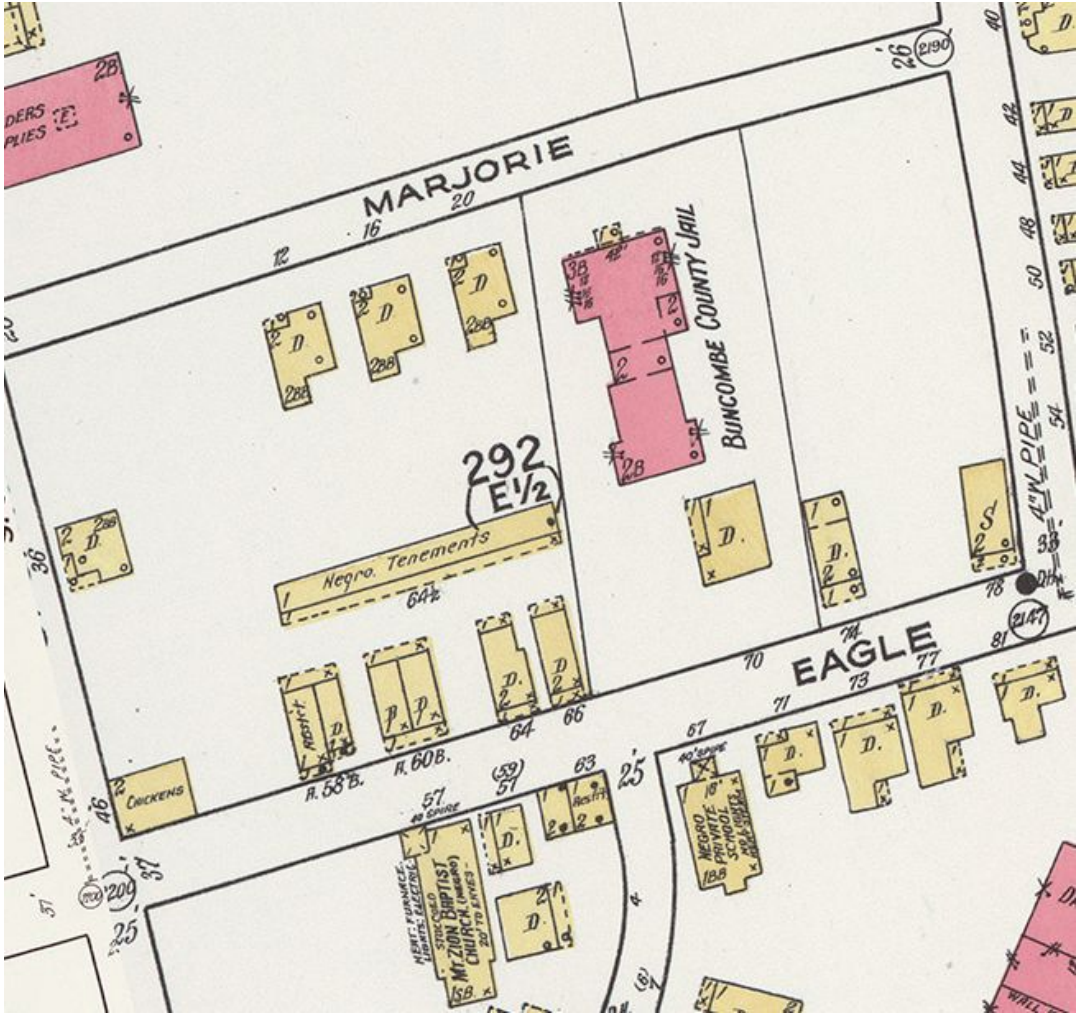
Before Parkside: An Active Eagle Street Community

The history of the site Asheville is considering for a performing arts center

GAP
AVL

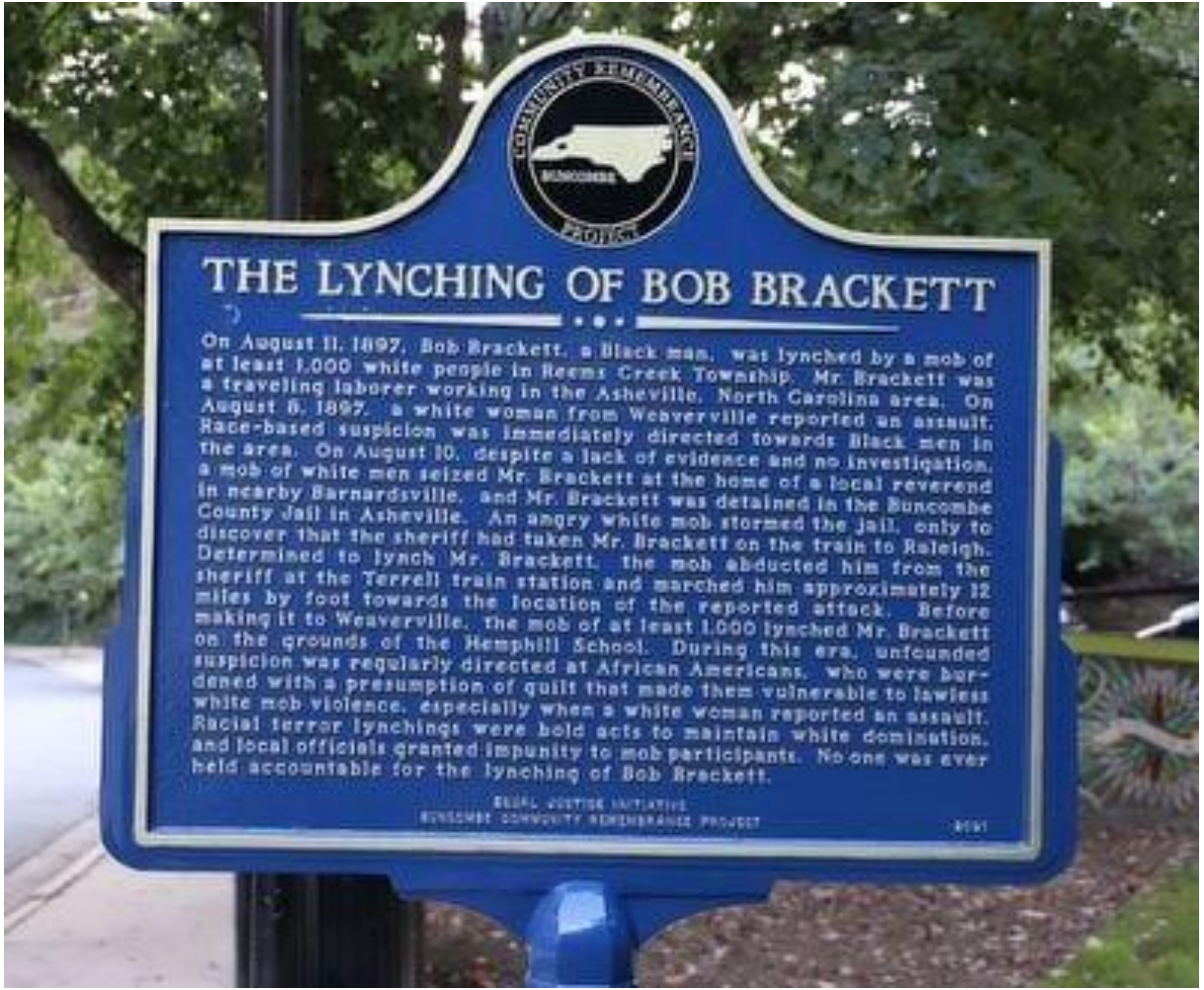

Marjorie Street
5 MARJORIE ST
17 MARJORIE ST
Acquired 1929
from private seller
Acquired 2003
from Buncombe
County
Acquired 1989
from private seller
1204
2284
3391
Both acquired in
1981 from
private sellers
Acquired 2003
from Buncombe
County
Acquired 1981
from private seller
99999 EAGLE ST
3199
40 EAGLE ST
54 EAGLE ST
60 EAGLE ST
Eagle Street



“Parkside” on Sanborn Map, 1917



"Stripes but no Stars," Fred Kahn Asheville Postcard Collection, D.H. Ramsey Library, Special Collections, UNC Asheville



Commemorative marker for Bracket that the Equal Justice Initiative put up at Triangle Park just a few blocks from the "Parkside" site.

Civil Rights Leader Floyd McKissick, who purchased 40 Eagle Street in 1946





Realtors To Renew Campaign For Slum Clearance

Asheville realtors are going to renew their attack on slum housing here.

The Board of Realtors, which two years ago spurred the City into an organized attack on substandard housing, acknowledged that members had lost interest in cleaning up slum properties and pledged a reemphasis of interest.

The board also commended the work of Harold L. Scruggs, assistant housing officer, who has directed the slum clearance work of the City.

Since the drive started, some 900 substandard dwelling units have been uncovered and 400 of them brought up to City Building Code standards.

The board's action was taken at its weekly session in the George Vanderbilt Hotel yesterday.

Beginning in the 1950s and 1960s, the City enacted a devastating practice:

- **These homes were labeled "substandard;"**
- **Investment for repairs and improvements was out of reach because Black homeowners largely could not obtain credit;**
- **Buildings were condemned and removed, clearing and devaluing the land.**

RESOLUTION NO. 81-75 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONDEMNATION OF PROPERTY IN THE CITY HALL PARKING EXPANSION PROJECT AREA

11. Consideration was given to a resolution authorizing condemnation of property in the City Hall Parking Expansion Project area.

The City Manager read the resolution explaining that the City of Asheville has executed a contract with the Housing Authority of the City of Asheville which requires the Housing Authority to provide acquisition and relocation services to the City. The Housing Authority has caused all properties in the City Hall parking expansion project to be appraised by a competent real estate appraiser and has established maximum acquisition values for these properties in accordance with the appraisals received. The Housing Authority has been unable to reach agreements to purchase parcels P-2 and P-3 on Eagle Street at the approved values of the parcels. This resolution will authorize the condemnation of Parcels P-2 and P-3 on Eagle Street in order that the City of Asheville can carry out its approved plan for development.

Upon motion of Councilman Cole, seconded by Vice-Mayor Morris, Resolution No. 81-75 was unanimously adopted.

Complete text of Resolution No. 81-75 will be found in Resolution Book No. 12 at page 357.

City Council Resolution, April 2, 1981 authorizing purchase of 74 and 76 Eagle Street or condemnation and acquisition through eminent domain

Property	Initial Purchase (1946)	Sale to City (1981)	Estimated Value Today
40 Eagle Street (McKissick family)	~$1,600 (~$27,000 today)	~$2,250 (~$8,100 today)	~$150,000–$300,000
74 Eagle Street (Abrams / Hentz family)	~$3,600–$3,700 (~$61,000 today)	~$3,000 (~$10,800 today)	~$180,000–$360,000

Purchase prices are estimated based on federal documentary tax stamps;
"today" value estimates are based on a calculator at in2013dollars.com;
current values are based on conservative estimates of downtown Asheville land values.

Proposals 2003–2014

Grove Park gets OK to continue studying downtown project

ASHEVILLE — The Grove Park Inn and the city of Asheville took a step forward Tuesday with plans for a mixed-use development downtown.

City Council unanimously adopted an agreement with The Grove Park Inn for a public-private development on about three acres southwest of City Hall adjoining Eagle and Marjorie streets. Preliminary plans include retail and office space, along with housing and parking, at a price tag of more than $40 million.

Asheville Citizen Times
June 28, 2004

City holds land for arts site

Council delays action on Parkside road request

By Joel Burgess
JBURGESS@CITIZEN-TIMES.COM

ASHEVILLE — Arts supporters and a condominum developer are angling for prime chunks of downtown near the city's planned centerpiece park, and the projects could permanently alter the center city landscape.

Promoters of a new city peforming arts center appeared to get their wish Tuesday when elected officials voted to hold 2.3 acres of city-owned property south of City Hall for a center site.

Developer Stewart Coleman, though, will have to wait. The City Council held off giving permission to build a road in front of his controversial Parkside Condominiums project.

The projects will shape the look of downtown for decades. Both are within 100 yards of the construction site for Pack Square Park, intended to be Asheville's main green space.

The nonprofit Asheville Area Center for the Performing Arts raised $5 million in private donations, but it needs to secure a site to bring in enough donations to build the center, said James Baudoin, nonprofit executive director.

"At the end of the day, the standout location was what we refer to as the Parkside site," Baudoin said.

"We believe now is the time to approve this site to keep the momentum going."

Organizers don't have a current cost estimate, but said in 2007 a center could cost $85 million.

Council members voted 5-1 to hold the city land for the center north of Eagle Street. Councilman Carl Mumpower voted no, saying city taxpayers could end up having to support the project. Councilwoman Robin Cape was absent.

Please see PARKSIDE on B2

Performing arts center land



City Council agreed to hold 2.3 acres of property south of City Hall for a performing arts center site. The council held off on a request by developer Stewart Coleman to build a road in front of City Hall for the Parkside Condominums project.

A- Property owned by Stewart Coleman.
B- Property set aside for performing arts center site.

R. Bradley/CITIZEN-TIMES

City's first land-hold for performing arts center on Eagle Street site, Asheville Citizen-Times, August 27, 2008

Plan calls for more parkland

Several obstacles ahead for park condo proposal

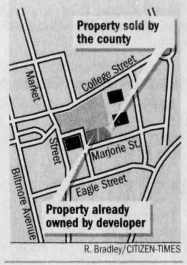
By Mark Barrett
MBARRETT@CITIZEN-TIMES.COM

ASHEVILLE — Developer Stewart Coleman owns some prime real estate just a few yards from City Hall, but he is still a long way from being in a position to build what he wants on it.

City officials raised a number of objections to plans for Coleman's 10-story Parkside Condominiums, which Charlotte architect Mark Fishero explained to them during an informal review last week.

The plan contemplates Coleman acquiring another small tract of what is now park space from Buncombe County. Commissioners and

Downtown property sold



R. Bradley/CITIZEN-TIMES

Asheville Citizen-Times
July 23, 2007

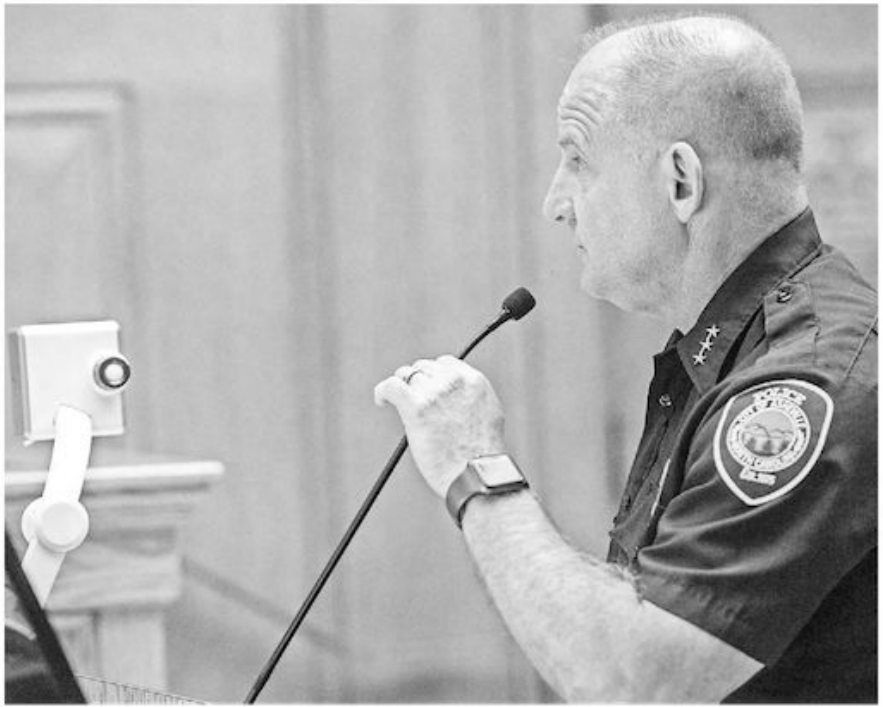
City considers future of police, fire headquarters

Sarah Honosky
Asheville Citizen Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

ASHEVILLE – As part of its findings from a $500,000 comprehensive facilities study, the city is evaluating the future of a key city building and the prime downtown real estate that sits adjacent to it.

Asheville City Council on Nov. 14 discussed the downtown Municipal Building, which houses the fire and police department headquarters. The study found both departments have outgrown the building and are facing an immediate space needs deficit.

A "conceptual" project introduced Nov. 14 would utilize the Parkside property, a 2.4-acre city owned assemblage of seven parcels. It sits adjacent to City Hall and the Municipal Building, boxed by Eagle, Marjorie and South Spruce streets and Davidson Drive. Parkside is used currently as city employee and motor pool parking.



academy, renovated by 2033 and the future civic complex and parking deck by 2034.

More about the Municipal Building

Built in 1925, the downtown Municipal Building, at 100 Court Plaza, was the work of Black builder James Vester Miller. It housed a fire department and station, the police department and the city market, the latter only until the 1930s. Its last significant renovations were in 2001.

Currently, there is a space deficit of about 13,000 square feet, Ear said. That deficit will grow to 17,000 square feet in 20 years.

The facility's condition was given a 'C' grade in the study. The cost to renovate and relocate to Parkside is estimated at about $145 million.

Ear said either the fire or police department must acquire space to "effectively serve the city for the next 20 years." Complicating the project is the

City considers new municipal building on "Parkside" site, Asheville Citizen-Times, November 21, 2023

Reparations: Asheville votes to stop urban renewal land sales; activists question exception for company



Joel Burgess
Asheville Citizen Times

Updated Oct. 27, 2020, 9:28 p.m. ET



Aerial photo with “Parkside” site in foreground, Anthony Lord, Buncombe County Special Collections

(Report)

Community Engagement Session

RE: Proposed Downtown Performing Arts Center

Hosted at the YMI Cultural Center
by The People's Place and JD Ellison

March 2026

Recommendation

Before this project can move forward, the city must do the hard work of rebuilding community trust through visible and structural changes to how development decisions are made and who gets to shape them. That starts with treating The Block and East End / Valley Street as living cultural districts deserving protection and expansion, not as development opportunities to be activated. The City must ensure that any project claiming to celebrate this community leaves that community present, visible, and economically viable when it's done. Most urgently, **we recommend that the land hold vote not move forward unless it is accompanied by a formal, binding commitment to bringing The Block and East End community to the table.**

This report was prepared by JD Ellison & Company.

East Riverside Needs Assurance

It is understandable that the prospect of cleaning up the East Riverside slums has aroused fears on the part of some residents that they will be forced to move from their homes and left without a place to live.

Many, apparently, have not yet been assured that they will be given assistance, under the Urban Renewal program, in finding better quarters in a suitable location—that is one of the basic requirements in such a project.

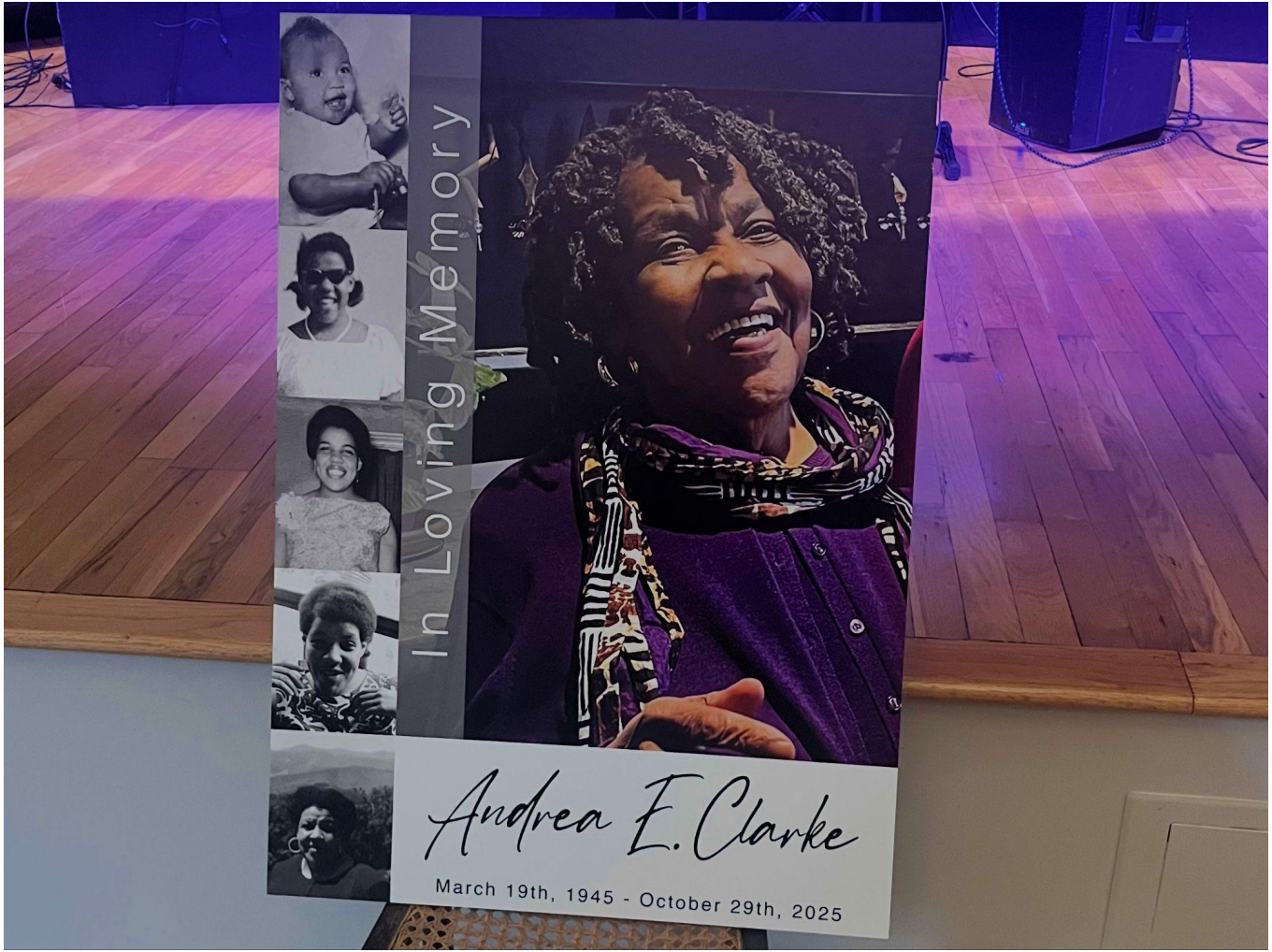
But the point ought to be clarified and explained to all East Riverside residents who will be displaced —and it ought to be explained as soon as possible.

The program is designed for their benefit, not for their discomfiture. And every precaution should be taken to assure that the aim is achieved.

Editorial reflecting "fears" raised at City community engagement events around an Asheville urban renewal program, Asheville CItizen-Times, February 15, 1968

- **The Block and East End/Valley Street** must be present **at every table** where plans are being made and decisions formed — with meaningful participation in **shaping** the project's scope, design, and benefits.
- For decades, decisions about this land have been made without the voices of those most connected to it.

- How will decisions be made and **who will be empowered to shape them** rather than merely react to them.
- The history of this site is **a story about power**: **who had it, who exercised it, and who did not**.
- Tonight, you have the opportunity to begin to **write a different ending — one in which the people whose history is rooted here are central in shaping its future.**


In Loving Memory
Andrea E. Clarke
March 19th, 1945 - October 29th, 2025