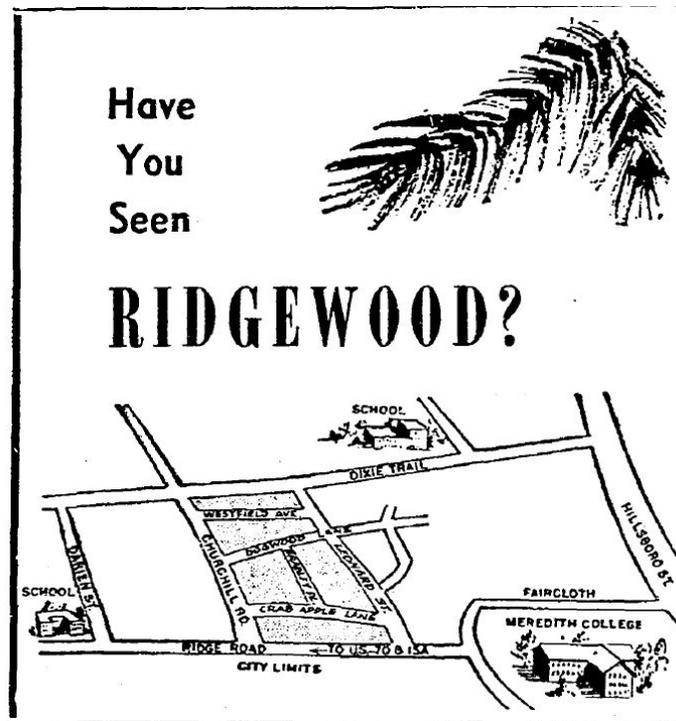


**Survey Report**  
**Ridgewood North WA4630**  
**December 2018**



**Hanbury Preservation Consulting**

## **Introduction**

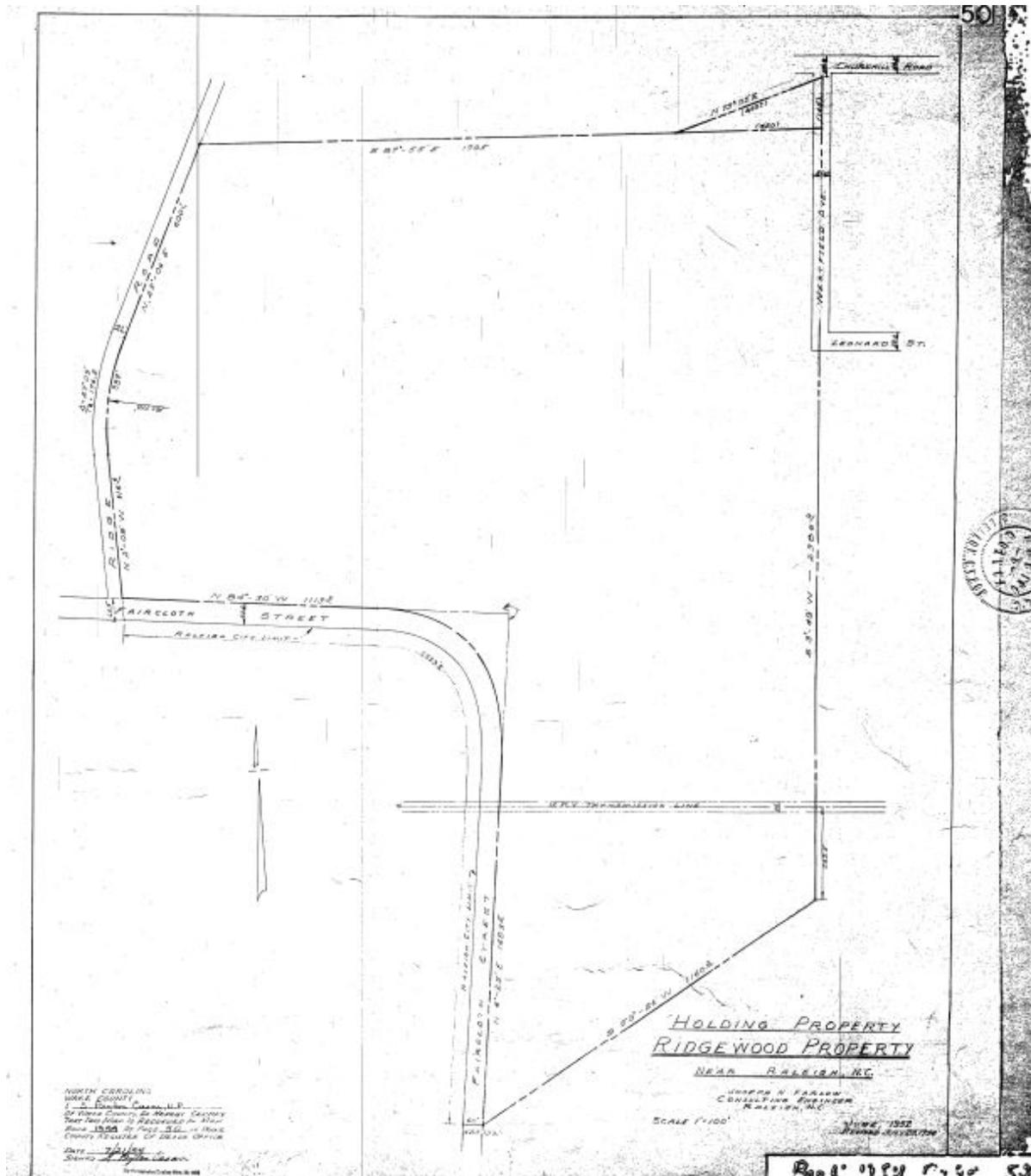
In November 2016 the City of Raleigh (City) contracted with Hanbury Preservation Consulting to perform a two-phased project consisting of a citywide survey update followed by a comprehensive survey of a neighborhood on the North Carolina National Register Study List (Study List). As a result of the first phase, the Ridgewood neighborhood was re-surveyed and its potential National Register eligibility was re-affirmed. In 2018, the City authorized a notice to proceed to survey the neighborhood comprehensively.

Although historically Ridgewood included areas both north and south of Wade Avenue, given budget constraints and the fact that Wade Avenue is now a major arterial road that effectively divides the neighborhood, only the northern portion of Ridgewood was surveyed. The survey was to encompass 142 properties including one that had previously been assigned a survey site number but was not surveyed (WA7830). During the course of the survey, three houses were demolished which reflects the rapid pace of change in the neighborhood.

The report that follows includes a brief overview of the history of the Ridgewood neighborhood and a summary of survey findings.

# Ridgewood

The first map recorded at the Wake County Register of Deeds that includes the subject area and the name Ridgewood is entitled "Holding Property Ridgewood Property" and is dated June 1952, drafted by Joseph N. Farlow (Map 1). It shows approximately 85 acres bounded on the east by Faircloth and Ridge Roads. The parcel lies outside of the Raleigh City limits. Faircloth runs north to a point where it turns west and intersects with Ridge. The east/west section of Faircloth shown in the plat is now Wade Avenue.

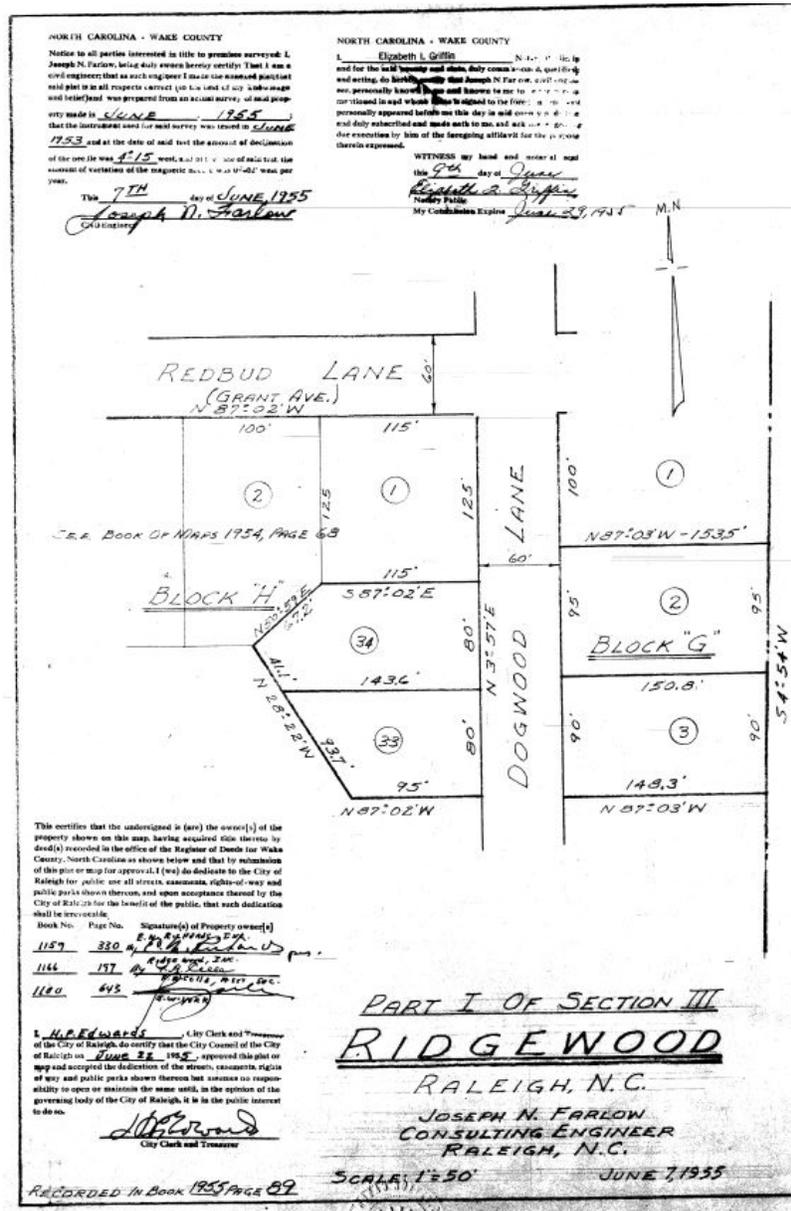


Map 1: Holding Ridgewood Property 1952





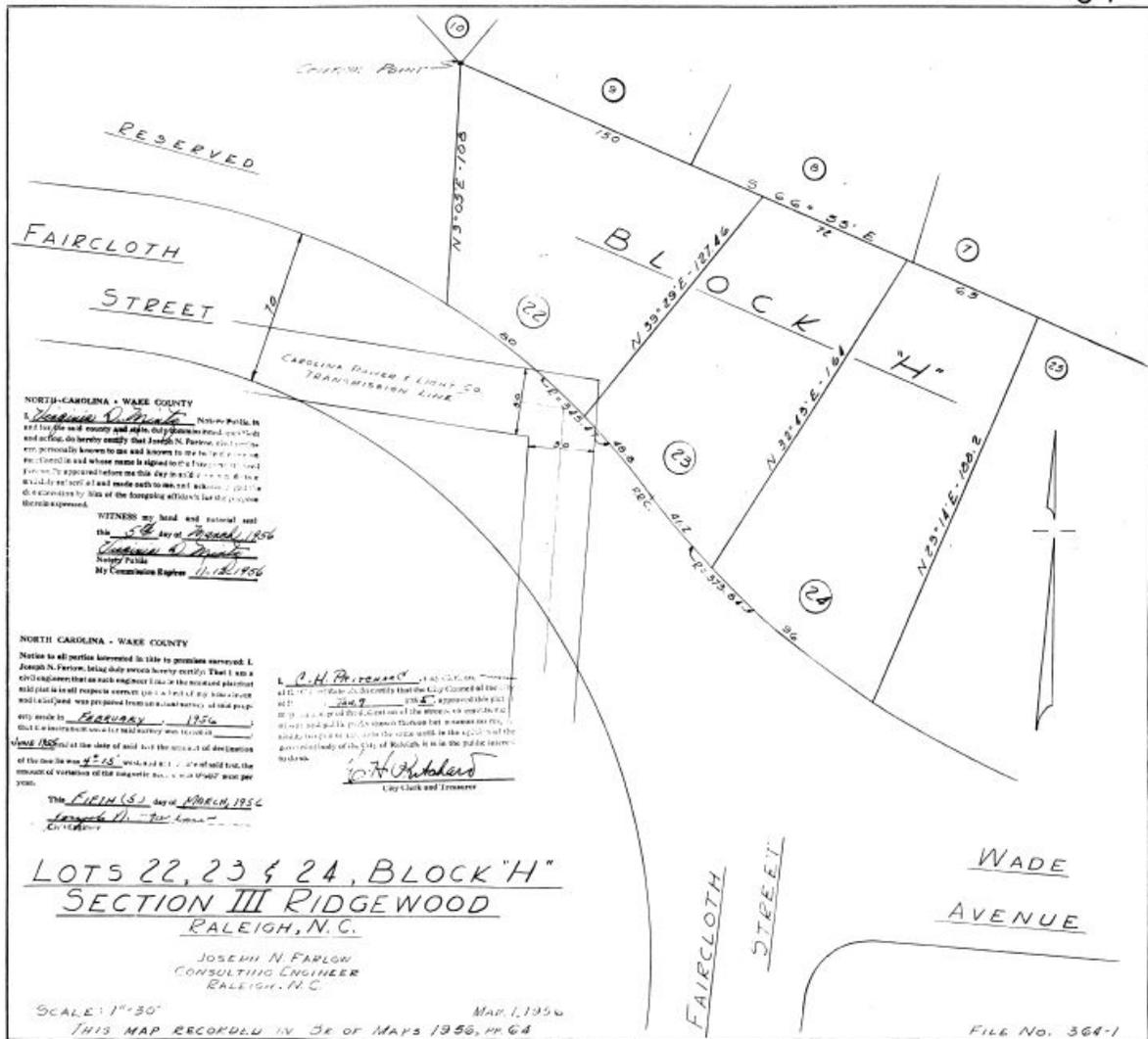
A few additional parcels were platted in June 1955 (Map 4) along Dogwood Lane, and the plat shows Grant Avenue renamed as Redbud Lane.



Map 4: Part I of Section III Ridgewood plat, 1955



A final plat in 1956 (Map 6) shows a few additional parcels along the north side of Wade Avenue/ Faircloth Street.



Map 6: Lots 22, 23 & 24 Block "H" Section III Ridgewood plat, 1956

A 1953 classified ad in the *Raleigh News and Observer* by J. W. York realtor offers three- and four-bedroom houses in Cameron Village, and adds that reservations for building sites in Ridgewood were being taken. In January 1954 the City of Raleigh and Meredith College came to an agreement to extend a water main from the college to the Ridgewood subdivision. By May of that year the developers petitioned for annexation by the city. At that point the utility work was 85% completed. According to an article in the *Raleigh News and Observer*, "The developers agree to put up a bond or cash to insure that the remainder of street and utility work required by the city will be completed."<sup>1</sup> The article

<sup>1</sup> "Ridgewood Asks for Annexation," *The News and Observer*, May 29, 1954, p.12

continues, "Annexation would make it easier for prospective purchasers to finance homes in the subdivision. About 25 homes are now under construction and many more are planned."<sup>2</sup>

On February 8, 1955 the *News and Observer* reported, "Twenty-six new homes will be constructed soon in Ridgewood at a cost of approximately \$260,000 according to building permits issued by the Raleigh Building Inspector yesterday. The new homes will be located on Leonard Street, Dogwood Avenue, Crab Apple Lane, Churchill Road and Ridge Road. Listed as owner on the permits was Ridgewood Partnership. Wachovia Building Company, owned by Ed Richards, was listed as contractor. The dwellings will be one-story and of frame construction."<sup>3</sup> In January 1956 the Raleigh Building Corporation was issued permits for 26 brick-veneered residences in Ridgewood. The six-room houses were planned for Dogwood Avenue, Wade Avenue, and Leonard Street at a cost of \$10,000-15,000 each.<sup>4</sup> By 1957 the firm of Lowery and Kistler was also advertising parcels in Ridgewood, including lots, building plans, and both construction and permanent financing. In 1958 a portion of the subdivision was rezoned to shopping center.

One notable aspect of Ridgewood is the role of architect Leif Valand who designed several house models for the development. Valand was living in Scarsdale, New York when Ed Richards, a sometimes partner of Willie York, introduced the two men. York hired Valand to move south and design Cameron Village. Valand remained in Raleigh and designed numerous houses, shopping centers, office buildings, and churches. Much of his work was tied to York and other developers.

A 1954 mention in the *News and Observer* shows photos of four homes designed by Valand in Ridgewood, constructed by the Richards Building Company and brokered by Cameron Realty Company. The photos are reproduced in this report (Photos 1-4) and for ease of reference are assigned letter names. A 1955 article describes the neighborhood, the "tree-shaded area has contemporary dwellings in the \$14,650-\$20,000 price range. Ed Richards is the builder, and the houses, which come with three or four bedrooms, were designed by Leif Valand, the Cameron Village architect. More than 100 have been occupied; another 30 will be built. Then a large shopping center will be put in."<sup>5</sup>

Many of Valand's drawings have been lost, thus attribution of his work must be careful. In the case of Ridgewood, only those that correspond to published photos with a Valand attribution or those that closely resemble them are noted in survey findings. However, it is conceivable that with further study, additional models can be attributed to Valand. Also, given Valand's participation in other subdivisions, some of these models may be found in other Raleigh neighborhoods.

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<sup>2</sup> IBID

<sup>3</sup> Raymond Lowery, "Building Boom Continues Here," *The News and Observer*, February 13, 1955, p.11

<sup>4</sup> "More Homes for Ridgewood," *The News and Observer*, January 19, 1956, p.25

<sup>5</sup> Lowery, p.11



Photo 1: Leif Valand house in Ridgewood, Model A.  
Photo News and Observer collection, State Archives of North Carolina



Photo 2: Leif Valand house in Ridgewood, Model B.  
Photo News and Observer collection, State Archives of North Carolina



Photo 3:Leif Valand house in Ridgewood, Model C.  
Photo News and Observer collection, State Archives of North Carolina



Photo 4:Leif Valand house in Ridgewood, Model D.  
Photo News and Observer collection, State Archives of North Carolina

Another home of note in the neighborhood is the B. Richard Jackson house (Photo 5), designed by Eduardo Catalano and Horacio Caminos, then professors at the School of Design at North Carolina State College. The house was the winner of a national competition by the Carrier Corporation to "stimulate the design of year-round air conditioned homes in a moderate price bracket."<sup>6</sup> It was constructed by Richards Building Company. The house was open for tours in 1954, and a newspaper article provides a detailed description of the design of the house and landscaping.<sup>7</sup>



Photo 5: B. Richard Jackson House, WA7830

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<sup>6</sup> "Raleigh's Newest Model Home to Open for Inspection Today," *The News and Observer*, January 30, 1954, 1955 p.8.

<sup>7</sup> IBID

## Survey Findings

Ridgewood North is a portion of the larger Ridgewood development. It is bounded by Wade Avenue to the south, Ridge Road to the west, Churchill Road to the north, and Westfield Avenue and the rear property lines of houses on the east side of Dogwood Lane to the west. It is a mix of rental and owner-occupied, single family residences.

Though there is some new construction, the predominant house type (61% of the resources documented) is a one-story, side-gabled dwelling of frame construction clad in wood or in brick veneer. Lots range from .22 to .53 acres and most houses are set back toward the center of their lots. Eight houses can be categorized as split-levels, and eighteen have a non-continuous or "broken" gable ridge.

Stylistically, there are 16 modern style houses, such as WA 8921, 3432 Bradley Place, designed by Leif Valand (Photo 6).



Photo 6: WA8921 3432 Bradley Place

There are 35 ranch style houses, such as WA8832, 3420 Wade Avenue (Photo 7).



Photo 7: WA8832, 3420 Wade Avenue

An additional 24 houses are hybrids that share both ranch and modern design aspects such as WA 8901, 3464 Leonard Street (Photo 8) , with its two columns of stacked awning windows at the corner of the facade.



Photo 8: WA8901, 3464 Leonard Street

Of the 139 houses documented, 122 were built between 1952 and 1965; 120 of those between 1952 and 1959. Despite the high concentration of housing built within a narrow time frame, a number of these houses are nevertheless non-contributing as they have been highly altered. Representative examples include: WA8838 1311 Westfield Avenue; WA 8865 3421 Churchill Road; and WA8874 3303 Leonard Street, seen below as currently remodeled (Photo 9) and as documented in 1995 (Photo 10).



Photo 9: WA8874, 3303 Leonard Street



Photo 10: 3303 Leonard Street, Wake County Tax Photo taken December 1995

There are 49 non-contributing resources, and 90 contributing resources in the potential district. Given its location inside the beltway, it faces market pressures for teardowns and massive re-builds to create larger homes.

Only four published Leif Valand designs for Ridgewood have been discovered. Fifteen strongly resemble (or resembled prior to remodeling) published Valand designs. Fifty-three additional houses contain, or originally contained, features found in Valand designs of the period. These are noted in the survey database. These designs should be considered when survey efforts extend to the portion of Ridgewood that is south of Wade Avenue. Additionally, a windshield survey of other subdivisions, notably Cameron Village, evidence other similar designs. Valand's role as an architect tied closely to the development community deserves additional research.

The community was developed by Ed Richards who built numerous Raleigh subdivisions in this period through numerous corporate entities. His impact and influence were strong in the mid 20th century and his role in Raleigh's residential growth is an area rich for further study.

The Ridgewood North neighborhood continues to exhibit the significance and integrity needed for National Register listing. The Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) **Post-World War II and Modern Architecture in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1945-1965** sets forth the registration requirements for a tract subdivision dating from the 1950s:

Subdivisions may be significant as historic districts under Criterion A in the area of community development and planning or under Criterion C for architecture. They also may be significant under Criterion A in the area of African American ethnic heritage. They must retain overall integrity of setting, feeling, association, design, and materials to be eligible as historic districts. The districts must retain the integrity of its layout, including its street plan, open spaces, curbs and sidewalks (or lack thereof), and other design features. Generally, individual buildings in the districts must retain a good degree of integrity. All subdivisions have at least a modest level of alteration, including replacement wall materials, minor additions such as garage wings, and replacement windows. If the historic architectural character of the majority of the individual houses is clearly evident and the subdivision has only a relatively small number of buildings dating from the post-1965 period, then the district is potentially eligible. In order to qualify, the district boundaries must encompass the largest concentration of intact houses within the original plat and exclude later expansions of the subdivision that post-date 1965 and blocks where major remodellings and/or tear-downs are occurring. Any later development within the district should be minimal and respect the setbacks and house size norms characteristic of the neighborhood.<sup>8</sup>

Ridgewood North is eligible for listing under the MPDF under Criterion C in the area of Community Planning and Development as a good representative of a tract subdivision that follows FHA guidelines for development. It could be significant in the area of Architecture for its small collection of houses designed by Leif Valand and Eduardo Catalano and Horacio Caminos. And it possibly could be significant

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<sup>8</sup> M. Ruth Little, *Post-World War II and Modern Architecture in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1945-1965*, National Register MPDF, May 2009.

under Criterion B for its association with Ed Richards and Willie York whose developments, many of which have been highly altered, shaped the city of Raleigh in the 1950s.

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"More Homes for Ridgewood," *The News and Observer*, January 19, 1956, p.25.

"New Bern Ave. Block Rezoned," *The News and Observer*, August 19, 1955 p.5.

### Raleigh Map Books

"Raleigh's Newest Model Home to Open for Inspection Today," *The News and Observer*, January 30, 1954, 1955 p.8.

"Ridgewood Asks for Annexation," *The News and Observer*, May 29, 1954, p.12.

"Ridgewood Plan on Water Fixed," *The News and Observer*, January 16, 1954, p.3.

Ridgewood photos *The News and Observer*, August 1, 1954, p.8.

"\$260,000 Goes into Homes," *The News and Observer*, February 8, 1955, p.13.

### Wake County Real Estate Tax Data