

Ridge Street Architectural Design Control District

The Ridge Street Architectural Design Control District was created in 1995 and overlays the same boundaries as the Ridge Street National Register Historic District. As the name indicates, this district comprises of properties along Ridge Street from the railroad tracks to the south across Elliott Avenue to the intersection of Ridge and Berring Streets.

Ridge Street, an historically African-American community, is located south of downtown Charlottesville and was originally part of Alexander Garrett's Oak Hill estate in Albemarle County. Garrett worked as an associate to Thomas Jefferson and was involved in the founding of the University of Virginia.

Charlottesville's African-Americans and wealthy, typically Caucasian, merchants constructed houses along Ridge Street during the late-19th century. The distinction between social class was evidenced in the architecture. White merchants' homes were often larger and located at the northern end of the street while African-American homes were significantly smaller and located to the south.

The 20th century brought dramatic changes to the architectural and social composition of the area. The proliferation of the automobile offered the wealthy an opportunity to move out of the city and head to suburbia. As a result, members of the African-American community purchased the homes once belonging to the merchant class and turned them into rental properties. Further changes during the 20th century included the realignment of 5th and Ridge Street and the extension of Cherry Avenue which destroyed several significant structures in the area.

Ridge Street ADC District
Contributing structures are identified
on this map with black shading

