

KARL F. DEAN  
MAYOR



# METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
3000 Granny White Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**2009 Sevier Street, Shelby Park & US Naval Reserve Training Center  
June 17, 2015**

**Application:** Historic Landmark Overlay for Shelby Park and US Naval Reserve Training Center

**Map and Parcel Numbers:** 09402022900

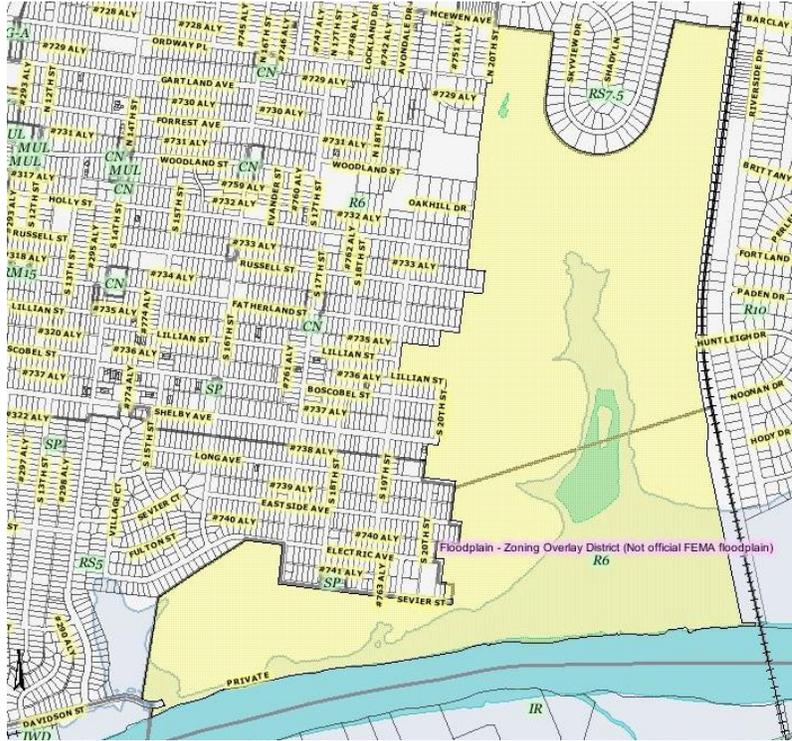
**Council Districts:** 06

**Applicant:** Mayor Karl Dean

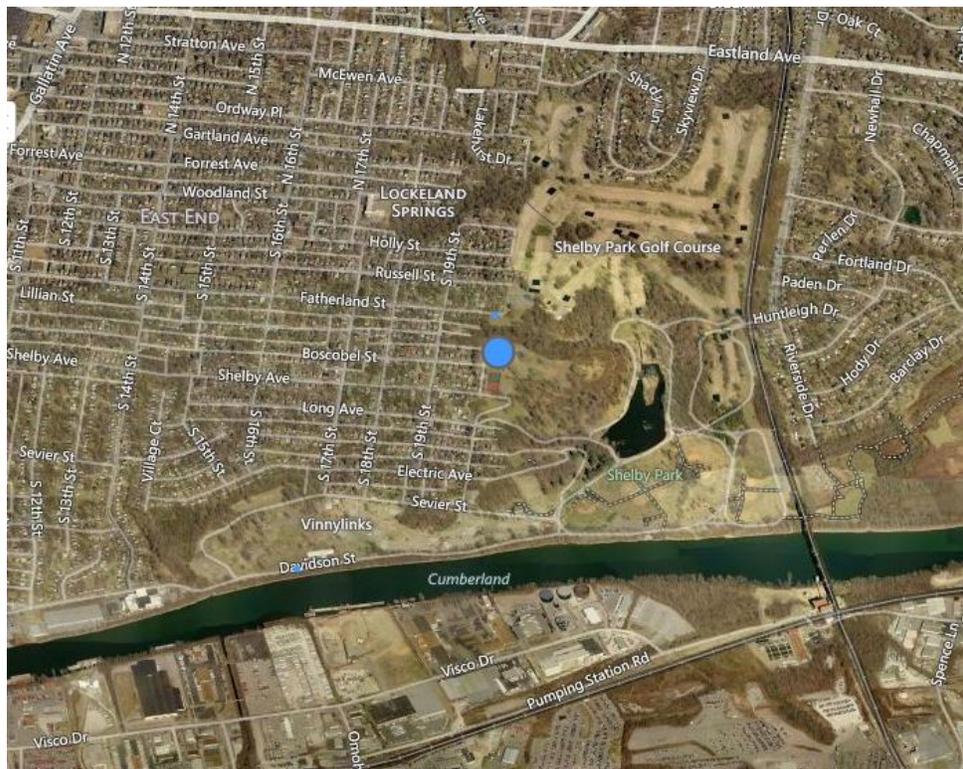
**Project Lead:** Robin Zeigler, [robin.zeigler@nashville.gov](mailto:robin.zeigler@nashville.gov), 615-862-7970

<p><b>Description of Project:</b> Mayor Karl Dean requests that Shelby Park and the US Naval Reserve Training Center be adopted as a Historic Landmark Overlay.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Summary:</b> The US Naval Reserve Training Center (NRTC) is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Since NRTC is listed and Shelby Park serves as the site of the NR building, the property meets the criteria of the ordinance. Staff suggests the Commission recommend to City Council a Historic Landmark Overlay for Shelby Park and the US Naval Reserve Training Center.</p>	<p><b>Attachments</b> <b>A:</b> Photographs</p>
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## Vicinity Map



## Aerial Map



## **Background:**

Shelby Park is located at Shelby Avenue and South 20<sup>th</sup> Street along the Cumberland River. It is named for John Shelby, a prominent doctor who owned much of East Nashville, including the land where the park is located. Shelby Park had its beginning as an amusement park at the turn of the century. The company that owned the amusement park went bankrupt in 1903 and the site was bought by the Parks Board in 1909. The Board spent a few years acquiring more land before opening the park on July 4, 1912.

Shelby Park has a storied past. The first city park baseball league was started there by the YMCA in 1915. Many of the first buildings in Shelby Park were part of a 1912 master plan laid out by Eugene Castner Lewis, the same man who built the Parthenon in Centennial Park. Among these were Sycamore Lodge, Mission House, and a large Dutch windmill overlooking the Cumberland River. Unfortunately most of these buildings have since disappeared, due to disrepair and a fire in the 1940s. Another long-gone piece of park history is the pool, which stood from 1932 to 1961, that was used by the Army during WWII for river assault boat training.

The most significant building still standing in the park today is the US Naval Reserve Training Center, located in Meredith Grove, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its local significance in military history, and under Criterion C for its design by notable Nashville architect Edwin A. Keeble. Constructed in 1948-1949, the US Naval Reserve Training Center building is a result of the United States Navy's need for additional reserve facilities across the nation following the close of World War II. The training, military action, and disaster assistance of the Naval reservists and units in Nashville indicate a strong connection between the city and the Naval Reserve. In addition to the military role, the US Naval Reserve Training Center is also significant for its architecture. Uniquely designed to resemble a ship's prow by Nashville architect, Edwin A. Keeble, the US Naval Reserve Training Center reflects Keeble's duty in the Navy during World War II as well as previous experience designing National Guard Armories during the New Deal era. The connection to such a notable Nashville architect, who later designed many prominent Nashville buildings including the Life & Casualty Tower, a 1950s modern skyscraper, illustrates local significant for architecture, under Criterion C.

## **Applicable Ordinance:**

### Article III. Historic Overlay Districts

17.36.120 Historic Districts Defined. B. Historic Landmark. An historic landmark is defined as a building, structure, site or object, its appurtenances and the property it is located on, of high historical, cultural, architectural or archaeological importance; whose demolition or destruction would constitute an irreplaceable loss to the quality and character of Nashville and Davidson County; and that meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. The historic landmark is associated with an event that has made a significant contribution to local, state or national history;
2. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in local, state or national history;
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic value;
4. It has yielded or may be likely to yielded archaeological information important in history or prehistory; or
5. It is listed or is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Analysis and Findings:**

The US Naval Reserve Training Center (NRTC) is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Since NRTC is listed and Shelby Park serves as the site of the NR building, the property meets the criteria of the ordinance. Staff suggests the Commission recommend to City Council a Historic Landmark Overlay for Shelby Park and the US Naval Reserve Training Center.

PHOTOGRAPHS

