

LANDMARK



SURVEY

IDENTIFICATION

Street Address: 215 East Main Street
 Map and Parcel: 33-237
 Census Tract & Block: 1-120
 Present Owner: Hollis Rinehart, et al.
 Address: c/o National Bank and Trust Company
 P.O. Box 711
 Present Use: Unoccupied
 Original Owner: Hollis Rinehart & P.H. Faulconer
 Original Use: Motion Picture Theatre

BASE DATA

Historic Name: Paramount Theatre
 Date/Period: 1931
 Style: Colonial Revival
 Height to Cornice:
 Height in Stories: 1, 2, 3
 Present Zoning: B-3
 Land Area (sq.ft.): 102' x 120.7', plus 20.4' x 120.4'
 Assessed Value (land + imp.): (14,767.56 sq. ft.)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Paramount Theatre consists of a building a half-block square and of three-storey height at the corner of Market and Third Streets with a half-block-long entry arcade to Main Street. Construction is of reinforced concrete faced with brick laid in common bond with every fifth or sixth course alternating one stretcher and two headers. The first storey of the Main Street facade is faced with polished granite and follows simple lines. Originally the ticket booth stood in the center of a recessed entrance loggia, but after the theatre closed, the ticket booth was removed and the first set of three pairs of single-paned doors was moved forward to accommodate a gift shop in the loggia and the front section of the arcade. The typical projecting marquee remains, but the 33 ft. vertical "PARAMOUNT" sign above it has been removed. A pedimented brick false front rises two stories above the marquee. Stone Corinthianesque pilasters frame a round stone arch with cartouche. Two stone medallions decorate the frieze, and the cornice and pediment have dentil moulding. The pediment has moulded decoration. The long arcade and the lobby have fluted Doric pilasters carrying an entablature with decorated frieze. This is repeated in the theatre, which is in the shape of an elongated octagon with an elaborately ornamented 36-ft. ceiling. On each side, a round arch with cartouche frames a large tapestry. False boxes with curtains and wrought iron railing flank the stage. The theatre originally seated 1000 on the main level and another 300 in the balcony. Built in the days of segregation, the balcony has a separate entrance and ticket booth on Third Street. The building extends six window-

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

less bays on Third Street and five on Market Street. Brick pilasters with stone capitals separate the bays. The water table above the concrete foundation is a flush band of vertical bricks, and there is a corbelled stringcourse of vertical bricks between the 1st and 2nd-storey levels. Above this there is a two-storey flush round arch in each bay with a stone diamond above it on the parapet. There is a stone cornice at the top of the parapet above two more flush bands of vertical bricks. The first bay on Third Street, with the balcony entrance at the first level, projects slightly and is not set off by a pilaster. There are three functionally arranged emergency exits on Third Street and a small room with display windows in the NE corner.

Hollis Rinehart and P.H. Faulconer purchased most of a city block between Main and Market Streets in 1930 (City DB 71-337, 338, 339). A 1/3 interest was sold to E.J. Perkins in 1931 and re-purchased from his estate in 1946 (DB 71-440, 128-418). The property was leased to the Charlottesville Theatre Corporation (DB 72-463) which erected the theatre building in 1931. It was designed by the Washington architectural firm of C.W. Rapp and George L. Rapp in

GRAPHICS

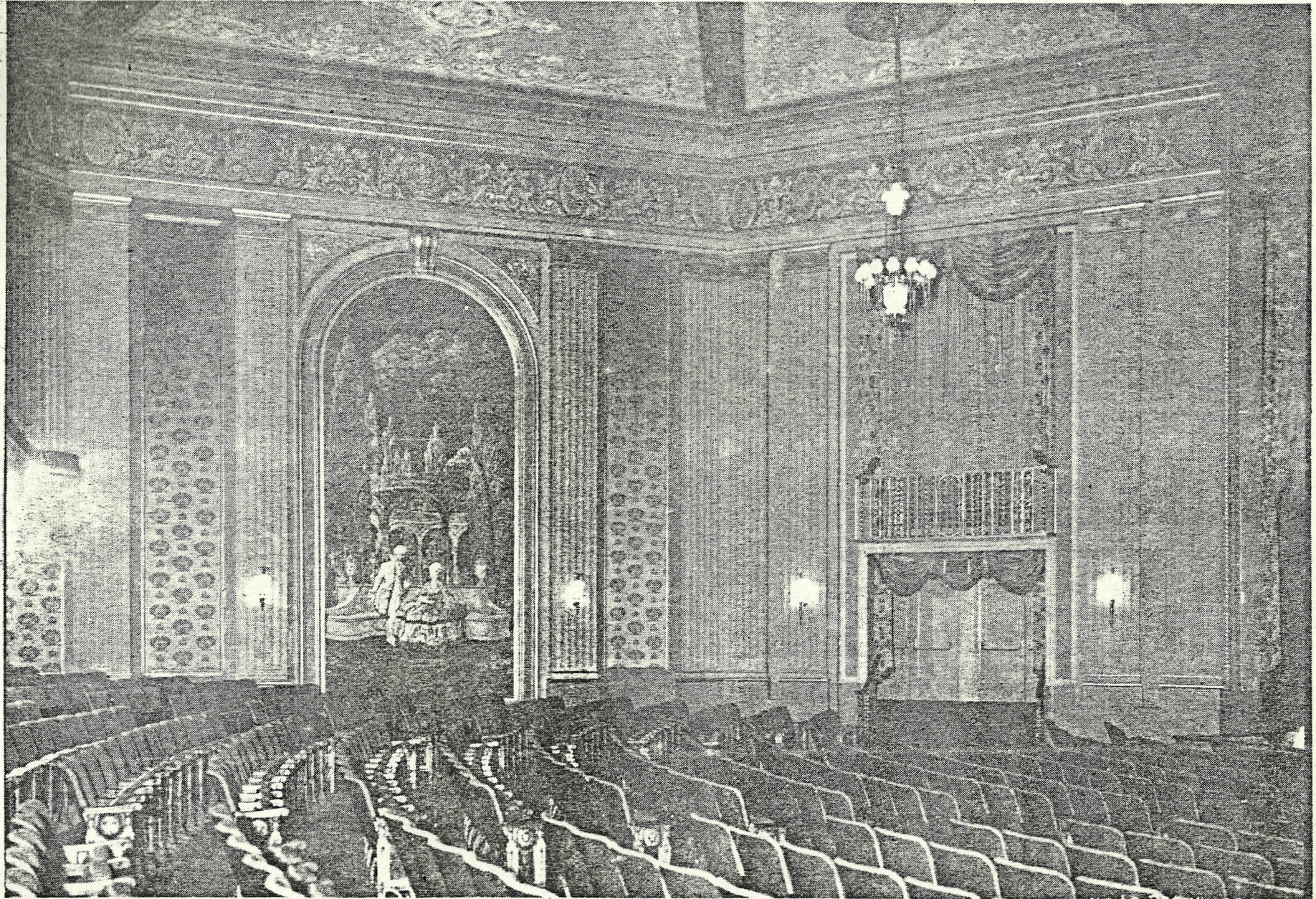
the style of the ornate motion picture theatres of the period, built by O.J. Phipps, Contractor, and decorated by the Haven Studios. The theatre building was leased to Publix Enterprises, Inc., of Paramount Publix Corporation (DB 72-472). The grand opening was held on November 25, 1931. The theatre was operated by ABC Southeastern Theatres, Inc., from 1949 until it closed in June 1974 after over four decades as a first-run motion picture theatre. Still owned by the Rinehart and Faulconer families, it has been vacant since that time and is for sale. Additional Deed References: DB 193-289, 361-1.

CONDITIONS

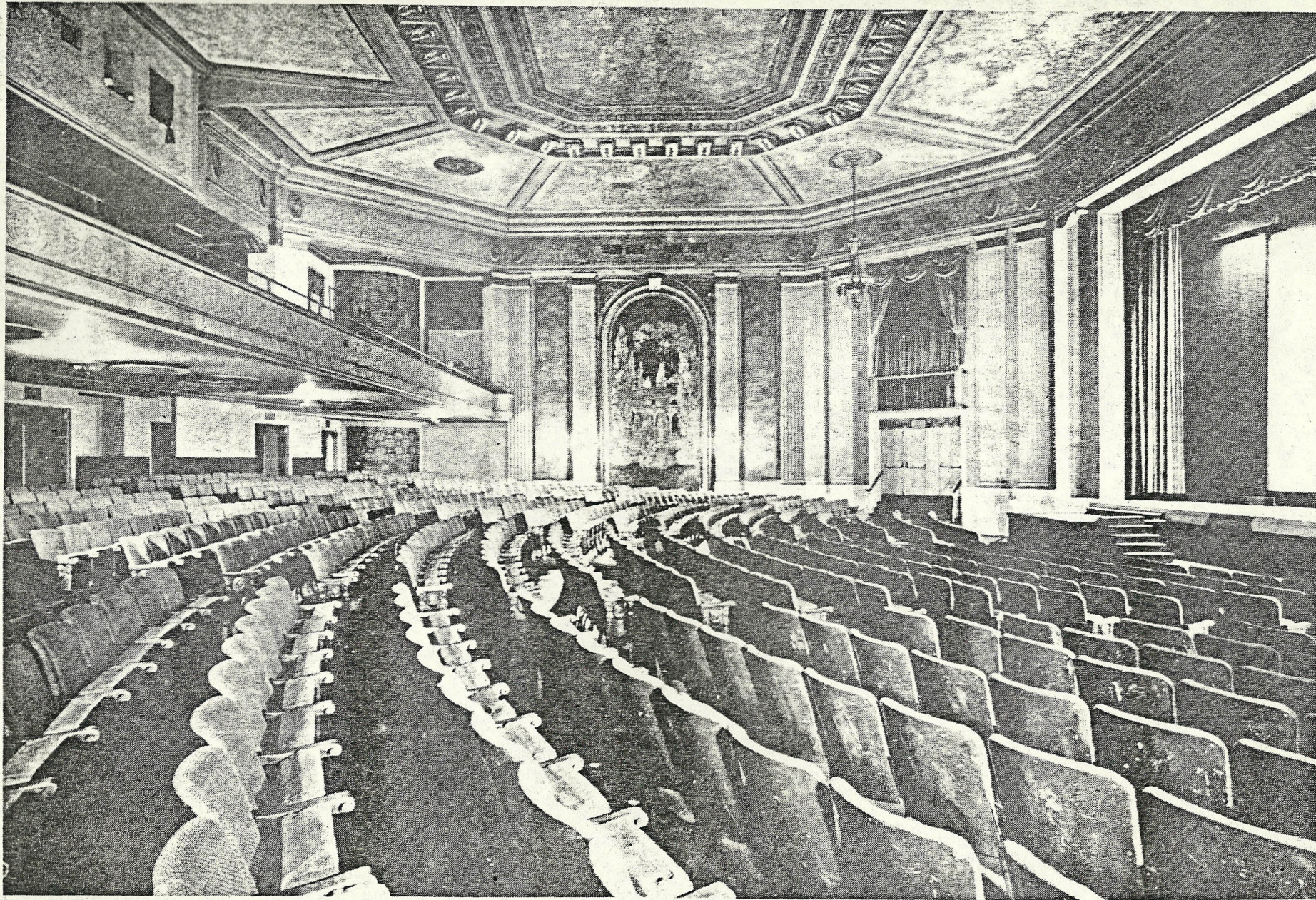
Good

SOURCES

City Records
 M. Jack Rinehart, Jr.
 The Daily Progress, November 19, 25, 27, 1931; Feb. 18, 1975.



The Paramount in Its Heyday in 1931



The Theater As It Looks Today



Paramount Theater Historical
Vertical Marquee
(Photo taken 1940s)

Marquee was 33' high and
contained 1,870 light bulbs