

Summary of Shoal Creek Park Studies and Outreach Efforts  
August 2018

**Park**

Nov. 2013- Elizabeth Mahler donated 167 acres to the City of Montevallo. One of the deed covenants:

2. The real property located in Section 15, Township 22S, Range 3W shall be retained by Grantee for the purpose of establishing a city park to be enjoyed by Grantee's citizens, with said park to be named "Shoal Creek Park". This covenant is not designed to restrict the Grantee from the placement of additional facilities onto the premises reserved for usage as a city park, but merely to designate the park as a primary usage of the premises. Grantee shall preserve the old Mahler home place which is situated upon the premises, for the purpose of enjoyment and usage by the Grantee and its citizens.

2013- City entered in lease agreement with Bearden and Nix for cattle grazing as a short-term solution to park maintenance.

2014- Montevallo Historical Commission requested and worked through the State Historical Commission to apply for an Archeological Study and an Architectural Study of the house. All grants required matching funds.

2014- The City, through Mayor Hollie Cost and Councilmember Woodham, investigated and met with various people and entities to explore ideas for creating and maintaining a park, and finding funding sources, including: Freshwater Land Trust, USDA (soil testing, conservation easements, wetlands mitigation etc), private firms that specialize in conservation easements, Nature Conservancy (easements/appraisals etc), Red Mountain Park (including a Land Management Plan describing efforts to eradicate non-native species), Pros Consulting (has done park consulting work throughout nation), Tom Walker, Richard Pearson (legal issues), local school principals, Cheryl Morgan of Auburn Urban Design Studio and Alex Dudchock and many others.

2014- Public interest meetings were held to gather public input for park use. Other interested parties participated in various ways, including: UM class came up the idea of a petting zoo, UM graduate student wrote a history paper on the Perry family, University of Alabama MBA class developed the idea of a working farm (aquaponics) and arts village and others.

2015- Shoal Creek Park Master Plan was produced by Kelly Landscape Architects, LLC and accepted by City Council.

2014/2015 Trails created on house side of creek, covering entire property (both sides of Hwy 119).

Jan. 2015- City Council approves creation of SCP Advisory Committee.

Feb. 2015- Terry Arnold's paper: "Mahler Family: 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Pioneers" completed.

Sept. 2015- University of Ala. archeological study titled "A Cultural Resources Survey for a Proposed Development at the Mahler Property in Montevallo, AL" was produced. The research design of the cultural resources survey is to locate and identify any archaeological sites and historic standing structures within the APE, assess their significance, and provide recommendation with regard to guidelines set forth by the NPS for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility criteria (NPS 1995).

July 2015- SCP Foundation (three member board) was incorporated. "The purposes for which the Foundation is organized are exclusively charitable, educational, civic, cultural, and historical: to solicit and receive tax deductible contributions to be expended to support activities and capital purchases in support of the improvement, maintenance and operation of Shoal Creek Park in the City of Montevallo, Alabama and to support other activities and capital purchases related to the park or park trail."

10-14-15 Ms. Elizabeth "Betty" A. Mahler passes away. The estate was settled a year later.

1Q2016- The County constructed two entrances, gravel parking lot and took down all barns (considered unsafe for public). This was funded by MDCCD. All the re-purposed wood from barns was used as accent features for the new City Hall.

2016- Councilmember Woodham finally determined USDA funding was not viable.

Nov. & Dec. 2016- City Council transfers \$100k from Mahler bequest to SCPF for general park purposes. House content sales netted two checks, \$2,939.60 & \$76.00 to SCPF.

1Q 2017- SCP Foundation amends its Articles of Incorporation to achieve 3-c status, per IRS requirements. "The purposes for which the Foundation is organized are exclusively charitable, and educational: to solicit and receive tax deductible contributions to be expended to support activities and capital purchases in support of the improvement, maintenance and operation of Shoal Creek Park in the City of Montevallo, Alabama and to support other activities and capital purchases related to the park or park trail."

2Q2017- Dr. Mike Hardig produces first draft of "Shoal Creek Park Plant Guide." He identifies the "critically imperiled" Tennessee Gladecress on the property, the only known sighting in Shelby County.

April 2017- Archeological study by Bonnie Gums. 70 shovel tests, 3 phases (one at house, one behind house covering most of barns' area and one across the creek at potential slave quarters.

June 2017- Archeological Phase II by Bonnie Gums study to focus on pig barn location for restroom/pavilion will be completed soon.

## House

Sept. 1976- The Alabama Historic Commission adds Perry Hall to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage.

Dec. 2013- An appraisal of house contents was conducted, totaling just under \$15k.

June 2015- Schneider Historical Preservation, LLC, in association with Christy Cobb Consulting Engineers produced the Perry Hall (The Mahler Farm) Historic Structures Report, which was funded by an Architectural Grant through the State Historical Commission with City matching funds.

Nov. 2015- The City employed C&C Electric to add ARC Fault circuit interrupters and rebuilt the panel, per recommendations from the County electrician.

1Q2016- Turner, Batson had structural engineer assess the foundation of the house. He cautioned against using the house. Recommended hiring professionals for further study. City Council hired GHD for further study.

1-2016 SCPF minutes: Herman reported the immediate concerns for the structural integrity of the house. Turner, Batson (City Hall architects) has agreed to help the city with a plan for the house and sent out a structural engineer to assess the condition of the foundation. The engineer found evidence of serious settling at a main load-bearing wall in the center of the house. Upon further investigation, the engineer noted visible, extensive termite damage to the original floor joists, which were accessible in the cellar. He recommended we hire a professional company to investigate further. Core samples of the beams will need to be taken in order to determine if the joists are still viable. In addition, access to the beams under the house will be required in order to make a complete assessment. This would most likely involve digging out the crawlspace or removing flooring above the beams. They will give us an estimate of that cost. Once that work is complete, our architects and engineer will be able to put together construction drawings from which we can obtain bids for the required improvements.

Given his immediate findings, the engineer cautioned against allowing public access to the home. He said that as few as five people standing above a compromised beam could cause the floor to collapse. He said this would include allowing people in the house for an estate sale. As a result, the Mayor has put our plans for a sale on hold.

April 2016 Prestige EnviroMicrobiology, Inc. did an Analytical Test Report on wood samples of foundation.

April 2016 GHD (Anthony Firriolo) Floor Framing Condition Assessment. GHD was hired by SDG.

May 2016 SDG (Structural Design Group, Craig Winn) writes to Turner Batson, recommends no public access to house. SDG Structural Assessment and Repair Feasibility Report.

Sept. 2016 William Willford of Williford Orman Construction, LLC gave \$130k foundation estimate. He was sent the SDG report. Orman was the general contractor for City Hall. Orman had done a project recently on an historic house and he estimated the repair very differently than the repair suggested in the SDG report.

2016- The house contents were sold, after the Montevallo Historical Commission flagged the items to remain in house. Ultimately, contents stored in climate-controlled facility (not at house due to weight issues).

April 2017 Turner/Batson, Rob Walker, Lowell Christy proposals to SCPF House Committee.

May 2017 City Council approves moving \$300k of the \$400k from Ms. Mahler's trail bequest to improvements for the house.

July 2017 City Council approves contract with Lowell Christy of Christy Cobb Structural Engineers to review and recommend a plan for the Perry/Mahler House.

Dec. 2017 Lowell Christy presents results of report to SCPF House Committee, Mayor, and City Clerk. Ms. Christy spoke with three different historical renovation contractors and all three independently estimated renovation cost for assembly use at a \$1 million plus or minus 20%. She recommended hiring an architect to proceed with non-assembly use of house.

March 2018 Terry Arnold summary for SCPF House Committee.

April 2018 Rob Walker (architect) proposal to SCPF House Committee.

July 2018 City Council approves Shoal Creek Pasture Succession Project

Aug. 2018 City Council approves County overseeing renovation work with SCPF representative and Montevallo Historic Preservation Commission representative for use as a caretaker house. City Council approves application for Perry-Mahler Home to National Register for Historic Places.

### **Restroom/Pavilion**

2Q2016- City Council approved application and City received a RTP (Recreational Trail Program) grant of \$100k, which requires a city match. Learned of this opportunity from a SCPF board-member.

March 2017- SCP Foundation let an RFP for architect for restroom/ pavilion. The Board had three firms respond and chose Turner/Batson.

April 2017- Preliminary design drawing from TB.

Early June 2017- First estimate of cost of pavilion from preliminary design at \$115k.

Mid-June 2017- Waiting on Phase II archeological survey to determine placement of restroom/pavilion on the former site of the pig barn.

1Q18- Low bid came in at \$270k. Decided to wait and re-bid, hoping more local contractors would bid next time.

July 2018- City Council accepts bid from Davis Construction. Final estimated cost: \$180k, which includes materials for some work being done by city crews. \$100k grant, \$80k from City through Mahler bequest for trails connecting or within SCP.

### **Bridge/s**

4Q2017- SCPF hired Martin engineering to perform a FEMA floodway study.

Aug. 2018- City Council approves a MOA with the County & MDCD to hire the County to oversee the bid process and installation of a bridge near the existing footbridge and 2 miles of additional trails. Estimated cost: \$160k, \$100k by the County and \$60k by the MDCD.