

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

(Former) Spruce Street YMCA

Local Historic Landmark #99

315 N. Spruce St., Winston-Salem

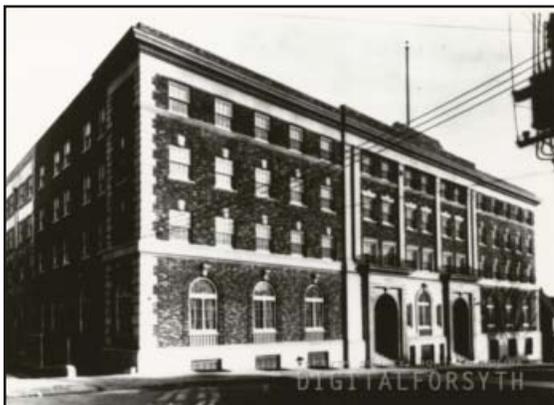
Construction Date: 1927

Adaptive Rehabilitation Date: 1984

Landmark Designation Date: 12/18/1995

The (former) Spruce Street building of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in Winston-Salem stands in the midst of the city's downtown. It served the men and boys of the community as the "Y" from 1927 until 1976, when a new facility was constructed in the West End neighborhood. The Spruce Street YMCA served newcomers to Winston-Salem with its 116 dormitory rooms. The Spruce Street building remains from an era when a downtown "Y" location was emphasized to attract young men who were entering the business and professional world and who needed a place to stay until they obtained a financial foothold.

The Spruce Street YMCA was built during the 1920s building boom in Winston-Salem when the tremendous wealth generated by tobacco, textiles and other industries enabled businessmen and others to finance and build substantial civic and commercial buildings. When originally founded in 1888, the Winston-Salem YMCA garnered the financial and volunteer support of the business and civic leaders of the community. The Spruce Street YMCA building stands as a reminder of the longevity and importance of the "Y" program and as evidence of the long-standing tradition of philanthropy in Winston-Salem.



YMCA Building, located at 315 N. Spruce Street, c. 1920s
Courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library Photograph Collection via
Digital Forsyth (<http://www.digitalforsyth.org>)



Photograph courtesy of Heather Fearnbach

The (former) Spruce Street YMCA was designed by the well-known Winston-Salem architect Harold Macklin. Macklin's other local work includes the Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel Building and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Building; additionally, Macklin served as the local architect for St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Summit Street in West End.

The exterior of the YMCA is brick and features Classic Revival limestone detailing. Pilasters centered over the two main entrances divide the center of the building. The limestone detail on the exterior includes angle quoins, a belt course between the first and second floors, and the "Men" and "Boys" entrances. These entrances, which face Spruce Street, have arched openings with carved keystones flanked by fluted Corinthian pilasters, which support a full entablature. On the frieze of the entablature are the words "Men" and "Boys." The limestone cornice above the arched entrance supports iron balconies with polished brass finials and rosettes and a central panel which bears the initials "YMCA" in intertwined ironwork. The building also features a limestone frieze that wraps around the building and supports a limestone cornice with dentil molding.

In 1984, the building was rehabilitated into use as apartment/condominium and commercial space.



Photographs courtesy of Forsyth County
Historic Resources Commission's Files

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

(former) Spruce Street YMCA
National Register Nomination
<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/FY0800.pdf>



This information is also available
at the Forsyth County
Historic Resources Commission's web site:
<http://www.ForsythCountyHRC.org>