

56-1934

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Main Theatre

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 7428 Hamilton Avenue

City or town: Mt. Healthy State: Ohio County: Hamilton

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A ___ B ___ C ___ D

<i>Barbara Pover</i> <i>DSHPO for Inventory November 9, 2017</i> <i>§ Registration</i>	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

12/27/2017
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/
Theater/Movie Theater

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant/Not In Use

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

20th CENTURY COMMERCIAL BLOCK

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Main Theatre, built in 1914, is centrally located within the small but dense commercial core of Mt. Healthy, Ohio. The city of Mt. Healthy is a suburb of Cincinnati, located in Springfield Township, in northern Hamilton County. The Main Theatre is a two-part commercial brick building with elements of the Classical Revival Style, which are characterized by the use of cast iron pilasters, a bracketed cornice with dentil ornamentations, and the centralized classical style pointed pediment at the cornice-line. The two-story building with an irregular plan accommodates wide storefront offices, a rectangular theater space with a rear equipment room on the first floor, and a large apartment on the second floor. Despite some alterations, the building demonstrates its early 20th century character as a theater space well and retains much of its historic integrity.

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Narrative Description

Setting

The Main Theatre building, situated on the east side of Hamilton Avenue in the City of Mt. Healthy, is roughly 15 miles north of downtown Cincinnati. Also known as U.S. Route 127, Hamilton Avenue begins south in Cincinnati and extends north, through Ohio and into Michigan. With just over 6,000 inhabitants, Mt. Healthy is a suburb of Cincinnati; primarily residential with a small commercial district. It is easily accessible by the Ronald Reagan Cross Country Highway (State Route 126), which intersects both Interstate-75 and Interstate-71.

Located at 7428 Hamilton Avenue, on the east side of the street, the Main Theatre is situated in Mt. Healthy's commercial district, just south of the busy intersection at Hamilton Avenue and Kinney Avenue (Photo 0001). Other early 20th century two-part commercial buildings line the pedestrian-friendly street (Photo 0002). Approximately one square mile in area, Mt. Healthy is a vibrant residential community with spacious lot sizes that extend beyond the compact commercial district. The Main Theatre is a Classical Revival-inspired building that occupies most of its rectangular tax lot, which, extends from the sidewalk on Hamilton Avenue towards a rear alley. A small rear yard spans the distance between the back of the building to the rear alley, with neighboring commercial buildings on Kinney Avenue to the north and an adjacent residential building to the south (Photos 0003 and 0004).

Exterior

The brick masonry Main Theatre building is three bays wide and rises two-stories in height at the front (west) facade, with two storefronts at the first level and apartments at the upper level (Photo 0005). The building's concrete slab foundation sits below the water table. At the front facade, four character defining cast iron pilasters visually divide the building's structural bays. There are two storefronts that flank the central bay. Each storefront hosts two entrances, set back further than the building's footprint, that flank non-original display windows. Non-original doors, with transom windows, are in place within the storefront entrances; the northernmost entrances have historic transoms. Within the central bay, there is a recessed entrance that feature two original double-doors, each with transoms that have all been boarded over with painted plywood. These historic wood double-doors feature stained-glass lites which are all intact; however, the transom windows above them are not, as they are missing glazing. Other architectural features include tile flooring in the recessed central entryway that is adorned with the brand 'Main' and white subway wall tiles that line the bottom half of the recessed exterior walls within the central bay (Photo 0006).

A lintel visually separates the storefront from the tan brick-veneer second-story. Above the belt-course, there is ghosting from where a sign-band was once positioned on the front facade. On the upper facade, two, one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl windows with stone lintels and sills are

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located within each of the three bays (Photo 0007). Four simple brick pilasters on the upper façade mirror the location of the decorative cast iron on storefront level. The repetition of windows and pilasters, as well as the overall dedication towards symmetry, are features indicative of the Classical Revival style.

The low-grade, flat-roof gently slopes to the building's rear and is covered in an asphalt roofing material. Just below the roofline rests an elaborate character-defining bracketed tin cornice detailed with a pointed pediment, corner finials, and dentil moldings—all elements found in Classical Revival architecture. The pointed pediment is inscribed with '*Main*' in the center.

The north and south elevations and rear (east) elevation have few windows and doors, thus reflecting the building's historic use as a 20th century two-part commercial theater building with storefront spaces. A rear equipment room, attached to the main building, contains three windows. On the south elevation, there are two small windows near the front of the building, a wide back theater exit with missing double-doors, and a small window in the equipment room, all of which have been covered with plywood boards. A second rear theater exit with intact historic wood paneled double-doors is located at the north elevation. Additionally, the north elevation hosts a large historic fixed window in the equipment room. The east elevation consists of two windows within the storefront and two small windows at the rear elevation.

Interior

The interior of the Main Theatre has upheld much of its historical integrity, as an early 20th century commercial building. Both the north and south bay storefronts are intact, in respect to shape and form. While their function as office spaces have long since been abandoned, they remain defining characteristics of the building. The center of the building used to be the primary theater space that once held the auditorium with seats, a stage and movie screen, and a music pit. While the seats and movie screen no longer remain, the shape of the auditorium, the original sound panels on the walls, and the pit area are still intact. The small mechanical room, located at the southeast corner of the building, is a tangible reminder of the building's age, with power equipment that is original to the building.

When entering the building through the central bay, the exterior flooring and wall tiles continue into the interior hallway (Photo 0008). The hallway leads towards the primary theater space. The front half of the theater has been heavily partitioned during a previous alteration. These partition walls, now a front storage room, have made the northernmost entrance, within the central bay, inaccessible.

The theater space is rectangular in shape, two-stories in height, and roughly 2,600 square feet. It has maintained its open layout, however the historic theater seats and finish flooring have been removed, exposing its visible concrete slab flooring (Photo 0009). The theater's wood lathe and plaster walls and metal lathe and plaster ceilings are heavily deteriorated. Baseboards, window trim, and door trim are minimally intact throughout the first floor. There are eight historic fabric sound dampeners with wood trim, in fair condition, along the walls of the theater space.

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Two small rooms with contemporary finishes were added on the north side of the theater space during a previous renovation. At the rear of the building an intact, yet dilapidated, stage area remains in its historic location (Photo 0010). An original mechanical room, at the southeast corner of the building, measures approximately 350 square feet in size. This historic mechanical room contains a remnant of original equipment which is original to the building (Photo 0011).

The interior entrances to the storefront offices are located near the front hallway, adjacent to the front storage room. From the front hallway, a non-historic door leads to the storefront on the south side of the building. The storefront space has retained its basic shape and form but has modern finishes such as drywall and laminate flooring (Photos 0012). Three large faux wood vinyl steps divide the room.

The storefront on the north side of the building is accessed, from the interior, by a doorway adjacent to the front storage room. An incomplete rehabilitation has left the northernmost storefront with visible concrete slab flooring and unfinished drywall partition walls with exposed wood studs. The only remaining staircase in the building is located on the north side of the building, behind the partition walls, and is accessible by an interior doorway.

Accessed from the exterior by the northern door on the front (west) facade, a single wood staircase leads to an unoccupied second-story apartment, approximately 1,600 square feet in size (Photo 0013). The basic layout of the apartment includes seven rooms: two partitioned rooms in the central bay, two larger rooms at both the north and south bays, and three small rooms that span all three bays at the rear of the building.

Much of the original hardwood flooring, as well as lathe and plaster walls and ceilings, remain throughout the second floor. In many cases, plaster is peeling or has been removed, uncovering the brick structure in some areas—particularly in the front rooms at the north and south bays. In each of these front rooms is an intact historic fireplace mantel with a brick hearth (Photos 0014 and 0015). The mantelpieces resemble those available in catalogs at the time the building was constructed. The rooms located within the central bay have contemporary additions and finishes, such as a closet, drywall, and hardwood laminate flooring (Photo 0016). The three small rear (east) rooms have undergone previous renovations: a bathroom with modern fixtures, an unfinished room with exposed brick and a non-original vinyl skylight, and a small corner room with contemporary wall and floor finishes (Photos 0017 and 0018).

Historic painted wood baseboards, as well as window and door trims are partially intact throughout the building. Moreover, six non-historic, one-over-one, vinyl windows line the upper front façade. Four additional second-story windows are located towards the rear of the building, along the north, south, and east elevations. Of these four windows, two are historic; one of which is a one-over-one, double-hung wood window and the other is a two-over-two, double-hung window. Furthermore, there are five intact wood paneled historic doors, and one non-historic door on the second floor. The second-story spaces are, overall, in fair-to-poor condition.

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Alterations & Integrity

Originally constructed in 1914 as a movie theater with storefronts on either side of the theater space and apartments above (Figure 1), the Main Theatre has maintained its overall spatial characteristics. Although the building has experienced modern alterations throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, it has good overall integrity. The Main Theatre has held its historical integrity within its *setting*, where the streetscape still reflects the character of Mt. Healthy's commercial district along Hamilton Avenue. The theater also holds its historical integrity through *location*, as it has remained in its historic siting. Aesthetically, the early 20th century two-part commercial block building with elements of the Classical Revival style has retained many of its original physical attributes. It continues to stimulate the historical sense of the past, specifically, during its period of significance, thus retaining historical integrity through *feeling*.

The Main Theatre's façade alterations, such as changes in signage and the replacement of windows and doors, are the most apparent exterior modifications. Historically, the theater building did not have a marquee (Figure 2), but a later photograph of a parade along Hamilton Avenue shows a projecting mid-20th century theater marquee (Figure 3). Removed at an unknown date, the marquee was eventually replaced by awnings above the storefront. The awnings were ultimately removed, as seen by the ghosting of the sign band. At some point, the original second-floor windows on the front façade were replaced with vinyl one-over-one double hung windows. The doors and transoms leading to both storefront office spaces have been also replaced over time. Lastly, the most recent exterior modification was the installation of a new roof for building stabilization in 2014. The historical integrity of the building's exterior has been retained with respect to *materials and workmanship*, as seen by the intact brick structure, cast iron pilasters, bracketed cornice, Classical Revival style pediment, and the original theater doors.

Alterations to the first-floor interior spaces were completed after the Main Theatre closed in May of 1971, when the building no longer functioned as a movie theater. The most substantial changes were the removal of the original ticket booth, auditorium seating, and movie screen. The physical theater space, while dilapidated, still has a stage and historic sound dampeners, retaining integrity through *materials and workmanship*. New walls were constructed for modern bathrooms and storage rooms during alterations, but appear to be easily removable. Within the central theater space are original lathe and plaster ceilings and walls, which have remained intact. The historic theater sound dampening panels have remained in remarkably good condition. The brick structure surrounding the theater stage also remains intact and is in fair condition. The storefront office at the building's south bay has been modernized with contemporary finishes, while the storefront at the north bay has exposed wood studs, indicating that a previous renovation project was left unfinished. Although the building has undergone alterations, the interior of the primary theater space, including the stage area, has maintained its original form, plan, and spatial composition, indicating it has historical integrity in respect to *design*. The overall use of materials and legacy of craftsmanship throughout the building continue to portray the building as it stood historically, however it is the detail in design and overall layout that continue to express its historical building type and use as an early 20th century two-part commercial block theater building.

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Originally, two historic staircases led to two upstairs apartments. The entrances to these staircases, at the north and south bays, are still in place, however the staircase that was in the south bay had been removed. The ghost of this staircase can be seen on the second floor. The remaining historic staircase in the north bay spans from the storefront space to the second-story. The two upstairs apartments were consolidated into one large apartment during a previous renovation. While the exact date of the change is unknown, it is likely there were a series of alterations that occurred over a period of time during the later-half of the 20th century, evidenced by the type of contemporary materials and finishes used (drywall, vinyl replacement windows, bathroom fixtures, and hardware).

Despite some modern modifications, many historic features remain. Much of the second-floor holds historical integrity, in that much of the original *design, workmanship* and *materials* used can still be seen throughout the upper story. The fireplace's wood mantels and brick hearths are intact and in good condition. All historic parameter walls continue to be of lathe and plaster, most original wood flooring is intact, and almost all historic door, window, and floor trim remains.

Although alteration to the building has occurred, the Main Theatre can still be recognized as an early 20th century commercial block movie theater. The building's position in Mt. Healthy's commercial district continues to be characterized by its lasting architecture and historical separation of spaces; retail on the first-floor, residential/office on the upper level. It is because the Main Theatre retains historical integrity in respect to *materials, workmanship, design, feeling, location, and setting*, that it also upholds the seventh aspect of integrity, *association*.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1914-1971

Significant Dates

1914
1915

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Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kunz, Anthony, Architect

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Main Theatre on 7428 Hamilton Avenue in Mt. Healthy, Ohio, is locally significant under Criterion A for its contribution towards entertainment and recreation in Mt. Healthy community. Since 1915, the Main Theatre offered leisure and pleasure through cinematic entertainment, until its doors closed in May of 1971. The period of significance spans from 1914-1971, as it represents its construction, in 1914, and the opening of the theater, in 1915, and the theater's continued use up to 1971, when it was closed. Although many early 20th century movie theaters have been lost over time, the Main Theatre remained an excellent example of an entertainment and recreation venue that served the local Mt. Healthy community and nearby farm towns during its period of significance.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

FROM MOUNT PLEASANT TO MT. HEALTHY

In 1788, Israel Ludlow, a surveyor and town planner in the Northwest Territory, was commissioned to survey an area of land known as the Miami Purchase as it covered the region between the Great Miami River and Little Miami River.¹ Israel Ludlow went on to plat the town of Cincinnati, then called Losantiville. The town grew quickly, which prompted the construction of Fort Washington in 1789.² Fort Hamilton, was constructed in 1791 as a supply depot along the Great Miami River. Fort Hamilton, now known as the city of Hamilton, was the first fort built north of Fort Washington in Native American territory.³ The Native American military foot trail between these two points became known as Hamilton Road.

The village of Mount Pleasant was originally planned by John Ludlow, brother of Israel Ludlow, in 1793. It's location along the Hamilton Road was significant, as it was the half-way-point between Fort Washington and Fort Hamilton. However, it did not attract settlers during that time due to anti-Native American sentiment.⁴ The Cincinnati and Hamilton Turnpike Company, founded in 1817, constructed the Hamilton Turnpike (a toll road) along Hamilton Road, for the purposes of decreasing travel time. These development trends eventually pushed out Native American communities, providing settlers Samuel Hill and John Laboiteaux with the opportunity to establish a rural community, with a small business district, in the village of Mount Pleasant.

It took approximately two days to travel from Fort Washington to Fort Hamilton on the Hamilton Turnpike, making Mount Pleasant the perfect location to rest overnight. Businesses developed along the turnpike to accommodate travelers. The commercial district offered lodging, food, entertainment (taverns), and tailor and blacksmith services, to name a few.⁵ The village became known for its tailoring industry. These business opportunities attracted German immigrants, such as the Blum family, who owned a tailoring business along Hamilton Turnpike for generations. In fact, the 1901 *Hamilton County Business Directory* specifies twenty tailor shops in Mt. Healthy at the turn of the century. Throughout the 19th century, the town was rather self-sufficient, with

¹ The Miami Purchase was also called the Symmes Purchase for John Cleves Symmes who originally acquired the land. Ohio History Connection, "Miami Purchase," Ohio History Central, accessed March 4, 2017, http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Miami_Purchase.

² Ohio History Connection, "Fort Washington," Ohio History Central, accessed March 4, 2017, http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Fort_Washington.

³ Ohio History Connection, "Fort Hamilton," Ohio History Central, accessed March 4, 2017, http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Fort_Hamilton.

⁴ Kathleen M. Tamarkin and Sue K. Wilson, *Images of America Mt. Healthy* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 9.

⁵ Kathleen M. Tamarkin and Sue K. Wilson, *Images of America Mt. Healthy* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 45.

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numerous individually owned businesses, including the Hill sawmill (c.1819), turned flour mill, which altogether ran for over a hundred years.⁶

Before the rural village of Mount Pleasant applied for a local United States Postal Office in 1828, town officials were not aware that the name Mount Pleasant was already being used by another Ohio village. It wasn't until 1832, when the Cincinnati area experienced its first Cholera epidemic—which spared most residents in Mount Pleasant—that the village started being referred to as Mt. Healthy. Another Cholera epidemic occurred in 1850, again, minimally affecting those in Mount Pleasant. Residents began to exclusively use Mt. Healthy when speaking of Mount Pleasant.⁷ Still having never changed the name of the village, in 1877 the United States Postal Service requested the name Mount Pleasant be changed to avoid confusion with the other Ohio town of the same name.

Mt. Healthy became an official Ohio village in August of 1893. With a newly elected mayor and city departments working to expand the village, a taxation system was established in 1894 to pay for public amenities. Mt. Healthy seemingly functioned autonomously; individual owned businesses flourished and various public amenities were offered. In 1909, waterworks began supplying water to the village and the Mt. Healthy Light and Power Company began supplying, electricity and gas to public and private consumers.⁸ Telephone service was provided by the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Telephone Company in 1912.⁹ The rural village was transforming into an alluring residential community, as it was beginning to have all the comforts of the city, but in a spacious and pleasurable setting.

MT. HEALTHY: A VILLAGE BECOMES A CITY

Mt. Healthy experienced a great deal of change during the 19th century, largely due to the development in transportation infrastructure throughout the United States. Formed in May of 1873, College Hill Narrow Gauge Railroad Company began constructing a transit line for steam cars. Beginning on Spring Grove Avenue, steam cars traveled north towards College Hill and continued through the outskirts of Mt. Healthy. The first steam cars began running from Spring Grove to College Hill on March 13, 1876. However, the narrow-gauge steam line to Mt. Healthy was not completed until October of 1877. In a local Mt. Healthy publication, it was stated that “the small four-wheel, dummy-type locomotive enclosed in a horsecar-like body was affectionately called *the dummy line*”.¹⁰ Residents of Mt. Healthy had many concerns with the steam line, such as cost and commute time. Traveling to downtown Cincinnati by way of the underpowered dummy train was expensive for its time, amounting to thirty-five cents for a one-way ticket and sixty cents for round-trip travel.¹¹ In 1887, under new ownership, the Cincinnati

⁶ Ibid, 48.

⁷ Ibid, 9.

⁸ *One Square Mile 1817-1992* (Mt. Healthy, OH: Mt. Healthy Historical Society, 1992), 58.

⁹ Ibid, 51

¹⁰ Ibid, 50.

¹¹ *One Square Mile 1817-1992* (Mt. Healthy, OH: Mt. Healthy Historical Society, 1992), 28-29.

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Northwestern Railway converted the narrow-gauge line to a standard-gauge, as standard-gauge train lines were becoming common.¹²

An interurban traction line wasn't constructed in Mt. Healthy until 1898 by the Cincinnati & Hamilton Electric Railway Company.¹³ This train line connected with the Cincinnati & Miami Valley Traction Company's thirty-six-mile track from Hamilton to Dayton. The new fourteen-mile track was more convenient for Mt. Healthy residents, as it ran through Hamilton Turnpike, connecting College Hill to Hamilton.¹⁴ At five cents per ticket, the traction line was considerably cheaper than the steam line trains, which made travel more attainable. Before there was a continuous traction line to downtown Cincinnati, southbound passengers would stop in Mt. Healthy to transfer to the Cincinnati Street Railway.¹⁵ The traction line contributed to the development of Mt. Healthy's commercial district in two ways. First, as a transfer point for travelers, it increased through-traffic in the village. Second, it made Mt. Healthy a desirable place to live, where residents could get to-and-from downtown Cincinnati rather easily.

The age of the automobile in the 20th century truly liberated rural families. In the 1910s and 1920s, automobiles and busses transformed transportation throughout the United States, and many other developed countries. Automobiles, in particular, were extremely popular because they were rather affordable and did not have to conform to specific routes or a time-schedule. This began to appeal to city dwellers, who began facing supreme blight and failing city services in the early 20th century. Living on the outskirts of Cincinnati became more attainable with motor vehicles. By 1951, the village of Mt. Healthy was incorporated into a city, as it surpassed the number of residents (5,500) required for incorporation.¹⁶

FOR MT. HEALTHY'S AMUSEMENT

In 19th century Mt. Healthy, residents found solace in participating barn raisings and huskings, as well as attending spelling-bees, Medicine Shows, and minstrel shows.¹⁷ While it has been said that minstrel shows in Mt. Healthy were not ostentatious in any way, these types of shows were often offensive by today's standards, as white performers in black face portrayed African Americans in a demeaning manner.¹⁸ Many residents also found themselves performing with local singing and dancing groups, such as the Butnet Society Concert in May of 1890, the Young Folks Entertainment in 1889.¹⁹

¹² The narrow-gauge line in Mt. Healthy was approximately thirty-six inches wide, while standard-gauge lines were set at about fifty-four inches. Throughout the country, narrow-gauge lines varied in width, while standard-gauge lines did not.

¹³ The interurban traction line is an electric railway, almost like a streetcar that runs between cities and towns, prevalent in the United States between the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

¹⁴ <http://jjakucyk.com/transit/cle.html>

¹⁵ *One Square Mile 1817-1992* (Mt. Healthy, OH: Mt. Healthy Historical Society, 1992), 31.

¹⁶ *One Square Mile 1817-1992* (Mt. Healthy, OH: Mt. Healthy Historical Society, 1992), 51.

¹⁷ *Once Upon a Hilltop: June 7, 8, 9, 10, 11* (Mt. Healthy, OH: F. Stout, 1967), 29-30.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 30.

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

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In the early 20th century, just as movies were becoming popular, a movie house opened on the second floor of the Independent German Benevolent Association (IGBA) Hall, the town's dance hall, located at the intersection of McMackin and Hamilton Avenues, per the *1904 Sanborn Map* of Mt. Healthy. Named for the woman who operated it, *Mary Scheidt's* showed silent films like movie serials "The Perils of Pauline" (c.1914) and "The Iron Claw" (c.1916). Tickets could be purchased at bottom of the staircase, near the entrance. Seating in *Mary Scheidt's* was limited to wood folding chairs said to have been "kept in some semblance of order by reason of the fact that they were fastened, both front and back legs, to strips of wood that accommodated about twelve chairs."²⁰ While exact dates are unknown, *Mary Scheidt's* is expected to have opened sometime after 1903, the date Hoffner Hall was constructed.²¹ Although the movie house closed c.1914 following the trend of *nickelodeons*, as discussed in the following section, the masonic building has remained in its original location.

Although the cinematic experience was becoming a more desirable form of amusement, many Mt. Healthians felt that the appreciation for performance arts was important to preserve. The Mt. Healthy Music Club formed in 1924 to help "promote musical interest in the community".²² They put on many operettas throughout their fourteen-year run, including "The Belle of Barcelona," for a local church benefit.²³ Even nationally acclaimed educational performance groups, such as the Chautauqua Circuit and the Lyceum Group, stopped in Mt. Healthy c.1928.²⁴ These autonomous assemblages would travel throughout the country to promote culture in rural communities, using music, dance, theater, and literature to inspire people to be more socially and politically aware.²⁵

MOVING PICTURE THEATERS AND THE CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE

Movies and films, originally called 'moving pictures' and 'flickers', began as experimental ventures during the 1890s—as black and white picture shows without sound. Filmmaking technology developed rather quickly during the decade and by the mid-1890s, moving pictures went from having a duration of only a few seconds to minutes.²⁶ The Lumiere brothers' camera-projector system, the Cinematographe, debuted on December 28th, 1895 in Paris, France. From there, the Lumiere brothers partnered with Mitchel H. Mark to open the first motion picture theater, the Edisonia Vitascope Hall, in Buffalo, New York, on October 19th, 1896.²⁷

²⁰ *Once Upon a Hilltop: June 7, 8, 9, 10, 11* (Mt. Healthy, OH: F. Stout, 1967), 33.

²¹ Hamilton county auditor

²² *Ibid*, 33.

²³ *Ibid*.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 31.

²⁵ "Traveling Culture: Circuit Chautauqua in the Twentieth Century," University of Iowa Libraries, accessed April 3, 2017, <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/sc/tc/>.

²⁶ Tim Dirks, "The History of Film Part 1," AMC Filmsite, accessed April 3, 2017, <http://www.filmsite.org/pre20sintro.html>.

²⁷ Tim Dirks, "The History of Film Part 2," AMC Filmsite, accessed April 3, 2017, <http://www.filmsite.org/pre20sintro2.html>.

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As filmmaking evolved, moving pictures became somewhat of a temporary escape from reality and were used as a relief from the stresses of everyday life. By beginning of the 20th century, cinematic entertainment had become more attainable for working-class families through *nickelodeons*. The first *nickelodeon* was opened in Pittsburgh by John Harris and Harry Davis in 1905.²⁸ The word *nickelodeon* was derived from “nickel”, the charge for admission, and “odeon”, the Greek word for theater.²⁹ *Nickelodeons* were often parlors and storefronts converted to low-to-moderate capacity theaters. When full-length feature films began showing in the United States in the 1910s, motion picture theaters were created, replacing *nickelodeons*. During this time, entrepreneurs began to see the potential for filmmaking and established motion picture production companies. Furthermore, audiences began to request more complicated plots, multi-reel films and publicity information about the stars.³⁰

Architecturally, the transition from *nickelodeons* to moving picture theaters was not too drastic, particularly in commercial districts where the two-part commercial block building type was already prevalent. These early 20th century two-part commercial block moving picture theaters assumed the identity of their surroundings, in form, virtually blending in with the streetscape. Theaters were set apart from other establishments by its front façade. Simple adornments, such as the use of tile mosaics on the ground of entryways opposite the sidewalk and modest cornice-lines offered patrons a sense of familiarity within the business district; however it was the box office and use of canopies and marquees that truly differentiated it from other two-part commercial buildings.³¹

Smaller theaters of this type were frequently segmented into three structural bays and hosted other retail business in storefront offices that flanked the main theater space on the first floor of the interior, often times with a box office in the central bay. Similar to other early 20th century two-part commercial buildings, the upper floors of theaters were often for residential use. The theater space resembled auditoriums, with rows of seats separated by aisles, and a musician’s pit just before the stage at which the movie screen would be positioned.³² A mechanical room with equipment to power electricity would be located at the rear of the building, and projector rooms were opposite the screen. Early 20th century motion picture theaters needed to accommodate a piano or organ as instrumental accompaniment for silent films. Motion pictures continued to be without sound until 1927, when the first “talkie”, as they were called, appeared in theaters. Before these “talkies”, silent films often had voice-overs done by actors, live theatrical performances, or they were accompanied by musical instruments.³³

Well-known architecture firms became influential in theater design after the advent the movie palace, which briefly overlaps the dates of moving picture storefront theaters in the early 1910s.

²⁸ Maggie Valentine, *The Show Starts on the Sidewalk* (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press), 23.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Tim Dirks, „The History of Film Part 3,“ AMC Filmsite, accessed April 3, 2017, <http://www.filmsite.org/pre20sintro3.html>.

³¹ Maggie Valentine, *The Show Starts on the Sidewalk* (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press), 22.

³² Ibid.

³³ Maggie Valentine, *The Show Starts on the Sidewalk* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 34.

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Because *nickelodeons* were similar to moving picture theaters in size and film was becoming a more accepted and appreciated form entertainment, the need for larger venues was in demand, thus the movie palace was created. The movie-goers experience of the theater, itself, became just as important to production companies as the films they showed. Movie palaces sought to intrigue patrons aesthetically, with grandiose buildings designed to provide them with a holistic artistic experience. Because technology was quick to develop in the film industry, larger production companies strived to capitalize on those successes. Architect Thomas Lamb and the architecture firm of Cornelius and George Rapp were of the first nationally recognized to design theaters solely for screening films.³⁴ Lamb began designing movie palaces in 1909, and is noted for his work on the Regent Theatre (1913) and the Strand Theatre (1914), which was built as part of a chain owned by the Marks Brothers who were pioneers of theater exhibition in the United States. Rapp and Rapp were architects for the Publix-Paramount chain and were known for movie palaces, first with high-class French and Baroque influences, and by the 1920s and 1930s, would design movie palaces in the widely-popular Art Deco style.³⁵

EARLY MOVIE THEATERS IN CINCINNATI & HAMILTON COUNTY

By the 1910s, it was clear that interest in motion pictures was growing in Cincinnati. The 1912 *Cincinnati Business Directory* lists nine moving picture film venues under the subject “Moving Pictures”, and sixty-one theaters under “Amusement Places”. The city directory did not distinguish which of the sixty-one theaters were *nickelodeons*, and which were *moving picture theaters*. Upon further investigation, many of these early theaters were in-fact *nickelodeons*. Often times, Cincinnati theaters began as live entertainment venues and were converted into moving picture theaters. According to historian Maggie Valentine, “the first movie theaters were established in existing buildings—either converted retail shops or vaudeville theaters—which were adapted for film projection”.³⁶ Most theaters listed in the 1912 *Cincinnati Business Directory* have since ceased their operations and their buildings were demolished. Lyric Theatre on Vine Street in downtown Cincinnati endured both fates. It opened as a live theater in 1906, closed c. 1911, and reopened fifteen years later as a moving picture theater. The Lyric Theatre closed in 1950 and the building was demolished two years later.³⁷

According to the 1911-1912 *Hamilton County Directory*, the only theater listed in the outskirts of Cincinnati was the Minette Theatre, located in Norwood (Figure 4). By 1913, moving picture theaters were no longer confined to Cincinnati’s city center. The Norwood Plaza Theatre, also in Norwood, opened in 1913, closed in 1959, and was demolished in 1972.³⁸ The Hyde Park Theatre, on Erie Avenue in Cincinnati, was constructed as a two-part commercial building in

³⁴ “Movie History,” accessed June 27, 2017, <http://www.davidandnoelle.net/moviehistory.htm>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Maggie Valentine, *The Show Starts on the Sidewalk* (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press), 6.

³⁷ Phil Lind, Steven J. Rolfes, and Douglass R. Weise, *Images of America Cincinnati Theaters* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2016), 32-35.

³⁸ Ibid, 62.

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1914 by local architect, Howard McClorey.³⁹ Although it underwent many renovations and the building still sits along Erie Avenue, even though the theater closed in 1980.⁴⁰

Theaters along Hamilton Avenue stretched from Northside, through College Hill and North College Hill, to Mt. Healthy, but they began popping up in the early 1910s, a time before automobiles were readily available. All four communities had, and continue to have, their central business district on Hamilton Avenue. Families, particularly with children, were not inclined to travel to another neighborhood or town via rail transit just to see a film. Not only was going downtown a hassle, but most people felt the Traction Line wasted time and energy. It was natural that the popularity of motion pictures, coupled with an unwillingness to ride the Traction Line, would increase the number of local theaters in Cincinnati neighborhoods and small communities outside the city.

In the Northside neighborhood of Cincinnati were Liberty Theatre (1909), Americus Theatre (1911), and Park Theatre (1913) – all commercial type buildings. The Liberty Theatre, located along Spring Grove Avenue, showed silent films with piano accompaniment and had vaudeville shows on Fridays until its closing in 1929.⁴¹ Americus Theatre, on Hamilton Avenue, served the community until the early-1950s, offering late night films.⁴² While there continues to be little information on the specific ownership changes of Park Theatre on Hamilton Avenue, what is known is that its name changed to the Alpha Fine Arts Theatre (c. 1970) and played adult films.⁴³ Although the Americus Theatre has been demolished, both the Liberty Theatre and old Park Theatre buildings still stand.

The Hollywood Theatre, which opened in the 1920s, served the College Hill community until the late 1980s. The two-part commercial type building originally accommodated a single-theater screen and auditorium with two storefront businesses, similar to the Main Theatre. The Hollywood Theatre had undergone remodeling in 1948, and was converted to a split-screen theater in the 1980s.⁴⁴ Although it no longer functions as a theater and has been severely altered, the building remains in its historic location. The Clovernook Theater in North College Hill was erected in the Art Deco style in the 1940s and shut its doors for good by the late 1950s (Figure 5). Because the theater was constructed in the mid-20th century, it was built in a more modern style than the Main Theatre. Though a short-lived theater, the Clovernook Theater building housed many different businesses after it closed, but was ultimately demolished in 2010.⁴⁵ The 1914 and 1915 *Cincinnati City Directories* indicated that there were many movie theaters in Cincinnati. Most of these theaters catered to an older audience, or were only opening in the late

³⁹ The Ohio Architect, Engineer, and Builder. July 1916. Charles E. Shippey. Volume XXVIII. Number 1. Page 26

⁴⁰ "Hyde Park Theater," Cinema Treasures, accessed April 16, 2017, <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/17873>.

⁴¹ Dan Woellert, *Images of America Cincinnati's Northside Neighborhood* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2009) 74.

⁴² "Americus Theatre," Cinema Treasures, accessed April 16, 2017, <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/29876>.

⁴³ Phil Lind, Steven J. Rolfes, and Douglass R. Weise, *Images of America Cincinnati Theaters* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2016), 32-35.

⁴⁴ <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/3067>

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 83-85.

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evenings.⁴⁶ Many of the aforementioned suburban theaters had either not been built yet, or were too far for Mt. Healthy residents to travel to via rail transit.

THE MAIN THEATRE

The story of the Main Theatre begins and ends with the Blum family. Born in Germany, Peter Blum Jr. (1866 – 1955) immigrated to the United States in 1881. Peter married his wife, Caroline Blum, in 1891 and had four children: Bertha, Albert, Edward, and Joseph.⁴⁷ As the mayor of Mt. Healthy from 1910-1917, Peter Blum was not only involved with local politics, but he had influence in the town's socioeconomic development. Already a successful businessman, a tailor by trade, Peter Blum began preparations for opening a photo playhouse in 1913. At that time, Peter began taking estimates for the erection of a theater with a seating capacity of 295, as well as two storefronts and two apartments.⁴⁸

In the summer of 1914, Joe Blum purchased land to construct the future theater from his brother, Robert J. Blum, for \$500. This piece of real estate was Lot 26 in Samuel Hill's subdivision in Mt. Healthy, the historic parcel boundary. A *Cincinnati Enquirer* newspaper excerpt from the July 28, 1914, *Real Estate and Building* page confirmed that, "Mayor Peter Blum of Mt. Healthy, has let contracts through architect Anthony Kunz Jr. for a photo playhouse at that place". Architect Kunz was an experienced professional who drew plans for a variety of building types, such as monasteries, schools, and single-family residences.⁴⁹ Local examples include the Charles E. Roth House, a Beaux Arts style house clad in enamel brick tile constructed in Cincinnati's North Avondale neighborhood c.1908, as well as St. Ann's black Roman Catholic Church in the West End and St. Matthew's Church in Norwood, both completed in 1909.⁵⁰

The Main Theatre was not Kunz's first attempt to draw up plans for a theater. In June 1911, Kunz was planning a motion-picture house for Harry Bley. It was to be located on the north side of Harrison Avenue in the Westwood neighborhood of Cincinnati. However, there is no supplementary archival proof indicating the proposed theater building was constructed. Kunz had also signed contracts in 1913 with the Belvedere Theatre Company for the construction of the Five Cent Theatre in Mt. Adams.⁵¹ The building was to be one story in height with a basement,

⁴⁶ Phil Lind, Steven J. Rolfes, and Douglass R. Weise, *Images of America Cincinnati Theaters* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2016), 9.

⁴⁷ Peter Blum (1866 – 1955), Caroline Blum (1868 – 1937), Bertha (1891 – 1966), Albert (1895 - 1971), Edward (1900 – 1953), and Joseph (1907 – 1989).

⁴⁸ *Moving Picture World* 17, (July-September 1913): 248, accessed February 13, 2017, <https://books.google.com/books>.

⁴⁹ *Cincinnati Enquirer. Real Estate and Building*. 1911, 1914.

⁵⁰ "Biographical Dictionary of Cincinnati Architects, 1788-1940," Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati, accessed June 22, 2017, <http://oldsite.architecturecincy.org/dictionary/K.html>.

⁵¹ *The American Contractor* 34, no. 1 (January 1913): 19, accessed February 13, 2017, <https://books.google.com/books>.

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clad in brick with ornamental plaster, with a cut stone and cement foundation.⁵² Again, no historical documentation was found through Sanborn Maps and city directories indicating the theater was ever constructed. Upon further investigation into local archival newspaper records and historic publications, such as local newspapers and *Moving Picture World* or *The American Contractor*, has been determined that the Main Theatre was the only theater in the Cincinnati area designed by Anthony Kunz.

The Main Theatre, which opened in February 1915, appears to be architect Anthony Kunz Jr.'s first successful theater construction project. The years 1914 – 1915 were significant, as they correlated to the dates of construction and theater opening. The theater was the first, and only of its kind in Mt. Healthy, and nearby communities. It was constructed as a theater and continued to function as one until it closed on May 2nd, 1971. With early 20th century 'modern' amenities and motion picture equipment, the theater began to offer a unique type of entertainment—one that was just beginning to be available in commercial settings during its date of construction. Electrical services were obtained through the Economy Electric Company of Hamilton, Ohio, where a 15 horsepower direct connected unit of 110 volts was installed in the theater's rear mechanical room. The lighting system and two projectors were powered by an electric and natural gas engine that was connected to a Lincoln generator.⁵³

Mt. Healthy and other nearby villages benefitted from the Main Theatre, as it offered wholesome movies for a wide-ranged audience (Figure 6). While the earliest motion pictures were modest, films were becoming more risqué. Peter Blum worked tirelessly to preserve the sanctity of his theater by refusing to show motion picture films that had the potential for being offensive.

Working at the Main Theatre was a family affair, particularly for Peter's immediate family. Blum opened the theater before there were 'talkies,' therefore films were accompanied by the organ, positioned in the 'pit' near the film screen, played by his daughter, Bertha Blum. His son, Joe Blum, was the projectionist. After Peter's wife, Catherine, died in 1937, he began adding his children to the deed for the theater. After Peter died in 1955, his son Joe Blum (1907 – 1989) took over full management of the theater. Joe had been operating the theater prior to his father's death, so it was only expected that Joe would run the theater exactly how his father had left it. He continued to offer sensible films and refused to show distasteful ones. He would often preview films prior to screening them.⁵⁴ Joe also maintained the theater as a place where children were welcomed.

According to oral histories with Vierling Blum (born 1921), Peter chose the films he showed very carefully, especially because the movie theater catered to kids during the weekends.⁵⁵

⁵² *The American Contractor* 34, no. 1 (January 1913): 53, accessed February 13, 2017, <https://books.google.com/books>.

⁵³ *The Electrical Record* 17, (January-June 1915): 76, accessed February 13, 2017, <https://books.google.com/books>.

⁵⁴ Joyce Ott and Floyd Ott (Daughter and son-in-law of Joe Blum) interviewed by Karen Arnett in Mt. Healthy, Ohio, May 2016.

⁵⁵ Vierling Blum (Cousin of Joe Blum) interviewed by Karen Arnett in Mt. Healthy, Ohio, May 2016.

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“Saturday was for the kids,” said Vierling, “...used to be fifteen cents on Saturdays.” Another relative, Marie Blum (born 1923), recalled the Main Theatre as a place where families felt safe sending their children.⁵⁶ She, along with many others who visited the theater regularly, noticed that Joe Blum would watch the kids very carefully, almost like a babysitter. Joe would chaperone young adults and yelled at them if they had their arms around each other.⁵⁷ The Main Theatre made entertainment a shared experience and connected people of all ages. It allowed parents to send their children to the movies without worrying about what they were watching, or who they would be watching with.

“The Otts lived upstairs; there was always someone who lived upstairs,” Vierling stated as he reminisced about how Joe Blum managed the building. In another oral interview, Joyce Ott indicated that she lived upstairs for a while with her husband, Floyd, just after they had gotten married, in the 1950s.⁵⁸ According to *Williams’ 1940 Hamilton County City Directory*, the building’s storefront offices were occupied by Chas Linkenhoker’s barbershop and Edward Blum’s clothes cleaning business. The two upstairs apartments were resided by Jack Bolser and Ralph Linkenhoker. *Williams’ 1958 Hamilton County City Directory* listed tenant in the south storefront office as Plaza Beauty Parlor and in the north storefront as Mt. Healthy Dry Cleaners. Lawyer James R. Marsh rented office space directly above the dry cleaners.⁵⁹ In November 1961, a *Cincinnati Enquirer* advertisement detailed a three-room office on the second floor of the Main Theatre was available to rent for seventy-five dollars a month. This ad was likely in response to the vacancy, listed in *William’s* city directory in 1960. The same directory documented Floyd Ott and John Holt in the two apartments above each storefront in 1957, but by 1958, only lawyer James Marsh was listed as a resident on the second floor.

While many motion-picture theaters in Cincinnati and surrounding suburbs did not survive the Great Depression (1929-1939), the Main Theatre withstood economic melancholy to serve the people of Mt. Healthy. Theaters in nearby communities, such as Northside, College Hill, and North College Hill, experienced various ups-and-downs in regard to their economic stability. When the Clovernook Theater closed in the mid-20th century, the Main Theatre was able to fill the void. Because of the availability of the automobile, and the fact that North College Hill is close in proximity to Mt. Healthy, the Main Theatre was more accessible for people in nearby towns and neighborhoods than it was only decades prior. The theater even continued to operate throughout the Drive-in phenomena. It was Joe Blum who chose to close the Main Theatre for good. In the May 5, 1971 issue of the *Cincinnati Post* newspaper, Joe Blum announced that he had to close the theater “because of the shortage of decent movies geared to the taste of children it was no longer feasible to continue providing movie entertainment to the area.” Supplemental income from renters after the theater closed was likely limited, seeing that *Williams’ Hamilton County City Directories*, in the 1970s and 1980s do not have anyone listed for occupancy on the

⁵⁶ Marie and Audrey Blum (Cousins of Joyce Ott) interviewed by Karen Arnett in Mt. Healthy, Ohio, May 2016.

⁵⁷ Joyce Ott and Floyd Ott (Daughter and son-in-law of Joe Blum) interviewed by Karen Arnett in Mt. Healthy, Ohio, May 2016.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Joyce Ott and Floyd Ott (Daughter and son-in-law of Joe Blum) interviewed by Karen Arnett in Mt. Healthy, Ohio, May 2016.

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second floor. The Plaza Beauty Parlor, however, continued to occupy the south storefront, even after the Blum family sold the theater to M&M Auction Inc., in 1983.⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

For over fifty years, the Main Theatre served Mt. Healthy and the nearby farming communities in Springfield Township, maintaining its original function. While the building itself still reflects most of its original architecture as a theater, it was the association of cinema and entertainment history that truly distinguishes the Main Theatre from other remaining theater buildings in Cincinnati's suburban areas. The impact the theater had towards the community and its expansive history truly sets it apart from all the rest, as it had become a place where people in Mt. Healthy and adjacent farming communities trusted the Blum family to showcase family-friendly films for generations. From its dates of construction, the Main Theatre building had been an important factor in the social and economic development of Mt. Healthy's business district. Moreover, the Main Theatre holds local significance for its association to broad patterns of local social history in respect to cinematic enjoyment and pleasure.

⁶⁰ Hamilton Co., Oh., Deed Book 40: 498.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

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Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 0.152

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16 | Easting: 711643 | Northing: 4345076 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The physical boundary of the Main Theatre property is set within Lot 26 of the Samuel Hill Subdivision, approximately 47.37ft in width by 142.13ft in length. The property's parcel number is 593-0007-0008-00. The property is bound at the front (west) elevation by the sidewalk, the public right of way. The rear (east) parcel line is bound by an alleyway. The side (south) elevation is bound by the south adjacent property's northern parcel line; while the side (north) elevation is bound by the north adjacent property's southern parcel line.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary of the property (Lot 26 of the Samuel Hill Subdivision) corresponds to the current tax lot and parcel measurements (47.34ft x 142.13ft).

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Deqah Hussein-Wetzel, Historic Preservation Consultant
organization: Mt. Healthy Renaissance Project
street & number: 2440 West McMicken Avenue
city or town: Cincinnati state: OH zip code: 45214
e-mail karenarnett@gmail.com
telephone: (513) 377-1976
date: April 27, 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

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Photo Log

Name of Property: Main Theatre

City or Vicinity: Mt. Healthy

County: Hamilton

State: Ohio

Photographer: Deqah Hussein-Wetzel

Dates Photographed: February 20, 2017 and April 5, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

0001 of 0018: Streetscape exterior, from west side of Hamilton Avenue, facing northeast; February 20, 2017.

0002 of 0018: Streetscape exterior, from west side of Hamilton Avenue, facing northeast; February 20, 2017.

0003 of 0018: Theatre exterior, south elevation, from rear alleyway, facing west; April 5, 2017.

0004 of 0018: Theatre exterior, rear (east) elevation, from rear alleyway, facing west; April 5, 2017.

0005 of 0018: Theatre exterior, front façade, from west side of Hamilton Avenue, facing east; February 20, 2017.

0006 of 0018: Theatre exterior, front façade, detail of entryway, facing east; February 20, 2017.

0007 of 0018: Theatre exterior, front façade, detail of second story, facing east; February 20, 2017.

0008 of 0018: Theatre interior, first floor, detail of historic entry doors, facing west; February 20, 2017.

0009 of 0018: Theatre interior, first floor, detail of auditorium and stage, facing east; February 20, 2017.

0010 of 0018: Theatre interior, first floor, detail stage area, facing east; February 20, 2017.

0011 of 0018: Theatre interior, first floor, detail equipment room, facing south; February 20, 2017.

0012 of 0018: Theatre interior, first floor, view of south storefront, facing west; February 20, 2017.

0013 of 0018: Theatre interior, second floor, staircase, facing east; February 20, 2017.

0014 of 0018: Theatre interior, second floor, detail of historic fireplace, facing northwest; February 20, 2017.

0015 of 0018: Theatre interior, second floor, detail of southern staircase ghost and fireplace, facing southwest; February 20, 2017.

0016 of 0018: Theatre interior, second floor, view of small room in central bay, facing south; February 20, 2017.

0017 of 0018: Theatre interior, second floor, view of bathroom in north bay, facing northeast; February 20, 2017.

0018 of 0018: Theatre interior, second floor, view of rear room in central bay facing east; February 20, 2017.

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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FIGURES/MAPS

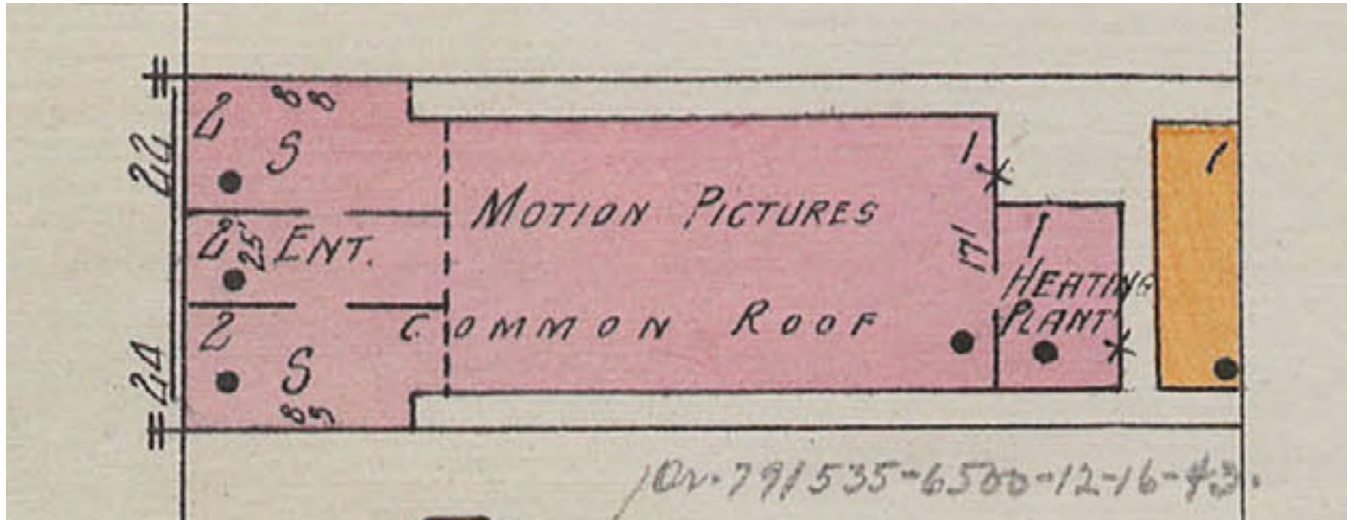


Figure 1: Sanborn Map, 1937, displaying Main Theatre. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, New York.

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Figure 2: Photograph of Main Theatre (left) and streetscape, circa 1919. Courtesy of the Mt. Healthy Historical Society.

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Figure 3: Newspaper clippings of the Main Theatre, 1943 (above) and circa 1969 (below).
Courtesy of the Mt. Healthy Historical Society.

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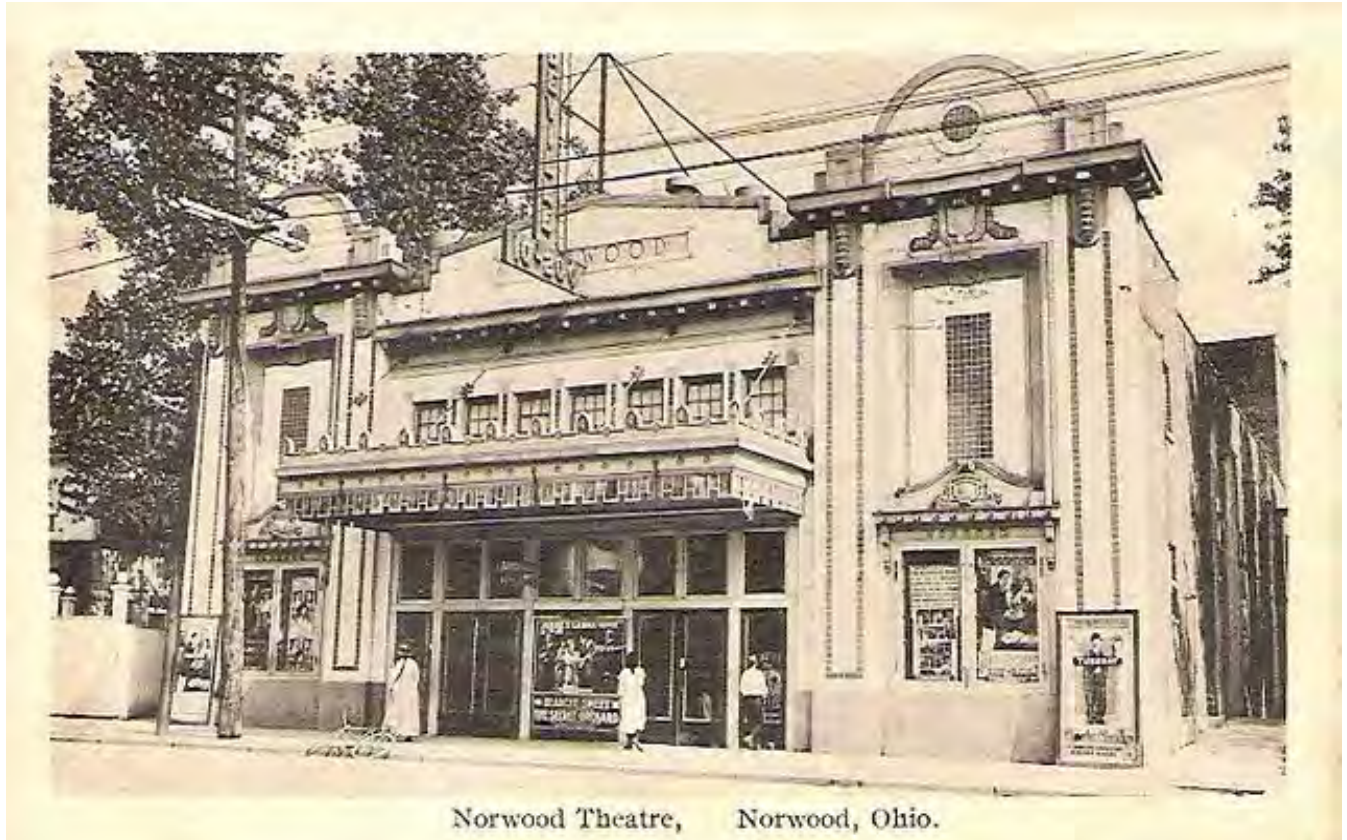


Figure 4. Lithograph of Norwood Theatre, date unknown. Courtesy of <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/33956>.

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Figure 5. Clovernook Theater after its closing, date unknown. Courtesy of *Images of America Cincinnati Theaters* book.

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Figure 6. Main Theatre movie guides, July 1961 (left) and December 1962 (right). Courtesy of the Mt. Healthy Historical Society.

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Figure 7. Marj Saunders purchases tickets from Janet Bach, date unknown. Courtesy of the Mt. Healthy Renaissance Project.

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■ = BUILDINGS
— = MAIN THEATRE
PROPERTY BOUNDARY



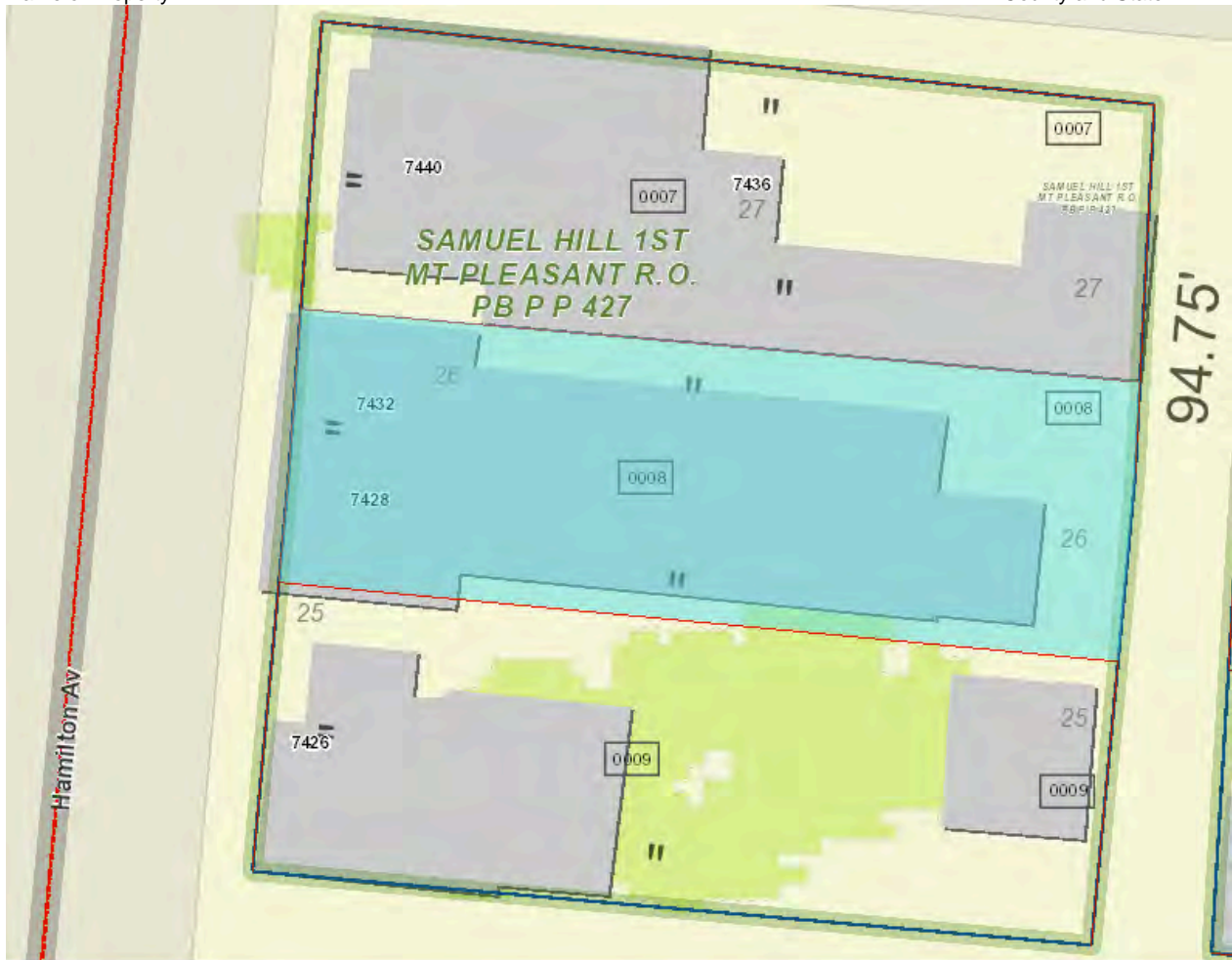
SITE PLAN

NOT TO SCALE

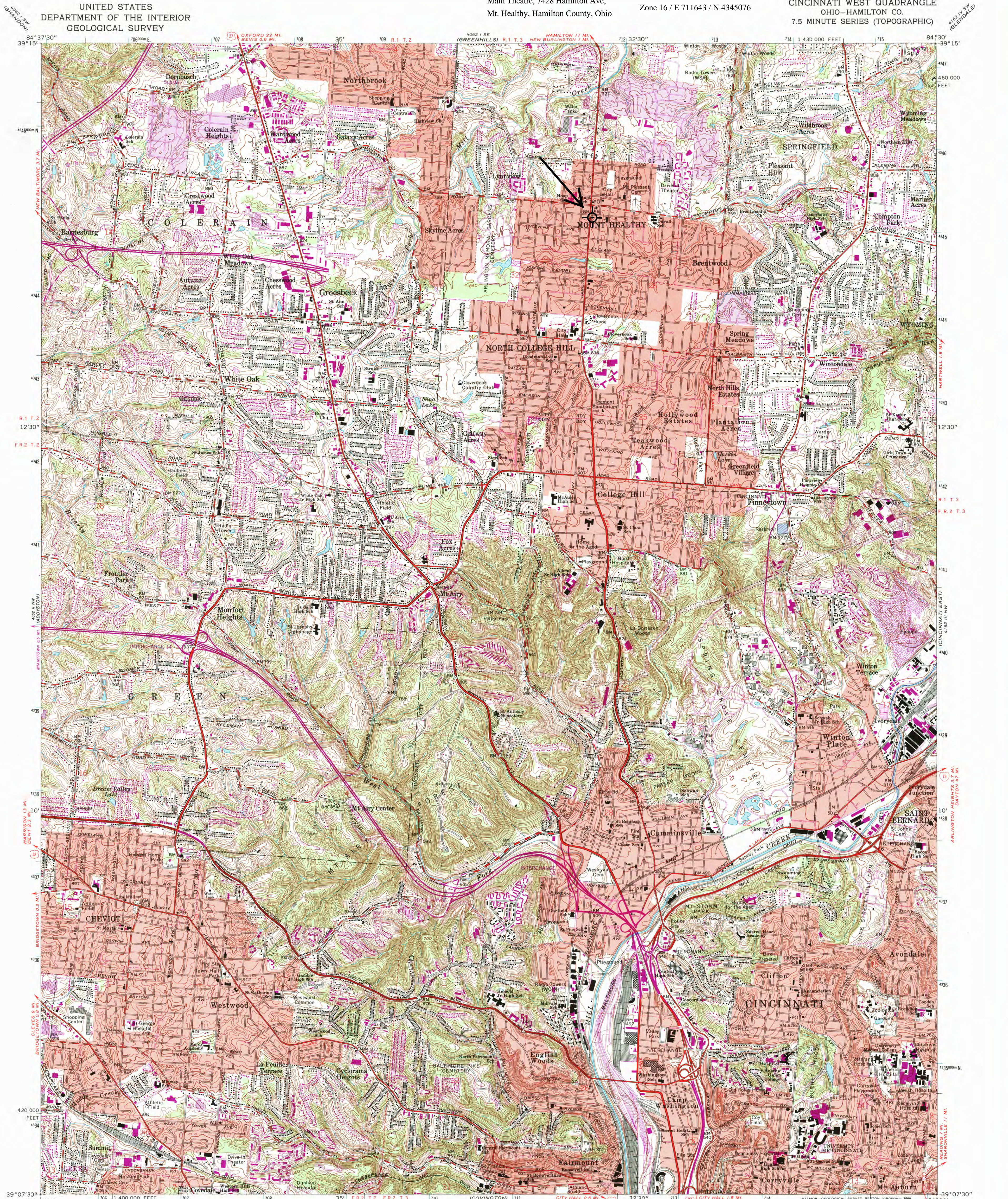
Site map with photo labels, base-map courtesy of the University of Cincinnati.

Main Theatre
Name of Property

Hamilton, OH
County and State



Samuel Hill tax lot map. Courtesy of the Hamilton County Auditor webpage, http://wedge.hcauditor.org/view/re/5930007000800/2016/cagis_map.



Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and City of Cincinnati
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1949 and in part by City of Cincinnati. Field checked
1953. Revised 1961
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Ohio coordinate
system, south zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator
grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum
to place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move
the projection lines 3 meters south and 5 meters west as shown
by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Entire area lies within the Between the Miamis
Land lines based on the Great Miami River Base
Dotted land lines established by private subdivision of the Symmes Purchase
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in
cooperation with State of Ohio agencies from
aerial photographs taken 1979 and other sources
This information not field checked. Map edited 1981
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

UTM GRID AND 1981 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET
Map photospected 1986
No major culture or drainage changes observed

SCALE 1:24,000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty Light-duty
Medium-duty Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

USGS HISTORICAL
MAP ARCHIVES
AUG 29 1996
REC'D FILE COPY

CINCINNATI WEST, OHIO
39084-B5-TF-024
PHOTOINSPECTED 1986
1961
PHOTOREVISED 1981
DMA 4062 II NE-SERIES V852





KIRBY AVE

MARKET SHOP

PRESS SHIRTS
329-2000
1000 LITTLE ROAD



SAVING STRIP
1000 S. 10th St.
Greenville, SC 29606
761-1111

NO STANDING
EXCEPT FOR
LOADING & UNLOADING
PASSENGERS
OR MERCHANDISE
OR FOR DELIVERY
OR PICKUP OF
PASSENGERS
OR MERCHANDISE
OR FOR DELIVERY
OR PICKUP OF
PASSENGERS
OR MERCHANDISE

761-1111
SAVING STRIP
1000 S. 10th St.
Greenville, SC 29606





NO OBSTRUCTIONS
LOCATED ONLY



MAIN

EXPRESS SHIRTS
729-2000
NEXT SHOP →
FOR PRINTING & BROADCAST

7428



7432

7428



PAIN























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Main Theatre

Multiple Name:

State & County: OHIO, Hamilton

Date Received: 11/16/2017 Date of Pending List: 12/8/2017 Date of 16th Day: 12/26/2017 Date of 45th Day: 1/2/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100001934

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 12/27/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept, National Register Criterion A.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus *Patrick Andrus* Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218 Date 12/27/2017

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



November 13, 2017

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief, National Register
and National Historic Landmark Programs
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find four (4) new National Register nominations for Ohio. All appropriate notification procedures have been followed for the nomination submissions.

NEW NOMINATION

Anthony Wayne Shipwreck
Duttenhofer Building
Main Theatre
Zimmerly Residence

COUNTY

Erie
Hamilton
Hamilton
Summit

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for the following: *Anthony Wayne Shipwreck, Erie County, Ohio and Main Theatre, Hamilton County, Ohio.*

Please note that we have checked the "Not for Publication" box for the *Anthony Wayne Shipwreck* nomination. Since this is the first shipwreck nomination for Ohio we are asking for a substantive review for the nomination.

If you have questions or comments about these documents, please contact the National Register staff in the Ohio Historic Preservation Office at (614) 298-2000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Power". The signature is fluid and cursive.

for Lox A. Logan, Jr.
Executive Director and CEO
State Historic Preservation Officer
Ohio History Connection

Enclosures

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NPS TRANSMITTAL CHECK LIST

OHIO HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
800 E. 17th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43211
(614)-298-2000

The following materials are submitted on Nov. 13, 2017
For nomination of the Main Theatre to the National Register of
Historic Places: Hamilton County, OH

- Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
___ Paper PDF
- ___ Multiple Property Nomination Cover Document
___ Paper ___ PDF
- ___ Multiple Property Nomination form
___ Paper ___ PDF
- Photographs
___ Prints TIFFs
- CD with electronic images
- Original USGS map(s)
___ Paper Digital
- Sketch map(s)/Photograph view map(s)/Floor plan(s)
___ Paper PDF
- ___ Piece(s) of correspondence
___ Paper ___ PDF
- ___ Other _____

COMMENTS:

- ___ Please provide a substantive review of this nomination
- ___ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- ___ The enclosed owner objection(s) do ___ do not ___
Constitute a majority of property owners
- ___ Other: _____