



**Survey and Research Report
On The
Charles R. McLaughlin House**

July 31, 2018



1. **Name And Location Of The Property.** The Charles R. McLaughlin House is located at 501 West John Street in Matthews, N.C.
2. **Name And Address Of The Present Owner Of The Property.**

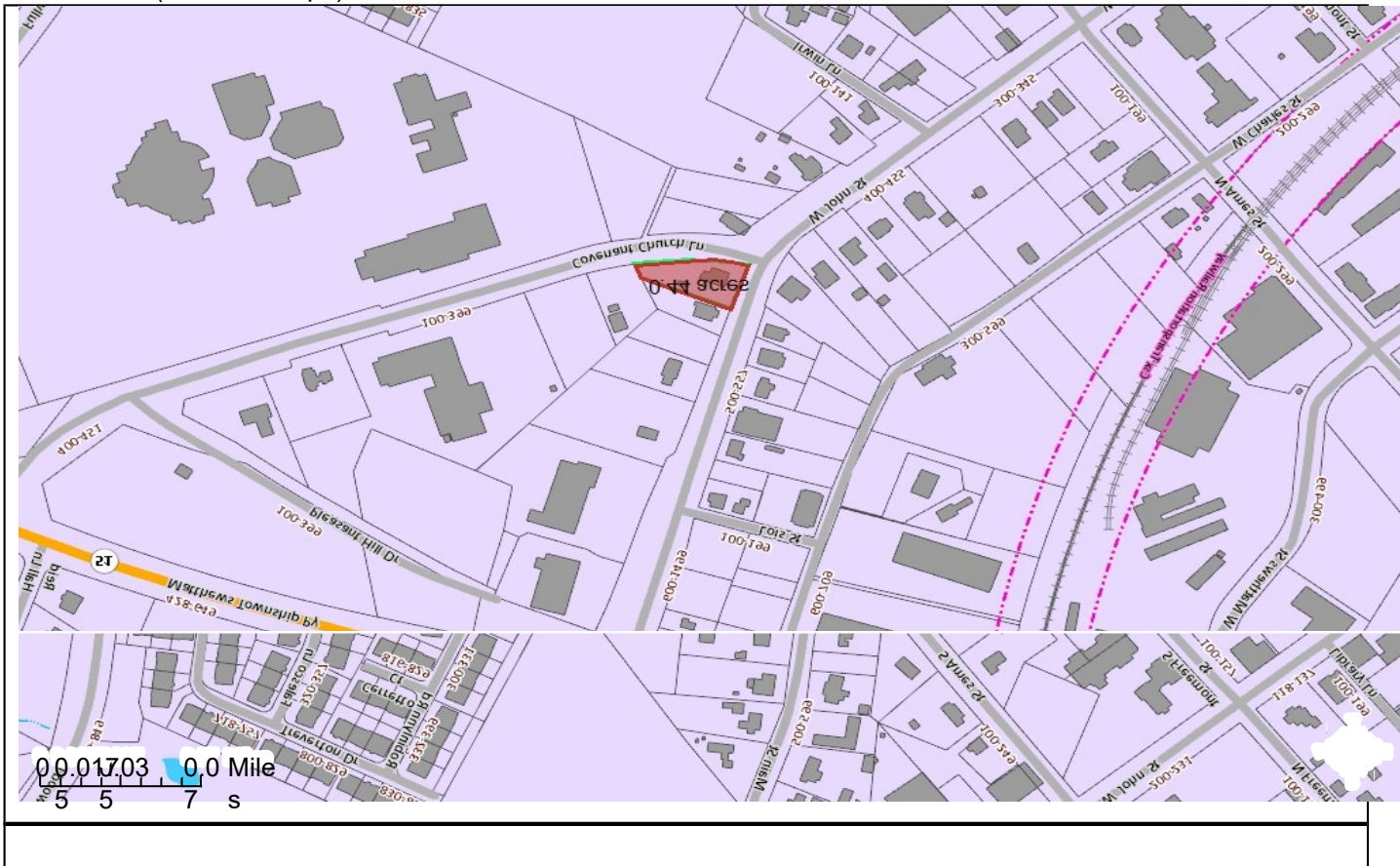
**Toka Properties LLC
4200 Cameron Oaks Drive
Charlotte, N.C. 28211**

**C/O Carolinas Cancer Care
4200 Cameron Oaks Drive
Charlotte, N.C. 28211**

3. Representative Photographs Of The Property. The report contains representative photographs of the property.

McLaughlin House

0.44 acres(19266.57 sq ft)



4. Map Depicting The Location Of The Property. This report contains a map depicting the location of the property.

5. Current Deed Book Reference To The Property. The current deed to the property is recorded in Deed Book 22615 at Page 322. The tax parcel number of the property is 21301106.

6. A Brief Historic Sketch Of The Property. The report contains a brief historical sketch of the property prepared by Dr. Dan L. Morrill.

7. A Brief Physical Description Of The Property. The report contains a brief physical description of the property prepared by Dr. Dan L. Morrill.

8. Documentation Of Why And In What Ways The Property Meets The Criteria For Designation Set Forth In N.C.G.S. 160A-400.5.

a. Special Significance In Terms Of Its History, Architecture, And/Or Cultural Importance. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission judges that the Charles R. McLaughlin House possesses special significance in terms of the Town of Matthews. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations:

- 1) The Charles R. McLaughlin House was the home of Charles R. McLaughlin from c. 1907 until 1952. McLaughlin was the Mayor of Matthews from 1929 until 1941, a period of significant growth in Matthews. McLaughlin was also a prominent businessman in Matthews and its environs.
- 2) The Charles R. McLaughlin House retains a high degree of physical integrity.
- 3) The Charles R. McLaughlin House is one of three extant Victorian style homes in Matthews, and the only Victorian style residence in Matthews that is not a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmark.

b. Integrity Of Design, Setting, Workmanship, Materials, Feeling, And/Or Association. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission judges that the physical description of the Charles R. McLaughlin House included in this report demonstrates that the Charles R. McLaughlin House meets this criterion. *Note: the interior of the house has undergone major renovation and lacks physical integrity. Therefore, a description of the interior is not included.*

9. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal. The Commission is aware that designation would allow the owner to apply for an automatic deferral of 50% of the Ad Valorem taxes on all or any portion of the property that becomes a designated "historic landmark." The current appraised value of the Charles R. McLaughlin House and 0.729 acres is \$367,700.

Date Of The Preparation Of This Report: July 31, 2018

Prepared By: Dr. Dan L. Morrill



L-R: Post Office Builder L. H. Yandle, Mayor McLaughlin, Postmaster General Smith W. Purdum, Congressman A. L. Bulwinkle. Photograph taken at Dedication of Matthews Post Office, May 4, 1939

A Brief History Of The The Charles R. McLaughlin House

Dr. Dan L. Morrill
July 31, 2018



House From Northeast



House From Southwest

The special significance of the Charles R. McLaughlin House is best understood within the context of the history of Matthews, N.C., and the town's place in the emergence of other outlying small towns along railroad lines in Mecklenburg County in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹ The house has special significance because of its associative history. Charles Rhyon McLaughlin (1868-1952), who lived in Matthews for almost his entire life, was a merchant and prominent citizen of the town.² McLaughlin was known as a "Matthews pioneer."³ He was Mayor of Matthews from 1929 until 1941, a span of years during which the town experienced significant growth.⁴ McLaughlin resided in the Charles R. McLaughlin House from c. 1907 until his death in 1952, including his entire tenure as the Mayor of Matthews.⁵

The Charles R. McLaughlin House stood at a major entryway to Matthews until the latter years of the twentieth century. It was at the intersection of North Carolina Highway 51 and West John Street. This circumstance had unfortunate consequences. In April 1937, two Davidson College students were killed when their automobile struck a tree in McLaughlin's yard.⁶ A gasoline truck turned over in McLaughlin's front yard in August 1941.⁷ McLaughlin also suffered personally. He was forced to resign as Mayor in May 1941 because of illness, and he never fully regained his health.⁸ Most poignantly, McLaughlin's wife, Mary Belle Grier McLaughlin (1869-1912), predeceased him by 40 years.⁹ McLaughlin most likely drew strength from his faith. He was member of the Matthews Methodist Church throughout his 83-year life.¹⁰

The Charles R. McLaughlin House also has special significance in terms of the evolution of the built environment of Matthews. Historian Richard Mattson describes how between the 1880s and the

Great Depression of the 1930s a group of “sleepy stagecoach stops or crossroad hamlets” in Mecklenburg County morphed into “centers of local trade with bustling main streets.” Pineville, Huntersville, Cornelius, and Matthews, says Mattson, followed “common patterns of development that engendered a distinctive small-town landscape.” One and two-story corbeled brick commercial buildings formed the main streets of these communities, which invariably intersected or were located next to the town’s principal railroad tracks. Radiating out from the central business district of each of Mecklenburg’s small towns was a collection of fashionable residences, commonly on the major thoroughfares, that illustrated the desire of prominent townspeople to fulfill their “urban ambitions.”¹¹

The majority of the homes erected in Matthews in the first two decades of the twentieth century were Craftsman style dwellings. Most were built in the 1920s. They include such notable structures as the Barnum A. Sustare House (1919), the Renfrow Lemmond House (c. 1924), the “Pete” Phillips House (1925), and the William and Nell Freeman House (1927).



Barnum A. Sustare House (1919)



Renfrow Lemmond House (c. 1924)



Phillips House (1925)



Freeman House (1927)

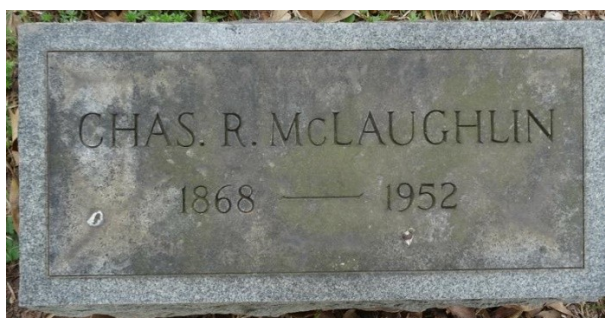
The Charles R. McLaughlin House (c. 1907) belongs to a group of three extant residences that appeared in Matthews between 1890 and 1910. Architecturally, they are Folk Victorian style or Queen Anne style, both of which arose in the late 1800s. The Folk Victorian style took its inspiration from the Queen Anne style, a Victorian motif that emphasized decorative excess.¹² After December 1874, mass-produced wooden features could be transported by railroad to Matthews and used by builders to embellish folk homes, meaning homes traditionally erected in a particular region, hence “folk.” Three Victorian style dwellings survive in Matthews. All are on West John Street. In addition to the Folk Victorian style Charles R. McLaughlin House (c. 1907), they include the Queen Anne style Nancy Reid House (1890) and the Folk Victorian McLaughlin-Bost House (c. 1891), a dwelling in which Charles R. McLaughlin lived before he resided for two years in Charlotte at the turn of the last century.¹³ Noteworthy is the fact that the Charles R. McLaughlin House is the only Victorian style residence in Matthews that has not been designated as a Charlotte-Mecklenburg historic landmark. Common features of Folk Victorian style dwellings are partial-width porches with spindlework detailing, gable-front plan, bay windows, cornice brackets, and clapboard siding.¹⁴ All are found in the Charles R. McLaughlin House, which is now adaptively reused as offices.



Queen Anne style Nancy Reid House (1890)



Folk Victorian style McLaughlin-Bost House
(c. 1891)



Charles R. McLaughlin's Gravestone at Elmwood Cemetery in Charlotte, N.C.



Mary Belle Grier McLaughlin's Gravestone at Elmwood Cemetery in Charlotte, N.C.



Headline Announcing McLaughlin Has Been Elected For Third Term As Mayor Of Matthews



Folk Victorian style Charles R. McLaughlin House (c. 1907)



The first scroll saws date from the 1860s. The scroll saw brought about the mass production of intricate wooden decorations, such as appear on the Charles R. McLaughlin House, the Nancy Reid House, and the McLaughlin-Bost House.



Charles Rhyon McLaughlin (1868-1952)

Note that McLaughlin has no right arm. It was lost in a sawmill accident.

A Brief Physical Description Of The Charles R. McLaughlin House



The Charles R. McAuliffe House is a north-facing, one-story, three-bay-wide, two-bay-deep, Folk Victorian style former residence sheathed in clapboard siding. The streetscape was historically residential, but many of the homes have been converted to commercial use in recent years. There is a one-bay extension at the southwestern rear corner of the house with a shed roof at its rear. The shed roof most likely covered a porch, which has been enclosed. A room has been added on the eastern side of the one-bay rear addition. The complex gable roof of the house is covered with architectural shingle, and the masonry foundation is continuous and covered with mortar.

The house is located on an essentially level, largely treeless lot, to the immediate southwest of the intersection of West John Street and Covenant Church Lane, formerly North Carolina Highway 51. The front of the dwelling is approximately 32 feet from the right-of-way of West John Street. There is a non-contributing outbuilding of recent origin in the backyard. The front yard has two trees. One is a large willow oak. The other is a flowering tree. There is one large tree in the backyard. It is at the eastern edge of the property near the right-of-way of Covenant Church Lane. A driveway parallels the western edge of the property and extends from West John Street to a concrete parking lot in the backyard. There is also a driveway cut that provides access to and egress from Covenant Church Lane and the concrete parking lot. A concrete sidewalk leads from the rear parking lot to the northeastern front corner of the house, turns westward, and turns again toward four brick steps that rise to the front porch. Shrubbery is located at the base of the exterior of the house. A wooden picket fence borders the northern and eastern edges of the property. The front yard is grassed.

The front façade identifies the Charles R. McAuliffe House as Folk Victorian. A partial-width engaged porch with a plank floor occupies the eastern and middle bays. It is bordered by a wooden balustrade with slender pickets and topped by a handrail. The four brick entry steps have a wooden handrail with balusters.



The front door consists of a solid wooden inner door and an outer door with a large glass insert. Neither is original. The western front bay is the most dramatic element of the house. It consists of projecting gable with a projecting window bay with three 4/1 windows. Regularly-spaced 4/1 windows flanked by blinds are seen throughout the exterior of the house. Robust brackets support the broad eaves above the front bay and along the first two bays on the western façade. Brackets also support the broad eaves of the eastern façade, wraparound the rear, and continue on the inner side of the gable projection. The front gable contains a faux diamond-shaped vent, as do the western and eastern façades and the gable on the southeastern rear of the house. Three slender brick chimneys with corbeled caps penetrate the complex gable roof.



1 For a general history of Matthews, see Lester, Paula Hartill. *Discover Matthews From Cotton to Corporate*, Charlotte: Herff Jones Publishing Company for The Town of Matthews Tourism Council, 1999. Hereinafter cited as *Lester*. For a Lengthy newspaper article on the history of Matthews, see *Charlotte Observer*, February 28, 1950.

2 *Charlotte News*, June 20, 1907. In an interview with Margaret Phillips and Mary Louise Phillips, both long-time residents of Matthews, Paula Lester, author of the most complete history of Matthews, was told that Charles McLaughlin's father built the house for Charles, because he was concerned that Charles might be adversely affected by the loss of an arm in a sawmill accident.

3 *Charlotte Observer*, February 11, 1952.

4 <https://www.cmstory.org/exhibits/hornets-nest-appendix/mayors-mecklenburg-cities-and-towns>

5 *Charlotte Observer*, April 20, 1937. McLaughlin purchased the land on which the house is located in November 1900. It is possible that the house was constructed shortly thereafter (see *Mecklenburg County Deed Book 150, Page 324*).

6 *Charlotte Observer*, April 20, 1937.

7 *Charlotte Observer*, August 17, 1941.

8 *Charlotte Observer*, May 7, 1941.

9 <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/73665844/mary-belle-mclaughlin>

10 *Charlotte Observer*, February 11, 1952.

11 <http://www.cmhpf.org/kids/neighborhoods/small-intro.html>. Hereinafter cited as *Mattson* The Town of Matthews emerged as one of many satellite communities that were established in the vicinity of Charlotte after the city developed as an important cotton distribution center and railroad hub in the 1850s. What would become Matthews began to take shape on July 12, 1825, when postal department records show that John Miles Fullwood was appointed postmaster in an area known as Stumptown. The new post office was established outside Fullwood's home. Stumptown soon became known by the locals as Fullwood. After the Civil War, a collection of general stores and other businesses emerged around the Fullwood post office. By 1870 the stagecoach stop of Fullwood had started to take shape as a town. Building lots were surveyed and streets were mapped out. In 1874 a section of the Central Carolina Railroad was completed through the town. The first train rolled into the town on December 15, 1874. The railway officials named the Fullwood stop "Matthews Station" in honor of Watson Matthews, a director of the Central Carolina Railway Company. A charter was granted on March 8, 1879, for Matthews to operate as a municipal corporation. The 1880 census listed 191 town residents. In 1909 Matthews had four general stores, a drug store, a bank, a grist mill, a blacksmith shop, a livery stable, and a hotel. By the 1920s, five passenger trains and eight freight trains passed through Matthews daily. (see *Lester*). What roads existed were either dirt or macadamized and extended outward from town only a few miles. Their condition was lamentable. As late as 1915, automobiles could not reliably travel between Charlotte and Matthews. By 1921, a paved road was completed between Charlotte and Matthews

(see *Charlotte Observer*, October 4, 1921).

12 The Queen Anne style originated in Great Britain in the 1860s in the works of architect Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912). The popularity of the Queen Anne style in the United States dates from the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. Visitors were delighted by the Queen Anne style buildings that the British government had erected at the Exposition. The Queen Anne style was characterized by ornamental excess. (see Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780. A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press,, 1969).

13 *Charlotte News*, October 6, 1901. For a Survey and Research Report on the McLaughlin-Bost House, see <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/McLaughlin-Bost-House-SR.pdf>

14 <https://architecturestyles.org/folk-victorian/>.