



**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper
Secretary Susi H. Hamilton

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

November 18, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Shelby Reap
Office of Human Environment
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Historic Structures Survey Report, B-5985, Replace Bridges 125 and 175 on NC 41/NC72 and SR 1600 over the Lumbee River, PA 17-12-0065, Robeson County, ER 19-3125

Thank you for your October 9, 2019, letter transmitting the above-referenced report. We have reviewed the letter and offer the following comments.

We concur that the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant (RB0653) is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C for the reasons cited in the report.

Additionally, the NCDOT Office (RB0721) is a contributing resource in the Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476).

We also concur that the following resources are not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for the reasons cited in the report:

- Whitley Furniture Company, RB0234
- West Fifth Street Stores, RB0716
- Thompson Electric Company, RB0717
- Planters Warehouse, RB0718
- Automobile Sales Center, RB0719
- Filling Station, RB0720

The consultant is to be commended for producing concise and effective National Register eligibility arguments and using well-drawn site plans.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-814-6579 or environmental.review@ncdcr.gov. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT, mfurr@ncdot.gov

Received: 10/22/2019
State Historic Preservation Office



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

JAMES H. TROGDON, III
SECRETARY

October 9, 2019

ER 19-3125

Ms. Renee Gledhill-Earley
Environmental Review Coordinator, State Historic Preservation Office
North Carolina Department of Natural & Cultural Resources
4617 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4617

Due -- 11/14/19

Dear Renee:

RE: Historic Structures Survey Report, Replace Bridges No. 125 & No.175 on NC
41/NC 72 and SR 1600 over Lumbee River in Robeson County PA# 17-12-0065,
TIP# B-5985

H- *ER letters*
11/13/19
BJE

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to replace two bridges in Lumberton. NCDOT contracted Commonwealth to evaluate eight properties in the Area of Potential Effects. Only the North Carolina Lumberton Water Treatment Plant (RB0653) is recommended as an individual property eligible for National Register listing. The NCDOT office is recommended as contributing to the Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476).

The report and survey materials are enclosed for your review and comment per 36CFR.800. Please let me know if you have any additional questions regarding this project. I can be reached at (919) 707-6088 or by email at sleap@ncdot.gov.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Shelby Reap in cursive.

Shelby Reap
Historic Architecture Team

Attachments

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1020 BIRCH RIDGE RD
RALEIGH NC 27610

**HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY REPORT
REPLACE BRIDGES NO 125 & 175 ON NC 41/NC 72 AND SR 1600
OVER LUMBER RIVER, ROBESON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

**TIP PROJECT B-5985
WBS NO. 47749.3.1
PA TRACKING NO. 17-12-0065**

**Prepared for:
The North Carolina Department of Transportation
Environmental Analysis Unit
Century Center A
1000 Birch Ridge Road
Raleigh, NC 27610**

**Prepared by:
Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc.
P.O. BOX 1198
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**Megan Funk
*Architectural Historian***

NCR-0800

OCTOBER 2019

**HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY REPORT
REPLACE BRIDGES NO 125 & 175 ON NC 41/NC 72 AND SR 1600
OVER LUMBER RIVER, ROBESON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

**TIP PROJECT B-5985
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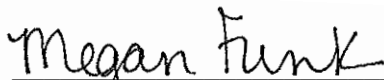
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**Megan Funk
*Architectural Historian***

NCR-0800

OCTOBER 2019



**Megan Funk, Principal Investigator
Commonwealth Heritage Group**

10-02-2019

Date

**Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor
Historic Architecture Group, NCDOT**

Date

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to replace bridges No. 125 and 175 on NC 41/NC 72 and SR 1600 over the Lumber River in Robeson County, North Carolina. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) equates with the study area and spans east from the Y-shaped intersection of West 2nd Street and West 5th Street to North Chestnut Street. The project is included in the North Carolina State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) as Project Number B-5985 and is state funded. Federal permits are anticipated.

The project is subject to review under the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for Minor Transportation Projects (NCDOT/NCHPO/FHWA/USFS 2015). An NCDOT Architectural Historian conducted preliminary documentary research and a site visit to identify and assess all resources of approximately fifty years of age or more within the APE. Eight resources warranted intensive National Register eligibility evaluation and are the subject of this report. Two of these are previously recorded, the Whitley Furniture Company (RB0234) and the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant (RB0653), and the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant was placed on the North Carolina NRHP Study List in 2011. NCDOT Architectural Historians determined all other properties and districts are not worthy of further study and evaluation due to lack of historical significance and/or integrity. Bridges in the APE were evaluated in the 2005 Historic Bridge Survey and determined not eligible.

This report represents the documentation of eight properties located within the APE for this project, as per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. For the preparation of this evaluation report, the Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc. (Commonwealth), architectural historian conducted architectural analysis and in-depth National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) evaluation of the requested properties in the study area. Field documentation included notes, sketch maps, and digital photography. Background research was conducted at the Robeson County Register of Deeds, both online and in person, the Robeson County Revaluation Office and the Robeson County Public Library in addition to online sources. This report recommends the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant as eligible for listing in the NRHP and recommends the Whitley Furniture Company, West Fifth Street Stores, Thompson Electric Company, Planters Warehouse, Automobile Sales Center, Filling Station, and NCDOT Office as not eligible for listing in the NRHP.

PROPERTY NAME	HPO SSN	ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION	CRITERIA
Whitley Furniture Company	RB0234	Not Eligible	-
Lumberton Water Treatment Plant	RB0653	Eligible	A and C
West Fifth Street Stores	RB0716	Not Eligible	-
Thompson Electric Company	RB0717	Not Eligible	-
Planters Warehouse	RB0718	Not Eligible	-
Automobile Sales Center	RB0719	Not Eligible	-
Filling Station	RB0720	Not Eligible	-
NCDOT Office	RB0721	Contributes to Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476)	A and C

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METHODOLOGY

For the preparation of this report, the Commonwealth architectural historian conducted architectural analysis and in-depth NRHP evaluations of the requested properties in the study area in April and May 2019. Field documentation included notes, sketch maps, and digital photography. Background research was conducted at the Robeson County Reevaluation Office, the Robeson County Public Library and the Robeson County Register of Deeds, both online and in person, in addition to other online sources. This report includes the architectural analysis and in-depth evaluation of eight properties in the APE: the Whitley Furniture Company (RB0234), the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant (RB0653), the West Fifth Street Stores (RB0716), the Thompson Electric Company Building (RB0717), a warehouse (RB0718), an automobile sales center (RB0719), a filling station (RB0720), and a former NCDOT Office (RB0721). Two of the evaluated properties are previously recorded: the Whitley Furniture Company (RB0234) and the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant (RB0653), which is also included on the North Carolina NRHP Study List. This report is on file at NCDOT and is available for review by the public.

Commonwealth prepared this historic architectural resource evaluation report in accordance with the provisions of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation*,¹ NCDOT's *Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines for Historic Architectural Resources*, and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office's (HPO's) *Report Standards for Historic Structure Survey Reports*. Resources are evaluated according to NRHP criteria. The location of the study area and the evaluated resource are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The study area is located in Lumberton, North Carolina and is defined by West 2nd Street, West 5th Street and North Chestnut Street. The Lumber River runs north/south through the study area dividing it into two parts. East of the river is the city's historic core, including the Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476), which was listed on the NRHP in 1989 and extends into the eastern portion of the study area. This section is comprised primarily of commercial buildings constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. West of the river, the study area is comprised of commercial properties that range in age from the early twentieth century to the early twenty-first century. Unlike the historic district, which exhibits medium to high density, the area west of the river is more spread out with swaths of open space, particularly along West 5th Street and in the area between it and West 2nd Street. The south side of West 2nd Street is developed with a large warehouse and a strip mall separated by parking lots. A riverwalk just west of the vegetated riverbank spans this section, north to south, as well.

Three of the studied resources stand east of the river: the Whitley Furniture Company (RB0234), the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant (RB0653), and the former NCDOT Office (RB0721). The water treatment plant is located on a large parcel that follows the bank of the river north from

¹ National Park Service, 2017. 48 CFR 44716; 36 CFR Part 800; 36 CFR Part 60.

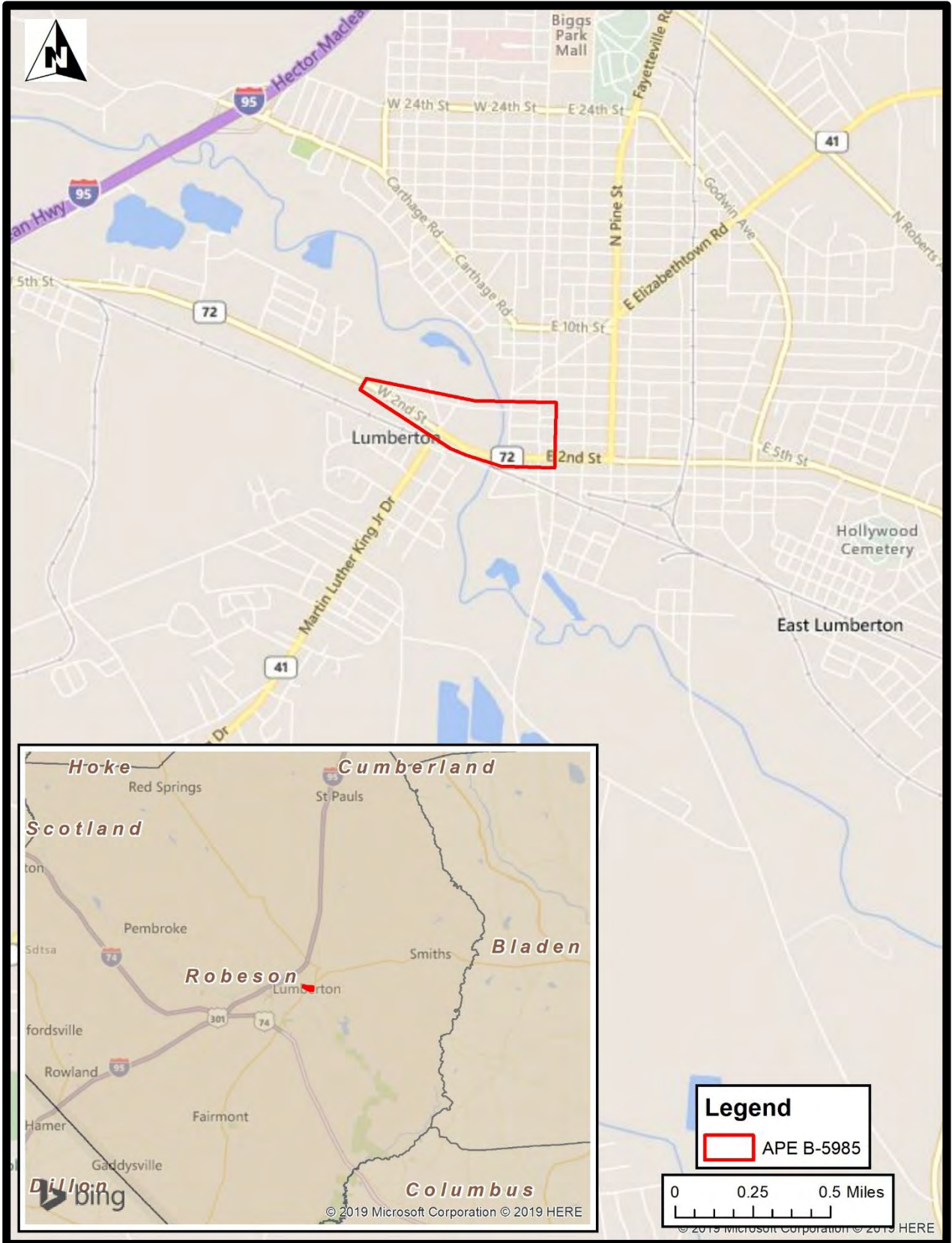


Figure 1: Project Location Map.

West 5th Street. The office is also located on the bank of the river, roughly halfway between West 2nd and West 5th Streets, and the Whitley Furniture Company is located on the southeast corner of North Water Street and West 3rd Street, southeast of the office. The five remaining resources, including the Planters Warehouse (RB0718), an automobile sales center (RB0719), the West Fifth Street Stores (RB0716), the Thompson Electric Company Building (RB0717), and a filling station (RB0720), are located west of the river. The filling station stands in the triangular parcel created by the intersection of West 5th and West 2nd Streets. The automobile sales center, Thompson Electric Company Building and a warehouse, now divided into retail and restaurant spaces, stand east of the intersection on the south side of West 5th Street. The last resource, a warehouse, stands on the south side of West 2nd Street near the intersection of West 2nd and West 5th Streets.

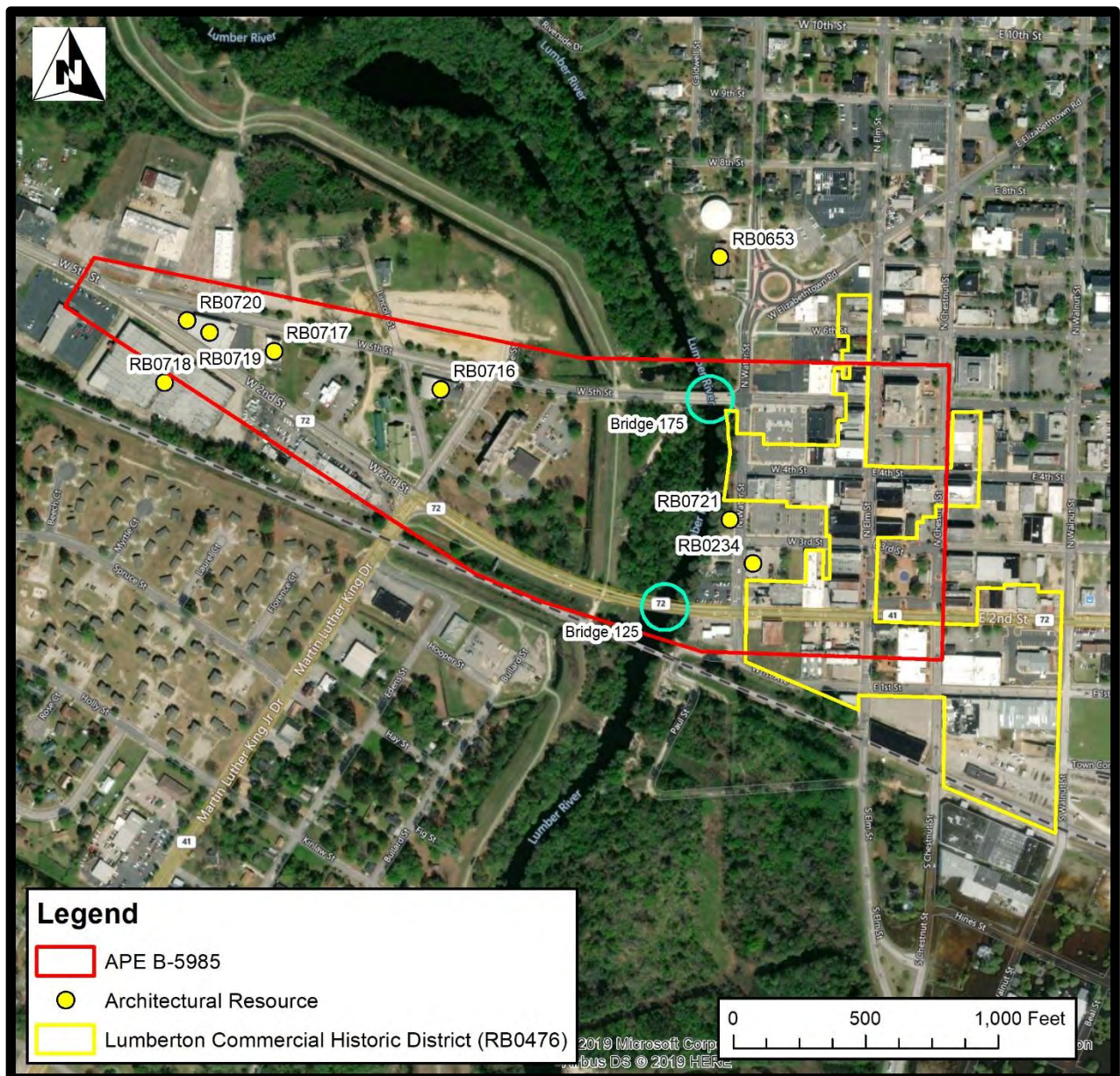


Figure 2: Resource Locations.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Robeson County was formed in 1787 from part of Bladen County and named in honor of Colonel Thomas Robeson who served in the American Revolution. One of the primary advocates for its formation was General John Willis, Robeson's brother-in-law, who also served in the war. Willis was one of the largest landowners in the area with a plantation that measured 11,776 acres. It's from this land that Willis selected a 170-acre tract and hired the surveyor, Jacob Rhodes, to lay out a town. On November 3, 1788, the town was created by an act of the North Carolina General Assembly and named Lumberton. Exactly how its name was chosen is a point of debate but theories center on the importance of the lumber industry to the area and the Native American name for the river: Lumbee.²

The first businesses established in the town were located on the waterfront, or "the wharf," as well as on present day Elm Street and the original courthouse was constructed in the same location as the current ca. 1980 courthouse. By the time the town was incorporated in 1852, it had a population of between 200 and 300 people and its economy relied primarily on the turpentine and timber industries and naval stores.³ In 1860, a railroad line was constructed along the southern edge of the town and while Lumberton was already well connected due to the presence of the river, the railroad promised to connect it with additional communities and to increase its options for commerce.⁴ The railroad was also important to developing Lumberton's cotton market, which served as a significant industry in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁵

Cotton mills also developed as a major industry in the city and by 1930, Lumberton had five textile mills.⁶ The increase in industry coincided with an increase in the population growing from 2,691 residents in 1920 to 4,100 in 1930.⁷ Over the next 20 years, the city grew to be one of the leading cities in Southeastern North Carolina with over 300 retail stores, two railroads, a Class 4 municipal airport, and access to two national highways. The local tobacco market grew significantly during this time as well selling from twenty to thirty-five million pounds annually in the 1940s and setting a new record in 1951 with the sale of over forty-four million pounds.⁸

The 1950s were witness to additional industrial growth with the operation of tobacco drying houses and warehouses; Southern Bell, which had recently built a \$850,000 facility; and a number of newly established textile businesses including: Jones Knitting, Alamance Knitting Mills, Vel-Cord, BF Goodrich Footware, and O'Nealia Sportswear.⁹ Carolina Power and Light

² *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1956, Master Edition, Vol. 33, (Charleston: 1956).*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Stewart Gray, "Lumberton Water Plant," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 2012, Davidson, NC.

⁵ *Nelsons' Baldwin's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1952, Master Edition, Vol. 4, ABCD No. 175 (Charleston: 1952), x.*

⁶ "600 Loom Weave Mill to be Added," *The Robesonian*, January 18, 1923, 1.

⁷ United States Department of Commerce, *Fourteenth Census of the United States* (Washington, District of Columbia: Bureau of Census, 1920) and *Sixteenth Census of the United States* (Washington, District of Columbia: Bureau of Census, 1940).

⁸ *Nelsons' Baldwin's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1952, x.*

⁹ "Rick Gray's Young Yak Yak," *The Robesonian*, June 21, 1967, 2.

began building a fourteen-million dollar steam plant on the river in 1951 and the Lumberton Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture declared in an advertisement in *The Robesonian* that the community offered: attractive industrial sites, unexcelled electrical power facilities, native born American labor, excellent state and national highways, well developed rail facilities, and a million dollar municipal airport among other amenities.¹⁰

The early and mid-twentieth century also saw growth across the Lumber River as businesses and residential development spread away from the historic core of the city and by 1974 the original 170-acre town had expanded to 7.7 square miles. The city experienced one of its largest population increases in the decade prior, 1950 through 1960, growing from 9,186 to 15,305 residents, or over 66 percent. Since then, the population has increased less rapidly reaching 21,542 in 2010.¹¹

¹⁰ “Historical Edition,” *The Robesonian*, February 1, 1951, 3a.

¹¹ United States Department of Commerce, *Seventeenth Census of the United States* (Washington, District of Columbia: Bureau of Census, 1950) and *Eighteenth Census of the United States* (Washington, District of Columbia: Bureau of Census, 1960).

PROPERTY INVENTORY AND EVALUATIONS

Resource Name:	Whitley Furniture Company
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	001
HPO Survey Site Number:	RB0234
Location:	123 West 3 rd Street, Lumberton, North Carolina
Parcel ID:	939176001701
Dates(s) of Construction:	1953
Recommendation:	Not Eligible



Figure 3: Whitley Furniture Company, Looking South.

Setting

The property is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of North Water Street and West 3rd Street and the store faces north to West 3rd Street. The store is sited in the northwest corner of the 0.41-acre lot and is separated from both streets by a sidewalk and a strip of grass. Two deciduous trees, placed roughly 15 feet from one another, rise from the strip of grass and shade the north side of the building. A gravel and asphalt parking lot wraps the south (rear) and east (side) elevations of the building and connects with both North Water and West 3rd Street.

There is a small shed that stands near the southern boundary of the parcel. Immediately across West 3rd Street is a public parking lot and across North Water Street are two Craftsman-style

dwellings that were constructed in 1932 and 1940.¹² Along the south side of the parcel is Lee's Auto Sales, which is located in the former Pure Oil Filling Station (RB0180) and is included on the North Carolina NRHP Study List. East of the property, separated by a grass lot, is RB0233, which is denoted as a store in HPOWeb but is now operated as a restaurant. Both previously surveyed resources are within the Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476) (Figure 4).

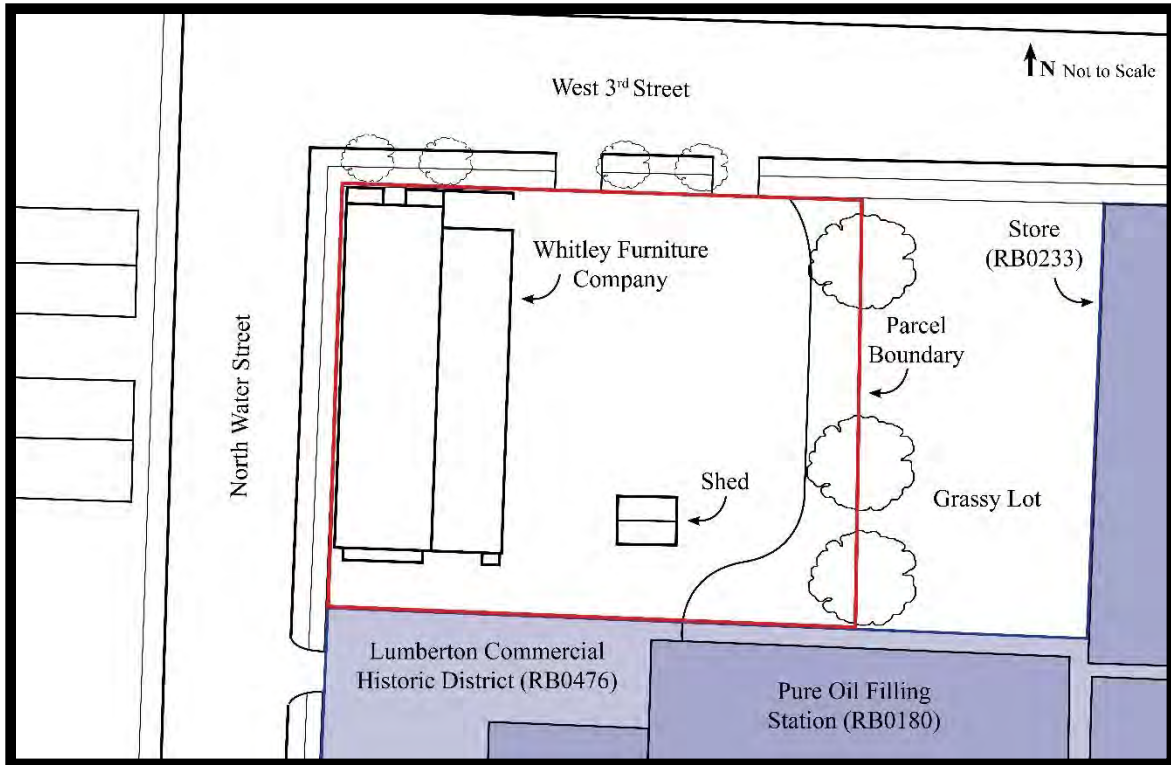


Figure 4: Sketch Map of the Whitley Furniture Company.

¹² County of Robeson, NC, Parcel Map, https://maps2.roktech.net/ROKMAPS_Robeson/#, accessed April 23, 2019.

Property Description

Exterior

The 1953 one-story building has a rectangular footprint and is clad with brick veneer and sheltered by a flat roof. Along its east (side) elevation is a 2014 brick veneered addition that also has a flat roof. The original aluminum and glass storefront was five bays wide with large display windows, a centered entry door below a transom, and a nearly full-width awning that was suspended from the façade by rods. At some point after the building's original survey in 1979, the windows were replaced with five-pane configurations consisting of three large panes below two transoms. These configurations still flank a centered entry door with a transom. A cloth awning shades the apertures and the words "African American Cultural Center" span the façade above the awning. Below each window is a concrete pad edged with brick. The façade of the addition is set back from the primary façade and is blind. A small retaining wall extends from east corner of the primary façade and frames a grassy area in front of the addition (Figure 3).

The west (side) elevation contains a large display window near the north corner. This aperture was originally filled with two panes of glass but is now filled with five panes configured like those on the façade. Five small windows span the remainder of the elevation; they are located along the upper portion of the wall (Figure 5).

The south (rear) elevation contains a modern double-leaf door. The door is centered on the elevation of the original portion of the building and flanked by large metal-sash, multi-pane



Figure 5: Whitley Furniture Company, Looking Southeast.



Figure 6: Whitley Furniture Company, Looking North.



Figure 7: Whitley Furniture Company, Looking Southwest.

windows. A metal awning shelters the apertures and above the awning is the remnants of a sign. The south (rear) elevation of the addition is flush with the original portion of the building and contains a door near the east corner. The door is also sheltered by a metal awning (Figure 6).

The east (side) elevation contains small windows like those on the west (side) elevation. They are also located more than halfway up the elevation with two along the south end of the elevation and four along the north end (Figure 7).

Interior

According to W. C. Washington, the treasurer of the African American Cultural Center and a downtown business owner, the building has been renovated twice since it was purchased in the 1980s. The most recent renovation coincided with the construction of a 2014 addition.¹³ A view through the entry door reveals that the space has a popcorn ceiling with new light fixtures and fans, drywalled elevations, and low-pile carpet. It is divided into a large front section with small rooms at the rear and a hall that extends to the rear entry. An opening on the east elevation of the large room connects with the addition (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Whitley Furniture Company, Interior, Looking South.

¹³ W. C. Washington, Personal Interview, April 16, 2019.

Ancillary Buildings

There is a small, concrete block, side-gabled shed near the south boundary of the parcel. It has an entry door on the north (front) elevation that is flanked by windows that are covered by panels. Off-center windows are also located on the east and west (side) elevations and a centered window is located on the south (rear) elevation. All of the windows are covered by panels that are painted to look like windows with scenes of the interior. The entry door is painted as if it is looking into a horse stable (Figure 9).



Figure 9: Whitley Furniture Company, Shed, Looking Southeast.

Historical Background

The building, which stands on lot 124 of the 1904 Map of Lumberton, was constructed in 1953. At the time, it was owned by Marie L. McCallum who had purchased it in 1940 from her mother and siblings.¹⁴ The property had been in the Linkhaw, also spelled Linkhauer or Linkhew, family since the mid-nineteenth century when Marie's grandfather, William Linkhaw, purchased both lots 124 and 125 from Moses Warwick.¹⁵ It appears that William constructed a dwelling for his family on the property as the 1898 and 1908 sanborn maps depict a one-story, frame dwelling with a rear ell on the lots.¹⁶ The dwelling, however, was removed from the property prior to 1938 when the city directory listed it as vacant.¹⁷

The first business to operate from the studied building was the Whitley Furniture Company.¹⁸ The furniture store was operated by Vernon E. Whitley who lived nearby at 510 East 2nd Street. Prior to 1953, when the building was constructed, the furniture store operated from 204 Water Street, which appears to be associated with the Water Street side of the property.¹⁹ It is unknown if another structure existed on the property between when the dwelling was demolished and the commercial building was constructed. However, a 1950 aerial image of Lumberton appears to show the property covered with trees (Figure 10). A 1958 aerial shows the newly constructed building as well as the cleared lot to its east (Figure 11).

In 1979, when the building was first surveyed, it was still marked as the Whitley Furniture Company. At the time, it was described as a one-story, brick commercial building with a modern storefront and an aluminum awning (Figures 12 and 13).²⁰

Marie and her heirs retained the property until 1983 when they sold it to Help Yourself Economic Development Corporation.²¹ Little could be found about the corporation which retained the property until 1999 when they sold it to the African American Cultural Center, Inc.²² W. C. Washington shared that from the mid-1980s through the mid-1990s an African American newspaper called *The Robeson Record* was published by Joy J. Johnson in the back of the building (Figure 14).²³ Today, the building is still owned by the cultural center, which operates the building as an event space. It also houses a collection of artifacts, paintings, and photographs that highlight the contributions and accomplishments of local African Americans.²⁴

¹⁴ Robeson County Deed Book 9E, page 181.

¹⁵ Robeson County Deed Book FF, page 40.

¹⁶ Sanborn Map Company, Lumberton, Robeson, North Carolina, March 1898, New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1898, "North Carolina Collection," <https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/ncmaps/id/7595/rec/5>, accessed June 6, 2019.

¹⁷ *Baldwin and Robesonian's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1938*, Master Edition, Vol. 1 (Charleston: 1938), 176 and 177.

¹⁸ *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1956*.

¹⁹ *The Robesonian*, May 31, 1946, 5.

²⁰ NCHPO, Survey File RB0234.

²¹ Robeson County Deed Book 543, page 447.

²² Robeson County Deed Book 1050, page 545.

²³ W. C. Washington, Personal Interview, April 16, 2019.

²⁴ Lumberton Visitors Bureau, "African American Cultural Center," <http://www.lumberton-nc.com/africanamerican-cultural-center>, accessed June 6, 2019.

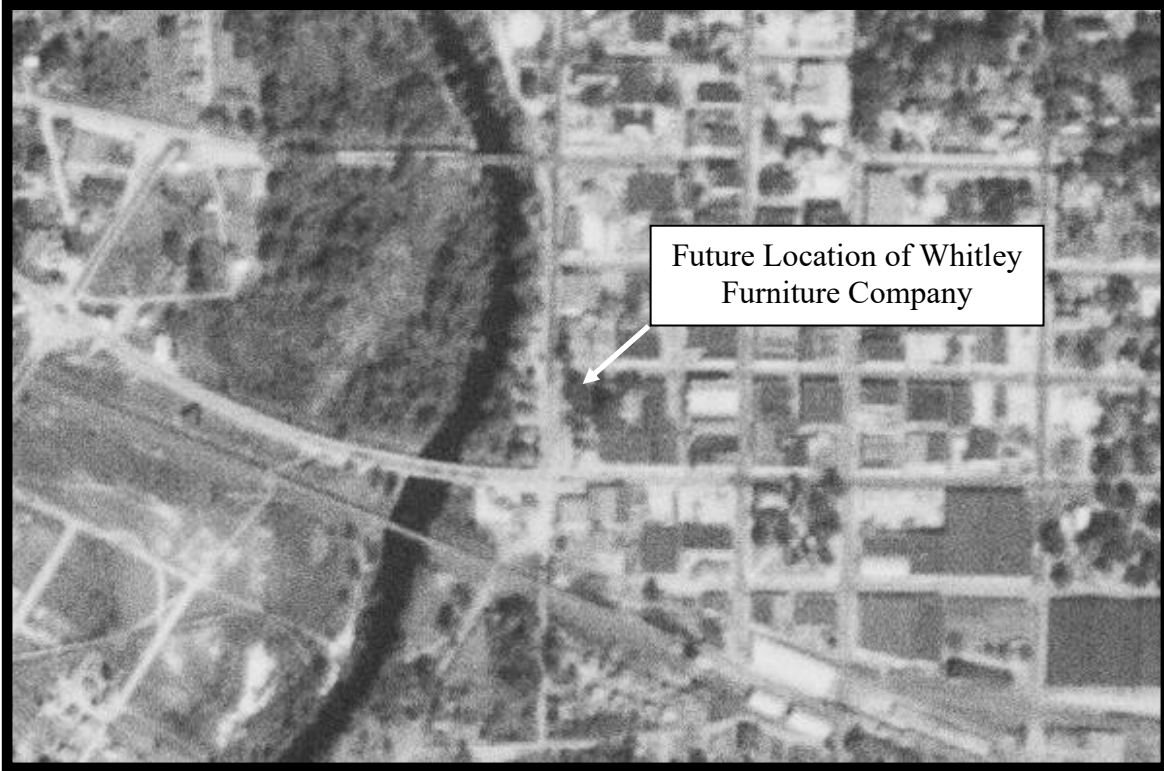


Figure 10: 1950 USGS Aerial Showing the Future Location of the Whitley Furniture Company (Source EarthExplorer).



Figure 11: 1958 USGS Aerial Showing the Location of the Whitley Furniture Company (Source EarthExplorer).



Figure 12: Whitley Furniture Company, Looking Southeast (Survey File, RB0234, 1979).



Figure 13: Whitley Furniture Company, Looking Southwest (Survey File, RB0234, 1979).

According to the organization’s website, its mission is “to serve as a resource providing high quality cultural activities, historical information and life-enriching opportunities for the citizens of Robeson and surrounding counties.”²⁵ The group renovated the building in 2014, constructing an addition and updating the interior.



Figure 14: *The Robeson Record* (W. C. Washington).

²⁵ Facebook.com, “Robeson County African American Cultural Center,” https://www.facebook.com/pg/rcafamcc/about/?ref=page_internal, accessed June 6, 2019.

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Whitley Furniture Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

The Whitley Furniture Company remains in its original location within a historic commercial area. Its setting, which includes the Pure Oil Filling Station (RB0180) and a 1920s store (RB0233), has changed little over the past 50 years, though it is unknown what types, if any, structures existed on the lots across the street when the furniture store was constructed. The current parking lot likely predates the 1989 Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476) nomination as it is shown as an open space on the boundary map. The design of the building has been altered through the replacement of the original windows, removal of the original awning, construction of the 2014 addition, and two interior renovations. On the exterior, the building does retain a high concentration of original materials and workmanship due to its brick construction. Its location in downtown Lumberton, on the edge of the historic commercial district preserves its association with twentieth-century commerce in the area and, though altered, its storefront with large display windows still conveys the feeling of a retail establishment.

Criterion A

The Whitley Furniture Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

The building is historically associated with commerce in Lumberton, particularly the growth and continued use of the original commercial core into the mid-twentieth century. The store, however, it not individually significant and while it does still convey the feeling and association of its original use, its storefront has been altered with a new window arrangement and new awning. For these reasons, the Whitley Furniture Company is recommended not eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The Whitley Furniture Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

For most of its known history, the parcel associated with the Whitley Furniture Company has been owned by members and descendants of the Linkhaw family. This family appears to have been a prominent family in the community with their residence located on the parcel in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Heirs of the Linkhaw family continued to own the property while it operated as the Whitley Furniture Company, likely renting the building. Though the property displays a strong link with the Linkhaws, research did not reveal their activities to be historically significant within the local, state, or national historic context. The activities of Vernon E. Whitley, who operated the furniture store, were also not found to be historically significant. Therefore, the property is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C

The Whitley Furniture Company building is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The Whitley Furniture Company building is representative of a small mid-century retail establishment. Over time, it has been adapted with new windows and expanded with an appropriately scaled and set-back addition. Though it still conveys the feeling of a retail establishment, despite being used as a cultural center, its association with the period in which it was constructed has been compromised by the replacement of its original windows with windows configured in a more modern arrangement with heavy, dark frames. Commercial buildings in Lumberton with preserved storefronts include a store at 219 East 3rd Street (RB0235) and a store at 232 East 4th Street (RB0246) (Figures 15 and 16). Constructed in 1950 and 1951, respectively, the buildings had not met the 50-year age requirement when surveyed for the NRHP in the 1980s and, therefore, were not included in the boundary of the commercial historic district.²⁶ The buildings, however, still retain their large display windows, with thin aluminum frames and a double-leaf entry flanked by angled windows and topped with a transom. The building on East 4th Street even exhibits windows on the side elevation – one large display window and multiple small, highly set windows – likely similar to the original windows on the Whitley Furniture Company building. Due to the preservation of their storefronts, these buildings more authentically represent the retail architecture of the 1950s in Lumberton.

In conclusion, the replacement of the store's primary feature, its façade windows, with windows arranged in a more modern configuration and within frames that do not replicate its original materials has compromised its association with its period of construction. Furthermore, the building does not represent the work of a master; possess high artistic value; or represent a significant and distinguishable entity. For these reasons, the Whitley Furniture Company is recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C for architecture.

²⁶ County of Robeson, NC, Parcel Map, https://maps2.roktech.net/ROKMAPS_Robeson/#, accessed April 23, 2019.



Figure 15: Store, 219 East 3rd Street (RB0235), Looking Northwest.



Figure 16: Store, 232 East 4th Street (RB0246), Looking Southwest.

Criterion D

The Whitley Furniture Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion D.

Resource Name:	Lumberton Water Treatment Plant
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	002
HPO Survey Site Number:	RB0653
Location:	609 North Water Street, Lumberton, North Carolina
Parcel ID:	939167719800
Dates(s) of Construction:	1952
Recommendation:	Eligible



Figure 17: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Looking Northwest.

Setting

The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is located on a 3.7-acre, wedge-shaped tract that runs along the east bank of the Lumber River. The southern boundary of the parcel is East 5th Street where bridge 175 crosses the river and its eastern boundary is North Water Street, on which it has an approximately 530-foot frontage. The original 1946 building is located slightly north of the center of the property and faces east to North Water Street. The main block of the building, which contains a lobby, stands back roughly 50 feet from the road, while the water treatment wing of the building, which extends north from the main block, is roughly 80 feet from the road. West of the building, along its rear elevation, is a terrace with the filled remains of fifty concrete water-treatment basins.²⁷ North of the 1946 building is a ca. 1972 above-ground water tank with

²⁷ NCHPO, Survey File, RB0653, Draft NRHP Nomination Form.

an attached mechanical room. An asphalt drive/parking area fills the space between the two buildings and North Water Street and permits access to the property. A chain link fence with a gate also spans the space between the buildings dividing the front portion of the property from the rear portion. South of the main building are two additional asphalt driveways – one leading to the corner of the building and one wrapping behind the building and providing access to the terrace of water basins. The second driveway is crossed by a chain link fence with a gate near the southwest corner of the terrace. According to a draft NRHP nomination form, which was submitted to the NCHPO in 2012 but appears to have not been revised and submitted as a final draft, there is an infilled concrete water reservoir south of the plant that dates to an earlier filtration plant. South of this is a small memorial park recognizing the site as the location of a town common given by John Willis in 1787 (Figure 18). North of the parcel is an early twentieth-century neighborhood with some infill development and across from the parcel and water treatment plant is a recently constructed roundabout that serves as the intersection of North Water Street and West Elizabethtown Road. The area past the roundabout is characterized by commercial development and parking lots (Figure 19).

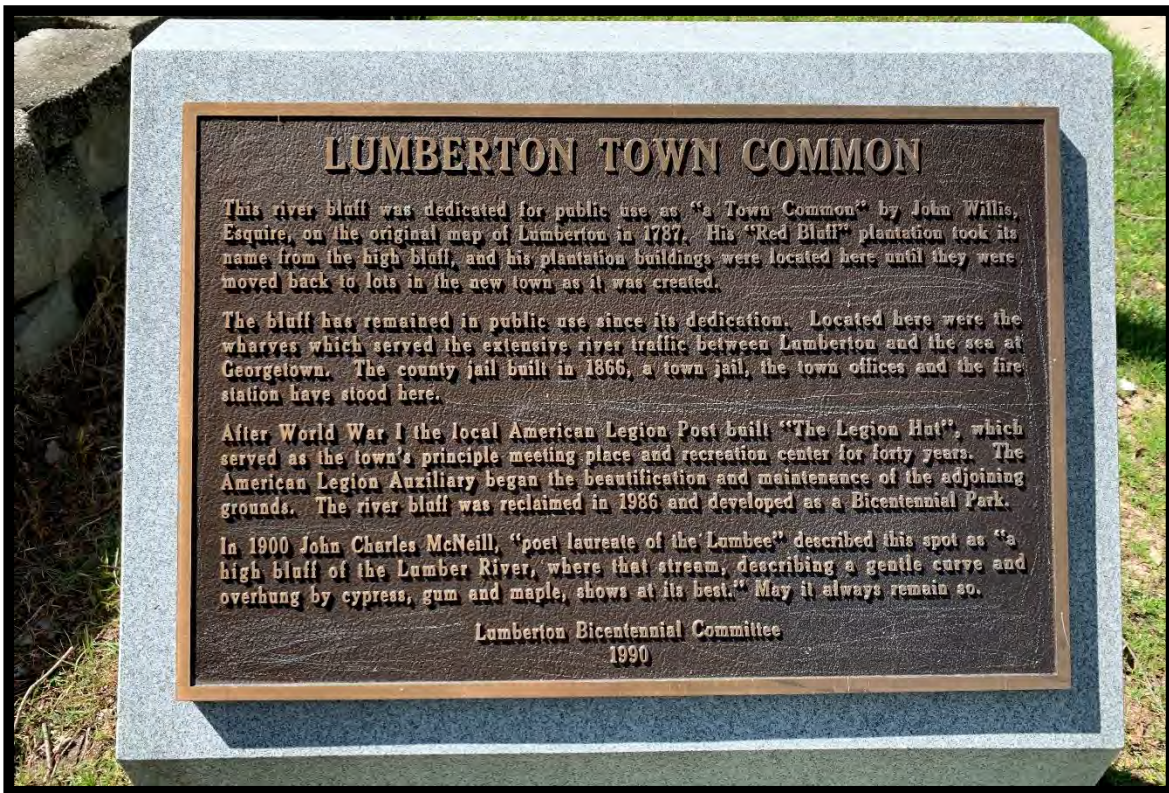


Figure 18: Plaque at Memorial Park.

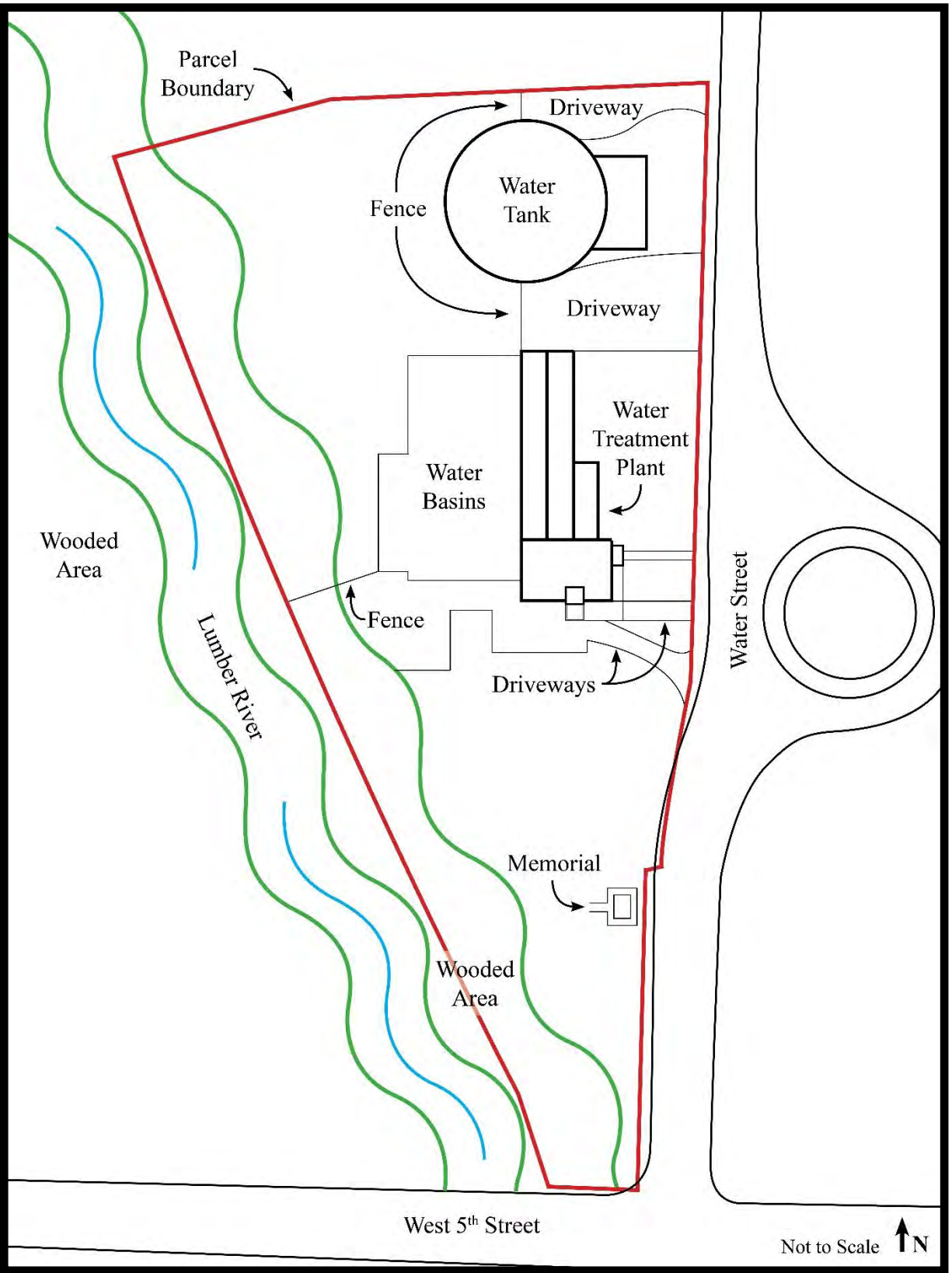


Figure 19: Sketch Map of the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant.

Property Description

Exterior

The 1952 Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is constructed of brick laid in a common bond pattern and has a tall concrete foundation and a flat roof encompassed by a parapet with concrete coping. The building is composed of a two-story main block with a walkout basement, a three-story tower, and a one-story wing that extends from its north elevation and was expanded in 1959.²⁸

The façade of the two-story section contains a two-bay, nearly floor-to-ceiling bank of steel-framed windows with a double-leaf, glass and metal entry door in its lower left corner. A concrete slab porch with steps on the north and east sides and a ramp on the south side projects forward from below the bank of windows. The porch has a flat roof supported by thin metal poles and shelters the first story of the window bank, including the entry door. It appears, however, that it may have once been sheltered by a cantilevered roof supported by I-beams that projected from the façade, a portion of which are still visible to the left and right of the flat roof. Just south of the entry doors is a white marble marker that dedicates the building to the McNeil Family. South of the window bank there are two ribbons of tripled steel-framed windows, one on each story. The north (side) elevation of the building contains a one-bay, nearly floor-to-ceiling bank of steel-framed windows near the north east corner (Figure 20).

The wing is composed of three sections that run parallel to one another and to North Water Street. Like the two-story block, the wing has a tall concrete foundation. The wing's foundation, however, is capped with a concrete belt course that also serves as a sill for the windows on its facade. The section closest to the road is not as long as the second and third sections and contains three banks of steel-framed windows on its façade (Figure 21). The second and third sections were originally the same length as the front section but were lengthened in 1959. They extend past the first section with four banks of steel-framed windows along their façade. The second section is taller than the other sections with ribbons of clerestory windows above the lower windows and above the shorter section. The north (side) elevation of this section contains a tall, two-bay bank of steel-framed windows above a set of subterranean steps that access the basement. It is also flush with the north elevation of the third section, which is significantly shorter, and while the belt course completely wraps the second section, it terminates at the beginning of the third section, which is blind. The north elevation of the first section is blind as well (Figure 22). The north elevation of the two-story block is visible above the wing and contains a steel-framed window near its western corner as well as a long, clerestory-like window above the center section of the wing.

The west (rear) elevation of the third section of the wing is flush with the rear elevation of the main two-story block. In total, it is 16 bays wide, with the seven northern-most bays belonging to the 1959 addition. The bays are filled with a diversity of apertures including entry doors, garage doors, and steel-framed windows. Many of these openings have been covered with plywood. Ribbons of clerestory windows on the rear elevation of the center section are visible

²⁸ NCHPO, Survey File, RB0653, Draft NRHP Nomination Form.



Figure 20: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Looking Southwest.



Figure 21: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Looking Southwest.



Figure 22: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Looking Southwest.



Figure 23: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Typical Windows.

above the roof of the rear section of the wing (Figure 24). The rear elevation of the main block contains two steel-framed windows near the north corner of the second story and two boarded over openings, likely windows, aligned below them on the first story. South of the second story windows is a pair of steel doors with eight lights over a large panel. An identical door is aligned below this one on the basement level. The retaining wall of the water tanks extends west from the elevation, just north of the lower entrance. The south (side) elevation of the main block contains ribbons of steel-framed windows on each level, including the basement level. Those on the upper levels are narrower than the building's typical window, and though slightly larger, the ones on the basement window are smaller as well. East of center on the elevation is an elevator tower. The tower is constructed of brick laid in rhythmic pattern with every fourth row of bricks recessed. The shadows created by the recessed row give the tower a striped effect. There is a double-leaf entry door on the first story of the tower. The entry door opens onto a concrete porch with a flat roof supported by thin metal poles. The porch is also the roof of a small room that projects from the building's basement level. This room has a metal entry door on the west (rear) elevation and a single steel-framed window centered on the south (side) elevation. A retaining wall that supports a driveway leading to the southeast corner of the main building extends from the east side of the small room. East of the tower on the second story is a small opening covered with plywood and east of this opening on both the first and second floors are two-bay steel-framed windows (Figures 25 and 26).



Figure 24: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Looking Southeast.



Figure 25: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Looking Northeast.



Figure 26: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Looking North.

Interior

The interior of the building reflects its industrial use with painted and unpainted brick walls and concrete floors and ceilings. The two-story block appears to have contained offices and utilitarian spaces, while the wings and basement contained mechanical equipment.

Through the front doors of the building is a two-story atrium with an open staircase in the southeast corner that leads to a balcony and second-story spaces as well as to the basement. On the first story, there is a room that appears to have served as an office located directly opposite of the entry doors, and south of the office it appears that there are additional rooms of an unknown use. On the north, the atrium is open to the plant's mechanical area. A railed-off section looks into the basement where piping and mechanical equipment are still present. West of the railed-off section is a space with small water basins, now filled with dirt, set in the floor. Control cabinets stand along the edge of the tanks (Figures 27 through 31).

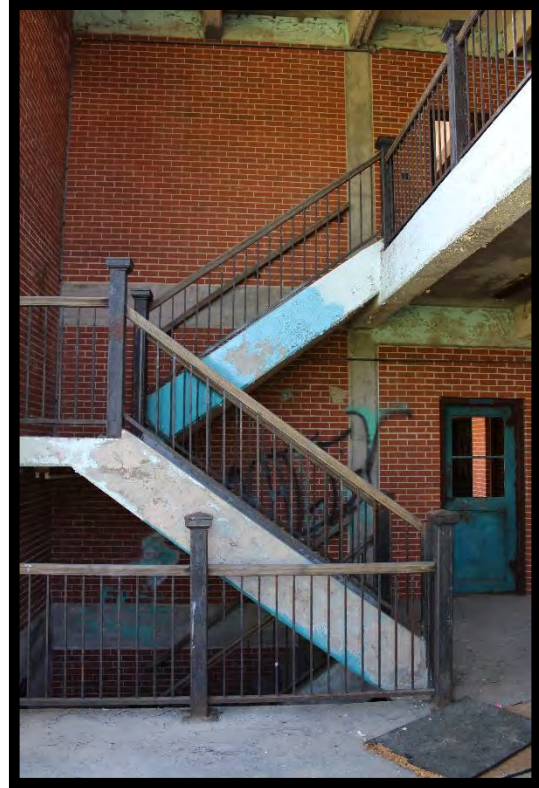


Figure 27: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Interior, Staircase and Balcony.



Figure 28: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Interior, Office.



Figure 29: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Interior, Mechanical Equipment.



Figure 30: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Interior, Filled Water Basins.



Figure 31: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Interior, Control Cabinets.

Ancillary Buildings

North of the 1946 plant is a ca. 1972 concrete water tank with a one-million-gallon capacity.²⁹ The cylindrical tank is shorter than it is wide and has a slightly domed roof. Attached to the east side of the tank is a one-story brick building that houses a mechanical room. The building has a flat roof with a metal cornice and its façade, which faces east to North Water Street, contains two apertures that mirror one another. The southern aperture is a double-leaf, glazed door with a transom that completely fills the space between the door and the cornice while the northern aperture is a full-height, six-pane window that mirrors the scale and arrangement of the entry door. The north (side) elevation contains two single-leaf entry doors with transoms set near the east corner and center of the elevation. Both are sheltered by metal awnings, though one is deteriorated. The south (side) elevation contains a single-leaf entry door with a transom and a full-height, three-pane window near the east corner. Near the west corner is a nearly full-height louvered vent. A large mechanical box stands forward of the building near the center of the elevation (Figures 32 through 34).

The interior is divided into at least two rooms by a concrete block wall and while the use of the northern room(s) is unknown, the southern room contains pumping equipment (Figures 35 and 36).



Figure 32: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Water Tank and Mechanical Building, Looking Northwest.

²⁹ NCHPO, Survey File, RB0653, Draft NRHP Nomination Form.



Figure 33: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Water Tank and Mechanical Building, Looking West.



Figure 34: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Water Tank and Mechanical Building, Looking Northwest.



Figure 35: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Mechanical Building, Interior. Note curved wall of water tank.



Figure 36: Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, Mechanical Building, Interior. Note concrete block dividing wall.

Historical Background

From its earliest days, the residents of Lumberton relied on wells for water, including mineral springs and artesian wells and by 1911, the town's potable water was supplied by twelve artesian wells.³⁰ Non-potable water, used for fighting fires and for the town's recently developed sewer system, was pumped from the river and stored in a 66,000-gallon stand pipe or water tower.³¹ However, as the town grew, so did its demand for water. To meet this need, more pumps were added to the river and by 1914, the town upgraded to a compound duplex pump created by the Buffalo Company. The improved pump provided 1,140 gallons of water a minute. At the time, the town's daily consumption (fire hydrants and sewer) was 120,000 gallons with drinking water still being supplied by private wells.³² A quote from *The Robesonian* indicates that the water was not of the best quality, describing it as "unquestionably bad, not fit for anything but bathing."³³

By 1915, Mayor A. E. White shared that the town had invested \$50,000 on waterworks and a sewer system since the turn of the twentieth century.³⁴ The town, however, still lacked a filtration plant. An article printed in *The Robesonian* in August 1913 estimated the cost of such a plant to be \$4,500 or less and elaborated "even at that figure, or at a greater outlay it would be

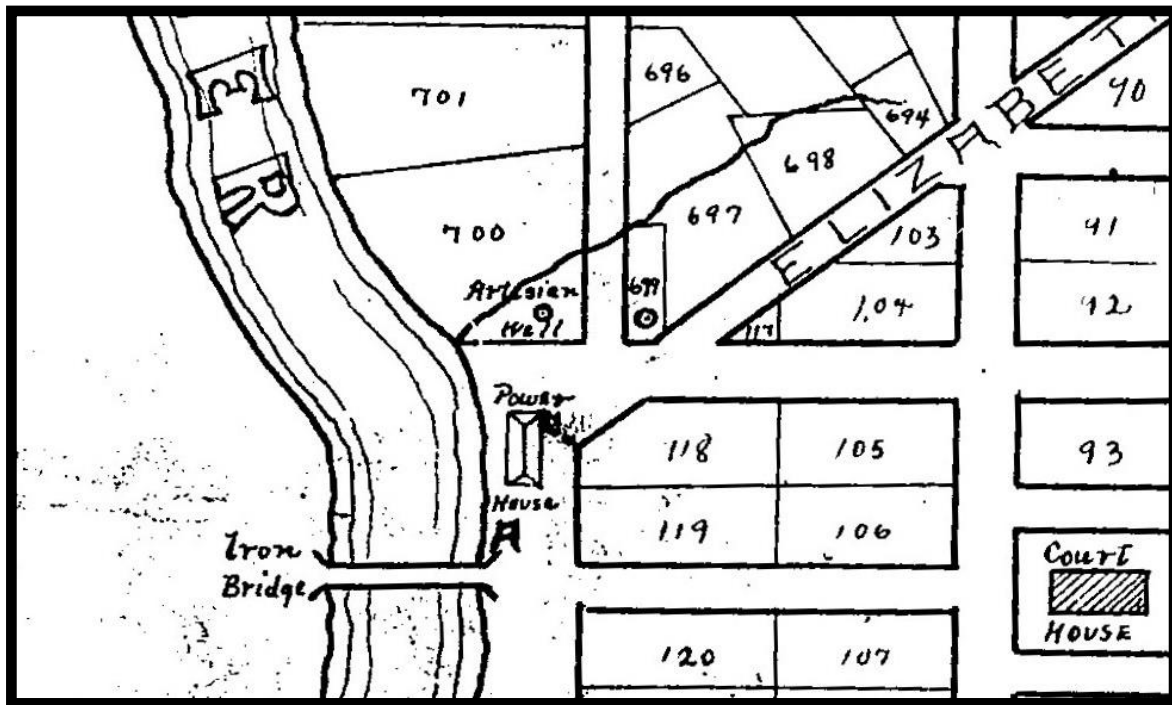


Figure 37: 1904 Map of Lumberton, Showing the Location of the Artesian Well.

³⁰ R. G. Cashwell, "Now and Then," *The Robesonian*, July 1, 1972, 3.

³¹ R. G. Cashwell, "Now and Then," *The Robesonian*, July 31, 1968, 5.

³² *Lumberton, North Carolina, Sheet 1*, 1914, "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1867-1970 – North Carolina" and R. G. Cashwell, "Now and Then," *The Robesonian*, July 13, 1968, 5.

³³ "Big Improvements Planned," *The Robesonian*, July 28, 1913, 1.

³⁴ "Historical Edition," *The Robesonian*, February 1, 1951, 8a.

the wisest investment the town could make.”³⁵ In January of the next year, the town engineer, Gilbert White, shared plans for filtration plants with the town council but the council responded that the designs were “too expensive” and instructed him to return with plans “that would cost approximately \$5,500.”³⁶ A \$7,000 plan was eventually accepted by the town council but was declined by the North Carolina State Board of Health.³⁷ By July 1915, the town council appears to have accepted the higher price of the plant as they voted to sell bonds, up to \$10,000, for a plant.³⁸

For the next few years, the debate over the need of filtered water and the cost of a filtration plant continued. Eventually, a filtering system was added to the existing pumping station, which like the studied plant was located on Water Street. It was not until 1923, however, when a system capable of satisfying the demands of the residents was completed.³⁹ An important aspect of the system was moving the intake and pumping station two miles north of the filter plant, upriver from the sewer discharge pipes. The new plant chemically treated the water and filtered it through sand and rock. It was then held in the 550,000-gallon concrete reservoir. A year after its completion, the town was consuming roughly 200,000 gallons of water a day.⁴⁰

Though the plant met the town’s immediate needs, it did not account for the continued growth of the community in both population and commerce. Between 1920 and 1930, the population of Lumberton grew from 2,691 to 4,100 residents.⁴¹ It was also home to five textile mills, which relied heavily on water to produce their final products.⁴²

During the Great Depression, federal programs such as the National Recovery Administration (NRA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) assisted the community in keeping mills open and by partially funding a new 100-foot tall, 300,000-gallon water tank.⁴³ Despite these improvements, the need for water continued to outpace the capacity of the filtration plant and in 1939, the town drilled a 240-foot deep well.⁴⁴ The well water, however, also required filtration in order to be used by residents and businesses.⁴⁵

In 1945, when Lumberton became a city, it was still struggling to provide its residents with clean water. The city was contemplating two alternatives to do so. The first was to construct a new filtration plant and the second was to drill additional wells. In 1946, the City Council was presented with and voted to accept plans for a new filtration plant designed by William C. Olsen Consulting Engineers, of Raleigh. William C. Olsen had already exhibited ingeniousness in the

³⁵ “Big Improvements Planned,” *The Robesonian*, July 28, 1913, 1.

³⁶ Town of Lumberton, Council Minutes, January 19, 1914.

³⁷ *The Robesonian*, March 13, 1914, 1.

³⁸ Town of Lumberton, Council Minutes, July 27, 1915.

³⁹ “Town Water Pumped from New Station,” *The Robesonian*, March 5, 1923, 1.

⁴⁰ *Lumberton, North Carolina, Sheet 1*, 1924, “Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1867-1970 – North Carolina.”

⁴¹ United States Department of Commerce, *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920 and Sixteenth Census of the United States*, 1940.

⁴² “600 Loom Weave Mill to be Added,” *The Robesonian*, January 18, 1923, 1.

⁴³ Gray, “Lumberton Water Plant.”

⁴⁴ “Deep Well Water to Undergo Test,” *The Robesonian*, December 6, 1939, 1.

⁴⁵ “Jaycees Ask Investigation of Deep Wells: As City Commission to Look into Method of Obtaining Water,” *The Robesonian*, December 17, 1947, 8.

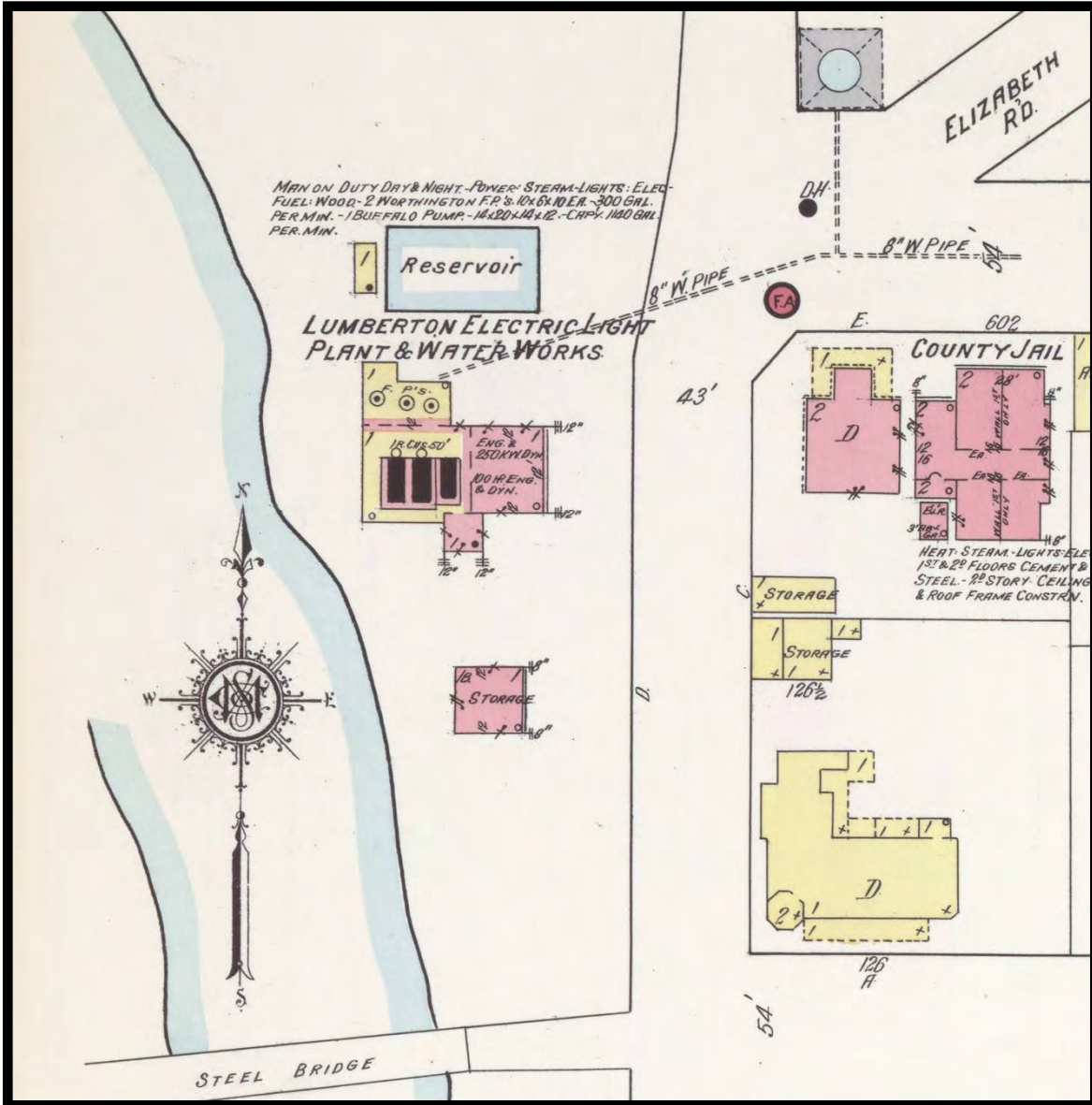


Figure 38: 1914 Sanborn Map of Lumberton, Showing the Location of the Electric Light Plant and Waterworks (North Carolina Maps).

field of water treatment through his involvement with other water treatment plants in North Carolina including the E. B. Bain Water Treatment Plant in Wake County (WA2795) and the Elizabeth City Water Plant in Pasquotank County (PK0625).⁴⁶

With plans for a new plant and additional water capacity, Lumberton's City Council began expanding water service by extending the main water line and adding more hydrants. It also extended service to the Jennings Cotton Mill, once one of the larger employers in the city; paid

⁴⁶ David R. Black and Beth P. Thomas, "Raleigh Water Works and E. B. Bain Water Treatment Plant," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1998, Raleigh, NC.

for a waterline extension to provide for sprinklers at a warehouse; and approved the extension of water and sewer lines to new residential developments.⁴⁷

It appears that while the City Council had accepted Olsen's plans, it was still undecided on how much it was willing to spend to implement them. An initial bidding process for the project resulted in a low bid of \$414,000 but was rejected by the council. The council then passed a \$350,000 bond referendum "in anticipation of lower bids at a later date."⁴⁸

Lower bids, however, were not provided and instead, Olsen reported to the council that material costs were rising. The debate over how to increase the water supply continued through the 1940s with both the new plant and wells being considered as viable, though vastly different in cost, options. At the same time, the Board of Commissioners continued to approve new development, including new subdivisions, a new school, and extension to the Mansfield Mills.⁴⁹ In 1949, the City Council received requests to incorporate North Lumberton and East Lumberton into the city limits. In the case of East Lumberton, its delegates explicitly stated "water and sewer systems, police protection and better sanitation" as reasons to be annexed by Lumberton.⁵⁰ Despite knowledge of how these actions would affect the water system, the council voted in 1949 to reject all the construction bids received from its most recent request as well as to incorporate North Lumberton as a part of the city.⁵¹

In 1950, a number of activities took place that spurred the long-anticipated construction of the filtration plant. First, Olsen was asked to reopen the bidding process for the plant, second, a report was made to City Council that the wells were running dry, and third, the city attorney was asked to write resolutions and ordinances for an additional \$100,000 water bond.⁵² With a bid of \$466,318, A. H. Guion and Company of Charlotte, was chosen to implement Olsen's plans and given instructions by City Council to proceed with the project even before the additional water bond was approved by voters. Some compromises were made to the plans, reducing the cost by nearly \$13,000, and in September 1950 the project began.⁵³ The special bond election was held the next month. Surprisingly, of 4,520 voters in the city, only 94 people participated in the election with 86 voting in favor and eight voting against.⁵⁴

In September 1952, the new plant was complete and operating as planned. The old plant, which was located to the south of the new plant, was put out of service though its 550,000-gallon reservoir was still used by the new facility. The new plant included the two-story office and laboratory block and multiple concrete water basins, including three sets of six sedimentation

⁴⁷ City of Lumberton, Council Minutes, January 9, 1948; March 15, 1948; and July 2, 1948.

⁴⁸ "Vote," *The Robesonian*, May 6, 1947, 2.

⁴⁹ City Lumberton, Council Minutes, November 3, 1948.

⁵⁰ City Lumberton, Council Minutes, March 4, 1949.

⁵¹ City Lumberton, Council Minutes, March 10, 1949.

⁵² City Lumberton, Council Minutes, April 24, 1950; June 15, 1950; and July 28, 1950.

⁵³ "Work May Start on New Plant Within Week," *The Robesonian*, September 6, 1950, p. 1 and Gray, "Lumberton Water Plant."

⁵⁴ Gray, "Lumberton Water Plant."

basins, and four flocculation basins. Its basement was equipped with a long valve and pump room that controlled the flow of water through the filtration systems.⁵⁵

The opening of the plant coincided with the 100th anniversary of Lumberton's incorporation and its dedication became a part of the city's centennial celebration, which occurred on December 2, 1952. The dedication took place inside the plant and included music from the Lumberton High School Band, a dedication of the building to the McNeill Family by Mayor Hector MacLean, and a tour of inspection.⁵⁶

Over the next decade, both population and commerce continued to grow in Lumberton and to place more strain on its systems and utilities. City officials, however, had been wise in the planning process as well as in their decision to choose Olsen's engineering firm. Originally built to treat two-and-a-half to three million gallons of water a day, Olsen had designed the building so that it could be enlarged to process six million gallons a day.⁵⁷ Around 1955, the city enlisted the engineering firm to produce plans that would increase the plant's capacity by one-and-a-half million gallons.⁵⁸ The City Council appears to have learned that the benefits of investing in infrastructure far outweigh initial costs, as it voted unanimously to hold a vote for the creation of a \$300,000 bond to fund the addition.⁵⁹ The bond was approved and construction began on the addition in March 1959.⁶⁰ The addition, which is one-story in height extends from the north



Figure 39: Aerial of Lumberton's Business Section, Showing the 1923 and 1952 Water Treatment Plants (*Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1963*).

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ "Water Plant is Dedicated in Eleven O'clock Ceremony," *The Robesonian*, December 2, 1952, 1.

⁵⁷ *The Robesonian*, August 22, 1951, 9.

⁵⁸ Gray, "Lumberton Water Plant."

⁵⁹ "Council to Decide Extent of Water Sewer Bond Vote," *The Robesonian*, June 13, 1958, 1.

⁶⁰ "Foundations for the Water Plant," *The Robesonian*, March 16, 1959, 1.

elevation of the original block adding four additional bays to the east elevation. Like the original portion of the building, the expansion was designed by Olsen and is in keeping with the original design of the building. Additional water basins were added west of the building at this time as well.⁶¹

In the 1970s, the plant was upgraded with the construction of the large, above-ground, concrete water tank and mechanical room that stand just north of the filtration plant. According to the draft NRHP nomination form, the sedimentation basins were also upgraded in the 1980s, though the alterations had little effect on the building itself. Eventually, the plant was able to treat eight million gallons of water a day. Lumberton's population and industrial growth, however, increased the demands of the community beyond the capacity of the plant and in 1992 the city completed a new plant with twice the capacity of the 1952 plant.⁶²

After the opening of the new plant, the 1952 plant was closed. In the early 2000s, plans were drafted to rehabilitate and adaptively reuse the building as an art gallery. The plans were made in cooperation with a non-profit group as well as a for-profit solar company, which planned to help fund the project in return for the tax credits awarded to the rehabilitation project. The tax credits were contingent upon the successful nomination of the plant to the NRHP, which appears to have fallen through after the submission of the draft nomination form to the NCHPO.⁶³ Since then the building has been vacant.

⁶¹ Gray, "Lumberton Water Plant."

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ NCHPO Survey File, RB0653.

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is recommended eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant remains in its original location along the bank of the Lumber River, which served as a primary resource for both water and commerce for much of the community's early history. Its setting, which includes the river and the commercial historic district has changed some with the loss of multiple commercial buildings on the opposite side of North Water Street and the reworking of the intersection of North Water Street and West Elizabethtown Road to be a roundabout. Nonetheless, it remains on a large parcel that is primarily defined by the treelined river to its west, a sloping field to its south (once the location of the 550,000-gallon reservoir), and the large ca. 1972 water tank to its north. The design of the building was also altered by a 1959 wing that extends from its north elevation. The wing, however, was designed by the original engineering firm less than ten years after the initial construction of the building and is in keeping with the design of the original section. Furthermore, the need to expand the building and its production capabilities in the future was an important consideration in the original design of the building and makes the addition more or less a realization of the original plans than a true alteration. The expansion also exhibits the continued relevancy and importance of the plant to Lumberton and its mid-century growth. The materials and workmanship of the building, which includes a brick structure pierced by steel-framed windows, is still greatly intact though it is compromised by a large number of broken, but easily replaceable, window panes. A large amount of mechanical equipment remains in the building as well. Though the equipment is no longer functional with many of the basins filled with dirt and sand as a safety precaution, its presence strengthens the building's feeling as the community's primary source of filtered water for much of the twentieth century. The intact materials and equipment, as well as the ca. 1972 non-contributing water tank, also strengthen the site's association with the latter half of the twentieth century and with its ongoing quest to provide water for its residents and industries.

Criterion A

The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant played an important role in the post-World War II development of Lumberton by providing the filtered water required by its residents as well as by the many industries that populated the community and supported its economy. Though the community is sited on the bank of the Lumber River and was able to benefit from both the river and an abundant supply of wells and springs for much of its early history, the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century brought new demands to the growing community. Textile mills, which

required large amounts of water for bleaching and treating materials, were becoming more prolific across the state and greatly benefited from communities with strong water systems. Other industries, including offshoots of the agricultural industry, were also important to the economy in Lumberton and benefitted from the availability of water as well.

In addition to the demand for larger quantities of water, the demand for better quality water was also increasing. Residents, who relied primarily on private wells, were finding it more difficult to satisfy their consumption as well as finding that the quality of their water was diminishing. The city shared a similar experience as it continued to drill wells in the early twentieth century in hopes of discovering naturally filtered water and averting the cost of constructing a new water filtration plant. However, after many unsuccessful attempts the city conceded to the idea of constructing the new plant, which was completed in 1952. The decades surrounding this decision are characterized by some of the largest population increases in the community since the first decade of the twentieth century with a fifty-eight percent increase between 1940 and 1950 and a sixty-six percent increase between 1950 and 1960. It also coincides with the establishment of a variety of new businesses, many in the textile industry, and helped to spur an overall increase in the amenities and attractiveness of the small southern North Carolina city.

Were it not for the construction of the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant, and the role it played in the development and community planning of Lumberton, the city likely would not have experienced the mid-century boom that helped to shape it into the community it is today. The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is therefore recommended eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

Though the plant is dedicated to and associated with various members of the McNeill family, research did not reveal their activities to be historically significant within the local, state, or national historic context. The most notable member of the family was Johnnie L. McNeill, who served as the superintendent of lights and water for much of the early twentieth century. His life and role with the water plant, however, does not appear to be of extraordinary importance to the development of the plant or to the growth of the community. The property, therefore, is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C

The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2)

represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is a locally significant example of mid-century modernist industrial design. Designed by the engineering firm of William C. Olsen and constructed in 1952, the plant is representative of an era of industrial construction that melded the traditional materials of early twentieth century utilitarian buildings with the more linear forms of modern design. These characteristics are most notably displayed in the building's long (and sometimes tall) banks of windows and its elevator tower, which rises above the roofline of the building and displays a recessed brick pattern that creates stripe-like shadows. The building's design, which could have incorporated more defining features, is also representative of the community's prosperity at its time of construction and its proclivity for cost minimizing options. The city council displayed this nature through its continued rejection of construction bids, only resolving to build the water filtration plant when it was decided that it was absolutely necessary. Had the council displayed a greater inclination for spending, or had the city's finances been stronger, a wholly different building may have been settled upon. Nonetheless, the circumstances of the plant's construction led to a building that was both humble in the simplicity of its design and a stately sign of progress in the community.

The plant's engineer, William C. Olsen, is also revered for a number of other water treatment plants in North Carolina including the NRHP-listed E. B. Bain Water Treatment Plant (RB0246) in Raleigh (Figure 40). Constructed ca. 1940, the primary façade of the three-story plant displays an art modern form with three "interlocking rectangular masses." The masses increase in height as they narrow in width and project forward with the center mass being the tallest and most forward. The façade is finished with Flemish bond brickwork and cast stone units that act as coping and a cornice frieze.⁶⁴ Though they were constructed roughly ten years apart, the two buildings are of different styles – Art Modern and Mid-Century Modern – and both serve as strong examples of the styles. The Art Modern style chosen for the E. B. Bain Water Treatment Plant is somewhat more elaborate than the Lumberton plant's Mid-Century Modern, which is reflective of its period of construction as well as the greater means of the community that constructed it.

While both plants were integral to the distribution of water in their communities during the twentieth century, they have since been decommissioned and replaced with more modern facilities. Like the Lumberton plant the E. B. Bain plant retains a large amount of historic materials but also exhibits broken windows and overgrown treatment basins. An example of a mid-century water plant that is still in use is the Glenville Water Treatment Plant in Fayetteville (Figure 41). Constructed in 1942, the plant has a form that is similar to, though more reserved than, the E. B. Bain plant with a tall center section. The center section is also stepped slightly at the forward corners in a manner that is different from but similar to the recessed brick effect of the Lumberton plant's tower. Over time, the plant has been expanded to increase its capacity,

⁶⁴ Black, "Raleigh Water Works and E. B. Bain Water Treatment Plant."



Figure 40: E. B. Bain Water Treatment Plant, 1810 South Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, North Carolina (RB0246), Looking South.



Figure 41: Glenville Water Treatment Plant, 628 Filter Plant Drive, Fayetteville, North Carolina, Looking Northeast.

growing from a three-million-gallon facility to an 18-million-gallon facility.⁶⁵ The expansions required enlarging the plant with a large rear addition, but the left the façade wholly unaffected. Despite this, the façade and west (side) elevation windows have been replaced with large single pane and one-over-one pane windows in heavy dark sashes that greatly compromise the character of the building.

In conclusion, though it has fallen into a state of disrepair, the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant still retains a large amount of its original material and defining features. It also remains as an important physical representation of Lumberton's efforts to provide a clean and efficient water supply to its residents and industries from the early twentieth through the late-twentieth century. Though it is not as elaborate as either the E. B. Bain or Glenville facilities, the plant is representative of the means of the community at the time of its construction as well as the popular Mid-Century Modern style, which is characterized by the building's streamlined and minimalistic details. For these reasons, the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C for architecture.

Criterion D

The Lumberton Water Treatment Plant is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion D.

⁶⁵ "Water Treatment Facilities," Electronic Document, <https://www.faypwc.com/water-treatment-facilities/>, accessed May 9, 2019.

NRHP Boundary Justification

The proposed NRHP boundary for the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant has been drawn according to the guidelines of National Register Bulletin 21, *Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties*. The boundary, which follows the right of way of North Water and West 5th Streets, is drawn to include the water plant, water tank and equipment building, and the grassy lawn, which contains remnants of the ca. 1923 water reservoir and the plaque/memorial to the founding of Lumberton (Figure 42). The proposed NRHP boundary contains approximately 3.7 acres and is identified as a part of parcel 939167719800 (Robeson County Parcel ID).

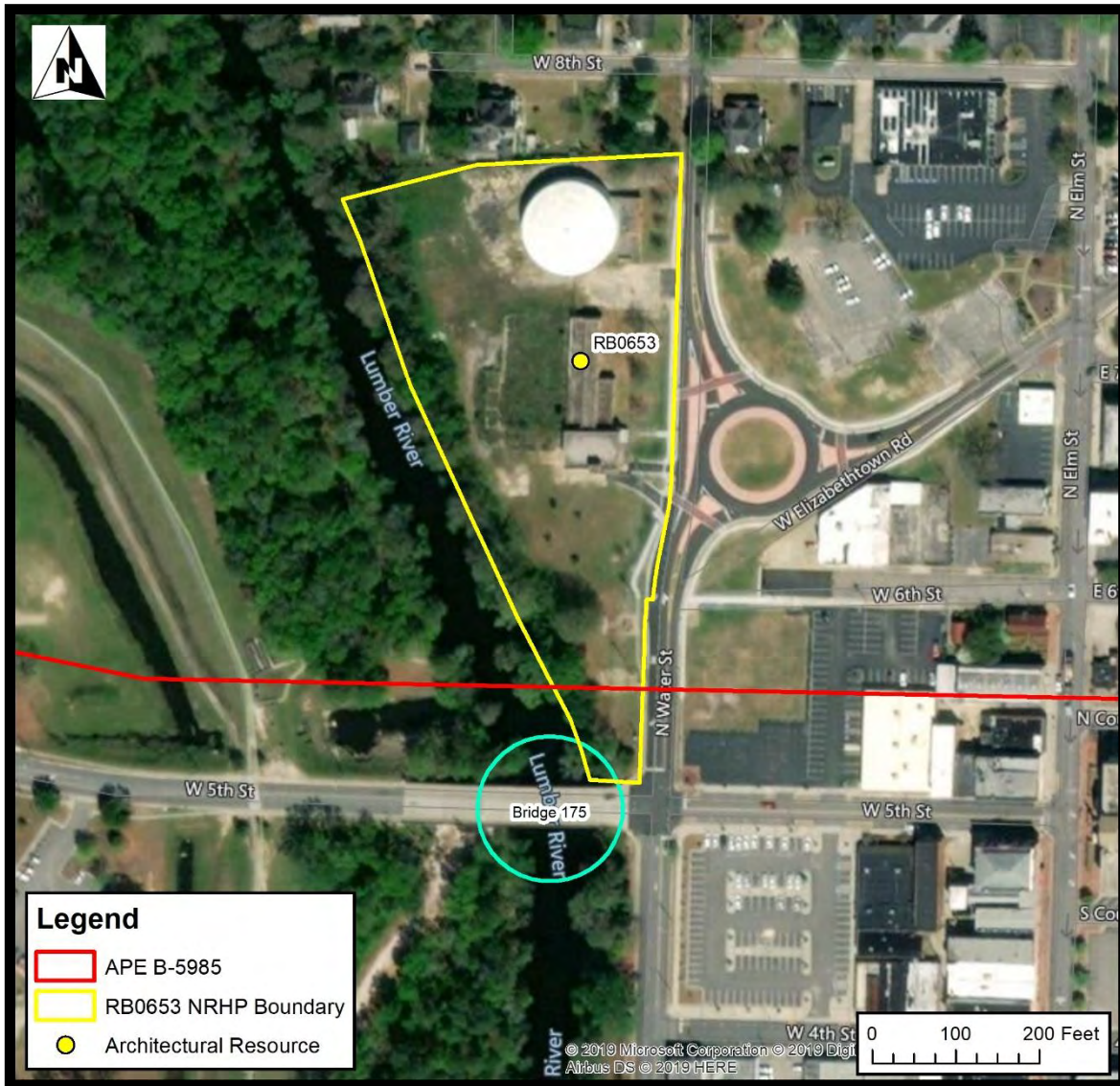


Figure 42: Aerial View of the Lumberton Water Treatment Plant (RB0653), Showing Proposed NRHP Boundary.

Resource Name:	West Fifth Street Stores
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	003
HPO Survey Site Number:	RB0716
Location:	301 5 th Street, Lumberton, North Carolina
Parcel ID:	939156767800
Dates(s) of Construction:	Ca. 1930
Recommendation:	Not Eligible



Figure 43: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking Southwest.

Setting

The triangular-shaped parcel is set in a commercial area west of the Lumber River. It is bound on the north by West 5th Street, on the southeast by Apple Street, and on the west by Lincoln Street. Its primary resource, a collection of stores formed from multiple, joined buildings, stands in the northern half of the parcel. Its primary elevation faces north to West 5th Street and its secondary elevation faces east to Martin Luther King Jr. Street. A parking lot wraps the two elevations. The north elevation is set back approximately 30 feet from West 5th Street. Due to the shape of the parcel, the east and west elevations are set at an angle to the side roads and their setbacks range from roughly 15 to 50 feet. The western corner of the lot contains a mowed lawn and mature trees shade the west elevation of the building. The southern half of the lot is grassy and not well-kept with mature trees and other vegetation. Along its western edge, the parcel is lined with parking spaces (Figure 44).

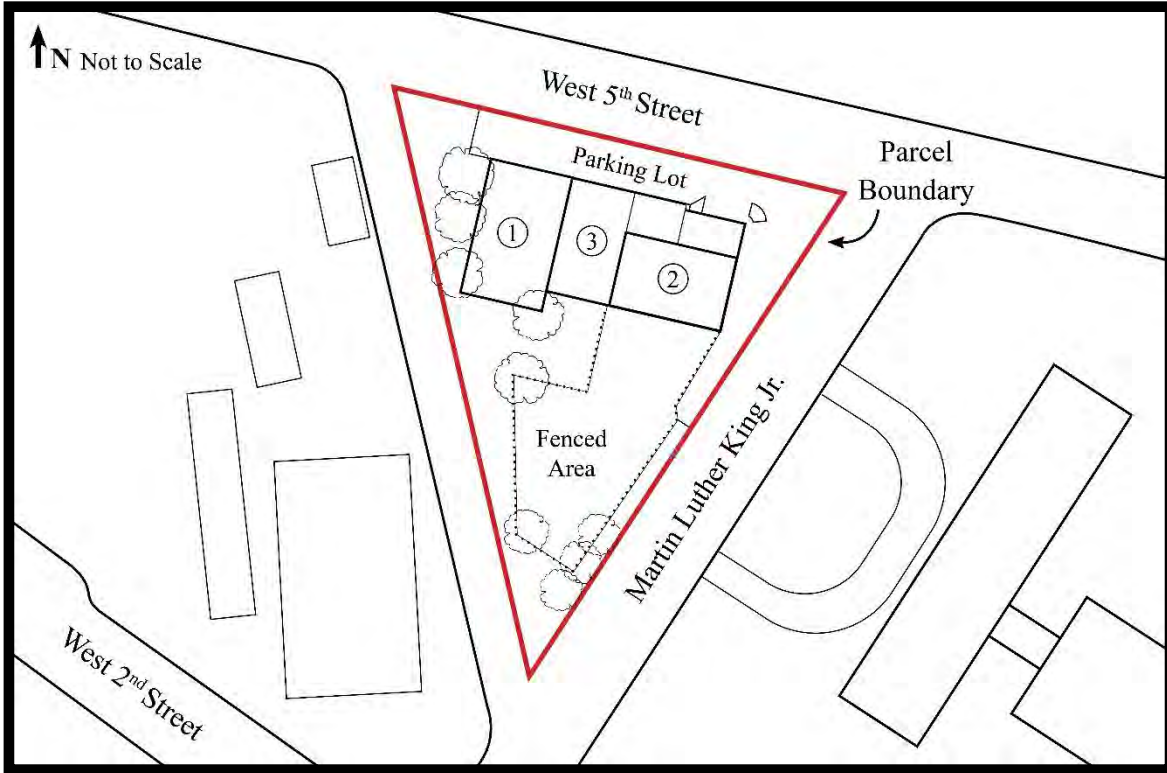


Figure 44: Sketch Map of the West Fifth Street Stores.

Property Description

Exterior

The one-story, stuccoed building is composed of roughly three buildings with various additions added over time (Figure 43). Buildings one and two, the largest of the three, have barrel roofs covered with standing seam metal and asphalt sheets, respectively, and serve as end caps to the L-shaped building. The first building faces north and has a six-bay façade with a parapet. The six bays are divided between three storefronts with, from west to east, a combined door and window surround, double-leaf entry doors, three large windows, and another combined door and window surround. All of the doors and windows contain a single pane of glass and are set in aluminum surrounds. A low, stuccoed belt course spans the elevation and doubles as window sills, and pilasters rise to just above the height of the windows and separate each bay. The ghost marks of various signs and awnings exist above the doors and windows and five light fixtures – one each above the second and fourth bays from the west and three above the fifth and sixth bays – light the elevation (Figure 45). The building's parapet wraps the northwest corner of the building before dropping to the roofline along the west (side) elevation. Though this elevation is blind, cracks in the stucco and a mid-height belt course suggest that it once had windows set high along the elevation. A roughly eight-foot break in the belt course paired with a just-above-grade threshold suggests that there was once a large opening near the southern corner of the elevation as well (Figure 46). The belt course wraps the south (rear) elevation of the building which has a centered loading dock with a modern garage door covered by metal bars (Figure 47). The building projects further south than the rest of the building creating a short, blind east (side) elevation (Figure 48).

The primary elevation of the second barrel-roofed building, which is covered with asphalt sheets, faces east and has four bays capped at the ends by pilasters that extend above the roofline and have bell-shaped tops. The pilasters exhibit a somewhat Art Deco motif with a raised center and an additional raised vein that is centered near the top of each pilaster. Simpler versions with flat tops and only raised centers separate the bays and a low, stuccoed belt course spans the elevation and duals as window sills. This portion of the elevation is flat between the end caps and appears to have been placed over the original elevation, which displays the curve of the barrel roof and rises above the stuccoed section. A small vacant storefront occupies the southernmost bay and is composed of a glazed entry door and transom flanked by large, single-pane windows in an aluminum-framed surround. The second storefront spans the remaining three bays and is also vacant. Its center bay is narrow with only a glazed entry door and transom while the flanking bays contain large, two-pane windows. Each arrangement is set in an aluminum frame. The south (rear) elevation of this section would have originally acted as its side elevation. Today it contains a large, two-pane window near the southeast corner that looks into the smaller store and a large garage door near the barrel-roofed building's original southwest corner. A belt course, slightly higher than that on the east elevation, spans the building and also serves as a window sill. Of note is a brick parapet that rises from the original west elevation of the building indicating that it may have acted as the building's original façade. It also faces toward the other barrel-roofed building, a characteristic that seems somewhat illogical, and may indicate that it pre-dates the other barrel-roofed building and that the western half of the lot was originally open to Lincoln Street (Figure 49).



Figure 45: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking South.



Figure 46: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking Northeast.



Figure 47: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking Northeast.



Figure 48: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking West.



Figure 49: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking Northwest.

Sandwiched between these buildings is an L-shaped building that spans from the north (front) elevation to the south (rear) elevation of the building. Its south (rear) elevation contains two metal entry doors with a small recessed opening between them. It also has a belt course that intermittently spans the elevation (Figure 50). The north (front) elevation is broken into two sections by three tall pilasters that are similar to those on the east (side) elevation. The two sections appear to have originally had the same configuration with a large, two-pane window to the east of a glazed entry door with a small transom and a single-pane window. However, the single-pane window on the east section has been filled and on the west section a door is integrated into the east side of the two-pane window configuration and the windows are narrower. Each section has a stuccoed, corbelled cornice; a long recess that may have once displayed a business name; and a low belt course that doubles as window sills. The remnants of signs are visible above the left and right storefronts while a two-part sign projects from above the center storefront (Figure 51).

East of this section is a small store that fills the remaining space between the L-shaped building and the east barrel-roofed building. It is essentially broken into four bays with, from west to east, an east-of-center barred door, a blind projecting elevation, a large single-pane window, and a glazed entry door. The window and entry door are sheltered by a cloth awning and a sign fills the upper portion of the projecting elevation. The northeast corner of the store is curved and its east elevation contains a glazed entry door with a small window on the south and a large window on the north, all within a single aluminum-framed surround. A small, pedimented cloth awning supported by metal poles shelters the entry door. South of this is another barred door that appears to lead to an exterior hallway that wraps the building and leads to the first barred door.



Figure 50: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking Northwest.



Figure 51: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking South.



Figure 52: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking South.

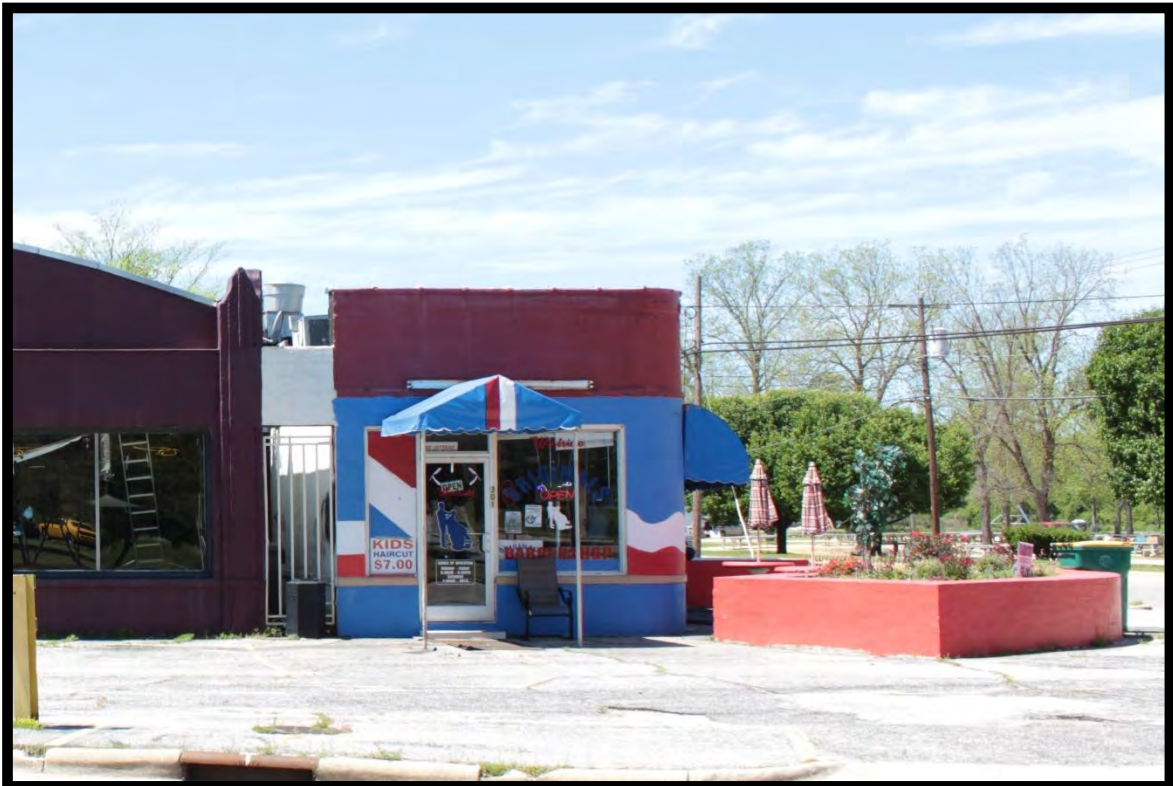


Figure 53: West Fifth Street Stores, Looking West.

Both elevations of the store are spanned by a low belt course that doubles as window sills and by a ceiling-height belt course. On the north side of the store is a patio enclosed by a metal fence with concrete pilasters between two concrete flower beds, the western of which is triangular and the eastern of which is wedge-shaped with an exterior edge that mirrors the curve of the building (Figures 52 and 53).

Interior

The building is broken into seven retail spaces and one restaurant space, each of which appear to have been altered with modern materials such as drywall, acoustic drop-tile ceilings, wooden paneling, and new flooring materials (Figures 54 through 59).



Figure 54: West Fifth Street Stores, Interior View of Retail Space at Southeast Corner of Building, Looking West.



Figure 55: West Fifth Street Stores, Interior View of Restaurant Space on East Side of Building, Looking West.



Figure 56: West Fifth Street Stores, Interior View of Barber Shop at Northeast Corner of Building, Looking Southwest.



Figure 57: West Fifth Street Stores, Interior View of Retail Space on North Side of Building, Looking Southwest.

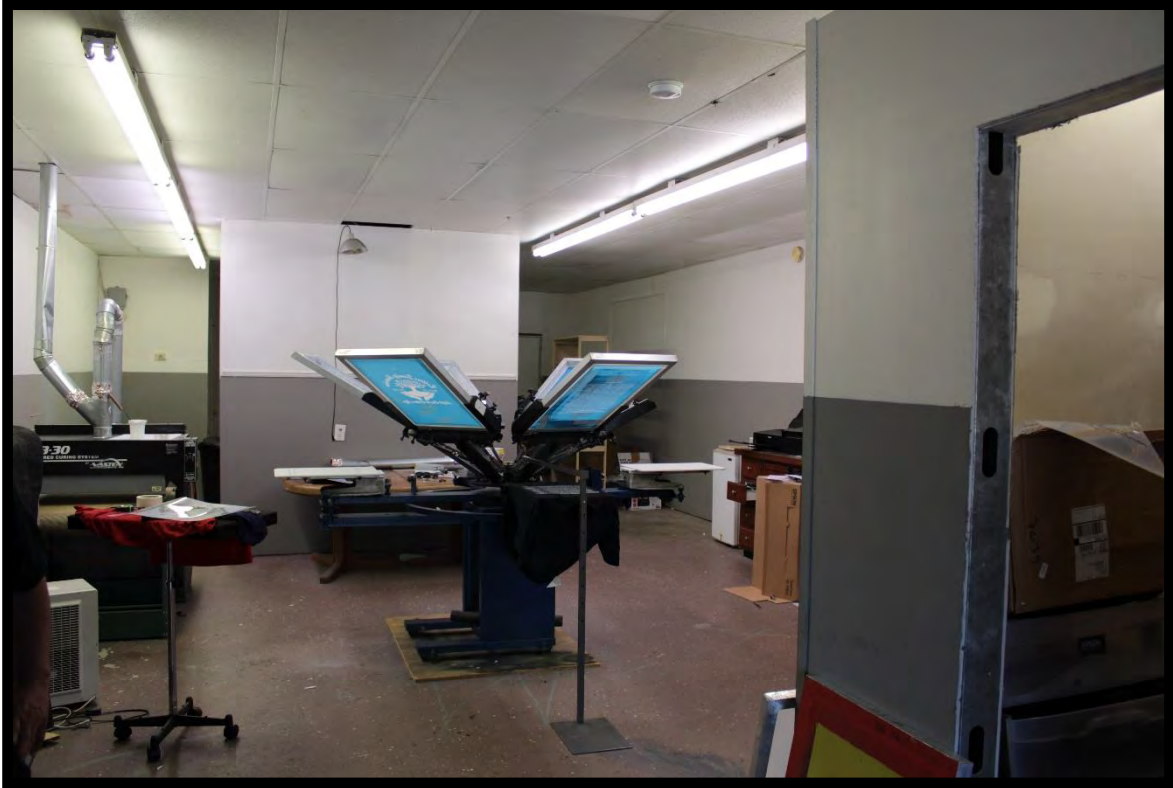


Figure 58: West Fifth Street Stores, Interior View of Rear of T-shirt Shop on North Side of Building, Looking Southwest.



Figure 59: West Fifth Street Stores, Interior View of Retail Space at Northwest Corner of Building, Looking South.

Historical Background

The earliest attained deed associated with the parcel at 301 5th Street was recorded in 1941 when Dr. H. M. Baker and his wife, Annie Ruth Caldwell Baker conveyed the land to their children, Horace M. Baker, Jr. and Anne Caldwell Baker (later Culbreth). The deed shares that the lot is bound on the north by U. S. Highway 301 and on the east by U. S. Highway 41, then known as Fairmont Highway and now known as Apple Street, and on the west by an unnamed street, now known as Lincoln Street. It also shares that the triangular shaped lot is made up of several smaller parcels formerly owned by Mrs. Kate B. McLeod, who sold the parcels to the Bakers. Though the 1941 deed does not provide a book and page reference for the earlier transaction, the deed does share that in 1941 the lot contained a service station, sales stables and other buildings.⁶⁶

It is reasonable to believe that at least one of these buildings, likely one of the barrel-roofed buildings, dates to this time period and has been integrated into the current building. Also, though the Robeson County Tax Administration website provides a construction date of 1960 for the building, aerial images from 1950 show a similarly shaped building on the site, suggesting that it has existed in its current form since then (Figure 60).

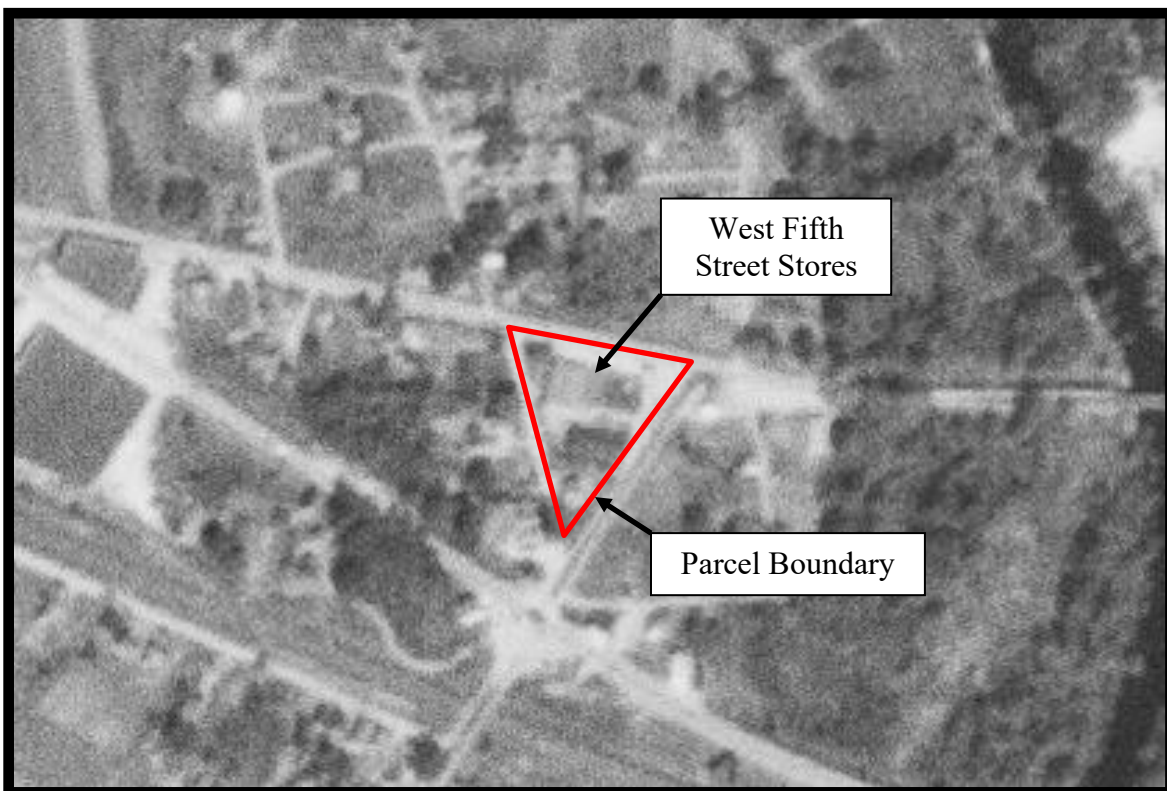


Figure 60: 1950 Aerial Image Showing Location of the West Fifth Street Stores (Source: Earth Explorer).

⁶⁶ Robeson County Deed Book 9J, page 7.

In October 1971, Anne and her husband, John C. Culbreth, conveyed her one-half interest in the property to her brother.⁶⁷ In July of the next year Horace, who like his father was a doctor, and his wife, Dorothy A. Baker, who was a nurse, conveyed the parcel and one other to the Lumberton Medical Arts Company.⁶⁸ Little could be found about the company except that the building that housed Horace's office in the 1950s and 1960s was named the Medical Arts Building. This building, however, was located on East 14th Street.⁶⁹ A city directory from the 1970s lists three addresses associated with the multi-unit building occupied by Smith's Sanitary Cleaners, Earl's Grill and "Stge," which likely stands for storage. The absence of a medical office suggests that the Lumberton Medical Arts Company owned the property as an investment but did not use it for medical purposes.⁷⁰

In 1988, the medical company conveyed nine tracts, including the studied parcel, to Horace and Dorothy.⁷¹ Soon thereafter, they sold the property to West Fifth Street Properties.⁷² The next year, one of the members of the property group, James T. Paul, was removed from the deed leaving Charles F. Atkinson and Patsy R. Carter, as the owners of the property.⁷³ On the same day, they conveyed the property to Charwill, Inc.⁷⁴ Charwill retained the property for just over three years before selling it to the current owners, Woodberry L. Bowen and his wife, Joan S. Bowen.⁷⁵ It is possible that one of these owners renovated the building with its current façade and storefront arrangement or that the storefronts existed from an earlier time. Today the building consists of seven storefronts with businesses such as a t-shirt printing shop, a barber shop and an antique store. At least two of the storefronts are currently vacant, one of which appears to have last operated as a restaurant.

⁶⁷ Robeson County Deed Book 18D, page 289.

⁶⁸ Robeson County Deed Book 18Q, page 351.

⁶⁹ *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1956*, 9 and 139 and *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1963*, Master Edition, Vol. 41 (Charleston: 1963), 154.

⁷⁰ *Lumberton, North Carolina, Con Survey, Directory, 1974*, Master Edition, Vol. 3 (Chillicothe: 1974).

⁷¹ Robeson County Deed Book 661, page 310.

⁷² Robeson County Deed Book 661, page 922.

⁷³ Robeson County Deed Book 695, page 194.

⁷⁴ Robeson County Deed Book 695, page 196.

⁷⁵ Robeson County Deed Book 785, page 56.

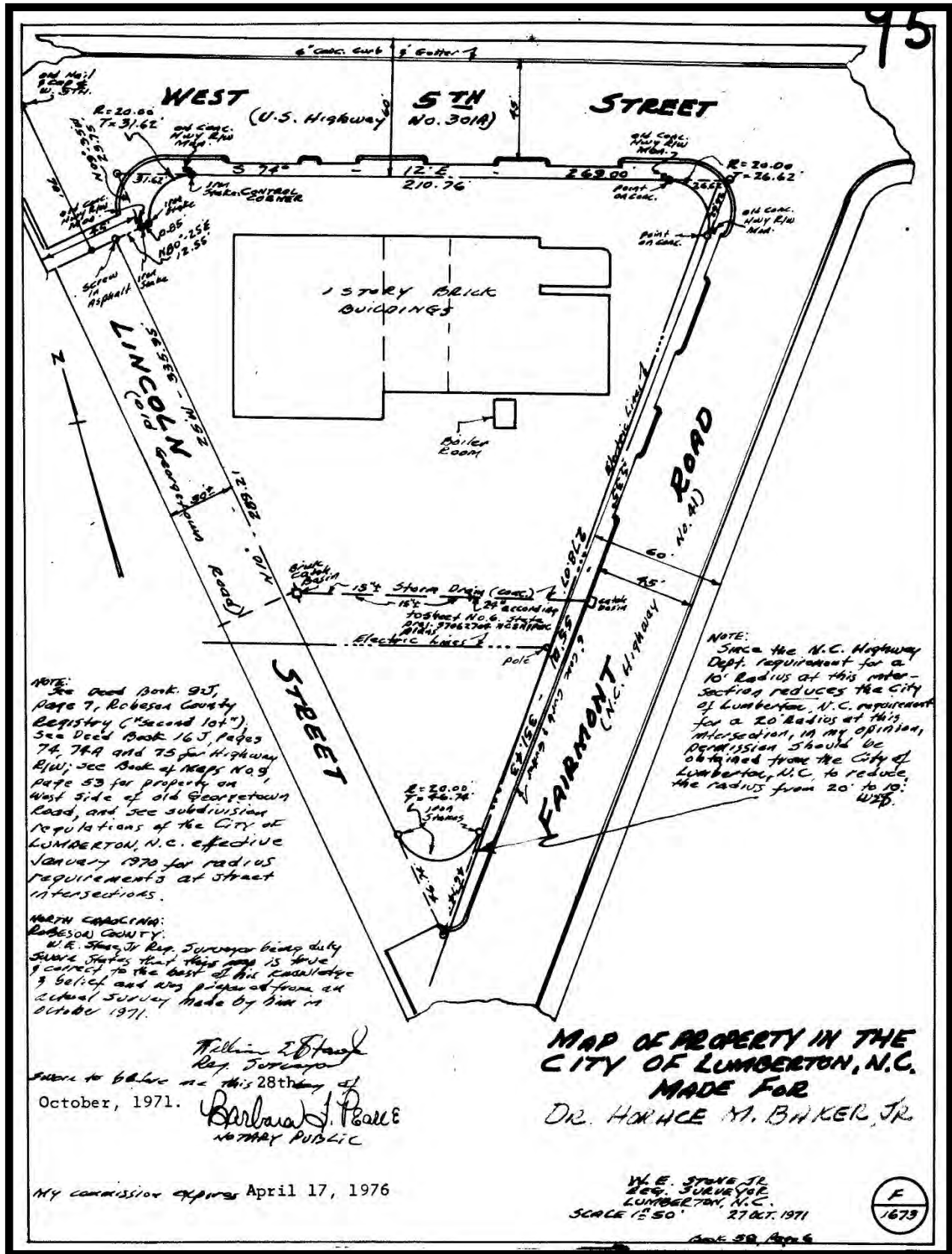


Figure 61: 1971 Plat of Property (Robeson County Map Book 19, page 95).

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the West Fifth Street Stores are recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

The West Fifth Street Stores remain in their original location within a commercial and industrial area in Lumberton on the west side of the Lumber River. Their setting includes other commercial and institutional properties including an apartment building, open land used for the Lumberton Outdoor Flea Market, a fast-food restaurant and a strip shopping center.⁷⁶ Most of this development occurred following the construction of the stores' original buildings. The area has also changed with the removal of trees to the north, west, and east of the property as shown on the 1950 aerial. As for the buildings' materials and workmanship, the two original stores appear to have begun as simple brick buildings that have been connected and divided to create retail spaces. Along with this modification, new exterior materials, such as stucco and aluminum-framed apertures, were added to the buildings' elevations. These alterations mask any historic workmanship that may have originally been displayed by the building as well as compromise the buildings' association with their original function and their feeling as part of the early twentieth century commercial landscape.

Criterion A

The West Fifth Street Stores are recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

The building is historically associated with twentieth century commerce in Lumberton and its expansion from the historic core on the east side of the Lumber River to areas west of the river. The building, however, has experienced great change, in both its form and its use, since it was constructed and is no longer a good representation of the time and atmosphere in which it was constructed and is therefore recommended not eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The West Fifth Street Stores are recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if

⁷⁶ County of Robeson, NC, Parcel Map, https://maps2.roktech.net/ROKMAPS_Robeson/#, accessed April 23, 2019.

its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

The most notable owner of the property was Horace M. Baker, Jr., a general thoracic and plastic surgeon in Lumberton. Dr. Baker, however, aside from holding a notable occupation in the community, does not appear to have made a significant impact on the past. Additionally, there is no conclusive evidence that he used the property for his own practice, likely using it instead as an investment or rental property. Because no associations could be drawn between the owners of the property and activities that are historically significant within the local, state, or national historic context, the property is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C

The West Fifth Street Stores are recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The deed between Dr. Baker and his wife, Annie, and their children shares that in 1941 the parcel contained a service station, sales stables, and other buildings. It seems very likely that at least some portion of these building still exist as a part of the building today (possibly one or both of the barrel-roofed buildings), particularly given that the 1950 aerial shows the building to have a form very similar to its current form. The similarity in form also implies that the building may have taken on some of its current aesthetic, such as its stuccoed walls and Art Deco pilasters, by that time, though those alterations could easily have come at a later time as well.

A Lumberton property that exhibits a barrel roof and, though larger, is likely similar to the original appearance of the barrel-roofed buildings is a ca. 1935 store (RB0229) on East 2nd Street (Figures 62 and 63). The building is constructed of brick which has been painted and has a stepped parapet on its south (front) elevation but no parapet on its north (rear) elevation, exposing its curved roof. A metal awning, likely a replacement, is suspended from the façade and shelters windows and doors set in aluminum frames. While aluminum frames did come into popularity in the 1930s, it is likely that these are replacements as well. To the east of the doors and windows is a large modern garage door and above the awning is a recess in the brick façade that proudly displays the name of the store's current tenant. Despite some alterations, the building has retained its original scale and form, and presents as a well-preserved representation of early twentieth-century commercial architecture and contributes to the Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476).

Next door to the store is a ca. 1935 gas station (RB0230) that also contributes to the historic district and exhibits pilasters with bell-shaped tops like those on two of the studied building's elevations (Figure 64). Though its fuel pumps have been removed, the station is still used for the auto industry as a car wash. Architecturally, it retains a wooden storefront with a centered entry door and large display windows below a row of transom windows. Its car port appears to be an early addition as does its mansard roof, which is covered with a material designed to emulate terracotta tiles. The building provides a glimpse of 1930s roadside architecture, which was



Figure 62: Store (RB0229), Looking North.



Figure 63: Store (RB0229), Looking South.



Figure 64: Gas Station (RB0230), Looking Northeast.

designed to capture the eye of the driver by standing out from the more traditional styles that characterized the late nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century. Furthermore, it stands as a purer example of the style, in contrast with the studied building, which began as a series of more simplistic, industrial buildings and has been greatly altered over time.

Due to its mismatch of storefronts and window sizes, as well as other aesthetic elements, the studied building does not fully embody the period in which it was constructed, nor does it embody any particular type, method of construction, or style. It also does not represent the work of a master; possess high artistic value; or represent a significant and distinguishable entity. For these reasons, the West Fifth Street Stores are recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C for architecture.

Criterion D

The West Fifth Street Stores are recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion D.

Resource Name:	Thompson Electric Company
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	004
HPO Survey Site Number:	RB0717
Location:	503 5 th Street, Lumberton, North Carolina
Parcel ID:	939156184400
Dates(s) of Construction:	Ca. 1945 and Ca. 1965
Recommendation:	Not Eligible



Figure 65: Thompson Electric Company, Looking Southwest.

Setting

The parcel is located west of the Lumber River in a wedge-shaped swath of land that exists between West 5th Street to the north and West 2nd Street to the south. Because of the angle of the roads, the parcel has a trapezoidal footprint. The Thompson Electric Company building is located at the center of the northern boundary of the parcel and faces north to West 5th Street from which it is set back roughly 30 feet. An asphalt parking area wraps the north and most of the west elevation of the building and a driveway leads from the parking area to West 2nd Street. An area adjoining the rear of the building is enclosed with a fence composed of corrugated metal sheets and chain link and is not well-maintained. The rest of the parcel contains a mowed lawn. The lot is surrounded by sparse commercial and industrial development with large parking lots and some vacant areas (Figure 66).

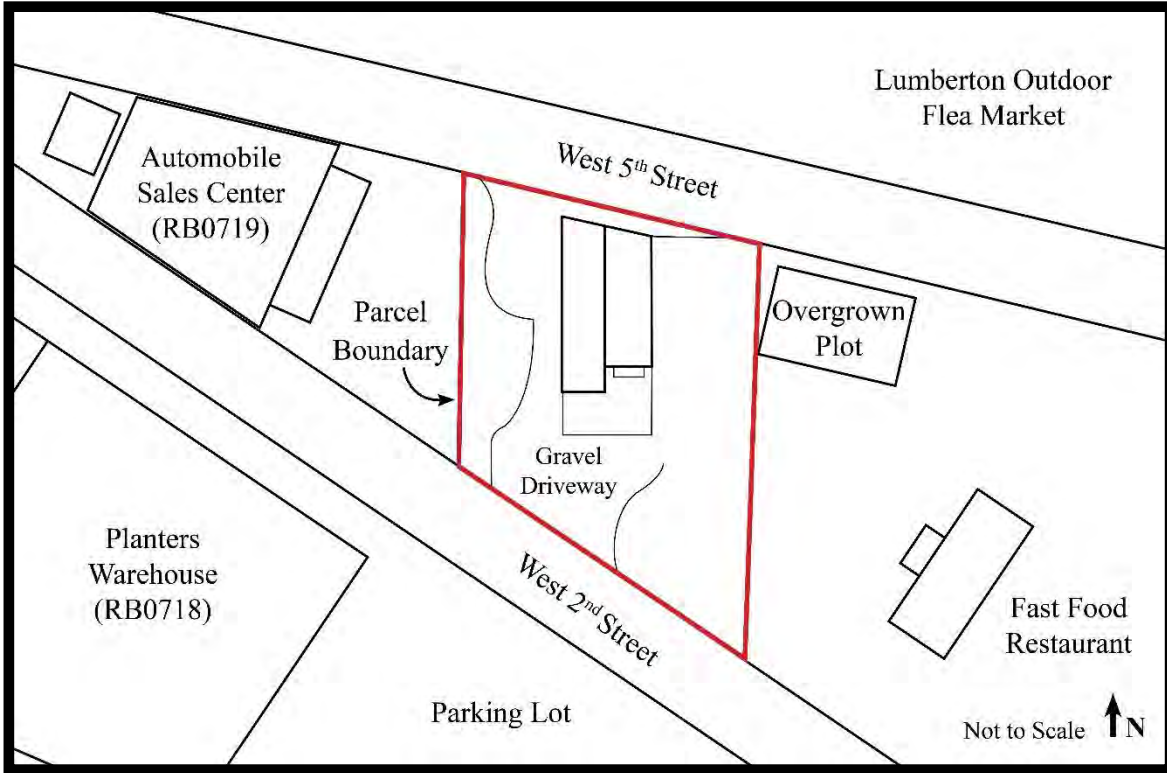


Figure 66: Sketch Map of the Thompson Electric Company.

Property Description

Exterior

The concrete block building is composed of a ca. 1945 two-story section with a ca. 1965 one-story addition and has a trapezoidal shape caused by angling the brick veneered façade to be parallel with West 5th Street. The façade of the ca. 1945 building is capped with metal coping and bookended by shallow brick pilasters with concrete caps. Its first-story façade contains four bays that are separated by brick pilasters. The first and third bays, from the east, are filled with paired display windows with brick sills and transoms. The second bay contains a glazed entry door that is flanked by a narrow sidelight on the east and has a brick lintel. Slightly above the lintel is a transom that is in line with the transoms above the windows. The fourth bay contains a solid entry door that is also topped with a brick lintel and transom, similar to the glazed door. All of the apertures are set in replacement surrounds. A course of soldier bricks spans the midline of the building just above the transom windows and a Thompson Electric Company sign projects perpendicular to the building. Three one-over-one, vinyl or metal sash windows with brick sills and lintels span the second-story façade. Centered above each one is a small rectangular vent (Figure 67).

The ca. 1965 building stands to the west of the earlier building and shares its western wall. Its one-story façade is capped with metal coping and contains a large display window that has six panes that are flush with the façade and four panes that angle inward toward a recessed glazed door with a transom that is located near the western wall of the building. The western interior elevation of the recess reveals a concrete wall and indicates that the building is of concrete block construction with a brick veneer façade. A wooden element spans the façade just above the window and likely supported a porch or awning at some point. Above this is a large sign that no longer identifies the occupying business. It is flanked by small rectangular vents with a small light or surveillance camera to its west (Figure 68).

The west (side) elevation of the ca. 1965 building is painted white and its parapet wall is stepped from the north (front) elevation to the south (rear) elevation. The parapet is finished with metal coping. The elevation has three tall brick piers that act as buttresses and line up with the first three steps of the parapet. Beyond the buttresses, the wall contains a multi-pane, metal sash window. The frame of a missing awning still projects from the left and right of the window. Continuing south, there is a metal entry door, and two small six-over-six, likely metal sash, windows. The second-story elevation of the earlier building is visible above the one-story building and contains one large and one small multi-pane, metal sash window (Figure 69).

The south (rear) elevation of the one-story building projects roughly five feet beyond the south elevation of the two-story building and is blind, and the brief east (side) elevation created by the projection contains an entry door. The south elevation of the two-story building contains a modern six-panel entry door that is flanked by two large multi-pane, metal sash windows. A flat metal awning is suspended from the façade by rods and shelters the door and part of the windows. The second-story façade is also lit by large multi-pane, metal sash windows that are aligned above the lower windows. One-story height, brick piers support the corners of the elevation (Figure 70).



Figure 67: Thompson Electric Company, Looking South.



Figure 68: Thompson Electric Company, Looking South.



Figure 69: Thompson Electric Company, Looking Northeast.



Figure 70: Thompson Electric Company, Looking Northwest.



Figure 71: Thompson Electric Company, Looking West.

The east (side) elevation is broken into five bays by a series of one-story height, brick piers/buttresses and like the west elevation its roofline is stepped and finished with metal coping. There is one multi-pane, metal sash window on the first story in the southern-most bay. The second bay from the south appears to have had a garage-sized door that is now filled in and the last two bays contains small rectangular windows that are placed near ceiling height. The last bay also contains an applied metal sign that reads “Thompson Electric Co. Sales & Service Since 1929.” Four multi-pane, metal sash windows exist on the second story and light all but the center bay. The brick façade wraps the northeast corner of the building giving the impression of a pilaster (Figures 71 and 72).



Figure 72: Thompson Electric Company, Sign, Looking West.

Interior

Attempts to contact the owner were unsuccessful and the surveyor was unable to gain access to the interior of the building. The large windows of the ca. 1965 structure, however, provided a view of the interior, which consists of a waiting room with a large, possibly tinted, window, a small receptionist window, and a door that likely leads to offices.

Historical Background

In 1945, J. D. Stewart and his wife, Maude, sold the property along with two other tracts to Bradley O. Thompson. The deed states that the three tracts were the same that had been sold by W. J. Cooley and his wife to Mrs. Kate McLeod in 1897 and to W. J. Cooley from Fredrica Wessel in 1879.⁷⁷

The 1940 Census shares that Bradley was a merchant and employer in the electrical appliances industry.⁷⁸ It is unknown if a structure existed on the property when it was sold or if Bradley constructed the original building but by 1956, the Lumberton City Directory listing for the business provided two addresses, 108 West 5th Street and, for the refrigerator department, 503 West 5th Street. The business listing portion of the directory shares that the Thompson Electric Company sold air conditioning units, refrigerators, dishwashers, ranges, washing machines and dryers, irons, and water heaters, as well as offering repair services and supplies and contractor electrical and heating.⁷⁹ The listing of 503 West 5th Street as the refrigerator department seems to indicate that it was used solely for the sale and/or repair of refrigerators and not as the primary salesfloor of the business. Because of the utilitarian feel of the building it is also plausible that it was used as the service shop.

The 1958 USGS aerial depicts the form of the original portion of the building and a 1964 aerial shows the first indication of the addition, which was not as long as it is today (Figures 74 and 75). The 1963 Lumberton City Directory lists 503-505 West 5th Street as Thompson Electric Company and the Carolina Power & Light Company office.⁸⁰ However, by 1974 it appears that the electric company was using the whole building.⁸¹ The business still operates from the location today. According to its Facebook page, it has been in operation since 1929 and now focuses on installing and servicing security systems.⁸² Bradley retained ownership of the building until his death in 1987, at which time it was inherited by his children John Bradley Thompson and Leslie Samuel Thompson who still own it today.⁸³



Figure 73: 1948 Advertisement for Thompson Electric Company (Source: *Nelson's Lumberton City Directory*).

⁷⁷ Robeson County Deed Book 9W, page 585.

⁷⁸ United States Department of Commerce, *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, 1940.

⁷⁹ *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory*, 1956.

⁸⁰ *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory*, 1963.

⁸¹ *Lumberton, North Carolina, Con Survey, Directory*, 1974.

⁸² Facebook.com, "Thompson Electric Co., Inc.," https://www.facebook.com/pg/Thompson-Electric-Co-Inc-1767936346827407/about/?ref=page_internal, accessed April 23, 2019.

⁸³ Find A Grave, "Bradley Oliver Thompson," <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/93287457> and Robeson County Property Record, PIN 939156184400.

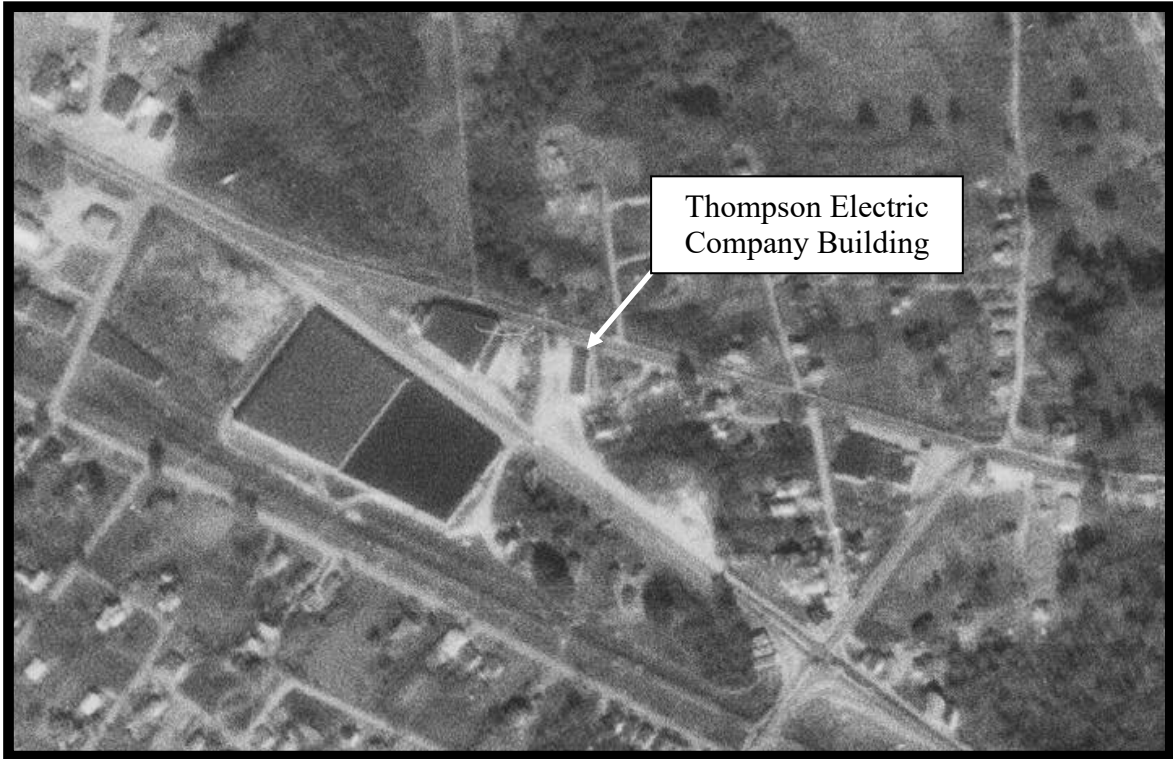


Figure 74: 1958 USGS Aerial Showing Location of Thompson Electric Company (Source EarthExplorer).

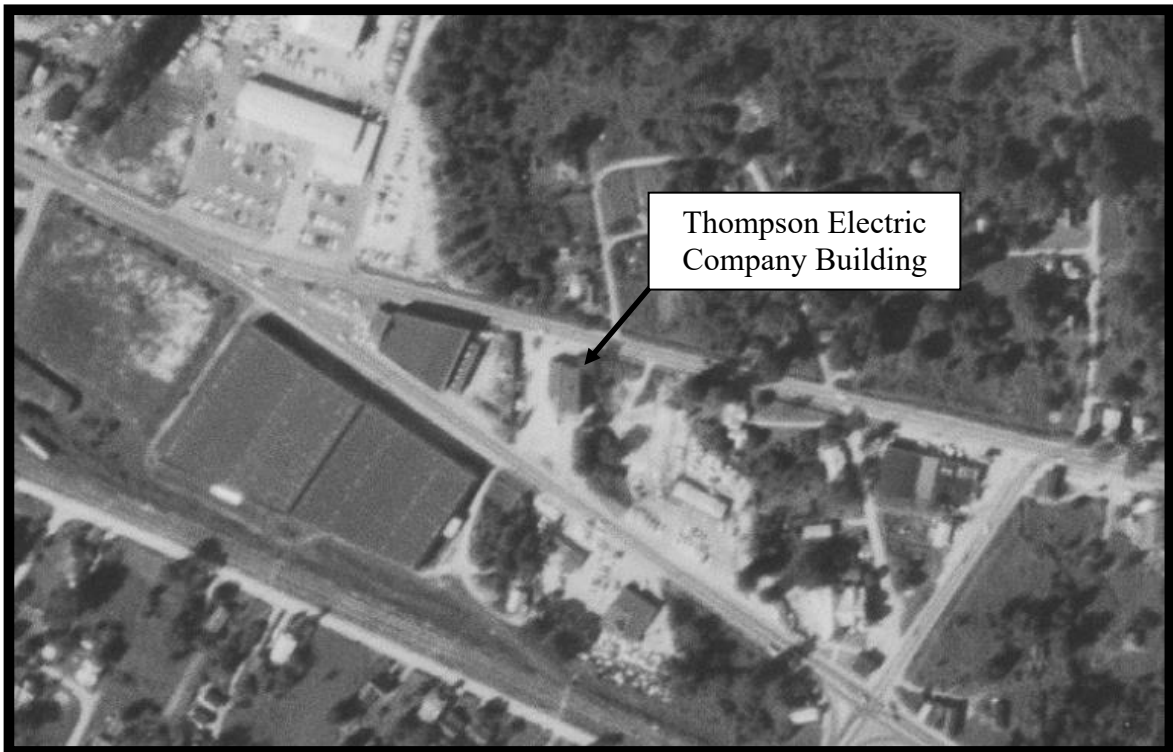


Figure 75: 1964 USGS Aerial Showing Location of Thompson Electric Company and Addition (Source EarthExplorer).

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Thompson Electric Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

The Thompson Electric Company remains in its original location within a commercial and industrial area in Lumberton on the west side of the Lumber River. The property's setting includes other commercial and institutional properties including an auto garage (RB0719), the Lumberton Produce Market and Outdoor Flea Market, a fast food restaurant, a strip mall, and a large warehouse (RB0718). Aside from the auto garage and the large warehouse, most of the surrounding development occurred in the latter part of the twentieth century, following the construction of the original portion of the building. Over time, the building's design has been altered with the replacement of its original storefront and the construction of an additional retail space along its western elevation. The addition adds an element of 1960s modernism with an angled display window and an off-center recessed entrance. Due to its masonry construction, its materials and workmanship have been well preserved, with the exception of its replaced storefront and second-story façade windows. The building, including its addition, does still convey the feeling of a mid-twentieth century store and is easily associated with the growth of commerce in Lumberton, particularly west of the Lumber River.

Criterion A

The Thompson Electric Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

The building is historically associated with twentieth century commerce in Lumberton and its expansion from the historic core on the east side of the Lumber River to areas west of the river. The building is also not greatly altered, despite the ca. 1965 addition, which exhibits its continued relevancy leading into the latter part of the twentieth century. As an individual property, however, the Thompson Electric Company's association with this period of growth is not considered to be of great significance to the development of the area and is therefore recommended not eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The Thompson Electric Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if

its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

Though the property has been owned by the Thompson family since 1945, primarily by Bradley O. Thompson, research did not reveal him or his family's activities to be historically significant within the local, state, or national historic context. Therefore, the property is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C

The Thompson Electric Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Constructed in two phases, the Thompson Electric Company is representative of both traditional mid-century commercial architecture, which borrowed from earlier, more-simplistic forms, and of the less traditional modernism of the 1960s. These two forms are not normally found side-by-side, but in this context they display the growth of the commercial area and the growth and/or entrepreneurship of the Thompson Electric Company and its owner, Bradley O. Thompson. Since their construction, the ca. 1945 building has changed the most with replacement windows and doors on the façade. The storefront of the ca. 1965 building may also be a replacement but closely emulates the characteristics expected of its era.

A building that is similar to the original building can be found in downtown Lumberton (Figures 76 and 77, RB0239). Constructed earlier in the twentieth century, the brick store has a wooden storefront across the first-story façade and three wooden sash replacement windows across the second story. It also retains its row of transom windows with textured glass. Because the original portion of the studied building was likely constructed later in the century, it is possible that its original storefront surround material was wood or aluminum. In either case, however, the first-story windows would more likely have been filled with a single large pane than their current two panes and had textured-glass transoms. The integrity of the downtown building is also improved by the presence of similar buildings in its vicinity, a factor that led to it being considered contributing to the Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476).



Figure 76: Store (RB0239), Looking South.



Figure 77: Store (RB0239), Detail of Storefront and Transom Windows.

A second building, constructed in between the construction of the two portions of the Thompson Electric Company building, is a Masonic Building (RB0164) on North Elm Street (Figure 78). Larger than the studied building, it contains three storefronts across its façade, two of which appear to be fairly original and that share a similar configuration of angled display windows and recessed doors with the ca. 1965 building. The building also has a suspended awning that may emulate the no longer extant awning of the ca. 1965 building. Its second and third story windows appear to be replacements exhibiting dark frames with single panes of tinted glass. Nonetheless, the standalone building near the northern boundary of the historic district represents the growth of the commercial core, as well as the town's social institutions, into the second half of the twentieth century.

Like the Thompson Electric Company building, the two comparable buildings also display the transition of architectural styles from early twentieth century traditional arrangements to the more modern and asymmetrical forms of the latter part of the century. The comparable buildings also benefit from their setting, which includes a higher density of commercial and institutional properties as opposed to the Thompson Electric Company building, which is set in a low-density area characterized by new and historic commercial properties, large parking lots, and large open areas. Due to these factors, the comparable buildings retain more integrity and better embody the characteristics of their types and periods of construction. For these reasons, the Thompson Electric Company building is recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C for architecture.



Figure 78: Masonic Building (RB0164), Looking Northeast.

Criterion D

The Thompson Electric Company is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion D.

Resource Name:	Planters Warehouse
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	005
HPO Survey Site Number:	RB0718
Location:	541 5 th Street, Lumberton, North Carolina
Parcel ID:	939146775500
Dates(s) of Construction:	Pre-1950 and ca. 1950
Recommendation:	Not Eligible



Figure 79: Planters Warehouse, Looking Southwest.

Setting

The warehouse is located on the south side of West 2nd Street which angles northwest from the Lumber River towards a Y-intersection with West 5th Street. The large building nearly consumes its irregularly shaped 3.29-acre parcel, which is bound by West 2nd Street on the north; a slender parcel on the west, which has the same owner; two small parcels on the east, one of which has the same owner; and the railroad on the south, from which it is separated by a line of trees and other vegetation. It does not have a clear front elevation, but its long northeast elevation is parallel with West 2nd Street, from which it is set back roughly 25 feet. Between the elevation and the road is a sidewalk and a long swath of pavement and gravel, as well as one pocket of landscaped area and one pocket of mowed grass. The eastern end of the parcel is a paved parking and loading area, and the pavement wraps the south and west elevations of the building as well. A fence encompasses the parcel including the slender lot on the west, which is paved and acts as a driveway. Beyond the property boundary, there are several commercial properties

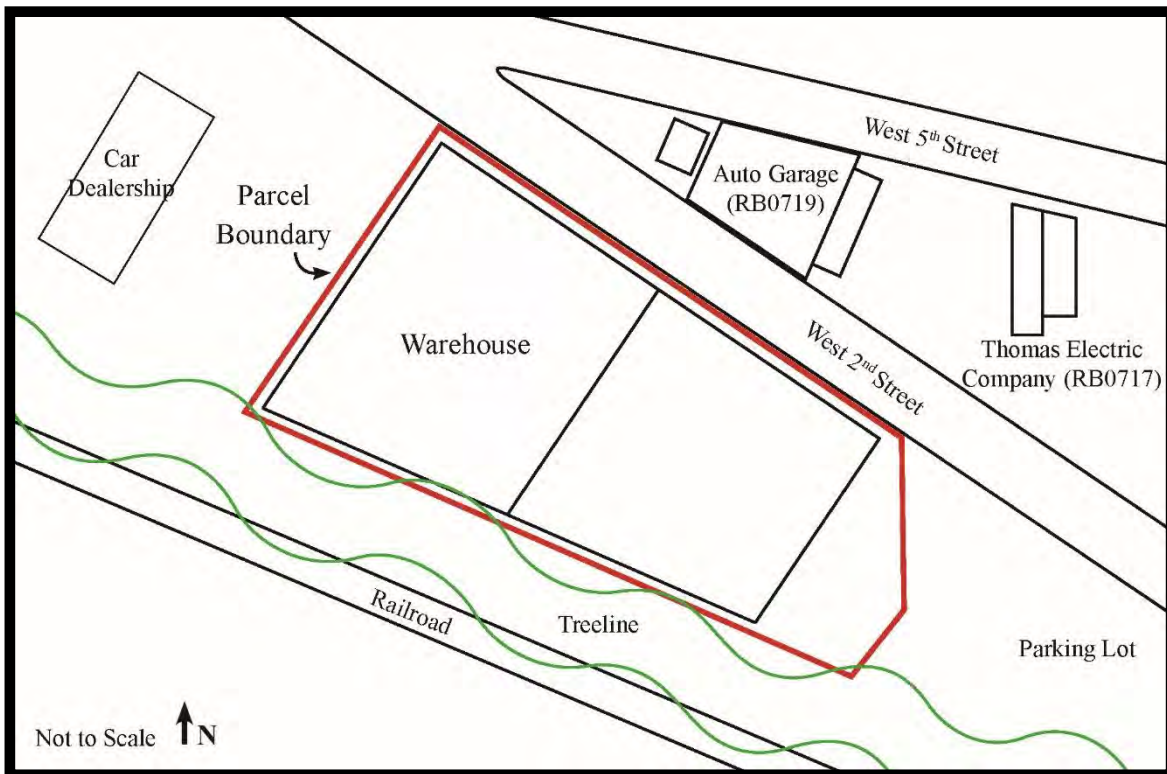


Figure 80: Sketch Map of the Planters Warehouse.

including an auto detailing shop, an auto dealer with a large parking lot, a fast food restaurant, and multiple small parking lots (Figure 80).

Property Description

Exterior

The irregularly shaped brick building was constructed in two phases, likely in the 1940s and 1950s. The two sections are very similar with brick laid in a common bond pattern, flat roofs and various-sized openings that span each elevation. The northeast, primary, elevation has a parapet with metal coping that conceals its roof while the east and west elevations have mansard-like asphalt shingled roofs. The rear elevation does not appear to have a parapet but rather terminates at the juncture of the wall and roof. The northeast elevation of the earlier building is pierced, from east to west, by a window, an entry door, a covered garage opening, three windows, an operable garage door, a window, an entry door, a small shed roofed room, four windows, an operable garage door, an entry door, a small shed roofed room, a covered garage opening, and a window. All of the windows and covered garage openings are covered with red standing seam metal panels (Figure 79). The shed-roofed rooms project from the elevation and are also clad with standing seam metal. They have asphalt shingled roofs and modern six-panel entry doors. The rooms appear to serve a purpose related to fire prevention or security (Figure 81).

The second building is set back slightly from the first and has a slightly higher roof line. A number of braces and pipes are present at the juncture and may serve as gutters for the building's roof. Its elevation is pierced by features identical to the earlier elevation, including from east to west, an operable garage door, a small shed roofed room, a window, an entry door, three windows, an operable garage door, two windows, a small shed-roofed room, an entry door, and three windows (Figure 82).

The southeast (side) elevation serves as a loading dock and is pierced, from south to north, by a window, two loading docks, a window, two loading docks and eight windows. Three of the windows in the center of the span of eight are smaller than the building's typical windows (Figure 83).

The southwest (rear) elevation is also pierced by covered and functional apertures as well as a loading dock and a platform that project from the building (Figures 84 and 85). The loading dock opens perpendicular to the main building and has a standing seam metal shed roof, standing seam metal and plywood cladding, and concrete foundation. Its southwest elevation has a metal entry door approached by concrete steps. The platform has a metal deck with metal supports and is sheltered by a shed-roofed awning with metal braces (Figures 86 and 87). This elevation also exhibits the building's form poured concrete foundation and an abandoned railroad spur follows the elevation as well (Figure 88).

The northwest elevation has a roughly symmetrical façade with four small loading dock openings and four window openings that flank a garage door with a projecting platform. The small loading dock openings and windows are all covered. The garage door is sheltered by a gable-roofed structure that is open on the northeast and southwest, clad with standing seam metal on the northwest, and has a concrete block foundation. A set of concrete block steps lead to the northeast side and it is used as a loading dock. A shed-roofed structure, like on the northeast elevation, also projects from the elevation near the southernmost windows (Figures 89 through 91).



Figure 81: Planters Warehouse, Typical Door, Looking Southwest.



Figure 82: Planters Warehouse, Looking Southeast.



Figure 83: Planters Warehouse, Looking Northwest.



Figure 84: Planters Warehouse, Looking Northwest.



Figure 85: Planters Warehouse, Looking East.



Figure 86: Planters Warehouse, Looking Northwest.



Figure 87: Planters Warehouse, Looking Northwest.



Figure 88: Planters Warehouse,
Railroad Spur, Looking West.



Figure 89: Planters Warehouse, Looking Northeast.



Figure 90: Planters Warehouse, Looking Southeast.



Figure 91: Planters Warehouse, Looking Northeast.

Interior

Attempts to contact the owner were unsuccessful and the surveyor was unable to gain access to the interior of the warehouse.

Historical Background

The tract that the warehouse stands on was originally composed of three parcels purchased by the Lumberton Trading Company from J. E. Johnson and his wife, Mary Patterson Johnson, in 1946 and 1947 and from the Robeson Manufacturing Company in 1947. The parcels purchased from the Johnsons originally belonged to Miss Julia Wessell, who sold them to the Johnsons in 1945 and measured 3.67 acres total. Interestingly, J. E. Johnson, who owned Johnson's Drug Store (RB0211), was also the vice president of the Lumberton Trading Company and of Lumberton Sales Company.⁸⁴ The parcel purchased from the Robeson Manufacturing Company was much smaller than the parcels purchased from the Johnsons measuring only 778 square feet.⁸⁵ The 1948 city directory, shares that the trading company operated another warehouse at the intersection of North Chestnut and East 1st Streets during this time as well (RB0163).⁸⁶ Over the next few years, the trading company conveyed small portions of the land to J. L. Townsend, who was also an executive of the trading company; the City of Lumberton, for the creation of a new street; and a two-foot strip of land to an unknown entity.⁸⁷

While it is possible that the Johnsons or Wessells constructed the first portion of the building before the land was sold to the trading company, it seems more plausible that the trading company constructed it between 1947 and 1951 when they conveyed it to Planters Warehouse Inc.⁸⁸ This time frame is also supported by the 1950 USGS aerial of Lumberton, which shows the eastern half of the building complete. The area that would become the second part of the building appears to be cleared, possibly prepping it for construction, and suggesting that it could have been constructed soon after the first portion (Figure 92). A 1958 USGS aerial confirms its construction by then (Figure 93). At the time, the building was conveniently located on the north side of the Seaboard Air Line Railroad and was less than a mile from the town's depot.

The 1956 Nelson's City Directory shares that Russell H. Livermore was the president of the Lumberton Trading Company and of Planters Warehouses Inc., as well as being the president of two other companies, the president-manager of one other company, and the senior vice president of The Scottish Bank.⁸⁹ The directory also mentions the other executives of the company including James E. Johnson, J. LeRoy Townsend, and Henry D. Ward and that the warehouse was used for tobacco storage.⁹⁰

Sometime after selling the property to Planters it was sold or transferred back to Lumberton Trading Company who sold it and four other tracts to Freeman Advertising Co. in 1987.⁹¹ Today it is owned by Freeman Investments. It is unclear if this reflects a change in name from Freeman Advertising Co. to Freeman Investments as a search for deeds involving either of the companies did not uncover any relevant deeds executed between the sale in 1987 and 2019.

⁸⁴ *Baldwin's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1948*, Master Edition, Vol. 5 (Charleston: 1948), 129.

⁸⁵ Robeson County Deed Book 10Z, page 447.

⁸⁶ *Baldwin's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1948*, 143.

⁸⁷ Robeson County Deed Book 10Z, page 447.

⁸⁸ Robeson County Deed Book 10Z, page 447.

⁸⁹ *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1956*, 114.

⁹⁰ *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1956*, 157.

⁹¹ Robeson County Deed Book 628, page 661.

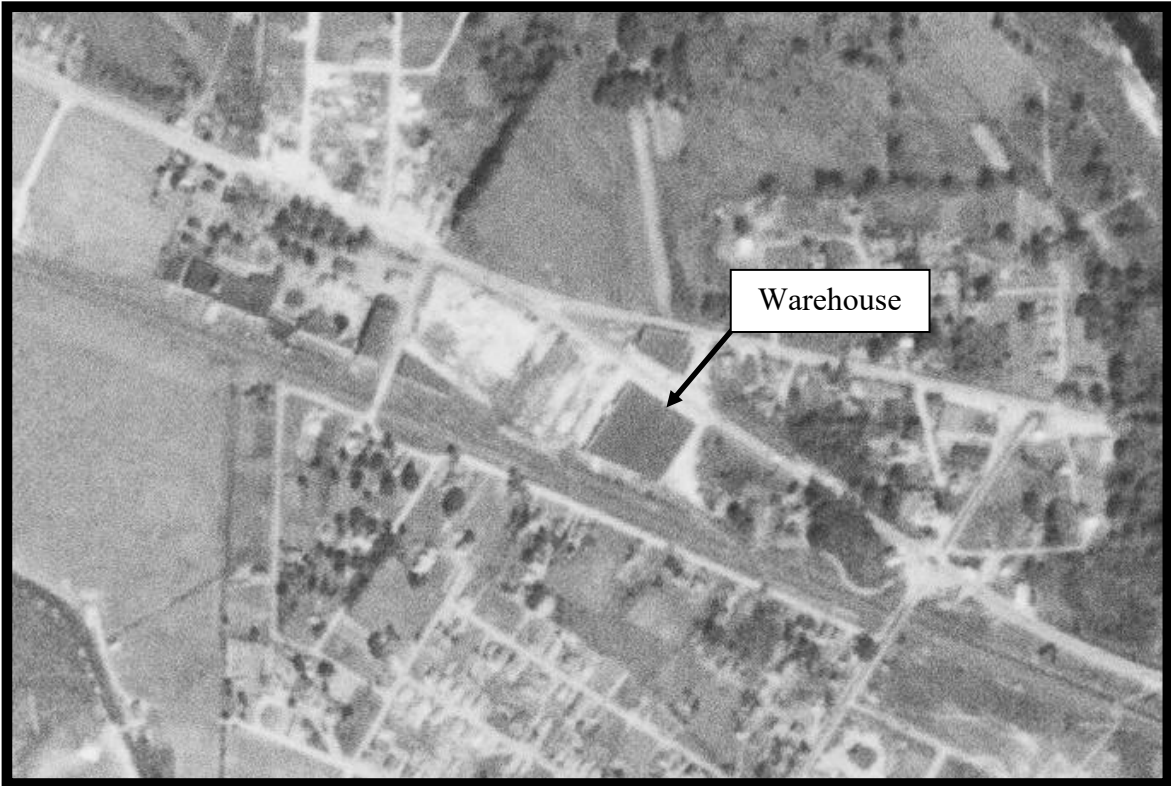


Figure 92: 1950 USGS Aerial Showing Location of Warehouse (Source EarthExplorer).

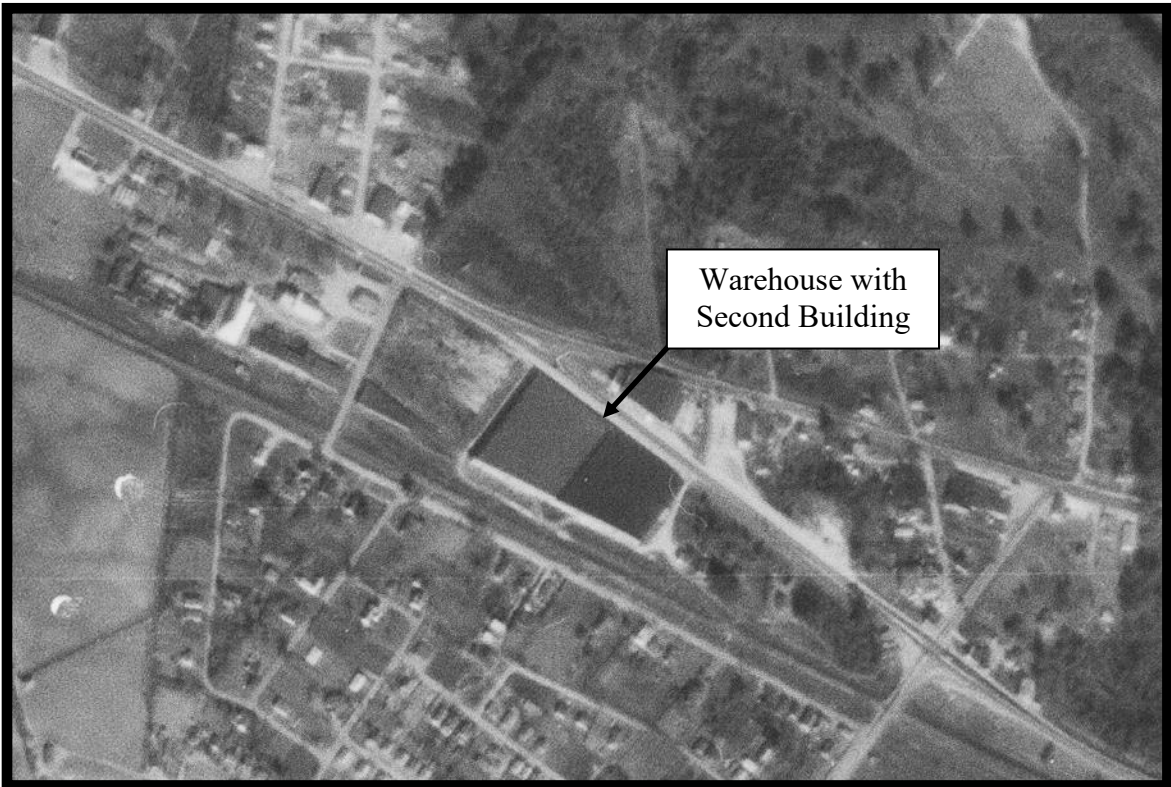


Figure 93: 1958 USGS Aerial Showing Location of Warehouse After Construction of Second Building (Source EarthExplorer).

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Warehouse is recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

The Warehouse remains in its original location within a commercial and industrial area on the west side of the Lumber River just north of the CSX railroad. The property's setting includes other commercial properties, most notably an auto garage (RB0719) and the Thompson Electric Company (RB0717), which were either in existence when the warehouse was constructed or constructed around the same time. A large portion of the remaining development post-dates the construction of the warehouse and includes a strip mall, a fast food restaurant, and a ca. 1980 car dealership. Apart from the addition of various exterior rooms and platforms and the covering over of most of the building's windows and loading bays, the design of the building does not appear to have drastically changed since its construction. This applies to the building's materials and workmanship as well. Though knowledge that the covered over windows have not been removed would greatly increase the building's material integrity. The warehouse does still convey the feeling of a mid-century warehouse though not necessarily one associated with the tobacco industry. The abandonment of the railroad spur and disconnect of the property from the nearby railroad, as well as the conversion of the remaining loading areas to accommodate semi-trucks instead of railcars has further compromised the site's association with the period in which it was constructed.

Criterion A

The Warehouse is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

The building is historically associated with twentieth century commerce in Lumberton and its expansion from the historic core on the east side of the Lumber River to areas west of the river. It is also associated with the tobacco industry which continued to thrive in Lumberton through the mid-twentieth century. However, since the decline of the tobacco industry and shifting of commerce from rail distribution to truck distribution the building has been altered by closing many of its apertures and converting its remaining loading bays to accommodate semi-trucks. Due to these alterations it has lost its association with its period of significance and is therefore recommended not eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The Warehouse is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally

associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

The property was developed by a group of prominent businessmen in Lumberton. The group of men, however, are also represented on the NRHP for their downtown businesses, such as Johnson's Drug Store (RB0211), and by an earlier warehouse associated with the Lumberton Trading Company (RB0163), both of which contribute to Lumberton's Commercial Historic District (RB0476). Additionally, the earlier warehouse belongs to one of the first warehouse complexes in Lumberton's tobacco district and remains as a strong example of the business group's influence on the town's tobacco industry (Figure 94).⁹² For these reasons, the property is not considered as the best example of their influence on the community and is therefore recommended not eligible under Criterion B.



Figure 94: Warehouse (Lumberton Trading) (RB0163), Looking Northeast.

⁹² Patricia S. Dickinson, *Lumberton Commercial Historic District*, National Register Nomination Form (Raleigh: 1989), 34.

Criterion C

The Warehouse is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The brick warehouse was constructed in two phases, likely in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Its simple design with a tall parapet topped with metal coping and utilitarian window and door openings, though not reflective of any particular architectural style, is emblematic of the period in which it was constructed and of the building's use as a tobacco warehouse.

HPOWeb lists only four other warehouses, or warehouse complexes, in Robeson County: the Lumberton Trading (RB0163) and a block of warehouses on South 1st Street (RB0466) in Lumberton, the Seaboard Air Line RR & Freight Warehouse in Maxton (RB0426), and a warehouse (RB0583) in Fairmont. Of those in Lumberton, both of which contribute to the NRHP district, the block of warehouses displays the most integrity. Like the warehouse on West 5th Street, it has also had many of its windows enclosed, though they have been filled with brick as opposed to standing seam metal. In both cases, the enclosure of the windows is likely indicative of the transition from passive lighting to the use of electric fixtures, and while neither case is ideal, the use of brick is in keeping with the building's original materials pallet. The cornerstone of the block, which dates to ca. 1910, also stands out for its use of a tall stepped parapet and a building toward the center of the block stands out for retaining its steel window sashes set below arched brick lintels. The warehouses also benefit from being a part of a collective unit and by being near other like structures (Figures 95 and 96).

Though not in Robeson County, an outstanding example of a ca. 1950 warehouse can be found at 472 Robeson Street in Fayetteville. Now used as a storage warehouse for Patterson Mayflower Moving and Storage, the building has been expanded with a large rear warehouse and a small, one-story loading area. However, the building's tall, parapet façade with slender columns of raised bricks that guide the viewer's eye up and give the façade a striped look is still indicative of the period in which it was constructed. A suspended, flat-roofed awning and pilaster-like buttresses on the side elevations harken to this period as well (Figure 97).

The biggest compromise to the integrity of the studied warehouse is that its windows and other apertures have been covered with standing seam metal making them inoperable and altering the appearance of the building. In contrast, alterations and additions made to the comparable buildings have been done with like materials or in ways that do not distract from the building's defining features and primary elevations. For these reasons, the comparable buildings stand as better examples of the property type or in the case of the block of warehouses in Lumberton already contribute to a NRHP district. Therefore, the Warehouse is recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C for architecture.



Figure 95: Warehouses (RB0466), Looking Southwest.



Figure 96: Warehouses (RB0466), Center Warehouse, Looking Southwest.



Figure 97: Patterson Mayflower Moving & Storage, 472 Robeson Street, Fayetteville, North Carolina, Looking Northwest.

Criterion D

The Warehouse is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion D.

Resource Name:	Automobile Sales Center
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	006
HPO Survey Site Number:	RB00719
Location:	575 West 5 th Street, Lumberton, North Carolina
Parcel ID:	939146996300
Dates(s) of Construction:	Ca. 1950
Recommendation:	Not Eligible



Figure 98: Automobile Sales Center, Looking East.

Setting

The 0.68-acre parcel is located on the west side of the Lumber River within a wedge-shaped swath of land created by the Y-intersection of West 5th and West 2nd Streets. The streets also form the property's north and south boundaries, respectively. The property's west boundary adjoins a wedge-shaped parcel that fills the interior of the Y-intersection and contains a ca. 1945 filling station and its east boundary adjoins a trapezoid-shaped parcel that contains a ca. 1945/65 commercial building. The property's primary resource, an automobile sales center, fills the western half of the irregularly shaped parcel leaving roughly five feet of clearance between it and the roads on its north and south sides and less than three feet of clearance between it and the ca. 1945 filling station, which is set six inches from the parcel line. The eastern half of the parcel is filled with a paved parking lot surrounded by a chain link fence. Gates on the north and south lengths of the fence permit access to the parking area. The surrounding area is characterized by sparse commercial and industrial development and large parking lots (Figure 99).

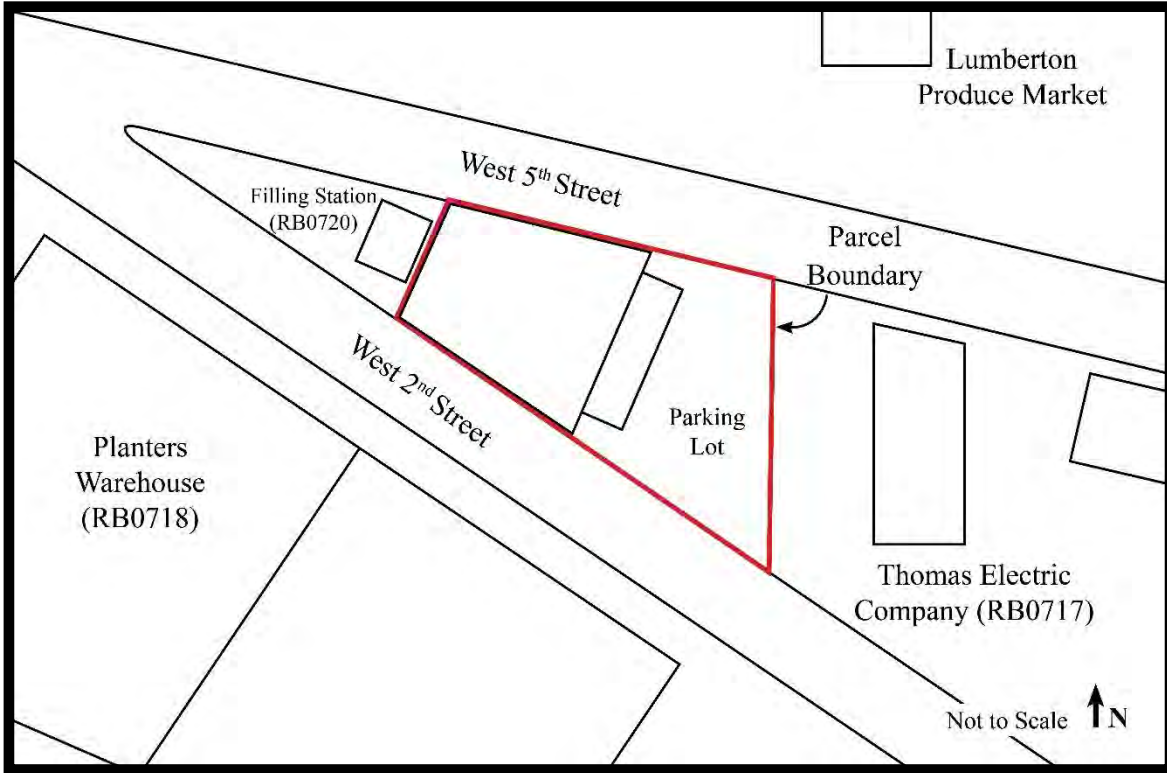


Figure 99: Sketch Map of the Automobile Sales Center.

Property Description

Exterior

The primary façade of the one-story, brick sales center faces west to the Y-intersection of West 5th and West 2nd Streets and has a large stepped parapet that conceals a flat roof. The façade is interesting in that it is partially concealed by a small ca. 1945 filling station but is still clearly visible to the east bound traffic approaching the intersection. The tiers of the parapet, including four small crenellations near the corners and center of the elevation, are capped with concrete coping and there is a large faded painted sign centered on the elevation. A more modern sign for the Heafner Tire Company is placed above the painted sign and almost entirely covers a small circle of brickwork that decorates the top tier of the parapet. Due to the shape of the parcel, the building has an irregular, trapezoid-like shape and this elevation is significantly shorter in width than the north and south (side) elevations as well as the east (rear) elevation, which is the widest. Also, though the elevation is large and impressive, it doesn't appear to have had an entry door at any point suggesting that its lower portion has always been concealed by the filling station (Figure 98). Another distinguishing feature of the west elevation is that its corners are curved and appear to have once contained large display windows, which would have been highly visible to traffic at the Y-intersection. The windows are also characteristic of mid-century automobile sales centers. Today, the windows are filled with brick (Figure 100).

The north (side) elevation has a stepped parapet as well though it contains less tiers and does not rise as high as the west elevation. It's pierced by eight windows that have been filled with decorative concrete block screens. Between the third and fourth windows, from the east, there is a large modern garage door. Small windows filled with brick flank the eighth window as well and a doorway filled with brick exists to its west. There is also an additional small window filled with a decorative concrete block screen between the filled doorway and the filled windows at the northwest corner of the building (Figures 101 and 102).

The east (rear) elevation is dominated by a one-story, flat-roofed, brick addition that serves as the storefront of the building. It is not as wide or as tall as the original portion of the building and is flanked on the north by a tall narrow garage door. Three fixtures that likely held lighted signs are visible on the east elevation above the addition. The east elevation of the addition is asymmetrical with three banks of windows and doors near the southern corner of the elevation that may have originally been garage doors. Large gate operators exist above each opening and contain security gates that roll down and cover the apertures. From south to north, the openings include an entry door flanked by



Figure 100: Automobile Sales Center, Looking Southeast.



Figure 101: Automobile Sales Center, Looking South.

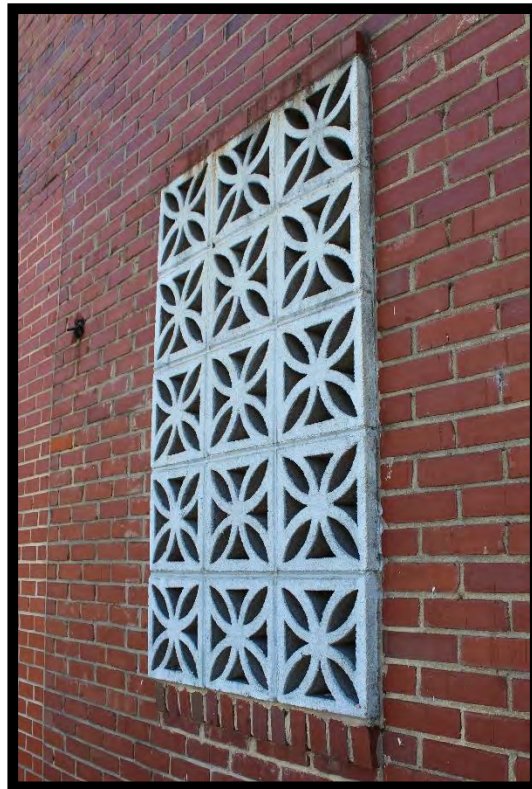


Figure 102: Automobile Sales Center, Typical Filled Window.

display windows, three display windows, and a double-leaf entry door flanked by narrow side lights and a two-pane transom window. All of the windows are above panels and the space above those with without transoms is filled with metal or vinyl. North of the apertures is a waiting area sheltered by a flat metal awning that is suspended from the elevation. Irregularities in the brick suggest that there were originally two to three garage doors in this vicinity as well as an entry door south of the existing apertures. The north (side) elevation of the addition is blind while the south (side) elevation contains a large window or screen filled with decorative concrete blocks (Figures 103 and 104).

The south (side) elevation has a stepped parapet like the north elevation and is pierced by seven windows with decorative concrete block screens. There is a large modern garage door between the third and fourth windows from the west. West of the windows is a garage-sized opening filled with bricks, an entry door filled with bricks, a small window filled with decorative concrete block, and a portion of the display window at the southwest corner, which is also filled with bricks. The remnants of original light fixtures are noticeable above the garage door and flanking the filled in entry door (Figure 105).



Figure 103: Automobile Sales Center, Looking Southeast.



Figure 104: Automobile Sales Center, Looking West.



Figure 105: Automobile Sales Center, Looking Northeast.

Interior

The current tenant shared that the interior of the building has been gutted and renovated and that in 2016 the building flooded over four feet due to Hurricane Matthew.⁹³

⁹³ Ronnie Locklear, Personal Interview, April 15, 2019.

Historical Background

The parcel on which the building stands originally belonged to the Wessell family and was part of a larger tract known as the Wessell Lands.⁹⁴ In 1879, the eastern portion of the current parcel was sold by the Wessells to W. J. Cooley, who sold it to Mrs. Kate McLeod in 1897. The property then passed through the hands of J. D. and Maude C. Stewart, and Bradley O. and Essie J. Thompson, who owned the neighboring Thompson Electric Company (RB0717), before being sold to Owen Clinton Norment in 1948.⁹⁵ The western portion of the parcel was inherited by Miss Julia Wessell from her parents. She then sold it to W. H. and Margaret Tyner in 1938 and they sold it to Norment in 1945.⁹⁶

The Robeson County Register of Deeds' indexes includes a significant number of transactions involving Norment suggesting that he was involved in the real estate industry. The 1938 Lumberton City Directory also shares that Norment was president of Norment Motor Co. Inc, which sold and serviced Chrysler and Plymouth vehicles and was located at 120 West 5th Street, on the east side of the Lumber River (Figure 106).⁹⁷ By 1956, the dealership had shifted its focus to Ford automobiles and while it still operated from the West 5th Street location the business had expanded to include a body shop at 601 West 5th Street, near the studied parcel.⁹⁸

Based on county property records, the building was constructed during Norment's ownership though the current tenant, Ronnie Locklear, said that the building was an automobile dealership in the 1930s.⁹⁹ The 1945 deed between the Tyners and Norment states that the western line of the property is six inches east of the east wall of the one-story filling station on the adjoining parcel but does not mention any other buildings.¹⁰⁰ The studied building is, however, visible on a 1950 USGS aerial of the property suggesting that it was in existence at the time of the sale or constructed soon thereafter (Figure 107). It is also possible that another building that was used as a dealership existed before the current building, but no evidence could be found to support this theory. However, if Norment constructed the building, it is very possible that did so as an



Figure 106: 1938 Norment Motor Co. Advertisement (Source: Baldwin and Robesonian's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory).

⁹⁴ Robeson County Deed Book 3A, page 359.

⁹⁵ Robeson County Deed Book 3A, page 359, Deed Book 3W, page 11 and Deed Book 10M, page 117.

⁹⁶ Robeson County Deed Book 8Y, page 506 and Deed Book 9Y, page 62.

⁹⁷ *Baldwin and Robesonian's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1938*, 176 and 177.

⁹⁸ *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1956*, 147.

⁹⁹ Ronnie Locklear, Personal Interview, April 15, 2019.

¹⁰⁰ Robeson County Deed Book 9Y, page 62.



Figure 107: 1950 USGS Aerial Showing Location of the Automobile Sales Center (Source EarthExplorer).

extension of his automobile sales and service business, which by 1956 included the body shop at 601 West 5th Street, just west of the Y-intersection and the studied property.

A 1952 article in *The Robesonian* recognized the Norment Motor Company's 25th anniversary and touted the company as one of the largest automobile dealerships in the Carolina's. The article described it as having one of the largest parts departments in the region, a service department with modern factory machines, and a sales department with access to any Ford car or truck.¹⁰¹ Norment's obituary shares that in 1957 he sold the business to Lumberton Motors and began focusing on farming interests.¹⁰² It does not appear that the sale included the studied property as it stayed in his name until after his death in 1969. Though it is possible that the property was rented to the new owner or to another business. A 1971 advertisement promotes the opening of the Lumberton Auto Electric Co. at the address and the 1974 Lumberton City Directory lists three businesses as operating from the address: the Lumberton Auto Electric Co., Currie Equipment Co., and United Align-Rite (Figure 108).¹⁰³

In 1972, the executors of Norment's estate sold the parcels to P. C. Caulder.¹⁰⁴ Caulder and his wife, Faye, retained the property until 1975 when they sold it to Hefner Tire Co. (Figures 109). The deed clarifies that the sale included all of the first and second tracts conveyed to Caulder by

¹⁰¹ "Norment Motor Company has Silver Anniversary; Is One of the Largest Ford Dealers in Carolinas," *The Robesonian* (Lumberton, North Carolina), November 11, 1952, 12.

¹⁰² "O. C. Norment Succumbs at 70," *The Robesonian* (Lumberton, North Carolina), May 5, 1974, 1.

¹⁰³ *Lumberton, North Carolina, Con Survey, Directory, 1974*.

¹⁰⁴ Robeson County Deed Book 18I, page 199.

NOW OPEN

Lumberton Auto Electric Co.

575 West 5th Street
Lumberton, N. C.

We Rebuild
Starters or Alternators
Exchange Generators

Check Our Prices!

PICK-UP AND DELIVERY SERVICE

Phone 738-2864

Figure 108: 1971 Lumberton Auto Electric Co. Advertisement (Source: *The Robesonian*, April 19, 1971).

WE'VE MOVED TO OUR NEW HOME!



- Remington
- Regal
- Monarch
- B.F. Goodrich

Located
across from
Lumberton Motors.

We are one of the largest independent
tire distributors in the United States.

HEAFNER TIRE CO., INC.

575 West 5th St., Lumberton, N.C., Ph. 738-6408
"We Handle Anything In Tires"

Figure 109: 1975 Heafner Tire Co. Advertisement (Source: *The Robesonian*, September 3, 1975).

the 1972 deed.¹⁰⁵ Hefner Tire Co. owned the property for the next twenty-five years selling it to Rodney and Brian Keesee in 2000.¹⁰⁶ In 2005, Brian and his wife, Kimberly M. Keesee, sold their interest in the property to Rodney and his wife, Trinity. The couple held the property until September 2013 when it sold to First Troy SPE, LLC. It appears that First Troy, which is headquartered in Troy, North Carolina, acts as a holding entity for foreclosed properties. The 2013 deed shares that the Keesees executed a deed of trust in 2010 appointing Teresa C. Nixon as trustee of the property. In 2013, a second deed of trust was executed substituting Russell J. Hollers as the trustee. Soon thereafter, the property was put up for public sale and bid on by First Bank, who assigned its bid to First Troy.¹⁰⁷ First Troy retained ownership until September of 2015 when the property was sold to the current owner, Jerry Michael Townsend.¹⁰⁸ Today the entire building is rented to Ronnie Locklear who has operated Ronnie's Tint and Audio from the location for the past four years.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Robeson County Deed Book 19U, page 115.

¹⁰⁶ Robeson County Deed Book 1113, page 796.

¹⁰⁷ Robeson County Deed Book 1924, page 521.

¹⁰⁸ Robeson County Deed Book 2008, page 283.

¹⁰⁹ Ronnie Locklear, Personal Interview, April 15, 2019.

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Automobile Sales Center is recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

The Automobile Sales Center remains in its original location within a commercial and industrial area on the west side of the Lumber River. The property's setting includes other commercial properties, most notably a large warehouse (RB0718) and the Thompson Electric Company (RB0717), both of which were constructed after or around the same time as the sales center. A majority of the remaining development post-dates the construction of the sales center and includes a strip mall, a fast food restaurant, and a ca. 1980 car dealership. The design of the building has not changed drastically since its construction. Its most irreversible change has been the filling in of a number of its windows and doors, including large corner display windows, with bricks. At the same time, many of its remaining windows have been screened with decorative concrete blocks but appear to retain their steel sash windows. The materials and workmanship of the building are well preserved due to the building's brick construction. The building is also still used for automotive purposes and appears to have retained that use since its construction. This use strengthens its association with the automobile industry as well as the mid-twentieth century, which experienced exponential growth due to the advent of the automobile and its influence on community planning, commercial development, and architectural design. Due to the retention of the painted sign, the Heafner Tire Company sign, and its current use as an auto detailing shop, the building retains its feeling as an automobile garage.

Criterion A

The Automobile Sales Center is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

The building is historically associated with the growth of the automobile industry in Lumberton and the early to mid-twentieth century expansion of the commercial district to areas west of the Lumber River. However, research did not reveal its association as integral to the development of the commercial area or to the development of the automobile industry in Lumberton. The Automobile Sales Center is therefore recommended not eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The Automobile Sales Center is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those

that best represent the person’s historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

The Automobile Sales Center is associated with the auto sales and service business of Owen Clinton Norment, who was president of Norment Motor Co. Inc. and was active in real estate in Lumberton throughout the mid-twentieth century. In a newspaper article from 1974 Norment was described as “one of the pioneer automobile dealers in Lumberton and Robeson County.” The primary location of Norment’s auto business, however, appears to have been on the east side of the Lumber River, first on the south side of West 5th Street then on the north side.¹¹⁰ Both of these locations are now parking lots. After selling the business to Lumberton Motors in 1957, Norment owned and worked from a small ca. 1840 office building that was originally constructed as the Proctor Law Office (RB0179, Figure 110) and is now a part of the Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476).¹¹¹ In 1974, Norment’s widow, Mrs. Loleta O. Boney (remarried), gave \$5,000 to Historic Robeson for the acquisition and renovation of the law office, which is still owned by the group today.¹¹² Though it has not been individually placed on the NRHP, the nomination form for the Lumberton Commercial Historic District characterizes the building as “the only antebellum building in the district and the oldest extant structure in



Figure 110: Proctor Law Office (RB0179), Looking Southwest.

¹¹⁰ “Historic Robeson Gets \$5,000 Gift,” *The Robesonian* (Lumberton, North Carolina), May 5, 1974, 1.

¹¹¹ “O. C. Norment Succumbs at 70,” *The Robesonian* (Lumberton, North Carolina), May 5, 1974, 1.

¹¹² “Historic Robeson Gets \$5,000 Gift,” 1.

Lumberton.”¹¹³ Because of its historic significance as one of the oldest structures in the city as well as its documented use as Norment’s office, the ca. 1840 building serves as a better representation of Norment’s productive life. The Automobile Sales Center is therefore recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C

The Automobile Sales Center is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Due to its prominent location and impressive stepped parapet, the Automobile Sales Center stands as one of the most distinctive mid-twentieth century buildings in West Lumberton. The building’s stateliness, however, is compromised by the presence of the small ca. 1945 filling station that stands roughly two feet from its west elevation as well as the filling in of many of its windows, including large corner display windows, and doors with bricks.

Buildings related to the automobile industry in Lumberton include the ca. 1970 Evans Auto Sales (RB0470), the ca. 1935 Freeman and Clegg Pontiac Dealership (RB0154), and five gas/service stations, two of which are no longer extant. Of these, three contribute to the NRHP commercial district and one, the Pure Oil Filling Station (RB0180), is also on the North Carolina NRHP Study List. The Pure Oil station is the best preserved of the buildings affiliated with the automobile industry in Lumberton retaining its Tudor Revival details including steep multi-gabled roofs, shaped brackets, an arched entrance, whimsical brick details, and non-functional chimneys (Figure 111). Through its non-traditional application of architectural detail, the building displays how the automobile industry used architecture to capture the attention of new drivers and to differentiate their business. Also, as a part of a larger chain of gas stations, the Pure Oil Filling Station is an early example of how a nation-wide corporation branded itself with a cohesive image across a large geographical area. Like the sales center, it has retained its association with the automobile industry and is currently used as a sales and service station.

Another building in Lumberton that serves as an example of a mid-twentieth century automobile shop is located at 324 East 4th Street. The brick building has not been previously surveyed but is well-preserved with four large display windows that flank a centered, double-leaf entry door. Though the door and window surrounds appear to be replacements with aluminum and other materials used for surrounds and wooden panels above the glass panes in the first and last bays, the windows are not drastically different from their original configuration. The façade also exhibits a stepped parapet with stone or concrete coping similar to the sales center. Additionally, original metal sash windows light the east (side) elevation and a garage door accesses the rear of the building. Though the building is now used as a carpet store, the Robeson County Tax

¹¹³ Dickinson, *Lumberton Commercial Historic District*.



Figure 111: Pure Oil Filing Station (RB0180), Looking Northeast.



Figure 112: 324 East 4th Street, Lumberton, North Carolina.

Assessment office lists its use as a garage/shop/car dealer, suggesting that was its original function (Figure 112).

The East 4th Street building and Pure Oil Filling Station remain as well-preserved examples of early-to-mid twentieth century architecture affiliated with the automotive industry in Lumberton, and in the case of the filling station, nation-wide. In comparison, though a distinctive building in West Lumberton, the sales center has been altered in ways that compromise its original design, negate its original materials, and lessen its feeling of prominence at the intersection of West 2nd and 5th Streets. For these reasons, the comparable buildings, one of which has been placed on the North Carolina NRHP Study List, stand as better examples of NRHP eligible properties. Therefore, the Automobile Sales Center is recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C for architecture.

Criterion D

The Automobile Sales Center is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion D.

Resource Name:	Filling Station
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	007
HPO Survey Site Number:	RB0720
Location:	595 West 5 th Street, Lumberton, North Carolina
Parcel ID:	939147707100
Dates(s) of Construction:	Ca. 1945
Recommendation:	Not Eligible



Figure 113: Filling Station, Looking East.

Setting

The 0.15-acre wedge-shaped parcel is located on the west side of the Lumber River at the Y-intersection of West 5th and West 2nd Streets. The streets form the property's north and south boundaries, respectively. The property's east boundary adjoins a trapezoid-shaped parcel that contains a ca. 1950 automobile sales center. The property's primary resource, a filling station, is nearly flush with the east boundary. The rest of the parcel is paved with both concrete and asphalt. The surrounding area is characterized by sparse commercial and industrial development and large parking lots (Figure 114).

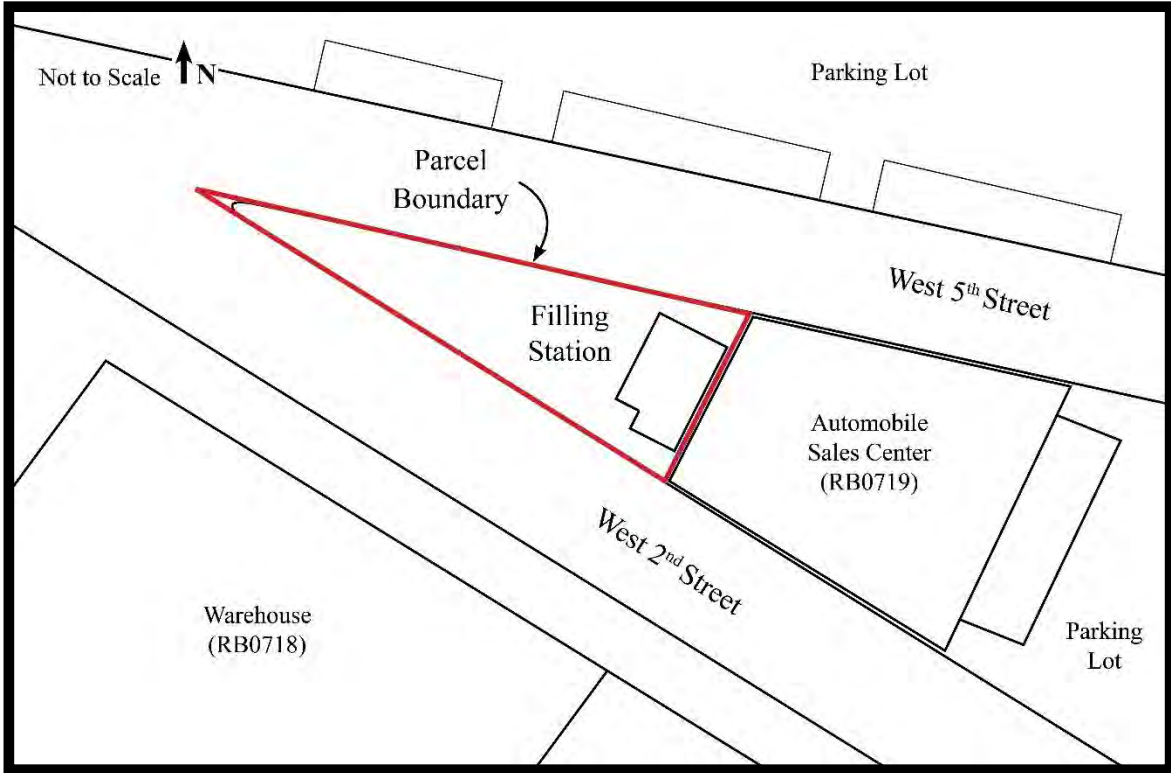


Figure 114: Sketch Map of the Filling Station.

Property Description

Exterior

The ca. 1945 one-story concrete block building has a flat roof concealed by a parapet and displays a typical mid-century garage form with two large replacement garage doors and a storefront on the west (front) elevation. The storefront consists of an entry door flanked on the south by a large display window that wraps the southeast corner of the building and is covered with beadboard (Figure 113). There is a small opening that is now filled with plywood in the south facing portion of the window. The storefront is sheltered by a metal awning that also wraps the corner. On the south (side) elevation, beyond the display window, a gabled restroom wing projects from the building. It contains two wooden entry doors that flank small wooden sash, one-over-one windows (Figure 115).

The east (rear) elevation contains a metal sash window that likely lights an office and two linear, metal sash windows that are placed near the roofline and light the building's garage space. According to a deed, the building is placed six inches from the parcel line.¹¹⁴ The neighboring building is also placed near the property line visually obstructing the elevation (Figures 116 and 117). The north (side) elevation contains two multi-pane steel sash windows (Figure 118).



Figure 115: Filling Station, Looking North.

¹¹⁴ Robeson County Deed Book 9Y, page 62.

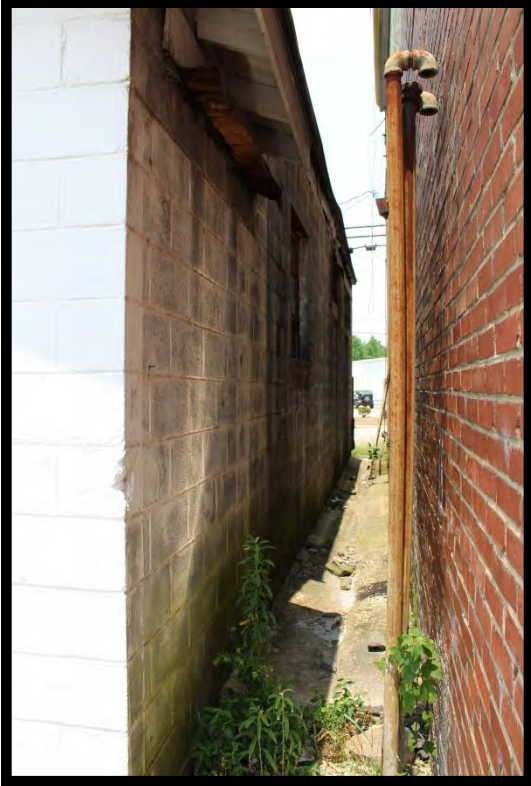


Figure 116: Filling Station, Looking North.

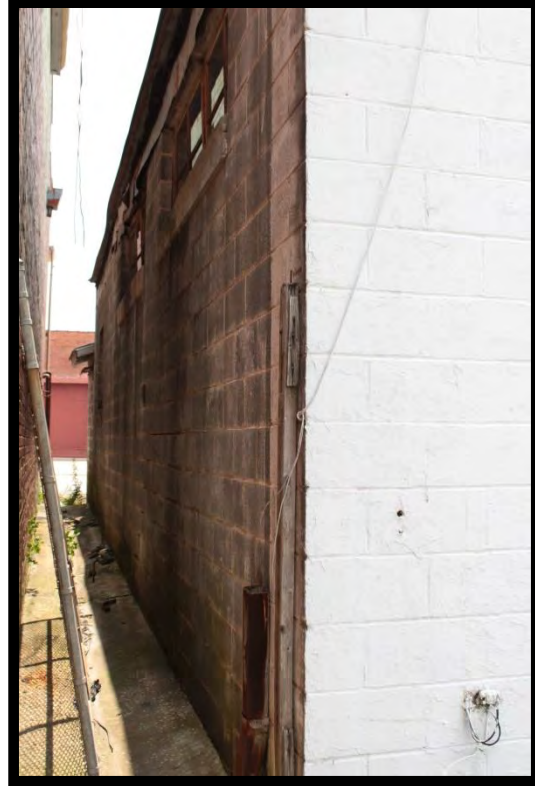


Figure 117: Filling Station, Looking South.



Figure 118: Filling Station, Looking South.

Interior

Attempts to contact the owner were unsuccessful and the surveyor was unable to gain access to the interior of the core of the building. The interior of the core, however, is most likely divided into two spaces: a two-bay garage space and an office/retail area. One of the restrooms on the south elevation of the building was accessible and has a tiled interior with a porcelain toilet and sink and mirrors. The second restroom likely mirrors this arrangement (Figure 119).



Figure 119: Filling Station, Restroom, Looking Northeast.

Historical Background

The studied parcel originally belonged to the Wessell family and was part of a larger tract known as the Wessell Lands. Miss Julia Wessell inherited at least a portion of this tract from her parents before selling the portion that now contains the filling station to Wade H. and Margaret Tyner in 1938.¹¹⁵

The 1930 census lists Wade, who was 21 years old at the time, as living in the Pembroke Township, west of Lumberton, with his parents. He is also listed as working on his own account as the manager of a garage.¹¹⁶ In 1931, he married Margaret Humphrey, who was also from Pembroke.¹¹⁷ The 1940 census indicates that they remained in Pembroke and that Wade was an auto dealer.¹¹⁸ A 1937 article shares that he owned and operated the Tyner Motor Co., which was established in Pembroke in 1932. The company sold Ford and Lincoln automobiles and included a gas station and full-service garage.¹¹⁹

It is likely that Wade purchased the parcel in Lumberton with plans to expand his Pembroke business though no businesses are listed at the address in the available city directories from the 1930s and 1940s. In August 1945 Wade sold the Pembroke business to O. Clinton Norment and Cutlar Moore who changed the name from Tyner Motor Co. to Pembroke Motor Company.¹²⁰ At the same time, possibly as part of the sale, the Tyners sold the eastern portion of the Lumberton parcel, which now contains an Automobile Sales Center (RB0719), to Norment. Norment was already well established as an automobile dealer in Lumberton, operating Norment Motor Co. Inc. The deed confirms the existence of the filling station at this time stating that the new parcel lied “6 inches east of the east wall of a one-story filling station.”¹²¹ The small building is also visible on a 1958 aerial photograph of Lumberton (Figure 120).

Though the Tyners retained the parcel with the filling station, city directories show that they moved to Shelby, near Charlotte, North Carolina in the 1940s. There, Wade operated Tyner Motor Co. from a new location.¹²² By 1957, however, he was once again operating Tyner Motor Co. from Pembroke.¹²³ Throughout this time frame, the address of the filling station (595 West 5th Street) is unmentioned in the Lumberton City Directories. A filling station, Curley & Mack’s Esso Service Center, is listed at 603 West 5th Street in 1956 and T & R Esso Station is listed

¹¹⁵ Robeson County Deed Book 8Y, page 506.

¹¹⁶ United States Department of Commerce, *Fifteenth Census of the United States* (Washington, District of Columbia: Bureau of Census, 1930).

¹¹⁷ Ancestry.com, “Wade H Tyner,” North Carolina Marriage Records, https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=60548&h=3615744&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=nee264&_phstart=successSource, accessed June 27, 2019.

¹¹⁸ United States Department of Commerce, *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, 1940.

¹¹⁹ “Pembroke Ford Dealer Has Complete Garage Service,” *The Robesonian*, Nov. 29, 1937.

¹²⁰ “2 Local Men Buy Tyner Motor Co.,” *The Robesonian*, August 30, 1945.

¹²¹ Robeson County Deed Book 9Y, page 62.

¹²² *Miller’s Shelby, N. C. City Directory, 1949-1950*, Vol. VII, (Asheville: Southern Directory Co., 1948), 337.

¹²³ “Tyner Motor Co.,” *The Robesonian*, July 31, 1957.



Figure 120: 1958 USGS Aerial Showing Location of Filling Station (Source EarthExplorer).

between 600 and 607 West 5th Street, though without a specific address, in 1963.¹²⁴ It could be that the addresses at the intersection have been changed over time and that the proprietor of these businesses rented the space from the Tyners and operated it under various names or even that Norment rented it and operated it as a part of his auto sales business. Evidence to confirm this arrangement, however, could not be found.

In 1970, Wade and Margaret sold the property to their son, Frederick C. Tyner, and his wife, Betty B. Tyner. According to the deed, they lived in Wake County, suggesting that they may have continued to rent the property to other proprietors as opposed to operating it themselves.¹²⁵

In 1974, they sold it to John C. Huggins and his wife, Linda O. Huggins.¹²⁶ John operated the filling station as an automobile dealership and real estate office throughout the 1970s and likely longer, though no newspapers or city directories for later decades were found to substantiate this theory (Figure 121). It should be noted that though the building is described as a filling station in the 1945 deed between Tyner and Norment, there does not remain any evidence of fueling pumps or an awning.

¹²⁴ *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1956* and *Nelson's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1963*.

¹²⁵ Robeson County Deed Book 17P, page 326.

¹²⁶ Robeson County Deed Book 19K, page 158.

In 2013, John and Linda deeded the property along with 12 other parcels to their three children.¹²⁷ Three years later, in 2016, the children transferred the property to Huggins Family Properties LLC.¹²⁸ In 2018, they sold it to the current owner, Alexander Stanton.¹²⁹ The current state of the building implies that it has been vacant for most of this time frame.

SUMMER SPECIAL

HUGGINS MOTOR SALES

1972 IMPALA CONVERTIBLE

Automatic transmission, power steering, power brakes, air condition, gold with black top & matching interior, low mileage, real sharp. The car that's hard to find, don't miss this one.

HUGGINS MOTORS

See Johnnie Huggins
Where West 5th St. Meets West 2nd St.

Figure 121: 1975 Huggins Motors Advertisement (Source: *The Robesonian*, August 20, 1975).

¹²⁷ Robeson County Deed Book 1926, page 109.

¹²⁸ Robeson County Deed Book 2059, page 881.

¹²⁹ Robeson County Deed Book 2148, page 72.

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Filling Station is recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

The Filling Station remains in its original location at the intersection of West 2nd and West 5th Streets in Lumberton. One of the earlier commercial buildings constructed in this area, its original setting likely consisted of residential properties interspersed with newly established commercial properties. Over time, the area has evolved to include primarily commercial properties from the mid- to late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The design of the concrete building has been compromised by the replacement of its glass paneled garage doors as well as by boarding over its display windows. These changes also compromise the integrity of its materials and workmanship. Also, though the building displays the quintessential form of an early twentieth century filling station, its feeling and association with this commercial endeavor is compromised by the absence of fueling pumps or an awning.

Criterion A

The Filling Station is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

The filling station is historically associated with the early twentieth century popularization of the automobile and the growth of automobile related industries, as well as the expansion of Lumberton's commercial core west of the Lumber River. The filling station, however, is not associated with a particular event or pattern of events that made a significant contribution to the development of the community, state, or nation and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The Filling Station is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

The building is not associated with the life or lives of persons significant to our past and therefore is not recommended eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C

The Filling Station is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Filling stations, or gas stations as they were later called, became a common roadside building in the early twentieth century. Originally operated by sole proprietors, often in conjunction with a general store, the emerging industry quickly evolved into a highly sophisticated and well-branded enterprise with strategically placed stations across the country. As the industry grew, the stations began to take on more identifiable forms with differentiating details and features. In some cases, brands, such as Pure Oil, developed fanciful or residential-like designs while other brands opted for simple utilitarian structures. Many stations also adapted to accommodate additional needs of motorists including cleaning windshields, checking oil, and providing other basic curb-side services.¹³⁰

As each station strove to improve its customer service and garner the patronage of more drivers, service bays were added to existing structures or incorporated into the design of new locations. This combination of fuel station and service garage lead to one of the most common gas station forms, the oblong box. Most often composed of a single bay retail area flanked by a two-bay service area, the form had a flat roof with or without a parapet and exhibited influences of the Moderne or International Style. The form could be designed with an attached or detached canopy that sheltered gas pumps in front of the retail area, or with no canopy at all.¹³¹

In the case of larger regional or nation-wide brands, this form was often differentiated through the application of design elements like stripes or distinct colors, such as Texaco's star logo and use of forest green and red.¹³²

While the filling station in Lumberton follows a typical oblong box form it does not exhibit features characteristic of a particular brand nor does it have a canopy or extant gas pumps. It is also very possible, particularly taking into consideration that the Tyner family seems to be more closely associated with automobile sales than gas stations, that the station was never formally associated with a regional or national brand but rather represents the industry of local entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, like other filling stations of the period, it retains its utilitarian, box-like form with large window openings, some of which are still filled with multi-pane steel units, and its service bays, which are still filled with large garage doors, though they are replacements. It has also been enlarged with the addition of restrooms on the south elevation. The restrooms, however, are modest in size and placed near the rear of the building. Furthermore, they were

¹³⁰ W. Dwayne Jones, *Historical Studies Report No. 2003-03: A Field Guide to Gas Stations in Texas, 2016 Update*, Texas Department of Transportation, 2003.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

likely an early modification and represent a common alteration that was necessary to sustain business and make the station appealing to both employees and patrons.

According to W. Dwayne Jones, author of *A Field Guide to Gas Stations in Texas*, these alterations fall into the category of “factors unlikely to affect property eligibility.” The only alteration to the building that might have a stronger impact on the building’s eligibility, falling into the category of “factors likely to make a property ineligible” would be the removal of the building’s canopy, but no evidence of a removed canopy exists on the façade of the building, or in aerial images. Another factor that may affect eligibility is the removal of applied ornament or the painting over of a historic exterior finish, however, no evidence of this remains either.¹³³ Archival research was also unable to associate the filling station with any brand that may have implemented a distinctive design.

On the other hand, the filling station exhibits over half, four out of seven, of the tier one (unlikely to affect) factors with the tier two (may affect) and tier three (likely to affect) factors as unknowns. Due to this high number of factors, it is difficult to assert the building’s eligibility with confidence based solely on these criteria.

A comparable resource in Lumberton is located roughly one mile west of the filling station at 1810 West 5th Street (Figure 122). Now used as a sign shop, the building is described in the Robeson County tax records as a ca. 1940 Auto Service Garage. Like the studied filling station, it is a concrete block building with a large garage bay and an office/retail space. The building differs, however, in that it does not exhibit the quintessential oblong-box form, only has one garage bay, and has a stepped parapet roof. It also does not appear that it was used as a filling station but was constructed to meet service needs. Because it does not follow the typical filling or service station form, the building is more representative of a one-off, independently owned business rather than one owned by or mimicking a corporate brand. This distinction also makes it more representative of this area of Lumberton, which is defined by a variety of building types, most of which reflect utilitarian functions versus a particular architectural styles or design motifs.

In contrast, two filling stations east of the Lumber River are still highly representative of their original designs and are easily linked with the fuel companies that established them. These stations include the 1947 Pure Oil Filling Station (RB0180, Figure 123) on West 2nd Street and a ca. 1935 gas station (RB0230, Figure 124) on East 2nd Street, both of which contribute to the NRHP-listed Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476). The Pure Oil station is an intact example of the company’s use of a residential design with Tudor Revival-style influences and identifiable colors. The second gas station was likely an Esso station based on its tiled pent roof, stuccoed elevations, and art deco pilasters.¹³⁴ Due to the retention of these character-defining features, these resources serve as better examples of intact filling stations and are more closely associated with the periods in which they were constructed.

¹³³ Jones, 12-12.

¹³⁴ RoadsideArchitecture.com, *North Carolina Gas Stations*, <http://www.roadarch.com/gas/nc.html>, accessed June 26, 2019.



Figure 122: 1810 West 5th Street, Lumberton, NC, Looking East.



Figure 123: Pure Oil Filing Station (RB0180), Looking Northeast.



Figure 124: Gas Station (RB0230), Looking Northeast.

Though the filling station is representative of a small early to mid-twentieth century filling station constructed with a typical oblong-box form and retains its original fenestration pattern, it lacks the architectural details and design elements that more strongly link other Lumberton filling stations with the companies that once owned them and the period in which they were constructed. Furthermore, the building's simple details are on par with other resources found along West 5th Street, such as the auto service garage. For these reasons, the building does not stand out as a significant architectural resource and is therefore recommended not eligible under Criterion C.

Criterion D

The Filling Station is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion D.

Resource Name:	NCDOT Office
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	008
HPO Survey Site Number:	RB00721
Location:	301 Water Street, Lumberton, North Carolina
Parcel ID:	939166631200
Dates(s) of Construction:	Ca. 1940
Recommendation:	Not Eligible



Figure 125: NCDOT Office, Looking West.

Setting

The property is located on the west side of North Water Street and is bound on the east by the Lumber River. To its north is a long, shaded parcel that fills the area between the studied lot and the Fifth Street bridge, which is proposed for replacement. Just southeast of the property, Third Street dead ends into North Water Street. The 1914 Sanborn Map of Lumberton, however, shows that the street once continued west to a wooden bridge that crossed the river. Today, this area is a gravel-filled lot that appears to be used for parking. South of this are two residential lots, a car sales lot, and the Second Street bridge, which is also proposed for replacement. The property contains an office building that faces east toward a municipal parking lot. Its façade is flush with the property line and a sidewalk that fills the space between the office and the street. Additional sidewalks wrap the building and connect with a path that follows the river north to the Fifth Street bridge. The sidewalks and river path also connect with a large viewing platform that extends a few feet over the river (Figure 126).

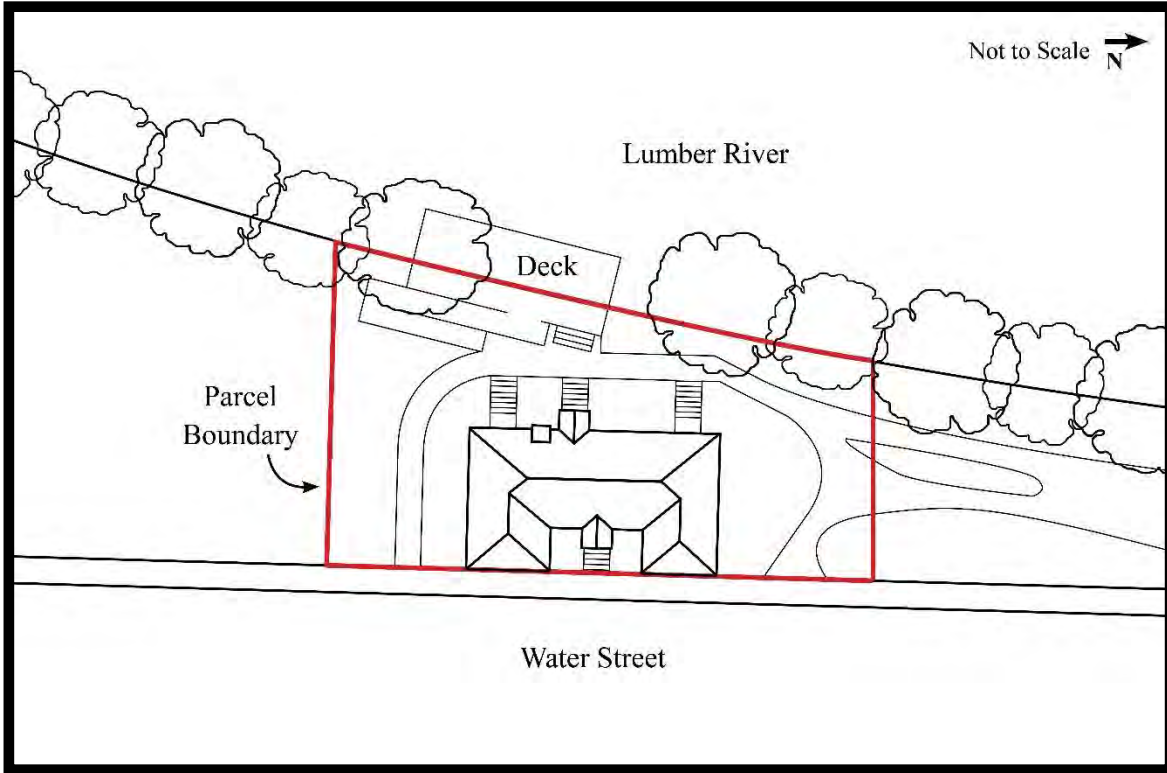


Figure 126: Sketch Map of the NCDOT Office.

Property Description

Exterior

The ca. 1950 one-story brick building has a U-shaped footprint, rests on a tall parged brick or concrete foundation, is sheltered by an asphalt-shingled hipped roof with shallows eaves, and is lit by vinyl sash windows. Its façade is symmetrical with hip-roofed wings that extend forward framing a recessed entrance. The wings are lit by paired six-over-six windows that are centered on each elevation. The entrance consists of a solid entry door and screen door sheltered by a pedimented porch supported by two slightly tapered square posts clad with vinyl. Because the building is raised, the porch is accessed by a set of five concrete steps lined with a metal pipe railing. The entry door is flanked by small four-over-four windows (Figure 125).

The north (side) elevation contains, from east to west, paired six-over-six windows, a small four-over-four window, and a single six-over-six window. Three panels fill openings in the foundation that may have originally acted as windows as well (Figure 127).

The west (rear) elevation contains, from north to south, a six-over-six window, paired six-over-six windows, an entry door with a pedimented porch that mirrors the configuration of the front entrance, an exterior brick chimney, and paired six-over-six windows. Two doorways covered with plywood pierce the foundation at each end of the elevation. They are both accessed by subterranean concrete steps (Figures 128 and 129).



Figure 127: NCDOT Office, Looking South.



Figure 128: NCDOT Office, Looking South.



Figure 129: NCDOT Office, Looking South.



Figure 130: NCDOT Office, Looking North.

The south (side) elevation contains two sets of paired six-over-six windows that are evenly distributed on the elevation. Two panels fill openings in the foundation that may have originally acted as windows (Figure 130).

Interior

The interior of the building consists of three offices and a breakroom/restroom area that are centered around a wide center hall that likely served as a reception space or additional office. The spaces are characterized by original woodwork, including doors, window and door surrounds, baseboards, and crown molding. The floors are finished with asbestos floor tiles and the ceilings are finished with acoustic tiles (Figures 131 through 136).



Figure 131: NCDOT Office, Center Hall/Reception Space, Looking Southeast.



Figure 132: NCDOT Office, Center Hall/Reception Space, Looking Southwest.



Figure 133: NCDOT Office, Office Space, Looking Northeast.

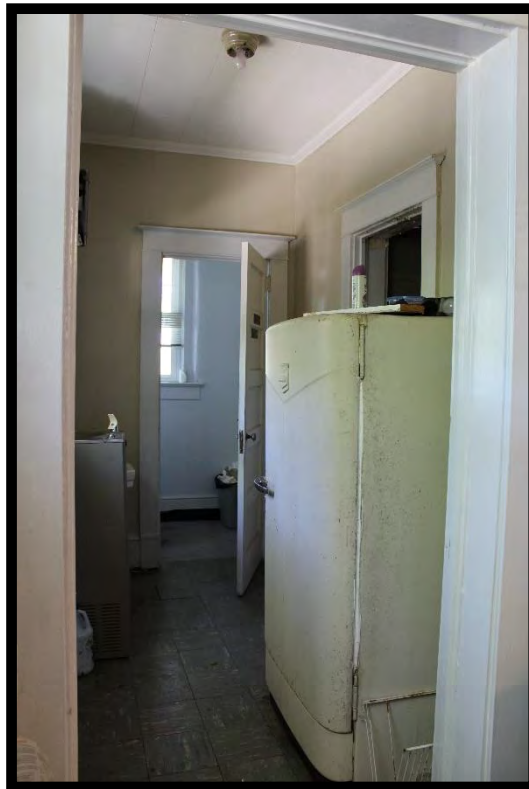


Figure 134: NCDOT Office, Break Room and Restroom, Looking Northeast.



Figure 135: NCDOT Office, Typical Wooden Door.



Figure 136: NCDOT Office, Typical Window.

Historical Background

No deed or current property owner information could be obtained from the tax assessment office or register of deeds to determine the ownership history of the property. City directories, however, indicate that the building was constructed after 1938, and was used from the 1940s through the 1970s as the office of the State Highway and Public Works Commission.¹³⁵ Additionally, Chuck Miller, an NCDOT district engineer, shared that the building served as the resident engineer's office and that the construction unit operated from the building until their current building was completed, roughly ten years ago.¹³⁶ Following this the ownership of the building passed to the City of Lumberton. A sign outside the office indicates that it was used at some point as the Robeson County Housing Outreach Center. The phone number provided on the sign, however, has been disconnected and the office appears to have been abandoned, possibly in response to flooding from Hurricane Matthew or Florence. Though the building is no longer used as an office, the river side of the property has been developed as part of a riverwalk with a viewing platform that extends over the bank of the Lumber River.

¹³⁵ *Baldwin and Robesonian's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1938, 271; Baldwin's Lumberton, North Carolina, City Directory, 1948, 257 and The Mullin-Kille Lumberton, North Carolina Con Survey City Directory, 1974, 290.*

¹³⁶ Charles S. Miller, Email Correspondence, May 31, 2019.

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Office is recommended not eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

The Office remains in its original location on the eastern bank of the Lumber River just west of the historic commercial district. Though its original setting is unknown, it is likely that it has changed some with the demolition of early structures and construction of newer structures, like the Whitley Furniture Company (RB0234), which stands southeast of the office. Its design does not appear to have been greatly altered since its construction, though its wooden sash windows have been replaced with similarly configured vinyl sash windows and the openings on its lower level have been covered with panels and plywood. Taking into consideration the interior finishes, the building retains a great deal of its original materials and workmanship, with the wooden sash windows being the building's greatest loss. The building's well-preserved form, which displays shallow eaves and minimal details, is reflective of its period of construction and strengthens its feeling as a humble office building as well as its association with the mid-twentieth century.

Criterion A

The Office is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

The office is historically associated with the development of North Carolina's transportation systems through the establishment of offices in each county. The office, however, is not associated with a particular event or pattern of events that made a significant contribution to the development of the community, state, or nation and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The Office is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

The building is not associated with the life or lives of persons significant to our past and therefore is not recommended eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C

As an individual resource, the NCDOT Office is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). It is, however, recommended as an addition to the current NRHP-listed Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The building is representative of a small early to mid-twentieth century office building constructed in the Minimal Traditional style and finished with Colonial Revival details. Its form, which is more complex than most Minimal Traditional-style buildings, harkens to Palladian structures built with a center mass and flanking pavilions or dependencies, though it is much smaller and more simplistic. Its most identifiable Minimal Traditional detail is its relatively shallow unadorned eaves, which serve as a strong contrast to earlier styles, such as Craftsman or Italianate, and displayed deep eaves and elaborate cornices. Its Colonial Revival, or in some regards Classical Revival, details are displayed in its plan and form, pedimented entrances, and windows with small panes, which, though replacements, likely reflect the its original design.

The building differs from most of the commercial/institutional architecture in downtown Lumberton in that it is smaller and less elaborate. It was also constructed later than most of the other buildings in the commercial core. Because of this, the building displays a style that is only minimally observed on the fringes of downtown Lumberton, and no buildings of comparable style, scale and age were identified for comparison. In order to find more comparable buildings, neighboring counties were searched for state highway and department of transportation buildings and complexes. The search identified a number of mid-century buildings with features comparable to the office in Lumberton. Chiefly among these features was the use of brick (both veneer and loadbearing), hipped roofs, and modest detailing. An NCDOT complex in Fayetteville contains two comparable buildings and once contained a third comparable building (Figures 137 through 139). The first building is a small one-story brick structure with a hipped roof. The building is smaller than the Lumberton office but displays similar eaves and windows placed near the roofline. It differs in that it has a basic rectangular form and also lacks a pediment above its industrial entry door. The second building on the complex is a much larger two-story brick building with a side-gabled roof. Its most comparable feature is its pedimented entrance, which displays paneling and applied details that make it more elaborate than the Lumberton office and displays the variation used by NCDOT, then the State Highway and Public Works Commission. The demolished building appears to have been the most similar to the studied building with a brick exterior, hipped roof, pedimented entrance, paired windows, and comparable scale. Together, the four NCDOT buildings exhibit the organization's preference for simple brick buildings as well as its openness to different forms and details.

In contrast with the other NCDOT buildings, the office does not stand out as a significant architectural resource. It does, however, remain as an intact example of an early to mid-twentieth century office building, and while recommended not individually eligible under Criterion C, the office retains a high enough level of integrity to be considered as an addition to the current NRHP-listed Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476) (Figure 140).



Figure 137: 425 Transportation Drive, Fayetteville, NC, Looking South.



Figure 138: 439 Transportation Drive, Fayetteville, NC, Looking West.



Figure 139: Demolished Building on Transportation Drive, Fayetteville, NC, Looking Southwest (Google Streetview).

Criterion D

The Office is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore not recommended eligible under Criterion D.

NRHP Boundary Expansion Justification

The proposed NRHP boundary expansion for the Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476) has been drawn according to the guidelines of National Register Bulletin 21, *Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties*. The expansion, which adjoins the western boundary of the current district, is drawn to include the office and its associated parcel. The proposed NRHP boundary expansion contains approximately 0.17 acres and is identified as parcel 939166631200 (Robeson County Parcel ID).



Figure 140: Lumberton Commercial Historic District (RB0476) Boundary Expansion.

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