NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

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OMB No.1024-0018

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NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Greenville County Courthouse

other names/site number Greenville Family Courts Building

2. Location

street & number 130 S. Main Street — not for publication ___
city or town Greenville — vicinity ___
state South Carolina code SC county Greenville code 045
zip code 29602

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide x locally.
(___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 2/24/94
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary Watson Edmonds, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall 4/7/94 Entered in the National Register
for Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

___ private
x public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

x building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	___	buildings
___	___	sites
___	___	structures
___	___	objects
1	___	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: GOVERNMENT Sub: Courthouse

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE Sub:

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/Beaux Arts

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation concrete
roof asphalt
walls brick/terra cotta
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

___ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
___ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
___ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

____ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
____ **B** removed from its original location.
____ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
____ **D** a cemetery.
____ **E** a reconstructed building, object,or structure.
____ **F** a commemorative property.
____ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)
Architecture
Law
Government

Period of Significance
1916-1918

Significant Dates
1916
1918

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Marye, Phillip Thornton

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
_x_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	371960	3856960	3			
2				4			

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Erin Williams and David Wright, AIA

organization Historic Greenville Foundation date 16 June 1993

street & number 123 West Broad Street telephone (803) 467-3100

city or town Greenville state SC zip code 29602

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Greenville (Mr. Aubrey Watts, City Manager)

street & number 206 S. Main Street telephone (803) 467-4425

city or town Greenville state SC zip code 29602

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

The Greenville County Courthouse, or the Family Courts Building as it is more commonly known, is located at 130 South Main Street in the City of Greenville, Greenville County, South Carolina and is the county's fourth courthouse. The architects were Phillip Thornton Marye (1872 - 1935) of Atlanta, Georgia and H. Olin Jones of Greenville. The contractor was James A. Jones of Charlotte, North Carolina. The cornerstone, in the northeast corner of the building, was set by Robert A. Cooper, Grand Master of Masons of South Carolina, in 1916; construction was completed in 1918.

The building is divided into two sections. The eastern section of the building faces Main Street and is three stories in height; each story is 3900 square feet in area. This will be called the courtroom section. Behind it lies an eight story tower; each story is 2600 square feet in area. This section will be called the tower section. The overall building footprint is 6500 square feet. Both sections were built at the same time.

A concrete structure with exterior walls of cream colored brick, the building is ornamented with terra cotta trim and details which are representative of the era and the Beaux Arts style. Special brick shapes are not used in this building; exterior trim is made of terra cotta unless noted otherwise. The terra cotta is off-white in color; its construction has been described as "Long tines moulded concrete braided with steel cable."[1]

The lowest level of the building is a sub-basement of 2,600 square feet underneath the Tower. The next three levels, referred to as basement, first and second are made up of both the Tower and the Courtroom sections. The tower section at the west end of the building contains the next five floors, referred to as three through seven. The subbasement is reached by stairs down from the basement level of the tower section. The basement is almost entirely above grade and is entered by way of stairs down from grade at the east end of the building or by an entrance on grade at the west end of the building. The first level is entered by way of a grand stairway at the east end of the building. The first and all upper levels are reached from an elevator/stair core near the west end of the building.

Original program spaces for the building were as listed below:

Subbasement - Boilers, elevator machinery and main electrical switchboards.
Basement - Sheriff, Superintendent of Education, Supervisor of Rural Schools, Treasurer and Auditor.
First level - Judge of Probate, Clerk of Court and Register of Mesne Conveyance.
Second level - Courtroom and Judge's private office.
Third level - Solicitor and Coroner.
Fourth level - Master, Supervisor and Supervising Auditor.
Fifth level - Two magistrate's courtrooms and offices.
Sixth level - County Attorney, Rural Police, Registration Board and County Engineers.
Seventh level - U. S. Weather Bureau and juror's dormitory.

Prominent features of the courtroom section include the grand entrance stair, lobby and courtroom. The entrance is a wide marble stair placed between two large marble plinths. Each plinth carries a tall bronze light fixture ornamented with flowers and laurel leaf wreaths wrapped with ribbons to match trim used in the building. The east end of the basement is reached by way of narrow marble stairs and a passage through the sides of the

[1] Greenville Daily News (Greenville, S.C), January 29, 1918.

plinths and underneath the grand stairway. The entrance and one window at each side are recessed and trimmed in a ribbon-wrapped dogwood blossom pattern. Originally used only by blacks, a side entrance door is located on the south elevation close to the southeast building corner; this entrance serves a stairway leading directly to the courtroom balcony; it is trimmed with volutes which support a shallow rain cover. The second level, which contains the courtroom, is two-stories high and faced with six half-round fluted columns which span from the sill, which is between the first and second levels, to the building's cornice ornament. The flutes are reeded with spindles referencing Greenville's textile history. Three tall window and trim assemblies are placed between the center four columns. Each assembly consists of two window sections. Terra cotta panels below and between the windows are ornamented with floral patterns. Each window assembly is trimmed with a ribbon-wrapped laurel leaf pattern. The cornice above the columns is inscribed with "Greenville County Courthouse." The cornice construction consists of egg and dart mouldings and large scale dentils, a short brick section, and a simple terra cotta coping. The north and south faces each have four tall window and trim assemblies like the ones between the columns above the entry; the assemblies are bracketed by simple punched openings with terra cotta sills.

Windows in the courtroom section are wood casement single pane. Windows in the tower section are wood double hung one-over-one sash. The basement level is separated from the first level by a slender sloped sill. The first and second levels are separated by a heavy stepped sill. Basement windows in the tower section are rectangular punched openings with rowlock brick sills. Basement windows in the courtroom section have sills which extend down to grade; each window has two heavy horizontal pipe rails spanning between the jambs close to grade level. Rowlock courses are placed around the basement walls at window head height and underneath the sill which separates the first level. First level windows in both sections are rectangular punched openings with terra cotta sills; the wall beneath each window is slightly recessed. A continuous egg and dart moulding runs around the first level walls underneath the sill which separates the first and second levels.

The entrance to the tower section of the Courthouse is flanked by two wall mounted cast bronze light fixtures and is otherwise unremarkable. The second through sixth levels of the tower section have six windows per floor on the north and south elevations and five windows per floor on the west elevation. The outer window sets on each floor are simple punched openings with terra cotta sills. The inner window sets, four per floor on the north and south elevations and three per floor on the west elevation, are slightly recessed and separated above and below each window with various patterns composed of diamond and lattice-patterned terra cotta and brick panels. The cornice construction consists of egg and dart mouldings and stepped running trim, a short brick section, and a simple terra cotta coping. East and west parapets of the tower section are peaked to form stepped pediment references and each contain a diamond shaped terra cotta insert. The west elevation features two window locations along the vertical center of the building which are filled with brick and one window which is partially brick filled and has a narrow vertical window.

The Basement is entered by masonry steps descending on each side of the grand staircase through heavy bronze barred doors into a spacious lobby. A corridor extends from this lobby through the length of the building, past the tower section stair and elevator, to the entrance at the parking lot level on the west side. The basement construction generally consists of linoleum tile floor finishes, painted plaster walls, and painted white oak base, ceiling, door and window trim. The elevator door is wood with wire reinforced glass panes with a three section wood and glass transom.

The first level is entered from the east side facing Main Street up a grand marble staircase and into a spacious lobby. The lobby has ornamental plaster walls and ceilings, terrazzo mosaic flooring and marble bases. The ceiling plaster design features panels trimmed in a ribbon wrapped laurel leaf pattern. On each side of the lobby are stairs

with ornamental floral pattern cast bronze railings leading down to the basement and up to the courtroom lobby above. From the first level lobby a corridor with terrazzo mosaic flooring extends through the length of the building to the elevators and stair in the tower part of the building. The main courtroom is located at the second level and has a lobby which is reached by stairways from the first floor lobby at the east end of the building. The courtroom has ornamental plaster walls and ceilings, terrazzo mosaic flooring and marble bases. The walls and ceilings feature trimmed panels and floral volutes with shield and fleur de lis inserts supporting ceiling beams. Panels on and beneath the beam faces have wrapped rod trim. Panels on the ceiling between the beams have ribbon-wrapped laurel leaf trim. Egg and dart moulding and laurel leaf plaster trim mouldings are placed near the top of the walls. The courtroom is generally lit by large suspended plaster fixtures which reflect light from the ceiling. Adjoining the courtroom on the southwest side is the judge's chamber with private bookcases and lavatories. On the north side of the judge's stand is a lobby with rooms for bailiffs, messengers, and a detention room for prisoners awaiting trial. At the west end of this level is a corridor giving access to the elevators and stairway and also two separate jury rooms, each with private toilet facilities.

The upper floors of the tower section contain offices and support space. Rooms generally consist of linoleum tile floor finishes, painted plaster walls, and painted white oak base, chair rail, ceiling, door and window trim.

Since its completion in 1918, the Greenville County Courthouse has undergone several renovations. The building served the Family Court through 1991, and now stands vacant. Significant renovations were conversion of the basement lobby to prisoner cells and renovation of the main courtroom to serve as office space with installation of interior partition walls, a suspended ceiling system and HVAC equipment. The marble stairs from the first floor lobby to the second floor courtroom lobby were removed during the latter renovation. Despite these renovations and vacant periods, the building is in good condition.

The Greenville County Courthouse, the fourth building employed in this capacity, is significant as an example of early twentieth century public architecture on a monumental scale in the piedmont South, for the high quality of its design and construction, and for its association with a prominent architect, and is also important to the history of Greenville and Greenville County as the seat of law and local government,

Additional Information

The primary architect was Georgia Architect Phillip Thornton Marye (1872 - 1935). Mr. Marye was born in Alexandria, Virginia, received his architectural education at the University of Virginia, and began practice in Newport News, Virginia in 1892.[2] Mr. Marye moved his practice to Atlanta, Georgia in 1904, built a firm which planned and executed numerous prominent public and commercial projects throughout the southern states, and remained active in the profession until his death.[3] The supervising architect for the building was H. Olin Jones of Greenville; J. A. Jones of Charlotte was the contractor.[4]

The courthouse is important to the history of Greenville for several reasons. It is the only existing public Beaux Arts style building in Greenville County. The site and surrounding section of Greenville are important to the community. This is where the City of Greenville began and where many prominent and architecturally valuable buildings have been built and still stand. This building is the fourth courthouse in the city of Greenville. The first was built immediately east of this building in what is now the center of Main Street. The second was designed by Robert Mills in 1824 and built further east across Main Street. The third was designed in the Gothic style and built in 1856 where this building is located.[5] The Fourth Greenville County Courthouse is surrounded by several important historic buildings. The Poinsett Hotel is to the north, the Carolina Supply Building is to the northeast, the old Chamber of Commerce building is to the east of this building where the second courthouse was built, and the Sayre bank building is to the south.

The courthouse embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type of construction, in that Mr. Marye's design is an excellent example of Beaux Arts architecture. The following quote is typical of the praise which this building has received from the time it was built to the present day:

> "Judge John S. Wilson...paid a high compliment to Greenville county [sic] on the erection of the handsome new court house. Judge Wilson congratulated the

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[2] Atlanta Historical Society Bulletin, September 1943, 161.

[3] Preston Stevens, Building a Firm, 68.

[4] Greenville Daily News, January 22, 1916.

[5] Greenville Daily News, October 10, 1916.

officers of the county, the court house commission and citizens of the county generally on having one of the finest court house buildings in the entire country...The building, with all of its fine architectural components, possesses high artistic value."[6]

According to a historic building survey completed by Enwright Associates, Inc. in 1977, the Greenville County Courthouse is of quality construction; its exterior is currently in good physical condition. Also, the inclusion of a separate and insular entrance and viewing gallery for blacks in the Main Courtroom is typical of the period, and reflects prevailing cultural values of the community from that period of our national, regional, and state history.[7]

This building served as the courthouse for Greenville County until 1950 when the court ws moved to a new building on East North Street. The Family Court of Greenville County was located then in the building and remained there until 1991. The building is presently vacant.

Although oustide of the period of significance, it is interesting to note that in 1947 the courthouse was the scene of a pivotal event in race relations and criminal justice in South Carolina when it served as the arena for the Willie Earle trial. Willie Earle, a young black man, was accused of killing a white taxi driver named Thomas W. Brown. Although he had been arrested and jailed, 31 white men kidnapped him and brutally murdered him on Bramlett Road on the westernmost section of Greenville County. The case attracted international attention when the entire lynch mob was arrested and tried for murder and conspiracy. Although the defendants were acquitted, the case sent a signal to the white community that such racial lynchings would no longer be tolerated by officers of the criminal justice system. Negative publicity from the New Yorker, Minneapolis Times, Atlanta Journal, New York Times, Life, and the Christian Science Monitor reinforced this view, and in fact, this was the last incident of its kind in South Carolina.[8]

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[6] Greenville Daily News, April 2, 1918.

[7] Greenville Daily News, November 29, 1916.

[8] Nancy Vance Ashmore, Greenville: Woven from the Past (Greenville, S.C.: Windsor Publications, 1986), pp. 158, 160.

Bibliography

Ashmore, Nancy Vance. Greenville: Woven from the Past. Greenville, S.C.: Windsor Publications, 1986.

Stevens, Preston. Building a Firm. n.p.: privately published, n.d.

Atlanta Historical Society Bulletin, September 1943.

Greenville Daily News. (Greenville, S.C.)
22 January 1916; 10 October 1916; 29 November 1916; 29 January 1918; 2 April 1918; 27 March 1977.

Verbal Boundary Descrition

Tax map number 22-F-87, block and parcel number 59-3-1

Boundary Justification

The courthouse is sited on a parcel 196.42' by 50' and the entire parcel is nominated.

Addtional Documentation

The following information is the same for each photograph:

Name of property: Greenville County Courthouse
Location: 130 S. Main Street
Greenville
Greenville County, South Carolina

Date: January/February 1993

Photographer: frames 1-10, David Wright, AIA
frames 11-12, Paul Birkell, Craig Gaulden & Davis

Location of negatives: SHPO

1. facade (S)
2. facade, detail (S)
3. facade, oblique; light standard, detail
4. elevation (E)
5. detail, entrance to jail/basement
6. tower elevation, (N)
7. elevation (W)
8. detail, minority entry
9. interior detail, lobby
10. interior detail, elevator
11. interior detail, courtroom ceiling
12. interior detail, courtroom ceiling

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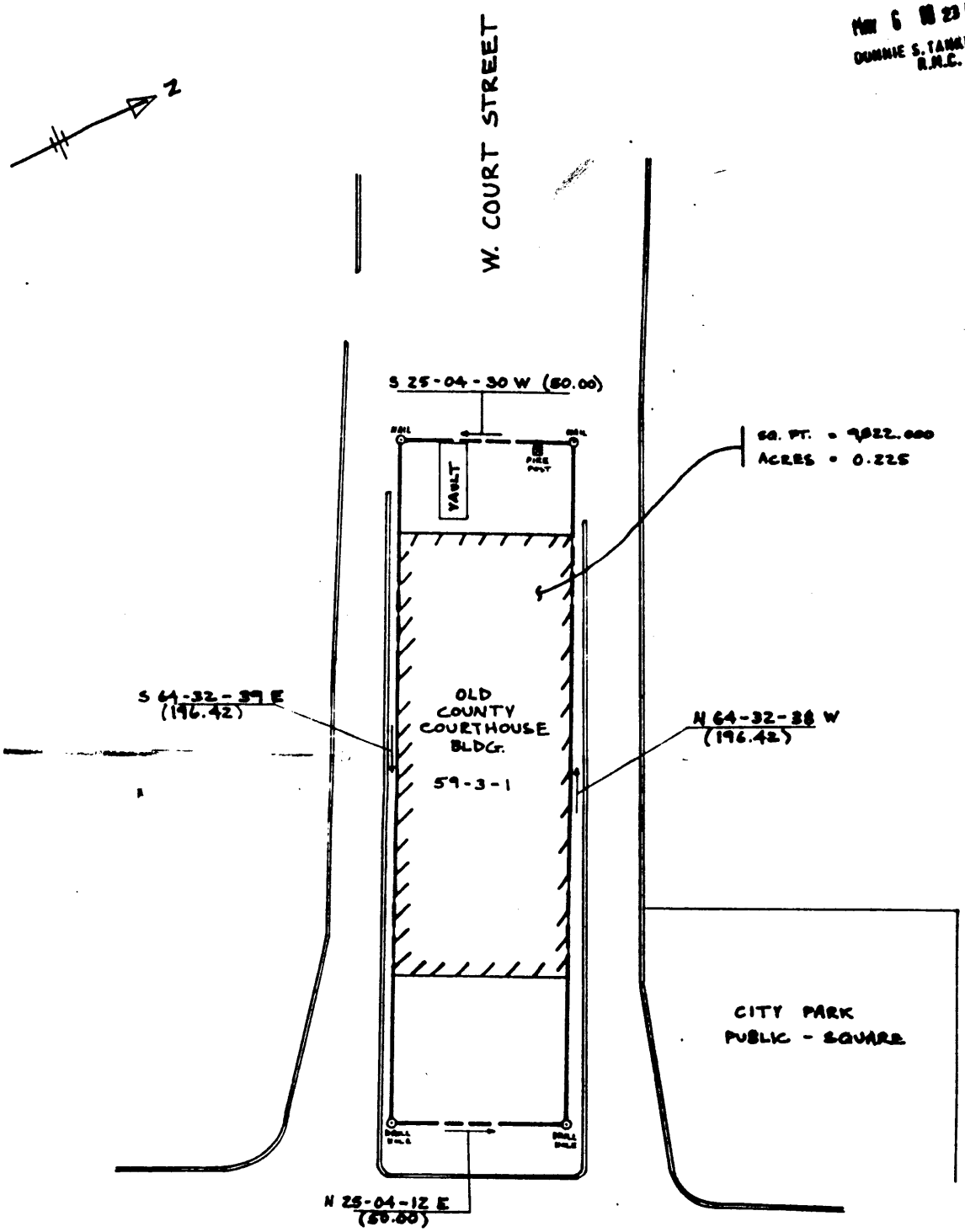

TO BROAD STR.

S. MAIN STREET

TO McBEE STR.

Fourth Greenville County Courthouse
Greenville, SC

22-F-87

28912

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