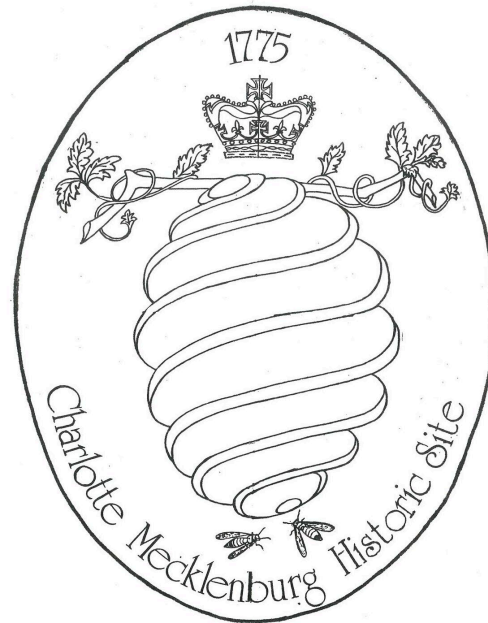


Historic Preservation Opportunities in The River District



The History Of The Land That Will Become The River District Is Rich And Varied.

- Indigenous peoples lived and hunted here for generations
- Settlement by Scotch-Irish immigrants in the 1750s.
- Gold Mining in the first half of the 19th Century
- Plantations worked by enslaved people until the Civil War
 - Sadler Plantation (c.1840s) was relatively large, with 20+ slaves by 1850
 - Numerous other “plantations” as well, including Alex. Cooper; James Marshall; Wm. and James Porter; Margaret, Robert, Geo. Sloan; and more.
- Yet, much of the area (especially the northern part) was somewhat integrated.
 - “Equality” Community in late 1830s to c.1850 (lower Paw Creek and upper Steele Creek).

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23	
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26	1 1/2 bu. 1/2
27	3 1/2 bu. 1/2
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- After the Civil War, formerly enslaved people started Mt. Olive Presbyterian Church (c.1865).
- Many became tenant farmers on the former plantations.
- “Dixie” becomes associated with community by 1885
- Community of Black Americans grew along the Dixie-River Road, Sadler Road, Mt. Olive Church Road and their environs.
 - School established for Black children on Mt. Olive Church Rd.
 - Several of these families still live along Sadler and Mt. Olive Church roads
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Post Office Department,
TOPOGRAPHER'S OFFICE
Washington, D. C., March 25

Sir:
To enable the Topographer of this Department to determine, with as much accuracy as possible, the relative positions of Post Offices, so that they may be correctly delineated on its maps, the Postmaster General requests you to fill up the spaces below, and the diagram on fourth page, returning the same, verified by your signature and dated, under cover to this Office.

Respectfully, &c.,
C. Roush
Topographer F. O. Dept.

To POSTMASTER AT Dixie
Mecklenburg Co.
N. C.

The (P. O. Dept.) name of my Office is Dixie
*Its local name is _____
It is situated in the _____ quarter of Section No. _____, in Township _____ (north or south), Range _____ (east or west), County _____ of Mecklenburg, State of N. C.

The name of the most prominent river near it is Catawba
The name of the nearest creek is Sugar Creek
This Office is 3 miles from said river, on the E side of it, and is 3 miles from said nearest creek, on the W side of it.

The name of the nearest Office on route No. _____ is Lodo, and its distance is 3 miles, by the traveled road, in a N. E. direction from this, my Office.
The name of the nearest Office, on the same route, on the other side, is Belmont and its distance is 7 miles in a N. W. direction from this, my Office.
The name of the nearest Office off the route is Steel Creek, and its distance by the most direct road is 5 1/2 miles in a S. E. direction from this, my Office.
This Office is at a distance of 2 1/2 from the track Station of the Richmond & Danville Railroad, on the South side of the railroad.

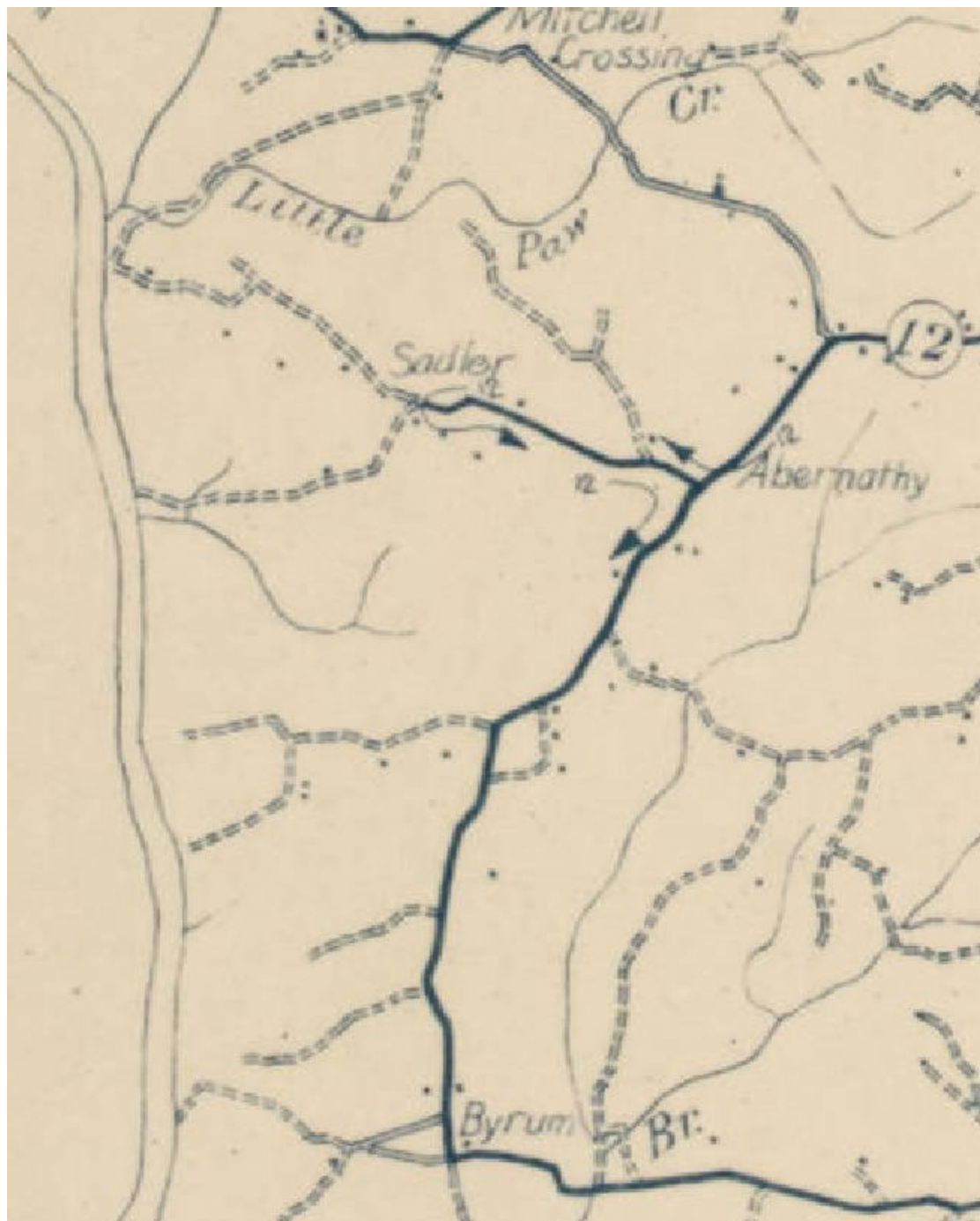
State, under this, the names of other Offices near your Office, in different directions from it, and their distances from it by the most direct roads.



Old Maps shed some light on what was here in the past ...

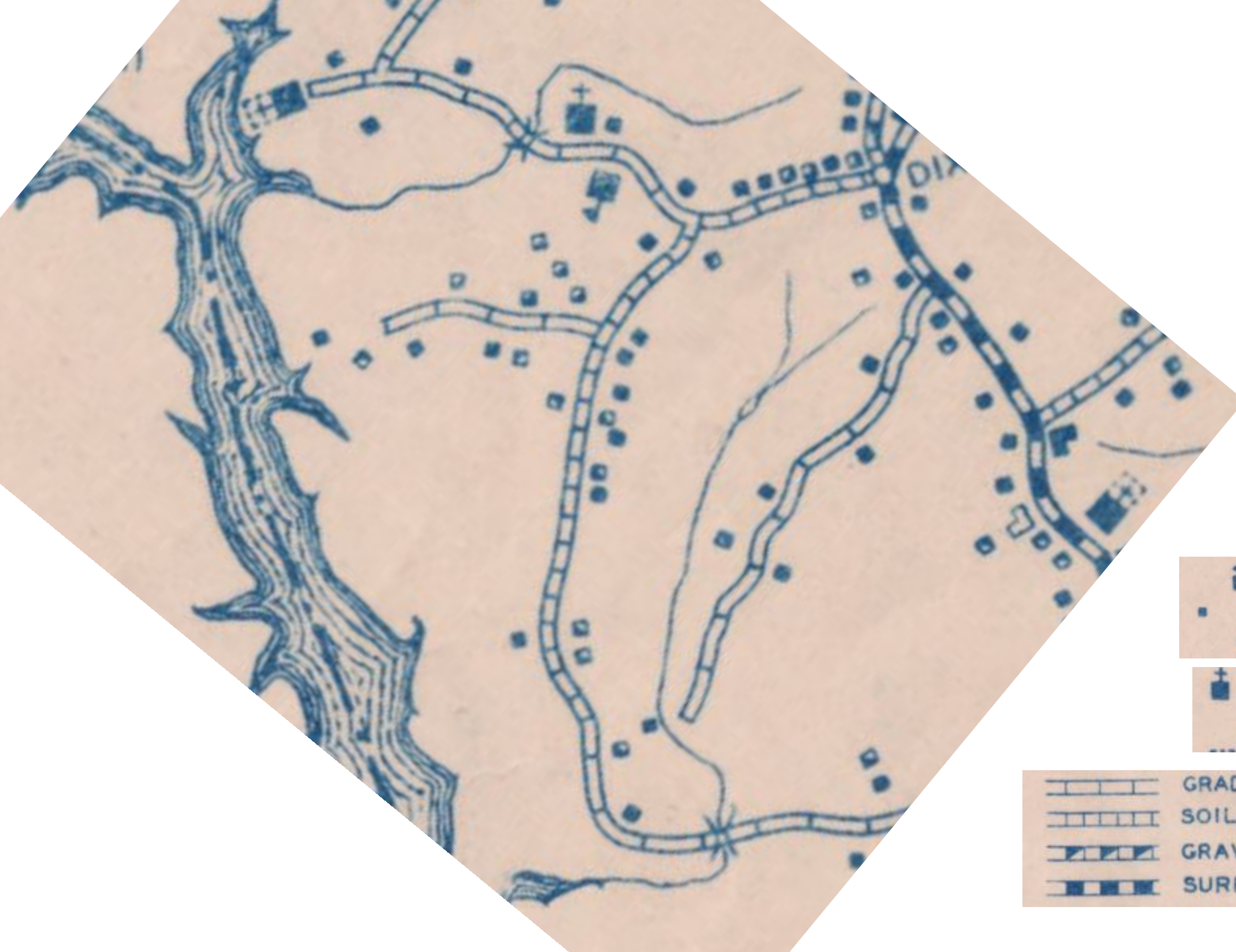
1911 Spratt Map of Mecklenburg Co.














1912 Map of Postal
Routes in Mecklenburg
Co.

1938 Highway Map of Meck. Co.



	SCHOOL
	FARM UNIT
	NON-FARM OR TENANT HOUSE

	CHURCH
	CHURCH WITH CEMETERY

	GRADED AND DRAINED ROAD
	SOIL SURFACED ROAD
	GRAVEL, OR STONE SURFACED ROAD
	SURFACE TREATED ROAD (BIT.)

*Unfortunately, most of the historic structures
in the River District have been lost ...*

LOST



Deese
House
c.1880/90
North Side,
Dixie River
Road

LOST

House
c.1880/90s
North
Side, Dixie
River Road



LOST

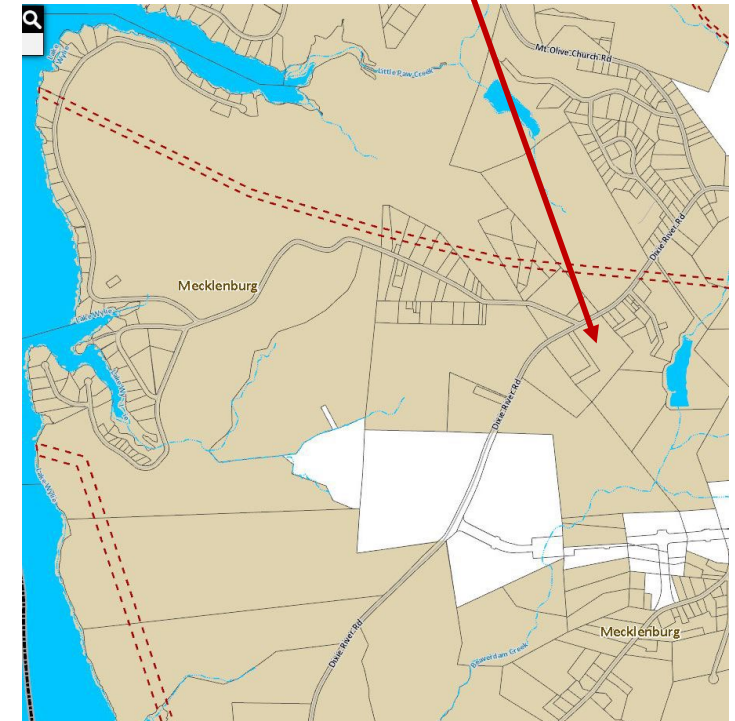
Vinson
House
c.1900
East Side
Dixie
River Rd.



LOST



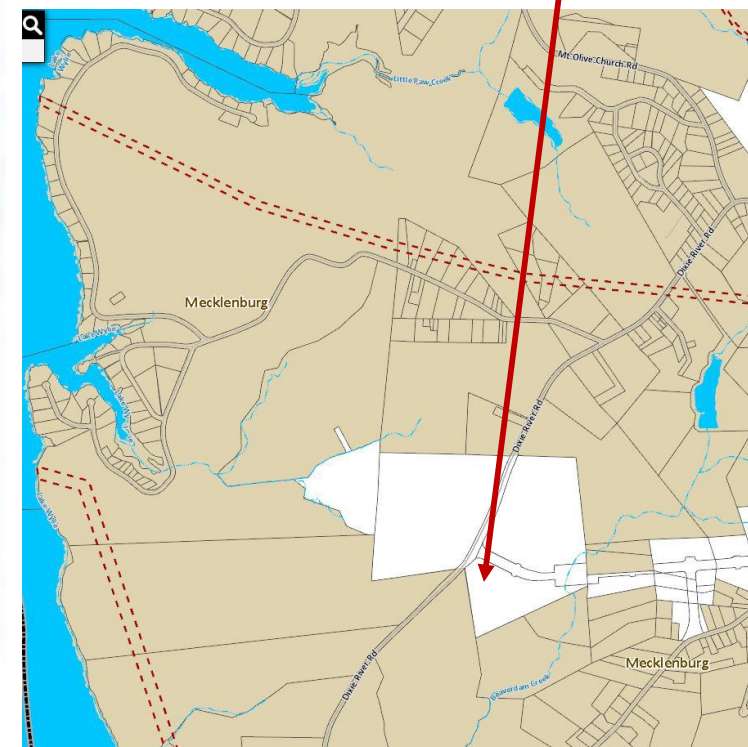
Roosevelt Neal
House c.1900
(Dixie River Rd.
opposite Sadler
Rd.)



LOST

House
first ½ of 20th C.

Dixie River Rd.
at River District
entry from
Garrison

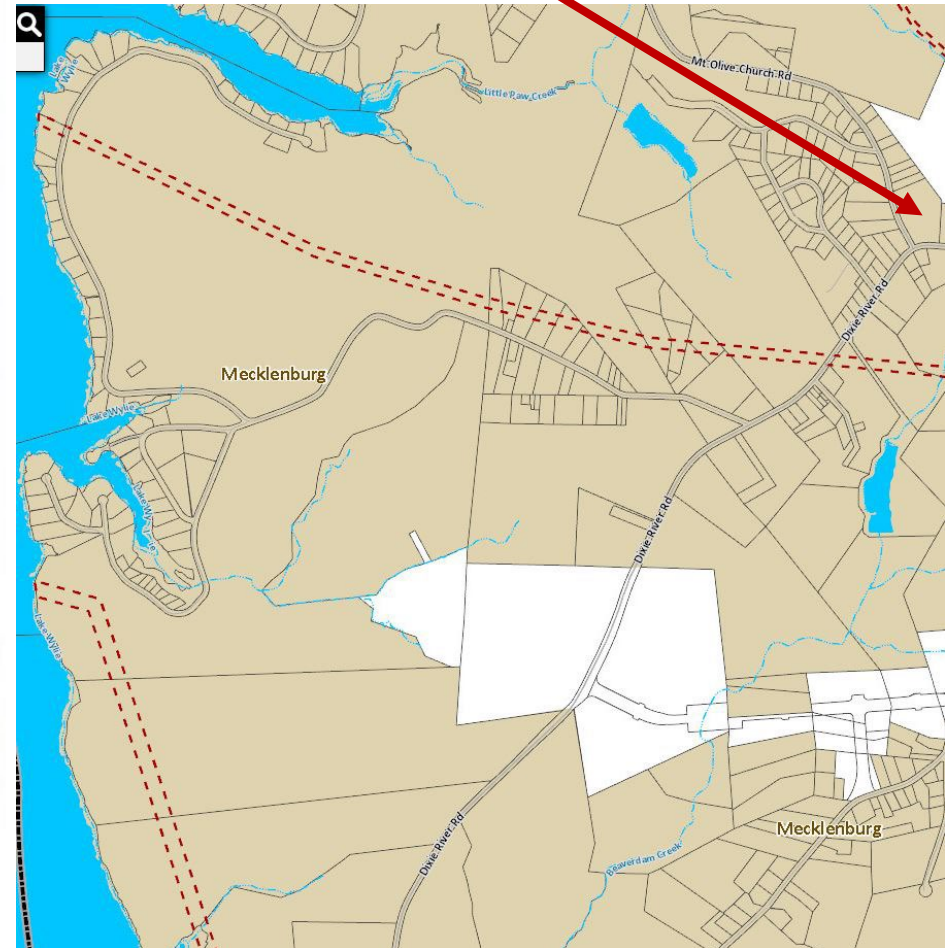


A few survive however ...

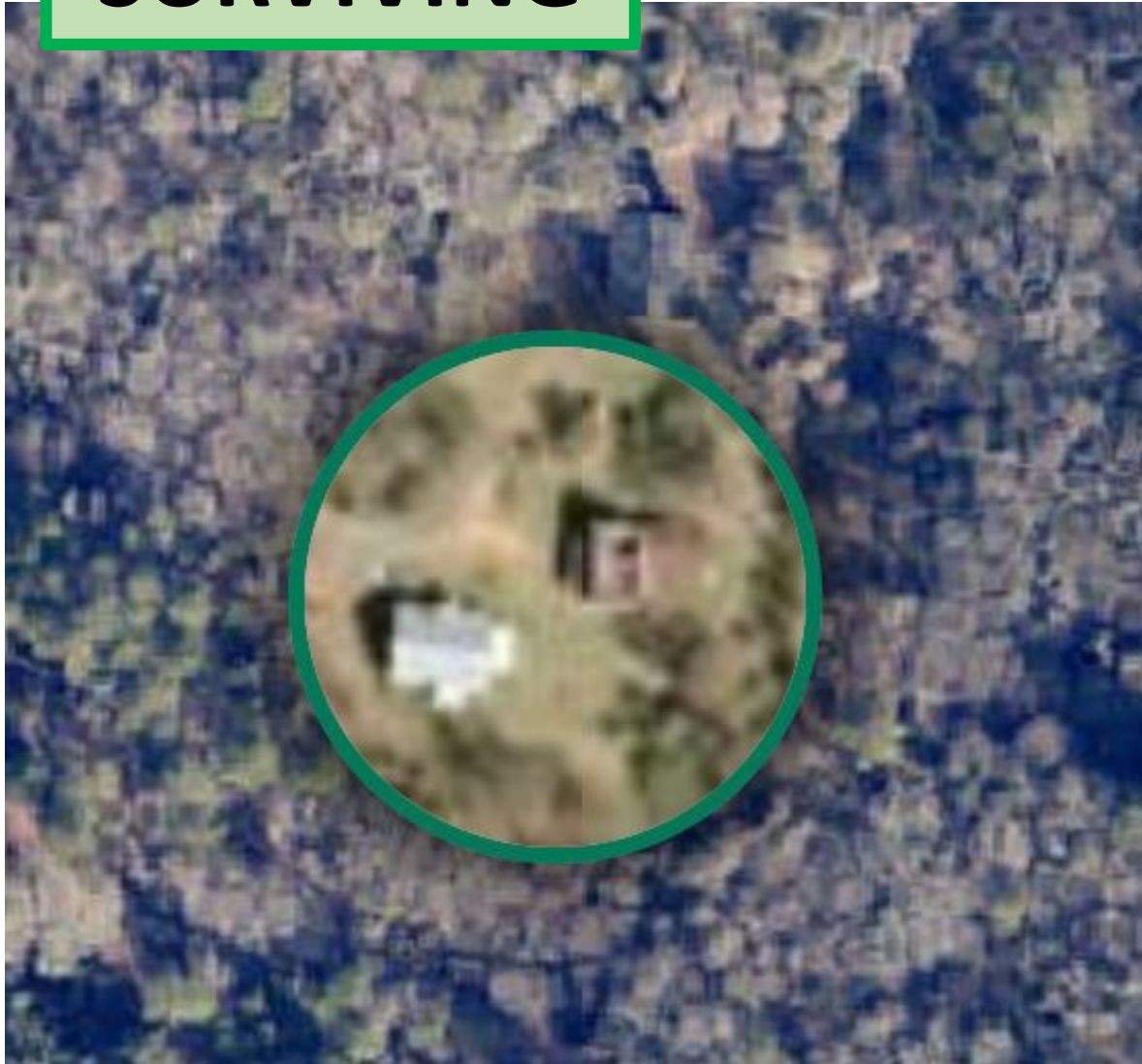
SURVIVING



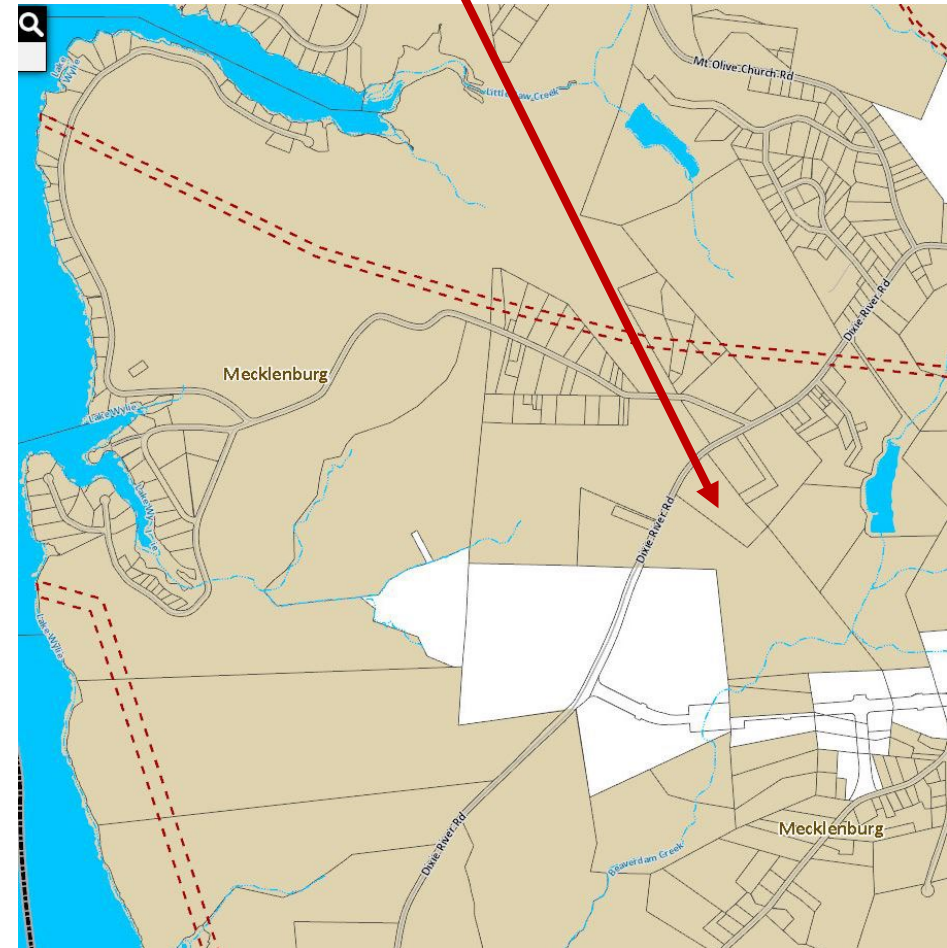
Cooper Log House c.1780



SURVIVING



Johnston Farm c.1900



SURVIVING

Sadler Road Houses (early 20th C.)



4909 Sadler Rd. c.1911



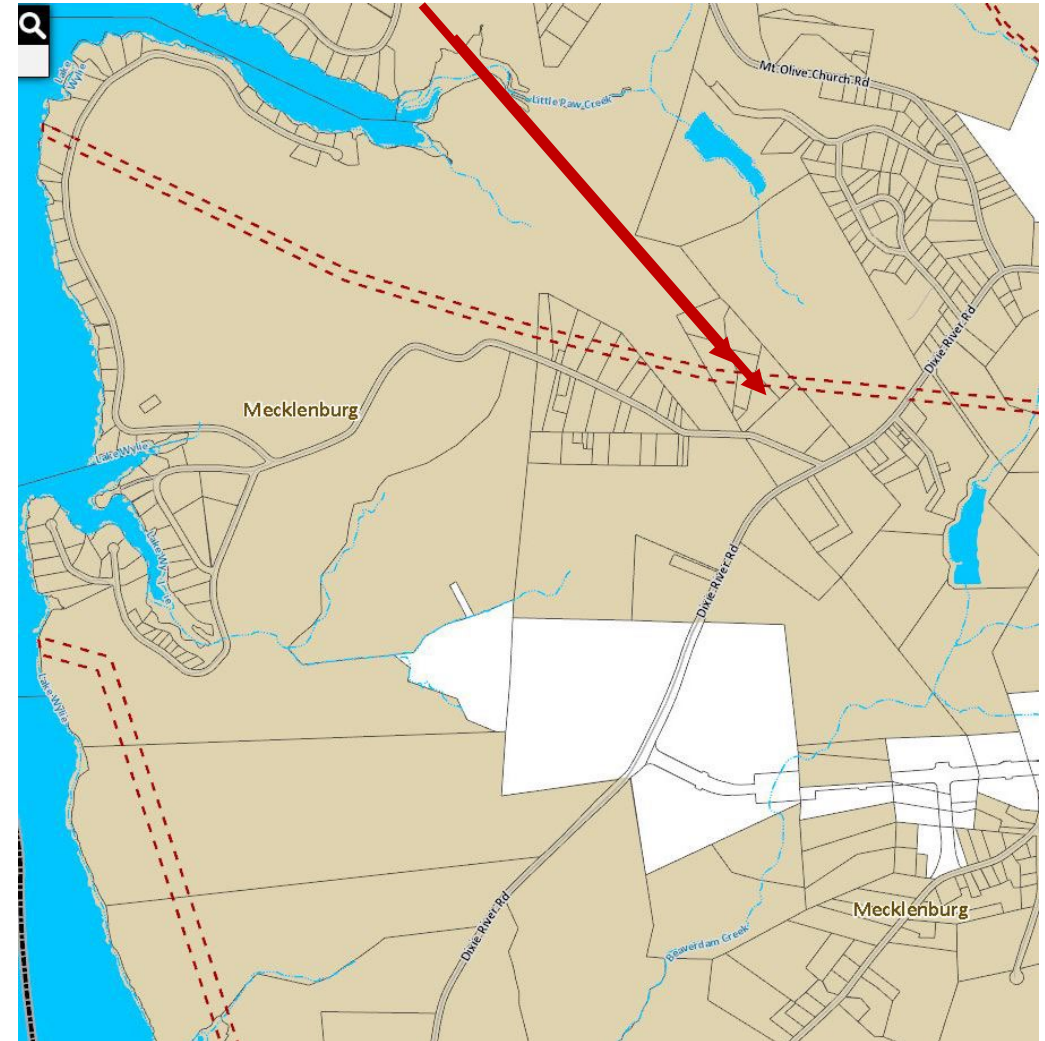
4911 Sadler Rd. c.1925



4915 Sadler Rd. c.1935



4917 Sadler Rd. c.1911



SURVIVING

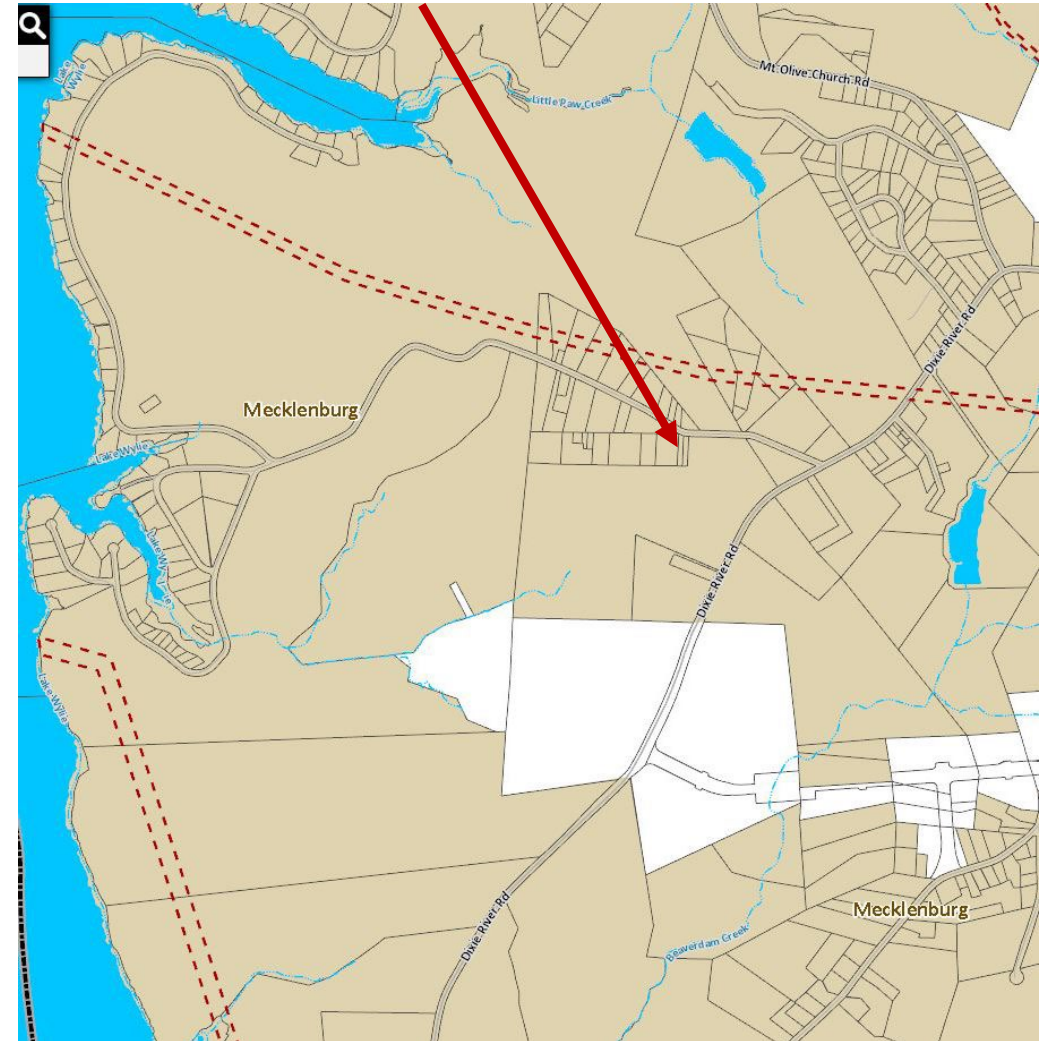
Sadler Road Houses (early 20th C.)



4814 Sadler Rd. c.1910



4818 Sadler Rd. c.1920



SURVIVING

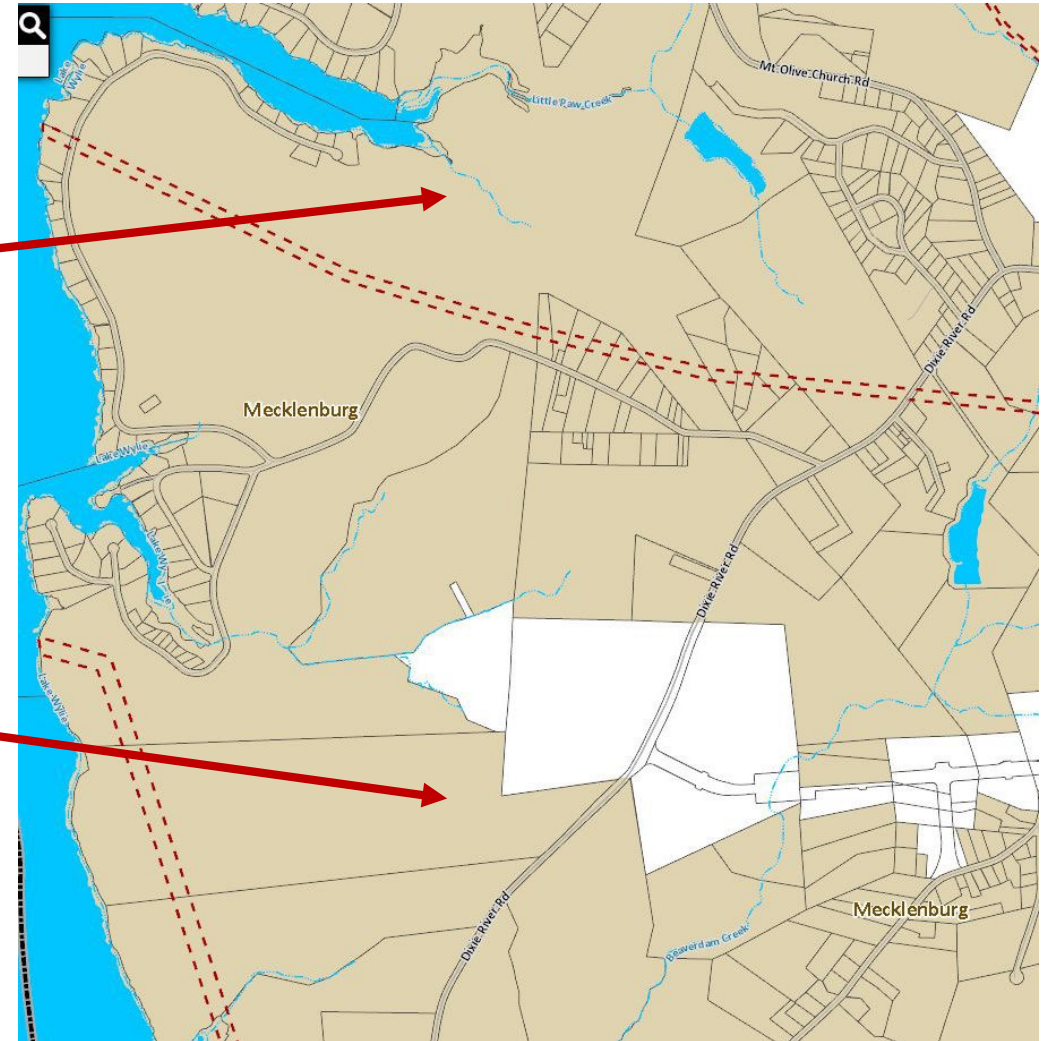
Ruins and Archaeological Sites



Dam (c. early 19th C.)



Hand-Dug Well



Rooting the River District in this History

- The plans for the River District do an admirable job of protecting and highlighting the **NATURAL** environment.
 - Both practical and pragmatic reasons for this.
- Highlighting the **HISTORICAL** environment is equally important and for the same reasons.
 - Appeal to Millennials and younger generations
 - Sense of place
 - Connecting residents to what came before
 - Acknowledging the past (both good and bad)
 - Creating destinations within the River District

Rooting the River District in this History: Opportunities

- Partnering with the Landmarks Commission (and, potentially, Preserve Mecklenburg) as you are partnering with Catawba Land Conservancy.
 - Preserving remaining historic structures
 - Potential to relocate significant historic structures threatened by the Airport's expansion
 - Wm. Grier House (c.1825)
 - Steele Creek Manse (c.1910) and (potential) Schoolhouse (c.1900)
 - John Douglas House (c.1870)
 - Spratt-Grier House (c.1850) [potential house for enslaved people]

Rooting the River District in this History: Opportunities

- Work with long-time residents along Sadler and Mt. Olive Church on Oral History (similar to Brooklyn/Pearl Street Park uptown)
- Educational Signage along sidewalks to tell the story of the area
- Using Crescent's Archaeological Survey (and County LiDAR data) to identify historic sites to preserve and/or celebrate
 - Dam/Mill Ruin near Little Paw Creek could be a hiking destination (with signage)
 - Gold Mining sites and former plantation/homestead sites
 - Potential for ongoing archaeological excavations (w/UNCC or other university)
- Turn historic farmstead(s) back into working farms for River District Farmers Market.
 - Johnston Farm would be perfect for this

Thoughts?

Questions?

CONTACT INFO:

- **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission**
 - Jack Thomson, Exec. Director (Jack.Thomson@mecklenburgcountync.gov)
 - Brian Clarke, Commissioner and Vice-Chair (briansclarke1972@gmail.com)