

On May 21, the [Historic Preservation Commission](#) announced its list of the [most endangered buildings](#) located in Cape Girardeau.

The Commission has compiled an Endangered Buildings List that identifies buildings and structures that are potentially “at risk” of being lost due to substantial physical deterioration or other conditions that prevent them from being used in a sustainable manner.

The Historic Preservation Commission was established in 1990 and was granted a number of powers and duties, including the responsibility “to increase public awareness of the value of historic, architectural and cultural preservation by developing and participating in public information programs and by recommending the update of the preservation program.”

For more information about the Historic Preservation Commission and the Endangered Buildings List, visit [cityofcape.org/hpc](http://cityofcape.org/hpc) or call the City of Cape Girardeau Development Services Division at 573-339-6327.

The following buildings are on the [2013 Endangered Buildings List](#).

### ***Broadway Theater – 805 Broadway***

In its heyday, the Broadway Theater was associated with both Twentieth-Century Fox and Paramount Pictures. It originally opened with a showing of the motion picture *The Sheik*, starring Rudolph Valentino. It was first-rate, with state-of-the-art equipment, an orchestra pit, stage facilities, and a grand marquee. The main floor and the balcony had a total seating capacity for 1,200 persons. Today, the 1921 theatre stands vacant, and the marquee is long gone. The building has not had a viable use for several years, and is showing signs of deterioration.



### ***Esquire Theater – 824 Broadway***

On its opening night of January 21, 1947, over 1,300 movie goers flocked to this modernistic movie theater to watch Bing Crosby in *Blue Skies*. Featuring an Art Deco design (with over one mile of neon lights), the theater quickly became a landmark to many locals. The Esquire Theater's doors closed in October 1984, as the last of the grand neighborhood movie houses in Cape Girardeau. The theater was re-opened briefly for second-run movies, but by the end of 1985 it was again vacant. The building, including the marquee, has been damaged over the years. The theater was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.



### ***Fort D Blockhouse – 920 Fort Street***

The block building located on the Fort D Historic Site was built by the Works Progress Administration around 1936. It was used as a meeting house for various groups and also as a private residence, but by the mid-1980s the building stood vacant. In 2005, the deteriorated roof was removed and major stabilization improvements were made. Today, the building is used annually as part of Civil War living history demonstrations by the Friends of Fort D. Aside from such events the building is rarely used and shows signs of disrepair. The Cape Girardeau City Council recently approved funding to repair the blockhouse, including construction of a new roof. At the time of release of this list, work had not yet commenced.

### ***Kage School – 3110 Kage Road***

Opened in 1880, this one-room brick schoolhouse once housed classes for as many as 110 students. It was used as a school until 1966. The building exhibits characteristics typical of Missouri-based German architecture. Over the years, the vacant building has suffered significant damage to the walls, chimney, and windows. The school was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.



***Lorimier Apartments – 150 South Lorimier Street***

This two-story brick apartment building was built in 1925 and features a U-shaped floor plan with a courtyard. The building features wood doors and eight-over-one wood windows in each bay. The building is no longer occupied, and many of the doors and windows have been boarded over. The apartment building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2010.



***P. H. Dempsey Buildings – 127 North Water Street***

The buildings at 127 North Water Street consist of three attached, one-part and two-part brick commercial block buildings that once housed P.H. Dempsey's wholesale and retail



grocery business. Built ca. 1870 and ca. 1896, these buildings were used as a grocery, commissary, and forwarding business by Mr. Dempsey. The store occupied the central building, with warehouses in the other two buildings. Their intact architectural elements represent a type of construction from the steamboat era. They are among the last standing 19th century one-part and two-part brick commercial block buildings in Cape Girardeau. "Dempsey Grocery Co." can still be seen painted in white on the side of the central building. A restaurant and bar occupied the buildings in recent years. Today, they are vacant and lacking a viable use.

