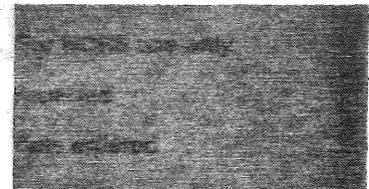


United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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 Masonic Temple Building

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 203 S. Washington Street not for publication

city, town Shelby vicinity of congressional district Tenth

state North Carolina code 037 county Cleveland code 045

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u>X</u> occupied	<u> </u> agriculture	<u> </u> museum
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u>X</u> commercial	<u> </u> park
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u> </u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational	<u> </u> private residence
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment	<u> </u> religious
<u> </u> object	<u> </u> in process	<u>X</u> yes: restricted	<u> </u> government	<u> </u> scientific
	<u> </u> being considered	<u> </u> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial	<u> </u> transportation
	<u>N/A</u>	<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military	<u>X</u> other: <u>Masonic Temple</u>

4. Owner of Property

name The Historic Preservation Fund of North Carolina

street & number 508 Insurance Building, 336 Fayetteville Street

city, town Raleigh vicinity of state North Carolina 27601

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cleveland County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Shelby state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? X yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Masonic Temple Building in Cleveland County, North Carolina, stands on the corner of S. Washington and E. Warren streets in downtown Shelby. Erected in 1924-25, the brushed-brick Egyptian Revival structure is a prominent landmark in the town, opposite the southeast corner of the courthouse square. The Masonic Temple Building is unique in western North Carolina for its sophisticated representation of the Egyptian Revival style.

With its splendidly ornamented ground floor acting as base, its three-stories of identically fenestrated offices and meeting rooms as shaft, and its elaborate frieze and heavy cornice as capital, the structure illustrates what for Shelby was early highrise construction. Upon completion in 1925, the Masonic Temple Building was, at four stories, the tallest structure in town.

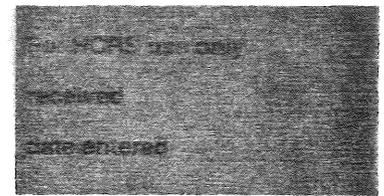
The building mass is rectangular in plan with three bays on S. Washington Street and six on E. Warren Street. The first floor of each bay is set off from the fenestration of the upper three floors by massive concrete lintels which carry bas-relief stylized winged sun disk and serpent designs. Acting together these heavy lintels create a striking cornice for the first floor.

Beneath the lintels the bays were broadly glazed with plate glass on E. Warren Street and treated as recessed shop fronts in the west and central bays on S. Washington Street. Three bays on E. Warren were infilled with brick in 1957, at which time modern entrances were introduced on both elevations.

The eastern bay on S. Washington Street remains the building's principal entrance. This function is announced by a stepped parapet at the building's roof, by large lotiform (lotus shaped) brass lanterns that flank the bay at street level, and especially by a pair of Egyptian style pillars which support the bay's massive lintel on robust lotiform capitals.

Above its ornamented lintel each bay is treated as a single recessed panel through the upper three floors of fenestration. At each floor paired double-hung windows are flanked by narrower windows creating a three-part composition within each bay. The flanking windows are separated from the central pair by narrow brick pilasters that rise from concrete bases just above the first floor lintels to segmented block-on-string capitals above the fourth-floor windows. Broader brick piers rise from the building's low concrete water table to separate the bays. It is into these piers that the lintels are keyed. Both the building's windows and the smooth stuccoed spandrels between them are recessed behind the plane of the piers and pilasters giving emphasis to these vertical elements. A cast concrete frieze ornamented with vertical leaves and raised disks and a broad cornice shelf crown the building beneath minimal capped parapets.

All facing brick on the streetside elevations are vertically brushed and buff in color. Common brick replaces the buff facing brick on the building's offstreet north and east elevations. A two-story structure, recently given a modern facade, abuts the building on its east side.

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Page one

One enters the Masonic Temple Building from S. Washington Street into a narrow lobby that becomes a hallway running through the building along its east wall. The hall provides access to storage rooms. A modern office area on the first floor, dating from the 1957 alterations, is approached from contemporary entrances on E. Warren Street.

The Washington Street lobby has a tiled floor featuring a large version of the traditional Masonic emblem composed of a rule and dividers. Wallpaper in the lobby bears the same design. Immediately inside the lobby entrance and to the right (upon the east wall) is the elevator, Shelby's first electric passenger elevator. Stairs rise the height of the building just beyond the elevator shaft.

The building's second floor has been subdivided with numerous impermanent partitions, reflecting a varied occupancy. The third floor is divided into two sections: half for the commandery, half for the Chapter of Masons with convenient side rooms for conferring degrees.

The fourth floor contains the lodge's principal ceremonial space, the lodge meeting room. Said to seat five hundred, the meeting room is outfitted with various ceremonial paraphernalia. Inset in the floor at the center of the room is a large, tiled blue and white square, backdrop to a five-pointed gold star. Both north and south ends of the room are arranged as stages. Meeting room chairs which line the east and west walls display the Masonic emblem. The lodge's quarters are furnished throughout with specially designed and adapted mission style pieces which date from the building's construction.

Despite the alterations to the ground floor in the 1950s, the Masonic Temple Building displays intact western North Carolina's most sophisticated version of Egyptian Revival architecture. Its overall image and landmark status in downtown Shelby has changed very little over the years.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				fraternal organizati
Specific dates	1925	Builder/Architect	J. P. Little and Son, Charlotte (Builder)	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

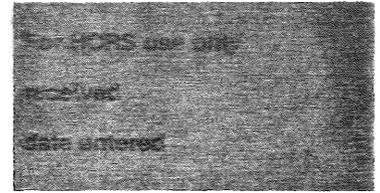
The Masonic Temple Building in Shelby was built in 1925 by the Cleveland Lodge of the Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons of North Carolina. The four-story buff-colored brick structure is western North Carolina's most sophisticated version of Egyptian Revival architecture. Massive concrete lintels at first story height, robust lotiform pillars at the building's principal entrance, and a richly ornamented cornice frieze all display the style's exotic ornament. The building has housed the Cleveland Lodge since its construction. In addition a number of businesses and professional firms have been housed in the building. The Cleveland Lodge dates back to 1858. A number of prominent North Carolinians have been members of this lodge including governors O. Max Gardner (1929-1933), and Clyde R. Hoey (1937-1941). The building was recently sold to the Historic Preservation Fund of North Carolina, Inc., which hopes to sell the property to a preservation minded buyer.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT:

- B. The Masonic Temple Building in Shelby, North Carolina, is significant due to the important roles several members of the Cleveland Lodge have played in state affairs.
- C. The building gains significance as well as western North Carolina's most significant example of Egyptian Revival architecture.

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Continuation sheet

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

Page 1

In 1924 the Cleveland Lodge of the Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons of North Carolina built a handsome, four story Egyptian Revival Masonic Temple in the Cleveland County seat of Shelby. The building has housed this chapter of Masons for over half a century and has also been the home of a number of commercial and civic institutions.¹

The Cleveland Lodge was formed in 1858. On September 16 of that year Augustus W. Burton, M. S. Hopson, Ancil I. Hardin, Thomas Williams, M. C. Roberts, John F. Aydlette, and E. Jennings petitioned the Grand Lodge in Raleigh for permission to organize a Masonic lodge in Shelby. Permission was granted and the lodge was chartered on December 7, 1858. A 1904 fire destroyed most of the early records of the lodge, but the charter survived.²

The lodge met in a variety of places prior to the 1920s, when a movement arose to build a permanent meeting facility. In December of 1922 a search committee was appointed to locate a suitable site. Property was purchased in February, 1923. One year later a building committee was appointed, consisting of Charles S. Young, J. Frank Roberts, William R. Hoey, William V. Metcalf, Seaton A. Washburn, Jacob H. Quinn, and Joseph S. Dorton. Later the committee was expanded with the addition of J. R. Dover, Sr., George Moore, Charles P. Roberts, L. F. McBrayer, Russell Laughridge, J. D. Lineburger, T. J. Babington, Forest Eskridge, C. Cline, George A. Hoyle, and a future governor of North Carolina (1937-1941), Clyde R. Hoey.³

On June 19, 1924 the Shelby firm of Lutz and Webb agreed to build the proposed temple. Shortly thereafter, however, they refused the contract and it was let to the Charlotte firm of J. P. Little and Son.⁴ The cornerstone of the building was laid in September of 1924, with Grand Master James LeGrand Everett presiding. The building was completed in the spring of the following year at a cost of around \$100,000. The first meeting was held in the new structure on May 29, 1925.⁵ The building was a four story structure, the tallest in Shelby at that time. It contained the town's first electric passenger elevator.⁶ The Cleveland Lodge had 251 members in 1925 and was reported to be in "flourishing condition."⁷

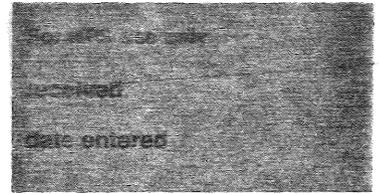
The fourth floor has served as the lodge headquarters from the time of construction to the present. The other floors have housed a number of tenants, including the J. C. Penney Company, Piggly-Wiggly Grocery, the Cleveland County Health Department, and a variety of law offices, dental offices, stockbrokers' offices, etc.⁸

The Cleveland Lodge suffered during the economic difficulties of the 1930s. Membership dropped from 331 in 1928 to 170 in 1938 and the lodge became delinquent in its payments on the Temple. A major fund raising effort in 1938 succeeded in raising the necessary money and the loan was refinanced and paid off in 1955. Membership has increased in recent years and now stands at 455.⁹

Like many Masonic lodges, the Cleveland Lodge has drawn much of its membership from the community's business, political, and social elite. A number of members have been of statewide renown. Clyde R. Hoey was governor of North Carolina from 1937 until 1941, and served as a United States Senator from 1944 until his death in 1954. O. Max Gardner was governor of the state during the difficult Depression years, from 1929 until 1933. Prominent Baptist minister Thomas Dixon, Sr. was a member as was lawyer and judge James L. Webb. Throughout the years the lodge has supported the various charitable efforts of Masonry, including the Oxford Orphanage and the Masonic and Eastern Star Home for the Aged.¹⁰

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National Park Service**

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The Masonic Temple building was recently sold to the Historic Preservation Fund of North Carolina, Inc., who hope to sell the building "to a buyer who will rehabilitate it subject to protective covenants." The Cleveland Lodge continues to meet there.¹¹

The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8

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NOTES

¹The fraternal organization known as the Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons traces its origins to the Middle Ages when "freestone craftsmen . . . gathered in lodges adjacent to their places of employment to work and discuss matters relating to their craft, to exchange ideas and news, and to air complaints." Non-craftsmen were admitted to the lodge in the sixteenth century and the first grand lodge was founded in 1717. Freemasonry made its appearance in the colonies in the 1730s. Dictionary of American History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 8 volumes, 1976-1978, revised edition), III, 108-109. The first lodge in North Carolina was organized in Wilmington in 1755. Thomas C. Parramore, Launching the Craft: The First Half-Century of Freemasonry in North Carolina (Raleigh: Grand Lodge of North Carolina, A. F. and A. M., 1975), 5.

²Russell G. Laughridge, "A Century of Masonry," Program of 1858-1958 Centennial Anniversary, Cleveland Lodge, No. 202, A. F. & A. M., December 8, 1958, 1, hereinafter cited as Laughridge, "A Century of Masonry."

³Laughridge, "A Century of Masonry," 1-2; Telephone interview with Roy Jackson, historian of the Cleveland Lodge, August 18, 1981, notes in file, hereinafter cited as Jackson interview; Cleveland County Deed Book 35, p. 376.

⁴The Cleveland Star, June 20, 1924, June 27, 1924; "The Masonic Temple Building," Brochure printed by the Historic Preservation Fund of North Carolina, Inc., copy in file, hereinafter cited as "The Masonic Temple Building."

⁵Laughridge, "A Century of Masonry," 3.

⁶"The Masonic Temple Building."

⁷Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons of North Carolina (Oxford Orphanage Press, 1925), 214, 293.

⁸"The Masonic Temple Building"; Jackson interview.

⁹Jackson interview; Laughridge, "A Century of Masonry," 3-4; Proceeding of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina (Oxford: Oxford Orphanage Press, 1928-1938).

¹⁰Jackson Interview; Laughridge, "A Century of Masonry," 4; Our Heritage: A History of Cleveland County (Shelby: Shelby Daily Star, 1976), 89, 232-233.

¹¹"The Masonic Temple Building."

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation page

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre (city lot)

Quadrangle name Shelby, N. C.

Quadrangle scale 1:62 500

UMT References

A

1	7	4	5	1	0	5	0	3	9	0	4	2	0	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing					

C

Zone		Easting						Northing					

D

Zone		Easting						Northing					

E

Zone		Easting						Northing					

F

Zone		Easting						Northing					

G

Zone		Easting						Northing					

H

Zone		Easting						Northing					

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Masonic Temple Building is shown on the Cleveland County Tax Records as being Map S-1, Block 12, Lot No. 14. See enclosed lot description.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Description prepared by Douglas Swaim, Preservation Specialist and Janet Hutchison, Preservation Assistant; Significance prepared by Jim Sumner, Research Specialist

organization N. C. Division of Archives and History date December 15, 1981
 street & number 109 E. Jones Street telephone (704) 298-5024 (Asheville)
(919) 733-6545 (Raleigh)

city or town Raleigh state North Carolina 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

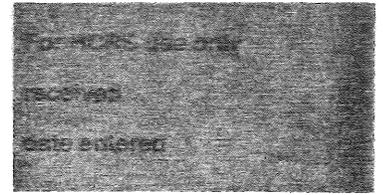
State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William S. Fair, Jr.*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date May 15, 1982

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	date
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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Item number 9

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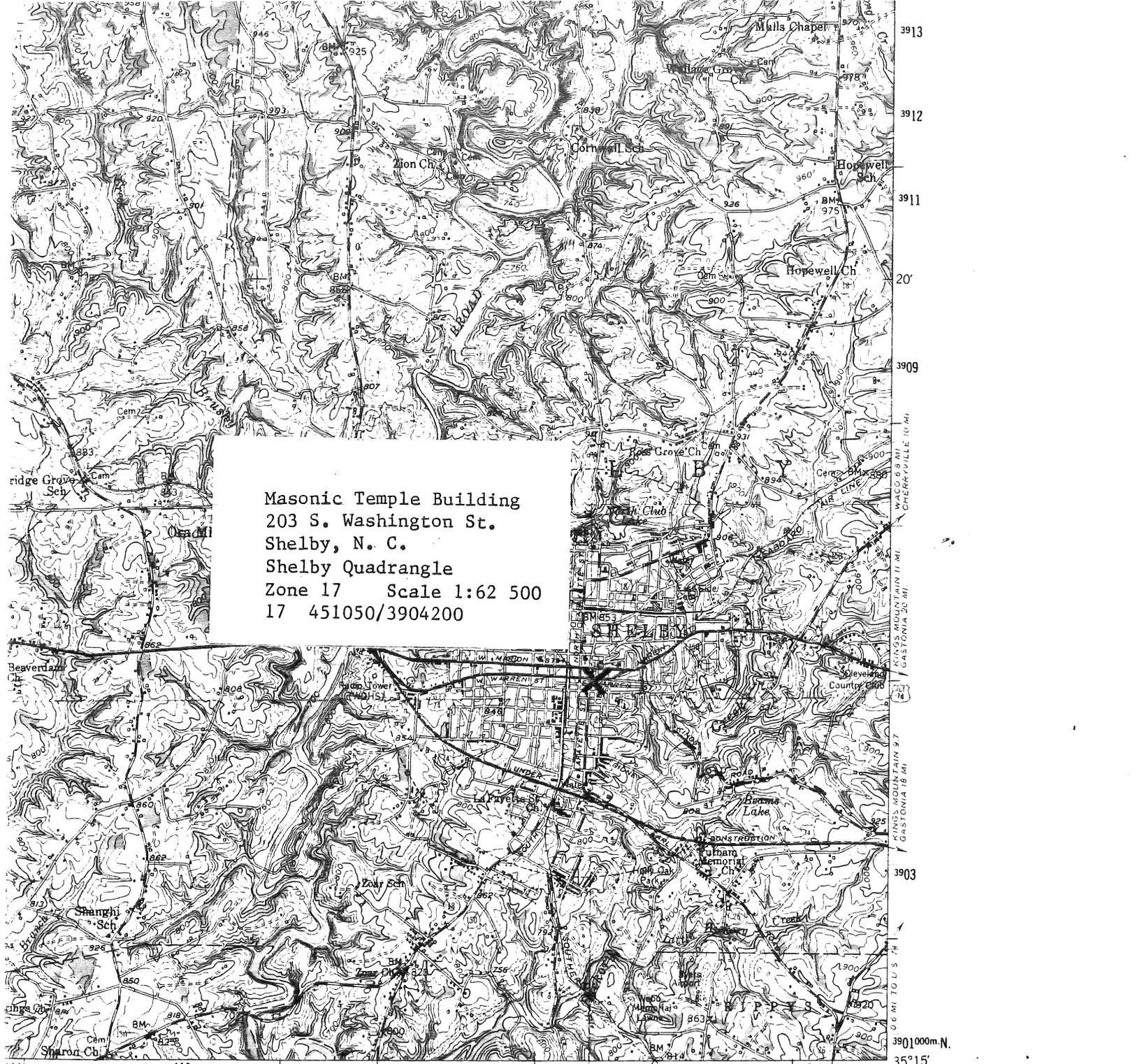
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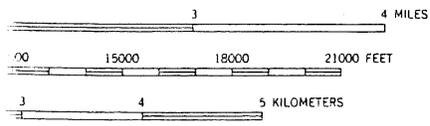
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Masonic Temple Building
 203 S. Washington St.
 Shelby, N. C.
 Shelby Quadrangle
 Zone 17 Scale 1:62 500
 17 451050/3904200

44 45 46 35' 48 451000m.E. 81°30' 35°15' 3901000m.N.



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty 4 LANE 2 LANE Light-duty
- Medium-duty 4 LANE 2 LANE Unimproved dirt
- U. S. Route State Route

(KINGS MOUNTAIN)
 4534 (II)

SHELBY, N. C.
 N3515-W8130/15

58

1950
 AMS 4654 I-SERIES V742

SPACING STANDARDS
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
 IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

LOT DESCRIPTION

The lot on which the Masonic Temple Building is located fronts on two heavily traveled streets in the central business district of Shelby. It has 60' of frontage on the east side of South Washington Street, 105' along the south side of East Warren Street, and a 5' x 32' strip extends southward from the southeastern corner of the lot. All except the eastern 5' of this land is covered by the building. The following sketch is a graphic representation of the shape and size of the lot.

