

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_ See Description Inventory \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

### 2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by River Rd, Jacob School Rd, and property boundaries of the houses along Rest Way, Bass Road, and Duroc Ave.

City or town: Prospect State: Kentucky County: Jefferson

Not For Publication:  NA  Vicinity:  X

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following

level(s) of significance: \_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local  
Applicable National Register Criteria: X A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <b>Craig Potts/SHPO</b> _____ <b>Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office</b> _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	_____ Date
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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official:	_____ Date
_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>111</u>	<u>32</u>	buildings
<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>119</u>	<u>38</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1 – Jefferson Jacob School (NR #12000449)

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## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

EDUCATION/school

RELIGION/religious facility

VACANT/NOT IN USE

### Current Functions

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

SOCIAL/meeting hall

RELIGION/religious facility

VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN  
MOVEMENTS/Bungalow/Craftsman

MODERN MOVEMENT/Ranch

MODERN MOVEMENT/

### Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Concrete

Walls: Wood, Brick, Asbestos, Synthetics/vinyl, Other/Stone Veneer/Brick Veneer

Roof: Asphalt, Metal

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## Narrative Description

### Summary Paragraph

The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District encompasses a 125-acre area in the east end of Jefferson County, Kentucky, just outside of the City of Prospect, Kentucky. The district is bounded on the southeast by River Road, on the southwest by Jacob School Road and the southern property boundaries of the homes on Riverway Drive and Rest Way, on the east by the property boundaries of the homes on Reset Way, on the north by the property boundaries of the homes on Rest way, Shirley Avenue, and the property boundaries of the homes on Bass Road, and on the northeast by the property boundaries of the homes on Duroc Ave, with the exception of a large single and multi-family development. This district consists of mostly single-family residential buildings, a church, and a Rosenwald school. The district as a whole is an historically African American suburban hamlet developed by and for African Americans during a time of mass suburbanization and discrimination. The area proposed for the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District is approximately 125 acres, and consists of 119 Contributing Resources, and 38 Non-Contributing Resources. One building in the district, Jefferson Jacob School, was listed on the National Register in 2012. The Period of Significance of the district is 1915 – 1971, beginning with the year that the first residential building within the area was constructed and ending with the last year of construction in the newer Beachland Subdivision.

The district has been named the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District as that is the official name of the neighborhood and the name that the neighborhood and its residents have been using for over fifty years. One of the interesting aspects of the history of this district is its segmented development. This means that while the entirety of the district appears to consist of three separate areas and eras of development, it should be viewed as three phases of the same contextual expansion. The name of this district highlights the distinct settlement patterns with a shared history and with two names that are important to the identity and history of the area, with the first name referring to both James T. Taylor Sr. and his son, James S. Taylor. However, even though there are distinct settlement patterns reflected, these are not wholly apart from one another, and this includes the Beachland subdivision, which was the last phase of construction within this district. These eras should be seen as the realizations of the original idea that existed from the beginning. The area was originally settled by a small African American population that had existed in the Harrods Creek and Prospect area for generations and then solidified by the construction of a Rosenwald school. As this identity grew, a trailblazing black man and local advocate, activist, and revolutionary named James T. Taylor sought to expand on the original residential development that grew next to the school. His era of construction created a suburban hamlet for African Americans in Jefferson County's east end at a time when such amenities, space, and independence was not readily available. These principles and motivations were further expanded on and more fully realized when Taylor's son, James Stewart Taylor, developed the Beachland Subdivision. Jefferson County's east end has not historically been overly African American, demographically, so it is no accident that, in this district, the latter periods of construction grew from the earliest settlement, creating a cohesive space with its built environment evolving over the years as development trends and suburban desires changed. As such, over the course of over fifty years, the area that is being proposed as the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District grew from a small residential hub for African Americans around the Harrods Creek and Prospect

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area into a modern subdivision and safe space for Jefferson County's black residents to enjoy the benefits of modern construction, suburban amenities, and a welcoming neighborhood.

### **Genesis of this Project**

In the planning for the Louisville-Southern Indiana Ohio River Bridges Project, mitigation provisions recommendations were made. In 2014, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet prepared NRHP nominations for communities in Louisville's east end, including nominations for two historically African American communities: the James T. Taylor Subdivision Historic District and the Jacob School Road Historic District. These nominations were prepared and reviewed by the Kentucky Heritage Council (the State Historic Preservation Office), but preservation advocates requested amendments to the nominations, which were never made.

This nomination results from the updating and combining of those two African American NRHP nominations as well as expanding their boundaries to include another adjoining mid-century African American development, as all three areas share a common historic context and area of significance. In fact, the James T. Taylor Subdivision and the Beachland Subdivision share a familial connection as well. Due to this nomination's continuation of previous efforts, large portions of the historic context are taken verbatim from those earlier nominations that were never formally submitted to the National Register. While these sections are not called out specifically in the text, as they are supplemented throughout for this current nomination, the author of these nominations (Robert W. Ball) is included below as one of the authors in an effort to properly acknowledge their excellent work, effort, and contributions.

### **Character of Site**

James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District is primarily a collection of single-family homes but also includes a religious facility, and a former school, which is currently being rehabilitated, that is located in Jefferson County's far east end near the communities of Harrods Creek and Prospect. The entire district comprises an early-20<sup>th</sup>-century African American settlement that was uniquely developed by the local black community that had a historic presence in the area dating back decades. The entire district is located on the north side of River Road, which was historically the most important thoroughfare in this part of Jefferson County before the construction of U.S. 42. This area of Harrods Creek and Prospect was historically very agrarian until the suburban movement reached Jefferson County's east end, first in the form of Gentleman Farms and Country Estates and then in the form of the more traditional suburban neighborhood and communities. However, even as the area was slowly developed, complete with the eventual construction of major roadways and highways that bypassed the historic corridors, the entire vicinity was largely rural and sparsely settled.

Outside of the proposed boundaries, the district is surrounded by densely wooded land to the southwest, a public park to the west/northwest that was once owned by the Taylor family who developed most of the proposed district, a modern residential neighborhood to the north/northeast, and River Road and the primary Prospect commercial center to the southeast. Despite the modern intrusions and developments surrounding the district, the district still retains its feeling as a single-family neighborhood that contains a semblance of isolation and a rural setting while also

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highlighting all the standards and amenities of a traditional early- to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century suburban neighborhood.

The district and its somewhat odd shape reflect the eras of development and are defined by the seven roads within. River Road makes up the southeast boundary of the district while Jacob School Rd, Shirley Ave, Bass Rd, and Duroc Ave make up the bulk of the district and run northeast-to-southwest. Toward the north/northwest ends, Shirley Avenue and Bass Road make a slight curve to the west and continue to the Beachland portion of the district and unassociated buildings that are situated outside of the district, while the outermost roads, Jacob School Road and Duroc Avenue are dead end streets. The last two roadways are Rest Way and Riverway Drive, each of which are short dead end roads that are lined with the houses from the first and second phase of the Beachland subdivision. A large portion of lots on the east side of Duroc have been removed from the district due to the dense collection of modern construction and the change in function of these lots from single-family to multi-family residential.

The natural setting of the district has historically been and remains rural with hints of suburbanization. The district as a whole is situated on relatively flat land which is a testament to the proximity to this bank of the Ohio River. The area contains an abundance of mature trees lining the roads and many of the residential lots are wooded. Similarly, the fact that many of the resources are located with shallow setbacks, leaving more space for a larger backyard and vegetation to separate from neighbors reinforces this feeling. Additional key characteristics of the district is the obvious lack of sidewalks throughout and the narrowness of the roadways that have no shoulders or curbs. This intentional omission of sidewalks in the neighborhoods' plans, which was somewhat common of early developments, can be inferred to be an attribute of the new automobile era and an effort to bring the more of the rural feeling to the suburban enclave which stood in contrast to the urban neighborhoods of Louisville.

This proposed district, while residential in character, is still a largely rural and somewhat casual-appearing residential neighborhood. Its houses vary in form, date, method of construction, and current condition. Many houses lack formal styling. The streets lack sidewalks. There is a uniformity in setback and landscaping features, two aspects which hint at its urban nature. The district's qualities are actually commonplace for rural residential enclaves, as well as for developments where progress was gradual, construction was undertaken out of necessity and practicality, with less thought for flourish and display, and where unity existed in the residents and the community more so than in a strict cohesive appearance among the buildings, even though there is a lot of commonality in the architectural styles used, particularly those known for their simplicity and function in the suburban era.

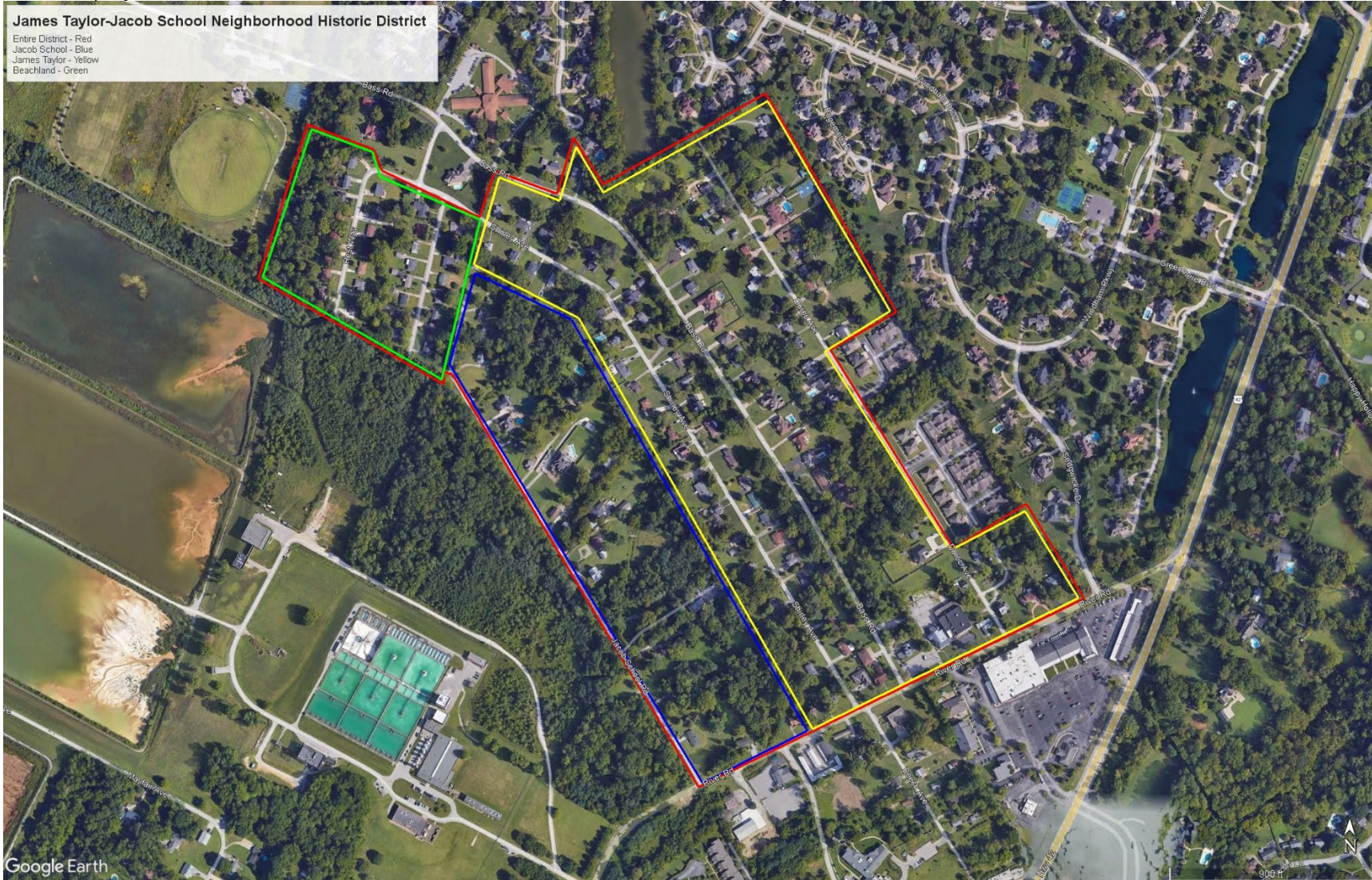
This district is a distinguishable entity compared to the surrounding area both in terms of the history of its development as well as its layout, design, and style. The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District is the only African American settlement in this area of Jefferson County's east end, but more than that, it predates many of the subdivisions that now surround it. This difference is further amplified by the fact that this district largely sought to embrace the rural nature of the area rather than transform it into a modern neighborhood. Overall, this district represents a unique regional history that differs in its early settlement and its modest beginnings.

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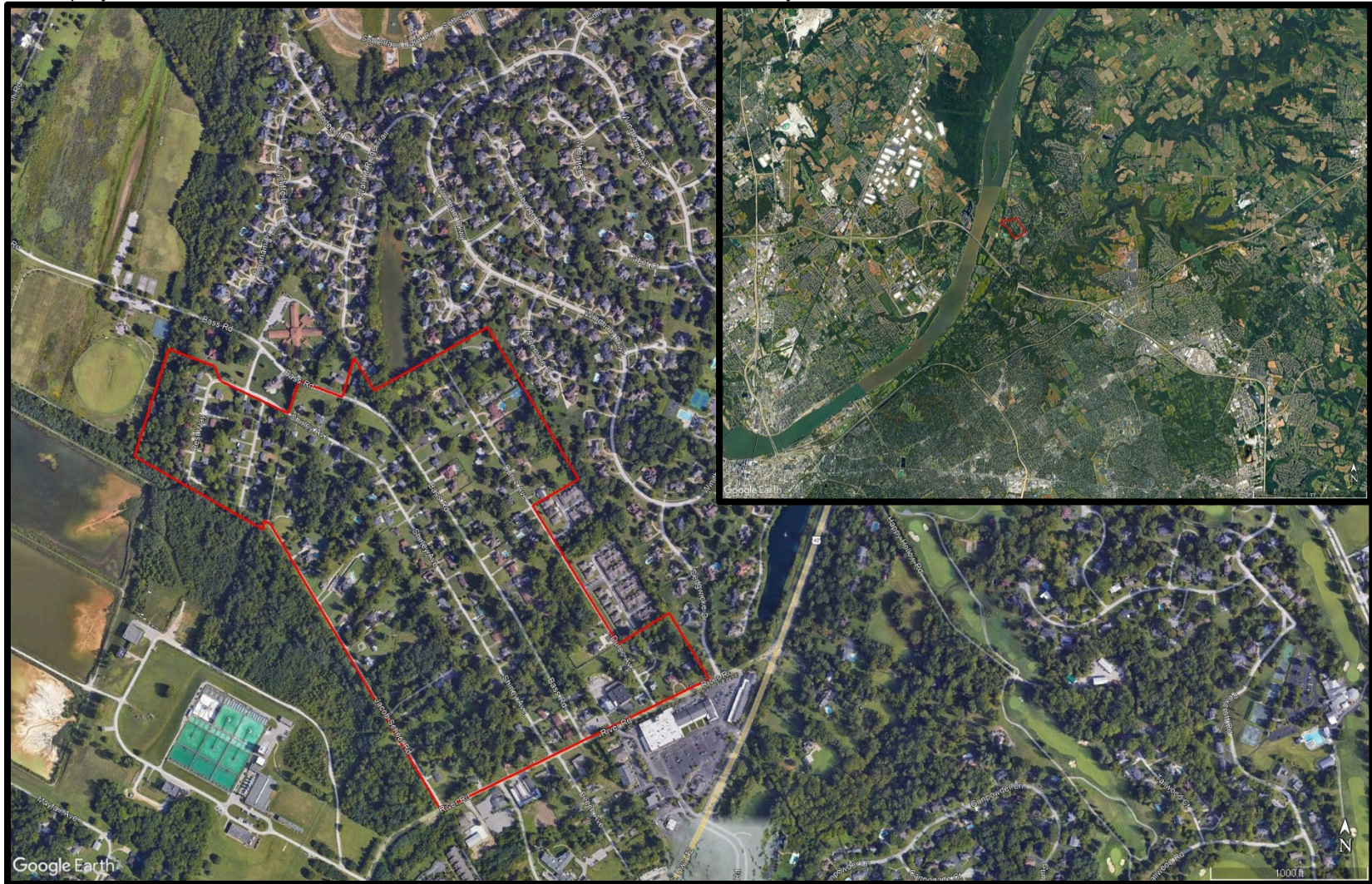
*Aerial showing the three areas of the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District.*

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*Aerial Map of the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District (Google Earth) with a corner callout showing its relation to the city of Louisville (Upper left corner)*

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### Description of Resource

The district is made up of a residential neighborhood, one that was designed and developed by and for African Americans in the early twentieth century. While this neighborhood has sometimes been given three distinct names, contextually and historically, this district should instead be seen as a cohesive entity that has evolved over the years, particularly in three distinct phases. The first phase of this evolution is centered around the Rosenwald school and the less concentrated African American population in the Harrods Creek and Prospect area in the Jim Crow era. After the school and modest residential area was established, a progressive and innovative man sought to further that discreet community by expanding it and offering modern amenities and suburban conveniences, while still highlighting a rural character, to an ever-growing African American population. This expansion came at a time when white folks were leaving the city center and flooding to their segregated suburbs, but African Americans were denied the same opportunities. Then, a few years later, that innovative man's son sought to expand on his father's plan. This last era of construction should not be seen as a separate incident or as apart from the contextual history of the rest of the district, but instead it should be viewed as the ultimate realization of an idea that began with the construction of the Rosenwald school. In fact, in order to organize the construction of Rosenwald schools, the local communities had to be intimately involved in both planning and fundraising. As such, the local African American community had long since established this location as a spot worthy of black expansion and residential and community growth.

The southwest portion is associated with Jacob School Rd and the Rosenwald School that was constructed in 1917. These lots, which are only situated on the east side of Jacob School Rd, all differ from the rest of the district slightly in size, shape, and layout as they tend to be narrow, deeper, and many are angled from the road. Additionally, the resources along Jacob School Rd. have inconsistent setbacks when compared to the rest of the district. With the construction of the Jefferson Jacob School, additional houses soon began to be built along the road with the vast majority dating to 1925 or before. The largest area, which encompasses the eastern half of the district, is the James T. Taylor subdivision. Aside from modern infill and some change in functionality of the lots, this area is defined by more uniformity that the first area in the size of the lots, the setbacks, and the properties' orientation. In this portion, specifically, the size of the lots and the houses were intentionally limited in the hopes that it would prevent them being bought by larger development projects. While this plan may have staved off the unwanted new developments and change in character, style, and makeup of the area for a while, it has not stopped new homeowners from moving in and knocking down the historic modest-sized homes that the neighborhood was known for and building large modern houses in the last few decades. The Contributing houses in this area have the largest range of construction dates, which highlights the ongoing demand and consistent growth throughout the decades of the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The northwest part of the district was last and most homogenous part of the district, and is illustrative of the mid-century suburban movement. In that part, nearly all of the lots are identical, as are the setbacks. The buildings' footprints and the roads lack the planned landscaping of the rest of the district. These buildings were all constructed between 1959 and 1971.

The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District was laid out and inhabited beginning in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and continued through the 1970s. This means that development began when the majority of the region was agrarian with the exception of some country estates,

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and continued through the height of the early suburban movement. African American enclaves in a rural areas arose throughout Kentucky following emancipation, as African Americans sought places to live. They coalesced as strict segregation laws and a necessity to live in close proximity to the workplace, meant that these small, loose communities became an option for residential needs, even those at the periphery of Kentucky's largest city, as is the case here.

The genesis of this district might have been the established African American community in the Harrods Creek and Prospect area, which existed prior to emancipation. Enslaved individuals were forced to live on the farms in the area, and they continued as freedmen and women, staying on in the area to keep house and work the land for wages. The existence of two historic African American churches dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the Jefferson Jacob Rosenwald School, indicate the coalescing of an African-American presence in the area. The factor that gives this loose community the identity as a district is its overall design and development, one that included the uniform layout of lots, paving of roads, planting of trees, and an intense dedication to offer the suburban life and all of its amenities to African Americans in the county's east end. This can still be seen in the district's layout, infrastructure, and rural yet suburban character.

### **Changes to the Property Since the Period of Significance**

As experienced by many historic hamlets in Jefferson County, recent development is transforming the once rural countryside. Modern in-fill is beginning to change the characteristics of the once-agrarian James Taylor subdivision, as large lots are subdivided and discordant modern houses are constructed. The homes filling the empty lots within the neighborhood are larger in scale and constructed in a modern style. Paralleling the changes in the built environment, the demographics of the neighborhood are changing too, replacing the initial collection of interrelated African American families with a less-cohesive community of people without historic connections to the district. Interviewees noted the irony of the situation: The subdivision began as a refuge for Blacks, when whites prohibited African Americans from moving into their neighborhoods in the middle of the 20th century. Today, white neighbors are comfortable living among African Americans in the neighborhood, which is resulting in new forms of construction being introduced to the neighborhood.

This phenomenon is likely due to the modern suburban ideal, the transient nature of residential choices, and the change from individuals caring less for the local identity than their own personal desires. In the Harrods Creek and Prospect area, modern suburbanization has been an activity driven by the affluent for the past several decades. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, open land for development in that area has been in short supply. However, that demand continues to grow even as the supply shrinks. A growing number of people who want to live in the eastern reaches of Jefferson County have shown a willingness to build their large suburban houses in areas without similar housing surrounding them. These opportunists have begun to look inside this historically African American community at open lots and low-priced houses for development. These single-owner developments may nominally be interpreted as the developer identifying with the James Taylor-Jacob School neighborhood, but it may more accurately be explained as a desire to extend the perceived identity of nearby Prospect, an affluent suburb, upon this small African American community.

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The Contributing/Non-Contributing decision for each property was largely centered around the date of construction and whether or not that date fell within the Period of Significance. As is commonplace among working-class neighborhoods, many of the buildings have undergone material changes. These changes can include replacement of exterior material, small additions, and a change in fenestration. Additionally, some resources have experienced more noticeable and severe changes, such as unsympathetic additions. Many such changes occurred during the historic period; others have occurred afterward. These changes largely, however, are seen as a part of the definable character of the neighborhood, meaning that working-class families, who are often financially burdened in ways that affluent families in wealthier neighborhoods are not, pride themselves on remodeling their house, even if it is in ways that fall outside of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, a design approach used by SHPOs, some cities with local historic preservation ordinances, and the preservation community in general. Such an example seen throughout working-class communities is in the replacement, or covering, of original exterior wall cladding with something newer, “prettier,” and easier to maintain, such as vinyl siding. The same is true for replacement windows. Additionally, some changes are made to make a building more livable and accommodating over the years, something that should be celebrated. Within the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District, alterations will be gauged for how they impact a resource’s ability to contribute to the district’s historic sense of time and place, not the change’s impact on the neighborhood as a high-style architectural resource. A building will be considered Contributing as long as the building still conveys its form, features, and details necessary to reinforce the district’s historic identity. Look to the integrity discussion below for more insight on Contributing vs. Non-Contributing decisions.

*Table of Resources within the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District*

KHC #	ADDRESS	YR BUILT	STYLE	TYPE	C/NC
JF-1950	6407 Bass Road	1925	Minimal Traditional	Building	C
JF-2818	6409 Bass Road	1973	Ranch	Building	NC
JF-2819	6411 Bass Road	1972	Ranch	Building	NC
JF-2820	6413 Bass Road	2002	Modern	Building	NC
JF-2821	6415 Bass Road	----	Empty Lot	Site	NC
JF-2822	6501 Bass Road	2013	Modern	Building	NC
JF-3837	6503 Bass Road	2015	Modern	Building	NC
JF-2823	6507 Bass Road	2013	Modern	Building	NC
JF-1951	6509 Bass Road	1958	Ranch	Building	C
JF-2825	6511 Bass Road	1996	Modern	Building	NC
JF-2826	6515 Bass Road	2008	Modern	Building	NC
JF-2827	6517 Bass Road	2014	Modern	Building	NC
JF-2828	6519 Bass Road	2000	Modern	Building	NC
JF-2829	6521 Bass Road	1996	Modern	Building	NC
JF-2830	6523 Bass Road	1986	Ranch	Building	NC
JF-2831	6525 Bass Road	1983	Split-Level	Building	NC
JF-2832	6527 Bass Road	----	Empty Lot	Site	C
JF-1906	6401 Duroc Avenue	1956	Minimal Traditional	Building	C
JF-1905	6403 Duroc Avenue	ca. 1930	Minimal Traditional	Building	C
JF-1908	6404 Duroc Avenue	1937	T-plan House	Building	C
JF-2833	6406 Duroc Avenue	1977	Split-Level	Building	NC
JF-1907	6407 Duroc Avenue	1930	T-plan House	Building	C
JF-2094	6408 Duroc Avenue	1973	Ranch House	Building	NC
JF-1909	6409 Duroc Avenue	1930	Bungalow	Building	C

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KHC #	ADDRESS	YR BUILT	STYLE	TYPE	C/NC
JF-1910	6412 Duroc Avenue	----	Empty Lot	Site	NC
JF-1911	6413 Duroc Avenue	2016	Modern	Building	NC
JF-1912	6414 Duroc Avenue	1956	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1913	6415 Duroc Avenue	1956	House	Building	C
JF-2095	6500 Duroc Avenue	1958	House	Building	C
JF-2096	6501 Duroc Avenue	1957	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2097	6503 Duroc Avenue	1958	House	Building	C
JF 4129	6504 Duroc Avenue	----	Empty Lot	Site	NC
JF-2098	6505 Duroc Avenue	1958	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1914	6506 Duroc Avenue	1954	House	Building	C
JF-2834	6507 Duroc Avenue	----	Empty Lot	Site	C
JF-1915	6508 Duroc Avenue	1951	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2852	6509 Duroc Avenue	----	Empty Lot	Site	C
JF-1916	6510 Duroc Avenue	1950	Cape Cod House	Building	C
JF-2099	6513 Duroc Avenue	1963	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2835	6514 Duroc Avenue	2007	House	Building	NC
JF-2837	6516 Duroc Avenue	2007	House	Building	NC
JF-2839	6518 Duroc Avenue	2008	House	Building	NC
JF-2100	6700 Duroc Avenue	1964	House	Building	C
JF-2851	6704 Duroc Avenue	2018	Contemporary House	Building	NC
JF-2101	6711 Duroc Avenue	1958	House	Building	C
JF-1917	6712-6714 Duroc Avenue	1934	House	Building	C
JF-1993	7516 River Road	1922	House	Building	C
JF-2065	7518 River Road	1922	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-2854	7600 River Road	1972	House	Building	NC
JF-2855	7602 River Road	2008	House	Building	NC
JF-2069	7606 River Road	1926	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-1992	7610 River Road	1945	Harrods Creek Baptist Church	Building	C
JF-1991	7616 River Road	1935	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-1994	7700 River Road	1935	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-2856	7704 River Road	1962	House	Building	C
JF-2857	7706 River Road	1958	Ranch	Building	C
JF-1880	6400 Shirley Avenue	1942	House	Building	C
JF-1877	6401 Shirley Avenue	1942	Cape Cod House	Building	C
JF-2083	6403-6405 Shirley Avenue	1954	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1878	6404 Shirley Avenue	1946	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-1879	6406 Shirley Avenue	1963	House	Building	C
JF-2858	6407 Shirley Avenue	1980	House	Building	NC
JF-1882	6410 Shirley Avenue	1915	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-1904	6411 Shirley Avenue	1940	Cape Cod House	Building	C
JF-1883	6414 Shirley Avenue	1949	Cape Cod House	Building	C
JF-1884	6415 Shirley Avenue	1951	Cape Cod House	Building	C
JF-1885	6416 Shirley Avenue	1925	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-1903	6419 Shirley Avenue	1963	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2859	6421 Shirley Avenue	2006	House	Building	NC
JF 2800	6501 Shirley Avenue	----	Empty Lot	Site	NC
JF-1886	6502 Shirley Avenue	1924	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-2084	6506 Shirley Avenue	1961	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2085	6507 Shirley Avenue	1957	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2086	6508 Shirley Avenue	1958	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1900	6509 Shirley Avenue	1956	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2087	6510-6512 Shirley Avenue	1959	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1901	6511 Shirley Avenue	1956	House	Building	C
JF-1902	6514 Shirley Avenue	1954	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2860	6515 Shirley Avenue	2014	House	Building	NC

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KHC #	ADDRESS	YR BUILT	STYLE	TYPE	C/NC
JF-1887	6600 Shirley Avenue	1930	James T. Taylor House	Building	C
JF-2089	6601 Shirley Avenue	1958	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2090	6602-6606 Shirley Avenue	1963	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2091	6607 Shirley Avenue	1967	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1888	6610 Shirley Avenue	1946	Cape Cod House	Building	C
JF-2092	6611 Shirley Avenue	1957	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-2093	6615 Shirley Avenue	1964	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1899	6700 Shirley Avenue	1941	House	Building	C
JF-1889	6701-6701H Shirley Avenue	1956	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1890	6703 Shirley Avenue	1961	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1891	6704 Shirley Avenue	1928	Bungalow	Building	C
JF-1892	6705 Shirley Avenue	1956	Split-level House	Building	C
JF-1893	6707 Shirley Avenue	1956	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1894	6708 Shirley Avenue	1921	House	Building	C
JF-1895	6710 Shirley Avenue	1963	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1896	6711 Shirley Avenue	1930	House	Building	C
JF-2862	6712 Shirley Avenue	----	Empty Lot	Site	C
JF-1897	6714 Shirley Avenue	1963	Ranch House	Building	C
JF-1898	6715 Shirley Avenue	1963	Ranch House	Building	C
JF 1859	6303 Jacob School Road	----	Empty Lot	Site	NC
JF 2803	6311 Jacob School Road	1998	House	Building	NC
JF 1856	6401 Jacob School Road	1920	House	Building	C
JF 2804	6403 Jacob School Road	-----	Empty Lot	Site	C
JF 2805	6411 Jacob School Road	2007	House	Building	NC
JF 1862	6413 Jacob School Road	1925	House	Building	C
JF 1858	6417 Jacob School Road	1925	House	Building	C
JF 2806	6419 Jacob School Road	1963	House	Building	C
JF 2808	6503 Jacob School Road	2005	House	Building	NC
JF 1860	6505 Jacob School Road	1925	House	Building	C
JF 2088	6507 Jacob School Road	1925	House	Building	C
JF 1861	6509 Jacob School Road	1925	House	Building	C
JF 1857	6511 Jacob School Road	1960	House	Building	C
JF 2809	6513 Jacob School Road	1994	House	Building	NC
JF 840.002	6517 Jacob School Road	1919	House	Building	C
JF 840	6601 Jacob School Road	1917	School	Building	C
JF 2810	6607 Jacob School Road	-----	Empty Lot	Site	C
JF 2811	6609 Jacob School Road	1958	House	Building	C
JF 2812	6611 Jacob School Road	1999	House	Building	NC
JF 1855	6701 Jacob School Road	1917	House	Building	C
JF 2813	6705 Jacob School Road	-----	Empty Lot	Site	C
JF 1854	6707 Jacob School Road	1925	House	Building	C
JF 2082	6709 Jacob School Road	1973	House	Building	NC
JF 1853	6713 Jacob School Road	1924	House	Building	C
JF 2814	7500 River Road	-----	Empty Lot	Site	C
JF 1988	7504 River Road	1964	House	Building	C
JF 2816	7512 River Road	-----	Empty Lot	Site	NC
JF 1990	7514 River Road	1988	House	Building	NC
JF 3806	6701 Riverway Dr	1960	Split-level Ranch House	Building	C
JF 3807	6703 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3808	6705 Riverway Dr	1961	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3809	6707 Riverway Dr	1961	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3810	6709 Riverway Dr	1961	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3811	6711 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C

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KHC #	ADDRESS	YR BUILT	STYLE	TYPE	C/NC
JF 3812	6713 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3813	6715 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3814	6714 Riverway Dr	1960	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3815	6712 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3816	6710 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3817	6708 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3818	6706 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3819	6704 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3820	6702 Riverway Dr	1959	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3821	6700 Riverway Dr	1959	Mid-Century Modern Ranch	Building	C
JF 3822	6701 Rest Way	1965	Split Level Ranch House	Building	C
JF 3823	6703 Rest Way	1966	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3824	6705 Rest Way	1966	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3825	6707 Rest Way	1964	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3826	6709 Rest Way	1965	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3827	6711 Rest Way	1965	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3828	6715 Rest Way	1965	Split Level Ranch House	Building	C
JF 3829	6714 Rest Way	1966	Colonial Revival	Building	C
JF 3830	6712 Rest Way	1966	Split Level Colonial Revival	Building	C
JF 3831	6710 Rest Way	1970	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3832	6708 Rest Way	1964	Split Level Ranch House	Building	C
JF 3833	6706 Rest Way	1971	Ranch	Building	C
JF 3834	6704 Rest Way	1965	Split Level Colonial Revival	Building	C
JF 3835	6702 Rest Way	1967	Split Level Ranch House	Building	C
JF 3836	6700 Rest Way	1969	Colonial Revival	Building	C

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

### Significant Person

NA

### Period of Significance

1915-1971

### Cultural Affiliation

NA

### Significant Dates

1917, 1922, 1925, 1959

### Architect/Builder

James T. Taylor  
James Stewart Taylor

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### Summary Paragraph

The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District meets National Register Criterion A. It is locally significant in the areas of Ethnic History: Black and Community Planning and Development and is evaluated within the historic context, “African American Communities in Jefferson County, Kentucky during the Jim Crow Era and the Long Civil Rights Movement: 1865-1971.” The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District provides insight into the smaller African American enclaves and developments that sprung up in Louisville’s predominantly white areas throughout the early-to-mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, this district highlights very significant features of African American history in Louisville. Three factors are present in this district that provide important insights into the Black experience in Louisville and the region: suburban spaces for African Americans, something that was largely nonexistent due to the relegation of most of Louisville’s African Americans into certain areas in the city proper; second, the construction of a Rosenwald School and the community engagement that accompanied those undertakings; and third, the development, growth, and realization of neighborhoods and communities built by and for African Americans. This district was the product of a group of independent African Americans in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The district largely grew from the efforts of James T. Taylor, an important member of the African American community of Harrods Creek and Prospect, and later his son, James Steward Taylor. James Taylor embodies the spirit of self-reliance, dignity and vision that would eventually overcome forced segregation and other aspects of the Jim Crow social system. The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District is distinctive among other African American communities in that it is the product of African American design, construction, ownership, and maintenance. The Period of Significance for this historic district stretches from 1915, the year that the first residential building within the area was constructed, and 1971, the last year of construction in the newer Beachland Subdivision.

### Historic Context: African American Communities in Jefferson County, Kentucky during the Jim Crow Era and the Long Civil Rights Movement: 1865-1971

#### *Postbellum Louisville and Jefferson County*

Following the Civil War, Louisville emerged relatively undamaged, and the city’s identity began to shift from a western city to a southern city with a strong Confederate identity where “it seemed that a part of the ‘rite of passage’ into the business world of the city was to have been an officer in the Confederacy. Nearly all of Louisville’s journalists, lawyers, realtors, and merchants were former rebels”.<sup>1</sup> Industry continued to grow and the population continued to expand, attracting both wealthy former Confederates fleeing the occupied South and recently-freed African Americans searching for a new life. Rapid population growth led to extreme crowding and resulting health concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, George C. *Life Behind a Veil, Blacks in Louisville, KY, 1865-1930*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985.

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Although as a Union state, Kentucky was not subject to Reconstruction, the mounting discrimination and racial violence led the government to place the state under the jurisdiction of the Freedman's Bureau to protect the civil rights of African Americans. The Freedman's Bureau was a federal agency established to aid former slaves during the Reconstruction Period, championing education and fair trials for African Americans. Postbellum legislation created separate institutions by race for education, taxation, marriages, criminal penalties, and more, effectively

creating two separate worlds of race and, in the separate and unequal world forced upon African Americans, discrimination, poverty, poor housing, crime, and police brutality became commonplace... Life in the post-Civil War African American community had several defining characteristics. First, housing was inadequate and overcrowding was common. While more fortunate African Americans lived in single-family homes, most others lived in tenements and shacks. Diseases and unsanitary conditions were part of the urban landscape. Jobs were plentiful for African Americans in Louisville's strong economy, but wages were generally low. Consequently, these neighborhoods were crowded with folks who were moderately to extremely impoverished"<sup>2</sup>

Despite these very real hardships in Louisville, African Americans elsewhere in the South faced worse hostilities. George Wright notes that

an essential aspect of Louisville life that kept racial friction to a minimum (and often gave the appearance of idyllic race relations when compared to the South) was the attitude of Louisville's upper-class whites and their desire to maintain racial order in the city. From the antebellum days, when most of the slaves had worked in close contact with their masters and mistresses, a form of paternalism had developed... Louisville's leading white citizens often seemed genuinely concerned about Afro-Americans and generously supported a number of black causes. But these whites were very selective about what to support, and in return they demanded that blacks be passive and remain in the place assigned to them in Louisville society... What existed in Louisville was racism in a polite form; it would remain polite as long as Afro-Americans willingly accepted 'their place,' which, of course, was at the bottom".<sup>3</sup>

Further, "Adequate housing was a continuing problem, with the poor being relegated to places not fit for animals and the middle-and upper-class blacks meeting sharp opposition to their attempts to move into better housing in white neighborhoods".<sup>4</sup> During the 1880s and 1890s, numerous Jim Crow laws were established throughout the state and country to legally establish a systematic system of racial segregation. In Kentucky, Jim Crow laws began in 1866 with a ban on interracial marriage. These provisions were predicated upon a "separate but equal" condition for institutions, such as education, public transportation, public accommodations, health care, housing, and more. At the close of the 19th century, African Americans in Louisville were generally segregated in schools, on streetcars, at restaurants, in theaters and entertainment venues, at welfare institutions,

<sup>2</sup> Aubespain, Mervin et. al., *Two Centuries of Black Louisville: A Photographic Collection*, Butler Books: Louisville, KY 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Wright 1985.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

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at public hospitals, and more.<sup>5</sup> In 1896, the US Supreme Court ruled that segregation was legal; this decision would stand until the mid-20th century.

Numerous developments and historic events occurred in Louisville during the decades of postbellum segregation that demonstrated a willingness among the black population to campaign for fairer treatment and a viable place for the African American community:

- In 1868, the 14th Amendment guaranteed African Americans citizenship and civil rights.
- In 1870, the 15th Amendment was ratified, providing suffrage for African American males.
- Alongside 15 private schools within the city, the first public school for African Americans in Louisville opened in October 1870. Numerous other schools followed.
- Also in 1870, Quinn Chapel organized “Freedom Rides” to protest segregation on streetcars. This is the first known protest of racial segregation in the state.
- In 1872, African Americans were permitted to testify in Kentucky courts.
- In 1873, the United Brothers of Friendship was chartered.
- The Civil Rights Act was passed in 1875. It was ruled unconstitutional in 1883.
- The first Kentucky Derby was run in 1875; the winner, Aristides, was ridden by African American jockey, Oliver Lewis.
- In 1877, the Colored Orphans Home was founded, making it the first social welfare institution for African Americans in Louisville.
- In 1904, passage of the Day Law officially segregated all higher education in the state. The law would be amended in 1950 to allow individual universities to determine whether to admit African Americans and would be repealed in 1954.
- In 1905, the Western Branch Library opened to serve African Americans; three years after the Louisville Free Public Library was founded.
- In 1914, the Louisville Board of Aldermen adopted a housing segregation ordinance; the first branch of the NAACP in Kentucky was organized in Louisville in response. The ordinance was initially upheld by the Criminal Court, which was presided over by Judge James P. Gregory later that same year. However, in 1917, the ordinance was overturned by the Supreme Court.

#### *Economic and Infrastructure Changes in the Harrods Creek Area*

Countywide, 1880-1900 was a turning point for agriculture. Total acreage in farms and the production of hay, horses, dairy cattle, and corn plateaued and fell during this period.<sup>6</sup> Large-scale production of a single cash crop became infeasible without the enslaved labor force; only tobacco farming expanded at a large-scale during this period. Smaller farms and tenant laborers became the norm in rural areas throughout the county. Russell Chamberlain recalls that tenant farmers in Harrods Creek, regardless of color, were “at the bottom end of the income and educational scale, and were desperate for any kind of work which they could obtain”.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Carey, Daniel and Mark Thames, “Agriculture in Louisville and Jefferson County, 1800-1930,” Multiple Property Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1990.

<sup>7</sup> Chamberlain, Russell Edward, *The Early Harrods Creek Settlement and the Kentucky Branch of the Chamberlain Family*, 1994.

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The decades following the Civil War also saw a major advancement in urban transportation. Extensive railroad expansions served the city's growing economy. Construction of the Louisville, Harrods Creek, and Westport Railroad interurban line opened areas to accelerated suburban development. Commuter service between downtown Louisville and Harrods Creek began in 1875. Area residents now had a convenient way to live along the riverfront bluffs and still work in the city. By 1883, there were 21 stops along the 11-mile route, "many for prominent landowners who held shares in the railroad".<sup>8</sup> By 1904, the line was electrified and included stops at Glenview, Harrods Creek, Transylvania, and Prospect.

This preceding context serves to provide context to African American life in Jefferson County in the years leading up to this district's beginnings while also demonstrating how the area in which the district is situated fit into the larger geographic context of Louisville. These two features directly impacted the founding, development, and uniqueness of this district as it explains why this enclave in Jefferson County's eastern expanse was rare in what it provided the African Americans who settled there, but was also ideal for development as a result to its infrastructure connection to the rest of Louisville.

### **Residential Makeup of Louisville and Jefferson County: Postbellum to 1940**

After the Civil War, cities all over the country, including Louisville, saw vast numbers of African Americans moving into urban areas. Scott Cummings and Michael Price in their paper entitled; *Race Relations in Louisville: Southern Racial Traditions and Northern Class Dynamics*, called it the "... beginning of black American urbanization".<sup>9</sup> By 1870, the number of African Americans living in cities had nearly doubled. The increase in Louisville's African American population from 1870 to 1960 saw a steady rise from 14,956 to 70,075.<sup>10</sup> These numbers reflect broader themes in African American history, namely the fact that after emancipation, African Americans moved to larger regional cities for community, safety, and to be in close proximity to emerging economic opportunities, particularly in the industrial boom that was happening concurrently. Moreover, this movement was sustained through the mid-to-late-20<sup>th</sup> century by the Great Migration, the large-scale diaspora of African Americans out of the rural south to the cities in the north, Midwest, and west. Louisville's African American population burgeoned during these years and largely settled in the West End, which provided a sense of community, which was the only positive outcome of the overt forced segregation and discriminatory housing policies, ease of transportation, and a close vicinity to a number of manual labor jobs in warehouses, along the river, on the railroad, or in the industrial facilities that were popping up throughout the area.

As the influx of African Americans into the city of Louisville steadily increased from 1870 to 1920; the majority settled near the central business district. The accommodations were described

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<sup>8</sup> Community Transportation Solutions' Project Team, *Historic Preservation Plan of the Country Estates of River Road Historic District and River Road Corridor*. Federal Highway Administration, Indiana Department of Transportation, and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Cummings, Scott and Michael Price, *Race Relations in Louisville: Southern Racial Traditions and Northern Class Dynamics*, Research Report, College of Urban and Public Affairs, University of Louisville, 1990.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

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as unsanitary, dilapidated and often considered to be a serious fire hazard.<sup>11</sup> As other groups migrated to Louisville and created their own communities based on ethnicity, such as Germantown and Limerick; the main factor in the make-up of the city's neighborhoods was race.

By 1920 the west side of Louisville saw African American neighborhoods of Russell, California District, and along Walnut Street established. This was met by opposition by other residents which successfully passed a segregation ordinance to try and limit where African Americans could live. While this ordinance was later overturned in the court system, it was yet another visible sign of the attitude of residential segregation. Eventually, the West End would contain the highest concentration of African Americans in the city.

While African Americans were moving into the city in great numbers, other ethnic groups were moving out to the suburbs in the county. Improved transportation and the decline in agricultural production correlated with this drastic suburbanization of the surrounding county. During the 1930s and 1940s, the majority of the expansion occurred to the south and west.

Following the Civil War, many of the large farms in eastern Jefferson County were divided and sold to new owners. The wealth and exclusivity of the River Road corridor in eastern Jefferson County precluded the extensive development seen elsewhere in the county. A significant number of Louisville's upper economic class developed eastern Jefferson County by establishing an iconic type of property, a "Gentleman Farm," which combined a working farm with a lavish country estate. The Gentleman Farm property type is exemplified by the Country Estates of River Road Historic District (NR # 99000495).<sup>12</sup> This trend began with the farms providing summer retreats for the wealthy but quickly evolved to include architect-designed year-round residences with landscaped grounds. The domestic staffs to run these large estates were often African Americans, who settled nearby in small, humble villages nearby. However, interspersed among these Gentleman Farms were the antebellum estates, some of which had numerous formerly enslaved persons on their property. One such example, the James Clore House (NR #84000387), located approximately 1 mile northeast of the Jacobs School-James T. Taylor-Beachland Historic District, once had as many as 18 enslaved persons and still contains an enslaved persons' cemetery on the property in addition to remnants of what are believed to be enslaved persons' residences.<sup>13</sup>

In the years immediately following Emancipation, several of the local freedmen and women settled in the nearby Harrods Creek and Prospect area, many of whom continued to work on the larger estates. This choice of settlement location laid the groundwork for the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District.

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<sup>11</sup> Wright 1985.

<sup>12</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Country Estates of River Road, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #99000495.

<sup>13</sup> National Register of Historic Places, James Clore House, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #84000387: Cunningham, Wes, *National Register of Historic Places Eligibility Assessment of the Potential Prospect Historic Districts Jefferson and Oldham Counties, Kentucky*, at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, KY 2021.

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### **African American Communities within Louisville and Jefferson County**

The following are brief descriptions of other African American communities once located within Jefferson County. Although many such communities arose and thrived throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, limited information about the day-to-day lives of each community has been documented. Few historic elements of these enclaves remain today. Many of these properties have been listed in the National Register, where a much fuller account of their story can be found. For those listed communities, a citation will be given to the year of listing and the National Register identification number, to aid in obtaining an electronic copy of the form.

*Park DuValle* is located southwest of downtown Louisville. The earliest development began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century following the Civil War but the majority of the community was developed in the 1940s. The original residences were mostly replaced during urban renewal efforts with the construction of large housing projects which are themselves being replaced in a new revitalization effort.<sup>14</sup>

*Limerick*, (NR# 78001360 & 83003715) while originally an Irish American neighborhood; always contained a large population of African Americans throughout its history.<sup>15</sup> It is located one mile south of downtown Louisville and was originally developed in the 1860s for workers of the Louisville and Nashville freight yard. Housing was varied for the residents of the neighborhood. More wealthy families built large, two story homes while Irish workers lived in shotgun houses and the African American residents found housing in the alleyways of the neighborhood. As the Irish residents began moving out to newer subdivisions, African Americans moved from the alleyways to the vacant shotgun houses.<sup>16</sup>

In addition the neighborhood was the location of the first state-supported public school for African Americans. It was opened in 1873 and was called Louisville Central Public School. The community boasted two successive baseball fields starting in 1874, both with the name of Eclipse Park. The ballpark was home to Louisville's major league team, the Louisville Colonels.<sup>17</sup>

*Smoketown* (NR# 97000661) is located southeast of downtown Louisville.<sup>18</sup> Originally settled by German families in the 1850s, the neighborhood soon was the destination of thousands of freed slaves following the Civil War. By 1870, Smoketown was overwhelmingly African American in population. The area was home to several brick-making kilns, with nine being listed in 1871. Housing consisted of frame, shotgun houses that lined the narrow streets. The vast majority of these houses were rented and not owned by the African American families living in them.<sup>19</sup> It was a densely populated neighborhood with a population of 15,000 in 1880.

<sup>14</sup> Kleber, John E. editor, *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*. University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 2000.

<sup>15</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Limerick Historic District, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #78001360 & 83003715.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Smoketown Historic District, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #97000661

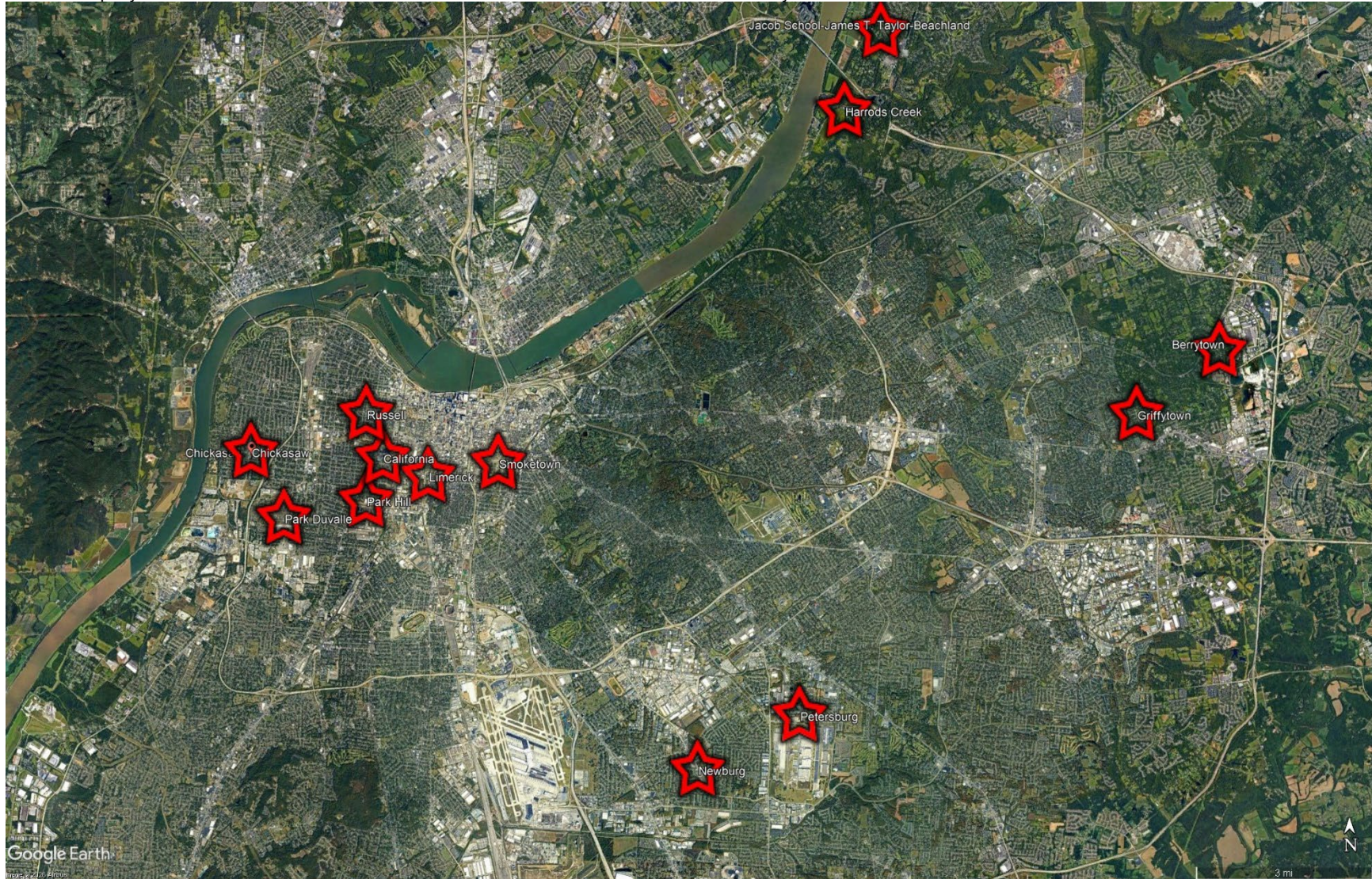
<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

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*Aerial showing the location of each of the listed African American hamlets*

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*Chickasaw* (NR# SG100010766) is located west of downtown Louisville. Born out of segregation, Chickasaw Park was reserved for African Americans, while to the north, Shawnee Park was reserved for whites. The Chickasaw Neighborhood was born from the Long Civil Rights movement in Louisville and includes portions of Little Africa, one of the earliest African American small communities in 20<sup>th</sup> century Louisville.

*Russell* (NR# 80001617 & 00000273) is located west of downtown Louisville.<sup>20</sup> In the 1870s, street car lines reached the area and the community's population began to climb. Originally the neighborhood was a mixture of affluent, white families and working class African Americans and whites. The housing paralleled the social mixture, with large homes along the main roadways and small shotgun style homes on side streets and alley ways.

Russell saw the exit of many of the wealthy families in the 1890s, and the influx of more working class African Americans. The area flourished through the 1940s and the community could boast of theaters, restaurants, churches, and night clubs. America's first public library serving African Americans exclusively is located in Russell and opened in 1908. The Russell area was described by a visiting reporter from Indianapolis in 1910 as, "extremely popular with black professionals and businessmen." He went on to say that the residences he visited in Russell had "all of the modern conveniences found in homes owned by whites."<sup>21</sup>

Following World War II, Russell again saw an exodus, this time middle class African Americans left for neighborhoods to the east and south. Much of the historic fabric was lost in the community's eastern section when Urban Renewal occurred in the 1960s. Betty Winston Baye in her *Louisville Courier Journal* article, "Russell with Influential Institutions, Glamorous Homes, the Area Served as Testimony to Heights of Black Achievement," says Russell is a mere shadow of its former self, with many vacant lots and abandoned buildings found throughout the community.<sup>22</sup>

*Park Hill* is located west of downtown Louisville. It dates back to the late-19<sup>th</sup> century where the southwestern portion of the neighborhood was farmland.<sup>23</sup>

*Petersburg/Newburg* was originally two separate communities; one of African Americans and the other of German descent. Petersburg was the area in which the freed slaves began to settle while Newburg, originally spelled Newburgh, was originally settled by four German families in the 1820s. Both are located on the south side of the city of Louisville. The first African Americans to settle in the area, that would later be called Petersburg, were Eliza and Henry Tevis in 1851. They were free and owned a 40-acre farm. Following the Civil War, African Americans began buying land in the area for farming.

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<sup>20</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Russell Historic District, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #80001617 & 00000273.

<sup>21</sup> Baye, Betty Winston, "Russell: With Influential Institutions, Glamorous Homes, the Area Served as Testimony to Heights of Black Achievement." In *A Place in Time: The Story of Louisville's neighborhoods*, 1989..

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Kleber 2000.

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The area remained rural, surrounded by farmland up until the 1950s when suburbia finally reached it. The biggest change occurred in the following decade, when in the 1960s Urban Renewal efforts, “wiped out the area's unpaved roads, outhouses, unlighted streets and substandard housing. It brought sidewalks, sewers, new roads, a community center and more than 100 new homes.”<sup>24</sup> The 1970s proved to be a time of expansion not only for physical boundaries of the community but also the number of people calling it home.

*California* is located west of downtown Louisville and is thought to have first been settled by German immigrants around 1850. Following the Civil War, African Americans moved into the area and established a school. The community's population was a mixture of African Americans and German immigrants till around 1900, when many German families began moving. Over the next several decades nearly half the population had moved and 40% of its housing had been lost. *California* has been the subject of Urban Renewal efforts.<sup>25</sup>

*Parkland* (NR# 80001613, 1980), originally called Homestead, is located west of downtown Louisville and was settled in 1871.<sup>26</sup> African American residents moved in early in the neighborhood's history with Joseph S. Cotter living there in 1876. As the neighborhood grew, two distinct areas emerged: Needmore, which was primarily African American, and Parkland, which was primarily white.

The area was hit by a tremendous tornado in 1890 which destroyed nearly all the residences and commercial businesses. However, as a sign of their resilience, the residents rebuilt their community and expanded their boundaries. A vast difference could be seen between the two areas of Parkland: the affluent white section had large homes built in the Queen Anne style while Needmore or Little Africa as it was called contained, “wood shacks, leaning shanties and public outhouses.”<sup>27</sup>

By 1916, the African American section of Parkland had 700 residences, six churches, seven groceries, one drug store, a county school and other professional services.<sup>28</sup> However, in 1948 Urban Renewal removed older homes in favor of several housing projects. Overcrowding soon became an issue, the area started to decline, and businesses relocated in the 1960s. The original housing projects were replaced by new housing for the residents in the mid- to late- 1990s.

*Berrytown* is located along English Station Road, east of Louisville. The earliest settler was Alfred Berry, who bought a 10-acre parcel in 1874. The community grew as many of the African

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<sup>24</sup> Goodwin, M. David, “Newburg: Freed Slaves Found Land to Call Their Own in a Swampy Section that Took the Name Petersburg” in *A Place in Time: The Story of Louisville's neighborhoods*, 1989..

<sup>25</sup> Kleber 2000.

<sup>26</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Parkland Historic District, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #80001613

<sup>27</sup> Pillow, John C. “Parkland: Between Upheavals, Area that Began as Homestead saw Rise of Little Africa, Business District.” In *A Place in Time: The Story of Louisville's neighborhoods*, 1989..

<sup>28</sup> Kleber 2000.

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Americans who worked for the wealthy residents of the nearby community of Anchorage settled there.<sup>29</sup>

In the 1960s, Berrytown saw a loss of residents as families moved into Louisville for industrial jobs. As a result, “many of the old neighborhoods were left with vacant properties and overgrown lots. They received few services from the county, which eventually bought the vacant lots but left them undeveloped.”<sup>30</sup>

*Griffytown* is located along Old Harrods Creek Run. It traces its origins back to 1879 when Dan Griffy purchased the land where he had been living. Soon, other African Americans began settling in the area and a community was established. For the next 90 years, the area remained predominantly African American. Then in the 1960s, similar to Berrytown, many residents left for the city, taking industrial jobs. Eventually, the neighborhood was redeveloped through urban renewal at which time most of the older buildings and homes were replaced.<sup>31</sup>

*Harrods Creek* (NR# 91001679, 1991) is located along River Road north of Louisville in the area known as “The Neck.”<sup>32</sup> By 1870, local census indicated that 176 African Americans lived in the area, including the African American families of Thomas Taylor, Jeff Taylor, William Taylor, George Taylor, Jefferson Jacob, and Lewis Brooks. In 1890, Isaac and Mary Hall Merriweather purchased land and constructed their large home in the area.<sup>33</sup>

By 1905 the area included a number of new homes and buildings. The pages from the 1913 Louisville Title Company mapping identified property owners in the Harrods Creek and Prospect area. Records indicated that the area “included an interesting mix of white, black, mulatto, and international residents.”<sup>34</sup>

The *James T. Taylor Subdivision* is located west of River Road just south of Prospect, adjacent to Jacob School Road. It began in 1920 when James Taylor purchased land from the A. E. Shirley Farm. In 1922, he began to subdivide the land into 38 lots along Shirley Avenue. A second plat was filed in 1924 which extended the subdivision to the east of the original 1922 plat and included Bass Road and Duroc Avenue, the latter being the central road within the 1924 plat that contained 37 lots.

Limited development occurred in the Harrods Creek area during the mid-20th century. James S. Taylor, son of James T. Taylor, created a 30-lot riverfront subdivision – Beachland – west of his father’s subdivision. A series of cabins and docks were constructed for African American use on

<sup>29</sup> Mohammad, Larry, “Berrytown Griffytown: Blacks made Homes in Shadow of Anchorage Employers; Share, Care was Rule of Depression,” In *A Place in Time: The Story of Louisville’s neighborhoods*, 1989.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Kleber 2000.

<sup>32</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Harrods Creek Historic District, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #91001679

<sup>33</sup> CDM Smith, *African American Heritage Interpretive Plan for Jefferson Jacob School, Jacob School Road, James Taylor Subdivision & Harrods Creek Village Jefferson County, Kentucky*, Technical Report, 2013.

<sup>34</sup> Turley-Adams, Alicestyne, “Historic Overview of the James T. Taylor Subdivision and The Historic Communities of Prospect Harrods Creek Jefferson County, Kentucky.” Yesteryear Research Unlimited, Inc.

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the Merriwether property in the 1950s. With increased opportunities opening for minorities, the African American community at Harrods Creek began to experience an emigration of its youth. Increasing property values along the River Road corridor in Jefferson County contributed to further gentrification and, into the late-20th century, a loss of community in the historically African American settlement.

The overarching vision of James Taylor was to create a self-sufficient rural community where African Americans could live and raise gardens and livestock. “Taylor’s subdivision quickly became the heart of the area’s African American community after the 1920s. Taylor developed the neighborhood out of his vision to merge the amenities of a modern suburb with the benefits of rural life.”<sup>35</sup>

### **Early African American Settlement in the area of Harrods Creek/Prospect**

The area along Upper River Road near Harrods Creek was locally known as “The Neck.” Freed African Americans began settling there in the 1870s, establishing a thriving community north of Louisville, however there had been a large population of enslaved persons in the area working the many large-scale farms throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As the locale was well out of the city limits of Louisville, the majority of the area was used for agriculture and large tracts of land were owned by wealthy farmers. It was this landscape where the residents of Harrods Creek lived and worked as many found employment on the surrounding farms and estates. By 1905 the area included a number of new homes and buildings. The pages from the 1913 Louisville Title Company mapping identify property owners in the Harrods Creek and Prospect area. Records indicate that the area “included an interesting mix of white, black, mulatto, and international residents.”<sup>36</sup>

Nearby Harrods Creek and Prospect have historically existed as two separate communities. However, their histories overlap and are shaped by different, albeit similar, development patterns. Harrods Creek is the older, place-based name, and was used to describe a huge area of land along the eastern shore of the Ohio River on the east end of Jefferson County, abutting the Oldham County boundary (look to the 1879 Beers & Lanagan Atlas). This broader understanding of Harrods Creek differs from the smaller town that existed therein. Harrods Creek in this document refers to a loosely defined rural and semi-rural corridor along the creek of the same name, which flows into the Ohio River. It was historically characterized by large estate properties, horse farms, and gentleman's country retreats stretching back into the 19th century. Its topography, which includes creek valleys and wooded bluffs, made it attractive to wealthy Louisvillians seeking pastoral escapes from the city. North of the town of Harrods Creek is Prospect, which developed later and was incorporated in 1974, emerged primarily as a suburban municipality in the mid-to-late 20th century. It grew out of 20th-century suburbanization, especially after World War II, as Louisville expanded eastward. Prospect includes land around and beyond Harrods Creek and was shaped by residential subdivisions rather than the earlier river-based economy. The two names are sometimes used synonymously in the local vernacular but in precise geographical terms, Harrods Creek is separate from and south of Prospect.

<sup>35</sup> Fiegel, Jayne, *A Cultural Historic Resources Report for the Harrods Creek Bridge Improvement Project in Jefferson County, Kentucky*. Winchester, KY. Palmer Engineering for American Consulting Engineers, 2002.

<sup>36</sup> Turley-Adams.

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Up through the mid-1960s, the area of Prospect largely belonged to a few wealthy families and groups of farmers. Passenger rail service was completed to the Harrods Creek area by 1875; the line was electrified in 1904 and provided safe, high-speed, hourly service between downtown and the outlying rural community. The construction of the Interurban railroad spurred population growth within the area between the years 1910-1934.<sup>37</sup>

## History of the Jacob School Road Development

### *Establishment of the Jefferson Jacob School*

During the era of segregation, in 1917, the Jefferson Jacob School was established. The school building was financed with assistance from the Rosenwald School fund, a program established to partner with rural African American communities to construct school facilities for African American children. It was one of the first Rosenwald schools in the state; it opened in 1918 with two teachers and eight grades. The local African American community provided \$400 towards the \$4,800 construction cost and agreed to assist with the construction work, including excavation, concrete work, and furnishing and hauling materials.<sup>38</sup> Turley-Adams notes that Jefferson “Jacob School became Jefferson County’s first Tuskegee ‘Rosenwald’ School and the third Rosenwald School in the state” and consolidated students from three regional African American schools – including both the one room schoolhouse at the Neck and the school meeting at Green Castle Baptist Church.<sup>39</sup> The school served the local Black community who already resided in the Harrods Creek area from 1917 through integration in 1957, both as an educational facility, recreation center, and community meeting room.

The Green Castle Baptist Church (JF 838) traces its roots back to 1869 when Reverend John Buckner began a revival after being inspired by prayer meetings in an old cabin along the Ohio River.<sup>40</sup> Buckner organized the Green Castle Baptist Church that same year in front of a regular congregation at Locust Grove. A few decades later, members of this congregation began construction on the first permanent building for the Green Castle Baptist Church. This church operated at its current location since the turn of the century until 2007 when the congregation outgrew its original facility and decided to build on a new site.<sup>41</sup> The Green Castle Baptist Church has had a predominantly African American congregation since its founding and is a testament to the early African American community of the Harrods Creek/Prospect area.

The Rosenwald school was named for Jefferson Jacob (1835-1910), a formerly enslaved person who settled on a farm in the Harrods Creek area in the 1870s. Mr. Jacob was a founder and co-pastor of Green Castle Baptist Church, one of the key institutions for the African American community at Harrods Creek. In naming the school for Mr. Jacobs, community members

<sup>37</sup> Community Transportation Solutions’ Project Team 2012.

<sup>38</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Jefferson Jacob School, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #12000449.

<sup>39</sup> Turley-Adams.

<sup>40</sup> Green Castle Baptist Church, “Church History.” Electronic Document, <https://www.greencastle.org/about-us/church-history>. 2020.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

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remembered him as “a person who took his freedom, as a parent, a church founder, a respected minister, businessman, and proponent of black education.”<sup>42</sup>

Miller describes the African American community at Harrods Creek:

the combination of accessible real estate, viable schools and social institutions, and an established group of local families serving as community leaders led to a kind of ‘golden age’ for the community of Greater Harrods Creek [during the 1920s through 1960s]. It is absolutely essential to note that this community was forged and maintained in the face of Jim Crow laws and legally enforced racial segregation. While to some extent defined by these external forces, the community was built from within, and is remembered with affection and pride.<sup>43</sup>

### History of the James T. Taylor Subdivision

James T. Taylor became interested in real estate during his 30s and in 1915, Taylor and his wife, J. Etta Taylor, created the James T. Taylor Real Estate Company at 610 West Walnut Street in Louisville.

In 1920, Taylor purchased land from the A. E. Shirley Farm and shortly after, subdivided the land to develop a subdivision. Taylor screened potential buyers; many early residents were members of Green Castle Baptist Church, or their relatives. The first lot, located on Shirley Ave., was purchased by Mrs. Mary Lizzie Brown and became first house constructed, at 7518 River Road. The earliest concentration of residences built was clustered on the south side of Shirley Avenue. James Taylor was involved in every aspect of the community’s development. He planted trees and shrubs, paved the roads and mowed surrounding fields.<sup>44</sup> His daughter suggests that the loss of the “wooded feel” of their previous residence contributed to the wooded landscaping he preferred and cultivated within his subdivision.

The subdivision offered a cohesive enclave where African Americans could not only own their own home, but build a dignified, agrarian community nestled among the wealthier estates and subdivisions along the Ohio River bluffs. The overarching vision of James Taylor was to create a community where African Americans could live as they choose, which might include raising gardens and livestock. The neighborhood offered the amenities of the modern suburbs of the time while providing the rural and agrarian feel of the area.

Miller describes the African American community at Harrods Creek: “the combination of accessible real estate, viable schools and social institutions, and an established group of local families serving as community leaders led to a kind of “golden age” for the community of Greater Harrods Creek during the 1920s through 1960s. Of course, this community was forged and maintained during an era when Jim Crow laws, which allowed racial segregation, prevailed. While

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<sup>42</sup> Turley-Adams.

<sup>43</sup> Miller, Orloff G. *The Historic African American Community of Greater Harrods Creek, Jefferson County, Kentucky*. Report for the Country Estates Historic District/River Road Corridor Historic Preservation Plan Ohio River Bridges Project. Unpublished paper on file at the Kentucky Heritage Council, 2007.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

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to some extent defined by these external forces, the community was built from within, and is remembered with affection and pride.”<sup>45</sup>

### **Social Institutions Defining the African American Community during the early-to-mid-20<sup>th</sup> century**

Three key social institutions defined the African American community that sprung up during this period:

- Jefferson Jacob School (JF-840), a Rosenwald school constructed in 1917 that consolidated three regional one-room school houses into a single institution with two teachers and eight grades. The building served the community during 1918-1957 as an educational facility, recreation center, and community meeting room. Early community members banded together to generate the funds and labor to construct the school. The social emphasis on education was an extremely important component of the overall community identity; pride that can be heard in the stories and memories about the school is almost universal when talking with residents. From those that attended the school, to those that attended recreation after the school closed, to those that just know about the school, it is a symbol of education and the opportunities education can unlock.
- Green Castle Baptist Church was established in 1869, located on Rose Island Road a few miles north of the Jacobs School Road area. The church served as one of the earliest African American schools in the county. Jefferson Jacobs is identified among the founders and early leaders in the church.
- Harrods Creek Baptist Church, (JF-1992), which was established in 1891 from members of nearby Green Castle Baptist Church who lived on Jacob School Road and did not want to walk the three mile journey to Rose Island Road. The original church building was located on River Road, about a mile east of its current location. It was damaged by a tornado and multiple floods before the congregation moved to the current building in the 1940s. Harrods Creek Baptist Church has been a key social and spiritual institution for community members, providing stability through the turbulent times of postbellum segregation, Jim Crow laws, wars, natural disasters, and more. A strong association with their faith has been a hallmark of the residents of the James Taylor subdivision.

These three resources helped connect the local African American communities (Jacob School Road, James Taylor subdivision, Harrods Creek Village, and eventually the Beachland subdivision) that were located in the Harrods Creek area.

### **History of the Beachland Subdivision**

James Stewart Taylor followed in his father's, James T. Taylor's, footsteps in establishing himself as a prominent figure and real estate developer in the Harrods Creek area. James S. Taylor was the president of the Taylor Real Estate Co., again following after his father James Sr. who was the founder and president of the company, previously named the James T. Taylor Real Estate Company, and is believed to be Kentucky's first licensed African American realtor. James Stewart Taylor, a fourth-generation Harrods Creek resident, owned a large swath of property with his father just northwest of his father's development with the hopes of continuing his legacy of providing

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<sup>45</sup> Miller, 2007.

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modern, convenient, and high quality housing for African Americans. Although there were no mentions of race or deed restrictions on the properties outlining that this area was developed with African Americans in mind, it was implied due to its proximity to the existing Black community, the fact that the Taylor family was spearheading the development, and that they advertised exclusively in the *Louisville Defender*, Louisville's African American newspaper.

The Beachland subdivision had been in the works for several years before, in 1958, ground was broken on the subdivision's first phase.<sup>46</sup> The first phase of the Beachland Subdivision included 16 lots on either side of Riverway Dr. with houses constructed between 1959 and 1961. Phase two was developed between 1964 and 1971, when an additional 15 houses were constructed. The subdivision originally advertised that the Beachland Country Club would accompany the development of the subdivision, with advertisements showing photos of the William C. Bass House (JF 839 – 6300 Bass Road), implying that it would be the eventual site of the club. In fact, the property that became the Beachland subdivision was purchased from the Bass Family. However, the country club dream was never realized. While a definitive reason is never stated, the most likely reasons it didn't materialize would fit the broader pattern well documented for this community: in the wake of James T. Taylor's death in 1965, as well as the zoning and residential freedoms ushered in by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it behooved many Harrods Creek residents to sell their homes. Additionally, although the Beachland subdivision continued to grow throughout the 60s and into the 70s, some change already started to occur in the broader area which, coupled with the sale of 78 acres of Taylor Land to Jefferson County in 1969 to create what is now the Hays Kennedy Park, altered Taylor's plans and eliminated the land that would have ultimately been used for the country club.<sup>47</sup> In addition to the country club that was never realized, the Beachland subdivision was originally planned to encompass 30 acres and include 65 lots, with an additional 90 acres making up the country club and associated picnic land, however, by the end of 1971, which marks the final date of construction on houses in the subdivision, only 31 lots had been developed which encompassed approximately 13 acres.<sup>48</sup>

When Beachland was first advertised, it boasted several amenities including, "Contemporary and traditional all-brick construction...full, dry basements...large, modern kitchens...city water and electricity...built-in Frigidaire, ovens, and cooking units...concrete drive" as well as offering enticing FHA terms on the houses with as little as 5% down required.<sup>49</sup> These offerings increased as the years went on and lots were developed. By 1960, advertisements were including more interior amenities and choices, highlighting school bus transportation, and emphasizing that the houses were being offered at "fair market prices" and offered "luxurious suburban living in a section of Jefferson County which is well-known for its scenic beauty and accessibility to

<sup>46</sup> "James Taylor Breaks Grounds for Beachland Subdivision." In *The Louisville Defender*, November 20, 1958.

<sup>47</sup> Beebout, Christopher, "James Taylor/Jacob School Subdivision," *Kentucky Historical Society*, electronic document, <https://explorekyhistory.ky.gov/items/show/879>, accessed March 2026; Munday, Walter, "African-American History Month series: Hays Kennedy Park," *Common Ground*, electronic document, <https://louisvillemetroparks.wordpress.com/2017/02/07/african-american-history-month-series-hays-kennedy-park/>, accessed March 2026.

<sup>48</sup> "Beachland Subdivision Promises Enjoyable Life" in *The Louisville Defender*, November 27, 1958.

<sup>49</sup> "Select Your Home...Now! In Beachland." In *The Louisville Defender*, December 11, 1958: "James Taylor Breaks Grounds for Beachland Subdivision." In *The Louisville Defender*, November 20, 1958: "Formal Opening Beachland Subdivision," In *The Louisville Defender*, April 2, 1959.

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downtown Louisville.”<sup>50</sup> At that same time, the country club was still being promised and section 2 was already being advertised. It appeared to be thriving, which was likely attributed to its offerings to African Americans who wanted the suburban life and modern amenities and to the quality of the homes that were already being constructed in the first two years of development.

The Beachland subdivision was part of the broader mid-20th century effort to provide east end property access to African Americans at a time when such opportunities were severely limited by racial segregation and discrimination. Moreover, Beachland highlights the demand for well-built, modern housing that offered the suburban dream to African Americans when such a thing was unavailable elsewhere. This subdivision continued the legacy of James T. Taylor by providing premium lots and premium houses to African Americans in the respectable and beautiful Harrods Creek area in the county’s east end.

### **Evaluation of the Significance of the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District within the context of African American Communities in Jefferson County, Kentucky during the Jim Crow Era and the Long Civil Rights Movement: 1865-1971**

African Americans have a longstanding presence in the Harrods Creek and Prospect area, dating back to the days of forced enslavement on large estates, such as the James Clore House (NR #84000387 - JF 446), and continuing in the years immediately following emancipation. The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District highlights another significant chapter in the story of African Americans in Jefferson County. This district shows African Americans exhibiting significant qualities such as self-reliance and a desire to participate in the suburban American dream in Jefferson County. Their activity over six-plus decades showed the creation of a cohesive African American community which was expressed in subdivisions that exhibited suburban ideals and amenities, at the same time that most black folks were confined to poor urban communities that lacked the conveniences and comforts of the newer white suburbs.

Louisville and Jefferson County have a rich African American legacy. Since the years following the Civil War, African Americans have been creating strong and distinctive communities/neighborhoods. This activity occurred in the very urban areas of downtown Louisville (as seen in Smoketown and Parkland) and out in the more rural parts of the county (e.g., Griffytown and Harrods Creek). These communities span a large time period; while most have an earlier beginning than this district, all overlap in various degrees in their time of occupation.

When comparing the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District with other African American communities in Louisville and Jefferson County, only a few commonalities appear.

- First, all were born out of necessity in response to the segregation practices of the day. A 1914 city ordinance (overturned three years later by the Supreme Court) prohibited blacks from buying real estate in predominantly white neighborhoods and vice versa.

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<sup>50</sup> “Grand Opening: Beachland Subdivision Featuring Homes with a River View ,” in *The Louisville Defender*, December 8, 1960.

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- Second, many of these communities contained similar resources in relation to the built environment. While largely comprised of single-family residences, other buildings included schools, churches, social gathering places and a number of residential and agricultural outbuildings. The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District, like the community of Parkland, contained not only residences and outbuildings but also a school for its residences and others.
- Third, the historic fabric of many of these villages, particularly in rural areas, has eroded as modern suburban development has increased. While larger “nicer” homes and buildings have generally been preserved, the smaller buildings, which also give the neighborhood its character, have traditionally been seen as having little value and have been cleared to make way for modern redevelopment.

However, and maybe more importantly, the comparison also reveals a number of differences between the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District and other African American communities which highlight its importance.

While other communities evolved over time into African American enclaves that were initially settled by other ethnic groups, this district, for all intents and purposes, was established by African Americans. Early residents settled this niche community, nestled among the elaborate gentleman farms and country estates of the east end, claiming a haven where they could thrive despite the rampant discrimination. With placement of the Jefferson Jacob School, the area was ideal for an African American community. Jim Crow laws limited options for African Americans: the types of jobs available, accessibility of real estate, educational opportunities, public accommodations/services, and more. The presence of an established African American community, with an existing school, nearby churches, community leaders, and social patterns, attracted other black families to the area. Large lots allowed individual families to plant gardens or raise livestock to supplement low incomes, creating an environment to foster a self-sufficient dignified lifestyle in an era of racial discrimination.

The older community served as inspiration for James T. Taylor as he envisioned his ideal African American community, embodied in the area’s development. Taylor built on the patterns established along Jacob School Road to establish his planned community along Duroc, Bass, and Shirley Avenues. The vision for the subdivision was one of bigger lots, that allowed ample room for gardens and small livestock to help the homeowners create a more idyllic, self-sufficient lifestyle, yet not lots large enough to entice unwanted outside developers. He incorporated landscaping to preserve the rural natural environment of the area. He invested in public spaces (paving roads and creating a park) and hand-selected residents from among his relatives and friends, even carrying mortgages for those in need to ensure that less affluent families had a chance at home ownership. This philosophy was then further realized by Taylor’s son in his development of the Beachland Subdivision, rounding out the entire district and allowing it to tell the story of a half century of African American suburban development in a small enclave in eastern Jefferson County.

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### Evaluation of the Integrity Between the Significance and the District's Physical Condition

Each building's contribution to the district has been evaluated insofar as it helps reinforce and interpret the significant identity of the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District. The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District meets the definition of a district stated as the 4th term of Criterion C, it is "a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction." Because that significance is in Jefferson County's developmental history, particularly in the context of the establishment of an African American community and suburban residential enclave, the Criterion of eligibility is Criterion A.

The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District is in good condition overall. Although some of the resources that once stood in the district are no longer extant, some of which have been replaced with modern infill in the form of larger, contemporary dwellings, many of the original materials remain intact. Some of the resources in the district have been lightly altered over the years, sometimes to meet growing demands, to enlarge as needs warrant, and to keep buildings in good shape. The introduction of large new houses and people moving to the area with no historical relationship or association with the community has occurred over the last several decades. This is indicative of the larger suburban movement, the desegregation of housing throughout Jefferson County, and the broader affluence that is associated with the Harrods Creek and Prospect areas. While this is something that James T. Taylor took steps to stave off, the geographic location within the county and that area's growth and development over the years made this occurrence all but unavoidable. However, despite this, the district and the community therein is still very supportive of the preservation of the area's history and its integrity, which will become apparent when reading the integrity discussion below.

It should be noted that all of the empty lots within the district boundaries were evaluated to determine if they are Contributing or Non-Contributing to the district. If the lot was empty during the Period of Significance, then it was determined to contribute to the district's integrity as these empty spaces help to keep the historic semi-rural settlement pattern of the neighborhood visible and enhance the overall feel of the neighborhood. However, if the empty lots are the result of demolition after the Period of Significance, then they are evaluated as Non-Contributing.

The following aspects of integrity will be given greater emphasis in evaluating the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District's overall integrity: integrity of location, setting, materials, and design. The conclusion that the district contains sufficient integrity of location, setting, materials and design, will cumulatively allow for the conclusion that the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District has Integrity of **Association**, which becomes the primary basis for National Register eligibility according to the terms of Criterion A: it is important as a "Property [that] is **associated** with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history."

The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District retains integrity of **location**. The Harrods Creek and Prospect area had a significant African American community dating back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Enslavement in the antebellum years contributed to the establishment of a community in this area in the years after the Civil War as freedmen and women stayed in the area to work. This community was so substantial that two African American churches were established

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in the years immediately following the war, one of which is located in this district, and later the Jefferson Jacob Rosenwald School was constructed to provide a place for education and community organizing in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. All of this is to highlight why the location of this historic district is so significant and intact. The three residential neighborhoods that make up this district were intentionally located in the heart of the African American community in Jefferson County's east end. James T. Taylor and later his son chose this area to build a suburban hamlet for African Americans to provide modern amenities and comfort in a very segregated and discriminatory world. The location of this district is of the utmost importance and has not been altered since the neighborhoods were laid out.

Moreover, the physical makeup of the neighborhood has remained largely unchanged over the last several decades, with the exception of some instances of modern infill. Additionally, the overall layout, the relationship to the major thoroughfare of River Road, the infrastructure, and even some of the older landscaping and plantings are intact, meaning that the district appears much as it did when it was first established and laid out, despite the modern intrusions. The district is also notable and unique among African American communities for its rural and suburban feel, something that persists with its isolated yet centralized, thanks to its location along major corridors, location in the east end. The dense vegetation and separation from surrounding development has ensured that the district appearance remains as it was intended. Because of this, the district retains integrity of **setting**. From its inception, the district has been mostly residential with a school and a religious building. The current physical makeup of the district retains the setting of a suburban single-family residential neighborhood that is physically separate from the surrounding landscape. There has been some impact of the historic setting, as there are several Non-Contributing buildings in the district, all of which were built outside the Period of Significance. However, these buildings are easily recognizable and are mostly single-family dwellings, so their presence does not alter the historic setting or the overall integrity of the district.

The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District also retains integrity of **design**. The overall design and layout of the district, something that was very intentional by both James T. and James S. Taylor, has been largely unchanged. This can be noted in the layout of the streets and their size, the size of the parcels, the heavy use of planned landscaping, the lack of sidewalks and curbs, the mostly uniform setbacks etc. While there has been modern infill, this has by and large not drastically affected the design. Although the newer construction is much larger and not in line with the original look and functionality of the area, they are all residential and mostly maintain similar setbacks and aesthetic landscaping, allowing the new houses to more easily fit into the neighborhood, if one can look past the size and styles. The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District still retains its ability to convey the original historic design. In addition to the integrity of design is the integrity of **materials**. Most of the historic resources within the district retain most of their original materials. While there are some cases of replacement materials and building additions, calling for the introduction of new materials, many of the original buildings are still able to convey the significance of the mid-century suburb by illustrating the styles and materials commonly used on such buildings. While some changes have been made to the materials over time, the new materials are used for practical purpose and effect, just as the original materials were, meaning that they do not detract from the district's integrity. While the district's material integrity is the aspect that has been affected by the presence of modern, Non-

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Contributing resources, the district's significant design is still visible. In fact, the buildings built just outside of the POS are compatible with the rest of the district in materiality. Most of these dwellings were built out of the same materials as the resources that are Contributing, even if they do not match the same in style, simplicity and utility.

The **feeling** and **association** of the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District is retained. The historic resources within the district, consisting of typical single-family residential suburban houses, are extant, along with the presence of the different eras of development and the other features that aided in the feeling of the subdivisions, notably the mature trees, the infrastructure, and the rural yet suburban design. The feeling has been somewhat impacted by the presence of new construction over the last several decades, but this has not been so widespread as to impact the overall integrity enough to preclude eligibility. The feeling of a rural subdivision can still be felt when you turn onto any of the district's entry points. The narrow road, mature trees, single family homes, and, in the case of Jacob School Road, the prominent school building, harken back to a time where one's neighborhood was an extension of one's family, the road was part of one's playground and the neighborhood was a place of rest and belonging. Longtime residents embrace this feeling with their stories and memories of life in the early neighborhood; they tell stories full of family and community. Similarly, the district's association with Community Development and African American ethnicity is reinforced by the district's physical resources. Although the demographics and physical makeup of the district have been altered over the last few decades, the community embraces its history and the presence of the Rosenwald school, Harrods Creek Church, and even the names of the streets, and the name of the largest of the three subdivisions, as well as the nearby park, all center the district within its history. The district's parts highlight the district's original landowners, along with the prominence and longstanding association with African American history here. The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District is associated with an important time in our nation's history; a time where lessons were learned about such important concepts as human worth, independence, community, and self-reliance. Through the struggle of segregation and racism, a vibrant and thriving community evolved. The James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District embodies the struggle and triumphs of this period in history as well as highlights the importance of education and the strength and hope that it provided. Overall, the James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District is significant as it shows the foundation, the design, the growth, and the survival of an African American residential enclave in Louisville's east end, something that challenged what was acceptable at the time while also revolutionizing what was available to a heavily discriminated class of people. It demonstrates the importance of community, self-reliance, and determination in the design and development of a unique suburban ideal.

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James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood  
Historic District  
Name of Property

Jefferson County, Kentucky  
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National Register of Historic Places, Harrods Creek Historic District, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #91001679

National Register of Historic Places, James Clore House, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #84000387:

National Register of Historic Places, Jefferson Jacob School, Jefferson County, Kentucky, National Register #12000449.

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James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood  
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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** See above table

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 125 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.348656 | Longitude: -85.630220 |
| 2. Latitude: 38.350305 | Longitude: -85.629437 |
| 3. Latitude: 38.350949 | Longitude: -85.622537 |
| 4. Latitude: 38.344997 | Longitude: -85.617467 |
| 5. Latitude: 38.342621 | Longitude: -85.623368 |

James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood  
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James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood  
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Jefferson County, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning on the northwest corner of River Road and Jacob School Road and then continuing north/northwest along the west side of Jacob School Road until the road ends, then continuing west/northwest along the southern boundaries of the houses associated with the Beachland subdivision to the southwestern corner of the lot at 6700 Rest Way, then continuing north along the rear property lines of the houses on Rest Way to the northwest corner of the lot at 6714 Rest Way, then continuing east along that property line and continuing along the north side of Shirley Ave to the southwest corner of the lot at 6401 Shirley Ave then continuing north to the north side of Bass Rd, then following along that road to the southwest corner of the lot at 6407 Bass Rd, then north to the northwest corner of that same lot, then following that property line to the northeast corner of that same lot, then continuing northeast along the northwestern property lines of the 6415 Bass Rd and 6403 Duroc Ave to the northern corner of the latter lot, then continuing southeast along the rear property lines of the lots fronting Duroc Ave to the northernmost point of the multi-family lot off Duroc Ave, then southwest along property lines to Duroc Ave, then southeast along Duroc Ave to the southern boundary of the house at 6617 Duroc Ave, then northeast along the property lines to the northernmost point of the lot at 7706 River Road, and then southeast to the north side of River Rd, then continuing southwest to the point of the beginning.

**Boundary Justification**

This boundary includes the entirety of the Jacob School Rd. development, the James T. Taylor subdivision, and the Beachland subdivision with the exception of several lots on the east side of Duroc Ave that have been so irreparably altered in recent years to warrant exclusion.

**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Wes Cunningham, MA, Sr. Principal Investigator History/Architecture, Director of National Register Nominations & Research

organization: Pinion Advisors

street & number: 1541 Frankfort Avenue

city or town: Louisville state: Kentucky zip code: 40206

e-mail: wcunningham@pinionadvisors.com

telephone: 502-807-0575

date: March 2026

name/title: Robert W. Ball

organization: CDM Smith

James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood  
Historic District

Jefferson County, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

street & number: 1648 McGrathiana Parkway, Suite 340  
city or town: Lexington state: Kentucky zip code: 40511  
e-mail: ballrw@cdmsmith.com  
telephone: 859-254-5759  
date: October 2014

## Additional Documentation

### Photographs

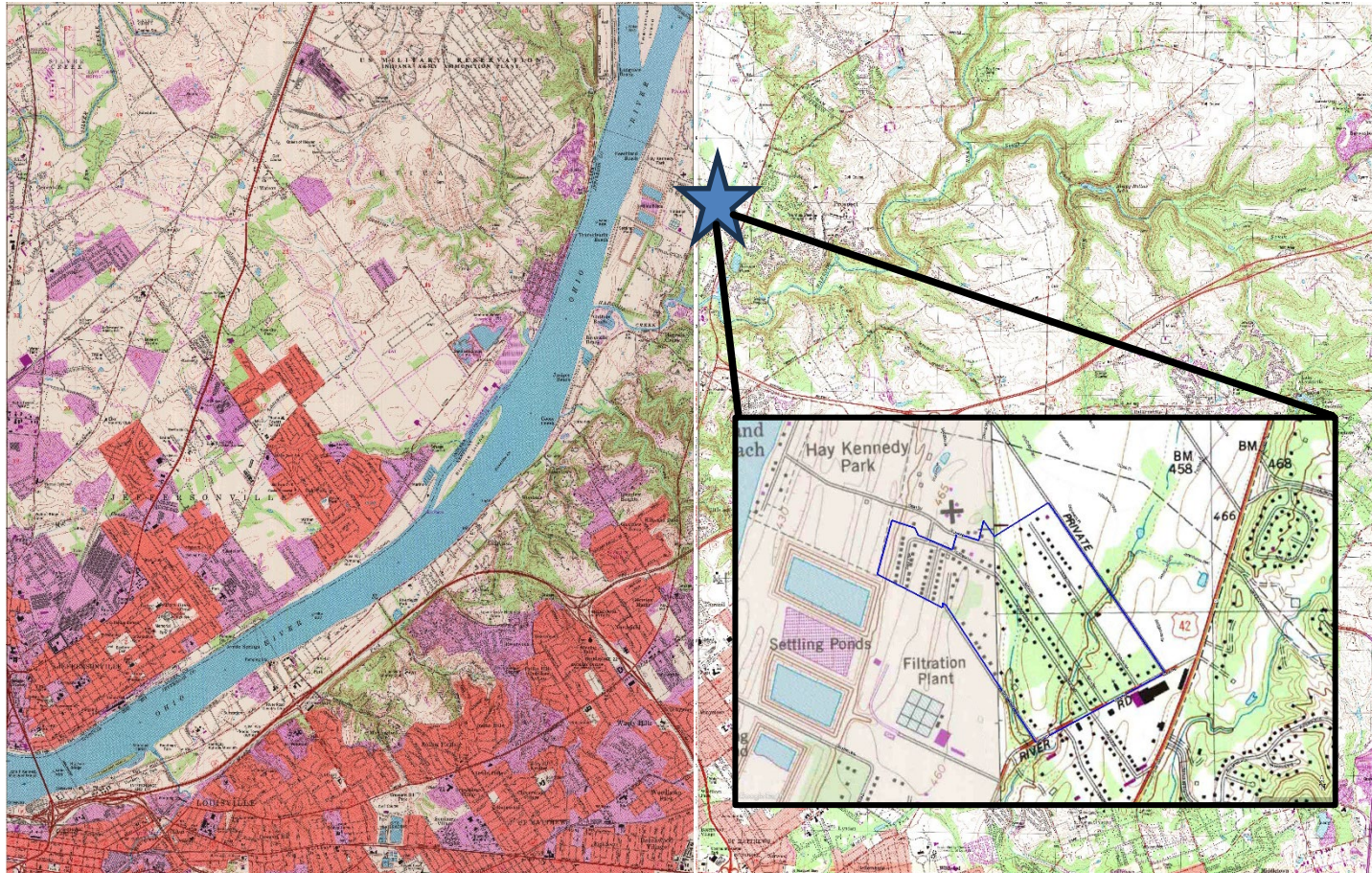
#### Photo Log

Name of Property:	James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood Historic District
City or Vicinity:	Louisville
County:	Jefferson
State:	Kentucky
Photographer:	Brent Girdler
Date Photographed:	April 2026

- 1 of 22: Jefferson Jacob School at 6601 Jacob School Road, camera facing north.
- 2 of 22: House at 6509 Jacob School Road, camera facing east.
- 3 of 22: House at 6707 Jacob School Road, camera facing north.
- 4 of 22: House at 6701 Jacob School Road, camera facing east.
- 5 of 22: House at 6523 Bass Road, camera facing north.
- 6 of 22: House at 6403 Duroc Avenue, camera facing northeast.
- 7 of 22: House at 6407 Duroc Avenue, camera facing northeast.
- 8 of 22: Contemporary house at 6413 Duroc Avenue, camera facing north.
- 9 of 22: House at 6505 Duroc Avenue, camera facing northeast
- 10 of 22: Harrods Creek Baptist Church at 7610 River Road, camera facing northwest.
- 11 of 22: House at 7518 River Road, camera facing north.
- 12 of 22: House at 6401 Shirley Avenue, camera facing northeast.
- 13 of 22: House at 6404 Shirley Avenue, camera facing southwest.
- 14 of 22: House at 6416 Shirley Avenue, camera facing south.
- 15 of 22: House at 6508 Shirley Avenue, camera facing south.
- 16 of 22: James T. Taylor House at 6600 Shirley Avenue, camera facing southwest.
- 17 of 22: House at 6610 Shirley Avenue, camera facing southwest.
- 18 of 22: House at 6700 Rest Way, camera facing northwest.
- 19 of 22: Representative streetscape along Rest Way, camera facing north.
- 20 of 22: House at 6702 Riverway Drive, camera facing west.
- 21 of 22: House at 6706 Riverway Drive, camera facing northwest.
- 22 of 22: House at 6708 Riverway Drive, camera facing southwest

James Taylor-Jacob School Neighborhood  
Historic District  
Name of Property

Jefferson County, Kentucky  
County and State



*USGS Topographic Maps: 7.5-minute Jeffersonville, IN (1993) and 7.5-minute Anchorage, KY (1981)*