

THE F. O. HAWLEY, JR., HOUSE

[Click here for a photo gallery on the F.O. Hawley, Jr. House.](#)



This imposing edifice was pushed over by bulldozers on May 19, 1990, to make way for an office building.

This report was written on September 24, 1981

1. Name and location of the property: The property known as the F. O. Hawley, Jr., House is located at 923 Elizabeth Avenue, Charlotte, North Carolina.

2. Name, address and telephone number of the present owner and present occupant of the property:

The present owner of the property is:

Mrs. Geraldine McPheeters Moore
923 Elizabeth Avenue
Charlotte, North Carolina 28204

Telephone: 704/375-4394

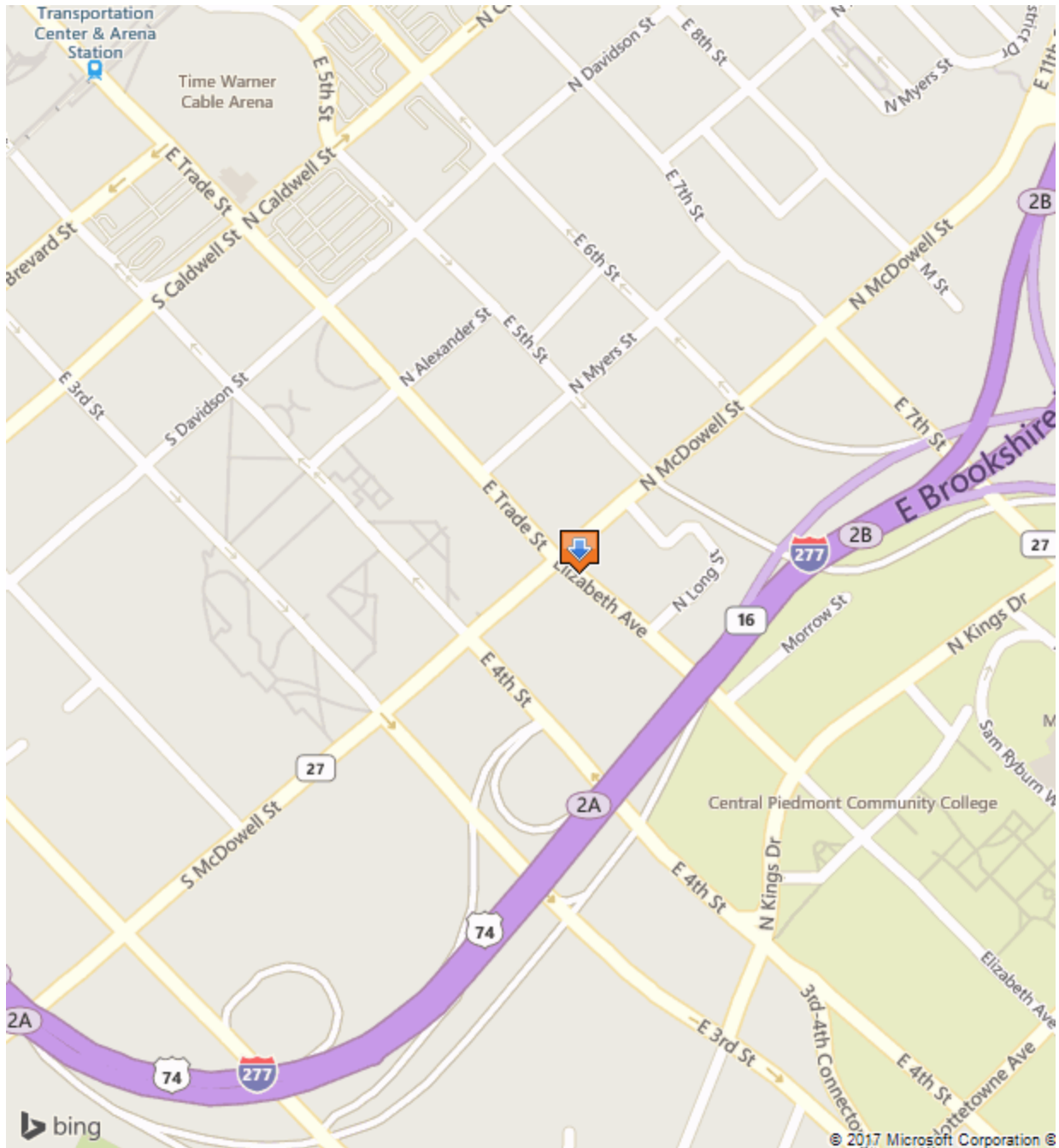
The present occupant of the property is:

Edmor Motor Inn
923 Elizabeth Avenue
Charlotte, North Carolina 28204

Telephone: 704/375-8168

3. Representative photographs of the property: This report contains representative photographs of the property.

4. A map depicting the location of the property: This report contains a map which depicts the location of the property.



Click on the map to browse

5. Current Deed Book reference to the property: The most recent deed to this property is listed in Mecklenburg County Deed Book 1287 at page 364. The current tax parcel number of this property is 080-092-02.

6. A brief historical sketch of the property: This report contains a brief historical sketch of the property by Dr. William H. Huffman, Ph.D.

7. A brief architectural sketch of the property: This report contains a brief architectural description of the property by Professor Mary Alice Dixon Hinson.

8. Documentation of why and in what ways the property meets the criteria set forth in N.C.G.S. 160A-399.4:

a. Special significance in terms of its history, architecture and/or

importance: The Historic Properties Commission judges that the property known as the F. O. Hawley, Jr., House does possess special significance in terms of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations: (1) the F. O. Hawley, Jr., House is one of the finest local examples of the Neo-Classical Revival style; (2) the F. O. Hawley, Jr., House is the only surviving element of the grand residential streetscape which once characterized the neighborhood; and (3) the initial owner, Mr. F. O. Hawley, Jr., was a prominent leader of the local business community.

b. Integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or

association: The commission judges that the attached architectural description by Mary Alice Dixon Hinson demonstrates that the property known as the F. O. Hawley, Jr., House meets this criterion.

9. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal: The Commission is aware that designation would allow the owner to apply annually for an automatic deferral of 50% of the Ad Valorem taxes on all or any portion of the property which becomes "historic property." The current Ad Valorem tax appraisal of the entire .520 acre tract is \$67,930.00. The Ad Valorem tax appraisal on the improvements is \$43,570.00. The total Ad Valorem tax appraisal is \$111,500.00. The property is currently zoned B-2.

Date of preparation of this report: September 24, 1981

Prepared by: Dr. Dan L. Morrill, Director
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission
3500 Shamrock Drive
Charlotte, North Carolina 28215

Telephone: 704/332-2726

Historical Overview

*Dr. William H. Huffman
June, 1981*

The **Neoclassical Revival** style house at 923 Elizabeth Avenue in Charlotte, which is now known as the Edmor Motor Inn, was built in 1906 or 1907 by Hector Theodore McKinnon (1845-1915) for his daughter, Elizabeth McKinnon Hawley (1881-1918).¹ Mr. McKinnon was a wealthy cotton merchant and owner of real estate, including the McKinnon Building at the northwest corner of N. Tryon and Fifth Streets.² In his will, H. T. McKinnon left the McKinnon building to the Independence Trust Company and other rents and property to two orphanages in Banner Elk, N.C. in addition to certain bequests to his daughter and son-in-law.³ Elizabeth Hawley, McKinnon's only child, contested the will on the grounds of her father's mental incompetence at the time of its devising (six months prior to his death) and undue influence on the part of the Independence Trust. In a well-reported trial from September 12 to 15, 1916, which included many witnesses for both sides, Mrs. Hawley succeeded in breaking the will and thus received all of her father's estate.⁴ At the time, McKinnon's estate was valued between \$100,000 and \$125,000, and the house on Elizabeth Avenue was valued at \$25,000.⁵

Elizabeth McKinnon Hawley was married to Francis Oscar Hawley, Jr. (1881-1939) on June 27, 1905.⁶ Her husband was the son of Dr. F. O. Hawley (1846-1915), who was practicing medicine in Polkton, N.C. when F. O. Hawley, Jr. was born. In 1894, the Hawleys moved to Charlotte, where Dr. Hawley lobbied, through written articles, for the establishment of the office of city physician. When the office was set up several years later, Dr. Hawley became assistant city physician, and in 1898, when his boss went off to the Spanish-American War, became the second city physician, a post he held until shortly before his death in 1915.⁷ Two months after his marriage to Elizabeth McKinnon, F. O. Hawley, Jr., who had graduated from the Maryland College of Pharmacy and traveled for the Eli Lilly Co., bought out (with T. Croft Woodruff) the Brannon Drug Co. on N. Tryon Street.⁸ Hawley and Woodruff later became Hawley's Pharmacy, which was located in a ground floor corner of the McKinnon Building.⁹ About the same time as the establishment of the younger Hawley's drug store, perhaps with his father-in-law's backing, H. T. McKinnon also bought the lot on Elizabeth Avenue to build a house on for his daughter.¹⁰ Since the deaths of H. T. McKinnon and Dr. F. O. Hawley, Sr. in 1915 made the younger Hawleys quite wealthy, the junior Mr. Hawley retired from active involvement in the drug store, and he and his wife moved from their Elizabeth Avenue home to a

suburban one on the Derita Road (now about 24th and Graham Streets), in 1917.¹¹ F. O. Hawley, Jr. was then president of Hawley Laboratories, also located at the Derita Road site, and looked after his and his wife's real estate holdings.¹²

A year later, in 1918, Elizabeth Hawley was stricken with the deadly flu which raged after World War I, and died within a week at the age of thirty-seven, leaving her husband as her sole heir.¹³ Upon F. O. Hawley, Jr.'s death in 1939, the Elizabeth Avenue house, which had been rented to various families since 1917, and was later called "The Clary," offering furnished rooms, was administered by the executors of Hawley's large estate.¹⁴ They sold the house to the Charlotte Elks Lodge 392 in 1941, which continued its use as a rooming house until they sold it three years later to Dr. Edgar Dorsett Moore (1897-1976) and his wife, Geraldine McPheeters Moore.¹⁵ Dr. Moore was a dentist, and he used the house as his residence while he built the presently existing dentist offices on Elizabeth Avenue in front of the house.¹⁶ In 1964, Dr. Moore converted the house to the Edmor Motor Inn, and moved his residence to Sunset Drive.¹⁷ Dr. Moore, who died at his home at 1117 Queens Road in 1976 at the age of 79, was born in Globe, N.C., and came to Charlotte in 1931. He devoted much of his time to religious projects; he produced the "Temple of the Air" Bible radio class in Charlotte, and was active in the Gideons International and other religious and professional organizations.¹⁸ The present owner of the Hawley house, Geraldine McPheeters Moore, continues to operate the site as the Edmor Motor Inn with the dental offices at the street level, but the house appears likely to be subject to demolition by a subsequent owner. Its location, association with the turn-of-the-century history of Charlotte and architecture certainly argue for its preservation if at all possible.

NOTES

¹ Meck. Co. Will Book R. p. 69, prob. Nov. 18, 1915; Certificate of Death, Bk.3, p.82t

² Charlotte City Directory, 1916, p. 315.

³ Will Book R, p.69.

⁴ *Charlotte Observer*, September 16, 1916, p.3.

⁵ *Ibid.*; and *Charlotte Observer*, September 12, 1916, p. 11.

⁶ *Charlotte News*, Dec. 15, 1918, p. 20.

- ⁷ *Charlotte News*, Sept. 15, 1915, p. 2.
- ⁸ *Charlotte Observer*, Sept. 1, 1905, p. 5.
- ⁹ *Charlotte City Directory*, 1916, p. 315.
- ¹⁰ Deed Book 200, p. 611, Sept. 1, 1905.
- ¹¹ *Charlotte News*, Dec. 15, 1918, p.20.
- ¹² *Charlotte News*, Oct. 31, 1939, p.2.
- ¹³ *Charlotte News*, Dec. 15, 1918, p.20; Will Book R, p.450.
- ¹⁴ Will Book Z, p. 486, prob. Nov. 1, 1939; *Charlotte City Directories*, 1917-1939.
- ¹⁵ Deed Book 1048, p. 294, July 15, 1941; Deed Book 1118, p. 132, March 17, 1944.
- ¹⁶ *Charlotte City Directory*, 1948-9, p. 49, and subsequent years.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1964, pp. 131 and 667.
- ¹⁸ *Charlotte Observer*, July 3, 1976, p. 4B.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Hawley House is a distinguished example of Charlotte's domestic Neoclassicism. The house stands two-and-a-half stories high on a sharply elevated site overlooking Elizabeth Avenue not far from the center of the city. The house carries a **hipped roof** covered by slate shingles. A monumental frontispiece projects from the facade. The main body of the house, five bays wide and three deep, is built of cream-colored brick laid in **running bond**. The brick provides a neutral background for the rich program of applied wooden and stone **Neoclassical** trim: frontispiece, dentil cornice, and window sills are painted white with dark accents added by masonry window lintels. The main (south) facade is dramatized by a Neoclassical frontispiece projecting from the three center bays of the elevation. The frontispiece consists of two symmetrical, interlocking porticoes: a colossal **Corinthian** portico enclosing a smaller, two-tiered **Ionic** portico.

The former consists of four two-story Corinthian columns with two complementary pilasters. These support a boldly projecting pedimented gable. Cream-colored stucco gives the gable face an impasto finish. A quadripartite oculus pierces the gable face; the oculus is framed by a round wooden surround bearing four raised **keystones**. A dentil cornice crisply outlines the pediment. The two-tiered entrance porch stands beneath the colossal portico. Four unfluted Ionic columns and two unfluted Ionic pilasters frame the central entrance and carry a second-story balcony. While the colossal Corinthian portico is clearly visible from the street, the smaller, two-tiered Ionic portico is most apparent only as the central entrance is approached. The monumental scale of the former responds to the distance of the street while the smaller size and formal division of the latter establishes human scale and reflects the internal layering of stories.

The main entrance, approached through the unfluted Ionic portico, is a neo-Palladian unit framed by a pair of fluted Ionic pilasters. A single-leaf door is punctuated by a large oval of beveled plate glass. A rectangular **transom** containing leaded glass surmounts the door. Within the transom a series of repeating geometric shapes form a semi-circular **fanlight**. Single-light sidelights flank the door. Each **sidelight** is outlined by flat-paneled pilasters; the pilasters carry acanthus modillions supporting molded entablatures. Above the entrance is the second-story balcony. The balcony is enclosed by a balustrade with a molded handrail, turned balusters, and four flat-paneled plinths. The two outer plinths are highlighted by bas-relief fleurs-de-lis. The balcony is overlooked by a sash window set beneath an eight-light transom with a pair of twelve-light sidelights.

Fenestration throughout the main body of the house is fairly consistent. Six-over-one and one-over-one **sash** (some with relatively new glass) are underlined by molded sills and decorative brick aprons. Stone jack arches with double raised keystones crown most of the windows except those within the three bays of the frontispiece. Along the east elevation a second-story round arched window overlooks the driveway. Three rows of headers with stone endblocks and double raised keystone surround this window. A shed dormer with dentil cornice pierces the tripped roof along the rear elevation. The east and west elevation of the roof are pierced by large louvered vents with molded hoods and fillet-trimmed ears. Two heavily corbeled brick chimney caps rise at the ridge of the roof. These are enclosed by a rectangular parapet whose turned balusters echo those of the second-story balcony. A small porte cochere protects the driveway entrance along the east elevation. It is balanced by a demi-hexagonal ground-story bay on the west elevation. Small weatherboarded sheds are attached to the main body of the house along both side elevations. The rear of the house, containing the service wing, is highly asymmetrical. The ground story consists of three shallowly stepped blocks beneath a stepped, set back second story. The

second story is faced with cream-colored stucco. A brick chimney pierces the kitchen roof. A single leaf rear entrance is sheltered by a small gable sheathed with ornamental pressed tin.

The focal point of the interior is the large stair hall into which the central entrance opens. The rectangular stair hall functions as both a circulation space and as a living hall. It contains exposed wooden ceiling beams with flat-paneled soffits. A flat-paneled [wainscot](#) runs around the room beneath a molded chairrail. The wainscot continues along the wall of a three-run staircase. The stair begins along the southern wall in the southeast corner of the room and then rises front-to-back along the eastern wall. The rectangular wainscot panels become ascending parallelograms as the [stair](#) rises. The [newel posts](#) are splayed and terminate in dentil caps above geometric cutouts. Slender rectangular insection [balusters](#) rise from the closed string.

Beneath the string is a flat-paneled inglenook with a built-in bench and several storage compartments. This alcove is at a right angle to the fireplace which dominates the northern wall of the stair hall. The fireplace has a red tile surround and a Neoclassical mantel. The mantel is built of two fluted Ionic columns supporting ovolo-molded endblocks and a blank frieze. An entablature with four horizontal flat panels and a second set of endblocks runs above the frieze. Most of the extant original doors are single-leaves. Each has five horizontal flat panels and a one-light rectangular transom. A single-run service staircase runs back-to-front along the western wall of the rear service wing. In the conversion from single-family dwelling to quasi-residential motel minor alterations and additions were made to the house. None appear to have had an overly significant impact on either the structural integrity of the building or the aesthetic merit of the street facade. The house and its handsome grounds, including a side garden with picturesque paths and a front lawn with massive roughcast [ashlar](#) retaining walls, form a visual oasis in the midst of heavy vehicular traffic. The Hawley House is a graphic reminder of Charlotte's past residential patterns. The Neoclassical frontispiece is an example of the use of multiple architectural scales in an urban residence.