

RECEIVED MAY 17 1990

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

APR 12 1990

Ala. Historical Commission

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 Grand Bay Historic District other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Dezauche Ln., 2 E & W of Freeland city, town Grand Bay state Alabama code AL county Mobile code 097 zip code 36541

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [x] private, [ ] public-local, [ ] public-State, [ ] public-Federal. Category of Property: [ ] building(s), [x] district, [ ] site, [ ] structure, [ ] object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 3, Noncontributing 1 buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total 4.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [x] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility 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 [x] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official: Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office) Date: 5-7-90

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

Signature of commenting or other official: State or Federal agency and bureau: Date:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- [x] entered in the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet. [ ] determined eligible for the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet. [ ] determined not eligible for the National Register. [ ] removed from the National Register. [ ] other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper: Amy Federman Date of Action: 6/28/90

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/department store

Commerce/Business

Commerce/Warehouse

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in use

Vacant/Not in use

Commerce/Trade/Specialty Store

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Weatherboard

Brick

roof Asbestos

other Standing seam metal

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The downtown section of Grand Bay included in this nomination followed the typical pattern of development in Mobile County. The center coalesced on subdivided lots formed to take advantage of their proximity to the railroad. The structures erected on these urban lots then served the outlying farms and the growing surrounding community.

Other than the early developed area in the nomination and the strip development along U. S. Highway 90, Grand Bay is characterized by pockets of suburban development surrounded by a mainly rural setting.

The nominated district is a strip adjacent to the intersection of Freeland and Dezauche on the south side of Dezauche. On the east corner is the brick bank building which abutts the sidewalks. Being brick, two stories and at the sidewalks the building gives a feeling of massiveness. To its east and separated by a narrow alley, the two story, false fronted, frame store is set back slightly but with its porch meeting the sidewalk. On the west corner of Dezauche and Freeland set in a large yard where the Sewell Freeland store once stood is a 1950s house, the only noncontributing structure in the district. To its west is another false fronted structure which originally served as an ancillary building to Sewell Freeland's store. With the district framed by the two false front structures, it retains a cohesiveness of character despite the intrusion of the non-contributing structure.

1. Freeland, Albert, Store. 1912. (MB-7040)  
Dezauche Lane, 2 east of Freeland (MCRS 144/28)

Two story; frame; standard commercial; lapped siding; false fronted second story of standing seam metal applied vertically; commercial glass front first story; one story, concrete slab porch covered by an attached flat roofed covering on iron posts; two small 2/2 second story windows; sides have small, transom type, first story windows and 2/2 second story windows; a doorway on the front right side opens to an enclosed exterior stairway which leads to the second story; the first story was basically one large open space and the second was divided into rooms for a boarding house. The building is currently vacant and unused.

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2. Powell, Nannie, Bank Building. 1913. (MB-7043)  
Dezauche Lane, corner of Freeland. (MCRS 144/29)

Two story; brick; early twentieth century commercial; built at sidewalk with beveled corner entrance; contemporary door and windows; long side on Freeland, two bays on Dezauche; first story dentil course with corbeled string course above; second story windows articulated with projecting headers and keystones; string course above windows; most of the metal cornice is missing; corbeled parapet hides roof; corner bay has stepped gable; the central section of the Freeland Street facade lacks cornice insets and has window mouldings different from the rest of the building; this also occurs in the last bay; the main entrance opens into what was the bank lobby, the remainder of the building was offices; the structure is currently vacant.

4. Freeland, Sewell, Storeroom. c. 1907. (MB-7090)  
Dezauche Lane, 2 west of Freeland. (MCRS 144/30)

One story; frame; lapped siding; gable perpendicular to street behind false facade; two bays; large c. 1945 picture window; stoop leads to three light door; single side window; lower gabled addition on rear.

Noncontributing

3. House. 1950s. (NC-1)  
Dezauche Lane, corner of Freeland., (MCRS) 144/31)

One story; frame; vernacular; aluminum siding; gable to side; concrete block foundation; centered, three bay, cross gabled, front porch with slim Tuscan columns; boxed eaves.

**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)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

c.1907 - c.1930  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1907  
1912  
1913

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**CRITERION A: COMMERCE**

The three contributing structures in the Grand Bay Historic District are the last surviving commercial properties which defined the original downtown core. Placed facing the railroad, these three buildings played an important role in the development of Grand Bay and combine to create the only downtown Grand Bay has ever had. The structures served as the retail focus for the early days of the area, and supplied most of the goods and services which linked the rural community to the outside world. The importance of the area is seen in the elaborateness of the bank building while the false fronts of the frame buildings reflect the boomtown mentality of the merchants. The Grand Bay Historic District maintained its commercial importance from the c. 1907 building date of the earliest structure through the 1920s when cars allowed more freedom to consumers.

Integrity

The buildings retain their overall integrity though some minor changes have occurred through time; these are enumerated in the individual descriptions. The district forms a cohesive unit due, in the main, to its being framed by buildings with the same unusual false facades.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Gilmer, Ann. Telephone interview by Devereaux Bemis. June 29, 1990  
Herr, Kincaid. The Louisville & Nashville Railroad, 1850-1940, 1941-1959.  
Louisville, Kentucky: L&N Magazine. 1960 printing.  
Huffman, Ethel. Telephone interview by Devereaux Bemis. June 19, 1989.  
Mobile County Probate Records. Mobile County Courthouse. Mobile, Alabama.  
United States Census Records: 1910. Mobile County, Alabama.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA  
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)  
has been requested  
 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:  
 State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Specify repository:  
Mobile Historic Development Commission

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property 1.2 acres

UTM References

A 116 | 37110910 | 31371211210  
Zone Easting Northing  
C 116 | 37110910 | 31371201810

B 116 | 37111910 | 31371221510  
Zone Easting Northing  
D 116 | 37111910 | 31371201810

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Begin at SW cor of Dezauche & Freeland; thence SW along the S sd of Dezauche 135'; thence S 187'; thence E 35'; thence N 112'; thence E 128' to the E ln of Freeland; thence N 25' to the SW cor of Lot 1 Blk 1, Schell's Addition; thence E 75' to E ln of Lot 3 Blk 1, Schell's Addition; thence N 119' to S sd of Dezauche Lane; thence SW along the S ln of Dezauche Lane 105' M/L to the Point of Beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The above metes and bounds describe the deeded property associated with the buildings included in this nomination.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Devereaux Bemis/Architectural Historian; Steven Kay/AHC Reviewer  
organization Mobile Historic Development Commission date July 15, 1989  
street & number P. O. Box 1827 telephone (205)438-7281  
city or town Mobile state Alabama zip code 36532

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Historic Context

The town of Grand Bay is located in the extreme southwest portion of Mobile County. As the name suggests, its early history was associated with the body of water known as Grand Bay. As with many parts of the County, the water provided the necessary means of transportation allowing settlement in the area. During the nineteenth century, property located just north of the bay was harvested for its forest products and put under cultivation.

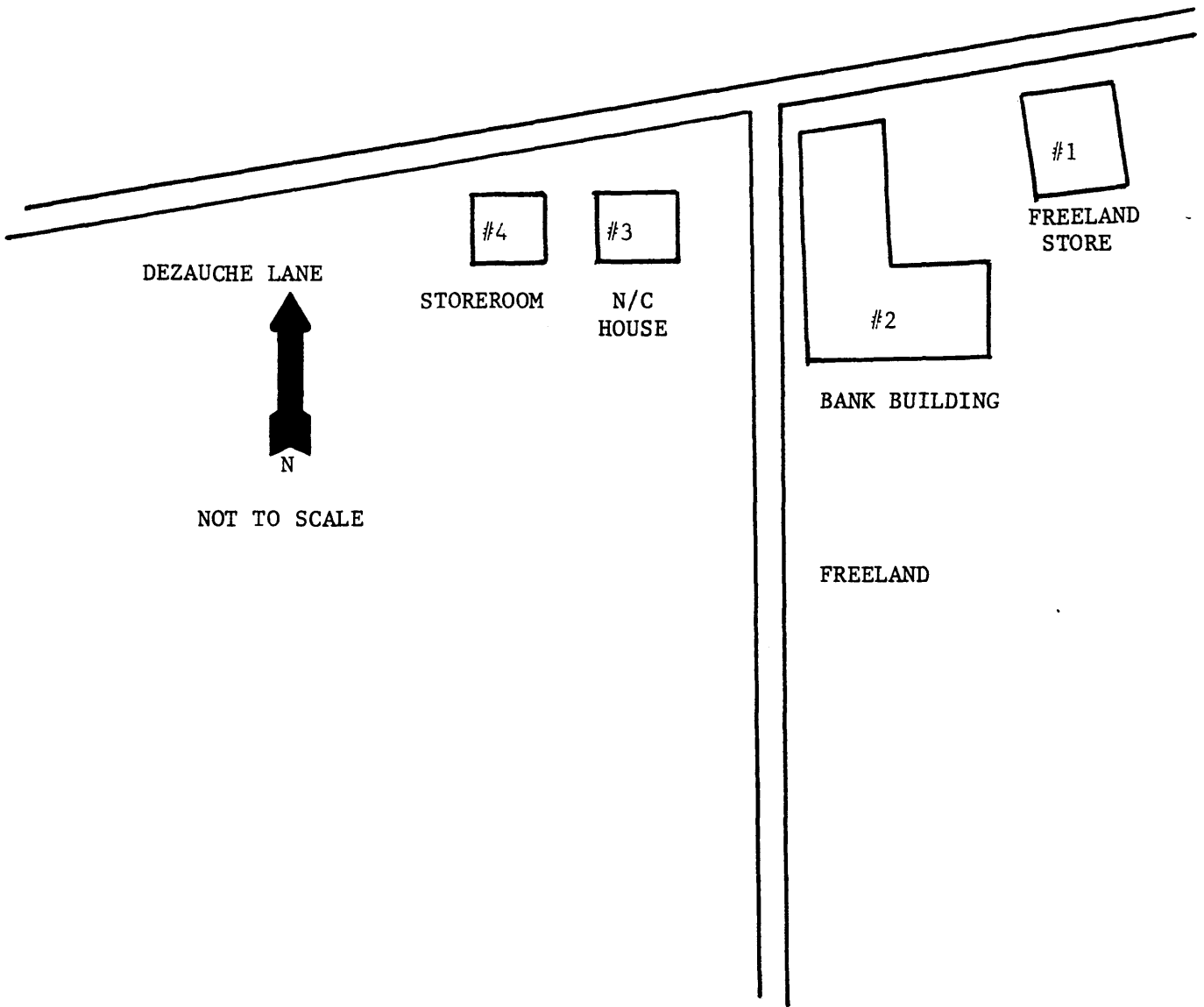
With the coming of the railway the emphasis on water transportation diminished. Spurs carrying goods to the bay boats changed direction to the north where they met lines leading to Mobile and New Orleans. With this, the area was ready for development.

In the year following the completion of the New Orleans, Mobile and Texas Railroad (1870), the town of Grand Bay was platted and some development on the large lots began. However, it was the subsequent 1911 division of several of the large parcels (by the Schell's Addition subdivision) that provided smaller lots more conducive to an urban setting.

The nominated structures are located in or are adjacent to Schell's Addition. The oldest building is located to the west and was an ancillary structure to Sewell Freeland's store. The two story frame store at the east end of the district is remarkably similar with a false front; it was built for Albert Freeland, Sewell's nephew. The final contributing structure in the nomination is the two story brick bank building; the construction of which bankrupted the original owners. Other commercial structures such as the hotel and train station have been destroyed.

As the use of the automobile grew, the importance of the railroad and adjacent structures declined. U.S. Highway 90 was built near the tracks. This became the focus of future development as car and truck traffic supplanted the train's passenger and freight services. The town has developed somewhat haphazardly through the years without a true focus. The coming of the Interstate has further contributed to the diffusion resulting in typical Interstate patterns of development and architecture.

GRAND BAY HISTORIC DISTRICT, MOBILE COUNTY, ALABAMA



DEZAUCHE LANE



N

NOT TO SCALE

#4

STOREROOM

#3

N/C  
HOUSE

#2

BANK BUILDING

#1

FREELAND  
STORE

FREELAND

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Section number photo-  
graphs Page 1

PHOTOLOG

Grand Bay Historic District

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1. Grand Bay Historic District
2. Grand Bay, Mobile County, Alabama
3. Devereaux Bemis, photographer
4. July 7, 1989
5. MHDC Negative File: MCRS Roll #144

Photo # View (Frame #)

1. Freeland, Albert, Store, Facade, Camera facing S (28)
2. Powell, Nannie Bank, General view, Camera facing SE (29)
3. Freeland, Sewell, Storeroom, Facade, Camera facing S (30)
4. House, Dezauche corner of Freeland, Camera facing S (31)
5. Street scene, Camera facing SW (34)
6. Street scene, Camera facing SE (33)
7. Street scene, Camera facing SW (32)
8. Street scene, Camera facing SE (35)