



Community and Economic Development

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February 2, 2010

Georgia DNR Office of
Historic Preservation Division

FEB - 4 2010

RECEIVED

Carole Moore, Grants Coordinator
Georgia Historic Preservation Division
254 Washington Street SE
Ground Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

RE: City of Decatur's 2010 CLG Grant Application for Beacon Hill Pre-development Plan

Dear Carole:

Attached is the City of Decatur's CLG Grant application for a pre-development plan for the Beacon Hill Complex located in Decatur. Beacon Hill is a fragile resource that speaks to a different, darker time in Decatur's history and to the plight of Decatur's African American residents. Beacon Hill was once a vibrant African American Community much like the Sweet Auburn neighborhood in Atlanta. In an effort to satisfy the Supreme Court decision of 1954 that schools can be separate but must be equal, the Decatur School Board demolished the old Herring Street School and constructed the Beacon Hill Elementary and Trinity High School which were connected to the Ebster Gymnasium. These schools were for the "colored" children who lived in the City of Decatur. Now known as "Equalization Schools", these are stark reminders of the Jim Crow laws and segregation. In the 1960's the Beacon Hill Community was destroyed as the entire area was demolished and public housing was built as part of the Urban Renewal efforts. Houses, churches, and businesses were swept away without any thought to or input from the African American community. One of the few remaining buildings left standing was this school complex. In 1966, the Decatur School Board ordered the desegregation of the schools and the African American children were taken out of their community schools and sent to the White schools. The Beacon Hill complex remained closed for some time until it was adapted to become the Decatur Police Department and a community center. It remains today as a witness to the very beginning of the Civil Rights movement in Georgia.

Our goal is to utilize the services of a cultural resource consultant firm to oversee the needs and facilities assessment for the Beacon Hill Complex. There will be a tremendous effort to involve the community in the re-development decision and to ascertain how the residents and former residents of this neighborhood would like to see this building preserved and used. Additionally, the City of Decatur

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will also be coordinating the effort to conduct oral histories with the residents and build upon some of the work completed by Clark Atlanta University several years ago. I have enclosed a copy of the narrative "A Vanished Community: Decatur's Beacon Hill 1900-1960" which was written and produced by the African American residents in Decatur in collaboration with city officials. This was a first step in identifying the need to preserve this resource and we are now ready to take the second step by determining how to preserve the buildings and the memories of this community. I have also enclosed a copy of the National Register Nomination produced by GSU Graduate Student in the Heritage Preservation Program. This nomination is an exhaustive look at this resource and proposes that the complex is eligible for the National Register under multiple criteria.

We are very excited about this project. As you know, the City recently completed a city-wide historic resource survey and we will be developing a city-wide preservation plan. Beacon Hill is considered one of our most valuable historic resources and we are taking this opportunity to start the pre-development planning process immediately. We hope HPD agrees that this is a project that is very worthy of the CLG Grant.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (404) 371-8386 if you require any additional information. Thank you so much for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Regina A. Brewer
Preservation Planner



2010 Historic Preservation Fund CLG Predevelopment Grant Application

General Application Instructions:

- Complete all sections of the application and be sure to include all supporting documentation, such as photographs.
- The application must be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.
- Submit **three** copies of the application (one with original ink signatures and two copies), and **three** copies of all supporting documentation. Additional sheets may be attached if more space is necessary to answer questions. Photocopied photographs are acceptable.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.
- Applications must be postmarked **by February 2, 2010**.

Send applications to:

Carole Moore, Grants Coordinator
Historic Preservation Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
254 Washington St. SE
Ground Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Questions? Contact Carole Moore at 404-463-8434 or carole.moore@dnr.state.ga.us

APPLICANT:

Certified Local Government/Official Applicant City of Decatur

Chief Executive Officer & Title Peggy Merriss, City Manager

Address for official correspondence P.O.B. 220, 509 N. McDonough Street, Decatur, GA 30031

Phone Number (404) 370-4102 E-Mail Address peggy.merriss@decaturga.com

Federal Identification Number 58-6000-567 County DeKalb

U.S. Congressional District Fifth RDC Atlanta Regional

State Senate District 42 State Rep. District 83,84, and 85

2. GRANT PROJECT MANAGERS:

Name Regina Brewer Title Preservation Planner

Address (if different from above) _____

Phone Number (404) 370-4104 E-Mail Address regina.brewer@decaturga.com

If different from grant project manager above, who will handle the financial management and documentation for the project?

Name _____ Title _____

Address (if different from above) _____

Phone Number _____ E-Mail Address _____

Will the project manager and financial manager be able to attend a grant administration workshop?

Yes ☒ No _____

List any other persons not listed above who will be involved in the project, such as consultants, volunteers, city employees, etc. What will be their roles?

Hugh Saxon, Deputy City Manager: Contract Administrator for the project

3. APPLICATION PREPARED BY:

Name Regina Brewer Title Preservation Planner

Address (if different from above) _____

Phone Number _____ E-Mail Address _____

4. PROJECT INFORMATION:

Total Project Cost (total project cost equals grant amount requested, plus matching share) \$ 25,000

Grant Amount Requested (not more than 60% of total project cost) \$ 15,000

Matching Share (at least 40% of total project cost; equal to total project cost minus grant amount) \$ 10,000

Project Schedule

Describe the schedule you expect to follow in carrying out this project. Keep in mind that project work cannot begin before May 1, 2010 and all work must be completed on or before August 15, 2011.

May 1, 2010 – Award Contract

July 1, 2010 – Design Team Selected

September 1, 2010 – Design Team and City Integration/Project Kick-off

October 1, 2010 – Community Needs Assessment/Public Meetings

February 1, 2011 – Analysis of Findings and Final Community Needs Assessment Report

May 1, 2011 – Project Completed, Final Report Delivered.

5. PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Is property listed on the National Register of Historic Places? Yes _____ No ☒

Property Name (use N.R. name; give N.R. district name first, if applicable) Beacon Hill Complex

Property Address 404-420 W. Trinity Place, Decatur, GA 30030

South Wing

The southern wing of the building is the Ebster Recreation Center, formerly Beacon Elementary School. It is a two-story rectangle with a single-story extension on the east end. The two-story walls are flush, but the single-story extension is L-shaped, with part of the southern elevation flush with the rest of the building and part of it set back a few feet from the main façade on the south but flush with the façade on the north. A flat concrete canopy with a metal fascia, which appears to be integral to the building, runs over the first story windows in the two-story portion of the building. Entries are located at both ends of the two-story portion of the south and north elevations and on the east elevation of the single-story extension. Concrete stairs with simple tubular metal handrails lead from the Electric Avenue sidewalk to the east elevation entrance. This entrance is flanked by brick planters that have been capped with concrete. Brick wing walls rising from the planters support the flat roof extending over the recessed entry to the door. The fixed transom over the east elevation entrance door has been covered. Doors are wood with a single light except for the exterior doors on the west end, which are metal. The entry on the east end of the south elevation is below grade and has a formed concrete step wall with steps to a concrete stoop and a shed-roofed awning supported by tubular steel posts.

The windows on the south elevation of the single-story extension are of the same construction as classroom windows in the rest of the south wing. A metal grille opening is located beneath the easternmost window bay on the southern elevation of this extension. All first floor window openings corresponding to former classrooms have been in-filled with what appears to be stucco except for the bathroom windows on the north elevation.

The north elevation of the south wing generally matches the south elevation with a few exceptions. An entryway of double wood doors with three-light windows opens from the single-story extension on the south to the concrete covered walkway. The walkway terminates at a covered stair leading to the rear of the gymnasium and the performing arts theater. The western entry on the north elevation opens to the covered walkway along the east façade of the single-story western portion of the building. Both walkways are constructed of tubular steel poles supporting concrete roofs. Chain link fence prevents entry from the eastern walkway into the courtyard.

Interior features in this wing include tile floors, acoustical tile ceilings, painted walls, and wood doors with transoms that provide entry to each classroom from the double-loaded hall. The first floor hall has black and white, 12" square tile flooring, and the second floor and stairwells have beige and brown 9" tile flooring. Many of the former classrooms on the second floor still have the original wooden "activity center" built into one end of the room.

Gymnasium

The Ebster Gymnasium portion of the north wing of the building sits at the corner of Electric Avenue and W. Trinity Place, facing W. Trinity Place. It is rectangular with a shorter, smaller front extension, both with flat roofs with parapets instead of overhangs. The front parapet of the main portion is approximately eighteen inches high, and the side parapets are approximately six inches high and support aluminum gutters. Although both parts of the gymnasium are of variegated brick, an inset portion of brick wall of the smaller front extension is laid stacked instead of running bond like the rest of the building. The smaller front portion has a precast concrete parapet cap at the roof and contains the single entry directly to the gymnasium. The recessed entryway surround is white painted concrete or smooth stucco with a square dome light. The entry consists of steel doors with a single fixed transom above them, approached by a set of concrete stairs rising directly from the city sidewalk in front of the building. A simple tubular metal handrail is affixed to the wall at the short ramp from the sidewalk to the front entry landing. Also on this front extension is an opening for a ticket sales window covered with diamond-lattice screening. Above the sales window is a metal plate covering the junction box for a light fixture no longer in place. The entry is protected by a flat-roofed concrete canopy with a metal fascia running over the door opening and the ticket sales window. On the east elevation of the small front extension is a single window opening covered with screen on the exterior and plywood on the interior. The only other opening on the north elevation of the gymnasium is a large grille for a vent fan on the east end of the main portion.

The east elevation has five bays, all windows. A sixth bay, formerly a door opening, has been in-filled with brick. Four of the windows exhibit signs of having once been larger openings in the brick in-fill above the precast concrete slip sills still expressed to the exterior of the building. The bottom panes of the four fixed, six-light windows in this elevation open hopper style to the interior, as do the middle panes of the single fixed, eight-light window on the south end of the

east elevation. The south elevation has no windows, only three metal grilles for HVAC supply air. Large aluminum downspouts extend from the roof-edge gutters to the ground on the sides and back of the gymnasium.

The Gymnasium contains an entry foyer from the main entrance on the north elevation that accesses the ticket booth and storage area on the east, men's and women's restrooms on the west, and the main gymnasium on the south. The gymnasium has a raised stage area on the south end with a door leading the southwest foyer that accesses stairs to the back of the building. On the north and south sides of the bleachers at the west of the gymnasium floor are stairs leading to boys' and girls' locker rooms beneath the bleachers. The gymnasium floor is maple wood painted as a basketball court. Bleachers on the west side of the room are wood backless benches bolted to a stepped concrete base with metal C-shapes. The locker rooms beneath the bleacher have nearly all their original features..

The gymnasium is tied into the library on the west side. The south end of the west elevation of the gymnasium contains the door from the landing at the top of the stairs from the covered walkway on the east end of the building. This door leads to a foyer that accesses the gymnasium proper. The north end of the west elevation has two bays, both windows, and a metal vent grille. The windows are fixed, three-light, corresponding to the bathrooms, and it is unclear if any of the lights are operable.

Performing Arts Theater (former Library)

West of the gymnasium is the upper performing arts auditorium, formerly the Carver Decatur-DeKalb branch library, part of Trinity High School located in the north wing of the building. It is attached on the east to the Ebster Gymnasium and on the west to the offices of the Decatur Police Department and the Municipal Court, formerly Trinity High School, so the only exposed elevations are on the north and south. It is a single-story with a basement. The front façade facing W. Trinity Place is expressed as a single-story, but the south, or back, façade facing the courtyard is expressed as two stories because the basement is exposed due to the steep grade. The north elevation contains five bays: two doors and three windows. The main door is metal with a two-light transom above it and is approached from the city sidewalk by a series of shallow steps and landings. The door is flanked on either side by stepped rectangular pilasters of painted concrete or smooth stucco supporting metal light fixtures. The handicapped-accessible entrance into this building also accesses this main entrance with a ramp that hugs the west elevation of the gymnasium and the north elevation of the performing arts auditorium to reach the landing at the front door. The handicapped-accessible ramp has a simple tubular metal handrail on one side. Granite rubble retaining walls create the terraces for the ramp and landings and provide a small spot in front of this part of the building for grass, a tree, and the historical marker detailing the history of the Beacon Hill community. The main door is flanked on the east by one large window opening identical to the window openings in the two-story portion of the building to the west. On the west, the door is flanked by two such openings, but the openings have been mostly in-filled with stucco and painted. Inset into each window opening are two aluminum-sashes with one-over-one, double-hung windows with screens over the lower panes. A flat-roofed canopy with a metal fascia spans the window openings and entryway.

The upper performing arts auditorium is connected to the two-story Decatur Police Department building (formerly, Trinity High School) by an entry on the west end. The entry is approached by a concrete sidewalk with concrete curbs to a single-step concrete landing. The west curb of the walkway is also the concrete retaining wall between the single-story portion of the building and the two-story portion to the west. This curb has a simple tubular metal handrail. The doors in this entry are steel, with no lights or transoms. Above the door is a flat-roofed canopy with metal flashing and a single overhead dome light. The canopy is attached to the wall of the building on the east and supported on the west by a tubular steel column set on the concrete cap of a partial-height brick wing wall extending about two-thirds of the way up to the canopy. Above the canopy, a stairwell window opening has been closed with a framed piece of plywood painted white. Most of the original interior library fixtures were removed when the library was converted to a space for performing arts. The wood floor is intact and the concrete block walls remain.

Decatur Police Department (formerly Trinity High School)

The two-story portion of the Decatur Police Department in the north wing of the building appears very similar to the south wing, but there are some differences, most apparent in how the windows are expressed on the north elevation. This elevation of the building has eight bays on each level, with all bays on the second level being windows, and all but one of the bays on the first level being windows. The other bay on the first level is the main entrance door to this portion of the building. The window bays are arranged as ribbon windows across the two levels, with continuous precast concrete

sills and lintels. The fixed, fifteen-light windows are separated by painted concrete or stucco pilasters between the sills and lintels. The window openings on the first floor have been infilled with painted stucco except for the second window down from the top, which remains exposed or is a replacement window inserted into the later infill. Three lights remain in each of the four easternmost window openings on this level, and two lights remain in each of the three window openings to the west. It is not clear if any of these windows are operable. The four eastern windows on the second level are fixed, fifteen-light with the second and third lights from the top opening together canopy style to the exterior. The next two windows to the west are fixed, ten-light windows, and the westernmost window is a fixed, fifteen-light window. It is not clear if any of the lights in these last four windows are operable. The entry doors on the first level are wood with single lights. They are flanked on either side by wood panel doors that appear to be for exit only since there is no door hardware on the exterior. A "Police Department" sign above this door arrangement is located in the transom above the doors. This entry and the adjacent three window openings to the east are sheltered by a flat-roofed canopy with a metal fascia supported by four large-diameter tubular steel columns, painted white. The column farthest from the door rises out of a low planter set perpendicular to the building and constructed of brick with a concrete cap painted white. The area beneath the canopy is paved with concrete, and four square dome lights are attached to the underside of the canopy, three of which are missing their housings.

The single-story portion of the building on the west end that connects the north and south wings was originally the cafeteria, kitchen, and industrial and cultural arts area of the schools and now houses the Decatur Municipal Court and a lower performing arts auditorium. The entrance door on the north end of this portion of the building is wood, and the transoms and sidelights have been in-filled with stucco and painted. All window openings in the former cafeteria area have been completely closed with stucco. The two large window openings to the south of this door have been partly in-filled with stucco at the top of the window opening. The single-story west projection of this part of the building has suffered the most modification: it has been converted to a drive-through garage by removing the windows on the north and south elevations and replacing them with roll-up doors. Two single doors with single-light fixed transoms are located on the south end of this portion of the building, south of a fixed four-light window. The interior was renovated in the 1980's and much of the original classroom configurations were removed.

B. Describe the current use of the property and what the property will be used for once restoration is complete. The southern wing (Ebster Recreation Center) serves as space for artists and performance art theater groups. The Ebster Gymnasium still serves as a gymnasium and a community meeting space. The former Trinity High School now houses the Decatur Police department and also serves as the City's Municipal Court. The library is a performing arts auditorium.

The Decatur Police Department will remain in the building. The future changes in use will be determined once the community needs and facility conditions assessments are completed.

C. Identify any threats to the preservation of the property.

The complex was constructed on a parcel of property that has severe flooding issue. The neighborhood nickname was "The Bottom" because this area was at the bottom of several large hills where water naturally collects. Water has infiltrated the basement and foundation creating some structural issues and severe mold growth. Additionally, with the exception of the Trinity High School Building, buildings do not meet modern code requirements.

D. Have any planning or predevelopment documents (such as a master plan, feasibility study, preservation plan, historic structures report, archaeological survey report, or plans and specifications) already been prepared for this property?

☐ No ☒ Yes (please include 3 copies with application) Briefly describe the documents.

A National Register nomination was completed in 2009 by Georgia State University graduate students in the Heritage Preservation Program.

C. Is there *demonstrated* local support for this project from 1) the local preservation commission (required); 2) local citizens; 3) local historical/preservation organizations; 4) local government 5) others? Explain and attach evidence of support.

Attached are letters from the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission, a Resolution from Decatur City Commission, a letter of support from the DeKalb History Center, and a letter of support from Mayor Emeritus Elizabeth Wilson.

10. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

(If you have other information relevant to our review, and especially if the information will relate to the general selection criteria, please elaborate. Attach additional sheets as needed)

- 1) The National Register Nomination for the Beacon Hill Complex.
- 2) "A Vanished Community: Decatur's Beacon Hill 1900-1960".
- 3) A proposal from Lord Cultural Resources for the Pre-development Plan.
- 4) Proposal to conduct an oral history of the Beacon Hill Community and Elementary School.

11. ASSURANCES: The Applicant hereby assures and certifies by placing his/her initials beside each item below that the Applicant will comply with all applicable regulations, policies, guidelines and requirements including OMB Circular No's A-87, A-95, A-110 and A-102, as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Federal funds for this Federally-assisted project. Also the Applicant assures and certifies with respect to the grant that: (initial blank beside each number to signify willingness and ability to comply)

PLEASE INITIAL EACH.

1. **Legal Authority** - Applicant possesses legal authority to apply for the grant; that a resolution, motion or similar action has been or will be duly adopted as an official act of the applicant's governing body, authorizing the filing of the application, including all understandings and assurances contained therein, and directing and authorizing the person identified as the official representative of the applicant to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as may be required.
2. **Civil Rights** - Applicant will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352), as amended, and in accordance with Title VI of that Act, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the applicant receives Federal assistance and will immediately take any measures necessary to effectuate this agreement.
3. **Nondiscrimination** - Applicant will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000d) as amended, prohibiting employment discrimination where (a) the primary purpose of the grant is to provide employment or (b) discriminatory employment practices will result in unequal treatment of persons who are or should be benefiting from the grant-aided activity. It will comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972.
4. **Conflict of Interest** - Applicant will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for purposes that are or give the appearance of being motivated by a desire for private gain for themselves or others, particularly those with whom they have family, business or other ties.
5. **Access to Records** - Applicant will give the grantor agency or the Comptroller General (through any authorized representative) the access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the grant.
6. **Programmatic and Financial Compliance** - Applicant will comply with all requirements imposed by the Federal grantor agency concerning special requirements of law, program requirements and other administrative requirements approved in accordance with appropriate Office of Management and Budget Circular. (For units of governments): It will maintain adequate financial management systems which will be (a) in accordance with the standards specified in OMB Circular A-102, Attachment G, "Standards for Grantee Financial Management Systems", and (b) auditable in accordance with the General Accounting Office's Standards for Audit of Governmental Organizations, Programs, Activities, and Functions.
7. **Audit** - Applicant will have an organization-wide, independent audit performed for each year in which federal funds are received, if required. This audit will be performed by using the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with Single Audit Act of 1984 and will be submitted to HPD following the end of the contract period.
8. **Flood Insurance** - Applicant will comply with the flood insurance purchases requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.

7. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A. Describe the specific products that will result from the grant-funded project.

- 1) Selection of a design team to thoroughly evaluate the site and develop facility recommendation plans.
- 2) Conduct an in-depth community engagement process which will include city representatives, cultural resource consultants, the design team, and targeted community groups.
- 3) Final report which will include findings from the public engagement process, building assessments, and recommendations for future facility development.
- 4) Presentation to the City and community stakeholders group on the findings and recommendations for the Beacon Hill Complex.

B. Describe how the grant-funded project will relate to planned future development work.

The City of Decatur is looking to this pre-development report to make the best decisions regarding planned future development. The facility recommendations coupled with the community's feedback regarding future use of this complex will be the foundation of any decisions made regarding this site. The information from the plan/report will also be used to determine funding requirement for the re-development of the site.

8. PROJECT BUDGET:

(Provide specific costs for each item of project work and indicated how the costs were determined)

The City met with a cultural resource consulting firm to discuss the project and the firm provided a detailed cost estimate for each phase of work (attached).

Total Project Cost *(total project cost equals grant amount requested, plus matching share)* \$ 25,000

Grant Amount Requested *(not more than 60% of total project cost)* \$ 15,000

Matching share *(Must be partly cash):* \$ 10,000
(Local share equals total project cost minus 60% grant amount requested)

Source of matching share

Donor: City of Decatur _____

Source: Annual Budget _____

Kind: _____ Cash X _____

Amount: _____

Donor: _____

Source: _____

Kind: _____

Amount: _____

9. PROJECT NEED:

A. Why is this project needed at this time?

The Beacon Hill complex is currently underutilized due to the structural and flooding issues. Many areas of the buildings are unusable and hazardous to the public. Additionally, the members of the original Beacon Hill Community are aging and dying. The City of Decatur wants to ensure that these stakeholders are able to be part of this input process thus time is of the essence.

B. Would the project be completed if HPF grant funding is not provided? Explain.

Yes, the project could be funded but the monies saved from the receipt of the grant can then be used towards the actual re-development of the complex which currently is not funded. The City will be seeking federal/state grants and a demonstrated commitment from the Historic Preservation Division will increase the City's chances of obtaining funds for the re-development of the site.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE:

DATE: 2/2/10

TITLE: City Manager

DATE: _____

TITLE: _____

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