

ATLANTA HOUSING 1944 TO 1965



**Case Studies in Historic Preservation
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INTRODUCTION

As post-World War II architecture, landscaping, and archeology within the city of Atlanta reaches the fifty-year rule of the National Register of Historic Places, historic preservation officials need to be able to identify these sites as well as their level of integrity if they are to be included in the National Register of Historic Places. Students of the Heritage Preservation Master's Program at Georgia State University have compiled this project for the Case Studies in Historic Preservation course. The project included survey work, oral interviews with planners, architects, landscape architects, and builders who practiced during the period as well as the historical research gathered from books, journals, and architectural plans. The goal of this project is to assist State of Georgia and City of Atlanta historic preservation officials in identifying and determining overall integrity of post-World War II housing, landscapes and potential archeological sites in the Atlanta area.

SECTION ONE: CONTEXT AND HISTORY

National Trends (1945-1965)

Postwar America

The twenty or so years following World War II, were times of immense change for American society. The mid-century housing boom paralleled that of the 1920's. Though on a larger scale, some of the same factors were at work: a burst of postwar prosperity, a pent-up demand, spectacular population growth, and the baby boom. It was the time of declining cities and burgeoning suburbs; it was the age of automobiles and interstates; it was the time in which the "family" was seen as the most important aspect of life; it was a time of modernization and industrialization in many sectors of the economy, including building construction and it was a time that would forever influence the ways in which Americans live.

The war ended in Europe in May of 1945 and in Asia in September of that same year. Over six million men and women were discharged from the Armed Forces in 1945 and another four million in 1946. Many of the twenty million women who had been employed during the war found themselves dismissed or demoted in order to ensure jobs for returning GI's. If jobs were scarce, housing was even more so. Two and half million reunited families and recently married couples had to double up with relatives. What had been temporary defense housing now became emergency homes. Senate investigations found hundreds of thousands of veterans living in garages, trailers, barns, and even chicken coops. The most conservative reports from the government's National Housing Agency estimated that the country needed at least five million new units immediately and a total of 12.5 million over the next decade."¹

Following World War II, some 1,500,000 countrymen expressed themselves as ready and eager to build a small house as soon as conditions permitted. Many of them were renters who

¹ Wright, pg. 242

saw the social and economic stability that home ownership would bring, the more satisfactory basis for developing a family. At the end of the war, veterans, with their World War II savings, were encouraged by a national policy promoting home ownership in suburban areas to participate in the transformation of the American city and the American economy.

The Role of the Federal Government

The federal government played a key role in promoting the construction of residential homes following World War II. Anticipating the sudden and vast demand for postwar housing, the Veterans Administration had created a Veterans' Mortgage Guarantee program in 1944 that came to be known as the GI Bill of Rights. Administered under the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), the VA housing program enabled veterans to borrow the entire appraised value of a house without a down payment. Additionally, Harry Truman on January 26, 1946, "issued an executive order establishing the office of Housing Expediter charged with the task of preparing plans and programs and recommending legislation for the provision of housing for veterans."² Additionally, Truman founded the Veteran's Emergency Housing Program through which he proposed a large expansion of factory fabrication of houses through allocations of surplus war plants and materials and through the guaranteeing the market for the product. In 1949, the authors of the Housing Act declared their objective to be "the realization as soon as feasible of the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family."³ Furthermore, under the 1944 Serviceman's Readjustment Act, all veterans received an almost irresistible incentive to buy, not rent, the house of their dreams with no down payment and a thirty-year mortgage at about four percent. These benefits, when added to already existing

² Wright, pg. 279

³ Wright, pg. 246

Federal Housing Administration legislation such as the landmark National Housing Act of 1934, which set up the FHA to stimulate the moderate-cost private housing market, made home owning safe and easy for a whole huge new market.

Creation of the Federal Housing Administration

In 1937, under an act of Congress, the Federal Housing Administration was established to provide American families with a unique opportunity to become homeowners. Formerly, a homebuyer's options were only limited to short term loans ranging from 1 to 5 years in term. Borrowers had to put as much as 40 to 50 percent down on the property and pay off the entire loan balance by the end of the term. FHA revolutionized the mortgage industry at the time by offering the 30-year mortgage and made the possibility of home ownership available to Americans nationwide. FHA rebuilt confidence in the housing market for lenders by offering insurance against losses, within certain limitations and provided lending institutions agreed to certain regulations by the FHA. Among these regulations were low down payments for the borrower ranging from five to twenty percent, permitting debt amortization through regular monthly payments over a relatively long period, and lower interest rates since the level of risk for the lender had decreased.⁴ Throughout the years, a variety of programs have spawned from this revolution to make home ownership easier, more affordable, and attainable to Americans.⁵ By the 1940s and 1950s, FHA loans were also growing in popularity, allowing home ownership to more people. Veterans Administration (VA) loans were even more popular than FHA loans and were a much better deal if you qualified.⁶ VA loans are often made without any down

⁴ *Housing U.S.A.: As Industry Leaders See It*, p. 13, 16.

⁵ The FHA Library, accessed via http://fha.sunnational.com/fha_mortgages/default.asp, April 1, 2001.

⁶ Interview, Bill Kennedy, April 4, 2001.

payment at all, and frequently offer lower interest rates than ordinarily available with other kinds of loans.⁷

Federal Housing Administration Politics

Unfortunately, not all were included in the new market that FHA created. One of the more unfortunate consequences of this new housing program was the urban built environment. As a result of this program, the supply of urban housing for urban residents dwindled substantially, while the proportion of the single-family houses being constructed grew even more rapidly. In fact, by 1950, Fortune Magazine boasted that the United States had fifty percent more households than in the period immediately before the war. Martin Mayer in the book *Builders*, quotes one economist's calculation: "between 1940 and 1956 the increase in single family home ownership was greater than in the previous century and a half of our history."⁸ While this was considered a positive step forward for many Americans, this trend did not alleviate the growing demand in the cities for multi-family housing by lower income minority residents. These single-family homes were not being built in the cities for several reasons. First, the FHA tried to control design and construction of suburban homes in an effort to achieve neighborhood stability. The agency endorsed zoning to prevent multifamily dwellings and insisted that no single-family residence could have facilities that would allow it to be used as a shop, office, preschool, or rental unit. The FHA was a major vehicle for the promotion of zoning ordinances; rarely could purchasers get a long-term mortgage insured by the government in an area without such an ordinance.⁹

⁷ Home Loan Guaranty Services, Veterans Benefits and Services, accessed via <http://www.homeloans.va.gov/lgyinfo.htm>, April 10, 2001.

⁸ Davidson, pg. 151

⁹ Wilens, David, "Redlining and the Federal Housing Administration," accessed via <http://www.capitalismmagazine.com/2000/march/tale2cities3.htm#6>, April 20, 2001.

Second, in FHA terms, “neighborhood character” depended primarily on overt policies of ethnic and racial segregation. An FHA technical bulletin on *Planning Profitable Neighborhoods* advised developers to concentrate on a particular market based on age, income, and race. In fact, the agency refused to underwrite houses in areas threatened by “Negro Invasion.”¹⁰

Interestingly, in the cities, the FHA “red-lined” huge sections that were changing and refused to guarantee mortgage loans in those areas, claiming that the influx of blacks made the loans bad risks.¹¹ This turn caused Savings and Loans Associations as well as banks to refuse to issue mortgages in redlined neighborhoods. These policies played a critical role in the deterioration of urban areas all across the country. The stigma of being redlined was immense: once a neighborhood was redlined, private lenders automatically thought that the neighborhood was declining and often refused to make any loans there, government insured or not. While a black person could technically apply for mortgage insurance and move into a new, all-white area where the federal government was insuring mortgages, that black person's mortgage would likely be the last mortgage insured in that area, since the area would subsequently be redlined.¹²

Fourth, in the suburbs, the FHA encouraged restrictive covenants to ensure neighborhood homogeneity and to prevent any future problems of racial violence or declining property values. The 1947 FHA manual stated, “If a mixture of user groups is found to exist, it must be determined whether the mixture will render the neighborhood less desirable to present and prospective occupants. Protective covenants are essential to the sound development of proposed residential areas, since they regulate the use of the land and provide a basis for the development

¹⁰ Wright, pg. 246

¹¹ The term “red-lining” originated from the discrimination by banks in their practice of lending; they would draw a red line around the neighborhoods that they felt would default on a home loan and were potential credit risks.

¹² Wilens, David, “Redlining and the Federal Housing Administration,” accessed via <http://www.capitalismmagazine.com/2000/march/tale2cities3.htm#6>, April 20, 2001.

of harmonious, attractive neighborhoods.”¹³ Policies such as these inevitably encouraged the intertwining of race with the building of new housing developments specifically targeted towards urban minorities. While this was not a new concept to many Southern urban centers, these policies served to further entrench segregationist ideals.

Furthermore, these FHA policies combined with the increase of federal funds for highway construction, which allowed easy commuting to work from residential neighborhoods, transformed the American city. Many younger workers and their families abandoned the central city in favor of the suburban ring. Young people left their families in the ethnic neighborhoods of the old central cities and, whistling the hit tune, “I’ll Buy That Dream,” bought new cars and went to live in new tract houses, with nothing down and low FHA monthly payments.”¹⁴ The dream house of the postwar period replaced the ideal city as the spatial representation of American hopes for the good life. In fact it was said that, “it is in the neighborhood that we make friends, build homes, and rear children. City planners consider the neighborhood good. Being outside the commercial district/departed from it by a green belt of lawn, trees, and farm land”¹⁵ In conclusion, with loans from the federal government and highways provided by the federal government, middle-class America began to line up eagerly to buy single family suburban homes. According to Wright, the suburban house seemed the only way to provide a stable family life. This was what the government, the builders, the bankers, and the magazines told them, and many believe it or felt they had to. This in turn encouraged both large and small builders to begin producing as many homes as they could on plots of land on the outskirts of the cities.

¹³ Abrams, pg. 219

¹⁴ Mayden, pg. 36

The American Home

The American home has always been the American dream; never more so was it than within the middle of the 20th Century. During the years after World War II and the decade following, building and furnishing a home was a married woman's dream and reason for a man returning home from World War II to work even harder. The American veteran, home from the victorious World War II, dreamed of building a house to further promote the stronger and more conquering attitude society felt after the victory in Europe. George Nelson and Henry Wright in their 1945 book *Tomorrow's House: How to Plan Your Postwar Home Now*, wrote the following,

What is a house? It is a perfect mirror of a society most of whose members are afraid of acting like individuals. Only through open mindedness and open planning in the design of American houses could the ideal for which the war was fought be fulfilled. Therefore you will do well to recognize the fact that only the modern architect is free to use every inch of space to your greatest advantage, free to use new and more efficient materials and structural techniques and free to give you at least the feeling of spaciousness that is actually attainable.

The idea of providing a modern, more abundant life for your family was no greater expressed in American History than in the years after the World War II. During the 1940's and 1950's, more efficient and effective houses were built all over the United States. The boom in housing and the governmental assistance to promote postwar housing led developers, manufacturers and designers to promote products that appealed primarily to women. These women were often the one's who would be utilizing these new modern interiors to the fullest extent and would need to be the secured market for establishing success. The connection of the modern American family and their home can be closely conveyed in many articles of *Southern Living* and *Metropolitan Living* of the 1940's and 1950's. Many "modern living" houses, provided all the amenities to assist women with their daily tasks while making them seem easily

¹⁵ Rogpg. 31

managed and promoting a more unified sense of duties. Within planning books and architectural floor plans of the 1940's and 1950's, many things are noticeable about the changing interior. One of these is the expanse of the kitchen, dining room, and laundry facilities, that boasted the "woman's area" of where her daily tasks were executed. While the interior plans of the 1920's and 1930's called for more formalized living spaces, after World War II the ideas changed about how this newly expanding family would live in a more efficient, modern home. The homes of the 1940's and 1950's often combined the dining room with a larger kitchen and breakfast room into one room. This extra space created by the absence of an individual dining room could be utilized as the children's area for play or sleep. Many rooms in the modern house had a myriad of functions. In these houses, for the first time you would see a combination of study-guest rooms, kitchen-laundry rooms, and sewing room-play rooms for children. These new uses had much to do with the birth increase in the 1940's and 1950's American family.¹⁶

While the interior of the home changed with the times of postwar America, so did the exterior of the homes. The use of the backyard and the enclosed private space of building began to take form in exterior planning of the 1940's and 1950's. With the expanded production and use of the automobile, the American family began needing a carport or garage, which was often located at the front of the house. The backyard began to define the social aspects of the postwar families by providing space for barbecues, shuffleboard pits, pools and places for recreational play. This overall theme of utilizing the home for celebrations of birthdays, holidays and family gatherings was the ideal of the prosperous, modern American family. The outdoor patios could

¹⁶ In the 1930's the birthrate per woman in the United States, was 2.2, by the end of the 1950's the birth rate per woman was 3.51. This increase in birthrates caused the American "babyboomers" generation and increased the needs for care of children within the home, in a time when most women still stayed home to raise children. This population information was provided in Clifford Clark's book *The American Family Home*.

host these families, most with small children in a social setting to convey the American ideal of celebrating life after the World War II victory.

As well as the exterior surroundings of the modern home, the building materials required for the postwar built environment changed in dramatic ways. The use of many types of prefabricated materials for the first time was seen in buildings. Beyond the sociological purposes of why the homes were changing, the building materials were changing due to technological developments brought about by the quick turn around time needed for acquiring materials in order to construct large quantities of single-family homes. During the early part of the 20th Century, building for residences was often derived from forms of building outside of balloon framing and the use of heavier materials, such as stone and brick. By the 1940's, poured concrete, vast balloon framing practices, and new developments in aluminum siding, had changed the face of residential building for the American family. The use of plaster after 1950 is rare in interior finishings and had been increasingly replaced by sheet rock and gypsum board. The use of heavy wooded or tiled floors in kitchens and bathrooms of the 1910's and 1920's was replaced by modern, streamlined linoleum in postwar houses. Additionally, the uses of fenestration in postwar houses often resulted in the replacement of double hung windows with casement windows. These windows were more easily installed and were less costly than their predecessors. These new materials, produced after World War II, were pivotal in providing countless new families of this era with a modern home. While these materials to preservationists might not seem to have the aesthetic appeal that the early 20th century homes contained, these 1940's and 1950's homes contained materials that are evidence of a distinct period of building. This period of building has great historical and social significance within this period in American History.

With the modernizing of exterior building materials, interior room advancement and the need for a new modern home, the appliances of these homes had to be appealing to the homemaker, convenient and helpful to everyday life. The advancement of appliances of this period ranged from self-cleaning ovens to quieter, better working washing machines. The modern, efficient refrigerators, ovens, dishwashers and kitchen appliances of the post World War II era were reminiscent of a time where housekeeping had to appear effortless, likeable and enjoyable without appearing psychically taxing. The ideals that Dr. Benjamin Spock, 20th Century child psychologist suggested related to child rearing he related to the role of the homemaker. He promoted the ideal of child rearing and said it should “be fun and not a burden”. The cooking and cleaning of the home should be transformed from mundane activities to a sophisticated approach to managing the home. The American woman of the 1950’s was no greater enforcer of the advertising agencies plot to convey happy homemaking and more often than not she convinced her neighbors, if not herself how efficient her home had become in the wake of technology.



Figure 1: Hotpoint Appliance Ad, 1952. Better Homes and Gardens.

Trends in Atlanta from 1945-1965

In Georgia, as in the nation, World War II accomplished what the New Deal had been unable to do: it generated the payrolls and production that brought the end to the Great Depression and touched off an era of prosperity. Southern cities, especially Atlanta, were on the cutting edge an economic change from an agriculturally based society to one of industry. Transportation accessibility is the underlying reason for the location, function, and consistent growth of Atlanta. While the railroad explains the early emergence of the city, air routes gave the city added thrust in the late 1930's, moving ahead of Birmingham. Air passenger traffic was able sustain the city as a major transaction center and convention Mecca. The interstate highway system added another dimension in the late 1950's and early 1960's that helped make Atlanta a leader as a southern metropolis. The interstate system helped to make Atlanta a leader in developing suburban office and industrial parks as well as producing a major local transportation hub. Interestingly, Atlanta began major freeway construction well before massive federal aid became available in the late 1950's. As of 1950, no southern city had reached a million people, however Atlanta crossed that threshold during the 1950's as people were irresistibly drawn to the burgeoning metropolis. As a result, at the end of World War II, the unincorporated part of Fulton County adjacent to the city of Atlanta was growing rapidly. In 1949, more than 90,000 persons lived just outside of the city limits.¹⁷ By 1952, the city of Atlanta had grown from 37 square miles to 118 square miles.¹⁸ This extraordinary growth in Atlanta's population naturally fueled the demand for more housing.

¹⁷ Hartshorn, pg. 25

¹⁸ Bernard, Bradley, Rice, pg. 36

Part of this expansion was due in part to the motivation of whites that were leaving the “city” and buying the house of their dreams in neighborhoods such as Oakland City, East Lake and Sherwood Forest. As trade, money and factories such as General Motors and Ford Motor Company joined forces with an already impressive and unique political-economic power structure comprised of Banks, such as Citizens and Southern National & Trust Company, business interests, such as Coca Cola, Rich’s, Haverty’s, and utilities, such as Georgia Power and Atlanta Gas Light and converged on the city so did the population. As result of this increased population in the decade following World War II there was also a direct variation relating to the increase in major social problems such as crime and overcrowding. Consequently, many middle-upper class whites left the problems of the city and fled to the neighboring suburbs, where housing developments and shopping centers leaped up in what had once been agricultural areas. Similar to the national trends, many residents of Atlanta “felt that the suburbs were bastions of comfortable homes, good schools, and low crime rates.”¹⁹ In the end, “the changes that swept over Georgia after 1940 were in many ways breathtaking. The so-called “Bulldozer Revolution” transformed placid fields and meadowlands into vibrant sub-divisions.²⁰ It is without a doubt that this suburban housing movement changed the face of Atlanta forever. In fact, Jim Anchmutey of the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* has argued that, “Atlanta looks the way it does today because it was a baby boomer among cities after World War II.”²¹

However, it is one thing to want to do something and another to be able to do it. If affluent whites wanted to leave the city for suburbia, were they able to financially do it? As would be expected, residents of Atlanta had the same federal benefits as others around the nation. The federal government was instrumental in helping Atlanta veterans finance their dream

¹⁹ Coleman, pg. 354

²⁰ Coleman, pg. 375

homes after the war. In addition, an increase in per capita income in Georgia from less than \$350/year in 1940 to more than \$1,000/year by 1950, made these dream houses affordable.²²

However, not all Atlantans profited from this federal aid and increased per capita income. Just as in other cities across the country, the FHA tried to control the design and construction of neighborhoods here in Atlanta. FHA policies and practices supporting segregation combined with a segregation system that was already well-established in Georgia insured that the vast majority of the two races lived as far apart as possible. The physical result of these factors was that single-family houses for white Atlantans were separated from multifamily housing that traditionally housed inner-city minorities. In fact, by 1960, only 5.5% of the Atlanta population resided in integrated neighborhoods.²³

²¹ Atlanta Journal and Constitution, April 1, 2001

²² Coleman, pg. 341

²³ Goldfried, pg. 167

National Building Trends 1945-1965

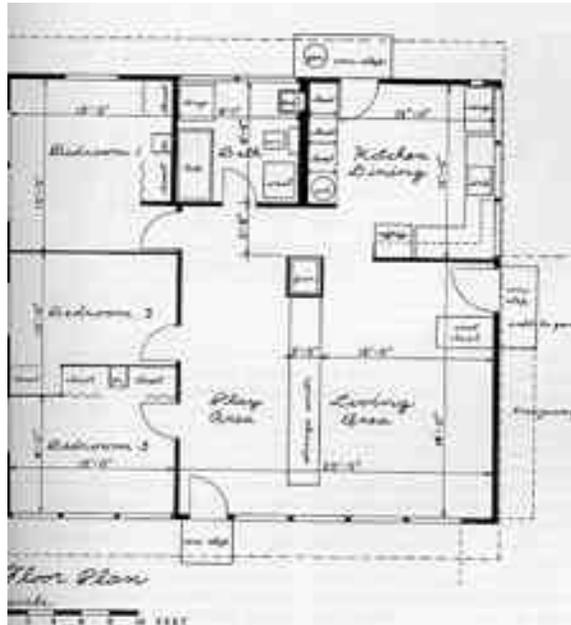


Figure 2: Floor plan for Government Sponsored Ranch House designed with specific play area for children. Harrell and Lendrum “A Demonstration of New Techniques”.

The individual’s family’s requirements for housing are continually changing. They change with the varying economic conditions of society, with the development of the community and its resources, with shifting family income, and with variations in the composition of the family. The goal of the federal government and particularly the building industry in the late 1940’s was to create a structure that was affordable for the middle class and easy to assemble quickly. Industrial progress resulted in a continuing array of new materials and conveniences that were being incorporated into homes. Additionally, architectural designs tended to keep pace with the development of the new materials and also reflected the new modes of living. It is within this context that we began to see the “pre-fabricated house.”

It is believed by many, that the architectural profession here in America had long been suffered from the “Henry Ford Syndrome.”²⁴ Architects and buildings have oftentimes contemplated the reasons behind the mass production of houses. This idea gained popularity in the postwar period simply because of the extraordinary need and demand for houses. The fundamental motivation for the building industry was the challenge of finding a technical means of solving the housing crisis. It is said that, “The factory made house is a product; industrialized housing is process.”²⁵ This was the catch phrase of the postwar period. Prefabrication is a process in which the whole is broken down into parts, which are precut, reassembled and packaged at the factory. As such, dry wall construction, and the use of prefabricated panels of plywood, asbestos siding, asphalt shingles, wood fibers, and particle boards; stressed-skin panels of plywood, metal, plastic, panels of ceramic tile, brick, or glass all seemed to point toward more factory work and less work on the building site; the end result being a decrease in ornamentation which of course leads to a decrease in cost.

As a result in the postwar period we began to see the development of subdivisions of three or four hundred almost identical houses. Every architectural theme has its own personality; it’s own natural appeal like that of any type of person. The architectural theme associated with postwar housing was small, cheap, quick to build, and would be home to the traditional nuclear family, the father the breadwinner, the mother the housewife, and two children, one boy and one girl. The general goal is to create a rational structure that incorporated the best aspects of the Colonial manner with the materials and the practical advantages of machine-age technology. The houses began to look “modern” yet usually utilized many traditional elements. Many popular models were both miniature and derivative, small editions or anthologies of old reliable

²⁴ Wachman, pg. 4

²⁵ Ibid, pg. 256

historical styles. Essentially, these houses were a “generalized prototype compounded of sentimentality and exploration.”²⁶

Some of the new development houses drew on the California style and mood, with informality spread out on one floor, which was open to the sun. Many were models that combined the old high and the new low floor and hence were called the split-level. One of the most popular house designs of the time was the ranch home, which evoked a rambling dwelling to postwar buyers. In reality, many of these types of houses has less square footage than the average house of the 1920’s; but housewives saw an end to their countless trips up and down the stairs, and husbands liked the look of spaciousness, with fewer walls between rooms and a view of the backyard. Perhaps the loss of square footage, with the advances of technology occurred due to the unavailability of space within an urban neighborhood. Without heading to the suburbs one had to have a home built within standards of city lots and often the size would have been less than those in the sprawling suburbs. The *Saturday Evening Post* reported in 1945 “postwar buyers wanted a new house, with modern floor plan, up-to-date materials, and the latest appliances. Buyers wanted a picture window or sliding glass door to make the house seem larger and more open. Preferably, the glass wall was in the back, facing the “outdoor living room,” where so many activities associated with suburban living took place. Here was the barbecue pit, the Jungle gym, the flower garden, and the well-mowed lawn. Mothers wanted to be able to watch her children outside through this picture window or inside, with the popular open floor plan that included a “recreation-room.”²⁷

²⁶ Davidson, pg153

²⁷ Dahir, unpaginated

SECTION TWO: PLANNING IN ATLANTA

Setting the Stage for Suburban Growth and Development

Around the time of World War II, Atlanta was becoming a metropolitan area, and many felt it should be treated as a region, not just a core city. This region would have vast amounts of suburbs, and little regard for the political boundaries that had governed its existence in the past. Between 1940 and 1950, the U.S. Population had grown by 18 million people. Of this increase, 80 percent was in major metropolitan areas, and 60 percent went to the suburbs. During this same time period, the population of Atlanta (what was becoming the metropolitan area of Fulton and DeKalb counties) grew by 30,000 to 550,000, while the population outside the city limits increased by 100,000. The Metropolitan Planning Commission (predecessor to Atlanta Regional Commission) predicted in 1952 that by 1980 the Atlanta “region” would have a population of 900,000. This means that the population would increase by 350,000 from 1952, and all of these people would locate in the suburbs.²⁸ The document that published this prediction was entitled *Up Ahead: A Regional Land Use Plan for Metropolitan Atlanta*, written by the Metropolitan Planning Commission. This document detailed planning issues and patterns of growth for Atlanta, but a different Atlanta than had been planned in the past. The image of Atlanta was beginning to change into something much larger than just the city. This was a plan that was designed for the city and all of the outlying areas that would become the suburbs, which would eventually be annexed into the city limits shortly after the report was produced. This document would indicate how important comprehensive planning should be to the growth and management

²⁸ Metropolitan Planning Commission, *Up Ahead: A Regional Land Use Plan for Metropolitan Atlanta*, February 1952.

of such a large and growing area, and included topics such as neighborhood design, land use patterns, zoning, and highway design.²⁹

Suburbs began to take on the image of better places to live and raise families due to the crowded image of the city. *Up Ahead* claimed that the future pattern (of growth) could include 30 or larger “communities separated by free-flowing arterial highways.”³⁰ Within each community, 30,000 to 40,000 people could live in “pleasant neighborhoods.” Population density can be low, with green ridges and creek valleys to provide parks and open space. Large, well-planned retail districts and shopping centers will be needed in outlying areas, with transportation provided by a web of coordinated arterial trunk highways.³¹ Atlanta was ideal for planning such suburban growth because it was free from physical boundaries (mountains, oceans, etc.) that would inhibit growth to outer areas. Atlanta was also credited for growing during the “Age of Mobility,” or during the escalation of importance of the automobile.³²

Limited History of Planning in the City of Atlanta from 1920 to 1960s

A history of planning efforts in Atlanta is important to know in understanding how the city has been shaped over time. Much of what has happened in Atlanta is a deliberate effort by city and county governments to distribute growth. It is important to understand major changes in the physical and population growth of Atlanta, and how we should pay attention to these trends to adequately plan for growth in the future.

1921 – Atlanta joins the ranks of many other metropolitan areas utilizing planning by forming the Atlanta City Planning Commission.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

1938 – The Fulton County Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals is formed to deal with the growing importance of Fulton County as local government.

1944 – Atlanta and Fulton County governments set up an informal “cooperative planning office” to develop postwar plans for Downtown Atlanta.

1946 – A Bond issue was approved for \$16,600,000, the largest bond allotment in the city of Atlanta history, to build the new expressway that would bisect Atlanta and be so critical in the future planning of Atlanta and its outer regions. This money was also used for infrastructure, improvements, schools, parks, etc. in Fulton County, and similar bond issues were approved to extend these services into DeKalb County.

1947 – The Metropolitan Planning Commission (the “Commission”) was established by an act of the Georgia General Assembly. It was perhaps the first metropolitan body in the U.S. supported from the start entirely by public funds and given the sole job of long-range planning.³³

1950 – The Commission undertook a two-year program to develop a basic master plan for planning this “New City.” About this same time, the Local Government Commission of Fulton County was set up by the Georgia General Assembly to produce a study of governments of Atlanta and Fulton County, and eradicate duplication of municipal services. The Commission produced a plan called the “Plan of Improvement” to expand the city limits into Fulton County so these municipal services could be combined. As of this time, the city of Atlanta encompassed 37 square miles

January 1, 1952 – As a result of the Plan of Improvement, the city of Atlanta extended its city limits into highly developed, unincorporated Fulton County by 83 square miles. This added 100,000 people to the population of the City, which was equivalent to the metropolitan area’s increase *outside* the city limits between 1940 and 1950. Table 1 illustrates the changes in population in the City of Atlanta before and after the annexation.

Changes in Population – City of Atlanta, 1940 – 1950

1940	1950	
	Before annexed city limits	After annexed city limits
302,300	331,300	430,700

Source: *Up Ahead: A Regional Land Use Plan for Metropolitan Atlanta, February 1952.*

The Plan called for shifting most of Fulton County’s municipal functions to city government in addition to extending the city limits. At this time, the City limits encompassed 118 square miles. The Metropolitan Planning Commission’s 1952 Plan is published with predictions about the City and how the focus must shift to a regional focus because of suburban growth and the interstates.

1954 – A new Zoning Ordinance for the City of Atlanta is adopted. Also, the National Housing Act of 1954 is enacted and officially begins the Urban Renewal process across the U.S. Atlanta immediately got involved and received millions of dollars to demolish homes (many of them were older then and could possibly have historic significance today) and clearance of blighted areas to make way for new construction. Urban Renewal was seen as an effort to rid inner cities of physical blight, high crime and moral decay.

³³ Ibid.

1958 – MPC produces another regional plan for the City, Fulton County and DeKalb County, which is known as the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Atlanta. The Comprehensive Plan included predictions that were revised from the 1952 Plan of Improvement. Eventually, the MPC becomes the Atlanta Regional Commission, which now serves 10 counties and 64 municipalities. By this time, the reports highlighted the importance of zoning, and the focus was shifted to developing uniform comprehensive zoning ordinances.³⁴

1960 – The exodus to the suburbs began. 1960 marked the highest population in the City, and also the time when the freeways' popularity peaked and people began locating along them in the suburbs in a leapfrog manner of development (the city core was fully developed). Land was much cheaper away from the core of the city, and people were taking advantage of opportunities to give their families homes on private lots, and popular magazines did a great deal to promote this new style of living. Freeways allowed people to commute from these “big, beautiful lots,” to keep Downtown as strictly a retail and work center that it was in the 1940s and 1950s.³⁵

Zoning

In 1926, zoning gained importance and national acceptance with the case of *Village of Euclid, Ohio vs. Ambler Realty*. In Euclid, the Supreme Court heard a challenge by an Ohio landowner of a comprehensive zoning plan adopted by the city council of Euclid, Ohio. The ordinance established districts for land use, and district regulations for building heights and minimum lot sizes. The ordinance, the court held, did not violate due process, and bore a

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Interview, Bill Kennedy, April 4, 2001.

relational relationship to valid government interests in preventing congestion and in segregating incompatible land uses. The court upheld the use of police power to zone.³⁶ Atlanta's first zoning ordinance was created in 1929. It was very basic and only had minimal zoning classifications. By the 1950s, zoning served two purposes within the city of Atlanta:

1. *Use Regulations*: to allocate to each type of activity sufficient and appropriate land for that purpose.
2. *Bulk Regulations*: sets the size and shape of the buildings and their locations in relation to each other and to lot lines.

Zoning protects property against conflicting uses to bring “stability and order” into a community's development.³⁷ Zoning played an important role in planning growth after the War, and was another reason for the 1952 Plan of Improvement – the zoning ordinance had not been redone since 1929 and it was time to put some changes into law.³⁸ After the War, many veterans were coming back and starting families, and a housing and population boom took place. Zoning would direct this new growth, and would greatly influence a separation of land uses and housing types that had not been as prevalent in the past.

Atlanta Zoning Ordinances

Up to the period of the scope of this report in 1965, Atlanta had two major zoning ordinances, 1929 and 1954, with several amendments made to the latter. In the *1929 Zoning Ordinance*, there were four zoning categories:³⁹

³⁶ Juergensmeyer, Julian Conrad and Thomas E. Roberts, *Land Use Planning and Control Law*, p. 23.

³⁷ Metropolitan Planning Commission, *Up Ahead: A Regional Land Use Plan for Metropolitan Atlanta*, February 1952.

³⁸ Interview, Bill Kennedy, April 4, 2001.

1. Industrial
2. Commercial
3. Residential (1 & 2 family)
4. Residential (multifamily)

These classifications were very broad and general, but provide insight as to the types of land uses and residential patterns of that day. Land uses were not as separate as we know today; many people lived downtown and worked there also. In the early part of the 20th century, Atlanta was not as big as other major cities in the U.S., and the physical area was smaller than it is today. The categories are primarily use regulations and do not yet mandate lot sizes, setbacks, etc.

The *1954 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta* is contained in Sections 41.1 through 41.40, Part II, of the Code of the City of Atlanta, was adopted and approved October 5, 1953, around the time the interstate highway system was being built under the administration of Eisenhower⁴⁰. The 1954 Ordinance contains changes from the 1929 Ordinance, such as the subdivision of residential classifications, but also contains changes representative of the growth and development of Atlanta after the war. The 1954 Ordinance contains the zoning regulations originally adopted by Fulton County on June 7, 1946, as amended, which were then in effect within a part of the City of Atlanta.⁴¹ This is a result of the annexation that took place in 1952. The *1954 Zoning Ordinance* contains an increased number of land use codes, and are mainly subdivisions and specifications of the original broader categories in the original *1929 Zoning Ordinance*:

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *1954 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta.*

Residential:

1. R-1: Single-Family Dwelling District
2. R-2: Single-Family Dwelling District
3. R-3: Single-Family Dwelling District
4. R-4: Single-Family Dwelling District
5. R-5: Single-Family Dwelling District
6. R-6: Two-Family Dwelling District
7. R-7: Two-Family Dwelling District
8. A-1: Apartment Dwelling District
9. A-2: Apartment Dwelling District

Commercial and Industrial:

10. C-1: Community Business District
11. C-2: Commercial District
12. C-3: Commercial District
13. C-4: Central Business District
14. M-1: Light Industrial District
15. M-2: Heavy Industrial District

Source: 1954 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, with text of all amendments to the original Ordinance, which were adopted prior to June 1, 1962.

The increase in categories is very interesting because it shows how specifically residential housing trends are changing within the area in the 1950s and 1960s, and many more types of classifications were necessary. There were more housing types after the war, and many more people who needed housing. But because everyone flocked to the suburbs during this time, the housing makeup changed within the city. There are many more multi-family classifications than in 1929 representing the many apartments that were built or were converted from large, formerly single-family houses.⁴² For example, in Inman Park, there are several big brick apartment buildings, non-characteristic of the historic fabric of the neighborhood, because people were leaving the big homes in the city for life in the suburbs, and these neighborhoods became flooded with new multifamily housing for lower-income families.⁴³ As whites left the larger

⁴² Interview, Bill Kennedy, April 4, 2001.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

houses in town for the suburbs, African-Americans would replace them as a result of natural in migration, or as a result of the government placing them there.⁴⁴

The *1954 Zoning Ordinance* is also where we begin to see minimum area regulations (yard, lot, etc.), dwelling square footage minimums, parking regulations and height restrictions, specified for each individual zoning code. These bulk regulations begin to set standards for building, but there were no architectural controls unless the subdivision itself had deed restrictions. There were separate building codes, which only provided minimum standards for maintenance and building of structures, including building materials, fireproofing, and height restrictions. Many of these codes were set to enforce health and safety standards, such as number of bedrooms, window and bathroom standards, and ventilation. Technical codes, such as plumbing and electricity requirements, were also very basic.⁴⁵

Neighborhood Patterns

Planning officials in Atlanta began to advocate the way neighborhoods should be planned based on these zoning ordinances, and used zoning as a tool with which to plan them.

Neighborhoods were planned to look like each other – there was very little variation, especially with the FHA regulations that ensured “homogeneity” outlined previously in this report.

According to Kenneth Jackson, who wrote *The Crabgrass Frontier* in 1985 about mass construction after World War II, the major characteristics of the postwar suburbs include:⁴⁶

- ?? Neighborhoods built on the outer edges of the city
- ?? Low density of people per square mile
- ?? Architectural similarity
- ?? Easy availability
- ?? Economic and racial homogeneity

⁴⁴ Stone, Clarence N., *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946 – 1988*,

⁴⁵ *1954 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta*.

⁴⁶ Jackson, Kenneth, *The Crabgrass Frontier*, p. 206.

Neighborhoods in general were promoted by the MPC as “well-knit” and built around elementary schools with *cul de sacs* to reduce noise and through-traffic flow.⁴⁷ However, *cul de sacs* were popular not only as a function of traffic calming, but also because of the general topography of Atlanta. Because of Atlanta’s rolling topography, developers were forced to build cul de sacs to get the maximum number of lots on a parcel. The general shape was curvilinear, which posed a contrast to the typical grid streets of early-20th century neighborhoods such as Fairlie-Poplar. There was little access to arterial streets, which also facilitated the reduction of traffic flow through the neighborhood. These patterns are illustrated in the Neighborhood Design of the MPC in *Up Ahead*, Figure 3.

⁴⁷ Metropolitan Planning Commission, *Up Ahead: A Regional Land Use Plan for Metropolitan Atlanta*, February 1952.

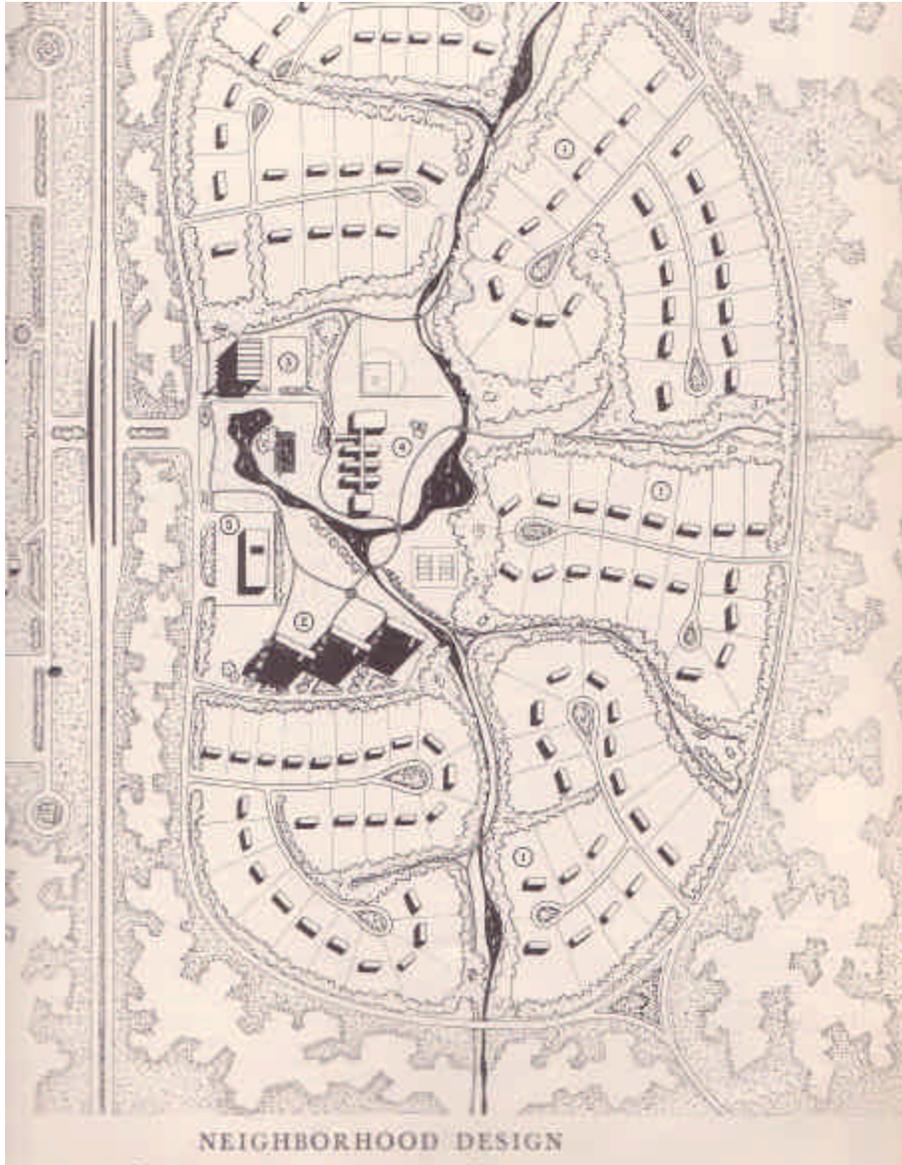


Figure 3: Neighborhood Design Plan, 1952

Many of the streets built during the 1950s and 1960s did not have sidewalks; local governments then did not impose sidewalks. Sidewalks were not as popular due to the growing importance of the car; without sidewalks, streets could be wider. The theme for many of the postwar suburbs is quantity versus quality, so it was more a matter of how fast can the developer get the houses built. With the baby boom, there was a greater demand for housing, so if the

developer could meet the need, they could make money.⁴⁸ However, in the 1940s and 1950s, the developer has the insurance of the FHA and conditions of mortgage financing, so this is a new era for the developer as well as the homeowner.⁴⁹ In response to the almost 10 percent increase in population from 1940 until before the annexation in 1952, the number of dwelling units also increased, but at almost twice the same rate.

New dwelling units were being built more rapidly outside the city limits (3 out of 4), and those that were built inside the city limits were apartments of three or more units per structure. This was indicative of the increase in population that was moving toward the suburbs. Dwelling units that were built in suburban neighborhoods were generally of the same size and quality, and multi-family was typically segregated from single-family housing. Shopping and community facilities were planned nearby, along with parks and playgrounds to alleviate the need to ever have to go back to the downtown commercial center again.⁵⁰

DeKalb County becomes the first “bedroom community,” in Atlanta, followed by Cobb County, though Cobb County is not technically in the City limits. Suburbs sometimes would have different zoning regulations given the area it was in. For example, houses built in Northwest Atlanta (Cobb) were built on septic tanks instead of sewers, so they had to be built on large acre lots to accommodate the tanks. Houses in the Northeast were built on sewer, so they were denser, but still what we would consider “suburban density.”⁵¹

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Housing U.S.A: As Industry Leaders See It, p. 14, 16.

⁵⁰ Metropolitan Planning Commission, *Up Ahead: A Regional Land Use Plan for Metropolitan Atlanta*, February 1952.

⁵¹ Interview, Bill Kennedy, April 4, 2001.

SECTION THREE: ARCHITECTURE

PART ONE: National-The Trendsetters

William J. Levitt, Developer

After World War II, veterans returned home to cash in on the American Dream. A key part of realizing this dream was purchasing one's own home. Rapid demobilization and the baby boom led to a major housing shortage. America, including the southeast and the city of Atlanta, needed housing and needed it fast. An assembly-line approach to building mass housing occurred throughout the U.S. William J. Levitt, a developer in the Northeast firm of Levitt & Sons, was a pioneer in the Northeast in providing affordable, mass-produced housing to the veterans and their families.



Figure 4: Cape Cod House, Levittown, 1948

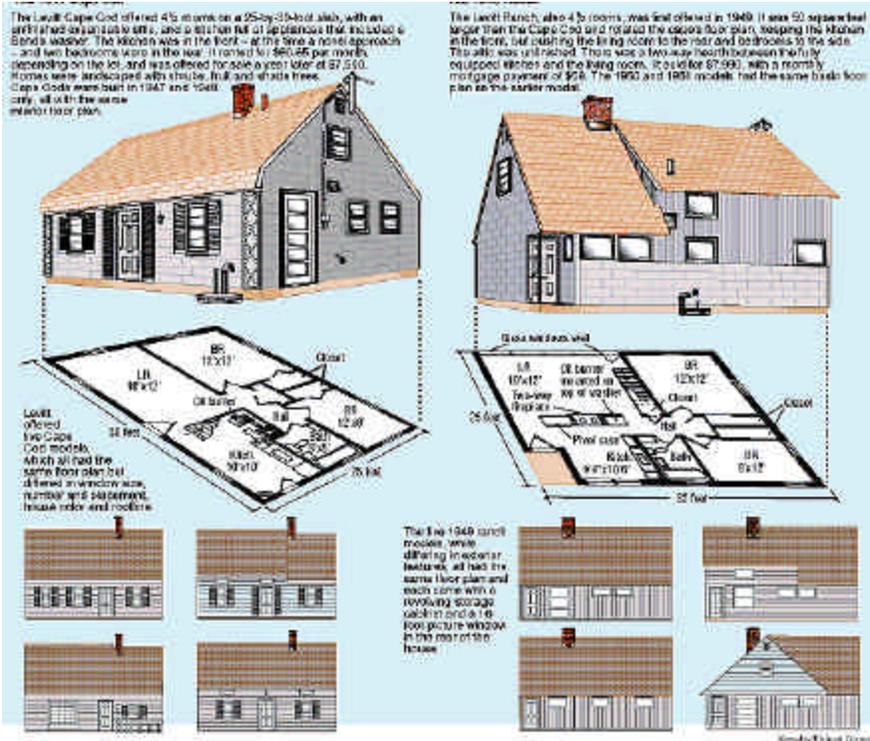


Figure 5: Two common types of Levittown Homes⁵²

Levitt's most well known large-scale project is Levittown. William Levitt purchased 1,500 acres of farming fields in Nassau County, located ten miles from Manhattan. Using prefabricated parts and assembly-line methods, builders churned out 180 low-style, "cookie cutter" homes per week. Bulldozers leveled the land, lots were marked off, and crews of street pavers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, painters, etc. produced a uniform product – a small, detached single-family house equipped with appliances and a landscaped lot.⁵³ By 1951, Levittown contained over 17,000 homes. In the late 1940's and early 1950's, the project was hailed as a successful and model suburban community that helped more Americans realize their dreams of homeownership in a timely and cost-effective manner. Levitt & Sons built other mass-produced housing communities in New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

⁵² "Levittown at Fifty," *Newsday, Inc.*, <http://www.lihistory.com/specsec/glevi28.htm>, accessed April 1, 2001.

⁵³ "Levittown-The Birth of the Suburbs," *About – The Human Internet*, <http://americanhistory.about.com>, accessed April 1, 2001.

Levittown served as a model suburban community and developers throughout the United States produced similar housing communities. The southeast United States and the city of Atlanta were no exception. Following World War II, rural land was cleared in the Atlanta city limits to put up much needed housing. One important example of this mass “suburban” development in Atlanta is a significant part of the Oakland City community. Oakland City, a neighborhood located in southwest Atlanta, contains hundreds of small, detached single-family houses that were built between 1945-1951 by the several developers. Filling an economic need in the Atlanta market, these developers provided affordable housing for large numbers of Atlantans. Like Levittown houses, the houses in Oakland City were uniformly constructed with inexpensive materials in an assembly-line fashion. Thus, these Levitt-like homes provided quick and affordable housing for lower middle income Atlantans.

Clifford May, Designer and Builder

Clifford May was both a designer and a builder who began his career building small houses in the early 1930’s in San Diego and Los Angeles, California. People who lived in California wanted a home that took advantage of the warm climate and brought a sense of the outdoors to the inside living spaces. As early as 1936, a home designed by May appeared in an issue of *San Diego Union* titled, “Home with a Garden in Every Room.” The new style of house Clifford May was promoting was the California Ranch House.

Clifford May paid attention to his customers and observed what they enjoyed most about the California Ranch style house and then improved his designs for future homes. May believed

that, "the early Californians had the right idea. They built for the seclusion and comfort of their families, for the enjoyment of relaxation in their homes."⁵⁴

Greene & Greene (Charles & Henry Greene)

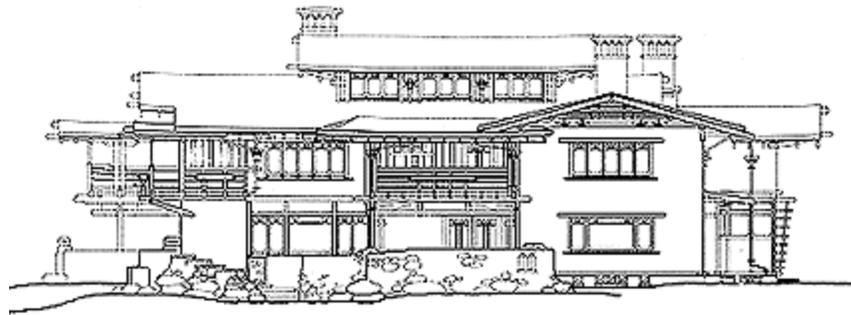


Figure 6: Gamble House, Pasadena, CA

Refined and exceptionally well crafted, Greene & Greene creations became known as "the ultimate bungalows." A classic Greene and Greene house is "a seamless fusion of simplicity and sophisticated detail with meticulous attention to building materials and natural surroundings," write Smith and Vertikoff. All of the Greene & Greene houses were notable for their articulated surfaces and oriental sensitivities. In 1952, the brothers were honored by the American Institute of Architects "as formulators of a new and native architecture." Although Greene and Greene were designing in primarily the pre-war period, it appears that some of their design standards were carried into postwar housing. Greene and Greene trademarks included emphasis on the horizontal plane and fitting the house appropriately into its setting. These were 2 characteristics of postwar housing and many builders referred to the ranch houses that they were building at the time as being in the California Ranch Style, a distant reference to the style influenced by Greene and Greene.

⁵⁴ Cliff May, *Western Ranch Houses* (Menlo Park, California: Lane Book Company, 1958), 7.

Frank Lloyd Wright

The Winslow House built in 1893 in River Forest, Illinois, clearly portrayed Wright's direction in architecture with its expansive, open proportions. Wright believed that architecture should create a natural link between mankind and his environment. "Organic architecture" as Wright came to call his work, should reflect the individual needs of the client, the nature of the site, and the native materials available. Some of Wright's most notable designs during this period were for "Prairie Houses." These houses reflected the long, low horizontal Prairie on which they sat. They had low pitched roofs, deep overhangs, no attics or basements, and generally long rows of casement windows that further emphasized the horizontal theme. He used native materials. This was his first effort at creating a new, indigenous American architecture. One of Wright's most famous talks, "The Art and Craft of the Machine" was delivered in 1901 at Hull House in Chicago. It marked the first decisive acceptance of the machine by an American architect and was widely hailed. Wright embraced the machine and urged its use, not to imitate fancy hand carving, but to bring out the simplicity and beauty of wood. This emphasis on simplicity and his insistence that natural materials be treated naturally was a hallmark of his work. Some of Wright's most important works at the time were: the Martin House in Buffalo, New York (which introduced the horizontal bands of windows, a prominent feature of his later houses); the Robie House in Chicago, Illinois (one of Wright's most celebrated Prairie houses); the Larkin Building in Buffalo, New York (for which Wright developed several innovations such as wall-hung water closets and the first metal furniture); and Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois (America's first important architectural work in poured concrete.)

In 1909 went to Europe with Mamah Borthwick Cheney, the wife of a client. While in Europe, Wright worked on two portfolios of his work. These publications brought international recognition to his work and greatly influenced other architects. In 1914, Wright began developing designs for several California residences such as the Millard House, which displayed Wright's first use of "textile block" where specially designed pre-cast concrete blocks were woven together with steel rods and concrete.

In 1932, at the age of 65, he published "An Autobiography" and "The Disappearing City" both of which influenced several generations of young architects. During 1934 when Wright and the Taliesin Fellowship were in Arizona, Wright was at this time considered a great architect, but one whose time had come and gone. In 1936, Wright proved this sentiment wrong and went on to stage a remarkable comeback with several important commissions - the Johnson Wax Administration Building in Racine, Wisconsin; "Fallingwater" the house on the waterfall in rural Pennsylvania (designed in 1935 but built in 1936); and Jacobs I (a functional yet inexpensive home, the first executed "Usonian" house). These works were widely publicized and brought a flood of commissions interrupted only by World War II. In 1937, Wright and the Taliesin Fellowship began the construction of Taliesin West. In addition, he continued to work on the designs for his "Usonian" homes, homes that proved to be just as popular as his Prairie houses. "Usonian" homes were moderate-cost, single-story houses. They featured such innovations as radiant heating (through hot water pipes placed in the cement slab floor); pre-fabricated walls made of boards and tar-paper (a cheap and efficient building technique); an open plan with greater flow of space; and the invention of the carport.

In the last decades of his career Wright received many awards, titles, medals and citations. He continued to write, producing "The Natural House" in 1954. This book discussed

the Usonian home and a new concept called the "Usonian Automatic" - a house that could be owner built. During this time period, Wright's name was ubiquitous in the popular and architectural publications of the time. Both the public and building professionals were exposed to Wright's work and influence continually. Articles written about him or referring to him were commonly found in publication such as *House & Home*, *Architectural Forum*, and *Architectural Record*. Wright was tireless in his efforts to create an architecture that was truly American. Through his work, his writings, and the hundreds of apprentice architects that trained at his side, his ideas have been spread and are evident in architecture throughout the world.

Mies van der Rohe and Philip C. Johnson



Figure 7: Mies van der Rohe, Farnsworth House, Plano, Illinois, 1945-1951⁵⁵

The International Style was the main architectural trend in the 1920's and 1930's in Europe and a product of the Bauhaus School in Germany. Utilizing modern materials such as steel, concrete and glass, the style was asymmetrical and geometric, emphasizing the pure form and function of structures.

⁵⁵ "Farnsworth House, Plano, Illinois," *Galinsky*, <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/farnsworth/>, accessed April 11, 2001.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969), one of the most notable architects of the 20th Century is considered the leading master of the International Style. Mies created buildings that provided a new style for the 20th Century. Mies' work is characterized by extreme simplicity, precision to detail, emphasis on geometrical shapes, elegance of material and lack of ornamentation. Mies moved from Germany to the United States in 1937. While serving as the director of architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology from 1938 to 1958, Mies trained and influenced a new generation of American architects.⁵⁶

Mies' work in America included skyscrapers, schools, museums and residences. One of his most significant buildings is a residential building, the Farnsworth House, designed and constructed between 1945 and 1951 in Plano, Illinois. The glass-walled house conveys Mies' principle of "less is more." The house consists of pre-cast concrete floor, roof slabs supported by steel skeleton frame and walls of glass. The owner, Edith Farnsworth, found it unlivable and occupied the house infrequently before she sold it in 1972.

Another prominent architect in the International Style movement is the American architect, Philip C. Johnson. Philip Johnson built the Glass House in New Canaan, Connecticut in 1949. Johnson owned this visionary home. The Glass House is similar to Mies' Farnsworth house.⁵⁷ The house is a box with walls made entirely of glass. Once again, pure form and function are the key players in the structure.

Unlike in Europe, the International Style did not play a major role in American architecture until after World War II. The International Style primarily influenced commercial buildings in America. Yet, residential architecture was affected by this style, particularly in the Northeast. Due to conservatism and the importance of historicism in the South, the International

⁵⁶ Leland M. Roth, *A Concise History of American Architecture* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980), 317-319.

⁵⁷ "Philip Johnson," *A Digital Archive of American Architecture*, http://infoeagle.bc.edu/bu_org/

Style did not have a significant effect on residential architecture in the South, including Atlanta. Nonetheless, Mies van der Rohe's work and the International Style in architecture did provide a new style of 20th century architecture that reshaped post-World War II architecture throughout the United States.

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL

The Case Study program was initiated by John Entenza editor of *Arts & Architecture* magazine in 1945 is one of California's most important contributions to architecture. Comprised of thirty-six experimental, modern prototypes, the Case Study houses were designed (and the majority built) between 1945-1966. Featuring some of the most important architects of the region and the generation, the program aimed to shape the course of the postwar building boom towards wide acceptance of modern architecture and to offer technologically based and ultimately affordable housing.⁵⁸

These house realized in California, a progressive design center after the war, suggested a way of looking at the future that had both national and international implications. Several of the houses have become icons for the postwar era; from Charles and Ray Eames Case Study house #8 in Pacific Palisades with its fabricated metal joist construction to Case Study House #22 designed by Pierre Koenig and photographed by Julius Shulman in the famous image of the flat roofed living room floating out over a cliff and the spectacular view of nocturnal Los Angeles became romantic symbols of privileged postwar life in America.

avp/cas/fnart/fa267/pjohnson.html, accessed April 4, 2001.

⁵⁸ Elizabeth Smith. Blueprints for Modern Living. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989)



Figure 8

Joseph Eichler, Developer

Highly influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian residential design and the California Case Study Houses, Joseph Eichler, a California developer, and his company, Eichler Homes, Inc., built approximately 11,000 single-family homes in Northern California after World War II. Eichler also built residential homes in Palo Alto, San Jose, San Francisco, Sacramento and Southern California.

As in the rest of the United States following the war, the housing shortage was a major concern in California. Although Eichler never sold thousands of houses at once like William Levitt after World War II, Eichler did build tracts of one or two hundred homes at a time to help address the housing shortage problem in California. Unlike the homes constructed for Levittown in New York, Eichler produced architect-designed, high-styled homes for his middle-class

customers at affordable prices. The houses had an indoor-outdoor approach to living that was appropriate to the California climate. Eichler houses also incorporated open-planned interiors, walls of glass, radiant-heat floors and atriums. Eichler subdivisions provided shared public space for residents as well as houses with open-planned interiors but privacy from neighbors. Community building through architecture design was part and parcel of Eichler's vision. He was the first large, tract builder to sell his homes to minorities.⁵⁹



Figure 9

Although Eichler never designed subdivisions in the South, the influence of Usonian design and Eichler houses can be seen in single examples in the South, including Atlanta, Georgia. Today, Eichler houses are highly sought after by Californians.

⁵⁹ *Eichler Network, Preserving the Wonderful World of Eichler Homes.* <http://www.eichlernetwork.com>.

PART TWO: Regional-Local Influences in Atlanta

SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Studies of the postwar modern movement in America generally focus on work found either in New England or California. Many excellent examples can be found in those areas, but modernism can be found all across America starting in the 1930s. In The International Style (1932) by Henry Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, a book that advanced and defined the style, included the Weyman Memorial Laboratory (1931) in Highlands, North Carolina as an early example of modern public architecture. Several other books of the time that surveyed modern structures; *Tomorrow's House* (1945) by George Nelson, *Built in USA: Post-war Architecture* (1952) by Henry Russell Hitchcock and Arthur Drexler, and *Quality Budget Houses* (1954) by Katherine Morrow Ford list houses in all corners of America including the southeast. *The South Builds, New Architecture in the Old South* (1960) by Edward and Elizabeth Waugh focuses on the work of architects practicing modern architecture in the South with a chapter on residential design. Today two areas of the South are identified as centers for modernism, one is Sarasota, Florida and the other is Raleigh, North Carolina.

SARASOTA SCHOOL, SARASOTA, FL (1941-1966)

“The Sarasota school sprang out of its special circumstances of location, personalities, and talent to reach its zenith of world architectural prominence in the 1950s. For Sarasota the task was to create a better place, to delineate and define itself in this unique tropical environment that existed nowhere else in the United States.”⁶⁰ Two architects, Ralph Twitchell and Paul

⁶⁰ John Howey. *The Sarasota School of Architecture 1941-1966*. (Cambridge MS: The MIT Press, 1997)

Rudolph, who had a common respect for the land and climate, and shared an eye for good form and use of local materials, founded the Sarasota School. Although not an architectural school in the academic sense, it would provide the impetus for other architects to build postwar modern structures in the Sarasota area. Architects such as Victor Lundy, Gene Leedy, Jack West and others would flourish in this environment. The following are examples of the work of the Sarasota School:

**Twitchell &
Rudolph**



Figure 10: Siegrist Residence, Venice, Florida (1949)



Figure 11: Healy "Cocoon House" Siesta, Florida (1950)



Figure 12: Walker Guest house, Sanibel Island, Florida (1952)

NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL, RALEIGH NC

Another oasis of modernism found in an unexpected place was Raleigh, North Carolina. Henry L. Kamphoefner, a young architect trained by Frank Lloyd Wright, would take advantage of the building boom caused by the end of World War II as the impetus for an architecture school in Raleigh. The school was named School of Design at North Carolina State University. Kamphoefner used as lecturers many of the leaders of the modern movement in America, including Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, Louis Kahn, and Buckminster Fuller.

He also assembled a faculty that not only taught but also practiced modern architecture. They include G. Milton Small, Matthew Nowicki, George Matsumoto, James Fitzgibbons, and Eduardo Catalano. Many of the projects were residential. Here are a few key examples:

**Henry L.
Kamphoefner**



Figure 13: Kamphoefner Residence. (1948) This house is largely modeled on the Usonian homes of Frank Lloyd Wright. Protected with preservation easement by Preservation North Carolina.

George Matsumoto



Figure 14: Matsumoto Residence (1954) Highly influenced by the International style of Mies van der Rohe

Ritcher House, Raleigh, NC (1950)

Poole House, Raleigh, NC (1957) (Matsumoto & Small)

James Fitzgibbons



Figure 15: Fadum House, Raleigh, NC (1950)
Residence, Knoxville, TN. Unique use of surplus Quonset structure materials.

Eduardo Catalano

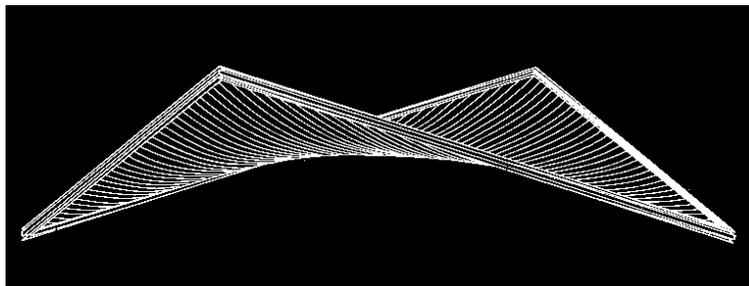


Figure 16: Ezra Meir-Catalano House, Raleigh, NC (1955) This is probably the best-known house of the North Carolina school. Catalano used a dramatic hyperbolic parabola roof form, anchored at two points, reminiscent of airplane design to create one of the best-known examples of roof architecture. The house also has the rare distinction of being publicly praised by Frank Lloyd Wright. Currently the house is for sale and in need of substantial restoration.

PART THREE: Atlanta High-Style Housing Examples

ATLANTA ARCHITECTURE 1944-1965

Modern architecture would appear in Atlanta as early as the 1930s, this can be seen in the commercial and public works of architects Pringle & Smith, A. Ten Eyck Brown, and Stevens & Wilkinson, but residential architecture remained largely traditional. In Atlanta, most people were interested in traditional revival style homes made popular in the 1920s. Architects such as Phillip Trammell Shutze, Ivey & Crook, and James Means were the preferred architects for Atlanta clients.⁶¹ But a handful of architects would experiment with modern houses, often with themselves as the client. These houses are scattered across the northwestern quadrant of Atlanta, in areas that were primarily undeveloped. Located on large wooden lots, these houses are often designed into the landscape, making them difficult to see and appreciate as architecture. Like much modern architecture, they do not have a grand façade meant to impress, but were to be experienced from the inside out. Simple honest materials exposed as structure gave precedent to comfortable and informal living incorporating the beauty of the natural surroundings.

ATLANTA ARCHITECTS WHO DESIGNED MODERN HOUSES

Note: The following is a list of architects named by their peers and architectural enthusiasts as architects who practiced in the postwar modern style in Atlanta. Questions were asked about who practiced modern architecture, what were the influences that brought modernism to the South, and did the South make any contributions to modern architecture. All interviewees were eager to talk, but it is clear that a concentrated research effort is needed soon. Due to the age of many of the interviewees, this undocumented information could soon be lost. Interviews were conducted with the following individuals who are either architects or in related fields:

Antonin Aeck, architect
Joseph Amisano, architect

⁶¹ See [American Classicist](#) by Elizabeth Dowling, [Lewis Edmund Crook, Jr. 1898-1967](#) by William Mitchell, and [The Houses of James Means](#) by Callie Eford, editor. These books document the careers of these traditional Atlanta residential architects.

Kempton Mooney, architect and educator
Thomas Ramsey, architect
Edward L. Daugherty, landscape architect
Herbert Brito, architect and preservationist
Kim Chamness, architect
Henri Jova, architect
Preston Stevens Jr., architect

**Aeck,
Richard**

Firm: Aeck & Associates

Did many different building types, residential architecture was a small part of the business. Job log for Aeck & Associates lists over twenty residences and additions from the period of 1937 up to 1971. Richard Aeck a Georgia Tech graduate. Founded the company in the 1940s.

Molly Whitehead Aeck, interior designer. Projects: Little White House in Warm Springs Georgia. Studied at Columbia, Stamford, the Fontainebleau, and Taliesin. Archive materials stored by Tony Aeck

Projects:



Figure 17: Aeck Residence, 2200 West Wesley Road. (1945) (Additions 1956, 1972, 1998)



Figure 18: Callaway Home, Callaway Gardens GA. This was the most ambitious residence designed by Aeck. Ed Daugherty, landscaping

**Alexander,
Cecil**

Firm: Finch, Alexander, Barnes, Rothchild & Paschal (bought out by Rossier)

Another successful and respected commercial firm that did few residences.

Projects:

2829 West Roxboro Road
Ridgeway Road



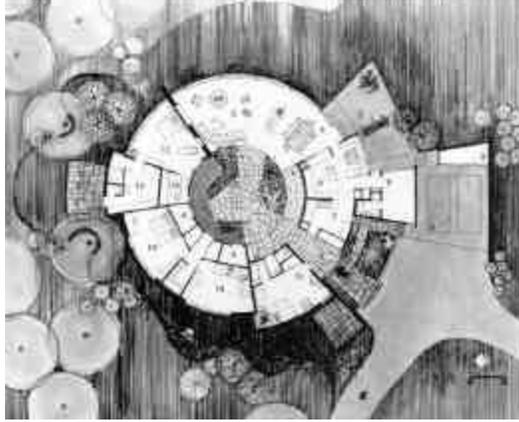


Figure 19: Alexander Residence, 2322 Mt. Paran Road. Published *The South Builds*, p.38 This house has an unusual round plan.
Firm: Harrison & Abramovitz, Toombs Amisano & Wells

**Amisano,
 Joseph**

Pratt Institute (1940), American Academy in Rome

A New Yorker that came South, he encouraged modernism to his traditionally oriented partner, Henry Toombs. Amisano did only a few houses.

Projects:



Figure 20: Amisano Residence, 1058 Nawench Drive. *AIA Guide to Atlanta*, p. 119



Figure 21: Short Residence (now Long Residence), Nawench Drive

Jim and Carol Paulk Residence. 2401 West Wesley, (404) 351-4334
On West Paces (near Lake)

**Bainbridge,
Fred**

Firm: Martin & Bainbridge

More transitional designs. Soft modern, influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright

Projects:

Mt Paran Road @ Randall Mill
Travis Brannon House, Paces Ferry
Ogilsby Residence, Glen Arden



Figure 22: Randall Mill Road

**Barnett,
William H.**

Firm: Stevens & Wilkinson

Projects:

Barnett Residence, Dupree Street
House, Mt Paran and Randall Road (renovated)

**Bush-
Brown,
Harold**

Firm: GA Tech, Bush-Brown, Gailey, & Heffernan

Harvard graduate. Director of Architecture at Georgia Tech beginning in 1922. Was responsible for luring Paul Heffernan as director of design in the 1930s, ushering in the modern movement at GA Tech.

Firm was responsible for much of the construction and renovation on the GA Tech campus. Early work was consistent with collegiate Tudor style of Georgia Tech. After Heffernan work became modern.

**Edwards,
Jim**

Firm: Finch, Alexander, Barnes, Rothchild & Paschal. Now lives in Columbia, SC.

Taught at GA Tech.

**Finch,
William**

Firm: Finch, Alexander, Barnes, Rothchild & Paschal (bought out by Rossier) Later: Finch & Herry. Lives in Alpharetta

Taught at GA Tech.

Projects:

10-12 houses near Colonial Homes
Moores Mill, beyond Peachtree Battle

**Godfrey,
Thomas**

Firm: Taught at GA Tech

Harvard graduate. Practiced in modern style

Projects:

Godfrey Residence (razed)

**Green,
Robert**

Disciple of Frank Lloyd Wright. Studied at Taliesin

Projects:

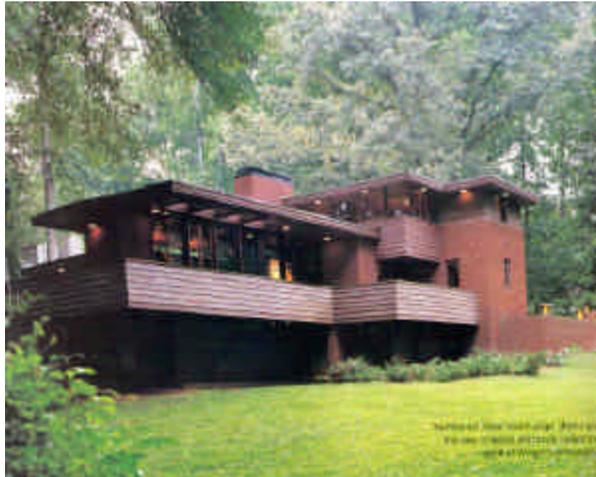


Figure 23: Dull Residence, Collier Hills. *Atlanta Homes*, June 1998 p.54

**Griffin,
Knox**

Self-employed architect or draftsman. Worked with developers on suburban homes. Claimed to have designed more houses in the South than anyone else.

Projects:

Knox Residence, near Atlanta Envelope (renovated)

**Heffernan,
Paul**

Firm: GA Tech, Bush-Brown, Gailey, & Heffernan

After a distinguished education, Bush-Brown brought Heffernan to GA Tech as director of design. This would mark the beginning of a modern design at the school both in the classroom and on the campus.

Projects:



Figure 24: Alpha Epsilon Pi House, GA Tech, 3rd and Techwood

Heffernan Residence, Fifth Street (now Heffernan Center) Renovated bungalow

**Heery,
George**

Herry & Associates



Figure 25: Thomas J. Northcutt Residence

**Johnson,
Ken**

Firm: Aeck

Considered an architect's architect. House designs reminiscent of the California Case Study houses

Projects:



Figure 26: 3052 West Pine Valley (1960) Ed Daugherty, landscaping. *AIA Guide to Atlanta*, p. 119

Argonne, Arden Road area. Also Andrews Drive Johnson Residence, Williams Street. Renovated bungalow

Jova, Henri

Firm: Harrison & Abramovitz, Abreu and Robeson, Jova Daniels Busby formed in 1966

Cornell University, American Academy in Rome-Prix de Rome. Moved to Atlanta in 1954.

Projects:

Perdue Residence, 2016 W. Paces Ferry (1955) (Additions made)
The Paces, Roswell & Peachtree (1965)



Figure 27: Jova Residence, Midtown (1959) (additions 1966, 1974) *AIA Guide to Atlanta, 1975*. p.121

Colony House and Hanover House at Colony Square (designed in 1966, built in 1971)

Many other residential projects after 1966. Renovations and new construction.

Martin, Bill *Firm:* Martin & Bainbridge

Bainbridge was the designer

Menefee, Edward *Firm:* Aeck & Associates

Princeton graduate,
House on Harris Trail

Millkey, Herbert C. *Firm:* Moscovitz, Wilner & Millkey

Projects:





Figure 28: Millkey Residence, Nancy Creek. (1950) Quality Budget Houses p.104

**Montague,
Harold**

Was with Aeck, then Robert & Company. Worked on Civic Center.

Projects:

Residence, Nancy Creek
Ridgewood Road

**Mooney,
Kempton**

Firm: S&W, later Kemp Mooney Architects

Kemp came to Atlanta in 1966 to work for Stevens & Wilkinson, so his work is too late for this survey, but he is a confirmed modernist who continues to promote the virtues of postwar modernism.

**Morgan,
Warner**

Nicknamed Pop

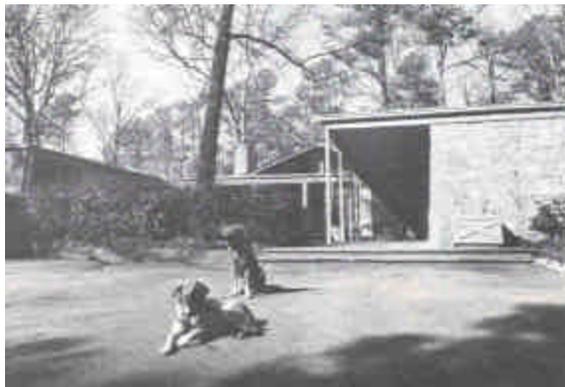


Figure 29: Dr. William Paulin Residence, 1885 West Paces Ferry Road (1959) *AIA Guide to Atlanta*, p. 119

**Moulthrop,
Ed**

Was with Aeck, later Robert & Co. Now makes turned wood art bowls

Projects:

1885 West Paces Road (1950)
Moulthrop Residence

**Murphy,
David**

Was with Aeck and S&W. Died in Paris plane crash.

Projects:

Murphy Residence, East Wesley, concrete block screen, near Catholic church.



Figure 30: Stewart House, Chatham Drive

**Norris,
Henry**

Did traditional and modern houses, smaller scale. Modern not contemporary

Projects:

Mooregate Square, Subdivision of Levittown style homes off Moores Mill Road. Published in *House & Home* (insert photo)
Ridgewood Road subdivision.

Norris, Peter *Firm:* Hall & Norris

Did traditional and modern homes. Struggled with the change from traditional to modern.

Wieuca Road

**Portman,
John C.**

Firm: Edwards & Portman, Portman & Associates

Projects:



Figure 31: Portman Residence 1, Fairfield off of Broadlands (1950s)

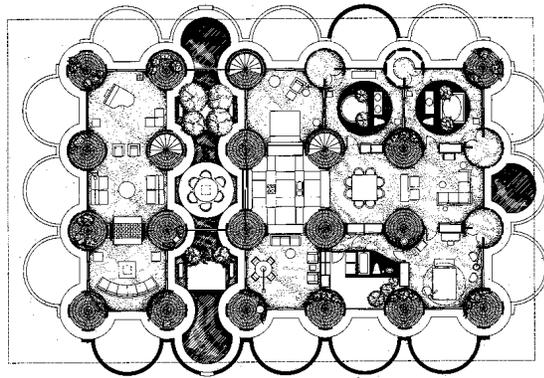




Figure 32: Portman Residence 2, Johnson Ferry Road, (1965) Unique geometric floor plan. *AIA Guide to Atlanta*, 1975. p.121

**Pulgram,
William**

Firm: Rossier FABRAP, later Associated Space Design (ASD)

Pulgram, an architect, founded the interior design firm Associated Space Design. They are still in practice.

Projects:





Figure 33: Pulgram Residence, 4055 Randall Mill Road (1953)
(remodeled in 1955, 1958, 2001)

**Salzman,
Alan** Early Partner of Cooper Cary Architects

H. Clay Moore Residence, Cloudland Avenue

Saporta, Ike *Firm:* Independent

Projects:

Residence, 4000 Randall Road (soon to be razed)

Saporta Residence, 8th Street

**Simmons,
William** *Firm:* Wise Simmons & Aiken (?)

Walter Moonlighted modern houses

**Smith,
Joseph N** Taught at GA Tech. Lives in Henry Norris house on Ridgewood
404/355-8541

**Taylor,
Richard** Was with Aeck and S&W

Projects:



Figure 34: Taylor Residence, 3314 West Andrews Drive (1973) *AIA Guide to Atlanta, 1975*. p.121
Firm: Stevens & Wilkinson

**Wilkinson,
James R.**

Graduated from Auburn University. Responsible for bringing modernism to S&W. Archival materials at the Atlanta History Center

Projects:



Figure 35: Wilkinson Residence, West Paces Road (razed) S&W 1919-1948 p.102-103. Designed as passive solar home.

Georgia State Solar House, (never built) S&W 1919-1948 p.100-101

Harold Cavenaugh Residence, (razed) S&W 1919-1948 p.75

Dick Richards Residence, West Andrews



Figure 36: Price Gilbert House, Arden (1941) (razed) S&W 1919-1948
p.72 Excellent example of International style, featured in *Life* magazine.
One man office

**Vanover,
Leroy**

Projects:



Figure 37: 3452 Woodhaven Road, Previous owner Tony Aeck.

Influences

One question asked of all the interviewees was what influenced these architects to practice modern architecture. A common response was architecture and design journals. *Architectural Record*, *House & Home*, *Progressive Architecture*, and *Arts & Architecture* were mentioned. Popular magazines were also mentioned such as *House Beautiful* and *House & Garden*. Images of the postwar lifestyle were so pervasive it would be hard not to be influenced.

Also mentioned were personal experiences. Joe Amisano remembered being amazed by the Woolworth Building and Radio City (Rockefeller Center) in New York. Later he went to work for Harrison & Abramovitz, architects of Rockefeller Center. Richard Aeck was sent to South America for work and exposed to European refugee architects. Later he saw Brasilia and the International style work of Oscar Niemeyer. Amisano would also travel to Brazil and Panama as an army soldier. Le Corbusier was named as an influence to Amisano, Mooney, and Aeck.

Kemp Mooney spoke of the “burn of what modernism was... It was exciting, with its images of open space and structure that created architecture.” Modernism marked a revolt to the stodgy styles of the traditionalists, a dramatic divide between the past and the future. Modernism was the style that represented the progressive and enthusiastic young America back from the war.

Tony Aeck talked of the practical nature of his father, Richard Aeck and how modernism must have made great sense to him. He responded to the practical, efficient, and simple nature of the structures. Tony pointed out that the Great Depression affected his parents (as many others were also affected), and modernism must have made great economic sense with its emphasis on mass production, systematic assembly, and minimal decoration.

Many of the interviewees considered modern residential architecture in Atlanta to be a failure. It is interesting to note how many examples of residential modernism were the homes of architects. In Atlanta, most people were interested in traditional revival style homes. No Atlanta architectural firms were able to make a business of designing modern homes, although many of the employees “moonlighted” for themselves and their own clients. Kemp Mooney estimates that in his experience, only one out of ten clients have any interest in modern architecture.

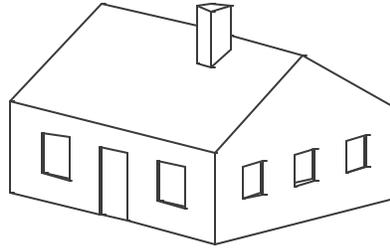
Amisano said that modern architecture in Atlanta “never took over.” And yet surveying Atlanta today reveals significant examples of postwar residential construction.

Although never an organized school with clear leadership, Atlanta architects did design modern style houses. There are not many of them and most were designed for the architects themselves, yet they clearly reflect national trends for simply honest informal living made popular by cultural trends after World War II and the architectural influences promoted by the architects of New England and California. These houses take great advantage of their natural settings and local materials. They incorporate indoor and outdoor living while keeping a low unpretentious profile.

Today many of these houses are difficult to see due to their naturalistic settings, but also due to renovations that cover over their defining characteristics. For example, the Alexander house on Mt. Paran road has recently had pseudo-neoclassical cornice and columns added to the facade obscuring the segmental roof design (yet the round plan of the house is still very apparent). It is hoped that such additions can be reversed at some time in the future. But more disturbing is the Atlanta trend for knockdowns: older smaller houses that are purchased with the intention of demolishing them for new larger-scale pseudo-traditional mansions. Most of the houses are located in desirable upper-class neighborhoods and are often on large parcels of land, making them ripe for development. Many postwar modern houses have already been demolished and others are threatened. With awareness comes appreciation; it seems imperative that Atlanta preservation and architectural enthusiasts become aware of the remaining resources before it is too late.

PART FOUR: Atlanta Vernacular Housing Forms

Minimal Cottage (1944 - 1955)



Other names: Economically small house, Minimal ranch

Description: The most basic of structures, these houses were intended to relieve the housing shortage in America following World War II. Also intended as starter homes for GIs, these houses are often associated with large tract-developments and often planned to be expanded up or out.

Characteristics:

1. Small footprint
2. Typically one-story
3. Detached garage
4. Steeply pitched roof
5. Shallow rake and eaves
6. Reduction of historical details, or no details
7. Mixed use of materials; brick, stone, wood siding

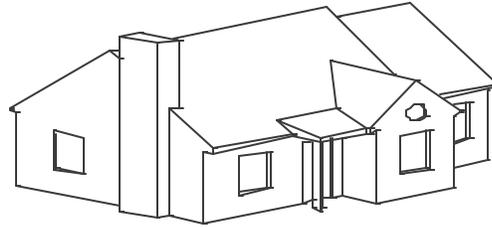
Frequency: Common

Examples:



Figure 38

Minimal Traditional Cottage (1944 - 1955)



Other names: None

Description: Historical form, loosely based on Tudor Revival (1930s)

Characteristics:

1. Small footprint,
2. Typically one-story but can be two. Often attic space was intended as a future room.
3. Detached garage
4. Dominate front gable
5. Asymmetrical massing
6. Low or medium pitched roof
7. Shallow rake and eaves
8. Reduction of historical details
9. Mixed use of materials; brick, stone, wood siding
10. Street conscious front facade

Frequency: Common

Examples:

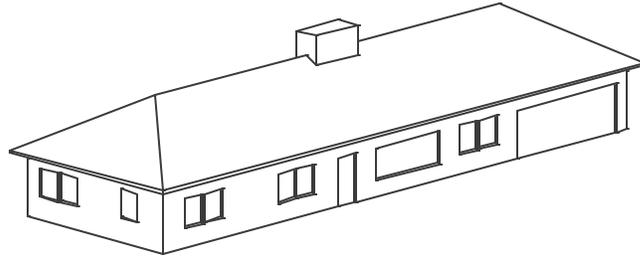


Figure 39



Figure 40

Inline Ranch (1935-1975)



Other names: Standard Ranch, Contractor's Modern, Builder's Contemporary

Description: This form of house is loosely based on traditional house types found in California and the American Southwest. Also influencing the design is the Spanish Colonial Revival style, the California Craftsman home, and the Prairie Style house from the Midwest.

Emphasizing the horizontal, these houses are typically one-story with a long low-pitched roof. Roofs can be hipped or gabled. Garages are attached and usually evident from the front façade of the house. Windows are often doubled or horizontal in form again emphasizing the 'long-and-low' style. A large picture window is usually installed on the front of the house indicating the living room. The plan is typically two-rooms deep without a formal hall system; each room feeds into the next, hence the description as 'rambling ranch.' Although there is often a living room and a dining room for formal entertaining, all other spaces are designed for daily family use.

This house form was extremely popular from the mid-1940s till the mid-1970s and can be found all across America.

Note: Ranch houses placed on the site with short ends out are known as Ranch Bungalows

Characteristics:

1. One-story, linear plan, often with telescoping ends
2. Adapts to different site conditions
3. Open plan with informal living spaces
4. Outdoor living component such as a patio or a deck
5. Plan is typically two rooms deep with three to four bedrooms
6. Emphasis on the horizontal, low ceiling heights inside
7. Attached garage or carport, usually evident from the front facade

8. Low-pitched roof, hip or gable
9. Moderate to wide eaves, sometimes rafter are exposed
10. Mixed use of materials: brick, stone, wood
11. Decorative ironwork or wood porches
12. Ribbon and picture windows
13. Modest traditional detailing applied decoratively
14. Street conscious front facade

Frequency: Common

Examples:



Figure 41



Figure 42

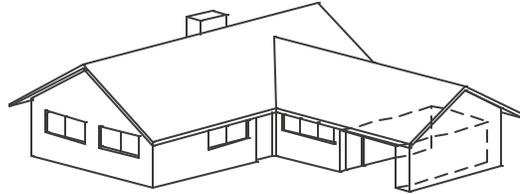


Figure 43



Figure 44

Composite Ranch (1935-1975)



Other names: 'L' 'T' or 'U' plan ranch, Contractor's Modern, Builder's contemporary,

Description: Conceptually very similar to Inline Ranch but with a more complicated footprint. Houses are arranged in 'Ls,' 'Us,' many wing, extreme angles, or circular shapes. Rooflines generally reflect the plan with cross gables.

Characteristics: See Inline Ranch

Frequency: Common

Examples:

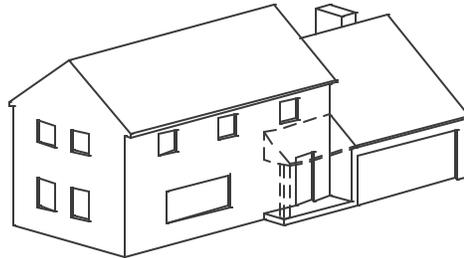


Figure 45



Figure 46

Neocolonial (1955-1980)



Other names: Contractor's Modern, Builder's contemporary

Description: This form can be found in almost every middle-class suburban development in America from the 1950s to the mid-1970s; it is the two-story ranch house with many of the same characteristics. Made up of two forms, the two-story house block and the one-story garage block. This house provided the space for growing families with living spaces downstairs and sleeping spaces up. The house can be symmetrical in plan with a traditional center hall or asymmetrical. The form is very adaptable to traditional styles such as Neo-Georgian or Plantation style.

Characteristics:

1. Plan is typically two rooms deep.
2. Three to five bedrooms upstairs
3. Emphasis on practicality and designed for family use
4. Attached garage generally evident from the front facade
5. Low-to-medium pitched roof, often a hip roof
6. Moderate to wide eaves
7. Mixed use of materials: brick, wood, shingles
8. Decorative ironwork or wood porches
9. Traditional six-over-six windows combined with picture window at living room
10. Street conscious, front and rear elevations

Frequency: Common

Examples:

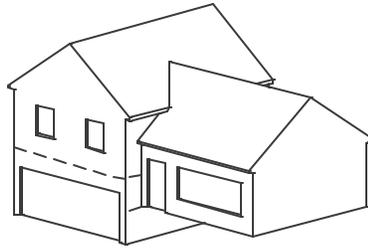


Figure 47



Figure 48

Split Level (1955-1975)



Other names: Contractor's Modern, Builder's contemporary

Description: The split-level is a multistory modification of the ranch house. The theory is based on the concept that the house needs three different types of space: quiet space, noisy and service space, and sleeping areas. The split-level defined each of these spaces on different levels of the house.

Characteristics:

1. Plan is typically two rooms deep. Can have 3 to 4 bedrooms
2. Open plan with informal living spaces
3. Emphasis on horizontally, low ceiling heights inside
4. Attached garage generally evident from the front facade
5. Low-pitched hip or gable roof
6. Moderate to wide eaves
7. Mixed use of materials
8. Decorative ironwork or wood porches
9. Ribbon windows
10. Street conscious front facade

Frequency: Regular

Examples:



Figure 49



Figure 50

Contemporary Flat Roof (1940-1980)



Figure 51

Other names: International style, American International, Miesian

Description: This style was popular with architects designing custom homes. The concepts are derived from the International style from the 1930s.

Characteristics:

1. Reduction of form
2. Open plan with informal living spaces
3. Exposed structural elements
4. Designed to respond to the site conditions
5. Built in naturalistic environments
6. No street recognition
7. No decorative details
8. Geometric form
9. Mixed use of materials but with an emphasis on structure; stone, concrete, wood
10. Masses of solid to void (solid to glass)
11. Use of overhangs at large window areas
12. Emphasis on horizontally

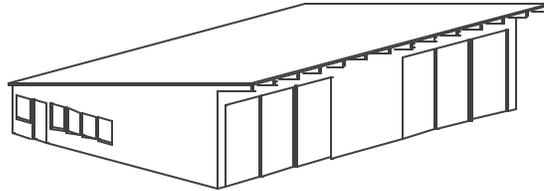
Frequency: Rare

Examples



Figure 52

Contemporary Gable Roof (1940-1980)



Other names:

Description: This style was popular with architects designing custom homes. This form blends the flat roof designs with more practical roof designs. Rooflines are shallow gable, butterfly or shed style. Often there is an emphasis on wood construction emphasizing Prairie and Craftsman roots.

Characteristics:

1. Very shallow pitched roof, or asymmetrical shed or butterfly roofs
2. Reduction of form
3. Geometric form
4. Open plan with informal living spaces
5. Exposed structural elements
6. No decorative details
7. Carports
8. Emphasis on the horizontal, long and low
9. Mixed use of materials but with an emphasis on wood

Frequency: Rare

Examples



Figure 53



Figure 54

OTHER HOUSING FORMS

Popular culture would mean that Americans would have more choices in their lives and in their homes. New materials, new construction techniques and new attitudes could mean ingenious results. Although many of these forms are rare some are so ubiquitous that we drive by them everyday.

Quonset Huts (1945)

These structures were developed as housing for Allied soldiers with an emphasis on quick construction, lightness, and flexibility. Quonset huts required no columns but instead depended on the arch as the structural system. After World War II, many Quonset huts were sold as Army surplus; they became garages, barns, and houses.

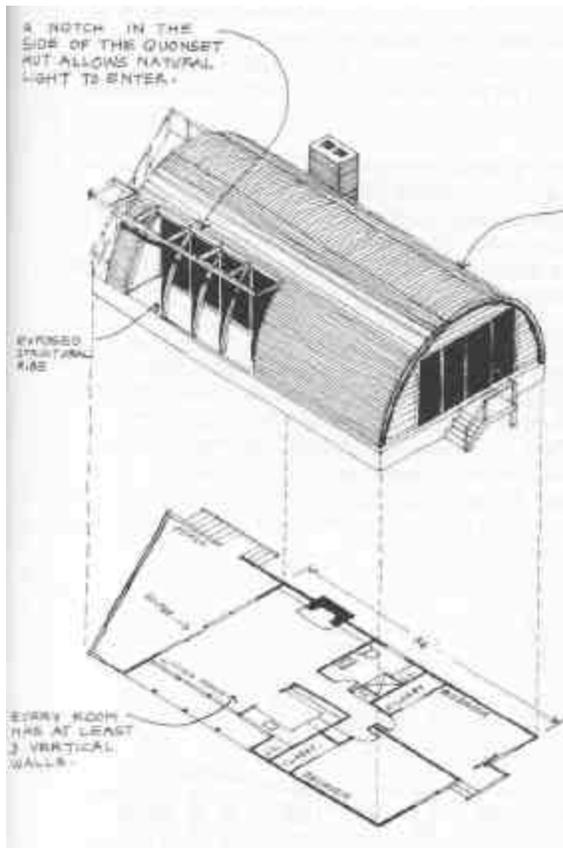


Figure 55



Figure 56



Figure 57

Mobile Homes (1950)

This form of housing elevated from the travel trailer of the 1930s. It is factory made and can be wheeled to different locations. Mobile homes break into three types: the small trailer hitched to a vehicle, the recreational vehicle that is propelled under its own power, and the prefabricated home that is wheeled to a location and hooked up as a permanent home. Lengths vary but the width is defined by the width of roadways.

Some prefabricated homes are designed to join together with other units to create larger homes. These homes are known as doublewide or triple wide homes. They also can be configured in 'H' plans.

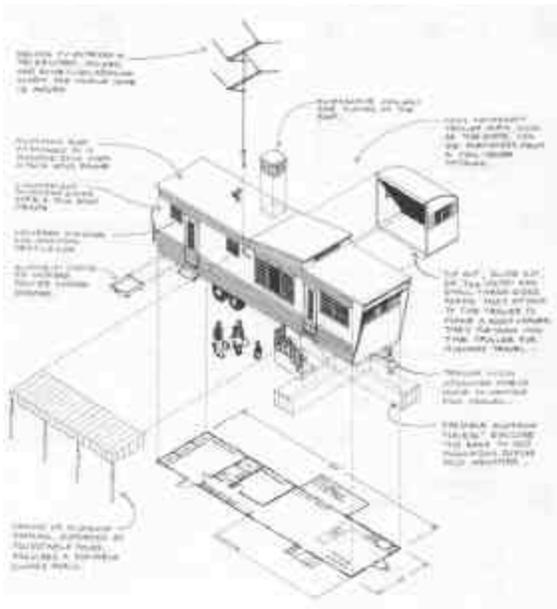


Figure 58

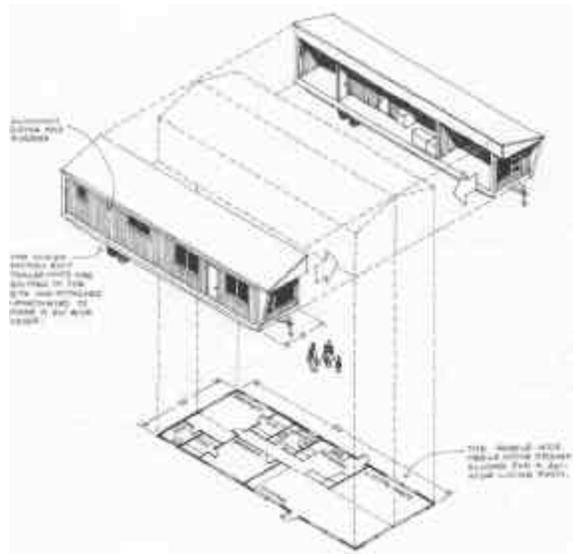


Figure 59

Prefabricated Housing (1950)

Conceptually similar to mobile homes but without the wheels, prefabricated houses were engineered and built in factories then shipped to a location for erection. An early manufacturer of prefabricated houses was Lustron that introduced their product in 1943. Unique to Lustron homes was that they were made of porcelain enamel-clad steel (even the roof tile) that made them maintenance free. All interior parts were framed in steel. Architectural details like bookcases and cabinets were integrated into the design. By 1960 there were 3300 Lustron homes across America, three are known to exist in the Atlanta area.



Figure 60

PART FIVE: Atlanta Vernacular Housing Styles

California Style (1945 – 1965)

Other names: None

Description: Predominate in the American suburbs in the late 1950's and 1960's; the Spanish Colonial style combined with design elements from the Prairie and Craftsmen styles influenced the California style house. California architects originated this new modern style, incorporating the concept of indoor-outdoor living for families. The California style's most distinguishing feature is its long rectangular shape with a low-pitched roof, which gives the house a low, horizontal appearance.

Characteristics:

1. Long, rectangular shape
2. Low-pitched, hip roof
3. Large, often wooded lots
4. Rectangular and or ribbon windows
5. Patios and or courtyards at the rear
6. Ridgepole parallel to street
7. Often include a garage or carport
8. Natural materials: wood, stone and brick

Frequency: Common

Example:



Figure 61: California Style House located off Cascade Road, Atlanta, GA

Neo-Tudor Style (1965 – 1990s)

Other names: None

Description: The Tudor Revival style, which became popular in the early 20th century in America, is characterized by decorative half-timbering. Authentic half-timbering is defined as beams holding up a building and the spaces between the beams filled with plaster. However, in the United States, half-timbering is utilized only as a decorative covering of frame construction. Unlike earlier examples, the later Neo-Tudor style elements are watered down. These examples contain lower roof lines and less ornamental detail of the style but some examples still show decorative half-timbering, massive masonry chimneys, and complicated roof lines.

Characteristics:

1. Massive masonry chimneys
2. Patterned brickwork
3. Small, leaded glass windows
4. Steeply-pitched roof
5. Lower, complicated roof lines
6. Decorative half-timbering

Frequency: Regular

Example:



Figure 62: Atlanta Journal and Constitution December 13, 1964

Neo-Colonial Revival Style (1950 – 1970s)

Other names: None

Description: In post-World War II America, the Neo-Colonial style emerged. This style commonly contains widely, overhanging eaves and metal windows, both absent in the traditional Colonial Revival style. Roof pitches are generally lower or steeper than seen in the late 19th and early 20th Century examples. Neo-Colonial style is simply a loose interpretation of earlier Colonial Revival elements.

Characteristics:

1. Symmetrical massing
2. Aligned windows with center door
3. Gable roof
4. Classical details (pilasters, fanlights, sidelights)
5. Double hung windows with multiple panes
6. Shutters

Frequency: Regular

Example:



Figure 63: Shallowford Road Area, Atlanta, Georgia

Neo-Classical Revival Style (1965 – 1990s)

Other names: Plantation Colonial Style

Description: The Neo-Classical Revival style, became popular in America in the 1960's and continues to be utilized in new homes today. The derivation of this style was first seen as a pedimented portico on to one-story ranch houses. Later adaptations included two-story examples of the same. Although this style is a loose interpretation of Classical Revival style details, some specific example more closely interpret the original style.

Characteristics:

1. Pedimented portico
2. Symmetrical massing
3. One and two-story examples
4. Classical details

Frequency: Regular

Example:



Figure 64: Sherwood Forest, Atlanta, Georgia

Neo-Dutch Colonial Style (1950 – 1965)

Other names: None

Description: Deriving from the Dutch Colonial style, which began in seventeenth century America, the Neo-Dutch Colonial style was popular in the United States from the 1900's until the 1940's. Popularized in America through magazines, notable features of this style are flaring eaves, single or shed dormers and central doorways. Neo-Dutch Colonial style homes often use a combination of exterior materials, such as slate roofs over wood or brick siding. These homes also tend to have side porches that can be opened or enclosed.

Characteristics:

1. Combination of exterior materials
2. Slate roofs
3. Wood or brick siding
4. Open or enclosed porches

Frequency: Regular

Example:



Figure 65: Northside Drive Area, Atlanta, Georgia

Cape Cod Style (1940 – 1960)

Other names: None

Description: The Cape Cod style is considered to be an American classic and examples of the style can be found in almost any neighborhood in America. From urban to rural settings, the Cape Cod style that was popular in the post-World War II era, was a derivative of the New England style houses built in America as early as 1700. The Cape Cod style houses that were built throughout the 1940's and 1950's in the United States continued the earlier tradition of the steeply pitched gable roof.

Characteristics:

1. Symmetrical with door in center
2. Window dormers
3. 1 – 1 ½ stories with linear floor plan
4. Bay windows
5. Decorative trim, hardwood floors, central fireplace
6. Wide (originally wood) siding

Frequency: Common

Example:



Figure 66: 2737 Hosea Williams Drive. East Lake, Georgia

Neo-Georgian Style (1950 – 1990s)

Other names: Williamsburg Colonial, Southern Colonial

Description: The original Georgian style, from which the Neo-Georgian style was adapted, is a classic and formal style and considered to be one of the most long-lived styles in the United States. The Georgian style was the governing style from 1700 to 1780 throughout the American colonies. Even today, design elements borrowed from the Georgian style are included on new high-style house plans.

Characteristics:

1. Houses are usually large, rectangular shape
2. Hip roof
3. Elaborate front doors, often paneled
4. Window dormers
5. Decorative brick quoins
6. Crown molding
7. Pediments over doors and windows
8. Masonry belt-courses
9. 2-story pilasters

Frequency: Regular

Example:



Figure 67: Shallowford Road Area, Atlanta, Georgia

Eastern Style (1960 – 1965)

Other names: Asian style

Description: During the romantic period of architecture in the 19th Century, several exotic styles emerged. In the Oriental Revival style of the 19th Century, the most dominant design aspect was the ogee arch often seen with a scalloped edge. Very few examples of the Eastern-Oriental style exist in Atlanta. The 20th Century examples that can be found are in high style, architect designed houses.

Characteristics:

1. Ogee arch with scalloped edge
2. Turkish or onion dome
3. Flared eaves

Frequency: Rare

Example:



Figure 68: DeKalb County, Atlanta, Georgia

Craftsman-Prairie Style (1900 – 1960)

Other names: None

Description: The Craftsman-Prairie style of architecture became a dominant style of the American landscape by the beginning of the 20th Century. The style itself although unique to the United States, was influenced by the one-story thatched roofs called “Bangalas” found in India. The architectural firm of Greene & Greene popularized the style first in California. The style quickly became a favorite and spread to the rest of the United States. Later versions of the style can be seen in brick instead of the traditional wood clapboard.

Characteristics:

1. Low-pitched roof with wide eaves
2. Exposed rafters
3. Decorative braces
4. Extensive porches
5. Interiors with built-in units (seats, shelves, cabinets)
6. Use of natural materials
7. Interior rooms placed around a central room or hearth

Frequency: Regular

Example:



Figure 69: Peachtree Battle, West side of Northside Drive, Atlanta, Georgia

Wrightian Style (1937 – 1960)

Other names: None

Description: The Wrightian style is adapted from the designs of famous American architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright's career spanned almost seven decades, starting at the end of the 19th Century and continuing through the 1960's. One of Wright's most significant contributions to American architecture was his achievement in the development of the Prairie style of architecture. The most important aspect of the Prairie style house is its emphasis on the horizontal. Wright designed houses to fit into the landscape on which they were surrounded. Adaptations of the Wrightian style in post-World War II houses not only emphasized the horizontal but also the landscape.

Frequency: Rare

Example:



Figure 70: Near Howell Mill Road, Atlanta, Georgia

PART SIX: Post-World War II Builder Housing

The Trickle Down Effect in Atlanta

Modernism in architecture, particularly domestic architecture, was slow to emerge in Atlanta and was never fully accepted. It first appeared in commercial, multi-unit apartment, school, and church architecture, and it eventually spread to domestic architecture. Kemp Mooney, AIA, cited some early examples of modernism in the South: Techwood Homes, 1935; Callaway Apartments, 1947; Uncle Remus Library, 1950; Peachtree Hills, 1930's; the Varsity; and the Inman Park Indian Apartments, 1920-30's.

The period in Atlanta between 1945 & 1965 marked a change in the way houses were designed and built. The builder and the architect would take on multiple roles and work both collaboratively and independently. The number and abilities of manufacturers increased greatly during this time. On a national level, manufacturers would produce mass produced component parts such as windows, doors, flooring, and appliances, as well as entirely prefabricated houses that came in a variety of plans and styles.

Local Housing

Generally, the housing built in Atlanta during the study period consisted of three categories: 1) architect designed for single plots or infill housing, 2) plan book derived for infill housing, and 3) developer produced housing from plan books, architect designs, and prefabricated components. Both housing plans and products were available throughout the country on a mass produced level. W. D. Farmer, a house plan producer, has been working in the house plan industry in Atlanta and on a National level since 1948. According to W.D. Farmer regarding the housing built in Atlanta during the study period, about 60% of it was builder designed/built and about 40% was architect designed and contractor built.

The study period marked significant changes in the housing industry. Although mass produced house plans, house products, and houses were available before the war from manufacturers such as Sears and Shoppels, the magnitude, scale, and speed with which they were produced and made available significantly increased after World War II. Before World War II, subdivision development was less comprehensive. For example, developers commonly purchased large tracts of land, which were parceled and sold individually. But, the individuals that bought the land parcels would choose their own house plans and hire their own contractors. There were many players involved in the post World War II housing market during this period and their roles varied. After World War II, manufacturers produced pre-engineered and prefabricated houses and new products. Builders took on greater control and influence by purchasing tracts of land, prefab houses, published house plans, or architect commissioned plans and hiring sub-contractors to build them. Little speculative housing occurred before the war. But after the war, the occurrence of speculative housing built during the study period greatly increased. Architects created designs for manufacturers, builders, and single buyers, as well as, published their own plan books. The location of housing changed as well. During this period there was a desire to move away from the city to a more rural-type setting. In addition to this, the housing lots were larger in size than they had been before the war. Mortgage companies financed the projects based on the size and even style of the housing. Financiers were reluctant to support modern housing because they didn't consider modern housing a wise investment. They were not confident that they could get their money back out of the houses if they needed to. Research indicates that in Atlanta, architects and builders often collaborated on house plans and development projects with the developer hiring an architect to design several houses for a

subdivision. For infill housing, owners could purchase a lot, then either hire an architect to design a house for that lot or purchase a plan and then hire a builder to construct the plan.

House plans designers and book producers also took on a more significant role during this time. Plan book producers such as W.D. Farmer designed their plans, sold them separately, and in book form locally and across the nation. W.D. Farmer indicated that there were about eight plan book companies that produced 98% of the plan books throughout the nation. W.D. Farmer advertised nationally in publications such as *House and Home*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *Ladies Home Journal*. Locally, W.D. Farmer distributed his plans on newsstands, in community and neighborhood publications, and in a weekly Sunday edition of the in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* as the House of the Week. Fulton Federal Loan featured W.D. Farmer Homes as a part of their advertising campaign. A Sunday, September 20, 1964 article in the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* read:

12 Booklets offer homes to suit all. Homes for Pleasant Living, a series of 12 booklets of illustrated home plan ideas by well-know residential designer W .D. Farmer, are being offered free at all offices of Fulton Federal Savings & Loan Association. The homes have been designed to suit Southern tastes and to conform to the types of construction most in use in the Atlanta area. Fulton Federal's loan department had Mr. Farmer create the series of booklets to help its customers and others in planning the construction of a new home or in the selection of an existing home. Each booklet has a full-color cover and contains at least 16 different homes, with drawing and floor plan for each home.

During an interview with W. D. Farmer, he was presented with an Atlanta metropolitan area map and asked to circle the primary areas where his house plans have been built, and he responded, “Well, I’d have to circle the whole map.”

Architect-Designed Vs. Builder-Designed Housing

In *Quality Budget Homes*, Ford and Creighton describe the tasks and roles of architects and builders. The architect's role included the following abilities: study problems and needs, and translate them into a design; place houses appropriately for the site; consider the site in relationship to the house; arrange space within the house; advise and select construction methods, materials, and equipment; and provide the design ability to combine all elements into a whole – “your own architectural masterpiece.” Alternatively, the builder could translate drawing and specifications into a finished building, shop efficiently for materials and labor, organize building construction to be efficient, find ways to achieve results without sacrificing workmanship, handle subcontractors, and take on financial responsibility for the project.

The important thing to remember about builder and architect, is to make use of the talents of each one, to the fullest extent of his abilities that you are able to contract for. Don't confuse the talents of each one; make use of the architect for his design ability; make use of the contractor for his building ability. Some architects think they know more about building procedures than a builder; in most cases, they are wrong. Some builders think they can design their own houses without the benefit of the education and experience of an architect; the faults in such houses are always obvious after any sort of critical analysis. (Quality Budget Homes, Ford & Creighton, 1954).

According to Kemp Mooney, a local Atlanta architect, there are notable differences between architect designed housing and developer/builder housing within the study period. Architect designed housing was usually based on a single commission, which took into account setting, purpose, and the personal needs and style of the client. On the other hand, developers often bought tracts of land varying in size (depending on the current expectations and needs) and developed them with a set number of pre-designed houses. The designs for developer/builder housing were obtained from hired architects, plan books, and national housing manufacturer's, or

actually created by the developer/builder by combining architect designed house features with plan book manufactured housing features.

The difference between architect and developer designed houses also effected the design purpose and relationship to the landscape. Architect designed houses were usually created to fit the landscape, and the house features had a purpose. For example, in an architect-designed house, ribbon windows would be placed to frame a brook or tract of forest. Whereas, in the developer/builder houses that were purchased from a plan book or national manufacturer, a row of ribbon windows would be placed into the design because that was trendy and expected at the time. The placement of the house and its features did not necessarily consider views and the landscape. House placement and design were often based on current trends, economy, & the size of the development.

The difference between the two types of products could be summarized as custom design vs. mass-produced design, much like today. In the mass produced houses, there would be a choice of details such as, finishes, windows, doors, and even layout. But the houses were of the same basic massing and were assembled with mass produced products. Some plan books tried to solve the perceived problems and stigma of mass produced housing by producing 'custom-made-plans with specific features suited for hilly terrain, sloping lots, corner lots, triangular lots, 'outdoor living & sunlit areas' (flat roofs), large families, small families, and energy efficiency, etc.

Evolution of Housing

Housing during the study period underwent numerous changes related to the cultural and contextual changes of the times. W. D. Farmer who served in the War and was directly involved with the changes occurring in the nation and Atlanta during the study period, explained how

housing changed. After the World War II, there was a shortage of housing, materials, and money. The experience of the War left most people ready settle into a home and start a family. Houses in the mid to late 1940's were very basic and small. Typically, lots were about 50'-75' and houses consisted of 1,000-square-foot plans with a bedroom (sometimes 2), bathroom, kitchen, and living room. Into the 1950's families were more established and economically secure. With this, lot sizes increased to 85'-100' wide. Proportionately, houses increased in size to about 1,500 square feet and the amenities included in this space increased. Houses now added dining rooms for eating. Breezeways lead to the carport for the new vehicle, and storage appeared behind the carport for the new washing machine and dryer. Later, two-car carports and garages also started appearing. In the latter half of the 1950's and up to the mid 1960's the wealth of the country increased. Lot sizes were between 110'-120' and the square footage increased to 1500 to 2000 square feet. Now, both parents needed cars and a two-car garage to house them. Houses now included 3-4 bedrooms, a den, a dining room, a living room, a separate laundry and utility room, a kitchen, 2 baths, and a two-car garage. This is also when split-level houses became common. It is important to note that the cottage and Levittown-type housing of the 1940's is located closer to the center of the city of Atlanta, while the larger lot ranch-type and contemporary housing of the 1950's and 1960's occurs further out from the city center toward the city limits. People started moving out to the periphery of the city of Atlanta where much of that area was still considered rural. Into the 60's and beyond housing developments and subdivisions moved outside of the city limits where larger tracts were available for larger developments. People in this suburban movement wanted to get away from the city to more rural and family oriented neighborhoods where land was inexpensive and could accommodate

their modern house, amenities, and vehicles. Land wasn't expensive in these areas and utilities were cheap, but the infrastructure was underdeveloped.

The different types of split-level housing had different advantages. Split-level housing was particularly good for hilly locations and drive under garages were more economical. An even-split house was suited to side-to-side slopes. Seven steps went up to the living room and seven steps went down to the utility room. A split foyer or off-center split house layout was suited to front to back slopes of about four to five feet. In an off-center split, nine stairs went up to the kitchen and bedrooms while five stairs went down to the family room and utility areas. This provided an overlook from the upper level down to the family room.

The housing styles preferred by Atlantans remained primarily traditional. W.D. Farmer explained that many younger people wanted a contemporary look, but they found out that after a few years, the houses did not look good anymore, and they went back to more traditional styles. Farmer describes the different styles he designed as colonial, French-provincial, Polynesian, County, Formal Country, Mansard, Cape Cod, Saltbox, Spanish, New Orleans, and the Farmer Split (which he says was built all over the region).

Projects

List of Developers, Architects, Manufacturers and Publications

While looking through the Home Planners plan books, W.D. Farmer pointed out a number of plans named for local builders at the time. Those included, Sargent, Spain, and the Roy D. Warren Co. Another local building company, Chatham Homes, is in business today and was building homes during the study period. They created subdivisions and house plan books. Today, their business has expanded to include financing, realty, and insurance services. Below are current segments from the Chatham and W.D. Farmer websites:

Chatham Neighborhoods counts more than 5,000 families living in more than 125 neighborhoods in Atlanta, each bearing the Chatham "family approved" stamp of distinction. Since Howard Chatham began building homes in 1948, he realized that right from the start that 50 years into the future, a family will still be a family, neighbors will still be neighbors, and we will all still want to feel proud of the neighborhoods in which we live. From the first Chatham neighborhood to the most recent, the Chatham name is synonymous with quality. Each home reflects a lifestyle that is unparalleled, and makes a family want to call a Chatham neighborhood home.

"The addition of the Chatham Advantage family of companies is a big step for us and we wanted to do it right. With this in mind, we spent an extensive amount of time researching and interviewing different companies to find the perfect fit. This is the most qualified and professional group around, and we all share the same business values and sense of family," said David Chatham, president of Chatham Holdings Corporation.

The Chatham Advantage offers complete real estate and financial services under one roof. This unification of companies promise immediacy, value and a customer-focused attitude. With so many choices and decisions to make when buying a home, it is comforting to know that there is a convenient and reliable family under one roof. For more information, please call 678-624-2904. (<http://www.chathamlegacy.com/March2001/NewsStory6.asp>)

CHATHAM ADVANTAGE Chatham Holdings and Legacy Realty are pleased to announce the Chatham Advantage, a family of businesses that offers "one-stop" real estate and financial services under one roof, combining value and convenience to save homebuyers time and money.

The Chatham Advantage has combined years of talent and expertise to help simplify the home buying process, one of the most important decisions one will ever have to make.

A fully integrated family of services, including highly regarded Sidney O. Smith Insurance, Windward Mortgage, Keller Williams Realty, Legacy Realty and Chatham Neighborhoods provide services that cannot be matched anywhere.

W.D. Farmer W. D. Farmer, F.A.I.B.D., Residence Designer, Inc., was established in 1961. W.D. Farmer has been a residential designer for 49 years. He is recognized throughout the country for his outstanding works, and has been awarded national and international recognition for design and plan books.

He is acknowledged as an authority in residential design and energy conservation, and his energy efficiency data has appeared in several publications.

W. D. Farmer is a certified professional building designer, as well as the former Chancellor of the College of Fellows with the American Institute of Building Design. He also employs other A.I.B.D. certified professional building designers. A recent national AIBD award is the 1994 designer of the year.

W.D. Farmer has been a member of the National Association of Home Builders since 1961, and is active in committee work and in recruiting new members for the Association. W.D. Farmer has been a life spike since 1984 and is a life director for Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association. His most recent award from GAHBA is the prestigious Lou Cenker award for professionalism and outstanding performance.

When you order your "home for pleasant living" from W.D. Farmer, you will receive blueprints, which are thorough, clear, precise, and easy to read. We provide the very best in home plans, to assist you in finding the home of your dreams. (<http://www.wdfarmerplans.com/index.html>)

**Golf View
Subdivision**

Location: Atlanta, GA
Architects: Finch & Barnes
Builders: Thomas Northcutt & Raymond Sanders
Prices: \$21,000 - \$23,000

An article in House & Home, April 1953 read, "Atlanta Goes Modern – without going overboard. Architect's Finch & Barnes gave their builders clean design, efficient techniques and just a hint of tradition. Result: a new market in the old South."

"This 16-house project has gone a long way toward selling Atlanta's merchant builders on the value of architects' services and up-to-the-date design. One of the areas first contemporary subdivisions – and one of the few local projects in the 10-to-20 house bracket that has made money – it drew a record-breaking crowd of 10,000 visitors on opening day and sold itself with a minimum of advertising and sales effort. Builders Northcutt & Sanders feel the architects added 'immeasurably' more than their fee of \$250 per house to the value of the finished product, are using are using architects on new projects of 20 contemporary houses in the \$12,500 class and 107 at \$16,000." The article stated that, "professional design contributed many things not always found in traditional houses," including: better siting, better floor planning, more variety, orderly & unified facades, wall-window sections, truss roof, perimeter heat. The following pictures feature the Golf View houses as they appeared in H&H and currently.



Photo: G. H. G.

Atlanta goes modern

—without going overboard. Architects Finch & Barnes gave their builders
clean design, efficient techniques and just a hint of tradition
Result: a "new" market in the old South

GOLF VIEW SUBDIVISION

LOCATION: Atlanta, Ga.

FINCH & BARNES, architects

THOMAS NORTHCLIFF & RAYMOND SANDERS, builders

PRICE: \$25,000

Figure 71: *House and Home*, April 1953



Photos: (above) Fray Studio; (others) Gabriel Benaur

Expensive land, near town and golf course (upper right), dictated narrow 65' x 230' lots that cost up to \$3,000 including improvements. But architects achieved privacy by proper siting and fencing, and variety by alternating, reversing and turning the three plans. Wall design permitted alternation of wood siding with five different types of brick. Foreground: a street of older houses.

Figure 72: *House and Home*, April 1953

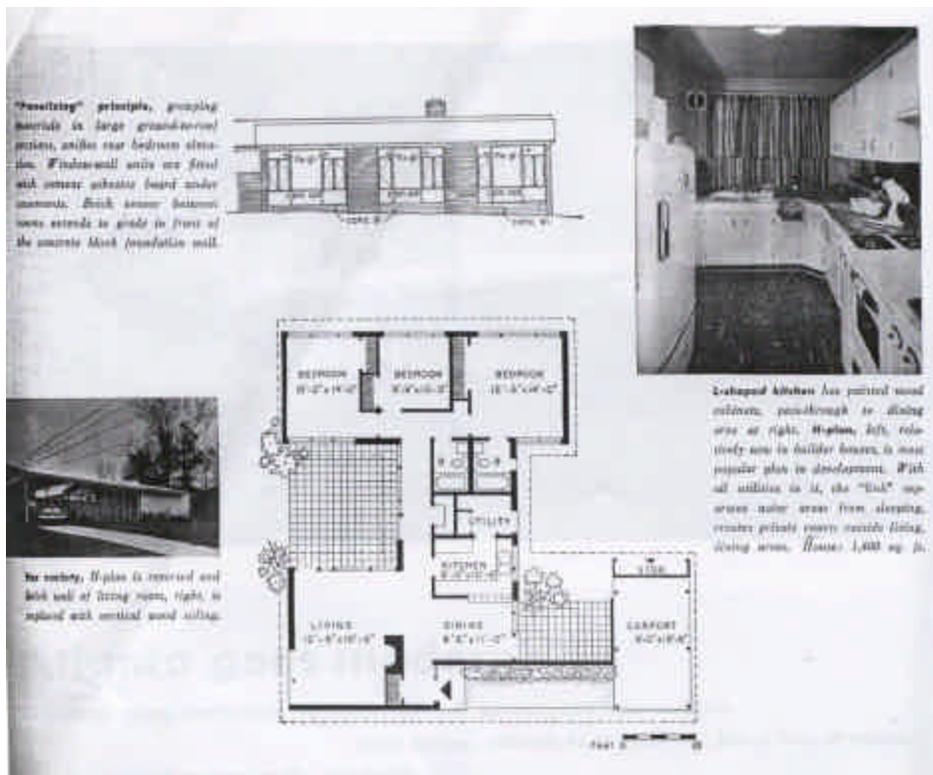
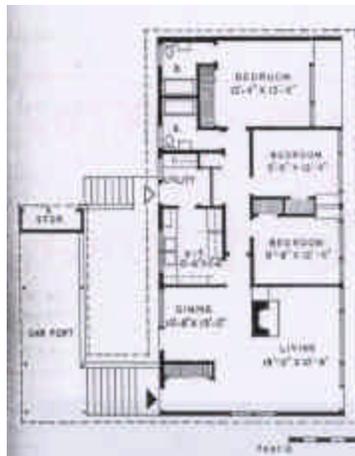


Figure 73: *House and Home*, April, 1953



Figure 74: Golfview Road, Atlanta, GA



Typical cost breakdown

Foundation and walls	\$1,100	Hardware	100
Masonry	900	Painting	500
Lumber and millwork	2,500	Labour	3,000
Siding	475	Landscaping, terraces, walk, driveway	900
Cabinet work	300	Lot improvements	1,000
Aluminum windows	400	Overhead (incl. loan costs)	900
Glazing	300	Lot improvements	1,000
Plumbing	1,150	Overhead (incl. loan costs)	900
Roofing	700	Profit (incl. sales tax etc)	2,550
Electrical	400	Architect's fee	200
Flooring	600	Sales price	\$33,000
Tile	300		
Plumbing	400		

Plan No. 2 has narrow end facing street, with living and bedrooms opening on diagonal terrace shielded from street by brick privacy wall.



Plan is adaptable to lot as sleeping porch. Single, sweeping roof line of house as sight glass is kept and better suited appearance.



Roofs-to-roof framing of end windows, with well-colored asbestos board above and below eaves, dresses up street view of entire plan.



Figure 75: *House and Home*, April 1953



Figure 76: Golfview Road, Atlanta, GA



Figure 77: Golfview Road, Atlanta, GA



Figure 78: Golfview Road, Atlanta, GA

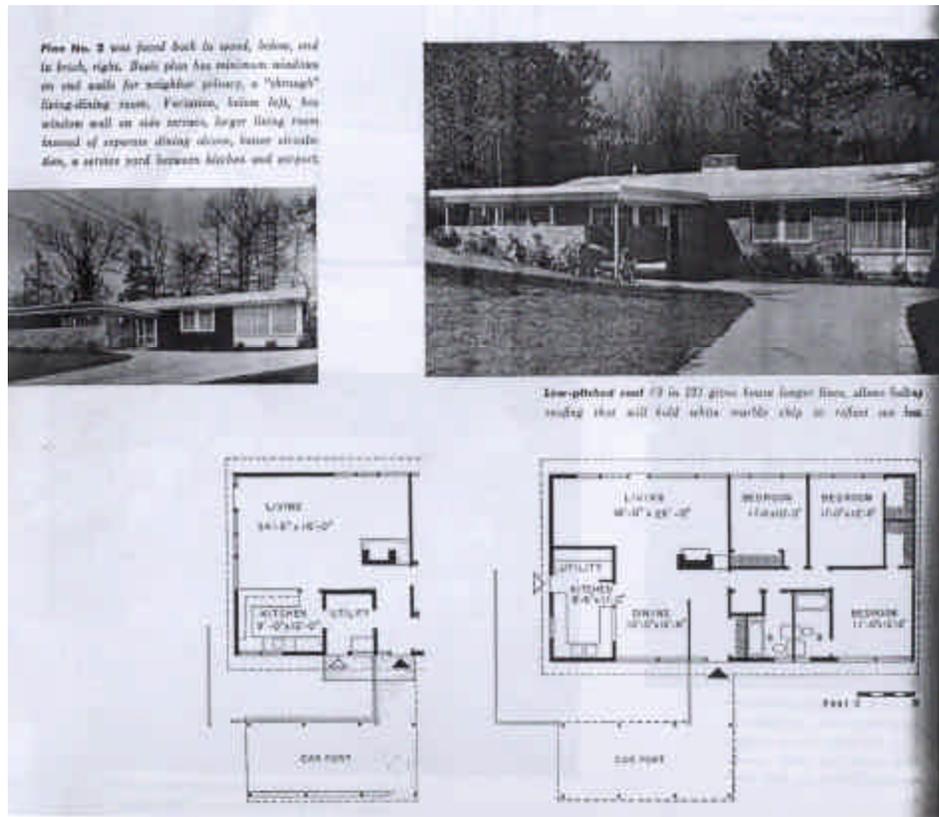


Figure 79: *House and Home*, April 1953

**Other
Atlanta
Projects
Featured in
Publications**

**Andrew
Steiner's T-
shaped two-
zoned home
in Atlanta.**



Figure 80: *House and Home*, April 1953



Figure 81: Golfview Road, Atlanta, GA

“The house was built by an architect for himself, but could well serve for a builder’s house. It contains 1,480 square feet and was built for \$15,000.”
House and Home, June 1955.

**Etheridge &
Vanneman**

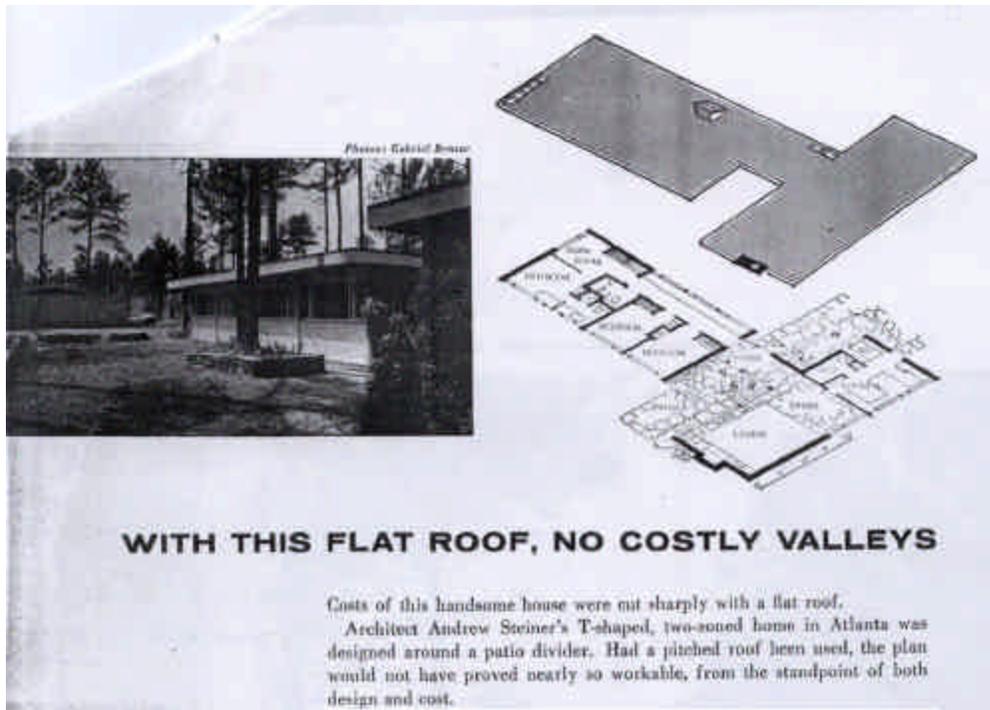


Figure 82: *House and Home*, June 1955



Figure 83: *House and Home*, June 1955

**H. Dean
Spatlin**

A May 1953 *House & Home* article reports that builders Etheridge & Vanneman find they can quickly sell 1,500-square-foot houses for \$16,700 by adding features to their story-and-a-half houses. Some of the features of the homes include: the homes are in the first complete merchant built development to offer air conditioning, plans were a product of architect builder collaboration. The builders stated that their architect, Henry D. Norris (AIA), provided the esthetics (such as making their 9'12" roof looks more like a 5' 9" roof because of the wide, heavy overhangs) and they provided the practical considerations. Vanneman was on Long Island when Levitt first started building and from his examples, learned cost-cutting techniques. The builders built prefabricated and precut house, but found precut be more cost effective. With precut houses, the framing lumber comes precut and the walls are assembled while lying flat. The houses were also site planned to take advantage of the terrain. Lot sizes varied from 75' X 200' to 150' X 400'. Trees were saved. To merchandise the houses, the builders used a local broker, model home, unfinished home, an expensive sales brochure, and a scale model of the entire tract. (The builders were also in the mortgage business.)

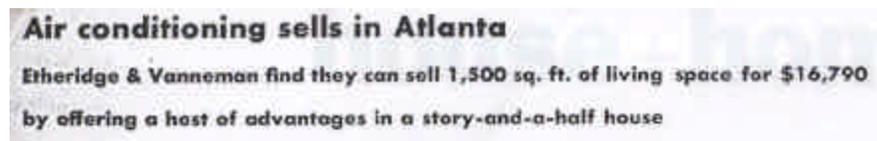


Figure 84: *House and Home*, May 1953

Walter Tally

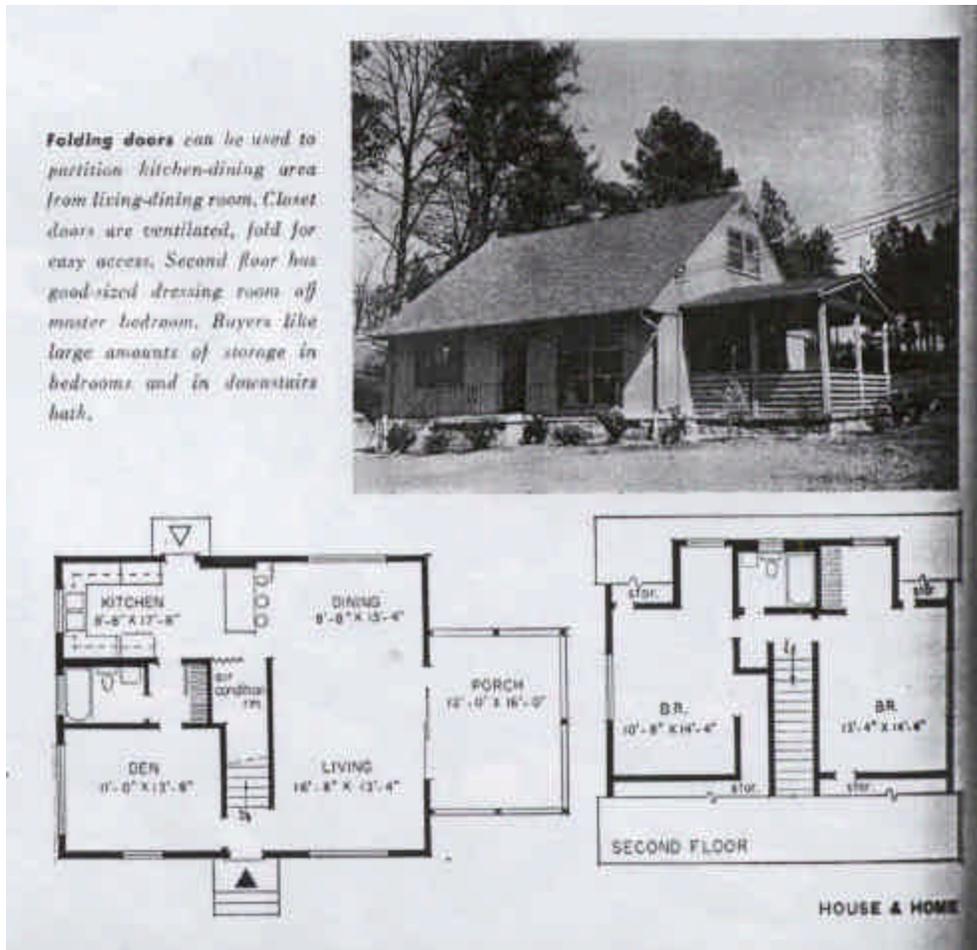


Figure 85: *House and Home*, May 1953

House and Home, October 1955: "From Atlanta, GA comes a concise statement of why buyers like split levels. Builder H. Dean Spratlin says, 'Split-level houses are steadily growing more popular in this section of the country. We believe some of the reasons for this popularity are the extra amount of floor space on the same ground area they give our buyers, the outward attractiveness of a house built on different levels, and the natural affinity split levels have for interesting rolling or hilly lots.'" Builders: Spratlin & Harrington Development Co., Atlanta, GA. Architect: John Cherry. Price: \$22,5000. Area: about 1,900 sf plus carport and partial basement.



Figure 86: *House and Home*, October 1955

Atlanta Contemporary: a lesson for lenders. *House and Home*, July 1955.

The development: Northwoods

Amenities: 2 sizeable parks, a school, a 15 store shopping center, and a professional building, a community church

The layout: Ranch houses occupy the southwestern section, new 'modern' houses are in the northeastern limits of the development.

**Henry D.
Norris**

Builder: Walter Tally.
Architects: Ernest Mastin and John Summer
Broker: Eugene Harrington
Terms: Standard VA and FHA

“One builders persistence has broken the mortgage barrier in Atlanta against contemporary design in the medium price range. At the time, Tally was Atlanta’s biggest independent speculative builder with his 250-acre, 700 house wooded development 11 miles north of downtown Atlanta. The development was described as the South’s most handsome.”

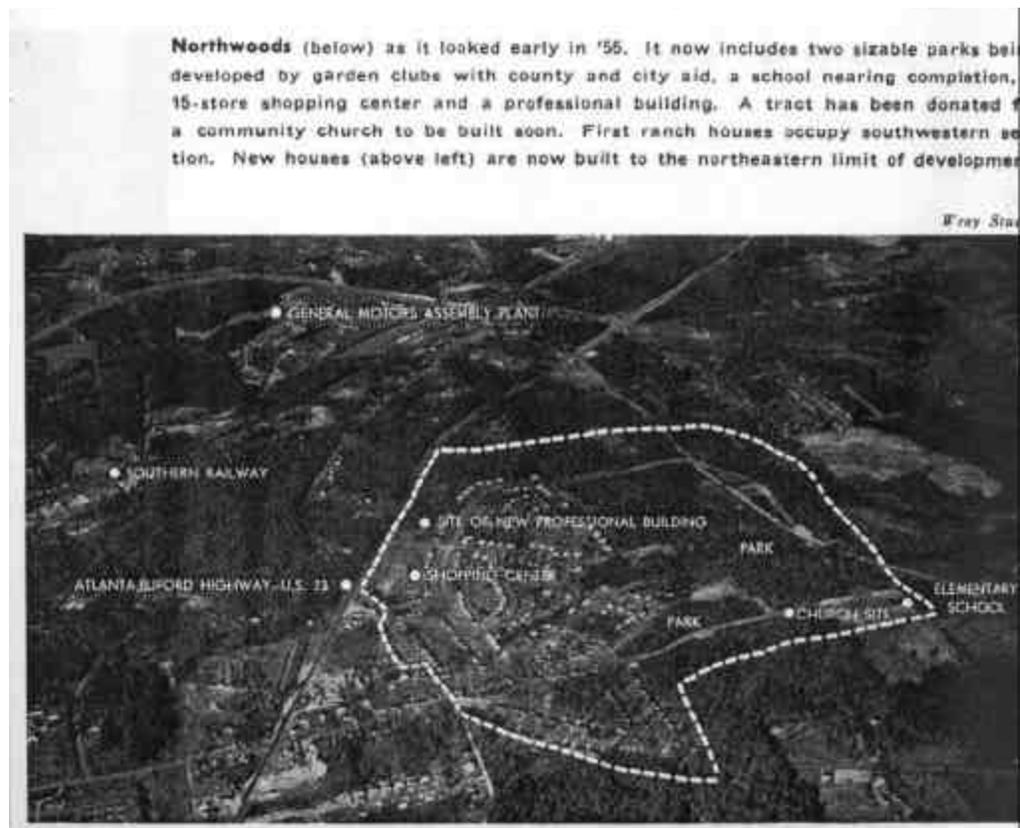


Figure 87: *House and Home*, July 1955

LOCATION: Doraville, Ga.
WALTER L. TALLY, builder
MASTIN & SUMMER, architects
LENDERS: Spearlin-Harrington & Summer
and Ehrhidge & Vennum
TERMS: standard VA and FHA

Figure 88: *House and Home*, July 1955

Warren F.
Penney

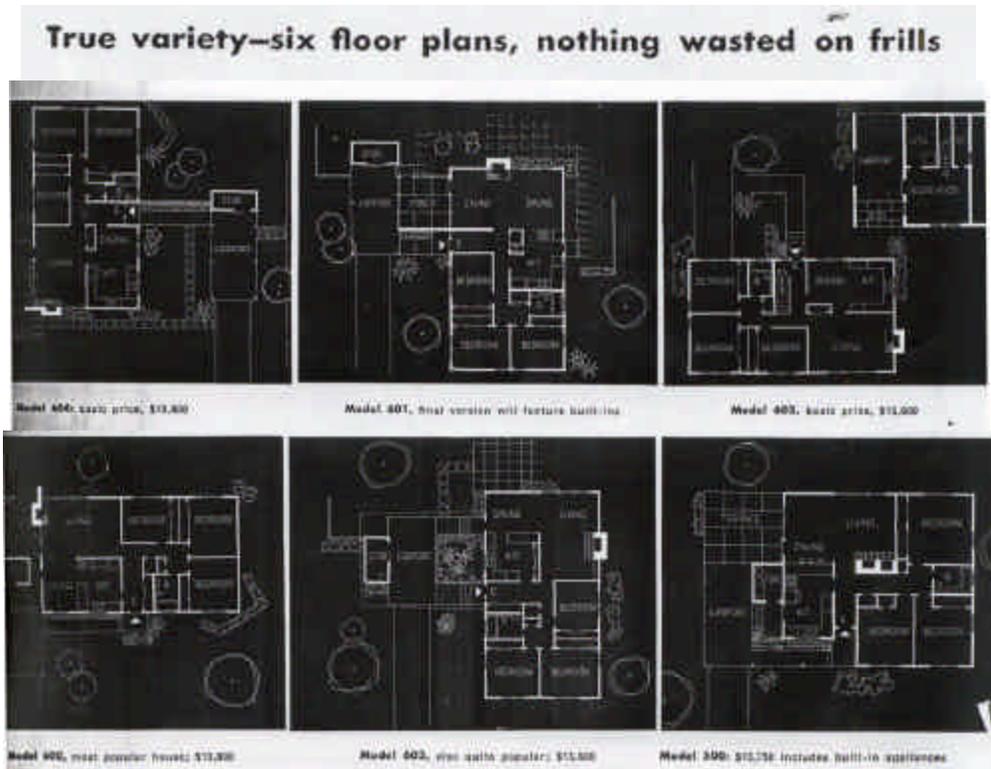


Figure 89: *House and Home*, July 1955



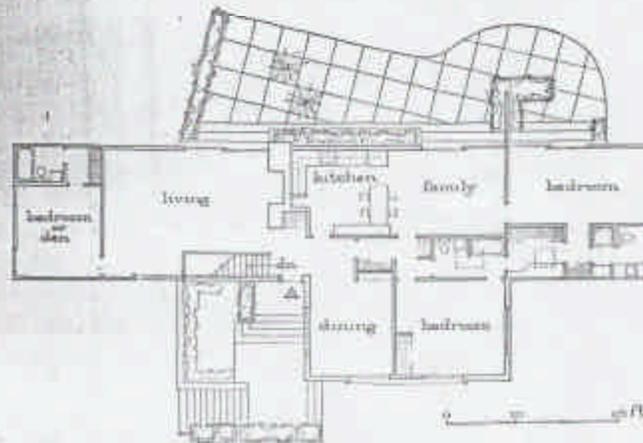
Painter,
Weeks &
McCarty



Figure 90: *House and Home*, July 1955



Rear of house is as handsome as front, with large glass and Roman brick areas flanked by 1 x 6 vertical siding. Paved terrace, 60' long, flows around tree and planting area which help to shield master bedroom at left.



ARCHITECT: Henry D. Norris
OWNERS: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Faulk
LOCATION: Atlanta

2,270 sq. ft. house has only six corners, is contained in two rectangles. Low-pitch roof permits easy use of skylights over master bedroom, dressing room, children's bath. Although carport is at one end of house, stairs to entrance bring it equally close to both formal and informal halves of house (see sectional drawing, opposite page).

Figure 91: The Mr. & Mrs. Robert Faulk house. Architect: Henry D. Norris. *House and Home*, April 1956.

Henry D.
Norris

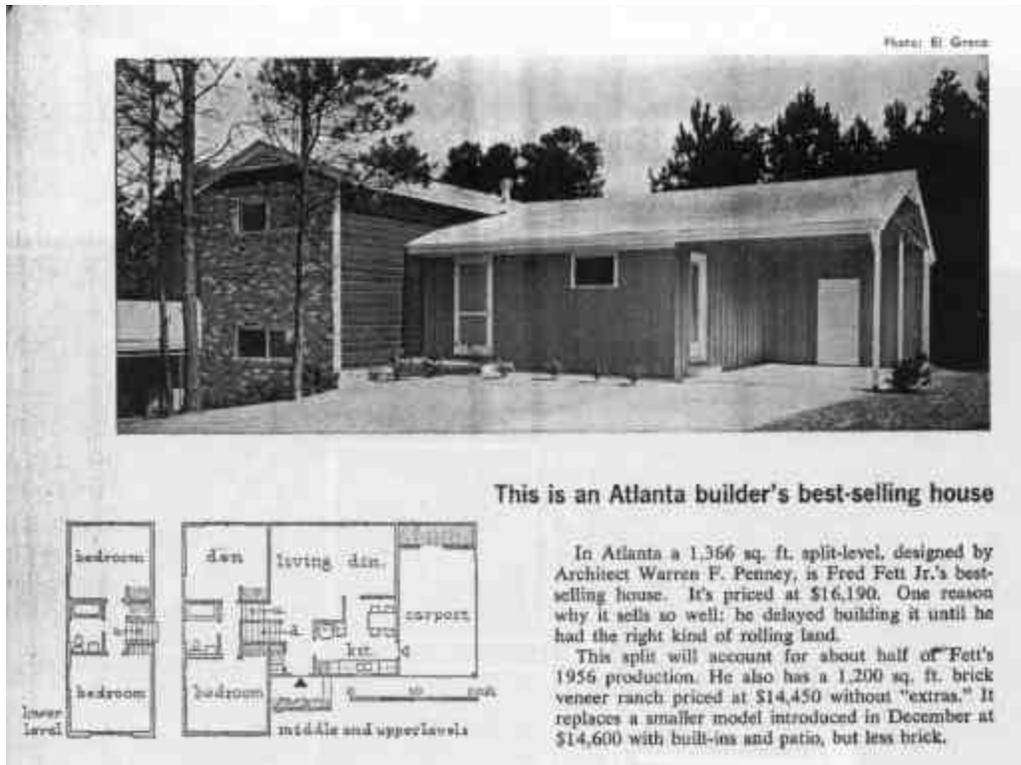


Figure 92: *House and Home*, July 1956

Atlanta's best selling house.

Architect: Warren F. Penney

Seller: Fred Fett, Jr.

Price: \$16,190

Size: 1,366-square-foot split level

“One reason why it sells so well: he (Fett) delayed building until he had the right kind of rolling land. This split will account for about ½ of Fett's 1956 production. He also has a 1,200 sf brick veneer ranch priced at \$14,450 without 'extras.' It replaces a smaller model introduced in December at \$14,600 with built-ins and patio, but less brick.”



Entrance is set off by fenced terrace. Living room sweeps out to fern carpet. Family room, bathroom are at right.

MERIT AWARD

Case # (\$15,000-\$20,000)

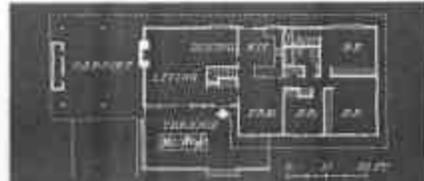
ARCHITECTS: *Painter, Weeks & McCarty*
 MANUFACTURER: *Knox Homes*
 BUILDER: *John F. Collins*
 LOCATION: *Atlanta*

CITATION: "Here is a very interesting builder house. It can be adapted to a sloping or flat site. The plan is very good—entry through the terrace is pleasant; there is an excellent relationship between family room and kitchen; two of the bedrooms are of reasonably good size; plumbing is centralized; there is good storage."

Jurors felt the carport was "somewhat out of tune with the solidity of the main house," also thought the house might have been sited to take more advantage of the back of the lot where there is greater privacy.



Front terrace is enclosed by lattice fence, partly sheltered by roof overhang. Family room is at right, living room is background.



Plan was praised by jurors for convenient location of kitchen, which is easily accessible to both family room and dining area. Jurors also liked close separation of living room from bedroom wing.



Kitchen is open to family room, also has view through family room to terrace. Built-ins include oven, counter burners, vent hood.

Figure 93: *House and Home*, July 1959

Architects: Painter, Weeks & McCarty

Manufacturers: Knox Homes

Builder: John F. Collins

Location: Atlanta

Cost: \$15,000-\$20,000

“Here is a very interesting builder house. It can be adapted to a sloping or flat site. The plan is very good – entry through the terrace is pleasant; there is an excellent relationship between the family room and kitchen; two of the bedrooms are of reasonable good size; plumbing is centralized; there is good storage.”

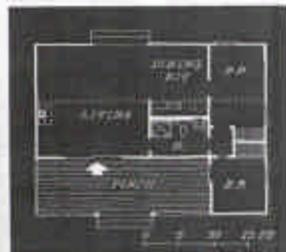


Prefabbed vacation house—designed to sell for \$3,000 to \$5,000 without land—is erected on steel/wood posts in precast concrete footings.

SPECIAL AWARD

ARCHITECT: *Henry D. Norris*
 MANUFACTURER: *Kingsbury Homes*
 SUBBER: *Forest Products Corp.*
 LOCATION: *Lawrence, Ga.*

CITATION: "Here is a first-rate vacation house filled with many fine features. The structural system is simple; materials are put to good use. The expandable possibilities in the house are excellent, and it also has the makings of a good retirement house. The prefabricated fireplace (see photo below) is an interesting idea for a house of this type. Prefinished materials cut down cleaning and upkeep."



Open plan includes wide front porch as part of living area. Bedrooms are small to leave more space for family activities.

Interior is blend of glass, exposed beams, and prefabricated wall panels. Sliding doors to porch are behind drapes at left.

Photo: Robert McGinnis



Figure 94: *House and Home*, July 1959

Special Award for prefabrication vacation house

Architect: Henry D. Norris

Manufacturer: Kingsberry Homes

Builder: Forest Products Corp

Location: Suwanee, GA

John Portman



Figure 95: *House and Home*, October 1956

Architect: John Portman

Builder: Henry R. Jackson Corp.

Area: 1900 square feet (2800 with terraces)

Cost: \$32,750

Lot: \$7,000

Henry D. Norris



Figure 96: *House and Home*, October 1956

Atlanta's best selling house

Location: Atlanta

Builder: Boyd-Jackson Corp.

Architect: Henry D. Norris

Area: 1270 square feet

Price: \$16,800

This house, "...is the fastest selling in its price-range." "

Almost every house in the subdivision is different as a result of Architect Norris' careful attention to varied orientation and

The plans and photos below are from plan books produced by W. D. Farmer and Home Planners in Atlanta during the study period. The plans have been matched up with similar houses photographed during the survey of Atlanta.

Plan	Photo
 <p>Figure 97: Home Builder's Plan Service, 1948</p>	 <p>Figure 98:</p>

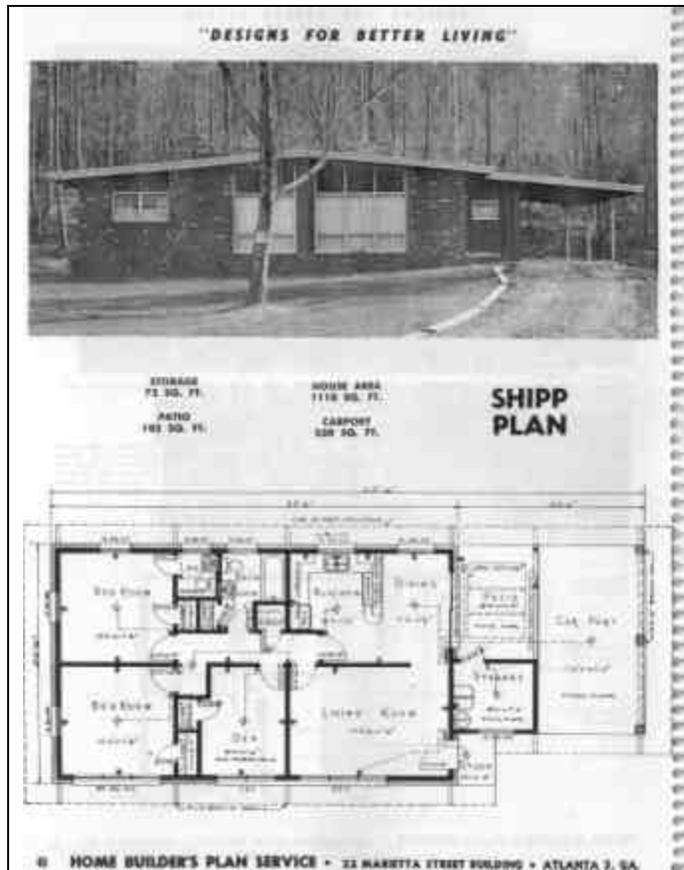


Figure 101: Home Builder's Plan Service, 7th Edition.

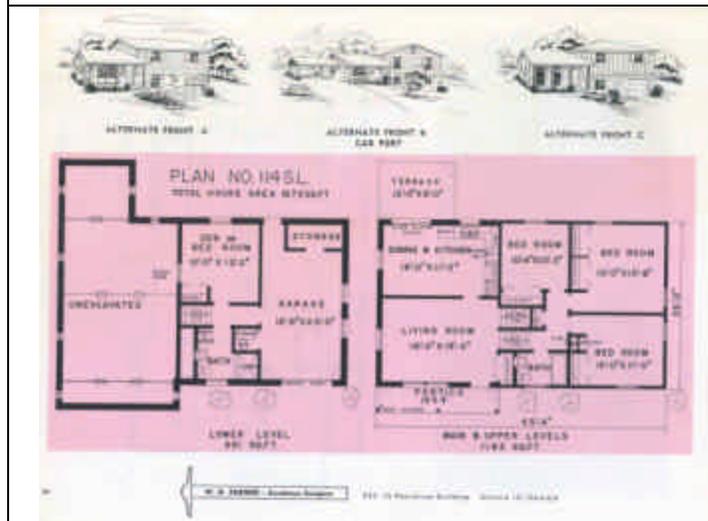


Figure 103



Figure 104

Local Developers and Plan Producers Still In Business Today

Chatham Advantage

Chatham Holdings and Legacy Realty are pleased to announce the Chatham Advantage, a family of businesses that offers "one-stop" real estate and financial services under one roof, combining value and convenience to save homebuyers time and money.

The Chatham Advantage has combined years of talent and expertise to help simplify the home buying process, one of the most important decisions one will ever have to make.

A fully integrated family of services, including highly regarded Sidney O. Smith Insurance, Windward Mortgage, Keller Williams Realty, Legacy Realty and Chatham Neighborhoods provide services that cannot be matched anywhere.

Chatham Neighborhoods counts more than 5,000 families living in more than 125 neighborhoods in Atlanta, each bearing the Chatham "family approved" stamp of distinction. Since Howard Chatham began building homes in 1948, he realized that right from the start that 50 years into the future, a family will still be a family, neighbors will still be neighbors, and we will all still want to feel proud of the neighborhoods in which we live. From the first Chatham neighborhood to the most recent, the Chatham name is synonymous with quality. Each home reflects a lifestyle that is unparalleled, and makes a family want to call a Chatham neighborhood home.

"The addition of the Chatham Advantage family of companies is a big step for us and we wanted to do it right. With this in mind, we spent an extensive amount of time researching and interviewing different companies to find the perfect fit. This is the most qualified and professional group around, and we all share the same business values and sense of family," said David Chatham, president of Chatham Holdings Corporation.

The Chatham Advantage offers complete real estate and financial services under one roof. This unification of companies promise immediacy, value and a customer-focused attitude. With so many choices and decisions to make when buying a home, it is comforting to know that there is a convenient and reliable family under one roof. For more information, please call 678-624-2904. (<http://www.chathamlegacy.com/March2001/NewsStory6.asp>)

W. D. Farmer

W. D. Farmer, F.A.I.B.D., Residence Designer, Inc., was established in 1961. W.D. Farmer has been a residential designer for 49 years. He is recognized throughout the country for his outstanding works, and has been awarded national and international recognition for design and plan books. He is acknowledged as an authority in residential design and energy conservation, and his energy efficiency data has appeared in several publications.

W. D. Farmer is a certified professional building designer, as well as the former Chancellor of the College of Fellows with the American Institute of Building Design. He also employs other A.I.B.D. certified professional building designers. A recent national AIBD award is the 1994 designer of the year.

W. D. Farmer has been a member of the National Association of Home Builders since 1961, and is active in committee work and in recruiting new members for the Association. W. D. Farmer has been a life spike since 1984 and is a life director for Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association. His most recent award from GAHBA is the prestigious Lou Cenker award for professionalism and outstanding performance. When you order your "home for pleasant living" from W.D. Farmer, you will receive blueprints, which are thorough, clear, precise, and easy to read. (<http://www.wdfarmerplans.com/index.html>)

Developers, Architects, Manufacturers, Publications

PLAN PRODUCERS

- W.D. Farmer** W.D. Farmer produced numerous house plan catalogs with subdivision type housing. During the study time period and into the 1970's, the AJC featured the W.D. Farmer House of the Week.
- Home Builders
Plan Service** Produced Levittown type houses in the Atlanta area.
- Knox Griffen** A drafter by trade that produced cookbook type houses. He claimed to have designed the most houses in the South.
- Royal Berry Wills** Royal Berry Wills produced house plan books nationally. An Atlanta architect claims that about 12 of the houses built by a developer on Woodward Way near the Bobby Jones Golf Course were direct copies of Royal Berry Wills houses.
- Garlinghouse** Garlinghouse was one of the largest house plan manufacturers during the study period. Their plans tended to be conservative and traditional and have been built throughout the county, including Atlanta. Garlinghouse advertised by sending plan books to men while they were serving in the war, so that they could come home and build their dream home.
- B.E. Roebuck** W. D. Farmer stated that Roebuck did the plans for many of the houses in College Park.
- Note:** Other builders are discussed in the local projects section of this document.

PUBLICATIONS

House & Home (H&H)

H & H is a comprehensive developer and architect-based publication, produced nationally before, during, and after the study period. *H & H* had a significant impact on housing in the country. Their publications included articles on architect and developer designed housing, current trends and styles in housing, as well as housing advertisements for products, plans, builders, and architects. Articles in *H & H* also focused on the benefits of the architect and developer collaboration where architects would produce a number of plans and housing styles, which the developer would build and/or provide to the buyer to choose from.

Other national publications:

Architectural Record, Architectural Forum, House & Garden, House Beautiful, Better Homes & Gardens, House Beat, Home Magazine

HOME MANUFACTURERS & PLAN PROVIDERS

Knox Homes, National Homes, Modern Homes & Equipment Co., Scholz, Crawford

SECTION FOUR: LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Whether high style or vernacular, residential houses do not exist in isolation. Each residential house has a physical setting that may or may not be landscaped. As outlined in *Georgia's Living Places*, looking at historic residential landscapes involves the consideration of four variables:

*(1) the site itself, its size, shape, topography, hydrology, soils, vegetation, orientation, and previous development; (2) prevailing landscape styles, fashions, trends, or conventions, whether "high-style" or vernacular; (3) the intentions and capabilities of the landscape designer, whether a trained landscape architect or a homeowner with an a vocational interest in gardening; and (4) the availability of time, money, labor and materials.*⁶²

Studying all of these variables provides a framework for understanding historic residential landscapes. As stated in *Georgia's Living Places*, landscapes can complement a house and its architectural features and can also be important historic resources themselves.⁶³ Historic landscapes from the recent past are significant historic resources that are worthy of preservation.

As explained in *Georgia's Living Places*, the new development of large-scale landscaped suburbs occurred in early 20th Century Georgia. In this period, these suburbs contained single-family houses that were set within large landscaped lots. Generally, these early 20th Century landscaped suburbs contained certain characteristics. *Georgia's Living Places* states that the following characteristics identify early 20th Century landscaped suburbs in Georgia:

an overall irregular or curvilinear arrangement of streets, fitted into rather than imposed upon the natural topography of the ground; relatively large and irregularly shaped lots; retention of existing natural features of the site, including topography and vegetation; uniform setback of houses, creating generally broad or deep front yards; retention of unsuitable building lots as natural open space; and the introduction of small

⁶² Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings* (February 1991), I-38.

⁶³ Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings* (February 1991), I-46.

*“domestic” landscapes on each lot, consisting primarily of open lawns, trees, and shrubbery.*⁶⁴

This development of early 20th Century landscaped suburbs is a precursor to residential landscapes following World War II in America and in Georgia. These park-like landscapes created a guideline for landscaped suburbs and influenced residential landscapes in Georgia throughout the 20th Century.

As with landscapes from other time periods, post-World War II residential landscapes are varied. Two important residential landscape types for the post-World War II period are (i) the standard residential landscape and (ii) the modern residential landscape. Much like mass-produced residential housing in Atlanta following World War II, the majority of residential landscapes were generally simple. As individual developers created new suburbs, housing and landscapes became more uniform in nature. This housing and accompanying landscapes were produced in a cost-effective, “cookie cutter” fashion.

The Post-World War II standard residential landscape’s general characteristics are:

1. a small front yard with a lawn, which is considered the public space;
2. a driveway for the homeowner’s automobile; and
3. a back yard, generally much larger than the front, used as a private space for the family.

Another influence on residential landscapes in Atlanta during the 1945 to 1965 period is modernism. Although most studies on the post-World War II modern movement in architecture and landscape architecture focus on work in the Northeast or the West Coast, examples can be found all over the United States, including Atlanta, Georgia. Two significant landscape

⁶⁴ Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, *Georgia’s Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings* (February 1991), I-46.

architects of the modern movement, Thomas Dolliver Church and Garrett Eckbo, influenced landscape architecture throughout America through journal publications and their books.

Thomas Dolliver Church, landscape architect

Thomas Dolliver Church (1902-1978) received his B.A. in landscape design from the University of California at Berkeley and graduate degree in landscape architecture from Harvard University. In the late 1920's until the late 1930's, Church worked as a landscape architect in California. Relying on historic elements of landscape design, Church emphasized the siting of individual houses within their landscapes, patio gardens that were appropriate to the Spanish rancho-style architecture, and a focus on outdoor living due to the California climate.⁶⁵

In the late 1930's, Church traveled to Europe and studied the work of the architects Le Corbusier and Alvar Aalto, practitioners of the International Style of architecture. Le Corbusier and Aalto were functionalists, who broke from the forms and design of historic styles and sought a new twentieth-century style based on modern technology and engineering progress, modern materials such as concrete, sheet glass, and synthetics for their unadorned, functional structures and the contemporary needs of town planning and housing projects. Influenced by the International Style in architecture but still relying on important historical forms in design, Church experimented with new designs and forms. According to Michael Laurie in *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, Church's approach to landscape architecture was given direction from three major areas – the architecture of the house, the site and the personal preferences of the client.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Charles A. Birnbaum and Robin Karson, eds., *Pioneers of American Landscape Design* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 53-54.

⁶⁶ Birnbaum and Karson, 55.

By the 1950's, Church was one of the leading landscape architects in the United States, who worked on commercial and institutional projects as well as residential assignments. Yet, the bulk of Church's work was in domestic landscape architecture. Designing over 2,000 home gardens in his career, Church was a key figure in the development of the modern Californian garden. Church viewed the garden as a logical extension of the house, with one extending naturally into the other.

In post-World War II America, key considerations in landscape design were the need for reduced maintenance in gardening, privacy for families in outdoor living space and places for the automobile on the residential site. Church addressed these issues in a myriad of ways. Church emphasized the importance of how the site affects the design of the landscape. In Church's view, the organization of the garden should be directly linked to the characteristics of the site for optimal utilization of the property. The landscape design should compliment the existing natural features of the property. Church emphasized the orientation of the house with regards to topography, views, existing trees, exposure, and sun.⁶⁷ Church's designs included a specific sequence of arrival to the property to accommodate the automobile. This sequence included an entrance drive, a parking area, and front door. Through his landscape designs, Church also showed a direct relationship between the house and the garden, so that homeowners could incorporate the outdoors in their day-to-day lives. Church also made room for functional spaces in his designs, such as parking areas, garages, kitchen gardens, doghouses, and play areas for children. Church's work contained a defined edge for the garden. The garden was distinguished from adjoining landscapes and provided privacy from neighbors but still connected to its surroundings. Furthermore, Church selected plants, such as groundcover plantings, that would support his overall design and provide ease of maintenance for homeowners. He also utilized

trees and other plant material to create screens that provided intimacy in separate areas of the landscape and privacy from the outside world. Church manipulated flowing lines, color, texture and simple planes to create a new approach to landscape design.⁶⁸

One of Church's most famous and influential designs is Donnell Garden, located on a knoll in Sonoma County, California. This design embodies the essence of California outdoor living. This design shows an amazing balance between architecture, the garden and the larger landscape surroundings. The pool and terrace in the design overlook a creek and the San Francisco Bay. The amoebae shape of the pool is in contrast to the manicured law and the natural surroundings below.⁶⁹



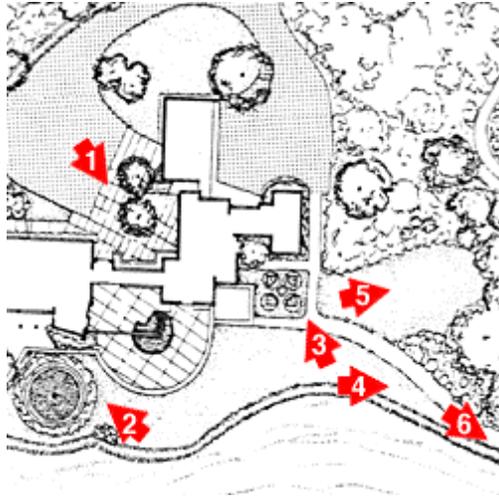
Figure 105: Thomas Church, Donnell Garden, Sonoma County, California, 1949.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Birnbaum and Karson, 55.

⁶⁸ Thomas Dolliver Church, *Gardens Are for People; How to Plan for Outdoor Living* (New York: Reinhold Pub. Corp., 1955), ix.

⁶⁹ Drothee Imbert, "Modernism Assumed Many Forms in Mid-20th Century Landscape Architecture," *Architecture Magazine*, <http://ww.architecturemag.com/nov99/spec/history/histor/asp>, accessed on April 13, 2001.

⁷⁰ Photographs and plans from the Reuben Rainey, University of Virginia, History of American Landscape Architecture website, <http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/~rnr/docs/31-church.html>, accessed April 5, 2001.



1. Arrival Area.
2. Tree well and seating area.
3. Herb garden.
4. Walk to pool area.
5. Play slope.
6. Path near pool area.

Figure 106: Plan for Donnell Garden

The publication of his books, *Gardens are for People* (1955) and *Your Private World* (1969) as well as countless articles in architectural and garden magazines, such as *House Beautiful* and *Sunset*, not only influenced the field of landscape architecture but also popularized his approach to landscape design. His vision reached people throughout the United States, including those in the Southeast and in the City of Atlanta, Georgia.

Today, one of Thomas Church's landscapes, part of the General Motor Technical Facility in Macomb County, Michigan, has been included in the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register listing recognizes the property's significance under transportation, engineering and landscape architecture. The inclusion of Thomas Church's landscape architecture in this listing is invaluable because it is the first acknowledgement of modern landscape architecture by Church and sets a precedent for future listing of modern landscapes in the National Register of Historic Places.⁷¹

Garrett Eckbo, landscape architect

One of the key figures in modern landscape architecture is Garrett Eckbo (1910-2000). Eckbo, a major influence in the field of landscape architecture for over 50 years, proposed innovative design ideas in a social setting. Throughout his entire career, Eckbo's goal of social improvement through design characterized his work.

Eckbo attended the University of California at Berkeley and completed graduate school at Harvard in 1938. Eckbo was greatly influenced by the vision of Walter Gropius, former director of the Bauhaus School, and the International Style in architecture. In 1939 Eckbo worked for Thomas Church for two weeks and decided that their visions were incompatible. He then worked for the Farm Security Administration, designing camps and housing for migrant farm workers in the West.⁷² Garrett Eckbo wrote articles for *Pencil Points* (later to become *Progressive Architecture*) and other architectural journals and magazines. Eckbo also published several books, including *Landscape for Living* (1950), which became one of the most important works on modern landscape architecture, offering modern landscape designs and an optimistic view of a new world for society.

Eckbo saw space as the most important aspect of landscape design. Eckbo asserted that landscape design is a social art. Landscape should be for living, incorporating plans that included people and their relationship to the land. Open space should be the structure for controlling the site plan, not the by-product of roads and arrangement of buildings.⁷³ Eckbo and fellow visionaries, Dan Kiley and James Rose, wanted a new and modern landscape architecture

⁷¹ "Thomas Dolliver Church: Preserving & Interpreting a Landscape Legacy," *Vineyard, an Occasional Record of the National Park Service Historic Landscape Initiative* (Volume II, Issue 2, 2000), 4.

⁷² Marc Treib and Dorothee Imbert, *Garrett Eckbo: Modern Landscapes for Living*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

⁷³ Treib and Imbert, 20-21.

that looked beyond small-scale garden design and addressed broad space and land usage concerns.⁷⁴

Highly influenced by the contemporary arts, Eckbo also saw the modern house and garden as interconnected, one flowing to the other and used abstract forms and modern materials, such as aluminum in his designs.



Figure 107: Garrett Eckbo, Gary Cooper Residence, Beverly Hills, California, 1955

Eckbo's radical ideas and work did not reach a popular audience the way Thomas Church's designs did. Eckbo's writings were primarily addressed to landscape architects and other professionals in associated fields. Yet, his important work reached countless landscape and architecture professionals, who utilized his ideas in their work. Eckbo's work supported the interconnection of garden and architecture. This ideal as well as other elements of Eckbo's designs can be seen in landscapes everywhere.

The Automobile and its Effect on the Environment

Before World War II, automobiles were a luxury item for the well to do and were not mass-produced. Most Americans, including Atlantans, utilized trolley cars, trains and the horse

⁷⁴ Treib and Imbert, 25.

and carriage for their transportation needs. Following World War II, the production and purchasing of the automobile increased dramatically. This transformation of America to an automobile-oriented society greatly affected the ways in which Americans lived, where they lived, where they worked, how their homes were designed and how the landscape was altered. In Georgia, great areas of pasturelands and woodlands were taken over by road and highway construction in the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's. New road construction, parking lots, and buildings such as restaurants, grocery stores and shopping malls that catered to the new automobile society, forever changed the Atlanta landscape.

In terms of residential landscapes, the mass-produced suburbs catered to the automobile owner. Neighborhood streets, whether curvilinear or irregular, are imposed on the land. Lots range in size but are regularly shaped. Existing natural characteristics of the site are not retained. There is a uniform setback of houses and front yards are typically small. The driveways are usually located at the front of the house tend to be straight and prominent on the lot. In contrast, in the residential landscapes influenced by modern landscape architecture, the driveways are not prominent but are often curved and integrated among a larger lawn, groupings of trees and other plantings on the lot, making their appearance less visible.



Figure 108: Standard Post-World War II Residential Landscape, 3591 Taft Street, Joyland, Atlanta, Georgia



Figure 109: “Modern Influenced” Residential Landscape, Ranch House located in North Buckhead Area

Regardless of the location or style of the driveway, its primary purpose is to provide convenience to the homeowner and his or her automobile. Thus, many houses built following the World War II have carports or garages to accommodate the automobile.

The Importance of the Lawn in Post-World War II America



Figure 110: 1954 Homko Remote Lawn Mower Advertisement

In early 20th Century landscaped suburbs, the lawn functioned as a way to create a residential park-like setting, visually linking individual lots throughout the entire neighborhood. The lawn was one of many important factors in early 20th Century residential landscapes. Following World War II, Americans experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity. As part of the American dream of homeownership following the war, the lawn and its maintenance became a central focus in residential landscapes. As suburban developments spread throughout the United States and the American economy boomed, the demand for lawn mowers, grass seed and fertilizer increased dramatically and to a wider audience of homeowners. Whether a small lawn in front of a Minimal Traditional home or a larger lawn layered with trees, ground covers and flowers, in front of a high-style house, the lawn is a central component of the post-World War II residential landscape.

The importance of the lawn in the “America psyche” in the late 1940’s, 1950’s and 1960’s is seen in popular magazines of the time, such as *House & Garden*. The issues are filled with advertisements for lawn mowers, grass seed, and fertilizers and pesticides for lawn maintenance and improvement. There are also countless articles on how to keep a well-maintained lawn and add value to your property.



Figure 111: 1957 Lawn-Boy Advertisement

In the post-World War II residential landscape, the front lawn serves as a public space. The landscaping of the front lawn contributes to the overall uniform and “cookie cutter” appearance of a neighborhood. The backyard provides a private space for families for recreational or leisure pursuits. The backyard often includes a patio or deck, a fence or hedge for privacy, and a service area for the maintenance of the yard. Backyards can also contain a wide-variety of gardens depending on the homeowner’s interest and economic ability to plant and

maintain a garden. From a simple backyard with a patio and a handful of plantings to a designed backyard with rock gardens, winding paths, and terraces, the backyard serves as a private space for the family.

Atlanta Residential Landscapes, 1944 to 1965

The majority of homes and residential landscapes constructed in post World War II Atlanta are part of a simple, suburban development pattern. As discussed previously, most landscapes are the standard residential landscape containing a small front lawn with a driveway and a larger backyard with few plantings and a patio space. These landscapes can be part of the curvilinear, irregular, or grid-patterned neighborhood streets. “Suburban” neighborhoods were constructed in various areas in the city of Atlanta, including sections of Lakewood Heights, Venetian Hills, Joyland, the Cascade Road area, Collier Heights, East Lake, Ormewood Park, Kirkwood, Oakland City, and other areas. Typically, these neighborhoods contain standard residential landscapes. Figures 112 and 113 illustrate two examples:



Figure 112: Standard residential landscape at 1642 Oak Knoll Circle, Lakewood Heights, Atlanta, Georgia



Figure 113: 1950 House with standard residential landscape in Westmont Estate, SW, Atlanta, Georgia

Areas near Cascade Road in southwest Atlanta as well as areas in north, northwest and northeast Atlanta have a more “high style” version of the standard residential landscape as well as examples of modern residential landscapes. These landscapes often have groupings of pine trees in a larger front lawn with several levels of foundation plantings close to the house. The influence of modernists, such as Thomas Church, can also be seen in residential landscapes in these areas.



Figure 114: High-Style Residential Landscape in Sherwood Forest, North of Ansley Park, Atlanta, Georgia



Figure 115: High-style Residential Landscape in Sherwood Forest, North of Ansley Park, Atlanta, Georgia

Ed Daugherty, Atlanta landscape architect, has designed landscapes for both traditional and modern homes in the Atlanta area since the 1950's. Modern homes are typically sited to fit into the natural landscape with the gardens spaces integrated as part of the living spaces of the home. One example of Daugherty's work is the Alexander House on Mount Paran Road. In the circular house plan, the center is utilized as a garden space adding an outdoor living dimension to the home.



Figure 116: Alexander House and Landscape, Mount Paran Road, Atlanta, Georgia⁷⁵

The post World War II suburban landscape is a significant part of American history in the 20th Century. Preserving various aspects of this past, including historic residential landscapes from the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's, is crucial to our interpretation of history. Whether high-style landscapes influenced by modernists or the common landscape of a typical post World War II neighborhood, preservationists must strive to preserve this part of our recent past.

⁷⁵ Edward Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh. *The South Builds: New Architecture in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960).

PART FIVE: ARCHAEOLOGY

More so perhaps than architectural resources, the archaeology of the recent past is in desperate need of clarification and context. Since the end of World War II, dramatic changes in American life have had an equally dramatic impact on the archaeological record of the time. In *Georgia Living Places*, the Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division was able to place Georgia's residential historical archaeology in context by documentary research of previously recorded sites. A similar attempt to update *GLP* for those properties that have gained significance since the first *GLP* project, or will within the coming years, was unable to find any such resources. That is to say, postwar residential sites are either not being evaluated for archaeology or are not yielding archaeological information that can be recorded as sites. The discussion provided in this chapter presents the results of a search for recent sites, some suggestions for how this might be rectified, and suggested questions to guide future research.

Why Study the Archaeology of the Recent Past?

National Register of Historic Places Criteria:

The first question that might be asked is why should we even discuss archaeology of the recent past? One reason are the National Register of Historical Places criteria themselves, which establish that any resource older than fifty years is potentially eligible. Therefore, compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act requires that Federal Agencies, in consultation with the Advisory Council and State Historic Preservation Offices, determine eligibility for these properties when they are affected by federal undertakings. This includes archaeology, so these sites (if they are present) are going to have to be evaluated, regardless of whether there are other reasons for doing so.

Research:

There might well be good reasons to study the archaeology of the recent past beyond mere regulations. Indeed, archaeology of the recent past may help archaeologists answer questions of historical, archaeological, and anthropological importance. An example would be the study of urbanization. Roy Dickens (1983) has suggested that the city be viewed as an archaeological site and that study of the growth and development of urban areas can provide important insights about how people shape their environment that may be cross applicable⁷⁶. The 20th Century has been the most urbanized century in human history, and getting more so all the time. If urban archaeology has something to offer to our understanding of history, than surely late 20th Century sites contribute to this picture.

Archaeologists have long been interested in how humans have interacted with their environment throughout history and prehistory. In almost all studies of prehistoric and early historic sites, archaeologists have concerned themselves largely with limits placed on humans by the environment. In the modern period, however, the opposite is the case. Increasingly the environment is limited as human activity holds greater and greater sway over ecological processes. This offers the researcher of earlier periods two equally compelling uses for data from modern sites. One is to better understand those constraints in earlier times by comparing them to the apparent or near lack of constraints in the modern period. Another is to observe patterns that may indeed, turn up at earlier sites and have gone unnoticed. Many past civilizations have seen their undoing in over-exploitation of the natural environment. Studies of the current intense use during the modern period could inform the study of those periods and in turn, give us a better idea of how we might avoid some of the mistakes of the past.

⁷⁶ Dickens, Roy S. and Timothy J. Crimmins. *Environmental-Impact Archaeology in the Urban Setting: A View from Atlanta*. New York: Academic Press, 1982

Another area in which the study of modern sites, especially those in an urban setting, can contribute to the study of broader history and prehistory is in the relationship of between inter-site and intra-site patterns. Archaeologists use patterns to study the past. Intra-site patterns tell us something about life on the micro level. The pattern of hearth, structure, refuse disposal at a single prehistoric household can contribute to the study of prehistory or the layout of work areas and living spaces at a plantation site to history. On the macro level, archaeologists look at how individual sites relate one to another to create regional patterns. Taking again the idea of the modern city as a site⁷⁷, the patterns by which cities develop internally and in relation to each other can improve our understanding of the patterns shaping modern life⁷⁸.

Finally, historical archaeology has long considered itself a laboratory in which to test archaeological theories. Because data from historical sites can be compared to the documentary evidence, it is uniquely positioned to test ideas about sites where such documentary evidence might not exist. This potential only increases the closer we get to the present. As the documentary evidence becomes increasingly thorough, the utility of comparing that documentation to what we see on the ground also increases.

What Has Been Done?

The utility of the archaeological study of the recent past aside, very little work has been done on the subject. A preliminary perusal of archaeological data on recent sites was performed in preparation for this chapter. The search resulted in no significant data on archaeology of the recent past in Georgia whatsoever. In fact, using the National Park Service's National

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ Hardesty, Donald. Historical Archaeology in the Next Millennium: A Forum in Historical Archaeology, 1999.

Archeological Database (NADB), a nationwide search for reports on 20th Century sites yielded only four such documents from the early and mid-20th Century and none on the late 20th Century. When focusing on the Southeast, no reports are listed in the database for 20th Century sites, early or late. To put this dearth of reports in perspective, a similar NADB search for reports on Paleo-Indian sites yielded 1,422. The Paleo-Indian is generally regarded as the oldest cultural period in the New World. It is neither well understood nor are the sites well preserved (due to their age) except under very exceptional circumstances. Yet, these sites outnumber 20th Century sites 474 to one.

There are several possible reasons for this dearth of information. The first is researcher bias or, what might be dubbed the “paleo-philia” of the archaeological community. Archaeologists are naturally inclined, not to mention trained, to study the very old. It is almost an unspoken maxim among archaeologists that the older your subject appears to be, the better. All human activity leaves an archaeological signature behind however and we should not shy away from sites from the recent past simply because they are not yet old enough to warrant study. At a minimum, we should focus on the location and preservation of these sites for future research.

While the evolution of cultural resource management (CRM) to deal with the requirements of historic preservation laws have created the need for study of recent sites it has also created an atmosphere where those sites will get only cursory attention. The tendency of CRM is to favor intra-site analysis at the expense of inter-site study. The National Register criteria judge properties on a site-by-site basis. There are numerous processes that would cause modern period archaeological sites to be ephemeral at best (these are discussed briefly below). However, when taken in relation to each other they may yield very interesting information

significant to the study of recent history. Since most archaeological study in the United States is increasingly CRM-driven, archaeologists may need to change their evaluative framework to include how a site fits into the broader patterns of modern urban evolution and less about the site in isolation as is usually done currently.

Finally, the very patterns of the modern period that we have argued here are amenable to archaeological study, work against the formation of a rich archaeological record. At least two, there are probably more, spring to mind. One of the most defining characteristics of the modern period, discussed above, is increasing urbanization. This intense urbanization has the potential to wipe the archaeological record clean with successive urban development. Another ubiquitous factor of modern life is the spread of centralized trash collection. The study of other peoples trash, what, how, and where people dispose of their material goods is what has allowed archaeology to contribute so much to the knowledge of the human past, from late nineteenth-century industrial sites to the first settlements on this continent almost 12,000 years ago. Modern period residential sites will undoubtedly be harder to study and may not even exist by traditional archaeological definitions. They will certainly be much more ephemeral but they may yet be very important. The truth is, we don't know how useful they might be.

To avoid the destruction of this data before its utility has been sufficiently understood we have suggested research and preservation goals for modern period archaeological sites in Georgia. These suggestions follow in the recommendations chapter of the next section.

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND NATIONAL REGISTER OF
HISTORIC PLACES**

Recommendations

- ?? Further architectural and landscape design study of the Post-World War II neighborhoods and a more extensive physical survey of all neighborhoods within the city of Atlanta with a possible comparison of outlying neighborhoods such as City of Decatur, East Point and College Park, Georgia.

- ?? Consultation of World War II era Interior Designer for more development of Southern impacted interiors of the Post-World War II period.

- ?? Development of a Post-World War II image file to bank photos of examples of 1945-1960 housing and residential landscapes in Atlanta and the retention of those images at GSU Special Collections Department.

- ?? Utilization of the National Register of Historic Places section of this document and study of National Register implications for neighborhoods in the City of Atlanta as nominated districts.

- ?? Interviewing landscape architects who designed in the Post-World War II era, for example, Ed Daughtery.

?? The following outlines goals and recommendations for archaeological properties:

- ✍✍ Research goals
- ✍✍ Settlement patterns
- ✍✍ Economic development
- ✍✍ Social Organization
- ✍✍ Transportation

?? Preservation goals in priority order

- ✍✍ Locate and evaluate previously unrecorded Modern Period properties
- ✍✍ Acquire significant Modern Period sites through the state's land acquisition programs
- ✍✍ Interpret Modern Period sites statewide for public appreciation and education.
- ✍✍ Encourage and financially support local government in preservation and acquisition of sites.
- ✍✍ Nominate Modern Period sites statewide the NRHP.

?? Further research of Atlanta builders/developers, Atlanta building practices, and builder-architect collaborations.

National Register of Historic Places

When preparing a nomination for the National Register of Historic Places it is important to be aware of the criteria for evaluation and how these apply to an entire group of postwar houses that could be nominated as a National Historic District. Within the example of Atlanta houses, some neighborhoods may contain houses that the years of construction may lap between five and eight years. This may involve additional research to establish if the area is eligible as a district or only individual houses. The following information should assist those interested in nominating properties that might extend beyond the fifty year limit criteria. While the physical evidence of the recent past of American History is important, the criteria do need to set certain standards to honestly examine importance for evaluation of these particular recently built houses.

The National Register of Historic Places calls for certain criteria to be met when nominating a historic place to the National Register. The following are the National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation:

“The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A.** That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B.** That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C.** That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D.** That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.”

Criteria Considerations:

“Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- a.** A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- b.** A building or structure removed from its original location but which is primarily significant for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- c.** A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or
- d.** A cemetery which derives its primary importance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
- e.** A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- f.** A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
- g.** A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

“There are several specific issues relating to time that should be addressed in evaluating a less than 50-year-old property. The 50-year period is an arbitrary span of time, designed as a filter to ensure that enough time has passed to evaluate the property in a historic context. However, it was not designed to be mechanically applied on a year-by-year basis. Generally, our understanding of history does not advance a year at a time, but rather in periods of time, which can logically be examined together. For example, events that relate to the Cold War can best be evaluated in relation to other events or properties from the same period.”

Over the past ten years many interested parties at the local, state and national level within the field of Historic Preservation have begun to look at ways of including particular properties that barely, or do not quite meet the 50 year rule of the National Register. The writings of Dr.

W.Ray Luce and Marcella Sherfy have been important in this understanding of how to make appropriate decisions, especially when related to National Register Historic Districts. They write the following:

“Some examples and some historic districts represent planned communities whose plan, layout of the streets and lots, and original construction of homes all began more than 50 years ago. Frequently, construction of buildings continued into the less-than-50-year period, with the later resources resulting from identical historical patterns as the earlier buildings and representing a continuation of the planned community design. In instances where these later buildings make up only a small part of the district, and reflect the architectural and historic significance of the district, they can be considered integral parts of the district (and contributing resources) without showing exceptional importance of either the district or the less-than-50-year-old buildings. While some districts have a unified historic and/or architectural development, it is important to recognize that integral does not mean that a district must have homogeneous resources or significance. Districts can also include diverse resources that represent the area's development over time. A commercial or residential area, for example, may form a unified whole, but have resources built in a variety of styles over a long period of time. In such a context, a post-World War II movie theater or recreation facility may have increased significance because these are important significance of the resource. A second consideration regarding time is that the appropriate date from which to evaluate a property for exceptional significance is not always the date of construction, but rather, the point at which the property achieved significance.”

Georgia is not the only state making decisions about postwar housing and the 50-year rule of the National Register. All over the country State Historic Preservation Offices are struggling to deal with these relatively new potential neighborhoods that boast interesting building, as well as social and architectural implications for their cities and suburbs. Within the next five to ten years the childhood homes of the baby boomer generation will come into maturity and preservationists, as well as historians, will begin the task of defining exactly what makes each particular house significant and how that house encourages a architecturally or historically significant district.

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APPENDIX