role in social problems. He “insisted that every church member become a registered voter and a member of the NAACP.”²⁴¹ A social and political action committee at the church kept church members informed on political developments.²⁴² Martin Luther King, Jr. became vice president of the Alabama Council on Human Relations, an interracial group that aimed to keep communication open between the races in Alabama. Through his activism, King became good friends with his future most-trusted advisor, Rev. Ralph David Abernathy of First Baptist Church of Montgomery. Rev. Abernathy would later become first Financial Secretary / Treasurer and

Vice President At-Large of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and then President of that organization. “By the spring and summer of 1955, a flame of discontent was smoldering below the surface of passivity in black Montgomery. King himself sensed the stirrings . . .”²⁴³

Rosa Parks was arrested for violating a Montgomery ordinance, which mandated segregated seating on city buses on December 1, 1955. E. D. Nixon, president of the Alabama NAACP contacted Montgomery’s Black pastors the next morning to advocate for a bus boycott by African American riders. Martin Luther King, Jr. suggested they hold a meeting of Black leaders at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. Approximately forty or fifty civic leaders and ministers attended the meeting. The group formed a coalition known as the Montgomery Improvement Agency (MIA) and elected Martin Luther King, Jr., its president. Dr. King spoke at a rally before the boycott, addressing over four thousand attendees. He said, “We are impatient for justice, but we will protest with love. There will be no violence on our part.”²⁴⁴

White segregationists used violence against Black leaders as a tactic to suppress participation and sow fear in the Black community. According to Coretta Scott King, Martin Luther King, Jr. had “considered the possibility of someone bombing the house. However, though the front of the house was right on the street, it was in a closely populated area, and I thought that no one would run the risk of attacking from there.”²⁴⁵ The Kings’ worries were warranted as a perpetrator set off an explosive at the front of the house on January 30, 1956. Despite the physical threat, the bombing reinforced Coretta Scott King’s dedication to the movement. She stated, “Shortly after the house was bombed I had a sudden realization of why Martin and I were supposed to be together and in Montgomery . . . We were part of a Movement that was worldwide in its impact. We had been chosen for that destiny.”²⁴⁶

The Montgomery Bus Boycott lasted for 381 days before a mandate from the United States Supreme

240. Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1992*, Revised (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 43.

241. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 46.

242. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 54.

243. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 58.

244. Quoted in Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1992*, 45.

245. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 116.

246. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 124.

Court ruled that segregation on municipal buses was unconstitutional. The boycott was not without violence or pushback from the white Montgomery community even though the movement was rooted in nonviolent protest. The Kings' house was bombed, but the family was unharmed. King and members of the MIA were arrested several times over the course of the boycott. Callers berated the King household with threatening and violent messages.²⁴⁷ Martin Luther King, Jr. began to hone his skills as a nonviolent leader using a Ghandian approach. According to Harvard Sitkoff, "King's neo-Ghandian persuasion fit the needs of the American South in the mid-twentieth century. It offered something to nearly all in a palatable way. King had learned in the crucible of the boycott that this form of black protest weakened the white community's resolve, unity, and readiness to retaliate with violence. It placed blame on the impersonal system of segregation, not on individual segregationists; it played on the whites' growing feeling of guilt; it forced whites to confront the plight of blacks, while assuaging the white fear of bloody reprisals."²⁴⁸ The boycott inspired ministers and students in other southern cities to pursue nonviolent protests throughout the South.

Recognizing the need to maintain momentum, nearly one hundred Black ministers gathered in February 1957 to form the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), electing Dr. King president and Ralph David Abernathy treasurer. The United States Congress passed the Civil Rights Act in 1957, which President Eisenhower signed into law in September. The law would have a limited impact on African American voter participation, but it did establish the United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and the United States Commission on Civil Rights. Through his success in Montgomery, King was becoming a nationally recognized leader. King appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine in February 1957. He became a sought-after speaker throughout the United States. The events of the late-1950s were eventful for the King family: Martin Luther King, Jr. and SCLC leaders met with President Eisenhower at the White House; he survived an attempt on his life that occurred in New York City; he and Coretta Scott King traveled to Ghana to celebrate its newfound independence;

247. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 84.

248. Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1992*, 55.

and they traveled to India to "deepen his understanding of Ghandian principles."²⁴⁹

Martin Luther King, Jr. continued in his role of organizer and community leader. His family lived in the church parsonage, and he refused offers of higher paying positions of national prominence. Coretta Scott King stated, "As the years went by, Martin really wished to take a personal vow of poverty. He was forced by his position as a family man to temper this desire, but even so, he did not want those possessions which would separate him from other people. He would say such things as 'I don't see why we have to own a house.'"²⁵⁰ The family continued to grow, and Martin Luther King III was born on October 23, 1957 (Figure 2.33). According to Oates, "King was so busy with meetings and speeches, not to mention his church work, that he had scarcely any time for his

249. Stanford University, "India Trip," The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, June 20, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/india-trip>.

250. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 148.



Figure 2.33. Portrait of Martin Luther King III, 1968. (Source: Stanford University. Libraries. Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Bob Fitch Photography Collection.)

family. He did hurry home during the third week in October, when Coretta gave birth to a son. King named him Martin Luther King III. ‘Little Marty’ cried with such fervor that King said he detected the voice of a future preacher.”²⁵¹

King authored a memoir of the Montgomery bus boycott titled *Stride Toward Freedom*. The book was “the chronicle of 50,000 Negroes who took to heart the principles of nonviolence, who learned to fight for their rights with the weapon of love, and who in the process, acquired a new estimate of their own human worth.”²⁵² In this book, Dr. King emphasized that the participants of the movement “accepted a nonviolent approach because they trusted their leaders when they told them that nonviolence was the essence of active Christianity.”²⁵³

Martin Luther King Jr.’s involvement in civil rights advancement continued and grew. Under his leadership, the SCLC was beginning to organize a grassroots movements for voter registration in the South. The initial project was called the Crusade for Citizenship, “to commence on Lincoln’s birthday, 1958, and to demonstrate once again that ‘a new Negro, determined to be free, has emerged in America.’”²⁵⁴ The goal was to double the African American voter rolls by 1960.²⁵⁵ The campaign created momentum and helped organize grassroots organizations, but it did not succeed in registering the originally proposed number of voters.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was having a difficult time maintaining his travel schedule, pastor duties, leadership duties for the SCLC, and his home life. Coretta Scott King noted “For three years, since 1956, Martin had been virtually commuting between Montgomery and Atlanta.”²⁵⁶ The family realized it would be nearly impossible for him to

dedicate more time to the civil rights movement while being a full time pastor at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church.²⁵⁷ The King family made the decision to relocate to Atlanta since the SCLC was headquartered there, and Dr. King resigned as pastor from Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. Martin Luther King, Jr. noted, “After four years as president of the Montgomery Improvement Association and five years as a resident of Montgomery, I decided to move from Montgomery to Atlanta. I would become co-pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta and thereby have more time and a better location to direct the Southwide campaigns of the SCLC . . . I hated to leave Montgomery, but the people there realized that the call from the whole South was one that could not be denied.”²⁵⁸ In February 1960, the King family moved to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth city.

The King Family Moves to Atlanta

Dr. and Mrs. King and their two children rented a two-story house on Johnson Avenue, close to SCLC headquarters on Auburn Avenue and Ebenezer Baptist Church where Dr. King would serve as co-pastor with his father. Dr. King “professed indifference to material things and still tried to be like Gandhi. He drove a dusty three-year-old Chevrolet, and his personal income was scarcely commensurate with his labors and prestige.”²⁵⁹ His income was modest, and he donated any large royalties he received to the SCLC. Though Atlanta had a relatively progressive mayor in William B. Hartsfield who pledged that desegregation in Atlanta could occur so long as it was “gradual and nonviolent,” the schools and City Hall still had segregated facilities. Though buses and golf courses were desegregated, “restaurants, theaters, lunch counters, and most of the parks were closed to blacks.”²⁶⁰ This gradual approach to desegregation became known as “the Atlanta Way,” which involved closed door negotiations between

251. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 121.

252. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, n.d.), 9.

253. Stanford University, “Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story,” The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, July 5, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/stride-toward-freedom-montgomery-story>.

254. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 119.

255. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 125.

256. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 167.

257. Ibid.

258. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 135–36.

259. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 143.

260. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 144.

Black and white leaders, thus promoting “Atlanta as the New South model city of racial harmony.”²⁶¹

As the King family settled into their new residence in Atlanta, students throughout the South were beginning a campaign of sit-ins to push for integration at restaurants, retail establishments, and public facilities. Widespread publicity of the movement began when four Black North Carolina A&T College students refused to move from a Woolworth lunch counter reserved for white customers in Greensboro, North Carolina. Mass demonstrations followed and inspired sit-ins throughout the South. Dr. King addressed a rally of students at Alabama State College who demonstrated at the snack shop at the Montgomery County courthouse.²⁶² Despite the opposition of the established Black leadership in Atlanta, Martin Luther King, Jr. joined with the students in protest. Police arrested Dr. King and a group of thirty-six students in October 1960 for conducting a sit-in at a large Atlanta department store. The result of these organized student protests was the formation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The group grew out of the SCLC youth coalition, and at the coaxing of SCLC Executive Director Ella Baker, it hosted its founding conference in Raleigh, North Carolina, in April 1960. Martin Luther King, Jr. made an address at the opening of the conference, stating “the youth must take the freedom struggle into every community in the south.”²⁶³ Dr. King’s national prominence attracted attacks on his reputation and threats to his family. Members of the Ku Klux Klan burned a cross on the front yard of the Kings’ house on Johnson Avenue in April 1960.

Martin Luther King, Jr. met with Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts in June 1960. Dr. King communicated his frustration with the pace of civil rights legislation and the Eisenhower administration. Of John F. Kennedy, Dr. King



Figure 2.34. 1962 Photo of Martin (age 4), Yolanda (age 6), Mrs. King, and Dexter (age 18 months). (Source: Associated Press Photo.)

remarked that he “did not have the grasp and the comprehension of the depths of the problem at that time, as he later did. He knew that segregation was morally wrong and he certainly intellectually committed himself to integration.” Dr. King didn’t feel a full commitment from the future president to make civil rights issues an administrative priority.²⁶⁴ He did not make an official endorsement for Kennedy in his race against Vice President Richard Nixon; however, the Senator did intervene after Dr. King was arrested and incarcerated after the Atlanta sit-in demonstrations. Senator Kennedy phoned Coretta Scott King, who was pregnant with their third child. Robert Kennedy, John F. Kennedy’s younger brother and “de facto campaign manager,” demanded officials release King on bond.²⁶⁵ Of the episode, Dr. King noted, that although he believed Senator Kennedy cared about him (Dr. King), “I think he naturally had political considerations in mind. He was running for an office, and he needed to be elected, and I’m sure he felt the need for the Negro votes. So I think that he did something that expressed deep moral concern, but at the same time it was politically sound.”²⁶⁶

261. Clarissa Myrick-Harris, “The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Atlanta, 1880-1910,” *Perspectives on History* Annual Meeting 2007 (November 1, 2006), <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/november-2006/the-origins-of-the-civil-rights-movement-in-atlanta-1880-1910>.

262. Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1992*, 69.

263. Martin Luther King Jr., “Statement to the Press at the Beginning of the Youth Leadership Conference” (Youth Leadership Conference (SCLC) Founding Conference, Raleigh, NC, April 15, 1960).

264. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 143–44.

265. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1986), 147.

266. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 147–48.

Coretta Scott King gave birth to their third child in January 1961. Dexter Scott King was named for the church where Martin Luther King, Jr. had his first pastorate (Figure 2.34). Dr. King was in Chicago at the time of Dexter's birth, but "rushed home as soon as he got the word."²⁶⁷ Dexter was born six weeks premature in a segregated hospital in Atlanta. Despite Martin Luther King, Jr.'s rising fame, the growing family attempted to create an atmosphere of normalcy when Dr. King's travel schedule allowed him to be home in Atlanta. Coretta Scott King stated, "In spite of Martin's being away so much, he was wonderful with his children, and they adored him. When Daddy was home it was something special."²⁶⁸ Mrs. King also began to gain national prominence as a surrogate for Dr. King when he was traveling. She frequently prepared and gave speeches in support of the movement. She attended national conferences promoting the global issues including economic justice, diplomacy, and international peace.²⁶⁹

The sit-ins and boycotts in Atlanta had successfully put adequate pressure for change on the entities that controlled Atlanta's commerce. Despite controversy and conflict between the young student protesters and Atlanta's established Black elite, a compromise was reached between the city Chamber of Commerce and the Black establishment. The stores would desegregate their lunch counters soon after Atlanta desegregated its schools, which was scheduled for September 1961. Dr. King's leadership was critical in bringing both sides of the Black community together to accept the terms of this deal.²⁷⁰

In the spring of 1961, a group of protesters from the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) began a protest to desegregate interstate bus facilities in what became known as the Freedom Rides. White and Black individuals boarded buses and would deliberately violate segregation laws of the deep South. CORE anticipated a two-week trip, leaving from Washington, D. C. and ending in New Orleans, Louisiana. The SCLC supported their efforts financially and physically. White mobs



Figure 2.35. 1968 photo of Bernice King. (Source: Stanford University Libraries. Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Bob Fitch Photography Collection.)

attacked the Freedom Riders in Alabama, and the national media disseminated horrific images of the violence. Dr. King's relationship with the Kennedy family was critical as he urged Robert Kennedy to send Federal assistance. Five hundred Federal marshals arrived in Montgomery and helped thwart the violent white mobs that gathered in counter protest to the Freedom Rides. Dr. King did not join the riders because he was on probation for prior arrests in Atlanta; were he to be arrested again, the consequences could include lengthy jail time. Additionally, Dr. King said he thought he would be more useful raising funds for the Freedom Riders.²⁷¹

Martin Luther King, Jr. and the SCLC led massive protests during December 1961 in Albany, Georgia, against segregated public facilities such as bus terminals. Participants in the protests used nonviolent protest methods, "including mass

267. Dexter Scott King and Ralph Wiley, *Growing Up King: An Intimate Memoir* (New York: Warner Books, 2003), 13.

268. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 200.

269. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 96–97.

270. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 164–65.

271. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 170–71.

demonstrations, jail-ins, sit-ins, boycotts, and litigation.”²⁷² Because Albany police responded with arrests but did not commit the kind of brutality seen in other Southern towns during this period, the city avoided negative publicity in the national press. The campaign eventually lost steam and demonstrations halted when Dr. King agreed to leave Albany in August 1962. Lessons learned by civil rights leaders from both the SCLC and SNCC helped shape strategy for forthcoming more successful campaigns.

Coretta Scott King gave birth to her fourth child on March 28, 1963, Bernice Albertine, nicknamed “Bunny” (Figure 2.35). Dr. King returned to Alabama the day after her birth to participate in voter registration movement in Birmingham. The Birmingham Campaign was a “direct action” protest attacking the city’s system of segregation. After his arrest for denying a court order and his jailing on April 12, 1963, Dr. King penned “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” which brought international attention to the civil rights movement in the American South. International press attention meant that the media captured the brutal tactics of Public Safety Commissioner Bull Connor as he directed his forces to blast peaceful protesters with high-pressure water hoses, attacked school-aged children with police dogs, and clubbed demonstrators with night watch sticks. Media outlets broadcast the overtly racist brutality across the globe. Politically, the Birmingham Movement advanced national civil rights policy. President Kennedy proposed a civil rights bill in 1963 as a result, which passed Congress in 1964.

With momentum from the successes in Birmingham, in the summer of 1963, the SCLC began to plan a massive protest march in Washington, D. C. known as the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Some 250,000 people gathered at the Lincoln Memorial to receive an array of diverse speakers. Dr. King agreed to speak last, and he delivered the famous “I Have a Dream Speech.”

Martin Luther King, Jr. was recovering from exhaustion at an Atlanta hospital in 1964 when

he received a call from Mrs. King informing him that he would be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The couple along with friends and family traveled to Oslo that December to attend the award ceremony. Dr. King donated the prize money to the movement, splitting it among several prominent civil rights groups.²⁷³ That November, Coretta Scott King performed the first of many “Freedom Concerts,” which highlighted her voice talent and raised money for the movement.

Landscape Summary (1933-1964)

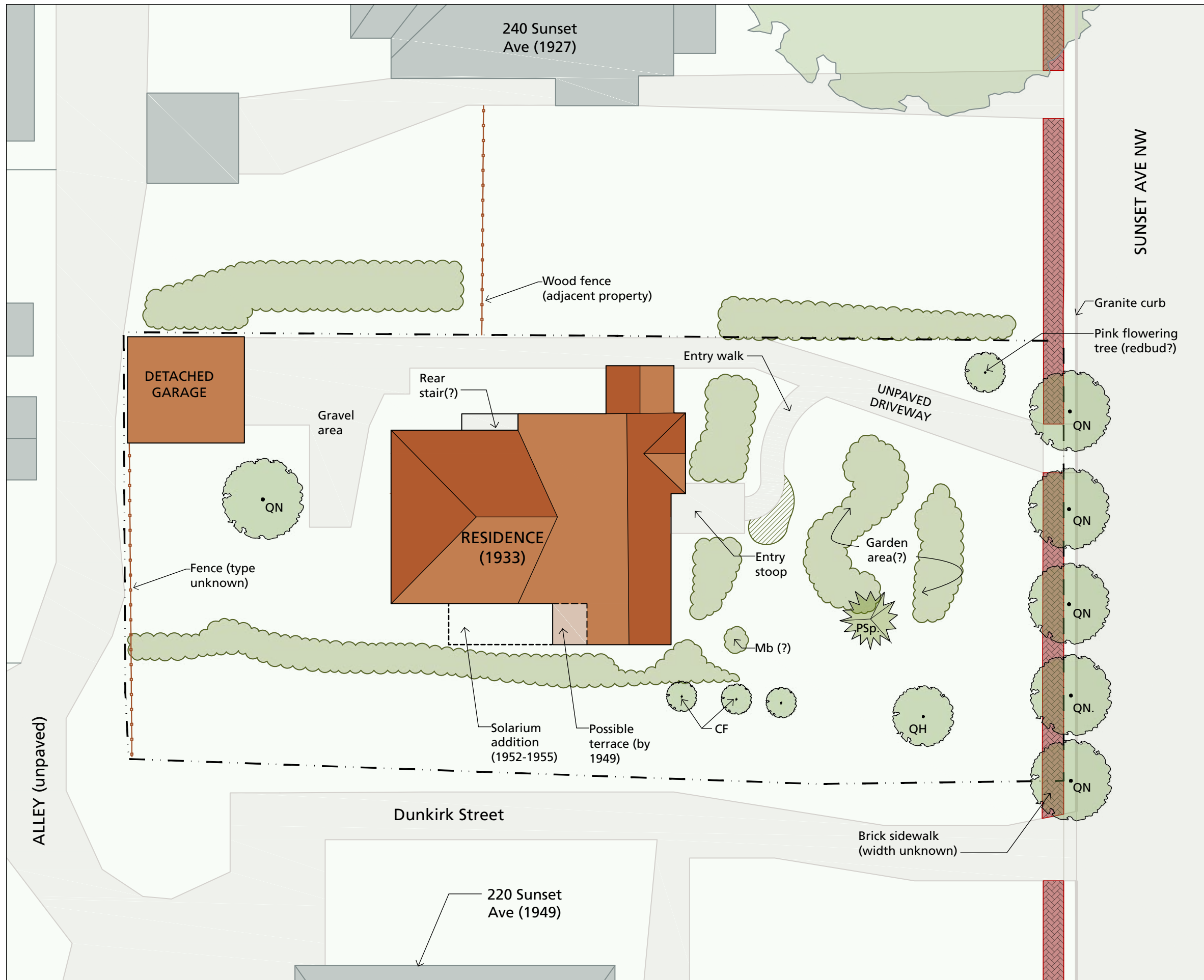
Between 1933 and 1964, the landscape at the property located at 234 Sunset Avenue underwent major changes. The Cowan family constructed a roughly 2,190 square foot house on one of the last undeveloped parcels of the Breitenbucher estate. The site boundaries were an easement for a narrow street on the south (labeled Dunkirk Street on maps), Sunset Avenue NW on the east, the Toomer residence at address 240 Sunset Avenue NW on the north, and an alley on the west. The property included the residence, a detached garage, a driveway (which may have been gravel), a paved or gravel area in the rear yard, a walk to the front entrance, and a garden. Sunset Avenue was a paved road by 1938 with brick sidewalks and granite curbs. Dunkirk Street, located south of the property, remained unpaved. The property included a fence along the western property line. Aerial images show intermittent hedges of unknown shrub types along the north and south property lines. The Cowans added a solarium to the south side of the house between 1952 and 1955. This addition may have been predated by a terrace in the same location. The Toomer residence had a large white oak in the front yard and a wood fence between that house’s porte cochère and the north property line of 234 Sunset Avenue. Photographic evidence suggests that there were five water oaks located in the landscape strip along Sunset Avenue by 1949. The size of these trees in mid-1960s images support this conclusion.

The Cowans sold the property to Charles and Jeannette Gideons in 1957. The landscape appears to have changed little in the time the Gideons owned the property, but little documentation exists. Photographs and film footage from the mid-

272. Stanford University and Stanford, “Albany Movement,” The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, April 24, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/albany-movement>.

273. Stanford University and Stanford, “Nobel Peace Prize,” The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, July 3, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/nobel-peace-prize>.

1960s show established vegetation that may have been present during this period including water oaks planted along Sunset Avenue, dogwoods on the south property border, a pine in the front yard (possibly a loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*)), and a large evergreen shrub that may have been a mahonia (*Mahonia bealei*) off the southeast corner of the house. The water oak currently growing in the rear yard of the house likely dates to this period. Illustration 2.1 depicts the cultural landscape during this period.



Plant Legend

Key Botanical Name Common Name

Trees

CF	<i>Cornus florida</i>	Dogwood
PSp	<i>Pinus sp.</i> (possibly <i>Pinus taeda</i>)	Pine (possibly Loblolly)
QN	<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water Oak
QH	<i>Quercus spp.</i>	Hybridized Oak

Shrubs

Mb	<i>Mahonia bealei</i>	Leatherleaf Mahonia
----	-----------------------	---------------------

Groundcover

Unidentified turf grass species

NOTE:

See Appendix B for house evolution models (HABS).

Credits:

1949 aerial photograph, asa0031, Planning Atlanta - A New City in the Making, 1949 Aerial Mosaic and Photographs, Georgia State University Library; 1938 WPA Map, atlpp0226_042, Works Progress Administration of Georgia Atlanta Maps, Georgia State University Library. Photographs and film footage from December 1965 (Brown Media Archives, University of Georgia Arnold Michaelis/MLK interview, Reel 8) and April 1968 (©Flip Schulke) - informed pre-1965 established vegetation.

**Illustration 2.1
Cowan/Gideons Period
(1933-1964)**

King Family Home

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

October 2021





Figure 2.36. Photo of Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King, Jr. during protests in Vine City, 1966. (Source: Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.)

The King Family Period 1 (1964-1972)

Vine City in the 1960s

Living conditions for many of Vine City's residents had declined by the mid-1960s even though it was an enclave for Black social leaders and Atlanta's "talented tenth" during the early twentieth century.²⁷⁴ Workers from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) led local protests in 1966, highlighting the poverty and living conditions in Vine City in an effort known as the "Atlanta Project." Leaders such as Stokely Carmichael and Julian Bond were part of the SNCC effort, which relied on existing community organizations such as the Vine City Foundation, the student-led Vine City Improvement Association (VCIA), and the Vine City Council (VCC), formed

by Quaker activist Hector Black.²⁷⁵ Events in Vine City in 1966, including the tragic death of a resident who froze to death in his apartment, culminated in protests and a march led by Dr. King from Atlanta University to the State Capitol (Figure 2.36). The march included fifteen hundred community members and organizers.²⁷⁶ SNCC organized rent strikes and protested eviction laws, which resulted in a case going to the Supreme Court in 1968. The case, *Sanks vs. Georgia*, involved "low-rent housing tenants challenging the requirement of posting bond in an amount double their rent before initiating court proceedings against landlords who [had] evicted them."²⁷⁷ The 200 and 300 block of Sunset Avenue NW remained largely owner-occupied despite the disturbing housing and economic conditions in Vine City, and this was the neighborhood the King family selected for their first home purchase.

274. The Talented Tenth is a term popularized by W. E. B. DuBois in his book *The Negro Problem*. DuBois penned the essay during his first extended stay in Atlanta. DuBois believed there was a group of college-educated black men, who would become social change leaders and push for the elimination of systemic racism. Historian Clarissa Myrick-Harris asserts that Vine City was the nexus of Atlanta's talented tenth in her 2020 Historic Context Study for the King Family Home.

275. Tuck, *Beyond Atlanta: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Georgia, 1940-1980*, 229-30.

276. Vine City Foundation, *Vine City Voice* (January 23, 1966), Southern Regional Council Clipping Collection, Folder 1, Box 612, Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library, Atlanta, Georgia.

277. Bob Hurt, "Judge Pye Loses in Condemnation Fight," *The Atlanta Constitution*, November 17, 1970, 11.

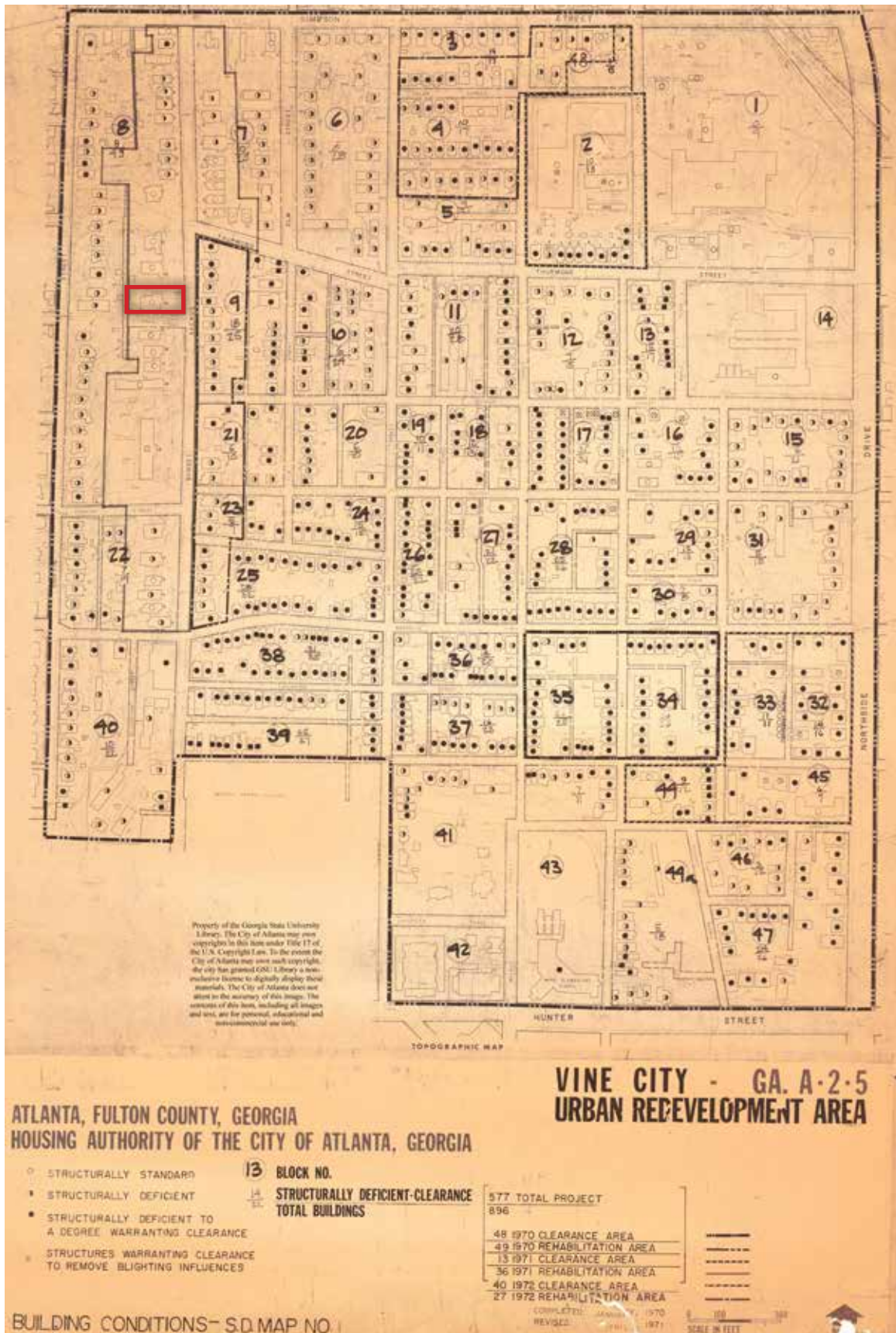


Figure 2.37. 1970 map showing Vine City buildings considered “structurally deficient” (1/2 black dots) and “structurally deficient to a degree warranting clearance” (black dots). The King Family Home is outlined in red. (Source: Vine City Urban Redevelopment Area, Planning Atlanta City Planning Maps Collection, Georgia State University Library.)

A 1967 report noted that “the housing conditions in ‘Vine City’ reflect a continuum of possibilities in housing. Most of the property is absentee-owned, run-down and even dilapidated. At the other extreme, there are some well-kept homes that are owner-occupied.”²⁷⁸ The author continues, “Although Vine City is clearly overall, a slum community, the presence of some relatively well-off families is not incongruous, given the fact that housing for Negroes – of any income level – is restricted, and, given the fact that ‘Vine City’ is a stable community that offers various kinds of satisfactions to its members . . . There is a solid core of long-time residents in ‘Vine City’ which gives the community a stability and continuity of membership lacking in many slum areas.”²⁷⁹ Twenty-seven percent of the residents of Vine City were unemployed in 1964, with many more residents of the community considered “underemployed.”²⁸⁰ The author of the report noted, “yet, even though there is much unemployment and underemployment, the families have not turned to public assistance in large measure. They rely primarily on wage income to support their families.”²⁸¹ A 1970 map entitled “Vine City Urban Redevelopment Area” depicts the large number of buildings in the neighborhood considered “structurally deficient” and “structurally deficient to a degree warranting clearance” (Figure 2.37). Raw footage from a 1965 interview by journalist Arnold Michaelis depicts the contrast in living conditions in Vine City. While areas like Sunset Avenue NW have single-family houses set on wide front turf grass areas with shade trees (Figure 2.38), other areas of the neighborhood had owner-neglected, dilapidated, sub-par housing (Figure 2.39). Many of these units

lacked indoor plumbing, heating, or structural integrity.

Vine City continued to be the home of many of Atlanta’s leading civil and human rights activists and religious leaders although there existed troubling economic conditions for many of its residents. Examples of Vine City residents included Atlanta Life Executive Fred Armon Toomer (1889-1961) who resided at 240 Sunset Avenue NW; Rev. Samuel H. Giles, minister and president of Turner Theological Seminary at Morris Brown College, who resided at 138 Sunset Avenue NW; Rev. Maynard Jackson, Sr., father of Atlanta’s first Black mayor, who lived at 220 Sunset Avenue NW; and civil rights leader Julian Bond and his wife Alice, who moved to 266 Sunset Avenue NW.²⁸² Dorothy Bolden (1924-2005), civil rights activist and founder of the National Domestic Workers Union, lived at 644 Delbridge Street.

Research does not reveal how Coretta Scott King learned about the property at 234 Sunset Avenue, but its proximity to many of Atlanta’s civil rights elite and the timing of its sale may have influenced her decision. Research did not reveal real estate advertisements for the house in 1964. There may not have been an advertisement, and Mrs. King may have learned about the house from family friends. It is not known if Mrs. King approached the Gideon sisters to inquire about purchasing the home or if it was already for sale in October 1964.

-
278. Marcia L. Halvorsen, “An Analysis and Interpretation of Data on the Social Characteristics of Residents of ‘Vine City’ - a Negro Slum Ghetto within the City of Atlanta, Georgia” (Spelman College, June 15, 1967), 8, Harry G. Lefever Papers, Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.
279. Halvorsen, “An Analysis and Interpretation of Data on the Social Characteristics of Residents of ‘Vine City’ - a Negro Slum Ghetto within the City of Atlanta, Georgia,” 8–10.
280. Halvorsen, “An Analysis and Interpretation of Data on the Social Characteristics of Residents of ‘Vine City’ - a Negro Slum Ghetto within the City of Atlanta, Georgia,” 36.
281. Halvorsen, “An Analysis and Interpretation of Data on the Social Characteristics of Residents of ‘Vine City’ - a Negro Slum Ghetto within the City of Atlanta, Georgia,” 39.

-
282. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 25–26.



Figure 2.38. December 1965 view of a large tree in the Toomer residence yard, located at 240 Sunset Avenue NW. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)



Figure 2.39. December 1965 still image of multi-family housing in Vine City. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)

The King Family | 1964-1972

Coretta Scott King Purchases the King Family Home

Coretta Scott King purchased the house from Juanita Gideons Hawkins and June Gideons Tiller on October 7, 1964, one week before Martin Luther King, Jr. learned he would be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.²⁸³ The King's purchase of the Sunset Avenue house coincided with major events in Dr. King's public life. In November 1964, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover publicly denounced Dr. King. This period also coincided with the events and planning leading up to the Selma to Montgomery marches. Dr. King's heavy responsibilities in late 1964 and early 1965 meant that Mrs. King oversaw remodeling the home to prepare it their young family.²⁸⁴ Xernona Clayton recalled in a 2019 interview that Mrs. King saw that the house needed some repairs and that she had ideas for specific improvements that could better meet the family's needs.²⁸⁵

Historian David Garrow notes that "for years Coretta [had] suggested that they leave their aging rented home on Johnson Avenue and buy a larger house better suited for raising four young children, but King had resisted."²⁸⁶ Dexter King explained that there was pressure for the growing family to move, noting "A freeway was coming, as was Bunny [Bernice King]. We moved because we needed more space and the freeway construction would displace us."²⁸⁷ Garrow elaborates on the significance of the King family owning their own house,

As Coretta later explained it, "he was reluctant in the first place to own a house. He didn't want to own a house because he felt that this would set him apart," and "felt it was inconsistent with his philosophy" and his strong doubts about America's celebration of private property. He had "strong feelings about owning a lot of property or acquiring a lot of wealth," and brushed off his wife's frequent reminders that

the family deserved a better abode. "Martin had a revulsion for the idea of owning a fine house in an exclusive neighborhood," Coretta said, and "for a long time he made no move to improve our housing situation."²⁸⁸

Mrs. King noted in her biography that she believed in the austerity practiced by Gandhi, but that belief had limits. She wrote,

Like Gandhi, my husband had struggled with the issue of materialism. . . . For me, that brand of asceticism was more than I had expended in our marriage, and it was more than I could accept. If Martin had had his way, he would have taken an oath of poverty, refusing even the most basic necessities, such as a house. . . . But I insisted that our family have a house—nothing fancy, but at least the basics. It took almost thirteen years of marriage before he agreed to buy a house, and when he did, he said that he didn't need it; it was for me and the children.²⁸⁹

Mrs. King's assistant Lynn Cothran stated that the need for owning a house was practical and influenced by the constant threats to Dr. King's life. According to Cothran, "There was a fear that if something happened that she wouldn't have a place to raise her children, and that was what was foremost in them going ahead and buying a home."²⁹⁰ The deed to the house was in Coretta Scott King's name, and against the wishes of his father who had recently bought a house in middle class Collier Heights, the family moved into the house. Mrs. King stated that the new residence was in a "low-income neighborhood, and [Martin Luther King, Jr.] wanted his children to grow up understanding the least of these. I didn't have a problem with that; I just wanted a house.

283. Warranty Deed (1910678), (October 7, 1964), Book 4313, Page 503, Fulton County Courthouse, GA.

284. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 136.

285. Clarissa Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 31.

286. David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference*, 421.

287. King and Wiley, *Growing Up King*, 7.

288. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference*, 421.

289. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 82.

290. Lynn Cothran, King Sunset Avenue Home and Adjacent Apartment Building, interview by Clarissa Myrick-Harris, July 13, 2019, Courtesy of Dr. Clarissa Myrick-Harris, OWA Institute.

Every woman wants a house.”²⁹¹ Though Sunset Avenue was home to middle class activists and professionals, Dr. King toured some of the poorest areas of Vine City in 1965, noting “I had no idea people were living in Atlanta in such conditions. This is a shame on the community.”²⁹²

Mrs. King oversaw extensive renovations to the house designed by Atlanta architect Joseph W. Robinson. (See profile of J. W. Robinson below for additional information.) While she managed the final renovations, Dr. King was back in Alabama leading efforts to press for voting rights with the Selma to Montgomery marches in March 1965. Events in Coretta Scott King’s hometown of Marion, Alabama, and the murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson spurred peaceful protests in nearby Selma, Alabama, that spring. These events garnered international attention. An increasingly ever-present press corps broadcasted Sheriff Jim Clark’s brutal actions against voting rights advocates to the world. The pressure from the reaction to coverage of the marches helped propel the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which President Johnson signed in August.

In 2019, Xernona Clayton recalled of Mrs. King during this period, “She was busy a lot, trying to be sure that the builders did what she wanted. She went every day, but she talked to the designers and the builders and architects and all the people who had anything to do with the house.”²⁹³ During the construction in early 1965, Mrs. King traveled to California for a concert tour and then joined Dr. King for the Selma to Montgomery March on March 17-25, 1965.²⁹⁴

Remodeling for the King Family Home

Two sheets of drawings for the 1964-1965 remodeling of the house at 234 Sunset Avenue survive. The title blocks list “Jos. W. Robinson, Designer, 255 Hopkins St, S.W. Ph. 753.5888” and note that the sheets were drawn by someone named Johnson. The project name and location

are listed only as “Additions & Alterations, Atlanta, Georgia.” The sheets are identified as follows:

- Sheet 1 contains a first-floor plan and finish schedule. It is dated 16 November 1964 and was revised on December 28, 1964 (Figure 2.40, see enlargement in Appendix A).
- Sheet 2 contains basement plan, a typical wall section, plot plan, and door and window schedules. It is dated 19 November 1964 and was revised on December 28, 1964 (Figure 2.41, see enlargement in Appendix A).

The remodeled house reflects 1960s trends in domestic life. The house style reflects characteristics of the Plain (no style) Ranch, “the signature Ranch House style for Georgia.”²⁹⁵ The remodeled house was comparable in exterior expression to Ranch Houses in Atlanta’s African American suburbs of the period.²⁹⁶ The variegated red brick veneer matched the soldier course and basketweave banding from the 1933 house, but it was otherwise typical for a Ranch House in Georgia. Interior modifications reflected an open floor plan, with the kitchen opening to dining and living spaces. By the 1960s, the open kitchen served as an American middle class status symbol.²⁹⁷ Combining living, dining, kitchen, circulation, and other functions into one larger, contiguous space could increase the sense of spaciousness while also providing an environment suited to the postwar paradigm of the nuclear family. By the time the Kings purchased the house in 1964, the spatial organization of the 1930s house would have seemed old-fashioned, with discrete rooms for various functions.

291. King and Reynolds, Coretta, 82–83. “The least of these” is a biblical reference to Matthew 25:45, “Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me” (King James Version).

292. Tuck, *Beyond Atlanta: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Georgia, 1940-1980*, 229.

293. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 32.

294. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 32.

295. Patrick Sullivan, Mary Beth Reed, Tracy Fedor, *The Ranch House in Georgia: Guidelines for Evaluation* (Stone Mountain, GA: New South Associates, 2010), 54.

296. For example, 224, 230, 240 Chicamauga Avenue SW and 241 and 247 Hopkins Street SW in Mozley Park and 665, 677, 683, 695, and 701 Aline Drive NW, 2770 Collier Drive, and 2665 Hightower Court in Collier Heights are all Plain ranch houses clad in brick and featuring basement garages.

297. Sarah Archer, *The Midcentury Kitchen: America’s Favorite Room from Workspace to Dreamscape 1940s-1970s* (New York: Countryman Press, 2019), 21.

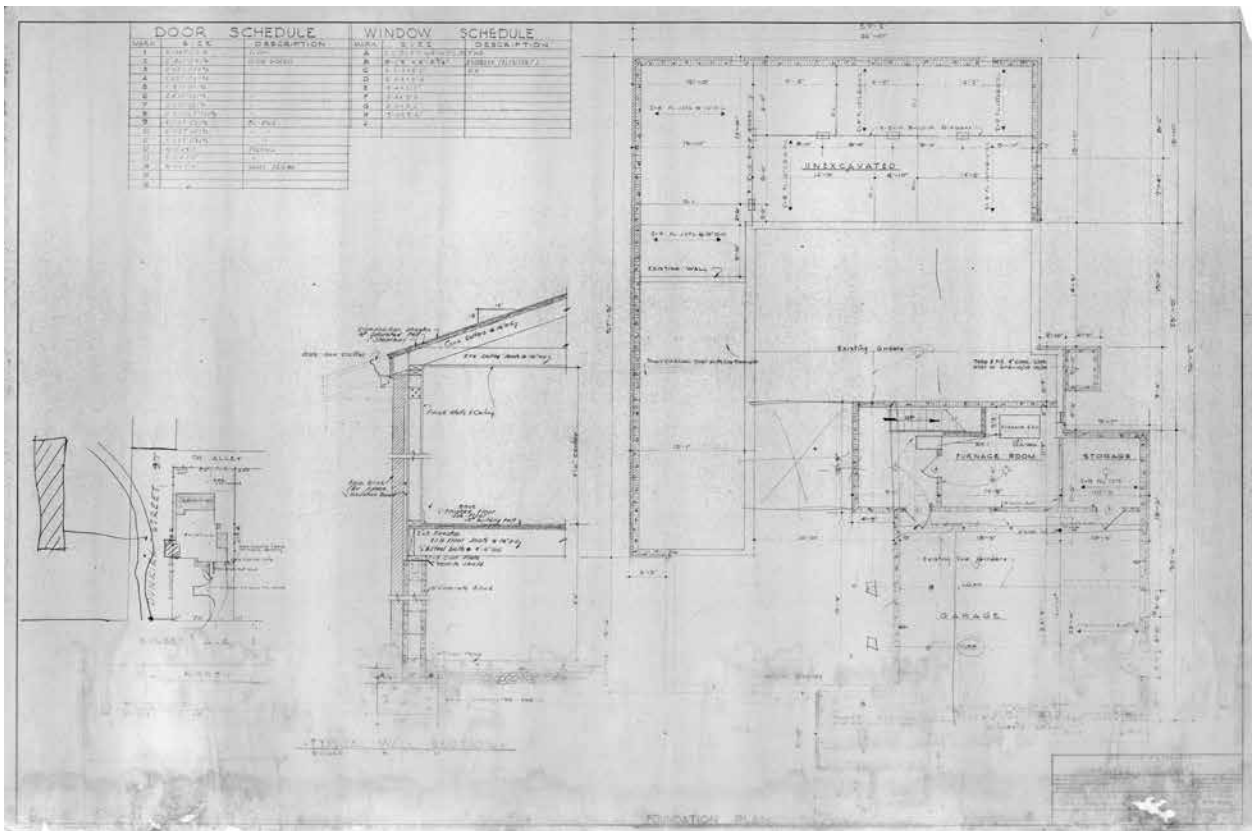


Figure 2.40. A1 First Floor Plan, Work Schedule, 12/1964, Joseph W Robinson, Designer. (Source: MALU Archives.)

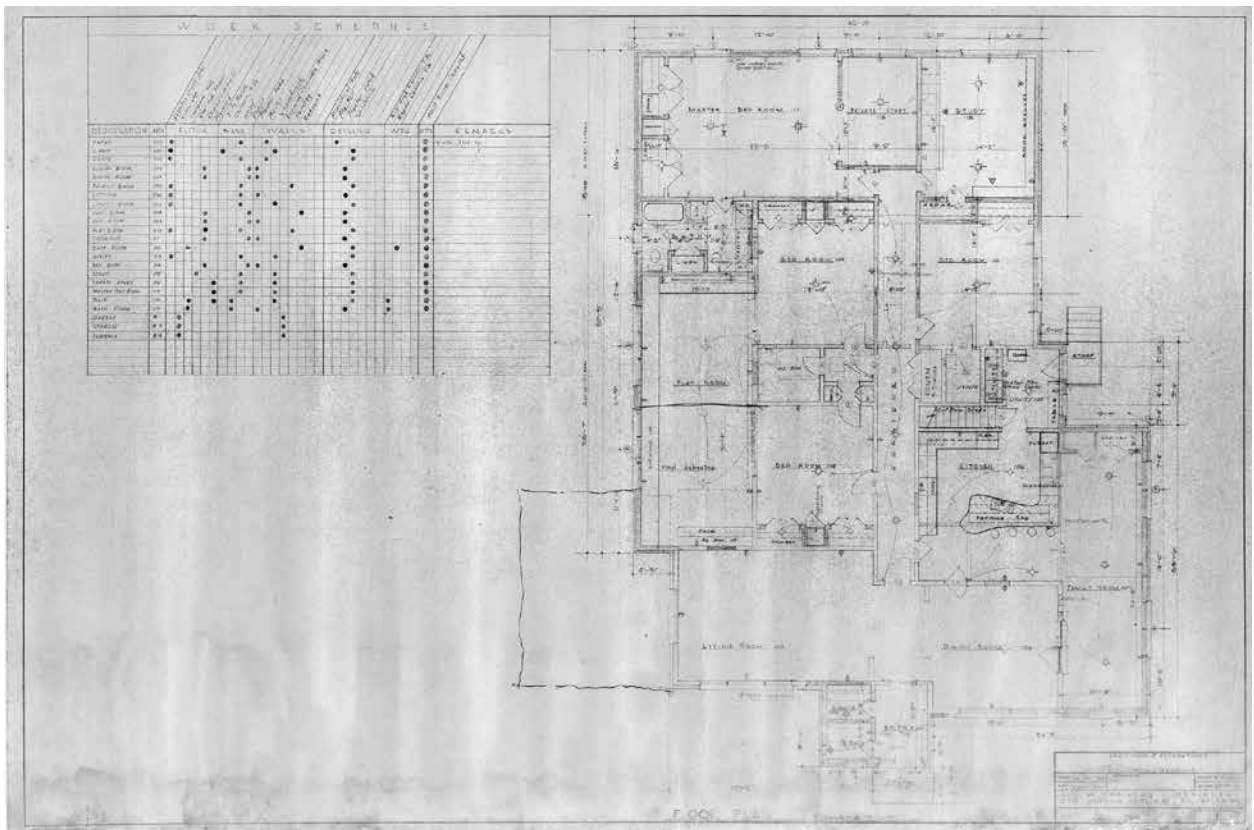
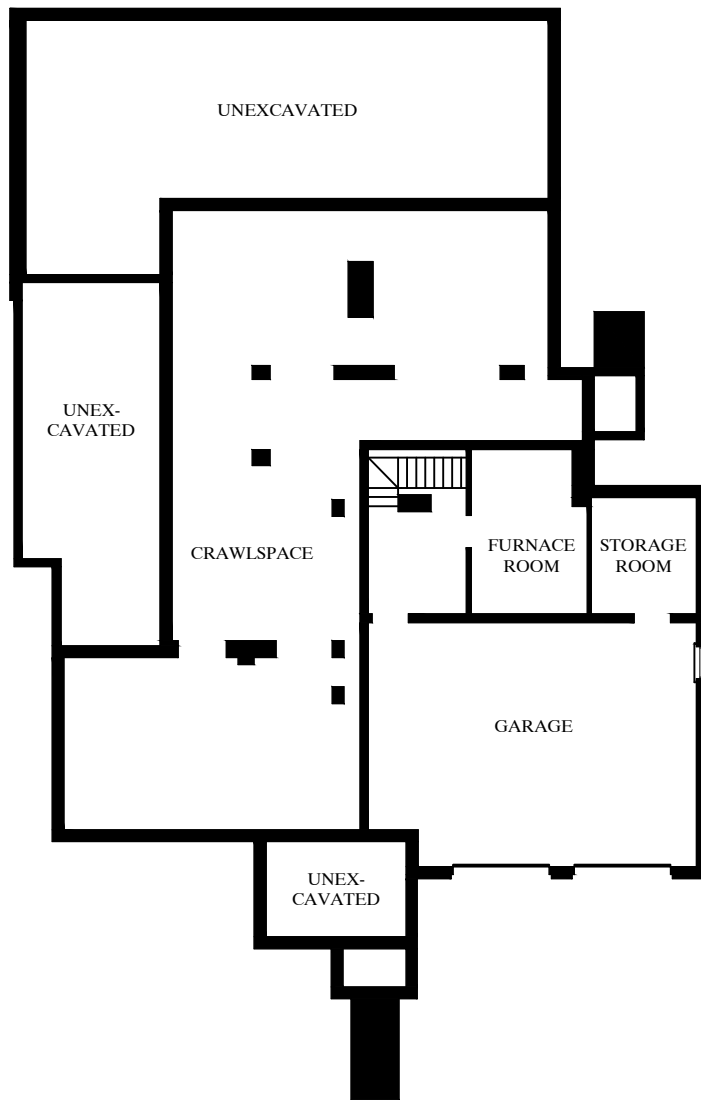


Figure 2.41. A2 Foundation Plan, Window & Door Schedules, 12/1964, Joseph W Robinson, Designer. (Source: MALU Archives.)



BASEMENT PLAN
CSK ALTERATIONS PHASE 1 (1965)

1/16"=1'-0"

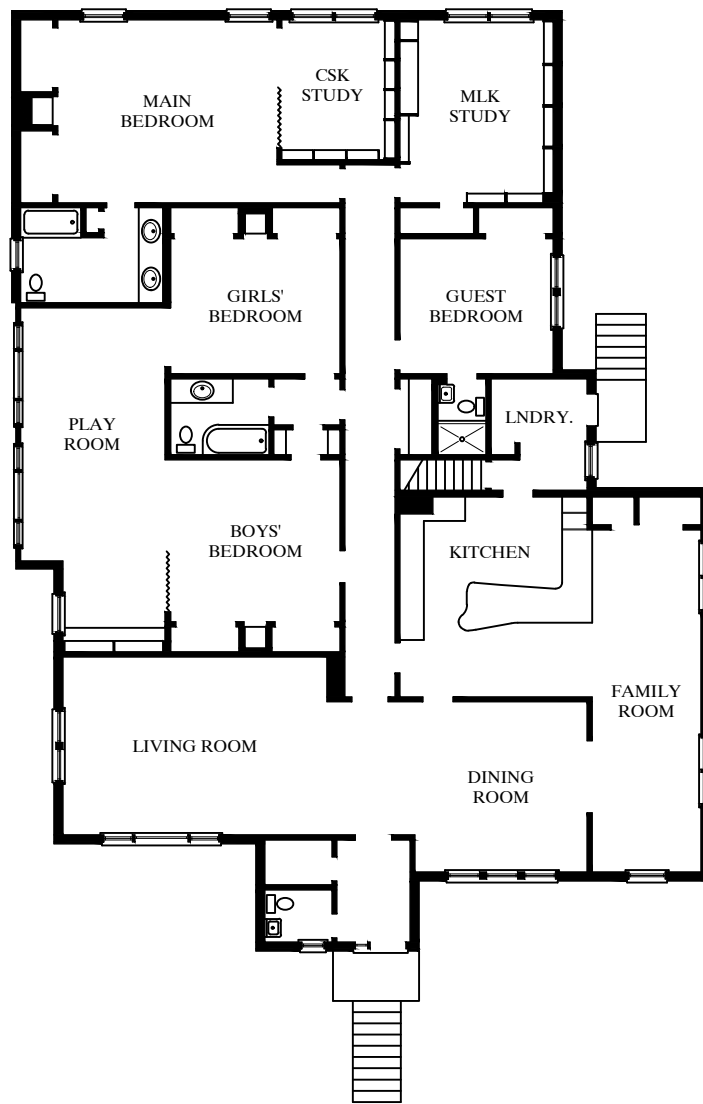
1:192

NOTE: ASTERISK (*) INDICATES CONJECTURAL ROOM DESIGNATIONS.

OTHER CONJECTURAL ELEMENTS SHOWN IN THIS PLAN INCLUDE:

- CONFIGURATION OF CELLAR STAIRS
- LOCATIONS OF SUPPORTING PIERS IN CELLAR
- LOCATIONS OF THE SOUTH AND WEST PARTITIONS IN THE FULLY-EXCAVATED PORTION OF THE BASEMENT

Figure 2.42. First-floor plan of 1965 house. (Source: Daniel DeSousa HABS, based on physical evidence and 1964 drawings by J. W. Robinson and analysis of HABS laser scan by Ben Ross, RATIO Architects.)



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
CSK ALTERATIONS PHASE 1 (1965)

1/16"=1'-0"

1:192

Figure 2.43. Basement level plan of 1965 house. (Source: Daniel DeSousa HABS, based on physical evidence and 1964 drawings by J. W. Robinson and analysis of HABS laser scan by Ben Ross, RATIO Architects.)

Attitudes toward automobiles had also changed rapidly during this period. The property featured a detached garage when the Gideon daughters sold the house to the Kings. Americans became ever more car-dependent during the post-World War II period, and both a second car and an attached garage became expected features of middle-class life. The 1965 remodeling converted an out-of-date 1930s house into a modern Ranch House compatible with the needs and lifestyle of a family in the mid-1960s (Figure 2.42 and Figure 2.43). The east façade underwent major alterations, removing most features of the original exterior and giving the house a Plain Ranch style character. The only element of the original façade to remain appears to have been the triple window of the dining room.²⁹⁸ Contractors altered all of the original façade features of the living room. Workers removed the original front chimney and associated living room fireplace and enlarged the south opening into a picture window. They infilled a double window north of the chimney and built a new entry pavilion containing the entry, half bath, and coat closet. At the north elevation, workers removed the northeast porch and built the family room addition across the north end of the front wing, enclosing the original north gable within an extended attic. They rebuilt the exterior of the utility room with a higher roof line and added a new stoop. Contractors constructed a large addition across the west part of the south elevation and the west (rear) elevation, containing studies for Dr. and Mrs. King, a main bedroom, and a main bathroom.²⁹⁹

The garage with its automatic doors was an important state-of-the-art security feature for the house. In June 1963, Medgar Evers was assassinated by a white supremacist while exiting his car in his driveway outside the carport. He was one of the first nationally known leaders of the

civil rights movement to be killed.³⁰⁰ According to Jeffrey Robinson, son of Joseph W. Robinson, the circumstances of Evers' assassination were one factor in the Kings' decision to include a basement garage with an electric garage door opener during the 1965 remodeling.³⁰¹

While automatic garage door openers occasionally appear in Atlanta realty listings of the late-1940s and appear with greater frequency into the 1960s, they did not become standard in new houses until the 1970s.³⁰² Manual garage doors of the period might feature counterweight or a counterbalance mechanism to make them easier to raise and lower by hand, but this required getting in and out of the car to open and close the door. An automatic garage door opener allowed a driver to open the garage door and drive into the garage before exiting the car. Though the type of opener was not identified at the King Family Home, "transistorized units" for remote operation of geared openers for garage doors appear in 1964 and 1965 Sears, Roebuck and Co. catalogs (dating to the era of the King family garage renovations).³⁰³ Joseph W. Robinson recalled Dr. King's enjoyment of the automatic garage door opener, "He just loved the remote control for the garage."³⁰⁴

The King family also added features to the site to accommodate the children. They installed a play set in the backyard. The play set survives at the site. According to the manufacturer, American Playgrounds, the model dates approximately to 1965 to 1968. The set is a 360-MS Combination Unit. The set includes a slide and a separate see-saw unit. The manufacturer notes that installation of the play set required three bags of cement, one yard of sand, and gravel mix installed by "two men with five hours of work." The catalog that contains this play set is no longer existing as many company records were destroyed by fire.³⁰⁵ Dexter King recalled in his autobiography playing in the

298. The northernmost window's original four-over-one sash was replaced with a three-over-one sash sometime before December 1965, creating an asymmetrical configuration; this alteration may have dated from the 1965 remodeling.

299. Physical and documentary evidence of the 1965 remodeling seem to contradict Xernona Clayton's 2019 recollection that Coretta "didn't even destroy the external appearance of the house, except from the back end... But the house was not destroyed from its appearance from the front." The appearance and character of the front of the house changed significantly during this remodeling. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 32.

300. Jennifer V. O. Baughn, Medgar and Myrlie Evers House, National Historic Landmark nomination, December 2015, 4-5, 19.

301. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, *How They Lived: An Historic Context Study*, 37-38.

302. Vivian Brown, "Do Your Thing: Decorate Garage," *Atlanta Constitution*, August 24, 1969, 5-F.

303. "Sears Catalog" (Sears, Roebuck and Company, Spring 1964), 1214, www.ancestry.com.

304. "For Longtime Architect, it's like a homecoming," *Atlanta Constitution*, June 3, 2007, K2.

305. Liz Solomon and Robert Hack, "1960s Equipment," August 12, 2020.

backyard, specifically on the play set. The play set became the centerpiece of their plays as young children, with the seesaw serving as the resting place for Bernice in a recreation of a scene from *Sleeping Beauty*.³⁰⁶

The vegetation at the King Family Home included trees that pre-dated the King's ownership of the property. 1965 film footage shows established water oaks (*Quercus nigra*) in the planting strip between the curb and sidewalk. Color photos from April 1968 show existing vegetation at the site, some of which may have been installed prior to the King's purchase of the house. One photo shows a large pink flowering tree with English ivy (*Hedera helix*) growing on it at the northeast property corner (Figure 2.44). This tree may have been a redbud (*Cercis canadensis*). There is a large pine tree in the front yard; based on the visible bark, this is possibly a loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*).³⁰⁷ Unidentified evergreen shrubs exist around the front foundation including what was likely a sasanqua camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*). Dogwoods (*Cornus florida*) are located along the south property line; and there is also large shrub that may be a mahonia (*Mahonia bealei*) (Figure 2.45 and Figure 2.46). (While it is documented that the first owner of the house, Eva Cowan, was a gardener, it is not known if plantings from that period survived the Gideons period or the 1965 remodel.)

The basement level garage renovation required not only a reconfiguration of the house itself, but also changes to the landscape (Figure 2.47). Drawings show a new driveway to be constructed of concrete "with brown pea gravel." The driveway configuration as installed did not reflect the footprint shown on the plans. The plans show a parking space or turn around area in the front yard. Topographic conditions may not have allowed for this planned parking spot.

The renovation plans call for the installation of a "new chainlink fence to match existing" along the northern property boundary. The drawings show new fence along the western and southern

property lines with an eight-foot-wide chain link gate shown between the northern property boundary and the northeast corner of the house. The southern fence is noted as "5'-0" tall." Historic film footage confirms that the contractors installed these fences. The plans also call for a "New Stone Ret. [Retaining] Wall." This portion of the drawing appears to have been revised. A red line on the drawing crosses out the retaining wall and shows the southern side of the driveway as a straight line between the house and Sunset Avenue. This configuration of the south driveway edge matches its installation in 1965. The northern edge of the drive curves near Sunset Avenue, perhaps to accommodate the existing pink flowering tree located near the northeastern corner of the property. In another deviation from the drawing, the King family or their builders decided to extend the northern edge of the driveway to the property line west of the curved area. Workers constructed the stone retaining wall parallel to the southern side of the drive, with a stepped down portion at the sidewalk along Sunset Avenue. Site plans do not show alterations to the existing sidewalk on the eastern property boundary or planting details.

306. King and Wiley, *Growing Up King*, 5.

307. Dr. Kim Coder (Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of Georgia) stated in correspondence that he believed this was possibly a loblolly pine based on photos of the periderm (bark), an opinion "supported by the presence of other trees in the area." Kim Coder to Susan Hitchcock, "Tree ID Opinion," January 6, 2022.



Figure 2.44. Photograph of Yolanda King signing for a floral arrangement during the funeral for her father, April 1968. Note the established pink flowering tree blooming in the northeast corner of the front yard (upper left corner of photo). This may have been a redbud (*Cercis canadensis*). (Source: © Flip Schulke.)



Figure 2.45. Image of Martin Luther King III and a police officer standing in front of the King Family Home, April 1968. This photo shows the established dogwood trees along the south property border and large shrub, which may be a mahonia located off the southeastern corner of the house. Police officers may have taken advantage of the view from the front entry stair for surveillance / security purposes. (Source: © Flip Schulke.)



Figure 2.46. Image of Martin Luther King III and Dexter King sitting on the front steps of the King Family Home, April 1968. This photo shows what appears to be a rock border in the front of the house in between the shrub plantings. The photo also shows the concrete rainwater diverter that separates the grade of the driveway into the garage from the grade of the driveway that skirts the north property line. (Source: © Flip Schulke.)

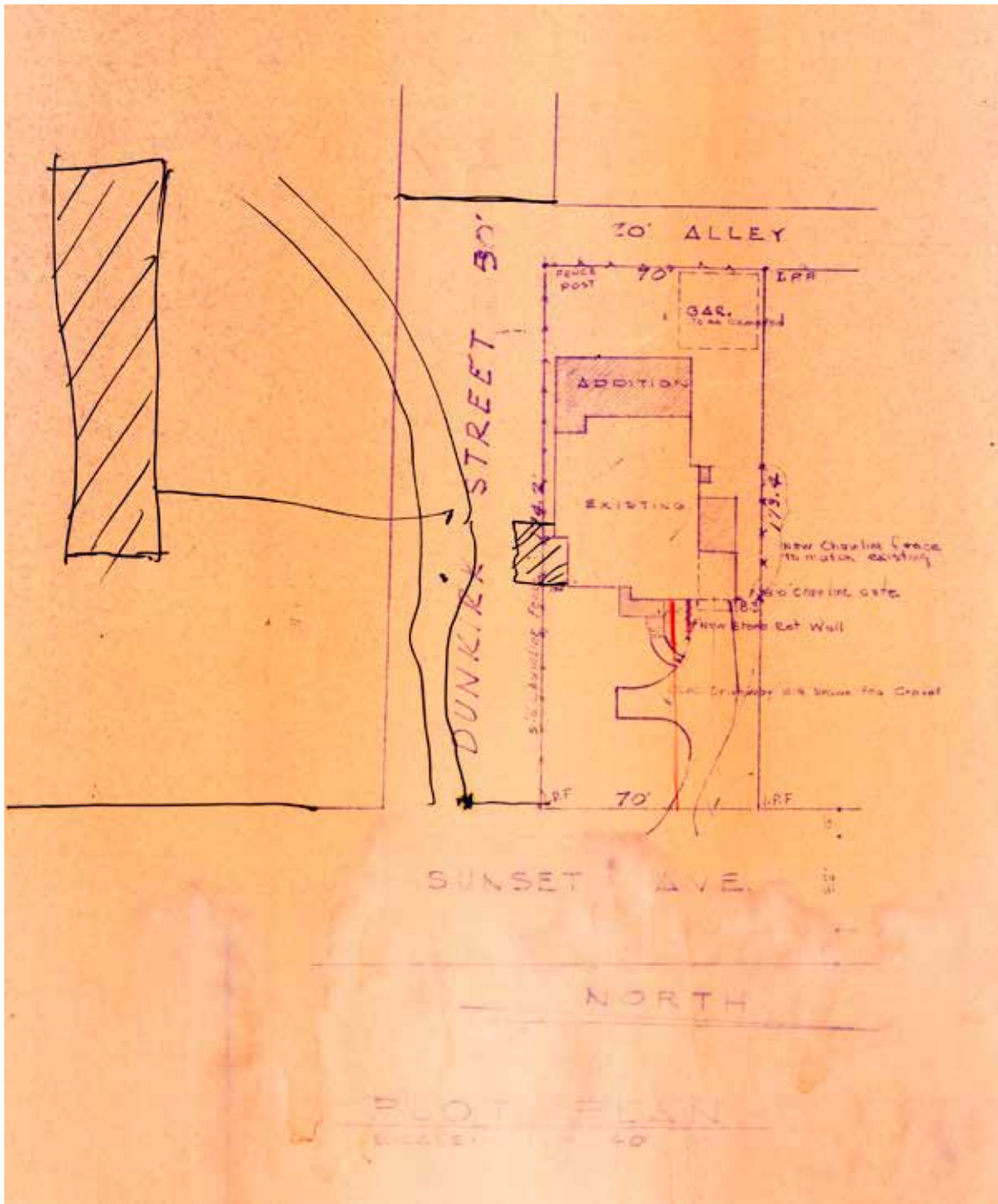


Figure 2.47. Enlarged Plot Plan from A2 Foundation Plan, Window & Door Schedules, 12/1964, Joseph W Robinson, Designer. (Source: MALU Archives.)

Joseph W. Robinson Sr. (1927-2008), FAIA, NOMA

Coretta Scott King engaged Joseph W. Robinson (Figure 2.48) to design both the 1965 house remodel and a subsequent 1968 remodeling of the house. Born in Hartsville, South Carolina, to Mary Robinson Frazier and Jasper Robinson, Joseph Robinson attended public schools in Georgetown, South Carolina, and graduated from Howard High School in 1944. He entered the Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Architectural Engineering in 1949. Robinson moved to Atlanta following graduation and completed postgraduate study at Atlanta University. Finding the field of architecture closed to African Americans in Atlanta, he taught mechanical drawing and descriptive geometry at Booker T. Washington High School from 1953 to 1968, where he inspired many young people to pursue careers in architecture and engineering. One of Robinson's larger residential projects of this period was the 1963 Herman J. Russell House at 714 Shorter Terrace NW in Collier Heights, a still extant large Ranch House that featured a recreation room with a dance floor, a combined fallout shelter and wine cellar, an indoor swimming pool, and a terrace opening onto tennis courts and a basketball court.³⁰⁸ Robinson later recalled that many of these clients sought basement recreation spaces where they could entertain family and friends and host community events when public spaces remained segregated.³⁰⁹ He designed a house sometime between 1964 and 1966 for Ralph and Juanita Abernathy in Collier Heights, which



Figure 2.48. Joseph W. Robinson, FAIA, NOMA. (Source: Courtesy of J. W. Robinson & Associates, Inc.)

still exists at 690 Laverne Drive NW.³¹⁰ Robinson may have been connected with the King family through the Abernathys, Russells, Jesse Hill, or other mutual acquaintances.³¹¹

Robinson established the firm of J. W. Robinson & Associates in 1970, with Robinson and John T. Savage as principals.³¹² Robinson was the first minority architect to win a city of Atlanta contract in the early-1970s, and he forged two of the first minority-majority joint-venture projects in Atlanta, demonstrating that such alliances could result in benefits for all parties.³¹³ Robinson was key in the initial preservation architecture and advocacy efforts at Martin Luther King National Historic

308. Maria Saporta, "Death of African-American architect Jeffrey Robinson leaves void in Atlanta," *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, December 8, 2019, <https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2019/12/08/death-of-african-american-architect-jeffrey.html>. *The King Family Home Historic Structure Report* contains an image of this house.

309. "Founder," J. W. Robinson & Associates Inc., accessed February 3, 2020, <http://www.jwrobinson.com/founder/>; Elizabeth A. Lyon, "J. W. Robinson (1927-2008)," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, last updated April 30, 2013, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/arts-culture/j-w-robinson-1927-2008>; Tina Saunders, "Architect's tribute has been building for years," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, May 4, 1995, JD4; Sullivan, et. al. *The Ranch House in Georgia: Guidelines for Evaluation*, 29-31, 132-133; Collier Heights Historic District, National Register nomination, 2008, 18, 48, 66-67, accessed February 6, 2020, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/c5d4cda7-9db5-452f-8e99-d5f11932fd21>.

310. Betsy Riley, "A Separate Peace: An iconic African American neighborhood home to Kings and Hollowells and Abernathys, makes history again," *Atlanta Magazine*, May 2010, 78. *The King Family Home Historic Structure Report* contains an image of this house.

311. Jim Auchmuty, "Collier Heights: civil rights suburb," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, September 21, 2008, D1.

312. Savage received a BS in Building Construction from the Hampton Institute in 1949 and a Bachelor of Architecture and further study toward an MA degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1953. "Architectural Firm Relocates," *Atlanta Voice*, November 17, 1973, 4.

313. Saunders, "Architect's tribute has been building for years," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, May 4, 1995, JD4; "Joint Venturing: Did It Really Work?" *Atlanta Magazine*, April 1984, 44-45, 99.

Site and new design for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center (1976).

Robinson became the first African American architect from Georgia to become a fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1995. Robinson married Willie Louise Taylor of Atlanta and the couple had three children. Robinson's sons Joseph W. Robinson, Jr. and Jeffrey L. Robinson succeeded their father as owners of the firm of J. W. Robinson & Associates. Jeffrey L. Robinson (1961-2019) advocated for the preservation of Atlanta's African American landmarks.³¹⁴ Joseph W. Robinson, Jr. continues to lead the firm at the time of this report, now believed to be the oldest African American architecture firm in Georgia.

The 1965 remodeling of the King Family Home falls within an architecturally conservative realm of Robinson's body of work of the 1960s. When considered in the context of Robinson's residential work of the period, the King Family Home's exterior is architecturally undistinguished, harkening back to modest Ranch Houses of the previous decade. This design decision may reflect constraints of the existing house, budget constraints, and Dr. King's desire to live simply and in an unostentatious way.

The King Family at Home on Sunset Avenue

The six members of the King family moved into the house shortly after the Selma to Montgomery March, likely during the weeks of March 28 or April 4, 1965 (Figure 2.49). Mrs. King recalled that the remodeling was still in progress at the conclusion of the Selma campaign (March 25) and that the movers had been scheduled months before. At the advice of his physician, Dr. King spent a few days in the Bahamas to recover from the stress of the Selma campaign. He was to leave on a Sunday (presumably April 4 or April 11) and asked Mrs. King to join him by Wednesday. To accommodate this trip, she rescheduled the movers for Tuesday. Mrs. King and her friend Freddie



Figure 2.49. A photo of the King family, taken in 1968. (Source: Bob Fitch photography archive -- Martin Luther King, Jr. Funeral, 1968, Stanford University Libraries, Department of Special Collections and University Archives.)

Henderson stayed up all night decorating, hanging curtains, and trying to get the house in order so that it would be in working order when she and Dr. King returned from the Bahamas. After one hour of sleep, Mrs. King felt as tired as she had on the first day she marched in Selma. She had to leave the work incomplete on Wednesday morning, which she admitted was difficult for her as a perfectionist.³¹⁵ Dr. and Mrs. King returned home to Atlanta on April 17, 1965.

The King family began to settle in at the house, and Dexter King recalls that their yard was the center of neighborhood activity,

Our home at 234 Sunset was kind of home central, the neighborhood headquarters. All the kids came by to play. My mom treated them like hers, which wasn't always reassuring for them. Coretta Scott King was a disciplinarian, took no guff from hers or any others. Froze you with a look. "Time out" was a call we made in football, not what fell from her lips in our direction. Under her eye or not, we'd play "hide-and-go seek," as we called it, football, softball, kickball, tag, marbles in the red clay; we'd spin tops, ride homemade skateboards, "pull" friends along by

314. Maria Saporta, "Death of African-American architect Jeffrey Robinson leaves void in Atlanta," *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, December 8, 2019, <https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2019/12/08/death-of-african-american-architect-jeffrey.html>; Jeffrey L. Robinson, "Opinion - Do Atlanta's African-American landmarks really matter?" *Creative Loafing*, February 5, 2015, <https://creativeloafing.com/content-230718-opinion---do-atlanta-s-african-american-landmarks-really>.

315. Coretta Scott King with Barbara Reynolds, *My Life, My Love, My Legacy* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2017), 142-143.

pedaling bikes standing up as the friend rode on the passenger seat. We had a swing set, seesaw, and slide. I loved the slide. I loved playing on the gym set. I loved it all, really. We had a hoop too. Ours was, in these regards, atypical family home—or so I thought back then.³¹⁶

Childhood friends Michael Julian and Horace Mann “Manny” Bond remember the King family’s basketball hoop. In a 2019 interview they recalled “that the King children had the only full-size basketball hoop in the neighborhood and a trampoline in their yard.”³¹⁷ The hoop was located in the rear yard, and the children likely used the hard surface of the patio as a court. Bernice King recalls that the ball would often go over the fence into the rear yard of the Toomer residence to the north of the King Family Home.³¹⁸

The King children used the alley to play in and to access their friends’ backyards. City garbage trucks used the alley to pick up refuse from individual homes. Dexter King notes, “Martin and I made our escape into the alley and whatever devilment we were up to. As we ran, the scent of honeysuckle mixed with the occasional open garbage can to sweeten and make pungent the late summer air; gravel secured our feet to the red clay; we raced by kudzu-choked fences in varying states of repair.”³¹⁹ Bernice King and family friend Maria Saporta remember the large water oak in the rear yard and that there was a tire swing tied to the branches for the children.³²⁰

One result of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s international notoriety was an obsession by the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Herbert Hoover to undermine his and the SCLC’s work. The FBI undertook a fervent campaign of monitoring and threatening the King family. According to Oates, the FBI bugged not only Dr. King’s hotel rooms but also his residences.

The bureau continued to bug King’s hotel rooms until January 1966, when a threatened congressional investigation impelled it to terminate the electronic surveillance of King. On April 30, 1965, King moved to a new home in Atlanta, but the FBI for some reason did not tap his new phone. The telephone taps on SCLC’s Atlanta headquarters ended in June 1966, when Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach ordered them discontinued.³²¹

Garrow notes that the Atlanta office of the FBI received approval to locate a wiretap into the King Family Home on May 6, 1965. However, the FBI canceled those orders on the same day for unknown reasons.³²²

Dr. King moved to Chicago in the winter of 1965 and 1966, while Coretta Scott King and the children stayed behind in Atlanta, “where Yoki and Marty were now enrolled in a desegregated public school – one of the best in Atlanta; Coretta had seen to that.”³²³ Dr. King traveled back and forth between Chicago and Atlanta frequently that winter, with his travel and home life documented by crews who accompanied journalist Arnold Michaelis in December 1965. Raw footage from these interviews show Sunset Avenue and the surrounding Vine City neighborhood, the children playing in the front yard with numerous neighbors and friends, including the son of Ralph Abernathy, the children inside the house interacting with Ms. Patricia Latimore, and Yolanda playing the piano.³²⁴ This footage captured many site features in the front yard as well as in the interior of the house. Footage shows the setting of Sunset Avenue, a neighborhood with single-family homes, herringbone brick sidewalks, granite curbs, on-street parking, and street trees (Figure 2.50 and Figure 2.51). Electrical utilities are aboveground.

316. King and Wiley, *Growing Up King*, 9.

317. Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, “How They Lived,” 41.

318. Bernice King, 23rd Virtual Transform Westside Summit, interview by Maria Saporta, April 2, 2021.

319. King and Wiley, *Growing Up King*, 13.

320. Bernice King, 23rd Virtual Transform Westside Summit, interview by Maria Saporta, April 2, 2021.

321. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 324. The date of April 30, 1965 may be inaccurate.

322. David J. Garrow, *The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 138.

323. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 372.

324. *MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8 (Michaelis_1533)*; Bernice King and Patricia Latimore, 234 Sunset Avenue, interview by Madie Fischetti, May 22, 2020.



Figure 2.50. December 1965 view facing south on Sunset Avenue. Image is across the street from the King Family Home. Note herringbone sidewalks, on street parking, and large street trees in front yards. The houses on the east side of the street have a smaller setback than those on the west side of Sunset Avenue and there is no planting strip between the curb and sidewalk. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)



Figure 2.51. December 1965 view facing north on Sunset Avenue. Camera operator is standing just off the curb from the King Family Home. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)



Figure 2.52. December 1965 view of southeast property corner, showing terminus of new chain link fence. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)

The footage shows the front yard and its vegetation, small-scale features, and the house's front façade. Details such as the chain-link fence on the south property line are visible in the footage. The fence line stops close to the southeast property corner, adjacent to the sidewalk along Sunset Avenue (Figure 2.52 and Figure 2.53). The front yard contains a turf grass area, evergreen foundation plantings, a pine tree, and a lamp post. The retaining wall lining the driveway is stepped down on its eastern end near the sidewalk. The retaining wall extends west to the house façade, with a break to allow for the steps up to the entry walkway (Figure 2.54). The lamp appears to be a coach lamp type post top luminaire on a four-foot-high post (Figure 2.55 and Figure 2.56). These types of fixtures were readily available in the 1960s from outlets such as Sears, Roebuck and Co.³²⁵ The front yard contains an established pine tree that is also visible in the film footage (Figure 2.57). The northern edge of the driveway

is lined by a brick border, with the bricks placed on a diagonal. Several bricks are missing from the border, and some bricks are askew (Figure 2.58). It is unknown if this was an existing border prior to the 1965 installation of the driveway. Plantings include evergreen shrubs, including possibly southern Indica azaleas (*Rhododendron indicum*), between the front entry stair and the retaining wall and mums in one of the concrete planters that flanked the steps to the entry walkway (Figure 2.59). Closeup footage of the retaining wall does not reveal if the wall is painted a light grey color or if a skim coat of concrete covers some of its stone. Raised beaded joints are apparent in the wall construction (Figure 2.60). An undated photo of the front yard shows the full length of the retaining wall, the variation in stone color in the wall construction is apparent in this photo (Figure 2.61).

Research did not reveal film footage or photographs of the rear yard during this period. The information available includes aerial photographs and interviews. Patricia Latimore remembers that there was a hedge in the rear yard

325. For similar examples, see *Sears Roebuck Company Catalog*, Spring 1965, 1363 – 1365. Also see Thomas Industries Inc., *Inspiration Lighting by Moe Light* (Louisville, KY: Moe Lighting, 1959), M36–39.



Figure 2.53. December 1965 view toward southern property border from across Sunset Avenue. Property line trees are apparent. Street trees are present between the curb and brick sidewalk. It appears that there is a section of brick or worn dirt between the two trees in this image. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)

of the property along the northern property line, likely “red tips” (*Photinia x fraseri*). When asked if Mrs. King had any particular plants she liked or if she liked to garden, Dr. Bernice King and Ms. Latimore agreed that she did not. Bernice King remembers the water oak in the rear yard as being a large tree even when she was a small child.³²⁶ A 1968 aerial of the site is too obscured to discern any site features beyond the rough outline of the house.

The King family moved to Chicago for the summer of 1966, where Martin Luther King, Jr. was running a campaign to raise awareness of Black poverty in urban areas. The family lived in an apartment in a disadvantaged area known as “Slumdale.” The children missed their Atlanta yard and neighborhood. Oates writes, “Right away, the children started whining. There was nothing to do except play outside in patches of black dirt. Even

the pitiful playground was black dirt. The streets were too congested and dangerous for them to release their stored-up energy there.”³²⁷

Dr. and Mrs. King began to advocate for and assist with local organizations once they were back home in Atlanta. Absentee ownership and poor conditions for tenants had ravaged many parts of the Vine City neighborhood. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s participation in the Atlanta Movement resulted in national attention to the poor conditions and treatment of tenants in low-income urban areas. Dr. King announced that he was going on a two-month sabbatical to write a book assessing the past decade of the movement.³²⁸ He wrote *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* during a trip to the Caribbean in January and February 1967. The book was “King’s analysis of the state of American race relations and the movement after

326. King and Latimore, 234 Sunset Avenue.

327. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 394.

328. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 408.



Figure 2.54. December 1965 view of the front yard, facing west. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)

a decade of U.S. civil rights struggles.”³²⁹ Dr. King also measured the rise of Black nationalism and “Black Power.” He had become more familiar with the leaders of these movements in Chicago, and as those groups moved into Atlanta, he interacted with their leaders more frequently. Oates writes about Dr. King and his Sunset Avenue residence, “Here, as in his flat in Chicago, young Black Power advocates argued with him over cups of coffee late into the night.”³³⁰

Martin Luther King, Jr. and the SCLC announced the Poor People’s Campaign in November 1967. The culmination of the campaign was to have two thousand people travel to Washington, D.C. to “meet with government officials to demand jobs, unemployment insurance, a fair minimum wage, and education for poor adults and children

designed to improve their self-image and self-esteem.”³³¹ One of Dr. King’s goals for the campaign was to counteract the riots that had occurred throughout the United States during the summer of 1967.³³² Planning for the campaign continued through the winter of 1967 / 1968. The marches and peaceful protests associated with the movement continued to pull Dr. King away from his home and Atlanta. Meanwhile, Mrs. King was supposed to be recovering for three months after surgery in January. Despite her need to recover and Dr. King’s exhaustion from planning the campaign, they both pushed on in their promotion of the Poor People’s Campaign.³³³ Coretta Scott King continued to advocate for peace and promote her opposition to the Vietnam War.

329. Stanford University, “Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?,” The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, June 12, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/where-do-we-go-here-chaos-or-community>.

330. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 372.

331. Stanford University, “Poor People’s Campaign,” The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, July 7, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/poor-peoples-campaign>.

332. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 278.

333. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 155–56.



Figure 2.55. December 1965 view of the front yard, facing east. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)



Figure 2.56. December 1965 view of the front yard and driveway, facing northeast. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)

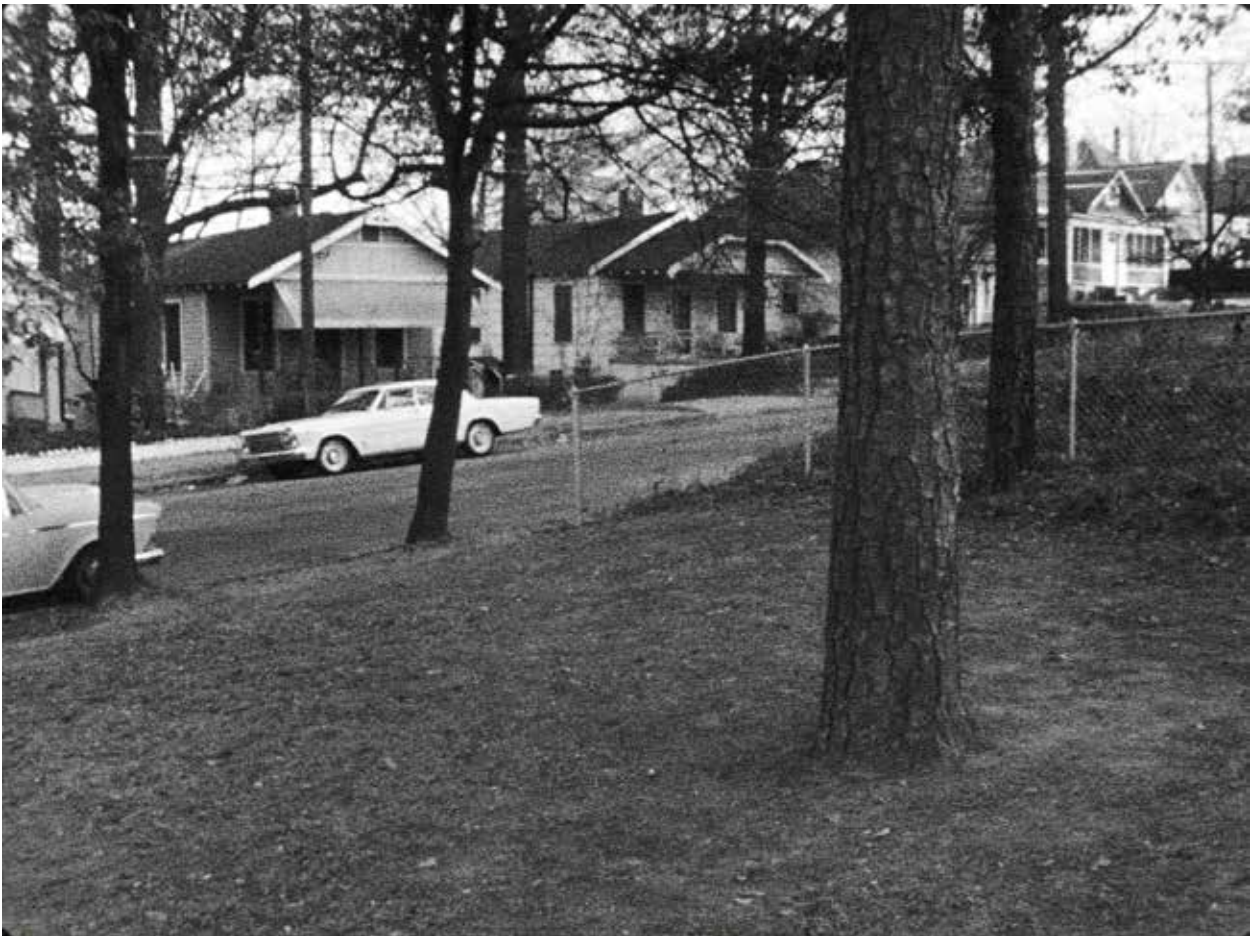


Figure 2.57. December 1965 view of the front yard, facing southeast. The pine tree (possibly loblolly pine) is in the foreground. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)

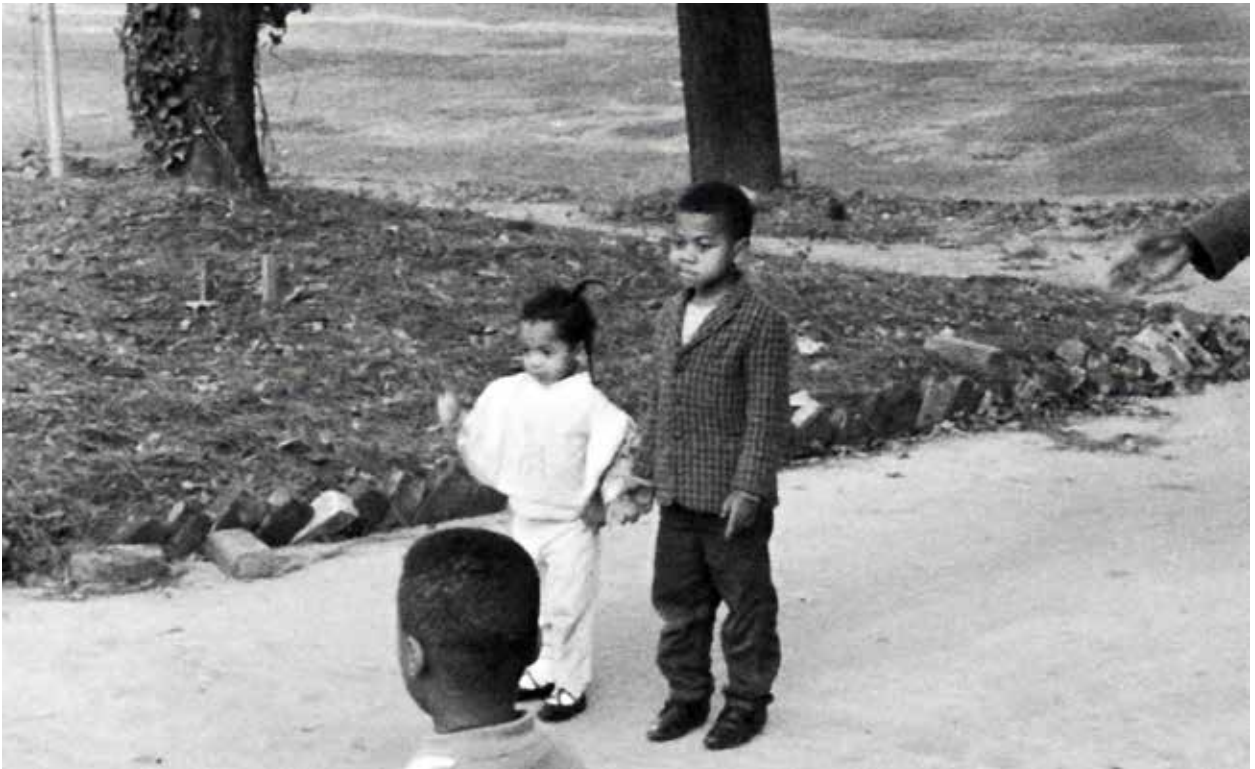


Figure 2.58. December 1965 view of front planting bed, facing northeast, showing brick border on north side of driveway. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)



Figure 2.59. December 1965 view looking northwest from the sidewalk. Note two concrete planters on retaining wall, one planted with mums. The adjacent side yard has a wood privacy fence with lattice along the top. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)

According to Mrs. King, “Amid the enormous activity in connection with the Poor People’s Campaign, there appeared a small but troublesome cloud on the horizon. In Memphis, Tennessee, the Sanitation Workers Union, most of whose members were black, had gone on strike because of the unjust treatment they were receiving. . . .”³³⁴ This organizational effort would be Martin Luther King, Jr.’s last. While in Memphis, on April 4, 1968, Dr. King was shot and killed while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel.

Coretta Scott King and the children received word of the shooting at the King Family Home. Despite Mrs. King’s effort to travel to Memphis, Dr. King died before she could board the plane in Atlanta. Calls began pouring into the King household. Senator Robert Kennedy arranged for Mrs. King to fly by private plane to Memphis to retrieve Dr. King’s body. The Senator also arranged for the installation of additional phone lines at the King

Family Home.³³⁵ Mrs. King’s bedroom became the command center for planning the funeral (Figure 2.62 and Figure 2.63). The children came in and out of the bedroom as did reporters, photographers, dignitaries, and the closest King associates.³³⁶ On the morning of the funeral, Coretta Scott King recalled, “I greeted a steady stream of mourners, from Hollywood celebrities to neighborhood residents, at our home. At one point, I looked up and saw that someone had escorted Jacqueline Kennedy back to my bedroom, where I was receiving a few guests.”³³⁷ The press corps swarmed the house, and a few trusted photographers such as

334. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 287.

335. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 296; Rebecca Burns, *Burial for a King: Martin Luther King Jr.’s Funeral and the Week That Transformed Atlanta and Rocked the Nation* (New York: Scribner, 2011), 38.

336. Burns, *Burial for a King: Martin Luther King Jr.’s Funeral and the Week That Transformed Atlanta and Rocked the Nation*, 92–93.

337. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 168. Photographs of Jacqueline Kennedy show her arriving at Sunset Avenue and the King Family Home, with Sunset Avenue in the background. Links to photographs located in Appendix F.



Figure 2.60. December 1965 still image of Bernice King sitting on the stone retaining wall next to the concrete planter. The retaining wall may be painted with grey paint or skim coated with concrete. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives.)



Figure 2.61. Undated photograph of Martin Luther King, Jr. in front of the King Family Home. View of the retaining wall and expansion joint in the driveway concrete. Evergreen shrubs are located at foundation. Unidentified trees are visible along the southern property line. (Source: MALU Archives.)

Flip Schulke and Bob Fitch were allowed inside the residence. Photos show Yolanda signing for flowers on the front steps of the house (Figure 2.44), lines of visitors in the living room, and Coretta Scott King receiving visitors in her bedroom. An image captures Martin Luther King III and Dexter King sitting on the front steps of the house with a police officer standing guard (Figure 2.46). Film coverage and images captured Robert and Ethel Kennedy as they arrived at the house to pay their respects.³³⁸



Figure 2.62. 1968 image of Yolanda and Coretta Scott King in the main bedroom with Bobby and Ethel Kennedy. (Source: Bob Fitch photography archive -- Martin Luther King, Jr. Funeral, 1968, Stanford University Libraries, Department of Special Collections and University Archives.)

338. See images located in the Bob Fitch Photography Archive, Stanford University, Stanford, CA. Film footage of the Kennedys arriving at 234 Sunset can be accessed at <https://youtu.be/Q6ouD3b5ni4>, minute 6:08.



Figure 2.63. Coretta Scott King with friends and family including Martin Luther King III, Alfred Daniel King, Ralph David Abernathy, and Jesse Jackson planning the funeral from her bedroom, April 1968. (Source: Bob Fitch photography archive -- Martin Luther King, Jr. Funeral, 1968, Stanford University Libraries, Department of Special Collections and University Archives.)

Establishment of The King Center

Coretta Scott King noted that Dr. King wrote of John F. Kennedy's death, "The posture of his life has written an epitaph that lives beyond the boundaries of death."³³⁹ Soon after Dr. King's assassination, she began efforts to establish an organization to continue his legacy. She wrote, "I vowed that I would carry [his] dream forward" (Figure 2.64).³⁴⁰ She continued, "You see, I feel strongly that Martin's work must go on. In the same way that I had given him all the support I could during his lifetime, I was even more determined to do so now that he was no longer with us. Because his task was not finished, I felt that I must rededicate myself to the completion of his work."³⁴¹ According to Mrs. King's former assistant, her vision for an organization to continue and preserve Dr. King's legacy began prior to his assassination. Mrs. King "knew that there was going to be a center built, and she wanted it to be built in the South, and she already sort of had it in her mind that there would need to be a place, a repository, for all of the history of the civil rights struggle . . . it was easy for her to make her dream a fruition. She already had it in her head."³⁴² Mrs. King did more than protect and continue her late husband's legacy. She expanded "the dream" and kept it relevant throughout the remainder of her life.

Mrs. King turned her attention to the Poor People's March in May 1968, continuing the work of the SCLC to promote issues associated with economic injustices. Mrs. King announced what she later called "My Fifth Child" on June 26, 1968, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center (eventually the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and The King Center).³⁴³ She wrote, "In those hectic first days after Martin was gone, I worked on the Center right there in my bedroom," but eventually Mrs. King needed additional space for her work and her staff.³⁴⁴

The Second Remodeling of The King Family Home

Coretta Scott King again contacted architect J. W. Robinson to prepare plans to renovate and expand the basement in the King Family Home to accommodate offices for the new organization. She had the basement "built out for the purpose of providing King Center offices, a kitchen, and a playroom for the children."³⁴⁵ Creating an office in the home was a priority with four children to care for as a single mother. According to one assistant, "Mrs. King, who was unsalaried, operated a complete office of the president [of The King Center] at her home, replete with staff, office space, and usual office equipment . . . this allowed her to be near her family and accommodated the odd hours that she would often be forced to work as a result of having so many demands on her schedule."³⁴⁶

Close family friends aided in the establishment of the organization and upkeep of the family. Mrs. King's sister Edythe Scott Bagley moved into the house to help. Bagley notes in her biography:

During the summer [of 1968], construction crews built out the basement beneath the house to add a playroom, kitchen, and office space. When Coretta officially opened her office that September, she had a staff of ten people. Despite the need for a large number of employees, Coretta was determined to maintain her offices at home. Having her offices there allowed her to structure her schedule around her children's schedules and afforded them immediate access to her.³⁴⁷

The family continued to live in Vine City after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Dexter King chronicles his life in *Growing up King*, and his autobiography describes the role the King Family Home played in their life. He describes the Vine City neighborhood, noting, "walnut . . . peach, apple, fig, or pecan—each of those species bloomed in the backyards of the small houses in Vine City."³⁴⁸ He describes the house as "kind of

339. Martin Luther King Jr., "Epitaph and Challenge," *Southern Christian Leadership Newsletter* 2, no. 3 (December 1963): 1.

340. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 171.

341. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 303–4.

342. Cothran, King Sunset Avenue Home and Adjacent Apartment Building.

343. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 185.

344. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 184–85.

345. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 191.

346. Carole Ashkinaze et al., "King Center - The Shape of a Dream," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 17, 1979, 10A.

347. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 252.

348. King and Wiley, *Growing Up King*, 6.



Figure 2.64. Photo of Coretta Scott King in front yard of King Family Home in prior to the second house renovation in 1968, showing east façade of house. (Source: National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, © The Estate of Diane Arbus © Neil Selkirk.)

home central, the neighborhood headquarters.”³⁴⁹ Neighborhood friends included the Bond children, Michael Julian and Horace Mann III “Manny,” who moved to 266 Sunset Avenue NW in 1970. The King children attended local schools and participated in performing arts and sports in the area (see King Children profiles below).

Besides individual offices, a kitchen, and recreation area, the downstairs also included a reception area, a fireproof room for document storage, a mailroom, storage closets, and a restroom. While donations likely helped support the establishment

of the organization, deed records from Fulton County indicate that Coretta Scott King took on a loan for \$26,000 on September 20, 1968 to fund the renovations.³⁵⁰ Portions of The King Center began to operate in different locations beginning in 1969. A 1969 city directory lists the address for Mrs. King’s personal office at 234 Sunset Ave. There is an additional office address for the King Center listed at 87 Chestnut Street with the “Document Center” located at 671 Beckwith Street (the Interdenominational Theological Center

349. King and Wiley, *Growing Up King*, 9.

350. “Warranty Deed to Secure a Debt,” September 20, 1968, Book 4961/Page 401, Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.



Figure 2.65. Martin Luther King III (on mower) and Dexter (starting mower) in front yard, 1970. Note the evergreen foundation plantings are still present in front of the house, and vegetation has increased near the southeast corner of the house. (Source: *Ebony* – permission pending, see Appendix E.)

located on the Morehouse campus).³⁵¹ A reading room was located at the Beckwith Street location as well.³⁵² The 1970 city directory lists the Martin Luther King Luther, Jr. Memorial Center Library on Beckwith Street.³⁵³

351. *Atlanta City Directory* (Atlanta, GA: Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Co., 1969); Mrs. King's former assistant noted that she had a mailing address separate from the house to handle the volume of correspondence sent to The King Center. This may be the "87 Chestnut" address.
352. Lloyd Davis, "History of the King Center: Twenty-Five Year Legacy of Accomplishment," n.d., 28, MALU Archives. Also discussed in Charles L. Sanders, "Finally, I've Begun to Live Again: An Intimate, Revealing Interview with Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr.," *Ebony* XXVI, no. 1 (November 1970): 174, where Coretta discusses the mission of the Library-Documentation Project to collect all material relating to the post-1954 phase of the Civil Rights Movement.
353. *Atlanta City Directory* (Atlanta, GA: Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Co., 1970).

Coretta Scott King had begun the library project prior to King's assassination. According to a King Center history document, she "called several of her husband's closest associates together [in 1967] to discuss a library project that would house his papers."³⁵⁴ Edythe Bagley stated, "once the center had obtained a permanent location, she expected to make those papers available for research as a historic archive of Martin's work, the Movement's development, and the effectiveness of nonviolence as a means of promoting social change."³⁵⁵ In an interview, Dr. Bernice King stated that the fireproof room was designed to hold these papers until they moved to the Beckwith Street location. The cedar lined closets were to house Dr. King's clothing.³⁵⁶ To handle the large quantity of mail that arrived after Dr. King's assassination, plans for the basement included a mail room.³⁵⁷ A 1970 *Ebony* article by Charles Sanders chronicled the life of the King family after Dr. King's assassination. Photographs show the children in the front yard performing chores and Coretta in her basement office (Figure 2.65 and Figure 2.66). The article describes the "half dozen" assistants who are busy with mail and answering phones outside her office.³⁵⁸ Mrs. King's remarks in the article include references to her income and expenses. She notes that prior to her husband's death, the family had almost paid off the mortgage on the house but that her income was limited.³⁵⁹ She published *My Life with Martin Luther King Jr.* in 1969. Book royalties provided her financial stability and the ability to pay several employees and to begin fundraising for The King Center. By 1970, the article stated that she employed seven full-time and "several" part-time employees for both the office and household.³⁶⁰ Sanders noted the household staff included "persons who help her in her home – the cook, the woman who helps with the children, [and] a man who handles heavy chores."³⁶¹ Patricia Latimore and Hal Hodgson were among the staff.

Joseph W. Robinson, who was again the architect for the project at the King Family Home, later

354. Davis, "History of the King Center: Twenty-Five Year Legacy of Accomplishment," 51.
355. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 263.
356. King and Latimore, 234 Sunset Avenue.
357. *Ibid.*
358. Sanders, "Finally, I've Begun to Live Again," 173.
359. Sanders, "Finally, I've Begun to Live Again," 179.
360. Sanders, "Finally, I've Begun to Live Again," 180.
361. *Ibid.*



Figure 2.66. Photo of Martin Luther King III washing the family car showing garage and east façade of the house, 1970. (Source: *Ebony* – permission pending, see Appendix E.)

recalled that many of his African American clients sought basement recreation spaces where they could entertain family and friends and host community events when public spaces remained segregated.³⁶² These basement spaces may have also provided space for social organizing and a safe refuge if the family was threatened by racially-motivated violence. The need for a safe recreational space for the family may have also been a concern for Coretta Scott King after Dr. King’s assassination.

Two dated sheets of drawings survive along with three undated sheets that appear to be associated with this project. The undated sheets bear the stamp of Orlice Charlie “O. C.” Floyd (1919-1987), an African American consulting engineer.³⁶³ The following sheets survive:

- A sheet “1 of 1” is dated May 1968 and shows the proposed basement floorplan

362. See footnote 304 for specific citations regarding the need for basement recreation spaces during segregation.

363. Orlice Charlie Floyd, World War II draft registration card, July 1, 1941, accessed April 28, 2020, ancestry.com.

with some variation from its final form. This sheet bears Robinson’s seal. The title block lists “Joseph W. Robinson, A.I.A. Architect, 255 Hopkins St, S.W. Atlanta, Georgia” (Figure 2.67, see Appendix A for enlargement).

- An undated foundation plan (sheet “1 of 2”) appears to correspond with the basement floorplan dated May 1968. The title block lists “Joseph W. Robinson, A.I.A. Architect, 255 Hopkins St, S.W. Atlanta, Georgia.” This plan bears the seal of O. C. Floyd, professional engineer, with a license that appears to note “Expires Dec. 31, 19” (See Appendix A).
- An undated floor framing plan (sheet “2 of 2”) appears to correspond with the basement floorplan dated May 1968. The title block lists “Joseph W. Robinson, A.I.A. Architect, 255 Hopkins St, S.W. Atlanta, Georgia.” This plan bears the seal of O. C. Floyd, professional engineer, with a license that appears to note “Expires Dec. 31, 19.” (See Appendix A).

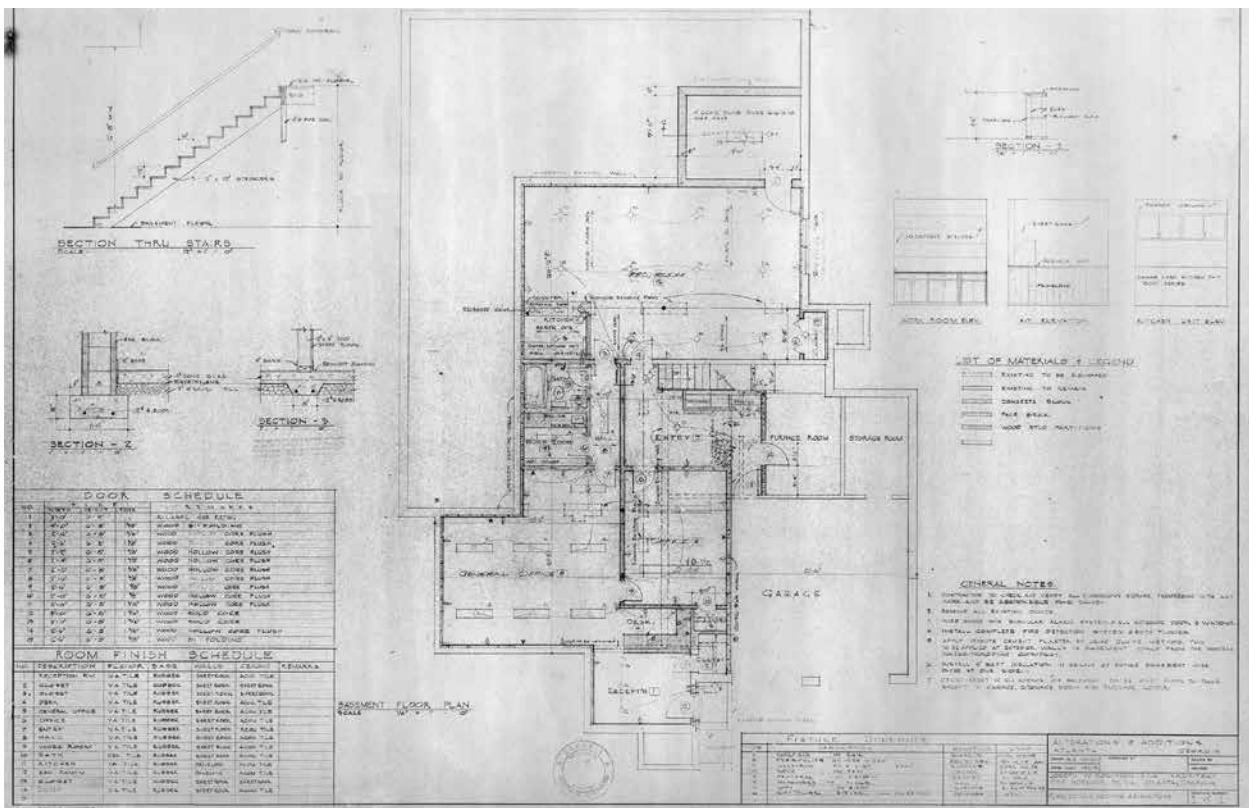


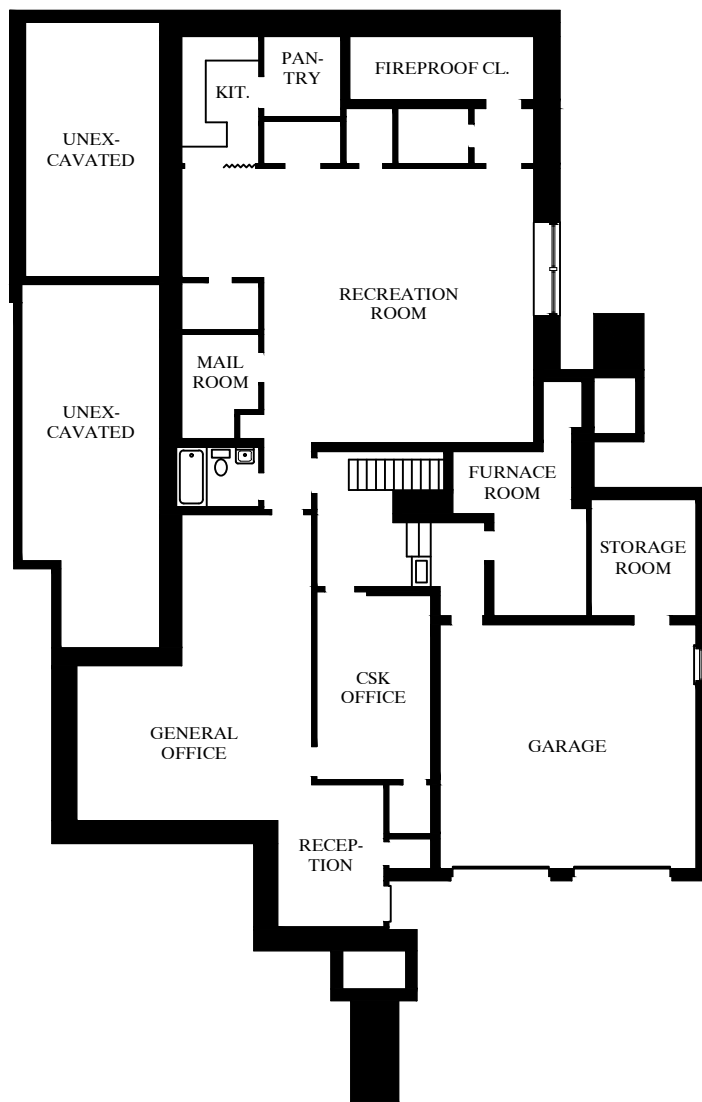
Figure 2.67. A3 Alterations & Additions, Basement Floor Plan (Plans, Details, Sections & Elevations) 1 of 1, 5/1968, Joseph W Robinson, AIA Architect. (Source: MALU Archives.)

- A basement floorplan closer to the plan as built, with indications of a proposed basement addition (unbuilt) at the north end of Room 004. This sheet has no title block and is labeled only “Basement Floor Plan.” (See Appendix A).
- A sheet dated 8 October 1968 with a title block bearing only “J. W. Robinson – Architect” shows the division of the playroom for incorporation into the adjacent bedrooms and the associated remodeling of the girls’ bedroom (R108). (See Appendix A).

Floor plans show the alterations builders made to the house based on Robinson’s drawings (Figure 2.68 and Figure 2.69). Most of the 1968 work occurred at the basement level. Workers excavated the former crawlspace south and west of the 1965 basement rooms and underpinned the foundation walls to create a full floor of new occupied space. The front portion of this floor included open office space for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, including a private office for Mrs. King. The rear part of this floor included a recreation room or

playroom for the children, a kitchenette, storage, a bathroom, and a reconfigured entry between the garage, office, and a stair to the first floor. Basement construction appears to have occurred during the summer of 1968, with The King Center offices complete enough for occupancy in September.³⁶⁴ Work also included alterations to the first floor in the children’s rooms. Exterior alterations appear to have been limited to the creation of a new basement entrance at driveway level on the north side of the entry pavilion and the cutting of a new window for the recreation room, along with the construction of a window well, on the north elevation. The creation of the window well may coincide with the addition of a patio area in the rear yard, which is visible in a low quality 1972 aerial photograph. Sometime in the 1970s, the King family added a metal sided utility shed to the rear yard. This shed exists at the site today and sits on the western property border. It is a Sears model number 696.60097, known as “The Lexington.” This model shed appears in Sears Roebuck, Co. catalogs from Fall 1971 through and

364. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 252.

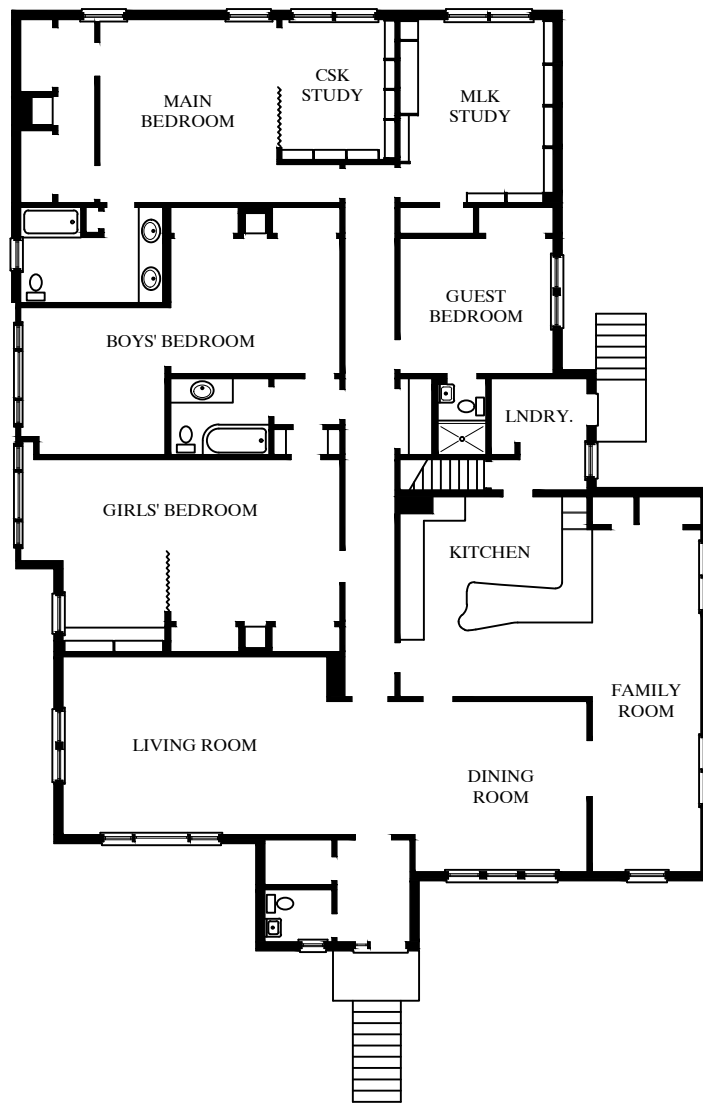


BASEMENT PLAN
CSK ALTERATIONS PHASE 2 (1968)

1/16"=1'-0"

1:192

Figure 2.68. Approximate first-floor plan of 1968 house. (Source: Daniel DeSousa HABS, based on physical evidence and 1964 drawings by J. W. Robinson and analysis of HABS laser scan by Ben Ross, RATIO Architects.)



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
CSK ALTERATIONS PHASE 2 (1968)

1/16"=1'-0"

1:192

Figure 2.69. Approximate basement level plan of 1965 house. (Source: Daniel DeSousa HABS, based on physical evidence and 1964 drawings by J. W. Robinson and analysis of HABS laser scan by Ben Ross, RATIO Architects.)



Figure 2.70. Image of Mrs. King in her office, 1968. (Source: © Flip Schulke.)

Spring 1972.³⁶⁵ While similar models appear in subsequent catalogs, they are a different size and model number. Research did not determine the date of installation of this utility shed.

The placement of The King Center office in the house reflects Mrs. King’s attention to balancing the continuation of Dr. King’s work with her new role as a single parent. Locating the office in the house provided a relatively secure location in close proximity to the family (Figure 2.70). The addition of an office with non-family members entering and exiting the basement level of the house necessitated a new entrance separate from the entrance into the private quarters on the first floor. Robinson proposed a basement entry door, which required site alterations. The entry level was slightly lower than the grade of the driveway, necessitating a step down. Robinson located the entry door under the steps up to the main house level. This altered the stone retaining wall along the driveway, turning it back toward the entry stair to accommodate the step and door.

In December 1968, the *Atlanta Constitution* ran a legal notice of public hearing for the city of Atlanta that an ordinance was introduced and passed for the “installation of driveways, curbs, and sidewalks” at several residences. This notification authorized the Atlanta Public Works department to install these amenities “and to charge cost of the same to the property owners.”³⁶⁶ This work may have corresponded with the installation of the short stone retaining wall located parallel to Sunset Avenue. The addition of this wall may have occurred to coincide with the site work associated with the conversion of the basement into a working office.

365. *Sears Roebuck Company Catalog*, Spring 1965, 1226-1227. Accessed at Ancestry.com.

366. J. J. Little, “Legal Notices,” *Atlanta Constitution*, December 19, 1968.

King Center Administrative Offices Leave the King Family Home

The move of The King Center administrative functions from the King Family Home happened gradually. By 1970, the organization had purchased the apartment building located next door (220 Sunset Avenue NW).³⁶⁷ By 1972, portions of the offices had moved into the apartment building, while Coretta Scott King continued to use the basement of the King Family Home for her personal office.

In 1976, the organization acquired 503 Auburn Avenue “to be renovated as temporary administrative offices for The King Center.”³⁶⁸ Edythe Bagley noted that the center was “housed in temporary offices” in 1974.³⁶⁹ Dr. Barbara Reynolds, co-author of Coretta’s second autobiography, describes meeting with Mrs. King at her office located in the Interdenominational Center on the Clark Atlanta campus in 1975, where “she was moving her office . . . as a temporary headquarters.”³⁷⁰ The offices relocated to 503 Auburn Avenue in 1977.³⁷¹ The King Center offices were housed at 503 Auburn Avenue until the completion of a new building located adjacent to Ebenezer Baptist Church.

Mrs. King and her staff focused on raising funds for the new building on Auburn Avenue. The King Center purchased the property for a new building in 1969. In 1970, Dr. King’s crypt “was transferred from Southview Cemetery to the permanent resting site” at The King Center site.³⁷² In 1973, Mrs. King hired the architecture firm Bond Ryder James to design The King Center Buildings.³⁷³ She advocated for the establishment of a historic district to include Ebenezer Baptist Church and Dr. King’s Birth Home, and these were listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

367. “Warranty Deed,” October 1970, Book 5306/Page492, Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room; Myrick-Harris and OWA Institute, “How They Lived.”

368. Davis, “History of the King Center: Twenty-Five Year Legacy of Accomplishment,” 62.

369. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 264.

370. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 351.

371. Davis, “History of the King Center: Twenty-Five Year Legacy of Accomplishment,” 29.

372. Davis, “History of the King Center: Twenty-Five Year Legacy of Accomplishment,” 52.

373. J. Max Bond, Jr. was one of the principals of this firm. He was an African American architect and the cousin of politician and Civil Rights leader Julian Bond.

By 1977, buildings at the twenty-three-acre King Center site included a day care/early-learning facility, a natatorium, tennis courts, community center, the Interfaith Peace Chapel, and Dr. King’s crypt with its reflecting pool.³⁷⁴ Construction of Freedom Hall began in 1980. Completed in 1982, the new building complex included an auditorium, conference facilities, a library and archives, and offices.³⁷⁵

Landscape Summary (1964-1972)

Between 1964 and 1972, the landscape at the King Family Home underwent significant changes. At the beginning of the period, Joseph W. Robinson’s architectural plans show an extensive renovation of the King Family Home that included the demolition of an existing detached garage on the property. The newly renovated house included a basement-level garage, and extension of the footprint toward the west to include offices and a main bedroom suite, and a remodeling of the façade to include an entry area and stoop. The interior of the building received a full remodeling to accommodate the family of six. Grading at the site required the installation of a stone retaining wall. Renovations to the house necessitated the installation of new circulation features including a new concrete driveway leading to the garage and concrete steps and a walkway leading to the front entry stair.

It appears that despite the renovations, the site retained some existing vegetation including a pink flowering tree in the northeast corner of the property (likely a redbud), a water oak in the rear yard, a pine in the front yard (possibly a loblolly pine), the water oaks in the landscape strip along Sunset Avenue, and trees along the southern property line in the front yard including at least two dogwoods. Plantings along the east façade of the house included evergreen azaleas (possibly southern *Indica* variety) and unidentified evergreen shrubs. There may have been an existing Japanese ternstroemia hedge in the rear yard along the north property line. This hedge was later replaced with fencing.

In terms of small-scale features, architectural plans show new fencing “to match existing” on a portion of the north property line, along the west

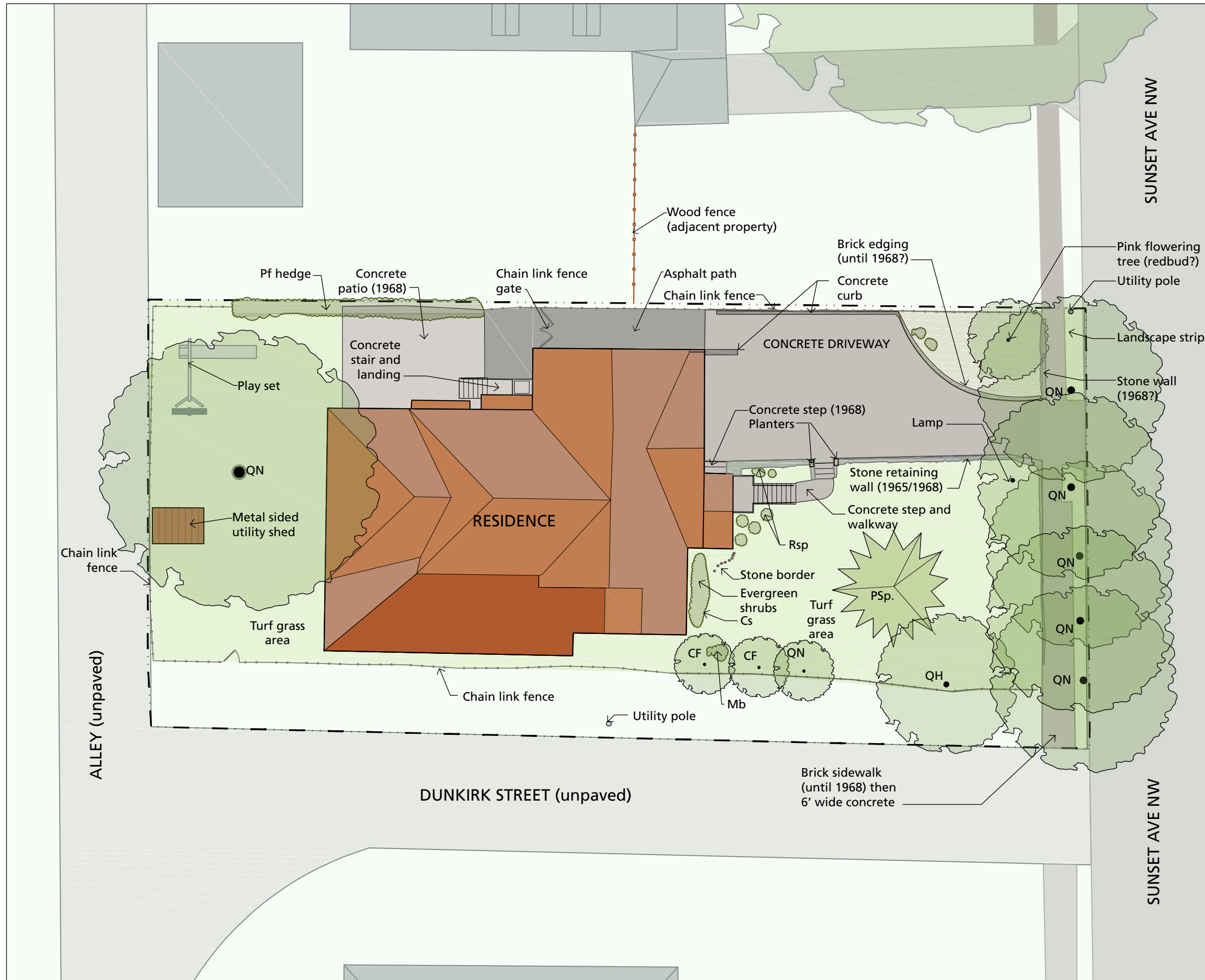
374. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 202–3.

375. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 204–5.

property line, and along the southern property line. The King family purchased a metal play set for the children and installed it in the rear yard. The Kings installed a lamp near the southeast corner of the driveway. There were concrete planters located near the base of the concrete steps to the front walkway. There was a stone border along a portion of the planting bed at the façade of the house. By 1968, there was an asphalt path leading from the driveway to the rear yard along the north side of the house. A concrete curb separated the asphalt area from the concrete driveway.

In 1968, Mrs. King renovated the basement of the house to accommodate offices for The King Center. Changes to the landscape included an alteration to the stone retaining wall to accommodate an entrance into the new basement level offices. This work, in concert with construction of a new concrete sidewalk, may have prompted the addition of another portion of stone retaining wall paralleling Sunset Avenue. Its construction is similar to that of the 1965 retaining wall, but it is shorter. The renovation included the addition of a recreation room in the basement, which had a window well for daylight. In terms of circulation, this construction may have coincided with the addition of a concrete patio off the north side of the house, which appears in a 1972 aerial. During the early 1970s, the King family purchased a small metal sided utility shed. The date of installation is not known, but the model dates between 1971 and 1972.

In terms of circulation, research revealed that the city approved for crews to install a new sidewalk, driveway apron, and curb at address 234 Sunset Avenue in December 1968. The concrete sidewalk “notched around” the base of an existing water oak in the landscape strip. At some point, perhaps during this period but at least by 1976, contractors installed a concrete curb lining the planting bed at the northeast corner of the driveway. This curb replaced a brick edge in this location. The curb followed the north edge of the driveway, but it is unknown where the curb ended. Illustration 2.2 depicts the cultural landscape during this period.



Plant Legend

Key	Botanical Name	Common Name
Trees		
CF	<i>Cornus florida</i>	Dogwood
QN	<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water Oak
QH	<i>Quercus</i> spp.	Oak (naturally hybridized red oak)
PSp	<i>Pinus</i> sp. (possibly <i>Pinus taeda</i>)	Pine (possibly Loblolly)
Shrubs		
Cs	<i>Camellia sasanqua</i>	Sasanqua camellia
Mb	<i>Mahonia bealei</i>	Leatherleaf mahonia
Pf	<i>Photinia x fraseri</i>	Red tip photinia
Rsp	<i>Rhododendron</i> sp.	Evergreen azalea

Groundcover

Unidentified turf grass species

Note:

See Appendix B for house evolution models (HABS).

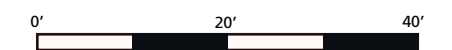
Credits:

Laser scan data from HABS recordation, October 2019
 Photographs and film footage from December 1965 (Brown Media Archives, University of Georgia Arnold Michaelis/MLK interview, Reel 8) and April 1968 (©Flip Schulke), Photographs from *Ebony* Magazine, November 1970

Illustration 2.2 King Family Period 1 (1964-1972) King Family Home

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

October 2021



The King Family Period 2 (1972-2004)

Vine City at the End of the Twentieth Century

As described by the King family's youngest son, Dexter, living and economic conditions in Vine City began to decline after the assassination of Dr. King and after the move of The King Center offices from the neighborhood. He recalled, "Vine City became the 'hood' later, after Daddy was killed and integration patterns became widespread and . . . black people could move, if not to where our hearts desired, then to where our purses allowed. Many did move . . . leaving only a few committed to their memories, or bound by lowering prospects in Vine City."³⁷⁶ Urban renewal and economic development projects on the western edge of downtown had a devastating effect on the physical environment of Vine City. New highway construction, including Interstates 85 and 20, cut through historically Black communities and isolated the west side of Atlanta from downtown. In 1976, the state

376. King and Wiley, *Growing Up King*, 10.

of Georgia opened an international trade and exhibition center just east of Northside Drive, bordering Vine City. The Georgia World Congress Center has continued to expand since that time, with its parking and support facilities encroaching across Northside Drive (historic Davis Street) into the Vine City neighborhood. In preparation for the 1996 Olympics, the state-funded Georgia Dome opened in 1992 (Figure 2.71). Mayor Maynard Jackson, son of a Vine City resident, and members of the city council promised, "This is not a slideshow . . . When that Dome opens up it's not going to be business as usual in Vine City. . . We want the sidewalks fixed and the streets properly paved to make Vine City as good as any other neighborhood."³⁷⁷ Students from Booker T. Washington High School interviewed residents prior to the construction of the Dome about their reaction to the project. Regarding the promises of "progress" associated with the Dome project, Pastor Howard Creecy, Jr. remarked, "I think it's

377. Rebecca Burns, "It's going to take more than \$45 million to help Vine City," *Atlanta Magazine*, March 13, 2013, Accessed May 15, 2020, <https://www.atlantamagazine.com/civilrights/its-going-to-take-more-than-45-million-to-help-vine-city/>.



Figure 2.71. View from Vine City of the Georgia Dome under construction in the late-1990s. (Source: AJCP330-041c, Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library.)

progress for Atlanta if everyone is treated fairly. . . . If the persons who live in Lightning [a nearby displaced neighborhood east of Northside Drive] and Vine [City] are not given the right kinds of consideration, then it is not progress. Progress is never made on the backs of poor people. That's the kind of vengeful thing that usually comes back and haunts you."³⁷⁸ Many of these promises went unfilled, and the economic conditions of the neighborhood continued to deteriorate.

In the mid-1970s, planning began for a rapid transit station to be located south of the King Family Home, near the intersection of Northside Drive and Rhodes Street. The station opened in 1979. It provided service to the colleges at the Atlanta University Center and the Vine City neighborhood. The station was a transportation asset to the community, and construction of the line through the neighborhood was mostly below ground.

In 1980, the population of Vine City declined to 6,552 people and continued downward in 1990 to 4,755.³⁷⁹ The population in Vine City decreased with the lack of quality housing. More than half the housing units in the neighborhood stood vacant after 2000. In 2000, there were 2,700 people in the neighborhood. In 2010, that population had decreased to 1,476.³⁸⁰

The King Children

Prior to Dr. King's assassination, entertainer Harry Belafonte established a trust fund for the King children's education. Mrs. King attempted to enroll both Yolanda and Martin III in the Lovett School, an Episcopalian school in Atlanta, but the school denied their applications.³⁸¹ They attended segregated elementary schools until Atlanta Public Schools integrated. Integration of Atlanta Public Schools began in 1961, with grades eleven and twelve. Each subsequent year, one additional grade would integrate children until desegregation was

complete. According to Alton Hornsby, "Under this arrangement it would require at least a decade to achieve full desegregation."³⁸² Court cases and pressure from NAACP ensued, and during the 1965-1966 school year, all Atlanta schools became desegregated under what was known as "freedom of choice."³⁸³

Despite the endowment from Mr. Belafonte, Yolanda King attended public schools in Atlanta, including Spring Street Elementary School and Grady High School.³⁸⁴ Yolanda King graduated from high school in 1972 and attended Smith College and New York University. She became "very instrumental in setting up the arts component of The King Center." Yolanda King had a successful career as an actor and author, and advocate for peace and civil rights causes. After becoming a spokesperson for the American Heart Association, she passed away in 2007.

Like his older sister, Martin Luther King III attended Spring Street Elementary School. He later transferred to The Galloway School, an independent private school located in Atlanta. Martin Luther King III attended Morehouse College and served as a campaign aide to Jimmy Carter. He became a commissioner on the Fulton County Commission, president of the SCLC, and a civil rights activist. Mrs. King said of her oldest son, "Keeping the dream alive is not a mere slogan or headline with Martin. It has captivated him. He conceptualizes it and in ways larger or small continues to reshape and repackage its tenets of peace, justice, and fairness for the next generation. Sometimes he steps back into politics to achieve the goal."³⁸⁵ Martin Luther King III was the last of the King children to live at the house on Sunset Avenue. He visited his mother often, staying overnight into adulthood.

Dexter King attended The Galloway School and later Frederick Douglass High School, a public school west of Vine City. Dexter King attended Morehouse College, where he began a career in music promotion, disc jockeying, and photography.

378. Howard Creecy, Interview with Reverend Howard Creecy, Jr., interview by Byron Amos and Shemar Jones, 1988, Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.

379. Urban Collage, Inc. and Robert Charles Lesser & Co., "Vine City Redevelopment Plan, Volume I - Final Report" (Atlanta, Georgia: Vine City Civic Association, September 2004).

380. "Atlanta's Changing Population," *The Atlanta Constitution*, March 24, 2011, B1.

381. Bernard Lefkowitz, "Church School in Atlanta Rejects Rev. King's Son," *New York Post*, March 18, 1963.

382. Alton Hornsby, Jr., "Black Public Education in Atlanta, Georgia, 1954-1973: From Segregation to Segregation," *Journal of Negro History* 76, no. 1/4 (Winter - Autumn 1991): 22.

383. Hornsby, Jr., "Black Public Education in Atlanta," 34-35.

384. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 282.

385. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 299.

He served as an officer in the Atlanta Police Department and as president of The King Center for two different terms.

Bernice King is the youngest child of Dr. and Mrs. King. Like her brother, she attended The Galloway School and Frederick Douglass High School. Bernice King attended Spelman College and Emory University in Atlanta to pursue dual divinity and law degrees. An ordained minister, Dr. Bernice King served as president and CEO of the SCLC and is now the CEO of The King Center. Through her work at the King Center, Dr. Bernice King has continued her parents' legacy of educating youth and adults about the principles of nonviolence. During the 2020 protests in Atlanta, Georgia, following the death of George Floyd in police custody, she often appeared on the national stage as an advocate for the ideals of nonviolence and peaceful protest. She helped preside over the funerals of several killed in police custody during the Black Lives Matter movement of the summer of 2020 and gave a eulogy at Congressman John Lewis' funeral in July 2020.

The King Family Home after The King Center

In 1983, Coretta Scott King successfully advocated for the creation of a national holiday honoring her husband. President Ronald Regan signed HR 3706 Public Law 98-144, which established the birthday of Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. as a Federal holiday, to be celebrated on the third Monday of January beginning in 1986. Mrs. King then called on Congress to establish a Federal commission to oversee the holiday. President Reagan signed this legislation in August 1984.

Mrs. King continued to advocate for peace and economic and social justice throughout her career. Her sister Edythe stated, "throughout much of her adult life, Coretta was defined by the public through her marriage to Martin. However, she lived thirty-eight years after he died . . . Some have seen [her work] merely as a continuation of Martin's mission and Martin's ideals. It was much more than that."³⁸⁶ Mrs. King addressed African issues, women's rights, and supported the creative arts in Atlanta and across the United States.

In 1985, the family selected Stanford University professor Clayborn Carson to "edit and compile" the Martin Luther King, Jr. papers into "publishable volumes."³⁸⁷ In 1997, Carson visited the King Family Home to assess the personal collection of papers stored at the house. (Documents not located at The King Center remained at the King residence.) Carson inventoried the books and papers in Dr. King's personal study, and then Patricia Latimore took him to the basement to assess additional documents. Carson recalled, "Lattimore [*sic*] took us down to the large basement. Across from the stairs we saw a storeroom filled with boxes."³⁸⁸ Carson documented many important personal documents during this effort, including Dr. King's draft sermons and personal correspondence.

Of her house being located in a "declining" neighborhood in Atlanta, Mrs. King wrote,

It surprised me to hear that people did not know that my house, the one I raised all my children in, was now in a drug-infested part of the city, an area none of my critics would dare walk in, let alone live in. In fact, my house in Vine City was broken into twice. Once when Martin [MLK III who lived with her at the time] happened not to be at the house, I fell asleep sitting up in my bed after reading some papers. I was briefly awoken by a noise and thought that picture had fallen, and I just went back to sleep. I discovered that a burglar had been there only when I woke up the next morning and Pat [Latimore], my beloved personal assistant, arrived and told me that a brick had been thrown through the living room window, which faced the front of the house. A walkie-talkie that had been in its charging station in the kitchen was missing. Only by the grace of God did I avoid being beaten, raped, or murdered.³⁸⁹

The house in which the Kings raised their children suffered from some deterioration toward the end

386. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 281.

387. Bagley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*, 266.

388. Carson, *Martin's Dream*, 175.

389. King and Reynolds, *Coretta*, 300–301.

of Mrs. King's life. In the afterword for *Coretta*, Patricia Latimore wrote, "Mrs. King should have left her house in Vine City years before that; the house was deteriorating, and it had been broken into several times. Actually, a water leak caused the ceiling to collapse in the hallway right outside Mrs. King's bedroom, and even though the ceiling and the leak could be fixed and were fixed, that leak signaled that it was high time for her to move out."³⁹⁰ Eventually the condition of the house and Mrs. King's declining health warranted her move to a different residence. Dexter King notes in his memoir that Mrs. King experienced a lack of privacy at the house as well, with tour groups stopping regularly and asking to "come in and look around."³⁹¹ With the urging of friends Andrew Young and Maya Angelou and financial assistance from Oprah Winfrey, Mrs. King moved to a condominium in the nearby Buckhead section of Atlanta in 2004. Daughter Bernice King described the move as a "blessing" due to barriers at the King Family Home including the steps to the front door and from the basement upstairs.³⁹² Though the date of installation is unknown, sometime after 1988, Mrs. King had a railing installed on the steps leading to the entry walkway from the driveway. The railing design matched the rail on the entry stair with the same S-shaped motif, square pickets, and posts.

In 1988, consultants Amy Canine and John Kissane performed a Historic Resource Survey of Vine City. This report includes a survey card and photograph for the King Family Home. The form describes the architecture of the house, but also notes that there is a "iron fence" and "flower garden" at the site. The image reveals that the driveway was concrete and the stone wall retained its natural color at the time of the survey.

During her life, Mrs. King envisioned preserving the house and incorporating it into Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. Former assistant Lynn Cothran stated, "She saw that the house at some point could possibly be important historically—that it would be open to the public.

That's why she didn't throw anything away. That's why she really didn't change any of the furniture much. She kept it pretty much the way it was."³⁹³

After a series of small strokes and advanced-stage ovarian cancer, Mrs. King passed away on January 30, 2006. King's body lay in state in the Georgia State Capitol, the first African American woman to receive this honor. Dr. Bernice King delivered the eulogy at her service, for which over fourteen thousand people gathered.

The National Park Service expressed interest in preserving the King Family Home as early as 1980 and included the property in its enabling legislation. Additional efforts to inventory and purchase the property commenced in 1998.³⁹⁴ In January 2019, a private donation made it possible for the National Park Foundation to purchase the property from the King estate and transfer ownership to the National Park Service.³⁹⁵ Of the King Family Home's relevance to the civil rights movement and importance in American history, Lynn Cothran compares the places in Atlanta where the movement took place as parts of a body,

The house where it sits is almost the heart . . . not only was it the home that Dr. King and Mrs. King raised their children, but it was where much of the movement was planned out of Atlanta. The legs were over on Auburn Avenue—SCLC. There was an arm over at Paschal's where they would often go, have meetings, eat. And Morehouse. So, the whole body of the movement is spread out over the city of Atlanta. But certainly, the heart was over there on Sunset Avenue.³⁹⁶

390. Afterword by Patricia Latimore in Coretta Scott King with Barbara Reynolds, *Coretta: My Life, My Love, My Legacy*, 341.

391. King and Wiley, *Growing Up King*, 254.

392. Afterword by Dr. Bernice King in Coretta Scott King with Barbara Reynolds, *Coretta: My Life, My Love, My Legacy*, 349.

393. Cothran, King Sunset Avenue Home and Adjacent Apartment Building.

394. Jennifer French-Parker, "Taking Inventory of King," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 15, 1999, 29.

395. Sheila M. Poole and Ernie Scruggs, "Foundation Buys King's Vine City Home, Will Be Opened to Public," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, January 24, 2019, <https://www.ajc.com/news/breaking-news/foundation-buys-king-vine-city-home-will-opened-public/nzJEzFUcmrdYjbtEUeaINO/>.

396. Cothran, King Sunset Avenue Home and Adjacent Apartment Building.



Figure 2.72. A low-quality image from a 1988 historic resource survey, showing the King Family Home. The planter bed in the northeast corner of the site appears to contain shrubs and perennials. The driveway is still paved with concrete, and there are evergreen shrubs in front of the house. Branching on the left side of the photo may be from the water oak located at the southeast corner of the driveway (no longer existing). (Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Historic Preservation Division.)

The NPS recorded video of the King Family Home in July 1998. While much of the video features the interior of the house and its belongings, there are several seconds of footage showing the cultural landscape. The footage reveals that the fences along the west and north property lines in the rear yard were chain link material and covered with an unidentifiable vine. There is a wood privacy fence located north of the chain link fence on the northern property boundary, likely on the adjacent parcel. Turf grass extends under the play set. There is a detailed shot of the fence leading from the backyard to the driveway. The top of a metal gate has ornaments of two lions facing each other. The seesaw still existed on the play set. The swings were missing, but their metal chains remained attached to the play set. The anodized aluminum fence on the northern property line had been installed by this date and the driveway was paved with asphalt.³⁹⁷

397. "234 Sunset," VHS film, from MALU archives, Subseries VII: Audio-Video Collection, 0201. VHS Tapes—King Sunset Home, July 2, 1998.

Landscape Summary (1972-2004)

Research revealed little documentation of the landscape of the King Family Home during this period, but it is likely that changes to the site were minimal. Aerial photographs are poor quality for this period and do not reveal much information about the site.³⁹⁸ In terms of circulation, photographs and video footage show that between 1988 and 1998, the driveway received an asphalt surface. There is a low-quality photograph from a historic resource survey taken in 1988 that shows the driveway is still paved in concrete. (Figure 2.72). In terms of structures, this same photo shows that the retaining wall retained its natural stone color until at least 1988. (The King family painted the wall red sometime between 1988 and 2007.) Either The King Center or city crews paved Dunkirk Street in the 1980s. The new area of impervious surface exacerbated runoff into the unwaterproofed basement foundation that resulted in flooding.

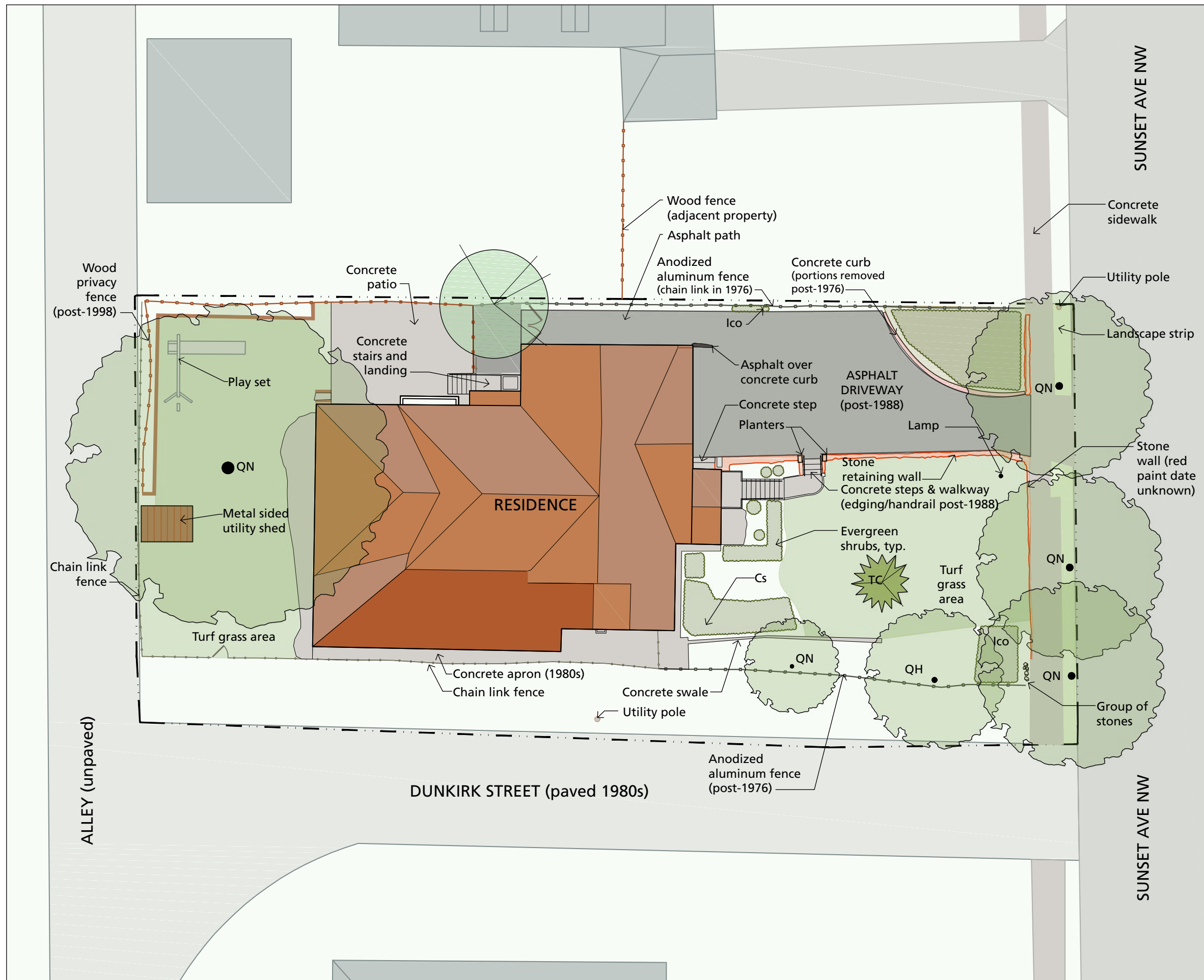
398. USDA Historical Aerial Photographs, "1981 Aerial Photograph," 1981, www.historicaerials.com; USDA Historical Aerial Photographs, "1988 Aerial Photograph," 1988, www.historicaerials.com.

Mr. Hal Higdon, who served as a repairman for the King family for many years, added a concrete apron around the foundation of much of the house. The intent of the concrete was to divert water away from the house foundation and into a concrete swale / ditch that emptied into the front yard.³⁹⁹ Beyond the concrete apron, the King family altered small-scale features at the site slightly during this period. They added a railing to the entry walkway steps after 1988. The 1988 survey form notes that the site contains a “flower garden” and an “iron fence.” The “iron fence” notation likely means that a black anodized aluminum pike fence had replaced the chain-link fence on the north and south property lines between 1976 and 1988. There is a photo of Dexter King from 1976 that shows a concrete curb had been installed along the northern edge of the driveway (Figure 2.73). A portion of this curb exists today along the northeast planting area near the driveway. The northern portion of the curb may have been removed when the contractor repaved the driveway in asphalt as it no longer exists at the site today.

In terms of vegetation, the “flower garden” noted in the 1988 historic resource survey may have been located in the northeast corner of the side where the concrete curb forms a planting bed in the corner of the driveway.⁴⁰⁰ The pine tree in the front yard may have died or declined, requiring removal, and the family replaced it with a hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) sometime during this period. The 1976 photo of Dexter King also what appears to be an evergreen hedge behind the chain link fence, possibly a Chinese holly (*Ilex cornuta*), outside the northern property line. It is unknown when either the city or the King family removed the water oak located adjacent to the south side of the driveway apron, but this occurred prior to 2007. Illustration 2.3 depicts the cultural landscape during this period.

399. King and Latimore, 234 Sunset Avenue.

400. Amy Kissane and John Kissane, “Georgia Historic Resources Property Information Form, Resource No. FU-A-324” (Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, August 1988).



Plant Legend

Key	Botanical Name	Common Name
Trees		
PS	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry
QN	<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water Oak
QH	<i>Quercus</i> spp.	Oak (naturally hybridized red oak)
TC	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>	Canadian Hemlock

Shrubs		
Cs	<i>Camellia sasanqua</i>	Sasanqua camellia
Ico	<i>Ilex cornuta</i>	Chinese Holly

Groundcover

Unidentified turf grass species

Credits:
 Laser scan data from HABS recordation, October 2019
 Aerial imagery (various years)
 1988 Vine City Historic Resources Survey, Georgia Historic Preservation Division

Illustration 2.3
King Family Period 2 (1972-2004)
King Family Home
 Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
 October 2021



The King Family Period 3 (2004-2019)

Vine City

In 2002, a flood of sewage and stormwater inundated approximately 169 houses in the northern portion of Vine City, near what was once the Wachendorff Brothers Nursery. The result of an aging and damaged sewer system, the flooding caused the displacement of nearly eighty residents.

When Arthur M. Blank sought to rebuild the Georgia Dome twenty-five years after its initial construction, his foundation committed copious funds to the Vine City community. However, the new stadium pushed speculators to buy up hundreds of parcels, both developed and undeveloped, just west of the building, leading critics like State Senator Vincent Fort to claim, “The stadium deal is nothing but an engine for gentrification.”⁴⁰¹ The new Mercedes Benz Stadium displaced historic churches, and surface parking lots servicing game day fans began to appear on lots in Vine City.

Though civic activism survives in the neighborhood, many of the residents of Vine City live in poverty and the total population has continuously declined.⁴⁰² While the population of Vine City topped fifty thousand during the 1960s, today the population is around seventeen thousand residents.⁴⁰³ Home ownership is around seventeen percent.⁴⁰⁴ The neighborhood remains largely African American, with a Black population of nearly ninety percent. Many recent investments in the community are largely underwritten by the Arthur Blank Foundation and include the Westside Future Fund, a nonprofit organization which is “committed to fostering long-term transformational change” in the neighborhoods

located west of downtown Atlanta.⁴⁰⁵ Joseph E. Boone Boulevard is currently undergoing a city-funded streetscape improvement project, which includes improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The city is currently redeveloping two major parks, Rodney Cook Senior Park (the site of the 2002 flooding and the Wachendorff Brothers Nursery) and John F. Kennedy Park.

By the early 2000s, several of the houses on the east side of Sunset Avenue had been demolished. Remaining historic buildings included addresses 237, 233, 219, and 215 Sunset Avenue.⁴⁰⁶ City of Atlanta property records show that owners constructed new residences at addresses 241, 229, and 211 between 1998 and 2006.

The city of Atlanta recognized the historic significance of the Vine City neighborhood and conducted historic research studies for the area, which culminated in the recognition of Sunset Avenue as a City of Atlanta Historic District in 2011 (Figure 2.74).⁴⁰⁷ Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division determined the district potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 2007.⁴⁰⁸

Landscape Summary (2004-2019)

Documentation for the period 2004 and 2019 is sparse, but it appears that the landscape at the King Family Home remained largely unchanged during this time. At some point the redbud in the northeast corner of the site died or was removed, and the estate installed additional vegetation in the planting bed in this area including hybrid azaleas and shrub roses (see existing conditions section for descriptions). Changes to the house included a new roof and hot water heater, and the estate used the house for storage. The property became a contributing feature in a local historic district in 2011. Illustration 2.4 depicts the cultural landscape during this period.

-
401. Ken Belson, “Building a Stadium, Rebuilding a Neighborhood,” *New York Times*, January 12, 2017, www.nytimes.com.
402. Belson, “Building a Stadium, Rebuilding a Neighborhood.”
403. Josh Green, “Five Years after Mercedes-Benz Stadium Broke Ground, Is Atlanta’s Westside Revival Working?,” *Curbed Atlanta*, January 31, 2019, <https://atlanta.curbed.com/atlanta-photo-essays/2019/1/31/18201601/super-bowl-lliii-atlanta-gentrification-poverty-blank>.
404. Green, “Five Years after Mercedes-Benz Stadium Broke Ground, Is Atlanta’s Westside Revival Working?”

-
405. “About – Westside Future Fund,” accessed July 6, 2020, <https://www.westsidefuturefund.org/about/>.
406. Schneider Geospatial, “QPublic.Net™ Fulton County, GA,” September 28, 2020, <https://qpublic.schneidercorp.com/>.
407. City of Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development and Flores, “Designation Report for Sunset Avenue Historic District.”
408. Gretchen Brock to Dough Young, “Sunset Avenue, Vine City,” July 11, 2007.

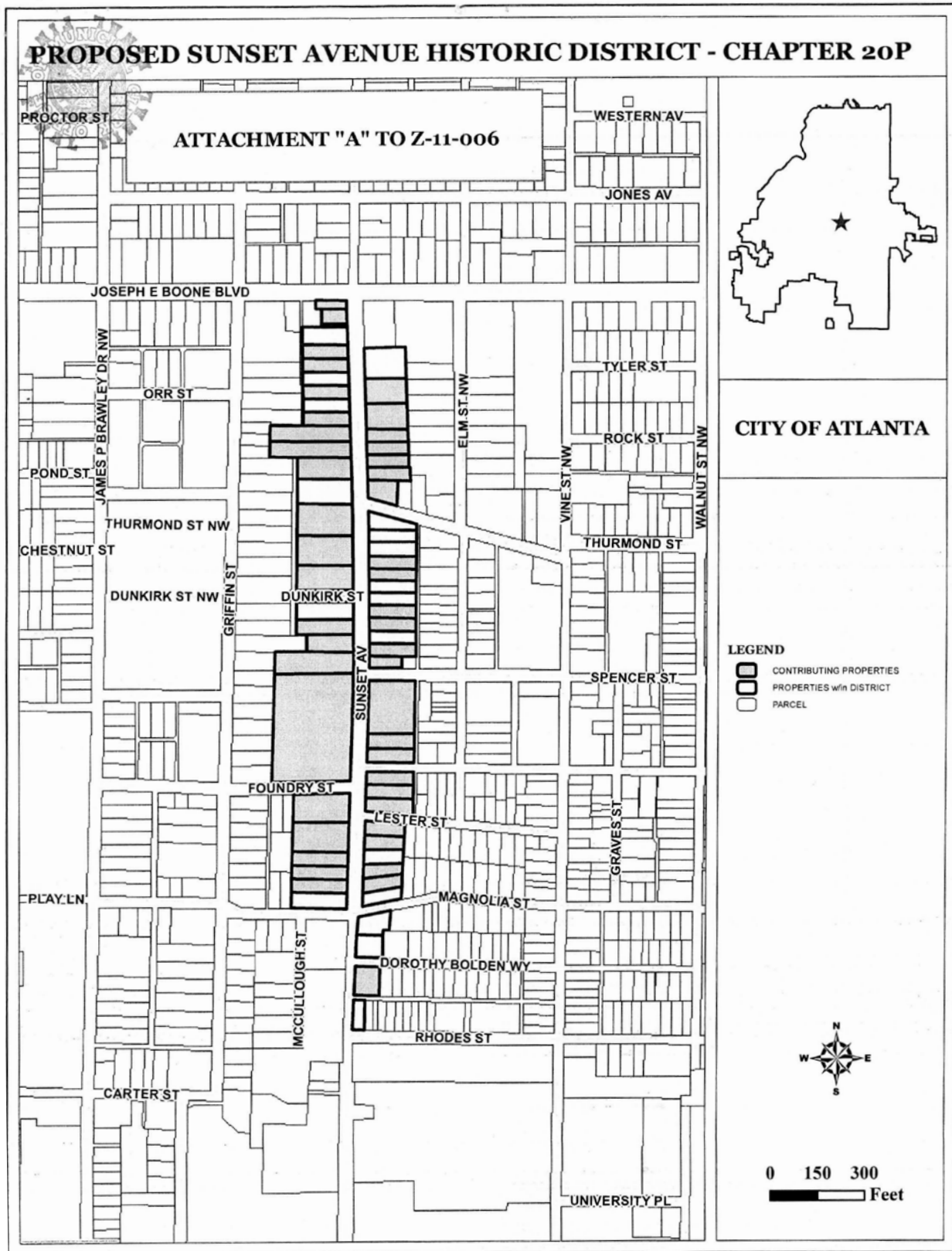


Figure 2.73. 1976 photo of Dexter King. Photo shows concrete driveway, chain link fence, painted concrete curb along north edge of driveway, and shrubs along the drive edge just inside the fence. (Source: © Flip Schulke.)

The National Park Service Period (2019)

In January 2019, a private donation permitted the National Park Foundation to purchase the King Family Home from the King Estate. The foundation immediately transferred the property to the National Park Service.⁴⁰⁹ Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is now studying the house and site in the hope of providing access to the King Family Home to visitors in the future. Park staff maintain the house and grounds.

In 2021, the Westside Future Fund purchased 220 Sunset Avenue NW located just south of the King Family Home property. The fund plans to rehabilitate this building for use as affordable student housing for students studying social justice and civil rights at the Atlanta University Center. The nonprofit has stabilized the building on this property and plans to renovate it into four two-bedroom, one-bath units. The nonprofit also plans to pursue a National Register nomination for the property at 220 Sunset Avenue NW.⁴¹⁰

Landscape Summary (2019)

Upon obtaining the property, the NPS had concerns about moisture seeping into the basement of the house through the foundation walls. To alleviate the problem, they took measures to divert water away from the foundation. One solution was to enclose the window well located on the north façade of the house. The NPS constructed a plywood enclosure with a metal roof around the basement window openings between June and October 2019. During this same period, the NPS installed drainage diversion measures around the house to alleviate flooding through the foundation walls and into the basement level. The NPS also installed a sump pump near the basement entry door to alleviate moisture entry into the basement through the door. Maintenance to the house included emergency roof and chimney repairs. In 2019, the NPS conducted a tree assessment report for the water oak located in the rear yard. This assessment is included as an appendix to this report (Appendix C). Illustration

3.1 (included in the Existing Conditions section) depicts the current state of the cultural landscape for this period.

409. Jacey Fortin, "Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Last Home Sold to National Park Foundation," *New York Times*, January 24, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/24/us/mlk-home-vine-city-atlanta.html>.
410. Westside Future Fund, 23rd Virtual Transform Westside Summit, 2021.

Page intentionally left blank



Plant Legend

Key	Botanical Name	Common Name
Trees		
AP	<i>Acer palmatum</i>	Japanese Maple
PS	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry
QN	<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water Oak
QH	<i>Quercus</i> spp.	Oak (naturally hybridized red oak)
TC	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>	Canadian Hemlock
Shrubs		
Cs	<i>Camellia sasanqua</i>	Sasanqua camellia
Ico	<i>Ilex cornuta</i>	Chinese Holly
Icr	<i>Ilex crenata</i> 'Convexa'	Convex Japanese Holly
Lj	<i>Ligustrum japonicum</i>	Japanese Privet
LI	<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	Waxleaf Privet
Ls	<i>Ligustrum sinense</i>	Chinese Privet
Pca	<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>	Cherry Laurel
Pco	<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>	Scarlet Firethorn
Pj	<i>Pieris japonica</i>	Japanese Andromeda
Ri	<i>Rhododendron eriocarpum</i>	Azalea (Satsuki hybrid)
Rp	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Azalea (Kurume hybrid)
Rcv	<i>Rosa</i> cvs.	Rose
Tg	<i>Ternstroemia gymnanthera</i>	Japanese ternstroemia
Groundcover		
Hsp	<i>Hosta</i> sp.	Hosta
Lm	<i>Liriope muscari</i>	Liriope
Turf grass	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> *	Bermuda grass

*Primary groundcover throughout turf areas

Credits:

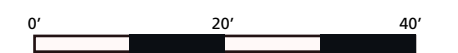
Laser scan data from HABS recordation, October 2019
 Atlanta Fulton County GIS Data, Accessed May 2020, <https://gis.fulton-countyga.gov/apps/topodownloadmapviewer/>
 Field investigation, Fall 2019-Spring 2020

Illustration 2.4 King Family Period 3 (2004-2019)

King Family Home

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

October 2021



Existing Conditions

Introduction

The focus of this study is the King Family Home located in Land Lot 110, Fourteenth District, Fulton County at 234 Sunset Avenue NW (Figure 3.1). The 0.2796-acre home site is located the Vine City neighborhood of Atlanta, Georgia. The National Park Service (NPS) has managed the property since January 2019. The Vine City neighborhood is situated just north of the Atlanta University Center and west of Atlanta’s Central Business District and major downtown buildings such as Atlanta’s World Congress Center and Mercedes Benz Stadium. The property is bounded on the north by the residence at 240 Sunset Avenue NW, on the east by the Sunset Avenue NW, on the south by a road sometimes labeled as “Dunkirk Street,” and on the west by an unnamed alley. The King Family Home is no longer a residence.

The surviving resources of the site that reflect the association with the King family include the house and surrounding landscape features. Adjacent residences support the historic character of the site. Illustration 3.1 depicts a graphic representation of the existing conditions of the site.

This section of the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) inventories the existing conditions of the site using a combination of contemporary photographs, plan view graphics, and narrative description. This inventory organizes site features by landscape characteristic, which are the “tangible and intangible aspects of an inventory unit which have either influenced the history of the development of the landscape, or are products



Figure 3.1. Façade and north elevations of the house, facing southwest. Visible are the front yard and driveway. (Source: HABS: HABS_GA-199-2, 2020.)

of its development, respectively.”⁴¹¹ Further, “these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance.”⁴¹² The NPS identifies thirteen landscape characteristics. These landscape characteristics are defined as follows:⁴¹³

- **Natural Systems and Features:** Natural aspects that often influence the development and resultant form of a landscape.
- **Spatial Organization:** Arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.
- **Land Use:** Organization, form, and shape of the landscape in response to land use.
- **Cultural Traditions:** Practices that influence land use, patterns of division, building forms, and the use of materials.
- **Cluster Arrangement:** The location of buildings and structures in the landscape.
- **Circulation:** Spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.
- **Topography:** Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.
- **Vegetation:** Indigenous or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.
- **Buildings and Structures:** Three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges, and memorials.
- **Views and Vistas:** Features that create or allow a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.
- **Small-Scale Features:** Elements that provide detail and diversity combined with function and aesthetics.
- **Constructed Water Features:** The built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions.

- **Archeological Sites:** Sites containing surface and subsurface remnants related to historic or prehistoric land use.

While most sites contain at least several of the thirteen characteristics, “Not all characteristics are always present in any one landscape.”⁴¹⁴ The existing King Family Home landscape contains eleven of the thirteen landscape characteristics in total, with *Constructed Water Features*, and *Archeological Sites* not represented in the landscape.

Natural Systems and Features

Though part of a downtown setting, the King Family Home property is situated within the Southern Outer Piedmont Level IV ecoregion.⁴¹⁵ This ecoregion is a transitional zone between the Appalachian Mountains and the Coastal Plain characterized by rolling, hilly terrain and a long history of human disturbance to the native land cover. Given the urban setting of the King Family Home, no obvious natural systems and features are apparent.

Climate

The climate of Atlanta and the surrounding area is characterized by hot and humid summers and mild winters. It is often referred to as a temperate humid subtropical climate. The average high temperature is 71.9 degrees Fahrenheit. Spring is the wettest season, with March being the wettest month, when over 5 inches of precipitation on average is recorded in Atlanta. The driest month is October, which registers 3.2 inches of precipitation on average. Annual precipitation for the area is roughly 50 inches. Climate models predict that temperatures will rise in the future.⁴¹⁶ According to a 2018 NPS Environmental Research Letter, with an emissions reduction scenario, the mean annual temperature increase at Martin Luther King, Jr.

411. Robert R. Page, National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, January 2009), 7-4.

412. Robert R. Page, National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide, 53.

413. Ibid.

414. Ibid.

415. G. E. Griffith, et al., *Ecoregions of Georgia: Corvallis, Oregon*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (map scale 1:1,500,000), 2001.

416. P. Gonzalez et al., “Disproportionate Magnitude of Climate Change in United States National Parks,” *Environmental Research Letters* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2018), <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2265248>.



Figure 3.2. Aerial view of the King Family Home showing setback from Sunset Avenue. (Source: ESRI, City of Atlanta.)

National Historical Park would be between 0.6 and 1.4 degrees Celsius (1.08 and 2.52 degrees Fahrenheit) over the next eighty years. In the highest emissions scenario over that period, the mean annual temperature increase at MALU would be between 0.9 and 4.5 degrees Celsius (1.62 and 8.1 degrees Fahrenheit).⁴¹⁷

Soils

The King Family Home property has soils typical of the surrounding urbanized area-- anthropogenic soils classified as Urban Land (UL).⁴¹⁸ This classification indicates that the soil profile is heavily disturbed and not representative of a native soil

profile; however, the surface soil appeared in field investigations to be a sandy clay loam.⁴¹⁹

Features:

- Temperate humid subtropical climate
- Soils
- Terrain

Spatial Organization

The spatial organization of the King Family Home site is defined by the residential building centered on the site, with fence lines designating the property boundaries on the north, west, and south. The house is aligned with its narrower elevation facing Sunset Avenue. The house setback is similar to that of other single-family residential buildings on the west side of the street, approximately seventy-five feet from the face of curb (Figure 3.2).

Three distinct spaces exist within the site: the front yard and driveway, the residential structure, and the back yard area. The front and back yards are separated by a fence on both the north and south sides of the house. The asphalt driveway is located in the northeastern corner of the site, adjacent to the front turf grass area and a small landscape bed north of the driveway (Figure 3.3). The residence occupies the center of the site. Brick and concrete stairs connect the primary entrance of the residence to the driveway (Figure 3.4). The residence has an additional entrance to the first floor on the north side of the property, where concrete and brick stairs connect the residence to the northern side yard (Figure 3.5). The basement level of the house is accessed by two garage doors and an exterior door facing the driveway (Figure 3.6). The back yard area west of the residence serves as the third space within the property. The back yard is primarily turf grass with a large mature water oak tree in the center (Figure 3.7). A concrete pad occupies the northern side yard (Figure 3.8). The areas between the house and the north and south property lines are narrow and largely covered with pavement.

The overhead plane is mostly enclosed by mature tree canopy, except for the northeastern corner of

417. Gonzalez et al., "Disproportionate Magnitude of Climate Change in United States National Parks," 522.

418. Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Web Soil Survey. <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>. Accessed May 13, 2020.

419. Level 1 Pre-Acquisition Environmental Site Assessment Survey (ESAS), 220 & 234 Sunset Avenue Northeast, Martin Luther King Life Home & Apartment Properties, National Park Service. Barksdale & Associates, Inc. January 3, 2019.



Figure 3.3. The asphalt driveway north of the front yard, facing northeast. A smaller landscape bed is visible in the northeast corner of the property. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.4. The primary entrance to the main floor of the residence is a set of stairs and walkway that connect to the driveway. Photo facing west. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.5. A secondary entrance to the main floor of the residence is a set of stairs on the north elevation of the building. Photo facing east. (Source: WLA Studio, October 2019.)

the property. Large mature oak trees in both front and back yards provide canopy cover over most of the site (Figure 3.9 and Figure 3.10). Mature street trees screen the view of the residence from the street and give the front turf grass area a sense of enclosure (Figure 3.11).

Features:

- Organization by adjacent properties and street setback
- Three-part organization at the ground level (front yard and driveway, house, rear yard)
- Overhead canopy of rear yard



Figure 3.6. The lower floor of the residence can be accessed through the garage door (right) or the exterior door (center). The door is accessible by a single concrete step to a lower concrete platform from the driveway. Photo facing south. (Source: WLA Studio, October 2019.)



Figure 3.7. The back yard of the residence is mostly turf grass areas and hardscape. A mature oak provides canopy cover over much of the back yard. A chain link fence runs along the southern property line. Barbed wire installed atop the fence is in poor condition and missing in areas. Photo facing north. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.8. View from the north side of the residence looking west. The concrete patio in the foreground connects to the back yard. (Source: HABS_GA-199-8, 2020.)



Figure 3.9. Mature canopy tree defines the overhead plane in the back yard. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.10. Mature canopy trees define the overhead plane of the front yard area. Photo facing west. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020).



Figure 3.11. Heavily pruned street trees on Sunset Ave screen the view of the front of the residence from the southeast. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)

Land Use

The land use of the site and surrounding neighborhood is residential. The King Family Home is no longer a residence; however, it continues to reflect single-family residential use. While many of the houses surrounding the site are single-family use, there is a multi-family building located south of the site at 220 Sunset Avenue NW. Additional multi-family residential buildings exist on the west side of Sunset Avenue as well as the Neighborhood Union Health Center located at 186 Sunset Avenue NW. The King Family Home is zoned for R-1 Single Family Dwelling according to a 2020 Fulton County Land Use Map.⁴²⁰ The NPS currently preserves the house and site.

Features:

- Residential use
- Heritage preservation

Cultural Traditions

The King Family Home landscape is a product of past and present cultural traditions. Cultural traditions reflect particular values and philosophies of a group of people that are then passed along to subsequent generations. The house and site hold deep cultural significance for their connection with Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King, Jr. The site also reflects the tradition of African American cultural leaders constructing and living in single-family residences in Vine City. The neighborhood remains largely African American as it has been since the 1930s. A cultural hallmark of this community is value for education and entrepreneurship. This is illustrated in the professions of its most noted members and also in the surrounding sites at the Atlanta University Center and the West Hunter Street corridor, a self-contained Black culture and business hub. This block of Sunset Avenue contains many of the single-family houses that occupied the block when Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King selected this street as the residence where they would raise their children. The house falls within and is a contributing feature to the locally-designated Sunset Avenue Historic District.

420. "Fulton County Land Use Map Viewer," n.d., <https://gis.fultoncountyga.gov/apps/FutureLandUseMapView/>.

Historic preservation and government-sanctioned commemoration of American history is another cultural tradition, which is and will become more evident as the NPS provides visitation opportunities to the site for tourists. Tourism will likely result in the addition of associated features for accessibility and interpretation.

Features:

- Neighborhood traditions including Black education and entrepreneurship
- Community activism traditions
- African American home ownership
- Historic preservation traditions
- Commemorative traditions

Cluster Arrangement

The existing residence is oriented east-west with a seventy-five foot setback from Sunset Avenue. The building is closer to the north and south property lines (nine and sixteen feet from the property line at the closest points). Roughly thirty-five feet separates the house from the rear fence line, which skirts the east side of an unnamed alley. The building sits parallel to Sunset Avenue, and it is oriented with its façade facing east like the other residences located north of the site. The apartment building located south of the site is oriented with its façade facing Dunkirk Street, which is located north of that building. There are several clustered features in the rear yard including the play set, a metal sided utility shed, and a large water oak tree. Vegetation at the site tends to be clustered along the property lines and the building foundation. There is one cluster of vegetation in the planting bed located near the northeast property corner.

Features:

- Relationship of the cultural landscape to Sunset Avenue
- Relationship of the cultural landscape to the south, north, and west property lines
- Relationship of the cultural landscape to other residential buildings in the neighborhood
- Cluster of small-scale features and vegetation in the rear yard
- Clusters of vegetation along the property lines
- Cluster of vegetation in the northeast corner planting bed



Figure 3.12. View of the asphalt driveway on the northeast section of the property, facing west. The driveway is lined by the stone retaining wall on the south and a concrete curb on the north. The apron leading from Sunset Avenue is concrete. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)

Circulation

The circulation features at the site facilitate vehicular and pedestrian access within the site and to adjacent properties.

Vehicular

One vehicular circulation feature, an asphalt driveway, exists within the property boundary. The site is bounded on three sides by vehicular circulation features, with Sunset Avenue to the east, a street sometimes referred to in mapping as Dunkirk Street to the south, and an unnamed alley to the west of the site.

Driveway

Vehicles enter the asphalt driveway from a curb cut on Sunset Avenue. The driveway can accommodate three to four vehicles at once when double-parked. The driveway is the primary access point for vehicular or pedestrian activity on the site, and it is located in the northeast portion of the site (Figure 3.12 and Figure 3.13). The irregularly shaped paved area spans approximately thirty feet north to south at its widest point. The southern edge of the paved area is straight and parallels a stone retaining wall. The northern edge is partially curved and has a landscape bed along its edge. The driveway extends sixty-eight feet west toward the two-car attached garage. A drive continues another thirty-five feet



Figure 3.13. View of the driveway as it continues to the north side of the residence, facing west. Utility lines cross the driveway and enter the residence from the front gable (left). (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)

along the north elevation of the house before ending near the side entry into the north side of the house. The northern section of the driveway past the northeast corner of the house is eight feet wide. The driveway on the east side of the house is bounded by the retaining wall to the south and a metal pike fence to the north. A concrete curb edge is the boundary between the northeast portion of the driveway and a planting bed. A section of the asphalt pavement on the north side of the house is fenced. It is bounded on the west by a section of wood privacy fence, on the north by the metal pike fence, and on the east by chain-link gate. The asphalt driveway shows signs of deterioration including cracking. In addition, the asphalt surface has negative drainage, which directs water toward the garage doors and basement entry area. There are no drains built into the driveway. There is a small area of raised asphalt near the northeast corner of the house, presumably installed to direct drainage away from this corner of the building.



Figure 3.14. View of the concrete curb along edge of driveway, facing northeast. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)

Concrete Curb

A raised, painted curved concrete curb encloses the landscape bed on the northeast corner of the site. It meets a stone wall at the entrance of the driveway (Figure 3.14). This feature is approximately thirty-six linear feet long, eight and one-half inches wide, and five inches high. The curb begins at the northern property line and terminates at the northern portion of the stone retaining wall paralleling Sunset Avenue, north of the driveway. The concrete is painted red, with peeling and chipping paint.

Features Adjacent to the Property

Dunkirk Street

Dunkirk Street runs along the southern property line (Figure 3.15). The label “Dunkirk Street” does not appear on current city maps, but it was the historic name of this access road. The road is paved with asphalt and has no curb. The approximate width of the street is eighteen feet with the asphalt flaring to forty feet wide where the street meets an alley on the west side of the parcel. There is a

concrete apron where Dunkirk Street meets Sunset Avenue.

Alley

There is an alley located along the western property border of the King Family Home (Figure 3.15). The alley is paved with gravel and provides access behind addresses 216 to 266 Sunset Avenue and 209 to 267 Griffin Street. The alley is eight to nine feet wide.

Pedestrian

Formal pedestrian circulation features at the King Family Home include a set of concrete stairs and a sidewalk leading to the front entry, a single concrete step, a concrete patio, and a concrete sidewalk located in the public right-of-way.

Concrete Step

A single concrete step connects the asphalt driveway to the basement-level entry door located underneath the front entry stair (Figure 3.16). Contractors constructed this step by removing a portion of the adjacent retaining wall and turning



Figure 3.15. View of Dunkirk Street, located south of the property, and the alley, located west of the property, facing northeast. (Source: HABS_GA-199-7, 2020.)

it back toward the house. The step is coated in chipping grey paint. The chipping paint provides evidence that the step was previously painted black. This feature dates to the 1968 renovation of the basement.

Concrete Steps and Walkway

A curved concrete walkway and set of steps connect the asphalt driveway to the primary entrance of the residence (Figure 3.17 and Figure 3.18). The steps intersect the stone retaining wall on the south side of the driveway. Three risers transition pedestrians from the driveway level to the top of the retaining wall. From there, the concrete walkway curves west and continues to the stair leading to the front entrance of the house. The curved portion of the walk is bounded by a mortared brick edge, which is painted grey.

Concrete Patio

A poured concrete slab patio is located on the north side of the residence (Figure 3.19). The patio abuts the building, meeting the staircase on the north side of the residence. The slab measures 41 feet long by 21 feet wide, totaling 861 square feet. The slab is in fair condition with visible cracks and vegetative growth, including moss.



Figure 3.16. Concrete step leading to basement entry door, facing south. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.17. Three concrete risers with decorative metal handrails connect to a concrete walkway, facing south. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020).



Figure 3.18. View of the curved concrete walkway from the front landing. The walkway is separated from the front turf grass area by a mortared brick edging (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020).

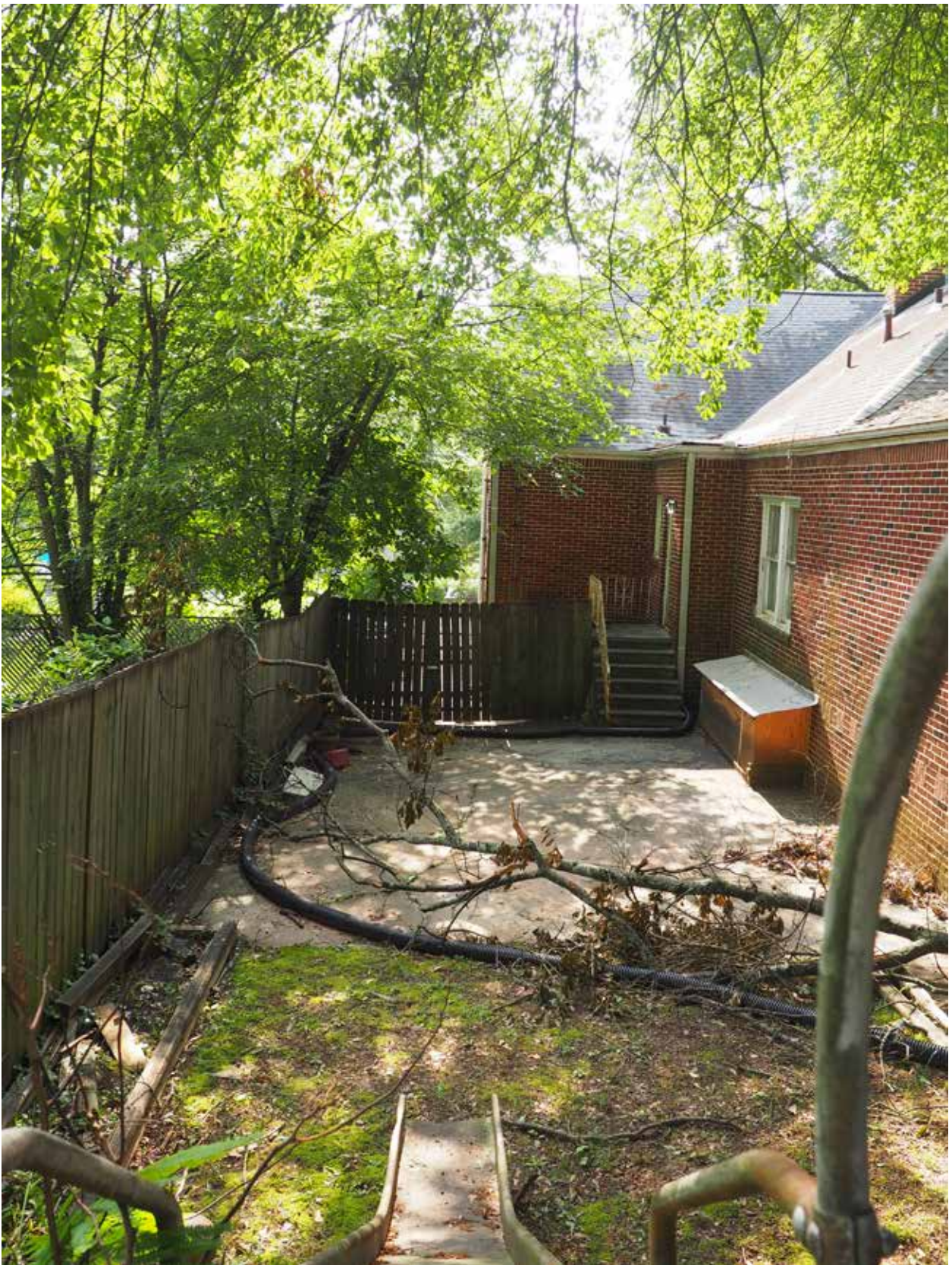


Figure 3.19. View of concrete patio from playground equipment in rear yard, facing east. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020).



Figure 3.20. View facing north along Sunset Avenue at the intersection with Dunkirk Street. The property is located on the left side of the photo. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)

Concrete Sidewalk

The city-owned sidewalk is located outside the property boundaries. It crosses the eastern edge of the property parallel to Sunset Avenue. The concrete sidewalk is six feet wide. The sidewalk provides pedestrian access to the site via the driveway (Figure 3.20) The sidewalk is in fair condition, with some areas of erosion and undermining and some cracking. Where the asphalt driveway meets the sidewalk, there is a concrete apron transitioning grade to the street from curb level. There is a landscape strip between the sidewalk and Sunset Avenue. A six-inch concrete curb with a twelve-inch gutter separates the landscape strip from Sunset Avenue, which is paved with asphalt.

Features:

- Driveway with asphalt surface
- Asphalt surface of driveway
- Asphalt area/walkway leading to back yard
- Concrete patio
- Concrete sidewalk along Sunset Avenue (outside property boundary)
- Concrete curb around northeast planting bed
- Dunkirk Street
- Alley
- Concrete step to basement entry
- Concrete steps and walkway to front entry stair
- Concrete apron at Sunset Avenue (outside property boundary)
- Concrete curb along Sunset Avenue (outside property boundary)
- Landscape strip along Sunset Avenue (outside property boundary)

Topography

There is significant topographic variation at the King Family Home site. The entirety of the site slopes to the northeast at approximately 7.7 percent, following the natural grade. The natural grade has been modified by the excavation for the foundation of the residential building and for the asphalt driveway (Figure 3.21). The house is located at an elevation of approximately 990 feet above sea level. There is a two- to three-foot change in topography from the south side of the front yard to the asphalt driveway on the northern side of the property. Retaining walls maintain grades along the driveway to provide access to the garage. Closest to the street, there is a fifteen-inch grade change from the top of the retaining wall to the asphalt driveway. The retaining wall gradually increases to a height of forty-nine inches as it nears the residence (Figure 3.22). Retaining walls also hold the grade at the eastern boundary of the site, with thirteen to fifteen inches of grade change

between the eastern property boundary and the sidewalk right-of-way (Figure 3.23).

Features:

- Sloping site from west to east
- Retaining walls
- Grade of circulation features



Figure 3.21. View facing southwest showing how the natural grade has been excavated to accommodate the asphalt driveway and residence. Concrete staircase and walkway connect the driveway to the main entry of the King Family Home. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.22. View facing southeast of the stone retaining wall, which holds the grade between front turf grass area and driveway. The wall terminates into the grade on either side of the staircase. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.23. View facing north of the stone retaining wall, which holds the grade between front turf grass area and sidewalk. The stone wall turns ninety degrees at the eastern edge of the driveway. The wall is present on both the north and south sides of the driveway. The concrete sidewalk is six feet wide in most areas. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)

Vegetation

The King Family Home site is mostly devoid of natural vegetation. There is weedy vegetation within the front yard area and some oak seedlings in the rear yard. These seedlings are likely the progeny of the large water oak (*Quercus nigra*) in the rear yard.

The King Family Home site includes informal and formal plantings. Existing vegetation features include areas of turf grass in several locations of the site, several mature trees, and multiple landscape beds with mixed landscape plantings.

The turf grass areas, comprised of grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), clover (*Trifolium repens*), and moss (*Bryopsida* spp.) groundcover, exist between landscape beds in both the front and back yards (Figure 3.24). The turf grass area in the front yard is fairly healthy with some bare areas in heavy shade near southern property line. The turf grass area in the rear yard is less vigorous, with swaths of weedy vegetation and bare areas in zones with heavy shade.

Trees on the property include several large canopy trees lining the southern edge of the front yard and one large tree in the central area of the back yard. The trees on site include water oaks (*Quercus nigra*), a hybridized red oak (*Quercus spp.*), cherry laurel (*Prunus caroliniana*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*), and Canadian hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) (Figure 3.25). The trees in the right-of-way along Sunset Avenue are in poor condition (Figure 3.26). Power company crews have pruned them to accommodate overhead utilities, resulting in massive deformation of the tree crowns. The trees on the southern property border are in fair condition. Impacts include the adjacent pavement, located within these trees' dripline and poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) and English ivy (*Hedera helix*) growing on two of the trees (Figure 3.27). The Canadian hemlock in the front yard and the Japanese maple in the front planting bed are in good condition. Arborists assessed the water oak in the rear yard in March 2019 (see Appendix C). According to this tree assessment, this oak creates site issues including surface roots that are pushing up the concrete apron located at the



Figure 3.24. Turf grass is planted between landscape beds in the front yard. The front turf grass area includes patches of moss and bare areas. Photo facing southwest. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)



Figure 3.25. The Canadian hemlock is centrally located in the front yard (foreground). View is from the front steps of the house, facing southeast. Mature trees line the southern perimeter and Sunset Avenue. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)



Figure 3.26. Water oaks in front of the property, located in the right-of-way on Sunset Ave. View is from Dunkirk Street, facing northeast. The trees have been aggressively pruned to accommodate overhead power lines and are in very poor health. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.27. View of trees along southern property boundary with poison ivy and English ivy growing on two of the trees (indicated), facing west. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)



Figure 3.28. Pyracantha (foreground) and wax leaf privet (background, against fence) on the southern fence line of the property. View is from Dunkirk Street, facing north. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.29. Foundation plantings along façade. View is facing north from southeast corner of the house. Visible are sasanqua camellia, cherry laurel, and Japanese ternstroemia. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.30. Foundation plantings by the front entry stairs. Visible are a mass that includes Japanese privet, Chinese privet, cherry laurel, and another unidentifiable weedy seedling. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)

rear of the house. The assessment states that the tree is at a moderate risk of failure of the roots. Condition issues include cavities in the sinuses at the root flare and at the attachment points of the co-dominant stems of the trunk. The house is the primary resource at risk if the tree fell.

The landscape beds contain mostly woody perennial shrubs. Shrubs along the southern property line include wax leaf privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*), scarlet firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*), Chinese holly (*Ilex cornuta*), Japanese ternstroemia (*Ternstroemia gymnanthera*), and cherry laurel (Figure 3.28). The Chinese holly (*Ilex cornuta*) at the southeast corner of the site may be a variety such as 'Carissa', which has reverted to 'Rotunda'. The east (front) foundation includes a variety of evergreen shrubs including a Sasanqua camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*), cherry laurel, convex Japanese holly (*Ilex crenata* 'Convexa'), and a mass that includes Japanese privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*), Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), and another unidentifiable weedy seedling (Figure 3.29 and Figure 3.30). The area north of the entry stair includes convex Japanese holly and an azalea (Kurume hybrid) (*Rhododendron ponticum*) (Figure 3.31 and Figure 3.33). The rear yard includes a clump of liriopé along the north property boundary and three Japanese andromeda along the west property boundary (*Pieris japonica*) (Figure 3.32).

Herbaceous species at the site include liriopé (*Liriope muscari*), which lines many of the planting beds in the front yard along the south property line (Figure 3.34). There is a line of liriopé along the north property line in the rear yard. Another line of liriopé extends north into the front yard, forming a ring near the front retaining wall. There are individual liriopé planted around the base of the light pole in the front yard as well as the foliage of some unidentified bulbs, likely tulip (*Tulipa* cvs.) (Figure 3.35). There are hostas (*Hosta* sp.) planted near the front entry walkway and around the base of the light pole near the front sidewalk (Figure 3.36).

The most formal planting at the site is in the landscape bed on the northeastern corner of the property (Figure 3.37). This bed includes a Japanese maple, roses (*Rosa* cvs., likely a 'Knock Out' variety), and azaleas (Satsuki and

Kurume hybrid) (*Rhododendron eriocarpum* and *Rhododendron ponticum*). Beyond this planting bed and some plantings in the rear yard, there is little vegetation along the north property line. There is a black cherry and a wax leaf privet just outside the property boundary near the wood gate to the back yard.

Features:

- Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*)
- Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
- Water oaks (*Quercus nigra*)
- Oak (naturally hybridized red oak) (*Quercus* spp.)
- Canadian hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*)
- Sasanqua camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*)
- Chinese holly (*Ilex cornuta* 'Carissa' or 'Rotunda')
- Convex Japanese holly (*Ilex crenata* 'Convexa')
- Japanese privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*)
- Wax leaf privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*)
- Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*)
- Cherry laurel (*Prunus caroliniana*)
- Scarlet firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*)
- Japanese andromeda (*Pieris japonica*)
- Azalea (Satsuki hybrid) (*Rhododendron eriocarpum*)
- Azalea (Kurume hybrid) (*Rhododendron ponticum*)
- Rose (*Rosa* cvs.)
- Japanese ternstroemia (*Ternstroemia gymnanthera*)
- Liriopé (*Liriope muscari*)
- Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*)



Figure 3.31. Convex Japanese holly by the front entry stair. View is facing south from the driveway, front stair behind shrub. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.32. Japanese andromeda located in the rear yard along western property line. View facing northwest. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.33. Azalea (Kurume hybrid) by the front entry stair. View is from driveway, facing southeast. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.34. View facing east of liriope, which lines the landscape beds in many areas of the front yard (center). Evergreen shrubs occupy the bed space (right). A concrete swale directs water through the landscape bed. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.35. Unidentified annual bulb (possibly tulip), liriope, and hosta, planted near the light in the front yard. View facing southwest. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.36. Hosta located near the front walkway. View facing southeast. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.37. Landscape bed on the northeast corner of the site. Visible are a Japanese ternstroemia hedge (left), roses (front center), azaleas (var. hybrid) (middle right), and Japanese maple (rear). View from driveway, facing east. (Source: WLA Studio, 2020.)



Figure 3.38. Longitudinal perspective section cut through house from front to rear, showing complex roof structure construction and general organization of linear interior spaces along a central corridor on the first floor and a room-to-room pattern in the basement areas. Section facing south. (Source: HABS October 2019.)

Buildings and Structures

The main residence is the only building at the King Family Home site. Structures include the stone retaining walls, a concrete block retaining wall, a structure constructed to close off a window well, and a metal sided utility shed. Various utilities are also located on site.

Buildings

The King Family Home, initially constructed around 1933, had major modifications completed in 1965 and again in 1968 under the direction Atlanta architect Joseph W. Robinson, Sr., AIA. The building has been documented in a 2021 historic structure report and by a Historic American Building Survey (HABS) report (GA-199). The first renovation project extensively altered the outside appearance of the house. Following the Kings' acquisition of the house and their subsequent renovations, the house appears to retain many of its mid-to-late 1960s character defining features. The building is one story built on a raised basement. The main block of the house is a series of cross gables with an asphalt shingled roof. A shed roof covers an addition to the south and several hipped roofs cover extensions to the rear of the house. The building has a brick foundation, brick-veneer and wood-clad façades, and wood-sided gables. The approximately 3,600-square-foot house is built into a hillside, exposing the basement level on the east and north sides (Figure 3.38). Two

garage doors are located at the front (east) of the basement. An interior brick chimney is located at the center of the house. The 2021 historic structure report includes a full description of the interior evolution, layout, and condition of the house.

Façade (East Elevation)

The façade is asymmetrical, three rooms and fifty-five feet wide and one story on a raised basement with a prominent front facing wood clapboard gable (Figure 3.39). The south bay contains a large triple sash picture window. The protruding south central bay contains a single window and wood recessed panel door with an exterior metal grill storm door and sidelight. A metal awning shelters the front entry. A group of three double-hung windows are in the north central bay. A single window is in the north bay. Louvered shutters flank the windows. Two paneled garage doors are located at the basement level. A triangular attic vent is located at the top of the horizontal clapboard front gable.

Front Porch

Contractors constructed the front porch during the 1965 renovation (Figure 3.40). The porch consists of a concrete pad set on brick walls that extend out from the house. The brick pattern matches that of the primary building. There is a vertical crack at the juncture of the front porch and the house. Nine concrete treads that have been painted grey span between brick stringer walls. White painted



Figure 3.39. Façade of the house, facing west. (Source: HABS_GA-199-2, 2020.)



Figure 3.40. View facing southwest of the nine concrete risers with decorative metal railing that lead to a concrete landing at the main entrance of the residence. (Source: HABS_GA-199-3.)



Figure 3.41. North and west elevations, facing southeast from rear yard. (Source HABS 199-8, October 2019.)



Figure 3.42. View facing east of the brick and concrete staircase located on the north side entrance of the residence. Five concrete risers with a decorative metal handrail lead to a landing. (Source: WLA Studio, October 2020.)



Figure 3.43. Oblique view facing northeast of the southwest corner of the residence. (Source: WLA Studio, January 2021.)



Figure 3.44. View facing northeast of the south elevation showing cross-gable roof of main house rising above the south elevation one-story low slope extension. (Source: WLA Studio, January 2021.)

wrought iron handrails and balustrades run along the stairs. The railings are constructed in panels supported on one-inch square tubular posts. The rails have vertical pickets. In the center of each panel, there is a decorative combined “S”-shaped motif, which is supported by two pickets. Decorative wrought iron balustrades continue around the concrete platform on the porch.

North Elevation

The north elevation is asymmetrical (Figure 3.41). The basement level is exposed on this elevation on the east side. Most of this elevation is composed of the thirty-three-foot-wide east bay. The east bay consists of two double windows at the first level and one opening at the basement (garage) level. The central bay is recessed nine feet, seven inches from the east bay, and it contains a side porch raised on a brick foundation. The central bay contains one window and a door at the first level. The west bay of the north elevation is recessed from the central bay. This bay contains one double window at the east side. Toward the rear of the building, the grade raises and conceals the basement level. At the west bay, two windows are located at basement level with a light well. A moderate hipped roof covers the central and west bays of the north elevation.

Side Porch

The porch located on the north elevation has a five-tread stair that is a straight run from the concrete pad in the back of the house to the kitchen door / utility room entrance on the north side of the house (Figure 3.42). The porch railing is “L” shaped as it follows the outer edges of the porch deck. It is attached to the porch deck on either side of the stair. The rails, pickets, and decorative motifs match the railings on the front porch.

West (Rear) Elevation

The west elevation is three rooms wide (Figure 3.43). The family room addition and side entry porch are recessed on the north side. The main portion of the rear elevation is forty-six feet, ten inches wide and contains four bays with two double windows on the north side and two single windows on the south side. All windows contain decorative metal grilles. A moderately-sloped hipped roof covers the north side while a low-pitched shed roof covers the south side. Vents are located along the top of the basement level.

South Elevation

The south elevation is asymmetrical (Figure 3.44). Stairs with brick foundation lead up to the front entry on the east side. A brick gable dominates the eastern front section of this elevation. A larger wood-sided gable is recessed. This elevation reveals the remnants of the curved beam/ swept roof detail from the early 1930s construction. The gabled section contains one double window and one single window. The center section is wood sided framed construction over concrete block foundation. It contains two large picture windows. This section is believed to have been constructed as an enclosed porch, later converted to a solarium. It was later renovated into a playroom for the King family and then into an extension of the boys’ and girls’ bedrooms. The west section of the south elevation is brick with one single window covered by a decorative metal grille. A low shed roof covers the west and central sections of this elevation. A single masonry chimney is located at the ridge of the hipped roof in the center of the house.

Interior Organization

After the King family acquired the property, contractors significantly altered the residence’s appearance. The renovation plans reconfigured the spaces to accommodate the family of six. The current interior configuration is a result of the 1965 and 1968 renovations completed by the King family as designed by Joseph W. Robinson, Sr., AIA.⁴²¹ The main block of the 1933 house is located at the core of the current building. During the renovation, builders incorporated several additions to expand the footprint of the residence to the east, north, and west elevations. A small family room addition is located adjacent to the dining room and kitchen to the north. On the south side, a former solarium has been enclosed to create bedrooms for the King children. Builders added a large main bedroom and bathroom suite in the rear with private studies for Dr. and Mrs. King.

Interior renovations and construction in previously unexcavated areas of the house’s foundation significantly altered the basement during both the 1965 and the 1968 renovation campaigns. The original foundation walls of the 1933 house (there may have been a crawl space under the house, or a very small cellar) were either demolished

421. These renovations are referred to as the “1965 renovation” and the “1968 renovation” in this report.

or underpinned. Contractors created additional interior space by constructing an enlarged basement area that included office space, a recreation room, a kitchen, a full bath, and multiple storage closets for the offices of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center (later the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change.)

Basement Floor (Lower Level)

The main entry into the basement (office) level is located off the driveway, south of the garage. There is a small reception area, which transitions into a general office and leads to Coretta Scott King's private office. There is a small stair hall at the center of the basement following the offices. Stairs lead up to the first floor to the utility room and north side entry. This hall also leads to both the furnace room to the north and to a large two-bay garage toward the front of the house. A storage room is located west of the garage. A central hall leads to a large recreation room at the rear of the house. This room contains cushioned benches and large glass cabinets built into the wall. A bathroom, mail room, and storage closet are located along the south wall. There is a small kitchen, pantry, and several storage and cedar closets located west of the recreation room. One of the closets is fireproof with CMU walls, a fire rated door assembly, and a four-inch-thick concrete slab ceiling.

First Floor

The first floor is accessed by the front entry vestibule. A half bathroom and coat closet are adjacent to the main entry. The entry leads into an open living room to the south and dining room to the north. The dining room has doors opening to both the family room and kitchen. The utility room, which contains the laundry and stair leading to the basement level, is located west of the kitchen. A side entry door is located on the north side of the utility room.

A central corridor from the living room and dining room divides the house into two sides. The corridor leads to the girls' bedroom (south side of the house), which contains built-in closets, cabinets, shelves, and desks. The room features an accordion-style wood partition that partly encloses the open space. Adjacent to the girls' bedroom to the west is a small hall and a bathroom. The hall connects to the boys' bedroom. The boys' bedroom is located west of the girls' bedroom and has similar features. Further down the corridor on

the north side of the house is an extra bedroom. A bathroom is located east of the extra bedroom. The corridor connects to the rear (west side) of the house, where there is a bedroom suite with a private study, a walk-in closet, and a full bathroom. Mrs. King's private study located in the main bedroom contains floor to ceiling shelving on the north and east sides. The walk-in closet is a later addition. Dr. King's study is located at the northwest terminus of the corridor.

Structures

Stone Retaining Wall

A varying-height stone retaining wall separates the asphalt driveway and concrete sidewalk from the northeast section of the front yard (Figure 3.45 and Figure 3.46). The wall ranges in width, approximately twelve to sixteen inches wide, and it is ninety-seven linear feet long. The wall begins at the southwest corner of the driveway at the house and continues east, turns back to the south at the concrete front entry staircase, then resumes east of the stairs to the driveway entrance, turning south and continuing to the southeastern corner of the property, before terminating five feet north of the fence line (Figure 3.47). Another section of wall follows the sidewalk on the northeastern corner of the property. The wall has been painted red, obscuring the stone material. The wall has a thin skim layer of concrete on the top surface. The wall is a mortared mosaic-style stone veneer with raised mortar joints. It was constructed as part of the 1965 renovations to the main structure. Builders removed a portion of the wall in 1968 to install a concrete step, which leads to a lower-level entrance beneath the front entry stairs. Masons installed the portion of the wall paralleling Sunset Avenue sometime after April 1968, likely in conjunction with sidewalk construction in December of that year.

Concrete Block Retaining Wall

A short concrete block wall retains ten to twenty-four inches of grade between Dunkirk Street and the concrete apron surrounding the house foundation. Portions of this wall are failing. In some areas, the chain link fence is preventing the wall from falling over (Figure 3.48).

Window Well Enclosure

There is a small plywood enclosure covering a garden level window well projecting from the north side of the house. The NPS installed the structure

in 2019 to prevent water from entering the windows in the basement. The enclosure obscures the decorative metal railing of the window well, which matches the adjacent concrete stairs (Figure 3.49 and Figure 3.50).

Metal Sided Utility Shed

A small metal sided utility shed structure is located on the western edge of the back yard, abutting the chain-link fence (Figure 3.51). The structure is approximately seven feet long by ten feet wide and sixty-five inches tall. The shed is sheathed in red-painted sheet metal, with a rounded roof. The structure was produced by the Sears Roebuck & Co., Model No.696-60097. The structure appears to be in poor condition. It approximately dates to the early 1970s.

Utilities

There are several utilities at the site. An above-head utility line provides power to the building and enters the site from a utility pole in the right-of-way northeast of the site. It connects to the east and north sides of the residential building (Figure 3.52). There is a second utility pole on the south side of the residence with no lines connecting to the building. Sunset Avenue has a high voltage transmission line running along the west side of the street in the right-of-way. There is a pole servicing this line just south of the intersection of Dunkirk Street with Sunset Avenue. The gas line is located below grade, and there is a gas meter near the southeast corner of the site. The Atlanta Department of Watershed Management provides domestic water and sanitary sewer service to the building. The domestic water line runs through the northern part of the front yard, just south of the retaining wall lining the driveway. The sanitary sewer line was not located, and no above ground exterior cleanout was identified at the site.

HVAC equipment exists on the north side of the site, just inside the chain link gate near the terminus of the driveway. A gas-powered forced air heating system supplies heat to the house. Air conditioning is electric powered. The unit is housed inside a locked cage structure (Figure 3.53). There is a non-functioning HVAC unit located near the west elevation of the house (Figure 3.54).

Features:

- House
- Stone retaining wall
- Concrete block retaining wall
- Window well enclosure
- Metal sided utility shed
- Utilities
 - Above ground power service to house
 - Overhead high voltage transmission line in right-of-way
 - Gas meter



Figure 3.45. Western portion of the stone retaining wall, which lines the south side of the driveway. View facing south. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)



Figure 3.46. View of retaining wall, facing southeast toward Sunset Avenue. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)



Figure 3.47. View of retaining wall lining the sidewalk on Sunset Avenue, facing north. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)



Figure 3.48. Concrete apron/swale on the south side of the house, facing west. Concrete block wall is located south of the swale. Portions of the wall are failing and are being held up by the chain link fence. (Source: WLA Studio June 2020.)



Figure 3.49. A small roofed projection prevents water from entering the garden level window well on the north elevation of the residence. The window well is surrounded by decorative bars that provide security. View facing south. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)



Figure 3.50. Window was enclosed with plywood and flashing between June and October 2019 to reduce the amount of water ingress to the basement and the window well area. View facing east. (Source: HPTC October 2019.)



Figure 3.51. Metal sided shed in rear yard. View facing west. (Source: WLA Studio June 2020.)



Figure 3.52. View facing northeast of the power pole and overhead residential electrical service in the northeast corner of the site. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.53. HVAC Unit located inside cage structure on north elevation. (Source: WLA Studio June 2020.)



Figure 3.54. Nonfunctioning HVAC unit located in rear yard, facing south. (Source WLA Studio June 2020.)



Figure 3.55. View toward the King Family Home from Sunset Avenue, facing west. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.56. View toward the King Family Home from the sidewalk, facing west. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 3.57. View toward Sunset Avenue from the front steps of the King Family Home, facing east. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

Views and Vistas

Given its small size, the proximity of nearby buildings, and dense foliage cover, the views pertaining to the King Family Home are limited. The farthest outward views are gained from the street on Sunset Ave looking to the north and south. From across Sunset Avenue, trees located in the landscape strip obscure the view of the house (Figure 3.55). From the sidewalk facing west, vegetation does not obstruct the view (Figure 3.56). The properties across the street and adjacent houses are best viewed from the top of the entry stair (Figure 3.57). The view toward the rear yard is obscured from the unnamed alley by the wood privacy fence, and the southwest corner of the property from the alley is obscured by the chain link fence (Figure 3.58).



Figure 3.58. View facing northeast toward the back of the house from Dunkirk Street is obscured by fencing. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

Features:

- View to the King Family Home from east side of Sunset Avenue
- View to the King Family Home from the sidewalk on the west side of Sunset Avenue
- View from the front entry stair
- View toward the rear yard

Small-Scale Features

Several small-scale features and numerous non-fixed items are present on the site.

Fences

Anodized Aluminum Pike Fence

A decorative anodized aluminum pike fence marks the property boundary on the north and south sides of the front yard, east of the residence (Figure 3.59 and Figure 3.60). Both sections have five-foot-tall fence panels, which are black. The fence totals 188 linear feet. The fences terminate at the sidewalk on Sunset Avenue. The fence is stable, but there are sections that are no longer plumb. The fence is missing decorative scroll work in several locations, and the finish has patinaed to a dull finish. Vegetation has overgrown the fence in some locations.



Figure 3.59. Decorative detail of the anodized aluminum pike fence lining the north and south sides of the front yard, facing north. (Source: WLA Studio, 2020.)



Figure 3.60. Anodized aluminum pike fence on the south side of the front yard, facing north. (Source: WLA Studio, 2020.)



Figure 3.61. Wood privacy fence in the back yard has been modified, likely for privacy or security, on the western boundary of the property, facing west. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)

Wood Privacy Fence

A wood privacy fence encloses a portion of the property on the northwest corner of the site and a concrete patio area on the north side of the residence (Figure 3.61). The four sections of fence total approximately 141 linear feet. The fence style is a common pressure treated pine dog-ear panel. This style is composed of six-inch-wide pine pickets tightly abutted with a blunt chamfered top, sold commercially in preassembled six-foot-wide panels. The fence is in disrepair with extreme weathering and damage, and it has evidence of previous modifications. There are missing and broken vertical boards, and the panels are no longer plumb. The hinged section at the terminus of the driveway is no longer functional. In most areas the fence panels are six feet high. Someone modified the fence height on the western edge of the property by layering sections of fence panels for a total height of eighty-six inches. This change was likely done to increase security or privacy in the rear yard.

Chain Link Fence

A chain link fence encloses the property on the south and west sides (Figure 3.62 and Figure 3.63). There are two gates, one near the southwest corner of the property that opens from the back yard to Dunkirk Street, which is secured with a chain and lock, and another on the north side of the residence that opens to a small enclosed area between the front and back yards. The chain link overlaps with the wooden fence on a portion of the western boundary of the property. The seventy-inch-tall chain link fence is approximately 176 linear feet, including the length of the two chain-link gates. Barbed wire installed on the top of the fence increases the fence height to approximately eighty-two inches. The barbed wire is in disrepair and missing in areas. The fence is generally plumb and solid. Most of the panels along the southern property line have a corroded finish. The barbed wire stingers at the top of the fence in the rear yard are deteriorated, and vegetation has overgrown the fence in certain areas.



Figure 3.62. Chain link fence along south side of the property, facing east. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.63. View of the chain link fence near the southwest property corner, facing northeast. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 3.64. Metal play set in the back yard originally held two swings and a seesaw, now missing. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)

Metal Play Set

A steel play set is located on the northwest corner of the property, in the back yard behind the residential structure (Figure 3.64). The set is approximately seven feet, nine inches high and over twelve feet wide. The play set originally had two swings and a slide with a ladder, as well as a separate seesaw. The ladder and slide are intact. The ladder has nine steps leading to a top landing. The steps are spaced fourteen and a half inches apart with handrails on two sides. The brand “AMERICAN” is cast in the step tread with a slip-resistant surface etch treatment. The slide, oriented to the east, has visible rust. There is hardware remaining for two swings that are no longer present. The structure is supported by three steel posts and is missing a fourth support post. The steel fulcrum adjacent to the slide set is all that remains of the seesaw. The fulcrum is just over two feet high and seventeen and a half inches wide. This play set, produced by the American Playground company, dates to the mid-1960s, as confirmed by the manufacturer.

Wood Landscape Edging

Landscape timbers create planting beds in the northwest corner of the site. Though varied in width, the approximately twenty-nine-inch-wide by eight-inch-high raised-bed style planting beds are approximately thirty-six linear feet in length. The planter is enclosed by stacked, commercially produced pressure-treated pine landscape timbers. The landscape timbers are eight feet long with rounded sides (Figure 3.65). Much of the planter is in disrepair, and the few remaining plants include liriopie and Japanese andromeda.

Concrete Apron

According to Bernice King and Pat Latimore, Hal Horton installed a concrete apron around the entire house in the 1980s to direct water away from the foundation of the residence (Figure 3.66 - Figure 3.69). There are cracks in the concrete and some areas are undermined and eroded, allowing water to infiltrate the foundation and basement. Because it is damaged, it is likely that the concrete on the south side of the house actually directs water toward the unwaterproofed foundation walls. The concrete apron is widest on the west side of the house, where it ranges in width from two feet, six inches to nearly seven feet wide.



Figure 3.65. Raised landscape beds constructed from landscape timbers in the back yard. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 3.66. Concrete apron on west side of the house (rear yard), facing south. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2019.)



Figure 3.67. View of the concrete apron on south side of the house, facing east. (Source: WLA Studio June 2019.)



Figure 3.68. View of the concrete apron on the east (front) side of the house, facing south. (Source: WLA Studio June 2019.)

Other Small-Scale Features

There are several fixed small-scale features on the site. A small lamp post with a glass globe is installed in the turf grass area on the south side of the driveway entrance (Figure 3.70). Landscape edging materials delineate landscape beds in several areas of the front yard, including pieces of brick and plastic edging (Figure 3.71). There is a group of stones or dislodged pieces of the stone retaining wall located at the southeast corner of the site where the stone retaining wall terminates at the anodized aluminum fence (Figure 3.72). The stones are located within a mass of Chinese holly. A white mailbox is installed on top of the stone retaining wall at the southwest corner of the driveway (Figure 3.73). The NPS installed a sump pump just outside the entry stair to the basement in 2019. The pump has rigid PVC piping attached to it, which outlets onto the driveway (Figure 3.73).



Figure 3.69. View of the concrete swale in the front yard, which now contains a temporary drainage pipe. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

There are several impermanent objects scattered across the site, some of which appear to have been discarded between the first site visit in June 2019 and the fieldwork in October 2019. Pieces of pipe and plastic tubing, broken concrete, household items, sporting equipment, a non-functional air conditioning unit, building materials including bricks, concrete blocks, wood and other objects are scattered across the site (Figure 3.66). There are two cast concrete planters at the front entry stair and a pot located near the front walkway edging (Figure 3.74 and Figure 3.75). There is a discrete sign for the home security system in the front yard (Figure 3.75). City waste receptacles are also stored on site on the north side of the house (Figure 3.76).

In the summer of 2019, the NPS installed flexible PVC black tubing at the ends of the downspouts around the house, routing water away from the foundation (Figure 3.77). The goal was to eliminate flooding in the basement and direct water toward Sunset Avenue. At the time of field inspection, every downspout on the house had a pipe attached to it.

Features:

- Anodized aluminum pike fence
- Wood privacy fence
- Chain link fence
- Metal play structure
- Wood landscape edging
- Concrete apron
- Mailbox
- Lamp post
- Stones at southeast corner of site
- Sump pump
- Plastic landscape edging
- Cast concrete planters
- PVC tubing attached to downspouts



Figure 3.70. Lamp post in the front yard is located west of the stone retaining wall. (Source: HABS GA-199-1.)



Figure 3.71. Plastic landscape edging in the front yard (indicated). (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 3.72. Group of stones at terminus of stone retaining wall near southeast property corner. These may be pieces of broken retaining wall. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 3.73. View of the sump pump and mailbox at the basement entry door. The sump pump alleviates moisture at the basement level of the house. (Source: HPTC, October 2019.)



Figure 3.74. Cast concrete planters placed on the stone retaining wall near the steps to the driveway. (Source: HABS GA-199-3.)



Figure 3.75. Pot and security sign located near the front steps. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

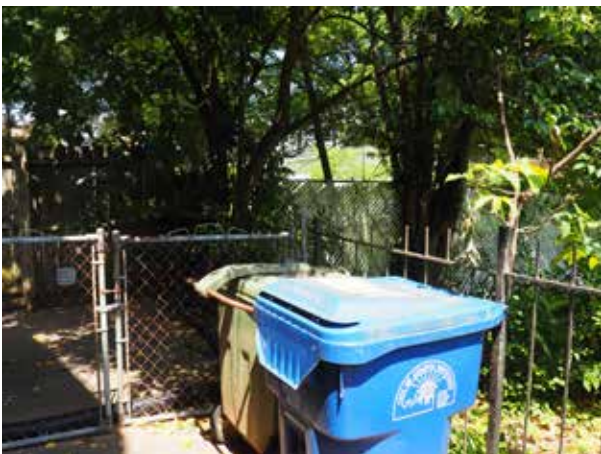


Figure 3.76. Trash and recycling receptacles, located on the north side of the property. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 3.77. Because concrete apron and swale no longer direct water away from the house foundation, the NPS has added drain pipes to direct water toward Sunset Avenue. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)

Page intentionally left blank



Plant Legend

Key	Botanical Name	Common Name
Trees		
AP	<i>Acer palmatum</i>	Japanese Maple
PS	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry
QN	<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water Oak
QH	<i>Quercus spp.</i>	Oak (naturally hybridized red oak)
TC	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>	Canadian Hemlock
Shrubs		
Cs	<i>Camellia sasanqua</i>	Sasanqua Camellia
Lco	<i>Ilex cornuta</i>	Chinese Holly
Lcr	<i>Ilex crenata 'Convexa'</i>	Convex Japanese Holly
Lj	<i>Ligustrum japonicum</i>	Japanese Privet
Ll	<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	Wax Leaf Privet
Ls	<i>Ligustrum sinense</i>	Chinese Privet
Pca	<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>	Cherry Laurel
Pco	<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>	Scarlet Firethorn
Pj	<i>Pieris japonica</i>	Japanese Andromeda
Ri	<i>Rhododendron eriocarpum</i>	Azalea (Satsuki hybrid)
Rp	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Azalea (Kurume hybrid)
Rcv	<i>Rosa cvs.</i>	Rose
Tg	<i>Ternstroemia gymnanthera</i>	Japanese Ternstroemia
Groundcover		
Hsp	<i>Hosta sp.</i>	Hosta
Lm	<i>Liriope muscari</i>	Liriope
Ts	<i>Tulipa cvs.</i>	Tulip
Turf grass*	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Bermuda grass

*Primary groundcover throughout turf areas

Credits:
 Laser scan data from HABS recordation, October 2019
 Atlanta Fulton County GIS Data, Accessed May 2020, <https://gis.fulton-countyga.gov/apps/topodownloadmapviewer/>
 Field investigation, Fall 2019-Spring 2020

Illustration 3.1
Existing Conditions
King Family Home
 Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
 October 2021



Analysis and Evaluation

Introduction

For cultural landscapes such as the property associated with the King Family Home, documenting existing conditions and analyzing and evaluating natural and human-made historic resources is critical in the development of a strategy for their management and treatment. Cultural landscape analysis involves two primary activities: evaluating historic significance and assessing historic integrity. Both use criteria determined by the National Register of Historic Places, which has developed nationally-recognized methods for evaluating the significance and integrity of historic buildings and landscapes. The evaluation of historic significance identifies the important historical associations of the property, as well as its architectural, archeological, and social value. The property's significance is tied to a discrete period of time (period of significance) in which its important contributions were made and the broader historic contexts (historic context themes) within which the activities that occurred on the property may be placed.⁴²² The analysis and evaluation section considers the site's history within recognized historic contexts to determine its contribution to the broad patterns of American history. It is important to note that historic resources, particularly cultural landscapes, change over time. As a result, a cultural landscape may have several areas of historic significance and multiple periods of significance. In order to determine whether a landscape feature contributes to the historic significance of the landscape at the King Family Home site, this chapter compares the existing conditions of landscape features to its understood historic condition during the period of significance. The objective of this analysis is to identify the specific features associated with the

422. As stated in the introduction to this report, a National Register nomination for this property has not been completed. This CLR document along with a concurrent historic structure report are the first treatment documents produced by the National Park Service for the King Family Home. Early correspondence from the State Historic Preservation Office indicates that the period of significance should be from 1964, when the King family purchased the property, to 2004, when Coretta Scott King stopped residing at the property.

period of significance and assess to what degree they continue to convey their historic significance.

To aid in this assessment, landscape features are categorized based on their contribution to the understanding of the historic character of the landscape during the period or periods of significance. These categories are:

- Contributing
- Noncontributing
- Missing
- Undetermined

Contributing landscape features survive from the period of significance and continue to reflect their historic appearance and function. Noncontributing landscape features include those added to the site since the period of significance or that no longer retain enough physical integrity to convey their historic appearance or function. Missing features existed during the period of significance but have been removed, destroyed, or cannot be recognized in their current condition. Undetermined include features whose age cannot be determined or whose contribution to the historic landscape is unknown. Please refer to the table at the end of this chapter for a summary of this information.

The process to identify landscape elements follows a National Park Service methodology that categorizes all landscape elements as one of thirteen landscape characteristics:

- Archeological Sites
- Buildings and Structures
- Circulation
- Arrangement of Buildings
- Constructed Water Features
- Cultural Traditions
- Land Use
- Natural Systems and Features
- Other
- Small-Scale Features
- Spatial Organization
- Cluster Arrangement
- Topography
- Vegetation
- Views and Vistas

Landscape characteristics are the “tangible and intangible aspects of an inventory unit which have either influenced the history of the development of the landscape, or are products of its development, respectively.” Further, “these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance.”⁴²³ Based on this understanding of the landscape, National Register of Historic Places methodology aids in establishing a site’s significance.

National Register Status

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 authorized the creation of the National Register of Historic Places as the official list of the nation’s historic places worthy of preservation. The National Park Service is responsible for maintaining the list and coordinating with public and private entities to identify, evaluate, and protect America’s historic and archeological resources. The National Park Service has developed criteria for evaluating historic resources to determine their eligibility for listing in the National Register. The National Register Criteria for Evaluation examine a property’s age, integrity, and significance.

To be considered historic, a property typically needs to be at least fifty years old, though exceptions can be made for certain properties. In terms of integrity, as *A Guide for Cultural Landscape Reports* explains, “historic integrity of a cultural landscape relates to the ability of the landscape to convey its significance. The National Register defines seven aspects of integrity that address the cohesiveness, setting, and character of a landscape, as well as the material, composition, and workmanship of associated features. Historic integrity is assessed to determine if the landscape characteristics and associated features, and the spatial qualities that shaped the landscape during the period of significance, are present in much the

same way as they were historically.”⁴²⁴ Accounting for change in a landscape—a natural occurrence—is integral to the evaluation process. As the *Guide* notes, “[i]t is important not only to consider changes to the individual [landscape] feature, but how such changes affect the landscape as a whole.”⁴²⁵

The property must also be associated with historic events, activities, or developments that were important in the past. The National Register identifies the type of significance of a property based on the following criteria:

- Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- Association with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- Yielding or potential to yield information in history or prehistory.

A site may be significant in any or all of these four criteria. Based on these criteria, a statement of significance can be drafted for a site.

The King Family Home is located in the Sunset Avenue Local Historic District, designated May 25, 2011. The site is not currently individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places. H.R. 267, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act, redesignated Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site a National Historical Park. As amended, Public Law 96-428 modified the boundaries of the park to include “Prince Hall Masonic Temple, where the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) had its headquarters on Auburn Avenue” and to include

423. Robert R. Page, *National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, January 2009), 7-4; 53.

424. Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, “A Guide To Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques” (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 1998), 71.

425. Page, Gilbert, and Dolan, “A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports,” 72.

the non-contiguous property “known as 234 Sunset Avenue, Northwest.”⁴²⁶

Statement of Significance⁴²⁷

The following is a draft Statement of Significance for the King Family Home:

The National Park Service has not yet documented the building through preparation of a National Register form.⁴²⁸ As stated previously, the national historical park completed a historic context study for this resource in 2018. That report established the associated historic themes for the property. The findings of this CLR concur with the documentation in the historic context study, which establishes the following:

The King Family Home is significant under Criteria A and B. Areas of significance including Ethnic Heritage, Black and Social History.

Criterion A includes properties “that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.” As such, the King Family Home is nationally significant for its association with the development of the civil rights movement in the United States.

The King Family Home served several different capacities between 1964-1972, pivotal years within the civil rights movement, including:

- **A community hub for civil rights work:** When Martin Luther King, Jr. was home in Atlanta, the house served as a space for his associates to meet and discuss civil rights issues. Though most of Dr. King’s official business took place at the SCLC offices

in Atlanta, informal visits by dignitaries, visiting journalists, and leaders of the social movement took place at the King Family Home, making it a hub for civil and human rights activism during the last three years of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s life.

- **A headquarters for The King Center for Nonviolent Change:** Coretta Scott King had her office and established The King Center in the basement of the house in 1968. Mrs. King and her associates conducted day to day operations and official business for The King Center in the basement of the house until the offices relocated in 1972. Mrs. King continued her life of civil and human rights activism for nearly four decades.

The King Family Home is also locally significant under Criterion A as part of the Vine City community, a historically African American neighborhood home to several well-known community and civil rights leaders.

Criterion B includes properties “that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.” The King Family Home is nationally significant as the home of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was an American civil rights leader and co-founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Coretta Scott King was an American civil rights leader and founder of The King Center for Nonviolent Change. She purchased the King Family Home in 1964. Mrs. King worked with architect Joseph W. Robinson to renovate the house and property. During the renovations, Dr. King accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway. The King family moved into their newly renovated home in the Vine City neighborhood of Atlanta in the spring of 1965. Dr. King lived in the house until 1968 when he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Mrs. King renovated the house again in 1968 after the assassination of her husband to accommodate a basement office for the newly founded Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center (later The King Center for Nonviolent Change). The administrative offices for The King Center were headquartered at 234 Sunset Avenue NW until 1972. Mrs. King maintained a personal office in the basement of the

426. “115th Congress Senate Report 115-49, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act, 2017,” legislation, 2017/2018, accessed April 29, 2020, <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/115th-congress/senate-report/49/1>.

427. The rest of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park lies within the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, a National Historic Landmark. Park managers may undertake a National Register amendment for the subject property, which may result in it being incorporated into the existing National Historic Landmark District. Park managers may also want to nominate this resource separately based on its significance.

428. The Family Home was administratively listed in the National Register of Historic Places when Congress established the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park (36 CFR 60.1(b0(1))).

King Family Home, and the house was her primary residence until 2004.

Under Criterion Consideration G, some of the landscape features associated with Coretta Scott King have been constructed or altered since 1971, and thus do not meet the fifty-year age criteria for historic significance. However, due to their association with Coretta Scott King and the Sunset Avenue property and surrounding community, they are considered as achieving significance to the cultural landscape.

Park Significance

The King Family Home is not physically contiguous with the rest of Martin Luther King National Historical Park (MALU). However, its significance is tied to the purpose of MALU and the significance statements that have been identified for the national historical park. These significance statements are as follows:

- Martin Luther King, Jr., one of the most prominent leaders of the American civil rights movement, changed the course of U. S. history and is known and honored throughout the world for his leadership in the struggle for social justice and the philosophy of nonviolent social change.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. [National Historical Park] preserves the home and immediate neighborhood where Dr. King was born and lived until the age of twelve, where his family life and values laid the foundation for his leadership during the American civil rights movement.
- Coretta Scott King was instrumental in the memorialization and preservation of Dr. King's legacy through the establishment of The King Center and Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. The King Center includes the tomb of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King and holds the largest primary source materials in the world on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the American civil rights movement.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. [National Historical Park] preserves the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, the spiritual home of Dr. King, where he followed his grandfather and father to become ordained and served as co-pastor preaching social

change grounded in Christian faith. After he was slain, Dr. King's body was brought home to Ebenezer Baptist Church for funeral services.

- The Martin Luther King, Jr. Preservation District protects core elements of one of the most prosperous and influential African American streets in segregated America from 1910 to 1960, the Sweet Auburn commercial district. Sweet Auburn included many organizations and businesses that actively supported the American civil rights movement, including the headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, for which Martin Luther King, Jr. was the founding president.⁴²⁹

At the time of the national historical park's foundation document (2017), the NPS had not yet acquired the King Family Home. That document lists the King Family Home as a "Related Resource" noting "the 1980 legislation specifically included and allows for future acquisition of this property. In the future, the National Park Service, in cooperation with the King Family, would like to provide public access to the home."⁴³⁰ The national historical park is currently updating this document to include the King Family Home as a fundamental resource.

An August 2021 foundation document update draft, which was underway during the production of this CLR, includes language for the King Family Home. It states that the King Family Home is "The home where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. Coretta Scott King moved with their children in 1965 and Dr. King's family continued to live after his tragic assassination in Memphis, TN. The National Park Service owns the King Family Home."⁴³¹ The draft document lists the King Family Home as a fundamental resource, stating:

429. National Park Service, "Foundation Document, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site" (Washington, D.C., August 2017), 6.

430. National Park Service, "Foundation Document, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site," 8.

431. National Park Service, "Foundation Document Update (Draft), Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park" (Atlanta, GA: National Park Service, Interior Region 2), August 2021, 3.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. Coretta Scott King purchased the home at 234 Sunset Avenue in October 1964. Their chosen location in the working-class neighborhood of Vine City near downtown Atlanta reflects Dr. King's commitment to address the universal injustices that plagued the working class and poor. The 1930s home was renovated twice under the direction of Mrs. King to meet their needs as a family with four young children and accommodate Dr. King's commitment to his work—once prior to moving in and again after Dr. King's death. The home included offices that supported the work of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and other organizations as well as spaces where he and Mrs. King hosted gatherings for prominent civil rights leaders. It provided a critical function during segregation because most public gathering spaces were off limits to African Americans.⁴³²

Period of Significance

A period of significance is established through national register documentation, which involves consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, Federal Preservation Office, and the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places. This report uses a provisional or proposed period of significance for evaluation of character defining features. The provisional or proposed period of significance is 1964 through 2004. This period begins when the King family purchased the property and ends when Coretta Scott King moved out of the King Family Home.

This period includes two major renovations to the property: the initial 1964-1965 renovation before the family moved into the house and the 1968 basement renovation to accommodate The King Center offices, which were housed in the King Family Home until 1972. Though Coretta Scott King continued to use the basement as her home office during the time she lived at the house, The King Center's administration and library relocated to other sites. Mrs. King moved to the Buckhead

community of Atlanta and out of the King Family Home in 2004.⁴³³

Analysis of Landscape Characteristics

Natural Systems and Features

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

During the period of significance, the natural systems of the region did not overtly influence the development of the landscape at the King Family Home. Features included the temperate humid subtropical climate, regional terrain, and the related subsurface soils and geology. The climate was characterized by warm to hot summers and cool winters and an average of nearly fifty inches of annual precipitation. The hot summers and cool winters meant that the King family had central air and cooling installed in the house for comfort.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the period of significance, the natural systems and features present at the site largely remained the same. Though disturbed, the soils and the slope of the front yard remain the same as they did in 1964 to 2004. Daily temperatures during the summer months have risen since in the latter half of the twentieth century, amounting to an annual mean temperature of sixty-two degrees Fahrenheit in 2020 versus an average between fifty and sixty degrees in 1970.⁴³⁴ The ten-year average rainfall between 2009 and 2019 was about fifty-

432. National Park Service, "Foundation Document Update (Draft), Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park," 5.

433. The national historical park's staff have requested that the cultural landscape report focus on an interpretive period of 1964 to 1972. Future interpretive plans may focus on this period and may consider two periods of interpretation of history for the King Family Home: 1964-1972 (as a *primary interpretive period*, starting when Coretta Scott King purchased the King Family Home and ending when the administrative offices of The King Center moved out of the King Family Home) and 1972-2004 (as a *secondary interpretive period*, starting when the administrative offices of The King Center moved out of the King Family Home and ending when Coretta Scott King moved out of the King Family Home). The emphasis on these periods is to be determined by future planning efforts. The consideration of contributing and non-contributing features for this document relies on the full period of significance 1964-2004.

434. William B. Monahan and Nicholas A. Fisichelli, "Climate Exposure of US National Parks in a New Era of Change," ed. Moncho Gomez-Gesteira, *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 7 (July 2, 2014): e101302, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0101302>.

eight inches.⁴³⁵ The soils in this area are classified as Ub, urban land. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, “Urban land consists of areas that have been altered by cutting, filling, and shaping. Schools, parking lots, streets, commercial buildings, and residential dwellings are located in these areas.”⁴³⁶ The existing plant materials at the site including shade trees and drought tolerant plants exist as a cultural response to these conditions. Trees along the southern property line and in the rear yard provide shade for the house. Drought tolerant evergreen shrubs at the front foundation require little maintenance and watering and are well adapted to the temperate humid subtropical climate of Georgia and the disturbed soils at the King Family Home.

Summary

Natural features and systems as well as cultural responses to natural resources survive within the King Family Home landscape today. These include the presence of shade trees and drought tolerant plant species. These vegetative features, some of which date to the period of significance, thrive in the temperate humid subtropical climate of Georgia and do well in disturbed urban soils.

Landscape Features

- Temperate humid subtropical climate
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Soils
 - Contribution Status: Contributing

Spatial Organization

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

During the period of significance, the property contained three distinct spaces: the front yard, house area, and rear yard. Historically, the front of the house was located seventy-five feet from the curb line at Sunset Avenue. The space between the front of the house and the road included a sidewalk, an elevated front yard area, and driveway. A chain link fence separated the front yard from adjacent properties on both the north and south sides of the property. A retaining wall separated the driveway space from the elevated front yard area. A row of water oaks stood between the sidewalk on the east boundary of the site and

Sunset Avenue. Someone removed the oak just south of the driveway sometime in the early 2000s. A planting bed with shrubs occupied the space between the yard and the front of the house. The house occupied about one quarter of the property and filled the middle space of the lot. The rear yard existed between the western edge of the house and the rear fence, which was bordered by an alley outside the property line. The overhead plane of the rear yard included the canopy of a large water oak. The King family added a patio area on the north side of the house, where the children played basketball. A hedge of evergreen shrubs constituted the northern property boundary in the rear yard during the early period of significance.

Post-historic and Existing Condition

After the period of significance, the three-part spatial organization of the site remained consistent with those conditions present during the period of significance. There were no additions to the house or front yard that changed the spatial organization. Similarly, both the overhead plane of the rear yard and the property boundary remain as they existed in the period of significance.

Summary

Presently, the three-part spatial organization of the site reflects the period of significance, with an open turf grass area between the house and the street, the house occupying the middle space, and the rear yard between the house and the alley. The overarching organization of the site remains intact.

Landscape Features

- Organization of adjacent properties and street setback
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Three-part organization at the ground level (front yard and driveway, house, rear yard)
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Overhead canopy of rear yard
 - Contribution Status: Contributing

Land Use

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

During the period of significance, the King family used the property for both residential and office purposes. Single- and multi-family residential buildings flanked the property for the entire period of significance. There were some commercial uses

435. NOAA US Department of Commerce, “Rainfall Scorecard,” accessed December 28, 2018, https://www.weather.gov/ffc/rainfall_scorecard.

436. United States Department of Agriculture, “Soil Survey of Fulton County, Georgia,” n.d., 44.

mixed in the neighborhood including a commercial building at the corner of Sunset Avenue and Joseph E. Boone Boulevard and an institutional use (the neighborhood health center) located at 186 Sunset Avenue. The administrative functions of The King Center moved out of the house to another location in 1972, but Mrs. King maintained a personal office at the house after 1972, using her bedroom and study upstairs and the basement office to conduct work from home until 2004.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After Coretta Scott King moved out of the house in 2004, the King family maintained the property as a residence. Though none of the family has lived permanently in the house since that time, the King estate used the house to store family memorabilia, files, and heirlooms. Adjacent properties remained residential. The NPS acquired the King Family Home in 2019. The agency manages the house as a historic resource, thus establishing the ability of the NPS to use the house for interpretation and heritage tourism.

Summary

The current land use of the site is heritage preservation, but the site and setting continue to reflect the residential use of the period of significance. Likewise, the King Family Home continues to reflect the office use from the period of significance with the entrance to the basement-level office still legible at the site. The house remains associated with the King family, and the setting reflects the cultural landscape's use as a residence and office during the period of significance. The introduction of heritage preservation of this cultural landscape occurred after the period of significance in 2019.

Landscape Features

- Residential use
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Office use
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Heritage preservation
 - Contribution Status: Noncontributing

Cultural Traditions

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

Cultural traditions that influenced the development of the King Family Home cultural landscape during the period of significance include political activism and African American home ownership. Sunset Avenue became a nexus of residences for activists in Atlanta's African American community, and many of these activists built and/or owned their own houses. Besides Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King, Jr., Eugene Marcus Martin, vice president of the NAACP and chairman of the local Citizens Committee on Public Education; Fred Toomer, Third Vice-President of Atlanta Life Insurance; Samuel Giles, a minister and local social activist; and Rev. Maynard Holbrook Jackson, Sr. and Irene Dobbs Jackson, who were very politically active in Atlanta, built residences and lived on Sunset Avenue. The previous owner of the King Family Home, Charles L. Gideons, was an educator and community leader. The King family continued these traditions during their ownership of the King Family Home. Martin Luther King, Jr. hosted civil rights activists and leaders at the house in his role as a national civil rights organizer and president of the SCLC. Mrs. King, who was continually active in the civil rights movement, established The King Center for Nonviolent Change and housed the administrative offices in her basement until 1972. All four of her children participated in political activism and social justice crusades as well, such as the Poor People's Campaign. Dr. and Mrs. King both came from Black families who owned their own property. Mrs. King recognized Dr. King's reticence to own a house, but she convinced him that owning a residence would provide their children with domestic stability. With this purpose, she purchased the property for the family in 1964.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

The property continued to be associated with the King family's political activism after Coretta Scott King left the property in 2004. All the King children continued to be politically active throughout their adult lives. Dr. Bernice King, who is now the CEO of The King Center, managed the house for the King estate until the NPS acquired the property in 2019. Sunset Avenue is no longer a residential center for Atlanta's African American civil rights community, but Vine City is still a largely Black neighborhood. Community activism and improvement efforts continue under nonprofit

organizations such as the Westside Future Fund. This organization purchased the house at 220 Sunset Avenue in 2020. The nonprofit plans to renovate the building and make it available as affordable housing for Atlanta University Center Consortium students studying social justice and civil rights.⁴³⁷

The National Park Service preserves the cultural landscape at the King Family Home, promoting the preservation of the resource and following its enabling legislation, which says the park should protect and interpret “the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, where he lived, worked, worshiped and is buried.”⁴³⁸ Thus, cultural traditions at the site now include preservation and commemoration.

Summary

Before and during the period of significance, Sunset Avenue was home to Black residents who were prominent in Atlanta’s civil, political, and educational movements. Groups such as the Westside Future Fund aim to continue this tradition by providing affordable housing in the community to future civil rights and social leaders. Since 2019, NPS efforts to preserve the King Family Home have continued its association with the cultural tradition of political activism and future interpretation efforts by the NPS will likely emphasize this tradition.

Landscape Features:

- Neighborhood traditions including Black education and entrepreneurship
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Community activism traditions
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- African American home ownership
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Preservation traditions
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Commemoration traditions
 - Contribution Status: Noncontributing

Cluster Arrangement

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

Between 1964 and 1965, workers remodeled the existing house at 234 Sunset Avenue into a dwelling for the King family. It was located approximately seventy-five feet from Sunset Avenue. When the King family moved into their house in 1965, the property was in an established residential neighborhood with lots of similar size, sometimes separated from each other by alleys and access roads. The King Family Home was located next to the Toomer family property located to the north, which contained a house constructed around 1927, and a property with a multi-family dwelling constructed in 1949 to the south. Fulton County records indicate that developers constructed the houses located on Griffin Street across the alley from the west side of the King Family Home in the 1920s and 1930s; therefore, these buildings were present when the Kings moved to the King Family Home. Developers constructed the residences across Sunset Avenue prior to the subdivision of the Breitenbucher estate in 1932. Even with the two remodelings of the King Family Home, the cluster arrangement of the house remained consistent with the typical residential configuration of the neighborhood (Figure 4.1). The King family kept the metal sided utility shed and metal play set in the rear yard. Some of the circulation features received new surfaces over time, but their locations did not change.

Post-historic and Existing Condition

After the period of significance, the cluster arrangement formed by Sunset Avenue and the King Family Home remained the same (Figure 4.2). Though some residences across the street have been demolished and rebuilt, the location and setback of the newly constructed residences are similar to their condition during the period of significance. The King Family Home’s orientation to the road and alley and its relationship to the surrounding residential buildings remained unchanged.

Summary

Presently, the cluster arrangement at the site reflects the period of significance, with the house paralleling Sunset Avenue, and the cultural landscape located among other residential buildings. The overall cluster arrangement of the site remains intact.

437. Westside Future Fund, *23rd Virtual Transform Westside Summit*, 2021.

438. “A Bill to Establish the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for Other Purposes,” Pub. L. No. 96-428 (1980).



Figure 4.1. 1972 aerial view of the King Family Home showing the cluster arrangement of the site. (Source: historicaerials.com.)



Figure 4.2. 2020 aerial view of the King Family Home showing the cluster arrangement of the site. (Source: 2020 ESRI aerial image.)

Landscape Features

- Relationship of the cultural landscape to Sunset Avenue
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Relationship of the cultural landscape to property lines
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Relationship to other residential buildings in the neighborhood
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Cluster of small-scale features and vegetation in the rear yard
 - Contribution Status: Contributing



Figure 4.3. Enlargement of a portion of a 1968 photo showing the concrete curb located at the northeast corner of the house and an asphalt walk leading to the rear yard. (Source: © Flip Schulke.)

Circulation

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

When architect Joseph W. Robinson drew plans for the remodeling of the King Family Home, he also planned a new driveway to access the newly designed basement level garage. The installed driveway deviated from the drawings for the project. Contractors installed a concrete driveway from Sunset Avenue to the garage which included a paved area between a newly installed stone retaining wall and the north property line. The driveway curved around a planting bed at the northeast corner of the site, which probably accommodated an existing tree. Pedestrian circulation at the site included a walkway with concrete steps leading to the entry stair to the first floor of the house. There was an existing herringbone brick sidewalk along Sunset Avenue, which was separated from the street by a landscape strip and a granite curb. Film footage from 1965 and a photo from April 1968 show that the brick sidewalk was in poor condition with loose bricks

especially at the intersection with the driveway.⁴³⁹ There was an asphalt path along the north side of the house with a concrete curb separating the asphalt from the concrete driveway (Figure 4.3).

Adjacent to the site, Dunkirk Street ran east to west and followed the south property line. It remained an unpaved access to the alley until the 1980s. Dunkirk Street provided vehicular and pedestrian access to the adjacent apartment building at 220 Sunset Avenue and to the rear of the houses on Sunset Avenue and Griffin Street. City trash crews used the alley to collect trash.

The 1968 house renovation required modifications to circulation features at the site. A new entrance constructed to provide access to the basement level offices was located under the main entry stair. This new basement entry door required the construction of a step down from the driveway level and a landing. During this renovation period, city crews may have paved the sidewalk at Sunset Avenue with concrete and replaced the granite curb with a concrete curb and gutter in 1968.

439. See Appendix E for a link to a photo of Jacqueline Kennedy arriving at the house in 1968.

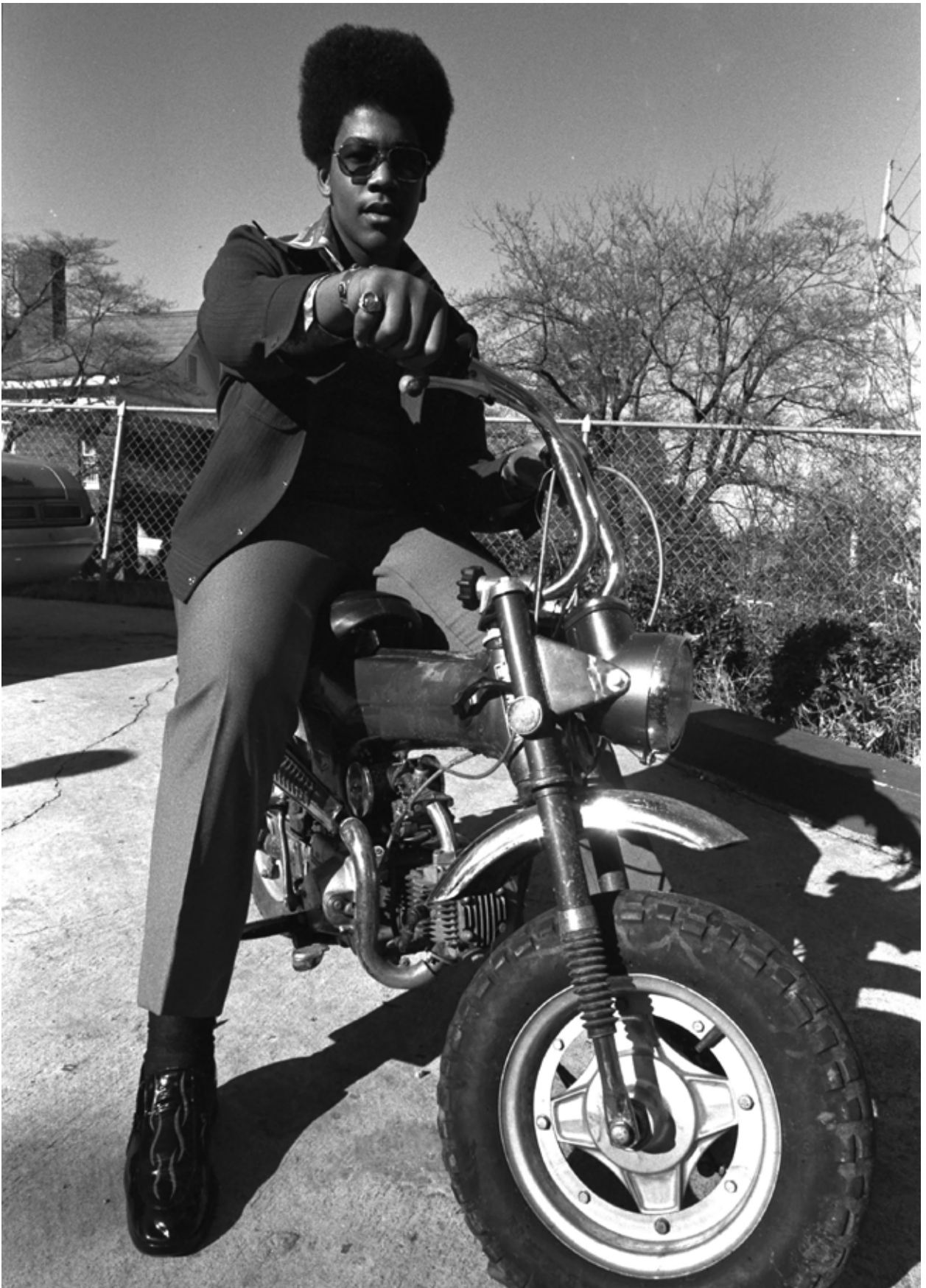


Figure 4.4. 1976 photo of Dexter King in the driveway of the King Family Home. Note evergreen shrubs between the drive and the chain link fence. (Source: © Flip Schulke.)

Contractors installed a new concrete patio in the rear yard, which served as a landing to the porch steps and directed water away from a newly installed window well.

By the mid-1970s, contractors had installed a curb that edged the north side of the driveway. This curb can be seen in a 1976 photo of Dexter King (Figure 4.4). The date of this curb installation is unknown but may have corresponded with modifications to the site made in 1968. The curb started at the northern portion of the stone retaining wall, curved around the northeast planting bed and along the northern property line between the driveway and the fence. It is unknown where the curb terminated. The curb likely replaced bricks which lined the northeastern planting bed along the driveway edge during the early period of significance. Sometime between 1988 and 1998, contractors paved the driveway with asphalt. It is not known when someone removed the straight portion of the concrete curb that lined the north side of the driveway, but this change may have occurred during the asphalt paving project.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

Many of the circulation features from the period of significance remain in place at the site. At some point, someone installed a mortared brick edge along the southern side of the entry walkway and painted these bricks grey (date unknown). Eventually, the King family painted the remaining portion of the concrete curb along the northeast planter bed red (date unknown). The alley at the rear of the property remains unpaved. Dunkirk Street is still paved with asphalt.

Summary

The alignment of the remaining circulation features at the site closely matches their condition during the period of significance. The driveway was concrete until between 1988 and 1998, but now it is paved with asphalt. The front walkway and steps date to the period of significance, though the front walkway is now lined with mortared bricks. The northeast planting bed is still lined with a concrete curb. The sidewalk on Sunset Avenue remains in place with a concrete surface. The curb and gutter along Sunset Avenue are concrete.

Landscape Features

- Driveway
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Asphalt area/walkway leading to back yard
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Concrete patio
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Sidewalk on Sunset Avenue
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Herringbone brick surface of sidewalk on Sunset Avenue from early period of significance
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Concrete steps and walkway to front entry stair
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Concrete curb along north driveway edge
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Concrete curb along northeast planting bed
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined (pre-1976)
- Dunkirk Street
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Unnamed alley
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Concrete step to basement entry
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Concrete apron at Sunset Avenue
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Granite curb along Sunset Avenue
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Landscape strip along Sunset Avenue
 - Contribution Status: Contributing

Topography

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

Historically, Vine City had moderately hilly topography, with Sunset Avenue NW located just east of a ridge that runs through the neighborhood. One of the low points in Vine City is located in the block between Vine Street and Sunset Avenue, south of Joseph E. Boone Boulevard.

The topography of the site at the King Family Home, with a high point at the west side (rear) of the property and a low point on the east side (front) of the property, meant that the house was set above street level, allowing for rain to shed toward the street. The house is built into the slope so that the rear of the house is at grade, and the front of the house is above grade, which necessitated contractors to install a sloped sidewalk and an entry stair to access the front door. Development of the house likely required grading of the site but grading plans have not been located for the 1933 construction of the house or for the 1960s renovations. The addition of the garage entrance into the basement level of the house in the 1964 / 1965 renovation required the construction of a retaining wall north of the front entry stair. Workers paved the driveway on the north side of the site, which was relatively flat and led from the street to the garage. When workers remodeled the basement to accommodate The King Center offices in 1968, they removed a portion of the stone retaining wall to accommodate an entrance below the front entry stair. The new basement entry door necessitated the installation of one step down to the basement office level. At an unknown date, someone installed a concrete block retaining wall on the south side of the house to retain the slope located topographically above the first-floor level of the house.

During the 1980s, city crews or The King Center paved Dunkirk Street, which resulted in additional runoff on the south side of the house. Topographically, Dunkirk Street is located at a higher elevation than the first-floor level of the King Family Home. Hal Horton, who maintained the house for the King family, added concrete aprons and swales in the 1980s around the west, south, and east foundations of the house to improve drainage away from the house and prevent water from infiltrating into the basement.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the period of significance, little topographic change occurred at the King Family Home. Drainage in the driveway pitches toward the garage doors and the basement entry door, which created moisture infiltration problems. The surfaces of the concrete aprons around the house are cracked and damaged, which caused and continues to cause drainage into the basement level. The NPS installed a sump pump at the basement entry door in 2019 to address these water infiltration problems caused by negative slopes toward the building and cracked pavement surfaces.

Summary

The overall topography of the site is the same as the period of significance. The site maintains its general slope from west to east, with low points at Sunset Avenue and at the basement entry doors. The stone retaining wall still provides grade separation between the front yard area and the driveway. The King family and the NPS have not modified the topography of the site since 2004.

Landscape Features

- Sloping site from west to east
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Retaining walls
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Grade of circulation features
 - Contribution Status: Contributing

Vegetation

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

Between 1964 and 1965, changes to the house at the site necessitated some changes to the existing plantings at the King Family Home. Historic newspaper articles and aerial photographs indicate that there was a garden in the front yard prior to 1964, maintained by the previous owners. Grading related to construction of the retaining wall necessary for the garage entrance and driveway may have meant that any remaining garden features were lost. However, the King family retained some of this vegetation. Based on video and photographic evidence, some existing trees remained at the site (Figure 4.5 - Figure 4.8), including:

- A pink flowering tree in the northeast corner of the site, likely a redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)
- A pine (likely a loblolly pine) in the front turf grass area (*Pinus* sp., likely *Pinus taeda*)
- At least two oaks (*Quercus* spp.) along the southern property border
- At least two dogwoods (*Cornus florida*) along the southern property border
- Water oaks (*Quercus nigra*) in the landscape strip along Sunset Avenue

These plants appear in December 1965 video footage and photographs from April 1968 and appear to be large enough to predate Coretta Scott King's purchase of the property in 1964.

The King family maintained the front yard as an open turf grass area, though the species of grass cannot be determined from photographs or video. Photographs reveal that the King family planted evergreen shrubs in a foundation planting bed along the façade of the house. Research does not reveal the exact species of all of the plant materials from this period, but documentation does reveal the general character (e.g. evergreen shrub masses and tree locations). The sasanqua camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*), which still exists at the site near the east façade, appears in a 1968 image. There appears to be a mahonia (*Mahonia bealei*) located south of the foundation near the fence along the south property line. There were evergreen shrubs of undetermined species planted around the foundation, including at least two

evergreen azaleas (*Rhododendron* sp.) flanking the entry stair. There were concrete planters located on either side of the steps from the driveway to the front stoop of the house that occasionally contained seasonal plant materials such as chrysanthemums (*Chrysanthemum x morifolium*) (Figure 4.9).

There is little documentation for the period of significance after 1972. A 1976 photo shows that there was a Chinese holly (*Ilex cornuta*) hedge along the northern property line, just outside the chain link fence (Figure 4.4). The date of installation and removal of these shrubs is unknown. At some point the King family removed the pine tree in the front yard, replacing it with a Canadian hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*). The date of this replacement is unknown, but based on the size of the tree, it likely occurred sometime before 2004.

Eventually the family added evergreen shrubs throughout the site including Japanese ternstroemia (*Ternstroemia gymnanthera*) along the north and south property lines and a mass of Chinese holly in the southeast corner of the property. Additional plantings include liriopé (*Liriope muscari*) along the planting beds on the south side of the site and a ring of liriopé that stretches into the front turf grass area. Additionally, someone planted a scarlet firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*) and wax leaf privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*) near the midpoint of the south property border at an unknown date. The pink blooming tree (presumed redbud) in the northeast corner of the site died at an unknown date prior to 2007. The King family planted shrubs of an unknown species in the northeast planting bed by 1988.

The King family maintained the mix of evergreen shrubs in the front foundation planting bed, but it appears that the health of these shrubs declined over time. The sasanqua camellia remained in place, but the family removed the mahonia at some point in time. The family removed the dogwoods sometime prior to 2007. Sometime prior to 2007, someone removed the water oak just south of the driveway in the landscape strip parallel to Sunset Avenue.

Patricia Latimore remembers that there was an evergreen hedge, possibly red tip photinia (*Photinia x fraseri*), along the northern property border of the rear yard during the early period of significance.⁴⁴⁰ The family later enclosed this area with fencing, constructed the rear patio, and removed these shrubs. Bernice King remembers the water oak (*Quercus nigra*) in the rear yard from an early age, and family friend Maria Saporta recalls that there was a tire swing attached to the limbs of this tree.⁴⁴¹

Raised planting beds in the rear yard indicate that at one time, there were formal plantings in the rear yard, but there is no documentation of these plantings. These beds were not present in a 1998 video of the rear yard, but the age of the landscape timbers and shrubs indicate that the King family may have installed plantings along the north and west property lines sometime before 2004. Either the area became neglected or too shady for the vegetation. A black cherry just outside the north property line near the gate to the rear yard is likely a volunteer, with its date of origin unknown.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

By 2007, someone (possibly someone maintaining the site for the King Family) planted roses (*Rosa* cvs.), and a Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*) in the northeast planting bed at an unknown date, but based on their existing size, this planting may have occurred after 2004 when Mrs. King moved out of the house. There is a Japanese ternstroemia hedge along the eastern portion of the north property boundary. The date of installation of this hedge is also unknown. It appears to have been planted by 2007. The elevated portion of the front yard is a turf grass area, comprised of grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), clover (*Trifolium repens*), and moss (*Bryopsida* spp.), and other weedy species. The Canadian hemlock remains in the front yard. The concrete planters placed on the stone retaining wall are currently empty.

The water oak in the rear yard has remained at the site, though it is showing signs of decline according to a 2019 arborist's report. The progeny of this oak remain throughout the turf grass area in the rear yard. The water oaks in the landscape strip along

Sunset Avenue are in poor condition due to severe pruning. Currently there are several Japanese andromeda (*Pieris japonica*) and a row of lirioppe in the landscape beds in the rear yard. Poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) and English ivy (*Hedera helix*) grow on the oaks located on the south property line.

Summary

Few vegetation features at the site date to the early portion of the period of significance. For trees, the water oak in the rear yard, the oaks along the south property line, and the water oaks in the landscape strip along Sunset Avenue are the exception. The sasanqua camellia in the front planting area near the southeast corner of the house also likely dates to the period of significance. There were evergreen shrubs at the front foundation shown in photos and film dating to 1965, 1968, and 1972; these have likely been replaced over time with similar plant material. The planting date of the Canadian hemlock in the front yard is unknown but likely prior to 2004. The King family introduced the Chinese and wax leaf hollies throughout the site, the black cherry on the north property line is likely a volunteer. It is unknown when the lirioppe in the front and rear yards was installed, but the plantings in the landscape bed in the northeast corner of the front yard appear to postdate 2004. The date of the lirioppe and Japanese andromeda in the rear yard is unknown. The turf grass species during the period of significance is unknown, but the Bermuda turf grass area present at the site today reflects the period of significance.

440. Bernice King and Patricia Latimore, 234 Sunset Avenue, interview by Madie Fischetti, May 22, 2020.

441. Bernice King, 23rd Virtual Transform Westside Summit, interview by Maria Saporta, April 2, 2021.



Figure 4.5. April 1968 image of the façade of the house, facing west. Note evergreen shrubs at foundation. The shrubs flanking either side of the entry stair are possibly azaleas. A similar contemporary view shows that there are evergreen shrubs in similar locations to the 1968 photo. (Source: © Flip Schulke and HAB5-GA-199, 2020.)



Figure 4.6. April 1968 photo of the façade of the house, facing west. There is at least one dogwood along the south property line. The existing sasanqua camellia is located on the center-left of the image (southeast corner of the house). Contemporary view shows additional vegetation along the south property line, the sasanqua camellia, and the ring of liriope near the front retaining wall (Source: © Flip Schulke and WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 4.7. 1965 image of the King children playing in the front yard. The pine tree is shown on the left. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia.)



Figure 4.8. 1968 photo looking toward Sunset Avenue showing the pink blooming tree in the northeast property corner. See Figure 4.16 for contemporary view. The redbud is no longer in this location. (Source: © Flip Schulke.)



Figure 4.9. 1965 image of Bernice King with planter and chrysanthemums. The shrub immediately behind her does not appear in 1968 photos. (It may have died between 1965 and 1968.) Shrub on far right may be an azalea. 2020 view of this wall corner shows the red painted stone retaining wall, concrete planter, and additional handrail on the step. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia and WLA Studio, April 2020.)

Landscape Features

- Pink/red blooming tree (possibly redbud, *Cercis canadensis*) in northeast corner of the site
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Water oaks (*Quercus nigra*) in landscape strip on Sunset Avenue
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Oak (naturally hybridized red oak) (*Quercus* spp.) on southern property line
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Water oak (*Quercus nigra*) along southern property line
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Dogwoods (*Cornus florida*) along south property line
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Sasanqua camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*)
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Mahonia (*Mahonia bealei*) near south property line
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Evergreen shrubs at east foundation including cherry laurel, convex Japanese holly (*Ilex crenata* ‘Convexa’), and a mass that includes Japanese privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*), Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), and another unidentifiable weedy seedling
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Evergreen azaleas (possibly southern Indica variety) flanking front steps
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Pine (*Pinus* sp., likely *Pinus taeda*) in front yard
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Canadian hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) in front yard
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Japanese ternstroemia (*Ternstroemia gymnanthera*) on the north property line
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*), azalea (*Rhododendron* spp.), and rose (*Rosa* cvs.) in northeast planting bed
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined, likely noncontributing
- Chinese holly (*Ilex cornuta*) in southeast corner of site
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Scarlet firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*) and wax leaf privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*) on south property line
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined
- Turf grass (*Cynodon* spp.)
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Evergreen shrubs along south property line
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined
- Water oak in rear yard (*Quercus nigra*)
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Red tip photinia (*Photinia x fraseri*) along north property line in rear yard
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Japanese andromeda in rear yard (*Pieris japonica*)
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined, likely noncontributing
- Liriope in front and rear yard (*Liriope muscari*)
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined
- Hosta in front yard (*Hosta* sp.)
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined
- Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) outside north property line
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined

Buildings and Structures

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

Throughout the period of significance, the King Family Home served as the principal constructed feature at the site. The house was originally an approximate 2,190-square-foot English Vernacular Revival style house constructed on the subdivided former estate of Atlantan Philip Breitenbucher. Coretta Scott King purchased the house in October 1964 and commissioned Joseph W. Robinson to design renovations to expand the house and remodel portions of the building, including the kitchen and bathrooms. New and remodeled exterior walls of the house were clad in brick veneer of similar color and texture to the 1930s brick, and the brick construction retained the basketweave and soldier course banding seen on the surviving 1930s side elevations. The façade, located on the east side of the building, underwent

major alterations, removing most features of the original exterior and giving the house a Plain Ranch House style character. The only element of the original façade to remain appears to have been the triple window of the dining room. At the north elevation, contractors modified the northeast corner of the house and constructed the family room addition across the north end of the front wing, enclosing the original north gable within an extended attic. Plans called to rebuild the exterior of the utility room with a higher roof line and to add a new entry stair on the north elevation. The addition of a basement level garage to the house necessitated the construction of a retaining wall adjacent to the driveway. This granite retaining wall included raised beaded mortar and an irregular stone pattern. The plans called to remove an existing detached garage, which was located in the northwest corner of the property.

After Martin Luther King, Jr.'s death, Coretta Scott King again renovated the house, expanding the basement to accommodate offices for the newly established King Center. This renovation included the addition of a door into the offices, which was located under the front entry stair. Most of the 1968 work occurred at the basement level. Contractors excavated the crawlspace south and west of the 1965 basement rooms, and workers underpinned the foundation walls to create a full floor of new space. The front portion of this basement level contained office space for The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, including a private office for Coretta Scott King. The rear part of this floor included a recreation room for the family, a kitchenette, a fireproof closet, a cedar lined storage closet, a bathroom, a reconfigured entry between the garage, and a stair to the first floor. Basement construction appears to have occurred during the summer of 1968, with The King Center offices complete enough for occupancy in September.⁴⁴² Work on the first floor appears to have continued after September, based on the October 1968 drawing of alterations to the children's bedrooms and the adjacent playroom. The girls and boys switched rooms at this time, and contractors divided the playroom and incorporated it into the bedrooms.

Exterior structural alterations to the house appear to have been limited to the creation of the new basement office entrance and the cutting of a new window for the recreation room, along with the construction of a window well, on the north elevation. The new basement entry door required a modification to the stone retaining wall. Contractors turned the wall back toward the front entry stair to create an opening for the basement entry door and a step down to the entry door level. Additionally, contractors added a section of low retaining wall paralleling the sidewalk on Sunset Avenue. This work may have corresponded with city installation of new sidewalks and a drive apron in December 1968 (Figure 4.10). At some point prior to 2007, the King family painted the stone retaining wall red.

The 1965 and 1968 construction of the retaining wall at the King Family Home reflects typical stonework patterns in the neighborhood. Granite rubble walls, with stones of various sizes and colors are present throughout the neighborhood. Several reflect the construction method of this stone retaining wall with an irregular pattern and raised beaded joints. There is another stone retaining wall on the 200 block of Sunset Avenue (216 Sunset Avenue) that has this same type of joint work. The stone mason is unknown for both walls. Another local example of similar stone workmanship former church walls located at First St. Mark A.M.E. Church at the corner of Chestnut Street and Cameron Madison Alexander Boulevard. This church construction displays similar stone and mortar work with raised beaded joints (Figure 4.11). According to masonry expert Harley McKee, "the irregular pattern and thickness of joint in rubble [walls] called for varied treatment with the trowel. Sometimes stones projected irregularly beyond the face of a flat surface of mortar."⁴⁴³

By 1988, Coretta Scott King had added a metal awning and removed the mailbox from the façade of the house. She also removed lights that were fixed to the façade. For the most part, the interior and exterior appearance of the house remained the same after the second remodeling, though there were redecorations and additions such as carpet, wallpaper, and modifications to the bathrooms on the interior.

442. Edythe Scott Bagley with Joe Hilley, *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2012), 252.

443. Harley J. McKee, *Masonry: Stone, Brick, Mortar and Plaster*, 2nd ed. (Springfield, Illinois: Association for Preservation Technology International, 2017), 70.

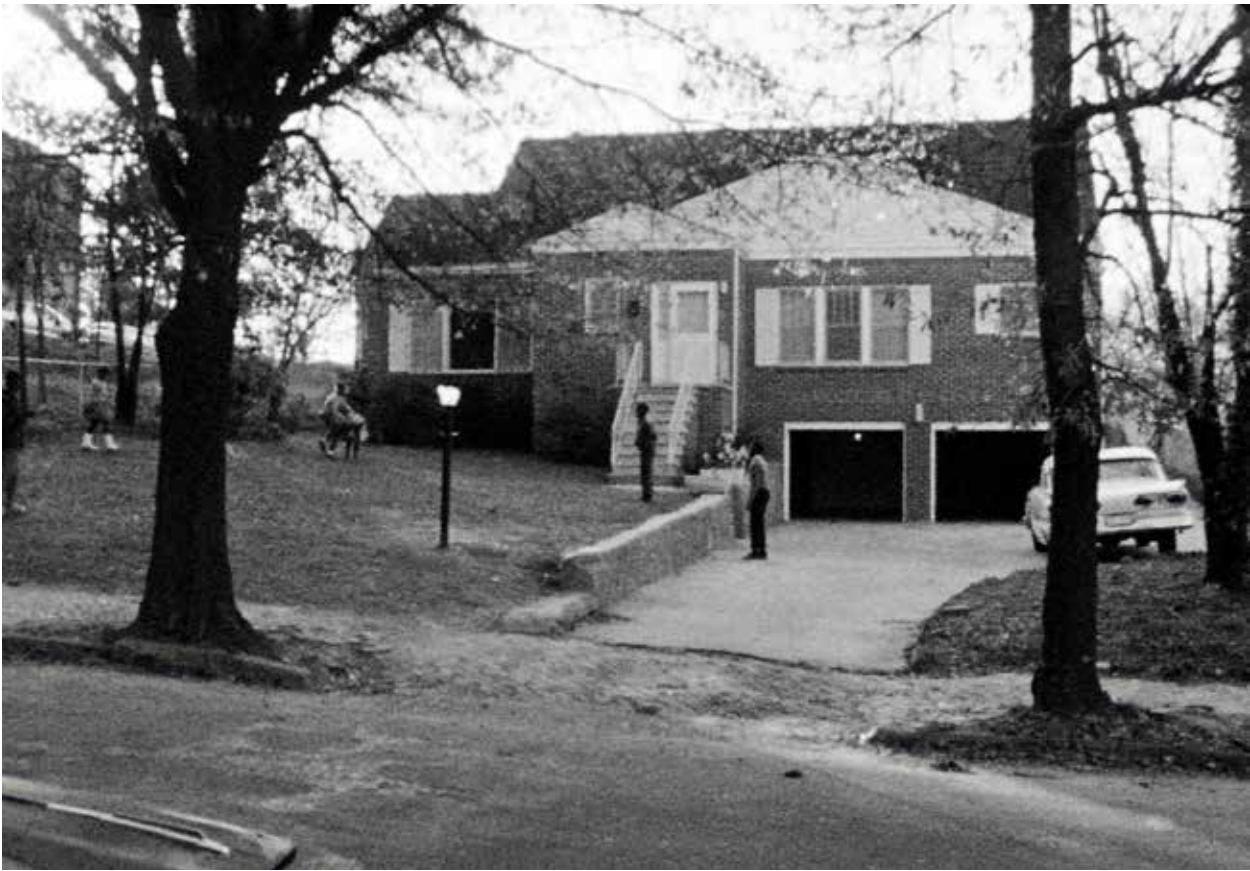


Figure 4.10. The house and retaining wall are intact at the site. The top photo is from 1965 and shows the retaining wall as constructed during the first house renovation. The lower photo is from 2020, and shows the later (1968) wall addition, which runs parallel to Sunset Avenue. (Source: MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8, University of Georgia, Peabody Archives and WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 4.11. Example of similar wall construction at the ruins of First St. Mark A.M.E. Church, located in the English Avenue neighborhood, just north of Vine City. North elevation and closeup of stonework. (Source: Google, 2020.)



Figure 4.12. Portion of a photo from April 1968 and current view of above ground power line servicing the house. Vegetation obscures the power pole in the current view. (Source: © Flip Schulke and WLA Studio, April 2020.)

There is a short concrete block retaining wall located near the south elevation of the house. This wall construction may be associated with the 1980s installation of a concrete apron to facilitate drainage away from the building foundation. However, some of the terra cotta foundation vents on the south elevation predate the 1965 renovations, meaning that the soil in this area may have been retained away from the building foundation before the construction of the concrete aprons. Additional soil may have been added when city crews or the King Center graded and paved Dunkirk Street requiring the retaining wall be placed away from the house, but these construction details have not been located. At some point, between 1988 and 2007, the family painted the retaining walls with red paint.

The King family added a ten-foot-wide by seven-foot-deep metal sided utility shed on the west property boundary in the rear yard of the house. This structure housed outdoor equipment such as bicycles and later served as storage for objects from the house. Research did not reveal the year of installation, but the shed model appears in early 1970s Sears catalogs. The metal sided utility shed appears in a 1998 video of the rear yard.

Video footage from 1965 shows that during the period of significance, site utilities included overhead lines, which were located on both the east and west sides of Sunset Avenue. By 2002, Georgia Power had upgraded the overhead utility line to a high voltage transmission line with concrete poles, located on the west side of Sunset Avenue. The concrete poles are outside the property boundaries. The location of subsurface utilities was not recorded during the period of significance.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After Coretta Scott King moved out of the King Family Home, her estate performed general maintenance and upkeep on the house from 2004 to 2019, preserving it much as it appeared in the period of significance. Improvements to the house included a new roof, a new hot water heater, and an upgraded HVAC system. The metal sided utility shed in the rear yard is in poor condition and shows signs of deterioration including rust. The doors have fallen off their tracks (they are still located at the site), and the roof shows signs of impact, perhaps from branches of the nearby water oak. Above ground power lines continue to service the house (Figure 4.12). The NPS modified the



Figure 4.13. View of window well prior to plywood structure construction. Window was enclosed with plywood and flashing between June and October 2019 to reduce the amount of water ingress to the basement and the window well area. (Source: HPTC, October 2019 and WLA Studio, June 2019.)

window well on the north façade of the house with an enclosed plywood structure between June and October 2019 (Figure 4.13).

Summary

The King Family Home remains at the site. The present configuration of the house and the stone retaining wall reflect their condition during the period of significance. The date of the installation of the metal sided utility shed predates 1998, and the model appears in Sears & Roebuck Company catalogs from 1971 and 1972. It is unknown when someone painted the stone retaining wall red. This may have occurred before or after Coretta Scott King moved out of the King Family Home.

After the period of significance, Coretta Scott King's estate maintained the property, and the National Park Service has not added any buildings or structures to the site. The residence, the stone retaining wall, overhead utilities, and metal sided utility shed still exist at the site. The NPS enclosed the window well of the house in 2019 with a roofed plywood enclosure. It is not known when someone installed a concrete block wall on the south side of the house, but it likely dates to the period of significance. It is unknown when a gas meter was installed at the house, but it was likely during the period of significance.

Landscape Features

- House
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Metal sided utility shed
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Stone retaining wall
 - Contribution Status: Contributing

- Window well enclosure
 - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Concrete block retaining wall
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined (likely contributing)
- Utilities
 - Above ground power service to house
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
 - Overhead high voltage transmission line in right-of-way
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
 - Gas meter
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined (likely contributing)

Views and Vistas

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

Given the small size of the site and its spatial organization, the principal views during the period of significance extended to and from adjacent properties and Sunset Avenue as opposed to being contained within the property boundaries. Notable views toward the King Family Home included the view from the east side of Sunset Avenue, which was obstructed by the water oaks in the landscape strip along the road and the view from the sidewalk on the west side of Sunset Avenue, which was not obstructed by trees.

Notable views from the property include the view from the top of the entry stair. Police officers, who were likely surveilling the area, are observed in historic photos at this location (Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6). The view toward the rear of the house from Dunkirk Street is unrecorded during the period of significance.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After 2004, the views to and from the King Family Home remained essentially the same. Nearby property owners demolished a few houses across the street in the early 2000s, but three of these sites have been redeveloped. The primary views to the property are from Sunset Avenue. Trees obscure the view to the King Family Home from the east side of Sunset Avenue (Figure 4.14). The view of the King Family Home from the sidewalk on the west side of Sunset Avenue is unobstructed except for the Canadian hemlock in the front yard (Figure 4.15.) The view toward Sunset Avenue from the entry stair of the King Family Home is framed by the trees planted in the landscape strip along the road (Figure 4.16). The view toward the cultural landscape from Dunkirk Street is obscured by the fence surrounding the rear yard.

Summary

In summary, views to and from the King Family Home remain consistent with the period of significance. Principal views continue to be those toward the King Family Home from the east side of Sunset Avenue and from the sidewalk on the west side of Sunset Avenue. The principal view from the King Family Home is from the front entry stair. This open view allows for observation of the neighborhood and approaching traffic from both directions of Sunset Avenue.

Landscape Features

- View of the King Family Home from the east side of Sunset Avenue
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- View of the King Family Home from the sidewalk on the west side of Sunset Avenue
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Views from the front entry stair
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- View toward the rear yard
 - Contribution Status: Contributing



Figure 4.14. View of King Family Home from the east side of Sunset Avenue. (Source: WLA Studio, June 2020.)



Figure 4.15. View of the King Family Home from the sidewalk on the west side of Sunset Avenue. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)



Figure 4.16. View of Sunset Avenue from the front entry stair. (Source: WLA Studio, April 2020.)

Small-Scale Features

Historic Condition (1964-2004)

Various small-scale features existed in the King Family Home cultural landscape during the period of significance. 1964 renovation plans for the King Family Home included specifications for a chain link fence on the north and south property lines. The family added two concrete planters set on top of the newly constructed stone retaining wall and a luminaire mounted to a lamp post in the front yard. These features are visible in film footage from 1965 and photos from 1968. The family installed a metal play set in the rear yard, which the manufacturer dates to the mid-1960s.

Small-scale features in the front yard during the period of significance included stones lining the front planting bed (Figure 4.5 - Figure 4.6) and bricks lining the planting bed on at the northeast corner of the site (Figure 4.8). The King family likely removed the bricks from the northeast planting bed when the concrete curb edge was constructed sometime between 1968 and 1976. There is a group of stones at the southeast property corner near the retaining wall. It is unknown if these stones date to the period of significance, but the retaining wall stops before reaching the stones,

suggesting that they may be a broken portion of the wall. It is unknown when the King family installed the mailbox on the retaining wall. It may date to the basement renovation period in 1968. It is documented that the family received a large amount of mail after Dr. King's assassination, so a larger mailbox may have been necessary. However, the mailbox is not documented in available historic photographs dating to the period of significance.

Between 1976 and 1988, the King family replaced the chain link fence in the front yard along the north and south property lines with an anodized aluminum pike fence. The anodized aluminum pike fence is visible in video footage from 1998.⁴⁴⁴ It is not known when the family installed the mortared brick edging along the front walkway, but this feature postdates photographs from 1968. The family also placed a plastic planter near the front walkway. The play set is visible in video footage dating to the 1990s, and the seesaw was present at that time. The seesaw portion of the set may have been lost in subsequent years; however, it may be in storage at the house.

In the 1980s, either The King Center or Atlanta city crews paved Dunkirk Street. The runoff from this pavement caused flooding in the basement. Hal Horton, who performed maintenance at the King Family Home, installed concrete around the foundation in an effort to shed water away from the foundation.

Based on the condition of the landscape timbers in the rear yard and a video from 1998, the King family installed these features sometime in the early 2000s, but the installation date is unknown. Mr. Horton may have added the plastic landscape edging in the front yard, but the installation date is also unknown. After 1988, Mrs. King had a handrail installed on the front entry steps leading from the driveway to the entry walkway. The date of installation is unknown. The date of installation of the wood privacy fence in the rear yard is unknown, but installation was likely sometime between 1998 (based on video footage, which shows chain link fence in the rear yard) and when Coretta Scott King departed the property in 2004. Prior to 2007, the King family installed a "No Trespassing" sign in the northeast planting bed. At

444. MALU Archives, Series VII: Audio-Video Collection, 1965-2010, Subseries A: Video, 1965-20210. VHS Tapes – King Sunset Home, [1998].

an unknown date prior to 2007, the King family replaced the coach lamp shaped luminaire on the lamp post with a round luminaire.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the NPS acquired the site, park staff removed the “No Trespassing” signs from the property. In 2019, the NPS installed flexible black PVC tubing at the base of all of the house downspouts to direct water away from the building foundation. The NPS also installed a sump pump with rigid white PVC tubing just outside the basement entry door in 2019.

Summary

Small-scale features remaining from the period of significance include portions of the chain link fence, the metal play set, the lamp post in the front yard, and the concrete planters located on the stone retaining wall near the entry walkway steps. At some point after 1968 and prior to 2007, the family changed the luminaire on top of the lamp post. The anodized aluminum pike fence, installed prior to 1988 in the front yard, follows the historic alignment of the chain link fence. The date of the wood privacy fence and wood landscape bed edging in the rear yard is unknown, but likely predates 2004. The stones lining the front foundation planting bed are no longer at the site. The concrete aprons constructed to facilitate drainage around the site remain in place, but they are in poor condition.

Several small-scale features postdate the period of significance including the PVC piping at the ends of the downspouts and the sump pump. The installation date of the mailbox on the retaining wall is also unknown but it likely predates 2004. The installation date of the exterior HVAC equipment near the rear stair is unknown.

Landscape Features

- Anodized aluminum pike fence and gates
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Wood privacy fence
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined (likely contributing)
- Chain link fence, rear yard
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Chain link fence, front yard
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Metal play set
 - Contribution Status: Contributing (seesaw is missing)
- Stones lining front foundation planting bed
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Bricks lining front walkway
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined
- Bricks lining northeast planting bed
 - Contribution Status: Missing
- Wood landscape edging
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined (likely contributing)
- Concrete apron at foundation
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Mailbox
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Handrail on steps from driveway to front entry walk
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined (likely contributing)
- Lamp post
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Lamp luminaire
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined (likely contributing)
- Plastic landscape edging
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined
- Cast concrete planters
 - Contribution Status: Contributing
- Stones at southeast corner of property
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined (could be part of the retaining wall)
- PVC tubing on downspouts
 - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Home security sign
 - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Sump pump
 - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Exterior HVAC equipment
 - Contribution Status: Undetermined

Evaluation of Landscape Integrity

Landscape integrity refers to a cultural landscape's ability to convey its historic significance. *National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 16A* defines historic integrity as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period." In *National Register Bulletin 15*, the National Register defines seven aspects of integrity to use when evaluating a historic property:

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred;

Setting is the physical environment within and surrounding a property;

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property;

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property;

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory;

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time; and

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

In order to retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, of these seven aspects. Evaluating historic integrity involves first determining the historic significance of a property and then identifying the existing features that contribute to our ability to recognize and understand this significance. Character defining features are those distinctive features or qualities that make a property unique. They are the individual parts that make the whole place special and worthy of our recognition as a historic property.

Location

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The King Family Home continues to occupy the same location that Coretta Scott King purchased in 1964. The King Family Home assumed its current form and configuration following extensive renovations in 1965 and 1968. Because of the important role the King Family Home played in the family's life in a predominantly Black neighborhood on the west side of Atlanta and in the establishment of The King Center, integrity of location is an essential quality or aspect to consider in assessing integrity of this resource. Vine City remains a largely African American neighborhood, and the 200 to 300 block of Sunset Avenue is still a residential community.

Integrity of location also relates to the ongoing existence of the features of the cultural landscape including the house, retaining walls, landscape beds, circulation features, and structures at the site. The house's location in the center of the site and its relationship to Sunset Avenue has remained consistent since the period of significance. Despite minor alterations to some site features, overall, the King Family Home cultural landscape retains integrity of location to the period of significance.

Setting

Setting is the physical environment within and surrounding a property. Located in Vine City, Georgia, the King Family Home is set on the high side of a residential street as it was during the period of significance (Figure 4.17). The landscape around the house, with a combination of turf grass areas, foundation shrubs, and a mixture of trees spaced across the lot is characteristic of residential landscapes of the mid-twentieth century. Like many mid-twentieth century residences, the driveway is a prominent feature in the front landscape, and the front yard has an open quality to it. Throughout its developmental history, the setting of the King Family Home has been a residential community, which became largely African American in the early-twentieth century. The development of the surrounding properties predates the King family's purchase of the property. During the period of significance, the community included a residential facility for the blind in houses that were once part of the Wachendorff Nursery complex. This use no longer



Figure 4.17. 1962 Sanborn Map and 2020 aerial photograph showing changes in neighborhood setting. (Source: Proquest Digitized Sanborn Maps, ESRI aerial data, 2020.)

exists in the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Union Health Center, which was present during the period of significance continues to provide free and reduced-fee health services to community residents. During the 1990s and early 2000s, several houses located east of the King Family Home on Sunset Avenue were demolished, and workers constructed new residential structures on these properties. Surrounding circulation reflects the period of significance. Dunkirk Street and the unnamed alley, which served as vehicular access and play areas for the King children, still frame the south and west sides of the site. Overall, the setting within and adjacent to the cultural landscape at the King Family Home still reflects the period of significance. As such, the King Family Home cultural landscape retains integrity of setting to the period of significance.

Design

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The King Family Home retains integrity of design due to the ongoing presence of historic patterns of spatial organization and the existence of built features that retain integrity. Though there have been decorative interior modifications to the building at the King Family Home, the exterior shell of the building and the organization of the site still reflect the design dating to the 1960s renovations by Atlanta architect Joseph W. Robinson. The retaining wall that borders the southern edge of the driveway remains as installed in 1965 and reconfigured in 1968, though the King family painted it red at an unknown date. The site has a three-part spatial organization, which accurately reflects the 1964-2004 period. The driveway retains the alignment installed in 1965. The front walkway and steps to the front entry stair are intact. The patio, located on the north side of the house remains where it was installed, likely during the 1968 renovation of the basement. The play set is missing portions of its original design including the swings, one leg, and the platform of the seesaw, but much of this feature is intact. Trees and most vegetation at the site reflect the period of significance. Despite the loss of some designed features, the overall form of the property—its plan, space, structure, and style—still generally reflects the period of significance; therefore, the King Family Home cultural landscape retains integrity of design to the period of significance.

Materials

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The historic building, the structures, and much of the vegetation located within the King Family Home cultural landscape survive from the period of significance and retain their original building materials. During the period of significance, the King Family Home landscape included a limited palette of materials. The house is constructed from wood and brick. Additional materials at the site include concrete, asphalt, stone, and metal. The stone retaining wall with beaded raised joints remains at the site intact. Vegetation materials during the period of significance included spontaneous vegetation, ornamental plantings, and areas of turf grass. Many of these materials remain at the site.

Changes that occurred to historic materials during the period of significance include the repaving of the driveway and sidewalk, a change in edging material along the northeast planting bed, and the replacement of some vegetation at the site. The driveway was paved in concrete and later asphalt. The material edging the northeast planting bed changed from brick to concrete sometime after 1968. The King family removed the pine tree in the front yard sometime after 1970 and replaced it with a Canadian hemlock. Some plantings along the façade have died and / or been removed from the site. Maintenance crews have severely pruned the water oaks located in the landscape strip between the sidewalk and Sunset Avenue, which has aided in the deterioration of their condition. The dogwoods located on the north property line and the pink flowering tree in the northeast corner of the site no longer exist.

Contemporary material introductions to the site are minimal and reversible and include PVC downspout extensions, a sump pump, and a plywood enclosure near the window well on the north elevation of the house. Despite these changes, the King Family Home retains integrity of materials to the period of significance.

Workmanship

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. The built features at the King Family Home, such as the house, retaining wall, planting beds, and circulation features, continue to demonstrate integrity of workmanship to the period of significance. Two primary features of the site, the house and the stone retaining wall, continue to reflect the workmanship dating to the period of significance. For the house, its construction technique reflected the building traditions of the community and the time during which it was remodeled. The remodeled house reflects the Plain Ranch House style aesthetic favored by many architects of the period, and brickwork on the additions to the house closely match the original 1933 construction. The stone retaining wall with its raised beaded joints reflects construction practices used throughout the neighborhood. The newer portion of the stone retaining wall, added to the site after April 1968, also reflects this aesthetic. The house and retaining walls are the primary features that reflect workmanship of the King family's 1960s renovations of the property. There were some changes to the landscape details at the site during the period of significance including landscape edging along the northeast planting bed and paving material of the driveway and sidewalks. The retention of many plantings, circulation features, and buildings and structures results in the King Family Home cultural landscape having integrity of workmanship to the period of significance.

Feeling

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. The King Family Home retains integrity of feeling for the period of significance due to the ongoing association of the property's use as the King family's primary residence and the presence of the house and structures designed for this purpose. The period of significance for this site relates to the King family's tenure and the establishment of The King Center for Nonviolent Social Change in the basement of the house.

There have been minimal changes to the site that diminish the feeling of the period of significance. The 200 to 300 block of Sunset Avenue remains predominantly residential. Though some houses

across Sunset Avenue were demolished and rebuilt, the buildings immediately adjacent to the site remain, and the neighborhood continues to reflect the residential patterns present during the period of significance. The site continues to reflect a single-family home, located in a walkable neighborhood adjacent to downtown Atlanta. Views to and from the house reflect the period of significance as well. The three-part spatial organization with the house in the center is consistent with the period of significance. Despite changes to other parts of the neighborhood, the built environment along this block of Sunset Avenue continues to reflect the period of significance; thus, the King Family Home cultural landscape retains integrity of feeling to the period of significance.

Association

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The King Family Home continues to convey its historical associations with members of the King family and with the establishment of The King Center. The NPS preserves and will interpret the King Family Home in the future, highlighting the association of the site to Martin Luther King, Jr., Coretta Scott King, and their children. The city of Atlanta has recognized the association of the Sunset Avenue neighborhood with African American heritage and has designated the neighborhood as a local historic district. The house and the cultural landscape of the King Family Home are contributing resources to this district. As the property still reflects the association with the King family and the Sunset Avenue neighborhood, the cultural landscape of the King Family home retains integrity of association to the period of significance.

Summary

The King Family Home cultural landscape continues to reflect the character of the site as it existed in from 1964 to 2004. The NPS has not yet made modifications to the site to facilitate visitation or tourism. The most significant impact to the integrity of the site relates to loss or change in materials. The family preserved, retained, or replaced in kind many of the site features during their ownership. The largest tree at the site is in fair condition, and it remains at the site. Its

progeny exist in the rear yard. Undated changes to the site that potentially fall outside of the period of significance, such as the landscape timbers in the rear yard and the plantings in the northeast planting bed, affect the integrity of these features, but these changes are reversible. The dominant contributing feature—the house—reflects the period of significance. Alterations to the exterior

of the house, such as the addition of PVC piping and the sump pump, have been minimal and are meant to prevent further damage to the building. The feeling and association of the site with Martin Luther King, Jr., Coretta Scott King, and their children and the establishment of The King Center for Nonviolent Social Change remain intact to the period of significance.

Cultural Landscape Features Table

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Noncontributing
Natural Systems & Features			
Climate	N/A	X	
Soils	N/A	X	
Spatial Organization			
Organization of adjacent properties and street setback	1949	X	
Three-part organization	1933	X	
Overhead canopy of rear yard	1964	X	
Land Use			
Heritage preservation	2019		X
Residential use	1933	X	
Office use	1968	X	
Cultural Traditions			
Black education and entrepreneurship	Early 20 th Century		
Community activism	Early 20 th Century	X	
African American home ownership	Early 20 th Century	X	
Preservation	1968	X	
Commemoration	2019		X
Cluster Arrangement			
Relationship to Sunset Avenue	1933	X	
Relationship to property lines	1933	X	
Relationship to other residential buildings in neighborhood	1949	X	
Cluster of a structure, small-scale features, and vegetation in rear yard	Likely pre-2004	X	
Circulation			
Driveway and Drive Apron	1964; Resurfaced pre-1998	X	
Asphalt area/walk leading to rear yard	1965	X	
Concrete patio	1968	X	
Sidewalk on Sunset Avenue	Pre-1936	X	
Concrete surface of sidewalk on Sunset Avenue	1968 (?)	X	
Concrete steps and walkway to front entry stair	1965	X	
Concrete curb along northeast planting bed	Unknown (Pre-1976)	X	

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Noncontributing
Sunset Avenue	Pre-1933	X	
Dunkirk Street	Pre-1933; Resurfaced 1980s	X	
Unnamed alley	Pre-1933	X	
Concrete step to basement entry	1968	X	
Granite curb along Sunset Avenue	Pre-1965	X	
Landscape strip along Sunset Avenue	Pre-1965	X	
<i>Missing Circulation</i>			
Herringbone brick surface of sidewalk	Pre-1936		
Concrete curb along north driveway edge	Pre-1976		
Topography			
Sloping site from west to east	N/A	X	
Retaining walls	1965 / Unknown (pre-2004)	X	
Grade of circulation features	1965	X	
Vegetation			
Water oak in rear yard	Pre-1965	X	
Japanese andromeda in rear yard	Unknown		Undetermined
Liriope (front and rear yard) and hosta (front yard)	Unknown		Undetermined
Black cherry outside north property line	Unknown		Undetermined
Japanese maple, azalea, and rose in northeast planting bed	1988 - 2007		Undetermined
Japanese ternstroemia hedge on north property line	Pre-2007	X	
Water oak in landscape strip	Circa 1940s	X	
Chinese holly in southeast corner of site	Post-1965 (but likely pre-2004)	X	
Turf grass	Unknown	X	
Evergreen shrubs at east foundation	Unknown	X	
Pyracantha and wax leaf privet on south property line	Unknown		Undetermined
Evergreen shrubs along south property line	Post-1965 but likely pre-2004	X	
Oaks on south property line (water oak and hybrid oak)	Pre-1965	X	
Canadian hemlock in front yard	Post-1970 but pre-2004	X	
Sasanqua camellia	1965	X	
<i>Missing Vegetation</i>			
Pine in front yard	Pre-1965		
Dogwoods along south property line	Pre-1965		
Pink flowering tree in northeast corner of the site (redbud?)	Pre-1968		
One water oak in landscape strip	Circa 1940s		

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Noncontributing
Mahonia near south property line	Pre-1968		
Azaleas flanking front entry stair	Pre-1968		
Red tip photinia on the north property line in the rear yard	Pre-1968		
Buildings and Structures			
House	1933 (remodeled 1965 and 1968)	X	
Stone retaining wall (driveway)	1965 (altered 1968)	X	
Stone retaining wall (sidewalk)	1968 (?)	X	
Concrete block retaining wall	Unknown, likely pre-2004	X	
Window well enclosure	2019		X
Metal sided utility shed	1971-1972	X	
Utilities	1933-pre-2004	X	
Views and Vistas			
View of King Family Home from east side of Sunset Avenue	1965	X	
View of King Family Home from sidewalk	1965	X	
Views from front entry stair	1965	X	
View toward rear yard	1965	X	
Small-Scale Features			
Anodized aluminum pike fence and gates	1976-1988	X	
Wood privacy fence	Post-1998	Undetermined	
Chain link fence rear yard	Pre-1965	X	
Metal play set	1964-1968	X	
Bricks lining front walkway	Post-1968	Undetermined	
Wood landscape edging	Post-1998	Undetermined	
Concrete apron at foundation	1980s	X	
Mailbox	Pre-1988	Undetermined	
Handrail on steps at front walkway	Post-1988	X	
Lamp post	Pre-1965	X	
Lamp luminaire	Unknown (likely pre-2004)	X	
Plastic landscape edging	Unknown	Undetermined	
Stones at southeast corner of property	Unknown	Undetermined	
PVC tubing on downspouts	2019		X
Home security sign	Post-1972		X
Exterior HVAC Equipment	Unknown	Undetermined	
Sump pump	2019		X
Cast concrete planters	1965	X	
Missing Small-Scale Features			
Chain link fence front yard (north and south)	1965		
Stones lining front foundation planting bed	Pre-1968		
Bricks lining northeast planting bed	Pre-1968		

Treatment Recommendations

Introduction

The treatment recommendations for this cultural landscape report (CLR) propose a preservation strategy for long-term management of the cultural landscape based on research, inventory, and analysis. The appropriate preservation approach considers the evolution of the landscape alongside historic significance, existing conditions, current use, and methods to improve overall sustainability of the landscape. The CLR combines the site history and analysis with input from the current site managers to formulate an appropriate treatment and management philosophy.

Recommendations follow National Park Service policy directives, including the Director's Orders No. 28: *Cultural Resource Management Guidelines* and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. These documents identify four types of treatment: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Each treatment ranges by level of physical intervention and includes specific guidelines and standards.

As defined by the National Park Service, the purpose of a landscape treatment plan is to set forth guidelines for preserving and enhancing historic landscape characteristics and features within the context of contemporary park uses.⁴⁴⁵ Treatment describes the future appearance of the landscape at the planning level with preliminary design recommendations. It does not provide construction level details necessary for implementation, nor does it address routine maintenance.

Management Summary

The King Family Home is a fundamental resource within Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park and will eventually be a destination for visitors (though the park has not yet determined arrival, parking, interpretive plans, etc.).

The treatment and use of the King Family Home cultural landscape must be considered within a framework of applicable laws, agreements, and policies. These mandates govern a wide range of management issues beyond the preservation, protection, and interpretation of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park's cultural resources. They extend to issues of visitor and staff use, safety, and universal accessibility, and resiliency to natural hazards, among others.

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Foundation Document, August 2017 (Draft Update document, August 2021)

Every unit of the national park system has a foundation level document to provide basic guidance for planning and management decisions—a foundation for planning and management.⁴⁴⁶ The Foundation Document for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Park is being updated in 2021 (original document 2017), “. . .to reflect new park ownership for the Birth Home, King Family Home, and legislation passed in 2018 (PL 115-108).”⁴⁴⁷

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PARK

The description of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park has been updated as follows:

445. Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, “A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques” (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 1998), 81.

446. National Park Service, “Foundation Document, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site” (Washington, D.C., August 2017).

447. National Park Service, “Foundation Document, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site” (Washington, D.C., DRAFT document August 2021), 2.

[TEXT EDIT OF BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PARK FROM 2017 DOCUMENT; pp 3-4]

On October 10, 1980, Congress established Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Preservation District in Atlanta, Georgia, in order to protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations, the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, where he lived, worked, worshiped, and is buried (Public Law 96-428). Legislation passed in 2018 (Public Law 115-108), included a change in designation to “national historical park,” and a revision to the park map to include the Prince Hall Masonic Building within the authorized boundary. The park consists of 39.17 acres, 14.07 of which are federally owned. Portions of the park are also part of a national historic landmark district. Approximately 700,000 to more than one million national and international visitors come annually to learn about the life experiences and the significance of one of the most influential men of the 20th century. Visitors to Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Site have spent \$38.5 million in the local area, resulting in 649 jobs and a cumulative benefit to the state economy of \$58.2 million.

The King Family Home at 234 Sunset Avenue. The home where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. Coretta Scott King moved with their children in 1965 and Dr. King’s family continued to live after his tragic assassination in Memphis, TN. The National Park Service owns the King Family Home.

Fundamental Resources and Values (FRV) are described as those determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

The following fundamental resources and values have been updated for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park:

[NEW FRV - PG 5] King Family Home. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. Coretta Scott King purchased the home at 234 Sunset Avenue in October 1964. Their chosen location

in the working-class neighborhood of Vine City near downtown Atlanta reflects Dr. King’s commitment to address the universal injustices that plagued the working class and poor. The 1930s home was renovated twice under the direction of Mrs. King to meet their needs as a family with four young children and accommodate Dr. King’s commitment to his work—once prior to moving in and again after Dr. King’s death. The home included offices that supported the work of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and other organizations as well as spaces where he and Mrs. King hosted gatherings for prominent civil rights leaders. It provided a critical function during segregation because most public gathering spaces were off limits to African Americans.

The Analysis of Fundamental Resources and Values for Historic Structures sections identify current conditions and trends as follows:

Threats: The updated Foundation Document lists a series of environmental and building degradation threats which include: aging of the home exterior maintenance deficiencies of the exterior envelope (roof, walls, windows, doors), impact of large yard tree on house foundations, deterioration of exterior fencing, inadequate building systems and services, house is not universally accessible, safety issues with stairs, railings, etc., lack of visitor parking or access.

Opportunities: The Updated Foundation Document lists a series of opportunities including: future planning efforts to include local community in future programming of the site, use of virtual tours and walking tours in the neighborhood, additional visitor interpretation, increased use of volunteers, use of contemporary interpretive media devices, an expanded partnership with the King family to enhance interpretation, and an expanded NPS curatorial staff for long term housekeeping, monitoring, etc., at the home.

Appendix C: Analysis of Related Resources assesses the Preservation District with current conditions and trends and threats and opportunities. It acknowledges the conditions in the Preservation District vary from poor to good depending on location.

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site: General Management Plan, February 1986 & Long-Range Interpretive Plan, December 2011

The national historical park's approved 1986 *General Management Plan* (GMP) and the 2011 *Long-Range Interpretive Plan* (LRIP) predate the inclusion of the King Family Home in the national historical park. These documents note the importance of the historic residential structures and the cultural landscape of the neighborhood as an extension of the Martin Luther King, Jr. boyhood story.⁴⁴⁸ The GMP's stated goal is to restore "the exteriors of the structures and grounds to appear as they did when Dr. King lived there as a boy," that is 1929-1941. The LRIP adds that this visual backdrop can play an active role in the interpretive tour. The national historical park may reevaluate these documents in the future to include the King Family Home and its setting in Atlanta's Sunset Avenue Historic District in Vine City.

National Historic Preservation Act

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) mandates that federal agencies such as the National Park Service consider the effects of their actions on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and allows the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a reasonable opportunity to comment.⁴⁴⁹ The King Family Home cultural landscape will likely be listed as a contributing resource in the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Park in the future, and any undertakings involving the expenditure of federal funds will be reviewed in accordance with NPS policy and federal historic preservation laws including the service-wide *Programmatic Agreement Among the National Park Service (U.S. Department of the Interior), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Conference of State*

Historic Preservation Officers for Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (2008).⁴⁵⁰

Section 110 of the NHPA clarifies the broad historic preservation responsibilities of federal agencies with the intention of ensuring that historic preservation is fully integrated into the ongoing programs of all federal agencies by identifying, protecting, and avoiding unnecessary damage to historic properties. Additionally, each agency is required to use historic properties available to it and when managing these properties and must consider preservation of their historic, archaeological, architectural, and cultural values.⁴⁵¹

Executive Order 11593

Executive Order 11593: Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment (1971) mandates that "the Federal Government shall provide leadership in preserving, restoring, and maintaining the historic and cultural environment of the Nation."⁴⁵² Responsibilities of federal agencies include:

- Nominating "...to the Secretary of the Interior all sites, buildings, districts, and objects under their jurisdiction of the control that appear to qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places."
- Exert caution "...during the interim period until inventories and evaluation...are completed to assure that any federally owned property that might qualify for nomination is not inadvertently transferred, sold, demolished, or substantially altered."
- "Initiate measures to assure that where as a result of Federal action or assistance a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places is to be substantially altered or demolished, timely steps be taken to make or have made records, including measured drawings, photographs, and maps, of the property, and that copy of such records then be deposited in the Library of Congress as part

448. National Park Service, *General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, Atlanta, Georgia* (Atlanta, Georgia: Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, 1986); Harpers Ferry Center Interpretive Planning, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site staff, and partners, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2011).

449. The NHPA of 1966 was last amended in 2006. A downloadable copy is located at <http://www.achp.gov/nhpa.html>.

450. A copy of this agreement can be found on the NPS's website at <http://www.nps.gov/policy/106agreement.pdf>.

451. More information on Section 110 can be found on the NPS's website at http://www.nps.gov/hps/fapa_110.htm.

452. A copy of this E.O. can be found in the National Archives at <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/11593.html>.

of the Historic American Buildings Survey or Historic American Engineering Record for future use and reference.”

- “Initiate measures and procedures to provide for the maintenance, through preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration, of federally owned and registered sites professional standards prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior.”⁴⁵³

Executive Order 13006

Executive Order 13006: Locating Federal Facilities on Historic Properties (1996) mandates that “the Federal Government shall utilize and maintain, wherever operationally appropriate and economically prudent, historic properties and districts.” Furthermore, “any rehabilitation or construction that is undertaken pursuant to this order must be architecturally compatible with the character of the surrounding historic district or properties.”⁴⁵⁴

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards

Recommended treatments for the King Family Home cultural landscape are to be guided by *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Historic Preservation Projects*.⁴⁵⁵ Descriptions of the four standards are as follows:

Preservation is “the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.

New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.”

Rehabilitation is “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.”

Restoration is “the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.”

Reconstruction is “the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.”

The preferred option for the ultimate treatment of the cultural landscape at the King Family Home is **rehabilitation** with preservation of character defining features; this treatment may include replacement of damaged or missing historic fabric with “replacement in-kind” or reproduction elements (sidewalks, plantings, fencing, etc.). Reconstruction is not a treatment consideration because the cultural landscape at the King Family Home remains largely intact.

The site has three primary zones consisting of the front yard and streetscape, the house, and the rear yard. The exterior of the building is largely unchanged and remains much as it did in the late-1960s and early-1970s with minor changes made in later years by Coretta Scott King, including painting the retaining wall and adding new fencing. The basement level entrance and stone retaining

453. “Federal Register, Executive Orders,” National Archives, May 13, 1971, <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/11593.html>. 1971, appear at 36 FR 8921, 3 CFR, 1971-1975 Comp., p. 559, unless otherwise noted. By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States and in furtherance of the purposes and policies of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.

454. A copy of this agreement is located on the ACHP’s website at <http://www.achp.gov/EO13006.html>.

455. Weeks, Kay D. and Anne E. Grimmer. “The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings.” United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Heritage Preservation Services, Washington, DC, 1995.

wall retain their appearance from the establishment of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change (The King Center) by Coretta Scott King in 1968. Joseph W. Robinson, FAIA, NOMA completed all of the architectural work for the house renovations. The landscape designer for the work at the site is unknown. Much of the existing cultural landscape dates from one of the two renovation projects at the house. Much of the cultural landscape fabric is related to the proposed period of significance of 1964-2004. The National Park Service has completed some minor temporary repairs since acquiring the property in January 2019.

Director's Order-28

Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline (DO-28) is intended to guide the National Park Service through successful cultural resource management through three steps:⁴⁵⁶

1. **Research:** "identify, evaluate, document, register, and establish other basic information about cultural resources;"
2. **Planning:** "ensure that this information is well integrated into management processes for making decisions and setting priorities;" and
3. **Stewardship:** "planning decisions are carried out and resources are preserved, protected, and interpreted to the public."⁴⁵⁷

The research and planning (for treatment and use) of this cultural landscape is addressed through the development of this CLR. The general preservation philosophy integrated into this CLR is best represented by the following guidance: "Better to preserve than to repair, better repair than restore, better restore than [re]construct. It is ordinarily better to retain genuine old work of several periods, rather than arbitrarily to 'restore'

the whole, by new work, to its aspect at a single period."⁴⁵⁸

Decisions for the future stewardship of this cultural landscape are under the purview of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. As part of DO-28, "stewardship focuses on five major activities:

- Control of treatment and use,
- Monitoring conditions of deterioration and structural failure,
- Protecting from human and environmental threats,
- Retaining or delegating responsibility for structures, and
- Developing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to support the program."⁴⁵⁹

DO-28 provides standards for each of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Rehabilitation is discussed further below, as these treatments directly apply to the King Family Home cultural landscape.

Rehabilitation improves the utility or function of a historic landscape, through repair or alteration, to make possible a compatible contemporary use while preserving those portions or features that are important in defining its significance.

In DO 28, Chapter 7: Management of Cultural Landscapes states that "rehabilitation improves the utility or the function of a cultural landscape, through repair or alteration, to make possible an efficient compatible use while preserving those portions or features that are important in defining its significance. The following standards based on the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* apply:

- A cultural landscape is used as it was historically or is given a new or adaptive use that maximizes the retention of historic materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- The historic character of a cultural landscape is retained and preserved.

456. A copy of NPS-28 can be found at https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/nps28/28contents.htm.

457. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management," May 23, 2000, 1, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/nps28/28contents.htm.

458. The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments policy statement (1936). Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Director's Order #28," 2.

459. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Director's Order #28," 127.

The replacement or removal of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a landscape is avoided.

- Each cultural landscape is recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features from other landscapes, are not undertaken. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve historic materials and features is physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
- Changes to a cultural landscape that have acquired historical significance in their own right are retained and preserved.
- Historic materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a cultural landscape are preserved.
- Deteriorated historic features are repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or replacement of a historic feature, the new feature matches the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Repair or replacement of missing features is substantiated by archeological, documentary, or physical evidence.
- Chemical or physical treatments that cause damage to historic materials are not used.
- Archeological and structural resources are protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures are undertaken including recovery, curation, and documentation.
- Additions, alterations, or related new construction do not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the cultural landscape. New work is differentiated from the old and is compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the landscape.
- Additions and adjacent or related new construction are undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the

essential form and integrity of the cultural landscape would be unimpaired.⁴⁶⁰

International Existing Building Code

According to The Public Buildings Amendments of 1988, any building constructed or altered by a Federal agency must, “to the maximum extent feasible, be in compliance with one of the nationally recognized model building codes and with other applicable nationally recognized codes.”⁴⁶¹ The International Existing Building Code (IEBC) is one of the allowable recognized model building codes.

Treatments of the buildings and cultural landscape are to be guided by the International Existing Building Code (IEBC).⁴⁶² Threats to public life, safety, and welfare are to be addressed; however, because this building and site is historic, alternatives to full legislative and code compliance are recommended where compliance would needlessly compromise the integrity of the cultural landscape such as the removal of character defining features or infringement upon the national register characteristics of the site and/or structures.

Accessibility

With no construction activity to initiate changes, it is premature to recommend accessibility design modifications to the house at the King Family Home. Appendix D outlines the necessary codes for accessibility that are applicable to the King Family Home. Modifications to the site may be likely as property use evolves and rehabilitation work commences. The most appropriate response will consider scoping and technical design requirements of the Architectural Barrier Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS) and skillful application of preservation principles to preserve the historic character and historical integrity of

460. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “Director’s Order #28,” 127.”

461. The General Services Administration had more information on this amendment and other accepted building codes at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101288>.

462. IEBC is overseen by the International Code Council. More information is located at <http://www.iccsafe.org/CS/Pages/default.aspx>.

this property.⁴⁶³ Refer to NPS *Preservation Brief 32: Making Historic Properties Accessible* for more information.⁴⁶⁴

Planning for Resiliency (Response to Natural Hazards)

Note: Terminology used in the 2016 National Park Service *Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy* is quoted from the report.⁴⁶⁵ The NPS uses the terms “natural hazards” and “climate change” when discussing this topic.

Cultural resources including historic buildings and small-scale features “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.”⁴⁶⁶ Natural hazards can impact cultural vegetation with even the slightest variation in temperature and moisture. 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.”⁴⁶⁷

Then-Associate Director of Cultural Resources Partnerships and Science provided the following description in the Foreword to the 2016 National Park Service *Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy* (CRCC Strategy):

463. The Architectural Barrier Act Accessibility Standards are under the authorization of the United States Access Board. More information can be found through Access Board’s website (<http://www.access-board.gov/aba/>).

464. Jester, Thomas C. and Sharon C. Park. “Making Historic Properties Accessible.” *Preservation Brief 32*. Washington, DC, September 1993. Accessible at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief32.htm>.

465. Marcy Rockman et al., “Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy” (Washington, DC: Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science and Climate Change Response Program, National Park Service., 2016).

466. “Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy - Climate Change (U.S. National Park Service),” accessed May 8, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/culturalresourcesstrategy.htm>.

467. John B. Jarvis to All National Park Service Employees, memorandum, 10 February 2014, *Climate Change and Stewardship of Cultural Resources, Policy Memorandum 14-02*, <https://www.nps.gov/policy/PolMemos/PM-14-02.htm>.

This strategy was developed in 2016 in conjunction with the centennial of the NPS Organic Act and the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, which established the framework for the current national historic preservation program. The NPS CRCC Strategy responds to the mandates of both Acts and provides guidance for NPS managers to anticipate, plan for, and respond to the real and potential effects of a changing climate on the cultural resources the 1916 Act commits us to protect unimpaired for future generations. Under the NHPA, it further provides guidance to...the national historic preservation program to recognize and respond to a wide range of environmental changes that are threatening cultural resources in communities throughout the Nation.

The CRCC Strategy...defines the impacts of a changing climate on different cultural resources and organizes methods for evaluating these resources, assessing their vulnerabilities, and prioritizing our options to respond.

This strategy builds on the foundation of PM 14-02 (Director’s Policy Memoranda, *Climate Change and Stewardship of Cultural Resources*) and is intended primarily as a companion document to the *Climate Change Response Strategy* (2010). The purpose of this strategy is to set out the broad scope of cultural resources in relation to climate change and identify major directions of action in cultural resources and climate change for the NPS.⁴⁶⁸

Goals for the CRCC Strategy include:

1. **Connect Impacts & Information:** Set the broad scope of cultural resources and climate change response by connecting the concepts of impacts and information with the four pillars of climate change response: science, adaptation, mitigation, and communication.
2. **Understand the Scope:** Coordinate science, management, and communication to identify and improve understanding of the

468. Rockman et al., “Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy,” 1.

effects of climate change on cultural resources.

3. Integrate Practice: Incorporate climate change into ongoing cultural resources research, planning, and stewardship.
4. Learn & Share: Collaborate with partners to grow and use the body of knowledge and practice for cultural resources and climate change.

The application of these goals toward the requirements of a cultural landscape report are most directly seen in Goal 3 where planning and stewardship are identified as “action tasks” along with research. Research, planning, and stewardship work together to create a holistic approach to preserving a cultural landscape.

Research is the identification, evaluation, documentation, and full understanding and interpretation of cultural resources and is essential to informed decision making for park planning and operations, including maintenance and visitor services.

Planning includes the definition of the site history, the existing conditions, and analysis sections of a CLR. In broader terms, planning “. . . integrates cultural resource concerns into other park planning and management processes.” It also “identifies the most appropriate uses for cultural resources and determine their ultimate treatment (preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, reconstruction).”⁴⁶⁹

Stewardship relates most directly to the recommendations for treatment and use sections where specific action plans are presented for consideration for the treatment of the resource’s contributing features (using NPS systems, such as the Cultural Resources Inventory System).⁴⁷⁰ Planning decisions are carried out and resources are preserved, protected, and interpreted to the public.

Goal 3 also states that,

Integrating climate change into cultural resource management is a merging process. . . . Goal 3 sets

469. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “Director’s Order #28,” chap. 3.

470. Definitions for Research, Planning and Stewardship are found in the Introduction to NPS-28, 1-4.

the broad objective of climate change – cultural resource integration. Many NPS programs, regions, and parks have already or are developing detailed guidance, action, and stewardship plans which include cultural resources in a variety of ways. Goal 3 supports these diverse efforts by organizing and illustrating points of intersection between developing approaches for climate change and *established cultural resources management practices* [emphasis by author].⁴⁷¹

As such, recommendations pertaining to climate change have been incorporated into the recommendations for treatment of the individual landscape features below.

Adaptation Options (part of *Goal 3 Action Tasks*) includes improvement to resilience / resistance. Improving resilience / resistance consists of one or more actions that change the nature and / or setting of a resource that are designed to make a resource better able to withstand or be recovered from environmental hazards or other forces. The goal of this option is survival of the resource, despite possible impacts of actions on integrity of the resource, although this option does not necessarily mean the resource will be unimpaired. Examples include treatment of site materials to better withstand increased moisture, wind, or an invasive species.

The National Park Service conducted a 2018 study of climate change, which analyzed climate trends including temperature and precipitation in all national parks in the United States.⁴⁷² The study includes data from a date range of 1950-2010 and projected trends for 2000-2100.⁴⁷³ As stated in the Existing Conditions section, statistics for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park show a past and projected increase in temperature and precipitation.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency document “What Climate Change Means for Georgia,” increasing temperatures and severe

471. Rockman et al., “Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy,” 26.

472. P. Gonzalez et al., “Disproportionate Magnitude of Climate Change in United States National Parks,” Environmental Research Letters (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2018), <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2265248>.

473. Gonzalez et al., “Disproportionate Magnitude of Climate Change in United States National Parks,” S22.

flooding is already apparent in the state, and rain includes heavy downpours.⁴⁷⁴ Heavy rainfall can inundate stormwater systems, and overwhelmed storm sewers have been a historically documented problem in Vine City. The City of Atlanta has a climate change initiative called the Climate Action Plan, which includes steps developers, homeowners, and residents of the city can take to reduce emissions and improve environmental quality in the city.⁴⁷⁵

The King Family Home is located in Atlanta, and the cultural landscape contains features that are important to the history of the city and the Vine City neighborhood. Treatment recommendations must aim to protect the cultural resources at the site, but treatment must also align with city of Atlanta and NPS climate change policies. More frequent heavy rain events are of particular concern as the house already experiences flooding at the basement level. The national historical park will need to address the lack of positive drainage away from the house foundation while attempting to reduce offsite stormwater discharge. Rising temperatures and increased moisture may also have distinct impacts on cultural resources within cultural landscapes such as the King Family Home, including the following:⁴⁷⁶

- Decline/disappearance of some vegetation species, other species favored;
- Heat stress on culturally significant vegetation;
- Increased desiccation, warping, and cracking of constructed landscape features;
- Limited ability to plant in waterlogged soil;
- Loss of historical integrity with improved drainage systems;
- Decreased soil fertility from erosion, waterlogging, leaching;

- Loss of landscape features;
- Increased susceptibility to destructive fungi;
- Wash out or damage to roads, trails, and landscape features throughout parks;
- Variable damage/loss of organic and inorganic materials and landscape features;
- Soil erosion;
- Immediate alteration/destruction of historic landscape, particularly trees; and
- Exposure of vegetation to conditions that are potentially less suitable for optimal growth thereby making them more susceptible to invasive species and pests.

NPS site managers should be prepared for any number of these impacts and have actionable strategies incorporated into all planning documents to address maintenance, repairs, and preservation of cultural resources.

Treatment Philosophy

The treatment philosophy articulates the essential qualities of the landscape that convey its significance and helps to guide decisions and provide context for the treatment tasks in this report. This landscape is a surviving remnant of the King family's occupation of the site. Coretta Scott King occupied the house until 2004, and she made minimal changes to the landscape. As stated in the Analysis and Evaluation section of this report, a proposed period of significance of 1964 through 2004 has been used for assessment of contributing and non-contributing resources.

Many contributing landscape features survive at the site. Rehabilitation of the landscape will advance the preservation, education, and interpretation goals of the national historical park. The overall treatment philosophy for the cultural landscape includes the following:

- The NPS should preserve the essential spatial organization and landscape features that contribute to the significance of the landscape including the buildings, circulation, structures, vegetation, and small-scale features.
- Future interpretation should include information on not only the King family but also the surrounding neighborhood, its

474. United States Environmental Protection Agency, "What Climate Change Means for Georgia," August 2016, <https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-09/documents/climate-change-ga.pdf>.

475. City of Atlanta, Mayor's Office of Sustainability, "City of Atlanta Climate Action Plan," July 23, 2015, <https://atlantaclimateactionplan.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/atlanta-climate-action-plan-07-23-2015.pdf>.

476. Marcy Rockman et al., "Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy" (Washington, DC: Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science and Climate Change Response Program, National Park Service, 2016).

development, and history. The NPS should inform visitors about Vine City and the King Family Home's importance as a part of the neighborhood.

- The rehabilitation of the house and cultural landscape should include compatible alterations to the landscape to allow visitors of all physical abilities to experience the property and to enhance opportunities for visitors to engage with the site's history. These alterations shall be guided by future visitation and interpretive plans for the site.
- The NPS should perform skilled care and upkeep of the landscape to present the qualities that characterized the property during the period of significance.
- The NPS will carry out replacement in-kind of aged features with the recognition of cyclic and long-term changes inherent in landscape features, land use practices, and natural systems.
- The NPS will coordinate with the city of Atlanta for changes that occur within the city right-of way.
- Park furnishings, signs, and other features necessary for identification, public use, and comfort will be inconspicuous and compatible with the historic setting.
- The national historical park will work with the community to protect the historic setting around the site.

Primary Landscape Treatment: Rehabilitation

The recommended primary treatment for the King Family Home landscape is Rehabilitation, one of four treatments defined by the Secretary of the Interior, which is defined as "...the act or process of making possible a compatible use of a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values."

The Secretary of the Interior identifies the following ten standards under Rehabilitation:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Rehabilitation is the most appropriate treatment for the King Family Home because of the need to provide for contemporary park functions, visitor services, and environmental sustainability. While alterations are expected, the ninth standard emphasizes differentiating the old and new as well as the selection of updated compatible historic materials. This treatment focuses on managing the landscape for its historic character by preserving significant landscape characteristics and features, replacing in-kind key features, and allowing for changes to parking and circulation to accommodate park visitors. Contemporary changes will be in keeping with the historic character of the landscape and represent a minor component in the overall treatment.

Treatment Concept

Definition of a treatment date provides a benchmark for managing the historic character of a landscape. The treatment date corresponds to a time during the historic period when the landscape culminated its development in relation to the areas of significance. The treatment date also corresponds to a time when the property best illustrates the park's significance and interpretive themes. The historic context study for the site establishes the historic themes for the King Family Home, and it is anticipated that a future National Register nomination will establish the period of significance.

Given the extensive proposed period of significance for the property (1964-2004), the goal of treatment is not restoration of the landscape to a particular period of time, but rather, appropriate long-term treatment measures that preserve and protect the qualities and character defining features of the King Family Home. Another goal is to maintain historic resources in good condition and address repair needs. Park staff have relayed that they wish to focus future interpretive efforts at the site on a period of 1964 to 1972. Since visitor access and an interpretive plan have not been developed or decided for this resource, the treatment

recommendations support the goals of providing public access and education and preserving features that remain at the site from the early period of significance; however, the CLR does not recommend that the national historical park remove character defining features. Additionally, until visitor use and interpretation are determined, the CLR cannot suggest improvements for providing universal access and movement through the site.

General Treatment Issues

The following are general treatment recommendations for the King Family Home landscape that inform the treatment objectives and tasks in the second part of this chapter. These recommendations are associated with visitor experience, circulation, and vegetation management for the King Family Home.

Visitor arrival and access

Public visitation to the house has not begun. The site currently contains no onsite or offsite identification or signage. The NPS will create recommendations for these features in conjunction with future wayfinding, visitation, and interpretive plan development.

It is anticipated that once visitors begin to tour the house, they will enter the site from Sunset Avenue. National historical site staff have not determined how visitors will enter the house or access the site; however, it is anticipated that they will use both the sidewalk that parallels Sunset Avenue and some portion of the driveway to approach the house. It is unknown at the time of this report if visitors will be required to drive to the site and park on Sunset Avenue or if they will arrive by some type of park-owned or concessionaire-run transportation.

When visitation occurs at the house, site development should include an accessible route from Sunset Avenue to the point of entry into the house. The entry point for visitors and staff to the house has not been determined at the time of this report, and site circulation will be dependent upon these future decisions. For instance, entry into the house could occur along the driveway and into the garage / basement level or via the driveway extension on the north side of the house, should the NPS install a lift on that side of the house.

As plans for visitation to the house develop, NPS should consider addressing the need to provide visitors access to the features of the cultural landscape. Design for accessibility should follow the guidelines afforded in the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ADA/ABAAS).

Site identification and wayfinding

The national historical park should update the 2013 *Signage, Safety and Services Plan* to include the King Family Home. The update should include recommendations for offsite directional signage, onsite identification and wayfinding signage, and interpretive wayside location recommendations.

Vegetation management

The King Family Home landscape contains several large specimen deciduous trees. The NPS recently assessed the large water oak located in the rear yard and has determined that it is hazardous.⁴⁷⁷ Ongoing replacement and rejuvenation of site vegetation is necessary to preserve the character of the King Family Home landscape. A comprehensive tree replacement strategy coordinated with the City of Atlanta for trees located in the city right-of-way will benefit the property.

Documentation

The NPS should document through drawings, photographs, and notes all changes and treatments implemented at the King Family Home cultural landscape.

Treatment Objectives and Tasks

This section provides treatment objectives and tasks to enhance the historic landscape setting including programming and visitor experience, circulation, vegetation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, and small-scale features.

Treatment objectives include:

- Convey the evolution of the King Family Home property using illustrations, models, and / or media;
- Convey the importance of Vine City and the King family's residence in the community to the public;

- Facilitate visitor circulation in the landscape;
- Protect views to and from the King Family Home to the surrounding neighborhood;
- Preserve and replant trees and shrubs; and
- Provide amenities for visitor safety, comfort, and engagement.

The individual treatment tasks are listed with a code using the feature category abbreviation: PV-Programming and Visitor Experience, CR-Circulation, VG-Vegetation, BS-Buildings and Structures, VV- Views and Vistas, and SS-Small-Scale Features. The task narratives identify affected landscape features as inventoried in the Analysis and Evaluation chapter. Preservation is the default treatment for historic landscape features having no specific tasks identified. Tasks are identified on Illustration 5.1 and summarized in Table 5.1.

PROGRAMMING AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

PV-1: Establish an arrival sequence and improve pedestrian circulation

The national historical park has not established how visitors will arrive at the site or the method by which they will arrive. A visitation plan may establish that visitors will arrive by a shuttle, and passengers may disembark at the curb or in the driveway. Alternatively, the national historic park might require visitors to use their own transportation and arrive at the site via car or by foot. The sidewalk in the right-of-way serves as a good place for disembarking passengers, and it could be repaved to provide accessibility to those of all abilities (see CR-1). The driveway would serve as a good location for gathering of tour groups. Repaving the driveway will create an even and accessible surface, suitable for all abilities (see CR-2).

PV-2: Establish site identification signage and waysides

The NPS will likely install site identification signs at the site. The site is of a residential scale, and a small identity sign would be most appropriate. Refer to National Park Service Uniguide Standards, Section 3.2 for VIS Park and Facility Identification Sign guidelines. To enhance visitor awareness of the appearance of the King Family Home during the period of significance, the NPS should develop waysides at the site. Interpretive waysides could utilize still images from the December 1965 Arnold Michaelis interview and photographs from April 1968. These images reveal that the King

477. Shawn Dawson and Steve Hanaburgh, "234 Sunset Water Oak Tree Inspection and Assessment Report" (Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historical Park, March 2019).

family made few changes to the landscape in the subsequent years. Waysides should also provide information on Vine City and the community traditions of activism and Black home ownership in the neighborhood. Suggested locations for waysides are indicated on Illustration 5.1. Since the NPS has not established a sequence of arrival and departure for visitors to the site, the NPS may desire to adjust these locations based on future visitation plan development.

CIRCULATION

CR-1: Repave sidewalk

When the King family purchased the house, the sidewalk paralleling Sunset Avenue was paved with brick set in a herringbone brick pattern. Later, likely in 1968, city crews repaved the sidewalks with concrete pavement. The existing sidewalks reflect this circa 1968 change in material. These sidewalks should be maintained or replaced in-kind with like material. The historic granite curbs at the site should be preserved and reset to a six inch height.

The subgrade below the pavement could include engineered soil to support tree growth and provide capacity for handling stormwater. The Environmental Protection Agency has recommendations for construction of sidewalks above engineered soils.⁴⁷⁸ Coordinate with VG-10 and SS-5 for potential recommendations for including a modular suspended pavement system in this location. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 are examples of a modular suspended pavement system supporting hardscape and tree plantings.

CR-2: Repave driveway

During the early period of significance, the driveway was paved with concrete and later included a concrete curb along the northern edge of the pavement. The King family repaved the driveway during the later period of significance with asphalt. Currently, the pavement is graded so that water flows along the northern side of the house, turns south toward the garage and flows toward the basement level entry door. The NPS should repave the driveway so that it has positive drainage away from the garage and basement

entry door. The NPS should remove the asphalt surface and evaluate the concrete underneath. If the concrete is beyond repair, the NPS should remove the concrete as well and install a new surface. Contractors should preserve areas of the pavement during demolition to evaluate and sample aggregate size, composition, and color. Replacement concrete or asphalt should visually match the historic materials. Both concrete and asphalt surfaces are contributing features to the period of significance.

To help alleviate pressures on the city's stormwater system and following *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, the NPS may want to consider using a pervious pavement to repave the driveway. The illustrated guidelines recommend "Avoiding paving up to the building foundation to reduce heat island effect, building temperature, damage to the foundation and storm-water runoff" and "Adding features . . . to the historic building site to enhance storm-water management and on-site water reuse."⁴⁷⁹ If it is possible to match the historic concrete or asphalt appearance, the NPS may use a porous material to reduce the amount of impervious surface at the site.

CR-3: Replace driveway extension north side of house

Should the building's waterproofing project (see BS-2) require contractors to remove any portion of the driveway extension on the north side of the garage, this extension should be replaced in-kind with like material. This area provides a pedestrian connection to the rear patio area, and photographic evidence dates it to the period of significance. To help alleviate pressures on the city's stormwater system the NPS may want to consider using a pervious pavement to repave the driveway extension, which follows *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. The NPS could consider replacing this impervious asphalt surface with pervious paving that replicates the look of the existing and historic asphalt and provides positive drainage away from the building.

478. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Stormwater to Street Trees: Engineering Urban Forests for Stormwater Management," September 2013, <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/stormwater2streettrees.pdf>.

479. National Park Service, "Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings," 2011, 21, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/sustainability-guidelines.pdf>.

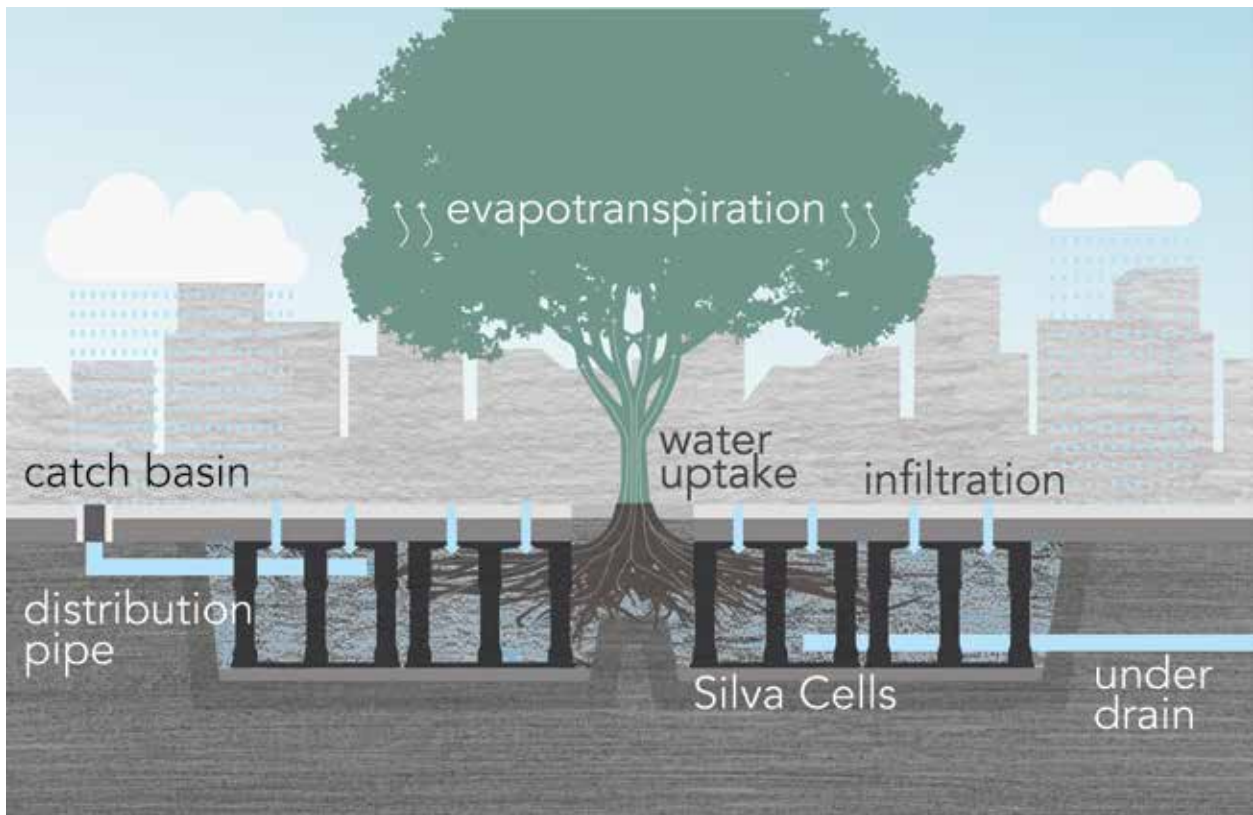


Figure 5.1. Example of a modular suspended pavement system that supports hardscape, accommodates tree root growth, and promotes stormwater infiltration. (Source: © 2021 Deeprout, deeprout.com.)



Figure 5.2. View of installation of a modular suspended pavement system. (Source: © 2021 Deeprout, deeprout.com.)

CR-4: Repave patio

The patio located on the north side of the house is in fair condition; however, it does not provide positive drainage away from the house. It is recommended that the NPS rebuild the patio after they have completed the foundation waterproofing project (see BS-2). The patio should provide positive drainage away from the house foundation at a slope of at least two percent. To help alleviate pressures on the city's stormwater system, the NPS may want to consider using a pervious pavement following *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. Contractors should preserve areas of the pavement during demolition to evaluate and sample aggregate size, composition, and color. New paving should replicate the look of the historic concrete. Plans for construction should guarantee that water infiltration occurs away from the house foundation and that appropriate waterproofing measures have been implemented at the foundation. If the NPS chooses to use a non-pervious concrete, it should match the existing concrete appearance.

CR-5: Coordinate with the City of Atlanta to repave Dunkirk Street

According to interviews, Bernice King and Pat Latimore believe that the paving of Dunkirk Street coincided with water entering the basement level of the house. The street is outside the property boundary and outside NPS ownership. The NPS should consider coordinating with the City of Atlanta to repave this street with a pervious paving (e.g. porous asphalt or concrete) to reduce sheet flow onto the King Family Home site, which is at a lower elevation. Alternatively, the city might consider installing a curb on the north side of Dunkirk Street to direct water away from the King Family Home property line.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES**BS-1: Preserve, maintain, and manage the house at 234 Sunset Avenue as a cultural resource**

A historic structure report for the King Family Home is under development for the house concurrent with this CLR. Treatment recommendations in that document aim to preserve the character defining features of the interior and exterior of the building. The report recommends preservation of some exterior character defining features and recommends the repair of historic features such as windows. Refer

to BS-2 for waterproofing recommendations related to preservation of the building.

BS-2: Provide positive drainage away from the house

The NPS should undertake a project to protect the house from water infiltration per recommendations in the HSR. Consult the HSR and *Preservation Brief 39: Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings* for additional information.⁴⁸⁰ After completing waterproofing of the foundation, the NPS should follow project guidance for drainage away from the building, which may include granular backfill immediately adjacent to the foundation walls and / or a French drain system. The NPS should remove the concrete aprons around the house and grade the backfill at a slope that promotes positive drainage away from the house (see SS-3). Though these features date to the period of significance, they exacerbate water infiltration problems in the basement level of the house, endangering that resource. The NPS has implemented several non-permanent interventions on the site to alleviate the problem. The historic structure report recommends waterproofing of the foundation walls to improve this condition and to direct water away from the building. Refer to BS-1, BS-6, CR-2, CR-3, CR-4, SS-2, and SS-5.

BS-3: Preserve and / or replace in-kind the metal sided utility shed

The existing metal sided utility shed is in poor condition. If possible, the NPS should locate a match to this building, which was readily available in Sears Roebuck & Company catalogs in the 1970s. If a replacement building cannot be located, preserve the existing building in situ and repair the doors and roof. Follow the Secretary of the Interior's guidance for the preservation of metals.⁴⁸¹

480. Sharon C. Park, "Preservation Brief 39: Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings," accessed April 16, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/39-control-unwanted-moisture.htm>.

481. National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings-Metals," accessed May 10, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/metals01.htm>.

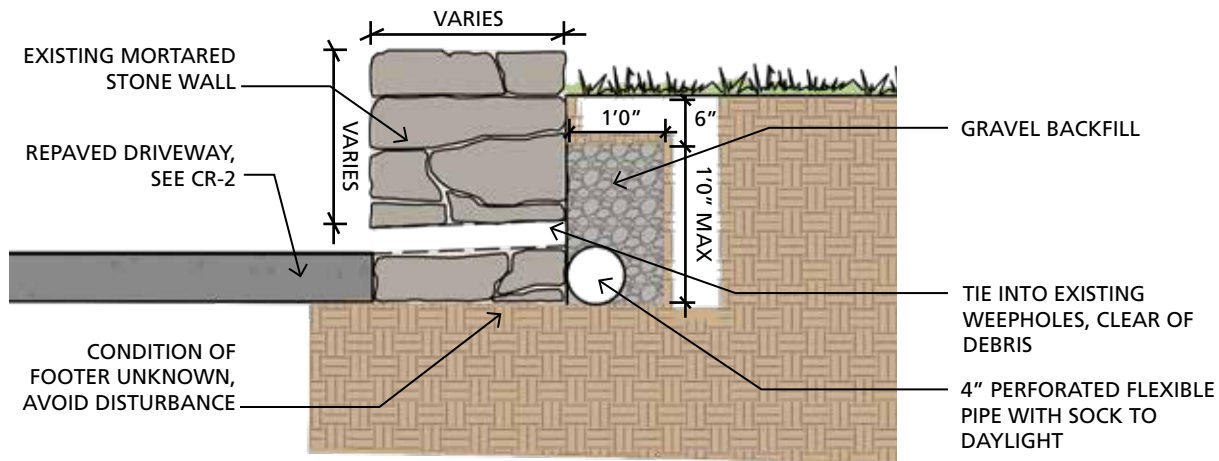


Figure 5.3. View of potential additional drainage behind existing retaining wall. (Source: WLA Studio.)

BS-4: Remove biogrowth and evaluate paint on the stone retaining wall

The stone retaining walls flanking the driveway and sidewalk were unpainted until after 1988. The NPS should evaluate the date of the paint during the interior finishes analysis (see HSR). Samples of the paint may reveal when the King family first added it to the wall to determine if it is a character defining feature dating to the period of significance. If it is found to be a post-2004 addition, the NPS should remove the paint from these walls so long as they can achieve removal without damage to the stone and mortar. The raised mortar joints are a character defining feature of the retaining wall, and the NPS should take care to preserve them. The NPS should also consider removing biogrowth from the wall using the gentlest method possible. Consult *Preservation Brief 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings* for additional information and cleaning methodologies.⁴⁸² Should the NPS determine that the paint pre-dates 2004, it is recommended that the NPS should repair the paint in places where it is missing or degraded.

BS-5: Provide drainage behind stone retaining wall

There are no known failure issues related to drainage behind the existing stone retaining wall. There is one weep hole located in the front sidewalk area. The weep hole did not appear to be draining water during project observation. In

coordination with proposed subsurface drainage in the front yard area (see SS-4), it is recommended that the NPS install drainage behind the wall. Since the wall is not experiencing failure, it is recommended that the NPS excavate a shallow trench (twelve inch depth maximum), install a four-inch perforated pipe, and cover with sterile granular backfill (Figure 5.3). The drainpipe can outlet onto the sidewalk along Sunset Avenue. Hand digging is recommended to protect the historic stone wall during excavation. As possible without damaging the stone retaining wall, the NPS may wish to add additional weep holes to the structure.

BS-6: Rebuild concrete block retaining wall

The date of construction of the concrete block retaining wall located on the south of the house is unknown. This wall retains the grade away from the house foundation, and the NPS should consider rebuilding this wall as portions of it are failing. It may be beneficial to locate the wall even further away from the house, abutting the southern property line. The NPS should consider adding granular backfill and a drainage pipe on the uphill side of the wall to facilitate drainage away from the house caused by runoff from the adjacent Dunkirk Street.

BS-7: Bury overhead power lines that run parallel to Sunset Avenue

There is a conflict between the water oaks and the overhead lines located between the King Family Home property and Sunset Avenue. Both the lines and the trees are character defining features. To eliminate the potential for limbs falling

482. Robert C. Mack and Anne E. Grimmer, "Preservation Brief 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings," accessed April 16, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/1-cleaning-water-repellent.htm>.

and causing a power outage, the NPS should consider relocating the active electrical, cable, and telecommunications lines in front of the property underground. The NPS may leave the poles in situ and install “dummy” wires in front of the property and from the power pole to the house. The NPS should upgrade these facilities to meet current code standards (see HSR for more information). See VG-10 for planting recommendations. Since this work will occur within the right-of-way, the NPS should coordinate with the City of Atlanta Department of Public Works and utility companies for this effort.

SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

SS-1: Evaluate and clean luminaire on lamp post

The luminaire that was present on top of the lamp post in the front yard during the early part of the period of significance was a tapered, four glass panel post-top lantern rather than a round globe fixture. The existing globe fixture is later, but the date of the fixture is unknown. The NPS should consider including evaluation of the age of this fixture in the proposed interior furnishings study (see HSR for additional details). Should the luminaire date to after 2004, the NPS should replace it with a fixture compatible with the historic period. Should it date to pre-2004, the NPS should clean and preserve the existing feature. (Note: The NPS may relamp the fixture to use energy efficient bulbs.)

SS-2: Remove concrete aprons from around house

The NPS should consider removing the concrete aprons from around the house during the project to waterproof the basement level of the house (see BS-2). The current condition of these features exacerbates water infiltration into the house. These features date to the period of significance; however, they are damaged and aid in the degradation of the house by facilitating water into the basement level. These features have been recorded through photography, drawings, and narrative in both the CLR and HABS documentation. After removal, these areas should be mulched and / or treated as planting areas where applicable (see VG-1 and Illustration 5.1). Surface materials should not hinder water infiltration into the proposed French drain system so that water moves away from the house foundation. The NPS could preserve the concrete trough that follows the southern property line into the front yard as an artifact of this drainage system, as this portion of

the concrete apron system does not exacerbate drainage problems into the basement. The feature could be preserved, even if it is bypassed by a future subsurface drainage project that directs all downspouts away from the house (see SS-5).

SS-3: Replace seesaw and swings on metal play set

The original seesaw was still present on the play set in 1998 according to video footage. The location of the seesaw is unknown, but it may be in storage at the house or in the metal sided utility shed in the rear yard. Any cleanout efforts in the house by the NPS should aim to identify and preserve this site feature. If the seesaw cannot be located at the house, the NPS should consider contacting the play set manufacturer to inquire if replacement swings, a seesaw, and one leg may be obtained for the play set.⁴⁸³

SS-4: Return rear yard fencing to chain link material

Film footage from July 1998 reveals that the fencing in the rear yard was chain link rather than the current wood privacy style fence. There was a wood privacy fence on the adjacent property to the north by 1998. The date of the existing wood privacy fence on the King Family Home property is undetermined. Since the fence is in poor condition, the NPS may want to consider removing it from the site and replacing it with chain link material as documented in historic drawings and the 1998 video. The wood privacy fence may date to the period of significance, but its location and condition has been recorded through photography, drawings, and narrative in both the CLR and HABS documentation. The NPS may consider changing the material of the gates leading toward the driveway to chain link material as well. These gates are shown in 1998 video footage.⁴⁸⁴

SS-5: Bury above ground drainage from downspouts

In 2019, the NPS installed above ground flexible downspout extensions around the King Family Home. In coordination with the basement level waterproofing project, the NPS should route this drainage below grade. The NPS should route the pipes to outlet at or near the retaining wall in the front yard (see Illustration 5.1 for schematic

483. As of 2020, the contact for this play set is Robert Haack with American Playground and DunRite Playgrounds, americanplayground.net.

484. MALU Archives, Series VII: Audio-Video Collection, 1965-2010, Subseries A: Video, 1965-20210. VHS Tapes – King Sunset Home, [1998].

locations). It may be desirable to install intermittent dry well features if the drains need to outlet before they reach Sunset Avenue. Coordinate with and follow guidance in the HSR on the house's gutter sizing and maintenance. Coordinate with VG-8 for front turf grass maintenance and rehabilitation. The NPS may want to add a tracing wire on top of the buried plastic pipe so that they may be easily located for maintenance in the future. Coordinate with VG-10 and CR-1 and potentially follow Environmental Protection Agency recommendations for using engineered soils to increase stormwater capacity at the site.⁴⁸⁵

SS-6: Evaluate landscape edging in front and rear yard

There is plastic landscape edging located in the front yard that does not appear in photographs or video footage from the period of significance, but its installation date is undetermined. Should future documentation determine that the edging dates to after the period of significance, the NPS may want to remove the material from the site.

The installation date of the timber landscape edging in the rear yard is unknown. Should future documentation determine that the edging dates to after the period of significance, the NPS may want to remove the material from the site.

Refer to VG-8 for recommendations for turf grass rehabilitation in these areas.

SS-7: Place a stone border near the rehabilitated foundation plantings

Photography from April 1968 shows an informal stone border between the front foundation plantings and the front turf grass area, south of the entry stair. If the NPS wants the site to reflect the early period of significance, the NPS should consider adding approximately eight to ten stones in this area. In photographs, the stones appear to be about ten to twelve inches in length, and they are a light grey color. The NPS could consider using locally-sourced granite stones in this area.

VEGETATION

VG-1: Rehabilitate foundation plantings

The NPS should replant the shrubs located along the front foundation to more closely represent historic period plantings. Research did not reveal the species of shrubs planted at the foundation, but they were medium sized and evergreen. Currently, there are gaps in some locations, and weedy or volunteer species are intermingled with intentionally-planted shrubs. The NPS may need to remove some of the foundation plantings during the house waterproofing project (BS-2). Any shrubs removed during that project should be replaced in-kind.

There two options for the treatment of the foundation plantings adjacent to the entry stair. The NPS may want to consider planting two southern Indica azaleas (*Rhododendron indicum*) flanking the entry stairs.⁴⁸⁶ These plantings would reflect the earliest part of the period of significance as documented in a 1965 video and photos from 1968. These plantings may outgrow these planting areas, and they may need to be replaced about every five years so that they do not become too large for their planting areas. Another option is for the NPS to leave the locations of the evergreen azaleas unplanted. This condition would reflect the later period of significance when there were no longer evergreen azaleas flanking the entry stair.

The NPS should consider adding one evergreen shrub underneath the bathroom window and three evergreen shrubs between the entry porch and the existing sasanqua camellia. Following *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, the NPS may want to consider using native evergreen shrubs such as dwarf yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria* 'Nana'). This native shrub would reflect the form and function of the historic plant material. The illustrated guidelines recommend "Landscaping with native plants, if appropriate, to

485. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Stormwater to Street Trees: Engineering Urban Forests for Stormwater Management."

486. Historic photos seem to support southern Indica azalea based on leaf shape, color, and form. The King family may have planted soon after construction, but likely by December 1965 (the date of film footage). In the Arnold Michaelis film footage and photos dating to 1968, these shrubs would have been less than one to three years old. Photos from 1970s do not show this area. The King family may have removed the southern Indica azaleas from the site prior to a 1988 historic resources survey photo (photo is inconclusive).

enhance the sustainability of the historic site.⁴⁸⁷ The NPS could line the northern portion of the planting bed so that the site more accurately represents the early period of significance (SS-7).

VG-2: Replant dogwoods along southern property boundary

There were at least two established dogwoods (*Cornus florida*) located on the south property line as evidenced in film footage from 1965 and photographs from 1968. Color photographs from April 1968 indicate that these were a white blooming variety. The NPS should consider planting two disease resistant variety dogwoods outside the fence located on the south property line. Disease resistant varieties include those released by Rutgers University such as Celestial® and Constellation®. Native varieties that may be more disease resistant include ‘Cherokee Daybreak,’ ‘Cherokee Princess,’ and ‘Cloud 9.’

VG-3: Preserve sasanqua camellia in front planting bed

The NPS should preserve the sasanqua camellia located near the southeast corner of the house. Common problems in camellias include tea scale and leaf gall. The NPS should monitor the plant for disease and treat appropriately. See University of Georgia Cooperative Extension publications for guidance.⁴⁸⁸

VG-4: Replant redbud in northeast planting bed

During the period of significance, there was a pink flowering tree located in the northeast corner of the site, likely a redbud (*Cercis canadensis*). The age of the existing plantings in this area is unknown, but based on their size, they appear to post-date the period of significance. The existing plantings do not appear in photographs or video footage from the period of significance, but their installation date is undetermined. Should future documentation determine that these plantings date to after the period of significance, the NPS may want to remove them from the site and replace them with a redbud as documented in historic photographs. The location of this planting is depicted on Illustration 5.1.

VG-5: Preserve and then replace water oak in rear yard

An arborist’s report for the water oak in the rear yard indicates that the tree is in decline.⁴⁸⁹ When the waterproofing project around the foundation of the house occurs, workers are likely to encounter large roots from this tree. These roots may be causing structural damage to the house, but that condition is currently unknown. As an interim measure prior to the waterproofing project, the NPS may want to trim and/or cable some of the larger branches of the tree to prevent falling limbs from impacting the house and the metal sided utility shed. When the waterproofing project occurs, workers will likely have to remove large portions of this trees’ roots to perform work. Because the tree is likely near the end of its lifespan, the NPS should consider removing it from the site at that time. According to the US Forest Service, “A rapid-grower, Water Oak has a relatively short life span of only 30 to 50 years, particularly in the east on good sites where growth is rapid.”⁴⁹⁰ Because of the impact of excavation in the rear yard and the projected life span of this variety of oak, it is not recommended that the oak be relocated during construction. There are progeny of this oak located in the rear yard. The NPS should consider transplanting fifty to one hundred of these seedlings and growing them in containers in a nursery setting to produce a stock of trees that they can use to replace declining trees on the site. This methodology will retain the genetic authenticity of the original plant. Refer to the Olmsted Center’s “Replacing Trees in Cultural Landscapes” document for recommendations for record keeping, planting to minimize impacts to archeological resources, and stump removal.⁴⁹¹ Tree removal should coordinate with BS-2. The NPS may want to consider adding a root barrier system in a linear application between the new oak and the house foundation. Example products

487. National Park Service, “Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings,” 100.

488. Shimat Joseph and William Hudson, “Tea Scale: Biology and Management in the Nursery and Landscape | UGA Cooperative Extension,” May 27, 2020, <https://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.html?number=C1201>.

489. Dawson and Hanaburgh, “234 Sunset Water Oak Tree Inspection and Assessment Report.”

490. Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson, “Quercus Nigra, Water Oak: Fact Sheet ST-553” (US Forest Service, October 1994), 3, http://hort.ufl.edu/database/documents/pdf/tree_fact_sheets/queniga.pdf.

491. Olmsted Center for Landscape Presentation, “Replacing Trees in Cultural Landscapes” (National Park Service, n.d.), <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/561516>.

include Deep Root Tree Root Barriers and Century Products Root Barrier.⁴⁹²

VG-6: Monitor large oaks and remove English ivy along southern property line

The NPS should have an ISA certified arborist evaluate the oaks located on the southern property line. Though these trees may be just outside or on the property line, their limbs may pose a hazard to the building. The NPS should trim any hazardous limbs to prevent damage to the turf grass area and / or building. At a minimum, it is likely that an ISA certified arborist will recommend removal of the English ivy that is growing at the base of these trees and is currently growing on both trees. English ivy is a category one invasive non-native plant in Georgia according to the Georgia Exotic Pest Plan Council, and the NPS should eradicate it from the site. Should a replacement tree be needed for the water oak, the NPS could use one of the nursery grown progeny from the water oak in the rear yard (see VG-5). Should the hybridized red oak need replacement, appropriate replacement species include scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea*), southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*), northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), or Shumard oak (*Quercus shumardii*).

VG-7: Plant chrysanthemums in the concrete planters on front retaining wall

The NPS should consider planting and maintaining a white or yellow variety of chrysanthemums (*Chrysanthemum x morifolium*) in the concrete planters flanking the entry stair. Research did not reveal color photographs of these plants in bloom, but black and white video footage shows a light color bloom on these plants. The NPS should consider replacing these plants seasonally.

VG-8: Rehabilitate the turf grass area in front and rear yards

The NPS can improve the resilience of the turf grass areas in the front and rear yards by providing appropriate care to the bermudagrass. The NPS may need to add new grass to areas where plantings are removed (see VG-1). Follow University of Georgia College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences recommendations for bermudagrass

care.⁴⁹³ The contractors performing turf grass care maintenance at this site should mow the grass to a height of one to two inches. Mowing should not remove more than one-third the total height at one time. The turf grass areas should receive one inch of water per week if there is no rainfall. The NPS should consider a maintenance regime that aerates the turf grass areas with a core aerator during active growth season and dethatches the grass if thatch exceeds one-half inch depth. The NPS may want to apply a spring preemergent to prevent crabgrass and other annual weeds. Where turf grass did not previously exist, the NPS should consider establishing turf grass using seed or sod. Where conditions are too shady to maintain turf grass, the NPS may want to consider a mulch covering in certain areas (e.g. under the large established oak trees on the southern property line).

VG-9: Replant mahonia near fence line in southern portion of the front yard

Historic photographs dating to April 1968 appear to show a large mahonia (*Mahonia bealei*) on the south property line in the front yard. In the photo, the plant appeared to be well established and may have pre-dated the King family's occupancy of the house. The NPS should consider planting a mahonia in this location (see Illustration 5.1).

VG-10: Coordinate with City of Atlanta to replace water oaks located in right-of-way along Sunset Avenue

The water oaks located on Sunset Avenue are severely compromised due to decades of trimming because of their conflict with an overhead power line. This trimming has affected their viability, and they should be removed from the right-of-way. After removal, the NPS should coordinate with the City of Atlanta to install five new water oaks. It is not practical to replant the southernmost water oak, which was adjacent to Dunkirk Street, because of existing pavement in this area. The NPS should consider installing a root barrier between the trees and the sidewalk and between the trees and the road to discourage the roots from growing under the sidewalk. Alternatively, the NPS could coordinate tasks with CR-1 to improve quality of soil under the pavement and SS-5 to provide additional stormwater capacity and an adequate

492. "Root Barrier Products and Tree Root Barriers | Deeproot," accessed May 19, 2021, <https://www.deeproot.com/products/root-barrier.html>; "Century Root Barrier – Leader in Root Barrier Systems," accessed May 19, 2021, <https://centuryrootbarrier.com/>.

493. University of Georgia, College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences, "Basic Turfgrass Management," accessed April 11, 2021, <https://turf.caes.uga.edu/publications/pest-control-recomendations.html>.

root growth zone. If the NPS installed structural or engineered soil under the sidewalk pavement to increase the stormwater capacity of the area, water runoff from the adjacent site will infiltrate under the sidewalk and in the landscaping strip to provide additional water to the trees' roots. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, "Structural soils are engineered to be compactable enough to support some vehicle traffic, yet the gravel with a soil media adhered to the stone provides porosity and enough soil for healthy root growth."⁴⁹⁴

VG-11: Remove all liriopie from the site

The liriopie at the site appears to post-date 2004, and this plant is an invasive non-native plant in Georgia according to the Georgia Exotic Pest Plan Council. Any liriopie at the King Family Home site should be removed and disposed of off site. Refer to VG-8 for recommendations for turf grass rehabilitation.

494. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Stormwater to Street Trees: Engineering Urban Forests for Stormwater Management," 9, 13.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

VV-1: Preserve and maintain view to King Family Home from Sunset Avenue and sidewalk

The NPS should preserve and maintain the view toward the King Family Home from Sunset Avenue. The NPS will have to coordinate with the city of Atlanta for preservation of features located in the right-of-way. Tasks outlined in CR-1, BS-6, and VG-10 support preservation of the view.

VV-2: Preserve and maintain view to Sunset Avenue from King Family Home

The NPS should preserve and maintain the view toward Sunset Avenue from the King Family Home. The NPS should engage neighboring property owners, so that these properties continue to reflect the period of significance. For example, the NPS may want to inquire about the willingness of the property owners of the Toomer residence (240 Sunset Avenue NW) to replant a white oak in its historic location. The NPS will have to coordinate with the city of Atlanta for preservation of features located in the right-of-way. Tasks outlined in CR-1, BS-6, and VG-10 support this task.

TABLE 5.1 TREATMENT TASKS FOR KING FAMILY HOME

Task ID	Task	Page #	Related Tasks
PROGRAMMING AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE			
PV-1	Establish an arrival sequence and improve pedestrian circulation	212	PV-2, CR-1, CR-2
PV-2	Establish site identification signage and waysides	212	PV-1, VV-1, VV-2
CIRCULATION			
CR-1	Repave sidewalk	213	PV-1, BS-7, VG-10, SS-5
CR-2	Repave driveway	213	PV-1, BS-2
CR-3	Replace driveway extension on north side of house	213	BS-2
CR-4	Repave patio	215	BS-2
CR-5	Coordinate with the city of Atlanta to repave Dunkirk Street	215	BS-2, BS-6
BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES			
BS-1	Preserve, maintain, and manage the house at 234 Sunset Avenue as a cultural resource	215	BS-2
BS-2	Provide positive drainage away from the house	215	BS-1, BS-6, CR-2, CR-3, CR-4, SS-2, SS-5
BS-3	Preserve and/or replace in-kind the metal sided utility shed	215	
BS-4	Remove biogrowth from the retaining wall and evaluate paint	216	BS-5

Task ID	Task	Page #	Related Tasks
BS-5	Provide positive drainage behind retaining wall	216	BS-4, SS-5
BS-6	Rebuild concrete block retaining wall	216	CR-5, BS-2
BS-7	Bury overhead power lines that run parallel to Sunset Avenue	216	VV-1, VG-10, CR-1
SMALL-SCALE FEATURES			
SS-1	Evaluate and clean luminaire on lamp post	217	VV-1
SS-2	Remove concrete aprons from around house	217	BS-2, VG-1, SS-5
SS-3	Replace seesaw and swings on metal play set	217	
SS-4	Return rear yard fencing to chain link material	217	
SS-5	Bury above ground drainage from downspouts	217	BS-2, BS-5, VG-8
SS-6	Evaluate landscape edging in front and rear yard	218	VG-8
SS-7	Place a stone border near the rehabilitated foundation plantings	218	VG-1
VEGETATION			
VG-1	Rehabilitate foundation plantings	218	VV-1, BS-2, SS-2, SS-7
VG-2	Replant dogwoods along south property boundary	219	VV-1
VG-3	Preserve sasanqua camellia in front planting bed	219	VV-1
VG-4	Replant redbud in northeast planting bed	219	VV-1, VV-2
VG-5	Preserve and then replace water oak in rear yard	219	BS-2, VG-9
VG-6	Monitor large oaks and remove English ivy along southern property line	220	VV-1
VG-7	Plant chrysanthemums in the concrete planters on front retaining wall	220	
VG-8	Rehabilitate turf grass areas in front and rear yards	220	VG-11
VG-9	Replant mahonia near fence line in southern portion of the front yard	220	VV-1
VG-10	Coordinate with city of Atlanta to replace water oaks located in right-of-way along Sunset Avenue	220	VV-1, VV-2, CR-1, BS-7
VG-11	Remove all lirioppe from the site	221	VG-9
VIEWS AND VISTAS			
VV-1	Preserve and maintain view to King Family Home from Sunset Avenue and sidewalk	221	CR-1, VG-1-4, VG-6-11, BS-7
VV-2	Preserve and maintain view to Sunset Avenue from King Family Home	221	CR-1, BS-7, VG-10

Recommendations for Further Research

Preservation Maintenance Plan

Based on the King Family Home HSR and this CLR, the national historical park should develop a preservation maintenance plan for the entire site. Items to address in the plan would include a moisture monitoring program, vegetation management, and other condition assessment protocols.

Call for Public Assistance

The national historical park should develop a strategy for public outreach to solicit photographs and information concerning the recent history of the site. There was limited photographic documentation of the landscape during the 1980s and 1990s and aerial photographs from these decades are low quality. Additional photographs from this era and from 2004 to 2019 will help improve documentation of the site and assess landscape features.

National Register Nomination

The King Family Home is currently not listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The national historical park should consider either amending the existing nomination for the national historical park to include this resource or completing a stand-alone nomination for the King Family Home. See Analysis and Evaluation section of this report for recommendations concerning period of significance.

Cultural Landscape Inventory

The national historic park should complete a Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the King Family Home cultural landscape to reflect the findings of the Cultural Landscape Report. This data entry will allow site managers to manage the resources at the site through the National Park Service's Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS).

King Family Home Archeological Resources

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Cultural Landscape Report recommends that the park “consider developing an archaeological inventory program so as to be in compliance with Section 110” of the National Historic Preservation Act.⁴⁹⁵ According to the CLR, “The completion of an archeological inventory program would greatly expedite Section 106 compliance.”⁴⁹⁶ This archaeological inventory should include the King Family Home property to expedite compliance for ground disturbing activities necessary to protect, preserve, and interpret the site.

Historic Furnishings Plan

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park has identified a project to document the historic furnishings at the King Family Home.⁴⁹⁷ If possible, the consultants completing the historic furnishings report may want to consider including analysis of several cultural landscape features. These features include: the luminaire on the lamp post, the metal sided utility shed, and the play set. This furnishings document may be able to identify sources for replacement parts and equipment for these features.

Interior Finishes Plan

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Park has identified a project to document interior finishes at the King Family Home.⁴⁹⁸ If possible, the consultants completing the interior finishes report may want to consider including analysis of the paint on the stone retaining wall. Determination of the date of the paint will help determine if this paint is a contributing landscape feature.

495. Panamerican Consultants, Inc. et al., “Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Cultural Landscape Report” (National Park Service, Southeast Region, August 2020), 302.

496. Ibid.

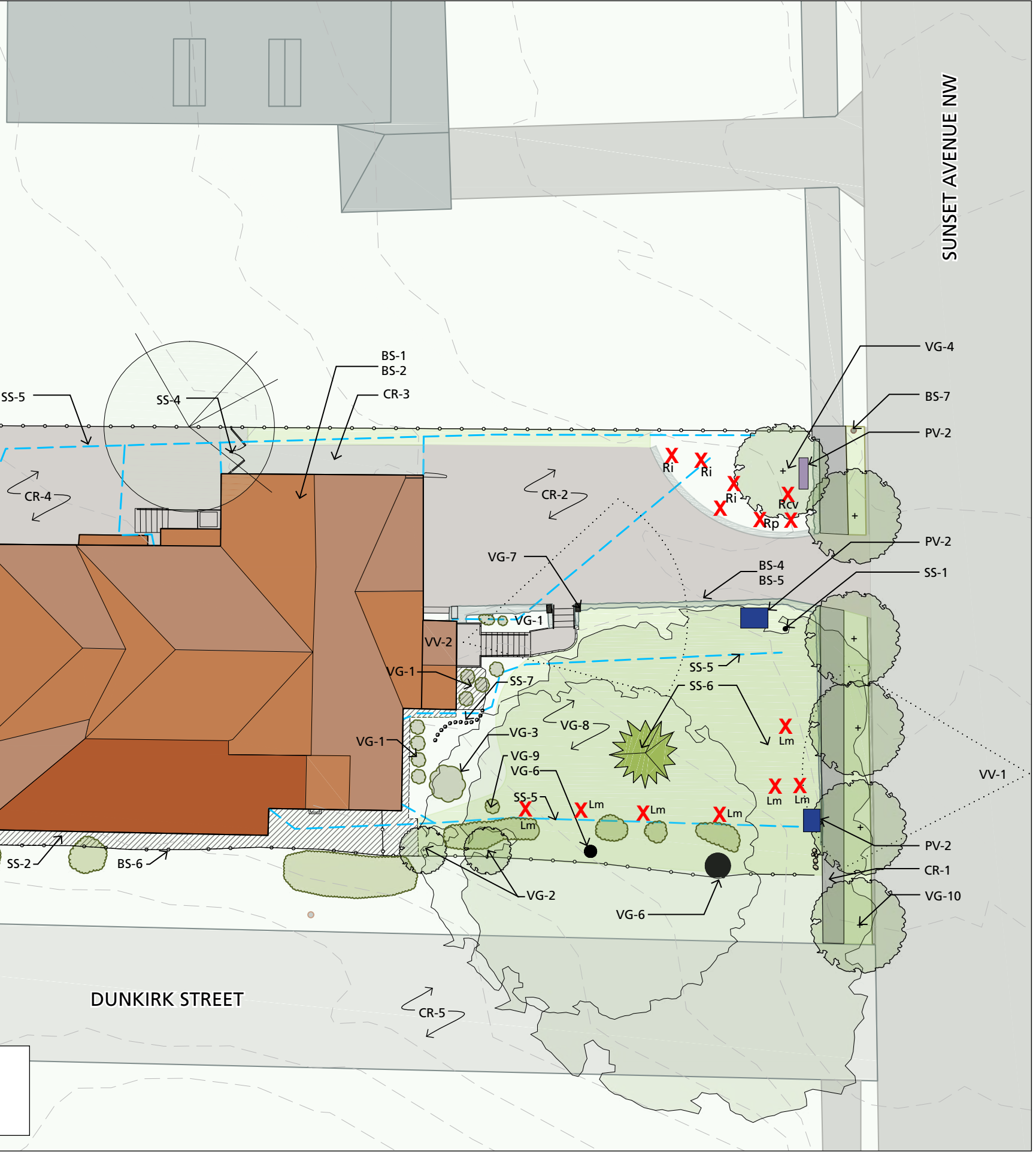
497. National Park Service, Project Management Information System (PMIS), PMIS 316530, Historic Furnishings Report for the King Family Home (234 Sunset Avenue). Park approved 12/31/2020.

498. PMIS 315130, approved 12/31/2020 – Interior Finishes Treatment Plan for the King Family Home (234 Sunset Avenue NW). Park approved 12/31/2020.

Legend

- X Remove Plant Material*
- Remove Concrete
- Remove Timber Landscape Edging
- View/Vista
- Subsurface Drainage Route
- New or Replacement Tree
- Potential Park Identity Sign Location
- Potential Wayside Location

*abbreviation indicates plant species to be removed, see Illustration 3.1 for identification



Key to Notes

Notes on illustration correspond to text recommendations contained in the King Family Home Cultural Landscape Report Treatment Section. Additional details are included in the text.

- PV-1 Establish an arrival sequence and improve pedestrian circulation
- PV-2 Establish site identification signage and waysides
- CR-1 Repave sidewalk
- CR-2 Repave driveway
- CR-3 Replace driveway extension on north side of house
- CR-4 Repave patio
- CR-5 Coordinate with the City of Atlanta to repave Dunkirk Street
- BS-1 Preserve, maintain, and manage the building at 234 Sunset Avenue as a cultural resource
- BS-2 Provide positive drainage away from the house
- BS-3 Preserve and/or replace in-kind the metal sided utility shed
- BS-4 Remove biogrowth from the retaining walls and evaluate paint
- BS-5 Provide positive drainage behind retaining wall
- BS-6 Rebuild concrete block retaining wall
- BS-7 Bury overhead power lines that run parallel to Sunset Avenue
- SS-1 Evaluate and clean luminaire on lamp post
- SS-2 Remove concrete aprons from around house
- SS-3 Replace seesaw and swings on metal play set
- SS-4 Return rear yard fencing to chain link material
- SS-5 Bury above ground drainage from downspouts
- SS-6 Evaluate landscape edging in front and rear yard
- SS-7 Place a stone border near the rehabilitated foundation plantings
- VG-1 Rehabilitate foundation plantings
- VG-2 Replant dogwoods along southern property boundary
- VG-3 Preserve sasanqua camellia in front planting bed
- VG-4 Replant redbud in northeast planting bed
- VG-5 Preserve and then replace water oak in rear yard
- VG-6 Monitor large oaks and remove English ivy along southern property line
- VG-7 Plant chrysanthemums in the concrete planters on front retaining wall
- VG-8 Rehabilitate turf grass in front and rear yards
- VG-9 Replant mahonia near fence line in southern portion of the front yard
- VG-10 Coordinate with city of Atlanta to replace water oaks located in right-of-way along Sunset Avenue
- VG-11 Remove all liriope from the site
- VV-1 Preserve and maintain view to King Family Home from Sunset Avenue and sidewalk
- VV-2 Preserve and maintain view to Sunset Avenue from King Family Home

Credits:
 Laser scan data from HABS recordation, October 2019
 Atlanta Fulton County GIS Data, Accessed May 2020, <https://gis.fultoncountygga.gov/apps/topodownloadmapviewer/>
 Field investigation, Fall 2019-Spring 2020

Illustration 5.1
Treatment Plan
King Family Home
 Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
 OCTOBER 2021



Bibliography

“115th Congress Senate Report 115-49, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act, 2017.” Legislation. 2017/2018. Accessed April 29, 2020. <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/115th-congress/senate-report/49/1>.

1900 United States Census, Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia. Ancestry.com.

1940 United States Census, Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia, digital image s. v. “Alonzo Cowan,” Ancestry.com.

“234 Sunset.” VHS Film. MALU Archives. Subseries VII: Audio-Video Collection, 0201. VHS Tapes – King Sunset Home, July 2, 1998.

A Bill to Establish the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, and for other Purposes, Pub. L. No. 96-428 (1980).

“About – Westside Future Fund.” Accessed July 6, 2020. <https://www.westsidefuturefund.org/about/>.

“Ad - Glass Realty Company.” *Atlanta Daily World*. January 13, 1957.

Ambrose, Andy. “Atlanta.” Text. New Georgia Encyclopedia, June 12, 2019. <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/counties-cities-neighborhoods/atlanta>.

Ambrose, Andy, Vincent Fort, Alexa Henderson, Dean Rowley, Carol Stevens, and Barbara Taggart. “Historic Resource Study: Auburn Avenue Community of Atlanta, 1865-1930.” Atlanta, Georgia: Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, 1982.

Ancestry.com. “1900 United States Federal Census,” 2004. <https://search.ancestry.com>.

———. *Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1907*. Atlanta, GA: Foote & Davies Co. and Joseph W. Hill, 1907.

———. *Atlanta City Directory, 1920*. Vol. XLIII. Atlanta, GA: Atlanta City Directory Co., 1920.

———. “1830 United States Federal Census.” Accessed August 23, 2019. https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8058/4409441_00055?backurl=&ssrc=&backlabel=Return.

Anderson, David G., and Glen T. Hanson. “Early Archaic Settlement in the Southeastern United States: A Case Study from the Savannah River Valley.” *American Antiquity* 53, no. 2 (1988): 262–86.

Anderson, David G, Jerald Ledbetter, Lisa O’Steen, Dennis Blanton, and Frankie Snow. “Paleoindian and Early Archaic in the Lower Southeast: A View from Georgia,” 1994, 16.

Anderson, William L., ed. *Cherokee Removal: Before and After*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991.

“Annexation Map of Atlanta.” n.d. Digital Collections. Georgia State University Library. <https://digitalcollections.library.gsu.edu/digital/collection/atlmaps/id/155/rec/1>.

Archer, Sarah. *The Midcentury Kitchen: America’s Favorite Room from Workspace to Dreamscape 1940s-1970s*. New York: Countryman Press, 2019.

- “Architectural Firm Relocates.” *Atlanta Voice*. November 17, 1973, 4.
- Ashkinaze, Carole, Seth Kantor, Jim Stewart, and Tina McElroy Ansa. “King Center - The Shape of a Dream.” *Atlanta Constitution*. October 17, 1979, 1A, 10A.
- Atlanta City Directory Company’s Atlanta Suburban Directory* (DeKalb and Fulton Counties), Atlanta, GA: Atlanta City Directory Co., 1934, 1938, 1940, 1963. University of Georgia Map and Government Information Library.
- Atlanta City Directory, 1920*. Vol. XLIII. Atlanta, GA: Atlanta City Directory Co., 1920. Ancestry.com.
- Atlanta City Directory, 1927-1948*. Atlanta, GA: Atlanta City Directory Co., 1927-1948. Ancestry.com.
- Atlanta City Directory*. Atlanta, GA, 1892. Ancestry.com.
- Atlanta City Directory*. Atlanta, GA: Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Co., 1969.
- Atlanta City Directory*. Atlanta, GA: Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Co., 1970.
- “Atlanta, GA : Booker T. Washington High School.” Accessed October 1, 2019. <https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/city-planning/office-of-design/urban-design-commission/booker-t-washington-high-school>.
- Atlanta, Georgia, City Directory, 1907*. Atlanta, GA: Foote & Davies Co. and Joseph W. Hill, 1907. Ancestry.com.
- Atlanta Housing. “AH History.” *Atlanta Housing Authority* (blog). Accessed May 14, 2020. <https://www.atlantahousing.org/about-us/ah-history/>.
- . “John J. Eagan Homes and Magnolia Park Records,” n.d., 8.
- “Atlanta’s Changing Population.” *The Atlanta Constitution*. March 24, 2011.
- Auchmuty, Jim. “Collier Heights: Civil Rights Suburb.” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, September 21, 2008, D1.
- Bagley, Edythe Scott. *Desert Rose: The Life and Legacy of Coretta Scott King*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012.
- Barksdale & Associates. “Level 1 Pre-Acquisition Environmental Site Assessment Survey (ESAS), 220 & 234 Sunset Avenue Northeast, Martin Luther King Life Home & Apartment Properties.” Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service: Southeast Region, National Park Service, January 3, 2019.
- Barnard, Susan K., and Grace M. Schwartzman. “Tecumseh and the Creek Indian War of 1813-1814 in North Georgia.” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 3 (1998): 489–506. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40583946>.
- Baugh, Jennifer V.O. *Medgar and Myrlie Evers House, National Historic Landmark Nomination*. December 2015.
- Bayor, Ronald H. *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

- Belson, Ken. "Building a Stadium, Rebuilding a Neighborhood." *New York Times*, January 12, 2017. www.nytimes.com.
- Bense, Judith A. *Archaeology of the Southeastern United States*. San Diego: California Academic Press, 1994.
- Bird and Son, Inc. *Are You Going to Build or Repair*. East Walpole, MA: Bird & Son, Inc., 1935.
- Blythe, Robert W., Maureen A. Carroll, and Steven H. Moffson. "Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Historic Resource Study." Atlanta, Georgia: National Park Service, Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Regional Office, 1994.
- Bowne, Eric E. *Mound Sites of the Ancient South: A Guide to the Mississippian Chiefdoms*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013.
- Brock, Gretchen. Letter to Dough Young. "Sunset Avenue, Vine City," July 11, 2007.
- Brown, Vivan. "Do Your Thing: Decorate Garage." *Atlanta Constitution*. August 24, 1969, 5-F.
- Burns, Rebecca. *Burial for a King: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Funeral and the Week That Transformed Atlanta and Rocked the Nation*. New York: Scribner, 2011.
- . "It's going to take more than \$45 million to help Vine City." *Atlanta Magazine*, March 13, 2013. Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://www.atlantamagazine.com/civilrights/its-going-to-take-more-than-45-million-to-help-vine-city/>.
- Byrd, Beth Wheeler. "Horseshoe Bend National Military Park Cultural Landscape Report." National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 2013.
- Carmody, Stephen. "From Foraging to Food Production on the Southern Cumberland Plateau of Alabama and Tennessee." PhD Dissertation, University of Tennessee, 2014.
- Carpenter, Cathy. "Fulton County." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, July 9, 2018. <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/counties-cities-neighborhoods/fulton-county>.
- Carson, Clayborne E. *Martin's Dream*. New York: Palgrave Macmillon, 2013.
- , ed. *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Hachette Book Group, 1998.
- Carter, E. R. *The Black Side: A Partial History of the Business, Religion, and Educational Side of the Negro in Atlanta, GA*. Atlanta, GA, 1894.
- "Charles Gideon, Atlanta Educator Receives Honors." *Atlanta Daily World*. April 30, 1957, 1.
- "Charleston's Free People of Color – Special Collections." Accessed October 4, 2019. <https://speccoll.cofc.edu/charlestons-free-people-of-color/>.
- "Church News." *Atlanta Daily World*. August 8, 1943, 2.
- City of Atlanta Department of Planning and Community Development and Pamela Flores. "Designation Report for Sunset Avenue Historic District," 2011.
- City of Atlanta Planning Commission. "The Atlanta Zone Plan," 1922.

Clark Atlanta University. "CAU History." Accessed May 11, 2020. <https://www.cau.edu/history.html>.

"Club News." *Atlanta Daily World*. January 22, 1938.

Coder, Kim. Email to Susan Hitchcock. "Tree ID Opinion," January 6, 2022.

Collier Heights Historic District National Register Nomination. 2008. Accessed February 6, 2020. <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/c5d4cda7-9db5-452f-8e99-d5f11932fd21>.

"(Colored)." *Atlanta Constitution*. March 30, 1933, 16.

"Colored - Lumpkin." *Atlanta Constitution*. April 1, 1933, 14.

"Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation." Accessed August 7, 2019. <http://thorpe.ou.edu/constitution/muscogee/index.html>.

Cooper Jr., William J., Thomas E. Terrill, and Christopher Childers. *The American South: A History*. Fifth Edition. Vol. I. 2 vols. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017.

Cothran, Lynn. "King Sunset Avenue Home and Adjacent Apartment Building," Interview by Clarissa Myrick-Harris, July 13, 2019. Courtesy of Dr. Clarissa Myrick-Harris, OWA Institute.

Creedy, Howard. "Interview with Reverend Howard Creedy, Jr.," Interview by Byron Amos and Shemar Jones, 1988. Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.

"Culture/History – Muscogee (Creek) Nation." Accessed August 7, 2019. <https://www.mcn-nsn.gov/culturehistory/>.

Dahl, Linda. *Morning Glory: A Biography of Mary Lou Williams*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing, 2012.

Davis, Lloyd. "History of the King Center: Twenty-Five Year Legacy of Accomplishment," n.d. MALU Archives.

Davis, Robert Scott. *Civil War Atlanta*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2011.

Dobak, William A. *Freedom by the Sword: The U.S. Colored Troops 1862-1867*. CMH Pub 30-24-1. Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2011.

Dorsey, Allison. *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004.

Du Bois, W. E. B. *The Social Evolution of the Black South*. Washington, D.C.: American Negro Monographs Co, 1911.

Dunbar, Sarah. "Final Prize Winners in Context Announced." *Atlanta Constitution*. October 19, 1941, 19.

Ecelbarger, Gary. *The Day Dixie Died: The Battle of Atlanta*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2010.

Encyclopedia of Alabama. "Creeks in Alabama." Accessed September 19, 2018. <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1088>.

- Ethridge, Robbie. *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- “Extra.” *Atlanta Daily World*. January 13, 1957.
- “Extra.” *Atlanta Daily World*. January 20, 1957.
- Flanders, Ralph B. “The Free Negro in Ante-Bellum Georgia.” *The North Carolina Historical Review* 9, no. 3 (1932): 250–72.
- Flanigan, T. J. “Funeral Rites are Paid Dr. Charles Gideons Here,” *Atlanta Daily World*. May 9, 1957, 1.
- Flores, Pamela. “Designation Report for the Sunset Avenue Historic District,” 2011. City of Atlanta.
- Floyd, Orlice Charlie. World War II Draft Registration Card. July 1, 1941. Accessed April 28, 2020. Ancestry.com.
- “For Architect, It’s Like a Homecoming.” *Atlanta Constitution*. August 24, 1969, 5-F.
- Fortin, Jacey. “Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Last Home Sold to National Park Foundation.” *New York Times*, January 24, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/24/us/mlk-home-vine-city-atlanta.html>.
- “Founder.” J. W. Robinson & Associates Inc. Accessed February 3, 2020. <http://www.jwrobinson.com/founder>.
- Fox Theatre Institute. *Georgia Historic Preservation Handbook*. Atlanta, GA: The Fox Theatre Institute, 2012. Accessed February 6, 2020, https://www.georgiatrue.org/wp-content/uploads/georgia_historic_preservation_handbook.pdf.
- French-Parker, Jennifer. “Taking Inventory of King.” *Atlanta Constitution*. January 15, 1999, 29.
- “From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Supplemental Material.” Atlanta, GA, n.d. National Archives. <https://www.archives.gov/files/atlanta/education/resources-by-state/images/mlk-supplemental.pdf>.
- “Fulton County Land Use Map Viewer,” n.d. <https://gis.fultoncountygga.gov/apps/FutureLandUse-MapViewer/>.
- “Funeral Notices.” *Atlanta Daily World*. May 7, 1957, 4.
- “Funeral Notices (Colored).” *Atlanta Constitution*. December 3, 1953.
- Garrett, Franklin Miller. *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1820s-1870s*. Vol. I. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988.
- . *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1820s-1870s*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011.
- Garrow, David J. *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1986.
- . *The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Penguin Books, 1986.

- Gerdes, Marti, Scott Messer, and Tommy Jones. "Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Historic Resource Study." National Park Service, Cultural Resources Division, Southeast Regional Office, February 2007.
- Gonzalez, P., F. Wang, M. Notaro, D. J. Vimont, and J. W. Williams. "Disproportionate Magnitude of Climate Change in United States National Parks." *Environmental Research Letters*. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2018. <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2265248>.
- Green, Josh. "Five Years after Mercedes-Benz Stadium Broke Ground, Is Atlanta's Westside Revival Working?" *Curbed Atlanta*, January 31, 2019. <https://atlanta.curbed.com/atlanta-photo-essays/2019/1/31/18201601/super-bowl-liii-atlanta-gentrification-poverty-blank>.
- Halvorsen, Marcia L. "An Analysis and Interpretation of Data on the Social Characteristics of Residents of 'Vine City' - a Negro Slum Ghetto within the City of Atlanta, Georgia." Spelman College, June 15, 1967. Harry G. Lefever Papers. Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.
- Hansell, William A., S.P. Floore, and U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. "City of Atlanta, Sheet 21." Washington, D.C.: Williams & Heintz Co., 1929. Emory University, Rose Library: Historic Map Collection.
- Harpers Ferry Center Interpretive Planning, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site staff, and partners. *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan*. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2011.
- Henderson, Alexa. "Heman E. Perry and Black Enterprise in Atlanta, 1908-1925." *The Business History Review* 61, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 216–42.
- Hess, Earl J. *Civil War Infantry Tactics: Training, Combat, and Small-Unit Effectiveness*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015.
- Holman, Curt. "How Well Do You Know Atlanta's Historically Black Neighborhoods?" *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*. March 4, 2016. <https://www.ajc.com/lifestyles/how-well-you-know-atlanta-historically-black-neighborhoods/XI5oFU29CIqhw24Sw7w9QJ/>.
- Hornsby, Jr., Alton. "Black Public Education in Atlanta, Georgia, 1954-1973: From Segregation to Segregation." *Journal of Negro History* 76, no. 1/4 (Winter - Autumn 1991): 21–47.
- Hudson, Charles. *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun: Hernando de Soto and the South's Ancient Chiefdoms*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997.
- Hurt, Bob. "Judge Pye Loses in Condemnation Fight." *The Atlanta Constitution*. November 17, 1970, 11.
- Jewell, Joseph O. *Race, Social Reform and the Making of a Middle Class: The American Missionary Association and Black Atlanta, 1870-1900*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007.
- "Joint Venturing: Did It Really Work?" *Atlanta Magazine* (April 1984): 44-45, 99.
- Jones, Tommy. "Atlanta's Indian Trails." Accessed February 12, 2020. http://tomitronics.com/indian_trails/indexB.html.
- . "Hammonds House." Accessed July 7, 2020. https://tomitronics.com/old_buildings/hammonds%20house/index.html.

- Kauffman, G.E. "Map of the Asa G. Candler Property Situated in The City of Atlanta in Land Lots 83 & 110." Plat, 80 feet = 1 in. Forrest and George Adair, real Estate Dealers, January 1905. Plat Book 2, Page 45. Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.
- Kauffman, O. F. "Map of the City of Atlanta." Atlanta, Georgia: O. F. Kauffman, C. E., 1906. Emory University. <http://disc.library.emory.edu/atlantamaps/1906-atlanta-city-map/>.
- King, Bernice. "23rd Virtual Transform Westside Summit," Interview by Maria Saporta, April 2, 2021.
- King, Bernice, and Patricia Latimore. "234 Sunset Avenue," Interview by Madie Fischetti, May 22, 2020.
- King, Coretta Scott. *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.* Revised. New York: Puffin Books, 1993.
- King, Coretta Scott, and Barbara Reynolds. *Coretta: My Life, My Love, My Legacy*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2017.
- King, Dexter Scott, and Ralph Wiley. *Growing Up King: An Intimate Memoir*. New York: Warner Books, 2003.
- King, Jr., Dr. Martin Luther. *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*. Boston: Beacon Press, n.d.
- King Jr., Martin Luther. "Epitaph and Challenge." *Southern Christian Leadership Newsletter* 2, no. 3 (December 1963).
- . "Statement to the Press at the Beginning of the Youth Leadership Conference." Presented at the Youth Leadership Conference (SCLC) Founding Conference, Raleigh, NC, April 15, 1960.
- . "To Coretta Scott," July 18, 1952. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/coretta-scott>.
- Kissane, Amy, and John Kissane. "Georgia Historic Resources Property Information Form, Resource No. FU-A-324." Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, August 1988.
- Klima, Don L. "Breaking Out: Streetcars and Suburban Development, 1872-1900." *The Atlanta Historical Journal* 26, no. 2-3 (Summer-Fall 1982): 67-82.
- Knight, Lucian Lamar. *A Standard History of Georgia and Georgians*. Vol. 6. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1917.
- Lands, LeeAnn. *The Culture of Property: Race Class, and Housing Landscapes in Atlanta, 1880-1950*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009.
- Lefkowitz, Bernard. "Church School in Atlanta Rejects Rev. King's Son." *New York Post*, March 18, 1963.
- Lewis, John. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2017, Pub. L. No. 115-108 (2017).
- Little, J. J. "Legal Notices." *Atlanta Constitution*. December 19, 1968.
- "Loan Deed," November 1, 1932. Book 1363/Page 424. Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.
- Lyon, Elizabeth A. "J. W. Robinson (1927-2008)." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*. Last updated April 201330, .

<https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/arts-culture/j-w-robinson-1927-2008>.

McKee, Harley J. *Masonry: Stone, Brick, Mortar and Plaster*. 2nd ed. Springfield, Illinois: Association for Preservation Technology International, 2017.

Miele, Frank. *Herndon Home National Historic Landmark Nomination*. June 19, 1998.

MLK and Arnold Michaelis Interview, Raw Footage Reel 8 (Mechaelis_1533), 1965.

Mohr, Clarence L. *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986.

Monahan, William B., and Nicholas A. Fisichelli. "Climate Exposure of US National Parks in a New Era of Change." Edited by Moncho Gomez-Gesteira. *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 7 (July 2, 2014): e101302. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0101302>.

Morehouse College. "Morehouse College | Morehouse Legacy." Accessed May 11, 2020. <https://www.morehouse.edu/about/legacy.html>.

"Mrs. A.B. Cowan Hostess." *Atlanta Daily World*. January 17, 1937.

Myrick-Harris, Clarissa. "The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Atlanta, 1880-1910." *Perspectives on History Annual Meeting 2007* (November 1, 2006). <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/november-2006/the-origins-of-the-civil-rights-movement-in-atlanta-1880-1910>.

Myrick-Harris, Clarissa, and OWA Institute. "How They Lived, An Historic Context Study of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Life Home at 234 Sunset Avenue and Maynard H. Jackson Family Home at 220 Sunset Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia c. 1934-2004," April 2020.

National Archives at Atlanta. "From the Roots of a Tree: The Genealogy of Martin Luther King, Jr." n.d. http://friendsnas.org/education/S4_civilRights/Roots_of_MLK.pdf.

National Park Service. "Foundation Document, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site." Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, August 2017.

———. "Foundation Document Update, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park." Atlanta, GA: National Park Service, Interior Region 2, August 2021.

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

———. "Historical Background Essay: Atlanta's Sweet Auburn." Atlanta, GA: Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, 1981.

New South Associates. "Historic Streetcar Systems in Georgia: Context and Inventory." Georgia Department of Transportation, January 31, 2012.

Noss, Reed F. *Forgotten Grasslands of the South: Natural History and Conservation*. Washington DC: Island Press, 2013.

"NPS Archeology Program: The Earliest Americans Theme Study." Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://>

- www.nps.gov/archeology/pubs/nhleam/E-Southeast.htm.
- “Oakland Remembers World War I: James Edward Tate, Jr. – Oakland Cemetery.” Accessed July 6, 2020. <https://oaklandcemetery.com/oakland-remembers-world-war-i-james-edward-tate-jr/>.
- Oates, Stephen B. *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Penguin, 1982.
- Page, Robert R. “National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide.” Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, January 2009.
- Page, Robert R., Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan. “A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques.” Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 1998.
- “Philip Breitenbucher (1842-1916) - Find A Grave...” Accessed July 10, 2020. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55852653/philip-breitenbucher>.
- Poole, Sheila M., and Ernie Scruggs. “Foundation Buys King’s Vine City Home, Will Be Opened to Public.” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. January 24, 2019. <https://www.ajc.com/news/breaking-news/foundation-buys-king-vine-city-home-will-opened-public/nzJEzFUcmrdYjbtEUeaINO/>.
- Reuben, Carol. “Food Baskets Are Gifts to Blind at Center Party.” *Atlanta Constitution*. December 25, 1980.
- Reynolds, Barbara. *Chicago Tribune*, January 11, 1976, 17–42.
- Riley, Betsey. “A Separate Peace: An Iconic African American Neighborhood Home to Kings and Hollowells and Abernathys, Makes History Again.” *Atlanta Magazine*. May 2019.
- Robinson, Jeffrey L. “Opinion – Do Atlanta’s African-American Landmarks Really Matter?” *Creative Loafing*. February 5, 2015. <https://creativeloafing.com/content-230718-opinion---do-atlanta-s-african-american-landmarks-really>.
- “Royal Ten Social Club.” *Atlanta Daily World*. May 31, 1942.
- Sanders and Conway. “At Auction, Saturday June 8, 3 P. M.,” January 19, 1907. Map Collection. Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.
- Sanders, Charles L. “Finally, I’ve Begun to Live Again: An Intimate, Revealing Interview with Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr.” *Ebony* XXVI, no. 1 (November 1970): 172–82.
- Saporta, Maria. “Death of African-American architect Jeffery Robinson leaves void in Atlanta.” *Atlanta Business Chronicle*. December 8, 2019. Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2019/12/08/death-of-african-american-architect-jeffrey.html>.
- Saunders, Tinah. “Architect’s tribute has been building for years.” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. May 4, 1995, JD4.
- Saunt, Claudio. *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1816*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1999.

- Sassaman, Kenneth. *Early Pottery in the Southeast: Tradition and Innovation in Cooking Technology*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993.
- Scaife, William, and William Harris Bragg. *Joe Brown's Pets: The Georgia Militia, 1861-1865*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004.
- Schneider Geospatial. "QPublic.Net (TM) Fulton County, GA," September 28, 2020. <https://qpublic.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?App=FultonCountyGA&Layer=Parcels&PageType=Search>.
- Sears Roebuck Company. *Sears Catalog*. Spring 1964. www.ancestry.com.
- "Services for Dr. Charles L. Gideons, Atlanta Educator, Planned Today," *Atlanta Constitution*. May 8, 1957, 25.
- Shriver, Cameron. "Reflecting on Justice 200 Years after the Creek Civil War." Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective. Accessed September 21, 2018. <https://origins.osu.edu/milestones/september-2013-reflecting-justice-200-years-after-creek-civil-war>.
- Sitkoff, Harvard. *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1992*. Revised. New York: Harper Collins, 1993.
- Smithsonian Institution. "Foundation Consortium Acquires Historic African American Photographic Archive." Accessed October 6, 2021. <https://www.si.edu/newsdesk/releases/foundation-consortium-acquires-historic-african-american-photographic-archive>.
- Smithsonian Institution. "Consortium Forms Advisory Council, Announces Plans to Preserve Historic Ebony and Jet Photographic Archive." National Museum of African American History and Culture, March 11, 2020. <https://nmaahc.si.edu/about/news/consortium-forms-advisory-council-announces-plans-preserve-historic-ebony-and-jet>.
- Solomon, Liz, and Robert Hack. "1960s Equipment," August 12, 2020.
- Spelman College. "Spelman History in Brief | Spelman College." Accessed May 11, 2020. <https://www.spelman.edu/about-us/history-in-brief>.
- Stanford University. "Crozer Theological Seminary." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, April 27, 2017. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/crozer-theological-seminary>.
- . "India Trip." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, June 20, 2017. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/india-trip>.
- . "Poor People's Campaign." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, July 7, 2017. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/poor-peoples-campaign>.
- . "Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, July 5, 2017. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/stride-toward-freedom-montgomery-story>.
- . "Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?" The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, June 12, 2017. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/where-do-we-go-here-chaos-or-community>.

- Stanford University, and Stanford. "Albany Movement." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, April 24, 2017. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/albany-movement>.
- . "Nobel Peace Prize." The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, July 3, 2017. <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/nobel-peace-prize>.
- Storey, Steve. "Railroads." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*. Accessed September 27, 2018. <https://www.georgiencyclopedia.org/articles/business-economy/railroads>.
- Sullivan, Patrick, Mary Beth Reed, and Tracy Fedor. *The Ranch House in Georgia: Guidelines for Evaluation*. Stone Mountain, GA: New South Associates, 2010.
- The Architects' Small House Service Bureau. *Face Brick Homes*. Chicago, IL: American Face Brick Association, 1931.
- The Torch* (Booker T. Washington Evening High School Yearbook). Atlanta, GA, 1953.
- Thomas Industries Inc. *Inspiration Lighting by Moe Light*. Louisville, KY: Moe Lighting, 1959.
- Thomas, Kenneth H. *Booker T. Washington High School National Register Nomination*. 1986.
- Thompson, Jr., Harold. *A Most Stirring and Significant Episode: Religion and the Rise and Fall of Prohibition in Black Atlanta, 1865-1887*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012.
- Tuck, Stephen. *Beyond Atlanta: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Georgia, 1940-1980*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001.
- United States Department of Agriculture. "Soil Survey of Fulton County, Georgia," n.d., 265.
- . 1955 Aerial Photograph. USDA Historical Aerial Photographs. www.historicaerials.com.
- . 1960 Aerial Photograph. USDA Historical Aerial Photographs. www.historicaerials.com.
- United States Department of Agriculture, National Resources Conservation Service. Web Soil Survey. <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>. Accessed May 13, 2020.
- Urban Collage, Inc., and Robert Charles Lesser & Co. "Vine City Redevelopment Plan, Volume I - Final Report." Atlanta, Georgia: Vine City Civic Association, September 2004.
- US Department of Commerce, NOAA. "Rainfall Scorecard." Accessed December 28, 2018. https://www.weather.gov/ffc/rainfall_scorecard.
- Venet, Wendy. *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2014.
- Vine City Foundation. *Vine City Voice*, January 23, 1966. Southern Regional Council Clipping Collection, Folder 1, Box 612, Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library, Atlanta, Georgia.
- "Warranty Deed," February 25, 1957. Book 3196/Page 520. Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.
- "Warranty Deed," October 1970. Book 5306/Page 492. Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.

“Warranty Deed to Secure a Debt,” September 20, 1968. Book 4961/Page 401. Fulton County Superior Court, Deeds & Records Room.

Washington, Crystal Tiller. 234 Sunset Avenue, Atlanta. Interview by Madie Fischetti, January 12, 2020.

Weeks, Kay D., and Anne E. Grimmer. “The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings.” Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Heritage Preservation Series, 1995.

Westside Future Fund. 23rd Virtual Transform Westside Summit, 2021.

White, Dana F. “The Black Sides of Atlanta: A Geography of Expansion and Containment, 1970-1870.” *Atlanta Historical Journal* 26, no. 2–3 (Summer-Fall 1982): 199–225.

“Who Says Poor Don’t Help Themselves?” *The Georgia Bulletin*, November 9, 1967. Harry G. Lefever Papers. Atlanta History Center, Keenan Research Library.

“William Bartram, 1739-1823. Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws; Containing An Account of the Soil and Natural Productions of Those Regions, Together with Observations on the Manners of the Indians. Embellished with Copper-Plates.” Accessed October 2, 2018. <https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/bartram/bartram.html>.

Woodward, Colin Edward. *Marching Masters: Slavery, Race, and the Confederate Army during the Civil War*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014. muse.jhu.edu/book/28770.

Appendix A. Historic Drawings

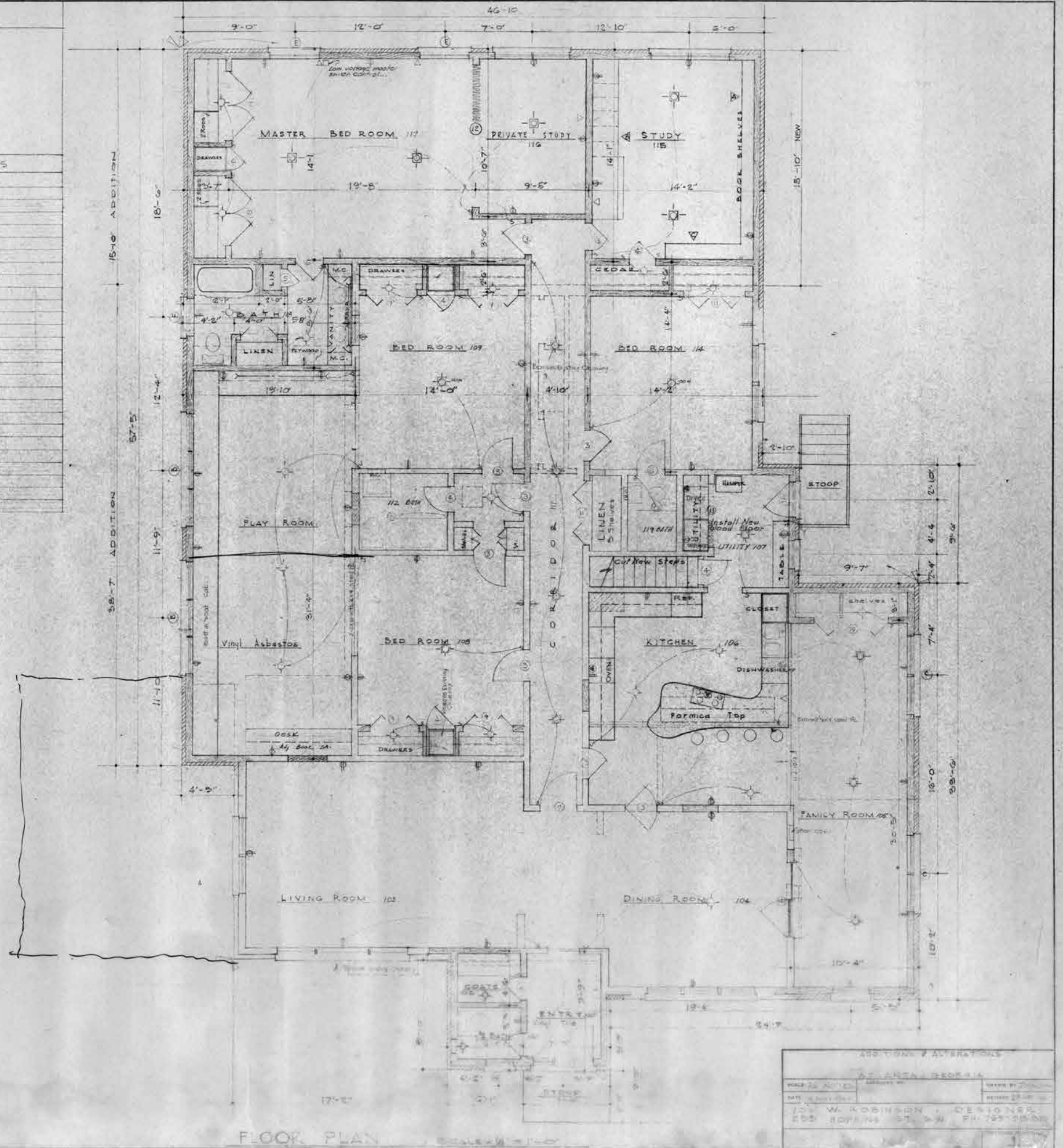
Courtesy of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives

- Sheet 1 contains a first-floor plan and finish schedule. It is dated 16 November 1964 and was revised on 28 December 1964
- Sheet 2 contains basement plan, a typical wall section, plot plan, and door and window schedules. It is dated 19 November 1964 and was revised on 28 December 1964
- A sheet “1 of 1” is dated May 1968 and shows the proposed basement floor plan with some variation from its final form. This sheet bears Robinson’s seal. The title block lists “Joseph W. Robinson, A.I.A. Architect, 255 Hopkins St, S.W. Atlanta, Georgia.”
- An undated foundation plan (sheet “1 of 2”) appears to correspond with the basement floor plan dated May 1968. The title block lists “Joseph W. Robinson, A.I.A. Architect, 255 Hopkins St, S.W. Atlanta, Georgia.” This plan bears the seal of O. C. Floyd, professional engineer, with a license that appears to note “Expires Dec. 31, 19.”
- An undated floor framing plan (sheet “2 of 2”) appears to correspond with the basement floor plan dated May 1968. The title block lists “Joseph W. Robinson, A.I.A. Architect, 255 Hopkins St, S.W. Atlanta, Georgia.” This plan bears the seal of O. C. Floyd, professional engineer, with a license that appears to note “Expires Dec. 31, 19.”
- A basement floor plan closer to the plan as built, with indications of a proposed basement addition (unbuilt) at the north end of Room 004. This sheet has no title block and is labeled only “Basement Floor Plan.”
- A sheet dated 8 October 1968 with a title block bearing only “J. W. Robinson – Architect” shows the division of the playroom for incorporation into the adjacent bedrooms and the associated remodeling of the girls’ bedroom (R108).

Page intentionally left blank

WORK SCHEDULE

DESIGNATION	NO.	FLOOR	BASE	WALLS	CEILING	WTG.	PTG.	REMARKS
ENTRY	100							VINYL TILE FL.
BATH	101							
COATS	102							
LIVING ROOM	103							
DINING ROOM	104							
FAMILY ROOM	105							
KITCHEN	106							
UTILITY ROOM	107							
BED ROOM	108							
BED ROOM	109							
PLAY ROOM	110							
CORRIDOR	111							
BATH ROOM	112							
STAIRS	113							
BED ROOM	114							
STUDY	115							
PRIVATE STUDY	116							
MASTER BED ROOM	117							
BATH	118							
BATH ROOM	119							
GARAGE	8-1							
STORAGE	8-2							
FURNACE	8-3							



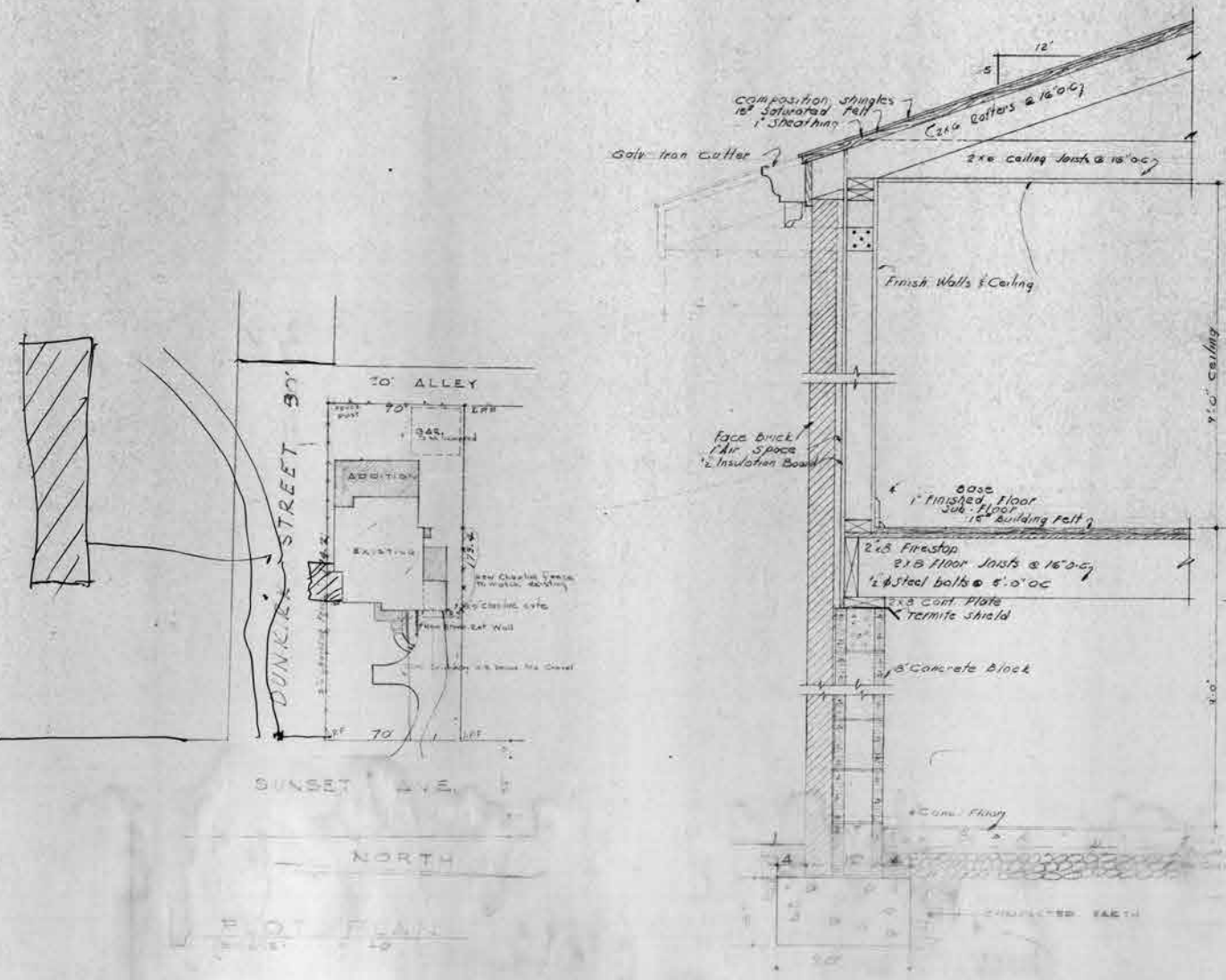
FLOOR PLAN

ADDITIONAL ALTERATIONS

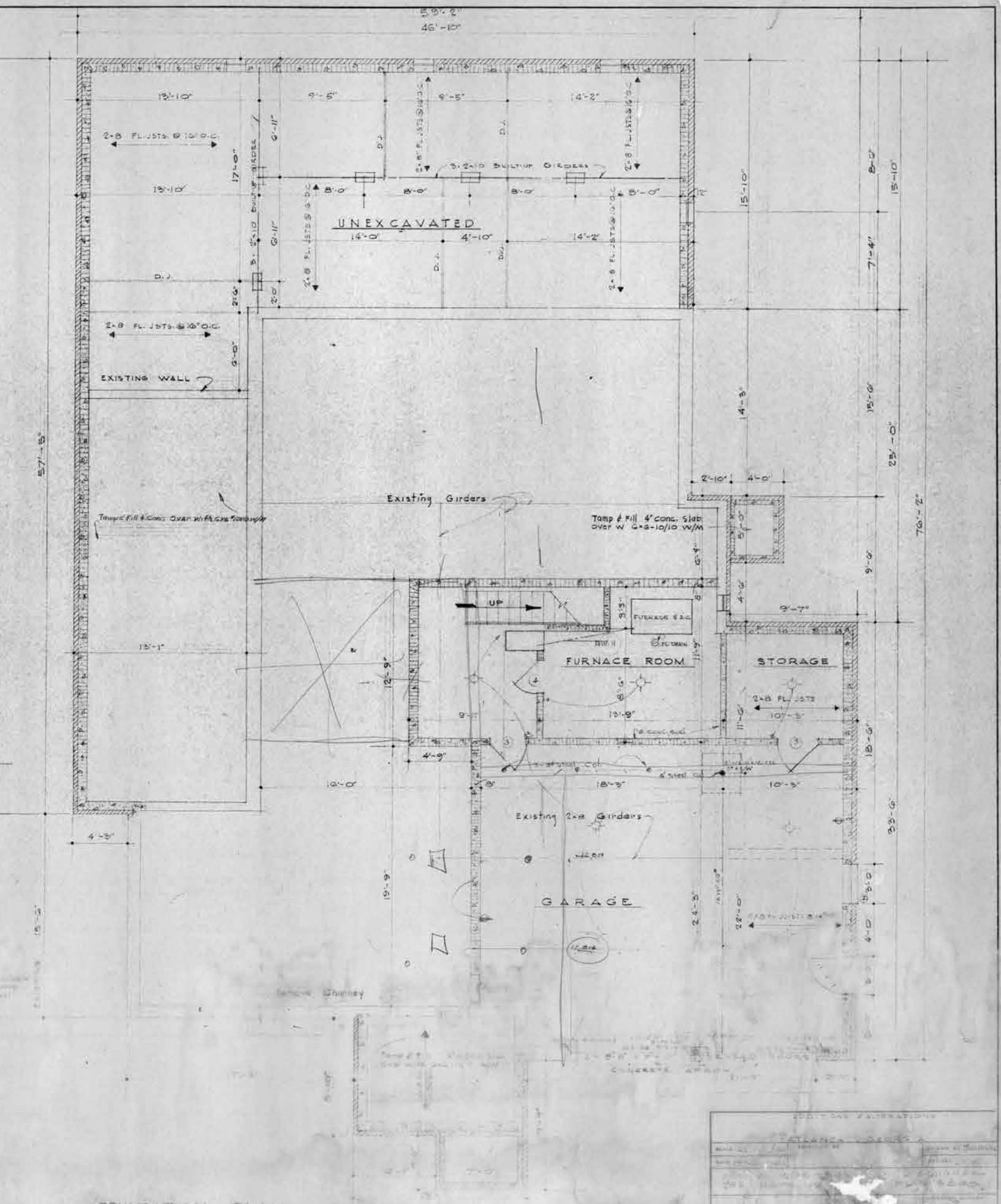
AT AREA, GEORGIA

DATE: 10/1/57	SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
1201 W. ROBINSON, DESIGNER	
255 SOPHIA ST. S.W. PH. 729-2828	

DOOR SCHEDULE			WINDOW SCHEDULE		
MARK	SIZE	DESCRIPTION	MARK	SIZE	DESCRIPTION
1	3'0" x 7'0" x 1/4"	FLUSH	A	2'-3" x 5'-2" w/4" x 5'2" P.K.R.W.B.	
2	2'-8" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	FLUSH & GLASS	B	8'-11" x 4'-8" 1/4"	ANDERSEN (FLEXIVENT)
3	2'-8" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	"	C	2'-5" x 4'-8" 1/2"	D.W.
4	2'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	"	D	2'-8" x 3'-2"	
5	1'-8" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	"	E	3'-4" x 5'-0"	
6	2'-4" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	"	F	2'-8" x 3'-2"	
7	3'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	"	G	2'-0" x 3'-2"	
8	2'-2" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	"	H	3'-0" x 3'-2"	
9	4'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	BL. FOLD	J		
10	6'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	"			
11	5'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/4"	"			
12	12'-0" x 7'-0"	FOLDING			
13	5'-0" x 7'-0"	"			
14	5'-0" x 7'-0"	GLASS SLIDING			
15					
16					

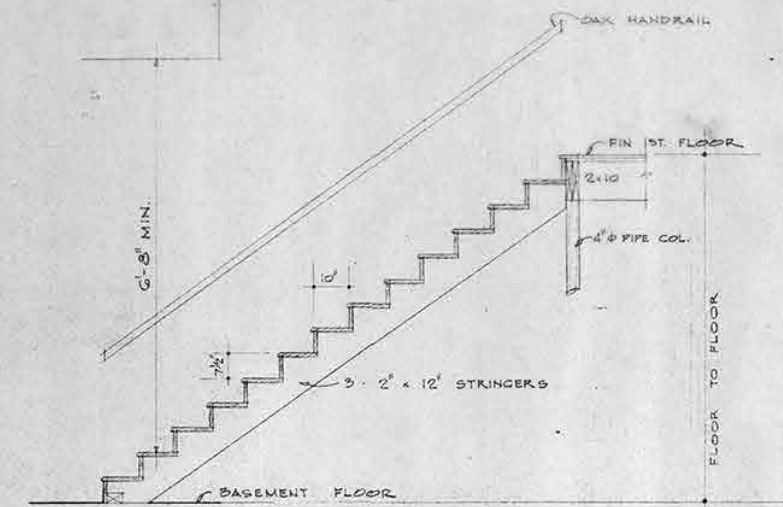


TYPICAL WALL SECTION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

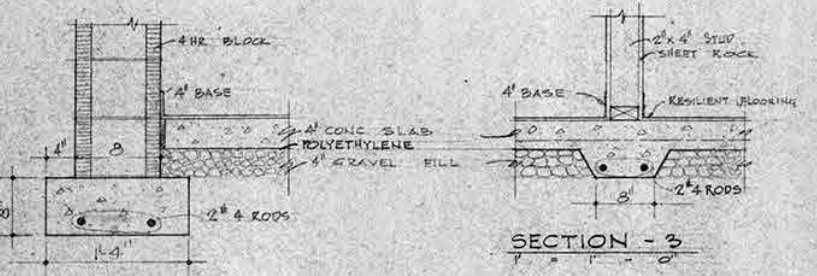


FOUNDATION PLAN

MATERIAL SPECIFICATIONS	
WALL	8" CONCRETE BLOCK
FLOOR	4" CONC. SLAB OVER W/6" x 10" W/M
CEILING	1/2" GYPSUM BOARD
ROOF	COMPOSITION SHINGLES
INSULATION	1/2" INSULATION BOARD
FOUNDATION	CONCRETE



SECTION THRU STAIRS
SCALE: 1/2" = 1' - 0"



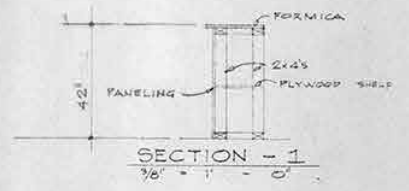
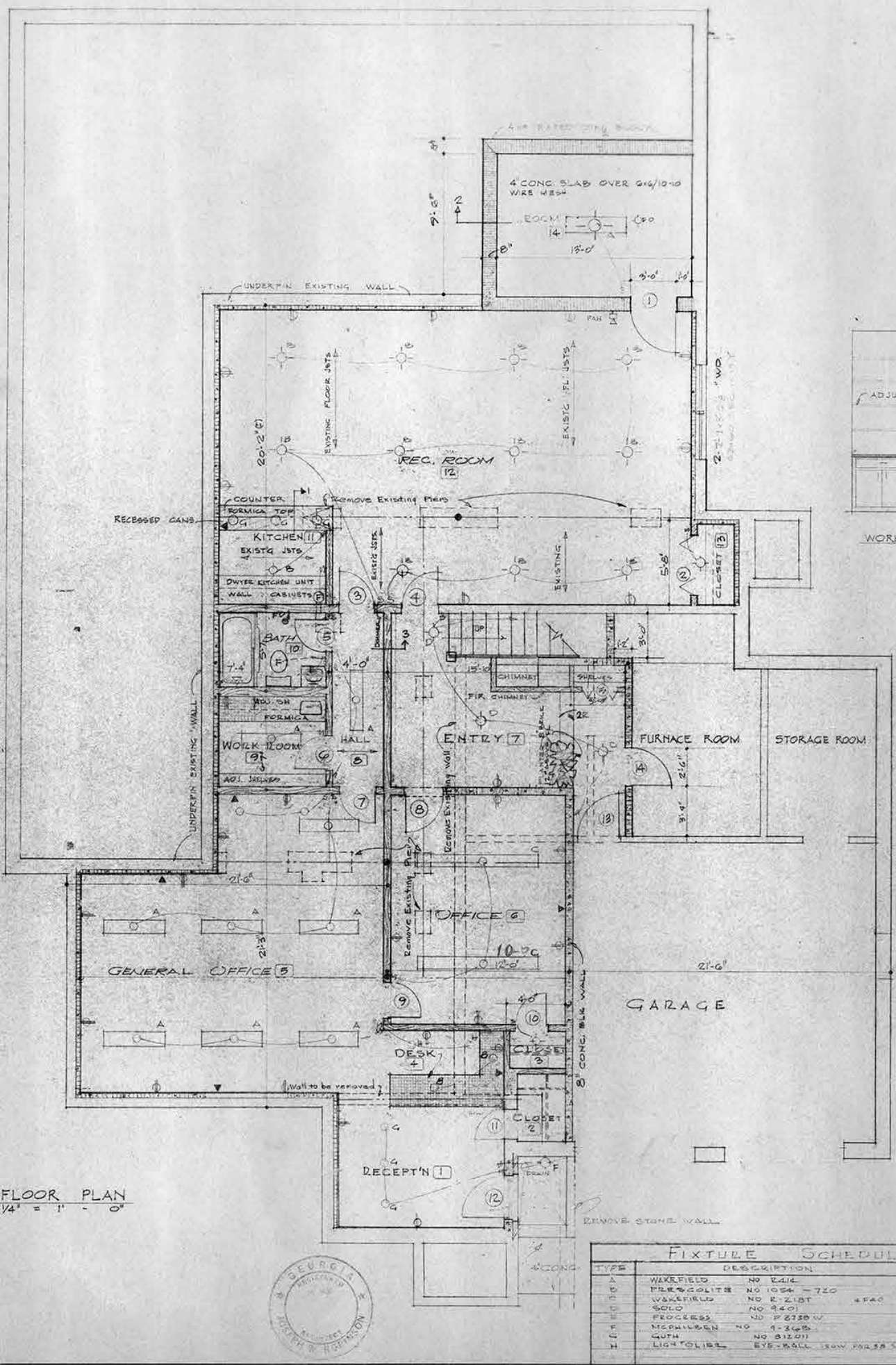
SECTION - 2

SECTION - 3

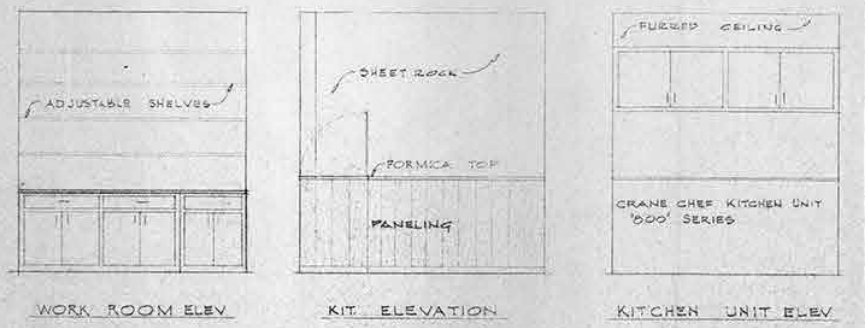
DOOR SCHEDULE					
NO.	WIDTH	HEIGHT	THICK	REMARKS	
1	3'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	A LABEL 4HR RATING	
2	4'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD BI-FOLDING	
3	2'-6"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD SOLID CORE FLUSH	
4	2'-6"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD SOLID CORE FLUSH	
5	2'-2"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD HOLLOW CORE FLUSH	
6	2'-4"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD HOLLOW CORE FLUSH	
7	2'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD HOLLOW CORE FLUSH	
8	2'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD SOLID CORE FLUSH	
9	2'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD SOLID CORE FLUSH	
10	2'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD HOLLOW CORE FLUSH	
11	2'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/8"	WOOD HOLLOW CORE FLUSH	
12	3'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/4"	WOOD SOLID CORE	
13	3'-0"	6'-8"	1 3/4"	WOOD SOLID CORE	
14	2'-6"	6'-8"	1 3/4"	WOOD HOLLOW CORE FLUSH	
15	2'-6"	6'-8"	1 3/4"	WOOD BI-FOLDING	

ROOM FINISH SCHEDULE						
NO.	DESCRIPTION	FLOOR	BASE	WALLS	CEILING	REMARKS
1	RECEPTION RM	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
2	CLOSET	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	SHEET ROCK	
3	CLOSET	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	SHEET ROCK	
4	DESK	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
5	GENERAL OFFICE	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
6	OFFICE	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
7	ENTRY	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
8	HALL	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
9	WORK ROOM	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
10	BATH	CER. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
11	KITCHEN	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	PANELING	ACQU. TILE	
12	REC. ROOM	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	PANELING	ACQU. TILE	
13	CLOSET	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	SHEET ROCK	
14	ROOM	V.A. TILE	RUBBER	SHEET ROCK	ACQU. TILE	
15						

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/4" = 1' - 0"



SECTION - 1
3/8" = 1' - 0"



WORK ROOM ELEV. KITCHEN ELEVATION KITCHEN UNIT ELEV.

LIST OF MATERIALS & LEGEND

- EXISTING TO BE REMOVED
- EXISTING TO REMAIN
- CONCRETE BLOCK
- FACE BRICK
- WOOD STUD PARTITIONS

GENERAL NOTES.

1. CONTRACTOR TO CHECK AND VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH ANY WORK AND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SAME.
2. REMOVE ALL EXISTING DUCTS.
3. WIRE HOUSE WITH BURGLAR ALARM SYSTEM & ALL EXTERIOR DOOR & WINDOWS.
4. INSTALL COMPLETE FIRE DETECTION SYSTEM & BOTH FLOORS.
5. APPLY IRONITE CEMENT PLASTER BY USING QUITE METHOD. THIS TO BE APPLIED AT EXTERIOR WALLS IN BASEMENT ONLY FROM THE WESTERN WATERPROOFING COMPANY.
6. INSTALL 4" BATT INSULATION IN CEILING OF ENTIRE BASEMENT WITH PAPER AT ONE SIDE.
7. CEILING HEIGHT IN ALL ROOMS OF BASEMENT TO BE 10'-0" FLOOR TO FLOOR EXCEPT IN GARAGE, STORAGE ROOM AND FURNACE ROOM.

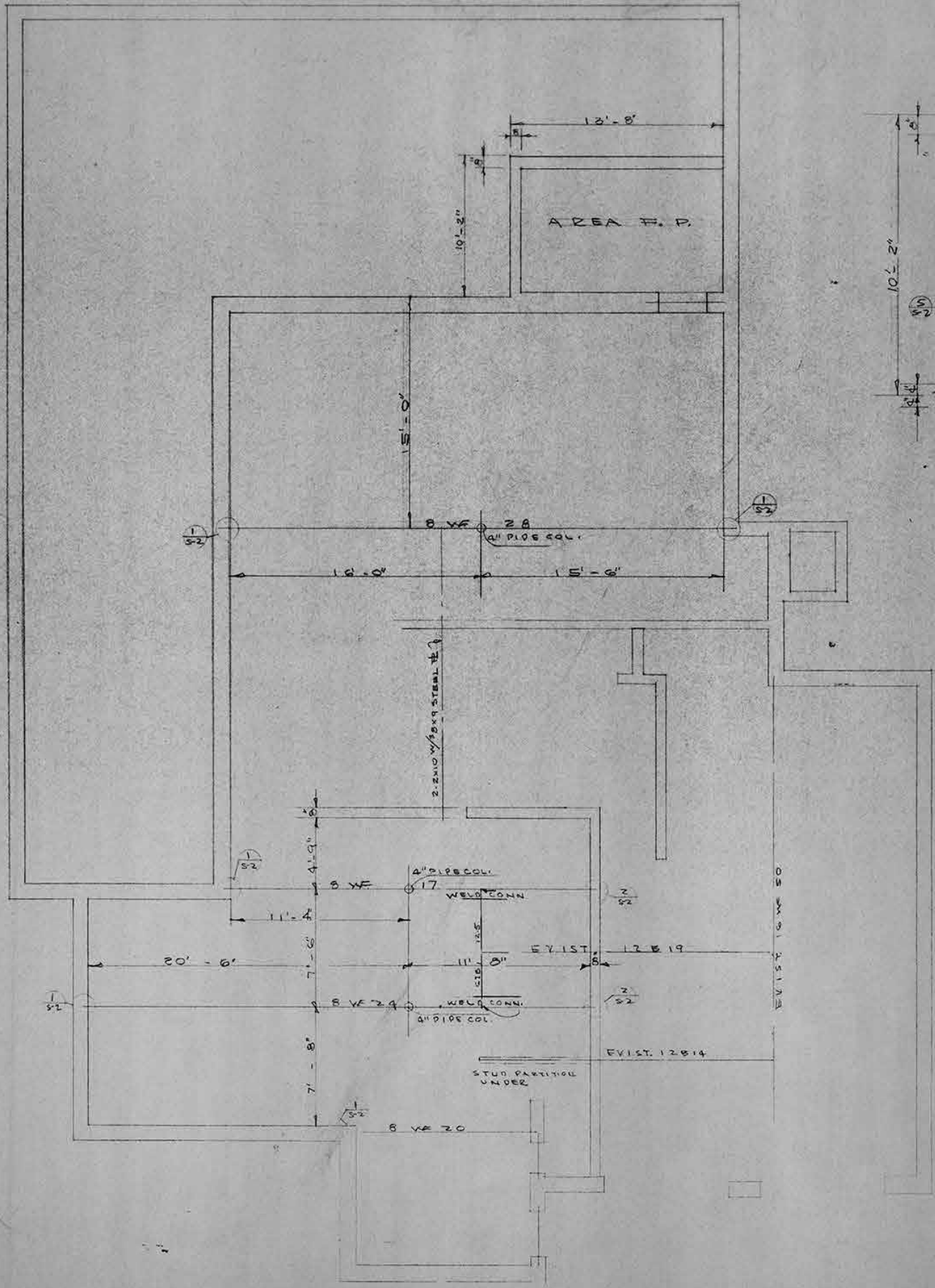
FIXTURE SCHEDULE

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	MOUNTING	LAMP
A	WAKEFIELD NO. 2414	SURFACE	COOL WHITE
B	WAKEFIELD NO. 1054 - 720	RECESSED	150 W. LE. AC.
C	WAKEFIELD NO. E-218T	SURFACE	COOL WHITE
D	SOLO NO. 840	CEILING	2-100 W. LE.
E	PROGRESS NO. P-210 W	CEILING	1-100 W.
F	MEDALLION NO. 4-242B	WALL	2-100 W. LE.
G	GUTH NO. 81201	SURFACE	2-100 W. LE.
H	LIGHTOLIER BYE-BALL 150W. PAR. SPOT	RECESSED	150 W.

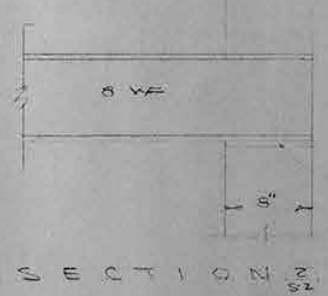
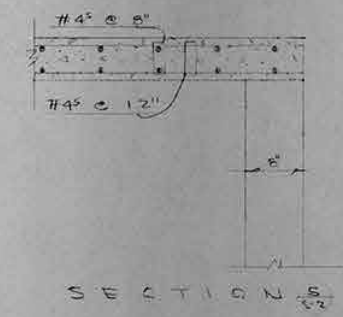
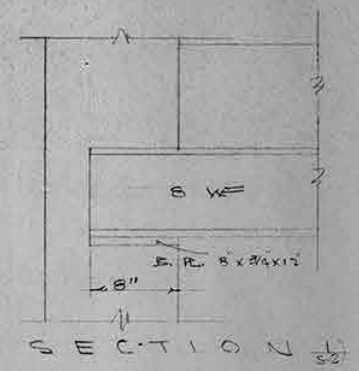
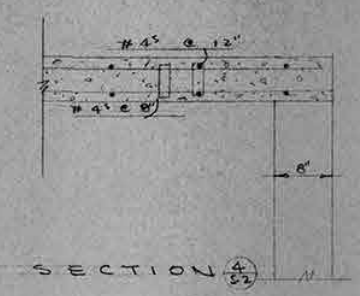
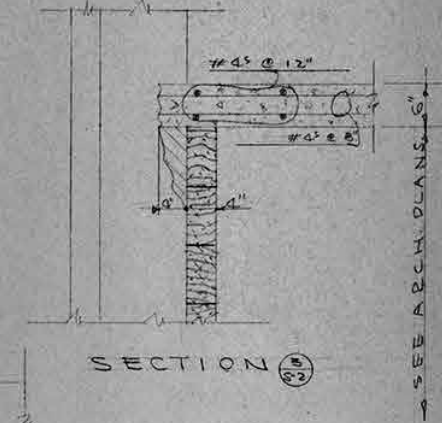
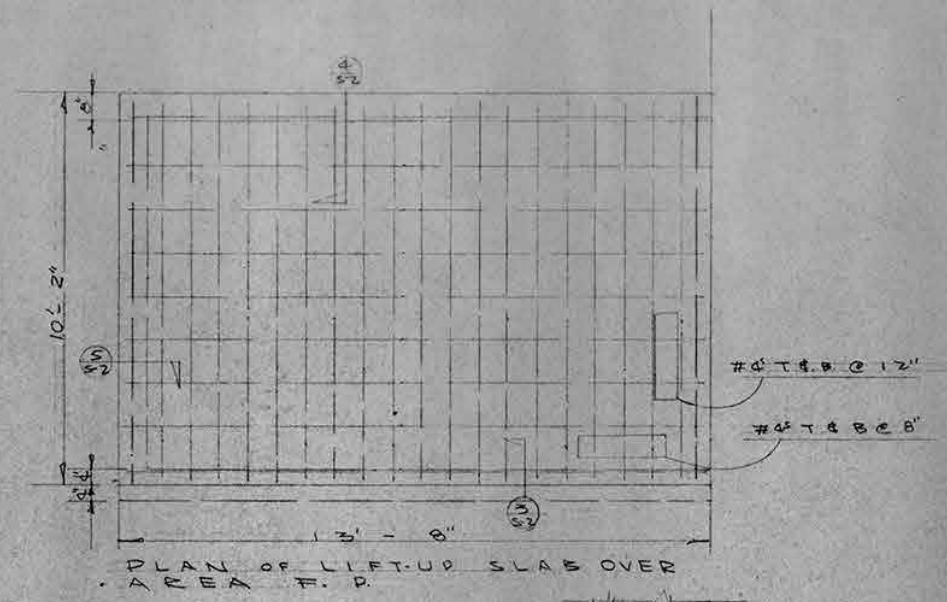
ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS

ATLANTA		GEORGIA	
SCALE AS NOTED	APPROVED BY:	DATE:	REVISION:
		MAY 1968	
JOSEPH W. ROBINSON A.I.A. ARCHITECT 255 HOPKINS ST. S.W. ATLANTA, GEORGIA			
PLANS DETAILS SECTIONS & ELEVATIONS			DRAWING NUMBER 1 8 1



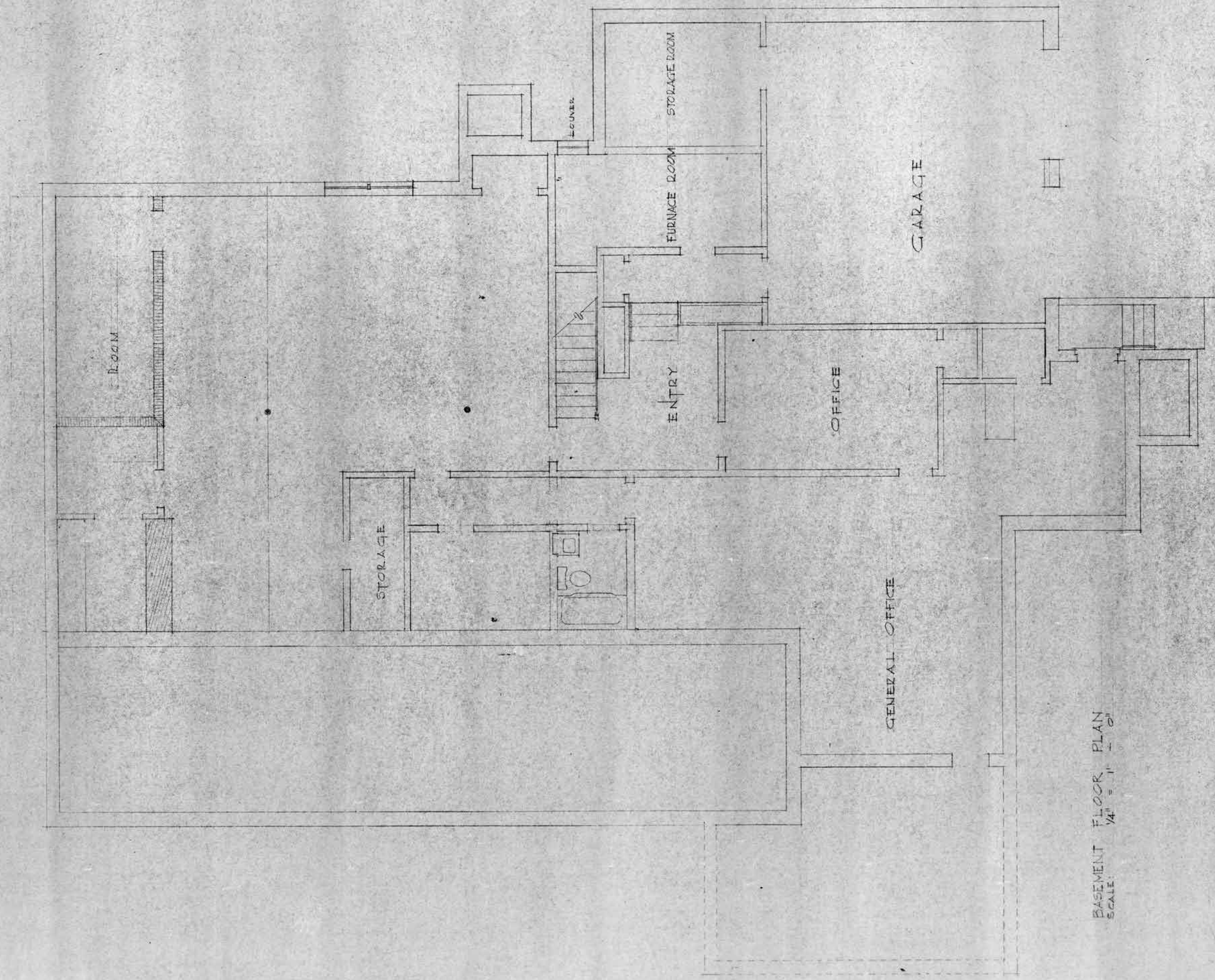


FLOOR FRAMING PLAN
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

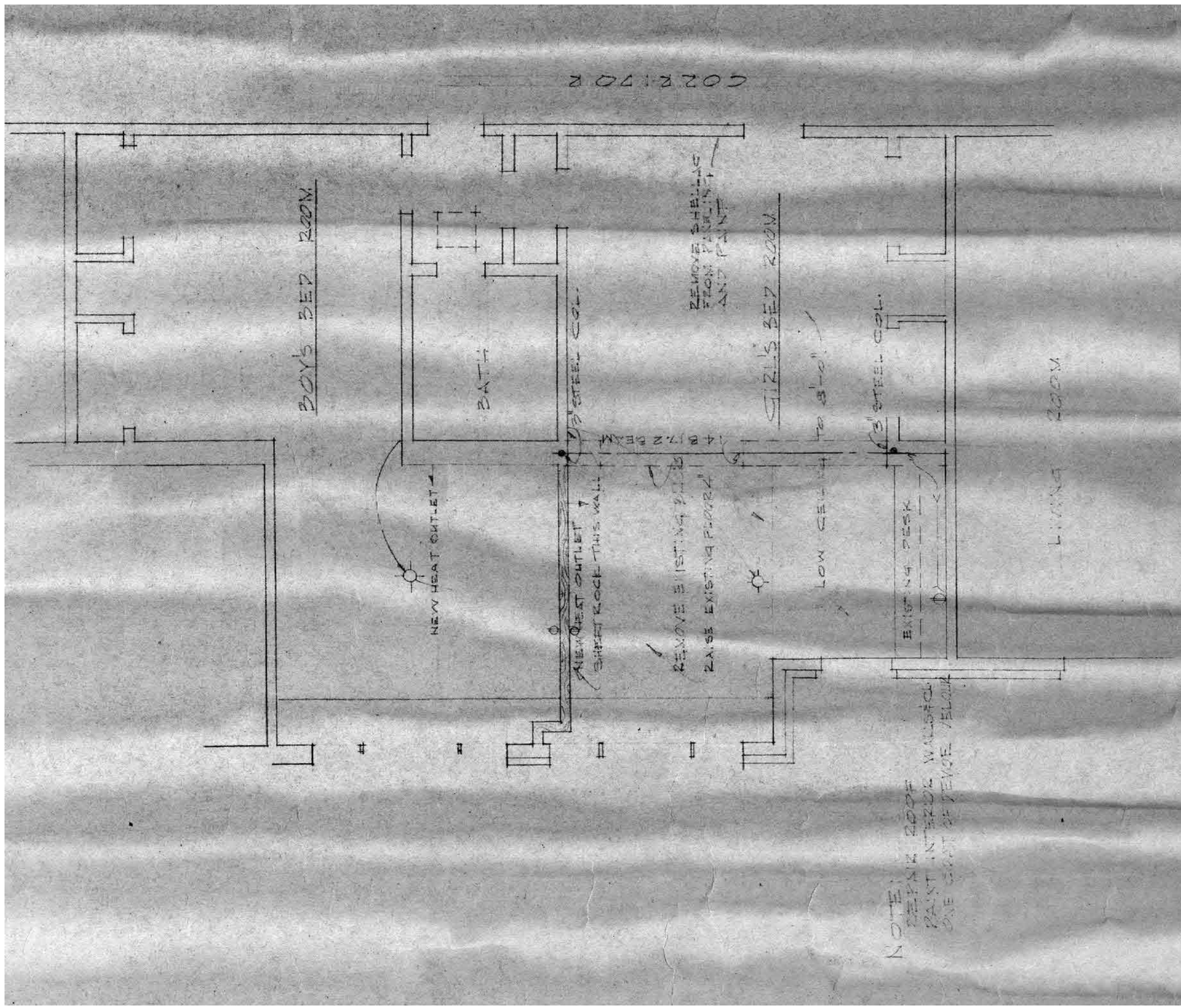


ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS
 ATLANTA GEORGIA
 SCALE AS NOTED
 JOSEPH W. ROBINSON, AIA, ARCHITECT
 755 HOPKINS ST., S.W. ATLANTA, GEORGIA

100-100-100



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/4" = 1' - 0"



NOTE:
 REMOVE ROOF
 PAINT INTERIOR WALLS
 ONE FOOT OF DECK BELOW

FLOOR PLAN SHEET 4-1-0

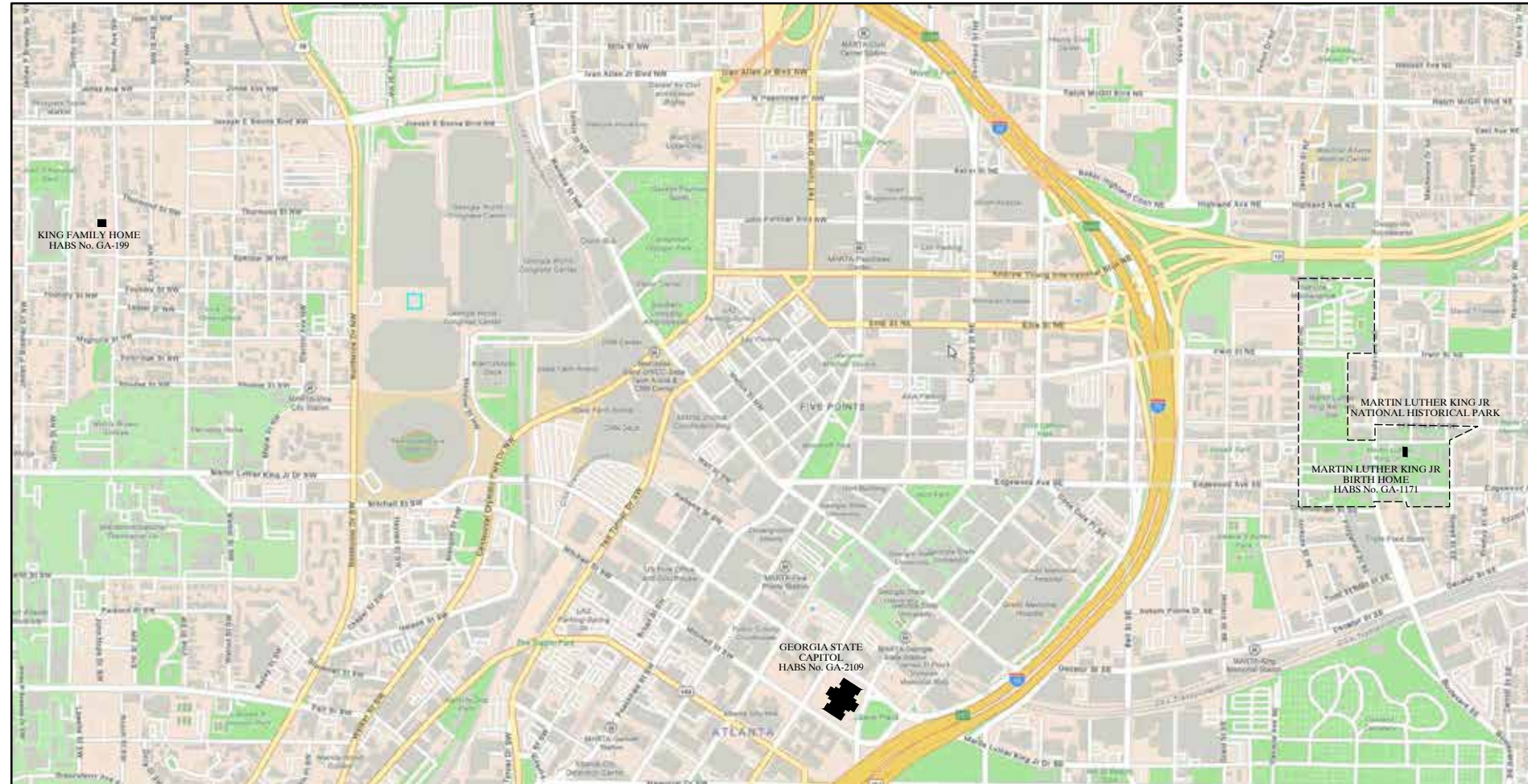
Appendix B. Existing Condition Recordation Drawings and Historic Evolution Drawings

Historic American Buildings Survey, GA-199, March 2021

Historic American Buildings Survey, Daniel DeSousa, Massing Models, March 2021

Page intentionally left blank

KING FAMILY HOME



ATLANTA CENTRAL AREA MAP

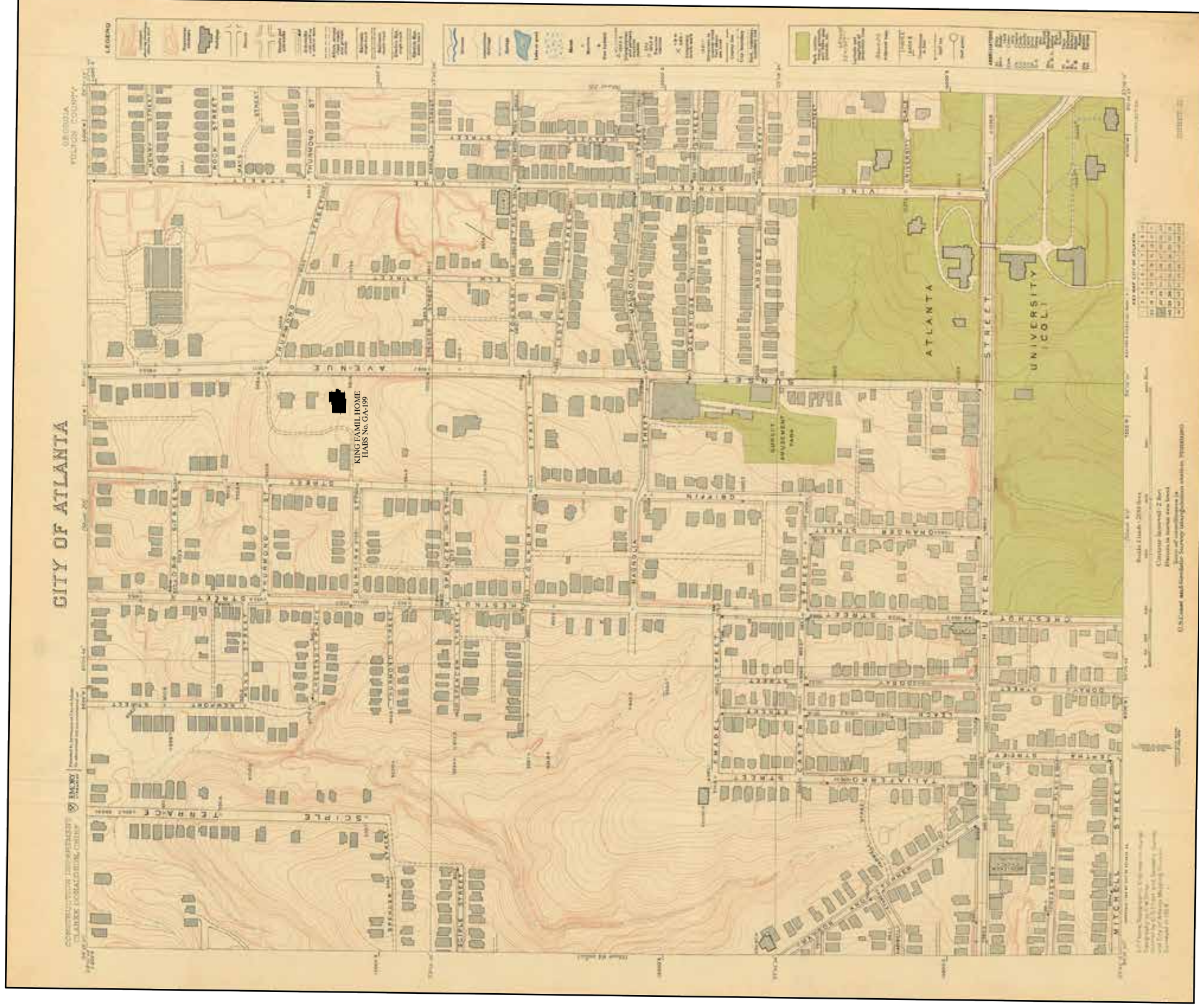
NO SCALE

THIS MAP WAS OBTAINED FROM THE WEBSITE OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING.

The King Family Home at 234 Sunset Avenue Northwest was purchased by the Kings in late 1964 at a critical professional and personal moment. That year the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed and Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) would win the Nobel Peace Prize. The family, including wife Coretta Scott King (CSK) and the four children Yolanda, Martin III, Dexter, and Bernice, had been renting for a number of years, most recently on Johnson Avenue in the Old Fourth Ward section of Atlanta. MLK was reluctant to own property or live in too grand of a house. Instead of moving to a new house in a middle class Atlanta neighborhood or suburb, the Kings chose to renovate a house in Vine City, a predominately black and economically diverse neighborhood on Atlanta's west side. Vine City was in decline in the 1960s, but it was also close to MLK's alma mater, Morehouse College, and home to other black professionals and civil rights leaders. This was the only house the Kings ever owned, and it immediately became a center of their civil rights work. The Kings hired African-American architect Joseph W. Robinson to design and execute two ambitious renovation projects -- one in 1964-65 and the other in 1968 -- that transformed the 1930s cottage into a 1960s ranch house.

When the Kings bought the property in late 1964, shortly before MLK was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, it was a circa 1933 one-story brick veneer small house with simple decorative details such as a curved asymmetrical gable at the side and possibly also at the front entrance. The house had most recently been owned by respected African-American educator Charles Gideons and his wife Jeannette Gideons, who lived there until her death in 1962. The first major renovation campaign overseen by J. W. Robinson included basement excavations to accommodate a two-car garage and additions to all sides, including a study and master bedroom suite at the rear and a family room on the north side. This renovation also enclosed a side porch or solarium on the south side to create a playroom for the children, reconfigured the roof line, and rebuilt the front facade of the house. The update included a completely redone kitchen with pink Formica counters and full bath with double sinks in the master bedroom suite. The family moved in during April 1965.

After MLK's assassination in April 1968, CSK again worked with Robinson to renovate the house, this time focusing primarily on the basement. Extensive excavation required additional I-beam structural supports to extend the basement under most of the upper floor. The new spaces included a recreation room and kitchenette, multiple closets including one designed to be fireproof storage for MLK's personal items, and offices for CSK and the newly founded King Center. Upstairs, the children's playroom was also divided and incorporated into the adjacent bedroom spaces. CSK finished raising the children in this house and continued to work and live there for nearly four decades, until 2004. The family retained ownership of the house until its acquisition by the National Park Service in 2019 for inclusion in the Martin Luther King Jr National Historical Park. As the only property ever owned by the couple, the King Family Home represents their experiences in the second half of the 1960s and CSK's development of the King Center following her husband's assassination. Except for cosmetic changes and upgrades to some systems and fixtures, the house has remained largely unchanged. Plans are underway to study the house, in order to prepare and interpret it for visitors.



AREA MAP (1930)

SCALE AS NOTED

THIS MAP WAS PREPARED BY THE U.S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY AND THE CITY OF ATLANTA MAPPING DIVISION. THE MAP WAS OBTAINED FROM THE WEBSITE OF THE EMORY UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS. THE MAP HAS BEEN ALTERED TO SHOW THE LOCATION AND CURRENT CONFIGURATION OF THE KING FAMILY HOME.

The documentation of the King Family Home was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Documentation Programs (HDP) division of the National Park Service (NPS), Dana Lockert, Acting Chief. The project was sponsored by the Historic Preservation Training Center (HPTC), NPS, Moss Rudley, Superintendent; by the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historical Park (MALU), NPS, Judy Forte, Superintendent; and by the Southeast Regional Office, NPS, Danita Brown, Architect. Project planning was coordinated by Catherine Lavoiie, Chief, HABS; and by Thomas Vitanza AIA, Senior Historical Architect, HPTC. The field work was undertaken and the measured drawings were produced by Project Supervisor Mark Schara AIA, HABS Architect; and by HABS Architects Paul Davidson and Daniel De Sousa. The historical report was written by HABS Historian Lisa Pfeuller Davidson. The archival photography was undertaken by HDP Photographer Jarob Ortiz. Assistance in the field was provided by HPTC Historical Architects Jennifer Leeds and Mark Slater; by Historical Landscape Architect Madie Fischetti ASLA, WLA Studio; and by Architectural Historian Ben Ross, Ratio Design. Additional assistance was provided by MALU staff, especially Facility Manager Elvis Babilonia.

DRAWN BY: MARK SCHARA

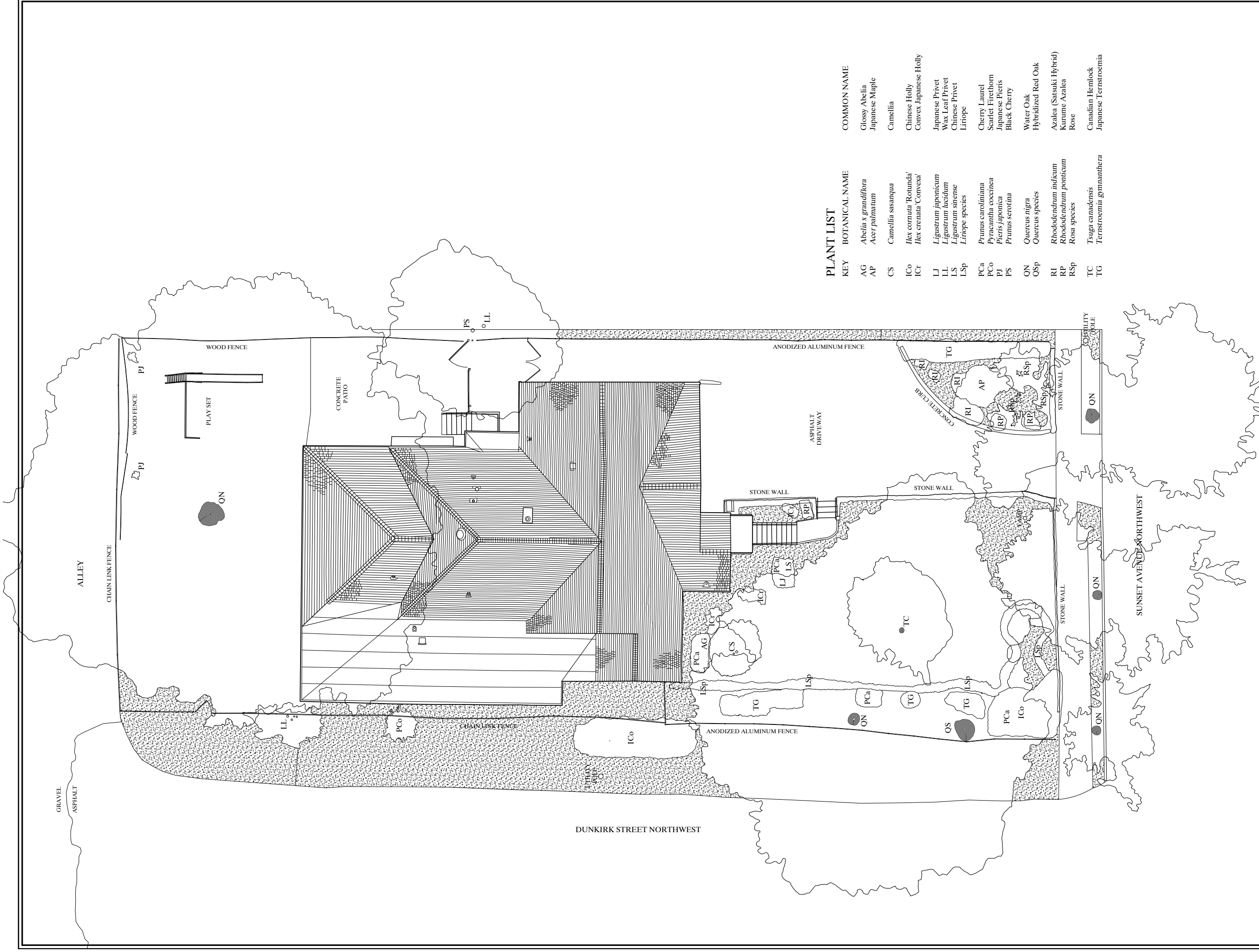
KING FAMILY HOME PROJECT, 2020
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

234 SUNSET AVENUE NORTHWEST ATLANTA FULTON COUNTY GEORGIA

HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 2 OF 11 SHEETS

SURVEY NO.
GA-199

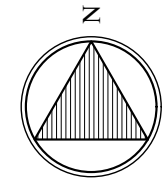
LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS
INDEX NUMBER



PLANT LIST

KEY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
AG	<i>Abelia x grandiflora</i>	Glossy Abelia
AP	<i>Acer palmatum</i>	Japanese Maple
CS	<i>Camellia sasangua</i>	Camellia
ICo	<i>Ilex cornuta 'Rotunda'</i>	Chinese Holly
ICr	<i>Ilex crenata 'Convexa'</i>	Convex Japanese Holly
LJ	<i>Ligustrum japonicum</i>	Japanese Privet
LL	<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	Wax Leaf Privet
LS	<i>Ligustrum sinense</i>	Chinese Privet
LSp	<i>Liriope species</i>	Liriope
PCa	<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>	Cherry Laurel
PCo	<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>	Scarlet Firethorn
PJ	<i>Pieris japonica</i>	Japanese Pieris
PS	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry
ON	<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water Oak
OSp	<i>Quercus species</i>	Hybridized Red Oak
RI	<i>Rhododendrum indicum</i>	Azalea (Satsuki Hybrid)
RP	<i>Rhododendrum ponticum</i>	Kurume Azalea
RSp	<i>Rosa species</i>	Rose
TC	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>	Canadian Hemlock
TG	<i>Ternstroemia gymnanthera</i>	Japanese Ternstroemia

SITE PLAN
 1/8" = 1'-0"
 1:96



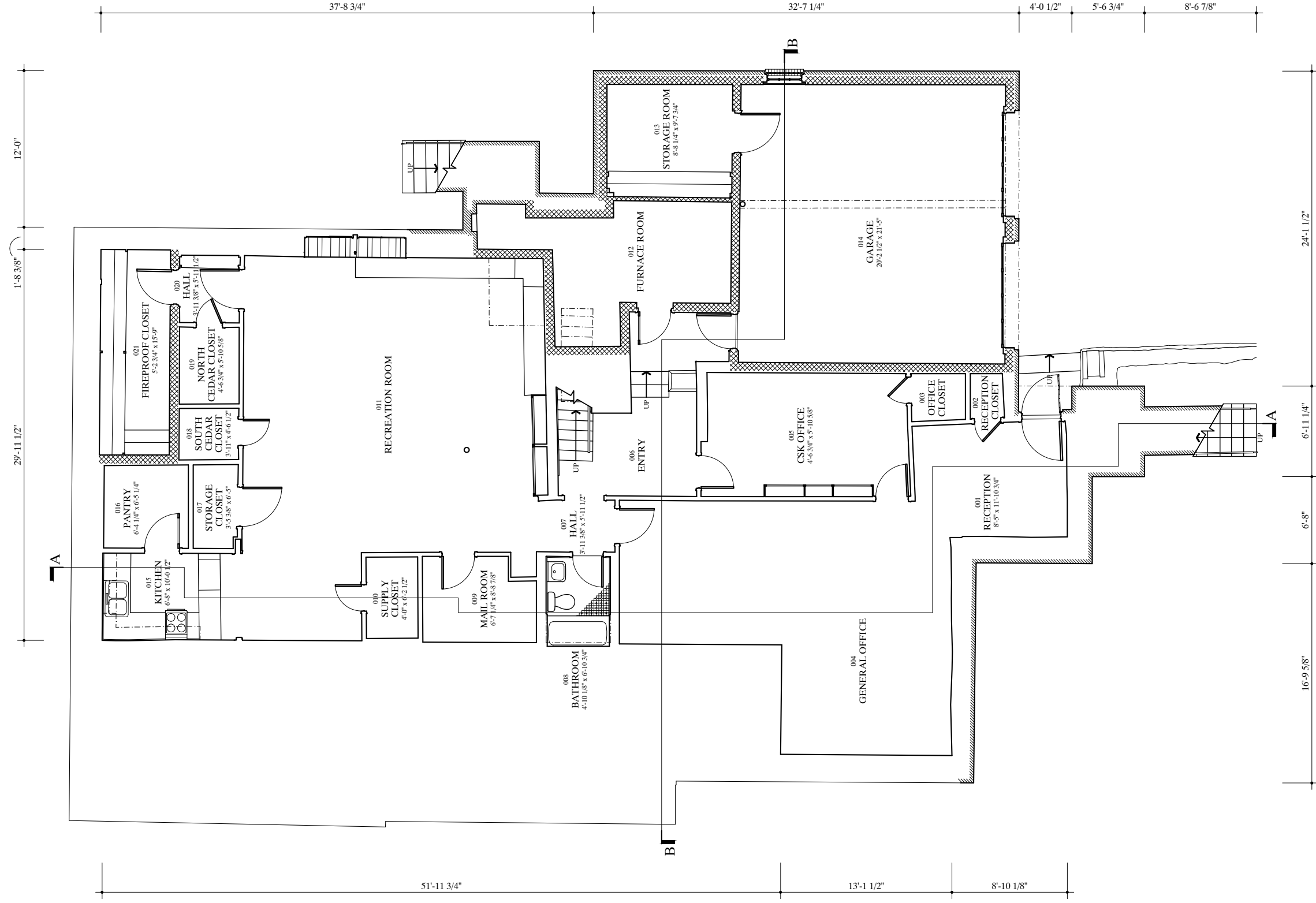
DRAWN BY: MARK SCHARA
 KING FAMILY HOME PROJECT, 2020
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

KING FAMILY HOME
 234 SUNSET AVENUE NORTHWEST ATLANTA, GEORGIA
 FULTON COUNTY

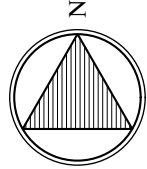
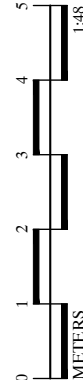
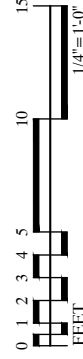
SURVEY NO. GA-199
 HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
 SHEET 3 OF 11 SHEETS

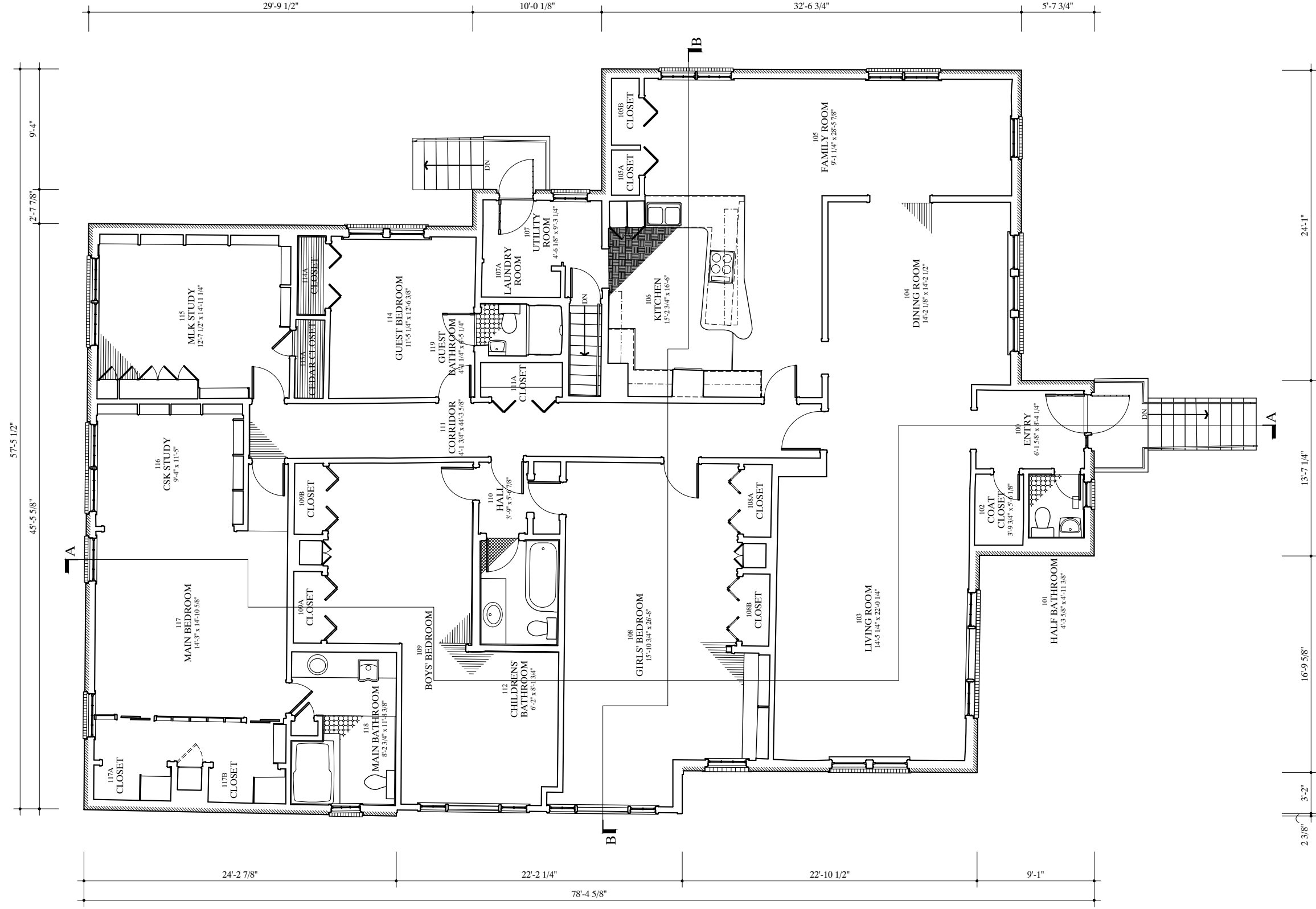
IF REPRODUCED PLEASE CREDIT THE HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NAME OF DELINEATOR, DATE OF DRAWING

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER

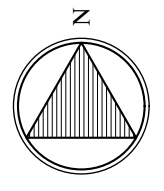
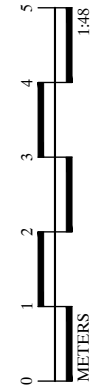
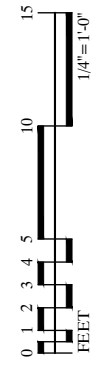


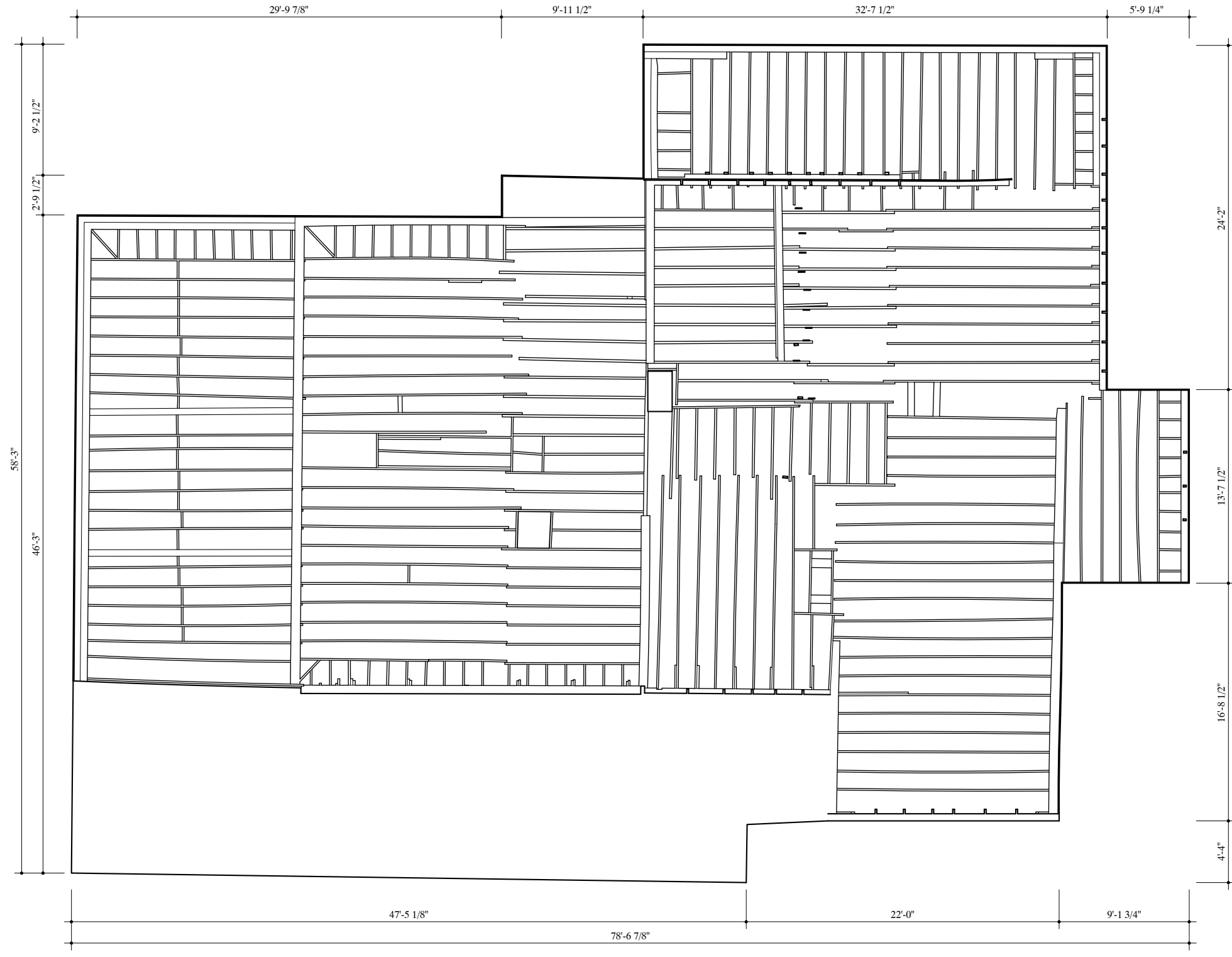
BASEMENT PLAN
 1/4" = 1'-0"
 1:48





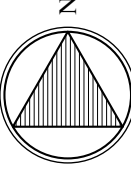
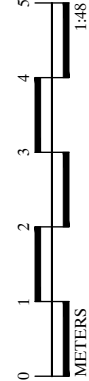
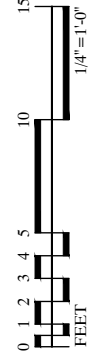
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
1/4"=1'-0"
1:48

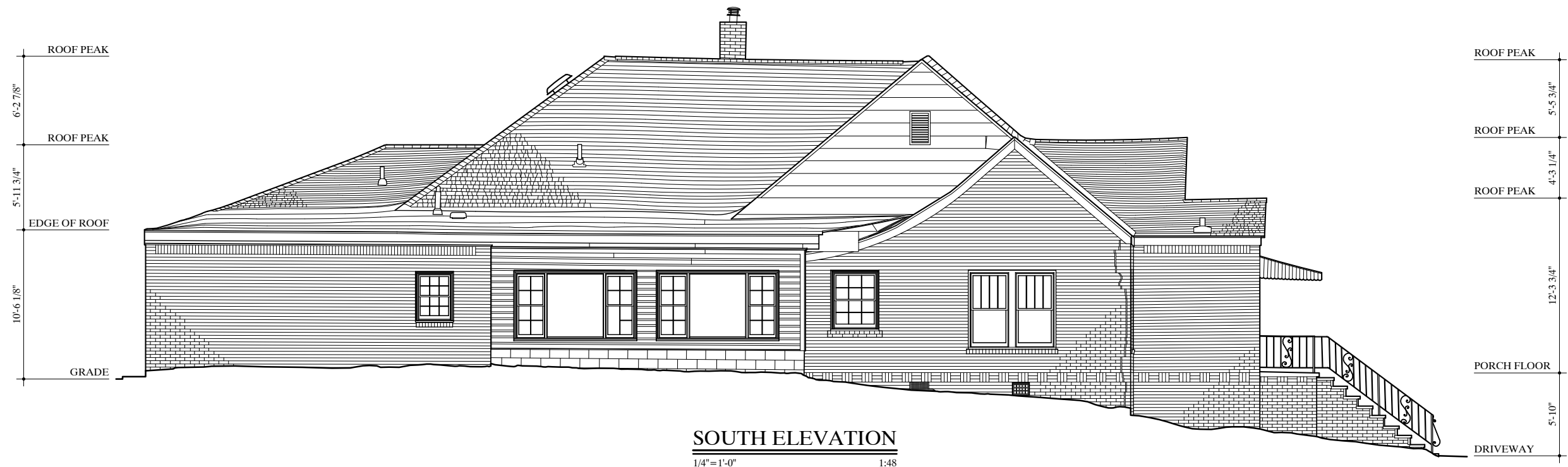




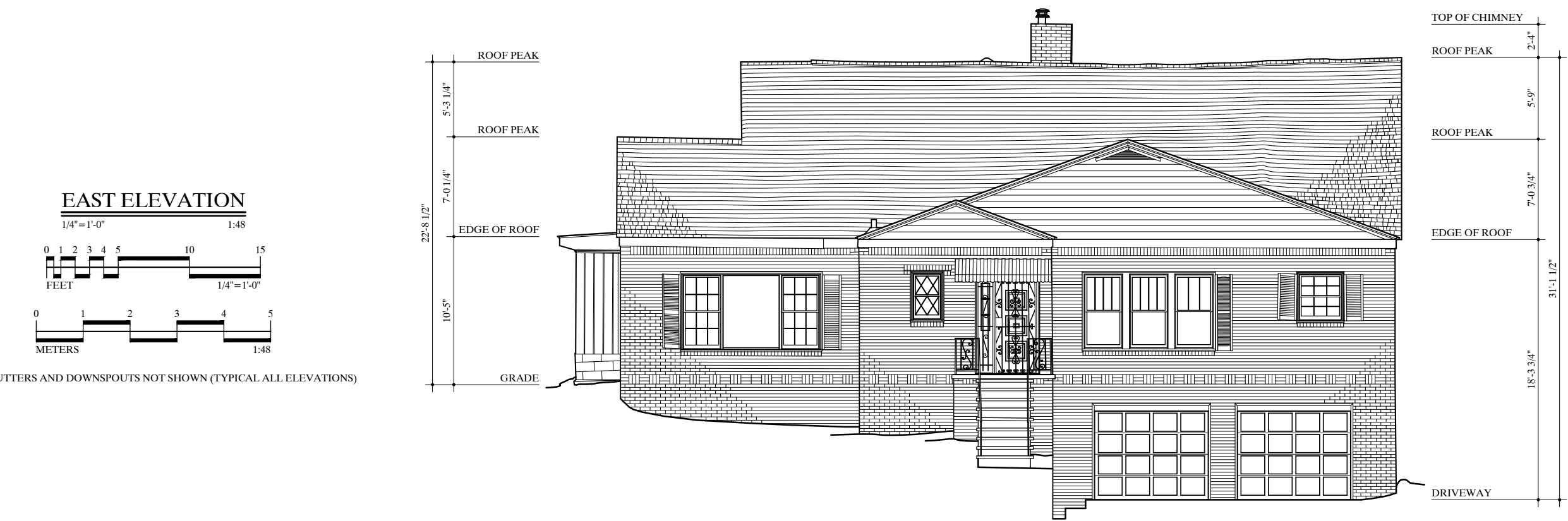
ATTIC FRAMING PLAN

1/4" = 1'-0" 1:48

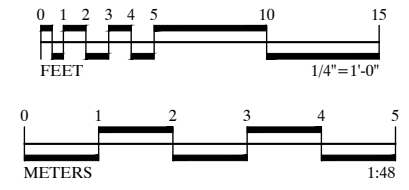




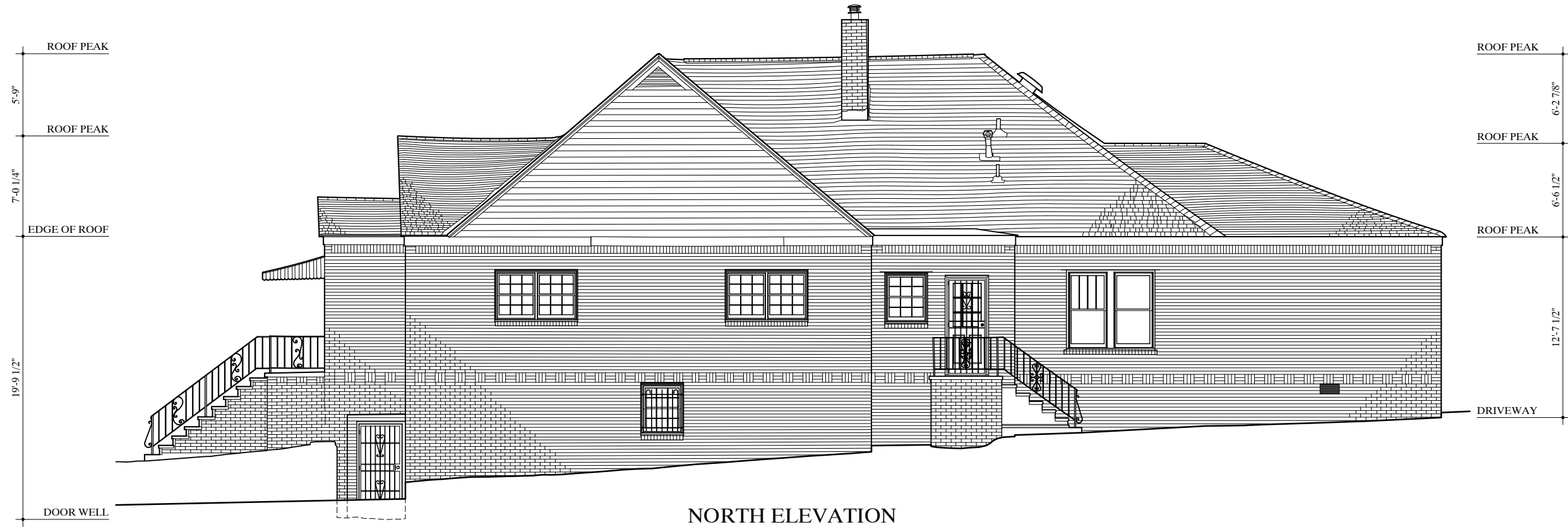
SOUTH ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0" 1:48



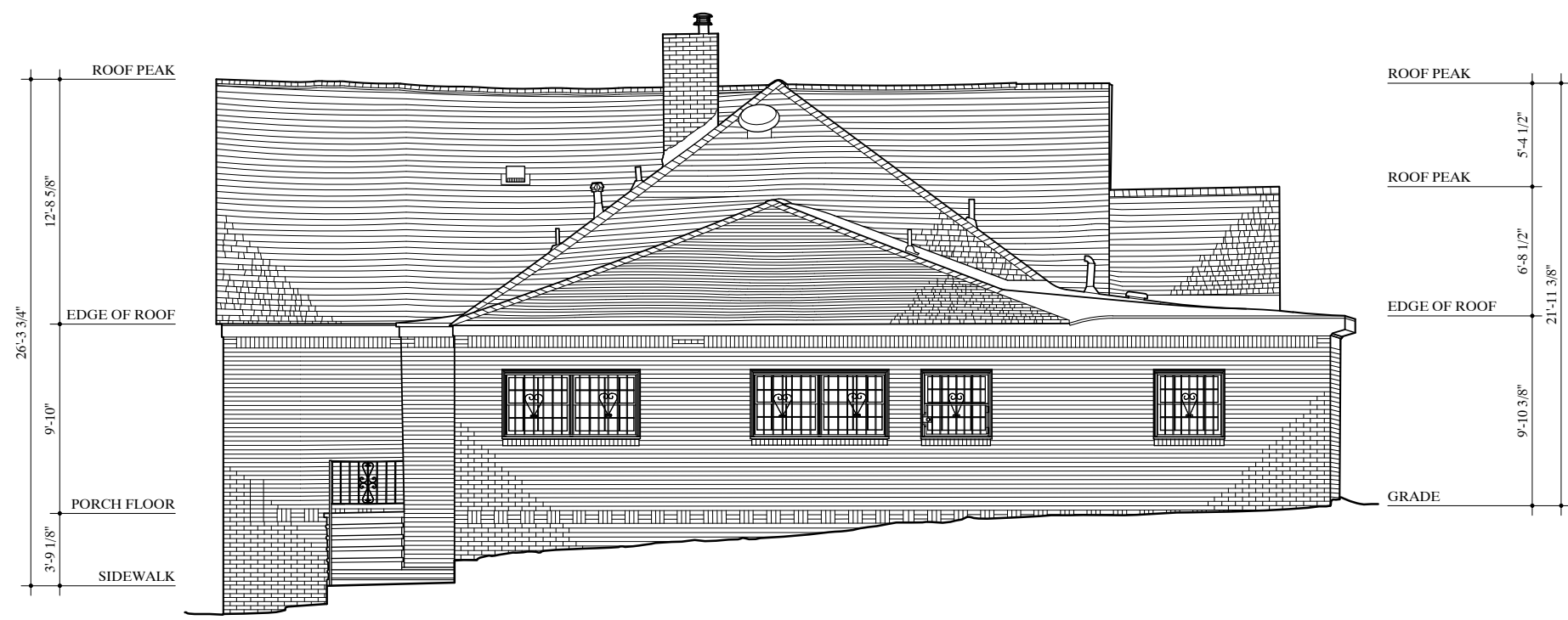
EAST ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0" 1:48



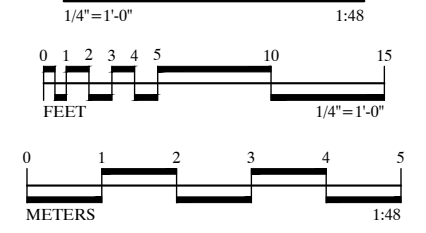
NOTE: GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS NOT SHOWN (TYPICAL ALL ELEVATIONS)



NORTH ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0" 1:48



WEST ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0" 1:48



PEAK OF RAFTERS
12'-3 5/8"

TOP OF JOISTS
9'-5 7/8"
CEILING
9'-0 1/2"

FIRST FLOOR
10'-1 1/2"
CEILING
7'-5 1/4"

BASEMENT



PEAK OF RAFTERS
6'-4 1/8"

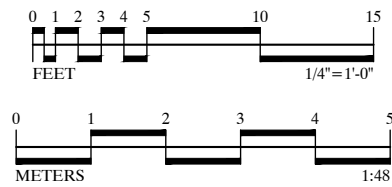
TOP OF JOISTS
9'-0 1/2"
CEILING
9'-6 1/8"

FIRST FLOOR
7'-6 5/8"
CEILING
9'-11 1/8"

BASEMENT

SECTION A-A
1/4" = 1'-0" 1:48

SECTION B-B
1/4" = 1'-0" 1:48



PEAK OF RAFTERS
12'-7 1/2"

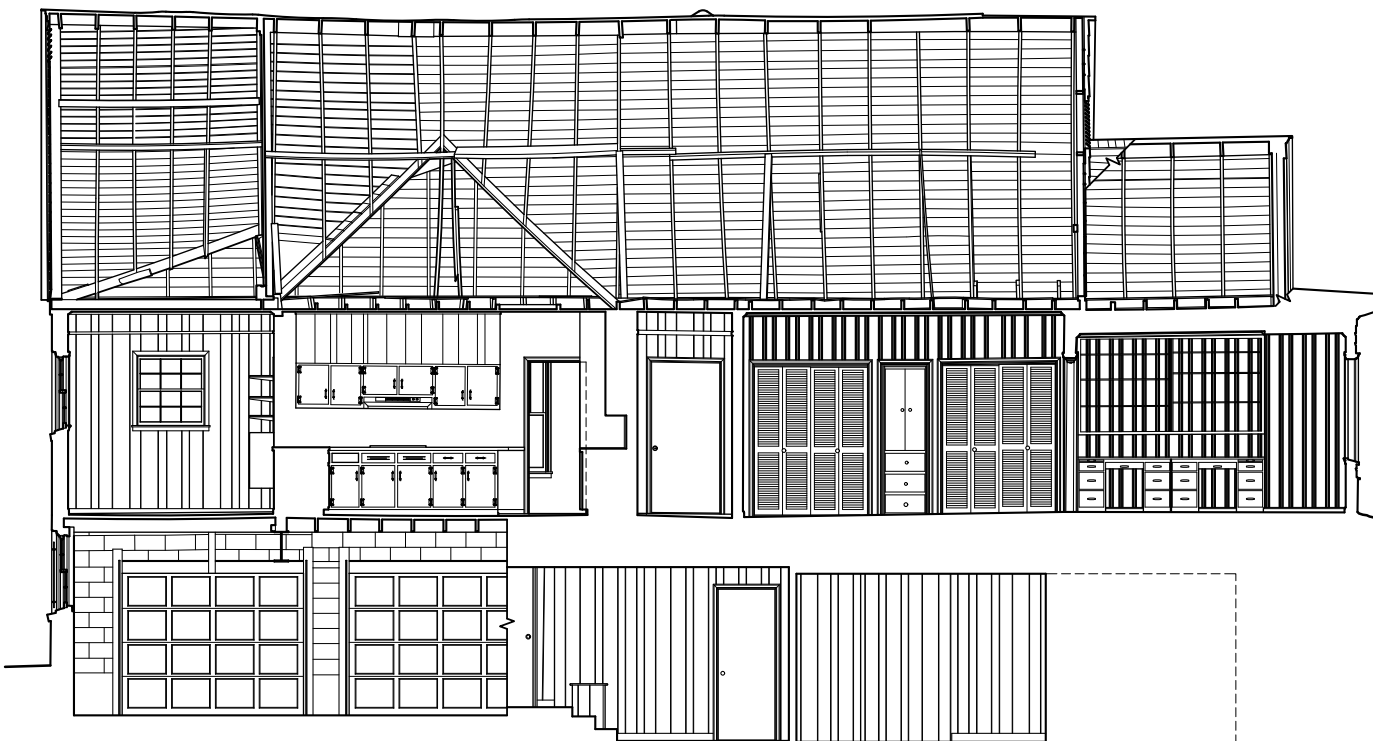
TOP OF JOISTS
9'-5 7/8"
CEILING
8'-11 1/2"

FIRST FLOOR
8'-10 1/4"
BOTTOM OF JOISTS
1'-3 1/2"

BOTTOM OF I-BEAM
6'-9 1/2"

GARAGE FLOOR
1'-1 1/2"

BASEMENT



PEAK OF RAFTERS
6'-10 1/4"

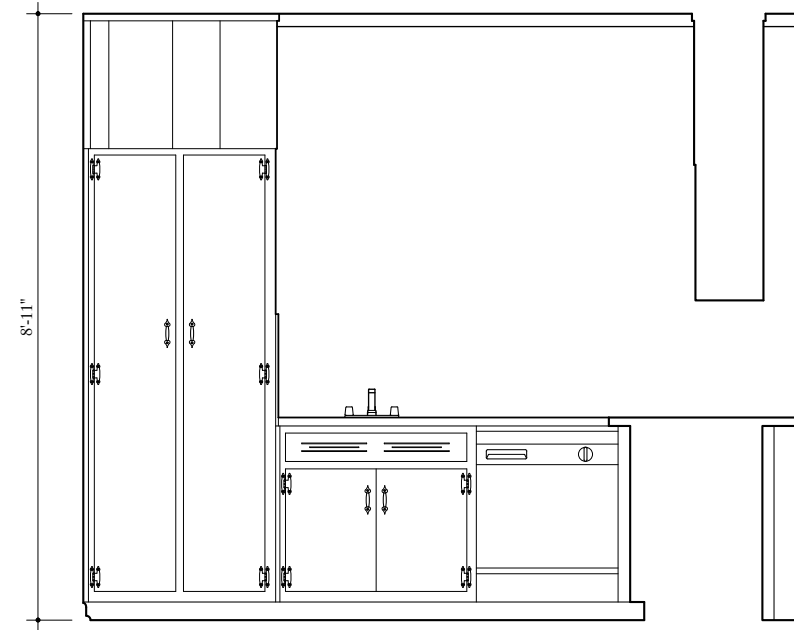
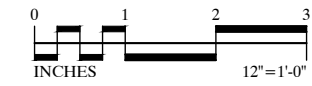
TOP OF JOISTS
7'-10 7/8"
CEILING
9'-6"

FIRST FLOOR
7'-5"
CEILING
10'-1 1/2"

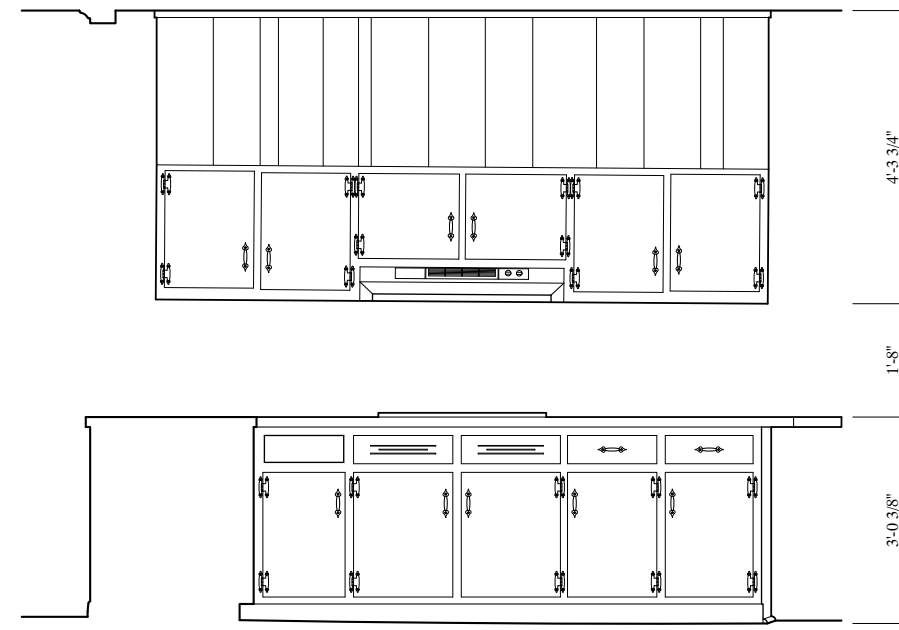
BASEMENT

**CROWN MOLDING
FAMILY ROOM (105)**

12"=1'-0" 1:1



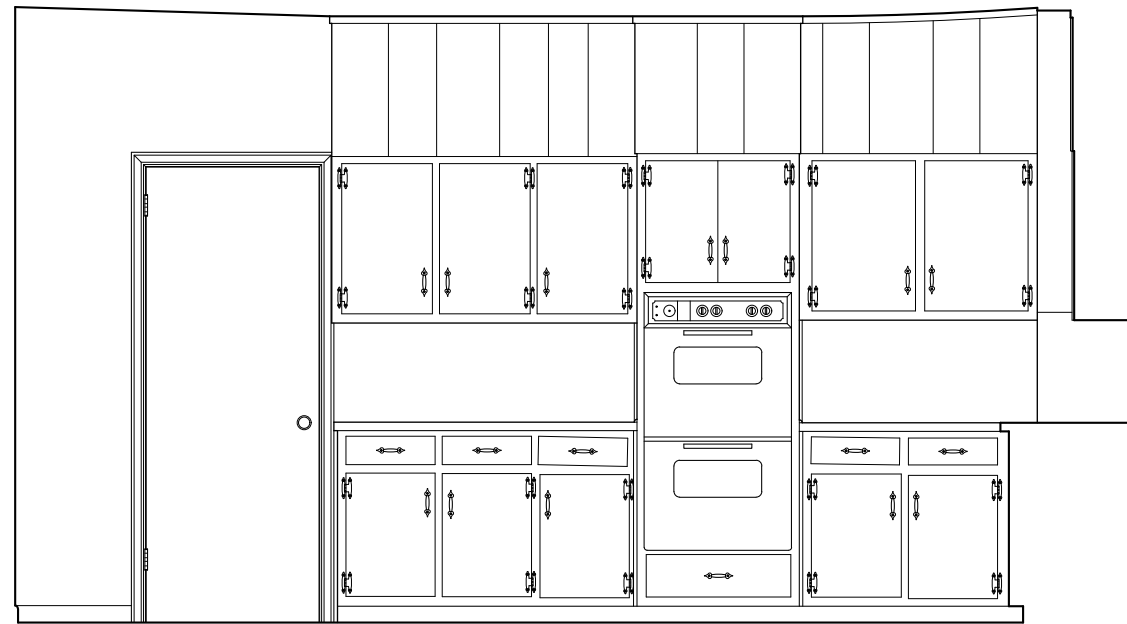
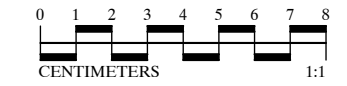
NORTH WALL



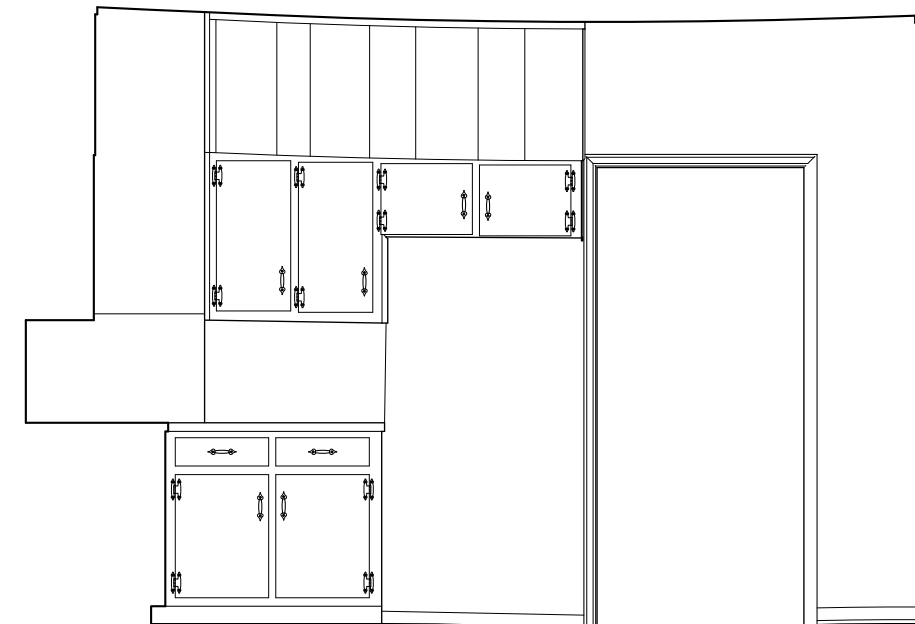
EAST WALL

**CROWN MOLDING
BEDROOM (114)**

12"=1'-0" 1:1



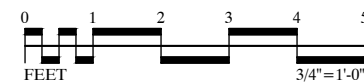
SOUTH WALL



WEST WALL

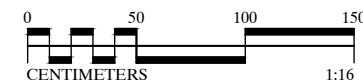
**BASEBOARD
KITCHEN (106)**

12"=1'-0" 1:1



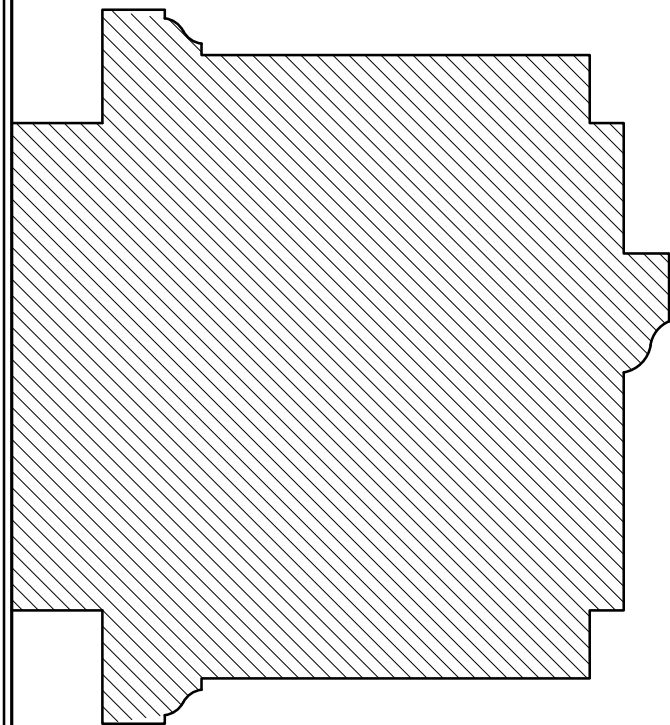
**INTERIOR ELEVATIONS
KITCHEN (106)**

3/4"=1'-0" 1:16

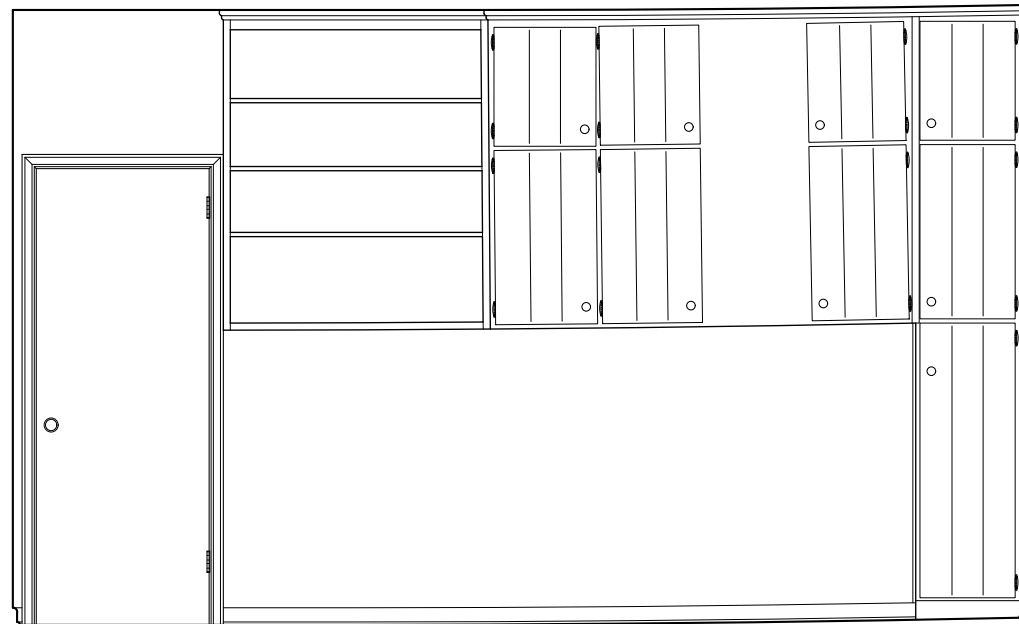
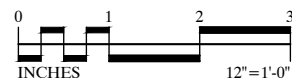


**BASEBOARD
BEDROOM (114)**

12"=1'-0" 1:1

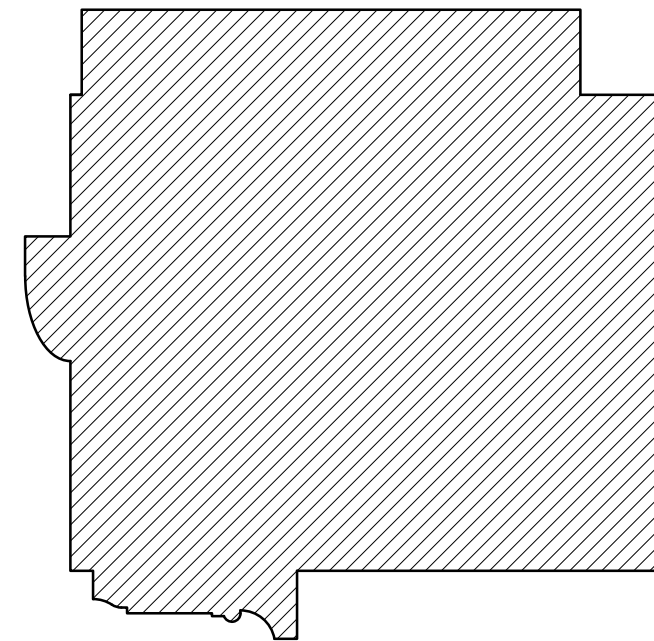
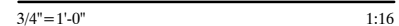


DOOR JAMB
BEDROOM (114) /
BATHROOM (119)

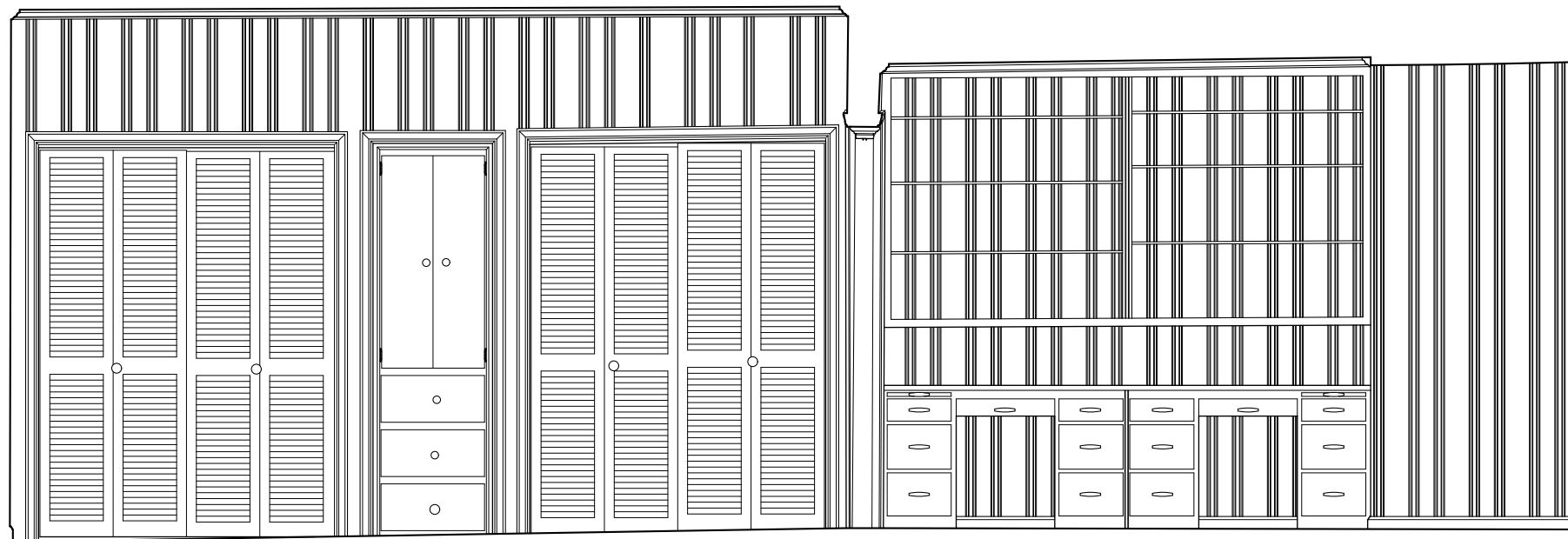


SOUTH WALL

INTERIOR ELEVATION
MLK STUDY (115)

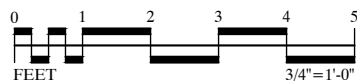
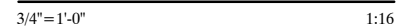


DOOR JAMB
HALL (110) /
GIRLS' BEDROOM (108)

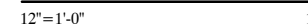


EAST WALL

INTERIOR ELEVATION
GIRLS' BEDROOM (108)



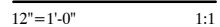
CROWN MOLDING
BOYS' BEDROOM (109)



BASEBOARD
MLK STUDY (115)



DOOR JAMB
TYPICAL



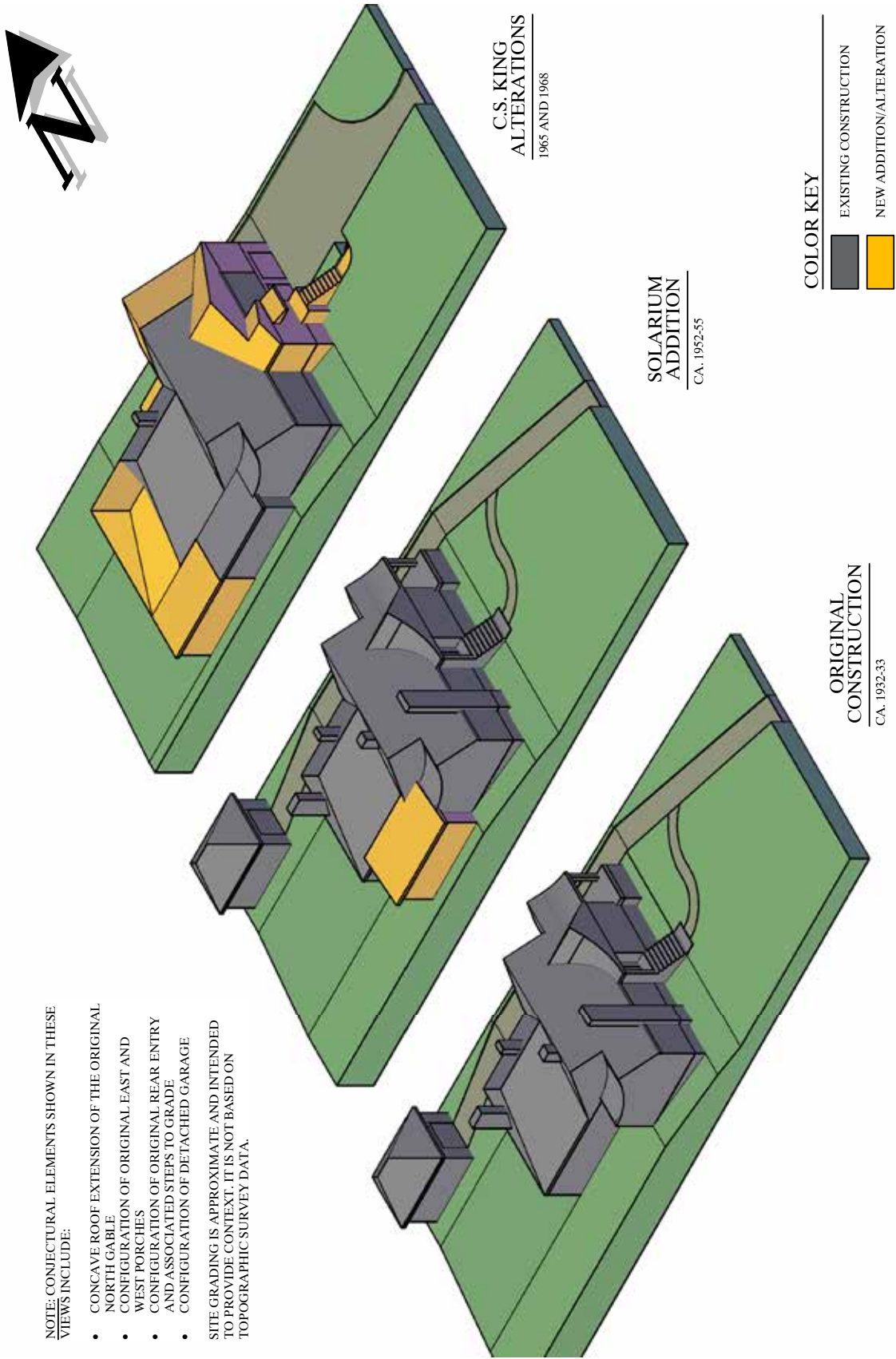
PERSPECTIVE VIEWS SHOWING PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION LOOKING TO THE NORTHWEST

NOT TO SCALE

NOTE: CONNECTURAL ELEMENTS SHOWN IN THESE VIEWS INCLUDE:

- CONCAVE ROOF EXTENSION OF THE ORIGINAL NORTH GABLE
- CONFIGURATION OF ORIGINAL EAST AND WEST PORCHES
- CONFIGURATION OF ORIGINAL REAR ENTRY AND ASSOCIATED STEPS TO GRADE
- CONFIGURATION OF DETACHED GARAGE

SITE GRADING IS APPROXIMATE AND INTENDED TO PROVIDE CONTEXT. IT IS NOT BASED ON TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY DATA.



Page intentionally left blank

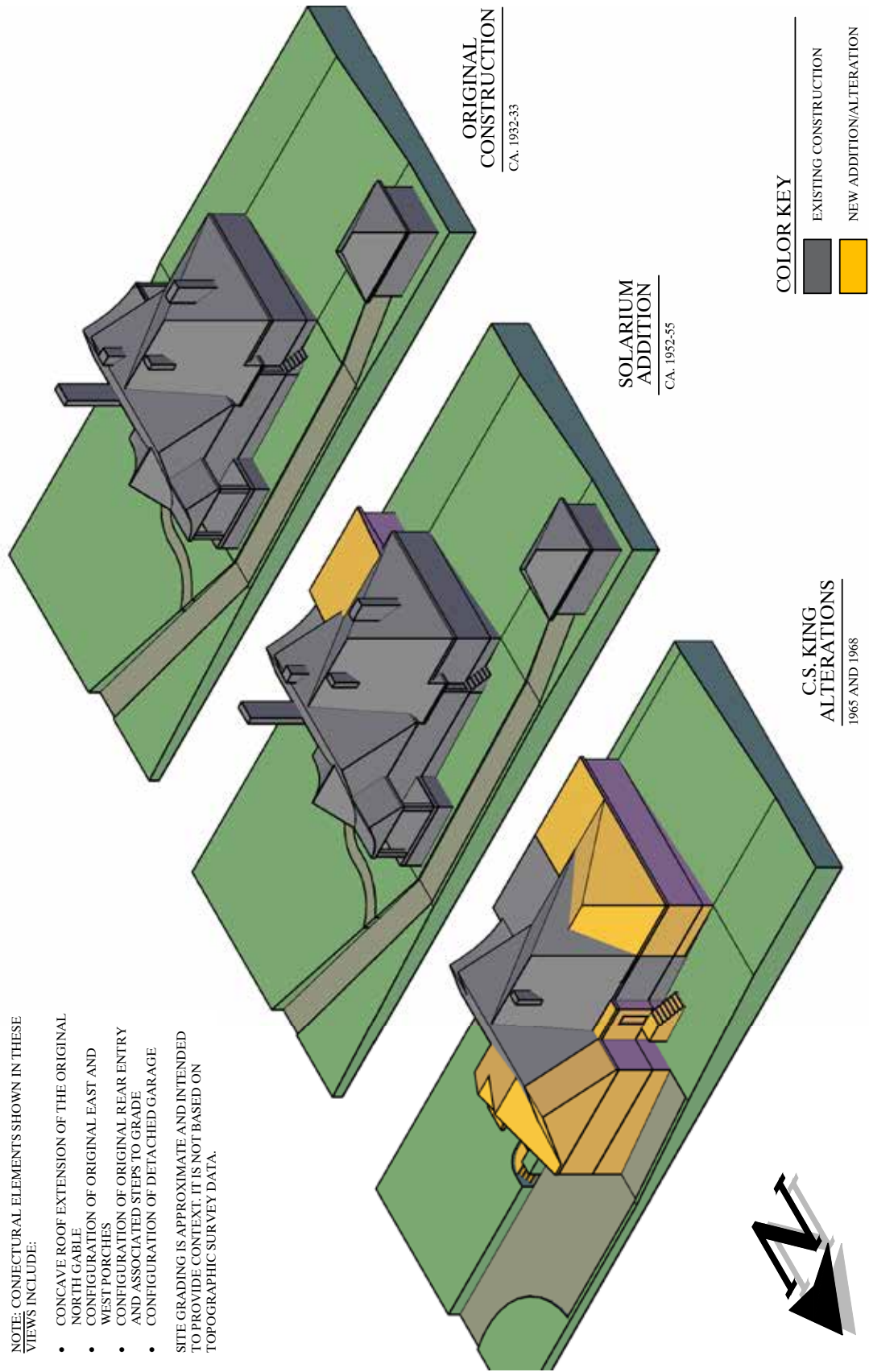
PERSPECTIVE VIEWS SHOWING PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION LOOKING TO THE SOUTHEAST

NOT TO SCALE

NOTE: CONJECTURAL ELEMENTS SHOWN IN THESE VIEWS INCLUDE:

- CONCAVE ROOF EXTENSION OF THE ORIGINAL NORTH GABLE
- CONFIGURATION OF ORIGINAL EAST AND WEST PORCHES
- CONFIGURATION OF ORIGINAL REAR ENTRY AND ASSOCIATED STEPS TO GRADE
- CONFIGURATION OF DETACHED GARAGE

SITE GRADING IS APPROXIMATE AND INTENDED TO PROVIDE CONTEXT. IT IS NOT BASED ON TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY DATA.



Page intentionally left blank

Appendix C. Tree Inspection Report

Tree Inspection at 234 Sunset Avenue, March 19, 2019

Page intentionally left blank

Tree Inspection at 234 Sunset Ave (MALU – “Life House”) March 19, 2019

Arborists assigned: Shawn Dawson and Steve Hanaburgh

Tree Species: Water Oak (*Quercus nigra*), also known as Possum Oak or Spotted Oak

Species Description: a medium sized deciduous (sometimes semi-evergreen in southern areas) oak of the red oak group that typically grows in a conical form to 50-80’ tall with a broad rounded crown. Trunk diameter extends to 3.5’.

Inherent problems: Water oak is a weak-wooded tree that is susceptible to trunk cankers and rots, all of which makes in vulnerable to limb breakage from wind and winter snow/ice. Oaks in general are susceptible to a large number of diseases, including oak wilt, chestnut blight, shoestring root rot, anthracnose, oak leaf blister, cankers, leaf spots and powdery mildew. Potential insect pests include scale, oak skeletonizer, leaf miner, galls, oak lace bugs, borers, caterpillars and nut weevils.(Missouri Botanical Garden)

According to Clemson (SC) Cooperative Extension writers Debbie Shaughnessy and Bob Polomski, water oaks have these problems: “It is more weak-wooded than most oaks and prone to damage from wind, snow and ice. It does not resist decay well, and damaged wood will begin to decay and decline. Trunks often rot by the time a water oak is 50 years old. Shallow, spreading root systems compete for water and nutrients in the soil, causing problems with grass or other plants planted beneath a water oak. In warmer climates leaves drop all winter, making raking a constant task.”

MALU Life House Water Oak details: **Height: 120 ft.**, Diameter at breast height (**dbh**): **53 in.**, Crown spread: **75 x 90 ft.**

On March 19,2019 Shawn Dawson and I met with Danita Brown (Historic Architect), Victor Ector (Maintenance Worker) and Elvis Babilonia (Facilities Manager) of MALU to inspect the tree mentioned above.

Park staff was not aware that there had been any recent site disturbance (i.e. excavation, grading, flooding, etc.). Our investigation of the site confirmed their opinion. Soil at the site is a clay-sand mix. The lot is relatively flat. The tree is in the rear yard in an area approximately 35x70. It is bounded by asphalt roadways to the south and west.

Shawn and I inspected the exposed roots, root flare and lower trunk from the ground. The upper trunk and crown were accessed and inspected by Shawn using a rope and tree climbing equipment..

The purpose of this report is to inform the management team at MALU about the condition of the tree and provide a summary of our observations. The risk rating and assessment is to help determine the likelihood of the tree or its parts failing in the next 3-5 years and the consequences of those failures.

First of all, this is a massive tree. Its exposed roots extend to the foundation of the house, approximately 20 feet away. Its crown spreads 70-90 feet in all directions. Its root system is contained primarily to the 35x70 foot back yard. The root system is limited on two sides by the paved alleyways. The houses foundation, which is likely impacted by the roots, also contains the root growth



The surface roots are pushing up the asphalt walkway in the rear of the house, possible impacting the foundation as well (above).



There are several cavities in sinuses at the root flare (above).

The main trunk is in good shape until the point where the co-dominate stems are attached to the trunk. Most of the attachment points have associated cavities and some level of decay (below).



There are cavities higher up, mostly on the side of the tree away from the house. There are two large (12-14 inch) branches that extend horizontally over the house approximately forty feet. There was no foliage to examine at this time of year. The tree does not have any discernable lean. Little pest evidence was found, which would be normal for this time of the year. Several witches' brooms are forming on some of the lower horizontal branches. Witches' brooms are possible indicators that the tree is stressed. (see below).





Shawn Dawson is climbing the tree for aerial inspection. Note the size of the co-dominate leaders.



The primary target of the tree would be the house at 234 Sunset Avenue (above).

Secondary targets would be the alleyways adjacent to the property. These alleys provide vehicular and pedestrian access homes to the rear of the NPS property.



The residence is a recent acquisition by the park. It is currently unoccupied. Once the building is restored, it will be open to the public based on park staffing levels. At that point, the NPS staff and visitors would be targets as well.

Risk Assessment.

At the present time there is a moderate risk of failure of the roots. It is possible and somewhat likely. Should this occur, damage to the structure would be significant to severe. Failure of the large branches leaning toward the structure is also possible and somewhat likely, damage to the structure would still be significant to severe given the size of the stems. The building is currently unoccupied and the likelihood of person(s) getting injured is very low. In the event that the tree falls toward the alleys damage to the roadway, fence and storage shed would be significant. A tree this size landing on an occupied vehicle or pedestrian would be severe, however, the likelihood of a person getting injured or killed is relatively low.

Part Most likely to fail	Likelihood of failure	Likelihood of a failure occurring and impacting a target	Consequences of Failure	Risk Rating	Mitigation Options	Residual risk after mitigation
Entire Tree	possible	High	Significant to severe	Moderate	Reduce Crown	Moderate
Large stems leaning toward Structure	possible	High	Significant to severe	Moderate to High	Reduce overall size and cable	Moderate
Large stems leaning toward Alleys	possible	High	Significant to severe	Low to Moderate	Reduce overall size and cable	Moderate

Risk given current conditions - unoccupied structure

In three to five years, decay at the roots and branch attachments will likely advance as Water Oak does not resist decay very well. It is also susceptible to a number of root rotting fungi. Restoration of the Life House will also negatively impact the tree due to soil compaction from construction equipment and workers on the site. All of these factors will increase the probability of failure of the tree and/or its parts. Failure of the roots is likely. The consequences would be severe. Additionally, the structure will be occupied for at least 8 hours a day during construction and again when it opens for tours to the public. Failure of one of the large stems is also much more probable at this time this would lead to high to extreme risk ratings as the decay in the branch attachment points grows and weakens these unions.

Part Most likely to fail	Likelihood of failure	Likelihood of a failure occurring and impacting a target	Consequences of Failure	Risk Rating	Mitigation Options	Residual risk after mitigation
Entire Tree	Probable	High	Severe	High to Extreme	Removal	None
Large stems leaning toward Structure	Probable	High	Severe	High to Extreme	Removal	None
Large stems leaning toward Alleys	Probable	High	Severe	High	Removal	None

Risk in 3-5 years – occupied structure

Reassessment: This tree should be visually inspected by park staff as the tree begins to leaf out and again after any severe or unusual weather phenomena. Some of the things to be on the lookout for would include: fungi at the base of the tree or root system; fungi on the areas of decay on the stem and branches; cracks developing at the compromised branch/trunk unions ; and lateral cracks developing along the two long leaders that are over the house.

Page intentionally left blank

Appendix D. Site Accessibility Overview

Applicable Codes & Standards

The King Family Home was originally built in 1933 as a private residence. However, once the National Park Service purchased the home in 2019 with the intent to open it to the public, it now must comply with various accessibility codes and standards. As a federal governmental agency, the National Park Service is subject to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 794. Section 504 requires that access be provided to programs and activities in the most integrated setting possible unless achieving program access would create an undue financial or administrative burden.

The accessibility standard for Section 504 is the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). Additionally, the King Family Home will be subject to the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design with the Georgia Amendments (2010 ADA).

A planned renovation of this scale, i.e. when the property is vacant and undergoing a complete alteration, then it must comply with UFAS' Minimum Requirements (UFAS Sections 4.1.1 – 4.1.5), except where “structurally impracticable.” Due to the unique nature of this property, there are possible exceptions to this requirement. For example, if the King Family Home qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or comparable listing under state or local government, then the following process within UFAS can be applied:

“The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation shall determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether provisions required by part 4 for accessible routes (exterior and interior), ramps, entrances, toilets, parking, and displays and signage, would threaten or destroy the historic significance of the building or facility. If the Advisory Council determines that any of the accessibility requirements for features listed in 4.1.7(1) would threaten or destroy the historic significance of a building or facility, then the special application provisions of 4.1.7(2) for that feature may be utilized. The special application provisions listed under 4.1.7(2) may only be

utilized following a written determination by the Advisory Council that application of a requirement contained in part 4 would threaten or destroy the historic integrity of a qualified building or facility.”

For the purposes of this document, the guidance contained within assumes all requirements of sections 4.1.1 – 4.1.5 of UFAS and the 2010 ADA Standards will be possible. It is the responsibility of the designers of record to determine which requirements may be “structurally impracticable” and/or to seek exemptions from the Advisory Council.

Parking & Passenger Loading Zones

Accessible Parking

Should public parking be provided on site, the following requirements must be met:

UFAS Section 4.1(5)(a): If 1-25 public parking spaces are provided, then at least 1 van accessible parking space (2010 ADA Section 502.2) must be provided complying with UFAS Sections 4.6.2 – 4.6.4.

Passenger Loading Zones

For passenger loading zones, UFAS Section 4.6.5 requires an access aisle of 60 inches minimum in width and 20 feet minimum in length parallel to the vehicular space for passenger drop off and pick up. The passenger loading zone must have a maximum slope of 2% in all directions.

Accessible Routes & Circulation Paths

Accessible Routes

Accessible routes must have the following characteristics:

- Be stable, firm, and slip-resistant (UFAS Section 4.5.1).

- Not have a change in level greater than 1/4 inch (unbeveled) or 1/2 inch (beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2) (UFAS Section 4.5.2).
- Have a minimum clear width of 36 inches, except at doors or any other obstruction that reduces the clear width to 32 inches minimum for 24 inches maximum provided each reduction is separated by a 48 inches minimum length of 36 inch wide unobstructed route (2010 ADA Section 403.5.1 Exception 1).
- Have 2% maximum cross slope and 5% maximum run slope. When the accessible route has a run slope of 5 – 8.33%, it must meet the requirements for a ramp (UFAS Section 4.8).
- For exterior accessible routes, it cannot have gaps, such as grates or seams between sidewalk segments, greater than 1/2 inch wide. If the gaps are elongated, then they should be positioned perpendicular to the path of travel (UFAS Section 4.5.4).
- For interior accessible routes, if carpet or carpet tile is provided, the pile height must be 1/2 inch maximum, with exposed edges fastened to the floor (UFAS Section 4.5.3).

Protruding Objects

Any item, such as lighting fixtures, landscaping, educational display cases, or video screens, that has leading edges between 27 and 80 inches above the finished floor are not permitted to protrude more than 4 inches into the circulation path without providing cane detection (UFAS Section 4.4.1). This includes items that might impact head room, or vertical clearance (UFAS Section 4.4.2).

Ramps

Any portion of the accessible route that has a slope greater than 5% must comply with UFAS Section 4.8. Slopes greater than 8.33% are not permitted unless it is technically infeasible to comply due to existing site conditions or historical significance.

Elevators & Platform Lifts

If an elevator is provided, it must meet the requirements of UFAS Section 4.10 and 2010 ADA Section 407.1.

If a platform lift is provided, it must meet the requirements of UFAS Section 4.11 and 2010 ADA Section 410.1.

Doors & Gates

Clear Width

Doors meant for human passage must have a clear width of 32 inches minimum (UFAS Section 4.13.5). Since the King Family Home was designed as a private residence, many doors will likely not meet this requirement. If widening doors would affect the historic integrity of the house, other less intrusive options include removing doors and door stops. Additionally, it may not be appropriate for some rooms to provide human passage, so doors could have barriers installed to convert the door to a viewing point from an existing accessible route, most commonly a hallway.

Thresholds

Maximum height at door thresholds is 1/2 inch with a beveled slope no greater than 1:2 (UFAS Section 4.13.8).

Additional Requirements

Assuming visitors will always be escorted, in lieu of these requirements, tour guides can open and close doors for visitors:

Maneuvering Clearances at Doors

Any door that is designed to be opened independently by the public must meet the door maneuvering requirements of UFAS Section 4.13.6.

Door Opening Force

The maximum force for operating a door that is designed to be used independently by the public is 5 pounds of pressure (UFAS Section 4.13.11).

Door Hardware

The installed door hardware for a door that is designed to be used independently by the public must be operable with one hand and cannot require tight grasping, pinching, or turning of the wrist (UFAS Section 4.13.9).

Appendix E. Author Statement Regarding Johnson Publishing Company Images

This Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) uses photos from the Johnson Publishing Company archives as figures. “The archive includes 3.35 million negatives and slides, 983,000 photographs, 166,000 contact sheets, and 9,000 audio and visual recordings, comprising the most significant collection illustrating African American life in the 20th century. The archive was acquired last year for \$30 million by the Ford Foundation, the J. Paul Getty Trust, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Smithsonian Institution in an effort to safeguard the unparalleled treasure of African American history and culture for the public benefit.”⁴⁹⁹

The Smithsonian Institution states that “The foundation consortium will donate the archives to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Getty Research Institute, and other leading cultural institutions for the public benefit to ensure the broadest access for the general public and use by scholars, researchers, journalists, and other interested parties.”⁵⁰⁰ However, researchers at the Smithsonian also stated that these items will not be made available until the entire collection is digitized. There have likely been delays in this digitization effort due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during which this HSR document was produced. The authors have made good faith efforts to receive updates about the status of this digitization, but they were unable to receive final digital products prior to the production of this report. Scans included herein were obtained from online versions of these photographs. In the future, the NPS may wish to substitute them for the full quality graphics when they are publicly available from the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

499. Smithsonian Institution, “Consortium Forms Advisory Council, Announces Plans to Preserve Historic Ebony and Jet Photographic Archive,” National Museum of African American History and Culture, March 11, 2020, <https://nmaahc.si.edu/about/news/consortium-forms-advisory-council-announces-plans-preserve-historic-ebony-and-jet>.

500. Smithsonian Institution, “Foundation Consortium Acquires Historic African American Photographic Archive,” Smithsonian Institution, accessed October 6, 2021, <https://www.si.edu/newsdesk/releases/foundation-consortium-acquires-historic-african-american-photographic-archive>.

Page intentionally left blank

Appendix F. Links to Referenced Photographs

Links to View Getty Images:

Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy and Companion Walking in Street

(Original Caption) Mrs. John F. Kennedy leaves the home of Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., after paying her respects to the widow of the slain Civil Rights leader.

<https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/american-first-lady-jacqueline-kennedy-walks-through-the-news-photo/53007162?adppopup=true%20and%20https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/mrs-john-f-kennedy-leaves-the-home-of-mrs-martin-luther-news-photo/515103062?adppopup=true>

Jackie Kennedy Greets Mourner At Funeral

(Original Caption) Jackie Kennedy leaves the home of Coretta Scott King. She was there to pay her respects after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

<https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/jackie-kennedy-leaves-the-home-of-coretta-scott-king-she-news-photo/517322634?adppopup=true%20>

Page intentionally left blank



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.



NPS MALU 489-176882, October 2021
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

King Family Home
Cultural Landscape Report

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
450 Auburn Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30312
www.nps.gov/malu