

Resub



# 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 28 for 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 Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building  
Other names/site number N/A  
Name of related multiple property listing N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & Number: 944 Philadelphia Street  
City or town: Memphis State: TN County: Shelby  
Not For Publication:  n/a Vicinity:  n/a Zip: 38104

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this  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  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  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Claudia S. [Signature] 3/20/17  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission Date  
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 of 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) \_\_\_\_\_

*Joe Walker*  
 Signature of the Keeper  
 For

5.5.2017  
 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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Organizational

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Organizational

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/International Style

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)  
Principal exterior materials of the property:

CONCRETE: BRICK; STONE: Granite; GLASS;  
METAL: Iron

**Narrative Description**

The Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 (MFM) Building is a reinforced concrete block building that features a brick veneer exterior, granite belt course trim, a single-leaf, single-light aluminum entry door, and double-hung aluminum windows. Constructed in 1962, it is a modest local representation of the late International Commercial style and retains its original appearance. The building's most stylized elevation is located at the south facing Young Avenue, but the main entrance faces Philadelphia Street to the west. The interior retains original configuration, fixtures, and finishes. It is located north of a modern commercial strip in the predominately-residential Cooper-Young Historic District (NRHP 6/22/1989). The MFM Building has experienced some ornamental deterioration but remains in overall good condition. It remains occupied by Local 71.

The predominate features that identify it as a mid-twentieth-century building are its modern materials, flat roof, and lack of ornamentation. Bill Gaskill's modest 1961 design displays his knowledge of the older International style and New Formalism. While some late International style buildings remained true to the classic white (or almost white) box with a flat roof, Gaskill substituted light-colored bricks for neutral white

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stucco or plaster enveloping walls. Other elements of the International Style on the MFM Building include an essentially horizontal feel with windows emphasized by opaque poured concrete panels in a nod to Formalism's brise-soleil, a rectilinear composition, substantive exterior walls, and a profound absence of ornamentation. The period of significance for this property is 1962-1967. The MFM may be the best building to show the importance of the Memphis Musician's union and Memphis soul music during this era.

**Site**

The 3600-square-foot, rectangular-plan, two-story building faces onto Philadelphia Street and is set back from the edge of the lot. The lot includes an asphalt drive that wraps around the building on the north, east, and south sides. Concrete curbing is present along the southern portion of the parcel and provides several angled parking places. A small portion of angular decorative concrete curbing exists at the northwest corner of the parcel near the driveway entrance. Landscaping around the building includes additional curbing and sidewalk features comprised of concrete and aggregate. There is modest landscaping in a poured concrete planter surrounding the concrete block foundation (*photo 3, 6, and 8*). Although the features are minimalistic, they lend a natural component to the otherwise modern building and site features. The modestly landscaped 0.268-acre site is at street grade, ringed with large trees and has a concrete retaining wall at the east end (*photo 14*).

**Exterior**

*South Elevation*

The bottom floor of the southern wing and the second floor have identical fenestration consisting of six, single-light metal casement windows obscured by aggregate-and-cast-concrete, 45-degree-angle panels attached to building by metal flanges (*photos 9, 10, 11*). These panels have weathered badly, and the brackets securing them to the walls have rusted (*photo 29*). This elevation has a concrete block foundation, a granite belt course, and a brick-capped parapet wall. The building's name spelled out in metal lettering is located on the wall just west of the first floor windows (*photo 12*).

*North Elevation*

The building materials here are identical to the south elevation, but fenestration on this wall is present only at the ground floor level. A hinged metal door with a single concrete step below is located at the center of the wall. There are three small, single-light, one-over one metal frame, double-hung windows on this elevation; one is to the west of the entry door, two additional identical windows are located to the east (*photos 2 and 4*).

*West Elevation*

The façade (west elevation) displays an elevated, poured-concrete patio with wrought iron railing accessed by a poured-concrete walkway and four concrete stairs to either side (*photo 13*). The single-light, aluminum-and-glass entry door has a small, rounded, aluminum canopy over it. To the left (north) of the entry, two single-light metal casement windows (one at first floor level and one aligned above at second floor level) are obscured by two attached, aggregate-and-cast-concrete, 45-degree-angle panels that extend the full height of the façade (*photo 1*).

*East Elevation*

Nearly identical to the façade, the east elevation has an elevated, poured-concrete patio with wrought iron railing accessed by a poured-concrete walkway and four concrete stairs on either side. (There is no canopy

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over this elevation's entry.) To the right (north) of the entry is a single-light metal casement window obscured by aggregate cast concrete, 45-degree angle panels on both the ground and second story (*photos 5 and 7*).

**Interior**

The ground floor lobby is comprised of a small seating area with an original wall mural on the south side of the space. A wood and Formica counter is located north of the entry and behind it is an open office area and a small copy room to the east (*photo 17*). The entire building retains its original flooring (linoleum tile in main areas and porcelain tile in bathrooms), acoustic ceiling tiles, fluorescent lights and painted concrete block walls. The metal front stairs are located in the southwest corner and have wrought iron railings (*photos 15 and 16*). This floor has a double-loader corridor extending east beyond the lobby area (*photo 22*).

The north side of the corridor contains a door into the reception area, men and women's restrooms (*photo 18, 19, and 20*), and a small landing where a second set of metal and wrought iron stairs are located (*photo 21*). An original water fountain hangs between the two restrooms. The original restroom interiors have baked enamel toilet stalls and a ceramic tile floor. The south side of the corridor contains a break room complete with an original sink, refrigerator, stove unit, shag carpet and wood paneled walls (*photos 23 and 24*). Wood doors (*photo 25*, representative example) denote two small offices west of the break room.

The upper floor is one large, open, multi-purpose room with linoleum tile flooring, concrete block walls, acoustic tile ceiling, and fluorescent lighting (*photo 26*). Between the windows along the south wall, original panels of abstract art depict musicians (*photo 27*), while a music-themed mural decorates the north wall; two metal doors for a small closet and stairwell exit are located on the rear (east) wall (*photo 28*). A small wood bar is located in a recessed area at the southeast corner of the room just to the right of the rear exit.

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**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.

**Criteria Considerations**  
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)  
Property is:

- 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  
Ethnic Heritage: Black

**Period of Significance**  
1962-1967

**Significant Dates**  
N/A

**Significant Person**  
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Gaskill, William

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The Memphis Federation of Musicians (MFM) Local 71 Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for local significance under Criterion A in the areas of Entertainment/Recreation and Ethnic Heritage: Black for its association with the "Memphis Sound," the Southern strain of soul music that entered into pop culture in the early 1960s. The modest union building exemplifies this world-famous era because its membership included Stax Recording Studio musicians who produced the original austere style, featuring melodic unison horn lines, organ, bass, and a driving beat on the drums. The period of significance begins in 1962, with the MFM Local 71 Building's construction during the height of the Memphis Sound's success when most of these musicians belonged to this union (*see p. 9*), and ends in 1967, with the decline of the MFM due to changing music tastes as a result of the British Invasion phenomenon. The essentially unaltered historic building reflects the period of significance and retains its architectural integrity.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

When veteran trumpet player and silver-voiced tenor Vernon Baty became the Local president in 1960, he spearheaded the campaign for the permanent home for MFM. The Local had never had a permanent building to call home, even though local musicians unionized in 1873 to form one of America's earliest unions. Incorporated in 1895 as the Memphis Protective Union, the state of Tennessee granted it a charter three years later on February 6, 1898.<sup>1</sup> By 1896, several musicians unions in the Northeast combined to form one negotiating labor force, the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), and awarded the Memphis Protective Union a certificate of affiliation. (The American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada remains to date one of fifty-five national and international unions represented by the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations [AFL-CIO].)<sup>2</sup> In 1914, the local adopted the present title, Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 of the American Federation of Music.

From its inception, many American Federation of Labor unions barred black members entirely, and musicians' unions, in most cities, proved no overwhelming exception. Many maintained segregated Locals or excluded black members entirely, even into the 1960s. Locally, non-unionized Memphis blues musicians had been performing in stage bands on Beale Street for decades. A 1942 *Billboard* article regarding jukeboxes only playing recording made by AFM union musicians quoted a Memphis jukebox distributor as saying that at all of his jukebox locations "the most popular tunes were hillbilly and Negro blues tunes," which were all non-union recordings. Pragmatically, Local 71 opened its membership to black Memphis musicians in 1949. This move proved to be a huge boon to the union coffers and to black musicians earning a living wage locally.

By the late 1950s, Local 71 had built a sizeable membership and general fund. Producer Sam Phillips started Sun Records, a seminal early rock-and-roll and electric blues label in 1952. Several Local 71 card-carrying members made their first recordings on Sun, including Elvis Presley and his back-up musicians Scotty

<sup>1</sup> American Federation of Musicians, "Memphis Federation of Musicians," <http://members.afm.org/locals/info/number/71>, accessed March 17, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organization, "Our Unions," <http://www.aflcio.org/About/AFL-CIO-Unions>, accessed March 17, 2017.

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Moore and Bill Black, Johnny Cash, Roy Orbison, Jerry Lee Lewis, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Ike Turner, Carl Perkins, and Charlie Rich.<sup>3</sup> Having made an enormous impact in the 1950s as “the first great rock ‘n’ roll record label,” Sun Records largely faded away by 1960; the studio building at 706 Union Avenue, Memphis was designated a National Historic Landmark on July 31, 2003.<sup>4</sup>

As John Lennon once famously said, “Elvis died when he went into the Army.”<sup>5</sup> Lennon was speaking about Elvis's career, as the Beatles knocked him off the charts when Elvis was serving in Germany 1958-1960. There is a large consensus that the British Invasion or groups such as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and others hindered early 1960s pop music by black artists as well.

New black pop music began emerging from various parts of the country. Southern soul from the Memphis area remained truer to musical roots in the black culture. Those musical roots came from the exuberance and emotion commonly found in black gospel music. The “Memphis Sound” began in 1957 when siblings Jim Stewart and Estelle Axton formed Stax Records with assistance from expert recording engineer and card-carrying union MFM member Chips Moman. “In 1960, Moman spotted abandoned movie theater on East McLemore Avenue and helped Stewart and his sister Estelle Axton convert it into the Stax Recording Studio in 1959.”<sup>6</sup> Because tiny Stax was more casual, the musicians took on whatever role was necessary which allowed more spontaneity and experimentation resulting in the “Memphis Sound.”

Their Southern soul put black pop into the mainstream of American pop culture in the 1960s. The first artists to make a recording in the building were Rufus Thomas and his daughter Carla, both MFM members. The Stax roster of black and white musicians included Otis Redding, Isaac Hayes, Eddie Floyd, Johnnie Taylor, Sam and Dave, the Memphis Horns (Andrew Love and Wayne Jackson) and the Mar-Keys (Pucky Axton, “Duck” Dunn, Wayne Jackson, Terry Johnson, Don Nix, Steve Cropper and “Smoochy Smith”. According to a Friday, June 15, 1970 “Memphis Sound” insert in the Memphis Commercial Appeal, the Stax house band Booker T. and the (Memphis Group) M.G.’s consisting of (Booker T. Jones, Donald “Duck” Dunn and Steve Cropper); put Stax on the chart in 1962 with their hit recording of ‘Green Onions’.”

Local 71’s fortune continued to improve as sessions at Stax Records were paying union scale. In January 1962, the MFM Board of Directors appointed former professional trumpet player, architect, and Local 71 member architect William Gaskill as a member of a feasibility study for construction of a new union hall. Further encouragement for a new headquarters came from the MFM’s parent union, the American Federation of Musicians. The Minutes of the February 6, 1962 meeting indicate that President Baty welcomed Gilbert

<sup>3</sup> John Sprott, “Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71,” Interview by author, January 15, 2016. John Sprott is the current President of the Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71.

<sup>4</sup> Jody Cook and Patty Henry, “Sun Record Company/Memphis Recording Service,” National Historic Landmark nomination form, National Park Service, August 31, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Williams, “Elvis Presley: The return of the King,” *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/mar/04/elvis-presley-army-rocknroll>, accessed March 7, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music: Rhythm and Blues and the Southern Dream of Freedom*, (Boston, New York, London: Little, Brown and Company, 1999), 101.



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Rogers, assistant to the president of the American Federation of Musicians to the board meeting. Gilbert had been on a fact-finding tour in Memphis and, accompanied by Baty, had visited most of the major local recording studios. It was Mr. Rogers's opinion that Memphis had recently skyrocketed over New York, Los Angeles, and Nashville as the largest recording center in the United States.

At the July 2, 1962 meeting, the Local 71 was negotiating purchase of the lot at 944 Philadelphia Street and the Board unanimously approved Gaskill as the architect of the project. Before becoming an architect in 1955, William (Bill) Gaskill was a professional musician and still maintained membership in the MFM. His firm Yeates and Gaskill designed libraries for the University of Tennessee and the futuristic Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium (Memphis Memorial Stadium) in 1965. He served as president of the Tennessee and Memphis chapters of the American Institute of Architects (AIA).<sup>7</sup> Gaskill received the prestigious Gassner award in 1990 from the AIA and served as the chair of the Memphis Landmarks Commission where he helped write the city's landmarks ordinances. Gaskill passed away in December 1996.

Sadly, Local 71 President Baty never saw his dream of a permanent union hall became a reality. The Minutes of a Special Board meeting on September 12, 1962 announced the unexpected but impending death of Vernon Baty. He passed away the next day at age 49. At the September 24, 1962 Special Board meeting, Bill Gaskill filled the Board in on many of the design details of the new Local 71 building and Gaskill joined the Board in December 1962. That same year Otis Redding recorded "These Arms of Mine" at Stax, which became a huge hit.

The January 17, 1963 minutes reported membership was booming. The January 31, 1963 minutes included the announcement that the MFM Main Street office closed on Saturday, February 2 for the move to the new headquarters. The February 17, 1963 grand opening of the new Local 71 headquarters was met with much fanfare as union members and city officials showed up for the festivities (*Image 1*). The dedication ceremony in many ways symbolized the pinnacle of the Memphis Sound's success. Sadly, the unforeseen demise of their unionizing influence began five years later as the Memphis music industry went into a decline and no longer could provide enough jobs to support union members. A spiral of less work meant fewer members, fewer members meant that employers did not hire union members but used non-union members at lower wages as Tennessee is a right-to-work state.

Despite his pivotal role in establishing the musical direction of Stax and recording its first hits, Chips Moman left in 1963 after a monetary dispute with Stewart and began American Sound Studios, where he recorded Neil Diamond and Elvis Presley; he left Memphis in 1973.

By 1967, when the Memphis recording industry generated twenty million dollars' worth of business, events transpired that would lead the Memphis music industry into a permanent decline and prove to be the demise of Stax. Following the death of Stax's biggest star, Otis Redding, in 1967, and the severance of the label's distribution deal with Atlantic Records in 1968, Stax continued primarily under the supervision of a new co-

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<sup>7</sup> "Presidential Profile –William Gaskill," *ARCHITECTURE + MEMPHIS* (Memphis, TN: American Institute of Architects, Memphis Chapter, October 1963), 11 and 16.

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owner, Al Bell. The sound changed to try to compete with Motown. Stax declared bankruptcy in 1976. The “Memphis Sound” was no more. The last part of the decade saw Motown soul singer-songwriters like Marvin Gaye invent album-oriented soul, and James Brown and his ever-evolving backing band invent funk.

Hampered by the city’s shrinking recording industry and by the state’s Right to Work labor laws, the union has seen its influence, and its membership, drop precipitously.<sup>8</sup> The largest musicians’ locals in the country are Local 47 in Los Angeles; New York’s Local 802; and in Nashville, where music is a \$6.4 billion dollar industry, Local 257 is the fourth largest local in the AFM (chartered in December 1902, offices now located on Music Row).<sup>9</sup> In contrast, the MFM Local 71 Building has deferred maintenance and no capital reserve because of the loss of membership dues. The current membership is between 140 and 150 members and the Memphis Symphony Orchestra makes up the largest block of the membership; also represented are freelance dance bands and popular musicians. The MFM Local 71 jurisdiction includes all of the following counties in Tennessee: Lauderdale, Tipton, Shelby and Fayette; all of the following counties in Mississippi: DeSoto, Tunica, Tate, Coahoma, Quitman, Panola, Lafayette, Marshall, Pontotoc, Benton, Union, Tippah, Lee, Prentiss, Alcorn, Tishomingo, Itawamba and Bolivar; and all of the following counties in Arkansas: Craighead, Mississippi, Poinett, Cross, Crittendon, Saint Francis, Lee, Phillips, Clay and Greene.<sup>10</sup> The Board of Directors is hopeful that National Register listing will spur a fund raising campaign to rehabilitate the building and attract more members.

### Architectural Context

Overall, the building retains the character-defining features and details, materials and artisanship to convey its architectural significance and association with the “Memphis Sound.” What follow is a brief comparison with other Memphis buildings associated with that era.

The Stax Recording Studios were abandoned in 1976 after the business went bankrupt. In 1981, a local bank sold the building for \$10 to an area church, who then allowed it to sharply deteriorate; as a result, it was demolished in 1989. Today, a museum with a reconstructed storefront occupies the location.

The Mid-South Coliseum (NRHP 12/06/2000) which housed many concerts by Stax performers has been shuttered for a decade or better and has experienced demolition by neglect. There are currently no viable plans to restore or rehabilitate it.

The former Mid-City Building at 1331 Union Avenue had a music showcase on the top floor that was a revolving restaurant. Stax musicians and others used to go there after hours and mingle in the mixed-race private club. The abusively altered building is partially gutted and the revolving top floor is no longer in situ.

<sup>8</sup> Roy Brewer, "The Union Label," *Memphis Flyer*, April 30, 1998.

<sup>9</sup> Robbie D. Jones, *Historic Music Industry Resources, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee: Historic Resources on Music Row, 1954-1989* (Nashville, TN: New South Associates), September 30, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> American Federation of Musicians, “Find My Local,” <http://www.afm.org/for-members/find-my-local/>, accessed March 17, 2017.

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The integrated Club Paradise nightclub at 645 E. Georgia Street was a venue for many “Memphis Sound” musicians, as it was located very close to Stax. Abandoned for many years, it sits vacant on a lot in the middle of a housing project.

Chips Moman’s American Sound Studios at 831 Thomas Street (1963-1972) was an adaptively reused Quonset hut demolished in 1998 for a new childcare center. In 2014, the Shelby County Historical Commission erected an historical marker at the site to recognize the studios’ historical significance.

The old Ellis Auditorium on the Main Street Mall at Poplar Avenue was demolished in 2000, and a new performing arts center currently stands in its place.

When compared with contemporary 1960s buildings, as discussed in *A Survey of Modern Public Buildings in Memphis, TN 1940-1980*, the MFM Local 71 building’s modest design is most similar to the Alcy Road School, as the massing of that building is also a direct reflection of its functional plan.<sup>11</sup> The MFM Local 71 Building reflects Gaskill’s deft touch by honoring its Modernist roots, foreshadows “green technology” as it shields the south facing windows from the brutal summer sun with solid concrete panels, and acknowledges Brutalism with his concept of the trade union building as plain and comprehensible. Essentially, the MFM Building is an example of no-nonsense style, executed for a small trade union with a limited budget and perfectly met the needs of its client, the true work of a good designer. With the above-noted loss and alteration of many other Memphis buildings, the largely unaltered MFM Local 71 stands as a strong, extant example of a building directly associated with the local musicians’ union and the pivotal “Memphis Sound” era.

<sup>11</sup> Keith Kays, Lee Askew, Martin Gorman, and Louis Pounders, *A Survey of Modern Public Buildings in Memphis, Tennessee, 1940-1980* (Memphis, TN: American Institute of Architects, Memphis Chapter, 2010), 24.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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### Bibliography

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American Federation of Musicians. "Find My Local." <http://www.afm.org/for-members/find-my-local/>, (accessed March 17, 2017).

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"Presidential Profile –William Gaskill." *ARCHITECTURE + MEMPHIS*. Memphis, TN: American Institute of Architects, Memphis Chapter, 1963.

Sprott, John. "Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71." Interview by author. January 15, 2016.

Williams, Richard. "Elvis Presley: The return of the King." *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/mar/04/elvis-presley-army-rocknroll> (accessed March 7, 2017).

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<b>Previous documentation on file (NPS):</b>		<b>Primary location of additional data:</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	<input type="checkbox"/>	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other State agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	<input type="checkbox"/>	University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):			

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** 0.268 acres **USGS Quadrangle** Southeast Memphis

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Latitude: 35.119770

Longitude: -89.986034

**Verbal Boundary Description**

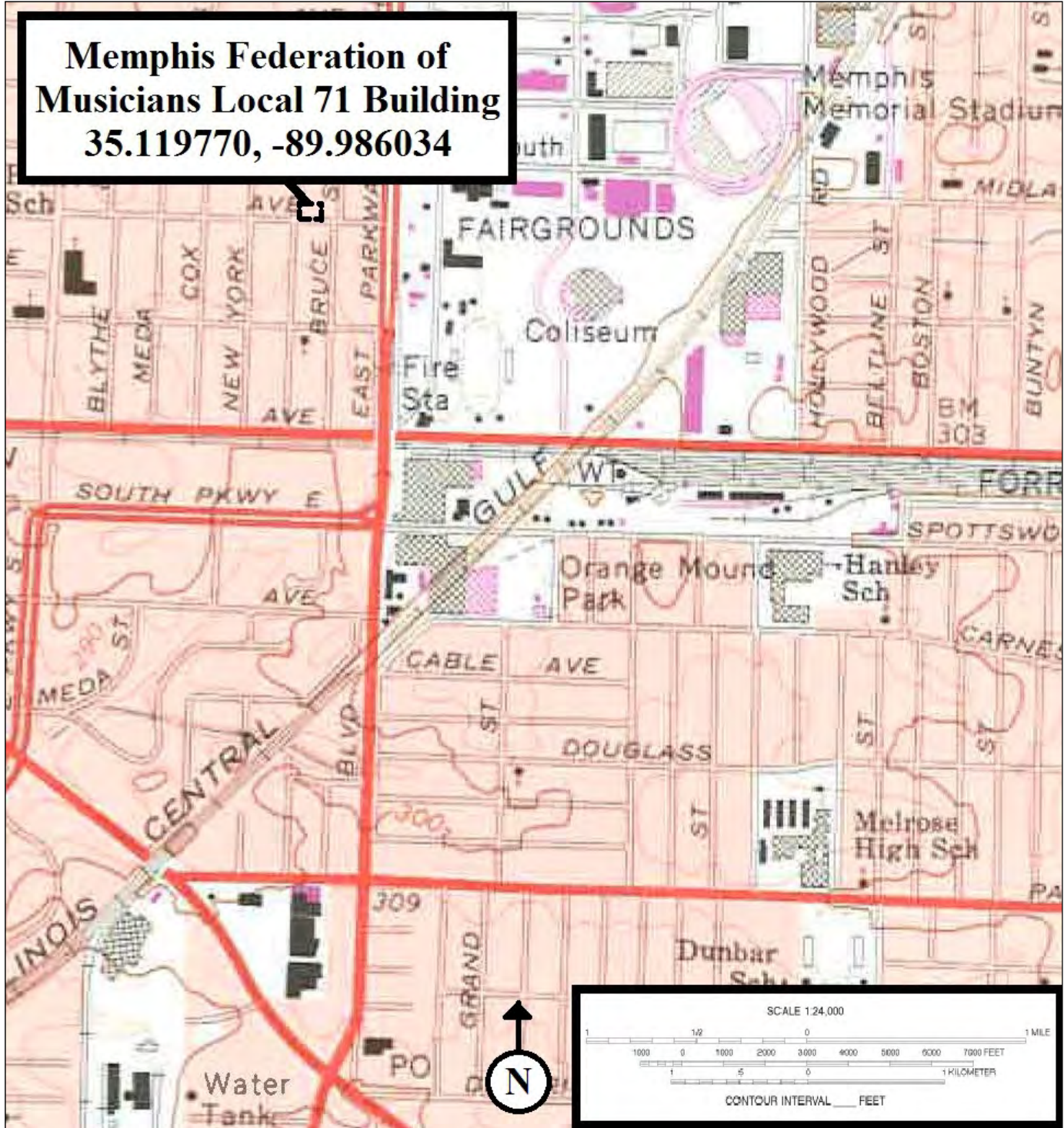
Located in the central area of Memphis, the southern boundary is Young Avenue, the eastern boundary is the eastern property line, the northern boundary is the north property line, and the western boundary is Philadelphia Street.

**Boundary Justification**

These are the historical boundaries associated with the property parcel number 029021 00007 which is owned by the Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 and located in Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee.

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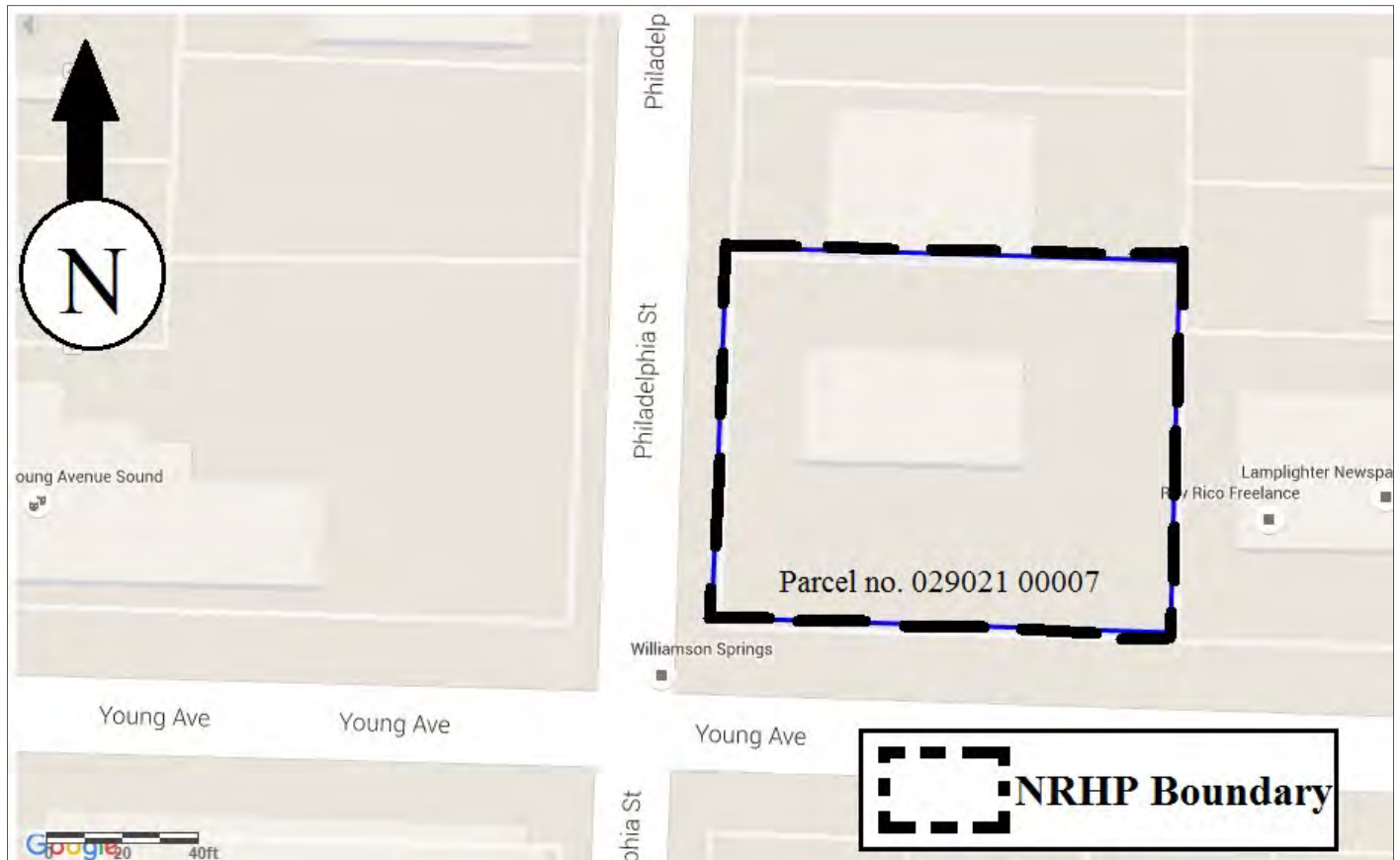


National Register boundary for Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building, USGS Topographic Map, *Southeast Memphis* quadrangle (1965, photorevised 1973).

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**Boundary Map**



Shelby County Tax Parcel Map for parcel associated with  
Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building (parcel no. 02902100007).



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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name Judith A. Johnson

Organization Judith Johnson & Associates

Street & Number 158 Windover Road #6 Date May 19, 2016

City or Town Memphis Telephone (901) 603-0054

E-mail judithjohnson73@gmail.com State TN Zip Code 38111

**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 map.
- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

**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.

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

---

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building

City or Vicinity: Memphis

County: Shelby County

State: TN

Photographer: Caroline Eller, Tennessee Historical Commission

Date Photographed: March 2, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 29. Façade and main entrance facing onto Philadelphia Street. Photographer facing east.
- 2 of 29. Northwest oblique. Photographer facing southeast.
- 3 of 29. Detail of front steps. Photographer facing south.
- 4 of 29. North elevation. Photographer facing east.
- 5 of 29. Northeast oblique. Photographer facing southwest.
- 6 of 29. Detail of rear entry steps and planter. Photographer facing southwest.
- 7 of 29. East elevation. Photographer facing west.
- 8 of 29. Detail of rear entry. Photographer facing northwest.
- 9 of 29. Southeast oblique. Photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 29. South elevation. Photographer facing north.
- 11 of 29. Southwest oblique. Photographer facing northeast.
- 12 of 29. South elevation detail. Photographer facing northeast.
- 13 of 29. West elevation detail. Photographer facing north.
- 14 of 29. West elevation and view of adjacent property at 940 Philadelphia Street. Photographer facing northeast.
- 15 of 29. Main entry hall and stairs at west end of building, first floor. Photographer facing west.
- 16 of 29. Interior stairwell at southwest corner of building, first floor. Photographer facing south.
- 17 of 29. Detail of main entry hall and reception area, first floor. Photographer facing west.

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

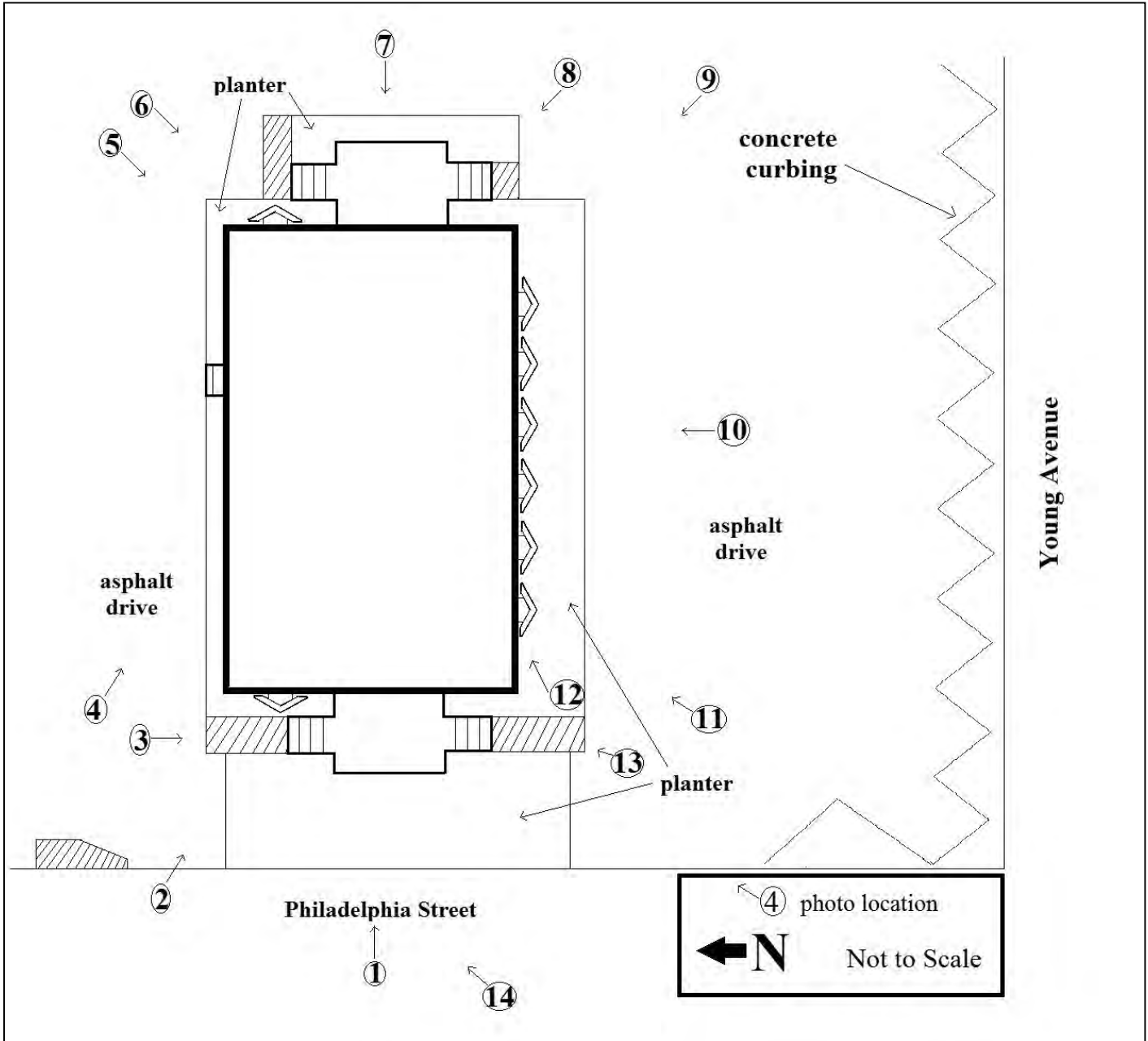
Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

- 
- 18 of 29. View of women's restroom, first floor. Photographer facing north.
- 19 of 29. Detail of women's restroom door, first floor. Photographer facing east.
- 20 of 29. View of main hallway, rear entrance and door to men's restroom, first floor. Photographer facing east.
- 21 of 29. Interior stairwell at northeast corner of building, first floor. Photographer facing north.
- 22 of 29. View of first floor hallway. Photographer facing west.
- 23 of 29. View of office, first floor. Photographer facing east.
- 24 of 29. View of office, first floor. Photographer facing west.
- 25 of 29. View of office, first floor. Photographer facing south.
- 26 of 29. View of multi-purpose room, second floor. Photographer facing west.
- 27 of 29. View of multi-purpose room, second floor. Photographer facing east.
- 28 of 29. View of multi-purpose room, second floor. Photographer facing northeast.
- 29 of 29. Detail of concrete panel. View from multi-purpose room, second floor. Photographer facing south.

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

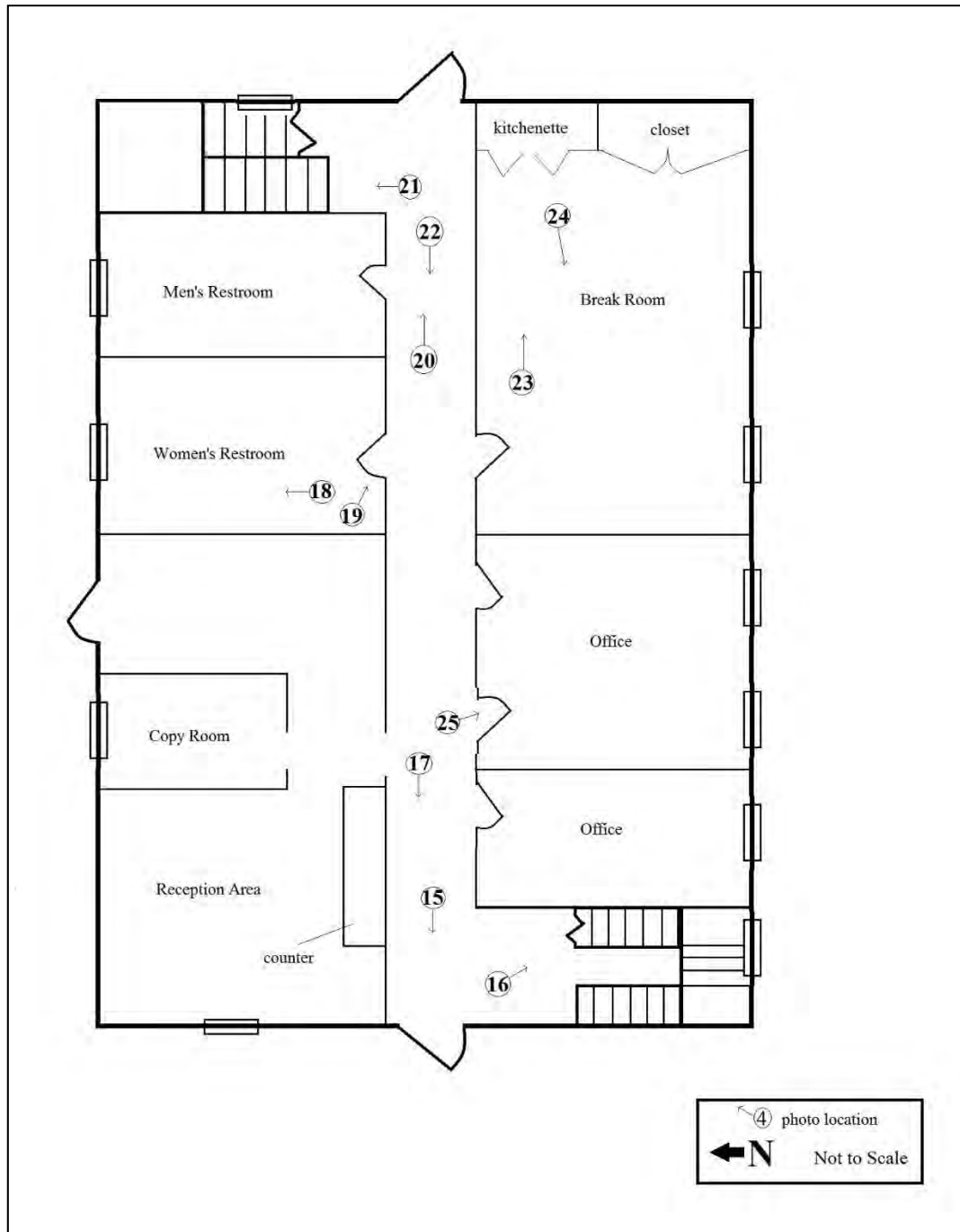
Site Plan with Photo Key



Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

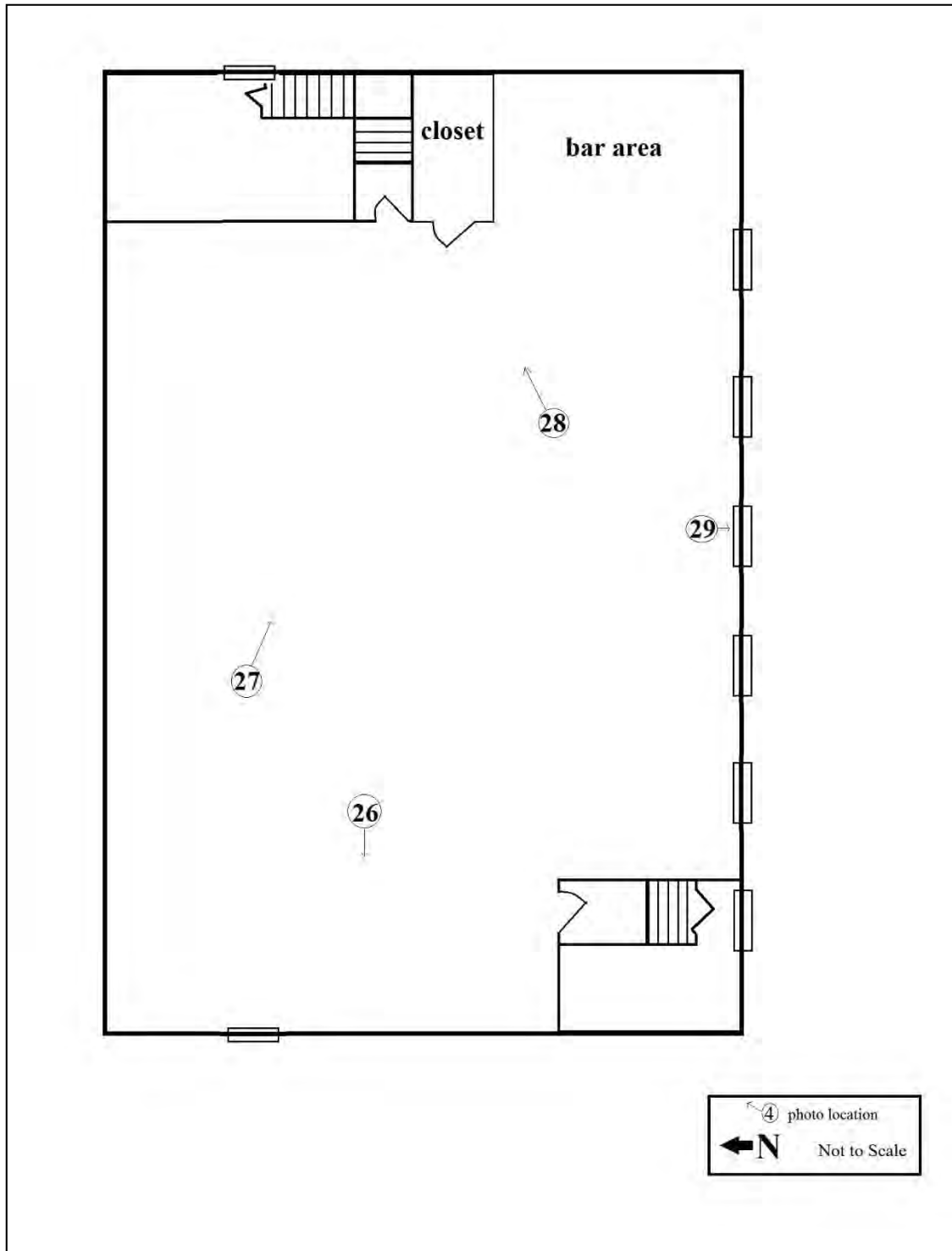
**First Floor Plan With Photo Key**



Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

**Second Floor Plan with Photo Key**



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number images Page 23

Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building
Name of Property Shelby County, TN
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



**Image 1.** Grand opening and ribbon cutting at Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building, February 17, 1963. Left to right-Pat Trickey, Bill Slais, and Eddie Cox, Board of directors; Bob Taylor Vice-president; Henry Loeb, Mayor of Memphis; Andy Ledbetter, President, C.V. Foster, Secretary; Bill Gaskill, Woody Brown, Larry Wunchberse, Scotty Moore, Board of Directors.

*Courtesy: Memphis Federation of Musicians.*

---

**Property Owner:**

(This information will not be submitted to the National Park Service, but will remain on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission)

---

Name	Memphis Federation of Musicians, John Sprott, president		
Street & Number	944 Philadelphia Street	Telephone	901-272-1746
City or Town	Memphis	State/Zip	TN 38104



























MEMORIAL  
FOUNDATION  
OF  
MUSCLE SHOALS

238

MEMBERS  
FEDERATION  
OF  
MUSICIANS  
2282



MEMBERS  
FEDERATION

OF  
MUSICIANS

2282















WOMEN



MEN

EXIT





**BIG BANDS!**  
are back....!

DRINK  
*Coca-Cola*

25¢

**FRAGILE**  
• TOP LOAD  
• DO NOT

TO:











SHEN YUN

Get Off My Bach!



EXIT





EXIT





National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Memphis Federation Of Musicians Local 71 Building

Multiple Name:

State & County: TENNESSEE, Shelby

Date Received: 3/24/2017      Date of Pending List:      Date of 16th Day: 11/29/2016      Date of 45th Day: 5/8/2017      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: 16000812

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other                   | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      5/5/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary      Written comments are in the file

Comments:

Resubmitted nomination addressed earlier comments (5-5-17)

Recommendation/      Return - see written comments

Criteria

Accept / Criterion A (5-5-17)

Reviewer Jim Gabbert

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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.

**CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW**

CLG: Memphis, Tennessee  
PROPERTY: Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building  
ADDRESS: Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION EVALUATION**

NAME OF COMMISSION:  
DATE OF MEETING:  
HOW WAS THE PUBLIC NOTIFIED OF THE MEETING?  
 ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER

The Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 (MFM) Building meets the National Register Criterion C for its significance as a solid local example of an International style. Design by William Gaskill the 1961 structure displays his knowledge of the merging styles of International and New Formalism. The white, flat roof, box remains true to the International Style. The nod to New Formalism is displayed in the brise-soleil and profound absence of ornament.

SIGNATURE:   
TITLE: Nancy Jane Baker, Memphis Landmarks Commission, Certified Local Government  
DATE: August 25, 2016

**THC STAFF EVALUATION**

ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**REASONS FOR ELIGIBILITY OR NON-ELIGIBILITY:**

The Memphis Federation of Musicians (American Federation of Music) Local 71 (MFM) Building meets National Register Criterion C for its significance as a strong local example of an International Style commercial building. Bill Gaskill's modest 1961 design displays his knowledge of the older International style and to New Formalism. While some late International style buildings remained true to the classic white (or almost white) box with a flat roof, he substituted light colored bricks for neutral white stucco or plaster enveloping walls. Other elements of the International Style on the MFM Building include an essentially horizontal feel with windows emphasized by opaque poured concrete panels in a nod to Formalism's brise-soleil, a rectilinear composition, substantive exterior walls, and a profound absence of ornament. The 1962 period of significance for this property is defined by the date of construction.

SIGNATURE:   
TITLE: Caroline Eller, National Register Coordinator-Historic Preservation Specialist      DATE: July 18, 2016

**PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN BEFORE: September 12, 2016**

RETURN FORM TO:  
CAROLINE ELLER  
TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
2941 LEBANON ROAD  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0442



**Lee Harris**  
Senator

**29<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District**  
Shelby County

**Committees**  
Energy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources  
Government Operations  
Judiciary



**Senate Minority Leader**  
**State of Tennessee**

**Lauren Agee**  
Senior Policy Advisor

**Isaac Kimes, Esq.**  
Research and Policy Analyst

**Shirley A. Frierson**  
Executive Assistant

RECEIVED  
AUG 12 2016  
TN. HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION

August 10, 2016

Mr. E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr., Executive Director  
and State Historic Preservation Officer  
Tennessee Historical Commission  
2941 Lebanon Road  
Nashville, Tennessee 37214

Dear Mr. McIntyre,

I write to you today in support of the nomination of the Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building to the National and Tennessee Registers of Historic Places.

The Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building has a rich history of union membership and the people who comprise it expand over 142 years. As you well know, Memphis has been the center of blues music for many years, especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building quickly became a viable resource for some very notable musicians with members including Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Charlie Rich, B. B. King, Isaac Hayes and Alex Chilton to name a few. Even now music plays an important role in the rich history of Memphis, Tennessee. I am honored to advocate on behalf of the Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building for the work they have done over the years.

I hope you will favorably consider the nomination and place the Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building on the National and Tennessee Registers of Historic Places.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lee Harris".

Lee Harris

CC: Mr. John Sprout, President  
Memphis Federation of Musicians

CAPITOL HILL OFFICE

318 War Memorial Building, Nashville, TN 37243 (615) 741-1767; FAX (615) 253-0357



**TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
2941 LEBANON PIKE  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0442  
OFFICE: (615) 532-1550  
E-mail: [Claudette.Stager@tn.gov](mailto:Claudette.Stager@tn.gov)  
(615) 770-1089



October 10, 2016

J. Paul Loether  
Deputy Keeper and Chief,  
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street NW, 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the documentation to nominate the *Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building* to the National Register of Historic Places. The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the listing of the *Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building* to the National Register of Historic Places. Certified Local Government (CLG) notifications were sent out to the CLG Coordinator and the Mayor. The CLG Coordinator responded but the Mayor did not.

A Historic Preservation Certification Application Part 1 Evaluation of Significance (preliminary determination for individual listing in the National Register) has been approved for this property.

If you have any questions or if more information is needed, contact Caroline Eller at 615/770-1086 or [Caroline.Eller@tn.gov](mailto:Caroline.Eller@tn.gov).

Sincerely,

Claudette Stager  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

CS:ce

Enclosures(3)

Returned

812



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 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 Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building  
Other names/site number N/A  
Name of related multiple property listing N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & Number: 944 Philadelphia Street  
City or town: Memphis State: TN County: Shelby  
Not For Publication:  n/a Vicinity:  n/a Zip: 38104

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this  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  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  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Claudia L. Spr... 10/10/16  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
Date  
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 of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
 Local 71 Building  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Property

Shelby County,  
 Tennessee  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 County and State

**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:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of the Keeper 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

Returned

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register** \_\_\_\_\_ 0

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/International Style

Returned

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

CONCRETE: BRICK; STONE: Granite; GLASS;  
METAL: Iron

**Narrative Description**

The Memphis Federation of Musicians (American Federation of Music) Local 71 (MFM) Building is a reinforced concrete block building that features a brick veneer exterior, granite belt course trim, a single-leaf, single-light aluminum entry door, and double-hung aluminum windows. Constructed in 1962, it is a strong local representation of the late International Commercial style and retains its original architectural appearance. The building's most stylized elevation is located at the south facing Young Avenue, but the main entrance faces Philadelphia Street to the west. The interior retains original configuration, fixtures, and finishes. The edifice is located on the north side of a commercial strip in the predominately-residential Cooper-Young Historic District (NRHP 6/22/1989). The MFM Building has experienced some ornamental deterioration but remains in overall good condition. The predominate features that identify it as a mid-twentieth-century building are its modern materials, flat roof, and lack of ornamentation.

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

**Site**

The 3600-square-foot, rectangular-plan, two-story building faces onto Philadelphia Street and is set back from the edge of the lot. The lot includes an asphalt drive that wraps around the building on the north, east and south sides. Concrete curbing is present along the southern portion of the parcel and provides several angled parking places. A small portion of angular decorative concrete curbing exists at the northwest corner of the parcel near the driveway entrance. Landscaping around the building includes additional curbing and sidewalk features comprised of concrete and aggregate. There is modest landscaping in a poured concrete planter surrounding the concrete block foundation (*photo 3, 6, and 8*). Although the features are minimalistic, they lend a natural component to the otherwise modern building and site features. The modestly-landscaped 0.268-acre site is at street grade, ringed with large trees and has a concrete retaining wall at the east end (*photo 14*).

**Exterior**

*South Elevation*

The bottom floor of the southern wing and the second floor have identical fenestration consisting of six, single-light metal casement windows obscured by aggregate-and-cast-concrete, 45-degree-angle panels attached to building by metal flanges (*photos 9, 10, 11*). These panels have weathered badly, and the brackets securing them to the walls have rusted (*photo 20*). This elevation has a concrete block foundation, a granite belt course and a brick-capped parapet wall. The building's name is spelled out in metal lettering that is affixed to the wall just west of the first floor windows (*photo 12*).

*North Elevation*

The north elevation building materials are identical to the south elevation, but fenestration on this wall is present only at the ground floor level. A hinged metal door with a single concrete step below is located at the center of the wall. There are three small, single-light, one-over one metal frame, double-hung windows on this elevation; one is to the west of the entry door, two additional identical windows are located to the east (*photos 2 and 4*).

*West Elevation*

The façade (west elevation) displays an elevated, poured-concrete patio with wrought iron railing that is accessed by a poured-concrete walkway and four concrete stairs to either side (*photo 13*). The single-light, aluminum-and-glass entry door has a small, rounded, aluminum canopy over it. To the left (north) of the entry, two single-light metal casement windows (one at first floor level and one aligned above at second floor level) are obscured by two attached, aggregate-and-cast-concrete, 45-degree-angle panels that extend the full height of the façade (*photo 1*).

*East Elevation*

Nearly identical to the façade, the east elevation also has an elevated, poured-concrete patio with wrought iron railing that is accessed by a poured-concrete walkway and four concrete stairs on either side. (There is no canopy over this elevation's entry.) To the right (north) of the entry is a single-light metal casement window obscured by aggregate cast concrete, 45-degree angle panels on both the ground and second story (*photos 5 and 7*).

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

**Interior**

The ground floor lobby is comprised of a small seating area with an original wall mural on the south side of the space. A wood and Formica counter is located north of the entry and behind it is an open office area and a small copy room to the east (*photo 17*). The entire building retains its original flooring (linoleum tile in main areas and porcelain tile in bathrooms), acoustic ceiling tiles, fluorescent lights and painted concrete block walls. The metal front stairs are located in the southwest corner and have wrought iron railings (*photos 15 and 16*). This floor has a double-loader corridor extending east beyond the lobby area (*photo 22*).

The north side of the corridor contains a door into the reception area, men and women's restrooms (*photo 18, 19, and 20*), and a small landing where a second set of metal and wrought iron stairs are located (*photo 21*). An original water fountain hangs between the two restrooms. The original restroom interiors have baked enamel toilet stalls and a ceramic tile floor. The south side of the corridor contains a break room complete with an original sink, refrigerator, stove unit, shag carpet and wood paneled walls (*photos 23 and 24*). There are two small offices back to the west that are denoted by wood doors (*photo 25*, representative example).

The upper floor is one large, open, multi-purpose room with linoleum tile flooring, concrete block walls, acoustic tile ceiling and fluorescent lighting (*photo 26*). Between the windows along the south wall, original panels of abstract art depict musicians (*photo 27*), while a music-themed mural decorates the north wall; two metal doors for a small closet and stairwell exit are located on the rear (east) wall (*photo 28*). A small wood bar is located in a recessed area at the southeast corner of the room just to the right of the rear exit.

Returned

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

**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.)

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1962  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Gaskill, William  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 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.

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

Property is:

- 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.

Returned



Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its local architectural significance as a strong example of an International Style commercial building. Bill Gaskill's modest 1961 design displays his knowledge of the older International style and New Formalism. While some late International style buildings remained true to the classic white (or almost white) box with a flat roof, Gaskill substituted light-colored bricks for neutral white stucco or plaster enveloping walls. Other elements of the International Style on the MFM Building include an essentially horizontal feel with windows emphasized by opaque poured concrete panels in a nod to Formalism's brise-soleil, a rectilinear composition, substantive exterior walls, and a profound absence of ornamentation. The period of significance for this property is defined by the 1962 date of construction.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

**History of the Memphis Federation of Musicians**

When veteran trumpet player and silver-voiced tenor Vernon Baty became the Local president in 1960, he spearheaded the campaign for the permanent home for MFM. The Local never had a permanent building to call home, even though local musicians unionized in 1873 to form one of America's earliest unions. Prior to the turn of the century, the local union's primary concern was negotiating for orchestras in the vaudeville and burlesque theaters downtown. Smaller theaters required pit groups to perform generic, loosely synchronized mood music for silent films. At the peak of live musical activity in Memphis in 1910s and 1920s, union musicians often performed three or more shows per day, seven days a week. According to the Memphis City Directory, the MFM office was located for decades in the old Orpheum Theater (no longer extant), where musicians spent time playing pinochle between shows.

During the Great Depression, union musicians found refuge in federal Work Progress Administration orchestras, performing at the Overton Park Shell (NRHP 10/25/1979) and on the radio. In addition, and despite the hard times, Memphians were still able to support musicians playing out. Hotels and private clubs on the top floors of many downtown buildings remained regular performance spots. Not by coincidence, the Local 71 office was located in the Hotel Gayoso (Gayoso-Peabody Historic District, NRHP 5/7/1980) during the 1920s and early '30s. During the later 1930s, the Local 71 moved twice, including an office locations at 66 Monroe Avenue and 37 Beale Street. They settled into an office on the second floor of 139 South Main Street during the war and remained there until they moved into their permanent offices on Philadelphia Street.

By the late 1950s, Local 71 had built a sizeable general fund to finance the project as Memphis had become the birthplace of rock-and-roll when Sam Phillips started Sun Records, a seminal early rock-and-roll and electric blues label in 1952. Several Local 71 card-carrying members made their first recordings on Sun, including Elvis Presley (who had 18 number one hits in the U.S.), Johnny Cash, Roy Orbison, Jerry Lee Lewis, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Ike Turner, Carl Perkins, and Charlie Rich.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Sprott, "Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71," Interview by author, January 15, 2016.

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building

Name of Property

Shelby County,  
Tennessee

County and State

Memphis music's future king first appeared on the scene when a young Elvis Presley went to work for Crown Electric Company in 1952. At Crown, he performed various jobs, including driving a delivery truck and delivering supplies to job sites. He also attended night school studying to be an apprentice electrician. In July 1954, Elvis teamed up with fellow musicians Scotty Moore and Bill Black and began cutting demos at Sun Recording Service, but nothing really clicked until July 5, when after a tedious session, the trio broke into a sped-up version of Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup's "That's All Right." This song, backed with "Blue Moon of Kentucky," became the first of five singles of early Elvis songs recorded and released on the Sun Records label. On July 30, 1954, Presley joined MFM Local 71.<sup>2</sup>

The "Memphis Sound" emerged in 1960 when siblings Jim Stewart and Estelle Axton formed Stax Records with assistance from expert recording engineer Chips Moman. He scouted an abandoned Capitol movie theater on East McLemore and College streets in South Memphis and helped Jim Stewart convert it into the famed Stax recording studio. By the early 1960s, the Local 71's fortune continued to improve as sessions at both Stax Records and Sun Studios were paying union scale. A host of other recording studios enlisted union players and, gradually, the self-taught "non-professionals" recording at Memphis' famous studios joined the union.

An important impetus for the Local 71 constructing their own building was Pepper Sound Studios. An early syndicator of radio station jingles, it began in 1957 as a record company created by businessman John Pepper and songwriter Floyd Huddleston. Huddleston based the company on the model of Capitol Records, but the record business phased out and by 1964, Pepper Studios exclusively became a jingle commercial company and a union shop. Their first jingle was for Everdry Deodorant, followed by Burke Hall Paint and hundreds of others. William Tanner was a sales representative for the company and quickly became one of the owners of the company.

Minutes from the January 12, 1962 MFM Board of Directors meeting indicate that the board appointed former professional trumpet player, architect, and Local 71 member architect William Gaskill as a member of a feasibility study for construction of a new Local 71 building. Further encouragement for a new headquarters came from the MFM's parent union. The Minutes of the February 6, 1962 meeting indicate that President Baty welcomed Gilbert Rogers, assistant to the president of the American Federation of Musicians to the board meeting. Gilbert had been on a fact-finding tour in Memphis and, accompanied by Baty, had visited most of the major local recording studios. It was Mr. Rogers's opinion that Memphis had recently skyrocketed over New York, Los Angeles, and Nashville as the largest recording center in the United States.

According to the minutes of the July 2, 1962 meeting, the Local 71 was negotiating purchase of the lot at 944 Philadelphia Street and the Board unanimously approved Gaskill as the architect of the project. Before becoming an architect in 1955, Bill Gaskill was a professional musician and still maintained membership in the MFM. His firm of Yeates and Gaskill also designed the University of Tennessee-Knoxville undergraduate library, the library at University of Tennessee-Martin and the Liberty Bowl Memorial

<sup>2</sup> Elvis A. Presley, American Federation of Musicians Application, July 30, 1954, Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 archives, Memphis, Tennessee.

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Stadium (Memphis Memorial Stadium) in 1965. He served as president of the Tennessee and Memphis chapters of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). In 1986, his firm merged with the firm of Jones and Mah to become JMGR. Gaskill received the prestigious Gassner award in 1990 from the AIA. The civic-minded Gaskill served as the chair of the Memphis Landmarks Commission where he helped write the city's landmarks ordinances. Bill Gaskill died in December 1996.

Sadly, Local 71 President Baty never saw his dream become a reality. The Minutes of a Special Board meeting on September 12, 1962 announced the unexpected but impending death of Vernon Baty. He would die the next day at age 49. At the September 24, 1962 Special Board meeting, Bill Gaskill filled the Board in on many of the design details of the new Local 71 building. In December 1962, Gaskill was elected to the Board.

The January 17, 1963 minutes reported that the Financial Report for 1962 indicated membership was booming. The January 31, 1963 minutes included a construction report by Gaskill and the announcement that the Main Street offices would close on Saturday, February 2 for the move to the new headquarters. February 17 was set aside as the date for the open house of the new headquarters. The February 1963 grand opening of the new Local 71 headquarters was met with much fanfare as union members and city officials showed up for the festivities (*Image 1*). The December 15, 1963 minutes authorized a \$10,000 payment on the building to be taken from the General Reserves.

The February 24, 1964 minutes proposed spending \$150 for a bar on the second floor to serve liquor at "jam sessions." The March 11, 1964 minutes refer to the second floor as "The Club Room" and propose getting a bid on a bass and drums for the space. The September 14, 1964 minutes include a lengthy discussion on serving liquor at Local 74 Club Room; the motion to serve alcohol passed. Memphis was a "dry town" at this time and mixed drinks were only to be (or being) sold in private clubs. Oddly, attendance was sparse and by the end of the year, the club closed. It would become a practice room and membership meeting area.

### **Decline of the Memphis Federation of Musicians**

The 1962 MFM Building symbolizes the pinnacle of the Local 71's success. Sadly, the unforeseen demise of their unionizing influence would begin four years later as the Memphis music industry went into a decline and no longer could provide enough jobs to support union members. A spiral of less work meant fewer members, fewer members meant that employers didn't hire union members but used non-union members at lower wages and Tennessee is a right-to-work state so union membership is an option.

In 1967, several events transpired that threw the Memphis music industry into a permanent decline. Despite his pivotal role in establishing the musical direction of Stax and recording its first hits, Chips Moman left in 1967 after a monetary dispute with Stewart. Following the death of Stax's biggest star, Otis Redding, in 1967, and the severance of the label's distribution deal with Atlantic Records in 1968, Stax continued primarily under the supervision of a new co-owner, Al Bell. Stax would declare bankruptcy in 1976. Creative force Floyd Huddlestone left Pepper Sound Studios in 1967 as well.

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The past few decades have been lean times for Local 71. Hampered by the city's shrinking recording industry and by the state's Right to Work labor laws, the union has seen its influence, and its membership, drop precipitously.<sup>3</sup> The largest musicians' locals in the country are Local 47 in Los Angeles; New York's Local 802; and in Nashville, where music is a \$6.4 billion dollar industry, Local 257 is the fourth largest local in the AFM. In contrast, the MFM Building has deferred maintenance and no capital reserve because of the loss of membership dues. The current membership is between 140 and 150 members and the Memphis Symphony Orchestra makes up the largest block of the membership, but also represented are freelance dance bands and popular musicians. The Board of Directors is hopeful that National Register listing will spur a fund raising campaign to rehabilitate the building and attract more members.

**Architecture**

Overall, the building retains the character-defining features and details, materials and artisanship to convey its architectural significance. The subject property was infill in the surrounding Cooper-Young Historic District during the early streetcar era, and there are no other buildings in the immediate area in this style.

When compared with the 1960s buildings discussed in Keith Kays' *A Survey of Modern Public Buildings in Memphis, TN 1940-1980*, its modest design is most similar to the Alcy Road School as the massing of that building is also a direct reflection of its functional plan. The MFM Building reflects Gaskill's deft touch by honoring its Modernist roots, foreshadows "green technology" as it shields the south facing windows from the brutal summer sun with solid concrete panels, and acknowledges Brutalism with his concept of the trade union building as plain and comprehensible. No mystery, no romanticism, no obscurities about function and circulation. Essentially, the MFM Building is an example of no-nonsense style, executed for a small trade union with a limited budget and perfectly met the needs of its client, the true work of a master designer.

<sup>3</sup> Roy Brewer, "The Union Label," *Memphis Flyer*, April 30, 1998.

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 Name of Property

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 \_\_\_\_\_  
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**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

Brewer, Roy. "The Union Label." *Memphis Flyer*. April 30, 1998.

"Presidential Profile –William Gaskill." *ARCHITECTURE + MEMPHIS*. Memphis: American Institute of Architects, Memphis Chapter, October, 1963, 11 and 16.

Sprott, John. "Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71." Interview by author. January 15, 2016.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)		Primary location of additional data:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	<input type="checkbox"/>	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other State agency
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	<input type="checkbox"/>	University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):			

Returned

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
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**10. Geographical Data**

---

**Acreage of Property** 0.268 acres **USGS Quadrangle** Southeast Memphis

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Latitude: 35.119770

Longitude: -89.986034

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Located in the central area of Memphis, the southern boundary is Young Avenue, the eastern boundary is the eastern property line, the northern boundary is the north property line, and the western boundary is Philadelphia Street.

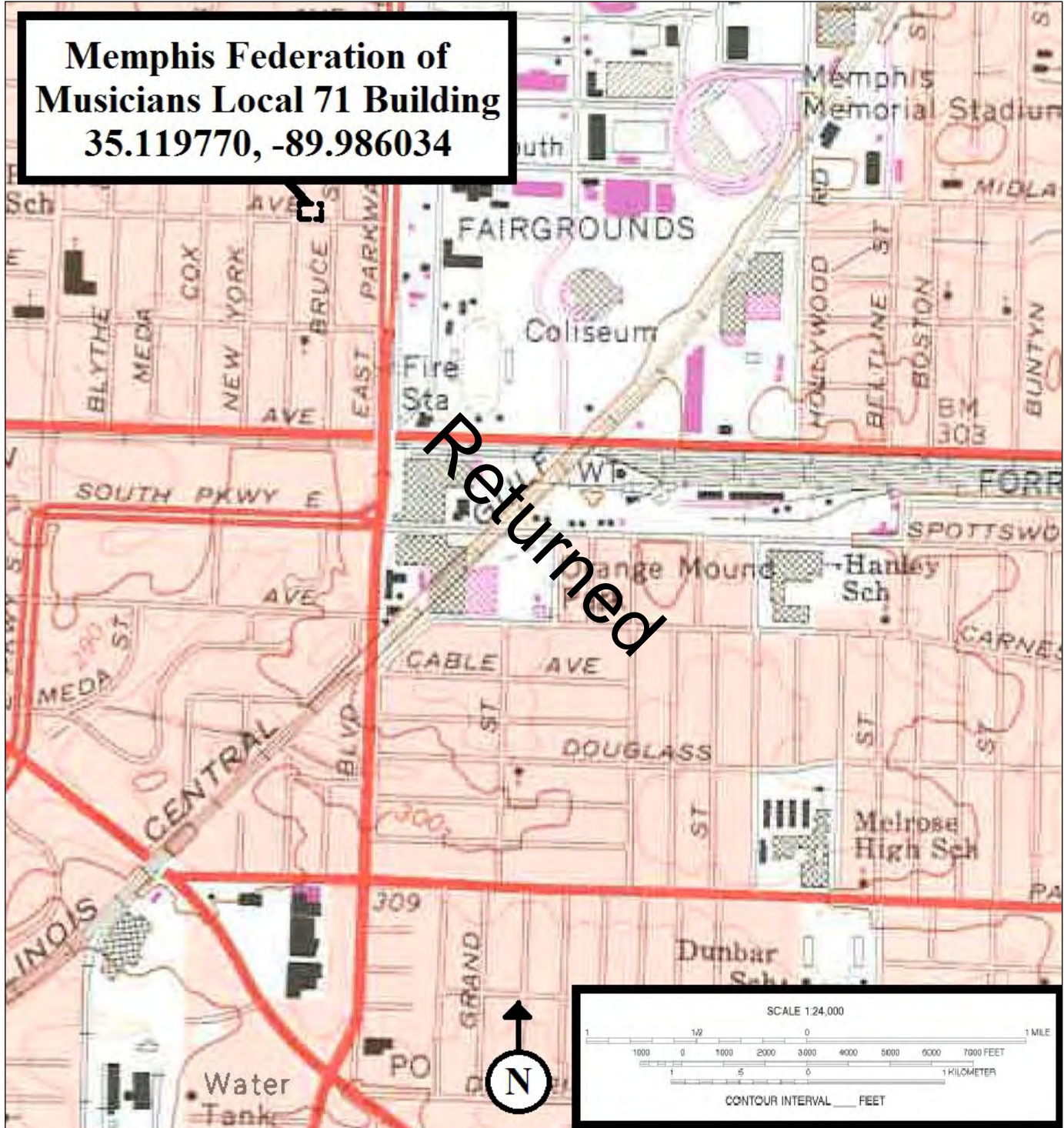
**Boundary Justification**

These are the historical boundaries associated with the property parcel number 029021 00007 which is owned by the Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 and located in Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee.

Returned

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
Local 71 Building  
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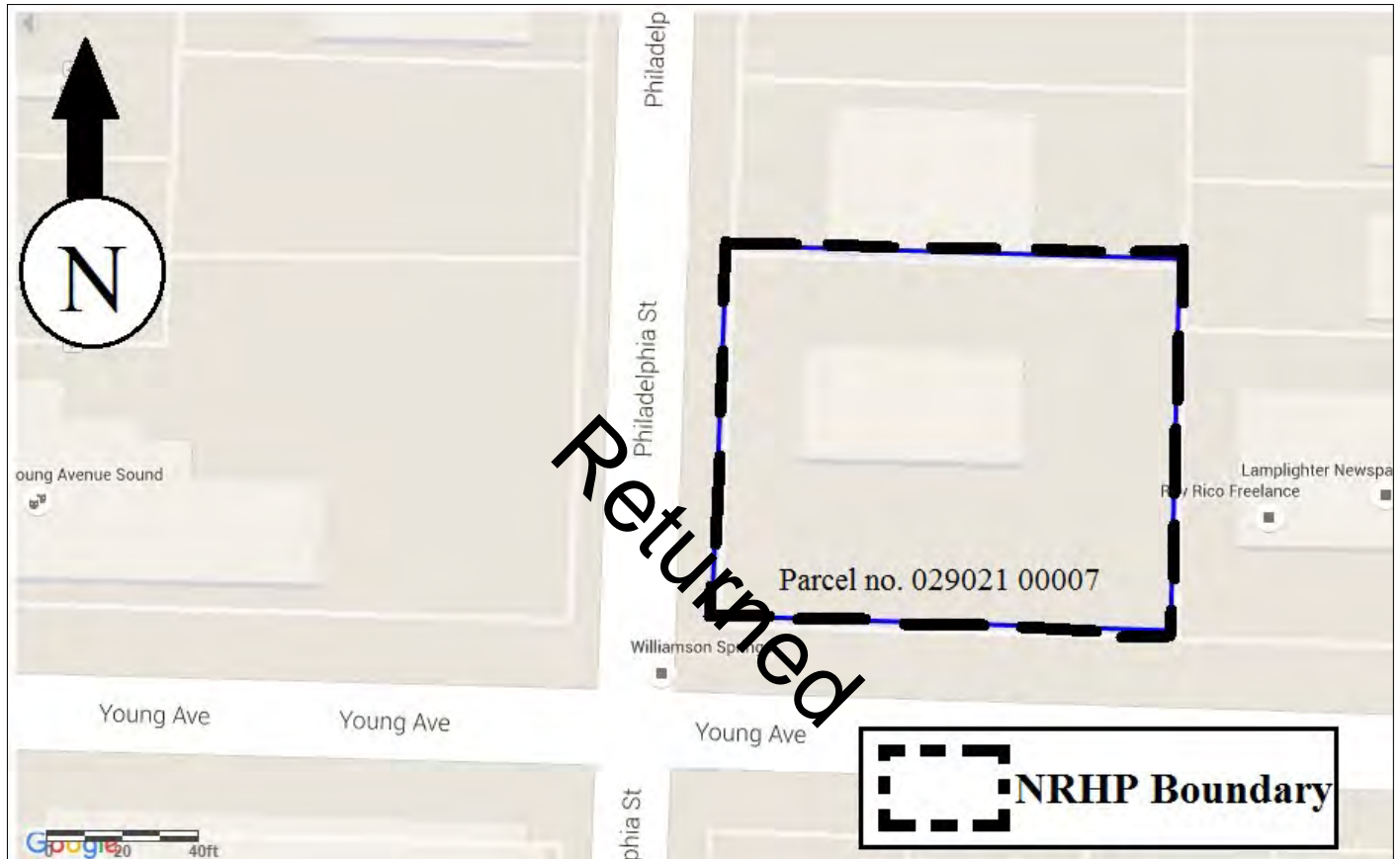


National Register boundary for Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building, USGS Topographic Map, *Southeast Memphis* quadrangle (1965, photorevised 1973).

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
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**Boundary Map**



Shelby County Tax Parcel Map for parcel associated with  
Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building (parcel no. 02902100007).



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**11. Form Prepared By**

Name Judith A. Johnson

Organization Judith Johnson & Associates

Street & Number 158 Windover Road #6 Date May 19, 2016

City or Town Memphis Telephone (901) 603-0054

E-mail judithjohnson73@gmail.com State TN Zip Code 38111

**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 map.
- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

Returned

**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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**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building  
City or Vicinity: Memphis  
County: Shelby County State: TN  
Photographer: Caroline Eller, Tennessee Historical Commission  
Date Photographed: March 2, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 29. Façade and main entrance facing onto Philadelphia Street. Photographer facing east.
- 2 of 29. Northwest oblique. Photographer facing southeast.
- 3 of 29. Detail of front steps. Photographer facing south.
- 4 of 29. North elevation. Photographer facing east.
- 5 of 29. Northeast oblique. Photographer facing southwest.
- 6 of 29. Detail of rear entry steps and planter. Photographer facing southwest.
- 7 of 29. East elevation. Photographer facing west.
- 8 of 29. Detail of rear entry. Photographer facing northwest.
- 9 of 29. Southeast oblique. Photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 29. South elevation. Photographer facing north.
- 11 of 29. Southwest oblique. Photographer facing northeast.
- 12 of 29. South elevation detail. Photographer facing northeast.
- 13 of 29. West elevation detail. Photographer facing north.
- 14 of 29. West elevation and view of adjacent property at 940 Philadelphia Street. Photographer facing northeast.
- 15 of 29. Main entry hall and stairs at west end of building, first floor. Photographer facing west.
- 16 of 29. Interior stairwell at southwest corner of building, first floor. Photographer facing south.
- 17 of 29. Detail of main entry hall and reception area, first floor. Photographer facing west.

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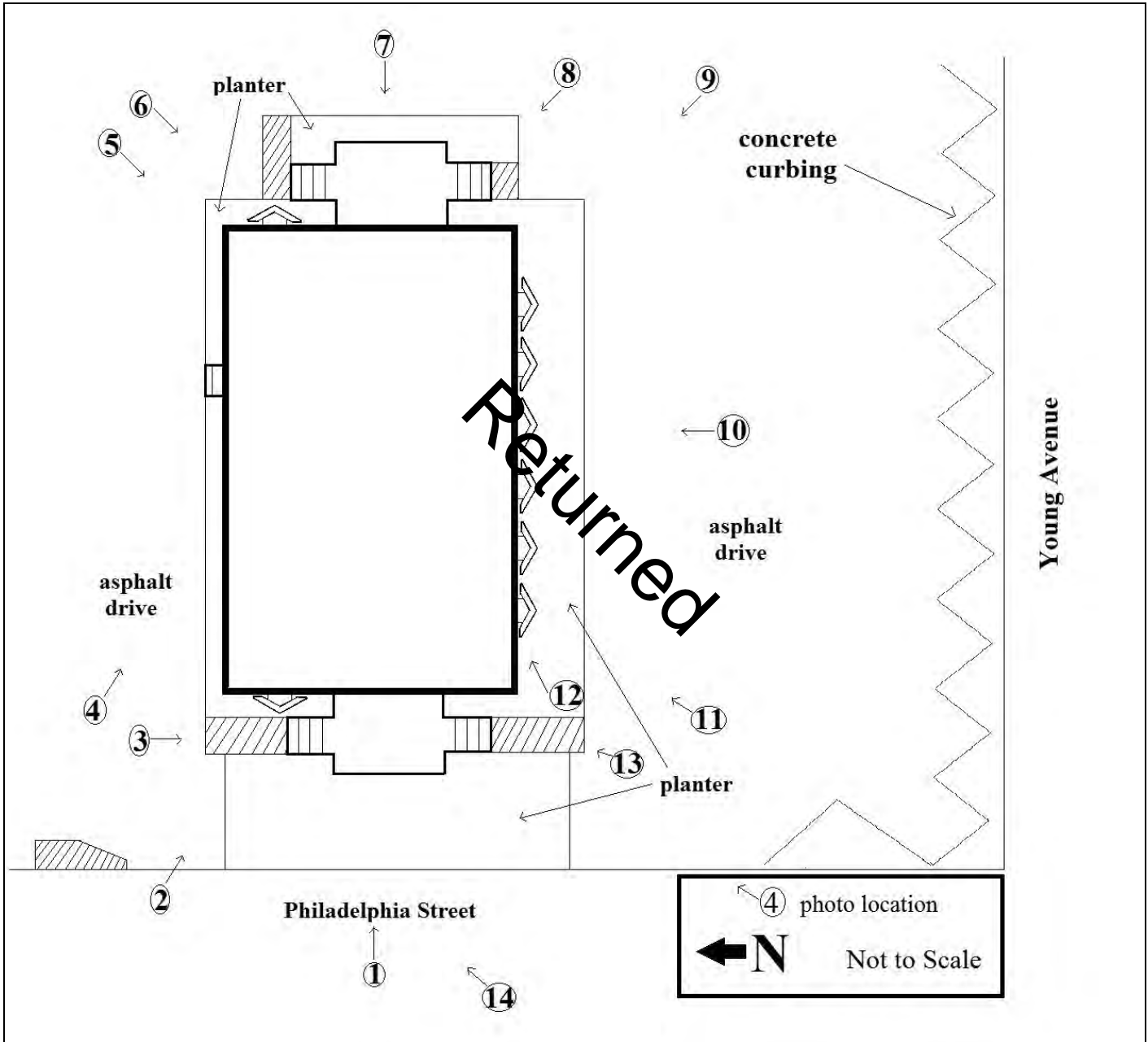
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- 18 of 29. View of women's restroom, first floor. Photographer facing north.
- 19 of 29. Detail of women's restroom door, first floor. Photographer facing east.
- 20 of 29. View of main hallway, rear entrance and door to men's restroom, first floor. Photographer facing east.
- 21 of 29. Interior stairwell at northeast corner of building, first floor. Photographer facing north.
- 22 of 29. View of first floor hallway. Photographer facing west.
- 23 of 29. View of office, first floor. Photographer facing east.
- 24 of 29. View of office, first floor. Photographer facing west.
- 25 of 29. View of office, first floor. Photographer facing south.
- 26 of 29. View of multi-purpose room, second floor. Photographer facing west.
- 27 of 29. View of multi-purpose room, second floor. Photographer facing east.
- 28 of 29. View of multi-purpose room, second floor. Photographer facing northeast.
- 29 of 29. Detail of concrete panel. View from multi-purpose room, second floor. Photographer facing south.

Memphis Federation of Musicians  
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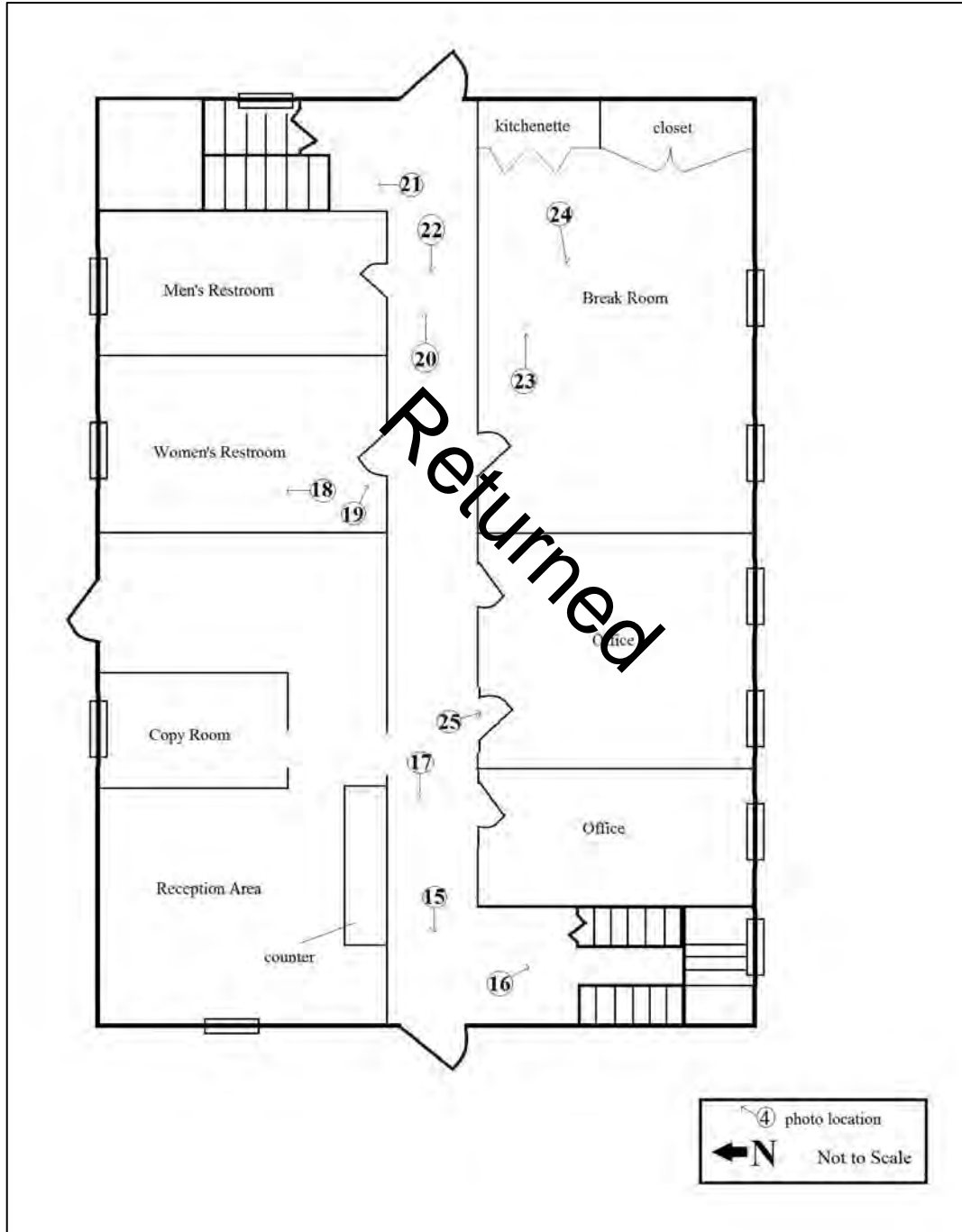
Site Plan with Photo Key



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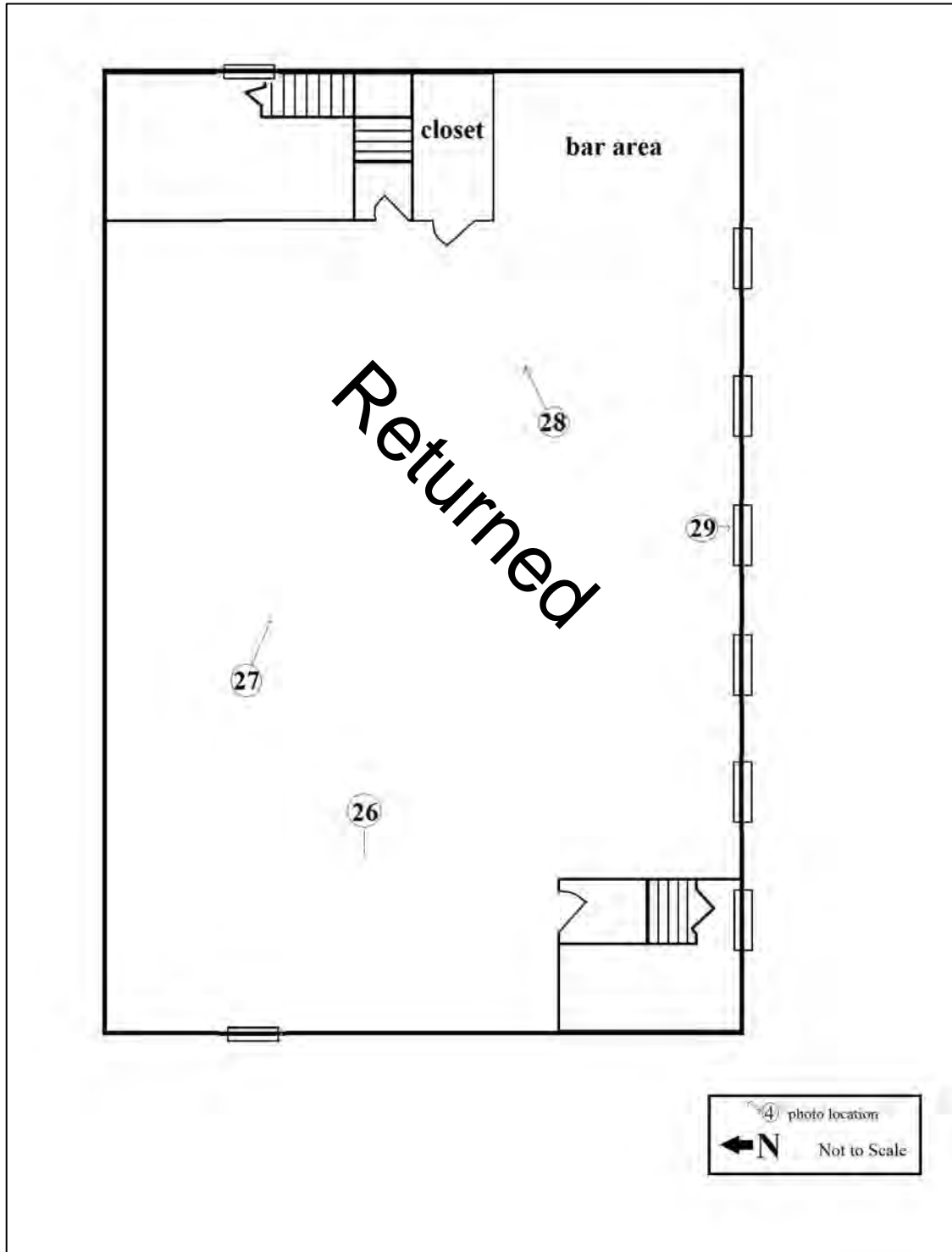
**First Floor Plan With Photo Key**



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**Second Floor Plan with Photo Key**



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number images Page 21

Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building
Name of Property Shelby County, TN
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



**Image 1.** Grand opening and ribbon cutting at Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building, February 17, 1963. Left to right-Pat Trickey, Bill Slais, and Eddie Cox, Board of directors; Bob Taylor Vice-president; Henry Loeb, Mayor of Memphis; Andy Ledbetter, President, C.V. Foster, Secretary; Bill Gaskill, Woody Brown, Larry Wunchberc, Scotty Moore, Board of Directors.

*Courtesy: Memphis Federation of Musicians.*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Memphis Federation Of Musicians Local 71 Building

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TENNESSEE, Shelby

DATE RECEIVED: 10/14/16      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/14/16  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/29/16      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/29/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000812

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

   ACCEPT     RETURN       REJECT    11-22-2016 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*See Return Comments*

RECOM./CRITERIA *Return*

REVIEWER *[Signature]*

DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 11-22-2016

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.





# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

## The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Evaluation Sheet

Property Name: Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building,  
Shelby County, TN

Reference Number: 16000812

#### Comment

The nomination for the Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building located in Shelby County, is being returned for substantive revision.

In May, 2016, a Part 1 application for this property was accepted by the NPS. The narrative statement of significance for the Part 1 concentrated on the historic use of the building as it relates to the music industry in Memphis. The Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing acceptance was predicated on significance under Criterion A.

The nomination of the property, however, claims significance only under Criterion C. The building, which is at best a pedestrian example of its period of architecture, is not placed in an evaluative context related to Modernist architecture in Memphis. The nomination does not support the claim of individual significance under Criterion C.

If the nomination is resubmitted, the focus of the statement of significance should reflect the theme(s) identified in the Part 1 submission and should be focused on Criterion A.

When checking boxes in Section 9, please remember that if a Part 1 request has been submitted to the NPS that the box "Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested" is marked, and NOT the "Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register." That box is only for formal Determinations of Eligibility that have been made by the Keeper, typically through the Section 106 process.

Jim Gabbert, Historian  
National Register of Historic Places  
11-23-2016



**TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
2941 LEBANON PIKE  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0442  
OFFICE: (615) 532-1550  
E-mail: [Claudette.Stager@tn.gov](mailto:Claudette.Stager@tn.gov)  
(615) 770-1089

March 20, 2017

J. Paul Loether  
Deputy Keeper and Chief,  
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street NW, 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the documentation to nominate the *Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building* to the National Register of Historic Places. The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the listing of the *Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 Building* to the National Register of Historic Places. Certified Local Government (CLG) notifications were sent out to the CLG Coordinator and the Mayor. The CLG Coordinator responded but the Mayor did not. This nomination is a re-submission.

A Historic Preservation Certification Application Part 1 Evaluation of Significance (preliminary determination for individual listing in the National Register) has been approved for this property.

If you have any questions or if more information is needed, contact Caroline Eller at 615/770-1086 or [Caroline.Eller@tn.gov](mailto:Caroline.Eller@tn.gov).

Sincerely,

Claudette Stager  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

CS:ce

Enclosures(3)