



**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper
Secretary Susi H. Hamilton

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

August 12, 2019

Matt Talbot
Senior Planner
Guilford County
P.O. Box 3427
Greensboro, NC 27402

RE: Proposed Designation of the Groome-Shevel Building, 532-536 South Elm Street, Greensboro, Guilford County

Dear Mr. Talbot:

Thank you for the report we received on the proposed designation of Groome-Shevel Building located at 532-536 South Elm Street in Greensboro. We have reviewed the report and offer the following comments.

The Groome-Shevel Building, which contributes to the Downtown Greensboro National Register Historic District, is of local architectural and historical importance due to its associations with the urbanization and early development of South Elm Street as Greensboro's main commercial district in the early twentieth century, as well as its long history housing several locally-significant businesses in Greensboro. The large, three-story, brick commercial building with Italianate finishes dates to 1897, but features well-preserved later storefronts, including leaded glass transoms, installed after a 1936 tornado. Prominent local businesses that occupied the Groome-Shevel Building are representative of booming late-nineteenth-century economic growth of Greensboro along South Elm Street, and included Lunsford Richardson Drug Company, the Goldstein/Shevel Furniture Company, the Greensboro Coca-Cola Bottling Company and the Greensboro Commercial School. The Groome-Shevel Building underwent a sensitive rehabilitation in 2016-2017, adhering to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and appears to retain a high level of historic integrity.

We have shared recommendations with staff to amend the report to include a clearer summary of the seven aspects of integrity and clarification regarding the proposed designation boundary for the property. With these changes, we believe the designation report will provide the Guilford County Historic Preservation Commission and the local governing board sufficient information to determine whether the Groome-Shevel Building possesses the requisite special local significance and integrity for local historic landmark designation.

Landmark designation means the community recognizes the property is worthy of preservation because of its special significance to the local community. Any substantial changes in design, materials, and appearance to the property is subject to the design review procedures of the preservation commission.

If the local governing board wishes to extend the Commission's design review authority to significant features of the interior, the owner must give written consent. The designation ordinance must specify the features and describe the nature of the Commission's design review authority over them.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report. Please note, our comments are advisory only and therefore, nonbinding. Once the governing board has received a recommendation from the Guilford County Historic Preservation Commission, it should proceed in the same manner as would otherwise be required for an amendment to the zoning ordinance. Once the decision has been made, please return a completed copy of the enclosed form to our office.

This letter serves as our comments on the proposed designation of the Groome-Shevel Building. Please contact me at 919-814-6575 should you have any questions about our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amber E. Stimpson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Amber E. Stimpson
Local Preservation Commissions / CLG Coordinator

CC: Commission Chair

Enclosure