

Field Notes

SCRC Series: Lewis Clarke Oral Histories Project – MC00191

Field Notes: Donald E. Basile (compiled October 20, 2011)

Interviewee: DONALD E. (“DON”) BASILE

Interviewer: Yona R. Owens

Interview Date: Thursday, July 14, 2011

Location: Douglassville, Pennsylvania

Length: Approximately 130 minutes

THE INTERVIEWEE A native of Springfield, Massachusetts, Don Basile graduated in 1967 with a BLA from the North Carolina State University School (now College) of Design. After graduation, he worked for Lewis Clarke Associates (LCA) during one of the firm’s most ambitious master planning projects, Palmetto Dunes. In the early 1970s, Basile partnered with two of his brothers, one in real estate and one an architect, to form the Basile Corporation. Over the past decades, the development firm has become known for its ecologically sensitive residential and commercial project designs.

THE INTERVIEWER Yona R. Owens is the Lewis Clarke Oral Histories project manager at North Carolina State University Libraries’ Special Collections Research Center (SCRC).

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW The interview was conducted in Basile’s home at a large dining table in the well appointed kitchen. He was happy to be interviewed and seemed to enjoy himself.

CONTENT OF THE INTERVIEW Basile was asked about his years in design school at NCSU, his work on Palmetto Dunes and other projects while employed as a landscape architect at LCA (late 1960s), and his decision, as a landscape architect in the early ‘70s, to start a development company with his brothers. He discussed Clarke’s “book of common knowledge,” the regulatory challenges his company has faced and overcome, and the projects he is most proud of.

NOTE ON RECORDING I used the SCRC's Edirol R-09 and recorded in stereo. I recorded the interview as a WAV file, and the quality is quite good. In the background, there is the sound of a loudly chiming clock, some dog barking, a squeaky toy, and two recording interruptions for visitors at the door.