

November 9, 2015

Proposal for immediate funds for the Structural Assessment of the Historic Franklin Masonic Hall

To the Board of Mayor and Alderman and City Administrator, Franklin, Tennessee

Request

The Historic Franklin Masonic Hall (501c3) seeks immediate funding of **\$15,000.00** for the Structural Engineering Analysis Report and Architectural/Preservation Plans. Having secured Belinda Stewart Architects, of Europa, Mississippi as the lead architectural firm, the costs associated with a defined scope of structural engineering, architectural surveys and analysis, historical and structural recommendations, overall historical conditions assessments and a preservation plan will total **\$60,000**. Matching contributions from the Masonic Lodge, the City of Franklin, the Williamson County government, and the State of Tennessee will greatly assist in securing this first necessary step to preserve this National Historic Landmark.

Immediate actions

Belinda Stewart Architects comprehensive structural analysis will provide the overall current conditions of the Hall's structural integrity including masonry, foundation, interior/exterior walls, floors, and roof. A comprehensive preservation plan will provide inclusive historical context of the Hall's historical narrative, showcase immediate threats and recommend necessary stabilization methodologies by applying a best practices approach to ensure the proper preservation of the Hall.

Historical Significance

The Historic Franklin Masonic Hall remains one of the only surviving examples of early Gothic architecture in Middle Tennessee. Its c. 1823 to 1826 three storied masonry construction made it the tallest building in Franklin until the Civil War. The Hall's historical connections to major religious denominations in Franklin as well as its social and economic sphere shaped the community by 1860. The Treaty of Franklin (1830) negotiated and signed in the Hall, called for the Chickasaw Nations' removal to lands west of the Mississippi. Never ratified by Congress set a precedence that led to the Cherokee removal known as the Trail of Tears. Serving both armies during the Civil War as an observation post, the Hall became a Federal army barracks and quartermaster's offices during occupation (1863) as well as a Federal field hospital following the Battle of Franklin (1864). By 1972, the Hall received a listing on the National Register for Historic Places and a National Historic Landmark designation in 1973. It is currently on Tennessee's 10 most endangered list of historic properties.

Bruce Barker
Chairman-Trustees
615-406-3712

Craig Feldner
President (501c3)
615-426-0088

Jason Rein
Worshipful Master 2015
615-406-2214