

HISTORIC DISTRICT INFORMATION FORM

I. NAME OF DISTRICT:

South Broad Street Historic District--traditional neighborhood name, as well as the name of the principal street in the district. ✓

II. LOCATION OF DISTRICT

A. General Location

1. Describe in general terms the location of the district:

The district is located along Monroe's main street, South Broad Street, south of the CBD. This residential area is between the commercial section of Monroe and the mill area of the city.

2. Principal streets, highways, and geographic features: *S. Broad St.*

South Broad Street is the major street in the district.

3. City:

Monroe ✓

4. County:

Walton ✓

B. U.S. Congressman and Congressional District:

Doug Barnard--10th District

III. CLASSIFICATION:

Occupied

Previous preservation work in the area has included the restoration of the John Felker House and the regular maintenance of other structures.

Current use: residential, office, commercial

IV. DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT

A. Narrative Description

1. General character, appearance, and historical development:

District is a small residential neighborhood that dates from the mid-19th century. Development occurred in this area due to Broad Street's status as Monroe's main street. The first houses were sited on large lots, as in a rural setting. Later buildings were constructed as infill. Several of the houses are quite large and architecturally important, while some of the later homes are more modest in character. Wood is the predominant building material found in the district. Styles range from the Plantation Plain to simple early 20th century townhouses.

2. Natural terrain, landmarks:

District has slightly rolling terrain, but there are no distinguishing natural landmarks.

3. Various parts of the district:

District is relatively uniform in character.

4. Pattern of land subdivision:

Broad Street curves at the northern edge of the district, breaking from the town's gridiron street pattern. Lots are irregular in size, with a few large lots included along with the smaller parcels. There appears to be little relationship between the street layout and the natural terrain.

5. Arrangement or placement of buildings:

Two of the buildings (the Walker-Fields House and the Wright-Henson House) sit on very large lots, at some distance from the street. The Wright-Henson House has an especially prominent setting, given the curve in Broad Street. Most of the other buildings in the district sit at right angles to the street, with a similar setback. Development is denser nearer the southern edge of the district.

6. Architectural characteristics:

District includes a variety of styles and house types. The earliest home (the John Felker House)

has both Plantation Plain and American Gothic characteristics, along with a later Victorian porch. Several homes in the district also date from the Victorian era. Like the Felker House, with its flat, jigsaw-cut balustrade, these homes usually feature decorative woodwork on the porch. Other decorative features are also employed in the gables and around doors and windows. Floor plans tend to be asymmetrical.

After the turn-of-the-century, housing styles changed. The Wright-Henson House is the district's finest example of Neo-classical architecture, and its monumental portico fits in well with its prominent setting. Other houses from this era are less imposing, and their designs and details are more closely tied to the bungalow and other early 20th century styles that came from pattern books. Porches remain an important element in the district, but decorative detailing is employed less often after 1900.

Wood is the major building material in the district, both for the main part of the structure as well as for detail work. The craftsmanship of the buildings appears to be of a high quality. This is especially true in the John Felker House, which features wall and ceiling boards throughout the house.

7. Landscape characteristics:

In most of the district, the landscaping is informal in nature as is typical in Monroe. Trees and bushes are used to good advantage to create a pleasant, natural setting. The landscaping surrounding the Walker-Fields House is more formal in nature. A stone wall separates the yard from the street, while extremely large bushes and trees block the view of the house, which is set back on a curved driveway. These features act together to create a rural and secluded atmosphere.

8. Archaeological potential:

Unknown

9. Exceptions to the general rule:

None appear to exist.

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B. Condition:

Excellent  
Good--general condition of the district  
Fair

C. Acreage of district (approximate):

15

D. Number of properties in district (approximate):

17

E. Intrusions and non-historic properties. Intrusions and non-historic properties are marked on the accompanying map.

Intrusions--General Description and Criteria for Inclusion:

Very few intrusions exist in the district, but a few lie immediately outside the district boundary. These are generally buildings built after the district's period of significance had passed. Because of their design, proportions, massing, site, or other features, these modern structures detract from the significance of the district. Criteria used included date of construction, design features, and compatibility with district.

Non-historic structures--General Description and Criteria for Inclusion:

Buildings in this category are generally structures built after the 1930s. While they generally blend into the district in terms of siting, proportion, massing, height, and design, they do not necessarily contribute to the significance of the district. These are usually very non-descript buildings, with few if any design details. Criteria for inclusion included date of construction, design features, and compatibility with district.

F. Boundaries of district

1. Brief boundary description and justification:

The district boundaries are shown on the accompanying map and include the remaining historical

residences along South Broad Street, south of the commercial area. The boundary was chosen due to the concentration of significant historic resources in the area.

2. Difference of areas outside the district:

A small collection of commercial buildings lie north of the district on Broad Street, breaking the continuity of the residential area between this district and the McDaniel Street district. To the east and northeast lie industrial buildings, clustered around the railroad line. South of the district is the Walton Mill and mill village. Vacant land separates the South Broad district and the Monland Place district on the west.

3. Tentative boundaries:

The boundaries are relatively clearcut.

G. Photographs:

Attached (See photographs #46-50)

H. Maps:

Attached (See Map M-33)

I. U.T.M. References:

A Z17 E249010 N3742040  
B Z17 E249180 N3741780  
C Z17 E248970 N3741660  
D Z17 E248780 N3742020

V. HISTORY

A. Summary of Historical Facts

1. Original owner/developer:

N/A

2. Subsequent developer:

N/A

3. Original use:

residential

4. Subsequent use:

Same

5. Architects:

Unknown

6. Contractors/builders:

Thomas Snow (John Felker House)\*

7. Other artists/craftsmen:

Unknown

8. Dates of development:

1850s to 1930s

B. Historical Narrative:

Since the founding of Monroe, Broad Street has been one of the major thoroughfares in the city, extending into commercial, residential, and industrial areas. Early in the life of the community residences began spreading along Broad Street south of the CBD, and for many years South Broad Street was a fashionable neighborhood. Large frame houses on large lots could be found in several places along the street. However, commercial encroachment from the north and industrial pressure from the south and east led to the demolition of part of the neighborhood and confinement of the remaining sections.

The earliest homes on South Broad Street generally sat on large lots which were often connected with the owner's extensive land holdings. Such a building was the John Felker House\*. Built c. 1857-1860 by Thomas Snow, the house was occupied in 1860 by John Felker, a merchant and one-time school commissioner in Monroe. The Felker family has played an important role in both the founding and the growth of the community, and it seems appropriate that John Felker would occupy this large and finely built home on the town's main street. As originally built, the house mixed Plantation Plain and American Gothic characteristics. The two-story Victorian porch with flat jigsaw detailing was added in 1886-1887.

For several years after the war, Monroe remained a small community with development clustered around the CBD. However, beginning in the 1880s and extending until the 1920s, the town grew rapidly, spurred by industrial development. This growth led to new construction activity on South Broad Street, with several of the homes reflecting the new prosperity.

Benefiting from the industrial expansion in Monroe, leading citizens began building large homes throughout the community. The prominent Walker family had held land in the South Broad area, and in 1894 Billington Sanders Walker purchased

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part of this land from his brother and built a two-story frame house\* at the corner of Davis Street and South Broad Street. B.S. Walker began his career as a lawyer, but later turned to banking and manufacturing interests. He was an organizer and president of both the Bank of Monroe and the Monroe Cotton Mills, in addition to serving as first president of the Cotton Manufacturers Association of Georgia. His large, impressive, and finely landscaped home reflects Walker's social standing in the community.

Further south of the Walker-Field residence, smaller frame houses were built from the 1880s to the 1920s. The earliest of these feature decorative scrollwork, bay windows, large porches, and other Victorian era features and detailing. Later homes exhibit less decorative work but retain much of the same massing, proportions, and siting as is found with the earlier homes. Residents included merchants and professional men.

The third monumental structure in the district is the Wright-Henson House\*, across from the Walker-Field House. This house was built shortly after the turn-of-the-century when the density of the neighborhood was rapidly increasing. W.C. Wright was a prominent citizen of Monroe, serving on the building committee for the 1900 public school. His large Neo-classical home was one of a series of imposing structures that lined South Broad Street shortly after 1900.

Although development continued in the South Broad Street area in the 1910s and 1920s, it was generally of a smaller nature. The prosperity that permitted construction of buildings such as the Walker and Wright homes also brought pressures that affected the neighborhood. By the early 1900s, warehouses and industries were locating along the rail line east of the district, stopping residential growth between South Broad and South Madison streets. The Walton Mill had its plant just south of the neighborhood, blocking growth in that direction. Finally, the CBD also pushed south, extending into the northern end of the district.

By the 1920s, South Broad Street was not as fashionable a neighborhood to live in as it had once been, and new developments to the north, west, and east lured homeowners in Monroe. In 1925, the Walton County Health Center was established in a residence on the west side of South Broad. The name was later changed to the Walton County Hospital, and in 1926 the facility was moved to another residence just south of the Walker-Field House, remaining there until a 1930 move.

Intrusions and changes in the district continued from the 1930s to the present. Commercial development moved to the northern edge of the district and the First Methodist Church

replaced a handsome residence north of the Wright-Henson House. Some strip commercial development also located within the district, and several of the residences now serve as offices. However, the late 1970s saw a renewed interest in the preservation of the neighborhood.

## VI. SIGNIFICANCE

### A. Areas of Significance:

Architecture  
Commerce  
Community Planning  
Industry  
Landscape Architecture  
Local History

### B. Statements of Significance:

Architecture: The buildings of the South Broad Street Historic District are significant both as a collection of representative architectural styles from the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and, in a few instances, as fine individual examples of certain styles and types.

Taken as a whole, the district reflects the changing architectural tastes of the citizens of Monroe over an 80 year span. The earliest homes (e.g., the John Felker House\*) rely heavily on indigenous architectural forms and designs, with only a small reference to national styles. Later homes in the district tend to reflect the opposite: a greater concern for national styles with some concessions for regional differences and individuality. While most of the later buildings are rather modest, they nonetheless employ forms, massing, and detailing found on fuller expressions of the Victorian and turn-of-the-century styles. Viewed as a whole, they reflect a middle class, small town response to the prevailing national mood in architecture, as well as a concern for good craftsmanship.

In at least three instances, individual buildings in the district stand apart as fine, local designs. The earliest of these, the John Felker House\*, shows the transition from the indigenous Plantation Plain style to the American Gothic. A later Victorian-era porch simply contributes to this evolutionary character. The Walker-Field House\* also displays a transitional nature, in that its asymmetrical floor plan comes from the Victorian era, yet it displays a somewhat formal facade. A more stylistic building is the Wright-Henson House\*, which was built in the early 1900s in a Neo-classical design. All three buildings are among the finest homes in Monroe and represent good local adaptations of regional and national architectural styles.

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Commerce: South Broad Street has long been home to merchants who have worked in the commercial sector of Monroe. John Felker, an early resident of the district, was a longtime merchant in the city. Another important figure in Monroe's commercial history is B.S. Walker. As one of the organizers and president of the Bank of Monroe, Walker's work stimulated both commercial and industrial growth in the community. These contributions helped shape Monroe into a small commercial center for nearby agricultural and industrial interests.

Community Planning: South Broad Street developed in an incremental fashion along a major historic traffic artery. This pattern of development is typical of many towns in Georgia, in that the street served as the framework for shaping the neighborhood. South Broad Street stands as a good local example of this type of community development.

Industry: B.S. Walker's contribution to the growth of industry in Monroe significantly affected the development of the town after 1890. In 1895, he helped organize the Monroe Cotton Mills, serving as its president until 1916. Walker also promoted industry statewide, serving as the first president of the Cotton Manufacturers Association of Georgia. Industry changed the pattern of development in Monroe after 1890, and Walker played a large and important role in the growth of industry.

Landscape Architecture: The lawns of the homes along South Broad Street are generally informally landscaped. However, the extensive use of trees, hedgerows, and bushes creates a naturalistic, residential character that is in stark contrast to the commercial and industrial areas surrounding the district. This transition is especially noticeable at the northern edge of the district where the Walker-Field House\* and the Wright-Henson House\* feature large green lots, towering trees, stone walls, large bushes, and long setbacks. These characteristics emphasize the residential nature of the area, are typical for the era, and remain important features of the district.

Local History: South Broad Street has had both prominent and typical middle-class residents. However, these individuals have had a significant impact on the development of Monroe. Therefore, the collective accomplishments of the residents of the district becomes an important element of the local history of the community.

\*Denotes a building that is still standing

VII. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

See Overview Statement

NOTE: See Maps M-31 and M-32  
FOR CONTINUATION OF McDaniel  
STREET DISTRICT

MAP 32

Historic Resources of Monroe, Walton Co., Ga.

DISTRICT SKETCH MAP M-33

Scale: 1" = 200'

Legend: As marked

McDaniel Street Historic District  
Monroe, Georgia  
Map M-33

- Contributing Structures
- ▣ Non-historic Structures
- Intrusions
- Boundaries
- ⊙ Photo Number/Direction

Other maps of district: M-31, M-32  
Map prepared January 1983 by David J. Brown

SOUTH BROAD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Monroe, Georgia  
Map M-33

- Contributing Structures
- ▣ Non-historic Structures
- Intrusions
- Boundaries
- ⊙ Photo Number/Direction

Map prepared January 1983 by David J. Brown

NONLAND PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Monroe, Georgia  
Map M-33

- Contributing Structures
- ▣ Non-historic Structures
- Intrusions
- Boundaries
- ⊙ Photo Number/Direction

Other maps of district: M-34  
Map prepared January 1983 by David J. Brown

NOTE: See Map M-34  
FOR CONTINUATION OF  
NONLAND PLACE DISTRICT

NOTE: See Maps M-34, M-35, M-43,  
AND M-44 FOR CONTINUATION OF MONROE  
AND WALTON PLACE DISTRICT

MONROE AND WALTON PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Monroe, Georgia  
Map M-33

- Contributing Structures
- ▣ Non-historic Structures
- Intrusions
- Boundaries
- ⊙ Photo Number/Direction

Other maps of district: M-34, M-35, M-43, M-44  
Map prepared January 1983 by David J. Brown

