

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Wake	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Mordecai House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Mimosa Street bounded by Mordecai Drive on the West, by Cedar Street on the North, by Wake Forest Road on the East, and Mimosa Street on the South

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE 32	COUNTY: Wake	CODE 32
------------	-----------------	------------

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Raleigh Historic Sites Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 690

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 32

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Wake County Courthouse, Register of Deeds Office

STREET AND NUMBER: 310 Fayetteville Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 32

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: North Carolina  
COUNTY: Wake  
FOR NPS USE ONLY  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The oldest section of the Mordecai House was a simple hall-and-parlor frame dwelling. Originally this section may have been one-and-a-half stories, which were subsequently raised to two stories. At an early date two shed rooms were added along the west side. There was an open passage between these two rooms. The passage was later enclosed and parts of it partitioned to form a small storage room and three closets. At approximately the same time the south shed room was extended to the west, a flue built on its south wall, and the western end partitioned to form a narrow service passage. The major expansion of the house consisted of erecting a frame Greek Revival two-story section on the south side making the house L-shaped thereby changing its east-west orientation to a southern one. At this time the chimney of the south room of the oldest portion was removed and the room was transformed into a gracious stair hall by removing the old stair and constructing a new one in the opposite corner. On the interior some of the original fabric of the old section remains including two mantels which bear a marked resemblance to designs found in William Salmon's Palladio Londinensis. The later stair is simple but graceful, being enriched by nice profile brackets. The Greek Revival trim of the south section is quite effective in its restrained simplicity. There are panels below the windows which add to the verticality of the design as they and the windows are framed by the same reeded surround punctuated by corner blocks decorated with roundels. The mantels are of Federal inspiration, but the use of diminutive Ionic pilasters show the influence of the new style. On the exterior there is a marked contrast between the formal facade of the south front and the picturesque informality of the rest of the house. The former features a superimposed pedimented portico correctly employing the Ionic order above the Doric. The portico is flanked by pairs of windows on both levels. Each window has nine-over-nine sash. The house is painted white and many of the original green blinds with stationary louvers survive. The later section of the house is approximately 52 feet by 20 feet. The older section including the shed rooms is approximately 32 feet by 34 feet.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

## SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   | _____                                    |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Mordecai House was built about 1785 by Joel Lane for his son Henry on land reputed to have been granted by George III. Seven years later Joel Lane sold 1,000 acres near his son's home to be used for the capital city of Raleigh. The house takes its name from Moses Mordecai who married twice into the family of Henry Lane--first to daughter Margaret and after her death to her sister Ann Willis Lane. Before his death in 1824, Moses Mordecai hired William Nichols for the purpose of enlarging the original structure. Four rooms facing south were added to make the house a Greek Revival mansion. This addition is significant as an existing example of the work of the architect, William Nichols. In the years 1820-1822 Nichols remodeled the old State Capitol originally built in 1792-1794.

Moses Mordecai was the son of Jacob Mordecai. The latter was a pioneer in the field of education in North Carolina as he founded a girls school in Warrenton in 1808.

"For more than a century after the coming of Jacob Mordecai into North Carolina his family and descendants played an important part in the history of the state. In many walks of life they could be found promoting the good of their country and community, and they were particularly noted for their legal ability. Especially prominent were the members of this family about Raleigh, where they greatly aided the development of that section." (North Carolina Historical Review, Jan. 1945, p. 63.) Among Jacob Mordecai's children were: Moses, a prominent lawyer and Raleigh member of the 1805 Court of Conference; Samuel, a prominent businessman in Richmond, Virginia, who wrote a history of that city; Solomon, who studied medicine in Philadelphia and practiced in Mobile, Alabama; George of Raleigh, an eminent lawyer, president of the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, and president of the Bank of North Carolina; and Alfred, who graduated first in the class of 1823 at West Point, taught there for several years, he rose to the rank of major and during his army career was the commander of several arsenals, and the author of several tracts on military engineering and other subjects. During the Civil War he resigned from the U. S. Army and lived a civilian life in Philadelphia. After the War he became assistant engineer for the Mexican Imperial Railway.

Moses Mordecai had two sons, Henry and Jacob, and one daughter, Ellen, by his first wife and one daughter, Margaret, by his second. Henry was

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

100 (1971)  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

North Carolina	
COUNTY	Wake
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. a prosperous planter and lived at the Mordecai house. He was a member of the State Legislature. His daughter, Margaret, married Dr. William Little, a distinguished Raleigh physician. Their descendants owned and occupied the Mordecai house until it was sold in 1967. Moses Mordecai's daughter Ellen married her first cousin, Samuel Fox Mordecai, son of Dr. Solomon Mordecai of Mobile. Ellen Mordecai was the author of Gleanings From Long Ago, a delightful collection of stories and descriptions of antebellum life in Raleigh and the surrounding areas. Her son Samuel Fox Mordecai, Jr. was the dean of the law school of Trinity College (later Duke University) from 1904 until his death in 1927. Moses' daughter Margaret married John Devereux who was head of the Quartermaster's Department of North Carolina during the Civil War.

When the Raleigh Historic Sites Commission acquired the house it came into the possession of many of the original furnishings which range from the last quarter of the eighteenth century to the early twentieth. In addition it rescued the significant Mordecai papers and library. The papers are now on deposit with the State Department of Archives and History in Raleigh. They include documents dealing with the Mordecai and Little family, their relations, and other prominent North Carolinians including Christopher Gale (1680-1734), William Person, Philemon Hawkins (1752-1833), and Stephen Haywood. The extensive library covers over 250 years of publication. It is the plan of the Raleigh Historic Sites Commission to catalog the library and place it in the Mordecai house. The house is presently undergoing an interior restoration. When this is completed, the original furniture, portraits, books and memorabilia of the Mordecai family will be returned.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mordecai, Alfred. "The Life of Alfred Mordecai, as Related by Himself." Edited with introduction by James F. Padgett in The North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. XXII, No. 1, January, 1945.

Mordecai, Ellen. Gleanings From Long Ago. Savannah: Braid and Hutton, Inc., 1933.

Wake County Records, Wake County Courthouse, Raleigh, North Carolina. Office of the Register of Deeds. Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate Papers, Inventories.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		35° 47' 33"	78° 38' 02"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 3.85 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Jack Zehmer, Survey Specialist, and Sherry Ingram, Survey Assistant

ORGANIZATION: North Carolina Department of Archives and History DATE: April 27, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:  
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 32

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Dr. H. G. Jones  
 Title Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date April 27, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

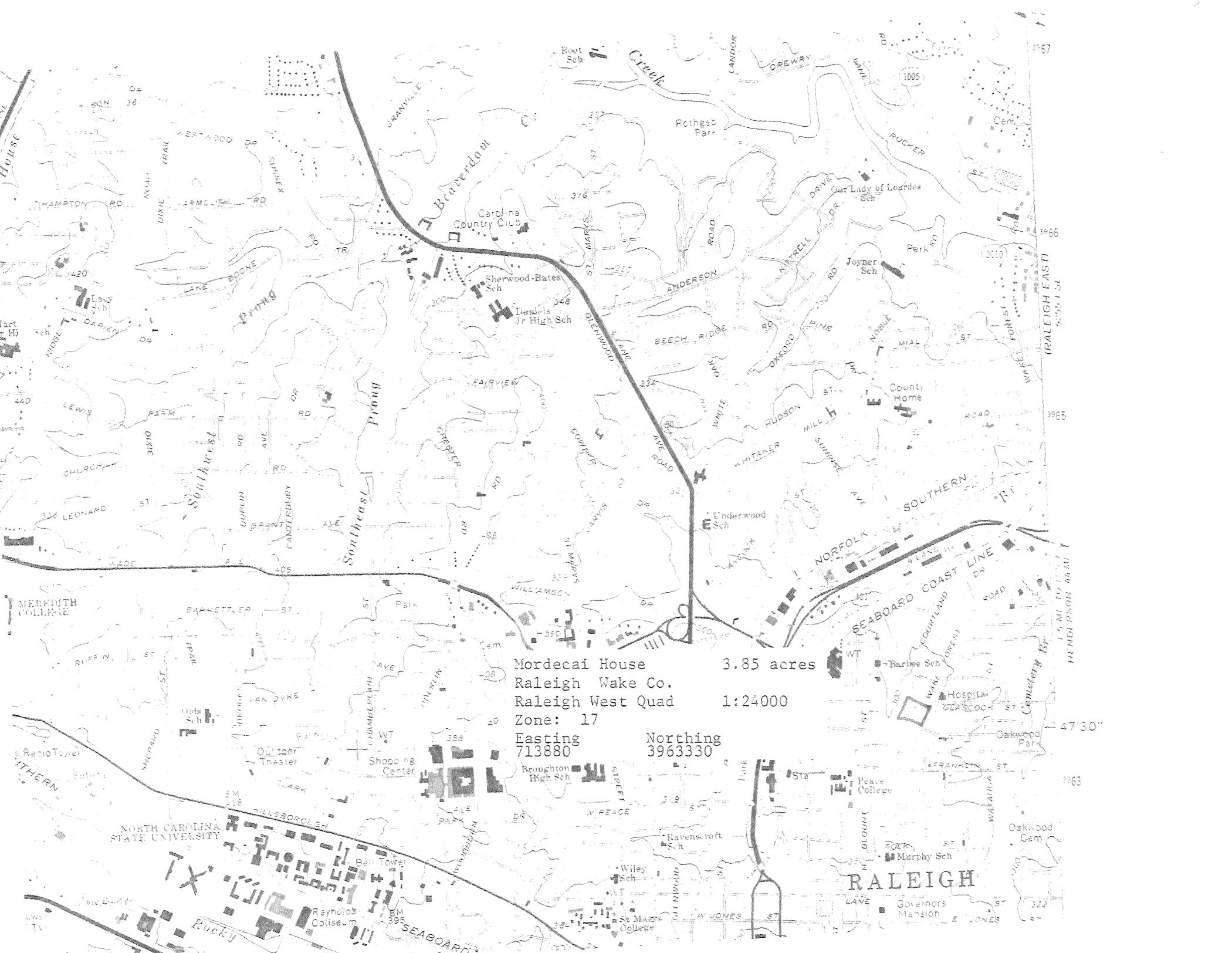
STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Wake	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

9. Wake County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate Papers, and Census Records.

Waugh, Elizabeth C. North Carolina's Capital, Raleigh. Raleigh: The Junior League of Raleigh, Inc. and Raleigh Historic Sites Commission, Inc., 1967.

Writers' Program of the Works Projects Administration in the State of North Carolina. Raleigh, Capital of North Carolina. New Bern: Owen G. Dunn Company, 1942.



Mordecai House  
 Raleigh Wake Co.  
 Raleigh West Quad  
 Zone: 17

3.85 acres

1:24000

Easting  
 713880

Northing  
 3963330

3967  
 3966  
 3965  
 47'30"  
 3963

RALEIGH

