



Pythian Hall Historic Marker Unveiled



Photo Courtesy of City of Winston-Salem Marketing and Communications

On July 21st, the Historic Resources Commission held an unveiling ceremony for the newest City of Winston-Salem historic marker. Recognizing the site of Pythian Hall, dedication of this marker brings the total number of historic markers placed for the City's Historic Marker program to 28. Dedication of the Pythian Hall marker was very well attended with strong representation from the Prince Hall Masons from throughout the state and the Clark S. Brown family.

Pythian Hall was constructed in 1902 at the northwest corner of East Seventh and North Chestnut Streets. Located in the prominent African-American community known as Depot Street, the three-story brick building housed the Prince Hall Masons and the Knights of Pythias on the second and third

floors. These fraternal organizations helped incoming African-Americans find jobs and housing. Among commercial enterprises on the first floor were a newspaper press and the Fraternal Funeral Home, established in 1928 by the Prince Hall Masons, and later acquired by local business leader Clark S. Brown. Brown was instrumental in the success of the Prince Hall Masons, serving as

the African-American order's Most Worshipful Grand Master of North Carolina from 1959 to 1974. Pythian Hall was destroyed by fire in 1994.



Photo Courtesy of Clark S. Brown and Sons Funeral Home

Two additional historic markers will be unveiled during September and October. On September 25th, a marker recognizing Calvin H. Wiley School will be unveiled; October 20th is the tentative date to dedicate Forsyth County's first historic marker, which will recognize the former Memorial Industrial School site at Horizons Park.

Adaptive Reuse of the former RJR Factory 64 to Begin

A massive adaptive reuse project is soon slated to begin on the former R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company Factory Complex 64. Rehabilitation of the site includes over 200 rental residential units with one to three bedrooms and retail space. The project will utilize income tax credits available for the rehabilitation of National Register structures, and thus must follow guidelines to ensure the architectural and historical integrity of the property. The property is also designated as a Local Historic Landmark; as such, the plans have been approved by the Historic Resources Commission. The total project cost is estimated to be \$55 million.

Factory 64 is comprised of buildings and structures ranging in date from 1916 to post-1960s construction. It is significant as a



*East Fifth Street, looking west, 1951
(R.J. Reynolds Factory #64 shown at left)
Courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library
Photograph Collection via Digital Forsyth*

highly intact and comprehensive early-to-mid-20th century example of the once numerous industrial buildings and complexes that covered most of Winston-Salem's downtown area. The complex is also significant for its role in the history of African-American employment during the first half of the 20th century. Reynolds was known for his almost total dependence upon African-American labor and he sent trains to South Carolina and eastern North Carolina to bring back factory workers.

The complex is also one of the few remaining sites where the large strikes of 1943 and 1947 took place between the CIO-affiliated Local 22 and the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Of note, it was primarily the female tobacco workers that led many of the strikes and became union leaders as a result.

Healthy Living in Forsyth County Supported by City-County Planning

Among Forsyth County's most pressing community problems are the state of health of residents and the disparities that exist in the health of our community's residents. City-County Planning is actively participating in community initiatives to positively impact community health, well-being and equity. Initiatives include:

- Inclusion of a Healthy, Complete, and Equitable Communities chapter in the recently adopted comprehensive plan, *Legacy 2030*. The chapter includes recommendations related to healthy community design, urban agriculture and food access, and parks and recreational facilities.
- Serving on the advisory committee for the study, *Forsyth County's Community Food System: A Foundation to Grow*. This community food assessment identified elements of the local food system, challenges and successes of the current system, and opportunities to expand the positive impact of local food on community health.
- Providing assistance to Forsyth County to develop a Farmland Preservation Plan. The County recently received a State grant to identify strategies to preserve more farmland and encourage food production.
- Representation on the Forsyth County Cooperative Extension Advisory Council. Local agriculture can contribute to improved community health and well-being. The Cooperative Extension has recently developed an Urban Agriculture Program to support community gardening efforts.
- Reviewing zoning codes and municipal regulations to facilitate or remove barriers to urban agriculture. Regulation changes would be led by community-based groups, with technical assistance from Planning staff.
- Representation on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee of the Translational Science Institute of the Wake Forest School of Medicine. The mission of the Institute's Program in Community Engagement includes working with the community to ensure that scientific research findings translate into information and action at the local level to improve health.
- Growing and strengthening partnerships between the Planning Department, Forsyth County Extension Services, and the Public Health Department on projects that impact community health.
- Leading a session on Planning for Healthy Living - Forsyth County/Winston-Salem at the 2013 North Carolina Planning Conference. The focus is the role that the comprehensive plan, *Legacy 2030*, can play in creating a healthier and more equitable community.



Winston-Salem to Host State Planning Conference

Winston-Salem will host over 500 planners from throughout the state at the North Carolina Planning Conference September 18th to 20th. The conference host committee includes City-County Planning staff and planners from other local jurisdictions, including Kernersville, Clemmons, Lewisville, and Yadkin County, along with staff from the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce and the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation. The Conference will feature over 32

concurrent sessions, networking opportunities, vendor displays, and mobile tours of Winston-Salem by foot, bus, kayak, and bicycle! A special conference registration rate is available for citizen planners. Visit www.nc-apa.org for more information.



Want more information?

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