

MEGAN BARRY  
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**

**621 Hill Road, The May-Granbery House and Alford Cemetery  
January 21, 2017**

**Application:** Historic Landmark Overlay for 621 Hill Road, The May-Granbery House and Alford Cemetery

**Map and Parcel Numbers:** 16000019200

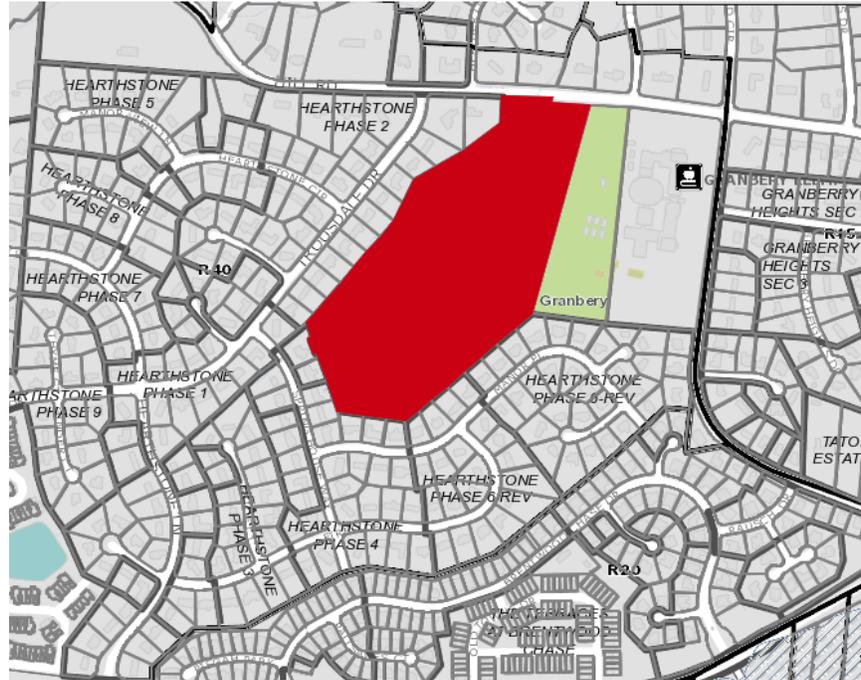
**Council Districts:** 04

**Applicant:** Councilman Robert Swope

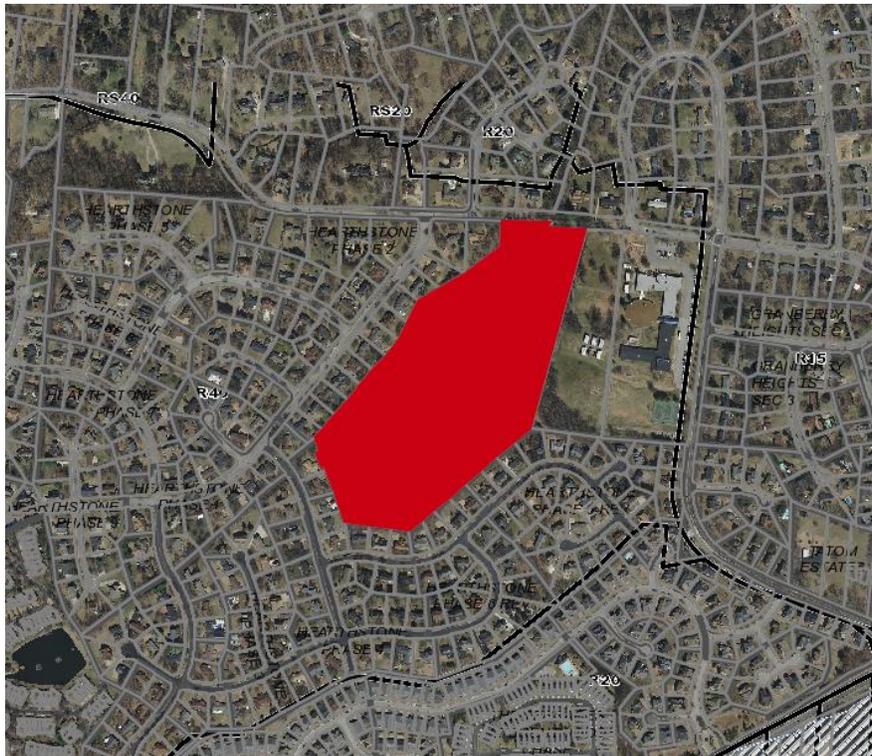
**Project Lead:** Robin Zeigler, [robin.zeigler@nashville.gov](mailto:robin.zeigler@nashville.gov), 615-862-7970

<p><b>Description of Project:</b> Councilman Robert Swope requests a Historic Landmark overlay for 621 Hill Road, The May-Granbery House and Alford Cemetery.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Summary:</b> Staff suggests that the MHZC recommend to Council approval of a Historic Landmark overlay for 621 Hill Road and to use the existing design guidelines for Historic Landmarks to guide future alterations, finding the building meets criterion 5 of ordinance 17.36.120.</p>	<p><b>Attachments</b> <b>A:</b> Photographs <b>B:</b> Articles</p>
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## Vicinity Maps



## Aerials



## **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 yield archaeological information important in history or prehistory; or
5. It is listed or is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Background:**

It is unknown if the building was constructed by John Alford or James May. John Alford likely lived at Travellers Rest, his stepfather's plantation, until 1841 when his stepbrother took over management. His 5<sup>th</sup> child was born on the property just after his death.

Alternatively, it could have been constructed by James F. May shortly after his purchase of the property in 1837. James Francis May was a member of one of Tennessee's most prominent families. His grandfather, James White, founded Knoxville, his father was a doctor and friend of Andrew Jackson, and his stepfather was Judge John Overton. He married into another affluent family with his marriage to Eliza Perkins. The property remained in the May family until 1888.

William Granbery purchased the home in 1909 and it remained in the Granbery family for more than 70 years. The log structures were moved to the site in the 1920s.

The property includes the principal home, multiple outbuildings and the Alford Cemetery. John Alford, Elizabeth Alford, and Nancy Alford are three of the burials at this small cemetery from the early 1800s.

The property is an outstanding example of an early Middle Tennessee rural estate that developed into an increasingly suburban neighborhood. The property also has an association with several prominent Tennesseans that influenced the social, economic, and built environments of Nashville, including John Alford and James May.

## Inventory

Structure	Date	Status
May-Granbery House	c.1830	C
Alford Cemetery	1800s	C
5-bay log carport and attached house	1920s	C
Vertical board barn	1980s	NC
Wood fencing		NC
Greenhouse		NC
2-pen log house with stone chimney and full-width porch	c.1920	C
1-pen log building	c.1920	C
Stone carriage step	c.1830	C

## Analysis & Findings:

The property is an outstanding example of an early Middle Tennessee rural estate that developed into an increasingly suburban neighborhood. The property also has an association with several prominent Tennesseans that influenced the social, economic, and built environments of Nashville, including John Alford and James May. For these reasons the building meets standard 5 of section 17.36.120.

## Recommendation:

Staff suggests that the MHZC recommend to Council approval of a Historic Landmark overlay for 621 Hill Road and to use the existing design guidelines for Historic Landmarks to guide future alterations, finding the building meets criterion 5 of ordinance 17.36.120.

# PHOTOGRAPHS





Front of May-Granbery House



Rear of May-Granbery House



Carport



Alford Cemetery



House attached to carport



Non-contributing vertical board barn



Non-contributing green house



Two-pen log house



Carriage step