

**RESOLUTION 2020-188**

A RESOLUTION CONCERNING AN APPEAL FILED BY FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA, INC. REGARDING THE JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION'S DECISION TO DENY THE DEMOLITION PERMIT APPLICATION FOR THE STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 125 WEST CHURCH STREET, WHICH IS A CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT, PURSUANT TO SECTION 320.407, *ORDINANCE CODE*; ADOPTING RECOMMENDED FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE LAND USE AND ZONING COMMITTEE; REQUESTING ONE CYCLE EMERGENCY PASSAGE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**Record of the Proceedings  
Before the Jacksonville Historic  
Preservation Commission**

Prepared by:  
The Office of the General Counsel

**LUZ APPEAL 3/17/2020**

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1 Introduced by the Land Use and Zoning Committee:  
2  
3

4 **RESOLUTION 2020-188**

5 A RESOLUTION CONCERNING AN APPEAL FILED BY  
6 FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA,  
7 INC. REGARDING THE JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC  
8 PRESERVATION COMMISSION'S DECISION TO DENY THE  
9 DEMOLITION PERMIT APPLICATION FOR THE  
10 STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 125 WEST CHURCH STREET,  
11 WHICH IS A CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE WITHIN THE  
12 DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT,  
13 PURSUANT TO SECTION 320.407, *ORDINANCE CODE*;  
14 ADOPTING RECOMMENDED FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS  
15 OF THE LAND USE AND ZONING COMMITTEE;  
16 REQUESTING ONE CYCLE EMERGENCY PASSAGE;  
17 PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.  
18

19 **WHEREAS**, First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida, Inc.,  
20 the owner of the structure located at 125 West Church Street,  
21 applied for a permit to demolish the structure known as the Sunday  
22 School Building, a contributing structure in the Downtown  
23 Jacksonville Historic District; and

24 **WHEREAS**, on February 26, 2020, at its regularly scheduled  
25 public meeting, the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission  
26 denied the demolition permit application;

27 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 320.407(b)(3), *Ordinance Code*,  
28 the applicant filed a Notice of Appeal within 14 calendar days from  
29 the date of the Commission meeting; and

30 **WHEREAS**, the Notice of Appeal was timely filed and the  
31 applicant, as the property owner, has standing to appeal;

1           **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

2           **Section 1. Adoption of recommended findings and**  
3 **conclusions.** The Council has reviewed the record of proceedings  
4 regarding the demolition permit application, which is in the file  
5 in the City Council Legislative Services Division and the Planning  
6 and Development Department, and has considered the recommended  
7 findings and conclusions of the Land Use and Zoning Committee. The  
8 recommended findings and conclusions of the Land Use and Zoning  
9 Committee are hereby adopted and this Resolution is the final  
10 action of the Council.

11           **Section 2. Requesting One Cycle Emergency Passage**  
12 **Pursuant to Council Rule 4.901 Emergency.** One cycle emergency  
13 passage of this legislation has been requested by the applicant.  
14 Subsection 307.420, *Ordinance Code*, provides that the Land Use and  
15 Zoning Committee and City Council may consider this legislation on  
16 an emergency basis.

17           **Section 3. Effective Date.** The adoption of this  
18 Resolution shall be deemed to constitute a quasi-judicial action of  
19 the City Council and shall become effective upon the signature by  
20 the Council President and Council Secretary.

21  
22 Form Approved:

23  
24           /s/ Kealey A. West          

25 Office of General Counsel

26 Legislation Prepared by: Kealey A. West

27 GC-#1344859-v5-Appeal\_125\_W\_Church\_Street.docx

**NOTICE OF APPEAL FROM A DECISION OF THE  
JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
RENDERED PURSUANT TO §320.407, ORDINANCE CODE**

**I. INSTRUCTIONS**

As provided in §320.407, Ordinance Code, an owner who has applied for a permit to demolish a structure listed as a contributing structure within a historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places may appeal a decision of the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission denying the permit. An appeal must be filed within 14 calendar days after the meeting at which the Commission denied the permit. To appeal a Commission decision rendered pursuant to §320.407, complete and submit this form to the Legislative Services Division, Suite 430, City Hall-St. James, 117 W. Duval Street, Jacksonville, Florida 32202 with the supporting documents (see Section III). A list of persons who spoke at the Commission meeting about the application (see Sec. III (3)) may be obtained from the Secretary to the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission at the Planning and Development Department. For questions regarding the appeal process, please contact the Secretary to the Historic Preservation Commission at (904) 255-7852.

**II. NOTICE OF APPEAL**

I, First Baptist Church, hereby file this Notice of Appeal from the decision of  
PRINT NAME CLEARLY  
the City of Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission concerning demolition permit application  
B-20-262892.000  
number \_\_\_\_\_. I am the person who filed the application for the demolition permit.

**III. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

To complete your Notice of Appeal, you must submit the following documents with this form:

- (1) A copy of the demolition permit. Exhibit "A"
- (2) A description of the specific error(s) you believe the Commission committed. Please provide this description in the space below:

See Exhibit "B" attached.

If you need additional space, please attach a separate sheet.

(3) The list of the persons (names and complete addresses), certified by the Secretary of the Historic Preservation Commission, who testified before the Commission about the application, or who provided a qualifying written statement to the Commission about the application See Exhibit "C" attached.

**IV. NOTIFICATION FEE**

Notification fees must be paid at the time your Notice of Appeal is filed with the Legislative Services Division or your Appeal will not be accepted. Make checks payable to TAX COLLECTOR.

Notification Fee: \$2.00 for each notification

11:41 AM 8-11-2020

V. CONTACT INFORMATION

Name (Printed): T.R. Hainline, Jr., Agent

Address: 1301 Riverplace Blvd., Suite 1500  
Jacksonville, FL 32207

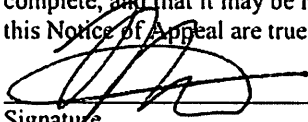
Daytime Phone: (904) 346-5531

Evening Phone: (904) 673-1630

E-mail address: THainline@rtlaw.com

VI. CERTIFICATION (Please read, sign and date the following statement)

I have read and understand the information contained in this Notice of Appeal. I hereby certify that I have provided all the information required under §320.407, Ordinance Code, and I understand that if this Notice of Appeal is incomplete, my appeal will not be processed until it is complete, and that it may be rejected for incompleteness. I further certify that all my statements in this Notice of Appeal are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

3/3/2020  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

<END OF FORM>

## Exhibit B to Notice of Appeal

### **SPECIFIC ERRORS COMMITTED BY THE JACKSONVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

This is an appeal of a vote by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission (the "Commission") on February 26, 2020, to deny a demolition permit sought by First Baptist Church (the Church") for a structure located at 125 West Church Street (the "Structure"). At its meeting on February 26, the Commission voted 5-2 to deny the demolition permit.

#### **The Commission's Errors**

The Commission committed the following specific errors in its decision:

- 1. Some Commission members expressly declined to review the only information which Section 320.407 requires to be submitted by an applicant—namely, the "reason for demolition."** Because the Code requires this information to be included in the application, it is necessarily relevant and should have been considered. Commission members expressly rejected any consideration of this information. It was error for the Commission not to consider it.
- 2. The Commission expressly applied to its determination on the demolition permit the criteria set forth in Section 307.104 for a determination on the landmark status of a building. It was an error for the Commission to apply the criteria in Section 307.104 to the Church's demolition permit.** Simply put, the Code does not provide for the application of these landmark criteria in the review of a demolition permit. The only information which Section 320.407 requires to be submitted by the applicant is the "reason for demolition." It was error for the Commission to convert the review of the demolition permit into a preliminary or tentative review of the landmark designation of the Structure.
- 3. To the extent the Commission applied the criteria in Section 307.104 to the demolition permit—and assuming, for the sake of argument, that the Commission may apply the criteria in Section 307.104 to a demolition permit—the Commission erroneously applied the criteria.**
  - (a) The Commission made no findings as to whether or how many of the landmark criteria are met by the structure.** There are seven criteria in Section 307.104. Because the Church objects to any designation of the structure as a landmark, the structure must meet four (4) of the criteria to be designated as a landmark. See, Section 307.104(j). In denying the demolition permit, the Commission made no findings regarding compliance with any or all the seven criteria. Rather, several members stated their individual views regarding the criteria. Some members commented as to some criteria, and some members commented as to all criteria. It is impossible for the Church to know from the Commission's Final Order or the public discussion during the hearing which criteria or how many of the criteria were determined by a majority of the Commission to have been met by the Structure. In other words, the Church does not know precisely why the demolition permit was denied. This violates Section 166.033, Florida Statutes (2019), and other more fundamental rights of the Church as applicant.
  - (b) Some members rejected any consideration of relevant contextual facts—for example, conditions in the Historic Downtown District, conditions in the immediate area of the**

**Structure, activation of the street on which the Structure is located, the significance of the First Baptist Church as an institution located in Downtown for more than 180 years, and the Church's ongoing viability as an historic Downtown landowner and institution—in their application of the landmark criteria.** These Commission members stated that the Commission can consider only the Structure and not such contextual facts, but they also observed that the City Council can consider such other contextual facts. These Commission members cited no Code provisions supporting such a narrow interpretation of the Commission's application of the criteria or why the application of criteria in a landmark determination would be different as between the Commission and the City Council.

- (c) **Some Commission members arbitrarily applied the criteria in Section 307.104 and arbitrarily rejected facts and conclusions provided by experts who testified for the Church.** Some Commission members expressed arbitrary and wholly subjective views in interpreting and applying the criteria in Section 320.407 to the Church's application. In response, the Church presented the testimony of two expert architects that the Structure does not meet four of the criteria in Section 307.104 and is therefore not a landmark. Some Commission members rejected these experts' testimony based on the Commission members' own personal, subjective views. As a practical, real-world result, no amount of evidence or expert opinion can be offered to address criteria applied so subjectively.

**Background: The decision on a demolition permit vs. the decision on landmark status.**

The Commission's review and decision on the Church's demolition permit is governed by Section 320.407, City of Jacksonville Ordinance Code.

Section 320.407(b)(1) requires that an applicant for a demolition permit include only three pieces of information in its application: "the reason for the demolition, documentation of any effort that has been made to save the structure, and a copy of the most recent Property Appraiser card." The Church's application included this information; the Commission's Final Order found that the Church's application met all requirements.

Section 320.407(b)(2) provides, "If the Commission votes to deny the demolition permit application, **at the next meeting after it considered the demolition request ...** it shall also issue an advisory recommendation to the City Council on the structure's landmark status utilizing the criteria and procedures in [Section] 307.104 [of the Ordinance Code]."

**Thus, in a decision by the Commission on a demolition permit under Section 320.407, the Code does not provide or expressly contemplate that the landmark criteria in Section 307.104 will be applied or even considered.** Rather, the Code only requires the applicant to submit "the reason for demolition [etc.]." The only mention in Section 320.407 of the landmark criteria is in describing what criteria apply "in the next meeting after [the Commission] considered the demolition request ... ."

**Additionally, in a decision by the Commission on a demolition permit, the Code does not state the applicable burden of proof (who must show what), standard of review (for example, "competent substantial evidence"), or any applicable criteria.** Again, as stated above, the Code only requires the applicant to submit "the reason for demolition [etc.]."



As a matter of precedent, in decisions by the Commission on demolition permits, the staff submits a memorandum with a "preliminary evaluation" of the structure and an opinion regarding whether the structure "may" meet the criteria in Section 307.104. The Code does not require or even mention such a "preliminary evaluation" by the staff or the criteria applicable to the demolition permit decision. The staff's "preliminary evaluation" makes no recommendation on whether the demolition permit should be approved or denied. (In this instance, the item for the Church's application on the February 26, 2020 Commission agenda was marked "DENY," but, at the Church's request, staff clarified in its comments to the Commission that staff was making no recommendation.) Furthermore, neither the Code nor the staff's "preliminary evaluation" describes whether or to what extent the applicant may or must address the staff's "preliminary evaluation" or the criteria in Section 307.104.

In sum, there are no criteria applicable to the demolition decision, and there is no burden of proof or standard of review governing what evidence the parties provide. The only requirement for in Section 320.407(b)(2) is that the applicant provide the "reason for demolition [etc.]"

**Exhibits included as part of Exhibit B to Notice of Appeal and submitted to the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission by the Church at February 26 meeting.**

- Exhibit 1      Slide Presentation "Demolition Application of 125 W. Church Street"
- Exhibit 2-A    Resume of David J. Luke, AIA
- Exhibit 2-B    Resume of Jerry Traino, AIA, NCARB
- Exhibit 3      Response to Staff Report prepared by David J. Luke, AIA (Response in Red)

Speakers – Jacksonville Historic Preservation Meeting, February 26, 2020, First Baptist Church.

T.R. Hainline, 1301 Riverplace Boulevard, Jacksonville, FL – Support

Jerry Traino, 900 Johnnie Dodds Boulevard, Mt. Pleasant, SC – Support

David Luke, 3516 Barquentine Road, Jacksonville, FL – Support

Heath Lambert, 7659 Chipwood Lane, Jacksonville, FL – Support

Christy Frazier, 2236 St. Johns Avenue, Jacksonville, FL – Oppose

Andy Johnson, 13841 Breaksea Ct, Jacksonville, FL – (No support/oppose chosen)

Angela Schifanella, 1352 Avondale Avenue, Jacksonville, FL, Support Staff to deny COA.

Cindy Corey, 908 Ionia Street, Jacksonville, FL – Support Landmark Status

Steve Williams, 1852 Talbot Avenue, Jacksonville, FL – Oppose Demolition

Brandon Pouch, 2826 Post Street, Jacksonville, FL – Oppose

Kim Pryor, 245 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Jacksonville, FL – Oppose

Joey Vaughn, 2468 Atlantic Boulevard, Jacksonville, FL – Support Demolition

Amy Evenson, 2330 Hendricks Avenue, Jacksonville, FL – Support Demolition

Viviane Mau, 5568 Lamoya Avenue, Jacksonville, FL – Support Demolition

Roselle Van Nostrand, 1230 Talbot Avenue, Jacksonville, FL – Oppose

Jeannette Meadows, 8623 Marietta Meadows Court, Jacksonville, FL – Support Demolition

Ronda McDonald, 1120 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North, Jax Beach, FL – Oppose

Edward Sundie, 2954 Apache Avenue, Jacksonville, FL – Support

Nancy Hornberger, 5318 Coronet Drive, Jacksonville, FL – Support

Mike "Bug" – No Address Given – No Speaker Card – Voice Unintelligible

**BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION**

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA  
BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION

*Jacksville*

Application must be typed or printed in black. Complete all required fields.

<p><b>OFFICIAL USE ONLY</b></p> <p>REAL ESTATE NUMBER _____ STREET NUMBER _____ DIRECTION _____ UNIT SUITE _____ ZONING _____ ZONING APPROVAL _____ DATE ISSUED _____</p> <p>FINAL APPROVAL _____ ZONING NOTES _____ TOTAL PERMIT FEES _____</p> <p>NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT REQUIRED? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FIRE PLAN REVIEW FEE \$ _____</p>		<p><b>PROJECT IDENTIFICATION</b></p> <p>PROJECT NAME: FBC DEMO PERMIT PROJECT CONTACT: RON SUTTON PROJECT CONTACT PHONE: 904-387-2333 PERMIT ASSOCIATION: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> BASE PERMIT <input type="checkbox"/> SITE TREE PERMIT TEMPORARY TAG NUMBER _____</p>	
<p><b>PROPERTY OWNERSHIP DETAILS</b></p> <p>TYPE: Business FULL LEGAL NAME, AGENCY, OR BUSINESS: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MAILING ADDRESS: _____ OWNER CONTACT PHONE (904): 387-2333 OWNER E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____</p>		<p><b>BUILDING PERMIT ADDRESS</b> (This is the physical address of the actual work location.)</p> <p>STREET NUMBER: 125 STREET NAME: CHURCH UNIT SUITE: _____ ZIP CODE: 32202 INTERSECTING STREETS: _____ AND _____ LOT NO: LOTS 1,2,3 SUBDIVISION JAX HARTS MAP CITY DEVELOPMENT NUMBER: _____</p>	
<p><b>LICENSED CONTRACTOR</b></p> <p>COMPANY NAME: _____ NAME: CGC015338 - JOHN WILLIAMS, JR. LICENSE NUMBER: 9984 ADDRESS: 5215 HIGHWAY AV JACKSONVILLE, FL 32254 PHONE: 904-387-2333 FAX: _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS: jwilliams@williamsr.com</p>		<p><b>FEES</b></p> <p>NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: 904-387-1060 E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ MORTGAGE LENDER: _____ BONDING COMPANY: _____ NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____ MORTGAGE LENDER: _____</p>	
<p><b>TYPE OF PLANS</b></p> <p>OTHER: _____ MEP WORK: \$ 525000.00 CREDIT CARD/CHECK: _____</p>		<p><b>JOB COST</b></p> <p><b>PAYMENT METHOD</b></p> <p>BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WORK: DEMOLISH EXISTING SIX STORY STEEL-FRAME BUILDING</p>	
<p><b>WARNING TO OWNER—YOUR FAILURE TO RECORD A NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT MAY RESULT IN YOUR PAYING TWICE FOR IMPROVEMENTS POSTED ON THE JOB SITE BEFORE THE FIRST INSPECTION. IF YOU INTEND TO OBTAIN FINANCING, CONSULT WITH YOUR LENDER OR AN ATTORNEY BEFORE RECORDING YOUR NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT.</b></p> <p>Application is hereby made to obtain a permit to do the work and installations as indicated. I certify that no work or installation has commenced prior to the issuance of a permit and that all work will be performed to meet the standards of all laws regulating construction in this jurisdiction. I understand that a separate permit must be secured for ELECTRICAL WORK, PLUMBING, SIGNS, WELLS, POOLS, FURNACES, BOILERS, HEATERS, TANKS AND AIR CONDITIONERS, etc.</p> <p>OWNERS AFFIDAVIT—I certify that all the foregoing information is accurate and that all work will be done in compliance with all applicable laws regulating construction and zoning building official, as required by law.</p>			
<p><b>CONTRACTOR'S COMPENSATION</b></p> <p>I attest the Worker's Compensation information provided on this permit application is true and correct and that the applicant is in full compliance with the State of Florida Worker's Compensation laws.</p> <p>(Qualifier only) <b>CONTRACTOR AFFIRMATION</b></p>		<p><b>OWNER or AGENT</b></p> <p>Signed _____ Date _____ (If Agent, Power of Attorney or Agency Letter Required)</p> <p>Before me this _____ day of _____, 2021, _____ in the County of Duval, State of Florida, has personally appeared and affirms all statements and declarations herein are true and accurate.</p> <p>Notary Public at Large, State of _____, County of _____ Personally Known <input type="checkbox"/> or Produced Identification <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><b>WORKER'S COMPENSATION</b></p> <p>EXPIRATION DATE: 1/1/2021</p>		<p><b>OWNER or AGENT</b></p> <p>Signed _____ Date _____ (If Agent, Power of Attorney or Agency Letter Required)</p> <p>Before me this _____ day of _____, 2021, _____ in the County of Duval, State of Florida, has personally appeared and affirms all statements and declarations herein are true and accurate.</p> <p>Notary Public at Large, State of _____, County of _____ Personally Known <input type="checkbox"/> or Produced Identification <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

TYPE OF IMPROVEMENT		PROPOSED USE																											
Demolition  <small>* If you selected Non-Structural Siding above, then check the type of siding material:</small> <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum <input type="checkbox"/> Cementitious <input type="checkbox"/> Vinyl <input type="checkbox"/> Wood <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify _____ Nature of Work <input type="checkbox"/> Soft <input type="checkbox"/> Fascia <input type="checkbox"/> Siding		RESIDENTIAL	Units	NON-RESIDENTIAL																									
		<input type="checkbox"/> Apartments <input type="checkbox"/> Carport <input type="checkbox"/> Condominiums <input type="checkbox"/> Duplex <input type="checkbox"/> Garage <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Single Family <input type="checkbox"/> Townhouse <input type="checkbox"/> 3 or 4 Families		Church, Other Religious																									
Master Product Approval Number																													
DIMENSIONS		WATER SUPPLY	SEWAGE DISPOSAL	PRINCIPLE TYPE OF FRAME	NEW RESIDENTIAL PERMIT INFO																								
Number of Stories: 0 Building Height: 70.00 feet Total Floor Area (Sf): Enclosed: 22248 Unenclosed: 178 New Land Area: <input type="checkbox"/> square feet <input type="checkbox"/> acres Impervious Area Added For This Permit: <input type="checkbox"/> sq. ft <input type="checkbox"/> acres Altered Floor Story: Altered Floor Area (Sf): Enclosed: Unenclosed:		<input type="checkbox"/> Public City <input type="checkbox"/> Private Utility Company <input type="checkbox"/> Private Well  <b>S.I.C. CODE</b>  <b>MECHANICAL</b> HVAC: NO Total Cooling Capacity (Tons): Fire Sprinklers: NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Public City <input type="checkbox"/> Private Utility Company <input type="checkbox"/> Private Septic  <b>WHICH BUILDING CODE WAS USED FOR PROJECT?</b>  For demolition, renovation projects involving a commercial, institutional or industrial structure or apartment building of more than four dwelling units, the following provisions are applicable: 1. If renovation to asbestos present? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <b>Warning Action:</b> If asbestos is subsequently discovered, then the applicant shall immediately provide notice to the DER and AGD and amend this application. 2. Demolition: All applicants must provide Notice to DER and AGD regardless of whether asbestos is present.	<input type="checkbox"/> Masonry Block Bearing <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Frame <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Steel <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforced Concrete <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify _____	Single Family No. of Bedrooms: 0 Bathrooms: Full: 0 Partial: 0  Multi-Family One bedroom units: 0 Two bedroom units: 0 Three plus bedroom units: 0																								
<b>CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY:</b>		Occupancy Classification	Occupancy Load: 0	Live Loads: 0	Florida Building Code Type of Construction																								
MOVING A HOUSE OR BUILDING																													
<b>Address Moving From</b> Number:   Street:   Type:   Direction: Loaded Side of Building: Width:   Height:   Length: Travel Route: Notes:			<b>Address Moving To</b> Number:   Street:   Type:   Direction: Loaded Side of Building: Width:   Height:   Length: Travel Route: Notes:																										
OFFICIAL USE ONLY																													
<b>PERMIT REQUIREMENTS</b> 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Submit two sets of shop drawings for and secure approval prior to erection 2. <input type="checkbox"/> No landscape required 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Initial and Final Elevation Certificates required—Submit to Development Services, Room 2100, 214 North Hogan Street <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Submit Initial Certificate prior to inspection requests for work completed above the slab <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Submit Final Certificate prior to request for building final inspection 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Call 630-4900 for NPOES inspection prior to commencement of site work 5.				<table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">FEE CALCULATIONS</th> <th>AREA (SF)</th> <th>FEES</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Enclosed Divided Area</td> <td>1 thru 3 Floors</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Area 4 Floor</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Enclosed Un-divided Area</td> <td>Unenclosed Area</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;"><b>TOTAL FEE</b></td> <td>5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;">STATE SURCHARGE</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		FEE CALCULATIONS		AREA (SF)	FEES	Enclosed Divided Area	1 thru 3 Floors			Area 4 Floor				Enclosed Un-divided Area	Unenclosed Area			<b>TOTAL FEE</b>		5		STATE SURCHARGE			
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APPROVAL NOTES & REQUIRED INSPECTIONS																													
<b>DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIVISION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Only  Review Group: BFE      FZ      No Date      Signed		<b>FIRE MARSHALL</b> <input type="checkbox"/> No Exceptions <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptions as Noted  Sheet # _____ Date      Signed <input type="checkbox"/> 45 <input type="checkbox"/> 54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55		<b>BUILDING</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 02 Dp Fnd <input type="checkbox"/> 22 Rid Wt <input type="checkbox"/> 58 Wt Shlg <input type="checkbox"/> 06 Flg <input type="checkbox"/> 23 Rt Shlg <input type="checkbox"/> 59 Ft Cell <input type="checkbox"/> 09 Final <input type="checkbox"/> 34 ADA <input type="checkbox"/> 61 Scr Off <input type="checkbox"/> 16 Tie Sm <input type="checkbox"/> 46 Lath <input type="checkbox"/> 62 Elev Fin Wk <input type="checkbox"/> 18 Frame <input type="checkbox"/> 48 Crv Wt <input type="checkbox"/> 63 R/W SH <input type="checkbox"/> 19 Inst <input type="checkbox"/> 49 Thrsh <input type="checkbox"/> 64 Dry-In <input type="checkbox"/> 20 Slab <input type="checkbox"/> 52 Pre-Dmo <input type="checkbox"/> 21 Swm Pl <input type="checkbox"/> 57 Opn Fl Fr																									
LANDSCAPE <input type="checkbox"/> 03 <input type="checkbox"/> 17		ELEC <input type="checkbox"/> 03 <input type="checkbox"/> 17	MECH <input type="checkbox"/> 03 <input type="checkbox"/> 17	PLBG <input type="checkbox"/> 03 <input type="checkbox"/> 17																									
AIR QUALITY		HEALTH OFFICIAL		CONCURRENCY MANAGEMENT																									
PLANNING		DIA Approval _____ DIA Final Required _____		Demolish      By      Date Plan Share      By      Date Erection        By      Date VPAC    CRC NO																									



DATE: 7/26/2019  
PROJECT: FBC JAX CHURCH  
MASTER PLAN  
PROJECT #: 2016-1104-3P

**FBC Jacksonville - Growth Projections and Program**  
All information is for peak attendance for any ministry for the main hour that occurs

Year	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	NOTES
Peak Worship Services	1150	1199	1247	1294	1342	1390	1438	1486	1534	1582	1 service, 100 seats
Other and Extracurricular	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	
Adult SS peak hour	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	30 rooms, 270 SF each
Children's Program	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	12 rooms, 500 SF each
Children's Day Care	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	12 rooms, 250 SF each
Maternity Services	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	6 rooms, 150 SF each
Multi-use room	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	3 rooms, 200 SF each
Category/User											
Staff and visiting offices	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14 rooms
Staff in open offices	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16 rooms
Offices	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10 rooms
Reception	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10 rooms
Daycare group	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10 rooms
Christian assemblies	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10 rooms
Practical Room/Community	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	
REPAIRS/RENOVATIONS											

**9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR**

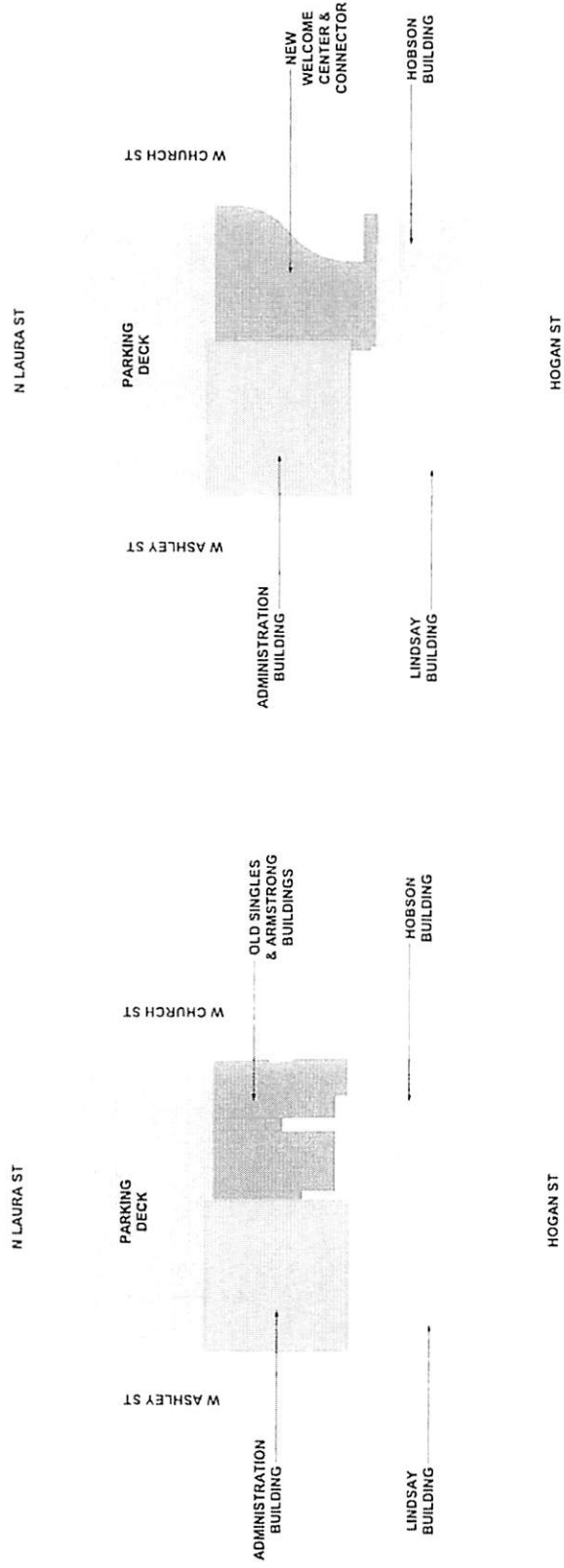
Category	2018	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	NOTES
Peak Worship Services	1150	1199	1247	1294	1342	1390	1438	1486	1534	1582	
Other and Extracurricular	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	
Adult SS peak hour	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	
Children's Program	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	
Children's Day Care	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	
Maternity Services	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	
Multi-use room	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	
Category/User											
Staff and visiting offices	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	
Staff in open offices	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
Offices	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Reception	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Daycare group	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Christian assemblies	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Practical Room/Community	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	
REPAIRS/RENOVATIONS											

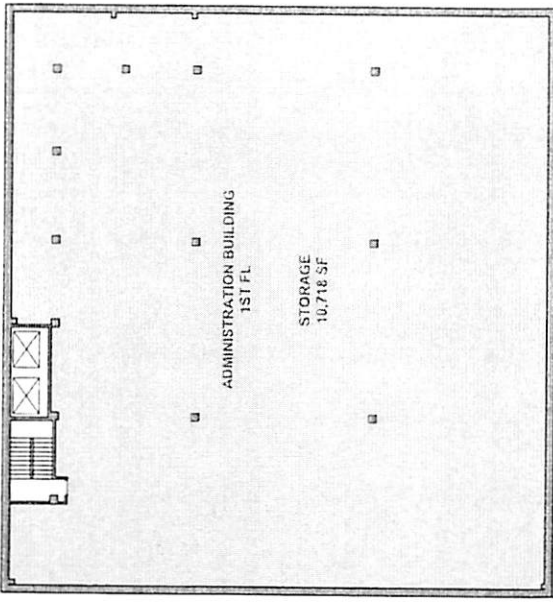
**Space Needs**

Peak Worship Services	1150	1199	1247	1294	1342	1390	1438	1486	1534	1582	
Other and Extracurricular	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	
Adult SS peak hour	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	610	
Children's Program	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	
Children's Day Care	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	
Maternity Services	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	
Multi-use room	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	
Category/User											
Staff and visiting offices	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	
Staff in open offices	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
Offices	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Reception	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Daycare group	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Christian assemblies	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Practical Room/Community	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	
REPAIRS/RENOVATIONS											
<b>Broad Total Need</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2745</b>	

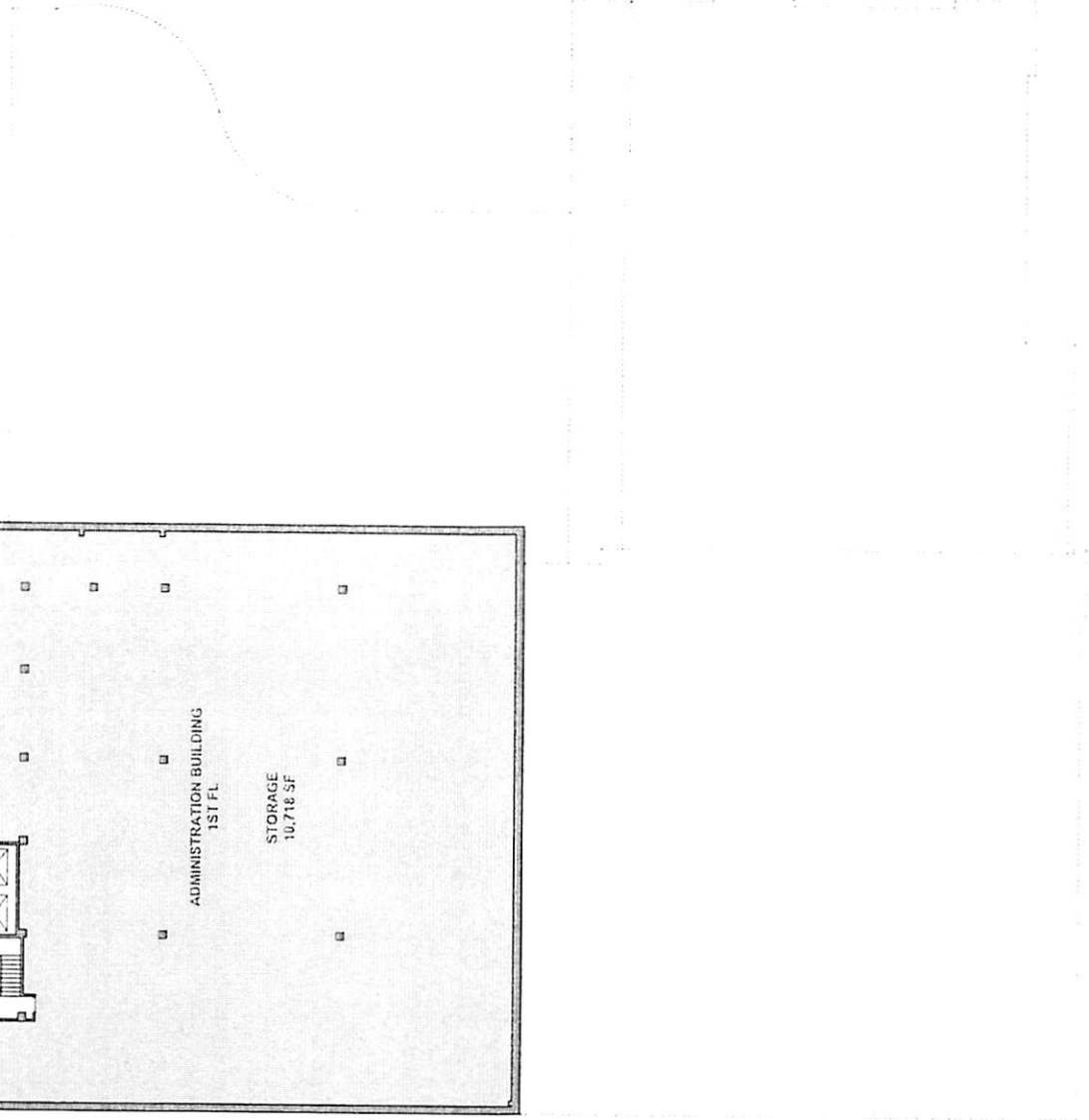
Space available: 128,000  
 Needs: 27,450  
 Difference: 100,550  
 New planned: 13,000  
 Remaining: 87,550

The needs and space reasonably align with services.



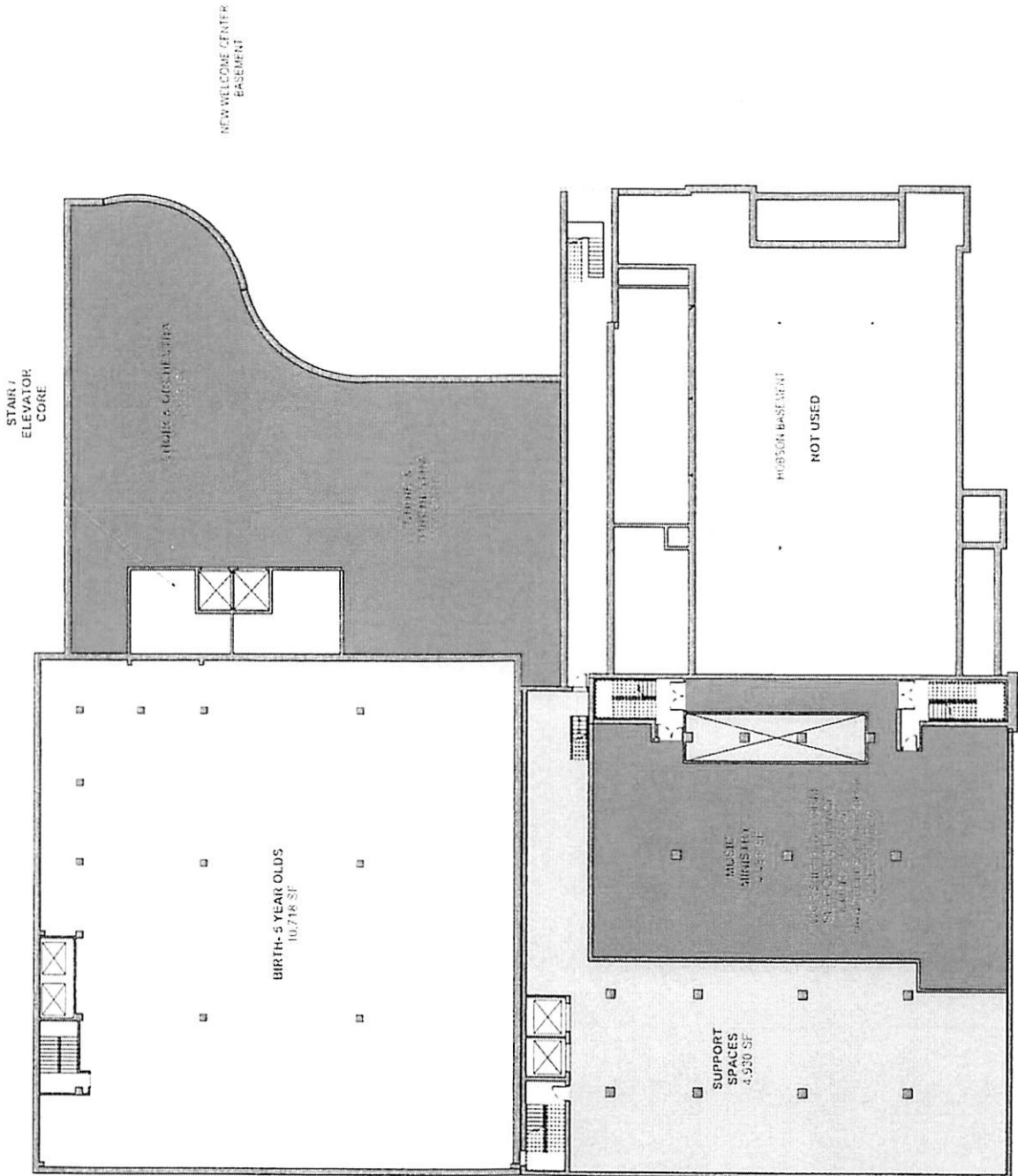


LEGEND  
 □ STORAGE



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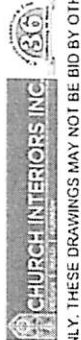
- LEGEND
- CHILDREN
  - CIRCULATION
  - MUSIC
  - MUSICIANS
  - SUPPORT



ADMINISTRATION BUILDING 2ND FL

URDSEY BUILDING 1ST FL

CHURCH INTERIORS INC. 366

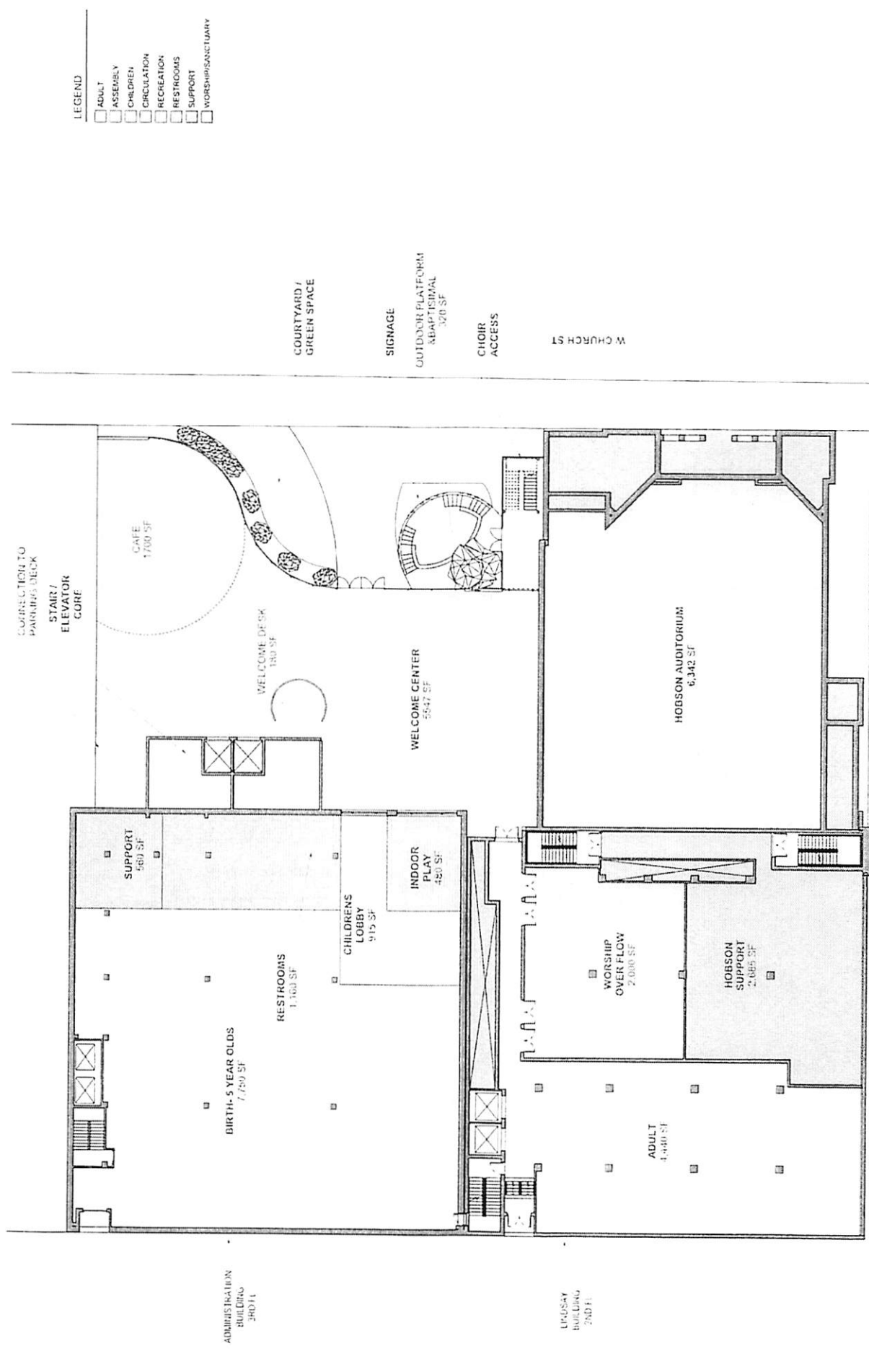


ADMIN 2ND FL, URDSEY 1ST FL, HOBSON-BASEMENT  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH PARKERSVILLE

PRICING SET

USE BY CHURCH INTERIORS ONLY. THESE DRAWINGS MAY NOT BE BID BY OTHER GENERAL CONTRACTOR.





- LEGEND
- ADULT
  - ASSEMBLY
  - CHILDREN
  - CIRCULATION
  - RECREATION
  - RESTROOMS
  - SUPPORT
  - WORSHIP/SANCTUARY

COURTYARD / GREEN SPACE

SIGNAGE

OUTDOOR PLATFORM / BAPTISMAL 370 SF

CHOIR ACCESS

W CHURCH ST

CONNECTION TO PARKING DECK STAIR / ELEVATOR CORE

CAFE 17,000 SF

WELCOME DESK 180 SF

WELCOME CENTER 5,547 SF

HOBSON AUDITORIUM 6,342 SF

SUPPORT 460 SF

BIRTH-5 YEAR OLDS 7,750 SF

RESTROOMS 1,160 SF

CHILDRENS LOBBY 915 SF

INDOOR PLAY 480 SF

WORSHIP OVER FLOW 2,000 SF

HOBSON SUPPORT 2,465 SF

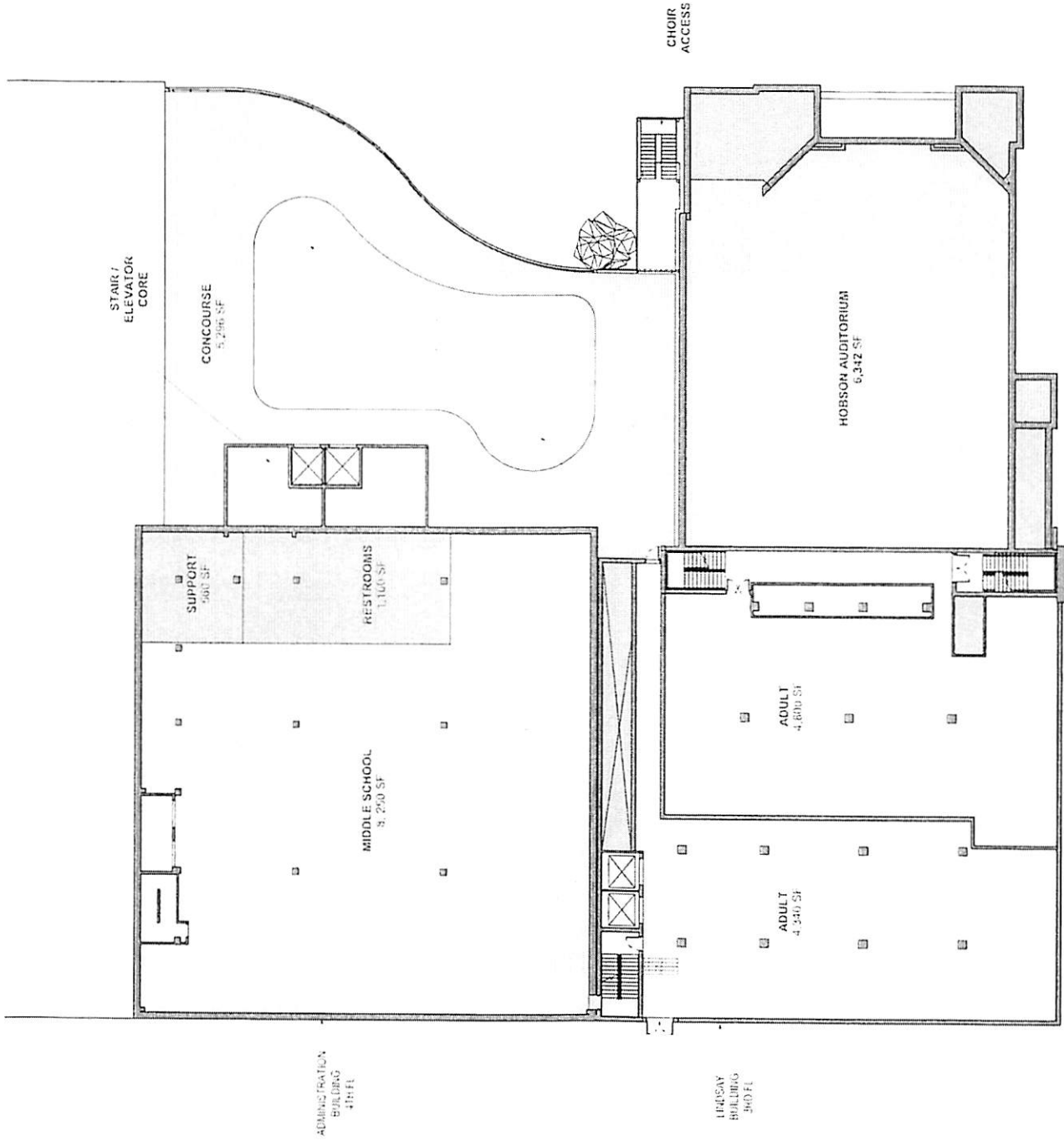
ADULT 4,440 SF

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING 3RD FL

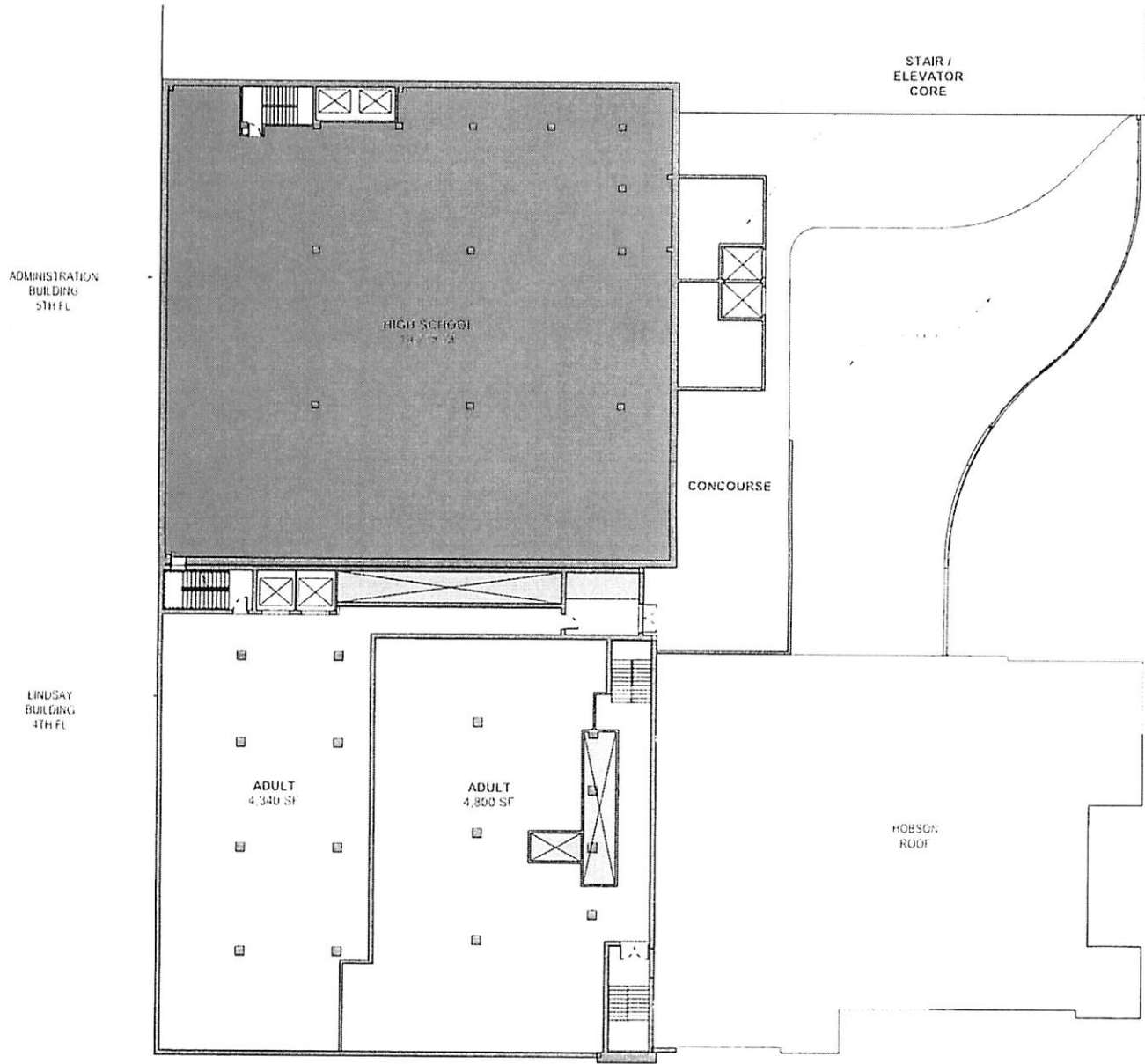
UP-GOSAY BUILDING 78DFL

DATE: 2/20/2024 11:58 AM

- LEGEND
- ADULT
  - ASSEMBLY
  - CIRCULATION
  - MIDDLE SCHOOL
  - RESTROOMS
  - SUPPORT



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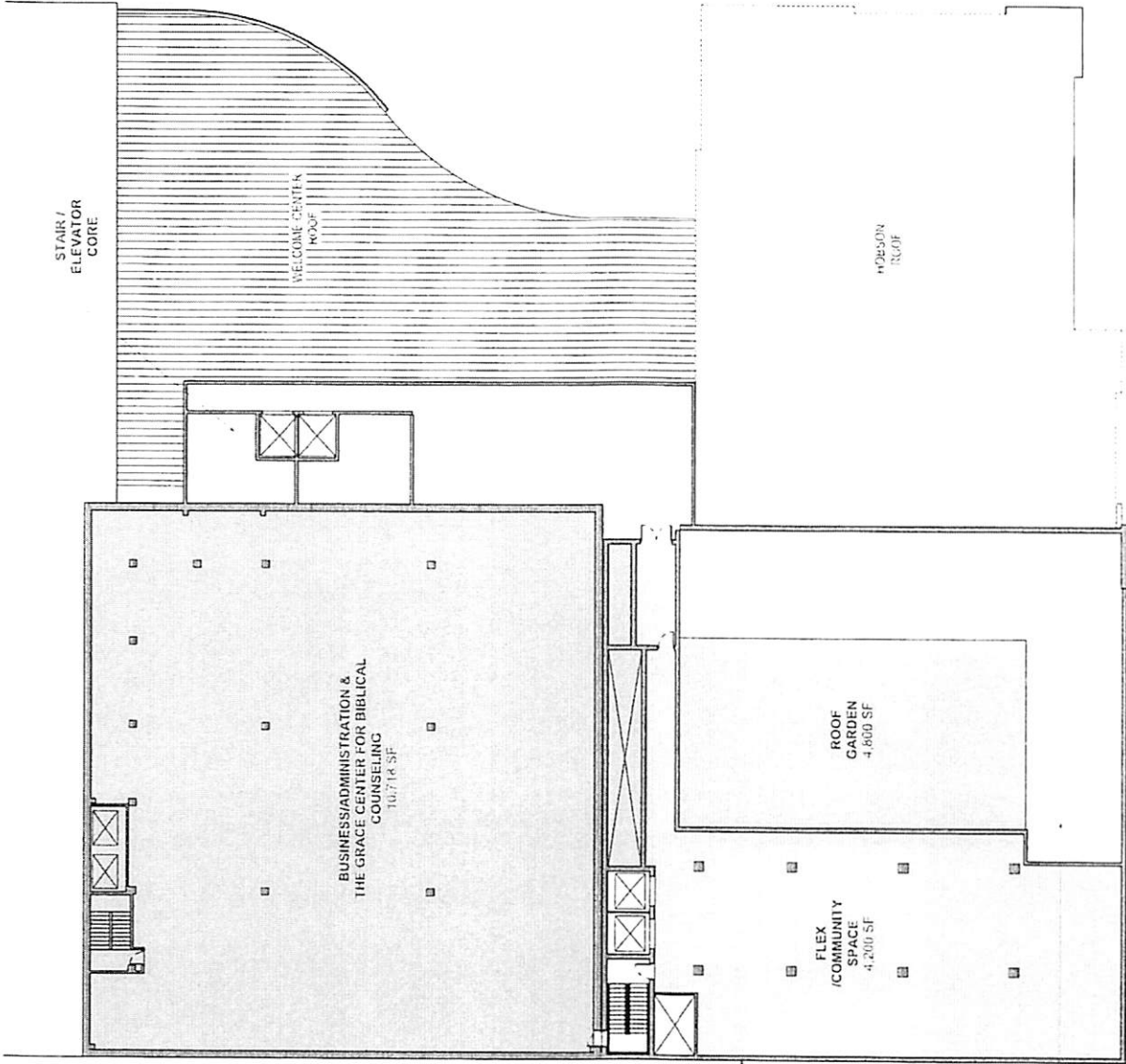


**LEGEND**

	ADULT
	CIRCULATION
	HIGH SCHOOL
	SUPPORT

© 2018/2019/2020/2021/2022/2023/2024

- LEGEND
- ADMINISTRATION
  - ASSEMBLY
  - CIRCULATION
  - RECREATION
  - SUPPORT



ADMINISTRATION BUILDING 6TH FL

LINDSAY BUILDING 5TH FL

LINDSAY BUILDING 6TH FL

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ADMIN. 6TH FL, LINDSAY 5TH FL, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH JACKSONVILLE



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH



CHURCH INTERIORS INC.

NOVUS ARCHITECTS



PRICING SET

USE BY CHURCH INTERIORS ONLY. THESE DRAWINGS MAY NOT BE BID BY OTHER GENERAL CONTRACTOR. JBS

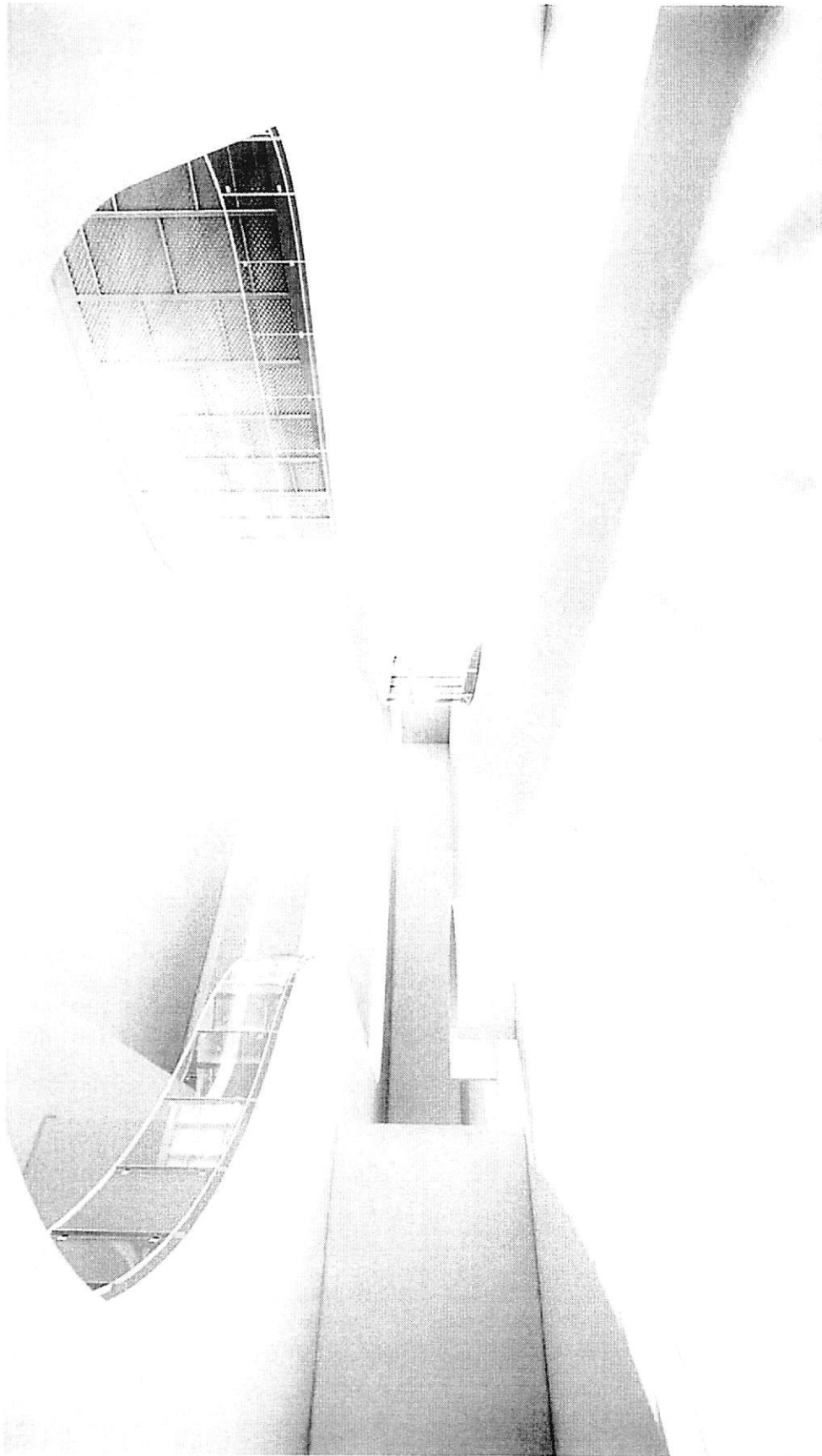
STAIR /  
ELEVATOR  
CORE

STAFF OFFICES  
10,718 SF

PROBSON  
MELOUP

© 2014 NOVUS ARCHITECTS, INC.







January 29, 2020

**Christian Popoli, MAURP**  
 City Planner Supervisor  
 Community Planning Division, Historic Preservation Section  
 City of Jacksonville | Planning and Development Department  
 214 North Hogan Street, Suite 300  
 Jacksonville, FL 32202  
 (904) 255-7852  
[www.coj.net](http://www.coj.net)

RE: **First Baptist Church Jacksonville demolition permit**  
**125 W Church St; Permit Number B20262892-000**

Dear Mr. Popoli,

As requested, I am submitting this letter to accompany the subject demolition permit to explain the following points:

- reason for demolition
- documentation of any effort that has been made to save the structure
- a copy of the most recent Property Appraiser card

A narrative response to each item above:

Reason for Demolition

The First Baptist Church Jacksonville desires to keep this block of real estate and consolidate its worship services back into the Hobson auditorium of their origin. The church requires a welcome center space that is large and open in nature to allow circulation and gathering space for the large assembly population in the sanctuary to move through on the way to and in-between services and Sunday school. The Hobson is book ended in both directions with old commercial structures (see below) that are unusable for this purpose. The structure at 125 W. Church that we're requesting approval to demolish is the only portion of the block that has the desirable orientation and is a large enough footprint to achieve the Church's requirements. For the reasons above, the removal of the building is necessary to realize the highest and best use of the overall block of property by the Church.

The removal of this structure is not only for the greater good of the Church, but also the City District with in which it is located. Should the Church not be allowed to remove this building they cannot do this project and will be forced to use another piece of property, which is not in the City's best interest. As a piece of real estate, this block consists of one historic church structure, 4 segregated commercial infill structures with very limited structural clearances, as was consistent with the time in which they were built, but not conducive to designing around the standards of 21<sup>st</sup> century commercial space. As such, the financial burden of rehabilitation to the inside and in some instances to the exterior of all of 4 structures on this block would make the property too undesirable for the market to bare its sale to another entity. Therefore, it's a high likelihood that if the Church does not do this project, this block will remain in its underutilized state for some time, or even fall deeper into a state of decay should the church vacate it without sale. No commercial business or developer is going to purchase a block with





one Historic church structure, and 4 structures totaling approximately 185,000 SF that require significant renovations, and have limited desirability.

Documentation of any effort that has been made to save the structure

Per City Staff's account, this is typically a focus where demolition requests are due to condition of the building being insurmountable to preserve. In the instance of this project, allowing the building to remain makes realizing this City block's highest and best use unattainable as specified in the "Reason for Demolition" narrative herein.

Provide a copy of the most recent Property Appraiser card

Please see attached, believed to be the document you are requesting. Please advise if additional information is required.

If you should have any questions please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely yours,

Jerry L. Traino  
Principal  
Novus Architects

39-2S-26E  
JAX HARTS MAP  
LOTS 1,2,4,5

BLOCK 59

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
124 W ASHLEY ST  
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32202

2019

R-073859-0000

PRINTED 10/02/2019  
BY: pao

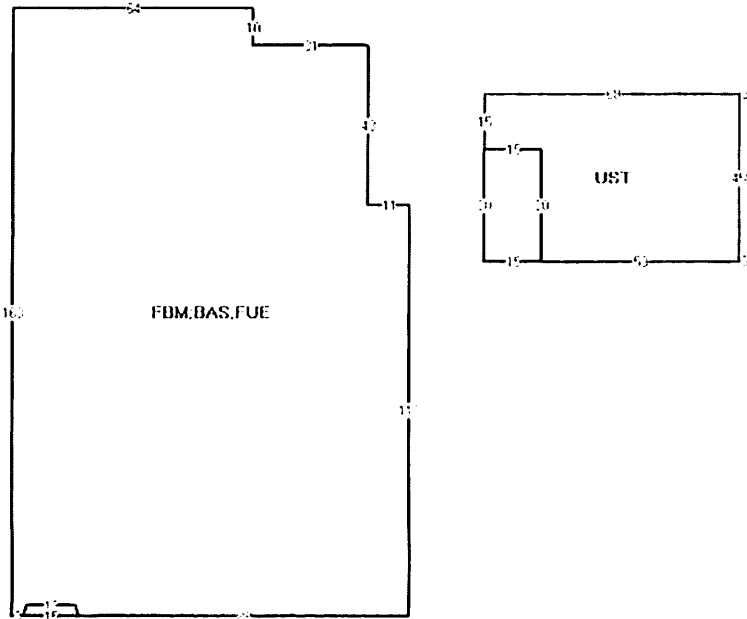
Map Id: 6413 117200.01 1.00 1.00 1.00 CENSUS TRACT 172.00



BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS			
CATEGORY	TYPE	%	PTS
Exterior Wall	21 STONE	100	37.00
Roof Struct	10 STEEL FR/TRS	100	13.00
Roofing Cover	4 BUILT UP/T&G	100	3.00
Interior Wall	3 PLASTERED	100	28.00
Int Flooring	14 CARPET	100	12.00
Heating Fuel	4 ELECTRIC	100	1.00
Heating Type	4 FORCED-DUCTED	100	4.00
Air Cond	4 PACKAGED UNIT	100	5.00
Ceiling Wall	5 S CEIL WALL	100	1.00
Comm Htg & AC	1 NOT ZONED	100	1.00
Comm Frame	2 B-REINFRCD CON	100	18.00

7100 Church

\*\* VALUE SUBJECT TO CHANGE \*\*



Duval County Property Appraisers Office		Year Dist	USDIC
VALUE SUMMARY			
PRIMARY VALUATION METHOD	CAMA		
BUILDING VALUE	7,569,504		
EXTRA FEATURE VALUE	101,295		
TOTAL MARKET LAND VALUE	669,090		
MARKET VALUE OF AG LAND	0		
TOTAL LAND VALUE AG, COMMON	0		
MARKET VALUE	8,339,889		
ASSESSED VALUE	8,339,889		
CAP BASE YEAR	0		
TAXABLE VALUE	0		
EXEMPTIONS	503		
TOTAL EXEMPTIONS VALUE	8,339,889		
SENIOR EXEMPTION VALUE	0		
SR/HSTORIC TAXABLE VALUE	N/A		

CATEGORY	UNITS	ADJ
Stories	6.00	0
Baths	80.00	0
Rooms / Units	75.00	0
Avg Story Height	12.00	0

BASE RATE ADJ	ADJ
Quality Adjustment	1.0000
Mkt/Design Factor	1.0000

TOTAL ADJUSTED POINTS	PT
DEPRECIATION ADJ	0

TYPE	STYLE	CLS	GUA	HX %	NHX %	LOC	% COMP
1801	04	2	03	0.00	100.00	1.00	100

REPL. COST NEW	AYB	EYB	DT	NORM	% GOOD
11,818,106	1953	1973	C4	60.00	40.00v

SAR	AREA	B	N	P.of B.	EFF. AREA	OPR VALUE
BAS	16,385	X	100	16,385	696,821	
CAN	177		25	44	1,871	
FBM	16,343	X	70	11,440	486,520	
FUD	42	X	400	168	7,145	
FUE	16,343	X	500	81,715	3,475,176	
UST	3,510		40	1,404	59,709	

BUILDING: 1 AKA: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
SITE ADDRESS: 124 W ASHLEY ST JACKSONVILLE 32202 1801 OFFICE 3-8 STY

PERMIT NO.	TP	ST.	DESCRIPTION	EST VALUE	ISSUE DATE
03372	ALTS	C		87,740	06/05/2006

**BUILDING DIMENSIONS**  
UST:194,23:-W68 S15 E15 S30 E53 H45 \$ FBM;BAS;FUE :95,10:-W31 N10 W64 S163 E3 U3R1 E13 D3R1 E88 N110 W11 N43 \$ CAN:194,23:-S45 E3 N45 W3 \$ UST;UST:1 26,38:-S30 E15 N30 W15 \$ BAS;FUD;CAN:17,160:-W13 D3L1 E15 U3L1 \$ .

**BUILDING NOTES**  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
ADMIN BLDG (124 W ASHLEY ST)

L N	VOLUME / YEAR	PAGE / CLERK	DATE OF SALE	I N	O U	V I	R E	SALES PRICE	NOTE AMOUNT	MAC	MAC AMOUNT	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	SALES NOTE
118,298	114,611	111,156						\$4,727,242						

ACREAGE	0.00	PRICE/SP	42.53
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L N	OB/FX CODE	DESCRIPTION	BLD	HX %	NHX %	LENGTH	WIDTH	UNITS	GRADE	FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	ORIG COND	ACTUAL YEAR	EFF YEAR	YEAR ON ROLL	% COND	OB/FX MKT VALUE	APPRaisal DATES DATE	APPRAISED BY	
1	ELHC6	Elevator Hydraulic	1	0.00	100.00	0	0	4.00	3	100	57,383.50	57,383.50	100	1953	1953	2008	20	45,907	BUILDING	04/06/2016	MAP
2	ESHC6	Elevator Stops Hydra	1	0.00	100.00	0	0	8.00	3	100	11,645.00	11,645.00	100	1953	1953	2008	20	18,632	LAND LINES	02/13/2018	TCT
3	ELHC6	Elevator Hydraulic	3	0.00	100.00	0	0	2.00	3	100	57,383.50	57,383.50	100	1965	1965	2008	20	22,953	VALUE REVIEW	02/21/2018	TCT
4	ESHC6	Elevator Stops Hydra	3	0.00	100.00	0	0	5.00	3	100	11,645.00	11,645.00	100	1965	1965	2008	20	11,645	TYRENHIAL INCOME	07/10/2013	MAP
5	WMCC1	Wall Masonry/Concret	5	0.00	100.00	0	0	121.00	3	100	10.60	10.60	100	1950	1950	2008	20	257			
6	PVCC1	Paving Concrete	5	0.00	100.00	0	0	1,402.00	3	100	5.65	6.78	100	1960	1960	2008	20	1,901			

L N	USE	LAND USE DESCRIPTION	HX %	NHX %	R D	LOC ZONE	FRONT	DEPTH	SIZE FACTOR	UNITS	UNIT TYPE	D T	DPHT FACT	COND FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	LAND VALUE
C 1	1200	COMM/RES/OFF	0.00	100.00		CRO	0.00	0.00	100.00	44,606.00	S	0	1.00	1.00	15.00	15.00	669,090

L N	DATE	BLD	USER ID	CD	PARCEL NOTES



BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS			
CATEGORY	TYPE	%	PTS
Exterior Wall	20 FACE BRICK	75	27.00
Exterior Wall	21 STONE	25	9.00
Roof Struct	10 STEEL FR/TRS	100	13.00
Roofing Cover	4 BUILT UP/T&G	100	3.00
Interior Wall	5 DRYWALL	100	23.00
Int Flooring	14 CARPET	100	12.00
Heating Fuel	4 ELECTRIC	100	1.00
Heating Type	4 FORCED-DUCTED	100	4.00
Air Cond	3 CENTRAL	100	6.00
Comm Htg & AC	1 NOT ZONED	100	1.00
Comm Frame	2 B-REINFRCD CON	100	18.00
Ceiling Wall	5 S CEIL WALL	100	1.00

CATEGORY	UNITS	ADJ
Stories	6.00	0
Baths	24.00	0
Rooms / Units	43.00	0
Avg Story Height	11.00	0

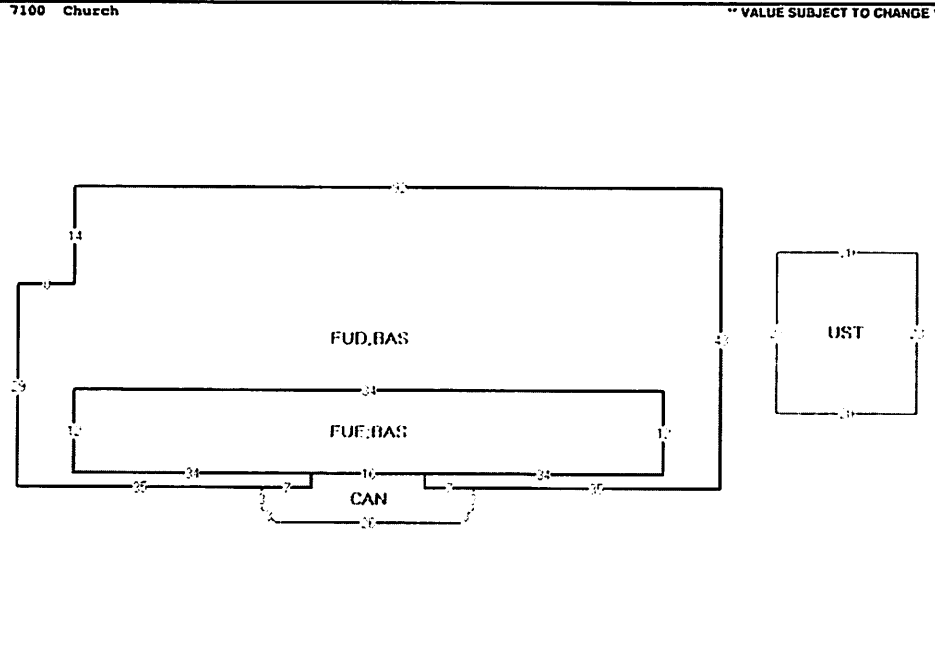
BASE RATE ADJ	ADJ
Quality Adjustment	1.0000
Mkt/Design Factor	1.0000
Size Adj.	0.9000

TOTAL ADJUSTED POINTS	100
DEPRECIATION ADJ	ADJ

TYPE	STYLE	CLS	QUA	HX%	NHX%	LOC	% COMP
1801	04	2	03	0.00	100.00	1.00	100

REPL COST NEW	AVG	EVB	DT	NORM	% GOOD
2,535,803	1927	1967	C4	71.00	29.00%

SAR	AREA	B	H	P.ct B.	EFF. AREA	DPR VALUE
BAS	4,156	X	100		4,156	138,819
CAN	178		25		44	1,470
FUD	3,148	X	400		12,592	420,601
FUE	1,008	X	500		5,040	168,347
UST	460		40		184	6,146



VALUE SUMMARY					
PRIMARY VALUATION METHOD	CAMA				
BUILDING VALUE	7,569,504				
EXTRA FEATURE VALUE	101,295				
TOTAL MARKET LAND VALUE	669,090				
MARKET VALUE OF AG LAND	0				
TOTAL LAND VALUE AG + COMMON	0				
MARKET VALUE	8,339,889				
ASSESSED VALUE	8,339,889				
CAP BASE YEAR	0				
TAXABLE VALUE	0				
EXEMPTIONS	503				
TOTAL EXEMPTIONS VALUE	8,339,889				
SENIOR EXEMPTION VALUE	0				
SR/HISTORIC TAXABLE VALUE	N/A				
PERMIT NO.	TP	ST.	DESCRIPTION	EST VALUE	ISSUE DATE
33372	ALTS	C		87,740	06/05/2006

BUILDING DIMENSIONS	
UST:108,9:=-S23 E20 N23 W20 S	FUD:100,0:=-W92 S 14 W8 S29 E42 N2 W34 N12 E84 S12 W34 S2 E42 N43 S
FUE:8,29:=-S12 E84 N12 W84 S	CAN:58,41:=-W16 S 2 W7 S3 D2R2 E26 U2R2 N3 W7 N2 S

BUILDING NOTES	
SINGLES BLDG (125 W CHURCH ST)	

BUILDING: 2 AKA: SINGLES BLDG  
 SITE ADDRESS: 125 W CHURCH ST JACKSONVILLE 32202-1801 OFFICE 3-8 STY

L N	VOLUME / YEAR	PAGE / CLERK	DATE OF SALE	I N	O U	V I	R E	SALES PRICE	NOTE AMOUNT	MAC	MAC AMOUNT	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	SALES NOTE

L N	OB/FP CODE	DESCRIPTION	BLD	HX %	NHX %	LENGTH	WIDTH	UNITS	GRADE	FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	ORIG COND	ACTUAL YEAR	EFF YEAR	YEAR ON ROLL	% COND	OB/FP MKT VALUE	APPRaisal DATE	APPRAISED BY
																			07/10/2008	KEK
																			02/13/2018	TCY
																			02/21/2018	TCY
																			07/10/2013	MAP

L N	USE CODE	LAND USE DESCRIPTION	HX %	NHX %	R D	LOC ZONE	FRONT	DEPTH	SIZE FACTOR	UNITS	UNIT TYPE	D T	DPTH FACT	COND FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	LAND VALUE

L N	DATE	BLD	USER ID	CD	PARCEL NOTES

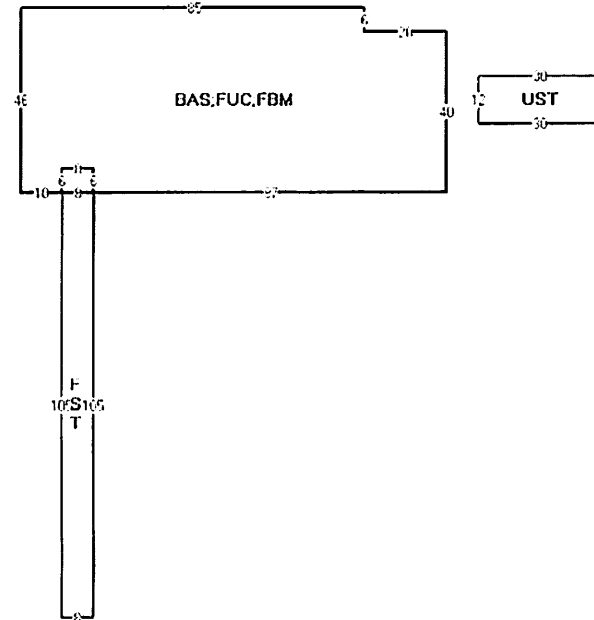


Map Id: 6413 117200.01 1.00 1.00 1.00 CENSUS TRACT 172.00

BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS			
CATEGORY	TYPE	%	PTS
Exterior Wall	21 STONE	100	37.00
Roof Struct	9 RIGID FR/BAR J	100	9.00
Roofing Cover	4 BUILT UP/T&G	100	3.00
Interior Wall	5 DRYWALL	100	23.00
Int Flooring	7 CORK/VNYL TILE	100	13.00
Heating Fuel	4 ELECTRIC	100	1.00
Heating Type	4 FORCED-DUCTED	100	4.00
Air Cond	3 CENTRAL	100	6.00
Comm Htg & AC	1 NOT ZONED	100	1.00
Comm Frame	2 B-REINFRCD CON	100	18.00
Ceiling Wall	5 S CEIL WALL	100	1.00

7100 Church

\*\* VALUE SUBJECT TO CHANGE \*\*



CATEGORY	UNITS	ADJ
Stories	1.00	0
Baths	6.00	0
Rooms / Units	1.00	0
Avg Story Height	12.00	0

BASE RATE ADJ	ADJ
Quality Adjustment	1.0000
Mkt/Design Factor	1.0000
Size Adj.	0.8900
TOTAL ADJUSTED POINTS	103
DEPRECIATION ADJ	ADJ

TYPE	STYLE	CLS	QUA	HX%	NHX%	LOC	% COMP
1801	04	2	03	0.00	100.00	1.00	100
REPL COST NEW	AVB	EVB	DY	NORM	% GOOD		
2,531,504	1965	1970	C4	66.00	34.00%		

SAR	AREA	B	N	P of B	EFF. AREA	OPR VALUE
BAS	4,710	X	100		4,710	175,133
CAN	48		25		12	456
FBM	4,662	X	70		3,263	124,100
FST	840		50		420	15,974
FUB	48	X	200		96	3,651
FUC	4,662	X	300		13,986	531,921
UST	360		40		144	5,477
24,702	23,454		22,631			\$860,711

ACREAGE	0.00	PRICE/SF	38.03
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BUILDING: 3 AKA: LINDSAY BLDG  
 SITE ADDRESS: 124 W ASHLEY ST JACKSONVILLE 32202-1801 OFFICE 3-8 STY

Duval County Property Appraisers Office		Year Dist	USDIC		
VALUE SUMMARY					
PRIMARY VALUATION METHOD	CAMA				
BUILDING VALUE	7,569,504				
EXTRA FEATURE VALUE	101,295				
TOTAL MARKET LAND VALUE	669,090				
MARKET VALUE OF AG LAND	0				
TOTAL LAND VALUE AG + COMMON	0				
MARKET VALUE	8,339,889				
ASSESSED VALUE	8,339,889				
CAP BASE YEAR	0				
TAXABLE VALUE	0				
EXEMPTIONS	503				
TOTAL EXEMPTIONS VALUE	8,339,889				
SENIOR EXEMPTION VALUE	0				
SR/HISTORIC TAXABLE VALUE	N/A				
PERMIT NO.	TP	ST.	DESCRIPTION	EST VALUE	ISSUE DATE
33372	ALTS	C		87,740	06/05/2006

BUILDING DIMENSIONS	
BAS;FUC;FBM:85,0:=W85 S46 E10 N6 E8 S6 E87 N40 W20	
N6 S FST:10,46:=S105 E8 N105 W8 S UST:11,3,17:=S	
12 E30 N12 W30 S CAN;BAS;FUC:10,40:=S6 E8 N6 W8 S	

BUILDING NOTES  
LINDSEY BLDG

L	N	VOLUME / YEAR	PAGE / CLERK	DATE OF SALE	I	Q	V	R	E	SALES PRICE	NOTE AMOUNT	MAC	MAC AMOUNT	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	SALES NOTE

L	N	OB/IF CODE	DESCRIPTION	BLD	HX%	NHX%	LENGTH	WIDTH	UNITS	GRADE	FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	ORIG COND	ACTUAL YEAR	EFF YEAR	YEAR ON ROLL	% COND	OB/IF MKT VALUE	APPRaisal DATES	APPRAISED BY	
																				BUILDING LAND LINES	07/10/2008	KKK
																				VALUE REVIEW	02/13/2018	TCY
																				TRIENNIAL INCOME	02/21/2018	TCY
																					07/10/2013	MAP

L	N	USE CODE	LAND USE DESCRIPTION	HX%	NHX%	R	LOC ZONE	FRONT	DEPTH	SIZE FACTOR	UNITS	UNIT TYPE	D	DPH FACT	COND FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	LAND VALUE

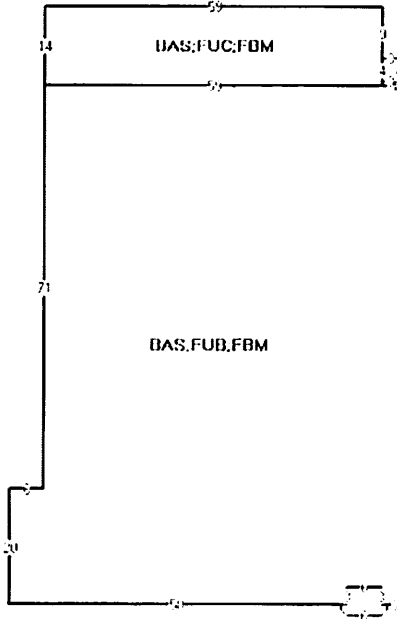
L	N	DATE	BLD	USER ID	CD	PARCEL NOTES



BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS			
CATEGORY	TYPE	%	PTS
Exterior Wall	21 STONE	100	37.00
Roof Struct	10 STEEL FR/TRS	100	13.00
Roofing Cover	4 BUILT UP/T&G	100	3.00
Interior Wall	5 DRYWALL	100	23.00
Int Flooring	14 CARPET	100	12.00
Heating Fuel	4 ELECTRIC	100	1.00
Heating Type	4 FORCED-DUCTED	100	4.00
Air Cond	3 CENTRAL	100	6.00
Comm Htg & AC	1 NOT ZONED	100	1.00
Comm Frame	2 B-REINFRCD CON	100	18.00
Ceiling Wall	5 S CEIL WALL	100	1.00

7100 Church

VALUE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



CATEGORY	UNITS	ADJ
Stories	3.00	0
Baths	37.00	0
Rooms / Units	26.00	0
Avg Story Height	12.00	0

BASE RATE ADJ	ADJ
Quality Adjustment	1.0000
Mkt/Design Factor	1.0000
Site Adj.	0.8800

TOTAL ADJUSTED POINTS 109

DEPRECIATION ADJ

TYPE	STYLE	CLS	QUA	HX%	NHX%	LOC	% COMP
1801	04	2	03	0.00	100.00	1.00	100

SAR	AREA	B	H	P.O.B.	EFF. AREA	DPR VALUE
BAS	6,661	X	100		6,661	224,636
CAN	45		25		11	371
FBM	6,661	X	70		4,662	157,222
FUB	5,835	X	200		11,670	393,560
FUC	826	X	300		2,478	83,568
UST	124		40		50	1,686

BUILDING: 4 AKA: ARMSTRONG BLDG  
SITE ADDRESS: 124 W ASHLEY ST JACKSONVILLE 32202- 1801 OFFICE 3-8 STY

Duval County Property Appraisers Office		Tax Dist	USDIC
VALUE SUMMARY			
PRIMARY VALUATION METHOD	CAMA		
BUILDING VALUE	7,569,504		
EXTRA FEATURE VALUE	101,295		
TOTAL MARKET LAND VALUE	669,090		
MARKET VALUE OF AG LAND	0		
TOTAL LAND VALUE AG + COMMON	0		
MARKET VALUE	8,339,889		
ASSESSED VALUE	8,339,889		
CAP BASE YEAR	0		
TAXABLE VALUE	0		
EXEMPTIONS	503		
TOTAL EXEMPTIONS VALUE	8,339,889		
SENIOR EXEMPTION VALUE	0		
SR/HISTORIC TAXABLE VALUE	N/A		
PERMIT NO.	TP	ST.	ISSUE DATE
33372	ALTS	C	06/05/2006

**BUILDING DIMENSIONS**  
 UST:78,54:=S5 E12 N5 W12 \$ UST:80,39:=S8 E8 N8 W8  
 \$ BAS;FUB;FBM:69,14:=W63 S71 W6 S20 E59 N3 E6 S3  
 E4 N91 \$ BAS;FUC;FBM:6,0:=-S14 E59 N14 W59 \$ CAN  
 :65,13:=N4 E3 S4 W3 \$ CAN:65,102:=W6 S3 W1 S1 DIR  
 1 E6 U1R1 N1 W1 N3 \$ .

**BUILDING NOTES**  
ARMSTRONG BLDG

REPL. COST NEW	AVG	EVB	BY	NORM	% GOOD
2,969,116	1947	1967	C4	71.00	29.001

L	VOLUME / YEAR	PAGE / CLERK	DATE OF SALE	I	Q	V	R	E	SALES PRICE	NOTE AMOUNT	MAC	MAC AMOUNT	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	SALES NOTE

ACREAGE 0.00 PRICE/SF 33.72

L	OB/XF CODE	DESCRIPTION	BLD	HX%	NHX%	LENGTH	WIDTH	UNITS	GRADE	FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	ORIG COND	ACTUAL YEAR	EFF YEAR	YEAR ON ROLL	% COND	OB/XF MKT VALUE	APPRaisal DATES	APPRAISED BY

L	USE CODE	LAND USE DESCRIPTION	HX%	NHX%	R D	LOC ZONE	FRONT	DEPTH	SIZE FACTOR	UNITS	UNIT TYPE	D T	DPTH FACT	COND FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	LAND VALUE

L	DATE	BLD	USER ID	CD	PARCEL NOTES

39-2S-26E  
 JAX HARTS MAP  
 LOTS 1,2,4,5

BLOCK 59

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
 124 W ASHLEY ST  
 JACKSONVILLE, FL 32202

2019

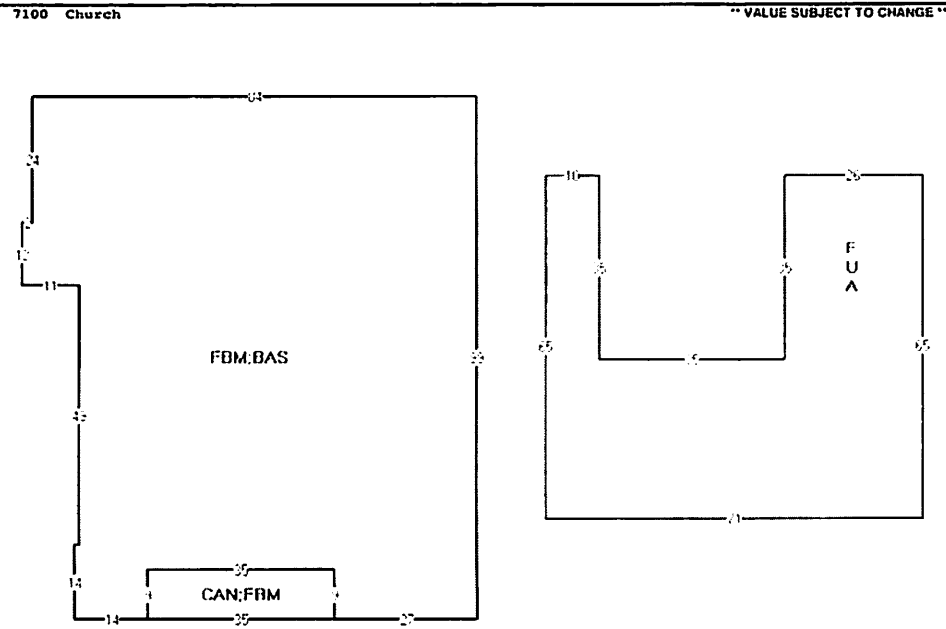
R-073859-0000



PRINTED 10/02/2019  
 BY: pao

Map Id: 6413 117200.01 1.00 1.00 1.00 CENSUS TRACT 172.00

BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS			
CATEGORY	TYPE	%	PTS
Exterior Wall	15 CONCRETE BLK	100	32.00
Roof Struct	4 WOOD TRUSS	100	7.00
Roofing Cover	3 ASPH/COMP SHNG	100	3.00
Interior Wall	5 DRYHALL	100	23.00
Int Flooring	14 CARPET	100	12.00
Heating Fuel	4 ELECTRIC	100	1.00
Heating Type	4 FORCED-DUCTED	100	4.00
Air Cond	3 CENTRAL	100	6.00
Comm Rtg & AC	1 NOT ZONED	100	1.00
Comm Framo	3 C-MASONRY	100	5.00
Ceiling Wall	6 NS CEIL WALL	100	1.00



Durval County Property Appraisers Office		Yax Dist	USDIC		
VALUE SUMMARY					
PRIMARY VALUATION METHOD	CAMA				
BUILDING VALUE	7,569,504				
EXTRA FEATURE VALUE	101,295				
TOTAL MARKET LAND VALUE	669,090				
MARKET VALUE OF AG LAND	0				
TOTAL LAND VALUE AG + COMMON	0				
MARKET VALUE	8,339,889				
ASSESSED VALUE	8,339,889				
CAP BASE YEAR	0				
TAXABLE VALUE	0				
EXEMPTIONS	503				
TOTAL EXEMPTIONS VALUE	8,339,889				
SENIOR EXEMPTION VALUE	0				
SR/HISTORIC TAXABLE VALUE	N/A				
PERMIT NO.	YP	SY	DESCRIPTION	EST VALUE	ISSUE DATE
03372	ALTS	C		87,740	06/05/2006
BUILDING DIMENSIONS					
FUA:109,15:-W10 S65 E71 N65 W26 S35 W35 N35 S FBM ;BAS:86,0:-W84 S24 W2 S12 E11 S49 W1 S14 E14 N9 E3 5 S9 E27 N99 S CAN;FBM:24,90:-S9 E35 N9 W35 S .					
BUILDING NOTES					
HOBSON BLDG					

CATEGORY	UNITS	ADJ
Stories	2.00	0
Baths	4.00	0
Rooms / Units	39.00	0
Avg Story Height	19.00	0

BASE RATE ADJ	ADJ
Quality Adjustment	1.0000
Mkt/Design Factor	1.0000
Size Adj.	0.9100
TOTAL ADJUSTED POINTS	97
DEPRECIATION ADJ	ADJ

TYPE	STYLE	CLB	QUA	HX %	NHX %	LOC	% COMP
7101	04	3	03	0.00	100.00	1.00	100
REPL. COST NEW	AYB	EVB	DT	NORM	% GOOD		
1,804,649	1902	1972	C4	79.00	21.00V		
SAR	AREA	B	H	P.of B.	EFF. AREA	OPR VALUE	
BAS	7,472	X	100		7,472	172,760	
CAN	315		25		79	1,827	
FBM	7,787	X	70		5,450	126,010	
FUA	3,390	X	100		3,390	78,380	

BUILDING: 5 AKA: HOBSON BLDG- ORIGINAL CHURCH  
 SITE ADDRESS: 124 W ASHLEY ST JACKSONVILLE 32202- 7101 CHURCH

L	VOLUME / YEAR	PAGE / CLERK	DATE OF SALE	I	Q	V	R	SALES PRICE	NOTE AMOUNT	MAC	MAC AMOUNT	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	SALES NOTE
18,964	18,649	16,391												

ACREAGE	0.00	PRICE/SP	23.12
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L	OBXF CODE	DESCRIPTION	BLD	HX %	NHX %	LENGTH	WIDTH	UNITS	GRADE	FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	ORIG COND	ACTUAL YEAR	EFF YEAR	YEAR ON ROLL	% COND	OBXF MKT VALUE	APPRaisal DATES	APPRAISED BY
																			07/10/2008	KKK
																			02/13/2018	TCY
																			02/21/2018	TCY
																			07/10/2013	HAP

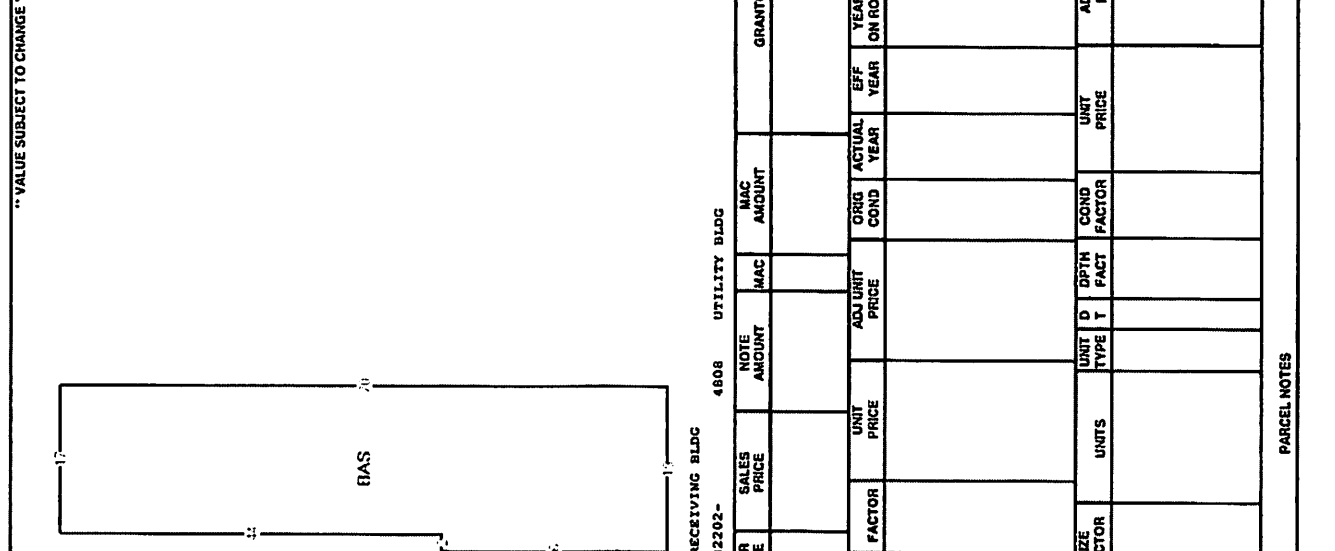
L	USE	LAND USE DESCRIPTION	HX %	NHX %	R	LOC ZONE	FRONT	DEPTH	SIZE FACTOR	UNITS	UNIT TYPE	D	DPH FACT	COND FACTOR	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	LAND VALUE

L	DATE	BLD	USER ID	CD	PARCEL NOTES

Divul County Property Appraisers Office  
 VALUE SUMMARY  
 PRIMARY VALUATION METHOD CANA  
 BUILDING VALUE 7,569,504  
 EXTRA FEATURE VALUE 101,295  
 TOTAL MARKET LAND VALUE 669,090  
 MARKET VALUE OF AG LAND 0  
 TOTAL LAND VALUE AG - COMMON 0  
 MARKET VALUE 8,339,889  
 ASSESSED VALUE 8,339,889  
 CAP BASE YEAR 0  
 TAXABLE VALUE 0  
 EXEMPTIONS 0  
 TOTAL EXEMPTION VALUE 8,339,889  
 SENIOR EXEMPTION VALUE 0  
 SPRINGFIELD TAXABLE VALUE N/A  
 PERMIT NO. TP EST. VALUE ISSUE DATE  
 33372 ALTS C 87,740 06/05/2006

BAS:19,0:-#17 S44 W2 S26 E19 N70 S

SHIPPING/RECEIVING BLDG  
 BUILDING DIMENSIONS



BUILDING: 6 AKA: SHIPPING & RECEIVING BLDG  
 SITE ADDRESS: 124 W ASHLEY ST JACKSONVILLE 32202-4808  
 UTILITY BLDG

BUILDING CHARACTERISTICS	UNITS	ADJ
Exterior Wall	15 CONCRETE BLK	100 44.00
Roof Structure	9 RIGID FR/BAR J	100 11.00
Roofing Cover	4 BUILT UP/T&G	100 5.00
Interior Wall	1 MASONRY MIN	50 2.00
Interior Wall	5 DRYWALL	50 5.00
Int Flooring	3 CONCRETE FIN	50 9.00
Int Flooring	14 CARPET	50 11.00
Heating Fuel	4 ELECTRIC	100 1.00
Heating Type	4 FORCED-DUCTED	100 9.00
Air Cond	4 PACKAGED UNIT	100 10.00
Ceom Htg & AC	1 NOT ZONED	100 1.00
Ceom Frame	3 C-MASONRY	100 12.00
Ceiling Wall	4 NS CEIL MIN	100 0.00
CATEGORY		UNITS ADJ
Restrooms		0.00
Stores		1.00
Rooms / Units		2.00
Avg Story Height		12.00

TYPE	STYLE	CUS	QUA	HK%	HK%	LOC	% COMP
4800	06	3	03	0.00	100.00	1.00	100
30,740				1960	1985	CS	80-00 20.00V
BAR	AREA	B	H	EFF	AREA	DPR	VALUE
BAS	1,242	X	100	1,242			6,168

BASE RATE ADJ	ADJ
Quality Adjustment	1.0000
Mkt/Design Factor	1.0000
Site Adj.	1.1600
TOTAL ADJUSTED POINTS	132
DEPRECIATION ADJ	ADJ

ACREAGE	PRICE/SF	BLD	HK%	PRICE/SF
1.242	1,242	1,242		\$6,168
	0.00			4.95

L N	ODAP CODE	DESCRIPTION	BLD	HK%	DATE	USER ID	CD

L N	YEAR	VOLUME	PAGE / CLERK	DATE OF SALE	SALES PRICE	NOTE AMOUNT	MAC AMOUNT	MAC AMOUNT	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	SALES NOTE

L N	USE	LAND USE DESCRIPTION	HK%	FRONT	DEPTH	SIZE FACTOR	UNITS	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	COND	FACT	DPTH	UNIT PRICE	COND	UNIT PRICE	ADJ UNIT PRICE	LAND VALUE

L N	ORIG COND	ACTUAL YEAR	EFF YEAR	YEAR ON ROLL	% COND	ORIG VALUE	ORIG COND	ORIG VALUE	ORIG COND	ORIG VALUE	ORIG COND	ORIG VALUE	ORIG COND	ORIG VALUE	ORIG COND	ORIG VALUE	ORIG COND	ORIG VALUE

L N	APPRAISED DATE	APPRAISER	MAP	TR	REVIEW	DATE	TR	MAP
	07/10/2008	MEK				02/13/2018	TCY	
	02/21/2018	TCY				07/10/2013	TCY	
	07/10/2013	MAP						

APPRAISED BY	APPRASER	DATE

APPRAISED BY	APPRASER	DATE

BEFORE THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE

DEMOLITION APPLICATION

IN RE: The Demolition Application of

First Baptist Church of Jacksonville  
125 W Church Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32202

**FINAL ORDER ON APPLICATION FOR DEMOLITION  
OF 125 W CHURCH STREET**

This matter came to be considered upon the Demolition Application filed by **First Baptist Church**, the owner of certain real property located at **125 W Church Street, Jacksonville, Florida 32202**, seeking approval to demolish the structure.

Having duly considered the testimony and documents presented at the public meeting on February 26, 2020, which are maintained by the Planning and Development Department, the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Jacksonville hereby

**FINDS AND DETERMINES:**

1. That the Applicant has complied with all application requirements set forth in Section 320.407 of the Jacksonville Ordinance Code; and
2. That the Applicant owns the property located at 125 W Church Street; and
3. That the building located at 125 W Church Street is a contributing structure within the Downtown Jacksonville Historic District which is a historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places and, as a result, proposed demolition activities of such structure are subject to review by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission; and
4. The structure was built c. 1926, and the preliminary evaluation by the Planning Department staff of the historic significance of the building indicates that the structure will likely meet 6 of the 7 criteria for landmark designation; and
5. The Applicant has indicated it is their desire to demolish the existing building and construct a new welcome center space.

**NOW THEREFORE**, it is **ORDERED** by the Historic Preservation Commission:


1. Application for demolition of the structure located at 125 W Church Street is hereby **DENIED**, prohibiting the demolition.




- 2. Pursuant to section 320.407 (b)(2), Jacksonville Ordinance Code, the Historic Preservation Commission, at its next meeting, shall consider the potential landmark status of the building pursuant to the criteria and procedures in section 307.104, Jacksonville Ordinance Code and issue an advisory recommendation to City Council.

Executed this 27<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2020.

**FORM APPROVED**

  
 Kealey West  
 Office of General Counsel

  
 Chairman,  
 Historic Preservation Commission

Copies to:  
 T.R. Hainline, Jr.  
 1301 Riverplace Boulevard  
 Suite 1500  
 Jacksonville, FL 32207

**TIMEFRAMES AND NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Chapter 320.407 of the Jacksonville Ordinance Code states, "The property owner may appeal the decision of the Historic Preservation Commission concerning demolition applications to the City Council. Such appeal shall be filed with 14 calendar days from the date of the Commission meeting. Notice of the appeal shall be provided to the applicant and all parties who spoke at the Commission meeting."

The property owner may appeal this decision to the City Council within 14 calendar days from the date of the Commission meeting by filing a Notice of Appeal with the Legislative Services Division of the Council as required by section 307.203, Ord. Code. Failure to file a Notice with the Legislative Services Division within the time prescribed waives the right to appeal this Order.

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Chairman and Members  
Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission

**FROM:** Christian Popoli  
City Planner Supervisor - Historic Preservation

**RE:** *Request for Demolition – 125 West Church Street, The First Baptist Church Sunday School Building*

**DATE:** February 26, 2020

The representative of the property owner has submitted a building permit application to demolish the institutional structure located at 125 West Church Street, the First Baptist Church Sunday School Building. Constructed in 1926 & 27, this six-story building has been identified as a contributing property in the Downtown Jacksonville Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016. Therefore, demolition of the subject building will require a review by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission pursuant to §320.407, *Jacksonville Ordinance Code* as amended in November, 2005.

Within sixty calendar days after the complete demolition application was received by the Historic Preservation Section of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department (January 20, 2020), the Commission must review and take action on the request for demolition. If the Commission fails to act within the sixty-day period, the demolition request is considered to have been granted. If the Commission approves the permit application, the demolition may proceed. If the Commission denies the application, the property owner can appeal the decision to the City Council. The appeal must be filed within 14 calendar days from the date of the Commission meeting. The case file, including the demolition application and the Commission's recommendation regarding the property's potential landmark status, will be forwarded to the City Council which will vote to approve the demolition request, or to proceed with landmark designation.

Based on a preliminary evaluation, it is the opinion of the Planning and Development Department that the building at 125 West Church Street, the First Baptist Church Sunday School Building may meet six of seven criteria for local landmark designation.

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

Known at different times as the First Baptist Church Sunday School Building, the Educational Building, the Gulf Life Building and the Singles Building, the property at 125 West Church Street is associated with the history of three very different institutions significant in the heritage of the City. The six-story masonry building was completed in 1927 as a Sunday school building for the First Baptist Church located immediately to the west. While serving as the Educational Building, the pastor of First Baptist Church, Dr.

Ferando Coelle McConnell, Jr. allowed William J. Porter University, chartered in 1934, to use the third floor to offer evening classes. Although starting in the Educational Building, Porter University moved to several locations in downtown Jacksonville over the years and in the process changed the name to the Jacksonville Junior College which evolved into Jacksonville University. In 1938, the building came under the ownership of the Gulf Life Insurance Company to serve as their home office. Expanded and altered, the Gulf Life Insurance Company used the building until the new Gulf Life Tower was completed in 1967 and sold the old building to a group of private investors. The owners leased the building for ten years before selling it to the First Baptist Church in 1977.

In 1838, Reverend James McDonald organized a Baptist congregation in Jacksonville that included four whites and two slaves. Known as the Bethel Baptist Church of Jacksonville, the congregation had sufficiently grown by 1840 to build a small chapel in downtown at the northeast corner of East Duval Street and North Newnan Street. It is generally recognized as the first sanctuary constructed in downtown. In 1842, Reverend McDonald purchased 550 acres 1½ miles west of town in the area later called LaVilla. Part of the old Isaac Hendricks grant, Reverend McDonald developed a farm on the property that he reportedly called LaVilla. Becoming officially incorporated in 1841, the church sold their downtown property to the Presbyterian Church, and relocated to a two-acre parcel that was part of Reverend McDonald's LaVilla property. An existing brick residence on the two acres was remodeled into a sanctuary becoming to be known as the "brick church". Deacon Elias G. Jaudon donated two additional acres adjacent to the church for a cemetery.<sup>1</sup>

Found to be too far out from the center of population, the congregation built a new sanctuary in 1860 on a lot at the corner of North Julia Street and West Church Street which was donated by Deacon Jaudon. During the Civil War, the old and vacant "brick church" was in the middle of much of the action between Union and Confederate forces. During the war federal troops used the church for pickets and outpost, as well as serving as a hospital following the Battle of Olustee. After the war, the congregation, which was predominately black, split along racial lines. The black members, who constituted 240 members of the total 290 in 1859, filed a successful lawsuit to take ownership of the church property which resulted in an agreement that the black members would receive \$400 and the right to keep the Bethel name as payment for their share of the property. The black members formed their own church which eventually became Bethel Baptist Institutional Church. The white members stayed on the property forming the Baptist Tabernacle Church.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> T. Frederick Davis, *History of Jacksonville, Florida and Vicinity, 1513 to 1924*. (St. Augustine, Florida: The Record Company, 1925), pp. 401 – 403.

Belton S. Wall, Jr., *A Tale To Be Told, The History of the First Baptist Church of Downtown Jacksonville*. (Jacksonville, Florida; 1999), pp. 18, 19 & 20.

The church and cemetery were located in the general vicinity of present day North Myrtle Avenue between West Adams and West Duval Streets.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

According to property records, the church purchased the current site of the 1903 sanctuary (Hobson Auditorium) in 1892 for \$9,000 (Archibald Plat Book, p. 97, DB 80, p. 560). In that year, the name was changed from the Baptist Tabernacle to the First Baptist Church. In November of the following year a new sanctuary was constructed and dedicated, but destroyed during the 1901 fire. Under the ministry of Reverend Dr. William Andrew Hobson, who came to the church in 1900, the cornerstone was laid for the new sanctuary on February 2, 1903. Using sketches produced by Dr. Hobson, Lockwood Co., Architects produced a design for the new sanctuary, but the building cost was determined to be beyond the church's \$35,000 construction budget. In 1902, Jacksonville architect, Henry John Klutho, was contracted to redesign the Lockwood plans to make it meet the church's budget and also to supervise construction. Most of the exterior design and its Richardsonian Romanesque style appearance reflected the earlier work of Lockwood. However, Klutho made numerous changes to the interior and later listed the sanctuary as one of his major projects indicating a significant involvement in the final design. Copies of the original and revised plans have never been found to confirm the degree and nature of involvement by Klutho. Built of Bedford limestone, the sanctuary, called Hobson Auditorium, was constructed by the Owens Building Company.<sup>3</sup>

During the heady days of the 1920s' Florida Land Boom, the Church began planning the construction of a 20 story 300 room hotel at the corner of North Hogan Street and West Church Street which would include a new sanctuary and education building. Because of the high cost and risk of such an adventure, the church settled for the construction of a six-story education building on the property immediately to the east of the sanctuary. Earlier in 1923 & 24, the 1903 sanctuary was completely gutted and rebuilt including the excavation of a basement level to accommodate a second lower auditorium named after Reverend Dr. Len G. Broughton who became minister in 1923 following Dr. Hobson. Increasing the number of seats to 1200, the \$100,000 remodeling which included a new organ was designed by the Jacksonville architectural partnership of Mark & Sheftall and constructed by church member, Robert James (R.J.) Gallespie.<sup>4</sup>

A few years after the re-opening of the Hobson Auditorium on July 6, 1924, R.J. Gallespie Construction Company began construction of the six-story masonry Sunday school building immediately to the east of the sanctuary.<sup>5</sup> Designed by the noted

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<sup>3</sup> Wall, pp. 25, 26, & 27.

Robert C. Broward, *The Architecture of Henry John Klutho, The Prairie School in Jacksonville*. (Jacksonville, Florida: The Jacksonville Historical Society, 2003 Second Edition), pp.29, 30 & 31.

Tragically, the first funeral held in the new sanctuary was that of Dr. Hobson's six year old daughter, Mary Kate Hobson, who was thrown out of the family car during a successful attempt to avoid crushing into a streetcar in June of 1904. (Wall, p. 27; *Florida Times Union*, Westside News, September 10, 2005, p. W-4)

<sup>4</sup> Wall, pp.32 & 33.

*Florida Times Union*, June 29, 1924, p. 19 & July 6, 1924, p. 15.

*130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Pastor and People, 1838 -1968*, Booklet – Bethel Baptist Institutional Church and First Baptist Church of Jacksonville.

<sup>5</sup> Born in 1881 in Montgomery, Alabama, Robert James Gallespie came to Jacksonville circa 1912 where he went into the construction business. In addition to remodeling the sanctuary in 1923-24, constructing the Educational

Chattanooga Architect, Reuben Harrison Hunt, the building was opened and dedicated on October 2, 1927 as the “Religious Education Center” and was recognized as the “only one of its kind in Florida”. In a 1927 *Jacksonville Journal* (September 24, 1927, p. 11) article it was identified as the second largest Sunday school building in the World. The \$250,000 building was designed to accommodate 3,500 people in Sunday school.<sup>6</sup>

As originally planned, the ground floor would accommodate a large kitchen and great hall that served as a multi-purpose room that included a dining hall, two smaller private dining rooms used as classrooms on Sundays, lectures and Sunday school meetings. The second floor housed the cradle roll and nursery along with the beginner and primary departments with the third floor accommodating two large adult classrooms, general secretary’s office and two intermediate Sunday school departments. The fourth floor, which was dedicated to the young people’s department, included an assembly room for 800 people along with ten classrooms. The fifth floor housed the junior department and included an assembly room, classrooms and gymnasium which were also accommodated by a mezzanine on the sixth floor which had additional junior classrooms.<sup>7</sup>

To finish these improvements and expansions, the church acquired a \$500,000 first mortgage at a six percent interest rate from the Hibernia Bank of Louisiana. Unable to pay the interest, which continued to accumulate, the church developed a staggering debt of over half a million dollars. Having the distinction of carrying the largest indebtedness in the Southern Baptist Convention, the church defaulted on the loan and went into foreclosure in 1938. The mortgage was assumed by the Gulf Life Insurance Company that kept the Educational Building while selling the sanctuary back to the church for \$89,000. After the building was sold, Sunday school classes were accommodate by curtaining off sections of the auditorium and by using nearby facilities such as the parlor of the Windsor Hotel on North Hogan Street, the American Legion Hall on West Church Street and the basement of the YWCA on West Monroe Street, as well as two adjacent residences and three funeral homes in the area. Through the leadership of Reverend Dr. Homer G. Lindsay, Sr. (1940 – 1973), the church undertook an austere spending and budget plan that resulted in being debt free by 1943.<sup>8</sup>

In 1911, insurance salesman, Thomas Tyre Phillips, started a small insurance company in Pensacola, Florida. While searching for a company name that reflected strength and integrity, T.T. Phillips, while looking out the window in his lawyer’s office, was able to observe in the distant the sparkling waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Reflecting on the size,

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Building in 1927 and the Armstrong Educational Building in 1948, some of the other building attributed to his company include the Olmstead Motor Company Building (1927-28); Old Jacksonville Police Headquarters (1926), the Scottish Rite Masonic Temple (1924-26) and the 1953 addition to the Gulf Life Insurance Company Building, all in Jacksonville. Some of the others outside the city include the Crane Company Warehouse in Tampa (1924) and the Milane Theatre in Sanford, Florida (1922-23).

<sup>6</sup> Wall, pp. 33, 34 & 35.

Jacksonville Building Permit Record #1710 – w/1926.

<sup>7</sup> Wall, pp. 33 & 34.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pp. 35, 37, 40 & 45.

permanence and power of the gulf, Phillips decided to name his tiny company the Gulf Life & Accident Insurance Company which was capitalized at only \$5,000. His former employer, now his competitor, paid Phillips to relocate his business to Jacksonville. Joined by three of his former associates, Phillips moved the company in 1916. At the time, the company had 40,000 policy holders. T.T. Phillip's brother, Elwin Litchfield Phillips, Jr., left his position with the Savannah office of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to manage the new company's sales office in Jacksonville. Joining the Board of Directors during that first year in Jacksonville was H. Terry Parker, prominent land owner and developer of Arlington, who also donated property for the construction of Terry Parker High School and for the Terry Parker Baptist Church. Parker has been credited with being the longest serving member of the Gulf Life Board of Directors.<sup>9</sup> Claims from the 1918 influenza epidemic wiped out one half of the company's resources and only kept afloat by E.L. Phillips pawning personal items. The company was also hit hard by the end of the Florida Land Boom in 1927 and the many claims produced by the disastrous hurricane of 1928.<sup>10</sup>

As it grew, the company occupied several downtown locations, the first being four rooms in the Duval Building in January of 1916 followed by an office in the Realty Building in 1920, office building at 213 West Adams Street in 1925 and finally at the Roberts Building at 225 West Adams Street until acquiring the former Educational Building at 125 West Church Street in 1938. Operating out of a home office, most insurance salesman at that time traveled a circuit to sell policies, pick-up premium payments, change beneficiaries, and arrange loans. The company quickly expanded selling policies in most Florida cities, as well as being licensed in Georgia (1930), Alabama (1937) and South Carolina in 1948. In 1923, the company began selling ordinary insurance (Whole Life policies). Merging with the Victory National Life Insurance Co. in Tampa in 1928, the company acquired additional branches and began sales of larger policies and group insurance. By 1928, the company had one million in assets that reached two million four years later.<sup>11</sup>

After acquiring the old Educational Building to serve as a permanent home office, the company hired well-known Jacksonville architect, Roy Benjamin and his associate, William D. Kemp, to design modifications and upgrades to make the building more functional as an office building. Most of the exterior alterations made by the company in 1938 were to the front elevation facing West Church Street. In particular, the highly detailed entryway was modified by removing arched fan lights, intricate terra cotta

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9 Margery Green and Joan Bentley, *The Arlington Story*. (Arlington, Florida: The Arlington Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, 1959), pp.28, 29 & 30.

*My Arlington Monthly*, Old Arlington, Inc., June, 2015, pp. 6, 7 & 16.

10 "Growing Up With the South, Gulf Life Insurance Co., 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 1911 – 1986". *Florida Times Union*, Advertising Supplement, June 15, 1986, p. 2.

Junius Elmore Dovell, *Florida, Historic-Dramatic-Contemporary, Family and Personal History, Volume III*. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1952), p. 209.

11 Gulf Life Insurance Co., 75<sup>th</sup>, pp. 3 & 4.  
 Dovell, p. 209.

ornamentation and pent roof with mission style tiles that covered the recessed opening. Under the arched fan light, the original two door pairs were converted to two revolving doors. A more contemporary, Art Moderne style aluminum canopy was placed over the entryway.<sup>12</sup>

In 1951 with the death of Thomas T. Phillips, E.L. Phillips sold the family' controlling interest in the company to the Ling-Temco-Vought Conglomerate that in turn sold the business to Troy Post who consolidated the company with two other companies to form the Great American Corporation. The Gulf Life Corporation was started as a holding company for Gulf Life and two other companies, and later expanded with new subsidiaries to operate various functions such as mortgage lending and group operations. By 1950, Jacksonville was home to seven companies and thirty smaller branch offices that employed 5,480 people which created a payroll and other expenses of \$30,000,000. In 1953, the Florida Legislature passed the Regional Home Office Law that provided attractive tax benefits to out-of-state insurance companies that relocated to Florida. Starting with the Southeast Regional Office of the Prudential Life Insurance Company in 1954, Jacksonville soon became the "Insurance Center of the Southeast" becoming home for the central office of seventeen companies, five regional offices, and headquarters for twenty major general insurance agencies. Many of these companies constructed new office buildings in Downtown Jacksonville during the 1950s and 60s.<sup>13</sup>

During that period, the company grew at a phenomenal rate becoming a financial powerhouse both in Jacksonville and Florida. In 1950, the company employed 1,700 people working in the home office and in fifty-three branch offices. By October of 1961, the Gulf Life Insurance Company had 13,378 stockholders who owned 2,400,000 shares of stock. At time the company had \$1,418,532,732 worth of insurance with 223 million in assets. In 1964, the Gulf Life Insurance Company was recognized as the first Florida life insurance company to reach over two billion worth of life insurance. In that year, the company sold and leased back it downtown home office, which included two buildings on 2/3 of a city block, to Transcontinental Investing Corporation of New York for 2.2 million dollars. By 1967, the company was in the top 4 % nationally based on the amount of insurance in force which was over 2 ½ billion dollars. In addition it had over 15,000 shareholders and served more than 1 ½ million policy holders. With 560 employees at the home office and 1,600 field and service representatives, the company had outgrown space in six different buildings. One of the six buildings was a new seven story office building that opened in 1954 at 124 West Ashley Street. The new building was actually an addition that was internally connected with the Educational Building. In

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<sup>12</sup> Original and Alteration construction plans – 1710-w/1926 and 673-w/1938.

Photo – Wall, p. 34 and Photo from the Florida Photographic Collection in the site file for 125 West Church Street, Historic Preservation Archives, Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.

<sup>13</sup> 1986 Advertising Supplement, p.3.

Caroline Rawls, *The Jacksonville Story*. (Jacksonville, Florida, 1950), p.73.  
 Dovell, p. 209.

1967, the company moved into a 433 foot high, 27story office tower on the South Bank area of Downtown Jacksonville.<sup>14</sup>

Growing just as phenomenally during the years as the Gulf Life Insurance Company was the First Baptist Church that began an ambitious expansion plan to be free of any outside financing and based instead on a pay as you go policy. Church members, Samuel and Louisa Armstrong donated property at 316 & 326 West Ashley Street along with \$23,000 in cash. On the death of Mrs. Armstrong in April of 1939, a trust fund was set up to start a new building program. The church purchased property next door at 517 North Hogan Street for \$16,500 in 1941. A new educational building was constructed on this site behind the sanctuary by R.J. Gillespie Company from a design by architects Marsh & Saxelbye in association with D. Floyd Rosser. Costing \$250,000, the new building opened on February 1, 1948 and named the Armstrong Educational Building in dedication to the memory of Samuel and Louisa Armstrong. In 1949, the sanctuary was remodeled including the addition of air conditioning.<sup>15</sup>

With Sunday school enrollment being near 2500 and having 2,700 members, the need for additional educational space was acute. Owning no more space on the block containing the sanctuary and the Armstrong Education Building, the church purchased properties across North Hogan Street and West Ashley Street. The church had a four-story building constructed across North Hogan Street at 209 West Ashley Street. Designed by D. Floyd Rosser and built by Paul H. Smith Construction Company at the cost of \$350,000, the new 22,000 square foot building opened on December 19, 1954. Since housing the youth departments, the building was named the Youth Building. In response to continued growth which reached 3,488 members by 1965, a new five story educational building was constructed and attached to the Armstrong Building which was also renovated. Built by the William E. Arnold Company for \$633,333, the building was dedicated on November 14, 1965, and named the Lindsay Educational Building to honor Reverend Dr. Homer Lindsay, Sr.<sup>16</sup>

When Gulf Life Insurance Company moved in 1967 it left two connecting buildings, 125 West Church Street and 124 West Ashley Street that had a total square footage of 127,000. The buildings and property was offered to the church for six million. After the church declined the offer, an investment group purchased the property which they leased for ten years. The group could not collect sufficient rent to cover cost which was additionally encumbered by ten years of deferred maintenance. The investors decided to

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<sup>14</sup> *Florida Times Union*, October 30, 1962, *Jacksonville Journal*, March 31, 1962, *Florida Times Union*, November 18, 1964 & Supplement to the *Florida Times Union and the Jacksonville Journal*, December 3, 1967.

Press Release, The Jack Wyatt Company, May 28, 1962.

Wayne W. Wood, *Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage, Landmarks for the Future*. (Gainesville, Florida: University Presses of Florida, 1989), pp. 45 & 382.

Another building constructed by the company was a two-story Art Moderne style structure at 604 North Hogan Street that was completed in 1947 from a design by A. Eugene Cellar and later purchased by the Church which currently houses the International Ministry program (Jacksonville Building Permit Record, # 1255, 1947).

<sup>15</sup> Wall, pp. 47 & 48.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, pp. 50 & 51.



sale the buildings which were purchased by the church in 1977 for \$1,680,000. After repairs and updates, the old Educational Building at 125 West Church Street became the Singles Building that housed the young people department. The building at 124 West Ashley Street was renovated as the Administration Building. As growth continued at a rapid rate, the church needed a newer much larger sanctuary. In April of 1976, a new 3,200 seat auditorium was opened named in honor of Ruth Lindsay, wife of Pastor Dr. Homer Lindsay, Sr. Ruth Lindsay was a tireless worker involved in a variety of activities important in the church's growth and development. With an increase in membership to 11,050 by 1986, a new 18.5 million dollar auditorium was dedicated on October 3, 1993 that accommodated 9,200 seats. The church campus was further expanded with three parking garages. By 1999, the church had 26,088 members and was recognized as the second largest Baptist church in the Country.<sup>17</sup>

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

The building at 125 West Church Street has significance as the first location of Jacksonville University. Opening a law practice in Jacksonville during the 1920s, William J. Porter, born in 1905, graduated from the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn) and received a law degree from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee. In order to supplement his income during the depression, Porter opened the Jacksonville Law School which usually attracted 20 students for a 30 month course. Under his motto, "Give the New Man a Chance", he was elected a judge of the Criminal Court of Record after beating a well-established incumbent. He was sworn-in on May 30, 1933. In addition to the law, Judge Porter became intrigued by the interest of a small group of local men to organize a university in the city. Judge Porter calculated that of the 700 high school graduates in Duval County only 150 could afford to go away to an out-of-town college which exemplified the need for a commuter school. In early 1934, he met with a group of local citizens who were active supporters in the establishment of a school of higher education in Jacksonville. The group included Dean Boggs, attorney; T.W. Benson, President of the Suwanee Life Insurance Company; J. Richard Grether, Chief Clerk in the Trust Department of Barnett Bank and F.S. Wetzel, head of the chemistry department at Robert E. Lee High School.<sup>18</sup>

Through their efforts, the William J. Porter University was officially chartered on April 16, 1934 and began planning an opening in September of 1934. Optimistically planning on opening a four year college with four degree programs, the organizers decided it was more financially and administratively prudent at the time to open as a two-year college program offering classes predominately in the evening. In preparing for the opening of the school, Judge Porter established an advisory council of nineteen civic minded leaders to guide him in recruiting students, hiring a faculty, as well as other administrative details including finding a location to hold the classes. A member of the advisory council was

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<sup>17</sup> Wall, pp. 64, 65, 67, 68, 85 & 102.

<sup>18</sup> George Hallam, *Our Place in the Sun, A History of Jacksonville University*. (Jacksonville, Florida: Jacksonville University, 1988), pp. 3 & 4.

Jacksonville University, 75. Advertising Special Section, *Florida Times Union*, October 15, 2009, pp. 4 & 6.

Reverend Dr. F.C. McConnell, Jr., minister of the First Baptist Church, who offered the school the use of the third floor of the Educational Building. The offer was quickly accepted since the building was centrally located in downtown, close to bus lines and the public library. In addition, the school had approval to use the chemistry labs at Robert E. Lee High School. 19

During the first year, the university had a business manager, librarian and dean who selected eleven instructors each teaching only freshman classes that first year. The new university was openly endorsed by the City Council, Jr. Chamber of Commerce, Allied Executive Committee and Dr. John J. Tigert, President of the University of Florida. President Tigert agreed that any student of Porter University transferring to the University of Florida could receive provisional credit for courses successfully completed up to a two year period. President Porter agreed to pattern their courses to follow those at the University of Florida including the use of the same textbooks. Provisional agreements were also established with Stetson University, the University of Alabama and Southern College in Lakeland. Opening on October 1, 1934 with convocation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor auditorium, the announced enrollment was sixty students which had increased to eighty-five students by the end of the first academic year. Programs offered during the first year included pre-law, arts and sciences, business administration and engineering.20

At the end of the first academic year, the college left the Educational Building and occupied different downtown locations including the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Florida Theatre, a rented room from the Haddock Business University on North Laura Street and several years at the Masonic Building on North Main Street. With the growing financial depression and the disruption of constantly moving affected student attendance and the college's credibility. Teachers were receiving a salary of only \$15 a month which caused low morale and high turnover of instructors. In addition, the business manager, John Lee, a close friend of Judge Porter, left the college to start a rival school in 1935. In February of 1937, Judge Porter turned over the leadership of the college to J. Richard Grether, acting president and dean, who inherited a balance of only \$16.66 making the college financially insolvent. Renamed the Jacksonville Junior College in 1935, the future of the school significantly changed when Dr. Francis A. Waterhouse, a Harvard graduate who held professorships in romance languages at Dartmouth, University of Pennsylvania and the University of Texas, became president. During his brief time as the college's president, Dr. Waterhouse was able to interest prominent business and professional leaders, such as Carl S. Swisher, Judge Burton Barrs as well as successful attorneys, Guy Botts and Fred Noble, in the development of the school.21

Under the leadership of the Board of Trustees and with growing community support, the college began to have an up-swing in enrollment during the 1940s including students from the Naval Air Station Jacksonville. In 1941, the college was accepted as a member

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19 Wall, p. 36.

Hallam, p. 5.

20 Hallam, pp. 6, 7 & 9.

21 Ibid, p. 11.

of the American Association of Junior Colleges. By 1943, the college had an enrollment of 80 students. With a successful \$20,000 fundraising campaign by the Civitan Club, as well as significant donations from Jessie Ball DuPont, Clifford E. McGehee and Carl Swisher along with a yearly donation up to \$10,000 by the City of Jacksonville, the college was able to purchase for \$16,500, its first permanent home in the former mansion of Colonel William E. Kay at 704 Riverside Avenue in 1944.<sup>22</sup>

With the tremendous demand for higher education, particularly stimulated by the G.I. Bill, the large 1899 house soon became inadequate and sold to the state for \$48,000. Anticipating becoming a four year fully accredited institution, the college purchased a 137 acre parcel along the St. Johns River in Arlington. At the cost of \$35,000, the college officially acquired the parcel on April 8, 1947, and opened on October 2, 1950 primarily using surplus barracks. With the offering of four year degree programs, the college was renamed Jacksonville University in 1956 with the first graduating class being in 1959. On December 7, 1961, Jacksonville University was granted full accreditation as a senior college by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.<sup>23</sup>

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

During the period from 1938 to 1951, 125 West Church Street has significance because of its direct association with the productive life of company founder, Thomas Tyre Phillips. Born in Stone Mountain, DeKalb County, Georgia in 1877, T.T. Phillips worked for the Industrial Aid Association of Georgia in Atlanta starting in 1898 and was appointed a traveling representative of the company in 1901. By 1903 at the age of 26, Phillips was residing in Pensacola, Florida, remaining there until he moved to Jacksonville in 1916. He served as president of the Gulf Life Insurance Company from 1911 to 1947 becoming chairman of the board of directors until his death in 1951. Founded in 1911 in Pensacola, Florida, the company started only with T.T. Philips and two agents working out of a single room in the Blount Building. With only \$500 in assets and capitalized at \$5,000, Philips within 25 years grew the company to be the largest insurance company in the state that insured one out of every five Florida residents.<sup>24</sup>

By 1935, the Gulf Life Insurance Company had assets of \$2,950,000, 250,000 policy holders, an income of \$2,250,000, as well as \$63,000,000 in volume of coverage. From

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, pp. 15, 14, 17, 18 & 21.

Jacksonville University 75, p. 4

<sup>23</sup> Hallam, pp. 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19 & 21.

Jacksonville University 75, pp. 4 & 6.

A committee reviewed forty different relocation sites including Cecil Field which was being considered for closure at the time but remained in operation.

<sup>24</sup> *Pensacola News Journal*, June 14, 1936, p. 14.

Dovell, p. 209.

<https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/12292138/person/262172582986/facts>

two employees in 1911, the company employed 500 agents with a payroll of \$65,000 monthly by 1935. During this first twenty-five years, Gulf Life had paid policy holders over \$5,600,000. At the time, the company was advertised as, "Florida's Largest & Strongest Life Insurance Company" The year before T.T. Philip's death in 1951, the company employed 1,700 people working in the home office and in fifty-three branch offices. The 27 directors of the company included a variety of prominent business and professional leaders from numerous Florida cities. By 1950, Gulf Life was one of seven insurance companies with a home office in Jacksonville and supplemented by thirty smaller branch offices that in total employed 5,480 people who created a payroll and expenses of \$30,000,000.<sup>25</sup>

With the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the company, one newspaper article described T.T. Phillips as, "*a man who had vision, confidence and the hope of building an institution with supreme though of humanitarian service*". His strong commitment to quality and dependable service is evident by his record of paying all claims regardless of the company's financial status. In order to pay all the claims produced by the 1918 influenza outbreak, T.T. Phillips worked without compensation. After the deadly hurricane of 1928, he personally paid claims for 75 storm related deaths in West Palm Beach. He died on April 3, 1951 in Jacksonville with funeral services at the First Presbyterian Church and burial in Oaklawn Cemetery. During his 36 year career as president and later chairman of the board of trustees, Thomas T. Phillips developed the Gulf Life Insurance Company into a multi-million dollar business, (60 million in assets by 1949), as well as a financial force in Florida and the Southeast by providing not only insurance and employment opportunities (1400 at the time of his death in 1951) but also investment funds for sound public and private projects. <sup>26</sup>

**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.*

The Educational Building represents the only documented design in Florida by regionally significant architect, Reuben Harrison Hunt, who has been called the, "the Master Builder of Chattanooga". In addition to his home state of Tennessee, R.H. Hunt had designed buildings in almost all Southern states including Oklahoma, Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Texas and Florida, as well as a designing the First Baptist Church in Rio de Janero, Brazil (1929). Born in Elbert County, Georgia in 1862, Hunt was educated in local schools before becoming a carpenter and builder from 1876 to 1881. In 1882 at the age of 20, he moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee to work for the Adams Brothers, contractors. While working for the Adams Brothers, Hunt began studying architecture. He became a practicing architect in 1886 with the establishment of Hunt and McDaniel, (L.W. McDaniel) firm of

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

*The Atlanta Constitution*, January 18, 1901, p. 10.

*The Miami News*, April 3, 1951, p. 6.

*The Atlanta Constitution*, April 4, 1951, p. 26.

architects, contractors and builders. His first major design, which was done with L.W. McDaniel, was the Romanesque Revival style First Baptist Church of Chattanooga in 1886 where he was an active member and deacon. Between 1890 and 1892 the name of the firm was changed to Hunt and Lamm (E.N. Lamm) and dropped the contracting and building part of the business to concentrate on architecture. During their short partnership, the firm designed three county courthouses in Tennessee and Georgia, as well as the Second Baptist Church in Atlanta. 27

In an 1890 advertisement in the Chattanooga City Directory, the firm emphasized the construction of churches and public buildings as their specialty focusing on large scale projects and less on residences. By the early 1900s, he established R.H. Hunt Company that operated until his death in 1937. Within a few years, the company became very prolific and in a 1907 advertisement listed having 131 finished projects that included 60 churches, 28 schools, 22 Businesses, 12 court houses, 5 hotels, 5 municipal buildings and two skyscrapers. He also established a branch office in Jackson, Mississippi in 1905 and one in Dallas, Texas in 1919. Hunt continued to focus more on church designs, and even provided free design services for those congregations unable to pay the professional fees. A recognized authority on the design of religious structures, Mouzon William Brabham began working with Hunt in 1926. Brabham published a book in 1928 entitled *Planning Modern Church Buildings* which incorporated mainly design examples from Hunt's work. Hunt also published a three volume set in 1916 called *Modern Church Designs*. The book had various examples of religious designs from the small and simple to larger more detailed churches made of brick and stone. He used the publication as a successful marketing tool.28

Being more a traditionalist, Hunt's designs reflected wide use of medieval and classical revival styles particularly Gothic Revival, but also Romanesque, Beaux Arts, Neo-classical, and Georgian. He was also known to reuse designs but with some modifications which saved time and money while increasing productivity further exposing his work to a wider audience. Similar to the 1926 & 27 Educational Building in Jacksonville, Hunt designed an Educational Building in 1928 for the First Baptist Church of Chattanooga in a more contemporary style but with decorative elements that harmonized with the Romanesque Revival style of the older sanctuary. Unfortunately both buildings have been demolished. After World War I, the R.H. Hunt Company began doing designs for colleges such as Baylor College for Women in Belton, Texas; Quachita Baptist College in Arkadelphia, Arkansas; Daniel Baker College in Brownwood, Texas; the Stonewall Jackson Institute in Arlington, Virginia; Mississippi A & M College in Starkville and the Mississippi Normal College.29

Between 1895 and 1935, Hunt's company was responsible for the design of all

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27 National Register of Historic Places, Thematic Resource Nomination – Hunt, Reuben H., Buildings in Hamilton County, Tennessee, p. 8-1.

<https://Tennesseeencyclopedia.Net/Entries/Reuben-Harrison-Hunt/>

28 Ibid

29 Ibid.

governmental buildings in Chattanooga including the Hamilton County Courthouse, Carnegie Library, the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium, the Municipal Building and his last major project, the Art Deco style Joel W. Soloman Federal Building and U.S. Post Office in Chattanooga that was designed in association with New York Architects, Shreve, Lamb & Harmon. Completed in 1934, the building received national attention when the American Institute of Architects (AIA) listed it as one of the top 150 buildings constructed in the United States since 1918.<sup>30</sup>

Hunt's company mentored many young architects from throughout the South who were just starting their professional career. A Mason and devout member of the First Baptist Church of Chattanooga, he was very active in the community serving as the Chairman of the Board of the Citizen's Council of Chattanooga organized in 1933 to monitor and respond to governmental activities including being a leader in the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), a Depression era rural electrification program. In addition to being a member of the American Institute of Architects, AIA, Hunt served on the Chattanooga Planning Commission, as well as served as a trustee of the Carson – Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee. His work has been recognized in national architectural journals such as *The Architectural Record* and the *American Architect*. At the time of his death in 1937, Reuben Hunt was widely praised in editorials, with one calling him, "as the outstanding architect in the entire South" and another stating, "no man's life has been more thoroughly woven into the progress of Chattanooga during the past half century than that of R. H. Hunt". Thirty-nine buildings designed by Hunt are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Educational Building is the only documented building in Florida designed by Hunt per the Florida Master Site File, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State.<sup>31</sup>

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

The quality of architecture in the Educational Building is recognized and reflected in the design of the south elevation which fronts West Church Street. Consistent with the traditional construction of commercial buildings in urban centers since the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries, the subject property was designed and constructed to maximize the use of the entire lot, with zero front and side setbacks. Constructed in 1926 & 27, the tan brick building, which is covered with a flat, built-up roof, has six-stories framed with steel and sheathed on the exterior with masonry and terra cotta. The design of the

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

E-mail from Andrew J. Waber, Division of Historical Resources, to Joel McEachin dated February 17, 2020. *The Architectural Record*, November 1916 & December, 1934 and the *American Architect*, August 1, 1908. Although producing designs in traditional revival styles, Hunt's relationship to Chattanooga is similar to that of avant-garde architect, Henry John Klutho in Jacksonville as far as the number of designs dating roughly from the same time period.

building reflects a variation of a commercial style referred by one stylebook as the two-part vertical block.<sup>32</sup> While acknowledging uniform design elements in commercial architecture that expanded the period from the 1850's to the 1950's, this stylebook identified commercial buildings based on the major horizontal divisions of the façade to which are applied numerous stylistic elements reflective of different architectural periods.

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-house 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. The design and materials of the ornamentation usually established the influence of any particular architectural style.<sup>33</sup>

Characteristic of other commercial styles of this period, structures in the two-part vertical block design have a strong vertical emphasis in the building shaft created by the application of decorative elements such as pilasters or the use of uninterrupted wall surface above the first zone. The first zone on the Education Building is the ground floor which is symmetrically balanced with the consistent placement of window pairs on each side of the central entryway. The first floor is further differentiated by being sheathed with terra cotta panels and defined on the top by a decorative band. The visually prominent second zone or the six floor, is composed of arched window pairs which is further articulated with terra cotta ornamentation and basket-weave patterned brick work which creates a unified whole. In addition to a decorative parapet, the center of the second zone is further defined by a raised centrally placed gabled parapet wall. The two zones are connected with continuous terra cotta mullions that ran from the top of the first story to the paired arched windows on the six which emphasizes the verticality of the facade. The symmetry of the front façade is also enhanced with the window pairs on each floor lining up vertically.

The architectural detailing of the building is reflective of the Second Renaissance Revival style common from the 1840s into the twentieth century. Second Renaissance Revival style buildings are organized into distinct horizontal sections by

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32 Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street, A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. (Walnut Creek, California: Alta Mira Press, 2000), pp. 25 - 51.

33 Ibid, pp. 24, 31 & 41.

string courses or different window types usually located in the top story. The ground floor is usually sheathed with a different material than found on the upper floors. In the publication, *Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage Landmarks for the Future*, the front of the building is described as having a, "handsome and yet restrained façade that makes an important contribution to the diversity of Downtown Jacksonville".<sup>34</sup>

**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 125 West Church 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 on-going neglect are also a factor in evaluating potential landmarks for their suitability for preservation or restoration. Therefore, it is the opinion of the Planning and Development Department that the Educational Building at 125 West Church Street appears to be basically sound with some exterior alterations and was until recently occupied.

In 1953, the Gulf Life Insurance Company constructed a seven story addition behind the 1927 building (Building Permit Record, #1298 – 1952). Fronting West Ashley Street, this addition, which is now the administration building for the church, was built by the Gallespie Construction Company from a design by Saxelbye & Powell. The main elevation of the addition fronts the south side of West Ashley Street (124 West Ashley Street). Internally connected to the 1927 building, the addition functioned as the primary entryway into the Gulf Life Insurance Company office. Reflecting the Mid-Modern style, the addition was built during the historic period which is before 1970.

The most significant exterior alterations completed in more recent years were the replacement of the original six over six sash windows including the arches on the sixth floor with a one over one metal product. The first floor windows on the West Church Street elevation have been enclosed with scored stucco or concrete. Windows on the west elevation of the back section also have been enclosed. The north and east elevations of the original building are no longer visible from the exterior with the construction of a seven-story addition to the north and a parking garage to the east. The front entryway is enclosed with a pair of doors and sidelights fabricated with anodized bronze aluminum.

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<sup>34</sup> Wood, pp. 18 & 45.



Based on the building permit records, the other major exterior alterations were to the first story which was completed in 1938 during the historic period, thus acquiring significance in their own right. All the other building permits were interior modifications and upgrades or maintenance related repairs to the exterior. Since local landmark designation does not require review of interior changes and upgrades, the interior of the building was not evaluated as related to the presence and condition of original or early features, as well as modifications to original or early floor plans and room configurations.

cc - Jerry Traino, AIA REWC  
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First Baptist Church of Jacksonville  
600 North Main Street  
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**Popoli, Christian**

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**From:** Debbie Thompson <djacksontom@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 19, 2020 6:36 PM  
**To:** Historic Preservation  
**Subject:** FBC Sunday School / Gulf Life Bldg

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

In case I'm not able to make the February 26th meeting, I'm writing to register, for the record, my opposition to the demolition request by First Baptist Church of the former Gulf Life Building. I don't need to go into the importance of this building here. I know you already know.

I'd further like to ask Historic Preservation to seek Landmark status for the building to provide additional protection for the building.

First Baptist can still build a beautiful greeting and event space by rehabbing this historic treasure. We've already lost too many of them downtown.

Thanks, Debbie Thompson, 1531 Silver St.

Sent from my iPhone

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Glenda Wann <Glenda@glendawanninteriors.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 19, 2020 12:49 PM  
**To:** Historic Preservation; Popoli, Christian; Boyer, Lori; Mayor Lenny Curry; Becton, Daniel  
**Subject:** FBC Demolition of Historic Sunday School Building

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

**To: Distinguished Members**

I have been a member of FBC since 1974 and am NOT in favor to tearing down the beautiful and historically significant Renaissance Revival Sunday School Building!

Respectfully submitted,

*Glenda Wann*

Glenda W. Wann, ASID  
Florida Registered Interior Designer #226

[glenda@glendawanninteriors.com](mailto:glenda@glendawanninteriors.com)

[www.glendawanninteriors.com](http://www.glendawanninteriors.com)

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Charles Kn\_ RT <cladue5jr@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 14, 2020 2:31 PM  
**To:** Historic Preservation; Popoli, Christian

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,

I am a Project Manager employed by the state of Rhode Island who has caught wind of people attempting to save another building wrongfully accused of having historic significance . Ill add that my current charge is a 3 plus million dollar exterior restoration to The Old State House constructed in 1767.

There does not appear to be enough data to allow this building to be considered a structure of historic significance that warrants it to be saved. The antiquated mechanical systems and aged infrastructure DO NOT in any way support the decision to not demolish the building.

Do the right thing and bring it down

best,

--

Charles J LaDue II

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Patricia Goelz <goelz1359@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 14, 2020 12:54 PM  
**To:** Historic Preservation; Popoli, Christian; Boyer, Lori; Mayor Lenny Curry  
**Subject:** The Singles Buildings

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

We love history and Jacksonville is losing many of its historical buildings. Please save the Singles Buildings. If you haven't read <https://www.thejaxsonmag.com/article/first-baptists-sunday-school-building-is-worth-saving/> please do so. It really explains my thoughts.

Help preserve Jacksonville's history!  
Thank you,  
Patricia Goelz  
1359 Beach Ave, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Kevin O'Halloran <kevinmohalloran@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 05, 2020 9:11 AM  
**To:** Historic Preservation; Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** Oppose Historic First Baptist Building Demolition

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I would like to formally oppose the proposed demolition of a historic 1920's building in Downtown Jacksonville. We have already lost so many historic structures that give our community character and it's unique identity so please do not let this cycle continue! This article by the Jaxson outlines all of the numerous reasons why the building should be saved and reused instead of destroyed. <https://www.thejaxsonmag.com/article/first-baptists-sunday-school-building-is-worth-saving/>

Thank you,

Kevin O'Halloran

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Historic Preservation  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 04, 2020 8:04 AM  
**To:** Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** FW: First Baptist Sunday School Building

**Sarah Mallory**  
City Planner I  
Community Planning Division, Historic Preservation Section  
City of Jacksonville | Planning and Development Department  
214 North Hogan Street, Suite 300  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
(904) 255-7854  
[www.coj.net](http://www.coj.net)

Please Note: "Under Florida's very broad public records law, email communications to and from city officials are subject to public disclosure."

**From:** Jen Morgan <morgjen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 4, 2020 7:38 AM  
**To:** Historic Preservation <HistoricPreservation@coj.net>  
**Subject:** First Baptist Sunday School Building

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I'm writing this short note to encourage the preservation of the First Baptist Church Sunday School building. As it sits within historic downtown Jacksonville, is in good shape, and because so many of our contributing historic structures are failing or have been removed, I feel the building should be landmarked and protected from alteration or demolition. It contributes to the character of our community and has significance beyond the whims of The ailing First Baptist Church.

Thank you,

Jennifer Morgan  
3938 Jean Street  
Jax, Fla 32205

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Mallory, Sarah  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 06, 2020 7:51 AM  
**To:** Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** FW: FBC Sunday School bldg

I responded, so just forwarding to you.

**Sarah Mallory**  
City Planner I  
Community Planning Division, Historic Preservation Section  
City of Jacksonville I Planning and Development Department  
214 North Hogan Street, Suite 300  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
(904) 255-7854  
[www.coj.net](http://www.coj.net)

Please Note: "Under Florida's very broad public records law, email communications to and from city officials are subject to public disclosure."

**From:** Tom Anderson <tanders922@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 5, 2020 8:08 PM  
**To:** Historic Preservation <HistoricPreservation@coj.net>  
**Subject:** FBC Sunday School bldg

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to express my support to save this bldg. We are losing so many historical bldgs in Jacksonville.

Please register my support to save this bldg from destruction.

Thank you,

Tom Anderson  
904-891-3609



**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Pourch, Brandon <Brandon.Pourch@rsandh.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 11:20 AM  
**To:** Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** An Architect's Thoughts on the Sunday School Building

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Popoli,

Thank you for your service to the community and your recent paper arguing for the preservation of the Sunday School Building.

As an architect, and current President of the Jacksonville chapter of the AIA, I want to take a moment to weigh in on the architectural value of this important building that could be lost to the city forever.

I have spoken to over 100 local architects and every single one agrees this is an important building to the history of architecture in Jacksonville that deserves to be preserved for future generations to enjoy and to serve as a guide and inspiration for current architects.

Judging the beauty of a building is subjective in nature, and typically people have differing views on any particular work of architecture, but this building has a balance and harmony that appeals to the senses and gives joy to all who see it.

The architect, Reuben Harrison Hunt, was well known in Chattanooga and this building he designed for Jacksonville is a wonderful example of the Renaissance Revival style popular throughout the US in the early 1900's. As the advent of steel construction technologies allowed for increasingly taller buildings with more glass, architects searched for new expressions of beauty for a new era of construction. At the Sunday School Building, Reuben Harrison Hunt chose to accentuate the vertical thrust of the building with Italian Renaissance style terracotta tile work that foreshadows the linear design elements of the Art Deco style. This building is one of the few examples of it's kind left in Jacksonville or the state of Florida.

The fact that all of the original tilework is still intact is amazing and lends itself for preservation and restoration. The building is structurally sound and there is absolutely no reason it could not be restored to its former glory, just as the Barnett Bank Building has been recently renovated.

The First Baptist Church wants to place a new welcome center in the location of the Sunday School Building, but what better way to welcome members than the covered archway leading into the Sunday School Building? Their new design features a glass façade. Well the Sunday School Building has windows all along the street façade that could be restored and have the same impact as the proposed design. The building has been used for almost 100 years without any problems so the idea that it cannot possibly be repurposed for a new use has no merit.

From an economic standpoint, this building is priceless. You simply cannot build a new 100 year old building! I have tried to leave emotion out of my letter but that would be impossible as I am passionate about this city,

this downtown, and this exceptional piece of architecture that would be a travesty to demolish. I regret that I don't have more time available to go into further detail on just how beautiful and important this building is.

Thank you for your time.

Brandon Pouch, AIA LEED AP

**Brandon Pouch, AIA, LEED AP**

Architect

10748 Deerwood Park Blvd South, Jacksonville, FL 32256

O 904-256-2442 | M 904-945-4429

Brandon.Pouch@rsandh.com

rsandh.com | Facebook | Twitter | LinkedIn | Blog

**Stay up-to-date with our latest news and insights.**

**RS&H**

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Meg Manco <megmanco@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2020 1:58 PM  
**To:** Historic Preservation; Popoli, Christian; Boyer, Lori; Mayor Lenny Curry; DeFoor, Randle; Freeman, Terrance  
**Subject:** First Baptist Church Sunday School Building

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am one of your constituents in Jacksonville and I am emailing you about the that the church has made application to demolish.

My hope is that you will uphold our standards and policies we have set for our downtown core regarding historic preservation and deny the application.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely,

Margaret M. Manco

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Mallory, Sarah  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 11:53 AM  
**To:** Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** FW: First Baptist Church

Did you get this one?

**Sarah Mallory**  
City Planner I  
Community Planning Division, Historic Preservation Section  
City of Jacksonville | Planning and Development Department  
214 North Hogan Street, Suite 300  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
(904) 255-7854  
[www.coj.net](http://www.coj.net)

Please Note: "Under Florida's very broad public records law, email communications to and from city officials are subject to public disclosure."

**From:** Jennifer Lail <jennifermelissalail@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2020 9:26 PM  
**To:** Historic Preservation <HistoricPreservation@coj.net>  
**Subject:** First Baptist Church

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Historical Preservation Committee,

I am one of your constituents in Jacksonville and I am emailing you about the First Baptist Church Sunday School Building that the church has made application to demolish.

My hope is that you will uphold our standards and policies we have set for our downtown core regarding historic preservation and deny the application.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Kindly,  
Jennifer

JENNIFER LAIL  
FINE ART 

[JenniferMelissaLail@gmail.com](mailto:JenniferMelissaLail@gmail.com)

941.518.4175

[jenniferlail.com](http://jenniferlail.com)

[instagram.com/jenniferlail](https://www.instagram.com/jenniferlail)

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Historic Preservation  
**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2020 11:06 AM  
**To:** Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** FW: First Baptist's proposal to demolish the Sunday School Building

For distribution to commissioners...

Sincerely,

**Lisa Sheppard, AICP, LEED® AP**

*Planner III*

Community Planning Division | Historic Preservation Section  
 City of Jacksonville | Planning and Development Department  
 214 North Hogan Street, Suite 300  
 Jacksonville, FL 32202

(904) 255-7843

Fax: 904-255-7885

Email: [sheppard@coj.net](mailto:sheppard@coj.net)

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT UNDER FLORIDA'S VERY BROAD PUBLIC RECORDS LAW, COMMUNICATIONS TO AND FROM CITY OFFICIALS ARE SUBJECT TO PUBLIC DISCLOSURE\*\*\*

**From:** Ms Helen Albee <g8tor001@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 22, 2020 11:13 AM  
**To:** Historic Preservation <HistoricPreservation@coj.net>  
**Subject:** First Baptist's proposal to demolish the Sunday School Building

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commission members,

I am writing to oppose the request to demolish the historic Sunday School Building. This building should not be a victim to First Baptist's ill-advised expansion of its campus and its subsequent failure to properly plan for its own future. As a contributing structure to Jacksonville's history, the Commission should preserve it and stop the continuing tear down of Jacksonville's historic structures. Aren't the Landing and Brooklyn's historic Fire Station #5 enough? Furthermore, the Church has not enough shown it has the financing to build its "grand" welcome center and since its membership is down and declining, how does building such a structure make any sense? Please save the Sunday School Building and in the process, perhaps save First Baptist for additional bad decisions and planning.

Sincerely,  
 Helen Albee

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Historic Preservation  
**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2020 11:09 AM  
**To:** Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** FW: Gulf Life / First Baptist Building

Here is another.... Do you think we should forward these as we get them or at least send what we have in a bundle? They are not going to have time to read all of these at the meeting.

Sincerely,

**Lisa Sheppard, AICP, LEED® AP**  
*Planner III*

Community Planning Division | Historic Preservation Section  
 City of Jacksonville | Planning and Development Department  
 214 North Hogan Street, Suite 300  
 Jacksonville, FL 32202  
 (904) 255-7843  
 Fax: 904-255-7885  
 Email: [sheppard@coj.net](mailto:sheppard@coj.net)

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT UNDER FLORIDA'S VERY BROAD PUBLIC RECORDS LAW, COMMUNICATIONS TO AND FROM CITY OFFICIALS ARE SUBJECT TO PUBLIC DISCLOSURE\*\*\*

**From:** Bradley & Leena LLC <[bradleyandleena@gmail.com](mailto:bradleyandleena@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 22, 2020 7:56 PM  
**To:** Historic Preservation <[HistoricPreservation@coj.net](mailto:HistoricPreservation@coj.net)>  
**Subject:** Gulf Life / First Baptist Building

<p><b>EXTERNAL EMAIL:</b> This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.</p>
--

Hello, I wanted to write to express my disapproval on the proposed teardown of the Gulf Life / First Baptist building. Historic buildings in Jacksonville have so much character, and this one in particular is in fantastic shape. It deserves to be renovated and used for some purpose rather than being torn down. Please fight to preserve the First Baptist building.

Leena Hashim-Waris  
 Creative Director  
 Bradley and Leena, LLC  
 347.585.1404

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Historic Preservation  
**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2020 11:09 AM  
**To:** Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** FW: Sunday School Bldg. | Downtown Jacksonville

From this morning...

Sincerely,

**Lisa Sheppard, AICP, LEED® AP**

*Planner III*

Community Planning Division | Historic Preservation Section  
 City of Jacksonville | Planning and Development Department  
 214 North Hogan Street, Suite 300  
 Jacksonville, FL 32202

(904) 255-7843

Fax: 904-255-7885

Email: [sheppard@coj.net](mailto:sheppard@coj.net)

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT UNDER FLORIDA'S VERY BROAD PUBLIC RECORDS LAW, COMMUNICATIONS TO AND FROM CITY OFFICIALS ARE SUBJECT TO PUBLIC DISCLOSURE\*\*\*

**From:** Christina Block <[christinablockphotography@hotmail.com](mailto:christinablockphotography@hotmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2020 11:03 AM

**To:** Historic Preservation <[HistoricPreservation@coj.net](mailto:HistoricPreservation@coj.net)>

**Subject:** Sunday School Bldg. | Downtown Jacksonville

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning,

I am writing you this morning as I am very concerned in regards to the possible demolition of the old Sunday school building which is owned by FBC in downtown Jacksonville.

As a Jacksonville native, it concerns me that all these historical (and beautiful) buildings are being knocked down left & right. When do we start leaving some history behind in Jacksonville? I think culture & history is so important for us & our future generations. One of my favorite things about walking through the streets of downtown is looking at the old architecture, there are so many stories & importance left in those buildings. What a shame it would be to continue to disregard Jacksonvilles history just because "new" is wanted.

I speak behalf on many citizens when I say, let us learn to start embracing our history rather than tearing it down. Also, while encouraging the city of Jacksonville to stick to our policies & standards.

If you would like to further this discussion, I would be happy & honored to do so.

Thank you for your time,



Christina Block

*Christina Block*

[www.christinablockphotography.com](http://www.christinablockphotography.com)

904.234.3635

@christinablockphotography

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Brent Foucht <904cafe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2020 11:40 AM  
**To:** Boyer, Lori; Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** Saving Historic Buildings

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Christian & Lori

I am one of your constituents in Jacksonville and I am emailing you about the First Baptist Church Sunday School Building that the church has made application to demolish.

My hope is that you will uphold standards and policies we have set for our downtown core regarding historic preservation and deny the application. We have lost far too many historic buildings in our city and it's time we make a stand.

I will unfortunately not be able to attend this Wednesday's meeting in regards to this historic building but hope that we as a community can come together to prevent such tragic destruction of something our city should hold of higher value.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely, a Jacksonville native

Brent Foucht  
2222 Gilmore Street  
Jacksonville FL 32204

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Hawkes, James <Jim.Hawkes@rsandh.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 10:37 AM  
**To:** Historic Preservation  
**Subject:** The Sunday School Building

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I urge the commission to carefully consider granting Landmark Status to the Sunday School building. Historic context for a community helps build a sense of civic pride and in general promotes a better quality of life by creating a quality built environment.

Jim Hawkes, AIA

**Jim Hawkes, AIA, LEED AP**

Vice President

D 704-940-4719

1520 South Blvd, Suite 200, Charlotte, NC 28203

O 904-256-2278 | M 904-635-6877

Jim.Hawkes@rsandh.com

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**Stay up-to-date with our latest news and insights.**

The logo for RS&H, featuring the letters 'RS&H' in a bold, stylized, distressed font.

**Popoli, Christian**

---

**From:** Gilmore, Timothy <tgilmore@fscj.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2020 10:41 AM  
**To:** Sheppard, Lisa; Popoli, Christian; Scott, Devin  
**Subject:** supporting mappingjax in preserving historic FBC building

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi, Lisa, Christian and Devin.

I'm emailing you in lieu of being there with the mappingjax group today. I fully support their call to preserve the historic FBC structure and do anything whatsoever to block its demolition. I'm not able to be there at three, because of work, but I wanted to voice my support for their call. I hope it matters.

Thank you for doing what you do, and for registering my voice with theirs on this concern.

Best,

Tim Gilmore

**Popoli, Christian**

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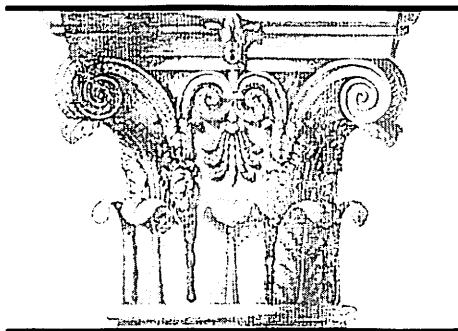
**From:** Nanci <enjb01@bellsouth.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2020 10:00 AM  
**To:** Popoli, Christian  
**Subject:** First Baptist Church Building

EXTERNAL EMAIL: This email originated from a non-COJ email address. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Please do not give approval for the tearing down of the Singles building owned by First Baptist. Adaptive reuse would save our architectural heritage while repurposing the structure and the revitalization of our downtown.

Thank you,  
Nanci Bishof  
3211 Remington Street  
Jacksonville, Florida 32205

Sent from my iPhone



26 February 2020

Mr. Christian Popoli  
Planning Department  
214 Hogan Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32250

Re: Demo 125 West Church Street

Dear Christian,

Please accept this letter to deny the demolition request made by the First Baptist Church at today's hearing on the matter. Your letter to JHPC dated today clearly outlines the importance of the 1927 building.

The Architects have created a reasonable project for the client, however it's the client that is the serial offender in regards to development in the CBD. The previous decades since 1988 have seen the growth of the Church and its related service buildings. The parking garage solutions, which must have come out of the "how not to create a parking garage manual" continues to be an eyesore in the CBD environment. Four city blocks of garage used on Sunday is a tired solution & we can only hope that vines cover the blocks in the near future. It's a win for the congregation & continued loss for the city character & streetscape.

In my opinion, the garage that abuts the 1927 structure under consideration, should be demolished and make room for the church expansion agenda. In addition to this new space, the 1927 structure can be modified to suit the needs of the client, with high glass additions and or multistory additions to the north for additional space. The selected architects are well capable of a design solution that includes the historic structure, saving history for all of us.

Sincerely,

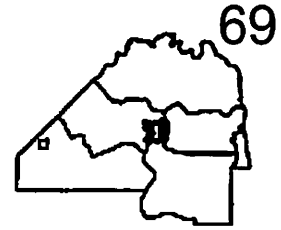
Michael Dunlap

MICHAEL DUNLAP ARCHITECT PA  
1120 NORTH SECOND AVENUE JACKSONVILLE BEACH, FLORIDA 32250  
FLORIDA REGISTRATION AR-9200  
[www.michaeldunlap.com](http://www.michaeldunlap.com) 904.358.1002

URBAN CORE  
Citizens Planning Advisory Committee

Chair: Kim Pryor

---



February 26, 2020

Distinguished Historic Planning Commission Members,

During the February 3, 2020 Urban Core CPAC meeting, Christian Popoll shared a presentation regarding the request from First Baptist Church to demolish the historic structure located at 125 West Church Street. After the presentation and a member discussion, the CPAC voted to support the Historic Preservation Section's decision regarding the demolition of the property.

Per Ordinance Chapter 307.104(j), "In the event the owner of the property expresses an objection in writing to the Commission regarding local landmark status, at least four of the following seven criteria must be met. If the owner of the subject property does not express such objection, only two of the following criteria must be met." According to the staff report, this structure may meet 6 of the 7 criteria for local landmark designation, which exceeds the legal requirement whether the owner agrees or not.

We implore this Commission to act based on your duty to protect our historic structures, as well as by what is required by law. This demolition request should be denied and the structure given the landmark status it deserves.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Pryor".

Kim Pryor  
Chair, Urban Core CPAC  
Preservation SOS  
(904) 465-1555

CC: The Honorable Lenny Curry, Mayor  
Reggie Gaffney, District 7 Council Member  
William Killingsworth, Director of Planning and Development  
Bryan Mosler, Director of Neighborhoods

Demolition Application of 125 W. Church Street

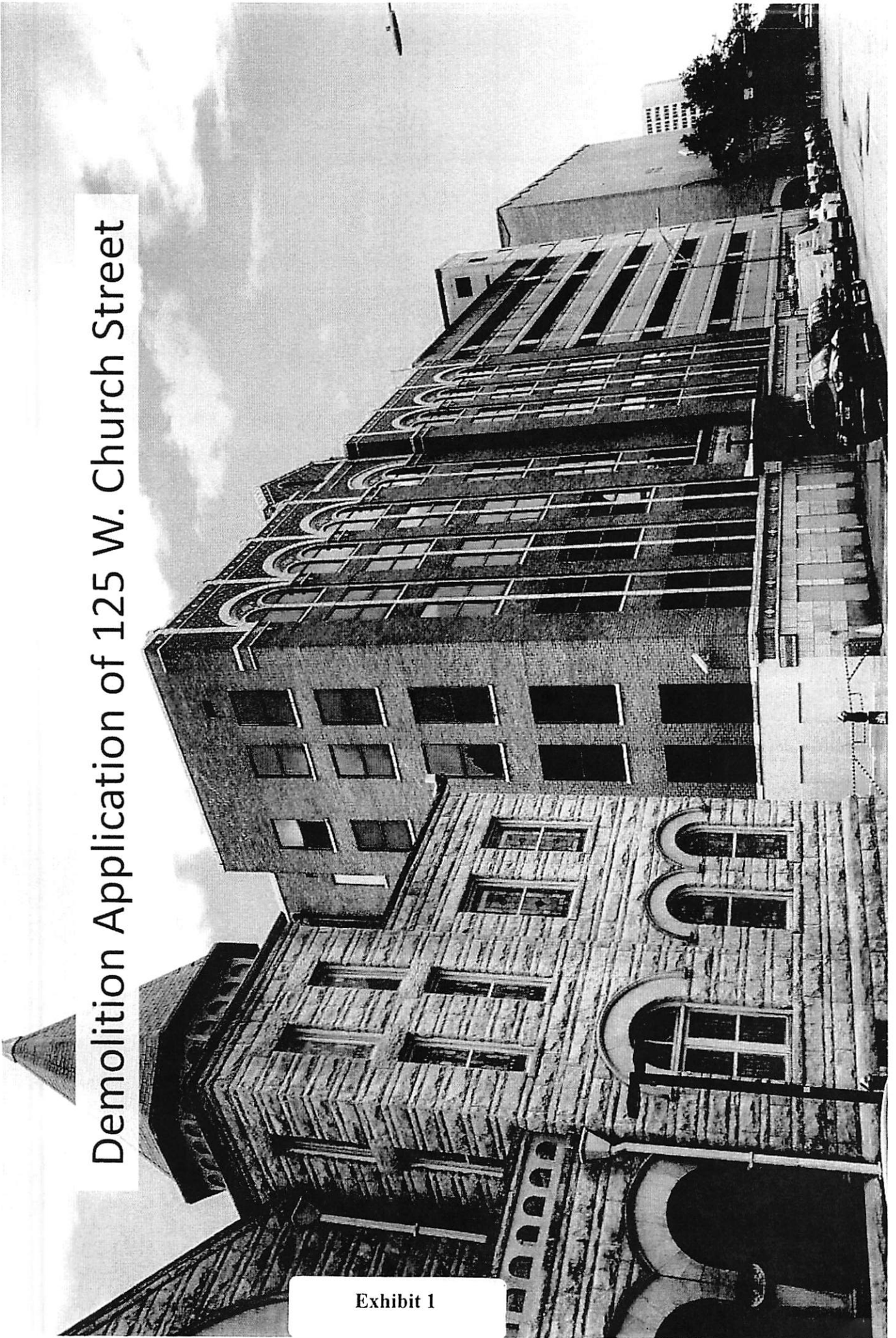
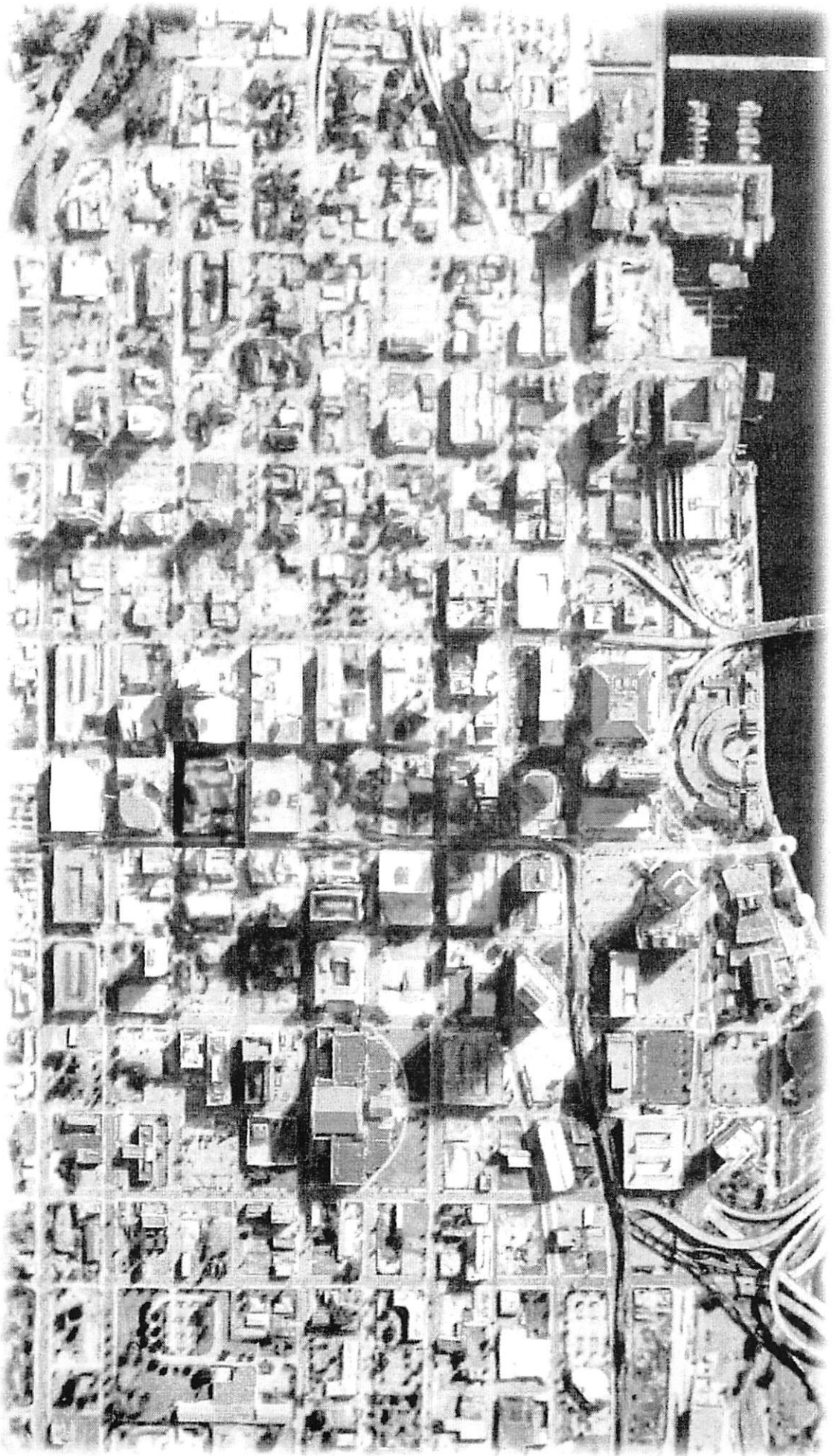


Exhibit 1



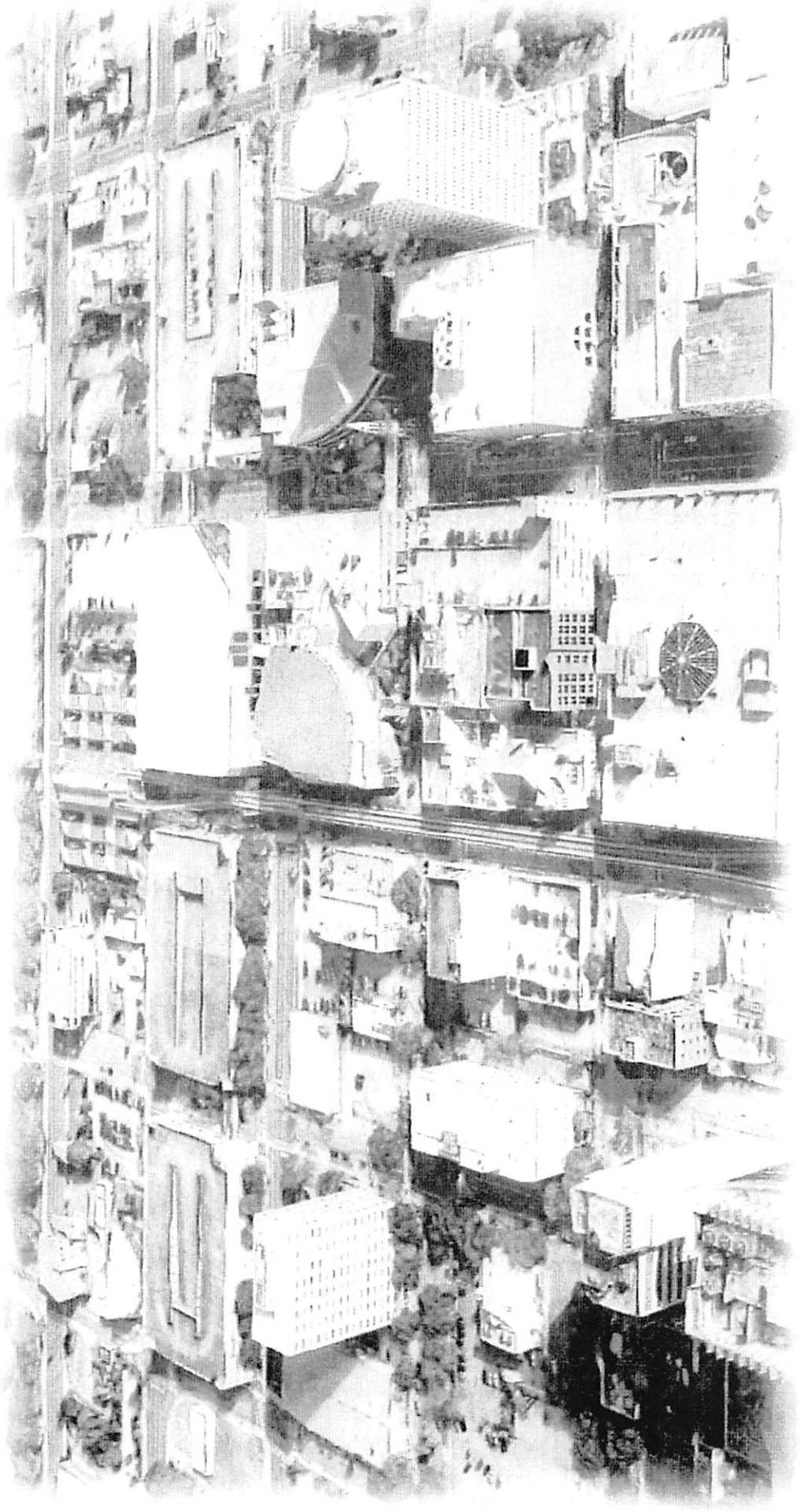


### Surrounding City Context



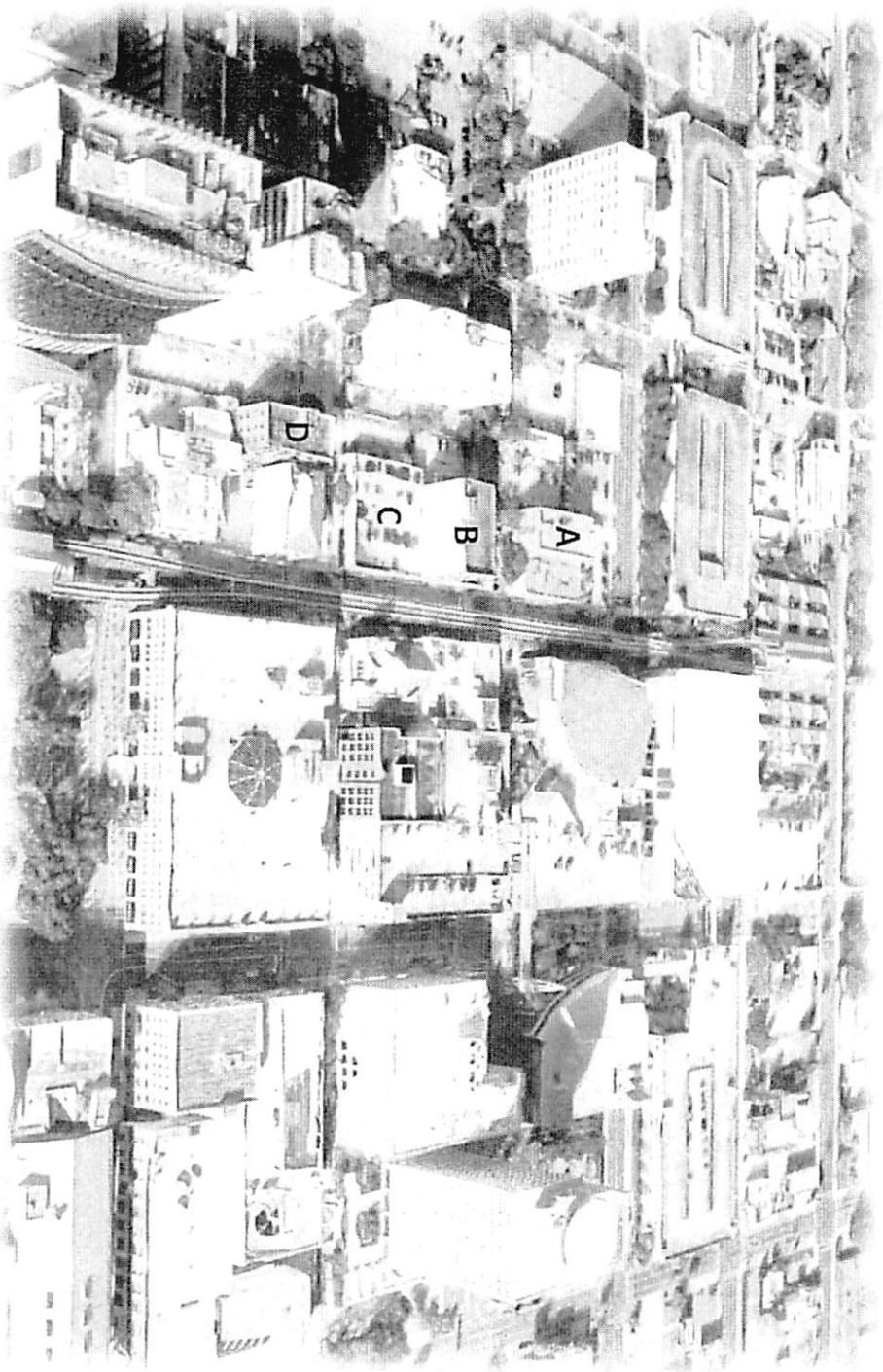


Adjacent City Context

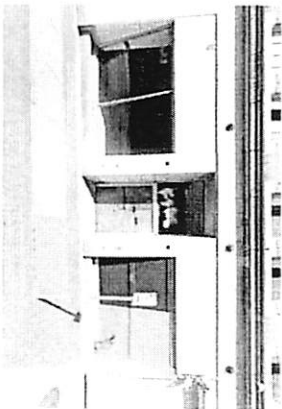




# Existing Buildings in Need of Major Repair



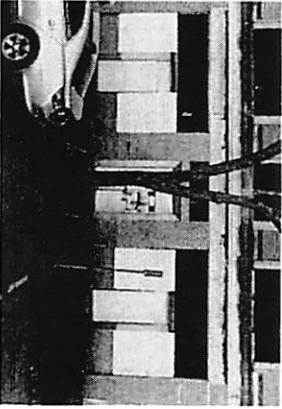
A



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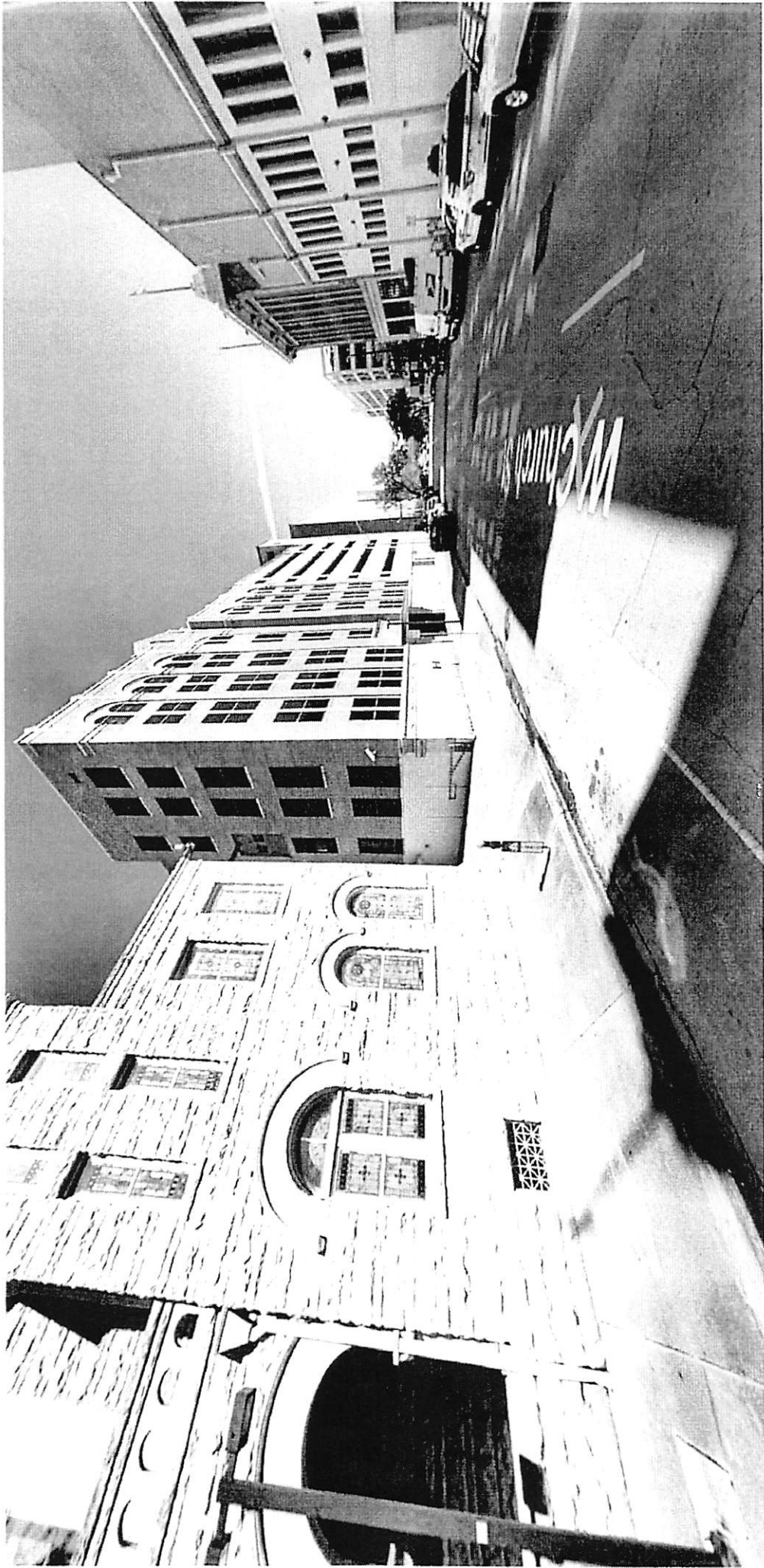


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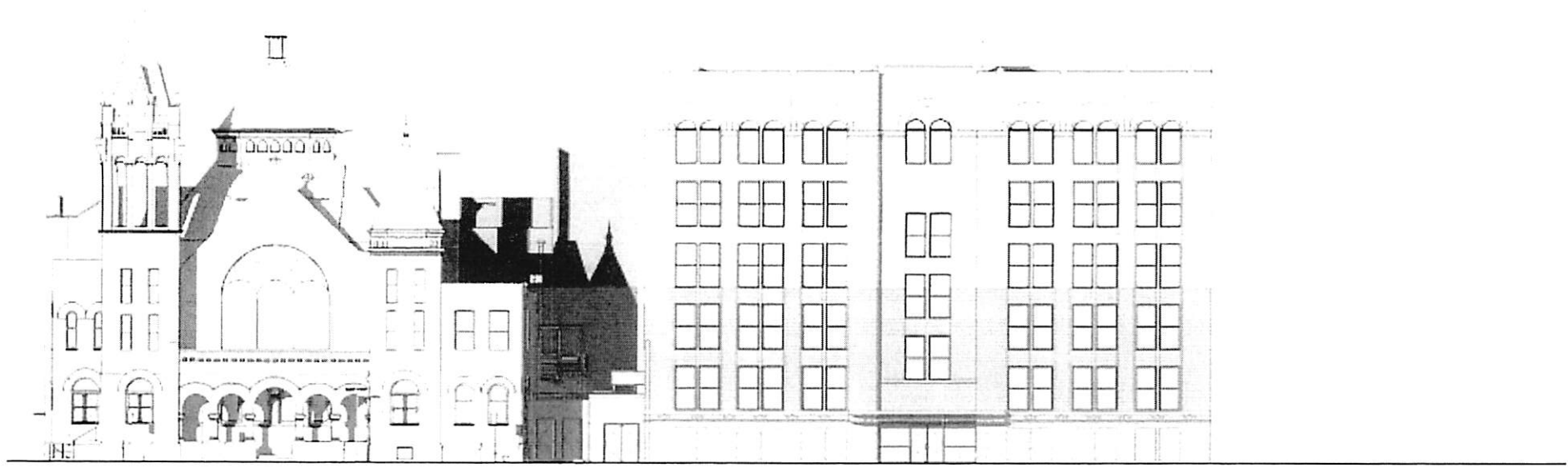


D

Southwest Street Perspective



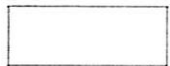
# Existing Structure Will Not Support Needed Welcome Center



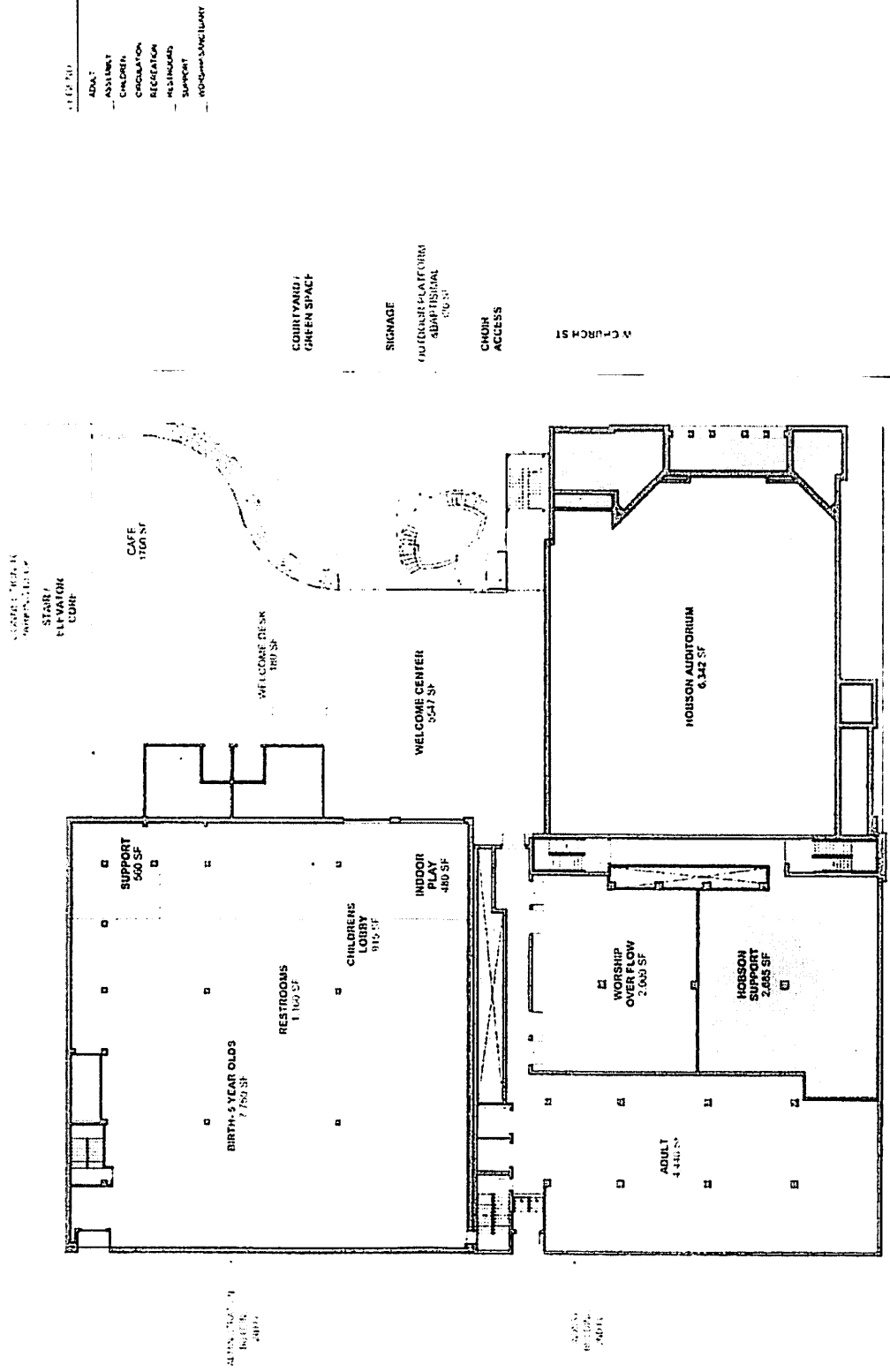
Hobson - 1903

Singles Building - 1927

Parking Garage - 1988

 Minimum interior height of space for Welcome Center designed for +/- 1,000 people

Plan Diagram



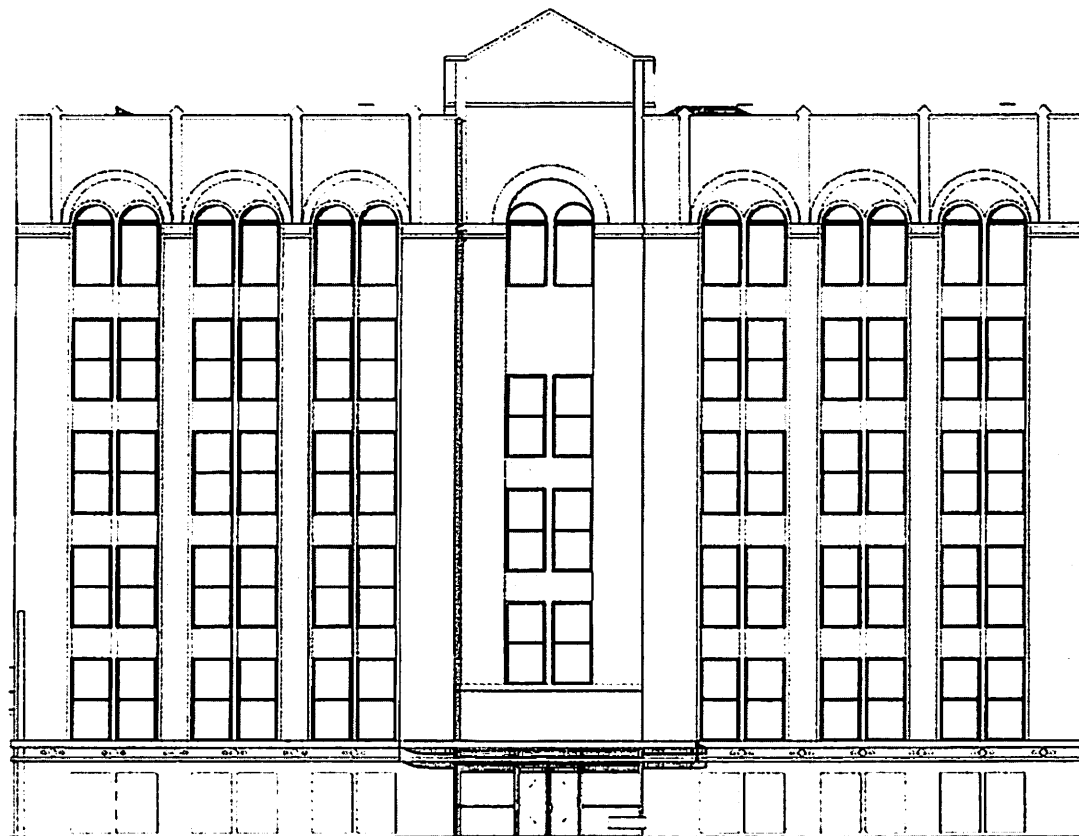
New Welcome Center



## Chapter 307 - HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION

Section 307.104 (j) Seven Criteria, of which it must be demonstrated this building meets 4 of 7

- (A) Its value as a significant reminder of the cultural, historical, architectural, or archaeological heritage of the City, state or nation.
- (B) Its location is the site of a significant local, state or national event.
- (C) It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the City, state or nation.
- (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.
- (E) Its value as a building is recognized for the quality of its architecture, and it retains sufficient elements showing its architectural significance.
- (F) It has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.
- (G) Its suitability for preservation or restoration.

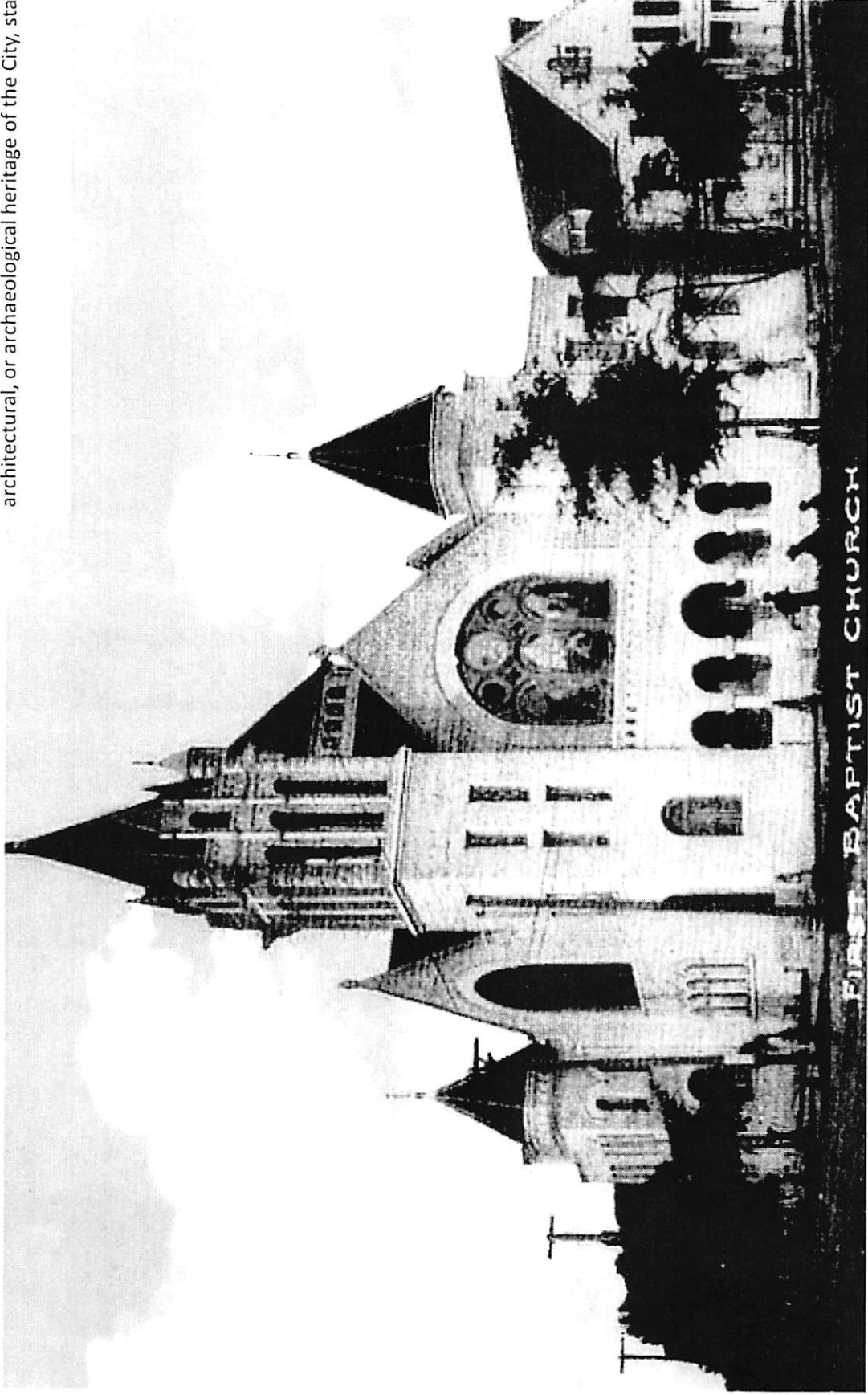




## Hobson Auditorium

### Section 307.104 (j)

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



First Baptist Church before  
Singles Building was constructed

Jacksonville University Graduation, 2013

Section 307.104 (j)

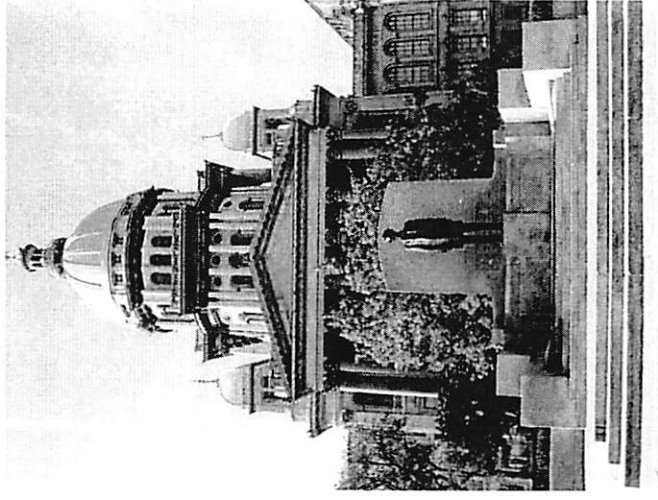
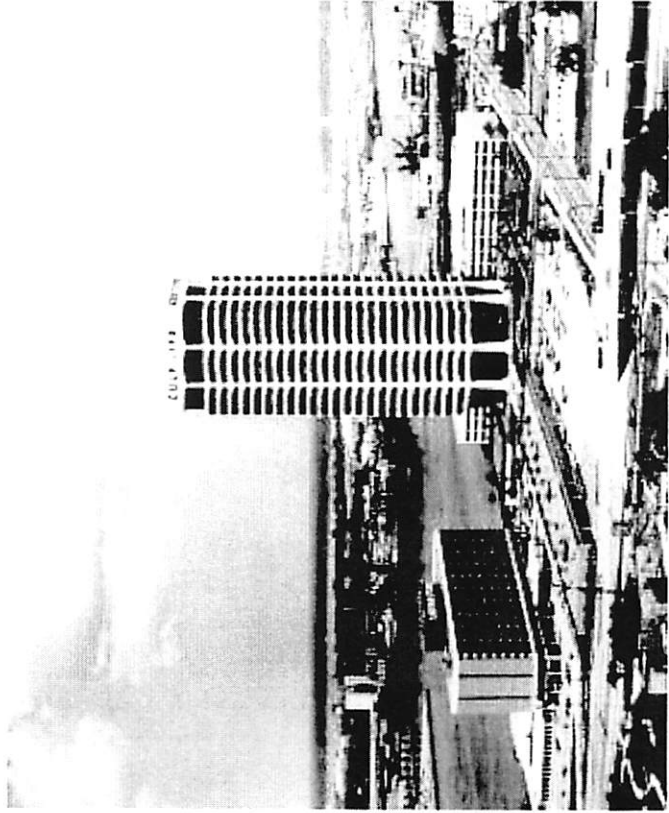
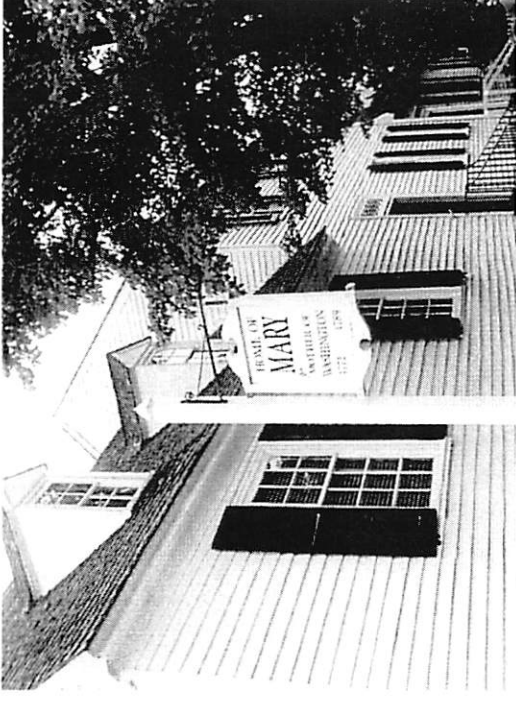
(B) Its location is the site of a significant local, state or national event.



## Gulf Life Insurance Identity

### Section 307.104 (j)

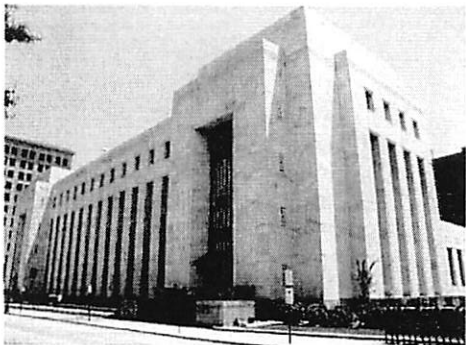
(C) It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the City, state or nation.



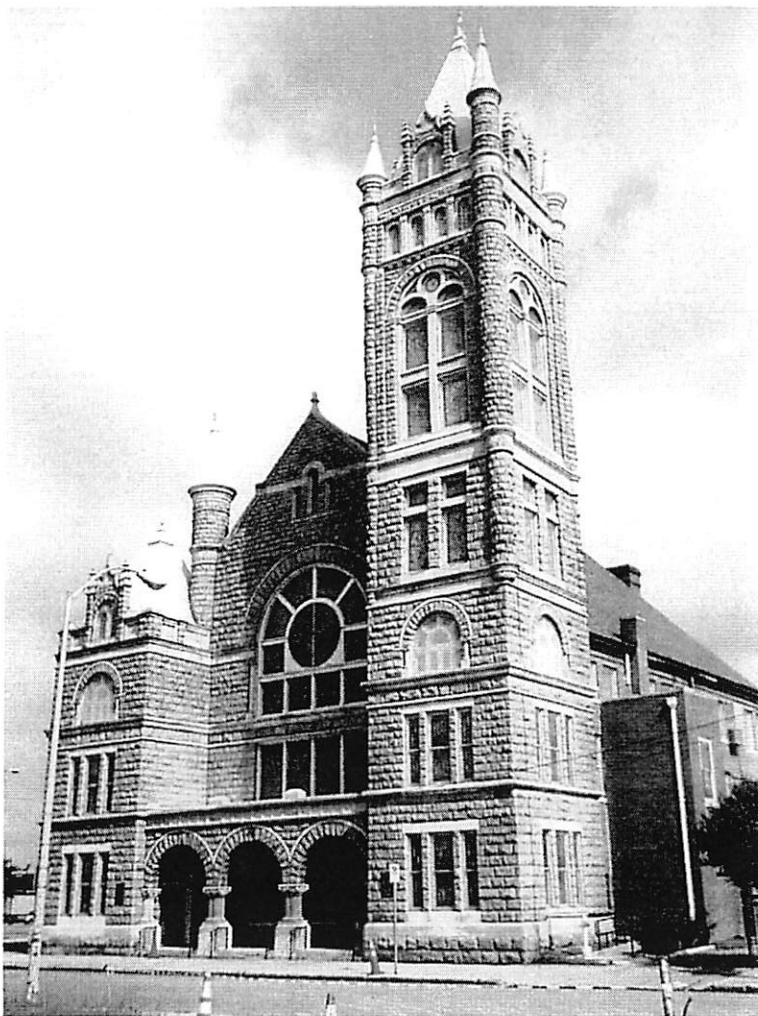
## R. H. Hunt Architect

### Section 307.104 (j)

(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.



Federal Courthouse and Post office – Lead  
Design in partnership with Shreve, Lamb, and  
Harmon  
Chattanooga, Tennessee 1930



First Baptist Church  
Norfolk, Virginia 1906



125 W. Church



Elbert County Courthouse  
Elberton, Georgia 1894

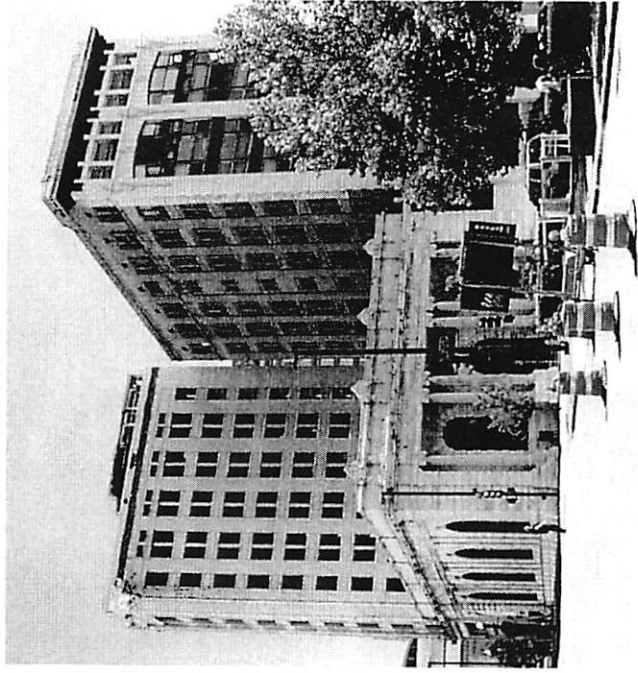
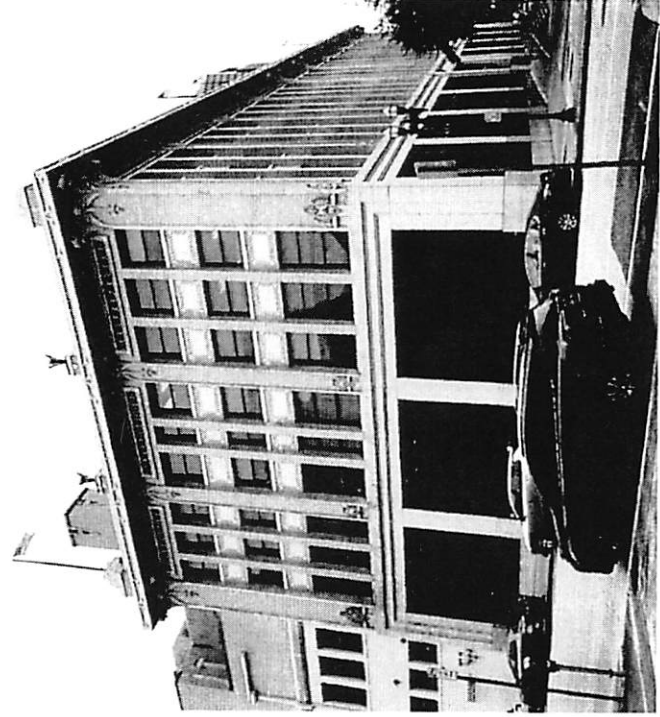
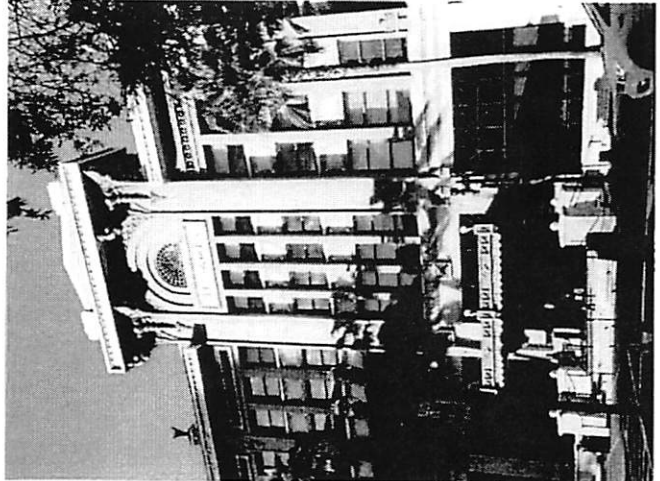
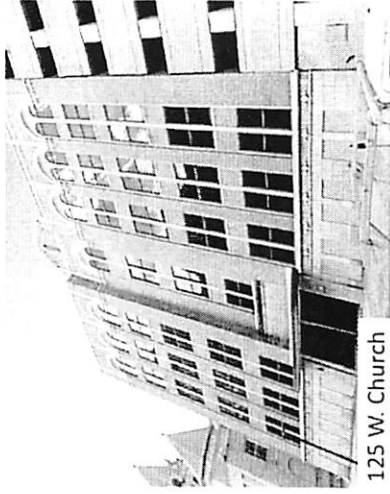
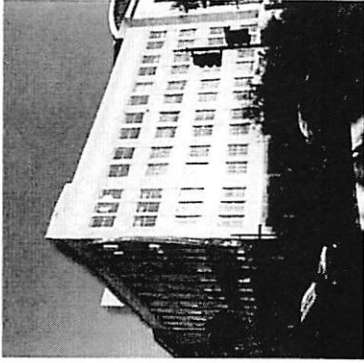
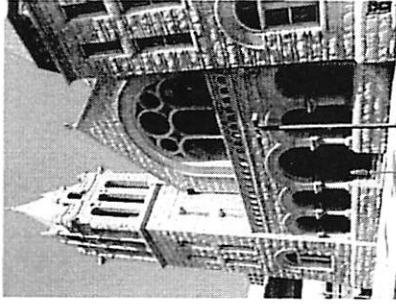
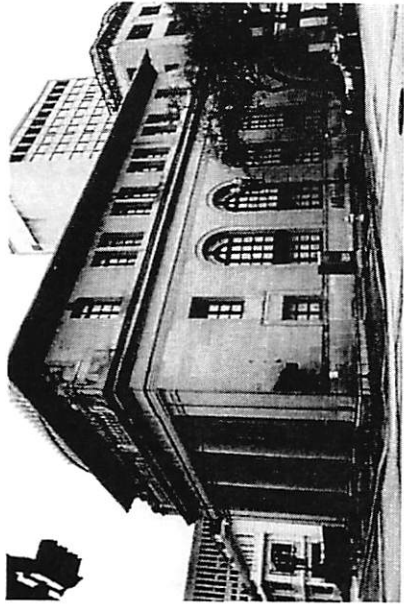


First Methodist Church  
Lenoir, North Carolina 1916

## Examples of Significant Buildings in Jacksonville

### Section 307.104 (j)

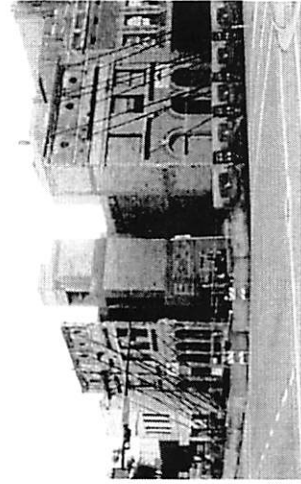
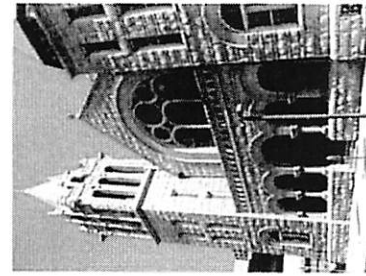
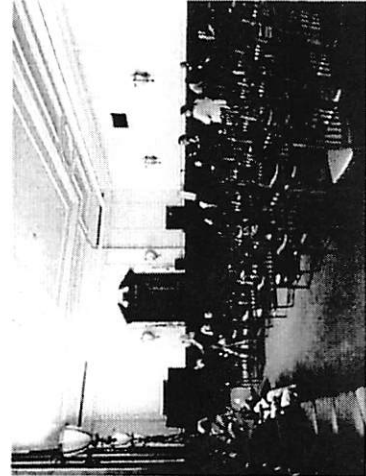
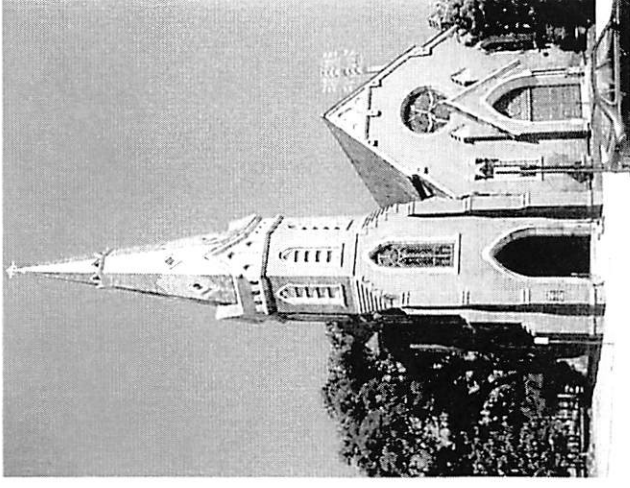
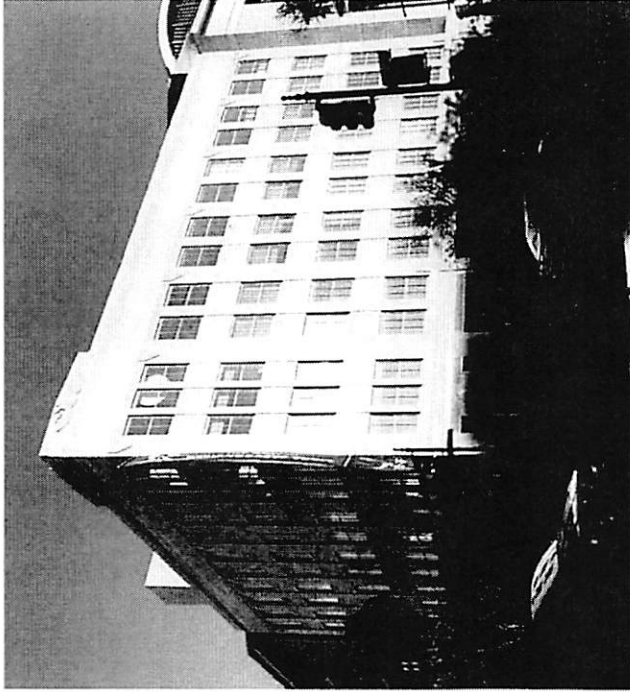
(E) Its value as a building is recognized for the quality of its architecture, and it retains sufficient elements showing its architectural significance.



125 W. Church

Section 307.104 (j)

(G) Its suitability for preservation or restoration.



# L u k e   A r c h i t e c t u r e ,   P A

davidluke@outlook.com

904-699-5113

4551 Salisbury Road Suite 400

Jacksonville, FL 32256

FL Lic. No. AA26002919

## Resume of Experience

- Name**      David J. Luke, AIA
- Position**    Architect / President of Luke Architecture, PA
- Education**   Terry Parker High School, Jacksonville Florida – Graduate 1985  
University of Tennessee – Bachelor of Architecture May 1990
- Education**   National Honor Society - 1985
- Honors**      Tau Sigma Delta National Architecture Student Honor Society - 1989  
Henry Adams Medal for Highest Academic Achievement in UT Architecture  
Class – 1990  
Dean's Award for Comprehensive Design Project - 1990
- Licenses**    Florida Registered Architect AR #14856 - 5/27/1994 (current)  
National Council of Architectural Registration Boards #45614 - 8/31/1992  
(current)  
LEED AP BD + C - GBCI #1044096 (inactive)
- Affiliations** American Institute of Architects  
Tau Sigma Delta National Honor Society for Architecture Students (Former  
President, UT chapter)  
Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society
- Projects**    Mr. Luke's project experience spans 30 years including 24 years as a  
Lead Designer for Historic Replication projects, Architect, Project  
Manager, and Vice-President with Kenneth Smith Architects (a premier  
historic preservation & reproduction architecture firm in the state) and 5  
½ years as founder & President of Luke Architecture, PA. During his  
career Mr. Luke has worked on, participated in, and completed a wide  
range of projects including design in multiple styles including historic  
restoration, renovation, reproduction, and replication as well as modern  
designs.

**Historic Restoration, Renovation, Reproduction, & Replication** (historic replication in this resume is considered to be new construction designed to mimic the historic style and character of adjacent structures) projects include:

Alcazar Hotel in St Augustine (built circa 1889) – Ballroom Restoration,  
 Internal Elevator Addition, & Lightner Museum Entrance Restoration  
 Government House in St Augustine (built circa 1710) – Renovation  
 Segui-Kirby Smith House in St Augustine (built circa 1790s) – Restoration  
 Kings Bakery Museum in St Augustine (built circa 1784) – Restoration  
 Llambias House in St Augustine (built prior to 1763) - Renovation  
 Bridge of Lions in St Augustine (built circa 1927) – Reproduction of Bascules,  
 Lights, Rails, and Replication for Pedestal Base for Lions  
 Dow Museum of Historic Houses at Old St Augustine Village including the  
 Prince Murat House (built circa 1790) and the Star General Store –  
 Restoration  
 St Cyprians Episcopal Church in St Augustine (built circa 1900) – Restoration  
 Grace United Methodist Church in St Augustine (built circa 1886) – Reroofing  
 Pena Peck House in St Augustine (built circa 1750) – Restoration  
 Ximenez-Fatio House in St Augustine (built circa 1798) - Restoration  
 Flagler College Crisp-Ellert Art Museum in St Augustine (built circa 1870) –  
 Renovation & Replication of Art Museum  
 Flagler College Ponce Hall in St Augustine (built circa 1888) – Restoration of  
 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Solarium & Renovation of Dorm Rooms  
 Flagler College Dorm Rooms at Old FEC Building in St Augustine (3  
 buildings built circa 1922, 1923, & 1926) – Renovation  
 Flagler College Hanke Hall Admissions Building in St Augustine – Replication  
 Flagler College Pollard Hall Classroom Building in St Augustine – Replication  
 Flagler College New Science Building in St Augustine – Replication  
 Flagler College Gymnasium in St Augustine – Replication  
 Princess Place Estates also known as 'Cherokee Grove' (built circa 1886) –  
 Restoration  
 Emily Taber Public Library in Macclenny (built circa 1906) – Restoration  
 Old Baker County Jail in Macclenny (built circa 1911) – Restoration  
 Old Bostwick Schoolhouse in Bostwick (built circa 1921) - Restoration  
 St. Augustine Lighthouse (built circa 1824) – Restoration, Keeper's House  
 Elevator Addition, & Replication of New Archaeological Center Design  
 Tybee Island Lighthouse (built circa 1736) – Restoration  
 Sapelo Island Lighthouse & Range Beacon (built circa 1820) – Restoration  
 Anclote Key Lighthouse (built circa 1887) – Restoration  
 Fowey Rocks Lighthouse (built circa 1878) – Restoration  
 Little Cumberland Island Lighthouse (built circa 1838) – Restoration  
 Ponce Inlet Lighthouse (built circa 1835) – Restoration  
 Amelia Island Lighthouse (built circa 1838) - Restoration  
 St Simons Island Lighthouse & Keeper's House (built circa 1810) –  
 Restoration  
 St Marks Lighthouse (built circa 1830) - Restoration  
 William H. Peck School in Fernandina Beach (built circa 1927) – Restoration



Amelia Island Museum of History formerly Old Nassau County Jail (built circa 1938) - Renovation and Addition  
 Olustee Train Depot (built circa 1880) - Restoration  
 Volusia County Courthouse in Deland (built circa 1929) - Restoration  
 Pritchard House in Titusville (built circa 1891) - Restoration  
 Dutton House in Deland (built circa 1911) - Restoration  
 Stetson University Deland Hall in Deland (built circa 1884) - Restoration  
 Stetson University Chaudoin Hall in Deland (built circa 1892) - Exterior Restoration  
 Stetson University Elizabeth Hall in Deland (built circa 1892) - Exterior Restoration  
 Stetson University Flagler Hall in Deland (built circa 1902) - Exterior Restoration  
 Stetson University Sampson Hall in Deland (built circa 1908) - Exterior Restoration  
 Stetson University Stover Theater in Deland (built circa 1930) - Restoration  
 Stetson University Hulley Tower in Deland (built circa 1934) - Modification  
 The Casement at Rockefeller Gardens in Ormond Beach (built circa 1914) - Restoration & Replication of Garden Pavilions  
 Parrish Medical Center Taylor Dunn House in Titusville (built circa 1910) - Restoration  
 Parrish Medical Center 'Main Street' Development in Titusville - Replication of Old 'Main Street' Style Walking Treatment Center  
 Parrish Medical Center 'Heritage Park' Development in Titusville - Replication of Old Florida Vernacular Style Historic Village  
 St George Episcopal Church Terry Hall on Ft George Island - Replication  
 Old South Jacksonville City Hall in San Marco (built circa 1915) - Restoration  
 St Pauls Chapel / Preservation Hall in San Marco (built circa 1888) - Renovations and Additions  
 St Andrews Episcopal Church in Arlington (built circa 1881) - Renovation and Addition of Transept Extensions  
 Norman Studios in Arlington (built circa 1920) - Restoration  
 Greenleaf & Crosby Building in Jacksonville (built circa 1927) - Interior Renovations  
 San Jose Country Club in Jacksonville - Renovation and Addition  
 Florida Yacht Club in Jacksonville - Renovation and Addition  
 John S. Swisher Residence at 2252 River Road in Jacksonville (built circa 1929) - Renovation and Addition  
 Carl Swisher Residence at 2234 River Road in Jacksonville (built circa 1929) - Renovation and Addition  
 Herbert Swisher Residence at 2209 River Road in Jacksonville (built circa 1936) - Renovation and Addition

Max Knauer Residence at 3404 St Johns Avenue in Jacksonville (built circa 1929) - Renovation

State Board of Health Building in Jacksonville (built circa 1911) - Restoration

Black Masonic Lodge in Jacksonville (built circa 1900s) - Renovation and Addition

The Bolles School Historic San Jose Estates Hotel in Jacksonville (built circa 1924) - Waterproofing Restoration

The Bolles School Bent Student Center in Jacksonville- Replication

Walter Jones Post Office & General Store in Mandarin (built circa 1911) - Restoration

Big Cabin at Camp Chowenwah Girl Scouts Campground (built circa 1933) - Restoration

Residence at 4072 Alhambra Drive West in Jacksonville (built circa 1934) - Renovation and Addition

Residence at 1163 Beach Avenue in Atlantic Beach (built circa 1902) - Renovation

First Baptist Church Lighthouse in Jacksonville - Replication

First United Methodist Church of Perry, Florida (built circa 1918) - Restoration of Sanctuary and Replication of New Elevator / Covered Drop-Off Addition

Christ Episcopal Church of Monticello (built circa 1885) - Restoration

Jefferson County Courthouse in Monticello (built circa 1909) - Restoration

Historic Power House on Gasparilla Island (built early 1900s) - Renovation

Casa Horruytiner at 214 St George Street (built circa 1640s) - Renovation and Addition

Lake Helen Elementary School / City Hall (built circa 1916) - Restoration

Healthcare projects in addition to projects in Restoration section above include:

Ackerman Cancer Center Mandarin - Proton I Accelerator Addition (this project was the 4<sup>th</sup> 'Mevion' Proton Accelerator installed in the world),

Ackerman Cancer Center Mandarin - New Main Building,

Ackerman Cancer Center Mandarin - MRI Buildout

Ackerman Cancer Center Mandarin - New Office

Ackerman Cancer Center Mandarin - Electron Linear Accelerator Buildout

Ackerman Cancer Center Amelia - Renovation

Ackerman Urology in Mandarin - Renovation

CSX Health & Wellness Fitness Center at Headquarters Building - Renovation

Educational projects in addition to projects in Restoration section above include:

The Bolles School San Jose Campus Treehouse Learning Classroom  
 The Bolles School San Jose Campus Schultz Hall Science Classroom -  
 Renovation  
 The Bolles School San Jose Campus Pavilion Classroom - Renovation  
 The Bolles School Bartram Campus Tarver Hall Science Classroom Building  
 The Bolles School Bartram Campus Childress Hall - Renovation  
 The Bolles School Ponte Vedra Campus New Gymnasium  
 Flagler College Athletics Complex Field House (new entrance feature &  
 locker rooms bldg)

Religious projects in addition to projects in Restoration section above  
 include:

Palms Presbyterian Church Additions & Renovations in Jacksonville Beach  
 Amelia Baptist Church - Renovation  
 First Baptist Church High School Sunday School Ministry in Jacksonville -  
 Renovation  
 Dunns Creek Baptist Church in Jacksonville - Renovation of Sunday School  
 Ministry Space  
 Etz Chaim Synagogue Wall Repairs in Jacksonville - Renovation

Resort & Club projects in addition to projects in Restoration section  
 above include:

The Outpost for Ponte Vedra Inn & Club in Ponte Vedra  
 Odom's Mill Amenity Center in Ponte Vedra  
 CSX Boca Grande Lodge on Gasparilla Island

Residential projects in addition to projects in Restoration section above  
 include:

Multi-Family Residential at 30 Granada Street in St Augustine - New  
 Construction Design  
 Residence at 32 Granada Street in St Augustine - New Construction Design  
 Residence at 409 Porpoise Point Drive in St Augustine - Renovation and  
 Addition  
 Residence at 43 Cordova Street in St Augustine - Renovation  
 Residences in Tallahassee - Renovation and Addition  
 Residence at St. Teresa Beach - Renovation  
 Residence at Marsh Landing - New Construction  
 Residence in Big Pine Key - Renovation

Restaurant projects include:

40 Charlotte Street (Catch 27) in St Augustine - Renovation  
 12 Avenida Menendez Renovation in St Augustine - Renovation and  
 Addition

200 Anastasia Blvd (Hoptingers) in St Augustine – Renovation and Addition  
64-A Hypolita St (Rhett Butler's) in St Augustine - Renovation

Office projects include several hundred projects of varying sizes and complexity for CSX; CB Richard Ellis; Freeland Lockwood; and Patrick & Raines.

Civic Activity Volunteer Service includes the following positions of service at the First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida:  
Sunday School Teacher since 1993,  
Deacon 1999-2002, 2004-2007, 2009-2012, 2014-2017, & 2019-current  
Deacon Vice-Chairman 2014 & 2015,  
Deacon Chairman 2016,  
Trustee 2011-2012, 2014-2017, & 2019-current

End of Resume

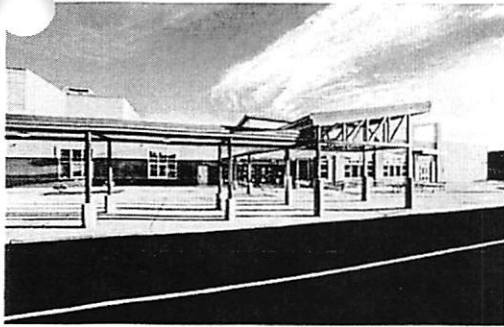


ASHEVILLE - ATLANTA - CHARLESTON - CHARLOTTE - JACKSONVILLE



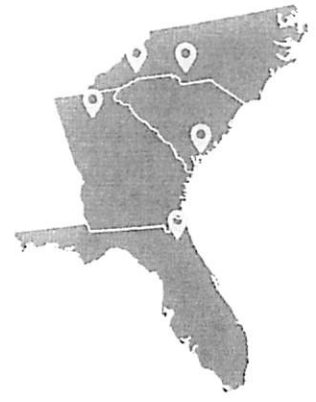
# NOVUS ARCHITECTS

**We create highly functional, beautiful spaces that are more than brick and mortar. They are spaces that foster human interaction, discovery, and deep connection.**



We do our best work when we challenge the notions of what an architect, designer, or planner can or should do and step beyond traditional roles to create new, unique processes that bring simplicity and clarity to the most complex projects.

For us, that lifelong study is, like people themselves, always new, always challenging, and ever changing. So we focus on process, priorities, details, and communication. We embrace ingenuity, collaboration, and adaptation, because for us, a space is more than any hospital, school, or house of worship, it's an always-new way of connecting and serving people.



**NATIONWIDE EXPERIENCE**  
Novus Architects has experience with projects in 11 states, with 5 offices in the Southeast.

**NOVUSARCHITECTS**  
*always new*



# JERRY TRAINO

**Principal / Charleston Office Leader  
AIA, NCARB**

With 20 years of experience, 14 of which have been with Novus, Jerry has worked on a variety of projects nationwide. Project experience includes worship, healthcare, commercial, institutional, residential, multi-family, single/multi-tenant, and education. Currently, Jerry has recently been working as Principal in Charge for a multitude of ground-up and expansion projects and has provided and managed full construction administration services on the majority of all his projects with Novus.

*Bachelors of Architecture  
Clemson University, 2000*

*Masters of Architecture  
Clemson University, 2006*

*SC #8244*

*20 Years*

*14 Years*

*AIA SC Award for "Special  
Citation for the Exterior  
Strategy" For Hope Lodge in the  
Historic District of Charleston, SC*

*Winner of the HOK Design  
Competition, Clemson University*

## RELEVANT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

**Preston Road Church of Christ**  
*University Park, TX*

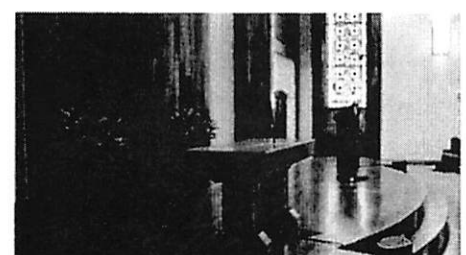
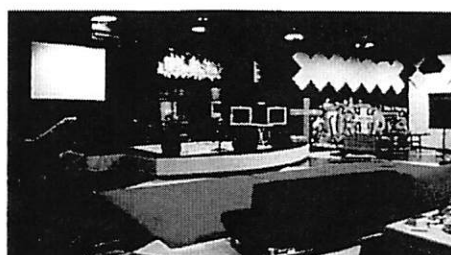
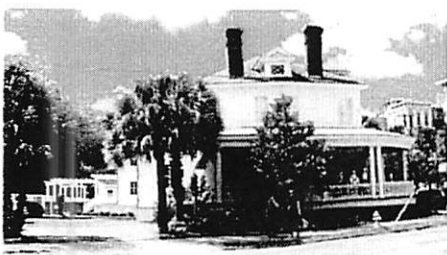
**United States Custom House**  
Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse (during  
tenure with Liollo Architecture)  
*Charleston, SC*

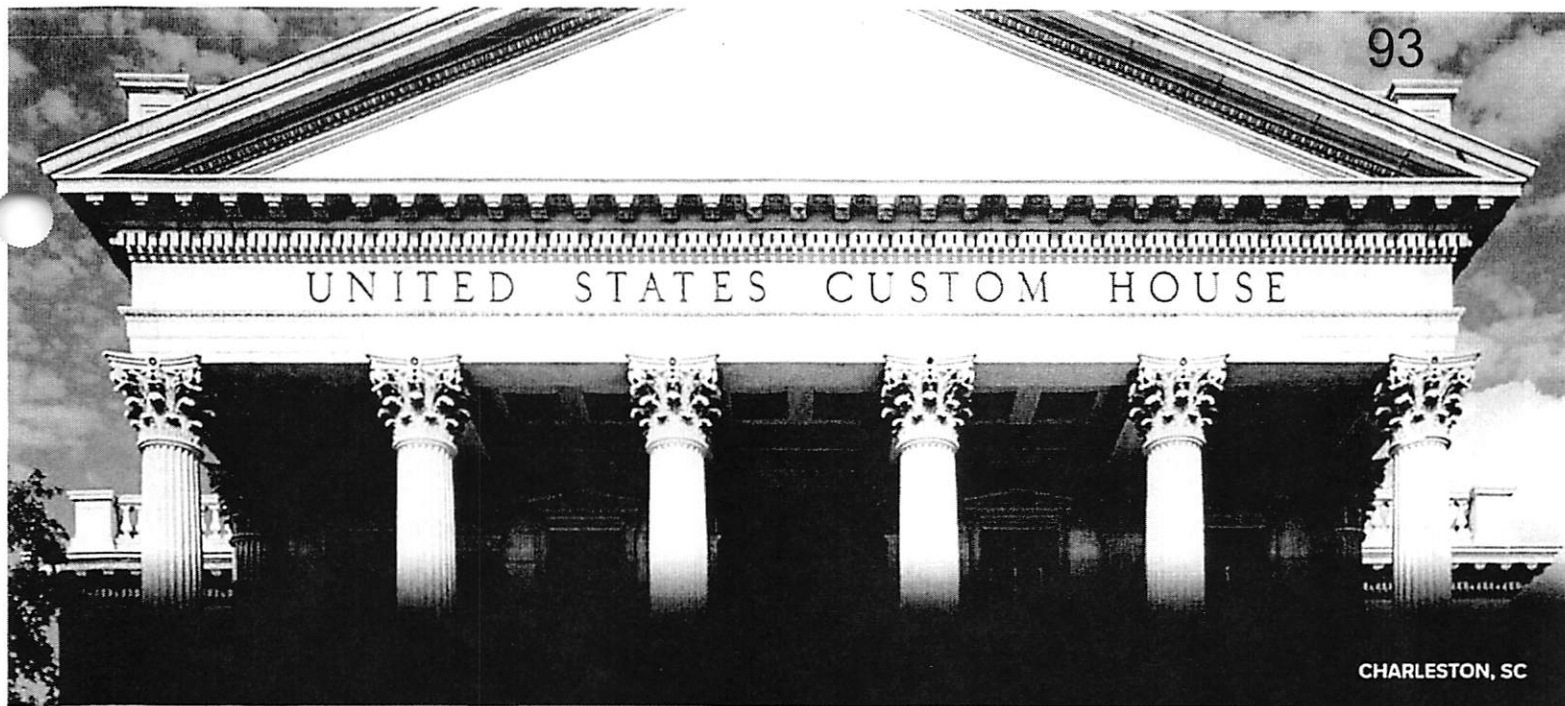
**American Cancer Society Hope Lodge**  
Historic Restoration and Adaptive Reuse, AIA Award  
Winning Project  
*Charleston, SC*

**Seacoast Church Renovation**  
*Mount Pleasant, SC*

**Seacoast Church Nursery Expansion**  
*Mount Pleasant, SC*

**Seacoast Cafe Church**  
*Mount Pleasant, SC*





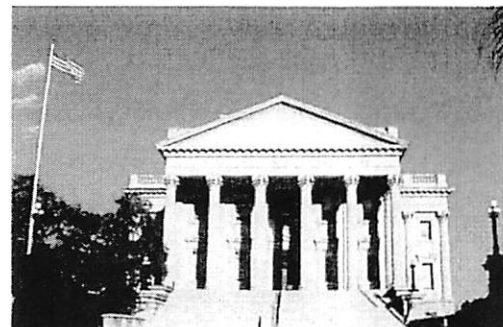
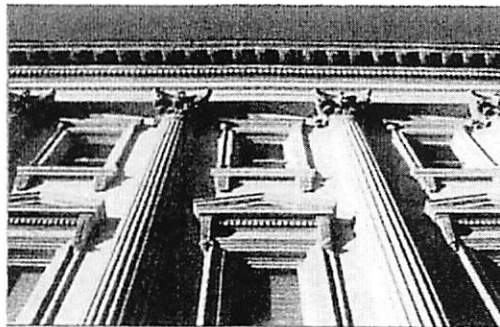
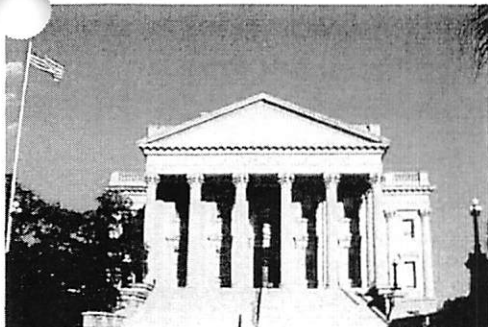
CHARLESTON, SC

## THE UNITED STATES CUSTOM HOUSE

Charleston, SC

Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse

*\* Work performed by Jerry Traino  
while at another firm*



### THE UNITED STATES CUSTOM HOUSE

The United States Custom House was the first federally commissioned building in South Carolina. It underwent construction in 1859 and continued until the early 1860's when tensions between the Federal States and Confederacy reached a breaking point. All federal funding to states participating in succession was annulled and consequently so was construction on the Custom House. In the 1870's, in an attempt to rebuild political interests, an agreement was made to accrue enough money to complete the structure, however the budget was much less than that of the original design. As the Custom House stands today, a start monument to classical civil architecture, it is not as it was intended to be by its originator. Although the original architect is not documented, there are several unsigned documents showing the original

design intent and photographs showing its partial completion. Before construction halted the entire ground floor was built up to the walls of the main floor as well as the porticos. As it sets the Custom House has east and west facing porticos in the Greek tradition. The original plan is that of a perfect crucifix with cardinal porticos of perfect symmetry. The north and south facing porticos were deconstructed and eliminated as a result in the budget change for the project. Since the project's completion it has undergone extensive remodeling and renovation in an attempt to keep up with modern society's needs. Some of these additions were respectful to the architecture and some were quite detrimental. This is a documentation of an attempt to renovate portions of the building in a historically sensitive matter.



CHARLESTON, SC



## AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY HOPE LODGE

Charleston, SC

Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse  
AIA Award for "Special Citation for the Exterior Strategy"



### AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY HOPE LODGE

Established by Margot Freudenberg in 1970, the Charleston Hope Lodge (Carol Grotnes Belk Campus) was the first hospitality house of its kind in the country. The facility offers lodging at no cost for cancer patients being treated throughout the Charleston area. The project more than doubled the capacity to 17 resident rooms, each complete with two single beds and a private bathroom. In addition to providing support functions, a driving programmatic goal of the new 3000 SF addition connecting the existing facility to the adjacent structures was to develop a multitude of common spaces in various sizes so that the guests could congregate in many various ways. Social activities provide a group healing environment for the guests, but there is also need for private areas for solitude to support the many different needs that come with rehabilitation. Some of the spaces include a large common dining area which is served by a common kitchen, large screened porch and rear patio, several small parlors and entertainment spaces, as well as a few

smaller more private sitting areas upstairs. The spaces between the houses were also developed into more private meditation gardens. The connection of the buildings was essential to support the expansion into the added space, but the design also needed to be sensitive to the individuality of the existing homes. The approach was to preserve the historic fabric of the existing buildings as much as possible. To accomplish this, connections were made subservient in scale to the historic structures and as transparent as possible using glass corridors. Programmatic elements were added as individual additions located to the back of the existing houses. The connection pieces were programmed solely for circulation to reduce their mass and scale. Careful placement of program elements, sensitive massing, an attentive use of detailing resulted in a project that will not only be of great benefit to the needs of the ACS, but also provides a great service to the regional community, and serves to enrich the fabric of the City which it supports.



Response to Staff Report in Red Text

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairman and Members

Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Christian Popoli

City Planner Supervisor - Historic Preservation

RE: Request for Demolition – 125 West Church Street, The First Baptist Church Sunday School Building

DATE: February 26, 2020

The representative of the property owner has submitted a building permit application to demolish the institutional structure located at 125 West Church Street, the First Baptist Church Sunday School Building. Constructed in 1926 & 27, this six-story building has been identified as a contributing property in the Downtown Jacksonville Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016. Therefore, demolition of the subject building will require a review by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission pursuant to §320.407, Jacksonville Ordinance Code as amended in November, 2005.

Within sixty calendar days after the complete demolition application was received by the Historic Preservation Section of the Jacksonville Planning and Development Department (January 20, 2020), the Commission must review and take action on the request for demolition. If the Commission fails to act within the sixty-day period, the demolition request is considered to have been granted. If the Commission approves the permit application, the demolition may proceed. If the Commission denies the application, the property owner can appeal the decision to the City Council. The appeal must be filed within 14 calendar days from the date of the Commission meeting. The case file, including the demolition application and the Commission's recommendation regarding the property's potential landmark status, will be forwarded to the City Council which will vote to approve the demolition request, or to proceed with landmark designation.

Based on a preliminary evaluation, it is the opinion of the Planning and Development Department that the building at 125 West Church Street, the First Baptist Church Sunday School Building may meet six of seven criteria for local landmark designation.

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

Known at different times as the First Baptist Church Sunday School Building, the Educational Building, the Gulf Life Building and the Singles Building, the property at 125 West Church Street is associated with the history of three very different institutions significant in the heritage of the City. The six-story masonry building was completed in 1927 as a Sunday school building for the First Baptist Church located immediately to the west. While serving as the Educational Building, the pastor of First Baptist Church, Dr. Ferando Coelle McConnell, Jr. allowed William J. Porter University, chartered in 1934, to use the third floor to offer evening classes. Although starting in the Educational Building, Porter University

moved to several locations in downtown Jacksonville over the years and in the process changed the name to the Jacksonville Junior College which evolved into Jacksonville University. In 1938, the building came under the ownership of the Gulf Life Insurance Company to serve as their home office. Expanded and altered, the Gulf Life Insurance Company used the building until the new Gulf Life Tower was completed in 1967 and sold the old building to a group of private investors. The owners leased the building for ten years before selling it to the First Baptist Church in 1977.

In 1838, Reverend James McDonald organized a Baptist congregation in Jacksonville that included four whites and two slaves. Known as the Bethel Baptist Church of Jacksonville, the congregation had sufficiently grown by 1840 to build a small chapel in downtown at the northeast corner of East Duval Street and North Newnan Street. It is generally recognized as the first sanctuary constructed in downtown. In 1842, Reverend McDonald purchased 550 acres 1½ miles west of town in the area later called LaVilla. Part of the old Isaac Hendricks grant, Reverend McDonald developed a farm on the property that he reportedly called LaVilla. Becoming officially incorporated in 1841, the church sold their downtown property to the Presbyterian Church, and relocated to a two-acre parcel that was part of Reverend McDonald's LaVilla property. An existing brick residence on the two acres was remodeled into a sanctuary becoming to be known as the "brick church". Deacon Elias G. Jaudon donated two additional acres adjacent to the church for a cemetery.

Found to be too far out from the center of population, the congregation built a new sanctuary in 1860 on a lot at the corner of North Julia Street and West Church Street which was donated by Deacon Jaudon. During the Civil War, the old and vacant "brick church" was in the middle of much of the action between Union and Confederate forces. During the war federal troops used the church for pickets and outpost, as well as serving as a hospital following the Battle of Olustee. After the war, the congregation, which was predominately black, split along racial lines. The black members, who constituted 240 members of the total 290 in 1859, filed a successful lawsuit to take ownership of the church property which resulted in an agreement that the black members would receive

\$400 and the right to keep the Bethel name as payment for their share of the property. The black members formed their own church which eventually became Bethel Baptist Institutional Church. The white members stayed on the property forming the Baptist Tabernacle Church.

According to property records, the church purchased the current site of the 1903 sanctuary (Hobson Auditorium) in 1892 for \$9,000 (Archibald Plat Book, p. 97, DB 80,

p. 560). In that year, the name was changed from the Baptist Tabernacle to the First Baptist Church. In November of the following year a new sanctuary was constructed and dedicated, but destroyed during the 1901 fire. Under the ministry of Reverend Dr. William Andrew Hobson, who came to the church in 1900, the cornerstone was laid for the new sanctuary on February 2, 1903. Using sketches produced by Dr. Hobson, Lockwood Co., Architects produced a design for the new sanctuary, but the building cost was determined to be beyond the church's \$35,000 construction budget. In 1902, Jacksonville architect, Henry John Klutho, was contracted to redesign the Lockwood plans to make it meet the church's budget and also to supervise construction. Most of the exterior design and its Richardsonian Romanesque style appearance reflected the earlier work of Lockwood. However, Klutho made numerous changes to the interior and later listed the sanctuary as one of his major projects indicating a significant involvement in the final design. Copies of the original and revised plans have never been found to confirm the degree and nature of involvement by Klutho. Built of Bedford limestone, the sanctuary, called Hobson Auditorium, was constructed by the Owens Building Company.

During the heady days of the 1920s' Florida Land Boom, the Church began planning the construction of a 20 story 300 room hotel at the corner of North Hogan Street and West Church Street which would include a new sanctuary and education building. Because of the high cost and risk of such an adventure, the church settled for the construction of a six-story education building on the property immediately to the east of the sanctuary.

Earlier in 1923 & 24, the 1903 sanctuary was completely gutted and rebuilt including the excavation of a basement level to accommodate a second lower auditorium named after Reverend Dr. Len G. Broughton who became minister in 1923 following Dr. Hobson.

Increasing the number of seats to 1200, the \$100,000 remodeling which included a new organ was designed by the Jacksonville architectural partnership of Mark & Sheftall and constructed by church member, Robert James (R.J.) Gallespie.

A few years after the re-opening of the Hobson Auditorium on July 6, 1924, R.J. Gallespie Construction Company began construction of the six-story masonry Sunday school building immediately to the east of the sanctuary.<sup>5</sup> Designed by the noted Chattanooga Architect, Reuben Harrison Hunt, the building was opened and dedicated on October 2, 1927 as the "Religious Education Center" and was recognized as the "only one of its kind in Florida". In a 1927 Jacksonville Journal (September 24, 1927, p. 11) article it was identified as the second largest Sunday school building in the World. The \$250,000 building was designed to accommodate 3,500 people in Sunday school.

As originally planned, the ground floor would accommodate a large kitchen and great hall that served as a multi-purpose room that included a dining hall, two smaller private dining rooms used as classrooms on Sundays, lectures and Sunday school meetings. The second floor housed the cradle roll and nursery along with the beginner and primary departments with the third floor accommodating two large adult classrooms, general secretary's office and two intermediate Sunday school departments. The fourth floor, which was dedicated to the young people's department, included an assembly room for 800 people along with ten classrooms. The fifth floor housed the junior department and included an assembly room, classrooms and gymnasium which were also accommodated by a mezzanine on the sixth floor which had additional junior classrooms.

To finish these improvements and expansions, the church acquired a \$500,000 first mortgage at a six percent interest rate from the Hibernia Bank of Louisiana. Unable to pay the interest, which continued to accumulate, the church developed a staggering debt of over half a million dollars. Having the distinction of carrying the largest indebtedness in the Southern Baptist Convention, the church defaulted on the loan and went into foreclosure in 1938. The mortgage was assumed by the Gulf Life Insurance Company that kept the Educational Building while selling the sanctuary back to the church for \$89,000. After the building was sold, Sunday school classes were accommodate by curtaining off sections of the auditorium and by using nearby facilities such as the parlor of the Windsor Hotel on North Hogan Street, the American Legion Hall on West Church Street and the basement of the YWCA on West Monroe Street, as well as two adjacent residences and three funeral homes in the area. Through the leadership of Reverend Dr. Homer G. Lindsay, Sr. (1940 - 1973), the church undertook an austere spending and budget plan that resulted in being debt free by 1943.

In 1911, insurance salesman, Thomas Tyre Phillips, started a small insurance company in Pensacola, Florida. While searching for a company name that reflected strength and integrity, T.T. Phillips, while looking out the window in his lawyer's office, was able to observe in the distant the sparkling waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Reflecting on the size, permanence and power of the gulf, Phillips decided to name

his tiny company the Gulf Life & Accident Insurance Company which was capitalized at only \$5,000. His former employer, now his competitor, paid Phillips to relocate his business to Jacksonville.

Joined by three of his former associates, Phillips moved the company in 1916. At the time, the company had 40,000 policy holders. T.T. Phillip's brother, Elwin Litchfield Phillips, Jr., left his position with the Savannah office of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to manage the new company's sales office in Jacksonville. Joining the Board of Directors during that first year in Jacksonville was H. Terry Parker, prominent land owner and developer of Arlington, who also donated property for the construction of Terry Parker High School and for the Terry Parker Baptist Church. Parker has been credited with being the longest serving member of the Gulf Life Board of Directors.<sup>9</sup> Claims from the 1918 influenza epidemic wiped out one half of the company's resources and only kept afloat by E.L. Phillips pawning personal items. The company was also hit hard by the end of the Florida Land Boom in 1927 and the many claims produced by the disastrous hurricane of 1928.<sup>10</sup>

As it grew, the company occupied several downtown locations, the first being four rooms in the Duval Building in January of 1916 followed by an office in the Realty Building in 1920, office building at 213 West Adams Street in 1925 and finally at the Roberts Building at 225 West Adams Street until acquiring the former Educational Building at 125 West Church Street in 1938. Operating out of a home office, most insurance salesman at that time traveled a circuit to sell policies, pick-up premium payments, change beneficiaries, and arrange loans. The company quickly expanded selling policies in most Florida cities, as well as being licensed in Georgia (1930), Alabama (1937) and South Carolina in 1948. In 1923, the company began selling ordinary insurance (Whole Life policies). Merging with the Victory National Life Insurance Co. in Tampa in 1928, the company acquired additional branches and began sales of larger policies and group insurance. By 1928, the company had one million in assets that reached two million four years later.

After acquiring the old Educational Building to serve as a permanent home office, the company hired well-known Jacksonville architect, Roy Benjamin and his associate, William D. Kemp, to design modifications and upgrades to make the building more functional as an office building. Most of the exterior alterations made by the company in 1938 were to the front elevation facing West Church Street. In particular, the highly detailed entryway was modified by removing arched fan lights, intricate terra cotta ornamentation and pent roof with mission style tiles that covered the recessed opening. Under the arched fan light, the original two door pairs were converted to two revolving doors. A more contemporary, Art Moderne style aluminum canopy was placed over the entryway.

In 1951 with the death of Thomas T. Phillips, E.L. Phillips sold the family' controlling interest in the company to the Ling-Temco-Vought Conglomerate that in turn sold the business to Troy Post who consolidated the company with two other companies to form the Great American Corporation. The Gulf Life Corporation was started as a holding company for Gulf Life and two other companies, and later expanded with new subsidiaries to operate various functions such as mortgage lending and group operations. By 1950, Jacksonville was home to seven companies and thirty smaller branch offices that employed 5,480 people which created a payroll and other expenses of \$30,000,000. In 1953, the Florida Legislature passed the Regional Home Office Law that provided attractive tax benefits to out-of-state insurance companies that relocated to Florida.

Starting with the Southeast Regional Office of the Prudential Life Insurance Company in 1954, Jacksonville soon became the "Insurance Center of the Southeast" becoming home for the central office of seventeen companies, five regional offices, and headquarters for twenty major general insurance

agencies. Many of these companies constructed new office buildings in Downtown Jacksonville during the 1950s and 60s.

During that period, the company grew at a phenomenal rate becoming a financial powerhouse both in Jacksonville and Florida. In 1950, the company employed 1,700 people working in the home office and in fifty-three branch offices. By October of 1961, the Gulf Life Insurance Company had 13,378 stockholders who owned 2,400,000 shares of stock. At time the company had \$1,418,532,732 worth of insurance with 223 million in assets. In 1964, the Gulf Life Insurance Company was recognized as the first Florida life insurance company to reach over two billion worth of life insurance. In that year, the company sold and leased back its downtown home office, which included two buildings on 2/3 of a city block, to Transcontinental Investing Corporation of New York for 2.2 million dollars. By 1967, the company was in the top 4 % nationally based on the amount of insurance in force which was over 2 ½ billion dollars. In addition it had over 15,000 shareholders and served more than 1 ½ million policy holders. With 560 employees at the home office and 1,600 field and service representatives, the company had outgrown space in six different buildings. One of the six buildings was a new seven story office building that opened in 1954 at 124 West Ashley Street. The new building was actually an addition that was internally connected with the Educational Building. In 1967, the company moved into a 433 foot high, 27 story office tower on the South Bank area of Downtown Jacksonville.

Growing just as phenomenally during the years as the Gulf Life Insurance Company was the First Baptist Church that began an ambitious expansion plan to be free of any outside financing and based instead on a pay as you go policy. Church members, Samuel and Louisa Armstrong donated property at 316 & 326 West Ashley Street along with \$23,000 in cash. On the death of Mrs. Armstrong in April of 1939, a trust fund was set up to start a new building program. The church purchased property next door at 517 North Hogan Street for \$16,500 in 1941. A new educational building was constructed on this site behind the sanctuary by R.J. Gillespie Company from a design by architects Marsh & Saxelbye in association with D. Floyd Rosser. Costing \$250,000, the new building opened on February 1, 1948 and named the Armstrong Educational Building in dedication to the memory of Samuel and Louisa Armstrong. In 1949, the sanctuary was remodeled including the addition of air conditioning.<sup>15</sup>

With Sunday school enrollment being near 2500 and having 2,700 members, the need for additional educational space was acute. Owning no more space on the block containing the sanctuary and the Armstrong Education Building, the church purchased properties across North Hogan Street and West Ashley Street. The church had a four-story building constructed across North Hogan Street at 209 West Ashley Street. Designed by D. Floyd Rosser and built by Paul H. Smith Construction Company at the cost of \$350,000, the new 22,000 square foot building opened on December 19, 1954. Since housing the youth departments, the building was named the Youth Building. In response to continued growth which reached 3,488 members by 1965, a new five story educational building was constructed and attached to the Armstrong Building which was also renovated. Built by the William E. Arnold Company for \$633,333, the building was dedicated on November 14, 1965, and named the Lindsay Educational Building to honor Reverend Dr. Homer Lindsay, Sr.

When Gulf Life Insurance Company moved in 1967 it left two connecting buildings, 125 West Church Street and 124 West Ashley Street that had a total square footage of 127,000. The buildings and property was offered to the church for six million. After the church declined the offer, an investment group purchased the property which they leased for ten years. The group could not collect sufficient rent to cover cost which was additionally encumbered by ten years of deferred maintenance. The investors

decided to sale the buildings which were purchased by the church in 1977 for \$1,680,000. After repairs and updates, the old Educational Building at 125 West Church Street became the Singles Building that housed the young people department. The building at 124 West Ashley Street was renovated as the Administration Building. As growth continued at a rapid rate, the church needed a newer much larger sanctuary. In April of 1976, a new 3,200 seat auditorium was opened named in honor of Ruth Lindsay, wife of Pastor Dr. Homer Lindsay, Sr. Ruth Lindsay was a tireless worker involved in a variety of activities important in the church's growth and development. With an increase in membership to 11,050 by 1986, a new 18.5 million dollar auditorium was dedicated on October 3, 1993 that accommodated 9,200 seats. The church campus was further expanded with three parking garages. By 1999, the church had 26,088 members and was recognized as the second largest Baptist church in the Country.

Although the structure at 125 West Church Street has been a part of the events of history in Jacksonville it is highly unlikely that any structure of this size having been occupied for this length of time would not have had some events or stories to tell; however, the structure is not a "significant reminder" of these events. Instead the structure has been used, altered, abandoned, and forgotten by the decisions about its use.

First, the First Baptist Church lost the building to foreclosure in 1938.

Second, the structure was immediately altered for use as an office building.

Third, the structure became the backend of the group of seven buildings housing Gulf Life employees then newest of which was constructed in 1954 on 124 West Ashley Street connecting internally to the structure at 125 West Ashley Street.

Fourth, the structure was abandoned by the Gulf Life Insurance Company along with these other locations in favor of a new tower on the south bank after which the building sat underused and relatively empty for approximately 10 years.

Fifth, the structure returns to use and later ownership again by the First Baptist Church; however, this time because of the internal connection to the newer building at 124 West Ashley Street the structure is now only entered and accessed by internal connection with the exterior door only as a means of egress.

The structure is not a significant reminder of the cultural, historical, architectural, or archaeological heritage of the city, state or nation in contrast the Hobson Auditorium is a significant reminder and the Gulf Life Tower is a significant reminder.

The structure has been a tool or implement of use by those who have occupied it and as with any useful tool there is a time put the hammer, screwdriver, or tape measure away to make room for a new tool for the mission of the organization.

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

The building at 125 West Church Street has significance as the first location of Jacksonville University. Opening a law practice in Jacksonville during the 1920s, William J. Porter, born in 1905, graduated from the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn) and received a law degree from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee. In order to supplement his income during the depression, Porter opened the Jacksonville Law School which usually attracted 20 students for a 30 month course. Under his motto,

"Give the New Man a Chance", he was elected a judge of the Criminal Court of Record after beating a well-established incumbent. He was sworn-in on May 30, 1933. In addition to the law, Judge Porter became intrigued by the interest of a small group of local men to organize a university in the city. Judge Porter calculated that of the 700 high school graduates in Duval County only 150 could afford to go away to an out-of-town college which exemplified the need for a commuter school. In early 1934, he met with a group of local citizens who were active supporters in the establishment of a school of higher education in Jacksonville. The group included Dean Boggs, attorney; T.W. Benson, President of the Suwanee Life Insurance Company; J. Richard Grether, Chief Clerk in the Trust Department of Barnett Bank and F.S. Wetzel, head of the chemistry department at Robert E. Lee High School.

Through their efforts, the William J. Porter University was officially chartered on April 16, 1934 and began planning an opening in September of 1934. Optimistically planning on opening a four year college with four degree programs, the organizers decided it was more financially and administratively prudent at the time to open as a two-year college program offering classes predominately in the evening. In preparing for the opening of the school, Judge Porter established an advisory council of nineteen civic minded leaders to guide him in recruiting students, hiring a faculty, as well as other administrative details including finding a location to hold the classes. A member of the advisory council was Reverend Dr. F.C. McConnell, Jr., minister of the First Baptist Church, who offered the school the use of the third floor of the Educational Building. The offer was quickly accepted since the building was centrally located in downtown, close to bus lines and the public library. In addition, the school had approval to use the chemistry labs at Robert E. Lee High School.

During the first year, the university had a business manager, librarian and dean who selected eleven instructors each teaching only freshman classes that first year. The new university was openly endorsed by the City Council, Jr. Chamber of Commerce, Allied Executive Committee and Dr. John J. Tigert, President of the University of Florida.

President Tigert agreed that any student of Porter University transferring to the University of Florida could receive provisional credit for courses successfully completed up to a two year period. President Porter agreed to pattern their courses to follow those at the University of Florida including the use of the same textbooks. Provisional agreements were also established with Stetson University, the University of Alabama and Southern College in Lakeland. Opening on October 1, 1934 with convocation in the 3rd floor auditorium, the announced enrollment was sixty students which had increased to eighty-five students by the end of the first academic year. Programs offered during the first year included pre-law, arts and sciences, business administration and engineering.<sup>20</sup>

At the end of the first academic year, the college left the Educational Building and occupied different downtown locations including the 2nd floor of the Florida Theatre, a rented room from the Haddock Business University on North Laura Street and several years at the Masonic Building on North Main Street. With the growing financial depression and the disruption of constantly moving affected student attendance and the college's credibility. Teachers were receiving a salary of only \$15 a month which caused low morale and high turnover of instructors. In addition, the business manager, John Lee, a close friend of Judge Porter, left the college to start a rival school in 1935. In February of 1937, Judge Porter turned over the leadership of the college to J. Richard Grether, acting president and dean, who inherited a balance of only \$16.66 making the college financially insolvent. Renamed the Jacksonville Junior College in 1935, the future of the school significantly changed when Dr. Francis A. Waterhouse, a Harvard graduate who held professorships in romance languages at Dartmouth, University of Pennsylvania and the University of Texas, became president. During his brief time as the college's president, Dr. Waterhouse

was able to interest prominent business and professional leaders, such as Carl S. Swisher, Judge Burton Barrs as well as successful attorneys, Guy Botts and Fred Noble, in the development of the school.<sup>21</sup>

Under the leadership of the Board of Trustees and with growing community support, the college began to have an up-swing in enrollment during the 1940s including students from the Naval Air Station Jacksonville. In 1941, the college was accepted as a member of the American Association of Junior Colleges. By 1943, the college had an enrollment of 80 students. With a successful \$20,000 fundraising campaign by the Civitan Club, as well as significant donations from Jessie Ball DuPont, Clifford E. McGehee and Carl Swisher along with a yearly donation up to \$10,000 by the City of Jacksonville, the college was able to purchase for \$16,500, its first permanent home in the former mansion of Colonel William E. Kay at 704 Riverside Avenue in 1944.<sup>22</sup>

With the tremendous demand for higher education, particularly stimulated by the G.I. Bill, the large 1899 house soon became inadequate and sold to the state for \$48,000.

Anticipating becoming a four year fully accredited institution, the college purchased a 137 acre parcel along the St. Johns River in Arlington. At the cost of \$35,000, the college officially acquired the parcel on April 8, 1947, and opened on October 2, 1950 primarily using surplus barracks. With the offering of four year degree programs, the college was renamed Jacksonville University in 1956 with the first graduating class being in 1959. On December 7, 1961, Jacksonville University was granted full accreditation as a senior college by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Although the structure at 125 West Church Street was the site of the first year of classes for the institution that would become the Jacksonville University; this housing of classroom space for one year should not be considered a significant local, state or national event.

First, as an example of the kindness shown by the First Baptist Church to the Jacksonville University this is not the only event. It is my understanding that in 1958 the Church paid \$17,500 for land and \$125,000 for construction of a Baptist Student Center with living room, fireplace, ballfields, covered pavilions, and other amenities across University Boulevard from JU as a student center and ministry area. It is my understanding that in 2013 the Church hosted JU's graduation on an emergency basis due to weather event at no cost including providing sound, technology, security, and parking as well as remaining JU's primary fallback site for several years after. This kindness is extended to other appropriate specific community organizations for graduations, banquets, and other events.

Second, this kindness has been extended to other appropriate specific community organizations for graduations, banquets, and other events including but not limited to: First Coast Crime Stoppers, Sheriff's Watch, Principals and Pastors, First Coast Women's Services, Starship Foundation, University Christian School, and others.

Third, all of the structures at First Baptist Church have been in kindness used for more than just the churches direct ministries and are given and forgotten not holding anything in record or asking anything in return.

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



During the period from 1938 to 1951, 125 West Church Street has significance because of its direct association with the productive life of company founder, Thomas Tyre Phillips. Born in Stone Mountain, DeKalb County, Georgia in 1877, T.T. Phillips worked for the Industrial Aid Association of Georgia in Atlanta starting in 1898 and was appointed a traveling representative of the company in 1901. By 1903 at the age of 26, Phillips was residing in Pensacola, Florida, remaining there until he moved to Jacksonville in 1916. He served as president of the Gulf Life Insurance Company from 1911 to 1947 becoming chairman of the board of directors until his death in 1951.

Founded in 1911 in Pensacola, Florida, the company started only with T.T. Philips and two agents working out of a single room in the Blount Building. With only \$500 in assets and capitalized at \$5,000, Phillips within 25 years grew the company to be the largest insurance company in the state that insured one out of every five Florida residents.

By 1935, the Gulf Life Insurance Company had assets of \$2,950,000, 250,000 policy holders, an income of \$2,250,000, as well as \$63,000,000 in volume of coverage. From two employees in 1911, the company employed 500 agents with a payroll of \$65,000 monthly by 1935. During this first twenty-five years, Gulf Life had paid policy holders over \$5,600,000. At the time, the company was advertised as, "Florida's Largest & Strongest Life Insurance Company" The year before T.T. Philip's death in 1951, the company employed 1,700 people working in the home office and in fifty-three branch offices. The 27 directors of the company included a variety of prominent business and professional leaders from numerous Florida cities. By 1950, Gulf Life was one of seven insurance companies with a home office in Jacksonville and supplemented by thirty smaller branch offices that in total employed 5,480 people who created a payroll and expenses of \$30,000,000.<sup>25</sup>

With the 25th anniversary of the company, one newspaper article described T.T. Philips as, "a man who had vision, confidence and the hope of building an institution with supreme though of humanitarian service". His strong commitment to quality and dependable service is evident by his record of paying all claims regardless of the company's financial status. In order to pay all the claims produced by the 1918 influenza outbreak, T.T. Phillips worked without compensation. After the deadly hurricane of 1928, he personally paid claims for 75 storm related deaths in West Palm Beach. He died on April 3, 1951 in Jacksonville with funeral services at the First Presbyterian Church and burial in Oaklawn Cemetery. During his 36 year career as president and later chairman of the board of trustees, Thomas T. Phillips developed the Gulf Life Insurance Company into a multi-million dollar business, (60 million in assets by 1949), as well as a financial force in Florida and the Southeast by providing not only insurance and employment opportunities (1400 at the time of his death in 1951) but also investment funds for sound public and private projects.

Although the structure at 125 West Church Street has an association with the life of TT Philips this relationship does not rise to the level of "identification with".

One example of this identification with would be how the house at 250 St George Street in St Augustine is referred to as the Prince Murat house ie...it is identified with an individual similar to how the Gulf Life tower although now having received a new nameplate is still referred to by the majority of citizens as the Gulf Life.

A second example of this would be the Mary Washington house in Fredericksburg which is identified with George Washington because he bought it for his mother and slept there while visiting.

A third example of this would be the Springfield Illinois Courthouse where Abraham Lincoln argued cases.

There is no such identification of the structure at 125 West Church Street with TT Phillips or Gulf Life Insurance. In contrast is referred to as the First Baptist Church Singles Building or Educational Building.

**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.**

The Educational Building represents the only documented design in Florida by regionally significant architect, Reuben Harrison Hunt, who has been called the, "the Master Builder of Chattanooga". In addition to his home state of Tennessee, R.H. Hunt had designed buildings in almost all Southern states including Oklahoma, Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Texas and Florida, as well as a designing the First Baptist Church in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1929). Born in Elbert County, Georgia in 1862, Hunt was educated in local schools before becoming a carpenter and builder from 1876 to 1881. In 1882 at the age of 20, he moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee to work for the Adams Brothers, contractors. While working for the Adams Brothers, Hunt began studying architecture. He became a practicing architect in 1886 with the establishment of Hunt and McDaniel, (L.W. McDaniel) firm of architects, contractors and builders. His first major design, which was done with L.W. McDaniel, was the Romanesque Revival style First Baptist Church of Chattanooga in 1886 where he was an active member and deacon. Between 1890 and 1892 the name of the firm was changed to Hunt and Lamm (E.N. Lamm) and dropped the contracting and building part of the business to concentrate on architecture. During their short partnership, the firm designed three county courthouses in Tennessee and Georgia, as well as the Second Baptist Church in Atlanta. 27

In an 1890 advertisement in the Chattanooga City Directory, the firm emphasized the construction of churches and public buildings as their specialty focusing on large scale projects and less on residences. By the early 1900s, he established R.H. Hunt Company that operated until his death in 1937. Within a few years, the company became very prolific and in a 1907 advertisement listed having 131 finished projects that included 60 churches, 28 schools, 22 Businesses, 12 court houses, 5 hotels, 5 municipal buildings and two skyscrapers. He also established a branch office in Jackson, Mississippi in 1905 and one in Dallas, Texas in 1919. Hunt continued to focus more on church designs, and even provided free design services for those congregations unable to pay the professional fees. A recognized authority on the design of religious structures, Mouzon William Brabham began working with Hunt in 1926. Brabham published a book in 1928 entitled Planning Modern Church Buildings which incorporated mainly design examples from Hunt's work. Hunt also published a three volume set in 1916 called Modern Church Designs.

The book had various examples of religious designs from the small and simple to larger more detailed churches made of brick and stone. He used the publication as a successful marketing tool.28

Being more a traditionalist, Hunt's designs reflected wide use of medieval and classical revival styles particularly Gothic Revival, but also Romanesque, Beaux Arts, Neo- classical, and Georgian. He was also known to reuse designs but with some modifications which saved time and money while increasing productivity further exposing his work to a wider audience. Similar to the 1926 & 27 Educational Building in Jacksonville, Hunt designed an Educational Building in 1928 for the First Baptist Church of Chattanooga in a more contemporary style but with decorative elements that harmonized with the Romanesque Revival style of the older sanctuary. Unfortunately both buildings have been demolished.

After World War I, the R.H. Hunt Company began doing designs for colleges such as Baylor College for Women in Belton, Texas; Quachita Baptist College in Arkadelphia, Arkansas; Daniel Baker College in Brownwood, Texas; the Stonewall Jackson Institute in Arlington, Virginia; Mississippi A & M College in Starksville and the Mississippi Normal College. Between 1895 and 1935, Hunt's company was responsible for the design of all governmental buildings in Chattanooga including the Hamilton County Courthouse, Carnegie Library, the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium, the Municipal Building and his last major project, the Art Deco style Joel W. Soloman Federal Building and U.S. Post Office in Chattanooga that was designed in association with New York Architects, Shreve, Lamb & Harmon. Completed in 1934, the building received national attention when the American Institute of Architects (AIA) listed it as one of the top 150 buildings constructed in the United States since 1918.<sup>30</sup>

Hunt's company mentored many young architects from throughout the South who were just starting their professional career. A Mason and devout member of the First Baptist Church of Chattanooga, he was very active in the community serving as the Chairman of the Board of the Citizen's Council of Chattanooga organized in 1933 to monitor and respond to governmental activities including being a leader in the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), a Depression era rural electrification program. In addition to being a member of the American Institute of Architects, AIA, Hunt served on the Chattanooga Planning Commission, as well as served as a trustee of the Carson – Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee. His work has been recognized in national architectural journals such as *The Architectural Record* and *The American Architect*. At the time of his death in 1937, Reuben Hunt was widely praised in editorials, with one calling him, "as the outstanding architect in the entire South" and another stating, "no man's life has been more thoroughly woven into the progress of Chattanooga during the past half century than that of R. H. Hunt". Thirty-nine buildings designed by Hunt are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Educational Building is the only documented building in Florida designed by Hunt per the Florida Master Site File, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State.

R. H. Hunt's standing as an architect of significance in his own state and others is unquestionable; however, his work does not rise to the level of influencing the development of architecture in our city, state, or nation.

First, Hunt's firm produced just the one structure at 125 West Church Street in the city of Jacksonville and the state of Florida and a poorly designed building cannot be considered as influencing the development of architecture in the city or the state. There are many examples of architects who greatly influenced architecture in the city such as Henry J Klutho, Roy A Benjamin, Marsh & Saxelbye, Mark & Sheftall, and Mellen C. Greeley. There are also many examples of architects who greatly influenced the development of architecture in the state such as Addison Mizner (Mediterranean Revival), Paul Rudolph (Sarasota School), and Henry Hohauser (Art Deco). There are also many of examples of architects who greatly influenced the development of architecture in the nation such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Julia Morgan, Albert Kahn, Philip Johnson, Cass Gilbert, Daniel Burnham, Richard Neutra, and Ludwig Mies VanDeRohe. Hunt's though prolific and producing many fine works of architecture does not rise to this level of influence in the city, state, or nation.

Second, Hunt's firm was not an influencer but influenced by others in the multiple styles of the firm's designs whether it be copying the Romanesque style of HH Richardson for his First Baptist Church of Chattanooga. The most significant structure of the firm that departs from this Romanesque style is the

Chattanooga Federal Courthouse & Post Office which was designed jointly with Shreve, Lamb and Harmon (SLH) out of New York who also designed the Empire State Building and therefore it is certainly reasonable to deduce that the "design" of the building was in the design style of SLH while the local significant architect was given the "construction documents" to complete.

Third, Hunt's firm as stated above produced fine works of architecture; however, the structure at 125 West Church Street is not indicative of or typical of the quality design of the firm. It may be that as in any large architecture firm (with offices in Chattanooga, Dallas, & Jackson) where there are multiple teams of architects, that during a busy time the structure at 125 West Church Street did not receive the firm's best effort.

Fourth, Hunt as a devout member of the First Baptist Church of Chattanooga thus relating to & sympathetic to the difficulties of a fellow church with the full understanding that the structure at 125 West Church Street was not his firm's premier or best work would have been more than likely in support of demolition.

Fifth, Hunt wrote a few books regarding Modern Church Designs; however, Architects do this same sort of thing today and we don't call it influencing the architecture of the nation but instead we call it marketing.

It is my opinion as an historic preservation architect that the work of RH Hunt does not rise to the level of influencing the development of architecture in our city, state, or nation.

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

The quality of architecture in the Educational Building is recognized and reflected in the design of the south elevation which fronts West Church Street. Consistent with the traditional construction of commercial buildings in urban centers since the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries, the subject property was designed and constructed to maximize the use of the entire lot, with zero front and side setbacks. Constructed in 1926 & 27, the tan brick building, which is covered with a flat, built-up roof, has six-stories framed with steel and sheathed on the exterior with masonry and terra cotta. The design of the building reflects a variation of a commercial style referred by one stylebook as the two-part vertical block.<sup>32</sup> While acknowledging uniform design elements in commercial architecture that expanded the period from the 1850's to the 1950's, this stylebook identified commercial buildings based on the major horizontal divisions of the façade to which are applied numerous stylistic elements reflective of different architectural periods.

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-house 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. The design and materials of the ornamentation usually established the influence of any particular architectural style.<sup>33</sup>

Characteristic of other commercial styles of this period, structures in the two-part vertical block design have a strong vertical emphasis in the building shaft created by the application of decorative elements such as pilasters or the use of uninterrupted wall surface above the first zone. The first zone on the Education Building is the ground floor which is symmetrically balanced with the consistent placement of window pairs on each side of the central entryway. The first floor is further differentiated by being sheathed with terra cotta panels and defined on the top by a decorative band. The visually prominent second zone or the six floor, is composed of arched window pairs which is further articulated with terra cotta ornamentation and basket-weave patterned brick work which creates a unified whole. In addition to a decorative parapet, the center of the second zone is further defined by a raised centrally placed gabled parapet wall. The two zones are connected with continuous terra cotta mullions that ran from the top of the first story to the paired arched windows on the six which emphasizes the verticality of the facade. The symmetry of the front façade is also enhanced with the window pairs on each floor lining up vertically.

The architectural detailing of the building is reflective of the Second Renaissance Revival style common from the 1840s into the twentieth century. Second Renaissance Revival style buildings are organized into distinct horizontal sections by string courses or different window types usually located in the top story. The ground floor is usually sheathed with a different material than found on the upper floors. In the publication, Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage Landmarks for the Future, the front of the building is described as having a, "handsome and yet restrained façade that makes an important contribution to the diversity of Downtown Jacksonville".<sup>34</sup>

The perceived 'quality' of the architecture for the structure at 125 West Church Street is almost completely based on one elevation, on one floor, at the top of building and is not a well designed or quality work of architecture. Although, alterations in the late 1930s may have changed the appearance of the first floor the net effect of an unbalanced design remains.

First, the quality of architecture is not based on the overall style as it is variation and mix of elements from multiple styles (two-part commercial block, romanesque, & second renaissance revival) and therefore not an ideal, pure, or well-designed representation of any one style.

Second, the design of the structure does not have a depth or layering in the one elevation with detail other than the recess above the entrance resulting in a structure that results in an appearance that is 'flat', without shadow lines, and without the resulting visual interest to draw the eye into a greater meaning or story.

Third, the structure does have a tri-partite division of base, middle, & top although this is a common classical planning tradition for almost all buildings of this time and is not indicative of a quality in and of itself. The configuration of most of the detail at the top is in fact not in keeping with good design which spreads the detail out of over all three divisions. although it is understood that the removal of detail at the first floor in the 1930s may be to blame for part of this the net effect is the same. Also, the proportion of the base is not proportional to the middle & top while the windows at the base awkwardly stop just short of the sidewalk creating a squashed appearance to the base.

Fourth, the structure has a verticality to it the proportions of the thin elements result in a structure that appears stilted as opposed to the balanced and well-proportioned verticality found in quality examples of commercial structures of this height, styles, and time period.

Fifth, the portion of the structure which has brick and precast concrete detail is above the sixth floor windows making it very difficult to see from the ground level. The value of the structure at 125 West Church Street based on this half story of detail is not balanced by or overcome the six stories of undistinguished and insignificant appearance.

It is my opinion as an historic preservation architect that the structure at 125 West Church Street is not recognized for the quality of its architecture, and that the elements of its exterior do not show architectural significance.

**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 125 West Church Street does not meet this landmark criterion.

It is my opinion as an historic preservation architect that the structure at 125 West Church Street is not valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.

**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. Therefore, it is the opinion of the Planning and Development Department that the Educational Building at 125 West Church Street appears to be basically sound with some exterior alterations and was until recently occupied.

In 1953, the Gulf Life Insurance Company constructed a seven story addition behind the 1927 building (Building Permit Record, #1298 – 1952). Fronting West Ashley Street, this addition, which is now the administration building for the church, was built by the Gallespie Construction Company from a design by Saxelbye & Powell. The main elevation of the addition fronts the south side of West Ashley Street (124 West Ashley Street). Internally connected to the 1927 building, the addition functioned as the primary entryway into the Gulf Life Insurance Company office. Reflecting the Mid-Modern style, the addition was built during the historic period which is before 1970.

The most significant exterior alterations completed in more recent years were the replacement of the original six over six sash windows including the arches on the sixth floor with a one over one metal product. The first floor windows on the West Church Street elevation have been enclosed with scored stucco or concrete. Windows on the west elevation of the back section also have been enclosed. The north and east elevations of the original building are no longer visible from the exterior with the construction of a seven-story addition to the north and a parking garage to the east. The front entryway is enclosed with a pair of doors and sidelights fabricated with anodized bronze aluminum.

Based on the building permit records, the other major exterior alterations were to the first story which was completed in 1938 during the historic period, thus acquiring significance in their own right. All the other building permits were interior modifications and upgrades or maintenance related repairs to the exterior. Since local landmark designation does not require review of interior changes and upgrades, the interior of the building was not evaluated as related to the presence and condition of original or early features, as well as modifications to original or early floor plans and room configurations.

There are other factors which should be considered by the words in the ordinance including but not limited to whether the structure is right or appropriate for preservation or restoration.

First, it may be right or appropriate to preserve or restore an historic courtroom with an historic federal courthouse as a way to provide a place within the community that citizens can go to be reminded of and remember the serious arguments, decisions, and participants (judges, lawyers, plaintiffs, & defendants); however, the structure at 125 West Church Street provides no such reminders or remembrances.

Second, it may be right or appropriate to preserve and restore an historic church as a museum or community use to provide a resource for events while also recalling the history a context of the lives we live now; however, the structure at 125 West Church Street provides no such resource or recall.

Third, it may be right or appropriate to gut the interior of an historic department store building to renovate the interior of an office building for new tenants or new use to repurpose or reuse the shell of the building; however, the structure at 125 West Church Street is not suitable for this type of repurpose or reuse because of very low ceiling height at the first floor & other floors, an 'H' shaped plan with very small column spacing resulting in a interior space that will not result in spaces usable than other for small rooms or offices, and means of egress which do not meet modern safety requirements do not allow for this type of repurpose or reuse.

Fourth, it may be right or appropriate to preserve or restore an historic building because the building frame and exterior walls are structurally sound or the exterior envelope remains relatively intact; however, the structure at 125 West Church Street in fact has not only lost its historic windows but should also be considered in terms of mechanical, electrical, plumbing vertical accessibility.

Fifth, it may be appropriate to brace and support and exterior façade of an historic 1, 2 or 3 story building while completely demolishing the interior structure; the height of the structure at 125 West Church Street provides significant obstacles to this type of 'facadism'.

It is my opinion as an historic preservation architect that the structure at 125 West Church Street is not suitable, right, or appropriate for preservation or restoration.

cc - Jerry Traino, AIA REWC Novus Architects

900 Johnnie Dodds Boulevard Suite 200

Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, 29464

First Baptist Church of Jacksonville 600 North Main Street Jacksonville, Florida 32202

1 on is training for the Commission. A lot of  
2 times the State does training, but they're in  
3 places like Tampa or other cities where it's  
4 not reasonable or the City isn't going to pay  
5 for you guys to go. So I have worked with the  
6 State to bring a training here in March.

7 I talked to the planning director and the  
8 Office of General Counsel, and we think doing  
9 it as a Commission workshop is probably the  
10 easiest. So you guys can be here. It'll be  
11 advertised. You're not conducting any  
12 business.

13 It will be open to the public. And  
14 probably, other cities in the area will send  
15 people for training as well. It will probably  
16 be a couple of hours. I think the woman from  
17 the State said about an hour, but I imagine,  
18 with questions, it will be longer than that.

19 She's basically given me two dates in  
20 March that she can't do it, which is March 2nd  
21 and March 24th. Other than that, she was open  
22 to coming whenever. I was hoping to get some  
23 consensus on a date from you guys so I could  
24 let her know, and we could advertise or at  
25 least notify -- I'm sorry -- notice the

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1 meeting. I think given the timeframe, it might  
2 be better towards the end of the month.

3 I'll have to see if we can get this room  
4 or if it might be the Training Room down the  
5 hall, but if anyone has any ideas on a good  
6 day ...

7 COMMISSIONER BRAMWELL: You think we could  
8 do the same sort of time?

9 MR. POPOLI: It can be, yeah. She didn't  
10 give us any restrictions on that.

11 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I'm pretty wide open  
12 except for the week of the 9th.

13 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Second half of the  
14 month works better for me.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. So I think  
16 we're all in agreeance, the second half of the  
17 month. Tuesday, Wednesday, somewhere in there?  
18 Anybody care day-wise?

19 MR. POPOLI: Okay. I'm going to shoot for  
20 Wednesday, just because it's when you guys  
21 normally meet. I think it works, probably. If  
22 there's any conflicts, obviously, let me know,  
23 but -- I'll put together a couple of options  
24 and e-mail you guys and try and get a consensus  
25 on that, but I'll shoot --

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1 COMMISSIONER KASPER: Wednesday -- yeah,  
2 March 18th, I'm out.

3 MR. POPOLI: Okay.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: So maybe --

5 COMMISSIONER LOPERA: The 25th.

6 COMMISSIONER STANSEL: The 25th is our  
7 meeting.

8 COMMISSIONER LOPERA: That's our HPC  
9 meeting.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Right.

11 COMMISSIONER KASPER: Oh, so it is.

12 MR. POPOLI: Okay. Then we can look at  
13 like a Tuesday or Thursday.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: That's fine.

15 MR. POPOLI: Okay.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Let's go that route because  
17 we're --

18 MR. POPOLI: I'll look at the week of the  
19 17th first, and then -- so we don't crowd the  
20 Commission.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

22 MR. POPOLI: Okay. I'll get back with  
23 you. And that was the only thing I had.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: All right.

25 Okay. We're going to take a ten-minute

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1 break and inform the rest of the crowd that we  
2 will be addressing the street demo next, and  
3 give us a chance to figure out if we want to do  
4 it in here or elsewhere. So we'll be back  
5 in -- at 4:05.

6 (Recess.)

7 (The following proceedings continue in the  
8 Ed Ball First Floor Training Room at 4:38 p.m.)

9 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Sorry for the  
10 delay.

11 It's really important, we're going to try  
12 to stay real organized about this because,  
13 obviously, there's a lot of people here, and a  
14 lot of people want to speak.

15 Can you please -- any conversations be had  
16 in the hallway. I don't want to hear any  
17 whispering because our court reporter, the  
18 equipment she has today is not really set up  
19 for this size of a room, so it's going to catch  
20 a lot of echo. So, please, just try and stay  
21 silent in the background, please.

22 And we are going to move on to our Church  
23 Street FBC demolition.

24 Christian, do you have a staff report?

25 MR. POPOLI: Through the Chair, yes, I do.

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1 I'd like to make one correction. At this  
2 stage of this process, staff isn't actually  
3 making a recommendation. So the agenda did  
4 have a recommendation on it. That was a  
5 mistake. So we're just giving our memo of  
6 findings at this point.

7 So this is a demolition delay review for  
8 125 West Church Street, which is known as the  
9 First Baptist Church Sunday School Building.

10 The applicant has provided a demolition  
11 application to the Building Inspection Division  
12 as well as a letter of information regarding  
13 their request for the demolition.

14 The process is based on the landmark  
15 criteria and the National Register criteria  
16 taken out of Chapter 307. So we are going to  
17 evaluate the seven criteria with our memo here,  
18 and then you can deliberate from there.

19 Briefly, just to go over the criteria,  
20 they are, starting with Letter A: Its value as  
21 a significant reminder of the cultural,  
22 historical, architectural or archaeological  
23 heritage of the city, state, and nation.

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

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

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

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

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

16 And then, finally: Its suitability for  
17 preservation or restoration.

18 So starting with Criteria A, which, again,  
19 is its significance based on the heritage of a  
20 city, state or nation, known as the First  
21 Baptist Church Sunday School Building, the  
22 building is significant because of its relation  
23 and history related to three different  
24 institutions that are significant to the  
25 heritage of the city.

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1 Built in 1927 originally for the First  
2 Baptist Church to host Sunday -- their Sunday  
3 school, it was then, at that time, also  
4 occupied by the William J. Porter University,  
5 and at a later time was associated with the  
6 Gulf Life Insurance Building.

7 As I said, it was originally built in  
8 1927 -- or completed in 1927, for the First  
9 Baptist Church at the time for its Sunday  
10 school program.

11 It is adjacent to the historic sanctuary  
12 for the First Baptist Church, which is the  
13 second sanctuary on that site, the first being  
14 destroyed in the Great Fire of 1901.

15 In 1927, a Jacksonville Journal article  
16 noted that the building was identified as the  
17 second largest Sunday school building in the  
18 world at the time and cost \$250,000 to  
19 construct and could accommodate 3,500 people.

20 In 1938, the building was taken over by  
21 the Gulf Life Insurance building -- or Company,  
22 rather; its association with Thomas Tyre  
23 Phillips, who started Gulf Life Insurance  
24 Company. This was the first permanent location  
25 for this build- -- for this company in

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1 Jacksonville. It had occupied other locations  
2 and rented spaces prior to that.

3 Another noteworthy individual associated  
4 with this company was H. Terry Parker, who was  
5 a prominent developer and was one of the  
6 longest or the longest serving board members of  
7 the Gulf Life company.

8 The Gulf Life Insurance Corporation was  
9 one of several significant insurance companies  
10 for the city of Jacksonville. It was started  
11 as a holding company. The Gulf Life  
12 Corporation started as a holding company of  
13 Gulf Life and two other companies that later  
14 expanded with new subsidiaries to operate and  
15 function as a large mortgage lending company.

16 By 1950, Jacksonville was home to seven  
17 companies and 36 branch offices which employed  
18 5,480 people. It created a payroll and other  
19 expenses of over \$30 million.

20 In 1964, the Gulf Life Insurance Company  
21 was recognized as the first Florida life  
22 insurance company to reach over \$2 billion  
23 worth of life insurance policies.

24 In 1967, the company then moved to  
25 their -- an office located on the Southbank.

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1 Under Criteria B, being a location of  
2 significant national, state or local event, the  
3 building was the first location of what became  
4 Jacksonville University.

5 In early 1934, Judge Porter -- excuse  
6 me -- William Porter met with a group of local  
7 citizens who were active in the establishment  
8 of a higher education school in Jacksonville.

9 The William J. Porter University was  
10 officially chartered on April 16th, 1934. They  
11 were given access to use the third floor of the  
12 then education building of the First Baptist  
13 Church. They, obviously, later, moved to other  
14 locations and through a series of changes of  
15 names became Jacksonville University.

16 Criteria C, it being identified with a  
17 person or persons who significantly contributed  
18 to the development of the city, state or  
19 nation, again, Thomas Phillips, who started the  
20 Gulf Life Insurance Company, was a significant  
21 individual. His company was one of the major  
22 companies in Jacksonville for a great period of  
23 time.

24 By 1950, the Gulf Life was one of the  
25 seven insurance companies with homes in

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1 Jacksonville and supplemented by 30 smaller  
2 branch offices. With its 25th anniversary of  
3 the company, one newspaper described  
4 T.T. Phillips as a man who had vision,  
5 confidence, and hope of building an institution  
6 with supreme thought of humanitarian service.

7 In order to pay policies during the 1918  
8 influenza outbreak, he actually covered  
9 policies personally out of his pocket. Again,  
10 the impact of Gulf Life Insurance Company in  
11 Jacksonville can't really be understated.

12 Being identified -- Criteria D -- excuse  
13 me -- identified as the work of a master  
14 builder, designer or architect.

15 The education building represents the only  
16 documented design in Florida by the regionally  
17 significant architect, Rueben Harris Hunt --  
18 Harrison Hunt -- excuse me -- who has been  
19 called the master builder of Chattanooga. He's  
20 noted for buildings in almost all southern  
21 states, including Oklahoma, Virginia, Alabama,  
22 Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina,  
23 Georgia, Texas, and Florida, as well as  
24 designing the First Baptist Church in Rio de  
25 Janeiro, Brazil in 1929.

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1 During its first tenure with -- I'm sorry.  
2 His first major design was done with the help  
3 of L.W. McDaniel. It was a Romanesque Reviv  
4 style for the First Baptist Church of  
5 Chattanooga in 1886 where he was an active  
6 member and a deacon.

7 In 1890, advertisements in the Chattanooga  
8 City Directory: The firm emphasized the  
9 construction of churches and public buildings  
10 as their specialty and focusing on large  
11 projects and less residences.

12 A 1907 advertisement listed them as having  
13 designed 131 finished products that included 60  
14 churches, 28 schools, 22 businesses, 12  
15 courthouses, 5 hotels, 5 municipal buildings,  
16 and 2 skyscrapers.

17 Hunt's design reflects a wide use of  
18 medieval and classic revival styles,  
19 particularly Gothic Revival, but also  
20 Romanesque, Neoclassical, and Georgian.

21 Similar to the 1926/'27 education building  
22 in Jacksonville, Hunt designed the education  
23 building in 1928 for the First Baptist Church  
24 in Chattanooga in a more contemporary style,  
25 but with decorative elements, harmonizing with

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1 the Romanesque style and similar to the older  
2 sanctuary on the site.

3 Between 1895 and 1935, Hunt's company was  
4 responsible for all of the governmental  
5 buildings in Chattanooga, including the  
6 Hamilton County Courthouse, Carnegie Library,  
7 the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium,  
8 and municipal buildings.

9 And his last major project, the Art Deco  
10 style Joel W. Solomon Federal Building and U.S.  
11 Post Office in Chattanooga that was designed in  
12 association with New York architects Shreve,  
13 Lamb & Harmon, completed in 1934, the building  
14 received national attention when the American  
15 Institute of Architects listed it as one of the  
16 top 150 buildings constructed in the United  
17 States since 1918.

18 Thirty-nine buildings designed by Hunt are  
19 listed on the National Register of Historic  
20 Places. The education building is the only  
21 documented building in Florida, designed by  
22 Hunt, based on the Division of Historical  
23 Resources for the State.

24 Criteria E, its value as a building that  
25 is recognized for its quality of architecture,

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1 the quality of architecture of the education  
2 building is recognized and reflected in the  
3 design of the south elevation which runs on  
4 Church Street.

5 Constructed in 1927, the tan brick  
6 building, which is covered with a flat,  
7 built-up roof, has six stories, framed with  
8 steel, sheathed on the exterior with masonry  
9 and terra-cotta.

10 A style of high-rise architecture  
11 developed in American cities and towns during  
12 the late 19th Century, early 20th Century, are  
13 buildings with a two-part vertical block design  
14 that are characterized with one elevation --  
15 I'm sorry -- with more than one elevation  
16 broken into two horizontal divisions.

17 Characteristic of other commercial styles  
18 of the period, the structure is in a two-part  
19 vertical block design, has a strong vertical  
20 emphasis in the building.

21 The first zone on the education building  
22 is the ground floor which is symmetrically  
23 balanced with a consistent placement of window  
24 pairs on each side of a central doorway. The  
25 first floor is further differentiated by being

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1 sheathed with terra-cotta panels and defined by  
2 a top decorative band.

3 The visually prominent second zone, or the  
4 sixth floor, is comprised of arched window  
5 pairs which is further articulated with the  
6 terra-cotta ornamentation and basket-weave  
7 patterns of brick.

8 The architectural detailing of the  
9 building is reflective of the Second  
10 Renaissance Revival style common in the 1840s,  
11 into the 20th Century. The Second Renaissance  
12 Revival Style buildings are organized into  
13 distinct horizontal sections by string courses  
14 and differentiated window types usually located  
15 on the top story. The ground floor is usually  
16 sheathed with a different material than found  
17 on the upper floors.

18 In the publication of *Jacksonville's*  
19 *Architectural Heritage, Landmarks for the*  
20 *Future*, the front of the building was described  
21 as having a "handsome and yet restrained facade  
22 that makes an important contribution to the  
23 diversity of Downtown Jacksonville."

24 Staff did not find that it met Criteria F,  
25 which is related to its value for the study of

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1 a period, method of construction, or use of  
2 indigenous materials.

3 We did find it met G, which was its  
4 suitability for preservation. Utilizing this  
5 criteria has been the practice of the Planning  
6 Department to evaluate the proposed landmark  
7 based on the evidence of significant exterior  
8 alterations that have negatively impacted  
9 character-defining features, as well as  
10 represent alterations difficult, costly or  
11 impossible to reverse.

12 It is the opinion of the Planning  
13 Department that the education building at  
14 125 West Church Street appears to be basically  
15 sound with some exterior alterations and was  
16 until recently occupied. There was an addition  
17 added in 1953 by the Gulf Life Insurance  
18 Company to the rear, but the front facade was  
19 mostly unaltered.

20 The most significant exterior alterations  
21 completed in more recent years was the  
22 replacement of the original six-over-six,  
23 sash-style windows with a modern metal product.  
24 Windows on the west elevation in the back have  
25 also been enclosed.

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1 Based on the building permit records,  
2 other major exterior alterations were to the  
3 first story, which were completed during --  
4 completed in 1938, during the historic period,  
5 thus acquiring significance in their own right.

6 The interior of the building was not  
7 evaluated as related to the present condition  
8 or original features as well as modifications.  
9 We simply examined the exterior.

10 That's our staff report. I'm happy to  
11 answer any questions.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions for staff?

13 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

14 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We'll come back  
15 to you.

16 Thanks.

17 MR. POPOLI: Thank you.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Is the applicant here?

19 (Mr. Hainline approaches the podium.)

20 MR. HAINLINE: Mr. Chairman, members of  
21 the Commission, my name is T.R. Hainline. I'm  
22 with Rogers Towers and I'm here representing  
23 First Baptist Church.

24 First, obviously, this decision is  
25 important and impactful to the church and we

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1 very much appreciate the seriousness and  
2 professionalism that you all have shown  
3 already. We just started the hearing, but in  
4 moving it to this room and in accommodating the  
5 audience. We also appreciate the  
6 professionalism of your staff throughout this  
7 process.

8 I would ask if we -- although we submitted  
9 over a hundred cards in support -- speaker  
10 cards in support of the project, our plan is  
11 for only four people to speak on behalf of the  
12 church; myself, two architects and the pastor.

13 Because the staff's recommendation was  
14 about 16 pages and Mr. Popoli's presentation  
15 was probably about 25 minutes or so, I would  
16 ask for your indulgence in our time. And we've  
17 timed our presentation of those four speakers  
18 and it's about a total of 30 minutes. So we  
19 would hope that we would -- we would ask and be  
20 allowed that presentation.

21 What I'd like to do is provide some  
22 context and then also give a brief preview of  
23 the other speakers. The first context point  
24 I'd like to make is procedural. This is an  
25 application for a demolition of an existing

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1 building. It is not a Certificate of  
2 Appropriateness and it is not, at this time, a  
3 landmark review. If you deny this demolition  
4 permit, then at the next hearing will be the  
5 landmark review.

6 We're proceeding under Section 320.407 of  
7 the code, and that's what sets out that kind of  
8 series of decisions by you; first today, if you  
9 are so inclined, on the landmark -- on the  
10 demolition permit, and then at the next hearing  
11 would be the actual landmark decision if you  
12 deny the permit today.

13 You may remember in September of last  
14 year, on September 25th, you faced this same  
15 procedural context with regard to -- I think it  
16 was seven residential structures over on East  
17 Duval Street, and your counsel explained to you  
18 that section 320.407 really doesn't require  
19 that you apply -- in fact, it doesn't say that  
20 you apply the landmark criteria to today's  
21 decision.

22 However, looking forward to what would be  
23 your review, if you deny the permit today, it  
24 is a practical matter for you to look at the  
25 landmark criteria today. And we do have an

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1 architect who is going to speak specifically on  
2 each of those landmark criteria and respond to  
3 the staff's -- in response to the staff's  
4 comments on that.

5 But in reality, Section 320.407, for a  
6 demolition permit, requires us only to provide  
7 one thing, and that is, quote, the reason  
8 for --

9 (Timer notification.)

10 MR. HAINLINE: -- the reason for  
11 demolition. It also requires, if the building  
12 is falling in, that we've taken precautions  
13 against the building falling in and falling  
14 apart, but that isn't the case here. So really  
15 the only thing that the code requires us to do  
16 is provide a reason for demolition here.

17 So to understand that reason, the reason  
18 for demolition and why we're asking for it, I  
19 would ask you to look at two other contexts in  
20 addition to the procedural one that I just  
21 described. One is the location.

22 This is obviously Church Street West in  
23 the Jacksonville Downtown Historic District.  
24 And what you know about this section of Church  
25 Street, if you work on it, if you drive by it,

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1 if you use it on a regular basis, is that this  
2 is a dead street. It's a dead street.

3 On the south side of Church Street at this  
4 location, between Hogan and Laura, is City  
5 Hall, but the -- it's the rear of City Hall,  
6 and for security reasons there's no public  
7 access along that whole block on that south  
8 side of the street at City Hall. For security  
9 reasons there's no access, and really all there  
10 is is loading and unloading. There's a garage  
11 entry, a back door for staff, but there's no  
12 access on that side of the street. There are a  
13 couple of people smoking cigarettes out on the  
14 sidewalk every now and then, City staff.

15 On the north side, just east of this  
16 proposed -- of this structure proposed for  
17 demolition is a parking garage. And on the  
18 west side of this structure proposed for  
19 demolition is the true landmark, the Hobson  
20 sanctuary, which was described by staff. With  
21 the exception of the Hobson, there is no  
22 regular access, no activation, no transparency  
23 in any of the buildings on this street for the  
24 entire length of the block on both sides.

25 There's no landscaping, there's no benches, no

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1 urban open spaces. All of the buildings are  
2 right up on the street. And if somebody is  
3 using the sidewalks, they're just using it to  
4 get from Point A to Point B.

5 One reason for the demolition is that the  
6 church proposes to build a welcome center on  
7 this piece of property to open up, to reach out  
8 to the community, to activate and energize this  
9 part of the downtown historic district.

10 The church's design architect, Jerry  
11 Traino of Novus from Charleston, will show you  
12 the proposed new welcome center and talk about  
13 its form and function and bringing this block  
14 of Church Street West back to life. He will  
15 also tell you why the existing building at  
16 125 Church Street cannot be repurposed, why  
17 other adjacent structures cannot be used for  
18 the welcome center, and how the proposed  
19 welcome center at this site will be very  
20 compatible with the Hobson sanctuary; in fact,  
21 will draw focus and attention to that beautiful  
22 historic landmark at the Hobson.

23 The other context, in addition to the  
24 location, that I would like to call your  
25 attention to is First Baptist Church itself.

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1 The staff's memo spends at least five pages  
2 talking about the history of First Baptist  
3 Church downtown; its history, its campus, and  
4 its central role in the downtown historic  
5 district.

6 First Baptist Church is one of the oldest,  
7 most loyal and most enduring members of the  
8 downtown community. And the church is a  
9 historic institution in and of itself. And as  
10 you know, as we hear often, a church is not a  
11 building, a church is a community; it's the  
12 people, it's the institution of the church.

13 And like other institutions, like other  
14 communities, churches must adapt and change to  
15 ensure sustainability and to ensure viability.  
16 And as you know, it's been widely reported that  
17 First Baptist Church is undergoing change right  
18 now. It is consolidating its properties and  
19 revitalizing its ministry. It has chosen to  
20 remain in the downtown historic district, but  
21 after much careful thought and consideration  
22 the church leaders have decided that there are  
23 changes to its campus that are needed,  
24 including the demolition of the existing  
25 building at 125 Church Street West and the

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1 construction of the new welcome center. Those,  
2 and the decision of the church, are necessary  
3 for the church's sustainability and survival.  
4 Pastor Lambert will speak to you very briefly  
5 about the critical importance of this proposed  
6 welcome center to its ongoing ministry.

7 Part of the decision is we ask that you  
8 respect this longtime downtown presence,  
9 institution, community, building owner and user  
10 and respect the very thoughtful and deliberate  
11 process they've gone through to come to that  
12 decision about this building.

13 So, again, in a preview -- just a quick  
14 preview, our first speaker will be Jerry  
15 Traino, the design architect from Novus in  
16 Charleston. I've said what he's going to talk  
17 about. His work includes work on -- his  
18 experience includes work on historic structures  
19 in Charleston's historic downtown district. We  
20 will submit his resume at the end of our  
21 presentation.

22 The next is architect David Luke whose  
23 offices are here in Jacksonville will speak.  
24 He'll address the code's landmark criteria and  
25 respond to the staff's memorandum point by

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1 point. Mr. Luke specializes in historic  
2 renovation and has extensive experience in  
3 historic structures in St. Augustine, Georgia's  
4 coastal islands and elsewhere. And we'll  
5 provide his resume as well.

6 And the last speaker will be Pastor  
7 Lambert, who will address the church's  
8 consolidation.

9 We ask -- of course, at the end we ask you  
10 to issue the demolition permit and allow the  
11 church to proceed with its plan to build its  
12 new welcome center next to the Hobson there on  
13 Church Street West.

14 I'd like to reserve rebuttal time as the  
15 chair sees appropriate, and next Mr. Traino  
16 will come up and speak.

17 Do you all have access to the slide show?  
18 I didn't ask Christian that.

19 MR. POPOLI: Yes.

20 MR. HAINLINE: You do? Okay. We have  
21 hard copies we would have passed out, but if  
22 you have access --

23 THE CHAIRMAN: To the slides that you're  
24 presenting?

25 MR. HAINLINE: Yes. If they are able to

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1 be put on the screen, great. If you -- if not,  
 2 I mean, we have some hard copies, cut --  
 3 THE CHAIRMAN: We'll answer that shortly.  
 4 I think we'd take the hard copies  
 5 regardless because --  
 6 MR. HAINLINE: Okay.  
 7 THE CHAIRMAN: -- we can't really -- we  
 8 don't have our screen visible today.  
 9 MR. HAINLINE: With your permission --  
 10 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.  
 11 MR. HAINLINE: (Tenders documents.)  
 12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
 13 (Audience member approaches the podium.)  
 14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I want to thank everyone  
 15 for the time. Thank you, T.R., for teeing that  
 16 up.  
 17 This is a very important project for the  
 18 church and is also a very important project for  
 19 several other reasons as well, so I want to  
 20 thank you all for your time and diligence and  
 21 thank the community. As you can see, it's an  
 22 engaging discussion.  
 23 MR. HAINLINE: The court reporter needs  
 24 your name.  
 25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Sure. Jerry Traino with  
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1 Novus Architects.  
 2 I want to thank the community for coming  
 3 out and engaging in this discussion. As I was  
 4 saying earlier, if you didn't hear me, this is  
 5 a very important project for the church but  
 6 also for the city of Jacksonville, for the  
 7 community.  
 8 As all important decisions, we feel they  
 9 need to be taken in context, so I'd like to  
 10 walk through some of that visually, as T.R.  
 11 started to do verbally just a second ago.  
 12 So next slide, if you wouldn't mind.  
 13 So everybody knows that isn't familiar,  
 14 this is the location of the block that the  
 15 building sits on (indicating). It is on  
 16 West Church, in between Laura and Hogan.  
 17 Next slide, please.  
 18 It's difficult to see on the screen, but  
 19 you can see that this building does sit, in  
 20 fact, between the parking garage and the  
 21 historic Hobson.  
 22 In terms of importance, this project is  
 23 important to the church to allow them to  
 24 consolidate to the place of their origin, which  
 25 is the historic Hobson Auditorium, second to  
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1 only that of the first auditorium which burned,  
 2 as staff stated, but this really is the roots,  
 3 the symbol, the origin of the church, this  
 4 building, this sanctuary.  
 5 And, secondly, the Hobson really is the  
 6 architecturally important element in this story  
 7 here. It has been bookended by commercial  
 8 structures over the years. And in today's  
 9 sensibilities for worship, with an auditorium  
 10 of this size, you just have to have a place for  
 11 people to come in and out, congregate,  
 12 circulate, and engage within the context of the  
 13 city. This building stops us from doing that  
 14 functionally.  
 15 Next slide, please.  
 16 This project, it's worth mentioning, that  
 17 it's important to the city of Jacksonville.  
 18 This area really is in need of revitalization.  
 19 It can use this incredible investment that the  
 20 church is willing to make, and this slide kind  
 21 of demonstrates the current state of the  
 22 community in this area.  
 23 Next slide, please.  
 24 So the first thing I want to say about  
 25 this image is imagine one to three thousand  
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1 people circulating in and out of the Hobson  
 2 Auditorium, to the left, three to five times a  
 3 week.  
 4 I'm sorry about the static.  
 5 You could see the logistics of just having  
 6 to move from two rooms with a few hundred  
 7 people, let alone a few thousand, to try to  
 8 reinvigorate this building in some type of  
 9 circulation fashion is just not programatically  
 10 feasible.  
 11 While on this slide, I'd like to point out  
 12 some of the things that T.R. pointed out about  
 13 the block. It is a one-way street that people  
 14 travel down between 25 and 35 miles per hour,  
 15 and that is how they currently experience the  
 16 building at hand at 125 West Church Street.  
 17 There is no engagement of the sidewalk by  
 18 this building. Meanwhile, the historic Hobson  
 19 lies stagnant in state next to it and not being  
 20 utilized. It really is a shame.  
 21 Next slide, please.  
 22 This slide is intended to be diagrammatic,  
 23 trying to wrap in all of the reasons why this  
 24 building at 125 West Church Street just will  
 25 not work for this project, for the church, or  
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1 for the city.  
 2 What you see here is an elevation of the  
 3 building and the Hobson Auditorium in a blue  
 4 overlay of what the welcome center, minimum  
 5 space criteria, really needs to be overlaid  
 6 upon that. So you can see that the space we're  
 7 talking about, for again, one to three thousand  
 8 people to circulate in and out and around this  
 9 facility, that's -- that's the space that we're  
 10 talking about overlaid. It consumes three  
 11 stories of this building.

12 I want to state very clearly that it was  
 13 never our intent at the start of this project  
 14 to tear down a building. We have been working  
 15 on this project for over a year. We've had  
 16 structural consultants, mechanical/electrical  
 17 plumbing consultants, all of the above,  
 18 historic preservation consultants.

19 You know, we work in Charleston, we know  
 20 the importance of these things. We've  
 21 exhausted options for this. And for us to move  
 22 forward with the church and reinvigorate the  
 23 Hobson, this is what we feel is absolutely  
 24 necessary.

25 That being said, what we did look at is to  
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1 remove the second floor, possibly the third  
 2 floor of this structure. By code, any element  
 3 that you change the load dynamics more than  
 4 10 percent, you must bring that element and any  
 5 element affected by it up to current code,  
 6 including foundations, including attachments of  
 7 cladding, including all of the above. So just  
 8 to remove a portion of one floor would probably  
 9 bring -- the need to bring 25 percent of this  
 10 structure into current compliance, not  
 11 feasible, let alone an entire floor or two.

12 Secondly, it's been proposed that we could  
 13 potentially preserve the facade of this  
 14 building. I've seen this done with -- at great  
 15 length, cost, with -- between two-, three-, and  
 16 four-story buildings in Charleston. I've never  
 17 seen that done with a six-story building. I  
 18 just -- the cost of the temporary construction  
 19 alone, we estimate it to be \$8 million or more.

20 So one option, just not feasible by code  
 21 in modern-day construction. The second option,  
 22 cost prohibitive, and the risk alone that it  
 23 would fail is just not wise to endeavor.

24 While on this slide, I want to point out  
 25 that there are five structures on this block.

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1 All of them have different levels with the  
 2 floor plates and all of them need  
 3 interconnectivity.

4 This welcome center results in all of  
 5 that. With one design -- I really apologize  
 6 for the --

7 (Microphone disruption.)

8 MR. HAINLINE: Hold it a little bit  
 9 further away.

10 MR. TRAINO: Is that better?

11 I really -- I just want to make the point  
 12 that there's a lot of functions at play here.  
 13 We've exhausted all options, opportunities to  
 14 save this building, and it just will not work  
 15 for this project.

16 I'd like to skip the next slide on to the  
 17 one after. I skipped it because I think this  
 18 really paints the picture to observe the first  
 19 one by --

20 The proposed design really highlights the  
 21 historic Hobson Auditorium architecture. It is  
 22 intended to be a banner for the church for  
 23 outreach. It's intended to draw the community  
 24 in. It is intended to create an integration  
 25 and an engagement between church and community.

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1 It was really the foundation of what the church  
 2 is all about.

3 By pulling the building off the street,  
 4 creating a pedestrian plaza, it creates a safe  
 5 place for people to circulate, gather, mingle,  
 6 comingle. It creates an opportunity for a  
 7 public area for the city and the community to  
 8 enjoy. I can envision things like people  
 9 playing acoustic guitars or anything like that  
 10 that you might see in any vibrant city that  
 11 does not currently exist in this block or area  
 12 of Jacksonville.

13 So there's really a lot of opportunity  
 14 here for the church community and the city of  
 15 Jacksonville that we're trying to create.

16 With that being said, Mr. David Luke will  
 17 address the historic points that are in the  
 18 code.

19 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening.

21 My name is David Luke. I'm with Luke  
 22 Architecture. I'm here as a historic  
 23 preservation consultant.

24 I, first of all, want to thank Christian  
 25 and Lisa and then Joel by -- for their efforts

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1 over the years. It's been a pleasure to work  
2 with them and their diligence. I'm -- greatly  
3 appreciated, so my thanks.

4 My background is just under 30 years as an  
5 architect where the majority of my work has  
6 been historic preservation; and as T.R.  
7 mentioned, predominantly in St. Augustine, but  
8 all over the Southeast, at least in a driving  
9 radius. Twenty four of those years have been  
10 with Ken Smith Architects where I was the  
11 architect, project manager, vice president,  
12 lead designer of replication -- architectural,  
13 when we were doing that. And they are the  
14 premiere historic preservation architects in  
15 the Southeast, I believe.

16 So I'm going to go through the seven  
17 criteria here and talk about them and our  
18 comments.

19 Its value as a significant reminder of the  
20 cultural, historical, architectural or  
21 archaeological heritage of the city, state or  
22 nation. Although the structure has been a part  
23 of history in Jacksonville, it is highly  
24 unlikely that any structure of this age and  
25 this size would not have witnessed some

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1 history. It's probably unreasonable to assume  
2 that it does not have some history. However,  
3 this -- the structure is not a significant  
4 reminder of these events. Instead, the  
5 structure has been used, altered, abandoned,  
6 forgotten by the decisions about its use.

7 First, I'm going to go -- highlight these.  
8 First, the First Baptist Church lost the  
9 building to foreclosure in 1938. Second, the  
10 structure was immediately altered for use as an  
11 office building. Third, the structure became  
12 the back end of a group of seven buildings  
13 housing Gulf Life employees, the newest of  
14 which was constructed on 124 West Ashley Street  
15 and connected internally to this building.  
16 Fourth, the structure was abandoned by the  
17 Gulf Life Insurance, along with these other  
18 buildings, in favor of a new tower on  
19 Southbank, after which the building sat  
20 underused and relatively empty for  
21 approximately ten years. Fifth, the structure  
22 returns to use in later ownership again by the  
23 First Baptist Church; however, this time,  
24 because of the internal connection to the new  
25 building at 124 West Ashley Street, the

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1 structure is now primarily entered and accessed  
2 by an internal connector and is not accessed  
3 from the street, losing all connection.

4 The structure is not a significant  
5 reminder of the cultural, historical,  
6 architectural or archaeological heritage of the  
7 city, state or nation, in contrast to the  
8 Hobson Auditorium, which is highly identified  
9 with First Baptist Church and the Gulf Life  
10 tower, which I believe is the finest example of  
11 architecture in our city, being associated with  
12 Gulf Life.

13 The structure, in reality, is a tool.  
14 Buildings are used for purposes, and there  
15 comes a time and a place and -- in a tool's  
16 life when it's lived its life and it's time to  
17 put it down and use another tool.

18 The second item here is location; its  
19 location as the site of a significant local,  
20 state or national event. Although the  
21 structure was the site of the first year of  
22 classes for the institution that would become  
23 Jacksonville University, this housing of  
24 classroom space for one year should not be  
25 considered a significant local, state or

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1 national event.

2 First, it's an example of the kindness of  
3 First Baptist Church to Jacksonville  
4 University, which is what that was. I mean,  
5 somebody's trying to start a university and you  
6 share your space. That relationship continued.  
7 It's my understanding in 1958 that the church  
8 paid \$17,500 for land and \$125,000 for  
9 construction of a Baptist student center with a  
10 living room, fireplace, ball fields, covered  
11 pavilions and other amenities across the street  
12 from the university as a student center --  
13 ministry area.

14 It's my understanding that in 2013 -- if  
15 you can slide through, I want to show this  
16 picture. Keep going. One more.

17 So in 2013, the church hosted JU's  
18 graduation on an emergency basis due to weather  
19 events, at no cost, providing sound,  
20 technology, security and parking, as well as  
21 remaining JU's primary fallback site for  
22 several years after. This kindness that has  
23 been extended to other appropriate -- this  
24 kindness has been extended to other  
25 appropriate, specific community organizations

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1 as well, including graduations, banquets, and  
2 other things; First Coast Crime Stoppers,  
3 Sheriff's Watch, principals and pastors, First  
4 Coast Women's Services, Starship Foundation,  
5 University Christian School, and others.

6 Third, all of the structures at First  
7 Baptist have been used in this way. That's the  
8 purpose of the -- of the church. It's not just  
9 for direct ministry, but to give without asking  
10 anything in return.

11 The next item is, it is identified with a  
12 person or persons who significantly contributed  
13 to the development of the city, state or  
14 nation. Although the structure has an  
15 association with the life of T.T. Phillips and  
16 others, this relationship does not rise to the  
17 level of identification with --

18 I've got a picture here of the Prince  
19 Murat House in St. Augustine. It's 250  
20 St. George Street. And in St. Augustine it's  
21 referred to as the Prince Murat House. The guy  
22 just stayed there very shortly, and yet the  
23 community calls it the Prince Murat House. In  
24 addition, Mary Washington's house in  
25 Fredericksburg, Virginia, it's referred to that

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1 way because George Washington bought it for his  
2 mom. He spent the night there.

3 Also, the Springfield, Illinois courthouse  
4 is referred to as the place where Abraham  
5 Lincoln argued. I mean, that's -- it's --  
6 these folks -- these places are identified.  
7 And so I would -- I would say to you that this  
8 identification does not exist for the  
9 structure.

10 The next thing is the identification as  
11 the work of a master builder, designer or  
12 architect whose individual work has influenced  
13 the development of the city, state or nation.  
14 So R.H. Hunt is an outstanding architect. I  
15 certainly would not argue that. In his own  
16 state and others, that's unquestionable.  
17 However, his work does not rise to the level of  
18 influencing the development of architects,  
19 certainly not in our city and state and  
20 certainly not in this -- in the nation.

21 So first, number one, Hunt's firm produced  
22 just one structure in the city of Jacksonville,  
23 in the whole state of Florida. So I -- and I'm  
24 going to talk about the design of the building  
25 and the quality of that design in just a minute

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1 and I'm going to argue that it's not a well  
2 designed building. And so to take that  
3 building for city and state, I think, is -- is  
4 not reasonable.

5 In fact, there are many examples of  
6 architects who have influenced Jacksonville.  
7 Y'all are familiar with their names; Henry J.  
8 Klutho, Roy A. Benjamin, Marsh & Saxelbye, Mark  
9 and Sheftall, Mellen C. Greeley. These guys,  
10 they influenced the city.

11 Also, there are examples in the state of  
12 people who greatly influenced. So I'm going to  
13 say Addison Mizner, Mediterranean Revival,  
14 right? Paul Rudolph, Sarasota School. Henry  
15 Hohauser, Art Deco. So these guys influenced  
16 the state by what they did. They had an  
17 impact.

18 There are also examples of architects who  
19 greatly influenced the development of our  
20 architecture in the nation, and you're going to  
21 recognize these names too: Frank Lloyd Wright,  
22 Julia Morgan, Albert Kahn, Philip Johnson, Cass  
23 Gilbert, Daniel Burnham, Richard Neutra, Ludwig  
24 Mies van der Rohe, these guys --

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Real quick, I need you to  
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1 slow down --

2 MR. LUKE: Sorry. I apologize. Get a  
3 little excited.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: You're good.

5 MR. LUKE: Start talking about  
6 architecture, you get going.

7 I'm going to read that list one more time.  
8 Frank Lloyd Wright, Julia Morgan, Albert Kahn,  
9 Philip Johnson, Cass Gilbert, Daniel Burnham,  
10 Richard Neutra, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. And  
11 these were all contemporaries of this building.  
12 It's not, you know, 1800s or late 1900s. These  
13 were contemporaries.

14 Hunt's firm, though prolific and producing  
15 many fine works of architecture, does not rise  
16 to this level of influence in the city, state  
17 or nation.

18 Second, Hunt's firm was not an influencer,  
19 but influenced by others. When you look at the  
20 styles -- the multiple styles -- so this is a  
21 good illustration here (indicating). You see  
22 the Romanesque and -- and the staff report  
23 mentioned this and some other styles. So he  
24 was, in fact, copying H.H. Richardson's  
25 Romanesque style. I mean, he -- he was

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1 influenced by others, not an influencer of. In  
2 fact, the most significant building that his  
3 firm was associated with, the Chattanooga  
4 federal courthouse and post office, I visited  
5 this building. It's an outstanding building.  
6 So he did that in joint venture with Shreve,  
7 Lamb & Harmon out of New York. And the reason  
8 they are significant -- they're significant is  
9 because they designed the Empire State  
10 Building. Y'all are familiar with that.

11 So I would -- I would argue and say that  
12 it's very reasonable to deduce that Shreve,  
13 Lamb & Harmon actually designed that building.  
14 Roy Hunt -- or the Hunt firm then becomes the  
15 local architect for political reasons who does  
16 the construction drawings. Does that make  
17 sense?

18 Third, Hunt's firm, as stated above,  
19 produced many fine works of architecture;  
20 however, this structure is not indicative of or  
21 typical of the quality, design of the firm. In  
22 fact, these images show that it's not anything  
23 like any of the others. It's not anything like  
24 them.

25 And it may be that -- as in any large  
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1 firm, he had offices up Chattanooga, Tennessee;  
2 Dallas, Texas; in Jackson, Mississippi, where  
3 there are multiple teams of architects that --  
4 you've got a busy time and the structure there  
5 just didn't get the -- the best effort. I --  
6 just happens.

7 Fourth, Hunt, as a devout member of the  
8 First Baptist Church of Chattanooga, would  
9 likely have been sympathetic to the  
10 difficulties of the fellow church. He would  
11 have understood, it's not his firm's best work,  
12 and I think it's not unreasonable to assume  
13 that he would support this demolition if he  
14 were here now.

15 Fifth, Hunt apparently wrote some books  
16 about modern -- about modern church design.  
17 However, today, we see the same thing.  
18 Architects do this today, but we don't call it  
19 influencing the architecture of the nation. We  
20 call it marketing, right?

21 So it's my opinion as a historic  
22 preservation architect that the work of R.H.  
23 Hunt does not rise to the level of influencing  
24 development of architecture in our city, state  
25 or nation.

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1 The next one, its value as a building is  
2 recognized for the quality of its architecture  
3 and retains sufficient elements showing its  
4 architectural significance. Okay. So I'm  
5 going to -- if y'all have got the picture that  
6 shows the building itself, this is what I'm  
7 going to -- I'm going to talk about here.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Real quick, before you  
9 start --

10 MR. LUKE: Yeah.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: -- we're giving you guys  
12 30 minutes, but we just hit the 30-minute mark,  
13 so I'll give you another five to ten, but we've  
14 got to --

15 MR. LUKE: But you've got two points and  
16 the pastor, and he's only 30 seconds.

17 But you said I couldn't talk fast.

18 The perceived quality of the architecture  
19 for the structure is almost completely based on  
20 one elevation, one floor at the top of the  
21 building, and it's not well designed as a piece  
22 of architecture, as a whole. Although  
23 alterations in the late 1930s may have changed  
24 this appearance, the first floor -- at the  
25 first floor, the net effect of the design

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1 remains.

2 Number one, it's not based on one style.  
3 There's multiple styles that can be found in  
4 this building. Yes, there's some pieces here  
5 and there, but it is not a cohesive -- whether  
6 it's Renaissance Revival, Romanesque, two-part  
7 block, commercial, what- -- it's not a  
8 consistent element.

9 Number two, the design of the structure  
10 does not have depth or layering, so when you --  
11 (Discussion held off the record.)

12 MR. LUKE: I'm sorry.

13 The depth of the facade, the elevation, so  
14 when you look at this, other than a small step  
15 at the -- at the front of the building, above  
16 the entrance, it is a very flat facade. One of  
17 the things they teach us in architecture school  
18 is shadow lines, shadow lines, shadow lines.  
19 It creates depth, it creates -- draws you into  
20 the building. In fact, if you look at the --  
21 at the Hobson Auditorium, you'll actually see a  
22 great example of that. And you can see that  
23 the St. James building, you can see it in the  
24 Marble Bank building, you can see it in the  
25 Federal Reserve building, and -- but this

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1 building doesn't have that.

2 The third thing is the tripartite division  
3 that the building -- so you'll see it does have  
4 a base, a middle, and a top. In architecture,  
5 we -- that's a planning tool that was very  
6 prevalent in this time period, and we still use  
7 that today, but that's not a sign of quality.

8 What makes it very difficult is the -- the  
9 relationship of detail in the base, middle and  
10 top. So it's very top heavy in that sense.  
11 It's got too much detail at the top relative to  
12 the middle and the base.

13 In addition, when you look at that  
14 elevation, you see those skinny elements that  
15 are in between the windows. So what that does  
16 is that creates a stilted appearance. It  
17 messes up the verticality and it makes the  
18 building feel unstable because it's -- the  
19 elements are too skinny. The base is too --  
20 too shallow. So for a base, it's not -- it's  
21 not substantial enough to feel like it's  
22 supporting the building.

23 Also, the windows. It's hard to see, but  
24 the windows stop virtually, you know, four  
25 inches above the street edge. It just is a

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1 courthouse within a federal courthouse as a way  
2 to provide a place for the community and the  
3 citizens to be reminded of the serious  
4 arguments; judges, plaintiffs, lawyers,  
5 defendants. However, the structure here offers  
6 no such reminders or remembrances.

7 Second, it might be right or appropriate  
8 to preserve a historic church as a museum or a  
9 community center or even in what -- with the  
10 Hobson, to restore it back to a church.  
11 However, this structure does not do that.

12 Third, it may be right or appropriate for  
13 the interior of a historic department building,  
14 similar to the St. James building or Jake  
15 Godbold or the museum of Jacksonville art  
16 [sic], it may be right to restore those things  
17 for their use, taking them down to a shell and  
18 then rebuilding it back. This building is not  
19 suited to that.

20 The floor plan of the -- it's got an eight  
21 shape of a floor plan, which means that there's  
22 very short column spacing, very small spaces.  
23 It also has low ceilings. It makes the first  
24 floor of that whole thing that Jerry talked  
25 about, where demolishing floors, just

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1 terrible way for the windows to terminate. In  
2 fact, I assume that's why they fill them in.  
3 It just doesn't work.

4 So it's my opinion as a historic  
5 preservation architect, the structure is not  
6 recognized for quality architecture.

7 And I'll finish the last thing and I  
8 will -- I will leave you to it.

9 Suitability for preservation or  
10 restoration. So the report talks about the  
11 practice of the committee. I'm going to say  
12 that there are other factors which should be  
13 considered by the words of the ordinance,  
14 including but not limited to whether the  
15 structure is right or appropriate for  
16 preservation or restoration.

17 In fact, every structure can be saved.  
18 The question is at what cost and for what use.  
19 And that's the struggle of historic  
20 preservation, restoration and renovation.

21 There are -- there are facts -- excuse me,  
22 first, number one, it might be appropriate to  
23 save a historic courthouse. You'll see in the  
24 lower left-hand corner of that -- that slide,  
25 it might be appropriate to save a historic

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1 impractical.

2 In addition to these things, you've got  
3 mechanical, electrical, plumbing, vertical  
4 accessibility. When you walk in, you walk in  
5 at half level. You got to go down to get to  
6 the basement, you got to go up to get to the  
7 first floor. I mean, it just -- it creates all  
8 kinds of problems.

9 And then fifth, it may be appropriate to  
10 brace and support an exterior facade, similar  
11 to the Cowford Chophouse there -- you can see  
12 in that picture -- but the height of this  
13 structure just makes that effort of facadism  
14 just very, very impractical.

15 So it's my opinion as a historic  
16 preservation architect that this structure is  
17 not suitable, right or appropriate for  
18 preservation or restoration.

19 Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
21 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. I'm Heath  
23 Lambert. I'm the senior pastor at First  
24 Baptist, and I will be the briefest speaker  
25 you've heard from.

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1 I want to thank you for your work on the  
2 historic preservation committee. We have  
3 really appreciated working with the staff on  
4 this and really appreciate your time and energy  
5 in evaluating our request that we demolish this  
6 building.

7 I want to let you know as -- as a  
8 preservation committee, that you will know,  
9 that there are all sorts of historic realities  
10 that need to be preserved. The buildings are  
11 one crucial reality that needs to be preserved,  
12 but an institution like First Baptist is  
13 another.

14 There are first -- there are precious few  
15 institutions in Jacksonville that have made an  
16 investment in this city for as long as First  
17 Baptist has, 181 years. We have been committed  
18 to this city, we've been committed to downtown.  
19 We remain committed to downtown.

20 Our job and our goal as a church is to  
21 preach Jesus Christ, crucified, buried, and  
22 risen for any sinner that would repent of their  
23 sins and trust in him. And Jesus Christ  
24 commands us to love our neighbor. That means  
25 we are required as Christians to be good

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1 neighbors in this city, and we have really  
2 tried to do that well. We are committed to  
3 continuing that effort.

4 Every week we welcome thousands of people  
5 to downtown Jacksonville. We have invested in  
6 this city. We want to continue to do that. In  
7 fact, one of our goals is to restore the Hobson  
8 sanctuary, the uncontroversially historic  
9 building, to full and vibrant use. And the  
10 only way that we have to do that that is  
11 possible and is affordable is the method that  
12 we have presented to you.

13 And so with great respect for you and your  
14 work and your expertise, I want to request that  
15 you would trust First Baptist Church with a  
16 181-year commitment to this city to continue  
17 that commitment and grant our request.

18 Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

20 (Mr. Hainline approaches the podium.)

21 MR. HAINLINE: If we could just submit  
22 this. We have copies in writing. This is  
23 David Luke's -- their responses to the staff's  
24 report. It's the written version of what he  
25 said. And this is resumes for Jerry Traino,

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1 David Luke, and Jerry Traino's colleagues.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure.

3 MR. HAINLINE: So I'll set those right  
4 here.

5 Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We're going to  
7 move to public comment. So we can just go down  
8 the list here. And everybody -- you'll be  
9 limited, obviously, to three minutes per  
10 person. So we will kick it off -- just start  
11 reading them off, yeah.

12 MS. LONG: Coty Hoskins.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Coty Hoskins.

14 MR. HAINLINE: Pass. She left.

15 MS. LONG: Nancy Powell.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Nancy Powell.

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: She left.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: She left. Okay.

19 MS. LONG: Christy Frazier.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Christy Frazier.

21 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Wow. I get to go first.

23 Okay. Well, you guys might already have  
24 what I e-mailed you, but it's just this.

25 Oh, Christy --

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: We don't have to swear you  
2 in, you're good.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: As a Jacksonville  
4 native, I have been witnessing the very fabric  
5 of our city cut to pieces without a plan or  
6 design. This might have a design, but it  
7 matters.

8 I'm reminded daily of the buildings that  
9 once were that are now gone. This is not okay.  
10 Please do not erase yet another piece of our  
11 history.

12 Over the past four years I've invested  
13 hundreds of thousands of dollars purchasing and  
14 restoring four-century-old industrial buildings  
15 in North Springfield.

16 The Phoenix Arts District will be  
17 converted into workshops, studios, apartments,  
18 galleries and more. Over the next ten years  
19 millions of dollars will be invested in this  
20 massive project. And, believe me, it is very  
21 expensive to do reuse, it really is. I don't  
22 have that -- big pockets.

23 I am truly excited to save these beautiful  
24 buildings. Instead of tearing down buildings,  
25 we need the City to actively hold building

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1 owners accountable for their preservation and  
2 upkeep.

3 I am encouraged with the recent renovation  
4 of deserted buildings like the Laura and -- the  
5 Barnett and Laura Street Trio. Personally,  
6 though, every person, every problem has a root,  
7 somewhere that there was pain lingering in the  
8 soul. In my opinion, Jacksonville's soul is  
9 damaged by the Great Fire. I think it's best  
10 described by the Jacksonville Historic Society;  
11 in just over eight hours the flames swept  
12 through 146 city blocks, destroying over 2,000  
13 buildings, taking seven lives, and leaving  
14 almost 10,000 people homeless.

15 I think that Jacksonville lost a lot of  
16 its soul. We don't have that much left. We  
17 really, really need to worry about what's  
18 happening. Even if the buildings aren't in  
19 vogue today, even if there's other things that  
20 people want to do, I really believe that we  
21 should look at it as a whole.

22 We, as a people, we're very resilient.  
23 Famous architects came and designed important  
24 buildings for us over the next hundred years.  
25 I do think most people would gasp if they were

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1 aware of just how many buildings have been torn  
2 down over the past five decades in the name of  
3 progress. Most of them were replaced with  
4 parking lots. That is why our downtown looks  
5 the way it does. We cannot destroy what little  
6 history we have anymore.

7 Because of my development project, I've  
8 been approached by an influx of investors  
9 coming to Jacksonville for opportunity. One of  
10 them --

11 (Timer notification.)

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: -- was a respected  
13 developer that has worked all across the U.S.  
14 When I walked him around, he suddenly asked me  
15 this: Why should I invest my money in  
16 Jacksonville? I mean, why Jacksonville?  
17 What's your history? I froze up.  
18 Embarrassingly, the first thing that raced  
19 through my head was that for no good reason, no  
20 good purpose, and at an extremely alarming rate  
21 we're tearing down our buildings.

22 I hate that this was my immediate reaction  
23 because I know and believe from the bottom of  
24 my heart that we are special, that there is so  
25 much that's interesting about us and that's

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1 worth preserving.  
2 Can we please just stop destroying our  
3 buildings? We don't have many left.

4 Thank you.  
5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
6 MS. LONG: Andy Johnson.  
7 THE CHAIRMAN: Andy Johnson.  
8 (Audience member approaches the podium.)  
9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Andy Johnson.  
10 And I'm intimidated by the expertise that  
11 I've already heard. I think your architects  
12 are very smart people.

13 I want to make a suggestion. It appears  
14 to me that all of this is part of the plan  
15 where we -- where First Baptist is going to do  
16 some things I would recommend they don't do,  
17 but it's not within our control.

18 First Baptist plans to get out of their  
19 wonderful, fancy, terrific auditorium -- my  
20 favorite auditorium for any church in the  
21 world -- and move over to the Hobson.

22 I'd like to make a suggestion that maybe  
23 as we consider all this, instead of tearing  
24 down one building so we can help to renovate  
25 Hobson, maybe save the sanctuary we're in right

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1 now and maybe First Baptist ought to consider  
2 what some other cities are doing, called the  
3 tri-faith initiative. Tri-faith initiative,  
4 you can look it up on -- you can Google it.  
5 Tri-faith initiative, where some big churches  
6 are -- now make deals where the church on  
7 Sunday is a Christian church, and on Saturday  
8 it's a Muslim mosque, and then on Friday it's a  
9 Jewish synagogue.

10 I don't understand why you can share a  
11 church with an insurance company. I don't  
12 understand why you can't share with other  
13 religions. This way each of these religions  
14 can shoulder just one-third of the burden and  
15 then (inaudible) the property.

16 I think -- the main thing that's wrong  
17 with Church Street is very simple. Any -- any  
18 kid can tell you, the main thing wrong with  
19 Church Street is you'd have lights there that  
20 are just as bright as you have at the baseball  
21 park. If we had lighted downtown instead of  
22 going the wrong direction with dimmer lights,  
23 then Church Street and all these other downtown  
24 streets could be just as safe as the rest of  
25 the community.

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1 Thank you very much.  
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
 3 MS. LONG: Angela Schifanella.  
 4 (Audience member approaches the podium.)  
 5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are we being sworn in?  
 6 THE CHAIRMAN: No. Not today.  
 7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay. Angela  
 8 Schifanella. I'm here representing Riverside  
 9 Avondale Preservation. I'm also speaking as a  
 10 former commissioner and also an architect.  
 11 I'd just like to point out that -- I  
 12 appreciate the evidence that was submitted, but  
 13 one of the goals of the downtown historic  
 14 district itself, the -- the reason it was  
 15 designated was that we preserve the fabric of  
 16 the entire district. To assign a test of  
 17 significance to this building, that it needs to  
 18 achieve some very high level of architectural  
 19 excellence I don't think is a fair assessment  
 20 in this case. I think it should be preserved  
 21 as a part of the historic district fabric of  
 22 downtown.  
 23 The Chophouse is actually a very good  
 24 example of looking at a building that was a  
 25 part of the district. It had some historic

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1 fabric. No one evaluated that building for  
 2 demolition as to its suitability for a  
 3 predetermined function. We just looked at that  
 4 building as being suitable for preservation and  
 5 restoration. I think that's the test you have  
 6 to apply to this building.

7 The other thing I'd like to say is that  
 8 the essential goal of this body is to preserve.  
 9 I think if there are further tests down the  
 10 road for whether this is suitable and -- that  
 11 challenge can be made at another date, but for  
 12 this body, you are a preservation commission,  
 13 and I think it's incredibly important to  
 14 acknowledge that and fulfill that role in this  
 15 case.

16 Thank you.  
 17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
 18 MS. LONG: Heather Cumberland.  
 19 THE CHAIRMAN: Heather Cumberland.  
 20 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)  
 21 MS. LONG: Erica Paul.  
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: Erica Paul.  
 23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Not speaking.  
 24 MS. LONG: Sharla Valeski.  
 25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I didn't mean to speak

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1 today.  
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.  
 3 MS. LONG: William Hoff.  
 4 THE CHAIRMAN: William Hoff.  
 5 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)  
 6 MS. LONG: John Simmons.  
 7 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)  
 8 MS. LONG: James Williams.  
 9 THE CHAIRMAN: James Williams.  
 10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: T.R. said everything I  
 11 need to say.  
 12 MS. LONG: Caitlin Armstrong.  
 13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: She left.  
 14 MS. LONG: Cindy Corey.  
 15 (Audience member approaches the podium.)  
 16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Welcome.  
 17 Cindy Corey.

18 You can see my notes here. I've had a  
 19 long time to think about this.

20 It was really impressive listening to the  
 21 church. And I think every person, every  
 22 entity, architect has a different vision and a  
 23 different perspective of what we value. I also  
 24 happen to be a real estate agent, so I spend a  
 25 lot of time with people helping them find what

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1 they love and listening to them. So I have no  
 2 fault to pick with the church's desire to  
 3 create a welcome center and something that's  
 4 beautiful. I get that. I understand.

5 Beauty definitely is in the eye of the  
 6 beholder. However, we have a historic fabric  
 7 to our downtown that is disappearing, and I  
 8 feel it's essential to preserve it for the  
 9 community.

10 Each person who comes before you, whether  
 11 it's a developer or a homeowner or a church,  
 12 has valid reasons for wanting to demolish their  
 13 building when that's the issue, but it  
 14 continues to chip away at that fabric that's so  
 15 important to our community identity.

16 And while I sympathize with the church's  
 17 wish to create a welcome center, that welcome  
 18 center will be at a cost to the community. And  
 19 so for that reason, I don't think that it  
 20 should be approved, the demolition, or  
 21 certainly there should be much more looking  
 22 into alternatives or approval of this  
 23 demolition at this time. So I'll leave it  
 24 there.

25 Thank you very much.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
 2 MS. LONG: Curtis Hart.  
 3 MR. HART: Pass.  
 4 MS. LONG: Dimitri Demopoulos.  
 5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'll pass.  
 6 MS. LONG: Mike Fisher.  
 7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Gone.  
 8 MS. LONG: Blake Bryant.  
 9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Gone.  
 10 MS. LONG: Layla Jada.  
 11 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)  
 12 MS. LONG: Steve Williams.  
 13 (Audience member approaches the podium.)  
 14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. How is everybody  
 15 doing? Ready to go? I'll make this really  
 16 quick.  
 17 I'm Steve Williams. I'm co-founder of  
 18 Mapping Jax. We're a group of citizens who are  
 19 trying to celebrate the arts, history, and  
 20 small business in Jacksonville. We love  
 21 Jacksonville.  
 22 I'd like to urge you to deny the request  
 23 for the demolition of the First Baptist Church  
 24 Sunday school building. Not only does it go  
 25 against the standards and policies we have

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1 established for our downtown core, but it  
 2 misses an opportunity to celebrate our rich  
 3 history and to build up our community. Tearing  
 4 this building down means also missing a chance  
 5 to build our civic pride, as well as strong  
 6 bridges within the community.  
 7 I would encourage First Baptist Church to  
 8 consider engaging the community in the urban  
 9 core. I encourage them to involve the  
 10 residents, working together to build a downtown  
 11 that is world class and building upon our  
 12 historical significance.  
 13 With some forward thinking and creative  
 14 solutions, I think the alternative goal -- the  
 15 alternate goal of tuning -- turning that spot  
 16 into a welcome center that feels welcoming to  
 17 all guests can be accomplished.  
 18 Remember, the most green building is the  
 19 building that is already built. Jacksonville  
 20 has a rich history, and utilizing the city's  
 21 great and historic properties to help grow and  
 22 improve, it is always in our best interest to  
 23 truly -- sorry. I can't read very well. I  
 24 can't see.

But I really think it's important that all

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1 of the people that have come in and out of that  
 2 building -- my grandparents went to the church.  
 3 I feel it's very important that all of those  
 4 stories and all that history needs to be  
 5 captured, celebrated, and we don't -- I don't  
 6 want to lose that anymore.  
 7 Thank you.  
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
 9 MS. LONG: Brandon Pouch.  
 10 (Audience member approaches the podium.)  
 11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. My name is  
 12 Brandon Pouch. I'm currently the president of  
 13 the AIA Jacksonville chapter, the American  
 14 Institute of Architects.  
 15 And my thoughts immediately -- I want to  
 16 get into the architecture aspect a little  
 17 later, but first the only good reason I could  
 18 hear for tearing down the building was a lack  
 19 of greenspace and a need for a public gathering  
 20 outside.  
 21 Now, that's -- with only having about  
 22 30 minutes to comprehend and analyze exactly  
 23 what the meaning was for tearing down the  
 24 building, I would suggest looking at  
 25 alternatives like a road diet where you make

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1 the street a little shallower. You have a  
 2 bigger greenspace in front of the street and  
 3 work with the City on a solution. Maybe during  
 4 a church service the street could be blocked  
 5 and you can have much more of a greenspace in  
 6 front of the building.  
 7 That's just a quick thought right off the  
 8 top of my head, but, like I said, I've had  
 9 30 minutes to think about this. And I have  
 10 offered the services of the Jacksonville AIA  
 11 chapter to help come up with alternative  
 12 solutions because I know there are other ways  
 13 to solve the issues in terms of getting the  
 14 welcoming/gathering space for the church.  
 15 And to go into the actual building, the  
 16 fact -- just the fact that the architect was  
 17 arguing about the proportions of the different  
 18 elements tells me this building has the  
 19 elements that make a building great. Now, we  
 20 can argue all day of whether or not it's  
 21 perfectly proportioned like the famous  
 22 buildings by Louis Sullivan or Frank Lloyd  
 23 Wright, but it has those elements. And in my  
 24 view, it's beautiful. And I've spoken to many  
 25 architects in the chapter and they all agree

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1 that this is a building worth saving.  
2 Now, in terms of the actual look of it, I  
3 personally think it looks like it was a  
4 precursor to the Art Deco movement that's  
5 really prevalent in South Florida. The columns  
6 have these terra-cotta elements that extend  
7 beyond and go to the roof in a very Art Deco  
8 type of way, which was pretty new at the time.  
9 And that alone is a good reason to save the  
10 building.

11 It is significant and it has relation to  
12 other movements in Florida and in architecture  
13 in general. And I know that -- well, I can't  
14 know, but I assume the architect, Hunt, would  
15 not be in favor of tearing down his own  
16 building. I think he was a really masterful  
17 architect and he would be able to come up with  
18 an alternative solution, in my opinion, and --  
19 because I know there's some out there if more  
20 time could be spent looking at it.

21 And we're also -- discussed a little bit  
22 about the history, and it was just suggested  
23 that, oh, the building, of course it's old, it  
24 has a lot of good history. Well, I don't think  
25 that negates the fact that it has good history.

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1 And we are willing, the AIA, to work with  
2 the church to come up with alternative  
3 solutions, if given that chance, which  
4 hopefully you guys will all give us the chance  
5 to find a better solution.

6 Thank you.  
7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
8 MS. LONG: Jennifer Mims.  
9 THE CHAIRMAN: Jennifer Mims.  
10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.  
11 MS. LONG: Jason Pratt.  
12 THE CHAIRMAN: Jason Pratt.  
13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: He's not here.  
14 MS. LONG: Joe Karably-Smith.  
15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.  
16 MS. LONG: Lindsey Erwin.  
17 THE CHAIRMAN: Lindsey Erwin.  
18 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)  
19 MS. LONG: Fitz Pullins.  
20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.  
21 MS. LONG: Tonya Roberts John.  
22 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)  
23 MS. LONG: Jeanine Saunders Gulliford.  
24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.  
25 MS. LONG: John Erstling.

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)  
2 MS. LONG: William Delaney.  
3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: He had to go.  
4 MS. LONG: Kim Pryor.  
5 (Audience member approaches the podium.)  
6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Take one and pass it  
7 down. I'm not sure I have one for everybody,  
8 but I can give you this when I'm done.

9 Hi. My name is Kim Pryor. I am the  
10 current chair of the Urban Core CPAC.  
11 I've got to wear two hats today. The  
12 first one's going to be kind of quick so that I  
13 can get my own comments in, but I'd like to  
14 read into the record the CPAC's view on this  
15 issue.

16 Distinguished historic planning commission  
17 members, during the February 3rd, 2020 Urban  
18 Core CPAC meeting, Christian Popoli shared a  
19 presentation regarding the request from First  
20 Baptist Church to demolish the historic  
21 structure located at 125 West Church Street.

22 After the presentation and the member  
23 discussion, the CPAC voted to support the  
24 Historic Preservation section's decision  
25 regarding the demolition of the property.

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1 Per ordinance, Chapter 307.104(J), "In the  
2 event the owner of the property expresses an  
3 objection in writing to the Commission  
4 regarding local landmark status, at least four  
5 of the following seven criteria must be met.  
6 If the owner of the subject property does not  
7 express such objection, only two of the  
8 following criteria must be met."

9 It didn't include the criteria. You  
10 already know what those are.

11 According to the staff report, this  
12 structure may meet six of the seven criteria  
13 for local landmark designation, which exceeds  
14 the legal requirement, whether the owner agrees  
15 or not.

16 We implore this commission to act based on  
17 your duty to protect our historic structures,  
18 as well as by what is required by law. This  
19 demolition request should be denied and the  
20 structure given the landmark status it  
21 deserves.

22 Kim Pryor, Urban Core CPAC chair.  
23 So I'm just going to add a little bit onto  
24 that. I have been an advocate of historic  
25 preservation for many years, and I've seen many

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1 structures torn down. This particular  
2 structure, in my opinion, does not need to come  
3 down. There is no -- there is no danger of  
4 collapse. It is structurally sound. And the  
5 fact that one of the issues brought up was the  
6 amount of money that it would take to bring it  
7 back up to code caused me a bit of concern.

8 First Baptist Church has owned this  
9 property for almost 50 years. Why haven't they  
10 kept it up? So they've let it go for 50 years  
11 and now all of a sudden it's too expensive to  
12 bring it back.

13 Our history, our downtown is too important  
14 to continue to allow its destruction. And I  
15 implore each member here to not make your  
16 decision based on emotion but make your  
17 decision on the facts.

18 Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

20 MS. LONG: Joey Vaughn (phonetic).

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

22 MS. LONG: Amy Evenson.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

24 MS. LONG: Paul Manley.

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

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1 MS. LONG: Kristin Miller.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

3 MS. LONG: Juliana -- I'll come back.

4 Donna Murray.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Donna Murray.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

7 MS. LONG: Allen Davis.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

9 MS. LONG: Judy Davis.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

11 MS. LONG: Edson Dickinson.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

13 MS. LONG: Stephen Arms.

14 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

15 MS. LONG: Dwayne Adams.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

17 MS. LONG: LaTrelle LeFevre.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

19 MS. LONG: Richard Powell.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

21 MS. LONG: Kaleb Erwin.

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

23 MS. LONG: Kandace Knutson.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Gone.

25 MS. LONG: Ryan Vickery.

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

2 MS. LONG: Matthew Furlong.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

4 MS. LONG: Patrick O'Rourke.

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

6 MS. LONG: Vivian Mau.

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

8 MS. LONG: Edward Sundie.

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

10 MS. LONG: Sharon Sundie.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

12 MS. LONG: John Wilson.

13 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

14 MS. LONG: Marie Spratley.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pass.

16 MR. HAINLINE: Mr. Chairman, I do want to  
17 point out one thing, and that is that most of  
18 these are supporters who we told to fill out  
19 cards in support and not speak.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: I'll take the cards up  
21 here.

22 MR. HAINLINE: So -- I mean, I don't --

23 THE CHAIRMAN: No, that's fair.

24 MR. HAINLINE: I don't want to give people  
25 the impression that these are a bunch of names

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1 who have no position. I think most of them  
2 are --

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: People have left who  
4 don't want it to be torn down.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I don't want to give the  
7 impression that all of these are --

8 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm going to go through the  
9 cards myself.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are these cards in  
11 order, divided by --

12 THE CHAIRMAN: No.

13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Edward Thomas.  
15 (Discussion held off the record.)

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anybody else who  
17 would like to speak?

18 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I do have a card in  
20 there.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: I'll find it.

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm just going to read a  
23 statement very quickly.

24 My name is Ronda McDonald. My partner,  
25 the local architect, Michael Dunlap, and I are

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1 members of an arts collaborative that has been  
2 located downtown for the past decade. We're  
3 here for one reason, because we're so dedicated  
4 to the revitalization of a vibrant downtown.

5 First Baptist Church, although I have  
6 nothing against First Baptist Church, has been  
7 a poor steward architecturally and a poor  
8 neighbor in the number of streets it has killed  
9 by building parking garages that do not provide  
10 a retail base, which would have made those  
11 streets walkable and vibrant.

12 At a time when the church is downsizing  
13 and putting property up for sale, many of us  
14 think that it is possible that they may  
15 ultimately, within a few years or maybe  
16 decades, depart from downtown. How sad if this  
17 building is destroyed needlessly when it could  
18 become housing stock in the future.

19 With an existence of their now redundant  
20 and painfully abundant parking garages within  
21 the blocks and blocks of real estate that  
22 First Baptist Church controls, it is horrific  
23 to ask to demolish a historic building when one  
24 of their many garages could be sacrificed  
25 instead.

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1 I'm surprised their architect, a  
2 specialist in historic structures, did not  
3 direct his clients to a more sensitive  
4 solution. Demolishing historic stock is not  
5 that solution.

6 Thank you.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

8 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. Robert Knox,  
10 Jacksonville resident. I used to be on the  
11 Murray Hill Preservation Association. I just  
12 want to say I would prefer for us to preserve  
13 this building.

14 Just seeing that church, generations of  
15 Baptist families and -- whether downtown,  
16 whether the Catholic Episcopalians, at one time  
17 downtown was full of churches, filled to the  
18 pack, thousands of people on the streets. The  
19 streets haven't changed since we platted them  
20 out in pioneer days. They can sustain and have  
21 people -- and actually having people on the  
22 street is a good thing. I've been downtown on  
23 a Sunday. They say the church is filled. I  
24 don't see anybody.

25 But as far as getting back to the historic

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1 preservation, we've torn down so much. And  
2 there is a history there. It may not be the  
3 grand cathedrals of Europe or church, but its  
4 still historic. People were there. Families  
5 were there. They dealt with things. They  
6 learned things. And it -- it can be a  
7 beautiful building. Not everybody will  
8 appreciate it. It may not be like the Gulf  
9 Life building or City Hall, but it's still  
10 worth preserving.

11 And we are just in one moment in time. If  
12 we take it down now, people 50, 100 years from  
13 now cannot appreciate that -- that building and  
14 may have little history in the future of what  
15 the Baptists were once in downtown  
16 Jacksonville.

17 Just having a church -- we have an  
18 Episcopal church. Nobody remembers the great  
19 Episcopal presence once downtown. So if we  
20 continue tearing things down -- I could go on  
21 and on, but it's late.

22 Thank you.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can I --

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Come on up.

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1 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you.

3 My name is Vivian Mau, and I come from a  
4 third world country. And First Baptist have  
5 been my home for 45 years. And we were a young  
6 couple, my husband and I, and they took us in  
7 and taught us how to love Jesus and how to love  
8 people. And I was brought up in a Jewish,  
9 strict home, and I came to know Jesus. And I  
10 love America and I want it to stay like it is.

11 I just want you to think about what's  
12 being done. Okay? It's a building that, you  
13 know, needs to be torn down. I mean, I was in  
14 that building all these years, and many people  
15 got saved, many were changed. My life was  
16 totally changed from religion -- lost religion  
17 to total freedom in Jesus. And my husband was  
18 there too. He died 38 years ago. And when he  
19 died, they, like, took over and paid my  
20 groceries, did my house. It was leaking, roof.  
21 I didn't ask anybody. The class -- the Sunday  
22 school class just came and did it.

23 And, you know, a lot of people don't  
24 understand. We love people. And there's  
25 heaven and hell, and you go to one place or the

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1 other. Jesus loves you so much. He wants all  
2 of us to go to heaven.

3 So I just want you to think about the  
4 decisions that you're making. I love you and I  
5 thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

7 Would anybody else like to speak?

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah, I'd like to speak.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Come on up.

10 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Edward

12 Sundie. I was born in this town, and I have  
13 seen a lot of stuff torn down because the  
14 government of the city needed that property,  
15 historic property and nonhistoric property.

16 Well, my wife and I been to that church  
17 since 1962. We enlarged that church because of  
18 the congregation. As the congregation grew, we  
19 had to grow. It's got to the point now -- a  
20 lot of churches downtown, the reason why  
21 they're not populated no more, because they  
22 moved out in this -- to Orange Park. They  
23 moved to Nocatee. They moved everywhere.  
24 That's the reason why downtown is -- churches  
25 are failing.

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1 We're trying to stay open. And the only  
2 way we can do it, we've got to modernize.  
3 There's a furniture company called Rhodes  
4 Furniture across the street from us that has  
5 never -- when it closed down, I don't see  
6 that -- nobody jumping on it to do anything  
7 with it, and it's still vacant.

8 So this committee needs to help improve  
9 downtown. We're trying to create -- to solve  
10 problems downtown. You're going to have  
11 apartment buildings downtown. You want people  
12 to move downtown, you better have them  
13 someplace to go. If you don't do what we need,  
14 we're going to have to possibly move out.

15 Who's going to pay for these buildings  
16 that y'all are wanting to save? I don't see  
17 anybody volunteering. Station Number 5 on  
18 Riverside, over a hundred-and-something years  
19 old, oh, y'all waiting for somebody to buy it.  
20 Nobody is buying it. Why didn't some of these  
21 preservation people come up with the money and  
22 have it moved to a private property? They  
23 didn't do it. Now all of a sudden they want to  
24 come down here and tell us, the church, that we  
25 cannot renovate or demolish a building next

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1 door to us that's been there, yes, since 1923.  
2 But who's going to maintain it? You've got --  
3 somebody got to maintain it.

4 It's getting to the point that we cannot  
5 find -- even though we're a large church, it's  
6 getting to the point, we cannot no longer  
7 finance these churches -- I mean, these  
8 buildings. That's the reason why we're trying  
9 to get rid of them, because we no longer -- we  
10 like to keep staying downtown, but that's the  
11 only way we can do it.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

13 Anybody else like to speak?

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I would.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Come on up.

16 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Jeanette  
18 Meadows and I've been a member of First Baptist  
19 Church for nine years.

20 I get emotional.

21 Someone said that the church has been  
22 neglected, but this pastor here was given to  
23 us, what, three or four years ago? When our  
24 other pastor was here, Dr. Brunson. And  
25 immediately when he got here, he was associate

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1 pastor. Immediately when he got here, he began  
2 to study all the way back to the very  
3 beginnings of First Baptist Church. I never  
4 knew anything about it because I've only been  
5 there nine years. I was saved at Westside  
6 Baptist Church 45 years ago, which means I gave  
7 my heart and my life to Jesus Christ. And my  
8 church is very, very important to me and my  
9 husband. It is our life because we live for  
10 Jesus Christ.

11 But saying all that, Pastor Heath began to  
12 study. And he showed us a video a couple of  
13 years ago, and we all wanted to weep, walking  
14 through all of the buildings that have gone  
15 down and how we are -- we were -- we were in  
16 the black as far as being able to pay our  
17 bills, but it was going to destroy us to try to  
18 keep up with all of the maintenance. We only  
19 needed 182,500 square feet and yet we had  
20 1,000,005 square feet just going to waste.

21 But this man God sent to us, and he is  
22 taking care of First Baptist Church because,  
23 let me tell you something, all these buildings  
24 do not belong to the City; they belong to  
25 Jesus Christ, God Almighty. He created it all.

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1 And that's what I've got to say. We want  
2 to improve and we want to be able to stay  
3 downtown and win souls to Jesus Christ, and we  
4 can't do it with all the property that we have  
5 now.

6 And he has -- he has worked and worked and  
7 worked and prayed and carried all this burden  
8 and he brought it all to us last year, and  
9 we're 100 percent in agreeance with him. We're  
10 not trying to destroy anything; we're trying to  
11 create more so that people will continue to  
12 come down to First Baptist and give their  
13 hearts to Jesus Christ because he's coming soon  
14 and that is the only thing that is important.

15 Whether you think I'm crazy or not, I'm  
16 going to heaven.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

18 Anybody else here to speak?

19 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Seeing none --

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Come on up.

23 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. My name is Roselle  
25 Van Nostrand. I really don't -- wasn't

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1 planning on speaking, but that woman got me so  
2 excited. And I'm hearing things too and I'm  
3 hearing that, you know, Jacksonville is worth  
4 saving. I hear voices. They say, you know,  
5 what makes a city great? What makes the --

6 My favorite city, Providence, Rhode  
7 Island, because of all the new buildings? No.  
8 Because of the cobblestone streets. I mean,  
9 20 years I lived in Jacksonville. I just sold  
10 my house at the beach and moved to Avondale.  
11 It is so lovely. And it's not lovely because  
12 of the cement block buildings. It's not lovely  
13 because of anything new anyone's done.  
14 Nothing. It's only important and interesting  
15 and lovely, Avondale and Riverside, because of  
16 all of its history.

17 You know, I mean, we can drive for mile  
18 after mile through America and we'll see the  
19 same Tire Kingdom and McDonald's and -- you  
20 know, we need to keep hold of all that special  
21 thing. And I think the Baptists have an  
22 embarrassment of riches. And kudos to you for  
23 amassing this wonderful legacy you have,  
24 really. It's extraordinary. And I love the  
25 fact that they're so open-hearted and they want

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1 to share their spaces with everyone. I think  
2 that's important, and I think it's important to  
3 preserve the visual beauty of a city. You  
4 know, we don't really need any -- you know,  
5 need -- we need space that's available. It's  
6 here now.

7 And all across the country people are  
8 using their imaginations. You know, they're  
9 reinventing spaces. You've all seen it.  
10 That's probably why you're on this committee,  
11 because it's interesting to you. I mean,  
12 you've seen it in city after city; you know,  
13 people reinventing and reenlivening their  
14 towns. You know, it's a challenge. You know,  
15 it's our challenge. It's your challenge. I  
16 mean, you guys are up there because you care.

17 You know, I mean, they're not -- nobody is  
18 going to build something more interesting than  
19 that. Come on. It's going to be cheesy,  
20 possibly, but possibly beautiful. But come on.  
21 You know, this is an embarrassment of riches.  
22 You know, we need to -- we need to get creative  
23 and -- I mean, there -- there are architects in  
24 this room that are ready to work and -- and  
25 become part of the community and helping this

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1 happen.

2 And thank you for your time and thanks for  
3 such a long day you've put in up there.  
4 Appreciate it.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Come on up.

8 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. My name is Nancy  
10 Hornberger.

11 I feel everybody's pain in this room. I  
12 feel that a lot of the people are attached to  
13 this city and its buildings and its culture,  
14 and I am too. And I sense that, instead of  
15 being divided, we could work together and  
16 remember that the building is a building, but  
17 we want to reach the people that come in the  
18 building, that that's the most important thing.  
19 It's not --

20 As long as they have a roof over a head, a  
21 warm place to be, and where we feel loving  
22 concern and cared for, that's the most  
23 important thing, where we can be safe at the  
24 elderly people can get to church and not have  
25 to walk so many blocks, and the young kids and

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1 children can be close and the parents can bring  
2 them and feel safe with their kids.

3 So there is a dilemma, and I hope that we  
4 can work it out together on both sides because  
5 that's really what we want to do in our city,  
6 is bring unity, not division. And I just want  
7 to pray that we would continue to pray that God  
8 would just show us the way.

9 We could use these buildings, yes, for a  
10 lot of things, for our community. We could use  
11 them for the homeless. We can use a store and  
12 have clothes and things that could help these  
13 people, and food, and we can all come together  
14 and help one another.

15 And my heart's burdened because in the  
16 book of Nehemiah, the Sitra, it was broken down  
17 because of sin. And we need to build that back  
18 up and build our walls in our city to protect  
19 it back up, not tear it down. We can tear a  
20 building down, but let's not tear each other  
21 down. That's what I'm concerned about.

22 Some things, like the Landing, they just  
23 tore that down, and that -- you know, I come  
24 from a frugal family where, you know, why are  
25 you tearing all that down? And why are we

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1 tearing a bridge down? You know, if there's a  
2 hurricane season, what are we going to do with  
3 all those people that go over that bridge?

4 But I just hope we can just work together  
5 on this whole thing because it's really not the  
6 people, it's not about the buildings. They are  
7 important, but when it's all said and done it's  
8 what's in our heart that lasts, not the  
9 building. That will just blow up or -- my  
10 sister had the earthquake, the volcano and the  
11 flood, so anything could happen. I mean, we  
12 could have a hurricane.

13 So -- okay. That's all.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

15 Anybody else here to speak?

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Come on up.  
(Audience member approaches the podium.)

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. Thank you.

19 I'll be very brief. I know we want to get  
20 out of here.

21 My name is Mike Burg (phonetic).

22 And, you know, I was preparing for this --  
23 and I also moved from the beach to Springfield  
24 because I wanted to be in an urban environment.

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1 And I don't know when I've been happier in my  
2 life.

3 And I'm -- Virginia and Charlottesville,  
4 which is a very urban city, and I worked in  
5 Atlanta, worked with developers renovating  
6 historic buildings. And it's not -- when I  
7 hear this, it's like I hear -- it's like evil  
8 versus good, and that's not what we're here  
9 about. We're here to preserve history, and  
10 that's all. That's the only thing we're here  
11 to do.

12 We have -- many people have said we have  
13 very little to work with and very little lately  
14 to work with, so much has been torn down. So  
15 let's save this building.

16 And First Baptist Church -- and I grew up  
17 in a Baptist church, so it's nothing against  
18 Baptists. It's not evil versus good. It's  
19 let's save the building and have a different  
20 plan for the church.

21 Thank you.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

23 Anybody else here to speak?

24 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Seeing no one --

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1 MR. HAINLINE: Brief rebuttal? Two  
2 minutes.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. Come on up.  
(Mr. Hainline approaches the podium.)

4 MR. HAINLINE: Again, T.R. Hainline, First  
5 Baptist Church.

6 Just a couple of code-related points.

7 The person who spoke from the CPAC -- I  
8 don't know whether y'all have experience with  
9 CPACs. They are local groups. We were not  
10 notified or given notice of that meeting, and  
11 so we weren't asked to make a presentation or  
12 something. I know that she said we support  
13 historic preservation's -- division's decision.  
14 Well, as Christian said right at the beginning  
15 of this, they have not made a decision, nor did  
16 they even make a recommendation in their  
17 advisory memo. They simply provided  
18 information to you because that's the context  
19 that we're in. We're not in a landmark  
20 decision-making context; we're in the  
21 demolition context. So I wanted to clarify  
22 that.

23 Several people have said, we want the  
24 church to do what's required by law and not to  
25

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1 go against standards and policies. So I want  
2 to make it clear, we have not asked for any  
3 deviations, variances, anything that moves away  
4 from code. What we've done is we've complied  
5 with the code. In our presentation we've given  
6 you the reason for the demolition. And then  
7 we've gone through each of the criteria, and  
8 with our experts said that we believe -- we  
9 believe that the building does not qualify,  
10 looking down the road, at what could be your  
11 next determination, it does not qualify as a  
12 landmark. So we have endeavored to comply with  
13 the code.

14 Someone said, well, they haven't  
15 maintained the building; that's their fault.  
16 Well, the building stays as it is. The codes  
17 change. That's why the building is out of code  
18 in some things because the codes change. And  
19 our architect spoke to the burdens of  
20 renovating, changing the building to bring it  
21 into compliance with code.

22 The last thing I want to say is just,  
23 Ms. Schifanella, who I have great respect for  
24 and like a lot, said that you're about  
25 preserving. And I -- we believe that. We're

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1 here because this is about preserving -- for  
2 the church, it is about preserving the  
3 institution, the community that has been in  
4 downtown since the early 1800s. It is about  
5 preserving the viability and ongoing  
6 sustainability of that citizen, resident,  
7 community of downtown.

8 What they're trying to do is preserve  
9 their church, their place in downtown, and this  
10 is a necessary change for them for all of the  
11 reasons that have been explained. That is the  
12 reasons for our request for demolition.

13 We very much appreciate your time. I have  
14 people here happy to answer any questions.

15 Thank you very much.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

17 We're going to take a quick five to  
18 seven-minute break. We'll readjourn [sic] here  
19 shortly.

20 (Brief recess.)

21 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We're going to  
22 go ahead and resume. If you would kind of  
23 state where we stand at this point.

24 MS. WEST: Kealey West, Office of General  
25 Counsel. Through the Chair, just trying to put

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1 you in the posture of where you are tonight.  
2 So we're here for a demo application under  
3 320.407, which is commonly referred to as "d  
4 delay." And so under a demolition, it's not  
5 under your Chapter 307 which governs the  
6 Historic Preservation Commission.

7 And so basically because the structure  
8 you're considering is a contributing structure  
9 in a National Historic District, we have a demo  
10 delay which gives you the opportunity to take a  
11 pause to review that structure under your guise  
12 as the Historic Preservation Commission.

13 So there is no, necessarily, criteria for  
14 the demolition, but what it does is it allows a  
15 review opportunity, a very brief period to look  
16 at the structure with regard to its historic  
17 status. So moving forward you can either  
18 approve the application -- if you approve the  
19 application, it moves forward to demolition.  
20 It's considered final action of the City. Or  
21 you can deny the application. If you deny the  
22 application, then at your next meeting in  
23 March, you would consider it for a landmark  
24 status. You would have a public hearing. It  
25 would be noticed. It would be posted. All of

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1 the things --

2 You would be considered the applicant  
3 because you're doing it against the will of the  
4 property owner, but then you would bring it  
5 forward for a landmark status. You would make  
6 an advisory recommendation. That advisory  
7 recommendation would go to City Council. City  
8 Council ultimately determines the landmark  
9 statuses in the city of Jacksonville, so your  
10 opinion would be advisory.

11 So with regard to today's criteria, you're  
12 looking at this for its potential for  
13 landmarking, you're looking at this for other  
14 factors that the staff has talked to you about.  
15 You're not making a decision on landmarking  
16 today.

17 I know it's a very quirky statute. It's  
18 not -- it's a quirky ordinance, it's not  
19 something that we deal with a lot, but that is  
20 basically the nature of what you're doing. So  
21 you're taking a pause to consider the structure  
22 under its potential for landmarking.

23 And so right now you've heard from both  
24 sides, you've heard from staff, you've heard  
25 from the applicant, you've considered public

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1 comment. So moving forward this would be a  
2 motion item for you to move forward for  
3 approval or denial of the demo application.  
4 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you.  
5 MS. WEST: Sorry, Mr. Chair.  
6 I guess the other thing I left out -- so  
7 if, in fact, you do deny it, it would move  
8 forward, but also there's an opportunity for  
9 the applicant to appeal that decision. So that  
10 appeal would move forward. It would have to be  
11 filed within a 14-day time period. And that  
12 would basically run a parallel track to your  
13 meeting with regard to the landmarking status  
14 as well. So I just wanted to make sure you're  
15 aware of that.  
16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
17 There is no closing of the public hearing,  
18 there's no --  
19 MS. WEST: No.  
20 THE CHAIRMAN: So we can just begin  
21 discussion, yes?  
22 MS. WEST: Yes.  
23 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, let's dive in  
24 here. Starting with A, I'd love to hear  
25 y'all's thoughts.

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1 COMMISSIONER KASPER: Through the Chair to  
2 counsel, is this a motion or just discussion?  
3 So are we making a -- normally, we begin  
4 discuss with a motion.  
5 MS. WEST: You can begin with a motion or  
6 you can begin the deliberations as you'd like.  
7 COMMISSIONER KASPER: Okay. Sorry.  
8 I will start. I appreciate everyone's  
9 opinions, everyone's time to come out. We have  
10 listened, obviously. We appreciate the staff's  
11 effort, putting together -- we appreciate the  
12 applicant's effort and the community's public  
13 comment.  
14 I think it is -- as counsel mentioned,  
15 it's our task to evaluate the demolition  
16 permits to whether we deem that the property  
17 has an opportunity to be a historic landmark.  
18 I do not believe it is our task to evaluate the  
19 preservation of the institution of First  
20 Baptist Church. It's not our task to evaluate  
21 whether this is -- First Baptist existing  
22 downtown is good for the community or good for  
23 the city or good for the urban core. Our  
24 responsibility, I believe, as a Historic  
25 Preservation Commission is to evaluate the

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1 historic characteristics of the building, and I  
2 believe at this moment we're determining  
3 whether it has the opportunity or the potential  
4 to be landmark status and to preserve it from  
5 demolition.  
6 So I will jump right out of the gate and  
7 believe that at this moment, based on staff's  
8 report and my reading through the report and my  
9 listening to the applicant's comments and the  
10 architect's comments, that I believe this  
11 building does have the potential to be  
12 landmarked and does have the potential of  
13 reaching four of those seven historic criteria.  
14 So, at this moment, my position would be  
15 to delay the demolition.  
16 THE CHAIRMAN: I tend to, off the bat --  
17 everything that's been said tonight -- I  
18 understand everybody is very passionate about  
19 this, and I do believe it is our duty to do our  
20 best in both preserving the history of this  
21 city but also what's best for the city. And in  
22 saying that, I also tend to agree that this  
23 building has enough historical value that I  
24 think it meets four of these points, but I'd  
25 like to go through the points line by line to

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1 see if we can get some sort of consensus  
2 between the group and see kind of where that  
3 conversation takes us, if you guys would  
4 divulge with me.  
5 As far as A goes, its value as a  
6 significant reminder of the cultural and  
7 historical, architectural, archaeological  
8 history of the city, state or nation, does  
9 anyone have thoughts on that? Whether for or  
10 against.  
11 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes. So I, again,  
12 just echo what Erik and J.C. said. I mean,  
13 obviously, a lot of passion surrounding this,  
14 and I think that's a wonderful thing.  
15 I agree with what Angela said, that the  
16 intent of this body is to --  
17 (Noise interruption.)  
18 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Trying to put us all  
19 to sleep; we had a sound machine going.  
20 I agree that, you know, the intent of this  
21 body is for preservation, but I also believe  
22 that, you know, really our job is to follow the  
23 guidelines that are laid out for us. And in  
24 this particular case, we've got some very  
25 specific criteria that I guess technically at

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1 the next meeting we would have to evaluate,  
2 but, you know, should be our guiding principles  
3 for tonight.

4 So on A, B, and C in particular, but  
5 really just focusing on A, you know, I think  
6 some of the connections -- or some of the  
7 points made for reaching those criteria were on  
8 the tenuous side. You know, A is its value as  
9 a significant reminder of the cultural,  
10 historical, architectural or archaeological  
11 heritage of the city, state or nation. And the  
12 three associations, I think, were more  
13 associations rather than actual significant  
14 reminders. I think "significant" is the key  
15 word there.

16 So the formation of First Baptist, the  
17 temporary housing of what became Jacksonville  
18 University and Gulf Life -- and Gulf Life being  
19 housed there for a period of time, I just -- I  
20 think the associations with those institutions  
21 are not necessarily significant reminders, you  
22 know, of Jacksonville's heritage. And so I  
23 would have a hard time on A saying that it met  
24 that particular criteria.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Does anybody  
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1 else have thoughts here?

2 COMMISSIONER KASPER: Are we staying on A?  
3 I guess we'll go one by one?

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah.

5 COMMISSIONER KASPER: Okay. Yeah, I was  
6 actually pleasantly intrigued by the history of  
7 the building. Obviously, I didn't know all of  
8 the pieces. I think it -- definitely First  
9 Baptist is an institution in Jacksonville that  
10 has the history and it has been here and is  
11 recognized with downtown and the city of  
12 Jacksonville.

13 I think this building is important in that  
14 it represented a time period when they needed  
15 to grow and add more singles -- classrooms. It  
16 represented a time period when they potentially  
17 struggled and had attendance or singles  
18 declined and then it experienced a transition.

19 I think being the first permanent office  
20 of Gulf Life is a historical moment in the city  
21 of Jacksonville. I guess Gulf Life is  
22 important to the city, and then that it ended  
23 up back in the hands of the church and served  
24 different purposes.

25 So I think we should not make these  
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1 criteria too monumental that they are not  
2 George Washington's home or Abraham Lincoln's  
3 courthouse, but they are buildings that  
4 represent time periods and are associated with  
5 important institutions in the city.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Anybody else have  
7 thoughts on A?

8 COMMISSIONER BRAMWELL: I can offer  
9 some -- I have some thoughts on A, B and C.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure.

11 COMMISSIONER BRAMWELL: I think I agree  
12 with Ryan with respect to B, but that's  
13 where -- this is where I think the significance  
14 is more important here, that -- is this a site  
15 of a significant local, state or national  
16 event. I didn't really see that in the history  
17 that was provided here in terms of a particular  
18 event, but that, I think -- I focus more on its  
19 value as a significant reminder of the  
20 cultural, historic, architectural, and  
21 archaeological heritage of the city, that -- we  
22 have a lot of overlap for a lot of different  
23 parties that were -- that have been significant  
24 to the city of Jacksonville that have all, you  
25 know, come through this building at different

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1 times.

2 So I think as far as A, I could -- I think  
3 there's enough there to dig further.

4 And then as far as C, it's identified with  
5 a person or persons who significantly  
6 contributed, there again, the parties that are  
7 involved -- that have been involved with the  
8 history of this building I think would satisfy  
9 that element as well.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER STANSEL: Through the Chair,  
12 I'd like to just concur with Commissioner  
13 Kasper, and I do agree that there's the  
14 potential for A to be a landmarking  
15 opportunity.

16 And I agree that -- with regards to B and  
17 C, that it's much slimmer, the connections are  
18 much more tenuous, and they are repeated in A.

19 So that's my two cents on A, B and C.

20 COMMISSIONER LOPERA: Through the Chair, I  
21 would also -- as far as A goes -- I believe  
22 we're just speaking about A at this point --  
23 that the significance of a major insurance  
24 company that operated in many -- operated in  
25 many cities throughout the state of Florida and

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1 started here in Jacksonville would be a --  
2 significant enough to have impacted this city  
3 in a very strong way, so I would concur that A  
4 would be significant enough to be part of the  
5 landmarking.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: So I think we've all, to a  
7 certain extent, discussed A, B and C being  
8 somewhat coherent where I think it sounds like  
9 the majority lean towards A, is -- is probably  
10 a go, or at least to dig further into it,  
11 whereas B and C maybe not quite as significant,  
12 maybe not quite as entrenched.

13 D, to me, I think it's difficult to make  
14 the argument that just because it wasn't maybe  
15 his best work, that doesn't mean it's not  
16 significant. I don't know if anybody has  
17 thoughts on that, but that's kind of where I  
18 stand on that one.

19 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Through the Chair,  
20 I'd like to just kind of run through my  
21 framework instead of going criteria by  
22 criteria.

23 So I'd like to echo J.C.'s sentiment about  
24 thanking everyone for coming here today. I  
25 know we're not deciding on landmark status, but  
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1 we kind of are evaluating this on potential for  
2 landmark, so --

3 Criteria I think that it meets based on  
4 staff's report and the presentation today, is  
5 it a significant reminder of the cultural  
6 heritage, I think it does meet that standard.

7 I think it meets the standard of D, is it  
8 the work of a master builder. I think it meets  
9 that.

10 For G, is the structure suitable for  
11 preservation or restoration, I think it does  
12 meet that.

13 Criteria I think the structure does not  
14 meet is, is it a location of a significant  
15 singular event. I don't think -- I don't think  
16 it meets that criteria.

17 C, is it identified with a particular  
18 person who contributed greatly to the city, I  
19 don't think this building checks that box.

20 And then I'd agree with staff's decision  
21 on F, does it have distinguished  
22 characteristics of an architectural style.

23 So E was the criteria that was kind of in  
24 flux for me, the value of the building and its  
25 quality of architecture. And I believe that E

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1 and F are the most similarly aligned criteria.  
2 So I don't believe that there's value in the  
3 building as far as its quality of architecture.

4 So I think it meets three of the four.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

6 Again, anybody else can jump in here with  
7 any other thoughts on, really, D through G as  
8 to where you -- as to where you stand would be  
9 great.

10 COMMISSIONER KASPER: Through the Chair,  
11 D, I do believe Hunt is a significant designer  
12 of structures, of church buildings, of federal  
13 buildings throughout the Southeast. I think it  
14 is unique that this is the only building in  
15 Florida. And I go back to the point of not  
16 having this criteria to reach the level of  
17 Frank Lloyd Wright or -- you know, of that  
18 level.

19 I think E, it is a quality structure. I  
20 think the column detailing, the use of the  
21 terra-cotta, the arches, the windows, the base,  
22 the middle of the top, I think it has a lot of  
23 strong qualities. I agree with staff that  
24 there's not a distinguishing style, so F, no.

25 And then G -- probably G is maybe one of  
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1 my strong ones. I do believe it is suitable  
2 for preservation.

3 And I appreciate the American Institute of  
4 Architects for showing up today and -- you  
5 know, and offering some suggestions or offering  
6 to work towards a solution. And I believe  
7 there's an opportunity for -- and I'd actually  
8 maybe comment a little bit just since I'm  
9 assuming we're making comments so that we can  
10 prepare for a future.

11 I believe the structure can be converted  
12 to accommodate the size of the congregation.  
13 I've heard 1,000, 2,000 individuals that would  
14 come one, two or three times a day. I think  
15 you can open up this space. I think you can  
16 remove a floor. I think you can open up the  
17 openings. I think you can demolish portions  
18 that are beyond, that are not visible from the  
19 street.

20 I think it's very feasible to provide a  
21 gathering space, a welcome center that would be  
22 inviting to the congregation, that would be  
23 efficient to receive a thousand people in and  
24 out. I think it would be a real nice feature  
25 to have a historic facade that's restored and

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1 utilized.  
 2 That's it.  
 3 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes, I'll just share  
 4 the rest of my thoughts for future discussion.  
 5 So D, is it identified as the work of a  
 6 master builder, designer or architect, I think  
 7 unquestionably yes. The second half of that  
 8 statement is, I think where it becomes a little  
 9 more of a gray area, "whose individual work has  
 10 influenced the development of the city, state  
 11 or nation," and I would say that I look forward  
 12 to more discussion on that.  
 13 E, its value as a building is recognized  
 14 for the quality of its architecture and it  
 15 retains sufficient elements showing its  
 16 architectural significance. I would tend to --  
 17 I would probably defer to Erik and Maiju on  
 18 that and, you know, follow their professional  
 19 direction as for that evaluation.  
 20 F, I would tend to agree with staff.  
 21 And then G, its suitability for  
 22 preservation or restoration, I've always looked  
 23 at that as a question of the building's current  
 24 condition. And I thought it was an interesting  
 25 argument that the applicant made where they  
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1 introduced the idea of whether it's appropriate  
 2 for the current intended use, but I would -- I  
 3 think that would be fairly short-sighted of us  
 4 just to evaluate that, letter G, based on what  
 5 they're -- what they're looking to do today, so  
 6 I would have a hard time going back on G and  
 7 saying that it did not meet that criteria.  
 8 Overall, I personally -- I think I'll have  
 9 a hard time getting to four out of the seven,  
 10 but I think we're -- I think we're looking at  
 11 it next month, so ...  
 12 COMMISSIONER STANSEL: Through the Chair,  
 13 I commented on A, B and C previously.  
 14 There's a lot of agreement on the D and G  
 15 categories, which is the master builder and  
 16 suitable for preservation, so I'm going to --  
 17 and I agree with those, so I'm just going to  
 18 let those go, as well as F, which is  
 19 distinguishing style. It's not specifically an  
 20 exemplary building for this style of what it  
 21 was made, so I agree with staff in that  
 22 category as well.  
 23 E is where it gets a little fuzzy for  
 24 everybody, and I do think that -- I think that  
 25 it's important to look at the space and the  
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1 building and when it was done and get good  
 2 research from our staff on what those things  
 3 actually mean.  
 4 What we were presented today was a cursory  
 5 review of those categories, and what I hope  
 6 that we come away with tonight is having staff  
 7 go back and doing a full, in-depth review of  
 8 this structure to make sure that we're making  
 9 the correct decision. That is -- we rely on  
 10 our staff to do our research for us, and  
 11 they're very good at it.  
 12 And I understand the historical architect  
 13 from the applicant, and he has some good points  
 14 as well, so it's a matter of pulling all of  
 15 that information together in one cohesive piece  
 16 so that we can make a very educated decision  
 17 when it comes before us next month. That is  
 18 what I hope we end up with tonight.  
 19 THE CHAIRMAN: I think that's pretty well  
 20 said.  
 21 Does anybody else have anything else to  
 22 add?  
 23 COMMISSIONER LOPERA: Yeah. I also agree  
 24 on D. I think it's clear that Hunt had  
 25 designed 39 buildings on the National Register  
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1 of Historic Places. That's a significant  
 2 number of buildings to meet the criteria  
 3 required by the landmarking.  
 4 As far as the quality of architecture  
 5 goes, I would like to get some additional  
 6 information from the staff and perhaps -- you  
 7 know, perhaps drive by the area to see the  
 8 terra-cotta elements of it, which are not clear  
 9 close up just from the photos.  
 10 And then F, I agree with the staff that it  
 11 did not meet that landmark criteria.  
 12 And as far as G goes, I did see it as  
 13 suitable for preservation based on it  
 14 meeting at least -- what I believe met at least  
 15 a few of the landmarking criteria.  
 16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
 17 Does anybody else have anything else to  
 18 add?  
 19 COMMISSIONER KASPER: So through the  
 20 Chair, just the last comment -- commentary.  
 21 So, again, our task is to evaluate the  
 22 historical characteristics of the building,  
 23 whether it's suitable for preservation, if it  
 24 has -- meets these potential criteria, and to  
 25 delay the demolition to allow that to happen.  
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1 And the other factors of the church's  
2 contribution to downtown, the revitalization of  
3 the urban core, the activation of the streets,  
4 the introduction of landscaping and benches and  
5 gathering space, that I would think would be  
6 City Council's opportunity. City Council can  
7 override our decision, or even if we get -- I'm  
8 not saying we're there, but -- so just putting  
9 it out there that we are evaluating one  
10 criteria. The City Council has the opportunity  
11 to override what we say and take into account  
12 the other factors.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: As far as where I stand,  
14 this one, I've done a lot of personal research  
15 just trying to dig back a little bit more  
16 because this one is tough, honestly. It's  
17 right on the edge for me between three and  
18 four. I don't necessarily think more  
19 information can hurt, so I think -- I  
20 personally know I'm voting today because I  
21 think more information on an issue quite like  
22 this, with this much passion and this much  
23 riding on it, makes sense to me.

24 So unless anybody else has thoughts, we  
25 can go ahead and vote. So I will entertain a

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion has been denied, and  
2 we will move on to nothing, so we are  
3 adjourned.  
4 (The foregoing proceedings were adjourned  
5 at 7:00 p.m.)  
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1 motion, I suppose.  
2 COMMISSIONER KASPER: I make a motion to  
3 delay -- I'm sorry, I make a motion to deny the  
4 demolition application of 125 West Church  
5 Street.

6 COMMISSIONER BRAMWELL: Second.  
7 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?  
8 Aye.

9 COMMISSIONER KASPER: Aye.  
10 COMMISSIONER STANSEL: Aye.  
11 COMMISSIONER BRAMWELL: Aye.  
12 COMMISSIONER LOPERA: Aye.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Those opposed?  
14 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Aye.  
15 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Aye.  
16 MS. WEST: Do a hand vote, please.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?  
18 (Indicating.)  
19 COMMISSIONER KASPER: (Indicating.)  
20 COMMISSIONER STANSEL: (Indicating.)  
21 COMMISSIONER LOPERA: (Indicating.)  
22 COMMISSIONER BRAMWELL: (Indicating.)  
23 THE CHAIRMAN: All those opposed?  
24 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: (Indicating.)  
25 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: (Indicating.)

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2  
3 STATE OF FLORIDA)  
4 )  
5 COUNTY OF DUVAL )  
6

7 I, Diane M. Tropia, Florida Professional  
8 Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did  
9 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and  
10 that the transcript is a true and complete record of my  
11 stenographic notes.  
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15 DATED this 8th day of March 2020.  
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19 \_\_\_\_\_  
20 Diane M. Tropia  
21 Florida Professional Reporter  
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23  
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