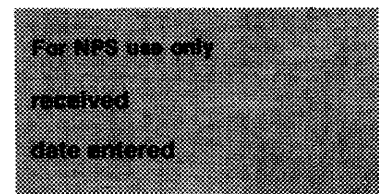


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WEST AVENUE-ROBERTS STREET RESIDENTIAL

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Name: West Avenue-Roberts Street Residential Historic District.

Location: ~~In Lavonia, Franklin County, Georgia, on either side of West Avenue and Roberts Street primarily between Mason Street and Jones Street, and intersected in the southern portion by the Augusta Road.~~

Acreage: 20 acres.

Verbal Boundary Description Justification:

The boundary of the West Avenue-Roberts Street Residential Historic District is described by a heavy black line on the attached map of the Lavonia multiple resource area. This boundary circumscribes an intact collection of historic residential structures which forms a neighborhood in the western portion of the multiple resource area. Development to the west, north, and south is primarily non-historic residential; to the east, commercial and industrial.

UTM Reference:

(A)	Z17	E306290	N3812370
(B)	Z17	E306460	N3812040
(C)	Z17	E305920	N3811990
(D)	Z17	E305800	N3812320

Photographs: See photographs Nos 30 through 35.

Description:

The West Avenue-Roberts Street Residential Historic District consists of two dozen houses and a city park on approximately 20 acres of land along West Avenue and Roberts Street west of the central business district. Houses in the district date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They consist primarily of Victorian cottages and Craftsman bungalows. The Victorian cottages are wood-framed and weatherboarded; the Craftsman bungalows are mostly brick. Also included is a single early twentieth century concrete block house. These houses are situated amidst informally landscaped yards.

One of the most distinguished houses within the district is the Judge Allen house at the intersection of Roberts Street and Augusta Road. This structure is a one and one-half story frame dwelling with multiple gables and a piazza with turned balustrade supported by square fluted piers with simple capitals. The house also features fanlight windows and dentil molding in the front gable. The design of this structure is repeated in approximately six other houses within this district which have more modest detailing. Another distinguished house within the district is the Queen-Sewell-Richey house on West Avenue. This structure

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Description (Continued)

is a two-story frame residence which has a front bay, a two-sided porch which is supported by Tuscan "rusticated" columns and turned balustrade, and a peaked roof with finial. The detailing on this porch is not found anywhere else within the multiple resource area. There is one structure of Bungalow-inspiration located on Mason Street known as the Wilder-Dowis house. This structure features a wide front gable with bracketed eaves. This gable shelters a recessed porch supported by square wooden columns set on brick foundations. Other brick and frame bungalows are found along West Avenue. They were built in the 1920s and 1930s. At least one, and possibly two, were designed by the noted Atlanta architect Leila Ross Wilburn. The Stevenson house located across the street from the Judge Allen house on Augusta Road contrasts with the wooden buildings which dominate the district. This house is constructed with decorative concrete blocks and resembles closely the Stevenson residence found in the Vickery Street District.

Also located in the district is a small city park. Although the park itself is not historic and contains no historic structures, it does preserve the historic sense of open space along the north side of West Avenue in the vicinity of Mason Street.

The configuration of this district is somewhat unusual and has been dictated by the location of historic buildings and lots on several streets. The relation of structures is created by visual ties between side, front, and rear yards. These yards are grassed with shrubs and trees and create a continuous landscape. There are no major intrusions within the district. There is one vacant lot within the district and there is no question that it was once a homesite. The layout of the district is an extension of the original gridiron plan. West Avenue is a major transportation artery and Roberts Street functions as a side street to Augusta Road. Mason Street is a side street connecting West Avenue and Roberts Street.

Statement of Significance:

Architecture. The West Avenue-Roberts Street Residential Historic District is significant in terms of architecture due to its large concentration of Victorian Eclectic and Craftsman/Bungalow architecture. The architectural design of these structures ties this collection of houses together and creates the neighborhood character. The architecture represented includes relatively elaborate examples as well as more modest interpretations which dominate the district. The district is important for representing the evolution of architectural design within the broad context of Victorian architecture. There are several modest structures within the district which relate closely with early Plain-styled design. There is

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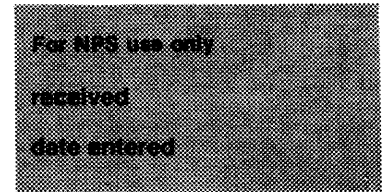
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a predominance of the later Victorian architecture which featured more fanciful adaptations-- large porches, high pitched roofs, rambling floorplans and Classical detailings. The later Bungalow-styled structures along the northern edge of the district illustrate another locally prevalent architectural style. At least one, and possibly more, of these 20th century houses was designed by the noted Atlanta architect Leila Ross Wilburn.

Landscape Architecture: The West Avenue-Roberts Street Residential Historic District is significant in terms of landscape architecture because of the way the landscape ties this collection of structures together to form a residential neighborhood. All of the houses within the district are sited at the center of small rectangular lots with side, front and rear yards of lawn, shrubs, and trees. The fact that these structures are located on several streets makes the similarity of landscape treatments surrounding each residence critical in the creation of this district. Pecan trees also impart a sense of unity to the area.

Local History: In local history the West Avenue-Roberts Street Residential Historic District is significant due to its association with prominent citizens in Lavonia. It is also representative of speculative building practices in a developing community. Those of importance who were associated with this neighborhood include: Judge Allen, a Clerk of the Superior Court of Franklin County; W. N. Harrison, president of the Northeast Georgia Bank who lived in a house still in the ownership of his family; Dr. Riley Sewell, a dentist who had his office in the town center and lived in the Sewell house; J. C. McDonald, a merchant who ran a store on Grogan Street and lived in the McDonald-McDaniel house; J. B. McBrayer, who ran the Lavonia Roller Mill and lived in the Mason-McBrayer house; and Henry Sewell, a postmaster who lived in a house which was later acquired by Lavonia Manufacturing Company. There are a number of structures within the district built as rentals or built by contractors who sold soon after construction. John Stevenson, a local builder who constructed the concrete block house on Augusta Road, built the structure as a rental. Queen, another builder in the community, constructed the Queen-Sewell-Richey house, lived in the structure a short time, and sold to Sewell. David Hughes is another builder responsible for a number of structures within the district. W. C. Mason, Sr., was a banker and cotton merchant who came to Lavonia from Westminister, South Carolina, built the present Mason-McBrayer house as a rental, and at one time owned approximately a block of land within this district.

Community Planning and Development. The West Avenue-Roberts Street Residential Historic District is significant in terms of community planning and development since it represents the vestiges of a once larger neighborhood in the western section of the city. This neighborhood was an extension of the original gridiron plan and the streets followed the symmetrical layout. West Avenue and Roberts Street join the original downtown gridiron plan on straight line axes. This neighborhood appears to have developed a few years later than the Jones Street and Vickery Street areas, since most of the structures within the West-Roberts District dating from the early 1900's. Many of the structures which once stood in the area were lost to fire. Several lots remain vacant at the present time. Other

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lots have been filled in with World War II-era residential architecture to the west, and commercial enroachment is found to the east. The district appears to have always been urban in nature with small lots laid out on either side of Roberts Street and West Avenue. It developed as a result of its proximity to the town square.

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