

**North Carolina Historical Commission
Raleigh**

October 10, 2018

North Carolina General Statute 121-12(a) Review
of
Proposed demolition of former School for the Deaf Infirmary, Morganton, Burke County
by
North Carolina School of Science and Math,
HPO # GS 18-3044

For several years, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has reviewed concepts developed by the UNC School of Government for reuse of the historic Broughton Hospital campus once the new hospital opens. One of those ideas included a new North Carolina School of Science and Math (NCSSM) locating in some of the buildings and on part of the hospital grounds. While that idea was not pursued, the NCSSM was able to work with the North School for the Deaf in Morganton to allow the development of a new NCSSM on the eastern portion of the campus.

The master plan for the new NCSSM calls for the rehabilitation and reuse of three contributing buildings: Goodwin Hall (1907-1911), Joiner Hall (1930), and the Cattle Barn (1935), within the National Register-listed North Carolina School for the Deaf Historic District (BK0021). The plan also calls for the demolition of five buildings outside this historic district, as well as the non-contributing Joiner Gym and contributing Infirmary (1918) within the district. (See attached map/collage.) The proposed demolition of the contributing Infirmary constitutes an adverse effect upon the National Register-listed district. Therefore, the proposed undertaking is subject to North Carolina General Statute 121-12(a) and requires the review and recommendation of the North Carolina Historical Commission.

The School for the Deaf Historic District was listed in the National Register in 1989 for its role in the social and humanitarian history of the state; its association with Dr. John McKee Goodwin, noted advocate for and educator of the deaf; with Augustus Bauer, architect of the North Carolina Executive Mansion; and for its architecture that reflects the high Victorian, Colonial Revival, and Romanesque styles popular between 1894 and 1939 when the buildings at the core of the district were constructed.

As shown on the attached collage, the master plan for the NCSSM calls for the rehabilitation of two former classrooms/dormitories into classroom buildings and the large brick barn into a gymnasium/auditorium. The Infirmary, with modern wings on each end, will be demolished to make room for a new commons/academic building and a neighboring amphitheater. The new perimeter road will continue to provide access to the School for the Deaf along the existing drive.

While the loss of the Infirmary is regrettable, the NCSSM will rehabilitate three key buildings in the historic district that had fallen into disrepair to the extent that developers were interested in redevelopment of the land and location, but not reuse of the buildings. The rehabilitation of the three buildings will be carried out in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*

and Guidelines to avoid any adverse effects to their design and character and to protect their historic character defining features. Due to an upcoming change in the State Building Code, it is imperative that the plans for this project be approved by November. Otherwise, the project will become too expensive for the NCSSM and place the buildings again at risk from inattention.

While regretting the loss of the Infirmary, the SHPO is pleased by the proposed plans to save, rehabilitate and reuse the three historic buildings. The SHPO will continue to monitor the project to ensure compliance with the *Standards*. Further, its staff recommends and is willing to thoroughly document the Infirmary and the current landscape/setting of that portion of the historic district, which will become the new NCSSM. This step will ensure that there is a permanent record to the historic buildings and district prior to any changes taking place.

Attachments:

Map with School for the Deaf and portion of Broughton Hospital Historic District
Collage map of NCSSM Master Plan



Collage map of NCSSM Master Plan

NC School for the Deaf Historic District outlined in green

Buildings to be rehabilitated outlined in blue

Proposed demolitions in red

