

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

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper  
Secretary Susi H. Hamilton

Office of Archives and History  
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

December 19, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kate Husband  
Office of Human Environment  
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley *Renee Gledhill-Earley*  
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Replace Bridge 25 on SR 2129 over Unnamed Tributary to Second Broad River,  
PA 10-03-0106, Rutherford County, ER 19-5005

Thank you for your memorandum of November 7, 2019, transmitting the above-referenced report. We have reviewed the report and offer the following comments.

We concur that the **New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery (RF0669)** is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its local architectural significance. The boundary as illustrated on page 28 of the report appears appropriate.

We also agree that the Walter and Emily Phillips House (RF0670) is not National Register-eligible under any criteria for the reasons outlined in the report.

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 919-814-6579 or [environmental.review@ncdcr.gov](mailto:environmental.review@ncdcr.gov). In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT

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

Received: 12/05/2019  
State Historic Preservation Office



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

JAMES H. TROGDON, III  
SECRETARY

**ER 19-5005**

November 7, 2019

MEMORANDUM

Due -- 1/2/20

**TO:** Renee Gledhill-Earley  
Environmental Review Coordinator  
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office

H- e letters  
12/17/19

**FROM:** Kate Husband  
Architectural Historian  
NCDOT Division of Highways

**SUBJECT:** Replace Rutherford County Bridge No. 25 on SR 2129 (Old Henrietta Road), PA No. 10-03-0106, Rutherford County

Enclosed please find the Historic Structures Survey Report, survey site database, and additional materials for the above referenced project for your review and comment per 36CRF.800. Please contact me by phone (919-707-6075) or email (klhusband@ncdot.gov) if you have any additional questions or comments.

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1020 BIRCH RIDGE RD  
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**HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY REPORT**

**REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 25 ON SR 2129 (OLD HENRIETTA ROAD) OVER UNNAMED TRIBUTARY  
TO SECOND BROAD RIVER  
RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

**TIP No. N/A  
WBS No. 17BP.13.R.206  
Limited Services Contract No. 7000019082**

**Prepared by:**

**Frances Alexander, Project Manager  
Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc.  
2228 Winter Street  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28205**

**Prepared for:**

**North Carolina Department of Transportation  
Environmental Analysis Unit  
Raleigh, North Carolina**

**October 30, 2019**

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Environmental Analysis Unit  
Raleigh, North Carolina**

**October 30, 2019**

**MATTSON, ALEXANDER AND ASSOCIATES, INC.**

*Frances P. Alexander*

**October 30, 2019**

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**Frances P. Alexander, M.A.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Richard L. Mattson, Ph.D.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**North Carolina Department of Transportation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is replacing Bridge No. 25 which carries SR 2129 (Old Henrietta Road) over an unnamed tributary to the Second Broad River in Rutherford County. This project is subject to review under the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for Minor Transportation Projects (NCDOT/NCHPO/FHWA/USFS 2015). NCDOT architectural historians delineated an area of potential effects (APE) for the project which is defined as the geographic area or areas within which a project may cause changes to the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. The APE for this bridge replacement project follows SR 2129 (Old Henrietta Road) between its southern terminus at Ragtown Road and its northern terminus roughly 200 feet south of the junction of Old Henrietta and Pepper Town roads. Between these two termini, the APE extends approximately seventy-five feet off the center line of SR 2129 in both directions.

In addition to determining the APE, NCDOT architectural historians also conducted a field investigation of the APE to identify and assess all resources that appeared to be fifty years of age or older. The architectural historians found two properties—New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery and the Walter and Emily Phillips House, 1559 Old Henrietta Road—which warranted intensive-level survey to determine National Register eligibility. Neither property has been surveyed previously. NCDOT architectural historians determined that all other properties and districts in the APE were not worthy of further study and evaluation because they lacked historical significance and/or integrity. The project location is depicted in **Figure 1**, and the APE is shown in **Figure 2**.

This architectural resources investigation consisted of background research into the historical and architectural development of the study area and an in-depth field investigation of the two resources. The field survey also included an investigation of comparable African American churches and cemeteries and Tudor Revival houses in Rutherford County. The field survey was conducted in August 2019. This intensive-level evaluation contained in this report recommends New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery for National Register eligibility (**Table 1**).

**Table 1**

<b>Property Name</b>	<b>PIN</b>	<b>Survey Site Number</b>	<b>Eligibility Recommendation</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery	1566317012, 1566316114, 1566316267, 1566308516	RF0669	Eligible	Criterion A
Walter and Emily Phillips House	1566313964	RF0670	Not Eligible	N/A

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This eligibility report was prepared in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) project entitled, *Replace Bridge No. 25 on SR 2129 (Old Henrietta Road) over Unnamed Tributary to Second Broad River, Rutherford County*. The WBS Number is 17BP.13.R.206. The project location is shown in **Figure 1**.

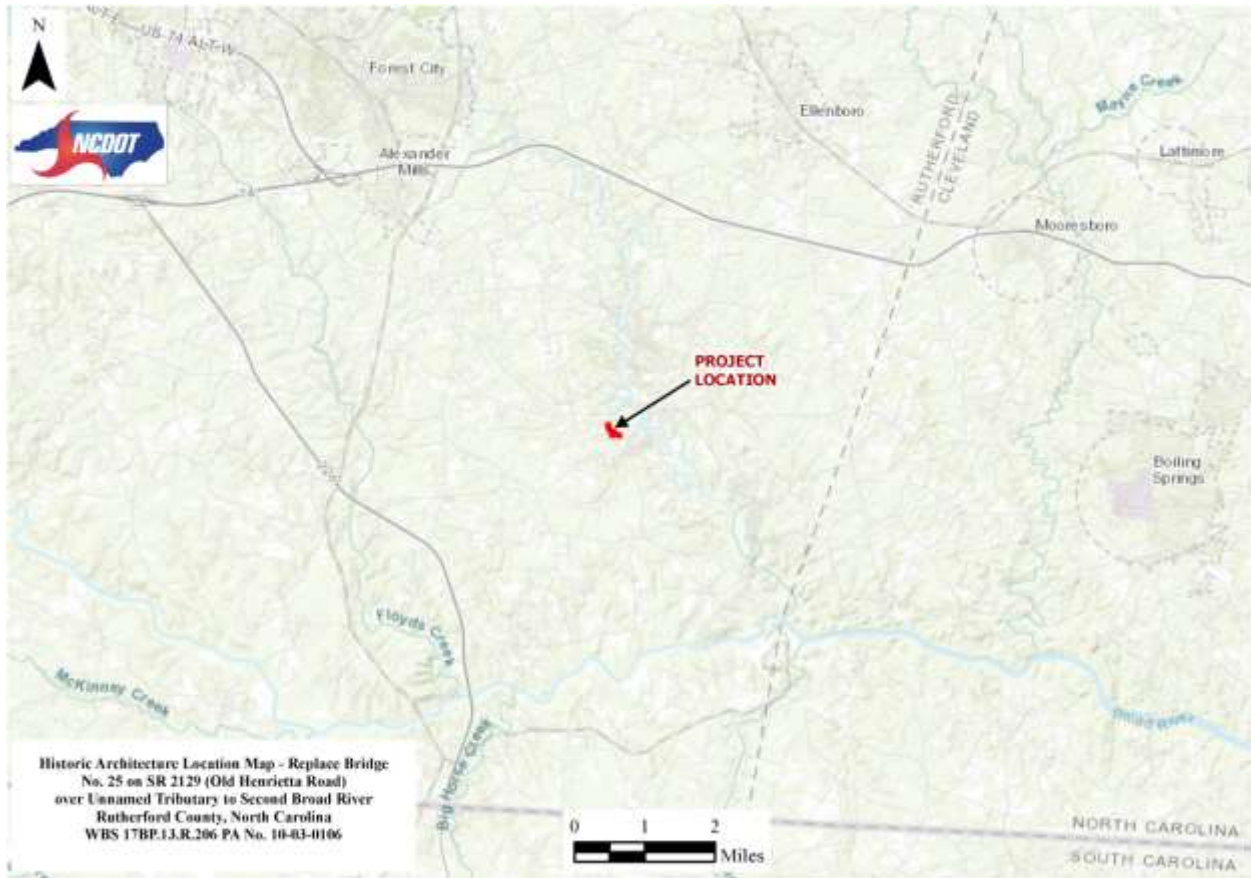
The APE for this bridge replacement project follows SR 2129 (Old Henrietta Road) between its southern terminus at Ragtown Road and its northern terminus roughly 200 feet south of the junction of Old Henrietta and Pepper Town roads. Between these two termini, the APE extends approximately seventy-five feet off the center line of SR 2129 in both directions. With the APE are two properties, New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery (RF0669) and the Walter and Emily Phillips House (RF0680), which warranted intensive-level survey to determine National Register eligibility. The church and house are shown on the APE map (**Figure 2**).

This investigation was conducted to evaluate the two resources for National Register eligibility. The current evaluation of eligibility report is part of the environmental studies undertaken by NCDOT and is on file at NCDOT, Raleigh, North Carolina. This documentation complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (36 CFR 800), the National Register criteria set forth in 36 CFR 61, and NCDOT's current *Historic Architecture Group Procedures and Work Products*. The report also complies with the *Report Standards for Historic Structure Survey Reports/Determinations of Eligibility/Section 106/110 Compliance Reports in North Carolina* established by the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office (HPO). Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effect of federally funded, licensed, or permitted projects on properties listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places and to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office a reasonable opportunity to comment.

In order to evaluate the church and cemetery and the house for National Register eligibility, the principal investigators conducted a field investigation of the resources and undertook research into the history and architecture of both the general study area and the two resources. For the research phase, the principal investigators examined both primary and secondary sources which included published histories, deeds, National Register nominations, environmental studies, and the HPO survey files for Rutherford County. Interviews with local property owners and church members were also invaluable sources of historical information. In developing the historic and architectural contexts for this project, the principal investigators also identified other African American churches and cemeteries in Rutherford County that were comparable to New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery. Similarly, the principal investigators also located Tudor Revival houses in the county that were similar in design, age, and material to the Phillips house. Site visits were made to each of the comparable properties during the field investigation.

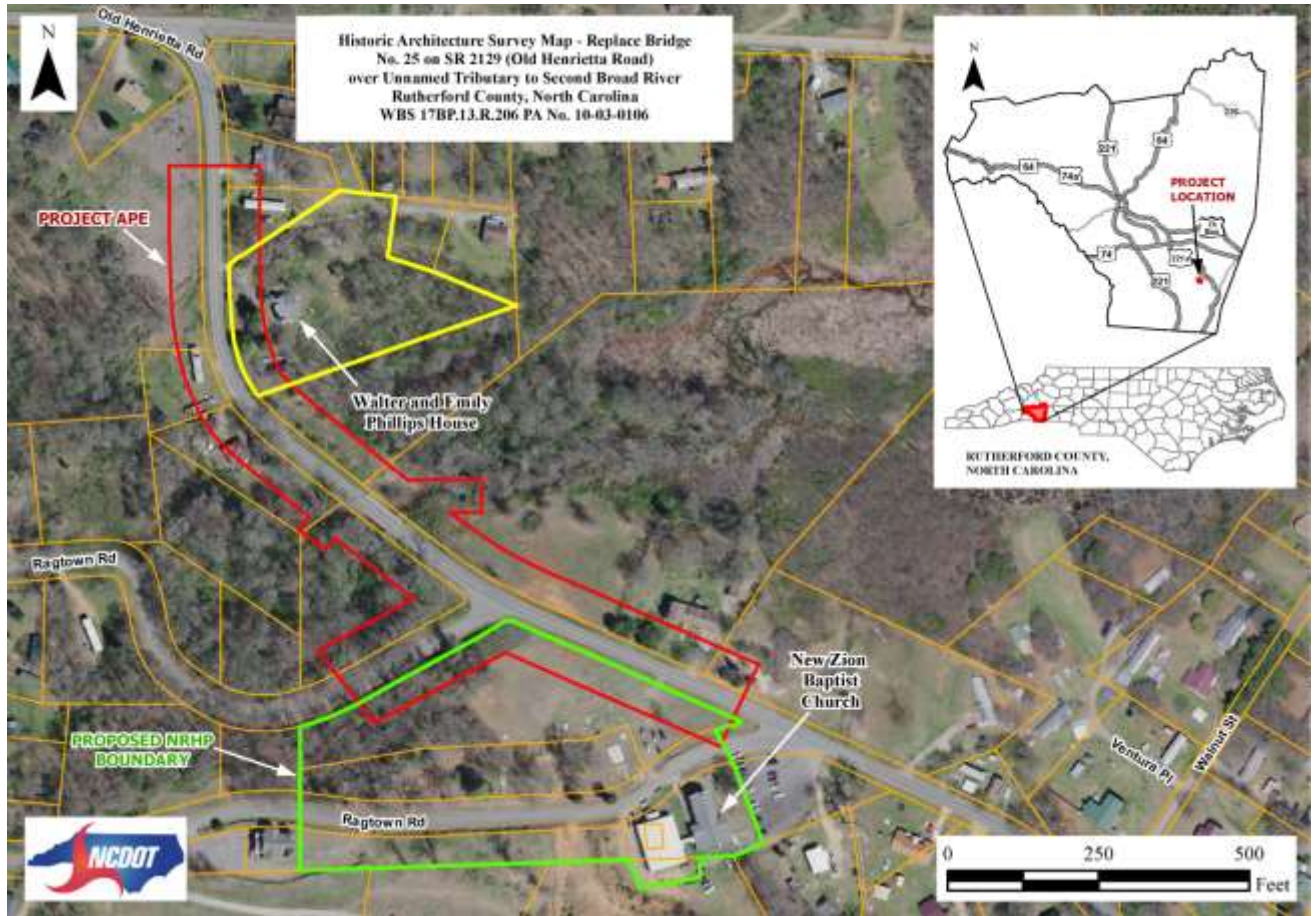
Field work took place in July and August 2019. The church and cemetery and the house, as well as the comparable properties, were examined and documented with photographs to assess current levels of integrity. As part of this evaluation, all outbuildings and landscape features on the properties were also examined and documented with photographs. The tax parcels for the church and cemetery and the Phillips house are shown on the site maps included in the evaluations found in this report (**Figures 3-4**).

**Figure 1**  
**Project Location Map**





**Figure 2**  
**Area of Potential Effects (APE) Map**



## II. PROPERTY EVALUATIONS OF ELIGIBILITY

### **New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery (RF0669) (PINs 1566-31-7012; 1566-31-6114; 1566-31-6267; 1566-30-8516)**

117 Ragtown Road  
Forest City, Rutherford County

Dates of Construction: ca. 1916; 1963  
Eligibility Recommendation: Eligible



### **Physical Description**

#### Church and Cemetery Setting

New Zion Baptist Church occupies a narrow, 1.28-acre parcel along the south side of Ragtown Road at its intersection with SR 2129 (Old Henrietta Road). A large, one-story, prefabricated metal building was added to the site in 2000 to house a fellowship hall. Standing just west of the church, the fellowship hall is joined to the rear of the church by a breezeway. The original church cemetery is located on a similarly elongated, one-acre lot across Ragtown Road to the north. In 1971, the church acquired additional acreage immediately north of this burial ground for its expansion, and the cemetery is now defined by Ragtown and Old Henrietta roads. The newer graveyard currently contains only a few modern headstones. The church and cemetery tracts follow Ragtown Road along a hillside that rises from a tributary of the Second Broad River on the western outskirts of the Henrietta community. Henrietta was one in a string of textile mill communities that developed near the shoals (known as High Shoals) of the Second Broad River in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition to Henrietta, these contiguous industrial villages include Caroleen, Avondale, and Cliffside.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Overall Site, Looking Southwest Along Ragtown Road.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Church and Fellowship Hall (Background) and Cemetery (Foreground), Looking South from Cemetery.



## Church

Originally constructed ca. 1916 as a weatherboarded, gable-front building, New Zion Baptist Church was extensively remodeled in 1963 with its current red-brick veneer and elements of style. The original wooden building had a belfry, and the bell survives near the entrance in a freestanding, brick structure that was also built in 1963. A pedimented, brick church sign stands beside the bell. The current edifice retains the gable-front roof and rectangular plan of the original building as well as a cross-gable rear addition that accommodates the chancel, choir seating, and education wing. Constructed on a hillside that rises east to west, the church has a raised basement with windows and doors along the east elevation.

Topped by a tall, metal spire, the 1963 church design displays Modernist interpretations of Romanesque Revival elements. Dominating the façade is a projecting center bay that has a tall, round-arched entrance with deep reveals. Under the entrance arch is a circular window, suggestive of a rose window, that is ornamented with keystones. The flat-arched doorway retains its original double-leaf, six-panel doors. A prominent, brick staircase with metal railings rises to a generous, concrete landing in front of the elevated entrance. One-over-one sash windows with frosted glass remain although the wood sashes and sills have been metal clad. Most of the secondary entrances now have replacement six-panel, metal doors, and the rear gables have been vinyl sided.

According to members of the congregation, the interior of the church has changed little since the 1963 remodeling. The existing wooden pews and other church furniture; the paneled wainscoting and railings; the six-panel doors; and the shallow, hipped ceiling with crown molding and acoustic tiles are all part of that renovation. The simply molded window frames and sheetrock walls also date to 1963 although the light fixtures have been installed recently (Dwight Phillips and Martin Lipscomb Interviews 2019).



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Church Façade, Looking South.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Church Façade, Looking South.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Church Cornerstone.





New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Church, Belfry, and Church Sign, Looking West.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Side (East) Elevation of Church and Rear Wing, Looking West.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Rear (South) Elevation of Church, Looking North.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Church Façade and Side (West) Elevation, Looking South.





New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Interior, Nave, Looking South towards Chancel.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Interior, Nave, Detail of Wainscoting.



### Cemetery

The original New Zion Baptist Church burial ground consists of approximately 250 grave markers set within the one-acre site and arranged in loose rows oriented east to west in the Christian tradition. The cemetery remains in use and contains a variety of headstones and flat markers dating from the 1920s to the present day. There are a number of family plots marked by concrete and brick borders as well as several brick and concrete vaults and box tombs. Like the church tract across the road, the burial ground occupies a hillside, and the older stones are generally found on the tree-shaded west side towards the top of the hill. Woodland borders the west side, but no grave stones or sites were visible in the adjoining stand of trees. The cemetery does not appear to contain any uninscribed fieldstone markers, and nearly all the grave sites have inscribed markers.

The west side of the cemetery holds a variety of modest, inscribed stone tablets, most of which were erected into the 1940s. Within this area are renditions of curvilinear baroque designs and arched or rectangular classical shapes with popular religious or secular motifs carved in low relief. Most were made in commercial shops and inscribed by professional stonecutters, but some are homemade and display uneven lettering and decoration that illustrate the work of local, untrained artisans. In typical fashion, many of the stones installed after World War II are mass-produced gravestones executed in polished granite. Commercially produced on a large scale, standardized, and of high quality, these markers include family monuments as well as individual stones. They often have thick, rectangular shapes with sandblasted, floral or religious symbols. A small collection of military veterans are buried throughout the one-acre plot, and these graves have government-issued, marble headstones with crosses in deep relief. The majority of headstones are upright and intact although some are broken or decayed, and some of the brick and concrete plot borders are deteriorating.

Approximately 150 of the grave markers were erected between the 1920s and 1970, including eighteen before 1940. Situated at the west end of the cemetery, the oldest identified marker was installed in 1923 to commemorate A.S. Style. This professionally manufactured, discoid headstone is embellished with the popular Dove of Promise motif. Nearby, the simpler, unadorned stones for Anna M. Jones and Siller Jeffries were probably hand crafted by local stone cutters. The treeless area north and east of the original cemetery was acquired by the church in 1971 and contains approximately fifty modern markers. With the expansion, the graveyard is now defined by Old Henrietta Road and two segments of curvilinear Ragstown Road ([www.findagrave.com.NewZionBaptistChurch](http://www.findagrave.com/NewZionBaptistChurch). Accessed August 15, 2019).



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Looking Northwest from Church.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Headstones, 1930s-1950s, Looking West.





New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Wood Family Plot, Looking West.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Wilkins Family Plot, Looking West.





New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Box Tombs, Looking West.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Vaults, Looking West.





New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Vaults, Looking West.



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, A.S. Styles Headstone (1882-1923).





New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Anna M. Jones Headstone (July 25-November 1, 1925).



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Siller Jeffries Headstone (Born 1893),



New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery, Modern Gravestones in the 1971 Cemetery Expansion, Looking West.

## Historical Background

Established in 1897, New Zion Baptist Church was among a host of churches formed in the bustling textile mill communities along the Second Broad River between the 1890s and early twentieth century. New Zion was the first African American church in the area, followed by Haynes Grove Baptist Church (founded as a Methodist church) in Cliffside in 1903 and Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion Church in Henrietta in 1912. Henrietta Baptist Church, which served a white congregation, was the first church in Henrietta, formed in 1888 soon after the organization of the Henrietta Cotton Mill in 1887. A large, water-powered mill with an adjoining mill village, Henrietta was developed by local investors, R.R. Haynes and S.B. Tanner, and Charlotte businessman, J.S. Spencer. By the early 1900s, this trio had opened three additional riverside mills and villages—Avondale, Caroleen, and Cliffside—and had transformed southeastern Rutherford County into a center of textile manufacturing (*Heritage of Rutherford County* 1984: 34; Bishir et al. 1999: 177-179; Merkel 1983: 20-23, 81-82; Rutherford County Deed Book 91: 294).

In 1916, New Zion Baptist Church purchased approximately one acre of land near Paine's Creek at the outskirts of Henrietta from J.C. and Nancy McDaniel. The deed specifically stated that this land was "for purposes of building a new church." Probably soon after the purchase, the congregation built the original frame church on the site. In 1932, the congregation acquired an additional acre for the church cemetery. The burial ground contains several 1920s headstones, indicating that the church was already interring members here before the actual acquisition in the early 1930s. The cemetery was also used on occasion by Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion Church, which still stands just west of New Zion Baptist on Ragtown Road (Rutherford County Deed Books 103: 297; 150: 507).



Serving the African American community around Henrietta, New Zion Baptist Church grew slowly but steadily through the early and middle decades of the twentieth century. Located in the North Carolina foothills, Rutherford County had fewer African Americans than the cotton and bright-leaf tobacco counties of the Piedmont and Coastal Plain. In 1960, for example, blacks composed just twelve percent of Rutherford's 45,000 inhabitants, and today only ten percent are African American. Thus, the county's African American churches were fewer in number and remained relatively small even as they performed vital religious and social roles in their communities. The 1963 cornerstone found on the church states that New Zion was also home to Henrietta Special Lodge 746 which belonged to the historically black Prince Hall fraternity of masons. The lodge was housed in a two-story, concrete-block building that stood next door to the church, but the hall was demolished ca. 2000 for the construction of the present-day fellowship hall (Davis 1983; Dwight Phillips Interview 2019).

In 1963, the congregation, under the leadership of Reverend W.C. Foster, undertook a renovation and expansion campaign which, with the later construction of the large fellowship hall, testifies to the active role New Zion Baptist played in the Henrietta community. The handsome decorative brickwork on the façade is said to have been executed by members of the congregation, at least several of whom were brick masons by trade. As represented in the cemetery, church membership through the decades comprised the full range of African American society in Henrietta, from manual laborers and domestic help to cotton mill workers, farmers, skilled craftsmen, and professionals. Among the church deacons listed on the building's cornerstone were brick masons, William Bristol and Smiley Wilkins; a farmer, William McDowell; and two mill hands, Charlie Petty and Conell Sarratt. Petty was employed "outside the mill" while Sarratt was a "towel packer", both occupations typical of the unskilled jobs held by African Americans in southern textile mills into the 1960s (Dwight Phillips Interview 2019; U.S. Census, Rutherford County, Population Schedule, 1940).

### **National Register Criteria Evaluation**

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery is recommended **eligible** for the National Register under Criterion C for Architecture and Criteria Consideration A for a religious property that has architectural significance under Criterion C. New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery has not been surveyed previously.

### **Integrity**

New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery retains the seven aspects of integrity needed for National Register eligibility. Specifically, the church and cemetery have integrity of location, feeling, association, and setting. The church and cemetery occupy their hillside settings above Paine's Creek on the outskirts of Henrietta and retain their historical and geographical associations. Although the detached, concrete-block masonic lodge on the church property was demolished ca. 2000, the church retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship from its 1963 remodeling. Originally built ca. 1916, the church has well-crafted exterior brickwork that dates to 1963 as well as well-preserved interior woodwork. The tree-shaded burial ground, with its range of intact, stone markers from the 1920s into the late twentieth century, also has integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Executed in soapstone, granite, and marble, the gravestones illustrate traditional as



well as nationally popular funereal designs. As a contributing site, the cemetery enhances the significance of the church.

### Criterion A

New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A, the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or a pattern of events or historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: 12*).

Although African American churches were often integral to the social, political, and cultural life of African American communities during the Jim Crow era, New Zion is not recommended for eligibility under Criterion A. There is no evidence that New Zion Baptist Church has the association, as required for eligibility under Criterion A, with either a specific event or a pattern of events important within a local, state, or national context.

### Criterion B

New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e. individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class, or social or ethnic group (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: 14*).

The property is not eligible under Criterion B because the house is not associated with individuals whose activities were demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context.

### Criterion C

New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery is **eligible** for the National Register under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: 17*).

Originally constructed ca. 1916 and remodeled in 1963, New Zion Baptist stands among the most architecturally significant African American churches in Rutherford County. Built on a hillside, the well-preserved edifice retains the gable-front, rectangular form of the original church and the handsomely executed brickwork from the 1963 renovation that evokes the Romanesque Revival style. The building has a dramatic entrance reached by a broad, brick staircase and set within a tall, round-arched bay with deep reveals and circular window. Frosted-glass windows survive

throughout the building, and the 1963 interior woodwork, including wainscoting, pews, pulpit, and other church furniture, is also intact. The modern fellowship hall on the site does not detract from the architectural integrity of the church. A freestanding building, the fellowship hall is only attached by a breezeway that leads to the rear of the church.

With the rapid growth of the textile industry and mill communities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, new churches for whites and African Americans alike appeared in Rutherford County. In the thriving textile belt along the Second Broad River, the cotton mills helped fund the construction of stylish Gothic Revival, Neoclassical Revival, and Colonial Revival churches for burgeoning white congregations. In the heart of the mill village of Avondale, the grand Neoclassical Revival Avondale Methodist Church (1924) (RF0110) was designed by noted Charlotte architect, J.M. McMichael. In the center of Cliffside, the Gothic Revival Cliffside Methodist Church (1926) (RF0114) and the Neoclassical Revival Cliffside Baptist Church (1940) (RF0658) both testify to the textile prosperity of this area in the early twentieth century (Merkel 1983: 18-20, 81; Bishir et al. 1999: 177-178).

At the same time, African American churches were organized in the emerging black communities on the outskirts of mill villages and in the larger towns of Rutherfordton and Forest City. Given the county's relatively small African American population, these churches were modestly scaled. Mill owner, R.R. Haynes, provided some financial support for the 1903 construction of the African American Haynes Grove Baptist Church in Cliffside, but no other black church is known to have received such assistance from the textile companies ([www.remembercliffside.com/landmarks/haynes-grove-baptist-church](http://www.remembercliffside.com/landmarks/haynes-grove-baptist-church). Accessed September 10, 2019).

Only one African American church has been previously surveyed in Rutherford County. St. John A.M.E. Zion Church (1926) (RF0256) in Rutherfordton features a twin-towered design with banks of large, round-arched windows. St. John A.M.E. Zion is the only known black church in the county constructed with a brick veneer prior to World War II.



St. John A.M.E. Zion Church, 1926, 102 North Ridgecrest Avenue, Rutherfordton.

The principal investigators examined six other remaining black churches erected in the county before 1971. Cliffside's 1903 Haynes Grove Baptist Church is the only frame black church to survive from the early twentieth century although the building has been vinyl sided in recent years. The building displays the restrained Gothic Revival elements of style which were also commonly used for rural white churches of the period. The church has a steeply pitched, gable-front roof, pointed-arch windows, and a pyramidal-roofed belfry. The projecting vestibule, rear addition, and rock-faced foundation are all later changes.



Haynes Grove Baptist Church, 1903, 121 Haynes Grove Church Road, Cliffside.

Like New Zion Baptist Church, which began as a weatherboarded church and was later remodeled with a brick veneer, two other African American churches follow a similar pattern. Located just west of New Zion Baptist, near the top of Ragtown Road, Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion Church was completed as a frame, twin-towered edifice in 1912. The brick veneer and side and rear wings were added in 1994, covering most of the original windows and doors. In Forest City, St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church was built ca. 1920 as a frame building with simply stated elements of style that include Gothic-arched windows and doorway and a tall, pyramidal-roofed entrance tower. The church was updated with a red-brick veneer in 1952, and in recent years, the entrance staircase has been reworked and a concrete-block wing added to the rear. Nearby is the church cemetery.





Zion Hill A.M.E. Zion Church, 1912, Brick Veneered 1994, 187 Ragtown Road, Henrietta.



St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, ca. 1920, Brick Veneered 1952, 200 Lawing Road, Forest City.

Finally, three African American churches built between 1959 and 1970 are housed in simple, concrete-block buildings: Hopewell A.M.E. Zion (1959) near Henrietta; Union Hill A.M.E. Zion (1962) in Union Mills; and Doggetts Grove A.M.E. Zion (1970) in Forest City. Hopewell A.M.E. Zion is typical of this group with its gable-front form, projecting vestibule, and flat-arched windows.



Hopewell A.M.E. Zion Church, 1959, 259 Harris-Henrietta Road, Henrietta vicinity.

In conclusion, New Zion Baptist Church is one of Rutherford County's most architecturally significant African American churches. The church is the most style-conscious black church of the post-World War II era and epitomizes the practice among smaller congregations of updating their original frame churches with brick exteriors and education wings as memberships expanded in the 1950s and 1960s. A noteworthy example of the brick mason's skill, New Zion Baptist's 1963 façade exhibits stylized Romanesque Revival motifs and a subtle variety of red-brick bonds and finishes.

#### Criterion D

New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history or prehistory; and 2) the information must be considered important (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15*: 21).

The property is not eligible under Criterion D because it is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design or technology.

### **Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties**

New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery is **eligible** for the National Register under Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties. To be eligible under Criteria Consideration A, a religious property must derive its primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: 25*).

The property meets the eligibility thresholds set for religious properties under Criteria Consideration A because of its architectural significance under Criterion C.

### **National Register Boundary Description and Justification**

The proposed National Register boundary for New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery has been drawn according to the guidelines of National Register Bulletin 21, *Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties*.

Shown on **Figure 3**, the proposed boundary encompasses the 1.28-acre church parcel (PIN 1566-31-7012) on the south side of Ragtown Road and the approximately one-acre cemetery plot (PIN 1566-31-6114) on the north side, both of which were the original tracts associated with New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery. The proposed National Register boundary includes that section of Ragtown Road that lies between these two tax parcels. The proposed boundary also encompasses a roughly two-acre tract (part of PIN 1566-31-6267) north and east of the original cemetery that was acquired in 1971 as an expansion of the church graveyard. Defined to the north and south by Ragtown Road and to the east by Old Henrietta Road, the two sections of the cemetery are contiguous with no visual interruptions. Finally, the proposed boundary also extends into a parcel (PIN 1566-30-8516) south of the church so as to encompass the full footprint of the 2000 fellowship hall building and its immediate setting. The church parcel contains the church, bell tower, and sign—all of which are contributing resources—and most of the modern fellowship hall which is a noncontributing building. The cemetery is a contributing site.



**Figure 3**

**New Zion Baptist Church and Cemetery  
Site Plan and Proposed National Register Boundary**



**Key:**

1. Church
2. Fellowship Hall (2000)
3. Original Cemetery
4. Expanded Cemetery (1971)

Source: Rutherford County Tax Map



**Walter and Emily Phillips House (RF0670)**  
**(PIN 1566-31-3964)**  
1559 Old Henrietta Road  
Forest City, Rutherford County



**Date of Construction:** ca. 1933  
**Eligibility Recommendation:** Not Eligible



**Figure 4. Walter and Emily Phillips House, Site Plan.**

Source: Rutherford County Tax Map

## Physical Description

The Walter and Emily Phillips House occupies a rolling, wooded, two-acre lot on the east side of Old Henrietta Road. This area of southeastern Rutherford County is transected by the Second Broad River, and in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a string of cotton mills and bustling mill communities—Avon, Caroleen Henrietta, and Cliffside—were built to take advantage of the river. Although the large cotton mills have been closed and largely demolished, the area remains thickly settled with winding roads linking small commercial cores, churches, and pockets of former mill housing.

Built ca. 1933, the one-story, Tudor Revival dwelling has a rock-faced granite exterior with roped mortaring. Emblematic of the Tudor Revival style, the house has irregular massing capped by a steeply pitched, cross-gable roof, round-arched windows under the gable, and a gabled entry bay with a recessed, round-arched entrance. The batten door is original. Next to the entry is an engaged, arcaded porch with round-arched openings. A secondary entrance opens into the house from the rear of the porch. The façade (west elevation) is dominated by a front-exterior, granite chimney with a pointed-arched niche. A broad, concrete staircase with shallow risers and granite wing walls leads to the entrance and porch, and a similar staircase ascends from Old Henrietta Road to the front yard.

The house was used as rental property for a number of years, and the new owners have recently replaced the original metal-shingle roof with a standing-seam, metal roof. In addition, the paired and single windows now have vinyl sash although the concrete sills and lintels remain. The main entry retains its round-arched, batten door with an off-center window, but the secondary entrance has a modern metal door. A large porch that originally extended across the rear (east) elevation has been replaced by a concrete patio (Joan Kimbrell Interview 2019).

The interior of the house has been extensively altered with an altered floor plan and new materials. The original beaded-board walls and ceilings on the main floor have been replaced or covered in modern sheetrock and ceilings tiles, respectively. The attic retains its beaded-board walls. The original layout of the house has been reconfigured with the demolition of walls to eliminate the original dining room and a transverse hall and create an open plan. A new partition wall was built on the north side of the present front room for a modern utility room. The paneled doors are all modern replacements, and the kitchen has been thoroughly modernized. The simple brick mantel in the front room remains although the mantel shelf is modern. Carpeting covers the hardwood floors (Joan Kimbrell Interview 2019).

The Phillipses' two-acre tract once included a frame general store that was operated by the family and a dwelling for a domestic servant that sat on the north side of the lot. Both of these buildings have been razed in recent years. Finally, a well house that originally stood behind the house is now gone (Joan Kimbrell Interview 2019).





Walter and Emily Phillips House, Façade (West Elevation) and Side (South) Elevation, Looking East.



Walter and Emily Phillips House, Main Entrance and Chimney, Looking East.





Walter and Emily Phillips House, Porch, Modern Entrance, Looking East.



Walter and Emily Phillips House, Side (South) Elevation, Looking North.





Walter and Emily Phillips House, Side (North) Elevation, Looking South.



Walter and Emily Phillips House, Rear (East) Elevation, Looking West.



Walter and Emily Phillips House, Interior, Remodeled Front Room, View from Entrance.



Walter and Emily Phillips House, Interior, Former Hall, Looking towards Rear.





Walter and Emily Phillips House, Interior, Front Entrance and Fireplace Mantel.



Walter and Emily Phillips House, Back Yard and Site of Well House, Looking East.

## Historical Background

On March 8, 1933, J.M. Brackett deeded this tract of land in the textile mill community of Henrietta to Walter (R.W.) Phillips (1901-1968) and his wife, Emily (1901-2006). The couple built this stone house soon after their purchase of the land. The exterior masonry was reputedly executed by a local, African American stone mason. Walter and Emily Phillips, who had married in 1923, were well established in the Henrietta community by the early 1930s. The 1930 census records the couple living in the community with Walter Phillips employed as a general merchandise salesman. In 1940, the house was valued at \$1,000, and the Phillips household included four daughters. By 1940, Phillips operated his own general store which stood beside his residence. The house remained in the Phillips family until 2017 when the property was sold to the current owners, Joseph and Joan Kimbrell (U.S. Census, Rutherford County, Population Schedules 1930, 1940; Rutherford County Deed Books 152: 269; 822: 711; 1155: 751; Joan Kimbrell Interview 2019).

## National Register Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Walter and Emily Phillips House (RF0670) is recommended **not eligible** for the National Register under any criterion because of a loss of integrity. The property has not been surveyed previously.

### Integrity

The Walter and Emily Phillips House does not possess the seven aspects of integrity needed for National Register eligibility. Although the dwelling remains on its original site and thus has integrity of location, its historic setting, feeling, and association have been compromised by the loss of the family general store and the secondary dwelling, both of which stood on the site. The house retains its well-crafted, stone exterior and some Tudor Revival elements of style, but its integrity of design, materials, and construction has been diminished significantly by replacement windows, modern metal roof, and heavily remodeled interior.

### Criterion A

The Walter and Emily Phillips House is recommended **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A, the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or a pattern of events or historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: 12*).

The Walter and Emily Phillips House is not eligible under Criterion A because the property is not associated with either a specific event or a pattern of events important within a local, state, or national context.

### Criterion B

The Walter and Emily Phillips House is recommended **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain



integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e. individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class, or social or ethnic group (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: 14*).

The Phillips house is not eligible under Criterion B because the property is not associated with individuals whose activities were demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context.

### Criterion C

The Walter and Emily Phillips House is recommended **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: 17*).

The Phillips house lacks sufficient architectural integrity for eligibility under Criterion C. Although retaining its distinctive stone exterior and some of its original Tudor Revival features, the dwelling now has replacement windows, a new standing-seam, metal roof, and an extensively remodeled interior. Inside, the plan has been reconfigured completely, and the original beaded-board finishes have been replaced or covered with sheetrock or ceiling tiles. Furthermore, a new utility room has been created from the original dining room, and modern doors have been installed. Rutherford County retains numerous, more intact examples of the Tudor Revival style, including versions with similar stone exteriors.

### Tudor Revival Style

The Tudor Revival style rose to popularity nationwide during the early twentieth century and especially after World War I. As the name suggests, the style drew its inspiration from English Tudor models, borrowed architectural elements both freely and loosely. Features such as steeply pitched and multiple gables, round-arched entrances, batten doors, decorative half timbering, and front-exterior chimneys, often with irregular stacks, came to define the twentieth-century style. By the 1920s, versions with red-brick veneers, often mixed with stone, stucco, or wooden cladding or trim, were widespread. Stone examples—exemplified by the Phillips House—were more unusual, but such versions appeared throughout the 1920s and 1930s, reflecting personal tastes and budgets as well as the availability of affordable quarried rock. Popularized in widely circulating architectural magazines, the Tudor Revival was among a variety of historic revival styles that caught the imagination of builders and homebuyers. While the Colonial Revival with its familiar Early American vocabulary was the favorite choice, the more exotic Tudor Revival arose in burgeoning urban centers across North Carolina. Examples ranged widely from the landmark manor houses of textile magnates to comfortable cottages for the broad middle class (Bishir 1990: 423-424, 440-443).

A number of well-preserved Tudor Revival houses remain in Rutherford County. They were built across the county in the 1920s and 1930s, particularly in the two principal towns of Rutherfordton

and Forest City. Simplified Tudor traits also persisted through the 1940s as components of popular Minimal Traditional houses.

Located on a rise of land at the southern outskirts of Rutherfordton, the ca. 1935 Couch House exemplifies rock-faced stone Tudor Revival architecture in Rutherford County. The rambling one-story residence boasts an array of steeply pitched gables, diamond-paned windows, a round-arched entry with batten door, and a bold, front chimney.



Couch House, ca. 1935, 188 South Main Street, Rutherfordton.

In Forest City, two rock-faced Tudor Revival cottages were constructed side by side along South Broadway Street. Built ca. 1940, the Harrill and Spear houses feature picturesque, rolled eaves to suggest thatched roofs. The Harrill House also retains its original six-over-six and eight-over-eight sash windows.



Harrill and Spear Houses, ca. 1940, 474 and 470 South Broadway Street, Forest City.



Harrill House, ca. 1940, 474 South Broadway Street, Forest City.



The residential center of Rutherfordton contains a notable sampling of brick and stucco Tudor Revival houses. The county's most imposing example is the ca. 1930 Benson House on North Main Street. The dwelling exhibits such hallmarks of the style as irregular massing, ornamental half-timbered gables, massive chimneys, and a blend of brick, stucco, and board-and-batten claddings. A grouping of smaller, but well-articulated, Tudor Revival houses occupies West Sixth Street in Rutherfordton among which are the stylish, red-brick Cobb and Garren houses.



Benson House, ca. 1930, 560 North Main Street, Rutherfordton.



Cobb House, ca. 1930, 177 West Sixth Street.



Garren House, ca. 1935, 205 West Sixth Street, Rutherfordton.



In Forest City, one-story and one and one-half-story versions of the style are located in the East Main Street Historic District (National Register 2005). The ca. 1925, one-story, M.J. Harrill House neatly illustrates the Tudor Revival mode in its steep cross gables, brick and quarried-rock trim, front-exterior chimney, and round-arched doorway. Located nearby, the ca. 1925 Hicks and Annie B. Hill House features half-timbering in the stuccoed south gable and a round-arched entrance sheltered by a gabled canopy. The house now has replacement windows and vinyl siding in the sharply pitched front gable (Fearnbach and Griffith 2005: Section 7, pages 14-15).



M.J. Harrill House. ca. 1925, 121 Carolina Avenue, Forest City.





Hicks and Annie B. Hill House, ca. 1925, 166 Carolina Avenue, Forest City.

Near the project area in the Henrietta community is the ca. 1935, brick-veneered Haynes House. Similar to the nearby Walter and Emily Phillips House, the Haynes House has sharply-pitched cross gables, front chimney, and an engaged, corner porch with arcaded openings. The house has been altered with replacement windows and a modern roof.



Haynes House, ca. 1935, 2544 Harris-Henrietta Road, Henrietta.

#### Building in Stone in Rutherford County

Although Rutherford County does not have the wealth of native-stone architecture found in some mountain counties of North Carolina, building in stone has long been common practice here. Bordered by the Blue Ridge escarpment to the northwest and traversed by three major rivers—the Broad, First Broad, and Second Broad—this foothills county has an abundance of granite and other building stone. The Sandy Mush area along the Second Broad River near Henrietta contains the largest concentration of granite flat rock in the state, and granite outcroppings have historically been rich sources for local stone masons (Padgett 2006: 1-12, 41-42).

As the county grew during the early and middle decades of the twentieth century, quarried rock was increasingly used for park-side retaining walls as well as various elements of house design. In the county's renowned resort areas and tourist destinations along its rugged western edge, stone construction stands out today in the massive granite gate (ca. 1926) at Chimney Rock Park and in the rock chimneys and verandahs of the frame summer cottages around Lake Lure. Overlooking Lake Lure, Jack London Lane contains a collection of such dwellings distinguished by rustic rock features. Elsewhere in the county, front-exterior, granite chimneys were occasionally employed as Tudor Revival touches to otherwise simple Minimal Traditional dwellings. A well-preserved example near the project area is the 1934 Sanney House in Avon (Bishir et al. 1999: 59-61, 181-183).





Summer Cottage, ca. 1930, Jack London Lane, Lake Lure.



Summer Cottage, ca. 1920, Jack London Lane, Lake Lure.





Sanney House, 1934, 2526 U.S. Highway 221A, Avon.

By contrast, houses executed entirely in stone are far less common in Rutherford County. In addition to the aforementioned rock-faced Tudor Revival dwellings in Rutherfordton and Forest City, a windshield survey along several of the principal two-lane roadways in the county (U.S. 64, U.S. 221, and U.S. 221A) identified one other example. Situated along U.S. 64 (Chimney Rock Road) west of Rutherfordton, the 1950 Ledbetter House combines Minimal Traditional and Colonial Revival elements with a rustic exterior of quarried greystone.



Ledbetter House, 1950, 626 Chimney Rock Road, Rutherfordton.

Finally, the grandest known example of stone domestic architecture in the county is the J.H. Thomas House built in 1922 in Forest City. Located in the East Main Street Historic District, this stately, two-story, Mediterranean Revival residence has a bracketed hip roof, covered in green tiles, and a façade with grouped Tuscan columns flanked by round-arched French doors (Fearnbach and Griffith 2005: 26-27).



J.H. Thomas House, 1922, 344 East Main Street, Forest City.

#### **Criterion D**

The Walter and Emily Phillips House is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history or prehistory; and 2) the information must be considered important (National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15*: 21).

The property is not eligible under Criterion D because it is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design or technology.



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