



AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL  
**OLD WINDERMERE**

PREPARED FOR:  
THE CITY OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA  
AUGUST 2009

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## AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL OLD WINDERMERE



## Acknowledgements

This signature project was made possible because of the vision of the City of Charleston and the Department of Planning, Preservation and Sustainability.

This project was also made possible by the efforts of citizens and Old Windermere who were instrumental in generating interest about the project and who provided valuable information about the history, opportunities, and challenges of the neighborhood. St. Andrews School of Math and Science should also be thanked for allowing the City of Charleston and the consultant team to use their space for public workshops.

The project received a great amount of support from individuals and organizations that provided resources and research aid during this project. These include:

- Historic Charleston Foundation
- Preservation Society of Charleston
- Dr. Nicholas Butler, Archivist - Charleston County Library
- South Carolina Historical Society
- Dale Rosengarten, Curator – Special Collections, College of Charleston Libraries

Finally, all the participants of the public workshops held at St. Andrews School in February and May 2009 should be thanked for taking their personal time to become involved in the development of the document. Their input was well received and crucial to developing a more comprehensive and thorough document that reflects their concerns and their pride in Old Windermere.

### Client Team

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The activity that is the subject of this publication has been financed, in part, with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior.

This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U. S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information please write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington DC 20240. Federal funds were administered by the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.





FIGURE 1.1. OLD WINDERMERE'S OAK TREE CANOPY: A LASTING IMPRESSION.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Most planning studies tend to focus on land use rather than the actual physical development patterns of a community. This often results in a lack of attention being given to the overall characteristics and qualities of what makes a community or neighborhood unique.

It is important to define the physical elements that make up a particular neighborhood so that any future development will be compatible with and strengthen the established context. This is particularly important in historic neighborhoods expected to undergo future developmental pressure.

## Purpose

Area Character Appraisals (ACA) are one method of assessing and documenting the physical characteristics of a place. By assessing and understanding the patterns of development and their unique components, character defining elements that make a neighborhood special can be documented for future generations.

Not only does it serve a planning function, but also an educational and outreach function as well. An ACA should also be accessible to lay citizens to explore how each neighborhood fits into the historical and architectural development of Charleston and the elements that make it special.

Charleston's recent annexation policies give it many of the qualities and diversity of a large city: very different areas within a short distance of each other, a large and growing land area, and significant development prospects. Balancing historic preservation with development pressure makes Area Character Appraisals for many neighborhoods an exercise that is especially worthwhile and relevant,

Area Character Appraisals broaden the view of preservation from specific buildings to the fabric of the surrounding community. It is a neighborhood-based approach to preservation, in which elements that make up neighborhood character are articulated and preserved. ACAs describe the context of a neighborhood and the key components that characterize a place. This includes the scale, mass, and rhythm of structures, as well as streetscape and landscape elements. In addition, the current uses and historic and cultural elements are defined in the community.

Area Character Appraisals will help ensure high-quality development in the City of Charleston, especially areas under heavy development pressure. Although some neighborhoods may not be regarded now as particularly historic or significant, it is important to document the character of an area before substantial change renders it unrecognizable. The first ACAs are being conducted for the historic neighborhoods of Cannonborough-Elliottborough on the Charleston Peninsula and Old Windermere and Byrnes Downs in West Ashley.

The houses, winding roads, and street trees compose the majority of the historic resources in the residential neighborhoods. Though not typically recognized as historic compared with downtown neighborhoods, many of the older West Ashley neighborhoods such as Old Windermere and Byrnes Downs illustrate Charleston's growth in the early to mid-twentieth century. Development west of the Ashley River after World War I and World War II represents unique historic periods of idealism and growth. Development patterns testify to the rise of the automobile and pro-growth policies after World War II. These representations of relatively recent history (pre-1960s) should be recognized and preserved as part of an increased effort to recognize the ongoing history of the entire city of Charleston—not just the history of the Lower Peninsula.<sup>1</sup>

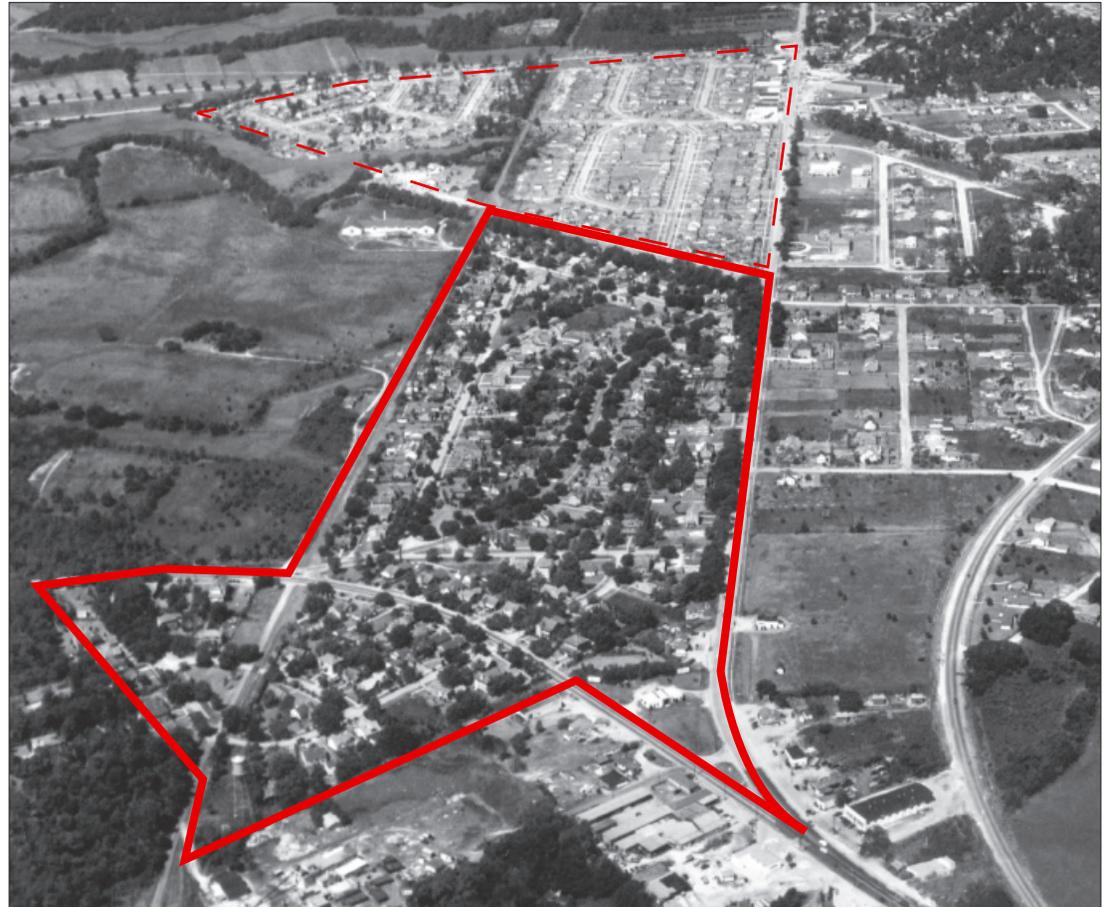


FIGURE 1.2. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF WEST ASHLEY LOOKING WEST, CIRCA 1951. OLD WINDERMERE IS OUTLINED IN A RED SOLID LINE; BYRNES DOWNS IN A RED DASHED LINE.

## How Area Character Appraisals Work

Area Character Appraisals (ACA) are not a road map for how a place should look, but rather a reflection of what exists and a guide for continuing established development patterns. ACAs have the ability to provide a neighborhood-specific framework for citizens, developers, Board of Architectural Review (BAR) members, and City staff to ensure that new development strengthens the established context.

The information gathered from the Area Character Appraisals will serve as a resource for future surveys and survey updates and as a basis for

evaluating current zoning regulations. The ACAs produced for the neighborhoods will provide guidance for potential zoning ordinance revisions governing new construction and may eventually serve as justification in establishing a future Conservation District for those areas.

The Area Character Appraisal for Old Windermere will be a vital resource for the neighborhood by providing guidance for City staff and architectural review boards. The Old Windermere neighborhood currently has no design review oversight, except for commercial properties which front along

Savannah Highway. An immediate result of the Area Character Appraisal will be a comprehensive documentation of neighborhood characteristics that will guide City staff when reviewing projects and renovations in the neighborhood.

To be effective, ACAs must adapt as areas change. City staff should initiate periodic updates to the ACA documents as needed. ACA updates may be conducted in conjunction with survey updates. The appraisals should be succinct and straightforward, enabling easier updates.

### ACA's Purpose

- ARTICULATE A HISTORIC CONTEXT AND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE STUDY AREA
- DESCRIBE THE URBAN DESIGN OF THE AREA
- IDENTIFY CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES (BUILDING HEIGHT, SCALE, MASS, SETBACKS, ETC. )
- DEFINE NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES
- IDENTIFY AREAS WHICH ARE INTACT AND TRANSITIONAL
- EVALUATE THE UNIQUE QUALITIES OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## Process

This Area Character Appraisal has been prepared by Robert and Company, an Atlanta-based engineering, architecture, and planning firm. In December 2008, Robert and Company was selected by a panel of City of Charleston staff, city council members, and local preservation professionals to prepare ACAs for three neighborhoods. Included on the Robert and Company team was Glenn Keyes Architects. Glenn Keyes Architects is an architecture and historic preservation firm located in Charleston, SC.

Between January and July 2009, Robert and Company made five trips to Charleston to complete field work and research, participate in public meetings, collect community input, and consult with local experts. Throughout the development of the ACAs, close and regular communication with the client group has helped ensure that the research and final product reflected community concerns, priorities, and visions.

Robert and Company initiated the project by collecting relevant studies, historical maps, and photographs of Old Windermere and St. Andrews Parish. Guided by the Charleston Department of Planning, Preservation, and Sustainability, Robert and Company reviewed copies of major surveys conducted in Charleston and plans prepared for the community and the city as a whole. Robert and Company also obtained copies of relevant National Register nominations and researched local archives, including the South Carolina Room at the Charleston County Public Library, Historic Charleston Foundation Archives, the South Carolina Historical Society, and the Charleston Library Society.

In January 2009, the consultant team conducted a walking tour of the Old Windermere neighborhood with City of Charleston staff. Robert and Company staff also conducted extensive field surveys of the Old Windermere neighborhood throughout the process. Staff photographed and took field notes to gather information on existing conditions and significant cultural resources in the neighborhood. This included a detailed inventory of land use, transportation, open space, historic resources, and architecture.

As community involvement is the key to developing successful Area Character Appraisals, a public meeting and workshop was held for both Old Windermere and Byrnes Downs. The first public workshop was held on February 17, 2009 at St. Andrews School of Math and Science. This meeting's purpose was to explain the intent of ACAs and provide a framework for the completion of this study. This meeting focused on what the residents of the study area value about their neighborhood, the project team's initial thoughts about the existing conditions and surrounding context, and determining what urban design and cultural elements contribute most to the neighborhood's character.

The ACA was publicly presented in a meeting in June 2009, with subsequent opportunities for public review and feedback. A draft copy of the ACA was placed on the City of Charleston's website for two weeks for public review and comment. Comments from both the website draft and the public presentation were used in the revision of this document.

## Endnotes

1 Page & Turnbull, *Vision, Community, Heritage: A Preservation Plan for Charleston, South Carolina*, 2008.

## Chapter 2: Neighborhood Background

Old Windermere is located across the Ashley River from the Charleston Peninsula. The neighborhood is bordered by Highway 17 (Savannah Highway), approximately three miles west of downtown. Located in the West Ashley area, it is within walking distance of the South Windermere Shopping Center and the Moreland Shopping Center. The West Ashley Greenway runs through the neighborhood and connects it to South Windermere and Byrnes Downs. The boundaries of Old Windermere are shown on the adjacent map (Figure 2.1).

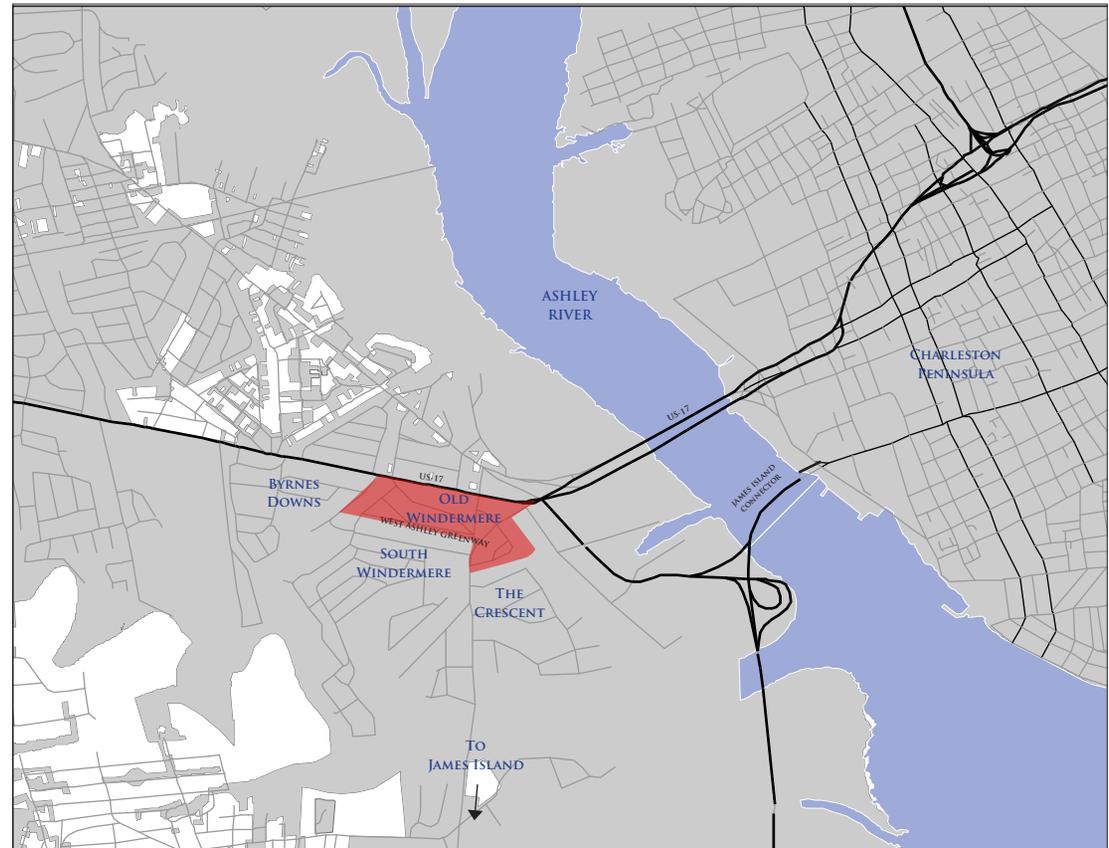


FIGURE 2.1. LOCATION MAP.



FIGURES 2.2-2.4. BICYCLE PATHS, TRADITIONALLY-INSPIRED DUPLEXES, AND WIDE BUFFER STRIPS DEFINE OLD WINDERMERE'S UNIQUE STYLE.

## General Context

Originally developed in 1926, Old Windermere maintains a sense of place and community that has made it a desirable place to live in the Charleston region. Over the decades, this neighborhood of curvilinear streets, buffer landscaping, older homes, and a magnificent canopy of old-growth live oak trees has continued to keep its special feel. With its prime location and convenience to shopping and local amenities, Old Windermere continues to attract people to the neighborhood. Many individual homes have been altered or expanded, yet the neighborhood's character is still very much intact over eighty years after its inception.

### Relevant Planning Studies

Charleston is nationally renowned for its planning and preservation efforts in its historic districts. Several planning studies have been developed in recent years to address the rapid growth and change occurring in West Ashley.

#### *Ashley Bridge District Plan (1997)*

In the mid-1990s, the neighborhoods that make up the Ashley Bridge District began to work with the City of Charleston to develop a plan to protect and enhance the livability of the District's residential areas and improve the quality of its commercial centers. The residential neighborhoods included in the study were Albemarle Point, Old Windermere, the Crescent, Moreland, Byrnes Downs, South Windermere, Wappoo Heights, and Westwood.

Several focus areas were identified in the Ashley Bridge District Plan, including the South Windermere Shopping Center. Another priority includes beautifying the busy arterial streets that flow through the area - Savannah Highway, St. Andrews Boulevard, and Folly Road.

Recommendations from the Ashley Bridge District Plan that have since been carried out in Old Windermere include:

- **Savannah Highway Overlay District.** An overlay zoning district was proposed for parcels fronting Savannah Highway (US 17) in order to keep the residential feel, but allow low-intensity non-residential uses (i.e., professional offices) that may be more suitable for the US 17 corridor. This overlay has been implemented, and there are now several non-residential uses (mainly offices) housed in original residential buildings.

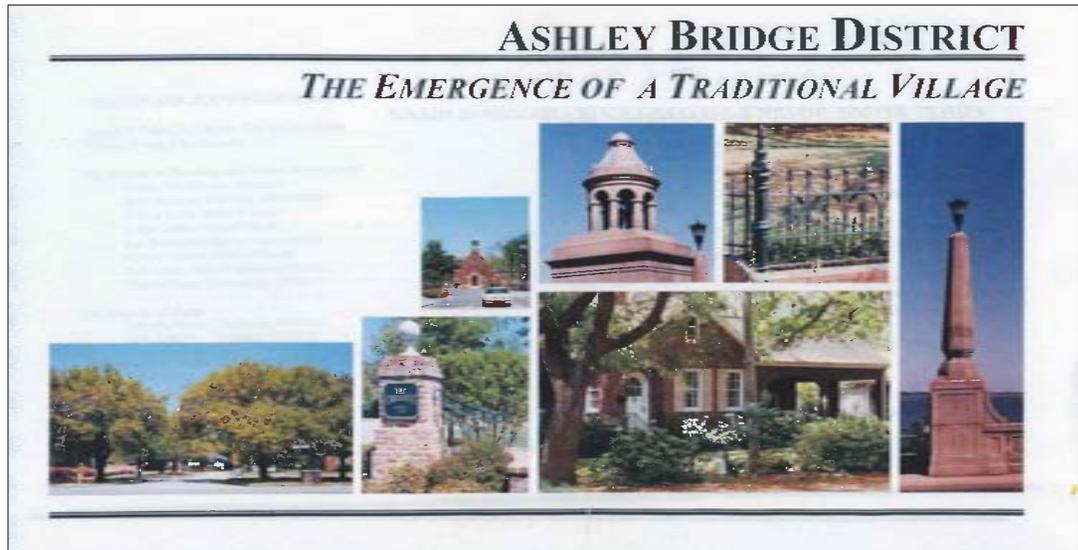


FIGURE 2.5. ASHLEY BRIDGE DISTRICT PLAN, 1997.

- **Closing Stocker Drive to through traffic.** Access to Wesley Drive from Stocker and Beverly Road is now blocked, preventing through traffic from Savannah Highway to Wesley Drive. This section of Old Windermere now sees minimal vehicular traffic, and as a result, is quieter and more pedestrian-friendly.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge.** Also proposed in the plan is a bike and pedestrian bridge for the West Ashley Greenway over Folly Road to provide a safe connection without conflicting with the high volumes of vehicle traffic in the area. Surface pedestrian improvements are currently budgeted for this area.<sup>2</sup>



FIGURE 2.6. THE CLOSED INTERSECTION OF STOCKER DRIVE AND BEVERLY ROAD.

### *City of Charleston Century V Plan (1999)*

The *Century V City Plan* is a comprehensive development plan for the City of Charleston. This plan presents a picture of Charleston today and recommends five areas of emphasis for the future. *Charleston Century V* is drafted as a working document for the citizens of the city. The Department of Planning will present an update of this plan in 2010.

*Charleston Century V* will become even more comprehensive over time as the city studies specific issues in more detail. Future plans conducted by the City of Charleston will represent additions to the *Century V Plan*. The goal of this effort is to make city planning more accessible and easier to understand for the citizens of Charleston.

*Vision | Community | Heritage: a Preservation Plan for Charleston (2008)*<sup>3</sup>

A new Preservation Plan was developed to address emerging preservation issues in the City of Charleston. The first preservation plan was developed in 1974 and a majority of that plan's recommendations have been implemented. The updated Preservation Plan is an extremely comprehensive document created with extensive public involvement and input. The community interaction culminated in a comprehensive document with over 600 recommendations, covering a wide-range of issues from traffic concerns to expansion of the historic districts to the issue of affordable housing to the importance of cultural preservation. As the new plan is intended to guide the city into the next 40 years, the recommendations are categorized as Immediate, Intermediate, Long Term, and Ongoing. This Area Character Appraisal of Old Windermere is one of the immediate recommendations of the 2008 Preservation Plan, and should serve as a vital resource for future preservation efforts in the neighborhood.

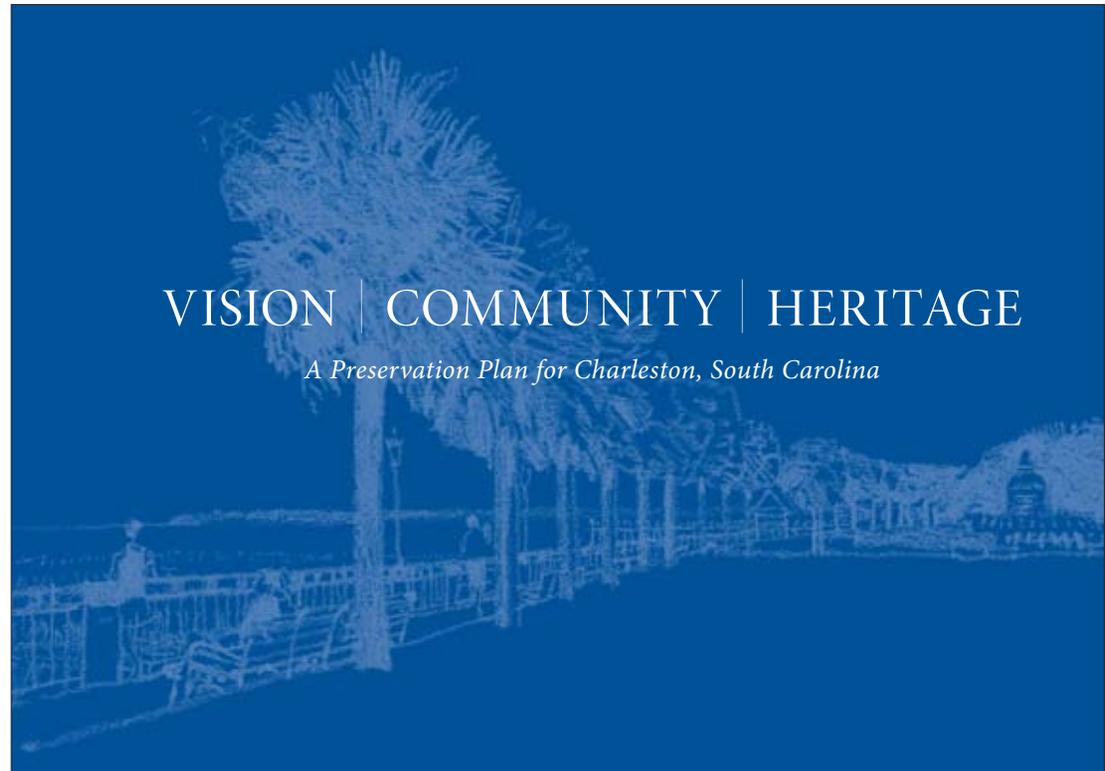


FIGURE 2.7. CHARLESTON'S MOST RECENT PRESERVATION EFFORT.

### Endnotes

- 1 Hanson, Taylor, Inc., et al, *Ashley Bridge District: The Emergence of a Traditional Village.*, 1997.
- 2 Charleston County Roadwise Program: [http://www.ccroadwise.org/hwy\\_17.html](http://www.ccroadwise.org/hwy_17.html).
- 3 Page & Turnbull, *Vision, Community, Heritage: A Preservation Plan for Charleston, South Carolina*, 2008.

## Chapter 3: History

The West Ashley area dates back to the original founding of Charleston in 1670, although its more recent history has seen the establishment of an early twentieth-century suburb which has continued to thrive to the present day.

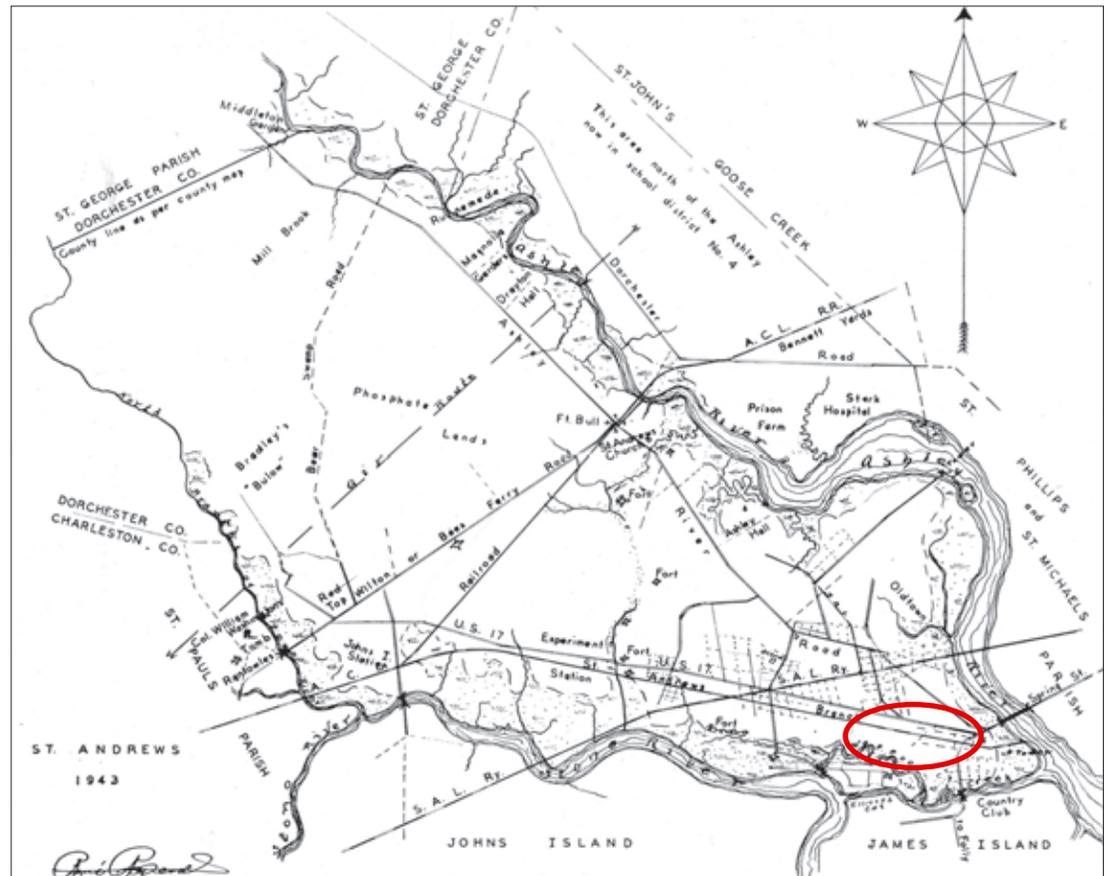


FIGURE 3.1. 1934 MAP OF WEST ASHLEY. APPROXIMATE AREA OF OLD WINDERMERE CIRCLED IN RED (COURTESY OF CHARLESTON COUNTY LIBRARY).

## Chapter 3 Summary

### *General History*

- Area west of the Ashley River is historically known as St. Andrews Parish, founded in 1703.
- Agriculture was the primary economic source for 200 years.
- St. Andrews Parish began to subdivide into smaller parcels of land after the Civil War, changing the nature and character of the landscape.
- A new bridge was constructed in 1926 from the peninsula, making West Ashley more accessible and ushering in a decade of new development.

### *Development History*

- Old Windermere was developed by James S. Simmons in 1926.
- Existing oak trees were one of the first features established in the neighborhood.
- Slowed by the Great Depression, Old Windermere was not built out until after World War II.
- St. Andrews Elementary School, now known as St. Andrews School of Math and Science, was built in 1950. Today it serves as the community gathering spot for many of the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Eventually the neighborhood around Old Windermere was developed including the South Windermere Shopping Center, the oldest in South Carolina.

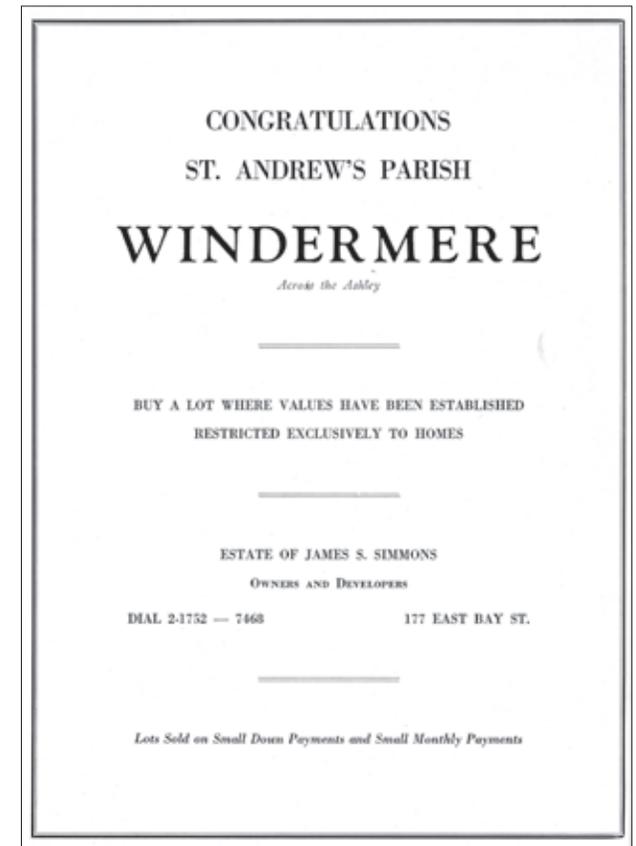


FIGURE 3.2. 1943 ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE OLD WINDERMERE DEVELOPMENT (COURTESY OF CHARLESTON COUNTY LIBRARY).

## General History

In 1670, the first European settlers of Charleston arrived at the present site of Charles Towne Landing, then known as Albemarle Point. After a short time in the area, the settlers moved to the area of present-day downtown Charleston to construct a better fortified settlement and to take advantage of the riverfront's commercial opportunities. The area west of the Ashley River, known as St. Andrews Parish, became one of 10 colonial parishes established by an act of Parliament in England in 1703.

With ideal conditions for growing crops, farming became the economic base in St. Andrews Parish and lasted for over two hundred years. This was due to the excellent soil conditions and accessibility to irrigation. In the late 1800s, the large agricultural producers in the area began to break up the plantations, and subdivided the area into smaller parcels. Also, dairy and beef cattle started to become more prevalent, and dairy farms replaced several of the crop farms.



FIGURE 3.3. 1935 PHOTOGRAPH LOOKING WEST SHOWING OLD WINDERMERE (COURTESY OF CAROLEE WILLIAMS).

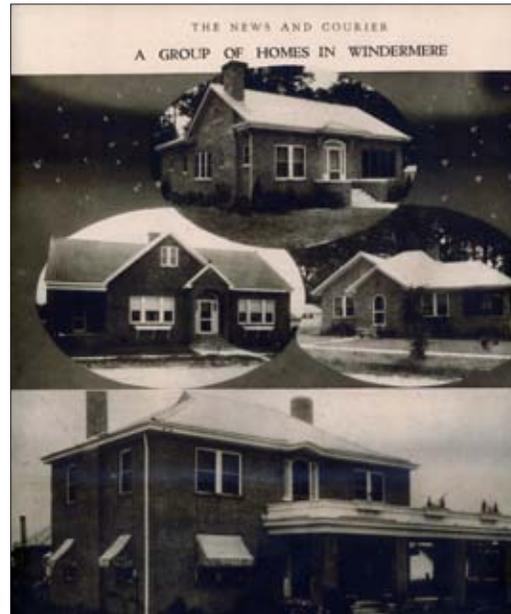
The area west of the Ashley River became more accessible for residents from the peninsula with the construction of a new bridge in 1926. The new World War I Memorial Bridge was constructed of concrete and steel, replacing the former wooden bridge, built after the Civil War in 1886.

With the new bridge in place, the West Ashley area became a desirable place for new development. By 1930, developers had laid out Wappoo Heights (1924), Windermere (1926), The Crescent (1926), St. Andrews Heights (1928), Stono Park (1928), and Pinecrest Gardens (1929) in St. Andrew's Parish.

## Development History

Old Windermere was established by James S. Simmons and began development in 1926. The neighborhood was named for Windermere, England, as the property owners were of English ancestry. The grand oak trees that stand today were planted when the neighborhood was developed and today give the neighborhood one of its most striking features. The first home was constructed in 1927, and it was the first all-electric home in St. Andrews Parish. Old Windermere began taking shape in the late 1920s, as the subdivision was promoted throughout the region.

In the 1929 Better Homes Edition of the *Charleston News and Courier* (see Figures 3.4-3.5), a pull-out advertising section lists many benefits of Old Windermere. Among the social, architectural and functional benefits, the neighborhood was noted to have “the greatest number of brick homes in any subdivision” and to be the only subdivision with concrete sidewalks and “hard surface and semi-hard surface streets.” Additionally, Windermere was “zoned against industrial and other objectionable encroachments,” which would “assure you desirable neighbors.”



FIGURES 3.4-3.5. 1929 ADVERTISEMENTS FROM THE *CHARLESTON NEWS AND COURIER* PROMOTING THE OLD WINDERMERE SUBDIVISION (COURTESY OF CHARLESTON COUNTY LIBRARY).

Unfortunately development of the neighborhood slowed with the onset of the Great Depression. The neighborhood did not finish building out until after the end of World War II. The triangular piece of property east of Folly Road was undeveloped for a long period of time and was used for passive

recreation in the 1930s and 1940s. The land in Saint Andrew's Parish also remained relatively inexpensive until the 1940s, due to the lack of water and electric services. In 1943, water was extended to St. Andrews Parish by means of a new water line under the Ashley River.

One of the most distinctive landmarks of the area was St. Andrews Elementary School, which was the only school in the district in the 1920s. It was a three room wooden building on Wappoo Road. A new elementary school was built in 1930 and became a high school in 1950. The elementary school was relocated that year to Chadwick Drive in South Windermere. Today, St. Andrews is a magnet school, the St. Andrews School of Math and Science.

St. Andrew's Parish comprises some of the earliest off-peninsula neighborhoods, many of which were annexed into the city of Charleston in the 1960s. West Ashley has some of the earliest and most interesting twentieth century and post-World War II residential subdivisions in the Southeast. Old Windermere is a great example of this growth as evidenced by the summary of development on the following page.



FIGURE 3.6. EARLY IMAGE OF ST. ANDREW'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BORDERING OLD WINDERMERE, BUILT IN 1950 (COURTESY OF TRICIA PEACOCK).

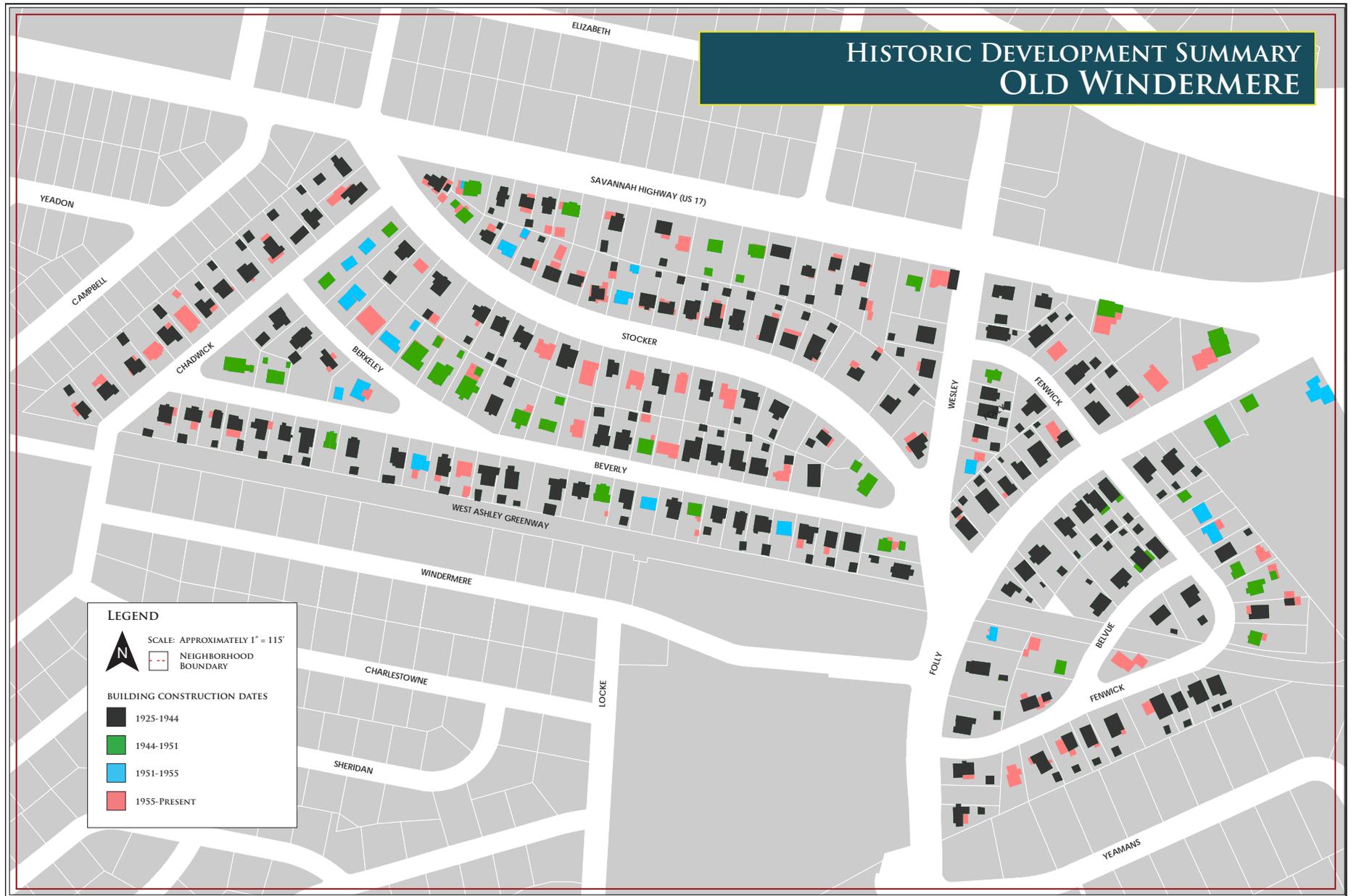


FIGURE 3.7. CURRENT BUILDING FOOTPRINT OF OLD WINDERMERE SUMMARIZING ITS HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT.

## Chapter 4: Urban Form

Each of Charleston's historic neighborhoods takes on a unique layout and aesthetic. This form is defined by the layout of the neighborhood, boundaries, nodes, gateways, lot sizes, building shape, and regulatory issues such as land use and zoning. Taken together, these elements create a neighborhood environment unique to Old Windermere.

### Prevailing Character

- CURVILINEAR STREET LAYOUT WITH LARGER, LESS DENSE STREET BLOCKS
- MOST BUILDINGS CONFORM TO A TYPICAL 30 FOOT SETBACK CREATING A UNIFIED APPEARANCE ALONG STREETS
- MOSTLY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD THAT IS DIVIDED BY WESLEY DRIVE AND FOLLY ROAD CREATING A PHYSICALLY DIVIDED COMMUNITY



FIGURE 4.1. AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE INTERIOR OF OLD WINDERMERE.

## Chapter 4 Summary

### *Neighborhood Form*

- Old Windermere constructed as a traditional early-twentieth century subdivision.
- Old Windermere's development over time can be documented using Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.
- Distinct edges define the neighborhood, including Savannah Highway (US 17), West Ashley Greenway, and Byrnes Downs, Albemarle, and Crescent neighborhoods.
- Significant nodes and focal points include the West Ashley Greenway and St. Andrews School of Math and Science among others.
- There are five gateways into the community.

### *Streets & Blocks*

- Old Windermere's streets are relatively curvilinear with greater distance between intersections.
- Street blocks are larger and less dense than neighborhoods on the Charleston Peninsula.
- Connectivity of streets is somewhat limited, with mostly local traffic inside the neighborhood.

- Wesley Drive and Folly Road divide Old Windermere into three separate pieces, limiting connectivity and pedestrian access.

### *Lots*

- A typical lot along US 17, Stocker Drive, and Beverly Road is rectangular (65' x 140').
- There is greater variation of lot size east of Wesley Drive.
- Single lots along Folly Road and Fenwick Drive are narrow (45 to 50 feet).
- Average lot size is 9,100 square feet.

### *Buildings*

- Buildings are oriented so that they face and are parallel to the street. Corner lots are an exception.
- Generally, setbacks are 30 feet deep with some variation.
- Most ancillary structures are located to the rear of the main building and are connected by a driveway.
- Development density is lower than the Charleston Peninsula.

### *Land Use & Zoning*

- Windermere's current land use is almost entirely residential with some office and commercial uses at the periphery of the neighborhood.
- Single-family residential is the dominant use with some post-World War II duplexes scattered throughout the neighborhood.
- Adjacent to Old Windermere to the south is the West Ashley Greenway and South Windermere Shopping Center.
- Nearly all lots are zoned SR-2 (Single Family Residential).
- There are other parcels zoned RO (Residential Office), GB (General Business), C (Conservation, West Ashley Greenway), and CT (Commercial Transitional).

### *Comparison of Zoning with Existing Lots & Structures*

- The zoning code is consistent with existing land use and does not restrict appropriate new development or redevelopment.

## Neighborhood Form

### *Neighborhood Development*

Old Windermere was originally platted in the 1920s, and its neighborhood form is reflective of suburban development of that era. As a reaction to dense urban design, early suburb design saw a change in lot size and neighborhood layout among other features. Because the neighborhood was developed over several decades (1920s through 1950s), there are a variety of house styles from different eras. However, the form of the neighborhood – street layout and design, landscaping, lot layout, location of buildings – remains true to its original design.

The map on the following page (Figure 4.2) displays the historical development of Old Windermere. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps are an invaluable resource for researching historical development – as a result of these maps, we are able to see where

buildings and lots existed during different periods of time. Sanborn Maps of Old Windermere were available for 1944, 1951, and 1955. Because Sanborn Maps were not done in consistent increments the resulting graphic works within the constraints of the existing map dates. The legend for the map is as follows:

- Dark gray buildings are those that were built by 1944
- Green buildings indicate those built between 1944 and 1951
- Blue buildings were built between 1951 and 1955
- Purple buildings represent structures after 1955

# HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OLD WINDERMERE



BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTED FROM 1925-1944



BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTED FROM 1951-1955



BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTED FROM 1944-1951



BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTED FROM 1955-PRESENT

FIGURE 4.2. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF OLD WINDERMERE.

Edges <sup>R</sup>

**Northern Edge**

The northern edge of the neighborhood is Savannah Highway (US 17), forming a clear distinction between Old Windermere and its northern neighbor, Moreland.

**Southern Edge**

The southern edge of Old Windermere is the West Ashley Greenway, providing both an excellent recreational amenity to the neighborhood and a buffer between it and South Windermere Shopping Center.

**Western Edge**

The back parcel lines of lots along the west side of Chadwick Drive provide the west boundary between Old Windermere and Byrnes Downs.

**Eastern Edge**

The eastern boundary of Old Windermere is less defined, as the neighborhood transitions into commercial uses and undeveloped properties along Folly Road and Savannah Highway. The back property lines of lots along Fenwick Drive provide more of a clear-cut border between Old Windermere and Albemarle and The Crescent.

Nodes & Focal Points of the Community <sup>R</sup>

- West Ashley Greenway
- St. Andrews School of Math and Science
- South Windermere Shopping Center
- Triangular park located at Berkeley-Beverly intersection

Gateways <sup>R</sup>

The primary gateways, or entries, into the neighborhood are:

- Stocker Drive, off of Savannah Highway
- Chadwick Road, from Windermere Boulevard
- Folly Road-Wesley Drive intersection
- Wesley Drive at Savannah Highway
- Folly Road off of Savannah Highway



FIGURE 4.3. WEST ASHLEY GREENWAY - BOTH A DEFINING EDGE AND VALUABLE AMENITY.

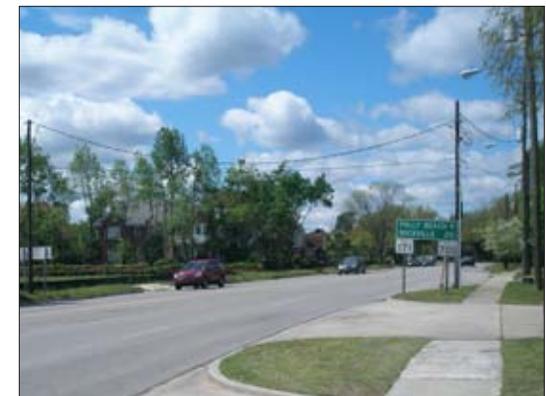


FIGURE 4.4. GATEWAY: ENTERING OLD WINDERMERE ON FOLLY ROAD FROM US 17.

## Streets & Blocks

Unlike the tight, rectangular grid pattern of blocks and streets on the downtown peninsula, Old Windermere's streets are more curvilinear, with longer spaces in between intersections. As a result, street blocks are larger and more irregular in shape than a city grid. In general, the network of streets and density of lots are more typical of a suburban area than an urban area, although not as low-density and sprawling as most modern suburbs. **R**

Although there are no cul-de-sacs, connectivity of streets throughout Old Windermere is somewhat limited. Consequently, there is very little traffic within the main part of the neighborhood and it is safe for pedestrians. Unfortunately, Wesley Drive and Folly Road are major traffic corridors that split up the neighborhood into different sections, greatly limiting connectivity and pedestrian accessibility between the sections. The areas west and east of Wesley Drive are very separated from each other. Wesley is heavy with traffic throughout most of the day, and poses a challenge in both convenience and safety for pedestrians moving from one part of the neighborhood to another. Folly Road further divides the eastern portion of the neighborhood into another third, limiting pedestrian accessibility and neighborhood connectivity. **R**



FIGURE 4.5. MINIMAL INTERIOR TRAFFIC.



FIGURE 4.6. FOLLY AND WESLEY INTERSECTION: A NEIGHBORHOOD DIVIDER.

**Lots** R

Typical lots along Savannah Highway, Stocker Drive and Beverly Road are rectangular with an average width of 65 feet, and an average depth of 140 feet. Corner lots, lots located along road curves, and combined lots vary from this pattern. Otherwise, most lots in this area are fairly uniform. On the east side of the neighborhood (across Wesley Drive), there is greater variation. Single lots along Folly Road and Fenwick Drive are narrower (45 to 50 feet wide), but there are also several combined lots that are much wider.

At 65 feet x 140 feet, the average lot size is approximately 9,100 square feet. By comparison, lots in the adjacent Byrnes Downs neighborhood average approximately 55 feet wide by 135 feet deep, or 7,425 square feet.



FIGURE 4.7. CONSISTENT FRONT SETBACK.



FIGURE 4.8. HOUSE WITH DETACHED GARAGE.



FIGURE 4.9. HOUSE WITH PORTE COCHERE.

## Buildings R

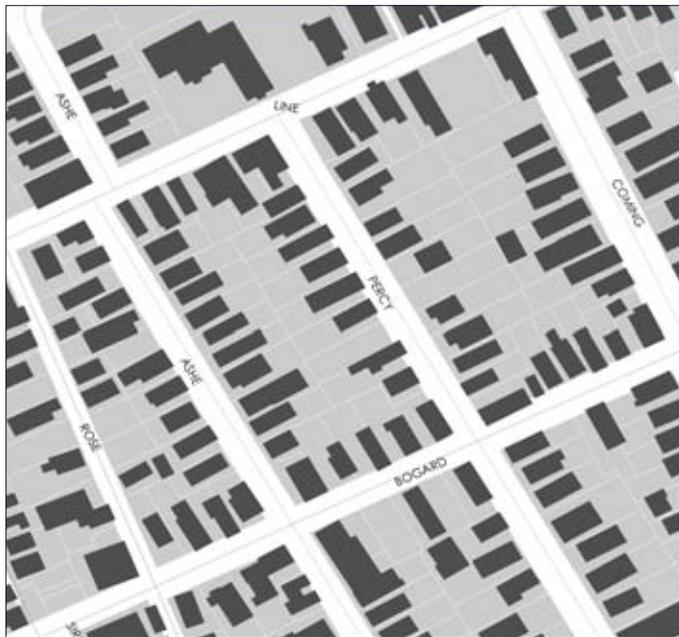
Buildings in Old Windermere are oriented so that they face and parallel the street, except for corner lots which have buildings diagonally-oriented to partially address each facing street. Houses are built along relatively consistent front setback lines – most are approximately 30 feet back from the public sidewalk, although there is some variation (about five to ten feet) throughout the neighborhood. This variation, plus the addition of porches to some houses, provides visual relief. Several lots have detached garages or ancillary structures, which are always located behind the primary residence and usually at or close to the back property line. Many of the houses that do not have detached garages have an attached porte cochere (carport) instead. Figure 4.11 on page 28 shows the arrangement of lots and approximate building footprints in the community.

Development density in Old Windermere is much lower than on the Charleston Peninsula, and it has bigger homes on bigger lots than Byrnes Downs, its immediate neighbor to the west. The graphics on the next page (Figure 4.10) display a comparison of lot and building density in four areas: Old Windermere, Byrnes Downs, downtown Charleston (Elliottborough neighborhood), and a contemporary development, Coosaw Creek subdivision in North Charleston. Each area is shown at the same scale with an area of 836 feet x 836 feet (16 square acres). Although Old Windermere is less densely developed than downtown Charleston, or even Byrnes Downs, it is more compact than that of modern, conventional suburbs such as Coosaw Creek.

As is discussed in detail in Chapter 5 (Architecture), there are a variety of architectural styles within the neighborhood, and therefore there is not necessarily a typical building type. However, some general characteristics of building form are present.

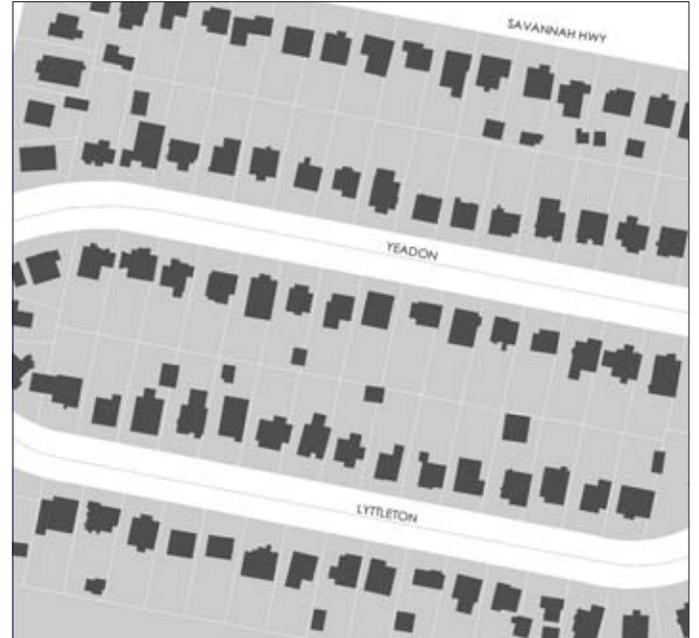


OLD WINDERMERE



ELLIOTTBOROUGH

FIGURE 4.10.  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMPARISONS.



BYRNES DOWNS



COOSAW CREEK, NORTH CHARLESTON

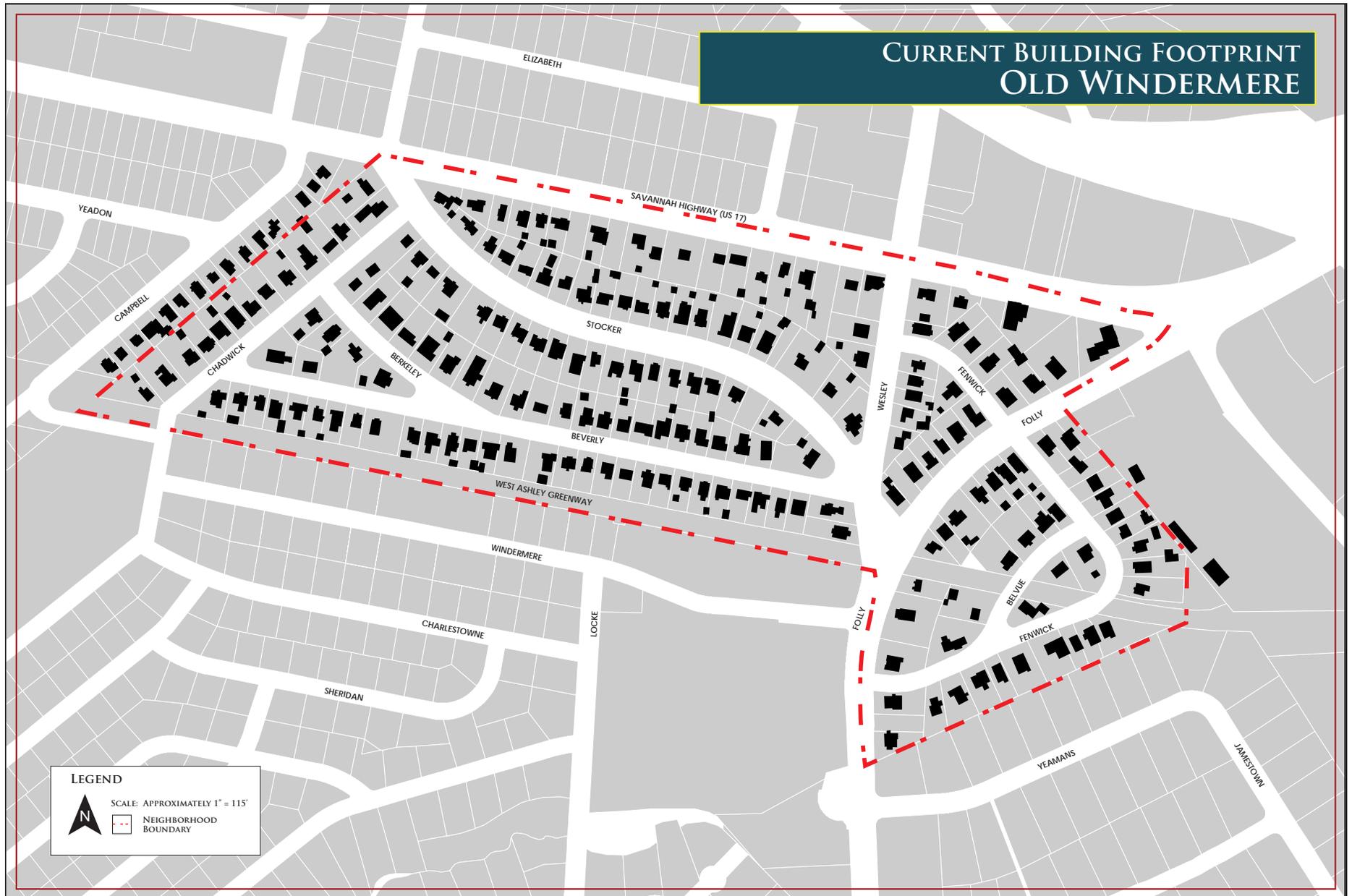


FIGURE 4.11. CURRENT BUILDING FOOTPRINT OF OLD WINDERMERE.

## Land Use & Zoning

### *Land Use*

Old Windermere's existing land uses are shown in the map on the next page (Figure 4.14). Windermere is almost entirely residential, apart from some office and commercial uses at the periphery of the neighborhood. Along Savannah Highway and Wesley Drive, several residential buildings have been converted to office or commercial uses. The West Ashley Greenway forms the southern boundary of the neighborhood, and provides Windermere with a valuable band of open space for recreational use.

Within the neighborhood, single-family residences are the dominant form, but there are some post-World War II duplexes scattered throughout. The east side of Chadwick Drive between Stocker Drive and Berkeley Road is entirely duplexes, with four nearly identical buildings in a row. There are no other instances of adjacent duplex buildings. **R**

Bordering the neighborhood are several different land use types, many of which provide retail and services to the neighborhood. Some of the uses, however, contrast with the style and scale of Old Windermere, and thus may pose a threat to the area's character. This is discussed in further detail in Chapter 7 (Preservation & Integrity).



FIGURE 4.12. DUPLEX RESIDENTIAL.



FIGURE 4.13. SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL.

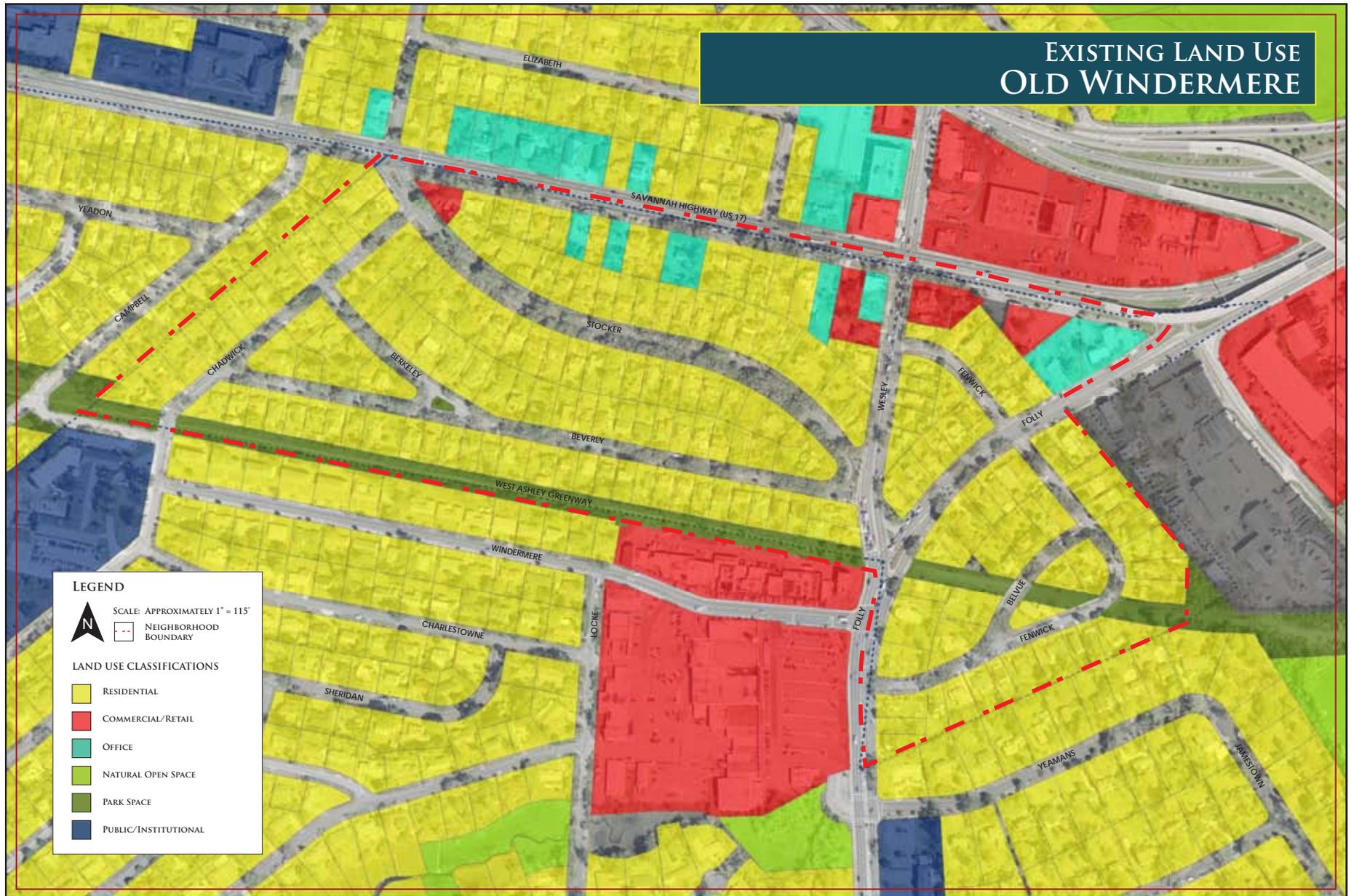


FIGURE 4.14. OLD WINDERMERE'S CURRENT LAND USE.



FIGURE 4.15. SOUTH WINDERMERE SHOPPING CENTER SUPPORTS THE SURROUNDING WEST ASHLEY NEIGHBORHOODS.

Adjacent to the southern boundary of Old Windermere is the South Windermere Shopping Center, with a variety of small and large retail stores and restaurants. These stores are conveniently located within a short walk of most Old Windermere homes. West of the shopping center along South Windermere Boulevard is a row of modern duplexes located on the south side of the West Ashley Greenway. At the southwestern edge of Old Windermere is St. Andrews Math and Science Magnet School, with recreation fields adjacent to it serving the neighborhoods of Old Windermere, Byrnes Downs, and South Windermere.

To the west is Byrnes Downs, another of Charleston's historic West Ashley neighborhoods. Byrnes Downs is comprised entirely of single-family lots with a similar lot and block pattern to Old Windermere – although with slightly smaller lot dimensions.

Savannah Highway forms the northern boundary of the neighborhood. The north side of the road follows a similar land use pattern as its southern counterpart, with a mix of residences and former residences that have been converted to office or commercial use. East of the intersection of Savannah Highway and Wesley Drive, however, the land use changes to commercial uses that are more highway-oriented.

The properties along Fenwick Drive back up to a mix of commercial uses and vacant land formerly associated with railroad and distribution uses.



FIGURE 4.16. NORTH SIDE OF SAVANNAH HIGHWAY WITH COMMERCIAL/OFFICE USES.



FIGURE 4.17. EASTERN END OF OLD WINDERMERE ALONG FOLLY ROAD, WHERE VACANT LAND IS DOMINANT.

*Zoning*

Whereas existing land use inventory describes what uses are currently in existence in an area, zoning describes what uses are permissible. In most cases a zoning map would not differ greatly from an existing land use map, but what is occurring on the ground (land use) is not always the same as what is permitted to be done (zoning), and that is why it is necessary to show both when studying a neighborhood.

As expected, the Zoning Map (Figure 4.21) shows that nearly all lots in Old Windermere are zoned SR-2, which is a single-family residential district. **R**

SR-2 requires a minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet, front and rear setbacks of 25 feet, and side yard setbacks of nine feet each (Figure 4.20). Height regulations limit building to 35 feet and 2½ stories. There is also a maximum allowable lot coverage – total area of the lot covered by buildings – of 50%.

Other areas along Savannah Highway (US 17) are zoned RO (Residential Office), GB (General Business), and CT (Commercial Transitional). **R**

The West Ashley Greenway property is zoned as C (Conservation) in some areas and SR-2 in other areas.



FIGURE 4.18. TYPICAL SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE.



FIGURE 4.19. WEST ASHLEY GREENWAY.

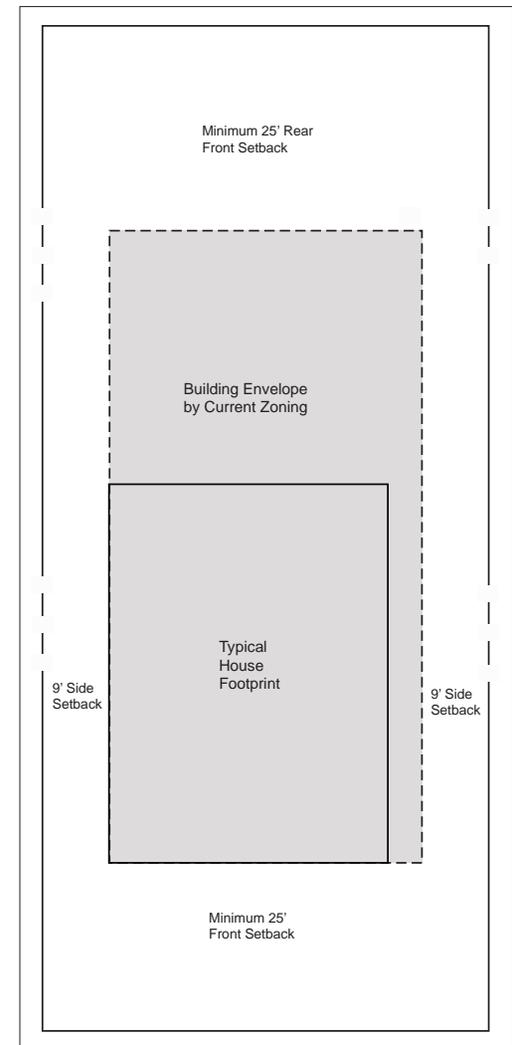


FIGURE 4.20. MINIMAL ZONING REQUIREMENTS FOR A RESIDENTIAL LOT IN OLD WINDERMERE.

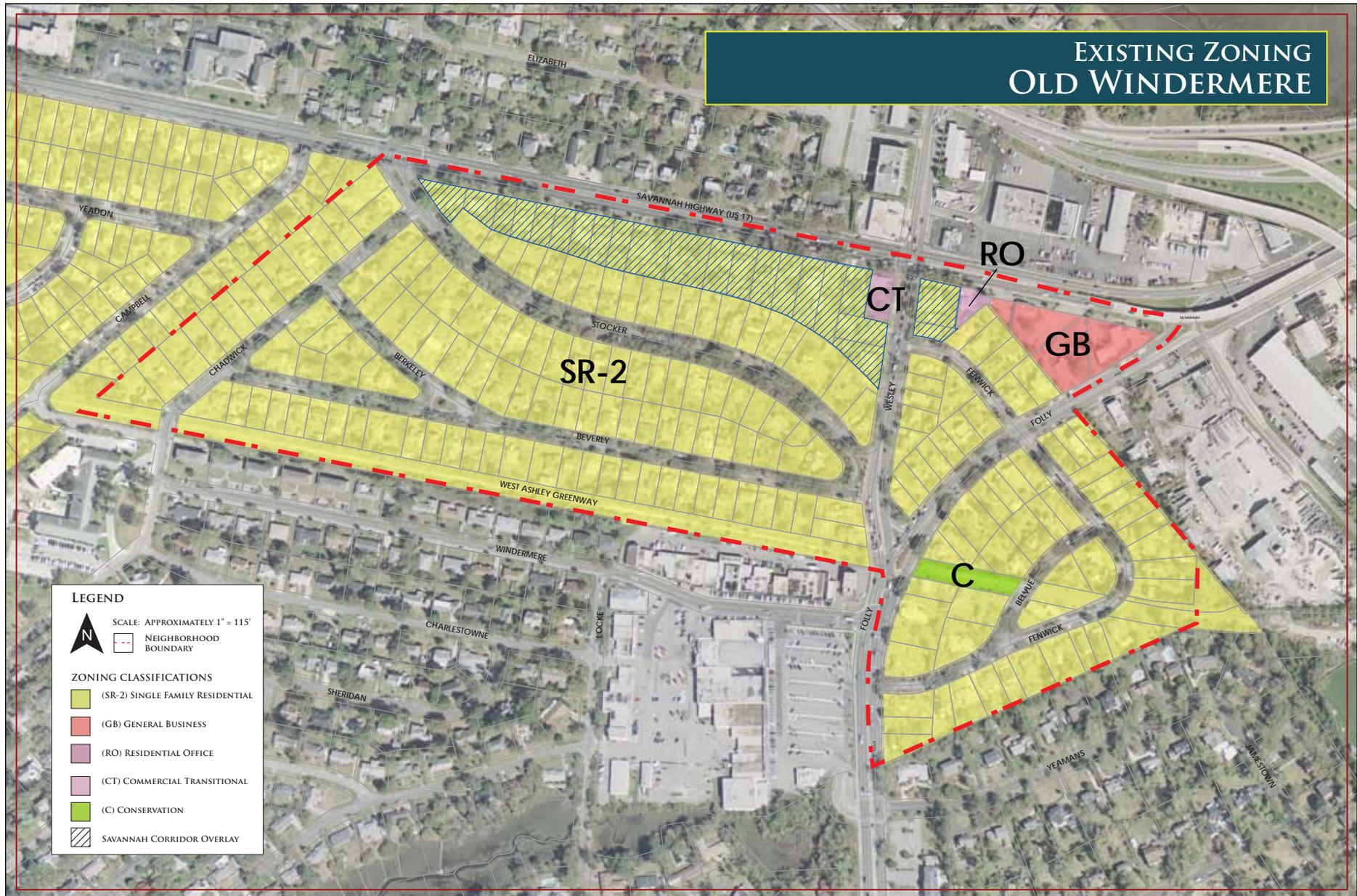


FIGURE 4.21. CURRENT ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS IN OLD WINDERMERE.

In the Old Windermere neighborhood, the Savannah Highway Overlay Zone (SH) covers properties along Savannah Highway from Chadwick Drive to Wesley Drive. It also includes parcels on Wesley Drive located in proximity to the Savannah Highway intersection. **R**

An overlay zone is a geographic area that creates additional standards in addition to the underlying zoning regulations, geared towards a specific purpose. An overlay zone may overlap several different zoning classifications, but the additional standards supplement all properties within the overlay, regardless of the underlying zoning.

The purpose of the SH Overlay is to provide office and neighborhood service uses in residential districts along Savannah Highway, while also maintaining a residential appearance. The overlay requires that all existing buildings shall be retained unless the Commercial Corridor Development Review Board (CCDRB) approves demolition. This is an effective means for preserving development characteristics while allowing some flexibility of use.



FIGURES 4.22-4.23. NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL USES OCCURRING WITHIN THE SAVANNAH HIGHWAY OVERLAY ZONE.

### Comparison of Zoning With Existing Lots & Structures

Often problems may arise in older neighborhoods when modern zoning regulations are inconsistent with the historic development of lots and buildings. This can create a situation where the zoning code is too restrictive, and would not permit new development that follows the existing form in terms of heights, setbacks, lot width requirements, etc. Similarly, zoning that is too loose can permit complementary development, but may also allow development that is out of scale or out of character with existing properties.

Based on existing development and current zoning regulations, the existing zoning code in Old Windermere is generally consistent with what is on the ground and does not restrict appropriate new development or redevelopment. **R**



FIGURE 4.24. DUPLEXES ARE NON-CONFORMING WITH CURRENT ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS.



FIGURE 4.25. CORNER LOTS ARE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS.

## Chapter 4 Recommendations

- Efforts and policies should continue to encourage distinct edges bordering Old Windermere.
- Focal points in the community such as St. Andrews School of Math and Science should continue to be preserved as such.
- Definable gateways denote entry into the neighborhood and efforts should be taken to better define these gateways through improved signage, lighting, and vegetation.
- Where gateways are barriers to pedestrian activity, efforts should be taken to minimize vehicular impact and improve pedestrian safety and connectivity.
- Old Windermere's current layout is historic and should remain intact.
- Improving connectivity between the eastern and western portions of the neighborhood is important for continued neighborhood cohesiveness and preservation.
- Future development and redevelopment should maintain lot sizes, setbacks, and building orientation.
- Land use and zoning is relatively consistent. In the future, duplexes in the neighborhood should be rezoned to be made conforming uses.
- Efforts should be taken to minimize the visual impact of properties zoned for commercial use along the northern edge of the neighborhood.



FIGURE 5.1. A WINDERMERE RESIDENCE.

## Chapter 5: Architecture

Beginning in 1926 and developing over subsequent decades, Old Windermere was the second neighborhood established west of the Ashley (after Wappoo Heights). It is characterized by modest-sized, predominantly brick cottages representing a greater variety of styles than its adjacent neighbor, Byrnes Downs. Many larger homes on the periphery of the neighborhood provide space for businesses and often stand out stylistically. Interior streets feature traditional homes that are typically well maintained and consistent in form.

### Prevailing Character

- A VARIETY OF HOUSING STYLES (REFLECTIVE OF HOMES BUILT IN THE 1940S) WITH LARGER HOMES ON THE PERIPHERY
- MOST BUILDINGS HAVE BRICK VENEER SIDING, GABLE ROOFS, PORCHES, AND A SINGLE CHIMNEY
- DIFFERENT AESTHETIC VALUES HAVE DEVELOPED WITHIN THE DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## Chapter 5 Summary

### *Types & Forms*

- The majority of buildings in Old Windermere are single family residences.
- Several of the residential properties along Wesley Drive and Savannah Highway have been converted into offices.
- Overall there is a wide variety of architectural forms within the neighborhood encompassing a long time period (1926-Post World War II).
- Generally homes are between 2500 and 3000 square feet, with smaller homes along Beverly Drive backing up to the West Ashley Greenway.
- Most floor plans are generally compact and functional within a rectangular living space.

### *Styles*

- Neighborhood styles are reflective of homes built in the 1940s except for a single Craftsman home dating to 1927.
- Other styles present include: Tudor Revival, Minimal Traditional, Ranch, Colonial Revival, and Georgian Revival
- Outstanding examples include: Stocker Manor, 20 Wesley Drive, a modern home on Beverly Drive, three ashlar duplexes on Chadwick Drive, 3 Belvue Road, and 9 Fenwick Drive.

### *Architectural Features*

- Most houses have brick veneer siding, gable roofs, asbestos or asphalt shingles, porches, and a single chimney.
- Trim on door frames and windows tends to be simple but elegant.
- There are a variety of door and window patterns in the neighborhood.
- Shutters are present on most houses, some with decorative cutouts.
- Few awnings exist on houses in the neighborhood.
- Residents commonly park in front of their houses or in drives but garages have been added over time.
- The divisions of Old Windermere have developed with different aesthetic values.

Recommendations will appear at the end of this chapter and are denoted in the text by this symbol.



## Types & Forms

Each section of Old Windermere features a variety of architectural styles, single family homes as well as duplexes and light commercial uses. Homes are frequently brick or wood-sided and one to two stories. In order to fit in with the scale and character of the neighborhood, duplex dwellings were designed to resemble single-family homes from the street.

### Types/Uses R

The majority of homes in Old Windermere are single-family residences. However, a few former dwellings along more heavily trafficked streets have been converted into businesses. For example, on Wesley Drive and Savannah Highway there are law offices and medical practices. Stocker Manor, where Stocker Drive meets Savannah Highway, was originally built as a boarding house and maintained its original use until recently. Historically, guest houses were a much more familiar sight along the highway. Many homes are owned and lived in by families, but others are rented out.



FIGURE 5.2. A HISTORICALLY LARGER TWO-STORY RESIDENCE NOW SERVING AS LAW OFFICES.

Early aerial photos and Sanborn Maps show an array of outbuildings and garages. Many “auto houses” are original to the homes and add to the neighborhood’s integrity and character. Storage or garden sheds have been added at the sides or to the rear of the well-sized lots.



FIGURE 5.3. AN OUTBUILDING ON FENWICK DRIVE.



FIGURE 5.4. ONE STORY RESIDENCE.



FIGURE 5.6. ONE-AND-ONE-HALF STORY RESIDENCE.



FIGURE 5.5. ROW OF TWO STORY DUPLEXES.



FIGURE 5.7. TWO-AND-ONE-HALF STORY DUPLEX.

### *Typical Height/Number of Stories*

Although the rooflines do not exhibit the uniformity of Byrnes Downs, homes in Old Windermere still maintain consistency of height and fall within four categories:

- One story
- One-and-one-half stories
- Two stories
- Two-and-one half stories

Heights are generally equally divided in each area of the neighborhood; newer homes tend to be taller, but there are exceptions. A 1954 Sanborn Map shows the majority of houses to be one-story. However, homes have grown in width and height per owner demands. Originally built as single level dwellings, many attics were finished and dormers added to increase living space, but maintain ridge height.

### *Size*

Viewing Old Windermere from above emphasizes the modest footprint of most homes in the area. Older homes on Beverly and Stocker are often wider than they are deep. Rear additions are evident, and even separate living “suites” exist on some parcels. As built, homes seldom exceeded 2500 square feet, although some modern additions have increased that size to over 3000 square feet. **R**

Homes along Beverly Drive that back up to the Greenway tend to be the smallest, averaging just under 2000 square feet, with the smallest house at 1165 square feet. The majority of houses in the neighborhood range from 1700 to 2400 square feet on one-and-one-half or two floors including finished attics.



FIGURE 5.8. A ONE-AND-A-HALF-STORY RESIDENCE ON A SMALLER BEVERLY DRIVE LOT BACKING UP TO THE WEST ASHLEY GREENWAY.

### *Floor Plan*

Living spaces in Old Windermere follow several plan typologies common in homes built between the world wars and throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Common features for the Old Windermere residences included the following:

- Plans were generally compact and functional, with only as much space as necessary.
- Porches and entries occasionally project from the main footprint, but plans are most often contained in a rectangle.
- Where living space has been added, typically it is to the rear of the house. Porches are generally integrated into the plan and contained under the main roof form.
- Less frequently seen in the neighborhood, modern homes of the 1950s and 1960s were usually one-story with an open plan, low, wide along the street and shallow front to back, often contained in a simple rectangular footprint.



FIGURE 5.9. A TRADITIONAL OLD WINDERMERE HOME WITH A FLOOR PLAN THAT MAXIMIZES SPACE.



FIGURE 5.10. A MODERN RANCH THAT HAS AN OPEN FLOOR PLAN.

## Styles

Old Windermere exhibits a diversity of styles reminiscent of peninsular neighborhoods built in the same era, such as Wagener Terrace. Although the neighborhood was founded in 1927, the decade of the 1930s was an economically challenging time, and building did not take off until around

1940. This is reflected in neighborhood styles, and is probably the explanation for the only Craftsman style house in the neighborhood, built in 1927. Empty lots are evident on the 1954 Sanborn Map, but with the exception of a single lot, the neighborhood is currently fully developed.



FIGURE 5.11. TUDOR REVIVAL - CORNER OF FOLLY ROAD AND FENWICK DRIVE.

## *Tudor Revival*

Most popular in the 1920s and 1930s, variations of this revival style can be seen throughout Old Windermere. Important stylistic features include:

- First level brick veneer surmounted by false timbered second and third levels
- A steep pitched roof
- Arched entries
- Three-over-one lite, double-hung windows
- Varying eave heights
- A pendant detail in each dormer

One of the neighborhood's largest and tallest houses was built in the Tudor Revival style (Figure 5.11). This particular house has more Tudor features than other houses in the neighborhood that would be considered "Tudor" style.

### *Minimal Traditional*

This is the most common style of architecture in the Old Windermere neighborhood. Often exhibiting details similar to Tudor Revival, this style balances the form of more elaborate revival styles, but is restrained in detail. Other stylistic elements include:

- Brick veneer siding (wood and stone siding less common)
- Lower roof pitches
- Front gables
- Three-over-one, six-over-six, eight-over-eight, or other lite variations

If minimal traditional homes do not overtly mimic the Tudor style, they frequently exhibit a cottage aesthetic. The home in Figure 5.12 is an example of the Minimal-Traditional style.



FIGURE 5.12. MINIMAL TRADITIONAL HOME ON STOCKER DRIVE.



FIGURE 5.13. BRICK RANCH HOME.

### *Ranch*

As the surrounding areas developed and reflected modern styles of the 1950s, so also did designs for homes on still available lots in Old Windermere. The ranch style is characterized by the following elements:

- Low-pitched roofs
- Wide, minimally divided picture windows
- Ribbon windows
- Brick or wood cladding
- Minimal detailing
- Shutters and decorated iron porch supports

There are only a few examples of this style in the neighborhood (a majority on Berkeley Drive), and the Ranch style is the last identifiable modern style before the emergence of a neo-traditional aesthetic that continues today.

### *Colonial Revival*

Single family residences and duplexes in Old Windermere are often styled in the Colonial Revival fashion. Architectural features include:

- Street-facing elevations that exhibit symmetry
- Front door framed by a supported pedimented surround
- Paneled or louvered shutters
- End-gabled roofs often featuring multiple dormers
- Double-hung, six-over-six or eight-over-eight windows



FIGURE 5.14. COLONIAL REVIVAL EXAMPLE ON SAVANNAH HIGHWAY.



FIGURE 5.15. GEORGIAN REVIVAL.

### *Georgian Revival*

Although similar to Colonial Revival, a few elements define the subtle difference between these two revival styles. Georgian Revival homes tend to have more detailing including:

- Quoins
- Elaborate fanlights
- Dentilled entry pediments

### *Craftsman*

A Craftsman style house on Fenwick Drive is the only one of its kind in the neighborhood, although the style was popular in Charleston at the time of Windermere's establishment. Built in 1928, it features:

- A full-width front porch
- A large, centered gable
- Exposed rafter tails
- One-over-one lite windows
- A low, painted brick wall that defines the front porch
- Brick piers at the front corners, which support a gently curved header with no intermittent supports
- Wide eaves
- An end-gabled roof



FIGURE 5.16. THE ONLY CRAFTSMAN BUNGALOW IN OLD WINDERMERE, ONE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S OLDEST HOMES.



FIGURE 5.17. STOCKER MANOR ON SAVANNAH HIGHWAY - A BOARDING HOUSE UNTIL RECENTLY.

*Outstanding Examples:  
Stocker Manor*

Stocker Manor is an Old Windermere mainstay and stands out not for its traditional style but for the way it was adapted to the site. Its unique telescoping plan addresses the wedge-shaped lot that contains it. Stocker Manor is composed of five sections of varying heights and roof directions.

*Outstanding Examples:  
20 Wesley Drive*

The house at 20 Wesley Drive features a turret and jerkinhead roof, with several window styles reflecting the period in which each section of the house was built. Like Stocker Manor, it occupies an end lot and has a dual street presence, addressing the corner of Wesley Drive and Stocker Drive.



FIGURE 5.18. 20 WESLEY DRIVE, WITH ITS UNIQUE TURRET AND JERKINHEAD ROOF.

*Outstanding Examples:  
Beverly Road Modern*

A much newer addition to the neighborhood, this contemporary home on Beverly Road is built with brick veneer, has a front porch and street-facing gables, but deviates from typical neighborhood dwellings in nearly all other respects. The floor plan is much more complex, built in an L-shape to accommodate an old growth live oak whose canopy extends into the footprint of the house. Little wood appears on the structure; that which is used is painted dark to match the steel frame windows. Railings at the front porch and on the interior stair are horizontally oriented metal tubing. By using like materials and forms, a modern design such as this is ultimately sympathetic to its surroundings.



FIGURE 5.19. BEVERLY ROAD RESIDENCE WHICH IS MODERN BUT COMPLEMENTARY TO THE LANDSCAPE.

Other unique homes include:

- Three matching Ashlar duplexes on Chadwick Drive, with yellow brick door surrounds and implied jack arches above the windows.
- A yellow concrete block cottage at 3 Belvue Road with a diamond patterned asbestos shingle roof.
- A modern home at 9 Fenwick Drive with textured basket weave wood veneer on the street façade, coursed ashlar planters and porch, and aluminium casement windows.

## Architectural Features

### Materials R

Brick veneer was the most frequently used material for the construction of Old Windermere homes, although wood frame, coursed ashlar, painted masonry and stucco are also present. Brick is sometimes painted, but less frequently than in Byrnes Downs. Vinyl siding is a contemporary material that has been used in a variety of applications, including dormers, new porches, or home additions. Colored or painted concrete block is a less common material, and when present, appears on homes built after 1950. To summarize, a typical neighborhood home contains the following materials:

- Brick veneer siding
- Simple wood detailing
- Wood shutters
- One chimney
- A street-facing gable



FIGURE 5.20. A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE IN OLD WINDERMERE.

### Details

The predominant aesthetic in Old Windermere is that of an elegant, modestly styled and detailed home. Trim at porches and eaves tends to be simple two-part construction with a fascia board and cyma recta or cyma reversa trim, but ogee profiles are also common. Door and window trim at masonry openings is equally restrained. On some Colonial Revival houses, carved wood door surrounds are highly detailed.

### Windows R

Window styles match the architectural period of the house, and include wood double-hung, metal casement, jalousie or fixed picture with operable sidelites. Replacement windows are often wood or vinyl-clad and feature simulated rather than true divided lites. The predominant window pattern in Old Windermere is six-over-six, wood, single pane, but a great variety of styles can be seen throughout the neighborhood. The most common patterns fall under the following classifications:

- Six-over-six: common in Colonial or Georgian revival and minimal traditional styles
- Three-over-one: “cottage” style window, seen on Craftsman or Tudor Revival styles
- One-over-one, found in Craftsman houses, or as replacements for original windows

There are also other, rare examples present in the neighborhood:

- Multiple lite metal frame casements, a modern design but installed in traditional houses
- Eight-over-eight, when present, are found in Colonial Revival or traditional designs



FIGURE 5.22. THREE-OVER-ONE “COTTAGE” STYLE WINDOWS.



FIGURE 5.21. SIX-OVER-SIX WINDOWS.



FIGURE 5.23. ONE-OVER-ONE WINDOWS.

### Shutters

Given the traditional nature of Old Windermere homes, shutters are a common element, and when present, appear most often on the street-facing elevation only. They most frequently are composed of two or three panels, but louvered shutters are a stylistic option. Not all shutters in the neighborhood are functional, sometimes only being added for aesthetic purposes. For detail, decorative cut-outs may be present in the upper section of a paneled shutter. Shutter dogs are visible on some of the houses.



FIGURE 5.24. TYPICAL SHUTTER APPEARANCE ON A COLONIAL REVIVAL RESIDENCE ON BELVUE.

### Awnings

Aluminum awnings are elements that add character to some homes in Old Windermere. Where present, they have typically been added to one or two elevations of some of the smaller, older residences in the neighborhood. Their styles may be striped or plain, straight-edged or scalloped. Some are flared as opposed to the typical convex shape. Awnings provide shade and protection to windows, and increase energy efficiency.



FIGURE 5.25. A RARE OCCURRENCE: HOUSE WITH ALUMINUM AWNINGS.

### Porches R

Porches are an important detail of many Old Windermere homes. They make the neighborhood more livable by providing an outdoor, semi-public space, and add character to the streetscape. Porches may occur on the front of a house as part of the entry procession, be open and offset, or be enclosed and to the side or rear. In the absence of a porch, homes may include a projecting entry bay or door hood. Most commonly, a gabled entry bay is open and supported by wood columns, but can also be constructed as a mostly enclosed exterior nook.



FIGURE 5.26. A STOOP PORCH WITH A FRONT GABLE.



FIGURE 5.27. A SIX-PANELED DOOR, THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF DOOR IN OLD WINDERMERE.



FIGURE 5.28. A DOOR WITH MULTIPLE LITES OVER ONE PANEL, A LESS COMMON DOOR TYPE IN OLD WINDERMERE.

**Doors**

The variety of door styles and patterns matches the variety of architecture in the neighborhood. Six panel doors are the most common, but other configurations add interest to the façade:

- Four panel with three lites
- Multiple lites over one or two panels
- No panels with three stepped lites at the top third
- Arch-top board or paneled door

Variations are often seen in the size and type of openings within the door, such as arched and/or rectangular. Doors may be painted or stained and can include a transom or sidelites. Screen doors or glass storm doors are also common.

**Roofs** **R**

Roofs are hipped or gabled, and range in pitch from 4 and 12 to 12 and 12. The most frequently repeated roof type is a 6 and 12 pitch with a street facing gable and asbestos shingles. Integrated porches may be covered with a shed roof that extends from the main roof form at a shallower pitch. Dormers, where present, are frequently small and have been added to the street elevation.

The maintenance of historic roofing material contributes to the architectural style of a house and gives it character. In the case of Old Windermere, asbestos roofs are uniquely patterned and repeated throughout the neighborhood. Layouts of asbestos shingles include a diamond design that gives the roof field more depth and interest. This material is seen most often on Tudor Revival and Minimal Traditional style houses.



FIGURE 5.29. DIAMOND-SHAPED ASBESTOS SHINGLES.

**Chimneys**

Most houses were built with one chimney. There are two common locations, either within the footprint or constructed at the outer wall of the house. In most cases, chimneys are not a prominent element and detail is minimal. On a few of the larger homes, the brick courses at the top step out for definition. Common locations for chimneys are on the back side of the ridge or rear-facing roof plane.



FIGURE 5.30. HOUSE ON FENWICK DRIVE WITH A SINGLE CHIMNEY.

***Garages, Sheds, & Outbuildings***

Parking on streets or in driveways is still common in Old Windermere; however, garages have often been built to accommodate the increased number of vehicles per household. Several original outbuildings still exist in the section east of Folly Road. The best example is an unrestored wood frame garage with integrated shed (Figure 5.31). In the main part of the neighborhood, the increased density and landscaping keeps additional structures hidden from view. A few modern residences have integrated carports supported by detailed metal supports (Figure 5.32).



FIGURE 5.31. DETACHED GARAGE.



FIGURE 5.32. BUILT-IN CARPORT.

## Chapter 5 Recommendations

- New structures should respect the overall character of the neighborhood, and in particular should relate to the scale, siting, and detailing present.
- Buildings along Savannah Highway and east of Folly Road see a greater mix of uses. Residential uses should be encouraged and/or new development should complement the historic architecture.
- Porches, dormers, or additions that are out-of-scale or that compete with the style of a house are detrimental to the neighborhood and should be discouraged.
- Many side porches have been enclosed over time, and it is important to maintain those that remain open.
- Additions visible or not visible from the right-of-way should be sympathetic to the design of the main house.
- Vinyl siding and other incompatible materials should be avoided.
- Replacement windows that differ in configuration and material from the originals detract from the aesthetic of the house and are discouraged.



FIGURE 5.33. STREETScape SHOWING CONSISTENT SETBACKS, SIZE, AND SCALE OF HOMES.

## Chapter 6: Landscape

Envisioned as a pre-World War II subdivision, Old Windermere was not completely built out until the 1950s. As such, its mix of architectural styles and types are arranged within a 1920s landscape. Traditional plantings, layouts, and streetscapes are common themes even among the more modern buildings. Old Windermere is also a divided community, with its streetscape design defining spaces within the neighborhood. These characteristics add to the challenges and opportunities for the neighborhood.

### Prevailing Character

- MOST DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD IS THE MATURE TREE CANOPY
- RESIDENTIAL STREETS HAVE LARGE PEDESTRIAN ZONES FOR SIDEWALKS, STREET TREES, AND BUFFER STRIPS
- FENCING AND WALLS ARE NON-EXISTENT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



FIGURE 6.1. OLD WINDERMERE'S STOCK OF OLD-GROWTH TREES IS A VITAL PART OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S CHARACTER.

## Chapter 6 Summary

### *Public Space*

- The most striking feature of the neighborhood is the presence of mature oaks that form a canopy over large portions of the right-of-way.
- There are three major streetscape types in Old Windermere: Highway/Major Roads, Residential Streetscape Type A, and Residential Streetscape Type B.
- Stocker Drive is the principal residential streetscape through the neighborhood. Although similar to other streets, its one unique feature are the larger greenway buffers that incorporate open stormwater ditches and culverts.
- The West Ashley Greenway is both a barrier separating South Windermere Shopping Center from Old Windermere and a successful recreation amenity.

- The City of Charleston has addressed traffic problems in recent years by closing Stocker Drive's access to Wesley Drive. A vegetative screen has replaced the historic entrance.
- Four-foot wide sidewalks are present throughout the neighborhood.
- Stocker Manor's sign is a unique landscape feature in Old Windermere.
- Two smaller signs mark the entry into the neighborhood at Stocker Drive and Folly Drive.

### *Private Open Space*

- Most residences in Old Windermere have nicely designed front yards with a mixture of lawns, shrubs, and trees.
- There is a diverse pattern of driveways in the neighborhood. The most common type incorporates two parallel strips of hardscape material that are separated by grass or other hardscape material.
- Fencing and walls are almost non-existent in the neighborhood.

### *Viewsheds*

- Beverly Road and Stocker Drive provide the most distinctive viewsheds, with intact tree canopies and consistent building setbacks.

### *Floodplains*

- Old Windermere sits entirely in one of two types of floodplains: the 100-year floodplain, and the 100-500 year floodplain.
- There are nearby wetlands as well as 100-year floodplains that are susceptible to wave action.

Recommendations will appear at the end of this chapter and are denoted in the text by this symbol. R

## Public Space

Old Windermere is an entirely residential landscape (despite the addition of several modern businesses and offices) with clearly defined public space. Generally this public space is associated with roadways or is linear in nature, with little traditional passive open space within the community.

## Streetscapes

Old Windermere has three distinct streetscape patterns (Figure 6.3):

- A highway and several major roads bisect and divide the area (Highway/Major Road)
- A residential streetscape which incorporates stormwater trenches into the design of the street (Residential Streetscape, Type A)
- A residential street pattern without stormwater trenches, which is prevalent throughout the neighborhood (Residential Streetscape, Type B)



FIGURE 6.2. WIDE LANDSCAPE BUFFER ARE A COMMON FEATURE IN OLD WINDERMERE.

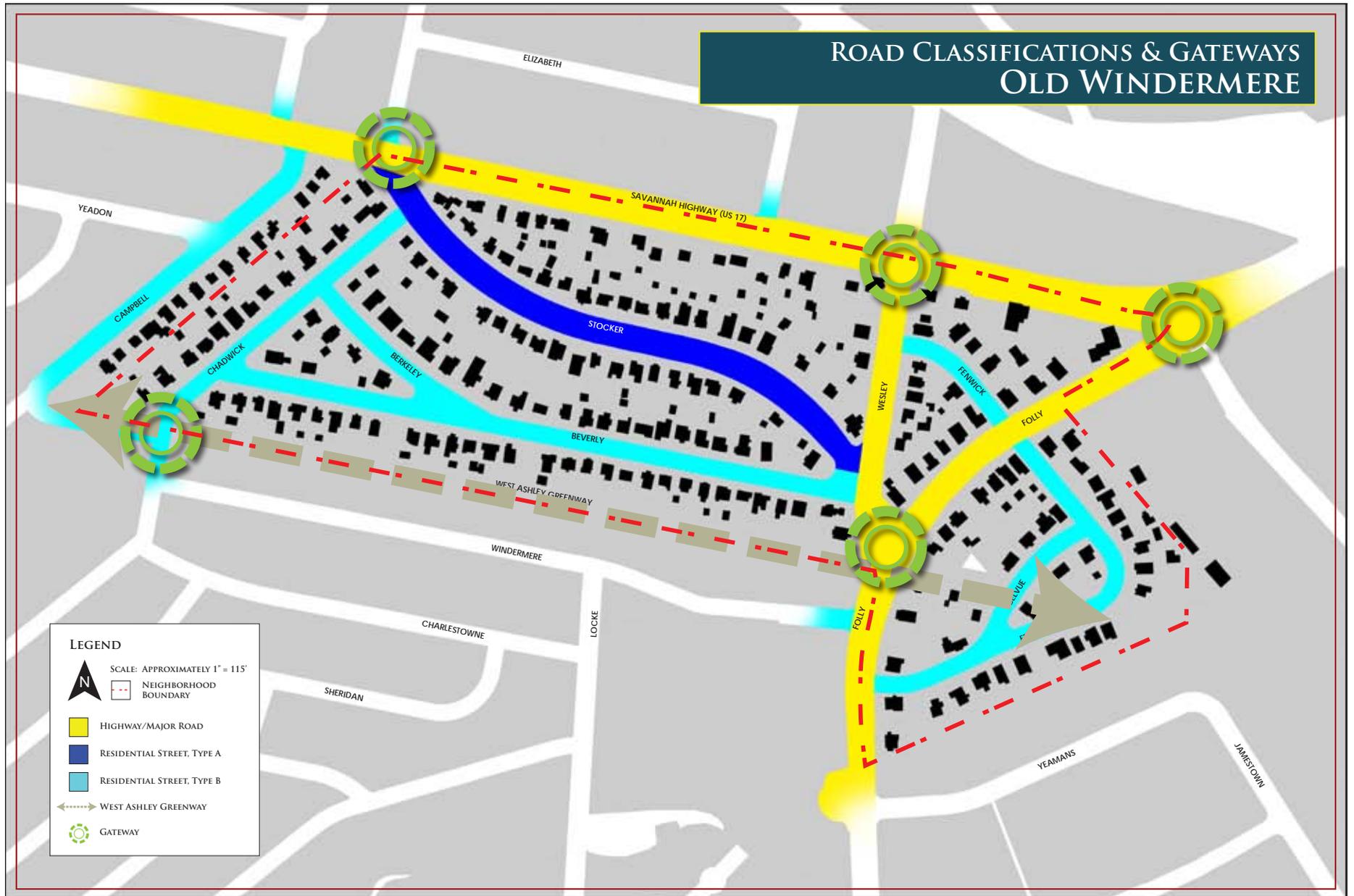


FIGURE 6.3. ROAD CLASSIFICATION AND GATEWAYS.

**Highway/Major Roads Streetscape**

Savannah Highway serves as the northern border of the Old Windermere community. The south side of Savannah Highway, portions of Folly Road, and Wesley Drive are where a majority of the commercial land use within the neighborhood is located. The uses are located along the periphery of an otherwise residential area, where many of the existing historic buildings have been converted into offices.

Wesley Drive and Folly Road are major roads that divide the eastern third of the neighborhood into two segments. In recent years, the east side of Wesley Drive has transitioned into a road lined with rental housing units. **R**

The driving lane widths range from 50 to 60 feet with large 12-18 foot buffer strips (the exception is Wesley Drive, which only has a six-foot buffer strip). Comparatively speaking, the sidewalks (like others in the early to mid-twentieth century) are small, only four feet wide. The setbacks along these roads are also large, ranging from 25 to 40 feet on average. Street trees help provide some visual relief to these wide road dimensions, but still deter pedestrian activity in the area.



FIGURE 6.4. FOLLY ROAD-WESLEY DRIVE INTERSECTION.



FIGURE 6.5. SAVANNAH HIGHWAY.

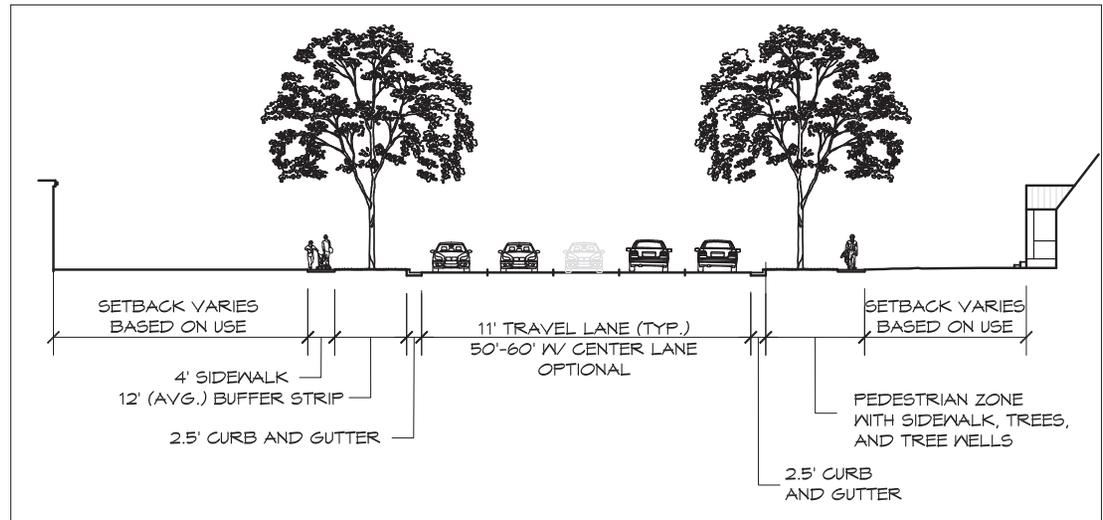


FIGURE 6.6. A CROSS-SECTION (TYPICAL) OF THE HIGHWAY/MAJOR ROAD STREETScape IN OLD WINDERMERE.

**Residential Streetscape, Type A**

Stocker Drive is the principal residential street in the Old Windermere neighborhood. It runs southeast-northwest connecting Savannah Highway to Wesley Drive (this latter entry is no longer functioning and has been rerouted to form a bend connecting Stocker Drive and Beverly Road). Similar to other streets in the neighborhood in its driving lane width (23 feet), sidewalks (four feet) and setbacks (30 feet), Stocker Drive has an unusually large buffer/lawn strip of 24 feet.

Contained within this large open space is the original stormwater system of open trenches and culverts. These trenches consume about half the width of the buffer strip and include clay tiles running through both brick and concrete culverts. The remaining portion of the buffer strips includes street trees, some shrubs, and lawn, typical to other streets within the neighborhood. **R**



FIGURE 6.7. OPEN TRENCH WITH CULVERT WITHIN THE LANDSCAPE BUFFER.

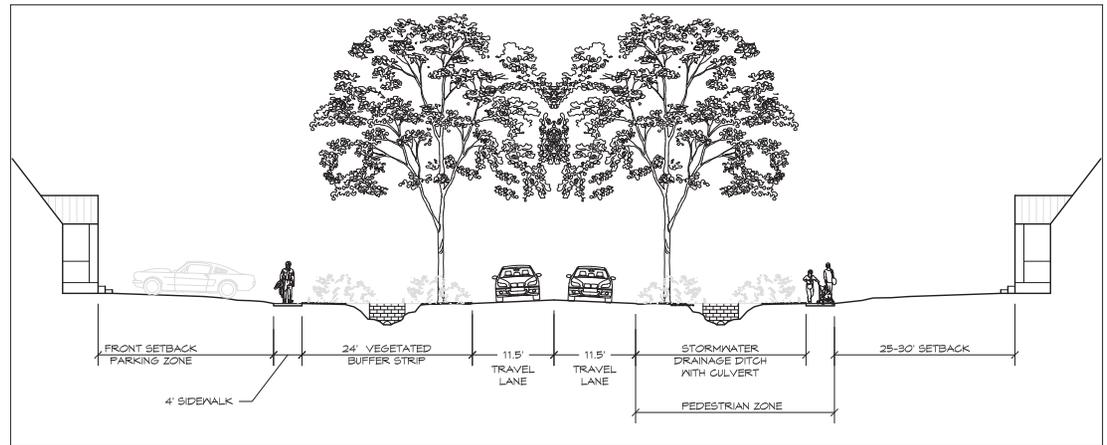


FIGURE 6.8. A CROSS-SECTION OF THE RESIDENTIAL STREETScape TYPE A (STOCKER DRIVE).



FIGURE 6.9. WIDE BUFFERS, TREE CANOPY, AND ON-STREET PARKING.

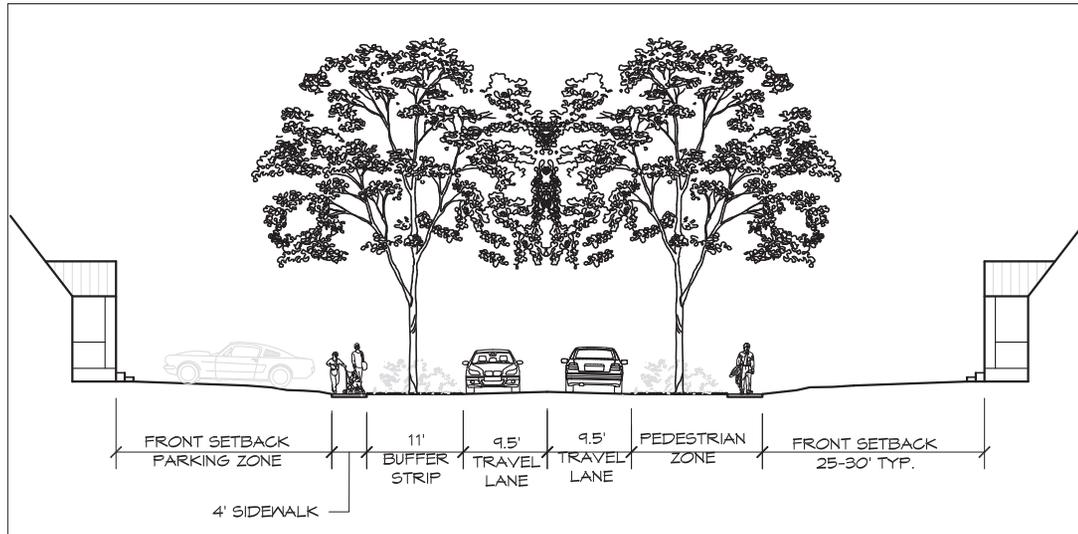


FIGURE 6.10. A CROSS-SECTION (TYPICAL) OF A RESIDENTIAL STREETScape, TYPE B IN OLD WINDERMERE.

**Residential Streetscape, Type B**

The remaining streets within Old Windermere follow this second pattern of design. All streets conform to the same design:

- Two-way road lanes ranging from 17 to 22 feet
- No curb or gutter
- Vegetated buffer strips 10-foot wide with street trees and turf
- Four-foot wide sidewalks
- Setbacks ranging from 25 to 30 feet from sidewalk to front door

On-street parking occurs through much of the neighborhood as many people park within the buffer strips. This has caused the lawn areas to erode over time, leaving behind large areas of sandy earth. With the addition of granite curbing on portions of some streets, further deterioration has been prevented. **R**

### *Open Space*

Old Windermere has no formal active recreation space. The West Ashley Greenway, which serves as the southern boundary of the neighborhood, has the only traditional gathering spot.



FIGURE 6.11. THE WEST ASHLEY GREENWAY.

### *West Ashley Greenway*

The West Ashley Greenway, formerly a railroad corridor, is a ten-mile long multiuse trail that is part of the larger East Coast Greenway trail network. The eastern portion of the trail runs through several West Ashley neighborhoods, including Old Windermere. The Greenway is mostly unpaved, generally very flat, has multiple entry points, and has varying degrees of right of way/open space. The ten-foot wide path offers opportunities for two-way traffic and crosses multiple roads, many of which are residential streets.

In Old Windermere, the Greenway separates the South Windermere Shopping Center from the neighborhood to the north. In certain locations, its right-of-way is fairly extensive, providing significant amounts of open space. The Greenway bisects the neighborhood as Old Windermere extends farther south along Folly Road.

***Beverly/Berkeley Open Space***

At the intersection of Berkeley and Beverly Roads is a pie-shaped piece of open space which is the only greenspace within the neighborhood. The space is defined by granite curbing and has a single live oak in its center. Under the shade of this tree sits a metal bench facing east.

***Wesley Drive Screen***

Originally, the intersection of Stocker Drive and Beverly Road provided an entry/exit point along Wesley Drive. An increasing amount of traffic and the streets being used as a cut through to Folly Road have resulted in a redesign of this intersection. Today, Stocker Drive loops south, back into Beverly Road, and the junction is screened by trees and shrubs. This has lessened the audible and visual impact of Wesley Drive and eliminated unnecessary traffic in the neighborhood.



FIGURE 6.12. BEVERLY/BERKELEY OPEN SPACE.



FIGURE 6.13. WESLEY ROAD SCREEN.



FIGURE 6.14. MATURE TREE CANOPY.

### *Street Trees and Tree Canopy* R

The most striking feature of the neighborhood streetscapes, beyond their consistency, is the mature street trees throughout the neighborhood. The tree canopies are generally created by live/willow oaks but there are also a number of other species present, including crepe myrtle, palmetto, red maple, Japanese maple, pine, dogwood, and magnolia. The canopy along Berkeley Road and Chadwick Drive is not as extensive as on Beverly Road.

Beyond the tree canopy, many homeowners have chosen to place additional plant material in the buffer strips. These plants include a number of medium-sized shrubs common in the Charleston region, such as nandina, boxwood, azalea, oleander, bayberry, camellia, mahonia, and aspidistra. These buffer plantings, although in the right-of-way, help to define the pedestrian space and the streetscape, adding to the dynamic natural environment of Old Windermere.

### *Drainage and Utilities* R

Stormwater and sanitary sewer are on separate systems throughout the neighborhood. Many of the original open trenches have been replaced and filled or paved. Stocker Drive is the only exception.

Overhead utilities provide electricity, telephone, and telecommunication service throughout the neighborhood. Utility poles run the length of one side of each residential street within the buffer strip.

### *Sidewalks*

Poured-in-place concrete sidewalks are present throughout Old Windermere. Their four-foot width is somewhat small, and pedestrians are often seen using both the sidewalk and roadway.



FIGURE 6.15. TYPICAL SIDEWALK THROUGHOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

### Signs

There are three signs within the public right-of-way in the neighborhood.

#### Neighborhood Signs R

There are two neighborhood entry signs, located at Stocker Drive/Savannah Highway and the intersection of Wesley Drive and Folly Road. The three-foot high wood mounted signs are situated within curbed medians and read: “Old Windermere, Est. 1927.” Thought should be given to redesigning the signage to make them more visible from the road.



FIGURE 6.16. NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRY SIGN, DIFFICULT TO SEE ALONG A BUSY ROADWAY.

#### Stocker Manor Sign

Stocker Manor is located at the intersection of Savannah Highway and Stocker Drive. Historically used as a roadside inn, the house is now a private residence. A historical sign perpendicular to Savannah Highway is located in the front yard of the property. It reads: “Stocker Manor, Guests, Private Baths.” This is a unique sign that should be retained as a representative feature of the history of the neighborhood.



FIGURE 6.17. STOCKER MANOR SIGN.

## Private Open Space

As with many communities in the West Ashley section of Charleston, Old Windermere residents take great pride in their properties with a number of nicely-landscaped yards and features.

### *Designed landscapes*

Designed residential landscapes are a common feature of Old Windermere. These landscapes consist of front lawns with a mix of trees and shrubs. Foundation plantings consist of a variety of shrubs such as camellias, azaleas, and boxwood. These themes are often continued into the rear yard where active private space is a common feature.



FIGURES 6.18-6.21. A VARIETY OF LANDSCAPED YARDS.

### *Driveways*

Because of Old Windermere's extended development history throughout the twentieth century, a diverse pattern of driveways are present. Concrete slabs are a common theme on many properties, with exposed oyster shell aggregate being an alternative. A second common type of drive incorporates parallel concrete lanes separated by an area of grass. This driveway design is present throughout the Charleston region. Variations on this theme include parallel strips of brick and dirt always filled with grass and more complex designs and modern interpretations of the parallel strip design.

The driveways vary in length. Some are long enough for only one car. Others extend to the rear of the property, sometimes to a detached garage. Where duplexes are present, driveways will be present on both sides of the building.



FIGURE 6.22. COMMON DRIVEWAY TYPE WITH PARALLEL BRICK STRIPS.



FIGURE 6.23. CONCRETE SLAB DRIVEWAYS ARE ALSO COMMON.

### *Walkways & Entries*

Most houses have concrete walks in line with the front door or connecting to the adjacent driveway. Some have walks constructed of brick or slate. These front walks have varying lengths; some extend to the curb, while others stop at the sidewalk.

### *Fences/Walls* R

Fencing is almost non-existent in Old Windermere. There are only a few houses with some form of fencing including chain link, picket, and chicken wire. There are situations where a small change in grade has required the placement of a small retaining wall parallel to the street. Most are constructed of concrete with some laid out using railroad ties.



FIGURE 6.24. A RARE HIGH BRICK WALL.

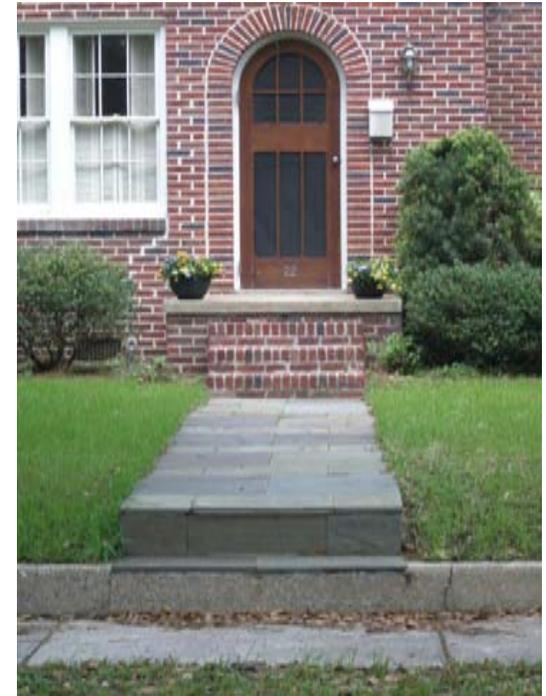


FIGURE 6.25. SLATE ENTRY WALK.

## Viewsheds

There are two significant viewsheds within the neighborhood. Beverly Road and Stocker Drive are tree-lined streets running east-west through the neighborhood with an intact tree canopy and consistent building setbacks. As a result, the view down either street provides an aesthetically pleasing viewshed that represents the historic legacy of the community.



FIGURE 6.26. BEVERLY ROAD VIEWSHED.

## Floodplain

Flooding is always a concern in Old Windermere. The southern portion of the neighborhood lies within the 100-year floodplain, and this becomes quite apparent during heavy rain.

The map on the following page (Figure 6.24) is a flood zone map of the neighborhood. The darker green indicates areas in Zone AE, meaning it is subject to a 100-year flood with Base Flood Elevation determined. Flood insurance is required in this area, and flood management standards apply.

The rest of the neighborhood is within Zone XE (light green) and indicates that it is not in the 100-year flood zone. It is between the 100-year and 500-year flood area and subject to a 100 year flood with average depths less than one foot. There are areas in surrounding neighborhoods that are within a 100-year floodplain but are subject to additional tidal wave threats (purple). There are also wetlands nearby (blue).



FIGURE 6.27. EXISTING FLOODPLAIN MAP FOR OLD WINDERMERE.

## Chapter 6 Recommendations

- Savannah Highway, Folly Road, and Wesley Drive represent barriers within the neighborhood. They provide challenges to pedestrians and bicyclists, and they also divide Old Windermere into three segments. Efforts should be taken to reconnect the eastern third of the neighborhood with areas west of Wesley Drive and south of Savannah Highway.
- The drainage system on Stocker Drive should be placed underground similar to other streets in the community.
- On-street parking is detrimental to existing street trees and damages the greenway buffer. Driveways and garages are present throughout the neighborhood and should be better utilized.
- The tree canopy should continue to be preserved. Efforts such as pruning and annual inspections by a certified arborist are encouraged. New tree plantings should be located in areas that have lost their canopy.
- The neighborhood entry signs are not easily identifiable from the roadway. New entry signage should be installed and made more visible.
- Walls and fences should be discouraged. They are not appropriate in the neighborhood.

## Chapter 7: Preservation & Integrity

This chapter provides an evaluation of how well neighborhood character elements have been preserved throughout Old Windermere. The evaluation is based on both first-hand observations and discussions from the public workshops.



FIGURE 7.1. SAVANNAH HIGHWAY RESIDENCES ARE TRANSITIONING TO NEIGHBORHOOD OFFICE AND COMMERCIAL USES, BUT THE ROAD HAS MAINTAINED A RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER.

## Chapter 7 Summary

### *Character/Integrity*

- The historic character of Old Windermere is intact throughout most of the neighborhood.
- The neighborhood's tree canopy and unique streetscape create a defining characteristic.
- The greatest threat to Old Windermere's character is the separation of the neighborhood by Wesley Drive and Folly Road.
- Character degradation has mostly occurred along Wesley Drive, Folly Road and Savannah Highway.

### *Preservation Efforts*

- Properties fronting Folly Road, Savannah Highway, and Wesley Drive fall under the purview of the Commercial Corridor Design Review Board (CCDRB), which helps to maintain the visual character of commercial corridors, and prevents demolition of older structures.
- There are no National Register properties in Old Windermere at this time.
- South Carolina's State Historic Preservation Office has determined that Old Windermere is potentially eligible as a National Register District.

### *Conservation Districts*

- Old Windermere lacks protection for its historic resources, except in areas under purview of the CCDRB.
- Charleston's Preservation Plan recommends a historic conservation district for Old Windermere.
- Conservation districts help protect neighborhood characteristics, but are usually not regulated to the detail of historic districts.

*Recommendations will appear at the end of this chapter and are denoted in the text by this symbol.* R

### Character/Integrity

The map on the next page (Figure 7.4) is a general appraisal of the threatened areas conditions in Old Windermere. For the most part, Old Windermere's historic character is very much intact. However, as indicated by the map, there are some areas that are slightly transitional or are more susceptible to loss of character.

The red-brown color indicates areas of the neighborhood that have either a loss of character, or are the most susceptible to character degradation.



FIGURE 7.2. BEVERLY ROAD - ONE OF THE BEST PRESERVED AREAS OF OLD WINDERMERE.

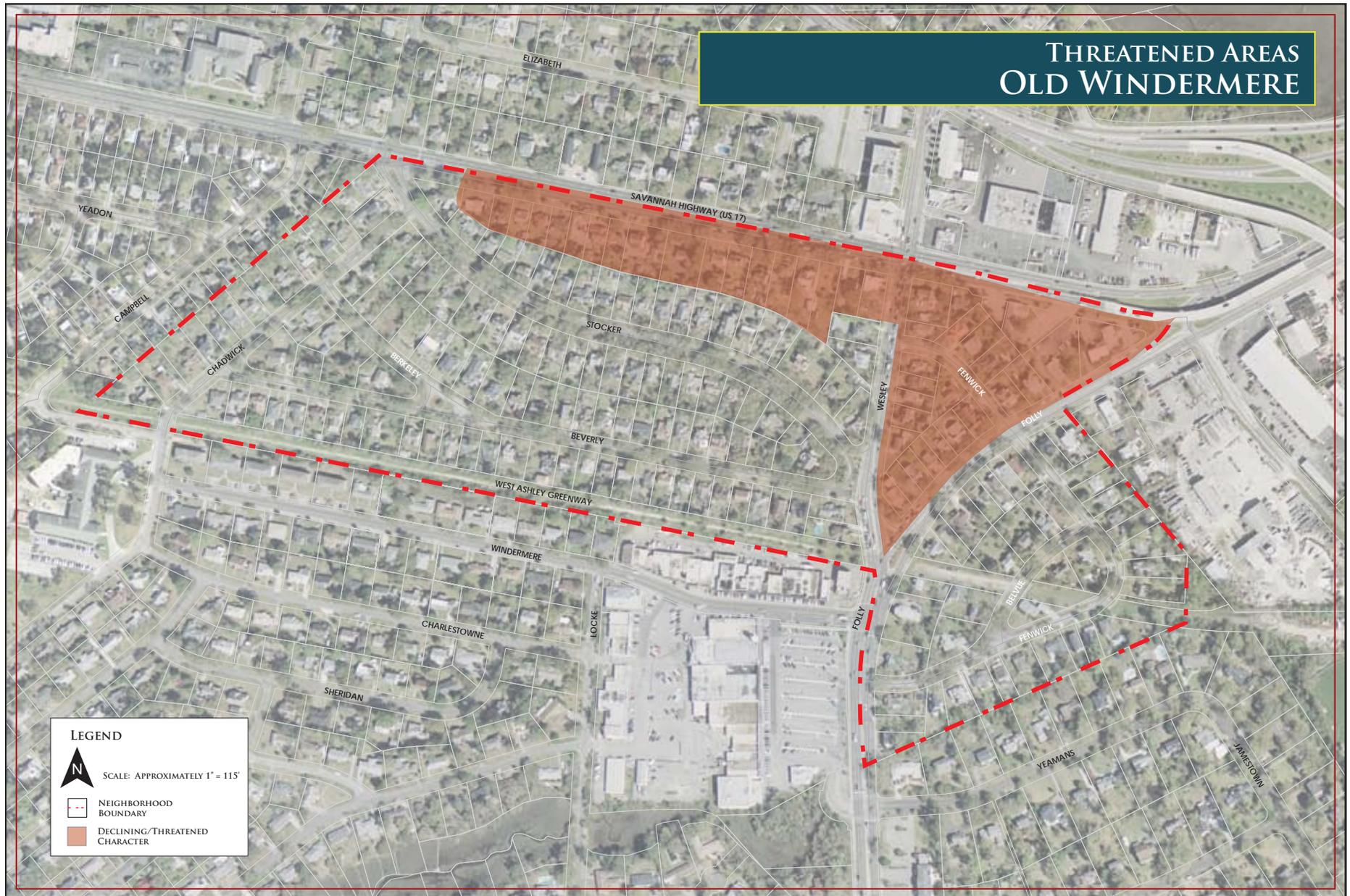


FIGURE 7.3. NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENT.

*Excellent/Intact Areas*

Old Windermere's historic character is best preserved in the main area of the neighborhood, which includes properties fronting Stocker Drive, Chadwick Drive, and Beverly Road. This area has maintained a good stock of homes exemplifying historic character, and the historic streetscape and landscape is best preserved in these areas.

Fenwick Drive, along with Belvue Road, also exhibits good neighborhood qualities; however, the streetscape and tree preservation are not as consistent in this area as they are along Stocker Drive and Beverly Road.



FIGURE 7.4. FENWICK DRIVE AND BELVUE ROAD.

*Areas With Transitional Qualities*

The biggest threat to maintaining cohesive neighborhood character is the width and traffic volumes of Savannah Highway, Wesley Drive, and Folly Road. Wesley Drive and Folly Road effectively split the neighborhood into smaller pieces, and create an obstacle to moving between different areas of the neighborhood, whether by car or on foot.

Savannah Highway has maintained the majority of its original buildings. However, the properties along the road are functionally separate from the rest of the neighborhood, and several of the residential structures have been converted to office and commercial uses. The medical office located at the southwest corner of Savannah Highway and Wesley Drive is a modern building that does not fit the characteristics of the neighborhood. It is recommended that further development of this type along Savannah Highway bordering Old Windermere be prevented. **R**

A back alley accessing the rear of the properties on Savannah Highway, providing access within the neighborhood and eliminating the need for driveways on the front side, would help preserve the area's integrity. However, this would be a costly endeavor that would also require political buy-in from owners of both Savannah Highway properties and the properties located on the north side of Stocker Drive. **R**



FIGURE 7.5. WESLEY DRIVE DIVIDES OLD WINDERMERE.



FIGURE 7.6. MEDICAL BUILDING LOCATED ON WESLEY DRIVE AT SAVANNAH HIGHWAY.

The east side of Wesley Drive between Folly Road and Savannah Highway is showing signs of character degradation. There are some modern concrete block structures that do not appear to be maintained as well as most Old Windermere properties. Additionally, parking is haphazard in this area, with some use of front yards as parking areas, and the sidewalks are narrow and overgrown with grass and other plantings. Some of this is due to the large amounts of traffic along this stretch of Wesley Drive. The west side of the road exhibits better upkeep.



FIGURE 7.7. CONDITIONS ALONG EAST SIDE OF WESLEY DRIVE.

Folly Road and Wesley Drive have several properties in which the front yard is used as parking area. Beyond Fenwick Drive, Folly Road transitions from residential to commercial and other uses. In all, the Wesley-Folly-Fenwick area of Old Windermere is much more susceptible to losing its historic qualities due to the presence of major traffic corridors. It is recommended that the city take efforts to improve pedestrian safety in this area and where possible, create alleys or shared parking to eliminate some driveways and front yard parking. **R**



FIGURE 7.8. FOLLY ROAD WITH SAVANNAH HIGHWAY IN THE DISTANCE.

### Preservation Efforts

Charleston’s Historic Preservation Plan, completed in 2008, recognized the importance of Charleston’s non-peninsular neighborhoods. It was through this Plan that this Area Character Appraisal was recommended to document the historic resources of Old Windermere, Byrnes Downs and other neighborhoods west of the Ashley River.

*Design Review:*

**Commercial Corridor Design Review Board**

The purpose of the Commercial Corridor Design Review Board (CCDRB) is “to protect and enhance the visual character and economic value of the City’s major commercial corridors.”<sup>11</sup> Folly Road, Wesley Drive, and Savannah Highway are corridors under the purview of the CCDRB. This re-

quires a permit before demolition of any structures 50 years or older fronting these roads, and for any exterior work for non-residential structures and multi-family residential structures. Permitting is required for new construction, exterior repairs, additions, alterations, and painting. Properties along these corridors must also conform to basic signage standards required by the CCDRB. This applies to all new and existing development.



FIGURE 7.9. WESLEY DRIVE APPROACHING SAVANNAH HIGHWAY. THIS AREA FALLS UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD.

*Potential National Register Properties*

Currently there are no properties in Old Windermere that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are also no historic easements or covenants on any properties within the neighborhood. A few properties, identified in the Architecture chapter, exemplify high-style architecture or unique characteristics that warrant further investigation as to their potential for the National Register.

Stocker Manor, at the corner of Chadwick Drive and Savannah Highway, has historically been used as a boarding house since the original development of the neighborhood. It has a unique, telescoping floor plan that helps address its corner location, and this is incorporated into five sections of varying heights.

20 Wesley Drive, located at the junction of Stocker and Wesley, is a brick residence that features a front turret and a jerkin head roof, giving it a unique appearance. It has several historic windows from different time periods, reflective of the various additions that were built onto the house over time.

The large, two and a half story brick residence that is located on the corner lot at 2 Beverly Road is also an outstanding architectural example.

Although there is not an abundance of historically or architecturally significant homes in Old Windermere that would warrant a national or local historic district, there is still an excellent stock of original structures. In 2007, the South Carolina Department of Archives and History determined that Old Windermere is potentially eligible for a district listing on the National Register. This means that were the neighborhood to be nominated, it would have a realistic chance of becoming a National Register District. Neighborhood leadership should educate itself on the benefits and issues of a National Register listing to determine if the neighborhood should pursue it.



FIGURES 7.10 - 7.12. TOP TO BOTTOM: STOCKER MANOR, 20 WESLEY DRIVE, AND 2 BEVERLY ROAD.

## Conservation Districts

The Charleston Preservation Plan recognizes the historical and architectural importance of Old Windermere, Byrnes Downs and other off-peninsula neighborhoods that do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Architectural Review. Without some means of protection, these neighborhoods could be particularly susceptible to character loss.

The Preservation Plan recommends the use of conservation districts to help preserve Old Windermere. Conservation districts are areas recognized to have historic value, but where regulations would not be as restrictive as in a historic district. The idea is to preserve basic elements of the district's character without unnecessarily burdening property owners and review authorities with minute details. Design review of these districts, therefore, should be less strict and should focus on overarching character elements, while being more relaxed in other areas compared to an historic district. **R**

Normally, the conservation district is incorporated as part of a zoning ordinance, and applicable activities (new development, redevelopment, demolition) would require a similar application process as that of a rezoning. This would allow for public re-



FIGURE 7.13. BEVERLY ROAD STREETScape - A VIEW WORTH PROTECTING

view and comment regarding changes to existing buildings, proposed demolitions or potential new structures. Should a conservation district be implemented, this Area Character Appraisal should be used as a resource guide for review decisions.

This document furthers the recommendation to create a conservation district for Old Windermere. At the very minimum, there should be demolition review in place to prevent the loss of old or historic structures that contribute to the neighborhood. **R**

The recommended conservation district for Old Windermere is the entire neighborhood with boundaries as shown in the maps of this document (see Figure 7.14). Areas of the neighborhood along Savannah Highway are under the purview of the Commercial Corridor Design Review Board, and should continue to be reviewed in this manner.

### Chapter 7 Recommendations

- Modern construction that does not respect the prevailing character and scale of the neighborhood should be avoided.
- If feasible, a back alley accessing the rear of parcels along Savannah Highway may improve access and conditions along Savannah Highway.
- Pursue further efforts to improve upon the pedestrian safety along and crossing Wesley Drive and Folly Road. At minimum, sidewalk conditions should be improved along Wesley Drive.
- Create a historic conservation district in order to help protect the character of Old Windermere.
- At a minimum, provide demolition review for the entire neighborhood, so that older, historic buildings are preserved.



FIGURE 7.14. MAP SHOWING THE PROPOSED CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOUNDARIES. THESE BOUNDARIES SHOULD CONFORM TO THE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES.

## Endnotes

- 1 City of Charleston website: [www.charlestoncity.info](http://www.charlestoncity.info).

## Chapter 8: Adjacent Conditions

This section includes an assessment of conditions and uses that occur at the edges of Old Windermere's boundaries. While preservation is vital within a neighborhood itself, forces on the periphery of a neighborhood also can have a tremendous effect, good or bad, on an area.



FIGURE 8.1. SAVANNAH HIGHWAY BECOMES AN OVERPASS JUST OUTSIDE OF OLD WINDERMERE.

## Chapter 8 Summary

### *Adjacent Neighborhoods & Districts*

- Old Windermere is flanked by South Windermere and Byrnes Downs.
- All three neighborhoods intersect at St. Andrews School of Math and Science.
- South Windermere and Moreland Shopping Centers are commercial centers for the West Ashley neighborhoods.

### *Relations With Neighboring Communities*

- The West Ashley neighborhoods have formed the Ashley Bridge District Association to address issues common to all the neighborhoods. These issues include traffic improvements, pedestrian safety, landscaping, and aesthetic improvements.
- The Area Character Appraisal for Old Windermere provided an opportunity to solicit public input about the neighborhood and issues concerning heritage and integrity.

### *New Developments*

- No new developments are proposed at this time.
- The undeveloped property bordering Folly Road and Albemarle Road, immediately adjacent to the far eastern side of the neighborhood, provides a potential site for new development.

### *Potential Character Issues*

- The biggest issue with Old Windermere is the fragmentation of the neighborhood by Folly Road and Wesley Drive.
- New multi-family homes in South Windermere have been identified as housing types ill suited for Old Windermere.
- On-street parking in the landscaping strip has also been identified as a problem and a threat to both the tree canopy and integrity of the neighborhood.
- Above-ground utilities are considered detrimental to the neighborhood aesthetics.

*Recommendations will appear at the end of this chapter and are denoted in the text by this symbol.* R

## Adjacent Neighborhoods & Districts

### *Neighborhoods*

Old Windermere is directly adjacent to Byrnes Downs to the west and South Windermere to the south. All three neighborhoods intersect at St. Andrews Magnet School of Math and Science. Directly across Savannah Highway to the north is Moreland. To the south and east is The Crescent.

The Albemarle Point area also borders the east side of Old Windermere. This area, although partially residential, is primarily an office and hotel business district in the area closest to Old Windermere.



FIGURE 8.2. BYRNES DOWNS NEIGHBORHOOD.



FIGURE 8.3. SOUTH WINDERMERE NEIGHBORHOOD.

*Commercial Areas*

There are two main shopping centers located at the edges of Old Windermere. The larger of the two is South Windermere Shopping Center, located south of Old Windermere along Folly Road and South Windermere Boulevard. Staples office supply and Earth Fare, an organic and health-conscious food and produce market, are the anchors of the shopping center. A variety of restaurants and smaller retail shops make up the rest of the area. The center is very convenient to Old Windermere residents who live west of Wesley Drive and Folly Road; however, it is less convenient from the east side of Wesley Drive, despite its proximity.

Moreland Center is located adjacent to the northeast edge of the neighborhood, across Savannah Highway and Wesley Drive. It includes a tire store, ice cream parlor, paint store, and a fitness center. The center has a highway-oriented character, with its type of tenants, older appearance, and abundance of front-side parking lot area. R



FIGURE 8.4. MORELAND SHOPPING CENTER.



FIGURE 8.5. SOUTH WINDERMERE SHOPPING CENTER.

## Relations With Neighboring Communities

### *Ashley Bridge District Association* R

The Ashley Bridge District includes the neighborhoods of Albemarle Point, Byrnes Downs, The Crescent, Moreland, Old Windermere, South Windermere, Wappoo Heights, and Westwood. Each neighborhood has its own association, but all of the involved neighborhoods came together in the mid-1990s and started working together to accomplish the Ashley Bridge District Plan. Since then, the communities have worked together as a district to implement traffic improvements, pedestrian safety measures, landscaping, and appearance improvements.

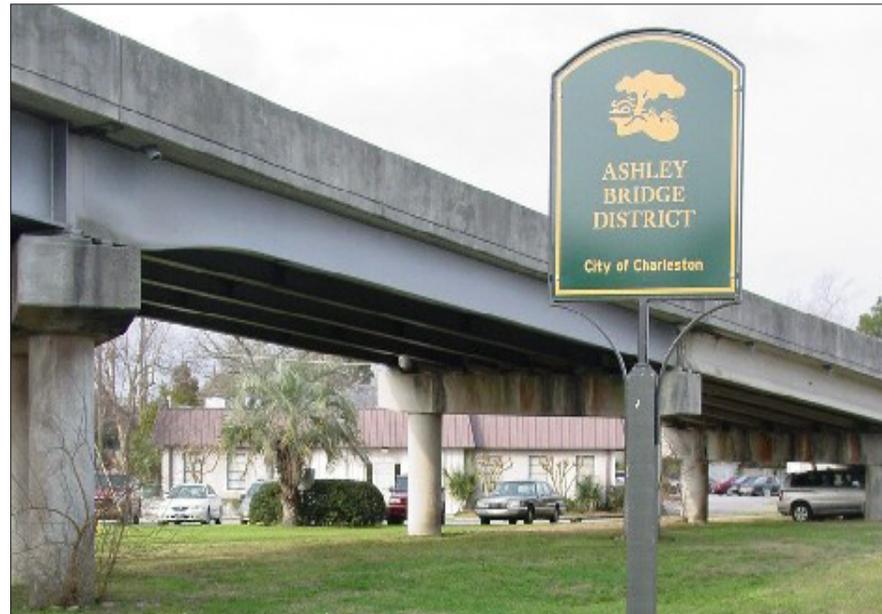


FIGURE 8.6. SIGN IDENTIFYING THE ASHLEY BRIDGE DISTRICT.

### *Area Character Appraisals*

As part of this study, workshops were held to solicit community input on the process and to gain valuable insight from residents about important aspects of the neighborhood. Because an appraisal was also being done for Byrnes Downs simultaneously, joint public workshops were held for both communities.

### New Developments

At the time of this document, there were no known developments proposed or under construction that would directly affect Old Windermere.

The large property bordering Folly Road and Albemarle Road, immediately adjacent to the far eastern side of the neighborhood, is currently undeveloped (Figure 8.7), but given its prime location, it is not likely to remain vacant. It is very important that this property is developed compatibly with Old Windermere to help the east side of the neighborhood remain cohesive. The 1997 Ashley Bridge District Plan's Future Land Use Map identifies this property as one that should become a mixed-use neighborhood center fronting Folly Road, and medium density housing for the remainder of the property.<sup>1</sup> **R**

A mixed-use center would be valuable for residents of the Fenwick-Folly-Wesley area of Old Windermere, since they are separated from South Windermere shopping center by Wesley Drive and Folly Road, and separated from Moreland Center by Savannah Highway. If a mixed-use development is built here, it should step down in scale in areas immediately adjacent to Old Windermere, and should respect the existing streetscape, land-

scaping, building forms, and styles of existing development. A similar type of development should eventually replace some of the outdated commercial buildings and parking lots in the triangular section between Fenwick Drive, Folly Road, and Savannah Highway. **R**



FIGURE 8.7. POTENTIAL LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT ALONG FOLLY ROAD.

### Potential Character Issues

The biggest issue for Old Windermere is the fragmentation of the neighborhood by Folly Road and Wesley Drive. A return to total neighborhood continuity would probably require that outer lanes on both sides of these two roads be given over to parallel parking. Since traffic volumes on these two roads will probably increase or at best remain the same, it is unlikely for that to occur in the foreseeable future. In the interim, efforts should be focused on providing safe, convenient crossings for bikes and pedestrians across Folly Road and Wesley Drive. Where possible, the landscaping along these roads should be reworked to provide an appearance more characteristic of those throughout the rest of the neighborhood. **R**

Mentioned in the public workshops were the tall multi-family homes located along Windermere Boulevard between the shopping center and St. Andrews School of Math and Science. These homes were described as “unattractive” and “incompatible” with existing development in Old Windermere. The presence of these modern buildings does not present a direct threat to the character

of Old Windermere; however, similar development should be prevented within the neighborhood. Future roadway projects on Windermere Boulevard should seek to create a streetscape that is more in line with that of Byrnes Downs, Old Windermere, and South Windermere in order to help restore some of area’s physical qualities. **R**

## Chapter 8 Recommendations

- Moreland Center is an excellent candidate for redevelopment, provided that the current tenants/services remain.
- The Ashley Bridge District Association should continue to promote the long-term physical and economic improvement of the West Ashley region.
- The vacant property along Fenwick Drive would be a suitable site for a mixed-use development that complements the existing character of Old Windermere.
- Redevelopment of the Folly Road-Wesley Drive-Savannah Overpass area is encouraged.
- To improve community connectivity, Folly Road and Wesley Drive should be redesigned to include parallel parking, safe pedestrian/bicyclist crossings, and improved landscaping for traffic calming.
- The model for multi-use homes built in South Windermere is discouraged for new development in Old Windermere.

## Endnotes

1 Hanson, Taylor, Inc, et al, *Ashley River Bridge District: The Emergence of a Traditional Village*, 1997, 41.

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## Maps/Drawings

"Plat of Block A, Windermere, A Subdivision in St. Andrews Parish, Charleston County, South Carolina, The Property of James S. Simmons." February 1922. 1 sheet, photocopy. City of Charleston, SC.

"Plat of Block B, Windermere, A Subdivision in St. Andrews Parish, Charleston County, South Carolina, The Property of James S. Simmons." June 1922. 1 sheet, photocopy. City of Charleston, SC.

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