

City Council – Action Request Form

Date: November 13, 2023

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Aaron King, Assistant City Manager
Chris Murphy, Director of Planning and Development Services

Council Action Requested:

Ordinance Designating Certain Property as a Local Historic Landmark – Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company Plant

Strategic Focus Area: Livable Neighborhoods

Strategic Objective: Preserve Historic Resources

Strategic Plan Action Item: No

Key Work Item: No



Summary of Information:

Local historic landmark designation is administered by the Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission. Landmark designation is provided for by North Carolina law and signifies recognition that a property is important to the heritage and character of the community and that its protection enriches the community’s residents. To date, 143 properties in Forsyth County are so designated. The effects of landmark designation are as follows: (1) a property owner who wishes to make changes to a designated landmark must first have the plans reviewed and approved by the Historic Resources Commission and (2) the owner of a designated landmark may apply for an annual property tax deferral of up to 50% for as long as the property’s important historical features are retained.

A designation application and report have been submitted by Jared Rogers and Salem Bottling LLC for the complete exterior and interior of the Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company and the complete exterior and interior of the garage and workshop/garage of the Plant and all of the tax block and lot upon which the buildings sit, located at 831, 845, 861, and 869 South Poplar Street in Winston-Salem, Tax Block 569, Tax Lot 302. PIN 6835-21-2697. The tax value of the property is \$644,000, and the tax office will calculate the value of the tax deferral based on the amount of the property that is designated. The Historic Resources Commission held a public hearing on the application/report on October 4, 2023 and unanimously recommended approval.

Committee Action:

Committee	<u>CD/H/GG (11/13/23)</u>	Action	<u>Approval</u>
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For	<u>Unanimous</u>	Against	<u></u>
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Remarks:

Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company Plant

Statement of Significance

The Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company plant has special significance in the areas of history and architecture and possesses the requisite special significance necessary for local historic landmark designation.

In the area of industry, the plant exemplifies the diversity of manufacturing operations that drove Winston-Salem's economic and physical growth during the twentieth century. As one of the city's largest soft drink bottling franchises since its 1906 establishment, the company's contribution as a manufacturer, employer, consumer of goods and services, taxpayer, and supporter of local institutions has been enormous. The plant's architectural design is equally important. Executed from drawings provided by the Coca-Cola Company Standardization Committee at the Atlanta headquarters, the 1929 factory is the only Mediterranean Revival style industrial building in Winston-Salem. The factory and 1938, 1947, 1948, 1955, and 1965 additions that tripled the square footage were erected using a cost-effective and resilient combination of steel, concrete, and brick structural elements that manifest significant 20th-century advances in fire-resistant industrial architecture technology.

In the area of architecture, the 1929 plant is much more stylish than the typical utilitarian factory, promoting the Coca-Cola Company brand through its imposing physical presence, sophisticated exterior, and design features intended to engage the public. The building is characterized by wire-cut variegated-red-brick walls laid in six-to-one common bond and a hip-roofed Mediterranean Revival-style two-story main block with a rusticated cast-stone primary entrance surround, bracketed wood cornice, and red terra-cotta tile roof.

The cast-stone panel that surmounts the window openings in the façade's north three first-story bays displays a "Coca-Cola" script logo flanked by plaques ornamented with sculpted contour Coca-Cola bottles. The now enclosed window openings located at the bottling room's east end facilitated public view of the washing, filling, mixing, capping, and conveyor equipment that comprised the assembly line. The room's open plan, high ceiling, light paint colors, ample lighting, and stainless-steel machinery conveyed the hygienic and bright aesthetic specified in Coca-Cola Company plant design standards. The concrete and red terra-cotta tile floors, painted exposed steel posts and reinforced-concrete beams, and plaster walls and ceiling were durable and easy to clean. Likewise, the second-floor syrup rooms and 1955 bottling room addition have hygienic white-glazed-ceramic-tile wainscoting and ceramic and terra-cotta tile floors. Multi-pane steel-frame windows with hoppers illuminate and ventilate the 1929 building and 1938, 1947, and 1948 additions. The 1955 bottling room's steel-frame multi-pane curtain walls and prominent location fronting South Marshall Street displayed the production process as a marketing tool.

In contrast, egress to the windowless 1965 brick-veneered concrete-block warehouse addition, one-story 1929 brick garage enlarged in 1933 and the late 1930s, and one-story brick 1930s workshop with a 1947 restroom and garage addition was from the central courtyard, minimizing visibility of activity in those areas. The complex retains a high level of integrity from its period of significance, which encompasses its construction and historic modification to accommodate production from 1929 until 1994.

The Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company bottling plant contributes to the significance of the National Register-listed West Salem Historic District (2005), an intact collection of resources erected from circa 1865 through the mid-twentieth century. The plant is among the cluster of commercial and industrial buildings at the primarily residential district's southeast corner. The district's period of significance ends in 1957. (Heather Fearnbach, Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company Plant Local Historic Landmark Application 6/20/23)

The current owners are seeking Local Historic Landmark designation for the complete exterior and interior of the Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company Plant and the complete exterior and interior of the garage and workshop/garage, and site in order to recognize the property's architectural significance. A list of the character-defining features is found in the application on pages 31-34.

Integrity

The Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company Plant possesses the seven qualities of historic integrity: location, setting, feeling, association, design, materials, and workmanship.

Location, Setting, Feeling and Association

The plant maintains integrity of location as it stands on its original site. The acreage encompassed within the rectangular 1.09-acre tax parcel is sufficient to convey the plant's industrial character, thus allowing for integrity of setting, feeling, and association. The brick-veneered concrete wall at the parcel's north end screens the site from the townhouses to the north erected in phases from 2007 until 2018 following the 2006 demolition of the 1965 Coca-Cola bottling plant.

Design, Material, and Workmanship

The plant displays high integrity of design, materials, and workmanship as original structural components, features, and finishes are intact. The 1929 building is characterized by wire-cut variegated-red-brick walls laid in six-to-one common bond; a hip-roofed Mediterranean Revival-style two-story main block with a rusticated cast-stone primary entrance surround, bracketed wood cornice, and red terra-cotta tile roof; and a utilitarian rear wing. The cast-stone panel above the window openings in the façade's north three first-story bays that displays a "Coca-Cola" script logo flanked by plaques ornamented with sculpted contour Coca-Cola bottles is in good condition. The large multi-pane steel-frame windows that illuminate the 1929 plant and 1930s and 1940s additions are original. Although the primary entrance and five flanking window openings have been enclosed with parged concrete block, this modification is reversible. Historic photographs and extant examples of entrances, transoms, and windows will be used to replicate the missing elements. The 1955 addition's steel-frame multi-pane curtain walls and brick knee walls are intact. Paint that has been applied to the east curtain wall frame and glazing will be removed. The roll-up doors on the 1965 brick-veneered concrete-block warehouse addition's west elevation have been replaced, but the door openings remain the original size. Alterations that occurred during Old Salem, Inc.'s tenure from 1994 until early 2023, such as modification of the garage door openings on the 1948 wing's west elevation and construction of small storage rooms flanking the rear wing, do not significantly impact the building's overall integrity.

On the interior, manufacturing and storage areas retain predominantly open plans. Original finishes include painted exposed steel posts and reinforced-concrete beams, painted and unpainted brick and concrete-block walls, plaster and beadboard walls and ceilings, and concrete, red terra-cotta tile, and hardwood floors. White-glazed-ceramic-tile wainscoting and ceramic and red terra-cotta tile floors remain in the second-floor syrup rooms and 1955 bottling room. Ongoing modification

and expansion necessary to meet manufacturing and storage needs during the plant's operation from 1929 until 1994 did not diminish the plant's integrity. Post-1994 wall removal and partition construction was minimal.

The 1929 garage enlarged in 1933 and the late 1930s and the 1930s workshop with a 1947 restroom and garage addition are also substantially intact. The one-story, flat-roofed buildings both have wire-cut variegated-red-brick walls laid in six-to-one common bond and terra-cotta-coping capped flat parapets. Concrete floors painted and unpainted brick and concrete-block walls, round steel posts, I-beams and posts, wood posts and beams, and exposed wood ceiling joists and roof decking are in good condition. Although the 1947 garage's east wall and north bays have been removed, the workshop, restroom, and remaining garage bays retain sufficient integrity for the building to remain a contributing element of the plant's significance.

(Heather Fearnbach, Winston Coca-Cola Bottling Company Plant Local Historic Landmark Application 6/20/23)