The historic structure report presented here exists in two formats. A traditional, printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeast Regional Office of the NPS, and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, the historic structure report also exists in a web-based format through ParkNet, the website of the National Park Service. Please visit www.cr.nps.gov/ for more information.
Foreword

The historic structure report (HSR) is the primary guide to treatment and use of a historic structure and is a prerequisite before restoration, reconstruction, or extensive rehabilitation of any structure is undertaken. These reports provide historical background and context for the historic structure; a chronology of the building's original development and its evolution over time; and a physical description of the building, its features, materials, and their current condition. The report concludes with recommendations for treatment and use of the building.

This report was originally prepared by Deborah E. Harvey as part of the requirements for study in "Conservation of Historic Building Materials," a course in the Masters in Heritage Preservation program at Georgia State University. Richard Laub and Laura Drummond were the course instructors. Tommy Jones, National Park Service Southeast Regional Office, provided project support, and Adria Focht, National Park Service Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, assisted in site documentation. Several class members were particularly helpful in development of the initial draft of this report: Rebecca Crawford, Sarah Kurtz, Angelica Dion, Jennifer Dixon, Mera Cardenas, and Billy McCarley. Most of the photographs were provided by the students.

Investigation for this report involved three site visits to photograph conditions, record dimensions, and investigate materials. Research at the Fulton County (Georgia) Courthouse in Atlanta, Georgia, for deeds and at the Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, Georgia, for building permits, maps, and city directories was undertaken. City directory information was also obtained at the Decatur Public Library in Decatur, Georgia. Online research in Sanborn Maps, Federal census records, and some of the National Park Service planning documents was conducted. In addition, hard copies of planning documents provided by the National Park Service, as well as technical books, were consulted.

The present report has been substantially edited and revised by staff of the Cultural Resources, Partnerships & Science Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service. Information from additional historical research and building investigation by NPS staff has been added throughout.
Martin Luther King National Jr. Historic Site
Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments
Historic Structure Report
2013

Approved by: [Signature] 8/4/15
Superintendent, Martin Luther King Jr. NHS

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Management Summary

The building at 491 Auburn Avenue, recently dubbed the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments, has been vacant since National Park Service (NPS) acquisition in 2003. This Historic Structure Report (HSR) is based on an HSR compiled by students in Georgia State University’s Masters of Heritage Preservation program in 2010. That HSR has been substantially re-worked by the staff of the Cultural Resources Division of the Southeast Regional Office of the NPS, and the students’ narrative has been heavily edited. New historical research and building investigation has provided additional information.

This section of the HSR is an executive summary of the full report. It provides summaries of the other sections of the HSR, including sections detailing the building’s historical context; the chronology of its construction, later development, and use; and the physical description and condition assessment of the building as it stands today. The final section of the report outlines a conceptual plan for future treatment and use of the historic structure. The recommendations that are included are intended to balance a variety of legal and policy restraints against the demands of modern use while preserving the building’s character-defining features and materials. The reader is encouraged to read the full report for a complete understanding of the summaries that follow here.

Historical Summary

Built in 1911, the apartment building was the last large structure built on the Birth Home Block. The owner was Mary Motes Delbridge (1867–1927), a widowed white woman who built the apartments for rental income. Her husband was the son of the noted physician Dr. George Washington Delbridge, dean of the Southern Medical College in Atlanta in the late 1880s. Of more than passing interest was Allen J. Delbridge, one of Dr. Delbridge’s ex-slaves and a shoemaker, who moved to Atlanta in the 1870s. By the end of the century, he had become one of the largest African American property owners in the city. In 1913, he sold his own house on Auburn Avenue and it was torn down for construction of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

The builder of the apartments was Alexander D. Hamilton Jr. (1870–1944), a prominent African American builder in Atlanta. His father had moved the family to Atlanta in 1877 and worked as a carpenter and builder. In 1890, the junior Hamilton joined him in the partnership of Alexander Hamilton and Son, one of the city’s best-known African American firms at the turn of the century. They built many commercial and residential buildings in the city, including several in the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, including 494 Old Wheat Street, 577 Auburn Avenue, and the younger Hamilton’s own house at 102 Howell Street. Hamilton was also the builder for the Neel Reid designed Butler Street YMCA, which became known as the “Black City Hall of Atlanta.” He also was the builder in reconstructing Big Bethel AME Church on Auburn Avenue after it was badly damaged by fire.

The application for the building permit for the Delbridge-Hamilton is dated September 6, 1911 and finished construction was approved on November 1, 1911. All of the original tenants were African Americans. In 1922, the city implemented new residential zoning districts for the city based on race, and because the areas designated by the ordinances as “for colored” were small compared to the total area of Atlanta, the neighborhood developed as a residential area for African Americans of all socioeconomic levels.

The Great Atlanta Fire of 1917 further exacerbated crowded conditions in the neighborhood because it destroyed many residences in the Fourth Ward, although it did not touch this particular block of Auburn Avenue. Mrs. Delbridge’s children inherited the apartments at her death in 1927 and continued to use it as rental property until they sold it in 1968. It then passed through a succession of owners until Johnnie Haugabrook purchased it in 1987, after it had become part of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District. Haugabrook sold the property in 2003 to the National Park Service.
Architectural Summary

The building is located on a narrow city lot, sixty feet wide and one hundred and eighty-eight feet long. It is a rectangular, two-story, balloon-framed structure clad in clapboard siding that is now itself covered with cement-asbestos shingles installed around 1960. Of vernacular design, it has simplified Neoclassical Revival-style details on the exterior and some Craftsman-style details on the interior. The foundation is brick piers infilled with concrete block. It has a hipped roof covered in three-tab asphalt shingles and four stucco-covered brick chimneys. The building features an engaged, two-story porch spanning the north (front) elevation. Original back porches were enclosed around 1960, with the enclosure reconstructed in 2010.

A Condition Assessment Report for the building was compiled in 2008, and the National Park Service (NPS) stabilized the framing and exterior in 2010. Roofing and much of the roof structure were replaced, chimneys re-parged, and the lower half of the front porch completely rebuilt. The cement-asbestos siding was repaired and painted; corner boards were repaired or replaced. Exterior access to the upstairs in the rear was removed. Most evidence of the utility meters formerly on the west side of the building was removed, as was all climbing vegetation. In short, the building envelope was largely secured against weather and human infiltration.

Although the recent roof replacement goes a long way to halting the progress of deterioration due to water infiltration, the interior is in a state of near-ruin. Some effort has been made to stabilize the flooring and framing through joist replacement, shoring in the crawl space beneath the west side floor joists, and installation of plywood sheets to replace rotted flooring materials. The building is currently being used to store random architectural components, both from this building and from other buildings in the district. It is recommended that components not belonging to this building be removed and stored in the building from whence it came and belongs. Over the years, some changes have been made to this building, but it remains remarkably intact, considering its age and use as a rental property for nearly ninety years.

Significance and Integrity

The building is a contributing resource in the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic District. The building is significant for its association with events related to African American history and the Civil Rights Movement (1906–1948) and as an example of residential architecture common in urban areas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1880–1950). It is particularly important for its associations with the childhood of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who was born at 501 Auburn Avenue and lived there until the family moved in 1941.

The aspects of integrity evaluated as part of the National Register criteria are location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling. These distinct qualities considered together convey historical significance and address architectural features and characteristics that express time and place. The Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments retain a significant degree of integrity in all seven aspects that convey the historic vernacular architecture of the building. The character and feeling of the building remain much the same way the tenants might have experienced them during the historic period.

Character-defining Features

Constructed in 1911, this building retains several original character-defining features evocative of the period that should be retained. They include:

- The arrangement of the front porches and entries where the porches are shared spaces addressing the street instead of being physically separated, private spaces
- The vernacular rendition of the Neoclassical Revival–style architectural details, especially on the front porch
- The linear arrangement of the rooms, namely one room leading to another with no hallways
- The access to the bathrooms from the former back porches, which indicates the utilitarian nature of these spaces at that time
- The high ceilings and wood floors
- The intact fireplaces, fireplace surrounds, mantels, hearths, and, especially, the coal grates
- The six-panel doors, most with at least some historic hardware still intact
- The single fifteen-light French door
- The two-over-two, fifteen-over-one, and transom windows
- The wood lath and plaster walls and ceilings
- The details of the historic baseboard, picture moldings, and door and window casing
The combination gas-electric light fixtures
- The intact fuse boxes and other earlier features of electrical use, such as the tubes for the knob-and-tube wiring

Character-defining features that have been removed and should be reinstated include:
- The alleyway to the east that provides access to the duplex houses behind the apartment building
- The hexagonal-shingle roof
- Cast-iron bath tubs.

Requirements for Treatment and Use

A number of laws, regulations, and functional requirements circumscribe treatment and use of the historic structures in our National Parks. In addition to protecting the cultural resource, these requirements also address issues of human safety, fire protection, energy conservation, abatement of hazardous materials, and handicapped accessibility. Some of these requirements may contradict or be at cross purposes with one another if they are rigidly interpreted. Any treatment must be carefully considered in order that the historic fabric of the structure be preserved.

The most important of these requirements is Public Law 96-428 that was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Carter on October 10, 1980. This law authorized the establishment of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site. The purpose of the National Historic Site is:

_to protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Junior, was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried._

The authorizing legislation also directs that “plans for the construction, exterior renovation, or demolition of any structure or any change in land use within the preservation district” must be submitted to the Atlanta Urban Design Commission “in a timely manner for its review and comment.”

The park’s General Management Plan (GMP) directs that “[c]ommunity values will be maintained through the continued _private use_ of the residential structures along the birth home block [emphasis added].” It further states that the NPS will empha-size the “rehabilitation of structures to perpetuate the existing uses.” The GMP identifies the houses in the Birth Home block, along Auburn Avenue between Boulevard and Howell, as “the primary cultural resource” of the National Historic Site and states that this block is where the NPS will focus its preservation efforts. The goal should be one “of restoring the exteriors of the structures and the grounds to appear as they did when Dr. King lived there as a boy” (1929–1941), and “all significant interior architectural features and historic fabric will be preserved.”

Recommendations for Treatment and Use

Of the uses considered, rehabilitation for residential use is the preferred alternative for treatment and use. This use fulfills the requirements of the authorizing legislation establishing the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and follows the General Management Plan for the site to maintain community values “through the continued private use of residential structures in the birth home block” while undertaking restoration of the exteriors of buildings following the _Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation_. The Standards mandate that rehabilitated historic buildings be used as they were historically or be put to a closely-related use. This approach is the most respectful of the historic building and its materials because it allows for upgrading of interiors to meet current residential standards and building codes. Background and details on the recommendations presented below can be found in the last section of this HSR.

The following recommendations are only summaries and should not be used to direct work. Park management and staff charged with implementing these recommendations must read the more detailed recommendations in the final section of this report.

Summary of recommendations for additional research
- Conduct an archeological survey of the property.
- Conduct thorough analysis of exterior painted finishes.
- Conduct additional historical research on the building's tenants and on the Delbridge families, black and white.

Summary of recommendations for site
- Replace brick walk with concrete hexagonal pavers.
- Remove rowlock border around front yard.
- Restore unpaved alley on the east side of the building.
- Establish vehicular ADA accessibility behind the building (see below).
- Reduce grade at rear of house to ensure adequate clearance between wood sills and ground.
- Re-evaluate cultural landscape and make appropriate recommendations.

Summary of recommendations for foundation
- Remove concrete block underpinning.
- Repair, repoint, and reconstruct brick piers as necessary.
- Based on paint analysis, repaint piers and front porch foundation walls red.

Summary of recommendations for the wood framing
- Inspect the foundation and framing periodically for evidence of termite and other wood pest infestation.
- Maintain the character of the historic framing by using materials and methods that match the original.
- Replace added supports under first-floor joists to eliminate wood-to-ground contact.

Summary of recommendations for the roof
- When the building is re-roofed, recreate historic appearance of the roof.
- Install half-round gutters and round downspouts and connect to site drainage.

Summary of recommendations for the exterior doors
- Replicate and install original front doors, using three 4" ball-pin hinges.
- Maintain six-panel doors opening on to the back porches.
- Repair or re-install screen doors, replacing missing doors.
- Repair transoms to working order.
- Repair and, if necessary, replace historic hardware. Avoid adding modern hardware.

Summary of recommendations for windows and doors
- Correct inconsistencies in the profile of stiles and rails on the sash installed in 2010.
- Repair double-hung sash and transoms to operability.
- Ensure wood-framed window screens are in good condition.
- Remove screened door at bottom of stairs.
- Install screened doors at all exterior openings.

Summary of recommendations for front porches
- Restore boxed columns by removing added plinths.
- Recreate historic molding on header between floors.
- Replace concrete block steps with wooden steps.

Summary of recommendations for rear addition
- Remove enclosure under shed roof.
- Reconfigure soffit to match historic condition.
Recreate enclosed returns at each end of the shed roof.
Design and install a new staircase appropriate to changed conditions.

Summary of recommendations for exterior
- Remove cement-asbestos siding.
- Repair underlying wood siding.
- Repair trim, replacing missing elements as necessary.
- Repaint exterior to recreate historic appearance prior to World War II.

Summary of recommendations for interior
- Develop plan to clear interior of artifacts and debris.
- Remove closet in Room 201.
- Repair flooring, replacing missing flooring with material that matches the original.
- Remove existing dry wall on walls and ceilings, taking care to preserve underlying plaster and finishes.
- Repair plaster walls where they exist; replace with drywall if missing.
- Install drywall ceilings throughout.
- Remove paint from woodwork after paint colors and layering have been documented.
- Repair woodwork as necessary, replacing missing or modern elements with elements that match the original.
- Replace missing and modern doors with six-panel doors to match the original.

Summary of recommendations for fireplaces
- Do not reinstate missing fireplaces.
- Re-open fireboxes where mantels remain in place.
- Retain existing ceramic tile wherever they exist, including the late twentieth-century tiles on the hearth in Room 201.
- Close tops of chimneys to prevent entry of wildlife and debris.

Summary of recommendations for kitchens
- Redesign and install new kitchens.

Summary of recommendations for bathrooms
- Redesign bathrooms for modern use.
- Reinstall historic footed tubs.
- Install modern toilets and lavatories.
- Close existing doors but preserve doors and transoms in situ.

Summary of recommendations for mechanical and electrical systems
- Design and install central, forced-air HVAC system with separate controls for each unit.
- Design and install new waste and supply lines for kitchens and bathrooms.
- Wherever possible, abandon old lines and equipment in place.
- Install complete fire-detection and fire-suppression systems in the building.

Summary of recommendations for energy efficiency
- Install new insulation in attic floor and beneath first floor but not in walls.
- Ensure operability of all double-hung sash.
- Weather-strip all windows and doors.

Summary of recommendations for handicapped access
- Design ramp to one of the first-floor apartments.
- Replace hardware as necessary in unit chosen for accessibility.
Historical Background and Context

Located at 491 Auburn Avenue, this four-unit apartment building, recently dubbed the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments, was built in 1911 by the city’s best-known African American builder, Alexander Hamilton, for a widowed white woman, Mary Delbridge, who purchased the property for rental income. A Historic Resource Study and a Cultural Landscape Report as well as other studies that have been developed for the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic Site have thoroughly documented the broader history of the district. For that reason, only a general overview of the area’s history is presented here, along with some new information on the Delbridges. The intent of this section of the HSR is to furnish context for understanding the chronology of development and use of the Delbridge/Hamilton Apartments that follows in the next section of this report.

Mary Motes Delbridge

Mary Marion Motes Delbridge (1867-1927) was the daughter of Columbus Washington Motes (1837–1919), a native of Perry County, Alabama, and a well-known photographer in Atlanta. He married Emily T. White Motes (1843–1897) soon after the Civil War, and they moved to Atlanta in 1872. They had six children by 1895, but only two lived to adulthood.

Around 1890, Mary Motes married Thomas James Delbridge (1858–1896), a son of the noted Alabama physician George Washington Delbridge (1826–1899). The elder Delbridge was born in Petersburg, Virginia, and moved with his parents to Macon County in the southeastern Alabama Black Belt in 1834. He married Emily Mandeville Hughley, whose family had also brought her to Macon County at an earlier date. The couple had five children, with Thomas James being the middle child. In 1884, Dr. Delbridge moved his family to Atlanta where he became dean of the Southern Medical College. He and his wife are buried at Oakland Cemetery.

Of more than passing interest is one of Dr. Delbridge’s ex-slaves, Allen J. Delbridge, who was interviewed by an Atlanta Constitution reporter in 1890. A prosperous shoemaker and reported to be one of the largest property owners in the city’s African American community, A. J. Delbridge owned a two-story house at the corner of Auburn Avenue and Jackson Street that he sold to Rev. A. D. Williams in 1911 for construction of Ebenezer Baptist Church. The nature of any relationship that these Delbridge families, one black and one white, might have had in late nineteenth-century Atlanta has not been documented.1

Thomas James and Mary Motes Delbridge had two children, a daughter Emily (1891–1979) and a son Thomas James Delbridge Jr. (1894–1968). Neither of them ever married. Thomas Sr. died of unknown causes in 1896, not yet forty years old, and was buried in Atlanta’s Oakland Cemetery. When the Federal census was taken in 1900, his widow and children were living with her parents on Whitehall Street, but by 1910 they had moved to a house on Spring Street. She died there in 1927 and was also buried at Oakland Cemetery.

Alexander D. Hamilton

Alexander Daniel Hamilton, the builder of the quadruplex as well as the three double-shotgun houses to the rear which he also built for Mary Delbridge, is mentioned here to place the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments in the broader context of the city’s African American construction activities. His prominence in the history of African American building is evidenced by his being known as the builder of the Lewis-Hammilton Homes, which were located on the site of the future Martin Luther King Jr. Historic Site. He is also noted for his building of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments.

1. Thomas McAdory Owen and Marie Bankhead Owen,

Motes Delbridge, and his father, Alexander Hamilton, were an African American father-and-son building team in the Atlanta area during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The elder Hamilton was born around 1840, and although his exact place of birth is not known, it was likely in either Georgia or North Carolina. Born into slavery, Hamilton served in the Union army during the Civil War. After the war, he married Martha "Mattie" Ann Coker, and the couple moved to Eufaula, Alabama. Hamilton became involved in Alabama politics, first serving two years in the state legislator and then the Eufaula city council. ³

On November 24, 1870, the first of their four children was born. They named him Alexander Daniel Hamilton after his father. In 1877, the Hamilton family moved to Atlanta, Georgia. He soon became a respected contractor in the Atlanta community. After the death of his wife Mattie, the elder Hamilton married a woman by the name of Katie Grant. In 1894, Hamilton built a new home for his family on Hilliard Street in Sweet Auburn.

Hamilton’s son, Alexander Daniel Hamilton, attended Atlanta University for three years in the late 1880s. After discovering that he shared his father’s interest in building, Hamilton joined his father as a partner, and in 1890, the firm Alexander Hamilton and Son was born. Two years later, he married Nellie Marie Cook. The couple would eventually have seven children.⁴

Sometime between 1890 and 1895, Hamilton built a home for his family at 102 Howell Street in the Auburn Avenue neighborhood. During this era of the neighborhood’s history, the block on which Hamilton built his house was one of the most elite. Auburn Avenue resident Millie Jordan recalled that Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP, and Antoine Graves, a prominent real-estate agent, lived on Houston Street (now named John Wesley Dobbs Avenue), near Hamilton’s house. Hamilton’s elegant house still stands today.⁵

⁴. One of A. D. Hamilton’s sons, Henry Cooke Hamilton, would marry Grace Towns who, in 1965, became the first African American woman elected to the Georgia State legislature.
The firm of Alexander Hamilton and Son worked steadily in Atlanta. One of their commissions was the construction of the Linton Hopkins House in 1908, which is located in Ansley Park. The house was clad in shingles and featured elements of Dutch Colonial Revival architecture with a gambrel roof. In 1911, the elder Hamilton passed away and A. D. Hamilton took the helm of the practice.

Throughout the mid-1900s, Hamilton built residences throughout and near the Old Fourth Ward, such as 494 Old Wheat Street in 1911, the double shotguns and quadruplex at 491 and 493 Auburn Avenue between 1911 and 1912, and 102 Howell Street and 577 Auburn Avenue in 1923. One of Hamilton's most notable commissions involved collaboration with one of Atlanta's prominent architects, Neel Reid. In 1916, Hamilton worked as the builder for Hentz, Reid, and Adler for the Butler Street YMCA, which is still extant. The building quickly became one of the centers of the African American community in Atlanta, counting the young Martin Luther King Jr. as a member. The Georgian style building became known as the "Black City Hall of Atlanta" with groups such as the Atlanta Negro Voters League using it as their headquarters. At the time of construction, the building cost $115,000 and contained over 10,000 square feet.

Hamilton’s career continued to thrive. In 1916, A. D. Hamilton served as the contractor for Robert Hall, an educational building on the Morehouse College campus. In 1920, he partnered with Henry White Jr. to construct Leete Hall, a grand building in the Gothic Jacobean style, which is now known as George Washington Carver High School. In 1923, Hamilton served as the builder for the reconstruction of Big Bethel African American Episcopal church. Located on Auburn Avenue, construction began on the church in 1891. However, the building was not finished until 1922 with John Lankford serving as architect. Soon after the church was finished, it was badly damaged by fire. Hamilton was brought in again to reconstruct the church and the project was completed in 1924. Also in 1924, he built 312 Auburn Avenue, known as Ma Sutton’s Restaurant and 315 Auburn Avenue, which was the Elko Home Gate City Lodge, serving as both apartments and a meeting space throughout its history.

Alexander D. Hamilton passed away in January 1944 and is buried in Oakland Cemetery.

Auburn Avenue

Auburn Avenue, originally known as Wheat Street and named for Atlanta merchant Augustus Wheat, ran east from Peachtree Street to Butler Street as early as 1853. East of Butler Street was farmland, part of which was once owned by Hardy Ivy, the

Figure 3. Detail from Augustus Koch's bird's-eye view of Atlanta in 1892, annotated with an arrow to locate the undeveloped lot on which the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments and Duplexes, as well as Dr. King's birth home, would later be built. (Library of Congress)
first white settler within the original boundaries of the City of Atlanta. Even twenty years later, Wheat Street was sparsely settled beyond Butler. In 1880, the heirs of John Lynch, a wealthy white merchant in the city, began to sell his extensive holdings on Wheat Street between Jackson and Howell Streets. In 1884, the Gate City Street Railroad Company ran a horse car line along the street from Pryor Street in the central business district to Jackson Street where it turned and continued north. This streetcar line provided direct access to downtown Atlanta and promoted the construction of residences for whites along Wheat Street east of Jackson Street. One of the first houses constructed during this first wave of residential development is still standing, built between 1882 and 1888 at what is now 521 Auburn Avenue. In 1889, the city’s first electric streetcar line began running on Edgewood Avenue, a block south of Wheat Street, and the following year a second electric streetcar line, the Nine-Mile Circle, began running north along Boulevard, providing even more transportation options for the area. In 1893, the Atlanta City Council voted to change the names of several of the city’s oldest streets with an eye to upgrading their images, and Wheat Street was renamed Auburn Avenue.

By 1894, the Lynch property had been sold and subdivided, and new houses were under construction. The city constructed Fire Station #6 on the corner of Auburn Avenue and Boulevard in that same year. The vacant lot on which the Delbridge/Hamilton Apartment building would be constructed is shown in Latham & Baylors Atlas of Atlanta as being owned by C. R. Swint. By 1899, nearly all the lots on Auburn Avenue between Boulevard and Howell were developed with two-story, wood-framed residences, mostly in Queen Anne style. Only the lots at the west end of the north side of that block remained undeveloped.

One of the first African Americans to own a home on this part of Auburn Avenue was Wesley C. Redding, one of the founders of the Atlanta Loan and Trust Company in 1891. He was living on Auburn Avenue as early as 1884, as soon as the presence of the horse-drawn streetcars made living there convenient to the city. Although the Federal census

9. E. B. Latham and H. B. Baylor, Atlas of Atlanta, n.p., 1894, located in the Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center. This is a series of a hundred loose pages in box G1314. ABL3.

Figure 4. Detail from Latham and Taylor’s map of Atlanta, 1894, showing property ownership at that time and annotated with an arrow to denote the future site of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments.
records do indicate that the larger houses fronting Auburn Avenue east of Boulevard were owned exclusively by whites from the 1880s until after 1900, blacks and whites lived in close proximity to one another in this area as they did throughout the city. Black workers in the white households and in nearby factories generally lived in small houses that were mostly on alleys and back streets.

The Fourth Ward

From an early date, black churches and schools were established in the Fourth Ward. In 1869, Wheat Street Baptist Church was established on what is now Auburn Avenue at Fort Street, two blocks west of its present location, by members of Friendship Baptist Church, the city's first African American Baptist church. Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church moved to its present location on Auburn Avenue at Jesse Hill Jr. Drive in 1866 and constructed the current church building there in 1891. In the latter part of November 1886, according to a church history, "the Ebenezer Baptist Church was organized by Rev. John Parker, who was then a member of the Wheat Street Baptist Church," apparently drawing its membership from the mostly black working-class residential district that had sprung up in the vicinity of the railroad shops at the east end of Auburn Avenue in the early 1880s.

In 1879, Big Bethel founded the first public school for African Americans, the Gate City Colored School, in its basement. Two years later, in 1881, Morris Brown College also began holding classes in the basement of Big Bethel and remained there until 1885, when it moved to a new building on the corner of Boulevard and Houston Street (now John Wesley Dobbs Avenue), just a few blocks north of Auburn Avenue. Before the proliferation of the automobile, institutions such as churches and schools were not founded as isolated islands to which students and parishioners were expected to travel. Instead, they were founded in the communities that they served, and the Auburn Avenue area had a sufficient number of black residents by 1866, and certainly by 1880, to support those institutions. By 1896, the Fourth Ward "had not only the greatest proportion of blacks (45%) but also the highest percentage of integration (26%) in the city." However, while it is true that blacks occupied residences in close proximity to whites, and sometimes owned those residences, it is also true that black residents were mostly working class, and whites were often, though not always, classified in occupations that marked them as middle class in the late nineteenth century.

The large houses on Auburn Avenue between Boulevard and Howell Street that were built before 1900 were originally built for white owners, but census records for the period indicate that much of the surrounding area was lower-middle or working-class of both races, which was not an unusual situation in nineteenth-century Atlanta. The house at 501 Auburn Avenue in which Martin Luther King Jr. was born in 1929, for instance, was built in 1895 for two white spinster sisters, Julia and Vada Holbrook. According to the 1900 census records, they operated it as a boarding house. Except for the house at 515 Auburn Avenue, the only residences constructed along the block of Auburn between Boulevard and Howell Street after 1900 were duplex rental housing and apartment houses, further indications of the working-class character of the neighborhood. Still, by the turn of the century, most streets in the neighborhood, and certainly Auburn Avenue, had all the amenities of more affluent neighborhoods, including paved sidewalks and streets, access to multiple streetcar lines, gas and electrical service, city water and sewer service, and fire protection services.

Small-scale commercial enterprises dotted the neighborhood. One was a small grocery store on the northwest corner of Hogue Street and Auburn Avenue, constructed in 1909 and operated by a series of white grocers. In the 1920s, a one-room building in front of 521 Auburn Avenue operated as a café and soda fountain, and in the 1930s, a restaurant was located in a small building at 37 Howell Street. A grocery store and a butcher's shop, both leased to and operated by white propri-
etors, occupied the triangle formed by the intersections of Auburn Avenue, Old Wheat Street, and Howell Street. Backyard mechanics serviced the automotive needs of the neighborhood, and the homeowner at 526 Auburn Avenue built a small shed in his back yard, which fruited on Old Wheat Street, and sold candy and potato chips out of it to neighborhood children.

After the 1906 Atlanta race riots, the demographics of the area changed rapidly. Although black and white residents of the area had managed to coexist there even after the passage of Jim Crow laws in the 1890s, the violence of 1906 created a climate of fear and distrust and precipitated a rapid demographic change. Whites sold or rented their homes along Auburn Avenue, and, by 1910, a little over a year after Reverend Williams purchased his home, area residents were mostly African American. In 1913, the Atlanta "Segregation Ordinance" instituted complete separation of the races into designated residential areas, and this neighborhood was designated "for colored." Although that ordinance was declared unconstitutional by the Georgia Supreme Court in 1915, a similar ordinance was passed by the city in 1917, and, in 1922, the city hired an urban planner to draw up residential zoning maps based on race. This ordinance mandating racial segregation in housing ensured that the area would be occupied exclusively by African Americans throughout the remainder of the historic period.

Because of the restrictions on where African Americans could live and conduct business, the small areas of the city designated for black occupancy tended to be densely populated and to include people from all socioeconomic levels. Auburn Avenue was no exception. This economic diversity is reflected in the variety of residential buildings in the area. Middle-class blacks purchased the Queen Anne style homes or built homes of their own, while those who labored in unskilled or service occupations rented rooms or, if they could afford them, the somewhat larger living spaces in the area's duplex houses and apartment buildings.

The Great Atlanta Fire of 1917, which burned most of the western and northern parts of the neighborhood, significantly increased crowding in the rest of the Fourth Ward. Many of those burned out of their homes chose to rebuild on the west side where Heman Perry was developing Washington Park, the city's first planned African American community. Until the 1960s, the west side around the Atlanta University complex would be the preferred residential area for middle-class blacks in Atlanta, leaving the Auburn Avenue area to the less affluent.

In 1922, other changes in zoning permitted more multi-family dwellings in the area, further accelerating the departure of the middle-class residents. In addition, when Morris Brown College joined with the Atlanta University Center and moved its campus from the corner of Boulevard and Houston Street (now John Wesley Dobbs Avenue) in 1932, the Fourth Ward lost one of its most important


Figure 5. View of part of the aftermath of the 1917 fire. (Vanishing Georgia Collection)

Figure 6. Detail from Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing extent of 1917 fire. The Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments are in the southeast corner of block 157.

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institutions, along with middle-class residents who had been associated with the college.  

Decay and Decline

Like much of the city, the area did not fare well during the Great Depression. As the Depression wore on, it exacerbated difficulties homeowners and landlords might already be having in maintaining the buildings as the neighborhood transitioned from one with a mix of people of differing socio-economic status to a low-income, working-class neighborhood. Lower rents made paying for maintenance difficult, and absentee owners were either indifferent or unable to correct the deteriorating conditions of their rental properties. In 1934, the U.S. Department of Commerce Real Property Survey reported that "nine out of ten homes [in the area] were unfit for occupancy and 35 percent needed structural repairs."19 By the end of the 1930s, 67.4 percent of the buildings needed major repairs or were unfit for use, according to the 1939 Works Progress Administration's Real Property Survey of Atlanta.20

In the 1930s, middle-class homeowners continued their exodus to the west side, selling their large, Queen Anne-style residences or subdividing them into apartments. The 1940 U.S. Census "reported that two-thirds of the dwelling units ... were in disrepair and 77% lacked a private bath."21 That same year the King family, too, moved from Auburn Avenue to a large, brick house built in 1920 at what is now the northwest corner of Boulevard and Freedom Parkway.

Even the prosperity of the post-World War II years did not significantly improve the economic conditions in the Old Fourth Ward. Ebenezer Baptist Church continued to thrive, and the Southern Christian Leadership Council was founded and headquartered on Auburn Avenue. Once legal restrictions enforcing segregation in housing were removed, however, the neighborhood declined even further as the area's few remaining middle-class residents vacated the neighborhood. Many moved to other areas of town that had not previously been open to them, leaving behind those economically unable to relocate. Those who still owned single-family homes in the area subdivided them into apartment units in order to make ends meet. The owner of the house at 530 Auburn Avenue, for instance, converted the second floor of her house into a separate apartment and the basement into two apartments while she continued to live on the first floor. In addition, urban renewal and construction of the Downtown Connector in the late 1950s and early 1960s destroyed thousands of residences east and south of downtown, further compromising the cohesion of the neighborhood.

King Memorial and National Historic Site

After Dr. King's assassination in 1968, interest in the history of the area grew, due to its connection to King and the Civil Rights Movement. Visitors came to see Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Dr. King served as co-pastor, and his memorial gravesite next door at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change. In 1974, the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic District was listed

Figure 6.1. Walker Evans photograph of "Negro Houses in Atlanta, Georgia," unknown location in the 1930s. (Library of Congress)

Figure 6.2. Mayor William B. Hartsfield, right, in 1959 inspecting the slums of Buttermilk Bottom on the northwest side of the Old Fourth Ward. (Atlanta Time Machine)
in the National Register of Historic Places. By 1975, the King family had restored the home at 501 Auburn Avenue in which Dr. King was born, and it was being operated as a house museum by the King Center. In 1977, the district was designated a National Historic Landmark. In 1980, Congress established the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site as a new unit of the National Park Service, encompassing the blocks of Auburn and Edgewood Avenues between Jackson and Howell Streets. By 1983, the site was drawing 350,000 visitors annually, many of them from outside the United States.

Still, the Old Fourth Ward did not experience a resurgence until the last ten or fifteen years of the twentieth century. Many of the buildings were in poor condition, and there was widespread disinvestment in the neighborhood by absentee landlords. In addition, the neighborhood’s crime-ridden reputation from the 1960s and 1970s discouraged new investment. By 1980, most of the small commercial buildings in the area were demolished except for the one-room building in front of 521 Auburn Avenue, although businesses continued to operate along the main thoroughfares. By then, too, urban renewal cleared the entire block on which the present park’s Visitor Center is located, and only intervention by Coretta Scott King and others prevented that demolition from continuing on the east side of Boulevard. According to the NPS, in 1979, the household median income within the area of the present historic district was about one-third that of the city-wide median. Although 86.5 percent of the residential units in the area were occupied in 1980, only 6.6 percent of them were owner-occupied; the rest were rentals. Additionally, the median value of owner-occupied housing in the area was $14,000 compared with $54,500 for the rest of the metropolitan area, and rental units commanded rents of about one-third to one-half that of rental units in the city as a whole. The unemployment rate was high in 1980, at almost 30 percent, and the NPS identified crime and vagrancy as serious deterrents to visitors. Most visitors arrived by tour bus and did not explore the neighborhood or spend money in it, but there was a dearth of restaurants and other amenities in the area to accommodate the needs of tourists anyway.

In 1980, the Historic District Development Corporation (HDDC) was organized "as an all-volunteer neighborhood-based organization with a charge to rehabilitate and revitalize the residential and commercial properties in the Sweet Auburn/Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic District." A non-profit community development corporation, HDDC spearheaded redevelopment in the neighborhood that, in concert with efforts by NPS, has done much to, in the words of the HDDC website, "restore the area to the proud, economically diverse, and viable community that once existed as it maintains its historic character while preventing displacement of long-term residents."\(^{23}\)

Starting in 1980, the NPS began to acquire and rehabilitate for its use buildings in what became known as the Birth Home Block of Auburn Avenue. After Atlanta was chosen as the site of the 1996 Olympics, the NPS accelerated this effort, focusing mostly on the Queen Anne-style residences in that block. By 1995, the NPS had rehabilitated nineteen buildings for adaptive use in the district.\(^{24}\) Based on the assessments of the 1934 U.S. Department of Commerce Real Property survey and the 1940 U.S. Census reports, it appears the exteriors of the buildings and the landscaping were restored to an appearance pre-dating the period of 23. See the organization's web site at https://sites.google.com/site/historicdistrictdevelopment/, accessed March 14, 2011.


The National Park Service has gradually rehabilitated most of the Birth Home block, and the influx of visitors to the area has somewhat improved economic conditions. A lack of affordable housing is still a concern, but developments on Edgewood Avenue are beginning to address the need for commercial services, such as restaurants and shops.
Chronology of Development and Use

The Delbridge-Hamilton apartment building was constructed as a four-unit apartment building and was used for that purpose until shortly before the National Park Service acquired the property in 2003. It has been vacant since that time.

On September 4, 1911, Mary Motes Delbridge (1867–1927) paid Harvey Reid $1,800 for one of the last vacant lots on Auburn Avenue, located immediately behind the fire station at Boulevard and Auburn. Measuring 60' by 188', the lot was described as lot 51 of a large parcel of property that the estate of John Lynch had first subdivided for sale in 1886. The parties to the sale “expressly agreed” that a ten-foot-wide alley “extending back the full depth of the lot” would “be kept perpetually open . . . for use as an alley and passageway for the joint benefit of this lot and the lot lying immediately east.”

Delbridge was proposing to build ten rental units in the form of a four-unit apartment house and three duplex shotgun houses on the lot. She hired noted African American builder, Alexander D. Hamilton Jr. to design and construct the buildings.

Original Construction

On September 6, 1911, Alexander Hamilton and Son obtained a building permit for construction of four residences at 375–377 Auburn Avenue, which was changed to 491–493 when the city’s streets were renumbered. The estimated cost for construction of the four-unit apartment building was $3,000. Hamilton built to a vernacular design.

Figure 8. Detail from 1911 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing vicinity of Boulevard and Auburn Avenue. Mary Motes Delbridge’s lot, just left of center in this map, remained empty. (University of Georgia)
with classical detailing using balloon-frame construction on brick piers. The cladding was clapboard, and the roofing, according to the building permit, was wood shingles. Four brick chimneys rose above the roof.

If the 1985 HABS drawings are correct, the front doors, each of which had transoms, had three, small square raised panels over a large square light with three more small square raised panels and two vertical panels below the light. Back doors to the kitchens were wooden with six horizontal panels like the rest of the interior doors. Doors to the bathrooms, which opened from the back porch and had transoms, were also six-panel.

The four windows at the front of the house featured fifteen-over-one sash. Two-over-two windows were used on the sides of the house, with single windows for the front and rear rooms and double windows for the two center rooms in each unit. All windows were covered with top-hung wooden screens.

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The two-story front porch was likely also raised on brick piers. The front porch steps would most likely have originally been wood instead of concrete block as they are now. The back porches, one for each apartment, were partially recessed beneath the main hipped roof. A wooden stairway would have provided access to the upper story.

The 1911 building permit for this building indicates that it was to contain sixteen rooms. Each of the four units had four rooms: a living room, two bedrooms, and a kitchen, plus the bathroom, which is not counted as a room in the language of real estate. These were arranged in a linear fashion, one room directly behind the other, connected by doorways.

City water and sewer were available on the street, according to the 1911 Atlanta city directory and the 1911 Sanborn maps. Each unit had a bathroom at the rear, sharing a “wet wall” with the adjacent kitchen but accessed from the back porch. Each bathroom contained a sink, a toilet, and a footed, cast-iron bathtub. A bathroom was a significant amenity at the time as only 15 percent of homes in the United States had complete bathrooms in 1900. The bathroom in each unit was unheated, and its only natural light was provided by the operable transom window over the door from the porch, which also provided necessary ventilation.

The 1995 Cultural Landscape Report depicts a small shed at the back of the lot, with similar sheds at the rear of each of the three shotguns. These are likely coal sheds for the fuel used in the fireplaces and stoves. Each apartment unit was heated by three coal-burning fireplaces, one in each main room, and a cook stove in the kitchen that was probably also originally coal-fired.

Both gas and electrical service were available in Atlanta in 1911, and there were ceiling-mounted light fixtures in all the rooms. Typical of the period, fixtures were almost certainly combination gas-electric fixtures. Gas lines still remain above the ceilings and some of the remaining lamp bases.

Walls and ceilings were painted plaster on wood lath; floors and woodwork were stained and varnished or shellacked. Fireplace mantels and hearths were installed in a hierarchy of room importance. The most important room of each unit, the parlor, had a quarter-tile fireplace surround with wood over-mantel and shelf; an inset beveled

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Figure 9. Building permit for construction of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments and the three duplexes at the rear of the lot. (Atlanta History Center)
mirror above the mantel shelf, and a quarter-tile hearth. Bedrooms had similar fireplaces, but the surrounds did not have the over-mantel and mirror. Even in the bedrooms, a hierarchy prevailed. One bedroom, perhaps intended for the head of household, had a fireplace similar to that of the parlor but without the over-mantel and mirror, but the other bedroom had an even simpler mantelpiece with console mantel supports, plastered surrounds, and plain concrete hearths. This arrangement is most evident in the upstairs west apartment, where the simplest fireplace mantel is still in place. All bedrooms had built-in closets, another modern amenity.

Interior doors had six horizontal panels. Doors were held in place with pintle-style hinges and opened with plain metal or glass door knobs.

The building was originally designated by deed records and postal addresses as 375–377 Auburn Avenue. The first-floor unit on the west was 375; the second-floor unit on the west was 375½. The first-floor unit on the east was 377, and the second-floor unit on that side was 377½. In 1927, the city renumbered street addresses throughout the city, and the units on the west became 491 and 491½ while those on the east became 493 and 493½. The historic numbering remains above the entrances to the two apartments on the west side of the building. This numbering continued until some point between 1978 and 1985, when the entire lot was designated as 493 Auburn Avenue. The 1994 National Register nomination refers to the property as 491–493, its designation during the district's period of significance. The National Park Service referred to the apartment house as 491 Auburn Avenue and the double-shotgun houses behind it as 493 A–D beginning about 1995. However, the entire property, when deeded to the National Park Service in 2003, was designated in the deed as 493 Auburn Avenue. The historic designations—491, 491½, 493, and 493½—will be used in this report.

Modifications Between the World Wars

Mary Delbridge died in 1927 and was buried next to her husband in Oakland Cemetery. Her two children, Thomas and Emily, inherited the apartment house. Neither of them ever married and both would continue to draw income from the apartments for decades to come.

During the early years, there were probably very few changes to the apartments beyond routine painting and repairs, but there are several changes that are characteristic of the period between the world wars, although some could have occurred somewhat later. Some changes to interior finish materials were made over the years, possibly as often as between every tenant, but most such changes would have involved minor repairs and simple repainting.

Roofing: After the 1917 fire, the city required that wood shingle roofs be replaced with fire-resistant materials. It is not clear when that change was made, but according to the 1932 Sanborn Map, the roofing of the building was asphalt shingle by that time. Since no early photographs of the house have so far been discovered, and all older roofing material was removed from the building in 2010, historic roof coverings cannot be characterized.

Electricity: Prior to World War I, residential electrical service was limited to lighting, typically a ceiling-mounted fixture, sometimes with wall sconces. An early modification was likely the addition of electrical wiring for baseboard-mounted receptacles. Remnants of surface-mounted knob-and-tube wiring are found in the baseboards. Typically this sort of modification occurred in the late 1920s.

1920s as the use of electric appliances and lamps proliferated.

**Heating/Cooking:** The coal-burning fireplaces were supplemented by free-standing natural-gas heaters that were usually set on the hearth in front of the firebox. Gas was also supplied to the kitchens, and the coal-burning kitchen stoves were replaced with gas-fired ones. This might have occurred prior to World War II but almost certainly in the decade or so after the war. Nevertheless, photographs of the back yard of this building taken in 1995 show a large woodpile, which may mean that occupants continued to use the fireplaces for heat, burning wood instead of coal.

**Interior Woodwork:** Stained-and-varnished woodwork was ubiquitous before World War I and was used in the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments. After World War I, that sort of finish was used less and less as painted woodwork, which was deemed more sanitary, came into fashion. In addition, shellac was widely used instead of varnish in the first quarter of the twentieth century, and its tendency to darken to almost black over the years was another impetus to overpaint old “natural” finishes. At the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments, the original stained-and-varnished woodwork, fireplace mantels, and doors eventually acquired layers of paint, but it appears that the fireplace surrounds and mantels were the last to be painted, since they have the fewest layers of paint, in some cases only one. On at least one of the fireplaces, contact paper was applied to the tile fireplace surrounds before painting. A careful laboratory analysis of painted and varnished or shellacked finishes would be

Figure 11. Probable appearance of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments prior to 1960. (HABS drawing)
helpful in establishing a chronology of changes in that aspect of the building’s architecture.

**Rear Porches:** When the apartments were originally constructed, each unit had a small service porch off the kitchen with a bathroom opening on to the porch as well. The original clapboard siding remains exposed on the walls of the porches that were formerly exterior walls.

It is not certain that the shed roof that extends beyond the rear of the building and would have provided at least partial shelter for stairs from the second floor was an original feature, but it was certainly there by the time the 1932 Sanborn map was issued. A slight projection of the exterior wall above the window on the east side of the addition was noted prior to the addition’s recent reconstruction, suggesting that there were the sort of closed returns often found at the sides of a shed-roofed porch. The Sanborn maps show the shed-roofed extension as an open porch, but it is possible also that the area under the shed roof was enclosed with lattice, which would not have been shown on the Sanborn map. A latticed back porch was a very common feature on Atlanta residences in the early twentieth century.

**Apartment 493½:** This apartment underwent some alterations that were unique to the building. This was the apartment of the tenant who lived in the building the longest, John Sims (b. 1890), his wife Fannie (b. 1891), and their three daughters: Mary Lou (b. 1910), Johnnie May (b. 1912), and Agnes (b. 1918). Originally tenants of one of the double-shotgun units behind the apartment house, Sims, a 34-year-old railroad machinist at the time, and his wife and three daughters moved into this apartment about 1926 and remained for twenty-one years. Rent in 1930 was set at $23 per month, according to the Federal census that year.

This is the only apartment in which the wood floors in the parlor (Room 202) and front bedroom (Room 201) were painted. Painting was accomplished after installation of a linoleum “rug” simulating a gray carpet with a floral pattern in the front bedroom; the flooring beneath the “rug” is unpainted.

Another modification probably made by the Sims was replacement of the typical six-panel door between Rooms 202 and 203 with a fifteen-light French door. This may indicate that Room 203 was not always used as a bedroom but as another “public” room, possibly a dining room, at some point in its history. Interestingly, the collection of locks on the south side of the door could indicate that this apartment was also, at one time, sub-divided into two apartments. The kitchen, Room 204, features a wooden “chair rail” around the room and a rigid plastic backsplash where the sink once was, additions not found in the other apartments. Finally, the now-enclosed back porch (Room 205) has shelving on its west wall, which the other apartments did not have.

**Modifications After World War II**

There are several alterations the character of which suggests were made in the third quarter of the twentieth century. Circumstantial evidence suggests that some of these were associated with the building permits that the Delbridges obtained in 1959 and 1960, but many are simply impossible to date more specifically.

It is assumed that all of the fireplace surrounds and hearths were originally finished with ceramic tile, but much of that is now missing. Missing ceramic hearth tiles were usually replaced with concrete patches, and in some cases the tile appears to have been entirely replaced with concrete. It is unlikely that many of these repairs would have been needed prior to World War II.

On occasion, wholesale changes were made to upgrade the appearance of the apartments, but these events were infrequent. Installation of resilient floor coverings in kitchens, bathrooms, and, in one case, a bedroom, likely occurred during and after the period of significance, as did installation of carpeting in parlors and bedrooms. Only the tacking strips around the perimeters of rooms provide evidence of former carpeting, so it is not possible to determine when or how often this floor material changed. Although few remnants of the linoleum-type floor coverings remain, it appears that introduction of this material only occurred once on each floor; there do not appear to be any layers of floor coverings. Likewise, remnants of wallpapering indicate single campaigns of wallpaper-hanging in selected rooms, with no underlying paper.

Changes—such as the introduction of electrical wiring in surface-mounted conduit and outlets and then, concealed wiring, with the associated appropriate fixtures—could have been made at any time after World War II. As the building aged, repairs would have become more extensive and expensive, and maintenance may have been deferred as
property owners throughout the district began to disinvest in the neighborhood.

The 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of Atlanta indicates that the apartment building must have remained largely unchanged from its original construction in 1911. The map's notation "o.u." (open underneath) indicates that the building still had piers with no underpinning. The map also shows that the rear shed-roofed area remained unenclosed. The house had asphalt-shingle roofing, perhaps the same roofing installed in the 1920s over the original wood-shingle roofing. The map generally did not note exterior finishes beyond noting whether it was wood, stone, or masonry construction. In 1950 the house was designated as being wood-framed, and its original wood siding probably remained exposed as well.

1959–1961 Renovation

In 1959, Emily and Thomas Delbridge, neither of whom apparently ever married, applied for a building permit to replace the wood stairs in the rear with a metal stairway. Colonial Forge was the contractor, and the work was completed July 1960. The estimated cost was only $250.24 A year later, Emily Delbridge alone applied for a building permit for "general repairs," proposing to use day labor at an estimated cost of $300. What work was proposed is not stated.25 Since building permits often included much more work than was stated on the application, it is probable that the building was substantially renovated between 1959 and 1961. The Delbridges also mortgaged the house in 1963 for $7500, but they may have gotten that loan for some other purpose than repairs to their apartment building.

Installation of the metal stairs that were removed in 2010 represents the only alteration the date of which can be determined by historical documentation. However, several other major alterations were characteristic of the period and provide material evidence that these changes almost certainly occurred in the late 1950s or early 1960s.

Rear Porches: Installation of the metal stairs seems to have been associated with enclosure of the porches. The enclosure could have come later; however, physical evidence suggests that it is likely original to the building noting that the precise

24. Atlanta Building Department, Fulton County, Georgia, Permit #7311.
25. Atlanta Building Department, Fulton County, Georgia, Permit #7168, Sep. 5, 1961, on microfilm in Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center.
sequence of changes and documentation of the original construction are difficult to determine. Photographs taken in 2008 document several features that are no longer present. At each end of the shed roof, the triangular area between the headers and posts and the rafters was finished with tongue-and-groove boards. When the area below was enclosed, the new walls were slightly narrower and, on the exterior, not in the same plane as the original returns. It is clear from photographs taken in 2008 that the area under the shed roof was enclosed with walls finished in drywall on the interior and sheathed with plywood and finished with cement-asbestos siding on the exterior, indicating that the enclosure was likely part of the renovations that occurred in 1959–1960.

**Exterior Siding:** The original clapboard siding was covered with the cement-asbestos shingle siding around 1960. The material was available in Atlanta as early as 1914 when “Fort Peace” was constructed on Fifteenth Street and the entire exterior finished with cement-asbestos shingles. These shingles were touted as being “fireproof” and requiring no maintenance, certainly important characteristics to a landlord. It was used extensively for roofing in the 1920s and 1930s, however, the material was not widely used in the area until after World War II. In the decade or so after World War II, cement-asbestos siding was used in new construction, and it continued to be installed over wood siding before being largely supplanted by aluminum and steel siding in the 1960s.

Similarly, it is also not certain when the foundation was underpinned with concrete block, but the underpinning was probably contemporaneous with the asbestos siding. Based on the 1950 Sanborn Map, this modification occurred after 1949 because the map notes the building as open underneath (the notation “o.u.”).

Other alterations might also be associated with the Delbridges’ alterations, one of which could have been installation of the hexagonal roof shingles that were removed in 2009. The cross-braced balustrades at the first floor of the front porch were in place when the building was drawn for the Historic American Building Survey in 1985 and could also have been installed around 1960.
There was significant work on the interior that most likely occurred in the third quarter of the twentieth century as well. One was installation of dry wall over the original plaster-on-wood-lath ceilings in the first floor and the subsequent stippling of the ceilings, a treatment that was tremendously popular in the 1960s and 1970s.

The original hearth tiles in Room 201 were also replaced using square tiles in pastel colors typical of the 1950s and 1960s. It may have been at this point, too, that several of the fireplaces were closed and some of the hearths replaced with concrete.

A closet was constructed in the southeast corner of Room 201, but that may be a later addition. At some point, too, most of the east yard, including the ten-foot alley described in the deed, was paved with asphalt. Remnants of asphalt paving are present in the rear yard but it is not clear if that area was actually used for parking since the 1995 CLR shows the entire rear yard as being fenced. It is unclear when the concrete steps at the back doors were installed, but they probably date at least to the 1960s. Remnants of a hexagonal-tile floor are also present around these steps, but they appear to have come from elsewhere. The modern building at the rear of Our Lady of Lourdes Church replaced a late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century wood-framed residence, and the tile remnants, as well as some of the debris along the west side of the house may have come from demolition of that building.

Late Alterations

It is likely that few changes were made to the building between 1968, when the Delbridges sold it, and 1987, when it was purchased by Johnnie Haugabrook, because it passed so swiftly between buyers and sellers during that period. Haugabrook kept the building for fifteen years before selling it to the National Park Service, so he may be responsible for some of the repairs and finish changes noted on site. Haugabrook was cited by the city in 1993 for housing code violations. It particularly noted that the front porch flooring and railing were in disrepair and required work. It was probably at this time that the early twentieth-century front doors depicted in the 1985 HABS drawings were replaced with the present flush doors.

Many of the features noted by the 1995 Cultural Landscape Report as being present in the rear yard at that time have been lost, including clothes lines, "mixed material" fences on the east and south sides, a small outbuilding, and a hydrangea. A clump of canna lilies is missing from the front yard, and the gangs of electrical meters and of gas meters that were present near the front of the building’s west side were removed after 2008.

National Park Service

After establishment of the National Historic Site, the National Park Service conducted a number of studies to assist in preservation and interpretation
of the district's historic structures and landscapes. These included a Historic Resource Study, which established an inventory of the district's most significant resources, and a Cultural Landscape Report for the Birth Home Block, which included the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments. The latter recorded several features that are no longer intact, including all of the features shown as existing in the rear yard; the gas and electrical meters at the front of the west side of the house; a clump of canna lilies at the northwest corner of the house; and the pipe railing on both sides of the front steps.

The NPS acquired the building in 2003, and it has remained vacant since that time. In 2010, an extensive campaign of improvement to the exterior envelope and the supporting structure was undertaken. Repairs included replacement of most of the roof structure and all of the roof covering; replacement of floor joists and other deteriorated structural members; installation of temporary supports for the first floor; removal and reconstruction of the first floor of the front porch and recreation of the original first floor balustrades; removal and reconstruction of the shed-roofed extension to the back porches; replacement of missing windows; and exterior painting. On the interior, cast-iron tubs and other fixtures were removed from bathrooms and kitchens and placed in storage. No finishes were changed except where windows were replaced or reconstructed for those that were removed; some deteriorated flooring was covered with plywood. This work was intended to stabilize the building and secure the building from weather and human infiltration until the Ultimate Treatment and Use could be determined and the work for it executed.

Timeline

Sep. 4, 1911 – Mary Motes Delbridge purchased lot 51 of the 1881 subdivision of the Lynch estate and gave Henry Reid a note for $1800.26

26. The legal description of the property remains the same throughout these transactions although the address of the property changes. The property was never subdivided and was passed intact from seller to buyer.

Figure 16. View of front of Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments in 2008. (NPS)
Sep. 6, 1911 – Alexander D. Hamilton applied for a building permit to construct a four-unit apartment house and three duplex houses.

Nov. 1, 1911 – Construction of four-unit apartment building at 375–377 Auburn Avenue completed.

1927 – City of Atlanta renumbered city lots and 375–377 become 491–493 Auburn.

1927 – Mary Motes Delbridge died, leaving the apartment house to her children, Emily and Thomas Delbridge.

Dec. 12, 1951 – Delbridges grant an electrical easement to Georgia Power.

July 19, 1960 – Completion of work to remove rear wood stairs and replace with metal stairway. It is probable that the area under the shed roof off the back porches was enclosed and the cement-asbestos siding and concrete block underpinning installed at this time.

Nov. 26, 1963 – Delbridges used the property as surety for a loan of $7,500 from Fulton Federal Savings and Loan Association.

June 5, 1968 – The Delbridges sold the property to Frank M. Williams for $9,500, and Frank M. Williams mortgaged it the same day to Benny Liberson for the same amount.


May 5, 1977 – Property designated a contributing structure in the National Historic Landmark District and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (#74000677).

Feb. 28, 1979 – Settlement of Frank Williams estate conveys property to his heirs.


Oct. 10, 1980 – The Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District established by Congress through Public Law 96-428. Property is within the authorized boundaries.

July 2, 1986 – The heirs of Francis Marcus Williams sold the property to John P. Bradbury Sr.

June 3, 1987 – John P. Bradbury Sr. sold the property to Johnnie Haugabrook for $90,000, self-financed.

1989 – Atlanta City Council designated the Martin Luther King Jr. Landmark Historic District under the city’s new historic preservation zoning ordinance. The Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments are part of this district.

1997 – Johnnie Haugabrook sold the property to JMES Holding, Inc. Johnnie Haugabrook and his wife, Mary, were President and Secretary of JMES Holding, Inc.

Aug. 6, 2003 – JMES Holding, Inc. sold the property to the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, for $270,000.
Physical Description

Vernacular in design, this four-unit apartment building is a two-story, rectangular, balloon-framed structure, measuring around 33' east to west and 53' north to south. It is detailed with simplified Neoclassical features on the exterior, expressed in the symmetrical facade; the slender, square, wooden porch columns; the enclosed boxed eaves with simple, molded details; and the simple, molded, crown and drip caps at the windows.

The units are numbered over the doors, indicating their historic designations after 1927, which are verified by the Atlanta city directories. Historically, the downstairs unit on the west side of the house was designated 491 Auburn Avenue, the upstairs unit on the west side was 491 1/2 Auburn Avenue, the downstairs unit on the east side of the house was 493, and the upstairs unit was 493 1/2. Some of these numbers remain intact over the doorways, and the historic numerical reference for each apartment should be used instead of a modern numerical or alphabetical reference.

Site

Facing north on the south side of Auburn Avenue, the building sits on a narrow lot 60' wide and 188' deep that slopes gently down from the southeast. Delbridge’s deed for the property states that a ten-foot-wide alley was to be kept open along the eastern side of the lot “in perpetuity,” but a concrete walkway to provide handicapped accessibility to the house next door was installed in 2008. In addition, much of what had been a narrow yard along the east side of the house has been paved.

Figure 18. Google Earth map annotated with an arrow to indicate the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments at 491–493 Auburn Avenue. (Google Earth, 2011)
with asphalt. The building sits less than two feet off the west property line and around ten feet from the sidewalk along Auburn Avenue. Three duplex houses occupy the rear half of the lot facing the alley running along the east lot line.

A rowlock course of brick defines the front yard on either side of a wide central walkway to the porch. Some of the brick are loose, and mortar is deteriorating. Each side of the front yard contains a large holly tree and no grass. The holly trees are pruned in an umbrella shape. The ground beneath the holly trees is mulched with pine straw.

The building is approached from the city sidewalk by a short, brick walkway spanning the width of the stairway leading to the front porch. The brick sidewalk is worn but still in fair condition. The steps to the front porch are concrete block. They probably replaced wooden steps, which were typical in the early twentieth century, and are likely contemporaneous with installation of the cement-asbestos siding and other alterations that occurred near the end of the district's period of significance. When originally constructed, only the lowest step was parged and all of the steps were left unpainted. The steps were patched and painted for the first time in 2010. The metal pipe handrails that were on either side of the steps in 2008 have been removed.

The western lot line is defined by a low stone wall topped by a chain-link fence separating the apartment building property and the parking lot for Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church to the west. Remnants of a small concrete pad and a possible
concrete curb of bricks and concrete are located at
the southwest corner of the building, between the
building and the stone wall. The rear yard was once
paved, but only remnants of the asphalt pavement
remains.

Foundation
The building is set on brick piers which have been
infilled at the perimeter with concrete masonry
units (CMU) to enclose the crawl space. The in­
terior piers on the north facade of the house have
been stuccoed. Periodic openings in the CMU infill
wall on the east and west elevations are covered
with metal grates except for the opening on the
south end of the west facade, where the grate is
missing. These openings ventilate and allow light to
the interior of the crawl space.

Uncontrolled runoff appears to have washed away
the mortar in places, especially close to the ground,
but, overall, the piers and CMU are in good condi­
tion and do not appear to be under stress. The
entry hatch to the crawl space on the east side of
the building is in poor condition and is closed with
a sheet of plywood. A similar opening on the west
side of the building has been closed with a sheet of
plywood and a piece of modern board paneling,
both unpainted. It is also in poor condition.

Exterior

Figure 22. View of foundation on west side of building, showing original piers and ca. 1960 concrete-block underpinning,
and, at left, the front porch foundation that was reconstructed in 2010.
The house features a full-width, two-story front porch engaged by the main hipped roof. Back porches are on both levels of the south elevation. The northern ends of the back porches are engaged by the main roof, while the southern ends project about three feet from the main house and are covered by a common shed roof. The back porches are enclosed except for the west side at the second floor where there are doors to 491½ and 493½. At the front porch, the two openings to the stairs to those units most recently were closed by screen doors. The two units on the west side of the house have modern metal mailboxes mounted on the first-floor door casing. A wall-mounted light fixture, probably dating to 1960, is mounted between the door casing and the window casing for 491 and 493 Auburn Avenue.

The east and west elevations of the building have the identical arrangement of windows on the first and second stories. Each elevation has two galvanized pipes penetrating to the exterior of building at the second story and running down the outside of the building to the foundation level, where they turn and enter the crawl space. These pipes once provided gas service to the upstairs apartments.

The south elevation has a two-story bay centered on the back of the building. This was originally a two-story porch that was later mostly enclosed except for a portion of the second story porch.
which remains open. The enclosed porch bay has a shed roof that fits up under the hipped roof of the main building and is covered with three-tabbed asphalt shingles. The bay has been completely reconstructed; evidence on the interior indicates that it is now about six inches deeper than originally. The door openings on the first story each have a concrete stoop with a single step. Currently, the openings have been closed with temporary plywood sheets. Wall-mounted ceramic light fixtures formerly located at each door have been removed. Random-width sections of wood serve as rails for the second story porch; there are no balustrades or stairs. The metal staircase (ca. 1960) to the second floor porches was removed in 2010.

**Roof**

The hipped roof is finished with three-tab asphalt shingles. Four stucco-covered brick chimneys penetrate the roof. All appear to be in excellent condition. New flashing and drip edges were installed with the new roofing. The soffit and fascia have been recently repaired and appear in good condition. The crown molding of the fascia is new and matches the original in its overall size but not in its profile. There are no gutters or downspouts on the building; any that might have existed were removed in the late twentieth century.

**Doors**

Exterior doors are wood, 2’10” x 6’10”, but none of them date to the 1930s. Solid-core, flush doors were installed at the front-door openings in the 1990s. Each has an 18” high transom. The four three-light, three-panel doors at the backdoor openings date to the 1960 renovation and are
2'10" x 6'8". Door casing is plain, 5" wide with a conventional sill at the bottom and drip cap and bed molding as a crown molding. At the top of the stairs, the entrance doors to the two apartments are also modern, solid-core, flush doors. At the foot of the stairs to the upstairs apartment are wood screen doors. A historic screen door is at the top of the stairs to 491½ Auburn.

Windows

Windows are all double-hung with counterweighted wooden sash. The four windows on the front of the house are fifteen-over-one and 3'0" x 5'0". On the sides of the house, windows were typically two-over-two, 2'6" x 5'0". Windows have plain wood casings and simple molded wood crowns on the exterior. Windows are in fair to good condition, but details of some of the replacement windows do not match the historic condition. A single four-over-four window is located on the east side of the rear addition. All windows except the four-over-four windows and the transoms over the doors have wood-framed, top-hung screens, some of which are recreations of the originals.

Exterior Finishes

The main body of the building is still clad in its original clapboard siding, covered with cement-asbestos siding with typical metal corners, except on the enclosed back porches where corners are wood. Only on the south elevation, at the second-story enclosed back porch level is the original clapboard siding exposed. The original composition shingles are cement-asbestos, but the shingles covering the reconstructed back porches are a modern non-asbestos-containing cement shingle, which match the historic shingles in appearance. The siding has been painted and, overall, is in good condition. There is an area of broken siding on the
second-floor north elevation, some of the siding on the west second-story elevation does not appear to be securely fastened, and there are a few minor areas of chipping on the earlier siding.

The wooden corner boards have been replaced or repaired. It appears that original metal corners on the main body of the building were simply re-attached; some of them still exhibit wrinkling of the metal.

All wood, metal, and masonry surfaces are painted except for the front porch foundation and the CMU infill along the perimeter of the building.

**Front Porches**

A full-width, two-story porch supported by square, one-story boxed columns on each floor extends across the front of the house. The porch foundation and the lower porch floor framing were completely reconstructed in 2010.

The porch foundation is continuous, constructed of brick laid in a running bond and is in good condition. It appears that at least some of the original foundation brick was used to reconstruct the porch. The brick piers and the porch foundation were painted red, probably during the historic period, but the concrete-block underpinning has never been painted.

Porch flooring consists of \( \frac{3}{4}'' \times 3\frac{1}{2}'' \) tongue-and-groove boards that have been face-nailed rather than blind-nailed. Several porch columns, including the first- and second-story columns on the northwest corner of the porch, have been replaced; others have been re-used or reconfigured. Elongated plinths were added to the second-story porch columns to match those on the first-story porch columns, creating a column profile that, from earlier photographs, is not the historic profile. The porch columns are in good condition, but knots are evident causing unsightly spots on the painted surface.

The original first-floor balustrades were lost in the twentieth century, with the present balustrades recreations of the original. The balustrades that separate the porches for each apartment are the best representation of the historic condition. Balustrades have top and bottom rails that are reeded on the sides and square balusters. Balustrades appear to be in good condition.

As repaired in 2010, the front porch columns differ from the historic columns in the depth of the plinth, which is several times the original, and in the profiling of the molding of the capital. Altera-
tions were also made to moldings on the header between floors that do not match the original.

Porch ceilings are double-beaded, tongue-and-groove boards, recently painted, which appear to be in fair condition. Evidence remains on the porch ceilings of former porch swings hung perpendicular to the building. On the west porch at the first-floor level are two small strips of wood secured to the porch ceiling, centered on the front window and parallel to the building, with holes in the wood strips where hooks to hang a porch swing might have once been.

On the east porch at the first-floor level there is a board nailed perpendicular to the building, centered on the front window and secured and braced at the building wall with a length of molding. Two hooks and a light fixture are attached to this wood strip. The light fixture is attached to a second strip of wood secured to the first strip, and it appears to be no longer powered. The 491 Auburn apartment has porch swing hooks screwed directly into the porch ceiling in front of the front window.

Crawl Space
The crawl space is beneath the entire first floor, excluding the porches. The walls consist of the original brick piers with concrete-block infill between them. The brick piers on the north side of the building have been parged, which may indicate the earliest treatment of these piers, although the rest of the piers around the perimeter of the build-

Figure 35. View of replaced floor joists.

Figure 36. View southwest of crawl space.
ing are not parged. These parged piers have been infilled with brick rather than CMU.

Openings for ventilation with metal grilles punctuate the underpinning except at the southwest corner of the crawl space, where the grille is missing. The floor is dirt. Brick piers, approximately 8" x 16", regularly spaced, support sills above, which are exposed to the crawl space, as is the underside of the wood flooring. The piers are approximately 4' high toward the north side of the building and decrease in height toward the south due to the natural slope of the lot on which the building sits. An additional support, consisting of wood "footings" on the dirt floor of the crawl space provide temporary support for the joists on the west side of the building. Some of the joists, especially on the south and west sides, have been sistered or replaced with new joists secured with metal joist hangers. The foundations for the four brick fireplaces are also located in the crawl space. Shallow brick arches within framed openings in the floors support the hearths for each fireplace. The joists have been drilled to run electrical wiring, much of which still exists.

Also still existing are water, gas, and waste pipes suspended from the joists. An interesting feature of the underside of the flooring visible in the crawl space is that it appears to have been stained and varnished, probably for use as part of a finished floor. Bridging between joists appears to be composed of sections of tongue-and-groove flooring. These features are indicative of the common construction practice of employing materials unused in previous work for a new job, saving the contractor, if not the client, money in materials.

Interior

Facing north, this two-story building has four apartment units, two downstairs and two upstairs, with a crawl space below. The rooms are in a modified shotgun arrangement, each connected to the one immediately behind it through a doorway, with no hall. On the first floor, the northernmost rooms (Rooms 101 and 107) are the parlors, each with a bedroom to the south, a dining room or another bedroom behind that, and the kitchen at the south end.

Figure 37. View of typical joist bridging and varnished flooring that must have been recycled from another building.
end. The back porch, now enclosed, is accessed from the kitchen, and the bathroom, which shares a wet wall with the kitchen, is accessed from the enclosed back porch. On the second floor, the room arrangement is the same except that the stairs from the front porch access the second room from the front. All rooms except the kitchen and bathroom originally had coal-burning fireplaces; some of these have been removed, closed, or covered.

**Flooring**

Flooring is wood. Historic flooring is 3\(\frac{1}{2}\)" × \(\frac{3}{4}\)" tongue-and-groove boards, laid north to south. Where the historic flooring has been removed or damaged, temporary flooring of 4' × 8' sheets of plywood has been added. All flooring is in poor condition due to neglect, moisture damage, and lack of protection. The remaining historic flooring is becoming increasingly damaged due to lack of protection from storage of damaged room finishes and continued deterioration. Some rooms have tacking strips around the perimeters, indicating the previous installation of wall-to-wall carpeting. Some floors have remnants of resilient floor covering, and temporary plywood sheets cover other areas of the floors where the walking surface is deteriorating.

**Walls and Ceilings**

The majority of the walls and ceilings are painted plaster on lath. All lath is wood except for some minor plaster patching that used metal lath. Plaster consisted of two, not the customary three coats, and as a result, is in poor condition in places. Some of the original ceiling and wall lath has been covered or replaced with gypsum board. Some
walls are covered in wallpaper. The walls of Rooms 110, 200, and 213 are partly covered with double-beaded, tongue-and-groove boards. Rooms 205 and 211 have no ceiling, and lapped wood siding covers what were the original exterior walls. The rest of the walls of these rooms are gypsum board or exposed studs with no wall coverings. All wall and ceiling finishes are painted. Painted finishes are failing.

**Doors and Windows**
Most of the interior doors are wooden, six-panel doors installed when the building was built. Doors are 2'10" x 6'8". Between Rooms 107 and 108, a fifteen-light French door replaced what was presumably a six-panel door sometime in the mid-twentieth century. A modern six-panel, Colonial-Revival door was installed with the closet added in Room 201. Wood window elements and window casing is painted. Painted finishes are failing. Many of the original mortise locks and ball-tip hinges remain intact.

**Woodwork**
All historic woodwork was originally stained and varnished with paint added over these historic finishes. Replacement woodwork is only painted or left unfinished. Woodwork profiles vary between floors. Baseboards on the first floor are 7½" high; baseboards on the second floor are only 7" high. Paint finishes are deterioration.

**Light Fixtures**
Most light fixtures, outlets, and switches are

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**Figure 42.** View of doorway trim in front rooms. Note the use of molded casing on the jambs and a plain casing on the headers.

**Figure 43.** View of typical original door hinge.

**Figure 44.** View of typical interior mortise lock.
either surface-mounted or with concealed wiring, indicating at least two campaigns of electrification in this building. There are remnants of knob-and-tube wiring in the baseboards, but none of the present fixtures are historic.

**Fireplaces**
The fireplaces are all sized for coal. All originally had ceramic tile firebox surrounds and ceramic tile hearths on shallow brick supporting arches, but not all of the tile remains intact. All of the fireboxes were originally fitted with cast-iron frames and had iron covers, but most of the covers have been lost. All fireplace surrounds are painted except for the firebox face and the coal grates. Some fireplaces have been closed with gypsum board and their hearths removed, but ghosts of the hearth remain in the flooring. Next to each fireplace is a gas valve for the gas-fired space heaters that were installed to replace the coal fires.

Figure 45. View of typical Type 1 mantel.

Figure 46. View of typical woodwork, which includes molded and un-molded casing and molded corner blocks at doors and windows; a baseboard with base cap and shoe mold; and a picture mold.
The Type 1 mantelpiece is $55\frac{1}{2}' \times 60'$. The mantel shelf and outer surround are painted wood. The surround protrudes $4\frac{3}{4}''$ from the wall, and the mantel shelf is $9'' \times 50'' \times 1\frac{1}{4}'$. The mantel shelf is supported by two wooden brackets $8'' \times 1\frac{1}{8}'' \times 3\frac{3}{4}'$. The cast-iron firebox is $30\frac{3}{4}'' \times 25'' \times 10''$ with integral supports for the coal fender. The hearth is $15\frac{1}{2}'' \times 60''$.

The Type 2 mantelpiece is similar in materials and design to Type 1, but the entire surround is $77'' \times 60''$ and includes an overmantel. The overmantel consists of two $3''$ square columns, $20''$ tall, supporting a $2''$ thick upper mantel shelf. Framed between the columns and inset in the wood surround is a $23\frac{3}{4}'' \times 13''$ beveled mirror. The hearth is $15\frac{1}{2}'' \times 60''$ and covered with ceramic tile.

The Type 3 mantelpiece consists of a mantel shelf supported by two narrow console brackets that extend to the floor. The firebox cover is of a different design than those of Types 1 and 2. The hearth is $15\frac{1}{2}'' \times 60''$ and appears to be masonry parged with concrete or plaster.

**Individual Room Descriptions**

All room dimensions are given north to south and then east to west. Rooms were measured from wall finish to wall finish and from ceiling finish to finished floor. Except where noted, rooms were measured at the widest points, without regard for intrusions, such as small plumbing chases or fireplace flues. Applied wall treatments were measured from the top of the treatment to the finished floor and are noted as "AFF," the abbreviation for "above finished floor."

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**Figure 47.** Detail of fireplace quarter-tile surround and cast-iron firebox surround.

**Figure 48.** View of typical Type 2 mantel.

**Figure 49.** View of typical Type 3 mantel.
**493 Auburn Avenue**

**Room 101**
This room was the parlor for the apartment. It measures 14'9" x 12'1". The ceiling is 9'9" high. Currently, it is being used for storage of random architectural and building materials.

Floors: This room appears to retain all of its historic flooring although the flooring is in poor condition.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls and ceilings are plaster-on-lath or plaster-on-lath covered with gypsum board. They are in good condition, with no evidence of peeling paint that might hint at a moisture problem. However, the amount of stored materials in this room may conceal some conditions on the west wall.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 around windows and doors with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinths. Woodwork appears to be in good condi-

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**Figure 50. Plan of existing first floor.**

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**Figure 51. Plan of existing second floor.**
tion except for the paint finish, which is in fair to poor condition.

Fireplace: Type 2. Over-mantel supports are square. Fireplace surround is glazed tile in a green and cream tortoise-shell design, 1½" x 5" in dimension, in good condition. Paint over-spray on the fireplace surround has resulted in paint on historically unpainted tile surround and firebox cover.

Lighting and Electrical Service: Both surface-mounted and concealed wiring service this room, and a light switch of each type is located next to the exterior door on the north wall. At least one outlet is located in the baseboards.

Room 102
This room was a bedroom for the apartment. It measures 13'4" x 16'1". The ceiling is 9'10". It is currently being used to store random architectural and building materials.

Floors: Historic flooring appears to be intact in this room although in poor condition. When walked on, floor deflects slightly.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls and ceilings are plaster-on-lath, some of which has been covered with gypsum board. Walls and ceilings are in good condition, with no evidence of peeling paint that might hint at a moisture problem. However, the amount of stored materials in this room may conceal some conditions on the west wall.
Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinth. Woodwork appears to be in good condition except for the paint finish, which is in fair to poor condition.

Fireplace: The mantel has been removed and the firebox is now concealed behind dry wall.

Closet: This room has a closet built into the recess created by the chimney stack on the north wall. The closet is original. The floors are wood, with a wood threshold between the closet and the room, and the door and door woodwork match that of the historic doors and woodwork. It contains a wood shelf with a clothes bar beneath, and a metal rack is affixed to the inside of the door.
Lighting and Electrical Service: This room appears to have only surface-mounted electrical service. Stored materials in this room could be concealing later electrical features.

Room 103
This room was the second bedroom for the apartment, or it could have been used as a dining room. It measures 11'10" x 16'1". The ceiling is 9'10½". This room is being used for storage of random architectural and building materials, making thorough investigation and analysis of its condition impossible.

Floors: Historic flooring apparently still covers most of this room, but it has failed and been removed along the south wall. There is a large hole in the southeast corner of the room, at the entrance to Room 104, which has been only partly covered with a plywood walking surface.

Walls and Ceilings: Although most of the walls may still be plaster-on-lath, the north wall appears to be covered with gypsum board. The ceiling is a single layer of gypsum board affixed directly to the ceiling joists. The ceiling was finished with a coating of joint compound that was "stippled" with a round brush, a finish that was widely used in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Some of the ceiling has failed or been removed at the south end of the room, revealing the pattern of the original lath boards on the existing ceiling joists and the brick base of the hearth for the room above, which appears to be failing into the cavity between the flooring above and the ceiling below. There is a crack in the wall above the south door, which may indicate water damage in the underlying plaster.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinth. Woodwork appears in fair to poor condition. The paint finish is failing.

Fireplace: The mantel has been removed and the firebox is now concealed behind dry wall.

Lighting and Electrical Service: Although surface mounted wiring and a light switch remain in this room, the addition of some kind of control, possibly an alarm system, mounted beside the north doorway indicated concealed electrical wiring as well. The surface-mounted wiring feeds a ceiling-mounted, ceramic-based light fixture with a

Figure 57. View north in Room 103.
double-bulb socket in poor condition. There is no light shade on this fixture.

Room 104
This room was the kitchen for the apartment. It measures 11'2" x 10'9" with an intrusion 14" x 58" for the fireplace flue on the north wall of the room. The ceiling is 9'8½". This room is currently being used to store random architectural and building materials.

Floors: It appears that the historic flooring has been completely replaced with plywood subflooring, which is in fair condition. A metal threshold oriented east to west near the door on the north wall, but not in the opening, may indicate the location of the northernmost edge of former resilient flooring. This feature is modern and in good condition.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls and ceilings are plaster-on-lath or plaster-on-lath covered with gypsum board. There is a large, vertical crack in the south wall of this room.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinth. Woodwork appears to be in fair condition although the paint finish is failing. Baseboards where the water supply line and P-trap indicate the former location of the kitchen sink are of a different profile than the rest of the baseboards in the room.

Fireplace: There is no fireplace in this room, but a circular opening with a metal liner is located about 8' above the floor where a stove exhaust pipe would connect with the fireplace flue. The presence of a gas line connection near the baseboard at this location indicates the stove was gas.

Lighting and Electrical Service: An outlet near the baseboard is evidence of concealed wiring in this room.

Special Features: Two pieces of woodwork mounted on the east wall of the room above the former location of the kitchen sink indicate where a mirror or a cabinet was hung. A metal towel bar is mounted on the north wall. Supply lines for the water heater are located in the southeast corner.

Room 105
This room was the utility room for apartment 493.
It measures 8’1” x 5’8½”. The ceiling is 9’11”.

Floors: Flooring is plywood. The plywood is covered with dirt and building materials, so the condition was impossible to determine.

Walls and Ceilings: The west wall of this room is a new stud wall without interior finishes. The south “wall” was rebuilt in 2010 and consists of two new stud walls. The original door frame remains in its original location, but the walls on either side of it are new stud walls with no interior finishes. On the outside of this wall is another wall of new studs with chipboard sheathing applied to the exterior side of the studs, to which the modern, asbestos-free cementious shingle siding is attached. This creates a double-wall system and makes the reconstructed porch approximately six inches larger than the original enclosed porch area on the outside, though it is the original dimensions on the inside. The north and east walls are painted clapboard siding, evidence that this was once an exterior wall to the back porch. The upper two clapboards on the north wall are of different profile than the rest of the clapboards and are later replacements.

Woodwork: The only woodwork in this room is the casing around the door openings on the north and east walls of the room. It is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding. Woodwork is in good condition, and paint finish is in fair to poor condition. There are no baseboards.

**Room 106**

This room was the bathroom for the apartment. It measures 5’5” x 5’10”. The ceiling is 8’4½”.

Floors: Flooring is plywood. It is in fair condition.
Walls and Ceilings: Walls are plaster-on-lath or plaster-on-lath covered with gypsum board. The ceiling is plaster-on-lath covered with gypsum board. The ceiling has been painted with texture paint and stippled. It is damaged.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding. Some plain baseboards remain in this room. They are 7¾" tall and in poor condition.

Lighting and Electrical Service: This room is served by surface-mounted wiring and a single-bulb, ceramic light fixture with no shade mounted on the ceiling.

Plumbing: Evidence of water supply lines and waste lines remain in the room, but all plumbing fixtures have been removed.

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Room 107

This room was the parlor for apartment 491-A. It measures 14'9" x 12'1". The ceiling is 9'9½".

Floors: Flooring consists of historic flooring between the east wall and the east side of the interior doorways. Remaining flooring is plywood. All flooring is in poor condition.

Walls and Ceilings: The plaster-on-lath ceiling is covered with a layer of gypsum board painted with texture paint and stippled. Both ceiling materials are failing due to water damage, leaving the ceiling lath exposed. Water damage is evident in the joists above the ceiling. Walls are either plaster-on-lath or plaster-on-lath covered with gypsum board. The
wall covering on the south end of the west wall and over the door on the south wall has failed, leaving the lath exposed. A wallpaper border of pink roses and green leaves encircles the room at approximately 4'6" above finished floor (AFF).

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinths. Baseboards appear to be in fair condition except at the west wall, where they have been removed.

Fireplace: Type 2. The overmantel supports are round. The beveled mirror inset into the mantelpiece is in good condition. The surround is glazed tile in a tortoise-shell design of deep red and cream, 1½" × 5" in dimension, in good condition except for a coat of black paint, which peels off easily. The hearth is mostly deep red tile of the same dimensions. "A.E.T. Co." is molded into the back side of the tiles, the initials of the manufacturer, the American Encaustic Tiling Company, Ltd. Most of the hearth tiles are broken or missing, though some whole tiles remain. Hearth tiles on the east end of the hearth have been replaced with what appears to be either cement scored to resemble tile or modern ceramic tile with a white bisque glaze. The metal firebox cover is in good condition, but the coal fender is missing.

Lighting and Electrical Service: This room has both surface-mounted wiring and fixtures and concealed wiring. A fuse box with two fuses is still located on the wall of this room. The ceiling-
mounted fixture in this room is a combination light and fan powered by surface-mounted wiring. The loss of ceiling plaster has destabilized the fan.

**Room 108**

This room was a bedroom for apartment 491-A. It measures 13'4" x 16'1" with an intrusion 22 1/2" x 61" that is the fireplace flue on the north side of this room. The ceiling is 9'10". It is currently being used to store building supplies.

Floors: Flooring consists of historic flooring between the east wall and the east side of the interior doorways. Remaining flooring is plywood. All flooring is in poor condition.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls and ceilings are plaster-on-lath, some of which are covered with gypsum board. The ceiling is painted with texture paint and stippled. The ceiling is slightly damaged near the entrance to Room 107, and some of the wall covering over this door has failed, leaving the lath exposed. A crack appears over this opening, east of the failed wall covering.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinths. Baseboards are in fair condition except at the west wall, where they have been removed.

Fireplace: No fireplace appears in this room, but the opening is likely concealed behind the gypsum board wall on the north side of the room. A change in the floorboards at this location shows the former presence of a hearth at this location.

*Figure 68. View of flooring in Room 108. Original flooring is visible in the lower right quadrant of this image. Across the top is similar pine flooring that was used to floor the area where the fireplace hearth was removed.*

*Figure 69. View north in Room 108.*
Lighting and Electrical Service: This room is served by both surface-mounted and concealed wiring. At least one receptacle is located in the baseboard of this room.

**Room 109**

This room was likely the second bedroom for apartment 491-A, or it could have been used as a dining room. It measures 11'9½" x 16'1". The ceiling is 9'9".

Floors: Flooring consists of historic flooring between the east wall and the east side of the interior doorways. Remaining flooring is plywood. All flooring is in poor condition. Tacking strips around the edge of the room give evidence of a former carpet covering.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls are plaster-on-lath, at least some of which has been covered with gypsum board. The ceiling is plaster-on-lath covered with gypsum board painted with textured paint and stippled. The west half of the gypsum board has been removed, likely because of failure in the plaster above it. The lath is exposed where the plaster failed. Most of the plaster and lath on the west wall of the room has failed, exposing the wall framing, including the original truss header over the window. The jack header over the south door has been completely replaced, so no wall finishes remain.

Figure 70. View north in Room 109.

Figure 71. View of windows on west side of Room 109, with most original casing and trim intact.
Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinth. Baseboards are in fair condition except at the west wall, where they have been removed.

Fireplace: There is no fireplace in this room. A pipe for a gas connection protrudes from the south wall, indicating where a gas heater once stood, so it is likely that there was once a fireplace that has since been removed.

Lighting and Electrical Service: There is no exposed wiring in this room and no ceiling light. Two outlets are present in the baseboards.

**Room 110**

This room was the kitchen for apartment 491-A. It measures 11'1" x 10'0" with an intrusion 13½" x 61" that is the fireplace flue. The ceiling is 9'9".

Floors: Flooring consists of historic flooring between the east wall and the east side of the interior doorways. Remaining flooring is plywood. All flooring is in poor condition. Resilient flooring which formerly covered this floor, noted in the 2008 Condition Assessment, has been removed.

Walls and Ceilings: The ceiling has failed from

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_Figure 72. View of southwest corner of Room 109, showing major water damage from leaking roof._

_Figure 73. View northwest in Room 110._

_Figure 74. View southeast in Room 110, showing part of new wall added at south end of room._
water damage. Some ceiling joists exhibit water damage, and lath is coming loose from the ceiling joists. The ceiling that remains appears to have been gypsum board painted with texture paint and stippled. New framing has been installed across the south side of the room, doubling the thickness of the wall. Most wall coverings have failed or been removed, leaving the lath, studs, and backs of the clapboard on the west and south walls exposed. The west and north walls still have remnants of wallpaper clinging to them, but the plaster behind them is failing.

Woodwork: Where it remains, woodwork is Type 2 with Type 26 cap moldings and Type 22 door plinths, all in poor condition. No baseboards remain in this room.

Lighting and Electrical Service: A single-bulb, ceramic fixture powered by surface-mounted electrical wiring is still mounted on the ceiling.

**Room 111**

This room was the utility room for apartment 491-A. It measures 8'0" x 6'1". The ceiling is 10'1".

Floors: Floor is plywood in fair condition.

Walls and Ceilings: Most walls have been reconstructed of new studs. The east wall of this room is a new stud wall without finish coverings. The south "wall" consists of two new stud walls. The original door frame remains in its original location, but the walls on either side of it are new stud walls with no finish coverings.
On the outside of this wall is another wall of new studs with chipboard sheathing applied to the exterior side of the studs, to which the new non-asbestos-containing, cement-shingle siding is attached. This creates a double-wall system and makes the reconstructed porch approximately six inches larger than the original enclosed porch area on the outside, though it is the original dimensions on the inside. The north and west walls are clapboard siding, painted or possibly stained, evidence that this was once an exterior wall to the back porch.

**Figure 78.** View southwest in Room 201.

**Room 112**
This room was the bathroom for the apartment. It measures 5'7" x 5'7½". The ceiling is 8'5".

Floors: Floor is plywood in fair condition.

Walls and Ceilings: The walls and ceilings are plaster-on-lath or gypsum board. The walls are covered with wallpaper. The ceiling, which was painted with texture paint and stippled, is beginning to fail, and part of it has been removed.

Woodwork: Some casing remains around the door opening, and it is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding. It is in fair condition except for the paint finish.

Lighting and Electrical Service: This room was likely served by a single-bulb, ceramic fixture like the one in Room 106, but only the surface-mounted electrical service remains.

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**Room 200**
This room is the stairway to the apartment. It mea-
sures approximately 3'3" wide. The ceiling height varies as the stairs ascend.

Floors: The floors consist of the wood stairway and the wood landing at the top of the stairs. They are worn, but seem sound.

Walls and Ceilings: The ceiling consists of unfinished gypsum board. Walls on the upper half are plaster-on-lath, which has been patched or repaired many times. The wall surface exhibits cracking, crazing, and some spalling of the finish. On the lower half, the walls are covered with beaded board applied horizontally. Wood half-round trim covers the joint between the two wall surfaces. The plaster is in poor condition, but the ceiling seems sound, though unfinished.

Woodwork: Besides the woodwork between the two wall surfaces, woodwork consists of typical baseboards and casing at the top landing. Woodwork is in fair condition except for paint finishes, which are cracking and in poor condition.

Lighting and Electrical Service: Lighting consists of a single-bulb, ceramic light fixture attached to the ceiling and powered by a surface-mounted switch with surface-mounted wiring located at the bottom of the stairs and running up the wall to the ceiling, where it becomes concealed.

Special Features – Handrail: A wooden, pole-type handrail is affixed to the south wall of this room with metal brackets. The handrail is in fair condition, but the painted brackets are deteriorating.

**Room 201**

This room was a bedroom for the apartment. It measures 14'9" x 12'1". The ceiling is 8'11½".

Floors: The floor is mostly covered with the remnants of a "rug" of resilient flooring in a floral pattern over the historic floorboards. It is in poor condition. Where the resilient flooring was not applied, the floor is painted, but beneath the resilient flooring, the floor is not painted, indicating that the installation of the resilient flooring occurred before the painting of the floorboards. There is some deflection and squeaking evident when walking on the floor of Room 201, but no replacement boards or rotting are evident. There is slight separation between floorboards at the threshold between Rooms 201 and 202.

Walls and Ceilings: The ceiling appears to be plaster-on-lath with gypsum board patches. The ceiling exhibits water damage and has failed in one location. The paint coat is peeling away from the ceiling. Walls are plaster-on-lath, which has cracked and failed in places, especially around the window openings.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 3 bull’s-eye corner blocks and Type 22 door plinths. In addition to baseboards with Type 3 cap molding and the door and window casing, this room has a Type 4 wood picture molding encircling the room approximately 7' 4" AFF. Molding is used as a finish edge around the top of the outer walls of the newer closet in the southeast corner of the room as a continuation of the picture molding, but the profile of this molding is slightly different from the picture molding. In the southeast closet, baseboards and door woodwork are plain wood of different profile and dimensions than in the original closet.

Fireplace: Type 1. The coal fender remains in the fireplace. The hearth is composed of a series of glazed tile arrangements different from hearths in the rest of the building. Brick-colored rectangular tile is closest to the fireplace opening, surrounded by...
by black ceramic tile, both square and rectangular. This is surrounded by square tiles in shades of yellow, pink, and blue, typical of the third quarter of the twentieth century. The entire hearth is surrounded by a wood molding with an ogee profile. The fireplace and hearth are in good condition except for the paint finishes.

Lighting and Electrical Service: A single, ceiling-mounted light fixture with a square glass shade is served by concealed wiring in this room. The fixture appears in good condition, but since electricity is off in this building, it is not clear if it is operable.

Closets: The closet in the northwest corner of this room is original. It contains a wood shelf, supported by what appear to be sections of wood cornice trim, and a metal rod resting on a wood ledger installed on the closet walls. The closet in the southeast corner of the room is a later addition. Framing for this closet appears on the interior. The closet walls do not extend all the way to the ceiling of the room, with the closet ceiling being only 7'6" AFF. The woodwork in this closet does not match the rest of the woodwork in the room, and the six-panel door does not match the majority of historic doors in the building. This closet contains a wood shelf.

Room 202

This room was the parlor for the apartment. It measures 13'4" x 16'1". The ceiling is 9'0". Currently, this room is being used to store construction debris.

Floors: When walking on it, there is some deflection of the floor near the window in this room, possibly due to floor joists bowing from water damage. One area of the floorboards has been

Figure 82. View northwest in Room 202.

Figure 83. View southeast in Room 202.
replaced with plywood. The floor was painted on the north side at the entrance door and the door to Room 201 to match the painted floor in Room 201. Tacking strips around the perimeter of the room are evidence that this room was once carpeted.

Walls and Ceilings: Ceiling appears to be plaster-on-lath painted most recently with texture paint and stippled. Much of the ceiling has failed or been removed, and part of the last paint finish has also failed, revealing an earlier paint treatment. Walls are plaster-on-lath in poor condition. Walls are cracking, and paint is falling away from the surface. A number of crack patches are evident.

Woodwork: Casing type varies. Upright casing at doorways is Type 6, which differs in profile from the Type 2 horizontal casing; this is likely a stylistic touch by the builder rather than evidence of replacement. Casing around the door to the stairway, however, exhibits evidence of replacement in the mismatched woodwork profiles. Doors and windows have Type 3 bull’s-eye corner blocks, and doors have Type 22 door plinths. In addition to baseboards with Type 5 cap molding and the door and window casing, this room has a Type 4 wood picture molding encircling the room approximately 7'6" AFF. Window woodwork is especially deteriorated, and paint finishes on all woodwork is checking and falling away.

Fireplace: Type 2. The overmantel supports are square. The surround has green and cream tortoise-shell patterned glazed quarter-tile and plain green-glazed quarter-tile, 1½ x 5" in dimension. The two kinds of tile appear to arranged in a pattern. Since the surround is painted white around the firebox cover, however, it is impossible to determine the pattern. The hearth has similar tiles in a yellow and cream color scheme. The coal fender is missing. The fireplace and hearth are in fair to good condition except for the paint finishes.

Lighting and Electrical Service: The metal base of a double-socket, ceiling-mounted lamp with no shade remains attached to the ceiling. It is served by concealed wires. It is in poor condition. A fuse box with four fuses is installed in the west wall. Several light switches are also installed in this room, and at least one outlet is in the baseboards.

Closet: The closet on the north wall is original to the room. It has a metal rod supported by wood ledgers surrounding the walls on the interior.

Special Features - Door: The door opening between Room 202 and Room 203 has a fifteen

Figure 84. Detail of fireplace surround in Room 202, with paint partially removed to reveal glazed ceramic tile in alternating solid and mottled green.

Figure 85. View of french door between Rooms 202 and 203.

Figure 86. View of plaster ceiling damaged during roof installation.
light French door. The door is historic, though not original. The north side of the door has a simple metal door pull, and the south side has the remains of the original door handle, but no knob. A number of locking devices on this door suggest that this apartment was once subdivided into two apartments. The door is in fair condition. All of the lights are intact, but the paint finish is deteriorated.

Room 203

This room was a bedroom for the apartment, or it may have been used as a dining room. It measures 11'10" × 16'1". The ceiling is 9'0".

Floors: The floor boards are discolored and possibly beginning to rot near the window wall. There is a hole in the floor at the transition between this room and Room 204.

Walls and Ceilings: The plaster-on-lath ceiling of this room has rotted, and most of it has collapsed or been removed, although the joists exhibit only a little damage. The plaster-on-lath walls are in very poor condition, cracked, and failing. Wall finish above the windows has been removed. The paint finish is delaminating.

Woodwork: Casing type varies. Upright casing at doorways is Type 6 but differs in profile from the Type 2 horizontal casing; this is likely a stylistic touch by the builder rather than evidence of replacement. Doors and windows have Type 3 bull's-eye corner blocks and doors have Type 22 door plinths. In addition to baseboards with Type 5 cap molding and the door and window woodwork, this

Figure 87. View northeast in Room 203.

Figure 88. View south in Room 203.
room has a Type 4 wood picture molding encircling the room approximately 7'6" AFF. Baseboards have been removed on the east wall. Window casing is especially deteriorated, and paint finishes on all woodwork is checking and falling away.

Fireplace: Type 3. The firebox has been closed with gypsum board or plaster. The mantelpiece is in good condition except for the paint finish, which is in poor condition. The hearth is parged brick.

Lighting and Electrical Service: A metal-based, two-socket, ceiling-mounted light fixture remains attached to the ceiling although the fixture itself is deconstructing and has no shade. It is served by concealed wiring. At least one outlet is located at the baseboard.

**Room 204**

This room was the kitchen for the apartment. It measures approximately 11'2" x 10'9". The ceiling is 9'0".

Floors: There is only minor water damage in the floor of this room although some of the floor boards are worn away. The resilient flooring noted in this room in the 2008 Conditions Assessment has been removed or covered with a plywood walking surface.

Walls and Ceilings: There is only minor water damage in the ceiling of this room; it has failed or been removed in only one location. However, the paint finish peeling away from the surface indicates at least a moisture problem. The plaster-on-lath wall is also cracking, and the paint finish is peeling. The wall has been covered with a sheet of plastic laminate behind the former sink location. The wall surface has failed at the sink location where the water service and drain pipes are still located.

Woodwork: Casing is mostly Type 2 with Type 3 bull's-eye corner blocks and Type 22 door plinths. A few casing pieces have been replaced with non-matching pieces, and others are deteriorating or completely rotting. Baseboards have Type 5 cap molding. A wood "chair rail" has been installed around the perimeter of the room about 4' AFF.

Fireplace: There is no fireplace in this room, but there is a circular opening with a metal liner and a length of hollow metal pipe protruding from it located about 8' AFF, where a stove exhaust pipe would connect with the fireplace flue, which shows where the stove once was. The presence of a gas

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*Figure 89. View southwest in Room 204, looking into Room 205.*
Figure 90. View of shelving in Room 205 and historic door that was installed as part of the early 1960s renovation of the house.

Figure 91. View east in Room 205, showing wall and roof framing reconstructed in 2010.

Lighting and Electrical Service: An electrical outlet on the east wall and a wall switch on the west wall indicate that this room is served by concealed wiring.

Special Features – Piping: Water service piping for the kitchen sink and gas piping for the stove remain in this room.

Room 205
This room was the utility room for the apartment. It measures approximately 8'1" x 5'8½". The ceiling slopes from 9'0" high at the north wall to 8'9" high at the header dividing the main room area from the reconstructed porch area.

Floors: Historic flooring remains in this room, with no evidence of subsequent installation of rolled flooring.

Walls and Ceilings: The north end of the ceiling in this room is tongue-and-groove boards. A rectangular attic access hatch framed in wood is located in the ceiling on the east side of this area. This section of the ceiling is painted and in fair condition. There is no ceiling in the south end of this room, where the roof slopes downward from the header between the main building and the porch area. The rafters and underside of the roof decking are painted and in excellent condition. North and east walls are finished in clapboard siding, indicating this was once an unenclosed porch. The south wall has been reconstructed and consists of the new stud framing and the back side of chipboard underlayment.

The west wall appears to have originally been a half-wall dividing the back porch space into two, one for each apartment. The former half-wall is covered with vertical tongue-and-groove boards and topped with horizontal woodwork. Above the half-wall woodwork, the wall continues to the ceiling and is covered with vertical, beveled tongue-and-groove boards of varying widths. Attached to this wall are two wood shelves on wood brackets. A length of woodwork affixed to the same wall indicates the likely former presence of another shelf or cabinet above it. The opening for the door that formerly closed this room from the open portion of the porch, as shown in the 2008 Condition Assessment for this building, has not been reconstructed, so the door is not hung, but is resting against the shelving in this room.
Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinths. Walls with clapboard siding have corner boards. Walls with board siding have crown molding. Stud walls have no woodwork. All woodwork is painted.

Lighting and Electrical Service: A surface-mounted, single-bulb, ceramic light fixture with no shade is mounted on the wood ceiling, served by concealed wiring. A surface-mounted junction box, switch, outlet, and wiring conduit are located on the west board wall.

Room 206
This room was the bathroom for the apartment. It measures approximately 5'5" x 5'10". The ceiling is 9'0". All fixtures have been removed.

Floors: Floors are plywood in fair condition.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls and ceilings are painted plaster-on-lath in poor condition. The lath is actually beaded board like that found on the front porch ceilings. Both walls and ceiling exhibit cracking and crumbling of the finish, which has failed in places, especially at the former location of the sink, where a wood panel was installed over the plaster.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 26 cap molding and Type 22 door plinths. There are no baseboards.

Lighting and Electrical Service: The light fixture is surface-mounted and served by surface-mounted
wiring. A surface-mounted outlet is mounted on the west wall.

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**Room 207**

This room was a bedroom for the apartment. It measures approximately 14'9" x 12'1". The ceiling is 9'0". The room is currently being used to store random building materials and debris.

Floors: The east half of this room has historic flooring; the west half is plywood. All flooring is in poor condition. Tacking strips around the edge of the flooring give evidence of a former carpet covering.

Walls and Ceilings: The walls appear to be plaster-on-lath covered with gypsum board. They exhibit significant damage due to moisture infiltration and misuse. The west wall covering is almost completely missing, revealing the wall framing and the back of the clapboard siding. The south wall covering is missing west of the fireplace. There is a hole in the east wall that appears to be the result of repeated blows with the doorknob. The plaster-on-lath ceiling has completely failed or was removed during the recent reconstruction of the roof framing. It was painted with texture paint and stippled.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 3 bull's-eye corner blocks and Type 22 door plinths. Baseboards have Type 5 cap molding. There is no baseboard or molding along the west wall. Type 25 picture molding has been installed at the level of the top of the window and door casing, about 7'6" AFF. Some replacement molding is evident in the north window casing, and some of the Type 24 crown molding is missing on the north wall. Where it still exists, molding is in fair condition except for the paint finish, which is in poor condition.

Windows: Both windows are operable, and the north window is in fairly good condition except for the paint finish. The upper sash of the west window has been replaced, but the profiles of the stiles and rails do not match the lower sash or the rest of the historic windows. The original truss header for this window has been replaced with a jack header and the stool and apron, and possibly the entire sill, were also replaced, along with the window woodwork. Replacement materials are unpainted. The lower sash is in fair condition except for the paint finish.

![Figure 94. View of southwest corner of Room 207, showing typical historic wall and ceiling framing along with repairs made in 2010.](image-url)
Fireplace: Type 1. The hearth appears to be cement or plaster-parged brick. The fireplace surround is in fairly good condition except for the paint finish. The coal fender is missing. Painted sheet metal has been placed over the firebox opening, but it is not secured.

Lighting and Electrical Service: This room is served by concealed wiring. At least one outlet box is located along the baseboards. The former ceiling-mounted light fixture, a double-socket, metal-based fixture with no shade, is suspended by its wires at the level of the joists.

Closet: The closet is original to the room. The door, although historic, is not original to the opening, but the wood threshold appears to be original. The closet contains a wooden shelf and a metal bar, resting on ledgers on the north and south walls. A third set of ledgers, constructed of ceiling molding, is beneath the others but holds no shelf or bar.

Room 208
This room was the parlor for the apartment. It measures 13' 4" x 16' 1". The ceiling is 8' 11 1/2".

Floors: Flooring consists of historic flooring between the east wall and the east side of the interior doorways. Remaining flooring is plywood. Tacking strips around the perimeter of the room give evidence of former carpeting. All flooring is in poor condition.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls and ceilings are gypsum board over plaster-on-lath. Most of the walls and ceiling are intact except at the west wall, where the joists are exposed in the ceiling and the studs are exposed in the wall over the window.

Woodwork: Casing is mostly Type 2 with Type 3 bull’s-eye corner blocks and Type 22 door plinths. Some casing around the north exit door has been
replaced with casing not matching the rest in profile. Most baseboards are intact and in fair to good condition except for the paint finish. The addition of the gypsum board over the plaster on the walls has reduced the baseboard profile from the wall.

Fireplace: Type 2. The firebox is closed with painted sheet metal. The overmantel supports are round. The beveled mirror has been framed with a wood frame. The $1\frac{1}{2}'' \times 5''$ glazed quarter-tile surround is of tortoise-shell pattern in shades of green, brown, and cream, but it has been covered with several layers of paint. The hearth appears to be of similar tile bordered by $3'' \times 5''$ glazed tile of complimentary colors framed in a border of half-round. Some of the hearth tiles have been replaced with similar tiles in different colors. The fireplace is in fairly good condition except for the painted finish and the hearth, in which some of the tile is broken.

Lighting and Electrical Service: There is a ceiling-mounted fixture with a square glass shade in the center of the room. It is served by concealed wiring.

Closet: The closet on the north side of the room is original to the room. The wall covering has failed or been removed. The 2008 Condition Assessment noted a serious mold problem in this closet, which likely prompted removal of the wall covering during stabilization of the building.

Room 209
This room was a bedroom for the apartment, or it might have been used as a dining room. It measures 11'9'' x 16'1''. The ceiling is 8'11½''.

Floors: The east half of this room has historic flooring; the west half is plywood. All flooring is in poor condition. Tacking strips around the edge of the flooring give evidence of a former carpet covering.

Walls and Ceilings: The north, east, and most of the south wall finishes are gypsum board over plaster-on-lath. The west wall has no gypsum board, plaster, or lath; the framing and back side of the clapboard siding are exposed. The south wall has exposed framing between the west wall and the interior doorway. The gypsum board is cracking in

Figure 98. View north from Room 209 into Room 208.
some places. The ceiling is partially covered with gypsum board over plaster on lath. Gypsum board, plaster, and lath are missing from the west portion of the ceiling, exposing the framing above.

Woodwork: Casing is Type 2 with Type 3 bull’s-eye corner blocks and Type 22 door plinths. Baseboards are intact except at the west wall, where they are missing. Some casing is missing from around the south door opening, where a new header has been installed. Casing has been replaced around the window; the pieced replacement woodwork exhibits a quality of carpentry that suggests it was a temporary replacement. Where it remains, historic woodwork is in fair to good condition except for the paint finish.

Fireplace: Type 3. The firebox surround is plaster, and the hearth appears to be parged brick.

Lighting and Electrical Service: A ceiling-mounted light fixture with a modern square glass shade and served by concealed wiring is in the center of the room. The fixture is disassembling, and the base indicates that the fixture was once a combination gas-and-electric fixture. Outlets are located in and near the baseboards.

Room 210
This room was the kitchen for the apartment. It measures approximately 11'1" × 10'0". The ceiling is 8'11½" high.

Floors: Flooring consists of historic flooring between the east wall and the east side of the interior doorways, but the floors have been covered with plywood walking surfaces. Remaining flooring is plywood. All flooring is in poor condition.

Walls and Ceilings: Remaining walls and ceilings are plaster-on-lath, but all of the wall covering on

Figure 100. View southeast in Room 209.

Figure 99. View southeast in Room 210.
the west wall and the ceiling has been removed to facilitate stabilization of the framing system, leaving the back of the clapboard siding and the roof joists, rafters, and sheathing exposed to the interior of the room. The rest of the walls are mostly intact, with a few places where plaster has failed or been removed. This room is the only one in the building with evidence of hardware cloth or some other metal fabric installed between the wood lath and the plaster. This anomaly is located in the wall between the kitchen and the bathrooms. The header over the north door has been reconstructed. A hole has been cut in the east wall at the floor level to expose the plumbing piping of the bathroom.

Woodwork: Casing is mostly Type 2 with Type 3 bull's-eye corner blocks. The only remaining baseboards are on the north wall. There is no remaining ceiling woodwork. Casing around the north door was removed to construct the new header, though casing remains on the east side of the door. Casing around the east door is intact and in fair condition except for a missing corner block, but it is Type 6 casing.

Fireplace: There is no fireplace in this room, but there is a metal-lined circular opening into the fireplace flue on the north wall about 8' AFF that indicates the probable location of the stove. The opening is closed with what appears to be plaster. Gas piping to this area indicates that the stove was gas although it may have originally been coal- or wood-burning. Additionally, the ghost of another opening into the fireplace flue shows to the east of the existing opening, indicating the probable relocation of the stove at some point in the history of this room.

Lighting and Electrical Service: The base of a light fixture formerly attached to the now-missing ceiling is suspended from electrical cables of various vintages just below the ceiling joists. This fixture is non-functioning, but the base and the gas piping above the ceiling joists indicate that this was once a combination gas-and-electric fixture. Outlets and switches in the walls indicate that this room was served by concealed wiring.

Room 211
This room was the utility room for the apartment. It measures approximately 4'8" x 6'1". The ceiling is 8'10".

Floors: Floors are plywood in fair condition.

Walls and Ceilings: The north wall is plaster on lath, but the west wall is clapboard with a gypsum board covering that has partly failed, indicating that this enclosed space was once part of an unenclosed porch. The ceiling is tongue-and-groove beaded board similar to the front porch ceilings. Part of this ceiling appears to be covered by a panel of some material, possibly painted metal or gypsum board. Although the wood ceiling appears to be in fairly good condition, the paint is delaminating from the surface, indicating a moisture problem, but whether from the roof above or from the bathroom and kitchen exhaust is unknown.

Woodwork: Casing is plain boards with Type 1 cap molding.
Lighting and Electrical Service: Wall outlets and switches indicate that this room is served by both surface-mounted and concealed wiring. The former wall-mounted light fixture has been removed, but its mounting remains in the wall.

**Room 212**

This room was the bathroom for the apartment. It measures approximately 5'7" × 5'7 1/2". The ceiling is 9'0".

Floors: Floors are plywood in fair condition.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls and ceilings appear to be plaster on lath in fairly good condition except near the floor, where some of it has been cut away to reveal the plumbing.

Woodwork: Casing is plain boards with Type 1 cap molding. Baseboards are plain boards. There are no baseboards on the west wall.

Lighting and Electrical Service: This room is served by surface-mounted outlets, switches, and wiring.

Special Features – Plumbing: The plumbing stack is exposed in the southeast corner of this room. The footed bathtub noted in this room in the 2008 Conditions Assessment has been removed.

Special Features – Transom Window: The transom window over the south door appears to be an operable casement-style window. There is a small metal pull on the bottom rail on the inside of the window.

**Room 213**

This room is the stairway to the apartment. It measures approximately 3'3" wide. The ceiling height varies as the stairs ascend, from just under 20' at the bottom of the stairs to 8'10" at the top.

Floors: The floors consist of the wood stairway and the wood landing at the top of the stairs. They are worn but seem sound.

Walls and Ceilings: Walls on the upper half are plaster-on-lath in fair condition. On the lower half, the walls are covered with double-beaded board applied horizontally. Wood half-round trim covers the joint between the two wall surfaces. The wall finishes are in poor condition.

Woodwork: Besides the trim between the two wall surfaces, woodwork consists of Type 5 cap molding and baseboards and casing around the door at the top landing. Woodwork is in fair condition except for paint finishes.

Lighting and Electrical Service: Lighting consists of a single-bulb, ceramic light fixture attached to the ceiling and powered by a surface-mounted switch with surface-mounted wiring located at the bottom of the stairs and running up the wall to the ceiling, where it becomes concealed.

Special Features – Handrail: A wooden, pole-type handrail is affixed to the south wall of this room with metal brackets. The handrail is in fair condition, but the painted brackets are deteriorating.

**Structural Conditions**

(Note: All lumber dimensions are nominal)

New 10" × 12" reinforced concrete footings and new brick piers were installed beneath the front
porch, behind the existing brick foundation.

The original framing of the porch floors was completely replaced with new doubled 2" x 8" beams across the new brick piers and new 2" x 8" lumber spaced at 16" on centers (o.c.).

Porch columns were reconstructed with new lumber in lieu of restoration.

A new, 10" x 18" x approximately 17' long reinforced concrete footing was installed beneath the building on the south elevation.

The piers and joists in the crawl space appear to be in good condition, overall. Temporary shoring has been installed along the west side of the building in the crawlspace. It consists of a supplemental 4" x 4" beam supported by 4" x 4" wood posts sitting on piles composed of sections of 4" x 4" posts resting directly on the ground spaced 48" o.c.

New 2" x 4" shoring studs have been sistered to the existing studs on the west and south elevations.

All floor joists beneath Rooms 110, 111, 112, 210, 211, and 212 have been replaced with new doubled 2" x 8" joists spaced 16" o.c. Floor joists beneath Rooms 107, 108, 109, 207, 208, and 209, and the ceiling joists above the second floor rooms except for Rooms 200, 206, 212, and 213 have either been completely replaced or have been sistered with new 2" x 6" joists.

New 2" x 8" braces have been added in selected locations between the second-floor joists on the east side of the building, and cracked or damaged joists were replaced.

The original truss headers at the windows on the west elevation of Rooms 207, 209, and 210 were replaced with modern header construction.

A new top plate consisting of doubled 2" x 8" lumber was installed on the south elevation of Rooms 210 and 211. The top plate along the west wall of Room 207 was repaired.

New 2" x 4" stud walls were constructed above the top plate at the wall dividing the second-floor apartments at the walls between Room 204 and Rooms 205 and 206; between Room 210 and Rooms 211 and 212; and at the north elevation between Rooms 200, 201, 207, and 213 and the porch.

The roof framing and decking have been almost completely replaced and new members have been
added. A few members remained in sound condition, and these appear to have been incorporated into the stabilization and repair of the roofing system. The roof was also shimmed and leveled during the rebuilding.

The entire south porch was reconstructed with new 2" × 8" studs placed 16" o.c.

The new construction appears to be in excellent condition. Remaining existing structural fabric appears in sound condition.

**Mechanical and Electrical Conditions**

Water piping is a mix of galvanized and PVC pipe.

All cast-iron bathtubs and other fixtures were removed in 2009 but remain in storage in the park. The bathtub in 491½ Auburn was in good condition at that time. Other bathtubs were in varying states of disrepair. The footed tub in 493½ Auburn was missing front legs and the cast iron tub in 491 Auburn had no legs. However, these tubs hold significant historic value to the building and should be retained for their interpretive values and high degree of integrity.

There are no water heaters in any unit.

Galvanized gas piping is deteriorating or missing entirely.

Cast-iron waste lines and vent stacks are in poor condition where still existing. The waste and vent pipe in kitchen of 491 Auburn is cracked. In 491½ Auburn, the pipe is broken and has been repaired by a sheet metal strap fixed over the break.

The building never had a central heating system. Heat was provided by gas space heaters. Flues for cook stoves are located in the kitchen areas, and appear to be terra cotta.

Electrical meters and their shelter have been removed from the west side of the building. The building’s electrical system is no longer functional.

**Fire and Life Safety Conditions**

No fire protection devices were observed in this building.

Secondary egress from the upper floors at the back of the building has been removed, and egress from the lower floors in this area has been closed with plywood.

**Summary of Existing Conditions**

The NPS stabilized the framing and exterior in early 2010 based mostly on the recommendations of a preliminary conditions assessment in 2008 for this building. Roofing and much of the roof structure were replaced, chimneys reparged, and the lower half of the front porch completely rebuilt. The siding was repaired and painted, and corner boards were repaired or new ones installed. Windows were repaired, and some new sashes were installed. Exterior access to the upstairs in the rear was removed and the back porches completely rebuilt. Most evidence of the utility meters formerly on the west side of the building was removed. Climbing vegetation was removed. In short, the building envelope was largely secured against weather and human infiltration.

Although the recent roof replacement goes a long way to halting the progress of deterioration due to water infiltration, the interior is in poor condition. Some effort has been made to stabilize the flooring and framing through joist replacement, shoring in the crawl space beneath the west side floor joists, and installation of plywood sheets to replace damaged flooring materials. However, the temporary shoring and subsequent debris have created significant points of wood-to-ground contact that may invite termites.

Large amounts of debris and doors, mantels, and woodwork from other historic residences on the
block remain in most rooms. The building has no functional mechanical or electrical systems and all bathroom and kitchen fixtures have been removed.

Overall, the exterior and structural components of the building have been stabilized, but some of the replacement materials and features do not match historic conditions. The interior is in very poor condition, but significant portions of the historic fabric remain intact.
Significance and Integrity

Located in what is known as the Birth Home Block, the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments is one of the most-prominent buildings in the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site. The building is a contributing resource in the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic District. The building is significant for its association with events related to African American history and the civil rights movement (1906-1948) and as an example of residential architecture common in urban areas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1880-1950).

Significance

In 1974, the Martin Luther King Jr Historic District, of which 491-493 Auburn Ave is a contributing resource, was listed in the National Register for its significant association with important events, of the 19th and 20th centuries, related to the civil rights movement and the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Additionally, the district was recognized for its architectural significance. The nomination points to the construction firm of Alexander Hamilton as the firm responsible for the greatest number of buildings in the area. In 1974, the Secretary of the Interior designated the district a National Historic Landmark (NHL) for its associations with Martin Luther King Jr (1929-1968) and for its association with important events in African American history, specifically the Civil Rights Movement.

In 1980, Congress established the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site as a new unit of the National Park Service, encompassing the blocks of Auburn and Edgewood avenues between Jackson and Howell streets. The park’s enabling legislation states that the park’s purpose is “to protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Junior, was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried...” In passing this legislation Congress acknowledged the district’s nationally significant associations with Martin Luther King Jr.

In 1994, the National Park Service prepared a new nomination to address all resources within the park boundary. The nomination included three historic contexts: (1) The Development of a Black Community and Leader: Atlanta’s Auburn Avenue Neighborhood and Martin Luther King, Jr., 1906-1948 (Criterion A); (2) Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Leadership of the American Civil Rights Movement, 1955-1968 (Criterion B); (3) Architectural Resources of the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, ca. 1880-1950 (Criterion C). 491-493 is listed as a contributing resource to the district’s National Significance under Criterion A and as contributing resource to the district’s local significance under Criterion C.

Future national register documentation may result in the recognition of additional areas of significance.

Assessment of Integrity

The aspects of integrity evaluated as part of the National Register criteria are location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling. These distinct qualities considered together convey historical significance and address architectural features and characteristics that express time and place. The Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments retain a significant degree of integrity in all seven aspects that convey the historic vernacular architecture of the building. The character and feeling of the building remain much the same way the tenants might have experienced it during the historic period.

Location: Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event took place. Although the Apartments have been altered over the years, they retain integrity of location.

Design: Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property (or its significant alteration)
and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials.

A property’s design reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics. It includes such considerations as the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing; and arrangement and type of plantings in a designed landscape.

The Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments express integrity of design in the vernacular form and appearance of most of its components. Integrity of design has been compromised by removal of all bathroom and kitchen fixtures, closure of fireplaces, and replacement of some doors with modern doors, as well as by the addition of cement-asbestos siding and concrete-block underpinning of the foundation.

Setting: Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the character of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves how, not just where, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space.

Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. In addition, the way in which a property is positioned in its environment can reflect the designer’s concept of nature and aesthetic preferences.

There has been some loss of historic fabric and structures on the Birth Home Block, but in the immediate vicinity of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments, the historic setting remains little changed. Nearly all of the buildings that surrounded the apartments during Dr. King’s lifetime remain intact. The most significant alteration to the setting was conversion of the Archbishop Ryan Memorial School to Our Ladies of Lourdes Catholic Church. The church building has been remodeled, the old school annex behind the church has been rebuilt, and the old school playground between the church and Fire Station #6 has been replaced by surface parking. The only missing building is the small utility building that sat at the rear of the fire station property. Even with these changes, however, the historic location and massing of buildings and the intervening open spaces that were the historic context for the apartment house have remained mostly intact.

Materials: Materials are the physical elements that were combined during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveal the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies. Integrity of materials determines whether or not an authentic historic resource still exists.

Although some elements are badly deteriorated, the physical materials with which the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments were constructed continue to convey the historic residential use of the property for over 100 years. However, this integrity of materials has been badly compromised by the loss of substantial parts of the original roof, including framing, decking, and roofing; the entire rear addition, which was reconstructed with new materials in 2010; the first floor of the front porch, which was also rebuilt entirely of new materials; some of the windows and doors; some wood flooring; and large amounts of plaster.

Workmanship: Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. It is the evidence of the labor and skill of craftsmen and artisans in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components. It can be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes, as in the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments, or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. It can be based on common traditions or innovative period techniques.

The integrity of workmanship in the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments still largely intact, and the variety of building types, the original construction techniques, and the owners’ approach to long-term maintenance of the building are still clearly expressed in the vernacular character of the structure. Integrity of workmanship has been compromised in some of the recent changes, and maintaining this aspect of integrity as the building is rehabilitated will be a difficult challenge.

Feeling: Feeling is a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property’s
The apartment's integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and association combine to create integrity of feeling.

**Association:** Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register.

The apartment building is a prominent contributing resource within the historic district. Since its period of significance, the district has been associated with African American communities and the struggle for civil rights. This association has continued to the present day. The district, which is nationally and internationally known, attracts a large number of visitors each year. Visitors are able to see resources that are directly associated with important events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. NPS efforts to interpret the property and educate the public about its history and significance reinforce its historical associations.

**Character-defining Features**

Constructed in 1912, this building retains several original character-defining features evocative of the period that should be retained. They include:

- The arrangement of the front porches and entries where the porches are shared spaces addressing the street instead of being physically separated, private spaces.
- The vernacular rendition of the Neoclassical Revival style architectural details, especially on the front porch
- The shotgun-style arrangement of the rooms: one room leading to another with no hallways
- The access to the bathrooms from the former back porches, which indicate the utilitarian nature of these spaces at that time
- The high ceilings and wood floors
- The intact fireplaces, fireplace surrounds, mantels, hearths, and, especially, the coal grates
- The six-panel doors, most with at least some historic hardware still intact
- The single fifteen-light French door
- The two-over-two, fifteen-over-one, and transom windows
- The wood lath and plaster walls and ceilings
- The details of the historic baseboard, picture moldings, door and window casing
- The combination gas-electric light fixtures
- The intact fuse boxes and other earlier features of electrical use, such as the tubes for the knob-and-tube wiring

Character-defining features that have been removed and should be reinstated include:

- The alleyway to the east that provides access to the double-shotgun houses behind the apartment building
- The diamond-shaped “French” shingle roof
- The rear metal access stairway
- Cast iron bath tubs, if stored off-site.
Treatment and Use

The developmental history in the first part of this Historic Structure Report documents the contextual history of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments and establishes a chronology of the building's construction and subsequent alterations. It also provides a physical description of the present building, with a focus on historic features and material condition. A summary of the building's existing condition and a discussion of the site's National Register significance, its integrity, and its character-defining features conclude that section of the report. While there will always be a need for additional historical and architectural research and while physical conditions change over time, the data so far collected provides a good foundation of knowledge on which to plan for the building's future.

Requirements for Treatment and Use

A number of laws, regulations, and functional requirements circumscribe treatment and use of the historic structures in our National Parks. In addition to protecting the cultural resource, these requirements also address issues of human safety, fire protection, energy conservation, abatement of hazardous materials, and handicapped accessibility. Some of these requirements may contradict or be at cross purposes with one another if they are rigidly interpreted. Any treatment must be carefully considered in order that the historic fabric of the structure be preserved.

Authorizing Legislation

Public Law 96-428 was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Carter on October 10, 1980. The law authorized establishment of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site to protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Junior, was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried.

The law also directs, among other things, that the National Park Service meet its "structural space requirements" for its administrative, operational, and interpretive functions by adaptive use of existing historic structures, if it can be done without displacing residents. To further ensure that existing structures remain and are used as they were historically, the authorizing legislation also directs that "plans for the construction, exterior renovation, or demolition of any structure or any change in land use within the preservation district" must be submitted to the Atlanta Urban Design Commission "in a timely manner for its review and comment."

National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (NHPA) mandates Federal protection of significant cultural resources, including buildings, landscapes, and archaeological sites listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Section 106.

A routine step in the park's planning process for the treatment of cultural resources is compliance with Section 106 of NHPA. This requires that prior to any undertaking involving National Register or National Register-eligible historic properties, Federal agencies "take into account the effect" of the undertaking on the property and give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation "a reasonable opportunity to comment with regard to such undertaking."

To satisfy the requirements of Section 106, regulations have been published (36 CFR Part 800, "Protection of Historic Properties") that require, among other things, consultation with local governments, State Historic Preservation Officers, and Indian tribal representatives. They also establish criteria under which the Advisory Council may comment, but as a practical matter, the vast majority of Federal undertakings do not involve review by the Advisory Council. The entire point of Section 106 review is to ensure that all interested parties have a voice in the treatment of our nation's
cultural heritage.

The Secretary’s Standards
The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are the Secretary’s best advice to everyone on how to protect a wide range of historic properties. They provide a philosophy to underpin historic preservation that is widely understood and almost universally accepted in the United States. By separate regulation, the Secretary has required the application of the Standards in certain programs that the Secretary administers through the National Park Service. They have been widely adopted by state and local governments and by the private sector and are intended to be applied to a wide variety of resource types, including buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts. The Standards, revised in 1992, are codified as 36 CFR Part 68 in the July 12, 1995 Federal Register (Vol. 60, No. 133). The revision replaced the 1978 and 1983 versions of 36 CFR 68 entitled The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The Standards are neither technical nor prescriptive, but they are intended to promote responsible preservation practices that help to protect our nation’s irreplaceable cultural resources. For example, they cannot, in and of themselves, be used to make essential decisions about which features of the historic building should be saved and which can be changed. But once a treatment is selected, the Standards provide philosophical consistency to the work.

The Standards describe four broad approaches to the treatment and use of historic properties. These are, in hierarchical order:

- **Preservation**, which places a high premium on the retention of all historic fabric through conservation, maintenance and repair. It reflects a building’s continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that are made.

- **Rehabilitation**, which emphasizes the retention and repair of historic materials, but provides more latitude for replacement because it is assumed the property is more deteriorated prior to work. (Both Preservation and Rehabilitation standards focus attention on the preservation of those materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give a property its historic character.)

- **Restoration**, which focuses on the retention of materials from the most significant time in a property’s history, while permitting the removal of materials from other periods.

- **Reconstruction**, which establishes limited opportunities to re-create a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object in all new materials.

Regardless of treatment approach, the Standards put a high priority on preservation of existing historic materials and not just the architectural form and style. Replacement of a column, for instance, even when replacement is “in kind,” diminishes the authenticity of the building, since the physical changes resulting from the passage of time is fundamental to the authenticity of an historic structure. The Standards also require that any alterations, additions, or other modifications be reversible, i.e., be designed and constructed in such a way that they can be removed or reversed in the future without the loss of existing historic materials, features, or character.

**Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990**
The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) establishes comprehensive civil rights protection for disabled Americans, both in employment and in their right to free, unaided access to public buildings. While people with restricted mobility have most frequently benefited from ADA, protection also extends to those with other disabilities, including those with impaired vision or hearing.

Requirements for full compliance with ADA regulations are extensive and easiest to apply to new construction. Full compliance for historic buildings is more difficult and sometimes would require significant alterations to the historic character of the property. Where that is the case, ADA authorizes a process for arriving at alternatives to full compliance that can preserve historic character while maximizing a disabled visitor’s access to the historic building.

**International Building Code**
Building codes are generally applicable to all buildings whether they are historic or not. As a matter of policy, the NPS and the State of Georgia are guided by the International Building Code, which includes this statement regarding codes and historic buildings:

> 3406.1 Historic Buildings. The provisions of this code related to the construction, repair, alteration, addition, restoration and movement of structures, and change of occupancy...
shall not be mandatory for historic buildings where such buildings are judged by the building official to not constitute a distinct life safety hazard [emphasis added].

Threats to public health and safety should always be eliminated, but because the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments are historic, alternatives to full code compliance are always sought where compliance would needlessly compromise the integrity of the historic building.

NFPA Code 914
The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has promulgated codes for historic buildings, most notably NFPA 909, “Code for the Protection of Cultural Resources Properties - Museums, Libraries, and Places of Worship,” and NFPA 914, “Code for Fire Protection of Historic Structures.” Installation of a completely new electrical system, with wiring run in conduit, and systems for fire detection and suppression would greatly reduce the chance of fire destroying the Outbuildings. Lightning rods, which the buildings have never had, would substantially reduce the risk of fire in the building. Additional protection should include the prohibition of storage of flammable materials and a strict no-smoking policy around or inside the buildings. An emergency response plan should also be developed in consultation with the local fire department.

NPS General Management Policies
The NPS General Management Policies (2006) guide overall management of historic properties, especially Chapter 5, “Cultural Resource Management.” Based upon the authority of some nineteen Acts of Congress and many more Executive orders and regulations, these policies require planning to ensure that management processes for making decisions and setting priorities integrate information about cultural resources and provide for consultation and collaboration with outside entities. These policies also support good stewardship to ensure that cultural resources are preserved and protected, receive appropriate treatments (including maintenance), and are made available for public understanding and enjoyment.

Section 5.3.5, “Treatment of Cultural Resources,” provides specific directives, including a directive that “the preservation of cultural resources in their existing states will always receive first consideration.” The section also states that treatments entailing greater intervention will not proceed without the consideration of interpretive alternatives.

The appearance and condition of resources before treatment, and changes made during treatment, will be documented. Such documentation will be shared with any appropriate state or tribal historic preservation office or certified local government and added to the park museum cataloging system. Pending treatment decisions reached through the planning process, all resources will be protected and preserved in their existing states.

The management policies lay out rules for use of historic properties under the control of the National Park Service. Chapter 5 of this document directs that “compatible uses for structures will be found whenever possible [to] help prevent the accelerated deterioration of historic structures due to neglect and vandalism,” but it goes on to warn against uses of structures that would “threaten the...character of a structure...or that would entail alterations that would significantly compromise its integrity.”

Director’s Order-28
Also circumscribing treatment and use of historic properties in our National Parks is Director’s Order 28, Cultural Resource Management Guideline. It requires that the NPS plan for the protection of cultural resources, such as the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments, and reinforces the requirement to use existing buildings for NPS purposes. Chapter 8, “Management of Historic and Prehistoric Structures,” states that “[t]he primary preservation issue...is the compatibility of the use with the structure.” DO-28 also requires that no historic structure be rehabilitated or restored without an appropriate historic structure report.

GMP
The park’s General Management Plan (GMP) directs that “[c]ommunity values will be maintained through the continued private use of the residential structures along the birth home block [emphasis added].” It further states that the NPS will emphasize the “rehabilitation of structures to perpetuate the existing uses.” The GMP identifies the houses in the Birth Home Block, along Auburn Avenue between Boulevard and Howell, as “the primary cultural resource” of the National Historic Site and states that this block is where the NPS will focus its preservation efforts. The goal should be one “of restoring the exteriors of the structures and the grounds to appear as they did when Dr. King lived there as a boy” (1929–1941), and “all significant interior architectural features and historic fabric will be preserved.”

The park's Historic Resource Study (1994) continues that idea, recommending that the buildings in the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, including the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments, should represent as accurately as possible the appearance of the neighborhood as "the residence of blacks of varying economic status during a period of national economic hardship. The historic appearance of the neighborhood reflected high density development and a great variety in income level." This apartment building and the three associated shotgun duplexes represent one of the best remaining opportunities in the neighborhood to interpret that condition.

Alternatives for Treatment and Use

Treatment and use of this building must address the needs of the National Historic Site and those of the neighborhood, as well as the requirements outlined earlier in this section of the HSR. The treatment must be that which returns the building to its highest and best use given its history, its material condition, its physical configuration, and its location in a National Historic Site and a National Historic Landmark District that is also an urban neighborhood. The Secretary's Standards identify three approaches that might be considered for treatment and use of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments: preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation.

Preservation

The building would be preserved in more or less its present state, with the minimal maintenance necessary to preserve it in its present condition. It would continue to display the significant alterations that occurred after World War II, alterations that Dr. King might have noticed as an adult but were not part of the scene when he was growing up at 501 Auburn. Under this approach, the interior would be cleared of debris, loose or falling ceiling materials removed, and floors repaired to a safe condition, but the interior would remain essentially un-usable. Simply repairing and preserving the building in its current state is really not a viable option. That approach would not meet the mandates of the enabling legislation or the needs of the park and surrounding neighborhood.

Restoration

The second approach to treatment and use that might be considered is restoration of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments to its historic appearance during the Period of Significance for the Birth Home Block, 1929–1941. Restoration would not preclude modern use although recreation of historic mechanical and electrical systems would make it difficult. Such a treatment approach might be better suited to use of the building, in whole or in part, as a house museum for interpreting working-class housing in the neighborhood and to help visitors better understand Dr. King's determination to achieve civil and economic justice for African Americans.

Rehabilitation

A rehabilitation approach to treatment would provide the most flexibility in adaptive use of the building. This approach emphasizes the retention and repair of historic materials, but more latitude is provided for replacement because it is assumed the property is more deteriorated prior to work. Like those for Preservation, the standards for Rehabilitation focus attention on the preservation of those materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give a property its historic character. An earlier proposal to convert the first floor of the building into a large lecture hall was rejected primarily because nearly all of the historic character of the interior would have been lost.

A rehabilitation approach to treatment still allows for alterations to the historic building if those alterations are necessary to return the building to a useful condition. So it would be in rehabilitating the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments as well, even if residential use were to continue. Bathrooms and kitchens, for example, would have to be redesigned entirely, and new and expanded mechanical and electrical systems will be necessary, all while retaining most of the existing room arrangements and character-defining features and finishes.

Even with some alteration of the interiors, the exterior of the building remains a part of the historic scene on the Birth Home Block and a contributing structure in a National Historic Landmark District.

As noted earlier, NPS work on the buildings in that block, particularly the exteriors which are a part of the primary visitor experience at the park, should seek to represent the appearance of the block when Dr. King was a boy. To that end, restoration of the exterior of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments would be a critical part of any plan for rehabilitation of the building.

Ultimate Treatment and Use

Of the uses that might be considered for the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments, rehabilitation for continued residential use is recommended. The Standards state that rehabilitated historic buildings should be used as they were historically or be put to a closely-related use. This approach is the most respectful of the historic building and its materials because it allows for some upgrading of interiors to meet current residential standards and codes while requiring that “significant interior architectural features and historic fabric...be preserved,” as required by the park’s General Management Plan. If the exterior were restored to its appearance during Dr. King’s childhood, as also recommended in the GMP, the emphasis in the park’s authorizing legislation on interpretation of that aspect of Dr. King’s life could also be satisfied.

There are a variety of residential uses that might be considered, ranging from long-term lease, month-to-month rental, or, as has been suggested most recently, short-term rental as a bed-and-breakfast or an inn. Continued use as conventional rental apartments would be closest to the letter and spirit of the authorizing legislation and the park’s GMP, but under any residential scenario, the apartments could be easily rehabilitated to meet modern standards while still retaining their historic character.

Recommendations for Treatment and Use

The present HSR is intended to form the foundation for additional planning for treatment and use of the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments. Fully-developed plans and specifications will be needed in order to proceed to actual construction.

As a first step, the recommendations of this HSR should be used to begin the consultation process required for compliance with Section 106. As plans and specifications are developed, the project schedule should allow time for review and com-

Additional Research

In order to support restoration of the exterior and in order to identify all historic properties that might exist on the site, as required by Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, additional work will be necessary.

Archeology: First, a comprehensive archeological survey should made of the entire property, including around and under the shotgun houses at the rear of the property. This should focus on confirming the historic extent of the alley and details of site features documented in the cultural landscape report as well as other features that might have existed during the historic period.

In conjunction with the archeological survey, there should be a careful examination of construction debris and other surface materials around and under the house. Some of the material, particularly at the rear and west side of the house, may relate to the historic building at the rear of Our Lady of Lourdes that was demolished sometime after World War II, but there may be significant artifacts associated with the Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments as well.

Painted finishes: An exhaustive study should be conducted of the painted finishes on the exterior of the building. A preliminary study was conducted in the 1990s, but there was no lab analysis. As the researchers stated in their report, “the analysis [was] not a precise, scientific color matching.... As a result some 'artistic license' has been taken in selecting the colors.” A new study should not be expensive and would be directed toward the exterior finishes. If interior finishes were ever to be stripped, which is not recommended, a similar study should be conducted on the interior as well.

Documentary research: Additional documentary research is recommended as an aid to interpretation. Some of the tenants have been identified, but many have not, and a better understanding of who they were might greatly expand interpretive opportunities.

There should also be additional research on the Delbridges. While it is known that Allen J. Delbridge was a former slave of Mary Delbridge’s father-in-law and that he lived on Auburn Avenue, the relationship of the two families after the Civil War is uncertain. There are indications that there

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may have been more than a passing acquaintance between them in Atlanta in the late nineteenth century.

**Summary of recommendations for additional research**

- Conduct an archeological survey of the property.
- Conduct thorough analysis of exterior painted finishes.
- Conduct additional historical research on the building’s tenants and on the Delbridge families, black and white.

**Site**

As part of the planning process and prior to any ground-disturbing activity on the site, the property should be surveyed for archeological resources. The remnants of concrete curbs and the Calhoun Brick Company bricks should remain in the back yard until archeology is complete. Findings from that survey may affect how other site recommendations are implemented.

The 1995 Cultural Landscape Report identified the brick borders and walkway and the pair of Bufordii holly in the front yard as historic landscape features that should be preserved. However, based upon current research, it seems more likely that these features were contemporaneous with the rehabilitation of the apartment house in 1959–1961. Certainly that is the case with the brick borders and brick walk. Replacement of the front steps (fig. 108) will likely require alterations to the front walkway. The brick should be replaced with 12” hexagonal pavers similar to those used at other houses on the block, and the rowlock border removed entirely.

Several landscape features identified in that report have been lost. The landscape of the site should be re-evaluated in light of current conditions and additional changes made accordingly.

Because of the building’s elevation above grade, handicapped accessibility to the front proch units of the house can be accommodated by the installation of a mechanical wheelchair lift on either side of the porch that will not alter the character defining features of the porch railings and is reversible.

A critical part of rehabilitation will be ensuring positive drainage away from the building on all sides. Roof run-off should be collected by gutters...
and downspouts (fig. 108) and directed away from the building. Significant site work will be required to lower the grade around the rear of the house where erosion has brought wood sills in contact with the ground.

**Summary of recommendations for site**
- Replace brick walk with concrete hexagonal pavers.
- Remove rowlock border around front yard.
- Restore unpaved alley on the east side of the building.
- Establish vehicular ADA accessibility behind the building (see fig. 108).
- Reduce grade at rear of house to ensure adequate clearance between wood sills and ground.
- Re-evaluate cultural landscape and make appropriate recommendations.

**Foundation**
As part of exterior restoration, the concrete block underpinning the sills should be removed, and the original brick piers, which are still present, repointed and restored. The brick walls underpinning the front porch should be removed and four brick piers constructed to replace them. Replacement brick should match the visual characteristics of the original brick. Mortar should match the original in composition and tooling. If the condition of the brick leaves an unacceptable appearance, a red masonry stain to achieve a more uniform appearance would be appropriate.

All wood-to-ground contact in the crawl space must be eliminated, including removal of debris from under the building.

**Summary of recommendations for foundation**
- Remove concrete block underpinning.
- Repair, repoint, and reconstruct brick piers as necessary.
- Based on paint analysis, repaint piers and front porch foundation walls red.

**Wood Framing**
The structure has been recently stabilized and likely requires little improvement beyond periodic inspection to ensure it remains in good condition. However, the ad-hoc wood supports beneath the first floor framing should be replaced with permanent supports that to do not include wood-to-ground contact. Termite shields should be installed if practical.

Future repairs should endeavor to maintain the character of the historic framing by using materials and methods that match the original.

**Summary of recommendations for the wood framing**
- Inspect the foundation and framing periodically for evidence of termite and other wood pest infestation.
- Maintain the character of the historic framing by using materials and methods that match the original.
- Replace added supports under first-floor joists to eliminate wood-to-ground contact.

**Roofing**
Roofing has been recently replaced with three-tab asphalt shingles and is in excellent physical condition. The building was most likely constructed with a wood-shingled roof, but after the 1917 fire, the use of asphalt roofing was mandated by the city. Since it was difficult to secure asphalt roofing over a wood-shingled roof, roll roofing was often installed on purlins nailed parallel to and attached to rafters. The imprint of such purlins was clearly visible under the later hexagonal shingles before the building was re-roofed in 2010. It is unlikely that the apartments ever had three-tab shingles during the historic period, and when the building is re-roofed, the building should be re-roofed to recreate the historic appearance.

The building does not have gutters and downspouts, but it is not clear that it never had those features. For continuing integrity of the site and the exterior of the building, a gutter system should be installed. In order to avoid alterations to the fascia, gutters should be roof-hung, half-round gutters with round downspouts, the type of guttering most common in the first half of the twentieth century.

**Summary of recommendations for the roof**
- When the building is re-roofed, recreate historic appearance of the roof.
- Install half-round gutters and round downspouts and connect to site drainage.

**Exterior Doors**
Except in the rear, all of the existing door openings are now covered with plywood or hung with...
modern, solid-core, flush doors which were likely installed not long before NPS acquired the property. At the rear exterior door openings, threelight, three-panel doors from the 1960 renovation remain in place at the second floor and still exist for the first floor. One or two simple screened doors dating to the 1960s or later remain on the building as well. Original transoms at the front and bathroom door openings remain intact.

**Front Doors:** The HABS drawings from 1985 show what appear to be early twentieth-century doors at the four main front-door openings. These had three square, raised panels above and below a large square light and three vertical panels in the lower third of the door. These were likely replaced when repairs were made to the house in the 1990s.

If salvaged replacements for the modern flush doors cannot be found, the doors should be replicated, based on similar doors in the area. Note that the doors at 472-474 Auburn Avenue are similar, except for the use of a single horizontal raised panel for the trio of square panels and the use of two vertical panels rather than three.

**Screen Doors:** Screen doors remain at some locations but all appear to date no earlier than the 1960s. All exterior door openings would have originally been screened. The HABS drawing shows a screen door at the opening between the front porch and the stairwell to Apartment 493½ while the screen door for Apartment 491½ is located at the top of the stairs. There is no clear evidence that screened doors were present at the bottom of the stairs during the historic period, and the one that is there now should be removed. New screened doors should be properly installed at each apartment entrance.

**Transoms:** Transoms are intact and should be preserved. Replace missing hardware and restore transoms to working condition.

**Hardware:** Wherever possible historic hardware should be repaired and re-used. Where replacement is necessary, hardware should be appropriate to the door. All lock sets should be mortised. Avoid the addition of modern dead-bolt locks.

**Summary of recommendations for the exterior doors**
- Replicate and install original front doors, using three 4" ball-pin hinges.
- Maintain six-panel doors opening on to the back porches.
- Repair or re-install screen doors, replacing missing doors.
- Repair transoms to working order.
- Repair and, if necessary, replace historic hardware. Avoid adding modern hardware.

**Windows**
Window sash were repaired and some were replaced in 2010, but some of the replacement windows do not match the historic molding profiles on stiles and rails. These should be replaced with sash that do match historic profiles. All of the sash are not operable, however, limiting the windows effectiveness in maintaining the interior climate without air-conditioning. Upper and lower sash should be restored to working order.
Most of the top-hung screens were repaired and re-installed or new ones made and installed. There is some damage that should be repaired. Ensure that all are in good repair and have the appropriate hardware.

The sash appear never to have had lifts along the bottom rail; if they were present they were likely simple thumb lifts. All of the sash did have sash locks but some are missing and many are simply modern replacements that do not match the historic appearance.

Summary of recommendations for windows
- Correct inconsistencies in the profile of stiles and rails on the sash installed in 2010.
- Repair double-hung sash and transoms to operability.
- Ensure wood-framed window screens are in good condition.
- Remove screened door at bottom of stairs.
- Install screened doors at all exterior openings.

Front Porches
The first floor of the porch has been replaced on at least one occasion, most recently in 2010. There were also repairs to the second floor at that time. To complete restoration of the porches, the existing balustrades around the perimeter of the first floor should be replaced with balustrades which match those at the upper floor.

All of the column bases have been altered from their historic condition by the addition of relatively tall plinths. These were probably added to the first floor columns as a way of making repairs, a typical alteration to box columns. Although the HABS drawings show this treatment at the second floor, too, older photographs show that they were not present until added in 2010. The original plinths should be restored on all columns.

The flooring at the first floor was replaced in 2010, but the installation did not match historic conditions. Flooring is not clear of knots, ends were left rough, flooring was not tightly laid, and all flooring was face-nailed. These conditions should be corrected when the flooring again requires replacement.

Based on what is typical for the period and on the character of the materials, the concrete block steps would not have been present during the Birth Home Block’s period of significance. Almost certainly the original steps were wooden and, since the present steps are hazardous because of the significant differences in the rise of the individual steps, the concrete-block steps should be replaced with a new flight of wooden steps.

Since the character of any bannisters that might have existed for the steps is not certain, the metal pipe railing that existed when the National Park Service purchased the property should be reinstated for safety and painted in a dark color to reduce its impact on the historic appearance of the building.

Summary of recommendations for front porches
- Restore boxed columns by removing added plinths.
- Recreate historic molding on header between floors.
- Replace concrete block steps with wooden steps.

Rear Addition (Exterior)
The rear addition was apparently created in two stages. The shed roof may well have been an original feature, but the area below was not enclosed until the 1959–1960 renovation. The entire structure was removed and completely rebuilt in 2010. The enclosure should be removed and wooden stairs reconstructed to the second floor. The eaves on the shed roof do not appear to match the historic condition, where the eaves were not boxed with a horizontal soffit. Removal of the horizontal soffit would more accurately reflect the original appearance.

Historically the returns under the shed roof were closed, probably with tongue-and-groove, V-joint boards. When the enclosures are removed, these features should be recreated.

Metal stairs to the second-floor back porch, which were contemporaneous with the enclosure of the porch, were removed in 2010 and there are presently no stairs to the second floor. Although wooden stairs to the original second-floor porch would have been present during the historic period, they would have been in a different location and probably a different configuration as well. For a variety of practical reasons, a metal stair case similar to the one that was removed should be reinstated. If a lift to the second floor is deemed necessary (see discussion below regarding accessibility), it could most easily be incorporated into the rear addition.
Summary of recommendations for rear addition
- Remove enclosure under shed roof.
- Reconfigure soffit to match historic condition.
- Recreate enclosed returns at each end of the shed roof.
- Design and install a new staircase appropriate to changed conditions.

Exterior Finishes
It seems certain that the cement-asbestos siding was installed between 1959 and 1961, and that the underlying lapped wood siding was exposed before that time. The cement-asbestos siding should be removed and the underlying siding restored. There will be some damage to the wood siding, primarily from nail holes. Typically when installing cement-asbestos siding, the wood siding was first covered with roofing felt, usually installed with roofing nails that are fairly easy to remove with a claw hammer or other nail-pulling device. The siding itself, however, typically used a ring-shank nail that is more difficult to remove. Usually, the underlying wood siding is found to be in quite serviceable condition and repairs are straightforward.

One of the only features that were usually damaged when asbestos siding was installed is the projecting drip cap over a wide sill board at the bottom of each wall. While simpler houses, like the shotguns in the rear, were finished without this feature, the apartment house likely had a drip cap that was removed. It should be reinstated using the numerous examples on the block as a guide.

Bed molding under the drip caps is missing from some of the window headers and should be reinstalled, matching the original in all visual appearances.

The exterior should be repainted in colors that match the historic condition, based on a professional paint study.

Summary of recommendations for exterior
- Remove cement-asbestos siding.
- Repair underlying wood siding.
- Repair trim, replacing missing elements as necessary.
- Repaint exterior to recreate historic appearance prior to World War II.

Interior
The interior is in poor condition, and the goal of treatment should be to rehabilitate it for modern use and not to restore it for interpretive purposes. While there might be some restoration of lost features, in other cases, restoration is not recommended.

A variety of historic doors and other architectural elements are stored in the building, mostly in 493 Auburn. These materials apparently came from other buildings in the block. If possible, the precise origins of these materials should be documented and catalogued. All molded materials, much of it cut from a grade of wood that is no longer readily obtainable, should be relocated to permanent storage and preserved for possible re-use at a later date.

Artifacts: There is also a significant amount of debris inside the building, but because there are also architectural materials mixed with the debris, a careful, forensic cleaning of the building is recommended. Under the direction of personnel familiar with historic building materials and artifacts, remaining materials should be carefully investigated after large architectural features and building materials have been removed. Photograph and note location of any loose features, such as hearth tiles, woodwork, or hardware. Bag and label these features and retain for re-use. Document finishes of failed ceilings or walls by photographing, bagging, and labeling samples of plaster or gypsum board and pieces of woodwork, wallpaper, and rolled flooring.

Once all artifacts have been removed, carefully broom-sweep the floors clean and re-evaluate the interiors to ensure that the present report has captured the significant features on the interior. Do not wash or re-paint painted surfaces until it is clear all historic information currently available from them has been obtained.

Floor Plan: Except for the kitchen and bathrooms, the existing floor plan, including placement of windows and doors should be maintained. The only exception is the closet that was added in the southeast corner of Room 201; it should be removed.

Flooring: Most flooring is intact, but there are areas where it has been damaged or is missing. Missing flooring should be replaced with new boards that match the historic flooring. Historic
flooring should not be aggressively sanded in the conventional manner since that can result in an unacceptable loss of material. A "passive" refinishing method is preferred. Finish with a clear coating, preferably not a modern polyurethane varnish, which are notoriously difficult to remove or refinish once applied.

**Walls and Ceilings:** Ceilings are in poor condition throughout the building, with the original plaster on wood lath missing entirely from the first-floor ceilings and most of those on the second floor have been badly damaged. Plaster and lath and the existing dry wall should be removed from the ceilings and new dry-wall finishes installed.

The condition of the plaster walls varies considerably. Wherever possible, they should be repaired and preserved.

**Woodwork:** Abatement of lead paint, primarily on the woodwork, will be necessary. Because the original woodwork was stained and varnished (or shellacked), removing lead paint would restore that appearance. However, before the existing finishes are stripped away, there should be analysis of those features in order to document how they changed over time.

Where original wood trim is missing, features should be replaced with material matching the original. This should include the picture molding that was removed when some of the walls were covered with dry wall. Only the kitchens, bathrooms, and stairwells did not have picture molding.

One or two of the original doors have been replaced with modern flush doors. These should be replaced with six-panel doors to match the original. The french door that was added between Rooms 203 and 204 ought to be preserved as an improvement to those spaces.

**Summary of recommendations for interior**

- Clear interior of artifacts and debris.
- Remove closet in Room 201.
- Repair flooring, replacing missing flooring with material that matches the original.
- Repair plaster walls where they exist; replace with drywall if missing.
- Install drywall ceilings throughout.
- Remove paint from woodwork after paint colors and layering have been documented.
- Repair woodwork as necessary, replacing missing or modern elements with elements that match the original.
- Replace missing and modern doors with six-panel doors to match the original.

**Fireplaces**

The fireplaces are not functional, but they are character-defining features of the building and should be retained. In addition, the wood flooring patches in the floors that delineate the presence of former hearths where fireplaces have been removed should be retained as historic artifacts.

Re-open fireboxes where mantels remain in place. Clean and repair all mantels, fireplace surrounds, and hearths. Repair and preserve existing tile wherever it is found, including the multi-colored tiles added later in Room 201. Where tile is missing, infill with concrete, since replacement tiles that match the original will not be available.

Clean and retain the coal fenders, but do not attempt to add new materials to them since they will not be used.

Because the mantels, tiles, and hearths are missing in the rear rooms, the closed fireplaces in those locations should not be reinstated. Failed brick
bases for the hearths at those locations should be removed.

Install caps at top of chimneys to prevent wildlife and debris from entering.

**Summary of recommendations for fireplaces**
- Do not reinstate missing fireplaces.
- Re-open fireboxes where mantels remain in place.
- Retain existing ceramic tile wherever they exist, including the late twentieth-century tiles on the hearth in Room 201.
- Close tops of chimneys to prevent entry of wildlife and debris.

**Kitchens**
All of the kitchens should be redesigned for modern use with new fixtures and cabinets. Maintain existing door and window openings.

**Summary of recommendations for kitchens**
- Redesign and install new kitchens.

**Bathrooms**
All bathrooms should be redesigned for modern use. The historic cast-iron, footed tubs should be reinstated and new toilets and lavatories installed. In order to facilitate modern use, interior access should be provided by installing new door openings on the north walls of each bath. Because they are significant features, the doors and transoms that open from each bathroom to the back porches should be closed but not removed. A new opening should be created on the north wall.

**Summary of recommendations for bathrooms**
- Redesign bathrooms for modern use.
- Reinstall historic footed tubs.
- Install modern toilets and lavatories.
- Close existing doors but preserve doors and transoms in situ.

**Mechanical and Electrical Systems**
Modern mechanical and electrical systems will be necessary for the building. Ducts for a forced-air HVAC system, which the building has never had, can be run in the crawl space for the lower units and in the attic for the upper units to minimize damage and intrusions into the historic fabric.

Investigate high-velocity, small-duct heating/cooling systems and point-of-service water heaters for possible utility in this building.

Location of the external equipment for the cooling systems will be a problem in this area. Equipment containing copper tubing or wires should be placed where it is not visible and is inaccessible to the public. The National Park Service might consider using the garage at 497 Auburn Avenue for use as a central plant for all the buildings on this site. Since the garage will likely only be interpreted on the exterior, it could be fitted on the interior to be a secure location for mechanical and electrical equipment if necessary.

Abandon but do not remove historic electrical features, such as fuse boxes, electrical tubes from the knob-and-tube system, and historic outlets and switches that are no longer working unless necessary for occupant safety. If such features must be removed, document their placement in the building and retain as artifacts.

An entirely new water supply system will be necessary. Historic galvanized steel supply lines should be abandoned in place. The cast-iron sewer lines and stacks will need some repair. Vertical stacks may remain useful, but wherever there are horizontal runs of cast-iron, there is the likelihood of deterioration and they should be replaced.

**Fire and Life Safety:** Install a hard-wired fire alarm and smoke detection system in each unit. A fire-suppression system should also be installed throughout the building, including the attic and crawl space. Because ceilings will be replaced, installation of a concealed system should not be a problem.

**Summary of recommendations for mechanical and electrical systems**
- Design and install central, forced-air HVAC system with separate controls for each unit.
- Design and install new waste and supply lines for kitchens and bathrooms.
- Wherever possible, abandon old lines and equipment in place.
- Install complete fire-detection and fire-
suppression systems in the building.

Energy Efficiency

In addition to the use of energy-efficient equipment, the design of new systems should keep in mind that the building was not designed for air conditioning, though it was designed to be heated. Ensure that windows and screens remain operable to maximize use of natural cooling whenever possible.

Install new insulation in the attic and crawl space. Do not attempt to insulate the exterior walls as the cost does not justify the energy savings and the work required to insulate exterior walls would seriously damage the remaining historic fabric.

Ensure windows and doors are properly caulked and weather-stripped, but also ensure that these measures do not compromise the historic appearance of the doors and windows.

Summary of recommendations for energy efficiency

- Install new insulation in attic floor and beneath first floor but not in walls.
- Ensure operability of all double-hung sash.
- Weather-strip all windows and doors.

Accessibility

It is not necessary to make every unit handicapped accessible. By redesigning the rear yard, access can be readily achieved for either of the first floor units with a very short ramp to the back door. Doorways are generally 34", which is adequate for wheelchair access in most instances. Door knobs should be replaced with levers in the unit that is being made accessible. Any hardware that is removed can probably be used to replace missing hardware elsewhere in the building. Alterations may be necessary to some thresholds, especially at the entrances at front and rear.

Summary of recommendations for handicapped access

- Design ramp to one of the first-floor apartments.
- Replace hardware as necessary in unit chosen for accessibility.
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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

NPS MALU 128317, March 2015

Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site

Delbridge-Hamilton Apartments Historic Structure Report