

RECOMMENDATIONS

National Register Study List

The following resources are proposed for placement on the North Carolina National Register Study List as potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

J. Kenneth Lee House, 1021 Broad Avenue

The J. Kenneth Lee House (GF6168) appears eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for Architecture. Designed by local African American architect W. Edward Jenkins, the flat-roofed, Modernist-style house was completed in 1959. The core of the house is roughly rectangular with a triangular projection on the right (east) elevation that houses an indoor pool. The house has a Roman brick veneer and stacked, one-light, wood-sash awning windows, generally grouped. The entrance, located near the center of the façade is inset and has paired doors flanked by wide, one-light sidelights. A single palm tree just outside the door extends above the cut-out roofline. Flanking the entrance/foyer are two dome-shaped skylights.

Just beyond the entrance is a wide living and dining room separated by a two-sided stone fireplace with brick chimney and lit by clerestory windows along the south elevation of the shed roof. A glassed sunroom extends along the rear wall of the living and dining rooms, visible on the rear (north) elevation.

To the right (east) of the entrance are the bedrooms, defined on the exterior by grouped windows with vertical wood sheathing between each group, all above a brick half-wall. The triangular-shaped pool room on the right elevation features bands of one-over-one double-hung windows above a brick half-wall and pierced brick wall at the basement level below.

To the left (west) of the entrance is a projecting bay with two exterior doors, sheltered by a flat-roofed carport. The carport is supported on the front (south) wall by a full-height brick wall with several square “cut-outs” at the top of the wall. The kitchen and family room spaces at the left end of the house have paired double-hung windows and open to a patio space at the left end of the façade that is partially enclosed by a brick half-wall.



Figures 62 and 63: J. Kenneth Lee House (GF6168) 1021 Broad Street, facing north (top) and west (bottom)

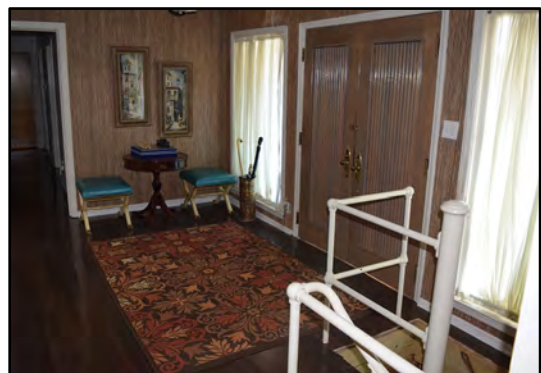


Figure 64: J. Kenneth Lee House (GF6168) 1021 Broad Street, foyer facing southeast

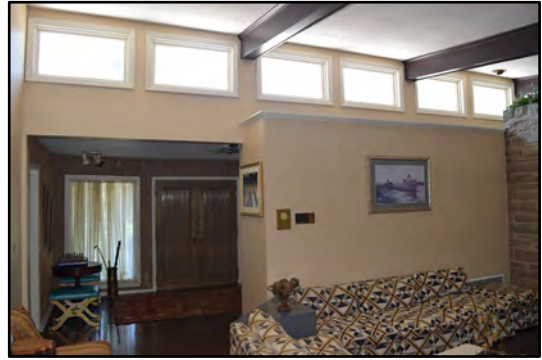
A spiral stair at the west end of the entrance/foyer (said to have been taken from the ship on which Lee served while in the military) leads to a full, finished basement.

Both the interior and the exterior of the house retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Its original plan and many original features, including a stone fireplace; exposed beams in the living, dining, and sunroom; hardwood floors in the entry, hallways, living, and dining rooms; doors and trim; and an interior pool remain in place.

The house stands on a large lot at the northwest corner of Broad Street and South Benbow Road. It is set well back from the road and accessed by a circular drive that extends through the covered carport at the left end of the façade.

The house may also be eligible for the National Register under Criterion B for its association with J. Kenneth Lee. Born in Charlotte, Lee graduated from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University with a degree in Electrical Engineering in 1945 and served in the Navy as electrician's mate during World War II. In 1951, after a lengthy lawsuit, Lee, along with Harvey Beech, became the first two African Americans to attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Law School, and they were the first African American graduates of the Law School in 1952. During his 38 years of legal practice, Lee participated in more than 1700 Civil Rights lawsuits and various Civil Rights leaders and organizations met in the Lee House. Lee was also a founder of American Federal Savings & Loan, the second African American-owned thrift in the state, as well as serving on numerous boards and commissions. Lee remained in the house until 2018 when he moved to assisted living and died soon after at the age of 94.⁸⁷

The boundary should include the entire 0.77-acre parcel historically associated with the property. The Period of Significance is 1959, the date of construction. An extended period of significance may be appropriate for a Criterion B argument.



Figures 65, 66, 67, and 68: J. Kenneth Lee House (GF6168) 1021 Broad Street, (from top to bottom) living room facing southwest, living room facing northwest, pool room facing east, basement living area

⁸⁷ North Carolina Architects and Builders website.

Dr. Alvin V. and Gwendolyn Blount House, 1224 East Side Drive

Constructed in 1964, the Dr. Alvin V. and Gwendolyn Blount House (GF6783) appears eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for Architecture. It was designed by local African American architect, Gerard E. Gray. The elongated form of the one-story, hip-roofed Modernist-style house is accentuated by the shallow pitch of the roof, which appears flat from the street, and the bands of windows on the façade. Near the center of the brick façade is a projecting, cantilevered, hip-roofed frame wing with vertical wood sheathing. The wing has a group of seven large fixed windows with operable awning windows below the light the main living and dining spaces. The left (south) end of the projecting bay is an inset porch supported by a frame wall with vertical wood sheathing. The porch shelters a solid door with one-light sidelights. To the left of the entrance, the private rooms of the house are lit by paired clerestory windows with vertical wood between the three pairs of windows. The clerestory windows are also located on the left elevation. The right (north) end of the house is a garage with no windows on the façade but a wide overhead door on the north elevation.

The interior of the house also retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Its original plan and many original features, including marble flooring in the foyer; a sunken living room and dining room with full-height double-sided stone fireplace separating the two; mahogany paneling and cabinetry in the kitchen; mahogany paneling and bookshelves in the sunken family room; and terrazzo flooring in the enclosed rear porch remain in place.

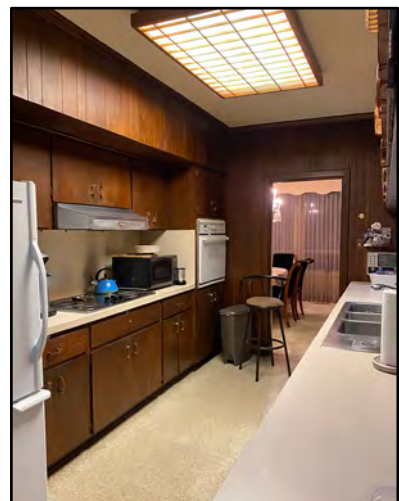
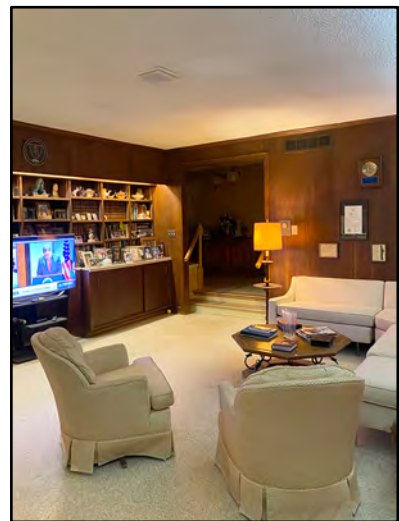
The house may also be eligible for the National Register under Criterion B for its association with Dr. Alvin V. Blount. Blount graduated from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University in 1943 with a degree in math and chemistry. He enlisted in the US Army and enrolled in Howard University School of Medicine, graduating in 1947 as a Medical Officer. A Captain in the US Army Medical Corps, he served in the Korean War as Acting Chief of Surgery, 8225th MASH Unit, from 1951 to 1952. In 1954, Blount started a medical practice in Greensboro, operating at the nearby L. Richardson Hospital. In 1957, he became the first African American in North Carolina to be certified by the American College of Abdominal Surgeons. Blount served as Chief of Surgery at L. Richardson Hospital for 23 years, served as charter member and long-term president of the Foundation at NC A&T, and was active in a wide variety of community organizations.



Figures 69, 70, and 71: Dr. Alvin V. and Gwendolyn Blount House (GF6783) 1224 East Side Drive, facing southwest (top), facing west (center and bottom)

At the time of his death, Dr. Blount was the last living litigant in the case of *Simkins v. Moses Cone Hospital* (1963), the landmark Supreme Court decision that desegregated hospitals throughout the South. Following the lawsuit, in 1964, he became the first African American physician to perform a surgery at Cone Hospital. In September of 2016, Cone Hospital honored Dr. Blount by issuing an apology for its segregationist past and awarding a \$250,000 scholarship to the Greensboro Medical Society in honor of Blount and his fellow Supreme Court litigants. Blount died in 2017 at the age of 94; the house is still owned by his children.

The boundary should include the entire 0.57-acre parcel historically associated with the property. The Period of Significance is 1964, the date of construction. An extended period of significance may be appropriate for a Criterion B argument.



Figures 72, 73, and 74: Dr. Alvin V. and Gwendolyn Blount House (GF6783) 1224 East Side Drive, living room fireplace (top), den (center), and kitchen (bottom)

William Streat House, 1507 Tuscaloosa Street

Designed by African American architect William Streat as his personal residence, this c.1965 split-level, Modernist-style house (GF4863) appears eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for Architecture. The brick-veneered house, as viewed from the street, has a typical split-level form with a one-story, side-gabled wing on the left (west) that houses the foyer, kitchen, dinette, dining room, and living room. A two-story, flat-roofed wing at the right (east) features bedrooms at the upper level and additional family living space at the lower level. The one-story wing is five bays wide with the entrance inset at the right (east) bay. The solid wood door with one-light sidelight to its right is accessed by an uncovered brick terrace that extends across the right two bays of the wing and is encircled with a brick knee wall. Windows to the left of the entrance are paired, one-light, slider windows. An engaged carport on the left end of the wing is supported by full-height brick walls on the left gable end.

The two-story wing on the right projects beyond the facade of the one-story wing. It has paired slider windows on the first-floor level. The second floor, which overhangs the first on the façade and right elevations, is supported by purlins, has vertical wood sheathing and large, triple, slider windows. The two-story, flat-roofed brick wing at the rear has an exterior brick chimney on the east elevation and grouped windows. Paired sliding glass doors on the upper level of the rear elevation open to an elevated wood deck with a half wall that is sheathed with vertical wood.

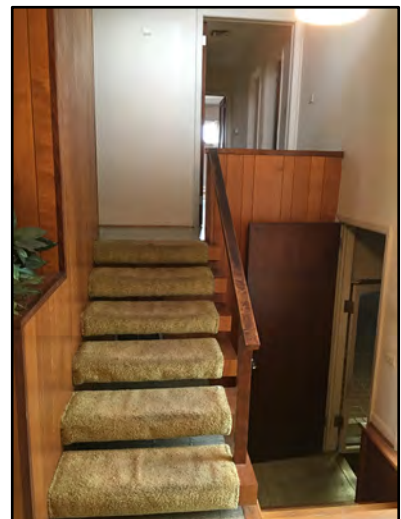
The interior of the house also retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Its original plan remains intact, as do many original features, including exposed beams, clerestory windows, and a two-sided brick and wood fireplace separating the living room and dining room; cabinetry in the kitchen; tile in the bathrooms; and paneling in the foyer, living room, and basement-level rooms.

Streat earned degrees from Hampton Institute and the University of Illinois. He began his career as a Professor of Architectural Engineering at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University in 1949 and was later chair of the department. He worked as a structural consultant for local architect Edward Loewenstein from 1950 to 1952. In 1952 Streat became the second registered African-American architect in North Carolina and the second African American to join the North Carolina Chapter of the AIA.



Figures 75, 76, and 77: William Streat House (GF4863) 1507 Tuscaloosa Street, facing north (top), facing south west (center), and facing east (bottom)

The house stands at the northwest corner of Tuscaloosa Street and Marboro Drive with a flagstone terrace at the rear. The boundary should include the entire 0.43-acre parcel historically associated with the property. The Period of Significance is c. 1965, the date of construction.



Figures 78, 79, and 80:
William Streat House
(GF4863) 1507 Tuscaloosa
Street, living room facing
west (top), kitchen facing
southeast (center), and front
hall facing east (bottom)

Benbow Road Historic District

The Benbow Road Historic District (GF9147) appears eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for Community Planning and Development, Criterion A for African American Ethnic Heritage and Social History, and Criterion C for Architecture. The district may also be eligible under Criterion A for its association with Civil Rights activities in Greensboro and throughout the state.

The planned African American development was initially platted as several separate developments including: Clinton Hills in 1936, Spaulding Park in 1955 and 1956, Spaulding Heights in 1964, and a number of other smaller plats. While the latter were gridded extensions of earlier streets, the largest platted area, Clinton Hills, may be the first African American suburban development in Greensboro to utilize curvilinear street patterns. It was laid out to follow natural ravines in the area, with a planned natural green space forming a boulevard along East Side Drive and Marboro Street, extending parallel to, and echoing the arch of East Side Drive. The automobile-oriented development follows planning principles typical of twentieth century suburban residential development, and features concrete curbs and gutters, concrete driveways to each house, but sidewalks are generally limited to South Benbow Road, the main thoroughfare through the district.

Lots throughout the development were platted with consistent 50' street frontage. However, lots were frequently combined to create lots with 100' to 150' of frontage to accommodate the sprawling Ranch and Modernist-style houses. Houses were largely custom built and thus display a wide variety of forms and styles. A number of them were designed by one of Greensboro's noted African-American architects and collectively they represent some of Greensboro's best examples of Modernist residential architecture. Others, especially those along South Benbow Road were more typical Ranch houses or cottages with Colonial or Tudor Revival detailing. Finally, a cluster of small-scale, Minimal Traditional-style houses are located along Julian Street in the northeast corner of the district.

Vinyl windows, siding, and trim are common in the district. Yet, the overall material integrity of the buildings remains high with few alterations to the building forms and little infill construction that post-dates the original development of the district. Sections of the original plats with more significant alterations have been excluded from the district boundary. Thus the district maintains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and



Figures 81, 82, and 83: 1200 block East Side Drive (top), 1600 block Tuscaloosa Street (middle), and 1201 South Benbow Road (bottom)

association.

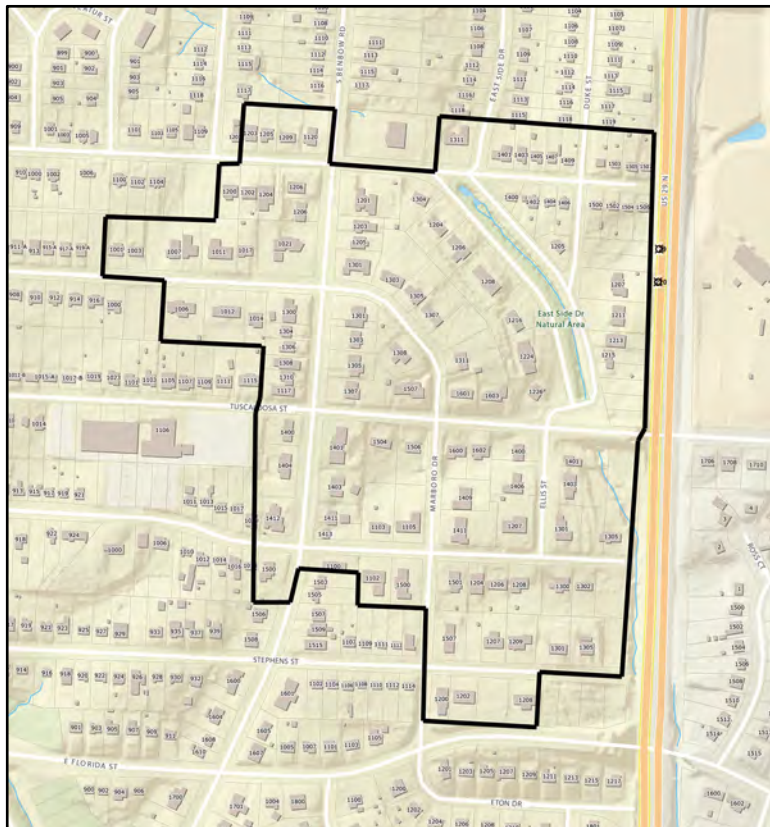


Figure 84: Map of the Benbow Road Historic District (GF9146)

Located just south of the Nocho Park development, the Benbow Road area is one of a number of residential areas that grew as a response to the growth of Bennett College and NC A&T in the early twentieth century. The area was planned and built for Greensboro's growing African American upper and middle classes. Occupants included teachers, doctors, lawyers, architects, engineers, professors at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. A number of clergymen also resided in the district, earning the area near the intersection of South Benbow Road and Broad Avenue the nickname "Religion Hill." Several residents—including J. Kenneth Lee, Dr. Alvin V. Blount, and Justice Henry Frye—were influential in Civil Rights lawsuits and legislation. Many other residents participated in Civil Rights activities including sit-ins

and other forms of protest. A full inventory of buildings and occupants will undoubtedly uncover significant connections to Greensboro's larger Civil Rights history.

The period of significance extends from 1936, when the earliest part of the neighborhood was platted, to about 1973, when the area was largely built out. The boundary of the Benbow Road Historic District includes the majority of resources within the Clinton Hills (1936), Spaulding Park (1955/1956), and Spaulding Heights (1964) platted developments, excluding areas along Julian Street that have been significantly altered, excluding properties at the southwest part of the development that were re-platted and developed later, and including other adjacent properties that are consistent with the architecture and social history of the proposed district. The district extends along South Benbow Road, roughly bounded by the properties on the west side of South Benbow Road, Julian Street on the north, O'Henry Boulevard (US-220) on the east, and Ross Avenue on the south.

Clinton Hills Historic District

The Clinton Hills Historic District (GF9144) appears eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for Community Planning and Development and Criterion C for Architecture.

The planned African American development was initially platted in 1926 and followed planning principals typical of twentieth century suburban residential development. The automobile-oriented development features an irregular street pattern laid out to follow a natural ravine in the area and to incorporate street curves along Bennett and East Florida streets. The development includes concrete curbs and gutters and concrete driveways to each house, though sidewalks are limited to the major thoroughfares of South Benbow Road and the west end of East Florida Street. A creek extends through a natural green space on the north side of South Side Boulevard.

The area was initially platted in 1926 and included lots with consistent 50’ street frontage. However, in 1956, when the area remained largely undeveloped, it was re-platted by Joseph Koury and Bill Kirkman (through the entity Better Homes, Inc.), white builders who went on to develop the adjacent Benbow Park subdivision in 1959. The new plat included slightly larger lots (most measuring 60’ of street frontage) and accommodated alterations to the street grid along Bennett, East Florida, and Oxford Streets. Further, the re-plat featured corner lots sized to allow houses on those lots to face the intersections, a practice typical in postwar developments and espoused by the Urban Land Institute.

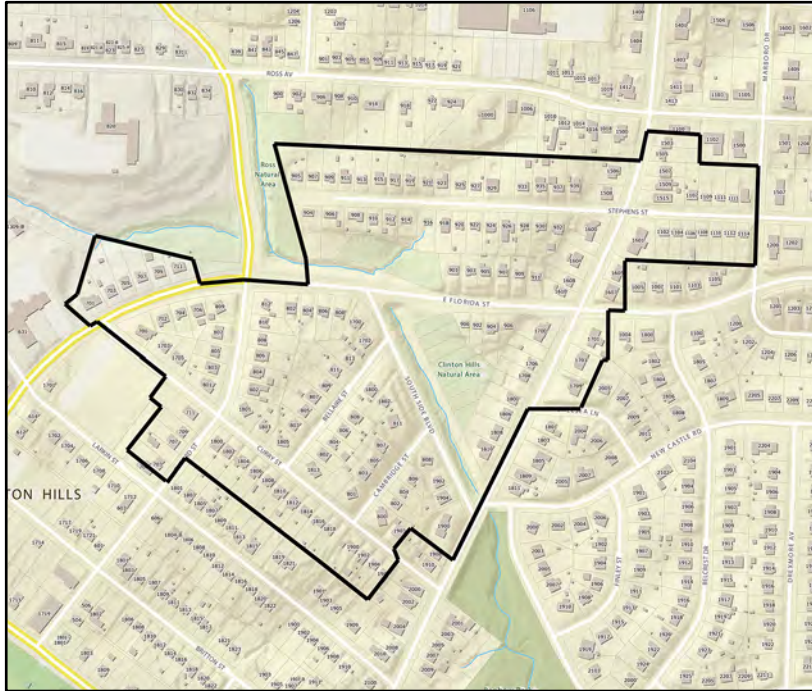
Koury and Kirkman constructed houses throughout the district, along Bellaire, Cambridge, Curry, East Florida, Oxford, and Stephens streets. The houses were predominantly four-bay-wide, hipped and side-gabled Ranch houses, executed with varying details. The small-scale houses all have brick veneers and while several have Colonial Revival-style detailing including multi-light windows with paneled aprons, most have more Modernist detailing including grouped awning windows in the public space and high awning windows lighting the bedrooms. Houses along South Benbow Road did not necessarily follow



Figures 85 and 86: 900 block Stephen Street (top) and 800 block Cambridge Street (bottom)



Figures 87 and 88: 927 Stephen Street (top) and 1700 South Side Boulevard (bottom)



Figures 89: Map of Clinton Hills Historic District (GF9144)

the repetitive forms found in the interior of the neighborhood, though the scale and form of these houses is consistent.

Vinyl windows, siding, and trim are common in the district. Yet, the overall material integrity of the buildings remains high with few alterations to the building forms and little infill construction that post-dates the original development of the district. Thus the district maintains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Clinton Hills is one of a number of subdivisions platted as a response to the growth of Bennett College and NC A&T in the early twentieth century. While developed by white investors, it was planned and built for African American occupants in Greensboro's growing black middle class. Occupants were employed as teachers, assistant professors, clerks, and other mid-level positions.

The period of significance extends from 1956, when the neighborhood was re-platted and construction began, to about 1960, when the area was largely built out. The district is roughly bounded by Stephen Street on the north, South Benbow Road on the east, Curry Street on the south, and East Florida Street on the west. The boundary includes portions of both the 1926 and 1956 plats.