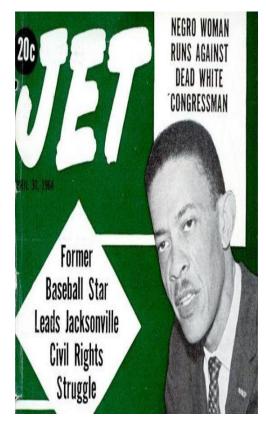
THE PEARSON RESIDENCE 1478 MCCONIHE STREET PROPOSED LANDMARK DESIGNATION LM-20-02 August 26, 2020





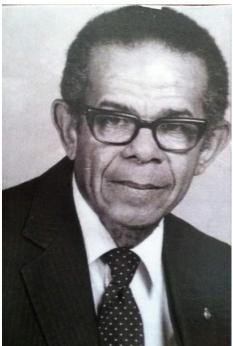
Submitted by the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.

Prepared in accordance with Chapter 307.104

City of Jacksonville Ordinance Code

August 26, 2020





Lloyd Nash Pearson Jr.



Rutledge Henry Pearson

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT - FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I.

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REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION AS A CITY OF JACKSONVILLE LANDMARK

LM-20-02

Pearson Residence 1478 McConihe Street

GENERAL LOCATION:	South side of McConihe Street between Blue Avenue on
	the east and Whitner Street on the west in the Durkeeville
	neighborhood.

Prepared in accordance with the JACKSONVILLE ORDINANCE CODE, SECTION 307.104, the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department hereby forwards to the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission, its "Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations" on the Landmark Designation, <u>LM-20-02</u>, sponsored by Roderick L. Pearson, 3841 Sarah Brooke Court, Jacksonville, Florida, 32277.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- (A) Consistent with the JACKSONVILLE ORDINANCE CODE, SECTION 307.104, the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department began preparing a designation application for the property located at 1478 McConihe Street.
- (B) The Planning and Development Department determined that the application for designation of the property at 1478 McConihe Street as a Landmark was complete. As required, the Planning and Development Department had signs posted in front of the property being considered for designation, as well as sent notices by U.S. Mail to each owner of real property within three hundred and fifty (350) feet of the proposed site. Notice of the public hearing on the designation of the property at 1478 McConihe Street as a Landmark was published in the *Financial News and Daily Report*. Proof of publication is attached to this report.
- (C) If designated, any activity affecting the exterior of the building and site of the proposed landmark will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission. Before issuing the Certificate of Appropriateness, the Commission will review the proposed activity for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. Routine repairs and maintenance, alterations, and new construction not seen from the public right-of-way and other projects consistent with the Secretary's Standards can be pre-approved by the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department. However, the following activities will require a review by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission.

- 1. New construction and additions visible from the public right-of-way.
- 2. Replacement of original windows and doors or major changes to or addition of door and window openings.
- 3. Demolition of all or part of the original building and early additions.
- 4. Enclosure of porch, porte-cochere, or garage.
- 5. Replacement or removal of original porches and porte-cochere.
- 6. Relocation of historic buildings.
- 7. Roof replacement with material different from the existing, unless going back to the original material.
- 8. Storefront restoration or replacement unless replicating the original in design and material.
- 9. Mothballing the building per Chapter 307.303
- 10. Other work the Planning and Development Department has determined to be in conflict or potentially in conflict with the *Secretary's Standards*.
- (D) In preparing the application, the Planning and Development Department has found the application to meet two of the seven criteria. The two criteria include the following;

A. Its value as a significant reminder of the cultural, historical, architectural, or archaeological heritage of the City, state or nation.

Summary:

The historic preservation movement nationwide is becoming more diversified by focusing on buildings and sites related to the history and cultural of racial and ethnic minorities. The determination of significance for such buildings and sites usually do not follow the traditional model based more on high style architecture and the degree and nature of alterations and additions. Constructed in c.1914, the Pearson residence at 1478 McConihe Street has been severely altered and upgraded over the years resulting in covering or removing the original fabric of the exterior, thus has no architectural significance. The Pearson residence does exemplify by its age, occupants and location the significant role that the Durkeeville community played in the development of black Jacksonville during segregation. These traditional black neighborhoods were the product of segregation which required the development of a separate society for blacks that included their own businesses, professionals, churches, schools and other institutions. Born and raised in these neighborhoods were generations of teachers, doctors, lawyers, ministers, government employees, labor leaders, business owners and workers in a variety of jobs. In addition to functioning within the separate society for blacks created by segregation, many of these individuals were also involved in the Civil Rights movement to end segregation and change the low economic, educational and political status of blacks, particularly after World War II.

The historic preservation movement nationwide is becoming more diversified by focusing on buildings and sites related to the history and cultural of racial and ethnic minorities. The determination of significance for such buildings and sites usually do not follow the traditional model based more on high style architecture and the degree and nature of alterations and additions. These buildings and sites usually embodied the unique history and culture of marginalized groups including their struggles for dignity and full citizenship. Examples of this trend in Florida include the historic districts of American Beach and Eatonville, both having very little architectural significance and original fabric but are extremely important in African American history. As further explained below, the Pearson residence, although not of architectural significance, does exemplify by its age, occupants and location the significant role that the Durkeeville community played in the development of black Jacksonville during segregation

Durkeeville was one of several historic black neighborhoods to develop outside the traditional areas of LaVilla, Brooklyn, Hansontown, Downtown and East Jacksonville. Although many were platted in the nineteenth century most were significantly occupied during the early twentieth century. To the west and north of LaVilla and Brooklyn were Campbell's Hill, West Lewisville (Mixontown) and New Town. Hansontown was immediately north of Downtown and LaVilla and east of Durkeeville. To the north of Hansontown was the upscale neighborhood of Sugar Hill which paralleled both sides of West 8th Street and continued west into Durkeeville. The Oakland neighborhood of east Jacksonville grew to the north into Campbell's Addition to East Jacksonville.

These neighborhoods were the product of segregation which also required the development of a separate society for blacks that included their own businesses, professionals, churches, schools and other institutions. With limited residential options, these neighborhoods tended to be mixed economically containing members of both the working and middle classes. Born and raised in these neighborhoods were generations of teachers, doctors, lawyers, ministers, government employees, labor leaders, business owners and workers in a variety of jobs. Many of these individuals were also involved in the Civil Rights movement to end segregation and change the low economic, educational and political status of blacks, particularly after World War II.

In the early 1920s, postal carrier, Lloyd N. Pearson, Sr. (1889 – 1967) and his wife, Hattie Ruth McGhee (1895 – 1952) moved to 1812 McConihe Street, now 1478, where they raised seven children. Lloyd Pearson, Sr. was born in Greenwood, South Carolina and by 1918 had married Ruth Pearson, also from South Carolina, and moved to Jacksonville. that same year. Their seven children included Lloyd Nash Pearson, Jr. (1921), Frank Boyce Pearson (1923 – 2013), Samuel Olin Pearson (1925 – 1996), Mary Louise Pearson (1927 – 2017), Rutledge

Henry Pearson (1929 – 1967), Ruth Pearson (1932 – 2020) and Delores Zephyrinus Pearson (1933 - 2007).¹

B. Its location is the site of a significant local, state or national event.

It is the determination of the Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 1478 McConihe Street does not meet this landmark criterion.

C. It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the City, state or nation.

Summary:

Continuously owned and occupied by the Pearson family from the early 1920s to the present, the residence at 1478 McConihe Street has the longest and strongest association with two significant civil rights activists in Jacksonville, Rutledge Henry Pearson and Lloyd Nash Pearson, Jr. Sons of Lloyd Sr. and Ruth Pearson, both were raised in the McConihe Street residence and as adults lived there at different times.

The significant roles played by Rutledge and Lloyd Pearson, Jr. in the Jacksonville Civil Rights movement of the 1960s are explained in a lengthy and sometimes complex overview of the events, timelines and people important in the movement. This overview establishes the historical context in which both men functioned which in turns establishes and explains their significance in the Civil Rights movement.

One of the names most associated with the Civil Rights movement in Jacksonville is that of Rutledge Henry Pearson. A teacher by profession, he is well known for his leadership of the NAACP Youth Council during their attempts to integrate downtown lunch counters. They were met with a violent response on Axe Handle Saturday (August 27, 1960) by white men in opposition to integration that to them would threaten long established and strong Southern traditions related to race relations.

As a leader of the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP, he was involved in all aspects of the Civil Rights movement and was committed to non-violent actions. In addition to equal access to public and private facilities and businesses, Rutledge Pearson was involved in the desegregation of public schools in Duval Country, as well as expanding employment opportunities for blacks.

Lloyd N. Pearson Jr. was also a noted civil rights activist in Jacksonville, particularly in the critical area of voter registration. It was his strong belief that voting was the most significant route to bring social change and improve the lives of African Americans. Through the encouragement of Sallye Mathis, chair of the NAACP's Political Actions Committee, Lloyd headed up numerous voter registration drives over many decades.

¹ Jacksonville City Directories, 1920 – 1967. <u>http://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/12292138/person/262176516512/facts</u>.

Starting in 1964, he led drives that have resulted in the registering or renewal of registration for 65,000 black voters, with him personally registering 35,000 new voters. Sometimes involving twelve hour days in front of supermarkets, drug stores, hospitals and state social service offices, Lloyd and his associates were able to register 11,000 voters in 1983, 13,000 in 1984 and 12,000 in 1985.

Rutledge Henry Pearson

The residence at 1478 McConihe Street has significance for its direct association with two key Civil Rights activists who contributed to end segregation and inequalities in Jacksonville. One of the names most associated with the Civil Rights movement in Jacksonville during the 1960s was that of Rutledge Henry Pearson, the youngest son of Lloyd Sr. and Ruth Pearson. Born in 1929, Rutledge Pearson attended local schools graduating from Stanton High School in 1947. While at Stanton, he was involved in many activities, especially using his talents in music and sports. In addition to singing in the school choir, he also played baseball. As a first baseman, Pearson was part of the 1947 undefeated Stanton team that won the state championship.²

Because of his baseball skills, he was awarded a full scholarship to Tillotson College, a historic black college founded in 1877 and located in Austin, Texas. In addition to baseball, Pearson was also a charter member of the Student Christian Association and a student representative to the World Religious Ecumenical Conference at the University of Kansas. With his wonderful baritone voice, he was a member of the college quartet and choir, as well as president of the 1951 graduating class. At Tillotson College, he received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology. While at Tillotson College Pearson met and married his wife, Mary Johnson, from Waco, Texas in 1951.³

After graduation, Pearson played semi-professional baseball, first with the Chicago American Giants in the Negro American League and latter with the Harlem Globetrotters Team in 1952 where he excelled with a 310 batting average. In 1953, he was selected to be one of the black players to integrate semi-professional baseball in Florida. However, when he showed up for spring practice with the Jacksonville Sea Birds, a minor league team associated with the Milwaukee Braves, he was barred from taking the field because of his race. This experience was a signature event in his life that changed him into a dedicated fighter for

² Patricia Pearson, Guest Columnist, "Jacksonville's NAACP President, Rutledge Henry Pearson. His Role in the 100 years of Change Cost Him His Life" *Program Success*, May, 2009, p. 15. Patricia is the daughter of Rutledge and Mary Pearson.

Reportedly, Pearson was able to take advantage of the large side yard on the 1478 McConihe Street property to hone his baseball skills.

³ Ibid, pp. 15 & 16.

In 1952, Tillotson College merged with Samuel Huston College to become the Tillotson – Huston College. Rutledge Pearson agreed to take the athletic scholarship only if the three other members of the Stanton quartet could attend with him. The three singers did receive scholarships to Tillotson-Huston College, thus joining with him to become the Huston – Tillotson College Quartet (Rodney L. Hurst, Sr. *Unless We Tell It . . . It Never Gets Told.* (Jacksonville, Florida: Kijas Press, 2015, p. 150 & 151).

equality and justice for blacks, a commitment he carried forward into his new life, as an educator.⁴

His fourteen year career as a teacher in Duval County started at Isaiah Blocker Jr. High School and later at Darnell Cookman Jr. High School where he served for five years as head of the social studies department. As a teacher of American history and civics, Pearson did not follow traditional methods of teaching, but focused on students initiating their own research and analysis of American history and politics to discover how it has impacted their lives and that of the black community. During this time he also served as vice-president of the Social Studies Teachers Council of Duval County, a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, director of the Westminster (Young Adult) Choir at the Laura Street Presbyterian Church and coached the Stanton High School baseball team that twice went to the state finals. Becoming a strong support of her husband's civil rights activities, Mary Johnson Pearson worked for the State of Florida Employment Board and later as a librarian with the City of Jacksonville retiring after 35 years. After Rutledge's death, Mary went on to serve on the executive board of the state NAACP, as well as the board of the Eartha White Nursing Home. ⁵

At great peril to his teaching career, Rutledge became involved in the Jacksonville Chapter of the NAACP becoming an advisor to the Youth Council where he mentored them in the use of non-violent protest to bring about social change. It was his work with the Youth Council that led to his active involvement in the fight for civil rights. Thirtyfive African Americans, mostly from the Youth Council of the NAACP under the leadership of Pearson, began staging demonstrations in Downtown Jacksonville seeking access to "whites only" lunch counters at F.W. Woolworth, W.T. Grant, Kress, McCrory's and Cohen Brothers. The focus of the sit-ins was more about respect, human dignity, and equal rights than necessarily about obtaining service at white lunch counters. But it was also a dangerous challenge to an established system of racial segregation and discrimination.⁶

The first sit-in on August 13, 1960 preceded "Axe Handle Saturday" and focused on the strategically located Woolworth Building at the northwest corner of West Monroe Street

⁴ Ibid, p. 16.

Abel A. Bartley, "The 1960 and 1964 Jacksonville Riots: How Struggle Led to Progress", *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Summer, 1999, Volume 78, #1, pp. 47 & 48.

The booking agent for the Harlem Globetrotters Baseball Team was successful Chicago promoter, Abe Saperstein, who in 1942 formed the Negro Midwest League and later purchased the Chicago American Giants (Mark Ribowsky, *A Complete History of the Negro Leagues, 1884 to 1995.* (New York: A Birch Lane Press Book, Carol Publishing Group, 1995), pp. 174 & 248).

Pearson was inducted into the Jacksonville Sports Hall of Fame in 1992 (*Florida Times Union*, February 22, 1992, D2).

⁵ Patricia Pearson, p. 16.

Florida Times Union, March 2, 2017.

⁶ The 1960 sit-ins in Jacksonville and the earlier ones in Miami in 1959 followed the example of the student sit-ins in Greensboro, South Carolina.

Most of the store managers opposed the integration of the lunch counters because of concern about losing white customers and violating established social tradition (Oral Interview – Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr., April 5, 1976, pp. 4 & 5).

and North Hogan Street. After being strengthened with prayer and song, 100, predominately black high school students, left the Laura Street Presbyterian Church headed for Woolworth's. Once in the store, the captains of the sit-in, Alton Yates and Rodney Hurst, Sr., gave the signal to sit-down at the lunch counter reserved for whites only. After the waitresses refused them service, the store manager came up and read a statement that the store has the right to refuse service, and ordered the lunch counter closed. However, the demonstrators remained at the counter through the lunch period during which they received both verbal and physical abuse from white customers. Afterwards they returned separately back to the church.⁷

Following up on calls reporting troubling activities at Hemming Park on Saturday morning, August 27, 1960, Pearson, Arnett Girardeau and Ulysses Beatty went by the park and witnessed a large group of white men, some in Confederate uniforms, congregated in Hemming Park where axe handles and baseball bats were being distributed. After being informed of the situation at the park, members of the Youth Council voted unanimously to go on with the planned sit-in, but move it to W.T. Grant store at the northwest corner of West Adams Street and North Main Street. When demonstrators sat down at the lunch counter, the manager of W.T. Grant turned the lights off and completely closed down the entire store. The demonstrators came out of the Grant store, and were met by a group of 150 to 200 whites armed with axe handles, baseball bats, golf clubs and heavy walking sticks. The group of whites included local residents as well as members of the Klan and Citizen Council members from other parts of northeast Florida and south Georgia. While being attacked, many of the demonstrators covered their head and tried to run for safety. No police presence was evident to stop the riot or protect the demonstrators. ⁸

Life magazine carried a story about the incident and used a photograph of a police officer holding the arm of a young black male whose face and shirt were splatted with blood. Ironically, the young man was not a member of the Youth Council, but was in the area only to shop. When the news of the attack reached the nearby black neighborhoods, a gang known as the Boomerangs that lived at the Blodgett Housing Project, accompanied by other individuals, headed downtown to assist and protect members of the Youth Council. The demonstrators were escorted to LaVilla where they sought refuge in nearby residences and businesses. Although there was no police presence during the attack, over 200 hundred squad cars and fire trucks quickly moved into the area to restore order. The

⁸ Hurst, pp. 70, 71, 72, 76 & 77).

Bartley, FHQ, p. 51.

⁷ Rodney L. Hurst, Sr. *It was never about a hot dog and Coke!* (Livermore, California: WingSpan Press, 2008), pp. 57 – 59 & 62.

A white sit-in demonstrator, college student, Richard Charles Parker, who was threatened by a group of angry whites, was physically removed from the lunch counter by members of the Boomerangs, a group of young black males, and escorted back to the safety of the church (Hurst, pp. 67, 68 & 69).

The actual sit-ins were preceded by the purchase of items to demonstrate clearly the willingness to take the protestors' money in other parts of the store while refusing to take their money for service at the lunch counters (*Florida Times Union*, August 26, 2010). Also, before the sit-ins, a smaller group met with the store manager to see if willing to voluntarily desegregate the lunch counters (Oral Interview – Lloyd Pearson, Jr., April 5, 1976, p. 4).

black business district along West Ashley Street was closed down while the police went searching for demonstrators.⁹

Sporadic violence and vandalism by both blacks and whites in different parts of the city continued through the night. The many Florida and regional newspapers that covered the event had differing estimates on the number arrested and injured with the *St. Petersburg Times* reporting a high of 150 arrests and 70 injuries. Using local police statistics, the *Florida Times Union* reported that 33 blacks and 9 whites were arrested on a variety of charges including fighting, inciting a riot, vandalism, resisting arrest and assault. An estimated 300 whites participated in "Axe Handle Saturday" which reportedly was planned by the Ku Klux Klan with prior knowledge of the police.¹⁰

On the evening of Axe Handle Saturday, an emergency meeting was held at the Magnolia Garden home of Dr. James Henderson, prominent black dentist. Held at Dr. Henderson's residence for security purposes, the meeting included Rutledge Pearson, Ruby Hurley, NAACP Field Secretary and NAACP Regional Director, NAACP attorney Earl Johnson, John Henry Gooden, president of the local branch of the NAACP, Marjorie Meeks along with Youth Council leaders Alton Yates and Rodney Hurst, Sr. Pearson and Earl Johnson took media calls and communications from the National NAACP office. They also held a press conference at Dr. Henderson's house which was not identified. In addition, Johnson coordinated with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund lawyers, including Thurgood Marshall, on legal strategies. The purpose of the meeting was to advise the Youth Council on developing possible strategies for responding to the events at Axe Handle Saturday and to encourage the Council as they moved forward. It was agreed to have a public meeting on Sunday night to discuss options and approve a plan of action.¹¹

Held at St. Paul's A.M.E. Church (southeast corner of West 13th Street & North Myrtle Avenue), the public meeting was presided over by Rodney Hurst, Sr., President of the Youth Council. The large crowd in attendance heard comments by Alton Yates and Marjorie Meeks, Vice President and Secretary of the Youth Council, along with speeches by Rutledge Pearson and by NAACP legal counsel, Earl Johnson. Having followed the events in Jacksonville closely, Mrs. Ruby Hurley and Bob Saunders from the regional and national offices of the NAACP also spoke. Also present was Saul Lefkowitz from the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. Those present overwhelmingly approved a resolution by the Youth Council that no further demonstrations would occur for the next two weeks giving the local white power structure the opportunity to respond to their demands, particularly that Mayor Haydon Burns establish a broadly represented biracial committee to address a multitude of issues Other demands in the resolution included a recommendation to boycott downtown stores, to cancel *Florida Times Union*

⁹ James B. Crooks, *Jacksonville, The Consolidation Story, from Civil Rights to the Jaguars*. (Gainesville, Florida: The University Press of Florida, 2004), pp. 18-22.

Hurst, pp. 72, 76, 77, 88 & 89.

¹⁰ Hurst, 76, 77, 88 & 89.

According to Crooks, 57 blacks and 20 whites were brought in but only 8 whites and 35 blacks were charged (p.21).

¹¹ Hurst, pp. 86 & 87.

subscriptions and call for the Justice Department to investigate the failure of police to provide security for the protestors.¹²

Although buried on page 15 of the *Florida Times Union*, the events at Axe Handle Saturday sparked broad media interest and was covered by the *Tampa Tribune*, *Atlanta Journal*, *Orlando Sentinel*, *Daytona Beach Morning News*, *Chicago Tribune* and the *Miami Herald*. Whites in Jacksonville had to obtain a copy of the *Florida Star* to get the full story on Axe Handle Saturday.¹³

The violent attacks of the young demonstrators on August 27, 1960 shocked the white community which in turn galvanized action, particularly by the business community, to address race relations. Concerned about continued national exposure to Jacksonville's negative racial climate and its impact on the city's business appeal, the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and other community and religious leaders, circumvented the lack of action by Mayor Haydon Burns to create a community advisory committee to address this explosive situation. The committee met with members of NAACP, along with representatives from black and white ministerial alliances, at Snyder Memorial Methodist Church to discuss the many issues facing the black community. Their efforts eventually lead to some change including the integration of several downtown lunch counters and restaurants and the hiring of two black public librarians. However, the meeting created the momentum needed to address other problems that have plagued the black community for decades such as segregated and unequal educational opportunities, lack of neighborhood infrastructure, as well as the need for economic development and jobs.¹⁴

With little action on the implementation of the community advisory committee recommendations by downtown businesses resulted in renewed demonstrations including a boycott starting March 1, 1963 of downtown stores. The boycott was called off when NAACP officials including Earl Johnson, Leander Shaw, Eric Simpson and W.W. Schell met with members of the Chamber of Chamber to develop an agreement to find ways of addressing black issues without a disruption of businesses. However, pressure for change continued to grow, leading the NAACP under Pearson in February of 1964 to initiate a

¹² Ibid, pp. 99 – 96.

Kristen Dodek, Interview with Rodney Hurst, Sr., February 18, 2005, Samuel Procter Oral History Project, University of Florida, p. 9.

Some white business and professional leaders provided tactful support in money or encouragement including Dr. Ralph M. Dreger at Jacksonville University, Ed Ballanee and James E. David with the Winn Dixie Company. Two black professionals actively involved in these initiatives included Dr. W.W. Schell, Jr. and Dr. Charles B. McIntosh (Oral interview – Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr., April 5, 1976, pp. 7 & 11).

¹³ Hurst, p. 90.

¹⁴ Crooks, p. 22

Hurst, 132, 133, & 156.

Hurst Interview, p. 19.

As a follow-up to the community advisory committee meeting at Snyder Church, Rodney Hurst, Sr. and Marjorie Meeks sat at the Woolworth's lunch counter for five days in March of 1961 and had no interferences. The same was true at other downtown lunch counters (Dodek, Hurst Interview, p. 19).

five week direct action campaign against businesses and organizations that continued to practice discrimination.¹⁵

To avoid a potentially violent situation as in 1960, Pearson approached the Jacksonville Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance who agreed to provide active support of the boycott. Since members couldn't be sued, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance under Reverend Charles Dailey took over as the leaders of the boycott with Pearson remaining the defacto leader. Dailey described the relationship with Pearson, "*as the pied piper who played the music while the ministers marched behind wherever he led*". Nevertheless, the protest always were organized and started at churches with active participation by ministers, with 27 of their number being jailed during this period.¹⁶

Continued frustration with the speed of desegregation by downtown businesses, demonstrators on February 17, 1964 attempted to have a meal at the restaurant located in the new Robert Meyer Hotel immediately behind the Woolworth's and J.C. Penney stores. After not being served, demonstrations broke out in different parts of downtown in the middle of the rush hour. Concerned about impact of the demonstrations on his gubernatorial race, Mayor Burns responded with the swearing in of 496 firefighters as special police officers that joined the 508 member force in arresting many of the demonstrators which included four ministers. In response, the Florida Chapter of NAACP requested the Justice Department and the Civil Rights Commission to investigate the legality of deputizing firefighters and interfering with peaceful protest. Mayor Burns responded that his actions were not to end peaceful protest but to enforce municipal assemblage laws. Going on local television stations to call for calm, Mayor Burns reiterated his continued support for segregation but stated that the city government had responded adequately to these protest citing opening public facilities to all races, no more civil service discrimination and to provide equal services to all neighborhoods.¹⁷

On March 23, 1964, riots broke out along Florida Avenue in Oakland when four men were charged with assaulting a white delivery man. In response to the arrest, most white owned businesses and some owned by blacks were attacked and vandalized. Without the authority of Rutledge Pearson and the local NAACP branch, some members of the Youth Council assembled in Hemming Park on March 23, 1964, but were forced by the police to disperse with most re-grouping at the new Stanton High School which was later closed due to a bomb threat. Again, sporadic outbreaks of violence and vandalism continued into the evening resulting in the arrest of 200 demonstrators. One particularly violent incident was the murder of Mrs. Johnnie Mae Chappell, a black mother of ten, shot while walking along Kings Road looking for her wallet.¹⁸

¹⁵ Bartley, pp. 56, 57 & 58.

According to Lloyd N. Pearson, Rutledge resigned from the community advisory committee due to becoming president of the local branch of the NAACP but shared the opinion of other black members that the committee was not truly committed to seeking and making changes and were unduly influenced by white business owners (Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr. Interview, p. 43).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Bartley, pp. 63, 64, 66 & 67.

¹⁸ Johnnie Mae Chappell was recognized as a civil rights martyr in 2000 at the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama.

Also on March 23, the police officers raided the office of the local NAACP chapter on North Broad Street. Arrested were 23 teenagers and adults charged with throwing fire bombs at passing cars from the second story window. During times of such racial violence, Pearson received threatening phone calls and hate mail forcing him to send his children to stay with his brother Lloyd Pearson, Jr. Mayor Burns blamed operatives of his opponents in the governor's race as inflaming predominately black youths stating that Jacksonville had good race relations before the campaigns started. Reverend Martin Luther King offered the services of the SCLC as mediators but declined by local black leaders. King also complimented Pearson on his use of non-violent techniques even when faced with violent responses.¹⁹

Speaking to various groups, Pearson called for the violence and destruction to end since downtown merchants seemed ready to negotiate. The violence and destructions soon ended. Although blaming the recent incidents on the local NAACP Chapter, Mayor Burns agreed to have the Committee Relations Committee (CRC) to study black concerns and issues and come up with recommendations to improve race relations. The CRC was composed of four prominent white businessmen that included Robert Millus, manager of May-Cohens Department Store, Robert Reagin, vice president of the Florida Publishing Company (*Florida Times Union* and the *Jacksonville Journal*), Claude Yates, vice president of Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company and Charles W. Campbell, senior vice president of the South Central Office of the Prudential Life Insurance Company. They were joined by three highly respected black leaders that included local physician Dr. W.W. Schell, who also was the president of the Jacksonville Urban League, I.H. Burney II, vice president of the Afro American Life Insurance Company, and prominent attorney, Earl Johnson who was a NAACP representative.²⁰

Chaired by Robert Millus, the committee had numerous individuals come and speak on various issues and concerns. However, the black representatives soon resigned in protest over the proposed agenda and wanted to focus more on economic and social issues with white members concerned only with social issues. Although the CRC was split in their charge, the new mayor, Louis Ritter took a more conciliatory position towards race relations and helped develop an acceptable agenda. In a March 26, 1964, the editors of the *Florida Times Union* made a fortuitous statement about Pearson stating, "*He can wheel and deal with ever segment. He holds this Negro town together. If he is killed, let's hope it'll be in an auto accident*"²¹

These demonstrations in the 1960s and Rutledge's election as president greatly revitalized the Jacksonville Branch of NAACP growing from less than 200 members to 2,000 members by 1964. During his administration, lawsuits also began to be filed by attorneys Earl Johnson and Leander Shaw, who later became Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court. These legal actions were taken under the guidance of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education

¹⁹ Crooks, pp. 27, 28 & 29.

At the time, the Rutledge Pearson family resided at 536 West 18th Street.

²⁰ Bartley, pp. 70 & 71.

²¹ Ibid., p. 71.

Fund. Mass meetings were held in various black churches to continue the fight against racial inequalities in Jacksonville with more focus on the poor state of black segregated schools. Some of the speakers at these night meeting included such nationally prominent civil rights leaders as Thurgood Marshall, A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, Ruby Hurley and Medgar Evers, Field Secretary of the Mississippi State Conference of the NAACP. Medgar Evers spoke at the Jacksonville Branch's Freedom Fund Banquet in 1964 and was assassinated at his Mississippi home later in the year.

According to Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr., black churches played an important role in the success of these civil rights activities by functioning as a 1960s era internet. In addition to hosting public meetings as exemplified by the Laura Street Presbyterian Church and St. Paul's A.M.E. Church, ministers also used the pulpit to communicate with their members about upcoming events. In some cases, special offerings were collected in the church to help fund these initiatives, as well as allowing for the distribution of literature and pamphlets that advertise these events and encouraged participation. Some of the churches and ministers that participated according to Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr. were Reverend J.S. Johnson (St. Stephens M.E. Church), Reverend Young (Mount Calvary Baptist Church), Reverend J. C. Sams (Second Missionary Baptist Church), Reverend Robert Wilson (Bethel Baptist Institutional Church), and Reverend Barnes (Springfield Baptist Church). Most of the ministers were also active in the local NAACP. Youth and ministers usually were more active in protest due to being shielded economically from reprisals.²²

Following the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Brown vs, the Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* that overturned the "separate but equal" principle, local NAACP attorney, Earl Johnson, working with Sadie Braxton, president of the Jacksonville NAACP and mortician Wendell Holmes, chair of the NAACP's Education Committee to desegregate local schools, filed a suit in 1960 on behalf of seven black parents and fourteen children, charging the Duval County School Board of operating a system of racially segregated schools. Holmes went on to become the first African-American to be elected to a school board in Florida, and later served as Chair of the Duval County School Board.

In 1962, Federal Judge Bryan Simpson ruled that the Duval County School Board must develop a plan for ending total segregation of local public schools. The School Board plan approved by Judge Simpson allowed for the integration of first and second grades in 1963 with a different grade level added each year until in full compliance with the court order. Because of residential segregation, only thirteen black students enrolled in five white schools in September of 1963. The schools included Fishweir, Hyde Grove, Oak Hill, Lackawanna and Venetia Elementary Schools.

First grader, Donal Godfey, started attending the white Lackawanna Elementary School near his home. He and his mother, Iona Godrey King were heckled and threaten by white demonstrators while walking to school which was also being picketed each day by a group of

²² Paul Weaver, Oral Interview – Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr. Oral History Project, University of Florida, April 5, 1976, pp. 10, 11 & 12.

Bartley, pp. 65, 66 & 68.

Sticks of dynamite were found on the grounds of St. Stephens M.E. Church, but fortunately failed to ignite.

white women. The threats got so severe that Donal was escorted to school by police detectives. In February of 1964, a bomb ripped through the Godfrey home located near the intersection of Gilmore Street and Owen Avenue. The explosion did not cause any injuries since it was placed under the house opposite the side containing the bedrooms. Two months later, William Rosecrans, a member of the KKK in Indiana, along with five local Klan members, was charged with placing the bomb. Rosecrans was sentenced to seven years, however, one of the five local Klan members was acquitted and the other four released due to a mistrial. Donal transferred to a black school, but returned to Lackawanna for the 5th grade.

Frustrated with the School Board's slow pace in following the desegregation order, the Citizens Committee for Better Education under Wendell Holmes requested all black students to not attend school during a three day period starting on December 7, 1964.²³ On the first day 17,000 black students did not attend school followed by 10,000 on the second day and 7,000 on the third. Within a three day period of December 7, 8 & 9, the absent of 34,000 students (\$3.33 per student) caused the School Board a loss of \$65,654 in state funds. With potential loss of his teaching job on the line, Pearson remained in his classroom during the three days of the boycott but continued to work behind the scene. The school board filed an unsuccessful lawsuit seeking a charge of blackmail against Wendell Holmes, Reverend Charles Dailey, R.L. Jones and Pearson, the School Board of School Trustees voted to bring insubordination charges against Pearson. In litigating against the lawsuit, NAACP attorneys, Earl Johnson and John Franklin countered that the boycott represented an exercise of free speech.²⁴

The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance sent a letter to School Superintendent Ish Brant, Board Chairman, Ned P. Searcy and trustee board member Dr. Hugh Wilcox protesting their treatment of Pearson. In the letter, the Alliance pointed out that the continued threats of making charges against Pearson, when none were established, was harassment challenging his integrity and reputation based on innuendos. Although no charges were officially made, Pearson was the only teacher out of 3,700 that was recommended by the Trustees to not be hired for the 1965 – 66 school year.²⁵

The Citizens Committee for Better Education also met with several white groups to address others educational issues. The biggest issue was the inadequate financial support for local schools due to insufficient tax base that developed from strong and excessive political

²³ According to Barbara H. Walch, the boycott was called by Reverend Charles Dailey on behalf of the Interdominational Ministerial Alliance (Walch, p. 133).

²⁴ Bartley, p.72.

Florida Times Union, January 7, 1967.

Jacksonville Journal, January 12, 1965, p. 12.

²⁵.*Florida Times Union*, December 11, 1964; March 9, 1965; March 11, 1965; April 30, 1965 and January 7, 1967 Following a program established in Nashville, Tennessee, the Citizen's Committee for Better Education in Duval County included predominately black professionals or clergy who were considered to be more insulated against economic reprisals. As president of the local NAACP branch, Pearson was an ex-officio member of the committee (Barbara Hunter Walch, *Sallye B. Mathis and Mary L. Singleton, Black Pioneers of the Jacksonville Florida, City Council.* Thesis, University of Florida, 1988, p.132.).

Patricia Pearson, p. 17.

At the same time, according to Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr., job offers in city government and private businesses were unsuccessfully made to Pearson as initiatives to stop the protests (Lloyd N. Pearson Interview, p. 35.).

influence on government officials. Unresponsive elected officials, insufficient funding, and the severe conditions of Duval County schools caused many groups to support disaccreditation of the fourteen secondary schools that occurred on December 3, 1964. The condition of black schools was far worse when compared with white schools. Black students suffered from segregated overcrowded classes forced in antiquated and inadequate facilities, as well as poor teacher morale due to the presence of political influence in the appointment of principals and the reportedly selling of teacher jobs.²⁶

Representatives of the Citizens Committee for Better Education went to Washington, D.C. to seek Federal assistance with regard to the segregated and inadequate condition of Duval County Schools. As a result, a meeting was held in Jacksonville in March of 1966 involving Federal officials and Mayor Lou Ritter, as well as representatives from the Florida Department of Education, the Duval County School Board and members of the Citizens Committee for Better Education. Out of the meeting, Mayor Ritter sought City Council support for the creation of a new Community Relations Commission to address black concerns. Another boycott in October of 1966 resulted in 19,700 black students remaining at home. The Duval County School Board petitioned the courts to stop any promotion of the boycott by black leaders. The case was dismissed by Judge Roger J. Waybright who also ruled that state law requiring attendance in segregated schools was unconstitutional.²⁷

Developing a statewide reputation as a champion for civil rights, Pearson was elected in 1962 as State Vice President of the Florida State Conference of NAACP Branches, becoming President in 1964. He was also elected as Chairman of the Southeast Regional NAACP in 1965 and nominated and elected for a three year term in January of 1966 as one of the sixty members of the National Board of Directors of the NAACP where he also served on the fifteen member executive committee. In 1965, Pearson was appointed to the Florida Advisory Council to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.²⁸

After resigning from his teaching post in August of 1966 due to continued school board pressure, Pearson went to work for the Laundry, Dry Cleaners and Dye House Workers International Union, Local # 218. In September of 1966, the local branch of the NAACP sponsored a march of 125 participants through downtown to the New York Laundry on North Liberty Street in Springfield in support of striking workers seeking a wage of \$5.80 a day. Pearson continued to receive hate mail and threats with one in January of 1967 stating he would not live to see the end of the year. While traveling on union business, Rutledge was killed in a car wreck on May 1, 1967 six miles outside of Waynesboro, Tennessee. According to a Tennessee State Trooper, Pearson may have been traveling 80 miles per hour based on tire marks when he skidded off the wet road, hit a bridge abutment and rolled over into the creek. However, the tragic car wreck was considered by some as occurring under very suspicious circumstances.

Approximately 5,000 people were in attendance at his funeral service held at Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church that included speeches by 37 ministers followed by burial at

²⁶ Walch, p. 139.

²⁷ Walch, p.p. 139 & 140.

²⁸ Florida Times Union, May 2, 1967.

Mount Olive Cemetery. In his obituary, Rutledge Pearson was described as a "straightforward, militant and fearless leader" His death occurred during the 1967 election causing Sallye Mathis to comment on the tragic loss of Pearson saying, "My main source of strength is gone. We all wondered what would happen. Rutledge was the glue, the inspirational leader. But we decided this was something we shared together – that what we were doing was bigger than the life or death of one person."²⁹

Pearson's influence on the local civil rights campaign continued for years after his death. Many of his fellow civil rights activists went on to hold public office including Earl Johnson, Jr., at-large member of the City Council, Sallye Mathis, along with Mary Singleton, served as the first women and first blacks since 1907 to serve on the City Council, and Dr. Arnett Girardeau, the first black in Jacksonville to serve in the Florida Senate. Some of his former students at Isaiah Blocker Jr. High School and later at Darnell Cookman Jr. High School included former U.S. Congresswoman, Corrine Brown, U.S. Postmaster of Atlanta, Marjorie Meeks Brown, Henry Gardner, City Manager of Oakland, California, pediatrician, Dr. Charles B. Simmons and former City Council member and author, Rodney L. Hurst, Sr.

In 1977, Rutledge Pearson's civil rights legacy was honored and immortalized with the naming of a new bridge where Moncrief Road goes over the Ribault River. On January 30, 1992, he posthumously received the first Mary L. Singleton Award for Social Harmony sponsored by the Mary L. Singleton Memorial Education Foundation, Inc. Jacksonville NAACP Branch established the Rutledge Pearson Freedom Award for outstanding civic work. In 1994, the Sherwood Forest Elementary School was renamed in his honor. Governor Rick Scott in 2016 chose Earl Johnson and Rutledge Henry Pearson to enter the Florida Civil Rights Hall of Fame. In an April 30, 1964, JET Magazine article, Pearson summarized being a civil rights leader in the following statement, *"it's just like skimming off hot grounders at third, but without the glove, what counts is your determination and throwing arm"*. In 1964, he described himself in the following way, *"I may be looked on as in a hurry. I'm in a hurry to be completely free*".³⁰

Lloyd Nash Pearson, Jr.

The residence at 1478 McConihe Street was also the childhood home of Lloyd Nash Pearson Jr. who was born in 1921. Like his younger brother, Lloyd N. Pearson Jr. was also a noted civil right activist in Jacksonville, particularly in the critical area of voter registration. After

²⁹ Ibid, pp. 147 & 175. Patricia Pearson, p. 17. Bartley, pp. 72 & 73. *Florida Times Union, Northside News*, October 5, 1994, p. 3. *Florida Times Union*, May 4, 1967, *Jacksonville Journal*, February 8, 1982 *Florida Times Union*, May 2, 1967.
³⁰ Patricia Pearson, p. 17. *Financial News and Daily Record*, February 2, 2016. *Florida Times Union*, February 9, 1992, p. 6 -3. *Jacksonville Journal*, September 9, 1977.

Florida Times Union, March 26, 1964.

Florida Times Union, February 3, 1991, A-1.

attending Old Stanton High School and Edward Waters College, Lloyd Pearson went on to have a 35 year career with the postal service following in the footsteps of his father, Lloyd N. Pearson, Sr. He is a life- long member of Woodlawn Presbyterian Church (Laura Street Presbyterian Church) where he served in a variety of positions including, Elder, Superintendent of the Sunday school, a Sunday school teacher and member of the Board of Trustees.³¹

It was Lloyd Pearson's long and active membership in the Jacksonville Chapter of the NAACP that got him involved in the local civil rights movement. As a NAACP member, he participated with 35 other black and white Jacksonville residents in the March on Washington in 1963 and was able to return for the 50th anniversary of the march. Lloyd Pearson was involved in numerous civil rights campaigns including the desegregation of local schools, integration of segregated lunch counters in downtown and overcoming discrimination in the work place. He took an active role in opening up more management and professional jobs in the City of Jacksonville for blacks that for the most part had been concentrated in low-paying and dead end jobs usually as laborers or in domestic work. In addition he was part of meetings with hospital leaders at the Duval Medical Center and St. Luke's Hospital on the use and condition of segregated wards and employment discrimination.³²

However, it was his strong belief that voting was the most significant route to bring about social change and to improve the lives of African Americans. Through the encouragement of Sallye Mathis, chair of the NAACP's Political Actions Committee, Lloyd Pearson headed up numerous voter registration drives over many decades. Starting in 1964, he led drives that have resulted in the registering or renewal of registration for 65,000 black voters, with him personally registering 35,000 new voters. Sometimes involving twelve hour days in front of supermarkets, drug stores, hospitals and state social service offices, Lloyd and his associates were able to register 11,000 voters in 1983, 13,000 in 1984 and 12,000 in 1985.

Much of the white leadership was well aware of the success of these drives to increase the number of black voters. Lloyd Pearson stated that the strong support of blacks in Jacksonville and elsewhere in the state for Robert King High of Miami against the incumbent Governor Burns angered and disturbed many local whites. With voting following racial lines in the spring election of 1966, many qualified black candidates on the local level ran unsuccessfully for political office but with many running very competitive campaigns.³³ Realizing that black women would be less threatening and thus more acceptable candidates to white voters, many black leaders including Rutledge Pearson convinced Sallye Mathis to run for City Council in Ward III with another group convincing Mary Singleton to run in Ward II in the 1967 election. Both Mathis and Singleton won in their representative districts becoming the first women elected to the City Council and the first blacks since 1907.³⁴

³¹ Celebrating a Living Legend, Lloyd Nash Pearson, Jr., Unpublished, Vertical Files – Florida & Genealogy Collection, Jacksonville Main Library.

³² Ibid.

Paul Weaver – Interview with Lloyd Pearson, Jr., Oral History Project, University of Florida, October 5, 1976, p. 15. ³³ Walch, pp. 142 & 143.

³⁴ Ibid, pp. 158, 159 & 160.

Sponsored and mostly funded by the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP, these voter registration drives also involved dividing the city into zones served by block captains who coordinated registrations on a more personal level. The block captains compared the voter registration records for their particular areas against names in the city street directories to see which residents were not registered. In addition to some financial assistance from the Southeast Regional Office of the NAACP in Birmingham, the drives were also supported by the local Long Shore men's Union that provided both money and volunteers. Serving as the Voter Registration Coordinator for the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP, Lloyd Pearson was identified as the "point man for the whole city" by Fred Matthews, Voter Registration Coordinator for the Florida Conference of NAACP Branches.³⁵

In 1941, Lloyd Pearson married Mildred Odessa Meriedy who was able to overcome job discrimination to be moved by her supervisor, Bob Myers, from the receiving department to a cashier position at the front counter of the popular Purcell's Clothing Store. This promotion was a vote of confidence in her abilities by Myers as well as his belief in making the right and fair decision even at the expense of losing some white customers and angering some of her co-workers. After eleven years at Purcell's, she moved on to a successful retail career at Sears & Roebuck Company.³⁶

In 1984, Lloyd Pearson was named as Citizen of the Year by the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity for his outstanding work in voter registration and was also recognized as a stable presence in the local branch of the NAACP after the death of Rutledge Pearson. As one of two vice presidents in the local branch, he served as interim president with the resignation of the president in 1984.³⁷

D. It is identified as the work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the City, state or nation.

It is the determination of the Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 1478 McConihe Street does not meet this landmark criterion.

E. Its value as a building is recognized for the quality of its architecture, and it retains sufficient elements showing its architectural significance.

It is the determination of the Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 1478 McConihe Street does not meet this landmark criterion.

F. It has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.

³⁵ Ibid.

Jacksonville Journal, August 16, 1988, p. A-1.

Florida Times Union, August 30, 1986, p. A-8.

³⁶ Florida Times Union, River Review, April 24, 2002, p. 1.

³⁷ Jacksonville Journal, December 12, 1984, p. 6D.

It is the determination of the Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 1478 McConihe Street does not meet this landmark criterion.

G. Its suitability for preservation or restoration.

It is the determination of the Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 1478 McConihe Street does not meet this landmark criterion.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this report, the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department recommends that the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission <u>APPROVE</u> the designation of the Pearson Residence, 1478 McConihe Street, <u>(LM-20-02)</u> as a City of Jacksonville Landmark.

DESIGNATION APPLICATION

II.

JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGNATION APPLICATION FOR LANDMARK OR LANDMARK SITE

Jacksonville Ordinance Code, Sections 307.103 and 307.104

Landmark Designation No:LM-20-02		
Site Name: Pearson Residence		
Site Address:	1478 McConihe Street	
Legal Description:	6-10-11-2S-26E, JACKSON S/D, LOTS 2 to 6, E 3 FT, LOT 7, Blk 6.	
Real Estate Assessment Number: 053025-0000		
Panel Map Number(s): 179		
Florida Master Site File Number (if available):		
Property Owner: Crumley, Frank, ET AL 1465 McConihe Street Jacksonville, Florida 32209		
Type of Ownership	: Residential – Single Family	
Application Sponsored By:Roderick L. Pearson3841 Sarah Brooke CourtJacksonville, Florida, 32277		
Date of Construction	on: Original – c.1914	
Original Architect:		
Original Builder:		
Period of Significance: 1922 - 2020		
Historic Use: Single Family	Residence – Single Family Current Use: Residence –	

I. HISTORIC AND PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE LANDMARK OR LANDMARK SITE: PEARSON RESIDENCE.

The residence at 1478 McConihe Street is located in Block 6 of the Jackson Subdivision in Durkeeville immediately northwest of downtown Jacksonville. Three blocks west of North Myrtle Avenue, 1478 McConihe Street is located on the north side of Block 6 between Blue Avenue on the east and Whitner Street on the west. Except for a few churches, the general area surrounding the subject property is composed predominately of residential uses, most single family in one-story wood frame houses, and by vacant parcels. **(Subdivision & Sanborn Maps)**

Constructed in c.1914, the residence has been severely altered and upgraded over the years resulting in covering or removing the original fabric of the exterior. The 1970 Sanborn Map depicts the house as having a full width front porch that wrapped around on the east side connecting with a projecting bay. The bay and porches have been removed and replaced with a smaller front porch covered with a shed roof supported by decorative wrought-iron style columns in a floral design. Between the two columns are similar decorative porch and stair rails. The house is accessed by masonry steps on the east side of the porch leading from a concrete driveway. (Photos 1, 2, 3 & 4)

The original exterior sheathing, probably some form of horizontal wood siding, has been covered on a larger upper section with artificial siding and the lower with tan brick veneer. The brick veneer also encloses the foundation which is probably raised piers. Separating the upper horizontal siding and the lower brick veneer is a row of header brick. The residence has a shallow hipped roof covered with asphalt composition shingles and narrow enclosed eaves. The fenestration pattern is composed of two unequal sized aluminum windows on the front elevation and four single windows and a window pair along the east elevation. The west side elevation has five single windows. The windows are a contemporary aluminum product with one over one sashes. Because of the age of the house, the original were probably wooden double-hung sash windows framed with traditional sills, side boards and headers. Most of these alterations were completed in the mid-1960s. Although the residence is sited close to the property line on the west side elevation, the east elevation fronts a large side yard.¹ (Photos 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9)

II. HISTORIC, ARCHITECTURAL OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LANDMARK OR LANDMARK SITE AS RELATED TO APPLICATION CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

Historic Context; Durkeeville (Part of Mid-Westside)

The predominately African-American neighborhoods of the Mid-Westside, such as Durkeeville, Grand Park, Royal Terrace, Chase & 29^{th,} and 45th & Moncrief, resulted from an expansion of residential growth, north and west out of Downtown

¹ Jacksonville Building Permit Record, 1965 - #2118.

Jacksonville and from the earlier LaVilla, Brooklyn and Hansontown neighborhoods, that occurred predominately during the first half of the twentieth century. This large area, which is located northwest of Downtown Jacksonville, is roughly defined by Interstate 95 and Lem Turner Road on the east; Avenue B, the Kings Road, and the old Seaboard Coastline Railroad on the west; Old Kings Road on the south; and Golfair Boulevard, Moncrief Road, and Edgewood Avenue on the north. Although having some settlement and platting during the nineteenth century, most plats were filed in the early twentieth century.²

A component of the larger Mid-Westside area, Durkeeville represents a composite of numerous plats predominately filed from the 1880s to the 1940s. Therefore, its boundaries are subject to varying interpretations. For purposes of this historical context statement, Durkeeville is being described as North Davis Street to the east, Old Kings Road to the south, Whitner Street to the west and the St. Johns River Terminal Railroad to the north (route of West 17th Street). At West 13th Street, Whitner Street terminates making Witschen Street from West 13th Street to the railroad becoming the west boundary of Durkeeville. Several of the plats described below extend beyond the boundaries of Durkeeville as defined above.

The area to the south and west of the old Atlantic Coastline Railroad is Barnett's Subdivision platted in 1907 and 1908. Barnett's Subdivision is composed of two parts divided by North Myrtle Avenue (Durkee Avenue). Filed in 1908 (Plat Book 3, Page 9), the west part of Barnett's Subdivision is generally defined as Kings Road to the south, West 7th Street on the north, North Myrtle Avenue on the east and Whitner Street on the west. This property was identified on the plat as belonging to Barnett (?). The east part is defined by Kings Road to the south, West 7th Street on the north, the old Atlantic Coast Line Railroad on the east and North Myrtle Avenue to the west. Filed in 1907, the eastern section constituted properties owned jointly by Noble A. Upchurch, F. L. Whiddon, J. B. McNeill and D. J. Harris.

Continuing north along the west side of North Myrtle Avenue is Jackson's Subdivision platted in 1914 by L. Jackson (Plat Book 6, Page 10). This subdivision runs north from West 7th Street to 9th Street and from Barnett Street west to Whitner Street. The lots between Barnett and North Myrtle Avenue from West 7th Street to the north side of West 8th Street are a continuation of Barnett's Subdivision. Between Jackson's Subdivision on the south to the north side of West 10th Street and from North Myrtle Avenue to Whitner Street is Durkeeville Unit 4 (Plat Book 17, Page 4, 1940). The remaining Units are located on the east side of North Myrtle Avenue. Split by the railroad is the large subdivision of Grand Boulevard platted in 1910 by the Grand Boulevard Investment Company under John J. Ahern, secretary and general manager (Plat Book 3, Pages 89 & 90). This subdivision is defined by North Myrtle Avenue to the East, Fairfax Street to the west and from West 13th Street north to West 21st Street.

On east side of the North Myrtle Avenue is the 1888 Stewart's Addition (Plat Book 1,

² The Mid-Westside is a contemporary name and does not have any historical antecedents.

Page 78) to the east and south of Barnett's Subdivision. The boundaries of Stewart's Addition originally ran from West 1st Street north to West 4th Street and from Payne Avenue east to North Davis Street. Block 15 of Stewart's Subdivision was re-platted in 1910 as Brooke G. White's Subdivision (Plat Book 3, Page 68). Running from West 4th Street to the north side of West 8th Street and from Payne Street east to North Davis Street is Jordan's Addition to Jacksonville platted in 1903 (Plat Book 2, Page 16). In the southwest quadrant of Jordan's Addition is the Mt. Herman Cemetery (site of Emmett Reed Community Center). Large sections on the east side of Stewart's Subdivision and Jordan' Addition have been incorporated as part of the interstate (I-95) right-of-way.

Between 1934 and 1944, the large parcel of land north of McConihe Street and along both sides of North Myrtle Avenue up to West Twelfth Street was platted into seven units commonly referred today as Durkee Gardens. The neighborhood was named after the Durkee family who has a long association with the area as reflected in Durkee Avenue, now North Myrtle Avenue, and Durkee Field (James P. Small Memorial Stadium), as well as the Durkeeville Federal Housing Complex constructed in 1936 & 37 on property immediately to the south of McConihe Street that formerly belonged to the Durkee family. Listed as a historic district on the National Register of Historic places in 2020, Durkee Gardens is composed of one and two-story brick homes and was occupied by many prominent African American families. Some of the houses were constructed by black contractors, many who also were designers such as Sanford Augustus Brookins who built over 150 residences in Jacksonville.³

A native of Oneida County, New York, Captain Joseph Harvey Durkee (1837-1905), was a decorated Union veteran who was awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor for his action and injuries received at the battle of Chancellorsville. Captain Durkee moved to Jacksonville in December of 1865 to serve as disbursing officer and superintendent of schools under the Freedmen's Bureau. Eventually settling in the St. Nicholas area of South Jacksonville, Joseph H. Durkee, who was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1879, went on to hold several political offices including Duval County Sheriff, State Senator, United States Marshall for the Northern District of Florida, as well as Master of Chancery of the United States courts. Joseph H. Durkee also became a successful business leader, serving as receiver of the Florida Central Railroad and the Jacksonville, Tampa & Key West Railway, as well as serving as first vice president of the National Bank of Jacksonville (later Barnett National Bank).⁴

The property for Unit I of Durkeeville was platted in 1934 by Lawrence K. Tucker, Jr. acting as agent for Dr. Jay H. and Sarah Durkee. Born in 1870, Dr. Jay Harvey Durkee, the son of Joseph H. Durkee, received his medical degree from Columbia College, and returned to Jacksonville in 1898 where he established a successful

³ Dreck Spurlock Wilson, Editor., *African American Architects, A Biographical Dictionary, 1865 – 1945.* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 64 & 65.

⁴ *History of Florida Past and Present, Historical and Biographical*. New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1923), pp. 253-54.

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> practice. Four of the remaining units of Durkeeville were platted by the Andover Investment Company under Lawrence K. Tucker Jr. with two others platted by Cordelia D. Tucker and Margaret D. McCarthy, both daughters of Dr. Jay and Sarah Durkee.⁵ A native of Palatka, Florida Lawrence Kitt Tucker, Jr. and his brother Finley Tucker had formed a partnership in 1905 that moved to Jacksonville in 1914 where is was incorporated as Tucker Brothers, Inc. Later expanding statewide, Tucker Brothers, Inc. went on to become a major general insurance, real estate, and mortgage business.⁶

To the west of Durkeeville Unit 1 and Unit 2 are three subdivisions that ran just north of West 8th Street to West 12th Street and from Payne Avenue east to North Davis Street. These subdivisions include College Heights (Plat Book 4, Page 21) platted in 1911 by E. B. Axtell; Hendersonville platted in 1912 (Plat Book 4, Page 77) and the Union Investment Suburb platted in 1914 (Plat Book 6, Page 38). These three subdivisions front both sides of Moncrief Road as it comes out of West 8th Street swinging towards the northwest. Moncrief Road dates to the 1870s when it was a toll road to the Moncrief Springs resort. The old Moncrief Road toll gate was identified on the 1911 College Heights plat. These three subdivisions were greatly impacted by interstate construction.

Cut into two parts by the railroad, Ritchieville (Plat Book 1, Page 66, 1888 – AB Plat) ran along the east side of Moncrief Road between West 15th Street and West 18th Street. C.W. Kinne's Revised Plat of Ritchieville was filed in March of 1915 which established streets and lots in the area from the railroad (West 18th Street) to West 21st Street and between Moncrief Road and North Davis Street (Plat Book 6, Page 53). To the east of Ritchieville is Sawyers Addition and the Wheelers Addition (Plat Book 4, Page 36) platted in 1911. Mostly destroyed by interstate construction, it ran north from West 13th Street to the railroad and to east by North Davis Street and to Stuart Street on the west.

Originally called the Shell Road or the Moncrief Shell Road, it also served as a route for streetcars. On July 1, 1902, the Jacksonville City Council granted a streetcar franchise to the North Jacksonville Street Railway, Town, and Improvement Company to construct, operate, and maintain a streetcar line starting at Clay Street and West Bay Street in LaVilla running northwest to Moncrief Springs. The franchise was awarded to a streetcar company chartered by a group of prominent black and white businessmen that included D.W. Eschidge, R.R. Robinson, J.C. Myatt, William Young, George R. Ross, S.P. Pratt, D.G. Adgers, F.D. Robbs, Walter P. Mucklow, Harry Mason, Frank C. Eleve, and Frank H. McDermott. With a capital stock of \$150,000, the company was organized and incorporated under the laws of New Jersey. The franchise was for thirty years at which time the City had the option of buying the line.⁷ The Duval County Commission allowed

⁵ Ibid, p. 254.

Duval County Courthouse, Plat Books, Durkeeville Unit 1, 15-23 (1934); Unit 2, 16-29 (1938); Unit 3, 16-63 (1939); Unit 4, 17-4 (1940); Unit 5, 17-90 (1942); Unit 6, 18-21 (1943), & Unit 7, 18-42 (1944).

⁶ Julius E. Dovell, *Florida, Historic, Dramatic, Contemporary*. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc. 1954, Volume III), p. 218-219.

⁷ The *Florida Times Union*, July 2, 1902, p. 5. George R. Ross represented District 6 on the Jacksonville City Council at the time the franchise was awarded.

the franchise to continue outside the city limits to Moncrief Springs but was never extended north of the railroad. The establishment of the predominately black-owned and operated company and the awarding of the streetcar franchise generated national attention, particularly since it was accomplished in the South.

The line ran approximately four miles from West Bay Street, up Clay Street, along Kings Road to Durkee Shell Road (Myrtle Avenue). The line ran north up Myrtle Avenue and turned east at West 13th Street where it turned south on Moncrief Shell Road before continuing along North Davis Street back to West Bay Street. At the city limits near the northeast corner of Myrtle Avenue and West 13th Street, the company opened North Jacksonville Park that was later renamed Mason Park probably after one of the investors, Harry Mason. In addition to being an amusement park with a dance and concert hall, the park also included the general office and car barn.⁸ The company had planned to lay-out a city near the springs to be called Moncrief Park. The development plans included business parcels, as well as 50' x 150' residential lots. Probably related to the North Jacksonville Street Railway, Town, and Improvement Company was the construction of seven brick duplexes fronting Moncrief Road between West 13th Street and West 17th Street. The rear of the duplexes paralleled the east boundary of Mason Park. As early as 1904, the property containing the buildings was owned by members of the Harry Mason family.⁹

Unfortunately, the majority black owned North Jacksonville Street Railway, Town, and Improvement went into receivership in 1905 and came under the control of successful businessman and real estate investor, Telfair Stockton who continued to operate the line in association with his new North Jacksonville Street Railway.¹⁰ Under Stockton's ownership, Mason Park was renamed Roosevelt Park, and a 6.4 mile eastside extension was completed serving the communities of Oakland, East Jacksonville, and Fairfield.¹¹

Served by the streetcar line, Hendersonville in particular became an attractive and vibrant neighborhood for many black families in Jacksonville. One of the more noted residents of Hendersonville was Bishop Henry Y. Tookes who along with his wife, Maggie Tookes, lived at the stately house at 1101 West 8th Street.¹² Henry Y. Tookes served as the Bishop

Florida Times Union, July 28, 1902, p. 5.

⁸ Robert W. Mann, *Streetcars of Florida's North Coast.* (Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2014), pp. 52 & 53.

⁹ Site File – 2306 – 2332 Moncrief Road, Historic Preservation Section, Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.

Early rental units constructed of brick was not common in the general area. Five or more single-family brick shotgun style houses were constructed along the 1400 blocks of Louisiana and Illinois Street in Hansontown. Constructed c.1898, all have been demolished.

¹⁰ Mann, pp. 53 & 54.

Because of its troubled financial condition, the company could not meet the condition of the franchise to have four cars in operation. By the time it went into receivership, it was operating only one car and couldn't maintain the established schedule. The company attributed their financial losses to the cost of electricity and insufficient funding from the City, but there were also charges of mismanagement.

¹¹ Mann, pp. 53, 54 & 55.

¹² The Bishop Henry Y. Tooke's residence has been designated a City of Jacksonville landmark (LM-95-31).

of the A.M.E. Church and was also president of Edward Waters College. Another early resident of Hendersonville was Wyatt J. Geter who in 1895 opened the first African American funeral home in Florida.¹³ Geter's funeral home continued under his nephew, Japhus Baker, the first licensed black embalmer in Florida. Japhus Baker also resided in the Hendersonville neighborhood. Long-time educators, Rebecca Turner and Thelma Pinkney Geiger lived in the neighborhood at 2106 Moncrief Road.

The 11 acre site of Mason Park, now part of the campus of Stanton College Preparatory School, had frontage along West 13th Street with the north boundary being the railroad right-of-way. On the east side of the park property was the more contemporary Woodland Subdivisions that constituted three separate units platted between 1941 and 1943 by the Standard, Inc. under president George Wood and secretary Jack Hall and later under the Derod Company, also under George Woods with Elizabeth Rodwell Wood as Secretary (Plat Book 17, Page 44 and Plat Book 18, Page 6). On the west side of the park property is North Side Park Addition platted in 1910 by the Albert E. Fendig Company (Plat Book 4, Page 2). Running north from West 13th Street to the north side of West 19th Street, the North Side Park Addition has frontage along the east side of North Myrtle Avenue. Also cut in two sections by the railroad, the properties of the North Side Park Addition to the south of the railroad to West 13th Street have been incorporated as part of the expansion of the Stanton College Preparatory School.

Depicted on the 1885 LeBaron Map of Jacksonville, one of the earliest developments in the Durkeeville neighborhood was Mount Herman Cemetery, now the site of the Emmett Reed Community Center. Originally defined by Herman Street to the north, the railroad (now abandoned) to the west, Johnson Avenue to the east, and West Sixth Street on the south, only a small number of marked graves remain. Most of the markers have deteriorated or been disturbed by the construction of the Emmett Reed Community Center. In 1941, E.J. & Mary E. L'Engle conveyed the cemetery property to the City of Jacksonville.¹⁴

In 1874, the Fernandina & Jacksonville Railroad was incorporated and started construction of a line in 1880 from Hart's Road (Yulee) in Nassau County to Jacksonville. At Hart's Road, the line connected with the Atlantic, Gulf, & West India Transit Company which operated a line between Fernandina Beach and Cedar Key on the Gulf Coast. Once over the Trout River, the railroad continued south to the east of Springfield before reaching the waterfront near the mouth of Hogans Creek. After being under different owners and going into receivership, the Fernandina & Jacksonville Railroad became part of the extensive Seaboard Airline Railroad in 1903.

¹³ Joined by his brothers, Jacob and Madison, Wyatt Geter opened a blacksmith and wheelwright ship on West Forsyth Street in LaVilla (Patricia Drozd Kenney, *LaVilla, Florida, 1866-1887: Reconstruction Dreams and the Formation of a Black Community.* (A Thesis Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida, 1990), p,35

¹⁴ Florida Master Site File, 8Du13271, Mount Herman Cemetery.

LeBaron, J. Frances, Map of the City of Jacksonville and Suburbs. 1885..

Duval County Court House, Deed Book 913, p. 78, May, 1941.

In July of 1886, the Florida Legislature approved the incorporation of the Jacksonville Belt Railroad Company. Constructed under the supervision of the Florida Railway and Navigation Company, the Jacksonville Belt Railroad Company was formed to construct and operate a line that connected the Fernandina & Jacksonville Railroad northeast of downtown with the Florida Railway & Navigation Company that ran a line west from the Jacksonville Terminal to Lake City. Now abandoned and developed as part of a pedestrian trail, this line, which in later years became part of the Seaboard Airline Railroad, was called the "S" line as it snaked its way north and east from the trunk lines feeding the Jacksonville Terminal. Other lines that crisscross the area included the Atlantic Coast Railroad that crossed Moncrief Road just south of the creek, as well as the Jacksonville Terminal Company railroad that roughly parallels West 18th Street east to the docks along Talleyrand Avenue.¹⁵

Immediately to the north of West Sixth Street and to the west of the Mount Herman Cemetery was a large vacant twenty-acre parcel that became the site of the Durkeeville Federal Housing Project in 1937. As a result of city lobbying efforts under the leadership of Mayor John T. Alsop, the Emergency Housing Division of the Public Works Administration awarded one million dollars to the City of Jacksonville for the construction of a housing project northwest of Downtown. Composed of 215 housing units in detached buildings that spread over twenty acres, the Durkeeville Federal Housing project, which was one of the earliest public housing for African Americans constructed in Florida, resulted from a collaborative design of six Jacksonville architects, Mellen C. Greeley, Ivan Smith, Lee Roy Sheftall, Olaf E. Segerberg, W. Kenyon Drake, and S. Ralph Fetner with construction by the H.S. Braid Company. In 1953, the Durkeeville Housing Project was expanded by an additional sixty-three units. These early housing projects such as Durkeeville, Brentwood and Blodgett Homes in Jacksonville, Liberty Square in Miami, and Griffin Park in Orlando, resulted from Federal housing programs initiated during the Great Depression to address the problem of substandard housing and urban decay. Durkeeville was named in honor of Joseph H. Durkee who had previously owned the property.¹⁶

At the southeast corner of Myrtle Avenue and West Eighth Street is James P. Small Memorial Stadium. Known at different times as Barrs Field, the Myrtle Avenue Ball Park, Joseph H. Durkee Athletic Field, and currently James P. Small Memorial Stadium, this parcel has been the site of organized professional, semi-professional, and amateur baseball since 1911. The current steel and brick grandstand basically has the same appearance as originally designed and constructed in 1935 and as expanded in 1937, which makes the field and grandstand the oldest such sports facility in Jacksonville, and one of the oldest in Florida. James P. Small Memorial Stadium, A.K.A. Durkee Field, has served as the epicenter of organized baseball in Jacksonville from the spring training and

¹⁵ Davis, pp. 343-348.

George W. Pettengill, Jr. *The Story of the Florida Railroads, Bulletin No. 86*. (Jacksonville, Florida: Southeast Chapter of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, 1998), p. 53.

¹⁶ The Jacksonville Housing Authority and Historic Property Associates, Inc. *Historical Documentation Report* for the Durkeeville Federal Housing Project, Jacksonville, Florida. (Jacksonville, Florida, 1997), pp. 10-13.

exhibition games of the major league teams to the minor league teams such as the Jacksonville Tars (Jacksonville Braves) and the Jacksonville Red Caps of the Negro League that played home games at Durkee Field.

In 1953, the Jacksonville Braves along with the Savannah team were the first teams in the Class A - South Atlantic League to break the color line when new team owner, Samuel Wolfson, hired three African American players, Henry "Hank" Aaron, Horace Garner, and Felix Mantilla. The attendance at games skyrocketed as the presence of these three players drew the curious as well as many African American fans to Durkee Field. Although withstanding a full season of verbal abuse generated by racial hatred as well as forced to seek accommodations in private homes, nineteen-year old Hank Aaron went on to have a successful season hitting twenty-two homeruns and achieving a batting average of 362. After being named the Most Valuable Player in the League and leading the Braves in winning a pennant, Aaron was promoted to the Milwaukee Braves in 1954. Once in the majors, Henry "Hank" Aaron went on to baseball fame by breaking Babe Ruth's career home run record by hitting his 715th homerun on April 8, 1974.

At one time, Durkeeville had the largest park for African Americans in the city. In 1930, the descendants of Charles B. Wilder donated thirty acres at the intersection of Lee Street and West Third Street for a third recreational area for Jacksonville's African American community following Oakland Park and LaVilla Park. Wilder Park was large enough to accommodate a football field, baseball diamond, track, playground, and branch library. In the late 1950's, Wilder Park was removed to accommodate construction of the Jacksonville Expressway (I-95).¹⁷ Playground facilities at different times were also located on the grounds of the Durkeeville Federal Housing Project, James P. Small Memorial Stadium and neighborhood schools.

The Emmett Reed Community Center and the adjacent Emmett Reed Park are on two large tracts donated to the City in May of 1941 by E.J. & Mary E. L'Engle. Containing the grounds of the old Mount Herman Cemetery, the upper parcel above West 6th Street was used for the construction of a community center, as well as to accommodate a swimming pool and playground. Opening in 1969, the community center was named after pioneer recreational leader, Emmett Reed. Starting in 1931 at Oakland Park and later at Wilder Park, Reed was employed by the Jacksonville Parks and Recreation Department for over thirty years. He was the first African American to become a Chief Recreation Supervisor serving during the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁸

The south parcel between Cleveland Street on the west and Francis Street on the east and West 6^{th} Street south to West 5^{th} Street originally had baseball fields and

¹⁷ Designation Application and Report: LaVilla Park, LS-94-3. (Jacksonville Planning and Development Department, October 26, 1994), pp. 4-5.

¹⁸ Summarized from the History of Emmett Reed Park written by Howard Zoll, Jacksonville Parks and Recreation Department. Unpublished, the write-up is in the files of the Historic Preservation Archives, Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.

basketball courts. This property has earlier accommodated a City incinerator between 1943 and 1969. After the incinerator was removed, Cleveland Street was closed with the property becoming part of the adjacent park to the east. In more recent years, the south part of Emmett Reed Park was redeveloped to accommodate the Malavi Washington Tennis Center.¹⁹

With the closure of the branch library at Wilder Park, the new Myrtle Avenue Branch opened in 1965 at 2304 - 12 North Myrtle Avenue. In 1977, the library was renamed to honor Dallas Graham, local civil rights activist, minister of Mount Ararat Baptist Church and funeral director. The new facility was designed by Jacksonville architect, Clyde Harris and built by the G.C. Auchter Company.²⁰

Scattered throughout the neighborhood are numerous churches of varying sizes and denominations. Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church at 1301 North Myrtle Avenue was founded in 1882 and first located in LaVilla. In February of 1948, the congregation began worshipping at the North Myrtle Avenue location. The corner stone of the current brick church was laid in January of 1951 and dedicated on June 23, 1956. The stately design of the church with its front façade framed by square towers reflects influences of the Gothic Revival style.²¹ Founded between 1910 and 1918, the Church of God Auditorium at 1445 Steele Street has a massive appearance created by the use of rusticated concrete block. Building permits for the construction of the building were issued in 1921, 1932, 1934 and 1935. The 1935 permit was a renewal of the one issued in 1932. Constructed by F. Bright, the design of the building was credited to Jacksonville architect Abner C. Hopkins working with draftsman, William C. Vaughan.²²

Organized in 1918, the congregation of Mount Ararat Baptist Church first met in a private residence from 1918 to 1922 and moved to a commercial building in 1922 & 1923 located along North Davis Street. In 1923, a wood frame church was built at the current site at 2503 North Myrtle Avenue and used until 1935 when the first masonry sanctuary was constructed. The current tan brick Gothic Revival style building was completed in 1957 under Reverend Dallas Graham.²³ On March 19, 1961 Mount Ararat Baptist Church hosted one of the few public appearances in Jacksonville by Martin Luther King, Jr.²⁴ St. Paul's A.M.E. Church was formed in 1870 and first located in LaVilla. The building at 2225 Myrtle Avenue, which is currently used by

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Site File, Dallas Graham Branch Library, 2304 North Myrtle Avenue, Historic Preservation Archives, Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.

Jacksonville Building Permit Record, #645 – 1964.

²¹ Site File, Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church, 1301 North Myrtle Avenue, Historic Preservation Archives of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.

²² Designation Application and Report as a Local Landmark, 1445 Steele Street, LM-07-02, October 24, 2007, Historic Preservation Section, Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.

²³ Works Projects Administration, *Vital Statistics from Church Records in Florida, Volume II Alachua – Gadsden.* Florida Historical Records Survey, Jacksonville, Florida, 1942.

²⁴ Mrs. Perry's Free Press, October 15-21, 2004, P. 3.

another denomination after the church moved to 6910 Old Kings Road, was built in 1952 from a design by Jacksonville architect, Britton Kirton. It was built by African American contractor, James Edward Hutchins who may have been involved in its design as well.²⁵

At the northwest corner of Cleveland Street and Old Kings Road is Simpson Memorial United Methodist Church. Founded in 1884, the current building at 1114 Cleveland St Street was the second or third sanctuary occupied by the congregation. The sanctuary and Sunday school building of Simpson Memorial United Methodist Church reflects a vernacular interpretation of the Late Gothic Revival Style. The church was probably designed by local African American contractor, John H. Rosemond, who also supervised the construction in 1923. In 1945, the sanctuary was remodeled to its current appearance after suffering severe fire damage.²⁶ Other churches located in Durkeeville identified on the 1970 Sanborn Maps were New Mount Tabor Church (1443 Mt. Herman Street) founded in 1917; New Mt. Olive Baptist Church (1420 Brady Street); 1st Timothy Baptist Church (1355 Hart Street); 2nd Bethel Baptist Church (1456 West 5th Street); Mt. Zion Apostle Faith Church (1329 Frances Street); St. Thomas Missionary Baptist Church (2502 Stuart Street) and the Pentecostal Church of God in Christ United (1326 West 9th Street).²⁷

Three public schools were opened in the neighborhood. Located at the extreme southeast end of Durkeeville is John E. Ford Elementary School, PS# 154 that opened in 1954 at 1137 Cleveland Street. The school was named in honor of Reverend John E. Ford, minister of Bethel Baptist Institutional Church and strong supporter of education for black children²⁸. Further to the north is Mount Herman School, PS # 164, which opened in 1964 at 1741 Francis Street. Named after the cemetery immediately to the south, Mount Herman School began serving students that had intellectual and physical disabilities in 1994 and is now known as the Mount Herman Exceptional Student Center.

The largest school in the area is "new" Stanton Senior High School that relocated in 1953 to 1149 West 13th Street from its original site at 521 West Ashley Street in LaVilla. The original six buildings with courtyards and breezeways were located on the site of Mason Park. Between 1969 and 1971, the focus of the school changed from academics to vocational training. In 1971, the vocational program at the Old Stanton High School in LaVilla was moved to the West 13th Street campus which offered both academic and vocational classes. In 1981, the school became Duval County's first magnet school which focused on Advanced Placement (AT) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Programs. With a yearly average enrollment of over 1,500

 ²⁵ Jacksonville Building Permit Record, 1952 - #42.
 Wilson, Editor, pp. 218 – 219.

²⁶ Designation Application and Report for Simpson United Methodist Church, 1114 Cleveland Street, LM-93-07, Jacksonville Planning and Development Department, 1993.

²⁷ Sanborn Map of Jacksonville, 1970.

²⁸ Olga L. Bradham, School Names of Negro Schools in Duval County Public School System. (Wilder Park Branch Library, 1963).

students, the Stanton College Preparatory School was listed in 2008 as the 9th best high school in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*. With continued growth, the campus of the school was significantly expanded to the west to have frontage along North Myrtle Avenue.²⁹

With the increased residential growth in the neighborhood, particularly with the opening of the Durkeeville Federal Housing Project, a limited number of small businesses began opening along both sides of North Myrtle Avenue from Old Kings Road north to West 17th Street. For example, businesses listed in the 1933 – 34 City directory included small grocery stores, barber shop, car repair, gas stations, restaurants, tavern, and social service office. However, most of Durkeeville maintained its residential character over the decades even though most of the area was zoned unrestricted in the 1940s with the Durkee Gardens having a residential zoning. A large industrial use was located north of Old Kings Road to near Hart Street and between Eaverson Street and Cleveland Street. As early as 1913, the Standard Oil Company operated an extensive oil storage facility that fronted the railroad as well as served by a spur. The facility included at the time large round oil storage tanks, warehouses for barrels and casks, railroad car repair shop, filling sheds, mule and wagon sheds. Standard Oil still occupied the site in 1970.³⁰

The greatest physical change in the neighborhood was the construction of the interstate system that physically divided Durkeeville from Hansontown immediately to the east. In addition to the loss of residences, businesses, churches and the public park, the highway construction impacted the traffic circulation system by closing off streets that connected with Hansontown. With the creation of the Jacksonville Expressway Authority by the state legislature in 1955, a seventy million dollar bond program was initiated in 1957 for the purposes of extending I-95 south from Dunn Avenue across the Fuller Warren Bridge to the south side. In addition to the construction of the Trout River Bridge and the development of the 20th Street Expressway from I-95 east to Haines Street, the bond program also included extending I-10 from I-95 west to Lane Avenue. The entire bond project required the acquisition of approximately 2,594 parcels located in and along the right-of-way.³¹

²⁹ Grace Brown Galvin, Tiffany Galvin Green, Ph.D and Ronald F. Galvin. *Stanton*. (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2009), p. 8.

³⁰ Jacksonville City Directory, 1933 – 1934.

Dolph – Stewart, Atlas of Jacksonville, Florida. (New York: Dolph – Steward, 1942), pp. 16, 17 & 18. 1913 Sanborn Map, p. 51, 1970 Sanborn Map, p. 51.

³¹ Arthur Neyle Sollee, Sr. The Engineer Speaks, Memoirs Covering Five Decades of Highway Problems in Duval County. Printed by the author and undated, pp. 95, 101-102.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPOSED LANDMARK AS RELATED TO DESIGNATION CRITERIA:

A. Its value as a significant reminder of the cultural, historical, architectural, or archaeological heritage of the City, state or nation.

Summary:

The historic preservation movement nationwide is becoming more diversified by focusing on building and sites related to the history and cultural of racial and ethnic minorities. The determination of significance for such buildings and sites usually do not follow the traditional model based more on high style architecture and the degree and nature of alterations and additions. Constructed in c.1914, the Pearson residence at 1478 McConihe Street has been severely altered and upgraded over the years resulting in covering or removing the original fabric of the exterior, thus has no architectural significance. The Pearson residence does exemplify by its age, occupants and location the significant role that the Durkeeville community played in the development of black Jacksonville during segregation. These traditional black neighborhoods were the product of segregation which required the development of a separate society for blacks that included their own businesses, professionals, churches, schools and other institutions.

Born and raised in these neighborhoods were generations of teachers, doctors, lawyers, ministers, government employees, labor leaders, business owners and workers in a variety of jobs. In addition to functioning within the separate society for blacks created by segregation, many of these individuals were also involved in the Civil Rights movement to end segregation and change the low economic, educational and political status of blacks, particularly after World War II.

The historic preservation movement nationwide is becoming more diversified by focusing on building and sites related to the history and cultural of racial and ethnic minorities. The determination of significance for such buildings and sites usually do not follow the traditional model based more on high style architecture and the degree and nature of alterations and additions. These buildings and sites usually embodied the unique history and culture of marginalized groups including their struggles for dignity and full citizenship. Examples of this trend in Florida include the historic districts of American Beach and Eatonville, both having very little architectural significance and original fabric but are extremely important in African American history. As further explained below, the Pearson residence, although not of architectural significance, does exemplify by its age, occupants and location the significant role that the Durkeeville community played in the development of black Jacksonville during segregation

Durkeeville was one of several historic black neighborhoods to develop outside the traditional neighborhoods of LaVilla, Brooklyn, Hansontown, Downtown and East Jacksonville. Although many were platted in the nineteenth century most were significantly occupied during the early twentieth century. To the west and north of

1478 McConihe Street LM-20-02 Page 14

LaVilla and Brooklyn were Campbell's Hill, West Lewisville (Mixontown) and New Town. Hansontown was immediately north of Downtown and LaVilla and east of Durkeeville. To the north of Hansontown was the upscale neighborhood of Sugar Hill which paralleled both sides of West 8th Street and continued west into Durkeeville. The Oakland neighborhood of east Jacksonville grew to the north into Campbell's Addition to East Jacksonville.

These neighborhoods were the product of segregation which also required the development of a separate society for blacks that included their own businesses, professionals, churches, schools and other institutions. With limited residential options, these neighborhoods tended to be mixed economically containing members of both the working and middle classes. Born and raised in these neighborhoods were generations of teachers, doctors, lawyers, ministers, government employees, labor leaders, business owners and workers in a variety of jobs. Many of these individuals were also involved in the Civil Rights movement to end segregation and change the low economic, educational and political status of blacks, particularly after World War II.

In the early 1920s, postal carrier, Lloyd N. Pearson, Sr. (1889 – 1967) and his wife, Hattie Ruth McGhee (1895 – 1952) moved to 1812 McConihe Street, now 1478, where they raised seven children. Lloyd Pearson, Sr. was born in Greenwood, South Carolina and by 1918 had married Ruth Pearson, also from South Carolina, and moved to Jacksonville. that same year. Their seven children included Lloyd Nash Pearson, Jr. (1921), Frank Boyce Pearson (1923 – 2013), Samuel Olin Pearson (1925 – 1996), Mary Louise Pearson (1927 – 2017), Rutledge Henry Pearson (1929 – 1967), Ruth Pearson (1932 – 2020) and Delores Zephyrinus Pearson (1933 – 2007).³²

3. It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the City, state or nation.

Summary:

Continuously owned and occupied by the Pearson family from the early 1920s to the present, the residence at 1478 McConihe Street has the longest and strongest association with two significant civil rights activists in Jacksonville, Rutledge Henry Pearson and Lloyd Nash Pearson, Jr. Sons of Lloyd Sr. and Ruth Pearson, both were raised in the McConihe Street residence and as adults lived there at different times.

The significant roles played by Rutledge and Lloyd Pearson, Jr. in the Jacksonville Civil Rights movement of the 1960s are explained in a lengthy and sometimes complex overview of the events, timelines and people important in the movement. This overview establishes the historical context in which both men functioned which in turns establishes and explains their significance in the Civil Rights movement.

³² Jacksonville City Directories, 1920 – 1967. <u>http://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/12292138/person/262176516512/facts.</u>

One of the names most associated with the Civil Rights movement in Jacksonville was that of Rutledge Henry Pearson. A teacher by profession, he is well known for his leadership of the NAACP Youth Council during their attempts to integrate downtown lunch counters. They were met with a violent response on Axe Handle Saturday (August 27, 1960) by white men in opposition to integration that to them would threaten long established and strong Southern traditions related to race relations.

As a leader of the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP, he was involved in all aspects of the Civil Rights movement and was committed to non-violent actions. In addition to equal access to public and private facilities and businesses, Rutledge Pearson was involved in the desegregation of public schools in Duval Country, as well as expanding employment opportunities for blacks.

Lloyd N. Pearson Jr. was also a noted civil rights activist in Jacksonville, particularly in the critical area of voter registration. It was his strong belief that voting was the most significant route to bring social change and improve the lives of African Americans. Through the encouragement of Sallye Mathis, chair of the NAACP's Political Actions Committee, Lloyd headed up numerous voter registration drives over many decades.

Starting in 1964, he led drives that have resulted in the registering or renewal of registration for 65,000 black voters, with him personally registering 35,000 new voters. Sometimes involving twelve hour days in front of supermarkets, drug stores, hospitals and state social service offices, Lloyd and his associates were able to register 11,000 voters in 1983, 13,000 in 1984 and 12,000 in 1985.

Rutledge Henry Pearson

The residence at 1478 McConihe Street has significance for its direct association with two key Civil Rights activists who contributed to end segregation and inequalities in Jacksonville. One of the names most associated with the Civil Rights movement in Jacksonville during the 1960s was that of Rutledge Henry Pearson, the youngest son of Lloyd Sr. and Ruth Pearson. Born in 1929, Rutledge Pearson attended local schools graduating from Stanton High School in 1947. While at Stanton, he was involved in many activities, especially using his talents in music and sports. In addition to singing in the school choir, he also played baseball. As a first baseman, Pearson was part of the 1947 undefeated Stanton team that won the state championship.³³

Because of his baseball skills, he was awarded a full scholarship to Tillotson College, a historic black college founded in 1877 and located in Austin, Texas. In addition to

³³ Patricia Pearson, Guest Columnist, "Jacksonville's NAACP President, Rutledge Henry Pearson. His Role in the 100 years of Change Cost Him His Life" *Program Success*, May, 2009, p. 15. Patricia is the daughter of Rutledge and Mary Pearson.

Reportedly, Pearson was able to take advantage of the large side yard on the 1478 McConihe Street property to hone his baseball skills.

baseball, Pearson was also a charter member of the Student Christian Association and a student representative to the World Religious Ecumenical Conference at the University of Kansas. With his wonderful baritone voice, he was a member of the college quartet and choir, as well as president of the 1951 graduating class. At Tillotson College, he received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology. While at Tillotson College Pearson met and married his wife, Mary Johnson, from Waco, Texas in 1951.³⁴

After graduation, Pearson played semi-professional baseball, first with the Chicago American Giants in the Negro American League and latter with the Harlem Globetrotters Team in 1952 where he excelled with a 310 batting average. In 1953, he was selected to be one of the black players to integrate semi-professional baseball in Florida. However, when he showed up for spring practice with the Jacksonville Sea Birds, a minor league team associated with the Milwaukee Braves, he was barred from taking the field because of his race. This experience was a signature event in his life that changed him into a dedicated fighter for equality and justice for blacks, a commitment he carried forward into his new life, as an educator.³⁵

His fourteen year career as a teacher in Duval County started at Isaiah Blocker Jr. High School and later at Darnell Cookman Jr. High School where he served for five years as head of the social studies department. As a teacher of American history and civics, Pearson did not follow traditional methods of teaching, but focused on students initiating their own research and analysis of American history and politics to discover how it has impacted their lives and that of the black community. During this time he also served as vice-president of the Social Studies Teachers Council of Duval County, a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, director of the Westminster (Young Adult) Choir at the Laura Street Presbyterian Church and coached the Stanton High School baseball team that twice went to the state finals. Becoming a strong support of her husband's civil rights activities, Mary Johnson Pearson worked for the State of Florida Employment Board and later as a librarian with the City of Jacksonville retiring after 35 years. After Rutledge's death, Mary went on to serve on the executive board of the state NAACP, as well as the board of the Eartha White Nursing Home. ³⁶

³⁴ Ibid, pp. 15 & 16.

In 1952, Tillotson College merged with Samuel Huston College to become the Tillotson – Huston College. Rutledge Pearson agreed to take the athletic scholarship only if the three other members of the Stanton quartet could attend with him. The three singers did receive scholarships to Tillotson-Huston College, thus joining with him to become the Huston – Tillotson College Quartet (Rodney L. Hurst, Sr. *Unless We Tell It . . . It Never Gets Told.* (Jacksonville, Florida: Kijas Press, 2015, p. 150 & 151).

³⁵ Ibid, p. 16.

Abel A. Bartley, "The 1960 and 1964 Jacksonville Riots: How Struggle Led to Progress", *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Summer, 1999, Volume 78, #1, pp. 47 & 48.

The booking agent for the Harlem Globetrotters Baseball Team was successful Chicago promoter, Abe Saperstein, who in 1942 formed the Negro Midwest League and later purchased the Chicago American Giants (Mark Ribowsky, *A Complete History of the Negro Leagues, 1884 to 1995*. (New York: A Birch Lane Press Book, Carol Publishing Group, 1995), pp. 174 & 248).

Pearson was inducted into the Jacksonville Sports Hall of Fame in 1992 (*Florida Times Union*, February 22, 1992, D2).

³⁶ Patricia Pearson, p. 16.

At great peril to his teaching career, Rutledge became involved in the Jacksonville Chapter of the NAACP becoming an advisor to the Youth Council where he mentored them in the use of non-violent protest to bring about social change. It was his work with the Youth Council that led to his active involvement in the fight for civil rights. Thirty-five African Americans, mostly from the Youth Council of the NAACP under the leadership of Pearson, began staging demonstrations in Downtown Jacksonville seeking access to "whites only" lunch counters at F.W. Woolworth, W.T. Grant, Kress, McCrory's and Cohen Brothers. The focus of the sit-ins was more about respect, human dignity, and equal rights than necessarily about obtaining service at white lunch counters. But it was also a dangerous challenge to an established system of racial segregation and discrimination.³⁷

The first sit-in on August 13, 1960 preceded "Axe Handle Saturday" and focused on the strategically located Woolworth Building at the northwest corner of West Monroe Street and North Hogan Street. After being strengthened with prayer and song, 100, predominately black high school students, left the Laura Street Presbyterian Church headed for Woolworth's. Once in the store, the captains of the sit-in, Alton Yates and Rodney Hurst, Sr., gave the signal to sit-down at the lunch counter reserved for whites only. After the waitresses refused them service, the store manager came up and read a statement that the store has the right to refuse service, and ordered the lunch counter closed. However, the demonstrators remained at the counter through the lunch period during which they received both verbal and physical abuse from white customers. Afterwards they returned separately back to the church.³⁸

Following up on calls reporting troubling activities at Hemming Park on Saturday morning, August 27, 1960, Pearson, Arnett Girardeau and Ulysses Beatty went by the park and witnessed a large group of white men, some in Confederate uniforms, congregated in Hemming Park where axe handles and baseball bats were being distributed. After being informed of the situation at the park, members of the Youth Council voted unanimously to go on with the planned sit-in, but move it to W.T. Grant

Florida Times Union, March 2, 2017.

³⁷ The 1960 sit-ins in Jacksonville and the earlier ones in Miami in 1959 followed the example of the student sitins in Greensboro, South Carolina.

Most of the store managers opposed the integration of the lunch counters because of concern about losing white customers and violating established social tradition (Oral Interview – Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr., April 5, 1976, pp. 4 & 5).

³⁸ Rodney L. Hurst, Sr. *It was never about a hot dog and Coke!* (Livermore, California: WingSpan Press, 2008), pp. 57 – 59 & 62.

A white sit-in demonstrator, college student, Richard Charles Parker, who was threatened by a group of angry whites, was physically removed from the lunch counter by members of the Boomerangs, a group of young black males, and escorted back to the safety of the church (Hurst, pp. 67, 68 & 69).

The actual sit-ins were preceded by the purchase of items to demonstrate clearly the willingness to take the protestors' money in other parts of the store while refusing to take their money for service at the lunch counters (*Florida Times Union*, August 26, 2010). Also, before the sit-ins, a smaller group met with the store manager to see if willing to voluntarily desegregate the lunch counters (Oral Interview – Lloyd Pearson, Jr., April 5, 1976, p. 4).

store at the northwest corner of West Adams Street and North Main Street. When demonstrators sat down at the lunch counter, the manager of W.T. Grant turned the lights off and completely closed down the entire store. The demonstrators came out of the Grant store, and were met by a group of 150 to 200 whites armed with axe handles, baseball bats, golf clubs and heavy walking sticks. The group of whites included local residents as well as members of the Klan and Citizen Council members from other parts of northeast Florida and south Georgia. While being attacked, many of the demonstrators covered their head and tried to run for safety. No police presence was evident to stop the riot or protect the demonstrators.³⁹

Life magazine carried a story about the incident and used a photograph of a police officer holding the arm of a young black male whose face and shirt were splatted with blood. Ironically, the young man was not a member of the Youth Council, but was in the area only to shop. When the news of the attack reached the nearby black neighborhoods, a gang known as the Boomerangs that lived at the Blodgett Housing Project, accompanied by other individuals, headed downtown to assist and protect members of the Youth Council. The demonstrators were escorted to LaVilla where they sought refuge in nearby residences and businesses. Although there was no police presence during the attack, over 200 hundred squad cars and fire trucks quickly moved into the area to restore order. The black business district along West Ashley Street was closed down while the police went searching for demonstrators.

Sporadic violence and vandalism by both blacks and whites in different parts of the city continued through the night. The many Florida and regional newspapers that covered the event had differing estimates on the number arrested and injured with the *St. Petersburg Times* reporting a high of 150 arrests and 70 injuries. Using local police statistics, the *Florida Times Union* reported that 33 blacks and 9 whites were arrested on a variety of charges including fighting, inciting a riot, vandalism, resisting arrest and assault. An estimated 300 whites participated in "Axe Handle Saturday" which reportedly was planned by the Ku Klux Klan with prior knowledge of the police.⁴¹

On the evening of Axe Handle Saturday, an emergency meeting was held at the Magnolia Garden home of Dr. James Henderson, prominent black dentist. Held at Dr. Henderson's residence for security purposes, the meeting included Rutledge Pearson, Ruby Hurley, NAACP Field Secretary and NAACP Regional Director, NAACP attorney Earl Johnson, John Henry Gooden, president of the local branch of the NAACP, Marjorie Meeks along with Youth Council leaders Alton Yates and Rodney

³⁹ Hurst, pp. 70, 71, 72, 76 & 77).

Bartley, FHQ, p. 51.

⁴⁰ James B. Crooks, *Jacksonville, The Consolidation Story, from Civil Rights to the Jaguars*. (Gainesville, Florida: The University Press of Florida, 2004), pp. 18-22.

Hurst, pp. 72, 76, 77, 88 & 89.

⁴¹ Hurst, 76, 77, 88 & 89.

According to Crooks, 57 blacks and 20 whites were brought in but only 8 whites and 35 blacks were charged (p.21).

Hurst, Sr. Pearson and Earl Johnson took media calls and communications from the National NAACP office. They also held a press conference at Dr. Henderson's house which was not identified. In addition, Johnson coordinated with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund lawyers, including Thurgood Marshall, on legal strategies. The purpose of the meeting was to advise the Youth Council on developing possible strategies for responding to the events at Axe Handle Saturday and to encourage the Council as they moved forward. It was agreed to have a public meeting on Sunday night to discuss options and approve a plan of action.⁴²

Held at St. Paul's A.M.E. Church (southeast corner of West 13th Street & North Myrtle Avenue), the public meeting was presided over by Rodney Hurst, Sr., President of the Youth Council. The large crowd in attendance heard comments by Alton Yates and Marjorie Meeks, Vice President and Secretary of the Youth Council, along with speeches by Rutledge Pearson and by NAACP legal counsel, Earl Johnson. Having followed the events in Jacksonville closely, Mrs. Ruby Hurley and Bob Saunders from the regional and national offices of the NAACP also spoke. Also present was Saul Lefkowitz from the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. Those present overwhelmingly approved a resolution by the Youth Council that no further demonstrations would occur for the next two weeks giving the local white power structure the opportunity to respond to their demands, particularly that Mayor Haydon Burns establish a broadly represented biracial committee to address a multitude of issues Other demands in the resolution included a recommendation to boycott downtown stores, to cancel *Florida Times Union* subscriptions and call for the Justice Department to investigate the failure of police to provide security for the protestors.⁴³

Although buried on page 15 of the *Florida Times Union*, the events at Axe Handle Saturday sparked broad media interest and was covered by the *Tampa Tribune, Atlanta Journal, Orlando Sentinel, Daytona Beach Morning News, Chicago Tribune* and the *Miami Herald*. Whites in Jacksonville had to obtain a copy of the *Florida Star* to get the full story on Axe Handle Saturday.⁴⁴

The violent attacks of the young demonstrators on August 27, 1960 shocked the white community which in turn galvanized action, particularly by the business community, to address race relations. Concerned about continued national exposure to Jacksonville's negative racial climate and its impact on the city's business appeal, the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and other community and religious leaders, circumvented the lack of action by Mayor Haydon Burns to create a community

Some white business and professional leaders provided tactful support in money or encouragement including Dr. Ralph M. Dreger at Jacksonville University, Ed Ballanee and James E. David with the Winn Dixie Company. Two black professionals actively involved in these initiatives included Dr. W.W. Schell, Jr. and Dr. Charles B. McIntosh (Oral interview – Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr., April 5, 1976, pp. 7 & 11).

⁴² Hurst, pp. 86 & 87.

⁴³ Ibid, pp. 99 – 96.

Kristen Dodek, Interview with Rodney Hurst, Sr., February 18, 2005, Samuel Procter Oral History Project, University of Florida, p. 9.

⁴⁴ Hurst, p. 90.

advisory committee to address this explosive situation. The committee met with members of NAACP, along with representatives from black and white ministerial alliances, at Snyder Memorial Methodist Church to discuss the many issues facing the black community. Their efforts eventually lead to some change including the integration of several downtown lunch counters and restaurants and the hiring of two black public librarians. However, the meeting created the momentum needed to address other problems that have plagued the black community for decades such as segregated and unequal educational opportunities, lack of neighborhood infrastructure, as well as the need for economic development and jobs.⁴⁵

With little action on the implementation of the community advisory committee recommendations by downtown businesses resulted in renewed demonstrations including a boycott starting March 1, 1963 of downtown stores. The boycott was called off when NAACP officials including Earl Johnson, Leander Shaw, Eric Simpson and W.W. Schell met with members of the Chamber of Chamber to develop an agreement to find ways of addressing black issues without a disruption of businesses. However, pressure for change continued to grow, leading the NAACP under Pearson in February of 1964 to initiate a five week direct action campaign against businesses and organizations that continued to practice discrimination.⁴⁶

To avoid a potentially violent situation as in 1960, Pearson approached the Jacksonville Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance who agreed to provide active support of the boycott. Since members couldn't be sued, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance under Reverend Charles Dailey took over as the leaders of the boycott with Pearson remaining the defacto leader. Dailey described the relationship with Pearson, "*as the pied piper who played the music while the ministers marched behind wherever he led*". Nevertheless, the protest always were organized and started at churches with active participation by ministers, with 27 of their number being jailed during this period.⁴⁷

Continued frustration with the speed of desegregation by downtown businesses, demonstrators on February 17, 1964 attempted to have a meal at the restaurant located in the new Robert Meyer Hotel immediately behind the Woolworth's and J.C. Penney stores. After not being served, demonstrations broke out in different parts of downtown in the middle of the rush hour. Concerned about impact of the demonstrations on his

⁴⁵ Crooks, p. 22

Hurst, 132, 133, & 156.

Hurst Interview, p. 19.

As a follow-up to the community advisory committee meeting at Snyder Church, Rodney Hurst, Jr. and Marjorie Meeks sat at the Woolworth's lunch counter for five days in March of 1961 and had no interferences. The same was true at other downtown lunch counters (Dodek, Hurst Interview, p. 19).

⁴⁶ Bartley, pp. 56, 57 & 58.

According to Lloyd N. Pearson, Rutledge resigned from the community advisory committee due to becoming president of the local branch of the NAACP but shared the opinion of other black members that the committee was not truly committed to seeking and making changes and were unduly influenced by white business owners (Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr. Interview, p. 43).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

gubernatorial race, Mayor Burns responded with the swearing in of 496 firefighters as special police officers that joined the 508 member force in arresting many of the demonstrators which included four ministers. In response, the Florida Chapter of NAACP requested the Justice Department and the Civil Rights Commission to investigate the legality of deputizing firefighters and interfering with peaceful protest. Mayor Burns responded that his actions were not to end peaceful protest but to enforce municipal assemblage laws. Going on local television stations to call for calm, Mayor Burns reiterated his continued support for segregation but stated that the city government had responded adequately to these protest citing opening public facilities to all races, no more civil service discrimination and to provide equal services to all neighborhoods.⁴⁸

On March 23, 1964, riots broke out along Florida Avenue in Oakland when four men were charged with assaulting a white delivery man. In response to the arrest, most white owned businesses and some owned by blacks were attacked and vandalized. Without the authority of Rutledge Pearson and the local NAACP branch, some members of the Youth Council assembled in Hemming Park on March 23, 1964, but were forced by the police to disperse with most re-grouping at the new Stanton High School which was later closed due to a bomb threat. Again, sporadic outbreaks of violence and vandalism continued into the evening resulting in the arrest of 200 demonstrators. One particularly violent incident was the murder of Mrs. Johnnie Mae Chappell, a black mother of ten, shot while walking along Kings Road looking for her wallet.⁴⁹

Also on March 23, the police officers raided the office of the local NAACP chapter on North Broad Street. Arrested were 23 teenagers and adults charged with throwing fire bombs at passing cars from the second story window. During times of such racial violence, Pearson received threatening phone calls and hate mail forcing him to send his children to stay with his brother Lloyd Pearson, Jr. Mayor Burns blamed operatives of his opponents in the governor's race as inflaming predominately black youths stating that Jacksonville had good race relations before the campaigns started. Reverend Martin Luther King offered the services of the SCLC as mediators but declined by local black leaders. King also complimented Pearson on his use of non-violent techniques even when faced with violent responses.⁵⁰

Speaking to various groups, Pearson called for the violence and destruction to end since downtown merchants seemed ready to negotiate. The violence and destructions soon ended. Although blaming the recent incidents on the local NAACP Chapter, Mayor Burns agreed to have the Committee Relations Committee (CRC) to study black concerns and issues and come up with recommendations to improve race relations. The CRC was composed of four prominent white businessmen that included Robert Millus, manager of May-Cohens Department Store, Robert Reagin, vice president of the Florida Publishing

⁴⁸ Bartley, pp. 63, 64, 66 & 67.

⁴⁹ Johnnie Mae Chappell was recognized as a civil rights martyr in 2000 at the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama.

⁵⁰ Crooks, pp. 27, 28 & 29.

At the time, the Rutledge Pearson family resided at 536 West 18th Street.

Company (*Florida Times Union* and the *Jacksonville Journal*), Claude Yates, vice president of Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company and Charles W. Campbell, senior vice president of the South Central Office of the Prudential Life Insurance Company. They were joined by three highly respected black leaders that included local physician Dr. W.W. Schell, who also president of the Jacksonville Urban League, I.H. Burney II, vice president of the Afro American Life Insurance Company, and prominent attorney, Earl Johnson who was a NAACP representative.⁵¹

Chaired by Robert Millus, the committee had numerous individuals come and speak on various issues and concerns. However, the black representatives soon resigned in protest over the proposed agenda and wanted to focus more on economic and social issues with white members concerned only with social issues. Although the CRC was split in their charge, the new mayor, Louis Ritter took a more conciliatory position towards race relations and helped develop an acceptable agenda. In a March 26, 1964, the editors of the *Florida Times Union* made a fortuitous statement about Pearson stating, "*He can wheel and deal with ever segment. He holds this Negro town together. If he is killed, let's hope it'll be in an auto accident*"⁵²

These demonstrations in the 1960s and Rutledge's election as president greatly revitalized the Jacksonville Branch of NAACP growing from less than 200 members to 2,000 members by 1964. During his administration, lawsuits also began to be filed by attorneys Earl Johnson and Leander Shaw, who later became Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court. These legal actions were taken under the guidance of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund. Mass meetings were held in various black churches to continue the fight against racial inequalities in Jacksonville with more focus on the poor state of black segregated schools. Some of the speakers at these night meeting included such nationally prominent civil rights leaders as Thurgood Marshall, A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, Ruby Hurley and Medgar Evers, Field Secretary of the Mississippi State Conference of the NAACP. Medgar Evers spoke at the Jacksonville Branch's Freedom Fund Banquet in 1964 and was assassinated at his home later in the year.

According to Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr., black churches played an important role in the success of these civil rights activities by functioning as a 1960s era internet. In addition to hosting public meetings as exemplified by the Laura Street Presbyterian Church and St. Paul's A.M.E. Church, ministers also used the pulpit to communicate with their members about upcoming events. In some cases, special offerings were collected in the church to help fund these initiatives, as well as allowing for the distribution of literature and pamphlets that advertise these events and encouraged participation. Some of the churches and ministers that participated according to Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr. were Reverend J.S. Johnson (St. Stephens M.E. Church), Reverend Young (Mount Calvary Baptist Church), Reverend J. C. Sams (Second Missionary Baptist Church), Reverend Robert Wilson (Bethel Baptist Institutional Church), and Reverend Barnes (Springfield Baptist Church). Most of the

⁵¹ Bartley, pp. 70 & 71.

⁵² Ibid., p. 71.

ministers were also active in the local NAACP. Youth and ministers usually were more active in protest due to being shielded economically from reprisals.⁵³

Following the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Brown vs, the Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* that overturned the "separate but equal" principle, local NAACP attorney, Earl Johnson, working with Sadie Braxton, president of the Jacksonville NAACP and mortician Wendell Holmes, chair of the NAACP's Education Committee to desegregate local schools, filed a suit in 1960 on behalf of seven black parents and fourteen children, charging the Duval County School Board of operating a system of racially segregated schools. Holmes went on to become the first African-American to be elected to a school board in Florida, and later served as Chair of the Duval County School Board.

In 1962, Federal Judge Bryan Simpson ruled that the Duval County School Board must develop a plan for ending total segregation of local public schools. The School Board plan approved by Judge Simpson allowed for the integration of first and second grades in 1963 with a different grade level added each year until in full compliance with the court order. Because of residential segregation, only thirteen black students enrolled in five white schools in September of 1963. The schools included Fishweir, Hyde Grove, Oak Hill, Lackawanna and Venetia Elementary Schools.

First grader, Donal Godfey, started attending the white Lackawanna Elementary School near his home. He and his mother, Iona Godrey King were heckled and threaten by white demonstrators while walking to school which was also being picketed each day by a group of white women. The threats got so severe that Donal was escorted to school by police detectives. In February of 1964, a bomb ripped through the Godfrey home located near the intersection of Gilmore Street and Owen Avenue. The explosion did not cause any injuries since it was placed under the house opposite the side containing the bedrooms. Two months later, William Rosecrans, a member of the KKK in Indiana, along with five local Klan members, was charged with placing the bomb. Rosecrans was sentenced to seven years, however, one of the five local Klan members was acquitted and the other four released due to a mistrial. Donal transferred to a black school, but returned to Lackawanna for the 5th grade.

Frustrated with the School Board's slow pace in following the desegregation order, the Citizens Committee for Better Education under Wendell Holmes requested all black students to not attend school during a three day period starting on December 7, 1964.⁵⁴ On the first day 17,000 black students did not attend school followed by 10,000 on the second day and 7,000 on the third. Within a three day period of December 7, 8 & 9, the absent of 34,000 students (\$3.33 per student) caused the School Board a loss of \$65,654 in state funds. With potential loss of his teaching job on the line, Pearson

⁵³ Paul Weaver, Oral Interview – Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr. Oral History Project, University of Florida, April 5, 1976, pp. 10, 11 & 12.

Bartley, pp. 65, 66 & 68.

Sticks of dynamite were found on the grounds of St. Stephens M.E. Church, but fortunately failed to ignite. ⁵⁴ According to Barbara H. Walch, the boycott was called by Reverend Charles Dailey on behalf of the Interdominational Ministerial Alliance (Walch, p. 133).

remained in his classroom during the three days of the boycott but continued to work behind the scene. The school board filed an unsuccessful lawsuit seeking a charge of blackmail against Wendell Holmes, Reverend Charles Dailey, R.L. Jones and Pearson, the School Board of School Trustees voted to bring insubordination charges against Pearson. In litigating against the lawsuit, NAACP attorneys, Earl Johnson and John Franklin countered that the boycott represented an exercise of free speech.⁵⁵

The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance sent a letter to School Superintendent Ish Brant, Board Chairman, Ned P. Searcy and trustee board member Dr. Hugh Wilcox protesting their treatment of Pearson. In the letter, the Alliance pointed out that the continued threats of making charges against Pearson, when none were established, was harassment challenging his integrity and reputation based on innuendos. Although no charges were officially made, Pearson was the only teacher out of 3,700 that was recommended by the Trustees to not be hired for the 1965 – 66 school year.⁵⁶

The Citizens Committee for Better Education also met with several white groups to address others educational issues. The biggest issue was the inadequate financial support for local schools due to insufficient tax base that developed from strong and excessive political influence on government officials. Unresponsive elected officials, insufficient funding, and the severe conditions of Duval County schools caused many groups to support dis-accreditation of the fourteen secondary schools that occurred on December 3, 1964. The condition of black schools was far worse when compared with white schools. Black students suffered from segregated overcrowded classes forced in antiquated and inadequate facilities, as well as poor teacher morale due to the presence of political influence in the appointment of principals and the reportedly selling of teacher jobs.⁵⁷

Representatives of the Citizens Committee for Better Education went to Washington, D.C. to seek Federal assistance with regard to the segregated and inadequate condition of Duval County Schools. As a result, a meeting was held in Jacksonville in March of 1966 involving Federal officials and Mayor Lou Ritter, as well as representatives from the Florida Department of Education, the Duval County School Board and members of the Citizens Committee for Better Education. Out of the meeting, Mayor Ritter sought City

⁵⁵ Bartley, p.72.

Florida Times Union, January 7, 1967.

Jacksonville Journal, January 12, 1965, p. 12.

⁵⁶.*Florida Times Union*, December 11, 1964; March 9, 1965; March 11, 1965; April 30, 1965 and January 7, 1967

Following a program established in Nashville, Tennessee, the Citizen's Committee for Better Education in Duval County included predominately black professionals or clergy who were considered to be more insulated against economic reprisals. As president of the local NAACP branch, Pearson was an ex-officio member of the committee (Barbara Hunter Walch, *Sallye B. Mathis and Mary L. Singleton, Black Pioneers of the Jacksonville Florida, City Council.* Thesis, University of Florida, 1988, p.132.). Patricia Pearson, p. 17.

At the same time, according to Lloyd N. Pearson, Jr., job offers in city government and private businesses were unsuccessfully made to Pearson as initiatives to stop the protests (Lloyd N. Pearson Interview, p. 35.). ⁵⁷ Walch, p. 139.

Council support for the creation of a new Community Relations Commission to address black concerns. Another boycott in October of 1966 resulted in 19,700 black students remaining at home. The Duval County School Board petitioned the courts to stop any promotion of the boycott by black leaders. The case was dismissed by Judge Roger J. Waybright who also ruled that state law requiring attendance in segregated schools was unconstitutional.⁵⁸

Developing a statewide reputation as a champion for civil rights, Pearson was elected in 1962 as State Vice President of the Florida State Conference of NAACP Branches, becoming President in 1964. He was also elected as Chairman of the Southeast Regional NAACP in 1965 and nominated and elected for a three year term in January of 1966 as one of the sixty members of the National Board of Directors of the NAACP where he also served on the fifteen member executive committee. In 1965, Pearson was appointed to the Florida Advisory Council to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.⁵⁹

After resigning from his teaching post in August of 1966 due to continued school board pressure, Pearson went to work for the Laundry, Dry Cleaners and Dye House Workers International Union, Local # 218. In September of 1966, the local branch of the NAACP sponsored a march of 125 participants through downtown to the New York Laundry on North Liberty Street in Springfield in support of striking workers seeking a wage of \$5.80 a day. Pearson continued to receive hate mail and threats with one in January of 1967 stating he would not live to see the end of the year. While traveling on union business, Rutledge was killed in a car wreck on May 1, 1967 six miles outside of Waynesboro, Tennessee. According to a Tennessee State Trooper, Pearson may have been traveling 80 miles per hour based on tire marks when he skidded off the wet road, hit a bridge abutment and rolled over into the creek. However, the tragic car wreck was considered by some as occurring under very suspicious circumstances.

Approximately 5,000 people were in attendance at his funeral service held at Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church that included speeches by 37 ministers followed by burial at Mount Olive Cemetery. In his obituary, Rutledge Pearson was described as a "*straightforward, militant and fearless leader*" His death occurred during the 1967 election causing Sallye Mathis to comment on the tragic loss of Pearson saying, "*My main source of strength is gone. We all wondered what would happen. Rutledge was the glue, the inspirational leader. But we decided this was something we shared together – that what we were doing was bigger than the life or death of one person."⁶⁰*

⁶⁰ Ibid, pp. 147 & 175.

- Bartley, pp. 72 & 73.
- Florida Times Union, Northside News, October 5, 1994, p. 3.
- Florida Times Union, May 4, 1967,

⁵⁸ Walch, p.p. 139 & 140.

⁵⁹ Florida Times Union, May 2, 1967.

Patricia Pearson, p. 17.

Jacksonville Journal, February 8, 1982

Florida Times Union, May 2, 1967.

Pearson's influence on the local civil rights campaign continued for years after his death. Many of his fellow civil rights activists went on to hold public office including Earl Johnson, Jr., at-large member of the City Council, Sallye Mathis, along with Mary Singleton, served as the first women and first blacks since 1907 to serve on the City Council, and Dr. Arnett Girardeau, the first black in Jacksonville to serve in the Florida Senate. Some of his former students at Isaiah Blocker Jr. High School and later at Darnell Cookman Jr. High School included former U.S. Congresswoman, Corrine Brown, U.S. Postmaster of Atlanta, Marjorie Meeks Brown, Henry Gardner, City Manager of Oakland, California, pediatrician, Dr. Charles B. Simmons and former City Council member and author, Rodney L. Hurst, Sr.

In 1977, Rutledge Pearson's civil rights legacy was honored and immortalized with the naming of a new bridge where Moncrief Road goes over the Ribault River. On January 30, 1992, he posthumously received the first Mary L. Singleton Award for Social Harmony sponsored by the Mary L. Singleton Memorial Education Foundation, Inc. Jacksonville NAACP Branch established the Rutledge Pearson Freedom Award for outstanding civic work. In 1994, the Sherwood Forest Elementary School was renamed in his honor. Governor Rick Scott in 2016 chose Earl Johnson and Rutledge Henry Pearson to enter the Florida Civil Rights Hall of Fame. In an April 30, 1964, JET Magazine article, Pearson summarized being a civil rights leader in the following statement, "*it's just like skimming off hot grounders at third, but without the glove, what counts is your determination and throwing arm*". In 1964, he described himself in the following way, "*I may be looked on as in a hurry. I'm in a hurry to be completely free*".⁶¹

Lloyd Nash Pearson, Jr.

The residence at 1478 McConihe Street was also the childhood home of Lloyd Nash Pearson Jr. who was born in 1921. Like his younger brother, Lloyd N. Pearson Jr. was also a noted civil right activist in Jacksonville, particularly in the critical area of voter registration. After attending Old Stanton High School and Edward Waters College, Lloyd Pearson went on to have a 35 year career with the postal service following in the footsteps of his father, Lloyd N. Pearson, Sr. He is a life- long member of Woodlawn Presbyterian Church (Laura Street Presbyterian Church) where he served in a variety of positions including, Elder, Superintendent of the Sunday school, a Sunday school teacher and member of the Board of Trustees.⁶²

It was Lloyd Pearson's long and active membership in the Jacksonville Chapter of the NAACP that got him involved in the local civil rights movement. As a NAACP member,

⁶¹ Patricia Pearson, p. 17.

Financial News and Daily Record, February 2, 2016.

Florida Times Union, February 9, 1992, p. 6 -3.

Jacksonville Journal, September 9, 1977.

Florida Times Union, March 26, 1964.

Florida Times Union, February 3, 1991, A-1.

⁶² Celebrating a Living Legend, Lloyd Nash Pearson, Jr., Unpublished, Vertical Files – Florida & Genealogy Collection, Jacksonville Main Library.

he participated with 35 other black and white Jacksonville residents in the March on Washington in 1963 and was able to return for the fifth anniversary of the march. Lloyd Pearson was involved in numerous civil rights campaigns including the desegregation of local schools, integration of segregated lunch counters in downtown and overcoming discrimination in the work place. He took an active role in opening up more management and professional jobs in the City of Jacksonville for blacks that for the most part had been concentrated in low-paying and dead end jobs usually as laborers or in domestic work. In addition he was part of meetings with hospital leaders at the Duval Medical Center and St. Luke's Hospital on the use and condition of segregated wards and employment discrimination.⁶³

However, it was his strong belief that voting was the most significant route to bring social change and to improve the lives of African Americans. Through the encouragement of Sallye Mathis, chair of the NAACP's Political Actions Committee, Lloyd Pearson headed up numerous voter registration drives over many decades. Starting in 1964, he led drives that have resulted in the registering or renewal of registration for 65,000 black voters, with him personally registering 35,000 new voters. Sometimes involving twelve hour days in front of supermarkets, drug stores, hospitals and state social service offices, Lloyd and his associates were able to register 11,000 voters in 1983, 13,000 in 1984 and 12,000 in 1985.

Much of the white leadership was well aware of the success of these drives to increase the number of black voters. Lloyd Pearson stated that the strong support of blacks in Jacksonville and elsewhere in the state for Robert King High of Miami against the incumbent Governor Burns angered and disturbed many local whites. With voting following racial lines in the spring election of 1966, many qualified black candidates on the local level ran unsuccessfully for political office but with many running very competitive campaigns.⁶⁴ Realizing that black women would be less threatening and thus more acceptable candidates to white voters, many black leaders including Rutledge Pearson convinced Sallye Mathis to run for City Council in Ward III with another group convincing Mary Singleton to run in Ward II in the 1967 election. Both Mathis and Singleton won in their representative districts becoming the first women elected to the City Council and the first blacks since 1907.⁶⁵

Sponsored and mostly funded by the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP, these voter registration drives also involved dividing the city into zones served by block captains who coordinated registrations on a more personal level. The block captains compared the registration records for their particular areas against names in the city street directories to see which residents were not registered. In addition to some financial assistance from the Southeast Regional Office of the NAACP in Birmingham, the drives were also supported by the local Long Shore men's Union that provided both money and volunteers.

⁶³ Ibid.

Paul Weaver – Interview with Lloyd Pearson, Jr., Oral History Project, University of Florida, October 5, 1976, p. 15.

⁶⁴ Walch, pp. 142 & 143.

⁶⁵ Ibid, pp. 158, 159 & 160.

Serving as the Voter Registration Coordinator for the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP, Lloyd Pearson was identified as the "point man for the whole city" by Fred Matthews, Voter Registration Coordinator for the Florida Conference of NAACP Branches.⁶⁶

In 1941, Lloyd Pearson married Mildred Odessa Meriedy who was able to overcome job discrimination to be moved by her supervisor, Bob Myers, from the receiving department to a cashier position at the front counter of the popular Purcell's Clothing Store. This promotion was a vote of confidence in her abilities by Myers as well as his belief in making the right and fair decision even at the expense of losing some white customers and angering some of her co-workers. After eleven years at Purcell's, she moved on to a successful retail career at Sears & Roebuck Company.⁶⁷

In 1984, Lloyd Pearson was named as Citizen of the Year by the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity for his outstanding work in voter registration and was also recognized as a stable presence in the local branch of the NAACP after the death of Rutledge Pearson. As one of two vice presidents in the local branch, he served as interim president with the resignation of the president in 1984.⁶⁸

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⁶⁷ Florida Times Union, River Review, April 24, 2002, p. 1.

⁶⁸ Jacksonville Journal, December 12, 1984, p. 6D.

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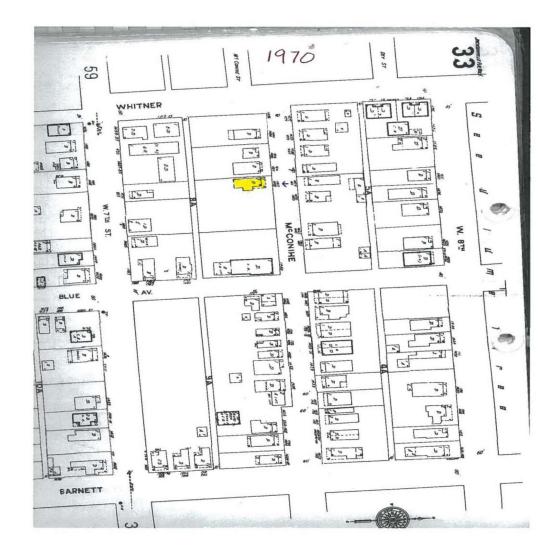
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Pearson Residence 1478 McConihe Street LM-20-02 Subdivision Map - 1942



Pearson Residence 1478 McConihe Street LM-20-02 Sanborn Map -1970





















LEGAL DESCRIPTION AND MAP

III.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON APPLICATION TO DESIGNATE THE PEARSON RESIDENCE 1478 MCCONIHE STREET AS A CITY OF JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC LANDMARK

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on the 22th day of July, 2020 A.D. at 3:00 P.M., the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Jacksonville will hold a *Public Hearing* for the consideration of the Pearson Residence, 1478 McConihe Street, as a City of Jacksonville Historic Landmark, pursuant to *Jacksonville Ordinance Code 307.104*.

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE FOR ZOOM MEETING

(**No physical location will be available for this public meeting**)

Notice is hereby given that the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission (JHPC) will meet on Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 3:00 pm. via Zoom pursuant to State of Florida Executive Order 20-69 (Emergency Management-COVID-19-Local Government Public Meetings). The purpose of this meeting is for the JHPC to consider and take action on items on the JHPC agenda which can be found at the following location:

https://www.coj.net/departments/planning-and-development/community-planning-division/default

Interested persons desiring to attend this meeting can only do so via Zoom (including by computer or telephone) using the following meeting access information:

By Computer

Join Zoom Meeting

https://zoom.us/j/99127920579?pwd=blJCTzZ1UWIWRnA4d2d2cDZlc2w5UT09

Meeting ID: 991 2792 0579 Password: 222158

By Phone

One tap mobile +13017158592,,99127920579#,,,,0#,,222158# US (Germantown) +13126266799,,99127920579#,,,,0#,,222158# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

- +1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma) +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston) +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose) Meeting ID: 991 2792 0579 Password: 222158 Find your local number: <u>https://zoom.us/u/aBfM5knly</u>

Interested persons who cannot attend this JHPC Zoom meeting but who wish to submit public comments to be read during the public comment portion of the meeting regarding any matter on the agenda for consideration at the meeting may do so by emailing the Historic Preservation Section at: <u>historicpreservation@coj.net</u> until 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Public comments submitted by email must be received no later than 2:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting to be read during the public comment portion of the meeting. The meeting agenda and materials can be obtained electronically by emailing <u>historicpreservation@coj.net</u>

Please contact The Historic Preservation Section by telephone at (904) 255-7859 or by email at <u>historicpreservation@coj.net</u> if you have any questions regarding this notice or if you experience technical difficulties during the meeting. If you have a disability that requires accommodations to participate in the above Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission: Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please allow 1-2 business days' notification to process; last minute requests will be accepted, but may not be possible to fulfill. Please contact Disabled Services Division at: V- 904-255-5466, TTY-904-255-5476, or email your request to KaraT@coj.net.

<u>Please note:</u> At this time all visits to the Planning and Development Department are by appointment only. To make an appointment, please contact the Historic Preservation Section at <u>historicpreservation@coj.net</u> or by phone at (904) 255-7800.

<u>Exhibit A</u>

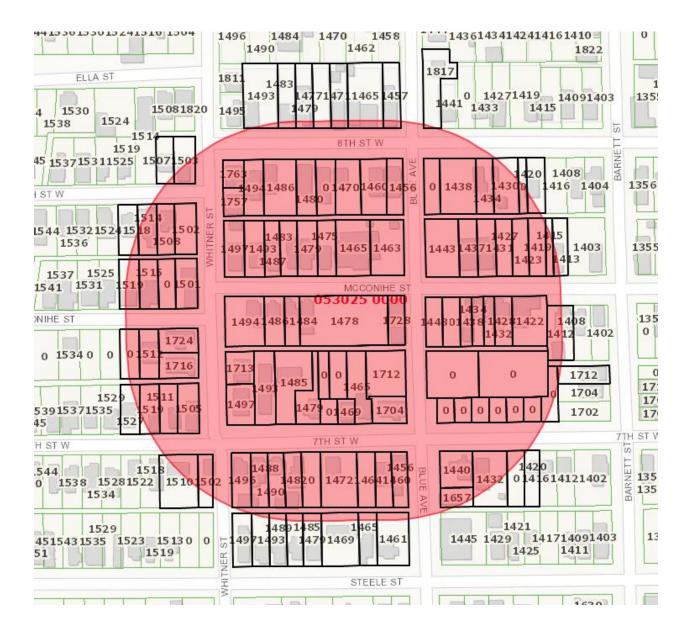
Legal Description

6-10 11-2S-26E JACKSON S/D, LOTS 2 TO 6, E 3FT LOT 7 BLOCK 6. RE Number: 053025-0000

This application (LM-20-02) is being sponsored by Roderick L. Pearson. A copy of the application may be examined in the Offices of the Planning and Development Department, 3rd Floor, Ed Ball Building, 214 North Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Florida (904) 255-7834. All interested parties are notified to be present and will be heard at the *Public Hearing*.

DATED this 8th day of July, 2020 A.D.

Jack C. Demetree, III Chairman Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission City of Jacksonville



PROOF OF PUBLICATION OF PUBLIC NOTICE

IV.

Daily Record

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

(Published daily except Saturday, Sunday and legal holidays) Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida

STATE OF FLORIDA,

S.S.

COUNTY OF DUVAL,

Before the undersigned authority personally appeared <u>Rhonda Fisher</u>, who on oath says that she is the Publisher's Representative of JACKSONVILLE DAILY RECORD, a daily (except Saturday, Sunday and legal holidays) newspaper published at Jacksonville, in Duval County, Florida; that the attached copy of advertisement, being a <u>Notice of Public Hearing on Application to Designate a City</u> of Jacksonville Historic Landmark

in the matter of LM-20-02 The Pearson Residence

in the Court of <u>Duval County</u>, Florida, was published in said newspaper in the issues of $\frac{7/8/20}{2}$

Affiant further says that the said JACKSONVILLE DAILY RECORD is a newspaper at Jacksonville, in said Duval County, Florida, and that the said newspaper has heretofore been continuously published in said Duval County, Florida, each day (except Saturday, Sunday and legal holidays) and has been entered as periodicals matter at the post office in Jacksonville, in said Duval County, Florida, for a period of one year next preceding the first publication of the attached copy of advertisement; and affiant further says that she has neither paid nor promised any person, firm or corporation any discount, rebate, commission or refund for the purpose of securing this advertisement for publication in said newspaper.

*This notice was placed on the newspaper's website and floridapublicnotices.com on the same day the notice appeared in the newspaper. NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON APPLICATION LM-20-02 TO DESIGNATE THE PEARSON RESIDENCE AT 1478 MCCONIHE STREET AS A CITY OF JACKSON-VILLE HISTORIC LAND-MARK

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on the 22th day of July, 2020 A.D. at 3:00 P.M., the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Jacksonville will hold a VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING Via ZOOM for the consideration of the Pearson Residence at 1478 McConihe Street as a City of Jacksonville Historic Landmark, pursuant to Jacksonville Ordinance Code 307.104. For information on the Virtual Zoom meeting, please see:

https://www.coj.net/departments/ planning-and-development/com munity-planning-division/default Please note: At this time all visits to the Planning and Development Department are by appointment only. To make an appointment, please contact the Historic Preservation Section at historicpreservation@coj.net or by phone at

(904) 255-7800. <u>Exhibit A</u> <u>Legal Description</u> 6-10 11-2S-26E, JACKSON S/D, LOTS 2 TO 6, E. 3 FT LOT 7, BLOCK 6. RE #: 053025-0000

This application (LM-20-02) is being sponsored by Roderick L. Pearson. A copy of the application may be examined in the Offices of the Planning and Development Department, 3rd Floor, Ed Ball Building, 214 North Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Florida (904) 255-7834. All interested parties are notified to be present and will be heard at the *Public Hearing*. **DATED** this 8th day of July, 2020 A.D.

Jack C. Demetree, III Chairman Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission City of Jacksonville Jul. 8 00(20-03903D)

Rhonda Fisher

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of July, 2020 A.D. by Rhonda Fisher who is personally known to me.

JANET MOHR Notary Public, State of Florida My Comm. Expires 12/18/2020 Commission No. GG55826

LIST OF PROPERTY OWNERS LOCATED WITHIN THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY FEET OF THE PROPOSED LANDMARK SITE

V.

054099 0000 FOWLER MARQUIS J 12687 SAMPSON RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32218

054096 0000 WISE EMMA ESTATE 1485 STEELE ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6263

054092 0000 BROWN EUGENIA M ESTATE ET AL C/O EDWIN MATHEWS 12307 DEWHURST CIR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32218

054056 0000 WILCOX JOHN W 534 26TH ST W JACKSONVILLE, FL 32206

054053 0000 ELFASI A MAGID 8005 SHADY GROVE RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32256

054050 0000 WILLIAMS EDDIE J 1464 W 7TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6276

054047 0000 CASTAWAY CAY LLC 301 THELMA DR #501 CASPER, WY 82609

054044 0000 LAND TRUST 1496 7 P O BOX 568276 ORLANDO, FL 32856

054036 0000 HUTCHINS DENA M 9 PRETORIA LN PALM COAST, FL 32137

053998 0000 SINCLAIR S TIMOTHY 2301 RIBAULT SCENIC DR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208 054098 0000 LONEY JOSEPH ET AL 1493 STEELE ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6263

054095 0000 HENDRICKS TERESA Y 729 PARKER ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32202

054091 0000 GULLATT KUJUANNA 1461 STEELE ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

054055 0000 DAVIS WILLIAM 1432 W 7TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

054052 0000 URBAN DEVELPMNT CENTER OF THE ST OF FL INC 108 CEDAR POINT LN LONGWOOD, FL 32779

054049 0000 HUANG GUOHAN 1472 W 7TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

054046 0000 BAKER SHEILA D 1488 W 7TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6276

054038 0000 WELDESILASIE YONAS 1469 7TH ST W JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

054026 0000 DEMPS BRENDA CRUM 1712 BARNETT ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

053997 0000 SINCLAIR TIMOTHY 2301 RIBAULT SCENIC DR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208 054097 0000 CIGAR CITY CAPITAL LLC 2002 E 5TH AVE #108 TAMPA, FL 33605

054093 0000 EDWARDS ERIC L 2914 RIBAULT SCENIC DR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208-2432

054057 0000 JACKSON JAMES 7160 GARDEN ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32219

054054 0000 INDY JAX PROPERTIES LLC 11715 FOX RD STE 400-107 INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46236

054051 0000 HELPFUL CITIZENS INC 1884 DEAN RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32216

054048 0000 HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF JACKSONVILLE INC 2404 HUBBARD ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32206

054045 0000 MAURIAT BELL TRACY 557 TROTTERS LN MCDONOUGH, GA 30252

054037 0000 BLUE NJ LLC 117 OCEAN LANE DR 900 KEY BISCAYNE, FL 33149

053999 0000 LEE LEAH A 4372 KINCARDINE DR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32257

053030 0000 MCDOWELL HERB 6922 ELWOOD AV JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208 053029 0100 WELDESILASIE YONAS 207 ENSLEY AVE UNIT 1 OLD HICKORY, TN 37138

053029 0010 ALVARADO GREGORIO 1249 W 5TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

053027 0000 AUSTIN OTIS ET AL 1486 BELLESHORE CIR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32218-5306

053020 0000 CALLAHAN GLADYS DELORISE 1516 BROOKWOOD RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32207-4282

053016 0000 ROBERTS CHRYSTAL 3651 PALEFACE PL JACKSONVILLE, FL 32210

053013 0000 LANG THOMA III ET AL 1422 MC CONIHE ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

053010 0000 JONES FREDDIE 384 BISCAYNE RD AIKEN, SC 29803-9352

053007 0000 EVANS JACKIE R 6101 MARY LYNN CT ORLANDO, FL 32807-2937

053003 0000 CONEY JOHN W 1430 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-5504

052999 0010 HOWARD SARAH REDDICK TRUST 2305 BARRY DR S JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208-3063 053029 0030 R&R LOVING HANDS INC 8027 SIERRA GARDENS DR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32219

053029 0000 RUSS MARIAH 1713 WHITNER ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

053025 0000 CRUMLEY FRANK ET AL 1465 MC CONIHE ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

053018 0000 CALLAHAN FRED 1516 BROOKWOOD RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32207

053015 0000 GULLATT KUJUANNA 7510 JOHN F KENNEDY DR W JACKSONVILLE, FL 32219

053012 0000 COPLAN ALVIN M ET AL 4251 UNIVERSITY BLVD S #201 JACKSONVILLE, FL 32216

053009 0000 CARLSON DUANE A 306 LUTHER ST LUTHER, IA 50152

053006 0000 CHATMAN FLORENCE DOE 1651 CARBONDALE DR N JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208

053002 0000 CUE HENRY JR 1479 W 9TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-5540

052999 0000 CRUMLEY FRANK D 2723 ARMSDALE RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209 053029 0020 BL FLA HOLDINGS LLC 1750 UNIVERSITY BLVD N JACKSONVILLE, FL 32211

053028 0000 JONES ANNETTE Y 635 LUNA CT JACKSONVILLE, FL 32205-5451

053022 0000 BURTON SYLVESTER D 1728 BLUE AVE JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

053017 0000 CALLAHAN GLADYS 1516 BROOKWOOD RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32207

053014 0000 WHITE PILLAR LLC 10225 ULMERTON RD STE 9C LARGO, FL 33771

053011 0000 CARLSON BRYAN 1507 6TH AVENUE BELLE PLAINE, IA 52208

053008 0000 STONE ROCKET CAPITAL LLC 10225 ULMERTON RD STE 9C LARGO, FL 33771

053004 0000 YOUNG HOWARD ET AL 6932 BLOWING ROCK LN JACKSONVILLE, FL 32222-2513

053001 1000 POWELL LAVEDA ET AL 1420 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-5504

052998 0000 ROBINSON ANTHONY 314 SHORELINE DR KINGSLAND, GA 31548 052997 0000 BAIR LAURA L 2660 EASTILL DR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32211

052994 0010 JACKSON JEREMIAH 10555 SHAMROCK RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32256

052992 0000 ROBINSON HAZEL 1486 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-5539

052988 0000 BOOKER ANETTA 1460 8TH ST W JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

052984 0010 OMA OPA LLC 9378 ARLINGTON EXP 332 JACKSONVILLE, FL 32225

052982 0000 LESTER FRED L 1471 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-5538

052979 0010 RHYMER LIA M P O BOX 43376 JACKSONVILLE, FL 32203

051171 0000 RICHARDSON LANIER 1515 MCCONIHE ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6124

051160 0000 HALL LARRY 1514 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6117

051157 0000 CHRISTOPHER HOUSE OF HOPE INC 442 16TH ST WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33407 052996 0000 JOHNSON ANNETTE Y 635 LUNA CT JACKSONVILLE, FL 32205-5451

052994 0000 JACKSON JEREMIAH SR 10649 MCLAURIN RD E JACKSONVILLE, FL 32256

052991 0000 PALACE OF PEACE INC 3126 CAPPER RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32218

052987 0000 JONES HENRY M ESTATE C/O HENRY L JONES 335 WEST 7TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32206

052984 0000 MELTON BENIN 2419 WHISPERING WOOD BLVD UNIT 1 JACKSONVILLE, FL 32246

052981 0000 BURNS FRANCISCO ET AL 1465 8TH ST W JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

051182 0000 DANIELS JAMES L 1503 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6116

051170 0000 RICHARDSON DOROTHY M ESTATE 1515 MC CONIHE ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6124

051159 0000 ASME HOLDINGS LLC 2220 COUNTY RD 210 W SUITE 108-311 JACKSONVILLE, FL 32259

051156 0000 JACKSON VICKY D 1511 W 7TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209 052995 0000 LONG WILHELMENIA 7234 ELWOOD AVE JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208

052993 0000 SMITH LAVERNE S 11519 OTTERS DEN CT E JACKSONVILLE, FL 32219

052989 0000 KELLOGG CALVIN THOMAS ET AL 97001 RICHO LN YULEE, FL 32097

052985 0000 GLANTON FAMILY TRUST 5618 CROWSON ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19144

052983 0000 KNOWLES ROBERT L 1477 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-5538

052980 0000 WILSON ELIJAH JERRY JR 1457 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-5538

051181 0000 MCCONNELL AMANDA ESTATE 1507 W 8TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6116

051161 0000 HOWARD WILMA C 307 KENNELWORTH PL AUGUSTA, GA 30909

051158 0000 AUSTIN REAL ESTATE COMPANY 1486 BELLESHORE CIR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32218

051155 0000 HARTMAN ERICH C ET AL C/O JOANNE BLANKENSHIP 4530 TANGO LN JACKSONVILLE, FL 32210 051154 0000 PARRISH NATHANIEL 8971 MADISON AVE JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208

051142 0000 BROWN TIMOTHY B 3940 MONCRIEF RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

051122 0000 JOHNSON CHARLES L JR 1502 W 7TH ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6113

URBAN CORE KIM PRYOR 245 3RD ST JACKSONVILLE, FL 32206 051144 0000 EDWARD WATERS COLLEGE INC 1658 KINGS RD JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-6167

051141 0000 BARNES GEORGE A ET AL 4991 SOUTEL DR JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208-1858

EWC CDC ELLIS G BROWN, JR. 1658 KINGS ROAD

051143 0000 ELOXAMA LLC 1981 NW 180TH ST MIAMI GARDENS, FL 33056

051122 0020 JONES LAVETTE ET AL C/O LAVETTE JONES 1704 SECRETARIAT LN N JACKSONVILLE, FL 32218

GOOD NEIGHBOR M.A.N.I.A. CELIA MILLER 1440 N. MYRTLE AVE JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209-7738