City File: FLUM-41A

According to Planning and Economic Development Department records, no member of the Community Planning and Preservation Commission owns property within 2,000 feet of the subject area. All other possible conflicts should be declared upon announcement of the item.

APPLICANT: City of St. Petersburg
175 – 5th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

SUBJECT AREA: The subject area is commonly known as a portion of the Monticello Park Subdivision and generally bounded by 12th Street North to the east, those properties fronting onto 15th Street North to the west, 42nd Avenue North to the south, and those properties fronting onto 45th Avenue North to the north. The total subject area is estimated to be 20.3 acres in total size.

PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS:
The parcel identification numbers ("PIN") are attached.

REQUEST:
This is a City-initiated application requesting that the subject area be considered for a future land use map amendment from PR-R (Planned-Redevelopment Residential) to RU (Residential Urban) and a rezoning from NT-1 (Neighborhood Traditional) to NS-1 (Neighborhood Suburban).
PURPOSE:
The purpose of this application is to improve compatibility between the zoning regulations and existing development in the subject area, which generally features wide parcels, residential buildings with large setbacks, parking and garages that are accessed from the street over driveways in the front yard, and the lack of pedestrian sidewalks.

EXISTING USES:
The subject area was originally developed for residential purposes only. The existing zoning, and proposed request, preserves the original intent for single-family residential development.

ZONING HISTORY:
The existing zoning has been in place since September 2007, following implementation of the City’s Vision 2020 Plan, the citywide rezoning, and update of the land development regulations (LDRs), Chapter 16, City Code. From 1977 to 2007, the subject area was designated RS-75. Distinctions among this zoning category and its relevance to the current proposal is outlined in the following sections.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS:
The subject area is not located within the boundary of an official neighborhood association; however, the Allendale Terrace Neighborhood Association Crime Watch has been acting in a similar capacity. There is no neighborhood plan for the subject area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: City staff recommends APPROVAL.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Background

Original Development
The portion of the Monticello Park Subdivision that is the subject of this application, was first surveyed and platted in 1926. The original plat extended from present-day 12th to 16th Streets North and from 42nd to 46th Avenues North.

Platted Lots vs Developed Parcels
The original plat established a predominance of platted lots measuring 50 feet in width. Development of much of the subject area traditionally occurred over two (2) or more platted lots. Today, the average lot width for parcels in the subject area measures 90.72 feet. Recent proposals for development within the subject area have highlighted this discrepancy and represent the challenges in assigning an appropriate zoning category that honors both the traditional characteristics of the neighborhood and its suburban lot dimensions and orientation.
History of Zoning Categories

Starting in 1977 and continuing through 2007, the subject area was zoned RS-75 (Residential, Single-Family). This zoning category was intended for single-family residential use. The current zoning designations have been in place since September 2007, following implementation of the City's Vision 2020 Plan, the citywide rezoning, and update of the land development regulations ("LDRs").

Public Request for Review and Consideration

Responding to recent land acquisitions, development proposals, and the compatibility of new construction within the surrounding area, residents in a portion of the Allendale neighborhood, located outside of the subject area but adjoined immediately to the south, contacted the City’s Urban Planning and Historic Preservation Division in June 2015. Residents inquired about the designation of a Local Historic District ("LHD"), modification of City Code requirements regulating conforming and non-conforming platted lots and parcels, and rezoning the subject area from NT to NS. In December 2015, the City Council approved the resident's request for rezoning, effectively increasing the minimum lot width requirement in that neighborhood from 50-feet to 75-feet.

City staff was subsequently contacted by a number of residents from within the subject area who participated in the process for rezoning a portion of the Allendale neighborhood and expressed a similar concern for their neighborhood. A meeting was held in April 2016 between City Staff, several residents of the Monticello Park Subdivision, and several residents from a portion of the adjoining Allendale neighborhood who participated in the original rezoning request.
City Council Review and Request for Application

Following a preliminary review, the residents’ request merited further study and deliberation. On May 12, 2016, the St. Petersburg City Council considered a Resolution initiating an amendment to the Future Land Use Map and Official Zoning Map designations for property located within the subject area. Specifically, the Resolution proposed to initiate an application amending the Future Land Use Map from PR-R (Planned-Redevelopment Residential) to RU (Residential Urban) and the Official Zoning Map from NT-1 (Neighborhood Traditional) to NS-1 (Neighborhood Suburban). The Resolution was unanimously approved.

Public Information Meeting

On July 26, 2016, a public information meeting was hosted by City staff at the Roberts Recreation Center, 1246 50th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, Florida, 33703. The meeting was attended by approximately 40 residents of the subject area and lasted for approximately hours. City staff began with a presentation, including a background, comparative analysis, and next steps, described hereafter. The comparative analysis included a detailed evaluation contrasting the existing NT-1 with the proposed NS-1.

Consistency/Compatibility of the Proposed Land Use and Zoning Designations.

St. Petersburg features two (2) distinct types of residential neighborhoods – traditional and suburban. Each type offers unique features and amenities that make them highly desirable. The Monticello park neighborhood, and especially properties located within the subject area, features a unique combination of character-defining elements from both the traditional and suburban descriptions. According to the City of St. Petersburg’s Comprehensive Plan:

Traditional Neighborhoods: Traditional neighborhoods were typically developed prior to World War II. Platted lots and required yards were narrow and sidewalks and front porches were pre-eminent features to the homes. Several modes of transportation, including pedestrian travel and trolley, supplemented the newly developed personal automobile. The street was the focus of the home, which provided a communal setting in where neighbors spent time socializing and communicating. Single-family homes make up most traditional neighborhoods. However, the house size and type were more varied allowing diverse housing opportunities for persons in different stages of life and at different levels of income to enjoy the same neighborhood. Single-family homes with garage apartments and small apartment buildings, in keeping with the scale of the neighborhood, were common. The alley system provided limited access for parking and utility functions to the rear of the site. Schools, corner stores serving the daily needs of the neighborhoods, parks and other amenities were located within the neighborhoods.

Suburban Neighborhoods: Suburban neighborhoods were typically developed after World War II. At that time, neighborhoods were adjusting to a great shift in technological advances that occurred at the turn of the century and placed into mass production by the 1950s. Between 1946 and 1973, the American economy was growing at levels unseen in the twentieth century, creating a nation of prosperous consumers who could afford both the automobile and the American dream of home ownership. These changes gave rise to a new kind of neighborhood. No longer constrained by pedestrian or
trolley travel, the automobile allowed neighborhoods to expand outward creating more spacious yards. Alleyways were replaced with wider streets and garages became a prominent feature of the front facade. Houses were pushed further back on the lot and porches and sidewalks were no longer incorporated. Neighborhoods became more homogeneous relative to income levels, age groups and family types. The focus of neighborhood life was less on the public realm and more on family life within the home and rear yard. Neighborhoods became strictly residential. Stores, schools and other daily needs were pushed outward to major roadways which connected suburban neighborhoods with other neighborhoods and the downtown.

The challenge in this instance is assigning an appropriate zoning category that acknowledges both the complimentary and conflicting features of this unique neighborhood, protects and reinforces the neighborhood’s established character, and is sensitive to the legal rights and expectations that come with property ownership. For this analysis, City staff thoughtfully considered these challenges and carefully evaluated the various consequences associated with the proposed amendments to the Official Zoning Map and Future Land Use Map.

The Monticello Park neighborhood was platted in 1926, prior to adoption of the City’s first zoning ordinance in 1933. As noted earlier in this report, the original plat established a predominance of platted lots measuring 50 feet in width. Development of Monticello Park’s single-family residences however, traditionally occurred over two (2) or more platted lots. When zoning was later established and subsequently modified, minimum lot width and area requirements were based on the physical development pattern, rather than the underlying subdivision plat. Consequently, many platted lots of record did not conform to the minimum zoning requirements for lot width and area and were thenceforth considered to be substandard lots.

From 1977 to 2007, most of the subject area was zoned RS-75 and required a minimum lot width of 75-feet. This regulation pertaining to lot width properly acknowledged the existing development pattern in the neighborhood, despite the fact that many platted lots averaged only 50-feet in width making them substandard. Starting in September 2007, following implementation of the City’s Vision 2020 Plan, many of these same properties were rezoned to NT-1, thereby reducing the minimum lot width requirement from 75-feet to 45-feet.

Today, the average lot width for parcels in the subject area is 90.72 feet. The physical characteristics historically demonstrated throughout the subject area, and exhibited partially through these average lot widths, are being stressed by new development proposals, and the compatibility of recent construction within the established development pattern.

While this request is focused on preserving a more compatible minimum lot width requirement, it should be understood that any rezoning will also include changes to building setbacks and other building design and site orientation considerations. These must be carefully considered and are highlighted in the following table series:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table: Subject Area Minimum Lot Size and Building Setbacks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lot Width</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot Width</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lot Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Front (Building)</td>
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<td>Side (Interior)</td>
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<td>Side (Street)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rear</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table: Subject Area Design Standards</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Building Form</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevated base floor 16”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Front porch / stoop required</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wall Composition</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>No blank facades allowed</td>
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<tr>
<td>No blank wall greater than 16’</td>
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<tr>
<td>30% fenestration street</td>
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<tr>
<td>20% fenestration interior/ rear</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/3 fenestration shall be glass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corner lot treatment all sides</td>
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<td><strong>Windows</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Curb Cut</strong></td>
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<td>Access from Alley <strong>Recommended</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Garage Doors</strong></td>
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<td>Max 40% of linear frontage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decorative doors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Garage Setbacks</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Carports</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Walkway</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
During the public information meeting on July 26, 2016, these changes were highlighted for attendees and the potential impacts were illustrated through various graphics and pictorial representations.

**Creation of Nonconforming Lots**

Since the creation of non-conforming lots is an important consideration when evaluating the rezoning of property, City staff produced the following map to show the number of non-conforming lots that would be created by the proposed rezoning from NT-1 to NS-1. City staff first evaluated the entire Monticello Park Subdivision. Due to the number of non-conformities created east of 12 Street North, the City Council resolution and subject area of the application was reduced (as highlighted).

*Rezoning to NS-1*
Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units are currently allowed as an accessory use within the existing NT-1 zoning category. Accessory dwelling units are required to comply with the use-specific development standards outlined in Section 16.50.010 of the City’s LDRs. Rezoning this subject area from NT-1 to NS-1 would reclassify existing, accessory dwellings units as grandfathered uses. Further, the rezoning would prohibit installation of any new accessory dwelling units by right.

Level of Service (LOS) Impact

The Level of Service ("LOS") impact section of this report concludes that the requested Plan change and rezoning will not significantly impact the City’s adopted LOS standards for public services and facilities including potable water, sanitary sewer, solid waste, traffic, mass transit, recreation, and stormwater management.

SPECIAL NOTE ON CONCURRENCY:

Level of Service impacts are addressed further in this report. Approval of this land use change and rezoning request does not guarantee that individual re/developments within the subject area will meet the requirements of concurrency at the time development permits are requested. Completion of this land use plan change and rezoning does not guarantee the right to develop on property within the subject area. Upon application for site plan review, or development permits, a full concurrency review will be completed to determine whether or not the proposed development may proceed. The property owner will have to comply with all laws and ordinances in effect at the time development permits are requested.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Public engagement and input regarding this application includes the following:

- Public Information Meeting conducted on July 26, 2016 – 40 attendees
- 26 submissions: 25 Support; 1 Against
  - 3 contacts by telephone: 2 for, 1 against
  - 23 contacts by email: 23 for, 0 against
a. Compliance of probable use with goals, objectives, policies and guidelines of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

The following policies and objectives from the Comprehensive Plan are applicable:

V1.1 Development decisions and strategies shall integrate the guiding principles found in the Vision Element with sound planning principles followed in the formal planning process.

LU3.4 The Land Use Plan shall provide for compatible land use transition through an orderly land use arrangement, proper buffering, and the use of physical and natural separators.

LU3.1 (A)(2) Residential Urban (RU) - ...allowing low density residential uses not to exceed 7.5 dwelling units per net acre.

LU3.1 (F)(1) Planned Redevelopment-Residential (PR-R) - ...allowing low to medium density residential uses where either single-family residential or single-family with accessory residential development may co-exist not to exceed 15 dwelling units per net acre.

LU3.5 The tax base will be maintained and improved by encouraging the appropriate use of properties based on their locational characteristics and the goals, objectives and policies within this Comprehensive Plan.

LU3.6 Land planning should weigh heavily the established character of predominantly developed areas where changes of use or intensity of development are contemplated.

LU3.7 Land use planning decisions shall include a review to determine whether existing Land Use Plan boundaries are logically drawn in relation to existing conditions and expected future conditions.

LU 3.11 More dense residential uses (more than 7.5 units per acre) may be located along: 1) passenger rail lines and designated major streets; or 2) in close proximity to activity centers where compatible.

T1.3 The City shall review the impact of all rezoning proposals and requests to amend the FLUM on the City’s transportation system. FLUM amendment requests that increase traffic generation potential shall demonstrate that
transportation capacity is available to accommodate the additional demand.

T3.1 All major city, county and state streets, not including those identified as constrained in the City’s most current concurrency annual monitoring report shall operate at LOS D or better in the peak hour of vehicular traffic. Roadway facilities on the State Highway System, Strategic Intermodal System and Florida Intrastate Highway System and roadway facilities funded by Florida’s Transportation Regional Incentive Program shall operate at a LOS that is consistent with Rule 14-94, FAC.

b. **Whether the proposed amendment would impact environmentally sensitive lands or areas which are documented habitat for listed species as defined by the Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.**

The proposed amendment will not impact environmentally sensitive lands or areas which are documented habitat for listed species as defined by the Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

c. **Whether the proposed change would alter population or the population density pattern and thereby impact residential dwelling units and or public schools.**

The proposed changes will have no negligible impact on the population or the population density pattern. Moreover, approved site plans involving a residential component are transmitted to the Pinellas County School Board, and their designee.

d. **Impact of the proposed amendment upon the following adopted levels of service (LOS) for public services and facilities including but not limited to: water, sewer, sanitation, traffic, mass transit, recreation, stormwater management.**

The following analysis indicates that the proposed change will not have a significant impact on the City's adopted levels of service for potable water, sanitary sewer, solid waste, mass transit, stormwater management and recreation. Should the requested land use and zoning change be approved, the City has sufficient capacity to serve the subject property.

**WATER**

Under the existing inter-local agreement with Tampa Bay Water (TBW), the region’s local governments are required to project and submit, on or before February 1 of each year, the anticipated water demand for the following water year (October 1 through September 30). TBW is contractually obligated to meet the City’s and other member governments’ water supply needs. The City’s current potable water demand is 28.3 million gallons per day (mgd).
The City’s adopted LOS standard for potable water is 125 gallons per capita per day, while the actual usage is estimated to be 79 gallons per capita per day. Should the proposed amendments be approved, there will be no impact on the adopted LOS standard for water.

WASTEWATER

The subject area is currently served by the Northeast Water Reclamation Facility (WRF). The average day demand is approximately 8.54 million gallons at the Northeast WRF. The facility has a capacity of 16.0 million gallons per day, leaving an average day surplus of approximately 7.46 million gallons per day. If approved, there will be no impact on the adopted LOS standard for wastewater.

SOLID WASTE

All solid waste disposal is the responsibility of Pinellas County. The County currently receives and disposes of municipal solid waste, and construction and demolition debris, generated throughout Pinellas County. The Pinellas County Waste-to-Energy Plant and the Bridgeway Acres Sanitary Landfill are the responsibility of Pinellas County Utilities, Department of Solid Waste Operations, however, they are operated and maintained under contract by two private companies. The Waste-to-Energy Plant continues to operate below its design capacity of incinerating 985,500 tons of solid waste per year. The continuation of successful recycling efforts and the efficient operation of the Waste-to-Energy Plant have helped to extend the life span of Bridgeway Acres. The landfill has approximately 30 years remaining, based on current grading and disposal plans. If approved, there will be no impact on the adopted LOS standard for wastewater.

TRAFFIC

The proposed rezoning is bordered by 12th Street North to the east and 15th Street North to the west, 45th Avenue North to the north, and 42nd Avenue North to the south:

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street North is classified as a signalized (minor) arterial. The portion of roadway extending from 38th Avenue North to 62nd Avenue North, operates at a LOS “B” and has a volume-to-capacity ratio of 0.447.

- 16th Street North is classified as a signalized (minor) arterial. The roadway operates at a LOS “C” and has a volume-to-capacity ratio of 0.289.

- 38th Avenue North is classified as a signalized (minor) arterial. The roadway operates at a LOS “D” and has a volume-to-capacity ratio of 0.721.
MASS TRANSIT

The Citywide LOS for mass transit will not be affected. PSTA provides local transit service along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street North (Route 59), 16th Street North (Route 74), and 38th Avenue North (Route 38). Route 59 has a service frequency of approximately 20-30 minutes depending on the time of day. Route 74 has a service frequency of approximately 20-30 minutes depending on the time of day. Route 38 has a service frequency of approximately 60 minutes. If approved, there will be no impact on the adopted LOS standard for mass transit.

RECREATION

The City's adopted LOS for recreation and open space is 9 acres per 1,000 population, the actual LOS City-wide is estimated to be 21.9 acres per 1,000 population. If approved, there will be no impact on the adopted LOS standard for recreation and open space.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Prior to any redevelopment within the subject area, site plan approval shall be required. At that time, the stormwater management system for the site will be required to meet all City and SWFWMD stormwater management criteria.

e. Appropriate and adequate land area sufficient for the use and reasonably anticipated operations and expansion.

Not applicable.

f. The amount and availability of vacant land or land suitable for redevelopment shown for similar uses in the City or in contiguous areas.

Not applicable.

g. Whether the proposed change is consistent with the established land use pattern.

The proposed rezoning is consistent with the established land use pattern.

h. Whether the existing district boundaries are logically drawn in relation to existing conditions on the property proposed for change.

The proposed boundaries are logically drawn in relation to existing conditions.

i. If the proposed amendment involves a change from a residential to a nonresidential use, whether more nonresidential land is needed in the proposed location to provide services or employment to the residents of the City.

Not applicable.
j. Whether the subject property is located within the 100-year flood plain or Coastal High Hazard Area as identified in the Coastal Management Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

According to the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map ("FIRM"), the subject property is not located within a designated flood zone, Coastal High Hazard Area ("CHHA"), or hurricane evacuation zone.

k. **Other pertinent information.**

None.
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN DESIGNATION

CITY FILE
FLUM-41

From: Planned Redevelopment
- Residential (PR-R)

To: Residential Urban (RU)

SCALE: 1" = 242'

SUBJECT AREA
ORDINANCE NO. __-L

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA; BY CHANGING THE LAND USE DESIGNATION OF PROPERTIES IN ATTACHED "EXHIBIT A," GENERALLY BOUNDED BY 12TH STREET NORTH, 15TH STREET NORTH, 42ND AVENUE NORTH, AND 45TH AVENUE NORTH, FROM PLANNED REDEVELOPMENT-RESIDENTIAL TO RESIDENTIAL URBAN; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND PROVISIONS THEREOF; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, established the Community Planning Act; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Petersburg Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map are required by law to be consistent with the Countywide Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map and the Pinellas Planning Council is authorized to develop rules to implement the Countywide Future Land Use Map; and

WHEREAS, the St. Petersburg City Council has considered and approved the proposed St. Petersburg land use amendment provided herein as being consistent with the proposed amendment to the Countywide Future Land Use Map which has been initiated by the City; now, therefore

THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG DOES ORDAIN:

SECTION 1. Pursuant to the provisions of the Community Planning Act, as amended, and pursuant to all applicable provisions of law, the Future Land Use Map of the City of St. Petersburg Comprehensive Plan is amended by placing the hereinafter described property in the land use category as follows:

Property

The properties described in “Exhibit A,” generally bounded from a point of beginning at the intersection of 12th Street North and 42nd Avenue North, thence north along 12th Street North, thence west along the rear property line of those properties fronting onto 45th Avenue North, thence slightly north and west, thence south along the rear property line of those properties fronting onto the west side of 15th Street North, thence slightly east and south along the centerline of 15th Street North, thence east along 42nd Avenue North to the point of beginning.
Land Use Category

From: Planned Redevelopment-Residential

To: Residential Urban

SECTION 2. All ordinances or portions of ordinances in conflict with or inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency or conflict.

SECTION 3. In the event this ordinance is not vetoed by the Mayor in accordance with the City Charter, it shall become effective upon approval of the required Land Use Plan change by the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners (acting in their capacity as the Countywide Planning Authority) and upon issuance of a final order determining this amendment to be in compliance by the Department of Economic Opportunity (DOE) or until the Administration Commission issues a final order determining this amendment to be in compliance, pursuant to Section 163.3187, F.S. In the event this ordinance is vetoed by the Mayor in accordance with the City Charter, it shall not become effective unless and until the City Council overrides the veto in accordance with the City Charter, in which case it shall become effective as set forth above.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND SUBSTANCE: FLUM-41A
(Land Use)

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT DATE

ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY DATE
### PROPERTIES WITHIN SUBJECT AREA

<table>
<thead>
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<th>PARCEL ID NOS.</th>
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ORDINANCE NO. ___-Z

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA; BY CHANGING THE ZONING OF PROPERTIES IN ATTACHED "EXHIBIT A," GENERALLY BOUNDED BY 12TH STREET NORTH, 15TH STREET NORTH, 42ND AVENUE NORTH, AND 45TH AVENUE NORTH, FROM NT-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD TRADITIONAL-1) TO NS-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD SUBURBAN-1); PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND PROVISIONS THEREOF; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG DOES ORDAIN:

SECTION 1. The Official Zoning Map of the City of St. Petersburg is amended by placing the hereinafter described property in a Zoning District as follows:

Property

The properties described in "Exhibit A," generally bounded from a point of beginning at the intersection of 12th Street North and 42nd Avenue North, thence north along 12th Street North, thence west along the rear property line of those properties fronting onto 45th Avenue North, thence slightly north and west, thence south along the rear property line of those properties fronting onto the west side of 15th Street North, thence slightly east and south along the centerline of 15th Street North, thence east along 42nd Avenue North to the point of beginning.

District

From: NT-1 (Neighborhood Traditional-1)

To: NS-1 (Neighborhood Suburban-1)

SECTION 2. All ordinances or portions of ordinances in conflict with or inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency or conflict.

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon the date the ordinance adopting the required amendment to the City of St. Petersburg Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map becomes effective (Ordinance ___-L).

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND SUBSTANCE: FLUM-41A

(Zoning)

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT DATE

ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY DATE
### PROPERTIES WITHIN SUBJECT AREA

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PUBLIC COMMENTS
## SUMMARY of PUBLIC RESPONSES

**SUPPORT:** 25 Support; 1 Against  
**BOUNDARY:** 15 Within Subject Area; 9 Outside Subject Area; 2 Unknown

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<td>Nina Light</td>
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<td>J. Correa</td>
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<td>Dave Markwood</td>
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STAFF REPORT
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION
LOCAL DESIGNATION REQUEST

For Public Hearing and Recommendation to the Community Planning and Preservation Commission on September 13, 2016 beginning at 3:00 P.M., Council Chambers, City Hall, 175 Fifth Street North, St. Petersburg, Florida

According to Planning and Economic Development Department records, Bob Carter, Lisa Wannemacher, and Tom Whiteman resides or has a place of business within 2,000 feet of the subject property. All other possible conflicts should be declared upon the announcement of the item.

CASE NO.: HPC 15-90300001
STREET ADDRESS: Multiple property addresses
LANDMARK: "Block 25" Historic District
OWNER(S): Multiple owners
APPLICANT: City of St. Petersburg
REQUEST: City-Initiated Local Historic Landmark Designation: "Block 25" Historic District

Block 25 along Central Avenue - c. 1920s
Block 25 along Central Avenue - 2016
Block 25 along 1st Avenue N - c. 1940s
Block 25 along 1st Avenue N - 2016
STAFF DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

Pursuant to City Code, Section 16.30.070.2.5, Staff finds that Block 25 meets five of nine criteria for historic context (Test #1), and five of seven factors of integrity (Test #2). This determination also finds that 15 of a total 17 extant buildings contribute to the historic character and significance of Block 25 as a historic district. Therefore, Block 25, as described, located, and evaluated herein, is determined to be eligible for designation as a local historic landmark district.

BACKGROUND

Timeline

On March 12, 2013, a demolition application was submitted for a portion of the Bishop Hotel property located at 256 1st Avenue North, part of Block 25 of the original Town plat of St. Petersburg. Because the property was identified in 2006 as potentially eligible for designation as a local historic landmark, a stay of demolition was commenced during which time an application for historic landmark designation of the property was filed. During deliberations on the stay of demolition and designation application, the City Council approved a Resolution on April 13, 2013, requesting that the Community Planning and Preservation Commission (then referred to as the Community Preservation Commission) review the local landmark eligibility of all of the buildings within Block 25. On July 9, 2013, the CPPC determined Block 25 to be eligible as a local landmark district, and referred their findings to the City Council. On August 1, 2013, the City Council considered the findings of the CPPC and approved a second Resolution initiating a local historic district landmark designation application for Block 25 in its entirety.

On February 12, 2015, City Staff conducted a public information meeting that was noticed by direct mail invitation to all registered owners of property within Block 25. The purpose of the meeting was to provide property owners information concerning the proposed local historic landmark district designation, including an introduction to the history of Block 25, an explanation of the benefits of being designated a local historic landmark district, the process for issuing Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs), and an explanation of financial incentives available to the property owners, including the Ad Valorem Tax Exemption and the Federal Rehabilitation Tax (Income) Credit.

The public information meeting was followed by a series of subsequent meetings with the property owners and their legal representatives, the most significant of which was a joint planning meeting that occurred on May 26, 2015. Following this joint planning meeting, a draft Historic Block 25 Term Sheet (Term Sheet) was published on April 14, 2015. The purpose of the draft Term Sheet was to memorialize commitments made during the joint planning meeting and to outline a series of “next steps” for the City Staff and Administration. (See Appendices).

On June 26, 2015, City Staff and Administration walked around Block 25 and through the public alley with property owners and their legal representatives to visually survey and document current conditions. The purpose of this conditions survey was to provide property owners with an opportunity to directly engage City department directors on a number of service and maintenance issues, and physical conditions concerning the alley and surrounding streetscape. A summary report was published on July 15, 2015.

A prevailing concern for the property owners focused on the public alley, and specifically included complaints relating to the uneven brick surface, lack of adequate drainage, public
sanitation, and private grease collection. A major commitment outlined in the Term Sheet relates to alley improvements. In response, the City contracted with George F. Young, Inc. to prepare a technical alley improvement study and final report. In addition to base data collection, the final report will include design options for alley improvements, cost estimates for the presented options, exhibits, and notes. The study and report requires no financial commitment from the adjoining property owners, who were notified of these activities through a follow-up letter on December 15, 2015. A preliminary findings report was produced by the engineering consultant in early July 2016.

The City is also preparing to issue a scope of services for sidewalk improvements around the perimeter of the subject block. The scope of services will solicit bids for conceptual and preliminary design, final design and construction documents for bidding, a pedestrian maintenance of traffic ("MOT") plan, and construction administration services. Said plan shall also include the development of interpretive elements to feature the history and heritage of the subject block. Property owner participation, funding scenarios, and long-term maintenance commitments will be evaluated as part of any final branding and streetscape improvement plan.

During a June 29, 2016 meeting with City Staff, certain property owners and their legal representatives presented a conceptual redevelopment plan for Block 25. While this conceptual plan did not carry any official submission status of an application pursuant to a development permit or development order of any kind, the City Administration was asked to provide generalized, non-binding feedback. This feedback, based on cursory review of effects to Block 25’s historic integrity was provided in an August 18, 2016 letter mailed to the property owners’ legal representatives. (See Appendices)

**Local Historic Landmark Designation**

This report provides updated information regarding the proposed historic district’s historical significance and integrity in a generalized format, while referencing previous reports and documentation. In this case, 15 out of 17 existing buildings are determined to be contributing to the proposed Block 25 Historic District (the “District”), while two are determined to be non-contributing. As of 1965, 19 historically significant buildings existed on Block 25. Since then, four of these historically significant buildings have been demolished. This includes the two Lewis buildings located at the northwest parcel in 1966, the one-story office complex at the northeast parcel in 1981, and the Binnie blacksmith shop located behind the Binnie-Bishop Hotel along the alley in 2013-2014.

Block 25 derives its name from the original platted block identifier from the 1888 plat named the “Map of the Town of St. Petersburg;” the name is used throughout the report for reference purposes only and does not prohibit use of an alternative name or other branding and thematic strategies. Incorporation of St. Petersburg occurred in 1892, followed by fast-paced growth. Today, Block 25 remains in fair condition from its first decades of development, and is considered the oldest, most intact example of contiguous pioneer commercial development buildings in the City from which the downtown commercial core would expand outward.

The proposed historic landmark district, which includes the entirety of Block 25’s lots and alleyway, is inclusive of the buildings and their architectural appurtenances such as porches and awnings, and internal spaces that define the overall footprint of the building collective. This designation is not intended to include the public sidewalk and associated pedestrian amenities between the
building footprint and the surrounding street edges. For property identification and designation purposes, all buildings within the proposed historic district boundary are addressed from either Central Avenue North or 1st Street North.

STAFF EVALUATIVE FINDINGS

Preliminary

The name “Block 25” is a tentative identifier for the District with the finalized name to be determined at a future date, or as part of this historic local landmark district designation application process. The name derives from the original 1888 Town of St. Petersburg Plat that prescribed numbers to the gridded blocks making up the physical plan of the town. In 2004, 11 buildings out of 13 were identified as contributing for Block 25 and approved for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places as the Downtown St. Petersburg Historic District. The City 2015 Landmark Designation Application also identified 13 buildings, with the 1966 building at the northwest corner as non-contributing. However, the total number of extant buildings overall has been updated to 17 (two as non-contributing) based on a more detailed analysis of construction dates, building infill and additions, and architectural styling. In 2006, four of the buildings, including the Hotel Tamiami and Peacock Row buildings along 1st Avenue North, and the St. James Hotel and St. Charles Hotel along Central Avenue were designated as potentially-eligible historic landmarks. The Hotel Detroit building was designated as a local historic landmark in 2010, and the Binnie-Bishop Hotel buildings were designated as a combined, individual local historic landmark in 2013.

The City of St. Petersburg uses locally adopted minimum criteria modeled after recognized national historic standards for determining the significance of historic properties. Pursuant to Section 16.30.070.2.5(D) of the City Code, at least one or more criteria each, under a two-part test for designation as a local landmark must be met, as evaluated herein.

Age/Period of Significance

As part of the first test for local landmark designation, the 15 contributing buildings on Block 25 meet the general 50-years of age requirement that ranges from the 1888 Town Plat date and first construction of the Hotel Detroit, to 1924 when the Hotel Tamiami building on 1st Avenue North was completed, and 1937, when a small infill building closed a gap along 1st Avenue North between the Bishop Hotel and the Lewis Building #5. This period of time represents an age range to date of 128 years, 92 years, and 76 years, respectively that the block has been active as an organized structure, regardless of the historic fabric deemed to be still present. The 1966 building at 270 1st Avenue North is now 50 years old, but it is determined to be non-contributing since it lacks architectural and contextual significance. The period of significance for Block 25 then is from 1888 to 1965.
Significance Criteria (City Code, Section 16.30.070.2.5.D.1)

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Also under the first test for local landmark designation, at least one or more of nine criteria must be met. In some cases, overall historic importance of a property elevates an apparent lack of physical integrity. The Block 25 Historic District is significant at the local level in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Commerce, and Settlement and, overall meets more than one of the criteria for local landmark designation, as found in Section 16.30.070.2.5(D) of the City Code of St. Petersburg.

Located in the City’s urban core, Block 25 remains a cohesive collection of buildings that played a significant role in the early settlement and the growth of St. Petersburg as the primary meeting and destination place that expanded outward from the Hotel Detroit. The business owners of Block 25 provided lodging for prospective residents and tourists, as well as goods and services for the early pioneer community and urbanizing city center. This extensive list of early movers and shakers included visionaries, community leaders, proprietors, and builders and designers such as John C. Williams, Peter Demens, Edson T. Lewis, Edgar Ferdon, M. Leo Elliott, S.V. Schooley, Edward Tonneller, Mary Ramsey, James Norton, Frank Fortune Pulver, and Hubert Rutland. The basic historic configuration of the block with its central alley terminating at the Hotel Detroit property line, and the manner of circulation in and around the block are still present.

The Local Landmark Designation Application provides a detailed narrative supporting the determinations regarding Block 25, as listed below:

(a) Its value is a significant reminder of the cultural or archaeological heritage of the City, state or nation;
(b) 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 work has influenced the development of the City, state, or nation;
(g) Its character is a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, or continuity or sites, buildings, objects or structures united in past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development; and
(h) Its character is an established and geographically definable neighborhood, united in culture, architectural style, or physical plan and development.

Integrity Criteria (City Code, Section 16.30.070.2.5.D.2)

The second test involves the property’s integrity, of which at least one or more of seven factors of integrity (i.e., location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association) must be met. In most cases, the integrity of feeling and association by themselves rarely merit a property being eligible for designation, since they often defer to personalized experiences, emotions, and perceptions that all vary among individuals and groups. When evaluating a historic district, the individual buildings and landscape features, and the relationships between them must be present enough to convey its distinctive sense of historicity.
Close scrutiny of individual buildings is performed but each is weighed with regard to their impact and relevance to Block 25 overall. Substantial alterations and associations outside of the period of significance (since 1966) result in diminished integrity that must also be considered and taken into account. The form and architectural integrity of Block 25 should reveal itself as being somewhat unified, though nuances over its multi-decadal construction continuum from 1888 to 1937, and beyond to 1965 are recognized for changing methods and practices that are likely found between the built constructs and array of individual components that now present a historically significant collection of the built artifact over time and still present today.

Most of the buildings depict various forms and applications of early design treatments by their original and later owners, and workmanship should be evaluated accordingly. Because Block 25 remains reasonably recognizable from how it appeared until 1965, albeit with certain components having been diminished over time, staff determines that Block 25 retains a sufficient degree of integrity from its period of significance regarding location, design, setting, workmanship, and feeling, where characteristic features are still present and observable, though not necessarily to a high degree. Materials has been determined insufficient overall due to ongoing alterations of all first floor storefronts and various demolitions and non-historic additions. Integrity of association is also determined insufficient, as explained below. The National Register Downtown Historic District Nomination recognizes that alterations to Block 25 have taken place over time, yet offers that the buildings continue to "represent the wide variety of historic functions and events significant to this historic district, rather than being different only for their architectural styles." A 2013 staff report to the City Council dated August 1, 2013 suggests that "...there is sufficient historic integrity and significance to form a district."

As a matter of record, the City Historic Landmark District Designation Application for Block 25 completed in 2015 indicated positive integrity regarding location, design, setting, feeling, and association, while acknowledging changes over time. The application also suggested that "many of the alterations have achieved historic significance in their own right." However, a detailed listing of these changes was not produced. Nor had any of the factors of integrity been examined in detail.

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*Must be in addition to at least one other factor

Since determinations of each factor of integrity are required to be evaluated by City Code, the following staff analysis examines each factor more closely, as follows:

**Location:** There is positive integrity of location. This is supported by the presence of 15 historically significant buildings still extant out of 19 originally existing in 1965, and that continue to delineate the footprint of the block's interface with the public right-of-way spaces, including the alley. These buildings are some of the oldest in the City and form a built collective of the largest and most intact, continuously operating commercial block from the City's recognized founding.

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1 (2001), Section 7, page 13.
When considering the street-side footprint collective today, roughly 76% of the historic building's interface with the sidewalks remain, measuring approximately 930 out of 1221 linear feet. With the exception of the now missing elements, the height and scale of the buildings as a collective has remained nearly unchanged. The orientation of buildings to the street frontages is also unchanged, and the premise of the continually changing storefront is as relevant today as it was since Block 25's first decades. This continual conversion process has become part of the block's commercial identity, where constant change is important to its history and therefore historically significant. Though the Hotel Detroit alone boasted 38 privately-run retail shops by 1938, and over 40 additional commercial businesses occurred around the block at one time or another, the trend of constantly changing storefronts is an inherent part of the commercial corridor at the street level, which, to repeat, provides its own character distinction.

**Design:** There is *positive integrity* of Block 25's design overall. This can be evaluated in three ways that include: 1) the block parcel layout and circulation; 2) the building footprints and dimensional characteristics; and 3) how the block is comparatively used. The relative design of the original Block 25 plat layout is virtually unchanged, with the large east parcel still mostly attributed to the anchoring Hotel Detroit, though the configuration of the northern tier of lots abutting the hotel has changed, and the hotel uses have changed to residential above retail—though a fairly similar conversion comparatively. The bifurcating alley leading from 3rd Street North east to the Hotel Detroit and Jannus Live courtyard is also in its same location, though it no longer reveals a publicly accessible orientation. The non-historic driveway that appears as an alley leading from 2nd Street North was added to provide access to the non-historic Jannus Live courtyard space. This courtyard, while not used historically as a visitor amenity, does retain some semblance of a precedent in its spatial form in that it has always been used as an open space area for different functions ranging from storage, to parking, to outbuilding placement. It must be noted that some early visitors also used the hotel as a temporary residence during their lengthy stays, which is similar to the present use of the condominium.

The orchestration of commercial facades still lining the length of Central Avenue and the middle 70-percent of the block along 1st Avenue North are also occupied in near-full capacity and relate somewhat to the original commercial intent of Block 25. As is typical of many urban commercial blocks, the zero-lot line configuration of the separately owned buildings is still present, allowing clear distinctions and demarcation between building uses and ownership, which is fairly present today in how the separately constructed building “blocks” appear as distinct creations from each other. The overall height and scale of Block 25 is virtually unchanged, revealing a high degree of recognition from early dimensional appearances. In fact, other than demolitions and minor additions that have occurred, the effect of height has not been altered to any major extent, which allows Block 25 to retain its historically built scale and human experiential as compared to the blocks that surround it.

The early blacksmithing building at the alley was also razed though it has a lesser effect on the block's design due to its alley-only front. The extant of the remaining buildings as they relate to the Central Avenue linear cluster, provides a modicum of stability to the overall setting, with a fair retention of each street side's spatial relationship and orientation to each other still preserved in situ as oriented and demarcated by the alley. The height profiles for each building as they combine to create a linear silhouette form are similar to their original design specifications, which retains a likely familiarity for the pedestrian experiencing either side of the block. This is negated somewhat by the diminished profile of the Hotel Detroit, though this building does still retain characteristic elements of its overall design from the 1911 and 1913 additions. Certainly, all of the buildings have been physically altered throughout their histories
due to economic, technologic, and maintenance influences and demands. The basic strips of commercial vernacular building presentations, except for the Hotel Detroit, survive intact, with only a negligible degree of alteration to overall form and massing, again, except for the razed buildings that create noticeable gaps in contributing property tallies at the northeast and northwest corners of 1st Avenue North. It must be noted that a new building is under construction at the corner northeast parcel with a retail business below an open elevated deck.

A comparative of historic photos for both sides of the block do reveal a similarity to how the street-facing buildings appear today as a commercial goods and services destination, albeit with more of a recent focus on entertainment. This type of change in retail/use form often results in the preservation of historic character through public appeal that in turn serves as an economic engine that drives vibrancy and historic character retention in one area, while nurturing new development and redevelopment activities in others. Comparatively, a very simple question arises here that asks whether or not Block 25 would keep its current vibrancy on any given weekday or weekend if a totally new or dramatically revised development replaced it? This topic is worthy of additional open discussion and consideration beyond what is included in this report.

The original uses of Block 25 have waned and been adapted to an overall theme of urban entertainment since 1966, which lessens the integrity of historic use. However, this is debatable and opens up a line of ongoing discussion since most of the uses are similar to what occurred historically, though the mix of businesses has always been in constant flux. Apart from the two primary street strips of retail, the existing north halves of the side streets of 3rd and 2nd Streets North are similar to their historic precedents though the amount of retail along 2nd Street North is quite diminished. Though a designated local historic landmark, the Hotel Detroit is a much altered building from its original design as a hotel amenity, appearing today as a residential condominium and entertainment outlet. The loss of integrity here includes the absence of an open courtyard area that helped to identify the hotel’s provision of the “healthy” outdoor environment that attracted early visitors. The current drinking establishment that now occupies the Central Avenue façade of the hotel reflects a significant change in the historic use of the space, but can be considered a fairly reversible situation. However, a number of early and later additions to the Central Avenue façade of the original hotel building reduced the frontal open space footprint, and important original structural elements have been removed such as the corner tower and the early twentieth century onion dome/minaret entry structure and garden.

The Victorian period character of the 1888 hotel is no longer apparent either, though the 1911 and 1913 additions, as masonry vernacular commercial buildings that were some of the first medium-rise buildings in the City are still very readable. The presence of the main hotel building and structural frame, along with some of its fenestration arrangement and its main structure essential form, though quite diminished are easily differentiated from the later additions. The importance of this building due to its age alone increases design integrity for the understanding it provides with regard to one of the City’s earliest multi-story buildings.

Setting: There is positive integrity of setting. When considering Block 25 as a platted entity with a significant number of extent buildings dating to St. Petersburg’s formative years and later to the 1960s, integrity of setting is recognizable under the terms of its commercial character, and in part to its architectural character as elements of the older constructions reveal themselves in various forms that accommodate the visiting public. The existing building array provides a highly distinctive experience set apart from all other blocks in the urban core. The fully extent row of buildings along Central Avenue represents an existing stock with a large percentage of primary inner constructed skeletons dating no later than 1913, with a modicum of historic fabric from two
of the buildings dating to 1888 and 1894, and others from at least 1904. These are extremely rare representations in St. Petersburg’s downtown area that add to the overall setting of the block’s representation as one of the oldest intact building collectives in the City.

Also, the overall design of Block 25 as an organically evolved commercial core of buildings representing the earliest permanent settlement decades is still present, though altered from the previously apparent one- and two-part block designs for lower retail and upper private space forms and functions. Today, these one- and two-part blocks accommodate contemporary uses catering to restaurant and entertainment, with the upper private spaces dedicated to individual living and storage spaces. The first-story retail fronts are actively engaged according to traditional patterns and circulation, but have aesthetically changed without altering the setting of the block as a whole.

Through interpretation and purposeful research, the character of the setting is enhanced as the buildings along the block’s perimeter reveal their histories. In some cases, setting is enhanced by today’s vibrancy that continues the similar early effect, even though they are now much different according to changed traditions, values, adornments, and uses. It may be possible to retrieve what may be a stronger, hidden integrity of setting, since no new or existing buildings have been rendered as out of scale with the early dimensional characteristics of the setting. It is debatable that many of the newer nuances such as temporary uses, spatial constraints and allowances, ambitions and expectations that affect earlier eras of character are today arguably reversible, though conceivably contrived. While demolitions certainly diminish the setting integrity along the 1st Avenue North side of the block, the presence of 70% of the block as an active strip, and its architecture as fairly unchanged, its role as a secondary component street of Block 25 is still evident.

Materials: There is insufficient integrity of materials. This is supported in light of continual building alterations, demolitions, and ongoing storefront changes that diminish the collective materials overall, especially with more recent changes. Upper façade components and some architectural appurtenances do remain, though less than half of the buildings retain significant materials keenly visible and readily available for meaningful study such as un-altered first-floor constructs that establish a visual and more personal connection to the casual observer for clear reading of a building’s physical makeup. It must be noted that original materials are found in some of the building’s parapets, structural framing, perimeter walls, façade ornament, and even windows in some cases. However, historic materials overall that are easily observed are too diminished to reveal a solid positive finding. It is important to note that none of the four corner buildings, in their entirety are found to have sufficient historic materials due to demolition or significant interior and exterior alterations. The Hotel Detroit that makes up the southeast corner, does have sufficient materials integrity pertaining to its later ells, though the 1888 hotel is too relived of its significant historic materials to retain a positive finding in this case.

Workmanship: There is barely sufficient integrity of workmanship overall, though enough to support a positive finding. The historically significant Block 25 buildings as a whole represented a long-standing, recognizable array of masonry vernacular construction that were juxtaposed in manners that allowed differentiation between owners, lessees, builders, and designers that is still present in spite of an apparent lack of visible materials readily apparent today. However, large elements and the configuration of building blocks that have been preserved tend to boost overall integrity of workmanship that tends to fail between individual buildings as opposed to their relationship to the larger block. The workmanship that is evident is found upon generalized
evaluation of individual street-wide form and presence, and upon closer scrutiny to higher profile components that may not offer significance by themselves.

Though materials overall are determined to be insufficient, notable workmanship is found mostly in the roof parapets that are fairly visible, exterior brick walls including along the alley, façade openings above the first floor, and with some of the windows and later ornamental projections—all of which allow a fairly common assessment of craftsmanship and the technologies used for early twentieth-century construction methods and practices. One can examine a historic, original wall of an individual building and mostly determine the method used for the entire building from its original construction and through subsequent changes. The placement of individual building blocks that formed a resulting collective still stands as a testament to how early buildings were constructed to adjoin each other. Dramatic revitalization efforts in the 1980s caused severe changes to manipulated work overall of some buildings, especially the first floor frontal planes, though the effect of the parapet brickwork can still be studied successfully for most of the buildings.

For example, the Hotel Detroit has had too many alterations such as removal of historic features and additions of non-historical elements to properly assess workmanship that gave it such a strong identity during the period of significance. The current uses of the building also depart too broadly away from a firm and robust original historic character that would otherwise produce a higher integrity here. This is critical in that the Hotel Detroit represented the largest site on the block, originally taking up nearly half of it overall. Also, the Lewis buildings at 277-279 and 259-269 Central Avenue are altered enough to limit easy recognition from their highest integrity moments during the period of significance, though their profiles are still quite evident; it does not appear that the alterations are reversible on either building. In addition, the loss of the spectacular Lewis Building #4 at 270 1st Avenue North, and the 1912 corner building at 1st Avenue North and 2nd Street North, have diminished the collective of what could have been a very complete, strong urban block of buildings.

The obvious loss of storefronts of which there does not appear to be more than 20-percent retained, does diminish a strongly recognizable workmanship related to the period of significance; however, non-historic, latent workmanship continues an attempt somewhat to fit into the physical constraints of past designs and workmanship. This is noteworthy in how changes have been guided by the COA process in some cases. While the continually changing storefront tends to create a historic significance in its own right, such change as that has occurred on Block 25, where multiple storefronts have been merged and individual identities eliminated, has nevertheless diminished effective and critical workmanship of early twentieth century and late nineteenth century buildings, creating a barely discernible, though still present workmanship effect suitable for current study.

Feeling: There is positive integrity of feeling in spite of other integrity factors. This is apparent in that today’s Block 25 still retains a strong essence of its historic character from its earlier era(s), though not as readily to its earliest founding years. Certain visual aspects of the block, as well as, its compactness amid surrounding redevelopments encourages feelings of historic quaintness, messy vibrancy, and a certain beauty of age that deliver a strong sense of place to be experienced differently among individuals. The Block 25 experience is often a destination place for many who likely view it as distinct from other downtown places. The attraction to the core of mostly brick, low-scaled buildings is delivered in part by how the buildings relate to the visitor in a human scale and as surviving, older constructs that are compact, and somewhat
against the grain of other more modern developments that have changed the landscape during their memory.

A walk around Block 25 delivers a strong feeling of historic character that is repeated along much of the Central Avenue corridor where aged, low-profile buildings offer a completely different experience of visitation, business, and leisure than contemporary tall buildings. This is evidenced with the failure of nearby buildings and projects that have not garnished the continual commercial successes as documented along Central Avenue. The historic buildings along Central Avenue today appear to reveal a commercial and active resilience not as successfully recreated by newer developments. Its steady use over time has created a de facto destination of sorts, a place that is “known” as a core of where to be, and easily found through instinctive wayfinding by its unique sense of place and character delivered by the buildings and spatial flow.

Association: There is insufficient integrity of association depending on how associations with historic precedents are considered. For the purpose of this report and evaluation, the overall block continues to operate similarly to its historic past, though strong physical associations with individuals and activities significant to its past are not clearly present to the casual observer. There are no remaining hotel uses, and only a limited number of retail/office spaces that were a critical part of its mix of uses remain. Critical demolitions on the block have also rendered an adverse associative disparity.

Due to the distinctive character of the block as differentiated from the immediately surrounding areas, it is acknowledged that most observers would likely characterize the block and its individual buildings as part of early development and a central core commercial area of the City, yet there are no readily apparent, ultra-high quality associations or associative patterns to direct or inform the observer without meaningful interpretation. It is also acknowledged that the early identity of Block 25 is lacking of strong readily apparent associations with significant individuals who helped to organize the Town of St. Petersburg, though the overall design of the intact block is fairly evident. Association may be enhanced or viewed more positively if the anchoring buildings were still in place, or restored, such as the Lewis Buildings, or a stronger representation of the Hotel Detroit. It must be noted that for determining contextual significance under the first test, association does remain.

PROPERTY OWNER CONSENT

This application for designation was not initiated or submitted by the owner(s) of the property. Upon first processing the designation application in early 2015, Staff was aware of at least two (2) property owners who objected to the local historic landmark district. Since noticing the 2016 CPPC hearing, Staff has received no definitive information regarding the owners’ position or intentions regarding the application. Additional clarification is expected.

BENEFITS OF DESIGNATION

The benefits of designation have a positive trajectory for community development. For example, a community’s or neighborhood’s sense of place and identity can be strengthened through the identification and stewardship of historic resources that reveal how they evolved and responded to various events over a time continuum. Lessons learned are often historical in nature, and understanding of historical events and adaptation practices helps to building resilience tailored to a local community’s needs and character. Localized heritage also helps
community's and individuals alike to come together on certain issues as part of a common bond across organizations and disciplines that have been influenced by shared historical patterns and trends, both positive and negative.

**Increased heritage tourism** through the maintenance of the local historic character and history setting that Block 25 extols as distinctive among any other area in the City. Sufficiently preserved and maintained history leads to creating local identity and a regionally and nationally recognized central core that reveals the City's story physically, as well, socially, politically, and economically. A wide array of published books and materials continue to represent St. Petersburg's long-standing historical overlaps that reveal many firsts in industry and business. Local architectural and history tours feed a successful economic engine spurred in part by the City's pioneer and traditional architecture.

Proven successes for economic benefits through the sensitive reuse of historic buildings and landscapes that reveal local character are exemplified through national programs such as the Florida and National Main Street Programs, which include historic preservation as one of their core tenets for creating dynamic, vibrant, and healthy commercial corridors. In the past, the word "downtown" brought to mind an image of a bustling center of commerce and activity that has often evolved into highly successful urban entertainment destinations and hotspots that thrive even during economic downturns. One of the critical components to preserving historic areas is maintaining a historic appearance and human pedestrian scale that proudly extols the City's heritage, but that also accepts sensitive adaptations to modern modes, uses, and technologies.

The local Ad Valorem Tax Exemption and Federal Tax Credit for historic building rehabilitation provides significant financial savings to property owners completing eligible improvements to their properties, as evidenced by the City's 2016 cycle that anticipates over $100,000 in tax savings for currently participating property owners. Historic designation also provides relief from an array of requirements of local building and land use codes, as well as, from certain flood elevation requirements. Occasionally, financial grants become available to local governments and nonprofit entities that provide assistance to property owners who choose to preserve and interpret historic sites. Inter-disciplinary City staff also provides limited expert technical assistance to property owners considering historic designation or historic building improvements by sharing best historic preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation practices for qualified historic building, structure, and site projects. In many cases, proposed historic review of rehabilitation projects can be streamlined through the Community Planning and Historic Preservation Division when a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is required.

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION AND EXISTING AND FUTURE PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY**

Renovations, alterations, development and redevelopment are guided, in part, by the City of St. Petersburg Comprehensive Plan, St. Petersburg Code of Ordinances, Future Land Use Map, and Official Zoning Map. Properties located within the proposed local landmark district, wholly or in part, include the following map designations:

- DC-C (Downtown Center - Core) on the City’s Official Zoning Map
- CBD (Community Business District) on the City’s Official Future Land Use Map
- Intown Activity Center on the City’s Official Future Land Use Map
- Downtown St. Petersburg National Register (Historic) District
- Individual Local Historic Landmark
• Potentially-Eligible List

The St. Petersburg Comprehensive Plan includes several elements relevant to the subject request for local landmark district designation, including the Vision Element, Future Land Use Element, and Historic Preservation Element. The Vision Element summarizes the City’s Vision 2020 Plan effort, including an overall mission statement, declaration of 15 citizen-based themes, and an implementation framework built around the concept of neighborhoods, corridors, and centers. The Vision Element presents an overall vision for the community and includes general recommendations for the downtown center, one of which states, “Preserve noteworthy buildings through renovation and adaptive reuse.”

The Future Land Use Element establishes Future Land Use categories. The Future Land Use category for the properties located within the proposed local landmark district is CBD (Central Business District) with an Activity Center Overlay. The CBD plan category encourages a mix of higher-intensity retail, office, industrial, service, and residential uses. This category is implemented by the Intown Redevelopment Plan, which establishes the goals, objectives and policies for the redevelopment of the CBD. The Intown Redevelopment Plan designates the subject properties as part of the Downtown Core Area on Map 2 titled, “Intown Redevelopment Area and Project Focus Areas.” Similar to the CBD plan category description, the Downtown Core Area is defined with an intensive, mixed-use emphasis.

The St. Petersburg Code of Ordinances, and specifically City Code, Chapter 16, Land Development Regulations (LDRs), is a set of standards that implements the St. Petersburg Comprehensive Plan and Intown Redevelopment Plan. According to the Official Zoning Map, properties within the proposed local landmark district are zoned Downtown Center-Core (DC-C). The DC-C category is the most intensive district in the City’s schedule of regulations. The purpose of this district is to create a diverse and vibrant downtown, which serves as a center for employment, entertainment, and retail activity.

It has been previously suggested that the prevailing land use classifications and Intown Redevelopment Plan (IRP) establishes a development vision for downtown that specifically encourages achievement of the maximum redevelopment potential for property and that this vision is prioritized over other historic preservation objectives. City staff disagrees.

Historic preservation was a part of IRP policy from its inception in 1982, although the City of St. Petersburg did not establish a formal historic preservation program until 1986, when it was awarded Certified Local Government status by the State of Florida and created a historic preservation ordinance. “Historic rehabilitation and restoration” was included as a “Project Component” in the original IRP, along with land acquisition, public parking and recreational facilities, commercial/retail facilities, and infrastructure.

Since 1986, the City has designated nearly 20 properties within the boundaries of the IRP, and perhaps a dozen more within areas zoned Downtown Center located outside of the IRP. Seven locally designated properties are within CBD-Core, of which six are privately owned. These include the Kress Building, Snell Arcade, the Open Air Post Office, Women’s Town Improvement Association Building (WTIA), the Dennis-McCarthy Hotel, and the Hotel Detroit. The Kress Building, Snell Arcade and WTIA buildings were successfully renovated and used for the profitable purposes of their owners while subject to the City’s historic preservation standards.
The current IRP, as amended, still includes reference to Block 25 (the “Jannus Landing Block”) encouraging, “rehabilitation” or redevelop(ment) in keeping with the architectural style (vernacular), scale and character of the block.” Moreover, previous editions of the IRP included various depictions and representations of the subject block emphasizing its historic character. Finally, when developers of the Detroit Hotel sought approval of its adaptive reuse in 2001, the Community Redevelopment Agency found the project consistent with the IRP, despite it having a development intensity below the low end of the FAR range envisioned by the zoning regulations at that time.

The Downtown Center zoning also supports historic preservation through a floor area ratio exemption for local landmark buildings, bonuses issued for the use of Transferable Development Rights, as well as bonuses issued for relocating eligible or contributing National Register properties.

The City recognizes the importance of historic preservation to its downtown revitalization efforts and has created incentives in its land development regulations to protect and rehabilitate historic buildings, or move them from harm’s way. The designation of this local landmark district, as proposed, is not a departure from the City’s vision for downtown, but an act consistent with its longstanding policy in downtown to protect historic resources.

Prior to Local Landmark Designation

Prior to local landmark designation, most properties located within the proposed local landmark district are generally eligible for redevelopment in accordance with the DC-C zoning district regulations, except as follows:

- **Hotel Detroit (201 Central Avenue) and Binnie-Bishop Hotel (256 1st Avenue North)** – These properties are already designated as individual local historic landmarks. Any proposal for redevelopment will first require approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for demolition. COA criteria for demolition are outlined in LDR Section 16.30.070.2.6.

- **St. Charles Hotel (243-247 Central Avenue), James Hotel (231-235 Central Avenue), and Hotel Tamiami (242 1st Avenue North)** – These properties are identified in the city records as potentially eligible for individual local landmark designation, which do not require a COA for exterior improvements. However, upon receipt of an application for partial or whole demolition, the issuance of a demolition permit is delayed for 30 days. During this time, written notice shall be sent to the Community Planning and Preservation Commission (CPPC) and any resident or community group who annually files for notification. If a third-party application to designate is received during the noticed period of time, issuance of a demolition permit is further delayed pending a final decision on the individual local landmark designation application. Criteria are outlined in LDR Section 16.30.070.2.11.

- **All Properties** – Within the LDRs, demolition of any building in a DC district, regardless of designation status, is prohibited until a site plan for new development has been approved and a complete application for required building permits has been submitted.
The DC-C zoning district regulations have a base floor area ratio (FAR) of 4.0. By right, properties located within the proposed local landmark district could cumulatively redevelop to a 4.0 FAR. Applicants may propose an unlimited amount of FAR through the use of FAR bonuses and the streamline or public hearing review process; however, this is not possible given the cumulative constraints of the need to comply with building envelope regulations (minimum building setbacks from public streets, minimum distance between buildings, maximum floor plate, and minimum ground level open space standards) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations pertaining to building height.

**Following Local Landmark Designation**

If approved, certain exterior alterations and renovations, all new construction, and demolition would benefit from professional input subject to a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) review. As of the date of this report, most COA requests are administratively reviewed with expeditious turn-around times as part of the regular procedures for construction permitting, and only a limited number of COA requests are scheduled for public hearing review. For example, during 2015, 59 of 66 total COA applications were administratively processed, with only six scheduled for CPPC review. For 2016 to date, 33 of 37 COA applications have been processed administratively.

The local landmark district designation encourages sensitive, compatible improvements and enhancements and does not prohibit affected property owners from seeking redevelopment of their properties. As an added benefit, the City provides technical and procedural assistance when a COA is requested, and addresses compatibility concerns within and around neighborhoods in a responsive manner.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The proposed local historic landmark district designation is generally consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, relating to the protection, use and adaptive reuse of historic buildings. The local landmark designation will not adversely affect the FLUM or zoning designations, nor will it significantly constrain any existing or future plans for the development of the City.

**OBJECTIVE LU28:** The City's LDRs shall continue to support the adaptive reuse of existing and historic buildings in order to maximize the use of existing infrastructure, preserve natural areas from being harvested for the production of construction materials, minimize the vehicle miles traveled for transporting new construction materials over long distances, preserve existing natural carbon sinks within the City, and encourage the use of alternative transportation options.

**OBJECTIVE LU10:** The historic resources locally designated by the St. Petersburg City Council and Community Planning and Preservation Commission (CPPC) shall be incorporated onto the Land Use Map or map series at the time of original adoption, or through the amendment process, and protected from development and redevelopment activities consistent with the provisions of the Historic Preservation Element and the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

**Policy LU10.1:** Decisions regarding the designation of historic resources shall be based on the criteria and policies outlined in the Historic Preservation Ordinance and the Historic Preservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
Policy HP2.3: The City shall provide technical assistance to applications for designation of historic structures and districts.

Policy HP2.6: Decisions regarding the designation of historic resources shall be based on National Register eligibility criteria and policies outlined in the Historic Preservation Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan. The City will use the following selection criteria [for city initiated landmark designations] as a guideline for staff recommendations to the CPPC and City Council:

- National Register or DOE status
- Prominence/importance related to the City
- Prominence/importance related to the neighborhood
- Degree of threat to the landmark
- Condition of the landmark
- Degree of owner support

Policy V1.1: Development decisions and strategies shall integrate the guiding principles found in the Vision Element with sound planning principles followed in the formal planning process.

Policy LU3.1: Central Business Districts. Allowing a mixture of higher intensity retail, office, industrial, service and residential uses up to a floor area ratio of 4.0 and a net residential density not to exceed the maximum allowable in the land development regulations. Increased floor area ratios may be permitted as a bonus for developments that provide additional amenities or other improvements that achieve CBD design and development objectives. Application of this category is limited to the Intown Sector. This category shall not be applied without development of, and CPA approval of, a special area plan.

OBJECTIVE LU2: The Future Land Use Element shall facilitate a compact urban development pattern that provides opportunities to more efficiently use and develop infrastructure, land and other resources and services by concentrating more intensive growth in activity centers and other appropriate areas.
APPENDIX B
Contributing/Non-Contributing Building Map

Block 25 Local Historic Landmark District
APPENDIX C
Designation Application
City of St. Petersburg  
Division of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation

Local Landmark Designation Application

1. NAME AND LOCATION OF PROPERTY

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2. PROPERTY OWNER(S) NAME AND ADDRESS

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<tr>
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4. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Describe boundary line encompassing all man-made and natural resources to be included in designation (general legal description or survey). Attach map delimiting proposed boundary. (Use continuation sheet if necessary)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET.

5. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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### Architectural Classification
(See Appendix A for list)

- Masonry Vernacular (incl. Victorian type)
- Mediterranean Revival
- Frame Vernacular
- Modern Commercial

### Materials
- Brick
- Stucco
- Concrete
- Wood, Metal

### Narrative Description
On one or more continuation sheets describe the historic and existing condition of the property use conveying the following information: original location and setting; natural features; pre-historic man-made features; subdivision design; description of surrounding buildings; major alterations and present appearance; interior appearance;

### 8. NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY

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Block 25 Historic District
Name of Property

9. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Criteria for Significance
(mark one or more boxes for the appropriate criteria)

☒ Its value is a significant reminder of the cultural or archaeological heritage of the City, state, or nation.

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

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

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

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

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

☒ Its character is a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, or continuity or sites, buildings, objects or structures united in past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

☒ Its character is an established and geographically definable neighborhood, united in culture, architectural style or physical plan and development.

☐ It has contributed, or is likely to contribute, information important to the prehistory or history of the City, state, or nation.

Areas of Significance
(see Attachment B for detailed list of categories)

Community Planning and Development

Commerce

Settlement

Period of Significance
1888-1965

Significant Dates (date constructed & altered)

Significant Person(s)
John C. Williams; Edson T. Lewis; Frank F. Pulver
Mary Ramsey; Edward Tonnellier; James Norton; Frank F. Pulver

Cultural Affiliation/Historic Period
N/A

Builder

Architect
Edgar Fendon; M. Leo Elliott

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property as it relates to the above criteria and information on one or more continuation sheets. Include biographical data on significant person(s), builder and architect, if known. Please use parenthetical notations, footnotes or endnotes for citations of work used.)

See Continuation Sheet.

10. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet.
St. Petersburg Landmark Designation Application

Name of Property Block 25 Historic District.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Boundary Description

Block 25, Revised Map of the City Of St. Petersburg, as recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 49, Public Records of Hillsborough County, Florida, of which Pinellas County, Florida was formerly a part and The Hotel Detroit, A Condominium, according to the plat thereof recorded in Condominium Book 12245, Page 1965 and being further described in that certain Declaration of Condominium recorded in Official Record Book 12214, Pages 2478 through 2527 and all exhibits and amendments thereof, of the Public Records of Pinellas County, Florida.

Boundary Justification

The boundary consists of the buildings and parcels historically associated with the development of Block 25.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Setting

The proposed Block 25 Historic District is located in the downtown core of St. Petersburg and consists of a cohesive collection of buildings and other historically significant resources representing the early formation and development of the City. Block 25 is centrally situated as one of eight blocks around St. Petersburg’s largest original urban core park from its 1888 plat. It was the first City block to fully develop with a mix of wood and brick buildings mostly characterized as one to two stories, and each commonly referred to at the time as individual “blocks.” Its largest lot was developed with an ornate wood framed hotel. Its original character as a commercial center began along its south side, while later development occurred along its north, both of which have changed modestly to accommodate contemporary entertainment uses of restaurants, bars, and live performance venues. It is dominated by a robust sidewalk activity character.

Block 25 includes 17 existing buildings (one is currently under construction) of which 15 contribute to the historic character of the block. The historic buildings of Block 25 are common examples of local Masonry and Frame Vernacular constructions, influenced by trends of the time such as late Victorian and twentieth century Mediterranean Revival standards of commercial building design and materials manufacturing. All of the buildings were historically constructed for commercial types of uses, with some designed as hotels or apartments mostly on upper floors. Most of the historic resources date principally from 1900 through the mid-1920s. Two buildings pre-date 1900, while one noncontributing building was built in 1966, and the other is under construction as of the date of this report.
Today, the entire block is an entertainment and dining destination for local residents and visitors alike, with the Hotel Detroit serving as the largest and only residential enclave of the block. Since 1966, four original buildings have been demolished.

**Locational Characteristics**

Block 25 is a rectangular-shaped city block of typical 220- x 400-foot dimensions originally platted in 1888, and incorporating approximately 2.0 acres. Bounded by Central Avenue on the south, 1st Avenue North on the north, 2nd Street North on the east, and 3rd Street North on the west, the proposed Block 25 Historic District consists of a cohesive collection of the City's earliest commercial properties.

The area draws its ambience from the consistent massing, scale, and setbacks of the commercial buildings that predate nearly all of the buildings on surrounding city blocks. With the exception of the Hotel Detroit site, which was originally designed to occupy nearly the entire eastern half of the block, the individual parcels were platted in a much smaller, repeated size resulting in a pattern of attached buildings occupying several contiguous lots as a wrap around the perimeter of the block. A central courtyard behind the Hotel Detroit today provides outdoor, interconnected event space as a concert venue. The central brick paved alley with granite curbs runs from west to east, terminating at the courtyard, and provides rear service access for the businesses, although several original or early balconies remain along the alley. One building constructed in 1966 occupies the northwest corner, and is considered non-contributing, while a second at the northeast corner is currently under construction and counted as a non-contributing building.

The buildings in Block 25 range from one- to four-stories in height with rectangular forms, flat or gable roofs, and exhibit either Masonry Vernacular or Frame Vernacular construction with influences from late Victorian and early twentieth-century Mediterranean Revival programs. All contributing buildings were constructed before the onset of World War II. Two contributing buildings were constructed during the early pioneer era in 1888 and 1894. Nine historic buildings (two are additions) were built from 1894 to 1913, and three buildings exhibit architectural styling from the land boom period of the 1920s. Although the majority of buildings are of masonry construction, frame structures are also represented on Block 25, although these are clad with stucco. The masonry buildings often retain their original brick or have been surfaced with stucco. Generally, the buildings of Block 25 feature flat roofs with surface modelling incorporated into parapets, and have continuous masonry foundations. A variety of window designs are found, and the second stories typically retain the most original historic fabric.
Each building is described below beginning with a basic architectural description, followed by a narrative of its alterations over time. In some cases, key photographs reveal comparisons between the original construct and latent alterations. The following graphic provides a guide from which the more detailed descriptions are ordered, beginning with the Hotel Detroit and running clockwise.

**Hotel Detroit, 201-215 Central Avenue (8Pli113)**

Locally designated in 2010, the former Hotel Detroit located at 201-215 Central Avenue was originally constructed in 1888 as a wood frame, four-story building with a five-story corner tower at its southeast corner. At the time, it was the tallest hotel in the City, at least until 1922. This building was markedly Victorian in its architectural statement, revealing a medium-pitch, side-gabled primary roof, punctured with a large left dormer that sandwiched three smaller dormers between it and the tower. The upper gable wall sides had applied decorative brackets that falsely appeared as half timbering to match the treatment of the verandah and corner tower.

Hotel Detroit, ca. 1895. FL State Archives, Photo N-040078

This early building dominated the block with nine perceivable bays along its façade running five bays deep, not including the center rear wing. Its two-story
verandah wrapped both the front and east elevations, preventing a continuous run of the verandah by the corner tower. The verandah posts were adorned with decorative post brackets and hand railings.

When constructed, the building was T-shaped, with two rear, one-story extensions and two outbuildings serving as laundry and servant’s facilities. An open, flat grand entry was featured leading to the frontal, south-facing entrance, followed with a later covered, two-story onion-domed gazebo and walkway that was removed by 1919. Two brick additions, constructed in 1911 and 1913, enlarged the hotel’s footprint, that today resembles an "H" shape, with one of the ells truncated. Additional but separate buildings located along 1st Avenue North were later constructed as annexes for the hotel’s use. Not including the annex buildings along 1st Avenue North, the current building is evaluated herein as consisting of three separate buildings since the 1911 and 1913 additions were considerably large, and represented different architectural interpretations. Today, the three buildings remain as a masonry and wood frame combination of structures that still stand four-stories, but without the original corner tower, rear 1888 center wing, and grand entry structure. Unlike the early hotel configuration, there are no direct connections to any of the existing buildings now situated along 1st Avenue North.

1888 building
The central and primary wing of the 1888 building still connects the two brick additions, but has been significantly altered. Its side elevations and original rear wing are missing (demolished 1911, 1913, 1981 respectively), with the east and west sides terminating into the 1911 and 1913 additions. Some of the original exterior wood siding was replaced with asbestos siding beginning in 1949 through the 1950s, and an early 1980s stucco application now covers all vertical wall planes. A one-story open porch with a shed roof and decorative wood posts and railing of non-historic materials now extends across the façade of the 1888 building. A gabled entrance and porch frames the former historic hotel entry with paired five-light doors set under a four-light transom. The north (rear) elevation features several wrought iron balconies accessed by sliding glass doors.

Fenestration, especially along the first floor planes has been continually altered. The majority of windows on the north and south elevations of the central wing and the tower are newer replacements as aluminum fixed, single-hung sashes with a three-over-one simulated divided light pattern. The early windows were mostly replaced beginning in 1985. The only extant early windows appear to be on the lower story as two-over-two, double-hung sashes set independently.
An open patio bar occupies the space in front of the central wing between the east and west additions, which has historically been used in this manner, though previously in tandem with a restaurant. A latent, covered handicap accessible entrance ramp extends along the east edge of the patio. The original five-story corner tower, which was removed in 1913, was recreated in 2002 at the northeast end of the patio area. Clad with vinyl siding and composition shingles, the tower has a hip roof with gabled dormers and an open top floor. A 2002 one-story addition, clad with stucco, connects to the tower at the junction with the 1913 addition, serving as an entrance to the condominium units on the upper floors. In 1939, a major renovation of the hotel included a pair of entry canopies, one of which extended from the Central Avenue entry to the street curb, and the other to the 2nd Street North curb. These canopies were removed in the 1980s. The one-story addition that was constructed in 1946 (now historic) at the west end of the patio is fairly intact, and was originally part of a coffee shop. The east exterior wall of this addition features the original stucco finish and five-light casement windows set in a ribbon pattern. Another addition of roughly 16 x 26 dimensions was added in 1947 on the opposite side of the patio, but is no longer extant.

1911 building
The 1911 four-story addition on the west elevation added 40 rooms. The building is narrow at its street elevation forming an L-shape toward the rear. The original addition had a flat roof with a raised parapet and bracketed decorative cornice. The parapet reveals an obvious repair for its entire length, and the cornice is a replacement that now lacks the decorative brackets. The upper east elevation reveals a recent brick resurfacing in its entirety above the third floor. The façade is narrow, standing as a two-bay building along the street, and while revealing another two bays along the south elevation where it meets the 1888 hotel. A small, one-story concrete block addition was constructed to the rear in 1947, but has since been demolished. The west elevation reveals six distinct brick columns terminating at the roofline, of which five may have been used as flues for early gas ducts, or as structural support devices, or both.
The rectangular window openings at the south and east elevations, which constitute the front façade, have slightly arched brick lintels with marble keystones above the rectangular windows, with granite sills below. Windows on the north and west elevations have the same brick lintels and granite sills, but reveal a slight rounded arch not present on the other elevations. The original windows were one-over-one double-hung sash, but began to be replaced in their entirety in 1985. Today, the windows on the east, west, and north elevations are three-over-one single-hung metal sash, and fixed windows placed independently and paired. The second through the fourth stories at the frontal elevation feature a single 15-light French door each under a one-light transom to access the individual metal balcony components. Each balcony window is a three-over-one single-hung metal sash. The fourth floor door was probably added in 1953.

Hotel Detroit, 1911 west addition. Photo 2015.

The wrought iron balcony/fire escape system supported on three iron posts occurs on the front (south) façade, creating a covered sidewalk at the first story street level; the original balcony accommodated two stories, while the fourth floor balcony was likely added in 1953. Each balcony reveals a wrought iron railing system with lower iron lattice spandrels. On the first floor, the south storefronts of the 1911 brick addition and the 1946 restaurant addition were altered in 1981 with the application of wood and fieldstone siding and the installation of one- and 20-light fixed and three-light casement windows.

1913 building
The four-story brick addition on the east was constructed in 1913 and is a similar architectural style to that of the 1911 addition. Like the west addition, this addition also has a flat roof with a raised parapet, but lacks the heavier detailing of the cornice. A more imposing structure, the 1913 addition reveals five bays along its south façade, and has a basic rectangular footprint overall. It also features a wrought iron, four-post balcony system on the front (south) façade creating a canopy at the first story street level, with balconies on the second through fourth floors. This balcony system replaced the 1939 anchored, full length canopy during the early 1980s. The upper floors also feature two 15-light French doors set under a one-light transom to access the balcony system, and three-over-one single-hung metal sash windows. A metal header beam with decorative wall anchors is visible along the façade.
Windows on the east, west, and north elevations are also three-over-one single-hung metal sash and fixed windows, with a three-over-one simulated divided light pattern placed independently and paired. Windows on this addition were originally nine-over-one double-hung sash and the openings are historically designed with thick lintels and narrow sills made of concrete sills. Windows on the west elevation which face the rear courtyard have segmental brick arch lintels and brick sills. First floor windows are commercial store-front plate glass windows. A column of window openings has been bricked-in at the west elevation where the building meets the later comer tower. The overall fenestration package along the east elevation has been significantly altered.

The L-shaped historic “Detroit Hotel” sign at the southeast corner of the facade was likely installed between 1939 and 1941. The neon sign advertising “Liquor” and located on the east elevation at the first story is not historically significant.

**Michigan Building, 231-235 Central Avenue (8Pl291)**

Designed by Edgar Ferdon and constructed in 1909, the Michigan Building is a typical commercial Masonry Vernacular building planned to accommodate small businesses on the first floor and living space above. The two-story brick building features a flat roof set behind a rectangular parapet with geometric surface modelling and a band of triad scuppers. Although the brickwork is set in a common bond pattern throughout the majority of the façade, the parapet features a decorative bond pattern.

Featuring a covered balcony originally made of wood, it currently extends the length of the building, and was likely replaced in 1952 with its current metal balcony system. The balcony has wood decking with a wood roof and a metal balustrade with a scroll motif and slender metal columns and was extensively repaired in 1952 and 1971. The first bay consists of paired, single light doors with a four-light transom above. The second, third, and fifth bays feature one-over-one, double-hung sash windows. A single-light door topped with a two-light transom is located in the fourth bay. All openings on the second story have masonry lintels and the windows also have masonry sills.
Two one-story concrete block additions were constructed at the rear; one in 1926 and the other in 1949. The second floor contains five bays, whereas the first floor can be divided into three bays of which the previous individual storefronts were continually altered over time. The first bay features a commercial glass door with a large single light transom. The second bay is comprised of inset commercial storefront with a standard, modern commercial glass door and transom. The storefront features four single-light windows set above a solid bulkhead. Wood siding has been used to clad the small portion of this bay that surrounds an ATM machine. The third bay is also comprised of an inset commercial storefront. It features a modern wood door that extends the full height of the opening and five two-light windows. A defining feature of the Michigan Building façade is its masonry header beam adorned with regularly spaced decorative wall anchor flower motifs running across the top of the storefront openings.

Ramsey Addition, 237-241 Central Avenue (8Pi313)

The Ramsey Addition is also a Masonry Vernacular building and was constructed in 1908 by R.W. Miller for Mary Ramsey as an addition to her adjacent 1904 building to the west. The brick building is topped by a flat roof set behind a decorative brick parapet featuring a defining row of brick corbel columns. A second story balcony with a flat roof and decorative metal balustrade runs the length of the building and continues west across the façade of the St. Charles Hotel. This balcony was likely a 1950s replacement of the originally wood balcony. The second story includes three bays with the west bay containing a single, 15-light French door and the remaining two bays revealing two-over-two, double-hung sash windows that likely replaced jalousie sets installed in 1953. Although the window openings are
arched with a brick header, the arch has been infilled to accommodate rectangular window framing. Earlier transoms have all been removed.

The first floor commercial storefront has been completely removed with the exception of the original metal columns which help to define the three lower bays. The middle bay contains a non-original sloped entrance and is flanked on either side with outdoor seating. The entire opening is covered with a metal grid structure that contains the entry gate.

St. Charles Hotel (1904 Ramsey Building), 243-247 Central Avenue (8Pi278)

The St. Charles Hotel building, also known as the Ramsey Block, was constructed in 1904 for Mary Ramsey. The Masonry Vernacular brick building is topped by a flat roof and features a central, articulated brick parapet that showcases a historic metal sign for the St. Charles Hotel. The frontal façade brick walls were repointed and reset in 1981 during an extensive renovation of the building resulting in part from a devastating 1975 fire that nearly gutted the entire interior space. A second story balcony runs the length of the building and continues uninterruptedly to the front of the Ramsey Addition. The wood balcony platforms are covered with a flat roof and protected with a metal balustrade that features a scroll design at regularly spaced intervals. The balcony and porch supports consist of slender metal posts that are not original; the original balcony posts were made or turned wood.

The second story features a 15-light French door topped with a single-light fan transom centered under the parapet and flanked by two-over-two, double-hung windows. Additional openings include a pair of two-over-two, double-hung windows and a 15-light French door with a rectangular single-light transom. The window openings reveal the original arched top with brick headers and have been infilled to accommodate a rectangular shaped window. Early transoms were covered up during the early 1970s.

The first floor contains three bays. The central bay includes an arched opening with a brick surround that leads into an arcade that provides access to the second story. The arcade was constructed during the 1981 renovation. A pair of metal gates are used to close the entrance. The right bay contains a commercial
storefront with an inset entrance flanked by glazing. Glazing consists of three sets of single lights topped with single-light transoms. An additional single hung window is also extant and has been surrounded by infill material and is topped with a single-light transom. The frontal entrance contains a standard commercial door and transom. A large piece of wood acts as a decorative lintel over the entire storefront.

Although the storefront still maintains its recessed entry in reference to a historic design, the left bay has been altered with the replacement of the commercial storefront system. It now consists of a central entry with a single-light door set under a rectangular, single-light transom and is flanked on both sides by a three-part system in which each part features a 16-light, fixed, wood window with lead comes set above a two panel, wood base. The inset portions of the system have an eight-light rectangular transom. The exterior four portions have an arched transom. The entire system is wood framed and utilizes decorative wood molding.

Norton Building, 249-253 Central Avenue

The Norton Building was constructed in 1906 by contractor Walter C. Henry for James Norton who operated one of the last saloons in the City before Prohibition. The two-story Masonry Vernacular building formerly featured a brick façade topped with a flat roof set behind a rectangular, decorative brick parapet wall. The second story featured one-over-one, double-hung sash, wood windows with an arched brick molding. The building, including the parapet, is now covered with prefabricated cementitious panels that continue along the facades of the buildings west to the end of the block. The parapet is covered by a metal wall cap and closed soffitted eave system. A metal, anchored canopy has been hung above the first story shading the entrance and public walkway, and also continues uninterrupted west to the end of the block, unifying those buildings.

The second story can be divided into four bays. The fenestration in the first and last bays is comprised of two, four-over-four, single-hung sash, metal frame windows set independently and close to the wall plane. The middle bays utilize the same windows set in pairs. The first story is also be divided into three bays, with the first bay being completely open, and featuring modern commercial glass doors. The second bay
has an inset entry the width of a single door. The two-light, two-panel Victorian style door is set below a solid panel transom. The entry is also paneled on both the left and right walls. The final bay has an opening that spans the length of the bay and has been infilled above and below the opening with concrete. A metal frame sliding glass partition closes the entry when needed.

**Lewis Building #3, 259-269 Central Avenue**

Constructed in 1908, the Masonry Vernacular Lewis Building #3 is one-story with a flat roof topped by the same seamed metal wall cap and canopy system used for the Norton Building adjoining its east wall. For the Lewis Building #3, it hangs above five bays that are separated by brick columns. From the left, the first bay maintains its inset storefront entrance design with a central entrance door featuring a single-light above a two-panel door. The storefront system has been enclosed with vertically laid siding. Fenestration consists of three fixed, single-light, arched windows. A fourth window has been framed to separate the arch. The bottom portion of this window is not currently visible. Semicircular awnings have been installed above both street facing windows.

The next bay features a set of three, nine-light, fixed, wood windows. A single-panel, rectangular transom and a single-panel, rectangular bulkhead is set above and below the windows, respectively. The entrance is inset on the right side of the bay and consists of paired doors; a modified two-light, two-panel, wood, Victorian era door (re-divided into four-over-four lights) and a two-light, two-panel door. The sides of the inset are paneled to match the transom and bulkhead designs.

The third bay consists of a central inset entrance with modern, paired, one-light doors and a one-light, rectangular transom. The sides of the inset feature three-light, fixed windows, wood framed glazing, and a one-panel, wood bulkhead. The glazing on either side of the entrance features nine-light, wood, fixed windows also set above a single-panel bulkhead with a wood header running the length of the bay.

The fourth and fifth bays are occupied by the same business. The fourth bay features a modern, commercial storefront with a central commercial, single-light metal frame door set below a single, fixed, rectangular transom light. It is flanked by commercial glazing on both sides totally eight fixed panes that run from the floor to the ceiling. The fifth entrance also has a centrally located commercial
glass, single-light door set below a fixed light transom. It is surrounded four, fixed panes of glass that run from the ceiling to floor on the right and the left consisting of a take-out window flanked by fixed panes set under a large fixed pane and above two fixed panes.

Lewis Grocery Building #1, 277-279 Central Avenue

Originally constructed as the Lewis Grocery for Edson T. Lewis in 1894, this two-story, original wood frame building has been significantly altered. While its original construction had a Victorian period appearance, the building would be significantly altered early on as part of modernization efforts. In 1917, a fire led to the replacement of the entire roof structure. In 1937, Lewis hired contractor R.E. Clarkson to reface this building along with his adjoining properties to the east. The buildings' interiors were also remodeled. At this time, the elevations were changed as sheer vertical elements of stucco above applied granite panels to meet the public sidewalk with large window display cases and individual storefronts. The roofline was dramatically different with its stepped parapet capped with a brick coping. The upper floor row of single and dual paired, metal casement windows created distinct bays along the south and west facades. A line of individual canvas awning devices ran for nearly the entire length of the storefronts, breaking only at the corner and at one wide vertical wall plane. This entire system combined with the building to the east along central. In 1966, the Lewis Buildings along Central Avenue received another “face-lift” for $40,000 when they were refaced with stucco panels and Carrara Glass, and the aluminum canopy and wall cap were installed.

Today, the second story, south façade (facing Central Avenue) is void of any meaningful decoration. Fenestration consists of two sets of paired four-over-four,

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single-hung sash, metal frame windows and two independently set four-over-four, single-hung sash, metal frame windows. Fenestration on the second story west façade (facing Third Street North) side includes six pairs of four-over-four, single-hung sash, metal frame windows, and four independently set four-over-four, single-hung sash windows. A concrete band runs beneath the fenestration around both street side facades.

The first story, south façade can be divided into three bays. The central bay contains an inset entrance with a door and four one-light, wood, fixed windows set in a ribbon pattern on the interior sides. The flanking bays are comprised of four, single-light wood windows set in a ribbon pattern. The first story, west façade utilizes the same fenestration in the first three bays. Other fenestration on the west façade includes single-light, wood and metal commercial doors set both independently and paired. Matching stucco and wood are both used on the exterior wall surfaces here.

**Lewis Building #5, 270 1st Avenue North**

Constructed in 1966, this Mid-Twentieth Century Modern Vernacular building was originally constructed in 1966 to replace two earlier, higher style buildings, and is situated at the corner parcel of 1st Avenue North and 3rd Street North. Topped with a flat roof and clad with stucco, the building features a profiled cornice above large engaged columns with square capitals on the second level; these decorative ornaments are made of composite materials including foam and the faux columns appear rather whimsical given the stature of the building and represent a post-modern expression given their purely decorative utility, and termination downward at the sidewalk canopy. A full length sidewalk canopy made of wood and metal runs above all entrances to the building, and is supported by extended horizontal beams with a kind of Craftsman reveal beyond the outward edge. The north façade (1st Avenue North) is divided into five bays separated by brick piers.
From the left, the first two bays each consist of three single-light, metal frame windows set above a stone veneered wall with a masonry cap. This veneer and cap run the length of this façade and extends to the third bay consists of a single-light, metal frame window and paired commercial, single-light doors with a transom above. The remaining two bays consist of single-light, metal frame windows set in a ribbon.

Like the front (north façade), the west façade is divided into five bays. The first bay of the west façade of the building continues the fenestration pattern seen on the front. The second bay is void of features and contains a single entrance door painted to look like the wall. The third bay contains an entry and four panel, aluminum framed accordion windows. The fourth bay is comprised of a metal, commercial storefront system with a central paired entry flanked by a three-part take-out window on the left and a single pane window on the right. The last bay also contains a three-part, commercial storefront system with a central entry flanked by commercial plate glass.

**Lewis and Binnie Infill Building, Part of Binnie-Bishop Hotel (256-260 1st Ave North) – not previously described**

This small, one-story building is likely a remnant of an earlier infill retail store space constructed in 1937 by Edson Lewis and Henry Binnie, and is now part of the historic hotel building property today. The compact façade does not appear to have its own address, and is included as an addition to the historic hotel property addressed as 256 1st Avenue North. However, it is considered to be a separate, contributing building for the purposes of this report.
Interestingly enough, records indicate that the small construct was likely designed by notable architect Henry Taylor who had an office in Lewis’s corner building next door. It is considered to be a contributing building based on its own merit. Though altered from its original appearance, the building retains its basic height and dimensional footprint, as well as, its completion of the storefront plane is significant. An attached awning was formerly installed over the storefront, though this has since been removed. The upper façade wall plane is basic smooth stucco capped by a metal coping at the parapet. The lower façade wall appears to be a rough stone veneer. The large single window opening takes up approximately 40% of the overall vertical wall plane, and directly abuts the metal entry door—both of which are not historic configurations.

**Binnie-Bishop Hotel, 248-260 1st Avenue North (8Pi12)**

The Binnie-Bishop Hotel is comprised of two structures; the earliest was constructed by Henry Binnie in 1912, followed by a second in 1921. Both are examples of early commercial Masonry Vernacular styling. An infill building was also added in 1937. They were integrated to combine the building under a single proprietorship as a hotel.

The two buildings are united at the roof to appear as a single building, yet they are two distinctly different constructs. A continuous roofline appears to unite the different floor patterns. Both are constructed of common bond brick, with the front façades now faced in stucco and a built up flat roof with a parapet and minimal cornice or parapet ornamentation. This later building reveals three floors,
whereas the earlier 1912 building has only two, resulting in a strange offset made more prominent by the later exterior balcony.

Built by Henry Binnie and constructed by contracting firm Allen and Dubois, the 1912 building spans the depth of the lot from north to south. It has a two-story, two-bay façade originally constructed as a garage on the first floor and room rentals on the second floor. The front façade of this structure is now faced in stucco. The first floor has a pair of two-bay storefronts, which have been altered over time. The majority of the windows are original. All but one of the original vertically divided three-light doors have been replaced. Original transoms are visible above the door openings.

Although the materials have changed, the storefronts retain the original placement of the openings, and readable transoms. Distinctive, and highly decorative iron pilasters on the façade are stamped with “Chattanooga Roof and Foundry,” a prominent manufacturer of cast iron and metal products during the early 20th century.

The 1921 building reveals three stories with three to six bays per floor. This later structure, also built for Henry Binnie by Allen and Dubois, is integrated into the 1912 building’s east wall. This building replaced a wood-framed trades shop that was previously built on the site. The building has a continuous parapet linking it to the 1912 structure but contains a third floor made possible by lower ceiling heights as compared to the 1912 building. The three ground level storefronts have been altered into a single venue, but the three bays reference the historic locations of storefronts amid recently updated improvements bracketed by historic architectural elements.

The upper floors fenestration of the 1921 building are irregular and consists of paired two-over-two divided light windows, separated, single entry doors. French doors with up to 18 lights each occur under fixed transoms.
Perhaps, the most prominent feature of the two buildings today is the elaborate wrought iron frontal balcony system added in 1948 by Roy Bishop that unifies the two buildings. The balcony system creates a canopy over the street level and exterior halls for all the upper story, former hotel rooms. An exterior, offset, metal staircase connects the balcony of the second floor of the 1912 building to the balcony of the third floor of the 1921 building. The wrought iron is made more elaborate with its grape leaf motif and louvered ironwork that descends from the second floor balcony. An *Evening Independent* article noted that this was considered the most *elaborate* use of ironwork in the region. Prior to 1948, photographic evidence shows that the wrought iron balcony system was more functional and less ornamental and did not extend above the first floor.

**Tamiami Hotel, 242 1st Avenue North (8Pi10446)**

Constructed in 1924, the Mediterranean Revival style Tamiami Hotel was built by the Schooley-Murphy Company. It reveals a built-up, flat roof set behind a parapet wall topped with barrel tile, above a three-story, brick building surfaced with smooth stucco. The second and third stories contain five bays each. Fenestration in these bays includes three-over-one, singe-hung sash, aluminum windows set both paired and independently and large plate glass window. Decorative features include masonry sills and a ledge over the plate glass window supported by decorative brackets. The ground floor consists of four bays. Fenestration includes a six-panel door, and four-light windows set above a Tudor inspired bulkhead. The first story also includes some brick veneer.

Cont.
1909 Detroit Building, 234-236 1st Avenue North

This two-story Masonry Vernacular building was constructed in 1909 as part of the Hotel Detroit. It features a flat roof set behind a parapet with a decorative cornice. Fenestration includes paired, one light, fixed, aluminum replacement windows set flush with the wall on the second floor front. Both openings include arched masonry headers. The windows are symmetrically set above two oversize openings at ground level. One appears to have been walled in while the other appears open. Both openings are secured with a metal gate. The building has a modernized, decorative appearance.

Peacock Row, 208-226 1st Avenue North (8Pi3053)

This Masonry Vernacular building has elements of Mediterranean Revival styling. Known as Peacock Row, the building was constructed in 1920 as a two-story brick building clad in smooth stucco. It has a flat roof set behind a small parapet with exposed bricks. Two courses of the exposed brick act as a decorative element running the length of the building between the top of the windows and the bottom of the parapet. The second story contains 10 bays, each defined by a set of paired, one-over-one, single-hung sash replacement windows with an arched header over each. An exposed course of brick runs the length of the building forming a continuous under-window sill/relief course.
The first story contains nine bays. The first three bays are comprised of simple commercial storefronts that include a door, plate glass window, and transom. The fourth and fifth bays have been infilled to create a walk up bar. These bays are comprised of window transoms, roll down doors, and solid wall partitions. The sixth and seventh bays retain a commercial storefront appearance. The sixth bay includes a door and plate glass window with a transom above and is wood framed. The seventh bay is comprised of a solid plate glass window with a transom above. The eighth and ninth bays consist of roll up, transparent garage doors.

A sloped wood awning supported by decorative wood knee brackets runs the length of the building. These brackets are similar in form and appearance to those used on some of the east façade openings of the Hotel Detroit at 2nd Street North.

INTEGRITY STATEMENT

The significance of Block 25 is based primarily on its historical associations, though a modicum of sufficient physical integrity remains overall. Like most century-old properties, the buildings of Block 25 have changed over time, and have been continually adapted to economic trends and responding to various effects. However, many of the alterations have achieved historic significance in their own right, while the basic configuration of the block regarding its scale, dimensions, and experiential setting are extant. Under these considerations, the proposed Block 25 Historic District retains integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, and feeling.
St. Petersburg Landmark Designation Application

Name of Property: Block 25 Historic District

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

Block 25, as the first primary commercially developed city block in St. Petersburg, around which future development would follow, is significant at the local level in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Commerce, and Settlement. Originally platted in 1888, Block 25 played a significant role in the early settlement and the growth of St. Petersburg. The buildings depict the craftsmanship of local architects, builders, and craftsmen. Block 25 provided lodging for prospective residents and tourists, as well as goods and services for the nascent community. Block 25 housed some of the most important businesses in the emerging city, which were owned or operated by individuals who played a pivotal role in the community including John C. Williams, Edson T. Lewis, S.V. Schooley, Edward Tonneler, Bainbridge Hayward, Frank Fortune Pulver, and Hubert Rutland, among others. Block 25 meets the following criteria for designation of a property found in Section 16.30.070.2.5(D).1 of the City of St. Petersburg Code:

(a) Its value is a significant reminder of the cultural or archaeological heritage of the City, state or nation;
(b) It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation;
(c) It is identified as the work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose work has influenced the development of the City, state, or nation;
(d) Its character is a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, or continuity or sites, buildings, objects or structures united in past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development; and
(e) Its character is an established and geographically definable neighborhood, united in culture, architectural style or physical plan and development.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

An Emerging Town

Initially surveyed in 1845 and 1848, the first tracts of land in present-day downtown St. Petersburg were purchased from the State of Florida in 1860. Following an economic decline during the Civil War, W.F. Sperling purchased 640 acres in 1873 from Dr. James Sargent Hackney and brothers, Judge William H. Perry and Oliver Perry. Detroit native John C. Williams arrived in Florida in

\[3\] State of Florida, Plat Map 1845, 1848.
1875 and purchased the Sperling tract in 1876 as well as several other parcels to eventually accumulate a total of 1,600 acres.⁴ The arrival of the Orange Belt Railroad in the 1880s served as the major impetus to the formation of a town.

Hamilton Disston, who owned and developed thousands of acres in Florida during the 1880s, financed the construction of the Orange Belt Railway to the sparsely settled Pinellas Peninsula under the assumption that the railroad would terminate in his newest development, Disston City (now Gulfport). Instead, Orange Belt owner, Peter Demens, built the narrow gauge railroad to land situated northeast of Disston City owned by John C. Williams. The first train arrived in June 1888 to a settlement with little more than a store and a few residences. In return for Demens building the railroad to Williams’ land, Williams deeded 250 acres to the Orange Belt Railway. Demens and Williams collaborated in their plans to build a new community around the terminus of the railroad, complete with a park, depot, and hotel. In exchange for naming the city after Demens’ birthplace, St. Petersburg, Russia, the hotel was named after Williams’ hometown, Detroit, Michigan.⁵

On July 14, 1888, John C. Williams and the Orange Belt Railway, represented by Demens, entered into a Memorandum of Agreement concerning the construction of a hotel. As part of the agreement, John C. Williams agreed to pay the Orange Belt Railway $5,000 upon the completion of the construction of the hotel by the railway. The agreement continues by stating

The Orange Belt Railway agrees to build a hotel at St. Petersburg, Hillsborough County, Fla. On lots to be selected and agreed upon by the respective parties, hereto said selection to be made, within the next seven days, according to plans agreed upon and dated and signed by the respected parties hereto, said hotel to cost not less than ten thousand dollars.⁶

Williams’ interest in the hotel would total the $5,000 he paid to the railway, while the railway’s interest would total the actual cost of construction. Williams included a clause that the railway would be required to pay for the materials, the contractors, and the workmen in full before he had to pay the railway his $5,000 interest. A receipt recorded on the same document indicated that Williams paid his full $5,000 in February 1889.⁷

The hotel was completed by the time the original city plat was officially filed. Prepared by Engineer A.L. Hunt and Draftsman G.A. Miller, the plat was filed in

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⁵ Aresnault 1996, 64, 81-82; Grismer 1948, 68, 74, 271-72; “Heavy Real Estate Deal” 1906, 1; “Detroit Sold to Rutland for Over $200,000” 1938, 1.
⁶ “The Detroit Hotel” 1888.
⁷ “The Detroit Hotel” 1888.
August 1888, and was recorded as the Map of the Town of St. Petersburg in April 1889 and revised in October 1889. As part of the plat, Williams and the Orange Belt Railway reserved space for the city park, the depot (which was completed late in 1888), Williams Grove, and the hotel which was on Lot 1 of Block 25. The parcel, which constituted almost half of a city block, was bordered on the south by 6th Avenue, on the north by 5th Avenue, and on the east by 2nd Street (now Central Avenue, 1st Avenue North, and 2nd Street North).

Conveniently located a block from the Orange Belt Railway Depot, the 40-room hotel served as the only hotel in the community for two years. Built by a "crew of carpenters from Oakland," the hotel was three-and-one-half stories high with a tower extending 70 feet high at the southeast corner and a two-story wing extending to the rear. E.G. Peyton from Virginia served as the first manager of the hotel, which was open all year, not just during the winter season.

Although the Orange Belt Railway was completed, it was not successful. When the railroad could not pay its debts in 1889, the syndicate of Philadelphia financiers holding the debts took over the railroad and the Orange Belt Investment Company, which was responsible for the land held in the name of the railroad, including the hotel. The syndicate organized the St. Petersburg Land and Investment Company for the purpose of selling the lots comprising the 250 acres deeded by Williams in exchange for bringing the railroad to his land. Colonel L.Y. Jenness was designated the manager of the new development company.

At the 1885 annual convention of the American Medical Association, Dr. Van Bibber had endorsed the Pinellas peninsula as the perfect location for a "Health City." Frank Davis, a prominent publisher from Philadelphia who arrived in Florida to alleviate his own health problems, utilized Dr. Van Bibber’s endorsement to heavily promote the benefits of St. Petersburg. Davis, along with other new residents including St. Petersburg Times editor William Straub and St. Petersburg Evening Independent editor Lew Brown, tirelessly promoted the community during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Orange Belt Railway

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8 Pinellas County Clerk of Circuit Court, Plat Book H1, Pages 27 and 49.
9 Grismer 1948, B1-79; Arsenault 1990, 58; Betros 1980, F1.
10 Grismer 1948, 70, 97, 111; “Heavy Real Estate Deal” 1906, 1.
started offering seaside excursions to St. Petersburg in 1889. To make a good impression, Colonel Jenness ordered the manager of the Hotel Detroit to make sure that the hotel bar was well-stocked with refreshments. These excursions were one of the first concentrated efforts by the community and the development company to attract tourists.

By 1890, the population grew from less than 50, prior to the arrival of the railroad, to 273 residents. With two hotels, two ice plants, two churches, a school, a pier, and sawmill, the economy remained largely dependent on commercial fishing. Incorporated in 1892, the community received telephone, public water, and electric service by 1900. The hotel was used to celebrate important events, hold civic and political meetings, and impress prospective residents. Residents marked the 1897 introduction of electricity in the town with a day of celebration culminating in a grand ball at the.

A severe freeze which destroyed the citrus groves throughout north and central Florida during the winter of 1894-95 prompted many farmers to relocate to coastal areas, such as St. Petersburg, which did not experience a freeze as severe. In an effort to attract additional tourists, the manager of the Hotel Detroit, J.H. Forquer, constructed a 16-room houseboat intended as “a seaside addition to the Detroit” in 1897. Known as the “floating hotel”, the houseboat was anchored near present-day Pass-a-Grille. In spite of initial success, a cold winter with few tourists followed by a fire which damaged the boat in the spring of 1899 precluded Forquer from rebuilding. Forquer made improvements to the Detroit during this period as well. Perhaps in an effort to imitate the minaret-topped Tampa Bay Hotel, the Detroit built its own minaret-topped gazebo addition to the entrance canopy at the front of the hotel around 1898.

Hotel Detroit, ca. 1906. City of St. Petersburg Photo Archives, Photo 081602.

12 Grismer 1948, 70, 97, 111; “Heavy Real Estate Deal” 1906, 1.
13 Arsenault 1996, 52-61, 64, 81-82.
15 Arsenault 1996, 93.
As the unofficial center of town, the lots surrounding the depot and the Hotel Detroit quickly filled with new construction. The first buildings were wood frame houses and commercial buildings. Central Avenue, which was then known as Sixth Avenue, was lined with large oak trees. J.C. Williams, Jr., son of founder John Williams, opened a general store across from the Detroit on the southwest corner of 2nd Street and Central Avenue. The Orange Belt Investment Company built an office on Central Avenue between 3rd and 4th Streets, and Colonel Jenness lived in a residence next door to the Detroit. D.S. Brantley, who had furnished ties for the railroad, opened a restaurant for the railroad employees on 2nd Street across from the Detroit. Edson T. Lewis and Ed Durant opened a store near 3rd Street south of the depot in 1892.

Lewis had arrived in St. Petersburg with his parents in 1888, three months before the arrival of the first train. Sixteen year old Lewis first worked in King’s sawmill, then Ward’s General Store, and finally Williams’ General Store across from the Hotel Detroit, before venturing into partnership with Durant. When they dissolved their partnership in 1894, Lewis constructed the two-story, wood frame Lewis Building on the northeast corner of Central and 3rd Street at 277-279 Central Avenue. Prior to this time, this area was considered a “swamp” with four feet of water in which boys fished and a foot bridge spanned it from the west side of 3rd Street to the Hotel Detroit. After being filled, Lewis bought the lot for $200 and constructed his building to house his grocery store on the first floor with his home and rooms for rent available on the second floor. By the late 1890s, Lewis became a banker for many residents and helped establish the Central National Bank in 1904. He held interests in a number of local companies including the Citizens Ice and Cold Storage Company. He also served as City Councilman from 1906-07, advocated for the use of brick in paving the city streets, and was a leader in the movement for municipal ownership of the waterfront and utilities.  

Lewis Grocery, ca. 1910.

Courtesy of Museum of History, Photo 4400.

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The Development of Block 25: 1900-1910

During the early 1900s, the creation of St. Petersburg’s waterfront park system, the incorporation of a trolley system, and the construction of the Electric Pier drew additional tourists and new residents to the area. Largely through the efforts of city boosters to attract businesses and residents, developers such as H. Walter Fuller, Noel Mitchell, Charles Hall, Charles Roser, and C. Perry Snell triggered the city’s first real estate land boom from 1909 to the start of World War I. Promotional efforts by the Atlantic Coast Line railroad (created in 1902 from the former Orange Belt Railroad and Henry Plant’s South Florida Railroad) brought organized tourist trains from New York in 1909 and from the Midwest in 1913. Many of these tourists continued to winter in the city with some even relocating to St. Petersburg.\textsuperscript{17}

One of the early settlers, Henry R. Binnie purchased the southeast corner of 3rd Street and 1st Avenue North for $500 soon after his arrival in St. Petersburg in 1900. He traded parcels with Ed Lewis, who owned the adjacent lot to the east. A native of Michigan, Binnie came to St. Petersburg by way of Dade City with his mother and step-father, who passed away soon after their relocation. Trained as a blacksmith by his step-father, Binnie established a blacksmith and wheelwright shop at 266-68 1st Avenue North.\textsuperscript{18}

In 1903, owner Mary Ramsey (also referred to as Marie and María) initiated the construction of a new brick building located at 243-247 Central Avenue, between the Hotel Detroit and the Lewis Grocery. Ramsey had moved to St. Petersburg in 1900 and was credited with being the first to build a brick commercial building in the city, which was located on


\textsuperscript{17} Arsenault 1996, 87-89, 135-37, 144-45.

Central Avenue between 3rd and 4th Streets. Her first two buildings have been demolished. The building at 243-247 Central Avenue, which she named the Ramsey Block, was her third commercial building. This building held the L.C. Heffner’s grocery and the McPherson-Dent Bakery on the first floor. Adjacent to the east, contractor R.W. Miller constructed the Ramsey Addition at 237-241 Central Avenue for Mary Ramsey in 1908. Built as a separate building from the Ramsey Block, Mrs. Ramsey lived on the second floor and rented the first floor to the Beverly ice cream shop. Some of the rooms on the second floor were rented to tourists initially as the Majestic Hotel, operated by William Jett. Within a few years, Ed C. McPherson operated it as the McPherson Flats.

In 1905-06, William B. “Bill” Carpenter leased space in the Ramsey Building for a curio shop. In the back, he opened the 350-seat Royal Palm Theater. It was the first motion picture theater in the city and even featured electricity. The first picture was “The Perils of Pauline” silent movie with a piano playing accompaniment. Occasionally vaudeville acts and comedians entertained the crowd. As part of his curio shop, Carpenter sold live alligators as souvenirs and held impromptu alligator shows. In 1916, he took his show on the road to Seattle and the northwestern United States with an alligator named Trouble and a car encouraging a visit to the “Sunshine City, St. Pete, Fla.” Following the opening of the larger Rex and La Plaza Theaters, among others, Carpenter closed the theater and went into real estate in 1917.

19 Various newspaper articles credit both Mrs. Ramsay and F.A. Wood with constructing the first brick business buildings in the city. The Wood Building was located at 325-37 Central Avenue and was constructed in 1900. Mrs. Ramsey’s first building was located at 319-21 Central Avenue and was also constructed in 1900.


To the west of the Ramsey Building, James S. Norton hired contractor Walter C. Henry to build a new brick building at 249-253 Central Avenue in 1906. Reportedly the first building in the city to be piped for gas, Gallagher Palace Ice Cream Parlor occupied the west side of the building, while the east side was split into offices for real estate agent E.B. Rowland and contractor Walter C. Henry. Other early occupants included Jones' Model Market, Leland's Ice Cream Parlor, and Jack's Bazaar. Norton and his wife, Julia, lived on the second floor, and she rented out the remaining rooms on the second floor to tourists as the proprietor of Norton Flats.22

James Norton had owned and operated a saloon located across the street at 242 Central Avenue as early as 1900. After City Council passed an ordinance in 1910 limiting the number of saloons and their location to Block 32, which is where his saloon was located, he built an addition on the rear of his building to the alley to be used as “the colored saloon.” African American Sam Harper conducted that saloon. When Pinellas County voters outlawed the sale of liquor in 1913, Norton closed his saloon with “no regrets.” Although saloons were allowed to reopen after another election in 1914, Norton elected not to return to the alcohol business. When the saloons reopened on March 4, crowds gathered in front of the businesses and along Block 25 to see which of the saloons would open first. All three opened at 10:30 am with a “regular football rush,” and a brisk business was done all day. Norton also established the St. Petersburg Steam Laundry in 1907, which he operated until 1912. Norton served as city councilman from 1908-09 and again from 1916-18. Norton built a summer home in North

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Carolina, but maintained his property interests in St. Petersburg until ca. 1929. Norton passed away in North Carolina in 1933.  

The Hotel Detroit, as the oldest hotel in the community, continued to prosper. By 1905, the newspaper advertised nine hotels in the city, including the Detroit, the Manhattan, Colonial, Huntington, Wayne, Chautauqua, Paxton House, Belmont, and Central Hotels. Of the combined 675 guests that these hotels could accommodate, the Detroit could house 100.

In December 1906, the St. Petersburg Land and Investment Company announced it was closing and terminating its business dealings in St. Petersburg due to manager Colonel L.Y. Jenness' ill health. By this time, the company owned full interest in the Hotel Detroit and sold it, along with an office building on Central Avenue, 75 additional lots in the city, and 75 acres southwest of the city to C. Perry Snell, A.E. Hoxie, and J.C. Hamlett. The purchasers were well-known developers with business and real estate interests throughout the city. Although the

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24 Grismer 1948, 124; Dell Miller, "St. Petersburg Had Many Good Hotels Before 1900; Detroit Was Leader," [St. Petersburg Independent, 1965].
total sale price was not revealed, the hotel property alone was valued at $28,000 in 1906. Curtis N. Crawford, who had held a lease to operate the Hotel Detroit with his associate S.E. Denny since 1899, purchased it in 1907. In 1909, Crawford built a two-story, concrete block building on the north end of the hotel property at 234-236 1st Avenue North. The first floor was “devoted to a sample room, where drummers may display theirwares and show the purchasing merchants what they have to offer.” The second floor housed four hotel rooms.

Ed Lewis’ second major construction project on Block 25 was a red brick commercial building, built ca. 1907, fronting 3rd Street North across the alley from his grocery. This building, located at 17-21 3rd Street North, housed the Advance Art Printery and the St. Petersburg Tailors and Dry Cleaners. Immediately north of this brick building two small, wood frame stores occupied the southeast corner of 1st Avenue and 3rd Street North. The corner building held the business of African-American cleaner and tailor, Archibald S. Smith, who maintained space between 1908 and 1917. The other wood frame structure was relocated to the site by Lewis around 1908 from the parcel adjacent to his grocery; built ca. 1890, it initially housed a photography studio, and later held a dressmaker studio, and then a cigar factory. By 1910, African American Charlotte Clayborn, alternately referred to as a

laundress or dressmaker, lived in the building with her three children. Her son, Edward, delivered groceries for Lewis.27 Back on Central Avenue, Lewis hired contractor J. Frank Chase to construct the one-story brick building located at 259-269 Central Avenue in 1908. With five stores, early occupants included Jeweler A.W. Rogers, pioneer plumber Charles Godsey, the St. Petersburg Shoe Company, Ermatinger's Hat Store, and Arthur L. Johnson's Men's Clothing Store. Arthur Johnson established his men's clothing store in 1907 at 367 Central Avenue, before moving to this building when it was completed in 1908, where he remained into the 1920s. Johnson was a leader in the Chamber of Commerce, and as Chairman of the Advertising Committee, organized the first St. Petersburg Fair and Tourist Week in 1913. Subsequently, he originated the idea of combining the annual Washington's Birthday Celebration and the St. Petersburg Fair and Tourist Week to form the Festival of States celebration. The four-day Festival of States celebration started in March 1917 complete with a "parade of states," a costume ball, and band concerts. It would not be celebrated again until 1922 due to the onset of World War I.28

In 1909, Edward Tonnelier purchased the parcel between the Ramsey Building and the Hotel Detroit property. A resident of Benton Harbor, Michigan, Edward was one of six brothers, three of which were early investors in St. Petersburg. Each of the three brothers purchased land and initiated construction of commercial projects within weeks of arriving in St. Petersburg. Peter Tonnelier, the first to discover the city in 1908, built the Arcade Building at 258-260 Central Avenue. Henry Tonnelier, the last to come, purchased land, hired an architect and

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27 It would be relocated by "a woman who is now wealthy...to move it to a lot she owns here and preserve it" in 1917 and the corner building would be demolished for the construction of a new building, "Handsome Building to be Erected at Third Street and First Avenue," Evening Independent, 6 August 1917; "Another New Brick Bock," Evening Independent, 19 September 1908; Sanborn 1899, 1904, 1908, 1913; St. Petersburg City Directory, 1900, 1908, 1912; Polk, 1914, 1916, 1918.

St. Petersburg Landmark Designation Application

Name of Property: Block 25 Historic District

contractor, and broke ground for construction of the Rex Theater at 167-171 Central Avenue within two weeks of first coming to the city in 1910. Both the Arcade Building and the Rex Theater are now demolished.29

The Development of Block 25: 1911-1925

Edward Tonneller, the second to come to St. Petersburg, hired local architect Edgar Ferdon to design and J. Frank Chase to construct the two-story brick building at 231-235 Central Avenue. Known as the Michigan Building, it was designed to accommodate retail stores on the first floor and a 10-room hotel on the second floor. When he was in town, Edward Tonneller maintained rooms on the second floor for himself. Businesses such as the Thayer's Curio Store, Red Cross Pharmacy, and the Hole in the Wall newsstand as well as the offices of Dr. William Secor and A.T. Mullins Real Estate were in the building. Thayer's Curio was owned by A.L. and Fanny Thayer.

The son of a sea captain, Thayer spent his bachelor days as a captain sailing to foreign ports and collecting oddities of the sea. After their marriage, the Thayers settled in St. Petersburg around 1898. Initially operating a jewelry store, the couple opened Thayer's Curio in the Michigan Building by 1911. Interestingly, Thayer's Curio maintained an alligator known as "Old Bill" in a small pool in the rear of their store. The couple sold out to Morris D. Gardner and his sister, Mrs. J.S. Dinwoodie, in 1913. After failing to get approval to open an aquarium and curio store on the north mole, Thayer opened a museum in Pass-a-Grille, which he operated until his death in 1926.

Gardner and Dinwoodies Curio Shop remained open in the Michigan Building until 1927 when it became Heath's, "The Shop of a Thousand Gifts." Another long-time occupant, the Red Cross Pharmacy, was opened by John H. Williams on the northeast corner of Central Avenue and 2nd Street in 1906. He relocated to the Michigan Building in 1911 and sold the business to Dr. E.C. Beach in 1914. In 1917, the pharmacy was forced to change its name due to copyright infringement on the Red Cross Organization, which filed a copyright on the name in 1905. Learning of the infringement, owner Dr. Beach changed the name to Beach's Pharmacy.30


In 1910, Lewis spearheaded the brick paving of the alley in Block 25 by the Georgia Engineering Company. In addition to Lewis, all of the local property owners, including Henry Binnie, James S. Norton, Mrs. Ramsey, and Edward Tonnelier, agreed to pay for the project. The first brick streets were laid in St. Petersburg in 1903. When Lewis organized the paving, the engineering company was just finishing paving 4th Avenue North in the downtown area. Block 25 was the first alley to be paved in the city. Lewis also decided to install a private lighting plant in 1910. Lewis purchased the gasoline powered engine and, with Henry Binnie’s assistance, installed it in Binnie’s blacksmith shop. Lewis was able to install lights throughout his grocery as well as run a coffee mill, meat grinder, electric fans, and an elevator, while Binnie could use it to power lathes and other light machinery. Lewis also sold electricity to others on the block.

In 1911, Henry Binnie and Ed Lewis discussed plans to jointly construct a

Fire Truck “can do 65 mph,” Central Avenue, looking west, 1913. Courtesy of Museum of History, Photo 6344.

Western portion of the Binnie-Bishop Hotel as the Northern Hotel and Restaurant, ca. 1915. Courtesy of Museum of History, Photo 478.

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large brick building on the three corner lots at 1st Avenue and 3rd Street North. Instead, the two men decided to go about their construction projects separately. The two traded lots once again, giving Lewis the two corner lots and Binnie the two lots adjacent to the east. In 1911, Binnie moved his wood frame blacksmith shop two parcels to the east. There was some concern about the relocation of Binnie’s shop within the fire limits. In response, he built a brick wall and a two-story brick building behind the wood frame shop as a fire break and extension to his blacksmith shop. In January 1912, he announced the construction of a new two-story commercial building on the lot adjacent to his shop. Constructed by contractors Allen & Dubois, this $8,000 building was built as a garage on the first floor with hotel rooms above. The first floor was soon leased by the local dairymen association as a milk depot for bottling and distributing. The second floor was initially leased by Harry H. Robinson as the Robinson House. After B.L. Dailey opened the Northern Tea Room and Restaurant on the first floor in 1913, the second floor hotel was renamed the Northern Hotel. When the hitching posts were removed in front of Lewis’ Grocery in 1914, Binnie foresaw the end of the blacksmith trade. Although he continued to work as a blacksmith shoeing horses and mules and repairing wagons, he diversified into repairing bicycles, automobile tops, lawn mowers, umbrellas, clocks, and operating as a locksmith. By 1915, he was also operating the Northern Hotel and Restaurant.33

The Hotel Detroit capitalized on the influx of winter tourists during the city’s first real estate land boom from 1909 to the start of World War I. Between 1911 and 1913, two large brick additions and a one-story commercial building were constructed on the Detroit. The first, a four-story brick addition constructed in 1911 on the west elevation, consisted of an additional 30 rooms, 15 of them with

private baths, and one store on the first floor. It incorporated electricity, running hot and cold water in each room, and was designed by an "architect from Tampa."34

In 1912, Crawford hired the Eureka Stone and Paving Company to construct a one-story concrete block, commercial building on the northeast corner of the property at 22-30 2nd Street North. Initially planned as storage, businesses soon occupied the storefronts. Dr. John D. Peabody, who founded the St. Petersburg Sanitarium with A.P. Avery in 1906 and organized the Pinellas County Medical Society in 1913, was one of the first occupants. The building also housed the Detroit Beauty Parlor, Central Printery, and Browning Gift Shop among others.35

The second brick addition, designed by M. Leo Elliott of the architectural firm of Bonfoey and Elliott of Tampa, was constructed in 1913. This four-story brick addition was attached to the east elevation of the original wood frame building and extended north from the corner of Central Avenue and 2nd Street North. The original 70-foot tower located at the southeast corner of the wood frame building was removed. Archibald Atkinson was selected as the contractor. One of the most notable elements in the new construction was the elevator installed by the Warner Electric Company, a novelty in the city at the time. The 60-room addition was completed by December 10, 1913 at a cost of $75,000. With these additions, the hotel could lodge 200 overnight guests, and the enlarged dining room could accommodate 300 patrons.36

34 “Brick Addition to Hotel Detroit,” St. Petersburg Evening Independent, 5 May 1911; “Hotels are Opening for Season,” St. Petersburg Times, 3 Oct 1911; “Hotel Detroit” advertisement, St. Petersburg Times, 3 October 1911; “Preparing for Immense Season,” St. Petersburg Times, 27 October 1911.
Following the death of owner Curtis N. Crawford in 1914, his widow retained ownership of the Hotel Detroit even after her subsequent marriage to L.M. Backus around 1917. Assistant Manager Gordon Bainbridge Hayward, who had been with the hotel since about 1912, was chosen to manage the hotel during this period. Following his service in World War I, he permanently relocated to St. Petersburg. According to the St. Petersburg City Directory, other individuals were noted as managers of the hotel in his absence, but none filled the position longer than a year.\(^\text{37}\) In 1916, a large electric sign was installed on the roof of the hotel. Advertisements for the hotel in the 1916 St. Petersburg City Directory listed the following attributes, "Hotel Detroit. Rooms en Suite with Bath. Electric Light, Steam Heat. Open All Year, American Plan. Mrs. C. N. Crawford, Owner. L.R. Cornell, Manager. $3.00 up, 120 rooms, 50 with Bath".\(^\text{38}\) Hotels, which functioned under the American Plan, including the Detroit, catered to winter visitors by including breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the hotel dining room as part of the rate.

The City's administration started to formally encourage tourism with promotional campaigns following the election of Al Lang as mayor in 1916. Lang was elected after he arranged to bring the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team to the city for spring training. Under his leadership, the City publicly encouraged tourism and made efforts to improve the physical appearance of the city. With approximately 83 real estate companies operating in the city in 1914, the focus turned increasingly to winter residents with the local population doubling during the season. These winter residents even formed tourist societies organized by state or region of origin which acted as booster clubs in their native states. Although the land boom collapsed during World War I, the development created a pattern for the future growth of the city. During the 1910s, the city's population grew from 4,127

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\(^{38}\) "Electric Sign on the Detroit is a Big One," Evening Independent, 19 January 1916; Polk 1916.
in 1910 to 14,237 in 1920. In spite of the downturn, limited new construction continued during the war. In 1917, Ed Lewis and fellow owner George Van Houten built a Mission Revival style building on the southeast corner of 1st Avenue and 3rd Street North. It was designed by architect W.S. Shull and constructed by Van Houten, who was a contractor. It tied into Lewis' adjacent brick building at 17-21 2nd Street North and housed the Hotel Dennis on the 2nd floor. Other businesses which occupied the first floor of the building included Thompson's Sanitary Market and Carpenter's New England Home Bakery and Tea Room. In the midst of the construction of this new building, Lewis' Grocery caught fire in November 1917. Damage was limited to the roof and the second story thanks to the quick action of the fire department and the local Boy Scout Troop, who covered the stock of the grocery to prevent water damage. The store reopened within a few hours. Wanting to keep the store open during the winter season, Lewis decided to repair the building instead of building a new structure. Fearing a storm, Lewis hired contractor George Van Houten and 20 carpenters, paid $1 per hour, to replace the roof within one day.

The Development of Block 25: Post WWI-1935

Although World War I limited tourism, St. Petersburg quickly rebounded with increases in people visiting St. Petersburg during the winter season of 1918-1919. Thanks in part to the efforts of John Lodwick, publicity agent for the Chamber of Commerce and the City of St. Petersburg, the hotels and boarding houses were filled to capacity during the season. At the onset of this post-war boom, Frank Fortune Pulver purchased the Hotel Detroit in 1919. Pulver had made his fortune through the manufacture of Spearmint chewing gum, a formula and business which he sold to William Wrigley, Jr. in 1913 before permanently settling in St. Petersburg in 1917. In addition to operating the Hotel Detroit, he purchased the McAdoo Bridge to Pass-a-Grille, acquired the Hollenbeck and Huntington Hotels, and opened the Soft Water Laundry. Pulver served as Mayor from 1921 to 1924. In this position, Pulver, along with city publicity director John Lodwick, collaborated to create widely publicized stunts to draw attention and tourists to the city.

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40 Polk, 1918; "Handsome Building to be Erected at Third Street and First Avenue," Evening Independent, 6 August 1917.
At the Detroit, Pulver retained Bainbridge Hayward as the manager of the hotel. Within a year after Pulver’s purchase, he initiated the construction of the two-story commercial building at 208-230 1st Avenue North. Located on the Hotel Detroit property and considered part of the hotel complex, the building was called Peacock Row. It housed some of the first commercial stores on 1st Avenue North including early occupants such as the Dr. Hugh W. Wade, the Tourist Café, The Palm Book Store, Fisher & Deaderick Realtors, Hanover Women’s Shop, Campbell & Mixon Fruits, George Atherton’s Confections, and Lydia Husband’s Art Craft Studio. Peacock Row offered 49 hotel rooms on the second floor and ten new commercial storefronts, increasing the overall Hotel Detroit capacity to 175 hotel rooms and 18 stores. Even with the additional rooms, the hotel reached capacity during the off-season. All four floors of the Detroit and the rooms in the new building were occupied during the summer of 1921. In 1922, the hotel advertised “200 outside rooms, Sunshine in Every Room.” During this period, the Detroit offered a barber shop and auto service, with the Hotel Detroit Grill & Coffee Shop, Katherine Veach’s Needlecraft Shop, Postal Telegraph Cable Company, Clewell & Fitzgibbon’s soft drinks, Broadway Fashion Shop, First Loan and Savings Company, and several real estate agencies occupying commercial space.44

The construction of a national, state, and local road system opened St. Petersburg to an increasing number of middle-class vacationers and a new type of vacationer known as “tin-can tourists.” This type of vacationer typically came by car and generally favored inexpensive campgrounds to hotels. The city’s shortage of hotel rooms led to the 1920 creation of Tent City, a municipal

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campground for the “tin-can tourists.” This new type of tourist threatened the city’s established hotel industry and was not the class of visitor the leaders of the city were interested in attracting.\footnote{Arsenault 1996, 186-189, 199-200.}

The lack of hotel space and the booming economy during the late 1910s and early 1920s prompted the conversion of a number of private residences surrounding downtown into boarding houses, apartment buildings, or small hotels. Many owners recognized the inevitable growth of the central business district and built new houses in the most fashionable residential section now known as the Old Northeast. The opening of the Gandy Bridge to Tampa in 1924 further encouraged widespread development and construction extending north of downtown to the bridge. With only five hotels providing fewer than 500 hotel rooms at the start of the boom, city leaders were encouraged by the construction of mid-sized hotels, such as the Alexander Hotel, the Mari-Jean, and the Hotel Cordova, and several large hotels, including the Princess Martha, Pennsylvania Hotel, and Vinoy Park Hotel, during the boom.\footnote{Polk 1927; Arsenault 1996, 201.}


In 1919, Ed Lewis sold his interest in his grocery, but retained ownership of his buildings and land. Ed Lewis, W.C. Burton, and Ed Wright had formed a partnership to operate the grocery store in 1913, and it was renamed the Lewis-Burton Company. After Lewis sold his interest, Burton controlled the majority of stock and continued to operate the grocery until 1923, when the owners decided to close the retail grocery, relocate, and convert it to a wholesale enterprise.\footnote{“Lewis-Burton Firm in Grocery Business,” \textit{St. Petersburg Daily Times}, 18 May 1913; “Brown Bros. Buy Ed T. Lewis’ Grocery Interest,” \textit{Evening Independent}, 30 January 1919; “Oldest Grocery in City to be Closed Here Soon,” \textit{Evening Independent}, 2 July 1923.}

At the same time, Arthur Johnson decided to move his clothing store from 259-69 Central Avenue to 428 Central Avenue. In his place, a new men’s store was opened by
Henry Hayward and Ian Boyer, and the Pelican Book Shop and Library opened. The Ermatinger Hat Store opened at 273 Central Avenue in 1926. In the Lewis Building at the northeast corner of Central and 3rd Street, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office decided to open an office in the Lewis Building in 1925. Leon Lewis, Ed Lewis' son, opened an office in his father's building after he sold the Crystal and Pinellas County Ice Companies in 1926. Architect Henry Dupont maintained an office in the Lewis Building. The St. Petersburg Red Cross opened an office in the Lewis Building in 1928 and remained there into the 1940s. 48

With the success of his first brick commercial building and the onset of the Florida land boom, Henry Binnie decided to demolish his ca. 1900 wood frame blacksmith shop and build a new three-story brick building in its place in 1921. Contractor Charles Dubois had the $20,000 contract to demolish the old building and build the new structure. Binnie retained the rear two-story brick building as his blacksmith shop. The new three-story brick building on the front of the lot was incorporated into his existing adjacent hotel and Binnie renamed it the Binnie Hotel. The Williams Art Store, the New York Hat Shop, and William Kirby's Photography Studio opened in the storefronts of the building. In 1926, a fire caused $10,000 worth of damage to the Binnie Hotel when 70 gallons of gasoline "unlawfully stored in a hat shop underneath the hotel" exploded. The event prompted the strict enforcement of laws regarding the storage of explosives and inflammables state-wide. 49


49 Ancestry.com, "1920 United States Federal Census; Polk 1920, 1922, 1925; "Handsome New Building Replaces One of the Oldest Houses in the City," Evening Independent, 19 May 1921;
During the 1920s, Beach’s Pharmacy and Gardner & Dinwoodie’s Curio and China Hall continued to occupy the Michigan Building. In 1927, J. Heath took over the Curio and China Hall, renaming it the Heath’s Gift Shop. William Weaver provided hotel rooms on the second floor as Weaver’s Hotel.\textsuperscript{50} By 1922, the St. Charles Hotel operated on the second floor of the Ramsey Building, and the Modern Oasis “thirst quenching emporium” took over the McPherson-Dent Bakery location. Mary Ramsey died in 1924.\textsuperscript{51}

In September 1924, owners Samuel V. Schooley and Perry M. Murphy pulled the permit to build the Tamiami Hotel at 240-42 1\textsuperscript{st} Avenue North. The two men formed the Schooley-Murphy Company soon after their arrival in St. Petersburg in 1921. A native of Indianapolis, Murphy came to the city to investigate groves that he had purchased. Involved in the manufacture of bricks and hollow clay tile, he convinced friend and builder Samuel V. Schooley of the possibilities of St. Petersburg, prompting their relocation. Initially, on residential permits for several residences at hiring real estate houses upon the houses started at the height of the land sale price was projects were in the neighborhood, and Paul R. Boardman Real Estate Agency as their general sales agent.\textsuperscript{52} By April 1922, the \textit{Evening Independent} reported that,

Schooley and Murphy, who have erected many fine houses in this city and who are now building several, took out permits for two more. They are of the usual type erected by that firm of

\textit{BUILT TO SELL} —Just Like Packard Automobiles


\textsuperscript{51} “Oasis Will Aid Thirsty Crowds,” \textit{Evening Independent,} 31 May 1921; “Pioneer Woman of City Dies at Former Home in Georgia,” \textit{Evening Independent,} 11 January 1924; Polk 1922.

contractors, of hollow tile and stucco and each contains eight rooms and bath and suitable porches. 53

By June 1922, the firm had 27 residences under construction in the North Shore neighborhood. Boardman purchased large ads in the newspapers to promote the new construction, focusing especially on the fact that these homes would please any wife. (insert ad, September 25, 1922) In 1923, Schooley-Murphy started an advertising campaign in which the owners explained their methods used in building the homes and the features of the homes in local newspapers. In the space of two weeks in January 1923, Schooley-Murphy sold ten residences which they had constructed for a total of $172,000. 54

With their success, the company moved into other residential areas of the city including Euclid-St. Paul, Pasadena, Snell Isle, and their own residential development near Lake Maggiore along Lakeview Avenue (now 22nd Avenue South) at 23rd Street. In April 1923, the company reported that they had built more than 150 houses, representing over $600,000 worth of construction. The men also started purchasing land in downtown St. Petersburg to develop for commercial purposes. They built a two-story commercial building at 736 Central Avenue, a one-story commercial building on the southwest corner of Central and 6th Street, the three-

53 "Building in Three Weeks Runs to Quarter Million," Evening Independent, 22 April 1922.
54 "Schooley & Murphy Start Work on Four More Homes," Evening Independent, 8 June 1922;
story Schooley-Murphy Apartments at 320 4th Avenue North, and the Tamiami Hotel.\textsuperscript{55}

Opened in 1925, rooms at the Tamiami Hotel started at $5.00 per week with hot water guaranteed at all times by manager Henry H. Williams, Jr. Upon the completion of the new building, the Williams Art Store relocated to the first floor of the Tamiami Hotel, where it remained until 1929.

In 1926, Schooley-Murphy sold the hotel for around $150,000. As the real estate market declined, the company shifted to advertising to do repairs, but still developing buildings as the opportunity arose. In 1936, they opened the Schooley-Murphy Arcade at 534 1st Avenue North providing a connection to Central Avenue through the Woolworth store. In the 1930s, the two men appear to have dissolved their partnership, but Schooley continued as a contractor, while Murphy continued Schooley-Murphy as a real estate agency. The 1926 sale by Schooley-Murphy was the first of several transfers for the Tamiami Hotel into the 1930s. In 1926, the “for sale” advertisement for the 22 room hotel noted that the “owner needs cash.”\textsuperscript{56}

A relatively healthy tourist trade initially kept the local economy afloat following the downturn of the real estate market in 1926 and the devastating hurricanes which damaged south Florida in 1926 and 1928. However, the crash of the stock market in 1929 kept the traveling public at home during the ensuing national depression. A dismal tourist season during the winter of 1929-1930 led to business failures, mortgage foreclosures, and unemployment in the city. Every bank in the city failed and closed by April 1931.\textsuperscript{57}


\textsuperscript{57} Arsenault 1996, 253-255.
Like most other businessmen in the city, Frank Pulver overextended himself during the real estate boom. Political infighting led to his removal from office in 1924. He then started a daily tabloid called the Daily News, which failed less than two years later. Pulver retreated into semi-retirement. In 1929, long-time hotel manager Bainbridge Hayward and Olive Matthews formed a company and purchased the Hotel Detroit from Pulver through a mortgage with the Life and Casualty Company of Nashville, Tennessee. With the decline of tourism during the Depression, the Life and Casualty Company foreclosed on the mortgage in 1934, but retained Hayward as manager.  

The Development of Block 25: 1936-1945

Federal relief projects helped revive the city's economy by the mid-1930s. Local projects included the construction of Bay Pines Veterans' Hospital, an addition to Albert Whitted Airport, Bartlett Park, an addition to Mound Park City Hospital, a beach water system, a new city hall, the construction of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station near Bayboro Harbor, the North Shore sewer system, a National Guard armory, and a new campus for the St. Petersburg Junior College. By providing these kinds of projects throughout the nation, the New Deal agencies brought partial economic recovery to residents of St. Petersburg as well as other cities. With an improved financial outlook, tourists returned to St. Petersburg during the late-1930s.

The revival of the economy during the late 1930s led to several improvement projects in Block 25. Ed Lewis decided to reface his buildings and remodel the interiors in 1937. His $16,000 refacing with glass was performed by contractor R.E. Clarkson. Ed Lewis died in 1940. Barber Groves Packing House, owned by Clayton Barber, opened in the Ramsey Addition at 239 Central Avenue around 1935. The company would remain in the building into the 1970s.

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St. Petersburg Landmark Designation Application

Name of Property: Block 25 Historic District

By 1939, Merton Rogers operated the hotel in the Michigan Building and renamed it the Michigamma Hotel. Beach's Pharmacy also closed and the Goldenrod Candy Shop opened in its place. By 1932, William E. Currie of Michigan owned the Tamiami Hotel building and leased the operation to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bruhns. In 1935, Anna Gerhard and Elizabeth Hussuer of New Jersey purchased the hotel for approximately $35,000. By 1941, Elizabeth Moore was the owner. In spite of the numerous ownership changes, the building served as the Tamiami Hotel well into the 1960s. In 1938, local businessman Hubert Rutland purchased the Hotel Detroit from the Life and Casualty Company for approximately $200,000. Following his arrival in St. Petersburg in 1921, Rutland worked with his brother in one of the largest department stores in the county, Northup-Rutland Store. In 1923, Hubert Rutland opened Rutland's Men's Store. Along with the growth of the store into the Rutland Clothing Company, Rutland had invested in real estate during the 1920s and 1930s. With the purchase of the Hotel Detroit, Rutland owned 1,022 feet of frontage in the downtown business district housing 75 stores. Following his purchase, Rutland announced that some remodeling at the Hotel Detroit would be conducted. Touted as modernization, the renovation, completed by contractor W.D. Berry in 1939, included adding stucco to the front elevation of the original wood frame portion of the building, removing the second floor of the front porch, and rebuilding the first floor porch. The wood canopy which extended from the hotel entrance to Central Avenue was replaced with a canvas awning. The front patio at the hotel entrance was created with the construction of a masonry garden wall. Although it was announced that Hayward would be retained as manager, he left in 1938 after he signed a long-term lease for a nearby hotel property and opened the Bainbridge Hotel. Hayward would serve as City Councilman from 1937 to 1940, and again from 1951 until his death in office in 1953.

60 "Central Avenue Stores Undergo Improvements," St. Petersburg Times, 25 August 1937; City of St. Petersburg, Property Card, 279 Central Avenue; "Edson T. Lewis, Pioneer of City, Succumbs at 68," Evening Independent, 2 December 1940.
61 "Familiar as Palms; Gift Box Industry," St. Petersburg Times, 6 February 1958; Margaret Nuccio, "Barber Groves, (8PI313)," Florida Master Site File Form, 1977, on file, Florida Division of Historical Resources, Tallahassee.
64 "Detroit Sold to Rutland for Over $200,000," St. Petersburg Times, 13 October 1938, 1; "Detroit Hotel Completely Remodeled," St. Petersburg Times, 1 October 1939, 3; Grismer 1948, 348.
In 1940, Ida Nancy Merrill purchased the Hotel Detroit from Rutland. Rutland retained ownership of Peacock Row on 1st Avenue North, separating the building from the Hotel Detroit property. After her arrival in St. Petersburg in 1923, Merrill entered the hotel business owning and/or managing several hotels prior to her purchase of the Detroit including the Merrill Hotel, Royal Palm Hotel, Deermont, and Allison Hotels. She was active in numerous civic organizations and held leadership roles in the YWCA, the Republican Party, Zonta Club, National League of American Pen Women, St. Petersburg Hotel Association, the Florence Crittenton Home, Chamber of Commerce, St. Petersburg Woman’s Club, League of Overseas Women, American Association of University Women, and the Business and Professional Women’s Club. Following the purchase of the Detroit, Merrill announced that her nephew, Charles Brazier, would be the manager.66

Although tourism had rebounded to some extent by 1940, the activation of the military, rationing, and travel restrictions of World War II severely curtailed St. Petersburg's tourism based economy. Most of the city’s hotels and boarding houses remained empty during the winter of 1941-42.

Realizing that the empty rooms could be an asset as military housing, city leaders successfully lobbied the War Department for a military base. The opening of a technical services training center for the Army Air Corps brought over ten thousand soldiers to the city during the summer of 1942. The military leased almost every major hotel and many of the smaller hotels in the city, including the Hotel Detroit. Only the Suwannee Hotel and some of the smaller hotels and boarding houses were open to civilian use. By the time the training center closed in July 1943, over 100,000 soldiers had visited St. Petersburg. Although the training center closed, the United States Maritime Service Bayboro Harbor Base, which trained merchant seamen, continued to grow, and eventually leased four of the downtown hotels abandoned by the Army Air Corps. Other bases and support facilities throughout the area brought thousands of soldiers to central Florida and the St. Petersburg area.67

The Development of Block 25: 1946-present

The city rapidly demilitarized following the war, and many veterans returned to St. Petersburg. The Great Depression and governmental restrictions during the war led to a housing shortage following World War II. Many hotels and boarding houses were again filled with tourists and new residents awaiting the construction of new homes. New houses filled the subdivisions platted during the 1920s, but left vacant by the real estate decline and depression. As development spread westward, the introduction of shopping centers, including Central Plaza and Tyrone Gardens Shopping Center, and motels along the west coast drew new residents and tourists away from downtown St. Petersburg.68

67 Arsenault 1996, 298-301.
During the post-World War II period, the block on which the Hotel Detroit was located underwent modernization. In an attempt to modernize and attract the post-World War II customer, the Detroit owners installed air conditioning and constructed an addition in the front courtyard area to open the Patio Restaurant. On the north side of the block, Roy Bishop purchased the Binnie Hotel in 1948. Soon after, pioneer blacksmith Henry Binnie passed away in 1949. Bishop remodeled and redecorated the hotel and renamed it the Bishop Hotel. Alterations included the installation of air conditioning and the addition of wrought iron to the front balconies to unify the two buildings. Bishop owned the hotel until 1977. Following the death of Edward Tonnelier in 1960, the interior of the Michigan Building was modernized, and by 1971, the hotel was renamed the James Hotel.\textsuperscript{69}

Following the death of Ida Nancy Merrill in 1965, her nephews, Charles Brazier Jr. and Frank Brazier, inherited the Hotel Detroit. Charles Brazier had managed the hotel since her purchase in 1940. In 1968, the brothers sold the hotel to St. Petersburg businessmen E.B. Joe Porter, Wilbert R. Canning, and Harold E. Wells for $260,000. At the time, it was noted as a 110 room facility. Purchased as an investment, Porter, Canning and Wells sold the Hotel Detroit to William L. Pendergast and Robert Barnes in 1977.\textsuperscript{70}

After the death of Ed Lewis in 1940 and his son, Leon Lewis, in 1950, the Lewis properties remained in the ownership of the Lewis Interests. In 1966, the company decided to raze the two buildings on the southeast corner of 1\textsuperscript{st} Avenue and 3\textsuperscript{rd} Street North, and construct the existing one-story commercial building located at 270 1\textsuperscript{st} Avenue North. Also in 1966, the Lewis Buildings along Central

\textsuperscript{69} Polk 1951; “Newly Remodeled Bishop Hotel Has its Formal Opening,” Evening Independent, 13 December 1948; Bethia Caffery, “A Bit of City History...,” Evening Independent, 21 May 1977; Ancestry.com, “Florida Death Index”; City of St. Petersburg, Property Cards.

Avenue received a "face-lift" for $40,000 when they were refaced with stucco and Carrara Glass and an aluminum canopy and wall cap were installed.\textsuperscript{71}

Northeast corner of Central Avenue and 3rd Street showing the Lewis Buildings, ca. 1950. Courtesy of the Museum of History, Photo 2636.

During the 1960s, downtown and the neighborhoods surrounding the city core entered a period of decline and abandonment. Many of the buildings associated with the early history of the community slowly deteriorated. One of the first widespread efforts at reinvestment and revitalization in the downtown area resulted in the complete renovation of the entire block on which the Hotel Detroit was located. The efforts were partially funded through a $1.3 million Community Development Block Grant. In addition to providing the owners funding to hire architects to modernize the buildings, public improvements in the block included replacing paving, landscaping, lighting, and installing planters and fountains.\textsuperscript{72}

On the former Detroit parcel, Peacock Row was renovated and leased as office and commercial space. The adjacent building along 2nd Street North on the northeast corner of the parcel, built in 1912 as additional commercial space for the Detroit, was demolished between 1977 and 1982. The centrally located north (rear) wing of the Hotel Detroit, which was part of the original 1888 construction, was demolished in June 1981 to create space for a paved courtyard. The courtyard was converted to the Jannus Landing (now Jannus Live) concert


venue, named for Tony Jannus who flew an airboat from St. Petersburg to Tampa making it the official birthplace of commercial aviation. The concert venue opened in October 1982. Other alterations included the application of stucco to the north (rear) elevation to cover the removal of the rear wing, replacement windows, addition of balconies and stairs to the rear elevation, and removal of paint from the original red brick additions. The Lewis Buildings, sold by the Lewis Interests in 1981, received a fresh coat of stucco.\textsuperscript{73}

Although businesses on the first floor remained open, the hotel finally closed in 1992. In December 1998, Jannus Landing Ltd. purchased the Detroit along with several adjacent properties from Bob Barnes and Bill Pendergast for over $2 million. In 2000, Jannus Landing transferred ownership to St. Pete Jannus for $3.6 million. St. Pete Jannus subsequently converted the property to a condominium in 2002. Of the 29 units, 24 are residential and five are commercial. With the conversion, the building underwent extensive alterations. The interior layout changed with the removal of hotel room walls and installation of modern equipment to create larger, independent condominium units. Exterior alterations included the construction of a new tower, re-stuccoing the front of the wood frame portion of the building, and replacing most of the original double-hung sash and the single-hung sash windows.\textsuperscript{74}

\textbf{STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE}

\textbf{Community Planning and Development, Commerce, and Settlement}

Block 25 is significant at the local level in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Commerce, and Settlement as an example of the evolution of the tourism industry and settlement patterns in St. Petersburg. It meets the following criteria for designation of a property found in Section 16.30.070.2.5(D) of the City of St. Petersburg Code:

(a) Its value is a significant reminder of the cultural or archaeological heritage of the City, state or nation;


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(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 work has influenced the development of the City, state, or nation;
(g) Its character is a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, or continuity or sites, buildings, objects or structures united in past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development; and
(h) Its character is an established and geographically definable neighborhood, united in culture, architectural style or physical plan and development.

As the first hotel in the City, the Hotel Detroit was constructed in conjunction with the railroad depot to encourage the settlement and growth of the new community. By providing lodging for prospective residents, the hotel supported the early growth of the city. Block 25 and the Hotel Detroit were the center of the community from the filing of the Map of the Town of St. Petersburg in 1888.

Until the construction of the hotels in the 1920s, the Detroit served as the central hub of social life in St. Petersburg where significant events were celebrated. For example, residents marked the 1897 introduction of electricity in the town with a day of celebration culminating in a grand ball at the Hotel Detroit. Block 25 held the earliest clothing stores, bakeries, restaurants, and the first movie theater in the city. The owners and business operators within the block played a significant role in the development of the city including John C. Williams, Frank Fortune Pulver, Bainbridge Hayward, Curtis N. Crawford, Edson T. Lewis, James Norton, Mary Ramsey, Bill Carpenter, Samuel V. Schooley & Perry M. Murphy, Henry Binnie, Arthur Johnson, Ida Nancy Merrill, and Hubert Rutland. Several, including Ed Lewis, Frank Fortune Pulver, and Bainbridge Hayward, played a leadership role in city government, actively establishing good roads, the city waterfront, public utilities, and safe drinking water. Developers John

Williams, Ed Lewis, Mary Ramsey, Herbert Rutland, S.V. Schooley and Perry Murphy laid the foundation for the growth and beauty of the City.

Supporting not only the settlement of the community, Block 25 played a significant role in the development of the tourism industry. A stop at the Hotel Detroit for refreshments was part of the first seaside excursions offered by the Orange Belt Railway in 1889. A number of the new residents likely stayed at the Detroit and the smaller surrounding hotels such as the St. Charles, Binnie-Bishop, and Tamiami Hotels when they first visited the city and while awaiting the construction of a residence. According to historian Karl Grismer, Lewis' Grocery became a "show place of the city and when F.A. Davis brought prospects to the city in an attempt to interest them in his various enterprises, he invariably took them to the Lewis store to show them evidences of prosperity."75 From Bill Carpenters excursion to Seattle with his alligator named "Trouble", to Frank Fortune Pulver's periodic visits to Broadway in New York City in a white suit flanked by Florida beauty queens, Block 25 occupants made a concerted effort to draw tourists to St. Petersburg. Events, such as the Festival of States organized by Arthur Johnson, not only drew tourists but bolstered community pride.

Block 25 is also significant as a cohesive collection of commercial buildings dating to the early settlement and growth of the city. They remain indicative of early commercial construction and the ever present effort to modernize and attract new customers. The buildings also convey a sense of history exhibiting the evolution of construction and the growth of St. Petersburg. The styles within Block 25 indicate the overall evolution of architectural design during the early- to mid-twentieth century and the history of development in St. Petersburg. Although the buildings display varying degrees of ornamentation, Block 25 achieves uniformity through the use of similar materials, massing, streetscaping, setback, scale, and proximity.

75 Grismer 1924, 233-24.
A Note About Commercial Architecture: In the U.S., the main street storefront is usually the most prominent feature of a historic commercial building, playing a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising strategy. Although storefronts normally do not extend beyond the first story, it often relates to the rest of the building visually through a unity of form and detail. The earliest extant storefronts in the U.S., dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries, had bay or oriel window fronts that provided additional display space. The 19th century witnessed the progressive enlargement of display windows as plate glass became available in increasingly larger units. The use of cast iron columns and lintels at the ground floor level permitted structural members to be reduced in size. Recessed entrances provided shelter for sidewalk patrons and further enlarged display areas.

Commercial establishments of the 18th and early 19th centuries were frequently located on the ground floor of buildings and, with their residentially scaled windows and doors, were often indistinguishable from surrounding houses. In some cases, however, large bay or oriel windows comprised of small panes of glass set the shops apart from their neighbors. Awnings of wood and canvas and signs over the sidewalk were other design features seen on some early commercial buildings. The ground floors of large commercial establishments, especially in the first decades of the 19th century, were distinguished by regularly spaced, heavy piers of stone or brick, infilled with paneled doors or small paneled window sash. Entrances were an integral component of the facade, typically not given any particular prominence although sometimes wider than other openings.

The first decades of the 20th century revealed a growing use of decorative transom lights (often using small prismatic glass panes) above display windows; in some cases, these transoms could be opened to permit air circulation into the store. Electric incandescent lights enabled storeowners to call attention to their entrance and display windows and permitted nighttime shopping. In the 1920’s and 1930s a variety of new materials were introduced into the storefront, including aluminum and stainless steel framing elements, pigmented structural glass (in a wide variety of colors), tinted and mirrored glass, glass block and neon.
Because commercial architecture responds to a variety of factors—environmental, cultural, and economic—distinct regional variations in storefronts can be noted. Fixed metal canopies supported by guy wires, for example, were common in late 19th and early 20th century storefronts in southern states where it was advantageous to have shaded entrances all year long. Such a detail was less common in the northeast where moveable canvas awnings predominated. These awnings could be lowered in summer to keep buildings cooler and raised in winter when sunlight helps to heat the building.

**Notable Architects and Builders of Block 25**

The buildings depict the craftsmanship of local architects, builders, and artisans. Several notable architects and contractors worked on the buildings of Block 25 including Edgar Ferdon, M. Leo Elliott, William Shull, J. Frank Chase, Charles DuBois, and Walter C. Henry. Henry Taylor occupied an office in one of the buildings, and designed a small infill building still present today. These men played a significant role in designing the built environment of an early St. Petersburg community.

**Edgar Ferdon**

Edgar Ferdon was born in Englewood, New York in 1869. He visited the St. Petersburg area in the 1890s, most likely to visit his father, who lived in the city. In 1892, although not a permanent resident, Ferdon designed the Chautauqua Villa, the first house to be built on the north side of the city (northeast corner of First Avenue and Second Street North). He moved to the City permanently in 1903 from Summit, New Jersey to become a permanent resident and was probably St. Petersburg's first professional architect, locating his office at 319 Central Avenue.

Ferdon had an important impact on Downtown St. Petersburg and the rest of the City in the first three decades of the twentieth century. In addition to the Michigan Building, Ferdon designed several important buildings in the City including the American Bank and Trust Building in the 300 block of Central Avenue, where his office was located, First National Bank (Florida Bank and Trust) in the 400 block of Central Avenue, the Crislip Arcade at 645 Central Avenue, the Rex (Cameo) Theater at 169 Central Avenue, Harrison Hardware Building, parts of the Pheil Hotel, and the First Congregational Church.

Ferdon was also associated for several years in the mid-1910s with noted local architect George Feltham, who would later design the Sunset Hotel, Green-Richman Arcade, Ponce de Leon Hotel, and the First Baptist Church, all locally designated historic landmarks. During the 1920s, Ferdon designed many attractive residences on Snell Isle and in the North Shore neighborhood, while
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also designing commercial buildings. During the peak of his career in St. Petersburg, Ferdon lived with his wife Florence and their four sons in their home on Tangerine Avenue South near Ninth Street. Ferdon died from a stroke on May 2, 1932, at his home at 2345-1/2 First Avenue North in Historic Kenwood.76

M. Leo Elliott

M. Leo Elliott, who designed the addition to the Hotel Detroit, was born in 1886 in Woodstock, New York. He attended Cooper's Institute in New York City and received training at the New York City firm of Welch, Smith & Provost. Early in his career he helped design buildings for the Jamestown Exposition of 1907 in Norfolk, Virginia. At the age of 21, he moved to Tampa and formed a partnership with Bayard C. Bonfoey. They designed the Tampa YMCA (1909), Centro Asturiano (1914) and Tampa City Hall (1915). The partnership was dissolved in 1917.

During World War I, Elliott served as an engineer in the construction of concrete oil tankers in Jacksonville. After his return to Tampa, he created the firm of M. Leo Elliott, Inc., Architects and Engineers. Elliott then designed the Italian Club (1917) and Cuban Club (1918) in Ybor City. In 1925, the firm was designing projects throughout Florida, maintaining a St. Petersburg office. During the peak of the land boom, the firm employed six structural engineers, forty-six draftsmen, and seventeen site inspectors. One of the firm's major projects in St. Petersburg includes the 1926 Ninth Street Bank and Trust designed in the Neoclassical Revival style.

Many of Elliott's notable projects in Tampa are still extant on Davis Islands near downtown Tampa and in Temple Terrace. Other important buildings in Tampa designed by Elliott include the Masonic Temple, the Scottish Rite Temple and the First National Bank. He also designed Sarasota High School. During World War II, he designed war housing for the Public Housing Administration. In 1946 the firm became Elliott & Fletcher. Elliott retired from practice in 1954 and died on August 18, 1967. 77

J. Frank Chase

A veteran of the Civil War, Captain J. Frank Chase came to St. Petersburg in 1895, and initially tried to develop present-day Gulfport as Veteran City. When

that effort failed, he joined with J.T. Lindsey to form a contracting firm in 1906. In addition to the Michigan Building and the Lewis Building at 259-269 Central, Chase and Lindsey went on to build the Wilson-Chase Building, the Welch Building, and the McCrory 5 & 10 Store, along with numerous residences.\textsuperscript{78}

Charles DuBois

Charles DuBois came to St. Petersburg in 1910 after working throughout the southeastern United States. In addition to the Binnie-Bishop Hotel, DuBois also built the Vogel apartments, Elks Club, Sunset Hotel, the Municipal Power Plant, the Municipal Gas Plant, and numerous residences as well as many seawalls along the waterfront. DuBois served as the president of the St. Petersburg Association of General Contractors during the 1920s.\textsuperscript{79}

Walter C. Henry

Walter C. Henry came to St. Petersburg in 1896 after severe freezes in 1894-95 destroyed local citrus groves and devastated the local economy in Leesburg, Florida. Once in St. Petersburg, he immediately built a combination office and residence on Central Avenue and went into business as a contractor. Henry was elected to City Council in 1901-02, but resigned in order to bid on the contract, which he received, for the construction of the first high school building in 1902. In addition to the 1905 Norton Building, he also built the 1910 First Congregational Church, the 1909 St. Petersburg High School, the 1913 American Bank & Trust, and the 1915 Mirror Lake Carnegie Library.\textsuperscript{80}


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CONTINUATION SHEET

Additional Photographs (all photos by City Staff, 2015, unless otherwise noted)

Detroit Hotel, Southeast Façade

Michigan Building, South Façade
Ramsey Addition, South Façade

Ramsey Building, South Facade
Norton Building, South Façade

Lewis Building #3, South Facade
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Lewis Grocery (Lewis Building #1), South Façade

Lewis Building #5, Southwest Façade
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Binnie-Bishop Hotel, North Facade

Tamiami Hotel, South Facade
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1909 Hotel
Detroit Building,
North Facade

Peacock Row,
North Facade
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Block 25 Alley, Looking east

Detroit Hotel
Historic Sign at Southeast Corner
APPENDIX D
Supporting Documents
August 18, 2016

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RE: “Detroit Block Renovation” Concept and Block 25 City-Initiated Historic District Designation

Mr. Taraszi, Mr. Foster, and Ms. Sole:

The City Administration and staff have reviewed the preliminary “Detroit Block Renovation” (the “concept”) dated May 13, 2016, pursuant to its introduction at the June 29, 2016 meeting between each of you, City staff, and certain property owners. The “concept” maximizes the development potential of the block, while preserving only parts of the historically significant buildings’ frontal constructs. While elements of the “concept” have merit under certain redevelopment scenarios, it does not appear to fully adhere to the type of redevelopment/adaptive reuse suitable for maintaining the essential founding built heritage of St. Petersburg’s oldest and most historically significant downtown city block. Because of the distinctive character represented by Block 25 as the City’s first developed block after plating of the Town of St. Petersburg in 1888, City Administration currently cannot support the “concept” pursuant to the considerations explained in the paragraphs that follow.

In part, because of the City’s ongoing infrastructure planning and investments, Block 25 also presents significant redevelopment opportunities that are inclusive of the full array of the block’s historic buildings and original platted configuration, and we remain very open to future considerations that balance sensitive preservation with innovative redevelopment. Therefore, in light of the ongoing dialogue between parties, the Administration will continue to process the City-initiated local landmark designation of Block 25, in its entirety, to be heard by the Community Planning and Preservation Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 13, 2016.
Background Information

Block 25 currently consists of eleven divided parcels and a central alleyway in the City’s urban core. It is contained within a boundary generally described as occurring between Central Avenue to 1st Avenue North, and 2nd to 3rd Streets North. Though there were eleven parcels as part of the original plat, the configuration today is different, wherein most of the east half reveals a reconfiguration of property lines. It is generally understood that all or parts of the entire block are considered historically significant for associations with the City’s early commercial development after the Town was first platted in 1888. The earliest extant building after platting is the remnant of the Hotel Detroit completed in 1888, with the last historically significant building developed by the end of 1924, with at least one infill building added during the 1930s.

Block 25 is currently an economic showcase as an urban destination and event venue that reveals its own distinctive vibrancy and character apart from surrounding City blocks and intensive development in other parts of the urban core. The subject property is zoned Downtown Center-Core (DC-C), the City’s most intensive category, which allows innovative redevelopment scenarios. The downtown core is experiencing robust redevelopment marked by several built high- and medium-rise projects, with several more committed but not yet commenced. The Central Avenue corridor extends this occurrence of redevelopment westward, whereby medium story residential projects are also being approved.

As you are already aware, the City-initiated local historic landmark designation application for Block 25 is considered to be in-process as a result of an ongoing public-private partnership for addressing the infrastructure issues and improvements referenced above, as they are commonly associated with an aging and heavily used city block. Two buildings are already designated as local historic landmarks, and four are considered potentially eligible for local landmark status. As an expression of its significance, ten of the eleven parcels contribute to the Downtown Historic District, as listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and most of the buildings of Block 25 are contributing resources. The completed Staff Evaluative Findings from the local landmark district designation recommend 15 out of 16 buildings as contributing to the proposed Block 25 Historic District.

Pursuant to City Code, Section 16.30.070.2.5.H, it is understood that a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is required for most: development activity when an active application for local landmark designation is in-progress. Pending legal review by the City Attorney’s office, the City could potentially co-consider the local landmark designation application along with a submitted, complete COA, and perhaps an associated Development Agreement. All COA applications are subject to the review criteria found in City Code, Section 16.30.070.2.6.E-M. Under these criteria, special attention and weight are given to how the integrity of historic buildings and sites are affected by effects to their character such as height, scale, frontal elevations, and spatialrelationships. Visual compatibility, materials preservation, and original building form are also considered along with other factors as referenced in the City Code.

Considerations of the “Concept” and its Effects to Block 25

1. The importance of preserving Block 25 as a single historic district. Even without a full comprehensive evaluation, it is readily apparent that the “concept” would likely eliminate the integrity of the City’s most important historic downtown block and historic public gathering place, and create a scale that irreversibly changes the dynamic of the relationships between the individual buildings; a valuable part of the City’s heritage would be forever lost.
Explanation. The significance of Block 25 is in its integrity as a whole block. The collection of historic buildings is perhaps the most intact for its scale and representation of pre-1920s commercial land boom development activity in St. Petersburg. As surrounding blocks have been redeveloped, Block 25 is now more of an enclave, representing a different historic experience from all that is happening around it. The quick-sketch graphic below reveals how demolitions of pre-1930s building stock have changed the downtown urban corridors, leaving little behind to form a cohesive, historic commercial scale and experience. Block 25, highlighted in yellow, still retains its prime location between the waterfront and the core blocks of Central Avenue as it extends to the fringe of the urban core. Though an extant row of historic buildings remain along the north side of Central Avenue from 4th Street North to 8th Street North, they do not carry the significance and historical precedent of Block 25 as the first developed block responding to the 1888 platting of the Town of St. Petersburg.

The current parcel configuration of Block 25 is similar to the original plat, and the alley reveals an on-site circulation characteristic that is virtually unchanged. The direct relationship between buildings along 1st Avenue North and Central Avenue is united by the historically important alley, that at one time led to a central courtyard of the Hotel Detroit (now Jannus Live). Though use and demographic changes have occurred and have become part of the contextual character, Block 25 still serves as a primary urban
destination and meeting place for the general public. Today, it is set apart from surrounding block
development in its lower scale and vibrancy that continue the earliest dynamics. Redevelopment that
considers the entire block and its historic buildings as an intermingled historic fabric would best serve its
significance and heritage distinction, of which appropriate and sensitive and robust design and planning
have proven under similar circumstances.

2. **Altering the linear depths of historically significant buildings.** Per the City Code criteria, the “concept”
appears to disqualify any proposed historic district since it would reduce too much of each factor of
integrity needed to sustain the historic block’s physical aspects, and character-defining layout. Façade-
only retention, while an important tool under certain situations, does not appear to work positively for
Block 25 without understanding other dynamics such as future use, aesthetics, scale, experience, etc.

*Explanation.* The existing building frontages reveal a communal relationship with the rear alley, to which
the City has committed significant improvements. Eliminating the alley, and retaining only the frontal
footprints of some buildings destroys this relationship by eliminating the physical elements that also
bring together each side of the block. The alley is an important feature of the early block along which all
original buildings were constructed. Alternatives for an improved, more historically sensitive design are
available that allow a more compatible scale and separation of new development versus old, while
incorporating the most important character-defining elements of the block, including the alley.

3. **Development of an internal high-rise project.** The “concept” would likely render Block 25 as
unrecognizable according to its historic configuration, its historic role, and its historic functions.

*Explanation.* Again, scale is an issue of concern. The projection of a large, multi-dimensional high-rise
building from the center of Block 25 completely alters the setting, while creating a false sense of history
by retaining only the facades of certain buildings. The current block is now a rarity when compared to all
other blocks in the City. The enormity of the proposed “concept” would likely require a false
preservation of existing historic buildings, whereby they become only shell remnants that may no longer
meet required minimum integrity standards. In this case, the buildings would become mere references
to their original design, workmanship, and materials. In other words, the stabilization of the historic
fabric is unclear, as revealed in the “concept,” since it appears that each building would be permanently
altered and modified in a gratuitous manner and therefore lose the effect of completeness. This
produces an unclear understanding then, of how the Central Avenue street venue, and the block as a
historic whole would retain any of its current historic character and value.

4. **Continued uses of the existing historic buildings are an important part of retaining important
historic collections of buildings.** The “concept” does not appear to preserve enough of any existing street
corridor character, and it is unclear how a complete and accurate historic building ensemble is then
restored and revived in tandem with the newly developed building construct that appears to improperly
and perhaps excessively engage and overwhelm the historic constructs.

*Explanation.* It has to be considered that the current atmosphere and dynamics of Block 25 would
change with development of the “concept”, but the immediate, and both short- and long-term
predictable effects are unknown. The strong flux of people and event activities, especially along Central
Avenue, is a characteristic feature throughout all historic periods that create a strong sense of identity
for St. Petersburg’s residents and visitors. Without preserving at least one full street block component of
buildings, the current historic setting and atmosphere are not likely going to be retained.
5. The Hotel Detroit. The "concept" slices through the hotel in an awkward manner and may disqualify the City’s most important pioneer building as a local historic landmark.

Explanation. As the earliest and perhaps most important building on the block, and the first major building constructed after the 1888 Town platting, the Hotel Detroit and its later 1911 and 1913 additions, all local landmarks, should be retained in their entirety. Though the historic integrity of the original hotel is now compromised, such changes have become part of its history. The winged additions that reveal its early dominance and progressive character, are old enough and architecturally significant enough today to perhaps allow it to reveal the history back to the founding of St. Petersburg better than any other building in the City.

We respect the desire to make substantial financial investments and improvements to the urban core of St. Petersburg. We also understand how critical historic areas have contributed to the success of our City as one of the best places to live, work, and vacation. As part of the upcoming local landmark district designation consideration, let us continue the open process of communication and public input that has already helped to shape our great City. We look forward to your input and comments.

Sincerely,

Dave Goodwin, Director, Planning & Economic Development Department

LF/dg

CC: Alan DeLisle, City Development Administrator
    Derek Kilborn, Manager, Urban Planning and Historic Preservation Division
    Michael Dema, Esq., Assistant City Attorney
    Dr. Larry Frey, Historic Preservation Planner II
HISTORIC BLOCK 25 TERM SHEET

This Letter of Intent or Term Sheet follows a more comprehensive letter of commitment that was previously prepared by the City of St. Petersburg and published on April 14, 2015. The purpose of this Term Sheet is to summarize action items discussed at a joint planning meeting on Tuesday, May 26, 2015. The meeting was attended by City Staff, legal representation for the property owners, and several property owners.

1. Amend the City’s Land Development Regulations (“LDRs”) to prioritize use of the transfer of development rights:

   - **Support dialogue** and **strongly recommend** re-ordering the FAR bonuses to prioritize historic preservation. The consensus recommendation is to combine the first 0.5 FAR requirement for workforce housing with the second 0.5 FAR requirement for historic preservation, workforce housing, and downtown transit, into a consolidated requirement for the first 1.0 FAR to be selected from any single or combination of historic preservation, workforce housing, and downtown transit.

   - **Support dialogue** and **strongly recommend** that where a streamline or public hearing application impacts properties listed individually or as a contributing resource on the St. Petersburg Register of Historic Places or the National Register of Historic Places, or properties formally identified through City Code Section 16.30.070.2.11 as potentially eligible for designation as a local landmark, then use of the historic preservation FAR bonus shall be mandated.

   - **Assign** one (1) representative from Block 25 to the committee that shall be convened to review and consider changes to the FAR exemption and bonus program within the Downtown Center zoning classification.

   - **Support dialogue** and **evaluation** of proposal that the Historic and Archeological Preservation Overlay (“HAPO”) Section of the City Code be amended to make contributing resources within a local landmark district eligible for the creation of TDR credits.

2. Amend the LDRs to allow the application of TDR,H outside the DC, CCS, and RC zoning districts:

   - **Research opportunities for** increasing the number of receiver zoning districts. Expansion must occur within permissible allowances governed by the provisions of the applicable plan category and the Countywide Plan Rules.

   - **Initiate** a text amendment application, and **strongly recommend** support for, applicable changes to the City’s LDRs that allow additional transfer opportunities.
3. Amend the Certificate of Appropriateness procedures to add more objective standards and to
lower the threshold for allowing replacement or redevelopment:

- **Confirm our commitment** to schedule a pre-development meeting with related staff liaisons in
  advance of any redevelopment proposal, if requested. The development review team would
  include staff liaisons from zoning, permitting, preservation, engineering, sanitation, water, and
  transportation and parking. The purpose of the development review team will be to provide
  preliminary assistance in identifying potential problems and solutions prior to submitting a formal
  application and processing fee.

- **Support dialogue** to consider amending the HAPO to allow greater flexibility when considering
  requests to replace original windows with impact resistant and energy efficient windows. During
  such consideration, City Staff will not be supportive of changes that jeopardize the City’s CLG
  status. Decisions regarding window and exterior door replacement often require Community
  Planning and Preservation Commission (“CPPC”) action, which is appealable to City Council.
  Favorable Commission and Council decisions cannot be guaranteed.

- **Support dialogue** pertaining to the use of a development agreement on proposals requiring COA
  approval. City staff can review and recommend support for certain exterior modifications that
  may be a part of a development agreement. However, development agreements cannot supersede
  the authority of existing laws and codes, including the decision making authority of an elected or
  appointed body. Development agreements are subject to review and recommendation by the
  Community Planning and Preservation Commission and approval by the City Council, such
  approval cannot be assured. Further, when a proposal requires public hearing review, in
  accordance with the COA Matrix, final authority is assigned to the Community Planning and
  Preservation Commission or City Council, on appeal. Again, favorable Commission and Council
  decisions cannot be guaranteed by the terms of a development agreement.

- **Prepare a list** of character defining features for each of the buildings located within the proposed
  district to help inform future decision making about exterior modifications. (The COA review
  process considers the impact of proposed changes on character defining features of the historic
  resource.) Said list shall be incorporated into a Letter of Opinion that will, to the best of our
  abilities, describe how future interpretations shall be made.

4. Alley improvements, including resurfacing and utility infrastructure. Issues and concerns
include stormwater, grease traps, and access for trash hauling and deliveries, and, streetside
enhancements along the perimeter of the block, including lighting, sidewalks, banners, signage,
and monuments. This includes general maintenance of public rights-of-way and adding new
enhancements to place a spotlight on the block as an entertainment and historic district:

- **City will review** the various challenges associated with the service alley and streetscape around
  Block 25 and will prepare an improvement plan and implementation strategy. The improvement
  plan will be prepared with input from the affected property owners, and the implementation
  strategy will be a negotiated agreement specifying obligations of both the City and affected
  property owners.

- **City will invest** available funding sources to prepare the implementation strategy and install any
  identified improvements or enhance programming.

- **Evaluate** assignment of special assessments to abutting property owners for negotiated
  improvements beyond City’s funding capabilities.

- **Evaluate** opportunities for additional loading zones to accommodate service vehicles.
• **Support dialogue** pertaining to elimination of on-street parking, either along Central Avenue or around the entire city block. Dialogue may include alternatives, such as elimination of diagonal parking along the north side of Central Avenue, conversion of diagonal parking to parallel parking, or redesigning this segment of Central Avenue into a convertible street meaning that it would be designed to prioritize pedestrians and special events and may be more regularly closed to vehicle traffic.

5. **Marketing of the district and expanded wayfinding signage on major arterial roadways, downtown pedestrians, thoroughfares and City-sponsored maps. Website content on stpete.org and stpete.com:**

• **Market the local historic district** through promotional materials and special event programming. All aspects of marketing will be coordinated through the City’s Marketing Department.

• **Pursue grant funding** or make a commitment through city funds to develop and install a heritage trail around the block. Descriptive panels could be designed featuring specific buildings and include historic narrative about the individual buildings and city block. Create a virtual tour on the City website to replicate the heritage trail on-site.

• **Pursue installation of directional signage** along I-275 and the I-175 and I-375 feeders. The Florida Administrative Code Chapter 14-51.1 regulates guide signs: 1) **provide annual trip data** to show compliance with the Qualifying Historic District requirements, meaning a minimum 100,000 annual trips; and 2) **negotiate with the Florida Department of Transportation** for additional signage in compliance with their installation criteria.

• **Consult with property owners** to help identify alternative district names that are historically accurate yet more agreeable from a marketing and branding perspective.

• **Evaluate** the potential for signature signage, similar to the signature signage installed along Beach Drive directing pedestrians to the Sundial.

• **Support identification on pedestrian wayfinding signs.** The City’s Transportation and Parking Department is commencing a study to update an existing pedestrian wayfinding sign program for the downtown center. The local historic district, if approved, will be included for consideration.
TO: The Honorable Karl Nurse, Chair, and Members of City Council

THROUGH: Derek Kilborn, Manager of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation

FROM: Kimberly Hinder, Historic Preservation Planner

DATE: Meeting of August 1, 2013

SUBJECT: Pursuant to a request by City Council at their April 18, 2013 meeting, this report is an analysis of the eligibility of Block 25, commonly known as the Jannus Landing block, for local landmark designation as a district.

REQUEST: The CPC is requesting that City Council initiate a local landmark designation application for Block 25 to be designated as a district.

Background:
On March 12, 2013, a demolition application was submitted for a portion of the Bishop Hotel property located at 256 1st Avenue North, which was identified as a potential historic landmark in 2006. City Code Section 16.30.070.2.11 requires a 30 business day stay of demolition for potentially eligible landmarks and notification of such to the owner, the CPC, and any interested individual or group. At the March 15, 2013 CPC public meeting, the Commission requested that the matter be referred to City Council under City Code Section 16.30.070.2.8 for Emergency Actions; Nondesignated Properties with the request for an extension of the demolition delay. During the discussion and approval of the demolition delay at their April 18, 2013 meeting, Council also approved a resolution requesting that the CPC work with staff to review the landmark eligibility of all of the buildings on Block 25, also known as the Jannus Landing Block, not currently locally designated as a historic landmark and report back to City Council. At the July 9, 2013 public hearing, the CPC reviewed the history of the block, identified it as potentially eligible, and approved a motion to refer their findings to City Council.

According to City Code, the property owner or any resident or organization in the City may submit an application for local landmark designation. If privately initiated, the applicant must provide evidence of the approval of the district from the owners of two-thirds of the properties within the boundaries. The City, including City Council, may also initiate a designation. Evidence of ownership approval is not required for city-initiated designations.
Staff has prepared the following information regarding the block as additional background information.

In addition to the Binnie-Bishop Hotel and the Detroit Hotel, which was designated in 2010, there are seven other historic buildings on the block. It appears that there is sufficient historic integrity and significance to form a district.

Block 25 was part of the original plat for the City of St. Petersburg with the eastern portion, on which the Detroit Hotel was built, identified for hotel use. With the train depot half a block away and the city park nearby, Block 25 saw some of the earliest settlement and businesses in the new town.

Central Avenue looking west from the Detroit Hotel, ca. 1926. St. Petersburg Museum of History.
The Michigan Building was designed by architect Edgar Ferdon and constructed in 1909. Edward Tonnelier owned the property which was designed to accommodate stores on the first floor and a 10 room hotel on the second floor. Businesses such as Dr. William Secor, A.T. Mullins Real Estate, Beach’s Pharmacy, Sun Drug Company, United Cigars, and the James Hotel occupied the building. The Masonry Vernacular building remains an excellent example of early twentieth century commercial design.
Ramsey Addition, 237-41 Central Avenue (8PI313)

Although built separately, this narrow structure was built by the same owner as the building immediately west. Contractor R.W. Miller constructed the building for Mary Ramsey in 1908. Mrs. Ramsey lived on the second floor and rented the first floor to the Beverly ice cream shop. Later occupants included a bakery and Barber Groves.
Ramsey Block/St. Charles Hotel, 243-47 Central Avenue (8PI278)

The Ramsey Block, also known as the St. Charles Hotel, was constructed in 1904 by owner Mary Ramsey. She moved to St. Petersburg in 1900 and is credited with building the first brick commercial building in the city, which was located in the block where the City's Municipal Services Center is now. Her first two buildings have been demolished. This building, which she named the Ramsey Block, was her third commercial building with the building adjacent to the east as her fourth. This building held the Royal Palms Theater, one of the first with electricity, and the McPherson-Dent Bakery on the first floor. The second floor served as the St. Charles Hotel.
The Norton Building was built in 1906 by owner James Norton. Until Pinellas County voters outlawed saloons in 1913, Norton operated one of the last saloons in St. Petersburg. His wife, Julia, was the proprietor of Norton Flats, which were rooms available for rent on the second floor of this building. Other occupants included the Palace Ice Cream Parlor, Leland’s Ice Cream Parlor, and Jack’s Bazaar. It was the first building in the city to be piped for gas.

This building was later acquired by the Lewis family, who owned the rest of the buildings to the corner of 3rd Street and was refaced with the others in 1966. Although this building has been altered, it is still identifiable as a historic building in terms of mass, height, setback and openings and could be returned to a semblance of its original design.
Lewis Building #3,  
259-69 Central Avenue

This one-story block was constructed ca. 1908 by owner Ed Lewis, who owned the property to the corner of 3rd Street. Early occupants included Roger’s Jewelry, a plumbing business, the St. Petersburg Shoe Company, Ermatinger’s Hat Store, and Arthur L. Johnson’s Men’s Clothing Store. Johnson was a leader in the Chamber of Commerce, and originated the Festival of States celebration.
Lewis Building #1, 277-79 Central Avenue

Constructed by owner Edson T. Lewis in 1894, the two-story wood frame Lewis Building was built to house Lewis' grocery store on the first floor with a hotel on the second floor. Lewis arrived in St. Petersburg with his parents in 1888, three months before the arrival of the first train. Sixteen year old Lewis first worked in Williams General Store across from the Detroit Hotel, before venturing into a partnership in 1892, and then building and operating his own grocery in 1894. By the late 1890s, Lewis became a banker for many residents and helped establish the Central National Bank in 1904. He served as City Councilman, advocated for the use of brick in paving the city streets, and was a leader in the movement for municipal ownership of the waterfront and utilities.
In 1913, W.C. Burton joined the grocery firm and Lewis sold his interest in the grocery around 1920, although he retained ownership of the building and land. In 1923, the grocery closed, relocated, and became a wholesale enterprise. Among other interests, Lewis and his son, Leon Lewis, maintained investments in real estate, building four structures in the Jannus Landing Block alone.

It appears that the original wood frame building remains, although it was substantially altered with refacing in 1937 and again in 1966. Other entities which occupied the building include the Red Cross, starting in 1928, and architect Henry Dupont.
Lewis Buildings
# 2 - 17-21 3rd Street North (demolished)
# 4 - 23-29 3rd Street North & 262-278 1st Avenue North (demolished)
# 5 - 270 1st Avenue North (existing)

Southeast Corner of 3rd Street and 1st Avenue North, ca. 1950. Lewis Grocery Building #1 is on far right. Red brick building to the left was Lewis Building #2 (demolished). Mission Revival building on the corner was Lewis Building #4 (demolished). St. Petersburg Museum of History.

Lewis’ second construction project on the block was a red brick commercial building built ca. 1907 fronting 3rd Street North across the alley from his grocery. In 1917, Lewis and fellow owner George Van Houten, who was a contractor, built the Mission Revival building on the corner which was designed by architect W.S. Shull. It tied into the red brick building and housed
the Hotel Dennis on the 2nd floor. Other businesses which occupied the first floors of the buildings included the St. Petersburg Tailors and Dry Cleaners, Advance Art Printery, Carpenter’s New England Home Bakery and Tea Room, and an African-American barber and tailor, Archibald S. Smith, who maintained space between 1908 and 1914. After the death of Lewis and his son, Leon Lewis, the property remained in the ownership of the Lewis Interests. In 1966, the company decided to raze the two buildings on the corner, and construct the existing one-story commercial building located at 270 1st Avenue North. The Binnie-Bishop Hotel is located adjacent to the east of this building.
Tamiami Hotel, 242 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North
(8PI10446)

The Tamiami Hotel was built in 1924 by the Schooley-Murphy Company, a prominent contractor and developer in St. Petersburg during the 1920s and 1930s. In addition to numerous downtown buildings, Schooley-Murphy also built a number of high style Mediterranean Revival style residences in Euclid-St. Paul, the Historic Old Northeast, Snell Isle, and Pasadena. The building served as the Tamiami Hotel well into the 1960s.

Peacock Row, 208-36 1st Avenue North (8PI3053)

Peacock Row, ca. 1926. Frances G. Wagner Photographs, University of South Florida, St. Petersburg.

The one-story corner building in the historic photo and Peacock Row were built as part of the development of the Detroit Hotel. The corner building was constructed in 1909 and housed the Detroit Beauty Parlor, Central Printery, and Browning Gift Shop among others. It was demolished between 1977 and 1986. Peacock Row, the two-story building which remains, was built around 1920 under the ownership of Mayor Frank Fortune Pulver. It too housed businesses such as the Palm Book Store, Woman’s Exchange, and the Tourist Café. The rooms upstairs alternately served as additional hotel rooms and as offices.
RECOMMENDATION: The CPC recommends, pursuant to Section 16.30.070.2.5, that City Council initiate a local landmark designation application to designate Block 25, Revised Map of St. Petersburg, as a historic district.
A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA, INITIATING A LOCAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION FOR BLOCK 25, REVISED MAP OF THE CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE JANNUS LANDING BLOCK; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, on April 18, 2013, the City Council of the City of St. Petersburg approved a resolution requesting that the Community Preservation Commission (CPC) work with City staff to review the landmark eligibility of all buildings on Block 25, Revised Map of St. Petersburg, not currently locally designated as a historic landmark, and

WHEREAS, at their July 9, 2013 public meeting, the CPC reviewed the landmark eligibility of the buildings and the history of Block 25, and

WHEREAS, the CPC requested that the City Council initiate a local landmark application for Block 25 to be designated as a local historic landmark district, and

WHEREAS, Section 16.30.070.2.5 provides for the initiation and filing of a local landmark designation application by the City Council.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of St. Petersburg that, pursuant to Section 16.30.070.2.5, the local landmark designation process is hereby initiated for Block 25, Revised Map of the City of St. Petersburg. The City Council of the City of St. Petersburg requests that City staff prepare and process a local landmark application for designation of Block 25 as a district.

This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

Approved as to form and content

[Signatures]

City Attorney (designee) Planning and Economic Development Department
APPENDIX E
Public Comment

As of September 2, 2016, City Staff has received the following 17 emails in support of local landmark designation.
Sorry ... please note the following comments.
Starting June 14.

From: Kiki Russell [mailto:krussell626@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2016 8:13 PM
To: Derek Kilborn <Derek.Kilborn@stpete.org>; info@stpetepreservation.org; Council <Council@stpete.org>
Subject: First Block - YES to Landmarking

I have lived in the Tampa Bay area for over 40 years and recently moved to dtsp to embrace the diverse backgrounds of the people, the arts, and the historic buildings. These buildings give our city character and ground the community filled with exciting nightlife, a rich music, art and film making culture, and spectacular, yet somewhat zany, art murals.

With each high rise built up around me (I live in a lovely 1930's former hotel of 20 units on 2nd Ave S & 6th St) I mourn the change of the skyline, the loss of view from my 2nd floor apartment, and the destruction of gorgeous historic buildings.

YES to Landmarking.

Thank you,

Kiki (Karen) S. Russell
129 6th St S, Apt 205
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
From: Angela Alexander [mailto:inkedsnowwhite@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2016 8:38 PM
To: Derek Kilborn <Derek.Kilborn@stpete.org>
Subject: Landmark First Block

I say YES to landmarking the First Block of Downtown St. Pete.
-----Original Message-----
From: lisa Schweitzer [mailto:mercerlisa1@icloud.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 01, 2016 12:48 PM
To: Derek Kilborn <Derek.Kilborn@stpete.org>
Subject: First Block

I support landmarking First Block.

Thank you,

Lisa Schweitzer MS, LMHC, NCC, RPT
727.560.9082
www.playful-therapy.com
Counseling for children and the grown-ups who love them
From: Lynn Kenchel [mailto:lynniekok@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, July 25, 2016 8:08 PM
To: Derek Kilborn <Derek.Kilborn@stpete.org>; info@stpetepreservation.org; Council <Council@stpete.org>
Subject: detroit/first block

It's a terrible loss for St Petersburg that money has talked our city into tearing down another beautiful historic building in the "cheese grater". I know all our mayor/city council can see is tax revenue/MONEY, but how many of these skyscraper condo buildings do you think our roads water and other infrastructure can handle before traffic, crowds and an ugly skyline ruin the quaint, artsy charm that draws people here in the first place. If I wanted to live in Miami, I'd be there! Please consider this when you consider the fate of our historic Detroit block,
Lynn Kenchel
lynniekok@aol.com
Hi, Derek. I’d like to add my voice to those who support the designation of First Block as a St. Petersburg historic district. Many cities can and do erect high-rise behemoths but it’s the early buildings that show a city’s character and showcase its journey from past to future. Too few of our landmarks have been preserved. Hope First Block doesn’t become another casualty of unfettered and thoughtless expansion. --Donna

Where all people think alike, no one thinks very much.
--Walter J. Lippmann

Donna L. Terrence
727-398-6862 Home
336-288-1627 Mobile/Text
From: Mandy Minor [mailto:mandy.minor@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, July 20, 2016 10:50 PM
To: Derek Kilborn <Derek.Kilborn@stpete.org>; info@stpetepreservation.org; Council <Council@stpete.org>
Subject: I support historic district designation for First/Detroit Block

Dear Mr. Kilborn and City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support of making the block bordered by Central & 1st Ave. N. and 2nd & 3rd Streets a historic district. This block, home to the 1888 Detroit & 1910 Bishop Hotel, among other historic buildings, is the critical historical block in St. Petersburg and deserves official protection so it is not lost.

In 2014, City Council initiated a historic district application for the block, but the application has faced opposition and is still in limbo. I understand the current owners was to be able to sell the block for development, but really - how many generic, same-old-same-old high rises does St. Pete need? Aren't we, as the present citizens, beholden to protect the history of our city, as well as its uniqueness?

At the application hearing set by the CPPC for September 13th I urge you to consider the value of a strong sense of place and find in favor of granting the historical designation.

Warmly,

Mandy Minor
Dear Mr. Kilborn-

The most important issue in the development of St. Petersburg now is to retain its character. I was greatly influenced as a young woman when I was a pharmacy intern in Miami in the 80’s. At that time I became involved with the group that was responsible for saving the art deco buildings at South Beach. At the time I didn’t completely understand their importance, but seeing the world destination it has become I completely get it now. People love to see the link to history in a city— it’s what New Orleans, Savannah, Santa Fe, St. Augustine have that make them such unique destinations.

St. Petersburg still has this appeal. Overdevelopment would be a tragic waste of our most valuable commodity. Please have the same foresight and vision as the developers of the Vinoy. Please save “First Block” and the integrity of downtown for the future of our city so that it can join the ranks of those beloved, historic world destinations.

Warm regards,

Janet Adams
Derek Kilborn

From: heller@mail.usfsp.edu on behalf of Harold Heller <heller@usfsp.edu>
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2016 5:32 PM
To: Derek Kilborn
Cc: Council
Subject: First Block

Derek,

I am writing to request that the CPPC designate First Block as a historic district. This block is truly where St. Petersburg started and would add greatly as an attractor to persons visiting St. Petersburg. We've been fortunate to have the 1888 Detroit Hotel landmarked and designating First Block as a historic district would further enhance the place of the Detroit Hotel in being part of the original heart of our City. The Detroit Hotel and First Block have a special connection to the University of South Florida St. Petersburg which now is the site of the home of the person involved with developing the original block, John C. Williams.

I trust the CPPC to recognize the historic value of First Block and the merits for its being landmarked.

Many thanks.

Bill

--

Bill Heller, Ed.d

Dean and Professor, College of Education

Director, Bishop Center for Ethical Leadership

140 7th Avenue South, COQ 201

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

(727) 873-4245

Fax: (727) 873-4191
As a proud resident of SaintPetersburg... I would like to say YES to landmark First Block!

Sent from my iPhone
Please landmark first block. Keep St. Pete special.
Derek Kilborn

From: Alivia <cdgdancer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2016 11:52 PM
To: Derek Kilborn

YES

Sent from my iPhone
Dear Mr. Kilborn & Council;

Please vote “yes” to make St. Pete’s “First Block” an historic district. So many people, locals and visitors, come downtown to enjoy St. Pete’s history along with it’s events & activities. Creating the First Block Historic District will allow the City to anchor it’s culture in the hub that is our first block - something unique and special, to cherish and herald.

As a parent and Old North East resident, I take pride in the City we call home and love sharing it with everyone, neighbors and tourists alike.

Respectfully,
-David Wishner
632 Bay Street NE
Dear Derek,
I support St Pete Preservation's request, on behalf of many residents of St Petersburg, to designate First Block as a local historic moment district. Let's preserve our history, culture and uniqueness which is what attract people to our beautiful city. Keep St Pete beautiful. We don't need another Sand Key or Miami.

Thank you,
Adele Visaggio
1234 Beach Dr NE
St Petersburg, FL 33701

I support
Sent from my iPhone
I'm saying YES to landmarking St. Petersburg's First Block! Will you please, please do the same? Enough with the tall buildings - keep the historic local feel!! Our iconic Pier is gone and now you want to level what's left of the historic buildings for $$$$ - shame on all involved!!!

Ms. Carolynn Russell
2939 64th Ave N
St. Petersburg, FL 33702
Please Landmark First Block.

Thank you,
Peter

Peter Pastman, CFP®
Financial Advisor

O 727.567.2670 // M 727.798.9298 // F 727.567.8349
880 Carillon Parkway 32E, Saint Petersburg, FL 33716

www.GoodrichWealthPlanning.com

"Certified Financial Planners specializing in retirement income solutions."

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Mr. Kilborn, please support the preservation of the historic buildings in our downtown. They are what makes our beautiful city so special. I know, I live here 14 years now, originally from NYC. Please!!! Thank you, Shelle Berk
From: Claire Seminario <claireseminario@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2016 2:03 PM
To: Derek Kilborn
Subject: YES to landmarking First Block!

Yes please to landmarking St. Pete's First Block! Good luck this afternoon!

Claire Seminario
Sarasota