

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered FEB 19 1988  
MAR 30 1988

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic West Hancock Avenue Historic District

and or common West Hancock Avenue Historic District

**2. Location**

street & number Glenhaven and West Hancock Avenues  
Reese, Chase, Billups, Rock Springs, and Indale streets <sup>N/A</sup> not for publication

city, town Athens <sup>N/A</sup> vicinity of

state Georgia code 013 county Clarke code 059

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Owners

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Clarke County Courthouse

city, town Athens state Georgia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title None has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local \_\_\_\_\_

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Description

The West Hancock Avenue Historic District is a historic black community that was originally settled in the rural outskirts of Athens and is now entirely within the city limits. Athens is located in Clarke County and is on the northeastern Georgia Piedmont, approximately seventy miles east of Atlanta. The district is situated in the area bounded by Franklin Street on the east, Broad Street to the south, The Plaza on the west, and Hill Street on the north, to the west of Athens' central business district. The northern and central sections of the district developed as an extension of the city's original gridiron street pattern. This street pattern evolved into an irregular street design as reflected in the portion of the district that lies west of Rock Springs Street. Side streets drop off dramatically from Hancock Avenue, which is laid out on an undulating ridge and is the main transportation route through the district. The land is divided into small rectangular lots, with houses fronting close to the street at a similar setback.

Most of the houses are one-story, wood-framed, vernacular-style structures with front porches and pyramidal, gable, or hip roofs. There are also several shotgun-style and Craftsman/Bungalow-style houses, as well as a few two-story structures. The one-story houses have various exterior architectural features including central doors, double pen or two front doors, recessed porches, dormer windows, and front gables. Other stylistic details consist of Greek Revival doors with transoms and sidelights, Neoclassical porches, Queen Anne fishscale shingles, and Victorian porch posts.

The Ebenezer Baptist Church, located on the southwest corner of Chase and Reese Streets, is a 20th-century vernacular church with Georgian Revival details. The brick building has a modified cross plan, gable roof, and a central spire. Bright blue and white marbled glass is featured in the large, round-arched windows located along the sides of the sanctuary. The main facade features a portico supported by six unfluted columns and three entrances, each topped by a heavy, broken pediment.

There are several historic commercial buildings within the district. These structures are one-story, frame buildings and are usually found on corner lots along Hancock Street. Combination commercial/residential development is located along Hancock at the corners of Chase and Billups Streets.

Landscaping within the district consists of low shrubbery, boxwood, hedgerows, and oak trees. Many of the yards feature flowering plants. Several of the streets have sidewalks and some houses have low retaining walls near the street.

The boundary of the West Hancock Avenue Historic District is determined by the concentration of remaining historic black resources within the community. The district is bounded on the east and northeast by two National Register Historic Districts, Cobbham and Milledge Avenue Historic District. The areas to the south and west of the district are bounded by black neighborhoods which are similar in design and scale but developed in the 1940s, after the historic period. Nonhistoric development within the district is also similar in design and scale to historic buildings and does not detract from the integrity of the district.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) black history
<b>Specific dates</b>	ca. 1890 - 1930	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	multiple	

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

### Statement of Significance

The West Hancock Avenue Historic District is a historical residential environment whose character is determined by a particular terrain, streets, landscaping, building lots, and buildings found within the district. Along with its sister district, the Reese Street Historic District which is also being nominated to the National Register, it is an important historic, urban, black neighborhood in Athens, Georgia. West Hancock is one of only two black districts identified to date in Athens and is among the most intact black districts in the state. It is significant in the areas of black history, architecture, and community planning and development. The West Hancock Avenue Historic District is significant in the area of black history because it contains a wide variety of resources that document residential patterns and, to a lesser extent, commercial and institutional development of the black community in Athens and Georgia from the late 19th through the early 20th centuries. A broad spectrum of Athens' black citizens from educators, doctors, and lawyers to unskilled laborers lived within the district. In terms of community planning, it references a land use pattern associated with Georgia communities in which black neighborhoods were relegated to, and then capitalized on, under-utilized land. Architecturally, the area is significant for documenting a wide variety of vernacular residential, commercial, and religious building types of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These areas of significance support National Register Criteria A and C.

### Black History and Community Planning and Development

The development of the West Hancock Avenue Historic District into one of Athens' early black residential areas dates back to the late 19th century settlement of the area and the platting of Lynwood Park in 1906 which included the areas of Hancock, Glenhaven, and Billups Streets and the southwestern part of the district. Sanborn Maps document the evolution of the district from the original grid pattern to an irregular street design as reflected in the layout for Lynwood Park. The area just north of the district, called "The Plaza," was a major portion of the park with its wide avenue and median that culminated in a cul-de-sac. However, The Plaza developed later than the remainder of the district.

It was noted in a 1913 Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Study that the area between Milledge Avenue and the city limits became a black settlement and that it was a little town in itself. There were 1136 of the city's 6300 blacks living in the area at that time. Many of the blacks who lived there owned their own homes and worked nearby. Many women were cooks or washed for white families living in nearby neighborhoods. In 1918 the area was described as crowded and unhealthy. Homeowners constituted 28% of the settlement residents while the remainder rented.

Because of racially segregated housing patterns, West Hancock was the home of a wide cross section of Athens' black residents. A residential hierarchy developed

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Jaeger, Dale. "West Hancock Historic District." National Register Information Form, August 15, 1985. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Studies, No. 1. Bulletin of the University of Georgia, Vol. XIX, no. 4, December 1913

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 80

Quadrangle name Athens West, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	17	2	7	19	0	10	16	3	7	5	9	9	17	10
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B 

1	17	2	7	19	1	16	10	3	7	5	9	5	10	10
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C 

1	17	2	7	18	3	16	10	3	7	5	9	3	10	10
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D 

1	17	2	7	18	5	19	10	3	7	5	9	8	14	10
Zone	Easting				Northing									

E 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries include the concentration of intact properties historically associated with the district and are marked on the enclosed tax map.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janice E. Adams, National Register Researcher

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

organization State Historic Preservation Office date February 5, 1988

street & number 205 Butler Street, S.E., Suite 1462 telephone (404) 656-2840

city or town Atlanta state Georgia

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon

title Elizabeth A. Lyon, Deputy State Historic Preservation date 2/8/88

For NPS use only

Officer

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Amy Schlegel date 3/30/88

Keeper of the National Register

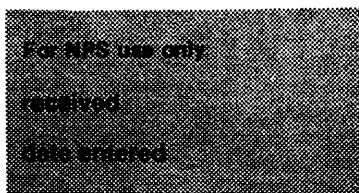
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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with larger homes built on higher, more level sites. These were occupied by the most successful families. Doctors, lawyers, and educators all lived in the district along with tradesmen and unskilled laborers. Some of the prominent black Athenians associated with the district were Dr. T. J. Elder, an educator who owned property within the district, and Dr. Andrew Jones, a medical doctor who resided in the district.

The district is significant in terms of community planning and development for documenting a land use pattern which occurred in communities throughout Georgia in which black neighborhoods were first positioned on, and then capitalized on, under-utilized land. The hilly terrain of the West Hancock Avenue District was overlooked by the white community as it expanded along Prince and Milledge Avenues, to the north and east of the black settlement. To meet the needs of the community, grocery stores, churches, and a hospital were constructed in convenient walking distance within the residential area.

West Hancock, over the years, developed into a community that housed a complete cross section of the city's black residents and for that reason it is significant in the area of black history. It provides valuable information regarding the life styles of Athens' black population and is very important to the state because it is an intact area associated with Georgia's blacks. This types of historic neighborhood, with all these characteristics, is identified as an important resource type in the Historic Black Resources handbook published by the Georgia State Historic Preservation office in 1984.

Architecture

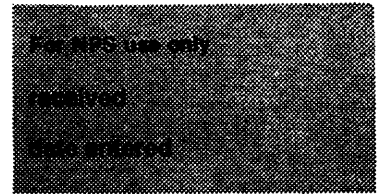
Architecturally, the district is significant for documenting good examples in Athens and Georgia of a wide variety of modest residential and, to a lesser extent, commercial and institutional resources dating from the late 19th and early 20th century. The residential structures document the evolution of building materials, technologies, types and styles during the period of development. The district consists primarily of residential structures which are good representative examples of modest vernacular house types including saddlebag, "L"-shaped cottage, and square plan with pyramidal roof. These are building types commonly associated with the black community of which there are very few intact documented examples. Also illustrated is the application of Victorian Eclectic and Craftsman details to the vernacular housing types.

National Register Criteria

The West Hancock Avenue Historic District documents residential development patterns of Georgia's black community from the late 19th and early 20th century. The districts provided for the needs of its residents through the development of small commercial establishments and churches, as well as residences. For these reasons, the West Hancock Avenue Historic District meets National Register Criteria A. Because of its collection of late 19th- and early 20th-century vernacular architecture, the district meets National Register Criteria C.

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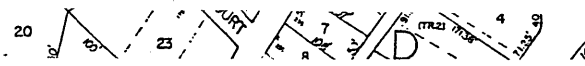
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Contributing/Noncontributing Resources

- 169 contributing buildings
- 33 noncontributing buildings (altered historic and nonhistoric)
- 11 noncontributing vacant lots (sites of former buildings)



BOUNDARY/SKETCH MAP  
 WEST HANCOCK AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 Athens, Clarke Co., Georgia

Scale: 0' ----- 220'

North: ↑

Contributing property: ○

Noncontributing property: ●

Vacant lot: ◉

Photograph number and direction of view: ↗

