

City of Jacksonville Landmark Designation Report

Slappey Building (Palmer Building) *at* 315, 317 West Forsyth Street

LM-24-02

March 27, 2024



Application Prepared By:

Spencer Jones
Underdascope Enterprise, LLC
315 West Forsyth Street
Jacksonville, Florida, 32202

Property Owner:

Spencer Jones
Underdascope Enterprise, LLC
315 West Forsyth Street
Jacksonville, Florida, 32202

I. Planning and Development Department – Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendation

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

**LM-24-02
Slappey Building (Palmer Building)
315, 317 West Forsyth Street
Jacksonville, Florida 32202**

GENERAL LOCATION: North side of Forsyth Street West, between Pearl Street North and Julia Street North in the Downtown National Register

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-24-02**. The owner of the property is:

Underdascope Enterprise, LLC
317 West Forsyth Street
Jacksonville, Florida 32202

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 315, 317 West Forsyth 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 315, 317 West Forsyth Street as a Landmark was published in the *Jacksonville 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 315, 317 West Forsyth 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 structure located at 315, 317 West Forsyth Street and 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 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 **four of the seven** criteria. The **four** 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 Slappey (Palmer) Building has significance as one of the few remaining examples of the commercial buildings constructed in Downtown Jacksonville during the second period of significant new construction following the Great Fire of May 3, 1901. The destruction caused by the 1901 fire ushered in a new era of growth in Downtown Jacksonville that is often referred as the Jacksonville Renaissance (1901 – 1920). The business opportunities caused by the fire had attracted numerous architects, builders, and investors from different parts of the country. New construction in the Downtown area began to reflect a variety of architectural styles popular during the first quarter of the twentieth century such as the traditional Colonial, Neo-classical, and Gothic Revivals interspersed with the more modernistic designs of the Prairie School and the Chicago school of commercial architecture.

The second period of significant new construction in Downtown Jacksonville following the 1901 fire coincided with the Great Florida Land Boom, a period of frenzied speculative development that forever changed the landscape of Florida. Although South Florida received the lion's share of development, virtually every section of the state experienced significant growth during the boom. Jacksonville became a primary departure point for visitors entering Florida. For example, in early 1925 some 20-25 trains were arriving at the city each day. The Chamber of Commerce reported that over 150,000 automobiles had passed over the St. Johns River Bridge (Acosta Bridge) during the spring of 1925. In July of that year alone, building permits issued totaled \$1,177,383, ranking Jacksonville sixth in the state in new construction behind the major cities of the southern peninsula. Stimulated by the Florida Land Boom, construction of these buildings also reflected Jacksonville's role as Florida's dominant commercial and financial center during the first quarter of the century.

The Slappey Building, originally known as the Palmer Building, was constructed for the Palmer and Palmer Insurance Company in 1925. W. Henry Slappey of the General Insurance Agency purchased the building in 1950 and subsequently renamed the building after himself. This two-story commercial building is affixed to two (2) other structures: the old First Federal Savings & Loan Building and the Hamby Building. These two-story structures were designed as multi-tenant rental facilities. Over the years, the building has been used as an office space, a rug and antique shop, restaurant (Akel's Deli), and presently, Indulgence Southern Bistro.

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

It is the determination of the Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 315, 317 West Forsyth Street 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 Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 315, 317 West Forsyth Street 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.

This building is identified as the work of master architects William Mulford Marsh and Harold Frederick Saxelbye of the firm Marsh and Saxelbye. They designed the Slappey (Palmer) Building while construction was handled by the Gerbich and Haugard Company. A native of Jacksonville, William Mulford Marsh (1889 - 1946) began his architectural practice around 1912. Prior to joining in partnership with Harold Saxelbye in 1919, Marsh designed several Prairie-style buildings in Jacksonville. Born in Hull, England, Harold Frederick Saxelbye (1885 - 1964) came to New York to practice architecture in 1904. In 1913 he moved to Jacksonville to design the Mason Hotel (Mayflower). After a brief association with architects Talley & Summer, Saxelbye entered a partnership with Marsh that lasted twenty-seven years. During that period between 1919 and 1946, Marsh & Saxelbye was the most prolific architectural firm in Jacksonville, especially during the Florida Land Boom of the 1920's. The firm is noted for many excellent commercial, institutional, and residential designs in Jacksonville and throughout the state.

Many of the elaborate residential designs found in San Marco, San Jose Estates, Avondale, and Ortega are attributed to Marsh & Saxelbye. Noted commercial and institutional designs by Marsh & Saxelbye in downtown include the Levy Building, 135 West Adams Street (1927); Hildebrandt Building, 300 West Adams Street (1926-27); Taliaferro Memorial Building, 256 East Church Street (1923-24); Title & Trust Company of Florida, 200 East Forsyth Street (1928-29); Hamby Building, 325 West Forsyth Street (1925); 225 North Laura Street (1923 alteration); Atlantic National Bank Annex, 118 West Adams Street (1925 -26); Olmstead Motor Company Building, 802 North Laura Street (1927-28); Old Jacksonville Police Headquarters, 711 North Liberty Street (1926); Groover-Stewart Drug Company Building, 25 North Market Street (1925); Buckman & Ulmer Building, 29-33 West Monroe Street (1925); South Atlantic Investment

Building, 37-41 West Monroe Street (1925); the Western Union Building, North Laura Street (1930 – 31); U.S. Post Office & Courthouse, 311 West Monroe Street, in association with Paul P. Cret of Philadelphia and James D. Wetmore of Washington D.C. (1932-33). Other nearby buildings designed by the firm include Crane Company Building, 1007 West Bay Street (1930); and First Church of Christ Scientist, 1116 North Laura Street (1921).

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

The design of the Slappey (Palmer) Building meets this criterion by embodying a variation of the Masonry Vernacular Style, which is usually the work of lay or self-taught builders using common masonry construction. Divided into the two horizontal zones, this building has a symmetrical façade that is embellished with cast stone detailing. The exterior wall fabric is brick and the ground level detailing consists of two storefronts and a center entrance. The entrance and window above it are embellished with elaborate cast stone detailing, which includes a cartouche and swag motifs. The second story has a drop cornice and pair nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows. The two zones are divided by a projecting beltcourse.

The design of the building also reflects a variation of a commercial style referred to as the two-part vertical block. A style of high-rise architecture that developed in American cities and towns during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, buildings with the two-part vertical block design are characterized with one or more elevations broken into two major horizontal divisions. The style was used to simplify and unify the design of high rise buildings. The two-part vertical block originated centuries ago with the basic two-story shop-home concept. In response to a growing demand for commercial space and the increase in urban land value in the second half of the nineteenth century, multi-story buildings became more common particularly as a result of new structural framing systems of steel and reinforced concrete. Also, with the advancements in the mechanization of stone and wood cutting, casting of iron and later the molding of cast stone and multi-colored and textured terra cotta, there was a significant increase in the number and variety of building ornamentation.

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 Planning and Development Department that the subject property at 315, 317 West Forsyth Street 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 ongoing neglect is also a factor in evaluating potential landmarks for their suitability for preservation or restoration. Not having any evidence of

significant exterior deterioration, the structure has been well maintained over the years. According to archival records and permitting, the structures do not show any evidence of being significantly altered, thereby retaining their historical integrity and fabric. The only known alteration is the metal frame fixed show windows located along the first-floor front elevation.

RECOMMENDATION

In reviewing the application, the Planning and Development Department has found the application to meet **four 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 315, 317 West Forsyth Street (**LM-24-02**) as a City of Jacksonville Landmark.

II. Designation Application



REQUEST FOR LOCAL DESIGNATION OF LANDMARK OR LANDMARK SITE
City of Jacksonville Historic Preservation

1. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Historic Name:

Slappey Building

Other Names:

Palmer Building

FMSF Number:

(if known)

Designation: (check all applicable)

☐ Residential

☒ Commercial

☐ Institutional

☐ Public

☐ Industrial

☐ Archaeologic

☐ Cemetery

☐ Other: _____

2. LOCATION

Street name & number:

315, 317, 319 W Forsyth St.

City or town:

Jax, Fla.

Zip Code:

32202

State:

Fla.

County:

Duval

Real estate number(s):

073788-0000

3. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of construction and additions:

1923 - 1999 - 2021 -

Significant historical associations:

Built for the Palmer & Palmer Insurance Company

Original use:

insurance company/agency

Present use:

Restaurant / multi tenant offices

Physical description (basic design, construction and conditions):

cast concrete ornamentation; arched entranceway topped by cartouche & swag motifs.

4. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following is a list of the cultural, historical, architectural, or archaeological significance with reference to all applicable local designation criteria outlined in section 307.104(f), of the Jacksonville Ordinance Code.

Mark "x" in any applicable boxes for the criteria to qualify for a landmark, using the space to the right to specify how it is applicable. If more space is needed please use a continuation sheet and write the name of the potential landmark on each sheet.

☒ Its value as a significant reminder of the cultural, historical, architectural, or archaeological heritage of the city, state, or nation

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

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

☒ 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.

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

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

☒ Its suitability for preservation or restoration

Ed Ball's office was upstairs
on the second floor

Ed Ball occupied second floor
office space

Marsh & Saxelbye built in
1920's

cast concrete ornamentation
arched entranceway topped
by cartouche & swag motif



Great condition, fully able to
be restored

5. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

- ☐ A minimum of five (5) labeled (with location and description) photographs of the site
- ☐ Area map showing property location
- ☐ Any available historic and or existing drawings such as elevations, floor plans, diagrams, etc.
- ☐ Legal Description

6. SPONSORSHIP STATEMENT

I am aware of the proposal for designation of the subject property or properties listed above as a City of Jacksonville landmark or landmark site and am aware of the procedures for review of the proposal by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission and the Jacksonville City Council. I understand that I will be notified of the date and place of any public meetings at which the proposal will be considered by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission and the City Council. I am also aware that if designated, any construction activities affecting the subject properties including alterations, new construction, demolition and relocation, will require a consistency review through an application for a Certification of Appropriateness. If the proposed designation is denied, I am aware that I must wait one year to re-apply.

Signature of property owner: [Signature] Date: 01-16-2024
Printed name: Spencer R. Jones Phone number: 904 609-5381
Email: IndulgenceSouthernBistro@gmail.com
Address: 315-317-319 W. Forsyth St City: Jax Zip: 32202

Signature of applicant (if different from property owner): _____ Date: _____
(representatives need to provide a signed and notarized letter from the property owner(s) identifying them as their official agent.)

Printed name: _____ Phone number: ()

Email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Sponsorship other than the owner

Consistent with Jacksonville Ordinance Code 307.104(a), the proposal for designation as a City of Jacksonville landmark or landmark site is being sponsored by: _____

Signature of sponsor: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

Printed name: _____ Phone number: () Email: _____

**POSITION AFFIDAVIT
FOR LOCAL DESIGNATION OF LANDMARK OR LANDMARK SITE**

City of Jacksonville Historic Preservation

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Historic Name: _____ Other Names: _____

Street Name and Number: _____

Zip Code: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Real Estate Number(s): _____

DECLARATION OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

In accordance with Section 307.104(j)(1-7), Ordinance Code, the Commission shall determine whether, based upon the evidence, the nominated landmark, or landmark site, does or does not meet the criteria for designation. In the event the owner of the property expresses an objection regarding local landmark status, at least four of the seven criteria must be met. If the owner of the subject property does not express such objection, only two of the seven criteria must be met.

☐

I do not oppose my property being nominated for local landmark status.

☐

I hereby object to my property being nominated for local landmark status.

Signature of Property Owner: _____

Printed Name of Property Owner: _____

Date: _____

**STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF DUVAL**

Sworn to and subscribed and acknowledged before me by means of ☐ physical presence or ☐ online notarization, this _____ day of _____, 20____, by _____, who is personally known to me or who has produced _____ as identification and who took an oath.

(Signature of NOTARY PUBLIC)

(Printed name of NOTARY PUBLIC)

State of Florida at Large.

My commission expires: _____

POSITION AFFIDAVIT
FOR LOCAL DESIGNATION OF LANDMARK OR LANDMARK SITE
City of Jacksonville Historic Preservation

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Historic Name: Slappy Building Other Names: _____
Street Name and Number: 315-317-319 W Forsyth St
Zip Code: 32202 City: Jax State: Florida
Real Estate Number(s): 073788-0000

DECLARATION OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION

In accordance with Section 307.104(j)(1-7), Ordinance Code, the Commission shall determine whether, based upon the evidence, the nominated landmark, or landmark site, does or does not meet the criteria for designation. In the event the owner of the property expresses an objection regarding local landmark status, at least four of the seven criteria must be met. If the owner of the subject property does not express such objection, only two of the seven criteria must be met.

☒

I do not oppose my property being nominated for local landmark status.

☐

I hereby object to my property being nominated for local landmark status.

Signature of Property Owner: 

Printed Name of Property Owner: Spencer R. Jones

Date: 01-16-2024

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF DUVAL

Sworn to and subscribed and acknowledged before me by means of [☒] physical presence or [☐] online notarization, this 16th day of January 2024, by Spencer R. Jones, who is personally known to me or who has produced Florida Driver License J520-796-77-008-0 Exp 1/8/2024 as identification and who took an oath.




(Signature of NOTARY PUBLIC)

Yasmine Walthour
(Printed name of NOTARY PUBLIC)

State of Florida at Large. 09/23/2024
My commission expires: _____

III. Legal Description and Location Map

Legal Description

39-2S-26E

JAX HARTS MAP

**E 15FT OF W 52.5FT OF S 100FT,
W 28.5FT OF E 1/2 LOT 2 BLK 47**

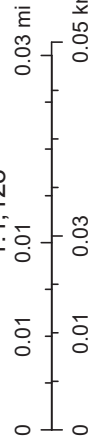
RE # 073788 0000

Duval Map



March 22, 2024

1:1,128



IV. Proof of Public Notice

STATE OF FLORIDA,

S.S.

COUNTY OF DUVAL,

Before the undersigned authority personally appeared Nichol Stringer, who on oath says that she is the Publisher's Representative of the JACKSONVILLE DAILY RECORD, a weekly newspaper published at Jacksonville, in Duval County, Florida; that the attached copy of advertisement, being a Notice of Public Hearing on Application to Designate a City of Jacksonville Historic Landmark

in the matter of LM-24-02 315 West Forsyth Street

in the Court, was published in said newspaper by print in the issues of 2/15/24.

Affiant further says that the JACKSONVILLE DAILY RECORD complies with all legal requirements for publication in Chapter 50, Florida Statutes.

*This notice was published on both
jaxdailyrecord.com and floridapublicnotices.com.



Nichol Stringer

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th day of February, 2024 by Nichol Stringer who is personally known to me.

RHONDA L. FISHER
Notary Public, State of Florida
My Comm. Expires 06/16/2024
Commission No. HH43566



Seal

Notary Public, State of Florida

PROOF OF PUBLICATION
DUVAL COUNTY

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC
HEARING ON
APPLICATION TO
DESIGNATE
THE SLAPPEY BUILDING AT
315 WEST FORSYTH STREET
LM-24-02
AS A CITY OF
JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC
LANDMARK**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on February 28, 2024 at 3:00 P.M., the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Jacksonville will hold a public hearing for the consideration of the Slappey Building at 315 West Forsyth Street as a City of Jacksonville Historic Landmark, pursuant to *Jacksonville Ordinance Code 307.104*. The public hearing will be on the 8th floor of the Ed Ball Building, 214 North Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Florida.

Exhibit A

Legal Description
39-2S-26E
JAX HARTS MAP
E 15FT OF W 52.5FT
OF S 100FT,
W 28.5FT OF E 1/2
LOT 2 BLK 47
RE # 073788 0000

This application (LM-24-02) is being sponsored by Spencer Jones. A copy of the application may be examined in the Offices of the Planning and Development Department, 3rd Floor, Ed Ball Building, 214 North Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Florida, (904) 255-7800. All interested parties are notified to be present and will be heard at the *Public Hearing*.

DATED this 7th day of February, 2024.

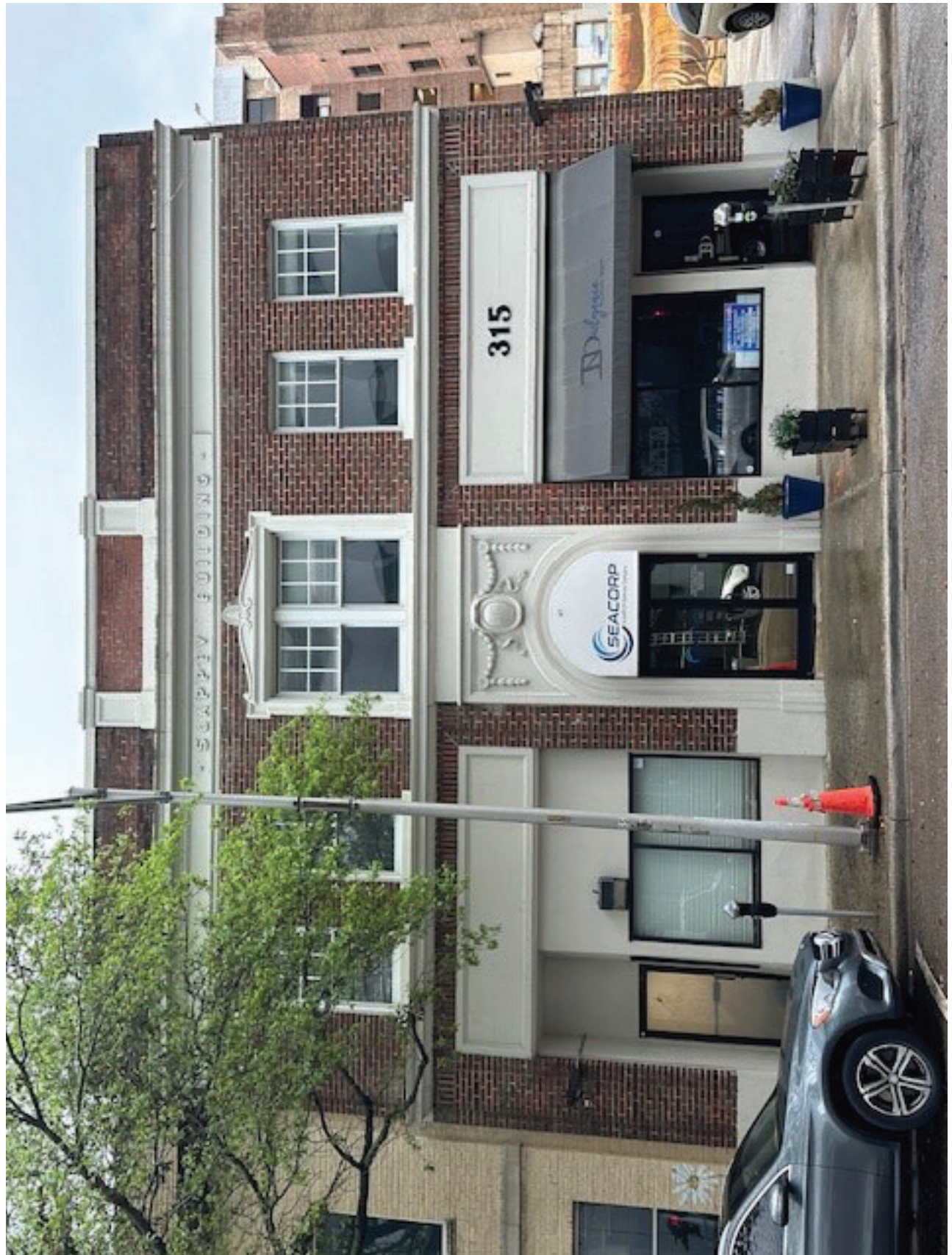
Jack C. Demetree, III
Chairman
Jacksonville Historic
Preservation Commission
City of Jacksonville

Feb. 15 00 (24-01012D)

V. List of Property Owners Located within 350 Feet of
the Proposed Landmark

RE	LNAME	LNAME2	MAIL_ADDR1	MAIL_ADDR2	MAIL_ADDR3	MAIL_CITY	MAIL_STATE	MAIL_ZIP
073793 0025	300 ADAMS STREET LLC		835 N BEACH ST			DAYTONA BEACH	FL	32114
073793 0005	300 JAX LLC		835 N BEACH ST			DAYTONA BEACH	FL	32114
073786 0000	331 W FORSYTH STREET LLC		331 W FORSYTH ST			JACKSONVILLE	FL	32202
073808 0000	AK PEARL LLC		1450 BRICKELL AVE STE 1450			MIAMI	FL	33131
073789 0000	AMKIN JULIA LLC		1450 BRICKELL AVE STE 1450			MIAMI	FL	33131
073779 0000	AMKIN WEST BAY LLC		1450 BRICKELL AVE STE 1410			MIAMI	FL	33131
073785 0000	BDC&S LLC		341 W FORSYTH ST			JACKSONVILLE	FL	32202
073768 1000	CITY OF JACKSONVILLE		C/O CITY REAL ESTATE DIV	214 N HOGAN ST 10TH FL		JACKSONVILLE	FL	32202
073787 0000	KORE PROPERTIES INC		PO BOX 330108			ATLANTIC BEACH	FL	32233
073812 0000	METROPOLITAN PARKING SOLUTIONS LLC		10201 CENTURION PKWY N SUITE 402			JACKSONVILLE	FL	32256
073794 0000	NEW CANTON RESTAURANT INC		8118 BAYMEADOWS CIR E #9			JACKSONVILLE	FL	32256-1843
073794 0100	RCS 225 PEARL STREET LLC ET AL		C/O REAL CAPITAL SOLUTIONS INC	371 CENTENNIAL PKWY STE 200		LOUISVILLE	CO	80027
073763 0000	TALARA INVESTMENT GROUP LLC		7880 GATE PKWY STE 300			JACKSONVILLE	FL	32256
073788 0000	UNDERDASCOPE ENTERPRISE LLC		317 W FORSYTH ST			JACKSONVILLE	FL	32202
	URBAN CORE		BRYANT SHUMAKER	303 4TH ST W		JACKSONVILLE	FL	32206

VI. Photographs and Images







NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
WILL HOLD PUBLIC
HEARINGS CONCERNING THE
HISTORIC DESIGNATION

FOR SLAPPEY BUILDING

TELEPHONE 255-7800 FOR

INFORMATION ON LM-24-02