



Spring 2023

Park Updates and Initiation of Planning Activities

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The National Park Service (NPS) is excited to share some updates around recent activities at the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument (park) and to kick-off a planning effort that is intended to identify some options for future park operations. The NPS is preparing an Historic Structure Report (HSR) and Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for the park, both of which will provide guidance for park management through an assessment of the character-defining features of the historic home and its broader cultural landscape. These documents will also provide specific treatment recommendations to ensure preservation of these significant resources. In addition, the CLR will evaluate potential alternatives to establish a park operational footprint and provide for visitor use and access.

This newsletter is intended to provide an overview of the status of these longer-term planning processes, as well as some of the other anticipated projects and activities that are beginning to take shape as the park prepares to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the assassination of Medgar Evers in June 2023. We are holding some engagement sessions with the public (see below for details) where you can ask questions and share your ideas about the future of this important new national park unit.

Thank you for your interest in the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument!



*Keena Nichelle Graham,
Superintendent*

Inside

- *Overview*
- *What's Happening at the Park?*
- *Planning Issues and Management Concepts*
- *Public Meeting Information*
- *How to Comment*

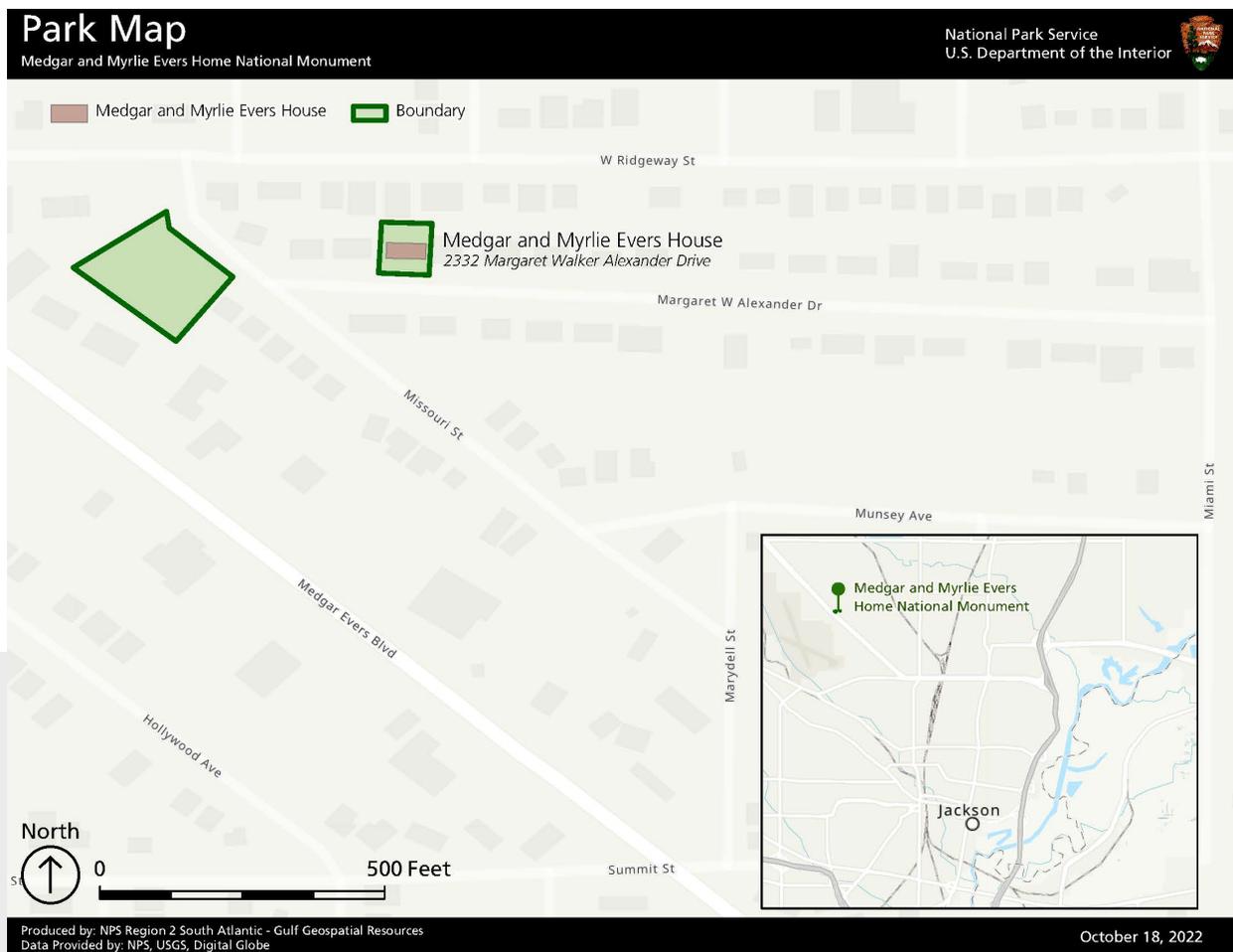


OVERVIEW

An overview of the park background and the history of the planning process at the park.

The Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument in Jackson, Mississippi, is a unit of the National Park Service honoring the life, work, and legacies of two important civil rights leaders, Medgar and Myrlie Evers. Built in 1956, the Evers home is in Jackson's Elraine subdivision, the first post-World War II residential subdivision created for middle-class African Americans in Mississippi. Medgar and Myrlie Evers exemplified civil rights organizing that combined grassroots strategies with efforts of national organizations to change laws and policies related to voting rights, public education, and public accommodations; to redress criminal injustice; and to contest the systemic nature of racial discrimination. The home helps tell a powerful story of the sacrifices the couple faced in this work and the efforts they made to raise and protect their family. It is also the site where Medgar Evers was assassinated on June 12, 1963. It serves as a tangible place where visitors may engage with their story and learn about the ongoing struggle for social justice in the United States.

Designated as a unit of the NPS in November 2020, the park is comprised of three parcels in the Elraine neighborhood that are owned and directly managed by the agency—the home itself at 2332 Margaret Walker Alexander Drive and two vacant parcels along Missouri Street near its intersection with West Ridgeway Street. From a historical perspective, the neighborhood is designated as a historic district in the National Register of Historic Places and provides an essential historic setting for the Evers home, which individually is listed as a National Historic Landmark. The two vacant parcels provide opportunities to provide a location for visitor services and operational support at the park. Alternatives for use of these two parcels as well as other potential management arrangements will be identified and evaluated in the CLR.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE PARK?

60th Anniversary Activities

The Trust for Public Land is working with the NPS to raise funds in support of the development of temporary facilities at the park. This partnership was initiated in 2022 and is providing support to make improvements to the Evers Home and prepare for commemorative events related to the 60th anniversary of Medgar Evers' assassination. Commemorative events will occur from June 9 to 12, 2023. Built improvements contemplated on the Missouri Street lots are also reflected on the conceptual site plan below.

Activities planned during the commemorative period include:

- Interpretive shuttle tours initiating from the M.W. Stringer Grand Lodge at 3344 John R Lynch Street
- Information sessions on community-focused NPS programs, including the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program and States, Tribal, and Local Plans and Grants Division
- “Day of Service” activities promoting volunteerism and opportunities to give back to the community

More information on 60th anniversary events will be available at www.nps.gov/MEMY



Long-Term Planning

The purpose of the HSR and CLR is to investigate, document, evaluate, and provide treatment guidance for the home and the cultural landscape surrounding the home and the two vacant parcels (collectively considered as the study area). As a new park unit with limited visitor access and facilities, this project will seek to identify appropriate signage, interpretive opportunities, and visitor facilities to allow it to fully open to regular visitation.

Goals for the project include the following:

- Preserve and maintain the historical integrity of the Evers home
- Preserve and rehabilitate the cultural landscape to ensure compatibility with the historic character of the neighborhood
- Develop the visitor experience and identify new interpretive opportunities for the home and surrounding historic district
- Develop a framework for establishing park management, operations, and visitor services
- Ensure physical and programmatic access through compliance with Architectural Barriers Act accessibility standards



PLANNING ISSUES AND MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

Key Issues

This project is being initiated to help resolve the following key issues:

- Provide safe access for visitors without negatively impacting the neighborhood
- Consider appropriate design of any new infrastructure to minimize impacts to neighborhood character and ensure appropriate stormwater management
- Identify opportunities for potential expansion of park boundary to include other key parcels within the historic district or adjacent to existing NPS-owned properties
- Develop relationships with key partners to support park operations and management

Preliminary Management Concepts

The NPS has developed some preliminary concepts or strategies for park visitation and operations that includes rehabilitation and restoration of the Evers Home and associated landscape improvements. Elements common to all management options include 1) restoration of the home as a house museum with minimal visitor amenities inside the home, and 2) retaining temporary improvements described previously for the 60th anniversary commemoration until replaced by any permanent improvements or infrastructure.

Concept 1: Use What We Own

This concept is based on the principle that the NPS would seek to provide all the necessary visitor and administrative infrastructure on-site entirely within the property that the NPS currently owns in the Historic District, with the majority of new infrastructure being placed on the vacant Missouri Street lots. The Evers Home would continue to primarily serve as a restored house museum, and the Missouri Street lots would have:

- Visitor arrival and parking
- Comfort Station (including restrooms)
- Small shelter/gathering area
- Maintenance/Storage Space
- NPS office space



Concept 2: Expanded NPS Footprint

This concept is based on the principle that the NPS would seek legislative action to expand the boundary of the park either within or beyond the historic district in order to acquire additional property on which to provide visitor services and an NPS administration/operations footprint. All NPS operations would still be located on-site, proximate to the Evers Home. This includes the following ideas:

- NPS operations would be provided on-site with increased capacity for operations and visitor contact.
- Additional properties could be acquired on Medgar Evers Boulevard to provide a more direct way for visitor access/parking and to minimize traffic effects within the neighborhood.
- Additional properties could be acquired within or adjacent to the historic district on either Margaret W. Alexander Drive or Missouri Street. This approach could provide the NPS with some existing, built infrastructure through which to provide visitor services or administrative uses.
- Acquiring additional properties would be contingent on legislative expansion of the park boundary and partner interest/willing seller.
- Opportunity for much larger outdoor gathering, interpretation and contemplation space.

Concept 3: Offsite NPS Operations with Partners

This concept is similar to Concept 2, in that the NPS would seek legislative action to expand the boundary of the park beyond the historic district. However, the emphasis in this concept is to provide minimal on-site improvements beyond parking and expanded outdoor gathering/interpretation space. The majority of NPS administration and operations would be provided off-site at a partner site somewhere in Jackson. This includes the following ideas:

- Additional properties could be acquired on Medgar Evers Boulevard to provide a more direct way for visitor access/parking and to minimize traffic effects within the neighborhood. Acquiring additional properties would be contingent on legislative expansion of the park boundary and partner interest/willing seller.
- Opportunity for much larger outdoor gathering, interpretation and contemplation space.
- Partner organizations would house the majority of NPS facilities off-site, which would require leasing and/or other operational arrangements.

Please provide us with your thoughts on the issues and preliminary management options and let us know if there are other actions we should consider!



PUBLIC MEETING INFORMATION

As part of the civic engagement process, the NPS will host three in-person meetings. The public is invited to attend any of these meetings to learn more about the project scope, issues, and potential management options; ask NPS representatives questions; and provide comments. All comments will be considered during development of the CLR and associated environmental compliance. Please see below for additional meeting information:

Meeting 1

Date: March 28, 2023

Time: 11am - 1pm

Location:

Two Mississippi Museums
222 North Street
Jackson, MS 39201

Details: Meeting will be held in the Community Room on the 2nd floor in the museum

Meeting 2

Date: March 28, 2023

Time: 5pm – 7pm

Location:

Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home
2332 Margaret W Alexander Drive
Jackson, MS 39213

Details: Meeting will be held outdoors at the Missouri Street lots, weather permitting

Meeting 3

Date: March 29, 2023

Time: 11am – 1pm

Location:

Medgar Evers Library
4215 Medgar Evers Boulevard
Jackson, MS 39213

Details: Meeting will be held in the meeting room at the library

HOW TO COMMENT

There are three ways to submit comments:

1. In person. Attend any of the meetings on March 28 or 29, 2023, and submit your comments via comment card.
2. Electronically. Submit your comments via the NPS's Planning, Environment & Public Comment (PEPC) website at https://parkplanning.nps.gov/memy_clr
3. By mail. Mail or hand-deliver written comments to park headquarters at: Superintendent, Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument, 222 North Street #2205, Jackson, MS 39201

All written comments must be postmarked, and all electronic comments must be submitted no later than June 30, 2023. The deadline for submitting comments will be posted on the project website.*

*Note: Comments will not be accepted by fax, e-mail, or any other way than those specified above. Bulk comments in any format (hard copy or electronic) submitted on behalf of others will not be accepted. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment-including your personal identifying information-may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you would like more information or have questions related to this project, please contact Keena Graham at MEMY_Superintendent@nps.gov. Thank you for your interest in shaping the future of Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument!