Broad Creek Shores Reconnaissance Architectural Survey and Historic Research

Management Summary

Prepared for

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Department of City Planning, Norfolk

Prepared by

Kristin H. Kirchen

IRON DOG PRESERVATION

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Introduction

In February 2024 Kristin Kirchen and Iron Dog Preservation, LLC completed a comprehensive reconnaissance-level survey of the Broad Creek Shores neighborhood. We documented, with photographs and narrative descriptions, all of the properties located along Anna Street in Norfolk, Virginia, and those houses located along the south side of Virginia Beach Boulevard at the north end of Anna Street. Documentation took place from the public right-of-way only. This project was completed on behalf of the City of Norfolk and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources who have partnered on a Cost Share Survey Grant to document the architecture and history of the Broad Creek Shores neighborhood. This project was initiated by the City of Norfolk at the request of a neighborhood resident who believed that the history of the neighborhood was worthy of documentation. A public meeting to introduce the project to property owners, residents, and interested members of the public was held in January 2024 and the fieldwork was completed over the course of two days in February. Historic research utilizing a variety of sources - including historic newspapers, City Directories, City of Norfolk property cards, and oral history, in addition to secondary sources detailing the history of Norfolk – took place between November 2023 and March 2024. Final products for the project include survey files for every individual property completed per the requirements of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources – including a survey form completed in the Virginia Cultural Resource Information System (VCRIS) database, photographs, and a site plan – and this management summary report. Objectives of the project included the documentation of the physical conditions of both the neighborhood and the individual houses as they exist today, and the documentation of the history of the Broad Creek Shores neighborhood. In addition, the contractor was instructed to complete additional research on the history of housing and civil rights in Norfolk, in order to better place the story of Broad Creek Shores into context. This report concludes with recommendations about the possible National Register eligibility of a potential Broad Creek Shores Historic District and recommendations for further work.

Broad Creek Shores Through a Wider Lens: Race, Housing, and Education in the Mid-20th Century

Norfolk's Black Population in the early 20th century

Norfolk in the early 20th century was a busy port town with a thriving shipping industry. Coal, tobacco, cotton, and fertilizer were all major exports that passed through Norfolk. In addition, the Norfolk Naval Shipyard was significantly expanded during World War I (and again later during World War II) and a new Norfolk Naval Station was established. All of these industries and facilities offered steady employment opportunities for Black workers. In the late 1920s, Blacks constituted 36% of Norfolk's population of 177,000 and the *Norfolk Journal and Guide,* the City's Black newspaper, published a promotional brochure that touted the advantages of Norfolk for the Black community (Norfolk Journal and Guide, *Norfolk's Thirty-Six Percent*, 3). In addition to the numerous job opportunities provided by the industries tied to the port, employment opportunities with the railroads, U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Navy and Shipyard, building industries, and public schools for Blacks were all cited. In 1927, the City had 13

Black schools, including a high school; 69 Black churches; 23 Black physicians, 8 dentists, and 3 drug stores; 16 Black lawyers; one Black-owned bank, the Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company; 3 Black-owned Building and Loan Associations; a Black-owned theatre (Attucks Theatre); parks, a tennis club, and numerous Welfare and Fraternal organizations for Blacks; not to mention the prestigious Journal and Guide newspaper itself. Church Street was the heart of the Black business district and community, and the most prestigious housing for Blacks in the 1920s was found in the Boulevard Terrace neighborhood, just east of downtown. The brochure also pictured a street illustrating "the better class of apartment construction for colored tenants" and a couple images of single-family Four Square style frame dwellings, or "Modern Homes," built by J.C. Brooks and Co. and Messrs. Meyer and Whitehill. Alongside these more urban housing options, they noted, "As is true of other elements of the population, the trend of home-seekers is in the direction of the suburbs or 'open spaces'" (Norfolk Journal and Guide, *Norfolk's Thirty-Six Percent*, 10).

Black Suburbanization in the South

(This section and the one following were originally drafted by the author and Debra McClane for the L&J Gardens Historic District National Register nomination; connections with Broad Creek Shores have been added.)

In the United States, although studies of suburbanization from a community planning and development standpoint abound, the role that race played in such planning and development is often overlooked. By the mid-twentieth century, "suburban" had become a spatial metaphor for whiteness and this word association game has been so effective that even in the early twenty-first century, historians paid little attention to the development of Black suburbs (Wiese 2004:5, 109). Historian Andrew Wiese's study, *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century*, fills in some important missing pieces in the scholarship and has proven instrumental in placing Broad Creek Shores squarely within the context of Black suburbanization. Wiese connects the mid-twentieth century explosion in Black suburban development to the settlement patterns evident in the mid-nineteenth century, when Black residential areas tended to be located on the fringes of urban centers on marginalized landforms—along rail corridors or on slopes or floodplains—where freedmen and enslaved workers employed in the cities were free from White oversight but remained close to their places of employment in White-owned households or businesses in the city center (Wiese 2004:18).

Nationwide, the Black middle class grew substantially between 1940 and 1960 with Black incomes nearly tripling during the 1940s and increasing by another 50% in the 1950s (Wiese 2004:124). Black adults, both men and women, were increasingly employed in white-collar positions, most often in the civil service, clerical positions, nursing, teaching, or as professionals catering to Black clientele, such as doctors, dentists, and architects. Fitting into this model, the early residents of Broad Creek Shores also were employed by the federal government at Norfolk Naval Air Station; they were teachers and administrators at local high schools and at Norfolk State College (now University); they were attorneys and doctors, real estate developers and insurance agents, funeral home managers, and barber shop owners. The mid-twentieth century suburban boom heralded "the emergence of a new black middle class larger and more economically secure than any black elite in the past" (Weise 2004:2). Between 1940 and 1960, the number of Black persons living in suburban areas in the United States increased by one million with over one-third of that population in the South (Wiese 2004:114). Suburban living was appealing to Blacks for the same reasons it appealed to the White population. The suburbs represented a set of middle-class ideals–safety, cleanliness, modern housing, better schools, and tight-knit communities.

Just like their White counterparts, Black middle-class citizens idealized what it meant to be middle class and American. National publications showcased the houses and estates of the rising Black middle class and "portrayed a vision of suburban life that many middle-class African Americans could appreciate and to

which they might aspire" (Weise 2004:148-149). In 1955, *Jet* magazine published a feature on the City of Norfolk; it included the two Princess Anne County homes of Dr. John Sydnor and Walter Riddick as the "plushiest" Black estates in the area (both are located in the L&J Gardens neighborhood, now listed as an historic district on the National Register of Historic Places). In 1958, Walter H. Riddick's home also was featured on the pages of *Ebony*. The pictorial essay, "Home Life of the 'Horsy Set'," depicted Riddick as a professional and a man of leisure who raised horses and enjoyed harness racing on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Riddick was clearly part of Tidewater's Black elite, and his home and lifestyle reflected a comfortable life equal to that of any middle-class White American. Jet magazine's 1955 feature, "Jet Visits Norfolk," went to publication as the development of Broad Creek Shores was just getting underway, but they did highlight the Black housing situation in the City and the radical improvements that it was undergoing at the time. They noted,

> "A growing number of Negro real estate men enjoy the fruits of this city's spectacular housing boom. A titan among them is shrewd, young (33) bachelor Maurice Collette, Norfolk-born and reared, who spends up to $6,000-a-year to advertise his real estate-building-insurance business and who, in a single day, has sold as much as $75,000 worth of property. In 1954 alone, he and his staff of seven chalked up a handsome sales record of one-thirtieth of all real estate sold in the Norfolk area. Presently, he is developing homes in the $12,500 to $30,000 class, besides planning a three-story office building in downtown Norfolk." (Fuller 1955: 14).

The homes in the "$12,500 to $30,000 class" included houses in the recently-platted Broad Creek Shores.

As Wiese notes, until the late 1950s Black suburbanization in the South often took the form of new construction on the urban fringe (Wiese 2004:165). In 1953, when Dr. Irving Watts and W.T. Mason Sr. bought the 75 acres from the Federal Government that they intended to develop as an elite and middle-class Black suburb, it was located in Norfolk County, outside the city limits of Norfolk, which had a substantial, and growing, Black middle class. The acreage was part of an annexation by the City in January 1955, six months after the plat for the 38-lot Broad Creek Shores subdivision was recorded and approved by both the County and the City. Watts and Mason were both themselves members of Tidewater's Black elite, and recognized the need for middle-class housing that aligned with the suburban dream and welcomed Black homeowners. At the time, Walter Riddick was well underway developing nearby L&J Gardens, in what was then Princess Anne County, and, even though many in Norfolk considered L&J to have a less desirable "country" location, the houses that Riddick was developing with Black contractor Herolin Deloatch were selling well. Watts and Mason laid out the Broad Creek Shores subdivision and sold 22 of the 38 undeveloped lots in 1955. But Watts, Mason, and Riddick all faced challenges in developing middle-class housing for Blacks that were not uncommon throughout the South. Difficulty winning necessary local government approval was not uncommon for Black developers; Wiese recounts several nationwide examples of local authorities placing stricter requirements on such projects in terms of lot size and water and sewer tie-ins, and, in one case, suddenly needing the land in question for a high school (Wiese 2004:102).

In the South, Jim Crow laws focused on racial segregation constrained where new housing for Blacks could be built, directing development to land already owned or occupied by Black people on the outskirts of towns and cities. Almost paradoxically, as Wiese notes, there were several localities where white and Black civic leaders collaborated in the planning and development of Black neighborhoods in predetermined "Negro expansion areas" at the edge of the town. While Whites were motivated by a desire to preserve segregation, Blacks made building better Black neighborhoods their number one priority. Such a compromise on the issue of segregation is best understood within the context of their "tradition of racial advancement rooted in strong black communities and a deep ambivalence about residential integration, as well as a pragmatic

appraisal of what was possible within the existing racial system." For many, their primary goal was not integrated housing, it was "overcoming the inferior conditions and second-class citizenship that discrimination imposed" (Wiese 2004:165-166). There is no evidence that such "Negro expansion areas" were discussed in Norfolk County or City, but the land that Watts and Mason purchased was on the fringes of both the county and the city, away from the downtown core. This emphasis on racial uplift via strong Black communities, which was tied strongly to the high value placed on education and professional achievement, is reflected in the oral histories of the early homeowners in both L & J Gardens and Broad Creek Shores.

Obstacles to Black Homeownership

Despite their financial accumulations and the allure of the suburban dream, the growing Black middle class nonetheless faced numerous roadblocks to making that dream a reality. The nation as a whole faced a substantial housing shortage following World War II, and local governments were disinclined to spend their limited funds on improving housing for Black residents when housing for Whites was also in short supply. This translated to substandard housing conditions in existing Black neighborhoods–dirt roads, no municipal water or sewer infrastructure, no sidewalks, and substandard housing stock. This situation was particularly felt in Norfolk City and County and Princess Anne County, which experienced significant population growth during World War II and in the postwar years. Black neighbors in the rural county remained without basic infrastructure for decades after the war. Several of the early L & J Gardens homeowners recounted in their oral histories what a step-up L & J was from their previous neighborhoods in Norfolk. "We moved to what was a 'dream house' after living in Oakleaf Park, Liberty Park, and what was called Haynes Tract Norfolk…all segregated housing for Blacks" (Livas 2020).

Additionally, at all levels government planning policies and financial lending practices beginning in the 1930s enforced or supported racial restrictions in white suburbs and other housing development through explicit or implicit regulations and restrictions stated in formal and informal language. Policies such as redlining and unequal valuations in white and non-white residential areas were tools used to ensure racially segregated housing, despite lip service paid to other reasons, such as stewarding taxpayer dollars or protecting investments made by banks. The New Deal-era programs of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and Veterans Administration (VA) stimulated housing construction through guaranteeing loans against default. Weise notes that in 1940, the FHA insured 44% of new mortgages and by 1960 that number had grown to 62% (Weise 2004:100-101); however, only 2-3% of those loans were made annually to non-white citizens in either urban or rural areas (Lassiter and Salvatore 2021:30-33, 49-50). By the late 1950s, only 2% of the FHA-backed houses built since World War II were occupied by Blacks or other minorities nationwide (Abrams 1955:229-232; Wiese 2004:101). Those agencies further required that neighborhoods be racially segregated and encouraged their appraisers and agents to consider "adverse racial influences" when evaluating loan prospects. In 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated the enforcement of racially restrictive clauses, yet the FHA continued to insure such developments until 1950. It was not until the Fair Housing Act of 1968 (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act), which outlawed housing discrimination based on "race, color, disability, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin," that the official policies of the FHA and VA were altered (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq., 1968) (Weise 2004:129, 223; Lassiter and Salvatore 2021:33, 65-66).

During the early twentieth century, deed restrictions with overt racial exclusion clauses were common in Virginia cities and throughout the United States. In Norfolk in 1914, the City passed an ordinance that actually segregated the city's streets, making it "unlawful for any white person to use as a residence or place of abode any house, building, or structure, or any part thereof, located in any colored block," and likewise for any "colored person" attempting to move in to a "white block" (*The Charter and the General Ordinance*

of the City of Norfolk, City Code § 11, Segregation of White and Colored Residents 1920; Passed March 24, 1914; cited in Ringelstein 2015). In the early 1920s, a group of white men, including those involved in real estate, a City Councilman, and the City Manager, decided that "no property was to be sold to colored people on Corprew Avenue" and that Corprew Avenue would separate a "white Brambleton and a colored residential section" (Norfolk Journal and Guide, "Another Crisis…", 1925). The neighborhood of Campostella Heights, a streetcar suburb established in 1902, specifically prohibited the sale of lots to Blacks. Weise notes that real estate agents had a code of ethics that prevented sale to Black people of properties in White neighborhoods, White-owned financial institutions refused to loan money to Black individuals seeking to purchase outside of prescribed neighborhoods, and homebuilders asserted their right to refuse sales to Black persons and other minorities or ethnic groups (Weise 2004:99). In the late 1950s, *The Virginian-Pilot*, the Norfolk-based daily newspaper, ran separate real estate listings under "Houses for Sale" and "For Sale to Colored" headings. When advertising in *The Virginian-Pilot*, Black agents often identified developments as "exclusively colored," though no such label was used in advertisements for the same developments in Norfolk's *Journal and Guide* newspaper, the historically Black newspaper.

Other government policies implemented in the 1950s and 1960s, such as urban renewal (first authorized by the Housing Act of 1949) and the Interstate Highway Act, resulted in the razing of numerous low-income, predominantly Black neighborhoods in many metropolitan areas and resettled residents into segregated federal housing developments. Such policies and programs proved to have enduring effects on the landscape of housing across the United States. (Lassiter and Salvatore 2021:29, 32). As noted by the Weldon Cooper Center at the University of Virginia, residential segregation, that is, the concentration of racial groups into specific housing areas, has historically led to segregation in schools, enrollments for which are typically organized by neighborhoods and geographic proximity. Because Black neighborhoods tended to be lower income and local school funding formulas for allocating taxpayer dollars were discriminatory, there were fewer resources available for schools that served Black children. In addition, residential segregation limited access and exposure to employment opportunities, information, and general quality of life (Claiborne 2012:4-5). Patterns of inequality in housing "barred African Americans from the most economically vibrant localities and confined them to areas where locational disadvantages reinforced racial inequity. At the same time, suburbanization reflected the legacy of segregation and racial inequality that had long shadowed the metropolitan landscape" (Weise 2004:2).

Segregation in Housing and Education in Norfolk in the 1950s

The City of Norfolk experienced extreme growth at the beginning of World War II, as federal government workers, members of the military and their families, and shipyard workers flooded the city to staff the war machine. This population boom stressed both the municipal services and the available housing stock in the city, and yet the city government was hesitant to invest the necessary funds to accommodate residents that they saw as "temporary" (White 1992: xxi). The Navy had to intercede to build houses, schools, highways, and recreational facilities for their workers, and they were aided by the businessmen of Norfolk (who at the time had no sway with the politicians in power) who could appreciate the economic boom the new residents could provide. The Norfolk Housing Authority grew out of this collaboration between the Navy and the business community to build housing units for servicemen and their families (White 1992: xxi). The postwar years again found the city government reluctant to invest in housing or municipal improvements, and crime – especially prostitution, racketeering, and gambling – was rampant and neighborhoods descended into crowded slums (White 1992: xxiii). While housing shortages impacted both the white and Black communities, segregation, which limited where Blacks could live, meant that the situation was far more dire for the Black community. The substantial influx of Black families during the war years, combined with the limited area reserved for housing for Blacks, meant that "more than half of the black families in the city had been forced to either take in boarders or double up…this meant two or

more families living in a one- or two-room apartment" (White 1992: 13-14). The *Journal and Guide* hammered the City and its citizens through its editorial pages:

> It is the age-old story of the operation of the law of supply and demand. Within the past five years Norfolk's Negro population… has grown at least 25,000, but…there has been no comparable increase in housing accommodations for colored occupancy either in the form of new construction or in racial population shifts…. On the other hand, a conservative estimate of the number of new housing units constructed for occupancy by white residents of Norfolk could be placed at a minimum of 5,000. Especially in suburban areas supplied with transportation, water, gas and lights, there is plenty of housing for white people…. But even assuming that private capital were available and homes [for blacks] could be built, under present restrictive conditions, where could the necessary land be found? …It cannot be emphasized too strongly, and it is worth repeating again and again, that the housing situation affecting Norfolk's Negro citizens is not only acute, but desperate, while, by a fair comparison, no such problem faces the white population. The housing predicament with which this community is confronted cannot be resolved by the simple expedient of viewing it as a racial matter. It is based upon an elementary human need and its amelioration must be on this basis alone (*Journal and Guide*, "Wrong Way…" June 1, 1946).

Undated photo from the collection of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority labeled, "Assisted Housing, Tidewater Gardens, Slum Conditions."

Like many cities in the South, Norfolk contained numerous small black communities scattered throughout the city, rather than a central Black ghetto surrounded by white suburbs. While the communities and neighborhoods themselves were segregated by race, Black and white housing areas existed side-by-side

(White 1992: 44). The boundary lines between these Black and white housing areas were often understood but only lightly suggested by the landscape – roads rather than fences, or something as simple as a chain across a road (as was the case between L&J Gardens (Black) and Diamond Lake Estates (white) in Virginia Beach). Under the atmospheric cloud of the extreme housing crisis of the 1940s, such lines were easy to breach. The Brambleton neighborhood, a small white neighborhood bounded on two sides by black housing areas, on one side by industrial properties, and on the other by the Elizabeth River, became the site of Norfolk's first conflict over Blacks moving into white neighborhoods in 1946. The resulting violence and racial tensions helped to raise the profile of the need for housing improvements in both the Black and white communities and spur the City Council to take some action, both to improve access to housing but also to protect segregated neighborhoods (White 1992: 15-16). In 1949, the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA) hired Charles K. Agle to survey the conditions in Norfolk's downtown slums and develop a plan for their redevelopment. His report revealed shocking living conditions for Blacks and poor whites – crowded and dilapidated housing with poor sanitation, no running water, rampant crime, frequent fires, and spreading disease (White 1992: 18-19). All of these factors coalesced and, in 1950, the City of Norfolk became the first municipality to be granted federal funds under the new Federal Housing Act of 1949 for slum removal. When the first house was demolished on December 11, 1951, Project One, as it was called, became the first federally financed slum clearance project in the Country (White 1992:1). It took five years to complete, but it cleared a 47-block Black slum and replaced it with over 4000 low-rent apartments in two public housing projects – Young Park and Tidewater Park (Parramore 1994: 352). The new projects were bounded by new, wide transportation corridors that made for firm racial boundaries.

Undated photo from the collection of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, labeled "Redevelopment Project #1, Slum Conditions, Young Park Area."

Project One undoubtedly improved the lives of some people, but it didn't solve all the housing problems in Norfolk. It did nothing, for example, to address the desire of the Black middle class to live in the type of suburban neighborhood available only to whites at the time. By the mid 1950s, Norfolk was the largest city in the state and plentiful well-paying jobs in the military and the shipyards made it attractive to the Black community. A black middle class grew in Norfolk at a faster pace than anywhere else in the South (White 1992: 41-42), and the middle class aspired to more than public housing. Some suburban neighborhoods, like Brambleton, flipped from white to Black in the late 1940s, and a few small developments aimed more towards the middle class – Mamie Homes, Incorporated; Chesapeake Manor Apartments; and Chesapeake Manor Gardens – were built just beyond the city boundary in Norfolk County in the early 1950s. These new developments bordered the all-white Coronado neighborhood, a middle-class community that offered the types of amenities often lacking in black neighborhoods – curbs and gutters, parks, playgrounds, paved streets, and city sewers (White 1992: 47) – and, in 1954, members of the Black middle class began crossing the invisible line and buying houses in Coronado. The racial violence that ensued ranged from vandalism and harassment to actual bombings, and neither the City nor County police were willing to provide much protection for the new Black homeowners. It took more than a month and the concerted efforts of leaders in the Black community, including P.B. Young Sr., owner of the *Journal and Guide*, and negative press from both the *Journal and Guide* and the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot*, before the authorities were willing to crack down on the snowballing violence (White 1992: 48-50).

The City of Norfolk was in dire need of more land to physically accommodate housing for the booming population and in the 1950s they embarked on a major annexation program to expand their boundaries. What they wanted was undeveloped land that they could build on, but they had to take a substantial amount of already developed land as well, including the area of Coronado (Parramore 1994: 358). Viewed through the lens of segregation, their consternation over annexing already developed land makes more sense. The City didn't just need more housing, they needed more housing that they could clearly delineate between Black and white areas. They wanted to be able to control the development process so that they could ensure that the boundaries between Black and white areas were wide and definitive – multi-lane highways, industrial areas, rivers, etc. – and to ensure that no Black housing areas were placed in close proximity to white schools. This undercurrent of panic over school integration runs deep beneath the impending battle to develop a new Black middle-class suburb in the newly annexed part of the City – Broad Creek Shores.

Battle over Integration in Norfolk Public Schools

The fight to integrate schools in the South was well underway by the mid-1950s, and the City of Norfolk was trying to walk a fine line. Because the Navy and the federal government were such an integral part of the Norfolk economy, the City had to be careful that any position opposed to integration wasn't so extreme so as to push the Navy out of Norfolk. But Southside Virginia was rabidly anti-integration and if Norfolk were to integrate schools they feared that the wrath of the politicians in Richmond would rain down upon them. Attitudes towards integration among the citizens of Norfolk was actually fairly moderate; the large number of military families meant many children in Norfolk public schools had lived in other parts of the country and attended integrated schools before coming to Norfolk. When the Supreme Court decision in the Brown vs. Board of Education case was handed down in 1954, the tightrope the City officials were walking became even more precarious. Because the Brown decision relied on the idea of proximity - that it was illegal to deny Black children access to the public school closest to their home - Norfolk looked at its development pattern and was very concerned. Like many Southern cities, Norfolk had multiple small Black communities scattered throughout the city and around its perimeter, rather than being concentrated in a single area. The large number of Black housing areas adjacent to white housing areas meant there were many instances in which Black children had to pass a

white school on the way to their Black school. The City government believed that if they could keep neighborhoods strictly segregated and avoid building schools in places where they would draw from both Black and white housing areas, then they could keep schools segregated (de facto segregation; making the politicians in Southside and Richmond happy) while not technically being in violation of the federal law (thereby satisfying the Navy).

The battle to develop Broad Creek Shores in 1955, detailed below, combined with the racial violence over housing segregation in Coronado "bred a climate of racial mistrust and resentment" and contributed to a decline in communication between the races with regard to school desegregation (White 1992:72). By spring of 1956 the NAACP had filed suit to desegregate Norfolk's schools. The attorneys were Victor Ashe and Hugo Madison (both residents of L&J Gardens in the City of Virginia Beach) and the petitioners were from the Oakwood and Coronado sections of Norview, where racial tensions were high, and the transitional neighborhoods of Atlantic City and Broad Creek, where physical boundaries between segregated housing areas were less well defined (White 1992: 72). To this end, the second major urban renewal project of the NRHA in 1956-1957 was focused on eliminating transitional areas where racial boundaries weren't clear, creating new physical boundaries between Black and white areas (highways, modern commercial development, expansion of hospitals), demolishing pockets of Black housing that were too small to be served by their own school, and demolishing or repurposing schools that would draw from interracial areas (Parramore 1994: 366-367). While Project One received praise at the time as a model of urban planning, Project II, as it was called, was a city planning failure. In less than a year and a half the project destroyed the homes of nearly 1/10th of the City population without replacing them, which put huge pressure on the already stressed housing market, forcing people to crowd into existing dwellings thereby creating new slums (White 1992: 284). Racial tensions in Norfolk continued to escalate when the Mayor, W. Fred Duckworth, uttered a racial slur at Dr. Lyman Brooks, the president of Norfolk's Black state college, as he spoke before a City Council meeting (White 1992: 156), and this animosity strengthened the Black community's support for the NAACP and their court case, attracting a total of 151 petitioners. The Norfolk School Board used a variety of tactics to try to exclude the petitioning students, subjecting them to ridiculous tests and harassing interviews, but by the summer of 1958 they could find no legal reason to prevent 17 of the Black students from transferring to a White school and they were forced by the Court to admit them (White 1992: 165).

In the face of intense harassment, the Black community refused to back down and withdraw the lawsuit, while in the white community the support for Massive Resistance was growing. In September 1958 the six white Junior and Senior High Schools that had been ordered to accept the 17 Black students wishing to transfer were closed. The closing only affected these six schools facing integration – none of the City's white elementary schools or any of the Black schools were affected, but it resulted in 10,000 students being locked out of school (White 1992: 173-174). The Black leadership established a school in the basement of First Baptist Church Bute Street for the "Norfolk 17," as they were called, the 17 Black students seeking to transfer to one of the now-closed white schools. The goal of the school was to prepare the students for all of the challenges that they would face once the schools were forced to reopen; teachers provided educational tutoring but also educated the students on dress, poise, etiquette, self-defense, and psychological preparation (White 1992: 188). The "superintendent" of the school was Vivian Carter Mason, prominent Civil Rights and Women's Rights advocate and the wife of W.T. Mason, Sr., developer of Broad Creek Shores.

In January 1959 the legal framework for Massive Resistance was shot down by the Courts and Virginia's Governor Almond and Norfolk's Mayor Duckworth pledged continued rebellion and threatened to close additional schools. CBS ran a primetime special with Edward R. Murrow titled "The Lost Class of '59:

The Norfolk Story" that drew significant attention to the situation and swayed public opinion against Massive Resistance (White 1992: 216). Finally, in late January 1959, Norfolk's business community, which had remained notably silent on the issue, issued a public statement by taking out a full-page advertisement in both the *Virginian Pilot* and the *Ledger Dispatch* that called for the immediate reopening of integrated schools (White 1992: 219). In the face of this pressure from the business community, combined with the national spotlight that resulted from the CBS special, Mayor Duckworth and Governor Almond acquiesced, and the schools reopened integrated on February 2, 1959. (This is a very brief summary of a legally complicated and emotionally fraught period in Norfolk's history, and Forrest R. White has written an entire book on the subject – *Pride and Prejudice: School Desegregation and Urban Renewal in Norfolk, 1950-1959*.)

This is the pressure cooker that was the City of Norfolk when W.T. Mason Sr. and Dr. Irving Watts purchased 75 acres from the Federal Government in July 1953 with the desire to develop a housing subdivision that would cater to the Black elite and middle class.

Fight to Develop Broad Creek Shores

William T. Mason Sr., an immigrant from Trinidad, was a prominent real estate broker, insurance man, administrator of Norfolk Community Hospital, and co-owner of Seaview Beach, an amusement park and beach resort for Blacks, and was one of the most prominent members of the Black elite in Norfolk in the 1950s and 1960s. Likewise, Dr. Irving T. Watts, a dentist in Portsmouth, was an investor in Seaview Beach and a well-known Black professional in the Tidewater area. Along with his brother, he managed a hotel and dance hall at Seaview Beach, owned a taxi service, and had investments in multiple other area businesses (Thomas 2018: 61). When Mason and Watts purchased the acreage along Broad Creek from the federal government, the land was used for farming and family garden plots (though former Broad Creek Shores resident Carolyn Peace Smith recalls that when she would visit the property every week with her father to check on the progress of the construction of their house at 900 Anna Street in 1957 the extended Knight family was living on the property in a collection of wood shacks). They filed a plat for a housing development called Broad Creek Shores in February 1954 with both Norfolk County, where the property was located at the time, and Norfolk City, who had already filed a plan with the courts to annex the area and therefore had to approve the development. The proposed development encompassed around 15 acres divided into 38 lots arranged along a single primary street, Anna Street, that extended south from Virginia Beach Boulevard along Broad Creek and the Elizabeth River. The new subdivision would make available to Blacks buildable waterfront property, something that was nearly nonexistent at the time. Both the County and the City approved the plat and Mason and Watts moved forward with the planned development. By January 1955, they had sold 22 of the lots to various members of the Black professional class, prepared the street with a cul-de-sac at the southern end, and made various necessary drainage improvements. Prominent local insurance agent and realtor Maurice E. Collette purchased multiple lots with the intent of constructing high-end "modern" houses on speculation, while other individuals purchased single lots and hired their own architects and builders.

Although they approved the plat for the planned development in June 1954, neither the City nor the County must have been pleased with the proposal. Before the end of 1954, the County had pressured the new owners to sell them 30 acres of the parcel that bordered the new Ingleside Elementary School (White), which bordered the parcel on the west, and Mason and Watts agreed leaving them with 45 acres. The City of Norfolk then came calling and in late February 1955 the Norfolk City Council decided that it wanted to acquire 33 of the remaining acres for a new high school and park, including the acreage already subdivided and sold; they offered $75,000 to the owners. Watts, Mason, and the new private owners of the lots all refused to sell. The City then voted to acquire, by condemnation proceedings if necessary, all

45 acres originally purchased by Watts and Mason, including all of the platted and sold lots in Broad Creek Shores. Both the local Black newspaper, the *Journal and Guide*, and the white paper, the *Virginian-Pilot*, raised eyebrows at this attempt at segregation via eminent domain. An editorial in the *Journal and Guide* read,

> "The basic, overriding issue at stake in the proposal of the city of Norfolk to take, by condemnation proceedings if necessary, the 45 acres which constitute Broad Creek Shores…is simple justice and municipal fairness….[Such action would be] a shocking miscarriage of justice. Broad Creek Shores is not only important in itself, but as a symbol. If this highly desirable land, on which at least 125 first-class homes could be built, can thus be taken away from the owners, who acquired it by frugality, foresight, and initiative, then no land which Negroes now hold or might acquire will be considered by them as safe from unjustifiable confiscation" (*Journal and Guide*, "The Issue…," March 5, 1955).

In slightly more muted language the *Virginian-Pilot* opined, "The City Council can afford to take a second thought as to the Broad Creek Shores property, and it should do so. Fairness and justice deserve a first place in city government" (*Virginian-Pilot*, "An Appeal…", February 27, 1955). The property owners continued to refuse to sell and the conflict dragged on for several months. On June 1, the City Council adopted an ordinance for the acquisition of Broad Creek Shores either by purchase or condemnation; it would be effective in 30 days and would allow the City to go to court to take the property by eminent domain. Mason and Watts then offered the City a deal; they would sell the City 30 acres for $84,000 but the already platted and sold subdivision of Broad Creek Shores would not be included; the City refused (*Virginian-Pilot*, "City Refuses…", June 25, 1955). Mason, Watts, and the other property owners then launched a last-ditch effort to call a referendum on the City Council's action. This required them to obtain 1,364 signatures of qualified voters before the end of June; they exceeded the mark, presenting 2,483 signatures to the City before the deadline to force a referendum, thereby staying the ordinance. Newspaper articles from July 1955 indicate that the owners were still willing to negotiate a compromise with the City as long as the 15 platted acres of Broad Creek Shores could be developed as planned. With the hiring of a new City Manager in mid-July, negotiations seem to have turned a corner, and by early September, the City Council voted 4-3 to offer Mason and Watts $57,500 for 24 acres of the unplatted Broad Creek Shores property, leaving the platted subdivision intact.

Although they insisted publicly that they needed the acreage for a school and a park, the City never built either on the property. Instead, in 1960, they built an Armory immediately adjacent to the subdivision to the west and discussed plans to construct a 10-acre farmers market beside that. In contrast, by 1960, at least nine lots in Broad Creek Shores had been developed with homes "in the high-tax bracket" and the Journal and Guide called shenanigans on the part of the City:

> "It is axiomatic that in recent years…that wherever Negroes attempted to build respectable and high-tax bracket residences for individual family occupation, the City Planning Commission and City Council have spoiled their efforts in a way that amounts nearly to premeditated confiscation and destruction of values by zoning and rezoning property from residential to commercial use" (Norfolk *Journal and Guide*, "Zoning Makes…", October 29, 1960).

The impact of the construction of the armory was the physical isolation of Broad Creek Shores, a tangible boundary dividing Black Broad Creek Shores from white Ingleside.

March 1959 aerial view of Broad Creek Shores. Courtesy of the Sargeant Memorial Collection, Norfolk Public Library.

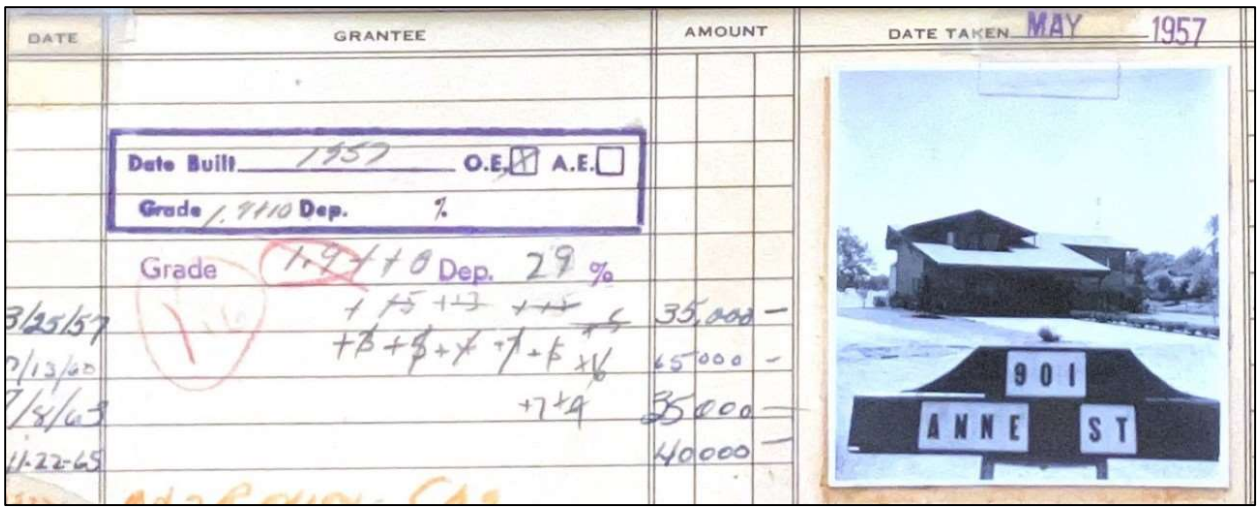
Building in Broad Creek Shores

Unlike the City of Norfolk, developers and property owners in Broad Creek Shores began construction immediately. Some of the lots, which averaged between ¼- and ½-acre, were sold undeveloped to private purchasers who then hired their own architect and builder and constructed their own house, while others were developed by a realty company (or companies) and then the completed houses were sold to buyers. According to newspaper articles, Maurice Collette partnered with his cousin, Mrs. Eloise Collette, to purchase 11 lots, which he then developed and marketed along with Robert Merriman, a fellow realtor and real estate investor. Classified advertisements for completed houses in Broad Creek Shores refer interested purchasers to Maurice E. Collette, Inc., the Collette-Merriman Realty Company, and Byler & Womble Realty, Inc. The houses at 906 Anna Street, 918 Anna Street, 939 Anna Street, and 997 Anna Street are all examples of houses that were built by one of these companies and then sold.

The house at 997 Anna Street was the first house completed in Broad Creek Shores in 1956. Located on the lot closest to Virginia Beach Boulevard, it would have been highly visible from the main road and served as the first model home for the development. Later, in 1961, the house at 918 Anna Street, nicknamed "The Princess" in newspaper advertisements, and the house at 939 Anna Street, nicknamed "The Duke," were both advertised as model homes in the neighborhood.

Advertisement appearing in the January 7, 1961 issue of the Journal and Guide newspaper.

Other lots were purchased by individuals who then hired their own architects and builders to complete their custom home. Collette and Merriman each built a private residence in Broad Creek Shores in 1957, Collette at 901 Anna Street and Merriman at 928 Anna Street. Both of these houses are larger and more architecturally detailed than the spec houses that were being built in the neighborhood at the same time, and it seems highly likely that a Black architect was involved with their design. Research thus far has not revealed exactly who that might have been, though William H. Milligan, Jr. and Henry Livas, Sr. are reported to have designed other houses in the neighborhood. According to neighbors, Collette's house was built by Black contractor and builder Herolin Deloatch, who constructed many of the houses in nearby L&J Gardens, just across the city line in Virginia Beach. Collette's house, in particular, is recalled by former residents as being an architectural showpiece, with an indoor fountain, vaulted ceilings, exposed beams, balconies, a marble bar on the lower level, and a fallout shelter. (Smith and Cole). Other early purchasers who built custom homes in Broad Creek Shores in the 1950s include Dr. George Peace (900 Anna Street), prominent attorney Hilary Jones (934 Anna Street), and Edward Carter, a master plumber and business owner with Navy contracts (936 Anna Street). Dr. Oswald Hoffler and his wife built their house at 974 Anna Street in 1963 with the help of Black architect William "Bill" Milligan, Jr. and builder Herolin Deloatch. Their son recalls that his parents had a concept that they wanted Milligan to design, which included a backyard entertaining space with a pool overlooking the river. That 1963 swimming pool, which seems to have been the only pool originally built with a house on Anna Street, is still in use today.



Detail from the City of Norfolk property card for 901 Anna Street (note that the sign in the photo says "Anne", probably a typo since the original plat shown below labels the street "Anna Street").

901 Anna Street in February 2024. Originally built for Maurice Collette by Herolin Deloatch. Comparison with the 1957 photo suggests that an original carport and a second story balcony have been removed. Photo by the author.

928 Anna Street, originally built for Robert Merriman. Photo by the author, February 2024.

974 Anna Street, originally built for Dr. Oswald Hoffler and family, designed by William "Bill" Milligan, Jr. and constructed by Herolin Deloatch. Photo by the author, February 2024.

Overall, nine houses were completed in Broad Creek Shores by 1960 and 23 followed over the next five years so that by 1965 the neighborhood was nearly built out. All of the houses were single-family dwellings and most were either Ranch style or Split Level; the 1961 advertisement for "The Duke" at 939 Anna Street noted that houses in the neighborhood started at $24,950. All of the advertisements also described the new houses as "modern" and several former residents who moved to Anna Street as children recall that their new houses had features that were cutting edge for the time – sunken living rooms, "great rooms," intercom systems, garages and carports, pools and patios. The houses on Anna Street were a decided step up from the neighborhoods that many new residents moved from. In addition, slightly more than half of the lots in Broad Creek Shores were waterfront, some of the only waterfront property available to Blacks in Norfolk at the time. Initially, Anna Street was not paved but as early as 1955, a newspaper article mentioned the "hard surfaced street" that Watts and Mason had constructed. Recollections of former residents suggest that this surfacing probably consisted of gravel and that ditches along the sides took the place of gutters. The neighborhood also lacked City water and sewer service initially; all of the houses were originally on wells. City property cards suggest that water and sewer were installed in 1968 and street improvements occurred in 1969.

Many of the original buyers in Broad Creek Shores knew each other before they moved to the neighborhood and many also had connections with property owners in L&J Gardens in Princess Anne County/City of Virginia Beach. Former residents recall that their parents were fraternity brothers with one neighbor, knew another from the Masonic lodge, and another from work. Word-of-mouth advertising was a primary form of marketing for the neighborhood. The adults moved in the same social circles and civic organizations, the kids all participated in the local Jack and Jill of America chapter, and the families attended the same churches. Many of the kids had friends that lived in L&J Gardens and one remembers

going to Walter Riddick's to ride horses on the weekends (Riddick was the original developer of L&J Gardens and owned a large property on the edge of the neighborhood where he raised horses). Former residents who grew up in Broad Creek Shores described it as "beautiful," "close-knit," "isolated," "rich in heritage and community," "exclusive," and "safe." They remember that all of their parents emphasized the importance of education and that going on to college and even graduate school was simply expected. For some former residents, what set Broad Creek Shores apart from other neighborhoods in Norfolk was the social and professional prominence of the residents alongside the custom, Modern homes on waterfront lots.

Prominent Figures Associated with Broad Creek Shores

Most of the original purchasers and developers in Broad Creek Shores were members of the Black elite, and many were significant individuals in their profession and/or community. The brief summary below of some of the prominent figures associated with Broad Creek Shores who have not been already mentioned in this narrative is not intended to be a complete list, but it highlights some additional important people affiliated with the history of the community. The author is aware that there are many other significant former residents of Broad Creek Shores that time did not allow us to fully document; recording their histories would add an important layer to the significance of Broad Creek Shores. In depth research on additional individual houses and families would undoubtedly reveal many more interesting and important stories. As a sampling, in no particular order, consider the following.

Dr. George Peace (900 Anna Street) – One of the only pediatricians in Norfolk for a time. He saw both Black and white children, but his daughter recalls that while he saw Black children at this office, he often cared for white children by visiting them at home or at their parent's place of business.

Patricia and Linda Cole (905 Anna Street) – some of the first Black students to integrate Norview High School.

Hilary H. Jones, Jr. (934 Anna Street) – prominent Black attorney involved in numerous Civil Rights cases. He was also the first Black to be appointed to the Norfolk School Board and was the first Black to be named to the Virginia State Board of Education in 1969. He also led the Broad Creek Shores civic association.

Dr. Oswald Hoffler (974 Anna Street) – surgeon on the staff of four hospitals at the same time. He was the director of medical services at Norfolk Community Hospital, and also served on the staff at Obici Hospital in Suffolk, Norfolk General Hospital and DePaul Hospital.

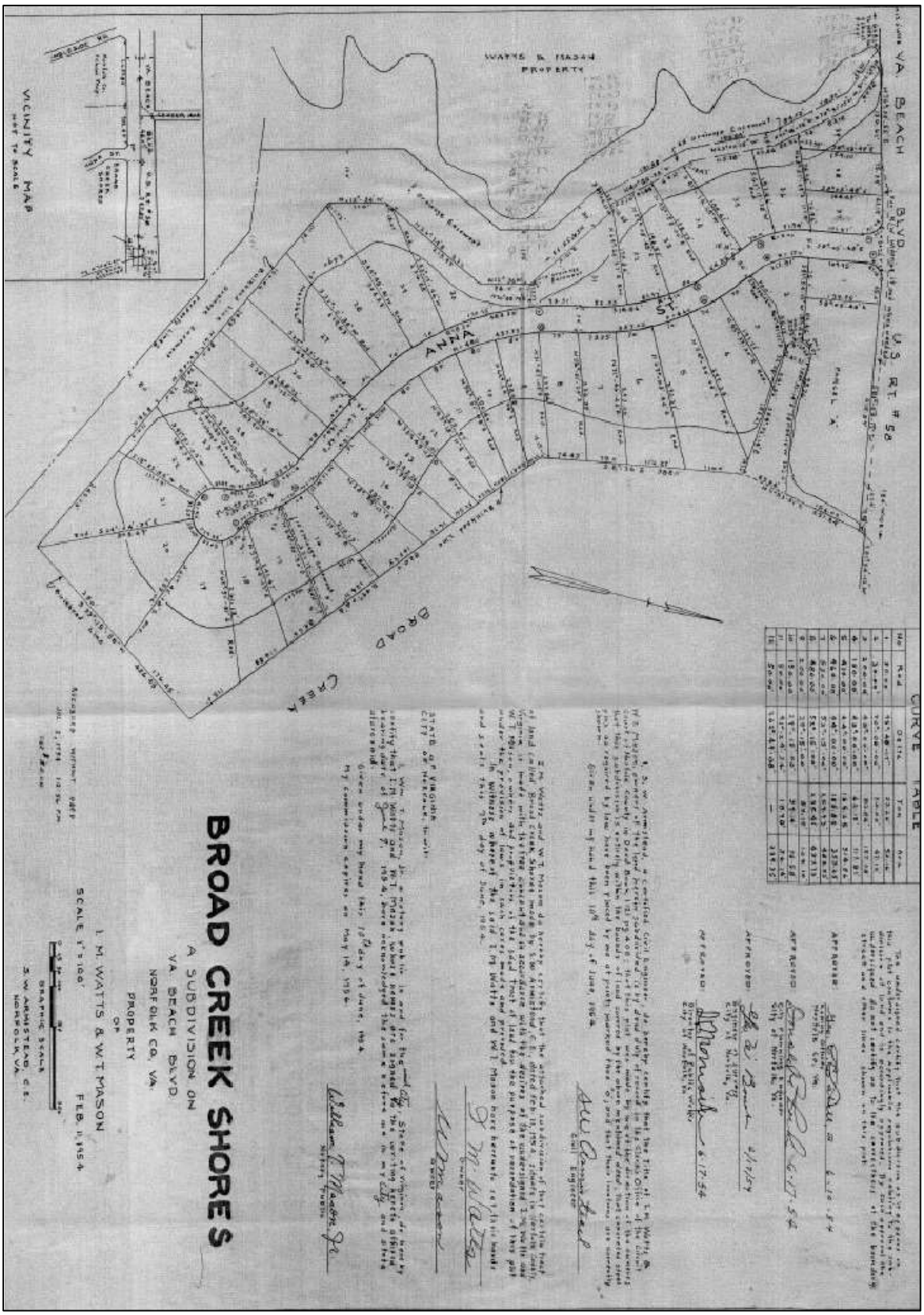
P. Bernard Young, Jr. – Son of the founder and editor of the Norfolk *Journal and Guide*, P. Bernard Young Sr., Young Jr. worked with him and took over the newspaper when his father died in 1962. He and his wife were some of the original purchasers of lots in Broad Creek Shores and, though they never seem to have lived on Anna Street, he served as the spokesman for the group of owners in many newspaper accounts during the fight to develop the neighborhood.

And many, many more.

Maps and Boundaries

The boundaries of the Broad Creek Shores neighborhood today do not differ from the original neighborhood plat filed in 1954. A copy of that plat was located in the City of Chesapeake and is reproduced below (the City of Chesapeake Circuit Court has the land records for the old Norfolk County;

when originally platted Broad Creek Shores was in Norfolk County). Immediately after the original plat, a current map shows the boundaries of the area surveyed as part of this project.



1954 Plat of Broad Creek Shores, Norfolk County, Virginia. Courtesy of the City of Chesapeake, VA.

Broad Creek Shores Survey Area, February 2024. Map courtesy of DHR's VCRIS system; map is oriented with north at the top of the page.

Survey Results

This survey documented 41 houses in the survey area shown above at the Reconnaissance, or Phase 1, level. Reconnaissance-level survey is intended to record the presence or absence of historic resources within a broad visual area; it provides base level documentation based on exterior views only, often from the public right-of-way. This was a comprehensive survey, meaning that it documented every property within the project area regardless of date of construction. The goal of the survey was to produce baseline

documentation on every property as it exists today and to document the overall appearance and integrity of the neighborhood as a whole. The table that follows provides the street address for every property in Broad Creek Shores, but it is organized numerically by DHR #, a unique identification number assigned by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. The table also provides the date of construction for the house (based on the City of Norfolk's property cards), a recommendation about whether it would be contributing or noncontributing (C or NC) to a potential historic district, and any notes of significance about the property. Much more detailed information about each property, including, in some cases, names of people associated with the house, is contained within the individual VCRIS record. Recommendations about whether or not a property would contribute to a historic district were made based on the date of construction of the house and its overall integrity to the period of significance for the neighborhood (1954-1977). A narrative discussion of the survey results follows the table.

Table 1. Results of the 2024 Architectural Survey of Broad Creek Shores

DHR #	Address	Date of Construction	C/NC	Notes
122-6440	997 Anna Street	1956	C	1st house completed, model home
122-6441	989 Anna Street	1962	C	
122-6442	983 Anna Street	1963	C	
122-6443	979 Anna Street	1963	NC	NC due to large addition, alterations
122-6444	975 Anna Street	1962	C	
122-6445	971 Anna Street	1960	C?	
122-6446	967 Anna Street	1977	C	"Prowed" gables
122-6447	955 Anna Street	2007	NC	
122-6448	941 Anna Street	1962	C	
122-6449	939 Anna Street	1961	C	"Prowed" gables, "The Duke" model
122-6450	937 Anna Street	1962	C	
122-6451	935 Anna Street	1961	C	
122-6452	933 Anna Street	1961	C	
122-6453	929 Anna Street	1962	C	
122-6454	919 Anna Street	2007	NC	
122-6455	905 Anna Street	1963	C	
122-6456	901 Anna Street	1957	C	"Prowed" gables, architect likely involved
122-6457	900 Anna Street	1957	C	Architect likely involved
122-6458	906 Anna Street	1960	C	"Prowed" gables
122-6459	912 Anna Street	1959	C	
122-6460	918 Anna Street	1960	C	"The Princess" model, "Prowed" gables, architect likely involved
122-6461	928 Anna Street	1957	C	"Prowed" gables, architect likely involved
122-6462	932 Anna Street	1957	C	
122-6463	934 Anna Street	1959	C	"Prowed" gables, architect likely involved

122-6464	936 Anna Street	1959	C	Architect likely involved
122-6465	938 Anna Street	1964	C	"Prowed" gables, architect likely involved
122-6466	940 Anna Street	1962	C	
122-6467	942 Anna Street	1958	C	
122-6468	950 Anna Street	1993	NC	
122-6469	958 Anna Street	1962	C	
122-6470	964 Anna Street	1961	C	
122-6471	968 Anna Street	1962	C	Architect likely involved
122-6472	974 Anna Street	1963	C	Architect - William Milligan Jr., Builder - Herolin DeLoatch
122-6473	980 Anna Street	1965	C	
122-6474	984 Anna Street	1961	C	
122-6475	990 Anna Street	1976	C	
122-6476	4541 Virginia Beach Boulevard	1965	C	
122-6477	4557 Virginia Beach Boulevard	1970	C	
122-6478	4561 Virginia Beach Boulevard	1975	C	
122-6479	4565 Virginia Beach Boulevard	1969	C	
122-6480	4569 Virginia Beach Boulevard	1977	NC	NC due to additions, alterations

The Broad Creek Shores neighborhood is compact and visually well-defined. The 1960 armory to the west of the neighborhood still creates a strong barrier that clearly defines the edge of the community, while the water on the east and south sides of the peninsula create other obvious boundaries. At some point, road improvements along Virginia Beach Boulevard resulted in the original alignment being turned into a feeder road that leads only to Broad Creek Shores before terminating in a dead-end at the water, while a new bridge over Broad Creek and a realignment of the six-lane Virginia Beach Boulevard kept busy traffic from passing right in front of the neighborhood's doorsteps. Even today, a visitor must be looking for Broad Creek Shores to find it; there is no through traffic in the neighborhood. Two signs are located at the intersection of Anna Street and the Virginia Beach Boulevard feeder road – one is a metal sign that consists of lettering spelling Broad Creek Shores on a black lattice metal panel, while the other is a green wooden sign on a green post that says Norfolk/Broad Creek Shores. The green sign appears to be a standard neighborhood sign erected by the city (the same design is found at the entrances to other city neighborhoods) while the metal sign appears to be the original neighborhood sign from the 1950s or 60s. Anna Street itself curves gently south from the Virginia Beach Boulevard feeder road following the landform of the peninsula and sticking to the highest ground. The southern end terminates in a cul-de-sac. Anna Street is paved and has concrete curb and gutters and concrete sidewalks along both sides. Power poles and street trees occupy the green space between the street and the sidewalk. Most houses have concrete driveways that are only one car wide. With a few exceptions, the houses have equal setbacks from the road and level, grassy front yards which creates a feeling of symmetry and order. The houses along the east side of Anna Street and around the cul-de-sac at the end all have water frontage to their rear. The houses on the west side of Anna Street back up to a creek and a marsh. Some of the

houses along the water have piers, docks, or boat ramps and a fair number of the houses which back up to the river have fenced rear yards. There are no fenced front yards.

Broad Creek Shores signage at the intersection of Anna Street and Virginia Beach Boulevard. Photo by the author, February 2024.

Anna Street, looking south, 938 Anna Street is the closest house on the left. Photo by the author, February 2024.

Cul-de-sac end of Anna Street, 900, 901, 905, and 919 (partial) shown left to right. Photo by the author, February 2024.

Anna Street looking north at 983, 989, and 997 shown left to right. Photo by the author, February 2024.

Every primary resource documented for this project was a single-family dwelling; a few appeared to have contributing secondary resources including a swimming pool and several sheds. There are no non-residential properties within the survey area. As at least half of the properties have waterfront access, many of the houses have associated docks or piers. Because this survey was conducted from the public right-of-way along the road, many of these waterfront features were not clearly visible to the surveyor at the time of the survey, but were noted later from aerial images. The dates of construction for these resources recorded in VCRIS, therefore, are educated guesses at best. Due to recurrent storm damage, to

which the neighborhood is susceptible, it seems unlikely that any of these docks or piers date to the 1950s or 1960s, though they may be replacements of earlier versions. Carolyn Peace Smith, who grew up at 900 Anna Street, remembers that her house used to have a pier with a gazebo but that both have since been lost in a hurricane. Certainly, the waterfront views and water access are important character-defining features of the neighborhood, even if none of the associated docks, piers, or gazebos are actually historic.

Rear views of Anna Street houses from across the water to the east. View is looking southwest. 932 and 928 Anna Street are shown right to left. Photo by the author, February 2024.

Architecturally, most of the houses in the neighborhood built before 1970 are one-story Ranch-style houses or one- and two-story Split Level Houses. Primary exterior construction materials are brick or masonry. Siding is found occasionally in the gables and on the second stories of the Split Level houses. Roof forms are low-pitched gabled or hipped roofs. Most houses have attached one- or two-car garages, though there are a couple original carports. A large picture window located somewhere on the primary elevation is also a character-defining feature of the neighborhood, although, because of the waterfront location, there are several houses in Broad Creek Shores that have more windows on the water-facing elevation of the house rather than the front or street-facing elevation. There are also several houses in Broad Creek Shores that are sited on the lot so that their side elevation faces the street.

928 Anna Street, with original carport and picture windows on the façade. Photo by the author, February 2024.

912 Anna Street, with garage, hipped roof, and picture window. Photo by the author, February 2024.

Although there were at least three advertised "model" homes for the neighborhood, there are only a couple of examples of houses that are clearly the same design and plan. The first model home at 997 Anna Street was definitely the model for 932 Anna Street (Majorie Davis Scott remembers her parents seeing the model at 997 and deciding to build one just like it); both are one-story, brick, Ranch-style dwellings with five-bay facades and an attached one-car garage. The model home marketed as "The Duke" at 939 Anna Street is very similar to this design, with one key difference – 939 Anna Street has "prowed" gables, a character-defining design feature found on multiple houses in Broad Creek Shores. The "prowed" gables in the gable ends of the house have a deep rake overhang and the peak of the overhanging gable extends further than the sides, giving the impression of a prow of a ship. This feature was documented on multiple houses in the neighborhood, including 901, 906, 918, 928, 934, 938, and 967 Anna Street.

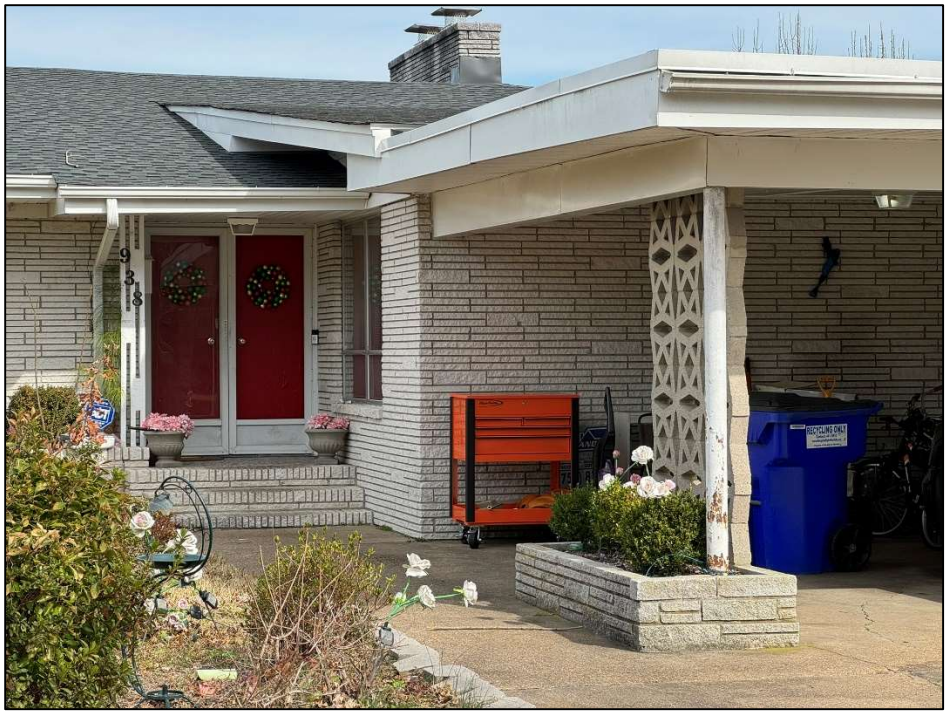
997 Anna Street, first house completed in Broad Creek Shores. Photo by the author, February 2024.

939 Anna Street, "The Duke". Notice the "prowed" gable on the right. Photo by the author, February 2024.

918 Anna Street, "The Princess," detail showing the "prowed" gable on the right, compare to the advertisement on page 13. Photo by the author, February 2024.

Because there are many custom designed houses along Anna Street, there are several highly detailed examples of the Ranch and Split Level styles that were probably architect-designed, including 974 Anna Street (designed by William Milligan, Jr.), 900, 901, 918, 928, 934, 936, 938, and 968 Anna Street. Further research could reveal the architects responsible.

936 Anna Street. 1959 image from the property card is reproduced on the cover of this report. Photo by the author, February 2024.



938 Anna Street, entrance detail, note breeze block screen supporting the original carport roof on the right and the midcentury modern-style post supporting the entry porch roof on the left.

Typical Alterations

The houses in Broad Creek Shores have high integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The most common alterations are changes to materials, especially installing replacement windows, garage doors, and front doors, and installing vinyl siding, but, because all of the houses in the neighborhood are primarily constructed of brick or masonry, these changes do not have a large impact on the overall feeling of the neighborhood. There are a couple of one-story Ranch-style houses that have had large, two-story rear additions that significantly alter the original design and materials of the house, and two other examples of significant additions and alterations to the façade that have significantly altered the integrity of the original design. Because the neighborhood was almost entirely built out within 10 years of the original plat, there are only three examples of later infill construction that date to within the last 30 years. In all three cases, the new houses are compatible in size, scale, design, and materials with the surrounding historic architecture.

979 Anna Street, northeast oblique. This was one of the houses originally oriented with its side elevation facing the street. The two-story section is an addition that took the place of an attached garage and the original roof on the house was changed from a hipped roof to a gable. Photo by the author, February 2024.

National Register of Historic Places: What is it and What does it mean?

In addition to documenting the current conditions of the neighborhood and researching the history and context, another goal of this project was to make a recommendation about the eligibility of a Broad Creek Shores Historic District for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP is the official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture and is maintained by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

The NRHP Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.4) divide the significance of properties into four areas (A-D). Resources may be eligible if they have important historical associations that are:

A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. Have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

National Register Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form, states that a building, site, structure or object may contribute to a historic property (in this case, a historic district) if it was present during the period of significance, relates to the documented significance of the property, and possesses historic integrity or is capable of yielding important information about the period.

A historic district possesses a significant concentration of resources (sites, buildings, structures or objects) that are united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district may be eligible

even if all of the individual elements lack individual distinction, provided that the grouping achieves significance as a whole within its historic context. In other words, it is not necessary for each building (or element) in a historic district to be individually eligible. A district may also contain elements that do not contribute to its significance, such as buildings that were built outside of the identified period of significance, resources that do not relate to the identified areas of significance, or those that have been so modified or altered that they do not retain their historic character or appearance.

The Virginia Landmarks Register is the Commonwealth's official list of places of historic, architectural, archaeological and/or cultural significance. This register is administered by the Department of Historic Resources on behalf of the Virginia Board of Historic Resources and has the same criteria and nomination process as the National Register of Historic Places.

Neither listing on the NRHP nor the Virginia Landmarks Register impose any restrictions or limitations on property owners. All limitations and controls that people often associate with being in a historic district are imposed solely by the local government via the creation of a zoning overlay district, which is not being proposed for Broad Creek Shores. Regardless, this project will not result in the listing of any historic district on any register, only the recommendation of eligibility for future listing, should the neighborhood so desire.

As a residential suburb, Broad Creek Shores should also be evaluated according to the National Register Bulletin, Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places. The Bulletin states that historic residential suburbs may be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A "for their association with important events or patterns in community history or with groups of residents (not specific individuals) who collectively made important contributions to the area's prosperity or identity as a place of industry, government, education, or social reform." In the case of Broad Creek Shores, significance under Criterion A is related to the fight for civil rights in housing. With regards to eligibility under Criterion C, the bulletin states that historic residential suburbs are eligible "if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, style, or method of construction; or represent the work of a master architect, landscape architect, or community planner." Broad Creek Shores represents the work of several Black architects in a collective grouping that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a 1950s and 1960s residential suburb.

Recommendations

Based on the research and survey completed as part of this project and detailed above, it is our recommendation that the Broad Creek Shores neighborhood could qualify as an historic district eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register. A National Register Statement of Significance for a potential district is suggested as follows.

Potential Broad Creek Shores Historic District, National Register Statement of Significance

The neighborhood of Broad Creek Shores was platted in February 1954 in an area of Norfolk County that was soon to be annexed by the City of Norfolk. Located due east of Downtown Norfolk and just south of Virginia Beach Boulevard, the neighborhood is just a few miles from Norfolk State University to the east and the City of Virginia Beach to the west. The neighborhood is located on a thin peninsula of land that is surrounded on three sides by the waters of Broad Creek and the Elizabeth River. Broad Creek Shores includes a single cul-de-sac street, Anna Street, with approximately 35 houses lining both sides of the street, and five houses located along the south side of Virginia Beach Boulevard at the intersection of the two roads. Sidewalks, paved driveways, and grassy lawns characterize the streetscape of one- and two-

story single-family houses. About half of the houses, those on the east side of the street and around the cul-de-sac at the end, have waterfront lots, some with piers extending out into the water.

Dr. Irving Watts and W.T. Mason, Sr. purchased 75 acres from the United States government in August 1953, with the intent of developing a neighborhood of modern houses to welcome the middle and upper classes of Norfolk's African American community. They recorded a plat for Broad Creek Shores on approximately 15 acres of the property in February 1954. In the 1950s Norfolk was experiencing an acute housing shortage, particularly for Blacks. "Redlining" and other official and unofficial policies and practices resulted in neighborhoods that were, for the most part, strictly segregated by race. Black neighborhoods tended to lack the amenities provided in white neighborhoods – paved streets, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, public sewer service, playgrounds – and overcrowded and blighted properties were commonplace. The Black middle class – the lawyers, doctors, and teachers who formed the backbone of the strong community - were increasingly dissatisfied with the housing options available to them. Broad Creek Shores was developed by two local members of this group to provide an option that offered waterfront lots and spacious, modern, single-family houses for the Black community. The City of Norfolk, however, almost immediately became concerned about the possibility of a Black neighborhood in the proposed location, due to increasing tensions with regards to maintaining segregated schools. The proposed Broad Creek Shores neighborhood was in close proximity to the white Ingleside Elementary School, located just to the west, and the City government feared that the future Black residents of the new neighborhood would, in the wake of the landmark Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education, demand that their children be allowed to attend the nearby white school. What followed was an attempt by the City to force Watts and Mason to abandon the already-platted subdivision (in which some lots had already been sold) and sell the property to the City. The City eventually threatened to use eminent domain to take the property when Watts and Mason refused to sell. The saga played out in the newspapers, both the white-owned *Virginian-Pilot* and the Black-owned *Journal and Guide*, and a compromise eventually resulted in Watts and Mason selling a portion of the acreage they had acquired from the federal government to the City, but retaining the section already platted for Broad Creek Shores. The first house was completed in the new neighborhood in 1956 and by 1963 there were 26 houses on Anna Street. Original owners were a veritable "who's who" of prominent members of the Black community in Norfolk. The Broad Creek Shores Historic District is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic History: African-American and Social History for its role in the fight for civil rights in housing in Norfolk, and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an example of a mid-century subdivision with examples of Modern-style single-family houses, at least some of which were architect-designed. The period of significance extends from 1954, when the neighborhood was first platted, to 1977, when it was largely built out.

Further Work and Research Potential

This project concludes with a full survey of the existing resources in the Broad Creek Shores neighborhood, a historic context that summarizes the framework of segregation in housing and education in the 1950s and 1960s in Norfolk that forms the basis for understanding the history of Broad Creek Shores, a summary of the history of the development of Broad Creek Shores, a brief mention of some (but not all) of the important people involved with the effort, and a recommendation that a potential Broad Creek Shores Historic District is eligible for listing on the National Register and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

Community engagement sessions moderated by the City could be held to share the results of this research with the community and to solicit feedback on both the results of the project and the interest in moving forward with any actual historic district designation. These sessions could also be used to highlight the

significant character defining features of the neighborhood and encourage their preservation. Efforts to engage property owners and neighborhood residents should utilize several different methods – such as mailed letters, emails, website postings, door-to-door engagement, in-person meetings, virtual meetings, etc. to reach as many people as possible. Should the neighborhood decide collectively that they wish to pursue actual historic district designation and listing on the Registers, then the next step would be the preparation of a full historic district National Register nomination. For an example of what that would look like, consider the nomination for the L&J Gardens Historic District in the City of Virginia Beach, which is available on the website of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

Listing on the National Register is a purely honorary designation, meaning it does not limit what property owners can do to their properties, but it does come with several advantages. Most importantly, it documents a snapshot of the resource for posterity and it records the significant history of that resource in the public record. This collection and presentation of history can be useful when discussing potential impacts to the area as a result of future development or climate change. It also fosters appreciation and understanding on the part of fellow citizens and government officials – the first step in preserving the history of a community is knowing what you have to preserve. The research necessary to complete a National Register nomination and the nomination itself can also be useful jumping off points for heritage tourism efforts, such as walking tours, informational brochures, local historical plaques and interpretive markers, and promotional digital content. A financial advantage of Register listing in the form of Rehabilitation Tax Credits is available to property owners interested in pursuing it and willing to complete a rehabilitation that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Minimum expenditures are required, as are multiple reviews by the Department of Historic Resources. Additional information about this program can be found on the DHR's website at https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/programs/tax-credits/.

Additional avenues for further research, either as part of a National Register nomination or for independent researchers, include: the identification of as many architects as possible who designed houses in Broad Creek Shores; the identification of builders and contractors involved with the neighborhood's construction; the identification of additional families and important individuals associated with Broad Creek Shores; an exploration of possible preservation challenges related to sea level rise and climate change; and numerous other possibilities associated with the architectural and historic significance of the neighborhood.

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