

(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Seaboard Historic District

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Bounded by Main, Church, & Washington Streets and NC Hwy. 186 n/a  not for publication  
(West Central Street)

city or town Seaboard n/a  vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Northampton code 131 zip code 27876

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jessie Crow SHPD  
Signature of certifying official/Title

7/27/05  
(Date)

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
107	21	buildings
1	0	sites
4	1	structures
0	0	objects
112	22	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

n/a

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- DOMESTIC/secondary structure
- COMMERCE/TRADE/department store
- COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse
- COMMERCE/TRADE/business
- COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
- RELIGION/religious facility
- RELIGION/church-related residence

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- DOMESTIC/secondary structure
- COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse
- COMMERCE/TRADE/business
- GOVERNMENT/city hall
- GOVERNMENT/fire station
- GOVERNMENT/post office
- RELIGION/religious facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Late Victorian/Queen Anne
- Colonial Revival
- Tudor Revival
- Bungalow/Craftsman

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation BRICK
- walls WOOD/weatherboard
- BRICK
- roof ASPHALT
- other METAL/Iron
- CONCRETE
- STONE/Granite

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Transportation
- Community Planning and Development
- Literature

**Period of Significance**

1874-1955

**Significant Dates**

1917

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Harris, Bernice Kelly

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

**Architect/Builder**

Riedel, R. H., architect  
Draper, Godwin W., architect

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Seaboard Historic District  
Name of Property

Northampton County, North Carolina  
County and State

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### 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** Approximately 90

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>281360</u>	<u>4041000</u>	3	<u>18</u>	<u>280920</u>	<u>4040370</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>18</u>	<u>281520</u>	<u>4040200</u>	4	<u>18</u>	<u>280840</u>	<u>4040820</u>

See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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### 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Sarah A. Woodard, with Cynthia de Miranda, survey assistance  
organization Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. date November 29, 2004  
street & number P.O. Box 1171 telephone 919 682-2211  
city or town Durham state NC zip code 27702

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#### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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#### Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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## 6. Function or Use (continued)

### Historic Functions

EDUCATION/school  
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related  
FUNERARY/cemetery  
AGRICULTURE/processing  
AGRICULTURE/storage

### Current Functions

FUNERARY/cemetery  
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related  
RELIGION/church-related residence

## 7. Description (continued)

### Materials

Walls:  
ASBESTOS  
ASPHALT  
SYNTHETICS/vinyl

Roof:  
METAL/tin

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Seaboard Historic District  
Northampton County, North Carolina

## 7. Description

The town of Seaboard is located approximately six miles south of the Virginia-North Carolina state line in the north-central section of Northampton County in the northeast section of North Carolina. Seaboard is laid out on an irregular grid-plan on generally flat terrain. The railroad corridor is the district's most prominent feature, creating a visual and physical boundary along the northern edge of the town's core. Seaboard is a typical rural, railroad town with a small commercial district, some open land where rail-oriented buildings once stood, a few light industrial and agricultural buildings near the railroad, residential areas with tree-lined streets, a consolidation-era school, and several churches. Cotton and peanut fields skirt Seaboard and present the quintessential approach to a Northampton County town: two lane roads cut across flat, sandy fields from which they abruptly enter residential areas and pass by a variety of late nineteenth and early twentieth century dwellings before intersecting at a compact commercial district, usually boarded by a rail line. In Seaboard, sidewalks line the central business district's streets and continue along many of the residential streets.

The district encompasses roughly ninety acres and contains 134 resources of which seventy-seven are primary buildings, forty-nine are secondary buildings, five are structures, and one is a site. Contributing resources number 112 (84%) and include 107 buildings, four structures, and one site. Noncontributing properties number twenty-two (16%) of which twenty-one are buildings and one is a structure. The boundary includes the greatest concentration of resources in Seaboard that retain integrity and were constructed during the district's period of significance (1874 to 1955). The town's African American neighborhood, located to the east of the district, is not included because buildings in that area do not retain significant historical or architectural integrity.

The Seaboard Historic District contains commercial buildings, residences, churches, and one school representing styles, trends, and vernacular expressions from the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century, clearly reflecting the period of Seaboard's greatest economic prosperity. Notable commercial buildings include a group of three one- and two-story, early twentieth century, brick buildings (19-22) on Clay Street, each with intact storefronts with recessed entries. Sidney Harris' gas station (28), a one-story brick building with recessed panels in the parapets and an expansive gas canopy with brick posts, addresses the northwest corner at the intersection of Clay and South Main streets, while the Edwards Warehouse (14), a one-story brick building with an elaborate shaped and stepped parapet, stands between Clay and Railroad streets. A mid-twentieth century peanut drying and storage facility (18) also contributes to the district. The peanut complex features utilitarian buildings, including metal-clad storage silos, two frame warehouses, and one concrete block warehouse. Historically, several frame warehouses and the late-nineteenth century Italianate depot stood in now-vacant space between Railroad Streets and the rail corridor.

Two late-nineteenth century Queen Anne houses of particular exuberance stand on South Main Street. The Stephenson-Barbee House (53) features circular bays and corners and a round gazebo attached to the northern

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corner of the wrap-around porch. At the Edwards House (63), decorative shingles and weatherboards highlight the asymmetrical massing of this cross gable dwelling with a projecting bay on the north elevation.

Several foursquare houses built in the early 1920s are located throughout the district. Oral tradition holds that a German immigrant built many of these houses.<sup>1</sup> Executed in brick or frame, all feature hip or pyramidal roofs, full-width front porches, and hip-roof porte cocheres on the side elevations. Larger, transitional Colonial Revival and Craftsman dwellings are also fairly common and were built in either brick or frame, with the masonry examples often having slate roofs. Only a few bungalows, generally side-gable, frame buildings, stand in the district. Early-to-mid-twentieth century dwellings include a handful of modest Period Cottages and small Minimal Traditional houses along with later ranch houses.

The town's three churches are brick. The earliest is the circa 1922 Seaboard United Methodist Church (57), a Gothic Revival design which features a T-shaped plan, square tower, and Gothic-arch stained glass windows. Bethlehem Baptist Church (77), home to an African American congregation organized in the late nineteenth century, occupies a lot near the district's northwest corner. Two asymmetrical, truncated square towers punctuate this gable-front building, which was built around 1900 and brick-veneered in 1943. Seaboard Baptist Church (54), a Colonial Revival edifice built in the early 1950s, features a steeple, stained glass windows, and a projecting portico with Ionic columns.

The Seaboard School (26), built in 1927, stands near the center of the district. The brick structure remains a prominent landmark rising two-stories over a raised basement. A large, half-round fanlight dominates the double-leaf front door and cast stone panels in the north and south ends read Seaboard School. Tall, arched windows illuminate the auditorium in the one-story, rear projection. The building shows the effects of prolonged neglect, including the removal of the original portico and most of the windows, but the owner has stabilized it with the goal of rehabilitating it. Immediately to the north is a brick gymnasium (26a) with a low barrel-vault roof, probably constructed in the mid-1940s.

Outbuildings accompany a large number of dwellings. Garages are the most common outbuilding in the district with historic examples often standing behind early twentieth century homes with porte cocheres. The garage at 109 Church Street is frame, while the house is brick, but it mimics the dwelling's slate hip roof. It also has a sliding wooden door and small, paired windows. The high hip roof on the frame garage at 404 South Main Street resembles its house and simpler, gable front examples stand throughout the district. Early or original garages are generally one narrow bay in width. As cars became larger and ownership became more common, wider garages with bays to accommodate two vehicles became typical. Sheds, storage buildings, and smaller buildings, possibly dairies or smokehouses, also remain in backyards throughout the district. The warehouse in the 200 block of South Main Street is a rare example of a commercial outbuilding, which probably served a commercial building that is no longer standing on the lot between the warehouse and the street.

<sup>1</sup> Hubert E. Varnadoe, interview with the author, May 6, 2004.

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## Inventory List

This inventory is arranged alphabetically by street. Within the streets, entries are arranged by ascending street number beginning with the north side of the street for east-west streets and numbers on the west side of the street for north-south streets. Resources are judged to be contributing or noncontributing, meaning the resource contributes or does not contribute to the architectural or historical character of the district. Contributing buildings, sites, structures, or objects add to the district's history because they were present during the period of significance, they relate to the documented significance of the district, and they possess historic integrity. Resources built outside the period of significance are noncontributing. Also, resources that have lost their integrity through significant alterations are considered noncontributing. With two exceptions, all the noncontributing resources are designated as such because they post date the period of significance. Only the Seaboard Fire Department and the Dean's Five and Ten Cent Store Façade are considered noncontributing due to alterations. Construction dates are based on interviews with property owners and local residents and the resource's architectural style. Additionally, the construction dates that are known for some resources are factored into decisions concerning construction dates for resources of a similar style about which little information is available. City Directories and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, commonly used to date buildings in larger municipalities, do not exist for Seaboard.

### Church Street, north side of street

#### **1. Harris-Fleetwood House, ca. 1942**

103 Church Street

Contributing building

One-story house with side-gable roof, vinyl siding, horizontal-light windows, interior brick chimney. This house was built in the tidewater area of Virginia, possibly in Norfolk, during World War II by the military. After the war, George Harris, a local school teacher, bought the house and moved it to Seaboard around 1946 or 1947. Phyllis and Henry Fleetwood have owned it since the mid-1950s.

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## 2. House, ca. 1960

105 Church Street  
Noncontributing building

One-story Ranch House with side-gable roof, brick exterior, 6-over-6 sash windows and horizontal-light windows, carport, and recessed entry. An interior brick chimney stands between the main house and an addition beneath the carport roof.

## 3. House, ca. 1935

107 Church Street  
Contributing building

One-story Period Cottage with steeply-pitched side-gable roof and front-facing gable, brick exterior, wooden casement windows, and arched porch openings.

## 3a. Garage, ca. 1935

Contributing building

One-story, gable-front garage with 4-light window in gable end. Frame construction covered with plywood.

## 4. Fenton Crocker House, ca. 1925

109 Church Street  
Contributing building

Two-story, transitional Craftsman and Colonial Revival house with slate hip roof, brick exterior, 12-over-1 windows, central brick chimney, exposed raftertails, hip-roof porch with paired posts on brick piers, and hip-roof wing on east elevation. Picket fence extends across from yard with split rail running along sides of yard. Fenton Crocker was a farmer and local representative for a fertilizer company. Information provided by Dick and Elsie Edwards.

## 4a. Garage, ca. 1925

Contributing building

One-story, frame garage with slate hip roof, sliding door, small paired windows.

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## 4b. Outbuilding, ca. 1925

Contributing building

One-story, frame outbuilding with slate hip roof and double-hung sash windows.

## 5. House, ca. 1950

201 Church Street

Contributing building

Two-story, Colonial Revival house with side-gable roof, brick exterior, 16-over-16 windows, chimneys on both gable ends, one-story wings on side elevations. Mildred Stephenson, who lives at 106 Church Street, provided the construction date but did not know the original occupants.

## Church Street, south side of street

## 6. House, ca. 1950

102 Church Street

Contributing building

One-story, Minimal Traditional house with side-gabled roof, brick exterior, 8-over-8 and 6-over-6 sash windows, small interior chimney, and carport. The construction date for this house is based on its style.

## 7. House, ca. 1945

104 Church Street

Contributing building

One-and-a-half-story Cape Cod with a side-gabled roof, brick exterior, 6-over-6 and 8-over-8 sash windows, interior brick chimney, gabled dormers, gabled stoop, pilasters and flat pediment at front door, and a picture window with side lights. Mildred Stephenson, who lives at 106 Church Street, provided the construction date but did not know the original occupants.

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### 8. Mildred Stephenson House, 1955

106 Church Street  
Contributing building

One-story Ranch house with side-gabled roof, brick exterior, 6-over-6 sash windows and large picture window, and interior brick chimney. Mildred Stephenson built this house in 1955.

### 9. Reid V. Harris House, ca. 1952

108 Church Street  
Contributing building

Two-story, Colonial Revival house with side-gabled roof, brick exterior, 6-over-6 sash windows, gable-end chimneys, and segmental-arched pediment over front door. Reid Harris, the current owner, provided the construction date and original owner.

### 10. House, ca. 1910

110 Church Street  
Contributing building

One-and-a-half-story, Dutch Colonial Revival house with gambrel-front roof, vinyl siding, 2-over-2 sash windows, interior brick chimneys, inset porches with slender Tuscan columns, and T-shaped plan.

### 11. Henry Russell and Clara Stephenson Harris House, 1926

200 Church Street  
Contributing building

Two-story, transitional Colonial Revival and Craftsman house with high hip, slate roof and hipped dormers, brick exterior, 8-over-1 sash windows, interior brick chimneys, hip-roof porch with brick posts and solid brick balustrade and hip-roof porte cochere. Henry Russell Harris, the house's original owner, helped organize the Farmers Bank of Seaboard in 1906, where he worked as a cashier before becoming president in 1920. Information provided by Dick and Elsie Edwards and *Footprints in Northampton*.

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## 11a. Garage, ca. 1925

Contributing building

One-story, hip-roof garage. Frame construction with weatherboard siding.

## 12. House, ca. 1900

202 Church Street

Contributing building

Two-story I-house with triple-A roof, weatherboard siding, replacement 1-over-1 sash windows, smooth-shouldered stuccoed gable end chimneys, lunette attic vent, and a full-width, hip-roof front porch with Tuscan columns. The Hall family has lived here since about 1955; the Browns and Harrises may have been associated with it earlier.

## 12a. Outbuilding, ca. 1900

Contributing building

Gable-front, frame shed.

## Clay Street, north side of street

## 13. Seaboard Volunteer Fire Department, 1954

101 Clay Street

Noncontributing building

Masonry building with sloping roof behind pediment and two wide garage bays. Brick façade with concrete block side and rear walls. Originally R. W. Edwards and Sons' second building; Edwards family sold it to the fire department in the early 1970s. While it is old enough to contribute to the district, the installation of garage doors in place of the storefronts to accommodate the fire department's needs have compromised its integrity.

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### 14. Edwards Warehouse, ca. 1910

103 Clay Street  
Contributing building

Brick, gable-front warehouse with corbelled cornice and shaped and stepped parapet on north and south elevations. Wide door openings.

### 15. Sprint Telephone Company Service Building, ca. 1970

119 Clay Street  
Noncontributing building

One-story, brick building with a flat roof.

### 16. Gas Station, ca. 1930

1 00 block Clay Street  
Contributing building

Frame, gable-front building with projecting gable-front canopy. Side-gable wing attached to rear elevation. Concrete block, shed-roof addition on east elevation. Corrugated metal sheathing covers most of the exterior.

### 17. Auto Garage, ca. 1940

100 block Clay Street  
Contributing building

Concrete block garage building with two garage bays, a flat roof and tile coping along the parapet.

### 18. Bradley Howell Peanut Drying and Storage Facility, ca. 1950

200 Clay Street, north and south sides of street

This group of peanut-related buildings was constructed when peanuts were overtaking cotton as Northampton County's most profitable agricultural product. The complex includes drying silos and small warehouses used to store peanuts before shipment to market. One warehouse stands on the south side of Clay Street; all other buildings are scattered across the lot on the northwest corner of Clay and Green streets. Bradley Howell was a company formed by two local men with the last names Bradley and Howell. Building name and approximate construction date provided by Christie Cleaton.

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## 18a. Drying Bin, ca. 1950

Contributing structure

Cylindrical drying silo on concrete block base. Silo is covered with sheet metal and topped with a low-pitch conical roof. A pipe used to feed peanuts into the silo enters at the apex of the roof. A shed to shelter trailers of peanuts stands beside the two bins.

## 18b. Drying Bin, ca. 1950

Contributing structure

Cylindrical drying silo on concrete block base. Silo is covered with sheet metal and topped with a low-pitch conical roof. A pipe used to feed peanuts into the silo enters at the apex of the roof. A shed to shelter trailers of peanuts stands beside the two bins.

## 18c. Office, ca. 1970

Noncontributing building

Small, mobile home used as office.

## 18d. Warehouse, ca. 1950

Contributing building

Gable-front, one-story, concrete block building. A false front has been added to the south elevation and the south gable end is open.

## 18e. Warehouse, ca. 1950

Contributing building

Frame, gable-front building with open brick pier foundation and sliding door. Clad in vertical metal siding. Stands on south side of street.

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### **18f. Warehouse, ca. 1950**

Contributing building

Frame, gable-front building with open brick pier foundation, clad in weatherboards on side elevations and plywood siding on the front elevation.

### **Clay Street, south side of street**

### **19. Seaboard Pharmacy, ca. 1910**

100 Clay Street

Contributing building

One-story, brick commercial building. Intact storefront with transom divided by numerous vertical mutins, display windows, and recessed entry. Double leaf front door contains large glazed panel in each leaf. A wide molded wooden cornice runs across the top of the transom. Above the cornice is a brick parapet trimmed with brick corbelling. In addition to the first occupant, the building has hosted several businesses, including Mrs. Barnes' millinery shop in the 1930s, a hardware store, and Gay Implement Company.

### **20. Dr. Carl Parker's Office and Drug Store, ca. 1920**

102 Clay Street

Contributing building

Two-story, brick commercial building with recessed entrance. Pilasters flank the façade. Paired windows on the second floor have been replaced. The store front contains large plate glass windows and a modern aluminum-frame front door. This building first housed Dr. Parker's office and drug store, but operated as Worell's Grocery Store during the mid-1900s. It now houses Seaboard Town Hall. Information provided by Christie Cleaton.

### **21. Jordan and Kee Mercantile Store, ca. 1925**

104 Clay Street

Contributing building

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Two-story, yellow brick commercial building with brick herringbone-laid trim around the storefront. Brick corbelling forms a cornice along the parapet. The second floor windows have one-over-one sash while the transom in the storefront has been removed or covered. The double-leaf, recessed front door features four-light panels above long panels in each leaf. Jordan and Kee carried a variety of goods, with clothing and caskets on the second floor.

## **22. Dean's Five and Ten Cent Store Façade, ca. 1930**

106 Clay Street

Noncontributing structure

Brick façade from one-story commercial building. Originally Dean's Five and Ten Cent Store; became a firecracker outlet later and in the 1940s, it exploded, killing one man. The building was vacant until the compromised walls were torn away to begin the current project, which is the construction of a new doctor's office behind the façade. Design work by architecture students from N. C. State University.

## **23. Seaboard School Teacherage, ca. 1940**

122 Clay Street

Contributing building

Craftsman-Colonial Revival transitional building, one-and-a-half stories, side-gable roof, brick exterior, 4-over-4 and 4-over-1 sash windows, interior brick chimney, three gabled dormers across front roof slope. Front porch has replacement posts and balustrade. Porch roof is very low pitched hip. One-story brick wing on the west elevation; one-story gabled wing addition on east elevation. This was the teacherage for the Seaboard School (26). The Lions Club altered the interior for meeting space. Head Start now occupies the building.

## **Green Street, west side of street**

### **24. Mobile Home, ca. 1980**

301 Green Street

Noncontributing building

One-story mobile home with metal siding, diamond-shaped light in the front door, and horizontal-light windows.

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### **25. House, ca. 1925**

305 Green Street

Contributing building

Bungalow, one-story, weatherboard exterior, 6-over-1 sash windows, brick chimney on north gable end. Shed roof porch has replacement posts on brick piers. Large, shed roof dormer extends across much of the front roof slope. Curved knee braces and exposed raftertails trim gable ends and dormer.

### **Green Street, east side of street**

### **26. Seaboard School, 1927**

302 Green Street

Contributing building

Colonial Revival, two-stories above a raised basement, consolidation-era school. Brick exterior with a corbelled cornice running around the parapet and brick coping along the top of the parapet. Banks of windows paired and in groups of three or more; all are missing sash or are boarded over. A cast stone sign panel with the school name occupies the parapet on the north elevation. The school originally had a gable-front portico, but that has been removed. Large fanlight above double-leaf entry. Cast concrete cornice. A one-story, projecting rear section with large arched windows housed an auditorium.

### **26a. Gymnasium, ca. 1943**

Contributing building

Brick gymnasium with bowstring truss roof and flat-roof class room spaces on west, north and east elevations. Metal sash windows, situated just below the eaves on the side elevations, remain in place, but their glass has been broken. Gyms of this design commonly date from the 1950s, but a local resident graduated from the school in 1944 and recalled playing basketball in the gymnasium during his senior year of high school.

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### South Main Street, west side of street

#### **27. Marvin Taylor Gas Station, 1949**

201 South Main Street

Contributing building

One-story, hip-roof, brick building with plate-glass windows flanking a central entrance. A hip-roof wing on the south end is a garage with a small shed addition, clad in vinyl siding, extending across the front elevation. The buildings currently houses Flowers by Design.

#### **28. Sidney S. Harris Gas Station, ca. 1930**

203 South Main Street

Contributing building

One-story, brick, flat-roof building with a paneled frieze, plate-glass windows with divided light transoms, gas canopy at front, and three separate storefronts. South facade, including one storefront and south side of porte-cochere hugs the curve of Clay Street. Small vinyl-sided addition at north corner of west (rear) facade. Building name provided by Dick Edwards.

#### **29. Dr. Carl Parker Office Building, ca. 1920**

205 South Main Street

Contributing building

One-story, gable-front commercial building with vertical plywood siding on façade with pressed metal in a brick pattern covering the side elevations, four-light replacement shop window, a six-light single-leaf door, and exposed raftertails. Building has had various tenants: Dr. Carl Parker operated his office here originally, but it was a beauty shop for most of its existence. Building name and date provided by Christie Cleaton and Dick Edwards.

#### **30. Eddie Lewis Edwards Barber Shop, ca. 1920**

207 South Main Street

Contributing building

One-story, frame, gable-front shop building with six-light single-leaf door and plate glass shop window in front facade. Board and batten siding at front; rolled asphalt faux brick over pressed metal in brick pattern covers other exterior walls. Exposed rafter tails. Building name and date provided by Christie Cleaton and Lillie D. Ray.

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### **31. Gay Implement Company, Inc, ca. 1975**

307 South Main Street  
Noncontributing building

One-story warehouse-type building of metal and brick with shallow-pitch front-gable roof. Large gravel lot housing tractors and other farm equipment.

### **32. House, ca. 1920**

309 South Main Street  
Contributing building

Foursquare, two-story, high hip roof covered in metal, weatherboard exterior, 1-over-1 double-hung sash in groups of three, exterior brick chimney on the south elevation. The house has a full-width front porch with battered posts on brick piers, a hip-roof porte-cochere on south side, and modillions in the eaves. Sidewalk crosses lot in front of house. Building date based on style and known construction dates for similar houses.

### **32a. Garage, ca. 1920**

Contributing building

Two-stall, hipped-roof garage with weatherboard exterior and trim matching that of the house.

### **33. Thomas J. and Mary Frances Draper House, 1952**

311 South Main Street  
Contributing building

Colonial Revival house, one-and-one-half-story, side-gable roof, brick exterior, 6-over-6 double-hung sash windows, interior brick chimney, denticulated cornice, and screened porch at south side. The Drapers still reside here. They built the house over a twenty-two month period during 1951 and 1952.

### **33a. Shed, ca. 1954**

Contributing building

One-story, side-gable, weatherboarded shed with bracketed roof over work space.

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### **33b. Shed, ca. 1954**

Contributing building

One-story, gable-front, weatherboarded shed with upper section projecting out over rear wall to create extra interior storage space.

### **34. Hinton L. and Helen Bridgers Joyner House, ca. 1908**

313 South Main Street

Contributing building

Transitional Queen Anne-Colonial Revival house, one-story, gable-front-and wing roof with clipped gables, weatherboard siding, 6-over-6 double-hung sash in main portion of house, 1-over-1 and 9-over-9 in additions that extend from the rear, interior brick chimneys, hip-roof front porch with slender Tuscan columns, pressed metal-shingle roof. Hinton L. Joyner was Northampton County's Sheriff from 1904 until 1934. Thomas J. Draper provided the house name and approximate construction date. Helen Bridgers Joyner is buried in the Grubbs Family Cemetery (36).

### **34a. Shed, ca. 1910**

Contributing building

Gable-front shed with shed-roof wings and weatherboard exterior.

### **34b. Garage, ca. 1930**

Contributing building

Gable-front single-bay garage with weatherboard exterior

### **35. Dr. Carl P. and Bertha Joyner Parker House, ca. 1920**

315 South Main Street

Contributing building

Neoclassical house, two-story, pyramidal roof, brick exterior, 1-over-1 double-hung sash windows, interior chimney. Full-height porch with fluted Ionic columns shelters a second-floor front balcony. A matching portecochere stands on the north side. Concrete sidewalk crosses lot in front of house. This was the first house in Seaboard to have central heat, which was supplied by a coal-burning furnace. Dr. Parker's in-laws lived next door

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(34) and his mother-in-law and brothers-in-law are buried in the adjacent Grubbs Family Cemetery (36). The construction date is based on the dwelling's architectural style and the fact that Dr. Parker started his practice in Seaboard in 1919 and probably married Miss Joyner around that time. Information provided by Dick and Elsie Edwards and *Footprints in Northampton*.

### **35a. Garage, ca. 1920**

Contributing building

Pyramidal-roof, single-bay garage with weatherboard exterior and metal roof.

### **35b. Shed, ca. 1920**

Contributing building

Pyramidal-roof shed with weatherboard exterior faces north.

### **36. Grubbs Family Cemetery, 1874**

300 block, South Main Street, west side of street

Contributing Site

Small family cemetery with between five and seven unmarked graves. The oldest marker is a standing marble tablet memorializing Virginia Barham, wife of A. E. Joyner. She died on March 24, 1874. A flat marble tablet marks three graves: Helen Bridgers, wife of H. L. Joyner, 1868-1894; Linwood Ashby Joyner, 1888-1909; and Harvey Bridgers Joyner 1893-1894. The cemetery's largest marker is a marble obelisk engraved with a Masonic symbol and commemorating W. F. Grubbs, 1852-1906.

### **36a. Grubbs Family Cemetery Fence, ca. 1900**

Contributing Structure

Wrought-iron fence surrounds cemetery; family nameplate in front gate.

### **37. House, ca. 1990**

319 South Main Street

Noncontributing building

Side-gabled manufactured house with deck at front and shed-roof addition at rear.

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### **37a. Garage, ca. 1990**

Noncontributing building

Single-bay, front-gable garage with vinyl exterior.

### **37b. Shed, ca. 1990**

Noncontributing building

Front-gable shed with vinyl exterior; faces northeast.

vacant lot

### **38. House, ca. 1950**

403 South Main Street

Contributing building

One-story brick Minimal Traditional with vinyl siding at south wing, 8-over-8 double-hung sash. The building's construction date was based on its style. The owner, Big D Farms, did not respond to a written request for information.

### **38a. Garage, ca. 1985**

Noncontributing building

One-story, one-bay, gable-front garage with personnel door and vertical wood siding.

### **39. House, ca. 1950**

405 South Main Street

Contributing building

Minimal Traditional house, one-story, side-gable roof, brick exterior with vinyl siding in gable ends, 1-over-1 replacement windows, interior brick chimney, enclosed porch on south end. The current owners, Edwin and Ernestine Sykes, were not sure of the construction date and did not know the identification of the original owners.

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## 39a. Garage, ca. 1980

Noncontributing building

Side-gable garage with plywood exterior, single-car bay, personnel door, and added carport at north side.

## 40. House, ca. 1910

407 South Main Street

Contributing building

Queen Anne cottage, one story, pyramidal-roof with projecting gable at north and at east (front), vinyl siding, 1-over-1 sash windows, interior brick chimney, corner porch between the two gabled projections with square replacement posts and balustrade. The owners did not respond to requests for information; the building's construction date is based on its style.

## 40a. Garage, ca. 1980

Noncontributing building

Single-story garage with vinyl siding and added carport at front.

## 41. House, ca. 1920

411 South Main Street

Contributing building

Two-story duplex with side-gable roof, asbestos shingle siding, 6-over-6 sash windows, interior brick chimneys, exposed rafter tails, gable-front porch, hip-roof wing at south side, and shed-roof porch enclosed with plywood at rear. The building's absentee owner could not be contacted.

## 42. Henry Lilly House, 1950

501 South Main Street

Contributing building

Cape Cod, one-and-one-half-story, side-gable roof, brick exterior with asbestos shingles in gabled dormers, 6-over-6 double-hung sash, brick chimney on north gable end, slightly protruding gabled entry, screened porch on north side, and rear wing with open porch on south side of wing. This house was built for Henry Lilly, who later moved to Oxford, North Carolina. Construction date and original owner provided by Dick and Elise Edwards.

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### 42a. Shed, ca. 1980

Noncontributing building

Small metal shed.

### 43. Dick and Elsie Edwards House, 1958

503 South Main Street

Noncontributing building

Ranch house, one-story, side-gable roof, brick exterior, paired 8-over-8 and 6-over-6 double-hung sash, inset corner porch at southeast corner supported by iron posts with flowering vine decoration, asphalt shingle roof. Dick and Elise Edwards still reside here.

### 44. Harris House, ca. 1900

601 South Main Street

Contributing building

Picturesque mode Queen Anne, two-story, gable-front-and-wing roof, vinyl siding, 6-over-6 double-hung sash, exterior corbelled brick chimney at south side, interior corbelled brick chimney in center of gable-front section. Shed-roof porch runs along front of wing and has slender, paired posts with sawnwork spandrels. Polygonal bay occupies gable-front section. Scrolled eave brackets accent the cornice. Rear gabled wing. The building's name and construction date are based on a SHPO survey form completed in 1995. *Note from 1995 survey form: Paneling around windows in polygonal bay; now covered with vinyl.*

### South Main Street, east side of street

### 45. Capital Bank, ca. 1970

200 South Main Street

Noncontributing building

Colonial Revival commercial building; one-and-a-half-story with a gambrel roof and brick exterior. Construction date provided by bank personnel.

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**46. White Appliance, ca. 1945**

202 South Main Street  
Contributing building

One-story, brick commercial building with brick corbelling along parapet, recessed entry, and plate glass windows.

**47. United States Post Office, ca. 1950**

206 South Main Street  
Contributing building

One-story, brick commercial building with two storefronts. The post office occupies the southern storefront which has intact fenestration with recessed entry, and plate glass windows; the other has been altered with plate glass windows and flush entry. A wooden, shingled awning extends across the entire façade. May have housed a doctor's office originally. The post office leases the property.

**48. Warehouse, ca. 1930**

200 block South Main Street  
Contributing building

Gable front, frame warehouse sheathed in metal. Building has a central entrance with a window opening in the gable end above the door. The building's owner could not be contacted.

**49. Henry Russell Harris Jr. Law Office, ca. 1945**

210 South Main Street  
Contributing building

One-story, brick commercial building with a sign panel outlined with soldier courses of brick in the parapet. The single leaf front door is topped with a segmental arched enclosed transom. Modern replacement windows flank the entry. Construction date and original occupant provided by Lilly D. Ray and Christie Cleaton.

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## 50. V. I. Bass Grocery Store, ca. 1920

212 South Main Street

Contributing building

One-story, frame, gable-front commercial building with brick façade and tall, stepped parapet with sign panel outlined with soldier courses of brick. Tile coping caps the parapet. Modern plate glass windows flank the centered, single-leaf entry. Building name and approximate construction date provided by Christie Cleaton and Dick Edwards.

## 51. Dr. J. W. Parker Office and Seaboard Drug Company, ca. 1938

214 South Main Street

Contributing building

One-story, brick commercial building with plate glass windows. It originally had two storefronts; one remains with a recessed entry. The other has been covered with vertical wood siding. Narrow recessed panels occupy the parapet above each store storefront. Terra Cotta tile coping caps the parapet. Building name and construction date provided by Mayor Broadnax, Christie Cleaton, and Dick Edwards.

## 52. Harris House, 1948

304 South Main Street

Contributing building

Bungalow, one-story, double-pitch side-gable roof, vinyl siding, Craftsman-style 8-over-1 sash windows, interior brick chimneys. Shed roof dormer on front roof slope. Square brick porch posts. Shed-roof porch extends to create a gabled porte cochere on the south elevation. Now houses Northampton Lodge, established 1987. Built for a member of the Harris family. Construction date and name provided by current owner, Hubert E. Varnadoe Jr.

## 52a. Shed, ca. 1950

Contributing building

Long, frame, side-gable shed.

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### **52b. Garage, ca. 1930**

Contributing building

One-story, gable front, frame garage.

### **53. Stephenson-Barbee House, ca. 1890**

306 South Main Street

Contributing building

Queen Anne, two-stories, cross-gable roof, weatherboard and decorative shingle exterior, interior chimneys. The Stephenson-Barbee House features a T-shaped plan. The main block is side-gabled with three bowed bays on the first floor in which windows and the front door are located. Sidelights, transom, and single-leaf door with oval light compose entrance. The wrap-around porch is enclosed on the south end and has Tuscan columns and rounded corners with a projecting, round gazebo attached to the north corner. A gable-front bay with rounded corners extends over the porch roof from the center bay on the second floor. Brackets decorate the eaves. Shingles clad first floor bays, gable-front projection, and gable ends; weatherboards cover other wall spaces. Built by Dr. Stephenson and passed to his daughter who was married to W. D. Barbee, principal of Seaboard High School. Building name and approximate construction date taken from SHPO survey file.

### **53a. Outbuilding, ca. 1920**

Contributing building

One-and-a-half-story, gable-front, weatherboard outbuilding.

### **54. Seaboard Baptist Church, 1951**

308 South Main Street

Contributing building

Colonial Revival church, two-stories, gable-front roof, brick exterior, stained glass, arched windows and double-hung 6-over-6 sash windows. Telescoping steeple with octagon shaft housing arched windows and capped with an octagon conical roof. A full-height pedimented portico with fluted Doric columns and a heavy cornice and rake that include modillions dominates the façade. Round light in portico gable. Fluted pilasters and broken pediment accent the central front entrance. Two-story, side-gabled addition is attached to the rear elevation. A one-story, brick, gabled addition extends from the rear elevation of the side-gabled addition.

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## 55. Baptist Church Parsonage, ca. 1922

310 South Main Street  
Contributing building

Foursquare, two-story, hip-roof, brick exterior, 4-over-1 sash windows, exterior brick chimney on north elevation. Full-width front porch with battered posts on brick piers and hip-roof porte cochere on north elevation. This house was built as the Baptist Church Parsonage. An older church building, similar to the Methodist Church, originally stood on the site of the current church building. Construction date based on known dates of other similar houses.

## 55a. Garage, ca. 1990

Noncontributing building

One-story, single-bay garage with gable-front roof and vinyl siding.

## 56. House, ca. 1955

312 South Main Street  
Contributing building

One-story, brick, side-gable house with wings extending to the south and 6-over-6 sash windows. Construction date based on style; attempts to contact the current owner produced no results.

## 57. Seaboard United Methodist Church, 1922

314 South Main Street  
Contributing building

Employing a style and form used by Methodists across eastern North Carolina, Seaboard's Methodist congregation built this T-plan, Gothic Revival, brick church with a square tower in 1922. The building has a steeply-pitched slate roof with modillions. Gothic-arched, stained glass windows are arranged in groups of three on the gable ends. The square tower with a crenellated cap houses Gothic-arched door openings and belfry. A one-story hip-roof addition extends across the rear and stands on a tall basement. From this, a two-story, brick, rear ell extends. Both additions have double-hung 6-over-6 sash windows.

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## 58. Methodist Church Parsonage, ca. 1925

316 South Main Street  
Contributing building

Foursquare, two-story, pyramidal roof, vinyl siding, modern 1-over-1 sash windows, four interior brick chimneys. Hip-roof front porch with square posts on brick piers and hip-roof porte cochere with square posts on north elevation. The building was built shortly after the church and always served as the Methodist parsonage.

## 58a. Garage, ca. 1925

Contributing building

One-story, frame garage with hip roof.

## 59. House, 1958

400 South Main Street  
Noncontributing building

Period Cottage, one-story, side-gable roof, weatherboard exterior, 6-over-6 sash windows, and small front-facing gables, one of which houses the round-arch front door. The current owner does not know the original owners, but stated that the house was built in 1958.

## 60. House, ca. 1930

402 South Main Street  
Contributing building

Bungalow, one-story, gable-front roof, vinyl siding, 6-over-1 sash windows, interior brick chimney, and gable-front porch with square posts. Construction date based on style.

## 60a. Garage, ca. 1950

Contributing building

Frame, gable-front garage.

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### **61. House, ca. 1920**

404 South Main Street  
Contributing building

Foursquare, two-story, pyramidal roof, vinyl siding, 6-over-1 sash windows, and an interior brick chimney and an exterior brick chimney on the north elevation. Full-width, hip-roof porch has Ionic columns on brick piers and pediment over porch entrance. Pressed metal shingles sheath this pediment. Hip-roof porte cochere on north elevation. One of several similar houses in Seaboard.

### **61a. Garage, ca. 1920**

Contributing building

Pyramidal-roof garage matches house.

### **62. S. V. Edwards House, 1931**

406 South Main Street  
Contributing building

Colonial Revival, two-story, side-gable roof, brick exterior, 6-over-6 sash windows, exterior chimney on south elevation, half lunette attic windows flanking chimney. One-story pedimented portico at centered front door. One-story addition extends to the south. Designed by architect R. H. Riedel, based in Holland, VA. Godwin W. Draper, an architect in Richmond, VA, designed the one-story addition on the south elevation.

### **62a. Garage, ca. 1940**

Contributing building

Gable-front, brick garage.

### **63. Richard W. and Agnes Ophelia Vick Edwards House, ca. 1900**

500 South Main Street  
Contributing building

The Richard and Agnes Edwards House is one of two elaborate Queen Anne houses in Seaboard. (The ca. 1890 Stephenson-Barbee House [53] is the other.) The two-story, asymmetrical Queen Anne dwelling has a steeply-

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pitched roof and prominent front gable. The north-facing gable houses a polygonal bay. A gable also faces south. Inset front porch has slender columns. Various windows: 1-over-1 sash, stained glass sash over single-light sash, and one oval window. Shingles and weatherboards cover the exterior. Sidelights and a transom surround the front door. A one-story ell with a high hip roof is attached to the rear elevation. The interior features typical Queen Anne trim with bull's eye corner blocks and mantelpieces with mirrored over-mantels and tile fireplace surrounds. Richard Edwards operated a general merchandise store in downtown Seaboard. Originally called R. W. Edwards, the name changed to R. W. Edwards and Sons when his sons joined him in business.

## **63a. Garage, ca. 1980**

Noncontributing building

Gable-front, frame garage with carport.

## **64. Grady Edwards House, ca. 1925**

504 South Main Street

Contributing building

Bungalow, one-story, side-gable, weatherboard siding, 1-over-1 and 4-over-4 sash windows, interior brick chimneys. A shed dormer occupies the front roof slope. Full-width, shed-roof porch extends to porte cochere on north end. Gable in porch roof over porch entrance. The interior features coffered ceilings in the living room and dining room, as well as built-in cabinets and Craftsman mantelpieces. Grady Edwards was R. W. Edwards' son and although he assisted with the family business, he oversaw the family's farming operations. Also on the property is a granite memorial plaque indicating that the cedar tree at which it is located was planted in memory of Verda Laura Ivey and Millard F. Long in 1934. Vinyl siding covered the house when the initial survey occurred; it has been removed to reveal the original weatherboards. Dick and Elsie Edwards provided historical information.

## **64a. Shed, ca. 1925**

Contributing building

Side-gable, frame outbuilding.

## **64b. Garage, ca. 1925**

Contributing building

One-story, frame, gable-front garage.

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### N. C. Highway 186, (West Central Street) north side of street

#### **65. House, ca. 1945**

211 West Central Street  
Contributing building

Minimal Traditional, one-story, side-gable roof, asbestos siding, 6-over-6 sash windows, brick chimney on east gable end, gabled stoop with decorative iron posts, enclosed side porch on east elevation.

#### **66. House, ca. 1945**

213 West Central Street  
Contributing building

Minimal Traditional house with Period Cottage elements, one-story, side-gable roof with gable-front wing, brick exterior, 6-over-6 sash windows, asymmetrical brick chimney on façade, lunette window in gable-front wing, small stoop on side elevation.

#### **67. House, ca. 1945**

215 West Central Street  
Contributing building

Cape Cod house, one-story, side-gabled roof, brick exterior, 8-over-8 sash windows, brick chimney on west gable end, two gabled dormers on front roof slope, screened side porch on west elevation. Gabled garage on east elevation attached to house by hyphen.

### Railroad Street, south side of street

#### **68. Bullock Brothers Service Station, ca. 1937**

124 Railroad Street  
Contributing building

Large, brick gas station with side-gable roof and projecting front-gable canopy supported by square, brick columns. Building has replacement plate glass windows and a concrete block, shed-roof addition on the west end of the façade. A shed-roof, metal-sheathed addition stands on the west gable end.

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## **68a. Storage Building, ca. 1990**

Noncontributing building

One-story, accordion-like, prefabricated metal storage building.

## **69. Seaboard Coastline Railroad Tracks and Right-of-Way**

Contributing structure

Railroad corridor first completed in the mid-1830s as part of the rail line connecting Weldon with Petersburg, Virginia.

## **Washington Street, west side of street**

### **70. Jim Bradley House, ca. 1880**

201 Washington Street

Contributing building

I-house with Queen Anne elements, two-story, side-gable roof, aluminum siding, 2-over-2 sash windows, interior brick chimney. Two-story polygonal bay on north elevation. Front porch with turned posts and sawnwork spandrels wraps around across north elevation. Name and approximate construction date taken from SHPO survey file.

### **70a. Shed, ca. 1940**

Contributing building

Gable-front, frame outbuilding.

### **71. Herbert and Bernice Kelly Harris House, 1926**

301 Washington Street

Contributing building

Transitional Colonial Revival-Craftsman foursquare, two-story, hip roof, brick exterior, 6-over-1 sash windows arranged in pairs and groups of three, exterior brick chimneys. Full-width front porch features square columns. Porte cochere on north elevation has been enclosed and clad in vinyl siding. The Harrises built this house after they

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married. Bernice Kelly Harris made her home in Seaboard during her prolific years as an author and used the town as a setting of much of her writing. Harris was born in 1894 in Wake County, but came to Seaboard in 1917 where she lived until a few months before her death in 1973. Between 1932 and 1938, she wrote a play a year for the Northampton Players; the Carolina Playmakers in Chapel Hill produced several of them. She was a prolific interviewer for the Federal Writers' Project, and in 1939, she finished her first novel, *Purslane*. *Purslane* garnered national praise, and reviewers compared Harris to Katherine Anne Porter, Thomas Hardy, and Erskine Caldwell. *Purslane* was the University of North Carolina Press' first fiction publication and the first fiction winner of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association's Mayflower Society Cup for best North Carolina book in 1939. Harris was the cup's first female winner. She went on to publish six other novels and received several awards and honors for her work. Her childhood home in Wake County was demolished in 2001.

## **71a. Garage, ca. 1926** Contributing building

Frame, weatherboarded, hip-roof garage with exposed raftertails and pressed metal shingle roof.

## **72. Kee House, ca. 1925** 303 Washington Street Contributing building

Bungalow, one-and-a-half-story, side-gable roof, aluminum siding, 1-over-1 sash windows arranged in groups of three, interior brick chimneys. Shed dormer on front roof slope. Shed porch has square columns. Craftsman sidelights flank front door. Kneebraces trim gable ends and shed dormer. According to the current owners, the Kee family owned the house in the early twentieth century and were probably the original owners.

## **72a. Garage, ca. 1925** Contributing building

Hip-roof garage with open sheds on either side. Frame with weatherboard siding.

## **72b. Shed, ca. 1925** Contributing building

Frame, gable-front shed with weatherboard siding.

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## 73. Lem Harris House, 1922

305 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Foursquare, two-story, slate hip roof and hipped dormers, brick exterior, Craftsman 8-over-1 sash windows in pairs and threes, exterior brick chimneys. Hip-roof front and side porches. Front porch has square brick columns; side porch has Tuscan columns. Lem Harris had this house built in 1922. Information provided by Christie Cleaton.

## 73a. Shed, ca. 1925

Contributing building

Tall, one-story, hip-roof shed.

## 73b. Garage, ca. 1950

Contributing building

One-story, frame, gable-front garage with garage bay opening and door. Metal carport has been added to the front elevation.

## 74. Karl Maddrey House, 1922

309 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Foursquare, two-story, hip roof, brick exterior, 1-over-1 sash windows, interior brick chimney, and a full-width porch. Porch features brick columns and a simple roof balustrade. This house was built for Karl Maddrey and his family. Information provided by current owner.

## 74a. Garage, ca. 1990

Noncontributing building

Three-bay, side-gable garage with vertically-grooved plywood siding.

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## 75. Drewett House, ca. 1900

403 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Queen Anne cottage, one-story, side-gable roof clad in pressed metal shingles with front gable, vinyl siding, 6-over-6 sash windows, interior brick chimney. Full-width front porch has turned posts with spandrels and a standing seam metal roof. Local tradition suggests the house was built as early as 1856, but the late nineteenth or early twentieth century seems more likely. According to the current owner, the Drewett family owned the house in the early twentieth century.

## 75a. Shed, ca. 1920

Contributing building

Gable-front, frame shed with sheds on either side.

## 76. House, ca. 1925

407 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Foursquare, two-story, hip roof, vinyl siding, replacement windows, exterior brick chimney. Full-width, hip-roof porch has modern porch posts. The current owners were unresponsive.

## 76a. Shed, ca. 1995

Noncontributing building

Four-bay, metal shed.

## Washington Street, east side of street

## 77. Bethlehem Baptist Church, ca. 1900, 1943

100 block Washington Street  
Contributing building

Gable-front church with truncated square towers of unequal heights on the corners. Hip-roof projections stand on each side elevation and telescoping wings extend from the rear elevation. Windows and louvered openings in the

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belfry of the taller tower are peaked. The church was brick veneered in 1943. The church stands on land donated to the African American community by the Jones family (a white family) with the understanding that the property would always be used for Christian worship. Information provided by Melvin Broadnax.

**78. House, ca. 1925**  
202 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Foursquare, two-story, high hip-roof, weatherboard siding, replacement 1-over-1 sash windows, exterior brick chimney on south elevation. House has exposed raftertails and hip-roof front porch with square posts. The current owners recently purchased this property and do not have any historical information about it.

**78a. Garage, ca. 1925**  
Contributing building

Gable-front, frame garage with weatherboard siding.

**79. House, ca. 1900**  
300 Washington Street  
Contributing building

I-house, two-stories, side-gable roof, weatherboard siding, 6-over-6 sash windows, hip-roof porch with modern metal posts. The absentee owner could not provide any information about this property.

**79a. Shed, ca. 1900**  
Contributing building

Gable-front, weatherboarded shed.

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## 80. House, ca. 1950

302 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Bungalow, one-story, side-gable roof, brick exterior, replacement windows, interior brick chimney, dormers in the front roof slope and a full-width porch with battered posts on brick piers. Vinyl siding on dormers and over trim. Porte cochere on south elevation. Construction date is based on the house's style.

## 80a. Outbuilding, ca. 1950

Contributing building

Side-gable, frame outbuilding.

## 81. House, ca. 1950

306 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Colonial Revival, two-story, side-gable, vinyl siding, modern replacement windows, interior brick chimneys, entry portico with replacement posts.

## 81a. Garage, ca. 1950

Contributing building

Gable front frame garage.

## 82. House, ca. 1955

308 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Minimal Traditional, one-story, side-gable roof with gable-front wing, brick exterior with weatherboards in gable ends, horizontal-light windows and picture windows with horizontal-light sidelights, interior brick chimney.

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## 83. House, ca. 1910

310 Washington Street  
Contributing building

Two-story, gable-front roof with gables on side roof slopes, weatherboard siding, 1-over-1 sash windows, central chimney, wrap-around porch with square posts and small brackets. The building's owner did not respond to requests for information about this house.

## 83a. Garage, ca. 1925

Contributing building

Narrow, frame, gable-front garage with weatherboard siding.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Summary

The Seaboard Historic District meets Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, and Transportation, Criterion B in the area of Literature for its association with writer Bernice Kelly Harris, and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Located just south of the North Carolina-Virginia state line in north-central Northampton County, the locally-significant district's period of significance begins at 1874, when the first marked burial, the district's oldest resource, occurred at the Grubb Family Cemetery and extends to 1955, the end of the historic time period for Criterion A. Seaboard is significant as a typical railroad town in northeast North Carolina displaying characteristic organic commercial and residential growth on an irregular grid pattern parallel to the rail line. Concord, as Seaboard was originally known, was settled in the 1750s. In 1836, the Portsmouth and Roanoke Railroad passed through the community. The line was sold in 1849 to the Seaboard and Roanoke Railroad Company and in 1911 the Seaboard Air Line Railway Company absorbed it. That company merged with Chessie System, Inc. to form CSX Corporation in 1980. Passenger trains stopped serving Seaboard in the late 1950s and the depot and a few trackside warehouses were demolished in the second half of the twentieth century, but freight trains still rumble down the tracks several times a day. The district is also significant for its association with Bernice Kelly Harris who made Seaboard home for her prolific years as an author and used the town as a setting of much of her writing. Harris was born in 1894 in Wake County, but came to Seaboard in 1917 where she lived until a few months before her death in 1973. Between 1932 and 1938, she wrote a play a year for the Northampton Players; the Carolina Playmakers in Chapel Hill produced several of them. She was a prolific interviewer for the Federal Writers' Project, and in 1939, she finished her first novel, *Purslane*. *Purslane* garnered national praise, and reviewers compared Harris to Katherine Anne Porter, Thomas Hardy, and Erskine Caldwell. *Purslane* was the University of North Carolina Press' first fiction publication and the first fiction winner of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association's Mayflower Society Cup for best North Carolina book in 1939. Harris was the cup's first female winner. She went on to publish six other novels and received several awards and honors for her work. Her childhood home in Wake County was demolished in 2001; her home in Seaboard stands at 301 Washington Street. The Seaboard Historic District is also eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for architecture. The district contains a mix of nationally popular styles and vernacular forms common to railroad towns that developed in North Carolina during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The district contains simple I-house dwellings, complex Queen Anne designs, a few bungalows, a large number of transitional Colonial Revival-Craftsman residences, and examples of popular mid-twentieth century styles. Three churches exhibit Colonial Revival and Gothic Revival influences. An intact

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downtown stands adjacent to residential areas and also displays a variety of typical, early twentieth century commercial designs. Most of the resources date from the 1920s, but a significant number are older while a few post-World War II properties illustrate that agriculture and small town commerce sustained Seaboard's prosperity into the mid-twentieth century. The Seaboard Historic District encompasses 134 buildings, structures, and sites, of which 112 (84%) are contributing resources. Twenty-two (16%) of the district's resources are noncontributing.

## Commerce, Community Development, and Transportation Context and Historical Background: Seaboard, the Railroad Town

North Carolina's earliest permanent European settlement occurred in the northeastern section of the state. Settlers began acquiring land in Northampton County at least as early as 1706. By 1741, the population had increased and legislators carved Northampton County from Bertie County. Northampton Courthouse, later renamed Jackson, was designated as the county seat the following year. By 1751, a village called Concord was located at present-day Seaboard and settlers organized several Methodist churches in the area's countryside, most notably Concord Methodist Church, formed in 1793 a few miles outside of Seaboard.<sup>1</sup>

The history of Seaboard's earliest years is unclear.<sup>2</sup> During the 1830s, the settlement of Concord found itself in the path of a railroad when Virginia and North Carolina chartered the Portsmouth and Roanoke Railroad Company in 1832 and 1833 respectively.<sup>3</sup> The Portsmouth and Roanoke planned and completed a line between Portsmouth, Virginia, and Weldon, North Carolina, by 1836, and in 1837, an amendment to North Carolina's charter of the company absolved its responsibility of picking up passengers or freight at locations without stations provided the company establish a depot at "some convenient point between Margarettsville and Garysburg."<sup>4</sup> While Gumberry is situated between those two locations and a depot was constructed there,

<sup>1</sup> Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, *Footprints in Northampton* (Rich Square, N.C.: Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 182; William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 52.

<sup>2</sup> An undated map that shows Martin's Crossroads (as Conway was known from the 1830s until the 1870s) and Gumberry, located just a few miles down the rail line from Seaboard, does not indicate the location of the railroad, Concord, or Seaboard. Undated map in the Map Collection, State Archives, Raleigh, N. C.

<sup>3</sup> Valuation Department, Seaboard Air Line Railway Company, *The Corporate History of the Seaboard Air Line Railway Company* (Norfolk: Burke and Gregory, Inc., 1922), Corporate History Chart Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> *Laws of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at the Session of 1838-'37* (Raleigh: Thomas J. Lemay, Printer, 1837), 227-228.

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Seaboard lies almost exactly at the midway point between Margarettsville and Garysburg and therefore may have been the location of the station suggested in the 1837 amendment.

Business on the Portsmouth and Roanoke, however, did not boom, and the company was sold under foreclosure in 1844. The new owner began dismantling the tracks, but angry citizens forced him to cease and either operate the line or sell it. In 1845 he sold the Portsmouth and Roanoke to the Seaboard and Roanoke Railroad Company, which reconstructed the damaged track. Four years later, the Seaboard and Roanoke consolidated with the Roanoke Railroad Company, but kept the name Seaboard and Roanoke until 1911 when Seaboard Air Line Railway Company absorbed it.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the little settlement of Concord, like other trackside towns in North Carolina, decided to take a name reflecting its association with the line and changed its name to Seaboard, sometime between 1845 and 1860, when Seaboard Township, with Seaboard listed as the local post office, first appears in the census records.<sup>6</sup>

Seaboard, along with Margarettsville, Severn, Conway, Milwaukee, and several other Northampton County communities, became a small but locally-important station where farmers and merchants shipped products to and from their farms and businesses and traded their goods with one another. It is not clear when Seaboard became a formal stop on the rail line; possibly as early as the 1830s, but probably by 1860 when the township and post office were listed in the census. Passenger trains stopped in Seaboard throughout the period of significance with service ending in the late 1950s. The line moved ideas, people, fashions, and goods between Seaboard and larger cities like Raleigh and Portsmouth and Richmond, Virginia. Cotton was the chief farm product shipped from Seaboard. In 1870, the farmers with Seaboard addresses produced 647 bales which they shipped to textile factories in New England and later (starting around 1900) to nearby Roanoke Rapids and other New South mill towns.<sup>7</sup> Like other railroad villages, Seaboard was not formally planned. It grew organically, along an irregular grid, away from and parallel to the railroad tracks, exemplifying railroad town development.

In 1877, the town officially incorporated.<sup>8</sup> At that time, Branson's *North Carolina Business Directory* listed one undertaker, eight merchants, one doctor, and a post office in Seaboard. By 1880, 163 people (seventy-two African Americans and ninety-one Caucasians) populated Seaboard. White residents worked as farmers, farm laborers, merchants, and clerks. At least one physician, coach maker, mail carrier, telegraph operator, boot and shoe maker, and brick mason served Seaboard. African Americans were limited to jobs as railroad laborers,

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 12-14; Bicentennial Committee, 188; John W. Smith, *Building a Railroad: the Seaboard Air Line: Its Beginnings and its Contributions* (New York: The Newcomen Society in North America, 1952), 4, 15-16.

<sup>6</sup> Bicentennial Committee, 182; William S. Powell, *The North Carolina Gazetteer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 444.

<sup>7</sup> Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Northampton County, North Carolina, Agriculture, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

<sup>8</sup> *Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at its Session, 1876-1877* (Raleigh: The News Publishing Company, State Printer and Binder, 1877), 404.

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domestic servants, cooks, and farm laborers. Unlike white households, where only the male head and possibly older sons worked outside the home, nearly every member of African American families worked, including young teenagers.<sup>9</sup> Between 1886 and 1889, the town had a newspaper, the *Seaboard Reflector* and around 1888, a small, frame, three-room Italianate train station was erected on the north side of the railroad tracks just west of Main Street.<sup>10</sup>

Seaboard's population grew with its fortunes, to 289 in 1900. One bartender and one circus entertainer provided diversions, and Pruden's Hotel (later Stephenson's Hotel) engaged at least one African American employee.<sup>11</sup> In 1906, several Seaboard businessmen organized the Farmer's Bank with six thousand dollars in capital. Less than twenty years later, the bank boasted deposits exceeding half a million dollars and a "modern brick building with excellent accommodations for the convenience of Customers who are always welcome."<sup>12</sup> The decade between 1900 and 1910 saw Seaboard's population hold nearly steady while residents worked in a typical assortment of capacities: African American males and females were cooks, dressmakers, domestic servants, sawmill employees, railroad laborers, laundresses, teachers, and nurses. White males were farmers, retail employees, store owners, carpenters, real estate agents, telegraph operators, bank employees, teachers, and doctors. A few white females earned a living as teachers, post mistresses, and dressmakers.<sup>13</sup> By 1920, nearly three hundred people populated Seaboard.<sup>14</sup>

During the first decades of the twentieth century, business expanded in Seaboard. In addition to the bank, H. C. Maddrey and Company, the oldest store in the town as of 1924, offered a wide variety of merchandise, was willing to sell to farmers on credit, and was the largest cotton buyer in the county. W. Paul Edwards opened his general store in 1921. Although advertisements for Edwards' establishment indicate that he dealt in a range of products, he specialized in perishable foods and maintained a modern icebox for that purpose. By the mid-1920s, one could patronize the Seaboard Pharmacy (19), general merchant D. S. Crocker, grocer F. C. Weaver Company, or R. W. Edwards who supplied furniture, floor coverings, hay, grain, groceries, and fertilizer. Jordan and Kee Mercantile Store (21), like Maddrey and Company, bought cotton, peanuts, poultry, and eggs from local farmers and offered them "generous credit." Dr. Carl Parker's office and drug store (20)

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<sup>9</sup> Tenth Census of the United States, 1880: Northampton County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

<sup>10</sup> Bicentennial Committee, 33 and SHPO Survey File NP 238.

<sup>11</sup> Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Northampton County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh); Bicentennial Committee, 30.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 188; *Northampton Progress* (Jackson), June 26, 1924.

<sup>13</sup> Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Northampton County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

<sup>14</sup> W. D. Lee, *Soil Survey of Northampton County, North Carolina* (Washington, D. C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1925), 3.

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operated on Clay Street, and Eddie Lewis Edwards ran a barber shop in the little frame commercial building at 207 Main Street (30). With business booming, a two-story, brick school (26) replaced the earlier frame schoolhouse in 1927. The imposing building resulted from a statewide school construction boom that aimed to consolidate small one- and two-room schools into substantial, fire resistant, sanitary, modern brick buildings with auditoriums, libraries, drinking fountains, and electricity. A teacherage (23) was also constructed on Clay Street, probably several years after the new school was built.<sup>15</sup>

Downtown Seaboard remained viable despite the effects of the Depression. Mrs. Barnes ran a millinery shop in the former Seaboard Pharmacy at 100 Clay Street (19) and Dean's Five and Ten Cent Store (22) opened around 1930 at 106 Clay Street. As many as five grocery stores operated in Seaboard during the Depression, but federal relief was welcome, even necessary for many. One resident recalled that the Works Progress Administration (WPA) enabled survival. Federal programs distributed meal, corn, and molasses and ensured each home had a milk cow. The WPA helped Seaboard pave streets and build a water and sewer system. R. W. Edwards and Sons on Clay Street survived because it sold goods to the county which it distributed, free of charge, to the destitute. Seaboard resident Bernice Kelly Harris interviewed farmers and fellow Seaboardians for the Federal Writers' Project, documenting an array of people, rich and poor, town and country, black and white, male and female, living through the economic turbulence. As recovery began in the late 1930s, 534 people called Seaboard home.<sup>16</sup>

During World War II, Seaboard's residents participated in the war effort in various ways. The town's proximity to the Atlantic coast created one particular opportunity for service: plane-spotting. Volunteers learned to identify and describe suspect airplanes and manned an observation post around the clock in three-hour shifts. The post was a very small frame building on the school grounds. A direct telephone line connected the spotter to a military base in Norfolk, Virginia. Nearly everyone in town was a plane-spotter and several locals received Certificates of Honorable Service from the Army Air Forces. Residents, most of whom already cultivated small vegetable gardens, expanded them to Victory Gardens and lived with the nationwide rationing of food, gas, and building materials. Locals collected scrap metal to sell to the "iron man" who shipped it by rail to Norfolk for use in ship construction and to other locations for wartime manufacturing. At the town's Red Cross sewing room, Seaboard's ladies fashioned nightgowns, shirts, and skirts for women in Stalingrad. Many of Northampton County's soldier sons embarked for service at Seaboard's depot.<sup>17</sup>

After World War II, changes came rapidly to Seaboard and Northampton County, specifically in the form of machines. Seaboard native and current mayor Melvin Broadnax felt the "automation" of the mid-1900s

<sup>15</sup> *Northampton Progress* (Jackson), June 26, 1924; Dick Edwards, interview with author, December 16, 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Melvin Broadnax, interview with the author on April 2, 2004; Valerie Yow, *Bernice Kelly Harris: A Good Life was Writing* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1999), 91; Dick and Elsie Edwards, joint interview by the author on April 8, 2004; North Carolina State Highway Map, 1938, State Archives, Raleigh, N. C.

<sup>17</sup> Broadnax interview; Yow, 141-142; Edwards joint interview.

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was the most significant change to Seaboard's economy and population since the arrival of the railroad. Farm subsidies, introduced as a New Deal economic stabilizer, paid farmers not to raise certain crops. With a little more cash on hand, farmers purchased various labor-saving implements, most notably, efficient mechanical harvesters. Competition with ever-improving machines pushed farmhands out of the fields, and those who retained jobs found it necessary but sometimes difficult to learn new mechanical skills. As a result, many sharecroppers, particularly African Americans, left Seaboard for jobs in northern cities. Even literature records the phenomenon. Although mechanization did not have a major impact until after the war, local writer Bernice Kelly Harris created a character in her 1940 novel, *Sweet Beulah Land*, who purchases new machinery to replace his tenants. Census figures confirm these observations: While Seaboard's population has remained steady at about 700 during the second half of the twentieth century, Northampton County's population has declined, from a peak of 28,432 in 1950 to 22,086 in 2000, and the estimated population for 2003 predicts a further drop of 1.4%.<sup>18</sup>

Equipment not only changed who farmed, but it altered what was farmed. Cotton was and is tremendously important to Northampton County's economy, but peanut farming became considerably more lucrative with better machinery. During the 1950s, peanuts overtook cotton as the county's leading agricultural product and in Seaboard, entrepreneurs erected two peanut drying and storage facilities (one of which, #18, the Bradley Howell complex, contributes to the district) during the mid-twentieth century.<sup>19</sup>

By 1968, over 600 people lived in Seaboard, and many of them had constructed new homes during the post-World War II period. The old Seaboard School, which had become an elementary school in 1963 when the county's high schools consolidated, closed in 1978 when all students were assigned to an integrated elementary school in the African American neighborhood east of downtown. Several industries, specifically Seaboard Liquid Foods, Inc., Union Camp, and Seaboard Industries, began operations in the Seaboard vicinity during the late 1960s and early 1970s, but today the larger industrial employers in the area are Georgia-Pacific, Purdue Farms, and International Paper. Agriculture, however, is still the county's main economic engine, although it now operates in the form of large-scale, industrial farming. Such agri-business has forced many small farmers to find other work, resulting in continued population losses in northeastern North Carolina, but the industry accounts for over one-third of Northampton County's business and generates over one hundred million dollars

<sup>18</sup> U. S. Census Bureau website, accessed via <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/37131.html> and [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsTable?\\_lang=en&\\_vt=name=DEC\\_2000\\_PL\\_U\\_GCTPL\\_ST7&\\_geo\\_id=04000US37](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsTable?_lang=en&_vt=name=DEC_2000_PL_U_GCTPL_ST7&_geo_id=04000US37) on April 22, 2004 and November 2, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> Dick Edwards interview; Lee, 5; Broadnax interview; Yow, 124.

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in products.<sup>20</sup> In 1997, Northampton County produced more peanuts than any county in North Carolina and ranked thirteenth in production nationally.<sup>21</sup>

Despite changes in agriculture and business, however, if a resident of Seaboard in 1930 returned today, he or she would find the town much as it was over seventy years ago. Although the town's population has not expanded, it has not contracted, remaining stable at nearly 700 since 1987, and with tree-lined residential streets and an intact commercial district, Seaboard epitomizes the small Northampton County railroad town.

## Architectural Context

The dwellings, outbuildings, commercial buildings, light industrial buildings, churches, and school in the Seaboard Historic District represent the architectural styles and forms that occurred in Seaboard and throughout northeastern North Carolina from the late nineteenth century to the post-World War II period. During this time, architecture reflected the social and economic changes occurring as Seaboard transformed from a railroad stop to a small but bustling agriculture-based commercial center and later to a small town home for local industrial employees and a few remaining farmers. Builders or architects based in Seaboard have not been identified, but since Seaboard's earliest documented years, carpenters and brick masons have been among the town's residents. In 1860, one man operated a sawmill in or near Seaboard. By 1870, one could hire an African American painter named Henry Hunt, a white carpenter, or a carpenter of mixed race in the Seaboard area. Ten years later, brick mason James Gilley, a twenty-four-year-old white male, lived in Seaboard. At the turn of the twentieth century, carpenters Willie Cuthrell, Floyd Agee, Thomas M. Stone, and William Mansfield worked in Seaboard.<sup>22</sup> Oral tradition suggests that a German immigrant built several homes in Seaboard during the early 1920s.<sup>23</sup> In 1931, S. V. Edwards and his wife completed their Colonial Revival house (62), designed by Holland, Virginia, architect R. H. Riedel. Godwin W. Draper, an architect working in Richmond, Virginia, designed a one-story addition to the house during the 1950s.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> North Carolina Department of Commerce, *County Profile 1987: Northampton County* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Commerce, 1987), no page numbers; Edwards joint interview; the Northampton County Chamber of Commerce website, accessed via <http://www.northamptonchamber.org/profile.aspx>, on April 6, 2004.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1997 Census of Agriculture, Ranking of States and Counties, Volume 2, accessed via the U. S. Department of Agriculture website, <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/census97/rankings/ac97s-3r.pdf> on April 23, 2004.

<sup>22</sup> Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Censuses of the United States, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, and 1910: Northampton County, North Carolina, Population Schedules, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

<sup>23</sup> Hubert E. Varnadoe, interview with the author, May 6, 2004.

<sup>24</sup> Kelly Lynn Edwards, interview with the author, May 6, 2004.

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The earliest buildings in Seaboard are Queen Anne in style, or at least take cues from Queen Anne designs. Queen Anne gained popularity across the country during the 1880s. It dominated domestic architecture nationwide until around 1900, but remained prevalent in rural areas for the first two decades of the twentieth century. Examples in Seaboard illustrate both the town's fashion-ability, made possible through rail connections, and its ties to rural traditions, which generally favored plainer I-houses. Both the circa 1890 Stephenson-Barbee House (53), with its curving walls and porch and the circa 1900 Richard and Agnes Edwards House (63), with its asymmetrical massing and decorative shingles are exuberant examples of Queen Anne design. The circa 1910 Edwards Warehouse (14) on Clay Street illustrates the application of the style to non-residential architecture and an adherence to the style as the twentieth century began. While utilitarian in form, the building's brick corbelling and elaborate shaped and stepped parapet pay heed to the persistence of Queen Anne tastes.

Queen Anne buildings were constructed in nearly every track-side town in North Carolina. The largest town, and therefore the largest concentration of Queen Anne architecture close to Seaboard and on the rail line can be found in Weldon, which lies about ten miles southwest of Seaboard. Adjacent to Weldon is Roanoke Rapids, which boomed as a New South mill town around 1900, but contains more mill houses than Queen Anne designs.

Just as hemlines were rising in cities, but retaining their modest lengths in the country's small towns, Queen Anne designs remained popular in rural locales decades after urbanites discarded them. Seaboard's rail line afforded residents a link to cities and the ideas permeating them, but journeys consumed time and money and generally, rural architecture stayed a step or two behind urban architecture. During the first decades of the twentieth century, however, things changed. Rural mail delivery, faster trains, cars, and better roads not only moved people and goods rapidly but also theories, tastes, and opinions. Magazines and catalogues, available through the mail, disseminated the same house plans and preached the same architectural tastes to New Yorkers, Californians, and Seaboardians. Greater cosmopolitan exposure coincided with general prosperity across the country and in Seaboard so that by the 1920s, many of Seaboard's high-style dwellings were constructed using designs on par with those seen during the same period in larger cities in North Carolina.

Two-story houses exhibiting a combination of Craftsman and Colonial Revival design elements gained particular favor in Seaboard during this period. Local tradition holds that a German immigrant built several of these houses during the first years of the 1920s. Executed in either brick or frame with weatherboard siding, most examples share deep overhanging eaves, low hip roofs or high hip roofs with dormers on three or four sides, full-width front porches usually with battered porch posts on brick piers, and porte cocheres on the side elevations. Most owners also built matching or complimentary garages. Examples include the circa 1922 Seaboard Baptist Church Parsonage (55), a brick dwelling with a Craftsman porch and Colonial Revival modillions in the eaves, and the 1926 home of Herbert and Bernice Kelly Harris (71). Like the parsonage, the Harris House mixes Craftsman six-over-one sash windows with an elegant, classically-inspired porch that

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features square columns and a simple cornice. Both houses have porte cocheres and garages, although the Harris porte cochere is enclosed.

Institutional buildings reflected prevailing architectural tastes during the 1920s, and like their residential counterparts, also often blended revival styles, classically-inspired styles, and Craftsman designs. The Seaboard School (26) was built in 1927 and exhibits a combination of Beaux Arts, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman references, including a now-destroyed full-height portico on the front elevation. The 1922 Seaboard Methodist Church (57) employs Gothic Revival styling, and commercial buildings from the early twentieth century on Clay and Main Streets display typical corbelling, display windows, and parapets.

As the twentieth century progressed, Seboardians accepted other styles. During the late 1930s and immediately after World War II, Period Cottages, also known as English Cottages, used some Tudor Revival elements, such as steep roofs, asymmetrical chimneys placed on the front of the house, and arched windows and doors, to create diminutive masonry or frame houses. Peanut production and other light industries generated new profits in Northampton County, which meant Seboardians could build new dwellings. Minimal Traditional houses, one-story side-gabled dwellings so-named for their stripped-down or minimal Colonial Revival decorative elements, gained popularity immediately after World War II and continued to be built into the 1950s. The house at 211 West Central Street (N. C. Highway 186) (65) is a good example, with a side-gable roof, gabled stoop, and six-over-six sash windows. Ranch Houses, such as the 1958 Dick and Elsie Edwards House (43), incorporated the mid-century ideals of open interior spaces, horizontal massing, and relaxed, casual living.

## Bernice Kelly Harris and Seaboard

The Seaboard Historic District is eligible for its association with the productive life of Bernice Kelly Harris, who resided in Seaboard from 1917, first as a boarder and after 1927, at 301 Washington Street, until her death in 1973. Meredith College graduate Bernice Kelly was born to a farm family in eastern Wake County in 1894 and arrived in Seaboard in 1917 to teach a variety of high school subjects. English and drama interested her most and she directed school plays for which she designed sets and occasionally stepped in for stage-frightened actors. Kelly also wrote plays, poems, and short stories. In 1926, after a six-year engagement, she married Seaboard businessman Herbert K. Harris, and shortly thereafter resigned her teaching position.<sup>25</sup>

Although no longer teaching, Harris continued writing, generating feature articles for the *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, the *Raleigh News and Observer*, and other local newspapers. *Colliers* and *The Saturday Evening Post* published her short stories.<sup>26</sup> Harris taught a play-writing class for her friends in Seaboard and between 1932 and 1938, she wrote a play a year for the Northampton Players. Carolina Playmakers in Chapel

<sup>25</sup> Bicentennial Committee, 189.

<sup>26</sup> Yow, 43-44; Bicentennial Committee, 190.

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Hill produced several. Harris' Wake County childhood inspired her, but her adopted home of Seaboard influenced her significantly and local people and places are often recognizable in her works. Two plays, *His Jewels* and *Open House*, sprung directly from her Federal Writers' Project in-home interviews with tenant farmers and their families through which she documented the injustices of the sharecropping system in and around Seaboard.<sup>27</sup> She also used these interviews to pen five of the twenty fictionalized essays from North Carolina in the Writers' Project book, *These Are Our Lives*, published in 1939.<sup>28</sup>

In an effort to distract herself from Harris family conflicts, and with encouragement from several newspaper editors familiar with her writing, Harris produced her first novel, titled *Purslane*, which was the first novel published by the University of North Carolina Press. Reviewers at the *New Yorker*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *New Republic*, and the *Los Angeles Times* raved and compared her to Katherine Anne Porter, Thomas Hardy, and Erskine Caldwell. The publishing houses of Putnam in London and McClelland and Stewart in Toronto printed the book abroad under the title *Pate's Siding*. For *Purslane*, Harris won the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association's Mayflower Society Cup for best North Carolina book of the year in 1939. She was the first woman to receive the prize, and *Purslane* was the first novel to win it.<sup>29</sup>

Harris set most of her plays, short stories, and seven novels in or around Seaboard. Although *Purslane* bore the traditional disclaimer that no resemblance to real persons was intended, she admitted in her autobiography that characters "are sometimes illumined by an identification less 'purely coincidental' than is indicated in prefaces to novels."<sup>30</sup> Doubleday published *Portulaca*, Harris' second novel, in 1941. It dealt with many of the issues Harris faced as a female in a small southern town as she sought to be her own artistic person while feeling both her own desire for and society's pressure to be a part of her community through the accepted channels of domesticity, women's clubs, and church participation. She set *Portulaca* in fictional Bonwell, but, despite her claims to the contrary, Seaboard seems to be the model. Though it offered up some unflattering descriptions of small town life, sparking predictions that Seaboard would "give her hell" or "finish her off," most Seaboardians embraced Harris' work. Those who read it and recognized locals rarely saw themselves, instead laughing at those they thought she had "hit hard."<sup>31</sup> *Sweet Beulah Land*, published in 1943 and based largely on her work for the Federal Writers' Project in and around Seaboard, bore a more honest disclaimer that "Some of the people and incidents in this book are fictional."<sup>32</sup>

Harris delved into the lives of rural African Americans in *Janey Jeems*, published in 1946, but she did not specifically mention race in the book. The only hints were a reference to slave ancestry at the beginning and

<sup>27</sup> Yow, 51, 55.

<sup>28</sup> Federal Writers' Project, *These Are Our Lives* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939).

<sup>29</sup> Yow, 61, 73, and 77; Bicentennial Committee, 190.

<sup>30</sup> Bernice Kelly Harris, *Southern Savory* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 205.

<sup>31</sup> Harris, *Southern Savory*, 161, 164, and 206; Edwards joint interview.

<sup>32</sup> Bernice Kelly Harris, *Sweet Beulah Land* (Garden City, N. J.: Doubleday, Doran, and Company, 1943), preface.

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a conversation between Janey and a white doctor in which the doctor condescendingly used “uncle” and “auntie” in reference to his patient and Janey respectively. Critics and readers often failed to realize the story was about African Americans, and many felt deceived when (if) they grasped the characters’ race. Her agent commented, “Here is a book about Negroes as people, just as if they were Laplanders or Southern Baptists. See what happens. Even the supposedly enlightened members simply don’t recognize it.” Others, including North Carolina author Inglis Fletcher, clearly recognized Harris’ treatment of African Americans and deemed it radically, unacceptably liberal.<sup>33</sup>

Harris published two short Christmas stories in the 1960s, but finished her last novel, *Wild Cherry Tree Road* in 1951. In 1963, she began teaching a non-credit creative writing class at Chowan College in Murfreesboro. She encouraged her students to publish their writing and edited her students’ works into two collections, *Southern Home Remedies* in 1969 and *Strange Things Happen* in 1971.<sup>34</sup>

In the last years of her life, Harris garnered several awards. In 1966, she received the North Carolina Award for Literature and honorary degrees from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and Wake Forest University. Two years later, Meredith College named her a distinguished alumna. Posthumously, she received a Brown-Hudson Folklore Award for editing her Chowan College students’ anthologies.<sup>35</sup>

Harris lived and wrote in Seaboard until a stroke sent her to a nursing home in Durham. She resided there for five months until she passed away on September 13, 1973, midway through writing a letter to friends in Seaboard. Her novels and plays, like her WPA work, explored the lives of a wide range of people. Seaboard was small, but, as in other villages, remarkable variety flourished on its streets and in its buildings. Seaboard was home to those of wealth and those living in poverty. Farmers lived in town or near town, as did sharecroppers. Shopkeepers, domestics, landlords, cotton gin-owners, preachers, bankers, and carpenters lived together in Seaboard and on Harris’ pages. Bernice Kelly Harris’ childhood home in eastern Wake County was demolished in 2001. The home she and Herbert Harris built in 1926 and 1927 still stands on Washington Street in Seaboard (71).<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Yow, 156; Harris, *Southern Savory*, 175.

<sup>34</sup> Bicentennial Committee, 190; Yow, 265.

<sup>35</sup> Bernice Kelly Harris biography on the North Carolina Writer’s Network website, <http://www.ncwriters.org/bharris.htm>, accessed April 6, 2004.

<sup>36</sup> Yow, 283; Valerie Yow, telephone conversation with the author, April 5, 2004.

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## 10. Geographical Data

### Verbal Boundary Description

The Seaboard Historic District boundary is marked with a black line on the accompanying Northampton County Tax Map with a scale of one inch equals one hundred feet.

### Boundary Justification

The Seaboard Historic District bounds are based on the edges of the greatest concentration of historic resources in Seaboard built during the period of significance. Historically, railroad-related buildings stood along the district's northern edge between Railroad Street and the rail corridor. These resources, however, have been demolished. The boundary encompasses the historic core of the town, with the exception of the African American neighborhood, which due to a loss of historic fabric and architectural integrity could not be included in the district. Resources associated with the African American community are located to the east of the district, east of the properties that line the east side of South Main Street.

