



RANDOLPH COUNTY

Historic Landmark Preservation Commission

204 East Academy Street • P. O. Box 771

Asheboro, North Carolina 27204-0771

Telephone: 336.318.6555

Fax: 336.318.6550

The Local Landmark Designation Report: ASHEBORO MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1938

SIGNIFICANCE:

The 1938 structure of the Asheboro Municipal Building is located at 146 North Church Street, Asheboro, N.C., North Carolina, in Asheboro Township, Randolph County. It is historically significant in that it is the city's foremost example of the Art Deco Style. This was a national architectural style that was especially popular during the 1920's and the 1930's. It is further significant in that the Asheboro Municipal Building was built as a federal PWA (Public Works Administration) Project toward the end of the Great Depression Era. This PWA project is not to be confused with the federal WPA (Works Progress Administration) projects.

The municipal structure is also historically significant in that it was the city's first structure that combined all of the city's government and public infrastructure for a progressive early twentieth century municipal building for the size of Asheboro, N.C. The words "Municipal Building" that were and are carved in the exterior upper front façade was indeed a modern concept in 1938. Not only did it house the city's fire department on the north end and the city's public library on the south end, it also housed the city's tax department, the water department, the city clerk, and the city finance officer on the first level. The city engineer, the police department, and the mayor's courtroom were housed on the second level.

The Federal Government contributed \$ 32,947 for the municipal building project while the City of Asheboro sold \$ 40,000 in bonds to cover the rest of the \$ 73,215 total cost. C.C. Cranford, D.B. McCrary, W.J. Armfield, and Mayor W.A. Bunch formed the committee to select the type of building. Greensboro architect Albert C. Woodroof was selected to design the building, who also designed other buildings in the City of Asheboro. Contracts for the building were awarded on September 8, 1938. Dermont Construction Company of High Point, N.C. was awarded the building contract with a low bid of \$56,216. H.P. McCain, also of High Point, served as superintendent of construction for the company.

Ground was first broken for construction on September 27, 1938. A commemorative ceremony was held on December 19, 1938 for the laying of the corner stone. The formal opening and celebration of the Asheboro Municipal Building occurred on August 4, 1939.

—TOLL FREE NUMBERS—

Greensboro/Liberty: 218.4555 • Archdale/Trinity: 819-3555

ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY:

The 1938 Asheboro Municipal Building retains its structural integrity as it was when it was built in 1938 and 1939. It also remains at the original site as it was when it was first built in 1938 and 1939. The exterior is still clad with the original limestone that faced it on the front, north, and south sides in 1939. The original Art Deco Style decorative limestone on the 1938-39 façade still graces the structure. The structural exterior appearance basically remains unchanged since it was first built. When the fire department was removed and re-located in 1972, the two bay openings on the front north end were replaced with concrete slab walls that complimented the front appearance of the building. The only major addition was constructed around 1957 to the rear of the north wing to accommodate an expanded fire department for more dormitory space. The addition was done in such a way as to not take away from the appearance of the exterior.

Minor renovations have taken place in the interior since it was first built. Although the interior has undergone some changes, especially in its uses, the interior appearance of the Art Deco Style woodwork and other components of the 1938-39 remain the same. Today, the old city courtroom is the city Council Chamber, where City Council, Planning Board, and other city commissions hold public meetings. The public library moved to a new location in 1964. The City of Asheboro Community Development Division currently occupies the former library space. The fire department left the Municipal Building in 1972. The City Water Billing Department now calls the former fire department home. In 1991, the building underwent a half million-dollar expansion for new offices, elevator, and wheelchair ramps to make the building more user friendly.

The exterior of the building, apart from the addition on the northeast rear corner, the addition of a door on the north side, the addition of a wheelchair ramp on the south end, and replacement windows, remains largely true to its original state.

LOCAL LANDMARK ORDINANCE CRITERIA:

The proposed designation of the 1938 Asheboro Municipal Building meets the following specific criteria outlined in the adopting Ordinance establishing the Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission: (1) Critical part of the City of Asheboro's heritage by having value as an example of the cultural, historic, and social heritage of the city and county; (2) Exemplification of an architectural type distinguished by overall quality of design; and (3) the location of the 1938 Asheboro Municipal Building provides a unique and distinctive structure representing an established and familiar visual presence in the City of Asheboro and Randolph County, N.C.

BASIC DATA:

Name and Street Address: 146 North Church Street, Asheboro, N.C. 27203

Name and Address of Property Owner: City of Asheboro
146 N. Church St., Asheboro, N.C. 27203

Date of Original Construction: 1938 - 1939

PIN #: 7751735132 (0.49 Acre) and PIN # 7751736109 (0.67 Acre)

Description and Justification of Boundaries of Structure Proposed for Designation:

The 1938 Asheboro Municipal Building that is being proposed as a designated Randolph County Historical Landmark, located at 146 N. Church Street, Asheboro, N.C. 27203, sits on two pieces of property, identified as Parcel Identification Numbers 7751735132 and 7751736109. The structure crosses both parcels and sits on the east side of Church Street. The structure measures approximately 50 feet in depth, and measures approximately 120 feet in length. The structure consists of two levels or two floors and a basement area. The structure sits on two parcels that total 1.16 acres.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION NARRATIVE OF ALL RESOURCES ON THE SITE:

The 1938 Asheboro Municipal Building that is being proposed as a designated Randolph County Historical Landmark, located at 146 N. Church Street, Asheboro, N.C. 27203, sits on two pieces of property, identified as Parcel Identification Numbers 7751735132 and 7751736109. The structure crosses both parcels and sits on the east side of Church Street. The structure measures approximately 50 feet in depth, and measures approximately 120 feet in length. The structure consists of two levels or two floors and a basement area. The structure sits on two parcels that total 1.16 acres. Today, the former city courtroom is the city Council Chamber, where City Council, Planning Board, and other city commissions hold public meetings. The former Asheboro Public Library

moved to a new location in 1964. The City of Asheboro Community Development Division currently occupies this space. The fire department left the Municipal Building in 1972. The City Water Billing Department now calls the former fire department home. In 1991, the building underwent a half million-dollar expansion for new offices, elevator, and wheelchair ramps.

The one contributing or secondary structure on the site, to the rear of the Asheboro Municipal Building, is the old 1910 city water tank structure. This is a reinforced round concrete, non-elevated, structure that sits on the ground level. This antiquated concrete tank once held 250,000 gallons of water. After the municipal lakes were built in the 1930s, the tank was no longer used. During 1938 and 1939, a garage door was added and the tank became a storage area.

MAP AND PLANS

A Geographic Information System (GIS) air photograph map, (produced by the Randolph County Planning Department) of this property reflecting the structure and its relation to nearby streets and other buildings is included as part of this report. Detailed floor plans are maintained by the City of Asheboro and the Randolph County Tax Department, records of which are available to the Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission.

PHOTOS

Submitted as part of this report are digital photographs, (including a compact disk) prepared and collected by the staff of the City of Asheboro. The photographs include images of the building's exterior and interior.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH CERTIFICATION

Historical data used in this report has been reviewed in regular scheduled public meetings and unanimously approved by the Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission for public presentation and use in this report. A final record of Certification, after a local landmark public hearing, will be reflected in the official minutes of the Commission. The Local Landmark Designation Report was prepared by staff person, Randle E. Brim, November 3, 2010. The historical information was documented and summarized by staff person of the City of Asheboro, Justin T. Luck, October 13, 2010.

NORTH CAROLINA
RANDOLPH COUNTY

11-9-10

Date

Hal Johnson

Hal Johnson, Chairman
Randolph County, HLPC

