

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3 West Raleigh Historic District, Wake Co., NC

The West Raleigh Historic District is located in the city of Raleigh, the seat of Wake County and the capital of North Carolina. Raleigh, incorporated by the state legislature in 1794 and located on the Neuse River in the Piedmont of North Carolina, is named for Sir Walter Raleigh, the English statesman who sent the first English colonists to Roanoke Island. Laid out according to an eighteenth-century plan, Raleigh developed as a center of government and higher education.

The West Raleigh Historic District lies approximately one-and-a-half miles west-northwest of the state capitol and encompasses roughly three hundred and thirty-two acres. The district's topography varies from nearly level in the southeastern portion to more rolling terrain along the northern half of the neighborhood. The southeastern prong of Beaverdam Creek flows southward from Crabtree Creek to create a ravine in the park along the east side of Gardner Street and north of Van Dyke Avenue. Streets form an irregular grid of slightly curved thoroughfares and side streets intersected occasionally by a few serpentine streets. Linear, square, triangular, and trapezoidal medians divide streets and occupy intersections particularly at the junction of streets meeting at oblique angles. Within the district, nearly all the land is devoted to single-family residential use interspersed with recent and historic multi-family housing. A few churches stand on lots in the district and along the southern edge, commercial development lines Hillsborough Street. Buildings in the West Raleigh Historic District are fairly dense, although all houses have front and back yards and narrow side yards. In some sections, yards are larger and setbacks are deeper. Most historic dwellings in the district are frame, and sided with weatherboard or brick veneer. Stone veneer, other forms of wood siding, and concrete block construction are also common. While two-story dwellings are not uncommon, most houses are one-story in height, and the majority was constructed during a twenty-year period between the mid- and late 1930s and the mid- and late 1950s.

Enterprise Street and the rear lot lines of properties on Chamberlain Street and Rosemont Avenue form most of the district's eastern boundary, while the majority of the northern boundary terminates along the rear property lines of buildings on Mayview Road, Rosedale Avenue, and Ruffin Street and along the south side right-of-way on Furches Street. Faircloth Street—from Furches to Pollock Place—functions as the district's western boundary. Hillsborough Street marks the southern boundary, except in the area from roughly Dixie Trail to Henderson Street where the boundary dips southward to include industrial buildings and dwellings located in an enclave subdivided as College Crest, but now commonly referred to as Stanhope. Hillsborough Street is also the northern boundary of North Carolina State University, where many of the district's historic and current residents worked and studied.

The boundaries of the district—shown as a heavy dark line on the accompanying map—encompass several neighborhoods platted in the first half of the twentieth century including Bedford Heights (1918, 1927 extension), Bagwell (1919, 1922 extension), Blue Moon Ridge (1925), College Crest (1922), Fairmont (1926), Forest Hills (1927, 1938 extension), Harris-Chamberlain (1915, 1925 extension), and Wilmont (1925).

Because it is made up of several subdivisions platted separately in first decades of the twentieth century, the West Raleigh Historic District presents an intermingling of street patterns. The two blocks between Shepherd Street and Brooks Avenue correspond to the plats of Bagwell, Bedford Heights, and the 1938 Forest Hills extension and follow a neat grid plan. Portions of Wilmont, located west of Shepherd Street, contain graceful curving avenues. Following the tenets of the City Beautiful movement, the various developers who created the district set aside space for irregularly-shaped, small, informal parks along Gardner Street (#463), Kilgore Avenue (#576), Logan