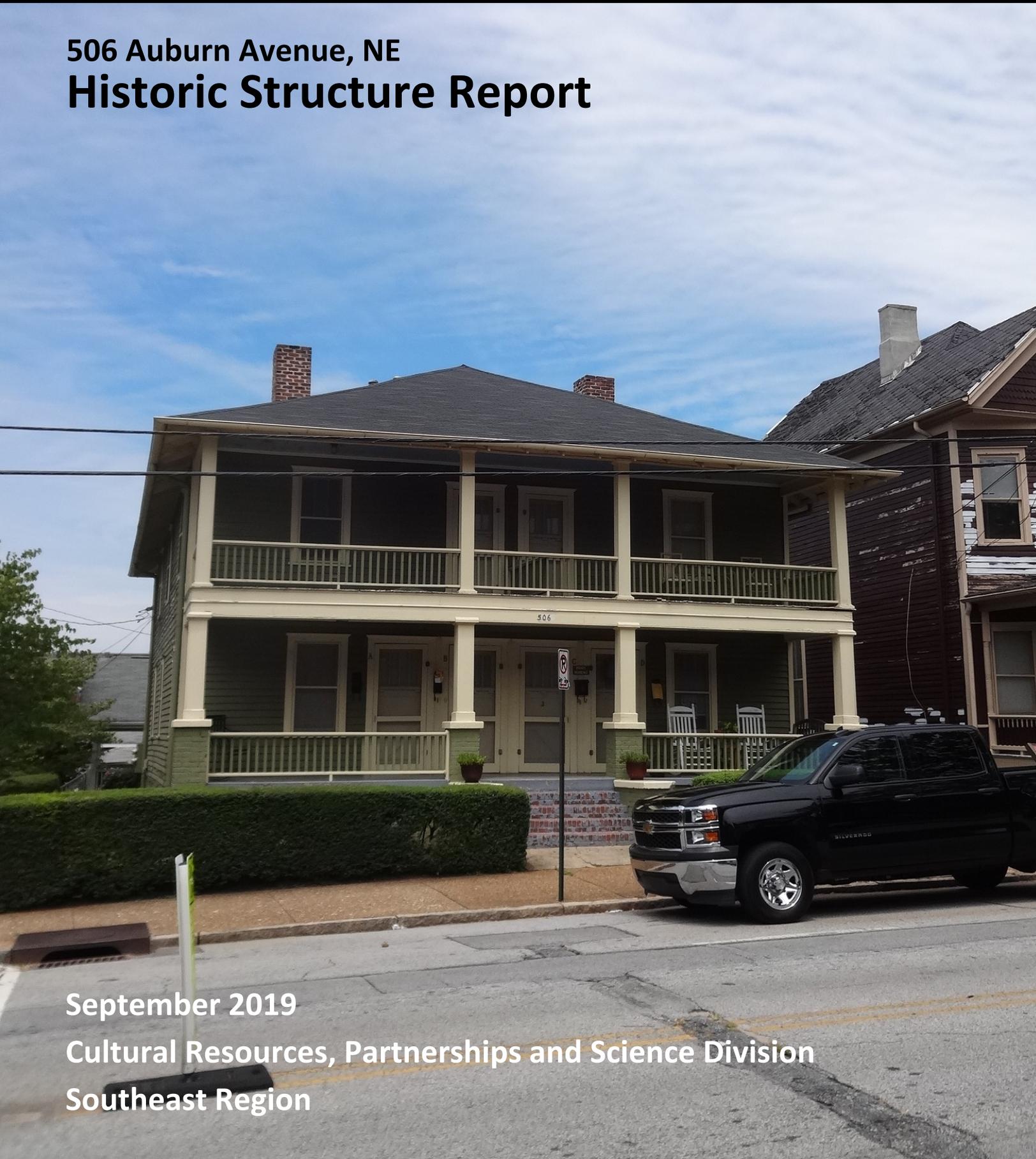




506 Auburn Avenue, NE Historic Structure Report



September 2019
Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division
Southeast Region

506 Auburn Avenue, NE

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

Atlanta, Georgia

Historic Structure Report

September 2019

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About the front cover: View of the 506 Auburn Avenue, NE, looking north, August 2017.

This manuscript has been authored by Panamerican Consultants, Inc., with consultants Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc., and WFT Architects, P.A., under Contract Number P16PC00097 with the National Park Service. The United States Government retains and the publisher, by accepting the article for publication, acknowledges that the United States Government retains a non-exclusive, paid-up, irrevocable, worldwide license to publish or reproduce the published form of this manuscript, or allow others to do so, for United States Government purposes.

506 Auburn Avenue, NE

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

Atlanta, Georgia

Historic Structure Report

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Contents

List of Figures	vii
Project Team	xii
Foreword	xiii
Management Summary	
Historical Data	1
Treatment and Use	3
Administrative Data	3
Project Scope and Methodology	5
Developmental History	
Historical Background and Context	9
African Americans in Nineteenth-Century Atlanta	9
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park	13
506 Auburn Avenue (LCS #090013)	14
Timeline 506 Auburn Avenue	22
Physical Description and Condition Assessment	
Site	25
Residence	27
Exterior Description	29
Condition Assessment	41
Interior Description	49
Condition Assessment	57
Structural Systems	59
Condition Assessment	60
Mechanical and Plumbing Systems	61
Condition Assessment	68
Significance and Integrity	
National Register of Historic Places	71
Significance Criteria	71
National Register Status of 506 Auburn Avenue, NE	72
Period of Significance	74
Character-Defining Features	75
Assessment of Integrity	76
Treatment and Use	
Requirements for Treatment and Use	79
Laws, Regulations, and Functional Requirements	79
Alternates for Treatment and Use	81
Ultimate Treatment and Use	82
Guidelines for Treatment	82
Recommendations	83
Exterior	83
Interior	84
Mechanical Systems	85
Recommendations for Further Research	86

Resilience to Natural Hazards	86
Bibliography	89
Appendices	
Appendix A: Measured Drawings	

List of Figures

Management Summary

1	Map of Georgia showing location of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park (black star)	7
2	Aerial photograph of Atlanta shows location of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park	8
3	Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park showing the location of 506 Auburn Avenue, NE	8

Developmental History

4	506 Auburn Avenue (1933), Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park, Atlanta, Georgia	15
5	54 Howell Street is another small, four-unit, simply constructed and architecturally decorated apartment complex within the Birth Home block	15
6	Craftsman architectural elements on 506 Auburn Avenue include 3/1 windows	16
7	Other Craftsman architectural elements on 506 Auburn Avenue include porch supports of square wood piers set on brick plinths	16
8	506 Auburn Avenue's front, street facade drawn to scale on 1985 HABS Auburn Avenue Street Facades (Sheet 4 of 11)	18
9	Historic and existing conditions landscapes, 506 Auburn Avenue	19

Physical Description and Condition Assessment

10	Overview of Auburn Avenue streetscape looking west at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Park	26
11	The sidewalk and curb that separate the site from Auburn Avenue to the south	26
12	Sidewalk and built-up site along west side of site	26
13	Concrete masonry unit retaining wall at north end of site	26
14	Mown-turf lawn and hedges at south (front) yard of site	26
15	Wood post fence and mown turf lawn at east side of site	26
16	Sanborn map (excerpt), 1899	27
17	Sanborn map (excerpt), 1932	27
18	Overview of the residence at 506 Auburn Avenue looking northwest	27
19	The south (primary) elevation	28
20	The west elevation	28
21	Partial view from west of north elevation	28
22	View from south of east elevation	29
23	Continuous brick foundation wall at base of building	29
24	Pattern in brick originally used for venting but has since been filled in	29
25	Supplemental CMU pier support at south end of foundation	30
26	Supplemental beam support under floor joists at south end of foundation	30
27	Typical horizontal shiplap wood siding at building, painted green	30
28	Typical wood trim at building corners, painted yellow	30
29	Downspout mounted to wall near corner of building	30
30	The south (front) entrance porch, facing west	31
31	Overview of second-floor porch bead board ceiling	31

32	The south porch balustrade	31
33	Overview of first-floor porch bead board ceiling	32
34	The metal stair to the first floor of the north porch	32
35	The metal stair to the second floor of the north porch	32
36	Tongue-and-groove decking at north porch, painted light blue	32
37	Balustrade at north porch	33
38	Overview of bead board ceiling at north	33
39	Overview of first-floor south elevation door opening with exterior trim	33
40	Detail of interior trim at first floor south elevation door opening	34
41	Typical south elevation door	34
42	Typical ball-tipped hinge at south elevation doors	34
43	Typical hardware including brass knob and escutcheon plate and deadbolt lock at south elevation doors	34
44	Metal plate and turn-knob doorbell at first-floor door	35
45	Wood-framed exterior screen door at south elevation doors	35
46	Typical barrel hinge at screen doors	35
47	The interior face and trim of the north elevation door. Note two vertical panels at bottom half of door is typical	35
48	North elevation door at west end of the second floor with three horizontal panels at the bottom of the door	36
49	North elevation door hinges	36
50	North elevation door hardware including brass knob, escutcheon plate, and deadbolt lock	36
51	Weather stripping mounted to interior face of door at north elevation	36
52	Metal-framed north elevation screen doors	36
53	Typical double-hung window and exterior window opening trim	37
54	Typical double-hung window and interior window opening trim	37
55	Brass window lift at bottom window sash has been painted white	38
56	Brass latch at meeting rail between sashes	38
57	Typical sash cord and pulley	38
58	Typical vinyl shade mounted to interior trim of window opening	38
59	Metal hooks mounted at exterior trim used to hang screen windows	39
60	Typical fixed window and interior trim of window opening	39
61	Sash cord pulley at fixed window indicates that the window was operational at one time	39
62	Overview of building hip roof	39
63	Underside of the eaves with plywood decking and rafters exposed to view	40
64	Brick chimneys located at the west-facing slope of the roof	40
65	East-facing slope of the roof showing one of the two brick chimneys and turbine vents	40
66	View of half-round hanging gutter and downspout	40
67	Some of the circular metal downspouts discharge at grade	40
68	Some of the circular metal downspouts are connected to a flexible pipe that extends below grade	40
69	Severely deteriorated brick at foundation piers	41
70	Portion of brick chimney where the brick is displaced and daylight is visible	41

71	Overall erosion of mortar joints as viewed from crawl space	41
72	Deterioration of mortar at joints along base of foundation wall	42
73	Pre-existing spalls at brick foundation, prior to most recent painting of the brick	42
74	Open mortar joints and deteriorated parge coating at CMU retaining wall	42
75	Peeling paint at brick foundation wall	42
76	Hairline cracking at concrete porch slab extends perpendicular to direction of slab	43
77	Displaced spindles at north porch balustrade	43
78	Deteriorated wood decking near ends of porch floor boards	43
79	Peeling paint at wood siding	43
80	Deteriorated paint at underside of roof eaves	44
81	Displaced siding board	44
82	Checked wood siding. Note check is located near end of board and adjacent to downspout	44
83	Biological growth at the ceiling of the south porch	44
84	Biological growth along the ends of decking boards at the north porch	45
85	Biological growth at the exterior face of one north elevation door	45
86	Replacement deck boards at south porch	45
87	Cracked glazing unit at one window	45
88	Gap between upper and lower sash meeting rails	46
89	Weather stripping applied to interior face of window sash to address air infiltration	46
90	Void between rope sash cord and sash has been filled in with tissue	46
91	Window that is out of plumb and has a small gap between the frame and sash	46
92	Deterioration of wood at window sill and screen window sash	46
93	Rope sash cord at double-hung windows that has been cut	47
94	Rope sash cord at double-hung windows that has been painted over and is no longer operable	47
95	Displaced window sash	47
96	Paint on exterior face of glass at window	47
97	South elevation door with missing decorative wood piece (circle) and missing turnbuckle at diagonal bracing of screen door (arrow)	48
98	Ripped screen at south elevation screen door	48
99	Metal stair landing at second floor of north elevation	48
100	Guano on the siding above one window opening. Note the adjacent telephone line	48
101	Mud dauber next at south elevation door opening	49
102	Mismatched paint around the light fixture	50
103	Note the sheen of the semi-gloss paint in this hallway	50
104	Typical medium-tan colored carpet	50
105	Fully carpeted stair in one of the second-floor apartments	50
106	Sheet vinyl in the kitchen of a first-floor apartment	51
107	Sheet vinyl in the kitchen and dining room of a second-floor apartment	51
108	Typical ceramic tile in the bathrooms. Note marble threshold between the floor tile and carpet in the adjacent hall	51
109	Typical window trim	52
110	5-inch apron below the 1-1/4-inch thick window sill	52

111	Typical two-piece baseboard with 1-inch cove molding applied to the top edge	52
112	Shoe mold along baseboards where the flooring material is sheet vinyl	52
113	Kitchen in second-floor apartment with plastic laminate countertop and backsplash	53
114	Kitchen in first-floor apartment with plastic laminate countertop and backsplash (hidden)	53
115	Bathroom vanity with combination, one-piece, cultured marble vanity top and sink	53
116	Bathroom vanity with combination, one-piece, cultured marble vanity top and sink	53
117	Bathroom vanity with plastic laminate top and self-rimming sink	54
118	Stile-and-rail wood door in unit B with two flat panels	54
119	Stile-and-rail wood door in unit B with five raised panels	54
120	Typical louvered sliding door	55
121	Typical louvered bi-fold door at water heater closet	55
122	Two-piece baseboard transitions into 6-1/2-inch wide, two-piece door casing	55
123	Old lockset with round knob	55
124	Contemporary door hardware with round knob	56
125	Masonry chimney in the attic	56
126	Non-functional, coal-burning fireplace in unit C, second floor	56
127	Gypsum board wall covering one side of back-to-back fireplaces in unit B	57
128	Pull-down ladder and attic access in unit B	57
129	Blown-in loose-fill insulation in the attic	57
130	Lack of code-required integrity, continuity, and smoke and fire rating of the fire barrier separation (gypsum board partition) in the attic between the two units	58
131	Floor beam with 2x4 ledger and 2x10 floor joist	59
132	Overview of first floor framing with 2x10 joists, cross bridging, and decking	59
133	Roof framing with 2x6 rafters and plywood decking	60
134	Mid-span beam and diagonal bracing at roof structure	60
135	Severe cracking at end of floor joist	60
136	Moisture damage and wood deterioration at wood framing below kitchen	61
137	Termite damage at floor joists on south end of building	61
138	Notch cut into lower half of the floor joist	61
139	Deteriorated supplemental wood post at south end of building	61
140	Moisture staining at underside of wood deck boards	61
141	Lennox HVAC equipment in the attic	62
142	Typical ceiling supply register	62
143	Return air grille	62
144	Lennox HVAC equipment in a unit A, first floor	62
145	Supply register in the floor	63
146	Wall-mounted return air grille in unit D, first floor	63
147	Closely grouped condensing units at northeast corner of the building	63
148	Ceiling fan in second-floor apartment	63
149	Updated kitchen in unit D, first floor	63
150	Typical bathroom	64

151	Tangle of pipes and wires in crawl space	64
152	Kitchen closet with gas water heater	64
153	Gas meters mounted on the east wall	64
154	Electric service enters the building at the northwest corner	65
155	Typical breaker panel for each apartment	65
156	Traditional pendant light fixtures in second-floor unit C	65
157	Ceiling fan with light kit	66
158	A traditional-style light fixture above the vanity	66
159	Modern, surface-mounted, 1-foot-by-4-foot, fluorescent fixture in unit B kitchen	66
160	NM electrical cable in the attic	66
161	Television and internet cabling running down the west side of the building	67
162	TV and internet cables stapled to the wood siding. Note the damage to the siding where the cable penetrates the exterior envelope, and the penetration is not sealed	67
163	TV and internet cable from Auburn Avenue	67
164	Co-axial cable connection (left) and data jack (right) inside one of the apartments	67
165	Smoke and fire detector in unit C	68
166	Ceiling-mounted smoke and fire detector	68
167	Motion detector above the door	68
168	Old motion sensor on the right and alarm horn on the left	68
169	Dx split-system heating and cooling systems in the attic above unit B	69
170	Web of new and abandoned PVC, black steel (gas), and copper piping in the crawl space	69

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Foreword

The telling of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and legacy is larger than the historic structures within the park and cannot be told just through the preservation of the historic buildings within the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. However, Historic Structure Reports (HSRs) are important treatment documents that help with preservation efforts on the historic structures throughout the park, through architectural assessments, historic background information for context, and chronology of development and use, all of which condensed provides the park a tool for repair, rehabilitation and preservation for those homes that Dr. King knew in his childhood. The reports will give the reader a better understanding of the architectural landscape of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birth Home neighborhood and the people who lived there and helped shape the life of one of the greatest leaders of the civil rights movement.

This scholarly work is dedicated to the stewardship of thirty-five historic structures, four of which have historic significance as the places where Dr. King was born, lived, worked, and worshipped. These structures include 501 Auburn Avenue, the Birth Home of Dr. King, where he lived until he was twelve years old; Ebenezer Baptist Church, where his grandfather, father and later himself served as pastors; the Prince Hall building that housed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); and 234 Sunset Avenue where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King made a home and lived with their children, Yolanda, Martin, Dexter, and Bernice, from 1965 to his death in 1968 and until Mrs. King left the home in August 2004.

The HSRs began in 2016, when the park was awarded funds to complete thirty-one HSRs for historic buildings within the park's boundary.

We are grateful for the cooperation of all those who helped to make this document possible.

Judy Forte
Superintendent
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
2019

Management Summary

At the request of the National Park Service (NPS), Panamerican Consultants, Inc. and its subconsultants, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE) and WFT Architects (WFTA), have developed this Historic Structure Report (HSR) for 506 Auburn Avenue at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park in Atlanta, Georgia. Refer to Figure 1 through Figure 3 at the end of this chapter for maps showing the location of the 506 Auburn Avenue and Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. Figure 1 is a map of the state of Georgia showing the location of Atlanta and Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. Figure 2 is an aerial photograph of Atlanta showing the location of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. Figure 3 is a map of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park showing the location of 506 Auburn Avenue.

The building at 506 Auburn Avenue is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as a contributing resource to the historic district that comprises Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, now Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.¹ The property is important as an example of a small, four-unit apartment building, originally occupied by African Americans, on the Birth Home block, the neighborhood surrounding Dr. King's birth home at 501 Auburn Avenue.

1. Robert W. Blythe, Maureen A. Carroll, and Stephen Moffson, *National Register of Historic Places Registration documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site*, certified by the Keeper of the National Register on May 4, 1994, (National Archives Identifier 93208246), Section 7-4 and 15, and Section 8-30.

Historical Data

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood and the Old Fourth Ward on the east side of the City of Atlanta. Sweet Auburn is centered on a mile and half stretch of Auburn Avenue which includes residential, religious, and commercial buildings associated with Atlanta's African American community dating from the late nineteenth century through the early twentieth century. At the time of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birth on January 15, 1929, Auburn Avenue was a thriving center of African American commercial, social, religious, and political activity. John Wesley Dobbs (1882–1961), an African American civic and political leader, coined the name "Sweet Auburn" in reference to the prosperity and opportunity afforded by the neighborhood.

The park commemorates the life and accomplishments of Dr. King as a prominent leader of the American civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. Toward this end, the park

preserves, protects, and interprets for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations, the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, lived, worked, worshiped, and is buried; while interpreting the life experiences and significance of one of the most influential Americans in the 20th Century [sic].²

2. National Park Service, *Foundation Document, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, Georgia* (Atlanta: National Park Service, 2017), 5.

Much of King's civil rights activities occurred outside of Atlanta, but he resided in the city from 1960 until his death in 1968. Also within the National Historical Park is Ebenezer Baptist Church, which is associated both with King's childhood and his return to Atlanta as an adult. Earlier, in 1957, he established a base of operations in Atlanta for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of which he was the first president.³

In addition to the national significance of the park for its association with Martin Luther King Jr., resources within the park include several late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century structures associated with development of the Sweet Auburn neighborhood and persons of local importance.

By the end of the nineteenth century, predominantly white, middle-class families had built new homes or moved into the recently constructed houses along Auburn Avenue east of Jackson Street.⁴ Built about 1886, the oldest building on the Birth Home block stands at 521 Auburn Avenue.⁵ By 1899, most of the lots along Auburn Avenue between Jackson and Howell Streets were developed, although denser residential development remained to the west. Single-family, one- and two-story houses, principally line the avenue. Some multiple-family dwellings had been constructed, but the housing tended to be single-family, the majority of which were large, modestly decorated houses. Many of the properties had stables and wood and coal sheds in the rear.

Residences in the Birth Home block are representative of vernacular adaptations of popular domestic architecture styles of the 1890s and the early twentieth century found in American cities. Most single-family houses on the Birth Home block erected in the 1890s exhibit Queen Anne-stylistic elements. The residences are mostly two-story, wood-frame dwellings with one-story rear extensions. Only two buildings on the block

constructed in the 1890s are one-story, wood-frame dwellings—515 and 546 Auburn Avenue. Typical characteristics of these houses include irregular massing, projecting bays, broad front porches carried on columns or posts, contrasting surface areas of shingles and clapboard siding, and decorative millwork. In 1894, the Romanesque Revival-style Fire Station No. 6 was constructed on the southeast corner of Boulevard and Auburn Avenue.

In 1905, the Empire State Investment Company developed the northeast corner of Auburn Avenue and Boulevard with the construction of nine duplex buildings for speculative purposes.⁶ Occupying half of the block between Boulevard and Hogue Street, the one-story, frame, double-shotgun houses contrasted with the existing houses on the block, but were typical of the dwellings to the north. Inexpensive shotgun-type housing was a popular vernacular housing type built across the urban South.

By 1929, the African-American middle-class families in the neighborhood were in the minority among the total population of residents on the Birth Home block. During the Great Depression, Auburn Avenue and the Birth Home block experienced the subdivision of many single-family dwellings, the deterioration of its existing stock, and increased tenancy.⁷ Several multiple-family dwellings were constructed on the Birth Home block and adjacent streets. Apartment houses were built at 509 Auburn Avenue (1925) and 506 Auburn Avenue (1933), and a quadraplex was constructed at 54 Howell Street (1931), which subdivided an already crowded house lot. A *Real Property Survey* conducted by the Works Progress Administration in 1939 reported that 100 percent of the Birth Home block was occupied by African Americans, though only 13.3 percent of the

3. Blythe, Carroll, and Moffson, *National Register documentation*, 2.

4. *Ibid.*, Section 7, 4.

5. *Ibid.*, Section 8, 14.

6. *Ibid.*, Section 8, 57.

7. Lucy A. Lawliss, *Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site Cultural Landscape Report: Birth-Home Block* (Atlanta: National Park Service, Southeast Region Office 1995), 13-14.

buildings were owner occupied and 67.4 percent needed major repairs or were unfit for use.⁸

The quadraplex apartment building at 506 Auburn Avenue was constructed in 1933, but park records indicate that a house, possibly a duplex, was on the site by 1900.⁹ The 1933 apartment was constructed for Dr. E.J. Bowden by day laborers. The designer of the building is not known.¹⁰

The appearance and style of 506 Auburn Avenue, when constructed, was decidedly different from the larger, single-family homes with their late-Victorian architectural details that had been built earlier in Sweet Auburn. Like the other apartment buildings on the block, 506 Auburn Avenue is a plain, two-story, rectangular structure with two-story porches, weatherboard siding, and a hipped roof.

The earliest residents of the fourplex apartment appear to have been African American, and it is probable that all the renters were black until the National Park Service acquired the building.

The US Congress created Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District in October 1980. The purpose of the site was “to protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Junior, was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried.”¹¹

On January 8, 2018, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site was designated as Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. John Lewis, noted civil rights activist and congressman from Georgia, sponsored the bill in Congress.¹²

The NPS acquired 506 Auburn Avenue in 1989. The park still uses the building as an apartment complex.

8. Ibid.

9. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, 506 Auburn Avenue NHS Report, n.p.

10. Ibid.

11. Public Law 96-428, October 10, 1980.

12. Public Law 115-108, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2017.

Treatment and Use

The building at 506 Auburn Avenue is significant for its association with the neighborhood in which Martin Luther King Jr. grew up, is located within the Birth Home block, and is a contributing resource to the historic district. The building is part of the context of the Birth Home neighborhood. It is anticipated to remain in use as apartment residences, and its exterior will continue to be interpreted as part of the historic neighborhood. The recommended overarching treatment for the structure is therefore *Rehabilitation*.

The building at 506 Auburn Avenue is generally in fair to good condition, requiring maintenance-type repairs. Conditions requiring more extensive repairs include significant deterioration at the foundation and first-floor wood framing; localized masonry deterioration at the foundation piers and chimneys; localized deterioration of the wood porch deck and wall trim; and open joints and other deterioration of the concrete masonry unit (CMU) retaining wall at the north and west sides of the site.

Administrative Data

Locational Data

Building Name: 506 Auburn Avenue

Location: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park, Atlanta, Georgia

LCS Number: 090013

Related Studies

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

_____. National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office. *National Register documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site*.

Certified by the Keeper of the National Register on May 4, 1994.

Benjamin Levy, Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service, Washington, DC (based on the work of Elizabeth Z. Macgregor and Carole A. Summers, Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, State of Georgia, and Joseph S. Mendinghall, Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation). *National Historic Landmark documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District*, January 5, 1976. The historic district was designated a National Historic Landmark on May 5, 1977.

Elizabeth Z. Macgregor, Architectural Historian, and Carole A. Summers, Coordinator, Historic Sites Survey, Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta. *National Register nomination documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District*, March 25, 1974. Entered in the National Register May 2, 1974.

Steven H. Moffson, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, with John A. Kissane, Historic Preservation Consultant, Historic District Development Corporation, Atlanta, Georgia. *National Register documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation*, 2001. Accepted by the National Register on June 21, 2001.

Lawliss, Lucy A. *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Cultural Landscape Report: Birth-Home Block*. Prepared under Cooperative Agreement between National Park Service and Georgia State University. Atlanta: National Park Service, Southeast Region Office, 1995.

In addition to the above studies and other publications and archival documents noted in the Bibliography, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan* (2011) and *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site*

Foundation Document (2017) were referenced in preparation of this report.

Cultural Resource Data

In 1974, National Register documentation was prepared for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, bounded approximately by Irwin Street, Randolph Street, Edgewood Avenue, Jackson Street, and Auburn Avenue.¹³ The building at 506 Auburn Avenue was not specifically addressed in this documentation.

National Historic Landmark documentation prepared in 1977 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, including Auburn Avenue between Jackson and Howell Streets, included the residence at 506 Auburn in the accompanying inventory of individual buildings. The inventory notes, “These apartments have been occupied by a series of black residents. The original architectural design is intact.”¹⁴

In October 1980, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District were established “to protect and interpret for present and future generations the area where Dr. King was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried.”¹⁵

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13. Elizabeth Z. Macgregor, Architectural Historian, and Carole A. Summers, Coordinator, Historic Sites Survey, Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, *National Historic Landmark Documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District (Landmark)*, March 25, 1974; entered in the National Register May 2, 1974 (National Archives Identifier 93208244).
 14. Benjamin Levy, *National Register Landmark Documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District (Landmark)*, 1976, designated May 6, 1977 (National Archives identifier 80000435_NHL). See also Joseph Scott Mendinghall, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Martin Luther King Jr. Historic District (Landmark)* (Washington, DC: Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation, 1973).
 15. Public Law 96-428, October 10, 1980

In 1985, the Birth Home block street facades were recorded for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS, GA 62-ATLA, 49). The HABS drawings include the front, street, facade of 506 Auburn Avenue. Its location on the block is also noted on a master Auburn Avenue Birth Home block map.¹⁶

In 1994, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, which comprises a historic district approximately bounded by Jackson, Howell, and Old Wheat Streets and Edgewood Avenue, was entered in the National Register. The documentation, certified by the Keeper of the National Register on May 4, 1994, indicated that the historic district is significant under Criteria A, B, and C, and Criteria Considerations A, C, and G. Areas of significance cited include the following: Ethnic Heritage, black; Social History, Commerce, and Architecture. The 506 Auburn Avenue residence was listed as a contributing building under historic contexts A and C.¹⁷

In 2001, a Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation were prepared for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, for an area approximately bounded by Freedom Parkway and John Wesley Dobbs Avenue on the north, Decatur Street on the south, the Southern Railway line on the east, and Interstate 75/85 on the west.¹⁸

On January 8, 2018, President Donald J. Trump signed into law H.R. 267, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2017, designating Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site as Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. Noted civil rights activist and congressman, John Lewis, sponsored the bill in Congress.¹⁹ The status of 506 Auburn Avenue remains a contributing resource to the historic district.

Period of Significance: 1933–1968.²⁰ The period of significance of 1933–1968 begins with the date of construction of 506 Auburn Avenue, and ends with the death of Martin Luther King Jr. This period addresses the local historical and architectural significance of the residence, as well as its association with the neighborhood in which Dr. King grew up. The National Register documentation prepared in 1994 identified a period of significance of 1880–1968, and a boundary increase and additional documentation prepared in 2001 identified a period of significance of 1853–1968, for the overarching historic district.²¹

Proposed Treatment: Rehabilitation

Project Scope and Methodology

The goal of the Historic Structure Report is to develop planning information for use in the repair, maintenance, and preservation of this historically significant structure. First developed by the National Park Service in the 1930s, HSRs are documents prepared for a building, structure, or group of buildings and structures of recognized significance. They are developed to record and analyze the property's initial construction and

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16. Historic American Buildings Survey, *Martin Luther King Jr., National Historic Site Birth Home Block Survey* (Washington, DC: HABS 1985), Sheet 11.
 17. Blythe, Carroll, and Moffson, *National Register documentation*, Section 8, 32 and 66. The documentation indicates that the building may have been constructed as a duplex, and notes that rehabilitation by the NPS was scheduled for completion in 1993.
 18. Steven H. Moffson, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, with John A. Kissane, Historic Preservation Consultant, Historic District Development Corporation, Atlanta, Georgia, *National Register documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation* (Accepted by the National Register on June 21, 2001), 30.

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19. Public Law 115–108, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2017.
 20. Refer to the report chapter on Significance and Integrity for further discussion of the period of significance for 506 Auburn Avenue. Note that the park interprets the Birth Home block to the period 1929–1941, Martin Luther King Jr.'s formative years in Atlanta.
 21. Blythe, Carroll, and Moffson, *National Register documentation*; Moffson and Kissane.

subsequent alterations through historical, physical, and pictorial evidence; to document the performance and condition of the structure's materials and overall physical stability; to identify an appropriate course of treatment; and, following implementation of the recommended work, to document alterations made through that treatment.²²

This HSR addresses key issues specific to 506 Auburn Avenue, including the history and construction chronology of the building; the existing physical condition of the exterior envelope, structural systems, and primary interior spaces and features; and the historic significance and integrity of the building.

The following project methodology was used for this study.

Research and Document Review. Archival research was performed to gather information about the original construction and past modifications and repairs for use in assessing existing conditions and developing treatment recommendations for the building, and to support assessment of the building interior. Documents reviewed included maps, drawings, specifications, historic photographs, and other written and illustrative documentation about the history of construction and repairs to the apartment. The research for this study built upon prior historical and archival research completed by the National Park Service and others, as outlined in the bibliography provided with this report. Primary reference material for this study included documents available from Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park and records held at the National Park Service Southeast Region. Additional research material was obtained from the National Park Service Technical Information Center (TIC) in Denver, Colorado, and the Kenan Research Center of the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, Georgia. The Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History

was consulted as were multiple online sites associated with the life and work of Martin Luther King Jr. and his family; the history of the City of Atlanta, Sweet Auburn, and African American commercial activities and education in the South; and other pertinent cultural and social topics.

Condition Assessment and Documentation.

Concurrent with the historical research, a condition survey of the apartment was performed, and observations were documented with digital photographs, field notes, and annotations on baseline drawings. For purposes of the field survey, drawings were prepared by the project team to update available existing drawings. These drawings were further developed as measured drawings, which are provided in Appendix A. The condition assessment addressed the interior spaces and features of the building. A limited review of visible features of the electrical system was also included in the scope of work.

Development of History, Chronology of Construction, and Evaluation of

Significance. Based on historical documentation and physical evidence gathered during the study, a context history and a chronology of design and construction were developed. This historical narrative includes a summary of the building's history. An evaluation of the significance of the building was also prepared, taking into consideration guidelines provided by *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.²³ This evaluation of history and significance provided the basis for the development of recommended treatment alternatives.

Guidelines for Treatments. Based on the evaluation of historical and architectural significance of the structure, guidelines were prepared to assist in the selection and implementation of preservation treatments.

22. Deborah Slaton, *Preservation Brief 43: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, 2005).

23. National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 1997).

Treatment Recommendations. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties guided the development of treatment recommendations for the significant exterior and interior features of the building. Following the overall treatment approach of *Rehabilitation* for the building, as previously established by the National Park Service, the specific recommendations were developed to address the observed existing distress conditions as well as the park’s intended future use and long-term objectives.²⁴

Preparation of Historic Structure Report. Following completion of research, site work, and analysis, a narrative report was prepared summarizing the results of the research and inspection and presenting recommendations for treatment. The HSR was compiled following the organizational guidelines of NPS *Preservation Brief 43: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports*, with modifications to organizational structure for purposes of this study.²⁵



FIGURE 1. Map of Georgia showing location of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park (black star) (not to scale). (Source: US Census Bureau, modified by the authors)

24. 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* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, 2017).

25. Slaton.



FIGURE 2. Aerial photograph of Atlanta showing location of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. (Source: Google Earth, annotated by the authors)

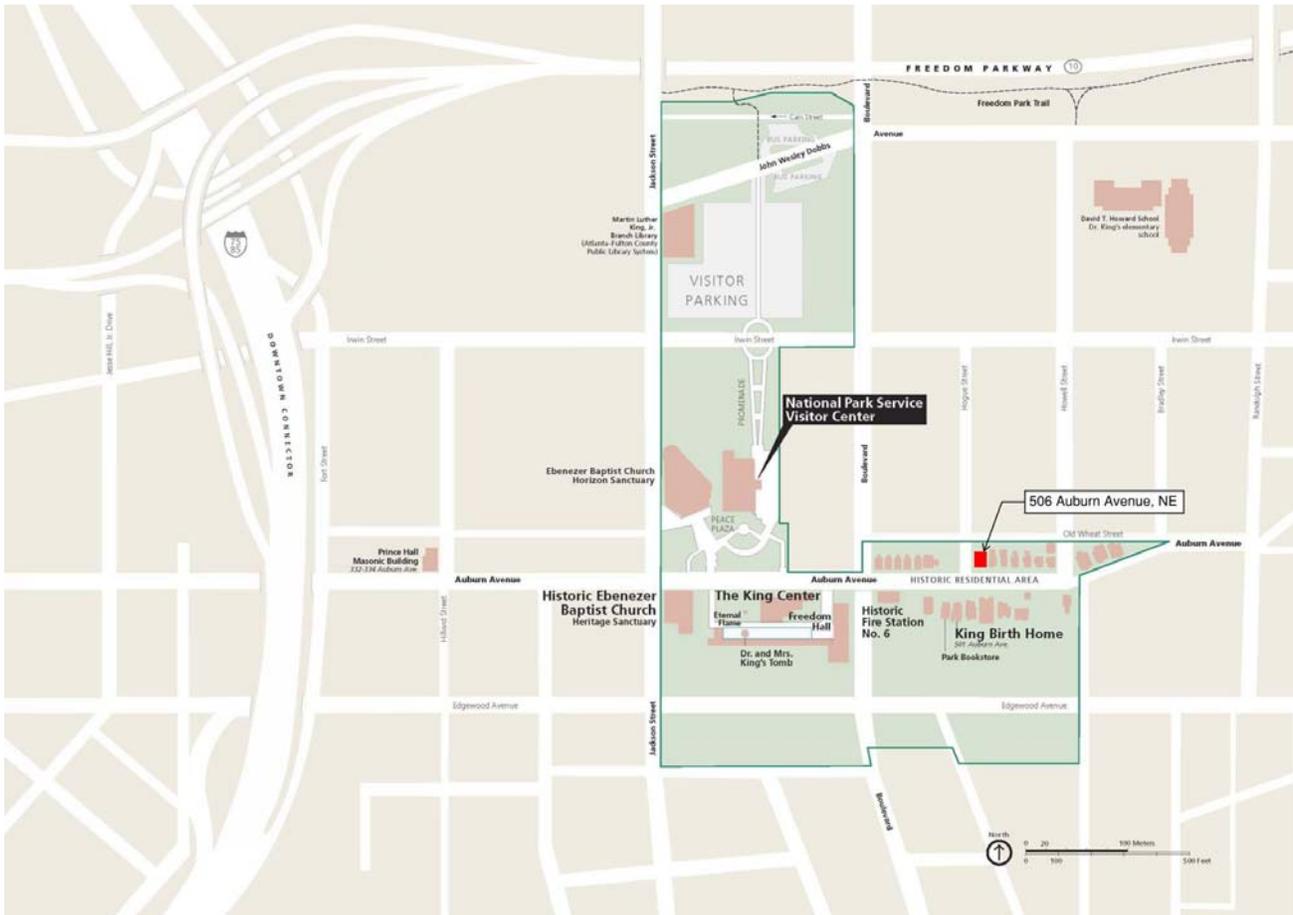


FIGURE 3. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park showing the location of 506 Auburn Avenue, NE. (Source: National Park Service baseline map, annotated by the authors)

Developmental History

Historical Background and Context

Situated in the Old Fourth Ward and the Sweet Auburn neighborhood on Atlanta’s east side, the apartment building at 506 Auburn Avenue is part of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. The neighborhood comprises commercial, residential, and religious buildings associated with Atlanta’s African American community dating from the late nineteenth century through the middle of the twentieth century. At the time of Dr. King’s birth in January 1929, Auburn Avenue was a thriving center of African American commercial, social, religious, and political activity.²⁵

The National Historical Park is an irregularly-shaped tract roughly bounded by Jackson Street on the west (and now includes Prince Hall Masonic Temple, where the Southern Christian Leadership Conference established its initial headquarters), Auburn Avenue on the north from Jackson Street to Boulevard, Wheat Street on the north between Boulevard and Howell Street, Howell Street on the east, and the rear property lines on the south side of Edgewood Avenue (refer to Figure 3). The National Historical Park also includes 234 Sunset Avenue, the last home of Dr. King, located in west Atlanta. The neighborhood surrounding the Birth Home on Auburn Avenue includes a cohesive grouping of residential

buildings constructed from 1893 through 1931.²⁶ The block also contains Fire Station No. 6 and an extant circa 1920 store building.

African Americans in Nineteenth-Century Atlanta

In 1837, Western & Atlantic Railroad engineers staked a point at the end of the line they planned to build south from Chattanooga, Tennessee. First known as “Terminus,” a small community grew around the railroad crossroads, later becoming Marthasville and, finally, Atlanta. By 1846, the town had two other railroad lines which connected it to other areas of the state and the Southeast. The railroad spurred the town’s rapid early development. When incorporated in 1847, Atlanta’s municipal boundaries included a one-mile radius centered on the terminus, or the zero-mile marker.²⁷ Beginning in the same year, Atlanta’s City Council placed a number of restrictions on African Americans in the city that defined for them an inferior position and role in society.²⁸

During the period before the Civil War, Atlanta had a relatively small black population in comparison to older and larger southern cities, such as Savannah.²⁹ With only a few exceptions, enslaved persons in Atlanta were forbidden to engage in entrepreneurial activity unless their

25. A. Ambrose, V. Fort, A. Henderson, D. Rowley, C. Stevens, and B. Taggart, *Historic Resource Study Auburn Avenue Community of Atlanta 1865-1930* (Atlanta: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, n.d.), n.p.

26. For this context, the Birth Home block includes the section of Auburn Avenue located between Boulevard NE and Howell Street NE.
27. Alexa Henderson and Eugene Walker, *Sweet Auburn: The Thriving Hub of Black Atlanta*. (Atlanta, Georgia: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1983), 3.
28. Ambrose et al., *Historic Resource Study*, 1-1.
29. *Ibid.*, 2-1.

owners or representatives were present.³⁰ Most of the enslaved population in Atlanta worked as general laborers and domestic servants. Others served in skilled trades as brick masons, carpenters, and blacksmiths.³¹ Free African Americans in antebellum Atlanta, though few in number, were also prohibited by law from participating in the city's commercial life. Census data reveals Atlanta's free black people did not own real estate or personal property.³²

In 1860, 1,939 African Americans were reported to be living within Atlanta's municipal boundary, only twenty-five of whom were free.³³ After the Civil War, the African American population of Atlanta increased as the newly freed from the surrounding countryside came to the city seeking opportunities for education and employment. By 1870, the city's 9,929 African Americans constituted more than 45 percent of the population.³⁴ Many in Atlanta's African American communities continued to live in the post-bellum period as they had during the years of slavery: in servant's homes or quarters located to the rear of a white person's residence. An increasing number of others began to settle in developing black tenements and settlements throughout the city. These clusters of African American settlements developed along railroads and in low-lying areas where land was less expensive and generally considered by the larger community as undesirable.³⁵ The railroad lines served as barriers between segregated neighborhoods. By 1883, at least six African American urban clusters were located in Atlanta's five wards. In the Old Fourth Ward, a large black community developed along Decatur Street east of Pratt Street in the formerly named Butler Street Bottoms, which is now the

general area of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park and Preservation District.³⁶

During the late nineteenth century, African American residents established a variety of successful retail trades and services. The most popular black-owned enterprises in the city included grocery stores, dry goods stores, and eating establishments. In the 1880s and early 1890s, the largest number of African American businesses operated along Marietta Street in the central business area with others scattered along Alabama, Broad, Forsyth, Peachtree, Pryor, and Whitehall Streets. Few black businesses were located on Wheat Street (Auburn Avenue) during this time, since it was still primarily a residential street; the few that did exist were mostly grocery stores. In 1896, the Old Fourth Ward had the greatest proportion of African Americans residents, who constituted 46 percent of the ward's population.³⁷

Atlanta experienced economic boom and growth during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, while during the same period, the city's African American community was in serious political and economic decline.³⁸ Retaliation by white supremacists at the end of Reconstruction and federal rule followed by the disenfranchisement of African American voters triggered a rise in racial segregation in the city. Booker T. Washington, president of Tuskegee Institute and an African American proponent of the "New South," gave his famous "Atlanta Compromise" speech in Atlanta at the 1895 International Cotton States Exposition.³⁹

In September 1906, Atlanta erupted into a three-day race riot, the Atlanta Race Riot, resulting in the deaths of at least a dozen African American citizens and a large number of injuries. The Atlanta Race Riot of 1906 significantly affected the city's black residential development. As the number of African American residents in the city continued

30. Ibid, 1-1.

31. Andy Ambrose, Karen Leathem, and Charles Smith, "Antebellum Atlanta," Atlanta; A National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary. National Park Service, accessed May 1, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/atlanta/antebellum.htm>.

32. Ambrose et al., *Historic Resource Study*, 1-3.

33. Ibid., 2-1.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid, 2-2.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., 2-4.

38. Lawliss, 12.

39. Ibid. Information on the "Atlanta Compromise" speech gleaned from Lawliss.

to grow, efforts to restrict them to well-defined areas of the city intensified. In 1913, Atlanta passed a segregation ordinance and became the first city in Georgia to legislate residential segregation.⁴⁰ Two years later, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled against racial zoning ordinances.⁴¹ Increasing segregation during the years leading up to World War I resulted in the transformation of mixed neighborhoods such as Auburn Avenue into predominantly African American communities. Despite the earlier ruling, city officials focused on racial segregation, and it was again incorporated into the city's first zoning ordinance in 1922.⁴² Even though the law was declared unconstitutional in 1925, zoning was authorized by the state legislature in 1927 and supported by a constitutional amendment in 1928.⁴³ The ordinance did not recognize the African American business and residential neighborhoods which had developed in the Old Fourth Ward.

Development of Auburn Avenue

Opening in 1853 as Wheat Street, Auburn Avenue extends east from Whitehall Street in downtown Atlanta.⁴⁴ Laura Lavinia (Kelly) Combs, a free black woman in pre-Civil War Atlanta, was the first African American property owner on Auburn Avenue.⁴⁵ One of two African American landowners in the antebellum period, Combs purchased a lot at the intersection of Wheat and Peachtree streets prior to 1854.⁴⁶ She sold the property in 1856 to buy her husband's freedom

from slavery.⁴⁷ Auburn Avenue and the surrounding area developed slowly until 1880 when John Lynch began subdividing his large landholdings, which encompassed property on both sides of Auburn Avenue between Jackson Street and Howland (now Howell) Street.

The area between Boulevard (then Jefferson Street) on the west and Randolph Street on the east and between Wheat Street on the south and Houston Street to the north was largely subdivided by the late 1870s and contained several dozen houses. Early residential development in the area occurred primarily north of Auburn Avenue. Several houses were constructed on and near Auburn Avenue in the 1880s, though only one house remains from the pre-1890 period. By 1892, the entire Auburn Avenue community was well established with the exception of a few sections. With increased development on Auburn Avenue, residents petitioned to have the street's name changed to a more stylish one out of concern that their street might be confused with the adjacent, and less desirable, Old Wheat Street.⁴⁸ The Atlanta City Council officially changed the name on April 17, 1893.⁴⁹

Expansion and improvement of Atlanta's transportation infrastructure in the late nineteenth century contributed to the commercial and residential development of the Auburn Avenue community. In 1884, Gate City Street Railroad Company constructed a horse-car line from downtown Atlanta along Auburn Avenue to Jackson Street, and then extending north on Jackson.⁵⁰ Atlanta's first electric street railway line opened along Edgewood Avenue in 1889, and in the early 1890s, the horse-car lines were electrified, and new electric lines were built.⁵¹ By the mid-1890s, the Auburn Avenue community

40. John Dittmer, *Black Georgia in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 13–14. Information on the 1913 Atlanta Ordinance was gleaned from this document.

41. *Ibid.*, 14.

42. Ambrose et al., *Historic Resource Study*, 2-10.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Henderson and Walker, 5.

45. *Ibid.*, 6.

46. Paul K. Graham, "A Love Story Proved: The Life and Family of Laura Lavinia (Kelly) Combs of Atlanta and Augusta, Georgia," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 101 (December 2013):246-266.

47. *Ibid.*; Cathy J. Kaemmerlen, *The Historic Oakland Cemetery of Atlanta Speaking Stones* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2013).

48. Lawliss, 21. Most of the information on Auburn Avenue and the Birth Home block is gleaned from this document.

49. *Ibid.*

50. Blythe et al., *National Register documentation*, Section 7, 3.

51. *Ibid.*

had direct transportation to downtown, where many residents worked and shopped.⁵²

In the period from the 1850s to 1906, Auburn Avenue “developed as a primarily white residential and business district that included a substantial black minority.”⁵³ The majority of African Americans in the community were working class, while its black middle class were proprietors of grocery stores, meat markets, restaurants, wood yards, and other businesses.⁵⁴ African American professionals were primarily teachers, ministers, doctors, dentists, and lawyers. From 1884 to 1900, the racial make-up of the area bounded by Old Wheat, Howell, Edgewood, and Jackson Streets (now a portion of the National Historical Park) remained substantially constant at approximately 55 percent white and 45 percent black.⁵⁵ An examination of Atlanta city directories from the 1880s and 1890s revealed the Auburn Avenue community was closer to integrated than almost any other southern community at the end of the nineteenth century.⁵⁶

During the years following the Atlanta Race Riot of 1906, nearly all African American-owned businesses vacated downtown Atlanta as African American businesses were forced to leave the central business district as a result of rising rents and increased hostility. By 1911, a Sanborn Fire Insurance map showed the Auburn Avenue community almost entirely built out. Auburn Avenue was residential west to Fort Street, although several commercial establishments were situated between Hilliard and Fort Streets. Industrial properties were located in the eastern section of the community along the Southern Railway, and Decatur Street to the south was primarily commercial with a few industrial facilities on Decatur toward downtown.⁵⁷ The

section of Edgewood Avenue at the east end of the community consisted of both commercial establishments and some residential development.

Auburn Avenue reflected “the changing nature of southern race relations during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”⁵⁸ From 1910 to 1930, Auburn Avenue became the center of African American business, institutional, religious, and social life.⁵⁹ During the 1920s, some African Americans started to migrate to the west side of Atlanta.⁶⁰ By the time Martin Luther King Jr. left in 1948 to attend Crozier Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, the majority of residential structures in the Auburn Avenue neighborhood had deteriorated. By the 1950s, the West Side had replaced the Auburn Avenue residential district as the preferred neighborhood.⁶¹

Birth Home Block

By 1899, most of the lots along Auburn Avenue between Jackson and Howell Streets were developed.⁶² Residences in the Birth Home block are representative of vernacular adaptations of popular domestic architecture styles of the 1890s and early twentieth century found in American cities.⁶³ Most single-family houses built in the 1890s exhibit Queen Anne-stylistic elements. The residences are mostly two-story, wood-frame dwellings with one-story rear extensions. Typical characteristics of these houses include irregular massing, projecting bays, broad front porches carried on columns or posts, contrasting surface areas of shingles and clapboard siding, and decorative millwork. In 1894, the Romanesque Revival Style Fire Station No. 6 was constructed on the southeast corner of Boulevard and Auburn Avenue.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., Section 8, 24.

54. Moffson and Kissane, 30.

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

56. Moffson and Kissane, 30.

57. Ibid.

58. Blythe et al., *National Register documentation*, Section 8, 24.

59. Blythe et al., *Historic Resource Study*, 1-24.

60. Ibid., 2-21.

61. Ibid., 2-36, 2-39, and 2-21.

62. Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Atlanta, Georgia* (1899), accessed May 22, 2019, <http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/sanborn/CityCounty/Atlanta1899/Sheet48.html>.

63. Blythe et al., *National Register documentation*, Section 8, 50.

The Empire State Investment Company developed the northeast corner of Auburn Avenue and Boulevard in 1905 with the construction of nine duplex buildings.⁶⁴ The smaller one-story, frame, double-shotgun houses contrasted with the existing houses on the block but were typical of the dwellings in the neighborhood to the north.

The first middle-class African American families to purchase single-family dwellings on the block were enticed by the appeal of living in one of the large attractive homes on Auburn Avenue.⁶⁵

Following the construction of additional double shotgun houses on the remaining undeveloped lots, the block acquired a distinct mix of African American socioeconomic classes where middle-class professionals lived alongside working-class laborers.⁶⁶ Martin Luther King Jr.'s maternal grandfather, Reverend A.D. Williams purchased the circa 1894 single-family house at 501 Auburn Avenue in 1909.⁶⁷ Dr. King was born in the Auburn Avenue house on January 15, 1929. He lived in the Birth Home until 1941, when his family moved three blocks away to 193 Boulevard near Houston Street.⁶⁸

By 1929, African American middle-class families in the neighborhood were in the minority among the total population of residents on the Birth Home block.⁶⁹ During the Great Depression, Auburn Avenue and the Birth Home block experienced the subdivision of many single-family dwellings, the deterioration of its existing housing stock, and increased tenancy.⁷⁰ A *Real Property Survey* conducted by the Works Progress Administration in 1939 reported that 100 percent of the Birth Home block was occupied by African Americans, though only 13.3 percent of the buildings were owner occupied and 67.4 percent needed major repair work or were unfit for use.⁷¹

Beginning in the 1950s, physical changes occurred to the Auburn Avenue setting. In 1954, two brick apartment buildings were erected at 531 Auburn Avenue on a lot formerly containing four wood dwellings of the Baptist Memorial Institute School.⁷² The apartment buildings are no longer extant. During the 1970s and 1980s, the overall condition of Auburn Avenue area's historic housing stock continued to decline. Fire Station No. 6 closed in 1991, after being in service for nearly 100 years.⁷³

With more than thirty years of historic preservation efforts, the Birth Home block has become a highly intact historic residential area.

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District was established on October 10, 1980, 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 and worshipped, and where he is buried."⁷⁴ Historic resources within the park include the houses on the Birth Home block, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Fire Station No. 6, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, and commercial buildings along Edgewood Avenue.

The 1980 legislation creating the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site authorized a 23.78-acre park. The Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992, enacted October 30, 1992, expanded the park boundaries to include properties located between Jackson Street and Boulevard north to Cain Street. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Preservation District, also established by

64. *Ibid.*, Section 8, 57.

65. Lawliss, 17.

66. Blythe et al., *Historic Resource Study*, n.p.

67. *Ibid.*

68. *Ibid.*

69. Lawliss, 21.

70. *Ibid.*, 14

71. *Ibid.*

72. Blythe et al., *National Register documentation*, Section 7, 9.

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

74. Public Law 96-428, October 10, 1980.

the 1980 legislation, adjoins the site (now National Historical Park) on the east, north, and west and embraces the larger Auburn Avenue African American community in which Dr. King grew up. The Preservation District links Dr. King's career to the African American business, religious, social, and political organizations that flourished along Auburn Avenue prior to and during his lifetime.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District was placed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 2, 1974, and it was designated a National Historic Landmark on May 5, 1977.⁷⁵ The Sweet Auburn Historic District was designated a National Historic Landmark on January 8, 1976.⁷⁶ Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District (Landmark) included some portions of the Sweet Auburn Historic District. On May 4, 1994, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site was administratively listed on the National Register of Historic Places.⁷⁷

In 2001, the original boundary of Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District was increased.⁷⁸ The purpose of the addition was to expand the district's boundaries to include contiguous and intact portions of the Old Fourth Ward neighborhood not included in the original National Register nomination. The boundary increase includes historically residential properties as far as the Interstate 75/85 corridor. The elevated interstate was rebuilt and widened three times its original width since 1980, and it is a large visual and physical barrier between Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District and the Sweet Auburn Historic District farther west. Historically, these two historic districts were once part of a single African American community. Sweet Auburn is now considered downtown, while the Auburn Avenue community is generally viewed as a residential neighborhood on the east side of Atlanta. Freedom Parkway forms the northern boundary of the historic district, and DeKalb Avenue forms the boundary on the south.

75. Macgregor and Summers; and Levy.

76. Blythe et al., *National Register documentation*.

77. Ibid.

78. See Moffson and Kissane.

On January 8, 2018, President Donald J. Trump signed into law H.R. 267, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act which redesignated Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site a National Historical Park.⁷⁹ Additionally, H.R. 267 further modifies the boundaries of the park to include the Prince Hall Masonic Temple, where the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) established its initial headquarters on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1957. This will also "enable the National Park Service to provide technical assistance to the building's owners with respect to repairs, renovations, and maintenance to help preserve its historic integrity."⁸⁰ Dr. King was one of the founders and first president of the SCLC, serving until his death in 1968.

Current land use within the National Historical Park is mostly residential on Auburn Avenue and largely commercial on Edgewood Avenue. The NPS has rehabilitated many of the dwellings on the Birth Home block, restoring the exteriors to the 1929-1941 period. The historic streetscape features and the major spatial relationships that define the streetscape within the Birth Home block have remained relatively constant since its development in the late nineteenth century. The residential buildings on the Birth Home block are used as park offices or private residences.

506 Auburn Avenue (LCS #090013)

Across the street from 501 Auburn Avenue, the birth home of Martin Luther King Jr., the building at 506 Auburn Avenue was constructed in 1933 as

79. The White House, "President Donald J. Trump signs H.R. 267 in law," Statements and Releases, January 8, 2018, accessed January 12, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-signs-h-267-law>.

80. 115th Congress Senate Report 115-49, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act 2017*, May 9, 2017, accessed January 12, 2018, <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/115th-congress/senate-report/49/1?overview=closed>.

a four-unit apartment building. It was not the first building on that site. Park records for 506 Auburn, originally 392 Auburn Avenue, reveal that a house, possibly a duplex, was already on that property by 1900.⁸¹ The exact disposition of the original property is not known. The 1994 National Register documentation for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site and Preservation District and the 1994 Historic Resources Study both seem to indicate that the original duplex was converted to four apartments.⁸²

In 1980, when the apartment building became part of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site and Preservation District, the building was described as

Two-story frame apartment building containing four 4-room apartments. Double porch supported by 4 square columns on brick piers; hip roof with 4 chimneys [Figure 4].⁸³

The look and style of 506 Auburn Avenue, when constructed, was decidedly different from that of the larger, single-family homes with their late Victorian architectural details which had been constructed earlier in Sweet Auburn and the Old Fourth Ward. In the 1920s and 1930s, reflecting the movement of the African American upper and middle class to the suburbs, a number of homes in the community were converted into rooming houses or apartments, and small apartment buildings like 506 Auburn and 491-493 Auburn Avenue and 54 Howell Street were constructed (Figure 5).⁸⁴



FIGURE 4. 506 Auburn Avenue (1933), Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park, Atlanta, Georgia. (Source: All photographs by the authors unless otherwise noted)



FIGURE 5. 54 Howell Street is another small, four-unit, simply constructed and architecturally decorated apartment complex within the Birth Home block.

The new apartment buildings were plain, two-story, rectangular structures with two-story porches, weatherboard siding, and hip or gable roofs. These apartments were constructed for working-class African Americans and reflected this purpose in their utilitarian form and lack of ornamentation. The apartments were generally small with those on the first floor having direct access to the street, and those on the second floor to a central stair hall. Some of these apartments probably shared bathrooms when built. The apartment building at 506 Auburn Avenue has

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81. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, 506 Auburn Avenue NHS Report.
82. *National Register Nomination*, Section 7-13, and *Historic Resource Study*, Appendix B.
83. Division of Facilities Management, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park, Series V, Subseries D – 1944-2019, Building Inventory Files 1971-2004, Box 5, Folder 10 – 54 Howell Street, 1981-1991 (Atlanta: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, 2016), n.p.
84. *Historic Resource Study*, 72.

exposed rafter tails, 3/1 sash windows, and on the porches square wood piers set on brick plinths, decorative architectural features often associated with the Craftsmen Style which was popular from about 1905 to 1930 (Figure 6 and Figure 7).⁸⁵

Dr. E.J. Bowden constructed the apartments at 506 Auburn Avenue in 1933 using day labor. The architect is not known.⁸⁶ No information could be found on Dr. Bowden.



FIGURE 6. Craftsman architectural elements on 506 Auburn Avenue include 3/1 windows.



FIGURE 7. Other Craftsman architectural elements on 506 Auburn Avenue include porch supports of square wood piers set on brick plinths.

85. *Ibid.*, 73.

86. 506 Auburn Avenue NHS Report, n.p.

Occupants of 506 Auburn Avenue

Unlike most of the single-family homes on Auburn Avenue, the apartments of 506 Auburn Avenue were always occupied by African American residents. Although several residents lived in the building for many years, no additional information could be found on any of those long-term residents. The information on residents was taken from park files and is not complete for some years.

Residents by date and apartment number, if known, are as follows:

1936	Henry Cudgger
1940	Henry Cudgger
1945	James Canady
1950	1. James Canady ⁸⁷ 2. Carrie Rutland 3. Mrs. Minnie L. Brooks 4. Thomas Preston
1955	1. James Canady 2. Carrie Rutland 3. Mrs. Minnie L. Brooks 4. Mrs. Odessa C. Cook
1960	1. James Canady 2. Mrs. Carrie Rutland 3. Mrs. Mary Gibson 4. Raymond Fambro
1965	1. Walter Oliver 2. James R. Reeves 3. Mrs. Mary R. Gibson 4. Raymond Fambro
1970	1. Walter Oliver 2. Mrs. Bessie B. Reeves 3. Mrs. Rosalie Johnson 4. Charlie Jones
1975	1. Walter Oliver

87. The numbers, 1-4, indicate the apartment number occupied by the resident. The location of the numbered apartments within the building is not known.

2. Robert McGee
 3. Mrs. Rossie Johnson
 4. Effie Griffin
- 1980
1. Walter Oliver
 2. Marion Parter
 3. Eloise Minter
 4. Effie Griffin⁸⁸

It is not clear why the roster of resident's stopped in 1980, since the park did not acquire the house until 1989, and the apartments were indicated at that date as rented to "four families."⁸⁹ It is noted in the National Historic Site's circa 1992 *Land Protection and Historic Preservation* document that the building was vacant at that date.⁹⁰

Historical Recordation of 506 Auburn Avenue

In 1974, a National Register of Historic Places Nomination form was prepared for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, and, although 506 Auburn Avenue was not specifically named in the document, the apartment house was included in the district.⁹¹ The 1976 Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site (Landmark) nomination listed the apartment and describes it as "apartments [that] have been occupied by a series of black residents. The original architectural design is intact."⁹² Although 506 Auburn Avenue was not like the Victorian houses of the larger district, it did represent a type of property existing when Martin Luther King Jr. was a child—multi-family dwellings.

In October 1980, federal legislation created Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District to protect and interpret the area where Dr. King was "born, where he lived,

worked and worshiped, and where he is buried."⁹³ The NPS acquired 506 Auburn Avenue in 1989. When the NPS acquired the properties that comprise the National Historical Park, it was with the intention that some of them would enter into the Historic Lease Program; the apartment building at 506 Auburn Avenue is one of those properties.⁹⁴ The apartments are currently leased and occupied.

In 1985, the Auburn Avenue Street Facades were recorded for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). During this recordation, 506 Auburn Avenue's front, street, facade was drawn to scale, and its location on the block indicated on a master Auburn Avenue Street Facades map (Figure 8).⁹⁵

The circa 1992 *Land Protection and Historic Preservation* plan created for and by the National Historic Site indicated that 506 Auburn Avenue was vacant and "deteriorated." Nevertheless, the park planned on beginning a \$270,000 rehabilitation of the property in 1993, and it was planned that the four-unit apartment would continue to be a multi-family rental property.⁹⁶

88. Ibid.

89. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, 506 Auburn Avenue XXX Form.

90. National Park Service, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, Land Protection and Historic Preservation* (Atlanta: National Park Service, circa 1993), 2.

91. Macgregor and Summers.

92. Levy, Continuation Sheet page 2.

93. *Foundation Document, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site*, 5.

94. Thomas J. Cassidy, Jr., Barbara Pahl, Sharee Williamson, Elizabeth Merrit, and T. Destry Jarvis, *Historic Leasing in the National Park System: Preserving History through Effective Partnership* (Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2013) np; and *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, Land Protection and Historic Preservation*, 1.

95. Historic American Buildings Survey, Sheet 4.

96. *Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, Land Protection and Historic Preservation*, 2.



FIGURE 8. 506 Auburn Avenue’s front, street, facade drawn to scale on 1985 HABS Auburn Avenue Street Facades (Sheet 4 of 11). (Source: Historic American Buildings Survey, Creator, and Alexander Hamilton, 1985)

A Cultural Landscape Report was initiated for the Birth Home block in 1993 by Lucy Lawliss, and the yard at 506 Auburn Avenue was included in the report (Figure 9).⁹⁷ In 1994, National Register documentation was completed for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, and the apartment building was listed as a contributing building and described as

A plain, four-unit apartment building that may have been built as a duplex. The building has a hip roof and a recessed, two-story, full-facade porch carried on brick piers and square posts. An NPS rehabilitation is scheduled for completion in 1993.⁹⁸

506 Auburn is listed as a contributing building to the district under Criteria A and C.

Blythe, Carroll, and Moffson also completed a Historic Resources Study on the Martin Luther

King, Jr. National Historic Site in 1994 and described 506 Auburn Avenue as, “A plain, four-unit apartment building that may have been built as a duplex. The building has a hip roof and a recessed, two-story, full-facade porch carried on brick piers and square posts.”⁹⁹

The Blythe, Carroll, and Moffson documentation and Historic Resources Study seem to indicate that the current building at 506 Auburn Avenue may have once been a duplex which was converted or changed into a four-apartment complex. The footprint, now and at an unknown date but prior to 1933, indicate a long, rectangular building.¹⁰⁰ It is possible that the original building was converted, but it is not known.

97. Lawliss, 190.

98. Blythe et al., *National Register documentation*, Section 7, 13.

99. Blythe et al., *Historic Resource Study*, Appendix B.

100. National Park Service, *506 Auburn Avenue NHS Report*.

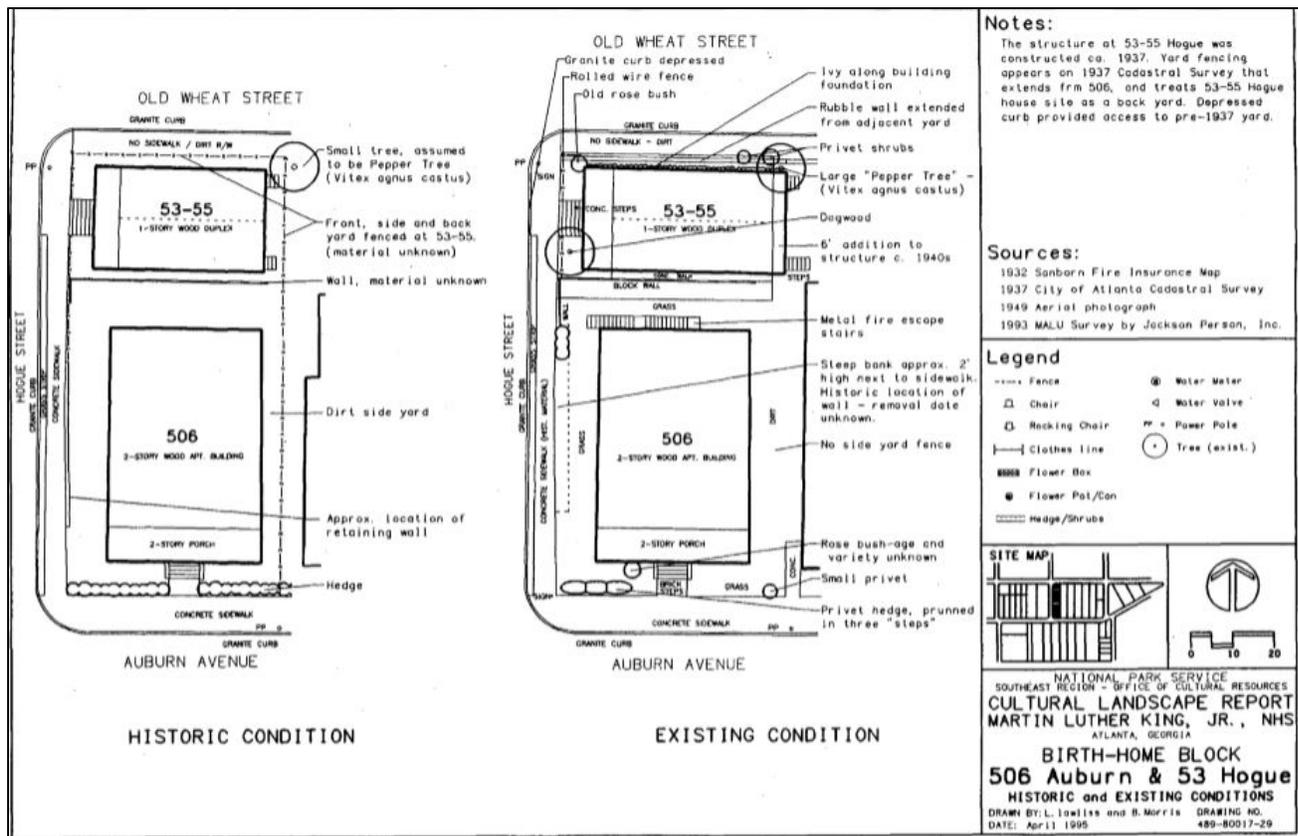


FIGURE 9. Historic and existing conditions landscapes, 506 Auburn Avenue. (Source: Lawliss, 123, Figure 72)

Physical Changes of 506 Auburn Avenue

The building at 506 Auburn Avenue was built in 1933, but the first recorded work completed on it was in the early 1960s. It is probable that work, certainly minor work, was completed on the apartment building during its first 30 years, but there is simply no record of it. In 1960, E.M. Cofer Roofing reroofed the building, and in 1961, day labor was brought in to make unspecified building repairs.¹⁰¹ No other building repairs or changes to the building were noted until the 1990s.

In 1990, QVC Roofing won a contract to reroof 506 and 510 Auburn Avenue. The contract for 506 Auburn Avenue included the selective demolition (\$4,461.88), installation of plywood decking (\$5,346.97), and installation of a complete roof (\$9,535.15), totaling \$19,344.00 for the new roof. This was substantially less than the original bid, which had been successfully renegotiated. The preconstruction meeting was held August 30, 1990,

101. *Ibid.*

and the completion report for the project was filed September 25, 1990.¹⁰²

QVC roofing adhered to their thirty-day deadline in the contract even though a \$2,851.00 amendment was required to remove existing deteriorated rafters and top plate and to repair and install the new rafters and top plate. It is not clear how many rafters needed to be replaced. Further, another amendment was required to replace deteriorated porch framing and to realign and reattach the porch to the house main structure (\$2,463.00), as well as to remove existing deteriorated soffits, fascia boards, trim eaves, and related items (\$2,047.60).¹⁰³

In 1992, the National Park Service initiated a stabilization project for the exterior of the

102. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, 506 / 510 Reroofing Costs, Series 5, Subseries G, Box 1, Folder 11.

103. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, 506 Reroof, Series 5, Subseries G, Box 1, folder 10.

Developmental History

apartment with a stabilization and repair of the front porches. LaFae, Inc. General Contractors was selected to perform the work, which included:

- Selective demolition of deteriorated portions of the porches.
- Rough and finish carpentry.
- Repair and replace second-floor porch structural framing.
- repair and replace deteriorated porch columns, ceiling boards, trim, balustrades, millwork, decking, and metal railings.

The work was completed for \$7,879.00.¹⁰⁴

However, when (or whether) the stabilization of the exterior of 506 Auburn Avenue was completed is unclear. In March 1992, after what seems to have been a warning in April to the park, it appears that the \$50,000 allocation that had been set aside for the stabilization of the exterior of the house was changed to cyclic maintenance on a Program Change Proposal form dated March 20, 1992. The form proposed to move the \$50,000 into: 445 Edgewood Avenue – replacement of decking, tile and joists; 443 and 445 Edgewood Avenue – replace all bad shutters; 443 Edgewood Avenue – restripe parking lot; 501, 522, and 526 Auburn Avenue – pour concrete slabs in basements, and wallpaper in bathroom at Birth Home.¹⁰⁵ The form was stamped received March 31, 1992. A note was made “Ltr 4/7/92” – a letter appears to have been sent to some entity at that date. A second received date was stamped on the form May 18, 1992.¹⁰⁶

The program change form underwent numerous changes and was commented upon, but it is not clear that funds were transferred from the 506 Auburn Avenue stabilization project.

104. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, 506 Exterior Stabilization, Series 5, Subseries F, Box 14, Folder 42.

105. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, 506 Exterior Stabilization, Program Change Proposal, Series 5, Subseries F, Box 14, Folder 42, March 20, 1992.

106. Ibid.

In July, Mr. Paul Hatchett, Historical Architect, wrote a Memorandum to the Superintendent of the Park reminding the park that exterior stabilization of 506 Auburn Avenue was not complete with the stabilization of the porch alone; \$50,000 had been set aside, less the almost \$8,000 just spent on the porch, to rehabilitate windows and doors and to rehabilitate the foundation deterioration on the west, south (front), and east sides. The park would stabilize the washout that created the foundation deterioration and prevent further erosion which would suffice until the “Historical Landscape Plan is implement[ed].” Hatchett also noted that the park “would not attempt the difficult stabilization / rehab work associated with the rear of the building. The other obvious deterrence for the park is the metal stair which is not handicap assessable [sic].”¹⁰⁷

A specification for the stabilization of the exterior of 506 Auburn Avenue is included in the park files on the 1992 stabilization. This specification was for the selective demolition, repair, and replacement of doors, windows, and associated hardware for the building.¹⁰⁸ It is not clear, however, that the doors, windows, and hardware were replaced at this time.

No park archival files were identified for the building between 1992 and 2008. In 2008, the Work Order FMSS database collected work orders on 506 Auburn Avenue. However, the database has not always been well maintained, and all fields of information are not consistently completed resulting in an incomplete record of work completed for properties. Archival records should complement this system, but there are no archival records from about 1990 to the present.

107. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, *Memorandum from Paul Hatchett, Historical Architect to Superintendent*, Martin Luther, King, Jr. National Historic Park, Series 5, Subseries F, Box 14, Folder 24.

108. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Archives, *Table of Contents Specifications Stabilization of National Park Service Structure 506 Auburn Avenue*, Series 5, Subseries F, Box 14, Folder 24, n.d., n.p.

The 1994 National Register documentation indicates that a “rehabilitation is scheduled for completion in 1993” for 506 Auburn Avenue.¹⁰⁹ Additionally, the park’s circa 1993 *Land Protection and Historic Preservation* document also indicated that the apartment was scheduled for a \$270,000 rehabilitation in 1993.¹¹⁰ However, no records of this rehabilitation were found.

2008-2010 projects. Between the years 2008 and 2010, routine pest control, utilities payments, custodial, general building maintenance, both corrective and preventive, and fire extinguisher inspection were recorded on work orders for 506 Auburn Avenue. In 2009, 506 Auburn Avenue was reroofed, the heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system was replaced, and the exterior repainted; all these projects were completed by 2010.¹¹¹

2011-2017 projects. Between the years 2011 and 2017, routine pest control, utilities payments, custodial, general building maintenance, both corrective and preventive, fire extinguisher inspection, and gutter cleaning were recorded on work orders for 506 Auburn Avenue. In 2016, a work order to cost out replacement of the roof on the building was completed, but the status of the roof replacement is not clear.¹¹²

109. *National Register Nomination*, Section 7, 13.

110. *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, Land Protection and Historic Preservation*, 2.

111. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park, Work Order FMSS, n.d., n.p.

112. *Ibid.*

Timeline 506 Auburn Avenue

- 1933 506 Auburn Avenue constructed as four apartment units with two apartments up and two down.
- 1960 New roof by E.M. Cofer Roofing.
- 1961 Day labor repairs made; type unknown.
- 1974 Included, but not named, as part of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District.
- 1977 Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District (Landmark) National Historic Landmark nomination included 506 Auburn Avenue as a contributing resource.
- 1980 Federal legislation created the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District which named 506 Auburn Avenue as a contributing resource.
- 1981 Exterior survey by the National Park Service found apartment building to be in “fair” condition.
- 1989 506 Auburn Avenue acquired by the National Park Service.
- QVC Roofing won bid for installation of new roof including:
- Selective demolition.
 - Installation of plywood decking.
 - Installation of complete shingle roof.
- 1991 Historic Structure Assessment found serious-to-critical problems with the exterior and interior envelopes, roof, and general building site.
- 1992 Building is vacant and deteriorated.
- National Historic Site’s *Land Protection and Historic Preservation Plan* included plans for major rehabilitation of 506 Auburn Avenue and maintaining the property as rental units.
- LaFae, Inc. General Contractors won contract to begin stabilization of exterior of 506 Auburn Avenue. Work undertaken included:
- Stabilization and repair of front porch.
 - Selective demolition.
 - Rough and finish carpentry.
 - Repair and replacement of second-floor porch structural framing.
 - Repair and replacement of deteriorated porch columns, ceiling boards, trim, balustrades, millwork, decking, and metal railings as indicated.
 - Windows, doors, and door / window hardware may have been repaired or replaced.

- 1993 Cultural Landscape Report begun on the Birth Home block which includes 506 Auburn Avenue.
Scheduled for major renovation (\$270,000.00), but it is not known if this work was undertaken.
- 1994 National Register documentation and a Historic Resources Study are completed for the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site listing 506 Auburn Avenue as a contributing resource to the district under Criteria A and C.
- 2009 Reroofed, HVAC replaced, exterior repainted.
- 2016 Roof replacement cost was requested; status of roof replacement not clear.
- 2018 Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park created

506 Auburn Avenue is a resource in the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. The building is a contributing resource to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A and C.

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Physical Description and Condition Assessment

Site

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is located in the Old Fourth Ward and the Sweet Auburn neighborhood on the east side of Atlanta in Fulton County, Georgia. The 38.38-acre historical park consists of one- and two-story residential, commercial, religious, and National Park Service buildings. The park is roughly bound by Edgewood Avenue to the south, Old Wheat Street to the north, Howell Street to the east, and Jackson Street to the west (refer to Figure 3). Boulevard and Auburn Avenue run through the center of the park. In general, buildings are organized so that commercial structures are located along Edgewood Avenue, religious and NPS buildings, such as the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, and the visitor center, are along the west end of Auburn Avenue, and residential buildings are concentrated along the east half of Auburn Avenue and Howell Street (Figure 10).¹¹³ The Martin Luther King Jr. Birth Home is located at the center of the residential portion of the historical park. In total, there are 67 historic structures within the park, most of which were constructed between 1890 and 1910.

The historical park is surrounded by the Sweet Auburn Historic District which encompasses approximately 230 historic structures.

Located at 506 Auburn Avenue, this multi-unit residential building is situated at the east end of the National Historical Park at the intersection of

Auburn Avenue and Hogue Street (formerly Howland Street). It is located across Auburn Avenue from the Martin Luther King Jr. Birth Home. The building has a mostly flat, mown-turf corner lot, measuring approximately 50 feet by 80 feet.

The front of the residence faces Auburn Avenue from which it is set back approximately 5 feet and is separated by an 8-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with granite curb.

The west elevation, along Hogue Street, is set back approximately 8 feet from the edge of the property line and has a 4-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with granite curb that separates it from the street (Figure 11). The west end of the site has been built-up approximately 30 inches to create a relatively flat lot (Figure 12). At the north end of the site is a concrete masonry unit (CMU) retaining wall (Figure 13). The wall wraps and helps define the north end of the west side of the site, along the public sidewalk.

The front yard, at the south side of the property, has manicured hedges that extend along the edge of the property line (Figure 14). A wood post and rail fence with attached wire mesh extends along the east property line (Figure 15). The adjacent property at 510 Auburn Avenue is a historic wood-framed two-story single-family house.

Immediately north of the site is a wood-framed one-and-a-half-story duplex bungalow.

113. The house at 234 Sunset Avenue, to which Dr. King and his family moved in 1965, is also a part of the National Historical Park, but it is outside the study area of this Historic Structure Report.



FIGURE 10. Overview of Auburn Avenue streetscape looking west at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.



FIGURE 13. Concrete masonry unit retaining wall at north end of site.



FIGURE 11. The sidewalk and curb that separate the site from Auburn Avenue to the south.



FIGURE 14. Mown-turf lawn and hedges at south (front) yard of site.



FIGURE 12. Sidewalk and built-up site along west side of site.



FIGURE 15. Wood post fence and mown turf lawn at east side of site.

Residence

When it was first constructed as a duplex dwelling, the building that now bears the street address 506 Auburn Avenue was numbered 390 and 392 Auburn Avenue. The duplex consisted of a two-story portion that extended to the north about 25 feet and an approximately equal length one-story portion to the rear (north) of its Auburn Avenue front elevation. At the northwest corner along Howland Street, there was a narrow, one-story addition. The dwelling unit on the east side (392 Auburn Avenue) was set back the depth of its porch from the front facade of 390 Auburn Avenue, and its single-story front porch wrapped around the southwest corner of the building onto the west side (Figure 16). According to the 1899 Sanborn map, this portion of 390 Auburn Avenue was a corner store. By 1925, according to the Sanborn map of that date, the wraparound porch and the narrow, one-story addition at the northwest corner had been removed, and the dwelling was no longer a duplex. The address was changed to 392 Auburn Avenue, and Howland Street along the west side of the property became Hogue Street. Between 1925 and 1932, there were few if any changes to the form of the building. The south half was still two stories and the north half remained one story. There was a porch across the east half of the Auburn Avenue facade and another porch at the rear (Figure 17). The form of the current, two-story fourplex resulted from renovation and alterations that occurred after 1932.

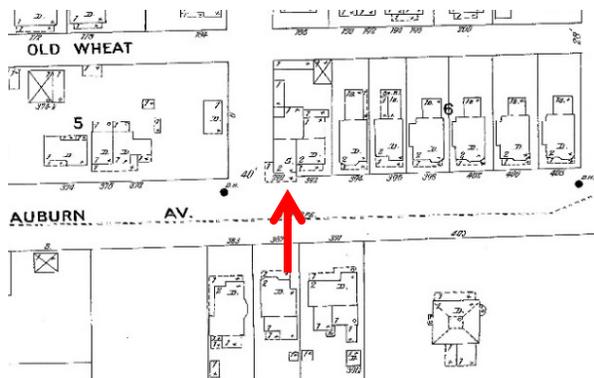


FIGURE 16. Sanborn map (excerpt), 1899.

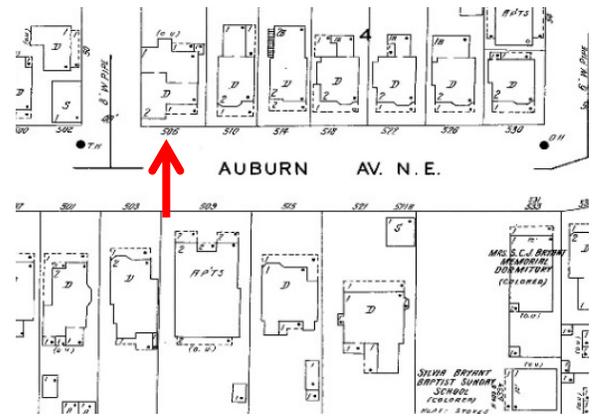


FIGURE 17. Sanborn map (excerpt), 1932.

The structure at 506 Auburn Avenue is a two-story, wood-framed multi-unit residential building with a two-story covered porch (Figure 18). It is a symmetrical building with a rectangular plan oriented on a north-south axis and the main entrances located on the south elevation.

The main portion of the building measures approximately 36 feet 6 inches wide east to west and 49 feet deep north to south. It has wood siding with vertical wood trim at the corners and a wood-framed asphalt-shingle hip roof with open eaves. The building is elevated above grade on a brick foundation wall. The building, from roof ridge to grade at the front elevation, is approximately 28 feet tall. The two-story front porch extends the full width of the building and is 8 feet 9 inches deep. The hip roof structure extends over both the main portion of the house and the front porch.



FIGURE 18. Overview of the residence at 506 Auburn Avenue looking northwest.

Physical Description and Condition Assessment

The primary entrances are centered on the south elevation of the building and are accessed from the front porch (Figure 19). The south elevation includes four wood-framed doors centered on the first floor. The four doors are grouped together, separated by trim at each opening. On either side of the bank of doors are multi-light double-hung windows. At the second floor, there are two closely spaced door openings. Window opening are located on either side of the set of doors and align with the window openings at the first floor.

The west elevation has eight window openings; four at the first floor and four at the second floor (Figure 20). The windows are vertically aligned between floors. The windows at the north end of the elevation are slightly shorter than typical window openings on the building. Wall-mounted downspouts are located at either end of the elevation. The electrical meter and a wall-mounted conduit are located at the north end of the elevation. The west-facing slope of the roof features two brick chimneys, three vent pipes, and three attic vents.

Centered on the north elevation is the two-story rear porch that is recessed approximately 4 feet from the face of the wall (Figure 21). The two porch landings are accessed separately by steel-framed stairs. At each floor, there are two door openings; one on each return wall, and two fixed window openings. The wood-framed access door to the crawl space is located below the first-floor porch.

The east elevation is like the west elevation. It has eight window openings; four on the first floor and four on the second floor (Figure 22). The windows are vertically aligned between floors and the two windows at the north end are slightly shorter than typical elsewhere on the building. Wall-mounted downspouts are located at either end of the elevation. Gas meters are mounted to the brick foundation at the north end of the building. The east-facing slope of the roof has two brick chimneys and three vent pipes.

The building has been owned by the National Park Service since 1989. Shortly after the National Park Service acquired the property, the roof was replaced. The building was renovated in 1994.

Currently, the apartments in the building are leased to the general public at fair market value.



FIGURE 19. The south (primary) elevation.



FIGURE 20. The west elevation.

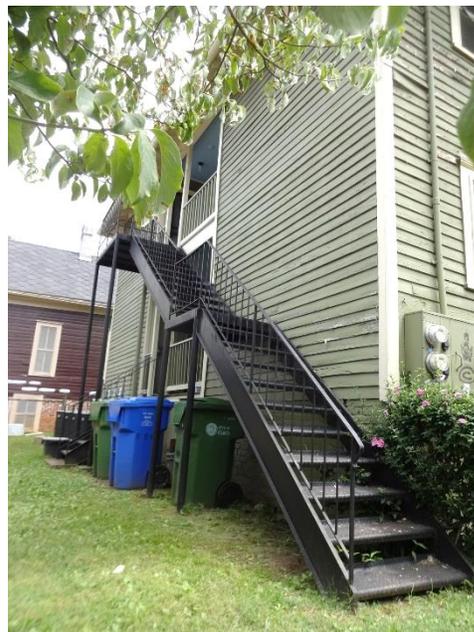


FIGURE 21. Partial view from west of north elevation.



FIGURE 22. View from south of east elevation.

Exterior

Description

Foundation. The building has a continuous brick masonry foundation wall at the perimeter of the building (Figure 23). The foundation wall supports the structure for the house as well as the north and south porches. The foundation wall raises the building approximately 30 inches and provides a crawl space under the structure. The brick is set in a running bond, and the exterior face is painted green. There is one header course of brick located 8 courses from the top of the foundation wall. It is only visible on the north and west elevations.

At the top of the foundation wall on the east and west elevations, there is a pattern of four small openings, each the size of a header brick. The four openings are arranged to create a diamond pattern in the wall (Figure 24). The openings appear to have assisted in the venting of the crawl space; however, have since been filled with batt insulation.

The foundation also includes a grid of brick piers that support the wood floor framing. The brick piers are typically 16 inches by 8 inches and support wood beams. There are two rows of piers, located approximately 14 feet from the east and west foundations walls. The piers are spaced approximately 14 feet apart in a north-south direction.

At the south end of the building, there is a line of piers separating the main portion of the building from the south porch. The piers measure 20 inches by 8 inches and are spaced approximately 7 feet apart. At the south porch area, there are supplemental CMU piers that support portions of the wood subfloor (Figure 25). There are also supplemental wood piers set on grade that are constructed of untreated wood and support portions of the porch structure (Figure 26). Each of the four chimneys has a brick foundation at grade.



FIGURE 23. Continuous brick foundation wall at base of building.



FIGURE 24. Pattern in brick originally used for venting but has since been filled in.



FIGURE 25. Supplemental CMU pier support at south end of foundation.



FIGURE 26. Supplemental beam support under floor joists at south end of foundation.

Walls. The exterior walls at the main portion of the building are clad with horizontal clapboard wood siding, painted green (Figure 27). The siding has a total 4-1/2-inch exposure and nailed with spiral nails spaced 16 inches on center. At corners of the walls, there are vertical trim boards that are 4 inches wide and painted dark yellow (Figure 28).

Portions of the exterior siding and trim were replaced as part of a building repair effort completed in 1994.

There are wall-mounted downspouts at the far north and south end of the east and west elevations (Figure 29). Electrical supply conduit is mounted to the north end of the west elevation.



FIGURE 27. Typical horizontal shiplap wood siding at building, painted green.



FIGURE 28. Typical wood trim at building corners, painted yellow.



FIGURE 29. Downspout mounted to wall near corner of building.

South Porch. The two-story wood-framed south porch was rebuilt in 1992. The porch provides access to the main entrance and is accessed from a brick stair centered on the porch (Figure 30). The

stairs have 12-inch treads with 7-inch risers and brick cheek walls capped with 4-inch-thick concrete copings.

The porch is raised above grade, and has a brick foundation that supports a concrete slab deck. The slab measures 3 inches thick, extends 2 inches beyond the face of the foundation wall, and is painted light blue.

The porch structure consists of brick masonry piers at the corners and on either side of the center stair that extend approximately 30 inches above the floor deck. The piers are capped by a concrete coping and support wood-encased columns measuring 8 inches square. The columns in turn support the second-floor deck.

The second-floor framing includes a perimeter wood box-framed beam that spans between columns and wraps around the porch. The box beam measures 8-1/2 inches deep by 5-3/4 inches wide, and is painted yellow. A band of horizontal trim is located at the midpoint of the beam. The beam supports the 3-inch-wide wood tongue-and-groove second-floor decking.

At the second floor, there are wood-encased columns, aligned with the first-floor columns. The columns extend the full height of the floor and support a box beam that runs along the edge of the roof structure (Figure 31).



FIGURE 30. The south (front) entrance porch, facing west.

At each floor, there is a wood-framed balustrade measuring 27-3/4 inches tall (Figure 32). The balustrade consists of a 2x6 top rail, 2x4 bottom, and 2x2 wood spindles spaced 4-1/2 inches on center. At the second floor, a section of railing divides the porch into an east and west half.

The first- and second-floor porches have bead board ceilings measuring 3-1/4 inches wide and painted light blue (Figure 33). Between the box beam and ceiling is a crown molding, painted yellow. There are two ceiling-mounted light fixtures at each floor.



FIGURE 31. Overview of second-floor porch bead board ceiling.



FIGURE 32. The south porch balustrade.



FIGURE 33. Overview of first-floor porch bead board ceiling.

North Porch. The rear porch measures 11 feet 4 inches wide and 4 feet deep and is located at a recessed portion of the north elevation. The porch is accessed from each floor by doors centered on the return walls to the east and west of the porch. There are steel-framed stairs that provide access from grade. At the first floor, the stair extends in a north-south direction and is centered on the porch (Figure 34). A second stair provides access to the upper level of the porch (Figure 35). It extends east-west and includes an intermediate and top-level landing. The steel-framed stairs consist of steel stringers that support diamond plate treads and landings. There is a metal handrail measuring 36 inches tall.

The porch consists of wood-framed floors with 3-inch-wide tongue-and-groove decking, painted light blue (Figure 36). The upper porch floor is supported by a 4x6 beam that extends across the opening. Wood-framed balusters are located at each level. The balustrades are 36 inches tall and constructed of a 1x3 top rail, 2x4 bottom rail with beveled edge, and nominal 2x2 spindles spaced 5-1/2 inches on center (Figure 37). On either side of the stair opening are 4x4 wood posts that extend the full floor height. The ceilings have 3-1/4-inch bead board, painted light blue, and two wall-mounted light fixtures (Figure 38).



FIGURE 34. The metal stair to the first floor of the north porch.



FIGURE 35. The metal stair to the second floor of the north porch.



FIGURE 36. Tongue-and-groove decking at north porch, painted light blue.



FIGURE 37. Balustrade at north porch.



FIGURE 38. Overview of bead board ceiling at north porch.

Exterior Doors. There are ten exterior doors on the building, including the four main entrance doors, two second-floor south porch doors, and four north porch doors.

All doors at the south elevation are accessed from the south porch and are of similar design. First-floor doors provide access to each residential unit, and second-floor doors provide porch access for the two upstairs units. The exterior face of the door openings has 4-1/2-inch flat trim with a molded trim piece at the jambs (Figure 39). The header of the door opening has 3-1/4-inch flat trim with a projecting hood trim that extends approximately 2 inches from the wall. At the first floor, there is an additional flat trim, measuring 4-1/2 inches wide, that separates the door openings. The interior trim consists of 3-1/4-inch-wide flat trim at the jamb and 5-inch-wide flat trim at the head of the door opening (Figure 40). At all

interior trim, there is a coved trim piece between the flat trim and the adjacent wall or ceiling.

The doors are 1-1/4 inches thick and measure 3 feet 11-1/2 inches wide by 6 feet 10-1/2 inches tall (Figure 41). The stiles and top rail are approximately 5 inches wide. The bottom rail is 6-3/4 inches tall. The upper third of the door has a four-light glazing panel. The lower portion of the door has a recessed panel with molded perimeter trim. At the exterior face of the door, between the glass panel and recessed panel, is a decorative trim measuring 1-3/4 inches wide that projects 2-1/4 inches from the door. There are also three smaller wood blocks under the trim. The trim and blocks resemble the appearance of a cornice and dentils.



FIGURE 39. Overview of first-floor south elevation door opening with exterior trim.



FIGURE 40. Detail of interior trim at first floor south elevation door opening.



FIGURE 42. Typical ball-tipped hinge at south elevation doors.



FIGURE 41. Typical south elevation door.

The doors are mounted on two ball-tipped hinges (Figure 42). Hardware includes brass knobs and escutcheon plates and deadbolt locks (Figure 43). The doors have wood thresholds and vinyl door sweeps. The two doors centered on the first floor provide access to the second-floor units. These doors also feature a metal plate with a metal turn-knob which was historically used as a doorbell (Figure 44). The actual ring mechanism has been removed and the bell is no longer operable.



FIGURE 43. Typical hardware including brass knob and escutcheon plate and deadbolt lock at south elevation doors.

At each door opening there is a wood-framed two-panel screen door (Figure 45). The screen doors are 1-1/4 inches thick and have metal mesh screens, surface-mounted barrel hinges, and surface-mounted handles (Figure 46). There is diagonal bracing, consisting of a metal rod and turnbuckle, at the lower panel of the screen door.

There are four doors at the north elevation; two at the first floor and two at the second floor. The door openings have 5-1/2-inch flat wood trim at the jambs and door head with a 1-inch coved trim along the edge.



FIGURE 44. Metal plate and turn-knob doorbell at first-floor door.



FIGURE 45. Wood-framed exterior screen door at south elevation doors.



FIGURE 46. Typical barrel hinge at screen doors.

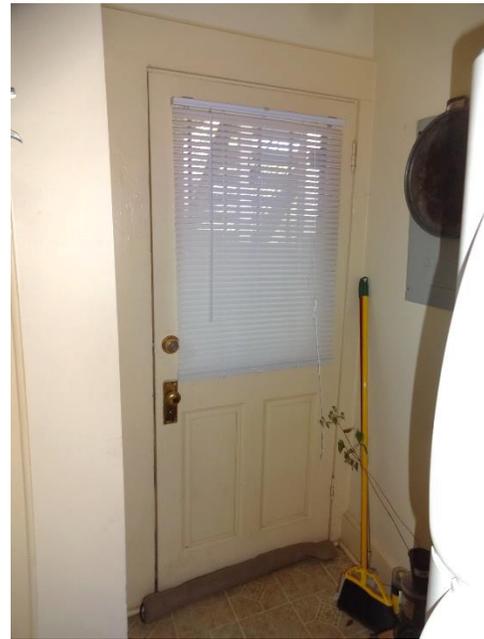


FIGURE 47. The interior face and trim of the north elevation door. Note two vertical panels at bottom half of door is typical.

The doors are wood-framed multi-panel and measure 32 inches wide by 6 feet 6 inches tall. Three of the four doors are 1-3/4 inches thick, and consist of an upper glazing panel with insulated glazing and two lower vertically-oriented recessed panels (Figure 47). The doors have 4-inch-wide stiles and top rail and a 6-1/4-inch bottom and dividing rail.

One door at the west side of the second floor has a 1-3/8-inch-thick door. The door has a bottom rail measuring 8 inches tall. It also features an upper glazing panel with insulated glass and three horizontally-oriented recessed panels at the lower portion of the door (Figure 48). The recessed panels are separated by 2-1/2-inch dividing rails.

All four doors are mounted on two hinges and have brass doorknobs with escutcheon plates, deadbolt locks, wood thresholds, a surface-mounted door sweep at the bottom and sides of the door, and vinyl shades covering the interior face of the glazing panel (Figure 49 through Figure 51). The doors have wrought iron screen doors consisting of vertical bars and fretwork (Figure 52). The doors have deadbolt locks and are mounted on three hinges.



FIGURE 48. North elevation door at west end of the second floor with three horizontal panels at the bottom of the door.



FIGURE 51. Weather stripping mounted to interior face of door at north elevation.



FIGURE 49. North elevation door hinges.



FIGURE 50. North elevation door hardware including brass knob, escutcheon plate, and deadbolt lock.



FIGURE 52. Metal-framed north elevation screen doors.

Windows. All windows are wood framed. Windows include three-over-one double-hung windows as well as three-light fixed windows. The double-hung windows are located at the west, south, and east elevations, and the fixed windows are located at the north elevation.

The double-hung window openings are framed with wood trim at the jambs and header and have projecting sills (Figure 53). The exterior trim includes flat trim at the jambs that measures approximately 4-1/2 inches wide and flat trim at the header that measures 3-1/4 inches wide. Above

the header, there is a projecting hood trim that extends 2 inches beyond the face of the wall. The wood sill is approximately 1-1/2 inches wide, projects approximately 1-1/4 inches from the face of the wall, and extends 1 inch beyond the jamb trim on either side.

The interior trim at the jambs and header is 6 inches wide and has a coved edge trim (Figure 54). The windows have a wood sill that is 1-1/4 inches wide and projects 2 inches. Below the sill is an apron consisting of 5-inch-wide flat trim.

Window units are wood-framed three-over-one double-hung with mortise-and-tenon joinery. Sash members measure approximately 2 inches wide with the bottom rail of the lower sash measuring approximately 2-1/4 inches and a meeting rail measuring 1 inch wide. The glass is set with glazing putty. For multi-light sash, vertical wood mullions, measuring 5/8 inch wide, separate the glazing units.



FIGURE 53. Typical double-hung window and exterior window opening trim.



FIGURE 54. Typical double-hung window and interior window opening trim.

Typical double-hung windows measure 30 inches wide by 59-1/4 inches tall. The windows at the north end of the east and west elevations are associated with the kitchen and measure approximately 29-1/2 inches wide by 44-1/2 inches tall. These wood windows appear to be character-defining features. Some of them may be original elements of the dwelling; however, some or all of them, particularly in the rear half of the second floor, were probably installed after the 1930s, when that portion of the upper floor was added.

Typical hardware includes brass window lift hooks at the lower sash, a brass latch at the meeting rail, and rope sash cords with pulleys set in sash pockets (Figure 55 through Figure 57). At all locations, the rope sash cords and pulleys have been painted or altered and are no longer operable. A vinyl shade is mounted to the interior trim of each window (Figure 58).



FIGURE 55. Brass window lift at bottom window sash has been painted white.



FIGURE 56. Brass latch at meeting rail between sashes.



FIGURE 57. Typical sash cord and pulley.



FIGURE 58. Typical vinyl shade mounted to interior trim of window opening.

Exterior-mounted screens consist of wood framing measuring 1-3/8 inches wide. The screens have a horizontal mullion that divides the screen into two sections and metal mesh screens. Frames are hung from two exterior-mounted metal hooks mounted to the header trim (Figure 59).

Fixed windows are located at the recessed portion of the north elevation and are associated with the bathrooms. The window openings have exterior trim like the double-hung window openings. It includes 4-1/2-inch flat trim at the jambs, 3-1/4-inch flat trim at the window head with a projecting hood trim, and a projecting sill. The interior trim consists of a 5-1/2-inch-wide flat trim that wraps around the upper portion of the opening (Figure 60). The lower portion of the window and sill are covered with ceramic tile. The window sash consists of 2-inch framing members and is divided into three lights by 5/8-inch mullions.

The windows have sash pockets with the pulleys, an indication that the existing windows have been modified from a previously existing operable sash (Figure 61). The rope sash cords are no longer present.



FIGURE 59. Metal hooks mounted at exterior trim used to hang screen windows.



FIGURE 60. Typical fixed window and interior trim of window opening.



FIGURE 61. Sash cord pulley at fixed window indicates that the window was operational at one time.

Roof. The roof was replaced and partially rebuilt in 1990. All areas of the hip roof are covered with asphalt shingles (Figure 62). The ridgeline of the roof is oriented on a north–south axis and features

overhanging eaves, wood rafters exposed to view, chimneys, and a gutter with downspouts.

The eaves extend approximately 24 inches, and the underside of the decking and rafter tails are exposed to view. The roof decking consists of plywood and is visible from the overhanging eaves and from the attic space (Figure 63).

The roof has four chimneys: two at the west-facing slope and two at the east-facing slope. The chimneys are approximately 24 inches by 16 inches and extend approximately 6 feet above the roof (Figure 64). The chimneys do not have a cap. Attic fans and vent pipes also project from the roof. The attic fans consist of low-profile fan boxes. The vents include pipe vents and turbine vents (Figure 65).

The roof has a half-round hanging sheet-metal gutter that is attached to hang in front of the roof fascia (Figure 66). The gutter is supported on semicircular galvanized brackets and drains to circular sheet-metal downspouts located at the north and south ends of the east and west elevations. Some of the downspouts discharge at grade, and others connect to flexible pipe that extends below grade (Figure 67 and Figure 68). The exposed roof framing and gutters are painted yellow to match the adjacent vertical wood trim. Downspouts are painted green to match the siding to which they are mounted.



FIGURE 62. Overview of building hip roof.



FIGURE 63. Underside of the eaves with plywood decking and rafters exposed to view.



FIGURE 66. View of half-round hanging gutter and downspout.



FIGURE 64. Brick chimneys located at the west-facing slope of the roof.



FIGURE 67. Some of the circular metal downspouts discharge at grade.



FIGURE 65. East-facing slope of the roof showing one of the two brick chimneys and turbine vents.



FIGURE 68. Some of the circular metal downspouts are connected to a flexible pipe that extends below grade.

Condition Assessment

The following notable conditions were observed in August 2017 at the building exterior:

Masonry Foundation

- In general, the masonry is in fair condition. Most of the conditions described are associated with the brick foundation and chimneys.
- Severe spalling and deterioration were observed at some brick units near the base of foundation piers (Figure 69). The finished faces of the bricks have spalled or significantly deteriorated and become friable. The deterioration appears to be moisture related.
- Deteriorated and displaced brick masonry was located at one chimney location at the northeast corner of the building (Figure 70). As observed from the attic, a few bricks were observed to be displaced, deteriorated, or missing, creating an opening to the flue of the chimney. Daylight was visible from the opening.
- Open, eroded, and deteriorated mortar joints were observed at the brick foundation wall at the perimeter of the building (Figure 71 and Figure 72). The distress was observed at the interior face of the foundation wall, as viewed from the crawl space, and at the base of the foundation wall, at grade. At open joints, the mortar was missing; however, the mortar setting bed appeared to be intact. Erosion and deterioration at joints consisted of loss of some of the mortar and bond separation between the brick and mortar.
- Spalled and deteriorated brick were observed at the brick foundation wall (Figure 73). Where observed, the spalling included the loss of the finished face of brick to a depth of approximately 1-1/2 inches. The spalls had been painted green, along with the rest of the foundation wall, indicating that the spalls were present at the time of the most recent repainting.



FIGURE 69. Severely deteriorated brick at foundation piers.



FIGURE 70. Portion of brick chimney where the brick is displaced, and daylight is visible.



FIGURE 71. Overall erosion of mortar joints as viewed from crawl space.



FIGURE 72. Deterioration of mortar at joints along base of foundation wall.



FIGURE 74. Open mortar joints and deteriorated parge coating at CMU retaining wall.



FIGURE 73. Pre-existing spalls at brick foundation, prior to most recent painting of the brick.



FIGURE 75. Peeling paint at brick foundation wall.

- Deteriorated parge coating and open mortar joints were observed at the CMU retaining wall at the north and west sides of the site (Figure 74). Much of the cementitious parge coating at the retaining wall has deteriorated and fallen away, and the CMU wall is exposed to view. The wall has open joints between units, open CMU cells at the top of the wall, and spalling at the corners of some units.
- Peeling paint was observed at the brick masonry foundation wall (Figure 75). The deterioration consisted of peeling of the paint at the face of the brick, as opposed to mortar joints. The distress was most pronounced at the south end of the west elevation.

Concrete

- In general, the existing concrete located at the front porch landing was in good condition.
- Hairline cracking was observed at the concrete deck slab at the front porch (Figure 76). The cracking extended perpendicular across the slab.
- Peeling and flaking of paint was observed at the concrete slab at the front porch.



FIGURE 76. Hairline cracking at concrete porch slab extends perpendicular to direction of slab.

Wood Elements

- In general, the wood elements are in fair condition. Typical distress conditions include failure of surface coatings and mild deterioration of the wood.
- Loose and displaced wood spindles were observed at the first-floor balustrade at the north porch (Figure 77). The bottom portion of the spindles were not anchored or engaged with the bottom rail. The bottom of many of the spindles were displaced and no longer aligned with the bottom rail.
- Deterioration was observed at a few wood deck boards (Figure 78). The deterioration consisted of decay along the tongue-and-groove edge of the deck boards. The distress was most pronounced at the ends of boards that extended to the edge of the deck.
- Cracking, debonding, deteriorating, and peeling of paint were observed at the wood siding, trim, porch deck boards, porch balustrade, rafters, and at the underside of the decking at the overhanging eaves (Figure 79 and Figure 80). The pattern of peeling paint typically followed the graining on the boards. At these locations, some of the wood was exposed to view. The paint failure may be related to poor surface preparation. At many locations, the existing paint had been applied over a previously existing paint coating that had not been completely removed. The

texture of the underlying previous coating was apparent.



FIGURE 77. Displaced spindles at north porch balustrade.



FIGURE 78. Deteriorated wood decking near ends of porch floor boards.



FIGURE 79. Peeling paint at wood siding.



FIGURE 80. Deteriorated paint at underside of roof eaves.

- Displacement was observed at localized siding and trim boards (Figure 81). The displacement was located at the ends of some wood siding members and at some vertical trim members. Typically, the displacement was approximately 1 inch.
- Mild to moderate decay and deterioration was observed at some wood siding and trim (Figure 82). Typical distress included decay as well as checking and splitting of wood near the end grain and along the bottom edge. The distress was most significant near downspouts.
- Biological growth was observed at the wood at the west end of the ceiling of the south porch at both floor levels, floor boards at the north porch, and some exterior faces of doors (Figure 83 through Figure 85). The growth had a splotchy appearance and was black in color.
- Previous wood deck repairs were observed at one location at the second floor of the south porch (Figure 86). An 18-inch-by-12-inch section of the wood deck had been removed and replaced with new decking.



FIGURE 81. Displaced siding board.



FIGURE 82. Checked wood siding. Note check is located near end of board and adjacent to downspout.



FIGURE 83. Biological growth at the ceiling of the south porch.



FIGURE 84. Biological growth along the ends of decking boards at the north porch.



FIGURE 85. Biological growth at the exterior face of one north elevation door.



FIGURE 86. Replacement deck boards at south porch.

Windows

- The windows are in fair condition.
- Broken glazing was observed at one window opening at the second floor of the west elevation (Figure 87). A large crack extended from one side of the glass to the center of the bottom edge.
- Large gaps were observed between the meeting rails between the sash and at the perimeter of the sash, adjacent to the window frame (Figure 88). These gaps indicate that the sash does not fit snugly in the sash pocket and are a source of air infiltration. Gaps along the edge of the upper sash are covered with closed cell foam weather stripping adhered to the interior face of the sash that covers the open joint (Figure 89). At lower sash, tissue paper has been installed at the grooved portion of the sash where the sash cord is located (Figure 90).
- Uneven window sash were observed at a few locations. Some of the sash appeared not to be set plumb within the window opening (Figure 91). There were small gaps along one edge of the sash.
- Deterioration of the wood sill, and exterior window screen was observed. The distress included peeling paint and evidence of decay of the underlying wood (Figure 92).



FIGURE 87. Cracked glazing unit at one window. This window is located at second floor unit B, in the bedroom.



FIGURE 88. Gap between upper and lower sash meeting rails.



FIGURE 89. Weather stripping applied to interior face of window sash to address air infiltration.



FIGURE 90. Void between rope sash cord and sash has been filled in with tissue.



FIGURE 91. Window that is out of plumb and has a small gap between the frame and sash. This window is located at second floor unit B, in the kitchen.



FIGURE 92. Deterioration of wood at window sill and screen window sash.

- Some rope cords at double-hung window pockets are missing or have been cut and the windows are no longer operational (Figure 93). At most locations, the pulley and cord remain but the rope may have been painted over (Figure 94).
- Displaced window screens were observed at a few window openings (Figure 95). Where displaced, large gaps measuring approximately 1 inch wide were observed between the screen sash and the window frame.
- Paint was observed on the glass of many of the window sash (Figure 96). Brush strokes of yellow paint were observed at the exterior face of the glass, indicating that the paint was

accidentally applied during previous repainting of the windows.



FIGURE 93. Rope sash cord at double-hung windows that has been cut.



FIGURE 94. Rope sash cord at double-hung windows that has been painted over and is no longer operable.



FIGURE 95. Displaced window sash.



FIGURE 96. Paint on exterior face of glass at window.

Doors

- The doors are in good condition.
- A decorative element was observed to be missing on the first-floor door at the west end of the south elevation. The center dentil block below the projecting trim applied to south elevation doors was missing (Figure 97).
- A broken turnbuckle was observed at one exterior screen door. The screen door was located at the west end of the first floor on the south elevation of the building. The turnbuckle between the diagonal tie rods was missing and the rods were loose (Refer to Figure 97).
- Torn screens were observed at two screen doors (Figure 98). At both locations, the metal screening was ripped in a linear pattern measuring approximately 4 inches long. The screens were located at the first floor at the east end of the south elevation and at the second floor at the west end of the north elevation.



FIGURE 97. South elevation door with missing decorative wood piece (circle) and missing turnbuckle at diagonal bracing of screen door (arrow).



FIGURE 98. Ripped screen at south elevation screen door.

Other Elements

- Mild surface corrosion was observed at the metal stair treads and stair landings (Figure 99). The corrosion was most significant at high-traffic areas along the walking path and at the edges of the landings.
- Guano was observed at the wood siding above a first-floor window opening on the east elevation (Figure 100). The area of distress was in close proximity to a telephone wire.

- Pest infestations were observed at one south porch door opening, at the perimeter of the ceilings at the north and south porches, and at roof eaves (Figure 101). The infestation included what appeared to be a mud dauber nest.



FIGURE 99. Metal stair landing at second floor of north elevation.



FIGURE 100. Guano on the siding above one window opening. Note the adjacent telephone line.



FIGURE 101. Mud dauber nest at south elevation door opening.

Interior

Description

Built in 1933 with Craftsman influences, this four-unit residential structure was renovated and has received periodic maintenance since it was acquired by the National Park Service. In general, very few Craftsman-style interior details or finishes remain. This may have been the intent of the original owner, Dr. E.J. Bowden, as 506 Auburn Avenue was built as rental property, or it may be a consequence of several small renovation projects and cyclical maintenance over the past twenty-eight years. Nevertheless, the interior survey conducted for this report revealed that the interior was refurbished, but the general floor plan configuration remains largely as it was when originally constructed. The first- and second-floor plan configurations comprise a two-story, front porch that faces south toward Auburn Avenue and entrances to the four dwelling units grouped symmetrically at the center of the south facade. A pair of stairs to the upper floor units occupies the center of the building and is separated by a fire wall that runs through the building. The plans of both floors are also symmetrical along this north-south fire wall, and all four dwelling units have four interconnected rooms aligned along either the east or west side of the structure (refer to Appendix A – Measured Drawings).

Because 506 Auburn Avenue is in the Historic Lease Program, it appears that the most significant

changes to the interior were made since the National Park Service took ownership. The preparation of the units for rentals in 1994 included modernizing kitchens, updating bathrooms, painting, adding contemporary flooring materials, and modernizing electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems. Other minor repairs and fresh paint were later incorporated into regular maintenance projects.

Walls and Ceilings. Walls and ceilings throughout the building are painted, 1/2-inch-thick gypsum board that was installed after the remaining original wood lath and plaster were removed during the 1994 interior rehabilitation. Generally, the walls and ceilings are in good condition most likely because of periodic cleaning and painting as indicated by park maintenance records. The few hairline cracks at the corners of windows and doors were minimal, and there is only minor damage from the movement of furniture and normal wear and tear.

The walls and ceilings of all four apartments are painted a ubiquitous, light tan color. There is some discoloration of the paint around a few ceiling fans and light fixtures, perhaps due to mismatched touch-up paint (Figure 102). Flaws on the ceilings and walls are more obvious because of semi-gloss paint that was used. It was probably applied because it is more durable and washable than paint with a flat finish (Figure 103).

Floors and Stairs. There are several different flooring materials throughout the building, and none of them are original. Materials on the first floor include wall-to-wall carpet in the living rooms, bedrooms, dining rooms and hallways (Figure 104). The same medium-tan colored carpet is also the predominant floorcovering on the upper floor including on the stairs that lead to the second-floor units (Figure 105).



FIGURE 102. Mismatched paint around the light fixture.



FIGURE 104. Typical medium-tan colored carpet.



FIGURE 103. Note the sheen of the semi-gloss paint in this hallway.



FIGURE 105. Fully carpeted stair in one of the second-floor apartments.

Floors in the kitchens and in dining rooms A1 and C2 are sheet vinyl with a different pattern and color in each apartment. The sheet vinyl flooring in those rooms is relatively new as the 1994 rehabilitation specifications called for resilient tile rather than the existing sheet vinyl, which is in good condition (Figure 106 and Figure 107). Bathrooms have the 2-inch-by-2-inch, beige ceramic mosaic tile that was ostensibly installed during the 1990s rehabilitation project even though the specifications stipulated 1-inch by 1-inch tiles. Transitions from ceramic tile to other flooring materials are achieved with marble thresholds (Figure 108).



FIGURE 106. Sheet vinyl in the kitchen of a first-floor apartment.



FIGURE 107. Sheet vinyl in the kitchen and dining room of a second-floor apartment.



FIGURE 108. Typical ceramic tile in the bathrooms. Note marble threshold between the floor tile and carpet in the adjacent hall.

Woodwork and Trim. Painted interior wood trim, moldings, and woodwork are simple and consistent throughout the building. Window and door openings have 6-inch-wide, flat casing with 1-inch cove molding edge trim. The windows also have a 5-inch flat apron below a 1-1/4-inch thick sill that has a rounded front edge (Figure 109 and Figure 110).

Two-piece baseboards are 5-1/2 inches tall and have 1-inch cove molding applied to the top edge (Figure 111). Quarter-round base shoe is only present in those rooms that have sheet vinyl (Figure 112). There is no crown molding or picture molding and no chair rail, all of which are commonplace in early twentieth-century, single-family homes in Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.



FIGURE 109. Typical window trim.



FIGURE 110. 5-inch apron below the 1-1/4-inch thick windowsill.



FIGURE 111. Typical two-piece baseboard with 1-inch cove molding applied to the top edge.



FIGURE 112. Shoe mold along baseboards where the flooring material is sheet vinyl.

Kitchens in the four living units are fitted with modern manufactured cabinets that have a medium, stained-wood finish. The countertops and 4-inch high backsplash are overlaid with plastic laminate (Figure 113 and Figure 114).

Bathroom vanities are also contemporary and factory-built with stained-wood finishes and door styles that match the kitchen cabinets. Vanities in three of the units, A, B, and D, have a combination, one-piece, cultured marble, vanity-top and sink (Figure 115 and Figure 116). The exception is in unit C, where the vanity has a plastic laminate top and a self-rimming, vitreous China sink (Figure 117). This one may be the only remaining vanity from the 1994 rehabilitation because it has a plastic laminate top and a self-rimming sink that were specified for the project and approved by the National Park Service. The other bathroom vanities in units A, B, and D are different and are probably more recent replacements for the vanities installed in 1994.



FIGURE 113. Kitchen in second-floor apartment with plastic laminate countertop and backsplash.



FIGURE 115. Bathroom vanity with combination, one-piece, cultured marble vanity top and sink.



FIGURE 114. Kitchen in first-floor apartment with plastic laminate countertop and backsplash (hidden).



FIGURE 116. Bathroom vanity with combination, one-piece, cultured marble vanity top and sink.



FIGURE 117. Bathroom vanity with plastic laminate top and self-rimming sink.

Doors and Hardware. Interior doors are wood, stile-and-rail units that include the following types: flush, louvered sliding, louvered bi-fold, five raised panels, and two flat panels. Specifications for the 1990s stabilization project required new wood doors to “. . . match original historic doors in size, design and materials, unless otherwise indicated . . . and the installation of new doors, repair and replacement of existing doors and components.”¹¹⁴ The doors with two flat panels or five raised panels may be original historic hinged doors, but, because the doors are painted, it is difficult to visually determine which doors are original and were repaired and which doors are new replications (Figure 118 and Figure 119). Louvered doors are not original, but were in the 1994 specifications, and the flush doors are also likely more recent (Figure 120 and Figure 121).

Dimensions of the thirty-six interior doors at 506 Auburn Avenue vary from 2 feet wide to 4 feet 6 inches wide and 6 feet 6 inches to 7 feet high. As

noted above, the openings are trimmed with 6-inch-wide, flat casings and 1-inch cove molding edge trim (Figure 122).

Door hardware is a mixture of aged and contemporary passage sets and locksets, although the older hardware is not historic. The finish is polished brass (Figure 123 and Figure 124).



FIGURE 118. Stile-and-rail wood door in unit B with two flat panels.

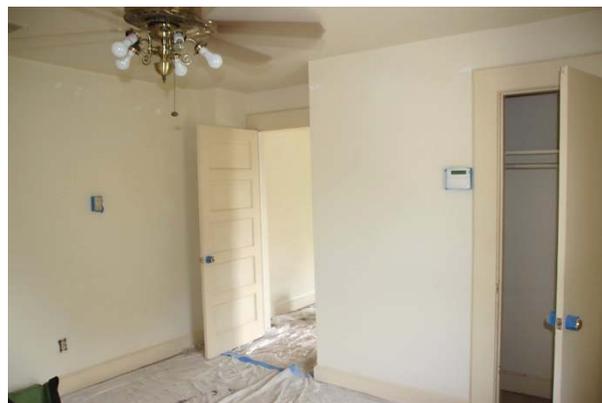


FIGURE 119. Stile-and-rail wood door in unit B with five raised panels.

114. Specifications for “Rehabilitation/Stabilization of National Park Service Structure, 506 Auburn Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, Section 08210, 1994.



FIGURE 120. Typical louvered sliding door.



FIGURE 122. Two-piece baseboard transitions into 6-1/2-inch wide, two-piece door casing.



FIGURE 121. Typical louvered bi-fold door at water heater closet.



FIGURE 123. Old lockset with round knob.



FIGURE 124. Contemporary door hardware with round knob.

Fireplaces. According to the set of drawings that documented the condition of 506 Auburn Avenue in 1992 and 1995, the remains of existing fireplaces were concealed behind gypsum board walls at some time when the structure was rehabilitated. Masonry foundations are extant in the crawl space, and the brick chimneys are visible in the attic and as they rise above the roof (Figure 125). In each apartment there were back-to-back, coal-burning fireplaces in the rooms at the south end of the building and in the adjacent room to the north. Presently, a simple, painted brick fireplace in each unit has the top three courses of brick corbeled to create a shallow shelf at the top of the fireplace. There is no mantel, but black cast-iron registers frame the firebox. Hearths are painted Portland cement plaster trimmed with wood (Figure 126). These fireplaces may have been partially or entirely re-constructed during renovations in the Twentieth century, but there is no documentation to confirm when or if they represent the original designs. However, they should be considered character-defining. The opposite sides of these back-to-back fireplaces were covered with gypsum board, and the hearths are overlaid with carpet, if they still exist (Figure 127).

Two other chimneys rise above the roof at the north end of the building near the east and west exterior walls (refer to Appendix A – Measured Drawings). The floor plans show diagonal walls enclosing open triangular spaces that run vertically through both floors where the chimneys occur. It may be that these gypsum board walls conceal flues of former corner fireplaces or perhaps flues for coal stoves.



FIGURE 125. Masonry chimney in the attic.



FIGURE 126. Non-functional, coal-burning fireplace in unit C, second floor.



FIGURE 127. Gypsum board wall covering one side of back-to-back fireplaces in unit B.

Attic. The west half of the attic is accessed by a pull-down folding ladder in the ceiling of the second-floor hall in unit B (Figure 128). There is hatch in the hall ceiling of unit C for the east half of the attic. A presumed, fire-rated wall runs north-south through building and into the attic to separate the two units on the east side from the two units on the west side. The roof is stick framed, and plywood sheathing from the early 1990s is visible. Thermal insulation is achieved primarily by blown-in fiberglass insulation that covers the ceiling joists (Figure 129).



FIGURE 128. Pull-down ladder and attic access in unit B. Ongoing painting of walls and ceilings.



FIGURE 129. Blown-in loose-fill insulation in the attic.

Condition Assessment

The interior of the house is in fair condition overall. The following items represent conditions that need periodic monitoring and cyclic maintenance or require attention and warrant corrective action.

Walls and Ceilings.

- Gypsum board walls and ceilings are in good to fair condition. No significant cracks at the joints or extensive delamination of joint compound at fastener heads are evident. Cyclical painting and gypsum board repairs in unit B were in progress at the time of the site visit for this report in August 2017. However, other National Park Service facility management records suggest that interior painting of the units occurs when there is a change of occupancy.
- Biological growth is evident in grout and sealant joints of the ceramic tile bathtub surrounds.
- The code-required integrity, continuity, and smoke and fire rating of the fire barrier separation (gypsum board partition) between the two units on the east side of the building and the two units on the west side are questionable because of unsealed penetrations, lack of fire-caulking, cut-outs and damage to the gypsum board and joints that are improperly taped and floated, particularly in the attic.



FIGURE 130. Lack of code-required integrity, continuity, and smoke and fire rating of the fire barrier separation (gypsum board partition) in the attic between the two units.

Floors and Stairs.

- Original flooring was covered in 1994 with other flooring materials that have subsequently been replaced with new flooring, such as carpet, sheet vinyl, and ceramic tile.
- The ceramic tile in the bathrooms is durable and suitable for wet areas. It has performed well with periodic cleaning.
- Newer sheet-vinyl flooring is also relatively durable, and it is holding up well. However, moving heavy furniture and equipment over it can scratch and mar the surface. The older sheet vinyl in unit B, for example, should be monitored for wear and replaced when necessary.
- Carpet is the resilient flooring material in the building. Generally, it is soiled and showing signs of wear.
- Carpet on stairs is particularly vulnerable to premature deterioration. This is the case at 506 Auburn Avenue. When wear and

deterioration occur, and the carpet becomes loose, it can be a hazard on stairs.

Woodwork and Trim.

- Most of the wood trim was replaced during the 1994 rehabilitation project. The current trim has since been repainted several times along with the remaining original trim, so multiple layers of paint are obvious. Door and window trim and baseboards continue to be susceptible to wear and tear from multiple occupants of the apartments which results in scratches, gouges, abrasions, and paint delamination.
- The manufactured cabinets in the kitchens and bathrooms are functional, but the plastic laminate countertops are scratched, stained, and worn.

Doors and Hardware.

- The hinged doors are fair condition, and the majority is functional.
- The louvered bi-fold and louvered sliding doors are less sturdy, and some of them are not operating properly. The sliding doors are disengaged from the overhead tracks, and bi-fold doors have become misaligned, so they either remain open or in a partially closed position.
- Generally, door hardware (locksets, latch sets, deadbolts, and hinges) is functional. The polished brass finish on the mismatched, knob-type door hardware is scratched and tarnished, and brass hinges and strike plates are marred by excess paint.
- Door knobs are not in compliance with the regulations of the revised Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). However, historic properties can, in some circumstances, receive waivers from strict compliance, but probably none of the locksets and latch sets is historic.

Fireplaces.

- Only four fireplaces—one in each unit—are visible. They are in good condition except for the missing coal grates and cast-iron registers at the firebox. A couple of registers are missing pieces.
- Further destructive investigation will be needed to determine whether the opposite sides of the back-to-back fireplaces remain behind the gypsum board wall, if consideration is given to restoring the original fireplaces.

Structural Systems

Floor. The previously described masonry pier foundation and supplemental posts support the wood-framed structure of the house. The structure consists of 4x10 wood beams with a 2x4 ledger that spans north-south at the perimeter foundation wall and between piers (Figure 131). The 2x10 floor joists span east-west and are spaced 16 inches on center (Figure 132). The ends of the floor joists are anchored to the beam and notched to rest on the ledger. There is wood bridging at the mid-span between joists. The floor joists support a 3-1/2-inch-wide tongue-and-groove subfloor at the north end of the building, and a 1x8 wood plank subfloor at the south end of the building. A supplemental plywood subfloor has been installed over the tongue-and-groove and wood plank subfloor.

The front porch framing is separated from the rest of the building by a row of brick piers that span east-west at the south end of the building. The piers support an 8x8 beam. A 4x10 wood beam with ledger is located at the south foundation wall. Floor joists measuring 2x10 span north-south between the two beams and support a 3-1/4-inch bead board subfloor. A non-original concrete slab was installed over the wood deck.

During the survey, no inspection openings were made, and the existing wall framing was not visible. Thus, existing conditions could not be documented or assessed. However, based on the date of construction, it is most likely a platform-

framed building. As was the case at 518 Auburn Avenue, there is evidence that portions of the exterior cladding had been removed and either replaced or reinstalled. As evidenced at 518 Auburn Avenue, this repair may have also included the installation of a weather barrier.

The second-floor ceiling is constructed of 2x6 joists spaced 16 inches on center. The joist pockets are filled with batt insulation.



FIGURE 131. Floor beam with 2x4 ledger and 2x10 floor joist.



FIGURE 132. Overview of first-floor framing with 2x10 joists, cross bridging, and decking.

Roof. The roof is constructed of 2x6 rafters spaced 24 inches on center (Figure 133). There is 2x4 blocking at the mid-span of each rafter as well as a continuous 2x4 member that spans between rafters at the mid-span. It is supported by 2x4 diagonal cross bracing (Figure 134). The ends of the roof ridge are supported by vertical 2x4 and 2x6 supports. The roof has plywood decking.

At the attic, the mechanical equipment is supported by nylon straps hung from the rafters. There is a wall clad with gypsum board that extends north-south and divides the attic into halves.



FIGURE 133. Roof framing with 2x6 rafters and plywood decking.



FIGURE 134. Mid-span beam and diagonal bracing at roof structure.

Condition Assessment

- In general, the structure is in fair condition. Distress conditions were primarily associated with the foundation and first-floor framing.
- Large horizontal cracks were observed at the center of two of the floor joists at the west side of the building (Figure 135). The cracks were approximately 1/2 inch wide, were located at the mid-height, and extended 5 feet from the end of the beam.

- Severe moisture deterioration was observed at the floor framing below the kitchen at the northwest corner of the building (Figure 136). The distress included severe decay and moisture staining at the joists, beams, and decking. Due to the distress, the joist did not appear to be fully bearing on the beam.
- Termite damage was observed at some of the beams, joists, and support members at the south end of the structure (Figure 137). The damage was most pronounced at the framing members at the south end of the framing plan.
- Large notches were observed at the lower half of some of the joists (Figure 138). The notches were approximately 4 inches wide and extended 6 inches from the bottom of the joist. At some locations, an original electrical conduit sheathed with a rubberized fabric extends through the notch.
- Severe decay and deterioration were observed at non-original wood posts installed at grade to support supplemental beams (Figure 139). It appears that some of the posts also have termite damage.
- Moisture staining was observed at numerous locations at the deck board and some beams (Figure 140). The staining typically had an irregular shape outlined with either a dark- or white-colored stain line. Where present, the moisture leakage did not appear to be active.



FIGURE 135. Severe cracking at end of floor joist.



FIGURE 136. Moisture damage and wood deterioration at wood framing below kitchen.



FIGURE 139. Deteriorated supplemental wood post at south end of building.



FIGURE 137. Termite damage at floor joists on south end of building.



FIGURE 140. Moisture staining at underside of wood deck boards.



FIGURE 138. Notch cut into lower half of the floor joist.

Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Systems

Mechanical. The multi-unit residential structure at 506 Auburn Avenue is heated and cooled by four split (direct expansion) systems. Two gas-fired, up-flow furnaces and fan units in the attic serve the units B and C on the second floor. Insulated ducts in the attic carry heated or cooled air from the Lennox equipment to supply registers in the ceiling (Figure 141 and Figure 142). A return air grille is in the ceiling of the middle room in units B and C (Figure 143).

Two other gas-fired, down-flow furnaces and fan units were installed in the mechanical closets in the first-floor apartments. Insulated ducts from these units run through the crawl space and distribute heated or cooled air to supply registers

Physical Description and Condition Assessment

in the floor (Figure 144 and Figure 145). In the two first-floor apartments, the return air grille is located high in the wall between the mechanical closet and the middle room (Figure 146). Condensing units for the four split systems are grouped closely together at grade at the northeast corner of the building (Figure 147). Serial numbers for the Lennox equipment identify the date of manufacture as November 2008, so the systems have been in operation for less than ten years.

Each apartment has a programmable thermostat centrally located near the return air grille (refer to Figure 146). In addition, ceiling fans augment air movement and aid environmental comfort inside (Figure 148).



FIGURE 141. Lennox HVAC equipment in the attic.



FIGURE 142. Typical ceiling supply register.



FIGURE 143. Return air grille.



FIGURE 144. Lennox HVAC equipment in a unit A, first floor.



FIGURE 145. Supply register in the floor.



FIGURE 146. Wall-mounted return air grille in unit D, first floor. Programmable thermostat is just below the grille.



FIGURE 147. Closely grouped condensing units at northeast corner of the building.



FIGURE 148. Ceiling fan in second-floor apartment.

Plumbing. Domestic plumbing was also significantly updated in 1994. Kitchens and bathrooms were refurbished with new fixtures, cabinets, countertops and finishes (Figure 149 and Figure 150).



FIGURE 149. Updated kitchen in unit D, first floor.



FIGURE 150. Typical bathroom.

Old galvanized and cast-iron piping was replaced with PVC (polyvinyl chloride) for potable water, drain and waste lines. Schedule 40 PVC pipe is code-approved for most sanitary waste systems because of long-term performance and ease of installation. Current PVC waste lines are routed in the crawl space and, from there, to the public sanitary sewer system in Auburn Avenue (Figure 151). Domestic water is provided by the City of Atlanta through a meter on Auburn Avenue. Each apartment has a 40-gallon gas water heater located in a small kitchen closet that backs up to the bathroom. No records were found to document when the current water heaters were installed (Figure 152).



FIGURE 151. Tangle of pipes and wires in crawl space.



FIGURE 152. Kitchen closet with gas water heater.

Natural gas is used to heat the building, to produce hot water, and for cooking. There is a gas meter for each apartment and the four of them are ganged together at the north end of the east facade (Figure 153). Black steel gas pipes run in the crawl space from the meters to the various appliances and equipment above.



FIGURE 153. Gas meters mounted on the east wall.

Electrical Systems. According to park records, the electrical system was updated and upgraded as part of the rehabilitation project in 1994. Electrical service comes from a power pole on Hogue Street to a weather head, conduit, and grouped-meter base at the northwest corner of the house (Figure 154). Each living unit is metered separately, and a

breaker panel for each unit is on the north wall of the kitchen next to the rear door (Figure 155).



FIGURE 154. Electric service enters the building at the northwest corner.



FIGURE 155. Typical breaker panel for each apartment.

The 1994 rehabilitation work included the installation of new receptacles, switches, and light fixtures. Currently, an assortment of ordinary light fixtures and ceiling fans in the apartments have a traditional or vintage style, but they may not accurately represent fixtures from the early 1930s when the building was constructed (Figure 156, Figure 157, and Figure 158). In contrast to the traditional-style fixtures elsewhere in the apartments, the kitchens in units A, B, and C have modern, surface-mounted, 1-foot-by-4-foot, fluorescent fixtures with wraparound plastic lenses (Figure 159).



FIGURE 156. Traditional pendant light fixtures in second-floor unit C.

It is assumed that when the electrical system and electrical devices (receptacle, switches, fixtures, etc.) were last updated they complied with the requirements of the building code. Some visible wiring in the attic and mechanical spaces is non-metallic clad (NM) cable (Figure 160), which conforms to the current International Building / Electrical Code for multi-unit residential buildings. However, observations of concealed wiring and electrical system components for the purpose of determining compliance with current codes were beyond the scope of this report.



FIGURE 157. Ceiling fan with light kit.



FIGURE 159. Modern, surface-mounted, 1-foot-by-4-foot, fluorescent fixture in unit B kitchen.



FIGURE 158. A traditional-style light fixture above the vanity.



FIGURE 160. NM electrical cable in the attic.

Data, Television, and Communication

Systems. Cable television, communication, and data service comes from a line on Hogue Street to the northwest corner of the building. From that point, cables drop down to weather-resistant junction boxes, and from there to locations along the west wall where the cables penetrate the wood siding and enter the building and the two apartments on the west side (Figure 161 and Figure 162). Units C and D receive cable television, communication, and data through cable that enters the building on the east wall from a line along Auburn Avenue (Figure 163). Data jacks and

co-axial cable jacks are present in the apartments (Figure 164).



FIGURE 161. Television and internet cabling running down the west side of the building.



FIGURE 163. TV and internet cable from Auburn Avenue.

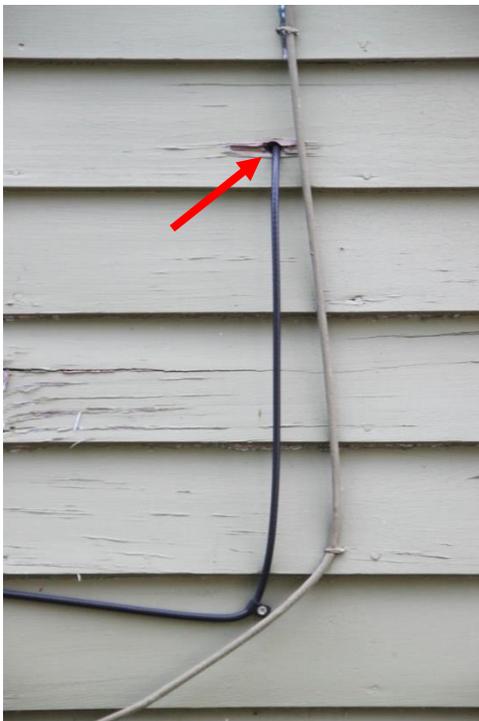


FIGURE 162. TV and internet cables stapled to the wood siding. Note the damage to the siding where the cable penetrates the exterior envelope, and the penetration is not sealed.



FIGURE 164. Co-axial cable connection (left) and data jack (right) inside one of the apartments.

Fire Protection and Security. Notification of smoke and fire is provided by ceiling-mounted detectors with alarms that are in each room of the living units. These detectors appear to be battery operated, but may be direct wired (Figure 165 and Figure 166).

Some motion sensors and horn alarms were present in the units, but they appeared to be old (Figure 167 and Figure 168). Key pads for arming and disarming a security system were not apparent, so the old-looking devices may not be functional.



FIGURE 165. Smoke and fire detector in unit C.



FIGURE 167. Motion detector above the door.



FIGURE 168. Old motion sensor on the right and alarm horn on the left.



FIGURE 166. Ceiling-mounted smoke and fire detector.

Condition Assessment

The following notable conditions about the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems were observed in August 2017.

Mechanical Systems.

- Each apartment in the multi-unit structure is heated and cooled by a Dx split-system, with blower coil unit, gas heat, and outdoor condensing unit. According to the serial numbers on the units in the attic that serve the second-floor apartments, they were manufactured in 2008 (Figure 169).

All four systems are slightly less than ten years old. Park records of periodic maintenance of HVAC units at 506 Auburn Avenue are minimal, but information about regular maintenance for other structures in the park indicates that these four HVAC units receive cyclical maintenance. During the on-site visit for this report, no problems with the HVAC systems were mentioned by the park staff. Performing cyclic preventative maintenance will continue to extend the operation of the HVAC equipment.



FIGURE 169. Dx split-system heating and cooling systems in the attic above unit B.



FIGURE 170. Web of new and abandoned PVC, black steel (gas), and copper piping in the crawl space.

- All four condensing units for the HVAC systems are grouped together on a concrete pad at the northeast corner of the building. Most manufacturers recommend a minimum of three feet of clear space around condensing units to ensure optimum air flow through the coil. The four condensing are positioned too close to each other and to the north wall to comply with the manufacturer's

recommended clearance (refer to Figure 147). Over time, this could diminish the efficient operation of this equipment.

Plumbing Systems.

- The tangle of old abandoned pipes, new PVC piping, wiring, and HVAC ducts in the crawl space makes repair and maintenance work there more complicated and hazardous. Removing some of the abandoned materials will make the crawl space less congested, easier to keep dry, and less attractive to rodents and destructive insects. Also, plumbing will be easier to visually inspect and repair or modify (Figure 170).
- Plumbing fixtures—sinks, toilets, bathtubs, faucets, and showers—appear to be in satisfactory condition. It is assumed that the tenants will alert the park staff to problems or about fixtures that break so they can be repaired or replaced before further damage occurs.

Electrical Systems.

- The assortment of light fixtures and ceiling fans in the apartments has a traditional or vintage style, but they may not accurately represent fixtures from the early 1930s when the building was constructed. In addition, some of them are damaged or have missing bulbs (refer to Figure 156, Figure 157, Figure 158, and Figure 159).
- Future electrical upgrades should be done after a code compliance assessment is completed by a licensed professional.

Data, Television, and Communication Systems.

- Haphazard and destructive penetrations through the exterior envelope of the building damaged wood siding and brick foundation walls. Left unsealed, the holes allow air and moisture to into the wall which can result in deterioration of the siding and other wood components of the wall. Moisture and humid

air also contribute to organic growth (refer to Figure 162 and Figure 163).

- Messy data, television, and communication cables and wires detract from the appearance of the building and are incongruous with the historic period of original construction.
- Some wiring runs are exposed along the baseboard to a jack or a device. This is unsightly, and the wires are unprotected (Figure 164).

Fire Protection and Security.

- Some ceiling-mounted smoke and fire detectors appear relatively new, but others are older. They may be battery operated or wired, but they should be checked regularly for proper operation as recommended by the manufacturer and local fire officials (refer to Figure 165 and Figure 166).
- Means of egress from the building must conform to the requirements of the adopted building code and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101: Life Safety Code (LSC).
- Although motion sensors and alarm horns are in the building, they may not work. There were no keypads near entry doors for arming and disarming a security system, so it is assumed that the units do not have active security systems (refer to Figure 167 and Figure 168).

Significance and Integrity

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.¹¹⁵

Properties are nominated to the National Register of Historic Places through preparation of documentation related to the historical development, current conditions, and historic integrity of its resources. National Register nominations also include a significance evaluation that identifies the important historical associations of the property, and comments on its architectural, archeological, and social values as they relate to the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. A property's significance is tied to a discrete period of time in which its important contributions were made and to relevant national, state, and local historic contexts.

Significance Criteria

In order for a property to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, it must possess significance under one of four criteria. The Criteria for Evaluation for listing in the National Register of Historic Places state:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties *will qualify* if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- a. A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or

115. National Park Service, "National Register of Historic Places," accessed May 22, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm>.

- b. A building or structure removed from its original location but which is primarily significant for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- c. A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building associated with his or her productive life; or
- d. A cemetery that derives its primary importance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
- e. A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- f. A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
- g. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.¹¹⁶

National Register Status of 506 Auburn Avenue, NE

National Register of Historic Places documentation pertaining to Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park reviewed for the purposes of this project includes the following:

- *National Register nomination documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District*, bounded approximately by Irwin, Randolph, Edgewood, Jackson, and Auburn Avenues. Documentation prepared by Elizabeth Z. Macgregor, Architectural Historian, and Carole A. Summers, Coordinator, Historic Sites Survey, Historic Preservation Section,

116. *Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 36, Part 60, "The National Register Criteria for Evaluation."

Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, March 25, 1974; entered in the National Register May 2, 1974.¹¹⁷

The National Register form used at the time allowed preparers to select date ranges as significant periods. The preparers of the NHL documentation selected 1800—1899 and 1900—as significant periods. The form identifies areas of significance including Architecture, Education, Political, Religion / Philosophy, and Other: History. The nomination documentation cites several structures that together “comprise an identifiable and definable historic district”; these structures include Ebenezer Baptist Church, the gravesite of Martin Luther King Jr; King’s birthplace and boyhood home at 501 Auburn Avenue; shotgun row houses and Victorian houses on Auburn Avenue; the Alexander Hamilton House at 102 Howell Street; the Atlanta Baptist Preparatory Institute at 535 Auburn Avenue; Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church Mission; and Fire Station No. 6.¹¹⁸ The building at 506 Auburn Avenue is not specifically addressed in this documentation.

- *National Historic Landmark documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District*, including Auburn Avenue between Jackson and Howell Streets. Documentation prepared by Benjamin Levy, Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service, Washington, DC (based on the work of Elizabeth Z. Macgregor and Carole A. Summers, Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, State of Georgia, and Joseph S. Mendinghall, Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation), 1976. The historic district was listed as a National Historic Landmark on May 5, 1977.

117. Macgregor and Summers. The nomination form notes that the Atlanta Baptist Preparatory Institute site was, at the time the nomination documentation was prepared, occupied by apartments.

118. Ibid.

The National Historic Landmark nomination was prepared using a National Register form, as was the convention at the time. As noted above, the form allowed preparers to select date ranges as significant periods. The National Historic Landmark documentation cites the period of significance as 1800–1899 and 1900–, and relevant areas of significance as Architecture, Education, and Religion. An inventory of individual buildings provided with this documentation is entitled, “Martin Luther King National Historic Landmark – Inventory.”¹¹⁹ The building at 506 Auburn Avenue is included in the inventory with the following notation: “506 Auburn Avenue. 1933. These apartments have been occupied by a series of black residents. The original architectural design is intact.”¹²⁰

- *National Register documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site*, which comprises a historic district approximately bounded by Jackson, Howell, and Old Wheat Streets and Edgewood Avenue. This documentation was prepared by Robert Blythe, Maureen A. Carroll, and Steven H. Moffson, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, and certified by the Keeper of the National Register on May 4, 1994.¹²¹

The 1994 documentation indicates that the historic district is significant under Criteria A, B, and C, and Criteria Considerations A, C, and G. Areas of significance cited include the following: Ethnic Heritage, black; Social History, Commerce, and Architecture. The period of significance is given as circa 1880–1968, and specific significant dates cited include 1929, 1968, and 1906. The

documentation addresses three historic contexts, as follows:

- A. The Development of a Black Community and Leader: Atlanta's Auburn Avenue Neighborhood and Martin Luther King, Jr., 1906–1948
- B. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Leadership of the American Civil Rights Movement, 1955–1968
- C. Architectural Resources of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, ca. 1880–1950

The 1994 documentation notes the district includes thirty-five contributing building. It includes 506 Auburn Avenue as a contributing building and offers the following specific commentary:

506 Auburn Avenue, 1933 (IDLCS #090013). A plain, four-unit apartment building that may have been built as a duplex. The building has a hip roof and a recessed, two-story, full-facade porch carried on brick piers and square posts. An NPS rehabilitation is scheduled for completion in 1993.¹²²

The building at 506 Auburn Avenue is included as a contributing building under Context A, “The Development of a Black Community and Leader: Atlanta's Auburn Avenue Neighborhood and Martin Luther King, Jr., 1906–1948.” Under this context, 506 Auburn Avenue—together with other residences in the historic district—are listed as contributing to the historic district’s national significance.

In this documentation, 506 Auburn Avenue is also listed as a contributing building under Context C, “Architectural Resources of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, circa 1880–1950.” This context addresses buildings within the historic district possessing local architectural significance. The documentation notes:

122. *Ibid.*, Section 7, 12–13.

119. Levy, n.p. See also Mendinghall, n.p.

120. Levy, n.p.

121. Blythe et al., *National Register documentation*. Blythe, Carroll, and Moffson also prepared a *Historic Resource Study for the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site* that includes a significance assessment consistent with that provided in the 1994 National Register nomination documentation.

In the 1920s and 1930s, a number of the single-family houses on Auburn were converted to apartments or rooming houses. Small apartment buildings were also constructed in this period. Three small apartment buildings, constructed between 1911 and 1933, are located at 491-493 Auburn Avenue, 506 Auburn Avenue, and 54 Howell Street. All are plain, two-story, rectangular structures with two-story porches, weatherboard siding, and hip or gable roofs. Built for working-class blacks, these buildings are utilitarian and largely unornamented.

The flats in these buildings are generally small; those on the first floor have access directly from the porch, while central stair halls provide access to upper floors. These buildings probably offered shared bathrooms when built.¹²³

In addition, 506 Auburn Avenue is included in the category, “Vernacular Houses and Apartment Buildings.”¹²⁴

The 506 Auburn Avenue building and other neighborhood residences are not contributing under Context B, “Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Leadership of the American Civil Rights Movement, 1955–1968.” This context includes as contributing resources the nationally significant Ebenezer Baptist Church and Martin Luther King Jr. grave site.

- *National Register documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation*, for an area approximately bounded by Freedom Parkway and John Wesley Dobbs Avenue on the north, Decatur Street on the south, the Southern Railway line on the east, and Interstate 75/85 on the west. This documentation was prepared by Steven H. Moffson, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, with John A. Kissane, Historic Preservation Consultant, Historic District Development Corporation, Atlanta,

Georgia. The documentation was certified by the National Register on June 21, 2001.¹²⁵

The documentation cites a period of significance of 1853–1968, beginning with the opening of Auburn Avenue (then called Wheat Street), and citing specific dates including 1906, the Atlanta Race Riot; 1917, the Atlanta fire; 1929, the birth of Martin Luther King Jr.; 1964, the strike at the Scripto plant and the opening of the Wheat Street Gardens I Housing Complex; 1968, the death of Martin Luther King Jr.; and 1976, construction of the Martin Luther King Jr. grave site.

The Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation indicates that there are 443 contributing buildings, 1 contributing site, and 1 contributing structure (not including 37 previously listed resources) and 79 non-contributing buildings. The building at 506 Auburn Avenue is not specifically addressed in this documentation, as it is within the boundaries of the previously established historic district.¹²⁶

In 2018, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site was designated Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. The status of 506 Auburn Avenue remains a contributing resource.

The findings of this Historic Structure Report concur with those of previous National Register and National Historic Landmark documentation. The 506 Auburn Avenue building is a contributing structure to the historic district, as a part of the Sweet Auburn neighborhood and as a resource present during the years in which Martin Luther King Jr. lived, grew up, and visited in the neighborhood. The 506 Auburn Avenue building survives with sufficient integrity to convey its historic associations.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for 506 Auburn Avenue is associated with the development of the Auburn

123. *Ibid.*, Section 8, 58.

124. *Ibid.*, Section 8, 66.

125. Moffson and Kissane.

126. *Ibid.*

Avenue neighborhood and surrounding community, as well as with Martin Luther King Jr.'s life there. The park interprets resources including the residences on the Birth Home block to 1929–1941, representing Martin Luther King Jr.'s formative years living at 501 Auburn Avenue, NE. As noted above, National Register documentation prepared in 1994 identified a period of significance of 1880–1968, and a boundary increase and additional documentation prepared in 2001 identified a period of significance of 1853–1968, for the overarching historic district. A period of significance of circa 1933–1968 is relevant for 506 Auburn Avenue, as the building was constructed in 1933. This period addresses the local historical and architectural significance of the building at 506 Auburn Avenue, from its date of construction through of the death of Dr. King.¹²⁷

Character-Defining Features

The historic nature of significant buildings and structures is defined by their character, which is embodied in their identifying physical features. Character-defining features can include the shape of a building; its materials, craftsmanship, interior spaces, and features; and the different components of its surroundings.¹²⁸

The following list identifies existing character-defining features found on the exterior and interior of 506 Auburn Avenue.

Exterior

- General configuration, massing, and orientation of the original portion of the building.
- Brick foundation walls.
- Original horizontal wood siding.
- Decorative woodwork.
- Covered porch at north elevation, and rear porch at the south elevation.
- Wood-framed exterior doors (where original).
- Original double-hung wood windows.
- Hip roof over the residence.
- Four masonry chimneys.

Interior

The interior of the four-unit residential structure at 506 Auburn Avenue has been renovated and has received periodic maintenance since it was acquired by the National Park Service in 1989. No definitive documentation was found for an interior renovation project that was authorized and bid, thus it appears likely that the work was accomplished by the park. The interior survey conducted for this study indicates that the interior was renovated, but the general floor plan configuration remained mostly as it was when originally constructed in 1933. It appears that changes were made that included modern kitchens, updated bathrooms, contemporary finishes, and modern plumbing and heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems. Thus, the remaining character-defining historic features of the interior are limited.

- First- and second-floor plan configurations, comprising a two-story, south-facing front porch that faces Auburn Avenue, and entrances to the four dwelling units grouped symmetrically at the center of the south facade. The plans of both floors are also symmetrical along the north-south centerline

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127. Prior National Register documentation, including most recently the 2001 Boundary Extension and Additional Documentation, indicates a period of significance for the historic district ending in 1968, with the death of Dr. King.
128. Lee H. Nelson, FAIA, *Preservation Brief 17: Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, 1988).

of the structure, and all four dwelling units have four interconnected rooms along either the east or west side of the structure.

- Original coal-burning, masonry fireplaces with cast-iron registers but no coal grates.
- Simple, brick, fireplace fronts without mantels. The top three courses of brick are corbeled to create a shallow shelf at the top of the fireplace.
- Limited original wood trim and flat-panel, wood doors, where present.

Assessment of Integrity

Assessment of integrity is based on an evaluation of the existence and condition of the physical features that date to a property's period of significance, taking into consideration the degree to which the individual qualities of integrity are present. The seven aspects of integrity as defined in the National Register Criteria for Evaluation are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. As noted in the *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*:

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. . . . Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. . . . Setting is the physical environment of a historic 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. . . . Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.¹²⁹

129. *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 44–45.

The property must retain the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historical significance. The essential physical features are those features that define both why a property is significant (National Register criteria) and when it was significant (period of significance). The *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* defines integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its significance.”¹³⁰

The historic integrity of 506 Auburn Avenue has been assessed within the context of its local architectural and historical significance, as well as a contributing resource within the historic district associated with the life and work of Martin Luther King Jr.

Integrity of Location. The residence at 506 Auburn Avenue retains integrity of location in relationship to its site. The location of the building has remained unchanged since it was originally constructed.

Integrity of Design. The building exterior retains integrity of design. Recent repair and restoration efforts have maintained the original exterior appearance of the building. The interior retains integrity of design in terms of the first- and second-floor configurations, sequence of spaces, remaining original features such as fireplaces, as described above, although the integrity of design of the interior is diminished by the extensive previous renovation work.

Integrity of Setting. The residence at 506 Auburn Avenue retains integrity of setting. The Sweet Auburn neighborhood continues to consist of single-family and multi-unit residences, as it did during the building's period of significance. Additionally, most of these residences date to the period of significance.

Integrity of Materials and Workmanship. The building exterior retains integrity of materials and workmanship. The restoration performed in the 1990s and 2000s reused existing historic materials where possible; however, replacement

130. *Ibid.*

was performed for much of the original wood siding, brick masonry at the foundation and chimneys, and some windows and doors. The integrity of materials and workmanship of the interior is diminished by extensive previous renovation work.

Integrity of Feeling. The residence at 506 Auburn Avenue retains integrity of feeling. The structure maintains its original function as a residence, while alterations to the building have not significantly changed the exterior character of the residence.

Integrity of Association. An important aspect of the significance of the residence at 506 Auburn Avenue is its association with the Sweet Auburn neighborhood during the time Martin Luther King Jr. resided in the area. The residence remains an integral part of the neighborhood and helps to strengthen the connection to the neighborhood's period of significance. As a result, 506 Auburn Avenue retains integrity of association.

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Treatment and Use

Requirements for Treatment and Use

The following discussion of treatment and use for the building at 506 Auburn Avenue has been prepared based on historical research, condition assessment, and discussion with the National Park Service to understand intended current and future use of the building. The apartment is considered a contributing structure to the immediate neighborhood of the Martin Luther King Jr. Birth Home and survives with sufficient integrity to convey its historic associations.

As such, treatment and use of the house should be considered within the context of the legal mandates and policy directives established by National Park Service Cultural Resources Management Guideline (Director's Order 28), as well as the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, for the protection of cultural resources. The building should be understood as a contributing context structure for the Birth Home neighborhood, although it is not in itself individually significant. The exterior of the building is therefore more important in providing historic context than the interior, although original features of the interior are character-defining. The apartment building at 506 Auburn Avenue is expected to remain in use as four leased residential units.

Laws, Regulations, and Functional Requirements

Key laws, regulations, and functional requirements that apply to the recommended work include the following:

- National Park Service Cultural Resources Management Guideline (Director's Order 28), which requires planning for the protection of cultural resources on park property.
- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which mandates that federal agencies, including the National Park Service, take into account the effects of their actions on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment.

Treatment of the building and site are also guided by the following:

- *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*
- National Park Service Management Policies, 2006
- Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS)
- International Building Code (IBC), 2018
- International Existing Building Code (IEBC), 2018
- International Plumbing Code (IPC)
- National Electrical Safety Code (NESC)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101: Life Safety Code (LSC), 2015, and NFPA 1 Uniform Fire Code
- NPS Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design

The State of Georgia has adopted the 2012 IBC with Georgia Amendments (2018) for statewide applicability. The State of Georgia has also permitted local jurisdictions the option of adopting the 2012 IEBC with Georgia State Amendments (2015); however, based on information available on the county web site, Fulton County has not adopted this code. (Based on the county web site, Fulton County has adopted the National Electrical Code [NEC] with Georgia State Amendments.) The National Park Service is self-regulating in terms of enacting and enforcing building code standards. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is therefore not legally subject to local or state building code requirements. When undertaking repairs to buildings and structures, the National Park Service endeavors to have the work comply with model building code standards. At this time, the 2018 IBC is the model building code used by the National Park Service for design and construction. The NPS Denver Service Center also references the 2018 IEBC, with appendices and Resource A.

With historic structures, attempts to achieve strict conformance with model building code standards that are intended for new buildings can lead to destruction of the historic fabric. Alternative compliance procedures, such as Chapter 12 of the IEBC relating to historic buildings, should be referenced in determining code compliance. For 506 Auburn Avenue, alternatives to full prescriptive legislative and code compliance should be considered where such compliance would compromise the integrity of the structure.

The 2018 IEBC includes the following statements in Section 507, Historic Buildings:

507.1 Historic buildings. The provisions of this code that require improvements relative to a building's existing condition or, in the case of *repairs*, that require improvements relative to a building's pre-damage condition, shall not be mandatory for *historic buildings* unless specifically required by this section.

507.2 Life safety hazards. The provisions of this code shall apply to *historic buildings* judged by the building official to constitute a distinct life safety hazard.

507.3 Flood hazard areas. Within flood *hazard areas* established in accordance with Section 1612.3 of the *International Building Code*, or Section R322 of the *International Residential Code*, as applicable, where the work proposed constitutes *substantial improvement*, the building shall be brought into compliance with Section 1612 of the *International Building Code*, or Section R322 of the *International Residential Code*, as applicable:

Exception: *Historic buildings* need not be brought into compliance that are:

1. Listed or preliminarily determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places;
2. Determined by the Secretary of the US Department of Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined to qualify as an historic district; or
3. Designated as historic under a state or local historic preservation program that is approved by the Department of Interior.

507.4 Structural. Historic buildings shall comply with the applicable structural provisions in this chapter.

Exceptions:

1. The *code official* shall be authorized to accept existing floors and existing live loads and to approve operational controls that limit the live load on any floor.
2. Repair of *substantial structural damage* is not required to comply with Sections 405.2.3, and 405.2.4. *Substantial structural damage* shall be repaired in accordance with Section 405.2.1.¹³¹

The IEBC exceptions noted above pertain to Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park as a property listed in the National Register. In addition, Executive Order 13693 issued in 2015

131. International Code Council, Inc., *International Existing Building Code 2018* (Country Club Hills, Illinois: International Code Council, 2017).

directs all federal agencies to implement sustainable design and construction practices, including reducing agency building energy intensity by 2.5 percent annually through the end of fiscal year 2025, relative to the baseline of the agency's building energy use in fiscal year 2015, and reducing agency potable water consumption intensity by 36 percent by fiscal year 2025 through reductions of 2 percent annually through fiscal year 2025, relative to a baseline of the agency's water consumption in fiscal year 2007.¹³²

Also, newly installed electrical systems and components, including any significant alterations to existing electrical systems, should comply with applicable provisions of the NFPA 70: NEC.

Alternatives for Treatment and Use

The National Park Service has developed definitions for the four major treatments that may be applied to historic structures: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. The four definitions are as follows:

Preservation is defined as 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. 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. However, new exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment. The Standards for Preservation require retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric along with the building's historic form.

Rehabilitation is defined as 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. The Rehabilitation Standards acknowledge the need to alter or add to a historic building to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the building's historic character.

Restoration is defined as 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. The Restoration Standards allow for the depiction of a building at a particular time in its history by preserving materials, features, finishes, and spaces from its period of significance and removing those from other periods.

Reconstruction is defined as 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 Reconstruction Standards establish a limited framework for recreating a vanished or non-surviving building with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes.¹³³

Of the four treatment approaches, *rehabilitation*, which involves making possible a compatible use through repair, alterations, or additions, is most appropriate for the 506 Auburn Avenue building. This treatment would allow for the repairs necessary to stabilize and preserve the buildings, while permitting minor renovation to meet the needs of contemporary park visitation, interpretation, and National Park Service management needs.

132. "Executive Order 13693: Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade," signed March 19, 2015.

133. Grimmer.

Preservation, which involves sustaining the building in its existing form, is to some extent in progress as a result of ongoing repair and cyclical maintenance implemented by the park. Further, similar preservation efforts would be incorporated in the overarching rehabilitation treatment approach.

Restoration, which would return the building to its appearance during the period of significance, is not supported by available documentation.

Retention of original materials and character-defining features during rehabilitation work is practical and appropriate, and will also assist in the use of 506 Auburn Avenue to interpret the Birth Home neighborhood to the public.

Ultimate Treatment and Use

Guidelines for Treatment

Guidelines and recommendations for treatment for 506 Auburn Avenue have been defined based on the preservation objectives and requirements for treatment and use outlined above. All treatment guidelines and recommendations were developed in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are as follows:

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 will 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.¹³⁴

Guidelines for implementing the treatment recommendations provided herein are as follows:

- Undertake all work on the structure in compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

134. Ibid.

- Undertake all work on the landscape in compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.
 - Retain the character of the historic structure and environs by protecting the house and significant site features.
 - Ensure that proposed new elements or construction are compatible with the historic character of the structure and its site.
 - Protect adjacent natural resources during construction activities.
 - Document through detailed as-built drawings, photographs, and written narrative all changes and treatments to the building and its immediate site. Maintain records of treatments and preserve documentation according to professional archival standards. Maintain a copy of records in the National Park Service archives.
 - Retain features and materials at both the exterior and interior of the buildings that survive from the period of significance to the greatest extent possible.
 - Incorporate sustainable design principles in all future projects that respect the preservation principles listed above.
- members. Prior to repairs, identify and address potential sources of deterioration, if possible. Similarly, at structural framing members where large notches have been made in the wood, the structural member should be sistered with a new framing member.
 - Deteriorated brick foundation piers should be temporarily shored, and the deteriorated masonry repaired or the pier rebuilt with new brick, as required. Consideration should be given to installing concrete foundations on which the brick piers can sit.
 - Deteriorated and displaced masonry at chimneys should be replaced or partially rebuilt to address openings in the masonry.
 - Open and deteriorated joints at the interior face of the masonry foundation wall and at the CMU retaining wall should be repointed.
 - Damaged and deteriorated wood window and screen sash should be repaired and reset. As part of repairs, the sash should be removed and deglazed. Deteriorated portions of the sash should be removed and replaced with new wood dutchman and epoxy. Broken glazing and screens should be replaced, the sash cords and hardware should be restored to an operable condition, and new weather stripping installed. Window and screen sash should be adjusted and joinery reinforced so that frames are square and reset in the window openings.
 - Damaged screen doors should be repaired. As part of the repairs, damaged screens should be replaced and diagonal bracing with turnbuckles repaired.
 - Displaced and damaged wood spindles at the guardrails of the north and south porches should be reinstalled and secured to the top and bottom rail. Spindles that are damaged or have deteriorated wood should be replaced.
 - Missing wood decorative elements, such as those at one door, should be recreated and

Recommendations

The following specific recommendations for treatment of 506 Auburn Street respond to the overarching treatment approach of *rehabilitation*, which involves making possible a compatible use for the building through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Exterior

- At locations where decay and deterioration of structural wood framing members is observed, framing member should be repaired or replaced. Sister deteriorated wood framing or remove and replace with new wood framing

installed to match the original appearance of the door.

- Decay at wood siding and trim should be removed and new wood dutchman installed. The dutchman should match the existing wood in profile and primed and painted to match the existing.
- Split, cracked, and warped wood siding and trim boards should be repaired where possible, or replaced with matching new boards.
- Deteriorated tongue-and-groove deck boards should be removed and replaced. Prime boards on all faces prior to installation and paint to match existing.
- At locations where loss of paint is observed at the wood features, the wood surface should be scraped, spot primed, and painted to match the original color scheme, using alkyd-based paints formulated for exterior wood.
- Deteriorated and loose paint at the brick foundation wall should be scraped, spot primed, and painted to match the original color scheme. Consideration should be given to removing the paint coating and exposing the underlying brick to better match the historic appearance of the building.
- Surface corrosion at the metal stair treads and landings at the north elevation should be repaired. Surface corrosion should be removed and loose paint scraped. The surface should be cleaned, spot primed, and painted to match the existing.
- Biological growth and mildew at structural wood framing members should be washed with a biocide. For difficult areas where mildew recurs rapidly, consideration could be given to stripping the surface to bare wood and repainting using alkyd-based paints containing anti-microbial additives.
- In areas of siding that experience heavy guano, the wood surface should be washed with a

detergent. Consideration should be given to installing bird deterrents to prevent birds from roosting on the nearby telephone line.

- Concrete splash pads or drain leaders should be installed at each downspout to keep rainwater away from the building foundation. While not a historic element, leaders and splash pads have a low visual impact and can be effective in diverting water away from the building.
- The asphalt shingle roof should be maintained and periodically monitored for indications of water infiltration. Plant debris that accumulates on the roof should be removed, and gutters and downspouts should be cleaned and routed seasonally.
- The building should be inspected and treated regularly for termites and other insect pests that are endemic in the region.
- Insect nests should be removed from the exterior walls regularly.

Interior

- Guidelines and recommendations for interior conditions address issues resulting from general wear and tear, focusing primarily on sustained maintenance, essential repairs, and code compliance.
- Future interior alterations and changes should not contribute to the loss of the remaining character-defining features and materials listed in Chapter 4.
- Loose wood baseboards and trim should be secured into place with finishing nails.
- Stained, loose, cracked, and blistered paint should be removed, sanded as needed to prepare the surface, primed, and repainted.
- Minor damage to gypsum board surfaces should be patched, sanded, and painted to match adjacent surfaces.

- Consideration should be given to refinishing original wood floors, where present.
- During future rehabilitation of the interior, consider rehabilitation of the fireplaces that are presently concealed by gypsum board partitions.
- The character-defining floor plan configurations of both floors, which appear to be compatible with the current use of the building, should be preserved.
- Programmed cyclic maintenance and essential repairs, such as painting, carpet replacement, sheet flooring replacement, and cleaning should be accomplished.
- Conduct a code compliance assessment of 506 Auburn Avenue and address compliance issues, especially those related to multi-family housing.
- Evaluate the integrity, rating, and continuity of the fire barrier separation between adjacent units on each floor and in the attic above the units. The gypsum board partition in the attic space was observed to have unsealed penetrations and was not complete between the joists at the second-floor ceiling. Analysis of the floor-ceiling assembly is recommended to confirm the continuity and rating of the separation. Where found, horizontal and vertical penetrations should be fire-caulked to maintain the continuity of the floor-ceiling assembly. Cut-outs and damage to the partition should be repaired promptly.
- Determine compliance with NFPA 101: Life Safety Code. Strobe lights and sirens and / or annunciators may need to be added to the building and tied into an upgraded fire detection and alarm system.
- Consider alterations and upgrades as needed to make the first floor accessible and to comply with the requirements of the ABAAS. For example, a ramp or a lift for first-floor accessibility (the second floor is not accessible without an elevator or a lift, but that may not be necessary depending of the use of the building and the second floor). The kitchen and bathroom of the lower floor units will require significant modification to meet the requirements of the ABAAS. These modifications can be accommodated in the kitchen within the footprint of the existing room. The bathroom, however, will require additional space to meet the clearance requirements, such expansion could result in a significant modification to the original floor plan layout of the units.
- All open junction boxes should be covered.
- An airtight seal around all conduit and cable penetrations at walls and ceilings should be provided.
- Watertight and airtight seals, such as applied exterior-grade sealants, at all penetrations through the exterior envelope should be provided. For example, where television, internet, and data cables enter the building.
- Obsolete or abandoned fixtures and devices should be removed.
- Consider installation of a wireless, monitored security system to include intrusion detection, fire, smoke, and carbon monoxide alarms.

Mechanical Systems

- Accomplish programmed cyclic maintenance and essential repairs, particularly for mechanical and electrical systems, fixtures, equipment, and devices.
- Monitor HVAC equipment for proper and efficient operation and plan for replacement of failing equipment with modern, energy-efficient systems.
- Air conditioning and dehumidifying the interior of historic structure can result in unexpected consequences that may accelerate the deterioration of interior materials and finishes and the potential for mold and mildew. Consider factors such as air and moisture infiltration and vapor and moisture

barriers at the building envelope when new HVAC systems are required.

Current and forthcoming work. The Park has not currently identified work in progress or planned to be completed at the building.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Conduct finishes analysis of painted wood on the exterior of the house to identify historic original / historic color schemes.
2. There is almost no archival documentation available to describe the history of 506 Auburn Avenue. The Park's archival record on this building is scant; there are no historic photographs, no drawings, and just a few pages of contact prints and other miscellaneous materials. Even the building records for the past twenty years are practically nonexistent. It is recommended that a call for historic materials, including photographs, documents, contracts, drawings, blueprints, illustrations, newsletters, brochures, etc., related to 506 Auburn Avenue be issued to all park departments, for material to be provided to park archives. If items such as original drawings need to be retained in a department, then a copy should be made for the archives with a notation as to the location of the original within the park. All past places of park storage, old administrative offices, former maintenance sites, and any area that may have served as some type of park administrative, interpretive, maintenance, or shop area should be searched for files related to 506 Auburn Avenue.
3. Further research would be helpful to understand the building that existed at the site of 506 Auburn Avenue prior to construction of the current apartments. Park records, the 1994 Historic Resource Study, and National Register documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, all indicate, without elaboration, that the building may have originally been a duplex or there may have originally been a duplex on the site.

Given the lack of information about the building, it is recommended that research be conducted to determine if the apartment complex was originally a duplex or if it was constructed on the former site of a duplex. This possible change from duplex to fourplex was made during Dr. King's childhood and may help to inform understanding of the changing patterns of the community.

Resilience to Natural Hazards

Although Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is located in urban Atlanta and is not sited in a coastal location, the site is still considered vulnerable to current and future threats associated with natural hazards.

Increasingly frequent strong storms and heavy rainfall have been noted for several years in the southeastern United States. Studies of effects of natural hazards on the State of Georgia and the Atlanta area have also indicated a predicted significant rise in average temperatures, coupled with periods of intense rainfall and associated flooding.¹³⁵ However, the more significant threat to the region may be drought, together with increased water demand in the Atlanta region.

Weather and climate related threats to resources have already been felt in the Atlanta area. For example, the remnants of Hurricane Frances caused extensive damage estimated at \$41 million in the region, primarily from flooding, and 2007 saw a severe drought and the largest forest fire in over a century, with damage estimated at \$1 billion.¹³⁶

Although threats are more immediate to coastal historic sites, inland historic sites similarly require identification of the resources anticipated to be threatened—both buildings and landscapes—and

135. Judith Curry, "Local Warming: Consequences of Climate Change for Atlanta," Georgia Tech University, accessed February 13, 2018, http://curry.eas.gatech.edu/climate/pdf/atlanta_rev.pdf.

136. Ibid.

planning for protection as well as mitigation in the face of increased storms.

As loss of historic resource integrity may occur, suddenly or slowly, from conditions related to natural hazards, documentation is the first response to mitigate anticipated loss or diminishment, or to plan for the impacts associated with natural hazards. This Historic Structures Report, including the historical narrative condition assessment, and recommendations, together with photographs and measured drawings, is an important part of the documentation process.

As part of future efforts to build on and update the documentation provided in this Historic Structures Report, the National Park Service should consider such approaches as developing more detailed documentation resulting from new three-dimensional scanning technology, monitoring weather-related deterioration, updating emergency and disaster planning to address natural hazards-related issues, and implementing strategic planning for mitigation of the effects of natural hazards on park resources. The latter may include special protection, documentation, and interpretation measures to address resources that are especially vulnerable to damage or loss due to natural hazards.

In addition to threats to the historic resources, natural hazards will affect visitation patterns. A park-specific brief has been prepared on this issue, and notes the historical relationship between visitation and temperature, finding that temperature was a significant predictor of visitation. The brief further notes that understanding this relationship, and taking advantage of continued study, will help park management “adapt to the effects of natural

hazards and remain effective resource stewards while promoting visitor experience.”¹³⁷

Efforts conducted for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park will benefit from coordination with other planning and documentation projects to address effects of natural hazards under consideration or in the process of being implemented by the National Park Service in the Southeast Region. Future severe weather events, rising sea levels, and other impacts related to natural hazards should be anticipated and considered in planning for protection and maintenance of the park and its resources.

137. National Park Service, “Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site: How might future warming affect visitation?” *Park Visitation and Climate Change, Park-specific Brief* (US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Natural Resource Stewardship & Science, 2016).

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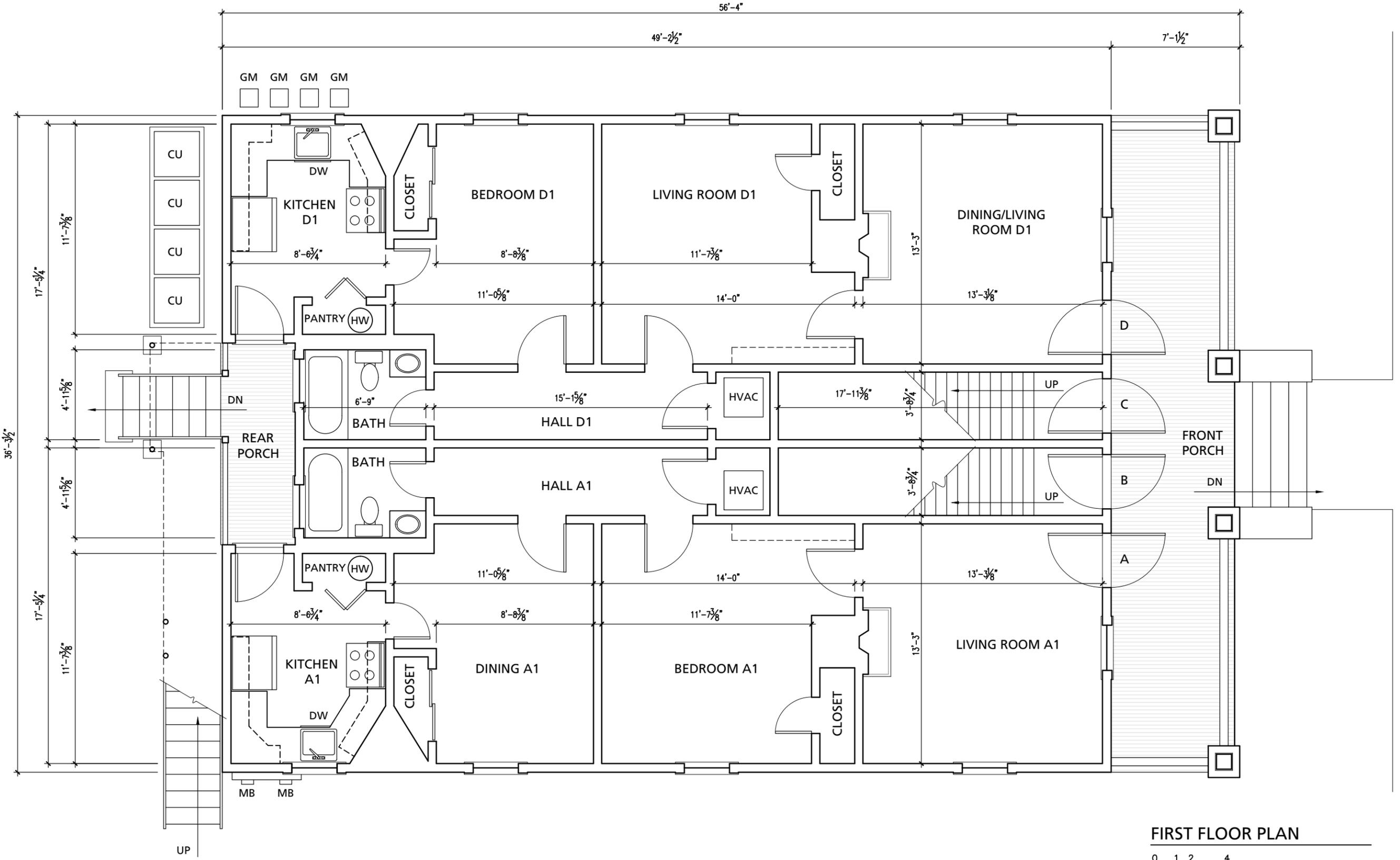
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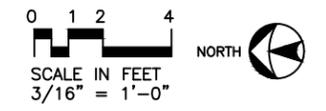
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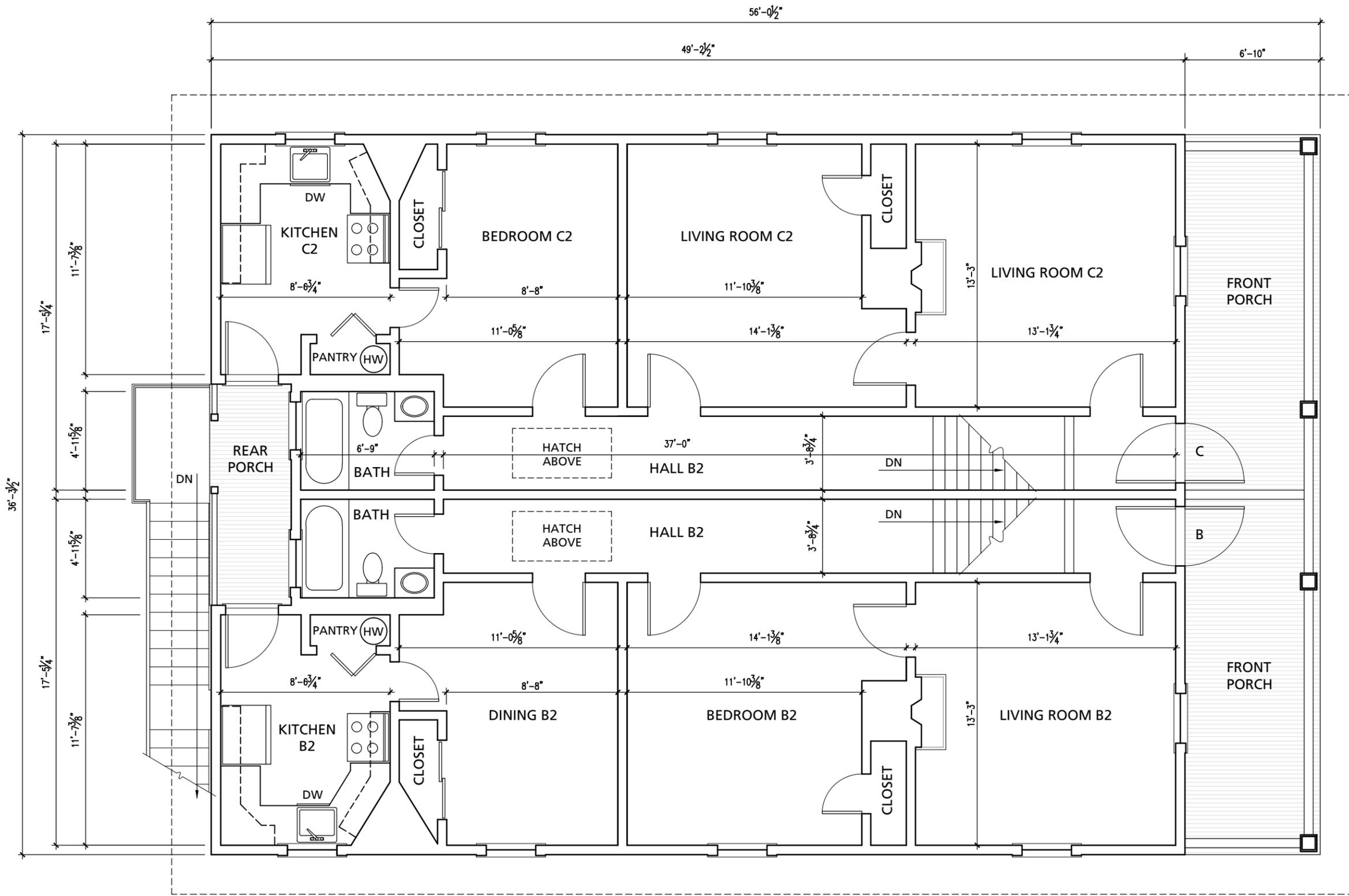
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Appendix A: Measured Drawings

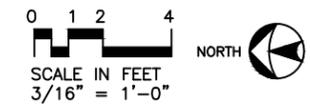


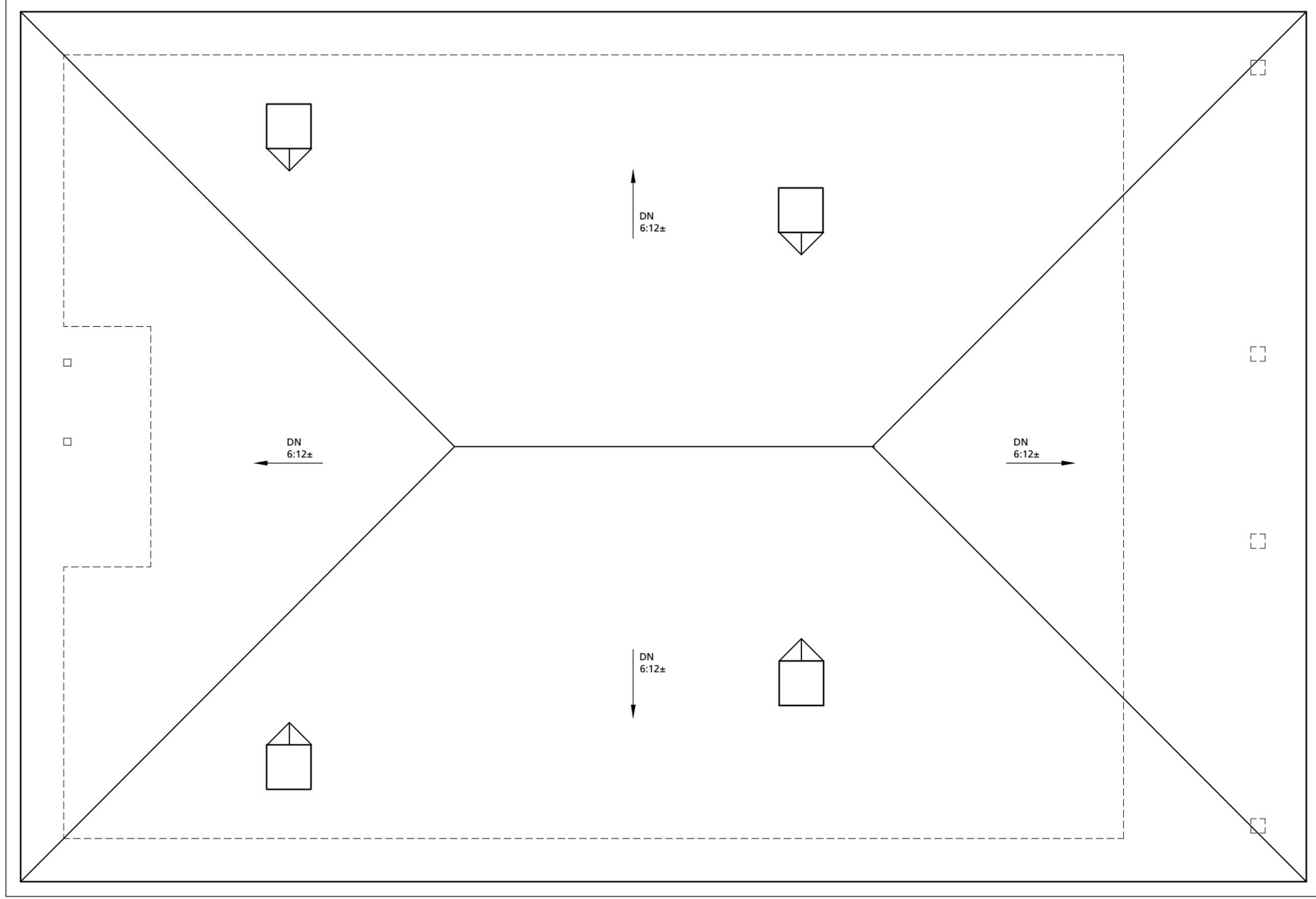
FIRST FLOOR PLAN





SECOND FLOOR PLAN





ROOF PLAN

0 1 2 4
 SCALE IN FEET
 3/16" = 1'-0"



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 SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

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 FULTON COUNTY

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 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

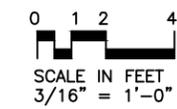
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SHEET
 3 OF 7



SOUTH ELEVATION



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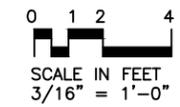
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WEST ELEVATION



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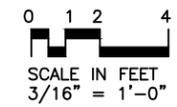
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NORTH ELEVATION



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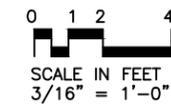
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EAST ELEVATION



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7 OF 7

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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