

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Approved: 4/22/2016
VLR and NRHP

Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District (2016 Update)
Name of Property Lynchburg, VA
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 1

Summary — Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District (2015 Update)

The Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District (DHR #118-5163) in Lynchburg, Virginia, was listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) in 2000 and in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2001. Situated on a promontory overlooking the south bank of the James River, the district is located in the heart of Lynchburg. A dramatic grade change separates Court House Hill from Downtown. The historic district is bordered to the east by the Lower Basin Historic District (118-0211) and to the south by the Diamond Hill Historic District (118-0060). The original boundaries of the historic district encompassed 25 blocks along Clay, Court, Church, and Main streets between the cross streets of 5th and 13th streets. A boundary increase in 2002 expanded the boundaries to include a residential area between Madison and Federal streets.

The Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Industry, Politics/Government, and Religion and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Lynchburg served as the major transportation, industrial, and commercial hub of the Lower Piedmont Region of Virginia from the early nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century due to its prominent location on the James River. The district retains commercial, residential, religious, and governmental buildings from this period of growth and prosperity. Court House Hill was historically the location of government buildings, religious institutions, and residences, while Downtown was the center of commerce and finance. Since the 2002 boundary increase, the period of significance for the district has been 1786 to 1952, which, at the time, marked the end of 50 years, the traditional end date for a period of significance at place where significant activities have continued into the more recent past.

The purpose of this nomination update is to expand the district's period of significance to end in 1957 to include mid-twentieth century resources that represent the continued growth and prosperity of the district as the major civic, transportation, industrial and commercial hub of the Lower Piedmont Region. The resource count in Section 5 has been updated to take into account the expanded period of significance; with this nomination update, the entire district contains 193 resources, 177 of which are contributing. This nomination update does not repeat information previously included in the original nomination. All content is organized by the section headers on the current edition of the NRHP nomination form, with only those sections that warrant updating included in this documentation.

SECTION 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

<i>Stephanie B. Williams</i>	<i>3.9.16</i>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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SECTION 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
-------------------------	----------------

SECTION 5: Classification

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>171</u>	<u>11</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	structures
<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	objects
<u>177</u>	<u>16</u>	Total

SECTION 7: Description

Narrative Description

Three previously non-contributing resources (2 primary and 1 secondary) within the original district boundary are now considered contributing due to the expanded period of significance: the ca. 1954 courthouse building and a ca. 1957 parking garage with associated attendant’s booth. An elevator shaft attached to the courthouse building dates to 2005 (after the original historic district nomination) and is a non-contributing resource.

The 1954-1955 Lynchburg Circuit Court Building stands diagonally across Court Street from the 1851 Greek Revival Lynchburg Courthouse. Everette Fauber designed the monumental limestone and granite courthouse using the Stripped Classical style, which was especially popular for federal, state, and local government buildings from 1930 to 1950. The style carries the same patriotic associations with democratic ideals as traditional

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classicism, but presented in a modern way, combining classical and modern styles with some Art Deco elements.¹ Its symmetrical façade is simple and restrained. The reinforced concrete frame courthouse is of masonry cavity wall construction. The main entrance portal is contained within a central two-story bay. A polished red granite inscription panel for the bronze sculptural relief depicting the Lady of Justice surmounts the double leaf plate glass and aluminum doors. Michael Lantz of New Rochelle, New York, created the relief over the entrance. He also completed a series of relief sculptures in the main lobby depicting the history of Lynchburg. Horizontal bands of ribbon windows extend out from the central bay. The vertical panels between the windows are made of polished red granite. Indiana limestone trim frames the main entrance portal, windows, and smaller door openings.

Located northwest of the courthouse building, a detached two-story, elevator building transports passengers from the Court Street sidewalk down to the courthouse’s offices on the basement level. The above-grade level of the elevator shaft is clad with light-colored brick to match the courthouse. The brick is arranged in three-course common bond with quoins at the corners of the shaft. Classical-columned porticoes with hipped standing-seam metal roofs shelter the elevator doors on the upper and lower levels. The elevator shaft was built in 2005 and does not contribute to the Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District.

The ca. 1957 parking deck at 1008 Church Street is composed of poured concrete on a steel frame. A curved ramp connects the two levels. A brick veneer covers the exterior walls of the parking deck. A one-story attendant’s booth occupies the northwest corner of the parking deck. Its concrete block walls are covered with a blonde brick veneer. Three sides of the building are steel frame with plate glass windows over a brick base. The flat roof extends past the front wall of the building to create a covered entrance supported by two steel columns. A transom caps the two-light metal door. Both the parking deck and the attendant’s booth contribute to the Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District with its expanded period of significance.

The newly-contributing resources are in keeping with the historic functions and architectural character of the Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District as it continued to serve as the commercial, financial, governmental, and religious center of Lynchburg into the mid-twentieth century.

Inventory

The following inventory lists the three newly contributing resources within the original Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District. The inventory is organized alphabetically by street name and then numerically by address number. Each entry provides the address, building name if applicable, date of construction, architectural style, current building use, VDHR File number, and the contributing status within the updated district. The contributing/non-contributing status of each building was determined based on the integrity of each building as they support Criteria A (Commerce, Industry, Politics/Government, Religion) and C (Architecture) during the expanded period of significance (1786-1957). Resources are keyed to the Sketch Map/Photo Key by their numerical street address and are labeled with their resource name and contributing or non-contributing status.

1008 Church Street 118-5163-0081 *Other DHR Id#:*

Primary Resource: Parking Garage (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1957

Contributing Total: 1

¹ Classic Commonwealth: Virginia Architecture from the Colonial Era to 1940, 129-130.

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Secondary Resource: Attendant’s Booth (Building)
Contributing Total: 1

900 Court Street 118-5163-0036 *Other DHR Id#:*
Primary Resource: Courthouse (Building), Stories 2, Style: Art Deco, Ca 1954
Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Elevator Shaft (Structure)
Non-contributing Total: 1

SECTION 8: Statement of Significance

Period of Significance

1786 – 1957

Significant Dates

1954-1955

Architect/Builder

Fauber, Everette (architect)
C.L. Lewis and Co. (builder)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

This 2015 Nomination Update expands the Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District’s period of significance to end ca. 1957, to include mid-twentieth century resources within the district boundaries that represent the continued growth and prosperity of the district as the major civic, transportation, industrial and commercial hub of the region. The period of significance for the district begins in 1786, when the General Assembly established the town of Lynchburg and the initial segments of the existing street grid system were laid. The expanded period of significance ends in 1957, the construction year of the most recent contributing resource to be built within the boundaries of the original historic district.

The areas of significance assigned to the district in the original nomination were Architecture, Commerce, Industry, Politics/Government, and Religion, and to date, subsequent research has not resulted in identifying additional areas of significance. The Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District continues to be locally significant under Criteria A and C for its role as the enduring governmental, financial, commercial, and religious center of Lynchburg.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

Criteria Justification

Criterion A: Commerce & Politics/Government

The 1954-1955 Lynchburg Circuit Court Building continues the tradition of court activities on the Ninth Street-Court Street axis established in the early 1800s by the Lynchburg Courthouse. Constructed diagonally across from the Lynchburg Courthouse as an annex, it became the main circuit court building when the Lynchburg Courthouse was restored as a museum in 1976. The court building also houses the corporation courts, clerk’s office, and the Lynchburg Bar Association Library. The Lynchburg Circuit Court Building has reaffirmed Court Street’s designation as the governmental center of the city.

The parking deck at 1008 Church Street represents a significant mid-century trend in downtown commercial development. As motor vehicles became widespread, downtown parking garages proliferated across the nation as central businesses districts tried to compete with suburban shopping malls and office parks. This parking deck and its associated attendant’s booth, built ca. 1957, are representative of this desire to provide convenient parking in downtown Lynchburg.

Criterion C: Architecture

Through its built environment, the Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District illustrates trends in architectural design that occurred from the 1800s to the mid-1900s. The cohesive assemblage of resources collectively retains a high level of integrity that conveys their historical associations with Lynchburg’s growth. The expanded period of significance allows resources from the “recent past” to be recognized for their architectural contributions to the historic district. In his book, *Lynchburg, an Architectural History*, S. Allen Chambers identified the 1954-1955 Lynchburg Circuit Court Building by Everette Fauber as “a building destined to make a mark on Lynchburg’s architectural history.” The courthouse stands on the hillside next to Monument Terrace, diagonally across Court Street from the 1851 Greek Revival Courthouse (now a museum). The monumental building is trimmed with granite and limestone and features a bronze relief of Lady Justice over the main entrance. Its symmetrical façade is simple and restrained. Designed in the Stripped Classical style, the courthouse respects the democratic ideals articulated by traditional classical civic buildings in the district, while also expressing modernity and progress.

SECTION 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Blanton, Alison S. Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District, National Register nomination 118-5163. Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia, 2001.

Chambers, S. Allen, and Richard Cheek. Lynchburg, an Architectural History. Charlottesville: Published for the Sarah Winston Henry Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities by the University Press of Virginia, 1981.

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Lynchburg, VA

County and State

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Laurant, Daniel. *A City Unto Itself: Lynchburg, Virginia in the 20th Century*. Lynchburg, Va.: The News and Advance, 1997.

Lyod, Richard B. and Bernard K. Mundy. *Lynchburg: A Pictorial History*. Virginia Beach, Va.: Donning, 1975.

Potter, Clifton W, and Dorothy Bundy Turner Potter. *Lynchburg: a City Set On Seven Hills*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publ, 2004.

Sanborn Insurance Company, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1885, 1890, 1895, 1902, 1907, 1951, 1955. New York, NY: Sanborn Insurance Company.

SECTION 11: Form Prepared By

name/title: Katherine C. Gutshall & Alison S. Blanton

organization: Hill Studio, PC

street & number: 120 Campbell Avenue SW

city or town: Roanoke state: Virginia zip code: 24011

e-mail: ablanton@hillstudio.com

telephone: 540-342-5263

date: November 2015

Additional Documentation

Photographs

Photo Log

Name of Property: Court House Hill/Downtown Historic District (2015 Update)

City or Vicinity: Lynchburg (City)

State: Virginia

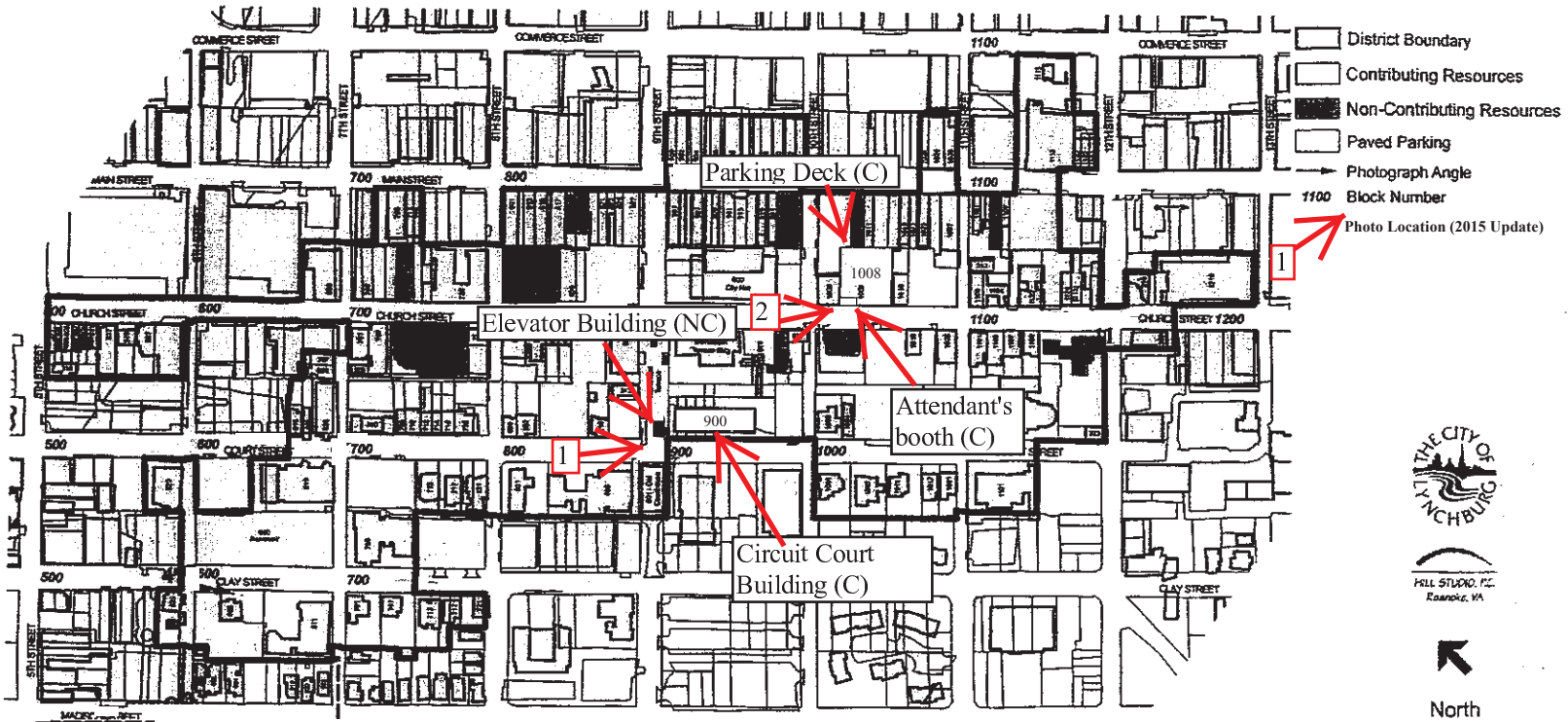
Photographer: Katie Coffield Gutshall

Date Photographed: October 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 2: Lynchburg Circuit Court Building, Court Street, 900 Block, with non-contributing Elevator Building shown in left foreground, camera facing Southeast

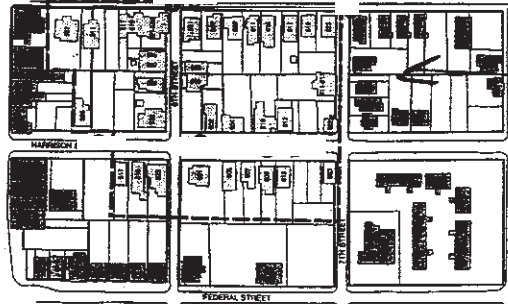
Photo 2 of 2: Attendant's booth with parking deck beyond, 1008 Church Street, camera facing southeast



FULL STUDIO, P.C.
Roanoke, VA



North



SKETCH MAP/PHOTO KEY

Court House Hill/ Downtown Historic District 2015 Update
City of Lynchburg, VA
DHR No. 118-5163

Note: map shows location of properties that changed from Non-Contributing to Contributing as a result of the nomination update.

This sketch map is based on the the original historic district sketch map, which was prepared by:

GRAY & PAPE
INC
CULTURAL RESOURCES CONSULTANTS