

Waverly Terrace Makes a Comeback

After a period of decay, Waverly Terrace is putting on a new face, one that some residents hope will be historically significant

By Kaffie Sledge
Staff Writer

Charles and Josephine Mixon discovered Columbus' Waverly Terrace 52 years ago when it was the place to live — a neighborhood on the rise, the best place to raise a family.

The Mixons were in the Terrace when it reached its peak, and they hung in there when transient residents threatened to be the neighborhood's undoing. So it's understandable that today Mrs. Mixon, Waverly Terrace's senior resident, is keyed up over attempts to save the neighborhood that has become a part of her life.

"We came here in 1930 — still feeling the effects of the depression," Mrs. Mixon says. "In those days it was cheaper to rent. We paid \$60 rent for two months, then the rent fell to \$25."

The Mixons rented their house at 2913 11th Ave., for four years, then in 1934 bought it for \$4,000 when they found out it was for sale.

Was it the style of the house with the big front porch, the tree-lined streets or the spacious yard that attracted her? Mrs. Mixon says it was a combination.

"I loved the old house the first time I saw it, and it was close to the school. This neighborhood was built for families," she says.

Waverly Terrace was developed in 1906 as a planned residential area, some say Columbus' first. The Terrace is bounded by Hamilton Road on the west, 30th Street on the north, Peabody Avenue on the east and 27th Street on the south.

"When we bought the house, we asked the man how long the neigh-



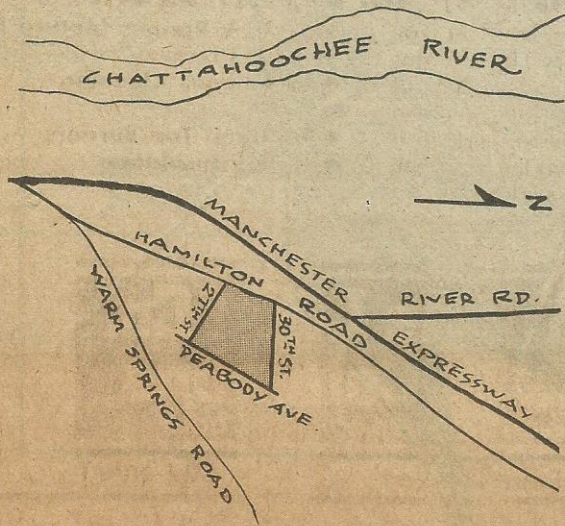
Staff Photo by Ed Ellis

LeGary Antley Puts a Brush to Mrs. E.P. Thornton's Home in Waverly Terrace

borhood would remain attractive." Mrs. Mixon says. "He told us 25 years is a lifetime for a neighborhood. And it was true. After that time, our friends and neighbors started to move. I wanted to move to a nicer place, but my husband didn't want to."

Post-depression and war years took their toll on Waverly Terrace especially, too many people were looking for too few houses. Tool sheds were turned into apartments

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Waverly Terrace Puts on a New Face for the '80s

and large homes became duplexes.

Most of the original homeowners had long since moved away and those like the Mixons who remained were plagued by rentals, noise and other nuisances.

Meanwhile in the name of progress, historic houses such as the English Gothic Albert Gresham Redd House, 2204 Redd Ave., in neighboring Rose Hill, were torn down to make way for parking lots, apartment buildings and public housing.

A decade ago, though, people who realized the advantages of older houses — big rooms, expert craftsmanship — rediscovered the Terrace, among them Presley and Genelle Tutherow and Zoe Allison and Peter Jayko. And in September some of the old and some of the newer residents of Waverly Terrace decided that "progress" should be stopped.

They formed the Historic Waverly Terrace Foundation — Tutherow is president and Ms. Allison is public relations chairman — and have made application to Georgia's Historic Preservation Department. They think Waverly Terrace should remain as was originally intended — a residential area, a family place. And being named to the National Register will ensure that, they believe. In January they'll learn whether they've been named to the Register.



Waverly Terrace Architect T.W. Smith (Mustache)

Waverly Terrace's Secondary Industrial School (now being used as Columbus High School) is already a National Historic Landmark Site. And residents say other structures in their district, the work of architect Thomas W. Smith and his colleagues, also have historical significance.

Smith, Waverly Terrace's principle architect, is credited with forming the Georgia Board of Architects in Atlanta in the early 1900s.

"T.W. Smith moved here from Mississippi and began buying land from Waverly Farm (the tract of land that now comprises Waverly Terrace)," says Genelle Tutherow, who says she's tried to learn all she could about Smith. "He wanted to build a planned subdivision. His architectural designs were largely influenced by California — Spanish, stucco bungalows. His own home, built in 1906, was an example of his style." The Tutherows now own the T.W. Smith House, 2850 Hamilton Road.

Smith also designed the Waverly Terrace Elementary School, the Congregational Christian Church, Rose Hill Baptist Church and Rose Hill United Methodist Church. These structures as well as the houses are valued highly by Terrace residents. And they know that getting on the National Register is the only guarantee they have against commercial intrusion.

"We're still residential and we don't want to lose valuable old houses to parking lots," Presley Tutherow says. "Getting on the register is not an attempt to get people to do extensive work to their property."

The Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Human Resources, describes the National Register as the federal government's official list of historic buildings and other

cultural resources worthy of preservation.

"Entry on the National Register does not place any obligations or legal restrictions on the use or disposition of the property by the owner. National Register designation is not the same as historic district zoning or local landmark designation which often requires maintenance and repair standards. National Register designation does not encourage public access to property."

Although Tutherow says he hasn't encountered any real negativism toward the foundation and its attempts to get on the register, he thinks some of the older residents, especially, would be more enthusiastic if they understood that getting on the National Register will protect the neighborhood.

Some long-time residents are happy, though. "This house has a personality," Mrs. Mixon says. "We had piano recitals, wedding and anniversary teas. I'm just delighted at the thought that it will be preserved after I'm gone. I'd be much more enthusiastic if I were younger, though. Age makes a difference, you know. Back then I was building a home. I'm not unenthusiastic, but I have less zest."

Zoe Allison and husband Peter Jayko have been in their house, 2706 10th Ave., three years. Both are artists and are attracted to detailed craftsmanship found in the houses in the Terrace. Inlaid mantels and beveled glass are trademarks of craftsmen of yesteryear, they say. The couple also find the cross-section of neighbors interesting. "You've got all kinds — young, old, mill workers, college professors. I think this adds to the richness," Ms. Allison says. "And it's a real neighborhood-looking area. "That's what we want to preserve."



Staff Photo by Kaffie Sledge

Mrs. C.E Mixon's Back Fence Is Made With Old Waverly Terrace Shutters



The T.W. Smith House on Hamilton Road

I Thought I Couldn't Learn To DANCE

My sister and the girl next door both tried to teach me to dance. I was hopeless.

I went to Arthur Murray's where my teacher helped me

