

Area Character Appraisal **NORTH CENTRAL**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	6
Methodology	7
Introduction	8
<i>Area Appraised</i>	9
Brief History	10
<i>Overview</i>	11
<i>Historical Context</i>	14
<i>Creation of the I-26 Corridor</i>	16
Points of Interest	18
Urban Form & Landscape	28
<i>Introduction</i>	28
<i>Zoning & Board of Architectural Review (BAR)</i>	29
<i>Edges</i>	30
<i>Corridors</i>	31
<i>Streetscapes and Street Patterns</i>	32
<i>Setbacks and Lot Sizes</i>	33
<i>Footprints</i>	35
<i>Non-Residential Urban Form</i>	38
<i>Landscape</i>	39

Uses	41
<i>Introduction</i>	41
<i>Public Housing</i>	42
<i>Adaptive Reuse</i>	42
Architecture	44
<i>Introduction</i>	44
<i>Typologies & Height</i>	45
<i>Charleston Single</i>	46
<i>Freedman's Cottage</i>	47
<i>Ell Cottage</i>	49
<i>American Side-Hall Townhouse</i>	50
<i>Bungalow</i>	52
<i>Center Hall Cottage</i>	53
<i>Sweet Shops</i>	56
<i>Corner Stores</i>	57
<i>Mid-Century Functional</i>	58
<i>Architectural Styles</i>	60
<i>Craftsman Style</i>	61
<i>American Foursquare</i>	63
<i>Minimal Traditional</i>	65
<i>Richardsonian Romanesque</i>	67
<i>Garrison Colonial Revival</i>	68
<i>Folk Victorian</i>	70
<i>Gothic Revival</i>	71

Lost Architecture	72
Character-Defining Features	73
<i>Site Features</i>	73
<i>Roofs</i>	74
<i>Dormers</i>	75
<i>Exterior Cladding</i>	76
<i>Foundations</i>	77
<i>Bays</i>	77
<i>Porches</i>	78
<i>Porch Supports</i>	80
<i>Windows</i>	81
<i>Chimneys</i>	83
<i>Decorative Details</i>	84
<i>Brick Ornamentation</i>	84
<i>Decorative Millwork</i>	85
<i>Shingle Cladding</i>	86
<i>Ironwork</i>	86
<i>Breeze Block</i>	87
<i>Hand-Painted Signage</i>	88
Upcoming Area Redevelopment	89
Challenges	90
Suggested Further Research	91

Additional Resources	92
<i>Local Resources</i>	92
<i>State and Federal Resources</i>	95
<i>Further Reading</i>	96
Bibliography	97
Appendix	100
<i>Board of Architectural Review Resources</i>	100
<i>Kit Home Comparisons</i>	102

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METHODOLOGY

In order to create this Area Character Appraisal document, the project team made several visits to the North Central neighborhood, conducted a photographic study, and extensive historical research, utilizing the following resources:

- Charleston County Public Library and the South Carolina Room
- Historic Charleston Foundation Archives
- Lowcountry Digital Library
- Kevin Eberle Photography Archive and “Charleston Uptown Bicycle Tours,” (Charleston, South Carolina: 2018)
- [Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula](#) (Brockington and Associates, Inc., 2004)

Community engagement was a critical component of this project, and helped ensure that the final product reflected community priorities and concerns, and aligned with neighborhood goals. The project team engaged North Central residents in ongoing dialogue about this project through presentations at the North Central Neighborhood Association (NCNA) and a neighborhood survey, that invited residents to share their lived experiences and identify important areas to the community.

For a full list of sources used, please see the Bibliography section at the end of this document. While this ACA provides a strong foundation for understanding the evolution and unique character of North Central, it is not a comprehensive neighborhood history or property inventory. Additional research and documentation is needed to tell the fullest story possible of the neighborhood and its residents.

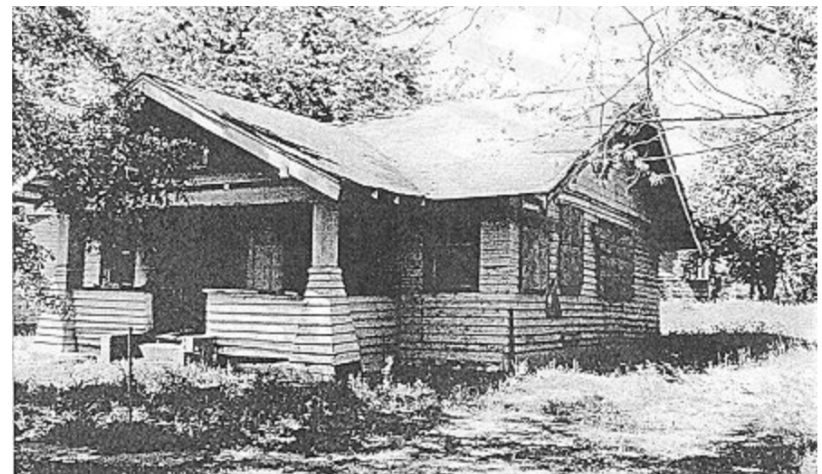
If you have any questions about the research or methodology of this document, please reach out to the Preservation Society of Charleston and Historic Charleston Foundation.

INTRODUCTION

Area Character Appraisals (ACA) analyze and document the characteristics that make a neighborhood or community special, including local history, land use patterns, architectural styles and features, and urban form. By highlighting character-defining elements, ACAs are intended to give residents language to identify and embrace their neighborhood's distinct sense of place.

ACAs also seek to articulate the complex relationship between historic context and new development by highlighting the importance of in-kind repairs, restoration, and sensitive new construction. These documents can then be used by local governments, nonprofit organizations, and neighborhood associations to guide decisions regarding planning for the area.

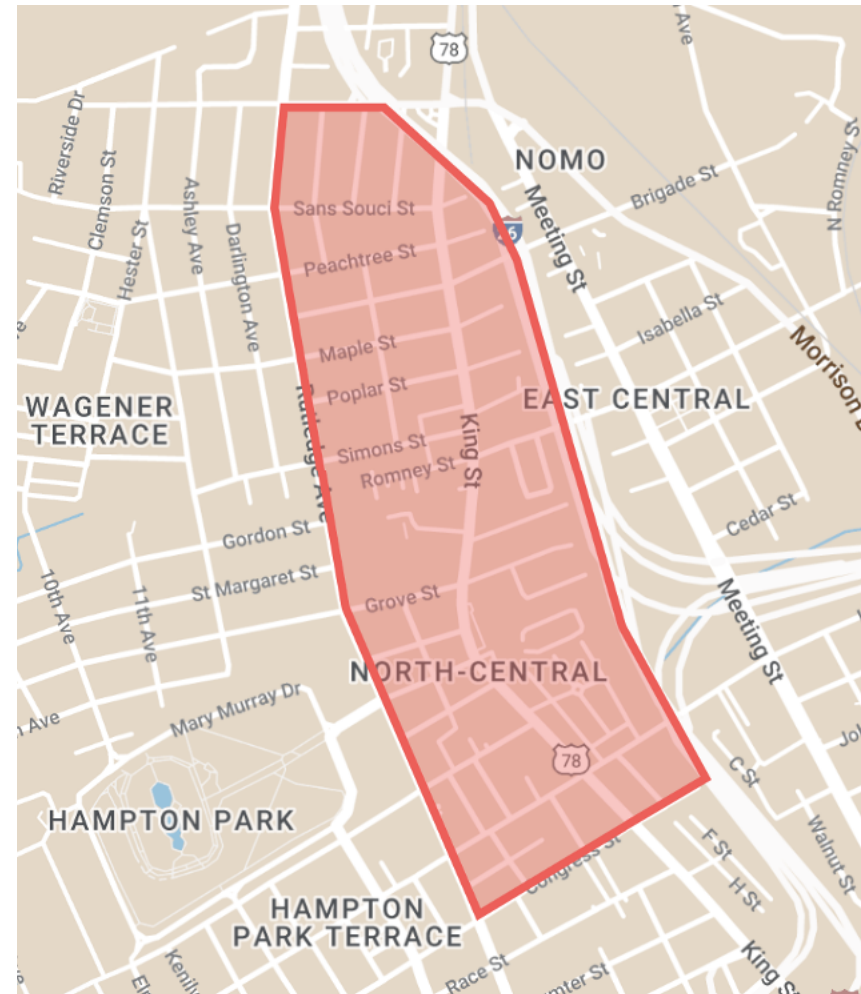
Building on the [Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula](#) (Brockington and Associates, Inc., 2004), the North Central ACA is intended to serve as a supplemental resource for residents of the neighborhood, design and construction professionals, the City of Charleston Board of Architectural Review, as well as historic preservation advocacy organizations. The goal of this ACA is to provide a user-friendly reference for understanding the historic elements that make North Central unique, and how to best ensure preservation of the neighborhood.



Top to bottom: 73 Maple Street, c. 1940 and 10 Simons Street (demolished) c. 1920s, courtesy of Historic Charleston Foundation archives.

AREA APPRAISED

The following maps show the boundaries of North Central on the Charleston peninsula. North Central is bounded to the north by Mount Pleasant Street, to the east by I-26, to the south by Congress Street, and to the west by Rutledge Avenue.



Maps created in MyMaps by Kerry Campion.

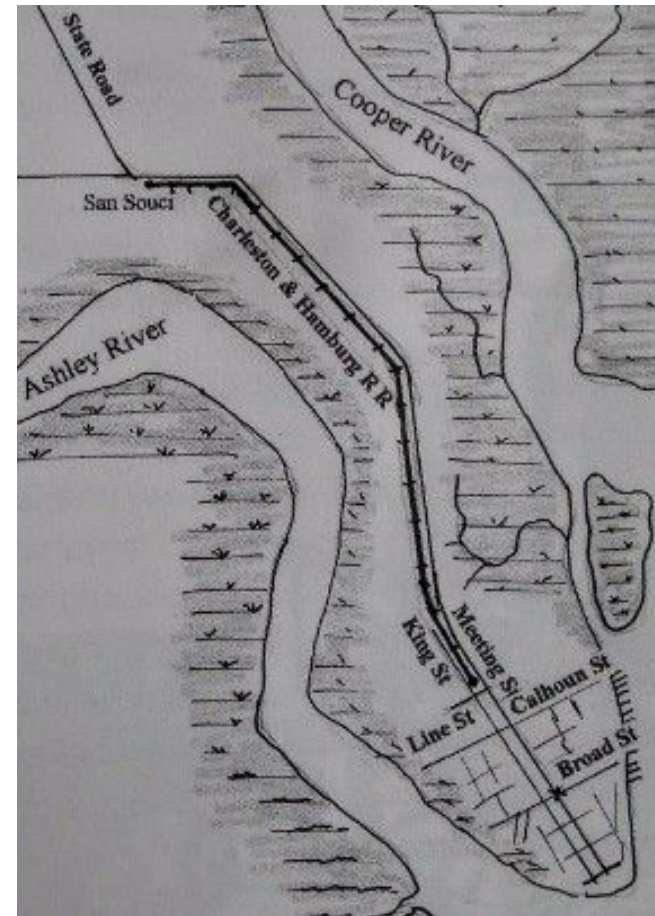
BRIEF HISTORY

OVERVIEW

Charleston, South Carolina, originally founded as a British colony, moved its settlement from Charlestowne Landing west of the Ashley River, to its current location on the Charleston peninsula in 1680. The area now known as the North Central neighborhood was located outside the town boundaries as part of the Grove, San Souci, and Rat Trap plantations.¹

In the late 1820s, the South Carolina Canal and Rail Road Company's first railroad network reached Charleston with tracks laid between King and Meeting Streets north of Line Street.² By this time, the upper peninsula was home to a diverse population of working-class Charlestonians, including both free and enslaved African Americans, and German and Irish immigrants arriving mostly after 1840.³ German immigrants, including Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, fled religious persecution, while Irish immigrants sought refuge from political and economic challenges.⁴ Affordability was a large draw for the upper peninsula's population; wood frame construction was allowed in this area as a cheaper alternative to the brick structures required within Charleston's historic city limits after 1838 to mitigate fire risk.⁵

Development on the upper peninsula increased in 1849 when it was annexed by the City of Charleston.⁶



Original route of the Charleston & Hamburg Railroad, map by Thomas Fettes.

¹ Butler, Christina R. "The Development of North Central. Then and Now." Charleston Empire Properties, 2020.

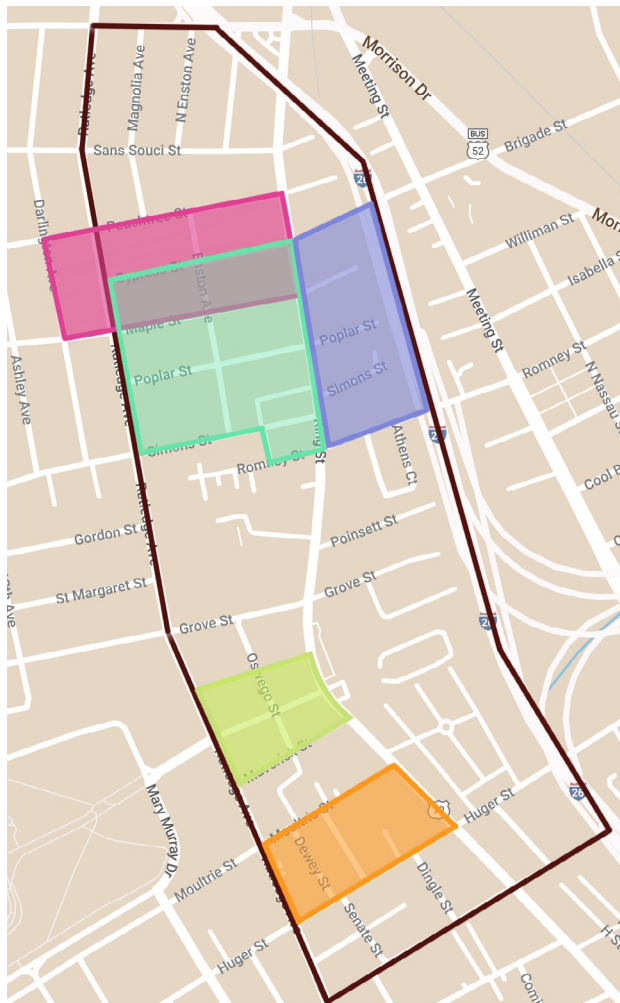
² Marhoefer, Audrey, et al. Historic Charleston Foundation, Charleston, SC, p. 3, I-26 Corridor Historic Resources Survey.

³ Beaty, John, and Ralph Bailey. "Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula, Charleston, South Carolina." Charleston: Brockington & Associates, Inc., 2004.

⁴ Gleeson, David T. "Immigration." South Carolina Encyclopedia, 2022.

⁵ Beaty and Bailey. "Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula, Charleston, South Carolina," 19.

⁶ Eberle, Kevin. "Charleston Uptown Bicycle Tours," 8.



- Maverick Street Neighborhood, 1893
- T. Allen Legare, 1899
- Rutledge Avenue Improvement Company, 1912
- Carolina-Florida Realty Company, 1918
- Riverside Development Company, 1920

Map made in Procreate by Madelyn Reber.

⁷ Eberle, "Charleston Uptown Bicycle Tours," 8.

⁸ Eberle, "Charleston Uptown Bicycle Tours," 9.

The area was less affected by the Civil War compared to downtown and its population increased when citizens fled areas of bombardment.⁷

North Central is located in the historic Ward 11, created in 1882 by the South Carolina General Assembly that split Charleston into 12 wards. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, North Central was made up of small farms and clusters of homes.



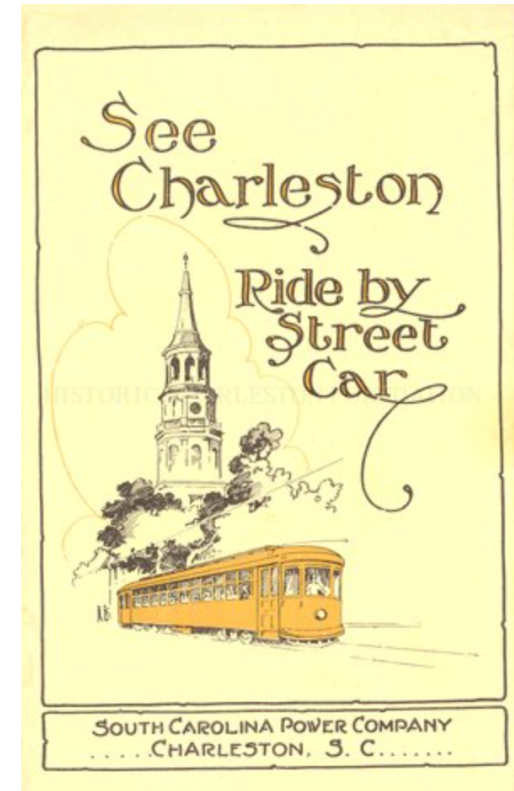
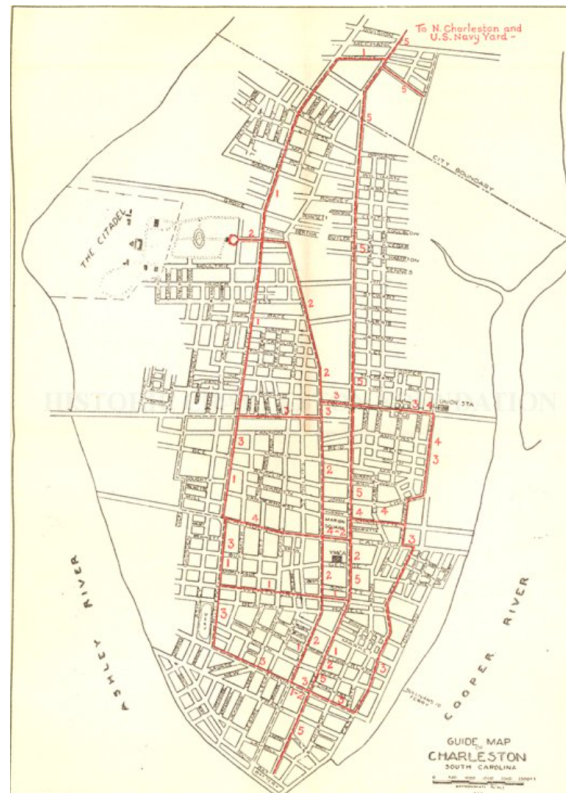
Rose Garden Pharmacy at 1106 King Street, photo by Kerry Campion.

The neighborhood became a desirable area to develop following the establishment of the Charleston Navy Yard in modern-day North Charleston, the development of the South Carolina Interstate and West Indian Exposition on the former Washington Race Course nearby (now the Wagener Terrace neighborhood and Hampton Park), and the growing trend of Americans moving away from crowded urban areas. Trolley lines grew into the upper peninsula and development followed.⁸

The Maverick Street Neighborhood was one of the first developed subdivisions in North Central, between King Street and Rutledge Avenue, including Maverick, Cleveland, Francis, and Grove streets, established by Frederick J. Smith in 1893. The neighborhood was settled primarily by African Americans.

In 1899, T. Allen Legare created lots between Moultrie and Huger Streets. The Rutledge Avenue Improvement Neighborhood was the largest subdivision created with lots on either side of King Street between Cypress Street, the railroad line, and Romney Street.

The Rutledge Avenue Improvement Company subdivided 146 lots west of King Street in 1912 and the Carolina Florida Realty Company subdivided 92 lots east of King Street in 1918; these areas were soon merged into one larger community.⁹ In 1920, the Riverside Development Company created the Rose Garden Tract, subdividing lots on Peachtree, Maple, Cypress, and Darlington Streets.¹⁰ Despite the multiple subdivisions in North Central, building construction did not pick up until a few years later. A majority of the homes in the neighborhood were constructed between 1920 and 1950, reflecting the popular styles in the United States during that period as well as vernacular architectural influences unique to Charleston.



Street car advertisement and route, includes North Central, circa 1930s, courtesy of Historic Charleston Foundation Archives.

The North Central neighborhood is characterized by both its commercial and residential development. King Street is the main commercial corridor in North Central. In the 18th century, commerce flourished on King Street as it was the main route for transporting trade north.¹¹ Both World Wars saw population growth in Charleston with the prominence of the Navy Yard.¹² By the 1950s, development growth hit the city limits at Mt. Pleasant Street.¹³

⁹ Beaty and Bailey. "Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula, Charleston, South Carolina," 59.

¹⁰ Butler, "The Development of North Central. Then and Now," Empire Properties.

¹¹ Beaty and Bailey. "Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula, Charleston, South Carolina," 19.

¹² Beaty and Bailey. "Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula, Charleston, South Carolina," 24.

¹³ Eberle, "Charleston Uptown Bicycle Tours," 9.

In 1936, an informal neighborhood association was created for citizens to have their voices heard over concerns in their neighborhood, spearheaded by local leader Vivian Moultrie Anderson. Individual streets had their own neighborhood groups in the 1950s and 60s to accommodate the growth of North Central. In 1976, the North Central Neighborhood Council was formalized and became the first neighborhood association recognized by the city's Neighborhood Council led by community leader and activist, the Reverend Alma Dungee, who became the first council president. The Rev. Alma Dungee acted as president for 38 years. She worked with great effort to bring the people of North Central together to create their neighborhood association which is still active today.

In the 20th century, North Central has experienced a wave of commercial redevelopment and increasing desirability among Charleston residents due to its large and assorted housing stock, walkability, and mixed-use buildings. The atmosphere of the neighborhood has shifted slightly with incoming contemporary restaurants and shops. Its unique blend of historical charm and modern amenities has enhanced the neighborhood's appeal. Over time, North Central has evolved into a diverse community. The neighborhood was predominantly Black during the late 1960s and 1970s. Now, due to demographic shifts, the neighborhood has become a home to families of various backgrounds contributing to North Central's thriving urban environment.



The Rev. Alma Dungee, 2008, photo by Henry De Saussure Copeland.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

North Central's narrative is less documented than other Charleston neighborhoods despite its extensive and rich history. The neighborhood's period of significance cannot be defined by one era or depicted in a single image. The following photos portray elements of North Central that give the neighborhood context throughout its existence.



Top left to bottom right: 1082 King Street, 1955. Gathering outside of 1220 King Street, c. 1930s. 949 King Street, 1979. Juan Calixto Sanchez White at 71 Poplar Street, 1927, courtesy of LatinAmericanStudies.org. 1085 King Street, 1942. West side of 1000 King Street, c. 1905. Historic photographs courtesy of Kevin Eberle unless otherwise specified.



Top left to bottom right: 757-759 King Street, 1959. Allen Smarte Burns at 91 Magnolia Avenue. Plat of Sans Souci and Rat Trap Plantations, 1790. Child sitting with 606 Rutledge Avenue in the background. Fire truck parked at the driveway of 1099 King Street looking north, 1950. 888 King Street, 1950. Porter Military Academy football game, 1918, 714-704 Rutledge Avenue in the background. All historic photographs courtesy of Kevin Eberle.

CREATION OF THE I-26 CORRIDOR

The construction of Interstate 26 between 1960 and 1969 resulted in the division of neighborhoods in “the neck” of the Charleston peninsula. In 1963, the South Carolina Department of Transportation conducted a survey of the properties in the highway “right of way” that were anticipated to be impacted or demolished during the construction of I-26. The majority of the documented properties were vernacular one- and two-story structures. Dwellings were demolished on almost every street north of Line Street, including approximately 25 structures in North Central. King and Mt. Pleasant Streets, as well as Enston and Laurel Avenues, suffered the majority of loss in architectural material. An estimated 50 or more houses in the vicinity of the train tracks were demolished on Addison, Riker, Indian, Romney, Brigade Streets, Lenox, Maple, and Poinsett streets, Boyer Court and A-J Places, which would have been visible from North Central.



Top left to bottom right: 6 Maple Street, 16 Lenox Street, 1200 King Street, 28 Sans Souci Street, 10-18 J Place, between Lenox and Brigade Streets, 101 Romney Street, 1226 King Street, and 10 Lenox Street, courtesy of “Highway Planning, South Carolina Department of Transportation,” Lowcountry Digital Library.

Some listed properties were vacant at the time of the highway's construction, while others were not recorded or recorded incorrectly. The map below depicts demolished properties that could be verified.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1951. Blue overlay depicts structures impacted by the construction of I-26.



Construction of I-26 south of Mt. Pleasant Street in 1968, courtesy of the Post & Courier archives.

POINTS OF INTEREST

In this study, “points of interest” is being used to describe structures or areas that have become iconic in the North Central neighborhood for their architecture, cultural importance, and community use. Many of these places act as community gathering spaces and are significant to the neighborhood.

William Enston Homes **900 King Street**

Built in 1889 as homes for the elderly, the William Enston Homes are a community of 24 Richardsonian Romanesque-style brick houses situated on twelve acres of land. The development features a memorial chapel and a tower. William Enston, merchant, furniture maker, and shipping magnate in Charleston, donated his estate to the City upon his death in 1860 and requested convenient homes be made for the elderly and sick. In 1887, 27 years after Enston’s death, W.B.W. Howe, Jr. designed the community of cottages according to Enston’s instructions and the complex was completed by 1889. A century later, the William Enston Homes were restored using historic tax credits and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996. Today the complex is owned by the Housing Authority of Charleston and the Enston Homes are used as affordable housing.¹⁴



C. 1890s historic photograph of the Enston Homes courtesy of “Charleston before 1945” Facebook page.



¹⁴ “William Enston Home.” National Parks Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Big Bertha
1056 King Street

Originally built in 1941 by the Sottile family as a theater with Art Moderne details, the building was leased to the U.S. Navy during World War II and repurposed as local training headquarters.¹⁵ The building then became Edens Food Stores, a family-run grocery store until 1955. Next, it housed a roller skating rink that claimed to be the largest in the state of South Carolina. The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2017.¹⁶



1056 King Street, 1949, courtesy of Kevin Eberle.



¹⁵ "Big Bertha." The Middleton Group, 2018.

¹⁶ Tulla, Brittany V. Lavelle. "Sixth Naval District Training Aids Library: National Register Listing." 2017.

County Hall (The Palace Apartments) **1000 King Street**

Constructed as a textile plant in 1902, it was later converted into an auditorium in 1938 in the Art Deco style where it served as a concert hall, featuring musical performances by Elvis Presley and George Jones, speeches from American icons like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1967, and boxing and wrestling matches featuring legends like Muhammad Ali and Andre the Giant. County Hall was significant to members of the community as well, as it served as a venue for graduations and dances. In 2001, the building was renovated and reopened as The Palace Apartments.¹⁷



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking at County Hall, 1967, courtesy of the Post and Courier.



1000 King Street, early 1900s, courtesy of Kevin Eberle.



¹⁷ Eberle, "Charleston Uptown Bicycle Tours," 111.

Fire Department Station 8 **370 Huger Street**

Completed in 1910, this fire station was created to serve the rapidly growing population of Charleston. The station served all areas above Line Street and was the last station built in Charleston to accommodate horse-drawn firefighting equipment. It is a two-story brick masonry structure with architectural details such as brick quoins, a distinctive decorative parapet, and corbelled brick cornices also found on other late 19th century fire stations in Charleston.¹⁸



Station 8 at 370 Huger Street, 1913, courtesy of Historic Charleston Foundation archives.

¹⁸ "Landmark Overlay Zoning Nomination Site Synopsis." Zoning Ordinance, City of Charleston, 2005.

St. Paul's Baptist Church **622 Rutledge Avenue**

This church is one of Charleston's oldest Black congregations remaining in its original location. St. Paul's Baptist Church was founded on February 28, 1888, and it purchased the land for this church on April 5, 1892. The cornerstone for the church was laid on September 23, 1895.¹⁹

The Butterfly Book Nook Garden **55 Poinsett Street**

This garden was created by First African Evangelical Christian Church, John L. Dart Library, and Enough Pie, a local nonprofit, in 2018. The green space honors librarian Cynthia Graham Hurd, a lifelong resident of North Central, who was killed in the hate crime committed at Mother Emanuel AME Church in 2015. The garden acts as a community space and features native pollinator plants. The Butterfly Book Nook provides educational opportunities for nearby schools and serves as a safe gathering place.²⁰



622 Rutledge Avenue.



Butterfly Book Nook Garden at 55 Poinsett Street.

¹⁹ Eberle, "Charleston Uptown Bicycle Tours," 141.

²⁰ "The Butterfly Book Nook." Historic Charleston Foundation, 2017.

James Simons Elementary School 741 King Street

This elementary school was built in 1919 for \$175,000 to serve the Upper Peninsula's White families as the population began growing rapidly. In 1955, Charleston's NAACP branch advocated to integrate the school but this request was rejected by the local school district. The parents of nine African American children sued the school board in 1962 and won the case, granting admission for their children to James Simons Elementary in 1963.²¹ James Simons Elementary School was one of the first Charleston schools to be integrated when three young girls, Oveta Glover, and Barbara and Gale Ford, became the school's first Black students in 1963.



Black students integrating James Simons Elementary, 1963, courtesy of the Preservation Society of Charleston.



James Simons Elementary School at 741 King Street.

²¹ Eberle, "Charleston Uptown Bicycle Tours," 133.

New Israel Reformed Episcopal Church **69 Simons Street**

This congregation traces its origins to 1875 when it was a small mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church called Racker's Mission. In 1875, when the Protestant Episcopal Church refused to ordain Black clergy, Black congregations left the Protestant Episcopal Church and moved to the Reformed Episcopal Church (REC). This congregation became the Israel Reformed Episcopal Church and as a result, the church needed to find a new location for worship. In 1882, Israel REC bought 71 Simons Street and built its original church. The current building was constructed in the same location in 1975 and the church was renamed New Israel Reformed Episcopal Church in 1977.²²

The church owns multiple properties nearby in North Central that are used as a school, affordable housing, and the Romney Urban Garden (RUG). RUG was created in 2014 by a group of young members of the church who came up with the idea to transform a vacant lot owned by the church into a garden. With help from neighbors, church members, and Historic Charleston Foundation, the garden was created for the community to enjoy.²³



Romney Urban Garden.



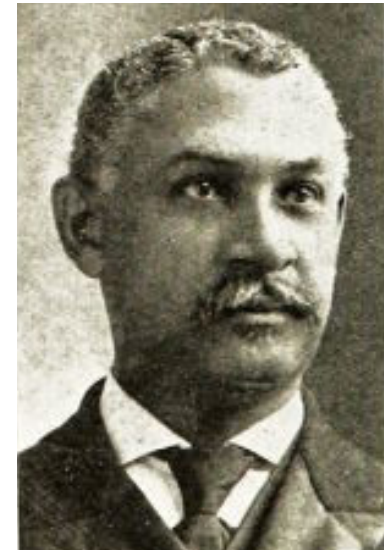
New Israel Reformed Episcopal Church at 69 Simons Street.

²² Gaillard, Edelle P., and Marguerite S. Middleton. "History." New Israel Reformed Episcopal Church.

²³ "Storytime and S'mores at Romney Urban Garden." Historic Charleston Foundation, 2023.

John L. Dart Library **1067 King Street**

The public library, named after champion of education John L. Dart, is a community focal point within North Central. Born in 1854 as a free Black man, Dart dedicated his life to equal education for Black people. Dart earned a master's degree from Atlanta University and served as an ordained Baptist minister in the neighborhood. He used his educational background to found schools in Charleston for Black youth and believed education was a foundational tool to empower African Americans. Reverend John L. Dart's family established the first free public library for African Americans in Charleston in 1927 where his daughter, Susan Dart Butler, gave free access to her father's collection of books. Funding from the Rosenwald Fund allowed them to establish the Charleston Free Library in 1931, which was purchased by Charleston County in 1952 and operated until 1968, when the current John L. Dart Library opened on King Street.²⁴



*John L. Dart, c. early 1900s,
courtesy of FindAGrave.com.*

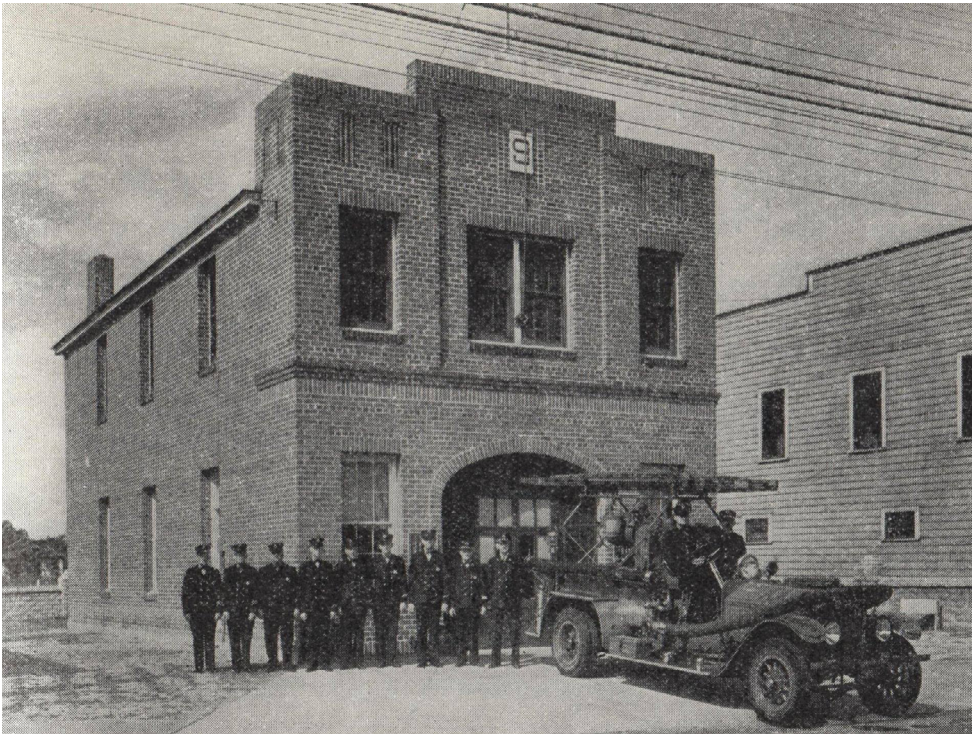


John L. Dart Library at 1067 King Street.

²⁴ Mohr, Maggie. "Celebrate the 90th Anniversary of John L. Dart Library." Charleston County Public Library.

The Rev. Alma Dungee Community Center 1099 King Street

Originally constructed in 1933 as a fire station, the building currently serves as a boxing gym and community center named after the Rev. Alma Dungee, who served as president of the North Central Neighborhood Association for 38 years and was an influential community leader in North Central. She was a vocal advocate for North Central and ensured the preservation of the neighborhood's character. Prior to serving as a community center, this building housed the Charleston Boxing Gym, owned by the legendary boxer, Al "Hollywood" Meggett for 40 years.²⁵ The boxing gym was created to provide a safe place for local youth to "motivate greatness."²⁶



Left to right: Station 9 at 1099 King Street, 1935, courtesy of Kevin Eberle; the Rev. Alma Dungee Community Center in 2025, Justin Falk photography for the Preservation Society of Charleston.

²⁵ "Whalen, Emma. "Charleston Boxing Gym Finds Success After Re-Opening in Al 'Hollywood' Meggett's Honor." Post and Courier, 2022.

²⁶ Preservation Society of Charleston Carolopolis Award Nomination, 1099 King Street, 2024.

The Fabulous Ellen Bright Hall **1104 King Street**

The Fabulous Ellen Bright Hall opened in this vernacular 1940s building in 1983 and served the North Central neighborhood for 33 years with a spacious room that hosted weddings, birthdays, and dance parties.²⁷ The hall also served food and was known for catering to Black residents at a time when Charleston's dining scene primarily served White clientele. The event space was named after owner Lloyd Frasier's mother, Ellen Green Frasier Bright.²⁸



1100-1104 King Street, 2016, photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.



1100-1104 King Street, 2024, after the character-defining hand-painted "Fabulous Ellen Bright Hall" signage was removed. Due to neighborhood advocacy, this element is proposed to be reintroduced as part of an upcoming redevelopment project.

²⁷ Raskin, Hanna. "Ellen Bright Closure Displaces Aaron Short's Seafood," Post and Courier, 2016.

²⁸ Eberle, Kevin. "The Fabulous Ellen Bright Hall," Facebook, 2018.

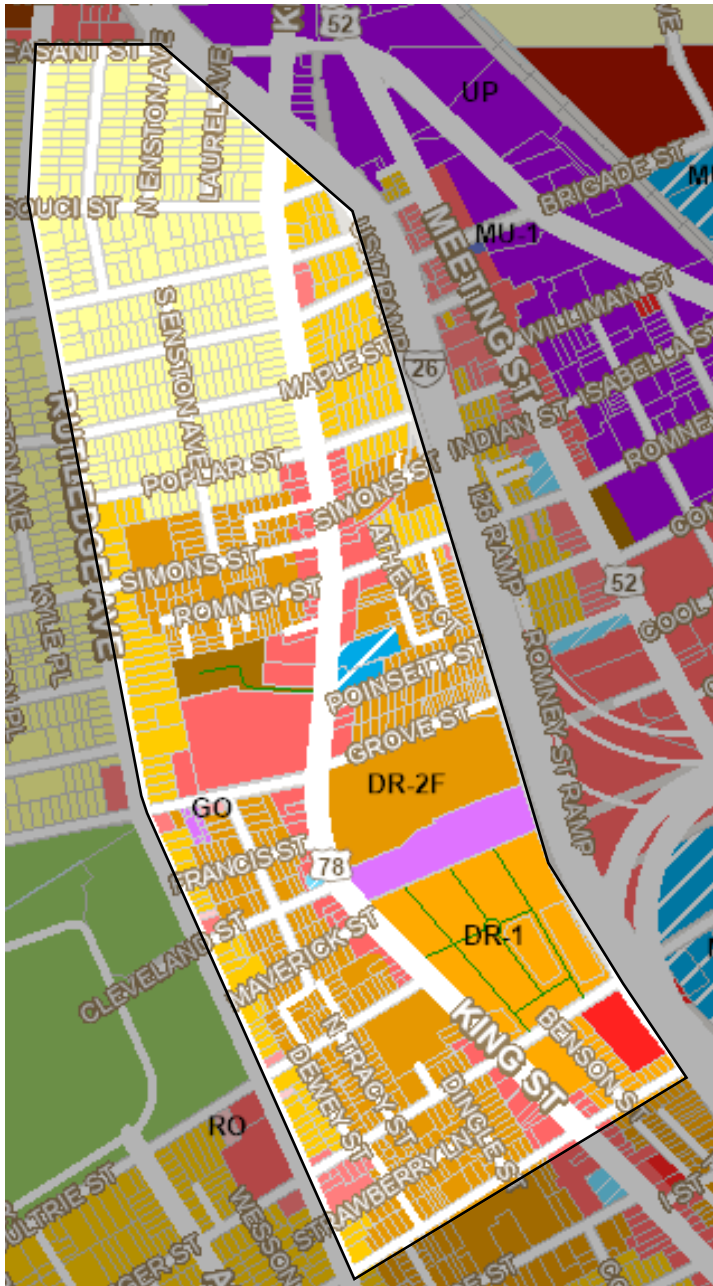
URBAN FORM AND LANDSCAPE

Introduction

Located in the upper core of downtown Charleston, North Central is known for its charming commercial and urban-residential characteristics. King Street, Rutledge Avenue, Grove Street, and Huger Streets feature the bulk of commercial properties while the remainder of North Central is primarily residential, featuring places of worship, community centers, and schools. This section discusses elements of the neighborhood that contribute to its distinctive character such as zoning, Board of Architectural Review, edges, corridors, streetscape and street patterns, setbacks and lot sizes, footprints, non-residential urban form, and landscape.



Left to right: Cypress streetscape, and 698 Rutledge Avenue looking southeast.












City of Charleston Interactive Zoning Map as of May 2025.

Zoning

North Central encompasses numerous base zoning districts in the [City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance](#), which regulates land use and site characteristics, such as building height and footprint, density, setbacks, and lot coverage. The varied base zoning districts represented in North Central reflect the neighborhood's densely developed and dynamic urban environment.

Board of Architectural Review (BAR)

The Board of Architectural Review (BAR), established in 1931, is an entity empowered by Charleston's Zoning Ordinance to ensure "the preservation and protection of the old historic or architecturally worthy structures and quaint neighborhoods which impart a distinct aspect to the city and which serve as visible reminders of the historical and cultural heritage of the city, the state, and the nation." The BAR has varying jurisdiction based on boundaries displayed on the city's [BAR Purview Map](#). The majority of North Central falls under "**Historic Materials Demolition Purview**," established in 2017, where BAR approval is needed for removal of historical materials, including partial and whole-building demolition. However, areas of North Central along Rutledge Avenue and King Street are subject to full BAR-S purview, including demolition and design, as they are located within the **Historic Corridor District**.

	Single Family		Light Industrial
	Diverse Residential - 1		General Business
	Diverse Residential - 2		Planned Unit Development (PUD)
	Diverse Residential - 3		Mixed-Use
	Limited Business		

Edges



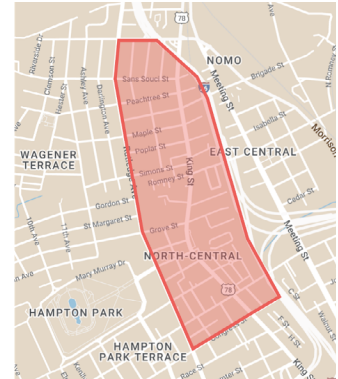
Western Edge
Rutledge Avenue



Northern Edge
Mt. Pleasant Street



Southern Edge
Congress Street



Eastern Edge
Highway I-26

Corridors

Corridors are the main routes for traffic, either by foot or car.

- King Street and Rutledge Avenue are the busiest corridors with vehicular traffic flowing north and south. Rutledge Avenue is made up of mostly residential with some commercial buildings. King Street is made up of mostly commercial buildings with some residential.
- Mount Pleasant Street is the only street with access onto highway I-26, making it a busy corridor with traffic traveling east and west.
- Cypress Street and Romney Street are the only east-west corridors that allow for vehicular and foot traffic beneath I-26. Cypress and Romney Street act as entrances into the neighborhood.



Rutledge Avenue looking northeast.



South side of Mt. Pleasant Street looking east.



East side of King Street looking north.

Streetscapes and Street Patterns

North Central's street pattern varies due to the east-west impact of Interstate 26 and the north-south fluctuation in uses between residential and non-residential blocks. Between Simons and Mt. Pleasant Streets, the neighborhood has more consistent gridded blocks. Most east-west streets were originally interrupted by the peninsula's railway and today are severed by I-26.

North Central's street pattern is less consistent south of Simons Street and north of Congress Street. Multiple dead-end "Courts," "Lanes," and "Places" exist throughout this portion of the neighborhood. The streetscape is also disconnected by parking lots for various non-residential properties.

Streets are often two lanes with space for parking on either side. With the exception of traffic lights on Rutledge Ave, King, and Huger Streets, North Central's intersections consist of two- and four-way stop signs.

Sidewalks line all major neighborhood streets with the widest sidewalks located on the corridors of Rutledge Avenue and King Street, which span the length of the peninsula. Major streets that extend beyond the core of the neighborhood to either the east or west include Congress, Huger, Grove, Cypress, and Mt. Pleasant Streets.



From top to bottom: Dewey Street looking southwest, and Francis Street looking west.

Setbacks and Lot Sizes

The lots in North Central vary in shape and size based on their era of development, use, and proximity to or location along major thoroughfares. Many of the oldest lots are rectangular in shape, half a block deep and narrow along the street. Newer areas of development tend to be wider at the street and more square in shape.

Residential buildings are typically off-center on the lot with narrow driveways to the side. Setbacks measured from the street curb to the front of dwellings range from approximately 5 to 32 feet in North Central. The neighborhood's oldest residential annexations, such as the Maverick Street Neighborhood and Rose Garden, are characterized by the density of single family residences.

A sample survey was completed to quantitatively assess average setbacks and lot coverage within the North Central neighborhood. Based on this survey, the following averages were derived for residential structures:

- **Average Front Setback: 20 ft**
- **Average Square Footage of Building Footprint: 1,455 ft²**
- **Average Lot Coverage: 40%**

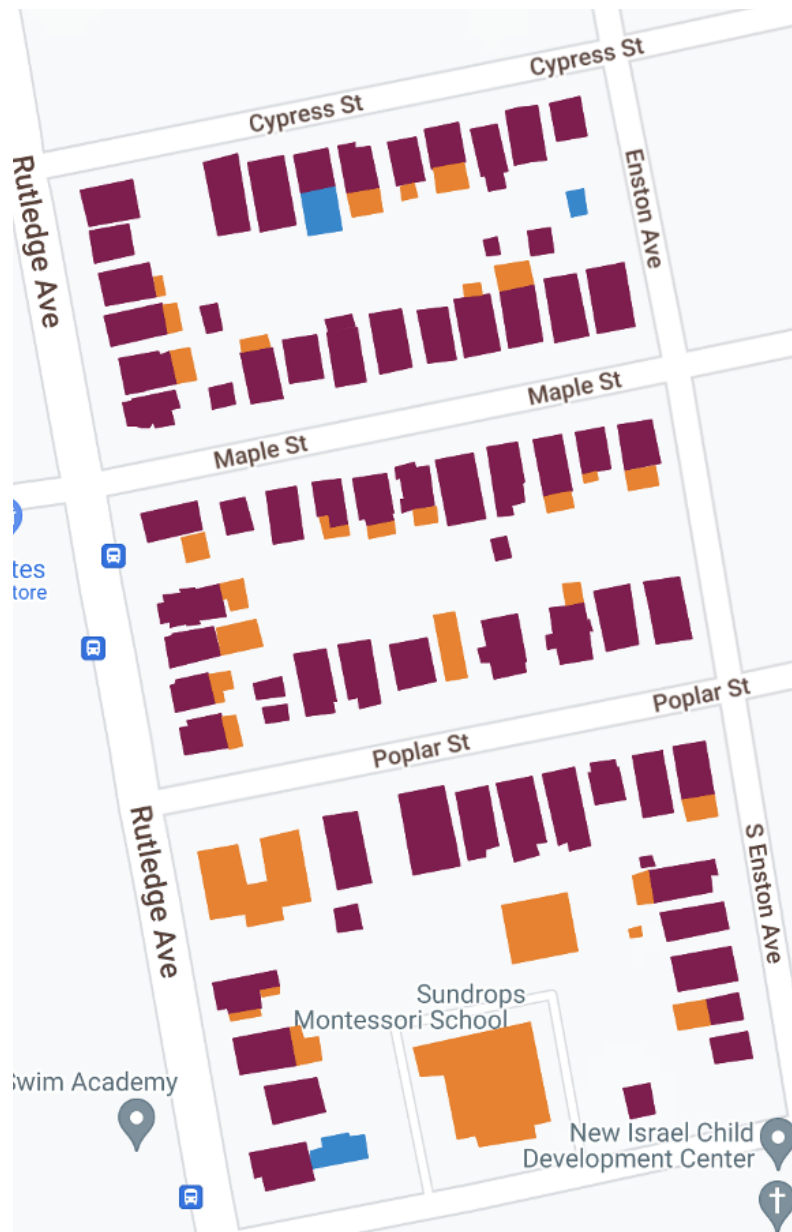
The map and table to the right show the surveyed sample blocks. The survey indicates average setbacks measured from the outer edge of the curb to the front of the house, as well as average building footprint size and percentage of lot coverage.



Blocks included in the sample survey, primarily of residential use. Graphic created using MyMaps.

Block	Average Front Setback (ft)	Average Square Footage of Building Footprint	Average Lot Coverage
West side of Dewey between Huger and Moultrie	5	1,406	54%
South side of Maverick between Oswego and Rutledge	22	1,053	36%
South side of Poinsett between King and I-26	10	1,319	42%
North side of Cypress between King and Enston	24	1,319	35%
West side of Magnolia between Sans Souci and Mt. Pleasant	26	1,610	41%
East side of Benson between Congress and Huger	21	1,675	47%
East side of Dingle between Congress and Huger	16	1,354	37%
South side of Huger between King and Senate	24	1,592	25%
West side of Tracy between Huger and Moultrie	12	1,374	48%
East side of Rutledge between Maple and Cypress	30	1,575	34%
South side of Poplar between Enston and King	32	1,732	38%
West side of King between Peachtree and Mt. Pleasant	26	1,810	31%
South side of Romney between the Romney Urban Garden and King	13	1,102	48%
TOTAL OVERALL AVERAGE	20	1,455	40%

The [Charleston County GIS parcel viewer](#) measurement tool was used to obtain measurements for each property on the block. Due to the nature of the tool, the figures shown are estimated values.



The Charleston County GIS parcel viewer measurement tool was used to obtain measurements for each property on the block using Google MyMaps. Due to the nature of the tool, the figures shown are estimated values.

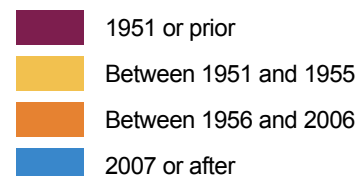
Footprints

Building footprints in North Central were traditionally narrow rectangles with front-facing, projecting porches. Many lots were developed with rear accessory structures, which were typically one story and used for utilitarian purposes. While late 20th and early 21st century additions have impacted the floor plans of a number of historic structures in the neighborhood, some blocks are characterized by sizable groupings of buildings and accessory structures that retain their original footprints.

The following maps depict a sample of alterations to building footprint and new construction between 1951 and 2023 in North Central. The map to the left shows three intact blocks within the bounds of Enston Avenue, Simons Street, Rutledge Avenue, and Cypress Street. This sample has experienced limited “modern” development with most additions to historic fabric developing post 1955 but before 2007. The majority of the additions were confined to the rear of the properties’ lots. Each street boasts its own row of houses that have not experienced alterations to their footprints in over 70 years.

While the overwhelming majority of houses were accompanied by garages or utilitarian sheds at the rear, only a few of these remain in their original form from this sample.

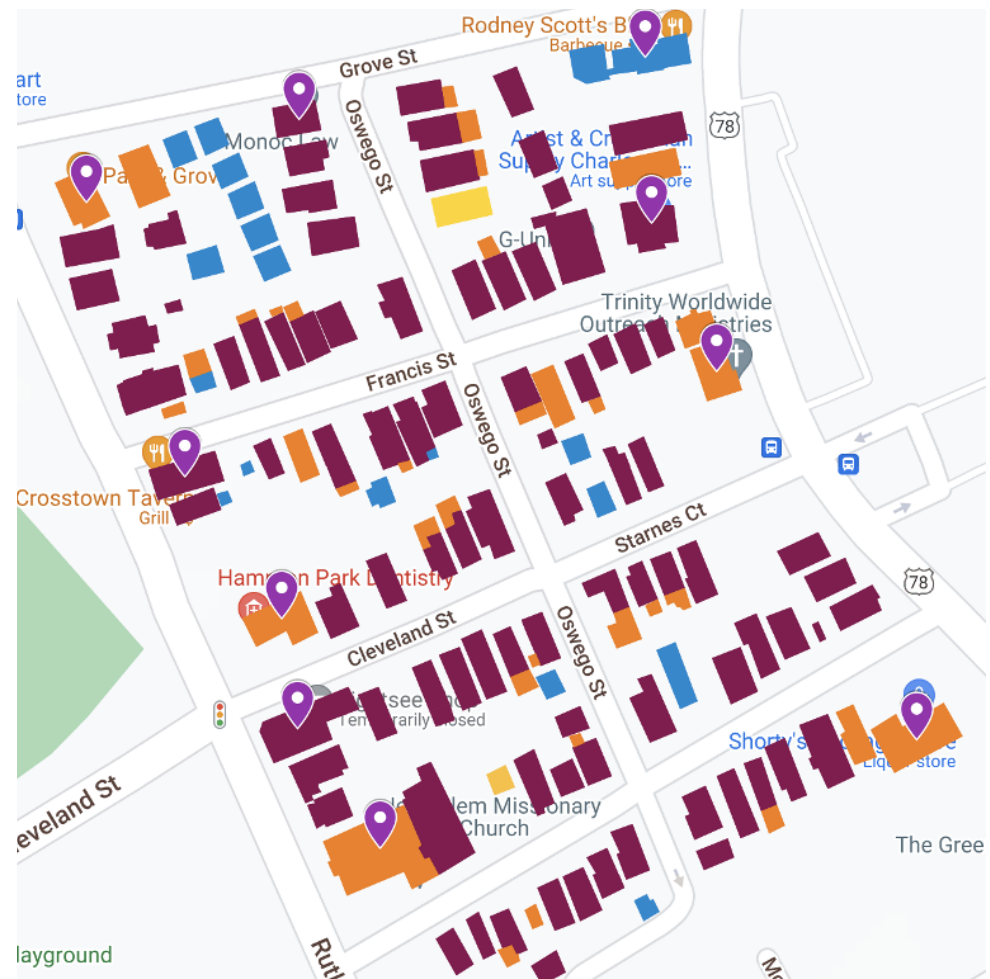
Building Construction Dates



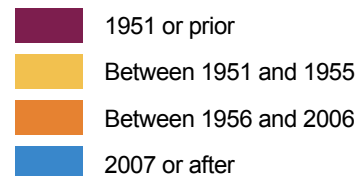
The map to the right depicts the area bounded by King Street, Maverick Street, Rutledge Avenue, and Grove Street. This sample is mixed-use and its overall historic footprint is relatively intact.

In contrast with the sample on the previous page, buildings in this section of the neighborhood serve multiple purposes and have undergone more development to their historic footprint since 1951. Many residential structures have experienced limited or no change to their footprint while commercial structures at the perimeter of the sample show greater alterations and additions.

New construction is also more prominent in this neighborhood on once-vacant lots.



Building Construction Dates



Google's MyMap feature was used to create and estimate the average footprint of these properties. A current Google Maps aerial view was contrasted with the building footprints of a 1951 and 1955 Sanborn Fire Insurance map. Due to the nature of the tool, the figures shown are estimated footprints based on visual estimation, roof/ridge line and building materials.

Poinsett and Grove Streets have experienced rising developmental pressures in the last 10 years. The map below depicts only a few structures from before 1951. Newer construction is prevalent on these streets, resulting in the loss of many vernacular structures. Grove and Poinsett Streets are two of many streets that dead end into I-26.



I-26 from below.



Building Construction Dates

- 1951 or prior
- Between 1951 and 1955
- Between 1956 and 2006
- 2007 or after

The Charleston County GIS parcel viewer measurement tool was used to obtain measurements for each property on the block. Due to the nature of the tool, the figures overlaid onto Google Maps are estimated values.

Non-Residential Urban Form

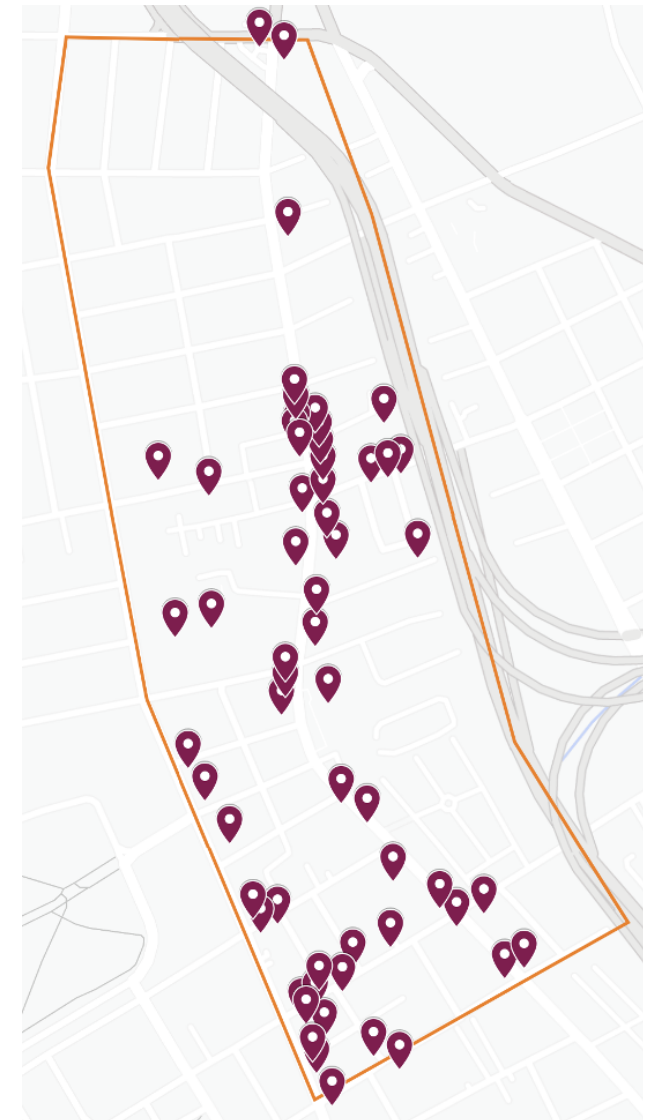
North Central is a mixed-use neighborhood with a number of commercial and non-residential buildings. Non-residential buildings encompass religious institutions, educational institutions, civic structures, stores, restaurants, service industries, etc.

The points on this map indicate buildings that have remained commercial or non-residential in use since 1951. Adaptive reuse, new construction, and building alterations were not considered in the assessment of a building's overall use.

Examples of commercial structures built prior to 1951 in North Central:



Left to right: 1107 King Street and 714 Rutledge Avenue.



Non-Residential Structure Urban Form

- Non-residential use since 1951
- North Central boundary

Graphic created using MyMaps.

Landscape

- Prominent vegetation in North Central includes small front gardens, yards, and wide tree lawns located between the sidewalk and street. Most properties also have contained private yards to the rear.
- Modest garden fences and taller privacy fences are common at the front and side of lots in North Central. Fences are typically constructed of wood, iron, or chain mesh.
- North Central is characterized by the presence of trees along its streets and in back yards. According to the [Street Tree Canopy study](#) published on the City of Charleston's GIS website, North Central has a total 29.11% tree canopy with 24.9% coverage over its 9.27 miles of streetscape.



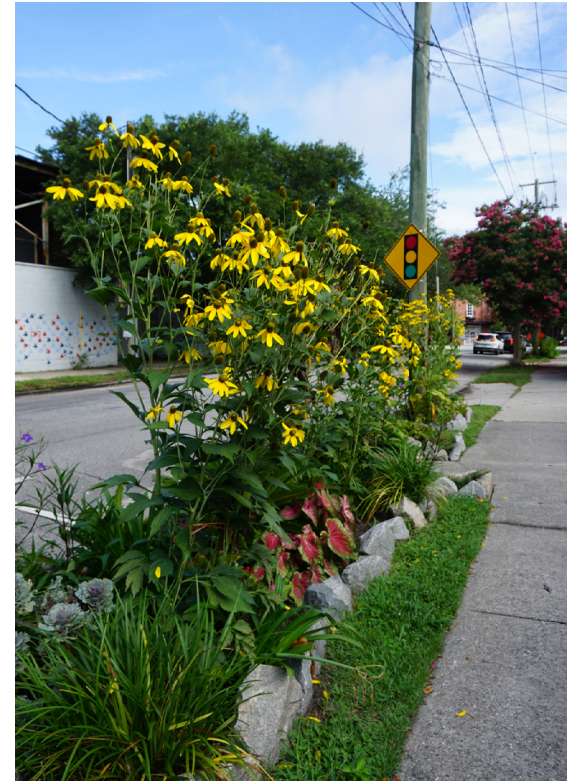
Tree lawn and privacy fence on Sans Souci Street.



Front yard at 51 Peachtree Street.



*Tree canopy coverage in North Central.
Graphic courtesy of City of Charleston Street
Tree Canopy GIS.*



Examples of landscaping in North Central.

USES

Introduction

North Central is a mixed-use neighborhood that includes both residential and non-residential structures. **Non-residential structures** include but are not limited to:

- Restaurants/bars
- Retail shops
- Religious institutions
- Educational institutions
- Service industries
- Civic structures

Many structures historically served the neighborhood under these categories while others have been adapted and rezoned to accommodate new businesses and alternative establishments. North Central consists of a range of **residential building uses** including:

- Historically single-family residences
- Converted single-family residences that are now multiple units
- Historic duplexes and triplexes
- Multi-family complexes
- Public housing

These dwelling categories share common forms and floor plans that contribute to the character of the neighborhood. Additional buildings on single family properties historically included one-story garages or sheds at the rear.



Top to bottom: 1082 King Street, 384 Huger Street, and 88 Simons Street.

Public Housing

The Charleston Housing Authority (CHA) oversees six public housing communities in North Central. These properties consist of recognizable architectural styles and forms. The development or conversion of these complexes into public housing spans a long portion of the neighborhood's history and are identifiable aspects of the neighborhood's building fabric and character. The following six properties are managed and maintained by the CHA:

- The William Enston Homes, units built in 1889, 1927, and 2006
- Simons Commons, 1085 King Street, built in 1947
- Poplar Arms, 75 Poplar, built between 1963 and 1973
- 7-17 Athens Court, built after 1973
- 129-137 Romney Street, built after 1973
- 1031 King Street, built after 1973



1085 King Street.



Top to bottom: 1031 King Street, 75 Poplar Street, and 129-137 Romney Street.

Adaptive Reuse

Many commercial structures in North Central employ adaptive reuse – the process of repurposing an existing building for a new use while preserving the original historic character. This is a more sustainable alternative to demolition as a historic building can be saved and resources can be conserved. The adaptive reuse of historic structures has led to a variety of non-residential architectural styles throughout the neighborhood.



981 King Street, 1915, courtesy of Historic Charleston Foundation.



1300 Rutledge Avenue c. 1970s, historic photograph courtesy of Kevin Eberle from the "Charleston before 1945" Facebook page.



ADAPTIVE REUSE EXAMPLES

981 King Street

Built in 1915 as a worship space for the Memorial Baptist Church, the building was sold in 1992 and is currently home to Artist & Craftsman Supply.

1300 Rutledge Avenue

Built after 1955 as a filling station and convenience store, the building was converted into a restaurant in 2013.

ARCHITECTURE

Introduction

The architecture of North Central reflects its predominant period of development from the late-19th century through the first half of the 20th century, with a high concentration of residential buildings that date to the 1920s and 1930s. Study of the area within neighborhood boundaries revealed a unique blend of urban and early suburban styles, vernacular building types and features, patterns of “sister houses,” and numerous corner stores. North Central’s architecture creates a dynamic urban environment characterized by small-scale residential streetscapes and vibrant commercial thoroughfares that retain a high degree of historic integrity.



323 Huger Street, c. 1940s, image courtesy of Diana Smith and Kevin Eberle from the “Charleston before 1945” Facebook page.

Typologies & Height

RESIDENTIAL TYPOLOGIES

Building typologies can be identified by building form, layout, floorplan, and height. Typologies are separated from the architectural style when considering the “bones” of a structure, rather than its decorative elements. Patterns in building form and type create a rhythm and contribute to the overall character and streetscape of a neighborhood. North Central’s most notable building typologies include:

- Charleston Singles
- Freedman’s Cottages
- Ell Cottages
- American Side-Hall Townhouses
- Bungalows
- Center Hall Cottages

VERNACULAR TYPOLOGIES

Some typologies are “vernacular,” such as the Charleston Single house and Freedman’s Cottage. Vernacular architecture is specific to an area or region, and is created using readily available materials, local craftsmanship, or traditional building methods. Cultural heritage and inherited knowledge contribute greatly to vernacular architecture, as well as environmental conditions. Vernacular structures are built to withstand the regional weather and climate conditions of an area.



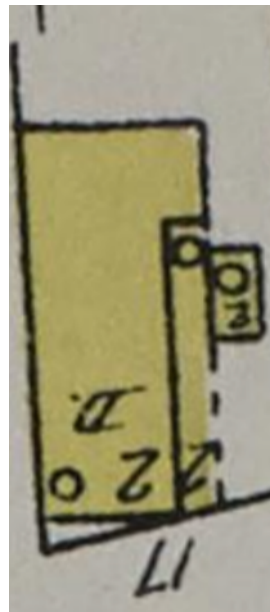
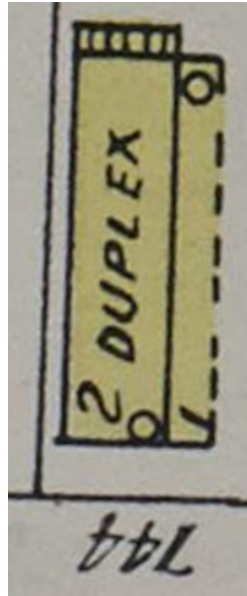
Top to bottom: 726 King Street and 704-708 Rutledge Avenue.

CHARLESTON SINGLE

Charleston Single houses are arguably Charleston's most iconic architectural typology. They are prevalent in Charleston's oldest neighborhoods and characterized by:

- One room wide
- Two to three rooms deep
- Two- to three-and-a-half stories tall
- Front gabled roof
- Single- or two-story piazza on the side
- Side entryway with piazza screen door
- Central stair plan

Concentrations of Charleston Single houses in North Central are located along Rutledge Avenue and Strawberry Lane.



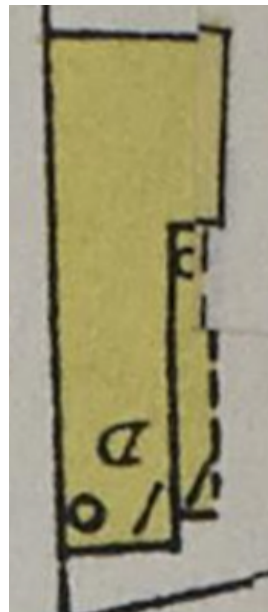
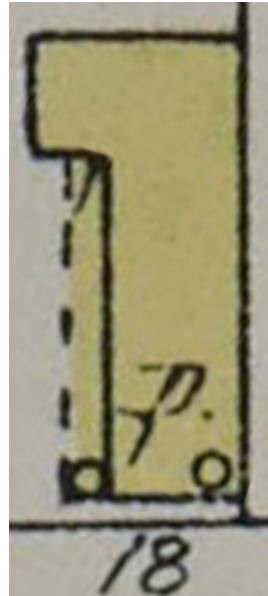
Top to bottom: 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 744 Rutledge Avenue.
1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 17 Maverick Street.

FREEDMAN'S COTTAGE

Freedman's Cottages (also called Charleston Cottages) housed a diverse array of Charleston middle- and lower-income residents. They are most often associated with the success of Charleston's free Black population prior to and after the Civil War, and into the early 20th century. These cottages were often built by their owners. Freedman's cottages are one-story variations of Charleston Single houses.²⁹ Their forms are characterized by:

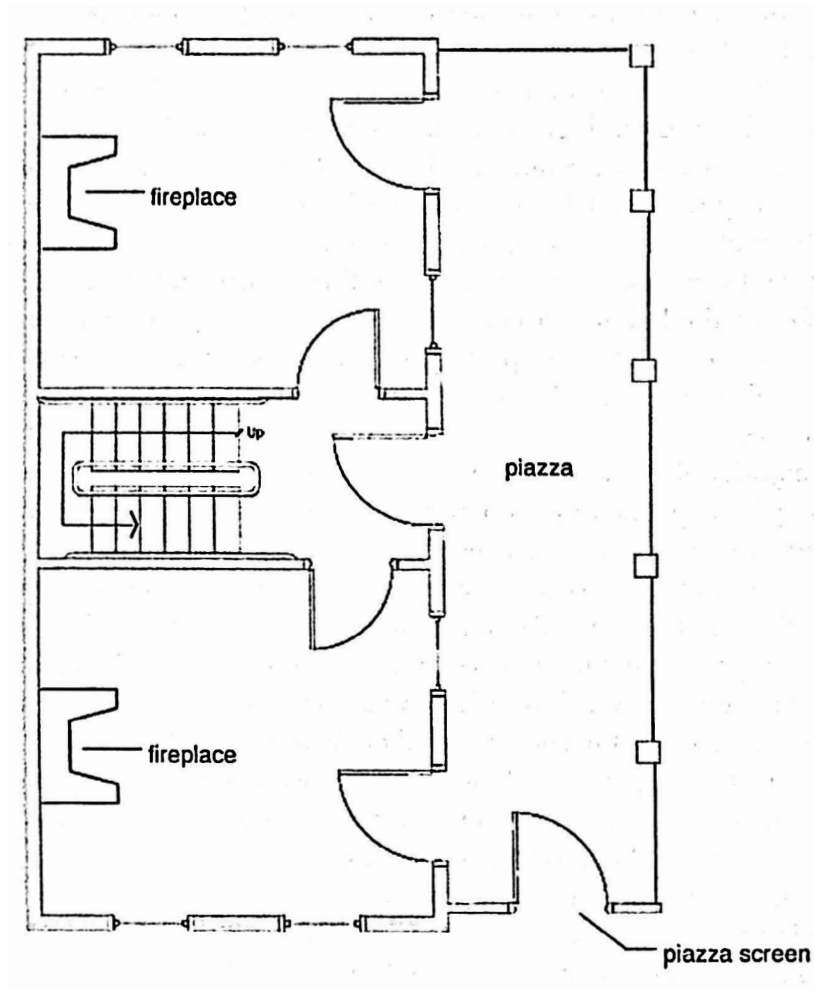
- One room wide
- Two rooms deep
- One- to one-and-a-half stories tall
- Front gabled roof
- Single-story piazza on the side
- Side entryway with piazza screen door

Concentrations of Freedman's Cottages in North Central are located along Cleveland, Moultrie, Maverick, Dewey, Romney, Poinsett streets, and Starnes Court.

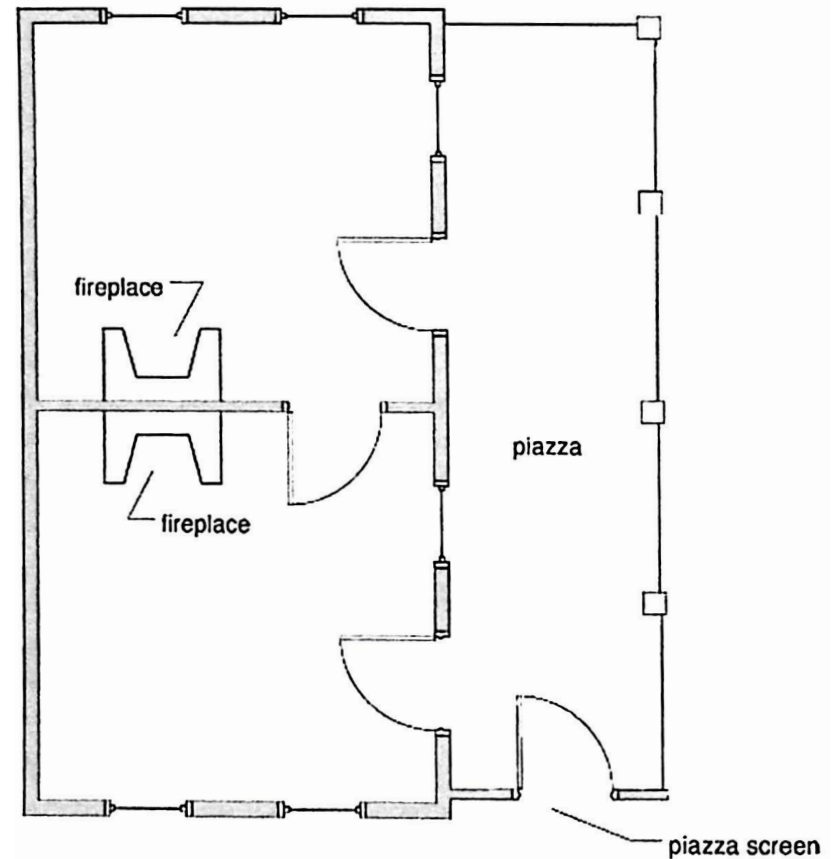


²⁹ Felzer, Lissa. *The Charleston Freedman's Cottage: An Architectural Tradition*. History Press, 2008.

*Top to bottom: 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 18 Moultrie Street.
1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 11 Starnes Court.*



CHARLESTON SINGLE



FREEDMAN'S COTTAGE

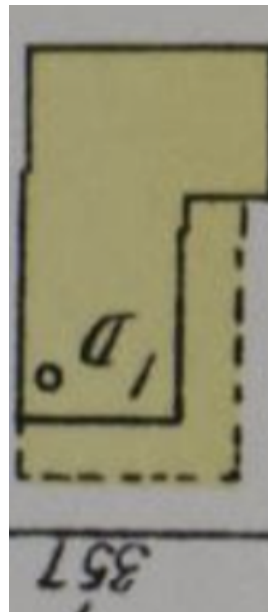
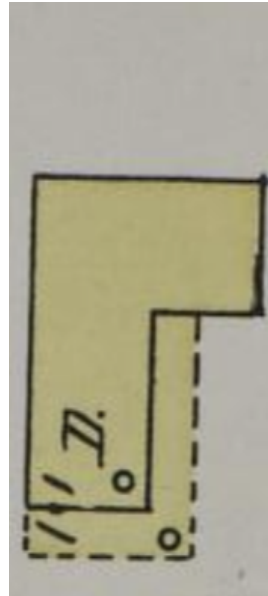
Floor plans from The Charleston "Freedman's Cottage": an Architectural Tradition by Lissa Felzer.

ELL COTTAGE

The “Ell Cottage” term was coined based on independent research and comparison with similar vernacular typologies. While Ell Cottages share characteristics with Freedman’s Cottages, they are truly unique in form and floorplan. Ell Cottages exhibit a connected front and side porch in the shape of an “L” with an entry at the front. In contrast, the Freedman’s Cottage typology is always void of the front porch and entryways are located behind a piazza screen door at the center of the side hall. The Ell Cottage form is characterized by:

- One room wide
- Two to three rooms deep
- One story tall
- Front gabled roof is typical; some examples also incorporate hipped roof forms
- L-shaped porch spanning the front and side facades
- Front entryway

Concentrations of Ell Cottages are located along Huger and Dingle streets in North Central. The underdocumentation and limited inventory of these vernacular structures makes them particularly important to the streetscape and worthy of preservation.



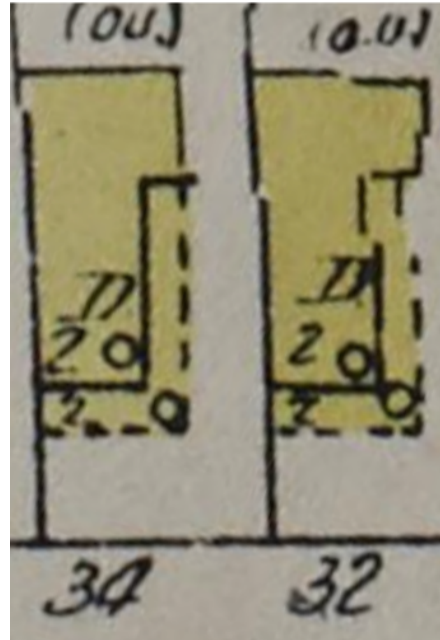
Top to bottom: 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 2 Dingle Street. 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 357 Huger Street, photo courtesy of Google Maps.

AMERICAN SIDE-HALL TOWNHOUSE

The American Side-Hall Townhouse typology is common in urban areas across the United States with variations based on readily available materials and climate. American Side-Hall Townhouses are distinct from traditional row house types seen in other historic cities which often share walls. This type of residential structure emphasizes vertical massing and maintains a narrow footprint along the street. American Side-Hall Townhouses are found throughout North Central and feature two-story front porches that span the width of the facade. It is also common to find variations of the townhouse with their upper-story front porch filled in, or the addition of a side porch that creates an “L” shape. Their forms are characterized by:

- Vertical, three-bay-wide street-facing facade
- Two stories tall
- Two-story front porches
- Hipped or gabled roofs
- Side-hall entry and staircase

Townhouses are widespread throughout North Central but are most concentrated on Huger Street, Moultrie Street, and Rutledge Avenue.



1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 34 and 32 Moultrie Streets.

AMERICAN SIDE-HALL TOWNHOUSE



A variation of the townhouse typology at 61 Simons Street.



Typical townhouse floor plan, courtesy of "[City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission Building Types and Architectural Styles](#)." Vernacular variations of this typology are found across the southeast.



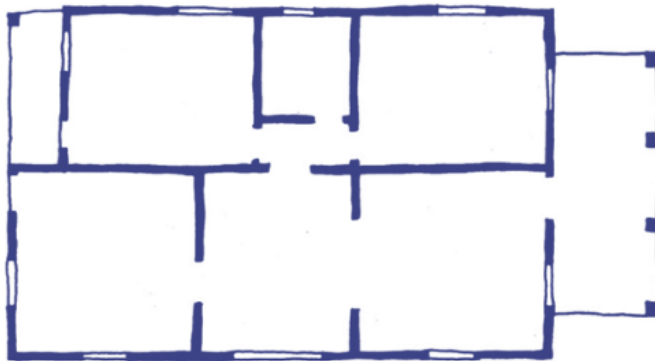
A variation of the townhouse typology at 380 Huger Street.

BUNGALOW

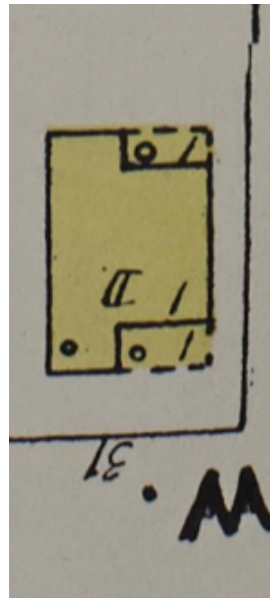
“Bungalow” is a term most commonly associated with the Arts and Crafts movement or the Craftsman style. Bungalows themselves are simple and small by design. Their forms are characterized by:

- One- to one-and-a-half stories
- Two rooms wide
- Front porches
- Asymmetry
- Irregular and varied floor and roof plans
- Low roof pitch

Bungalows are widespread throughout North Central but are predominantly located on Tracy Street, Oswego Street, Rutledge Avenue, and between Poplar and Sans Souci Streets.



Typical bungalow floor plan, courtesy of [“City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission Building Types and Architectural Styles.”](#) Vernacular variations of this typology are found across the country.

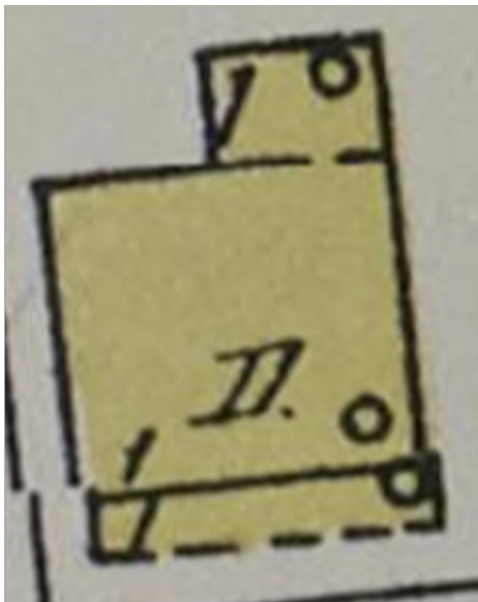


Top to bottom: 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 31 Moultrie Street. 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 64 Sans Souci Street.

CENTER HALL COTTAGE

Center Hall Cottages, or “massed-plan houses” are an uncommon typology in the City of Charleston. North Central is home to a few examples of this house form on the peninsula. Center Hall Cottages are a part of the overarching “Hall and Parlor” typology which is characterized by a central hall flanked by a large room on each side. Center Hall Cottages are similar in floor plan but in contrast are more than two rooms deep. Their form is characterized by:

- Side-gable roof
- Horizontal massing and orientation
- Center entryway into central hall
- Wide front porch
- Two rooms wide
- More than two rooms deep
- One story
- Symmetry



1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing 34 Cleveland Street.

Typical Height: Residential

RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY

The height of single-family residences range between one- and two-and-a-half stories, with one-and-a-half and two stories being the most prevalent.

One-story house
50 Simons Street



One-and-a-half story house
876 Rutledge Avenue



Two-story house
51 Poplar Street



Two-and-a-half story house
28 Maple Street



RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY

The typical height of multi-family residences ranges between two and three stories. Multi-family complexes do not exceed three stories in North Central.



Two-story duplex
52 Poplar Street



Two-and-a-half story multi-family house
71 Poplar Street



Three-story apartment complex
1054 King Street, North Central Apartments
(Palmetto Community Land Trust)

Non-Residential Typologies

SWEET SHOPS

Sweet shops are vernacular one-story commercial buildings. Many have been demolished, making them increasingly hard to find in Charleston. Contrary to their colloquial typology name, these buildings were used for many types of business in addition to sweet shops, such as barber shops, hair salons, bars, and doctors' or real estate offices. In the North Central neighborhood, the buildings are typically one story with a canted corner entry. Some have been adaptively reused as residential structures because zoning has changed. Sweet shops in North Central feature a combination of the following features:

- One-story
- Canted corner entry or flat facade
- Parapet
- Awning or visor
- Located near intersection/node



Top to bottom: 33 Moultrie Street, photo courtesy of Google Maps, and 391 Huger Street.

CORNER STORES

The corner store is a prevalent commercial building type in Charleston. The canted corner is a signifier of a current commercial space or a former commercial space that has been adaptively reused. The corner store is an easily adapted architectural type and the style is vernacular. Corner stores in North Central include two or more of the following features:

- Canted corner
- Differentiated storefront
- Two-over-two windows on the upper story
- Residential unit(s) above
- Wood-lap siding
- Two- or two-and-a-half stories
- Located near intersection/node



724 King Street.



1108 King Street.



1106 King Street.

MID-CENTURY FUNCTIONAL

The term “mid-century functional” was determined based on independent research and input from industry professionals. The mid-century refers to the period between 1945 and 1970 and is characterized by architectural form, material, and orientation. These particular structures were built to support a wide variety of functions by housing the growing commercial endeavors of this era in the Charleston metro area. These structures continue to provide flexible and functional spaces to businesses and are noteworthy examples of mid-century commercial architecture. Their forms are characterized by:

- One-story
- Symmetrical facade
- Minimal decorative detailing
- Wide windows composed of large panes
- Central entryway
- Open or flexible floorplan
- Often are duplexes or triplexes

Examples of Mid-Century Functional architecture are located on King Street in North Central.



Top to bottom: 785 King Street, 1117 King Street, and 1111 King Street, photo courtesy of Google Maps.

Typical Height: Non-Residential

The majority of non-residential buildings range from one to two-and-a-half stories in North Central. Religious buildings are the only non-residential structures that exceed three stories in the neighborhood.



One-story commercial building
401 Huger Street



Two-story commercial building
1001 King Street



Two-and-a-half story commercial building
614 Rutledge Avenue



Three-story religious structure
754 Rutledge Avenue

Architectural Styles

The diverse architectural styles of North Central are reminiscent of the neighborhood's intermittent and fragmented development from the late 19th century to today. Many of the neighborhood's residential architectural styles are comparable to those of other American cities that experienced growth in the 20th century. Non-residential structures for long-standing institutions such as churches and schools often exhibit more traditional styles while various commercial structures are reminiscent of the mid-century style.

As architectural tastes and trends changed, modern materials emerged, and demand for housing stock in Charleston grew, North Central's buildings came to reflect the city's expressive patchwork of history. The following elements comprise the broad categories of character-defining features in North Central that span multiple styles and periods of construction:

- Craftsman Style
- American Foursquare
- Minimal Traditional
- Richardsonian Romanesque
- Garrison Colonial Revival
- Folk Victorian
- Gothic Revival



31 Cypress Street, c. 1950, courtesy of Historic Charleston Foundation.



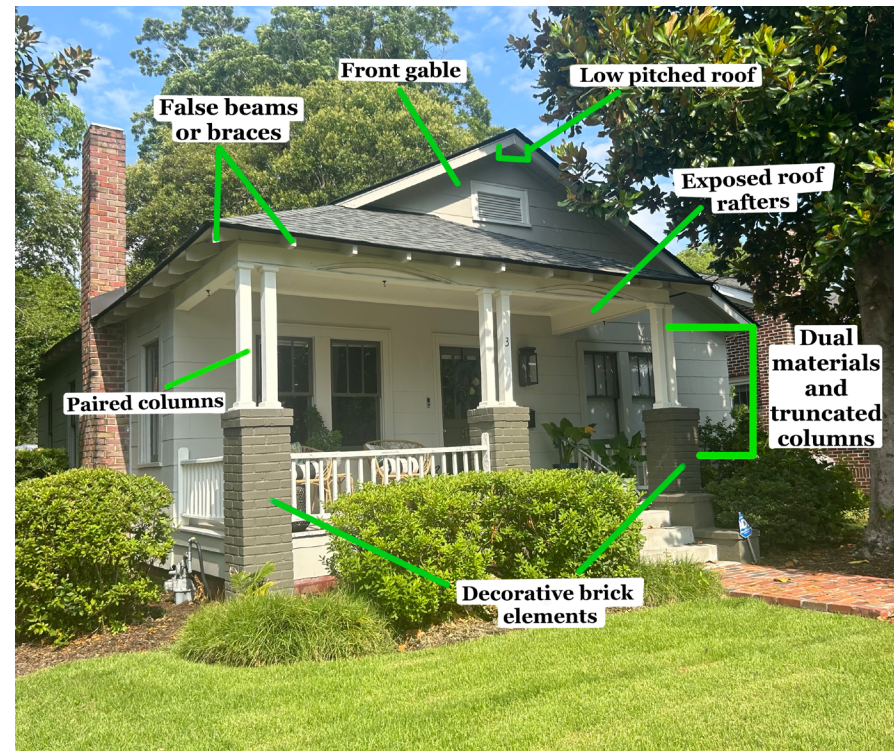
CRAFTSMAN STYLE

The Craftsman architectural style was most popular in the United States from about 1900 to the 1930s where it was the predominant style for smaller houses. This architectural style was inexpensive to build and increased in popularity through pattern books and magazines.³⁰ They dominate large portions of early upper peninsula residential neighborhoods in Charleston.

Craftsman houses in North Central are characterized by:

- Low-pitched front gabled roofs
- Exposed roof rafter tails
- Deep eave overhangs
- False beams or braces
- Decorative brick elements
- Tapered or paired columns
- Dual materials and truncated columns
- Full- or partial-width porches with square column porch supports
- Two-over-one or three-over-one windows

North Central features many one-story Craftsman-style homes, and are most common in the northern part of the neighborhood between Poplar and Sans Souci streets and along Rutledge Avenue. These houses are often referred to as “Craftsman Bungalows,” where bungalows are the house *type*, and Craftsman is the *style*.



3 Magnolia Avenue, graphic by Kerry Campion.

³⁰ McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*, 454.

CRAFTSMAN STYLE



Clockwise from top left: 62 Sans Souci Street, 38 Poplar Street, 97 Magnolia Avenue, and 15 Tracy Street.

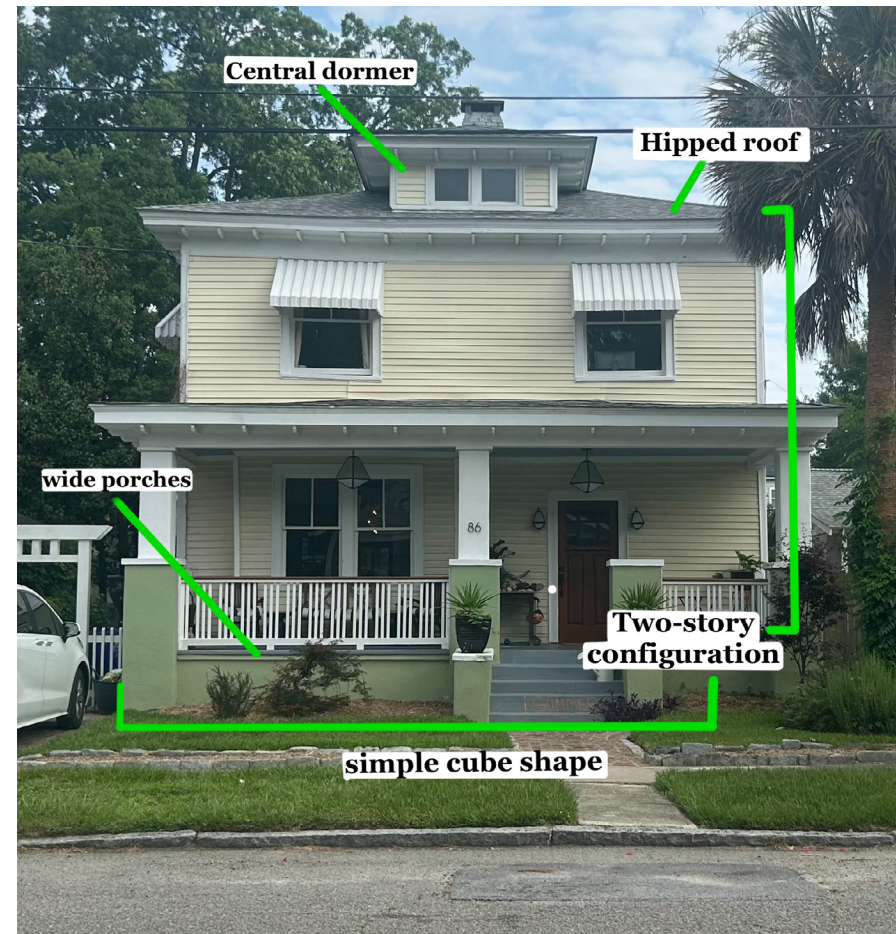
AMERICAN FOURSQUARE

The American Foursquare was popular from the 1890s to the early 1930s and refers to a two-story house featuring a square floor plan with four rooms on each floor. The simplicity of this style was created in reaction to ornate Victorian-era Queen Anne-style houses popular in the late 19th century and originated out of the Prairie style in the Midwest.³¹ American Foursquare homes share characteristics with the Craftsman style, have simple clean lines, and are admired for their efficiency.

Characteristics of the American Foursquare style in North Central include:

- A simple, cube-shaped design
- Two-story configuration
- Hipped roofs
- Central dormers
- Wide front porches

American Foursquare homes are very common within North Central and examples can be found on most residential streets. Concentrations of Foursquare homes are located on Poplar, Cypress, King, and Cleveland streets, and along Rutledge Avenue.



86 Cypress Street, graphic by Kerry Campion.

³¹ Bachrach, Julia. "Ode to the American Foursquare." Julia Bachrach Consulting, 2022.

AMERICAN FOURSQUARE



Clockwise from top left: 14 Poplar Street, 36 Cypress Street, 13 Poplar Street, and 60 Poplar Street.

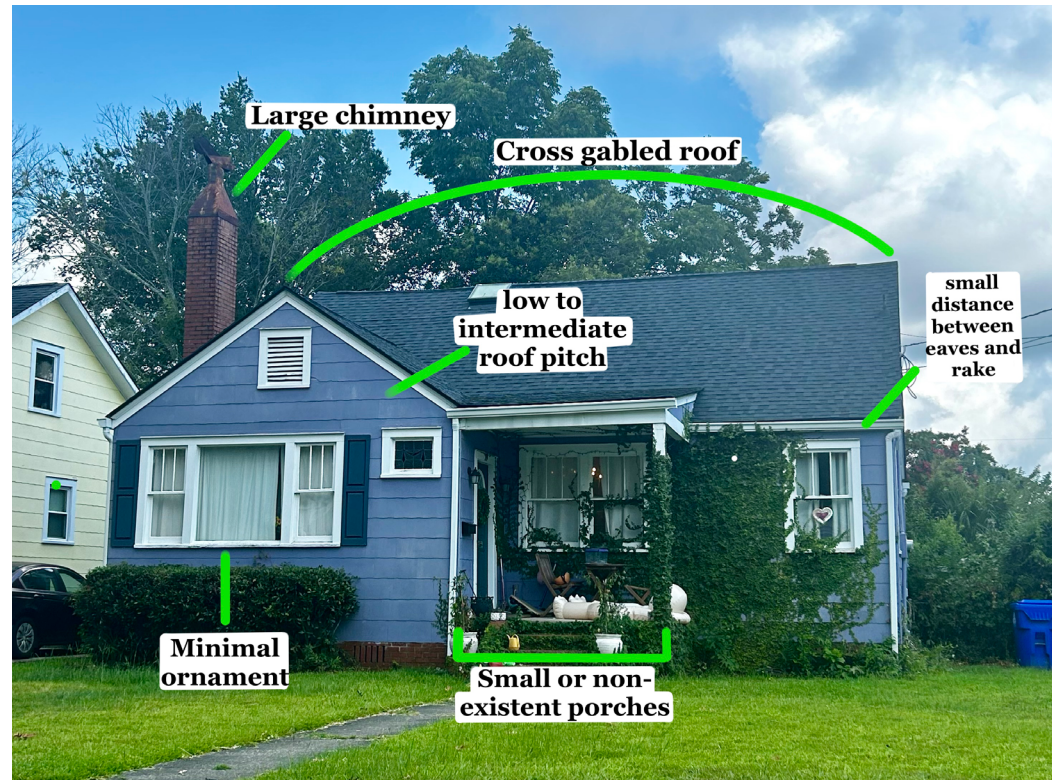
MINIMAL TRADITIONAL

The Minimal Traditional style was popular from the 1930s to the early 1950s for smaller homes. It is a vernacular style that incorporates influences from earlier styles such as Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Craftsman. The style is characterized by its lack of ornamentation compared to other popular early 20th century styles. The style has also been known as Victory Cottages and the American Small House.

Minimal Traditional homes in North Central are characterized by:

- Minimal ornamentation
- Cross gabled or front-facing gables
- Low to intermediate roof pitch
- Short distance between eaves and rake
- Small or non-existent porches
- Large chimneys

Minimal Traditional houses are less common in North Central but can be found in the northern part of the neighborhood, particularly on Peachtree Street.



29 Peachtree Street, graphic by Kerry Campion.

³¹ Bachrach, "Ode to the American Foursquare," 2022.

MINIMAL TRADITIONAL



Clockwise from top left: 11, 24, and 27 Peachtree Street and 1179 King Street.

RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE

The Richardsonian Romanesque style was at its most popular from 1870 to 1900 but remained a more uncommon style compared to those previously mentioned. Created by architect Henry Hobson Richardson, the style was often used for public and institutional buildings. This style is from the Victorian era and emphasizes Romanesque Revival elements.³² The style is intended to be robust and massive in appearance.

The Richardsonian Romanesque homes in North Central are characterized by:

- Cross-gabled roof
- Asymmetrical massing
- Arched and/or rectangular windows
- Multiple masonry elements such as stone and brick
- Masonry arches over windows and porches
- Ornate decorative masonry details

In the North Central neighborhood, Richardsonian Romanesque houses can be found in the William Enston Home community along King Street. Richardsonian Romanesque is an uncommon style in Charleston; however, William Enston specifically requested that the homes be built in this style.



900 King Street, graphic by Kerry Campion.

³² McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*, 302.

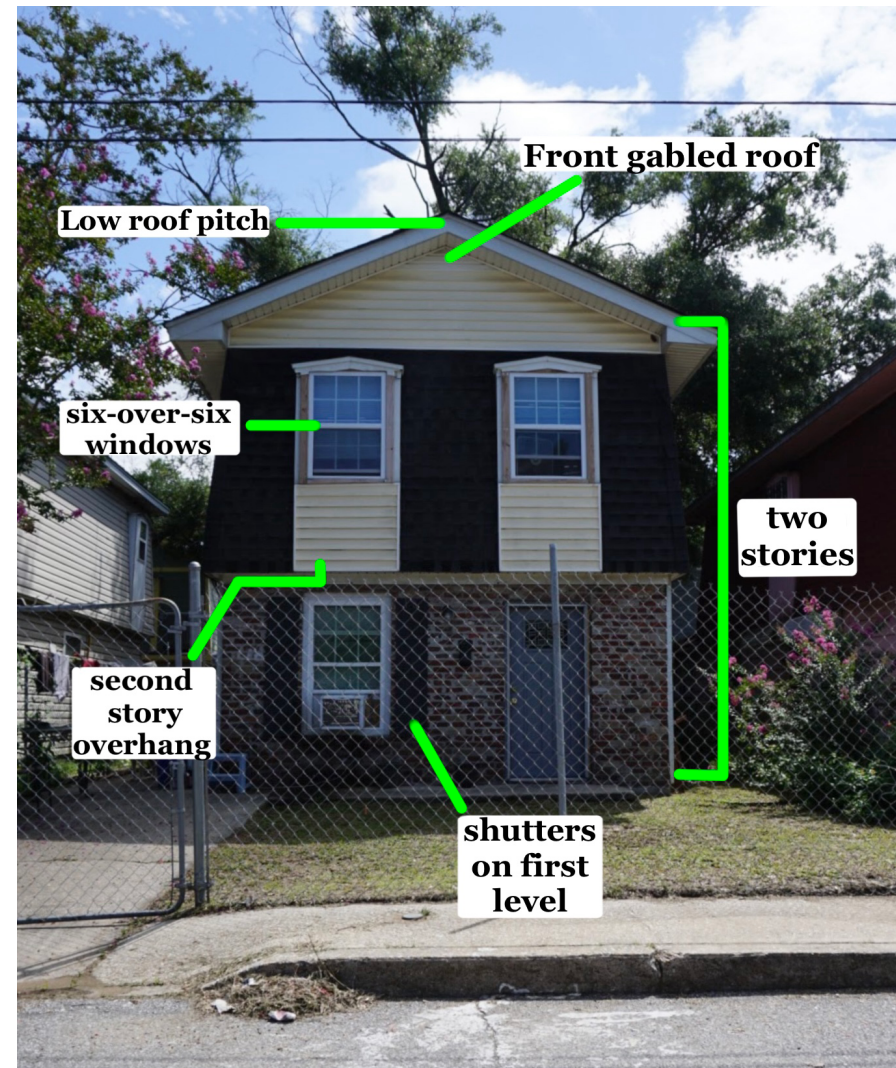
GARRISON COLONIAL REVIVAL

Garrison Colonial Revival style was popular from the early 1930s to the late 1950s. The style was inspired by 17th century New England landmarks and forts. The style is named after a garrison referring to a group of soldiers or defensive structure. The Garrison Colonial Revival style allows for increased square footage on smaller lots where the overhang can allow for more living space while not affecting setback limitations.³³

Garrison Colonial Revival houses in North Central feature:

- Second story overhang in the front
- Side or front gabled roofs
- Low roof pitch
- Two stories
- Six-over-six windows
- Shutters on first level

Garrison Colonial Revival houses in North Central are concentrated on Athens Court.



18 Athens Court, graphic by Kerry Campion.

³³ Wiese, Ray. "The History of Garrison Colonials." The Wiese Co.

GARRISON COLONIAL REVIVAL



Athens Court streetscape, photo courtesy of Google Maps.



The McIntire Garrison House, built 1707, is an example of Garrison Colonial architecture in York, Maine, courtesy of Library of Congress.

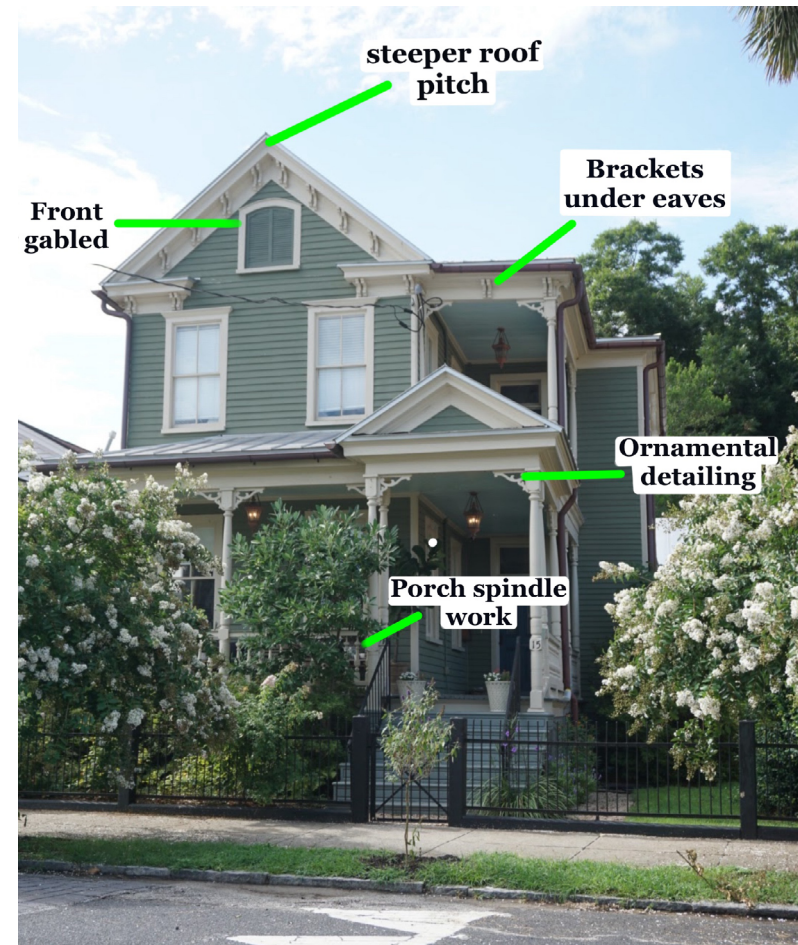
FOLK VICTORIAN

Folk Victorian is identified by the presence of Victorian detailing on simple folk house forms. They are typically less elaborate than the Victorian-era architectural styles that they are inspired by, such as the Italianate or Queen Anne styles. The porch and cornice line are typically what is ornamented with Folk Victorian detailing.³⁴

The Folk Victorian style features:

- Steeper roof pitch
- Front gabled, sometimes with a recessed ell
- Ornamental detailing
- Front or wrap-around porch with spindlework
- Brackets under eaves

In North Central, examples of the Folk Victorian style can be found on Francis Street.



22 Francis Street, graphic by Kerry Campion.

³⁴ McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*, 310.

GOTHIC REVIVAL

Gothic Revival draws on medieval architectural characteristics and is identifiable by pointed arch windows known as lancet windows. Also, the shape of the doors mimics the lancet windows. Details can be understated or high style but will typically have some ornamentation.

Gothic Revival churches in North Central feature:

- Pointed arched (known as lancet) windows and doors
- Steeply pitched gable roof
- Front-facing gables

The Gothic Revival style is predominantly found in churches throughout the neighborhood.



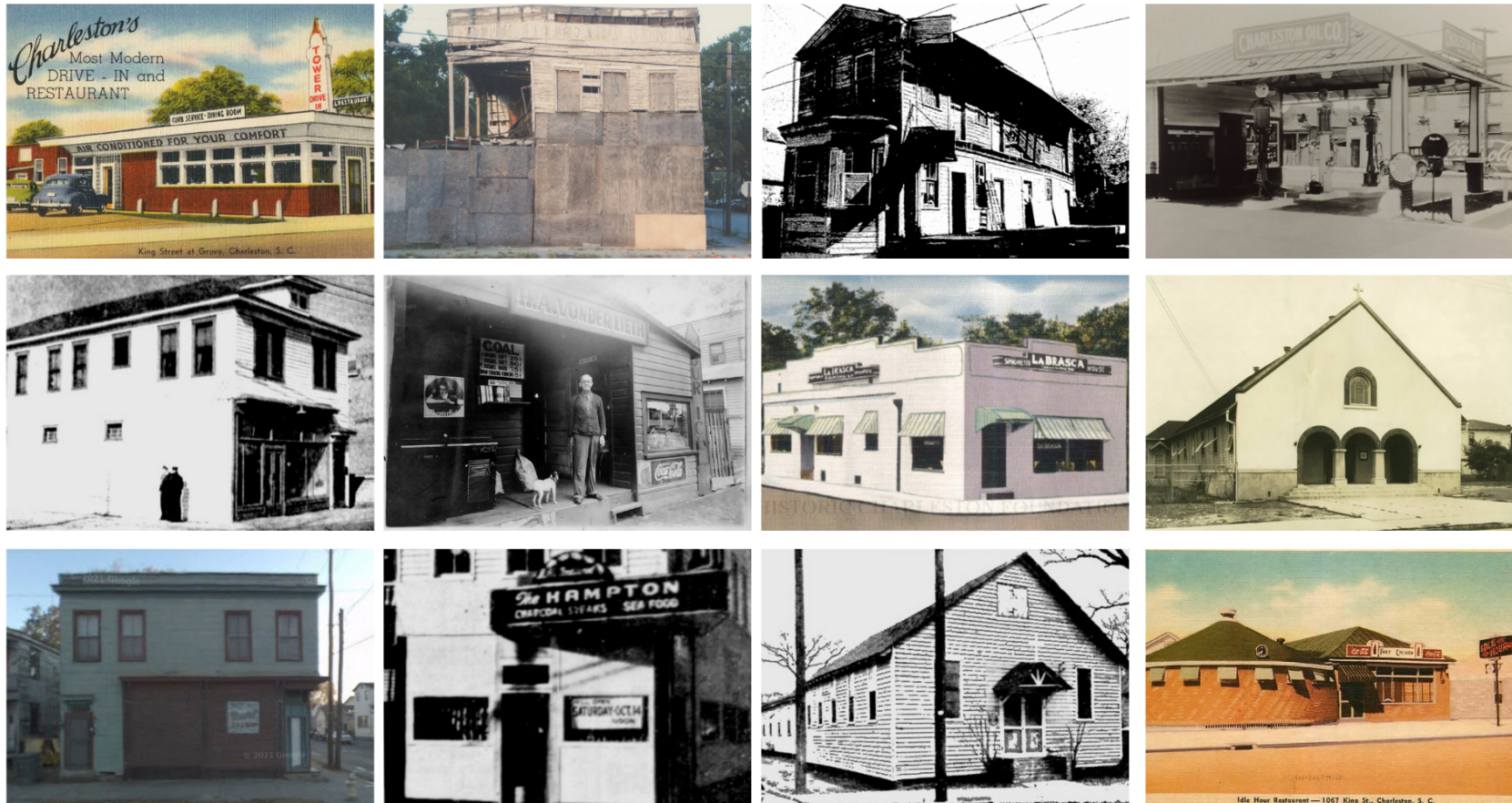
Parkside Church at 54 Moultrie Street.



Left to right: Calvary Baptist Church at 620 Rutledge Avenue; Sacred Heart Catholic Church at 888 King Street; Gethsemane Baptist Church at 180 Romney Street.

LOST ARCHITECTURE

North Central has endured the loss of historic buildings due to demolition, natural disasters, and neglect. Intensifying development pressures and climate risk continue to pose threats to the neighborhood's historic buildings today. The pictures below represent a sampling of structures that were documented before they were lost. Documentation efforts, like this ACA, not only help define the unique features that characterize a neighborhood, but serve as an important record for future generations.



Top left to bottom right: 1011 King Street, c. 1940s. 973 King Street, c. 1970s. 5 Strawberry Lane, 1980. 735 King Street, c. 1920s. 1093 King Street, 1943. 622 Rutledge Avenue, c. 1940s. 975 King Street, c. 1940s, courtesy of Historic Charleston Foundation archive. 800 King Street, 1938. 626 Rutledge Avenue, 2007, photo courtesy of Google Maps. 895 King Street, 1950. 1034 King Street, 1951. 1067 King Street, c. 1940s. Historic photographs courtesy of Kevin Eberle unless otherwise specified.

CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

Site Features

Site features include the overall scale, landscaping, property setback, and fixtures that surround the building. Almost all properties in North Central include at least one or a combination of the following:

Front Walkway

12 Simons Street



Limited Front Setback

16 Moultrie Street



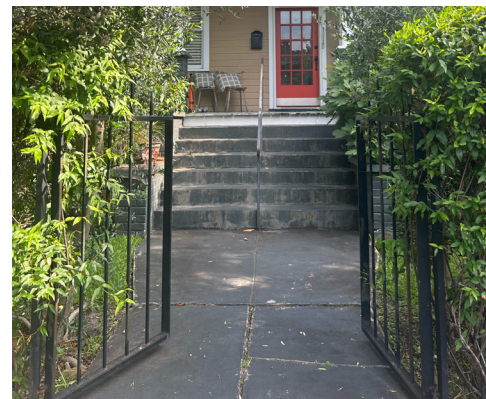
Side Driveway

45 Peachtree Street



Fences/Walls

36 Poplar Street



Roofs

Roof configurations, ridgeline, and pitch are some of the most significant character-defining features of North Central homes. Common roof types in the neighborhood include high and low-pitched front or side gables, which when combined are known as “cross gables.” Low pitched hipped roofs which are similar to a pyramid where all four corners meet at a single point are also prevalent. “Jerkinhead” or half-hipped roofs are less common but still repeat within the neighborhood.



Front Gable
6 Fields Place



Side Gable
7 Laurel Avenue



Hipped
1159 King Street



Cross Gable
38 Peachtree Street



Jerkinhead or Half-Hipped
874 Rutledge Avenue

Dormers

Dormers are a prominent design feature common across numerous architectural styles in North Central and contribute to the character of the roof form. Central gable, hipped, and shed dormers are most common, while symmetrical pairs of dormers also exist.



Gable Dormer
53 Cypress Street



Hipped Dormer
40 Poplar Street



Shed Dormer
1 Benson Street

Exterior Cladding

“Cladding” is the exterior material used to cover the facade of a building. “Veneer” siding is the exposed exterior material over a solid wall underneath. The most common historic cladding types in North Central are:



Wood Lap Siding



Brick Veneer



Asbestos Siding

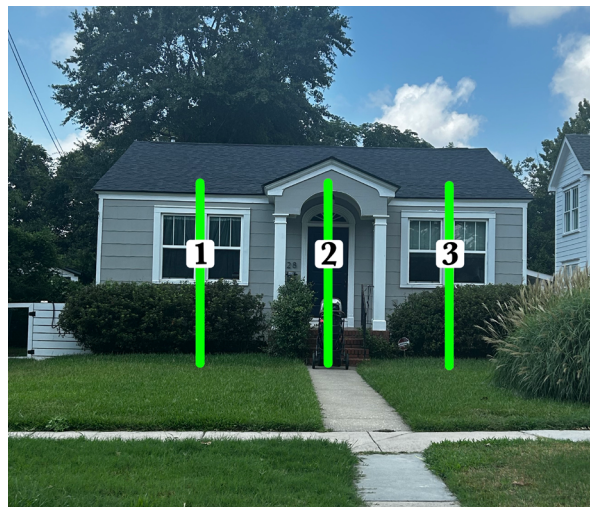
Foundations

Dwellings in North Central are generally raised on a shallow foundation supported by masonry piers, with a crawlspace. The exterior is often finished with an unpainted brick veneer or stucco.



Bays

Houses of all styles and periods in North Central are frequently three bays wide. “Bays” are the number of openings, including doors or windows, on the front facade from left to right. These three homes are all different styles but each are three bays wide:



Graphics by Kerry Campion.

Porches

Porches of all shapes and sizes can be found throughout North Central. When a front porch is present, it often spans the entire width of the building, or is off-center and spans a portion of the primary facade. Front porches are commonly one or two stories and some have been partially or fully enclosed. Porches can also take on the form of a “stoop,” which is a small landing covered by an overhang, usually spanning the width of a doorway or a set of front steps. Long and narrow side porches, better known as piazzas, are also common in the neighborhood, as are L-shaped porches that span the front and side of a house.



Full-Face Front Porch
59 Congress Street



Stoop
64 Poplar Street



Off-Center Porch
786 Rutledge Avenue

Porches



One-Story Piazza
11 Maverick Street



Two-Story Piazza
34 Lenox Street



Two-Story Porch (open)
69 Congress Street



Two-Story Porch (partially enclosed)
64 Maple Street



L-Shaped Porch
30 Moultrie Street

Porch Supports

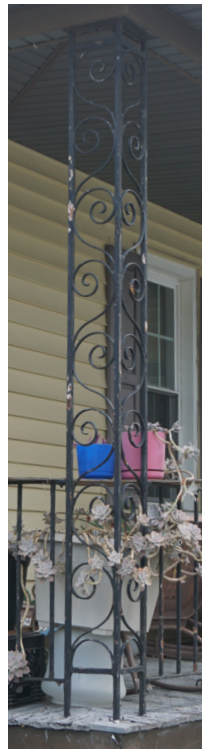
Many porches are supported by columns, including wood, brick, truncated, and decorative iron supports. Truncated columns are columns composed of two materials such as brick and wood, and are often tapered with a wider base. Brick and truncated columns commonly support larger porches while decorative iron supports can be found on both porches and stoops.



Truncated columns



Iron columns



Brick columns



Wood or Wood Lap columns



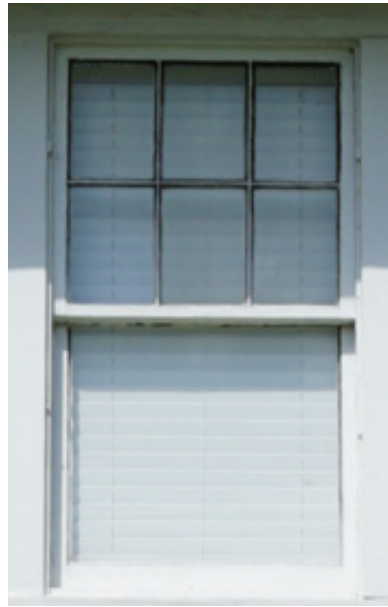
Windows

Most historic windows in North Central are “true divided lite” windows, meaning single panes of glass are divided by muntins. Wood double-hung sash windows are the most common window type in the neighborhood. Notably, many windows in North Central feature a multiple-lite sash over a one-lite sash. This is characteristic of early to mid-20th century architectural styles prevalent throughout the neighborhood, like the Craftsman style. Diamond pane windows are also common in the neighborhood.

Historic true divided light windows are important features of North Central’s architecture that contribute to the neighborhood’s authenticity and historic character. Modern windows, such as vinyl, clad, or aluminum, do not have the same character and quality as historic windows. Today, the BAR counsels against replacing original windows due to their character-defining quality and proven durability.



Six-over-six window



Six-over-one window



Two-over-two window



Two-over-one window

Windows



Three-over-one window



Diamond pane window



Elongated diamond pane window

Chimneys

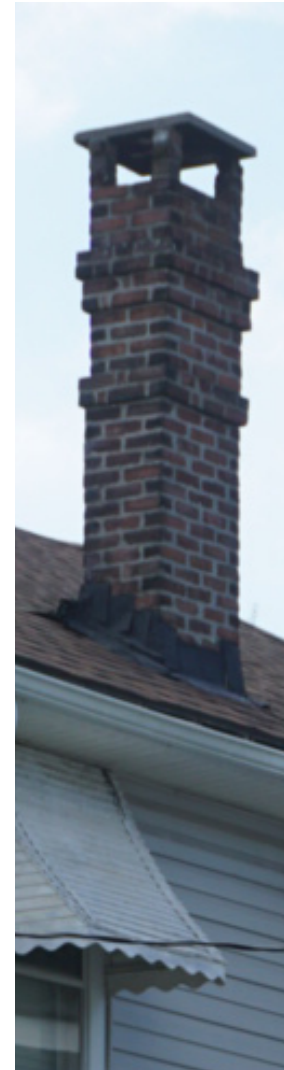
Small unpainted brick chimneys are most common in North Central while some dwellings have large exterior chimneys. Many chimneys are capped with a decorative feature, such as an arched bishop's cap, which is a traditional design feature common across periods and styles of architecture in Charleston.



Looking west on Cleveland Street from King Street.



Bishop's Cap



Corbeled Chimney



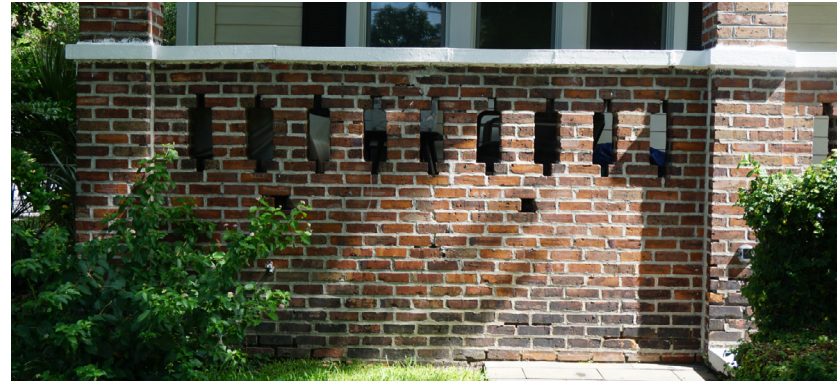
Large Exterior Chimney

DECORATIVE DETAILS

Architectural detailing in the form of brick ornamentation, decorative millwork, shingle cladding, ironwork, and breeze block can be seen in North Central.

Brick Ornamentation

Brick patterns and ornamentation were commonly employed to enhance the appearance of unpainted brick buildings. Brick ornamentation includes unique patterns in window and door surrounds, belt courses, chimney, and gables, among others. Brick was typically intended to remain unpainted to display these features that reflect an intentional part of the house's original design.



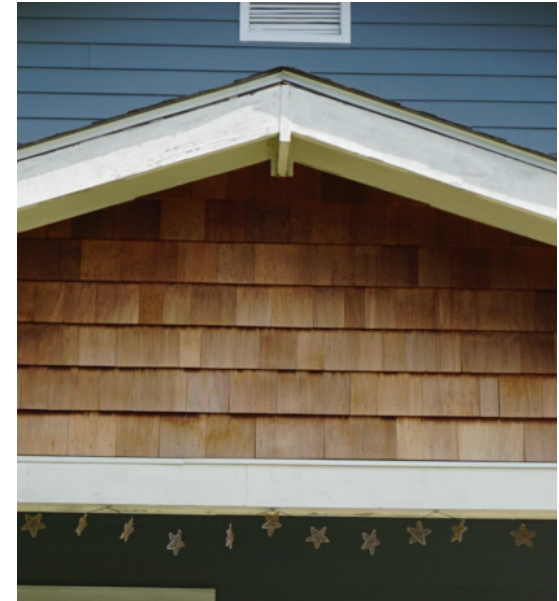
Decorative Millwork

Decorative millwork is commonly found on porches in North Central. These decorative wood elements are most prevalent within gables and porches. The zig-zag motif is unique to upper peninsula neighborhoods and is especially widespread in North Central.



Shingle Cladding

Shingle cladding in varying profiles, materials, colors, and textures is often found in front gables, and occasionally across the upper story of residences in the neighborhood.



Ironwork

Iron railings, columns, and decorative brackets adorn front porches and entryways in many different styles. Iron window and door panels are less common but can be found throughout the neighborhood.

Breeze Block

Breeze block is a decorative element found on residential and nonresidential structures alike, most commonly associated with the Midcentury Modern style of architecture. Breeze blocks are patterned cinder blocks often used as decorative walls, screening, or porch balusters.



Hand-Painted Signage

North Central is a vibrant neighborhood with many commercial properties that contain small, locally owned businesses. Hand-painted signage is a vernacular art form that typifies these kinds of businesses, which are often Black-owned. While this kind of signage used to be commonplace along King Street and other commercial corridors on the Charleston peninsula, many examples have been lost in recent years. A higher concentration of hand-painted signage still remains in North Central, making this a character-defining feature that should be preserved.



Left to right: "The Fabulous Ellen Bright Hall," at 1104 King Street, 2015, photo courtesy of Dorian Warneck. 1100-1108 King Street.

UPCOMING AREA DEVELOPMENT

Lowcountry Lowline

The North Central Neighborhood is located at the upper end of the future [Lowcountry Lowline](#). The Lowline is a proposed 1.7-mile linear park intended to revitalize old railways and the highway corridor. North Central sits adjacent to a large portion of the Lowline project, which proposes gathering spaces like “The Columns,” where neighborhood markets and pocket parks are contemplated. A dedicated pedestrian district is also proposed at the north end of the Lowline. Also slated to provide designated bike paths and flooding relief, the Lowline would be the second-largest park on the peninsula, after Hampton Park.

The Lowline concept is intended to drive infrastructure improvements and create economic opportunities in surrounding neighborhoods, including North Central. Properties adjacent to the Lowline are expected to experience increases in property value, which could also lead to affordability challenges for long-term residents.



Top to bottom: Rendering of “The Columns,” a proposed public space in North Central and North Central Corridor conceptual master plan. Rendering and site plan courtesy of the Lowcountry Lowline Masterplan, lowcountrylowline.org.

CHALLENGES

North Central is an important Charleston neighborhood that retains much of its historic fabric and character. To ensure future generations can understand and embrace the character of North Central, there are several challenges that must be addressed. These include:

Housing Affordability

The cost of housing in North Central has increased dramatically over the last 10 years. As the population of Charleston continues to grow and North Central becomes a more desirable neighborhood, housing costs will continue to increase.

Displacement of Long-Term Families

Increasing housing costs can disrupt patterns of generational homeownership, which in turn impacts the character and culture of the neighborhood. The loss of legacy owners is largely irreversible and will dramatically alter the character of the neighborhood.

Degradation of Neighborhood Character

Rising real estate prices create pressure for added square footage that can result in loss of historic material and irreversible alterations to character-defining features. Except for properties located in the Historic Corridor District, the Board of Architectural Review does not have purview over design in North Central, only demolition, which makes mitigating impacts of modifications and new development challenging.

Lack of Documentation and Surveys

The most recent survey of upper peninsula neighborhoods dates to 2004. Outdated documentation poses challenges in maintaining an accurate understanding of neighborhood development over time.

SUGGESTED FURTHER RESEARCH

This ACA is a living resource intended to be supplemented over time as additional research, studies, and surveys become available. Areas of ongoing research in the North Central neighborhood include but are not limited to the following:

- Freedman's Cottages
- Kit Houses (houses built from kits manufactured by Sears, Roebuck, and Company)
- Rumney Coffee House
- Lost buildings
- African American architectural and cultural history (pending completion of City of Charleston Historic African American Architectural Resources Survey)

Further, this document will be updated to reflect information revealed through any future updates to the Upper Peninsula Architectural Survey or changes to BAR purview in North Central.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Local Resources

SURVEYS

- A Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula Charleston, South Carolina Final Report (2004):
nationalregister.sc.gov/SurveyReports/CharlestonUpperPeninsula2004SM.pdf

BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW (BAR)

- Charleston Board of Architectural Review website:
www.charleston-sc.gov/293/Board-of-Architectural-Review-BAR-L-BAR-
- Charleston Board of Architectural Review Purview Map:
www.charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1270/Historic-Districts-Purview-Map--color-2020?bidId=
- Policy Statement for Historic Materials Demolition Purview:
www.charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/32850/BAR-Policy-Statement-North-of-Line-Historic-Materials--FAQs---Adopted-102022?bidId=

BAR STAFF CONTACTS

- www.charleston-sc.gov/directory.aspx?did=92

PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF CHARLESTON (PSC) WEBSITE

- preservationsociety.org

HISTORIC CHARLESTON FOUNDATION (HCF) WEBSITE

- historiccharleston.org

Local Resources (continued)

RESILIENCE

- Resilience Guidance for Charleston:
preservationsociety.org/what-we-do/preservation-initiatives/resilience-guidance-for-charleston/
- “Find Your Basin” Resource:
charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/37233/Full-Map-Set48x36-portrait_v50c-1
- City of Charleston GIS Flood and Other Maps: gis.charleston-sc.gov
- Charleston All Hazards Vulnerability and Risk Assessment, 2020:
charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/27994/All-Hazards-Vulnerability-Assessment-Full-Report
- Charleston Climate Action Plan, 2021:
charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/29030/Climate-Action-Plan-May-2021?bidId=
- Charleston Sea Level Rise Strategy Update, 2023:
storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/5f03a3cd61d244908eed5be10489d9a4?item=2
- Charleston Design Guidelines for Elevating Historic Buildings:
charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/18518/BAR-Elevation-Design-Guidelines-Adopted?bidId=

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

- Lowcountry Lowline:
lowcountrylowline.org
- Plans for Mixed-Use Development at 1000 King Street Moving Forward:
counton2.com/news/plans-for-mixed-use-development-at-1000-king-st-moving-forward/
- Huger Street and King Street Drainage Improvements:
charleston-sc.gov/2377/Huger-Street-and-King-Street-Drainage-Im

Local Resources (continued)

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

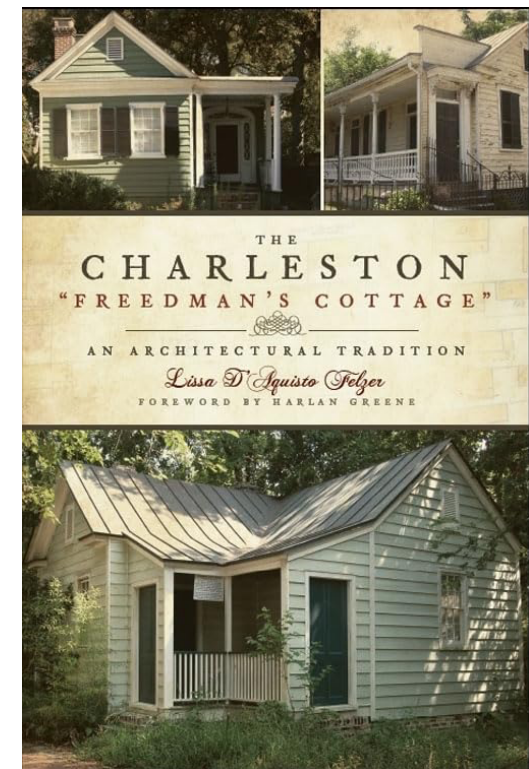
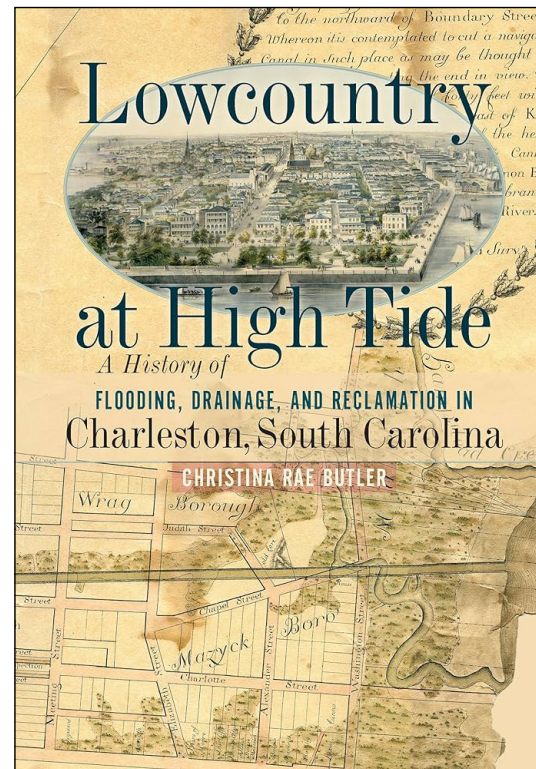
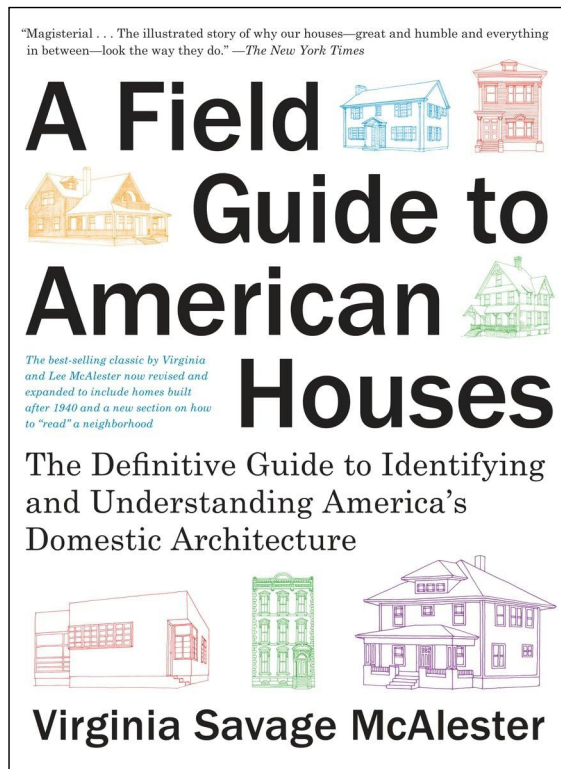
- Interview with Joe Lewis Jefferson from North Central, Historic Charleston Foundation:
<https://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/lcdl/catalog/246468>
- Interview with Gladys Harvey from North Central, Historic Charleston Foundation:
<https://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/lcdl/catalog/246467>
- Interview with Virginia Joyce Freeman Howard from North Central, Historic Charleston Foundation:
<https://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/lcdl/catalog/246466>
- Black Businesses of Charleston Oral History Project, Preservation Society of Charleston
<https://www.preservationsociety.org/programs-resources/oral-history-project/>

State and Federal Resources

- South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SC SHPO):
scdah.sc.gov/historic-preservation
- National Park Service's Bulletin, "New Additions to Historic Buildings":
nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/additions.htm
- The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:
nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/secretarys-standards-rehabilitation.htm
- The National Register of Historic Places FAQ page:
nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm
- The U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit:
toolkit.climate.gov
- National Park Service Guidelines on Flood Adaptations for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings:
www.nps.gov/articles/000/guidelines-on-flood-adaptation-for-rehabilitating-historic-buildings.htm
- FEMA Flood Maps:
hazards-fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd
- NOAA Sea Level Rise Viewer:
coast.noaa.gov/slr/#/layer/slr/0/-11581024.663779823/5095888.569004184/4/satellite/none/0.8/2050/interHigh/midAccretion

Further Reading

- *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture* by Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.
- *Lowcountry at High Tide: A History of Flooding, Drainage, and Reclamation in Charleston, South Carolina* by Christina Butler, University of South Carolina Press, 2020.
- *The Charleston "Freedman's Cottage": an Architectural Tradition* by Lissa Felzer, The History Press, 2008.



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APPENDIX

Board of Architectural Review Resources

DOES MY PROJECT NEED BAR APPROVAL?

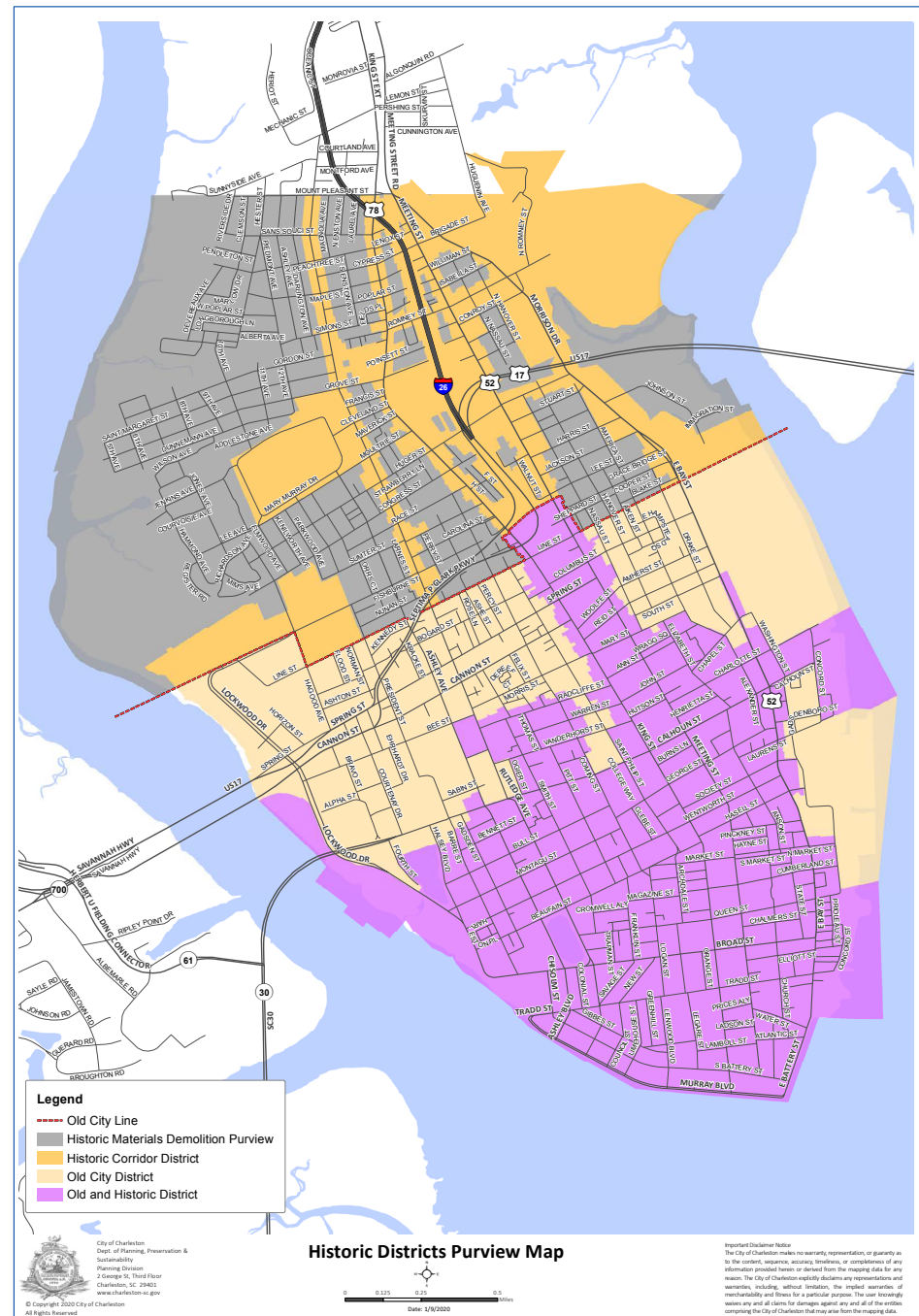
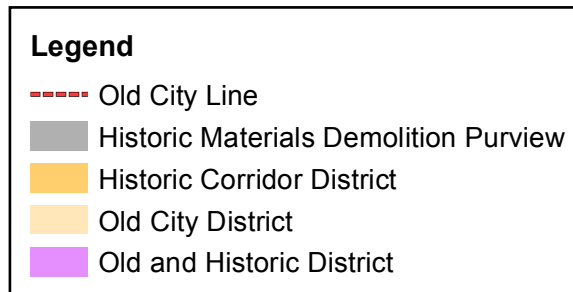
Where is the property?

What
type
of work is
involved?

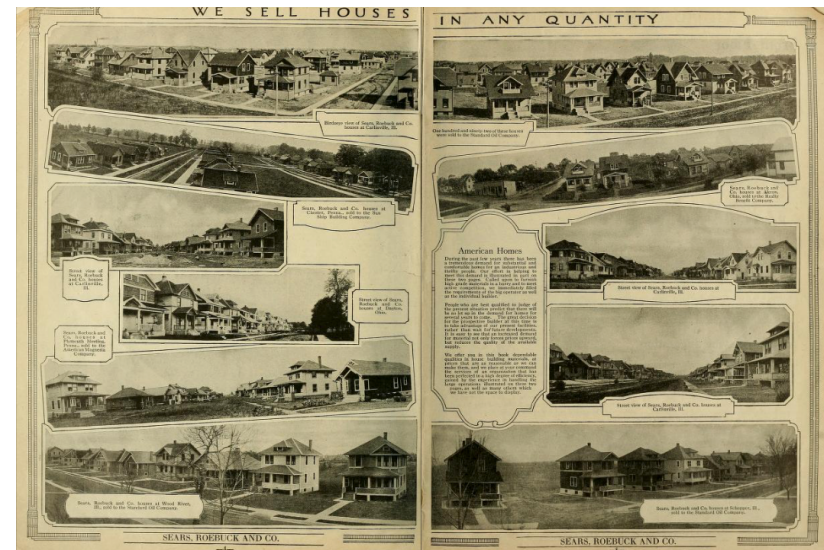
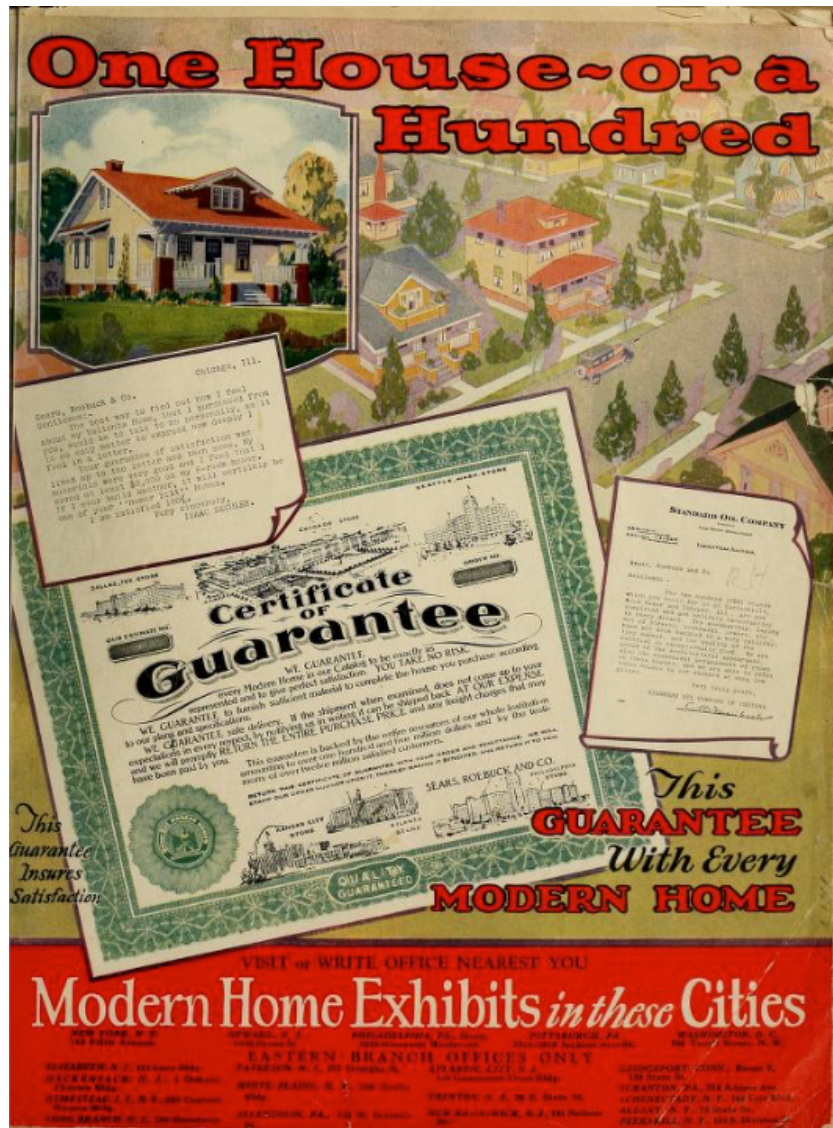
	Old and Historic District	Old City District	Historic Corridor District	Historic Materials Demolition Purview (North of Line Street/south of Mt. Pleasant Street)	Landmark Overlay
New Construction	Yes, if visible from a public right-of-way ⁷	Yes, if visible from a public right-of-way ⁸	Yes, if visible from a public right-of-way	No	Yes, whether visible from a public right- of-way or not
Exterior Repairs/Alterations	Yes, if visible from a public right-of-way ⁷	Only if the structure is at least 100 years old, or rated ⁵ , or previously reviewed by BAR, and visible from a public right-of-way ⁸	Only for commercial and 8+ unit multi-family residential properties and visible if from a public right-of- way	Only when removing a substantial portion of elements or features that define its historic architectural character, the loss of which would compromise the structure's architectural character ⁶ and visible from a public right-of-way	Yes, whether visible from a public right- of-way or not
Demolition - Whole Building	Yes, if visible from a public right-of-way	Only if the structure is at least 50 years old, or rated ⁵ , or previously reviewed by the BAR, and visible from a public right-of-way	Only if the structure is at least 50 years old or rated ⁵ and visible from a public right-of-way	Only if the structure is at least 50 years old and visible from a public right-of-way	Yes, whether visible from a public right- of-way or not
Demolition - Partial	Yes, if visible from a public right-of-way	Only if the structure is at least 50 years old, or rated ⁵ , or previously reviewed by the BAR, and visible from a public right-of-way	Only if the structure is at least 50 years old, or rated ⁵ , or previously reviewed by the BAR, and visible from a public right-of-way	Only if the structure is at least 50 years old, or previously reviewed by the BAR/DRB, and visible from a public right- of-way	Yes, whether visible from a public right- of-way or not
Signage	Yes, if visible from a public right-of-way	Only if the structure is at least 100 years old, or rated ⁵ , or previously reviewed by the BAR, and visible from a public right-of-way	Only for commercial and 8+ unit multi-family residential properties or previously reviewed by the BAR and visible from a public right-of- way	NA	NA

Board of Architectural Review Resources

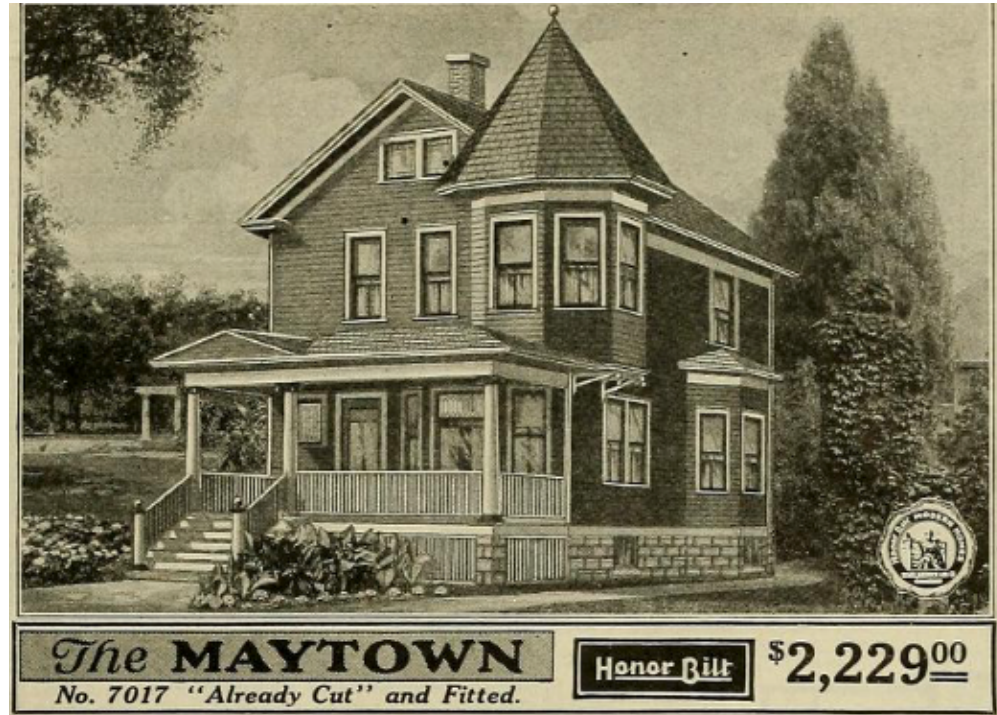
CITY OF CHARLESTON HISTORIC DISTRICTS PURVIEW MAP



Kit House Comparisons

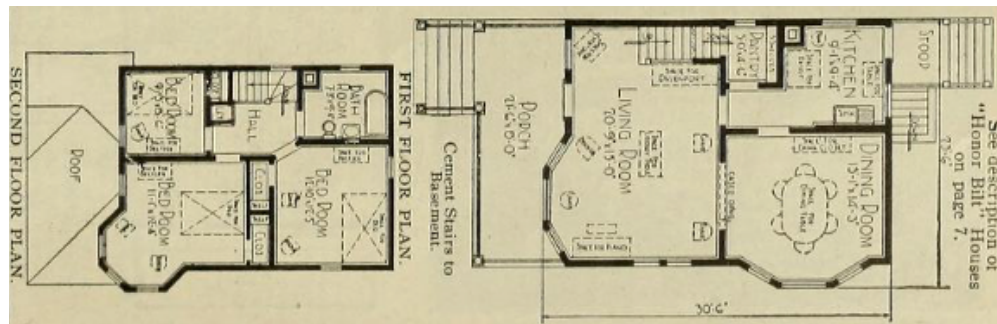


Kit House Comparisons



28 Maple Street compared to the Sears, Roebuck and Co. kit house, "The Maytown," No. 7017, 1920. Sourced from I-26 Report produced by Historic Charleston Foundation in 2014.

<https://archive.org/details/onehouseorhundre00sear/mode/2up>

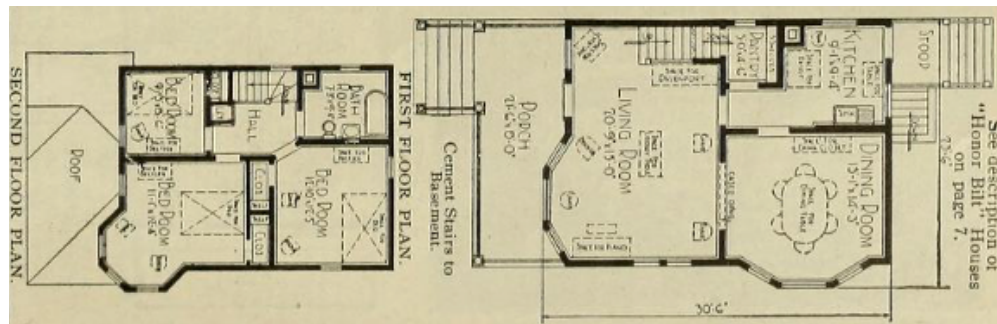
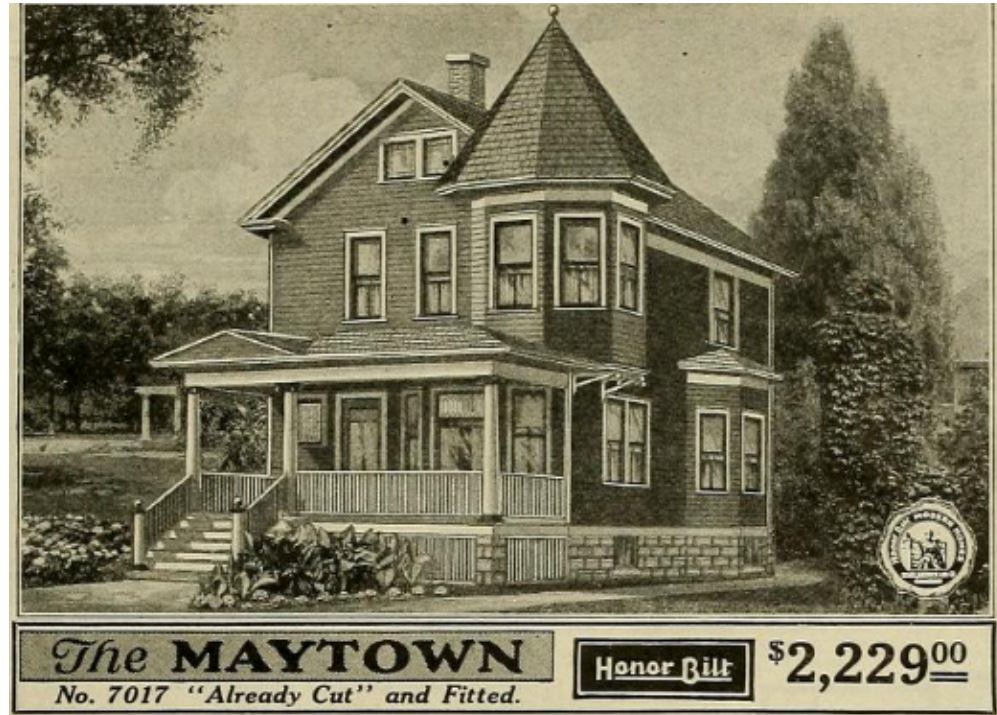


Kit House Comparisons



1130 King Street compared to the Sears, Roebuck and Co. kit house, "The Maytown," No. 7017, 1920.

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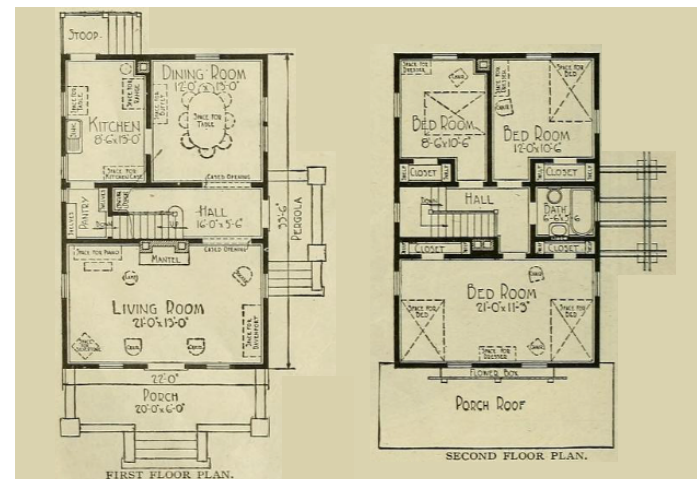


Kit House Comparisons



830 Rutledge Avenue compared to the Sears, Roebuck and Co. kit house, "The Roanoke," No. 226, 1918.

<https://archive.org/details/honorbilt.modernhomes.sears.1918/page/82/mode/2up>

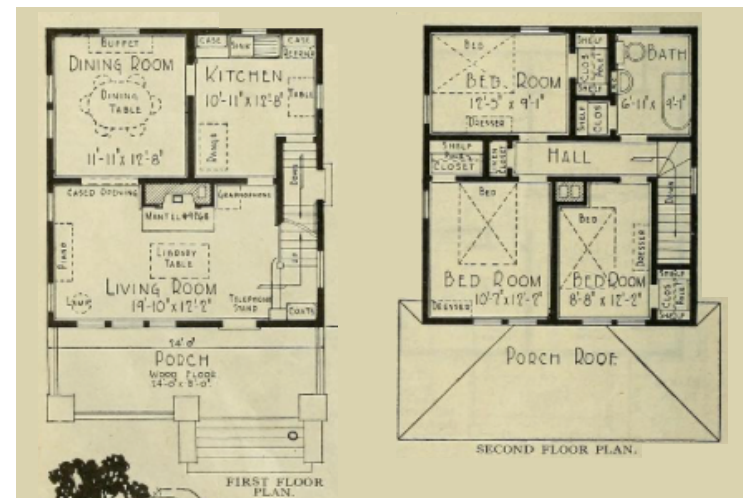


Kit House Comparisons



86 Cypress Street compared to the Sears, Roebuck and Co. kit house, "The Fullerton" No. 3205, 1920.

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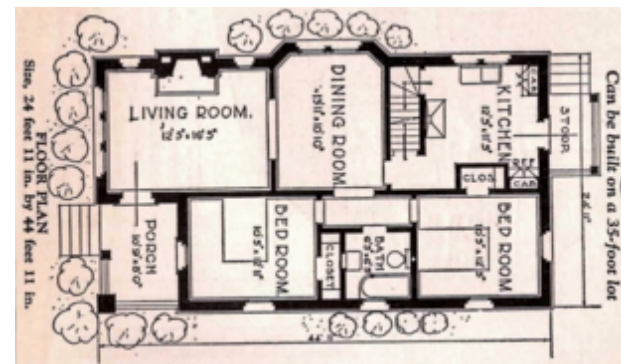
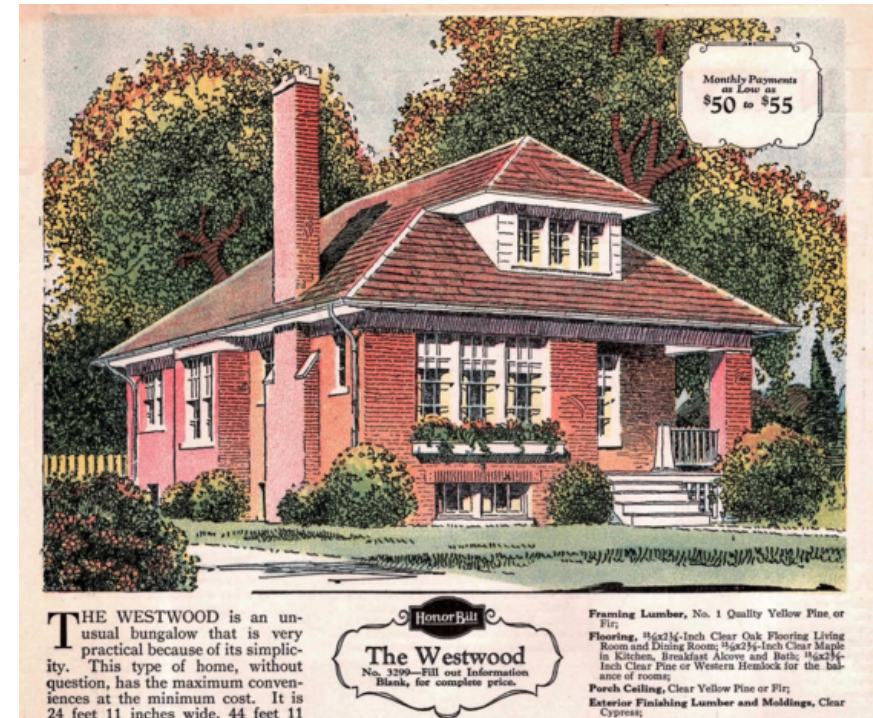


Kit House Comparisons



874 Rutledge Avenue compared to the Sears, Roebuck and Co. kit house, "The Westwood" No. 3299, 1929.

https://archive.org/details/Sears1929BrickVeneerPg6/Sears_1929_Brick_Veneer_Pg24.jpg



Kit House Comparisons



64 Sans Souci Street compared to the Sears, Roebuck and Co. kit house, "The Vallonia" No. C13049, 1920.

<https://archive.org/details/onehouseorhundre00sear/page/26/mode/1up>

