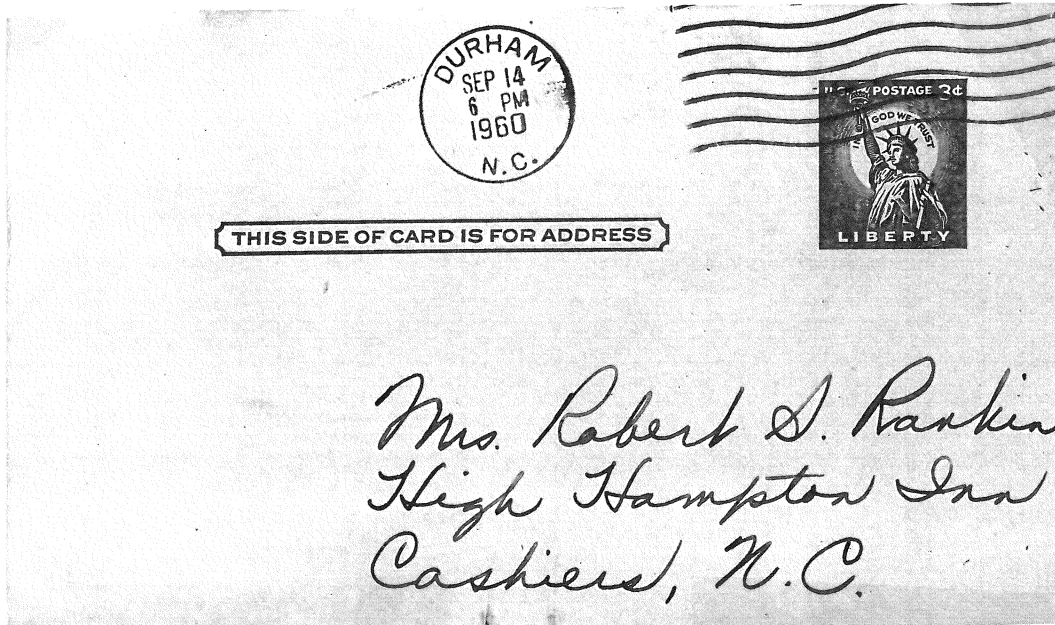


ARTHUR WATTS CLARK (1923-2023) COMMENTS ON
"DOWNTOWN BY HISTORY AND CHOICE"

In 3 cents postal card dated and postmarked September 14, 1960, addressed to Dorothy (Ms. Robert S.) Rankin then in Cashiers, NC, Arthur Clark reported on the historic congregational meeting held the previous evening at First Presbyterian Church. He was then an Elder representative on the Executive Committee of the church's Long Range Study and Planning Committee. The committee charged him and Diaconate representative Watts Hill, Jr. to draft what became known as the Clark-Hill Report. The Report offered four options the first of which was to remain downtown and substantially improve the physical plant while option 3 endorsed a selling the church property and relocating the church to a new site and physical plant in the city's southwest suburbs. Whatever choice was made, the Report insisted that the congregational vote constituted "an overwhelming majority." The larger Executive Committee voted to present only option 3 to the congregation the proceedings of which and the ramifications of which are the subject of Arthur Clark's card:



Wednesday, 14 Sep 60.

Dear Dorothy,

At our congregational meeting last night the vote was 207 in favor of the resolution and 139 opposed. In other words, those present voted about 60-40 in the affirmative. Though this obviously constitutes a majority, it is certainly not an overwhelming expression of determination to relocate. And 346 was not a particularly impressive turnout. The meeting was lay, and there was a good deal of discussion. It was, however, not acrimonious.

As you may well know, the picture now is verily complicated by Kelsey's impending move. I believe we have every reason to fear that he will not be with us two months hence. Unless something alters the apparent course of events, he will accept the call from Richmond's First Church. I'm very much afraid that the die is cast. We miss you. Have fun. A. Clark