# APPLICATION
LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

1. Name of property  Forsyth County Courthouse

2. Owner's Name & Address  Forsyth County
211 North Chestnut Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

3. Property Location  11 West Third Street
Winston-Salem, NC

4. Amount of Land To Be Designated  0.91 acres
(acreage)

5. Interior To Be Designated  X Yes  No

6. Tax Block(s)  6084  Tax Lot(s)  152

Please complete the following information on continuation sheets

7. When was the structure erected? For Whom? (If you don't know the exact date, please give a general time frame.) Have there been additions or modifications? If so, describe and give dates.

8. Do you know the names of any of the craftsmen who worked on the structure (i.e., architects, carpenters, contractors, landscape designers, etc.)? Do any architect's plans or building accounts exist? Where?

9. Do you have any old photographs of the structure? If so, do you know the dates of the photographs?

10. How has the building been passed down through the years, from whom to whom (i.e., a quick chain of title)?

11. What was the structure's original use, if different from today? Has the building ever been moved? List the sources of your information.

12. What is the significance of this property? (Please be specific and to the point.) Include a list of sources for your information.
13. Describe the architecture and present condition of the structure, also including any outbuildings or other appurtenant features to be included in the designation. If the property has been restored, what were the dates of restoration? Was the restoration done under the supervision of any historic preservation organization? If the property has not been restored, is any restoration planned for the property?

14. Is the property listed in any existing architectural or historical survey (i.e., the National Register of Historic Places)? If so, please give the title and date of the listing.

In addition to written application, the following materials must be submitted simultaneously:

- a black and white 8" x 10" overall photograph clearly depicting the property being designated.

- color slides showing all sides of the main structure and any outbuildings (may include architectural details, interior and exterior, which add to the property's significance)

- a tax map showing the location of the property, including any buildings and appurtenant features.

(Please label the above materials with the name of the property owner)

APPLICATION FEE $50.00 (Check Payable to Forsyth County)

The following information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Date: ________________

Signature of Property Owner: ____________________________

Mailing Address:

211 North Chestnut Street

Winston-Salem, NC
7. When was the structure erected? For Whom? (If you don’t know the exact date, please give a general time frame.) Have there been additions or modifications? If so, describe and give dates.

The courthouse, as it is seen today, is the result of several building campaigns and is built on the site of the first 1850 county courthouse (demolished). Between 1893 and 1896 Forsyth County had the second courthouse built. In 1926, a third courthouse was executed and retained and enveloped much of the 1897 courthouse. The 1926 courthouse was expanded on the north and south facades in 1959–1960. The expansion, which matched the style of the 1926 courthouse, added office space on three floors and in the basement, and as a result almost filled the entire block. In 1968, a courtroom for the criminal division of the district court was constructed in the former quarters of the tax assessor in the courthouse basement (no trace of the courtroom remains today). In 1974, the court functions moved to a new building and the interior, including the courtrooms, was subdivided for county offices and used until 2004, when the building was closed. The building has been vacant since 2004.

8. Do you know the names of any of the craftsmen who worked on the structure (i.e., architects, carpenters, contractors, landscape designers, etc.)? Do any architect’s plans or building accounts exist? Where?

The second courthouse was designed by Winston-Salem architect Frank Pierce Milburn (1868–1926) and constructed between 1893 and 1896 by the J.A. Jones Construction Company. The architectural firm of Northup and O’Brien was hired to design the new 1926 courthouse. Their design retained and enveloped part of Milburn’s 1897 courthouse. The large center tower, the corner turret and other portions of the 1896 courthouse were removed during the 1926 construction. Lashmit, James, Brown, and Pollock, the successor firm to Northup and O’Brien, likely designed the 1958 addition, which matched the style of the 1926 courthouse. Winston-Salem architecture and engineering firm Newman, VanEtten, Winfree & Associates, designed the 1970s interior renovation.

The only architectural drawings identified by this research to date for the courthouse is “Details of Main Stairs and Entrance Lobby,” by Northup & Obrien on file at the NCSU Libraries’ Digital Collections: Rare and Unique Materials. http://d.lib.ncsu.edu/collections/catalog/mc00240-001-ff0543-001-001_0001

The Newman, VanEtten, Winfree & Associates plans for the interior renovations when the courts vacated the building are also on file at the NCSU library. See finding aid “Drawings 1917-1980 (MC 0024 Series 1, Forsythe County Courthouse, 1974 (74-04) Flat Folder 245. These drawings do not appear to be on line.
9. Do you have any old photographs of the structure? If so, do you know the dates of the photographs?

Yes, historic photographs of this and the preceding courthouses can be found on the Digital Forsyth website: http://www.digitalforsyth.org/. The dates of the various courthouses picture are listed beneath each photograph but not the date of the photographs.

10. How has the building been passed down through the years, from whom to whom (i.e., a quick chain of title)?

There is no chain of title. The courthouse has always been owned by Forsyth County.

11. What was the structure’s original use, if different from today? Has the building ever been moved? List the sources of your information.

The building’s original use was as a courthouse and remained in that use until 1974. Following the departure of the courts into the newly built Hall of Justice, the interior of the old courthouse, including the courtrooms, was subdivided for county offices and used until 2004, when the building was closed. From 2004 to present the building has stood vacant. The building has not been moved. See bibliography at the end for sources.

12. What is the significance of this property? (Please be specific and to the point.) Include a list of sources for your information.

The Forsyth County Courthouse is significant for its association with the important functions of Forsyth County administration as the local seat of government and center of law. Second, the courthouse is significance as an example of restrained classical architecture and that embodies the importance of its function as a courthouse. Third, the prominent Winston-Salem architectural firm of Northup and O’Brien, known for its public buildings, designed the courthouse—the only courthouse the firm designed.

13. Describe the architecture and present condition of the structure, also including any outbuildings or other appurtenant features to be included in the designation. If the property has been restored, what were the dates of restoration? Was the restoration done under the supervision of any historic preservation organization? If the property has not been restored, is any restoration planned for the property?

The courthouse, which reached its current appearance in 1960, incorporates parts of both the 1926 Beaux Arts courthouse and the 1893–1896 Romanesque Revival–style courthouse. Standing three stories high on a raised basement and sheathed with limestone, the central core is the 1926 courthouse, which incorporated the walls and some of the interior features of the 1893–1896 courthouse. Between 1959 and 1960, additions were built onto the front and rear, creating its current form. The interior features elements of each of the three building campaigns that created the current building. The
later additions include front and rear stairs, an elevator, and additional office space. Also located on the grounds are three monuments that honor Confederate soldiers, World War I soldiers, and the Good Samaritan.

The courthouse is a three-story building on a raised basement with two-story rectangular additions at both the north and south ends. The brick foundation, some of the masonry walls, and part of the tower of the former 1890s courthouse were retained and incorporated into the 1926 courthouse. The central core of the building, which dates to 1926, is seven bays on the east side and eight bays on the west side with projecting center sections. The north and south additions are nine bays wide.

The basement and first floors are delineated by coursed stone and by string courses in the central core of the building and by tapered stone walls that angle inward on the additions. The original 1926 Northup & O'Brien courthouse had multiple-light casement windows with multiple-light transoms. It is probable that the windows were replaced when the additions were erected, and the building now has metal four-light casement windows with fixed lights beneath them. Sculpture panels separate the windows vertically on the 1926 section. These panels feature a swag motif and a small roundel. Additional relief decoration is located at the base of the same windows, and consists of a wave motif. The windows in the additions are recessed within the walls. The 1926 core and the 1960 additions both feature full entablatures. The 1926 portion features a dentilled cornice, while the cornice on the additions feature decorated friezes with medallions.

The 1926 building features a roof balustrade running the perimeter, with solid panels broken by intermittent projecting and receding portions. At the center of each side, round moldings that once framed clocks punctuate the balustrade. The clocks have been removed, and these round frames are now empty. A hipped standing-seam-metal roof caps the central portion of the building, while flat roofs shelter the additions. A single chimney projects above the roofline and is visible along the Fourth Street side of the building.

An aedicule composed of paired pilasters and a decorative entablature frame the main entrance on Third Street. Recessed behind the aedicule is an aluminum-and-glass entrance composed of two single-leaf doors and fixed lights between the doors all topped with a panel of mosaic glass. At the entrance, the floor transitions from concrete to terrazzo. A secondary entrance, similar to the main entrance on Third Street, is located on the Fourth Street side. The framing aedicule and aluminum-and-glass entrance are all the same with slight variations. The doors at this entrance are paired double-leaf doors topped by a mosaic-glass panel identical to that over the main entrance. Two single-leaf doors are located along the basement level of the Liberty Street side of the building, one in each addition. Concrete stairs accompanied by a simple metal pipe railing provide access to these doors. One single-leaf door with sidelight is located on the Main Street side of the building within the northern addition and appears to have served as a loading entrance. A concrete retaining wall stands just south of this entrance, and the ground in front of the doorway is paved. Simple pipe railings enclose the wells for the basement windows on both sides of the building.
Three monuments have been erected on the grounds. A statue of a Confederate soldier stands at the northwestern corner, a flagpole with a bronze plaque honoring the county's dead in World War I stands on the southwest corner, and a Good Samaritan monument is located at the northeastern corner of the block.

The property has not been restored. Current plans call for the building to be rehabilitated into apartments.

14. Is the property listed in any existing architectural or historical survey (i.e., the National Register of Historic Places)? If so, please give the title and date of the listing.

The property has just been listed on the State Study List by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. A draft nomination for listing to the National Register of Historic Places has been written and submitted to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. The Study List application was submitted on September 7, 2012 and approved on October 11, 2012, and the draft National Register nomination was submitted on August 10, 2012.

Bibliography


*Richmond Times-Dispatch.* August 5, 1926.


*Winston-Salem Journal.* July 31, 1919; October 10, 1920; March 5, 1924; March 5, 1926; October 4, 1962.

End Notes

1 *Winston-Salem Journal, March 5, 1926, Richmond Times-Dispatch, August 5, 1926.*


### Forsyth County, NC

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http://mans2.co.forsyth.nc.us/propertydata/08/printPreview.aspx?PrintOptData=ForsythCounty.... 8/7/2012