

The Liberty awaits renovation.

By Allen Horne/Ledger-Enquirer

Governor supports Liberty's cause

Restoration of the historic Liberty Theatre in Columbus has been given a further boost by a \$10,000 grant from Georgia Gov. Joe Frank Harris.

The money was sought by and awarded to the Lower Chattahoochee Area Planning and Development Commission, to help offset restoration expenses for the theatre.

This is in addition to a \$50,000 Community Development Block Grant which the city awarded to the Columbus Housing Authority to stabilize the building, halting its deterioration. Jospeh Mahan, historic planner for the Lower Chattahoochee commission, said architectural

plans have been completed and bids for restoration contracts are to be accepted early next year.

The Liberty, at 821 Eighth Ave., was built in 1924 and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The building is owned by the Golden Owlettes. That group is working with the city planning office, the housing authority, the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, Tuskegee University and the Lower Chattahoochee Planning and Development Commission. It has been estimated that restoration of the theater, as a place to host fine arts events, will cost \$1.2 million.

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