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Two Properties Receive Raleigh Historic Landmark Designation

The Raleigh City Council, on June 21, approved the recommendation of the City of Raleigh Historic Districts Commission (RHDC) to designate the Raleigh Furniture Building, 119 E Hargett Street and the Paul and Elsie Stahl House, 3017 Granville Drive as Raleigh Historic Landmarks.

The Raleigh Furniture Company building is a brick three-story late Romanesque Revival commercial building incorporating Italianate elements. Built in 1914, the building has been restored to a historically accurate wood storefront including a fully glazed transom and a copper cornice. The upper stories are divided in to three bays by brick pilasters and horizontal corbelled molding that frames both stories of each bay.

In the 1920s and 1930s, East Hargett Street between Fayetteville Street and Blount Street became the center of commerce and was known as the ‘Black Main Street’ due to its location near City Market, Moore Square and predominately African-American communities. The Raleigh Furniture Company building is one of a few architecturally significant buildings remaining from that time.

The Stahl House is an excellent example of a contemporary Ranch that includes window walls, an open interior floor plan, low-pitched side-gabled roof and post and beam construction. The house was designed by local architect Milton Small and built by Frank Walser in 1956.

The Stahl House possesses a level of architectural integrity not often seen due to its continued ownership by the same family. The house has seen no alterations and no significant replacement of materials or architectural elements. Original materials, finishes and light fixtures remain. The house is significant in the development of post-war architecture in Raleigh and as a rare example of a house in the Contemporary style.

A historic landmark is an individual building, structure, site, area, or object that is deemed and found by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission to be of historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological, and/or cultural significance, and to possess integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or association

Historic landmark designation is bestowed on only a few of the city's significant historic properties each year. The owner of a privately owned landmark is eligible for an annual 50 percent property tax deferral the year following designation, as long as the special character of the historic property is maintained. The Design Guidelines for Raleigh Historic Districts aid a landmark owner in planning desired exterior changes in a manner that preserves a landmark's historic value. The City of Raleigh Department of City Planning staff can provide technical preservation assistance to owners of landmarks upon request.

The Raleigh City Council designates historic landmarks upon recommendation of the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission. Raleigh's survey of historic architecture is used as a guide to evaluate a property's eligibility for landmark designation. In addition, the RHDC maintains a "Designation Priorities List," which includes properties potentially eligible for landmark designation. A property owner wishing to pursue historic landmark designation should discuss the property's eligibility with City of Raleigh staff before proceeding. Historic landmark designation can be initiated by the property owner or the RHDC.

To begin the process a property owner must complete and submit a Raleigh Historic Landmark designation application to the RHDC. The application report will include current data about the property and site, a complete description of the property proposed for designation, pertinent historical information, and photographs. There are professional standards for designation applications and frequently architectural historians or qualified preservation consultants will prepare an application on behalf of the interested party.

Once City staff determines that the report is complete, it is submitted to the Research Committee of the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission for review. The Research Committee makes a recommendation to the full RHDC. The City Council will hold a joint public hearing with the RHDC and forward the application to the State of North Carolina Historic Preservation office for non-binding review and comment on the report. Comments from the property owner, the State Historic Preservation office, and other interested parties will be heard at the public hearing. The RHDC then makes a final recommendation to the City Council, which votes on adopting the designation ordinance.

For more information, visit the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission website at rhdc.org.