

The [City of Cape Girardeau Historic Preservation Commission](#) recently approved its Endangered Buildings list below. The following list was adopted by the Commission for the sole purpose of promoting awareness of buildings and structures that the Commission believes have historic value and are at risk of being lost due to deterioration and/or imminent demolition. The listing of a building or structure does not constitute an act of enforcement of any law or regulation, nor does it constitute a legal action against any person or entity. The information below is compiled from various sources, including public nominations.

[View the 2014 Endangered Properties List](#)

[View the 2013 Endangered Properties List](#)

2015 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. Its doors

closed in October of 1984, 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 had again become 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 1980's 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 utilized and is showing signs of disrepair. The Cape Girardeau City Council 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.

LORIMIER APARTMENTS – 142-148 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.



WOOLWORTH'S STORE – 1 NORTH MAIN STREET

The building at 1 North Main Street is the end cap of a block of storefront buildings in the downtown district. The building has changed looks and owners many times over the years. The building gained historic significance in 1914, when F.W. Woolworth's original store was opened. In 1950, the store expanded and when it was completed, the building extended the width of the entire block and had openings on Main, Spanish, and Independence Streets. This expansion reflected a surge in commercial shopping activity in the downtown district. The building is now vacant and deteriorating, with no apparent plans for its future.

635 GOOD HOPE STREET

Located at the southeast corner of Good Hope and South Sprigg Streets, this ca. 1884 building served as a German saloon from the 1880's through the 1910's and was one of the first saloons in Cape Girardeau to cease liquor sales during the Prohibition era. Throughout the 1920's and 30's, it functioned as a gathering place for community discussion, much as it had when it was a saloon. It eventually became the official meeting site of the local German American Alliance as well as several local unions related to the construction industry in Cape Girardeau. The saloon itself was owned by Anton and Joe Haas, two important figures in the development of Cape Girardeau. The brothers were involved in the construction of the old Saint Francis Hospital and Saint Mary's School, among others. In addition, Anton's concrete company was responsible for the pouring of the courthouse steps – one of the earliest uses of concrete in Cape Girardeau. The building, along with others on the same block, shows signs of structural degradation, among other issues. It is partially occupied at the moment, but if major stabilization work is not made soon, the building may become uninhabitable.

127 SOUTH LORIMIER STREET

The brick house at 127 South Lorimier Street reflects the Missouri German Vernacular style, which was once prevalent in Cape Girardeau. Unlike most houses of this style, it features two stories. The house, now vacant, shows significant deterioration.

412 ASHER STREET

This small brick house was built in the Missouri German Vernacular style. It features a side gable and a centered door with a transom, flanked by pairs of two-over-two vertical light double hung window. The house, which is currently vacant, shows signs of early deterioration in the walls, foundation, windows, and roof. Given its proximity to the expanding River Campus, the future of the house is uncertain.

OCHS-SHIVELBINE HOUSE – 1409 NORTH SPRIGG STREET

Built in the early 1920s by Henry Ochs, this expansive house was purchased by L.J. Shivelbine in 1962 and remains an iconic historic home that once existed beyond the northern city limits of Cape Girardeau. The property once contained a plant nursery. The house features oak floors, deep eaves, Palladian windows, and stained glass windows. Most recently used as a fraternity house, it stands in the way of Southeast Missouri State University's plans for a new Greek housing development, and its demolition is pending.

MARQUETTE SCHOOL -2815 SOUTH SPRIGG STREET

This former two-room schoolhouse was in service for over forty years before its doors were closed. In the 1970s, it served as a lodge for Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity. The brick building features a hipped roof and a projecting pavilion. It represents a typology of small rural schoolhouses that once served as the primary source of education for most Americans.

Such buildings are becoming rare as rural land is cleared for development. Such is the case for this schoolhouse.

JUDEN SCHOOL – 900 WEST CAPE ROCK DRIVE

This former schoolhouse was built in 1854 and was in service until 1960. It features original wood floors and windows, as well as a blackboard. The building is vulnerable to flooding, particularly the basement, and the roof needs to be replaced. It is endangered in the sense that historic schoolhouses are disappearing from the landscape across the nation. If not properly preserved, it could be among those that once were.

444 WASHINGTON AVENUE

Rev. Adriel Sherwood hired E.B. Dean to build this house, which was completed in 1846. Rev. Sherwood used this residence to teach classes on classical languages and literature, and later it was used for the Washington Female Academy, which was chartered by the Missouri General Assembly in 1849. During the Civil War, it was used for officers' quarters and later as a U.S. smallpox hospital. Though occupied, this home is showing signs of deterioration and needs repair and maintenance. Stucco is missing from several areas of the home and stains and cracks are also visible. Damaged stucco is susceptible to water infiltration and can lead to more significant problems over time.

14 SOUTH LORIMIER STREET

What was once a great example of Gothic Revival architecture has become a worsening eyesore. The house, which features a high pitched gable roof and ornamental brackets, is slowly succumbing to structural failures in the roof, walls, porch, and rear addition. Its condition is severe enough that it could be considered a "demolition by neglect."

524 WILLIAM STREET

This traditional brick house features a front porch on each of its two stories and has a concrete foundation and window sills. The owner has given permission to the Cape Girardeau Fire Department to conduct simulated events for training purposes. Given the nature of the training exercises, the building will continue to be damaged and vacant.

1118 BLOOMFIELD ROAD

Built in 1950 with a Dutch Colonial Revival influence, this home features a gambrel roof with curved eaves and dormers with overhanging eaves. There is evidence of the roof beginning to separate from the eaves and the rest of the house, and cracks in the foundation. Both are cause for concern about the building's structural integrity.

328 SPANISH STREET

Surrounded by the Glenn House, the River Campus, and the Old Mississippi River Bridge, this prominent historic home is an example of American Foursquare architecture. The house is in need of maintenance. An immense amount of ivy is growing over the building,

there are broken windows, and the porch and balcony are deteriorating. Maintenance issues like this can easily become safety issues if not addressed in time.

213 SOUTH MIDDLE STREET

This Victorian-era house has retained many of its ornamental features, including fishscale siding, brackets, panels, cornices, porch trim, and bay windows. It is in poor condition, with several broken windows and rotting wood structural members. The house was recently condemned by the City and may be lost soon.

261 GOOD HOPE STREET

This two-story brick house was built in the Missouri German Vernacular style and features character defining elements such as a brick facade, stone foundation, and arched windows. The windows and doors are boarded up, and the gable areas are damaged. Although some attempt has been made to “mothball” the building, it is still vulnerable to the weather due to the upper damage. By the time the boards are removed, the building’s structural integrity may be undermined.

UPDATES – PREVIOUS ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE LIST

BUCKNER – RAGSDALE BUILDING – 132 NORTH MAIN STREET

This two-story brick building at the southeast corner of Broadway and Main Street originally served as the home of the Buckner-Ragsdale Company, starting in 1916. The clothing company played a major role in Cape Girardeau’s economic growth period from 1910 to 1940. During the Great Depression, the company extended credit to customers who were experiencing financial hardship. The building was constructed using steel-reinforced concrete, which has helped it survive two major fires. The building was last occupied by Buckner Brewing Company. After being vacant for several months, the building was recently purchased and is in the process of being remodeled for a new microbrewery and restaurant. The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2000.

513 WILLIAM STREET

This Queen Anne style house dates to 1914 and represents an architectural style that was popular during Cape Girardeau’s boom period from 1880-1950. The vacant house has been neglected over the years, leading to structural failures and other damage. It has been condemned by the City and recently demolished.

818 NORTH FOUNTAIN STREET

The original portion of this house was built ca. 1860 as a log cabin. It is believed the cabin’s builder was Franz Schmidt, who served as a blacksmith during the Civil War. The cabin, made from mud-and-straw daub covered logs with notched joints, had a full stucco exterior – a

German Vernacular technique – which was rare among log structures of the period. Less than a decade later, a German Vernacular addition was constructed, which wrapped two sides of the cabin, and the entire structure sided with clapboard. The house became vacant and deteriorated rapidly. It was condemned by the City in 2011. A group of volunteers was organized with the hopes of saving the cabin, but little progress was made except for removing a portion of the exterior to expose the log construction. After several extensions were granted to allow time for the cabin to be preserved or disassembled by the group, during which sufficient progress was not made, the City recently proceeded with having the structure demolished.

P.H. DEMPSEY BUILDINGS – 127 NORTH WATER STREET

127 North Water Street consists 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. The buildings were vacant and lacking a viable use until August 2014, when renovations were made for a new restaurant and bar.

261 GOOD HOPE STREET

This two-story brick house was built in the Missouri German Vernacular style and features character defining elements such as a brick façade, a stone foundation, and arched windows. Until recently, the windows and doors had been boarded up and the gables were showing signs of damage. The boards are now removed and the house is in the process of being rehabilitated.

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. Since that time, the vacant building has suffered significant damage to the walls, chimney, and windows. The property was sold last year, and the schoolhouse was rehabilitated and converted into a two-bedroom guest house. The building exhibits characteristics of the Missouri German Vernacular style. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.