

PLACES IN PERIL NOMINATION FORM

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Name of Property: East Point City Hall, Auditorium, City Library, and Victory Park

Address: 2777 East Point Street, East Point, GA 30344

City/county: East Point, Fulton County

Construction date: City Hall – 1931; Auditorium – 1931; City Library – 1939; Victory Park – first memorial approximately 1920-1930, dedication October 24, 1971.

Historic Designation: None

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name: Vickie Chung

Address: 3149 Boulder Way East Point, GA 30344

Phone: 404-784-4028

Email: Vickie@preserveeastpoint.org

Association with Property: Officer of the East Point Preservation Alliance

OWNER INFORMATION

Name: City of East Point

Address: 2227 East Point Street, East Point, GA 30344

Phone: 404-270-7093

Email: mayor@eastpointcity.org

Are they aware of the nomination? Yes

If so, do they support it? The City has taken no official position.

OTHER GROUPS OF INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED

Name: East Point Historical Society

Address: 1685 Norman Berry Drive, East Point GA 30344

Phone: 404-767-4656

Email: ephistoricalociety@gmail.com

1. *Why is the property significant? Is it architecturally and/or historically significant? Does it contribute to a historic district? What makes it unique or different?*

East Point City Hall, Auditorium, City Library and Victory Park form a contiguous block that has been the heart of downtown East Point since the 1930's.

City Hall is the City's most iconic structure, and was constructed in 1931. It is the symbol of the City, prominently displayed on the City's flag, in the municipal court, and on the City's stationary for decades. Typical of the Federal Revival and antebellum architectural styles that dominated the South during that era, City Hall's distinctive architectural details include a white columned porch and a cupola with a clock

and bell. City Hall also currently houses the office of the Mayor. The top floor contains the offices of several local boards, such as Keep East Point Beautiful, as well as the old Council Chambers.

The City Auditorium is located behind City Hall, and was also built in 1931. It makes up the center of the historic Civic Block. The City Auditorium is a unique venue in the metropolitan area and has huge potential to become great again. It features a red brick exterior, Palladian windows, and medallions along the interior and exterior walls. The front façade is dominated by three large archways which visitors pass through to gain entrance to the Auditorium doors.

The old City Library sits directly behind the City Auditorium, but faces the opposite direction so that the backs of each building are facing the other. In front of the old City Library lies Victory Park, the city's memorial fallen East Point veterans. Victory Park completes the historic Civic Block, and contains large Magnolia trees, park benches, gas lamps, and a World War II canon that used to sit on the lawn of City Hall for decades. The Library retains the majority of its original interior, including judges paneling on nearly every wall and multiple art deco brass light fixtures. Original wooden bookshelves remain in the Library, and there are two fireplaces with deep stained wooden mantels. Built as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" for America, the building was finished in 1939. A plaque on the front of the building bears the names of Mr. Roosevelt and then Administrator of Public Works Harold Ickes.

2. *What is the history of the property? Please provide a brief historical summary.*

City Hall was built in 1931 and was financed with public bonds. The East Point City Council met in City Hall from its completion until several decades later, when council meetings were moved to the Auditorium for ADA compliance.

The Auditorium was also built in 1931 and financed with public bonds. City council meetings were held in the Auditorium until 2008. City council minutes reveal that the Auditorium was used for a wide variety of community events, such as graduations, musicals, vaudeville shows, and public debates.

The City Library was a New Deal project completed in 1939 as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Public Works Administration. The library also hosted community events, such as summer programs, before it was closed in the mid-1990's.

Victory Park's first memorial was placed in the 1920's, dedicated to those who had fallen in the First World War. Several other plaques dedicated to East Point veterans have been placed since that time, some of which have unfortunately been the target of metal thieves. Victory Park was formally dedicated on October 24, 1971.

3. *Describe the nature of the threat to the property (demolition, neglect, lack of maintenance, inappropriate development, insensitive public policy, etc.) How imminent is the threat?*

Downtown East Point is facing an increase in private development pressure that puts all three of the buildings and Victory Park at risk. As this pressure mounts, the properties are slowly deteriorating due to neglect. Although City Hall is still currently being used, albeit at a reduced capacity, the Auditorium was condemned and closed off to the public in 2011 and has suffered roof damage, which has resulted in leakage and black mold. Since being closed off to the public in the mid-1990's, the City Library has been used as storage space for the City. The threat of demolition by neglect is ever present and ongoing.

These historic properties are mere blocks away from a multi-acre plot of grassy area referred to as “The Commons,” different sections of which are owned by private and public entities, including the City. The Commons, which are just two streets across from the MARTA station, are ripe for private development. The block of historic buildings is also flanked with acres of city-owned property, some of which are vacant. This property is also ripe for private development. Nevertheless, the fate of the City Hall, Auditorium, City Library, and Victory Park remain uncertain.

The East Point Preservation does not oppose the construction of new buildings in our downtown. In fact, the group wholeheartedly welcomes new development in the City but believes that any new structures, public or private, could easily be built on vacant land adjacent to the historic buildings.

4. *Has any recent or past preservation activity occurred on behalf of the property? Please identify any entities, organizations and/or agencies that have a goal to save the property. Are they willing to work towards the implementation of a preservation plan for the property?*

The East Point Preservation Alliance has worked closely with the East Point Historical Society, as well as members of the City government and State Department of Natural Resources’ Historic Preservation Division. East Point residents, the State Historic Preservation Division, and members of the City government in their individual capacities have expressed strong support for saving these buildings. Individual members of the State’s Economic Development, Tourism and Film offices have also provided guidance and support to us.

5. *Is there any potential opposition to including this site on the list? If yes or maybe, provide the names, titles and contact information of those opposing the nomination. Please indicate reasons for each person’s opposition, if known.*

There is no known potential opposition to including this site on the list. The East Point Preservation has been active in the community and has rented booth spaces during our City’s farmer’s markets, fall festival, “Taste of East Point” festival, and Fourth of July celebration. At each of these events, members of the public, including members of the City government, have expressed support for the group’s mission.

6. *What would you hope to accomplish if your project is placed on the Places in Peril list?*

A listing on the *Places in Peril* list would give the buildings the best fighting chance they have. These architectural gems have the potential to bring positive attention and tourism to the Southside metropolitan area, which has been economically depressed for decades but has recently been revitalized. A listing on the *Places in Peril* list would also recognize the historical value and beauty of these buildings, which have largely been forgotten due to their deteriorated conditions.