

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Belhaven City Hall

and/or common Belhaven City Hall

2. Location

street & number Main Street

not for publication

city, town Belhaven

vicinity of

congressional district

1

state North Carolina

code 37

county Beaufort

code 013

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Belhaven

street & number Belhaven City Hall, Main Street

city, town Belhaven

vicinity of

state North Carolina 27809

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Beaufort County Courthouse

street & number Second Street

city, town Washington

state North Carolina 27889

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Belhaven City Hall stands on the north side of Main Street near the intersection with Pamlico Street in the heart of Belhaven's business district. The City Hall, which sits flush with the sidewalk, is separated by a narrow alley on the east from a frame commercial structure; a public parking lot adjoins the building on the west and north sides.

The design of the two-and-a-half story structure was furnished by local carpenter W. T. Kirk. Constructed in 1910-1911, the building is of brick laid in seven-to-one common bond, with a wood-shingled pediment and belfry. All windows feature large two-over-two sash and segmental arches. The present wooden shutters are recent additions. The arrangement of the fenestration is quite varied on the facade. The entrance to the City Hall is through a centrally placed arched opening which leads to a wide hall running the depth of the building; originally, market stalls lined this hallway. To the right of the central entrance is an identical opening which was the entrance to the fire department; this has now been bricked up with a contemporary door and window unit. To the left of the main entrance is a short flight of brick steps to the doorway leading to the second floor of the City Hall. A corbeled, two-bay projection at the second floor is above the main entrance; the projection is flanked on either side by two windows. The projection continues up the facade, breaking the pediment and supporting the belfry. A window in the pediment is flanked by small fan-shaped vents. The belfry has a slightly curved pyramidal roof, and the four faces of the belfry are identical with two pointed-arch vents with a circular vent above. A wide cornice with large scrollwork brackets appears on the belfry, around the building, and in the pediment. The side elevations of the City Hall are six bays long; some of the first floor fenestration has been bricked in. A fire escape runs up the east side of the building to a door on the second floor. The rear elevation is similar to that of the front, but lacks the pediment and projecting bay and has only the central arched opening on the first floor. Each side of the hip roof, which is covered with asphalt shingles, is broken by large hip dormers with diamond-paned windows.

The interior of the first floor has been much altered. The former market stalls flanking the wide center hall have been finished with plywood paneling and linoleum flooring to serve as town offices. The hallway retains plaster walls above a wainscot of narrow beaded sheathing. The large arched openings at each end of the hall have been filled with double glass doors with glass surrounds. The second floor of the City Hall originally housed a large auditorium; today, the Belhaven Memorial Museum occupies the space. The plaster walls, simple trim, hardwood floors, and tin ceiling with a diamond-shaped design survive. At the north end of the room is a high proscenium arch over a wide stage; the rear section of the stage has been partitioned off into storage space. At the south end of the room is a balcony with stairs leading to the unfinished attic and to the belfry, which now houses the fire department siren.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1911 **Builder/Architect** W. T. Kirk; C. F. Doughty

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Belhaven City Hall has been the town's major landmark since its construction in 1911. Settled in the 1880s and incorporated in 1899, Belhaven developed as a lumber town with the arrival of the Norfolk and Southern Railway in 1891. The City Hall is the most conspicuous reminder of Belhaven's turn-of-the-century prosperity as a lumbering center. A pretentious two-and-a-half story brick structure with a belfry, the City Hall was built by C. F. Doughty, a mason, and W. T. Kirk, a local carpenter-cabinetmaker. The building's first floor housed meat and market stalls, the fire department, and the town clerk's office; the second floor contained a large auditorium. Since 1954 town offices have occupied the entire first floor. In 1967 the Belhaven Memorial Museum opened in the auditorium. The museum's eclectic collection contains antique furniture and clothing, 30,000 buttons, a preserved eight-legged pig, dressed fleas, and thousands of other such items of interest. The City Hall-Museum is one of the nine sites featured on the Historic Albemarle Tour.

### Criteria Assessment:

- A. Associated with the turn-of-the-century prosperity experienced in many parts of eastern North Carolina with the arrival of the railroad and the development of the lumber industry.
- B. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a civic structure housing a public market, fire department, city offices, and public auditorium. The civic and architectural landmark of the town, the City Hall is an unusually large and pretentious structure for a community as small as Belhaven.
- D. Is likely to yield information important in the history of late nineteenth-century urban settlement.

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Belhaven was first settled in the 1880s as Jack's Neck. In 1891 the name was changed to Belle Port and again in 1893 to Belhaven; the town was incorporated in 1899.<sup>1</sup> During the 1890s and the first two decades of the twentieth century, Belhaven developed into a thriving town with its economy based on the lumber industry. In 1886 the John L. Roper Lumber Company of Norfolk, Virginia, chartered the Albemarle and Pantego Railroad; in 1891 the Norfolk and Southern Railway took over the Albemarle and Pantego and brought rail service to Belhaven.<sup>2</sup> With its railroad and port facilities, Belhaven became the center of a large-scale lumbering industry based on thousands of acres of woodland in Beaufort and Hyde counties. By 1910, six lumber companies, each employing several hundred workers in logging operations and saw and planing mills, were located in Belhaven. The largest was the Interstate Cooperage Company, a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company, which produced barrels and boxes for the shipment of oil and oil products.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of the town's rapid development, the Board of Aldermen issued a \$10,000 "Public Improvement Bond for building a Town Hall, Public Dock, and Fire equipment" in 1909; the bond was purchased by the Chase National Bank of New York.<sup>4</sup> In March 1910 a committee of three was appointed by the aldermen to secure a site for the town hall; the committee reported in the same month that a site could not be had without great expense, and recommended building the town hall on public land near the town dock.<sup>5</sup> This recommendation was accepted by the aldermen, and in May W. T. Kirk "was directed to submit to the board as early as possible final plans and specifications for the new town hall. . . ." <sup>6</sup> For unstated reasons, the aldermen decided not to build the town hall on public land; in July the town purchased a lot at the corner of Main and Union streets from T. F. Riddick for \$1,500 where the town hall was built.<sup>7</sup> On 2 August 1910 the "contract for Building the Town Hall was awarded to Mr. C. F. Doughty-- Mr. Doughty agreeing to furnish Brick in wall at \$10.25 Pr. M the town agreeing to pay for handling brick from car to building. Mr. W. T. Kirk to be employed to oversee and look after the construction of the wood work on Town Hall at a salary of \$3.50 Pr. Day."<sup>8</sup>

Work probably began soon afterwards, and progressed rapidly. Materials for the building were brought to the construction site by a short railroad spur of the Norfolk and Southern Railway.<sup>9</sup> By February 1911 the Town was accepting bids for the use of the market stalls, and in March the E. H. Stafford Manufacturing Company was awarded the contract for furnishing opera seats in the auditorium.<sup>10</sup> The building was finished by 28 April 1911 when the Board of Aldermen first met in the city hall; in May the aldermen instructed that the "City Clerk was to have use of small room between the meat stalls for his office."<sup>11</sup> In addition to the 1909 public improvement bond, the town sold bonds worth \$8,500 to the Bank of Belhaven to pay for the construction of the city hall.<sup>12</sup>

The City Hall has housed city offices continuously since its construction; today, the former market stalls have been made into offices. The Belhaven Fire Department, organized in 1903, was housed on the first floor until it moved out in 1954.<sup>13</sup> The

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second floor served as a public auditorium until the late 1940s when the seats were removed and the space used as a gymnasium. In 1967 the Belhaven Memorial Museum opened in the former auditorium-gymnasium. The core of the museum's collection was formed before 1918 by the late Mrs. Eva Blount Way, and since 1967 local residents have contributed many items to the museum. Among the holdings are 30,000 buttons, a preserved eight-legged pig, a watch fob made from the first Atlantic cable, dressed fleas, and many other artifacts and oddities. The City Hall-Museum is one of the nine sites on the Historic Albemarle Tour.

While the City Hall continues its important function of housing city offices and the Belhaven Memorial Museum, its significance as an architectural landmark must not be overlooked. The architecture of Belhaven and Beaufort County was long dominated by frame and timber construction; the Belhaven City Hall is one of the oldest of the few non-commercial brick structures in Beaufort County. The vernacular quality of its late-Victorian stylistic features is enhanced by the thorough documentation of the building's designer, contractor, and construction. Although it could not be stated the City Hall influenced the architecture of Belhaven, it does represent the best attempt at high-style architectural design in Belhaven at the turn-of-the-century.

The structure is, of course, closely related to the surrounding environment. Archeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archeological record. Therefore, archeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Ursula Fogleman Loy and Pauline Marion Worthy, eds., Washington and the Pamlico (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1976), p. 353.

<sup>2</sup>Loy and Worthy, p. 353,

<sup>3</sup>Loy and Worthy, p. 347.

<sup>4</sup>Minutes, 6 May 1907-2 May 1913, Board of Aldermen, Belhaven, N. C., p. 63, 19 August 1909; hereinafter cited as Minutes.

<sup>5</sup>Minutes, p. 75, 1 March 1909; p. 76, 9 March 1909.

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<sup>6</sup>Minutes, p. 79, 3 May 1910.

<sup>7</sup>Minutes, p. 85, 27 July 1910; T. F. Riddick to Town of Belhaven, 2 August 1910, Beaufort County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Beaufort County Courthouse, Washington, Book 162, 212.

<sup>8</sup>Minutes, p. 86, 2 August 1910.

<sup>9</sup>Minutes, p. 99, 10 May 1911.

<sup>10</sup>Minutes, p. 96, 10 Feb. 1911; p. 98, 7 March 1911.

<sup>11</sup>Minutes, p. 104, 28 April 1911; p. 106, 2 May 1911.

<sup>12</sup>Minutes, p. 99, 10 May 1911; p. 101, 25 April 1911.

<sup>13</sup>Ladies' Auxiliary of the Belhaven Fire Department, Historic Bi-Centennial (Belhaven, N. C.: n. p., 1976), pp. 1-2.

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Loy, Ursula Fogleman, and Pauline Marion Worthy, eds. Washington and the Pamlico.  
Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1976.

Matcho Pungo Garden Club. "Tour, Belhaven, North Carolina." Belhaven, N. C. : n. p., 1978

Minutes, 6 May 1907-2 May 1913, Board of Aldermen, Belhaven, N. C., City Clerk's  
Office, Belhaven City Hall, Belhaven, North Carolina.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Beaufort County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Beaufort County Courthouse, Washington.  
 Ladies' Auxiliary of the Belhaven Fire Department. Historic Bi-Centennial. Belhaven: N. C. : n. p., 1978

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Belhaven

Quadrangle scale 1: 24000

UMT References

A 

1	8
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3	5	3	9	5	0
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3	9	3	3	8	2	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled "Map of the City of Belhaven," and includes the entire property connected with the structure. Beaufort County Map Book 6, 14, Register of Deeds Office, Beaufort County Courthouse, Washington.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marshall Bullock, consultant to the Mid-East Commission  
Survey and Planning Branch, Archeology and  
 organization Historic Preservation Section date August 1980  
North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
 street & number 109 E. Jones Street telephone 919-733-6545  
 city or town Raleigh state North Carolina 27611

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

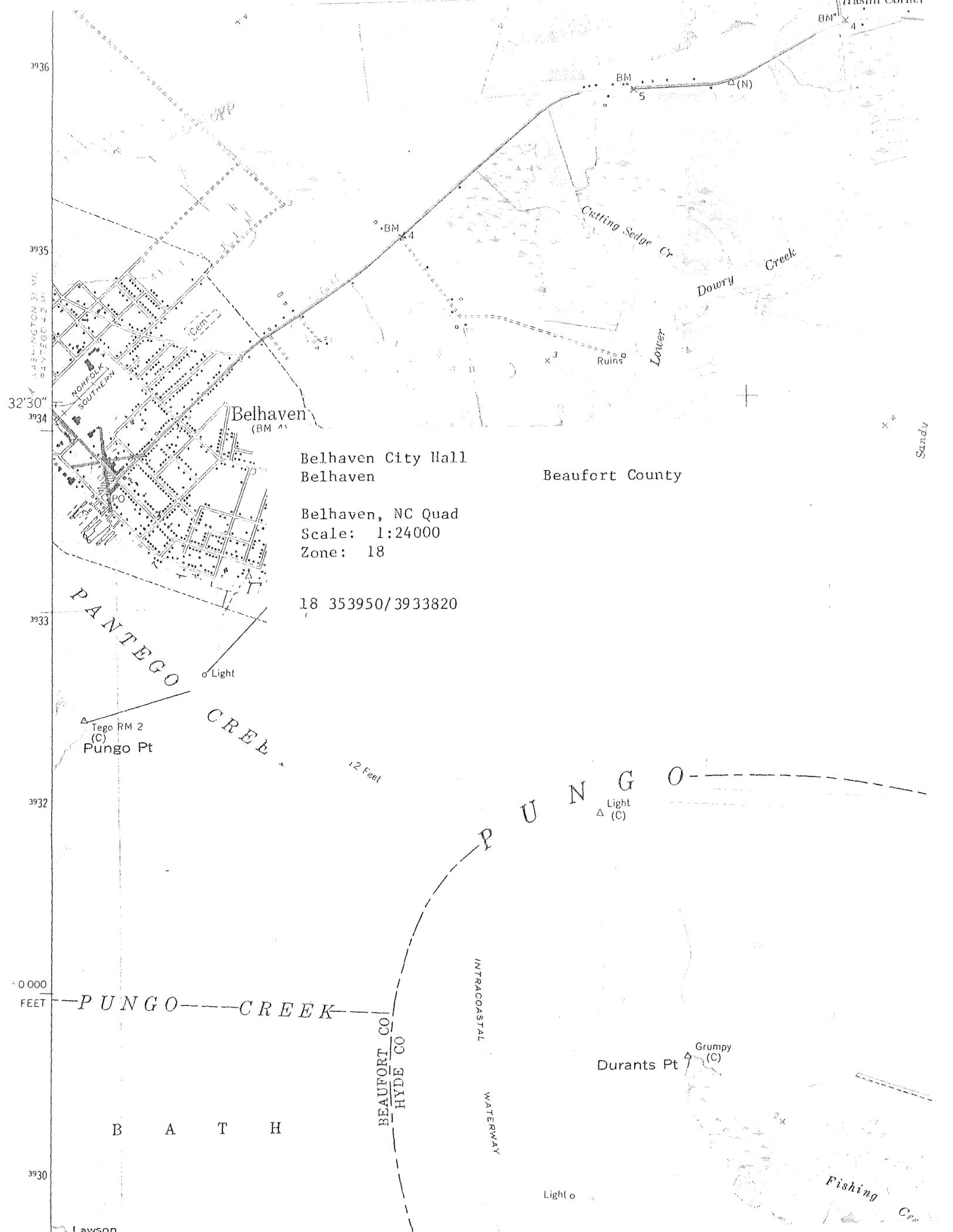
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:  
 national     state     local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Ray C. ...*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 16 October 1980

<b>For HCRS use only</b>	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	date
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	



3936

3935

3934

3933

3932

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3930

WASHINGTON ST. MI.  
RAVEGG 4.2 MI.

32°30"

FEET

Belhaven  
(BM 41)

Belhaven City Hall  
Belhaven

Beaufort County

Belhaven, NC Quad  
Scale: 1:24000  
Zone: 18

18 353950/3933820

PANTEGO CREEK

INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY

BEAUFORT CO  
HYDE CO

PUNGO CREEK

B A T H

Durants Pt  
Grumpy (C)

Fishing Cr

Light (C)

Light o

Cutting Sedge Cr

Dowry Creek

Lower

Ruins

Sandy

BM 4

BM 5

BM 44

Light

Tego RM 2  
(C)  
Pungo Pt

Lawson

