

**North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources**  
**State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Pat McCrory  
Secretary Susan Kluttz

Office of Archives and History  
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

August 28, 2014

Daniel H. Bridges  
Parson Brinckerhoff  
121 West Trade Street, Suite 1950  
Charlotte, NC 28202

RE: Historic Structures Survey Report, I-85 Design Build, I-3802A,  
Cabarrus and Rowan Counties, ER 05-0376

Dear Mr. Bridges:

Thank you for your letter of August 5, 2014, transmitting the above-referenced report. We have reviewed the report and offer the following comments.

We concur that the Parkwood subdivision area is not significant under any criteria and is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The area has not retained sufficient integrity from the initial development period of the subdivision, and it does not appear to have been an important aspect of Concord's patterns of residential development.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or [renee.gledhill-earley@ncdcr.gov](mailto:renee.gledhill-earley@ncdcr.gov). In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Renee Gledhill-Earley".

A small handwritten word "for" in blue ink, followed by the name "Ramona M. Bartos".

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT/PDEA/HES

[mfurr@ncdot.gov](mailto:mfurr@ncdot.gov)

# **HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCE REPORT INTENSIVE EVALUATION FOR PARKWOOD (MARIETTA PLACE) SUBDIVISION**

Main Street/US 29A Realignment (ATC #5)  
Cabarrus County  
Tip No. I-3802A

Prepared for:  
Human Environment Section  
North Carolina Department of Transportation  
1598 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, North Carolina, 27699

Prepared by:  
Mulkey Engineers and Consultants  
6750 Tryon Road  
Cary, North Carolina, 27518

July 2014



---

Sarah Woodard David, Principal Investigator

July 31, 2014

Date



## Contents

Project Description .....	4
Physical Description .....	7
Historical Development .....	10
Architectural Context.....	12
National Register Evaluation.....	26
Bibliography .....	28
Appendix: Bergerburg Plat and Photos.....	30



## Project Description

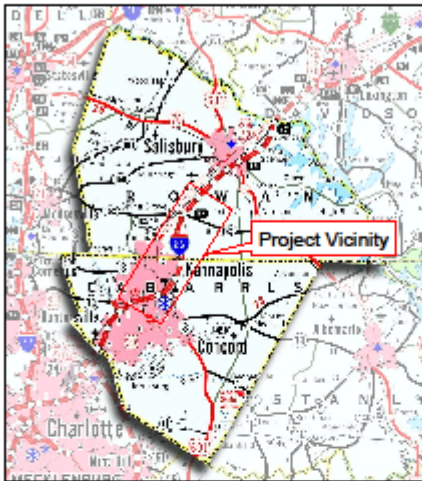
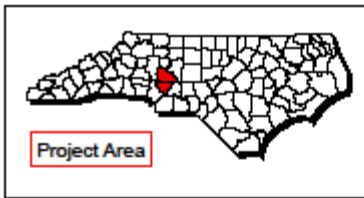
The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and Federal Highway Administration propose the reconstruction and widening of I-85 to an eight-lane freeway from NC 73 in Cabarrus County to U.S. Highway 29-601 Connector in Rowan County as TIP No. 1-3802A. The project is divided into two sections for construction phasing: Section A from NC 73 to north of Lane Street in Cabarrus County and Section B from north of Lane Street to the US 29-601 Connector in Rowan County. A Categorical Exclusion was approved for I-3802 in 2013. Section A of the project is currently in the Design-Build process. The realignment of U.S. Highway 29A (ATC #5) is proposed as part of I-3802A. Additional environmental studies are being completed for the proposed design modifications. The NCDOT identified one previously undocumented architectural resource within the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE): the Marietta Place Subdivision. This potential historic district has not been documented in any previous architectural survey.

In June 2014, NCDOT requested that Parsons Brinckerhoff complete research, an intensive-level historic field survey, and a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) evaluation of the Marietta Place Subdivision. Subsequently, Parsons Brinckerhoff contracted with Mulkey Engineers & Consultants, and on July 14, 2014, Mulkey Architectural Historian Sarah Woodard David visited the site, completed photo-documentation, undertook research at the Cabarrus County Public Library and the Cabarrus County Register of Deeds, and conducted a windshield survey for comparable examples of similar resources in Concord and Kannapolis.

Following the survey and research for this project, the investigator discovered that the subdivision's original name is Parkwood rather than Marietta Place. Therefore, the resource is primarily referred to as Parkwood in this report.

Mulkey conducted all fieldwork, research, and evaluations to meet the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800, as well as NCDOT's *Guidelines for the Survey Reports for Historic Architectural Resources*.

Based on the field survey, background research, and the NRHP evaluation documented in this report, the Parkwood (Marietta Place) Subdivision has been determined not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



**Figure 1**

**Project Vicinity**

I-85 Widening and Interchange Improvements From North of NC 73 to US 29-601 Connector (I-3802/I-3610/B-5365)  
 Rowan and Cabarrus Counties, North Carolina



North Carolina  
 Department of Transportation

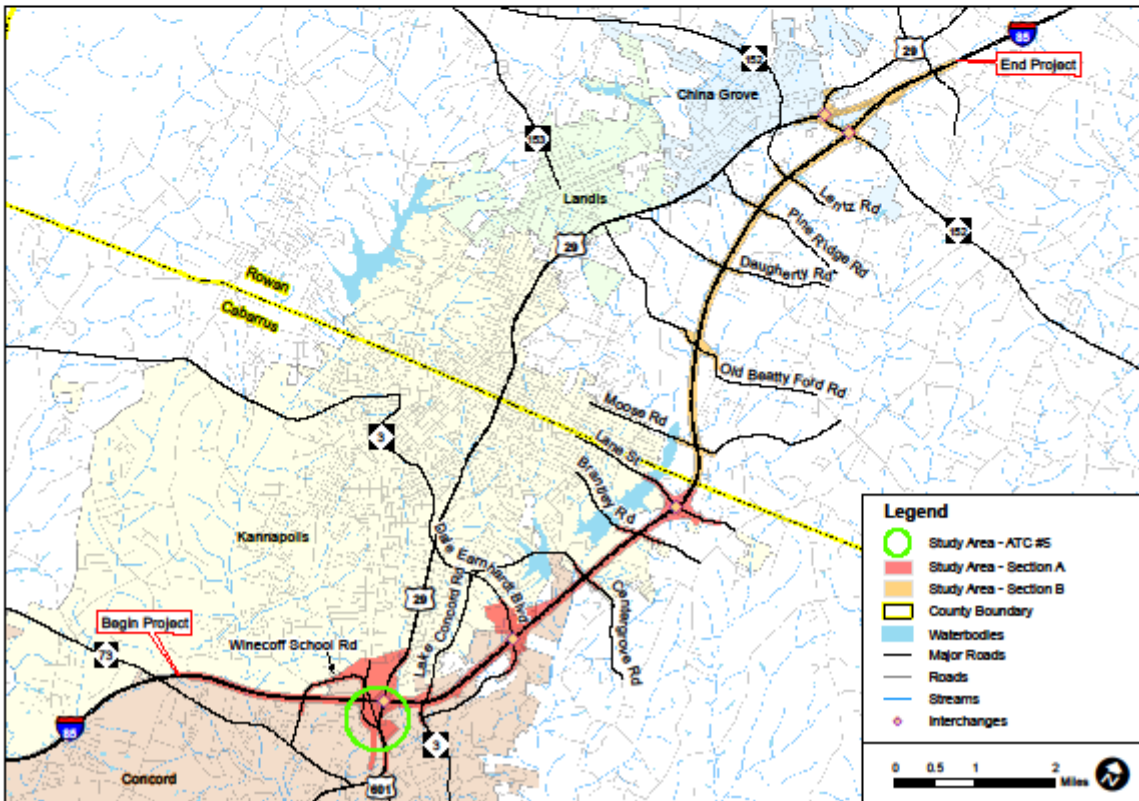


Figure 1: Project Vicinity





Figure 2: Study Area for Main Street/US29A Realignment (ATC #5)

## Physical Description

The study area encompasses a neighborhood on the southern edge of I-85. A 1920s subdivision, Parkwood, comprises most of the study area, but additional lots on Walnut Avenue, Marietta Place, and Mills Avenue are also part of the study area. These three streets were not part of the original Parkwood plat, but visually, these streets are part of or at least an outgrowth of the Parkwood development. Therefore, this report considers the entire study area to be Parkwood. Although platted in the 1920s, the neighborhood developed slowly and contains houses dating from the 1920s through the present day, as well as a notable number of intrusive, newer commercial buildings. Many of the older houses have been altered through the application of replacement materials, including doors, windows, and siding.

The Parkwood subdivision is within Concord's present-day bounds, but historically, it was between Concord and Kannapolis, both of which are located in Cabarrus County in the southwest corner of North Carolina's Piedmont region.

Parkwood is platted along U.S. Highway 29A (known today as Kannapolis Highway and as Main Street through downtown Kannapolis) immediately north of the intersection of that road and the North Carolina Railroad (Southern Railway) corridor.<sup>1</sup> Lots on the east side of Kannapolis Highway (U.S. 29A) are wedged between the road and the railroad, and, originally, the subdivision extended farther north along the east side of Kannapolis Highway. Today, however, I-85 runs through and has eliminated that arm of the neighborhood. Lots to the west of Kannapolis Highway are arranged around the curvilinear Willowbrook Drive and along the gridded Central Drive (originally School Street), Maple Avenue (originally Maple Road), and Parkwood Avenue (originally Oakridge Drive). Walnut Avenue to the south and Mills Avenue to the north bound the subdivision but were not part of the original plat.

Parkwood's houses are modest in scale. The subdivision's most intact and largest houses are located along Kannapolis Highway. A brick bungalow on the southwest corner of the northern intersection of Willowbrook Drive and Kannapolis Highway retains its wrap-around porch with battered posts on brick piers, gable ends finished with false half-timbering and stucco, exposed raftertails and original three-over-one sash windows. Across Kannapolis Highway, three other brick bungalows retain original doors, windows, and porches. Other houses along Kannapolis Highway include modest Tudor Revival-inspired English cottages and Minimal Traditional houses.

The remainder of the subdivision includes more modest gable-front bungalows, small English cottages, and plain Minimal Traditional dwellings. One building predates the subdivision: a diminutive side-gable cottage at 1231 Central Drive probably dates from the late nineteenth century. With the exception of a stone English cottage on Maple Avenue, two modest brick bungalows, and the brick Craftsman

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Highway 29A was also known as National Highway or Concord-Kannapolis Boulevard in the early twentieth century.



bungalows on Kannapolis Highway, the subdivision’s historic houses are frame and without exception, vinyl siding covers them. Additionally, most windows in the subdivision have been replaced with vinyl substitutes on both the frame and masonry examples.

The subdivision includes a significant number of late-twentieth-century and early-twenty-first-century residential and commercial infill buildings. Gable-front bungalows of a similar scale as their earlier neighbors date from the 1970s. Modest ranch houses were built in the 1970s or 1980s. Numerous duplexes and small- and medium-sized apartment buildings are scattered throughout the neighborhood and date from the 1990s and early 2000s. Two two-story brick duplexes are currently under construction on the north edge of the subdivision.

A Cabarrus County EMS Station was built on Willowbrook Drive in the 2000s, and along Kannapolis Highway, an auto-repair shop is located near its southern intersection with Willowbrook Drive. Also, along the main road, many of the houses have been converted for use as businesses, resulting in the introduction of larger driveways and parking lots.



Figure 3: Typical Parkwood house

Book 2 Page 19 B2 19

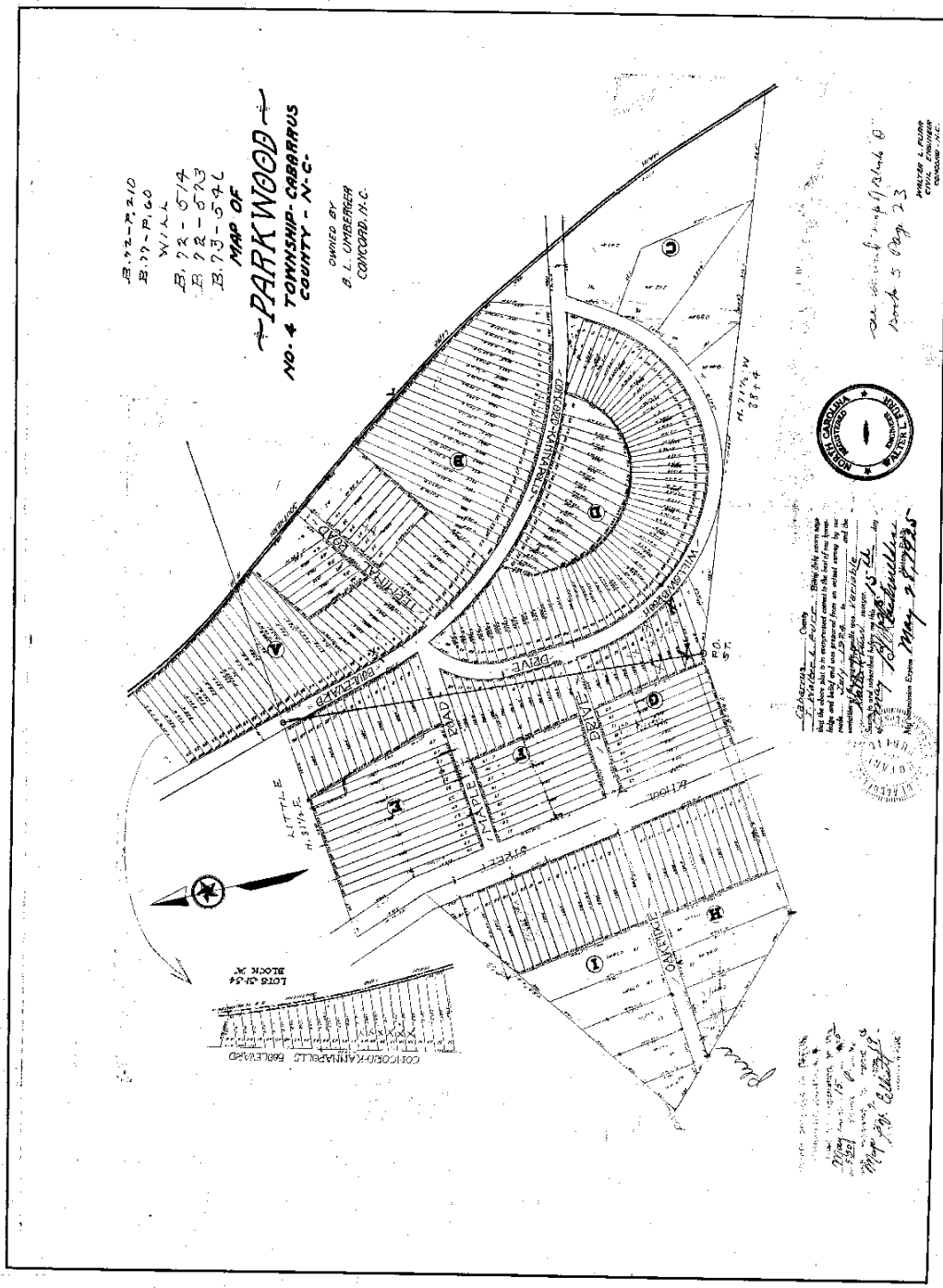


Figure 4: Parkwood plat

## Historical Development

The Parkwood subdivision is situated between Concord and Kannapolis. The towns were founded over a century apart and their developmental histories are very different, but U.S. Highway 29 links the two places so that they share a corridor of early suburban development along the Kannapolis Highway.

Legislators carved Cabarrus County from Mecklenburg County in 1792. Citizens established Concord as the county seat in 1796, naming the new town for the harmonious agreement that the county's German and Irish residents finally reached when deciding where to locate county seat. The town served as the center of local government and commerce, but the 1856 arrival of the North Carolina Railroad sparked cotton trading and antebellum textile manufacturing. This activity positioned Concord and Cabarrus County perfectly for participation in the region's post-war, New South prosperity.<sup>2</sup>

In 1877, John Milton Odell established a new textile mill at Forest Hill, Concord's earliest textile plant. Odell expanded the factory several times and although Odell was forced to sell it in the early 1900s, the mill continued operations into the 1970s. One of Odell's associates was James William Cannon, who started Cannon Manufacturing Company. Other mills followed until Concord was nearly surrounded by textile mills and their associated housing.<sup>3</sup>

By 1907, J. W. Cannon wanted to expand, but Concord's success meant land was scarce and expensive, so Cannon looked just a few miles north, up the North Carolina Railroad, where he established Kannapolis. The town and its mills expanded repeatedly until it produced more household textiles than any other mill in the world. Workers lived in over 1,600 company-owned mill houses and shopped in the company's downtown business district.<sup>4</sup>

In the early 1900s, Concord's expanding economy attracted investors and entrepreneurs, including Bascom Leonard Umberger. A native of Virginia, Umberger attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute before embarking on a career as a salesman, despite having a disability that required his use of crutches throughout his life. Shortly after moving to Concord, Umberger married Jennie Ludwig, a member of a locally well-known and wealthy family, and he founded Home Educational Company, through which he employed young men to sell a wide variety of products door-to-door. His most successful lines were musical instruments, including the novelty mandolin guitar harp.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003) 491.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 494.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 496.

<sup>5</sup> Leonard Wilson, ed., *Makers of America: Biographies of Leading Men and Women Including Family Histories* vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: B. F. Johnson, Inc., 1917), 45-47, and *The Concord Times*, February 17, 1916, page 10.

Through his own endeavors and his wife's family's money, Umberger eventually became one of the area's largest landholders with fourteen farms and a family home situated between Kannapolis and Concord. His farms supplied cream to his Purity Ice Cream Company. He sat on the board of directors for numerous businesses, and he became involved in real estate development in Concord, Kannapolis, and Charlotte.<sup>6</sup>

In 1913, Umberger began advertising Bergerburg, a subdivision illustrated on a 1924 plat map and located in Kannapolis, several blocks south of the town's commercial center.<sup>7</sup> The subdivision's lots were laid out on Bethpage Street, Leonard Street, Bell Avenue, and West Street, just off National Highway (U.S. Highway 29).

Bergerburg was a small development and relatively close to downtown Kannapolis so car ownership would not have been a requirement. Two or three houses may date from the subdivision's initial opening in the 1910s, and some were constructed after World War II, but the subdivision appears to have attracted most of its builders during the 1920s.<sup>8</sup>

In 1925, Umberger platted Parkwood between Kannapolis and Concord, where it could take advantage of the prosperity of both towns.<sup>9</sup> It is not known if he opened it up for sale before the plat map was drawn.

Unlike Bergerburg, Parkwood was far from either town center and would have required car ownership. Possibly because of this, it developed somewhat sluggishly. About one-third of the houses in the study area, which is slightly larger than Parkwood, date from the 1920s and approximately 45% predate World War II. About 65% of the study area's buildings are over 50 years in age; 35% appear to have been built after 1964, which is the NRHP's fifty-year guideline for eligibility.

Parkwood and Bergerburg are both situated on or close to Kannapolis Highway, and both are within the corridor of suburban development that links Kannapolis and Concord. Development along the highway includes a very small number of nineteenth-century farmhouses and numerous Craftsman bungalows scattered among post-World War II development. Parkwood serves as a small-scale mirror of this pattern with one nineteenth-century farmhouse, modest bungalows, post-war houses, and more recent construction. In Parkwood, the later development is primarily residential, but along Kannapolis Highway, the post-war development includes a striking collection of intact 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s roadside commercial buildings including trucking terminals, car dealerships, vintage signs, and at least two drive-in restaurants.

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> *The Concord Daily Tribune*, July 25, 1913, and Cabarrus County Plat Map Book 1, page 20.

<sup>8</sup> Appendix A includes a plat map and photos of Bergerburg.

<sup>9</sup> Cabarrus County Plat Map Book 2, page 19.



## Architectural Context

Parkwood's location, within a corridor of early suburban development, is somewhat unique because most developers continued building suburbs closer to city-centers even as car ownership became more common in the 1920s. Parkwood's location reflects Umberger's understanding or prediction that car ownership would continue spreading, and the subdivision's architecture reflects the common and pervasive styles applied to suburban houses from the 1920s and onward.

As industry played a bigger, smellier, noisier, and more intrusive part in urban life, the concept of an idyllic suburb with trees and quiet, curving streets appealed to more and more people. At the same time, the steadily decreasing cost of automobiles made suburban living an option for more people. Outside big cities like Atlanta, Cleveland, and New York, landscape architects laid out carefully designed, planned, and controlled suburbs like Druid Hills, Shaker Heights, and Tuxedo Park.<sup>10</sup> Designers worked in smaller cities, too, like Winston-Salem (Buena Vista) and Charlotte (Meyers Park).

In Concord, Bascom Leonard Umberger took the concept of a car-based suburb, platted along curvilinear avenues at a distance from a factory or city center, and situated Parkwood well outside Concord and Kannapolis with Willowbrook Drive and the already-established Kannapolis Highway nodding to the notion of bucolic, curving streets.

Within these suburbs across the county and at every socioeconomic level, including in Parkwood, builders and buyers tended to apply romantic revival styles and Craftsman styles to their dwellings. Craftsman designs emphasized the way houses are assembled and grew out of an impulse to focus on the craftsperson's handiwork rather than the products of a mechanical, industrialized sawmill. On the exterior, exposed raftertails and kneebraces, which were typically only decorative, served to illustrate workmanship, while interior woodwork with highlighted or exposed joinery celebrated craftsmanship.

Within Parkwood, several houses were executed in the Craftsman style or were embellished with modest Craftsman references. The most intact and largest examples are located on Kannapolis Highway and include several brick dwellings. The house at 2402 Kannapolis Highway (Figure 5) is a one-story, gable-front cottage with a side-gable, wrap-around porch, exposed raftertails, and three-over-one sash windows. The simpler, frame gable-front cottage with an attached hip-roof porch at 13 Willowbrook Drive (Figure 6) is more typical of the neighborhood's Craftsman-influenced houses.

Revival styles, including Tudor Revival and the less decorative version of it, the English Cottage, reflected a pre-industrial era when life was quieter and, presumably, simpler. In revival designs, architects, buyers, and builders looked to history, rather than craftsmanship, to evoke a sense of peace and order.

---

<sup>10</sup> Leland M. Roth, *A Concise History of American Architecture* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1979), 231-232.

The English cottage at 109 Maple Avenue (Figure 7) is Parkwood’s best revival-style house. The side-gable house is executed in stone with arched openings over the front door and side porch. An asymmetrical chimney and two narrow, steeply pitched, front-facing gables with small attic windows add interest to the house’s facade. A brick English cottage at 1215 Central Drive (Figure 8) features an asymmetrical front-facing gable with a roof slope that curves out to shelter an arched front door.

After World War II, interest in revival styles remained high, but economic conditions pushed builders to construct houses with only modest or minimal references to the Colonial Revival, resulting in a stripped-down style called Minimal Traditional. Numerous houses in Parkwood exhibit Minimal Traditional features such as broad gables with flush ends or minimal molding, picture windows, and six-over-six sash windows. The house at 2415 Kannapolis Highway (Figure 9) is a good brick example with scalloped trim on the front-facing gable.

Construction continues in Parkwood with apartments, duplexes, and small single-family houses dating from the 1970s through present-day. Most of these buildings exhibit the same modest or absent application of stylistic detailing as seen on the neighborhood’s pre-war houses. Parkwood has also seen the introduction of a notable number of non-residential infill buildings such as storage units along Central Drive, an EMS station on Willowbrook Drive, and a car repair garage on Kannapolis Highway. Figures 11 through 29 illustrate the variety of styles and forms found through the neighborhood.



Figure 5: Bungalow at 2402 Kannapolis Highway at the corner with Willowbrook Drive





Figure 6: Bungalow at 13 Willowbrook Drive



Figure 7: English cottage at 109 Maple Avenue





Figure 8: English Cottage at 1215 Central Drive



Figure 9: Minimal Traditional house at 2414 Kannapolis Highway





Figure 10: Minimal Traditional house on Maple Drive at the intersection with Central Drive



Figure 11: Apartments on Willowbrook Drive





Figure 12: Apartments and older house on Central Drive



Figure 13: Bungalow on Willowbrook Drive





Figure 14: Ranch house on Walnut Avenue



Figure 15: Ranch house on Willowbrook Drive





Figure 16: 1970s house on Willowbrook Drive



Figure 17: Houses on Willowbrook Drive





Figure 18: EMS station on Willowbrook Drive



Figure 19: Houses on Walnut Avenue





Figure 20: Houses on Walnut Avenue



Figure 21: Townhouses on Central Drive





Figure 22: Late-nineteenth-century house and newer house on Central Avenue



Figure 23: English cottage on Parkwood Drive





Figure 24: Bungalows on Kannapolis Highway



Figure 25: Bungalows on Kannapolis Highway





Figure 26: Bungalow on Kannapolis Highway



Figure 27: English cottage on Kannapolis Highway





Figure 28: House on Kannapolis Highway



Figure 29: Townhouses under construction on Mills Avenue

## National Register Evaluation

### Integrity

Parkwood retains its integrity of location because it has not been moved. It retains most of its plan design from the 1925 plat, but the construction of I-85 demolished the northern arm of the neighborhood, so that the subdivision's overall integrity of design has been negatively affected. The introduction of vinyl siding on every frame building in the neighborhood detracts significantly from the subdivision's architectural design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Infill is found throughout the neighborhood and consists of apartment buildings, houses, and commercial buildings dating from the 1970s through the 2000s. The apartment buildings, EMS station, auto repair shop, and the use of houses for commercial purposes have resulted in a large number of parking lots and paving where yards would have been historically. The infill's pervasiveness has negatively affected the neighborhood's integrity of feeling and setting. Finally, Parkwood's association with the history of subdivisions, either pre-World War II or post-war is weak given its slow development and wide age-range of houses.

### Criteria Evaluation

Parkwood is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because it does not retain its association with suburban development or with any other event or broad pattern of history because it developed fairly slowly and does not represent a clear or concise time period. The subdivision is a mixture of styles and altered houses, unsympathetic infill, and commercial uses that have eroded the neighborhood's historic integrity and associations.

Parkwood is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B because it is not associated with the lives of persons of significance. Bascom Leonard Umberger was a locally prominent citizen and real estate developer, but he does not rise to the level of transcendence the National Register requires. Additionally, Bergerburg is a more architecturally intact neighborhood developed by Umberger, and there may be other properties more representative of Umberger's work in and his contributions to Concord and Kannapolis.

Parkwood is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C because it does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, nor does it represent the work of a master, possess high artistic value or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. All of Parkwood's frame houses have been covered in vinyl siding, many of its masonry houses have vinyl trim, and unsympathetic infill is scattered throughout the neighborhood, all of which detracts significantly from its architectural integrity and precludes it representing a type, period, or significant entity. Furthermore, I-85 destroyed the subdivision's northern arm, and Concord retains a large number of intact representatives of the architectural styles applied in Parkwood, as well as more intact early suburban neighborhoods.

Parkwood is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D because the property has not yielded, and does not appear to be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.



## Bibliography

Bishir, Catherine W. and Michael T. Southern. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Cabarrus County Plat Map Books.

*Concord Times*.

*Concord Daily Tribune*.

Roth, Leland M. *A Concise History of American Architecture*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1979.

Wilson, Leonard, ed. *Makers of America: Biographies of Leading Men and Women Including Family Histories*. Washington, D.C.: B. F. Johnson, Inc., 1917.



## **Appendix: Bergerburg Plat and Photos**

Sheet 1 Page 20

B1 20

**BERGERBURG**  
PROPERTY OF  
**B. L. UMBERGER**  
ANNAPOLIS, M. CAR.

BY  
**QUINT E. SMITH**  
CONCORD, N. C.

Approved for recording on this day and of the Board of  
County Commissioners of Cabarrus County,  
by  
**Walter L. Rice**  
Feb. 1, 1924

Scale 1" = 100'

