

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 Apex Historic District (Boundary Increase)

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

### 2. Location

street & number roughly bounded by E. Chatham, S. Hughes, S. Mason, and E. Moore streets N/A  not for publication

city or town Apex N/A  vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Wake code 183 zip code 27502

### 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 forth 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.)

William S. King, SHPO 1-24-95  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State of 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:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

<b>Ownership of Property</b> (Check as many boxes as apply)	<b>Category of Property</b> (Check only one box)	<b>Number of Resources within Property</b> (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private <input type="checkbox"/> public-local <input type="checkbox"/> public-State <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district <input type="checkbox"/> site <input type="checkbox"/> structure <input type="checkbox"/> object	Contributing _____ 39	Noncontributing _____ 23
		buildings	
		sites	
		structures	
		objects	
		39	23
		Total	

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
 Historic & Architectural Resources of  
 Wake County, NC (1770-1941)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
 in the National Register**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 -0-

**6. Function or Use**

<b>Historic Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Current Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
Domestic: Single Dwelling _____ Domestic: Secondary Structure _____ Religion: Religious Facility _____ _____ _____ _____	Domestic: Single Dwelling _____ Domestic: Secondary Structure _____ Religion: Religious Facility _____ _____ _____ _____

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
Queen Anne _____ Neoclassical Revival _____ Italianate _____	foundation brick _____ walls weatherboard _____ brick _____ roof asphalt _____ other metal _____ vinyl _____

**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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

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):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, etc.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning/Development

Architecture

Period of Significance

Ca. 1870-1944

Significant Dates

ca. 1870

1906

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, etc.

Name of repository:

Name of Property \_\_\_\_\_

County and State \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 15±

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	694400	3956020
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	17	694700	3955900

3	17	694560	3955560
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	17	694240	3955680

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.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title M. Ruth Little

organization Longleaf Historic Resources date October 1994

street & number 2709 Bedford Ave. telephone 919-836-8128

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27607

**Additional Documentation**

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)

**Property Owner**

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

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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 listings. 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 20503.

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## Description

This boundary increase to the Apex Historic District contains 27 houses and one church located east of the CSX railroad tracks in a compact three block area of gridded streets. The area include the east-west streets of East Chatham, Olive and Moore streets and the north-south streets of S. Hughes and S. Mason streets. The Apex Historic District, listed in early 1994, contains approximately 60 historic houses, stores, railroad and civic buildings. This nomination of the S. Hughes/S. Mason streets addition is the final phase of the effort to list within the Apex Historic District all potentially eligible properties located in the densely settled historic center, and completes the eligible district boundaries.

Functioning as farmland until the early twentieth century, the area was gradually subdivided into rectangular lots of generally one-third up to one acre in size. The flat, moderately wooded land contains a pleasantly varied streetscape of large one and two story frame houses with small front yards, spaced evenly along the block faces. Most houses have detached garages located at the end of the driveway, and some of the larger lots have a cluster of agricultural outbuildings located to the rear. This southeast section of Apex retains its peaceful village atmosphere and historical character. The boundaries are drawn to include only the densest concentration of historic buildings in this area. Although there are some noncontributing buildings in the boundary increase area, overall integrity is maintained by consistency of scale, materials and setbacks. A prominent row of historic houses along E. Chatham Street links this addition to the Apex Historic District [NR 1994] containing the majority of the town's historic resources.

Of the twenty-eight principal buildings, nineteen were built before 1944 and contribute to the architectural character of the addition. Nine either postdate 1944 or have lost architectural integrity due to major alterations. Twenty outbuildings are contributing resources and fourteen outbuildings are noncontributing. Of the total 62 buildings in the addition, 39, or 63%, are contributing.

Predictably, the oldest house in this section, the ca. 1870 Thompson-Wrenn House at 203 E. Chatham Street, is located adjacent to the railroad tracks.

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The Apex Land and Improvement Company subdivided farmland in this section in 1906 and in the next ten years a number of Apex families built comfortable, stylish frame houses, a number with distinctive pyramidal roofs embellished with interior chimneys, cross gables and hipped dormer windows, bay windows, front and rear ells and wraparound porches. These Queen Anne ensembles were probably built by local builders using mail-order plans. One of the first to purchase a lot was Apex Mercantile Company owner Mac Upchurch, who bought at the corner of Mason and Moore streets and soon built a large pyramidal cottage. Across the street J. W. Lassiter, owner of the prosperous Apex Mule and Supply Company, built an equally impressive Queen Anne cottage with a pyramidal roof and a corner turret. Pharmacist A. V. Baucom had a Queen Anne cottage with pyramidal roof and corner turret built for his family at the corner of S. Hughes and Olive Street. In 1906 Raleigh banker J. R. Cunningham moved to Apex to help with the new Merchants and Farmers Bank and built his family a large two-story Queen Anne style house on an entire block of S. Hughes Street. The next year, across the street, Lon J. Sears built his family a two-story Neoclassical Revival style house with three bay windows with pedimented gables and a wide wraparound porch. In following years smaller vernacular Queen Anne houses with gable roofs and without the dormers and bays went up. At the corner of S. Mason and Olive streets Sidney Baucom built a rambling cottage with a front gabled wing and a porch that wraps across the front and completely down the side of the rear ell.

From the 1920s to about 1950 the children of these early Apex families bought lots that were subdivided from the old lots and built, in the 1920s and 1930s, Craftsman houses, in the 1940s, Tudor Revival cottages, and in the 1950s, ranch houses. For example, in 1946, across the street from his parents' early twentieth century house on S. Mason Street (demolished), R. W. Stephens Jr. built a brick Tudor Revival cottage with a rustic stone entrance. S. T. Bennett Sr. moved from his vernacular Victorian house at 107 S. Hughes Street and built a stylish Craftsman house about 1928 next door at 101 N. Hughes Street. In 1950 Lawyer R. W. Johnson Jr. built the first ranch house in Apex at the corner of S. Hughes and Olive streets, next door to his father's large Victorian house. Residents were

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awed by such modern features as the low form, vertical redwood siding, picture window and attached garage.

Only one non-residential building stands in this peaceful domestic section--the Apex United Methodist Church. In 1917 the congregation built its third building, a frame Gothic Revival church with an entrance tower, on the block of E. Chatham Street beside the railroad tracks.

### Building Inventory:

### Notes:

Properties are organized by streets, beginning at the northwest corner of the boundary increase. East-west streets are listed north side first, then south side. North-south streets are listed west side first, then east side.

All buildings are of frame construction unless otherwise indicated.

Dates are estimated using design, inclusion on the 1928 Sanborn Insurance Map, and secondary sources such as oral history provided by local residents, including Ann Poe Grebing. [ 1928 is the only year in which Apex was mapped by the Sanborn Insurance Company. This map is available on microfilm at the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh]

Historic names of buildings, if available, are enclosed in brackets after the street address. Only the names of early or original occupants are given.

All buildings are categorized as C (contributing) or NC (noncontributing) based on the following criteria. Any building built after the end of the ca. 1870-1944 period of significance is noncontributing due to its age (NC-Age). Buildings built before 1944 that have lost their architectural integrity because of substantial additions and/or alterations incompatible with their original character are categorized as noncontributing because of these changes (NC-Alt). Examples of this are complete window, door and porch replacements; artificial siding that obscures

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original door, window, wall and eave detailing; and extensive post-1944 additions. Such artificial siding as aluminum, vinyl or asbestos shingles does not automatically render a building noncontributing so long as the application of the siding does not completely obscure the decorative finish.

The following inventory continues the numbering of the Apex Historic District. The last property is numbered #83, thus this increase begins with #84.

**E. Chatham Street, north side**

C. 84. 203 E. Chatham St. [Thompson-Wrenn House] ca. 1870. Italianate 2-story frame house which retains its original plain siding, segmentally arched 4/4 sash windows, boxed eaves with scalloped molding, glazed and paneled front door with transom, and a front porch. Although altered by several rear additions and replacement front porch posts, the house retains its general integrity. This land was deeded to John Thompson, Wake County register of deeds, and his wife in 1872. According to local tradition, Apex builder J. McC. Ellington, father of the bride, built the house for the young couple. He supposedly used leftover materials from his own home, the Ellington-Norris House, now demolished. Prominent merchant W. H. Harward and his wife later lived here.

NC a. Garage. ca. 1960. 1-story front-gable concrete block garage.

C 85. 209 E. Chatham St. [Harward-Bagley House] ca. 1910. Queen Anne 2-story frame house of L-plan form, with original siding, boxed cornices with eave returns, paneled front door with transom, tall 1/1 sash windows with colored glass borders around the upper sash, and a front porch with turned posts, sawn brackets and a turned railing. The house is currently divided into three apartments and has smaller replacement 6/6 sash on the second story and a bulky exterior stair to an added second floor entrance on the west side. W. H. Harward, who lived at 205 E. Chatham St., built this house for his daughter who married a Bagley.

C 86. 215 E. Chatham St. [J. Raymond & Belle Strickland Harward House] ca. 1915. Unusual 2-story frame house that combines an I-house center section with a

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front gambrel-roofed wing that creates an apparently original Dutch Colonial appearance. The house also features original 4/4 sash windows, glazed and paneled front door, decorative bands of plain and sawtooth wood shakes in the gambrel end, and a porch with turned posts. Known alterations consist of the porch railing and the application of artificial siding. W. H. Harward, who lived at 205 E. Chatham St., built this house for his son J. Raymond Harward.

C a. Shed. ca. 1920. 1-story side-gable frame building with German siding and 6/6 sash.

NC b. Rental building. ca. 1980. 2-story frame duplex of utilitarian style.

NC-Age 87. Former Apex United Methodist Church parsonage. 301 E. Chatham St. 1946. Brick Tudor brick house of 1 1/2 stories with 8/8 sash windows and a side porch. This is located on the corner opposite the church and served as the parsonage until about 1992.

**S. Hughes St., west side**

NC-Alt. 88. Apex United Methodist Church. sw corner E. Chatham & S. Hughes St. 1917. The extensive complex occupies the entire block and consists of the 1917 sanctuary located at the corner and two auxiliary buildings. The frame Gothic Revival style sanctuary has a corner tower and arched windows with stained glass but its integrity has been compromised by a number of alterations. In the 1950s a brick annex was added to the rear. In the early 1990s the sanctuary was enlarged on the west side, the church interior was completely remodelled, and the exterior was completely resided in vinyl. This is the third sanctuary of the congregation, founded in 1870.

C a. Cad Upchurch Garage-Apex Journal Office-Church office. ca. 1910. 1-story gable front brick building, three bays deep and one bay wide, with some segmental arched 6/6 sash windows and several other types of windows. The brick is laid in random common bond and the eaves have exposed rafter tails. This was built as the garage for the Cad Upchurch House to the south, which has been

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demolished. Later it was the office of the *Apex Journal*, a rental residence, and now houses the church office.

NC-Age b. Church annex. ca. 1990. This low and unobtrusive brick annex is one bay wide and five bays deep.

C 89. 202 S. Hughes St. [Mr. and Mrs. James Rieves Cunningham] 1906. Originally occupying the entire block, this imposing Queen Anne double pile 2-story frame house has a high hip roof with symmetrical brick chimneys, an elegant Neoclassical Revival style entrance with a glazed and paneled door and leaded glass fanlight and sidelights, and 1/1 sash windows with pointed arch surrounds. The ample front porch wraps around both sides and has oversized Doric columned posts. The front and right side elevations have high center cross gables with ornate sawnwork ornament. It was built for the family of James Rieves Cunningham, who came to Apex to open the Merchants and Farmers Bank. In the 1920s the family updated the house by replacing the original entrance and original porch with the present handsome Neoclassical Revival doorway and porch.

C a. Playhouse. ca. 1906. Tiny side-gabled 2-room frame playhouse, well-detailed, that was built at the same time as the house.

C b. Garage. ca. 1910. Frame 1-story front-gable garage with plain siding. The windvane/lightning rod has a Model-T car ornament and is original.

C c. Smokehouse. ca. 1906. Frame front-gable smokehouse with plain siding.

C d. Pump house. ca. 1930. Shed-roofed brick pump house.

C e. Flowerhouse. ca. 1920. Small front-gable brick plant storage building with large front glass window.

NC f. Car shelter. ca. 1990. Metal three-sided canopy.

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S. Hughes St., east side

C 90. 101 S. Hughes St. [S.T. Bennett Sr.-Moore House] ca. 1928. Craftsman style 1-story frame house with side-gable roof, gable front 2-bay porch with bungalow posts, decorative eave brackets, plain siding, and a front door and windows with Craftsman style sash.

C a. Shed. ca. 1930. 1-story front gable frame shed.

NC-Age 91. 105 S. Hughes St. [Charles C. Bennett Sr. House] ca. 1960. Brick ranch.

C 92. 107 S. Hughes St. [S.T. Bennett Sr.-Schnilling House] ca. 1910. Triple A style 1-story frame house with plain siding and diamond vents in the front and side gables. The original front porch has been replaced by a stoop with decorative iron posts. S.T. Bennett Sr. purchased this house from the original owner about 1913 and lived here until 1928 when he built the house at 101 N. Hughes St.

C a. Shed. ca. 1930. Frame front-gable 1-story shed.

C 93. 111 S. Hughes St. [Roy J. Bolling-Barnes House] ca. 1910. Queen Anne 1-story frame house with two front gables, one with a round vent, one with a sash window, a glazed and paneled front door, and a front porch with turned posts with brackets and a turned railing. The only exterior alterations are replacement sash, vinyl siding, and a right side bay window addition. This was built for Roy Bolling who worked at A.B. Hunter & Company general store.

C a. Shed. ca. 1930. Frame front-gable 1-story shed with plain siding.

NC b. Shed. ca. 1960. Frame front-gable 1-story shed.

C 94. 115 S. Hughes St. [A.V. Baucom House] ca. 1910. Large pyramidal cottage with tall symmetrical interior brick chimneys, original 1/1 sash windows, a wraparound front porch and a corner turret with a wooden finial. The gable ends have segmental window surrounds. Exterior alterations consist of vinyl siding and

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replacement porch posts which are fluted Doric columns installed many years ago. Built for A. V. Baucom, a prominent pharmacist and educational leader in Apex, and his wife.

C a. Garage. ca. 1930. Frame 1-story front gable garage.

C b. Chicken shack/mule barn. ca. 1920. 1-story frame barn with board-and-batten siding and a shed roof.

NC-Age 95. 201 S. Hughes St. [R. W. Johnson Jr. House] 1950. One of the first ranches built in Apex, this side-gable frame house is built of board and batten redwood siding and has such modern features as a bull's eye window, a picture window, a front porch with decorative iron posts and an attached garage.

NC-Alt. 96. 205 S. Hughes St. [Dr. R.W. Johnson Sr.-Kane House] ca. 1910. Large 2-story frame vernacular house of L-plan form, with a front gabled wing and a wraparound front porch. Only the front paneled door with wide sidelights appears to be original, as the siding, sash windows, and porch posts have been replaced. This was built for Dr. R. W. Johnson Sr., and his wife Jeanette, who raised six children here. In recent years the house served briefly as a nursing home.

C a. Smokehouse. ca. 1910. Small front-gable frame smokehouse with plain siding.

NC b. Garage. ca. 1990. Large 1 1/2 story Colonial Revival style garage which has guest quarters upstairs.

C 97. 209 S. Hughes St. [Lon J. Sears House-Teacherage] ca. 1907. This large 2-story Neoclassical Revival house was built for Lon J. Sears and features a front and two side pedimented gables that top 2-story bay windows, connected by a wraparound porch with Doric columns. From 1925 to the 1950s the four upstairs bedrooms housed boarding teachers from Apex Graded School located one block east.

NC a. Garage. ca. 1980. Front-gambrel frame garage.

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Olive Street, north side

NC-Alt. 98. 311 Olive St. ca. 1915. Pyramidal cottage with deck-on-hip roof, tall interior brick chimneys, a hipped front dormer and front cross gable. The house has lost its architectural integrity due to the addition of brick wainscot and wide aluminum siding to the walls and to the replacement of the original porch with a Mt. Vernon style portico.

C a. Garage. ca. 1940. 1-story frame shed-roofed garage with plain siding.

C 99. 315 Olive St. [Puckett-Sidney Baucom House] ca. 1905. Rambling Queen Anne cottage with a side gable core, a front cross gabled wing and rear ell, and a porch which wraps around the front and right side elevations. The house retains its original interior brick chimneys, paneled front door with round-headed upper panes and a transom, and turned posts with brackets, and 2/2 sash windows. The German siding and the porch railing appear to be replacements of original materials. A Puckett family had the house built, and Sidney Baucom lived here later.

C a. Shed. ca. 1920. Front-gable, 1-story frame shed.

Olive Street, south side

NC-Age 100. 306 Olive St. [R.G. Perry House] ca. 1960. Brick ranch with a hipped roof and a front picture window.

C 101. 410 Olive St. [Mrs. Esther Castleberry House] ca. 1915. Queen Anne cottage with an unusual front-gable form, with a side ell and a porch wrapping across the main elevation and down to the side ell. The house is intact and retains all of its original exterior features, including boxed eaves with wide returns, 2/2 sash windows, plain siding, turned porch posts with brackets and turned railing, and the original glazed and paneled front door.

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S. Mason St., west side

NC-Age 102. 200 S. Mason St. [Mrs. R.W. Stephens Sr. House] 1948. This 1 1/2 story frame house, on a large lot, has a side-gabled form, with a central chimney, front entrance stoop and a side porch. The 8/8 and 6/6 sash windows are original but the aluminum siding is a later addition. The widow of R. W. Stephens Sr. built this house after the Stephens' old homeplace burned in 1948. The outbuildings date from the earlier dwelling.

C a. Shed. early 20th century. Front-gable, 1-story frame shed with plain siding.

C b. Packhouse. early 20th century. Front-gable, 1-story frame packhouse with plain siding.

NC c. Barn. early 20th century. Front-gable, 1 1/2 story frame barn with replacement siding and windows that alter its architectural integrity.

C d. Pump house. ca. 1920. Small shed-roofed brick building.

C 103. 302 S. Mason St. [Tharrington House] ca. 1925. Large frame bungalow with a pyramidal roof with three tall brick interior chimneys, front and side hipped dormer windows, and an ample porch wrapping around both sides. The house retains its original Craftsman sash, glazed and paneled front door with transom, and paired wooden porch posts on brick bases. The walls are covered with asbestos shingles. The house, located opposite the Apex Middle School, the former site of the Apex Graded School, is known as the Tharrington House for Principal Tharrington, who lived here in the 1940s.

S. Mason St., east side

C 104. 109 S. Mason St. [Jim and Cellie Jones House] ca. 1915. Well-preserved Queen Anne cottage of Triple A style, with a side-gable roof, a left side bay

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window, rear ell and a wraparound front porch. The house retains its original siding, 2/2 sash windows, glazed and paneled front door, and turned porch posts and sawn brackets.

C a. Privy. ca. 1940. Small shed-roofed privy with vertical siding, in deteriorated condition.

NC b. Corn crib. early 20th century. Front-gabled crib with sawn horizontal slats. Moved from its original Chatham County location to this site for adaptive reuse as a storage shed about 1980.

C 105. 115 S. Mason St. [Lynn Baker House] ca. 1905. Rambling Queen Anne cottage with a side-gable roof, two front gables, a front-gable wing and large rear ell. All gables have decorative wooden shakes and diamond louvered vents. The house retains its original plain siding, 2/2 sash windows, and its glazed and paneled front door with transom and sidelights. The bungalow style supports with slender Doric posts of the wraparound porch are probably 1920s replacements. This was the home of Lynn Baker, a builder.

NC a. Shed. ca. 1990. Side-gabled 1-story frame storage building with plain siding.

NC-Age 106. 201 S. Mason St. [R. W. Stephens Jr. House] ca. 1946. Brick Tudor style cottage with side-gable roof and the trademark entrance gable with a rusticated stone surround and a segmental-arched door. The house also features 8/8 sash windows and an exterior end off-center chimney.

NC a. Garage. ca. 1950. Concrete block front-gable 1-story garage.

C 107. 205 S. Mason St. [Everette Holleman House] ca. 1915. Pyramidal cottage that retains its symmetrical brick chimneys and two front cross-gables with pointed arch ventilators, a front cut-away bay window, a hipped dormer on the right side, and original siding and 2/2 sash windows. The substitution of a front stoop with

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decorative iron posts for the original front porch has greatly altered the character of this house but it retains basic architectural integrity.

NC a. Garage. ca. 1950. Concrete block front-gable 1-story garage.

C 108. 207 S. Mason St. [S.S. Rogers House] ca. 1906. One of the few full two-story houses in this section of Apex, this house has a side-gable roof with a front cross-gable topping a cutaway bay window at the first and second story. A smaller cross-gable balances the roofline on the right elevation. A porch with original turned posts and a few sawnwork brackets wraps around the bay and across the main facade. Original 2/2 sash windows remain, although the front door is a replacement and the walls and trim have vinyl siding. S.S. Rogers operated the Rogers Insurance Agency.

C 109. 211 S. Mason St. [Mac Upchurch House] ca. 1902. Large intact pyramidal cottage with two front cross-gables and a large central hipped dormer, all with 1/1 sash windows, and symmetrical interior brick chimneys. The house retains its original glazed and paneled entrance door with transom and sidelights, original siding, and original 1/1 sash throughout. The wraparound porch with bungalow style posts is apparently a 1920s replacement of the original porch. Mac Upchurch, who owned Apex Mercantile Company, which specialized in furniture and caskets, bought this lot in 1898 and built the house shortly afterward.

NC a. Garage. ca. 1985. Front-gable 1 1/2 story frame two-car garage with upstairs quarters.

E. Moore St., north side

C 110. 307 E. Moore St. [Teacherage Annex] ca. 1915. This 1-story frame Triple A style house originally sat on the site of Apex Graded School campus one block east, and was moved to this school-owned property by school officials before 1950. For many years it was an annex to the teacherage next door. The house retains the fishscale shakes and diamond ventilators in the gables, plain siding,

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and a hipped front porch, but it has a replacement front door, replacement porch posts and railing and replacement sash in the front.

NC a. Shed. ca. 1950. Shed-roofed frame storage building.

C 111. 313 E. Moore St. [J.W. Lassiter House] ca. 1905. This large pyramidal cottage features an eclectic mixture of architectural elements, including a bell cast turret with tall metal finial, cross-gables, and dormer windows, all covered with slate shingles and pierced by traceried sash windows. The wall surfaces, with original siding and 1/1 sash windows, are enlivened by bay windows and by the porch which wraps across the main elevation on S. Mason St. and down the Moore St. side, which now serves as the entrance. The house has tall interior brick chimneys and replacement porch posts. This house was built for J.W. Lassiter, owner of the prosperous Apex Mule and Supply Company in the early twentieth century, and his family.

C a. Shed. ca. 1905. Tall narrow front-gable frame building with plain siding. This may have served as a smokehouse.

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### Statement of Significance

#### Summary:

The Apex Historic District Boundary Increase is a small residential area containing twenty-seven houses and the historic Apex United Methodist Church located east of the railroad tracks adjacent to the commercial district. This boundary increase completes the boundaries of the Apex Historic District (NR 1994) by adding the stylish houses built on E. Chatham, S. Highes, S. Mason, Olive, and E. Moore streets in the subdivision developed by the Apex Land and Improvement Company in 1906. The Apex Historic District contains the core commercial and residential buildings of this historic railroad town chartered in 1873 on the Chatham Railroad Line. The town of Apex is documented in "Historic and Architectural Resources of Wake County, NC (1770-1941)," the multiple property documentation form. The boundary increase reinforces the significance of the district in the areas of community planning/development and historic architecture because it contains a collection of stylish Queen Anne and Neoclassical Revival houses built by such leading new and long-time residents of Apex as officers and directors of the new Merchants and Farmers Bank, merchants, a doctor, a pharmacist, a builder, teachers, and others. Among the buildings is the long-time Apex Graded School Teacherage and the 1917 Apex United Methodist Church. The earliest building in the area of the boundary increase, the ca. 1870 Italianate style Thompson-Wrenn House on the railroad tracks, is the most stylish early house standing in Apex. Nineteen of the buildings retain architectural integrity and create a significant historic neighborhood of middle-class early twentieth century houses, many with contributing outbuildings, on large wooded lots. Although there are some non-contributing buildings in the boundary increase area, its overall integrity is maintained by consistency of scale, materials, and landscape.

#### Historical Background:

Prior to about 1900, houses and stores were located side by side along the railroad tracks and on the main artery of Salem Street. The S. Hughes/S. Mason streets area was farmland owned by a number of people, among them Apex developers J. McC. Ellington and J. A. Norris. The oldest house in this southeast area, the

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Thompson-Wrenn House at 203 E. Chatham Street (#84) is said to have been built by Ellington. Ellington supposedly built it as a wedding present about 1870 for his daughter and her husband John Thompson, Wake County register of deeds. The two-story L-plan house, with Italianate windows, faces the railroad tracks like two of the other earliest Apex houses, the Thompson-Utley-Tunstall House and the Betts-Poe-Beasley House. Apex merchants W. H. Harward and A. B. Hunter also owned much undeveloped land in this area and developed and built real estate in this area.<sup>1</sup>

An early cluster of houses in this section are three houses on S. Mason Street built by 1906.<sup>2</sup> Mac Upchurch, who owned a furniture store, is said to have bought his large lot at the corner of S. Mason and Moore streets in 1898 and built a commodious pyramidal cottage (#109) a few years later. Next door, a sizeable two-story vernacular Victorian house was built for insurance agent S.S. Rogers (#108). Across the street, J. W. Lassiter, owner of the Apex Mule and Supply Company, built a large Queen Anne pyramidal cottage (#111). All were large and comfortable frame houses on big lots, with small front yards and big back yards.

In 1905 Apex was poised on the brink of its largest boom period. The first bank, the Merchants and Farmers Bank, opened its doors. New brick stores were built to replace frame buildings, and a second railway line, the Durham and Southern, was completed in 1906. In this same year Apex businessmen L.S., P. J. and W. W. Olive, C. P. Sellars, J. B. Mason, J. R. Cunningham and A.C. Hughes perceived the need for house sites for the newcomers moving to Apex. L.S. Olive, Sellars, Mason, Cunningham were either officers or directors of the bank. They incorporated the Apex Land and Improvement Company and the company bought 75 acres of land east of the tracks. Within five years *The Apex Journal* reported with quiet satisfaction on the huge success of their endeavor:

Apex was growing and growing rapidly, but there were but few houses and fewer vacant lots open for purchase or occupancy. These gentlemen laid off this land, which was then in cultivated fields, into residence lots, with spacious streets and convenient alleys and put them upon the market. There was no boom; their

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idea was to develop. Today [in 1911] a stroll through this section, whose streets are occupied by a large number of the most handsome homes in our town will show the beneficent result to our town.<sup>3</sup>

Although E. Chatham, S. Mason and E. Moore streets apparently existed in some fashion in 1880, the Apex Land and Improvement Company added the new streets of S. Hughes Street and Olive Street and created a subdivision of nine blocks, with over 100 rectangular lots of generally one-third acre. The subdivision map, platted by W.C. Black in 1906, is registered in the Wake County Book of Maps. <sup>4</sup> Early land purchasers often bought several lots in order to have a larger tract. J. R. Cunningham, cashier of the Merchants and Farmers Bank and secretary of the Apex Land and Improvement Company, was apparently one of the first to build a new house in the subdivision. The Special Industrial Edition of *The Apex Journal* of 1911 describes the house which he built in 1906:

His residence on Hughes Street, in the newer part of the town, was the first of the newer type of residential architecture of Apex, setting a good pace for years to come. It is one of the handsomest in the town.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Cunningham became one of Apex's leading citizens. He was not content to build on one lot, but purchased the entire block on S. Hughes Street between Olive and Moore streets and the railroad tracks. Ellington, one of the original developers of Apex, is said to have played a role in the construction of the Cunningham House.<sup>6</sup> Like others in Apex the Cunningham homestead functioned as a small farm. Behind his large Queen Anne style home (#89) stood a smokehouse, two barns, a pig pen and a livestock pasture where horses and cows grazed beside the railroad tracks. The well was enclosed in a stylish latticed cupola incorporated into the back porch. In the side yard near the wraparound porch stands a diminutive playhouse with a porch where the three Cunningham daughters played with their dolls in the 1910s. On the other side of the house was Mrs. Cunningham's brick flower house. The barn and the animals were replaced later by a tennis court, and now the new Methodist parsonages occupies the old pasture, but all of the other outbuildings, including the playhouse and well cupola, still stand.

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Across S. Hughes Street from the Cunningham House, L. J. "Lon" Sears, assistant cashier of the Merchants and Farmers Bank, built an equally handsome residence (#97) about 1909 in the Neoclassical Revival style, with pedimented dormers, gables, and a large wraparound porch with Doric columns. Like Cunningham, Sears was not content with one lot, but placed his house in the middle of two lots. Sears, who had grown up on a nearby farm, eventually left his bank position to open an insurance business in Apex. He was chairman of the Wake County Board of Education at the time he built his house.

Around 1910 two more new houses went up on S. Hughes Street: at 111 S. Hughes Street, Roy J. Bolling, employee of A.B. Hunter general store and a director of the Merchants and Farmers Bank, built his vernacular Queen Anne one-story house (#93) with double front gables, and at 205 S. Hughes St. Dr. R. W. Johnson, one of Apex's most highly regarded doctors and one of the original bank stockholders, built a two-story L-plan house (#96) described in 1911 as "one of the best built and nicest furnished in Apex."<sup>7</sup> Both houses still stand, although Dr. Johnson's house suffered the replacement of its windows and its porch during its recent usage as a nursing home.

Construction of the first public school in Apex at the corner of S. Mason and Moore streets in 1911 solidified the desirability of this new section of Apex. Soon the Apex Graded School had four teachers and nearly 150 students in grades one through eleven.<sup>8</sup> When Lon Sears and his family left Apex about 1925, the Apex School Board purchased his house for a teacherage, and until the 1950s single female teachers boarded in the four upstairs bedrooms during the school year. The need for teacher housing was so great that a house was relocated from the school property to the rear yard of the teacherage and used for additional housing. This house, at 307 E. Moore Street, still stands.<sup>9</sup>

By the 1920s most of the lots in the S. Hughes/S. Mason streets area were almost completely developed with stylish frame houses, and the neighborhood has changed little in the past seventy years. Within the proposed boundaries of the district, only some five houses postdate World War II. Few remain in the families

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of the original owners, and most have been purchased in recent years by new owners attracted by the small town atmosphere, the neighborhood school, a business district within walking distance, and the architectural charm of the houses with large yards and trees.

### Community Planning/Development Context:

The Apex Historic District was listed in the National Register for its significance as one of the most intact railroad towns in Wake County. No other town in the county exemplifies a bustling railroad town of the early 1900s as well as does Apex, not just for the 1912 Town Hall (NR 1985), 1914 Union Depot (NR 1988), 1925 Seaboard Air Line Freight Depot, 1920s tobacco warehouse, and early twentieth century brick stores but also for the frame dwellings which surround the small downtown. The nearly two dozen houses and the Apex United Methodist Church in the area encompassed by the boundary increase further complements the significance of the district. This pleasant section with comfortable middle-class houses contains the homes of many of the bankers, insurance agents, merchants, builders, teachers and their wives and children who built Apex during the early twentieth century.

These dwellings, situated between the tracks and the site of the Apex Graded School (now the Apex Middle School), expand the Apex Historic District so that it represents the complete concentration of historic buildings constructed in Apex from its beginning in 1869 through the 1920s, the end of its economic boom. These vernacular, Queen Anne, Neoclassical Revival, and Craftsman houses on S. Hughes, S. Mason, E. Chatham, Olive and E. Moore streets were built by many of the citizens who contributed to Apex's early twentieth century prosperity.

### Historic Architectural Context:

The architectural significance of the S. Hughes-S. Mason streets boundary increase results primarily from the collection of well-preserved frame houses reflecting Apex's boom period from about 1900 to the 1920s. Yet the area also contains one of the earliest dwellings in Apex--the Thompson-Wrenn House (#84)--facing

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the railroad tracks on East Chatham Street. In the earliest days of the village, simple I-houses such as the Betts-Poe-Beasley House or the G. W. Atkinson House stood along the railroad tracks and Salem Street. The Thompson-Wrenn House, said to have been built about 1870 from scrap materials from J. McC. Ellington's own fancy house on the tracks (now demolished), is the most stylish early house standing in Apex. It was Ellington's wedding present to his daughter and has segmental arched windows which give the L-plan house an Italianate flair.

The Apex newspaper hailed the 1906 construction of the Cunningham House (#89) not only because it was one of the first houses in the "new" section of S. Hughes and S. Mason streets but also because the house was "the first of the newer type of architecture in Apex." Banker J.R. Cunningham added such new features as three prominent decorative gables, a porch that stretched across the front and down both sides, and a cupola well house adjacent to the rear kitchen ell.

No I-houses stand in the S. Hughes-S. Mason streets addition. After 1900 when this new section developed, affluent Apex families were no longer content to hire carpenters to build traditional I-house plans. Owners became interested in putting on a fashionable display, and a number of families, the Cunninghams, Sears, Bollings, Baucoms, Upchurches, Lassiters and others, probably hired builders who constructed houses from popular plans, perhaps copied from a builders' guide or ordered from an architect. The "newer type of residential architecture" that so impressed the newspaper editor was probably the popular styles of Queen Anne and Neoclassical designs built from blueprints, with fancy cupolas, bays, dormers and porches that wrapped around corners and down side elevations. J. W. Lassiter, the merchant owner of Apex Mule and Supply Company, who is said to have bought his mules in Kansas City, built a Queen Anne house (#111) with a flashy slate roof studded with a corner cupola, dormers, gables, and diamond-paned windows. Across the street, merchant Mac Upchurch's steeply pitched roof (#109) also sported a striking array of gables and dormers that would have been beyond the ability of most country carpenters. Lassiter and Upchurch travelled far beyond Apex on their buying trips and built up-to-date showplaces.

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This group of stylish early twentieth century houses have significance to the Apex Historic District as a whole because they represent the arrival of popular fashion in house design. These Queen Anne and Neoclassical Revival houses round out the building history represented in the district, from the earliest vernacular I-houses along the tracks to the up-to-date residences along S. Hughes and S. Mason streets.

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Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Anne Lydia Olive, typescript of Special Industrial Edition, *The Apex Journal*, September 15, 1911. 1963 typescript in Genealogy Collection, North Carolina State Archives, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Ann Poe Grebing, August 24, 1994. Ralph Poe came to town in 1906 and told his daughter, Ann Poe Grebing, that these four houses were standing at that time.

<sup>3</sup> Olive typescript of *The Apex Journal*, September 15, 1911, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Map of Apex, ca. 1880, in Holleman, Carl P., Jr. *Pluck, Perseverance and Paint*, Durham: Moore Publishing Company, 1973; Plat of the Apex Land and Improvement Co. property, by W. C. Black, 1906, in Wake County Book of Maps, 1885, page 74; Map of land sold to Apex Land and Improvement Co. by J. A. Norris, 1908, Wake County Book of Maps, 1885, page 72.

<sup>5</sup> Olive Typescript of *The Apex Journal*, September 15, 1911, p. 65.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Jessie Ruth Cunningham, August 23, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Olive typescript of *The Apex Journal*, September 15, 1911, p. 68.

<sup>8</sup> Olive typescript of *The Apex Journal*, September 15, 1911, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Jessie Ruth Cunningham, August 23, 1994.

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### 10. Geographical Data

#### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the district addition are shown by a black line on the accompanying map, drawn approximately at a scale of 1/3 inch = 50 feet. This map is a composite of Wake County Tax Maps 6, 7, 18 and 19.

#### Boundary Justification

The boundaries are drawn to include the densest concentration of contributing resources in the S. Hughes-S. Mason streets area that form the Apex Historic District Boundary Increase. Boundaries follow property lines except for the property at 215 E. Chatham Street, at the northwest corner of Hughes and Chatham streets. The rear section of this lot is omitted from the district because it contains a non-historic building and no longer contributes to the historical integrity of the Harward-Bagley House which stands on the front portion of the lot.

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Photographs

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### Photographs

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Photographer: M. Ruth Little

Date: August 1994

Location of negatives: North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh

AA. 111 and 115 S. Hughes St., from northwest

BB. 205 and 209 S. Hughes St., from northwest

CC. Apex Methodist Church and Raymond and Belle Harward House, 215 E. Chatham St., from south

DD. Thompson-Wrenn House, 203 E. Chatham St., and Apex Water Tower at rear of commercial district, from southeast

EE. 115 and 109 S. Mason St., from southwest

FF. J. R. Cunningham House, 202 S. Hughes St., from east

GG. J. W. Lassiter House, 313 E. Moore St., from south

HH. R. W. Johnson Jr. House, 201 S. Hughes St., from west (Noncontributing)

5255 N SW  
(GREEN LEVEL)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

APEX HISTORIC DISTRICT (BOUNDARY INCREASE)  
Wake County, N.C. 1:24,000 Zone 17  
A. 694400/3956020 C. 694560/3955560  
B. 694700/3955900 D. 694240/3955680  
Apex Quad.



