

### III. Methodology

MdM project manager and architectural historian Jennifer F. Martin and architectural historian Cynthia de Miranda, who meet the Secretary of the Interior’s qualifications for architectural history (36 CFR Part 61), conducted the fieldwork and research, analyzed the resource, and drafted this report from September to October 2025. As part of this effort, MdM conducted research at the North Carolina Collection at Durham County Public Library. They completed keyword searches of digitized issues of Durham-based newspapers at [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) and [www.digitalnc.org](http://www.digitalnc.org). They consulted Durham County deeds and plats online, GIS data from Durham County’s land records website, and reviewed survey files at the NC Historic Preservation Office (NCHPO). They consulted nominations for other suburban residential districts in Durham in evaluating comparable properties in Durham. All photos are by the authors unless otherwise noted.

Ms. Martin and Ms. de Miranda prepared this report pursuant to the above-referenced laws, regulations, and guidelines. The report is on file at NCDOT and is available for review by the general public.



North Roxboro Street in Northgate Historic District, view to the north

#### IV. Property Description and Evaluation

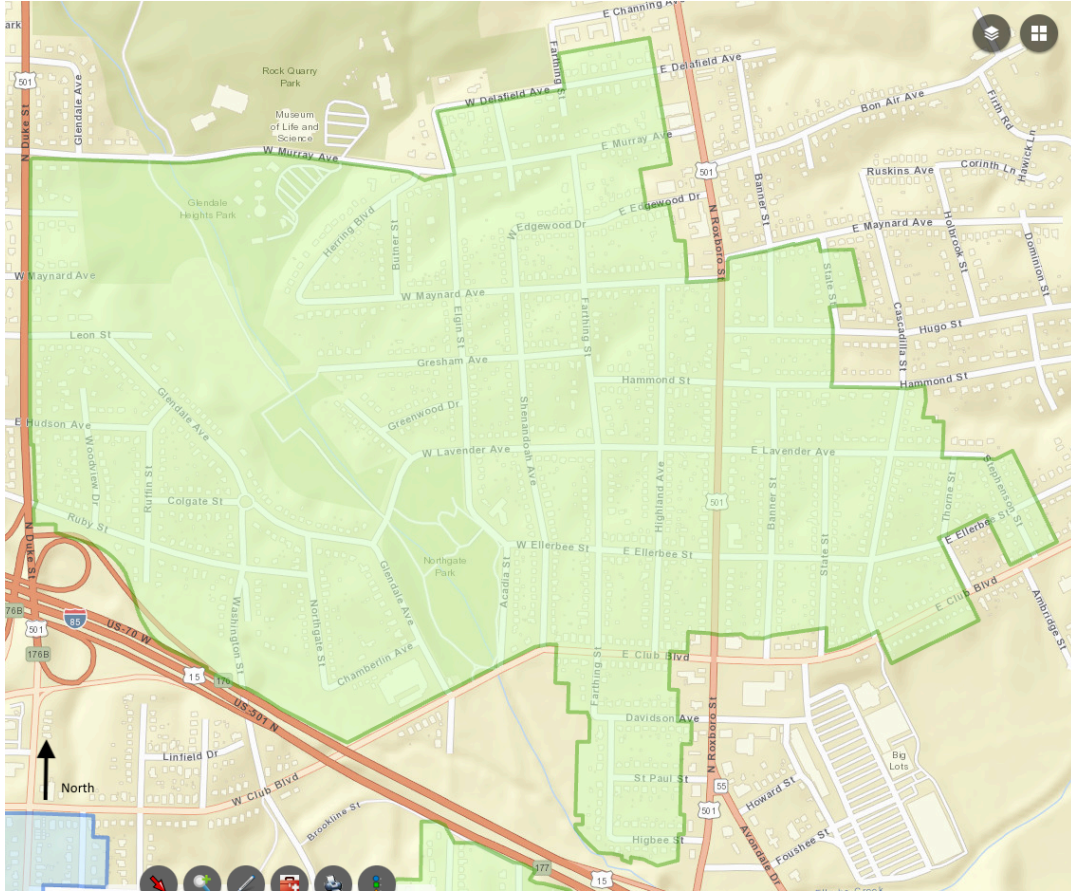
Resource Name	Northgate Park Historic District
HPO Survey Site Number	DH3509
Location	Roughly bounded by Murray Avenue, Stephenson Street, East Club Boulevard, and US 501 Business (North Duke Street), Durham, Durham County
Construction Date	1912 to 1970
Recommendation	Eligible under Criteria A and C



2301 and 2303 Glendale Avenue, view to the SW



2107 and 2109 Woodview Drive, view to the W



Study Listed Northgate Park Historic District (DH3509, Study List 2015), Durham, created from HPOWeb

## Setting

Northgate Park Historic District lies about two miles north of downtown Durham in Durham County, North Carolina. Interstate 85, completed in 1972, extends roughly east to west just to the south. While the district is an urban area surrounded on three sides by bustling thoroughfares, a large, centrally located public park fosters community connection and contributes to the district's livability. The Museum of Life and Science is just to the north, while residential areas mixed with commercial development are to the east and west. Historic residential neighborhoods located on the edge of the center city are on the south side of Interstate 85.

## Description

Northgate Park Historic District is an approximately 715-acre, mostly residential neighborhood with buildings, structures, and sites dating primarily from the 1920s to 1970. While domestic architectural styles and forms dominate, non-residential properties include civic buildings, churches, and a park.

Numerous subdivisions platted by various individuals and developers from 1924 to 1952 make up the majority of Northgate Park Historic District. Most of the district follows a grid plan except around Northgate Park, an expansive greenspace extending roughly north to south near the center of the west side of the district. Around the park, especially on the west side, some streets become more meandering to conform with the contours of the park's boundaries and to reflect principles of landscape design in the period after World War II.



Glendale Avenue, view to the NW

Two major historic arteries traverse the district. Two-lane East Club Boulevard extends east to west and forms part of the district's southern border while four-lane North Roxboro Street, a bustling commercial artery, runs north-south as it provides a link between downtown Durham and suburban north Durham. Most of the district lies to the west of North Roxboro Street with less than one-third situated to the east. The east edge of North Duke Street, another four-lane, north-south route, albeit with no commercial development adjacent to the district, forms the west boundary.

The district contains houses of overall simplistic form and modest scale typical of suburbs developed primarily after World War I to around 1960. Most are one story and sheathed in synthetic siding that covers original historic wood or in brick veneer. The few and relatively scattered pre-Great Depression dwellings display variety in their massing and stylistic elements while houses built from around 1940 to 1960 express a uniformity in appearance and configuration. The wide range of architecture, however, is made cohesive by a uniformity of setback, scale, and parcel size and original granite curbing throughout most of the district.

The earliest dwellings stand in the northern part of the district and include the only Queen Anne-style house. Located at 101 West Delafield Avenue, the 1912, one-story

weatherboard house with a pyramidal roof and wraparound porch displays intersecting front-gabled wings on its side elevations.



Queen Anne-style house built in 1912 at 101 West Delafield Avenue

A few bungalows and Craftsman-style houses appear in the northern part of the district where building occurred prior to the suburban development that characterized the area beginning around 1940. The highly intact, one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled, stucco over masonry bungalow at 206 East Hammond Street dates to 1928. Known as the Marshall-Dickson House, it features a wraparound and partially inset front porch and a bracketed front dormer.<sup>1</sup>



Marshall-Dickson House at 206 East Hammond Street, built 1928

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<sup>1</sup> Marshall-Dickson House, Open Durham website, [opendurham.org](http://opendurham.org), accessed September 30, 2025.

Battered wood posts on brick plinths support a substantial front gable with knee braces along the eaves of the bungalow at 106 West Delafield Avenue. Built in the mid-1920s, the house retains four-over-one windows and a rear side-gabled wing. A group of five Craftsman-style houses of various forms stand near the junction of Farthing Street and Gresham Avenue. The one-story, side- and clipped-gable weatherboard and wood shingled houses date from the mid-1920s to early 1930s.



1920s bungalow at 106 West Delafield Avenue



Craftsman style house at 2705 Farthing Street



Craftsman bungalow at 111 Ellerbee Street

Period cottages, modest-sized English Tudor Revival dwellings mostly built in the 1940s, stand along North Roxboro Street and on nearby cross streets. Typically, side-gabled or with a clipped side gable roof, these predominantly brick dwellings include a prominent front facing gable and a façade or gable end chimney. Period cottages built after the Great Depression display more restrained elements than Tudor houses from the 1920s, which often included half-timbering and elaborate chimneys.



Circa 1940 Martha and Harrell Mangum House is a brick Period cottage at 2725 North Roxboro Street that includes a swooping roof over the entrance bay



Two prominent front facing gables dominate the façade of the Period Cottage from 1945 at 2707 North Roxboro Street

By far, the most common house form in the district is the Minimal Traditional, sometimes called the FHA house because its compact size, simple form, and limited range of materials met the standards for construction set by the federal agency. Built primarily in the 1940s both during the second world war and after, Minimal Traditional houses in the Northgate Park Historic District have mostly low to intermediate side gable roofs and reserved to no architectural adornment. Front-facing, off-center wings sometimes break the monotony of the strict rectangular footprint. Tudor or Colonial Revival elements embellish a handful of the otherwise austere houses. Aluminum or vinyl siding, or brick veneer sheathe their exteriors.



Brick Minimal Traditional, early 1940s, at 314 Greenwood Drive



Minimal Traditional with Colonial Revival influence at 2117 Ruffin Street



Minimal Traditional with original wood siding, 2513 Banner Street



Minimal Traditional with Tudor Revival front gable and façade chimney at 2609 Highland Avenue



Artist Gene Dillard's Minimal Traditional Mosaic House at 2706 Elgin Street, which is covered in pieces of broken mirrors has received widespread acclaim for his creative reuse of discarded glass

Ranch houses appeared in substantial numbers in the district in the early 1950s, especially in the northwest section where the Glendale Heights subdivision developed from the late 1940s until around 1960. The earliest Ranch houses appear alongside Minimal Traditional dwellings. Sheathed in brick veneer, these Minimal Ranches, as they are sometimes called, have hipped or side-gable roofs and front doors sheltered by the roof overhang. Into the late 1950s, a few more elongated Ranch houses went up in the Glendale Heights.



Ranch house at 1306 Gresham Avenue



Ranch house at 804 Ruby Street



Ranch house at 2601 Farthing Street

Durham native Donald Reed Chandler designed a one-story, low-slung modernist house at 312 West Delafield Avenue while still a student at the North Carolina State University School of Design. Built in 1958, it includes two window walls intersecting below an upward sloping roof with wide overhangs. In 1960, his last year of architecture school, Chandler designed, and with the help of his father, carpenter Daniel Terry Chandler, built a home for his parents at 2500 Glendale Avenue. The vertical-wood house with large expanses of glass in its upper side gable ends floats on a concrete block raised foundation. The rear of the unpretentious dwelling overlooks the park.<sup>2</sup>



Modernist house designed by Donald Reed Chandler at 312 West Delafield Avenue

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<sup>2</sup> "Donald Reed Chandler (1931-2019)," NC Modernist website.

Two brick churches occupy the district. The original 1955 portion of Parkview Baptist Church at 2500 Acadia Street is a two-story, gable-front building with a Colonial Revival style pedimented portico framing its entrance. The 1970 brick sanctuary designed by architects Haskins and Rice of Raleigh complements the original building in its front gable form but reflects the influence of modernism. Northgate Presbyterian Church built a Colonial Revival style brick church at 2504 North Roxboro Street in 1949. A monumental front-gabled portico spans the façade. The congregation built a two-story, brick Colonial Revival education wing in 1963.



The 1955 fellowship building at Parkview Baptist Church dates to 1955. The sanctuary to the right was added in 1970

Northgate Park, established by two major donations of land to the city in 1938 and 1940, is a linear greenspace stretching from Club Boulevard northwest through the center of the neighborhood. A paved greenway follows along the west side of Ellerbee Creek which flows from the northwest to southeast through the length of the park. Paired stone pillars placed in 1940 mark the entrances on the south, west, north, and east. The stone foundation and chimneys, all that remain of the 1946 children's museum, are on the northwest side of West Lavender Avenue, the only neighborhood street to cross the park from east to west. Two small picnic shelters stand separately but on the east side of Ellerbee Creek. One shelter has a large stone fireplace and stone foundation with wood supports while a circa 1965 concrete block shelter includes a concrete block fireplace.



1940 entrance gate to Northgate Park on the north side of Club Boulevard



Greenway through Northgate Park, view to the south from West Lavender Avenue



Circa 1960 concrete block picnic shelter in Northgate Park



Stone pillars on the south side of Lavender Avenue provide entrance to the park



Concrete bridge carries West Lavender Avenue over Ellerbee Creek in Northgate Park



Stone culverts in the park carry the greenway over small streams

## Historical Background

The earliest construction in Northgate Park Historic District took place in the 1910s in the northeast corner in the unincorporated community of Bragtown. While some settlement occurred in the late eighteenth century, Bragtown post office was established in 1880. The community, separated from central Durham by Ellerbee Creek and the lowlands through which it flowed, retained its independence as a commercial, institutional, and residential village until it was annexed into the city limits in 1957.<sup>3</sup>

On the west side of Bragtown, the Belvindale subdivision developed primarily in the 1910s and 1920s. Capt. E. J. Parrish owned and platted the land centered on the east end of West Delafield and East Murray avenues and along North Roxboro Street, which formed the commercial center of Bragtown. In November 1913, just prior to an auction of fifty lots of Parrish land, a Durham newspaper declared, “a vast sum of money has been spent in the improvement of this property and it is in dandy condition for sale.”<sup>4</sup> One of the first dwellings built was a one-story, Queen Anne-style dwelling with a pyramidal roof and wraparound porch. Located at 101 West Delafield Avenue, it likely dates to 1912. In 1918,



The unincorporated community of Bragtown developed along both sides of North Roxboro Street starting in the late nineteenth century. Remnants of the commercial center of Bragtown remain along North Roxboro Street, view to the south

attorney Hugh Scarlett and his wife Margaret Foote Scarlett bought ten lots in Belvindale and built a spacious two-story, weatherboard farmhouse, which remains at 3023 Farthing Street.<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere in the subdivision, a fine collection of front-gabled and hipped-roof Craftsman bungalows were built in the 1920s and 1930s on the north side of West Delafield Avenue between Farthing Street and North Roxboro Street. Many came with small front-gabled garages to house increasingly popular and widely available automobiles. In 1927,

L. D. Rogers sold a lot in Belvindale to the American Telegraph and Telephone Company where, in 1928, it built a brick telephone switching station that stands on the corner of North Roxboro Street and East Murray Avenue, just outside the boundary.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> “City Plans Welcome,” *Durham Sun* (Durham, North Carolina), December 31, 1957, 1.

<sup>4</sup> “Fifty Lots at Auction,” *Herald-Sun* (Durham, North Carolina), November 9, 1913, 7.

<sup>5</sup> Scarlett House, Open Durham website, [opendurham.org](http://opendurham.org), accessed October 1, 2025.

<sup>6</sup> “Nine Realty Transfers Recorded on Saturday,” *Herald-Sun*, June 19, 1927, 2.

Construction in the 1920s and 1930s was sporadic in the area west of North Roxboro Street and included Craftsman bungalows and a two-story, Colonial Revival-style brick dwelling at 2615 Highland Avenue. John L. Sally Sr., a well-known contractor and builder in Durham from 1914 to 1942, constructed a group of several Craftsman style bungalows and foursquare houses in the early to mid-1920s on land he subdivided surrounding the junction of North Roxboro Street and East Ellerbee Street.<sup>7</sup>



The 1920s Colonial Revival-style house at 2615 Highland Avenue is one of the earliest dwellings in the northeast part of the district

Over the next several decades, the district developed predominantly according to plats approved after the 1926 creation of zoning codes and subdivision regulations in Durham, policies meant to address the random development that occurred in previous decades.<sup>8</sup> Under these codes, the city's zoning board worked with developers in planning subdivisions. It would not be until January 1945 that the City of Durham got its first full time planning director along with a planning staff, a timely move as the city worked to regulate construction and development amidst the post-war building boom.<sup>9</sup>

In May 1938, Durham Realty and Insurance Company held a contest to name its newly platted development just north of the city and southwest of Bragtown. Company president Finley T. White presented W. E. Stone of 812 West Main Street with a check for fifteen dollars, a reward for

submitting the name, "Northgate." The real estate company received about 2,000 entries. While announcing Stone's winning entry, Finley T. White remarked, "the name Northgate will be used by the Durham Realty and Insurance Company to designate its property on Highland Avenue, Lavender Street, Hammond Street, and North Roxboro Street, where it is building low-cost, low-price, five and six-room homes." White also announced that another developer, O. B. Wagoner, would use "Northgate" for his new development on the north side of Club Boulevard and adjoining White's nascent neighborhood. Reportedly, White and Wagoner liked the name because their

<sup>7</sup> "J. L. Sally Sr. to be Buried Here Friday," *Durham Sun*, August 28, 1947, 1.

<sup>8</sup> "City Passes Ordinance to Regulate Districts at Last Night's Meeting," *Herald-Sun*, May 19, 1926, 13.

<sup>9</sup> "City Approves Ward Changes; Names Dieter," *Durham Sun*, January 3, 1945, 6.

property stood at the northern gateway to the city. According to the *Durham Herald-Sun*, three local businessmen who judged the contest “chose the name because it was attractive, significant of the location, short, and easy to remember.”<sup>10</sup> While some houses were built in the late 1930s, most houses in the original Northgate subdivision were built in the 1940s and early 1950s.

In an area to the east of their Northgate subdivision and around the time that its Northgate subdivision was formed, Durham Realty and Insurance Company aggressively marketed additional houses they had built. One advertisement from September 11, 1938, in the *Herald-Sun* featured “this cozy little home for sale...201 Ellerbee Street.” Described as occupying a large, level lot, the five-room brick house included hardwood floors, ample closets, and “things that make a house a home.”

In 1938, Ruby and J. F. Barfield and O.B. Wagoner donated sixteen acres to the City of Durham to create what is now known as Northgate Park.<sup>11</sup> In addition to owning J. F. Barfield Auction Service, Barfield, who referred to himself as the “world’s original singing auctioneer,” bought and sold real estate throughout the city.<sup>12</sup> Oscar Bernice (O. B.) Wagoner was a tobacconist, but also instrumental in the early residential development of Northgate and Westover, a community north of Watts Hospital.<sup>13</sup> Barfield and Wagoner were partners in Banner Planters Tobacco Warehouse.<sup>14</sup>



1938 advertisement for 201 Ellerbee Street

The park land, which was low, relatively flat, and prone to flooding from Ellerbee Creek, proved a poor location for houses and other buildings but a suitable place for recreational activities. A highly popular bird sanctuary under the direction of Arthur C. Lucas opened in the park.<sup>15</sup> Works Progress Administration (WPA) labor, which also graded and landscaped the entire park, built bird houses and feeding stations.<sup>16</sup> In 1940, the Barfields and Wagoner donated additional land for expansion of the greenspace. C. R. Wood, Director

<sup>10</sup> “Northgate’ Picked as Name of New Subdivision Project,” *Herald-Sun*, May 8, 1938, 12.

<sup>11</sup> “Durham Bird Sanctuary,” *Durham Sun*, October 18, 1940, 21.

<sup>12</sup> Advertisement, *Herald-Sun*, June 4, 1944, 28.

<sup>13</sup> “O. B. Wagoner Dies at Home,” *Durham Sun*, September 18, 1943, 1.

<sup>14</sup> Advertisement, *Herald-Sun*, October 20, 1942, 10.

<sup>15</sup> “Seven Acres of Land to be Developed Here,” *Herald-Sun*, October 24, 1940, 8; “Director of Bird Refuge Returns,” *Herald-Sun*, July 20, 1940, 12.

<sup>16</sup> “Present WPA Grant for Park Will Run About Month More,” *Herald-Sun*, December 13, 1938, 14; “Recreation Events Draw Big Crowds,” *Herald-Sun*, November 17, 1938, 18.

of the City Recreation Department, announced the clearing of thirty acres to expand the park as well as plans for a nature museum at the location of the bird sanctuary.<sup>17</sup>

An especially active period of residential construction occurred in the neighborhood in the early 1940s beginning with the announcement in August 1941 of plans by the United States War Department to build a massive triangular division camp in northern Durham County. That installation, named Camp Butner in February 1941 for World War I Major General Henry Wolfe Butner, would eventually spread over 40,000 acres in Granville, Person, and Durham counties. The camp trained infantry, artillery, and engineering troops for service during World War II. Camp Butner opened on August 4, 1942.<sup>18</sup>

Durham builders, developers, and real estate speculators responded to the news of Camp Butner by planning and building housing developments to accommodate the thousands of workers needed to transform former tobacco farms into a major military training facility and to house the workers necessary to operate it.<sup>19</sup> While a handful of multi-family dwellings were constructed, including a long, side-gabled triplex at the north end of aptly named Butner Street, most dwellings were single family.

In preparation for the Fort Butner project, Durham based Thrift Home Builders built or oversaw the construction of numerous Minimal Traditional homes, what the company called “thrift homes,” in the district and across Durham in the early 1940s. Thrift Home Builders produced house plans with uniform outlays, which were built by local subcontractors including Young Roofing, Paschall Brothers Plumbers, and Borden Brick and Tile Company.<sup>20</sup> In 1940, the company acquired land on the south side of East Maynard Avenue just west of Roxboro Street and built eleven uniform, one-story, side-gabled Minimal Traditional Houses.<sup>21</sup> All but the house that stood at 116 East Maynard Avenue remain.



114 East Maynard Avenue built by Thrift Home Builders in 1940, photo from Durham GIS

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<sup>17</sup> “Tennis Court Plans Are Approved by the WPA,” *Durham Sun*, November 7, 1940, 13.

<sup>18</sup> “New Army Camp at Durham Named for Gen. Butner,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 18, 1942, 6; “Formal Opening Held at Camp Butner,” *News and Observer*, August 5, 1942, 1.

<sup>19</sup> “Camp Butner is Scene of Stirring Activity as Work Shows Progress,” *Herald-Sun*, April 26, 1942, 13.

<sup>20</sup> “Thrift Home Builders Have Model Home Open for Public Inspection,” *Herald-Sun*, June 15, 1941, 6.

<sup>21</sup> Building permits reported in the *Herald-Sun*, April 1940.

In the spring of 1942, Thrift Home Builders completed twenty-four “strictly modern” five-room homes in the Edgewood subdivision being developed near the newly established Northgate Park. Like the company’s other dwellings, the compact one-story, side-gabled Minimal Traditional houses epitomize the small house concept promoted by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Thrift Home Builders arranged financing, including garnering FHA insurance and funding from local banks.<sup>22</sup> Elsewhere in Northgate Park Historic District, Thrift Home Builders constructed at least eleven additional small houses on Farthing Street and Shenandoah and Highland Avenues.<sup>23</sup>



A home in the Edgewood subdivision of Northgate Park Historic District built by Thrift Home Builders, *Herald-Sun*, June 21, 1941

In April 1942, the Durham *Herald-Sun* reported that Carolina Homes Inc. had platted a subdivision on the east side of Roxboro Street to create Colonial Village, “where about one hundred defense residences are to be constructed.” The houses “cost above average of current construction.”<sup>24</sup> Along Banner, State, and Cascadilla streets between Club Boulevard and Lavender Streets, Carolina Homes Inc. laid out nearly uniform parcels and built one-story, side-gabled, wood-sided Minimal Traditional dwellings. Throughout 1943, Durham Realty and Insurance Company, which marketed the neighborhood, routinely placed advertisements in Durham newspapers targeting military personnel with statements like “members of the military, here is the answer to your housing problem.” The

<sup>22</sup> “Thrift Home Builders Observe Second Anniversary This Week,” *Herald-Sun*, April 19, 1942, 7.

<sup>23</sup> “Seven Houses Will be Built,” *Durham Sun*, April 28, 1941, 9; “Still Issues Four Permits,” *Durham Sun*, May 6, 1940, 5.

<sup>24</sup> “Councilmen Appropriate Fund for Aiding Local Transients,” *Herald-Sun*, May 5, 1942, 5.

ads went on to describe Colonial Village houses as “five and six rooms with kitchen equipment furnished.”<sup>25</sup>



Plat for Colonial Village, April 1942, Plat Book 14, page 94



House at 2503 Banner Street was built in 1943 in Colonial Village

In the spring and summer of 1942, multiple newspaper advertisements for Player-Bethune Realty Company of Durham declared “we are building and have for sale to defense workers,

<sup>25</sup> Advertisement, *Herald-Sun*, June 11, 1943, 19.

modern, five-room homes,” in the Greenwood subdivision located along the parallel streets of Shenandoah Avenue and Elgin Street. The company assured a “small down payment” and “FHA terms” for the purchase of one of these one-story, side-gabled Minimal Traditional, mostly frame houses that stand in Northgate Park Historic District.<sup>26</sup>

Not all investors felt confident to carry on with construction as the conflict in Europe wore on. In February 1945, with the United States embroiled in World War II, developers T. J. Horton and R. R. Miller announced they bought land east of Roxboro Street to build an annex to Colonial Village. The men expressed trepidation about starting construction. According to Horton, “no construction will begin as long as hostilities continue in the European theater...it is quite possible the work will begin once the fall of Germany has been announced and restrictions on labor and materials are lifted.” He added that it was possible construction would not begin until the war ended.<sup>27</sup> After the war, Colonial Village would expand to the north and east, but Horton and Miller’s role in that development remains unknown.

As realtor T. J. Horton asserted, building material and construction labor during the war was funneled to the war effort. When the United States’ involvement in World War II ended

**Veterans**  
**White or Colored**  
**WE WILL BUILD YOU**  
**A HOME**  
On Your Personally  
Selected Lot With  
**No Down Payment**  
FHA and GI  
**COMBINATION LOAN**  
If Interested  
Call  
**Ed Bullock—Alvitt Loftis**  
**Southern Constr. &**  
**Mfg. Corp.**  
404 Snow Bldg. Phone R-5141

in September 1945, Durham and other cities found themselves with a housing shortage because relatively little building according during the conflict. In addition to returning veterans seeking shelter, Duke faculty members and employees found it difficult to secure adequate housing.

Builders and developers quickly responded by subdividing land on the edges of Durham to create neighborhoods containing the types of small houses that qualified buyers for financing through the FHA and GI Bill of Rights. To fill the housing needs, builder-developers created subdivisions of houses based largely on pre-war designs generated through the advent of the FHA in the 1930s. Marketing of many of these post-WWII homes went toward returning soldiers who could get GI bill housing loans at a low interest rate and with little or no money down.

Advertisements such as this one from the October 7, 1948 *Herald-Sun* frequently appeared in local newspapers after the war

the city.”<sup>28</sup> Construction boomed on the east and west sides of Roxboro Street in Northgate

One newspaper described building activity in 1946 as “residential dwellings mushrooming in every section of

<sup>26</sup> Advertisement, *Herald-Sun*, May 31, 1934, 31; Advertisement, *Herald-Sun*, June 7, 1942, 31.

<sup>27</sup> “Plans Remain in Formulative Stage for New Housing Development in North Roxboro Street Section,” *Herald-Sun*, February 7, 1945.

<sup>28</sup> “City in Midst of Largest Building Boom But Housing Conditions Remain Acute,” *Herald-Sun*, August 11, 1946, 25.

Park Historic District so that the 1940s and early 1950s represent the district's most active building period.

Subdivisions platted before the war, but where little or no construction occurred during the Great Depression, filled with small, unadorned dwellings. Throughout the mid to late 1940s, one-story, frame and brick veneered Minimal Traditional houses, most with side gable roofs, went up in a rapid pace on Acadia, Farthing, and Lavender streets and Shenandoah Avenue in section one of the Northgate subdivision platted in 1938 by Durham Realty and Insurance Company. Northgate subdivision sections two and three, platted in 1938 and 1939, and situated between Glendale Avenue and Washington Street on the west side of the park, filled with similar compact houses.

Other areas of Northgate Historic District developed in a similar manner to the Northgate subdivisions. In the mid to late 1940s, brick veneer and frame Minimal Traditional houses filled most of the Dillard subdivision's seventy-five parcels located on four streets on the south side of Club Boulevard just west of North Roxboro Street. In the early 1950s, a row of about seven side-gabled and hipped roof Ranch houses was constructed on the west side of the subdivision.

The building frenzy occurring in the neighborhood north of downtown after the war occurred during a period of great prosperity in Durham. The conflict had ended, a baby boom was underway, and government loans and financing helped make the American dream of homeownership possible. Advertisements in Durham newspapers for appliances, the latest automobiles, and brand-new modern homes belied the fact that the neighborhoods making up Northgate Park Historic District prohibited non-white home ownership or occupation. To achieve whites-only neighborhoods, subdivision developers in the first half of the twentieth century crafted restrictive covenants that were recorded in deed books spelling out overt racism and xenophobia in housing. The FHA bolstered and even promoted this activity by requiring appraisal standards based on racial exclusion in the subdivisions it insured.

Multiple examples of restrictive covenants exist for the subdivisions in Northgate Park Historic District, but the language is mostly consistent among the documents. Covenants from the 1940s for Colonial Homes, Greenwood, and Glendale Heights ban the occupation or use of any property by any race or nationality other than white or Caucasian. The only exception was "domestic servants of a different race or nationality employed by an owner or tenant."<sup>29</sup>

While the Supreme Court case *Shelley v. Kraemer* in 1948 ruled racially restrictive covenants violated the Fourteenth Amendment and were unenforceable, it failed to outlaw the covenants. As a result, social attitudes and real estate practices perpetuated segregation in housing. The Fair Housing Act of 1968 finally outlawed restrictive covenants

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<sup>29</sup> See Deed Book 143, Page 143, dated December 12, 1941; Deed Book 145, page 96, dated October 15, 1942; and Deed Book 160, page 442, dated May 15, 1946.

based on race but did not remove them from deeds. Even today, these clauses remain in historic deeds or as reference documents to deeds.

With new residents pouring into the northeast corner of Durham, Northgate Presbyterian Church organized in 1944. The congregation met in a house located on the parcel on Roxboro Street where they laid the cornerstone for a new sanctuary on October 31, 1948.<sup>30</sup> Construction of the commodious Colonial Revival-style brick building was completed in June 1949. The congregation used the house on the lot for Sunday school.<sup>31</sup>

In 1946, Draughon and Bishop Construction Company built eight Minimal Traditional brick veneer houses and eight wood-sided Minimal Traditional dwellings in the block bounded by Banner, Hugo, State and Hammond streets in the east part of Northgate Park Historic District.<sup>32</sup> The construction company widely advertised their “Dura-Built” homes, small dwellings eligible for FHA insurance. Jacob Bishop, company co-owner, reported that none of the sixteen five-room houses would be exactly alike and that only veterans would be eligible to purchase. With this buyer restriction, the construction company obtained low-cost building supplies through the Civilian Production Administration (CPA), which the federal government created in 1945 to certify that civilian goods, like building materials for veteran homes, remained affordable.<sup>33</sup>



**NEARLY COMPLETED HOUSES** in Bragtown, in the section of Hammond and Banner Streets, are part of a project of 16 residential dwellings built by Draughon and Bishop Construction Company. A permit for \$96,000 was issued for the construction April of this year.

Draughon and Bishop Construction built these houses in the northeast part of the district in the summer of 1946, *Herald-Sun*, August 11, 1946

A substantial subdivision developed in the northwest corner of Northgate Park Historic District beginning in the late 1940s. After his death in 1936, a portion of the former land of Ornie K. Ferrell was subdivided in 1940 with two plats for land along both sides of Glendale

<sup>30</sup> “Ephesus Church Will Be Occupied,” *Durham Sun*, October 30, 1948, 10.

<sup>31</sup> “New Northgate Presbyterian Church to be Occupied Sunday,” *Durham Sun*, June 23, 1949, 5.

<sup>32</sup> “City in Midst of Largest Building Boom but Housing Conditions Remain Acute,” *Herald-Sun*, August 11, 1946, 25.

<sup>33</sup> “Work Begins Next Week on 16 New Houses Here,” *Herald-Sun*, April 13, 1946, 12.

Avenue on the west side of the park. Prior to World War II, no construction occurred in newly created Glendale Heights. After the war, the city approved three revised plats. On March 19, 1946, the *Herald-Sun* reported development “will start soon.”

Piedmont Home and Construction Company began construction of the first phase in April 1946.<sup>34</sup> This initial development contained fifty parcels on Glendale Avenue and Colgate, Ruby, and Ruffin streets. One month later in May 1946 on Colgate Street, the company began building the first prefabricated houses approved by Durham building inspectors. The local newspaper described the new houses as prefabricated of plywood but, “finished in the usual way, with plastered walls, and the outside of brick veneer, asbestos shingles, or wood siding.” The FHA approved these prefab houses with the stipulation that they be first offered to veterans.<sup>35</sup>



**GLENDALE HEIGHTS DEVELOPMENT** will eventually include approximately 50 residential homes. The construction is being done by the Piedmont Home and Construction Company.

The first part of Glendale Heights was under construction in 1946-1947, *Herald-Sun*, August 11, 1946

By the end of 1946, a little over half of Glendale Heights first fifty houses, all owned or rented by veterans, were completed. Piedmont Housing and Construction Company placed advertisements in the Durham *Herald-Sun* in January 1947 appealing to former soldiers. “Notice to Veterans, Five New Homes Ready for Immediate Occupancy in Glendale Heights.”<sup>36</sup>

In June 1946, the Children’s Nature Museum opened at the bird sanctuary.<sup>37</sup> The museum offered a preschool and programs for children and adults in a one-story, shed roofed building with large stone chimneys. In October 1947, the museum moved to a building at 2500 Georgia Avenue just east of Hillandale Road on the west side of Durham.<sup>38</sup> In 1961,

<sup>34</sup> “Permits Issued for Six New Dwellings,” *Herald-Sun*, November 16, 1946, 2.

<sup>35</sup> “\$375,000 Housing Development Started,” *Durham Sun*, May 6, 1946, 1.

<sup>36</sup> “Compensation for Policeman Sought,” *Herald-Sun*, May 17, 1946, 8; “Notice to Veterans,” *Herald-Sun*, January 6, 1947, 9.

<sup>37</sup> “Nature Museum Will Open Today,” *Herald-Sun*, June 15, 1946, 9.

<sup>38</sup> “Nature Museum News Corner,” *Durham Sun*, October 31, 1947, 13.

the museum obtained a long-term lease from the city for land on Murray Avenue north of Northgate Park and built a more substantial facility. After a period of expansion, in the early 1970s it became the North Carolina Museum of Life and Science.<sup>39</sup> It is located on Murray Avenue immediately north of the Northgate Park Historic District. The original 1946 children’s museum that stood in Northgate Park was disassembled in 2014 after years of flooding from Ellerbee Creek.<sup>40</sup> Two stone chimneys and the stone foundation remain.



Remains of the Children’s Museum built in the park in 1946

In July 1947, WDUK radio bought eleven acres on the east side of Glendale Avenue and adjacent to Glendale Heights to construct a radio station and erect tall transmission towers. Many residents of Glendale Heights where brand new houses were going up at a rapid pace, opposed the towers and the visual effect they posed. The city’s board of adjustment approved the towers and the station. Today, the twelve-acre site contains modern transmission towers, the radio station building, and at least one additional modern building. Because of new construction on the parcel, the property is not included in the proposed district boundary.<sup>41</sup>

In the late 1940s, groups of parents and community leaders from the Northgate Park area appeared before the county commissioners to argue for the establishment of a public elementary school in the neighborhood. Children from the neighborhood had been

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<sup>39</sup> “Museum History,” North Carolina Museum of Life and Science website, [lifeandscience.org](http://lifeandscience.org), accessed October 1, 2025.

<sup>40</sup> “Museum of Life and Science,” Open Durham website, [opendurham.org](http://opendurham.org), accessed October 17, 2025.

<sup>41</sup> Durham County Deed Book 192, page 424, dated July 17, 1947; “Building of Radio Tower to be Decided by Board,” *Herald-Sun*, November 26, 1947, 9; “Ordinance for Tower Erection Criticized Here,” *Herald-Sun*, December 18, 1947, 15.

attending North Durham School, which parents described as crowded.<sup>42</sup> Residents' efforts proved successful because Club Boulevard School opened in November 1950 with a maximum capacity of 450 students. Durham architect Marion A. Ham designed the modernist brick building containing fourteen classrooms, an auditorium, cafeteria, kitchen, library, and teacher's lounge.<sup>43</sup> In 1955, seven additional classrooms were added.<sup>44</sup> In the late 1990s, a large brick addition was built onto the front, partially obscuring the 1950 and 1955 façade. The school is not included in the district because of its integrity, but its history is closely tied to the neighborhood development.

In 1950, the city built a community center at the north end of the park at the corner of West Lavender Avenue and Elgin Street in honor of Ruby and Frank Barfield, who donated land to create the popular greenspace. The one-story, Ranch house style building included an assembly room, canteen, kitchen, and restrooms.<sup>45</sup> It burned around 1970, and tennis courts were built on the site. In 1958, the park expanded to the north when Durham Realty and Insurance Company donated land to the city on the north side of Leon Street.<sup>46</sup> In 1959, the Jaycees sponsored the construction of a ballfield (not extant) in the park for the Durham Little Tarheel League.<sup>47</sup>

In September 1951, local Girls Scouts broke ground on "an attractive one-story building approximately 35 by 50 feet" on land on Glendale Avenue where they had been meeting



Girl Scout Hut, 1951, on Glendale Avenue

since 1942. In planning the building, one scout leader expressed "the pressing need of recreation and character-building facilities for the younger girls of Durham." Completed by November of that year, the cabin contained a large central room, screened porch, kitchen, and bathroom.<sup>48</sup> The Girl Scouts sold the building in 1973 to the Friendly City Civitan Club, which still owns it.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> "Pressure on Board Requested," *Durham Sun*, May 17, 1948, 3.

<sup>43</sup> "Crowded Conditions Will Be Relieved in Fall Opening of Northgate School," *Herald-Sun*, May 20, 1950; "Club Boulevard School Classes to Begin Today," *Herald-Sun*, November 8, 1950, 11.

<sup>44</sup> "Club Boulevard School Addition is Completed," *Herald-Sun*, February 26, 1955, 9.

<sup>45</sup> "Long Fight is Won for New Structure at Northgate Park," *Herald-Sun*, July 20, 1950, 15.

<sup>46</sup> Deed book 252, page 613, dated October 7, 1958, Durham County Register of Deeds.

<sup>47</sup> "Ball Field Dedication to be Held," *Durham Sun*, May 27, 1959, 19.

<sup>48</sup> "Ground Broken for Construction of New Girl Scout Cabin Here," *Durham Sun*, September 18, 1951, 5.

<sup>49</sup> Deed Book 409, Page 660, Durham County Register of Deeds, dated December 12, 1973.



Two-lane Roxboro Street to the north from Murray Avenue, ca. 1953, North Carolina Collection, Durham County Public Library

An educational building for Parkview Baptist Church was built in 1955 at 2500 Acadia Street on a portion of three tracts in the original Northgate subdivision platted in 1938. H. N. Haines served as architect and T. H. Brown as builder for the brick building. The congregation had formed in 1952 and met in the Barfield Recreation Center (not extant) in the park until the education building was completed.<sup>50</sup> According to Rev. John A. Moore, senior pastor in 1954, families with young children and husbands who served in World War II made up most of the congregation.<sup>51</sup> After using the education building for church services for fifteen years, the congregation completed its sanctuary in 1970. Architects Haskins and Rice of Raleigh designed the 300-seat church and Trout and Riggs Construction Company built it.<sup>52</sup>

The final area of the district to develop was in Glendale Heights north and northwest of the park, which was platted in 1940 and 1952. Through the 1950s, builders constructed side-and hipped-roof brick veneer Minimal Ranch and Ranch houses on East Hudson Avenue, Leon Street, and Woodview Drive, the location of the district's only cul-de-sac.

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<sup>50</sup> "Allied Arts Inc. Gets Use Permit," *Herald-Sun*, April 15, 1954, 21.

<sup>51</sup> "Erection of New Church Here is Authorized," *Herald-Sun*, November 11, 1954; "Have You Met," *Durham Sun*, December 17, 1954, 11.

<sup>52</sup> "Park View Baptist Church to Dedicate Sanctuary," *Durham Sun*, February 1970, 6.



Minimal Ranch house at 2008 Woodview Drive, built 1954



Glendale Heights subdivision was the last area in the district to be developed. By the time this aerial photograph was taken in 1950s, Glendale Heights subdivision had been built out. NCDOT Historical Aerial Imagery Index

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