

City of Jacksonville Landmark Designation Report

801 North Jefferson Street

LM-24-03
August 28, 2024



Application Prepared By:
Amon D. Whetstone
17 West 11th Street
Jacksonville, Florida, 32202

Property Owner:
Amon D. Whetstone
17 West 11th Street
Jacksonville, Florida, 32202

**REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION
AS A CITY OF JACKSONVILLE LANDMARK**

LM-24-03

**801 North Jefferson Street
The Whetsonian Building
Jacksonville, Florida 32202**

GENERAL LOCATION: Northeast corner of North Jefferson Street and West Union Street in LaVilla immediately west of Downtown Jacksonville

Prepared in accordance with the JACKSONVILLE ORDINANCE CODE, SECTION 307.104, the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department hereby forwards to the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission, its "Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations" on the Landmark Designation, **LM-24-03**, sponsored by Amon D. Whetstone, agent for the property owner, Dorothy Whetstone.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- (A) Consistent with the JACKSONVILLE ORDINANCE CODE, SECTION 307.104(d), the Planning and Development Department determined that the application for designation of the property at 801 North Jefferson Street as a Landmark was complete.
- (B) As required, the Planning and Development Department had signs posted in front of the property being considered for designation, as well as sent notices by U.S. Mail to each owner of real property within three hundred and fifty (350) feet of the proposed landmark. Notice of the public hearing on the designation of the property at 801 North Jefferson Street as a Landmark was published in the *Financial News and Daily Report*. Proof of publication is attached to this report.
- (C) Once designated, any activity affecting the exterior of the building and site of the proposed landmark at 801 North Jefferson Street will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). All proposed work will be reviewed for consistency with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. The review of most routine work scopes including repairs, maintenance, alterations of previously altered features, small additions and size-limited new construction that would not impact significant historic elements or would not be readily street visible can be processed by the Historic Preservation Section (HPS) of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department, but certain activities like alterations, additions, new construction, relocation and demolition that would be visible from the public right-of-way, as well as any work the HPS determines

to be potentially in conflict with the *Secretary of the Interior Standards*, will require review by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission.

The purpose of the historic designation of this site is to provide protection to the Whetstonian Building and the old Atlanta Life Insurance Company at 801 North Jefferson Street not to discourage or prohibit the future development of the site. The review of work through the COA process is to preserve the historic character, architectural features, and materials of this significant structure, as well as, to ensure any future development of the site is compatible with and sensitive to this primary historic resource.

(D) In preparing the application, the Planning and Development Department has found the application to meet two of the seven criteria. The two criteria include the following.

A. Its value as a significant reminder of the cultural, historical, architectural, or archaeological heritage of the City, state or nation.

The Whetstonian Building at 801 North Jefferson Street is one of the few remaining historic commercial buildings in LaVilla. Historically, the LaVilla neighborhood was defined by North Clay Street to the east, North Myrtle Avenue to the west, Old Kings Road to the north and McCoys Creek to the south. During Reconstruction, LaVilla began to take on the character that has historically defined the neighborhood well into the 20th century. The northern part of LaVilla developed into a vibrant neighborhood that became the social, cultural, and economic center of black Jacksonville, a reputation it held until the end of segregation in the 1960s. During most of its history, the community was predominantly African American, but also racially and ethnically diverse. The neighborhood became home to numerous ethnic groups, the largest being East European Jews, who originally lived, worked, and worshiped primarily in the middle section of the neighborhood. Becoming a major rail center, the southern part of LaVilla became filled with small hotels, rooming houses, restaurants, and other businesses serving the traveling public, as well as large warehouses and industrial uses dependent on rail service. Given the transient nature of the southern part of the neighborhood, this portion of LaVilla developed a notorious reputation for criminal activities.

The most significant legacy of northern LaVilla was its associated with the vibrant musical scene that developed from the 1890s until after World War II. During this period, LaVilla had a variety of clubs and venues that featured major blues and jazz performers. LaVilla's music legacy were planted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and coincided with the development of LaVilla as the commercial, cultural, and social center of Jacksonville's African American community. Other than isolated clubs outside the downtown area such as the Two-Spot and the Havana Club, the northern part of LaVilla was the only area in the city where these nationally known blues and jazz musicians performed. The remaining buildings in the neighborhood associated with the era include the Richmond Hotel, Genovar's Hall, the Masonic Temple, Clara White Mission, the Central Hotel, and the Maceo Elks Lodge.

In the years between 1896 and 1916 before the widespread availability of electronic recording, LaVilla was alive with, music, dance and comedy performances by professional entertainers

featured in numerous clubs, vaudeville houses, and other venues such as Frank Crowd's Bijou Theater, later renamed the Globe Theater, that opened in 1909 and its competitor across West Ashley Street, the Airdome also opened in 1909 by Louis D. Joel and Morris R. Glickstein. Theatrical stock companies and tent shows were an important part of LaVilla's cultural legacy. Some of the shows were produced and managed by Blacks such as the Rabbits Foot, a traveling show owned and operated by LaVilla's pioneer Black promoter, Patrick Henry Chappelle.

During June of 1915, a new attraction, the Strand Theater, opened at 701 West Ashley Street the next block down from the Airdome and the Globe Theater. Owned and operated by the Strand Amusement Company under H.S. Walker, the Strand, located at the corner of West Ashley Street and North Jefferson Street, opened on June 12, 1915. The Strand continued as a movie house for decades before finally closing with the building being demolished in 1969.¹ The largest venue was the Knights of Pythias Hall at 727-33 West Ashley Street which was built in 1921 by Jacksonville general contractor, P.J. McCullough. Crowned with a stepped parapet wall, the five-story building had three storefronts on the first story, five to six apartments on each floor of the second, third and fourth stories and a large hall, dining room and kitchen on the fifth. A distinctive feature of the building was the full-width balconies on second to the fifth stories that cantilevered over West Ashley Street. On the first story, an arcade provided elevator access to the upper floors, as well as to three more stores. Demolished in 1957, the first story of the Knights of Pythias Hall housed numerous businesses over the years such as Dr. James D. Patterson's Drug Store, Sentinel Publishing Company, White Front Pool Parlor, and the Peoples Dressmaking.²

Playing in LaVilla during this time were nationally recognized performers such as Billy Kersands, Gertude "Ma" Rainey, Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton, and Jacksonville resident, Arthur "Blind Blake" Phelps, who became widely known for his "piano sounding" fast guitar style. In the 1920s and 30s, the big venues, such as the Knights of Pythias Hall on West Ashley Street and the Odds Fellows Hall on North Pearl Street, featured such nationally known performers as Cab Calloway, Billie Holiday, Count Basie, Nat King Cole, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Duke Ellington³

By the 1930s and 40s, LaVilla had become a stop along the Chitlin Circuit. Named after the Southern cuisine made from pig intestine, also spelled Chitterlings, the unofficial circuit was a connection of performing venues that featured Black entertainment within the safe environment of the Black community. Performers that followed the Chitlin Circuit usually started their tour in Baltimore or the mid-Atlantic region then traveled through the South before swinging west to Texas and north to Chicago. The name probably came from many of these venues offering soul

¹ Peter Dunbaugh Smith, *Ashley Street Blues: Racial Uplift and the Commodification of Vernacular Performances in LaVilla, Florida, 1896 – 1916*, Dissertation Submitted to the Interdisciplinary Program in the Humanities in the Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Florida State University, College of Arts and Science, 2006, pp. 99 – 101.

² Jacksonville Building Permit Records, #369, 1921.
Mason, p. 16.

³ Smith, pp. 3, 20 – 25, 29, 40 – 44, 67, 75 – 78, 81 – 86, 152, 159 & 160,
Francis Davis, *The History of the Blues, The Roots, The Music, The People from Charley Patton to Robert Cray*. (New York: Hyperson, 1995), pp. 28 & 29,
Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black American, A History*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1971), pp. 47, 48, 51, 161 & 162, 116 & 117, 146, 154, 183 -185, 229, 237, 238, 245, 251, 270, 285 & 291.

food such as chitterlings. Like the humble chitlins, the shows on the circuit were considered by some as being second rate and since in segregated neighborhoods under the radar screen of the larger white community. Most of the Black communities along the Chitlin Circuit had a central avenue called the “stroll” where most Black businesses and venues were located. The “stroll” in LaVilla was West Ashley Street.⁴

“Stroll” in some other cities include Beale Street in Memphis, Indiana Avenue in Indianapolis’s Bronzeville, Farish Street in Jackson, Mississippi, and Auburn Avenue, “Sweet Auburn” in Atlanta, Georgia. The “stroll” such as West Ashley Street was lined with bars, restaurants, cafes, barbershops, clothing stores and theaters which attracted large crowds, particularly on Saturday night and the Monday night after Easter. Alex McBride, who performed in clubs in the area, stated “*Ashley Street was just like a flower garden, everybody looking the best they could look*”.⁵ During the 1930s and 40s, the “stroll” in LaVilla included such popular clubs and venues as Lenape Tavern, The Top Hat, the Bronx, Emanuel’s Tap Room, and the Knights of Pythias. It was during this period that LaVilla, specifically West Ashley Street, acquired such nicknames as the “Little Harlem of the South”, “Jacksonville’s Harlem”, Jacksonville’s Answer to Harlem” and the “Great Black Way”, a reference to Broadway’s the Great White Way.⁶

Many of the venues, clubs, hotels, and restaurants associated with the Chitlin Circuit tended to concentrate in 600 and 700 block of West Ashley Street, “the Stroll” and the blocks of North Broad Street. The north side of the 600 block of West Ashley Street included the Hollywood Music Street opened in the 1920s by Joe Higdon to promote black music and to bring quality black musicians to LaVilla. In the same building were Adolph’s Beauty Products and Florida Cut-Price Pharmacy. Manuel’s Taproom at 622-626 West Ashley Street managed by co-owner, Chula Papa Rivera, opened 24 hours for drinks, dining and dancing, and according to *Crisis Magazine*, “*the finest of its kind in the South*” horseshoe-shaped bar, back room for cards, dice, and slot machines, upstairs Blue Room with stage for performers – live radio broadcast on Station WRHC. attracted a well-dressed crowd in tailored clothing. In the same block as Manuel’s Taproom were Hotel Eggmont, Brad’s Café, the Artistic Barbershop, the John Betsch Place, Carl, and Daisy Ford’s, “Bubber’s Coffee Shop.”⁷

The popular three-story Richmond Hotel, which attracted many jazz and blues greats during the 1930s including Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald, and Billie Holiday, was built in 1909 at 420 North Broad Street, immediately adjacent to the Masonic Temple. In addition to a third floor ball room, a tea room and forty-eight rooms, the first floor housed a variety of businesses over the years such as a candy manufacturer, cigar maker, barber, tailor, insurance company and Vanderhorst, which has been called by one trade journal as “*the largest black-owned shoe store in the Country*”.⁸ With the decline of LaVilla, the Richmond Hotel closed in

⁴ Preston Lauterback, *The Chitlin Circuit, and the Road to Rock N Roll* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2011), pp. 9, 31 -36, 41, 54 & 55, 66-72,88 & 89, 91, 101 103, 115, 162, 267.

The Crisis Magazine, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 1942, pp. 14 & 31.

⁵ *The Florida Times Union*, February 1, 1991, A-2.

⁶ *The Florida Times Union*, July 26, 1998, Page E-1.

Mason, p. 9.

⁷ *Florida Times Union*, February 1, 1991, A-2.

Mason, p. 14.

⁸ *Florida Times Union*, June 6, 1993, D-1.

1970 and was used as a furniture showroom and storage facility. In its 1942 edition that focused on Jacksonville, the *Crisis Magazine* featured the Richmond Hotel as an “outstanding hotel for colored people in Jacksonville”. It was located “close to all principal Negro businesses, theaters, and churches, and less than five minutes’ drive from the railroad terminal. Most of its 48 rooms have running water, with many bathrooms adjacent. The Richmond Hotel boasts a quiet, homelike atmosphere. A Tea Room is operated for the convenience of guests.”⁹

Although currently gutted from a failed rehabilitation attempt, Genovar’s Hall is one of the largest and most well-known of the Chitlin era hotels. The actual date of construction for Genovar’s Hall at 644 West Ashley Street has not been determined. The first definitive listing of Genovar’s Hall at the southeast corner of West Ashley Street and Jefferson Street (Hawk Street) in the city directories was in 1895 which listed Genovar Brothers (grocers) at that location. Harry Finkelstein, who later had his name inscribed on the central dormer of the west elevation facing North Jefferson Street, purchased Genovar’s Hall in 1919. Harry Finkelstein, who operated a pawnshop at 633 West Bay Street, apparently rented or leased Genovar’s Hall for a variety of commercial and residential uses. Members of the Finkelstein family kept ownership of Genovar’s Hall until sold to the City of Jacksonville during the 1990’s.

In 1933 or 34, former railroad porter, Jack D. Wynn, opened the Wynn Hotel on the second and third floors with the Lenape Tavern being located on the first floor. According to oral tradition, the Wynn Hotel, which operated under that name until 1941, was a popular lodging spot for some of these early jazz performers playing in LaVilla and the surrounding area. Reportedly, Louis Armstrong, who played at the Knights of Pythias Hall at 733 West Ashley Street, would prefer the Wynn Hotel to other more “upscale establishments” since it was located closer to the street action generated by such nearby entertainment amenities as the Hollywood Music Store, The Top Hat, Manuel’s, and the Bronx.¹⁰

Located in front of Genovar’s Hall near the intersection of West Ashley Street and North Jefferson Street were two hitching rails constructed of four-inch galvanized pipes. According to oral tradition, these rails were called the “rails of hope” since many waiters and musicians would hang out in front of these hitching posts waiting for employment offers. One such occupant of the “rails” was a young, blind musician by the name of R. C. Robinson, now professionally known as Ray Charles. Born in 1930 in Albany, Georgia, Ray Charles moved with his family to Greenville, Florida whereby the age of seven he had progressively lost his vision due to glaucoma. In 1937, R.C. Robinson was sent to the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind in St. Augustine, Florida where he attended until the death of his mother in 1945. Fifteen years old at that time, R.C. Robinson moved to Jacksonville in 1945 to pursue a career as a musician. He lived with family friends at 633 West Church Street directly behind Genovar’s Hall, which at that time still housed the popular Lenape Tavern. While in LaVilla, Robinson hung around the Musician Union office (Local 632) at Clara White where he honed his playing skills and

⁹ Wood, p. 97
The Crisis Magazine, p.

¹⁰ Vertical File – Genovar’s Hall, Historic Preservation Archives, Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.
Florida Times Union / Jacksonville Journal, November 9, 1986, p. E-1.
Wayne W. Wood. *Jacksonville’s Architectural Heritage Landmarks for the Future*. (Jacksonville, Florida: University of North Florida Press, 1989), p. 92.

provided the opportunity to back up some of these musicians at local clubs. In 1946 Robinson left Jacksonville to go on tour of central Florida with Little Louis, “Tiny” York. After playing piano as sideman to several well-known entertainers, R.C. Robinson went on to stardom as Ray Charles.¹¹

With the end of state sponsored segregation, many African American residents and businesses left the LaVilla area to seek opportunities in other parts of the city. As a result, the economic and social vitality of LaVilla declined resulting in marginal businesses or empty commercial buildings and a predominance of low-income rental units. Continued lack of investment fostered significant deterioration of LaVilla’s building fabric resulting in numerous demolitions. Beginning in the 1990s LaVilla underwent major redevelopment as part of the River City Renaissance Program. The redevelopment took an urban renewal approach resulting in the demolition of nearly all residences and a significant number of commercial buildings to accommodate open space for new construction. The largest project in the redevelopment of LaVilla was the construction of the LaVilla School of the Arts (2000). Using a suburban development model, the school was located on a significant amount of property, which resulted in fracturing the traditional street grid and destroying much of the Ashley Street “Stroll.” This significant disruption of the street grid impacted connectivity within LaVilla and reduced its original sense of place.

Except for several landmark structures and a cluster of older commercial buildings along North Broad Street and North Jefferson Street, LaVilla is composed of large vacant parcels and a scattering of new construction, primarily apartments and offices. Significant buildings and sites that remain are spread out and disconnected except for those in the cluster of historic buildings along North Broad Street and North Jefferson Street. The remaining buildings reflect the once vibrant commercial and institutional uses found in this part of the neighborhood.

Constructed in c. 1927, the Whetsonian Building shared a similar history found in other parts of northern LaVilla and was part of the rich cultural tradition of the area. Common at the time of construction, the building was mix use with commercial on the first floor and residential on the second. From 1928 until the end of the historic period (1974), the Whetsonian had housed a variety of small businesses owned or catering to northern LaVilla’s Black residents. Well into the 1950s, the building always housed a grocery store at 801 North Jefferson Street starting with John Abraham Grocery Store in 1928, later owned and ran by M. Eswood, John Tubel, Harold L. Friedlin, and Louie’s Grocery Store and Market. Other long-term businesses included McNeill’s Drug Company, owned, and operated by Gertrude H. McNeill; Edna Chandler, hairdresser; Continental Investment Company, and E.&M. Beauty Salon. Different residents were listed each year in the city directories as well. Another established business that operated out of 801 North Jefferson Street was Bill’s Barbecue that opened in 1949 and stayed at that location until 1973. The Apothecary Shop (pharmacy) opened in the Whetsonian in 1955 and was in business at that address until 1973. In 1975 only two businesses were listed, Broadcast T.V. Shop and the Starlite Diner. By 1978, the Starlite Diner was replaced by Jim’s Diner which was still in business in

¹¹ Michael Lydon, *Ray Charles, Man and Music*. (New York: Riverhead Books, Penguin Putnam, Inc., 1998), pp. 29 – 38.

1985. By the late 1980s, the city directories listed no businesses or residents at 801 North Jefferson Street.¹²

The building took on a new significance with its purchase by Walter Whetstone in 1998. Born in Jacksonville in January of 1937, Walter Whetstone attended Oakland Elementary, and Matthew W. Gilbert High School in East Jacksonville. Starting at the age of fourteen he worked as a Western Union bicycle messenger before serving in the U.S. Army at the age of twenty-three. Around this time, Whetstone married Dorothy Jean Thomas in 1959 that continued for 59 years until his death in 2018. After his military service he continued working as a bicycle messenger, as well as part time with the Gulf Life Insurance Company while attending Edward Waters College in the evenings. After graduating from Edward Waters College in 1968, Whetstone began working full time with Gulf Life Insurance Company. During his successful career as agent with the company, he won numerous awards such as the life membership of the Million Dollar Round Table, a financial professionals' organization and selected for the Gulf Life Insurance Company Hall of Fame. Walter Whetstone also was involved in community service working with the Boys Scouts of America, 100 Black Men of Jacksonville and the David H. Dwight Young Men Christian Association (YMCA).¹³

Although living in Springfield, Whetstone purchased the condemned two-story brick building at 801 North Jefferson Street, northeast corner of North Jefferson Street and West Union Street. Condemned and slated for demolition, Whetstone at the age of 61 saved the building at the last minute. The building's sewer lines were disconnected in anticipation of demolition. He opened the interior of the building by removing walls between three of the commercial units. With the purchase of the building, he began to turn it into one of the most recognizable landmarks in Downtown Jacksonville. Charlie Whetstone, his father, drove an ice truck and began to pick up a variety of things thrown out by others. Walter continued this tradition but added antiques, artifacts and art obtained from thrift stores, antique stores, garage sales and estate sales. Each item was selectively displayed on the interior and exterior of the building creating an eclectic collection that turned the building into a single work of folk art. Known for his kindness and gracefulness, Whetstone was quick to invite curious visitors attracted to the building to come in and review the collection in more detail. He also stated that if James Smithson could have his collection at the Smithsonian Institute, then he could display his at the Whetsonian.¹⁴

The building and its eccentric collection drew the attention of Mike Wolfe and Frank Fritz who visited the Whetsonian as part of their show, "American Pickers". Wolfe aptly described Whetstone on his show, "*You can tell that Walter has the eye of an artist*". "*The way he's placed them almost transcends them into art. What Walter did was genius. He surrounded*

¹² Jacksonville City Directories, 1926 to 1989.

¹³ *Walter Whetstone Obituary, January 7, 1927 – May 4, 2018, Aaron and Burney Funeral Home and Cremation Services (Obituary/Walter -Whetstone/Sympathy – Landing.*

¹⁴ "LaVilla: Whetsonian", Tim Gilmore, 10/3/2012, <https://jaxpsychogeo.com/the-center-of-the-city/Whetsonian>. "LaVilla: Whetsonian's Last Days? The Mural of Whetstone's Life", Tim Gilmore, 11/18/2016. <https://jaxpsychogeo.com/the-center-of-the-city/Whetsonian>.

Jacksonville.com, *The Florida Times Union*, "The Whetsonian, A Masterpiece of Outside Art and a Treasure Trove of Collective History", Tim Gilmore, December 30, 2016.

Jacksonville.com, *The Florida Times Union*, "Curious Jax: The Whetsonian Was His Smithsonian", Sandy Strickland, February 17, 2020.

himself with his collection but did it in a way for others to enjoy it too” (Strickland). As a folk artist Whetstone is part of tradition of “outsider artist” with no formal art education or training who produce works for the sake of expressing their creativity rather than necessarily for money or fame. The Whetsonian has been described as a “masterpiece of outsider art” (Gilmore).¹⁵

Whetstone’s collection space also included the old Atlanta Life Insurance Company building next door at the southeast corner of North Jefferson Street and West State Street. Also purchased by Whetstone in 1998, the Mid-Modern style building was constructed by W.G. Lumpkin, Jr. in 1965 from a design by Jacksonville architect, Emilio Zeller III.¹⁶ Originating from the Atlanta Benevolent and Protective Association formed in 1905, the Atlanta Life Insurance Company was founded in 1922 by former slave, Alonzo Herndon, who became Atlanta’s most wealthy African American.¹⁷ As part of their expansion into other states, the Atlanta Life Insurance Company acquired Jacksonville based, Afro-American Life Insurance Company in the 1990s.

B Its location is the site of a significant local, state, or national event.

It is the determination of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 801 North Jefferson Street, the Whetstonian Building, does not meet this landmark criterion.

C It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation.

It is the determination of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 801 North Jefferson Street, the Whetstonian Building, does not meet this landmark criterion.

D It is identified as the work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, state, or nation.

It is the determination of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 801 North Jefferson Street, the Whetstonian Building, does not meet this landmark criterion.

E Its value as a building is recognized for the quality of its architecture, and it retains sufficient elements showing its architectural significance.

It is the determination of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 801 North Jefferson Street, the Whetstonian Building, does not meet this landmark criterion.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Jacksonville Building Permit, #189, April 2, 1965.

¹⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Atlanta_Life&oldid=1182376219

F It has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.

It is the determination of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 801 North Jefferson Street, the Whetstonian Building, does not meet this landmark criterion.

G. Its suitability for preservation or restoration.

In utilizing this criterion, it has been the practice of the Planning and Development Department to evaluate proposed landmarks based on evidence of significant exterior alterations that have negatively impacted character-defining features, as well as represent alterations difficult, costly, or impossible to reverse. Further, the degree and nature of any exterior deterioration, as well as the evidence of long term and potentially on-going neglect are also a factor in evaluating potential landmarks for their suitability for preservation or restoration.

Both the Whetstonian and the old Atlanta Life Insurance Company have been altered in different ways, usually for displaying the collection or for security reasons. However, the significance of both buildings has grown beyond its architecture but now how it functions as a single work of folk art. Therefore, its preservation has been focused on preserving the buildings themselves but also to incorporate the collection into future reuse and rehabilitation plans. In the current plans the first floor of the Whetstonian will house a food court providing affordable dining with the second being used for public gatherings and meetings. The third floor will be a rooftop cigar lounge that will feature vintage whisky, spirits, beer, and wine along with a humidor to display prime cigars. The old Atlanta Life Insurance Company will house an administrative office and a small museum. The Whetstonian collection will be inventoried and displayed on walls and the small museum or appropriately stored as needed.

RECOMMENDATION

Since the agent of the property owner is the sponsor of the designation, at least two of the seven criteria must be met. In reviewing the application, the Planning and Development Department has found the application to meet two of the seven criteria. Based on the findings of this report, the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department recommends that the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission **APPROVE** the designation of 801 North Jefferson Street, the Whetstonian, **(LM-24-03)** as a City of Jacksonville Landmark.