



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

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper  
Secretary D. Reid Wilson

Office of Archives and History  
Deputy Secretary, Darin J. Waters, Ph.D.

November 23, 2021

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Kate Husband, Architectural Historian [klhusband@ncdot.gov](mailto:klhusband@ncdot.gov)  
NCDOT/EAU/Historic Architecture Group

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

Subject: Addendum to Historic Structures Survey Report for R-5826B, Upgrade Roadway NC 109  
from SR 1127 to SR 1174, Montgomery County, ER 21-2358

Thank you for your November 15, 2021, memorandum transmitting the addendum to the above-referenced report. Having reviewed the report we appreciate the investigator's efforts to provide additional information and create a thorough context for comparisons of house and store complexes. We also concur that the Morton House and Store as a complex are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C and that the boundary as shown is appropriate.

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



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

J. ERIC BOYETTE  
SECRETARY

November 15, 2021

MEMORANDUM

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

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

**SUBJECT:** R-5826B: Upgrade NC 109 from SR 1127 (Hearne Farm Road) to SR 1174 (Pee Dee Road), PA 19-06-0024, Montgomery County, ER-21-2358

Thank you for your response to our Historic Structures Survey Report for the above-referenced project. We have reviewed the comments provided regarding the Hurley House (MG0163) and the Morton House and Store (MG0160).

We concur that the Hurley House (MG0163) proposed boundary should follow the edge of pavement along the west, roughly follow the tree line to the south, turn to follow the railroad tracks to the east, and then the parcel line to the north, as illustrated below.



**Hurley House (MG0163) Proposed National Register Boundary.**

In regards to the Morton House and Store (MG0160), the author of the report provides an addendum that re-evaluates the resource, which is attached to this memorandum. After further evaluation and based on comments provided, they recommend that the complex is eligible under Criterion A and C. Please review this evaluation, and please contact me by phone (919-707-6075) or email ([klhusband@ncdot.gov](mailto:klhusband@ncdot.gov)) if you have any additional questions or comments.

**ADDENDUM TO**  
**HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY REPORT**  
**UPGRADE ROADWAY NC 109**  
**FROM SR 1127 (HEARNE FARM ROAD) TO SR 1174 (PEE DEE ROAD)**  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

**TIP PROJECT R-5826B**  
**WBS NO. 57098.1.3**  
**PA TRACKING NO. 19-06-0024**

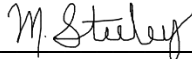
**PREPARED FOR:**  
**The North Carolina Department of Transportation**  
**Environmental Analysis Unit**  
**Century Center A**  
**1000 Birch Ridge Drive**  
**Raleigh, NC 27610**

**PREPARED BY:**  
***Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc.***  
**P.O. Box 1198**  
**201 West Wilson Street**  
**Tarboro, North Carolina 27886**

**Melissa Steeley, M.S.**  
***Architectural Historian***

**NCR-0871**

**NOVEMBER 2021**

  
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**Melissa Steeley, Principal Investigator** **11-10-2021**  
**Commonwealth Heritage Group** **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor** **Date**  
**Historic Architecture Team, NCDOT**

**HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY REPORT  
UPGRADE ROADWAY NC 109  
FROM SR 1127 (HEARNE FARM ROAD) TO SR 1174 (PEE DEE ROAD)  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

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**Melissa Steeley, M.S.  
*Architectural Historian***

**NCR-0867**

**NOVEMBER 2021**

## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to widen NC 109 within the boundary of Mount Gilead in Montgomery County. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) equates with the study area and extends for approximately 2.8 miles along NC 109 from SR 1127 (Hearne Farm Road) to SR 1174 (Pee Dee Road). The project is included in the North Carolina State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) as Project Number R-5826B and is state funded. Federal permits are anticipated.

The project is subject to review under the Section 106 programmatic agreement for the transportation program in North Carolina (FHWA, USACE, NCDOT, ACHP, and NCSHPO 2020). In March 2021, Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc. (Commonwealth), conducted survey of the APE to assess all resources of approximately fifty years of age or more within the APE. NCDOT architectural historians reviewed the resulting building inventory in May 2021 and determined that five resources warranted intensive National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility evaluation.

One of these resources, the Morton House and Store (MG0160) was recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criteria A, B, C, and D. Eligibility findings for Criteria A and C were based on the lack of integrity of the house and store as separate buildings and not as a related grouping.<sup>1</sup> The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) requested that the resource be re-evaluated as a house and store pair, and that comparable resources located nearer to the project area be provided. The following addendum reassesses the significance of the Morton and House and Store as a related pair, rather than individually, under NRHP Criteria A and C, using additional comparable resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Melissa Steeley, *Historic Structures Survey Report, Upgrade Roadway NC 109 from SR-1127 (Hearne Farm Road) to SR 1174 (Pee Dee Road), Montgomery County, North Carolina, 2021*, Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc.

## ADDENDUM

The Morton House and Store were constructed ca. 1925 by Sam and Rosa Morton. The Hurley family purchased the property approximately 20 years later and ran the store while farming the associated acreage. The Morton Store, like many other rural general stores, could ultimately not compete with larger stores and closed in the 1950s. The previous report noted extensive alterations to the Morton House, including the replacement of original windows, siding, and the front porch. The Morton Store, although less altered, was observed to be missing the floor of its front porch and to have a boarded-up window opening on its primary façade. Each building was individually evaluated and found not eligible for the NRHP under Criteria A, B, C, or D. Findings of not eligible under Criteria A and C specifically were made based on a lack of architectural integrity of each building separately. The following is an evaluation of the Morton House and Store as part of a single historic resource under Criteria A and C.

### *Criterion A*

The Morton House and Store are recommended eligible for the NRHP 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 pattern of events or historic trends 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.

The Morton House and Store are associated with the commercial development of rural areas in North Carolina during the turn of the twentieth century as discussed in the *Historic Store Context. Burke, Caldwell, Cleveland, McDowell, and Rutherford Counties*.<sup>2</sup> In the early twentieth century, local general stores were both convenient places for area residents to obtain provisions and social centers. They were often constructed on farms and operated in tandem with farming to generate extra income. Stores of this type were located within view of the farmhouse and fields so that the farmer or a family member could keep an eye on the store while plowing or working in the home.<sup>3</sup> The Morton Store operated for approximately 30 years, beginning at the time of its construction in 1925, and would have served as an important commercial and social center in the area. Oral interviews indicate the store was typical of others operating during the period in that the store and farm were run side by side in the manner described in the context and thus have a strong historical association with rural commercial development. Although the Morton House has been extensively altered, as a grouping, the Morton House and Store and their associated barn retain sufficient integrity to communicate their significance as a typical rural general store complex and are therefore recommended eligible under Criterion A.

### *Criterion C*

The Morton House and Store are recommended eligible for the NRHP 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)

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<sup>2</sup> Heather Fearnbach, *Historic Store Context. Burke, Caldwell, Cleveland, McDowell, and Rutherford Counties*, Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, prepared for NCDOT.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

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.

The Morton House and Store represent a typical rural general store property operational in the early to mid-twentieth century. The Morton House and Store when grouped with their barn can be placed more specifically in the category of rural stores that operated alongside a working farm. No properties of the same type were encountered within Montgomery County during fieldwork, and none could be found in the HPO Web 2.0 database. A review of historic aerial imagery has shown that the comparables used in the previous report, a store located at 1132 El Dorado Street in Troy, Montgomery County and the G.C. Cook Store in Denton, Davidson County, operated as standalone stores and not as part of a farm, house, and store complex. The two additional comparables provided in the following section resemble the Morton House and Store more closely in setting and in the manner of their historic operation.

The Ray Burluson Store (ST0381) located at 28368 Canton Road outside of Albemarle is one such example (Figure 1). Although located in Stanly County, rather than Montgomery County, the Burluson Store is approximately 15 miles from the project area and located within a similarly rural area. No construction date is listed in HPO Web 2.0 or in local tax records, but it appears to date to the early twentieth century. Historic aerial imagery shows that the store was once associated with a dwelling approximately 300 feet to its southeast, currently located at address 28400 Canton Road. A barn located near the house indicates that the complex was run much like that of the Mortons.<sup>4</sup> The house and store are now visually separated by mature trees that exist around the store and along a driveway that passes between the store and house.<sup>5</sup> The buildings no longer have any visual linkage and no longer communicate their shared history to the degree seen at the Morton property (Figure 2). The Morton Store is distinguished from the Ray Burluson Store in its brick construction and its incorporation of a front porch. It is likely that the Burluson Store once had a porch, but it has been removed. Porches were commonly found on general stores of all types and are considered a character-defining element of this building type.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Nationwide Environmental Title Research, LLC, Historic aerial imagery dated 1956.

<sup>5</sup> Note the dwelling and barn are not visible from the roadway and could not be photographed.

<sup>6</sup> Fearnbach





Figure 1. Ray Burleson Roadside Store (ST0381) located near Albemarle.



Figure 2. Location of the Ray Burleson Store (ST0381) in relation to its historically associated house (Google Earth). Note the presence of what appears to be a barn to the south of the residence.



Another early to mid-twentieth century rural general store found in the HPO Web 2.0 database was originally part of a similar grouping of buildings. The Harward General Store (ST0335) is located near Aquadale, Stanly County, approximately 12 miles west of the project area in a rural area. Notably, it was one of a pair of related stores, the other being Harward-Floyd Seedgrader (ST0335), both of which are still standing (Figures 3 and 4). Aerial imagery shows that the stores were located in the midst of cultivated fields and stood very near two additional buildings. Given their spatial relationship it is very likely that one of the buildings (likely the small building directly across the road from the stores) was the residence of the store's owner/operator. The building to the south is large enough to have been a barn (Figure 5). Both of these buildings have been demolished, leaving only the stores standing. These two stores, although excellent examples of rural commercial buildings, form an incomplete picture of the more complex system in which they historically existed. It is notable that both the Ray Burleson Store and the Harward General Store are clad in weatherboard. Brick general stores like the Morton Store appear to have been constructed far less often.



**Figure 3. Harward General Store (ST0335) located near the intersection of Bethlehem Church Road and Chapel Road in Aquadale, Stanly County.**



Figure 4. Harward-Floyd Seedgrader (ST0338). The Harward-Floyd General Store (ST0335) is visible in the background.

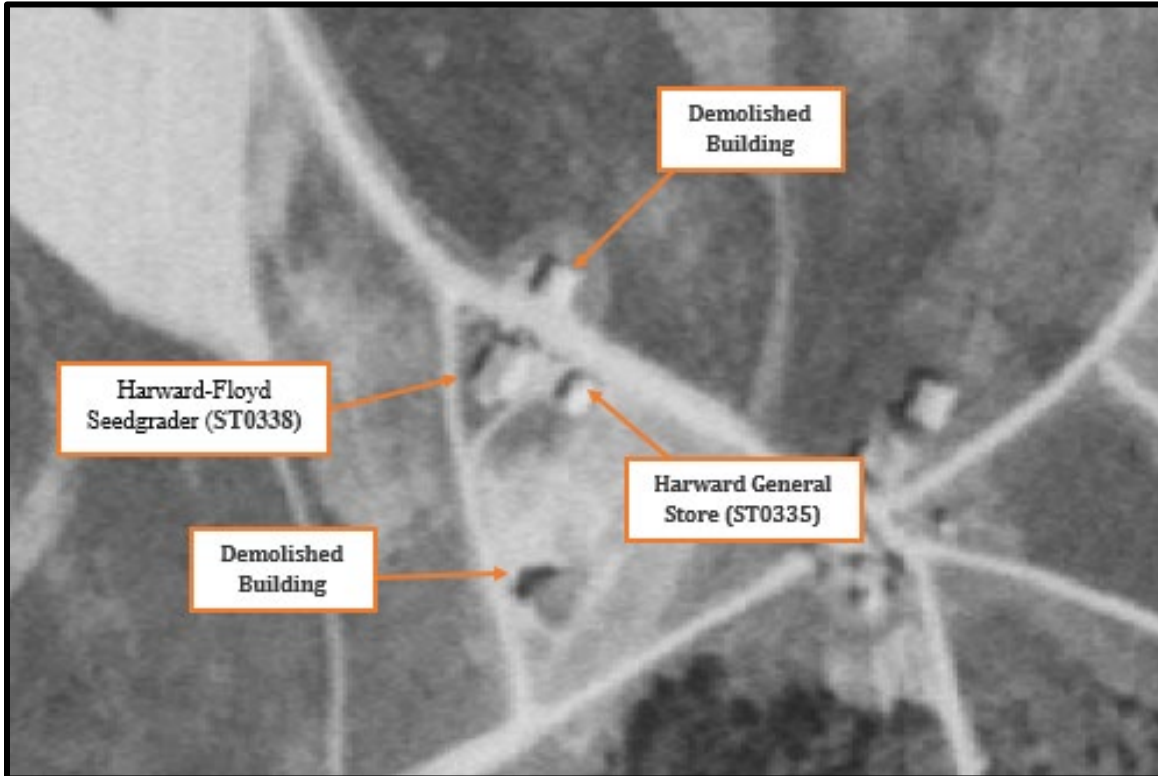


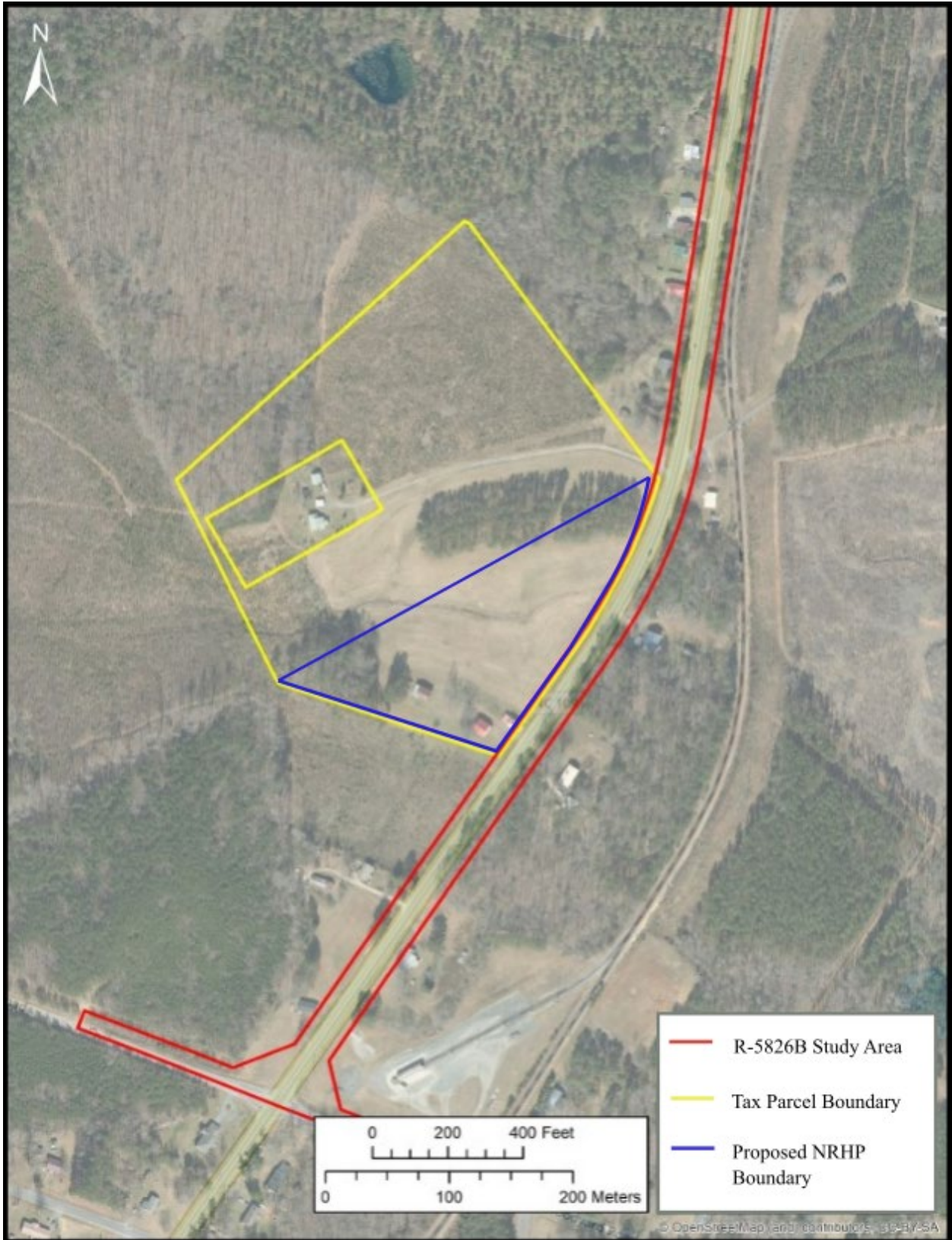
Figure 5. Harward General Store (ST0035) in 1950 (United States Geological Survey 1950).

The Morton House and Store are recommended eligible under Criterion C. As an interrelated grouping of buildings, they are illustrative of North Carolina's rural economic development in the era before automobile travel. Morton Store, in particular is a unique example of a brick (rather than frame) rural general store. In comparison to the two local examples listed above, and in consideration of the lack of comparable properties found in Montgomery County during fieldwork, it is evident that the Morton House and Store are a unique representation of this property type. The proposed period of significance for the Morton House and Store begins in 1925 when they were constructed and ends in 1960, by which time the store had ceased operations.

#### *NRHP Boundary Justification*

The proposed NRHP boundary for the Morton House and Store has been drawn according to the guidelines of "National Register Bulletin 21, Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties." The boundary is comprised of the southern portion of its modern tax parcel (PIN 7504 00 65 3689) and includes the Morton House, Morton Store, and their historically associated barn and agricultural acreage which were a vital part of the system outlined in the context and contribute to their eligibility under Criterion A (Figure 6). The boundary does not include acreage within the modern 22.47-acre parcel acquired after the store had closed and does not include historically associated acreage on the south side of NC 109 which is no longer under cultivation and currently holds a ranch house.





**Figure 6. Proposed NRHP boundary for the Morton House and Store**

## REFERENCES CITED

Steeley, Melissa

- 2021 *Historic Structures Survey Report, Upgrade Roadway NC 198 from SR 1127 (Hearne Farm Road) To SR 1174 (Pee Dee Road) Montgomery County, North Carolina, 2021*. Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc. Submitted to North Carolina Department of Transportation. On File at the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh.

Fearnbach, Heather

- 2012 *Historic Store Context. Burke, Caldwell, Cleveland, McDowell, and Rutherford Counties*, Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, prepared for NCDOT.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), United States Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District (USACE), North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer (NCSHPO)

- 2020 *Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, United States Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer for the Transportation Program in North Carolina*. Electronic document, [https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env\\_topics/historic\\_pres/documents/sec106PAs/NC.aspx](https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/historic_pres/documents/sec106PAs/NC.aspx), accessed November 9, 2021.

National Park Service

- 1995 “NRB-15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.” Accessed online August 2021 at [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15\\_web508.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf).

Nationwide Environmental Title Research, LLC

- 2021 Historic aerial imagery dated 1956. Accessed online November 2021 at <<https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>>

United States Geological Survey (USGS)

- 1950 Aerial photograph A007102603522, taken October 14, 1950. Accessed November 2021 via USGS Earth Explorer at <<https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/>>

## ER 21-2358 Response and Addendum

Husband, Katherine L <klhusband@ncdot.gov>

Mon 11/15/2021 10:23 AM

To: DCR - Environmental\_Review <Environmental.Review@ncdcr.gov>

Good Morning,

Attached please find the response to ER 21-2358, R-5826B in Montgomery County, as well as the report addendum. Please review and contact me if you have any further questions.

Thank you,

Kate

### **Kate Husband**

Architectural Historian

Environmental Analysis Unit

North Carolina Department of Transportation

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