The McIntire neighborhood, where the McIntire Skate Park now resides, has a rich, but tragic, history. The land that now runs along McIntire Road was once the site of a prominent Black neighborhood, which the city demolished, in the early 1960s. This destruction nearly obliterated a whole community from the cityscape.

Until the 1960s, the Vinegar Hill neighborhood resided along West Main Street near the east end of what is today the Downtown Mall. The area was a steadily growing one until the 1950s. After the Second World War, the neighborhood slowly came into a state of disrepair and dejection and the city, thus, chose to clear the area to make way for a more commercial and industrial usage of the land. Photographs show the utter demolition of the neighborhood in before and after views of the area. After razing a vast section of the community from 4th Street west to the Downtown Mall and several blocks north to Preston Avenue, the city established McIntire Road to run from West Main Street out to Route 250. Modern maps and aerial photographs show the office buildings, industrial buildings, the Omni Hotel, and vast expanses of asphalt parking lots that took the place of the displaced community that had once been.

The modern McIntire neighborhood contains a mixture of uses such as retail stores, office buildings, industrial sites, residential areas, and recreational sites. The north end of McIntire Road has gained a more informal recreational function that offsets the formal uses of the area nearer to Downtown. The McIntire Skate Park has only recently come into existence as a result of the new demands of modern recreational culture. The site, bounded by the roadways of McIntire and Route 250, was a series of tennis courts as recently as 8 years ago. The area was gradually taken over by errant skateboarders and bike riders that had been banned from almost everywhere else they tried to perfect their craft, including the nearby Downtown Mall. The city eventually decided to create a sanctioned space for these modern athletes in an effort to keep them out of the often-dangerous path of the general public. The Skate Park was thus set up within the chain-linked enclosure of the tennis courts with a series of ramps, rails, and platforms. The park is now run by the city department of Parks and Recreation and maintains regular seasonal

The storied history of the vinegar hill area is depicted in these pictures and diagrams. The diagrams show the existing structures of the neighborhood that were demolished and replaced with parking lots, industrial and office buildings, and the Omni Hotel. The photographs along the top illustrate the before and after views of the neighborhood. [left] the vinegar hill neighborhood just after the demolition (looking west). [center] the structures of vinegar hill along main street with the present day county office building in the background (looking northwest). This view is mimicked in the sanborn fire insurance map from 1929. [right] an aerial view from 2002 shows mcintire road running through the area that was once vinegar hill.
The McIntire Skate Park is situated in a rather difficult location for the accessibility of its average patrons. Located on the corner of McIntire Road and Route 250, walking to the park is relatively limited. Though the location is central, since the average park patron is under the driving age, parents are also frequent park visitors and observers. The diagram to the right shows the park surrounded by wooded areas as well as a stream on nearly all sides. The boundaries of this area are formed by the roads to the north and west sides and the trees to the south and east. Within the area, however, the boundaries are a transparent chainlink fence that encloses the specific skate area. The aerial photograph at the right also illustrates the situation of the skate park along the roadways. The locational issue poses the largest problem of use because it often limits the accessibility for its users who have to depend on their parents for transportation. Once in the space, though, both skaters/bikers and parents are afforded ample opportunity for interaction. The diagram of physical features to the right shows the layout of the skate ramps, as well as the service building outside of the skatepark. The skatepark is a popular public space for teenagers and younger kids because, like any sporting venue, it brings together many people interested in competing and practicing the sport. The park has minimal limitations on who can use the space and with no entrance fee, or prerequisites, it is a popular hangout for both participants and observers alike. Based on the season, hourly usage varies. By far the skating area is the most social space in the park. Since the skatepark is under the driving age, limited to the park is the most social space in the park. Though skating is the majority of use at the skatepark, the viewing and socializing of mothers and fathers is also significant for interaction. The informal atmosphere of the skatepark lacks the delineated boundary between observers and performers.