

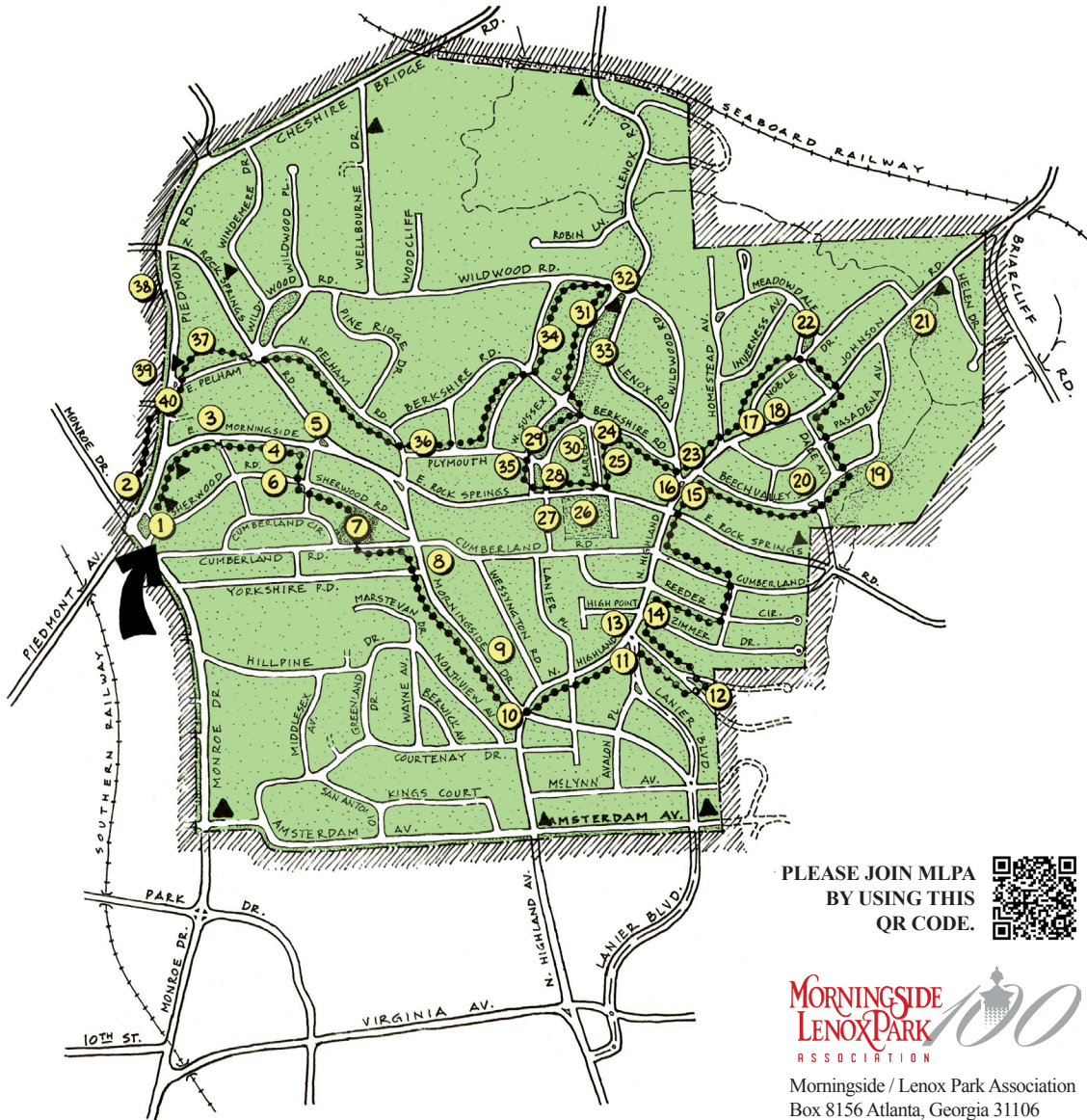
The Walking Tour of Morningside/Lenox Park

The walk through MLPA History was originally written in the early 1990s.

It was researched by MLPA stalwarts Pam & Jim Auchmutey, Bill Chalker, Mary Huntz, Don & Syd Janney, Betty Layng, David Robertson, Genevieve Scully, Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr. and

Brian Randall for publication around the time of the Atlanta Olympic Games (1996). The 2023 version was updated by Pam Auchmutey, Don Campbell, Debby Eason, Syd Janney, and Barb Tucker. Brian Randall designed the original map.

The entire walk is around six miles, but feel free to break it into sections. We suggest beginning at Smith Park, the neighborhood gateway, but begin wherever you would like. The important thing is to get out and enjoy our neighborhood and learn some of the background of the sites within our borders.



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Morningside / Lenox Park Association
Box 8156 Atlanta, Georgia 31106

1 SMITH PARK, located at the corner of Monroe Drive and Piedmont Road, was dedicated in July 1932 to honor one of Morningside's developers, James Robert Smith. Note the small plaque near the center of the park.

2 In 1928 when Albert Heery Bailey began construction of the **MORNINGSIDE SHOPPING CENTER** along Piedmont Road, he designed buildings with each tenant's purposes mind. Original tenants included King Hardware, Blair's Florist and Rhodes Bakery. The second floor at 1582 1/2 Piedmont was built as a Masonic Lodge and used as such for 50 years. 1590 Piedmont housed Rogers Grocery Store and 1586 Piedmont was a Piggly Wiggly. Vestiges of these early enterprises can be found in some of the businesses presently occupying this commercial block.

3 614 and 626 E. MORNINGSIDE DRIVE were two of the first houses in the 1923 Morningside Park development. 626 was home to developer James R. Smith and part of the Fourth National Better 2 Homes Week, May 12-18, 1924.

4 705 E. MORNINGSIDE DRIVE was designed by R. Kennon Perry and built by Thomas K. Windham as The Atlanta Constitution Master Model Home in 1928. Its construction served to promote better home building through the use of high-grade materials and workmanship.

5 WILSON PARK. The triangular park at the intersection of E. Morningside and N. Rock Springs roads memorializes President Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924). Dedicated by the Atlanta Women's Club on May 25, 1924, WILSON PARK was planted with crepe myrtles and elm trees, which all succumbed to Dutch elm disease.

6 By 1929, the stucco houses at **696, 697, 701, 702 and 715 SHERWOOD ROAD** had all been built in the Mediterranean style, the fashionable late 1920's blending of Italian and Spanish architectural elements. George H. Lowell is associated with the design of 701 Sherwood. Other Mediterranean-style houses exist singly in the neighborhood: this collection is noteworthy.

7 SIDNEY MARCUS PARK. In October 1983, residents broke ground for Cumberland/Sherwood Park on land that had been cleared for proposed highway I-485. After the road was stopped through considerable neighborhood activism, the late Sidney Marcus arranged a land swap with Georgia D.O.T. to acquire the property for

a park between Cumberland and Sherwood roads and helped secure state funds to create this popular park. On Nov. 1, 1983, the Morningside/Lenox Park Association passed a resolution to rename the park in honor of the state representative who helped stop a freeway through Morningside.

8 1511 N. MORNINGSIDE DRIVE was home to Dean Rusk, Secretary of State for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, just prior to his departure for Davidson College in 1927.

9 Founded in 1925, the first **MORNINGSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** was listed at 415 Morningside Drive. In 1944, members purchased property at 1411 N. Morningside Drive and hired architects Thomas & Wagner of Philadelphia to design a new sanctuary. A recreation building was constructed in 1945; the congregation moved into the new sanctuary in 1949. The steeple was added in 1957.

10 CONGREGATION ANSHI S'FARD at 1324 N. Highland is among Atlanta's earliest synagogues. Its orthodox members first held services in 1911 in southside Atlanta, a predominately Jewish area at the time. After 1945, as the area was redeveloped, many Jewish residents settled in Morningside, where Anshi S'Fard moved to its present location.

11 HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING CENTER at N. Highland and University. Developed by Byron Kistner in 1925, the row of commercial storefronts originally included family-owned Shackleford's Drugstore, Henry's Dry Cleaning, Rogers Brothers Grocery and an A&P. Later tenants included Havers 5 & 10, Van Omer's Hardware, a Pig and Whistle Bakery, a beauty salon and several real estate offices. This development is characteristic of Atlanta's middle-class commercial buildings of the period.

12 CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL ("remnant of Israel") on University Drive is Atlanta's third oldest Jewish congregation. The first synagogue was on Washington Street, several blocks south of where Georgia State University's Center Parc Stadium is now. In 1949, Shearith Israel bought the former Lanier University property on University Drive. The main structure on the property was a replica of the Custis-Lee Mansion at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. The congregation met in the building until the larger synagogue opened behind it in 1957. (Charles Lewis Fowler, the founder of Lanier University in 1917,

thought the South needed an “All Southern” Baptist University and intended to reproduce great southern edifices, such as Monticello and Mount Vernon as part of his grand plan. However, his scheme failed and he sold the property to the Ku Klux Klan in 1921. The Klan owned the property for a year and left some ironic neighborhood history to ponder.)

13 HIGHLAND HOUSE AT MORNINGSIDE PARK at the corner of N. Highland and High Point Drive. Built in 1914 and given to the Georgia Chapter of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union in 1927, the red-bricked Highland House is now incorporated into the Morningside Park Condominium development as an example of adaptive reuse.

14 THE HISTORICAL MARKER AT ZIMMER DRIVE AND N. HIGHLAND documents this site as the salient point of Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston’s initial defensive line before the Battle of Peachtree Creek in July 1864 resulted in the Confederate withdrawal from the area. Walk down Reeder Circle, up Bonnie Lane and back up Cumberland Road to see some of the Tudor eclectic styles which dominate the neighborhood’s residential architecture.

15 THE TRAFFIC ISLAND HERE, along with other small green spaces in the neighborhood, has been adopted and maintained by area residents and businesses over the years. It has showcased the work of the Morningside Garden Club, founded in 1980 for intown gardeners interested in neighborhood beautification.

16 THE HISTORICAL MARKER AT LENOX AND JOHNSON ROADS describes Federal troop movements advancing toward Atlanta during the Civil War. In July 1864, Gen. William T. Sherman set up headquarters nearby at the intersection of N. Decatur and Briarcliff roads.

17 The homestead of Daniel Johnson, the original pioneer who won the land in the land lottery in the 1820s after the Muscogee Indians were removed, was located at the corner of **HOMESTEAD AND JOHNSON ROADS** at what is now 1624 JOHNSON ROAD. Both street names reflect this history.

18 When Daniel Johnson’s son, Daniel Noble Johnson, subdivided the farm in 1930 to create Johnson Estates, the homestead became the real estate sales office of his partner W. A. Ozmer, who married his daughter Lucy. Charline Avenue was named for another daughter.

19 Residents feel like they’re in the country when they stroll past the **DANIEL N. JOHNSON NATURE PRESERVE** on Beech Valley Road. Paths lead into a ravine, preserved as a natural flood plain and home to a variety of plant and animal life. The preserve was deeded to the city of Atlanta in 1935.

20 The home at 1289 Beech Valley Road was commissioned by a chiropractor in 1934 to be built as a Cotswold cottage. The second owner allegedly won it in a poker game. The third owners, Chick and Debby Eason, founded the alternative news-weekly, *Creative Loafing*, here in 1972. (Last year it celebrated its 50th anniversary.) When the Easons renovated the house, they continued the authenticity of the architecture found in the Cotswold hills in SW England (and in some corners of Morningside). The house includes an English pub and a scullery (a cleaning kitchen).

21 HERBERT TAYLOR PARK, located off Johnson Road near the Noble Drive intersection, is a continuation of Daniel H. Johnson Nature Preserve. The park is named for Atlanta builder, developer and former pharmacist Herbert Taylor. The land was donated in two parcels in 1972 (by Mr. Taylor) and 1978 (by his son, Mark Taylor) as a gift to the city of Atlanta. The park was dedicated in April 1987.

22 NOBLE PARK, located at Meadowdale Avenue and Noble Drive, is lovingly tended by neighbors who enjoy the tree-shaded park complete with landscaping, play equipment for children and benches for parents. The park is named for Daniel Noble Johnson, developer of the Johnson Estates neighborhood in 1930, and was the end of the line for the 16 Noble bus for many years.

23 1585 LENOX ROAD served first as the field office for the Lenox Park development, in which prospective home buyers could review plats and homesite information. The Lenox Park Garden Club met monthly at the land office in the 1930’s. Note “Lenox Park” stone near curb.

24 1627 BARCLAY PLACE, a beautiful result of the Great Depression, was built in the early 1930’s using the talents of out-of-work Georgia Tech professors. Fine workmanship is a hallmark of the house’s interior wood and plaster features and its brick and stone facade.

25 1607 BARCLAY PLACE. Originally advertised as a handsome modified English-type one-story dwelling, “The Barclay” was designed by Ivey and Crook, well-known Atlanta architects, as one of three model homes built in Lenox Park in 1931.

26 MORNINGSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL at 1053 E. Rock Springs Road started as a six-classroom building in 1929; neighborhood growth prompted construction in 1934 of the main school building, a Tudor Jacobethan structure designed by George H. Bond and featuring exceptional brickwork. Architect Mark Reese’s 1994 addition greatly expanded the school facility and won an Atlanta Urban Design Commission Award in 1995. Major renovation of the 1934 structure took place in late 1995. Other renovations have followed, including the recent addition of a two-story gym built next to the original school by Parrish Construction Group. The

school has been nationally recognized for education and environmental excellence.

27 In 1941, members of **HAYGOOD METHODIST CHURCH** bought four acres of property at the corner of E. Rock Springs and Sussex roads. Because of World War II, the church was not completed until 1947. Founded in 1925, the church originally was located at N. Highland Avenue and Lanier Place. Haygood was named for Bishop Atticus G. Haygood and his sister, Laura Haygood an early Methodist missionary to China.

28 In the 1930s, residents referred to **SUNKEN GARDEN PARK** as the “rose bowl.” Gardeners from nearby households were sent to work on its rose beds. After years of neglect, the MLPA rallied in 1985 to reclaim the park for MLPA gatherings such as movies and concerts. The park lies between E. Sussex and W. Sussex on E. Rock Springs Road and is slated for renovation.

29 Behind Sunken Garden Park is **MORNINGSIDE NATURE TRAIL**. This densely forested trail winds through a ravine between Plymouth and Berkshire roads. It most likely resembles Sunken Garden Park before it was developed. The former Lenox Park Garden Club planted dogwoods here to remember those who had fought in World War II.

30 From the nature trail, one can glimpse **1625 E. SUSSEX** or “The Sussex,” one of three model homes designed by Lewis Crook of Ivey and Crook to promote the Lenox Park development of 1931. Herbert Kaiser was the developer of Lenox Park.

31 1750 W SUSSEX. Designed in 1941 by Philip Shutze, the great Atlanta classical architect, this grand residence is an interpretation of the Governor’s Palace at Williamsburg and reflects the original owner’s (Harry Dvoskin) great concern that the highest quality of workmanship be carried out in its construction. Shutze also designed the Swan House on the grounds of the Atlanta History Center.

32 The **STONE WALL AT W. SUSSEX AND WILDWOOD**. Built by Sonny Reece of the former Monroe Landscaping Co. and inspired by a trip to Italy, the stone wall with its imbedded millstone is a neighborhood landmark.

33 Residents often bring their children to climb on the play equipment or play Frisbee or football at **LENOX-WILDWOOD PARK**, located at Wildwood and Lenox roads. The park has tennis courts and off-street parking. Park land behind the tennis courts stretches to Berkshire Road.

34 1743 MERTON ROAD is a dramatic “ranch redo” or reconstruction of a ranch-style house by architect Barry Doss. Several Doss-designed ranch conversions dot this part of the neighborhood.

35 963 PLYMOUTH ROAD, one of the Lenox Park model homes, was featured in promotional pieces as “The Chateau.” The two-story, white-painted brick dwelling with French inspirations was designed by Ivey and Crook in 1931.

36 LENOX PARK MARKER AT 878 PLYMOUTH ROAD. An original marker for the Lenox Park development, this urn-capped pillar served as the model for reproducing the 12 markers placed at the neighborhood’s boundaries in 1991. Continue up N. Pelham past Pine Ridge Drive. Note the many expressions of the Tudor eclectic style house. Cross N. Rock Springs Road onto E. Pelham and turn right up Rockmont.

37 636 ROCKMONT, home to its builder J. Thomas K. Windham in 1932, displays an elaborate interplay of brick and stone in the Tudor eclectic style and seems to prove, as company ads boasted, that Windham homes would “age with dignity.”

38 (Though not easily accessible from the tour route up Piedmont, consider crossing Piedmont and then taking a right on Montgomery Ferry to approach this neighborhood landmark on foot.) The oldest church in Morningside, **ROCK SPRING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** started in a school house in 1870. The first sanctuary a white frame structure without a steeple, was built on the site of the current church at Piedmont and Rock Spring roads. Architect Charles H. Hopson designed the present Jacobean Revival sanctuary, completed in 1922. Tombstones in the graveyard next to the church date back to 1875. Rock Spring Presbyterian Church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. Today, Heritage Preparatory School owns and uses the site as its high school campus.

39 In 1951, members of **MORNINGSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH** held their first worship service in the current sanctuary on Piedmont Road, bounded by Pelham Road and Montgomery Ferry Drive. The church was designed by Thomas W. Gardner of Nashville in the “gothic style” members voted to accept. Founded in 1930, the church met in a temporary building at N. Highland Ave. and Wessington Road beginning in 1931. Today, Heritage Preparatory School leases the church property on Piedmont as its lower and middle school campus. A congregation worships at what is now called Morningside Church.

40 The **HISTORICAL MARKER AT E. PELHAM AND PIEDMONT ROADS** describes Federal troop movements advancing toward Atlanta during the Civil War. In July 1864, Federal troops were brought from Buckhead and placed in a line starting at Morningside Baptist Church and running to about the intersection of E. Rock Springs and Cumberland roads.