

**BARTON WOODS ROAD and PONCE DE LEON MANOR
CHARACTER AREAS**

DRAFT 4/21/10

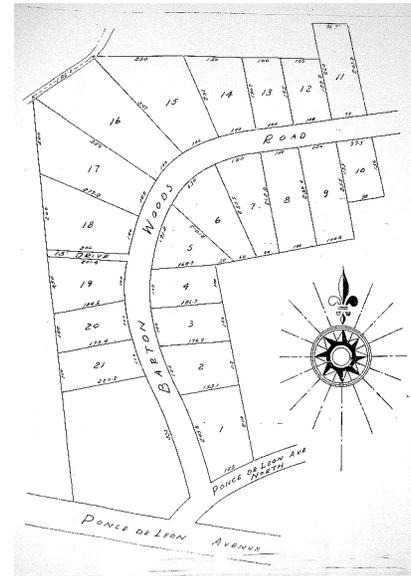
The subdivisions of Barton Woods and Ponce de Leon Manor are located in unincorporated DeKalb County, west of the City of Decatur in the east central area of the Druid Hills Historic District. Both are cul-de-sacs, streetscapes not typical of Olmsted design. Barton Woods is accessed from North Ponce de Leon Avenue, just west of Deepdene Park, while Ponce de Leon Manor is accessed from the south side of Ponce de Leon Avenue, just below the intersection with East Lake.

The areas of both subdivisions appear on both concept maps and plats executed by the Olmsted firm in developing Druid Hills.

For Barton Woods, much of the acreage of this later subdivision appears to have been left vacant before World War II, resulting in a wooded buffer at Peavine Creek, which borders to the west. In 1950 developer Edward A. Barton bought the undeveloped parcel to create his subdivision. An existing lane was extended to make a cul-de-sac. The plat (Plat Book 18, page 14) shows 21 lots on a street 50 feet in width; the street is to be paved and have granite curbing. Both county water and sewer are provided.



Olmsted plat, 1915(?)



Barton Woods plat, 1950

Like Malvin Rauschenberg on Artwood Road, E.A. Barton lived on the street (843) and supervised construction. Barton, an officer at a savings and loan, also was involved in financing construction. In the early 1950's, Edward A. Barton brokered the sales of many lots in both old and new neighborhoods in greater Atlanta. His name is connected to new construction in the subdivisions of Oglethorpe Estates, Idlewild, and Parkview. A member of the National Home Builders Association (NHBA), in 1953 Barton received national recognition as a builder of their "Trade Secrets House," which revolutionized the home construction industry.

The lots at Barton Woods come with restrictive covenants regarding the size and siting of houses. Houses of one story are to have a minimum of 1,500 square feet, and if two stories, 1,000 square feet downstairs and 500 upstairs. Only single-family homes are to be constructed, with no duplexes. The building line is 50 feet from the street, with side yard setbacks at 10 feet. Additionally, houses on lots 11-21 can be sited no more than 100 feet from the street, and on lots 15-18 houses cannot be sited within 50 feet of the rear property line. Buyers are obligated to spend at least \$ 15,000 for constructing a house, and Edward A. Barton reserves the right to approve all designs.

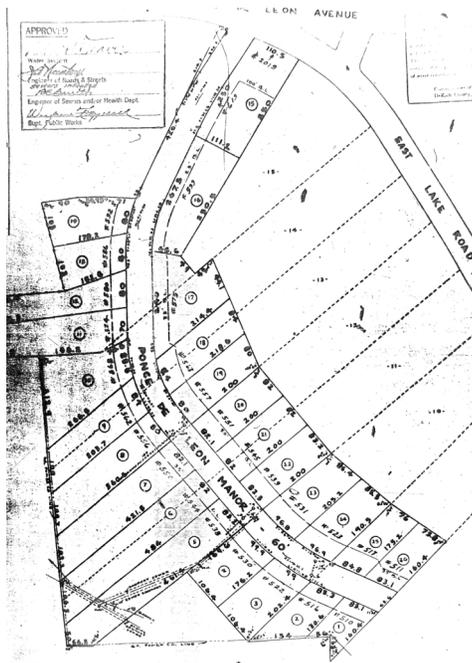


Two houses constructed by E.A. Barton, at 871 (1950) and 864 (1952).

From these covenants, which lasted to 1973, it is apparent that Edward A. Barton envisions a street of ranch houses, ramblers, or split-levels, a departure in looks and massing from the older neighborhoods. Barton constructs about half the houses during the first phase of building. The new houses are attractive to families seeking a less formal lifestyle in a wooded setting. Compared to Artwood Road, there is a lack of uniform appearance in the houses. The materials and the ranch house form are more varied. From period magazines, Barton himself may have favored more contemporary designs with asymmetrical roofs, but appears to have catered to the tastes of clients who may have preferred the more conservative lines of small ranches. Both styles are represented in this small subdivision.

In 1957, the rear halves of the seven adjacent Olmsted lots facing North Ponce de Leon are acquired. These original lots were very large, up to 1,000 feet in depth. The road is widened and extended into the rear halves of these properties to access 14 more lots for new construction. The last house in the cul-de-sac is built in 1975.

The area of Ponce de Leon Manor also appears on both concept maps and plats executed by the Olmsted firm in developing Druid Hills. Originally, the Olmsted lots facing the west side of East Lake were very deep, up to 1,000 feet. By World War II, only three houses had been constructed on the first seven lots. In 1957 Calvin T. Rutland, who owned Rutland Contracting in Decatur, acquired the rear halves of these lots, combining the acreage to create lots for his new small subdivision, Ponce de Leon Manor. The plat (Plat Book 26, page 142) shows 26 lots lining a dead-end street 50 feet in width. Later, St. Elias Antiochan Orthodox Church, constructed in xxx, would absorb 2 of the 26 lots.



Plat of Ponce de Leon Manor. 1957



Narrower lots, smaller set backs in side yards, and closer building lines contribute to a more intimate feel on Ponce de Leon Manor.

The Rutland family is connected to many commercial activities in De Kalb County in the 1950's and 1960's. Rutland Contracting specialized in grading, excavation, and the installation of storm and sanitary sewers. Guy W. Rutland Sr. and Jr. are connected to development occurring on East Ponce, Trinity Place, and Church Street in Decatur. Family commercial interests include broadcasting, sheet metal working, hoists and hydraulic equipment, and automotive transport. In 1949-50, Guy Rutland Sr. arranges the transfers of the back halves of deep properties on Olmsted lot 17 between Scott Boulevard and Decatur, creating the new street of Pinetree Drive. Guy Rutland Jr. and Calvin are responsible for managing the project at Ponce de Leon Manor.

Rutland Contracting prepares the building sites and sells the lots, but does not do the actual construction between 1957 and 1960. Like Artwood and Barton Woods, Ponce de Leon Manor has restrictive covenants regarding the size of houses. Houses of one story are to have a minimum of 1,800 square feet, with carports. Only single-family homes are to be constructed, with no duplexes. The building line is 35 feet from the street, with side yard setbacks at 7 feet. Calvin Rutland reserves the right to approve all designs. Compared to Artwood and Barton Woods Roads, more builders are likely represented on this street with its mix of popular ranches, ramblers, and split levels. Plans appear to be a mix design services and customized work; two houses were designed by Leila Ross Wilburn, at the end of her career. In the 1990's, the street is extended for 7 more houses and a turnaround.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Site and Landscape Characteristics:

Front Setbacks: On Barton Woods Road, the building line is generally 50 feet from the street. On Ponce de Leon Manor, the building line is 35 feet from the street on the west side, and 50 feet on the east side.

Side Setbacks: On Barton Woods Road, 10 feet. On Ponce de Leon Manor, 7 feet.

Typical Lot Sizes:

On Barton Woods Road, lots in both phases of construction are similar in size. Generally, lots are mostly rectangular: 94 to 125 feet wide at the street, with depths of 170 to 260 feet. The smallest lot is .35 acres; most lots are between .40 to .60 acres. Fan-shaped lots along the curve of Barton Woods Road are bigger, up to 1.25 acres, and deeper, up to 390 feet.

On Ponce de Leon Manor, lots are smaller: averaging 80 to 85 feet wide at the street, and 175 to 219 feet deep. Lots on the west side are deeper, up to 484 feet, while lots on the east side are less deep and more consistently sized at .33 to .50 acres. The smallest lot is .28 acres. The largest lot, more trapezoidal in shape, is 1.25 acres.

Typical Building Sizes:

On Barton Woods, the smallest house is 1,527 sq. ft. and the largest is 3,536 sq. ft, with the average floor plan ranging from 2,000 to 2,600 sq. ft.

On Ponce de Leon Manor, the smallest house is 1,836 sq. ft. and the largest is 3,830 sq. ft., with the average floor plan ranging from 2,000 to 2,700. Most houses have at least 1,000 sq. ft. of subterranean space not visible from the street.

Percentage of Lot coverage (Home to Lot):

Lot coverage of 9-12% is prevalent on Barton Woods Road. The smallest lot coverage is 3.5%, and the largest is 15%. A quarter of the properties, mostly in phase one of construction, have lot coverage of less than 9%.

Of the 21 houses studied on Ponce de Leon Manor, 13 houses have lot coverages of 11 to 19%. The smallest lot coverage is 5%, and the largest is 23%.

Streetscapes:

Both Barton Woods Road and Ponce de Leon Manor are paved with asphalt. There are granite curbs throughout. There are no sidewalks on either street. Garages and carports generally face the street, although there are more side-loading garages and carports present on Ponce de Leon Manor.

Other

Masonry elements

On both streets, brick is used on about half the houses, but in combination with other materials. Foundations appear to be concrete block with brick facing or cast concrete. On Barton Woods Road there is one granite foundation, and accent panels of decorative schist are evident on some front elevations. Original driveways on both streets are concrete and are 10-12 feet wide. Front walks, close to the front of the house, run to driveways. Walkways are cement, flagstone, and brick. Stoops are concrete, with concrete and brick steps, and some flagstone. Retaining walls are rare. There are examples of lattice-work brick or block, used especially to screen carports on Ponce de Leon Manor.



Brick is used for a wainscot in combination with horizontal siding on this ranch house (1952) on Barton Woods. The lattice-work brick on the screen wall across the front is distinctive.

Drives and parking

On Barton Woods Road, driveways generally run perpendicularly to the street. Garages and carports incorporated into the floor plans open to the front. Houses may have parking pads in side yards and in front. Earlier houses lacking carports have detached garages.

There are no detached garages on Ponce de Leon Manor. Carports are incorporated into the footprint and rooflines of houses. Compared to Artwood and Barton Woods, Ponce de Leon Manor has more examples of side-facing carports and garages, sometimes extending into the front yard spaces. There is one front-loading subterranean garage.

Front yard spaces

On both streets front yards are fairly open, and mature hardwoods provide shade. Planting beds and low ornamentals, especially azaleas, emphasize the horizontality of the houses from the street. Some later houses on the north side of Barton Woods Road may be partially hidden by the vegetation in a small wooded ravine.



add another photo here- trade secrets Barton Woods

On two houses on Ponce de Leon Manor, carports project into in front yard spaces and use screening lattice-work block incorporated into end walls

Signage

There is no subdivision signage at Barton Woods, while Ponce de Leon Manor has a more formal entrance incorporating a curved brick wall.

Mailboxes

On both streets, mailboxes are supported on simple wood posts or iron pipe. Some supports have wrought iron trellises. Brick enclosures for mailboxes are rare.

Parks

The entrance to Barton Woods Road is across from Deepdene Park, one of the linear green spaces along North Ponce de Leon. Fernbank Forest can be accessed from the rear yards of some properties. Parks and playgrounds are less accessible at Ponce de Leon Manor, which is surrounded by private property.

Building Characteristics:**Scale**

On both streets, one-story houses predominate. Many of the houses in the first phase of construction on Barton Woods do not have basements. On Ponce de Leon Manor, only two houses lack basements, and most houses have large (1,000 sq. ft. +) subterranean spaces that may not be apparent from the street.

Type

Single family detached dwellings. The restrictive covenants for both streets originally prohibited subdivision, duplexes, and any living spaces in out buildings.

Style

On Barton Woods Road, one-story houses include in-line ranches and ranches with projecting wings. There are also as more contemporary houses with front-facing gables that echo the 1953 "Trade Secrets" house. There is one "international style" house with a flat roof. There are 2 split-levels.

On Ponce de Leon Manor, there are (four?) split levels in addition to in-line ranches.

Material

Materials are varied. In addition to brick, there are many examples of siding: vertical board and batten, horizontal lap, shake and tabbed siding. The siding is often used above a brick wainscot. Crab Orchard stone and grey schist are used occasionally to add contrast. Roofing material is asphalt shingle throughout.

Roof Form

On Barton Woods Road, shallow gables are actually more common than hip roofs. There are also asymmetrical roofs and shed roofs. There is one flat roof.

At Ponce de Leon Manor, Ranch houses have hips and gables equal in prevalence, and sometimes used in combination. There is also one asymmetrical gable roof.

Roof Pitch

Ranch houses commonly have slopes less than 30%. This translates to pitches between 4/12 and 7/12.



Roof lines are shallow but varied on Barton Woods



Massing

On both streets, houses stay close to the ground with limited vertical massing but often a sprawling footprint. Ceiling heights of 8 feet are common. Houses having a more contemporary style may have open floor plans, higher exposed ceilings, and more glass. Open carports help to reduce massing.



An entry recessed behind projecting wings helps break up the facade and horizontality of this ranch (1953)

Directional emphasis

Horizontality is emphasized by the shallow rooflines. Carport roofs are often integrated with house roofs to add width. On the front elevation, this horizontal quality can be accented by bands of windows (often with shutters) or windows wrapping around corners. Shallow verandahs, overhanging eaves, and recessed front entrances also contribute the horizontality.

Other

Details

Houses on both Barton Woods Road and Ponce de Leon Manor, while minimally detailed, exhibit more varied materials and rooflines than those on Artwood Road.

Garages and parking

On Barton Woods Road, front-facing garages and carports are dominant. Garages that are flush with front walls may have originally been open carports. Earlier houses have detached garages.

There are no detached garages on Ponce de Leon Manor. Carports are incorporated into the footprint and rooflines of houses. Compared to Artwood and Barton Woods, Ponce de Leon Manor has more examples of side-facing carports and garages, placed in the rear as well as in the front. There is one subterranean garage.

Porches

Small stoops and shallow verandahs predominate on both streets. There is a definite lack of screened porches on the fronts of houses, indicating that the social gathering spot has shifted to a screened porch, patio, and living room at the rear.

Windows

A variety of windows with aluminum frames are used, often occurring on one house but used for different rooms. These include double hung, triple and single awning, and jalousie windows. A larger window opening is commonly used across the front: fixed plate glass, fixed glass with flanking awning units, or banked double hung or awning units. Bay windows and bowed units are less evident. Corner windows are also present. Needed cross-ventilation is supported by awning and jalousie windows, whole house fans, and later air-conditioning. On more contemporary houses, narrow rectangular bi-pass units are evident, as well as fixed high glass in the gables.



This contemporary split-level has a more open floor plan with exposed ceilings and high glass in public areas



Corner windows help anchor the hip roof

get another photo of window PM

Chimneys

Chimneys are brick. On both streets they are usually located in the roofline-- centered or slightly off-center-- and reflect the more open floor plan of the ranch house, as well as the freestanding fireplaces with exposed brick and raised hearths that become more popular by the late 1950's. On Barton Woods Road, there is one chimney placed on a front elevation.

Roofing Material

Asphalt shingle is used throughout both streets.

Accessory buildings

Some detached garages on Barton Woods Road appear to be original.

Retaining walls

Because of the relatively flat streetscape in phase one at Barton Woods, retaining walls in side yards appear rare and no more than 2 feet high, and are constructed using brick or railroad ties.

Because ground falls off sharply on the west side of Ponce de Leon Manor, a few of these houses have high retaining walls at driveways running to the rear. Retaining walls may be up to 4 feet high and are brick.

Foundation materials

Brick, or cinder block faced with brick, predominates. There are some concrete foundations. There is one granite foundation on Barton Woods Road.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES:

In creating these small subdivisions, there was an intended clear departure from the two-story houses of the past. Variations of the ranch house, a post-war housing phenomenon, are clearly evident. Low hip and gable rooflines, shallow verandahs, overhanging eaves, and bands of windows (often with shutters) or windows wrapping around corners emphasize the horizontality characteristic of the ranch house.

GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

These Guidelines and Recommendations are to be applied in the place of and intended to supercede the existing Guidelines of the Druid Hills Historic District, except for Sections 8 & 9 of the General Guidelines, which shall fully apply to Barton Woods Road and Ponce de Leon Manor. It is the intent of these Guidelines and Recommendations to preserve the as-built historical pattern of these streets without unduly restricting or regulating the architectural style and features of homes constructed or renovated in the District.

Massing and Additions

Character-defining features

- One story
- Horizontal emphasis

Design Guidelines

- Additions should be placed at the rear, and should only be visible at an angle from the street
- Existing setback patterns honored and maintained from street
- Visibility from the street should be one story
- Setting the addition back from sides of house reduces visibility from street
- New construction or additions should be consistent with heights of surrounding houses
- New construction and additions should have plate heights similar to surrounding houses
- New construction and additions should have roof forms similar to surrounding houses
- Hip or shallow gable roofs, and possibly flat roofs, are recommended
- Avoid using building materials that are not common to the individual street, although rear additions may use other materials
- A split level may be more successful than “pop-up,” and closer to original intent
- Lots that drop off may accommodate additions more easily
- Primary building facades should have horizontal emphasis, not vertical; roof overhangs, shallow verandahs, and appropriate windows can enhance horizontality

Landscaping

Character-defining features

Ranch houses have a horizontal emphasis on the streetscape

Design guidelines

- Encourage use of lower bedding, bushes, and ornamental trees that do not compete with facades
- Install retaining walls in front and side yards only if truly needed: if visible from the street, not more than 24” high, using brick
- Higher retaining walls may be used in rears of properties on slopes
- Minimize grading for any new construction or additions

Detailing

Character-defining features

Ranch houses have minimal detailing, and instead contrasting materials are used for affect.

Design guidelines

- Maintain wrought iron panels and brackets, as well as railings
- Maintain accent panels such as tab shingles or vertical siding, and if replacement is needed, replace with similar material
- Keep original shutter
- Avoid painting brick and Tennessee Crab Orchard stone

Roofing

Character-defining features

The hip and/or shallow-gable roofs are used and contribute to horizontality. Deeper overhangs may be present. Asphalt shingles are used throughout the street.

Design guidelines

- Additional or new roofs should echo those of the original house
- Additional roofs should be subordinate to the primary roofline visible from the street
- The addition of dormers or skylights should not be visible from the street
- Newer roofing materials may be used, but should suggest the asphalt shingle of the period. Architectural tabbed shingle may be appropriate. Real or synthetic slate and tile are not appropriate. Metal is not appropriate.

Siding and Exterior Finishes

Character-defining features

A variety of exterior finishes are evident on Barton Woods Road. Red brick, board-and-batten, lap siding, routed siding, shake siding, and tabbed siding are evident. Buff Crab Orchard stone is less used for color contrast.

Design guidelines

- Maintain accent panels such as tab shingles or vertical siding, and if replacement is needed, replace with similar material
- Avoid introducing other materials: vinyl siding, real or synthetic stucco, or granite. Hardiplank is appropriate for replacing siding on end gables and may be used on rear additions.

Windows and Doors

Character-defining features

Windows were sized and arranged to emphasize the horizontality of the ranch. Windows may be used to wrap around corners. A mixing of window types was common on ranches. Doors were minimally detailed: solid, 6 panel, 6 panel with top lights, 3 diagonal lights. Entryways may have one panel of plate glass installed to one side of the front door. On “colonial” ranches, windows units may be fixed above raised wood panels, and paneled front doors may be flanked by divided sidelights.

Design guidelines

- Install replacement windows that suggest the horizontal quality of the original awning units
- Keep larger window units on the front facade
- Keep original placement and sizes of window openings
- Replacement doors should be simple: solid, 6 panel, 6 panel with top lights, 3 diagonal lights
- Decorative doors incorporating leaded panels are not appropriate
- Sidelights and transoms may not be appropriate



923 Barton Woods Road (1959), with its pediment and Doric columns serves as a good example of a more traditional neoclassical ranch

Chimneys

Character-defining features

Chimneys are brick, incorporated into rooflines, and reflect the more open floor plans of ranches.

Design guidelines

- Avoid painting existing chimneys
- A new chimney in an addition may be a material other than brick provided that the chimney is not visible from the street