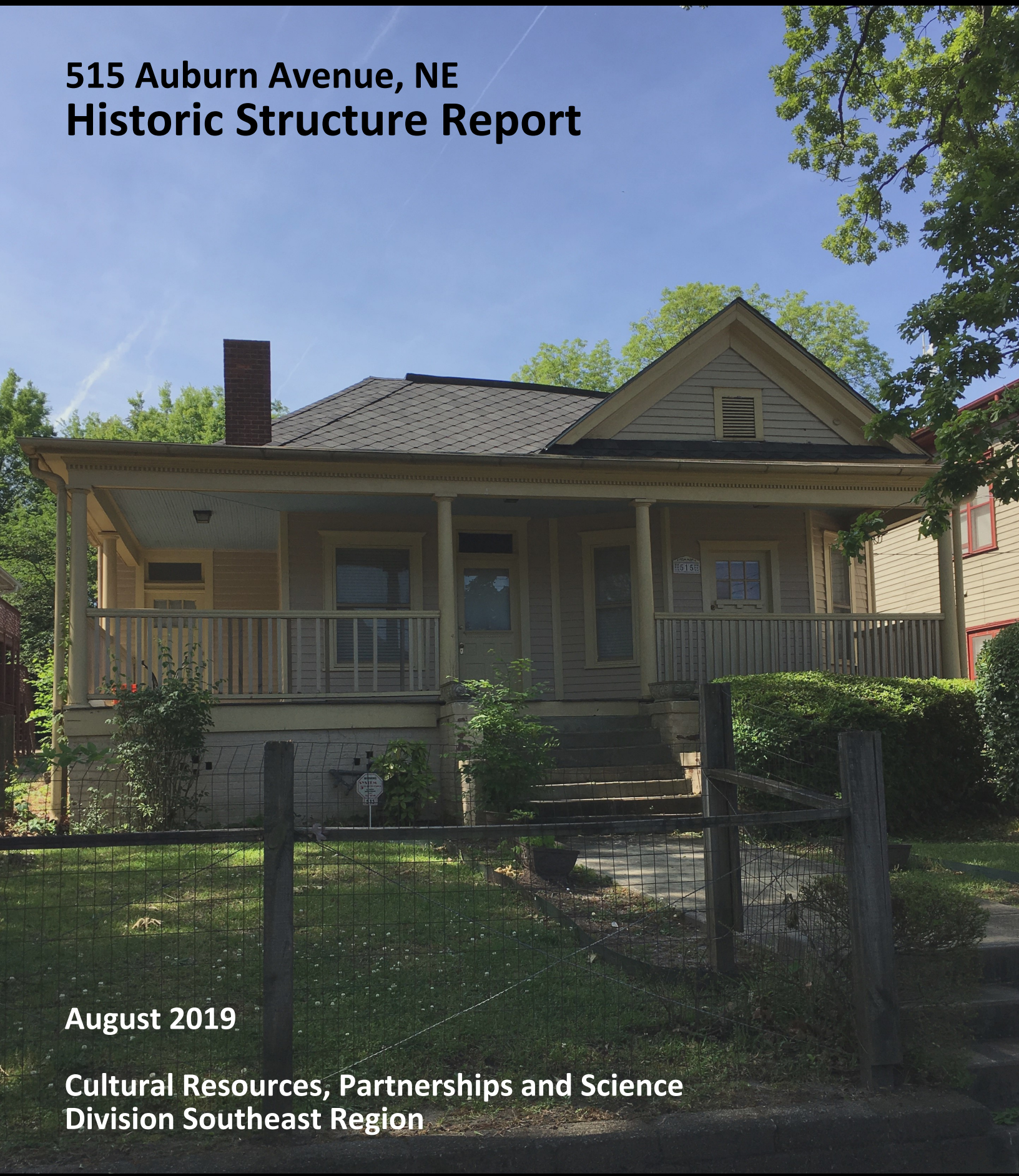




515 Auburn Avenue, NE Historic Structure Report



August 2019

Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science
Division Southeast Region

515 Auburn Avenue, NE

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park

Atlanta, Georgia

Historic Structure Report

August 2019

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About the front cover: View of the 515 Auburn Avenue, NE, looking south, April 2019.

This manuscript has been authored by Panamerican Consultants, Inc., with consultants Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc., and WFT Architects, PA, 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.

515 Auburn Avenue, NE
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
Atlanta, Georgia

Historic Structure Report

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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 515 Auburn Avenue, NE 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 515 Auburn Avenue, NE and the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. Figure 1 is a map of the state of Georgia showing the location of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. Figure 2 is an aerial photograph of Atlanta showing the location of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park. Figure 3 is a map of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park showing the location of 515 Auburn Avenue, NE.

The dwelling at 515 Auburn Avenue, also known as the Charles A. Faison House, is listed on 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. The property is important within the park as an example of a one-story, single-family, African American continually occupied dwelling on the Birth Home Block, the block of houses surrounding Dr. King's birth home, 501 Auburn Avenue. The Faison family was an important family within the larger African American community, and Dr. King and his family would have certainly known and been aware of Faison's color barrier-breaking work with the Shriners and the Masons. Faison and his wife Annie were anchors of the Sweet Auburn community, which had begun to change during Dr. King's boyhood, living there until their deaths in 1936 and 1940.

Historical Data

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is in the Old Fourth Ward and Sweet Auburn neighborhoods 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].¹

-
1. 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.²

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 houses or moved into the recently constructed houses along Auburn Avenue east of Jackson Street.³ Built about 1886, the oldest building on the Birth Home Block stands at 521 Auburn Avenue.⁴ 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 architectural styles of the 1890s and 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.⁵ Occupying half of the block between Boulevard and Hogue, 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.⁶ 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

2. Robert W. Blythe, Maureen A. Carroll, and Stephen Moffson, *National Register of Historic Places documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site*, certified by the Keeper of the National Register on May 4, 1994, (NRIS 80000435; National Archives Identifier 93208246), 2.

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

4. *Ibid.*, Section 8, 14.

5. *Ibid.*, Section 7, 4 and Section 8, 57.

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

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 repairs or were unfit for use.⁷

The original owners of 515 Auburn Avenue were Charles A. Faison and his wife Annie Belle Evans Faison, African Americans.⁸ Faison is best known in Atlanta for his long careers with Herndon Barber Shop, 66 Peachtree Avenue, and with Atlanta's first black Masonic organization, Rabban / Nabbar Temple. Faison was the Illustrious Potentate of Rabban Temple, and he was personally named in 1916 when a lawsuit challenging the right of African Americans to form Shriner organizations and temples began making its way to the US Supreme Court. On July 3, 1926, the US Supreme Court overturned a Texas lower court ruling that had let stand a ruling that black Shriners could not meet as Shriners. The Supreme Court determined that Shriners could be black people, and Charles A. Faison would be enshrined in Shriner history as the Illustrious Potentate who officially broke the color barrier. Faison would go on to become a 32nd-degree Mason, and one of the founding members and the Commander-In-Chief of the Atlanta Consistory No. 24, Orient of Georgia, Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Prince Hall Affiliated, Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America.⁹

When Faison was not engaged in Masonic activities, he was a barber at the Herndon Barber Shop at 66 Peachtree Avenue where he cut hair for almost half a century. Upon Faison's death in 1936, John Wesley Dobbs, the unofficial Mayor of Sweet Auburn, called for an escort of Masons to accompany the body from the church to Oakland Cemetery for interment, an honor that had never

before been bestowed upon any black person.¹⁰ After Faison's death, his wife lived in the house until 1940, possibly her death.

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 When the NPS acquired the properties that make up the Historical Park, 515 Auburn Avenue was set aside for administrative use.

The house underwent exterior stabilization in 1994 and a roof replacement in 2014. The house is currently vacant, but is slated for continued NPS administrative use.

Treatment and Use

Located within the Birth Home Block, the house at 515 Auburn Avenue is significant for its association with the neighborhood in which Martin Luther King Jr. grew up and is a contributing property to the historic district. The building is part of the context of the Birth Home neighborhood. It is anticipated to remain in use as meeting space by the NPS, 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 515 Auburn Avenue house is generally in good condition, typically requiring maintenance-type repairs. Examples of which include masonry repair, wood repair or replacement, painting, and lack of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility.

7. Ibid.

8. Myron W. Adams, Compiler, *General Catalog of Atlanta University, Georgia, 1867-1918* (Atlanta: The Atlanta University Press, 1918), n.p.

9. Nabbar Temple No. 128, History, accessed May 22, 2019, <https://www.nabbar.org/history.html>.

10. Ren Davis, Helen Davis with Introduction by Timothy J. Crimmins, *Atlanta's Oakland Cemetery: An Illustrated History & Guide* (Athens, GA, and London: Historic Oakland Foundation and University of Georgia Press, 2012).

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

Administrative Data

Locational Data

Building Name: 515 Auburn Avenue, Charles A. Faison House

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

LCS Number: 090015

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 (NRIS 80000435; National Archives Identifier 93208246).

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*. 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, the *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 of Historic Places nomination documentation was prepared for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District.¹² Although 515 Auburn Avenue was not specifically named, the “Victorian Houses” that lined the Birth Home Block were indicated as contributing resources.¹³ This would include 515 Auburn Avenue.

In October 1980, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District were established “to protect and interpret for present

12. 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).
13. Joseph Scott Mendinghall, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District (Landmark)*, (Washington, DC: Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation, 1973), 3.

and future generations the area where Dr. King was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried.¹⁴ In 1993, National Register nomination documentation was completed for the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, comprising a historic district bounded by Jackson, Howell, and Old Wheat Streets and Edgewood Avenue. In this documentation, 515 Auburn Avenue was listed as a contributing building under Criteria A and C.¹⁵

In 1985, the Birth Home Block street facades were recorded for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS, GA 62-ATLA, 49). During this recordation, 515 Auburn Avenue's front, street facade, was indicated as a blank outline because the "property [was] inaccessible for documentation." However, its location on the block is depicted on a master Auburn Avenue Birth Home Block map.¹⁶

Period of Significance. The period of significance of 1909–1968 begins with the date of construction of 515 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 Jr. grew up.¹⁷ 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.¹⁸

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14. Public Law 96-428, October 10, 1980.
 15. *National Register documentation*, 32 and 66.
 16. Historic American Buildings Survey, *Martin Luther King Jr., National Historic Site Birth Home Block Survey* (Washington, DC: HABS 1985), Sheet 13.
 17. Note that the park interprets the Birth Home Block to the period 1929–1941, Martin Luther King Jr.'s formative years in Atlanta.
 18. *National Register documentation*, 4; Steven H. Moffson, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, with John A. Kissane, Historic Preservation Consultant, Historic

Proposed Treatment. Rehabilitation

Project Scope and Methodology

The goal of the HSR 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 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.¹⁹

The HSR addresses key issues specific to 515 Auburn Avenue, also known as the Charles A. Faison House, 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

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

modifications and repairs for use in assessing existing conditions and developing treatment recommendations for the building. Documents reviewed included maps, drawings, specifications, historic photographs, and other written and illustrative documentation about the history of construction and repairs to the house. 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. Contacts at the Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History were consulted as were multiple online sites associated with the history of the City of Atlanta, Sweet Auburn, Charles A. and Annie Belle Evans Faison, 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 was performed and observations were documented with digital photographs, field notes, and annotation on baseline drawings. For purposes of the field survey, drawings were prepared by the project team. The condition assessment addressed the exterior and primary interior spaces and features of the building as well as the building's hazardous materials.

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. An evaluation of the significance was also prepared, taking into consideration guidelines provided by *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register*

*Criteria for Evaluation.*²⁰ This evaluation of history and significance provided the basis for the development of recommended treatment alternatives.

Guidelines for Preservation. 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.

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 buildings, as well as for the features of the landscape included in this study. Following the overall treatment approach of *Rehabilitation* for the house, 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.²¹

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 project.²²

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20. *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 1997).
 21. 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 Historic Preservation Services, 2017).
 22. Slaton.



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



FIGURE 2. Aerial photograph of Atlanta showing the 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 515 Auburn Avenue, NE. (Source: National Park Service baseline map, annotated by the authors)

Developmental History

Historical Background and Context

Situated in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood and the Old Fourth Ward on Atlanta's east side, the residence at 515 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.²³

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 the last Atlanta home of Dr. King and his family on 234 Sunset Avenue. The neighborhood surrounding the Birth Home on Auburn Avenue includes a cohesive grouping of residential

buildings constructed from 1893 through 1931.²⁴ The block also contains Fire Station No. 6 and an extant circa 1920 store building.²⁵

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.²⁶ 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.²⁷

During the period before the Civil War, Atlanta had a relatively small black population in comparison to older and larger southern cities,

23. 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.

24. *National Register documentation, Section 8, 32-33*. For this context, the Birth Home Block includes the section of Auburn Avenue located between Boulevard NE and Howell Street NE.

25. *Ibid.*

26. Alexa Henderson and Eugene Walker, *Sweet Auburn: The Thriving Hub of Black Atlanta* (Atlanta: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1983), 3.

27. Ambrose et al., 1-1.

such as Savannah.²⁸ With only a few exceptions, enslaved persons in Atlanta were forbidden to engage in entrepreneurial activity unless their owners or representatives were present.²⁹ Most of the enslaved population in Atlanta worked as general laborers and domestic servants. Others pursued skilled trades as brick masons, carpenters, and blacksmiths.³⁰ 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 newly free black people did not own real estate or personal property.³¹

In 1860, 1,939 African Americans were reported to be living within Atlanta's municipal boundary, only twenty-five of whom were free.³² 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.³³ Many in Atlanta's black 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 African American tenements and settlements throughout the city. These clusters of black settlements developed along railroads and in low-lying areas where land was less expensive and generally considered by the greater population as undesirable.³⁴ 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.³⁵

During the late nineteenth century, African Americans established a variety of successful retail trades and services. The most popular black 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, who constituted 46 percent of the ward's population.³⁶

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.³⁷ 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.³⁸

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

28. *Ibid.*, 2-1.

29. *Ibid.*, 1-1.

30. 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>.

31. Ambrose et al., 1-3.

32. *Ibid.*, 2-1.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*, 2-2.

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*, 2-4.

37. Lawliss, 12.

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

black residential development. As the number of African American citizens residing in the city continued 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.³⁹ Two years later, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled against racial zoning ordinances.⁴⁰ 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 1922.⁴¹ 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 1928.⁴² 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.⁴³ Laura Lavinia (Kelly) Combs, a free black woman in pre-Civil War Atlanta, was the first African American property owner on Auburn Avenue.⁴⁴ One of two African American landowners in the antebellum period, Combs purchased a lot at the intersection of Wheat and Peachtree streets prior to 1854.⁴⁵ She sold the

property in 1856 to buy her husband's freedom from slavery.⁴⁶ 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.⁴⁷ The Atlanta City Council officially changed the name on April 17, 1893.⁴⁸

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.⁴⁹ 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.⁵⁰ By the mid-1890s, the Auburn Avenue community

39. 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.

40. *Ibid.*, 14.

41. Ambrose et al., 2-10.

42. *Ibid.*

43. Henderson and Walker, 5.

44. *Ibid.* 6.

45. 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.

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

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

48. *Ibid.*

49. *National Register documentation*, Section 7, 3.

50. *Ibid.*

had direct transportation to downtown, where many residents worked and shopped.⁵¹

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.”⁵² 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.⁵³ 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.⁵⁴ 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.⁵⁵

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.⁵⁶ 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 in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”⁵⁷ From 1910 to 1930, Auburn Avenue became the center of African American business, institutional, religious, and social life.⁵⁸ During the 1920s, some African Americans started to migrate to the west side of Atlanta.⁵⁹ 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. The West Side replaced the Auburn Avenue residential district as the preferred neighborhood by the 1950s.⁶⁰

Birth Home Block

By 1899, most of the lots along Auburn Avenue between Jackson and Howell streets were developed.⁶¹ Residences in the Birth Home Block are representative of vernacular adaptations of popular domestic architecture of the 1890s and early twentieth century found in American cities.⁶² 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.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid, Section 8, 24.

53. Moffson and Kissane, 30.

54. 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).

55. Moffson and Kissane, 30.

56. Ibid.

57. *National Register documentation*, 8, 24.

58. Ambrose et al., 1-24.

59. Ibid., 2-21.

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

61. Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Atlanta, Georgia* (1899), accessed May 20, 2019, <http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/sanborn/CityCounty/Atlanta1899/Sheet48.html>.

62. *National Register documentation*, 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.⁶³ 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.⁶⁴

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.⁶⁵ Martin Luther King Jr.'s, maternal grandfather, Reverend A.D. Williams purchased the circa 1894 single-family house at 501 Auburn Avenue in 1909.⁶⁶ 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.⁶⁷

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.⁶⁸ 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.⁶⁹ 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 work or were unfit for use.⁷⁰

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.⁷¹ 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.⁷²

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.”⁷³ 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 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 the 1980 legislation, adjoins the site (now National

63. *Ibid.*, 8, 57.

64. Lawliss, 17.

65. *Historic Resource Study*, n.p.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *Ibid.*

68. Lawliss, 21.

69. *Ibid.*, 14.

70. *Ibid.*

71. *National Register documentation*, 7, 9.

72. 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).

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

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, 1977.⁷⁴ The Sweet Auburn Historic District was designated a National Historic Landmark on January 8, 1976.⁷⁵ Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District (Landmark) included some portions of the Sweet Auburn Historic District. On May 4, 1994, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site was administratively listed on the National Register of Historic Places.⁷⁶

In 2001, the original boundary of Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District was increased.⁷⁷ 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 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.

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.⁷⁸ Additionally, H.R. 267 further modifies the boundaries 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."⁷⁹ Dr. King was one of the founders and first president of the SCLC 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 National Park Service 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. The house at 515 Auburn Avenue is currently vacant. It has been used by the National Historical Park as temporary office and meeting space.

74. Macgregor and Summers; and Benjamin Levy, *National Register Landmark Documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District (Landmark)*, 1976, designated May 6, 1977 (National Archives identifier 80000435_NHL).

75. *National Register documentation*.

76. *Ibid.*

77. See Moffson and Kissane.

78. 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-r-267-law>.

79. 115 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>.

515 Auburn Avenue, known as the Faison House (LCS #090015)

The house at 515 Auburn Avenue is located on the south side of Birth Home Block, two houses east of 501 Auburn Avenue, the Martin Luther King Jr. Birth Home in the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park, Atlanta. This single-family house was constructed in 1909 for Charles A. Faison. In 1980, when the house became part of the NPS, the building was described as a “single-story frame cottage with projecting cross-gable and octagonal bay; [with]Doric porch columns, dwelling covered in asbestos siding”⁸⁰ (Figure 4). The single-family house was also a duplex at that time, although it is not one at present. Although the house at 515 Auburn Avenue is a single story building and most of the other houses on the Birth Home Block are two-story buildings, it still shares a late Victorian aesthetic with its neighbors. The dwelling’s decorative elements include: a steep, complex roof line with front facing gable, decorative window and door moldings, 1/1 windows, and full-width porch (Figure 5). Although 515 Auburn Avenue sits back farther on the lot than most of the other houses, like the other Auburn Avenue lots, it is long and narrow, with only small very narrow side yards.

The architect and the builder of the house are not known.

Occupants of 515 Auburn Avenue

The original occupants and owners of 515 Auburn Avenue were Charles A. and Annie Belle Faison, African Americans. The Faison’s occupied the house until 1940.⁸¹



FIGURE 4. Faison House (1909), 515 Auburn Avenue (LCS #090015), MALU. (Source: All photographs by authors in 2016 unless otherwise noted)



FIGURE 5. Rear, south facade, 515 Auburn Avenue, showing steep, complex roof line, decorative window and door moldings, and 1/1 windows.

Charles Faison is best known in Atlanta for two reasons: his long careers with Atlanta’s first African American Masonic organization, Rabban / Nabbar Temple, and with Herndon Barber Shop, 66 Peachtree Avenue, Atlanta; both of which are intertwined.

In 1908, John Wesley Dobbs, the “Unofficial Mayor of Auburn Avenue,” and a group of African American businessmen started a Masonic Temple, Rabban Temple No. 27 in Atlanta, specifically for black members. In 1914, Rabban Temple was sued by YAARAB Temple of Atlanta and its Illustrious Potentate Forest Adair, who alleged that Rabban had illegally copied the name, terminology, symbols, and paraphernalia of YAARAB Temple.

80. Division of Facilities Management, Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, Series V, Subseries D – 1944-2019, Building Inventory Files 1971-2004, Box 2, Folder 22 – 215 Auburn Avenue, 1981-1983, 1992-1999 (Atlanta: MALU 2016), n.p.

81. *Ibid.*; Adams, n.p.

Adair was seeking the court's denial of the right of the Rabban nobles to hold meetings or use the emblems or regalia of Shriners.⁸²

On October 19 and 20, 1914, the first case was tried before Judge Bell in the Superior Court of Atlanta. The opposing lawyer failed to make a case, and Judge Bell took the case under advisement. Ten days later, the judge denied the injunction sought by YAABAR Temple, but the trial was later declared a mistrial because Bell had family members in the YAABAR Temple.⁸³

On January 6 and 7, 1915, the case was reheard in Atlanta, and it was passed to the Supreme Court of Georgia. On June 7, 1915, the appeals case was heard in the Georgia Supreme Court, which rendered a decision in favor of YAABAR Temple. The decision was a stunning blow to Rabban Temple, which had exhausted its funds pursuing the case. John Wesley Dobbs and the Rabban Temple's new Illustrious Potentate Charles A. Faison subsequently went to the 18th Annual Session of Nobility in Chicago to successfully plead for funds.⁸⁴

With new funding, Rabban Temple was handed another blow when on May 15, 1916, a separate ruling found that Rabban Temple, with Illustrious Potentate Faison named as a party in the suit, was meeting and using the symbols of Shriners illegally. The impact of this ruling was to make it illegal for African American Shriners to meet as Shriners across the United States.⁸⁵

Rabban Temple did not give up, especially since the fate of all African American Shriners was now in their hands. The lawsuit made its way to Texas, where, on October 22, 1926, the Supreme Court of Texas denied a motion for a hearing. The Rabban Temple's lawyers immediately applied to the Clerk of Court for a transcript. On December 21, 1926, the transcript was taken to the Clerk of the Supreme Court of the United States. On July 3, 1926, the US Supreme Court overturned the Texas

ruling. Shriners could be African American, and Charles A. Faison would be enshrined in Shriner history as the Illustrious Potentate that officially broke the color barrier. Later, Dobbs renamed the temple Nabbar Temple.⁸⁶

Faison later became a 32nd degree Mason, and helped to form the Atlanta Consistory No. 24, Orient of Georgia, Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Prince Hall Affiliated, Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America. Faison also served as the Atlanta Consistory No. 24 Commander-In-Chief.⁸⁷

When Faison was not engaged in Masonic activities, he was a barber at the Herndon Barber Shop, 66 Peachtree Avenue, where he cut hair for almost half a century. Upon Faison's death in 1936, John Wesley Dobbs called for an escort of Masons to accompany his body from the church to Oakland Cemetery for interment, an honor that had never before been bestowed upon any African American.⁸⁸

Annie Belle Evans Faison, Faison's wife, was born in Madison, Georgia, on March 14, 1878, and attended Atlanta University where she received an advanced degree in education.⁸⁹ It is not known whether or not she taught in the Atlanta area. After Charles Faison died in 1936, Annie continued to live in the house until at least 1940.⁹⁰

Occupants of 515 Auburn by Date:

1910	Charles A. and Annie B. Faison (C – HO) ⁹¹
1915	Charles A. and Annie B. Faison (C – HO)
1920	Charles A. and Annie B. Faison (C – HO)

86. Ibid.

87. Atlanta Consistory, History of Atlanta Consistory #24A, accessed May 22, 2019, <http://www.atlantaconsistory.org/history-of-atlanta-consistory-no-24a.html>.

88. Davis et al., n.p.

89. Adams, n.p.

90. Division of Facilities Management, 2016.

91. Census records indicated race and home ownership status; thus C=Colored and HO = Home Owner.

82. Nabbar Temple No. 128.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.

1925	Charles A. and Annie B. Faison (C – HO)
1930	Charles A. and Annie B. Faison (C – HO)
1936	Charles A. and Annie B. Faison (C – HO)
1940	Annie B. Faison (C-HO)
1945	John Braswell (C- HO)
1950	Mrs. Minnie Turner (no race or ownership listed)
1955	Charles C. Armstrong (no race or ownership listed)
1965	No occupant/s listed
1970	Mrs. Ellyn F. Simpson and Mrs. Janie Evans (no race or ownership listed)
1975	Mrs. Ellyn F. Simpson and Mrs. Janie Evans (no race or ownership listed)
1980	Mrs. Ellyn F. Simpson and Mrs. Janie Evans (no race or ownership listed) ⁹²

The house was turned into a duplex at an unknown date. Occupancy data would seem to indicate this happened in the late 1960s or 1970s; although that data is inconclusive.

Historical Recordations of 515 Auburn Avenue

In 1974, a National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form was prepared for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, and, although 515 Auburn Avenue was not specifically named, the “Victorian Houses” that lined the Birth Home Block were indicated as contributing resources.⁹³ These “Victorian Houses” would include 515 Auburn Avenue.

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 worshipped, and where he is

buried.”⁹⁴ When the NPS acquired the properties that comprise the National Historical Park, it was with the intention that some of them would enter the Historic Lease Program, and some of them would be retained for use as NPS administrative properties.⁹⁵ The 515 Auburn Avenue house was set aside to serve as an administrative property.

In 1985, the Birth Home Block street facades were recorded for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). During this recordation, 515 Auburn Avenue’s front, street facade, was indicated as a blank outline because the “property [was] inaccessible for documentation”; however, its location on the block was depicted on a master Auburn Avenue Birth Home Block map (Figure 6).⁹⁶

A Cultural Landscape Report was conducted on the Birth Home Block in 1993 by Lucy Lawliss, and the yard at 515 Auburn Avenue was included (Figure 7).⁹⁷ In 1994, a National Register Nomination was completed for Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, and 515 Auburn Avenue is listed as a contributing building and described as

A vernacular gabled-ell house, with several additions, that was converted from a single-family residence to a duplex. The roof is complex with two hipped portions and a front-facing gable. The wraparound porch displays Tuscan columns.⁹⁸

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

95. 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), n.p.

96. Historic American Building Survey, *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Birth-Home (Sic) Block Survey* (Washington, DC: HABS 1985), Sheet 10.

97. Lawliss, 258.

98. *National Register documentation*, 18.

92. Division of Facilities Management, 2016.

93. Macgregor and Summers, 3.

Developmental History

The 1994 Historic Resource Study of the site included 515 Auburn Avenue and described it the same way.⁹⁹

The house at 515 Auburn Avenue is currently vacant and has been used by the National Historical Park as temporary office and meeting space.

Physical Changes to 518 Auburn Avenue

The house at 515 Auburn Avenue has undergone a number of changes since its construction in 1909. As listed in NPS maintenance files, the shingle roof was replaced with a composition roof between 1925 and 1930.¹⁰⁰ In 1953, a building permit was issued, but there is no record of the work completed.¹⁰¹ In 1983, the NPS conducted a conditions survey of the house. The conditions found are listed below:

- Foundation (brick wall): Good
- Foundation infill: NA
- Facade/siding (plywood siding): Fair (Medium gray)
- Trim (or wood shingles): Fair (white)
- Roof: Fair (a drawing of diamond shaped shingles is shown)
- Dormer (illegible comment): Fair
- Chimney (brick): Good
- Soffit/cornice (or wood): Good
- Windows (1/1): Good
- Doors (wood panel): Good
- Doors (1 pane w/ security gate): Good (black)
- Porch (wood): Fair
- Stairs (concrete, brick piers): Fair

99. *Historic Resources Study*, Appendix B.

100. Division of Facilities Management, 2016, n.p.

101. *Ibid.*

- Front Walk (concrete): Fair
- Sidewalk (concrete): Good
- Retaining Walls (stone ag.): Good
- Driveway (dirt – closed off): Not used
- Fencing (chain-link covered with 9-foot hedge): Good
- Curb (granite): Good.¹⁰²

At this same time, several measurements and drawings were made of the house presumably by the individual completing the survey (Figure 8, Figure 9, Figure 10, and Figure 11).

In 1994, 515 Auburn's exterior underwent stabilization.¹⁰³ In 2014, Northwest Pest Control cored holes, three to four inches deep, through the soil around 515 Auburn Avenue in order to place Sentricon® as a termite treatment. Gray caps were placed on top of the holes.¹⁰⁴ In 2014, the house's roof was replaced with asphalt shingles with a 40-pound felt underlayment.¹⁰⁵

102. *Ibid.*, Folder 23.

103. Department of the Interior, *Stabilization of 515 Auburn, Auburn Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr., National Historic Site* (Atlanta: National Park Service, SERO, 1994).

104. National Park Service, *Categorical Exclusion Form: Termite Treatment Throughout Historic District, PEPC Project No. 53364* (Atlanta: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, 2014).

105. National Park Service, *Categorical Exclusion Form: Replace roof on historic buildings 503, 515 Auburn Avenue and 39 Boulevard, PEPC Project No. 52440* (Atlanta: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, 2014).



FIGURE 6. HABS Birth Home Block Street Facades, 515 Auburn Avenue, Sheet 10, showing the building as a blank outline because the “property [was] inaccessible for documentation.” (Source: Alexander Hamilton, *472-550 Auburn Avenue & 39 Boulevard, Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia. Martin Luther King Jr., National Historic Site. HABS GA, 61-ATLA, 49-[Sheet 10 of 13], 1985*)

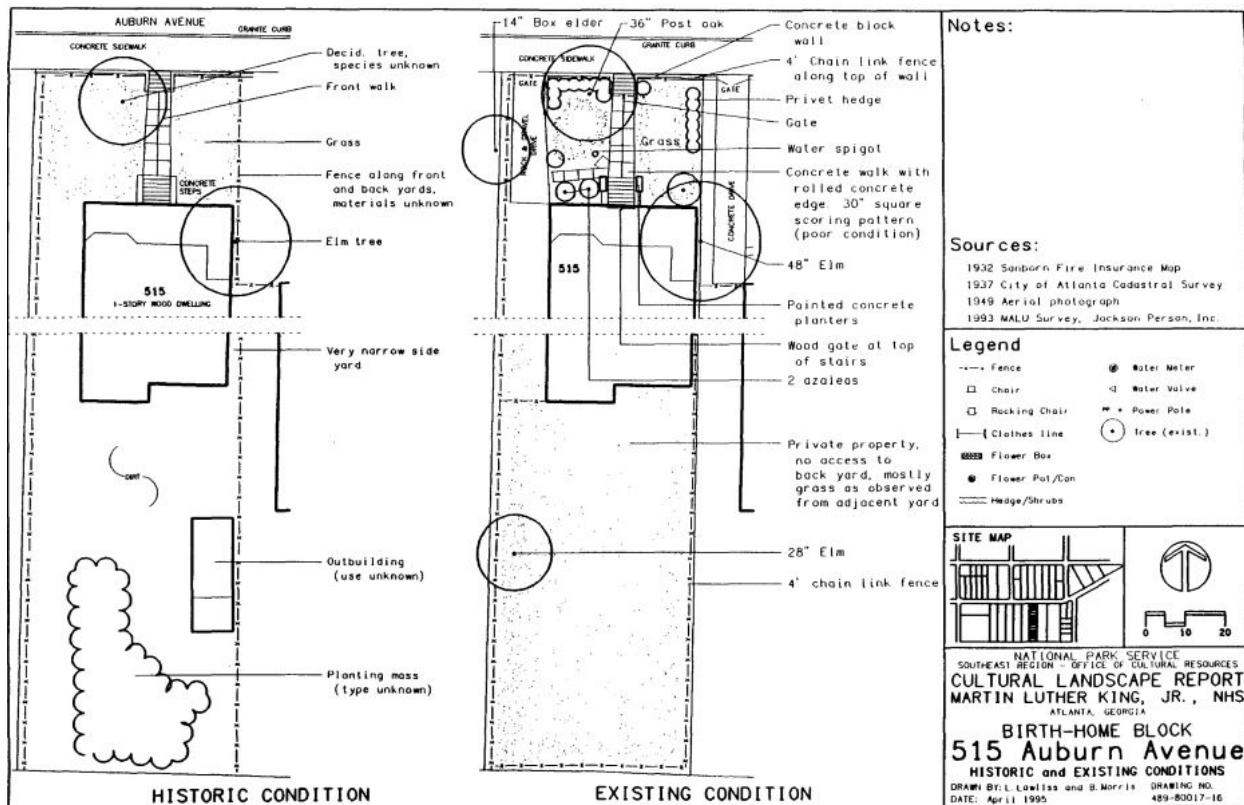


FIGURE 7. Current and historic landscape at 515 Auburn Avenue (Source: Lawliss, Figure 52)

Developmental History

Also in 2014, 515 Auburn Avenue received an upgrade of its drainage system to carry water away from the building as did many other others in the National Historic Site (now National Historical Park).¹⁰⁶ In 2016, cyclic interior painting was completed on 515 Auburn using Park Youth Preservation Crew, a part of the NPS Call to Action, 21st Century Conservation Service Corps, and President Barack Obama's America's Great Outdoors initiative.¹⁰⁷

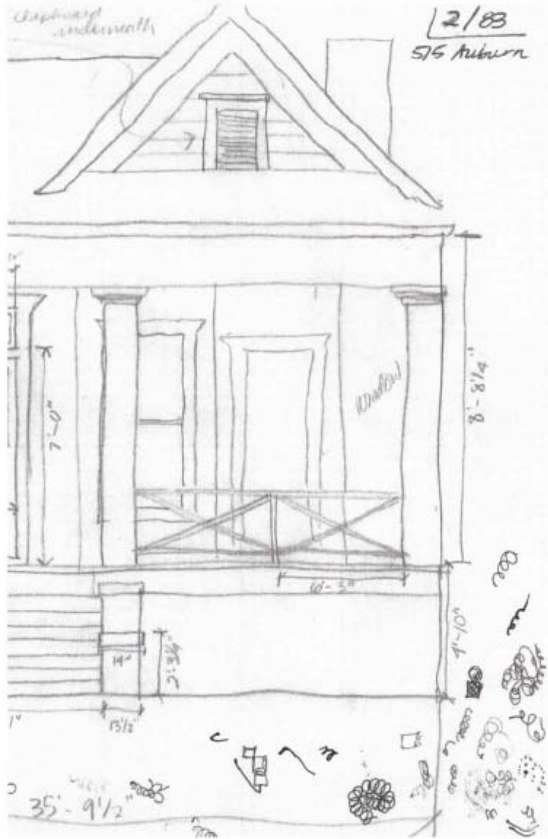


FIGURE 8. Drawing of 515 Auburn Avenue showing the front, north, façade, a portion of the porch and front gable. (Source: Division of Facilities Management, 1981-1983, 1992-1999)

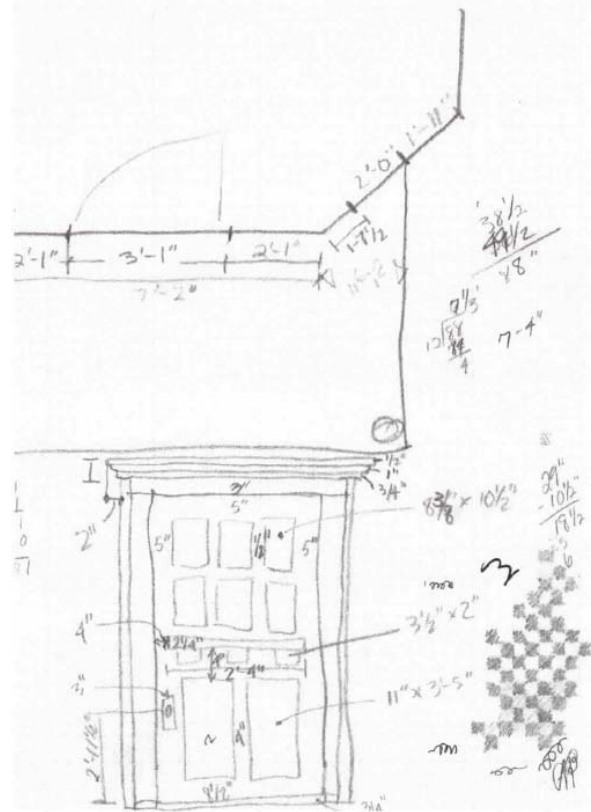


FIGURE 9. Drawing of door detail at 515 Auburn Avenue gable. (Source: Division of Facilities Management, 1981-1983, 1992-1999)

106. National Park Service, *Categorical Exclusion Form: Update Drainage System in Birth Home Block, PEPC Project No. 59324* (Atlanta: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, 2015).
107. National Park Service, *PST Work Order Tracking: Perform Cyclic Interior Painting of Historic 515 Auburn Avenue, Work Order 11919406* (Atlanta: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, 2016).

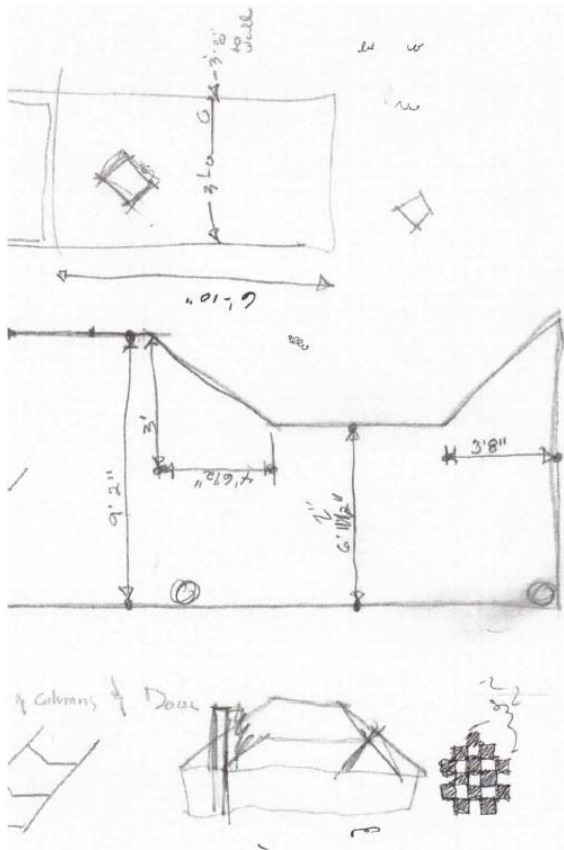


FIGURE 10. Drawing of roof dimensions at 515 Auburn Avenue gable. (Source: Division of Facilities Management, 1981-1983, 1992-1999)

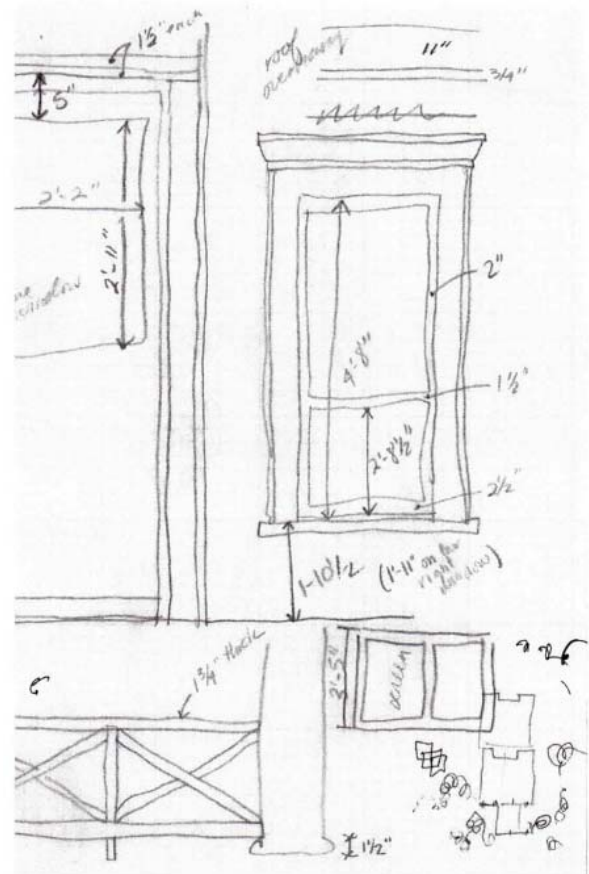


FIGURE 11. Drawing of front, north, facade, window, door, and porch railing details at 515 Auburn Avenue gable. (Source: Division of Facilities Management, 1981-1983, 1992-1999).

Chronology of Development and Use: 515 Auburn Avenue Timeline

1909	House at 515 Auburn Avenue constructed for Charles A. and Annie Faison
1925-1930	Roof shingles changed to composition shingles
1953	Building permit issue but no record of changes
1974	Becomes a contributing element to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District
1977	Listed as a contributing resource to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District (Landmark)
1980	Becomes part of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and an NPS property
1983	NPS exterior conditions report made
1985	HABS recordation of Birth Home Block notes of 515 Auburn
1993	Landscape surveyed as part of a CLR
1994	Named a contributing resource in the administratively listed Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Named in resource in Historic Resource Study of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. Exterior stabilization undertaken
2014	Roof replaced with asphalt shingles with 40-pound underlayment Sentricon® termite control used; upgrade of drainage system
2016	Interior cyclic painting undertaken
2018	Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park created

The house at 515 Auburn Avenue is a contributing property under NRHP criteria A and C to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.¹⁰⁸

108. *National Register documentation*, 8, 33 and 66.

Physical Description and Condition Assessment

Site

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park is located in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood in eastern 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. 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, National Park Service and religious buildings, such as the visitor center, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, and the Ebenezer Baptist Church, are along the west end of Auburn Avenue, and residential buildings are concentrated along the east half of Auburn Avenue and Howell Street (Figure 12). 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.

The building at 515 Auburn Avenue, NE is situated on the south side of Auburn Avenue at the middle of the block between Boulevard Avenue and Howell Street. It is approximately 100 feet east of the Martin Luther King Jr. Birth Home. The house sits on a site that slopes gradually to the north and measures approximately 50 feet wide by 180 feet deep (Figure 13). The front of the house faces Auburn Avenue from which it is setback 25 feet

from the sidewalk and separated from the street by an 8-foot-wide concrete sidewalk.



FIGURE 12. Overview of Auburn Avenue streetscape looking west at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.



FIGURE 13. View of the 515 Auburn Avenue site taken from the east, across Auburn Avenue.

The site has a mown-turf lawn to the north (front) and south (back) of the house. At the front lawn, a concrete stair and walk extend perpendicularly from the sidewalk and provide access to the front porch (Figure 14). The property also includes a 10-foot-wide concrete drive that extends from Auburn Avenue along the west side of the lot and provides access to a concrete-paved surface lot located at the south end of the property (Figure 15). The surface lot is shared by 515 Auburn and the adjacent lot (509 Auburn) to the west, and it measures approximately 40 feet by 60 feet. Half of the surface lot is situated on the 515 Auburn Avenue property.



FIGURE 14. The concrete walk that extends from the sidewalk.



FIGURE 15. The concrete drive west of the residence.

In addition to the walk, the front lawn consists of a concrete masonry unit (CMU) retaining wall, approximately two feet in height that extends along the north edge of the property and along the north portion of the drive. Atop the retaining wall

is a wood-framed fence, consisting of 4x4 wood posts and welded wire mesh (Figure 16). An oak tree is located at the northwest corner of the lawn.¹⁰⁹ Hedgerows extend along the east portion of the front lawn, defining the property boundary, and along the porch of the house. A chain-link fence defines the south portion of the east property line (Figure 17).



FIGURE 16. The retaining wall and wood-frame fence along the north edge of the property.



FIGURE 17. Building at 515 Auburn Avenue looking northwest with chain link fence in the foreground.

The adjacent housing lots also have residential buildings, all with different setbacks. The lot to the east includes a one-story, wood-framed single-family residence, set back approximately 30 feet from the sidewalk. A one-story wood-framed outbuilding is located at the north (front) end of the lot, along the sidewalk. The lot to the west features a two-story, wood-framed apartment building setback approximately 10 feet from the

109. Lawliss.

sidewalk. A lot to the south has a two-story brick apartment building and one-story outbuilding which fronts the south property line of 515 Auburn.

House

The structure at 515 Auburn Avenue is a one-story wood-framed residential building constructed in 1909 with influences of the Queen Anne Style (Figure 18). It has a brick foundation, wood clapboard siding with wood trim, and complex asphalt-shingle hip roof and features a wrap-around porch.



FIGURE 18. Overview of the 515 Auburn Avenue property.

The building has an irregular plan consisting of a center hip-roof portion of the building and an attached north wing which extends from the west end of the north elevation. The center portion measures 37 feet 8 inches wide by 30 feet deep and is 25 feet tall. The north wing measures 30 feet wide by 10 feet deep. The two sections of the building form the primary “L”-shaped plan of the building. Each section has a separate hip roof, the ridge lines of which run parallel in an east–west direction. An octagonal bay projects 2 feet from the west end of the north elevation and is capped by a gable roof. A one-story wood-framed porch with hip roof extends the full width of the north elevation and wraps around the northeast corner. There are two non-original additions at the south elevation. Each addition, located on opposite sides of the elevation, has a hip roof and is offset 8 inches from the corners of the elevation. The addition on the east side of the elevation measures 9 feet wide by 7 feet 5

inches deep. The addition at the west side of the elevation is 12 feet wide and 12 feet deep.

The north elevation is the primary, street-facing elevation for the house (Figure 19). There are three doors on the elevation. The primary entrance is centered on the elevation and consists of a multi-panel door with transom. At the center face of the octagonal bay is a decorative multi-panel door. Located on the setback portion of the building is another multi-panel door. Window openings are located at the return face of the octagonal bay and adjacent to the east of the main entrance. The gable roof of the octagonal bay projects above the hip roof of the porch. The end gable has a wood cornice and louvered wood attic vent. The elevation also includes brick masonry chimneys at the east and west sides of the hip roof at the main portion of the house.



FIGURE 19. Main (north) elevation of building at 515 Auburn Avenue.

The east elevation consists of four window openings with wood trim equally spaced and centered on the elevation (Figure 20). The elevation features the brick foundation wall and painted metal downspouts at the corners of the porch roof, center hip roof, and south addition hip roof.

The south elevation features a recessed area, defined by the south additions, with a wood-framed patio that extends between the additions (Figure 21). Two door openings are accessed from the patio; one centered on the south elevation and one located off the west side of the patio. Each opening is accessed from the patio and has wood trim and a wall-mounted light fixture above the

opening. Window openings with wood trim are centered on the south elevations of the south additions. The elevation also includes a brick chimney at the east side of the elevation and gutters with downspouts located at the corners of the additions.



FIGURE 20. East elevation of the building.



FIGURE 21. South elevation of the building.

The west elevation features a window opening with wood trim at the south addition and four window openings with wood trim at the center portion of the building. The windows are irregularly spaced across the elevation. The opening at the south end of the center portion of the building is smaller than the typical window size; having a sill height 12 inches higher than the adjacent windows. The elevation includes a brick foundation wall and sheet metal gutters with downspouts at the corners of each wing of the building.

Owned by the National Park Service since 1990, the building was restored in 1994, and it currently

functions as office space and a meeting center for NPS service personnel.

Exterior Description

Foundation. The foundation at the center portion of the house and the south additions consists of a perimeter brick foundation wall with supplemental pier supports. The porch has a brick pier foundation. At the perimeter porch piers, the space between them has been infilled with brick. The exterior face of the brick at the foundation walls and piers has been painted yellow. Numerous repairs and alterations were observed at the foundation, particularly under the porch and south additions.

At the center portion of the house, the foundation wall is visible from the east and west elevations and is generally constructed with common bond brick. The third course from the top has a more decorative pattern consisting of a stretcher followed by a 2-1/2-inch wide gap. At some locations on the west elevation, the gaps provide access to the crawl space for pipes and conduit. One portion of the foundation wall at the west elevation of the building, which appears to be non-original, was constructed with an American bond. There was no decorative stretcher course with intermediate gaps at this location.

The foundation at the center portion of the house also includes 8-inch-by-16-inch brick piers, spaced approximately 10 feet on center in both directions, forming a grid upon which the floor beams are supported (Figure 22).

The foundation between the center portion of the building and the south foundation is defined by an offset in the foundation wall. The brick at the south addition foundations appear to be of a later vintage. Additionally, there is a 15-foot-long brick foundation wall that spans the north end of the crawl space, between the two south addition foundations. At the south additions, the foundation consists of a brick common bond foundation wall approximately five courses tall.



FIGURE 22. Brick pier foundation at center portion of house.

A top plate and perimeter beam rests on top of the wall and supports the floor joints. Because of the width of the additions, there are no supplemental brick support piers at the additions.

The transition from the center portion of the building to the porch is defined by a sistered wood beam that spans east–west and a change in the foundation system. The porch has a brick pier foundation. Piers measure 16 inches square and are located at the perimeter of the porch as well as spaced 10 feet on center. As previously described, the space between perimeter piers is infilled with common bond brick (Figure 23). At the north and east elevations of the porch, the brick infill was constructed with 2-1/2-inch gaps between adjacent brick units, creating a diamond pattern in the wall. The pattern is repeated every 6 feet.



FIGURE 23. Infill brick between pier supports at foundation below north porch.

The crawl space is accessed from a wood-framed door on the west elevation of the porch foundation. It has a dirt floor that gradually slopes to the north. Thus, the height of the crawl space and the exposed portion of piers ranges from 44 inches tall at the north end of the foundation to 12 inches tall at the south end of the foundation. The south portion of the crawl space includes numerous insulated copper pipes and polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes that are suspended from the floor joints with wood cleats and metal straps (Figure 24).



FIGURE 24. Pipes of various kinds suspended from metal straps attached to floor joists.

Walls. The exterior walls are clad with horizontal wood siding, painted yellow, with 4-1/2 inches of exposure and nailed with spiral nails spaced 16 inches on center (Figure 25). Vertically-oriented wood trim is located at all corners of the building, including those at the octagonal bay. The trim measures approximately 4 inches wide and is painted yellow. Horizontal trim boards are located at the top of the wall, below the eave. The trim is approximately 6 inches wide and is painted yellow. At the top of the trim is a profiled trim piece that conceals the joint between the trim and the soffit. The roof eave overhangs approximately 12 inches beyond the walls. The eave consists of a wood fascia, approximately 6 inches wide, with a profiled trim and a plywood soffit (Figure 26). The end gable above the octagonal bay has a full eave return that extends across the entire end gable. There are a few non-original light fixtures mounted to the siding at the south elevation of the building. These include wall-mounted light

sconces mounted above door openings and flood-light fixtures mounted to the soffit near the corners of the building (Figure 27 and Figure 28).

Much of the exterior siding and trim appears to have been replaced or removed and reinstalled as part of exterior stabilization and alterations performed in 1994.¹¹⁰

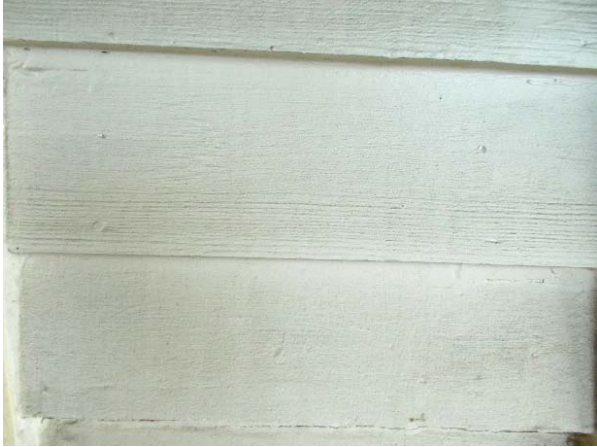


FIGURE 25. Typical horizontal wood siding at building.



FIGURE 26. Roof eave with wood fascia and profiled trim.



FIGURE 27. Non-original sconce above exterior door at south elevation.



FIGURE 28. Flood light mounted to underside of roof eave.

Porch. The front porch extends the full width of the north elevation and wraps around the north end of the east elevation. It is a one-story wood-framed structure with raised foundation and asphalt shingle hip roof. The porch has an “L”-shaped plan with the north leg measuring 37 feet 8 inches wide by 10 feet deep and the east leg measuring 10 feet by approximately 7 feet. It appears that much of the porch was reconstructed as part of the 1994 stabilization and restoration.¹¹¹

As previously described, the porch has a brick pier foundation with brick infill which raises the porch approximately 4 feet above grade. The porch has a wood skirt board, painted yellow, which wraps around and conceals the floor framing. The porch floor consists of 3-inch tongue-and-groove wood decking screwed directly to the floor joists. The

110. Department of the Interior, *Stabilization of 515 Auburn Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site* (Washington, DC: Department of the Interior, 1994).

111. Ibid.

porch floor is painted grey. The boards are oriented perpendicular to the porch and extend 2 inches over the edge of the porch framing. A wood quarter-round trim conceals the joint between the decking and the main portion of the house.

At the perimeter of the porch are turned wood columns aligned with the foundation piers. The columns are painted yellow and have a base and column cap. Mounted to the columns are wood balustrades consisting of a bottom rail, spindles spaced 4 inches on center, and a top rail with rounded profile. The balustrade is 42 inches tall and painted yellow.

The columns support the roof structure including the perimeter beam and eave with soffit. The perimeter beam measures approximately 12 inches tall by 8 inches deep and is painted yellow. A horizontal dentil molding extends across the upper portion of the beam. The roof eave extends approximately 12 inches beyond the beam and has a plywood soffit.

The porch ceiling consists of 4-1/2-inch bead board oriented parallel to the direction of the porch and painted light blue. There are two surface-mounted light fixtures centered on the ceiling (Figure 29).



FIGURE 29. Surface-mounted light fixture at ceiling of north porch.

The porch is accessed from a non-original concrete stair that ascends four feet from the concrete walk to the raised porch level. The stairs are framed by brick cheek walls with concrete coping units that are painted yellow (Figure 30).



FIGURE 30. Concrete stair with brick cheek walls at main entrance porch.

Patio. The patio is located at the south elevation of the house and is a wood-framed platform between the two additions. It provides access to the south entrances (Figure 31). The patio measures approximately 15 feet wide by 12 feet deep and is constructed of 2x8 joists oriented east-west. The decking, consisting of 3-inch-wide tongue-and-groove boards, spans north-south across the framing. At the east end of the patio is a ramp. The ramp, measuring approximately 3 feet wide by 9 feet long, extends south from the porch and provides access to the porch from grade. The upper portion of the ramp is wood-framed with decking spanning perpendicular to the direction of the ramp. The lower portion of the ramp is concrete sloped to grade.



FIGURE 31. Overview of the south patio with concrete and wood access ramp and wood-framed platform.

Exterior Doors. The building has five exterior doors; three accessed from the front porch and

two accessed from the rear patio. While each door opening is unique, all openings have wood-framed, multi-panel hinged doors, similar wood casing, and brass hardware.

The typical door casing on the building is on the sides and header of the door opening, measures approximately 5 inches wide, and is painted yellow. Above the header casing is a crown molding trim.

Typical door hardware includes brass knobs, escutcheon plates, and mortise locks. Most of the doors also have non-original, brass, single-cylinder deadbolts located above the knobs.

The main entrance door is centered on the north elevation and is accessed from the front porch (Figure 32). In addition to the typical door casing, the opening has a six-panel, half glass, wood-framed door and a single-light transom. The glazed panel occupies the top half of the door and has a single light. Mounted to the center rail, immediately below the glazed panel, is a crown molding with a scalloped edge. Five double raised, wood panels (i.e., raised panels exposed on both sides of a door) in the lower portion of the door include three that are square and two that are vertical. In addition to the typical hardware, the door has a brass threshold.

The door opening at the center of the octagonal bay is also accessed from the front porch (Figure 33). It has 4-1/2-inch-wide door casing, slightly less than typical casing on the building. The door is a three-panel, half glass unit with typical brass hardware. The glazed panel consists of a six-lights separated by wood muntins. Below the glazed panel and mounted to the center rail is a band of denticulated wood trim. At the lower portion of the door are two double raised, vertical panels. The door is presently not operational.



FIGURE 32. Main entrance door at north elevation, accessed from porch.



FIGURE 33. Door opening at west end of north elevation has been fixed in place.

The third door accessed from the front porch is located at the east end of the porch (Figure 34). The door opening has typical wood casings except for the crown molding which is not present. Similar to the door at the octagonal bay, the opening features a three-panel half glass door with a six-light glazed panel and typical brass hardware. However, unlike the octagonal bay door, the opening has a single-light transom and aluminum threshold.



FIGURE 34. Door opening at east end of north elevation.

At the center of the south elevation is a four-panel wood door with typical casing and brass hardware (Figure 35). The double raised panels are vertically-oriented. The door is accessed from the south patio and has an aluminum threshold.



FIGURE 35. Door opening centered on south elevation, accessed from patio.

Also accessed from the patio is a six-panel door (Figure 36). The double raised panels are oriented horizontally. The door is located at the east elevation of one of the additions and features typical casings and an aluminum threshold.

Hardware includes a brass knob, escutcheon plate, and mortise lock. No deadbolt was observed.



FIGURE 36. Door opening at west side of south elevation, accessed from patio.

Windows. The existing windows are non-original, wood-framed units installed as part of the 1994 stabilization and repairs. All window openings have wood casing, projecting sills, and crown molding and feature single, one-over-one double-hung, wood-framed units constructed with mortise and tenon joinery. Sash members measure approximately 1-3/4 inches wide with the bottom rail of the lower sash measuring approximately 2-1/2 inches. The single pane glazing is set with glazing putty. Many of the windows have non-original screens.

Windows range in size depending on location on the building. The majority of windows, including most of those at the east and west elevations and at the octagonal bay, measures approximately 66 inches tall and 32 inches wide (Figure 37). Windows at the south elevations of the two rear additions are generally shorter, measuring 44 inches tall and 32 inches wide (Figure 38). Unique window sizes include a window at the north elevation that measures approximately 66 inches tall by 40 inches wide and a window at the south end of the west elevation that measures approximately 44 inches tall by 24 inches wide (Figure 39).



FIGURE 37. Typical window at east and west elevations.



FIGURE 39. Typical window at north elevation.



FIGURE 38. Typical window at south elevation.

Typical window casings throughout the building are the jambs and header and are 5 inches wide. At all but three of the window openings, an additional edge trim was observed at the jamb casings. The trim is approximately 1 inch wide and projects approximately 1/2 inch beyond the face of the casing. Above the header casing is a crown molding trim (Figure 40). Each window has a wood sill, approximately 1-1/4 inches thick, that projects 1-1/2 inches beyond the siding (Figure 41).



FIGURE 40. Crown molding header casing at window openings. Also note metal hooks for window screens.



FIGURE 41. Typical sill at window openings.

Non-original, wood-framed screens were observed at all the window openings. They have metal mesh screens and are hung from the exterior of the windows with two metal hooks mounted to the exterior header casing (refer to Figure 38 and Figure 40).

Roof. The roof, gutters, downspouts, and roof vents were replaced in 1994 as part of the stabilization and repairs. All roof areas are covered with asphalt shingles with a diamond-shaped pattern (Figure 42). Roof areas include the hip roofs at the center portion of the building and north wing. The roofs run parallel to each other on an east–west axis and are connected by an asphalt-shingle low-slope roof that extends between the ridge of the lower north wing hip roof and the center building hip roof. The gable roof of the octagonal bay extends perpendicular from the north wing hip roof. The south additions each have hip roofs oriented on a north–south axis which extend from the hip roof at the center portion of the building. In addition to the building roof, the porch has a hip roof. The porch roof is located approximately one foot below the eave of the main roof. It has sheet-metal valley flashing and ridges clad with asphalt shingles. Sheet-metal flashing was observed at the interface between the chimney and roof.

Waste vents and attic fans are located primarily at the south-facing slope of the roofs. The vents are metal pipes that project approximately 24 inches above the roof and have rubber boots. The attic

fans are located adjacent to the ridgeline and consist of low-profile fan boxes.



FIGURE 42. Roofing with asphalt-shingle diamond-shaped pattern.

There are three brick chimneys; two located on the north-facing slope of the roof and one on the south-facing slope. The chimneys, each measure 28 inches by 16 inches, are constructed of clay brick masonry, and project approximately 8 feet, to a height even with the tallest roof ridge (Figure 43 and Measured Drawings in Appendix A).



FIGURE 43. Brick masonry chimney with sheet-metal flashing. Also note vent pipe near base of chimney (arrow).

The roof drains to half-round, hanging sheet-metal gutters, supported on semicircular galvanized brackets; the gutters drain to circular sheet metal downspouts that discharge at grade (Figure 44). The gutters are approximately 5 inches wide. The gutters and downspouts are painted yellow to match the wood trim.



FIGURE 44. Typical gutter with gutter straps (arrow).

Condition Assessment

The following notable conditions were observed in September 2016 at the building exterior:

Masonry

- In general, the foundation is in good condition. Most of the conditions described are associated with peeling paint and displacement of brick due to alterations.
- Step cracking was observed at localized areas on the brick foundation wall and at the CMU retaining wall (Figure 45 and Figure 46). At the foundation wall, the cracking was primarily located at the northwest corner of the building. At the CMU retaining wall, cracking was most prevalent at the midspan of the east and west walls. The cracking appeared to be related to unaccommodated movement and the lack of a control or expansion joint.
- The foundation of the retaining wall at the west elevation was observed to be undermined (Figure 47). At portions of the wall, the bottom course of CMU was exposed to view and was observed to be unsupported by soil below. There was a 6-inch gap between the bottom of the CMU and grade.
- Displaced brick was observed at the brick foundation wall on the west elevation (Figure 48). The displaced brick was located adjacent to the designed gaps between brick units and

appears to be associated with the installation of PVC pipe as part of a more recent alteration.

- Open joints were observed at the brick masonry foundation below the porch (Figure 49). The foundation consists of brick piers with brick infill. The open joints were observed between the piers and the infill masonry.
- Cracking, blistering, debonding, and peeling paint was observed at the brick cheek walls at the north stair (Figure 50). The distress consisted of cracks in the paint coating along with isolated areas of debonding and blistering. At a few small areas, the paint was removed, and the underlying brick was visible.
- Organic growth was observed on the face of the CMU at the retaining wall along the north and east elevations (Figure 51). The growth was primarily located at the top of the retaining wall and at mortar joints and consisted of lichen and moss.



FIGURE 45. Step cracking at the brick foundation wall.



FIGURE 46. Step cracking at the CMU retaining wall.



FIGURE 49. Outline of brick masonry foundation piers at porch.



FIGURE 47. The foundation at the west side of the retaining wall has been undermined.



FIGURE 50. Peeling paint at brick foundation walls.



FIGURE 48. Displaced brick associated with previous alterations to the brick masonry.



FIGURE 51. Organic growth on CMU at retaining wall.

Concrete

- The concrete was observed to be in fair condition with evidence of some cracking and previous crack repairs.
- Cracking was observed at the concrete stairs (Figure 52). The cracking included hairline and mild cracks, less than 1/8-inch-wide, as well as larger cracks which had been previously repaired. Previous repairs included grinding and filling cracks with mortar. All the previous repairs had failed, and the mortar was loose.
- Hairline cracks were observed at the concrete coping units at cheek walls (Figure 53). Where present, the cracks were parallel to the orientation of the coping unit and were evidenced by a tear in the paint coating.



FIGURE 52. Cracking of the concrete at stairs.



FIGURE 53. Hairline cracking at concrete coping units at cheek walls.

Wood Elements

- In general, the wood elements are in fair condition. Typical distress conditions include failure of surface coatings and mild to moderate deterioration of the wood.
- Decay and deterioration of the wood siding and trim, at the fascia, and at the base of exterior doors. The distress appeared to be potentially related to the presence of moisture and most prevalent at the east and west elevations (Figure 54). The deteriorated boards were typically located at the lower portion of the building and adjacent to gutters and downspouts. The distress was concentrated along the edges of the boards or at the end grain. The distress consisted of splitting or splintering wood.
- Severe deterioration was observed at approximately 10 percent of wood decking boards at the front porch and rear patio (Figure 55 and Figure 56). The distress ranged from splitting or splintering of wood to total loss of material. At some locations, particularly at the rear patio, the wood was friable and fell apart when touched.
- Displaced wood elements with open joints were observed at the baluster rails, column base, and porch apron (Figure 57 and Figure 58). At these locations, there was evidence of movement and subsequent displacement between adjacent wood elements. As a result, the fasteners between the elements were loose and there was an open joint. At some locations, there was a 1/2-inch opening at the joint.
- Moderate deterioration was observed at some baluster units. The deterioration consisted of splintered wood and at most locations had been painted over.
- Twisting and buckling was observed at the front porch and rear patio deck boards (Figure 59). The buckling was most pronounced at the rear patio where the tongue-and-groove connection between the boards was no longer

engaged. The buckled boards are a tripping hazard.

- Mild cupping was observed at approximately 25 percent of the deck boards at the rear patio and 25 percent of the deck boards at the front porch (Figure 60). The cupping was approximately 1/8 inch.
- Loose and displaced nails were observed at a few locations within the wood siding. The nails were observed to be walking out and were no longer sunk into the wood or providing an attachment to the underlying structure. The loose nails were primarily located at the lower part of the south elevation of the south additions.
- Cracking, debonding, and peeling paint was observed at wood siding, trim, front porch, rear patio, and decorative elements (Figure 61). For the siding, the distress was most pronounced at the east elevation where there was non-original siding. Peeling paint was also noted at various components of the front porch and at the deck boards of the rear patio. The paint failure is most likely related to weathering and poor surface preparation.
- Wood spindles were observed to be missing from balustrade units (Figure 62). The missing spindles were located at the east section of the north baluster.
- Replacement deck boards were observed at numerous locations at the front porch and rear patio. Non-original boards were also evidenced by the use of screws instead of nails to fasten the boards to the framing and failed paint due to poor surface preparation.
- Biological and vegetative growth was observed at deck boards at the front porch, rear patio and at wood siding (Figure 63). Vegetative growth had been recently removed from the siding at the east elevation of the building. However, some of the plant tendrils are still present on the siding.



FIGURE 54. Deteriorated wood trim. Note that deterioration is more significant at bottom of trim.



FIGURE 55. Deteriorated wood decking at front porch.



FIGURE 56. Deteriorated wood decking at rear patio.



FIGURE 57. Open joint and displacement of wood porch apron.



FIGURE 60. Mild cupping of floor decking at front porch.



FIGURE 58. Open joint and displacement at balustrade rail.



FIGURE 61. Peeling and debonding of paint on wood decking at rear patio.



FIGURE 59. Twisting and buckling of wood decking at front porch.



FIGURE 62. Balustrade at north porch with missing spindles.



FIGURE 63. Tendrils from previously existing vegetation are attached to siding.

Windows

- In general, the windows are in good condition. Distress conditions are primarily associated with the window opening trim.
- Missing trim was identified at one window at the south end of the west elevation. The missing trim included the projecting edge trim adjacent to the jamb casing.

Doors

- The doors are in good condition with the exception of peeling paint, mild deterioration of the wood, and the condition of the glazing.
- Mild deterioration was observed at the bottom of the door stiles of exterior doors (Figure 64). The distress consisted of splintering and cracking of wood starting at the end grain.
- Peeling paint was observed at the exterior face of the doors on the south elevation (Figure 65). The distress consisted of debonded, chipped, and peeling paint at the door casing and at the door leafs.



FIGURE 64. Deteriorated wood at bottom stile of the wood door.



FIGURE 65. Deteriorated paint at wood trim and door leaf.

Roofing

- In general, the roof is in good condition. Distress conditions were associated with gutters and downspouts.
- A disconnected downspout leader was observed at the northwest corner of the building (Figure 66). The leader diverted water in the downspout away from the building. There were no splash pads present.
- Loose and displaced gutter straps were observed at a few locations on the building (Figure 67). Despite the straps being loose, the gutters appeared secure and were not displaced.
- Small dents were observed along the edge of the gutter (Figure 68). The gutter remains

secure. The dents were most likely caused by impact damage from trees or ladders.

Other Conditions

- Pest infestation was observed at the crawl space of the building. Spiders and spider webs were located throughout the crawl space.



FIGURE 66. Disconnected leader at northwest corner of the building.



FIGURE 67. Loose and displaced gutter strap.



FIGURE 68. Damaged gutter at south elevation of the building.

Interior

The Faison House at 515 Auburn Avenue has a floor plan typical of Queen Anne-style residential structures of the early twentieth century, particularly in the Free Classic subtype. Internally, this one-story house was organized around a main north-south hallway which bisected the floor plan and connected the rooms (refer to Measured Drawings in Appendix A). Primary living spaces (e.g., parlor, dining room, and kitchen) were on the west side of the hall and spaces such as bedrooms and a bathroom occupied the east portion of the plan. This original plan arrangement is still expressed on the exterior. It exemplifies a common type of the Queen Anne Style characterized by a predominant hipped roof with lower cross gables that emphasized projecting rooms (refer to Measured Drawings in Appendix A). At 515 Auburn Avenue, the large room in the northwest corner of the house has an octagonal bay that extends north from the main body of the house into the L-shaped front porch. This projecting room is emphasized on the front elevation by a bold cross gable (Figure 69). Similarly, on the rear elevation, the kitchen and a bathroom extend to the south from the main body of the house. Both spaces have lower and subordinate hipped roofs that are perpendicular to the main hipped roof and typical of the Queen Anne Style (Figure 70).



FIGURE 69. Front elevation facing Auburn Avenue. Note cross gable emphasizing the projecting octagonal bay.



FIGURE 70. Rear elevation facing south. Note two subordinate hipped-roof projecting rooms.

Charles and Annie Faison built the house in 1909 and lived there until 1936 when Mr. Faison died. Mrs. Faison continued to occupy the house until about 1940. A number of others lived at this address between 1940 and 1980, when the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District were established. The house was converted to a two-unit dwelling by 1970, as two individual tenants are listed as occupants from 1970 through 1980.¹¹² The exterior was stabilized in 1994 and then substantially rehabilitated. The interior was completely renovated in the early 2000s under the auspices of the National Park Service for use as administrative offices and meeting space. A consequence of the conversion to a two-unit dwelling and the later renovation resulted in the loss of significant historic features.

112. *Historic Resource Study*, 18.

Therefore, this Interior Description and Condition Assessment is a commentary on the condition of the building during the site visit in September 2016.

Foyer. There are three entrance doors at the front (north) of the house that provide access from the front porch, an unusual condition that may have occurred when the house was changed to a duplex between 1965 and the early 1970s. The primary “front” entrance, which is located just to the left of the octagonal bay, opens from the front porch into a generous foyer. The door has a clear glass transom, and the stile-and-rail door has a single, clear glass light above three square, double raised panels and two rectangular, double raised panels (Figure 71). A pleated shade covers the glass light. There is a one-over-one double-hung wood window in the north wall next to the entry door. On the west wall is a pair of seven-foot tall, painted wood pocket doors. Each door has six horizontal double raised panels. When fully retracted into the wall, they provide a six-foot wide opening from the foyer to the large room on the west side of the house (Figure 72).



FIGURE 71. Interior side of primary front door.



FIGURE 72. Remaining pair of pocket doors.

Positioned at a diagonal in the southeast corner of the foyer is a fireplace with cast-iron register surrounded by a dark-stained wood mantelpiece. Above the mantel shelf is a stained wood overmantel with a rectangular mirror at the center. Behind the cast-iron register and surrounding the firebox is rectangular, glazed ceramic tile installed in a running bond pattern. The hearth has the same mottled maroon-color tile within a narrow, stained wood border. It is not known if the mantelpiece is original, but the tile on the hearth and the surround were installed in the early 2000s when the interior was renovated.¹¹³

Door and window openings are trimmed with traditional moldings, plinth blocks and corner blocks with rosettes (Figure 73). Plaster and wood lath were removed throughout the house during a major interior renovation in the early 2000s.¹¹⁴ Consequently, walls and ceiling are painted gypsum board. In the foyer and throughout the house, the traditional wood baseboards are approximately 10-1/2 inches tall (Figure 74). Also, in the early 2000s, square ceramic tile with a pink and tan marble appearance was installed on the floor (Figure 75). A suspended light fixture hangs from the ceiling in the center of the foyer. It has

the appearance of a traditional fixture, but it is not original.



FIGURE 73. Rosette corner block, typical door and window casing detail.



FIGURE 74. Typical plinth block and baseboard.



FIGURE 75. Tile flooring in foyer, installed in the early 2000s.

113. Oral histories with NPS maintenance staff and observed conditions.

114. Oral histories with NPS maintenance staff and observed conditions.

Central Hall. The central hall is 6 feet wide and slightly less than 11 feet tall. It extends from the foyer to a non-original, four-panel rear door in the south wall of the house. Beside doorways to the foyer and the rear porch at the north and south ends of the hall, there were originally doors to two bedrooms (now temporarily used as offices) on the east side, a door to a presumed butler's pantry (currently a laundry room) and the kitchen, and a second pair of large pocket doors at the former dining room. Presently, these doorways remain except for the pocket doors at the dining room which were removed in the early 2000s and the 6 feet wide by 7 feet tall door opening was filled in and finished with gypsum board. The remaining door openings are trimmed with the same painted traditional moldings, plinth blocks and corner blocks with rosettes found in most of the other rooms. Red wall-to-wall carpet covers the original flooring. The attic is accessible by a pull-down, folding ladder in the ceiling of the central hall. Flanking this attic hatch are two identical light fixtures suspended from the ceiling (Figure 76). Both have the appearance of a traditional fixture, but they are not original.



FIGURE 76. Central hall looking south toward rear door.

Meeting Room. West of the central hall is a large meeting room created when the original parlor and dining room were combined into one space

that is approximately 33 feet north-south and 15 feet east-west. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the east-west wall between the original parlor and the dining room was removed along with the pair of pocket doors in the dining room, thus inappropriately altering the original floor plan (Figure 77). No documentation was found that would verify the existence of a cased opening or another pair of doors in the wall separating these two primary rooms, but it seems likely, given historical precedents, that one or the other was there.



FIGURE 77. Meeting room looking south toward rear hall and kitchen. Note location where original wall was removed.

Presently, the room is open from the octagonal bay on the north to the rear hall at the south end, interrupted only by a pair of fireplaces that share a common chimney and jut into the space at 45-degree angles where the missing wall was located (Figure 78). Both fireplaces have a black cast-iron register surrounding the firebox and both fireplaces are missing a coal grate and hood. The two identical, stained wood mantelpieces each have a shelf supported by a single bracket on each end. Above the shelf is a wood overmantel with a rectangular mirror at the center flanked by two half-round pilasters that carry an unadorned horizontal cornice. Mantelpieces were loose and were not tight to the wall or firmly attached to it. The firebox surrounds are finished with rectangular, glazed ceramic tile installed in a running bond pattern, and the surface of the outer hearth has 4-inch square, glazed ceramic tile within a narrow, stained wood border. The tile

color at both fireplaces is a dark green. It is not known if the mantelpieces are original, but the tile on the hearths and the surround were installed in the early 2000s when the interior was renovated.¹¹⁵



FIGURE 78. Fireplace in meeting room.

There are two one-over-one windows in the west wall symmetrically arranged on each side of the double fireplace. At the north end of the meeting room is a projecting octagonal bay. In the center is one of three exterior doors that open in from the front porch. This painted stile-and-rail door has two vertical raised panels below a three-over-three divided glass light and no transom. To the right and left are larger, one-over-one double-hung windows with clear glass. Directly opposite the exterior door in the center of the south wall is a 36-inch wide cased opening to a short rear hall and the kitchen beyond (refer to Figure 77). In the east wall are the pair of sliding pocket doors that open to the foyer. These doors are described above (refer to Figure 72). Door and window openings are trimmed with the same painted traditional moldings, plinth blocks and corner blocks with rosettes found in most of the other rooms. The traditional, painted wood baseboards, without base shoe, are the same as those in other rooms and there is a narrow picture rail set

approximately 18 inches below the ceiling. Red wall-to-wall carpet covers the original flooring. In the center of each half of the room is a non-original ceiling-mounted fan with four lights that have milk glass shades (refer to Figure 77).

Rear Hall. The short rear hall is a transition space to the kitchen. On the east wall is a stile-and-rail paneled door to a small laundry room and on the opposite side of the hall is another paneled door for the west bathroom. At the south end is a cased opening to the kitchen. Painted wood baseboards and door trim are consistent with the traditional moldings found in most of the rooms, and the red wall-to-wall carpet is continuous from the meeting room through the rear hall. A single ceiling-mounted fixture provides the only light.

Laundry. This small room between the rear hall and the central hall may have originally functioned as something other than a laundry, but, presently, it serves laundry and a convenient passage between the offices on the east side of the house and the kitchen and bath on the west side. Also passing through the laundry appears to be the most direct route to the kitchen from parking in the backyard and from the rear patio. Two stile-and-rail doors with six horizontal raised panels are opposite each other in the east and west walls, and they touch if opened simultaneously. A washer and dryer are next to each other on the north wall. Door casings and baseboards are typical. The floor has the same earth-tone porcelain tile found in the kitchen with marble thresholds at each door opening. A strip of red wall-to-wall carpet from the adjacent hall runs under the washer and dryer and covers half of the tile floor (Figure 79).

115. Oral histories with NPS maintenance staff and observed conditions.



FIGURE 79. View through laundry to central hall.

Kitchen. When the interior was extensively renovated in the early 2000s, the kitchen was completely updated. New plumbing and electrical wiring were added to all four walls before installing new gypsum board. Contemporary stained wood cabinets and appliances wrap around the east and south walls (Figure 80) and terminate at the edge of a one-over-one double-hung window in the west wall. Cabinets continue above a stainless-steel refrigerator on the north wall. Cabinet pulls are dull chrome, round knobs. The countertop and integral double-bowl sink are solid surfacing, the backsplash comprises 4-inch square porcelain tiles and the floor is covered in 12-inch square porcelain tiles that terminate at a marble threshold at the cased opening in the north wall. Other appliances include a 36-inch gas cooktop, stainless steel exhaust hood, a combination microwave and wall oven, and a dishwasher. In addition to the window in the west wall, there is a window in the south wall above the sink. A 36-inch-wide, six (horizontal) panel door in the east wall provides access to the rear patio; however, it is not used and remains locked. Painted door and window casings and baseboards are consistent with wood trim throughout the house.



FIGURE 80. Renovated kitchen looking south.

North Office. Originally an office or bedroom but currently used as temporary office space, this approximately 14 feet square room has a shallow closet, a fireplace, and a door from the front porch along the north wall. The exterior door provides direct access from the east side of the front porch and resembles the main entry at the foyer. Both doors have single-light transoms above and both are stile-and-rail doors with a glass light. But, just like the door in the center of the projecting octagonal bay, the north office door has two vertical, double raised panels below a three-over-three divided glass light (Figure 81). This similarity suggests that both doors were either added at the same time or they replaced old doors at the same time; however, there is insufficient documentation to indicate whether these doors are original or were installed during the 1994 exterior stabilization. On the left side of the fireplace is a shallow closet that conceals the security system's electronic controls and wiring. The closet door and the adjacent door from the central hall are stile-and-rail, six (horizontal) panel wood doors with mortise hardware (Figure 82). The door from the hall has a lockset and deadbolt. On the opposite wall are two one-over-one, double hung windows from the 1994 exterior stabilization project.¹¹⁶ Walls are painted gypsum board, and painted wood baseboards and door and window trim match those in other rooms.

116. *The Exterior Stabilization of 515 Auburn Avenue 1994.*



FIGURE 81. Secondary front porch entry door in north office.



FIGURE 82. North office looking northwest.

Centered on the north wall is a fireplace with a black, cast-iron register surrounding the firebox and both fireplaces are missing a coal grate and hood. In contrast to the other fireplaces already described, this fireplace front is framed by an elaborately detailed mantelpiece. On each side, shelf brackets are supported by turned pilasters. Above the shelf is an overmantel with an oval mirror flanked by two delicate, round pedestals.

At the top of the overmantel is a hood with a carved apron projecting over the mirror. A plain frieze topped with crown molding completes the dark stained mantelpiece, a character-defining feature, assuming it is original (refer to Figure 82).

The firebox surround is finished with rectangular, glazed ceramic tile installed in a running bond pattern, and the surface of the outer hearth has 4-inch square, glazed ceramic tile within a narrow, stained wood border. The tile color is dark red, very close to the color of the wall-to-wall carpet in the room. Tiles on the hearth and the surround were installed in the early 2000s when the interior was renovated.

Artificial light comes from a non-original ceiling fan and integral light fixture in the center of the room.

South Office. Almost the same as the north office, this approximately 14 feet square room has a shallow closet, a fireplace, and a door to a bathroom along the south wall. The shallow closet to the right of the fireplace is used for storage. The closet door, the adjacent door from the central hall, and the bathroom door are stile-and-rail, six (horizontal) panel wood doors with mortise hardware. On the east wall are two one-over-one, double-hung windows from the 1994 exterior stabilization project. Walls are painted gypsum board, and painted wood baseboards and door and window trim are consistent with other woodwork in the house. The floor has the same red, wall-to-wall carpet installed in most of the rooms.

A fireplace in the middle of the south wall is virtually identical to the fireplace in the north office except for black glazed tile surrounding the firebox and on the outer hearth. The handsome mantelpiece is indistinguishable from the one in the north office (Figure 83; refer to the description under North Office).

In the south office, artificial light comes from a non-original ceiling fan and integral light fixture in the center of the room.



FIGURE 83. Fireplace and ornate mantelpiece in south office.

Bathrooms. Both the south and west bathrooms were renovated in the early 2000s with like materials and fixtures. Ceilings are painted gypsum board. Walls in each bathroom are also gypsum board with a 40-inch high wainscot of white, 4-inch square glazed ceramic tiles capped by a double band of black glazed tiles. One-inch hexagonal black and white ceramic mosaic tiles are used in an alternating daisy pattern on the floor in the south bathroom and two-inch square tiles are used in a black and white checkerboard pattern in the west bath. Other than different tile floor patterns in each bathroom and slightly different room dimensions, all bath fixtures and accessories are the same – claw foot bathtubs with vintage suspended shower curtain ring, vintage-style pedestal sinks, faucets and toilets, framed oval mirrors and vintage light fixtures (Figure 84 and Figure 85).

Doors are stile-and-rail with six (horizontal) wood panels and brass hardware. Each bath has a one-over-one, double-hung window with 2-inch venetian blinds. Painted wood door and window trim match those in other rooms.



FIGURE 84. South bathroom.



FIGURE 85. West bathroom.

Attic. The attic is accessed by a pull-down folding ladder in the ceiling of the central hall. The roof is stick framed, and the dark patina of original structural members makes them distinguishable from the newer, more recent wood braces and plywood roof deck added when the asphalt shingle roof was replaced in 1994 and again in 2014¹¹⁷ (Figure 86). Roof replacement included installing plywood continuously over the original roof rafters. A brick chimney extends through the attic and

117. National Park Service, *Replace Roof*.

penetrates the roof on the north side, south side, and west side. Thermal insulation is achieved by blown-in fiberglass insulation that covers the ceiling joists; however, some of this loose insulation has been disturbed resulting in a loss of effective thermal efficiency.



FIGURE 86. Attic with plywood roof sheathing and loose fill insulation.

Condition Assessment

The interior of 515 Auburn Avenue is in good condition overall. The following items represent conditions that need periodic monitoring and cyclic maintenance or require attention and some conditions under localized distress that warrant prompt corrective action.

Walls and Ceilings

- Gypsum board walls and ceilings are in good condition. No significant cracks at joints or extensive delamination of joint compound at fastener heads is evident. The last cyclic painting occurred in 2016.¹¹⁸

Wooden Doors and Trim and Architectural Woodwork

- Several existing interior doors were replaced during the interior renovation project in the early 2000s. According to NPS maintenance staff, some existing usable doors were labeled and removed then installed in original locations. Other doors were new six-panel, stile-and-rail replacement units (FIGURE 87).

These newer doors are in good condition requiring only cyclic painting.

- The exterior doors at the rear of the house are in fair to poor condition. Specifically, the rear door in the central hall is clearly not original or compatible with other doors in the house. The threshold, sub floor, and conceivably the structural member(s) beneath the wall and the door are rotted leaving a large gap. This distressed condition requires immediate action to prevent more serious damage. Also, the door does not fit the frame properly resulting in gaps that allow air and moisture infiltration which adversely affects energy efficiency and, ultimately, the condition of interior finishes (Figure 88).
- In the kitchen, the side door to the rear porch is experiencing distress from exposure to weather. This is a six-panel, stile-and-rail wood door that may be original or it may be a compatible replacement. On the exterior side, the lower portion is exhibiting signs of paint blistering and delamination from moisture and separation of joints between stiles and rails. These problems are beginning to affect the interior side of the door.



FIGURE 87. Typical six-panel interior door.

118. National Park Service, 2016.



FIGURE 88. Non-original rear exterior door. Note deteriorated threshold and gaps around door.

- Generally, door hardware (locksets, latch sets, deadbolts, and doorknobs) is in functional condition. Some the locksets and latch sets appear to be original and others are newer with brass knobs and escutcheon plates that match the original hardware as closely as possible. Deadbolts appear to be recent; however, a comprehensive survey of door hardware is not within the scope of this Historic Structure Report.
- The four fireplaces (no longer functional) and their mantelpieces are significant original features. The mantelpieces are the only important architectural woodwork features that are stained rather than painted. Two mantelpieces in the meeting room are relatively simple designs with overmantels (Figure 89). Both fireplaces were repaired and deteriorated and missing materials were replaced around 2001 (e.g., mantelpieces refinished and new ceramic tile on the surrounds and hearths). Consequently, they are in very good condition and should only need regular cleaning. However, both mantelpieces in the meeting room were apparently not properly anchored to the walls behind them. This should be done immediately to prevent damage to the mantelpieces and the fireplaces. Consideration

should be given to installing the missing coal grates and register hoods.



FIGURE 89. Fireplace in meeting room.

- Identical mantelpieces in the north and south offices have a more complex and ornate design than the other two mantelpieces. Both fireplaces were also rehabilitated in the early 2000s, and they are in very good condition, except for missing coal grates and register hoods. They are significant features of the house (Figure 90).



FIGURE 90. Fireplace and mantelpiece in north office.

- Painted cased openings and door trim are consistent throughout the house. Painted window trim is also the same throughout. Despite the effects of wear-and-tear and multiple coats of paint applied over time, the

trim is generally in good condition but in need of cleaning and painting. Cyclical interior painting was last completed in 2016.

- Baseboards are consistent throughout the house and most are original. If there was an original base shoe, it was removed when wall-to-wall carpet was installed. Not surprisingly, baseboards have several layers of paint and scarring, scratches, and abrasions that have accumulated over time. Cyclical interior painting was completed in 2016.

Floors

- Floors are covered with red wall-to-wall carpet except for the foyer (ceramic tile), kitchen (porcelain tile), bathrooms (ceramic mosaic tile), and the laundry (porcelain tile). Generally, the carpet is soiled and worn from normal use. The extent and condition of hardwood flooring beneath the carpet could not be determined, but further investigation would contribute to recommendations for restoring original flooring concealed by the carpet (Figure 91).



FIGURE 91. Meeting room with ubiquitous red wall-to-wall carpet.

- Ceramic tile and porcelain tile floors and tile base in the foyer, kitchen, laundry, and bathrooms were installed in the early 2000s. No major cracks or delamination were observed, and these floors have held up well since they were installed (Figure 92, Figure 93, and Figure 94). Because installation was done over a wood substrate, the type of waterproof

membrane applied to the substrate will affect the long-term performance of these tile floors. Maintaining stiffness of the floor framing will also aid long-term performance.



FIGURE 92. Ceramic mosaic tile floor in south bathroom. Note "daisy" pattern.



FIGURE 93. Tile floor in west bathroom. Note black and white checkerboard pattern.



FIGURE 94. Porcelain tile floor in kitchen and laundry. Note marble threshold.

Structural System

The building has a wood-framed structure on a brick masonry foundation. A top plate and a perimeter beam consisting of sistered, actual-sized 2x8s is on top of the foundation wall. A 2x4 ledger strip is attached to the bottom of the perimeter beam to support the notched floor joints (Figure 95). In addition to the perimeter beam, an actual-sized 2x10 beam extends north–south at the center of the plan and is supported by the supplemental brick piers. Similar to perimeter beams at the foundation wall, 2x4 ledger strips are attached to the bottom portion of this central beam and support notched 2x8 floor joints. The floor joints are spaced 24 inches on center, have wood cross bridging at the mid-point, and the space between the joists is filled with batt insulation (Figure 96). At one location, there is a non-original replacement beam with support posts. The replacement beam consists of a sistered 2x8 and spans approximately 20 feet, between existing brick piers. At the midpoint of the non-original beam span is the replacement support post, consisting of two 4x4 posts on a concrete footing (Figure 97).



FIGURE 95. Floor structure. An additional 2x4 ledger strip is attached to the bottom of the perimeter wood beam to support the floor joints.



FIGURE 96. Overview of wood joints with batt insulation between joists.



FIGURE 97. Replacement support posts at floor beam.

The porch foundation piers support a nominal 2x10 beam that spans north–south. Nominal 2x8 joists are mounted to the beams with joist hangers (Figure 98). There is no insulation between the porch floor joists.



FIGURE 98. Floor joists with joist hangers at porch flooring.

During the survey, no inspections openings were made, and the existing wall framing was not visible. Thus, existing conditions could not be documented or assessed. However, based on conditions observed at 518 Auburn Avenue, a nearby wood-framed structure of similar design and period of construction, the structure is most likely balloon framed and consists of 2x4 framing spaced 24 inches on center. 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.

As is typical of balloon framing, the first-floor ceiling framing would be nailed to the continuous wall framing. The ceiling consists of actual-sized 2x6 joists spaced 24 inches on center. The space between the joists is filled with blown-in fiberglass insulation (Figure 99).



FIGURE 99. Ceiling framing has been covered with blown-in insulation.

The attic has a plywood deck that supports the mechanical equipment and water heater. The flexible ductwork within the attic is hung from nylon straps fastened to the roof rafters.

The house has a complex roof structure consisting of two hip roofs connected by a low-slope roof at the center portion of the building, an intersecting gable roof above the octagonal bay, and hip roofs

over the south additions. The main hip roof structure consists of 2x6 rafters spaced 24 inches on center with no ridge beam (Figure 100). A 1x6 kicker is fastened to the ends of the rafters and provides framing for the roof soffit. On top of the framing is 3/4-inch plywood roof sheathing. There are no collar ties or supplemental support framing at the hip roof.



FIGURE 100. Overview of roof framing.

The hip roof at the north wing consists of 2x4 rafters spaced 24 inches on center with 3/4-inch plywood roof sheathing. There are no collar ties or supplemental support framing at the hip roof. Between the two hip roofs is a low-slope roof, also with 2x4 framing spaced 24 inches on center. However, the roof has 1x8 roof sheathing overlaid with 3/4-inch plywood. Wood-framed knee walls support the edge of the roof framing (Figure 101). Some of the framing members appear to have been modified and recently cut as evidenced by the condition of the exposed ends of the boards.

At the gable roof, the framing consists of 2x4 rafters spaced 24 inches on center with a makeshift beadboard ridge beam (Figure 102 and Figure 103). There are no collar ties at the gable framing.

The hip roofs at the south additions are like the main hip roof and are constructed of 2x6 rafters spaced 24 inches.



FIGURE 101. Wood-framed knee wall support.



FIGURE 102. Overview of gable roof framing.



FIGURE 103. Detail of rafter-to-ridge beam interface.

Structure

- In general, the structure is in fair condition.
- Large gaps were observed at the interface between the roof and wall framing (Figure 104). While not visible from the exterior, sunlight and moving air were noticeable from the attic. The gaps were observed at the ceiling line and extended the full space between rafters.
- Moisture staining was observed on some plywood sheathing (Figure 105). The staining was located along the side of the plywood, adjacent to the rafters. The moisture staining is an indication of moisture infiltration; however, there was no evidence of active water infiltration.
- Mild spalling was observed at some brick units at the foundation piers and at the chimney foundations (Figure 106). The spalling consisted of face spalls on the brick.



FIGURE 104. Large air gaps between roof and wall framing.



FIGURE 105. Moisture staining on plywood sheathing.



FIGURE 106. Spalling of brick and masonry foundation piers.

Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Systems

Mechanical and Electrical Systems. The house is heated and cooled by a new split system. A gas-fired furnace and fan unit were installed in the attic in 2016 and coupled with an outdoor

condensing unit (Figure 107).¹¹⁹ Insulated ducts in the attic carry heated or cooled air from the fan coil unit to ceiling registers. A return air grille is in the ceiling of the central hall. The condensing unit for the split system is located at grade on the south side of the house below the kitchen window (Figure 108).



FIGURE 107. New heating and air conditioning unit in the attic.



FIGURE 108. New split system condensing unit.

According to NPS maintenance staff, an old electrical system was replaced in the early 2000s with a new residential-class system including the weather head, entrance cable, meter base, and a

119. Oral histories with NPS maintenance staff and observed conditions.

new main panel. In addition, new receptacles, switches, and light fixtures were installed. Currently, light fixtures and ceiling fans in the house have a vintage style but may not represent fixtures from the period of significance. It is assumed that when the system was last updated more than fifteen years ago it complied with the requirements of the building code.

There is a security system. Electronic and monitoring equipment are in the north office, and wireless sensors are dispersed throughout the house. The date of installation is unknown.

Domestic plumbing in the house was also extensively updated during the early 2000s when the bathrooms were completely renovated, and the current kitchen installed. Drain and waste lines are PVC, and water supply lines are copper. Domestic water is provided by the city of Atlanta through a meter on Auburn Avenue. A 40-gallon gas water heater was placed in the attic near the heating and air conditioning unit (Figure 109). No records were found to document when the current water heater was installed.



FIGURE 109. Gas water heater in the attic.

Both bathrooms were renovated as part of the interior project, but neither one is in full compliance with the regulations of the revised Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); although, historic properties can, in some circumstances, receive waivers from strict compliance.

Heating and Air Conditioning. The house at 515 Auburn Avenue is heated and cooled by a direct expansion (Dx) split system, with blower coil unit, gas heat, and outdoor condensing unit. This system was installed in 2016 and should be under warranty. It replaced a similar, older system. The gas-fired furnace, heat exchanger and fan coil are in the attic (refer to Figure 87), and the outdoor condensing equipment is at grade on the south side of the house. Conditioned air is supplied through insulated round ducts in the attic to metal grilles in the ceilings. A return air grille in the ceiling of the central hall conducts air back to the attic unit. A programmable thermostat controls the heating and air conditioning system.

Electrical. Single-phase electrical service comes from a power pole on Auburn Avenue to a weather head and meter base at the northwest corner of the house (Figure 110). A 200-amp electrical panel is positioned in the east wall at the north end of the central hall. According to NPS maintenance staff, the old electrical system was replaced with a new system during the interior renovation project around 2001.¹²⁰ At that time, new exterior and interior light fixtures (Figure 111), telephone and data jacks, smoke detectors, and various electrical devices such as receptacles and switches were put in. The new electrical system was installed in compliance with the current residential electrical / building code at the time.

Wiring for telecommunication and internet services enters the house through a weather resistant junction box adjacent to the electric meter at the northwest corner of the house (refer to Figure 110). Cable upgrades or a transition to a wireless system may be necessary to benefit from the latest technology.

120. Oral histories with NPS maintenance staff and observed conditions.



FIGURE 110. Electric service meter base and telecommunications box.



FIGURE 111. Example of ceiling-mounted light fixture from the circa 2001 interior renovation.

Plumbing. Plumbing in the house was substantially replaced in the early 2000s. Copper domestic water lines are insulated in the crawl space and should also be insulated in exterior walls. Although copper is a proven, long-lasting material for domestic water piping, it is standard practice to insulate it to prevent freezing when it is exposed or installed above grade. Observation in

the crawl space did reveal that insulation was missing on some water lines, a condition that could result in pipes bursting during cold weather (Figure 112).



FIGURE 112. Missing insulation on copper water pipes in the crawl space.

Sanitary waste lines are PVC (Figure 113). In the crawl space under the house, the main sanitary waste line is connected to the kitchen waste line, to waste lines from both bathrooms, and the laundry. It is assumed that the main line exits from the crawl space at the north side of the house and ties into the public sewer line in Auburn Avenue. Schedule 40 PVC pipe is code-approved for most sanitary waste systems because of long-term performance and ease of installation.

From a city water meter along Auburn Avenue, the main domestic water line enters the crawl space and runs vertically to a 40-gallon gas water heater in the attic (Figure 114). From there hot and cold water are distributed to two bathrooms, the kitchen and the laundry. A few exterior hose bibs are also connected to the cold-water supply (Figure 115). The water heater is in serviceable condition, but it does not have an insulation jacket. No leaks into the drain pan were noted.



FIGURE 113. PVC waste lines in crawl space.



FIGURE 114. Gas water heater in the attic.



FIGURE 115. Exterior hose bib behind condensing unit.

The house has natural gas service. A gas meter is set near the foundation wall on the north side next to the front porch steps (Figure 116). Gas is delivered through black steel pipes in the crawl space and wall cavities to gas-fired heaters, a water heater, a cooktop in the kitchen, and a clothes dryer.



FIGURE 116. Gas meter adjacent to front porch.

Fire Protection. Fire protection is limited to electrically powered, ionization-type detectors mounted on ceilings. At the time 515 Auburn Avenue was surveyed, operation of the smoke detectors could not be determined. Records of periodic maintenance and detector replacement were not available.

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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 Park Service's 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.¹²¹

The significance evaluation identifies the important historical associations of the property, and comments on its architectural, archeological, and social value as they relate to 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
- b. A building or structure removed from its original location but which is primarily significant for architectural value, or which is the surviving

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

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.¹²²

National Register Status of 515 Auburn Avenue, NE

National Register of Historic Places documentation pertaining to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park reviewed for 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, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta,

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

March 25, 1974; entered in the National Register May 2, 1974.¹²³

The National Register form used at the time allowed preparers to select date ranges as significant periods. The preparers of the National Register 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. 6.¹²⁴ The residences along Auburn Avenue near the Birth Home are described as “Victorian houses.”

- *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), January 5, 1976. The historic district was designated a National Historic Landmark on May 5, 1977.

123. 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.

124. *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.” The 515 Auburn Avenue building is included in the inventory with the following notation: “515 Auburn Avenue: Faison House. 1909. Charles Faison, the original owner of this house lived here until 1940. This house was constructed as a single-family residence and was later converted into a duplex.”¹²⁵

- *National Register documentation for Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site*, comprising 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, 1994.¹²⁶

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 explores three historic contexts, as further discussed below.

The 1994 documentation notes that the district includes thirty-five contributing buildings. It includes 515 Auburn Avenue as a contributing building and offers the following specific commentary:

515 Auburn Avenue, 1909 (IDLCS #090015). A vernacular gabled-ell house, with several additions, that was converted from a single-family residence to a duplex. The roof is complex with two hipped portions and a front-facing gable. The wraparound porch displays Tuscan columns.¹²⁷

The 515 Auburn Avenue residence 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, 515 Auburn Avenue—together with other residences in the historic district—is listed as contributing to the site’s national significance.

In this documentation, 515 Auburn Avenue is also listed as a contributing building under Context C, “Architecture 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 that although these buildings do not represent high-style architecture, they do “. . . represent residential and commercial buildings common in urban areas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” and also “serve as good examples of local adaptations of popular methods of construction which often incorporate elements of nationally popular architectural styles.”¹²⁸

The 515 Auburn Avenue residence is included under the category “vernacular houses and

125. Levy.

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

127. *National Register documentation*, 7, 13.

128. *Ibid.*, 8, 21.

apartment buildings,” together with several other buildings nearby on Howell Street, Auburn Avenue, and Hogue Street.

The 515 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. It was accepted by the National Register on June 21, 2001.

The 2001 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 515 Auburn Avenue is not specifically addressed in this documentation, as it is within the

boundaries of the previously established historic district.¹²⁹

The findings of this Historic Structure Report concur with those of previous National Register and National Historic Landmark documentation. The 515 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 515 Auburn Avenue building survives with sufficient integrity to convey its historic associations.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for 515 Auburn Avenue is associated with the development of the Auburn Avenue neighborhood and surrounding community, as well as with Martin Luther King Jr.’s life there. The park interprets resources including the fire station and the residence 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. As 515 Auburn Avenue was constructed in 1909, a period of significance of 1909–1968 is relevant to this particular building. This period addresses the local historical and architectural significance of the residence, from its date of construction through the death of Martin Luther King Jr.

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

129. Moffson and Kissane.

spaces, and features; and the different components of its surroundings.¹³⁰

The following list identifies existing character-defining features found on the exterior and interior of 515 Auburn Avenue:

Exterior

- General configuration and orientation.
- Brick foundation walls.
- Horizontal wood siding.
- Wrap-around covered porch at north elevation.
- Wood-framed exterior doors.
- Double-hung wood windows.
- Gable and hipped roofs over the residence.
- Three masonry chimneys.

Interior

- General configuration of floor plan.
- Original finishes including wood flooring (concealed by carpet), wood trim and millwork that remain.
- Decorative mantelpieces in the foyer, meeting room, north office, and south office.
- Original six-panel wood doors, including pair of wood pocket doors at foyer.

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 *National Register Bulletin 15: 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.¹³¹

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.”¹³²

The historic integrity of 515 Auburn Avenue has been assessed within the context of the

130. 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).

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

132. *Ibid.*

contribution of the building to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.

Integrity of Location. The residence at 515 Auburn Avenue retains a high degree of 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 residence at 515 Auburn Avenue retains a high degree of integrity of design, despite changes in finishes made to the interior of the structure and the removal of wall between the north and south portion of the meeting room.

Integrity of Setting. The residence at 515 Auburn Avenue retains a high degree of 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 residence at 515 Auburn Avenue retains a moderate degree of integrity of materials and workmanship. While the historic appearance of the exterior of the building is generally intact, extensive modifications to the interior, including replacement of many of the original finishes, has resulted in a diminished integrity of materials and workmanship.

Integrity of Feeling. The residence at 515 Auburn Avenue retains a moderate degree of integrity of feeling. The structure was originally constructed as a residence and, while it no longer retains that function today, the exterior of the building still reflects a residential building. Alterations that have been made to the building have not significantly altered the exterior character of the residence.

Integrity of Association. An important aspect of the significance of the residence at 515 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, 515 Auburn Avenue retains a high degree of integrity of association.

Treatment and Use

Requirements for Treatment and Use

The following discussion of treatment and use for the 515 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 house 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 house 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 house is therefore more important in providing historic context than the interior, although original features of the interior are character defining. The 515 Auburn Avenue building is expected to remain in use as park meeting and support space.

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 (NHPA), 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 is also to be 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 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 515 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 405.2.1.¹³³

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

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

addition, Executive Order 13514 issued in 2009 directs all federal agencies to implement sustainable design and construction practices. For 515 Auburn Avenue, the relevant guidelines in this executive order require:

... managing existing building systems to reduce the consumption of energy, water, and materials, and identifying alternatives to renovation that reduce existing assets' deferred maintenance costs . . . [and] ensuring that rehabilitation of federally owned historic buildings utilizes best practices and technologies in retrofitting to promote long term viability of the buildings.¹³⁴

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.

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.

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.

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.¹³⁵

Of the four treatment approaches, *rehabilitation*, which involves making possible a compatible use through repair, alterations, or additions, is most appropriate for the 515 Auburn Avenue building. This treatment would allow for the repairs necessary to stabilize and preserve the building, while permitting minor renovation to meet the needs of contemporary park visitation, interpretation, and National Park Service management needs.

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 and is considered overly limiting for a contributing but not individually significant building within the historic district. 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 also considered overly limiting for a contributing but

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

135. Grimmer, 2017.

not individually significant structure. In addition, sufficient documentation has not been discovered to support accurate restoration of the house.

Retention of original materials and character-defining features during rehabilitation work is practical and appropriate, and it will also assist in the use of 515 Auburn Avenue to interpret the Birth Home neighborhood to the public.

Ultimate Treatment and Use

Guidelines for Treatment

Guidelines and recommendations for treatment for 515 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.¹³⁶

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*.

136. 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 building 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 NPS 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.
- Locations of missing trim and siding in the exterior envelope should be repaired by the addition of matching wood siding or trim. Repairs to siding should be integrated with the existing clapboard siding.
- Deteriorated wood window and screen sash should be repaired or replaced. As part of repairs, the sash should be removed, deglazed, and deteriorated portions of the sash removed and replaced with new wood dutchman and epoxy. Window and screen sash should be adjusted, and joinery reinforced so that frames are square.
- Decay at wood siding, trim, and decorative elements should be removed and new wood dutchman installed. The dutchman should match the existing wood in size and 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.
- Cupped, buckled, and deteriorated tongue-and-groove deck boards should be removed and replaced. Prime boards on all faces and edges prior to installation and paint to match existing.
- Cracked and spalled cementitious parge coating at the foundation walls should be removed, repairs should be performed to the underlying CMU, and a new cementitious parge coating should be applied to match the existing.
- Cracked mortar joints and CMUs in the foundation wall should be repaired. Depending on the type and extent of cracking, repairs may include routing and repointing cracks and open joints with mortar or creating vertical expansion joints with elastomeric sealant. Repointing should be done in accordance the recommendations in NPS *Preservation Brief No. 2 – Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings*.

Recommendations

Exterior

- Remove all plastic vapor barrier fastened to the underside of the floor joist at the crawl space.
- At locations where decay and deterioration of structural wood framing members are observed, framing member should be repaired or replaced. Sister deteriorated wood framing or remove and replace it with new wood framing members. Prior to repairs, identify and address potential sources of deterioration, if possible.

Treatment and Use

- Exposed voids in the CMU foundation wall at vent openings should be filled with mortar. Install mortar shelter coat at perimeter of vent openings to shed water from the opening.
- Loose nails at the wood siding and trim should be removed and replaced with stainless steel ring shank nails.
- Loose and damaged screens at screen windows and doors should be removed and the screens replaced with new metal screens.
- Consideration should be given to providing new wood-framed screens at all operable windows.
- Loose and displaced wood trim should be either re-secured or removed and reinstalled with stainless steel ring shank nails.
- At locations where loss of paint or bleaching of the paint are observed, the wood surface should be scraped, spot primed, and painted to match the original color scheme, using alkyd-based paints formulated for exterior wood.
- Biological growth and mildew at structural wood framing members should be washed with a biocide.
- In areas of siding that experience heavy mildew or organic growth, the wood surface should be washed with a biocide and repainted using alkyd-based paints. 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.
- Provide watertight and airtight seals, such as applied exterior-grade sealants, at all penetrations through the exterior envelope. For example, where television, internet and data cables enter the building.
- Install concrete splash pads or drain leaders 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.
- Displaced wood fence posts with concrete foundations should be removed and either reset or replaced. Upon repair, the perimeter fence should be rebuilt.
- 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 mantels, overmantels, and trim in the meeting room should be secured into place.
- Obtain historically appropriate coal grates and cast-iron registers for fireplaces.
- 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 removing wall-to-wall carpet and then repairing and refinishing original wood floors, where present.
- Consider rehabilitation of original openings and replicating original pocket doors between the north and south portions of the meeting room and between the central hall and the south portion of the meeting room during future rehabilitation of the interior.
- Preserve the character-defining floor plan configuration, which appears to be compatible with the current temporary office space and storage use of the building.
- Accomplish programmed cyclical maintenance and essential repairs, such as painting, carpet replacement and tile flooring replacement, and cleaning.
- Determine compliance with NFPA 101: Life Safety Code. Strobe lights and sirens and / or annunciators may have to be added to the building and tied into the existing upgraded fire detection and alarm system.
- Consider repairs and upgrades as needed to make the building accessible and to comply with the requirements of the ABAAS. For example, repair the ramp and rear deck at the south door. One or both toilet rooms will require modifications to meet the requirements of the ABAAS. These modifications can be accommodated within the footprint of the existing toilet room in the southeast corner of the building. However, the toilet room on the west side of the building will require additional space to meet the clearances required, such modifications would result in a significant alteration of the original floor-plan layout.
- Repair the deteriorated floor framing and subfloor at the south end of the central hall prior to installing new carpet or hardwood flooring (refer to recommendation on hardwood flooring above).
- The non-original rear door at the south end of the central hall should be replaced with a historically appropriate exterior grade door. The frame should be repaired as necessary to provide solid anchorage for hinges, locks, and hardware. Install complete weather-stripping and a new wood threshold.
- The rear door at the kitchen should be replaced with a historically appropriate exterior grade door. The frame should be repaired as necessary to provide solid anchorage for hinges, locks, and hardware. Install complete weather-stripping and a new wood threshold.
- Remove obsolete or abandoned fixtures and devices.

Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Systems

- Accomplish programmed cyclical maintenance and essential repairs, particularly for mechanical and electrical systems, fixtures, equipment, and devices.
- The current heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system was installed in 2016. Monitor HVAC equipment for proper and efficient operation. Accomplish programmed cyclical maintenance and essential repairs, and plan for future replacement of failing equipment with modern, energy-efficient systems.
- 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.
- The current plumbing and electrical systems were installed in the early 2000s, and they are in good condition. Monitor plumbing and electrical fixtures and equipment for proper

and efficient operation. Accomplish programmed cyclical maintenance and essential repairs.

- Consider future cable and wi-fi / internet upgrades or a transition to a wireless system to benefit from the latest technology. Wireless technology is also less likely to contribute to the loss of character-defining features and materials.

Current and forthcoming work

As of this writing, the park has not identified work currently in progress or planned by the park to be completed at the house.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Conduct further research on Charles A. and Annie Belle Evans Faison, for whom the home at 515 Auburn Avenue was constructed. Charles Faison, a barber, also served as Illustrious Potentate of the Rabban Temple, Atlanta's first African American Shrine Temple, and, along with his wife, was a significant member of the community in the early twentieth century. While some information is known about the Faisons, further research into their lives is needed, particularly with the addition of Prince Hall, a former masonic temple, to the park.
2. Conduct further research into the development of 515 Auburn Avenue. While research of the park's archival records was undertaken as part of this study, little information on alterations to the building, particularly during NPS ownership of the property, was found.
3. Conduct finishes analysis of painted wood on the exterior of the house to identify original/historic color schemes.

Resilience to Natural Hazards

Although the 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.¹³⁷ 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.¹³⁸

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

137. Judith Curry, "Local Warming: Consequences of Climate Change for Atlanta," Georgia Tech University, accessed June 2017, http://curry.eas.gatech.edu/climate/pdf/atlanta_rev.pdf.

138. Ibid.

As part of future efforts to build on and update the documentation provided in this Historic Structure Report, the NPS should consider such approaches as more detailed documentation resulting from new three-dimensional scanning technology, monitoring weather-related deterioration, updating emergency and disaster planning to address resiliency to natural hazards, and 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 climate change and remain effective resource stewards while promoting visitor experience.”¹³⁹

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 site and its resources.

139. 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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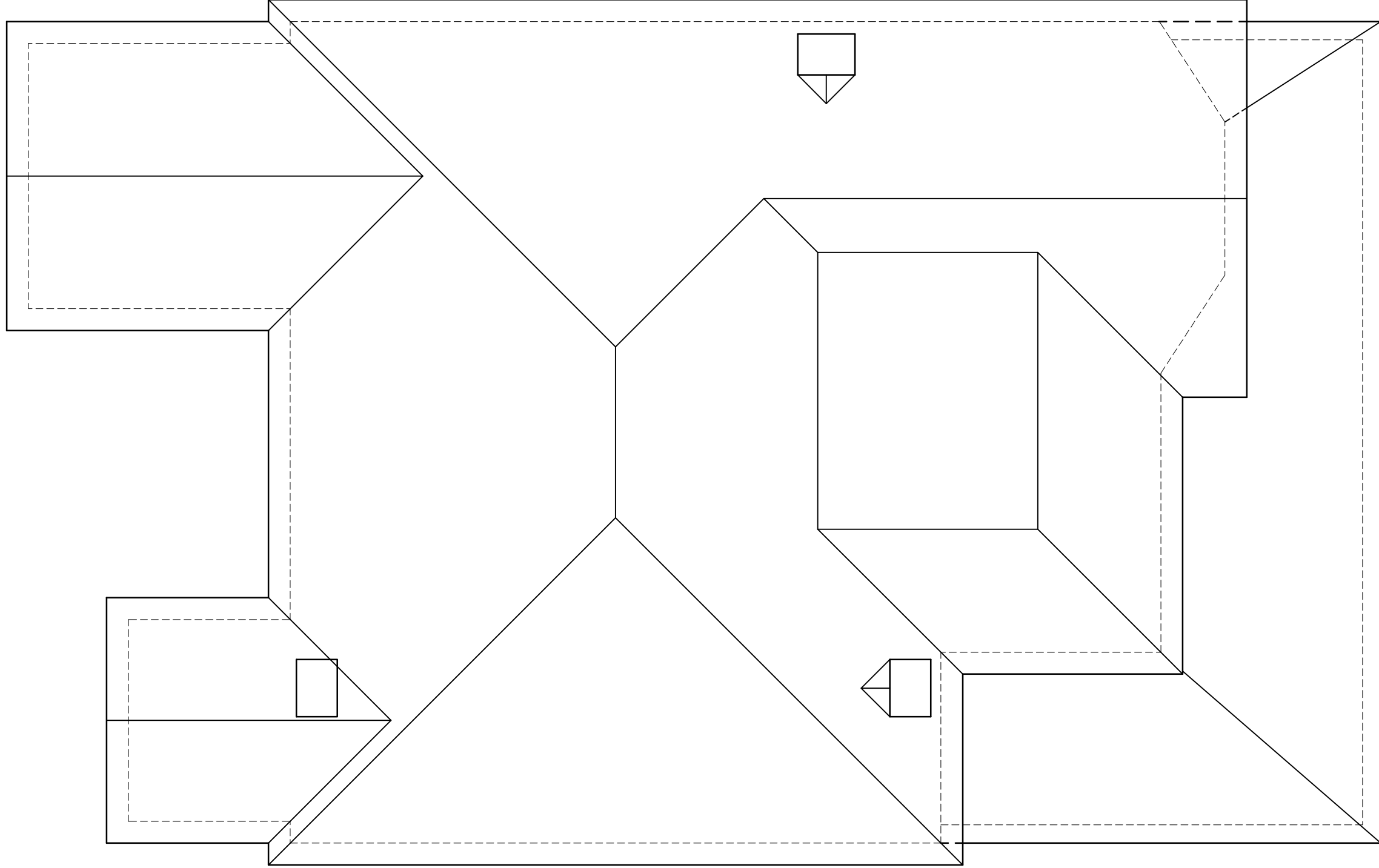
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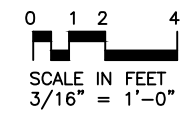
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Appendix A: Measured Drawings



ROOF PLAN



DRAWN BY: WFT, MAY 2018

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

ATLANTA
FULTON COUNTY

515 AUBURN AVENUE, NE
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

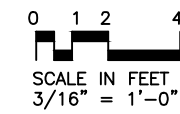
GEORGIA

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

SHEET
2 OF 6



NORTH ELEVATION



DRAWN BY: WFT, MAY 2018

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

ATLANTA
FULTON COUNTY

515 AUBURN AVENUE, NE
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

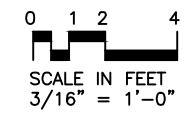
GEORGIA

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

SHEET
3 OF 6



WEST ELEVATION



DRAWN BY: WFT, MAY 2018

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

ATLANTA
FULTON COUNTY

515 AUBURN AVENUE, NE
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

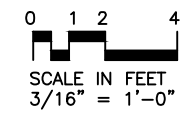
GEORGIA

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

SHEET
4 OF 6



SOUTH ELEVATION



DRAWN BY: WFT, MAY 2018

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

ATLANTA
FULTON COUNTY

515 AUBURN AVENUE, NE
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

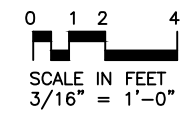
GEORGIA

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

SHEET
5 OF 6



EAST ELEVATION



DRAWN BY: WFT, MAY 2018

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

ATLANTA
FULTON COUNTY

515 AUBURN AVENUE, NE
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

GEORGIA

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

SHEET
6 OF 6

Appendix B: Hazardous Materials Survey Report

A REPORT FOR A QUALITATIVE SURVEY
FOR
SUSPECT ASBESTOS-CONTAINING MATERIALS,
LEAD-CONTAINING MATERIALS,
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND UNIVERSAL WASTE,
AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS
OF
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
515 AUBURN AVENUE
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MLK HSR PCI # 36145

Requested by

PANAMERICAN CONSULTANTS, INC.
149 NEEDLES COURT
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

TELEPHONE NO. (615) 232-3963

Prepared by

HAZCLEAN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS, INC.
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HAZCLEAN Report No. 18.1813.01.02
May 2018

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Asbestos-Containing Materials

1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

HAZCLEAN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS, INC. (HAZCLEAN) was retained by Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee to conduct a facility Qualitative Survey to identify suspected Asbestos-Containing Materials (ACM) at a residential-type building located at 515 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.

Specifically, the scope of services rendered included the following:

Scope of Work:

1. Conduct a visual survey of the building interior spaces and exterior to identify suspect asbestos-containing building materials
2. Prepare a final report with observations and recommendations relating to the identified facilities' conditions.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

HAZCLEAN, under the direction of Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee conducted a site investigation on September 21, 2016, to identify suspected Asbestos-Containing Materials (ACM) at 515 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia at the Martin Luther King Jr., National Historic Site (now National Historical Park). 515 Auburn Avenue is a two-story residential building with a total area of approximately 2300 square feet. The structure is a wood frame covered by wooden siding with a shingle pitched roof. The interior is finished with drywall and hardwood flooring or ceramic tile flooring

3.0 DISCUSSION OF OBSERVATIONS

HAZCLEAN only identified building materials that were suspect to be asbestos-containing materials (ACM). No sampling or laboratory analysis was conducted on these suspect materials. Any suspect building materials that were newly installed without documentation of being asbestos free or no listed asbestos in the material safety data sheet (MSDS), safety data sheet (SDS) or manufactures data of specification will be considered Presumed Asbestos Containing Materials (PACM) until laboratory analysis confirms if asbestos is present or absent.

This is a residential building used for public purpose and is subject to compliance with the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) 40 CFR Part 61 Subpart M, as given in the Definitions § 61.141.

The following summary of findings is based on the results from the physical observation during the field investigation:

1. **HAZCLEAN** presents the following table, summarizing the results of the asbestos-containing materials (ACM) survey:

Material	Location	Comment
Roofing System (new)	Roof	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Asbestos.
Thermal System Insulation (new)	Piping and Blown-in Attic	These materials were glass fiber (pink or yellow) which are trademark color and are considered non-asbestos-containing materials
Flooring	Throughout	The floors were terra cotta or ceramic tiles, or hardwood and these materials are non-asbestos-containing materials
Interior Walls	Throughout	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Asbestos or that ACM was installed during renovation.

It was understood that this building has undergone a recent renovation; however, there was no documentation provided to address previous asbestos inspections or abatement of asbestos-containing materials.

Inspection Report Limitations

This report shall not be used as a substitute for National Emissions Standards for a Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) thorough inspection prior to renovation of demolition activities (40 CFR Part 61 Subpart M).

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) any material containing greater than one percent (>1%) asbestos is considered ACM.

4.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Recommendations

The following recommendations are made concerning the suspect building materials located at the residential structure, 515 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.

1. **HAZCLEAN** recommends that prior to demolition or renovation of any of the listed suspect building materials that will be disturbed by these activities that a "thorough inspection" as referenced in NESHAP 40 CFR Part 61, Subpart M, be conducted by a Georgia Certified Asbestos Inspector. The inspector should sample the suspect materials and have them analyzed at an accredited National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) laboratory to determine the absence or presents of asbestos in the building materials. Additionally, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires bulk sample analysis to declare that a material is not asbestos-containing (29 CFR 1910.1001 and 29 CFR 1926.1101).
2. **HAZCLEAN** makes no further recommendations at this time regarding the study site; however, **HAZCLEAN** reserves the right to modify our opinion should additional information, not available during the time of this investigation, be presented to **HAZCLEAN**.

Lead-Containing Materials

1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

HAZCLEAN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS, INC. (HAZCLEAN) was retained by Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee, to conduct a Qualitative Survey to identify suspected Lead-Based Paint (LBP) or Lead-Containing Materials (LCM) at a residential building located at 515 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.

Specifically, the scope of services rendered included the following:

Scope of Work:

1. Conduct a visual survey of the building interior spaces and exterior for suspect lead-based paint and lead-containing materials.
2. Prepare a final report with observations and recommendations relating to the facility conditions identified.

2.0 DISCUSSION OF OBSERVATIONS

This building is not a Target Housing, Child-Occupied Facility or pre-1978 Housing and is not subject to comply with Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 24 CFR Part 35 and USEPA 40 CFR Part 745 due to its use as a public access building. However, in the event it reverts to a residence that will be child-occupied, USEPA and HUD regulations should apply. This building is subject to compliance with OSHA 29 CFR Part 1926.62 and 29 CFR 1910.1025.

HAZCLEAN presents the following table, summarizing the results of the lead-based paints survey:

Component	Location	Comment
Window Components	Perimeter walls (interior and exterior sides)	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Lead-Based Paint

Component	Location	Comment
Door and Door Frames	Exterior and Interior	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Lead-Based Paint
Interior Walls and Trim and Ceiling	Interior	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Lead-Based Paint
Glazed Ceramic Tile	Interior (Bathroom and Fireplace Hearths)	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Lead-Based Paint
Cabinetry	Interior	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Lead-Based Paint
Walls; Crawlspace Apron; Porch floor, ceiling, railing, columns	Exterior	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Lead-Based Paint
Eaves and Overhangs	Exterior	No documentation was provided to refute the presence of Lead-Based Paint

It was understood that this building was renovated; however, there was no documentation provided to address previous LBP or LCM inspections or abatement of LBP or LCM.

Inspection Report Limitations

This inspection report shall not be used as a substitute for a HUD Lead-Based Inspection and Risk Assessment Inspection Report or as a removal specification.

3.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made concerning the building materials for the residential-type building located at 515 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park:

1. **HAZCLEAN** recommends that prior to demolition or renovation of any of

the listed suspect building materials that will be disturbed by these activities that an X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) multi-spectrum analysis or laboratory paint-chip analysis confirm if lead is present or absent.

2. **HAZCLEAN** recommends that if any painted surfaces are confirmed to be LBP or LCM that all personnel performing work on the lead-containing materials be aware of the presence of lead and to implement the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) safety measures. OSHA regulation 29 CFR 1910.1025 and 29 CFR 1926.62 establishes protection guidelines for workers who may be exposed to airborne lead, including a permissible exposure limit (PEL) for airborne lead particles averaged over an eight (8)-hour time-weighted average (TWA) period. OSHA has identified manual demolition of structures with lead content as a potential health hazard in the Construction Safety and Health Outreach Program.
3. **HAZCLEAN** makes no further recommendations at this time regarding the study site; however, **HAZCLEAN** reserves the right to modify our opinion should additional information, not available during the time of this investigation, be presented to **HAZCLEAN**.

Hazardous Materials and Universal Waste and Other Environmental Conditions

1.0 INTRODUCTION

HAZCLEAN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS, INC. (HAZCLEAN) was retained by Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee, to conduct a Qualitative Survey for potential hazardous waste and universal waste and environmental conditions identified at a residential building located at 515 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.

This report presents the Findings and Recommendations of the Qualitative Assessment for Hazardous Materials and Universal Waste and Environmental Conditions.

Background:

As background information and an introduction into the qualitative survey proposed for the subject facility, the following sections describe **Hazardous Materials and the Universal Waste Rule (UWR) and the relationship with hazardous waste typically handled by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).**

1.1 Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials pose hazards and risks to humans, animals, and the environment and can be any substance or material that could adversely affect the safety of the public, handlers or carriers. Hazardous material professionals are responsible for and properly qualified to manage such materials at any point in their life-cycle, from process planning and development of new products; through manufacture, distribution and use; and to disposal, cleanup and remediation. Hazardous materials are defined and regulated in the United States primarily by laws and regulations administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Each has its own definition of a "hazardous material."

OSHA's definition includes any substance or chemical which is a "health hazard" or "physical hazard," including: chemicals which are carcinogens, toxic agents, irritants, corrosives, sensitizers; agents which act on the hematopoietic system; agents which

damage the lungs, skin, eyes, or mucous membranes; chemicals which are combustible, explosive, flammable, oxidizers, pyrophorics, unstable-reactive or water-reactive; and chemicals which in the course of normal handling, use, or storage may produce or release dusts, gases, fumes, vapors, mists or smoke which may have any of the previously mentioned characteristics. (Full definitions can be found at 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1910.1200.)

1.2 Universal Waste

The Universal Waste Rule (UWR) codified in Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 273, "Standards for Universal Waste Management," was promulgated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on 11 May 1995. The EPA developed the UWR to improve waste management practices of widely generated, low risk Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste. Through streamlined RCRA waste management practices, the EPA intended to develop a system to separate "universal" hazardous waste from the municipal waste stream and ensure proper waste management.

The streamlined management established by the UWR provides relief from the full regulatory aspects of RCRA by simplifying collection and management requirements for universal waste. **In 1995, the EPA designated three types of hazardous waste as universal: batteries, pesticides, and thermostats. In 1999, the EPA added lamps to the list of universal waste and in 2005 EPA added Mercury-containing equipment which means a device or part of a device (including thermostats but excluding batteries and lamps) that contains elemental mercury integral to its function.**

Although the UWR is less stringent than RCRA, EPA believes the rule encourages resource conservation and improves the implementation of RCRA. EPA developed the rule to facilitate and expand collection of universal waste and hopes the rule will encourage unregulated entities to participate, further diverting these wastes from the municipal solid waste stream.

The following is the current list and definition of Universal Waste:

a. Batteries

A battery is defined in Title 40 CFR 273.9, "Definitions," as a device designed to receive, store, and deliver electric energy that consists of one or more electrically connected electrochemical cells. The term also includes an intact, unbroken battery from which the electrolyte has been removed. In short, many kinds/types of batteries are covered under the universal waste regulations as long as they are hazardous waste.

Spent lead-acid batteries, which are managed under Title 40 CFR Part 266, Subpart G, "Spent Lead-Acid Batteries Being Reclaimed," are exempt from universal waste regulations. However, if spent lead-acid batteries are not managed under Title 40 CFR Part 266, Subpart G, then they are subject to management under universal waste regulations.

b. Lamps

A lamp is defined as "the bulb or tube portion of an electric lighting device." Examples of common universal waste lamps include spent fluorescent, high intensity discharge, neon, mercury vapor, high pressure sodium, and metal halide lamps. As of 6 January 2000, any spent or waste lamp that is hazardous or exhibits one of the hazardous waste characteristics identified in Title 40 CFR Part 261, "Identification and Listing of Hazardous Wastes," is subject to regulation as a universal waste.

c. Pesticides

A pesticide means "any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest, or intended for use as a plant regulator, defoliant, or desiccant, other than animal drugs and feeds. Therefore, any unused pesticide products that are collected and managed as part of a waste pesticide collection/recall program mandated by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), or a voluntary recall program, are subject to management under universal waste regulations. [Note: Recalled pesticides managed by farmers in compliance with Title 40 CFR Part 262, "Standards Applicable to Generators of Hazardous Wastes," Subpart G, "Farmers," are not subject to regulation as a universal waste.]

d. Mercury-Containing Equipment

Mercury-containing equipment means a device or part of a device (including thermostats but excluding batteries and lamps) that contains elemental mercury integral to its function. A thermostat means "a temperature control device that contains metallic mercury in an ampule attached to a bimetal sensing element, and mercury-containing ampules that have been removed from these temperature control devices." A thermostat becomes a solid waste on the date it is discarded, at which time the generator must determine if the thermostat exhibits any hazardous waste characteristic: ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity. If thermostats are not waste, or are not determined to be hazardous wastes, they are not subject to universal waste regulations.

2.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

HAZCLEAN proposed to conduct a Qualitative Assessment for potential hazardous waste, universal waste and environmental conditions located at a residential-type building located at 515 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park.

Specifically, the scope of services rendered for this project included the following:

Scope of Work:

1. Conduct a Qualitative Assessment to identify potential hazardous waste and universal waste and environmental conditions that may impact planned renovation and/or demolition activities.
2. Review all field, survey, and analytical data (if available) to provide a comprehensive facility assessment.
3. Prepare a final report with observations and recommendations relating to the qualitative assessment.

3.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

HAZCLEAN conducted a facility-wide Qualitative Survey to identify potential **Hazardous Materials, Universal Waste and Environmental Conditions** that may have an impact on planned renovation and/or demolition activities. The Findings are discussed below:

3.1 Hazardous Materials

HAZCLEAN conducted a limited survey to identify hazardous materials or areas with environmental concerns. The following materials and concerns were identified:

1. **HAZCLEAN** determined by site interview and a records search and verification of Georgia Environmental Protection Division records that no underground storage tanks were registered to the City of Atlanta for this site.

2. **HAZCLEAN** did not observe areas of chemical/hazardous materials or waste storage in the form of bulk containers on the property.

3.2 Universal Waste

1. **HAZCLEAN** did not observe any batteries that would be subject to universal waste regulations as defined in Title 40 CFR 273.9.
2. **HAZCLEAN** observed lamps as defined as a universal waste. The common universal waste lamps were noted throughout the facility included standard fluorescent lighting units. These units potentially contain mercury and appear to be in good condition; however, all fluorescent lighting units should be handled with caution when removing. The lamps are the Compact Fluorescent Screw-in (CFL) bulbs with non-PCB ballast.
3. **HAZCLEAN** did not observe any pesticides that would be subject to universal waste regulations as defined in Title 40 CFR 273.9.
4. **HAZCLEAN** did not observe one zone control thermostats that would be subject to universal waste regulations as defined in Title 40 CFR 273.9.

4.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Recommendations:

The following recommendations are made concerning universal waste and environmental conditions identified at a residential-type building located at 515 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park:

1. **HAZCLEAN** recommends that all CFL bulbs (Lamps), be managed during renovation activities as provided in USEPA 40 CFR 273 Standards for Universal Waste Management. All other bulbs, lights and components may be recycled or disposed of as solid waste in accordance with 40 CFR Parts 260 and 261.
2. **HAZCLEAN** recommends the development of abatement specifications or guidelines for the handling, recycling and/or disposal universal waste during renovation and/or demolition activities.

QUALIFYING STATEMENT

HAZCLEAN has prepared this report for the exclusive use of the client. The report and its findings, conclusions, and recommendations either in part or in its entirety are not to be used or relied on by any other party without prior consent by **HAZCLEAN, the Client or assigns**. The report format is proprietary to **HAZCLEAN**, having been designed, developed, and prepared by **HAZCLEAN** at great expense and the information is secret, confidential, unique, and constitutes the exclusive property of **HAZCLEAN** and shall not be used by any third party without the prior written consent of **HAZCLEAN**. Any use thereof, other than the sole benefit of **HAZCLEAN** or the client, shall be deemed wrongful and will cause irreparable injury to **HAZCLEAN**.

HAZCLEAN presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations, therein, which are based solely on the conditions observed during the inspection and analytical results. The client should be aware that methodologies, results, conclusions, recommendations, and any remediation protocol to be written are based partially upon decisions made by the client concerning the extent of project work to be conducted and are the results of a limited sampling program conducted on a specific date(s). A different sampling program or samples taken at another time may have resulted in different conclusions, recommendations, and protocols. Additionally, **HAZCLEAN** does not make any representation or projection as to past conditions or future exposures and does not extend its findings to areas outside of the statistical representation of the completed investigation.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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