

## B. RESOURCES RECOMMENDED ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

### BERRY O'KELLY SCHOOL HISTORIC DISTRICT (NCDOT SURVEY #15, #16, AND #17)

Resource Name:	Berry O'Kelly School Historic District
HPO Survey Site #	WA 6527
Location	512, 514, and 520 Method Road
PIN	794035766, 0794037650, and 794034561
Date(s) of Construction	1941; circa 1947; circa 1997
Recommendation	Eligible for NRHP Under Criteria A, B and C

The Berry O'Kelly School campus is recommended eligible for the NRHP. It consists of approximately 8.5 acres at the north end of the historic Method community. Historically, the campus was larger, extending to the north and east. Today, the campus is bounded on the east side by Method Road, to the south by Woods Place, and to the west by I-440 (Figure 18). A tree buffer mostly blocks the view of the interstate from the campus. The campus shares its north boundary with Surtronics, a company specializing in commercial metal plating and anodizing. East and south of the campus are areas of modest single-family dwellings and multi-unit housing. The surrounding Method neighborhood contains a mix of long-term residents, North Carolina State University students, and young families and others attracted to the recently constructed, moderately priced homes erected at the west ends of Steadman Drive, Wilder Street, and Ligon Street.

The campus parcel is flat and contains three buildings: the 1928 Agriculture Building, the circa 1950 Gymnasium, and the 1923 St. James AME Church, each of which is described in detail in the descriptive sections that follow. Historic landscape features include the 1931 grave of community benefactor Berry O'Kelly north of the church, a former agricultural field east of the Agriculture Building that was later used as a playing field, and the bus loop, which provided a route for vehicular circulation through the campus. The campus is currently used as a public park and recreational facility and six non-historic structures have been erected to serve these purposes; these include parking lots, a playground, tennis and basketball courts, a picnic shelter, and a baseball diamond. The baseball diamond occupies the site of a 1928 Rosenwald school. Mature trees grow near the historic buildings and include oaks, beeches, and pines.

*Table 2. List of Contributing Properties in Recommended Berry O'Kelly School Historic District*

Site ID #	NCDOT Survey #	Name	PIN	Date	Address	NRHP Eligibility Recommendation
WA 3481	17	Berry O'Kelly School Agriculture Building and Agriculture/Playing Field	794034561	1928; ca. 1990	514 Method Road	Contributing
WA 6479	16	Berry O'Kelly School Gymnasium and Bus Loop	794035766	ca. 1938; ca. 1950	512 Method Road	Contributing



Source: ESRI Resource Data

Figure 18. Berry O'Kelly School Historic District Recommended NRHP Boundary



WA 3482	15	St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church and Berry O'Kelly Grave	0794037650	1923; 1931; ca. 1990	520 Method Road	Contributing
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BERRY O'KELLY SCHOOL AGRICULTURE BUILDING AND AGRICULTURE/PLAYING FIELD (NCDOT SURVEY # 17)

### *Description*

The circa 1928 Agriculture Building is situated west of St. James AME Church and was constructed the same year as a Classroom and Administration Building, which was demolished in the late 1960s. West of the Agriculture Building is a cleared, level field, which was originally used as the school's crop field for its vocational agriculture program and as a recreational playing field since as early as the 1950s (Figure 19).

The Agriculture Building was constructed from "two-room shop" plans provided by the Julius Rosenwald Fund. It is a utilitarian, one-story, flat-roofed building (Figure 20). An addition was built on south side circa 1950, making it a longer rectangular building. The 1928 section has walls of 4:1 brick and a parapet roofline. The circa 1950 addition is laid in a 6:1 brick bond and has a stepped parapet on the sides and no parapet across the rear (Figures 21 and 22). The old and new sections are unified by a "cornice" of soldier bricks with a projecting header row above it. The north facing façade has a central entry with three 6/6-replacement window sashes with brick header sills on either side of it. The entry door is wood and has nine lights over two vertical raised panels. Flanking the door are three-light sidelights over a single raised vertical panel. A shed-

roof stoop porch, supported by robustly curved brackets, shelters the entry (Figure 23). A set of concrete steps set between a brick stringer wall access the front door.

Photographs of the building from 1982 show the window openings on all four sides of the building were bricked over. The City of Raleigh restored some of the window openings after acquiring the property in 1983. The windows flanking the front entry are replacement 6/6 sashes that match the historic light pattern. The six window openings on the east side of the 1928 section remain filled with brick; the east side of the addition has three 6/6 replacement windows (Figures 24 and 25). The nine window openings on the west side of the building, six on the 1928 section, and three on the circa 1950 section, are 6/6 replacements sashes as well. The four window openings across the rear remain bricked over (Figure 26). A modern glass and metal door assembly is at the east end of the south wall. The opening corresponds with the size and location of an original garage bay door. An exterior square stove flue rises at the approximate center of the rear wall.

On the interior, the two-room floor plan remains intact. There is a small lobby at the north end, and a narrow center hall bisects the 1928 building and leads to the circa 1950 addition (Figures 27 and 28). The west room has walls of exposed brick and currently houses an exhibit on the history of Method and the school. The room on the east side of the hall was not accessible. The 1950's addition (Figure 29) is a large room with exposed metal roof trusses and walls of exposed brick and concrete block.

The building is in good condition. It is owned by the City of Raleigh and is part of the Method Park and Community Center. The building is used for offices, meetings, and exhibits.



*Figure 19. Agriculture/Playing Field Looking North  
Gymnasium, Agriculture Building and St. James AME Church are in the  
background.*



*Figure 20. Agriculture Building, North Side*





*Figure 21. Agriculture Building, East Side with 1928 Section Right of Frame and Circa 1950 Section Left of Frame (With Windows)*



*Figure 22. Southwest Corner of Circa 1950 Addition Showing Intersection West Side Parapet Wall*



*Figure 23. Entry Detail*



*Figure 24. Filled Windows on East Wall of 1928 Section*





*Figure 25. Replacement Windows on East Wall of Circa 1950 Section*



*Figure 26. South Elevation*





*Figure 27. View South From Lobby Down Hall to Circa 1950 Addition*



*Figure 28. West Room of 1928 Section, Looking Southeast*



*Figure 29. Interior of Addition, Looking Southeast*



## BERRY O'KELLY SCHOOL GYMNASIUM AND BUS LOOP (NCDOT SURVEY #16)



### *Description*

The Berry O'Kelly School Gymnasium was built circa 1950 on the west side of the bus loop, north of the Agriculture Building. The double-height gymnasium is a rectangular building with an arched roof supported by steel roof trusses (Figure 30). It is built of concrete block and faced with brick. Flat-roofed, one-story wings are on the east, south, and west sides. The main entry, consisting of a 15-light window and a glass and metal door with a transom, is located at the southeast corner under a flat-roofed canopy that extends from the south wall of the windowless east wing and wraps around to the east wall of the south wing (Figure 31). Brick pilasters separate the six bays of the side elevations of the main gym block (Figure 32). The upper part of each side bay has a 15-light metal window with operable hopper sashes. The south side wing contains the cafeteria, kitchen, and boiler room (Figure 33). A square brick boiler flue is situated in the fifth bay. A 15-light, an 18-light, and a 30-light metal window are on the south wall of the wing. The rear wing has two 8-light metal windows on the upper wall of the south side (Figure 34).

The paved bus loop off Method Road provides access to the campus at the northeast corner and exits just south of St. James AME Church. An unpaved path is visible on the same alignment on the 1938 aerial photograph. The path connected the campus' buildings and provided access for vehicular traffic. Buses are visible at the south end of the loop in the 1959 aerial photograph and in a documentary photograph from 1962 (Figure 35).

The gymnasium and cafeteria are accessed directly from the rectangular main lobby. Interior walls are made of exposed concrete block and the floors are covered with asbestos-type tiles. The gym, west of the lobby, has exposed metal bow-arched roof trusses (Figure 36). The wood roof rafters and decking are also visible. The cafeteria is a brightly lit rectangular room in the south wing (Figure 37). West of the cafeteria are the kitchen and other mechanical rooms.

The building is in good condition. It is owned by the City of Raleigh and is part of the Method Park and Community Center. The building continues to be used as a gymnasium. The cafeteria is used for a children's after school program.



*Figure 30. Front (East) Side*



*Figure 31. Front (South) Side*





*Figure 32. North Side*



*Figure 33. South Side*



*Figure 34. West Side*



*Figure 35. Bus Loop, 1962 with  
Gymnasium in Background*

Source: Historical Exhibit in the Pioneer Building at  
Method Park and Community Center





*Figure 36. Gym Interior, Looking West*



*Figure 37. Cafeteria*

ST. JAMES AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND BERRY O'KELLY  
GRAVE (NCDOT SURVEY #15)



*Description*

The 1923 St. James AME Church is situated on the east side of the proposed historic district. (Figure 38). The church faces east and its eastern parcel line encroaches on the sidewalk and Method Road right-of-way (ROW). The church's façade wall is approximately five feet from the curb. Between the sidewalk and the façade wall is a mulched planting bed with a brick framed sign. The grassy yard on the church's north side contains a single grave for the community benefactor Berry O'Kelly (Figure 39). His grave is marked with a rusticated, arched-top tablet on a rectangular base and a footstone inscribed with O'Kelly's date of death, March 14, 1931. North of the grave is a polished granite obelisk, a memorial to O'Kelly placed in his honor in 1985 by the Berry O'Kelly School Friends and Alumni (Figure 40).

St. James AME Church is an irregularly massed, red-brick Gothic Revival-style structure. The 1923 section is a one-story front-gable building three bays wide and four bays deep, with pointed-arch door and window openings and stained-glass windows typical of the style. At the northeast corner of the church stands a square entry tower with a pyramidal roof with flared eaves (Figure 41). Two brick additions were added to the rear (west side) in the 1990s (Figure 42).



The exterior walls are built of running-bond brick with a soldier course water table and dogtooth header courses above the gable windows and along the cornice. At each corner of the 1923 block, and in between each window opening, are engaged buttresses decorated with concrete caps and lozenges. The door and window surrounds consist of double rows of header courses. The window openings have header-course sills. A granite cornerstone at the southeast corner of the façade is etched with the inscription “St. James A.M.E. Church 1923” (Figure 43).

The façade features stained-glass windows: a large center window with single windows in the flanking bays (Figure 44). Above the center triple sash is a diamond-shaped stained-glass window. The main entrance in the northeast corner entry tower consists of a glass and metal replacement door surmounted by a pointed-arch stained-glass transom. The entry is accessed by a set of concrete steps with a metal railing. The north side of the church has four bays of stained-glass windows separated by buttresses (Figure 45). The west side has three stained-glass windows separated by buttresses and a small pointed-arch stained-glass window in the gable (Figure 46). The gabled wing that projects from the south side has two stained-glass windows in the south wall and a window and secondary entry with a glass and metal replacement door on the east side (Figure 47). A plywood panel fills the arched transom above the door; it is unknown why it was placed there. The south entry is accessed by a set of concrete steps and landing underpinned with solid brick. A metal shed roof supported by square posts covers the landing.

In the 1990s, a brick shed addition was built on the west wall of the south wing (Figure 48). Shortly afterwards, a one-story gabled brick fellowship hall was built behind the church and connected to the shed addition by a hyphen (Figure 49). The fellowship hall has a shallow-pitched roof and two-light slide windows. Vinyl entry doors are situated on the west side, accessed by a wooden wheelchair ramp. The south side of the hyphen is accessed by a set of wood steps. The roofs of the 1923 and circa 1990s sections are covered with grey composite shingles. Both sections rest on foundations of running-bond brick.

The church is in good condition and is used regularly by the congregation.



*Figure 38. St. James AME Church, Front (East) Side*



*Figure 39. Grave of Berry O'Kelly*





*Figure 40. Memorial Obelisk Honoring Berry O'Kelly*





*Figure 41. Oblique View Looking Southwest*



*Figure 42. View of Additions Looking Northeast*





*Figure 43. Cornerstone at Southeast Corner*



*Figure 44. Detail of Triple Center Window on Façade*



*Figure 45. North Side Showing Buttresses with Concrete Caps*



*Figure 46. West Side*





*Figure 47. Oblique of Front View Looking Northwest*



*Figure 48. South Side, View of Connection of Shed Addition and 1923 Church*