

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY
NOMINATION FORM

Continuation Sheet

Item Number

Page

Name Historic: Working Benevolent Temple and Professional Building Location: Broad & Fall Streets
Common: A.M.E. Working Benevolent Temple Classification: Building

Owner: Phoenix Square
P.O. Box 8472
123 Cleveirvine Ave.
Greenville, SC 29607

Representation in Existing Surveys Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina, 1981

Description: Situated at the corner of Broad and Fall streets, the Working Benevolent Temple and Professional Building is a three-story, brick building with a steel superstructure. Built in 1922, the building is one hundred feet long and seventy feet wide. The ground floor is comprised of storefronts with multilight transoms and each bay is divided by brick piers. The second floor contains rectangular windows with one-over-one lights. The third floor is separated from the second floor by a concrete belt course and had round-arched windows and is laid in Flemish bond with burnt headers. The first and second floors are of brick laid in common bond. The parapet has two decorative horizontal brick bands. The second floor contains offices which are arranged around a central hallway and open area. On the third floor is a large meeting hall. Both floors are presently vacant.

Significance: The Working Benevolent Temple and Professional Building is significant for its historic association with the development of Greenville's black business district and professional activities for fifty years. It was designed, built, and financed by the Working Benevolent State Grand Lodge of South Carolina, a black health, welfare, and burial benefit society. The site was chosen to serve as the administrative offices and headquarters of the lodge, as well as to attract black professionals to Greenville. It provided offices for black doctors, lawyers, dentists, a newspaper, and insurance firms and housed the first black mortuary in Greenville. The temple was also the center for Greenville's Civil Rights activities during the 1960's. Although the process of desegregation has led to a decline

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Verbal Boundary Description The Working Benevolent Temple and Professional Building is shown as the red line on the accompanying Greenville Tax Map #59, drawn at a scale of 1 inch = 50 feet. This boundary includes the entire historic building, while excluding the adjacent sidewalks and paved city streets.

UTM Reference Point 17/372098/3856790

Other Information

Significance Continued:

in the building's function, it continues to serve as a focal point for the local black community.