

Item Title: Public Hearing to Consider Joseph Blake Farm Historic Landmark Designation

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners holds a public hearing and approves the proposed landmark designation ordinance for the Joseph Blake Farm.

Item Summary:

One of the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission's primary responsibilities is to recommend individual buildings, structures, sites, or objects that are significant in the history of Wake County for historic landmark designation. Property owner participation in the program is voluntary. Landmark designation requires the property owner to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness for any exterior changes to the property. Property owners are eligible for a 50% local property tax deferral. This regulation also provides a public benefit by acknowledging a landmark's legacy and place in the County's scenic and historic landscape encouraging neighborhood stability and high property values and helping to build communities with a strong sense of identity.

Joseph Blake Farm: 4301 Mial Plantation Road, Knightdale vicinity, 27545-9373

The Joseph Blake Farm, established circa 1860, exemplifies a late-antebellum, well-to-do, eastern Wake County farm in operation into the 20th century. Joseph Blake hailed from a wealthy family and inherited the land upon which he built his farm. While his holdings did not rise to the level of planter, his wealth was on par with about a quarter of Wake County farming families in 1860, according to Kelly Lally's study of Wake County's historic architecture. The farmstead comprises buildings dating from the mid-19th century through the early 20th century. The variety of building types and construction dates are testament to the decades of agricultural use of the land. While they have seen some alteration, their basic form and materials are intact, as is the layout of the overall farmstead. The farmstead is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Walnut Hill Historic District, designated in 2000.

Boundary Description:

The 19.81-acre tract proposed for landmark designation is historically associated with the farm and provides an unspoiled rural setting for the Joseph Blake house, outbuildings and structures.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the Joseph Blake Farm as a Wake County Historic Landmark.

Wake County Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation:

At its November 15, 2016 meeting, the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission unanimously recommended that the Wake County Board of Commissioners designate the Joseph Blake Farm at 4301 Mial Plantation Road, Knightdale vicinity as a Wake County Historic Landmark.

Attachments:

1. Presentation
2. Landmark Designation Report
3. Draft Ordinance
4. SHPO letter