

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name ROCKSPRINGS SHOTGUN ROW HISTORIC DISTRICT
other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number 433-447 Rocksprings Street
city, town Athens (N/A) vicinity of
county Clarke code GA 059
state Georgia code GA zip code 30605

(N/A) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	6	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	6	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Architecture of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia: Shotgun Houses

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Mark R. Edwards

Signature of certifying official

7/01/96
Date

Mark R. Edwards
State Historic Preservation Officer,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Ma J. M. [Signature]

8/23/96

() determined eligible for the National Register

() determined not eligible for the National Register

() removed from the National Register

() other, explain:

() see continuation sheet

BE

Signature, Keeper of the National Register

Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

No Style: Vernacular

Materials:

foundation	brick
walls	weatherboard
roof	metal
other	N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Rocksprings Shotgun Row Historic District is composed of six shotgun houses arranged in a row along Rocksprings Street. According to the associated historic context, "a shotgun row district is a grouping of three or more shotgun buildings. The buildings are located contiguous to each other facing a common street." This grouping of six buildings follows the description of a Shotgun Row District found in the associated historic context.

The houses in this district were all constructed about 1925. Each is an example of the shotgun house type --a one-story house that is one room wide and two or more rooms deep (usually three).

In this instance, the shotgun buildings have no identifiable architectural style and may be classified as vernacular types. The properties all have the characteristic plan of a shotgun house (see associated historic context), some additions to the rear of the buildings and some to the side of the buildings. These wood additions are small in scale, often built to accommodate modern bathroom facilities.

All six buildings have front-gable roofs clad in galvanized metal. Most of the shotguns in the Rocksprings Shotgun Row Historic District have intact brick chimneys. The six houses have weatherboard siding, although until recent restoration three of them had Bricktex siding layered over the wood siding. Bricktex is a trade name for an asphalt siding with a resemblance to brick. All of the single dwellings have front porches. These porches are simple, shed porches with unadorned wooden posts and balustrades, and, in some cases, are not original to the buildings but have been constructed to replace earlier porches that deteriorated. These buildings were constructed of inexpensive

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materials to house low-income families, and as a result the architectural integrity of these houses may be average when compared to other property types, while above average for shotgun houses.

The doors and doorways are asymmetrically placed on the facade and are original to the buildings. The doors have four-pane glazing that remains intact. The majority of the windows are original six-over-six, double-hung windows.

On the interior, walls and ceilings are covered with tongue-and-groove boards. The houses' simple mantels, doors, and moldings also remain.

The brick pier foundations have been underpinned with additional materials such as plywood and tin to stabilize the buildings.

The houses sit on narrow lots and are uniformly set back from the street. The grassed front lawns have a steeply sloped bank with steps leading down to the sidewalk and are informally planted with small shrubs.

The shotgun houses are only a block or so from larger, more elaborate homes. The area near the nominated houses has changed dramatically, leaving them the only cluster of intact shotgun houses in the area.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

ARCHITECTURE
ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK

Period of Significance:

c.1925

Significant Dates:

c.1925

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Unknown

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Significance of property, justification of criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Rocksprings Shotgun Row Historic District is a small historic district in the middle of Athens, Georgia, consisting of six shotgun houses, the remnant of a much larger collection of worker housing.

The district is significant in architecture as an important intact example of a grouping of a rare building type in an urban setting. Historically, the shotgun was much more common. Today, these building types are relatively uncommon in Athens-Clarke County; of the 1,600 properties surveyed to date, only fifty-five buildings were identified as shotgun or double shotguns. Considering these numbers, it is unlikely that many shotgun districts remain.

The Rocksprings Shotgun Row Historic District meets the National Register requirements established in the "Associated Historic Context, Shotgun Houses in Athens-Clarke County, Georgia" for an Urban Shotgun Row District.

As asserted in the associated historic context, "the shotgun house type has been the object of much academic discussion". John Michael Vlach, in his article "The Shotgun House: An African American Legacy" (1986) maintains that the beginnings of the American shotgun house should be traced through New Orleans to Haiti. His theory is that approximately 2,060 free Haitian settlers, documented as *homme de couleur libre* [free persons of color], who immigrated to New Orleans brought this building type from their homeland. In Haiti, the native Haitians, known as the Arawak tribe, had a similar plan for their dwellings. One theory is that the free Haitians adopted this building type from the native Haitians. Vlach considers it to be likely that the Arawak design reinforced a traditional African dwelling type found in the area of the continent from which the African slaves originally came to Haiti. This portion of Western Africa is home to the Yoruba tribe. One of their building types closely resembles the 'modern' shotgun. Because this design was also found in medieval Europe, it may have been common to the European slave owner, the slaves from Africa, as well as the native Haitians.

The district significance in architecture rest also in the fact that the six houses are excellent historic examples of the shotgun house type and are constructed in a uniform row along the street. According to Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings, shotgun houses are predominantly an urban phenomenon, built mainly for low-income workers between the 1870s and the 1920s.

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Shotgun houses are one room wide and two or more rooms deep, usually three. There is no hallway, and all doors typically line up front to back. The roof is usually gabled, but hipped roofs were also used. The shotgun house was especially popular in larger cities but may be found in small and medium-sized towns as well.

The district is significant in ethnic heritage: black for its association with the African-American working class in Athens. Shotgun houses are typically associated with both the African-American and white working class, particularly mill workers and domestic laborers. The shotgun houses in the district were constructed for African-American laborers, many of whom worked for the white upper-class neighborhood on nearby Milledge Avenue.

The Rocksprings Shotgun Row Historic District is shown on the 1926 Sanborn Insurance Map to be located two blocks south of churches indicated as "Colored" and one AME Church, thus near an African-American neighborhood.

The Rocksprings Shotgun Row is not located near a mill. Consequently, it may be assumed that the occupants of these structures were laborers. Milledge Avenue, with its large antebellum Greek Revival and later residences, is one block to the east, therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that these shotguns could have housed domestic labor for the larger households.

The dates of significance were determined using the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. The shotguns appear first on the 1926 version of these maps. Consequently, the estimated construction date of these properties is somewhere between 1923 (the previous issue of the Sanborn Maps) and 1926.

The following buildings are shotgun buildings which contribute to the Rocksprings Shotgun Row Historic District:

433 Rocksprings
437 Rocksprings
439 Rocksprings
441 Rocksprings
443 Rocksprings
447 Rocksprings

There are no non-contributing buildings within this district.

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National Register Criteria

This district meets National Register Criterion A because of its association with African-American history, a vital part of the American Experience in the South, and especially in Athens, Georgia. It also meets National Register Criterion C because it consists of six good examples of shotgun houses, a fast-disappearing resource and one that has been proven to be an important housing type in the South.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance c.1925 is based on the date when the houses were built, with the Sanborn Insurance Maps as a source.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

All six properties within this district are contributing. There are no non-contributing resources within the district.

Developmental history/historic context (if applicable)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Morgan, Julie D. "Architecture of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia: Shotgun Houses in Athens-Clarke County, Georgia", Associated Historic Context, 1992. Copy submitted with this nomination.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): () N/A

- (X) preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested December 16, 1992
- () previously listed in the National Register
- () previously determined eligible by the National Register
- () designated a National Historic Landmark
- () recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- () recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- (X) State historic preservation office
- () Other State Agency
- () Federal agency
- (X) Local government Athens, Georgia, Historic Preservation Commission
- () University
- () Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately one acre

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 279000 Northing 3758700

Verbal Boundary Description

The district is parcels 8-13 of Block F, Map 12-2-D-4 of the Athens-Clarke County Tax Maps. The district is marked with a heavy black line on an attached copy of that tax map, drawn to scale.

Boundary Justification

The district boundary includes all the property legally and historically associated with the six shotgun houses comprising the Rocksprings Shotgun Row Historic District. Other buildings in the vicinity of these buildings are not shotguns and are not included as part of the district.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tom Reynolds\Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian
organization Reynolds Bowden, Inc.\ Historic Preservation Division,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 190 Park Ave.\ 500 The Healey Building, 57 Forsyth St.
city or town Athens\Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30601\ 30334
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** October 17, 1992\June 25, 1996

(HPS form version 10-29-91)

United States Department of the Interior
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Photographs

Name of Property: Rocksprings Shotgun Row Historic District
City or Vicinity: Athens
County: Clarke
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: September, 1995

Description of Photograph(s):

1 of 3: House no. 433 on far left, House no. 447 on far right, entire district of six houses seen in photograph; photographer facing northeast.

2 of 3: Houses no. (from left to right) 433, 437, 439, photographer facing northeast.

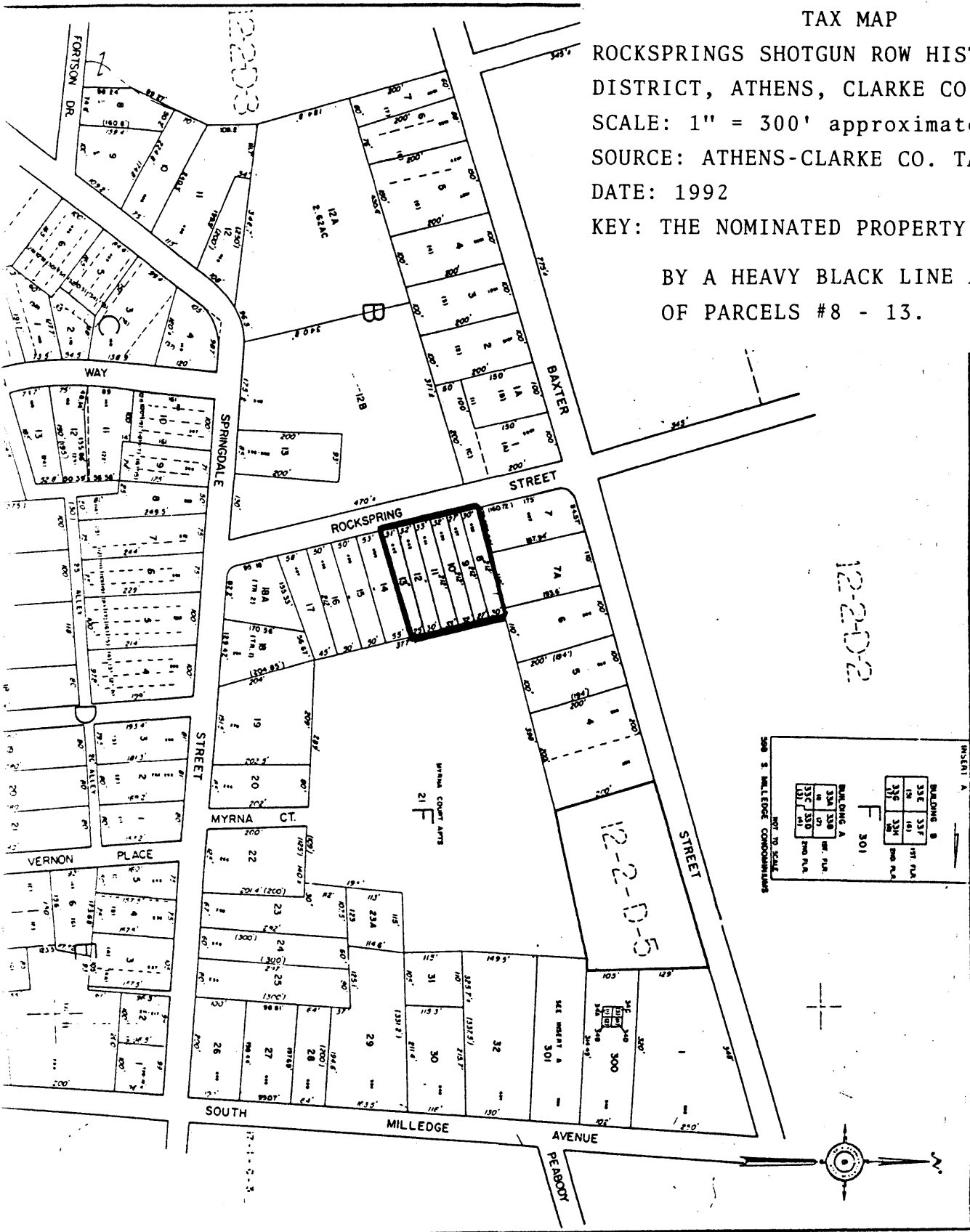
3 of 3: Houses no. (from left to right) 441, 443, 447, photographer facing southeast.

TAX MAP

ROCKSPRINGS SHOTGUN ROW HISTORIC DISTRICT, ATHENS, CLARKE CO., GEORGIA
SCALE: 1" = 300' approximately
SOURCE: ATHENS-CLARKE CO. TAX ASSESSOR
DATE: 1992

KEY: THE NOMINATED PROPERTY IS MARKED.

BY A HEAVY BLACK LINE AND CONSISTS OF PARCELS #8 - 13.



12-2-D-2

12-2-D-5

INSERT A

BUILDING A		BUILDING B	
NO.	SQ. FT.	NO.	SQ. FT.
336	337	130	141
335	328	131	142
337	330	132	143
338	331	133	144

301

NOT TO SCALE
500' MILLERIDGE CONDOMINIUMS

440

ROCKSPRINGS SHOTGUN ROW HISTORIC DISTRICT, ATHENS, CLARKE CO., GEORGIA
SCALE: AS MARKED ON THE PLAN.

SOURCE: DRAWN BY "P.K."

DATE: 1992

KEY: THIS IS A FLOORPLAN FOR ONE OF THE SIX HOUSES, REPRESENTING ALL OF THEM.

