AN INQUIRY INTO THE PREFERENCE FOR LOCAL VERNACULAR DESIGN IN VIRGINIA HIGHLAND

by

MATTHEW J. LIVERMORE

(Under the Direction of MARY ANNE ALABANZA AKERS)

ABSTRACT

Many neighborhoods in America are characterized by a particular local vernacular design style. This thesis investigates any significant relationships that may exist between preference for the vernacular design of Virginia Highland and residence in Virginia Highland. This thesis provides a useful framework and analytical tool for assessing the preference for specific environmental variables, particularly those related to neighborhood design and character.

INDEX WORDS: vernacular, vernacular design, Virginia Highland, preference, development

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BA, University of Massachusetts, 2000

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2006

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DEDICATION

To my wife and parents without whom none of this was very likely to happen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis benefited greatly from the comments and support of Dr. Mary Anne Alabanza Akers, Pratt Cassity, Dr. Jorge Atiles, and J. Todd Arnold. Hank Methvin's network of contacts was also invaluable. Final thanks are due to my classmates for all of their varied, strange and sometimes stupefying commentary.

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Preface

Influences on contemporary life seem to increase constantly in number and variety. Information passes very quickly to and among us, and many of us are aware of and capable of obtaining more every day. The author has recently had the singularly peculiar experience of eating upscale Italian food at a Belizian restaurant accessible only by watercraft and small prop planes. The brine that flavored the capers eaten that day came from waters thousands of miles from Belize, and the irresistible question was: "how did this food get here, and how do they know how to cook it? Why, given how tasty everything else here is, would they even want to?" Traditional Belizian cuisine involves mostly fish and fruit. It is a large step to rustic Italian fare. Yet, like so many other strange juxtapositions in today's world, there it was.

Similar questions nag every time one travels through the contemporary landscape. Why is it that things look this way? How did that six thousand square foot mansion end up next to a row of shotgun mill houses? When exactly did someone think to use Japanese cryptomeria trees for that alee? Some of these questions are easily answered. Just like the Italian restaurant which, it turns out, was started by a formally-trained chef who felt compelled to ply his trade in the far reaches of the Caribbean, some of these oddities in the landscape are unique occurrences. They were purposefully put there by someone who first saw them clearly in his or her mind. This makes the incongruity of something like Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling Waters or one of James Rose's suburban Japanese style oases much easier to accept. There is some genius behind it.

But what about the others? Not every unexpected sight in the landscape arrived there through some masterminded scheme. Most just happened, and people probably can't give one single reason why. Some keep happening, and eventually become part of the expected landscape. Ask why they are there, and you will hear that that is the way things are done. Travel down the road some more and things are likely done a different way, but to no less practical effect. It may seem random and unimportant, but there must be some driving force or forces that cause people to select and perpetuate a common landscape. And, counter-intuitively, with all of the influences now available to us, much of that landscape is becoming seemingly more common.

There are, however, still many places interspersed in the world around us that have not been absorbed into the greater common landscape or become overwhelmed by new and exotic influences. They persist despite frequent, looming peril, and one feels compelled to ask why.

Chapter 1
Introduction

There are many approaches to the study of landscape use patterns. This thesis narrows down the simple question of why to a very specific question: *Does familiarity gained through residence in close proximity to a discernable vernacular design style influence preference for that style*? This question is asked specifically about the vernacularly distinct Virginia Highland neighborhood in Atlanta, GA.

Chapter 2 introduces the concept of vernacular design. An in depth definition of the word "vernacular" is provided in the first section, followed by a discussion of place associated vernacular design. This area of study is well documented, and an overview of seminal works on traditional American vernacular design is presented. To give an example, a brief description of the commercial vernacular style of the Little Five Points neighborhood in Atlanta, GA is provided.
Because the vernacular style central to the thrust of this thesis is associated with a particular neighborhood, the concept of place associated vernacular design is quite important to this research.

Also included in chapter 2 is a discussion about the concept of vernacular that is associated directly with culture and not necessarily with any particular geographic location. The discussion of cultural vernacular begins with a brief definition of culture and an assertion that vernacular design can be influenced by factors such as religious, financial, ethnic, or philosophical differences. It is explained how, due to the ease of portability of these influencing factors, both cultural and vernacular ideas can be carried to a wide variety of locations, creating what is here termed "portable

culture" and "portable vernacular". The literature introduces several authors who have recorded examples of portable vernacular design.

Portable or culturally associated vernacular design is important to this thesis because it is the most likely source of stylistic elements that may be preferred more by residents than a local vernacular style. With the easy flow of information in contemporary society, people are exposed to many cultural influences not traditionally associated with their area of residence. This could create a preference for something very different than established local design. It is important from a planning and design perspective to establish to what degree these portable forms of vernacular design may influence preference in an area already characterized by a place-specific vernacular design.

Chapter 3 examines some mechanisms of perception and their effects on the formation of preference. Introduced first is the idea that certain environmental elements are thought to elicit universal responses. The classic theory of *prospect refuge* is given as an example of this phenomenon. Also discussed are some other patterns in the environment that normally provoke positive evaluations including *abundant natural elements, obvious upkeep and maintenance, openness, variety, and order.*

The three levels of perception - , denotative, connotative and abstract, are discussed, and it is shown how cultural factors can be strongly influential, according to the mechanisms of these levels of perception, to the formation of preference. A cultural influence of particular importance to this thesis is that of the concept of "home" on perception. The final section of chapter 3 introduces some theories about

the ways in which a perceived "home" area can affect the preferences of its inhabitants. Three studies are included that utilize surveys to examine specific, significant relationships involving home areas and preference. Because the relationship central to the question in this thesis is between residency in Virginia Highland and preference, the above studies provide a necessary foundation for any further research pertaining to that question.

Chapter 4 details the methodology of the imagery preference survey employed in this thesis. The survey consists of nine background questions, and ten images (see appendix A) that participants were asked to rate on a semantic differential scale. These questions and images were included in the survey to examine possible significant relationships between the variables in Table 1. Chapter 4 also details the criteria by which images were selected in order to isolate vernacular design characteristics, the reasons for choosing the particular media employed by the imagery preference survey, and the methods of participant selection. In addition, a detailed description of the vernacular design style particular to Virginia Highland is presented.

Table 1: Variables in the Research Design

Variable Name	Variable Type	Dependent/Independent
Gender	Nominal	Independent
Age	Interval	Independent
Residence in Virginia Highland	Nominal	Independent
Duration of residence in Virginia Highland	Ratio	Independent
Work in Virginia Highland	Nominal	Independent

Variable Name (cont.)	Variable Type	Dependent/Independent
Residence in Atlanta	Nominal	Independent
Image Preference	Ordinal	Dependent

The questions pertaining to the variables in the above table are provided in appendix A.

Chapter 5 describes the results of the statistical tests performed on the data yielded by the imagery preference survey. There follows a discussion of the implications of the statistically significant relationships found between the independent and dependent variables.

Chapter 2

On the Meaning of "Vernacular"

English is a language that is willing and eager to eke out as much use from its words as it possibly can. Indeed, the language can seem monstrously miserly to those in search of clear meaning. One need only look to the dictionary to see evidence of words stretched thin. A random turning of pages will show words like "lift" (15 listed meanings followed by a half page of synonyms), or "regular" (16 listed meanings with a healthy smattering of subcategories). It is with this unfortunate tendency of the English language in mind that the meaning of a word critical to this thesis, vernacular, must be addressed.

Vernacular, as it applies to design, is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary 3rd edition as "of, relating to, or characteristic of the style of architecture and decoration common in a particular region, culture, or period. Occurring or existing in a particular locality; endemic." (1996). This definition serves well as a foundation, but in and of itself it is lacking. Perhaps to get a better sense of the word, its other usages should be examined. Vernacular is most commonly associated with language, and the American Heritage Dictionary can be of help here again. Pertaining to language, the definition given is "the everyday language spoken by a people as distinguished from the literary language." In this definition there is a suggestion of separation between professional and amateur. Applied to architecture and design, this would create a distinction between the structures and environs built or conceived by the people with professional training and those without. This certainly is useful, but as a means of universal distinction it still fails. Professional

training itself is far too difficult to define. In contemporary America the task seems simple enough. One need only verify a designer's professional degree to know that his or her product carries the stamp of officialdom, and is therefore, at least in the eyes of the government, held to different standards. The ability of the designer to divorce his or her work from common cultural background remains in question, but the definition is marginally satisfied. But what of other places and times? How does one distinguish between the learned and the vernacular in the structures of an era with no formal universities?

Henry Glassie writes:

> Buildings, like poems and rituals, realize culture. Their designers rationalize their actions differently. Some say they design and build as they do because it is the ancient way of their people and place. Others claim that their practice correctly manifests the universally valid laws of science. But all of them create out of the smallness of their own experience. All architects are born into architectural environments that condition their notions of beauty and bodily comfort and social propriety. Before they have been burdened with knowledge about architecture, their eyes have seen, their fingers have touched, their minds have inquired into the wholeness of their scenes. They have begun collecting scraps of experience without regard to the segregation of facts by logical class. Released from the hug of pleasure and nurture, they have toddled into space, learning to dwell, to feel at home. Those first acts of occupation deposit a core of connection in the memory (Glassie 2000:17).

The above quote comes close to the heart of it. People draw from what they have seen and experienced, and designers are no exception. What becomes important is the extent of the region, culture or period that shares common sights and experiences. Within that boundary one can reasonably expect to encounter a common theme in the vernacular based on a commonality of experiences and beliefs. Indeed, the vast majority of structures and landscapes attributable to a particular region, culture or period will share common elements.

Design is not as straightforward as language. Writing that deviates sufficiently from accepted norms may not by understood by some, but a hedge or roofed structure, no matter what form it takes, has a basic utilitarian purpose comprehensible to most. But the forms of things do change from place to place, culture to culture, and time to time and, professional training or not, designers drawing from a common pool of experience are far more likely to build and embellish in a similar way.

This principle is phrased particularly well by Lewis, who writes in his axiom of landscape as a clue to culture that "the culture of any nation is unintentionally reflected in its ordinary vernacular landscape" (Lewis 1979:15). Mindful of the diverse nature of "any nation" he adds in what he calls the regional corollary: "If one part of the country (or even one part of a city) looks substantially different from some other part of the country (or city), then the chances are very good that the cultures of the two places are different also" (Lewis 1979:15). In this a bond between design, culture and place is evident. It is reasonable to infer that so long as either culture or place remains viable and strong that the common elements of design, the vernacular, will persist as well.

One elusive element of the word remains unaddressed. Glassie hints at it in his above description, and again the linguistic definition of vernacular can be of help. The literary language referenced by the dictionary, when viewed in a historical light, has undergone substantial change over the years. A glance through the pages of Shakespeare, certainly an employer of the literary language, shows an English very different from contemporary writings. Perusal of Chaucer will reveal an even

stranger language, one that might defeat casual efforts to read it. However, these men were writing with the literary language expected by their peers. Those expectations may have been clear and concrete at the time, perhaps even codified, but obviously they have changed in the interim. Historical changes in the landscape show a similar pattern of undirected change punctuated by brief periods of standardized expectations. This element of change and ultimate impermanence is important vernacular design. It is not so much professional involvement that distinguishes between official and vernacular design as much as the possibility that elements of design, be they professional or amateur in origin, will be allowed to change freely with the whims of culture.

Vernacular then, for the purposes of this thesis, can be defined as *those elements of design, regardless of professional origin, and created without duress, that distinguish a particular region, place, culture or period.*

A. Vernacular associated with a particular place or region

The vernacular of region and place is perhaps the most accessible. These are the designs most commonly analyzed in scholarly publications, and the designs most likely to be noted by the casual observer moving through the landscape watching patterns develop and fade along the way. For a variety of reasons, to be discussed anon, each region the traveler passes through will have its own character, possibly echoed elsewhere, but strong and distinct within the boundaries of its influence. This phenomenon is well documented, and it would be folly to further recount and belabor it here. Excellent descriptions of regional vernacular can be found in the following

seminal works. In *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes* (Meinig et al. 1979), various contributors provide an excellent introduction to the theories behind the study of the American vernacular landscape. In particular, the chapter contributed by Lewis is very insightful concerning possible methodology for American vernacular study. Referenced earlier, *Vernacular Architecture* (Glassie 2000) addresses the meaning of the vernacular and provides some excellent regional examples from places such as Ireland, Turkey and Bangladesh. This work also delves deeply into cultural and individual attitudes that contribute to the current vernacular of the locales discussed. *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (Jackson 1984), as well as providing an excellent etymological look at the word "vernacular", describes various vernacular scenes common in the United States. The approaches of the different chapters vary from philosophical to quite technical, and address a wide time period in the American vernacular tradition. In *Styles and Types of North American Architecture* (Gowans 1992), the reader is given a concise description of the architecture, including some common vernacular styles, of the United States over a several hundred year period. The relationship of the building styles detailed is also linked to contemporary social ideals which place the styles in clear context. *Common Landscapes of America, 1580 – 1845* (Stilgoe 1982) gives a similar treatment to the rural designs of the period. Of particular value to this thesis is Stilgoe's focus on the influence of and traditions passed through builders rather than professional designers. *Common Places* (Upton and Vlach 1986) includes a very useful introduction to the concept of vernacular, and addresses the topic in five parts: definitions and demonstrations, construction, function, history and design and intention. This book is valuable for its

equal richness in technical, historic, and cultural information pertaining to a wide variety of vernacular styles. *To Build in a New Land* (Noble et al. 1992) examines the vernacular styles of immigrant populations in America. This book contributes excellent descriptions of various styles used by immigrant populations, but by tracing the progression of their vernacular styles, also provides a sense of the common patterns of stylistic integration. *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Wright 1981) is a well-rounded work that describes many architectural styles and urban settings, and examines them from a historical and social perspective. The examination of recent (at the time of its publication) urban vernacular patterns is of particular interest.

There is, however, always the temptation to further buttress an already strong field. Because the majority of the vernacular trends discussed in the above works are residential or rural, it would be useful to mention a commercial area distinguished by a vernacular style. It is important to understand that the vernacular is not limited to the classic examples, and the center of the Little Five Points neighborhood in Atlanta, GA is a particularly colorful example of the vernacular patterns not often seen in the literature. Little Five Points is a small neighborhood in Atlanta, Georgia with its nexus located at the intersection of Moreland and Euclid Avenues.

What distinguishes the neighborhood is not so much the architecture or spatial layout, but the common patterns of ornamentation. The brick buildings are painted with surprisingly vivid, often clashing colors, as are the majority of the tile roofs. During a walking survey, the author counted dozens of different colors and shades. Storefronts and windows are also painted and decorated elaborately, usually by hand.

One restaurant even has its customers enter through the mouth of a one-and-one-half-story glowing skull. Murals depicting a variety of scenes are another element common in the neighborhood. One mural featuring the face of Albert Einstein is found, furthering vernacular cohesion, on the side of the neighborhood police precinct. The front of the precinct is, likewise, painted bright red with a blue tile roof. A nearby street-lamp is decorated with a hand painted sign that reads "Hug everything except toes". Very little is left unembellished in this manner.

The result is a neighborhood characterized by its use of brightly painted buildings, unique storefront decorations, and murals. The effect is striking, and easily associated with that particular place. The author has overheard people remarking upon seeing brightly painted buildings in other areas of Atlanta that "that is so Little Five Points". It may be more garish than the whitewashed buildings of Ballymenone described by Glassie (2000), but Little Five Points, none the less, has produced its own vernacular style (see Figures 1-8).

Figure 1
Photo by author

Figure 2, Photo by author

Figure 3
Photo by author

Figure 4
Photo by author

Figure 5
Photo by author

Figure 6
Photo by author

Figure 7
Photo by author

Figure 8
Photo by author

B. Cultural Vernacular

Vernacular design, however, does not need to be tied to a region or place. For some people, when it comes time to add to the landscape, there may be factors more compelling or influential than local style. These factors could come from any number of sources including but not limited to religious, financial, ethnic, or philosophical differences. The product of this process could be called a cultural vernacular style.

Culture is commonly defined as the ideas, patterns, traits, and products of a particular period, class, community, or population. This is a very broad concept, and, accordingly, vernacular designs associated with culture are perhaps less accessible than those associated with regions and places.

Because cultures are not necessarily confined to particular places, there may be people who are geographically widespread but culturally similar. Examples of this are common throughout history. The Catholic priesthood holds to a rather unique way of life, but even in the early years of the Church, priests united by common religious belief were often separated by thousands of miles (Chadwick 1967). Another example of widespread but cohesive culture is the Masonic guilds. The Freemasons managed to maintain, through symbolic and written tradition, a complex ideology and uniform building style across Europe and America in the 17th and 18th centuries despite minimal contact between lodges (Curl 1991). What is necessary to maintain such a system is an idea, pattern, trait or product of sufficient clarity to persist without the frequent, unsolicited reinforcement provided by geographical confinement. A culture so characterized could be termed a portable culture for its ability to persist independent of place.

As a portable culture spreads, it is reasonable to expect that it will become evident in the ideas, patterns, traits and products of those it influences. When portable culture directly influences distinctive design, the result is what could be termed a portable vernacular. This type of vernacular design can be truly independent of place.

Evidence of portable cultures is highly visible, and observers of the American landscape have not ignored it; for example, the various works of Kuntsler (1993) and Bryson (1999) offer some choice observations on the less appealing aspects of the portable vernacular. In *A Walk in the Woods*, Bryson (1999) shares his thoughts on the jarring effect of garish sections of Tennessee along the Appalachian Trail. Having spent weeks at a time immersed in either the woods or more predictable southern locales, he was quite surprised by his regionally atypical findings in Tennessee. Kuntsler (1993), in *The Geography of Nowhere*, provides a very thorough if sarcastic account of the place-independent design of modern America. An excellent history of a specific and highly visible example of portable vernacular, the fast food sign, is provided in Rubin's (1986) *Aesthetic Ideology and Urban Design.* In this she follows the course of the fast food sign from its practical beginnings in the expositions held during the late 19th century to the current form that was pioneered by McDonalds in the 1960's.

This type of vernacular is of particular importance to this thesis because it provides the most likely alternative sources of design for which people may have significant preferences. Historically, changes in local design are rarely rapid, meaning that if familiarity is limited to the local design style it is unlikely that there

would be many other factors affecting the formation of preference for that style. However, because of modern means of communication and information sharing, people are exposed to a wide variety of novelties, including portable vernacular styles. It is entirely possible that some of these portable styles may elicit greater preference than a given local design style.

It is essential that more than the quaint, rustic and folksy elements of the landscape be considered vernacular. In determining the design preferences of a particular area, it must be understood that there are more vernacular choices available than just the traditional local style. Local vernacular, portable vernacular, or professional design are all possibilities. Upton and Vlach (1986) assert that the vernacular builder creates not what he thinks is best but what he knows or thinks his customers will want. The next step is to investigate how the builder can know what his customers will want..

Chapter 3

Some theoretical aspects of perception and preference

In the second chapter of this thesis, a case was presented for the inclusion of certain elements of the landscape that are not commonly considered vernacular into the category of vernacular design. It was shown that vernacular design is the product of a process that is consistent through different regions, places, cultures and periods, and that those designs are equally valid. However, the assertion that all vernacular, whether venerated or considered hideous, is equally valid is likely to raise some protest. All elements of the landscape when encountered have to be filtered through the perception of the viewer. Certain things are almost always likely to provoke negative responses when seen by people. The number of things which are inherently negative in the eyes of humanity is likely quite small, but simple visual recognition is almost always accompanied by the filter of perception. Those same cultural accoutrements that guide the creation of the vernacular also impact its evaluation. The remainder of this chapter will discuss the theoretical mechanisms that guide people's perception and formation of preferences.

Scholars in the fields of environmental psychology, and particularly environmental aesthetics, have endeavored to determine if there are qualifiable circumstances in which people will form evaluative responses in a predictable way. These studies are based on the assumption that factors such as instinct, cultural associations, and emotion will influence preferences noticeably and consistently.

This research is greatly important to the central question of this thesis. Whether or not reliable conclusions can be made about the preferences of any group

depends on understanding the mechanisms of perception. It is through examining perception that one can come to some understanding of how it is that people process information and form an opinion. For this reason, perception and preference are thoroughly entwined, and must both be examined before asking detailed questions about design preferences in Virginia Highland.

It is generally accepted in discussions of perception that the thing being perceived is concrete in its existence; as Aristotle allegedly said, "A is A" (Joad 1957). The sensory properties, i.e. visual, olfactory, auditory, and tactile, of the thing under consideration will be experienced in the same way by any human sensory organ that is functioning properly. However, beyond the basic functions of sensory perception there are many factors which affect the way in which people differentially perceive the same thing.

The first impact on perception is argued by some to be inherent properties in certain combinations of elements, for example landscapes, that are, through instinct or some other basic force, perceived similarly by humanity in general. One of the most celebrated examples of this thinking is the theory of *Prospect Refuge*. Proposed by Appleton (Appleton 1996), *Prospect Refuge Theory* states that open vistas screened by wooded edges are inherently appealing to humanity. The theory is based, possibly erroneously according to current evolutionary anthropological thinking (Potts 1998), on the belief that humanity originated in the East African savanna, and that modern humanity still carries evolutionary baggage that was once crucial to survival on the savanna. Anthropologists who study the evolution of human behavior do not put much stock into the supporting rational for *Prospect Refuge Theory* (Turner, personal

communication), but the fact remains that in evaluative surveys open vistas seen through a screen of vegetation are consistently evaluated positively. Nor are open vistas the only scenes that are consistently enjoyed. In various culturally and geographically diverse evaluative surveys, researchers have found that people often react positively to scenes showing, among other things, copious natural elements, obvious upkeep and maintenance, openness, variety and order (Nasar 1998, Kaplan and Herbert 1988). These findings appear to be reliably predictable, but the reasons for this observed consistency remain unclear. Other explanatory theories besides *Prospect Refuge* exist, but at present further research is warranted. Culture, however, does seem to have some influence; (Relph 1976:59) argues that

> Knowledge does not begin with a knowledge of the self or of things as such, but with a knowledge of their interactions. It is by progressing simultaneously towards both poles of assimilation and accommodation, by reconciling new knowledge with the old and old knowledge with the new, that intelligence organizes the world.
>
> In the context of place the most obvious implication of this is that identities of places cannot be understood simply in terms of patterns or physical and observable features, nor just as products of attitudes, but as an indissociable combination of these.

Nasar (1998) proposes that human perception happens on three different levels, those being denotative, connotative, and abstract. The simplest of these is denotative perception, which is simply recognition of a thing for what it is. It is the recognition through sensory cues that the thing being perceived is, say, a pine tree or a brick structure. Connotative and abstract perception are where more complex recognition and thought take place, and it is through these that culture can be introduced to the process of perception and evaluation, particularly as it applies to the landscape (Nassauer 1995).

Connotative perception refers to the emotional values associated with the thing being perceived. Nasar (1998: 7) writes, "When you make inferences – such as guessing the likely quality of goods or the friendliness of the merchants in a commercial strip – or evaluative judgments – such as how much you like the appearance of the area – you experience connotative meanings." Moreover, Zajonc (1984) suggests that affect (the term frequently used by environmental psychologists equating to provoked-emotion) influences evaluation before cognitive thought or conscious recognition are possible. Connotative perception then is the first factor to influence evaluation.

Abstract perception refers to evaluations made according to cultural, philosophical or other sophisticated guidelines. Abstract perception involves considerable, often conscious thought, and is therefore the last element to influence evaluation. However, there is evidence that cognition, i.e. abstract thought, can change the initial influence of affect on evaluation (Lazarus 1984). It is because of this that, regardless of instinctual models like Prospect Refuge, cultural ideas, such as vernacular preferences, can overrule if not entirely replace innate or emotional evaluations. All of the above factors, including inherent properties and perceptive meanings, are combined by Gibson (1977) into what he calls "affordances," i.e. the sum total of what the perceived has to offer to the individual perceiver.

It stands to reason that the greater the differences between two individuals perceiving the same things, that each of their affordances will differ accordingly. Significant cultural differences as well as much smaller differences between individuals belonging to the same cultural systems have been shown to affect

evaluative responses (Ho 2005, Lyons 1983). Gender, age, and ethnicity have all been shown to have an effect. It seems plausible to expect that differences in place of residence could also foster difference in affordances. Because a local culture including vernacular design is likely associated with a given place of residence, it is also plausible to expect that place of residence could influence preference.

A. The importance of "home" to the evaluative response

Provided that one is not struggling for survival in one's place of residence (Lang 1988), the idea of "home" has been shown to influence preference. Nasar (1989: 51) writes, "Taken together, the evidence on sociodemographic and environmental category differences suggests a need to disaggregate populations into relevant sociodemographic groups, derive perceptually relevant categories of scenes for each group and then identify the visual quality needs for each socioperceptually relevant entity." Essentially, this means that people are likely to have different preferences depending on, in part, where they live. This idea has great bearing on this thesis because the central question involves the influence of place of residence on preference. What follows is an explanation of what can be included in the concept of home, and some explanations of its importance to the formation of preference.

Taylor and Brower (1985:183) argue that "home does not end at the front door but rather extends beyond." This is true in both a physical and cultural sense. Of importance to determining the physical boundaries of the home area is the idea of the mental or cognitive map theorized by Lynch (1960). According to Lynch, there are elements in the landscape that give it an identity. One of these elements is the edge,

and it is this mental image of the edge that can help determine the extents of what an individual considers to be the home area. Studies have shown that physical boundaries can, but do not have to be so obvious and easy to picture in the mind as suggested by Lynch. In support of the noticeable physical boundary determining the edge of a home area is Jacobs' proposed idea of the border vacuum. According to Jacobs existing objects that are either insurmountable or difficult to traverse, highways or rivers for example, not only create definite area boundaries, but also impact the levels of activity in proximity (Jacobs 1961). The majority of construction in America in the past sixty years has been either urban or suburban in nature, and, accordingly, those are the settings in which the majority of Americans live. Because the urban and suburban landscapes are full of potential edges like major roads it is easy for home areas or neighborhoods to be delineated by them. However, those same major roads create a situation in which it is possible for a very different mental map of the home area to be established. Buttimer proposes the existence of two distinct groups that she calls "localites" and "urbanites" with very different activity orbits (Buttimer 1980a). The localite rarely travels beyond the vicinity of the physical dwelling. While Buttimer measures these trips more in terms of distance and trip time, it would be just as easy to attribute their movements to Lynch's edges. The urbanite, on the other hand, does not confine activities to the area around the dwelling. Typically, the urbanite has a far flung network comprised of the work place, the dwellings of friends, and the providers of various services. For the urbanite the area in the vicinity of the physical dwelling often has little or no significance. The mental map of the home area for the urbanite will be very different

from the neighborhood mental map of the localite. However, both will be exposed repeatedly to the same scenes, and will be able to associate those scenes with the home area.

The above is no guarantee that residents of a neighborhood will consider that neighborhood home. It is not unusual for Americans to undergo substantial changes in dwellings. Neighborhoods and even cities are often left behind for new surroundings. People do not always feel the same sense of rootedness, a strong, local sense of home and emotional attachment to an area, in their new surroundings (Hummon 1992). The mental map of the home area may still reflect an area completely separate from the current dwelling. This phenomenon can be seen in the research conducted by Hummon in Worcester, Massachusetts. Hummon recounts interviews with various residents of Worcester, and determines that the feeling of rootedness is different for each individual. In two cases Hummon describes individuals who, despite living in Worcester, refer to a geographically removed area as home (Hummon 1992). This sense of disassociation can change. Duration of residence can affect the likelihood that the place of residence is also considered to be home (Buttimer 1980b).

Various studies have been conducted that incorporate the above definitions of home by seeking the evaluative opinions of both residents and non residents of a study area. Three studies particularly relevant to this thesis are described below.

Rachel Kaplan and Eugene Herbert conducted a study titled *Familiarity and Preference: a Cross-cultural Analysis* (Kaplan and Herbert 1988). It was the goal of this study to determine if there are differences in landscape preferences between

groups that are geographically far removed but culturally similar that can be tied to familiarity.

For this study two groups of participants were selected. Ninety seven students at the University of Michigan were chosen, and one hundred and twenty two participants were chosen from among the student body at the University of Western Australia. The participants were shown fifty five photographic images taken in six rural townships close to the University of Michigan. The scenes represented in the photographs were grouped into three categories, those being abandoned fields, forests, and rural housing. Each participant was asked to rate each scene using a five point scale according to the question, "how much do you like the scene".

Kaplan and Herbert state that they were unsure what to expect from the resulting data. They cite several previous works that suggest relationships between preference and the degree of visual familiarity, as well as works that emphasize the importance of cultural differences. To accommodate these previous works Australia was chosen as a counterpoint to America because of general cultural patterns shared by the two nations. Similarly, the scenes represented in the photographs were not typical of Western Australia, but not strikingly unfamiliar either. The differences between the two regions lie mostly in the number of trees and the color of the foliage, but are significant enough to merit the study.

The results of the survey and the subsequent analysis of the data are very interesting. The overall preference represented by averaging all of the responses for each group shows that both are very similar in "how much they do like the scene" with the American group showing a slightly higher preference. On the five point

scale the American average was 3.08, and the Australian average was 3.06 (Kaplan and Herbert 1988). The overall high levels of preference are not particularly surprising. Many works have shown that people are normally attracted to scenes with ample vegetation like the ones shown in the Kaplan Herbert study. However, the slightly higher preference on the part of the Americans would seem to suggest that familiarity contributes to preference.

Kaplan and Herbert suggest, however, that further analysis of the responses suggests a different interpretation. When the evaluations of the different categories of images is examined it is seen that the Americans and Australians were very close in their evaluation of the forest and rural housing scenes, but that the average Australian evaluation of the open rural scenes was far lower than the American average at 2.6 and 3.1 respectively. Kaplan and Herbert write that this could be attributed to the phenomenon that sometimes higher degrees familiarity can breed contempt. The landscape in Michigan has sufficient variety to provide all of the scenes used in this study. Variety has been linked to preference (Thwaites 2001) so it is not surprising that familiarity appears to have a positive influence on preference among the American sample. However, the landscape in Western Australia is characterized almost entirely by open fields, and Kaplan and Herbert suggest that prolonged familiarity with such a uniform landscape could negatively influence preference. Because the overall averages are so close Kaplan and Herbert are unwilling to provide a firm explanation.

Nasar conducted a study titled *Visual Preferences in Urban Street Scenes: a Cross-cultural Comparison between Japan and the United States* (Nasar 1988).

Similar to the Kaplan and Herbert study, Nasar's study used two geographically removed populations, but Nasar purposefully used sample groups with significant cultural differences. Nasar writes that at the time of this study the preferences of cultures outside of America and Western Europe were insufficient. For this reason Japan was used as a counterpoint to America. Through analyzing the responses of the two groups Nasar hoped to identify some elements of landscape preference that might be universal.

The participants in this study were graduate students. The Japanese sample consisted of eighteen architectural engineering students and eleven environmental engineering students. The American sample consisted of seventeen regional and city planning graduate students.

In order to choose the scenes to be evaluated in the study Nasar selected four Japanese and four American cities and asked residents of those cities to identify for him a major street in that city. Those streets were then driven, and photographs were taken at ten second intervals. The photographs were then rated by a group of architectural professionals according to their rating on bipolar adjective scales much like the ones used in the Hershberger study. The scales were: closed - open, simple - diverse, chaotic - orderly, dilapidated - well kept, vehicles prominent - vehicles not in sight, and nature not in sight - nature prominent. Twenty four photographs were chosen to represent a balanced variety of the above categories.

The participants were asked to rate each of the twenty four scenes on two seven point bi-polar scales, those being pleasant – unpleasant and interesting – uninteresting. The results were analyzed for each group separately, and then a

composite of both groups was made. The responses showed very similar preferences for both groups with each group slightly preferring the foreign scenes overall. Nasar attributes the slight preference for the foreign scenes to what was described by Berlyne as "relative novelty" (Berlyne 1972). The theory is that relative novelty contains stimuli that are somewhat familiar to the observer but arranged in an unfamiliar way, and is usually evaluated positively. Absolute novelty does not contain familiar elements, and is normally evaluated negatively.

Regarding the overall findings Nasar states that there is evidence that young adults from two distinct cultures share certain preferences, and that while further testing is needed the findings support the idea that there exist certain universal environmental preferences. This is intriguing in as much as it places less emphasis on the educational similarities of architectural and regional planning students than the Kaplan Herbert study would have. As was noted earlier, there are certain elements of the landscape that seem to have wide appeal among very different groups of people. However, as even Nasar admits, the findings of this study are not sufficient to do any more than suggest the possibility of universals. Reinforcement of these widespread preferences is certainly valuable for future research.

Another relevant study was conducted by Kaltenborn and Bjerke titled *Associations between Landscape Preferences and Place Attachment: a study in Roros, Southern Norway* (Kaltenborn and Bjerke 2002). This study was designed to determine if place attachment has a significant effect on evaluative perception. A representative selection of the population of Roros, Norway was selected and asked to complete a questionnaire intended to establish their level of attachment to the region.

Participants were then shown 24 color images carefully selected from a large bank of images gathered in the area by people knowledgeable in local design characteristics and culture. The participants were asked to rate the photographs on a seven point scale ranging from "do not like it at all" to "like it very much.

The questionnaires showed three distinct groups with similar levels of attachment. These groups were separated, and the mean ratings of the images were compared between them. For the most part, the group with the strongest level of place attachment rated the images most favorably. Images showing traditional agricultural vistas were rated highly by all three groups, and, n general, images rich in natural elements and greenery were also rated highly despite the respondent's degree of place attachment.

This study strongly suggests a positive link between place attachment and preference. However, it does not show a clear relationship between familiarity and preference as the questionnaire determining the participant's level of place attachment focuses exclusively on feelings for and interest in the area. The participants in this study were chosen only from among the Roros population, but it is possible, given the form of the study questionnaire, that similar feelings of place attachment could be found among non-residents, captivated by, but only loosely familiar with the region.

The above studies show clearly that place of residence or "home" can influence the formation of preference. This strongly suggests that there could be a significant relationship between preference for Virginia Highland vernacular style and residence in Virginia Highland. The following chapter will introduce a method by which the vernacular characteristics of a home area can be isolated in order to

determine the relationship of those particular elements with preference and place of residence.

Chapter 4
Methodology

In the previous chapter, four studies were discussed, each of which included a component requiring participants to evaluate visual images according to various criteria. Different methods exist for the purpose of obtaining data regarding the preferences of participants for visual stimuli. The term commonly used to describe such studies, the "Visual Preference Survey", has been trademarked by Nelessen as a descriptor for his particular method (Nelessen 1994). For the purposes of this thesis, the survey technique employed by the author will be termed the "***imagery preference survey***".

The three studies discussed in the previous chapter are particularly relevant parts of a body of literature that deals with the commonalities in visual preferences, and the possible formative factors contributing to those preferences. The fields of environmental aesthetics and environmental psychology have well documented the general components of the landscape that are likely to elicit a predictable response from observers such as abundant vegetation and obvious, regular maintenance. These fields have even addressed the importance of local familiarity on preference. One factor of possible importance to the formation of affordances and response to preferenda that warrants further research is vernacular design. It is the intent of this thesis to examine whether or not prolonged exposure through residence to a discernable vernacular style may influence preference for that style.

The method employed by the author to obtain data regarding the impact of familiarity with a vernacular style is the imagery preference survey. This survey

consists of a brief questionnaire followed by a series of images to be rated by the participants on a semantic differential scale. Semantic differential scales are also known as bi-polar adjectival scales, and were discussed in the previous chapter under the latter moniker. The imagery preference survey was administered to two groups of participants. The first group was chosen based on their residence in an area of discernable vernacular style, and the second group, the control group, was chosen according to a lack of residence in any area represented in the imagery of the survey.

A. Neighborhood Selection

The first step in the design of the vernacular imagery preference survey was to identify an area suitable for study and characterized by a discernable, local vernacular style. The area chosen for this study is the Virginia Highland neighborhood in Atlanta, Georgia. The following is a brief description of the neighborhood.

The Neighborhood in Atlanta known as Virginia Highland is included in the National Register of Historic Places. The information here regarding the historic and current appearance of the neighborhood, except where otherwise noted, is derived from the 1985 and 2005 National Register proposals available through the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation archives, and also from the author's own observations. The neighborhood is located to the north east of Atlanta's central business district. It is bordered on the west by the historic Midtown Atlanta neighborhood. To the south it is bordered by Ponce De Leon Avenue. To the north the border is the historic Morningside neighborhood, and to the east the border is the historic Druid Hills neighborhood. The Virginia Highland neighborhood is

primarily single family residential with some apartment housing and commercial nodes.

Development in the area began in earnest in 1904 when real estate developer George W. Adair subdivided his property into thirty nine lots. This subdivision is roughly triangular in shape, and is located between Todd, Adair, and North Highland Avenues. Other major subdivisions in Virginia Highland are the North Boulevard Park subdivision and the Orme Park subdivision. The Orme Park subdivision, in particular, is well known for its proximity to the park from which it takes its name, and its rural atmosphere. Development, however, was not limited to larger subdivisions, but numerous planners and builders were involved in the development process, sometimes having responsibility only for one or two lots. The bulk of this construction occurred between the late teens and the early 1930's. The result is a well rounded area, highly typical of early twentieth century, vernacular, upper middle class development in Georgia, but not made overly similar through uniform master planning as is the case for nearby neighborhoods like Morningside and Druid Hills.

The architecture in Virginia Highland is characterized by the strong presence of the craftsman style bungalow (see Figure 10). This type of building was enormously popular in America in the early twentieth century. Hundreds of different bungalow plans were available for purchase through various publications (Lancaster 1986), and many regions in the country adapted the style to their own needs. Suburban expansion of the period often comprises the neighborhoods closest to the core of contemporary cities, and these neighborhoods are frequently called "bungalow belts". Virginia Highland falls squarely into Atlanta's bungalow belt, and

the bungalows evident in the neighborhood are often of excellent quality and well maintained. The bungalow is so important to the appearance of the neighborhood that even the historic fire station is constructed in the craftsman bungalow style (see figure 11). Further accentuating the bungaloid presence in Virginia Highland is the planned absence of the style from the abutting Morningside Neighborhood. Constructed slightly later than Virginia Highland, Morningside was master planned, and the architectural styles utilized are almost exclusively English and French revival. The style of the remaining architecture in Virginia Highland is split historically between English Cottage, English House, New South Cottage, New South House, Georgian Cottage, Georgian House, American Foursquare, and American Small House. Structures built after the early 1930's are in various styles including the ranch style, and, recently, the style commonly called the "McMansion" (see figure 12).

The landscape of the neighborhood, owing to diverse influences, is wonderfully varied while maintaining a discernable unity. In the southern and central parts of the neighborhood the streets follow a grid pattern. The reason for this can be traced to the Fulton County Street Railroad Company's Nine-Mile Circle Trolley line that ran through the area and was the cause for the location of the neighborhood. The value of subdivided plots depended largely on proximity to the trolley line, and gridded streets were an easy way to ensure the shortest possible distance from the front door to the trolley. Elsewhere in Virginia Highland, particularly along Lanier St. and in the Orme Park area, the streets are very curvilinear, and impart a meandering feel. Piedmont Park, Atlanta's only large, Olmstedian park, is located nearby. The Olmstedian influence can be seen in these curvilinear streets, much like

those directly Olmstedian influenced streets in the Druid Hills neighborhood. Olmstedian here refers to the work of Frederick Law Olmsted who also designed Central Park in New York and Chicago's Riverside subdivision. His designs are characterized by curvilinear, natural streets and paths, and by abundant, naturalistic vegetation punctuated by isolated formal elements. Regardless of the street orientation, sidewalks on both sides are the norm. Usually the sidewalks are separated from the street by a vegetated strip, in some cases like those on Adair St., quite wide (see figure 13), that is usually planted with trees at regular intervals. The species vary, but some of the street trees are historically important dogwoods planted in the nineteen thirties by the North Boulevard Civic Association. In the Eastern section of the neighborhood along Lanier St. there is also a median planted with historic magnolias (see figure 14).

The setbacks vary in the neighborhood, but they are largely uniform on each street. The front yards of the single family residences are normally a mixture of grassy lawn and groundcovers such as English ivy. Flowering and green shrubs are also present in abundance. The topography of the area is quite hilly, and, accordingly, many yards are bounded by brick or, occasionally, stone retaining walls (see figure 15). Unfenced yards are predominant. The arrangement of the yards is usually informal and very naturalistic, again suggesting an Olmsteadian influence.

Front yards in Virginia Highland often display individual characteristics within the greater framework, and the results can be quite striking. However, unlike the Candler Park neighborhood of Atlanta that shares a park-like atmosphere and a high density of bungalows, the individual treatment of front yards in Virginia

Highland does not often utilize folk art. However, the specific varieties of shrubs and small trees vary significantly along with their arrangement from yard to yard. For instance, the author noticed an example of Eucalyptus growing alongside the more common cherry and dogwood trees. The landscaping of the neighborhood is characterized primarily by the abundance of naturalistic vegetation, but some notable, individual hardscape elements are also present. Foremost in the author's memory is a Japanese influenced fountain (see figure 16).

Over most of the Virginia Highland neighborhood there is a canopy of mature shade trees. Again, the species vary, but water oaks and magnolias are common. These trees contribute greatly to the characteristic, park-like atmosphere of the neighborhood, and leave much of it in partial shade throughout the day.

Within Virginia Highland there are several commercial nodes and some apartment buildings. There are some stylistic aberrations within these parts of the neighborhood, but a significant amount of this construction is either historic or otherwise appropriate to the neighborhood.

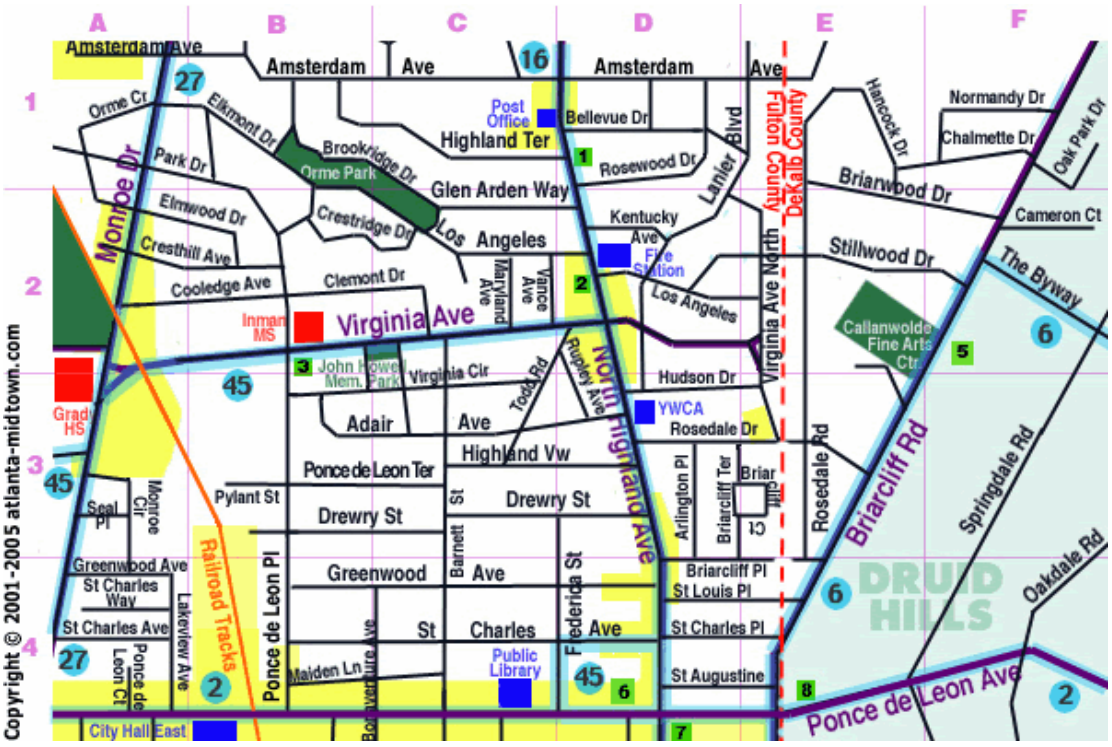

Figure 9

http://www.atlanta-midtown.com/neighborhoods/virginia-highland/map.html

The main commercial node is located at the intersection of Virginia and North Highland Avenues. The commercial buildings at this intersection are typical of the neighborhood. They are one story and constructed of brick with Mediterranean-style, tile cornices. The neighborhood commercial buildings have the large, street facing windows typical of early twentieth century commercial architecture, and often feature decorative work within the brick construction including corbelled brickwork, recessed brick panels, decorative cornices, and brick pilasters. The sidewalks in the commercial areas tend to be wide enough for comfortable pedestrian traffic. The sidewalk on the east side of North Highland Avenue north of the intersection with Virginia Avenue is well over ten feet in width. Street trees are also utilized in the commercial areas, and a particularly attractive installation of over-arching Bradford

pear trees is featured on North Highland Avenue at the intersection of Virginia Avenue (see figure 17).

The apartment buildings in the neighborhood are separated primarily into three categories being the garden style, the hotel style, and the country house style. The country house apartments were constructed to resemble larger versions of the typical single family housing, and, accordingly, they blend well with the other architecture in the area. An excellent example of the hotel style apartment building is the National Register listed Briarcliff Hotel. Located at the very southern edge of Virginia Highland, the Briarcliff Hotel has a rich history, having been built by Asa Candler in 1924, and is particularly noteworthy for the stucco and terra cotta detailing of its top floor (Atlanta Urban Design Commission 1981) (see figure 18).

The garden style apartments are those apartments which appear to best characterize the neighborhood. The Garden style apartment building is normally a free standing u-shaped building with separate entrances to each unit all of which face a central courtyard. Garden apartments were built throughout Northeastern Atlanta in the early twentieth century, and some particularly good examples were constructed in Virginia Highland. Two worthy of note are the St. Charles Apartments constructed in 1922 and located on St. Charles Avenue (See figure 19), and the Colonnade Apartments constructed in 1916 and located on North Highland Avenue (see figure 20). The Colonnade Apartments remain in excellent condition and feature very attractive landscaping in the central courtyard along with distinctively oversized, Doric columns. The St. Charles Apartments are in the Spanish Colonial Revival

style, and feature a more open courtyard than the Colonnade Apartments. Both of these buildings are of brick construction.

The overall atmosphere of Virginia Highland is one that readily suggests the early twentieth century origins of the neighborhood, but also one that shows a continued interest of its residents in the local design characteristics. It is at the same time an obviously historic and contemporary place, and, of late, that duality has led to heated debate over the future appearance of the neighborhood. All of this combines to make Virginia Highland an excellent example of an area with clearly discernable, organic vernacular design characteristics.

The first element establishing the design of Virginia Highland as vernacular is the clear influence of recorded early twentieth century vernacular styles on most existing architecture in the neighborhood. The evidence proving the bungalow to be a portable vernacular style is well documented (Vlach 1986). Similarly, the informal, naturalistic planting styles seen in the area are consistent with vernacular styles of the period, particularly in Atlanta. Furthermore, as is noted above, the Virginia Highland neighborhood is not the product of a master plan, as were many of the surrounding neighborhoods, but many individuals had a hand in the formation of the area and its appearance.

However, the evident vernacular style is not merely a leftover of century old cultural impetus. The neighborhood is in excellent repair, and a springtime tour will reveal dozens of work crews undertaking renovations of both buildings and the landscape. Clearly there is a desire to maintain design characteristics of the neighborhood, and the job has been done well enough to secure Virginia Highland a

place on the National Register of Historic Places. Contemporary design elements are certainly in evidence, but in many cases have been adapted to the existing styles. In fact, an examination of the photographic record will show that the appearance of most homes has changed very little over the years. An extensive photographic effort was undertaken in 1985 by students at Georgia State University for the 1985 Historic Register proposal, and those photographs, for the most part, accurately depict the existing conditions of today twenty years after they were taken. By willfully maintaining the overall historic style, the contemporary residents have made that stylistic legacy characteristic of their own period, place, and local culture.

All of the above makes Virginia Highland a unique, vernacular neighborhood. While the area does share similarities with other neighborhoods in Atlanta and around the country, it is sufficiently different merit classification as a unique vernacular style.

Figure 10
Photo by author

Figure 11
Photo by author

Figure 12
Photo by author

Figure 13
Photo by author

Figure 14
Photo by author

Figure 15
Photo by author

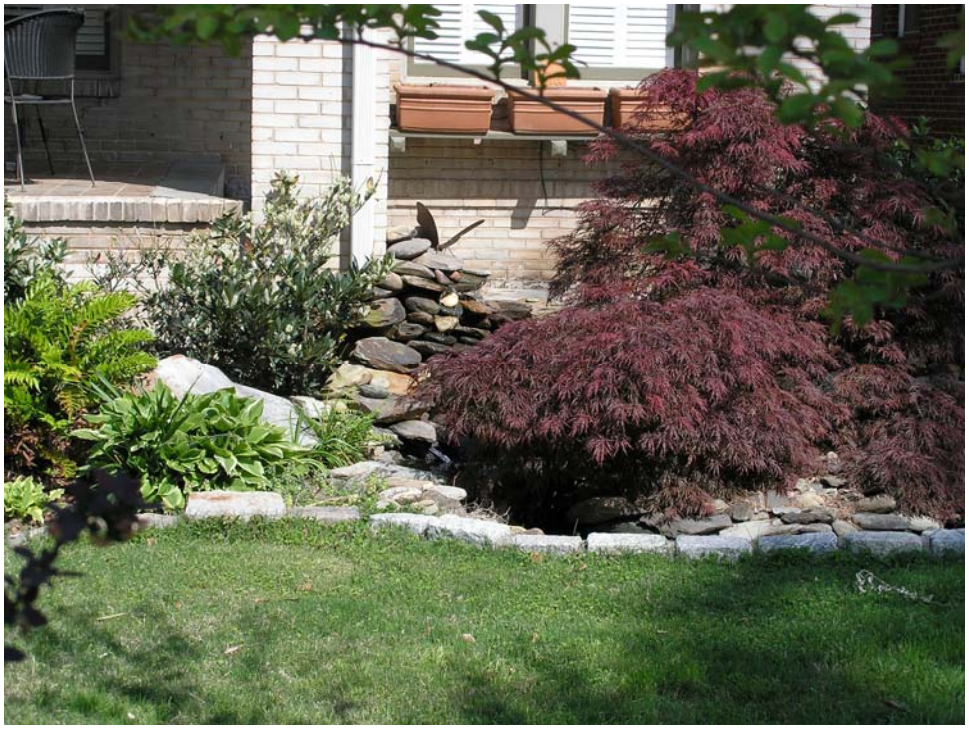

Figure 16
Photo by author

Photo 17
Photo by author

Figure 18
(Atlanta Urban Design Commission 1981:120)

Figure 19
Photo by author

Figure 20
Photo by author

B. Questionnaire Methods

After choosing Virginia Highland as a focus area, the contents of the questionnaire were crafted. Following is a summary of each question included in the questionnaire accompanied by an explanation of that question's importance to the study. For a complete copy of the vernacular imagery preference survey please see appendix 2.

The first question is, "Do you currently reside in the Atlanta area?". This question was chosen to establish degrees of geographic separation between the various respondents. Participants in the control group reside in geographically diverse locations. Some participants reside in Atlanta neighborhoods outside the Virginia Highland neighborhood, and some are located in other states and regions. This question was included because responses could suggest a relationship not only between immediate familiarity with the vernacular style, but also the more tangential familiarity that could result from residing near by. The results of Nasar's study *Visual Preferences in Urban Street Scenes: a Cross-cultural Comparison between Japan and the United States* (Nasar 1988) discussed earlier suggest that varying degrees of familiarity could influence preference.

The second question, "Do you currently reside in Virginia Highland?" is clear in its intent to establish residence of respondents in the neighborhood. The borders of the Virginia Highland neighborhood are somewhat nebulous, and this question does allow respondents to rely on their own understanding of the boundaries. However, it is unlikely that any understanding of the neighborhood extents would differ by more

than a few blocks in any direction. Reliance on the cognitive maps of the respondents should not be damaging to the results of the survey.

The third question asks how many years the respondent has resided in Virginia Highland. This question is of great importance to the study. Duration of residence and familiarity have been linked to preference (McHugh Gober and Reid 1990). This study suggests that there may be significant differences between the relevant affordances of long and short term residents.

The fourth question asks if the respondent resided in Virginia Highland between the ages of 0 and 12. The residency patterns of the Atlanta area make it unlikely that respondents will have been childhood residents, but childhood residency would be an important factor. The influence on adult preferences of childhood experience has been shown (Chawla 1992).

The sixth question asks if the respondent works in Virginia Highland. This question was included to establish the general activity orbits of the respondents. The impact of activity orbits on the formation of cognitive maps was discussed in the second chapter. According to Buttimer, localites, those people with activity orbits limited to the home area, will form a cognitive map more dependent on local features than the more widely traveling urbanite (Buttimer 1980a). Essentially, this means that the individual who both resides and works in the same neighborhood will be more familiar with the features of that neighborhood. Because familiarity has been shown to impact preference, and because a limited activity orbit can increase local familiarity, respondents who both live and work within Virginia Highland may demonstrate different preferences than those who do not.

The next three questions are for classifying purposes, and may help establish patterns among the respondents. In particular, age and gender have both been shown to have an impact on preference and the formation of cognitive maps (Rubenstein and Parmelee 1992, Lawton and Morrin 1999).

The final question of the survey asks what three things the respondent, given the chance, would change about the appearance of the exterior of his or her residence or his or her front yard. This question was added to the survey for two reasons. Primarily, this question serves to help detect any patterns of preference not revealed by they imagery evaluation portion of the survey. This question is considered an open-ended question, and responses to this question will be difficult to systematically record. The second reason for the inclusion of this open ended question is one of practical formatting. This question is the last of the survey, and is meant to be completed by respondents after they have completed the imagery evaluation. By including an open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire some of the chances of bias caused by what is called an "end effect" (Kaplan and Herbert 1988) can be negated. End effect is when respondents, sensing that they are close to the end of a survey, begin to answer carelessly and inaccurately in order to complete the survey sooner. By including more difficult questions in what appears to be the middle of the questionnaire, the answers to those questions are more likely to accurately reflect the opinions of the respondent.

C. Imagery Methods

The primary goal of the imagery preference survey is to obtain from the respondents evaluative appraisals of a series of visual images. This is achieved by

showing visual stimuli to respondents and asking them to assign an evaluative rating to the stimuli based on a particular set of criteria.

The variety of visual stimulus employed by this study was color photography. Color photographs have been shown to be nearly as effective in obtaining evaluations as on-site exposure to the scene depicted in the photograph (Nasar 1998). Color photography is also a more practical choice because of the difficulties associated with transporting respondents to each scene for which an evaluation is desired. Also, it is much easier to control variables in the landscape through the use of color photography. Photographs will allow more effective control over the desired visual stimuli. By showing the same photographic image to each respondent, the study will not be affected by differences in things such as light and weather conditions. Furthermore, photography helps ensure that visual stimuli are primary during the respondent's evaluation. On-site evaluations carry the risk of introducing distracting, auditory and olfactory stimuli.

Because color photography allows such control the investigator must take extreme care in selecting the content of each image. The imagery used by this study differs from the imagery commonly used in preference studies in several ways. Normally, in preference studies a wide variety of images is shown in order to detect common evaluative responses. The content of these images frequently varies greatly within a single study. This is because the goal of most preference studies is to isolate as many relevant factors as possible according to the evaluative criteria. For instance, the Visual Preference Surveys used by Nelessen (1994) are designed to determine which elements in an area are most desirable to its inhabitants. In order for such a

study to be effective, the included images must be exhaustive and include every significant visual element found within the area in as many combinations as possible. Otherwise, the results will not necessarily be representative of the respondents' actual opinions. Any study seeking general insight into an evaluative or affective response, i.e. what people find pleasant, will have to be similarly exhaustive. Only when the question is made more specific, i.e. whether or not people find trees pleasant, should the imagery focus on limited content.

Because this study is interested in a specific question, being whether or not familiarity with a discernable vernacular style may influence preference for that style, the imagery purposefully focuses on differences in vernacular style. However, it is insufficient to simply obtain color photographs of different vernacular styles for evaluative purposes. Any number of other elements that could affect evaluative responses could then be included in the photographs. It is necessary instead to utilize imagery that is very similar in every element except for vernacular design. In this way the researcher can reasonably expect that any differences in evaluative responses are due to the only variable element in the imagery, in this case vernacular design, and not to random chance. Image modification programs such as Photoshop could be useful to the researcher in isolating certain aspects of an image. However, such isolation was not appropriate to this research because vernacular design is inextricably related to context, and any modification of that context would damage the validity of a vernacular tableau.

In order to obtain photographs that, absent vernacular design, will likely elicit similar evaluations from all respondents, it is necessary to understand what elements

in the landscape receive predictable evaluations. The previous chapter discussed the insufficiently explained but consistently observed commonalities in preference among diverse groups of people. Various studies have examined those common preferences, and have isolated some of the landscape features that seem to be most closely associated with them. For instance, Prospect Refuge Theory, discussed in the previous chapter, is based on evidence that people commonly prefer open landscapes viewed through a buffer of vegetation. However, not all predictable evaluations are positive. Studies have also determined that certain landscape features elicit predictable affective evaluations other than "pleasant" ones. Images showing large amounts of trash or litter, for example, commonly receive fearful or unpleasant evaluations (Nelessen 1994). Before choosing imagery content, the investigator must decide what type of base affective response is desired from the respondents.

A useful tool in this pursuit is the "affective quality of environments" chart devised by Russell (Russell 1988:122). According to Russell the English language utilizes approximately two thousand emotion-related words, but most of them can be summarized by the emotions represented in his chart of affective qualities. Basically, the chart consists of two crossed, bipolar adjectival scales. The horizontal axis stretches between the extremes of "pleasant" and "unpleasant". The vertical axis stretches between "arousing" and "sleepy". Affective responses that combine emotions from both axes are located graphically in the quadrants created by the chart.

Because the vocabulary of the affective qualities chart is easily compatible with the vocabulary of most semantic differential scales used in preference studies, the findings of those studies can usually be referenced on the chart. For example, a

Prospect Refuge type scene would be located graphically almost exactly in the "pleasant" area of the affective qualities chart. By selecting photographs that contain images already located on the chart by previous studies, the investigator can make reasonable assumptions about the probable reactions to those photographs.

For the purposes of this study the investigator chose to select photographic images that approached being equally "pleasant". Pleasantness is the affective evaluation most commonly associated with preference. Most people do not prefer landscape scenes that cause extreme boredom, excitement or distress. In order to select pleasant elements to include in the photographic images, the findings of various studies conducted by Nasar were consulted. The focus was on studies conducted within the United States to prevent any bias that could be caused by large cultural differences. Two studies Conducted by Nasar in Chattanooga and Knoxville Tennessee yielded particularly useful findings (Nasar 1998). According to Nasar these two studies helped verify his previous findings that people tend to prefer and evaluate as pleasant scenes that include naturalness, upkeep, openness, historical significance, order, and complexity.

Naturalness, according to Nasar, "refers to the presence of vegetation, water, or mountains. Respondents reported that they liked places for landscaping, countryside, rivers, lakes, water, and mountains. They reported dislikes for built areas of high contrast, referring to the appearance of commercial strips, industry, poles, wires, and signs" (Nasar 1998). Upkeep "refers to the maintenance of areas. Respondents reported that they liked places for their cleanliness, maintenance, and hew homes. They reported disliking places for their dilapidation, dirtiness, weeds,

and lack of upkeep" (Nasar 1998). Openness "refers to the vista. People often reported liking places for the presence of open space and scenery. They reported disliking places for their restriction, crowding, congestion, and narrow roads" (Nasar 1998:62). Historical significance "refers to places perceived as having historical significance. Places may have authentic historical significance or look historical to the observers" (Nasar 1998:62). Order "refers to the degree to which respondents feel an area looks organized. Respondents reported that they liked areas for their visual order, referring to order, cohesiveness, and compatibility. They said they did not like areas with disorder, referring negatively to chaos and the lack of uniform style" (Nasar 1998:62). Complexity "involves the number of different noticeable elements and the distinctiveness between those elements" (Nasar 1998:75). Complexity, however, can also lead to affective evaluations other than pleasant. Too much complexity can increase interest, and cause an affective evaluation that is more exciting or arousing than pleasant.

Using the above information, photographs were taken of residential and commercial scenes in the Virginia Highland neighborhood, the Coral Gables neighborhood in Miami Florida, the Watercolor development in Destin Florida and Wellesley Massachusetts. Many photographs were taken in each area, and the images were examined by design students at the University of Georgia until ten were selected that were deemed similarly pleasant. Most relevant to the selection process were naturalness, upkeep, and historical significance with a particular focus on naturalness. Images were first chosen from Virginia Highland that included well maintained areas with abundant vegetation and an absence of litter or clutter. Despite Nasar's

warnings to the contrary, power lines were not purposefully excluded from the images because they are highly visible in the Virginia Highland neighborhood, and their exclusion would be misleading and inappropriate. Images were then chosen from the other neighborhoods according to similar criteria. One further exclusionary criterion was used in the selection process. According to Appleyard, images showing heavy traffic or many parked vehicles are less likely to be evaluated positively (Appleyard 1981). Through the above selection process a series of images was chosen that can be expected to elicit positive evaluations from most people.

The only significant differences purposefully included in the images were differences in design styles. The Coral Gables neighborhood in Miami has a landscape that is somewhat park-like, but the size, species and patterns of vegetation are quite different from those seen in Virginia Highland. The architecture of Coral Gables is also very different, being characterized primarily by Spanish and Mediterranean influenced ranches. The photograph taken in Watercolor shows a craftsman style bungalow, but the surrounding vegetation, typical of the Florida panhandle, is very different in style from Virginia Highland. The photograph taken in Wellesley shows a pedestrian-friendly commercial node of similar scale and proportion to those in Virginia Highland, but executed in a very different style. Also of note is that, despite these differences, all of the styles represented are found in the eastern United States. By not including vastly different design styles such as the vernacular buildings of the Cook Islands or Sri Lanka, the dangers of bias caused by absolute novelty, a concept discussed in the previous chapter, can be avoided.

In some photographs the differences in style are quite subtle. However, the careful selection of pleasant photographs makes it reasonable to expect that differences in evaluations of these images will be due to those differences in style. By introducing difference in style as the variable factor in the images, it can be assumed that differences in preference for the images are directly related to the design styles represented.

The photographs were included in the middle of the image preference survey, and care was taken in establishing the order in which the images will be seen by respondents. Two versions of the survey in which the photographs are arranged differently were created to help eliminate the chances of bias based on unforeseen problems in the order of presentation of the images. In both versions care was taken to ensure that the progression of images does not foster comparisons. Russell discusses the tendency of people to judge images by relying heavily on the evaluations of other, recently viewed images (Russell 1988). For example, by not putting two commercial images together, respondents will be less likely to judge the images by comparison with each other. Instead they will be more likely to judge each image on its own contents.

D. Respondent Selection

Due to the time and resources available to the author a convenience sample of respondents was chosen based on their place of residence. The goal was to survey an equal number of Virginia Highland and non-Virginia Highland residents. Virginia Highland residents were selected by various means. A large portion of the respondents were selected through contact with a neighborhood association in

Virginia Highland. Other residents were found through personal and professional contacts of the author. Non-residents of Virginia Highland were found through personal and professional contacts of the author, and reside mostly in the greater Atlanta area excluding Virginia Highland, and in eastern Massachusetts. Because immediate residential proximity is the independent variable of primary interest the control group was evenly split between Atlanta and non-Atlanta residents. Respondents were required to have reached the age of legal majority. Groups of professional designers such as architects and landscape architects were also excluded from participation because of the bias likely associated with their profession. Various studies (Hershberger 1988: 175–194, Devlin and Nasar 1989: 333-334) have shown that the preferences of professional designers often differ greatly from those of non-designers. However, individual, professional designers were not actively excluded. While mass evaluations from the professional community would likely be misleading, the evaluations of individual designers residing do not represent sufficient bias for exclusion. The danger to the anonymity of respondents posed by recording their professions would far outweigh the risks associated with the inclusion of random, professional opinion.

Once selected, respondents were given the image preference survey in paper format both in groups and individually. The author or a trained administrator was present when the survey was administered to groups, and monitored the proceedings to ensure that there was no discussion between respondents. Discussion between respondents and the administrator was limited to practical formatting questions prior to completion of the survey to avoid creating bias.

Chapter 5
Data Interpretation

In total seventy two participants each completed one survey. Both the Virginia Highland resident group and the control group included thirty six participants. In order to ascertain the possible significance of the participant responses, a combination of t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Pearson's correlations were employed (Weiss 2001). T-tests are used to determine any significant difference in the mean responses to a given variable between two groups, for instance: mean image preference among residents vs. non-residents (see table 4). ANOVA performs a similar test of differences in means, but among three or more groups, for instance: mean image preference among five age categories (see table 4). Finally, Pearson's r correlations are used to assess the degree of linear relatedness, and its significance, between two interval or ratio variables, for instance: image preference and duration of residence in Virginia Highland (see table 4). The following tables contain the results of those tests.

Table 2 Background Information

	Virginia Highland residents	Non-Virginia Highland residents
Gender Male Female	Male: 17 individuals Female: 19 Total: 36	Male: 19 individuals Female:17 Total: 36
Age groups (years)	18-29: 9 individuals 30-39: 9 40-49: 10 50-59: 5 60+: 3	18-29: 4 individuals 30-39: 13 40-49: 6 50-59: 4 60+: 9

	Virginia Highland residents (cont.)	Non-Virginia Highland residents (cont.)
Ethnic groups	White: 29 individuals Hispanic: 2 Asian or Pacific Islander: 3 Prefer not to answer: 2	White: 26 individuals African American: 2 Hispanic: 2 Other: 2 Prefer not to answer: 4

Table 3 Comparison of Image Ratings between Highland residents and Non-Highland Residents

Images	Virginia Highland residents Average rating per image	Non-Virginia Highland residents Average rating per image	Overall Average rating per image
Slide 1 	5.0278	4.0278	4.528
Slide 2 	4.9167	3.5000	4.208
Slide 3 	3.7500	2.7778	3.2639
Slide 4 	2.5278	.4722	1.5
Slide 5 	5.5556	3.8056	4.6806

Images (cont.)	Virginia Highland residents Average rating per image (cont.)	Non-Virginia Highland residents Avg. rating per image (cont.)	Overall Average rating per image (cont.)
Slide 6 	3.1389	.2778	1.7083
Slide 7 	3.1944	4.9444	4.0694
Slide 8 	4.2222	4.0833	4.1528
Slide 9 	.5278	1.7222	1.125
Slide 10 	4.0556	2.6944	3.375

Table 4 Comparison of Image Ratings between Gender, Age, Place of Residence, Residential Duration, and Place of Work

	Statistics
Gender	Virginia Highland Images: $t = .870$, $p \leq .387$ Non Virginia Highland Images: $t = 1.020$, $p \leq .311$
Age	Virginia Highland Images: $F = .899$, $p \leq .470$ Non Virginia Highland Images: $F = 1.829$, $p \leq .133$
Residence in Virginia Highland	Virginia Highland Images: $t = 2.640$, $p \leq .010$* Non Virginia Highland Images: $t = .458$, $p \leq .649$
Residence in Atlanta	Virginia Highland Images: $F = 7.376$, $p \leq .008$* Non Virginia Highland Images: $F = .853$, $p \leq .359$
Residential Duration in Virginia Highland	Virginia Highland Images: $r = .356$, $p \leq .033$* Non Virginia Highland Images: $r = .549$, $p \leq .001$**
Work in Virginia Highland	Virginia Highland Images: $F = .846$, $p \leq .361$ Non Virginia Highland Images: $F = 1.296$, $p \leq .259$

* $p \leq .05$ **$p \leq .001$

Table 5 Comparison of Residents' and Non-residents' evaluation of Highland images and non-Highland images

	Highland images	Non-Highland images
Residents overall averages	4.3556	3.0278
Non-residents overall averages	2.9167	2.7444
	$F = 6.970$, $p \leq .010$*	$F = .210$, $p \leq .649$

The mean values shown in table 3 validate the assumption that all images in the survey will be evaluated positively. No negative mean values are shown. However, this assumption should not cause future researchers to exclude the option for negative evaluation. Negative evaluative responses would be valuable, showing that either the researcher's assumptions regarding likely evaluation are incorrect, or that the sample population has unexpected evaluative preferences. The option for negative evaluation should not be excluded in future research.

The tests in table 4 are based on the mean scores reported in table 3. The first test was conducted to ascertain if there is a significant difference in preference (dependent variable) according to place of residence (Virginia Highland) and gender (independent variables). The t-test showed no significant differences in preference.

The second test is to ascertain significant difference in preference (dependent variable) according to place of residence (Virginia Highland) and age (independent variables). The ANOVA showed no significant differences.

The third test is to ascertain if there is significant difference in preference (dependent variable) according to place of residence (Virginia Highland, independent variable). The results of this t-test do show significant difference in preference,

indicating that residents of Virginia Highland prefer images of Virginia Highland more than foreign images.

The fourth test is to ascertain if there is significant difference in preference (dependent variable) according to place of residence (Atlanta, independent variable). The ANOVA does show significant difference, indicating that participants who reside within the Atlanta area prefer images of Virginia Highland more than foreign images.

The fifth test is to ascertain if there is significant difference in preference (dependent variable) among residents of Virginia Highland according to duration of residence (independent variable). The Pearson's correlation does show significant difference. Interestingly, the test shows that longer duration of residence increases preference not only for Virginia Highland images, but also for foreign images.

The sixth test is to ascertain if there is significant difference in preference (dependent variable) according to place of work (Virginia Highland, independent variable). The ANOVA does not show significant differences in preference.

The test detailed in table 5 is based on the overall mean ratings reported in table 5, and is to ascertain if there is significant difference in preference (dependent variable) according to place of residence (Virginia Highland, independent variable). The ANOVA does show significant difference in preference, indicating that residents of Virginia Highland prefer images of Virginia Highland more than foreign images.

Table 6 groups the responses to question 11 into five categories based on thematic content, and shows the number of responses in each category provided by both groups. Appendix B lists verbatim the responses to question 11. As predicted in chapter 4, it is difficult to extract any meaningful patterns of preference out of these

responses. It is interesting that the majority of responses from both groups pertained to the vegetation around their residences. Also, several of the responses of Virginia Highland residents suggest a technical familiarity with the local design style, but this is not entirely surprising due to the inclusion of neighborhood association members in the sample population.

Table 6 Summary of Respondents' Desired Changes

Response Category	Number of responses
Change vegetation	Virginia Highland Residents: 23 responses Non-Virginia Highland Residents: 40 responses
Change lawn	Virginia Highland Residents: 15 Non-Virginia Highland Residents: 12
Change exterior hardscape elements	Virginia Highland Residents: 16 Non-Virginia Highland Residents: 16
Change building exterior	Virginia Highland Residents: 22 Non-Virginia Highland Residents: 19
Other	Virginia Highland Residents: 6 Non-Virginia Highland Residents: 3

The above tests clearly show that there is a significant difference in preference among residents of Virginia Highland for images depicting Virginia Highland. In short, according these data, the answer to the question "does familiarity gained through residence in close proximity to a discernable vernacular design style increase preference for that style" in the case of Virginia Highland is yes.

There are, however, some additional relationships established in the results that merit further investigation. It is interesting that those participants with the longest duration of Residence in Virginia Highland not only have significantly more preference for Virginia Highland images, but for all of the images included in the survey. The causes of this are unclear. It is possible that this implies an association between duration of residence in a particular place or rootedness (see chapter 3) and environmental preference in general, but further research is needed to better understand the interpretive significance of this relationship.

Also of interest is the significant relationship between residents of the Atlanta area and a preference for Virginia Highland images. The specific question asked by this thesis is whether or not immediate residential proximity influences preference for local vernacular, but this relationship possibly implies that a regional and not just immediate proximity might also be influential to the formation of preference. The interpretive significance of this relationship also warrants further research. Residents of Atlanta outside Virginia Highland comprised approximately half of the control group. These individuals were included in the control group because the independent variable of primary interest was immediate residential proximity. Further study in other regions would be particularly interesting with varying ranges of geographic residential proximity represented in the sample population. This study shows that immediate proximity is a significant variable influencing preference. Research further defining the ranges of significant proximity would be equally valuable. Similarly, further study utilizing random sample populations seems warranted.

Chapter 6
Conclusion

This central question of this thesis is whether familiarity gained through residence in close proximity to the vernacular style of Virginia Highland influences preference for that style. The data obtained through the course of this research does show a significant relationship between residence in Virginia Highland and preference for the local vernacular style. While the data provided in this thesis is only specifically informative about the preferences of Virginia Highland residents, it nonetheless suggests greater trends. There are many neighborhoods in America that share a similarly rich and historical local vernacular style. For many of these neighborhoods development is a forgone conclusion. The question is not will development happen, but what form will that development take. The existing vernacular context of these neighborhoods is in peril, and it seems extremely unwise to risk its destruction without careful research to determine its full value and influence. One does not just buy a house. One buys a part of a neighborhood, and it is reasonable to expect that something that has been enjoyed and preserved thus far has some value worth preserving. The methodology introduced by this thesis can be used to investigate the preferences of residents for any number of neighborhoods. The method of the imagery preference survey allows the isolation of any desired dependent variable, and can thus be used to investigate the preference for any desired feature in an existing neighborhood context. This research can provide extremely valuable insight into the significant preferences within a neighborhood facing development, and can be used to guide the responsibility of that development,

preserving at least some of what establishes the inherent character of a place. Other preference survey methodology is not feasible for such specific inquiry, and can only provide general insight. The method introduced by this thesis can be used to establish pointed and pertinent guidelines for specific places.

Regarding Virginia Highland, it appears that such guidelines are warranted by a clear and discernable significant pattern of preference for the existing vernacular style of the neighborhood. Furthermore, there are residences within Virginia Highland that accommodate the recent American desire for increasingly large houses while incorporating the neighborhood vernacular. In this one can see a middle ground allowing new development that is not necessarily damaging to the surrounding vernacular context. That middle ground, however, is not necessarily the simplest alternative. It requires research, and has to be calibrated to the specific locality. The question becomes one of value. Is it better to build indistinct structures regardless of place, or is it better to invest in guided, place-appropriate development? This is a very large question. A good answer will require the combined efforts and research of many fields. Vernacular preference may only be one part of the question, but it is just as pertinent as any other. This research into the preferences of Virginia Highland residents, and any further research facilitated by the methodology introduced by this thesis can and should certainly be used to inform the overall question of responsible development throughout the rich, established vernacular neighborhood framework of America's cities.

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Appendix A

The Virginia Highland Image Preference Survey

1. Do you currently reside in the Atlanta area?

   ___ yes ___ no

2. Do you currently reside in Virginia Highland?

   ___ yes ___ no

3. If yes, for how many years have you resided in Virginia Highland?

   ___ years

4. If yes, did you reside in Virginia Highland between the ages of 0 and 12?

   ___ yes ___ no

5. If yes to #4, for how many years between the ages of 0 and 12 did you reside in Virginia Highland?
   ___ years

6. Do you work in Virginia Highland?

   ___ yes ___ no

7. Which category best describes your age at your last birthday?

   ___ (18-29) ___ (30-39) ___ (40-49) ___ (50-59) ___ (60+)

8. Which category best describes your gender?

   ___ Male ___ Female

9. Do you self identify with one or more ethnic group, and, if so, with which ethnic groups do you self identify?
   ___ Asian or Pacific Islander ___ Black or African American ___ American Indian or

   Native American ___ White or Caucasian ___ Hispanic ___ Other

   _____

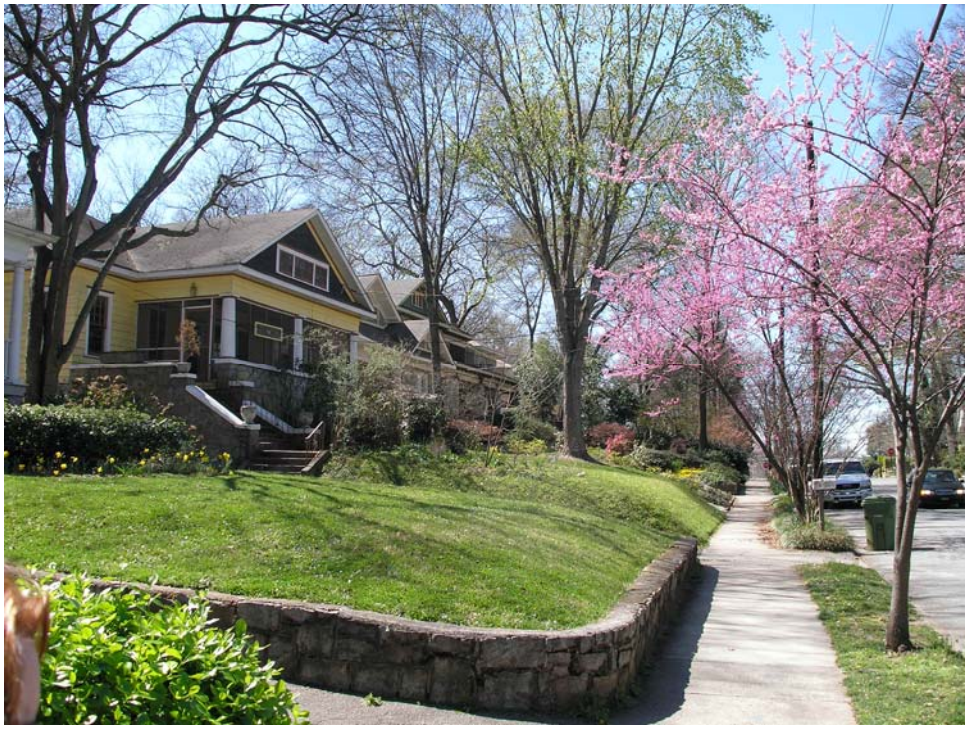
   ___ I prefer not to respond

10. Following is a series of photographic images. Please consider each image in terms of its overall visual appeal. Below each image is a scale ranging from –10 to +10. Please use this scale to record your opinion of the overall visual appeal of each image. A rating of 0 is neutral. A rating of –10 is least appealing, and a rating of +10 is most appealing. Please circle the number that you think best describes your opinion of each image. Please record your initial opinion, and try not to over-think your response.

Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing

Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing

Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing



Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing

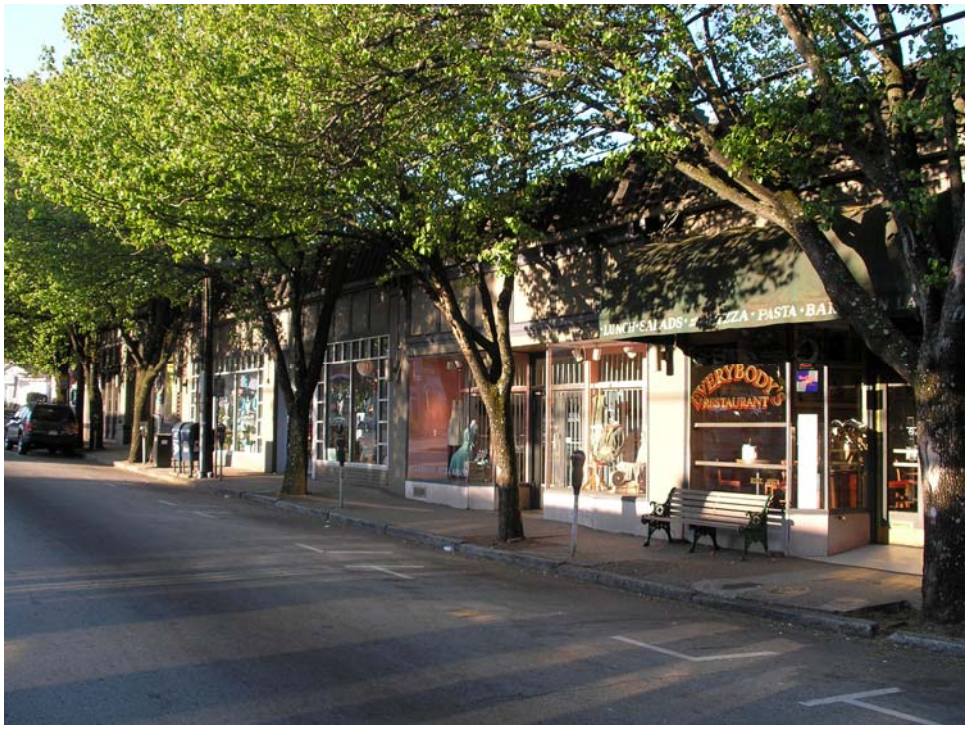
Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing

Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing

Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing

Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing

Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing



Please circle the number that best matches your rating of the image
Least appealing -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Most appealing

11. Please list three things that you would like to change about the appearance of your front yard or the appearance of the exterior of your residence.

Appendix B

Verbatim list of responses to question 11

Response Category	Participant response as written	Virginia Highland Resident Y = yes N = no
Change vegetation:	- plants on front and side lawn	N
	- I like the exterior of my front lawn I would improve it by planting more shrubs and flowers	N
	- replace katsura tree with Japanese dogwood tree	N
	- replace existing hybrid lilies with a more compact and sturdier lily	N
	- remove some dangerously large trees	N
	- I want some ferns	N
	- upkeep and presentation of trees	N
	- shrubbery maintenance and health	N
	- less islands to maintain	N
	- more trees	N
	- more color	N
	- more plantings (shrubs and perennials)	N
	- A couple of additional trees such as dogwood and cherry	N
	- add more color in terms of flowers, etc…	N
	- create more planting beds	N
	- plant more trees to provide shade in the summer and act as a windbreak in winter	N
	- shrubs appear overgrown	N
	- more flowers in front	N
	- trees to break up large green lawn in back	N
	- shrubbery variety	N
	- more color variety	N
	- more shrubs and trees	N
	- I'd like more flowers, more shade, shutters or some sort of embellishment to the windows	N
	- more trees	N
	- more flowers	N
	- more flowery plants	N
	- plant extra dogwoods (have two)	N

Change vegetation (cont.)	- more trees	N
	- more flowering bushes/ trees	N
	- evergreen ground cover (but not pachysandra, myrtle)	N
	- less wooded area	N
	- more perennial flowers	N
	- add a flowering tree	N
	- flowering trees, more of them	N
	- flower beds, bigger more	N
	- more flowers in the front yard	N
	- a tree in the front yard	N
	- more manicured flower beds on the side of the house (we have them, but they are messy and weedy)	N
	- more flowers	N
	- more flowering bushes along the front- there is a bare spot along our front porch without any flowers or bushes	Y
	- more flowers	Y
	- change to all native plants and no grass	Y
	- uniformity of plantings in the area between sidewalk and street down entire street	Y
	- landscaping more developed	Y
	- plant trees	Y
	- more flowers	Y
	- grooming	Y
	- more trees of smaller, more colorful varieties	Y
	- remove non native plants and replace with natives	Y
	- more color in vegetation	Y
	- variation in layout of vegetation	Y
	- more hardwood shade trees	Y
	- replace tree	Y
	- shrubs	Y
	- need new plants	Y
	- ivy or other ground cover	Y
	- more azaleas	N
	- trees	Y
	- I would add flowers in front beds	Y
	- I would add a bit more greenery in left towards front/ side near the home	Y
	- everything – need shrubs and shrubs and groundcovers, out of money, just renovated. Suggestions?	Y

Change vegetation (cont.)	- more trees - more unique shrubbery (now the complex is lined with generic looking bushes to take up space, but not contribute much to the character of the space	Y Y
Change lawn	- grass instead of pavement in front - have a better lawn - I want nice green grass - lawn health, soil issues - replant my lawn - better lawn in front and back - fuller lawn - more grass - better grass - more grassy area - more green space (currently not much yard) - plant more lawn/ grassy areas - trim the neighbors' excessively overgrown lawn - new grass- ours is mottled in color and filled with patches of clover and crab grass - more uniform lawn - regular lawn maintenance - better lawn upkeep - would like to change the turf and the walkway - replace turf - change to all native plants and no grass - grass fill in completely - more grass - more grass than miscellaneous growth - grass that is not weeds - condition of lawn - need sod instead of weeds - better kept lawn (apartment complex courtyards)	Y N N N N N N N N N N N N Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y
Change exterior hardscape elements	- add curbing at street - put in a new front walk - cement part front yard and maybe some flower	N N N

Change exterior hardscape Elements (cont.)	- align walk with front stairs	N
	- add walkway between front door and driveway	N
	- convert asphalt drive to brick	N
	- decorative rock wall in front yard	N
	- replace wooden planters along front foundation with either stone or brick	N
	- architectural fencing	N
	- less cement	N
	- hammock in front yard	N
	- brick walk/ path to back yard	N
	- lose the flag pole	N
	- fix the stone wall	N
	- put in a low stone wall	N
	- level drive/ pavement	N
	- less lawn ornamentation	Y
	- new/ nicer address marker and house number	Y
	- would like to change the turf and the walkway	Y
	- replace driveway	Y
	- improve/ replace walkway	Y
	- create a wall to retain instead of ivy	Y
	- find distinctive pottery for plantings to unify with house	Y
	- mailbox	Y
	- less rocks	Y
	- repair sidewalk	Y
	- add stone/ texture to sidewalk	Y
	- add color to front walk	Y
	- install a new brick walk way	Y
	- granite curbs	Y
	- sidewalk	Y
	- better paved road accessing parking area in back	Y
Change building exterior	- color other than gray	Y
	- wooden rather than metal railing and banisters	Y
	- color of house	N
	- rehab porch	N
	- my house exterior needs to be redone preferably with a nice dark wood paneling	N
	- replace the front porch with either brick	N

Change building exterior (cont.)	or stone facing including brick or stone steps	
	- I'd like more flowers, more shade, shutters or some sort of embellishment to the windows	N
	- lighting on front of house	N
	- needs painting	N
	- add screen porch onto deck by extension	N
	- replace the ugly brick	N
	- replace rotting wood of windows	N
	- new paint	N
	- copper roof	N
	- attached green house	N
	- change house color	N
	- replace the front porch	N
	- architecture with more character, tile or awnings or something	N
	- repaint the residence	N
	- get it painted	N
	- new paint job, refinish the porch	N
	- new front porch- ours is ugly orange tile with a wrought iron fence	Y
	- more windows	Y
	- paint house (currently pealing)	Y
	- painting of trim and shutters	Y
	- painting of porch	Y
	- remove siding on front right gable and replace with traditional Tudor stucco	Y
	- replace/ restore screens on front porch	Y
	- add detail elements to house, i.e. chimney pots, lightning rod	Y
	- change cover of front door	Y
	- change louvers on attic vent	Y
	- cracks in step to front door	Y
	- paint color	Y
	- fresh paint	Y
	- return to screen porch	Y
	- replace old screen on porch	Y
	- replace horizontal siding	Y
	- larger front porch	Y
	- change paint color	Y
	- I would add stone on front steps and front porch (flag stone)	Y
	- better restoration of façade	Y

Other	- sweep deck - get rid of carpenter bees - minus the carved wooden bald eagle in my neighbor's yard. Tacky sh*t, man. - less lawn ornamentation - lawn furniture and plants on front porch - size - power lines - lighting - more communal space (apartment complex)	N N N Y Y Y Y Y Y