

Local Designation Report
The Clarke Cottage
156 Wax Myrtle Trl.
Southern Shores, North Carolina



December, 2017

Historic Landmark Designation Report

156 Wax Myrtle Trl.

Southern Shores, North Carolina

1. NAME OF PROPERTY:

Historic Name: The Clarke Cottage

Current Name: The Clarke Cottage

2. LOCATION:

156 Wax Myrtle Trl.

Southern Shores, NC

27949

3. LEGAL OWNERS OF PROPERTY:

Stephen Adam Gudas & Sally Andrews Gudas

14365 Yankeetown Rd.

Ashland, VA

23005

4. APPLICANT:

Property Owners

5. GENERAL DATA/SITE INFORMATION:

According to Dare County Tax records, the Clarke Cottage was built in 1954. Dare County Register of Deeds records show that the home was purchased from Kitty Hawk Land Company by Clara F. Clarke, November 1, 1956. Lots 51 & 52, Block 40, Amended Plat B, Section 3 with improvements thereon. Kitty Hawk Land Company deed signed by John B. McMullan, Vice President of Kitty Hawk Land Company, and C.C. Aydlett, Secretary attested (Frank Stick was President of KH Land Co. at the time).

No additions have been made, but a screened porch was enclosed after 1958, with the addition of siding, windows, wooden shutters and props, and interior juniper paneling. No change in footprint has occurred.

Approximate lot size or acreage: 19,998 sq. feet

Architect, builder, carpenter, and/or mason: Name of builder unknown, but house sold to Clara Clarke by Kitty Hawk Land Company, of which Frank Stick was President.

Original Use: Second home, residential; seasonal rentals

Present Use: Second home, residential; seasonal rentals

Appraised building value: \$47,200

Appraised land value: \$146,800

Total Tax Value: \$194,000

6. CLASSIFICATION:

Structure(s) Object Site

7. ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Frank Stick, an artist from Wilmington, Delaware created the first “Flat Top Cottages” on the Outer Banks. The Flat Top was adapted for its barrier island setting from the single-story, flat-roofed block houses of Florida. To those design elements, Stick added an extended overhang and a bright, whitewashed exterior. These features alone deflect the sun and intense heat, which makes these homes a cool relief during the hot and humid summer months. The exposed soffits and storm shutters were painted in brilliant shades introducing color to an otherwise monochromatic Outer Banks landscape.

Frank Stick’s Flat Top homes were second homes, which were designed so that middle-income families could enjoy the same amenities as wealthier clients. As the real-estate market fluctuated, site plans for Southern Shores were made, discharged, adopted, and abandoned during the early years of the community. The Flat Top houses become the idiom around 1965 when they become the predominant local form. They are of three types: (1) cement block exterior, inside paneled (typically juniper tongue and groove); (2) cement block exterior, inside half width cement block walls; and (3) frame construction inside and out (inside most commonly paneled), varying exterior sidings. Before pouring the foundation, original plumbing lines were buried in the sand, and sealed by a concrete slab.

The Clarke Cottage, is of the first type – cement block exterior, inside paneled. The entire interior walls including the closets are juniper paneled, including kitchen cabinets, closets, and built-in bookshelves. Exposed beam ceilings are throughout the main cottage. The cottage contains 3 bedrooms, one bathroom, kitchen, living room/dining area, fireplace, enclosed porch, enclosed outdoor shower, and asbestos tile floors

throughout, with the exception of the bathroom. The only internal structural alterations are a new toilet, vinyl tile in the bathroom, kitchen countertops, changing the large oil furnace in 1992 to gas logs, baseboard heat, and ceiling fans. The outdoor showers were enclosed sometime between 1956 and 1958. Though the footprint of the cottage was not changed, the original wrap-around screen porch was enclosed sometime after 1958. It was enclosed with siding, windows, and wooden shutters with props, exact date unknown but likely before 1965. The enclosed porch has juniper paneling on walls and ceiling, with the ceiling lower than that of the main cottage, giving the multi-level exterior look of the Flat Tops.

When the cottage was first built, the landscape was bare sand. Cement blocks were placed as a walkway extending from the paved area on the south side of the house around the west and east sides of the cottage; this walkway still exists. By 1980 the property was covered by dune grass, and over the last 35 years, has converted to the present landscape of trees and thick vegetation. The landscape is that of the dunes of Southern Shores, currently marine forest with wax myrtle, live oak, wild grapes, and pine predominating.

The Clarke Cottage is representative of all the elements of the Southern Shores Flat Tops being designed by Frank Stick: flat roof, cement block construction, natural wood paneling, extended overhangs, exposed soffits, wooden shutters with wooden props, white-washed exterior walls with brightly-colored trim and shutters, concrete foundation, and a porch roof that is lower than the roof of the main cottage, resulting in the multi-level appearance. The original Flat Tops had brightly-painted trims, soffits and shutters: reds, blues, greens, and yellows. This made the cottages stand out from the landscape in an inviting and pleasant manner. The Clarke Cottage is considered a mid-20th Century Modernist design, as are all the Flat Tops envisioned by Frank Stick, who was also influenced by architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Only 6 flat top cottages remain with flat roofs in the dunes of Southern Shores, with the Clarke Cottage being one of them, adding to its historic import. The Falconer cottage, 159 Wax Myrtle Trail, just across the road, is a sister cottage to Clarke and was built a year later, in 1955.

8. HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE:

The Clarke Cottage was bought by George Reid Clarke and Clara Clarke of Norfolk in 1956, who used the cottage as a vacation home, entertaining their nephew and other family members there. It was in this post-war era that even middle-income families were able to afford to buy a vacation home at the coast. In the summer of 1958, the cottage was rented for the entire summer by author Robert Knowlton. Knowlton, his wife, and daughter Marissa stayed at the cottage the entire summer while he wrote the mystery novel *Court of Crows* set in coastal North Carolina (see attached photo).

Maureen Ohlinger Clarke, second wife and widow of George Clarke, sold the Clarke Cottage to James and Rebecca Mauch of Pennsylvania in 1983. The Mauchs were good stewards of the cottage, making it available for weekly rental for some of the years they owned it, but primarily retaining it for their family's use as a second home. The Cottage was acquired by Stephen and Sally Gudas of Ashland, Virginia in December, 2009. Steve had first rented the cottage in the early eighties and fell in love with the simplicity of the Flat Tops and the Clarke Cottage then. The cottage has sustained hurricanes; most wooden shutters with props are original and protect the structure in storms. The fact that many Flat Top cottages have survived nearly 70 years without major structural damage and wear attests to their vitality in an environment where the elements can be intense. In 2013, Steve and Sally Gudas developed a network of owners of Southern Shores Flat Top cottages. With the help of the Flat Top owners and Outer Banks Community Foundation (OBCF), they organized the 2013, 2014, and 2016 Southern Shores Historic Flat Top Cottage Tours to raise awareness of the historic significance of the rapidly disappearing Southern Shores Flat Tops. The Tours benefitted the Flat Top Preservation Fund of the OBCF. The Clarke Cottage was one of two headquarters of the Flat Top Tours.

9. SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Clarke Cottage is one of the few remaining Flat Top homes in existence, representative of the style created by Frank Stick, the developer of Southern Shores. The hallmarks of these structures that are found in this home are the flat roof; extended overhang; exposed soffits; exterior cement block walls; large flat chimney; wrap-around porch; multi-level roof, colorful wooden shutters and props; concrete foundation; the minimal landscaping and design of the home so that the structures do not overwhelm the surrounding natural environment and setting. As noted above, the architectural significance of the Clarke Cottage is that it is an example of a mid-20th century modernist home in the likeness of the designs of Frank Stick, which were influenced by designs of Frank Lloyd Wright.

A variety of factors have contributed to the demolition of most of these cement-block, Flat Top homes built on concrete foundations on the oceanfront. The cultural importance of these small beach homes is the stories they tell of families vacationing together at the seashore during the mid-20th century. Preserving those few historic Flat Top homes that remain is of paramount importance to the history of the Town.

10. ABSTRACT:

The Clarke Cottage at 156 Wax Myrtle Trail is a solid example of the first architectural Flat Top style homes in Southern Shores, designed by Frank Stick during the mid-20th century; and as such this cottage should be considered for designation as a historic landmark by the Town of Southern Shores. The property owners ask that the entire property, house and land, be considered for historic designation. The owners are

proposing designation of this property because it is one of a few remaining structures of its type (one of 25 or so) left in the Town, that embraces the cultural history of a family vacationing at the seashore in the mid-20th century. This property has been an anchor and administrative participant in the three Southern Shores Historic Flat Top House Tours conducted in 2013, 2014, and 2016.



Clarke Cottage, 1956



Clarke Cottage, 1958



Clarke Cottage, 1958 (Marissa Knowlton(r) & Sharon(l))



Clarke Cottage, 2016



East Side



North Side



South Side



West Side



Bathroom



Kitchen



North Bedroom



Dining Room and Counter



Interior Kitchen



Living Room



Northwest Bedroom



Porch



Southwest Bedroom



FRONT PERSPECTIVE

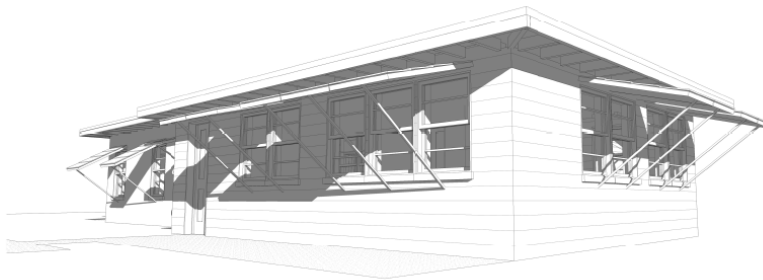
LIST OF DRAWINGS

ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

- T1.1 TITLE SHEET
- A1.1 FIRST FLOOR
- A1.2 ROOF FRAMING PLAN & ROOF PLAN
- A2.1 ELEVATIONS

GUDÁS COTTAGE

156 WAX MYRTLE TRAIL,
SOUTHERN SHORES,
NORTH CAROLINA



FRONT PERSPECTIVE 2



PROJECT NAME:
GUDÁS COTTAGE

156 WAX MYRTLE
SOUTHERN SHORES
NORTH CAROLINA

REVISION:	DATE:
A3-BUS1	8/9/16

DRAWING NAME:
TITLE SHEET

PRELIMINARY DRAWINGS
NOT FOR
CONSTRUCTION:

DRAWN BY: DF

DATE: 8/9/16

SCALE: SEE PLANS

STAMP:

BEACON ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN, P.L.L.C. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

SHEET:
T1.1



PROJECT NAME:
GUDÁS COTTAGE

156 WAX MYRTLE
SOUTHERN SHORES
NORTH CAROLINA

REVISION:	DATE:
A3-BUS1	8/9/16

DRAWING NAME:
FIRST FLOOR
PLAN

PRELIMINARY DRAWINGS
NOT FOR
CONSTRUCTION:

DRAWN BY: DF

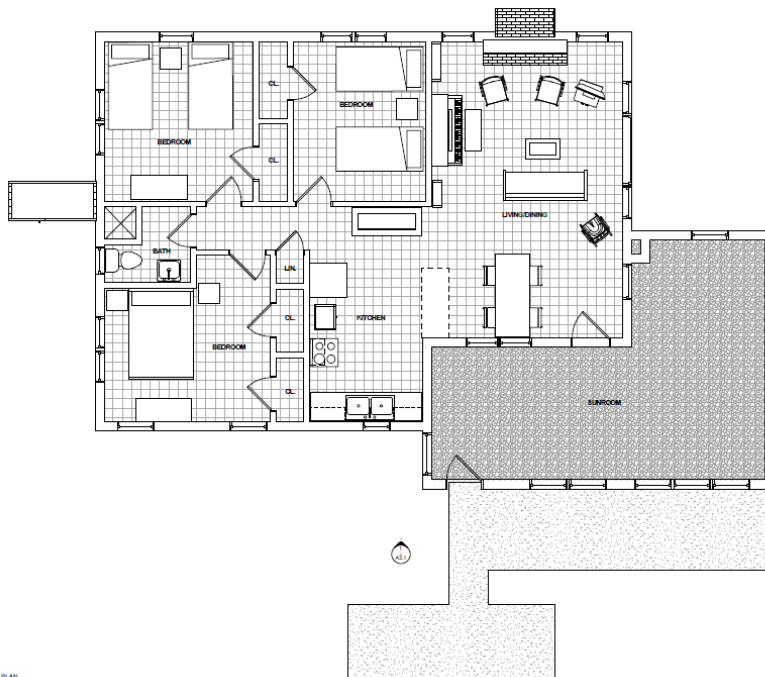
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SCALE: SEE PLANS

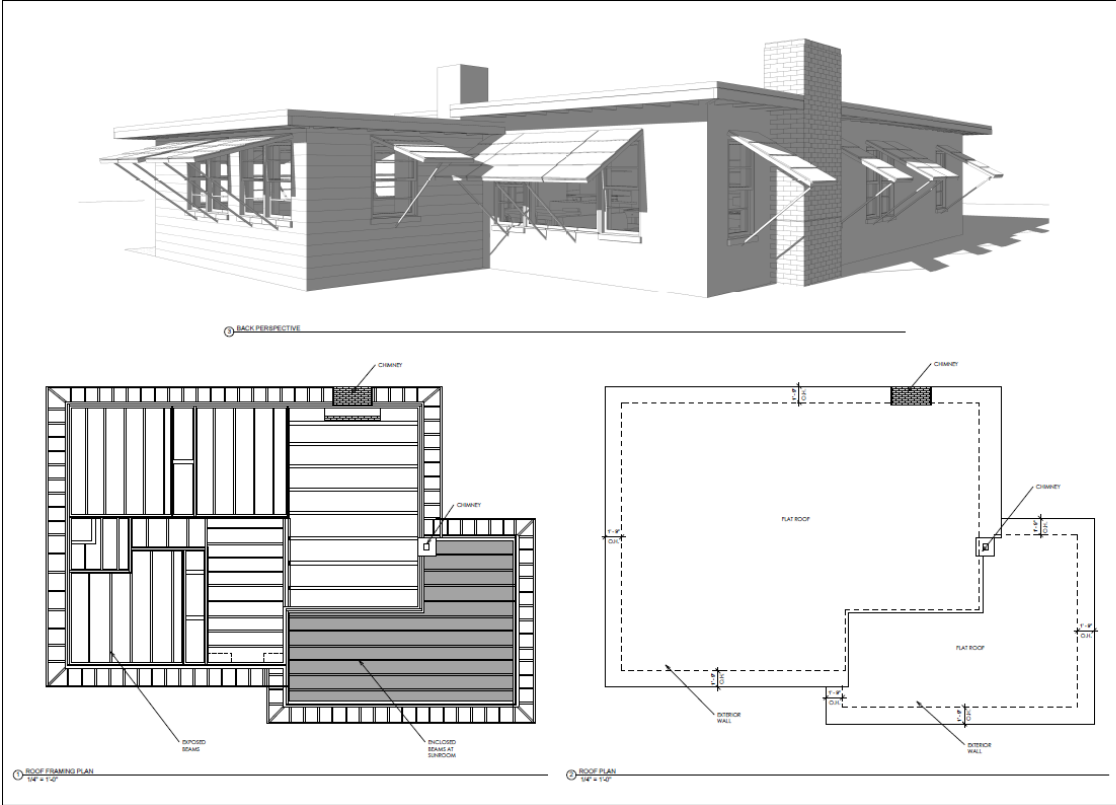
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SHEET:
A1.1



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
8/9/16



BEACON
ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN, P.L.L.C.
P.O. BOX 1827
KITT WAKE, NC 27149
PH (336) 441-4267 FAX (336) 381-6268

PROJECT NAME:
GUDAS COTTAGE
156 WAX MYRTLE
SOUTHERN SHORES
NORTH CAROLINA

REVISIONS:	DATE:
AS-BUILT	8/9/16

DRAWING NAME:
ROOF FRAMING PLAN

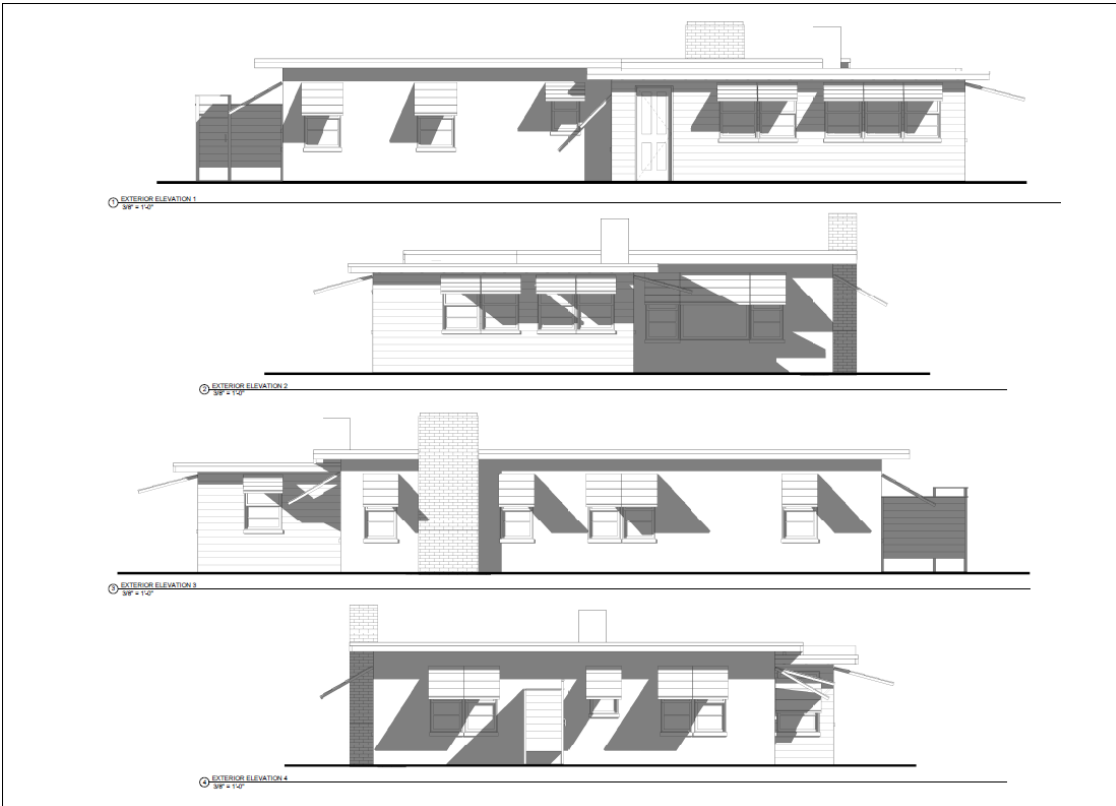
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SHEET:
A1.2



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REVISIONS:	DATE:
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DRAWING NAME:
ELEVATIONS

PRELIMINARY DRAWINGS
NOT FOR
CONSTRUCTION

DRAWN BY: DF
DATE: 8/9/16
SCALE: SEE PLANS

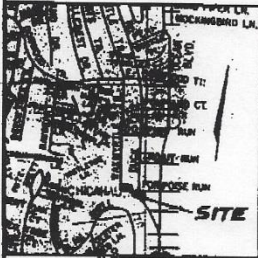
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PH (336) 441-4267 FAX (336) 381-6268

SHEET:
A2.1

I, WILLIAM S. JONES, JR., P.L.S., CERTIFY THAT UNDER MY DIRECTION AND SUPERVISION THIS PLAT WAS DRAWN FROM AN ACTUAL FIELD LAND SURVEY MADE BY ME FROM INFORMATION AS REFERENCED HEREON, AND THAT THE RATIO OF PRECISION IS 1:10,000+. WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL THIS 26th DAY OF October, 2009

[Signature]
WILLIAM S. JONES, JR., P.L.S. L-2532

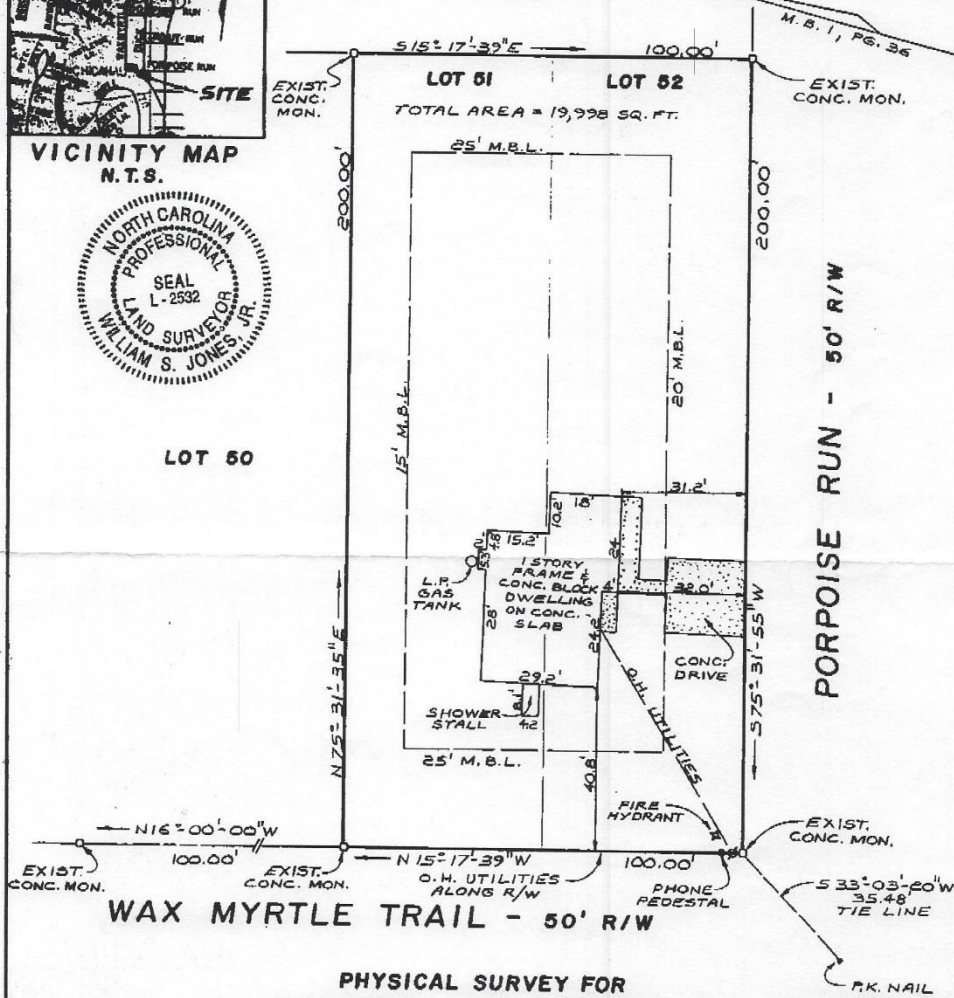


VICINITY MAP
N.T.S.



LOT 50

LOT 4



PHYSICAL SURVEY FOR
STEPHEN & SALLY GUDAS
LOTS 51 & 52, BLOCK 40, SECTION 3,
AMENDED PLAT "B", SOUTHERN SHORES

MAP BOOK 1, PAGE 36
TOWN OF SOUTHERN SHORES
DARE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
SURVEYED 10-22-09

- NOTES:
1) SURVEYOR MAKES NO CERTIFICATION AS TO BUILDING SETBACK LINES. THEY MUST BE VERIFIED BY OWNER.
2) FIRM ZONE SHADED X
3720986700J - 9-20-06


FILE NO. 09185
WILLIAM S. JONES, JR., R.L.S., P.A.
303 WEST ARCHDALE STREET
KILL DEVIL HILLS, N.C. 27948
P (252) 441-3673 F (252) 441-0925



DATE: 10-22-09 SCALE: 1" = 30' DWN BY: G.V.S.

SOUTHERN PHOTO - GREENSBORO N148204



 <p>This map is generated from data sent to the secretary of the real property tax base program. Primary information errors such as incorrect parcel, area, etc., and other primary public records should be consulted for verification of the information contained on this map.</p> <p>DARK COUNTY ASSUMES NO LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS MAP.</p> <p>Print Date: 01/11/2022</p>	<p>156 Wax Myrtle Trl Southern Shores, NC 27949</p> <p>Parcel: 021977000 Pin: 986707694287 Tax District: Southern Shores Subdivision: So'ah Amended Plat B Sec 3 Lot-Blk-Sect: Lot 51 52 Blk 40 Sec 3 Property Use: Residential Building Type: Flat Roof Year Built: 1954</p>	<p>Tax Ownership</p> <p>Stephen A Gudas Sally Andrews Gudas</p>	<p>Current Tax Value</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Land</td><td>146,800</td></tr> <tr><td>Building</td><td>47,200</td></tr> <tr><td>Misc</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td>194,000</td></tr> </table>	Land	146,800	Building	47,200	Misc	0	Total	194,000	<p>Map Legend</p> <p>Scale: 1:533 Basemap: Aerials(2012) Parcel Lines Property Line Selected Parcel</p>
	Land	146,800										
Building	47,200											
Misc	0											
Total	194,000											

References

McNaughton, M. (n.d.). Outer Banks Architecture. Retrieved October 12, 2017, from <http://southernshores-nc.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/completed-bk2.pdf>

Dare County. (n.d). <http://gis.darecountync.gov/>