

FAQs:

PRESERVE
PROTECT
EDUCATE

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What is the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission?

A community's history and traditions are embodied within its buildings and landmarks. Recognizing the importance of maintaining those links to Mecklenburg County's past, the Charlotte City Council and the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners jointly created the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission ("HLC") in July 1973. For more than 50 years, HLC has preserved more than 375 historic landmarks, including homes, schools, churches, cemeteries, civic and commercial buildings, mills, farms, parks, sports arenas, and archeological sites across the county. What can be saved today can be enjoyed tomorrow by future generations of Mecklenburg County residents.

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What is a "local historic landmark"?

Just about anything can qualify for designation as a local historic landmark so long as it is at least 50 years old and has historical, architectural, and/or cultural significance for Mecklenburg County or any of its municipalities. It can be a building, like the original Charlotte Coliseum (ca. 1955). It can be a structure, like the stone entry gates (ca. 1923) at Johnson C. Smith University. It can be a site, like the Roseland Cemetery in Matthews, a burial site for formerly enslaved people dating back to 1865. It can be an area, like the rural Huntersville farmland along McAuley Road that has been actively cultivated since the mid-19th century. Or it can be an object, like the 1861 hand-powered pumper firefighting apparatus owned by the Charlotte Fire Department.

Learn more about Mecklenburg County's designated landmarks.



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How does something become a local historic landmark?

Landmark designations are the result of the collaborative efforts of Mecklenburg County citizens, government officials, and HLC. The HLC commissioners and staff are always searching for buildings, places, and objects throughout the county as candidates for designation. But anyone can nominate a property of local historical, architectural, and/or cultural significance for consideration as a potential landmark. Upon receiving a nomination, HLC will research and authenticate the property's backstory, inspect and confirm the integrity of its design, setting, and construction, and determine its significance to the community's historical, cultural, or architectural heritage. Once those criteria are satisfied, HLC works with the local governing body where the property is located to enact an ordinance granting landmark status.

Nominate a property for landmark status.



Charlotte-Mecklenburg

Historic Landmarks Commission

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What else does HLC do?

Landmark designation is not the only way HLC protects historic properties. It may purchase endangered historic properties and restore and improve those properties for later resale to new owners who promise to preserve the properties. Or HLC may acquire specific rights to such properties, like a first option to purchase or a legal commitment from the owner to perpetual preservation obligations on a property. If that is not be feasible, HLC can negotiate voluntary preservation commitments with the owner of an endangered historic structure. Those efforts often include helping owners identify opportunities for adaptive reuse, that is new and different uses for a historic property as an alternative to demolition and building anew. HLC also works to educate the citizens of Mecklenburg County about the significance of historic properties and their intrinsic value to the community.

How you can help...

If you discover an older property that has an interesting historical background, a unique or attractive architectural style, or a longtime cultural meaning, let us know about it! Nominate the property for landmark designation. But if you really like history, consider these opportunities for getting more involved in HLC's preservation efforts:

- **HLC Adventure Club:** Experience history firsthand with HLC's Adventure Club. Join us for a historic neighborhood bike tour, a headstone cleaning at a historic cemetery, a "backstage" tour of one of our designated landmarks, or other free history-related activities. Join the club and follow HLC on Facebook to know what's coming next.  
- **HLC Historic Bookmarks Book Club:** HLC offers a book discussion group (also free!) focused on Mecklenburg County and North Carolina history that puts you where it happened. Join us at a local WWII U.S. Army quartermaster depot for an author's discussion of her book about a local WWII munitions plant. Ask an author about his book on Charlotte's 1960s urban renewal campaign while seated in one of the last surviving structures of that campaign. And you can participate without reading the book!
- **HLC Committees:** Volunteer for one of our committees for even more involvement! You can join our Survey Committee to help identify and learn more about local properties as potential candidates for historic landmark designation. You can become part of the Projects Committee as they work out creative solutions for preserving endangered historical assets. You could also introduce and educate the public about Mecklenburg County's history as a member of the Community Outreach Committee. All you need is a desire to help, a passion for history, and an active imagination.
- **Historic Landmarks Commission:** HLC is a Mecklenburg County agency. The Board of County Commissioners, the Charlotte City Council, and the Mayor of Charlotte appoint its 12 members. Any Mecklenburg County resident can apply for a three-year appointment as an HLC commissioner and help direct the preservation efforts for the county's historical assets. If you love history, this might be the perfect job for you!

Want to learn more? Visit us at www.LandmarksCommission.org.

Do you have questions, or are you ready to dive in?
Contact (980) 314-7660 or HL@MeckNC.gov.