

HISTORIC SALISBURY
FOUNDATION, INC.

SAVING OUR HISTORY. EXPANDING OUR FUTURE.

John E. Ramsay, Jr.
809 Runnymede Road
Raleigh, NC 27607

Re: National Register Nomination – Residence – John Erwin Ramsay FAIA

Dear John:

As President of the Historic Salisbury Foundation, I want to endorse the application to nominate the John E. Ramsay House at 16 Pine Tree Road in Salisbury to the National Register of Historic Places. The John Ramsay house is the finest example of mid-century modern architecture in Rowan County and arguably one of the finest in the state.

Salisbury, a very traditional city, established in 1753, laid out in the Roman grid, popular in the 18th century. We have a rich architectural heritage, but we do not have many examples of mid-century modern architecture, however, the few that we do have are outstanding, thanks to the design of John E. Ramsay, an award winning, Yale educated architect. Though he designed many public buildings, his residences are some of my favorites, reflecting the influence of many of the finest modernists of the twentieth century, but especially that of Frank Lloyd Wright.

The Ramsay Residence built in 1951 was one of the first modernist houses constructed in Salisbury, NC. The innovative ventilation techniques incorporated into the house were featured in Architectural Record in August 1952. The house was given an Award of Merit by AIA North Carolina in 1955. Other modernist houses by Ramsay were featured in both Good Housekeeping, January 1956 and Southern Architect, published by the North Carolina Chapter, American Institute of Architects, December 1962.

As a strong proponent of Modernist architecture, Ramsay designed many award-winning Modernist residences and buildings, including the Rowan County Health and Agricultural Building, Alderman Studios, the American Square showroom for American of Martinsville Furniture in Thomasville, the Robertson Community Center in Salisbury, and the striking Fairfield Building, now the Broyhill Convention Center.

Additionally, he designed more traditional buildings including the Rowan Public Library, First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury.

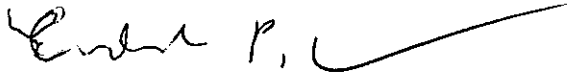
Salisbury has ten historic districts, but none of which include our mid-century modern houses. We hope to correct that in the future by pursuing a district in the neighborhood of the Ramsay house, where there are many early twentieth century houses built around the Salisbury Country Club neighborhood. Established in the 1920s, importantly this neighborhood includes a fine collection of mid-century modern houses.

Historic Salisbury Foundation, established in 1972, has for fifty years sponsored a house tour that featured the historic architecture of the city. This year for the first time we are including the Salisbury Country Club area where many houses recently celebrated their one hundredth year.

I knew John Ramsay Sr. personally and saw the many contributions he made to the community not only in his professional life but also with his volunteer work, membership on the Salisbury City Council, and his support of the arts and local progressive causes.

I wholeheartedly endorse nominating his house to the National Register and I understand that progress is being made to protect it with historic protective covenants as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward P. Norvell", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Edward P. Norvell

President

Historic Salisbury Foundation

CC: NC State Historic Preservation Office