

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 16000268

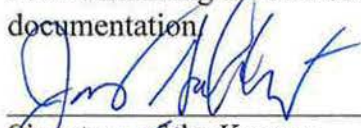
Date Listed: 5/18/2016

Property Name: Gaither House

County: Leon

State: FL

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

5-18-2016

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: "African American" is hereby deleted under Cultural Affiliation, since Criterion D is not claimed.

The period of significance ends in 1970; although criteria consideration G is not checked, 1970 serves as the most logical end of the POS.

- Note regarding Split-T offense (page 8-5) – Coach Gaither might have emphasized and written about the Split –T in the 1950s and 60s, but the formation and offense was introduced in 1941 at the University of Missouri under Don Faurot and popularized by Bud Wilkinson at the University of Oklahoma after WWII.

The Florida State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

RECEIVED 2280

268

APR 08 2016

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name GAITHER HOUSE

other names/site number FMSF#LE6177

2. Location

street & number 212 Young Street N/A not for publication

city or town Tallahassee N/A vicinity

state Florida code FL county Leon code 073 zip code 32301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Glossa Lade Lotane 3/29/14
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Jan [Signature]

5-18-2016

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"N/A"

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Ranch

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

RECREATION/CULTURE

Period of Significance

1954 - 1970

Significant Dates

1954

1969

Significant Person

Gaither, Alanzo S. "Jake"

Cultural Affiliation

African American

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 0.34 approx. acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	7	6	0	9	2	5	3	3	6	8	7	8	4
	Zone	Easting						Northing							
2															
	Zone	Easting						Northing							

3													
	Zone	Easting						Northing					
4													
	Zone	Easting						Northing					

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Corbett, Laura Lee/Robert O. Jones, Historic Preservationist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date March 2016

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone 850-245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Cornelius D. Jones

street & number 711 Floral Avenue telephone 850-510-4957

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32310

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1 **GAITHER HOUSE, TALLAHASSEE,
LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SUMMARY

The Gaither House is located at 212 Young Street, in Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida. The one story brick home built in 1954, is in the Ranch Style with a hipped roof. The 2,745 square foot home has an irregular foot print due to the carport, screened patio, and trophy room extensions. The house has a car port and recessed entry porch with concrete stairs on the west side of the driveway. The home's façade features a granite plaque. The property is in excellent condition and its integrity is high.

SETTING

The Gaither home is located in a historically African-American neighborhood adjacent to the east side of the FMU campus that developed during the 1920s and 1930s.¹ Most of the land within the sub-division was owned by Mr. Barbour and a Barbourville Drive is named for him. The houses are set back from the streets on relatively narrow lots with landscaped shrubbery and mature trees. The homes were built for faculty and staff of the university. Houses in the neighborhood are built in Bungalow, English Cottage, Minimal Traditional and Ranch Styles, and the Gaither's Ranch house compliments them in scale and style.

The Gaither House was constructed on lots numbers 34 and 35 of Florida A & M Subdivision Unit Number 3. This area is located just north of the Florida A & M Addition plat. The Gaither's purchased these lots from J. Luther Thomas in March of 1954, for the sum of ten dollars "and other good and valuable considerations."² This was one year after the state legislature recognized the status and growth of the institution's academic program by changing the official school name from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College (FAMC) to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU).

The home was possibly constructed by R. E. Webber, a masonry instructor at FAMC who built much of the nearby Speed Subdivision, along with Marion Watson. Their company name was named Square Deal Construction. W. E. Carr, a mason and construction

¹ Beth LaCivita, "Tallahassee Neighborhood Survey Phase IV," (LE4913), 1997, p.3-12

² Warranty Deed 156, Leon County Clerk of Court, p.349.

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supervisor at the Federal Correction Institution, also built many homes in the Speed Subdivision, is another possible contractor, or a Mr. Bellamy who was another prolific local mason at the time.³

Young Street runs east/west through the neighborhood with Adams Street, and major thoroughfare to the east, and Martin Luther King Boulevard to the west. Martin Luther King Boulevard forms the eastern boundary of Florida A & M University. Landscaping is minimal on the front lawn with a few small rose bushes, an agave plant, and large oak trees surrounding the lot. Concrete stairs and a metal railing are located on the west side of the driveway (Photo #1). A Florida Historical Marker is centered in the front yard next to the street (Photo #2).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Exterior

The home's exterior walls are red brick with a continuous foundation. The hip on hip asphalt shingle roof has a low pitch, gable end addition to the rear (north elevation). With the exception of a picture window, all windows are 1/1 double hung vinyl sashes that match the original fenestration.

The south façade has centered in the brick wall a granite plaque from the "Jake" Gaither Athletic Center and Gymnasium (Photo #3). The small recessed entry porch is located off center of the façade with a scrolled pattern wrought iron railing (photo), brick steps and a tile floor (Photo #4). A picture windows is located to the west, and two ribbons of three windows are to the east. The center portion of the façade extends about a foot from the rest of the elevation.

The west elevation has a one-car carport and a screened porch and both protrude from the west elevation. Under the carport, located at the southwest corner of the home, are two sets of double hung sash windows and concrete stairs with a metal railing leading up to a side door of the home (Photo #5). The screened porch is

³ Faye Daniels. Mr. Muldrow, e-mail and telephone interviews, August 24, 2015.

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located north of the carport with screening on three sides above several courses of brick. The entrance to the screened porch from the exterior faces the carport. It is connected to the interior of the main house by a set of double doors. At the northwest corner of this elevation are two 1/1, double sash windows just above the ground level.

The east elevation is comprised of several staggered exterior walls (Photo #6). A door surrounded by wood framing is located towards the center of this elevation, and three 1/1 double hung sash windows are on this elevation. Remnants of a masonry grill, planter beds (Photo #7), and a clothes line are in this side yard.

The north elevation is comprised of two exterior walls staggered at different locations due to the 1950s addition. The very rear wall (near the north property line) is low to the ground, with no windows and a very low pitched gable end roof (Photo #8). Another exterior north elevation wall is located towards the center of the home and is part of the original core of the structure (Photo #9).

Interior

The front porch opens into a pine paneled entry room with wood floors (Photo #10) which is connected to the living room, dining room and kitchen. To the immediate right, east, one enters the living room which has a brick fireplace (Photo #11), a large picture window in the south wall, and is connected by double pocket doors to a pine paneled den with wood floors on the east (Photo #12). The den connects to a small paneled bedroom at the southeast corner of the house complete with a cedar lined closet (Photo #13). A renovated bathroom is connected to this bedroom and the den.

The master bedroom in the northeast corner has wood floors and (Photo #14) is connected at an angle to an interior hallway. This hallway features a built in ironing board and connects to the master bathroom. The master bathroom (Photo #15) retains its original blue and white tiles including the hexagonal tiles on the floor and countertop, fixtures and linen closet. The hallway also connects to the dining room.

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The dining room has an original wood, double hung sash window passing into the entry room as well as an exterior door leading to the backyard.

The kitchen (Photo #16) is accessible from the front of the house via the entry room. The kitchen is large and has been renovated. A vestibule connects the kitchen to the rear trophy room and the screened side porch.

The large rear trophy room (Photo #17) once accommodated a 75 feet tall, 3 feet wide pine tree, with the trunk extending up through an opening in the roof. This large room is carpeted, but still has a circular depression where the pine tree once grew. The trophy room connects to the yard at the east elevation via a bathroom.

ALTERATIONS

Historically the trophy room was added by the Gaithers several years after the home was constructed. The house was fully renovated in 2014, which included a full kitchen renovation, full renovation of the second bathroom, the addition of a third bathroom at the trophy room and replacing carpeting and some light fixtures. The exterior windows, doors and roof were replaced.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section number 8 Page 1 **GAITHER HOUSE, TALLAHASSEE,
LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SUMMARY

The Gaither House is nominated to the National Register for local significance under Criteria A and B for the home's association with Alonzo "Jake" Gaither, and Entertainment/Recreation and Ethnic Heritage: Black. Gaither coached Florida Agriculture & Mechanics University (FAMU) football program into a nationally successful collegiate team. Gaither used his athletic program as a way to promote civil rights for African American during the years of enforced segregation in the South. His football team played the first integrated collegiate football game in the South against the University of Tampa in 1969, and won. Noted political and community leaders often sought his advice and many prominent African-American and white sports and public figures frequented the Gaither home during the Civil Rights era. The period of significance is 1954, the year the house was built, until 1970, when schools in Leon County were integrated.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Entertainment/Recreation

In 1869 the first intercollegiate football game was held between New Jersey schools, Princeton and Rutgers University. Played with a round soccer sized ball, twenty five players a team tried to put the ball through the opponents' goal post without carrying or throwing the ball. In the 1870s a cross-bar was placed on the goal posts at ten feet, and the number of players were reduced to fifteen. In the 1880s, rules for scrimmage, downs, and yardage were incorporated. In 1892, two African American schools in North Carolina, Biddle, now Johnson C. Smith University, and Livingston College, met for the first black collegiate game.¹ Teams were largely self-organized in the early years and were frowned upon by school administrations as being non-scholastic and brutal.²

African American athletic teams received little acknowledgement from the American public who were focused on white professional and collegiate teams. In the first half of the

¹ George E. Curry, "Jake Gaither: America's Most Famous Black Coach," New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1977, p.108.

² John R. Thelin and Jason R. Edwards, "College Athletics – History of Athletics in U.S. Colleges and Universities," www.collegefootballpol.com/history (accessed February 8, 2016).

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20th century, black collegiate athletes were not viewed as potential players in the All American Football League (AAFL) or National Football League (NFL), and black and white colleges did not play each other. The first black collegiate players to be drafted into the professionals were Kenny Washington and Woody Strode from the University of California Los Angeles, into the Los Angeles Rams. Also Marion Motley and William “Bill” Willis of Ohio State University were drafted into the Cleveland Browns. All four men became professionals in 1946.³ In 1956, Jim Parker from Ohio State was the first black to receive the Outland Trophy given to the best lineman in the nation.

Many schools were founded to educate the newly freed slaves in the South after the American Civil War. These schools were organized often times by philanthropists or religious denominations, but sometimes by governors and legislatures to preserve institutionalized segregation and inequality in public schools. In time, the “black colleges subverted the Jim Crow regime. They served as the agency of black achievement and the epicenter of black pride, a kind of secular equivalent to the African-American church.”⁴ These black colleges taught the professors that then taught the classes that graduated the doctors, ministers, artists, engineers, pharmacists, journalists, lawyers, and fostered leadership skills and pride. This was the deliberate role that Alonso “Jake” Gaither set for his athletic programs.

Ethnic Heritage/Black

Well into the 20th century, African-American Floridians were treated as sub-class citizens through a series of laws and customs designed to reinforce racial inequality. These included voting rights restrictions, lack of access to a quality education, and segregated public facilities, transportation and housing. Reflecting on his experience facing such obstacles, Gaither stated “We traveled by bus which meant that we were subject to highway patrolmen interfering sometimes... We had trouble getting food to eat. They wouldn’t serve us in most of the eating places. We had trouble with restrooms at service stations, they’d tell us we have no place for you, no restrooms where you could go...It’s

³ Filip Bondy, “Before Jackie Robinson, Four Broke the Color Line,” New York Daily News, September 16, 2014.

⁴ Samuel G. Freedman, “Breaking the Line,” New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013, p.2.

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hell to be a Black man in the Deep South.”⁵

FAMU students launched a bus boycott in May of 1956. This brought the civil rights movement to Tallahassee as part of a larger effort to bring racial equality throughout the South. The demonstration efforts were the culmination of years of local and state laws and customs designed to perpetuate segregation of the races. In the third bus boycott to take place in the South, Tallahassee’s 10,000 black citizens united in non-violent protests against segregation.⁶ FAMU students later staged peaceful sit-ins and were jailed en mass in March 1960, choosing to serve out their sentences rather than accept bail. As of 1962, Tallahassee was the only major city in Florida that had not desegregated its downtown lunchroom facilities, thus triggering more sit-ins. FAMU students again picketed the city’s segregated theaters in 1963.⁷ That same year, the airport, bus terminals, and lunch counters at national chain stores were integrated in Tallahassee. However, most locally owned stores remained segregated until the passage of the civil rights bill in 1964.⁸ The Civil Rights Act, despite opposition from Florida’s congressional delegation, was passed, and the Voting Rights Act was subsequently passed in 1965. Despite these two high points of the movement, the integration of Tallahassee public pools and of the municipal hospital were not yet realized. The final phase of full integration occurred in 1970 when local public schools were desegregated.⁹

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Alonzo Smith “Jake” Gaither

Born April 11, 1903, in Dayton, Tennessee, Alonzo Smith "Jake" Gaither was one of six children of the Rev. A. D. Gaither, a Methodist minister. At age 13 he moved to Middlesboro, Kentucky and later attended high school in Memphis, Tennessee.¹⁰ Gaither earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Knoxville College in 1927, where he was an

⁵ “Teacher, Coach, Citizen” Great Floridians Film Series, Florida Department of State, 1984.

⁶ Glenda Alice Rabby, “The Pain and the Promise, The Struggle for Civil Rights in Tallahassee, Florida,” Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1999 p.3.

⁷ Ibid. p.5.

⁸ Ibid. p.7.

⁹ Ibid. p.8.

¹⁰ David L. Porter “Biographical Dictionary of American Sports: 1992-1995 supplement for Baseball, Football, Basketball and other sports,” Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1995, p.429

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Section number 8 Page 4 **GAITHER HOUSE, TALLAHASSEE,
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All-Conference end on the football team, and excelled on the debate team. He went on to become a high school teacher of mathematics, civics, and debating as well as coach of all athletic teams at Henderson Institute in North Carolina, from 1927-1935. Both his debating and athletic teams at Henderson won several state championships. In 1935, Gaither served as Assistant Coach and later Head Coach at St. Paul Polytechnic Institute in Lawrenceville, Virginia, until 1943. He earned a master's degree in Physical Education from Ohio State University in 1937. He subsequently became an assistant coach at Florida A&M College that same year, a position he held until 1944. Diagnosed with malignant brain tumors which caused temporary blindness in 1942, he was sidelined for a more than a year uncertain if he would live.¹¹ He told himself that his illness was “like a football game that I’ve got to win.”¹²

During his career, Gaither was named Small College Coach of the Year three times by the National Collegiate Athletic Association, received a Distinguished American Award from the Walter Camp Foundation, and received the A.A. Stagg Award from the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA). He was a member of the President's Council on Physical Fitness. In 1961 he was elected to the Helms Athletic Hall of Fame. In 1963 he was given an award by the Football Writers of America.¹³ Chosen in 1969 as a permanent trustee of the American Football Coaches Association, Gaither served on numerous committees, including that of the Orange Bowl. In 1975, he became the first coach from a largely African-American college to be inducted into the College Hall of Fame of the National Football Foundation, the greatest honor the game can give. He has been enshrined into the College Football, Florida Sports, FAMU Sports, National Association of College Directors of Athletics, Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference and SIAC halls of fame. In 1984 he was named a Great Floridian by resolution of the state legislature. These honors were bestowed on Gaither while he was living at his home on Young Street. He was posthumously awarded the AFCA Trailblazer award in 2008, his third honor from the association. In addition, Middlesboro, Kentucky, awarded Gaither as an Outstanding Former Citizen, and a Tallahassee street, park, golf course, community center and gymnasium are named for him.

¹¹ Ibid. p.429.

¹² Wyatt Blassingame, “Jake Gaither Winning Coach,” Champaign, Illinois: Garrard Publishing Company, 1969, p.66.

¹³ Ibid., p.89.

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Entertainment/Recreation

Gaither served 25 years as the head football coach at FAMU, from 1945 to 1969. He built a virtually unfunded athletic program, and he lead the Rattlers football team to win 6 National Black Championships, 22 Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference titles, and produced 36 All-American players. His team's record was 203-36-4, a percentage of .844 and were unbeaten in 1957, 1959 and 1961. The Rattlers were 93-7-1 in a 10-year span between 1953 and 1962. Gaither often stated that he liked his players "mobile, hostile and agile." He retired in 1969, the same year he made history when FAMU defeated the University of Tampa, the first college football game in the South where a black team played a predominantly white team. Gaither remained on as athletic director and chairman of the Health and Physical Education Department at FAMU until 1973.

Within a decade of becoming the football coach, Gaither had developed a scouting network across the State of Florida. Former players and graduates that had become coaches in black high schools, would keep him appraised of their best players. Gaither did not want just talent but talent with character, and if the high school coach had any doubt he would not mention the student. Gaither wanted the "hungry boy," who clearly aspired to accomplish something.¹⁴

In his early years Gaither had been denied attendance at a coaching workshop hosted at Duke University because he was black. In the mid-1950s he began hosting his own coaching clinic for college coaches from black and white schools. His instruction was primarily carried on outside under shady trees, and he did draw white coaches including Bear Bryant from the University of Alabama.¹⁵

The popularity of his clinics grew when Gaither in 1956, developed what was known as the Split T offense. By spacing the offensive line further apart, 48 feet rather than the customary 33 feet, the options for offensive play were expanded. It had been customary that the positioning of the defense determined the offensive options, but Gaither's new approach changed that. Coaches across the country took note and praised the dramatic

¹⁴ Freedman, p.22,23.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.25.

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innovation. FAMU from 1956 to 1962 won 62 games and lost only 5, and the points spread was phenomenal and grabbed everyone's attention.¹⁶ Gaither authored a book titled "The Split-Line T Offense," with New York publisher Prentice-Hall in 1963.

Gaither was proud of the Rattler's winning records, but it was his last big game prior to his retirement as football coach that he knew to be a great accomplishment. On November 29, 1969, Florida A & M played University of Tampa, in Tampa Stadium. The Tampa football team played against Gaither's Rattlers, a black/white collegiate contest never before played in the South. The 47,000 tickets were sold out days before. The Tampa coach was Fran Curci who had played integrated football in the military and a short stay in the American Football League. Curci recruited players to his team based on talent, and he felt a black and white college matchup in Florida would be a big attraction for his small University team. Curci had suggested a matchup to Gaither in 1968. Gaither wanted to demonstrate that his Rattlers could equal the play of a white team, and he wanted the event to be conducted peacefully. A peaceable contest was the intent of both teams, but the volatility of Civil Rights tensions was a reality in Tampa and the South. The two individual sides of the stadium were sold to the two school's fans, and separate programs were printed by each school. A special guest of Gaither's in the press box was Eddie Robinson, the football coach of Gaither's main collegiate rival, the Grambling College Tigers. Gaither and Curci meet in the field for a pre-game greeting and handshake. It was an evenly matched game with the score tied on three occasions. In the last two minutes of play Florida A & M led 32-28, and Tampa moved the ball to the Rattler's 14 yard line. On a fourth down pass, defender Leroy Charlton knocked away the ball. Florida A & M took possession and ran out the last seconds on the clock to win. Coach Curci ran onto mid-field and hugged Gaither and congratulated him.¹⁷

Ethnic Heritage: Black – Civil Rights

It was during these years that Gaither recruited the best black football players in Florida. The vast majority of Florida's black high school coaches were FAMU graduates who had been under the tutelage of Gaither. A 1954 Federal Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v.*

¹⁶ Ibid., p.31; George E. Curry, "Jake Gaither: America's Most Famous Black Coach," New York City: Dodd, Mead & Co., p.63-65.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.110,111; Freedman, p. 249-255.

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LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Board of Education of Topeka to integrate schools had little effect in Florida, where legally sanctioned segregation in the classroom prevailed. Forty-two of his players went on to play in the National Football League, many of whom were the early African-Americans to integrate the NFL. They included Olympic gold medal sprinter Bob Hayes who played for the Dallas Cowboys; Al Denson; Robert Paremore; Curtis Miranda; Walt Highsmith; Carleton Oats; Bobby Felts; and Hewritt Dixon.¹⁸

Gaither retired as coach in 1969, the same year FAMU defeated the University of Tampa.¹⁹ The 1960s were the height of the civil-rights movement and Gaither was a behind-the-scenes adviser, working to keep the peace. According to former FAMU President Frederick Humphries "Jake had a great deal of influence on whites as well as blacks, I thought he helped immensely. He was always in the background, saying the appropriate things to achieve the ends of the civil rights movement." Knowing how to compromise, Gaither was sometimes criticized for not being on the front lines of the civil rights movement. "He took front stage on the things he was an expert on, like football. On the things he was not an expert he still had a sense of justice and made his thoughts known."²⁰

Gaither was an adviser to Florida Governor Leroy Collins and assisted Collins in soothing tensions in 1956, when blacks integrated public beaches in Delray Beach. Trouble was averted when the governor combined a call for tolerance with shrewdness. According to C. Spencer Pompey, a retired Palm Beach County school principal, "He sent two people down from Tallahassee. One was a man he sent to talk to the black and white establishment. The other was Jake Gaither, then the football coach at Florida A&M University."²¹ Immediately after passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Collins served as director of the Federal Community Relations Service, organizing the agency at the request of President Lyndon Johnson to try to keep the peace. Collins later noted that "Jake was a black leader committed to reform but he counseled patience and understanding. This was misunderstood by some blacks who felt that he was not being aggressive in his black

¹⁸ George E. Curry, "Jake Gaither: America's Most Famous Black Coach," New York City: Dodd, Mead & Co., p.67.

¹⁹ Ibid. p.66.

²⁰ "Florida A&M's Gaither Was True Football Success Story." *Knight-Ridder/Tribune*, February 27, 1994.

²¹ "Floridian Of The Century Former Gov. Leroy Collins' Legacy In Florida Is Undisputed, According To Those Touched By Him." *Sun Sentinel/Tallahassee Bureau*, March 17, 1991.

**United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section number 8 Page 8 **GAITHER HOUSE, TALLAHASSEE,
LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

loyalty. All the while Jake sought change, but through conciliation, adjustment and better understanding worked out around tables, and not by force and destruction in the streets.”²² Other noted political and community leaders often sought Gaither’s advice as well. Former Florida governors Claude Kirk, C. Farris Bryan, W. Haydon Burns and Leroy Collins visited the Gaither home.²³ During the heated years of the 1950s and 1960s, many prominent African-American and white sports and public figures also frequented the Gaither home, signaling acceptance of America’s new integrated social structure. Gaither and his wife, Sadie, hosted a gathering at their home after every FAMU home football game. On these occasions, the Gaither residence was filled with alumni, assistant coaches, college professors, administrators, clergymen and other community leaders. When the Florida Legislature honored Gaither as a Great Floridian, the resolution read that “Coach Gaither broke through racial barriers and he did it before it was fashionable.”²⁴

²² “Teacher, Coach, Citizen” Great Floridian Film Series, Florida Department of State, 1984.

²³ Florida Historical Marker Application #HM-0146, 2014, p.1.

²⁴ “Teacher, Coach, Citizen” Great Floridians Film Series, Florida Department of State, 1984.

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LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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Warranty Deed #156, page 349, Leon County Clerk of Court.

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Section number 10 Page 1 **GAITHER HOUSE, TALLAHASSEE
LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Fla A&M Unit 3 Lots 34 35 DB 168/393 OR 1489/2018 2354/2051 OR 2388/157
Property parcel #4101460000340
Acres 0.34

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This property is historically associated with the Gaither House.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number Photos Page 1 **GAITHER HOUSE, TALLAHASSEE,
LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

PHOTOGRAPHIC LIST

1. Gaither House, 212 Young Street, Tallahassee
2. Leon County, Florida
3. Laura Lee Corbett
4. September 2015
5. Main, south elevation, facing northeast
6. Photo #1 of 17

Items 1 – 4 are the same for the following photographs.

5. Florida Historic Marker by the street, looking north
6. Photo #2 of 17

5. Plaque in side of the house, looking north
6. Photo #3 of 17

5. Porch and carport, looking east
6. Photo #4 of 17

5. Carport and west elevation with screened porch to the north, looking east
6. Photo #5 of 17

5. East elevation, looking west
6. Photo #6 of 17

5. Planter at east side of house, looking west
6. Photo #7 of 17

5. North elevation of original house most northerly extension, looking south
6. Photo #8 of 17

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Section number Photos Page 2 **GAITHER HOUSE, TALLAHASSEE,
LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA**

5. North elevation of most northerly extension, looking southwest
6. Photo #9 of 17

5. Interior, entry, looking north
6. Photo #10 of 17

5. Fireplace in livingroom, looking north
6. Photo #11 of 17

5. Den, looking east
6. Photo #12 of 17

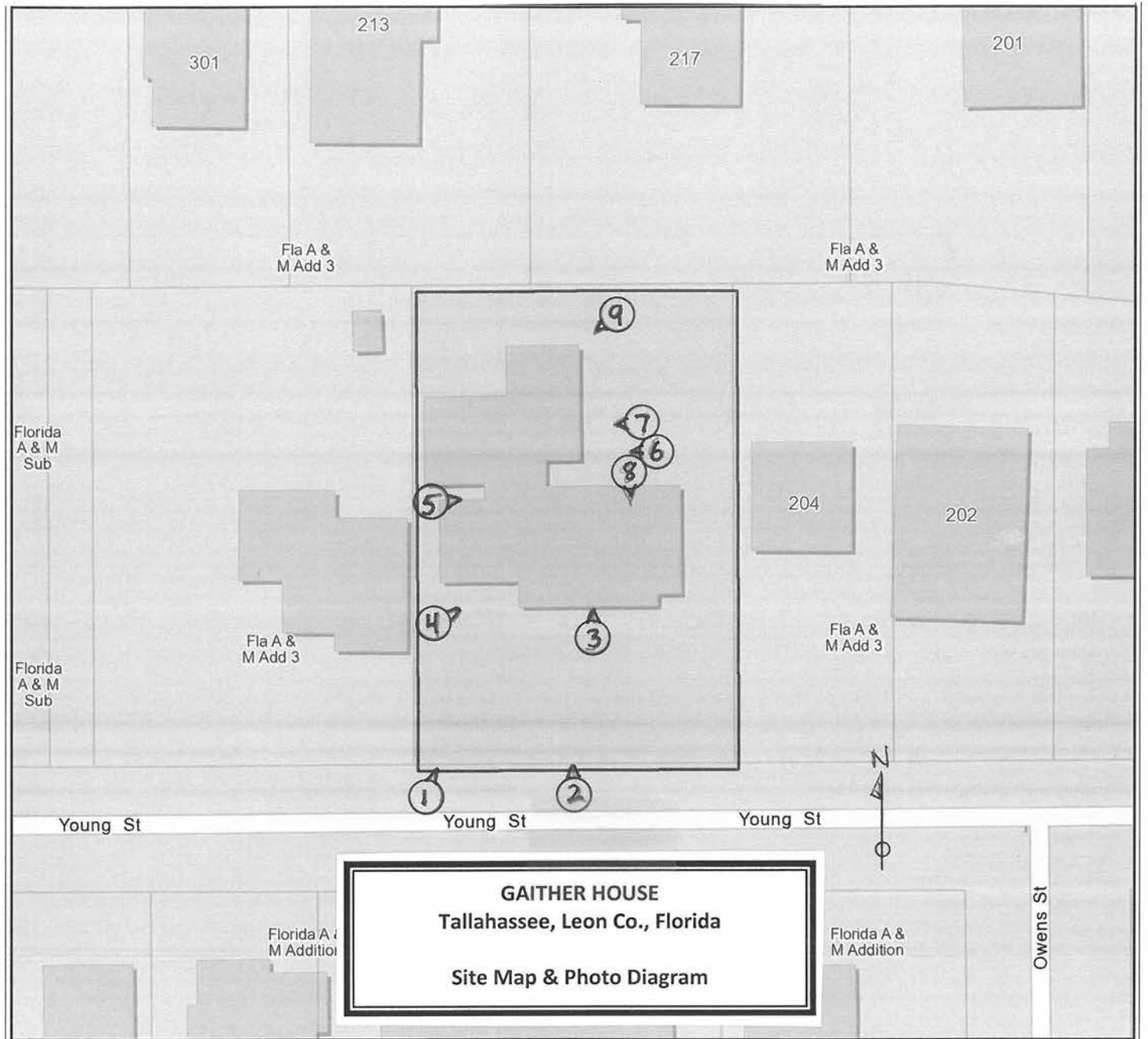
5. Cedar lined closet in eastern bedroom, looking north
6. Photo #13 of 17

5. Master bedroom, looking southwest
6. Photo #14 of 17

5. Bathroom for master bedroom, looking west
6. Photo #15 of 17

5. Kitchen, looking southeast
6. Photo #16 of 17

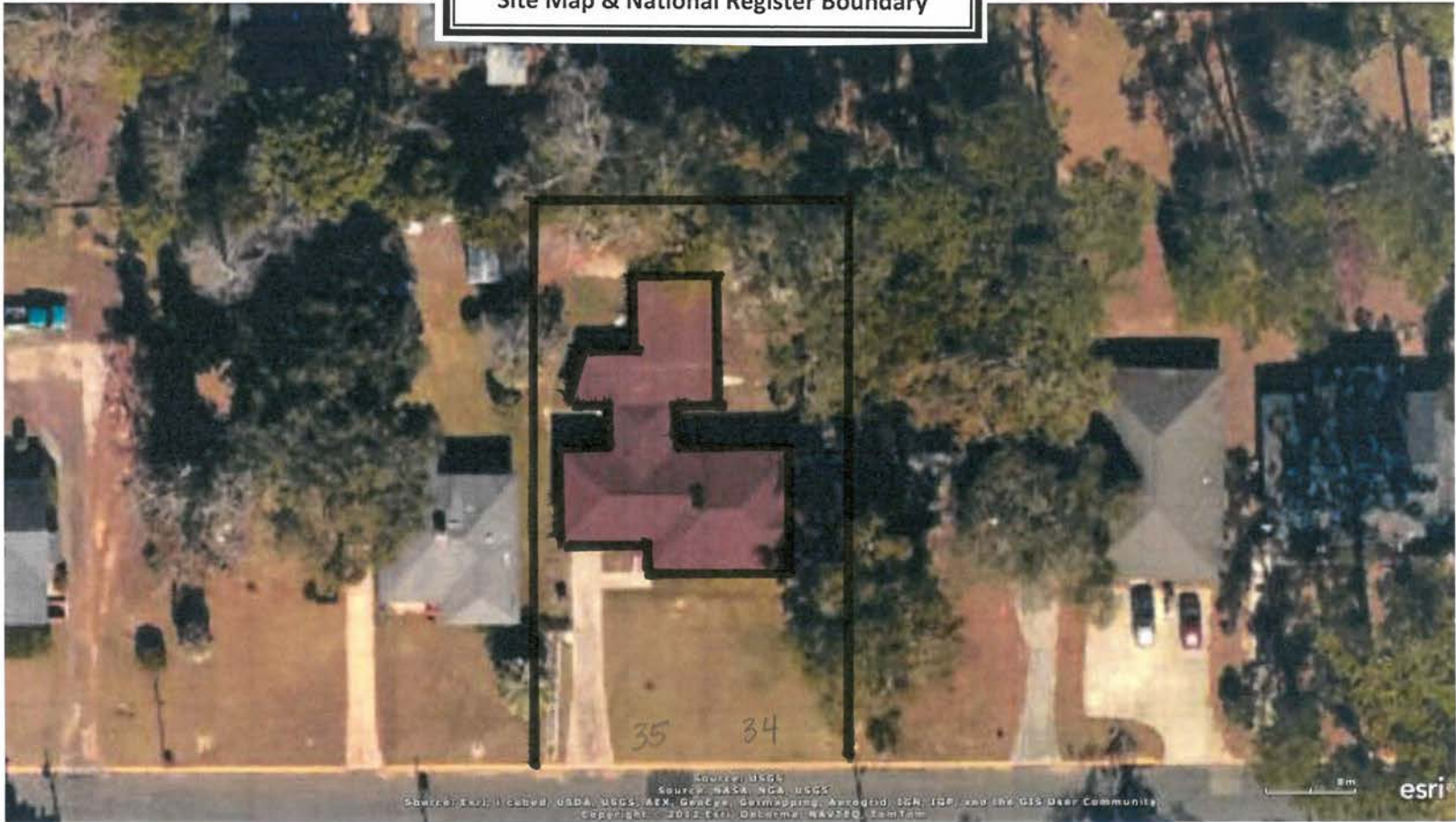
5. Trophy room, looking west
6. Photo #17 of 17





GAITHER HOUSE
Tallahassee, Leon Co., Florida

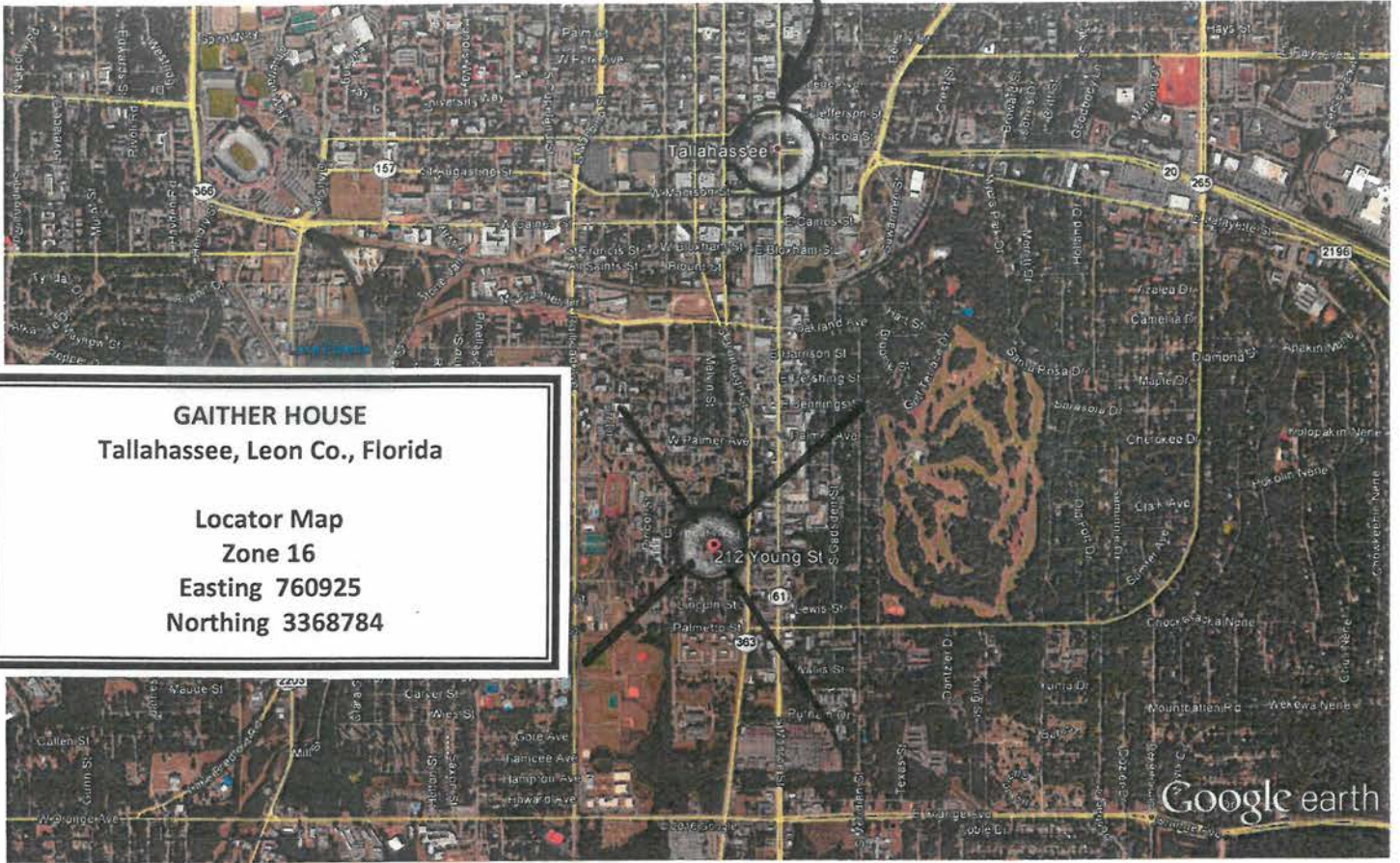
Site Map & National Register Boundary



Source: USGS
Source: NOAA, USGS
Source: Esri, DeLorme, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, IGP, and the GIS User Community
COPYRIGHT © 2012 Esri, DBCI/IMA/NAVTEQ, TomTom



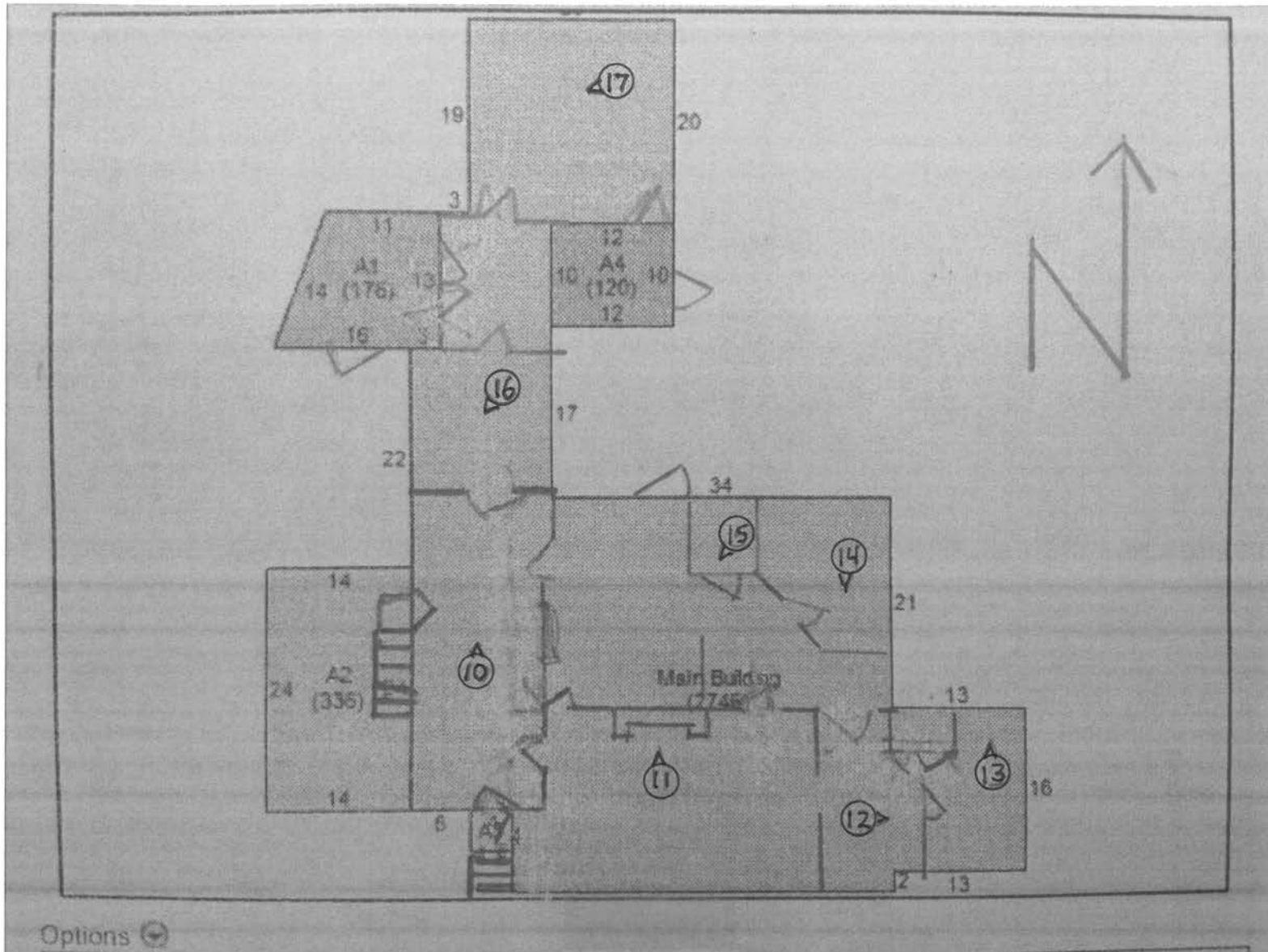
CAPITAL



GAITHER HOUSE
Tallahassee, Leon Co., Florida

Locator Map
Zone 16
Easting 760925
Northing 3368784





GAITHER HOUSE
Tallahassee, Leon Co., Florida
Floor Plan & Photo Diagram





COACH ALONZO "JAKE" GAITHER
1890-1968

Alonzo "Jake" Gaither was born on August 10, 1890, in the town of Gaithersburg, Maryland. He was the son of John and Mary Gaither. He attended the University of Maryland and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1912. He then worked for the U.S. Forest Service for several years before moving to the state of Georgia in 1918. In Georgia, he worked for the Georgia Forestry Department and later for the Georgia Power Company. He was a member of the Georgia Forestry Society and the Georgia Forestry Association. He died on June 15, 1968, in the town of Gaithersburg, Maryland. He is buried in the Gaithersburg Cemetery.

THE "JAKE" GAITHER
ATHLETIC CENTER & GYMNASIUM

PIGSKIN CLUB OF WASHINGTON, D. C. AWARD 1953
GASPARILLA FAIR FLORIDA CITIZEN AWARD 1954
JAKE GAITHER RECREATION CENTER AND PARK 1954
TALLAHASSEE QUARTERBACK CLUB AWARD 1956
100/WRONG CLUB COACH OF THE DECADE AWARD 1960
HELMS HALL OF FAME AWARD 1961
N. C. A. A. SMALL COLLEGE COACH OF THE YEAR 1962
FLA. SPORTS WRITERS HALL OF FAME AWARD 1962
FOOTBALL WRITERS ASSO. OF AMERICA AWARD 1963
KNOXVILLE COLLEGE HALL OF FAME AWARD 1963
RECORD (1945-1964) 165 WINS, 25 LOSSES, 4 TIES





























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Gaither House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: FLORIDA, Leon

DATE RECEIVED: 4/08/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/29/16
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/16/16 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/24/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000268

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 5-18-2016 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Home of important coach + local Civil Rights champion.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+B

REVIEWER J. Gabbert DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/ see attached SLR Y/

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

**TALLAHASSEE-LEON COUNTY
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD**

423 EAST VIRGINIA STREET
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301
850-488-7334 (tel) 850-488-7333 (fax)

November 20, 2015

Attention: Desiree Estabrook, MHP, CNU-A
Historic Preservation Supervisor for Survey & Registration
Division of Historical Resources
Florida Department of State
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Re: National Register Nomination
212 Young Street – Alonzo “Jake” Gaither House

Dear Ms. Estabrook:

I'm writing in regard to the nomination of the Alonzo “Jake” Gaither house located at 212 Young Street, Tallahassee, FL to the National Register of Historic Places. The Tallahassee-Leon County Architectural Review Board recommended the property at 212 Young Street for listing in the Tallahassee-Leon County Local Register of Historic Places on November 4, 2015. The Tallahassee-Leon County Architectural Review Board is pleased to support the nomination of the Gaither House to the National Register of Historic Places.

Thank you for your consideration of the Architectural Review Board's support and recommendation, and please let me know if any additional information is needed.

Sincerely,



Melissa Stoller, Ph.D.
Historic Preservation Officer/
TTHP Executive Director



RECEIVED 2280

APR 08 2016

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

RICK SCOTT
Governor

KEN DETZNER
Secretary of State

March 29, 2016

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs
Department of the Interior
1201 Eye Street, N.W., 8th Floor
Washington DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Gaither House (FMSF #8LE6177), in Leon County**, to the National Register of Historic Places. The related materials (digital images, maps, and site plan) are included.

Please do not hesitate to contact Bob Jones at Robert.Jones@DOS.myflorida.com or (850) 245.6333, if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Alissa Slade Lotane".

Alissa Slade Lotane
Chief, Bureau of Historic Preservation
& Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

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