

## Soul City

09/29/09 361 W, 1 I - + 17 - 17

More history from Warren County. The bright blue pumper below belongs to the Soul City Fire Department, which is Warren County Station 13 and located at 103 Crescent Drive in Mansion. Who or what is Soul City? Let's turn back the clock to 1969, when civil rights leader Floyd McKissick proposed a planned town to economically assist and empower blacks and other excluded people. He envisioned a self-sustaining community that would attract industries, provide jobs for the poor, and eventually reach a population of 50,000. After forming a development company, he chose a 1,180-acre site in Warren County: Satterwhite Farm, a former slave plantation that included a sixteen-room antebellum mansion called the Green Duke House. The need for jobs and industry in that area was great, as Warren County was one of the poorest in the state.



Soul City was one of thirteen model city projects funded by the federal government. Ground was broken in 1973. With many millions in grants, roads and water lines were constructed. Some homes were built, and one industrial building named Soul Tech 1. Overall development was slower than expected. Industry was difficult to attract, because companies needed workers. And the city needed people, who needed jobs as a reason to move there. Soul City was also misperceived as an Afro-centric community. The development company foreclosed in 1979. By the next year, Soul City had 35 housing units, a medical clinic, a tennis court, and a pool. Some 150 people were employed in the city. Since that time, the community has grown a bit. And there were accomplishments: the first medical clinic in rural Warren County, a water system serving three counties, a sewage disposal system serving many, and recreation and community facilities. Plus the aforementioned fire department. Perhaps our readers can elaborate on SCFD today, as well as how the community is doing.

## Sources:

- [Soul City via Google Maps](#)
- [Soul City Encyclopedia of North Carolina entry](#)
- [Soul City, North Carolina Wikipedia entry](#)
- "A Brand New Shining City": Floyd B. McKissick Sr. and the Struggle to Build Soul City, North Carolina by Timothy J. Minchin, North Carolina Historical Review, Volume LXXII, Number 2, April 2005

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Seems like I read somewhere that a few of the other ones were rather successful. I remember when Soul City was started. Seems like there were viewpoints expressed in the news media that the name was going to put off a lot of people. I also remember the sign that was on I-85

for Soul City.

Looking back, maybe some of that money would have been better spent on one of the existing communities in Warren County.

**DJ** ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 09/30/09 - 12:07

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preferred)

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