



**CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA**  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
URBAN PLANNING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION

## STAFF REPORT

### COMMUNITY PLANNING AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION REQUEST FOR LISTING IN THE ST. PETERSBURG REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Report to the Community Planning and Preservation Commission from the Urban Planning and Historic Preservation Division, Planning and Development Services Department, for Public Hearing and Executive Action scheduled for **Tuesday, December 14, 2021, beginning at 2:00 p.m.**, in Council Chambers of City Hall, 175 Fifth St. N., St. Petersburg, Florida. Everyone is encouraged to view the meetings on TV or online at [https://www.stpete.org/connect\\_with\\_us/stpete\\_tv.php](https://www.stpete.org/connect_with_us/stpete_tv.php).

*According to Planning & Development Services Department records, no Commission member or his or her spouse has a direct or indirect ownership interest in real property located within 2,000 linear feet of real property contained with the application (measured in a straight line between the nearest points on the property lines). All other possible conflicts should be declared upon the announcement of the item.*



CASE NUMBER:	<b>21-90300006</b>
LANDMARK NAME:	<b>Peninsular Fruit Company Building</b>
STREET ADDRESS:	10000 Gandy Blvd. N.
PARCEL ID NUMBER:	18-30-17-11322-009-0060
LEGAL DESCRIPTION:	BRIDGEVIEW SUB BLK 9, UNPLATTED PART OF BLK 9 LES RD R/W
OWNER:	Gandy 10k LLC
AGENT:	Thomas A. Hammer, AIA, Rowe Architects Inc.
REQUEST:	Owner-initiated designation of the Peninsular Fruit Company Building as a Local Historic Landmark of the St. Petersburg Register of Historic Places [Quasi-Judicial]

### Summary: Peninsular Fruit Company Building

<b>Historic/Alternative Names:</b>	Yardage Unlimited (8PI00487); Alveo Chemical Corp.
<b>Date of Construction:</b>	Circa 1924
<b>Period of Significance:</b>	1924-1971
<b>Architect and Builder:</b>	Unknown
<b>Criteria for Landmark Eligibility:</b>	A, B, E, and F
<b>Areas of Significance:</b>	Architecture Commerce Community Planning and Development
<b>Retention of Historic Integrity:</b>	Location, Design, Materials, Workmanship, and Feeling

### OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

The property at 10000 Gandy Blvd N ("the subject property") was constructed circa 1924 in the Mediterranean Revival style that was fashionable at that time, particularly in rapidly blossoming coastal Floridian communities such as St. Petersburg. The subject property was designed to engage the curve between present-day 4<sup>th</sup> St N and Gandy Blvd, making it a prominent landmark for tourists entering or exiting St. Petersburg via the then brand-new Gandy Bridge. As such, it stands as a tangible reminder of several important themes in St. Petersburg's history: citrus fruit's impact on the region's identity, the Gandy Bridge's huge effect on the area's development, and the growing importance of tourism to the young city's economy.

The application was accompanied by a thorough narrative detailing the subject property's history, existing conditions, and significance to the community's development. Staff concurs with the application's (Appendix A) conclusion that the subject property is eligible for listing in the St. Petersburg Register of Historic Places. The application proposes listing under criteria A, E, F, and I. Staff recommends listing under criteria A, B, E, and F in the areas of Architecture, Commerce, and Community Planning and Development).

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

A detailed narrative description of the property is included in the application documentation (Appendix A). The subject property is a two-story building facing southeast, following the direction of the curve between 4<sup>th</sup> St N and Gandy Blvd N. A single-story addition at the building's rear (northwest) elevation follows the parcel's triangular shape.

The building offers a straightforward but carefully detailed example of commercial Mediterranean Revival architecture. Its façade is symmetrical and features 11 bays of eight-lite casement windows. The windows at the ground floor feature arched fanlights and are separated by engaged twisted columns. See the Character Defining Features section and the application for additional details on the building's ornamentation.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The southern portion of the Florida peninsula was largely unsettled in the mid-nineteenth century. The vast majority of the Seminole tribes who had resided in Tampa Bay had been eliminated, migrated, or killed by disease by the conclusion of the Indian Wars in 1858.<sup>1</sup> A small handful of settlers had established fish ranchos and small farms in the lower Pinellas area by the dawn of the Civil War, but most relocated during the conflict.

Following the war, politicians in Florida and states throughout the South struggled to recoup financially while still bickering over the ramifications of emancipation. During these early post-war years, some of the settlers that had called the Pinellas Peninsula home prior to the Civil War returned, and their numbers slowly grew. The expansion of railroad construction further into the state allowed a growing number of large-scale landowners to begin developing what had previously been agricultural land in the final decades of the 1800s. One such landowner was Peter Demens (born Pyotr Alexeyevitch Dementyev), a Russian immigrant and speculative real estate developer. Partially financed by Philadelphian and fellow area landowner Hamilton Disston, Demens expanded the Orange Belt Railway into, and platted the land that would become, St. Petersburg. When the first trains arrived in the newly named town in 1888, it was home to only 30 residents.

Although the Orange Belt Railway was providing service into St. Petersburg, it was not initially successful. The American Medical Association's Dr. W.C. Van Bibber had endorsed the Pinellas peninsula as the perfect location for a "Health City" in 1885. To boost ridership and capitalize on the idea that St. Petersburg's climate offered healing powers, the Orange Belt Railway started to offer seaside excursions to St. Petersburg in 1889.<sup>2</sup> These excursions were among the first concentrated efforts by the community and its boosters to attract tourists.<sup>3</sup> When the railroad could not pay its debts in 1889, the syndicate of Philadelphia financiers holding the debts took over the railroad and the investment company, which was responsible for the land held in the name of the railroad.<sup>4</sup>

### The Citrus Industry in St. Petersburg

In his economic history of Florida, William B. Stronge notes the significant and growing impact that the "sunshine sector" had in the twentieth century as production shifted away from "frontier industries" such as lumber and open-range cattle ranching and the state began to establish itself as a destination. His evaluation of the state's growing economy considers the combined impact of all industries which depend upon Florida's warm weather, and, perhaps more specifically, upon its mild winters. When taking the impact of tourism into account alongside the production of winter and early spring vegetables, citrus, and other semitropical products, this sunshine sector had come to account for nine percent of the state's total production in 1899. Although

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<sup>1</sup> Nevin D. Sitler, *Warm Wishes from Sunny St. Pete*, (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2014), 21-22.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond Arsenault, *St. Petersburg and the Florida Dream: 1888 – 1950*, (Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company, 1988), 62.

<sup>3</sup> Karl H. Grismer, *The Story of St. Petersburg: The History of Lower Pinellas Peninsula and the Sunshine City*, (St. Petersburg, FL: P.K. Smith & Company, 1924), 70, 97, 111; "Heavy Real Estate Deal: Old Company Goes Out of Business," *St. Petersburg Times*, December 15, 1906.

<sup>4</sup> Grismer.

this figure trailed so-called frontier and maritime industries, which created 55 and 34 percent of statewide economic production respectively, the sunshine sector would grow significantly in the coming decades and surpass 50 percent of the state's economy by 1950.<sup>5</sup>

St. Petersburg's tourist and winter-resident population had begun to swell thanks to the connectivity afforded by the Orange Belt Railway and the marketing efforts developers. The local citrus industry saw a major boost after the winter of 1894-1895, when a large number of groves further north in Florida were devastated by a lasting freeze. This caused growers to move to even more temperate areas, such as Pinellas County.<sup>6</sup> Stronge's consideration of a sunshine sector which encompasses both the growth of tourism and of citrus farming in Florida becomes especially relevant when examining resources such as the subject property, which certainly demonstrates a higher style of architecture than would be needed for a strictly utilitarian packinghouse or sales building.

A 1926 aerial photograph of an area just north of downtown St. Petersburg shows (Figure 2) that, even at the height of the 1920s residential construction boom, land at the fringes of the town's commercial core was being cultivated as citrus groves with neatly-spaced dots of trees, quite often comingling with new housing developments and land that had been cleared and readied for development through the grading and paving of streets, sidewalks, and alleys.



**Figure 1: 1926 Aerial photograph of citrus farms interspersed with developments of single-family homes.**

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<sup>5</sup> William B. Stronge, *The Sunshine Economy: An Economic History of Florida Since the Civil War*, (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2008), 16-19, 169.

<sup>6</sup> Arsenault, 62.



Along with tourism, citrus production remained an important element of the sunshine sector. Oranges were the predominant citrus crop, accounting for approximately 70 percent of Florida's total citrus in 1930; grapefruit production accounted for most of the remaining 30 percent. Florida's citrus growers benefitted greatly from changing tastes among Americans (likely related to nationwide marketing campaigns as well as improving shipping), which saw the per-capita consumption of apples fall and citrus consumption rise during the 1910s and 1920s.<sup>7</sup>

Largely as a result of 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.<sup>8</sup> 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.

St. Petersburg's fresh citrus crops were marketed to early twentieth century winter visitors and tourists through downtown shops and the shipment of gift baskets. Visitors to St. Petersburg were urged to send a box of fresh fruit to loved ones back north for the holidays. During the early 1920s, a handful of packing and shipping companies sold citrus from downtown storefronts in addition to hosting visitors at packinghouses in more industrial areas on the outskirts of the city.

The builders of the subject property appear to have taken advantage of the site's proximity to the newly constructed Gandy Bridge as well as tourists' and visitors' interest in purchasing fresh citrus fruit. The building appears to have been constructed circa 1924, the same year that the bridge opened to passengers.

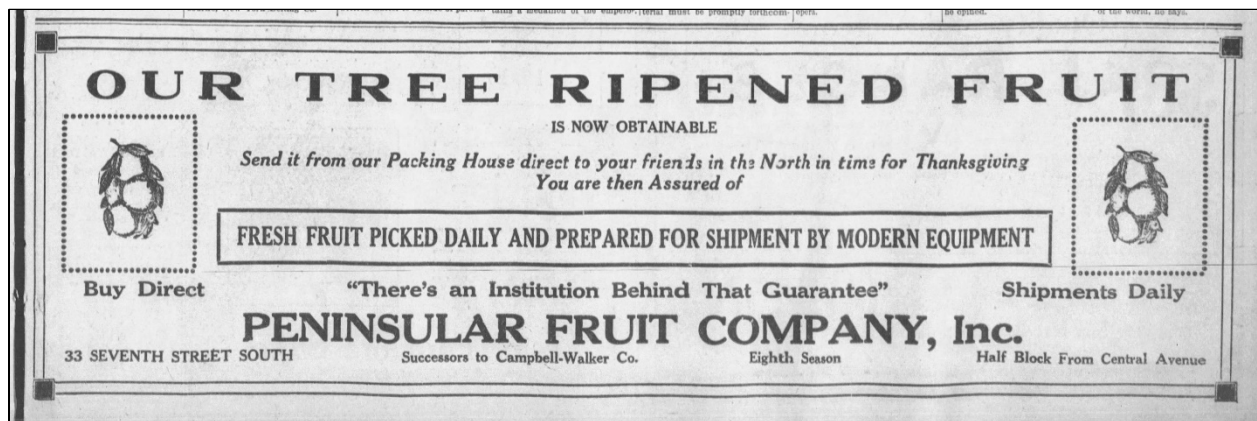


Figure 2: Advertisement from the St. Petersburg Times for Peninsular Fruit Company, November 18, 1923.

Peninsular Fruit Company had been operating since at least 1922 from a shop in downtown St. Petersburg on 7<sup>th</sup> St S, and perhaps earlier under the name Campbell-Walker Company. The company continued to operate downtown as well as its new location in the subject building; in

<sup>7</sup> Stronge, 115-116.

<sup>8</sup> Arsenault, 136.

1927 it advertised stores at 33 7<sup>th</sup> St S and 26 Beach Dr N as well as its packinghouse on 4<sup>th</sup> St and Gandy Blvd.<sup>9</sup>

### The Gandy Bridge and Development of St. Petersburg

The subject property was constructed near the height of the 1920s Land Boom, when the experience of visitors – increasingly, visitors arriving by car in particular – was paramount. The City’s administration itself began to formally encourage tourism with promotional campaigns following the election of Al Lang as mayor in 1916. Lang had been 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 attracting winter residents. The local population soon doubled during “the season.” Winter residents even formed tourist societies organized by their state or region of origin which acted as booster clubs in their native states. Although the real estate market collapsed during World War I, the boom of development had created a pattern for the future growth of the city. During the 1910s, the city’s population grew from 4,127 to 14,237.<sup>10</sup>

Among the developers who saw potential in a young St. Petersburg was George Gandy, who began the initial plans for a bridge that would span Tampa Bay in 1910. His initial work, in partnership with H. Walter Fuller, was put on hold due to a permit denial in 1918 when civilian construction permits required special approval by the War Emergency Board.<sup>11</sup> Creating a bridge connecting St. Petersburg and Tampa remained a goal, however, as evidenced by the 1921 Map of St. Petersburg issued by the St. Petersburg Investment Company, a development company with interests throughout the city, shown in Figure 3. The dual red lines indicate roads that were planned for construction but not yet built; the dual black lines indicate existing paved routes. The overland route to Tampa would involve a trip northwest through Pinellas Park, via today’s Haines Rd, then north and around Tampa Bay.

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<sup>9</sup> St. Petersburg Times, January 10, 1927.

<sup>10</sup> Arsenault, 121-125, 143-146, 190; Grismer, 189.

<sup>11</sup> Arsenault, 196.



**Figure 3: Section of a 1921 Map of St. Petersburg issued by St. Petersburg Investment Company, showing proposed Gandy Blvd (4<sup>th</sup> St N) and Gandy Bridge in red.**

When the Gandy Bridge was constructed in the 1920s, it took 1,500 workers more than two years to complete and cost three million dollars. The bridge's opening ceremony on November 24, 1924 was led by Florida Governor Cary Hardee and attended by an estimated 30,000 spectators. The bridge's opening is noted to be perhaps the most significant individual development in spurring the peak of St. Petersburg's Land Boom in 1925.<sup>12</sup>

A large number of residential subdivisions were platted in the area of the subject property in 1924-1925, their investors hoping to cash in on the development that followed improved transportation between the communities of St. Petersburg and Tampa. The Peninsular Fruit

<sup>12</sup> Arsenault, 196-197.

Company building was one of a small number of packinghouses that appear to have clustered around the area of 4<sup>th</sup> St N and the Gandy Bridge. It is likely that many, like the Robbin's Fruit Company building shown in Figure 4, were utilitarian in design.

**ROBBIN'S FRUIT COMPANY, Inc.**  
*Wishes To Thank The Thousands*

Wishes to thank the many hotels, restaurants, stores and the thousands of tourists and residents that have made possible the greatest volume of business that we have ever handled.

**Plenty of Fruit for the Summer**


We have plenty of choice fruit in storage to take care of our customers throughout the summer.

Never before in the history of our business have our customers so clearly portrayed their faith in us as they have this past year, when orders were repeated many times and hundreds of new customers added to our list . . . an assurance that our service and quality of fruits are 100 per cent satisfactory . . . Such faith forces us to take pride in our accomplishments and look forward to serving these same patrons even better next year as we now have our own packing house and fruit will come direct from grove to consumer.


The largest citrus fruit dealers in St. Petersburg are ever anxious to prove the superiority of complete equipment, proper management and access to the finest quality fruits obtainable . . . These features mean COMPLETE SATISFACTION to you.

**Let Us Take Care of Your Fruit Juice Needs**

We wholesale and retail fresh fruit juices throughout the entire year . . . prices cheerfully quoted upon request.



Packing House, Gandy Boulevard at 102nd Avenue North



Wholesale Department, 1108 Fourth Street North

**ROBBIN'S FRUIT COMPANY, Inc.**

Wholesale Department: 1108 Fourth Street North	J. Albert Robbins, President J. B. Hall, Treasurer	Packing House: Gandy Blvd. at 102nd Ave. North
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**Figure 4: Robbin's Fruit Company Advertisement showing packinghouses at intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> St N and Gandy Bridge, St. Petersburg Times, March 30, 1930.**

However, the subject property, with its eye-catching Mediterranean Revival design and placement directly at the curve onto the Gandy Bridge span from 4<sup>th</sup> St N, would have been perfectly placed to catch the eyes of motorists traveling across Tampa Bay. Although its initial use as a citrus company appears to have been cut short by the collapse of the Florida Land Boom and the beginning of the Great Depression in the late 1920s, the subject property has remained a noticeable piece of the landscape along one of St. Petersburg's most influential roadways.

## STAFF FINDINGS

In St. Petersburg, eligibility for designation as a local historic landmark is determined based on evaluations of age, context, and integrity as found in Section 16.30.070.2.5(D) of the City Code. Under the age test, a property must have been constructed over 50 years prior to designation. Historic documentation demonstrates that the subject property was initially constructed approximately 97 years ago, surpassing the required 50-year threshold.

Further, staff suggests that the subject property satisfies four Criteria for Significance and five Criteria of Integrity. Staff, therefore, recommends **approval** of the application to designate the subject property to the St. Petersburg Register of Historic Places.

#### Historic Significance and Satisfaction of Eligibility Criteria

The first portion of the evaluation to determine eligibility for the St. Petersburg Register of Historic Places examines a resource's historic significance with relation to nine criteria. One or more of these criteria must be met in order for a property to qualify for designation as an individual landmark or district to be placed in the St. Petersburg Register. The nine criteria are based on the National Park Service's criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and are designed to assess resources' importance in a given historic context with objectivity and comprehensiveness.

In the case of the subject property, the applicant proposes that the property be designated under criteria A, E, and F, and I for its significance in the areas of Architecture, Commerce, and Community Planning and Development. The application additionally suggests that the subject property be designated under criterion I, which is generally reserved for sites with archaeological significance. Staff does not recommend that this criterion be included in the designation's approved significance since there is no known archaeological site associated with the subject property.

Staff concurs with the areas of significance, but believes that the property satisfies the St. Petersburg Register criteria as follows:

<i>Is at least one of the following criteria for eligibility met?</i>		
Yes	A	<b>Its value is a significant reminder of the cultural or archaeological heritage of the city, state, or nation.</b>
Yes	B	<b>Its location is the site of a significant local, state, or national event.</b>
No	C	It is identified with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state or nation.
No	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.
Yes	E	<b>Its value as a building is recognized for the quality of its architecture, and it retains sufficient elements showing its architectural significance.</b>
Yes	F	<b>It has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.</b>
No	G	Its character is a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, or continuity of sites, buildings, objects or structures united in past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.
No	H	Its character is an established and geographically definable neighborhood, united in culture, architectural style or physical plan and development.

No	I	It has contributed, or is likely to contribute, information important to the prehistory or history of the city, state, or nation.
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### *Architecture*

As elaborated in the application, the subject property is a largely unaltered example of the Mediterranean Revival style, exhibiting such characteristics arched windows, a Spanish Baroque-influenced entry bay, and materials typical to the style such as stucco exterior treatment, a tiled roof, and casement windows. Although several fine examples of the Mediterranean Revival style remain in St. Petersburg, the subject property's relatively early construction date in the Gandy Bridge area makes it unique for the vicinity.

### *Commerce*

The subject property appears to be the last remaining 1920s-era commercial structure in its area, as pointed out by the application. As one of the first buildings encountered by visitors departing from the Gandy Bridge, the subject property's promise of fresh fruit served in many ways as a welcome sign to St. Petersburg.

### *Community Planning and Development*

The 1924 construction of the Gandy Bridge promised an opportunity for enormous expansion of St. Petersburg's residential and commercial development. The subject property's location represents the high hopes that investors and business owners had for the new bridge, and also shows the expectation of a continued shift toward auto tourists from the city's first generation of visitors, who had arrived downtown by train.

### Historic Integrity

Under the second part of the two-part assessment of eligibility for designation as a historic landmark, staff finds that the subject property retains integrity in seven of seven given criteria, surpassing the requirement of one or more.

<i>Is at least one of the following factors of integrity met?</i>						
Location	Design	Setting	Materials	Workmanship	Feeling*	Association*
Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
*Must be present in addition to at least one other factor.						

### Primary Character-Defining Historic Features

Future exterior alterations to the property will be subject to Certificate of Appropriateness review. The following list does not define all significant features of the subject property but is intended to identify the most distinct elements of this designation:

- Two-story, symmetrical façade of 11 bays,
- Stucco finish
- Paired wood eight-lite casement windows with sills,
- Twisted, engaged column details at ground floor,

- Arched window openings at ground floor,
- False arch detail at alternating base at second story,
- Entrance bay surround with signboard, cartouche, and finials,
- Stepped parapet with decorative coping.

#### PROPERTY OWNER CONSENT AND IMPACT OF DESIGNATION

The proposed local landmark designation was submitted by Thomas A. Hammer, AIA, of Rowe Architects Incorporated on behalf of the owner, Gandy 10K, LLC. The designation is supported by the owner.

The benefits of designation include increased heritage tourism through the maintenance of the historic character and significance of the city, some relief from the requirements of the Florida Building Code and FEMA regulations, and tax incentives, such as the local ad valorem tax exemption and federal tax credit for qualified rehabilitation projects. The designation of historic landmarks protects and enhances the St. Petersburg's historic character, fulfills the City's goals as a Certified Local Government in Historic Preservation, and reinforces a strong sense of place.

#### CONSISTENCY WITH ST. PETERSBURG'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, EXISTING LAND USE PLAN, AND FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The proposed local historic landmark designation is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, relating to the protection, use and adaptive reuse of historic buildings. The local landmark designation will not affect the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) or zoning designations, nor will it significantly constrain any existing or future plans for the development of the City. The proposed landmark designation is consistent with the following objectives:

**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 CPC 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

#### RECOMMENDATION

Based on a determination of general consistency with Section 16.30.070.2.5(D) and the submitted designation application, staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request to designate the Peninsular Fruit Company building, located at 10000 Gandy Blvd N, as a local historic landmark, thereby referring the application to City Council for first and second reading and public hearing.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Arsenault, Raymond. *St. Petersburg and the Florida Dream: 1888 – 1950*. Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company. 1988.

City of St. Petersburg. 1926 Aerial of St. Petersburg. On file, City of St. Petersburg.

Grismer, Karl H. *The Story of St. Petersburg: The History of the Pinellas Peninsula and the Sunshine City*. St. Petersburg, FL: P.K. Smith & Company. 1924.

St. Petersburg Investment Company. Map of St. Petersburg. 1921. Accessed via FloridaMemory.com

St. Petersburg Times: November 18, 1923.

\_\_\_\_\_ January 10, 1927.

Sitler, Nevin D. *Warm Wishes from Sunny St. Pete*. Charleston, SC: The History Press. 2014

Strong, William B. *The Sunshine Economy: An Economic History of Florida Since the Civil War*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida. 2008.

## Appendix A

### Application for Local Historic Landmark Designation



# AFFIDAVIT TO AUTHORIZE AGENT

I am (we are) the owner(s) and record title holder(s) of the property noted herein

Property Owner's Name: Gandy 10K, LLC

This property constitutes the property for which the following request is made

Property Address: 10000 Gandy Blvd, St Petersburg, FL 33702

Parcel ID No.: 18-30-17-11322-009-0060

Request: The owner requests the City of St. Petersburg review and approve the Local Landmark

Designation Application submitted with respect to this property.

The undersigned has(have) appointed and does(do) appoint the following agent(s) to execute any application(s) or other documentation necessary to effectuate such application(s)

Agent's Name(s): Thomas A. Hammer

This affidavit has been executed to induce the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, to consider and act on the above described property

I(we), the undersigned authority, hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct.

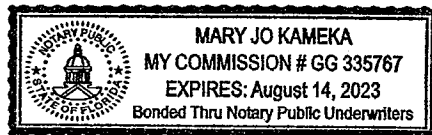
Signature (owner): Joseph M. Walker III, Manager  
Printed Name: Joseph M. Walker III  
Manager, Gandy 10K LLC

Sworn to and subscribed on this date

Identification or personally known: [Signature]

Notary Signature: Mary Jo Kameka Date: 9-28-21

Commission Expiration (Stamp or date):





# Local Landmark Designation Application

Type of property nominated (for staff use only)

- building  structure  site  object
- historic district  multiple resource

## 1. NAME AND LOCATION OF PROPERTY

historic name \_\_\_\_\_

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_

historic address \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. PROPERTY OWNER(S) NAME AND ADDRESS

name \_\_\_\_\_

street and number \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

phone number (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. NOMINATION PREPARED BY

name/title \_\_\_\_\_

organization \_\_\_\_\_

street and number \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

phone number (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

date prepared \_\_\_\_\_ signature     *Rob Atkinson*    

## 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)

Legal Description: That unplatted portion of Block 9, Bridgeview Subdivision, according to Plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 7, page 25, public records of Pinellas County, Florida, less that part deeded to Department of Transportation for State Road 600, Section 15240-2502 # 162.1.

## 5. GEOGRAPHIC DATA

acreage of property \_\_\_\_\_

property identification number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

**Historic Functions**

**Current Functions**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. DESCRIPTION**

**Architectural Classification**

(See Appendix A for list)

**Materials**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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**

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	<u>Resource Type</u>	Contributing resources previously listed on the National Register or Local Register
_____	_____	Buildings	_____
_____	_____	Sites	_____
_____	_____	Structures	_____
_____	_____	Objects	Number of multiple property listings
_____	_____	Total	_____

\_\_\_\_\_  
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)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates (date constructed & altered)

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation/Historic Period

\_\_\_\_\_

Builder

\_\_\_\_\_

Architect

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property as it relates to the above criterial and information on one or more continuation sheets. Include biographical data on significant person(s), builder and architect, if known.)

**10. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)



# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_

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## NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Peninsular Fruit Company Building sits at the southeast corner of Gandy Boulevard and 4th Street North in St. Petersburg. This two-story building faces southeast and fronts upon the access ramp between the two previously mentioned streets. The Peninsular Fruit Company Building is an eleven-bay wide, two-part commercial building. Built about 1924, Peninsular Fruit Company is constructed in the Mediterranean Revival Style. This was one of the dominant architectural styles in Florida during the Boom Times period (1920-1929).

The Peninsular Fruit Company Building is of masonry construction, with a continuous foundation, and it has irregular exterior and interior plans. The original two story section of the building is rectangular, with an architecturally similar. One story, 1920s era addition on the northwest facade of the building. The addition possesses an irregular, trapezoidal plan. The exterior walls of the building are constructed of structural clay tile and clay brick.

The exterior of the building is finished with stucco. The first floor has paired, eight-light, wood casement windows in arched openings, with six-light, wood, fixed fan windows above them. The first floor bays of the southwest, southeast, and northeast facades are separated from each other by twisted, engaged columns that have composite order capitals. The second floor bays of these facades have paired, eight-light, wood casement windows. The second, fourth, eighth, and tenth bays of the southeast facade, as well as the center bays on the end facades, are all topped by semi-circular blind arches.

The addition on the northwest side of Peninsular Fruit Company is structurally similar to the main body of the building. There are four over four wood double-hung sash windows on this historic addition, and there is a service entrance on its northwest corner.

The entrance bay in the center of the symmetrical southeast facade of the Peninsular Fruit Company Building takes its styling cues from a mix of Classical and Spanish Baroque influences. The entrance surround is elaborately shaped and is surmounted by a dentilled cornice. Two decorative pilasters rise from this first floor cornice, through the second floor level of the facade, and are capped at the top by massive masonry finials. There is a crest-shaped cartouche and a now empty signboard in the panel formed between the two pilasters. The only notable alteration to the building is on this center bay and consists of glass blocks placed on either side of the entrance. The materials and construction techniques of this modification indicate that it dates from the 1930s or early 1940s, and it might be considered historic of its own right. This modification appears in a circa 1952 photograph of the building.

Scuppers are set into the wall above the third and ninth bays of the northeast facade. There is a stuccoed masonry chimney on the western corner of the one story addition. All facades of building are topped by a parapet which is shaped on the main block of the building. The roofing on the main building and the addition was replaced with single ply TPO roofing in 2019.

The interior of the two story section of the building has been remodeled by its various tenants. The interior of the perimeter masonry walls on the first floor were finished with a wood wainscot and gypsum plaster and with gypsum plaster on the second floor. Most of the wainscot has been removed. The ceilings were gypsum plaster with a small crown molding. The first floor ceilings and crown molding remain however they were removed from the second floor. The original stairs were partially removed when the addition was constructed. The interior of the addition remains as a single open space except for a small masonry room capped with a concrete ceiling under the exposed wood roof rafters.

# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_

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## COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

This building could be considered significant in the area of commerce, as it is believed to be the last remaining Boom Times commercial structure on the Pinellas County end of Gandy Boulevard. City directories indicate that during the 1920s, this building was the first non-automotive commercial structure travelers encountered on their way from Tampa to St. Petersburg (R. L. Polk 1925-1945). For the first few years of its occupation, this building was owned by W. C. Gregory (St. Petersburg Construction Services and Permitting 1984). Gregory ran an upscale fruit store in the building (Howard Hansen, personal communication 1994). He also built a 1926 wood frame and iron fruit packing plant on the site (St. Petersburg Construction Services and Permitting). R. L. Polk's 1927 St. Petersburg City Directory indicates that an H. D. Walker ran the Peninsular Fruit Company at this site. Between 1927 and 1945, the property card for this building, on file at the City of St. Petersburg Construction Services and Permitting Department, shows no new permits issued for any work. Additionally, the building is not listed again in R. L. Polk's directory until 1947. Many Boom Times commercial buildings were abandoned after the real estate failure in the late 1920s, which might account for the complete lack of available commercial information on this building during those years. This building was purchased by Al Werly in about 1945. At this time, the 1926 packing plant was demolished (St. Petersburg Construction Services and Permitting 1984). Mr. Werly used the building as a real estate office until he leased it in about 1947 to the Alveo Chemical Company, a cosmetics manufacturing company. In 1952, Mr. Werly leased the building to Yardage Unlimited, a fabric outlet store, which occupied the building for 43 years until 1995. From 1995 until 2002 antique dealer Ebony & Ivory occupied the building. In 2002 Sweetwater Kayaks, a retail and rental store leased the building until 2018. The building has been vacant since then. The building has been owned by various Werly family members since 1945 and is currently owned by five of Mr. Werly's grandchildren.

## COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SIGNIFICANCE

The Johnson Fruit Company Building could be considered significant as an example of community planning and development in the Gandy Boulevard area during the Boom Times (1920-1929). The completion of the Gandy Bridge in 1925 caused real estate speculation in Pinellas County to escalate. The vacant pine and palmetto scrub located between the bridge and St Petersburg sprouted with a bumper crop of survey stakes marking proposed residential subdivisions. The most ambitious subdivision project was Eugene Elliott's Florida Riviera, located immediately south of the Gandy Bridge on Weedon Island. The majority of the lots for sale were underwater (and still are), but this was considered a minor issue by the investors who snapped them up. The collapse of the Florida Land Boom in 1926, however, meant that the paper plans for subdivisions produced only a handful of structures (Arsenault 1988: 198). Along Gandy Boulevard, a few new commercial buildings were erected during the last two years of the boom period. The largest building project on Gandy Boulevard during the 1920s was a greyhound racing track, Derby Lane. R. L. Polk's St. Petersburg City Directories from 1925 to 1945 list two gasoline filling stations, the Peninsular Fruit Company, the Derby Lane dog track, and one house as the only structures along the Pinellas end of Gandy Boulevard. Winter tourism continued even during the worst years of the Depression, and by the late 1930s "the season" was almost back to its 1925 level of visitors. The Johnson Fruit Company Building is significant as the sole intact example of the Boom Times development of the Pinellas County end of Gandy Boulevard.

# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_

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## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Johnson Fruit Company Building could be considered significant for its architectural design, as it is an essentially unaltered example of the Mediterranean Revival Style used extensively in Florida during the 1920s. The Mediterranean Revival style is the architectural style most intimately linked with the 1920s Florida land boom. The style, however, did not originate in Florida and was not popularized in the State until just prior to World War I. The style has its origins in Beaux Arts trained architects' love of historicism and their desire to create a building style appropriate to the history of Sun Belt areas of the United States. This style was part of the Eclectic Movement, beginning in the 1880s and continuing through the 1940s, which found its inspiration from architectural traditions spanning from ancient times to modern. Sometimes referred to as Spanish Colonial Revival, the Mediterranean Revival style was most popular during 1915-1945 (Whitten 1992:225). Although closely associated with Spain, the style was influenced by the traditions established among other European countries lying along the Mediterranean Sea, including Italy, North Africa, and France (McAlester 1990:417-418; Spain 1987:42).

The Mediterranean Revival style flourished in Florida during the 1920s and 1930s. Its domestic buildings were associated chiefly with middle and elite class suburban housing developments. The style was also used for commercial, hotel, club, and school buildings. The style referenced the history and romance of the state's Spanish heritage and at the same time could be modified to suit Florida's hot and humid climate. Another reason for its popularity lay in that it could be stylized to the suit the picturesque resort image the state was promoting to its winter visitors (Spain 1987:1).

Features of the Mediterranean Revival style include stuccoed wall surfaces and low-pitched, red tile roofs. Roof tiles are commonly half-round barrel tiles or interlocking pantiles. Typically the buildings are not more than two stories high, although square towers are not uncommon. Arches are used to mark doors and major windows; usually the arches are semicircular. Doors are typically wood and may be ornamented further by inset tiles, carved stone, columns or pilasters on their surrounds. Often the building will have a focal window, sometimes tripartite in arrangement and occasionally with stained glass. Balconies and window grilles are common and are typically made from wrought iron or wood. Ornamentation can range from simple to dramatic and may draw from several Mediterranean references (Whitten 1992:225; McAlester:417).

The Johnson Fruit Company Building exhibits many of the characteristics of the Mediterranean Revival Style including arched windows, stuccoed wall surfaces, and a Spanish Baroque-influenced entrance bay. The only alterations to the building include the rear 1920s-era addition, and the glass block added to the entrance. The rear addition to the building is vernacular in nature but is architecturally similar to the original block of the building. The glass block modification to the entrance exhibits materials and construction methods consistent with 1930s or early 1940s. This building would be considered significant because its original historic fabric has not been significantly modified. As an example of its type, this building is unique in the general vicinity of the Pinellas County end of Gandy Boulevard.

# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_

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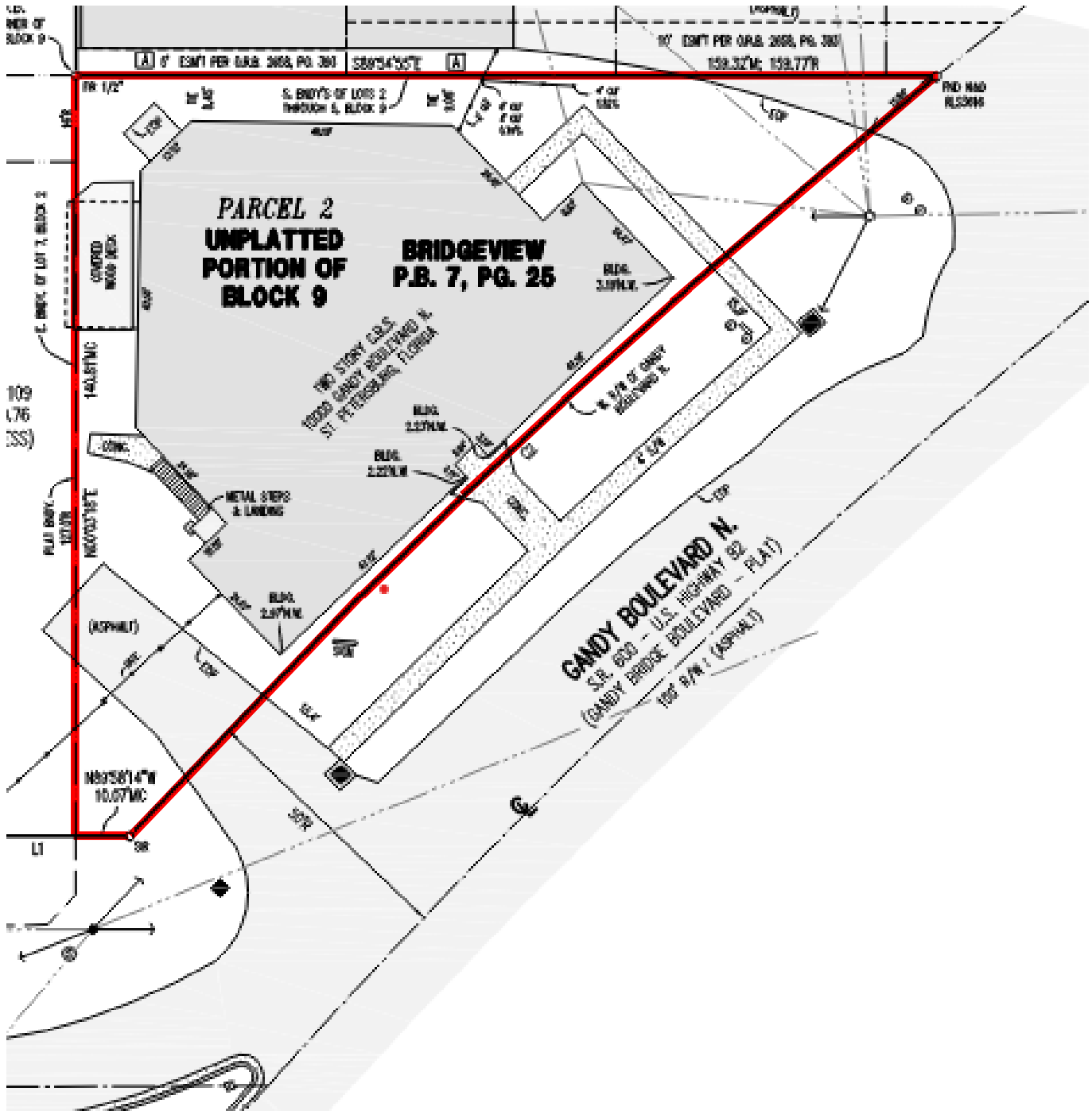
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# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_



## Legal Description

That unplatted portion of Block 9, Bridgeview Subdivision, according to Plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 7, page 25, public records of Pinellas County, Florida, less that part deeded to Department of Transportation for State Road 600, Section 15240-2502 # 162.1.



# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_



Historic Photograph - Yardage Unlimited, circa 1952 postcard



Southeast Facade - October 2021



# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_



Northeast Facade - October 2021



Southwest Facade - October 2021



# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_

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North, Northwest and West Facade - October 2021



West Facade - October 2021

# St. Petersburg Local Landmark Designation Application

Name of property \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation Section

Page \_\_\_\_\_



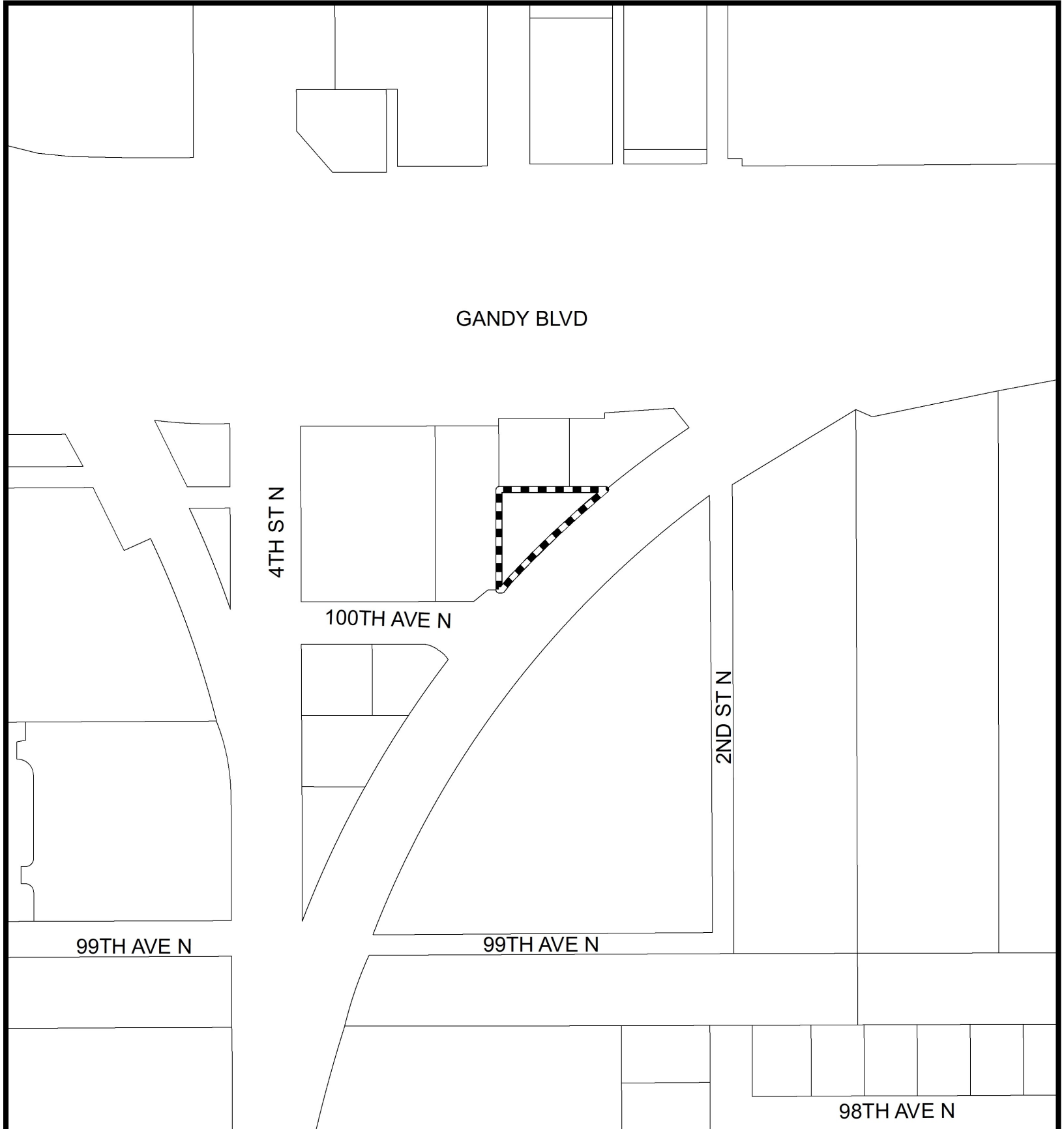
Detail over Main Entry - October 2021



Typical First and Second Floor Windows - October 2021



Appendix B  
Maps of Subject Property



GANDY BLVD

4TH ST N

100TH AVE N

2ND ST N

99TH AVE N

99TH AVE N

98TH AVE N

**Community Planning and Preservation Commission**

**10000 Gandy Blvd N**

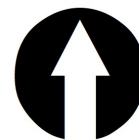
**AREA TO BE APPROVED,**

**SHOWN IN**



**CASE NUMBER**

**21-90300006**



**N**

SCALE:  
1" = 200'



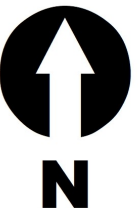


**Community Planning and Preservation Commission**

**10000 Gandy Blvd N**

**AREA TO BE APPROVED,  
SHOWN IN** 

**CASE NUMBER  
21-90300006**



**SCALE:  
1" = 200'**