

Buick Motor Company and Greensboro
Motor Company Automobile Dealerships
309 and 315 North Elm Street
Greensboro
Guilford County
North Carolina

HABS No. NC-232

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

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BUICK MOTOR COMPANY
 GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Location: 309 North Elm Street

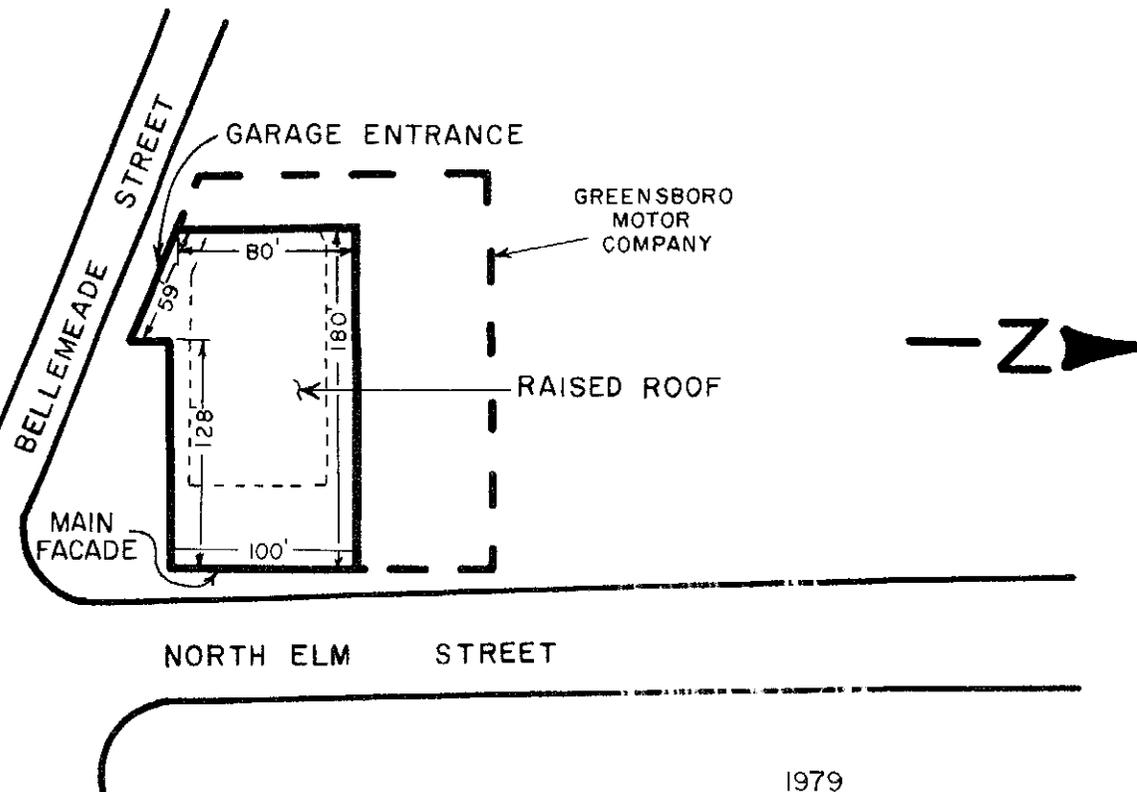
Date of Construction: 1927

Construction Type: Brick Walls
 Reinforced Concrete Floors
 Steel Frame Roof

Architect or Builder: Unknown

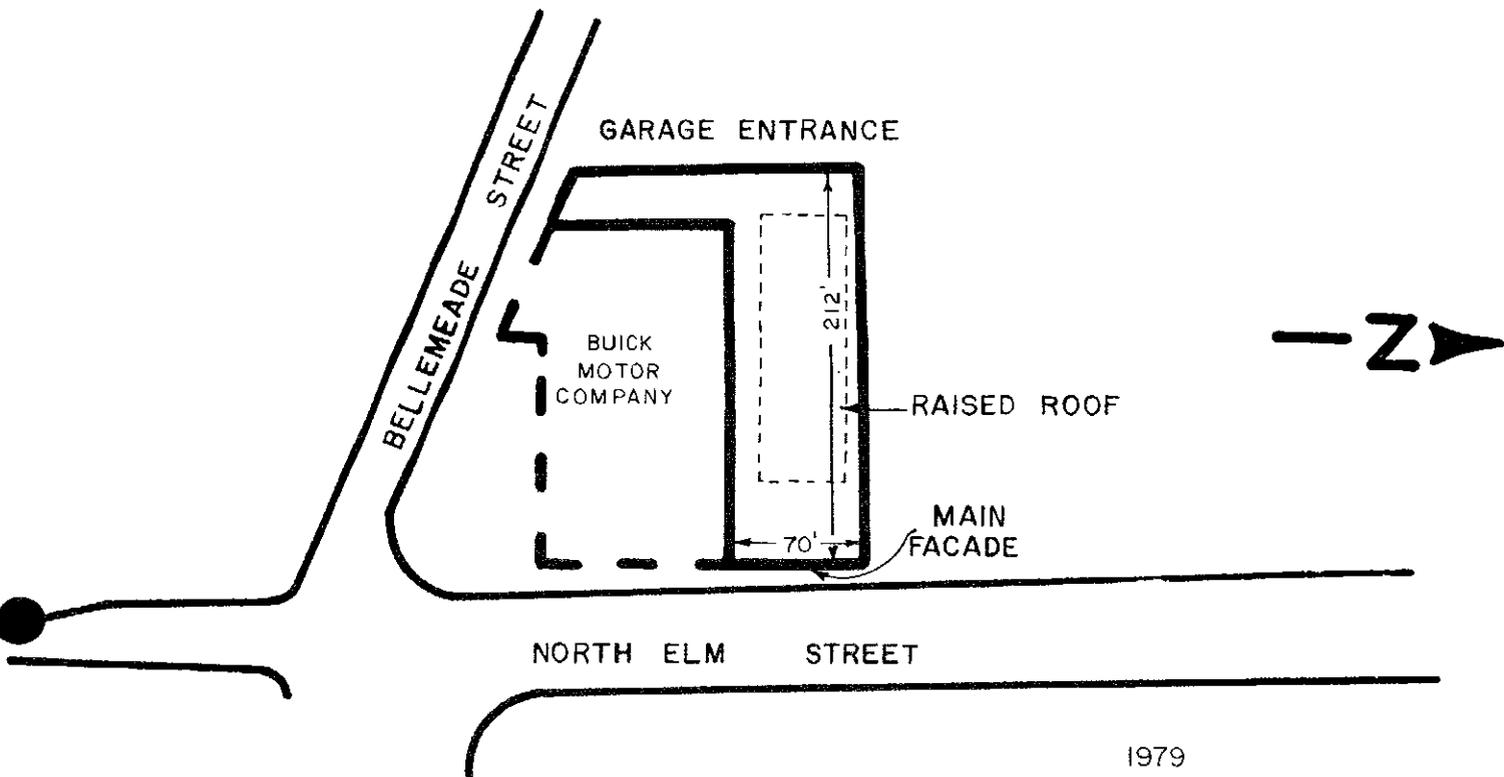
Additions: Modern exterior added to southern portion of facade sometime in 1950's.

Dimensions: Main Facade--100 feet
 Total Square Footage First Floor--20,990



GREENSBORO MOTOR COMPANY
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Location: 315 North Elm Street
Date of Construction: 1929
Construction Type: Brick Walls
Reinforced Concrete Floors
Steel Frame Roof
Architect or Builder: Unknown
Dimensions: Main Facade--70 feet
Total Square Footage of First Floor--14,840



BUICK MOTOR COMPANY AND GREENSBORO MOTOR COMPANY
AUTOMOBILE DEALERSHIPS

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Location: 309 and 315 North Elm Street, Greensboro, Guilford County, North Carolina.

USGS Greensboro Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 17.608910.3992710.

Present Owner: Kermit G. Phillips II and Joseph F. Freeman, Jr., P. O. Drawer 9515, Greensboro, North Carolina 27408 (1977).

Present Occupant: The Greensboro Motor Company is occupied by the Guilford Technical Institute, while the Buick Motor Company is vacant.

Present Use: The Guilford Technical Institute is using the Greensboro Motor Company as a Manpower Training Center. The Buick Motor Company is vacant although portions of the structures are being utilized as a private parking facility. The motor company buildings are scheduled for demolition with an office complex to be constructed on the site.

Significance: The Buick Motor Company and Greensboro Motor Company were built in 1927 and 1929. Their facades, with Spanish Revival details, are interesting contributions to a commercial district.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. History of Structure:

The Buick Motor Company was built in 1927, while the Greensboro Motor Company was built in 1929. They were constructed as automobile dealership showrooms and garages. The Greensboro Motor Company continued to operate as an automobile dealership into the 1960s, while the Buick Motor Company building may have been converted to another use as early as the 1940s. The only major exterior alteration occurred to the Buick Motor Company in the 1950s when a modern exterior was added to the lower half of the southern portion of the east elevation.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Preyer, William Y. Excerpts from a Speech. Richardson Corporation. April 13, 1948.

Raleigh, North Carolina, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History. Field Notes (by Ruth Little-Stokes).

2. Secondary and published sources:

Greensboro City Directories, 1920, 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, and 1970. Greensboro Public Library.

Little-Stokes, Ruth, editor. An Inventory of Historic Architecture, Greensboro North Carolina. Greensboro: North Carolina Division of Archives and History/City of Greensboro, 1976.

Prepared by Dan Curry
Community Planner
City of Greensboro
North Carolina
November 1977

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Buick Motor Company:

The Buick Motor Company (309 North Elm Street), built of brick and concrete, is an irregularly shaped, two-story building measuring roughly 100' (twelve-bay front) x 180'. The facade is composed of a five-bay center pavillion with a smaller flanking pavillion to each side. The lower portion of the center pavillion is composed of concrete Corinthian posts supporting semicircular arches with equilateral arched tops. Behind the posts are display windows which flank the main entrance. The second story has casement windows set into semicircular arches. The remainder of these arches are infilled with bricks set in a herringbone pattern. The roof line of the center pavillion forms a pediment and is decorated by interlace ornament in concrete relief. There

is a circular inset below the apex of the pediment decorated with the Buick emblem. The flanking sections have corbeled cornices and semicircular arched windows with fanlights. The lower portion of the southern pavillion has had its facade modernized. The northern portion has a door flanked by windows. The facades have pent roofs with a flat roof and a glass clerestory behind them. The garage entrance elevation faces Bellemeade Street. The first story is composed of a large display window flanked by an entrance on either side. The second story has three groups of three windows.

B. Greensboro Motor Company:

The greensboro Motor Company (315 North Elm Street) is built of yellow brick with concrete and cast iron trim. The floors are of reinforced concrete. The L-shaped, 70' (three-bay front) x 212', building is two stories. There is a pent roof of red clay tile on the front section, while the rest of the steel frame roof is flat with a glass clerestory running east to west over the center of the building. The east (front) facade has a central entrance composed of a triple arch motif with concrete Corinthian columns. A trefoil drip course outlines the semicircular arches. Above the arches is brickwork of two colors forming a diaper pattern. This brickwork is divided into three rectangular sections corresponding to the three entrance bays. The main entrance is flanked by a large showroom window in either side. Above these windows there are a pair of semicircular arched windows separated by coiled colonettes, with cast iron balconies. These windows are set into a rectangle, the rest of the composition being filled by bricks set on end. The cornice is of corbeled bricks.

The garage entrance is on Bellemeade Street. The first story is the garage entrance; on the second floor there are five semicircular arched windows. The north (side) elevation has twenty-three sets of windows on the second story and a fire escape; and two side entrances and five sets of windows on the ground level. At the top of the building on the northeast corner is painted "Greensboro Motor Co. We Service After We Sell" interspersed with the Ford logo.

The interior is composed of a large showroom and garage space on the first floor, and garage space on the second floor. The showroom is surrounded by a balcony on three sides. The balcony is supported by masonry posts with elaborate composite plaster capitals. The balcony has

a turned balustrade and chamfered posts with brackets. A lower coffered plaster ceiling covers the space to the rear of the showroom. The remainder of the interior space is devoted to the garages. The garage is entered from Bellemeade Street. A ramp leads up to the second floor. The main feature of the second floor is the steel trusses that support the roof and clerestory.

C. Site:

The Buick Motor Company and Greensboro Motor Company Automobile Dealerships sit on the corner of Bellemeade and North Elm Streets with their main elevations facing North Elm Street. They share a common wall.

PART II. HISTORY

Prepared by Dan Curry
Community Planner
City of Greensboro
North Carolina
November 1977

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the City of Greensboro with funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort in the construction of an office complex. John A. Burns, AIA was the HABS project coordinator. The historical and architectural written data was prepared by Dan Curry, Community Planner, City of Greensboro. The data was edited and in some cases expanded in April 1979 by Mary Beth Betts, in the HABS office. Photographs were taken by William Heroy in February 1979