

KARL F. DEAN
MAYOR



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission
Sunnyside in Sevier Park
3000 Granny White Pike
Nashville, Tennessee 37204
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**417 Fourth Avenue North, Nashville Municipal Auditorium
June 17, 2015**

Application: Historic Landmark Overlay for Nashville Municipal Auditorium
Map and Parcel Numbers: 09302001300
Council Districts: 19
Applicant: Mayor Karl Dean
Project Lead: Robin Zeigler, robin.zeigler@nashville.gov, 615-862-7970

<p>Description of Project: Mayor Karl Dean is requesting that Nashville Municipal Auditorium be adopted as a Historic Landmark Overlay.</p> <p>Recommendation Summary: Staff suggests the Commission recommend to City Council that the Nashville Municipal Auditorium be adopted as Historic Landmark Overlay. The site meets the standards of the Ordinance for a Historic Preservation Landmark Overlay and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.</p>	<p>Attachments A: Photographs</p>
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Background:

The history of the Nashville Municipal Auditorium dates back far before the building's construction. Fourth Avenue has long been the home of entertainment, as two theaters have previously occupied the site where the auditorium now stands. The first was the Adelphi Theater/Grand Opera House, which was constructed in 1850. The Adelphi Theater burned to the ground in 1902 and was replaced by the Bijou Theater in 1904. The Bijou Theater was a segregated facility created to provide an entertainment venue for Nashville's African American community.

Talks of creating a convention center in Nashville began in the 1940s. In 1949, construction was authorized by the General Assembly and Nashville's citizens voted in approval of building a convention center. Construction wouldn't begin, however, until 1957 when the old Bijou Theater was torn down to make room for the auditorium. Construction took five years and the Nashville Municipal Auditorium officially opened on October 7, 1962 when it hosted a revival meeting for the Church of Christ.

Since its inception, the Municipal Auditorium has hosted a wide array of athletic and musical events. It has been home to several basketball and hockey teams throughout the years, as well as hosted rodeos and roller derbies. In 1994, the auditorium was the site of the National Gymnastics Championship. Nearly every big name band and musician from the past fifty years has graced its stage at some point. No matter the genre, everyone from Elvis, to the Rolling Stones, to Tim McGraw has been to the Municipal Auditorium. It's also the only place in Tennessee that Michael Jackson ever performed, which he did as a child in the Jackson 5. Concerts and sporting events have become less frequent at the Municipal Auditorium ever since the Bridgestone Arena was constructed in 1996, but still occur. In the summer of 2010, the Municipal Auditorium hosted the Grand Old Opry when the flood caused them to be temporarily relocated.

In 2013, the first floor of the Municipal Auditorium became the home of the Musician's Hall of Fame and Museum. The museum was first opened in 2006, but closed in 2010 when their building was torn down to make room for the Music City Convention Center. The museum boasts a large number of musical instruments, the most famous of which is Jimi Hendrix's guitar. Every year they induct a new class of honorees into the museum that include musicians, producers, and songwriters that have made invaluable contributions to the industry.

Applicable Ordinance:

Article III. Historic Overlay Districts

17.36.120 Historic Districts Defined. B. Historic Landmark. An historic landmark is defined as a building, structure, site or object, its appurtenances and the property it is located on, of high historical, cultural, architectural or archaeological importance; whose demolition or destruction would constitute an irreplaceable loss to the quality and character of Nashville and Davidson County; and that meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. The historic landmark is associated with an event that has made a significant contribution to local, state or national history;
2. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in local, state or national history;
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic value;
4. It has yielded or may be likely to yielded archaeological information important in history or prehistory; or
5. It is listed or is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Analysis and Findings:

The Municipal Auditorium meets criteria 5 in that eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Staff suggests the Commission recommend to City Council a Historic Landmark Overlay for the Municipal Auditorium.

PHOTOGRAPHS



