

CHARRETTE REPORT PRODUCED BY:

Center for Community Design and Preservation  
College of Environment and Design  
The University of Georgia  
May 3-5, 2009  
Cordele, GA





# *Project Overview*

The Center for Community Design & Preservation at the College of Environment and Design, University of Georgia, was invited to Cordele to generate solutions and concepts to improve the historic African-American Gillespie-Selden neighborhood. The Gillespie-Selden Institute - a prominent boarding school for African-Americans from 1902-1956 - was once the centerpiece of the neighborhood and of African-American society in Crisp County. In recent years, the buildings associated with the campus have deteriorated and it is difficult, at first glance, to see their amazing heritage. The UGA Team soon realized that a gem was hidden in Cordele. Some of that is tangible, but much of the "spirit of the place" is vested in the church members and individuals who sustain the legacy of the Gillespie-Selden Institute.

It was clear that the majority of the neighborhood was neglected - by city services, by absentee landlords, by society. Houses near collapse, crime being overlooked, and open ditches created a neglected appearance. UGA's mission was to find solutions and opportunities to revitalize the area and create a vision for change that could result in tangible improvements, from preserving the built legacy of Gillespie-Selden Institute to offering new solutions for ending erosion. Southwest Georgia United, St. Paul Presbyterian Church, Rural Life and the Family Development Task Force, as well as other service providers, will be able to use our suggestions as a way to sustain their ongoing efforts to create change.





Charrette Leader: **Jennifer Lewis**  
Center for Community Design and Preservation (CCDP)  
Certified Local Government Coordinator

Charrette Team: **Masters of Landscape Architecture (MLA):**  
**Dale Hall** – Fallston, Maryland  
**Megan Zeigler** – Denver, North Carolina

**Masters of Historic Preservation (MHP):**  
**Laura Kviklys** – Marlton, New Jersey  
**Heather McDonald** – Berkeley Heights, New Jersey

**Bachelors of Landscape Architecture (BLA):**  
**Erich Bilal** – Chapel Hill, North Carolina  
**Curt Jackson** – Marietta, Georgia

Charrette Report  
Production: **Megan Zeigler**  
MLA Student and Charrette Coordinator  
**Jennifer Lewis**  
CCDP Certified Local Government Coordinator  
**Pratt Cassity**  
CCDP Director  
**Eleonora A. Machado**  
CCDP Graphics Coordinator

# *Charrette Participants*

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## What is a Charrette?

Charrette is a French word that translates as "little cart". At the leading architecture school in the 19th century, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts ("School of Fine Arts") in Paris, students were assigned tough design problems to complete under time pressure. They would continue sketching as fast as they could, even as the little carts (charrettes) carried their drawing boards away to be judged and graded.



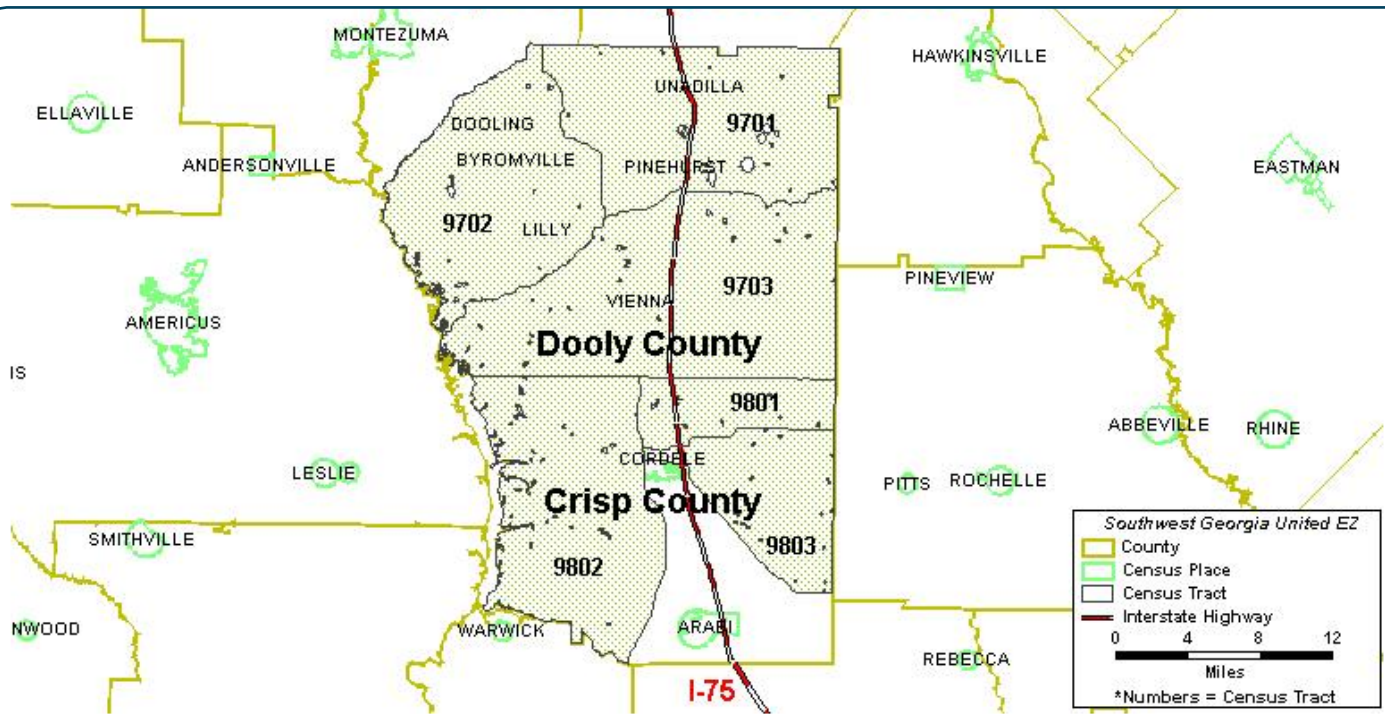
*Charrette is a French word that translates as "little cart".*



Today the word "charrette" describes a rapid, intense, and creative work session, in which a design team focuses on a particular design problem and arrives at a collaborative solution.

The charrette process is a way of evaluating resources through new eyes. Fresh ideas are what help communities maintain and build their vitality. With the report and supporting materials, readers will experience the enthusiasm and commitment which comes from a broad-based group of students, faculty, practitioners, and the public.

*Source: National Charrette Institute  
<http://www.charretteinstitute.org/>*



#### WHO THEY ARE:

Southwest Georgia United’s mission is to work with communities in a cooperative spirit to improve quality of life by supporting sustainable economic development, housing, health, education, agriculture, and social programs. Their vision is the creation of a well-educated, active, attractive and sustainable community of healthy families.

#### WHAT THEY’VE DONE:

Southwest Georgia United has supported the creation of over 1,600 jobs, operated a youth development program, built affordable homes, provided ongoing training/ technical assistance to 66 faith-based and community organizations and distributed over \$16 million into the community. The poverty rate in Crisp and Dooly Counties was reduced by more than 13 percent between 1999 and 2004, based on U.S. Census statistics.

#### WHY THEY’VE BEEN SUCCESSFUL:

The organization is guided in implementing its vision and mission by a comprehensive Community-Driven Strategic Plan. Southwest Georgia United seeks to address persistent poverty and its associated ills by providing financial resources, technical resources, and direct services in the areas of economic, business, community, youth, and affordable housing development.

For more information, please visit:  
<http://www.swgau.org>

*Southwest Georgia United*



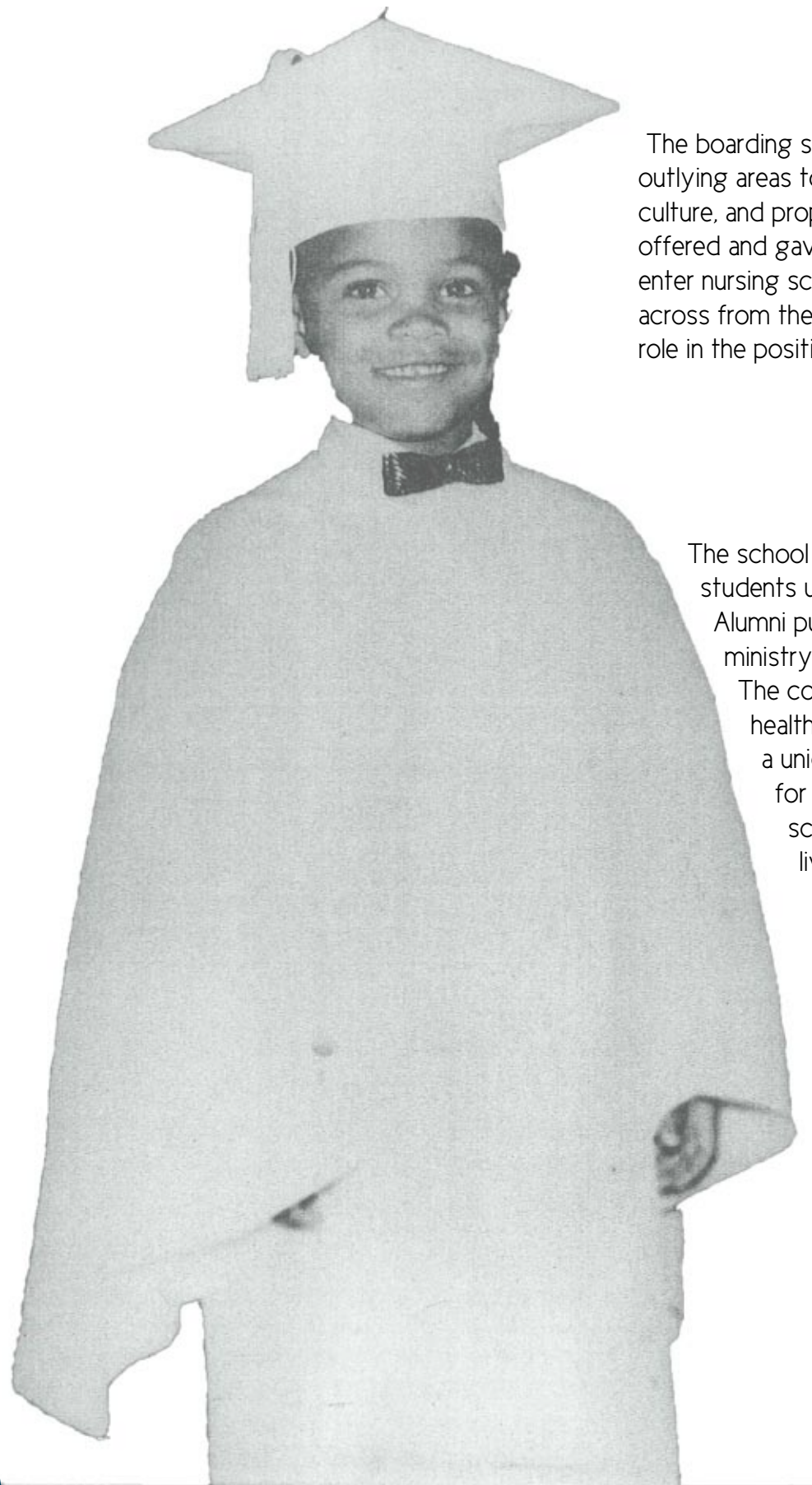
# *The Legacy*



In 1902, Dr. Augustus S. Clark and his wife Annie founded the Gillespie Normal School for underprivileged African-American boys and girls. Cordele had meager educational facilities and the Clarks felt this region of the nation was where they could serve the most good. It was soon apparent that healthcare was a growing concern in the community so the hospital was established in 1927 in the school building. In 1933, the Selden Institute in Brunswick merged with the Gillespie Normal School to form the Gillespie-Selden Institute. In 1937, the Gillespie family of Pittsburgh funded a new, modern medical facility. The Gillespie Hospital was the only African American hospital available in Crisp County until 1956. The campus at its height, consisted of the girls dormitory, the administration building, a vocation building, two rented houses for males, the Principal's house, a garage, laundry facility, hospital and nurses' quarters.







The boarding school allowed students from outlying areas to attend classes in music, theatre, culture, and proper etiquette. Nursing classes were offered and gave students the opportunity to enter nursing school. St. Paul Presbyterian Church across from the school, played an important role in the positive influence of the students.

The school graduated over 2,000 students until the school's closing in 1956. Alumni pursued careers in medicine, law, ministry, education, and manufacturing. The combination of academics, healthcare, ministry and heritage was a unique experience and important for African Americans. Although the school closed in 1956, its legacy lives on through the over 2,000 graduates of Gillespie -Selden and its dedicated alumni.

St Paul Presbyterian Church remains active in the neighborhood with former Gillespie-Selden Institute students as congregation members. Strengthening the relationship between St Paul and Gillespie-Selden will leverage revitalization of the neighborhood. Church members operate the St. Paul Gillespie-Selden Rural Life organization, which has been the most active entity continuing the legacy of Dr. and Mrs. Clark and Gillespie-Selden's goal.



## *The Campus Today*





St. Paul/Gillespie-Selden Rural Life Community Center is located in the former administration building of the Gillespie-Selden Institute. The organization has great commitment to the buildings of the former campus. In 1996 a Georgia Heritage Preservation Grant funded a new roof and gutter system as well as repairing the original windows.



The Rural Life Community Center continues to follow their plans for the building as funding becomes available. The proposed library and the A.S. Clark Museum will reinforce campus heritage. Historic artifacts should be retained as evidence of the early beginnings of the Gillespie-Selden Institute.



Rural Life has also opened a twenty-four hour childrens' day care facility adjacent to the administration building. This state of the art facility has classrooms for children from infant to preschool age. The well-equipped playground is a great asset to the neighborhood.





*This is the current condition of the Nursing Quarters Building.*



*The hospital is in good condition but the longer it remains vacant, the more potential for deterioration.*

The Nurses' Quarters Building remains but just barely. Its current condition has made it "ground zero" for illicit activities. This building is part of the built legacy of the Gillespie-Selden Institute, and is integral to any neighborhood improvement strategies.

The Nurses' Quarters should be immediately "mothballed" – temporarily securing the structure from rain and squatters to prevent further deterioration while a future plan is formulated. This will allow the building to be saved for a future use that will compliment the larger plan for the campus.

Currently, the Hospital remains empty with no firm plans for redevelopment. Similar protective steps to ensure that the least amount of building deterioration happens until a Campus Master Plan is developed and appropriate steps are taken to renovating this building begins.

### What is Mothballing?

*The National Park Service has completed extensive research and developed a set of guidelines for communities to effectively "mothball" their historic buildings.*

*The actual mothballing effort involves controlling the long-term deterioration of the building while it is unoccupied as well as finding methods to protect it from sudden loss by fire or vandalism. This requires securing the building from unwanted entry, providing adequate ventilation to the interior, and shutting down or modifying existing utilities. Once the building is de-activated or secured, the long-term success will depend on periodic maintenance and surveillance monitoring.*

*The full brief of mothballing historic buildings can be found at:*

*<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/TPS/briefs/brief31.htm>*



*First I came because my parents gave me no choice.  
After I got here, I realized I was going to be taught to  
walk with pride and to realize the beauty of my heritage.*

*~Former Gillespie-Selden Student*



*The former Girls Dormitory*

Currently the Family Development Task Force operates out of the first floor of the former Girls Dormitory. Rosemary Watkins created this program in 1997 as an extension of the USDA Americorps Program. It is dedicated to the betterment of the community through public service.

Having struggled as a single teen mother on welfare, Mrs. Watkins understands how difficult parenting can be and is dedicated to educating the community on how to rise above the struggles.

The main focus of The Family Development Task Force is to strengthen the family as a whole with healthy marriage counseling and responsible parenting initiatives as a priority. Mrs. Watkins is committed to early childhood development and is quick to point out, "I am not a drop-off day care. If parents bring their children here, they are going stay and to learn something too."

*Gillespie really had a rich heritage. It is one that we hope will live forever through the heirs of dear ole GSI.*

*~ Former Gillespie-Selden Student*



## *Master Plan*

The UGA Team recommends that the campus receives the respect and reverence it deserves to be a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization. The main objectives for this Master Plan (above) includes increased site safety, maximized pedestrian-oriented access, and expanded outdoor opportunities for recreation and gathering.

Currently on the Gillespie-Selden Institute campus, overgrown vegetation encourages crime and loitering. Pruning existing plants and only introducing appropriate plants will maximize visibility, increase safety and decrease crime.

The concept described here include a police substation, "a blue light 911 call box", and new lighting to increase security. The alleyway through campus should be eliminated to create a concentrated focal point around all the major campus buildings. The concept calls for a new pedestrian-oriented space which includes recreation options and an amphitheater.

This concept provides a turnaround maintain vehicular access for emergency vehicles and a new parking lot beside the Hospital. The Girls Dormitory future use can vary from adult education, temporary housing for single parents, or transitional residential space. East of the Girls Dormitory is space for an assisted living or multi-family facility.





*Perspective from proposed 12th Street parking areas towards the hard court recreation area.*

## *Design Features of the Master Plan*

Rural Life and Mr. Oscar Ford's successful recreation program is a community asset despite minimum funding and resources. Providing activities for youth of all ages and income levels in the neighborhood and the inclusion of both passive and active recreation space should be at the forefront of campus revitalization.

The existing open fields easily serve as places can be utilized for unscheduled recreation and events. The hard courts provide space for active recreation from basketball to hopscotch. The amphitheater, if constructed, provides even more opportunities for outdoor activities.



*This perspective is of the proposed grass amphitheater and educational facility, the former Nurse's Quarters, west of the Hospital.*

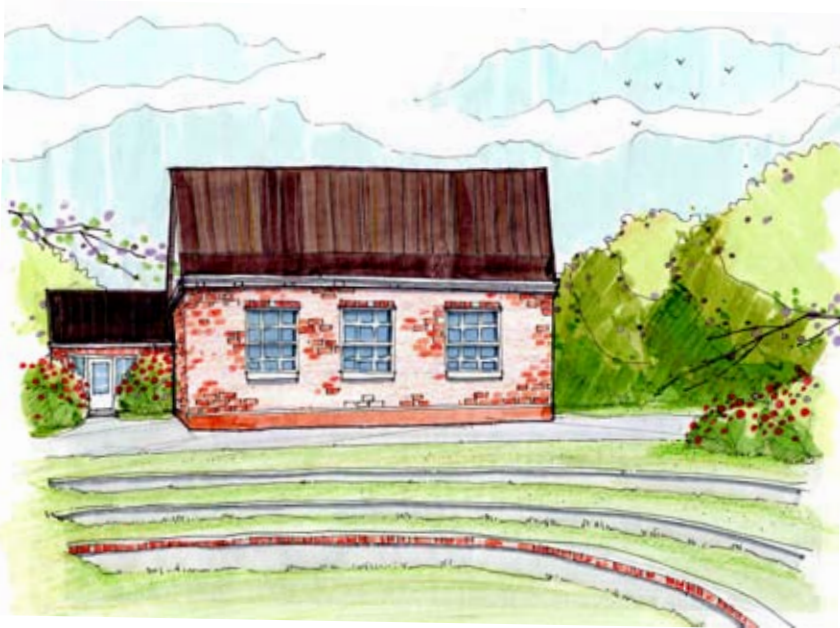
*See recreational programmatic needs on page 41.*



*This illustrates a new Central Plaza and emergency turnaround south of the Dormitory. The objective is to interconnect the buildings and outdoor spaces with unobstructed views through the center of campus.*



## *Design Features of the Master Plan*



*Perspective from the main plaza showing the corner of the proposed educational facility, the hospital building and the parking area towards 16th Avenue.*

The only sign for the Gillespie-Selden Neighborhood begins is in front of the Hospital on 16th Avenue. Additional signs and gateways are needed for the campus.

Creating a Central Plaza by the turnaround will provide a focal point, orient visitors and let them know they are somewhere special.

New seating areas will accommodate people watching and socializing. Pedestrian linkages throughout the campus promotes alternative transportation along with for bike racks.



## *Programmatic Suggestions*

The revitalization of the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood hinges on the empowerment of the residents. The legacy of Gillespie-Selden Institute is its ability to adapt and accommodate community needs. Currently, there is high unemployment in the region, high teen pregnancy, and drug use.

*The Girls Dormitory could be renovated to accommodate an expansion of the current program offerings through the Family Development Task Force, and could continue to be a catalyst in the neighborhood. The first floor could remain dedicated to the Family Development Task Force with expanded programs. The second floor could be educational class rooms and administrative offices. The third floor could easily function, given its historic configuration, as a temporary housing facility.*



Residents that have created successful programs in the neighborhood, rather than waiting for local government to step up and allocate funds to address issues plaguing the neighborhood,

## *Mothers Assistance Program*

The Family Development Task Force could benefit by including a Mothers Assistance Program or "MAP" which will give live-in support to single mothers struggling to back on their feet. Living in the facility would create a sense of camaraderie and a support system necessary for the participants' success.

Basic skills taught could include how to budget, balance a checkbook and how to prepare taxes. Career services could address interview skills, resume creation, basic responsibilities of a job and establishing benefit packages. MAP could assist in finding housing and explaining leases and

tenant rights. Also, if one is interested in owning a home, classes could be offered on what to expect from the process and how to prepare to qualify for a loan. The exceptionally large kitchen and pantry can be used to teach cooking classes and nutrition. Given the previous use of the building, it would be an ideal reuse with minimum interior changes needed.

A community garden on the premises is an excellent inexpensive food source and gardening is a skill that can transition with the family once they move from the facility.



## *Wellness Clinic*

One of the most significant components of the Gillespie-Selden Institute was the Hospital, which now sits vacant. This building could be converted to a wellness clinic within close walking distance.

## *Trade School*

While Darton College is establishing a satellite campus downtown that will offer continuing education classes, they will not be oriented toward trade skills. Proficiency in woodworking, masonry, and carpentry will always be marketable and profitable talents to have. Creating a niche such as historic restoration, would ensure steady, lucrative employment opportunities. Downtown Cordele is on the verge of major renovations and a qualified workforce is needed to rehabilitate the buildings properly. This needs to be done in conjunction with the Technical College System of Georgia. They certify that the teachers are the trained and prove that the workforce is as well.





# *Case Study:* AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THE BUILDING ARTS *Charleston, South Carolina*

The American College of the Building Arts (ACBA) is dedicated to educating the next generation of building artisans and to preserving the building arts in a manner never before seen in America. Under the direction of our experienced faculty, students have the opportunity to learn the skills needed to excel in their chosen field, and receive a quality liberal arts education. This combination of education, training, and access to highly experienced faculty is available nowhere else in the United States.



For more information, contact the admissions office:

21 Magazine Street  
Charleston, SC 29401

Toll-free: 877.283.5245  
Tel: 843.577.5245

Fax: 843.577.2451 or 843.529.6283  
Email: [info@buildingartscollege.us](mailto:info@buildingartscollege.us)



The American College of the Building Arts offers a wide variety of collegiate programs in the following crafts:

- Architectural Stone
- Carpentry
- Forged Architectural Ironwork
- Plaster Working
- Preservation Masonry
- Timber Framing

# National Register of Historic Places

In 1998 the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood was designated as one of Cordele's three National Register Historic Districts. A National Register Historic District designation recognizes places that are historically, architecturally, or archaeologically significant.



The Gillespie-Selden Neighborhood was founded in the late 1890s by African Americans working on the railroad. This district demonstrates community planning and development of a Georgian African-American residential neighborhood with additional commercial and community landmark buildings.



The majority of the houses were constructed between 1890 and 1940 with a variety of architectural styles ranging from Folk Victorian, Craftsman, Georgian cottage, Foursquare and Queen Anne cottages. The streets are a tight grid pattern with uniform setbacks and a complimentary alley system throughout.



Visit the National Park Service at <http://www.nps.gov/nr/> and Georgia Department of Natural Resource at <http://www.gadnr.org/>





The outline in red delineates the Gillespie-Selden National Historic District

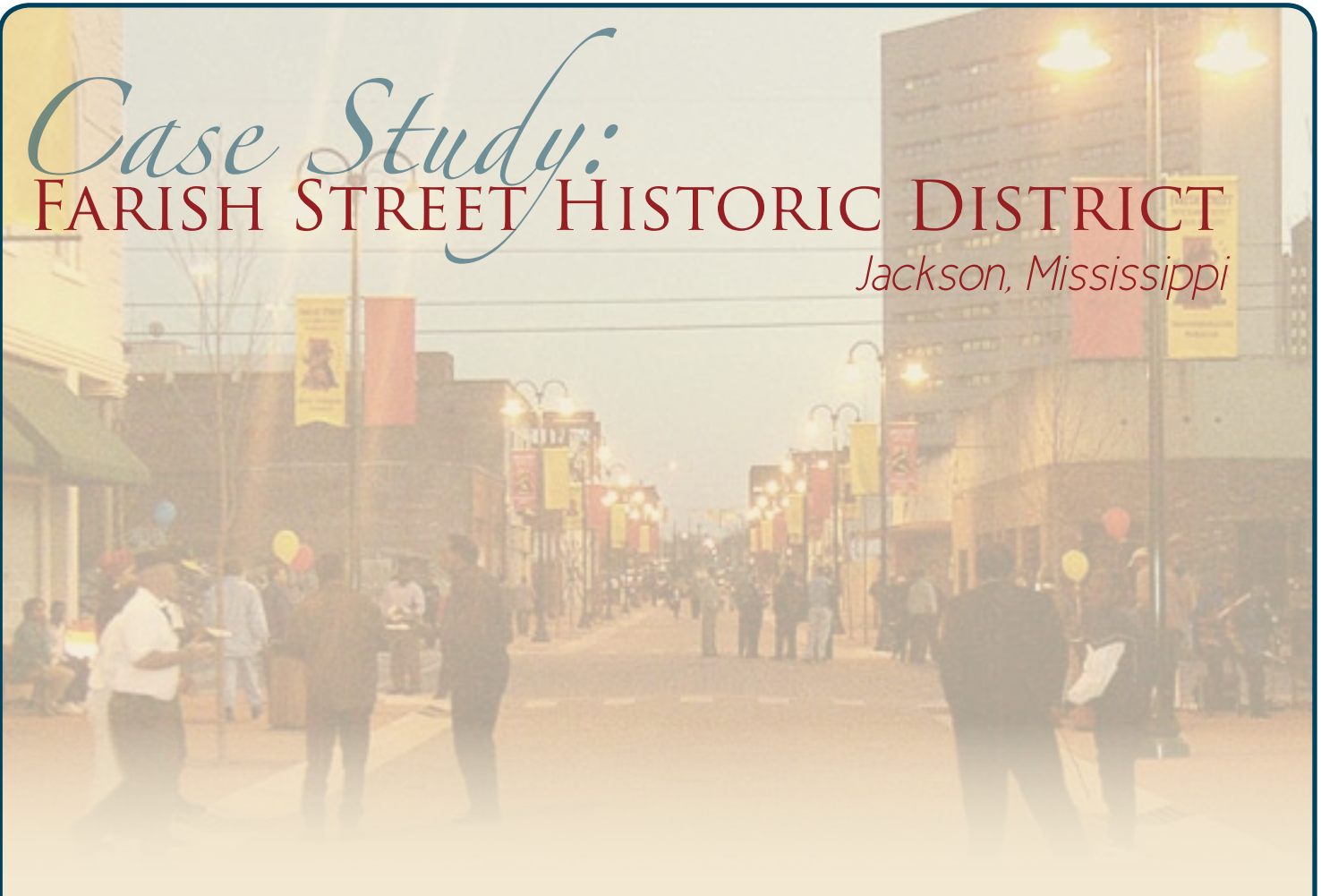
The National Register designation allows the community access to some state and federal grants and tax incentives for preservation. To fully protect this historic district, the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood could pursue local district designation. Local designation would help to prevent unnecessary demolition, require compatible new housing designs and promote sensitive rehabilitation of historic homes.

For more information on how local districting works in Cordele, contact Cordele Historic Preservation Commission chair Susan Barge at 229.273.2405 or [snbarga@bellsouth.net](mailto:snbarga@bellsouth.net).



# *Case Study:* FARISH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

*Jackson, Mississippi*



The Farish Street Historic District is one of Mississippi's largest economically independent African-American communities. This district has the highest concentration of shotgun row houses constructed from 1930-1950 central to a surviving African-American neighborhood. In conjunction with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Farish Street Historic District Neighborhood began implementing a revitalization plan. They began with a central core group of houses and expanded to include important commercial districts within the neighborhood.

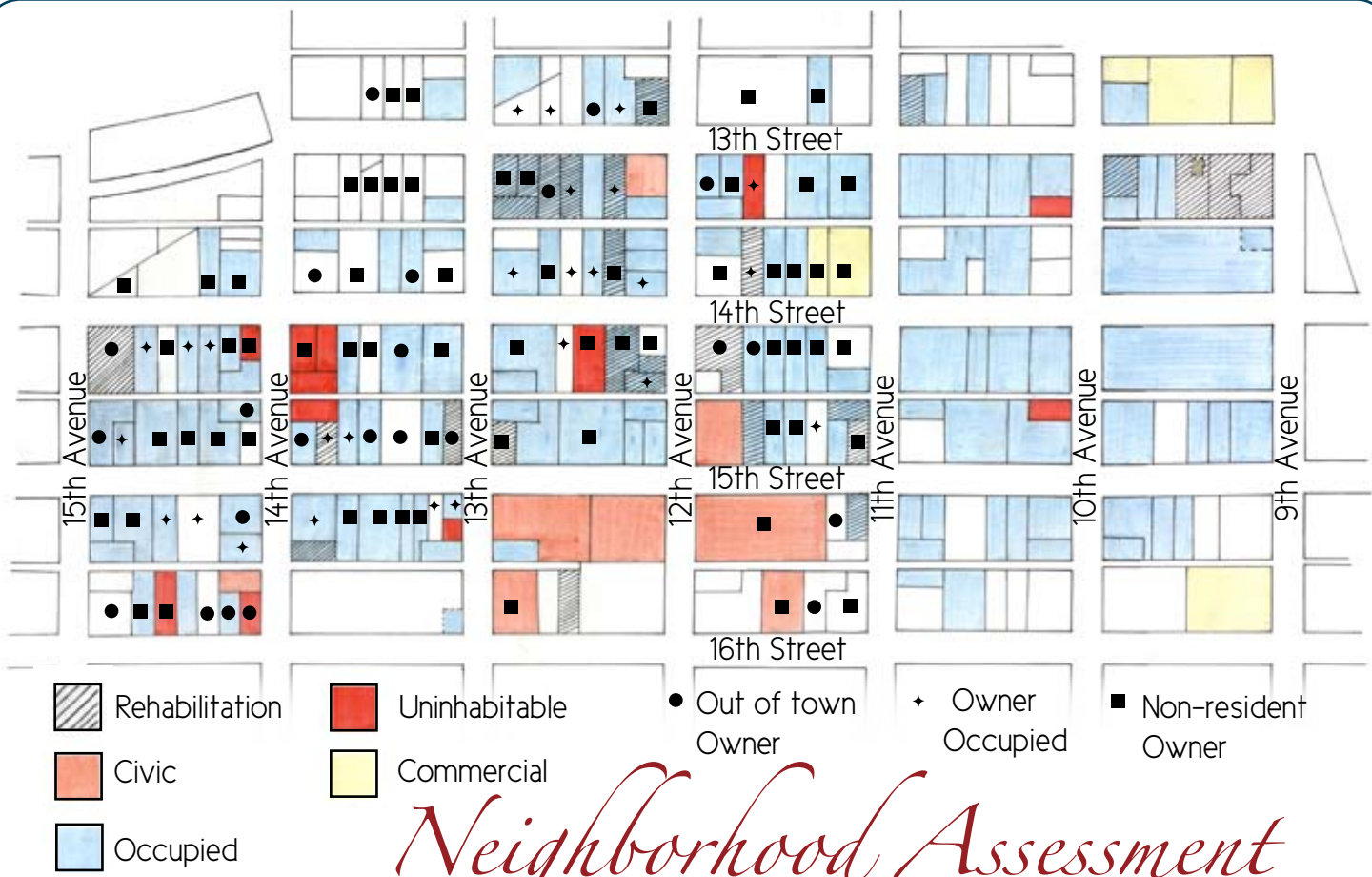
As of 2005, 39 shotgun houses have been rehabilitated for low-income housing through a combination of Historic Preservation Tax

Incentives and the Investment Tax Credit for Low Income Housing. The Performa Group of Memphis established Beale Street and have created an entertainment district on a 2 block stretch of Farish Street.



For more information visit:  
<http://www.farishstreet.com/history.htm>





# Neighborhood Assessment



The UGA Team surveyed the condition and ownership of the houses in the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood. Prior to the Charrette Team’s arrival in Cordele, the assumption was the team would be addressing infill issues in the neighborhood due to the demolition of historic buildings.

However, compatible infill is not the greatest need, rehabilitation of the current houses is. Throughout the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood, there are many well-maintained up-kept houses that have unique architectural features. These properties serve as examples for the entire neighborhood.



The vitality of a neighborhood is centered around its residents. Having a higher percentage of owner-occupied properties creates a greater sense of pride. Currently the neighborhood is comprised of 29 out-of-town owners, 86 non-resident GS owners and 36 owner-occupied residents. Renters should be made aware of their legal rights as a tenant and hold landlords accountable for proper upkeep of their properties.

*If you have questions related to Tenant-Landlord Law, please call the Tenant-Landlord Hotline at 404-463-1596 or 800-369-4706.*

This 1890s folk Victorian house is in a dilapidated block of the most architecturally significant forms in the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood. The historic windows have been replaced, the intricate roof detailing is failing and the front porch is rotting away on the left side allowing more water damage to happen. The owner still appears to see the house as rentable given the "For Rent" sign on the front door; others may say this house should be demolished. However, an empty lot does not attract new investors like a rehabilitated house does.



## *Before and After*

# REHABILITATION IMAGES



Many of the buildings in the neighborhood are excellent candidates for rehabilitation. With repaired wood siding, a fresh coat of paint, a reconstructed front porch and repaired windows, it is an asset rather than a liability. The front yard has been planted with low-maintenance shrubs common to mid Georgia. The rainwater is being managed with an innovative "dry creek bed model" that allows the water to percolate into a perforated pipe (described on page 22). This way, the water is slowed down enough to prevent flooding and erosion.



This late 19th-century house is an example of vernacular architecture, probably built by a local builder. Multiple additions show the evolution of family size, income and needs. The roof and siding are original as well as the four over four window panes.



Rehabilitation of this house includes replacing the metal roof, repairing any loose siding and scraping and painting the house. Reglazing the windows as needed, painting the trim, repairing the porch supports and some landscape maintenance would complete the transformation.



This pyramidal cottage needs few repairs. The foundation and steps are deteriorating. The roof is in good condition, and fresh paint on the siding and trim along with a new sidewalk completes the rehabilitation.



## *Before and After*



This house is also in good condition, but improvements to the porch, columns, and a coat of paint would provide noticeable improvements at minimal cost.



# Case Study: HANDS ON ATHENS

*Athens, Georgia*

Each spring in Athens-Clarke County, hundreds of volunteers come together to help low-income homeowners in historic neighborhoods maintain and repair their properties. HOA is a 10-year project spearheaded by the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, a non-profit with a mission to advocate for historic places. The focus is on exterior renovations such as painting, siding and roof repair, gutter installation, door and window repair and porch repair.

This organization receives donations and sponsorships from local businesses to fund the weekend of work. The Gillespie-Selden neighborhood should explore potential organizations similar to HOA or start a similar project in the neighborhood to assist elderly residents or homeowners that are unable to make repairs themselves.

<http://achfonline.org/handsonathens.html>





# Case Studies:

## WORLD CHANGERS

*Alpharetta, Georgia*

World Changers is an organization of Southern Baptists and other evangelical churches based out of Alpharetta, Georgia that has youth mission trips in the summer. For almost twenty years now, home improvement projects are selected to help youth better understand how “hands-on” work experiences are important mission opportunities.

This could be a wonderful collaboration between the local churches in Gillespie-Selden neighborhood and serve to bring the community together with the intention of unity and beautification. The advantage of extra hands allows for more work to be accomplished in a short period of time, demonstrating the neighborhood’s commitment to change and improvement.

For more information on World Changers and a downloadable application please see:

<http://www.world-changers.net>

## SWEAT EQUITY

During the 1970s in Charleston, South Carolina, the city was looking for creative solutions to discourage displacement of residents from historic neighborhoods. The Historic Charleston Foundation was permitted to offer “sweat equity” as a down payment in their home ownership program. “Sweat equity” programs have become more common over the last 30 years as seen now in Habitat for Humanity .

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, self-help, ecumenical Christian housing ministry designed to make home ownership possible for low-income families. Through volunteer labor and contributions, Habitat builds or rehabilitates simple houses. Each homeowner family makes a 1% down payment and invests 350 hours of sweat equity in their home. This component could be incorporated into the existing home ownership programs available in the Cordele area.



# Case Study:

## COMMUNITY ASSISTING RESTORATION EFFORTS

Thomasville, Georgia

Thomasville Landmarks Inc is an organization dedicated to preserving, protecting and promoting the architecture, history and heritage of Thomasville and the Thomas County area. In 1997, Landmarks initiated a new program called the Community Preservation Program. The organization changed the program's name to CARE, Community Assisting Restoration Efforts in 2008.

It is a volunteer based activity devoted to the repair and rehabilitation of historic homes. The program is designed to help homeowners who otherwise would not be able to do the work themselves. Often times the recipients of this program are elderly or have experienced financial constraints that do not provide them the opportunity to maintain their homes.



Historic Preservation of existing homes is one of the best affordable housing programs. It helps residents remain in their homes and in their communities, providing much-needed stability in neighborhoods which are, all too often, becoming rundown.

Thomasville Landmarks, Inc., has actively pursued partnerships with local organizations such as – D.A.S.H., Habitat for Humanity, Southwest Georgia Community Action Council, Helping Hands, City of Thomasville, Hands on Thomas County ensuring continued success.

*For more information about the CARE program, contact Thomasville Landmarks at:*

*<http://www.thomasvillelandmarks.org/>  
Phone: 229-226-6016 E-mail: [tli@rose.net](mailto:tli@rose.net)*

# WHAT WE FOUND...



*This is the most severe erosion found in the neighborhood.*



*Trash and standing water are issues throughout the ditch systems.*

## LAND IMPROVEMENTS

### *The Ditches*

During the community input session, concerns were raised regarding stormwater management in the neighborhood.

Residents felt local government was redirecting funds to the Eastside of town and not addressing the erosion and standing water problems in the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood.

In the Westside neighborhood directly across 16th Avenue, new infrastructure was recently installed but similar work has not yet occurred along the streets of Gillespie-Selden.

The Team undertook a survey of the Gillespie-Selden ditches to determine current conditions and to develop solutions to improve the stormwater problems.





# Ditch Analysis

This map indicates various areas of erosion and drainage problems. The slope of the land is directing the water to the 13th Street and 13th Avenue intersection creating the largest area of concern.



## Our Solutions

**1** CLOSED UNDERGROUND SYSTEM



**2** GRASS SWALES



**3** BIORETENTION





*This drainage field in the Westside Neeighborhood.*



*This photo from the Westside neighborhood directly across 16th Avenue illustrates the stormwater solution practiced throughout Cordele.*

# 1 Closed Underground System

This system entails covering the ditches as seen in other parts of Cordele. The addition of an integrated perforated pipe system throughout the neighborhood would allow for better infiltration and prevent extended periods of standing water. Road inlets would collect the water and the water will be sent to general collection areas.



*This system extends the front yard and creates recreation opportunities for the residents.*

## Pros:

- Everything is uniform
- The grass lawn can extend to the street
- No open ditches to collect trash
- Safer
- System is invisible

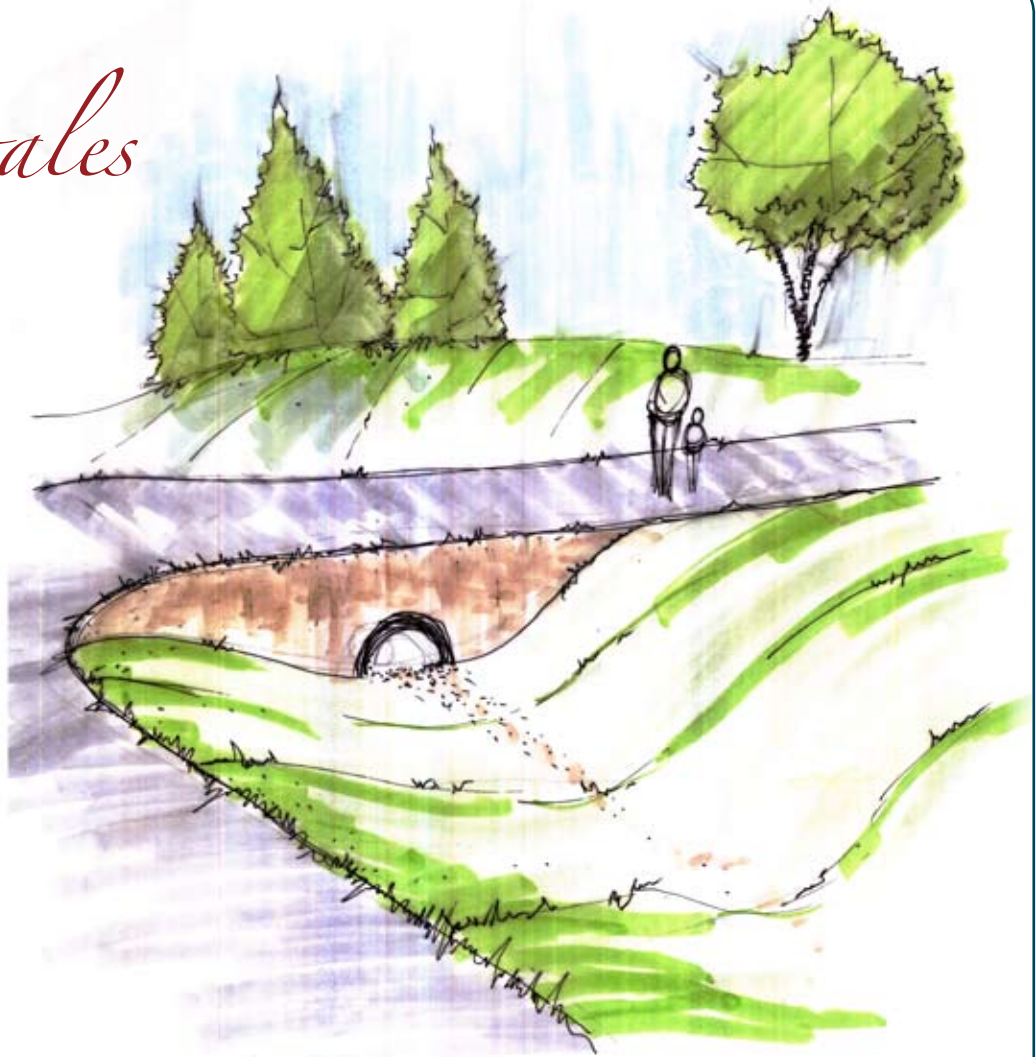
## Cons:

- Most costly option
- Requires a comprehensive effort
- Underground placement makes it difficult to maintain
- Requires a large retention area
- Invisible system so silt collection goes unnoticed



# 2 Grass Swales

This option maintains more of the existing character of the ditches but converts them to wider, more shallow grass swales. There are pipes incorporated in this plan as well. This will eliminate some of the severe erosion occurring in certain areas of the neighborhood. Sod such as Bermuda, Centipede, St. Augustine and other mat forming grasses will hold the soil in place.



*A well maintained grass swale in the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood*

## Pros:

- Easy to implement
- Fill deep ditches only at the driveways and put sod over the top
- Relatively inexpensive
- Could be implemented one section at a time

## Cons:

- Cannot accommodate large rain storms as well as Option 1
- Could negatively impact neighbors with less maintained and effective ditches
- If not maintained, there could be a relapse back to existing eroded conditions



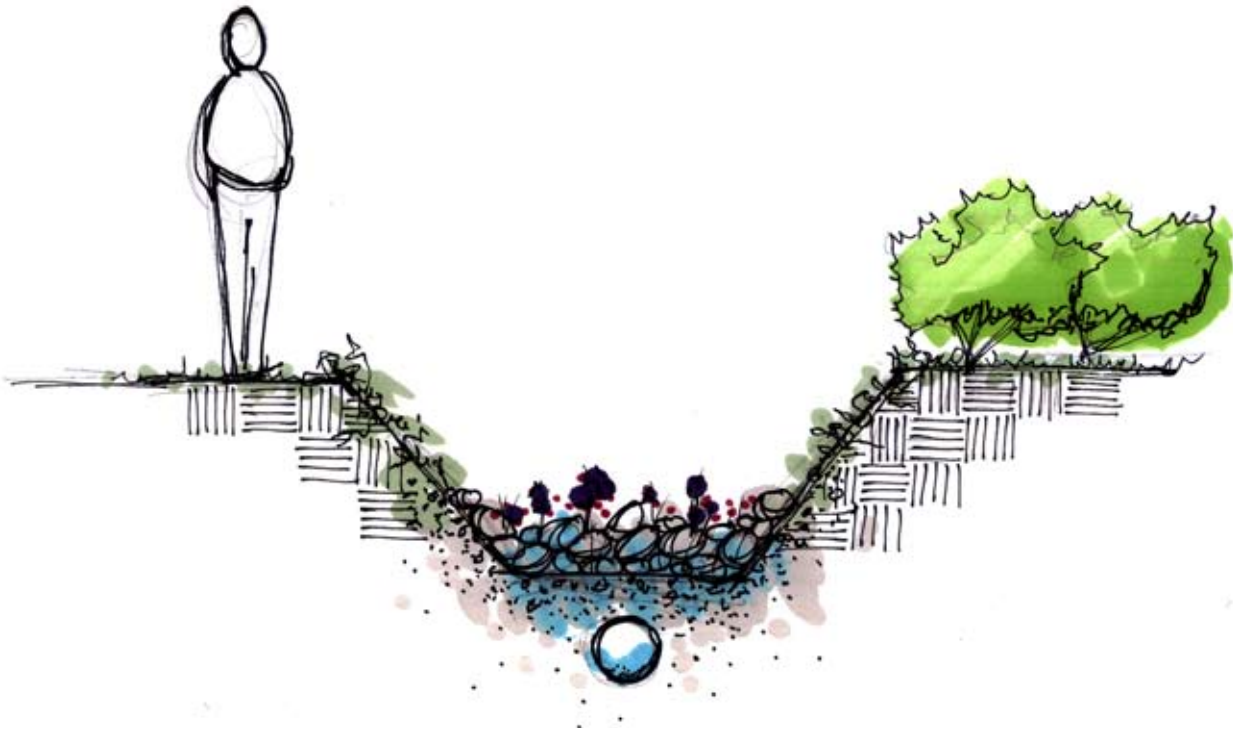
*A view down 13th Street showing road improvements. The intersection of 13th and 13th is in the worst condition and option 3 is used throughout to alleviate the current erosion problem. Sidewalks and benches are also installed adjacent to the "creek beds".*

## 3 *Bioretention*

This option establishes the ditches as more of a nature-based feature by converting them into a "dry creek bed" model. There is a perforated pipe in the bottom of the ditch that is covered with stone allowing for more infiltration of the water. Plantings help control erosion and filter pollutants before the water reaches the collection site, as well as add an element of beauty.





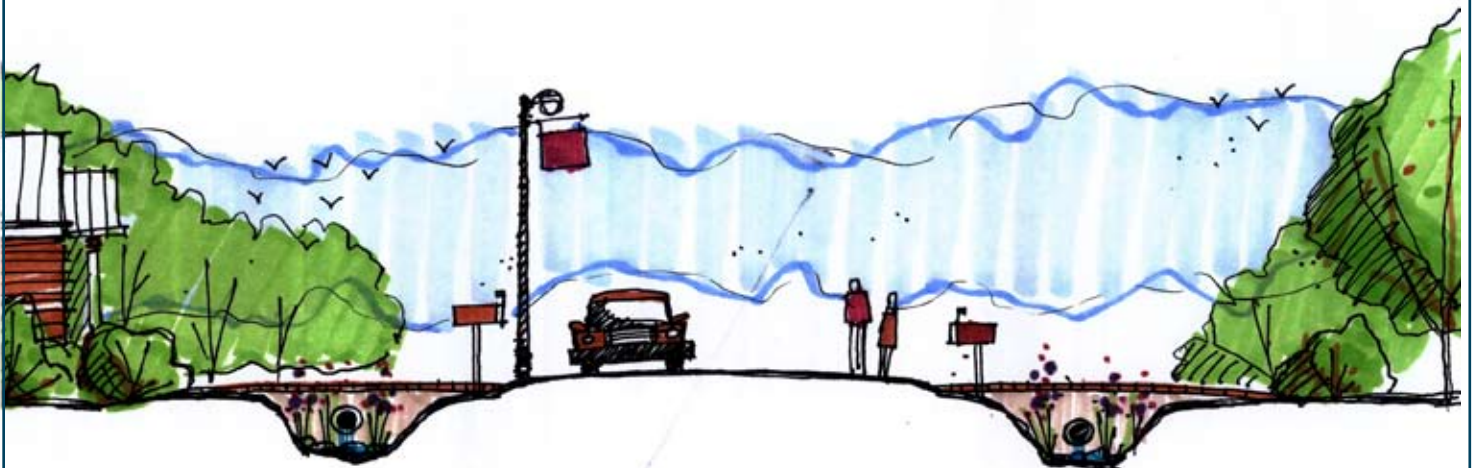


#### Pros:

- Slows rainwater down
- Eliminates the need for a large fenced off retention area
- Easy construction and cost effective
- Can be implemented in stages while maintaining effectiveness
- Experiential approach for city to test
- Community can upkeep

#### Cons:

- New aesthetic for the community
- Pipes will still need occasional cleaning
- Silt collection will occur over time



*A section view of a street with the bioretention system in place*



## *Alleyways*

Gillespie-Selden is one of four neighborhoods in Cordele with an intact alleyway system. It is a unique characteristic that should be highlighted and maintained. Although they are not a main thoroughfare, the alleyways are a safe option for pedestrians and cyclists.





# Lighting



Concerns about crime and loitering can be addressed with the addition of appropriate lighting to enable residents to keep a more watchful eye on the neighborhood.



# Signs



Directional signs are important for the neighborhood. All streets should be labeled and many intersections currently do not have correct street signs. Street signs specifically for the neighborhood highlighting its unique history and unifying it with the Gillespie Selden Institute.



# *Neighborhood Empowerment*



The changes needed in the Gillespie-Selden neighborhood can gradually occur over time but staged planning will ensure its success. Residents should advocate for more transparency from their local representatives and hold them accountable for allocating funds. Residents have the power to begin working together to see change.

Establishing a Gillespie-Selden Neighborhood Association would create a more unified voice and be an excellent way to educate residents about important government decisions that may affect

them. Monthly public meetings, newsletters and pamphlets are important tools to get the message out and drum up support for local causes. Volunteer opportunities such as cleanups and home repairs for elderly residents would foster stronger leadership, communication and pride.

Many residents take great pride in their throughout Gillespie-Selden. This ethic of property upkeep can be encouraged by the creation of a property recognition and awards program in the form of a 'Yard of the Month' award.





## *Land Trusts*

Given the high number of non-owner occupants, a land trust can assist families in home ownership. Land trusts are organizations that own properties, or interests in property (conservation easements), and ensure they are managed to benefit the public. That management might consist of protecting natural resources or providing affordable housing. In these situations, the non-profit land trust owns the tract of land while the private individual owns the built structure on the parcel.

The homeowner pays taxes on the structure only, alleviating some of the financial strain associated with homeownership. The house can be sold with a 10 percent profit made and the property remains in the land trust so another family can benefit from the same opportunity. Once the neighborhood has gained momentum and leadership, establishing a land trust for the neighborhood would renew a sense of pride that current residents have admitted is lacking. Land Trusts can establish its own funding priorities.



## *Church Involvement*

The churches of the Gillespie Selden Neighborhood are an incredible source to increase community involvement and leadership. Creating an Inter-Church Coalition would increase awareness and combine resources in a meaningful way. The individual churches are already dedicated to community service, through food and clothing drives.

The campus could host revivals, singings, Christmas and Easter functions and covered dish meals with sermons from all the churches' ministers. These events would encourage interaction between the congregations and build stronger relationships with the neighborhood residents who may not attend on a regular basis.



*A clothing drive and fish fry at the Rural Life Center Day Care during the Charrette Team's visit to the Gillespie Selden neighborhood demonstrated the community's commitment to service.*





# Alumni Support

The Gillespie-Selden Institute alumni are an asset to reestablishing the connection between the school and the current residents. Their stories and memories are a source of pride for the community to be heard and remembered. Local high school students could conduct an oral history projects bridging the generational gap and establishing new advocates for the Gillespie-Selden Institute. Within the old administration building, the history of the neighborhood could be displayed through various maps, aerials and old photographs. A trophy cabinet could showcase key faculty, students, events and facts important to the legacy of Gillespie-Selden Institute.

During alumni reunions, details of current revitalization efforts. One way to generate financial donations would be a gift registry for supplies that current programs operating on campus may need. Alumni could directly purchase items off the list and know their contributions are being enjoyed and appreciated by neighborhood children.

## RECREATION REGISTRY

By: Mr. Oscar Ford

During our visit, Mr. Ford supplied a list of recreation items he needs to continue to operate his successful recreation program.

2 portable basketball goals

24 softballs

2 bags football flags

6 jump ropes

6 hula hoops

4 basketballs

2 kicking tees

8 softball gloves

2 tee ball sets

1-2 foot basketball goals

1 badminton goal

1 volleyball set

2 checker sets

4 footballs

5 board games - assortments

Soccer balls / goals

25-inch TV

6 frisbees

Equipment & uniforms for Praise Teams

Chalk liner for field (marking line)

Digital camera and camcorder

Reading books - all ages

Coloring books & crayons

Karaoke Machine

Popcorn machine

Ping pong tables & balls

Video games

Fundraising material

Snow-cone machine

CD players and cds



# Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network

The Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network, GAAHPN, is an organization within the state to promote heritage tourism and the preservation of historic African-American sites. Sites associated with Georgia's African American heritage were listed in the National Register of Historic Places through the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The Camilla-Zach Community Center Historic District in Hancock County, the Atlanta University Center, the Laurel Grove-South Cemetery in Savannah, and the Morton Building and Theatre in Athens were some the first listings.



*Morton Theatre in Athens, GA*

By developing partnerships with the state's Historic Preservation Department, the Georgia Power Company, and the Georgia Humanities Council, GAAHPN developed a poster series, a videotape, and a heritage tourism brochure highlighting African American resources in Georgia. A guide, incorporating case studies of successful preservation projects, was developed to provide a contextual study of African American history in Georgia.

Reflections is a quarterly publication where GAAHPN highlights African Americans contributions to Georgia's history. The publication provides historic preservation information and technical services available through HPD and other organizations.



*The 1903 Graduating Class of Atlanta University*

Each issue features built resources listed in the Georgia and National Registers of Historic Places and significant resources associated with African American heritage. Through Reflections, GAAHPN highlights collaborations with the local, state, regional, and national partners who are critical components in successful preservation initiatives.

GAAHPN continues to celebrate African American heritage in Georgia, with the hope that all Georgia communities will embrace diversity as a unique opportunity to enhance heritage tourism and historic preservation. The Gillespie-Selden Institute and the neighborhood should be involved in this great organization.

*For more information about the Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network, please contact Jeanne Cyriaque at 404.656.4768*





The vision for change presented by the UGA Charrette Team includes projects that range from rewarding a homeowner with 'Yard of the Month' to creating a public campus from scattered historic buildings. Together they result in a complete reinvigoration of the neighborhood, but even small efforts will go a long way towards marked improvements. Embrace the ideas that you and your neighbors, or your church, or your organization can accomplish best with your talents.

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Mrs. Rosie Watkins  
Family Development Task Force

Mr. Bruce Capps

Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Outlaw

Mr. Oscar Ford

All the residents of the Gillespie Selden  
Neighborhood who shared their stories and  
experiences!

# GILLESPIE-SELDEN *Design Charrette*

This report was produced by:

The University of Georgia  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
325 S. Lumpkin St.  
Athens, GA 30602  
706.542.4731

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