

CASTLEBERRY HILL LANDMARK DISTRICT

District 14, Land Lots 77, 84, 85

Fulton County, City of Atlanta

Existing Zoning: C-3, C-3-C, C-5, C-5-C, I-1, SPI-1

N-05-362

Proposed Designation:

Landmark District

National Register Listed: August 8, 1985

BOUNDARIES

The proposed Castleberry Hill Historic District includes all properties within the following general boundary: Beginning at the southeast corner of the intersection of McDaniel St., SW and Whitehall St., SW; then proceeding southeasterly 166.35 ft. to the rear property line of the property at 490 Whitehall St., SW; then proceeding northeasterly 938.3 ft. along the rear property lines of properties facing Whitehall St., SW to a point; thence southeasterly 28.5 ft. to a point; thence northeasterly 1006.8 ft. along the rear property lines of properties facing Whitehall St., SW; thence northerly 102 ft. to the southwest corner of the intersection of Whitehall St., SW and Spring St., SW; thence northerly 155 ft. to a point on the west side of Spring St., SW; thence northerly 923.3 ft. along the west side of Spring St., SW to a point; thence northeasterly 1250.6 ft. along the west side of Spring St., SW to the southwest corner of the intersection of Spring St., SW and Mitchell St., SW; thence 1061 ft. northwesterly along the southwest side of Mitchell St., SW; thence northeasterly 211.8 ft.; thence westerly 668.2 ft. along the south side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., SW to the southeast corner of the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., SW and Mitchell St., SW; thence southwesterly 92 ft. to the southwest corner of the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., SW and Mitchell St., SW; thence westerly 384.4 ft. along the south side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., SW to the southeast corner of the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., SW and Northside Dr., SW; thence southerly 1162.4 ft. along the east side of Northside Dr., SW to a point; thence southeasterly 10 ft. to a point; thence west-southwesterly 14 ft. to a point; thence southwesterly 2082.2 ft. along the east side of Northside Dr., SW to the northeast corner of the intersection of Northside Dr., SW and McDaniel St., SW; thence southeasterly 1288.7 ft. along the northeast side of McDaniel St., SW to the point of beginning.

SIGNIFICANCE

Located along the southwestern edge of Atlanta's central business district, the proposed Castleberry Hill Landmark District is associated with a long and highly significant period of the city's developmental history. Patterns of settlement established in Castleberry Hill during the early 19th century, before the founding of the city of Atlanta, remain evident to this day. Changing modes of transportation, from travel along Native American trade routes and early stagecoach roads, to an increasingly intricate network of railroads; from late 19th-century innovations in public transportation, to the impact of automobile travel

and truck transport, have shaped and reshaped the context of the district and have had a profound influence on land use. Nowhere in the district is the impact of these changes more evident than on Peters Street, anchored on its east side by one of Atlanta's oldest rail lines, and connected, on its north end, to the downtown street grid via the Peters Street bridge. The construction of a spur of the Southern Railroad in the northern section of the district's central core, between 1913 and 1915, dramatically accelerated the commercialization of the district. Within a period of 15 years, houses that filled the northern blocks of Walker Street had been replaced by continuous rows of two and three-story loft warehouses. The contours of the rail spur, in that section of the district, create very close spatial relationships between streets, building facades, and rail tracks.

While the distinctive physical characteristics of the district recall the history of Atlanta's growth as a regional transportation and distribution center, Castleberry Hill's primary significance lies in its extraordinary collection of more than 100, late-19th and early-20th century commercial structures. Peters Street is lined on its west side by rows of one to three-story retail buildings, dating to as early as the 1890s. The occupants of these buildings sold essential goods and services—food, clothing, furniture, prescription drugs, and hair cuts—to the residents of surrounding neighborhoods and provided wood, coal, and other support services to the system of railroads that cut through the district. In contrast, the eastern side of Peters Street contains a collection of early to mid-20th century warehouse and light industrial buildings, several of which are associated with the meat packing industry that once flourished in the district. Beginning at the northern end of Nelson Street and continuing down the eastern side of Walker Street is an almost solid wall of brick warehouse buildings, constructed from 1914 to about 1930. These open-plan loft buildings housed farm implements, industrial and office supplies, as well as tires, electric batteries, lighting, overalls, and a multitude of other items, while providing showroom and office space for the distributors of these goods.

ARCHITECTURE

Architecturally, the commercial buildings in Castleberry Hill illustrate the evolution in construction techniques from load-bearing brick to steel-framed and reinforced concrete construction. Industrial sash windows and track loading doors are found in many of the warehouse buildings. Most buildings have flat facades and flat roofs with stepped parapets. Detailing includes segmented and rounded arch windows, cast stone sills and copings, corbelled cornices, and decorative spandrel panels with terra cotta insets—modest elements of late Victorian and early 20th century Commercial styles that were once common in Atlanta.

Alterations to the buildings, most commonly to the street level storefronts, reflect changes in occupancy that have occurred over the years. During the mid-to-late 20th century, many businesses in Castleberry Hill closed and buildings were abandoned, as interstate highway-oriented industrial and warehouse facilities

became more accessible. Artists and other professionals began occupying the area's loft buildings during the 1980s. Since that time, adaptive use projects, both by individuals and real estate development firms, have multiplied, and Castleberry Hill is today considered to be one of Atlanta's growing neighborhoods. Along with the steady increase in residential occupancies has come a burgeoning commercial revitalization, as restaurants and other neighborhood-oriented businesses have begun to move back into storefronts in Castleberry Hill. The Castleberry Hill Neighborhood Association now hosts an annual tour of lofts that showcases the diversity and creativity that have brought new life to the historic architecture of this district.

HISTORY

Early Settlement

Settlement patterns that exist in Castleberry Hill predate the founding of the city of Atlanta. Street names and place names within the district serve as reminders of this early history. As historian Darlene Roth noted, in her analysis of research that culminated in a National Register of Historic Places listing for the Castleberry Hill District (1985), the district's street pattern and street names "stand as a fragment of Atlanta's beginnings."¹

Peters Street

The section of Peters Street that runs through Castleberry Hill follows a segment of the Sandtown Trail, a Native American trade route that stretched east and west across Georgia and intersected the Peachtree Trail at what became the Five Points area of Atlanta. The Sandtown Trail continued west (of the Peters Street section) toward a Creek Indian village near Utoy Creek and the Chattahoochee River. As white traders and settlers traveled the area, the trail developed into a stagecoach route known as Sandtown Road.

In 1835, Charner Humphries, an early settler in the area that became West End in southwest Atlanta, built a public inn on land he purchased at the junction of Sandtown Road and the road that led to the town of Newnan (now the junction of Gordon Street and Lee Street/Highway 29). Humphries named the inn White Hall, since it was noticeably the only painted building around. Over the years, White Hall Tavern served as a post office and polling place for the community that developed around it, as well as a drill and parade grounds for militia from the area. Segments of Sandtown Road that led to White Hall were referred to as White Hall Road.²

¹ Darlene Roth, "Castleberry Hill, Historic District Information Form," found in National Register of Historic Places files, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Much of the developmental history narrative has been adapted from Roth's report.

² The White Hall community grew to become the town of West End (1868-1894).

Sometime before 1853, the road from Atlanta to White Hall was renamed Peters Street, in honor of Richard Peters (1810-1889). Peters moved to Atlanta from Pennsylvania as principal assistant to the Chief Engineer of the Georgia Railroad. By 1845, Peters became superintendent and two years later was named Resident Engineer. He was responsible for completing the construction of the Georgia railroad from Augusta to Atlanta. Peters was active in many phases of the early development of the city of Atlanta, and along with George Adair, became a real estate developer. In 1871, Peters and Adair organized the Atlanta Street Railway Company (the first successful public transport system in Atlanta). Peters founded and directed several banks, railroad companies, and a telegraph company and was a director of the Exposition Cotton Mills. He was active in politics at the local and state levels, serving on the Atlanta City Council and in a variety of appointed positions on State commissions and boards.

While the name Peters evokes the history of Atlanta's early railroad development, the physical presence of the railroad along Peters Street creates a more direct association. The railroad bed along the eastern edge of Peters Street dates to 1846, when the tracks of the Macon and Western Railroad reached Atlanta (then Marthasville), and is one of the three main rail lines that "brought the city into being."³

Snake Nation

Nothing serves as a more vivid reminder that Atlanta was once a "frontier" town than the history of its early "shanty town" settlements. In the late 1840s and early 1850s, "Snake Nation" was the name commonly used by the public press to identify "a settlement along the old White Hall Road (later Peters Street) from the railroad crossing to about where Fair Street now crosses" that was "devoted almost entirely to the criminal and immoral element." Murrell's Row (along a block of Decatur Street), Snake Nation, and a third area, known as Slabtown, were pockets where drinking and gambling houses and brothels were common and murders were not uncommon.

As a result of the mayoral election of 1851, Jonathan Norcross (of the Moral Party) defeated Leonard C. Simpson, a former member of the Atlanta City Council (representing the Free and Rowdy Party). After the election, Mayor Norcross organized a group of citizens who raided the shanty towns one night, ran off the inhabitants, and burned down all three settlements.⁴

Nelson Street

Nelson Street was opened and named sometime before 1848 and was a segment of Nelson's Ferry Road that led to a ferry across the Chattahoochee

³ Roth.

⁴ Vivian Price, *The History of DeKalb County, Georgia, 1822-1900* (Fernandina Beach: Wolfe Publishing, 1997) 273-301.

River. John B. Nelson owned the ferry during the 1820s. His son, Allison Nelson is also memorialized by the street name. Born in 1822, Allison Nelson practiced law in DeKalb County⁵ and in the settlements of Terminus and Marthasville that later became Atlanta. After service in the Mexican War, he was elected to the Georgia General Assembly in 1848 (serving only one term) and became the ninth mayor of Atlanta in 1855. After moving to Texas, he became a member of the Texas legislature. He died from illness, while serving in the Confederate Army, in 1862.

Minutes of the Atlanta City Council from October 23, 1848 suggest that the Nelson Street viaduct, across the Macon and Western Railroad tracks, may have been the first bridge in Atlanta. The original wooden bridge across the tracks was 45 feet wide. It was replaced and widened before 1900.

Judge John Collier lived on a large estate on the west side of Nelson Street between Elliott and Mangum Streets in the late 1860s (west of the viaduct, at what would now be 301-359 Nelson Street). At that time, Judge Julius Hayden owned half of the triangle formed by Nelson, Walker, and Stonewall Streets. These prominent Atlanta judges may have been the developers of the residential community marketed as "Castleberry Hill." Much of the land along Nelson and Walker Streets had been developed for residential use by 1868.

Walker Street

John Collier and Julius Hayden petitioned the Atlanta City Council in October 1848 "for a street to be run from the bridge across the Macon and Western Railroad southwesterly to intersect with the White Hall Road (Peters Street) within the City Limits." This new street was named Walker Street, as shown on Vincent's 1853 "Map of Atlanta." Samuel Walker, for whom the street is named, came to the Atlanta area in the 1820s and owned a 189-acre farm that included the present sites of Piedmont Park and the Piedmont Driving Club. He also operated a mill on Clear Creek near the point where Park Drive now crosses. Walker later built and lived in a large house at the corner of Peachtree and Twelfth Streets that was destroyed during the Civil War. He served as a judge of the first Inferior Court of Fulton County from 1854 to 1856.

Mangum Street

Mangum Street bears the name of the Mangum family, whose male members (brothers James and William and their sons Nathaniel, Robert, and Wheeler) were early clerics, lawyers, and public office holders in Atlanta and Fulton

⁵ The land that was developed to become Atlanta was divided for settlement in the Land Lottery of 1821. At that time, the area was a part of Henry County. The area became part of the new county of DeKalb in 1822 and remained a part of DeKalb County until 1853, when the Georgia General Assembly created the county of Fulton.

County. Mangum Street was extended southeasterly from Nelson Street sometime between 1853 and 1870 (according to maps from that period).

Haynes Street

Haynes Street was extended into the proposed district between 1853 and 1870 and bears the name of Reuben Haynes, a master carpenter and cabinetmaker. The section of Haynes Street between Peters and Walker Streets was known as Booth's Alley around 1870.

Fair Street

Fair Street was named for the Agricultural Fair of 1850. Portions of Fair Street that lie east of the Castleberry Hill district were renamed Memorial Drive in the 1930s.⁶

Castleberry Hill and Castleberry Street

The name Castleberry Hill is associated with a topographic prominence that peaks along Walker Street between Fair and Stonewall Streets. The high point of the hill is about 1086 feet above sea level.

The family name Castleberry became associated with the area sometime between 1859 and 1867.⁷ Hanleiter's 1867 Directory of Atlanta lists M. T. Castleberry as the operator of a "family grocery" on the east side of Peters Street, west of the railroad tracks. A listing for Castleberry Street does not appear in Hanleiter's Directory until 1870.

A plat map from 1868 identifies M.T. Castleberry as the owner of several contiguous parcels fronting on the east side of Peters Street. Specifically, the 1868 maps notes that Castleberry owned the northern half of the block between what are now Fair and Castleberry Streets (Block 1) and roughly one third of the block north of Castleberry Street (Block 2). By 1870 (and a second plat map), Castleberry had purchased additional land on the south end of Block 1 and had subdivided and sold several parcels backing against the railroad along that block. He had also sold half of the parcels he owned on Block 2 by 1870. Darlene Roth suggests that these parcels were an extension of the earlier development along Nelson and Walker Streets.

⁶ Portions of the street that lie west of Peters Street were known as Stephens Street until about 1870, when they were renamed Fair Street.

⁷ There is no mention of the name Castleberry in the 1859 Directory of Atlanta. The next available directory was published in 1867, which connects Merrill T. Castleberry with a business on Peters Street.

The family residence and a two-story commercial building, associated with the family, stood on Block 1. Roth's research indicates that Castleberry retained ownership of land at the southern edge of Block 2 for livery and timber purposes.

THE CASTLEBERRY FAMILY

Atlanta City Directories, the 1880 US Census, and other sources provide the following information about the Castleberry family.

Merrill Thomas Castleberry was born in Georgia in 1830 (d. 1890). The 1872 City Directory identifies M.T. Castleberry as a "contractor," residing on Peters Street near Castleberry Alley. By 1874, he was involved in other business interests. The City Directory from that year lists him as owner of the M.T. Castleberry Furniture Emporium (later Castleberry and Co.) at 1 Marietta Street and 20 Peachtree (Five Points), as well as owner of a furniture factory at 150 W. Peters Street. He is also listed in 1872 as being associated with Pelligrini and Castleberry (see Zach Castleberry) and the D.B. Morgan and Co. furniture store at 85 Whitehall and 92 Broad. The 1876 City Directory notes that Merrill T. continued his involvement in the Castleberry and Co. furniture store at 20-22 Peachtree Street, while the directory of 1886 lists him as "City Tax Collector." From 1874-1890, M.T. Castleberry's residence is listed at 164 W. Peters.⁸

Castleberry served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War as First Lieutenant in the unit known as the "Atlanta Volunteers." He was shot in the face during the Battle of Antietam. Castleberry's obituary notes that the war ended for him in 1864; "he cared nothing for veterans' leagues or revivals of the old issues of the past." Instead, he was committed to ideals of the New South and to the city of Atlanta, which "he helped to rebuild from her ashes." Toward these efforts, Castleberry served on the Atlanta City Council from 1870-1872 "during the stormy days of Reconstruction." His obituary indicates that Castleberry did not inherit wealth but was "self made."⁹

Martha Richards Castleberry, born in Georgia in 1832 (d. 1900), is listed in the 1880 US Census as wife of Thomas Castleberry. Her occupation is listed as keeper of the household.

⁸ The family home at 164 Peters Street was a gabled-wing house with porches on the north, west, and east facades. The two-story commercial building at 158 Peters Street may have housed the family grocery, as well as the furniture factory, early on. Both buildings are shown on Sanborn Maps from 1886-1899 but had been replaced by a new row of store buildings by 1911.

⁹ Members of the Castleberry family are buried at Oakland Cemetery. Their graves were unmarked until recently. M.T. Castleberry's obituary explains that he "lost the accumulations of many honest years" and had suffered through years of illness before his death.

Daughters Lilly, Ona, and Dora,¹⁰ ranging in age from 10 to 20, are also listed as members of the Castleberry household in 1880. Other members were Lucinda Gray, Thomas Castleberry's mother (age 79), who married George Washington Gray in 1846, following the death of her first husband, Meredith Castleberry. Eraline Blalock, born in South Carolina in 1820, also lived with the Castleberry household in 1880. Her occupation is listed as cook.

Dora Castleberry (b. 1860) is listed in the 1880 City Directory as a teacher at the Walker Street School and boarder at 164 W. Peters Street. She was listed as Dora Castleberry Horine at the time of her death in 1930.

Zach Castleberry (b. 1853 d. 1921) became a partner in Pellegrini and Castleberry, renowned manufacturers of architectural terra cotta, sometime around 1876.¹¹ The US Census of 1880 lists Zach Castleberry as a terra cotta worker, suggesting that his involvement with the firm was as a craftsman rather than merely as a business partner.

Pellegrino Pellegrini started the terra cotta works in 1871. By 1876, the company is listed as Pellegrini, Castleberry and Co. also known as Southern Terra Cotta Works. Pellegrini, along with M.T. and Zach Castleberry, are listed as owners of the business in 1876. The company specialized in decorative red terra cotta for both interior and exterior building purposes but also manufactured "fire brick, fire clay, chimney flues, chimney tops, and garden vases" and did ornamental plaster work. The business address for the company is listed as 178 Chapel Street (near Barracks) in 1880. Pellegrini and Castleberry later merged with a factory from East Point. After Zach Castleberry left the business in 1893, followed by Pellegrini in 1897, the Southern Terra Cotta Works continued in business until 1912.¹²

From 1876 to 1886, Zach Castleberry lived in the Castleberry Hill area, either on property owned by the Castleberry family along Peters Street or as a boarder nearby. In 1880, for example, he is listed as a boarder at 117 W. Fair, in a building owned by James Johnston, a grocer. By 1896, Zach Castleberry had moved to another part of the city and was working as a clerk with the State and county tax receiver's office. Pellegrini also lived in Castleberry Hill, along with his wife and children.¹³ During the late 1870s, the Pellegrini family lived at 267 W.

¹⁰ While both Dora and Lilly Castleberry were born in Georgia, census records state that Ona was born in Alabama in 1864, suggesting that the family sought refuge from Civil War activity in Georgia that year.

¹¹ Zach Castleberry worked at the D.B. Morgan and Co. furniture store in 1874. He is assumed to be the son of Henry C. Castleberry (b. 1822 d. 1862) and nephew of Merrill Thomas Castleberry.

¹² Elizabeth Anne Mack Lyon, *Atlanta Architecture: The Victorian Heritage, 1837-1918* (Atlanta Historical Society, 1976) 99. Sanborn Maps from 1899 to 1911 show the terra cotta factory on Chapel Street (now Northside Drive) near the southeast corner of McDaniel Street. The east façade of the factory faced what was then known as Kuhrt Street. In 1911, Samuel Young owned the factory, according to the Sanborn Map. The building had been demolished by 1932.

¹³ Pellegrini was born in the Tuscany region of Italy in 1839. He and wife Julia (born 1845 in Pennsylvania) had seven daughters living in their household in 1880. The family lived in Ohio

Peters Street (on the west side of Peters Street between Trenholm Street and Hills Avenue).¹⁴

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY 1870-1899

Following the Civil War, Atlanta quickly re-asserted itself as a regional transportation and commodities distribution center. Vigorous rebuilding efforts and a growth in population resulted in an expansion of the city's boundaries. Atlanta's new role as state capital established it as a focus of public policy and government action. By 1878, the local economy stabilized from effects of the war and the Panic of 1873, and Atlanta established its system of public schools, a system of public transportation, as well as other public health and safety services. The Hopkins Atlas of 1878 provides evidence that Castleberry Hill benefited from these improvements and illustrates development that had occurred in the district by that time. The Atlas also serves as a baseline from which subsequent changes can be observed.¹⁵

By 1878, more than 80 percent of all principal buildings within the Castleberry Hill district were residences. Occupants were a mixture of working class and managerial class persons. African Americans began moving into northern and western portions of the district during the 1870s.

Non-residential buildings, concentrated along Peters Street, were used for retail and consumer services, light manufacturing and repair services, and transportation-related services, such as freight-handling, livery, and coal and wood supplies. Two large tracts (the Doane and Lowe properties) on the east side of Peters Street were still being used for farming. All other lots were of typical, urban size and all but a few were developed.

The principal community facilities in 1878 were the Walker Street School and a fire station at the corner of W. Fair and Bradberry Streets. The wooden trestle bridge at Nelson Street was the only structure in the district that passed over the railroad. All other streets in the district were at grade. The mule-drawn trolley line of the Atlanta Street Railway Company was routed along Peters Street, connecting downtown Atlanta with the town of West End. Another line crossed the Nelson Street Bridge going westbound to Hunter Street and eastbound to Mitchell Street.

By 1886, there is evidence that Castleberry Hill's proximity to the railroad and to the city's thriving economy had begun to accelerate changes in the district.

and Kentucky before moving to Georgia in 1871. Pellegrino Pellegrini's occupation is listed as sculptor in the 1880 Census.

¹⁴ The Sanborn Map from 1886 shows a two-story commercial building at 267 Peters Street. The building may have included residences on its upper floor.

¹⁵ This section includes material adapted from both Roth's report and from the 1985 National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for the Castleberry Hill Historic District.

Several secondary and spur lines were constructed in the main bed of the railroad and in the area of tracks that ran east of Peters Street. These lines were added to provide access to the new East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad Freight Depot, which had been constructed on the east side of Peters Street north of Castleberry Street, as well as to serve expanded and new cattle and lumber yards.¹⁶ The mule-drawn trolley line had been re-routed to circumvent the grade crossing at Peters Street, due to greatly increased railroad traffic.

Additional retail buildings and warehouse and light industrial buildings had been built on both sides of Peters Street, displacing some residential buildings. The Lowe farm property had been subdivided and developed for cattle and meat processing businesses, and the Doane farm had been partially subdivided and developed with houses. The residential nature of Nelson and Walker Streets had not changed significantly since 1878. During the early 1880s, African American residencies increased in the northern and western sections of the district. African Americans also began moving into parts of the district's central core, along Bradberry Street, in the rear of houses occupied by whites, on properties facing the railroad, and on Peters Street south of the Walker Street intersection.

By 1892, retail, light manufacturing, and wholesale businesses continued to expand along Peters Street, and only a few houses remained. Cattle and meat processing operations and coal and lumber storage facilities also expanded on the east side of Peters Street. A new iron bridge replaced the wooden Nelson Street Bridge. Several new residences and the Walker Street M.E. Church had been built in the triangle formed by Nelson, Haynes, and Walker Streets. The increase in African American occupancies continued between 1886 and 1892, in the southwest quadrant of the district and along the southern part of Walker Street. This change was due, in part, to an increasing availability of housing for whites in other districts of the city and due to displacement, as a result of continued commercial and industrial expansion in many parts of the city. Middle class residential development filled both the east and west sides of Whitehall Street within the proposed district, between 1886 and 1892. However, this was primarily an expansion of housing for downtown workers and business owners and not associated with changes occurring in Castleberry Hill.

By 1899, the trend toward commercialization of Peters Street and industrialization of the area between Peters and the railroad intensified. While the ownership of railroads, stockyards, retail businesses, lumberyards and planing mills changed, the presence of these enterprises remained constant. All residential buildings on the west side of Peters Street were gone by 1899, but several houses remained scattered along the east side. The Nelson and Walker Streets residential area remained relatively intact, as non-whites continued to move into houses vacated by whites.

¹⁶ The freight depot was destroyed by fire c. 1990.

1900-1959

Atlanta was transformed, during the first three decades of the 20th century, from a city of modest size, into an industrial metropolis. During these years, the city became not only the railroad distribution center for the entire Southeast but a major financial and business center as well. Atlanta also began to grow as an administrative center for State government and education. Real estate activity during this period was unprecedented and extended into all sections of the city.

From its close proximity to downtown, Castleberry Hill experienced dramatic change during this period. The transition from residential to commercial and industrial uses that began in the central core of the district in the 1880s was complete by about 1930. The Nelson to Walker Street residential area, north of Fair Street, was completely replaced by warehouses and light manufacturing buildings, following the construction of the spur line in that section.

Many of the earliest extant buildings in the district were constructed on Peters Street from about 1895 to 1915. The retail and warehouse buildings dating from this period tended to be larger or more elaborate replacements of earlier structures. The three-story L.H. Hill Furniture Store and the elaborately decorated Farmers and Traders Bank, both near the intersection of Peters and Walker Streets, represent the prosperity and optimism of the time. Several major public improvement projects contributed to the building boom on Peters Street. A citizens group successfully lobbied city government to widen Peters Street to 50 feet, pave it and build a bridge over the railroad tracks, in order to accommodate the electrified street railway (that replaced the mule-drawn trolley around 1900). The improvements were completed quickly; the widening and paving occurred in 1903, and construction of the first Peters Street Bridge in 1904. The bridge was replaced during the 1920s.

From the late 1910s through 1920s, construction continued on Peters Street. While smaller buildings continued to provide neighborhood retail and consumer services, larger buildings served both citywide and regional markets. Two of the nation's largest meatpacking companies, Kingan and Company and Swift and Company, located on Peters Street around 1930. By 1932, the central core of the district had become a dense development of commercial, light industrial, and warehouse buildings. More than 70 percent of buildings in that section were used for non-residential purposes. The only community facility remaining was the Walker Street School (destroyed by fire in 1983).

In the northern and western sections of the proposed district, most streets remained residential in nature, or became a mix of light industrial, neighborhood commercial, and residential uses. By 1915, for example, both the east and west sides of Mangum Street, between Mitchell and Chapel Streets, contained a mix of manufacturing buildings and working class housing. At that time, the Gate City

Coffin Company and Bottle Works factory stood within a dense development of modest homes, creating a mill village appearance in that area.

Along the eastern edge of the district, redevelopment began on the McDaniel Street end of Whitehall Street around 1920 and continued north along both sides of Whitehall for several decades, as food processing, light industrial, and office-warehouse buildings replaced the c. 1890 residences. In contrast to the rapid transformation that took place on Nelson and Walker Streets, the transition from residential to commercial and industrial uses on Whitehall Street occurred gradually, as industry spread from Peters Street, on the west side of the rail lines, to Whitehall, on the east side of the tracks. Construction of a segment of Interstate 20, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, directly east of the proposed district, hastened the loss of additional residential properties on Whitehall Street. A church built on the east side of Whitehall in 1906 (near McDaniel) stands as the only tangible reminder that the segment of Whitehall Street, contained within the proposed district, was once residential. However, many parcels of vacant land remain where houses once stood.

Buildings constructed in Castleberry Hill during the late 1930s to 1950s are representative of changes in transportation occurring at that time. As automotive transport became the preferred method of moving goods and passengers, service stations, automobile repair shops, and parking garages appeared in commercial districts throughout the city. Warehouse and light industrial buildings constructed during this period were typically sited along main thoroughfares with setbacks that provided automobile access and parking for customers, as well as loading space for trucks. Loading docks were often at the front of the building and faced the roadway, rather than at the rear along the rail lines. Several buildings that are typical of this trend were constructed in Castleberry Hill during this period, along Peters Street, Walker Street, and along portions of Whitehall Street. However, some buildings from this period continue the zero setbacks of earlier periods and represent a departure from previous periods of development only in terms of materials and techniques used in construction. The buildings from this period reflect the continued development of the Castleberry Hill district and are representative examples of modest commercial and industrial buildings from the mid-20th century.

STRUCTURES

The historic structures in Castleberry Hill provide excellent examples of two important types of late 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture in Atlanta. Retail and commercial buildings along Peters Street are modest late Victorian and early 20th century buildings of a type once common in Atlanta. Concentrations of these buildings are now quite rare in Atlanta. These one to three story brick buildings feature modest ornamentation that includes decorative corbelling along the cornice, string courses that define the stories of the building, segmental or rounded arch windows, cast stone sills, and stepped roof parapets.

They have continuous commercial storefronts at the street level. Upper floors were typically used as office or warehouse space. In the oldest buildings of this type that exist in the district, upper floors commonly included residential uses.¹⁷

Many examples of the "loft" type of industrial or warehouse building are found in Castleberry Hill. These buildings are concentrated along the northern section of Nelson Street and extend south along Walker Street. However, examples of this type are found in other sections of the district as well. Loft buildings feature sturdy construction, open floor plans, and modestly detailed front facades.

More than 50 percent of the warehouse and industrial buildings in Castleberry Hill feature "standard mill" or "semi-mill" construction. These buildings were constructed from the 1890s to about 1925 with heavy timber framing or steel beams. They have load bearing masonry walls rising from brick or stone foundations. The construction methods used in these buildings allowed for open floor spaces and fireproofing. Semi-mill construction is found in many of the one and two story retail buildings in the district, while standard mill construction is typical of the older industrial and warehouse buildings which required a floor system with a heavy loading capacity.

Examples of buildings with standard or semi-mill construction include Kelly Brothers Grocery Warehouse (1903) at 161 Mangum Street, the Nu-Way Laundry Company – Ty Stokes Building at 261 Walker Street (c. 1910), Smith and Higgins Department Store – Bressler Brothers Building (1906-07) at 330 Peters Street, the Bottle Works at 63 Mangum Street (1914), the John Deere Plow Company at 326 Nelson Street (1914), and the Wright Manufacturing Company – Maryland Baking Company (1923) at 479 Whitehall Street.

Many buildings in the district are "functional" in terms of their design but most include elements of styles that are representative of the periods in which they were constructed. Popular architectural styles represented in the oldest commercial buildings within the district include stripped or streamlined classical, neoclassical revival, and Italianate. Elements of Georgian or Colonial Revival, Art Deco, Art Moderne, and Modern styles are distinctive features of buildings constructed in Castleberry Hill from the 1910s through the 1950s.

LANDSCAPES AND STREETSCAPES

Commercial and industrial buildings are attached in rows and sited along the streets. Street paving and sidewalk paving materials in most areas of the district are cast-in-place concrete separated by granite curbs. Sidewalks on Peters Street are laid with hexagonal sidewalk pavers. Planting zones in the sidewalks to allow for the growth of street trees, which are the only vegetation on commercial streets in the district, was part of a recent streetscape project.

¹⁷ This section includes portions of statements of significance from National Register of Historic Places forms and research reports.

"Topographic differences are accommodated in many places by rough-cut-granite walls and at other places by steeply graded, unplanted banks. The landscape impression is of a densely packed, low-height industrial area strongly tied to the street system and the railroad." The most striking "characteristic of the area is its visual proximity to downtown Atlanta" and the impact of the downtown skyline.¹⁸

In the southwestern quadrant of the proposed district some residential uses still exist, primarily along the southern end of Nelson Street. Residential streets in the district are typical of streets laid out for modest working class or middle class housing from the late 19th century. The setbacks allow for front and side yards. Landscaping includes matures trees and shrubs. Stone retaining walls are common features of the streetscape.

CRITERIA

Castleberry Hill meets the following criteria for designation as a City of Atlanta Landmark District:

Group I (Historic): 1, 2 & 3

Group II (Architectural): 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 & 13

Group III (Cultural): 1 & 2

FINDINGS

The proposed nomination of the Castleberry Hill Landmark District meets the above referenced specific criteria, as well as, the minimum criteria for a Landmark District as set out in Section 16-20.004 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Atlanta.

¹⁸ "Castleberry Hill Historic District, National Register of Historic Places, Nomination Form" (1985).

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