

Dear Planning Commissioners,

2/28/06

The City of Charlottesville, on an institutional level, should be proud of the goals realized in forty seven years of Historic Preservation.

Now that a method has been perfected, it's time to set in place the keystone of Charlottesville's preservation, the historic designation and interpretation for the Woolen Mills Neighborhood.

When the Historic Landmark Study was published in 1976 the sole property listed in the Woolen Mills Neighborhood was the Woolen Mills Chapel.

I think it is long overdue for the Woolen Mills that they have a clear signal of where their neighborhood is going, and not be done in this piecemeal fashion. So I guess my hope would be that out of this process, given the talent that they have in their neighborhood, that they get together and decide that proactively we are going to tell you what the future of our neighborhood is going to be, and it is not going to continue to be an erosion of the things that they have come to feel anchor their neighborhood, that's the residential use and some of the mixed use strategies that they have.

4/7/03 Mayor Maurice Cox

"As early as 1795, several types of mills operated here. In 1847, Farish, Jones, and Co., opened a cotton and woolen factory. John A. Marchant gained control of it by 1852 and renamed it the Charlottesville Manufacturing Company. His son, Henry Clay Marchant, bought it in 1864. Although the Union army burned the factory in 1865, Marchant reopened it in 1867 as the Charlottesville Woolen Mills, which became Albemarle's largest industry. A community grew up around the mill and Marchant built worker houses and a chapel. By the 1880s the mill specialized in making cloth for uniforms; it remained in operation until 1964."

Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2000



In 1848 the railroad came to Charlottesville. For a while the Woolen Mill was really connected, served from its port by the Rivanna Navigation Company and via rail by the Virginia Central Railway.

In November 1962 the Woolen Mill shut down. In 1963 Charlottesville annexed a section of the neighborhood.

Undeniably, the Woolen Mills neighborhood was hit hard. hundreds of jobs disappeared overnight. Its 100+ years as a unique village were symbolically smitten with a name change, Woolen Mills Road became East Market Street.

"In the late 1960s and 1970s, much of Virginia's survey efforts focused on the documentation of high-style examples of American architecture and structures associated with important Virginians and significant events. Beginning in the 1980s, historic resource surveys broadened to include representative examples of all resource types from all historic periods and associations. Industrial plants, workers' housing, military architecture, barns, schools, battlefields, historic roads, bridges, and designed landscapes are taking their place alongside Virginia's premier colonial and antebellum dwellings. Surveys of proposed historic districts were also emphasized as communities increasingly sought to identify and record the collections of historic resources that represented their cultural and historical identity and to consider measures to protect them."



When honoring cultural heritage we need to do more than protect the workplaces and homes of the affluent.

The Woolen Mills is a historic neighborhood. Its functioning as a neighborhood has spanned the years from water-power to nuclear power, from the days of agrarianism to the information age, from ante-bellum to present day.

Imagine Monticello in 1879 with pigs in the yard, steps rotted, porches covered with red clay and a roof like swiss cheese.

Fifty three years after Jefferson died his place was trashed.

The Woolen Mills neighborhood, 44 years after the demise of its big producer, faces significant challenges. There are not pigs in the yard but there is great pressure to develop in such a way that the physical and cultural fabric of the neighborhood would be torn irreparably.

In the Woolen Mills draft neighborhood plan, developed for inclusion with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan there is a statement beneath the *Centers* section:

Woolen Mills is better characterized as a fabric rather than a center oriented place... the original structures are spread across the neighborhood and the meanings and stories are as important as the structures.

Right, Fourth of July, 2005, Monticello. It's slightly over a half mile from here to the Woolen Mill.

Certainly the Chapel, the Mill and several other properties have historic value. Since 1976 three additional properties in the neighborhood have been listed in the National Registry:

1) Piereus Store added 1983, Building #83003272, 1901 E. Market St., 1860?

2) Timberlake-Branham House, added 1984, Building #84003525, 1512 E. Market St., Charlottesville, 1886

3) House at Pireus added 1983, Building #83003268, 203 Riverside Avenue, Charlottesville, 1832





Lets look at a house not in the Register. Not in an ADC District.

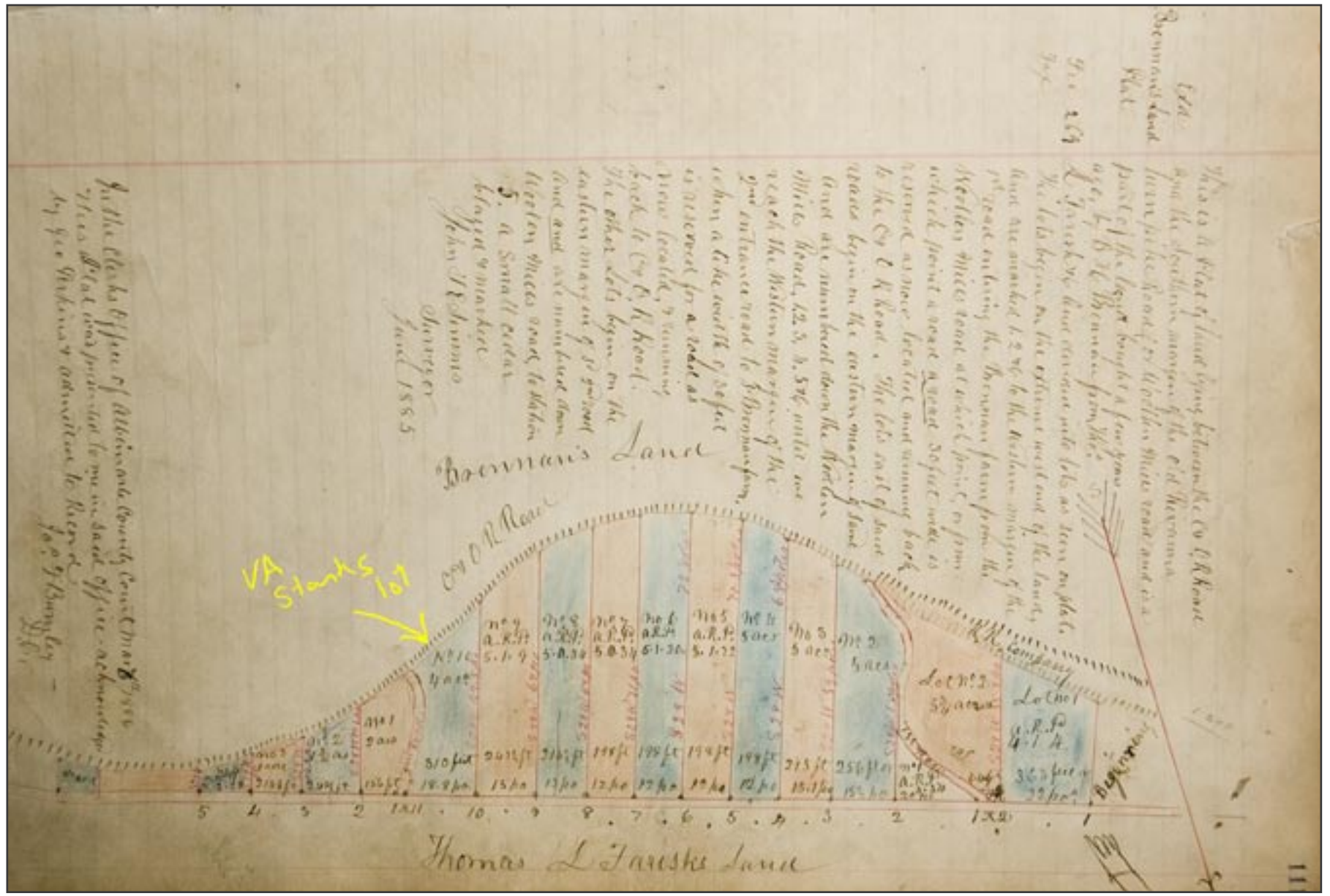
The 1880 Census lists the subject to the left, Virginia Starks, as thirty one years old, married to J.M. Starks, forty-five years old.

J.M. works in the Mill for Henry Clay Marchant.

Also living with J.M. and Virginia are nieces Mary and Fanny Gianiny, (22 and 21 years old), Mary and Fanny work at the Mill.

Mary Morris, 59, widowed, rounds out the household.

Most of the houses that comprised the original Mill Village are still standing as is the Mill School, two stores and the mill owner's house.



On the 21st day of June, 1886, (DB 92 PG 65) Virginia Starks spends five hundred dollars for a four acre lot at the corner of Woolen Mills Road and "the road leading into Brennan's land under the C&O railway track" (present day Franklin Street).

In the same year, James Timberlake, foreman of the wet-finishing department at the Woolen Mill, purchases a lot (immediately west of Virginia Starks) and builds a house (1512 East Market).

Virginia builds her house (1604 East Market) in 1890.

Why did she wait four years to build?

Possibly the birth of her daughter Mamie, June 18, 1888 delayed construction?

Possibly Virginia is the widow Starks by the time her house is constructed?

In 1901 Virginia pays \$3.20 to Albemarle County for her real estate tax.

That is 30 cents per \$100 for support of the government, 10 cents per hundred for the support of the schools.



Mamie (Starks) Baltimore is buried in Riverview cemetery next to her husband



Mamie, Thomas and Louise Baltimore

Virginia Starks dies intestate. Her oldest child Lottie files a chancery suit (chancery orders 1903, Book 21, Page 42) against Virginia's younger children Willard F. Starks and Mary M. Starks (Mamie). Virginia's house and land is ordered sold at auction by the Judge to settle the case.

James Timberlake buys the Stark's house at 1604 East Market June 20, 1903.

Timberlake is mentioned repeatedly in Andy Myers article: *Albemarle County Historical Society, Volume 53, 1995*



***The Charlottesville Woolen Mills:
Working Life, Wartime, and
the Walkout of 1918***

"James E. Timberlake was foreman of the wet finishing department. Born in 1856, he was one of the oldest workers at the plant. Apparently, he was also something of an outsider. In 1880 his house was located outside of the mill village, close to Charlottesville. The community appears to have expanded outward to him by 1910. Nor did Timberlake seem to have as many family connections as did the majority of those so long established."

Timberlake-Branham house, 1512 East Market



1600 East Market

In January of 1916, Timberlake divides and sells Virginia Stark's land. The western portion of the land he sells to R.N. Gianiny (1600 East Market Street), a weaving second hand who had grown up in the mill village.¹

The eastern part of the land he sells to Marcellus and Bettie Harlow, 1606 East Market. (DB 160 PG 406).

"Cel" Harlow's wife, Bettie (nee Baltimore), has a sister in-law in need of a house.



1604 East Market

1606 East Market

The day after Christmas, 1916, Mamie (Starks) Baltimore spends 1500 dollars and regains the house she lost thirteen years previously.



Mamie's granddaughter, Jean, relates that until Mamie reached the age of majority she was cared for by H.C. Marchant's family (owner of the Mill).

The plaintiffs in the chancery case moved to Arizona and haven't been heard from since.

That is Jean to the left, 1604 East Market in the background, early 1940's.



Jean visits family “up on the hill” . Her maternal grandparents, the Marions, lived on Pireus Row, the rocky outcrop defined by the intersection of Moore’s Creek and the Rivanna River. The Mill is on their left.

The Hill behind them is Monticello.

Legend has it that TJ would come down the hill, cross Moore’s Creek and ride the Rivanna turnpike west to UVA.



In the backyard of 1604

Jean's paternal grandparents, John and Mamie Baltimore.

John died in 1946. He was a bricklayer.

Cel Harlow's house (1606 East Market) in the background.

Architectural and Historical Summary:

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

This house, with its broad lawn overlooking Woolen Mills Road, is still surrounded by 7 3/4 acres of farmland. James E. Timberlake, a foreman at the Charlottesville Woolen Mills, purchased 5 1/2 acres in 1886 (ACDB 86-405) and built this house the same year. He bought another 5 1/2 acres adjoining it in 1889 (ACDB 103-241). The house remained in the family for half a century, and there was a family cemetery in the front yard just northwest of the house. The Timberlakes deeded it to their daughter Bessie M. Mann in 1916 (ACDB 162-244). She sold it in 1937 to Henry E. Fairburn (ACDB 237-210), who sold it to George W. Maupin the next year (DB 509-108, DB 528-214). It is now an Adult Care Center.

SIGNIFICANCE & RELATION TO EVALUATION CRITERIA

Built in 1886, the Timberlake-Branham House is a fine example of the vernacular house with Victorian detail which was quite popular in the City in the last quarter of the 19th Century. As such, it is an important part of the historical and architectural fabric of the City. The basic form of the house is vernacular: a 2-story, 3-bay, single-pile house following the central hall plan. To this basic form have been added Victorian details such as a central gable on the facade and bracketed porch posts. The semi-octagonal projecting bay with floor-length windows is not quite like any other in the City. The entrance door with its circular-headed lights and moulded rails is an infrequent survivor of a popular form. The fact that many of its contemporaries have not survived increases the value of this house as a well-preserved example of the style. The Timberlake-Branham House would contribute greatly to the architectural and historical significance of a proposed Woolen Mills Historic District. It is already listed

The Timberlake property has changed since it was described by the Virginia Department of Historic resources.

Much of the farmland has been converted for use as storage facility.



truck stuck trying to negotiate the turn from Franklin Street onto Market. Over 1500 vehicles pass through this intersection daily.
His left rear tires are on Virginia Stark's land.

I believe the City long viewed the Woolen Mills as a failed industrial neighborhood whose main value was to be realized by upzoning.

How else to explain manufacturing zoning on residential lots or the R2 zoning in Riverview Cemetery?

One of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources's priorities cited on page 5 of the *Guidelines* book is:

"Address areas where historic resources are threatened.

Survey projects for areas or resources threatened by development or neglect are considered high priority."

We have been talking with the City regarding quality of life issues for the nineteen years I have lived in the neighborhood. Please hear us now.