



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State Historic Preservation Office

Peter B. Sandbeck, Administrator

Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary  
Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary

Office of Archives and History  
Division of Historical Resources  
David Brook, Director

January 4, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Greg Thorpe, Ph.D., Director  
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch  
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Peter Sandbeck *PBS for Peter Sandbeck*

SUBJECT: Improvements to US 29 – 74 (Wilkinson Boulevard) and US 521 (Billy Graham Parkway),  
Charlotte, U-2704B, Mecklenburg County, ER 01-9611

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2005, transmitting the survey report by Richard Silverman for the above project.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under the criterion cited:

The McCoy Service station is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for commerce and C for architecture. The property retains good integrity and is a fine and rare example of the gas station type once common in Mecklenburg County and nationwide. The gas station stands among the first roadside establishments along Wilkinson Boulevard, the state's first four-lane highway.

We concur with the proposed National Register boundaries as described, defined, and delineated in the report. The boundaries include a ca. 1950 auto repair/storage facility.

We are unable to concur that the Oakden Motel is eligible for the National Register from the information provided in the report. Please provide a justification for the motel's eligibility under Criterion C. Instead of citing Charlotte's 2001 "Post-war Architectural Survey Report," a full verbal explanation of the motel's significance should be extrapolated from the source and discussed in the Oakden Motel summary of significance.

We look forward to receiving this further information.

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.

	Location	Mailing Address	Telephone/Fax
ADMINISTRATION	507 N. Blount Street, Raleigh NC	4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4617	(919)733-4763/733-8653
RESTORATION	515 N. Blount Street, Raleigh NC	4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4617	(919)733-6547/715-4801
SURVEY & PLANNING	515 N. Blount Street, Raleigh, NC	4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4617	(919)733-6545/715-4801

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above-referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr  
Richard Silverman

bc: Southern/McBride  
County



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY  
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT  
SECRETARY

November 22, 2005

Mr. Peter B. Sandbeck  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
4617 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4617

Dear Mr. Sandbeck:

RE: U-2704B, Improvements to US 29-74 (Wilkinson Boulevard) and US 521 (Billy Graham Parkway), Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, NC. Federal Aid # STP-29 (17), WBS #34844.1.1

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is conducting planning studies for the above-referenced project. This letter serves as an update to the 2001 historic architectural resources survey undertaken for the subject project. Please find attached two copies of this NCDOT report which concludes:

- McCoy Service Station (SL), 5315 Wilkinson Boulevard is recommended **eligible** for the National Register under Criterion A for Commerce and Criterion C for Architecture. The historic boundaries and justification are attached to this letter.
- Oakden Motel, 5104 Wilkinson Boulevard is recommended **eligible** for the National Register under Criterion A for Commerce and Criterion C for Architecture. The historic boundaries and justification are attached to this letter.

No other properties identified within the Area of Potential Effects are eligible for the National Register (see attached NCDOT-HPO concurrence form dated November 14, 2005). Please review and provide us with your comments. If you have any questions concerning the accompanying information, please contact Richard Silverman, NCDOT Historic Architecture, (919) 715-1618.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Silverman".

Richard Silverman  
Historic Architecture  
Human Environment Unit

Attachment  
cc  
cc (w/ attachment):

Teresa A. Hart, P.E., Project Development Manager, PDEA  
John F. Sullivan, III, P.E., Division Administrator, FHWA

MAILING ADDRESS:  
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
OFFICE OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENT  
1583 MAIL SERVICE CENTER  
RALEIGH NC 27699-1583

TELEPHONE: 919-715-1500  
FAX: 919-715-1522

WEBSITE: [WWW.NCDOT.ORG](http://WWW.NCDOT.ORG)

LOCATION:  
PARKER LINCOLN BUILDING  
2728 CAPITAL BOULEVARD, SUITE 168  
RALEIGH, NC 27604



NCDOT  
 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT UNIT  
 HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE SECTION  
 1683 MAIL SERVICE CENTER  
 RALEIGH, NC 27699-1583  
 T 919.715.1500  
 F 919.715.1501

DRAWN BY  
 R. SILVERMAN  
 T 919.715.1618

PROJECT DESCRIPTION  
**Improvements at Boyer St., Winthrow Rd., in  
 vicinity of Wilkinson Blvd. and Billy Graham Pkwy.**

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

SHEET

COUNTY DATE DRAWN  
 Mecklenburg 11.22.2005

W.O.# REVISED

UNIT  
 2090

F.A.#  
 STP-29(17)

W.B.S.#

TIP.#  
**U-2704B**



Property	Finding	Date
1. House	Determined Not Eligible	11.01.2001 & 11.14.2005
2. House	Determined Not Eligible	11.01.2001 & 11.14.2005
3. House	Determined Not Eligible	11.01.2001 & 11.14.2005
4. House	Determined Not Eligible	11.01.2001 & 11.14.2005
5. OAKDEN HOTEL	RECOMMENDED ELIGIBLE	SEE REPORT
6. House/Commercial	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005
7. House/Commercial	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005
8. House	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005
9. Industrial/Commercial	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005
10. Industrial/Commercial	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005
11. Big Spring UMC	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005
12. McCoy SERVICE STATION	RECOMMENDED ELIGIBLE	SEE REPORT
13. A-1 Petroleum	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005
14. House	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005
15. House	Determined Not Eligible	11.14.2005

## Evaluation for National Register Eligibility

### Property #5 - Oakden Motel, Charlotte, NC

#### Location

5104 Wilkinson Boulevard  
Charlotte, NC 28208

#### Owner

Madhusudan B. Mehta

#### Current Historic Designation

Recommended Eligible by Mattson, Alexander, & Associates via draft report for: Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) West Corridor Rapid Transit Project, 2005 [Report Pending].<sup>2</sup>

#### Background Information & Description

As its name indicates, the motel (the word itself being a combination of "motor" and "hotel") is a modern building form that developed in the 1940s and early 1950s to serve the needs of the pre-Interstate automobile traveler. In the opening decades of the twentieth century, those traveling by car had several options for their overnight stay. From 1900 into the 1920s, automobile travelers could wind their way into a congested downtown area and likely find a large hotel, usually designed to serve the needs of rail traveler. For those who were on a tight budget or sought less formal surroundings, car camping was a popular option. Some travelers carried camping equipment and at the end of a day's travel pitched their tents on private property beside the road. Some towns and municipalities provided designated car camping areas for free, or for a small fee to limit access. Private entrepreneurs discovered the market for car-oriented travel and began to build rudimentary cabins along the roadside, leading to the development of what were called "cabin camps". During the 1920s and 1930s, as the automobile traveler began to demand more amenities, many cabin camps were superceded by more substantial roadside cottages that took the appearance of small, houses. Usually cottages were arrayed around a central grassy court with an office and eye-catching sign located near the roadside. Cottages were almost always detached, and some had garage appendages. In some cases the cottages and garages were linked, creating a neat row.<sup>3</sup>

By the 1940s, the long, sleek motel form emerged as a modern counterpoint to the cottage court formula. With their low-lying, bar-shaped forms, motels incorporated all guest rooms under one continuous roof. Garages almost always were absent from the design vocabulary, and a large parking lot fronted buildings, in place of the landscaped yards of the cottage court. Prior to the rise of standardized, national chain motels and even larger highway hotels, many small motels of the 1940s and 1950s were "mom-and-pop" operations and their architecture reflected the individual tastes of the owners. Nonetheless, many common themes can be found in post WWII motel architecture. First, the buildings were planned in long bar shapes, either as a single strip or arranged in an "L" or "U" shape, depending on the constraints of the site. Roofs were either fashioned in a low-hipped or gabled form or are flat in appearance. In most cases, wide overhanging eaves predominate. Blocks of orderly, uniform rooms convey an image of efficiency, tidiness, and functionality and are therefore are devoid of extraneous

<sup>2</sup> Mattson, Alexander & Associates, Draft Report: West Corridor Rapid Transit Project, Charlotte Area Transit System, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers. **The Motel in America**. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p 23-57. Chester H. Liebs, **Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture**. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985, p. 169-192.

architectural ornamentation. Stylistic themes, when present, are largely drawn from the residential architecture of the period: Minimal/Traditional, Colonial Revival, and in some cases "western" Ranch-style themes. The most elaborate design treatments were reserved for the edge of the highway, where a brightly lit office or a flamboyant highway sign was meant to capture the attention of passersby. Highway signs were large, usually twenty-five feet high or more, well lit, and often trimmed in neon. Many incorporated message boards that helped to inform (i.e. to enter, take U turn 100 feet) or advertise (all rooms air conditioned).

Built in 1952, the Oakden Motel is a remarkably intact example of a small motel built after WWII and prior to the introduction of the Interstate system. Due to the narrow constraints of its lot, the two main blocks are oriented with the end walls facing Wilkinson Boulevard. An asphalt-paved driveway and originally concrete-paved parking lot form a narrow court between the two buildings. Each block of rooms is covered by a low-pitched gable roof, with the western block adorned with a small, wood clad ventilator capped by a hip roof. End walls of each block are veneered in red brick to the top of wall, and shiplap siding continues to the underside of the eaves. Along the room fronts, walls are raised in an economical concrete block faced with a brick skirt (or watertable). A continuous porch is supported by decorative metal porch supports.

Architecturally, the Oakden's design combines aspects of commercial Colonial Revival as evidenced in the "red brick, white wood trim" treatment; 1950s Ranch-style in the attenuated, low profile massing; and a touches of modernistic detailing, such as the use of horizontal, louvered windows lighting the office, and motel rooms with metal sash windows set within concrete block openings detailed with a streamlined radius block.

Rising above the low-slung motel units, the original Oakden motel sign survives alongside Wilkinson Boulevard, though the original brick planter at the base has been replaced by wooden landscape timbers. Due to the motel's proximity to downtown, the airport, and the Billy Graham Parkway, the immediate setting has been altered by successive waves of commercial redevelopment. Nonetheless, the motel's site maintains its historic roadside commercial feel, defined by its large highway sign, paved surfaces, and a few pines and of course mature oaks - from which the motel likely took its name. The most extensive alterations include the extension of the western block of rooms (on the north side, away from the roadway) and the necessary redecoration and refurnishing of motel rooms to accommodate the changing tastes in what is a now more than a half century tradition of welcoming guests.

### **National Register Criteria Assessment**

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Oakden Motel is recommended **eligible** for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for commerce and under Criterion C for architecture. Due to intensive commercial redevelopment along major highways leading into Charlotte, only a few 1940s-1950s motels survive intact. An informal windshield survey conducted by Mattson, Alexander & Associates of Charlotte revealed just three comparable intact examples.<sup>4</sup> The Oakden Motel meets the registration requirements set forth for motels in Charlotte's "Post-War Architectural Survey: National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2001" (Woodard and Wyatt 2001). The Oakden Motel is not eligible under any other criteria.

### **National Register Boundary**

See attached sheet NR-2.

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<sup>4</sup> Mattson, Alexander & Associates, Draft Report: West Corridor Rapid Transit Project, Charlotte Area Transit System, 2005.

**National Register Boundary Justification**

The National Register boundary for the Oakden Motel is drawn to include all historic structures located on the site, including the contributing sign. Since the motel's sign is located very close to the roadway, the National Register Boundary along Wilkinson Boulevard extends to the back of the curblineline. The recommended boundaries are drawn on a tax map accessed through Polaris, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg GIS-based land record system.



OAK DEN MOTEL  
NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY



**Boundary Justification:** The NR boundary is drawn to include all known historic architectural resources of the Oak Den Motel. At Wilkinson Boulevard, the National Register Boundary follows the back of the curblines.

CharMeck GIS Aerial Map



NCDOT Historic Architecture  
1583 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1583

Project

US 29-74 (Wilkinson Blvd.) and US 521  
(Billy Graham Parkway) Area Improvements

Sheet Title

Oak Den Motel  
NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY

Drawn By:  
Silverman

Issue Date:  
11-16-05

File Name:  
NR\_2.ppt

TIP No.

**U-2704B**

Scale **NTS**

Sheet No.

**NR-2**





5. Oak Den Motel - 5104 Wilkinson Blvd



5. Oak Den Motel - 5104 Wilkinson Blvd



5. Oak Den Motel - 5104 Wilkinson Blvd



5. Oak Den Motel - 5104 Wilkinson Blvd



5. Oak Den Motel - 5104 Wilkinson Blvd



**OAKDEN MOTEL**  
5104 Wilkinson Blvd.  
On Routes 29 South & 74 West  
4 miles from downtown Charlotte  
(Off Interstate 85, take Mulberry Exit)  
T.V. - Phones - Air-Conditioning  
Managed By Owners - Phone 399-5050

12,034A

Go-Ver - Fifth By AURORA POSTCARD COMPANY - Aurora, Missouri  
C. Hoffheimer, 505 Oakden Dr., Thomasville, N. C.



PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

**Post Card**

5. Oak Den Motel - 5104 Wilkinson Blvd - Post Card  
provided by owner, Madhusudan B. Mehta

## Evaluation for National Register Eligibility

### Property #12 - McCoy Service Station, Charlotte, NC

#### Location

5315 Wilkinson Boulevard  
Charlotte, NC 28208

#### Owner

Annie McCoy Bradford  
15607 Huntersville-Concord Road  
Huntersville, NC 28078

#### Current Historic Designation

HPO survey site MK-1790  
(SL) North Carolina Study List, 01/11/1990

#### Description & History

Edwin Ross McCoy ( -1948) was drawn into the gas station business as early as the 1910s after a cattle epidemic nearly drove his farm into bankruptcy. McCoy owned several stations in the Charlotte area, but the large McCoy Service Station he built in 1924-25 on Charlotte's newly constructed four-lane Wilkinson Boulevard is the only survivor. According to a North Carolina Study List application, the McCoy Service Station was likely designed by a black Charlotte architect.<sup>1</sup> Gas stations of the 1920s, then more popularly known as "filling stations", commonly adopted the forms and styles of the domestic architecture of the day. The image of a neat brick Craftsman bungalow could easily be distilled into the form of a small, one-story commercial building. As such these designs provided the motoring customer with an image of familiarity and cast the mundane task of purchasing oil, gasoline, or antifreeze into a more pleasant experience.

As with many early twentieth century gas stations, the McCoy Service Station is located near the highway to maximize visibility. The building's drive-through canopy, office, garage, and storage are all integrated under one continuous low-pitched hipped roof which is adorned with a pair of gabled dormers to add a touch of domesticity. The gas station's engaged canopy is supported by red brick piers accented by buff colored bricks laid in a repeating soldier course pattern. Buff colored brick is also used for the building's lintel's and sills. The contrast of the red field brick and the buff accent brick also adds to the building's visibility from the highway.

Under the canopy, one finds a five-bay façade formed by a centrally placed six-panel wood door crowned by a ten-light transom. Flanking the entrance are two, one-over-one double-hung sash windows. Presumably the abundance of windows provided a storefront in which to display accessories and allow the owner or attendant to serve customers more easily. Photographs taken in 1989 show a pair of gas pumps located on opposite sides of each canopy pier. These were likely not the original pumps. When the McCoy Service Station was built, the "visible pump" was standard with a glass cylinder atop the pump to guarantee that the customer received exactly what he paid for.

Due to previous road widenings, it is likely that the original forecourt and highway sign were eliminated. As seen today, the building is remarkable in its retention of period features,

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<sup>1</sup> McCoy Service Station. North Carolina Study List Application, Department of Cultural Resources, North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, 11 January 1990; See also Oakden Motel, Survey File #MK 1709, Department of Cultural Resources, North Carolina Historic Preservation Office; Mattson, Alexander & Associates, Draft Report: West Corridor Rapid Transit Project, Charlotte Area Transit System, 2005.

including its highly intact office/sales room, appended rest room, rear service bays, and storage facilities. Though today used for storage, the property survives as a distinguished example of a large "flagship" gas station operation. It is the only surviving example in a chain of McCoy-owned, Charlotte-area gas station properties.

#### **Evaluation for National Register Eligibility**

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the McCoy Service Station is considered **eligible** for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for commerce and under Criterion C for architecture. The property is an exceptionally fine and rare surviving example of a gas station type common in Mecklenburg County and nationwide in the early twentieth century. The service station also stands among the first roadside establishments along Wilkinson Boulevard, the state's first four lane highway. The property also includes a ca. 1950 auto repair/storage facility to the rear. The McCoy Service Station is not eligible under any other criteria.

#### **National Register Boundary**

See attached sheet NR-1.

#### **National Register Boundary Justification**

The National Register boundary for McCoy Service Station is drawn to include all historic structures located on the site. Since the gas station is located very close to the roadway, the National Register Boundary along Wilkinson Boulevard extends to the back of the curblin. The recommended boundaries are drawn on a tax map accessed through Polaris, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg GIS-based land record system.

NR Boundary follows back of curblin on Wilkinson Blvd.




 McCoy SERVICE STATION  
NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY



**Boundary Justification:** The NR boundary is drawn to include all known historic architectural resources of the McCoy Service Station. At Wilkinson Boulevard, the National Register Boundary follows the back of the curbline.

CharMeck GIS Aerial Map

 NCDOT Historic Architecture 1583 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-1583	Project <b>US 29-74 (Wilkinson Blvd.) and US 521 (Billy Graham Parkway) Area Improvements</b>	Drawn By: Silverman	TIP No. <b>U-2704B</b>
	Sheet Title <b>McCoy Service Station          NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY</b>	Issue Date: 11-16-05	Scale <b>NTS</b>



12. McCoy's Service Station - 5315 Wilkinson Blvd



12. McCoy's Service Station - 5315 Wilkinson Blvd





**12. McCoy's Service Station - 5315 Wilkinson Blvd**



**12. McCoy's Service Station - 5315 Wilkinson Blvd**

Federal Aid # STP-29(17)

TIP# U-2704B

County: Mecklenburg

Encl: # 5 - UAT & ...  
# 2 - MSCOY'S SERVICE STA.

**CONCURRENCE FORM FOR PROPERTIES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR  
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Project Description: **US 29-74 (Wilkinson Boulevard) and US 521 (Billy Graham Parkway) Area Improvements**

On **Nov. 14, 2005** representatives of the

- North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO)
- Other

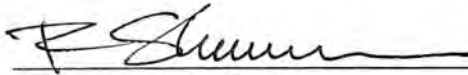
Reviewed the subject project at

- Scoping meeting
- Historic architectural resources photograph review session/consultation
- Other

All parties present agreed

- There are no properties over fifty years old within the project's area of potential effects.
- There are no properties less than fifty years old which are considered to meet Criteria Consideration G within the project's area of potential effects.
- There are properties over fifty years old within the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE), but based on the historical information available and the photographs of each property, the properties identified as 1-4, 6-11, 13-15 are considered not eligible for the National Register and no further evaluation of them is necessary.
- There are no National Register-listed or Study Listed properties within the project's area of potential effects.
- All properties greater than 50 years of age located in the APE have been considered at this consultation, and based upon the above concurrence, all compliance for historic architecture with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and GS 121-12(a) has been completed for this project.
- There are no historic properties affected by this project. (Attach any notes or documents as needed)

Signed:



Representative, NCDOT

Nov. 14, 2005

Date

N/A

FHWA, for the Division Administrator, or other Federal Agency

Date



Representative, HPO

11/14/05

Date



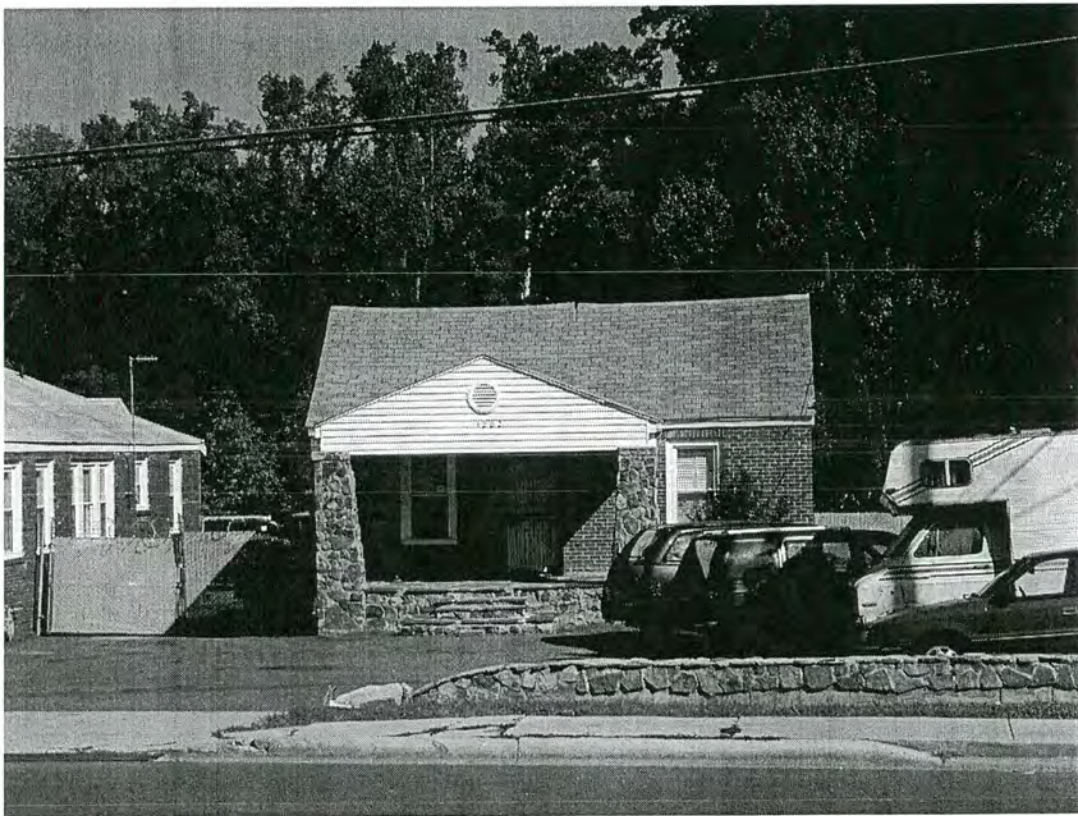
State Historic Preservation Officer

11/14/05

Date



6. House/Commercial - Wilkinson Blvd



7. House/Commercial - Wilkinson Blvd



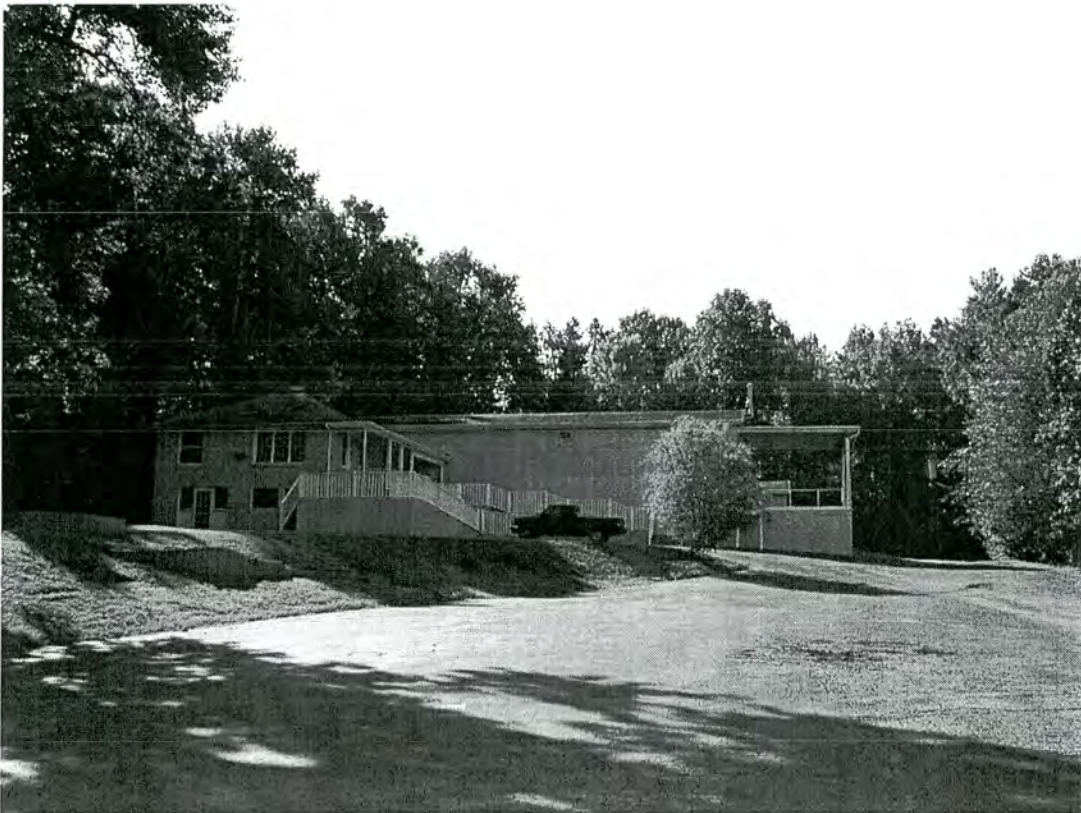
**8. House - 5015 Wilkinson Blvd**



**8. House - 5015 Wilkinson Blvd**



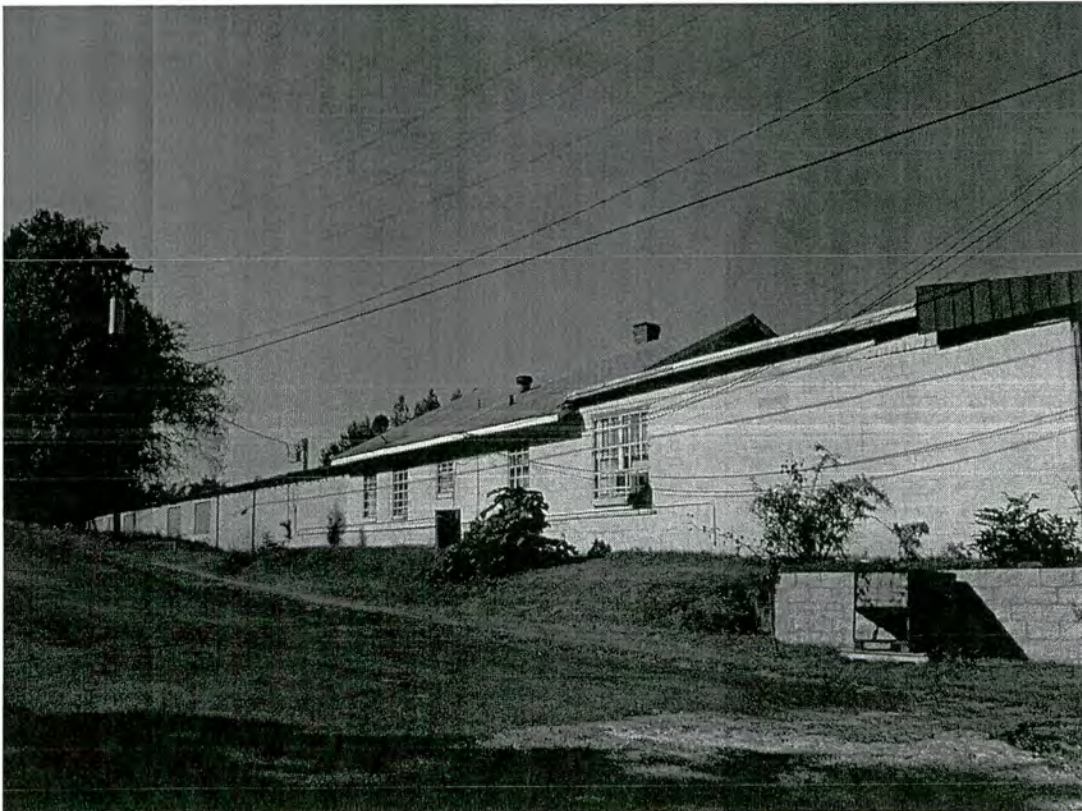
9. Industrial/Commercial - Wilkinson Blvd



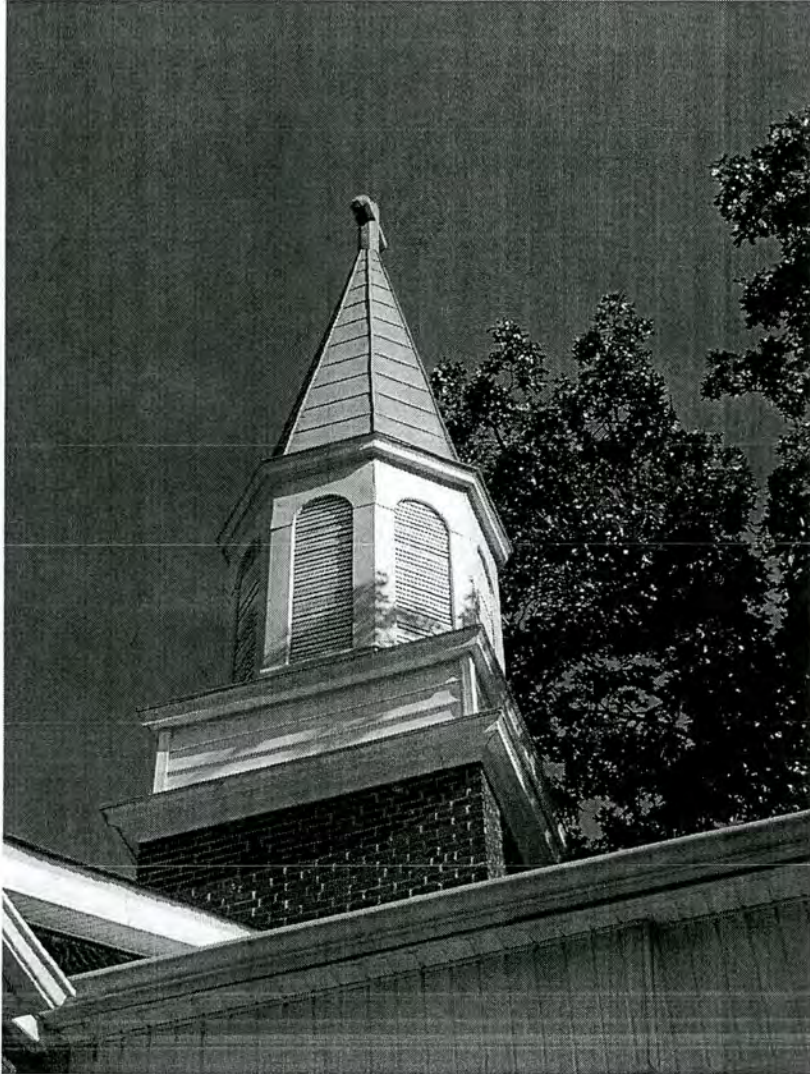
9. Industrial/Commercial - Wilkinson Blvd



**10. Industrial/Commercial - Wilkinson Blvd**



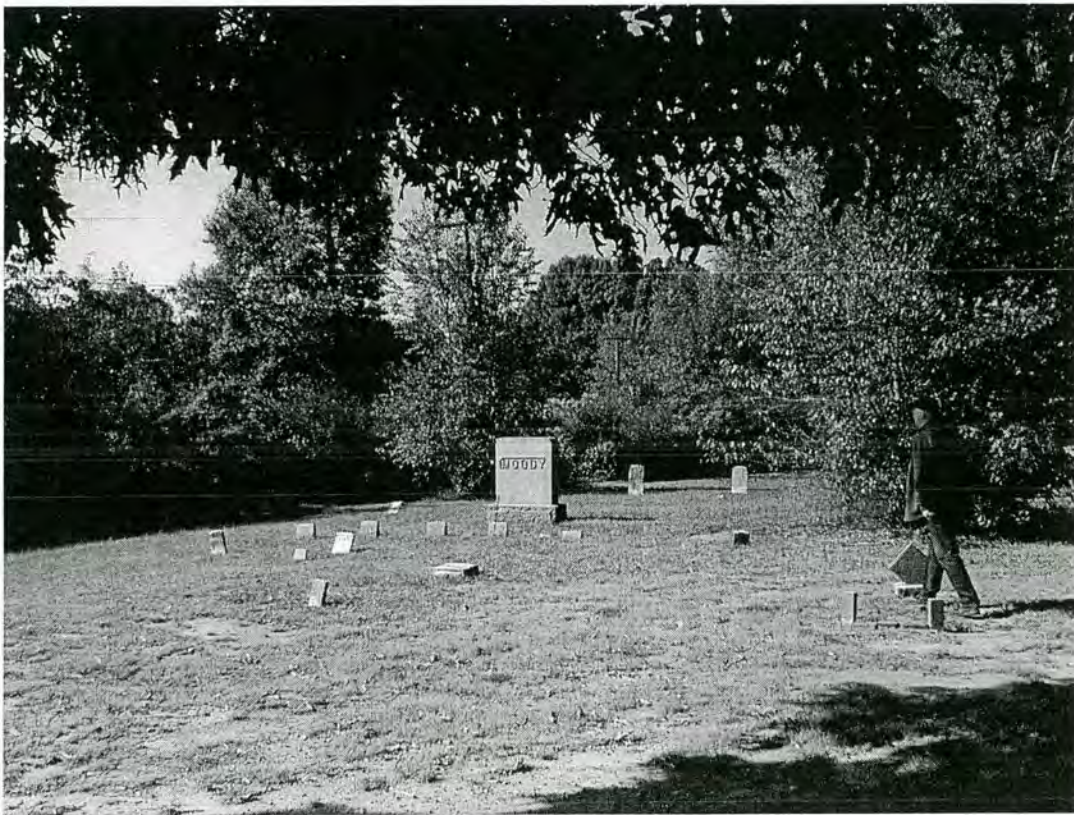
**10. Industrial/Commercial - Wilkinson Blvd**



11. Big Spring UMC - 5300 Old Dowd Road



11. Big Spring UMC - 5300 Old Dowd Road



11. Big Spring UMC - 5300 Old Dowd Road

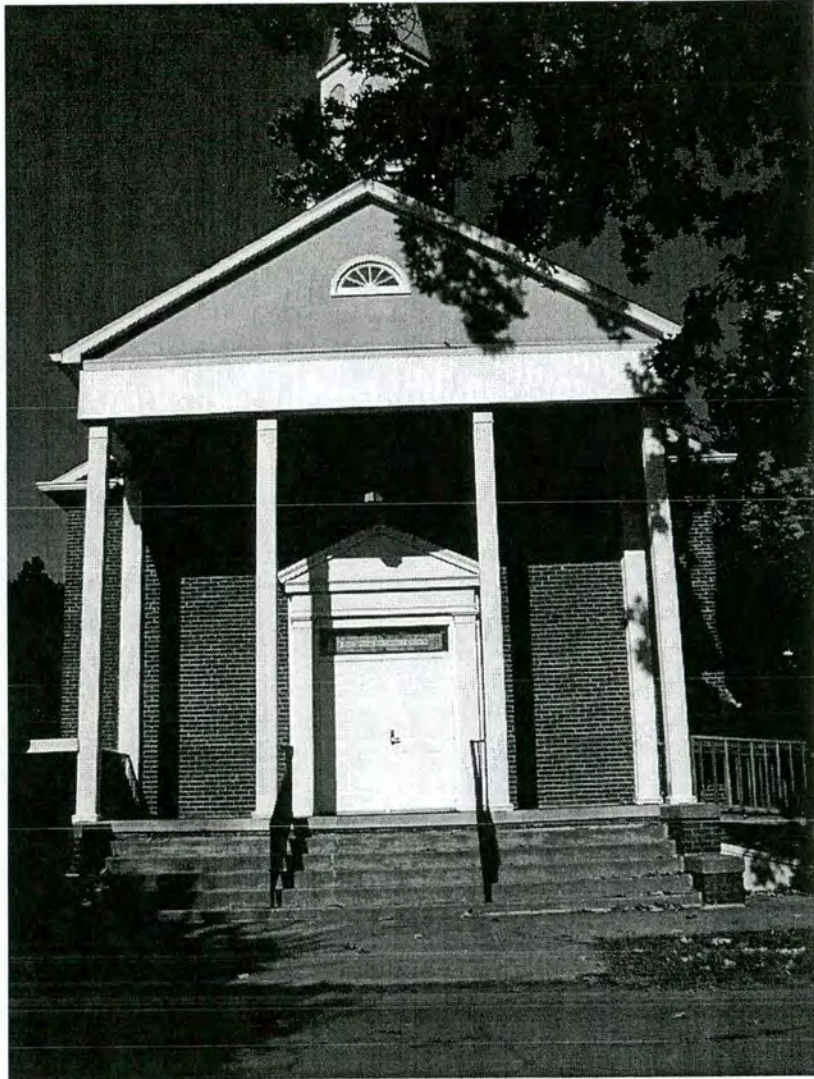




11. Big Spring UMC - 5300 Old Dowd Road



11. Big Spring UMC - 5300 Old Dowd Road



11. Big Spring UMC - 5300 Old Dowd Road



13. A-1 Petroleum - 5314 Wilkinson Blvd



13. A-1 Petroleum, 5314 Wilkinson Blvd



14. House, 5312 Wilkinson Blvd



15. House, 5300 Wilkinson Blvd