

Chairman, Raleigh Historic Properties Commission
1 Mimosa St., Raleigh, N.C. 27604

BCCR 2822 PAGE 201

ORDINANCE NO. 1980-332

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE PROPERTY OF SIR WALTER ASSOCIATES LOCATED AT 400-412 FAYETTEVILLE STREET IN THE CITY OF RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, A HISTORIC PROPERTY

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina authorized the creation of a Historic Properties Commission for the City of Raleigh and otherwise provided for the preservation of certain historic sites and buildings by the passage of Part 3B, Article 19, Chapter 160A North Carolina General Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Raleigh Historic Properties Commission has made an investigation and recommended the following property be designated a Historic Property; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina State Department for Cultural Resources has made an analysis and recommendation that the following property be designated a historic property; and

WHEREAS, on the 4th day of March, 1980 a joint public hearing was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, Raleigh, North Carolina, by the Historic Properties Commission and the City Council of the City of Raleigh to determine whether the hereinafter described property should be designated a historic property; and

WHEREAS, said hearing was advertised and the property owners of the property hereinafter described were notified by mail of the date and purpose of said public hearing at least ten (10) days prior to the date set for the hearing; and

WHEREAS, all requirements of Part 3B, Article 19, Chapter 160A of the North Carolina General Statutes, preceding the adoption of this ordinance, have been complied with.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH THAT:

Section 1. The property of Sir Walter Associates located at 400-412 Fayetteville Street, in the planning jurisdiction in the City of Raleigh, North Carolina, be and is hereby declared a historic property. Said property being more particularly described as follows:

Sir Walter Hotel, being approximately .5 acre, Block A-26, Lot 10 and described in deed recorded in Book 2632, Page 309, 310, and 311, Wake County Courthouse.

Section 2. Those elements of the property that are integral to its historical, architectural, archaeological, or any combination thereof, as follows:

PRESENTED
FOR
REGISTRATION

APR 14 2 04 PM '80

R. B. H. YENZIE, JR.
REGISTER OF DEEDS
WAKE COUNTY, N.C.

The Sir Walter Hotel is a massive ten-story, functional brick L-shaped structure with classical ornamentation at street and roof levels in the Neo-Classical Revival style. Under the direction of the Capital Construction Company formed by General Albert Cox and Josephus Daniels, the Sir Walter was designed by J. A. Salter, built by B. H. Griffin, and contracted by C. V. York. Its state-wide significance derives from the fact that throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s the Sir Walter served as the "third house of state government," since legislators, lobbyists, newspapermen, and others did much of their work and determined much of the political history of the state in this building.

Section 3. No building or structure that is designated in this ordinance located on the hereinbefore described site may be altered, restored, moved, remodeled, or reconstructed so that a change in design, material or outer appearance occurs unless and until a certificate of appropriateness is obtained from the Raleigh Historic Properties Commission or its successors.

Section 4. No building or structure which is designated in this ordinance on the hereinbefore described site may be demolished unless and until either approval of demolition is obtained from the Raleigh Historic Properties Commission or, after the Commission has received a completed request for demolition, one-hundred and eighty (180) days have elapsed.

Section 5. That all owners and occupants of the property hereinabove described, whose identity and addresses can be ascertained by the exercise of due diligence be sent by certified mail a copy of this ordinance.

Section 6. This ordinance shall be indexed under the property owner's name in the grantor and grantee indexes in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Wake County.

Section 7. City administration and the Historic Properties Commission are hereby authorized and directed to have erected an appropriate sign on the site hereinabove described setting forth the fact that said site has been designated a historic property by action of the Historic Properties Commission and the City Council of the City of Raleigh provided, should the owners of the hereinabove described property not consent to the erection of said sign on the described premises, City administration and the Historic Properties Commission are hereby authorized and directed to have said sign located on the public right-of-way adjacent to said property.

Section 8. In the event any building or structure is demolished in accordance with the ordinances of the City of Raleigh, this ordinance shall automatically be null and void.

Section 9. Any violation of this ordinance shall be unlawful as by law provided.

Adopted: March 4, 1980

Effective: March 4, 1980

CCLK/341m

Distribution: City Manager
City Attorney
Planning Department (2)
Inspections Division (3)
Historic Properties Commission
Wake County Tax Supervisor
Property Owner and/or Occupant
Register of Deeds

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF WAKE)

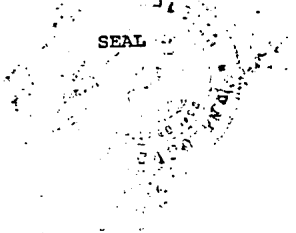
BOOK 2822 PAGE 204

CERTIFICATION

I, Gail G. Smith, City Clerk and Treasurer of the City of Raleigh, North Carolina, do hereby certify that the attached is a true and exact copy of Ordinance No. 1980-332 adopted by the City Council at their meeting held on 3-4-80.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and have caused the Seal of the City of Raleigh to be affixed this 24 day of March, 1980.

SEAL


Gail G. Smith
Gail G. Smith
City Clerk and Treasurer

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Sir Walter Raleigh Hotel

AND/OR COMMON
(same)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
400-412 Fayetteville Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Raleigh

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
4th

STATE
North Carolina

VICINITY OF
CODE
37

COUNTY CODE
Wake 183

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
William B. Benton (see continuation sheet)

STREET & NUMBER
Benton, Anderson, Benton and Holmes Box 21

CITY, TOWN
Winston-Salem VICINITY OF
STATE
North Carolina 27102

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Wake County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
Raleigh STATE
North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 1

Owners, cont.

David Weil
Box 2063
Goldsboro, NC 27530

First Federal Savings and Loan Association
c/o President
300 S. Salisbury Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED slightly	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sir Walter Hotel is located at the corner of Fayetteville Street, Raleigh's broad main street now developed as a pedestrian mall, and Davie Street, a side street. The large brick structure, which runs west through the city block to Salisbury Street, is typical of hotels of the 1920s--a massive, functional brick L-shaped structure with classical ornament at street and roof levels. When it was opened in 1924, it was the tallest, most massive structure at the south end of the business district; it is now dwarfed by the towering multistory office and government buildings near it.

The hotel is ten stories high. Its Fayetteville Street facade is seven bays wide, and the depth running along Davie Street is fourteen bays, with some bays having double windows. The westernmost six bays were added in 1938-1939; the addition was treated identically with the original block.

The first two stories are sheathed in a striated gray stone veneer and formally treated. The ground floor has been remodeled over the years, but originally had a series of large rectangular openings, large doorways and show windows. The main entrance is on Fayetteville Street. Above this level runs a prominent projecting cornice, adorned with egg and dart and other moldings, forming a base for the more elaborate second level treatment, which survives unaltered. The striated courses of the stone create voisseurs for the tall arched openings in each bay at this level. These are accented by scroll keystones. On the Fayetteville Street facade, the corner bays have blind arches and the other four are glazed; the corner bays are further emphasized by the striation of the stone. On the Davie Street facade, there are pairs of blind-arched openings with the central openings glazed, and the emphasis through striation is repeated. Elaborate cartouches occur between the bays of the central portion of each facade. This story is terminated by a broad, heavy molded cornice.

The seven middle stories feature simply treated windows set cleanly into the brick wall, and they are arranged in pairs and singly within the bays, generally alternating single and paired vertical rows.

The roofline of the building is emphasized by a lower cornice of stone, a final band of windows, and a heavier upper cornice adorned with heavy modillions and topped by a brick parapet with stone coping. Mechanical equipment is located on the roof. The rear and south side of the building are more simply treated.

The interior of the hotel has, as might be expected, small dining rooms and shops on the ground level, a large lobby and other rooms on the first floor, meeting and dining rooms on the mezzanine floor overlooking the lobby, guest rooms on the intervening floors, and large dining and meeting rooms on the top floor. Remodeling has occurred over the years. The lobby is a large one with banks of elevators, cashiers and other booths, and stairs leading to the mezzanine. Large paneled pillars and mezzanine balustrades, plus ceiling decoration, are handled in handsome classical fashion, creating a gracious and pleasant room.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1924

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

J. A. Salter

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sir Walter Hotel, built in 1923-1924, is a Raleigh landmark as the chief (and soon to be the only) surviving major hotel in a town that once boasted many; its state-wide significance, however, derives from its role in the twentieth century political history of North Carolina. Called the "third house of state government," the Sir Walter Hotel was throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s a major headquarters for political activity in the state; lacking office space around the Capitol, legislators, lobbyists, newspapermen, and others did much of their work and determined much of the political history of the state in the Sir Walter. The hotel was designed by architect J. A. Salter and built by B. H. Griffin, contracted by C. N. York. It has been leased and owned by several companies. Following the construction of the Legislative Building in 1963 and several suburban motels, the hotel's vitality dwindled; it is now being considered for conversion into apartments, a plan which can provide for its survival as a part of downtown Raleigh. (The significant property is the building and the land it stands on.)

In 1923 General Albert Cox and Josephus Daniels formed the Capital Construction Company for the express purpose of building, in Raleigh, a large, convention-oriented hotel that would attract to the capital city the convention traffic that had been going to Greensboro and Durham.¹ In January, 1924, the Sir Walter Hotel was opened in response to these efforts. The hotel, costing approximately \$900,00 was designed by J. A. Salter, built by B. H. Griffin, and contracted by C. N. York. The Capital Construction Company leased the hotel to Griffin, T. L. "Alton" Bland and Virgil St. Cloud. The first public meeting in the hotel was held by the Raleigh Kiwanis Club, on January 11, 1924, with Josephus Daniels giving the keynote address.² Daniels, Salter, York, Bland, and St. Cloud were all members of the Kiwanis Club.

The hotel was an immediate financial success.³ In 1934, however, in the midst of the depression, its lessees went bankrupt, and the hotel was leased to the North State Hotel Company, with Robert Meyer as president.⁴ The list of directors for the new lessees included future governor J. Melville Broughton. By January of 1935 Meyer,⁵ head of a chain of ten eastern and southern hotels, had spent \$75,000 on renovations. In 1938 Meyer employed New York hotel architect W. L. Stoddard to add 50 rooms to the hotel, making it the largest in the state with 400 rooms. In 1940 the Sir Walter was valued at \$1,250,000.⁶

These additions solidified the Sir Walter's reputation as one of North Carolina's finest convention hotels. For many years the hotel, along with the Memorial Auditorium, was the cornerstone of Raleigh's lucrative convention industry. Of greater importance, however, was the Sir Walter's unofficial but widely accepted designation as the headquarters of the Democratic Party in North Carolina. For years lack of space in the

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

official government complex had made mandatory the use of non-government buildings for conventions, dinners, and meetings, both backroom and otherwise. The Yarborough House served this function for many years until the opening of the Sir Walter. Following the inauguration of Angus McLean as governor in 1925 one source estimates that 80% of the state legislators moved into the Sir Walter. The accidental burning of the Yarborough House on July 3, 1928, left the Sir Walter as the undisputed "third house of state government."

Throughout the 1930s, 40s, and 50s the Sir Walter continued this role. Jonathan Daniels, writing in 1941, said:

Sir Walter in an important sense is the whole State of North Carolina. . . . The east meets the west in it. The Piedmont shares the liquor of the planters. Almost a majority of the judges of the Supreme Court lives there. . . . The official affairs of state go on in a whole company of new buildings around the honestly lovely old granite Capitol. . . . But what that government is grows in the Sir Walter, and State Government in North Carolina is probably more important than in any other State. . . . Power is in the capital and the people come to it in the Sir Walter Hotel.

Legislators, lobbyists, aides, jurors, newspapermen, businessmen, and others used the Sir Walter as their headquarters. Willard Gatewood, Jr., in his biography of Eugene Clyde Brooks, the noted North Carolina educator, relates that Brooks, after his retirement in 1934, decided to move into the Sir Walter, rather than his home on North Blount Street in order "to remain in close touch with individuals conducting the affairs of North Carolina. . . . He was frequently visited by state officials, members of the General Assembly and former students and associates."

The Meyer chain purchased the hotel from the Capital Construction Company in 1956, but sold it in 1964 due to falling revenues. After the departure of the Meyer chain, the hotel underwent rapid turnover in ownership. Announced plans to renovate and revitalize the hotel were never fulfilled. The decline of downtown Raleigh, the rise of the motel and the creation of the new State Legislature Building in 1963 conspired to make the Sir Walter obsolete.¹⁰ Present plans call for it to be converted into apartments by David Weil of Goldsboro and the Winston-Salem development firm of Anderson-Benton-Holmes.

For the better part of four decades the Sir Walter served a significant role in the lives of North Carolinians. Jonathan Daniels summed up the importance of the Sir Walter thus:

Perhaps the shaping of important decisions in a State's destiny in a hotel is not what we expect where we have provided council chambers and

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

legislative halls. It is not what perfectionists desire in an open world of open dealings. But decision grows, even in pure democracy (which we have not got), slowly, informally, in the easy meeting of men and their minds. . . . In that process the hotel room has a place. The fate of the land beyond Sir Walter's brave colony might seem more sweetly fashioned if it were done always in decorum under flags. It will be native, still, if it is done in the Sir Walter Hotel over glasses and cigarettes.

FOOTNOTES

¹News and Observer (Raleigh), March 7, 1971, hereinafter cited as News and Observer.

²News and Observer, January 12, 1924.

³News and Observer, January 18, 1928. At this time the Capital Construction Company reported a 6 percent dividend and also that its mortgages would be paid off ahead of time.

⁴News and Observer, October 3, 1934.

⁵News and Observer, January 30, 1935.

⁶News and Observer, June 3, 1938, May 18, 1940.

⁷News and Observer, March 7, 1971.

⁸Jonathan Daniels, Tar Heels: A Portrait of North Carolina (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1941), p. 117, p. 319, hereinafter cited as Daniels, Tar Heels.

⁹Willard Gatewood, Jr., Eugene Clyde Brooks: Educator and Public Servant (Durham: Duke University Press, 1960), p. 268.

¹⁰News and Observer, March 7, 1971.

¹¹Daniels, Tar Heels, p. 327.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Daniels, Jonathan. Tar Heels: A Portrait of North Carolina. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1941.
- Gatewood, Jr., Willard. Eugene Clyde Brooks: Educator and Public Servant. Durham: Duke University Press, 1960.
- News and Observer (Raleigh). January 12, 1924; January 18, 1928; October 3, 1934; January 30, 1935; June 3, 1938; May 18, 1940; March 7, 1971.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre
 UTM REFERENCES

(The significant property is the building and the land it stands on.)

A

1	7	7	1	3	3	2	0	3	9	6	1	3	9	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

B

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

C

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

D

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Description prepared by Catherine W. Bishir, Head, Survey and Planning Branch
Significance prepared by Jim Sumner, Researcher

ORGANIZATION Division of Archives and History DATE _____

STREET & NUMBER 109 East Jones Street TELEPHONE 733-4763

CITY OR TOWN Raleigh STATE North Carolina ZIP 27611

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE 

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE January 12, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

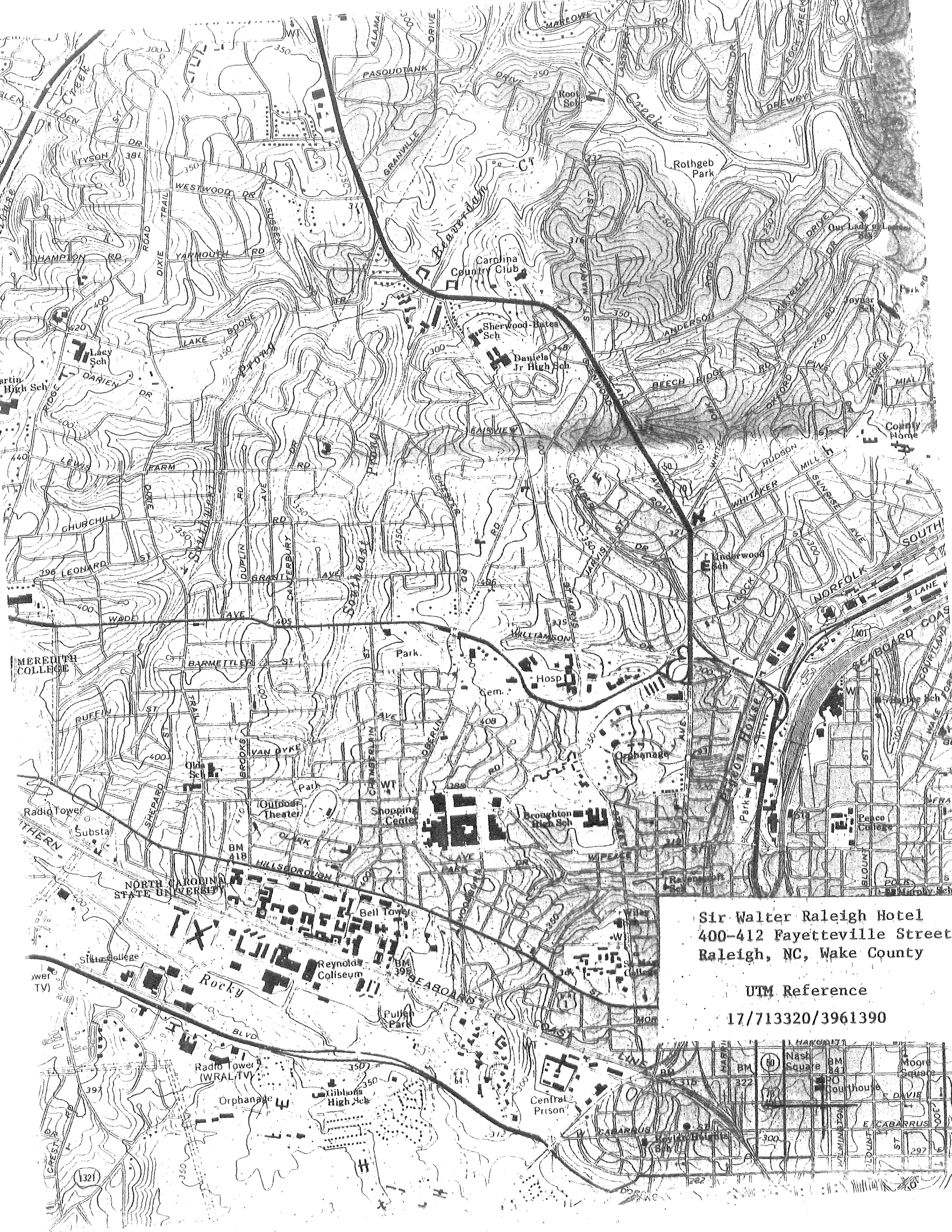
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

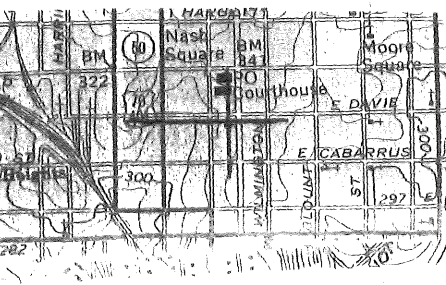
DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Sir Walter Raleigh Hotel
400-412 Fayetteville Street
Raleigh, NC, Wake County

UTM Reference
17/713320/3961390





HOTEL SIR WALTER

SIR WALTER

HOTEL SIR WALTER

SIR WALTER
HOTEL

HOTEL