



HISTORY, CHARM, AND SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

Ms. Ellen Rankin, Architectural Historian
National Park Service
100 Alabama Street, SW
1924 Building
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Rankin,

I am writing you on behalf of the Village of Pinehurst Village Council asking for National Park Service (NPS) guidance and direction relative to the impact NCDOT project U-5976 will have on our National Historic Landmark status and the historic road system in our community. This project will totally replace the 68-year-old Traffic Circle and surrounding roads with a large complex intersection that would be more appropriate to a densely populated metropolitan area.

Although we understand the NPS briefly reviewed the project in February of this year, the magnitude, scope, and impact of the NCDOT project is only now becoming clear. Not only would this project totally destroy the circle and its immediate environs and replace these with a sea of concrete, directional signs and traffic signals, but the impact on Midland Road is such that the intersection would seriously compromise this iconic road and gateway that has been a feature of the area and a significant element for over 100 years. Although the traffic circle was constructed outside the Landmark designated period of significance (1895-1948), it, along with Midland Road, which was built in the 1920s, are described in the landmark application as an important part of the Pinehurst Planned Road System, which is listed as a Contributing Structure. See the attached excerpts from the Landmark application for references to the Traffic Circle and Midland Road as "*one of the most significant aspects of the planned landscape.*"

In addition, Midland Road is considered the gateway to Pinehurst by residents and visitors alike and has been described as the "Fifth Avenue of Golf" by the Convention and Visitors Bureau for Pinehurst, Southern Pines, and Aberdeen. We believe this project, if implemented as proposed, would significantly negatively impact visitors' impressions of our area.

Our evaluation of this proposed project, shared by a large segment of the Pinehurst area community, is that this a "Continuous Flow Intersection (CFI)", known as the "Shifted Pillow", would permanently change the character of the area and alternative solutions should be a priority rather than destroying these significant historic features.

We understand that NCDOT will involve the NC Historic Preservation Office in reviewing design plans for historic impact. Now that we more fully understand the impact of this project on the Traffic Circle, Midland Road, and our overall road system, the National Park Service's comments on the project would be helpful to us in gauging the potential impact to our Landmark status.

We look forward to NPS guidance and involvement in this matter as a means of strengthening our partnership to preserve and protect the cultural resources and values we all consider so important to North Carolina, Pinehurst, and the surrounding community. Please, contact us as necessary. We want to work with you.

Sincerely,

Patrick Pizzella, Mayor
Village of Pinehurst
395 Magnolia Road
Pinehurst, NC 28374

ADMINISTRATION

395 Magnolia Road • Pinehurst, NC 28374 • Telephone (910) 295-1900 • Fax (910) 295-4434 • www.vopnc.org



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Councilmember Barb Ficklin
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Village of Pinehurst

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References to the Pinehurst Traffic Circle in the Landmark Application 1994

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Present and Historic Physical Appearance

In the 1920s, Midland Road was built as the first divided, two-lane road in the state, and houses extended eastward along this landscaped boulevard. In 1956, the traffic circle at the junction of NC 2, NC 211, and US 15/501 was created at the east end of the district to ease congested traffic. Its circular design continued the historical layout of the village, and it immediately became the primary ornamental gateway to Pinehurst.

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Statement of Integrity

The historic integrity of Pinehurst remains strong. While some of the roadways have been modified over the past one hundred years, the majority of the planned layout remains intact. The system of curvilinear roads, which began with the 1895 plan, continued with the expanded plan west of Beulah Hill Road in the 1910s, and culminated with the 1956 traffic circle, still plays a major role in conveying the historic character of the Pinehurst resort.

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PLANNED ROAD SYSTEM throughout Pinehurst, Beginning 1895
Landscape architect - Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., Brookline, Mass; Warren H. Manning, North Billerica, Mass.

Contributing Structure

One of the central features of the design of Pinehurst is the system of curvilinear roads which reflects the late 19th century popularity of picturesque landscape planning and creates a leisurely environment consistent with resort life. ...

... Midland Road, which connects Pinehurst with Southern Pines, also exemplifies the careful planning of Pinehurst's road system. Designed by Warren Manning, this portion of NC 2 was built in the 1920s to connect the two towns with Knollwood, a Tufts-sponsored country club development. It was the first double road in the state and was beautified with a planted center strip and pine trees along either side. When the traffic circle in Midland Road (NC 2), at its junction with NC 211 and US 15/501, was built in 1956 to ease traffic congestion, its very design continued the theme of curves and circles that characterize Pinehurst's roadways; it immediately became a primary, ornamental gateway to Pinehurst. Today the roadways of Pinehurst continue to function as a unified whole and constitute one of the most significant aspects of the planned landscape.

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The pattern of the streets would influence subsequent planned development of the resort through the opening decades of the twentieth century and up to the construction of the traffic circle which punctuates the Midland Road connecting Pinehurst with Southern Pines.