The Humber-Spencer House may be among the oldest residences in Carthage and commands a prominent location on a corner lot along stylish McReynolds Street, the main artery through the county seat that once served as the Fayetteville and Western Plank Road.

Samuel Humber, a Virginia native who came to Carthage in 1870 to work for the prosperous Tyson and Jones Carriage Works, purchased an existing house built around 1830 and remodeled and enlarged it in 1880 in the Italianate style, a popular choice among successful Carthage residents. Exterior features include shingled gables, paired windows and projecting bay. Restrained Italianate mantels remain on the interior.

As the buggy factory wound down in the 20th century, other industries took over including hosiery, tobacco, and lumber milling. Around 1920, Dr. Colin Spencer, a noted forestry consultant associated with North Carolina State University, bought the property and it was remodeled once again to reflect more classical sensibilities incorporating Tuscan columns on the expansive porches and a Craftsman-style fireplace in the parlor. The old kitchen dependency was removed and a more modern kitchen was built in its place. Spencer family history suggests a different origin for the early c. 1830 section of the house relating that it was moved from next door and added onto the Humber House by the Spencers who later constructed a house for their son on the vacant lot. Either way, there is no doubt that the current house is a combination of two distinct structures.

Around the time the Spencers built the brick bungalow next door for their son, they updated a few rooms in their ever-evolving house. Sturdy, warm-stained pine paneling, sound-proof ceiling tiles, and updated fireplace were added to a room off the entrance hall to create a cozy TV room. The Butler’s Pantry was converted to a breakfast room, retaining the glass cabinets and adding the same pine paneling and ceiling tiles. Later, their daughter and son-in-law, Elizabeth Spencer Deahl and Uriah (Sam) Deahl, would modernize the house further by updating bathrooms and the kitchen once again. They would also install solar panels on the c.1950 garage to power the hot water heater for a time.

The Humber-Spencer House is a fine example of local styles and tastes spanning two centuries. It is habitable, but will need some structural repair, most notably in the area of the Butler’s Pantry/Breakfast Room. The house would benefit from cosmetic updates, restoration of the oldest second floor room and windows, and removal of the vinyl siding. The house has central heat and air conditioning ductwork installed by Mr. Deahl, but not completed. The large corner lot with its many specimen plants, mature trees, and flowering shrubs also includes an old well house and the 1950s garage. Nearby is the WPA-era Community Center on land donated by Dr. Spencer whose dedication was attended by Eleanor Roosevelt. Located in the Carthage Historic District, the property is eligible for tax credits.

For more information or to make an appointment to see the Humber-Spencer House, contact:
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Financial Incentives: The Humber-Spencer House is located on the Carthage Historic District and is eligible for tax credits. In North Carolina, both state and federal income tax credits are available for the certified rehabilitation of historic structures. For the rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures, a 20% federal income tax credit and a tier based state income tax credit are available. For the rehabilitation of owner-occupied certified historic structures (non-income producing properties), a 15% state tax credit is available for rehabilitation expenses up to $150,000. For more information on Historic Preservation Tax Credits, please contact the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office at 919-807-6570 or at www.hpo.ncdcr.gov.

Directions: From Raleigh, take Interstate 40 W/US-64 W to exit 293 toward US-1 S/US-64 W. In 0.3 mile, keep left at the fork to continue on Exit 293A, following signs for US 1 S/Sanford. In 0.7 mile, keep left at the fork to continue toward US-1 S/US-64 W. In 0.4 mile, keep left following signs for US-64 W/Apex/Sanford/Asheboro/US-1 S and then merge onto US-1 S/US-64 W. In 39.6 miles, take a slight right onto US-15 S/US-501 S. In 10.6 miles, take a slight right onto Monroe Street. In 1.2 miles at the traffic circle, take the 2nd exit onto Courthouse Square/McReynolds Street and continue to follow McReynolds Street. The property will be on the right in 0.2 mile.

Area Information: The Town of Carthage was established in 1776 and was settled largely by Scottish immigrants traveling up the Cape Fear valley. The success of the local buggy manufacturing industry from about 1850-1929 led to the construction of many of the historic homes now found along Carthage's main streets. Only 20 minutes to world class golf in Pinehurst and Southern Pines. Other recreational areas include the beautiful Uwharrie Mountains where outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy boating, hiking and history in just 40 minutes. Research Triangle Park/Raleigh-Durham area or Fayetteville are only one hour away. Visit www.townofcarthage.org/ and www.moorecountync.gov/ for more information.

Preservation North Carolina is a statewide, private, non-profit membership organization that protects and promotes the architectural heritage of North Carolina. Through its Endangered Properties Program it acquires and sells endangered historic buildings. Preservation North Carolina sells all properties with protective covenants and a rehabilitation agreement to ensure that the historic buildings will be renovated and that they will be protected from demolition and unsympathetic changes in the years to come. For samples of these legal documents visit www.presnc.org/get-help/easements-covenants.

For general information or to join Preservation NC:

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