

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 5 1987
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Reese Street Historic District

and or common same

2. Location

The area between Finley, Harris, Meigs, and
street & number Broad Streets N/A not for publication

city, town Athens N/A 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"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Owners

street & number

city, town N/A 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

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Reese Street Historic District is located in Athens, Georgia in the area between Finley Street on the east, Harris Street on the west, Meigs Street on the north, and Broad Street on the south. The district is approximately three blocks west of Athens' central business district. It is comprised primarily of late 19th- and early 20th-century residences, a church, a school, and several small commercial structures associated with the city's black community. The district is situated in an area of rolling terrain, and the land is divided into small, rectangular lots, with houses fronting close to the street behind the sidewalk at a similar setback.

Most houses are one-story, wood-framed, vernacular-style structures with front porches and pyramidal, gable, or hip roofs. There are several shotgun and craftsman/bungalow-style houses as well as a few two-story structures. The one-story houses have various exterior architectural features including central door, double pen or two front doors, recessed porch, 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 and balustrades.

The district contains a two-story, wood-framed school building, the historic Athens High and Industrial School (1913), located on the northeast corner of Church and Reese Streets. It has four-over-four double-hung sash windows, and a central entrance with sidelights and triangular pediment with two slender column supports.

Hill's First Baptist Church, located on the northeast corner of Pope and Reese Streets, is an early 20th-century vernacular church with Gothic detailing. The building has a modified cross plan, steep sloping gable roof, a two-and-one-half story tower with steeple, and lancet arched windows.

The commercial structures are located on the northeast and southwest corners of Pope and Hancock Street. These are one-story, brick buildings with a stepped gable on the front and rear facades.

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

The district also contains two vacant lots which are the sites of former educational structures associated with the Knox Institute and the J.T. Heard University on the southwest corner of Reese and North Pope Streets.

The boundary of the historic district is determined by the concentration of historic structures associated with the city's remaining black community. The area to the east and northeast of the district has post-World War II development. The Cobbham Historic District, listed in the National Register, is located to the west of the district. Broad Street to the south consists of recent commercial and light industrial development.

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 checked="" 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
Specific dates	1868-1930	Builder/Architect	several	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Summary Statement of Significance

The Reese Street District is a historic residential environment whose character is determined by the particular terrain, streets, building lots, landscaping, and buildings found in the district. It is an important historic, black, urban neighborhood in Athens, Georgia, along with its sister district West Hancock Historic District which is also being nominated to the National Register. Reese Street is among the most intact black districts in the state and one of only two black districts identified to date in Athens. It is significant in the areas of black history, community planning and development, architecture, and education. In terms of black history, the Reese Street Historic District is significant 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 in the area. In terms of community planning and development, it documents a land use pattern frequently associated with Georgia communities in which black neighborhoods were first positioned on, and then capitalized on, underutilized land. Architecturally, the area is significant for documenting a wide variety of vernacular residential and to a lesser extent, commercial building types of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In terms of education the district is significant for both public and private schools, located within the district, that were founded for blacks. These areas of significance support National Register Criteria A and C.

Black History and Community Planning and Development

The development of the Reese Street Historic District into one of Athens' primary black residential areas dates back to the 1860s. After the Civil War the black population in Athens increased from 1679 to 3011 and by 1900 it was around 5190. In the late 19th and early 20th century, segregated residential neighborhoods began to develop. By the turn of the century, most blacks were building or renting small houses on narrow lots in several expanding, self-contained settlements in Athens. In a 1913 Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Study it was noted that blacks lived in groups of 30 to 300 families. These groups settled in low places between the ridges and the streams of the hills near the downtown area and on the outskirts of town. Within the Reese Street Historic District--one of these settlement areas--blacks built or rented houses on narrow lots facing the street. Other houses were built in clusters in the interiors of blocks, so that alleys were formed to provide access. The streets were unpaved and narrow with no water or sewer connections at that time.

Reese Street was the home of a wide cross section of Athens' black residents and a residential hierarchy developed, as the full spectrum of the black community settled there because of racially segregated housing patterns. On higher, more level sites there were generally larger homes built on more spacious lots and occupied by the most successful families. Doctors, dentists, and educators all lived in the district along with tradesmen and unskilled laborers. Some of the prominent black Athenians who lived in the district were Dr. W. H. Harris, a physician, Dr. Charles Haynes, who founded the nursing department at Athens High and Industrial School in 1918, and Drs. Ida Mae and Lace Hiram, dentists.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jaeger, Dale. "Historic District Information Form-Reese Street Historic District", 1985.
(On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources).

"The Negroes of Athens, Georgia". Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Studies, No. 1. Bulletin of the University of Georgia, December 1913.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 18

Quadrangle name Athens West, GA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

117	271971510	317610000
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

117	2719830	31751971210
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

117	271931710	3175195810
Zone	Easting	Northing

D

117	2719500	31751991410
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 all the 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 Andrea Niles, Survey and Research Specialist
Janice E. Adams, National Register Researcher

organization Georgia Department of Natural Resources date July 31, 1987

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

city or town Atlanta state Georgia 30334

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
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 9/9/87

For NPS use only

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

Amy Schlager date 11/10/87

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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On the lower and steeper sites were built the more modest homes of lower and working class black families.

In terms of community planning and development, the district is significant for documenting a land use pattern frequently associated with Georgia communities in which black neighborhoods were first positioned on, and then capitalized on, under-utilized, hard-to-build-on land. The Reese Street Historic District, with its hilly terrain, was land overlooked by the white community as it settled along Milledge and Prince Avenues. The needs of the residents of the district were provided for by the presence of a church, school, and a few commercial buildings in convenient walking distance within the residential area.

The district is significant in the area of black history for documenting an archetypical black residential neighborhood which developed over the years into a community that housed a complete cross section of the city's black residents. Reese Street is very important to the state for providing an intact area associated with Georgia's blacks. It provides valuable information about the life styles of Athens' black population. This type of historic neighborhood, with all these characteristics, is identified as an important resources type in the Historic Black Resources handbook published by the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office in 1984.

Education

The Reese Street Historic District developed into an important education center for blacks in Athens. The Knox School, established in 1868, was the first school for blacks in Athens. The name was later changed to the Knox Institute and Industrial School. In 1921 it became the first accredited black high school in Georgia. Knox Institute operated for 60 years until it closed in 1928. Another small private high school for blacks was established around 1912, the J. Thomas Heard University. Neither of these buildings remain, although their sites remain at the intersection of Reese and Pope Streets. Athens High and Industrial School, still extant in the district, was built in 1913 and was Georgia's only black public high school in 1916. In 1922, the Athens High and Industrial School was among the first black schools to be accredited by the state.

Architecture

Architecturally, the district is significant for providing 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 district consists primarily of residential structures that together document the evolution of building materials, technologies, types, and styles during this period. The residential resources provide many good representative examples of modest vernacular house types including the saddlebag, shotgun, "L"-shaped cottage, and square plan with pyramidal roof. They illustrate how Victorian Eclectic and Craftsman detailing are applied to some houses. These are building types typically associated with the black community of which we have very few intact documented examples.

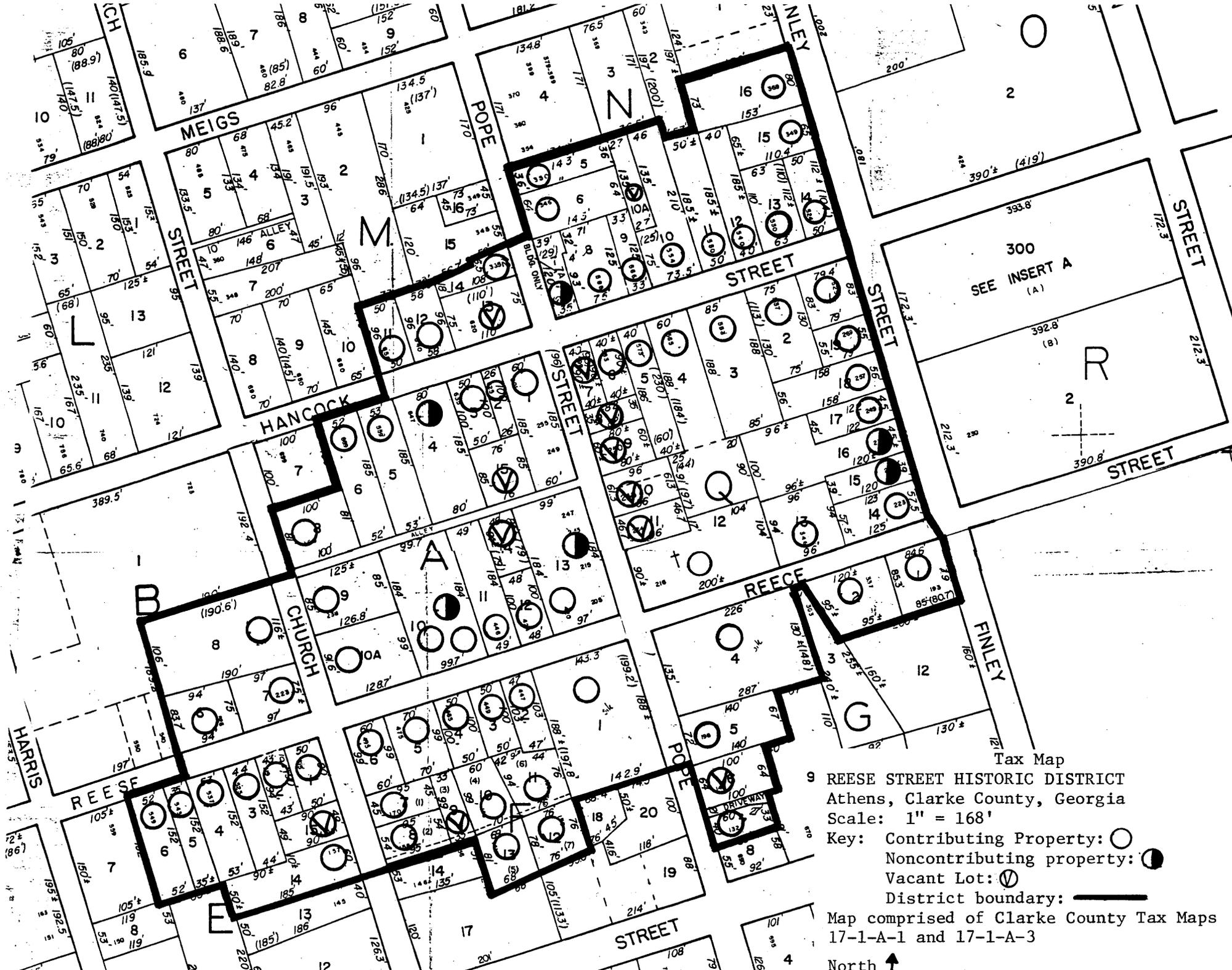
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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National Register Criteria

The Reese Street Historic District documents residential development patterns of the black community from the late 19th and early 20th century. The district included small commercial establishments and schools, as well as residences. For this reason and the district's association with early residents, the Reese Street 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.



Tax Map

9 REESE STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
Athens, Clarke County, Georgia
Scale: 1" = 168'

Key: Contributing Property: ○
Noncontributing property: ◐
Vacant Lot: ⊕

District boundary: **—————**
Map comprised of Clarke County Tax Maps
17-1-A-1 and 17-1-A-3

North ↑

PHOTO LOCATIONS

REESE STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Athens, Clarke County, Georgia

Scale: 1" = 152'

Key:

photo number and direction: 

district boundary: 

map comprised of Clarke County Tax Maps

17-1-A-1 and 17-1-A-3

North 

