

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER/GEORGIA REGISTER NOMINATION

Name: Atlanta Constitution Building

Location: 143 Alabama Street; Atlanta, Fulton County

Description: The Atlanta Constitution Building, located at 143 Alabama Street SW in Atlanta, Georgia, is a five-story brick and concrete newspaper publishing building with a three-story rear production section. The building was constructed in the Streamline Moderne style and completed in 1947 by the notable Atlanta architecture firm Robert & Company. The 95,000 square foot building was constructed with a reinforced concrete frame. The focal point of the building, located at the northwest corner of Alabama and Forsyth streets, is a rounded corner façade with horizontal bands of brick in a Flemish bond and ribbon window openings that wrap around the corner of the building and the length of the building on all elevations. Polished marble cladding is present at the base of the building and limestone bands frame the ribbon window openings. Despite the later occupation and renovation undertaken by Georgia Power Co. and then years of neglect, the building still retains a significant degree of integrity associated with its Streamline Moderne aesthetic. 163 words

Acreeage & Boundary Explanation: current legal boundary

Period of Significance: 1949 (Building is completed and Ralph McGill establishes his office here.) - 1952 (McGill moves into the non-extant Atlanta Journal Building at 10 Forsyth Street following the merger of the *Journal* and *Constitution* newspapers.)

NR Criterion & Areas of Significance: Criterion C: Architecture as a significant example of Streamline Moderne style in Atlanta, and Criterion B: Social History for its association to *Atlanta Constitution* editor-in-chief Ralph E. McGill

Statement of Significance: In 1929, the *Constitution* hired Ralph McGill who ultimately became one of the most notable journalists in the history of the newspaper. Though his writings on racial justice and equality he became known as “the conscious of the South.” By 1938, he was named executive editor of general news reporting. On the first day in this new position, he mandated that the word “Negro” would always be capitalized when printed in the *Constitution*, facilitating a growing mutual respect between the paper and the African American population of Georgia. Named editor-in-chief in 1942, his editorial writings soon became syndicated and reached a national audience. McGill received the 1959 Pulitzer Prize in Editorial Writing for his long, courageous, and effective editorial leadership and for his distinguished editorial writing. In 1964, McGill received the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his “long-time counsel of racial moderation.” The building remains the only extant building associated with the productive life of Ralph McGill. The building’s significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture recognizes the Streamline Moderne style rarely found in Atlanta. Only a very few, though smaller, examples of this style exist in Atlanta.

Suggested Level of Significance: Criterion B: National; Criterion A: Local

Sponsor: The nomination is sponsored by City of Atlanta, Office of the Mayor. Nomination materials were prepared by Spencer Rubino and Scott Doyle, Heritage Consulting Group.

