

Preservation of the Arboretum on George King Road

For over 45 years, the 12.6-acre tract at **5501 George King Rd.** was the property of William Louis Culberson, Hugo L. Bloomquist Professor of Botany at Duke University and former Director of the Sarah P. Duke Gardens. During his lifetime, Dr. Culberson and his wife planted over 300 species (list available) of woody trees and shrubs, including many of significant horticultural and educational interest.

Because of the exceptional value of this collection, the Executive Board of the North Carolina Botanical Garden Foundation has agreed to have the NC Botanical Garden hold a Conservation Easement for the property and to accept the gift of this tract to the NC Botanical Garden. Timothy Nordgren of Brady, Nordgren, Klym & Morton, PLLC (573-1415) is in the final stages of preparing the documents for the Conservation Easement and the gift of the land is anticipated soon.

The Culberson home designed, in the late 1950's by the noted Raleigh Architect, Edward Waugh, Professor of Architecture at NC State University and author of "The South Builds New Architecture in the Old South" by Edward and Elizabeth Waugh, is of historical significance. As a structure designed to capture solar radiation in the winter but exclude its heat in the summer, the plan though relevant today was ahead of its time. As the area surrounding this property becomes intensively developed, the Arboretum will be a significant attraction, possibly as a park; with the two greenhouses adding value as an educational/recreational facility for the public.

Collector roads should not impinge on any portion of this property, and any widening of George King Road should not encroach farther than its current position. Because the property is so widely planted, any road passing along a boundary and possibly requiring telephone poles would involve a significant loss.

For these reasons, any plan adopted should skirt this arboretum. For the SW Durham Drive Alignment, **Plan C** is the best and **Plan B** is the worst.

- 1) Plan C would only require shifting the collector road shown along the southern property line farther the South and not allowing any widening of George King Rd to encroach further onto the property.
- 2) Plan A would require a slight shift of the SW Durham Drive so that it did not encroach along the northwest corner of the property. The collector street shown along the eastern side of the property would need to be shifted to the East.
- 3) Plan B would require the SW Durham Drive to be shifted slightly so that it did not cut off the southeastern corner of the property, and the collector road shown along the eastern side of the property would need to be shifted to the East.

With these modifications the goals and intent of Conservation Easement and the gifting the property to the NC Botanical Garden to benefit the general public would be realized.