

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Salisbury Historic District Extension: former Salisbury Fire House

Section number _____ Page 1

The former Salisbury Fire House and City Building, located immediately adjacent to the Salisbury Historic District, at 117 S. Lee Street, is a two-story brick vernacular Victorian public building which has been a Salisbury landmark since its construction in 1897. It is one of a group of public buildings representing the flowering of Salisbury at the turn-of-the-century. This group includes the Methodist Church (demolished), the Baptist Church (demolished), the Salisbury Depot, and the Rowan County Courthouse. Although simpler than the other buildings in the group, the Fire House with its broad arched doors on the first story, heavy arched window hoods on the second story, and high hipped roof with console eaves and decorative gables is a rare representative of turn-of-the-century municipal vernacular design in Salisbury. The Salisbury Historic District nomination provides ample context for the importance of the architecture of this period in the district.

Although local tradition states that this two-story late Victorian brick public building was built in 1896 at a cost of \$3,500, it is more likely that it was not completed until 1897. In July, 1896 the Salisbury Board of Commissioners instructed its finance committee to borrow "...no more than \$6,000..." for the construction of a new municipal building and the opening of several streets. According to the minutes of the Commissioner's meeting, the new city building was to house the city's fire department, the mayor's office, and the city "calabose," or jail. It was not until November 1896 that the city purchased the lot on S. Lee Street where the new building would be erected. It is not known when construction of the building actually began, but it was completed during the spring of 1897. City commissioners met on May 6, 1897 and discussed visiting the newly completed building and making a final inspection of the work. Sanborn maps reveal that by 1907 the city's fire department included four horses, four horse carts, two horse wagons, and one hook and ladder truck. The 1913 Sanborn Map shows a one-story brick addition on the north side of the building which was used as storage for the police wagon. The building continued to be used by the city of Salisbury as a fire station into the early 1960s. It stood vacant for several years and was adapted into a restaurant in the late 1970s. A serious fire in 1980 destroyed much of the building's interior and roof, but it has now been purchased by new owners who have renovated it for use as a florist and gift shop. This rehabilitation has been certified by the National Park Service.

Although the interior was completely destroyed by fire, the exterior retains much of its original fabric, and has sufficient integrity of materials, workmanship and feeling to be eligible for the National Register. The building has a high hipped roof punctuated with decorative gables featuring heavy console brackets on each elevation. A heavy wooden cornice with the same console brackets runs around the edge of the entire roof, which has an attractive brass and wood cupola in its

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center, a spot originally occupied by the fire department's bell tower. The first floor levels of the 1897 building and the 1913 addition are characterized by broad arched openings with striated brickwork frames, which originally accommodated the wagons and horses of the fire and police departments. The second floor features a three-part square window flanked by two round-arched windows with heavy hoods with keystones.

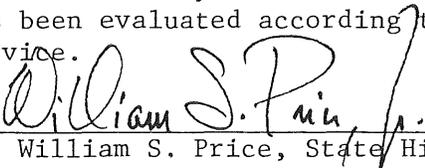
The Salisbury Historic District was nominated many years ago (1975). The State Historic Preservation Office no longer has a copy of the USGS map showing the UTM's for the district. Accordingly, a new USGS map showing the boundaries of the original district and of this amendment is attached. A base map prepared by the local planning department showing this amendment and a second proposed amendment is attached. The second proposed amendment, two commercial buildings at the corner of Main and Bank streets, will be submitted along with a third proposed amendment, a residential amendment shown on the southwest side of the district, in the near future. All three of these amendments were originally submitted in 1985 and were returned for additional documentation.

The verbal boundary description of the Salisbury Historic District is amended as follows:

Thence northeast along the rear property lines of 133-131 S. Main Street, thence southwest across a parking lot to the west property line of 117 E. Lee Street (Tax Parcel 10-300), thence northeast along the rear property line, thence northwest along the east property line and across a parking lot to the rear property lines of 119-107 S. Main Street, thence as before.

State Historic Preservation Office Certification

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer under the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby resubmit this amendment to the Salisbury Historic District nomination and certify that this amendment has been evaluated according to the procedures set forth by the National Park Service.



Dr. William S. Price, State Historic Preservation
Officer

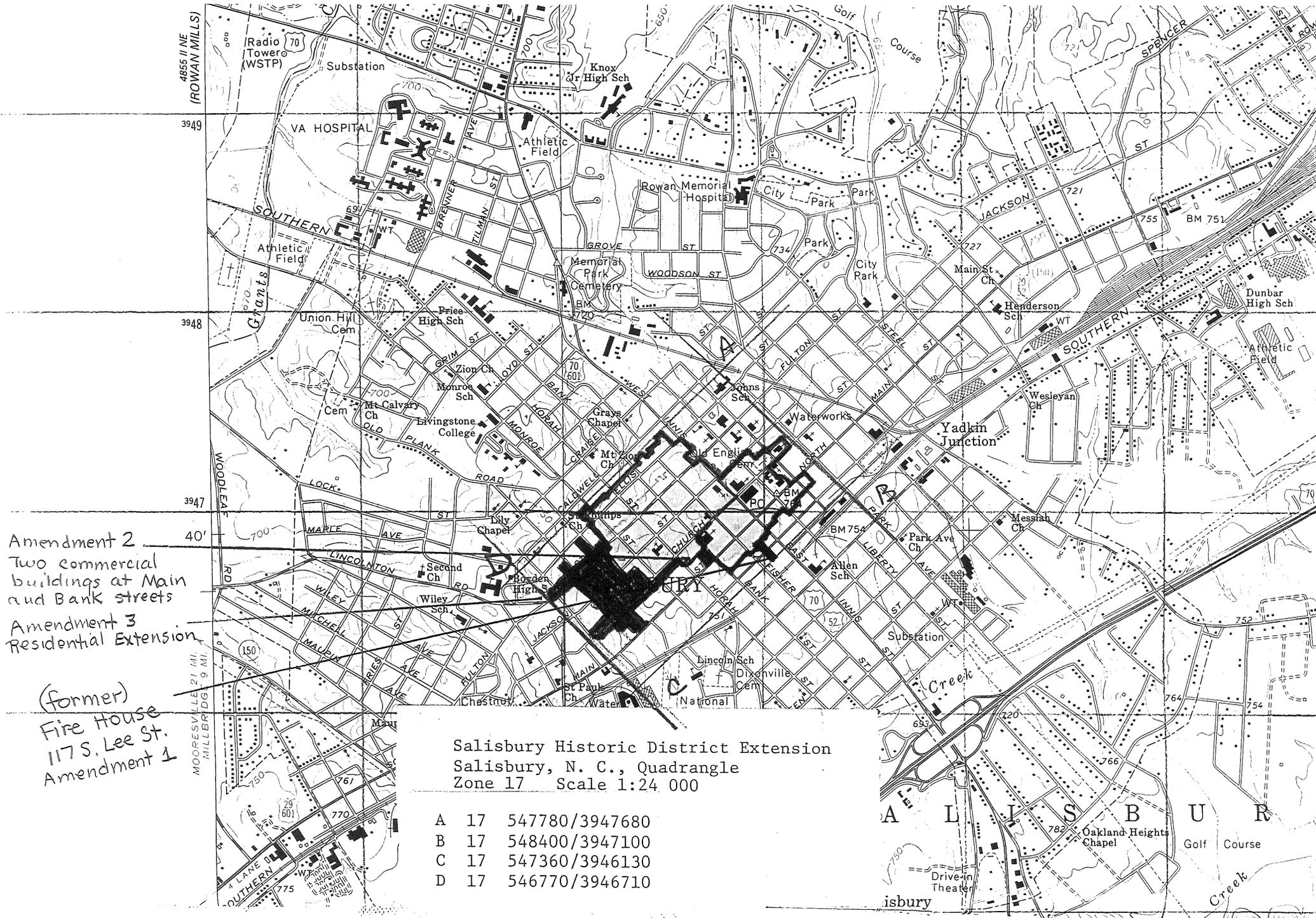
Date 11-24-87

(The architectural description and historical documentation in this amendment was prepared by Ray Manieri, consultant, in 1985 and updated by Ruth Little, North Carolina SHPO staff, in 1987.)

Amendment 2
Two commercial
buildings at Main
and Bank streets

Amendment 3
Residential Extension

(former)
Fire House
117 S. Lee St.
Amendment 1



Salisbury Historic District Extension
Salisbury, N. C., Quadrangle
Zone 17 Scale 1:24 000

A	17	547780/3947680
B	17	548400/3947100
C	17	547360/3946130
D	17	546770/3946710



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