

CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORT WITH PICTURES

40 East Main

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prior inspection records – records review is underway and this draft report may be updated.

1982 National Register consideration – evaluated for consideration, but was not supported by the owner and not submitted as part of the district – property condition was described as “fair”. Polaroids of this period are unclear but may show the building as having been painted.

2001 Historic District inventory – 19 years after the National Register evaluation the property condition was described as “fair” despite no known or clearly identifiable changes other than replacement of a metal front awning with a porch over the sidewalk (date unknown).

September 17, 2015 – The structure is in significantly poorer condition than others within the Square area and perhaps all commercial buildings in the City. Despite its “character” it detracts from the potential commercial vitality by being in disrepair and vacant for so long (since 2012). Without significant intervention it will only decline further over time. Overall condition is very poor for the front portion along East Main (main building) and poor for the rear portion along Meaders Street (an apparent later addition). There is evidence throughout the building of deterioration and neglect which make the it presently an unsafe structure for occupancy. Materials used in construction are common and non-distinguishable and the building is a victim of long-standing deferred maintenance.

Virtually nothing is plumb or square and there is evidence of suspect structural conditions throughout. Per the Lumpkin County Fire Inspector the building at present cannot be occupied for any use. The building lacks Life/Safety elements, heating/air and insulation and systems for plumbing and electricity. Provision of these to even the most basic level would likely exceed 50% of the value of the structure and would result in requiring the entire structure to be brought up to Code.

If the building is not secured immediately from ongoing deterioration by insects it will soon be, if not already is, appropriate to be declared unsafe. The building has not been posted at this time because the time-frame for resolution of its condition is short. If the owner does not proceed with restoration, relocation or demolition of the building before the end of the year, the property will likely be posted as unsafe to expedite corrective action or removal. Changes in its condition may prompt an earlier date. Vagrants have broken in and there is risk of fire, and by extension risk to other buildings in the vicinity, if the building is not properly secured.

Rehabilitation would likely require complete gutting and stick-by-stick replacement of all damaged elements, much of which remains unexposed and undetermined. Described below and in accompanying photographs are visible current issues.

Roof – pictures at Section 1

Overall roof condition is poor to fair, depending on location. Standing seam metal portion – age of material and last repair or detailed inspection unknown; significant rusting visible

Corrugated metal roof – age of material and last repair or detailed inspection unknown; holes, loose and/or missing fasteners; nails popped up, loose or sticking up above the sheet metal

Evidence of water infiltration – water staining on several walls with considerable deterioration of old hardwood clapboard siding on the rear portion of the main structure (under vinyl siding).

There is moderate to severe wood rot and decay to fascia and eaves boards. Visibility of eaves board splitting and signs of deteriorated and wood rot. Flashing appears to be in poor condition with signs of leaking.

Chimneys - Condition of masonry, mortar and liner not examined and not known. Two chimney flues are present and there may have been another more central to the building in the past.

No significant architectural elements, distinguishing features or quality materials are noted on the roof or chimneys.

Gutters & Downspouts - pictures at Section 2

Modern metal gutters with downspouts are visible along the East Main side of the roof and the East Main covered sidewalk. These appear to be in good condition overall.

The front porch roof over the sidewalk also drains to an enclosed hidden gutter in the front face of the building – evidence of water damage and insect damage at interface; gutters and downspouts were not inspected for blockage and condition is not known. They should be cleaned to reduce potential for further water damage.

Exterior Walls - pictures at Section 3

Overall condition of the exterior walls varies from very poor to good, depending on location. The western wall of the main building has large vegetation growing adjacent to and within the wall, which has caused significant damage. This should be removed to reduce moisture, root penetration, vermin and insect access.

The walls bulge in several locations with significant variation in condition of visible and covered wood siding material; significant deterioration at ground level for much of the structure and in the southwestern wall (area covered by vinyl siding)

Severe paint peeling, blistering and cracking is present over all walls; paint not tested for lead content; much of the building may have been unpainted for much of its life because of the thin paint layer.

Water collects near the base of the exterior wall on the west and southwest side of the building.

Sill plates rest on bare dirt with significant insect damage and wet/dry rot. This has transferred into many lower level pieces of siding and likely into wall studs.

Some exterior siding below windows is deteriorated from insect damage and wet/dry rot. This has likely transferred rotted sills

Mold/mildew are visible.

There were no significant architectural elements, distinguishing features or quality materials noted on the exterior walls.

Access, Porches and Balcony - pictures at Section 4

Access from East Main (front sidewalk) is adjacent to the right of way, requires step down into building, is not ADA compliant, and likely results in moisture transfer to the building.

Access from Meaders to the rear portion of the building (an apparent later addition) is from a small porch adjacent to the right of way via a short set of steps without handrail. The steps are not ADA compliant. Because of the adjacent public sidewalk the porch would need to be rebuilt if ADA compliant access at this location were to be provided. Feasibility is not confirmed and would require detailed design.

The rear of the building adjacent to the parking lot is from a short set of three concrete steps without handrail. The steps are not ADA compliant. This location appears to have the greatest potential for creation of ADA compliant access. A large magnolia tree is adjacent to the steps and lower porch and should be removed to prevent root damage and access to the porches, roof and attic of the building by squirrels and insects.

A single set of exterior wooden stairs joins two porches on the rear portion of the building and provides access to the second floor of the building. If there was ever internal stairway access in the main building, its location cannot be easily determined. The outside stair treads are in relatively good repair and do not appear to be well worn. However, the porches are severely deteriorated and the stair risers need to be reset. The upper rear porch has a dangerous slope and requires complete reconstruction.

A covered balcony or porch on the front of the building has a dangerous slope, is severely rotted and requires complete replacement. It provides access and ventilation to and from four rooms of the upper floor. The balcony or porch cannot be easily confirmed as being original to the

building as the construction materials of flooring and walls in the rooms varies widely, suggesting the main building was built over time and is, itself, not a single structure.

Access doors are of a variety of styles, sizes and hardware, suggesting various dates of installation.

No significant architectural elements, distinguishing features or quality materials were noted on doors, porches, stairs or balcony.

Windows - pictures at Section 5

The upper floor of the main building has inoperable wooden windows with wooden shutters and hardware. These are 9 over 6 lite sashes and appear to be double-hung. More than one is permanently open, resulting in significant damage and rot to the sill and both floors below with long present water damage on interior walls (west and south side). Much of the glazing on the windows is missing. The condition of sash cords and weights was not determined as all windows appear to be painted shut or inoperable because of alignment problems from wall shift.

The lower floor of the main building has plate glass some of which is new and some of which is large older plate glass.

The addition has eight windows of the 2 over 2 lite sash style.

None of the windows are distinguished by ornate trim. Some of the windows, shutters and old plate glass may be salvageable and may have value for use elsewhere, if the structure is not rehabilitated.

Attic - pictures at Section 6

The main building attic ridge beam seems intact but was not closely examined along its entire length. Roof decking is of a variety of widths and wood species. This variety suggests multiple construction phases of the main building and prior replacement of water damaged wood over time.

There is evidence of water leaks in several locations and extensive bird and vermin infiltration.

The ridge beam of the addition seems intact but was not closely examined along its length. The addition appears to have been at one point in time with replacement of water damaged wood over time.

Interior - pictures at Section 7

The interior of the main building is rough with noticeable floor sag/bounce on the ground floor, sagging ceilings with walls and doors out of alignment with sticking/binding of doors and uneven settling.

There is evidence of a prior kitchen and two bathrooms but there is no serviceable plumbing in the building.

Doors are of a variety of sizes, materials, styles and hardware with nothing noteworthy noted. The size and species of wood flooring, base molding and door trim varies by room with no logical continuity, except in the addition.

Carpet was laid directly on the wood floor of the ground floor and sheet vinyl was laid on newspapers from the 1960s in several of the upper level rooms of the main building and addition.

Walls bear a thin layer of paint with no crown moldings, decorative chair rails, wainscoting, decorative painting treatments or significant wallpaper. At least one wall incorporates an earlier non-functioning door as part of the wall and some wall areas are covered in used cardboard boxes. A small area on the second floor which may have been part of a closet or interior stairway bears severely deteriorated wallpaper installed over newspaper. The wall paper and underlying newspaper are insect-ridden. The newspaper bears dates in the 1869-1870 timeframe.

Ceilings sag in several places and are of a variety of material, which show evidence of water damage. No decorative plaster ceiling treatments are noted.

Electrical service was added to the building with 100 amp service. Insulation wire is frayed particularly in the attic with some bare wire exposed. Aluminum wire and knob and tube wiring is present but not in active use. There are limited light fixtures and wall receptacles.

The apparent chimneys outside are really just stove pipe flues. There are no fireplace fireboxes, hearths or evidence of prior mantels on either floor.

A distinguishing feature of the building is a small galvanized metal walled room on the ground floor apparently used for cooling by ice. Historical references show the ground floor of the building was a grocery store for several years.

No significant architectural elements or quality materials were noted in the interior.

Foundation - pictures at Section 8

Drainage problems under structure – high moisture level in very dry weather period- mildew, mold and fungus present with dank, musty smell; standing water may be present at times based on water marks/stains. No vapor barrier is present. Loose pieces of wood including an old empty barrel lie in contact with the bare dirt inviting insects.

Vertical cracks, spalling, crumbling and deterioration in the stone masonry foundation with some missing stone. Temporary shored bracing appears inadequate to support dead or live load for occupancy.

Subfloor shows prior collapse and current significant break in main girder beam paralleling East Main under the main building. Virtually all replacement floor joists made from cedar trees or heart pine laid lengthwise from the main beam to the sill plates show significant damage from borer beetles along their entire length. Small piles of sawdust/wood debris exist in numerous places.

The lower floor decking above the subfloor shows rot, water damage and moisture.

Based on its condition the crawlspace should not be entered except by trained personnel and should not be entered with anyone in the building above.

There are no significant architectural elements, distinguishing features or quality materials noted on the foundation/crawl space area.

Section 1 Roof

Possible ridge beam sagging



Deterioration rusted metal



Section 1 Roof

Corrugated metal, nails



Section 1 Roof

Deteriorated flashing



Section 1 Roof

Decay rotten wood on fascia boards



Section 2 Gutters and Downspouts

Gutter enclosed evidence of water and insect damage



Possible water damage behind wall



Section 3 Exteriors Walls

Vegetation growing on exterior



Section 3 Exteriors Walls

Deterioration of siding and foundation



Deteriorated corner support



Section 3 Exterior Walls

Vinyl siding on one back wall



Deterioration of wall underneath the vinyl siding



Poor condition of clapboard siding



Peeling, blistering and cracking of paint



Dry rotted siding



Exterior wall leaning



Deteriorated siding



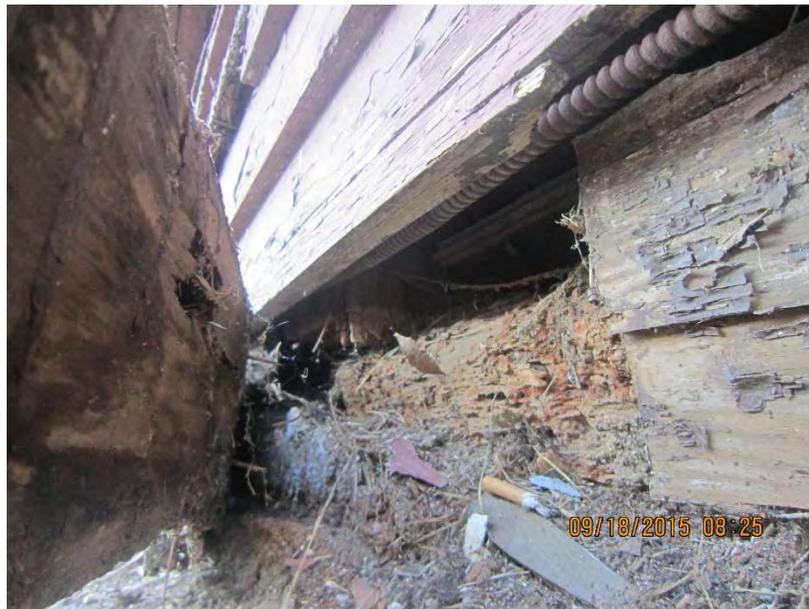
Deteriorated siding



Rotten siding



Sill plate on bare dirt, insect damage, rotten floor sill on east side of building



Insect damage, rotten floor sill Meaders St. Side



Siding deteriorated under window



Evidence of mold/mildew



Section 4 Access, Porches and Balcony

Entry is below sidewalk- not ADA compliant



Side entry.



Rear Entry



Upper Rear Porch Deterioration



Upper Rear Porch dangerous slope



Lower Rear Porch



Upper Rear Porch



Stairways are deteriorated and need to be replaced.



Upper Front Porch



Upper Front Porch



Section 5 Windows

Front lower level window sill



Upper window deterioration





Section 6 Attic

Extensive bird and vermin infiltration



Water damage



Attic area

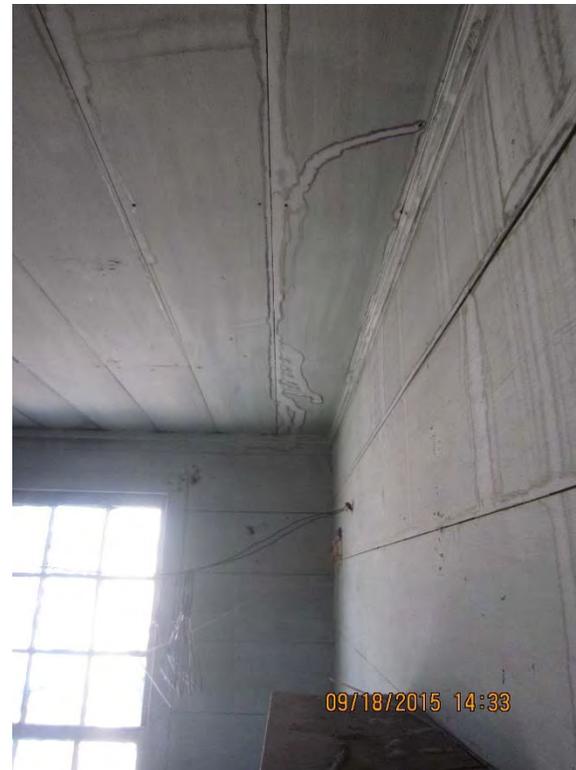


Section 7 Interior

Sagging ceiling, misaligned doors



Water damage



Sagging ceiling and



Water damage



Interior walls



Prior Kitchen



Prior Bathroom



Lower level prior bathroom area



Electrical panel- frayed wires



Chimney exterior



Chimney in attic



Section 8 Foundation

Floor joist damage



Rotten Sill plate, joist resting on ground



Deteriorated wood on ground



Water and wood rot damage



Water and moisture accumulation



Water damage and wood rot



Crumbling, deteriorated stone foundation



Exterior foundation holes and gaps



Break in center girder beam support



Crumbling foundation



Beams failing



Insect, wood rot of sill plate



Beams failing



Floor joist rot and inset damage



Signs of Termite Damage



Wood rot



Water damage on sub floor



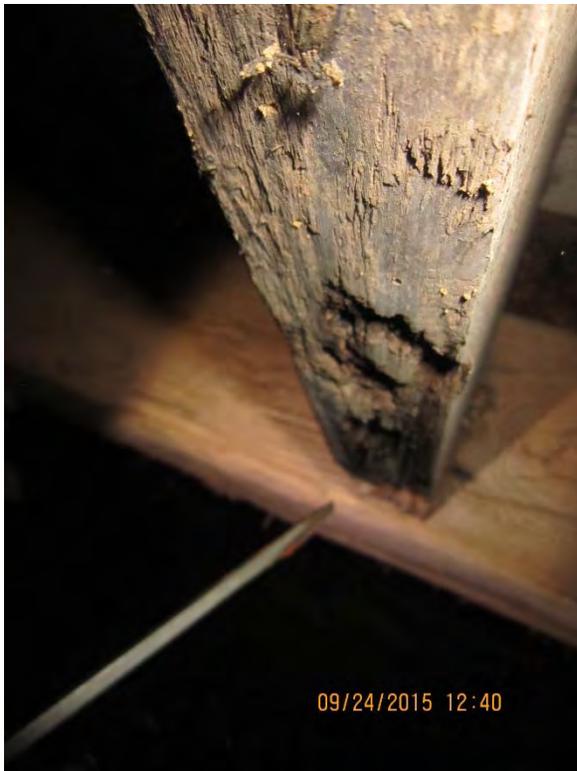
Wood rot on support post



Lower Floor Decking water damage



Floor joist



Crumbling stacked stone foundation



Falling stacked stone foundation



Deteriorated floor joist



Deteriorated sill joist



Subfloor signs of mildew and rot



Evidence of water damage

