

City of Charleston Engineering Records, 1867-1979

Descriptive Summary

Title and Dates:

City of Charleston Engineering Records, 1867-1979

Creators:

L.J. Barbot, Civil Engineer of the City of Charleston, 1865-1893

James H. Dingle, Surveyor of the City of Charleston, 1894-1904

Engineer of the City of Charleston, 1904-1938

Bernard M. Thomson, Engineer of the City of Charleston, 1938-1952

Joseph Needle, Engineer of the City of Charleston, 1953-1957

H.B. Good, Engineer of the City of Charleston, 1958-1965

James G. Snowden, Engineer of the City of Charleston, 1966-1974

Carlton J. Poulnot, Jr., Engineer of the City of Charleston, 1975-1976

Harold B. Nielson, Jr., Engineer of the City of Charleston, 1977-1980

Quantity:

18 cubic ft.

Forms of Material:

Correspondence, advertisements, contracts, pamphlets, studies, reports, plats, photographs, resolutions, ordinances, invoices, permits, maps, building plans, cassette recording

Processed by:

Rebecca L. Schultz, 2017

Location:

27-C-001 to 27-C-018

Series List

Series I: Administrative

Series II: Boards and Commissions

Series III: Correspondence

Subseries I: Departmental Correspondence

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Subseries IV: City Parks and Playgrounds

Subseries V: Sanitation
Subseries VI: Sewerage and Drainage
Subseries VII: Streets and Sidewalks
Subseries VIII: Works Progress Administration Projects
Subseries IX: Zoning

Abstract

The Records of the City of Charleston Engineering Division date from 1867 to 1979 and consist of the files of eight of the city's engineers, L.J. Barbot, James H. Dingle, Bernard M. Thomson, Joseph Needle, H.B. Good, James G. Snowden, Carlton J. Poulnot, Jr., and Harold B. Nielson, Jr. These records document the efforts of employees of the Engineering Division to provide essential public services to a growing populace.

Background

On February 26, 1867, the City Council of Charleston officially adopted an ordinance for the establishment and regulation of the office of the City Civil Engineer, a position which had already been filled by L.J. Barbot the previous year. Prior to the establishment of the position of City Civil Engineer, the duties assigned to the engineering office were performed by the Surveyors of the Upper and Lower Wards, positions which were thereafter abolished. Upon the retirement of L.J. Barbot the title of City Civil Engineer was briefly changed to City Surveyor, a position filled by James H. Dingle in 1894. When the office of Superintendent of Sewers was abolished and its duties subsumed by Dingle in 1904, the position was once again renamed City Engineer.

While the duties of the City Engineer fluctuated somewhat over time, the Engineering Division generally held responsibility for the arrangement and oversight of projects addressing the City's needs regarding public roadways, sanitation, sewerage, and drainage. The City Engineer supervised the construction of city property including public buildings, parks, and playgrounds. The creation and approval of maps, plans, plats, encroachments, and easements likewise fell under the care of the City Engineer.

Scope and Content Note

The collection is divided into four series: administrative, boards and commissions, correspondence, and subject files. The correspondence series is further subdivided into departmental correspondence and general correspondence. The subject files are subdivided into material related to annexations, the Charleston Municipal Airport, general subject files, City parks and playgrounds, sanitation, sewerage and drainage, streets and sidewalks, Works Progress

Administration projects, and zoning. In an effort to retain the files' original organization there may be some overlap between series and subseries. Researchers are encouraged to review all files.

The collection consists of correspondence, contracts, pamphlets, photographs, meeting agendas and minutes, studies and reports, advertisements, building plans and permits, invoices, ordinances, resolutions, maps, and plats. An audiocassette recording can also be found in the departmental correspondence file for Mayor Gaillard entitled "Pamma Roast: A Night with the Mayor," recorded on June 27, 1975. Photographs located throughout the collection primarily date to the late 1960s and 1970s. Of special note are photographs of the Charleston Municipal Airport, property and neighborhood photographs, and photographs of King Street storefronts, which are located in the zoning subject files. The records contain many contracts for work performed by outside contractors hired by the City.

Related Material:

Researchers interested in this collection may also wish to consult the Engineering Scrolls Collection, 1900-1950 and the City Surveyor Records, 1817-1916. Please consult the Records Manager or Records Specialists to view the collections or request information on other materials in the City's Records Center holdings relevant to the City of Charleston Engineering Records.

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