



## CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

URBAN PLANNING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION

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# STAFF REPORT

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION

LOCAL DESIGNATION REQUEST

For **Public Hearing and Recommendation to City Council** on **January 10, 2017** 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, Commissioner Lisa Wannemacher 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.

<b>CASE NO.:</b>	<b>HPC 16-90300003</b>
<b>STREET ADDRESS:</b>	118 Fifth Avenue North
<b>LANDMARK:</b>	Grant and Maude Aiken House
<b>OWNER:</b>	Fuel Investment & Development II, LLC
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	St. Petersburg Preservation, Inc.
<b>REQUEST:</b>	Local Landmark Designation of the Aiken House



**Grant and Maude Aiken House, 118 Fifth Avenue North**

**OVERVIEW**

A non-owner initiated application for Local Historic Landmark designation of the Grant and Maude Aiken House (subject property), located at 118 Fifth Avenue North, was submitted by St. Petersburg Preservation, Inc. in July of 2016. Prepared by Howard Ferebee Hansen, the application provides thorough information regarding the building’s early ownership and its historic and architectural context. The subject property is listed as a contributing property to the Downtown St. Petersburg Historic District, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places on March 3, 2004.

**STAFF FINDINGS**

Staff finds that the Aiken House (118 Fifth Avenue North) is **not eligible for individual designation as a Local Historic Landmark** as nominated by the applicant. In St. Petersburg, Local Historic Landmark eligibility is determined based on evaluations of age, context, and integrity under a two-part test as found in Section 16.30.070.2.5(D) of the City Code. Under the first test, historic documentation demonstrates that the Aiken House was constructed over 100 years ago, surpassing the minimum required age of 50. However, staff does not concur that the subject property’s historic association and extant conditions merit individual designation. Beyond its individual significance, staff notes that the subject property’s significance under criteria G and H should be considered.

**Historic Significance and Satisfaction of Contextual Criteria**

The first portion of the two-part test to determine Local Historic Landmark eligibility 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 a Local Historic Landmark. The applicant contends that the property satisfies the criteria as follows.

Is at least one of the following historic contextual criteria met?								
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N

Staff does not agree that there is sufficient historical documentation to warrant a finding that the subject property meets Criteria C, E, and F, which relate to the building’s significance in the area of architecture and its association with noteworthy individuals.

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

The applicant suggests that the subject property is historically significant due, in part, to its association with attorney Grant J. Aiken (also frequently spelled “Aikin”). Aiken was involved in drafting the legislation re-incorporating St. Petersburg as a city in 1903, and in creating Pinellas County from a portion of Hillsborough. Aiken later served as City Attorney for St. Petersburg. Although the nomination application names Grant Aiken as the first City Attorney and states that he served in said role from 1903 until 1912, sources indicate that Edward Myers formally held this position from as early as 1903 until at least 1908<sup>1</sup> and that James Booth assumed the role in

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<sup>1</sup> A.R. Dunlap, *St. Petersburg Times*, “The Rambler,” July 24, 1951; *St. Petersburg Times*, “City Council Proceedings,” November 10, 1906; *Polk’s City Directory*, St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida, 1908.

1911.<sup>2</sup> Grant Aiken was noted in a 1910 *Evening Independent* article as St. Petersburg's City Attorney and Myers's successor.<sup>3</sup> The earliest primary source known to staff at the time of this report which names Myers as City Attorney is dated 1906,<sup>4</sup> leaving open the possibility that the role was shared by multiple contractors in the city's early years, or that Aiken held the position for two, non-consecutive periods. Nonetheless, when considering available information, staff is reluctant to consider Aiken the first City Attorney. This is not mentioned to dismiss the significance of Mr. Aiken's contributions to St. Petersburg's early period of growth, but to note that more research may be needed in order to clarify the dynamics of the early members of St. Petersburg's staff.

The subject property's association with Aiken in the nomination paperwork is based on a "Wanted" advertisement for a nurse appearing in *The Evening Independent* on March 30, 1910, which states "Apply to Grant Aikin, 118 Fifth avenue north."<sup>5</sup> However, multiple primary sources of historical documentation are in conflict with the advertisement's suggestion that Aiken was a resident of the subject property in 1910.

The City's original property cards for the subject property have been lost, leaving no records of this type predating 1919.<sup>6</sup> However, available sources indicate a construction date between 1910 and 1913. The 1910 United States Census, information for which was collected in late April of that year, covers the immediate vicinity but does not list the subject property or any buildings on the south side of the 100 block of Fifth Avenue North. This suggests that the subject property and immediate surroundings had not yet been developed in April of 1910. The earliest Sanborn Map covering the area, which was drawn in 1913, does depict the subject property. Therefore, it stands to reason that the building was constructed after April 1910 and before the publication of the Sanborn Map in September of 1913.<sup>7</sup>

Grant Aiken, wife Maude (spelled "Maud"), and children Merrill, Carlisle, Bernette (spelled "Burnette"), Caryl, and Horace, appeared in 1910 Census records as residents of the house at 143 Sixth Avenue North, a building which Grant Aiken is shown to own mortgage-free.<sup>8</sup> Note that the 1910 Census (dated April 18-19, 1910) was enumerated several weeks after the "Wanted" ad mentioned above (March 30, 1910) was placed.

Grant Aiken's death occurred in late 1912.<sup>9</sup> Also in 1912, Maude Aiken established the Aiken Open Air School at the home where she lived, which was located at 456 Bay Street Northeast, and remained open in that location for many years.<sup>10</sup> This building is no longer extant.

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<sup>2</sup> *Evening Independent*, "City Can Buy Bayboro Lots," July 17, 1911; Paul Davis, *St. Petersburg Times*, "Good Morning," February 19, 1960.

<sup>3</sup> *Evening Independent*, "City Attorney Grant Aiken and Acting City Attorney W.R. Howard Exonerated," May 28, 1910.

<sup>4</sup> *St. Petersburg Times*, "City Council Proceedings," November 10, 1906.

<sup>5</sup> *The Evening Independent*, "Wanted," March 30, 1910.

<sup>6</sup> City of St. Petersburg, Florida, "Property Card for 118 5<sup>th</sup> Ave N.," on file, City of St. Petersburg, Florida.

<sup>7</sup> Sanborn Map Company, "St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida," [map], 1913. ProQuest, LLC: 2016.

<sup>8</sup> "United States Census, 1910," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MVKW-ZH3>; 29 October 2015).

<sup>9</sup> *Evening Independent*, "Death Expected At Any Moment," December 14, 1912; Lisa Vivirito, "Grant J. Aiken, 1864-1912," *Find A Grave*.

<sup>10</sup> *Evening Independent*, "Aiken Open Air School," April 2, 1938.

Although the standards of eligibility for Local Historic Landmark designation and listing in the National Register for Historic Places are not identical, the criteria discussed in St. Petersburg City Code Section 16.30.070.2.5 are based on the National Park Service's National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Under the National Register criteria, significance due to an association with a person must be reflective of a person who is individually significant within a historic context, and must be reflective of the period during which he or she achieved significance.<sup>11</sup> Because of the existence of primary sources connecting the Aiken family to other residences in 1910, and from 1912 on, as well as the lack of additional evidence connecting Grant Aiken to the subject property, staff does not consider the "Wanted" ad discussed above to be sufficient evidence to warrant a determination of historic significance under Criterion C for Local Historic Landmark designation.

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

The Local Historic Landmark nomination asserts that the subject property is a fine exemplar of the Craftsman style bungalow. The building has retained its overall historic scale and certain stylistic elements, such as its notched porch surround and upswept eaves. However, the alterations to the building's façade, which are discussed in depth below, have significantly deteriorated the subject property's ability to convey its historic design. Staff concludes that the subject property does not retain a sufficient degree of its historic aesthetic to merit individual status as a Local Historic Landmark.

Much of the applicant's narrative regarding this criterion hinges on the building's architectural significance when placed in dialogue with the neighboring three bungalows sharing the 100 block's southern frontage along Fifth Avenue North. While setting is an important element of integrity, the subject property's significance as a member of a concentration of similar homes is more appropriately seen to meet Criteria G and H, as reviewed below.

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

The applicant relates the history of the subject property to St. Petersburg's pre-World War I Land Boom. Once again, staff finds that considerable integrity has been lost due to alterations unnoted by the applicant. The number of essential distinguishing characteristics that have been removed or obscured by these changes is too high to justify individual Local Historic Landmark designation. However, as with the case of Criterion E, the building's architectural history, when considered in concert with its neighbors, merits a discussion of Criteria G and H.

Beyond a consideration of the above criteria, staff finds that the subject property meets two criteria which acknowledge the strong dialogue between the building and its surroundings. The subject property's eligibility under these criteria could not be considered by the applicant, as Section 16.30.070.2.5.B.2 of City Code requires evidence of support from the owners of 66 percent of tax parcels within a proposed district's boundaries, a written description and map of said boundaries, and a list of contributing and non-contributing properties, a process generally led by an association of homeowners. As a non-owner-supported application, therefore, the subject property cannot be designated under these criteria. However, the applicant notes the increasing scarcity of contiguous collections of single-family homes dating to the early twentieth century within the Downtown St. Petersburg Historic District. Staff proposes that the subject property's significance as a part of one such remaining cluster should, at the very least, be noted. Because

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<sup>11</sup> National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 14-15.

of the intact nature of the subject property's immediate environs, staff suggests that it is eligible under the following criteria.

*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.*

The subject property is located within a concentrated area of bungalows dating to the 1910s, during which time St. Petersburg saw its first major building boom and the early stages of suburbanization. Both the Aiken House and the residences which surround it are notable for their relatively large scale and grand architecture. Other remaining concentrations of historic residential buildings in the Downtown St. Petersburg Historic District were originally constructed at a more affordable scale for families of their era, like Lang's Bungalow Court, or multi-family units meant to house seasonal residents, like the collection of apartment buildings surrounding Mirror Lake. The residences on the 100 block of Fifth Avenue North, however, were initially constructed for St. Petersburg's early upper middle class, including doctors, City Commissioners, and builders.

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

When considered in dialogue with its surrounds, the subject property contributes to the concentration of buildings representing the pre-World War I period of development in St. Petersburg. As compared to later Florida bungalows, the subject property and those surrounding it are relatively long and narrow, the result being that they feature larger interiors than one might guess from a glance at their facades. This characteristic was influenced by the pedestrian scale and deep, narrow lots that dominated the first-developed areas of St. Petersburg. Many of the buildings were used as boarding houses during the early-to mid-twentieth centuries, as was common practice for homes in or near downtown St. Petersburg. Despite their later reuse as multi-family residences or even commercial spaces, the area retains a historic continuity defined and united by a consistency of form and scale, historic hex block sidewalks, and historic landscaping that extends beyond the significance of each individual building. With the exception of the parcels at its east and west edges, the buildings on the 100 block of Fifth Avenue North are one to two stories in height and constructed for single-family residential use.

The bungalow form would remain immensely popular in St. Petersburg during the late 1910s and into the 1920s. The building type was particularly embraced as the young city spread to the north, south, and west of downtown with neighborhoods dominated by single-family residences, and high style houses within those neighborhoods generally feature wider footprints and more blatant horizontal massing. The Aiken House and its neighbors, however, are representative of a period of transition as the era of centralized downtown development shifted toward the suburbs that followed. It is worth noting that the buildings were built within five years following the expansion of streetcar lines along Second Street, only a few hundred feet from the subject property.<sup>12</sup>

As suggested above, the subject property and its surroundings appear to constitute the most intact collection of its type remaining within the Downtown St. Petersburg Historic District. In spite of its close proximity to continuing redevelopment, this cluster of residences provides a sense of immersion that is exceedingly rare in the city and cannot be replicated. Although staff does not concur with the applicant's determination of the subject property's individual Local Historic

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<sup>12</sup> James Buckley, *Street Railways of St. Petersburg Florida*, (Forty Fort, PA: Harold E. Cox, 1983); 8.

Landmark eligibility, were an application submitted for the area’s designation as a Local Historic District, staff would be in support of the subject property’s inclusion as a contributing resource.

**Historic Integrity**

A second test, which involves integrity, is begun when a property is determined to meet at least one of the criteria for significance. In order for a resource to pass the second test, at least one of the seven factors of integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association) must be met. In most cases, integrity of feeling and association by themselves rarely merit a property’s eligibility for designation, since these factors often rely on personalized experiences, emotions, and perceptions. In this case, the Aiken House meets five of these factors, albeit with several having been diminished over time, as follows.

Is at least one factor of the following factors of integrity met?						
Location	Design	Setting	Materials	Workmanship	Feeling*	Association*
Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
*Must be present in addition to at least one other factor.						

*Location:* The building’s location remains unchanged.

*Design:* As detailed below, additions and alterations have degraded the subject property’s intended design.

*Setting:* The subject property lies at the east edge of a grouping of historic bungalows which comprise a continuous and concentrated representation of early twentieth century single-family residences.

*Materials:* Although a number of historic elements, such as gable end brackets and historic windows at the side elevations, have been retained, too many of the character-defining elements of the subject property have been removed, replaced, or obscured to consider it to retain integrity of historic material.

*Workmanship:* Though degraded by the alterations discussed herein, the methods used to create and apply the home’s Craftsman style details can still be read through its overall form, as well as surviving details such as upswept eaves, gable brackets, and notched porch surround.

*Feeling and Association:* Though individual integrity has been eroded, the building, when considered in its setting, does convey historic feeling and association.

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND**

The subject property is a one and one-half story wood frame bungalow type house with an exterior treatment of wood siding, asphalt siding, and stucco and a front-gabled roof surfaced in asphalt shingles. Its façade is symmetrical, with one window at each side of a centered single action door with sidelights opening onto an integral front porch (Figure 1).



**Figure 1: North façade of 118 Fifth Avenue North**

A unique and noteworthy feature of the building is the visible influence of Japanese style. Slightly upswept eaves and the notched circular cutouts that frame its porch are among the most evident features displaying this influence. Japanese influences were common in early bungalow design, especially those of more sophisticated or “high style” form.<sup>13</sup> The gable end additionally features large brackets, a common and defining characteristic of the Craftsman bungalow style (Figure 2). The side and rear windows are primarily double-hung wood sash with one-over-one lights, though several have been replaced with non-historic single-hung sash windows. The windows and doors at the façade are all non-historic. A gable vent centered at the façade has been replaced with a fanlight window, and two non-historic shed dormers are visible at the roof’s east and west turf.

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<sup>13</sup> Anthony D. King, *The Bungalow: the Production of a Global Culture*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984):154.



**Figure 2: 118 Fifth Avenue North, facing southwest**

## **ALTERATIONS**

In the Local Historic Landmark nomination packet, the applicant notes several modern alterations dating to the 1980s, including the addition of two shed dormers to the roof's eastern and western planes, replacement the façade gable vent with a vinyl fanlight window, the replacement of several windows, and the replacement of the front door. When considered conjointly, these changes erode the subject property's integrity of materials, of craftsmanship, and, especially in the case of the gable-end fanlight and shed dormers, of design.

In addition to the alterations documented by the applicant, staff finds the footprint of the house to have been altered significantly by the enclosure of portions of the integral front porch, as revealed by historic documentation. Shown in the 1913 map in Figure 3, the front porch (indicated by dashed lines) was originally U-shaped, wrapping around a central, projecting foyer (buildings' enclosures are denoted by solid lines).

By 1923, the porch's configuration had changed, as shown in Figure 4. Instead of a façade featuring an articulated central entrance, the northern elevation had been altered to extend the full width of the integral porch. The exact date of this alteration is not noted in property records.

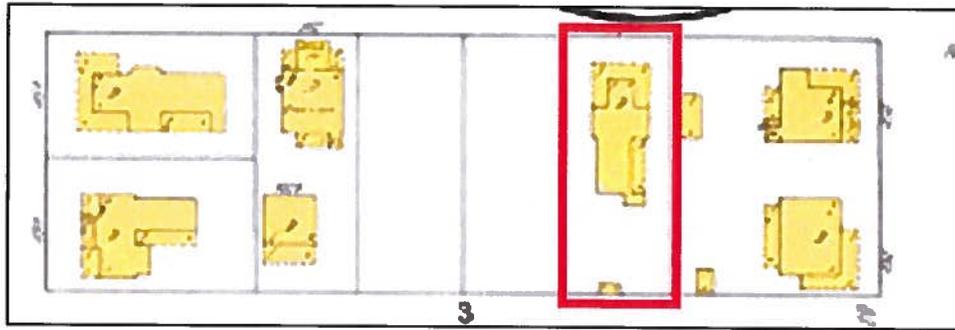


Figure 3: 1913 Sanborn Map showing the 100 block of Fifth Avenue North with parcel of 118 highlighted<sup>14</sup>

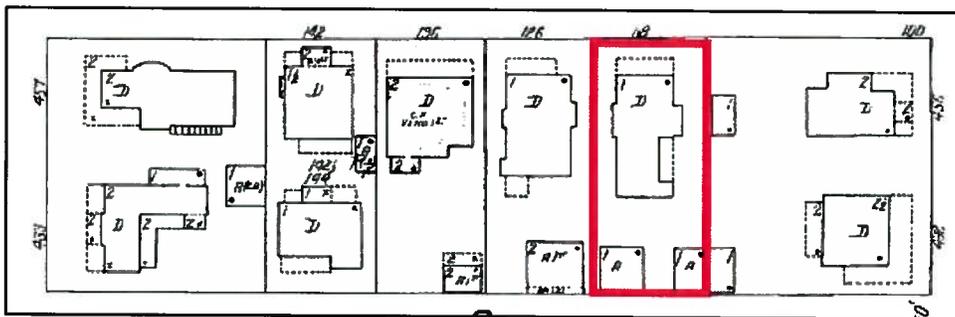


Figure 4: 1923 Sanborn Map showing the 100 block of Fifth Avenue North with parcel of 118 highlighted<sup>15</sup>

A considerable impact on the building's overall integrity results from this enclosure. Porch enclosures are a somewhat common alteration to historic buildings and were typically undertaken to accommodate growing families or the conversion of single-family homes to multi-family residential use. However, many such expansions to historic living spaces were constructed in such a way that allows the original footprint of the porch to be "read" by a viewer. One such example, only two doors down, is the Burnside House at 136 Fifth Avenue North, which originally featured a porch spanning the full façade. The western portion of said porch has been enclosed with a bank of windows and masonry replicating that on the original building, but the porch's roof and cornice have been left intact, allowing the eye to identify the front porch as a single, horizontal element of the façade's design, and, therefore, maintain the building's integrity.

In the case of the enclosure at the Aiken House, the articulated entrance created by the wrapping porch was an essential physical feature, and a vital element of the building's design. The deep, three-sided overhang created by the wrapping porch, as constructed, linked the building's form and design to the high style bungalows being influenced by the Chicago School of architecture and would have showed references to the pagoda form that gained popularity in the United States following the Columbian Exposition of 1893.<sup>16</sup> The enclosure of this character-defining footprint

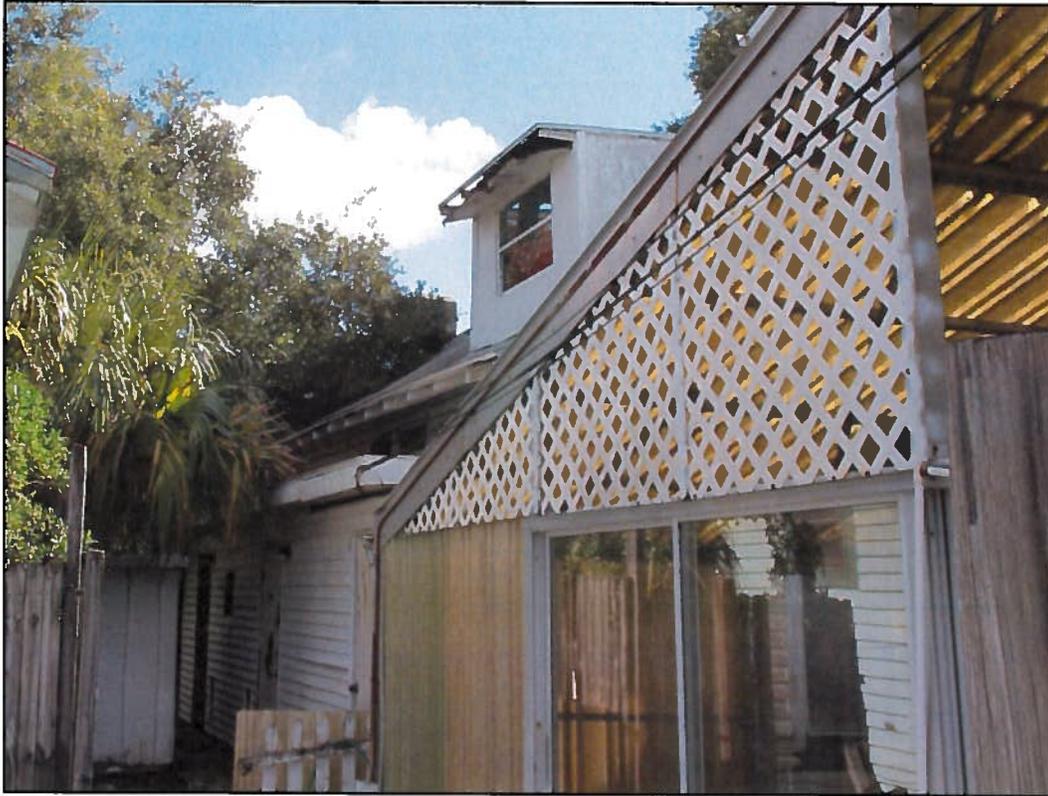
<sup>14</sup> Sanborn Map Company, 1913.

<sup>15</sup> Sanborn Map Company, "St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida," [map], 1923. ProQuest, LLC: 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Clay Lancaster, *The American Bungalow: 1880-1930*, (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1985), 98.

leaves the addition undifferentiated from the original building and diminishes the subject property's association with high Craftsman style.

In recent years, the building has been used for commercial purposes, most recently as a florist beginning in the 1990s. A large pool enclosure, constructed in 1980, occupies the majority of the property's backyard (Figure 5).



**Figure 5: 118 Fifth Avenue North and rear pool enclosure, facing northeast**

### **PROPERTY OWNER CONSENT AND IMPACT OF DESIGNATION**

The proposed Local Historic Landmark designation was submitted by St. Petersburg Preservation, Inc., a third party non-owner of the subject property. As required by Section 16.30.070.2.5.C.4 of City Code, the applicant included documentation showing that a copy of the application was provided to the registered owner via certified mail, when the application was submitted. Separately, a copy of the application and materials were provided by City Staff to Larry Hyman, who was officially appointed as receiver for the subject property by the court.

Benefits of Local Historic Landmark designation include increased heritage tourism through the maintenance and promotion of the city's historic character and significance. Certain relief from the requirements of the Florida Building Code and FEMA regulations are also available to designated Local Historic Landmarks, as are tax incentives such as the Ad Valorem Tax Exemption.

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

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

**OBJECTIVE LU10:** The historic resources locally designated by the St. Petersburg City Council and the commission designated in the LDRs, shall be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan 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 Community Planning and Preservation Commission 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

The subject property has a Future Land Use Plan designation of CBD (Central Business District) and is zoned DC-2 (Downtown Center-2) on the City's Official Zoning Map. Maximum density in all DC categories is limited by Floor Area Ratio (FAR), rather than units per acre. CBD designation allows a mixture of high-intensity retail, office, industrial, service, and residential uses up to a FAR of 4.0 and a net residential density not to exceed the maximum allowable in the land development regulations. There are no known plans at the time of this report to change the allowable uses of the subject property, or those properties that border it.

This district comprises St. Petersburg's historic and original downtown core, and was platted to reflect the pedestrian-oriented scale that was necessary and typical of urban centers before mainstream automobile ownership. Redevelopment of properties in the surrounding area has been increasing over the past several years as part of a prospering local economy and booming real estate market. A number of extant historic buildings within this district have also been preserved, both with and without the protection of a Local Historic Landmark designation.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff **DOES NOT RECOMMEND APPROVAL** of the request to designate the Aiken House, located at 118 Fifth Avenue North, as an individual Local Historic Landmark, thereby referring the application to City Council for first and second reading and public hearing.

## RESOURCES

City of St. Petersburg, Florida. Property Card for 118 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. On file, City of St. Petersburg, Florida.

Davis, Paul. *St. Petersburg Times*. "Good Morning: It was Growth Pains, Mr. Jones." February 19, 1960.

Dunlap, A.R. *St. Petersburg Times*. "The Rambler: Program from Old Opera House Recalls Early Days and Early Amateur Actors in the City." July 24, 1951.

*Evening Independent*. "County Division Still Alive." August 8, 1908.

*Evening Independent*. "Wanted." March 30, 1910.

*Evening Independent*. "City Attorney Grant Aikin and Acting City Attorney W.R. Howard Exonerated." May 28, 1910.

*Evening Independent*. "City Can Buy Bayboro Lots, Says City Attorney, and Payment Be Made from Last Bond Issue Voted." July 17, 1911.

*Evening Independent*. "Death Expected At Any Moment." December 14, 1912.

*Evening Independent*. "Aiken Open Air School." April 2, 1938.

Hatton, Hap. *Tropical Splendor: An Architectural History of Florida*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1987.

King, Anthony D. *The Bungalow: the Production of a Global Culture*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1984.

Lancaster, Clay. *The American Bungalow: 1880-1930*. Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1985.

Miller, Betty Jean. "I remember..." *St. Petersburg Times*. February 28, 1994. As reprinted by Ancestry Message Boards. Accessed online.  
<http://boards.ancestry.com/surnames.aikin/44/mb.ashx>.

National Park Service. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

Polk's City Directory. St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida. 1908. On file, St. Petersburg Museum of History.

Sanborn Map Company. *St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida* [map]. 1918. ProQuest, LLC: 2016.

Sanborn Map Company. *St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida* [map]. 1923. ProQuest, LLC: 2016.

Sanborn Map Company. *St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida* [map]. 1952. ProQuest, LLC: 2016.

*St. Petersburg Times*. "City Council Proceedings: City Finances Were Main Subject." November 10, 1906.

"United States Census, 1910," database with images, *FamilySearch*  
(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MVKW-ZH3> : 29 October 2015), Grant J Aiken,  
Saint Petersburg, Hillsborough, Florida, United States; citing enumeration district (ED)  
ED 20, sheet 4A, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington, D.C.: National  
Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,374,174.

Vivrito, Lisa. "Grant J. Aiken, 1864-1912." *Find a Grave*. Accessed online.  
[http://image1.findagrave.com/cgi-  
bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSmpid=47183002&GRid=25670182&](http://image1.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSmpid=47183002&GRid=25670182&).

**APPENDIX A: AERIAL AND STREET MAPS**



**Community Planning and Preservation Commission**

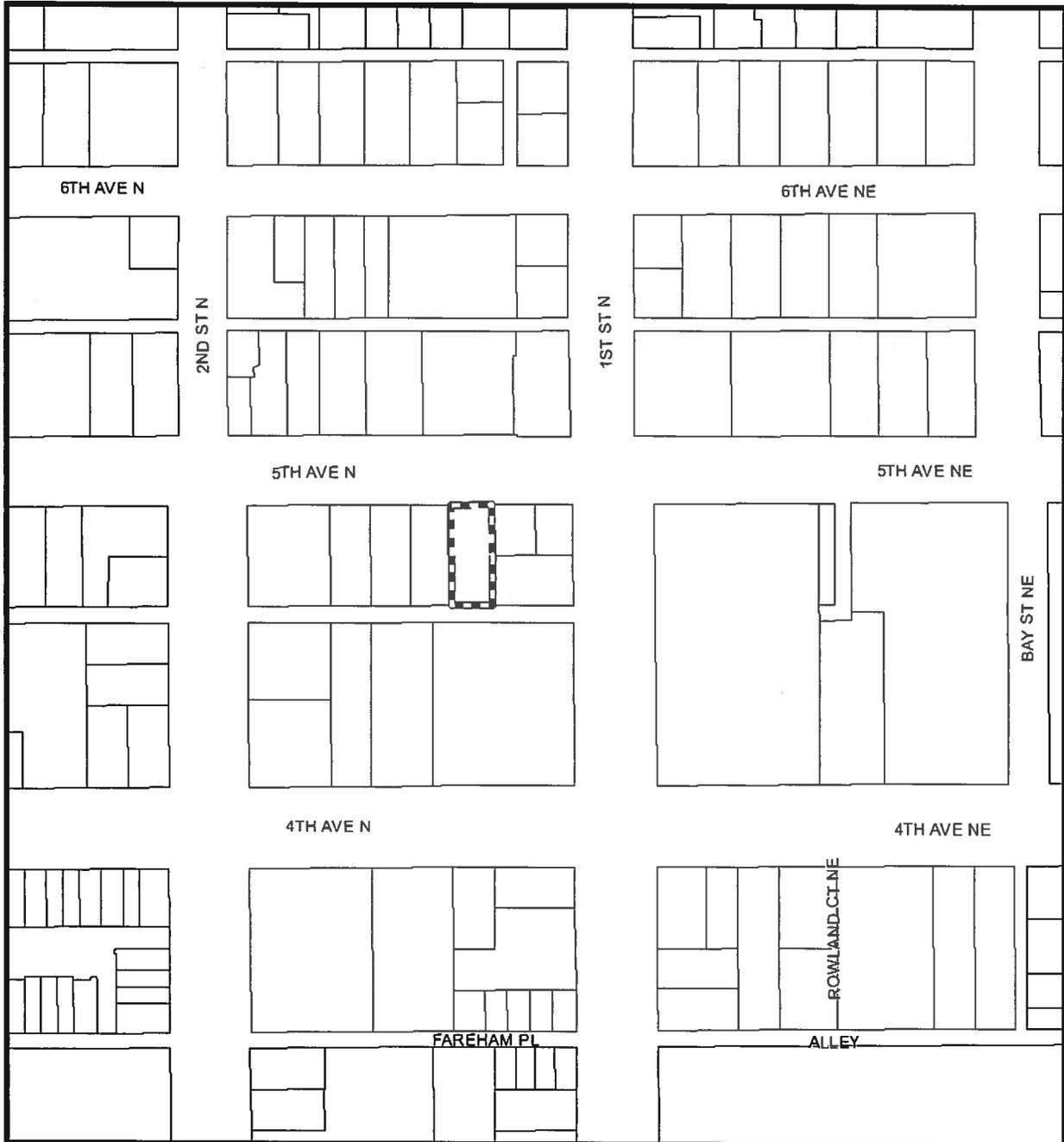
**118 5th Avenue North**

**AREA TO BE APPROVED,  
SHOWN IN** 

**CASE NUMBER  
16-90300003**



**N**  
NOT TO  
SCALE



**Community Planning and Preservation Commission**

**118 5th Avenue North**

**AREA TO BE APPROVED,  
SHOWN IN** 

**CASE NUMBER  
16-90300003**



**N**  
NOT TO  
SCALE

**APPENDIX B: DESIGNATION APPLICATION**

City of St. Petersburg  
Division of Urban Planning, Design,  
and Historic Preservation

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7 [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] bject  
[REDACTED]

# Local Landmark Designation Application

## 1. NAME AND LOCATION OF PROPERTY

historic name Grant Aiken House

other names/site  
number 8Pi 10451

address 118 Fifth Avenue North

historic address 118 Fifth Avenue North

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

name Fuel Investment & Development II LLC

street and  
number 201 North Franklin Street suite #2505

city or town Tampa state Florida zip code 33602 -5800

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

## 3. NOMINATION PREPARED BY

name/title Howard Ferebee Hansen

organization St. Petersburg Preservation

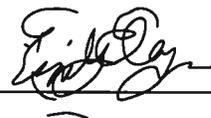
street and  
number Box 838

city or town St. Petersburg state Florida zip code 33703

phone number 727-323-1351 (h) 727-323-1351 (w) e-mail fenford1@gmail.com

date prepared 1 May 2016

signature



**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)

Lot 3 of Block 3 of the Revised Map of St. Petersburg as recorded in Plat Book 1, p. 49 of the official records of Hillsborough County, Florida of which Pinellas County was formerly a part.

The parcel of land known as lot 3 is the historic and present-day boundary of the Grant Aiken House.

SEE ATTACHED MAP

**5. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

acreage of property	< 1 acre
property identification number	19-31-17-74466-003-0030

Aiken House  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Property

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

<u>Historic Functions</u>	<u>Current Functions</u>
DOMESTIC/ single-family	vacant
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## 7. DESCRIPTION

### Architectural Classification

(See Appendix A for list)

Craftsman bungalow

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### Materials

wood

concrete block

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### 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;

### **NEIGHBORHOOD SETTING**

The Aiken House is located on Block 3 at the northern edge of the original plat of St. Petersburg that was surveyed in 1888. Fifth Avenue North a 100' r.o.w. street runs along the northern boundary of this original plat. This block is situated on a sandy ridge about 10' above sea level and lies about 1000' west of the original shoreline of Tampa Bay which since circa 1905 became Beach Drive NE. This northeastern section of the original town plat had sparse development before the first decade of the 20th century. Between 1905 and 1916 it became a residential neighborhood favored by the wealthy citizens and winter visitors because of its proximity to the waterfront and isolation from the congestion of the nearby downtown commercial district. The majority of the buildings in this area were built before the construction hiatus of 1917 caused by the Great War. These buildings were all residential, a combination of detached single family homes, tourist rental cottages, apartment buildings, and small winter tourist hotels. Generally they were of frame construction and one or two stories high. By the close of the Florida Land Boom in 1926 this neighborhood was "built out". By the late 1920 and through the 1930s many of the single family homes were converted into small apartment buildings and boarding houses because the more affluent residents had moved north to the more fashionable new neighborhoods of the Old Northeast and Snell Isle. During the 1980s the city drastically changed the zoning of this area designating it "Central Business District 2" that granted high density construction and building heights to these properties. This triggered the demolition of many of the older structures and the

construction of high-rise condominiums. This area forms the northeastern corner of the National Register of Historic Places, Downtown St. Petersburg Historic District (8PI10648) which was enacted in 2004 to help preserve the remaining historic resources here.

### **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY**

The Aikin House was built on a 50' X 123' lot of Block 3 of the Rev. Map of St. Petersburg. The house fronts north onto Fifth Avenue North which is a 100" right of way street and the rear of the lot faces a 20' wide alley. The public sidewalk along 5th Ave. is of hex-blocks, 3 mature Sabal palmettos occupy the 5th Ave. r.o.w. which are part of a historic row of such palms planted on both sides of 5th Ave. before 1920 that extends from Beach Drive to 2nd St. N. The front yard has an old poured in place concrete walkway from the sidewalk to its front porch. There are no historic fences or walls, ancillary buildings, structures, or objects that were observed on the lot.

The foundation is a poured in place concrete spread footing surmounted by a continuous foundation wall about 30" high of concrete blocks with stucco finish. The one story house is of balloon frame construction with exterior load bearing walls sheathed in clapboards. The floor is supported by wood joists and finished in wood strip flooring. Interior partitions are wood studs covered with wood lath and smooth plaster as are the ceilings. It is an irregular rectangle in plan, 32' wide and 70' long (N-S) with a recessed front porch about 8' wide and 32' long, in all it is of 2,009 sq. ft. The roof is a high pitched cross gable of wood trusses and sheathed in asphalt composition shingles, it has wide projecting eaves that change grade and flare, and are supported by decorative wood Craftsman style knee braces. Windows are wood double hung sash with one over one lights that have simple wood surrounds and sills. Two large front windows flank the central front door which has a pair of simple sidelights. The front door is of plain wood with a small central window with Craftsman style wood moldings it is flanked by a pair of sidelights. The front porch has a stuccoed concrete block apron wall about 30' high topped by a plain concrete cap, this wall has a decorative "scallop" and two projecting central piers about 36" high (likely supported urns or flower pots?). Two stuccoed concrete pillars at corners of the porch support a heavy wood cornice with decorative moldings. The gable end of the porch, is sheathed in shingles and has a central wood ventilator with Craftsman style details, 2 decorative knee braces support the porch eaves. The front porch floor is paved with concrete tiles and the steps (on east side) to it are concrete.

Historic (pre 1966) Alterations- None observed.

Modern (post 1966) Alterations- ca. 1980s addition of roof dormers on east and west sides, replacement of front (north) gable ventilator with a fan light window.

Replacement of western front (north) window, and a similar window on the north end of the west elevation. Replacement front door. 1980 construction of a swimming pool and fiberglass shed enclosure for it with retractable roof. 6' high wood fence around rear perimeter of lot (city "Property Card")

**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
1	0	Buildings	8Pi10451 is a contributing historic building to the N.R. Downtown St Petersburg Historic District (2004) 8Pi10648
0	0	Sites	
0	1	Structures	
0	0	Objects	Number of multiple property listings
1	1	Total	N. A.

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

architecture

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social history

---

Period of Significance

1909 to 1914

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Significant Dates (date constructed & altered)

1909

---

Significant Person(s)

Grant J. Aiken (1864 -1912)

---

Maud Chase Aiken (1874 -1948)

---

Cultural Affiliation/Historic Period

---

Builder

unknown

---

Architect

unknown

---

**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.)

**SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Aiken House located at 118 Fifth Avenue North, meets three of the nine criteria necessary for designating historic properties listed in Section 16-525(d) of the City of St. Petersburg Code of Ordinances. These criteria are:

**(3) IT IS IDENTIFIED WITH A PERSON OR PERSONS WHO SIGNIFICANTLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY, STATE, OR NATION; (5)**

Its value as a building is recognized for the quality of its architecture, and it retains sufficient elements showing its architectural significance; **AND (6) IT HAS DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ARCHITECTURAL STYLE VALUABLE FOR THE STUDY OF A PERIOD, METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION, OR USE OF INDIGENOUS MATERIALS.**

Under **Criterion 3** the house is significant for its association with Grant Aiken, a pioneer attorney who served as St. Petersburg's first city attorney from 1903 until 1912. The house is significant as the home of Grant's wife, Maud Chase Aiken who founded and operated the city's first private day school from 1914 until 1936. The property is also significant under **Criterion 5** and **Criterion 6** because the residence is significant as a well preserved Craftsman style bungalow that exhibits a high level of design and workmanship. The Aiken House's architectural significance was determined in 2004 by listing it as one of the contributing historic buildings within the National Register of Historic Places "Downtown St. Petersburg Historic District" (8PI10648).

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**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

During the First Boom Period in St. Petersburg, 1909-1914, the city of St. Petersburg experienced dramatic population growth and real estate development in the brief period beginning in 1909 and ending with the outbreak of World War I. The population was 4,500 in the 1910 Federal Census and rose to 14,237 in the 1920 Census, an increase of 245%. The county's property tax evaluation for the city in 1911 was \$3,546,130 and it grew to \$8,977,930 in 1915 (Fuller, Walter, St. Petersburg and its People (1972) p. 142). In 1909 local voters approved a large municipal bond issuance that provided for major upgrades to the potable water, sewer system, and brick paving of city streets (Grismer, Karl, The Story of St. Petersburg (1948) p. 120). The City's western municipal limits in 1907 were at

7th Street N., jogging at Central Ave. to 12th St. S., but by 1914 the City stretched to Boca Ciega Bay (Fuller 1972:132). The city's trolley system grew from 3 miles in 1909 to 23 miles by 1917 (Arsenault, Raymond, St. Petersburg and the Florida Dream 1888- 1950 (1988) p. 136). This explosive growth was the result of residential real estate subdivision projects created by local developers; H. Walter Fuller, Noel Mitchell, Perry Snell, and many smaller speculators (Arsenault 1988: 136). The expansion was in all directions from original plat of the town, bounded roughly by 5th Avenues North and South, west to 12th Street, and followed new streetcar lines largely financed by the private developers. The buyers of these 22,000 lots that existed in 1914 (Fuller 1972:131) were the seasonal winter tourists who were lured to the city in ever increasing numbers by a sophisticated national advertising campaign. An estimate of the 1910-1911 tourist season made by the Board of Trade, claimed 4,518 seasonal visitors registered at their welcome station, but this was likely only 50% of the real total. The majority came from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and New York (Evening Independent 7 Mar. 1911, p.6). A major difference between this real estate boom and the larger one of 1920 to 1926, was the emphasis on selling suburban houses versus selling vacant lots. These houses were intended as winter homes to be used as investment rentals until the owners retired to St. Petersburg. A brisk business for both residential and commercial properties began in the winter of 1908-1909. Each winter thereafter the demand increased. By the winter of 1912-1913 it became a "boomlet of the super- dooper variety" (Fuller 1972:131). This boom was short lived, by the fall of 1913 it began to taper off and during the early months of 1914 real estate advertising almost disappeared from the newspapers. The market had been oversold and there was a public fear that the country seemed headed for another depression. The outbreak of World War I in July 1914 completely stopped the boom. Although tourism remained strong during the 1914-1915 tourist season, buyers became reluctant to invest in vacation homes and bankers became stingy in extending more credit to the developers. There was no "crash" in the local real estate market, home prices and tax evaluations did not deflate, but cash flow problems crippled the developers who had to bide their time till the end of war in 1918 (Grismer 1948:235-6).

#### **HISTORY OF 118 5th Avenue North**

The Aiken House is located on Lot 3 of Block 3 of the Revised Map of St. Petersburg which was surveyed originally in 1888 and later revised. Fifth Avenue North was the northern boundary of the town's first subdivision and

development did not occur here until the first decade of the 20th century. The 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map of this block shows no buildings or structures along its northern half that fronts onto Fifth Avenue North. The Thornton's Addition subdivision on the north side of Fifth Avenue in this block had a similar pattern of development, however the 1910 U.S. Census lists four houses here and no houses on the south side of the 100 block of 5th Avenue North. Construction in this area began in earnest with St. Petersburg's first real estate boom cycle that occurred from 1909 until 1915.

Evidence suggests that the bungalow located at 118 5th Avenue North was built between 1908 and the end of 1909 since the house does not appear on the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of this block and the newspaper ad placed by Grant Aiken at this address was made on 30 Mar. 1910. The original city "Property Card" for this parcel does not survive, so the architect and contractor of the house is unknown. The first evidence of this house is a newspaper classified advertisement; "Wanted, a white nurse girl - apply to Grant Aiken - 118 5th Avenue N" ("St. Petersburg Evening Independent", 30 Mar. 1910, p. 3, 'classified ads'). Grant Aiken appears in the 1910 federal census here with his wife, Maud and family of 5 young children. The ad for a nurse is a clue that Grant Aiken was suffering from the illness that later took his life at this house in 1912. Mrs. Aiken and children remained here until 1914 when she moved to the site of her new school nearby at 456 Bay Street NE (demolished 1965) ("St. Petersburg Times", 19 Aug. 1993, 'Obit of Burnette Aiken Beatty').

The next occupant of the house was Mrs. Isabella S. Brown who appears in the 1916 city directory. She was the widow of William H. Brown of Indianapolis president of the Brown-Ketchum Iron Works. She lived in the house until 1921 when it was occupied by a succession of new winter tourist renters each season through the 1930s. It became the single family residence of Mrs. Myrtie Householder by 1940 who lived there through 1964 (R. L. Polk, St. Petersburg City Directory 1916 to 1965, passim). The house became a retail florist shop during the 1980s and this is when modern alterations were made to the house and a swimming pool built in the rear yard (city "Property Card" 118 5th Ave. N.). The house was sold 7 Dec. 1993 for \$60,000 by Joseph Del Grosso of N.Y. to Rosalee M. Neil. The house was sold on 25 Apr. 2006 by Dennis A. Farrell and Olive his wife to Fuel Investment & Development II LLC for \$500,000 (Pinellas County, FL, Tax Assessor website, entry for 118 5th Ave. N.).

#### **BIOGRAPHY OF GRANT J. AIKEN (1864-1912)**

Grant J. Aiken was born in 1864 in Mercer County Pennsylvania. His father immigrated from Ireland and eventually settled there as a farmer dying when Grant was aged 13. Grant aged 21 moved to Orange County Florida in 1885 in hopes of improving his health and owned a small citrus grove until the severe freezes of 1894-5 destroyed his trees. He moved to St. Petersburg where he worked as a clerk in Harrison Hardware and studied law in the evenings. In 1899 he married a local school teacher, Maud Chase. He passed his bar exam in October 1902. In 1903 he became the first lawyer employed by St. Petersburg. That year he prepared the bill for the state legislature to convert St. Petersburg from a town to a city charter and handled this reorganizarion. Grant served a term of six years as city clerk and tax collector. By 1909 he also enjoyed a lucrative law practice which gives special attention to the examination of land titles ("St Petersburg Evening Independent", 22 February 1909, p. 15 'Grant Aiken, City Attorney and Councillor at Law'). The 1908 city directory lists him as one of four attorneys in St. Petersburg his office was at 249 Central Avenue and his residence at 405 6th St. N (1908 St. Petersburg City Directory). In 1909 he complained to the press of the deplorable condition of the city's jail and inhumane treatment of sick inmates ("St. Petersburg Evening Independent", p.1 'Man Dying in Jail Outrage, Condtions Deplorable, Dr. Rouse, Councilman Blocker, and City Attorney Aiken Speak Candidly'). In 1911 he worked with the firm of McMullen & McMullen to draft the bill for the state legislature to create Pinellas County from the western section of Hillsborough County ("St. Petersburg Times", 19 Aug. 1911, p.7 'obit Bernette Aiken Beatty'). "Death Expected at any Moment, Grant Aiken is Given up by his Physicians and is Sinking Rapidly - Grant Aiken formerly city tax collector and city attorney and one of the best known men in St. Petersburg is dying at his home in this city and it is feared he will not live through the day. Mr. Aikin has been in poor health for several years. His health broke down while he was city attorney'... ("St Petersburg Evening Independent", 14 Dec. 1912, p.1).

#### **BIOGRAPHY OF MAUD CHASE AIKEN (1874 -1948)**

"AIKEN, Mrs. MAUD, whose name is identified with and held in particular esteem for her work in behalf of education at Saint Petersburg, is a daughter of the late Capt. JOHN F. CHASE, a pioneer of Saint Petersburg, whose career is described at length on other pages. Mrs. AIKEN was born in Augusta, Maine, where she was reared and educated. Saint Petersburg was a small village when she and her parents came here in 1895. Prior to her marriage she engaged in teaching. Her husband was Mr. GRANT AIKEN of Pennsylvania, an attorney by

profession. He died in 1912. After her husband's death Mrs. AIKEN opened what has since become famous as the AIKEN Open Air School. Its first attendance consisted of three pupils. For a year or so its enrollment has been on average of two hundred each term. It is now a highly systematized school, with a staff of teachers, and doing the work in all the grades, beginning with the primary and fitting advanced pupils for entrance to any college or university. Mrs. AIKEN is highly educated and beautifully accomplished. She is a member of the Women's Club, the Carreno Club and the Episcopal Church." (*The History of Florida Past & Present* (The Lewis Publishing Co., 1923) p. 145).

Maud was the daughter of Maj. John F. Chase a Union officer who received the Medal of Honor for his service at the Battle of Chancellorville he also lost an arm and an eye at Gettysburg. He came to St. Petersburg in 1895 with his family from Augusta, Maine. When the Disston City (present -day Gulfport) project failed, Chase devised a plan to turn the area into Veteran City, a retirement community for members of the Grand Army of the Republic. Although the veterans never showed up to buy land, the Veteran City trolley line built by F. A. Davis from downtown St. Petersburg to Boca Ciega Bay and became a popular tourist excursion that was linked to a ferry to carry passengers to Pass-A-Grille (Arsenault, Raymond, *St. Petersburg and the Florida Dream* (1988) p. 88).

Maude became a teacher at the town's public school in 1895 the year her family moved here. In 1899 she married Grant J. Aiken. Grant Aiken died in 1912 and left her aged 37 a widow with six young children to support; Merrill aged 10, Carlyle aged 8, Burdette aged 7, Caryl aged 4, Horace aged 2, and Dean an infant (1910 and 1920 U.S. Census, St. Petersburg, FL). In 1913 Maud decided to open the first private school in the city it catered to the children of winter tourists and offered high quality innovative educational methods. She obtained financing from the American Bank & Trust to buy a house on a large lot on Bay Street between 4th and 5th Avenues North ("St. Petersburg Times", 1 Aug. 1913, p. 37 'Private School was Result of Widow's Efforts to Preserve Family'). She ran an advertisement in the local newspaper in 1914 announcing its opening;

"The St. Petersburg Open Air School  
Montessori Class

Primary, Grammar, and High School Departments

Classes in Rythmic Dancing

Special Attention Given to Tutoring

No Tubercular Pupils Received

Mrs. Grant Aiken Principal

corner Fifth Avenue North and Bay Street

Phone 357-B" ("St. Petersburg Daily Times", 13 Nov. 1914, p. 8, 'advertisement').

In 1915 Maud was hired to organize a girls' boarding school, the Southland Seminary in a new building erected by Snell & Hamlett on a large tract of their land at 1st Street and 32nd Avenue North located on the bayou at the terminus of the streetcar line. Snell hoped that the school would attract residential buyers for his land. The school venture failed by 1916 and the building was sold at a loss to the Masons who turned it into a retirement home for members, the Masonic Home of Florida (ibid. "SPT" 1 Aug. 1983). Maud Aiken became ill in 1936 and turned the operation of the school over to her daughter in law Martha Trice Aiken (Mrs. Dean Aiken). The Aiken Open Air School continued in operation until it was sold in 1965 for the site of the Presbyterian Tower retirement home. Maud Aiken died 1948 and is buried in the Chase family plot next to her husband and daughter in law, Beulah Aiken (1912 -1944) at St. Bartholomew Episcopal Church Cemetery, 2120 19th St. S. ("St. Petersburg Times", 19 Aug. 1993, 'Obit of Burnette Aiken Beatty').

#### **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Aiken House at 118 5th Avenue North is a textbook illustration of a classic Craftsman style bungalow. The exterior of the house has retained its historic appearance and integrity with only minor alterations to its fabric. The front (north) facade exhibits a high level of craftsmanship and ornamental detail that employ quintessential design elements of this style. The quality of this home's design when combined with the similar high-style design of the three adjacent Craftsman style houses creates a splendid collection of architectural artifacts of this style built between 1909 and 1916. There is no other grouping of Craftsman style residences of this quality surviving within the National Register listed St. Petersburg Downtown Historic District (2004) 8Pi10648. The only similar assemblage of Craftsman style houses of this period is the Lang Bungalow Court local landmark district (2014) HPC-14-90300002. However, the four houses in the 100 block of Fifth Avenue North were built for a wealthier class of clients than the houses of Lang Court and therefore were able to display a more expensive level of ornamental design and construction.

The American Craftsman style, or the American Arts and Crafts Movement, is an American domestic architectural, interior design, landscape design, applied arts, and decorative style and lifestyle philosophy that had its origins in the last decade of the 19th century. As a comprehensive design and arts movement it remained popular till the 1930s Great Depression. The Craftsman style took its

inspiration from the British Arts and Crafts movement founded on the philosophy and writings of William Morris (1834 -1896). Morris was appalled by the shoddy workmanship and gaudy tastes of the Victorian era which were a result of mass production caused by the Industrial Revolution. In his opinion the beauty of an object, fabric, or building was the result of the handcrafted labor by skilled artisans who understood and respected the intrinsic qualities of the materials that they used. Yes, it was a nostalgic yearning for “the good old days” that appears naive, however the goal of preserving traditional artisanal skills via apprenticeship had a profound impact on the creation of vocational training schools across Europe and The U. S. The European proponents of the Arts and Crafts style were closely allied politically and philosophically with the growth of Socialism and its concern for the “working man” and attempting to improve the working conditions and housing of this class. This movement laid a special emphasis on the design of affordable, yet aesthetically pleasing, housing for the middle and working class that incorporated the latest innovations in sanitation and modern technology. Ironically the booming mill towns of Britain became the first laboratory for these new experiments in city planning, and affordable housing.

The American Craftsman style was formally born in 1897 when the non-profit American Society of Arts and Crafts was founded in Boston. The publications of this society and articles in American architecture journals featuring this “modern architecture” evolving across Europe introduced American architects and builders to this new aesthetic and design vocabulary. Elbert Hubbard (1856 -1915) inspired by William Morris created the Roycroft artisanal community in East Aurora, NY in 1895, one of the main products of this group was the Roycroft Press whose books also spread the concepts of this movement. Adventurous U. S. architects embraced the tenants of this style which had spread from Glasgow to Vienna, the most famous being Louis Sullivan (1856 -1924) and Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959). In California which was booming with new construction in this era many architects began creating residences in the Arts and Crafts style. Bernard Maybeck ( 1862-1957) in San Francisco and the brothers Charles (1868-1957) and Henry Greene (1870-1954) of Pasadena by 1905 had created a synthetic new style and started calling these houses bungalows. They were adapted to function in a warm climate and well suited to the new “streetcar suburbs” springing up in southern California. And this housing type became instantly popular with the California public and when the bungalow style home spread to other parts of the country they were commonly called “California Bungalows”. St. Petersburg’s two great historic building

boom periods were 1909 to 1914 and 1921 to 1926 and both occurred during the height of this housing type's popularity. As a result this form of domestic architecture is the predominant style in most of the city's pre World War II neighborhoods.

The Craftsman bungalow style was synthesized from a wide range of sources which include; British Colonial era homes in India where the term "bungalow" originated and Japanese domestic architecture with its wood frame skeleton, open floor plan, widely projecting and flaring eaves, and large open porches. These exotic styles were grafted onto the common American one story frame vernacular style cottage and elements of high-style European Arts and Crafts were added for flair. This hybrid creation called the bungalow was coeval with the similar synthetic styles of early modern architecture known as Jugendstil in Germany, Secession in Vienna, Modernismo in Spain, and Art Nouveau in France. All of these styles had the common denominator of fusing together the best of local traditional "folk style" buildings with a new aesthetic derived from Asian art and applying the early modernist philosophy of "organic design" derived from nature. The novel experimental designs of architects; Charles Rennie Mackintosh in Scotland, Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago, Josef Hoffmann in Vienna, Lluís Domènech y Montaner in Barcelona, and Sir Edward Lutyens in Britain although superficially different in appearance all sprang from the same aesthetic source as the Craftsman bungalow found along suburban streets across the U.S. In the state of Florida the Craftsman bungalow was generally built of wood frame construction with brick, concrete block, or oolitic limestone as secondary materials. Most were one story high, but the two story "aeroplane bungalow" with a second floor bedroom with banks of windows on all four sides was also popular. The use of wide roof eaves and many windows for cross-ventilation made these houses perfect for Florida in the era before air-conditioning.

### **Craftsman style Characteristics**

- 1 - 2 stories
- Low-pitched roof, hipped, gabled, sometimes with a clipped gable. Roof lines may be complex and cross gabled.
- Broad eaves
- Heavy masonry porch piers supporting squat tapered pillars or paired posts
- Knee braces, exposed rafter tails and beams, elaborated rafter ends and verge boards, occasionally roof ridge finials are seen
- Natural materials indigenous to location (exception: kit homes)

- Open floor plan
- Dormers: shed, gabled, hipped, sometimes in combination
- Fireplace and chimney, brick or native stone
- Handcrafted, built-in cabinetry including as buffets, bookcases, colonnades
- Unique custom features such as inglenooks and window seats
- Substantial covered porches
- Windows, double-hung, multiple lights over single pane below. Multiple windows appear together in banks. Casement windows are also seen.
- Shingle, lapped, and stucco siding is common.

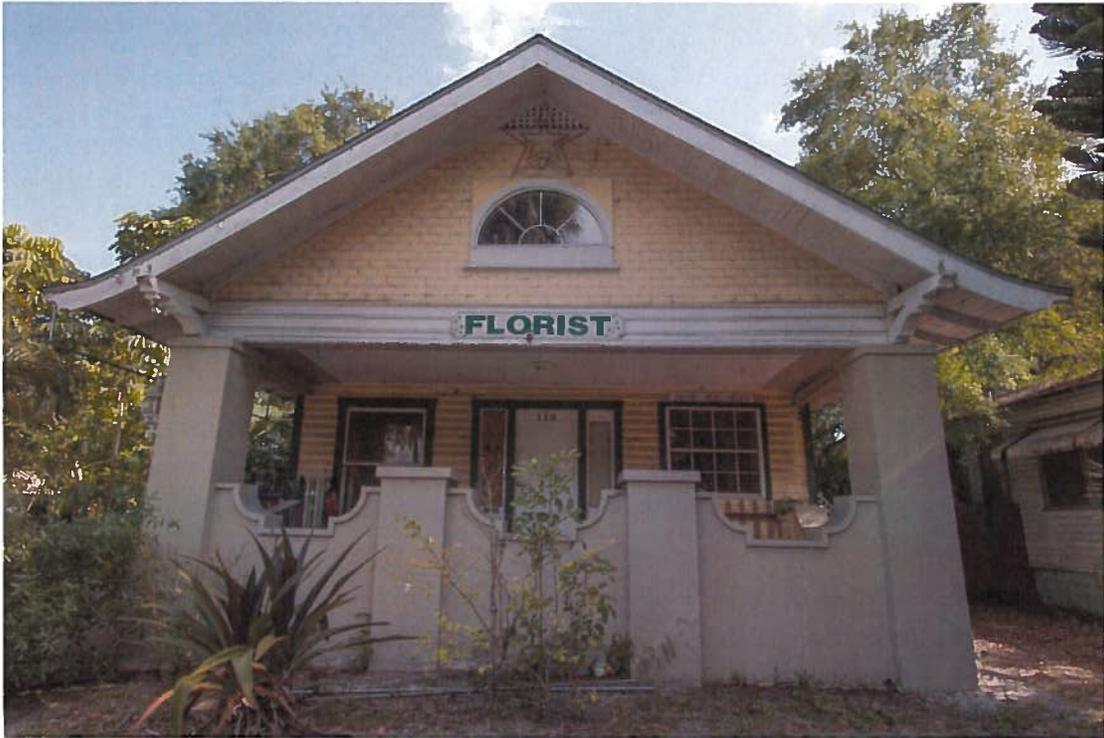
## **10. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Please list bibliographical references.

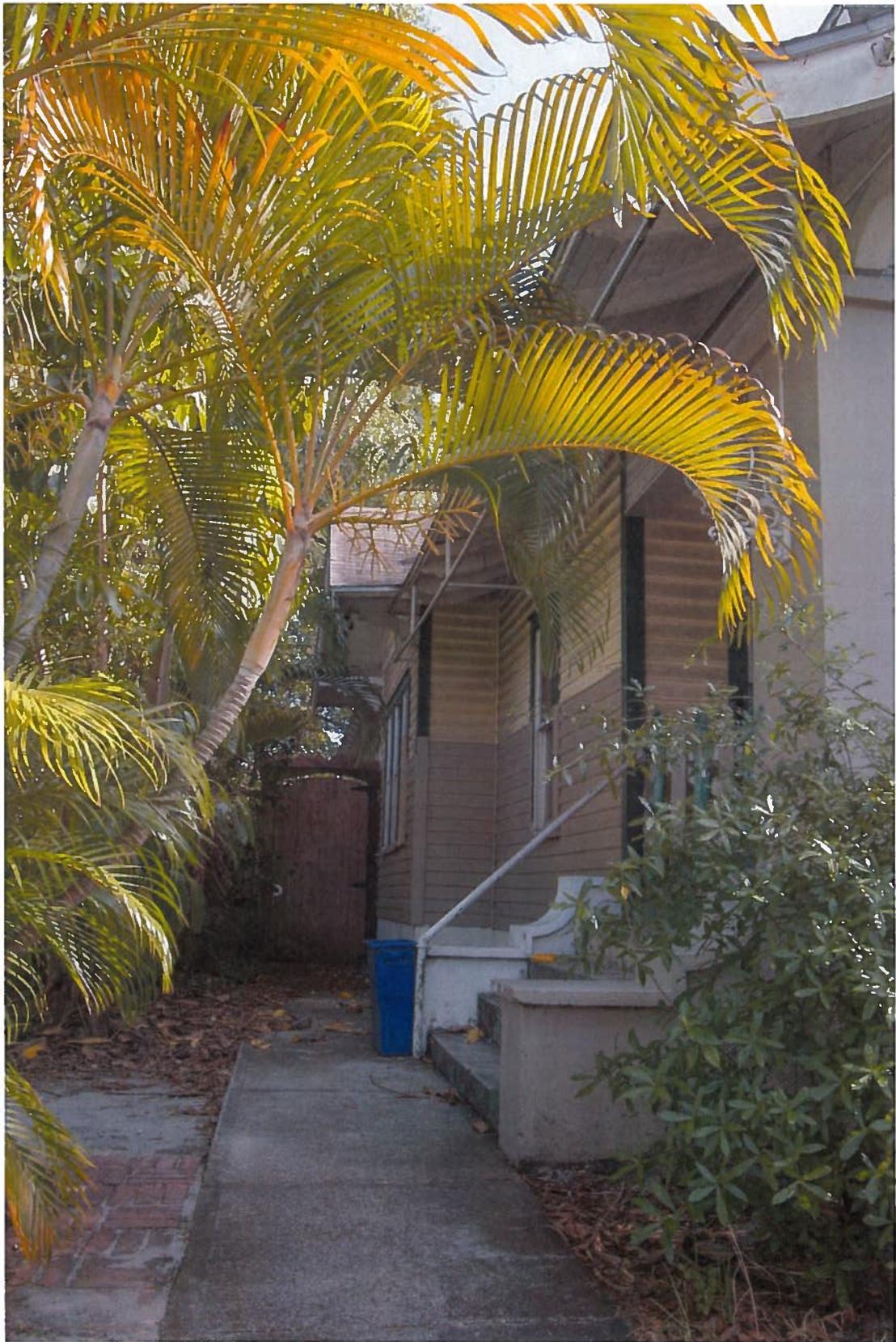
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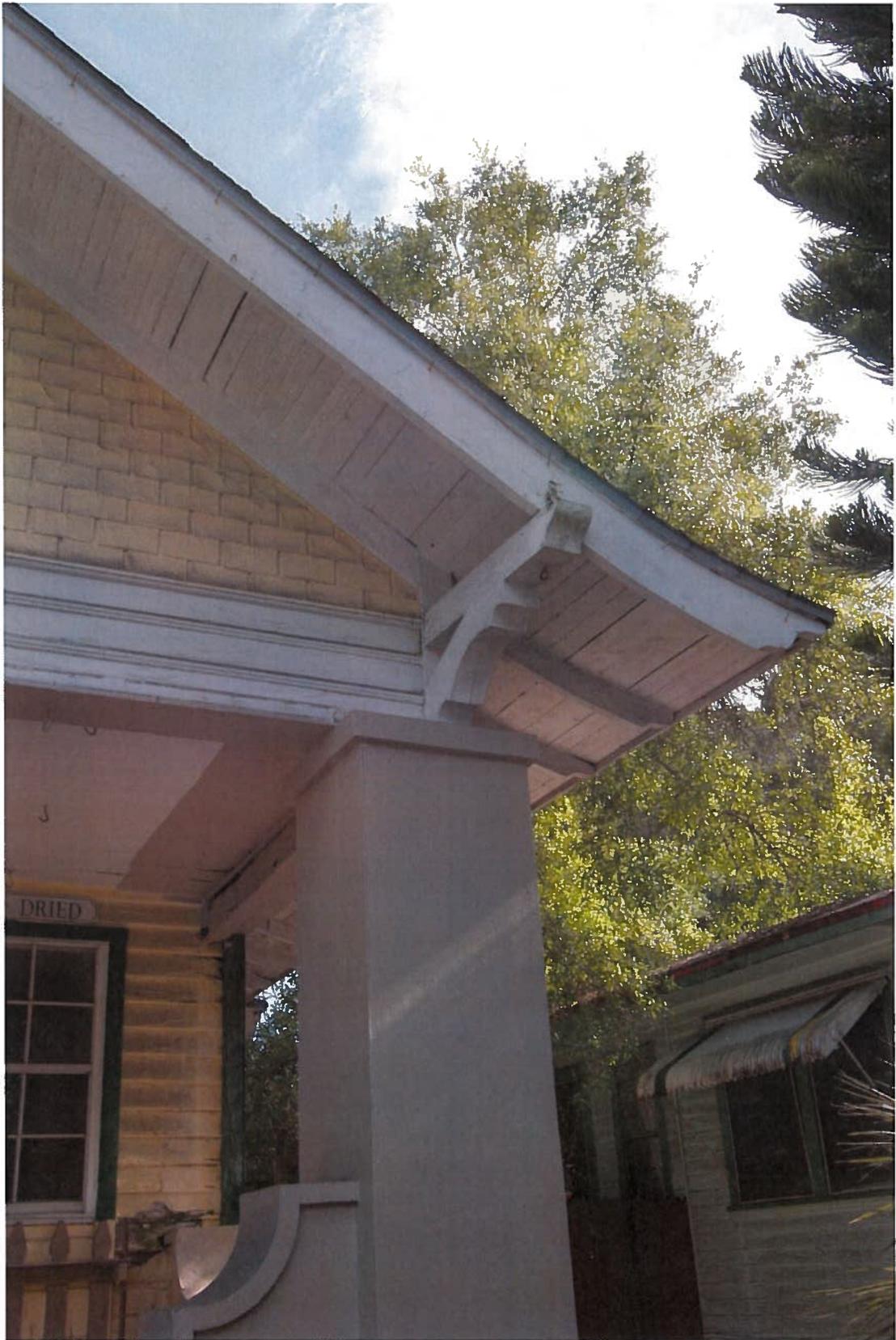
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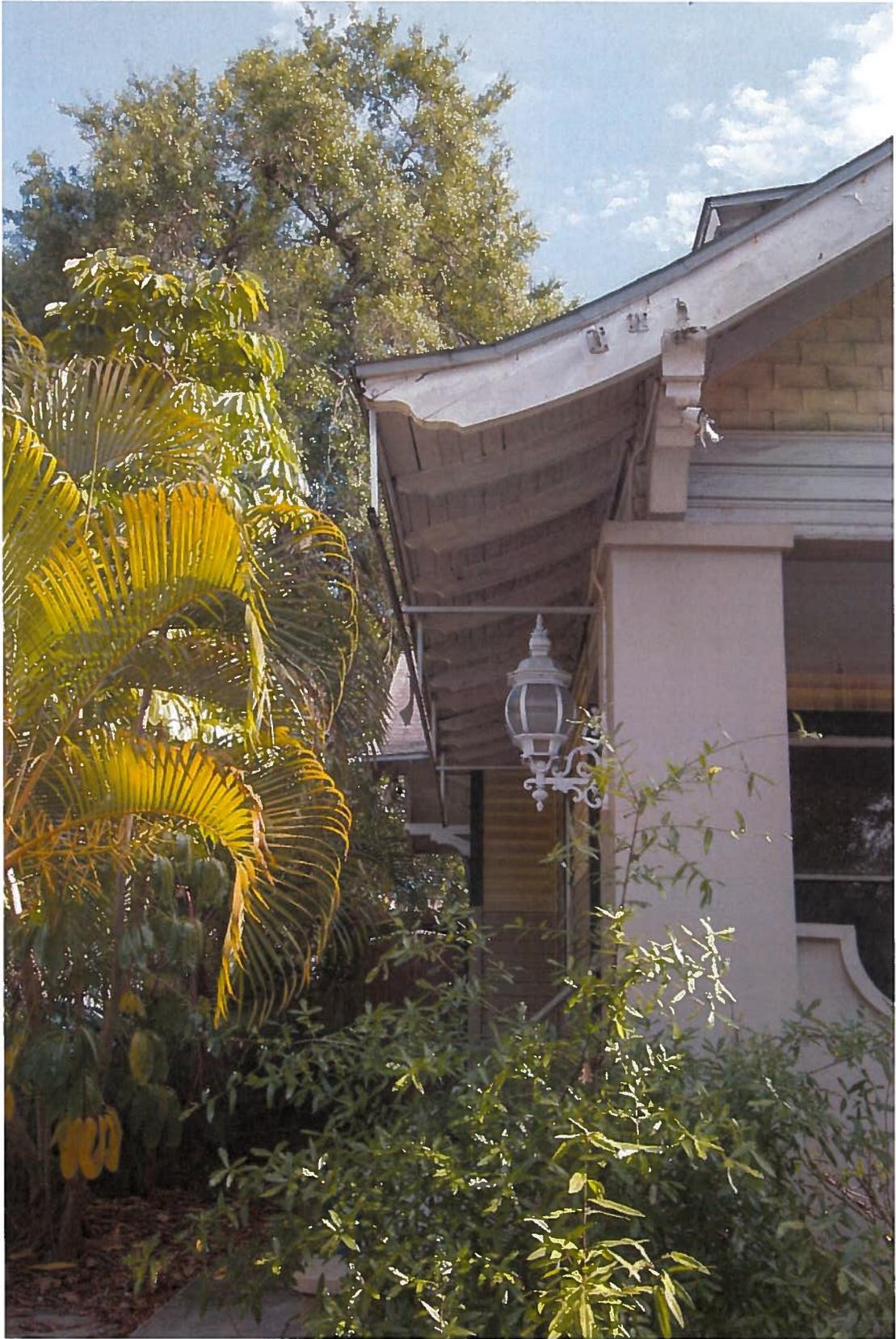




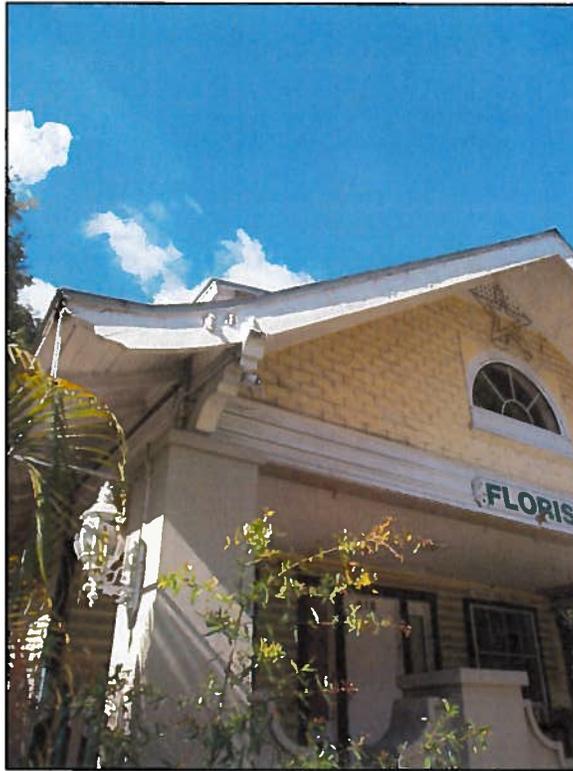








**APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS**



**Photograph 1: Upswept eaves, gable brackets, and removed gable vent at east elevation (left) and north façade (right), facing southwest**



**Photograph 2: Subject property in relationship to neighboring bungalows, facing west**



**Photograph 3: Façade and notched porch surround, facing southeast**

**APPENDIX D: PUBLIC COMMENT**

Three comments in opposition of designation (attached, to follow) and none in support have been received as of January 3, 2017.

**In re Historical Landmark Designation Applications:  
118, 126, 136, 142, and 142 ½ 5th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, Florida**

**HPC 16-90300003  
HPC 16-90300004  
HPC 16-90300005  
HPC 16-90300006**

**AFFIDAVIT OF CHANDRESH S. SARAIYA  
AS MANAGER OF SUBURBAN FEDERAL PROPERTY, LLC**

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, personally appeared Chandresh S. Saraiya, being first duly sworn, deposes and says:

1. This affidavit is submitted in opposition to the Local Landmark Designation Applications (together, the "Applications") filed by St. Petersburg Preservation for the contiguous parcels of property located at 118, 126, 136, 142, and 142 ½ 5th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, Florida (together, the "Subject Property"), copies of which are attached hereto as Composite Exhibit "A."

2. My name is Chandresh S. Saraiya, I am over the age of eighteen years old, and I am the Manager of Suburban Federal Property, LLC ("Suburban"), the seventy percent (70%) owner of Fuel Investment & Development II, LLC ("FID II"). Suburban was ten percent (10%) owner of FID II in 2006, but due to performance issues with the initial developer, Suburban ended up acquiring all of the developer's interest and is now seventy percent (70%) owner of FID II.

3. FID II is the owner of the Subject Property, having purchased all applicable parcels between December 2005 and April 2006 for a total of \$3,100,000, and an additional two contiguous parcels of property in November 2006 for \$3,500,000, representing a total purchase price of \$6,600,000.

4. In addition to being the majority owner in FID II, Suburban is a co-managing member of FID II. FID II has an additional three (3) co-managing members, who have not been consulted in the drafting of this Affidavit. I am unaware of whether or not any of the other co-managing members have received notice of the Applications.

5. The Applications were submitted on May 1, 2016 by Howard Ferebee Hansen of St. Petersburg Preservation ("St. Pete Preservation"), a non-profit organization whose mission is described as educating the public about local historic architecture resources, landmarking or assisting in the landmarking of "deserving" sites and structures, and preserving sites and structures previously landmarked.

6. St. Pete Preservation has no ownership or other interest in the Subject Property, and, to the best of my knowledge, submitted the Applications without any notice to or communication with any representative of FID II.

7. FID II purchased the Subject Property in order to redevelop the same and take a city block that has, even as acknowledged by the Applications, been blighted by neglect and crime.

8. During my involvement with the Subject Property as Manager of the majority owner and otherwise, I was unaware of any potential historical landmarks on any of the Subject Property.

9. After purchase of the Subject Property, FID II submitted applications for approval of two (2) separate projects, each of which were rejected by the City of St. Petersburg. In addition to issues with zoning and approval of FID II's development projects, and in large part because of the same, FID II experienced financial difficulties which resulted in (a) default on its

obligations to its lenders, (b) initiation of foreclosure on the Subject Property, and (c) two (2) bankruptcy proceedings.

10. As a result of these issues, the Subject Property has been the subject of a foreclosure action styled First Street and Fifth Avenue, LLC v. Fuel Investment & Development II, LLC, Case No. 09-16378-CI-15 (the "Foreclosure Action"), which has been pending before the Circuit Court for the Sixth Judicial Circuit in and for Pinellas County, Florida (the "State Court") since August 15, 2009.

11. The Foreclosure Action has been pending for more than seven (7) years and has prevented any potential development of the Subject Property while it remains in limbo. The senior mortgage holder of the property, First Street and Fifth Avenue, LLC, holds a lien on the Subject Property in an amount exceeding \$10,000,000.

12. FID II has been dissolved and non-operational since at least September 27, 2013.

13. As a result of the years of limbo and uncertainty created by the Foreclosure Action and lack of financial resources of FID II, the Subject Property has fallen further into disrepair.

14. On May 11, 2016, the City of St. Petersburg Code Enforcement department ("Code Enforcement") sent out two (2) notices of their intent to seek demolition of portions of the Subject Property (the "Demolition Notices"), copies of which are attached hereto as Composite Exhibit "B."

15. I have personally walked the Subject Property with Code Enforcement in order to gain a better understanding of the issues associated with the Demolition Notices and other code enforcement violations.

16. On November 23, 2016, after hearings on August 22, 2016, and November 4, 2016, the State Court appointed Larry S. Hyman, CPA (the "Receiver") as receiver over the Subject Property in order to address the issues identified in the Demolition Notices, delinquent taxes, and other issues of the Subject Property.

17. Accordingly, the Receiver is in control of the Subject Property for the balance of the Foreclosure Action or until otherwise discharged by the State Court.

18. If the Applications are successful, the value of the Subject Property will be severely impaired and it is unlikely that any revitalization or improvement to the Subject Property will take place.

19. This will, in effect, leave half of a block in downtown St. Petersburg in a state of neglect that impacts the surrounding community, particularly where downtown St. Petersburg is in the middle of a redevelopment and revitalization effort that involves new construction and an influx of residents and businesses.

20. It would require an enormous amount of resources in order to clear the Demolition Notices and other Code Enforcement violations, and even more resources would be required in order to restore the Subject Property to even the most minimal of habitable condition.

21. If there is no possibility for future development on the Subject Property due to a Local Landmark status, it is unlikely that any entity would be willing to commit the appropriate resources in order to correct or maintain the Subject Property.

22. It is my understanding that the purpose of the City of St. Petersburg Code on "Preservation of Historic Properties" (Sec. 16.30.070.2) includes stabilizing and improving property values "in historic districts and in the City as a whole" (16.30.070.2.1.B.3), strengthening the economy of the City (16.30.070.2.1.B.5), and enhancing the "visual and

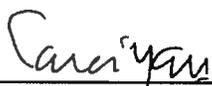
aesthetic character, diversity and interest of the City” (16.30.070.2.1.B.7). I do not believe that any of these purposes are furthered by the designation of the Subject Property as local landmarks.

23. At the very least, it is incumbent upon the City of St. Petersburg to delay any decision of the Historic Preservation committee to delay consideration of any of the Applications until the Foreclosure Action is resolved and a new and solvent owner of the Subject Property is identified to allow full due process to the owner.

24. I did not receive any formal notice of the Applications or any steps to consider the same by the City of St. Petersburg, and only received notice through proceedings involving appointment of the Receiver in the Foreclosure Action.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

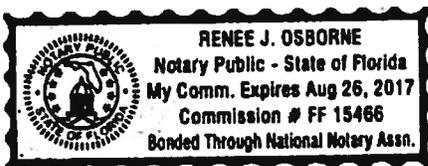
Dated this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2017.

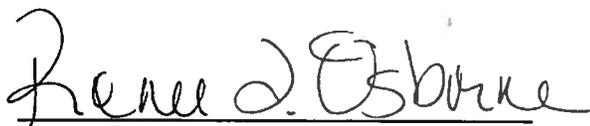
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHANDRESH S. SARAIYA

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2017, by Chandresh S. Saraiya, Manager of Suburban Federal Property, LLC, a Florida limited liability company. He is personally known to me or has produced personally as identification.



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public, State at Large  
Serial Number and Seal

# **Exhibit “A”**

To prevent redundancy within this packet, please refer to **Appendix B: Designation Application**.

# **Exhibit “B”**



**codes compliance assistance department**  
post office box 2842                      st. petersburg, florida 33731-2842

**DEMOLITION VIOLATION NOTICE**

Delivered via U.S. Certified and First Class Mail

May 11, 2016

FUEL INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT II LLC  
201 N FRANKLIN ST STE 2505

TAMPA FL 336025800

**DEMOLITION CASE NO:** 15-00022138  
**RESPONSIBLE PARTY:** FUEL INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT  
**PROPERTY IN VIOLATION:** 118 5TH AVE N  
REV MAP OF ST PETERSBURG  
BLK 3, LOT 3

**STRUCTURE (S) :** DUPLEX & INGROUND POOL

*This notice is directed to the above legal property owner(s) of record (responsible party) and additional copies are being provided to potentially interested parties including the person whose name and address appears at the top of this letter.*

The property described above has been evaluated and determined to have conditions which appear to not comply with the City Code: **CHAPTER 8, DIV. 4, SEC. 8-263 - UNFIT OR UNSAFE DWELLINGS OR STRUCTURES**

The property owner or duly authorized representative **must obtain permits** to make repairs to the above referenced structure(s). The property owner may be required to retain a design professional to conduct an evaluation of the structure and produce a detailed written report with rehabilitation plans. A licensed contractor may also be required to provide a cost estimate and conduct the rehabilitation.

**Permits to rehabilitate or to demolish the structure(s) must be obtained by June 20, 2016.**

If these conditions are not corrected by the specified date, the City can take action to condemn and demolish the structure(s). All costs incurred in any condemnation action will be assessed as an interest bearing lien against the property. If additional time is needed to obtain permits for rehabilitation or demolition of the structure(s), contact me in writing with an outline of your plans before June 20, 2016.

Respectfully,

MAUREEN PALMER 892-5488 (Area Code 727), Building Demolition Coordinator



**codes compliance assistance department**  
post office box 2842                      st. petersburg, florida 33731-2842

**DEMOLITION VIOLATION NOTICE**

**Delivered via U.S. Certified and First Class Mail**

May 11, 2016

FUEL INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT II LLC  
PO BOX 273944

TAMPA FL 336883944

**DEMOLITION CASE NO:** 16-00008671  
**RESPONSIBLE PARTY:** FUEL INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT  
**PROPERTY IN VIOLATION:** 142 5TH AVE N  
REV MAP OF ST PETERSBURG  
BLK 3, LOT 6

**STRUCTURE(S) :** SGL FAM RES & TRIPLEX

*This notice is directed to the above legal property owner(s) of record (responsible party) and additional copies are being provided to potentially interested parties including the person whose name and address appears at the top of this letter.*

The property described above has been evaluated and determined to have conditions which appear to not comply with the City Code: **CHAPTER 8, DIV. 4, SEC. 8-263 - UNFIT OR UNSAFE DWELLINGS OR STRUCTURES**

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**Permits to rehabilitate or to demolish the structure(s) must be obtained by June 20, 2016.**

If these conditions are not corrected by the specified date, the City can take action to condemn and demolish the structure(s). All costs incurred in any condemnation action will be assessed as an interest bearing lien against the property. If additional time is needed to obtain permits for rehabilitation or demolition of the structure(s), contact me in writing with an outline of your plans before June 20, 2016.

Respectfully,

MAUREEN PALMER 892-5483 (Area Code 727), Building Demolition Coordinator

**In re Historical Landmark Designation Applications:  
118, 126, 136, 142, and 142 ½ 5th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, Florida**

**HPC 16-90300003  
HPC 16-90300004  
HPC 16-90300005  
HPC 16-90300006**

**AFFIDAVIT OF CHANDRESH S. SARAIYA AS  
PRESIDENT OF FIRST STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE, LLC**

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, personally appeared Chandresh S. Saraiya, being first duly sworn, deposes and says:

1. This affidavit is submitted in opposition to the Local Landmark Designation Applications (together, the "Applications") filed by St. Petersburg Preservation for the contiguous parcels of property located at 118, 126, 136, 142, and 142 ½ 5th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, Florida (together, the "Subject Property"), copies of which are attached hereto as Composite Exhibit "A."

2. My name is Chandresh S. Saraiya, I am over the age of eighteen years old, and I am the President of First Street and Fifth Avenue, LLC ("FSFA"), the senior mortgage holder on the Subject Property, and the additional contiguous parcel located at 135 5th Avenue North.

3. FID II is the owner of the Subject Property, having purchased all applicable parcels between December 2005 and April 2006.

4. On November 6, 2006, FID II borrowed funds in the original principal amount of \$4,800,000, and executed a "Mortgage, Assignment of Leases and Rents and Security Agreement" (the "Mortgage") in favor of Broadway Bank, a copy of which is recorded in the Official Records of Pinellas County, Florida at Official Records Book 15475, beginning at 1387.

5. After a series of assignments that are a matter of public record, on September 28, 2012, FSFA received an "Assignment of Mortgage and Loan Documents" assigning all right,

title, and interest in the Mortgage to FSFA. Accordingly, FSFA is now the owner and holder of the Mortgage and the associated rights thereunder.

6. The Applications were submitted on May 1, 2016 by Howard Ferebee Hansen of St. Petersburg Preservation (“St. Pete Preservation”), a non-profit organization whose mission is described as educating the public about local historic architecture resources, landmarking or assisting in the landmarking of “deserving” sites and structures, and preserving sites and structures previously landmarked.

7. St. Pete Preservation has no ownership or other interest in the Subject Property, and, to the best of my knowledge, submitted the Applications without any notice to or communication with any representative of FSFA.

8. The Subject Property has been the subject of a foreclosure action styled First Street and Fifth Avenue, LLC v. Fuel Investment & Development II, LLC, Case No. 09-16378-CI-15 (the “Foreclosure Action”), which has been pending before the Circuit Court for the Sixth Judicial Circuit in and for Pinellas County, Florida (the “State Court”) since August 15, 2009.

9. The Foreclosure Action has been pending for more than seven (7) years and has prevented any potential development of the Subject Property while it remains in limbo.

10. During the pendency of the Foreclosure Action, the Subject Property, which was initially purchased as a development investment, has fallen further into disrepair.

11. On May 11, 2016, the City of St. Petersburg Code Enforcement department (“Code Enforcement”) sent out two (2) notices of their intent to seek demolition of portions of the Subject Property (the “Demolition Notices”), copies of which are attached hereto as Composite Exhibit “B.”

12. As a result of the Demolition Notices and other Code Enforcement violations, on July 29, 2016, FSFA filed "FSFA's Emergency Motion for Appointment of Receiver to Maintain and Safeguard Assets" in the Foreclosure Action, seeking an order of the State Court appointing a receiver over the Subject Property and the remaining contiguous parcel covered by the Mortgage in order to correct code enforcement violations and protect the Subject Property from further serious issues during the pendency of the Foreclosure Action.

13. On November 23, 2016, after hearings on August 22, 2016, and November 4, 2016, the State Court appointed Larry S. Hyman, CPA (the "Receiver") as receiver over the Subject Property in order to address the issues identified in the Demolition Notices, delinquent taxes, and other issues of the Subject Property.

14. Accordingly, the Receiver is in control of the Subject Property for the balance of the Foreclosure Action or until otherwise discharged by the State Court.

15. If the Subject Property is designated as a Local Landmark, the value of the Subject Property will be further impaired, impacting the Mortgage and the ability of FSFA to recover the sums due thereunder, which now exceeds \$10,000,000.

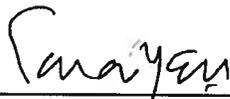
16. Further, if the Subject Property is limited in its uses, there will be a limited market for sale of the Subject Property, and limited uses for the same, after foreclosure or otherwise, and this will in effect leave half of a block in downtown St. Petersburg in a state of neglect that impacts the surrounding community.

17. At the very least, it is incumbent upon the City of St. Petersburg to delay consideration of any of the Applications until the Foreclosure Action is resolved and a new and solvent owner of the Subject Property is identified to allow full due process to the owner.

18. FSFA did not receive any formal notice of the Applications or any steps to consider the same by the City of St. Petersburg, and only first received notice of the same through the proceedings involving appointment of the Receiver in the Foreclosure Action.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

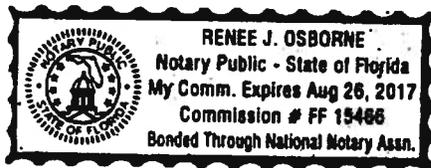
Dated this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2017.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHANDRESH S. SARAIYA

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2017, by Chandresh S. Saraiya, President of First Street and Fifth Avenue, LLC, a Florida limited liability company. He is personally known to me or has produced personally ✓ as identification.



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public, State at Large  
Serial Number and Seal

# **Exhibit “A”**

To prevent redundancy within this packet, please refer to **Appendix B: Designation Application**.

# **Exhibit “B”**



**codes compliance assistance department**  
post office box 2842 st. petersburg, florida 33731-2842

**DEMOLITION VIOLATION NOTICE**

Delivered via U.S. Certified and First Class Mail

May 11, 2016

FIRST STREET & FIFTH AVE LLC  
18608 MONACO AVE

LUTZ FL 33558

**DEMOLITION CASE NO:** 15-00022138  
**RESPONSIBLE PARTY:** FUEL INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT  
**PROPERTY IN VIOLATION:** 118 5TH AVE N  
REV MAP OF ST PETERSBURG  
BLK 3, LOT 3

**STRUCTURE(S) :** DUPLEX & INGROUND POOL

*This notice is directed to the above legal property owner(s) of record (responsible party) and additional copies are being provided to potentially interested parties including the person whose name and address appears at the top of this letter.*

The property described above has been evaluated and determined to have conditions which appear to not comply with the City Code: **CHAPTER 8, DIV. 4, SEC. 8-263 - UNFIT OR UNSAFE DWELLINGS OR STRUCTURES**

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**Permits to rehabilitate or to demolish the structure(s) must be obtained by June 20, 2016.**

If these conditions are not corrected by the specified date, the City can take action to condemn and demolish the structure(s). All costs incurred in any condemnation action will be assessed as an interest bearing lien against the property. If additional time is needed to obtain permits for rehabilitation or demolition of the structure(s), contact me in writing with an outline of your plans before June 20, 2016.

Respectfully,

MAUREEN PALMER 892-5438 (Area Code 727), Building Demolition Coordinator



**codes compliance assistance department**  
post office box 2842                      st. petersburg, florida 33731-2842

**DEMOLITION VIOLATION NOTICE**

Delivered via U.S. Certified and First Class Mail

May 11, 2016

FIRST STREET & FIFTH AVE LLC  
18608 MONACO AVE

LUTZ FL 33558

**DEMOLITION CASE NO:** 16-00008671  
**RESPONSIBLE PARTY:** FUEL INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT  
**PROPERTY IN VIOLATION:** 142 5TH AVE N  
REV MAP OF ST PETERSBURG  
BLK 3, LOT 6

**STRUCTURE (S) :** SGL FAM RES & TRIPLEX

*This notice is directed to the above legal property owner(s) of record (responsible party) and additional copies are being provided to potentially interested parties including the person whose name and address appears at the top of this letter.*

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If these conditions are not corrected by the specified date, the City can take action to condemn and demolish the structure(s). All costs incurred in any condemnation action will be assessed as an interest bearing lien against the property. If additional time is needed to obtain permits for rehabilitation or demolition of the structure(s), contact me in writing with an outline of your plans before June 20, 2016.

Respectfully,

MAUREEN PALMER 392-5488 (Area Code 727), Building Demolition Coordinator

VI

## Laura Duvekot

---

**From:** kimmylevell@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 03, 2017 4:30 PM  
**To:** Laura Duvekot  
**Subject:** Amended version previous email. Please include this version.

Dear Ms Duvekot,

I'm am writing to you about the proposed homes located at 118, 126,136, and [142 5th Ave North](#) has historic designation. I own a home located at [155 5th Ave N.](#) As an accomplished exterior designer from the area I am all for preserving historic homes, however, for 5th Ave I believe this ship has sailed. In other words to force upon owners historic designation which would require costly repairs to these homes is unfair due to the fact that they are now surrounded and continue to be surrounded with new luxury town homes and high rises which have now made their homes be worth the land value only. It's my belief that no one will pay the premium price for an older home with the extreme costs it would require for repairs to these homes on a street that has eclectically been transformed over the years at today's current market values. If historic preservation had taken place before many other homes had been destroyed for "newer bigger homes" the "habu" or highest and best value of the land would stand for square footage price. Within the confines of Old North East where designating historic homes have occurred I could agree because they are surrounded by like properties, however, on 5th the city is too little too late and should not fiscally strangle the owners of these homes by requiring them to keep these homes as is or repaired to their former grandeur. It's unfortunate but this is entirely an unfair proposal based on allowing these homes as well as my own to be surrounded by high rises and high end townhomes yet not allowing these owners to do the same to their land within the confines of building codes and requirements.

My suggestion would be to be more pointed about the style of architecture or vision for St. Petersburg and requiring new structures to fall into this realm of design. As far as I can see now it's a free for all and not all what's being built is aesthetically cohesive or in many cases simply put bland and not attractive.

I am unable to attend this meeting and would like my voice heard. Is there anything else I can do to communicate my feelings?

Thank you in advance,

Kim Levell  
[813-810-5469](tel:813-810-5469)

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

Please excuse the grammatical and spelling errors, auto correct is my editor. 😊

## APPENDIX E: TIMELINE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- circa 1903 – circa 1908: Edward Myers served as St. Petersburg's City Attorney (Item 1 and Item 2).



### The Rambler

**Program From Old Opera House  
Recalls Early Days And Early  
Amateur Actors In The City**

By A. E. DUNLAP  
Dean of Florida Newsmen

Another relic of early days in St. Petersburg recently was sent to the Rambler by Mrs. Margaret Myers Dolan, 5855 27th Avenue South. It was a program of an amateur performance titled "The Deestrick Skule" which was given at the Opera House here June 9, 1903. Mrs. Dolan is the daughter of Edward Myers who was City Attorney at the time the play was given. He had a part in the play that was for the benefit of St. Peter's Guild.

William A. Holsbouser now in the real estate business here, was in the production 48 years ago. The Rambler took the old program to his office on Fifth Street South and Holsbouser displayed an amazing memory by recalling nearly all those who had a part in the "Skule." Holsbouser is a reliable person to consult about old days in St. Petersburg. His memory is accurate. He said, the other day, that he cultivated the habit of remembering names and faces when he had a drug store here so that he would know his customers when they came into the store.

In that production of 1903, leading roles were played by Mr. and Mrs. Roy S. Hanna. Mrs. Lillian Curtis Crawford, who owned the Detroit Hotel for years, also was in the cast. Holsbouser recalls that Mrs. Crawford and her husband paid \$12,500 for the hotel when they bought it about 1900.

Phoebe Gaugh was in the cast. She lived then, Holsbouser recalls, where the Randolph hotel now stands, at Fourth Street and Second Avenue North. Another member of the cast was Abigail Michael who lived where the Orange Blossom cafeteria now stands. Mrs. Mary Cecil English played a role. She was the wife of "Billy" English who, with Harry Dent, organized the firm of Dent & English.

Lucinda Scott, mother of Harry Scott, who lives now on Lakeview Avenue South, was in the play. She recited "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Other old-timers, not now living, in that production were Fred Lowe, who for years operated the Floronton hotel, and Sarah Armistead, often called the "Mother of St. Petersburg."

Arthur Norwood, one of the first merchants in St. Petersburg, had a good part in the

production at the Opera House. Dr. Joseph E. Gulsinger, Superintendent of Schools, and Prof. Henry C. Damm also were in prominent parts. Abraham and John Sims furnished fun.

The Opera House, Holsbouser recalls, was on Central Avenue, then known as Sixth Avenue, just west of Second Street. It was three stories high and was built at a cost of \$3,400. Holsbouser had a drug store in that building before he moved further west to a location at what is now the west end of the Willson-Chase Building.

#### Shifting Offices

In the general shifting of offices of The Times staff, the Rambler and Bart Bryan, Public Relation director, have a much nicer room than they have had for the last six months. The new office is on the fourth floor. It is very large and has five windows and gets the breeze from three directions so is much cooler than the old office which was on the third floor. Artificial light is not needed, most days.

This change of offices at The Times reminds the Rambler of a story he heard in Washington. It seems that the head of one of the bureaus was a very self-important person who thought he was next to the President. He had a fine suite of offices in one of the big buildings. One afternoon he left his suite at 4 o'clock and went home, well pleased with his setup.

The next morning at 9 o'clock he went to the office and found that every stick of furniture had been moved. The suite was entirely empty. That was not the worst, however. Nobody in the building knew where he had been moved to. It took him most of the day to find his new office.

Item 1: *St. Petersburg Times*, July 24, 1951.  
Pertinent information highlighted by author.

### St. Petersburg City Guide

#### CITY GOVERNMENT

MAYOR  
T. J. NORTHROP, Office, 802 Central Avenue.

CITY CLERK AND COLLECTOR  
W. F. DIVINE, Office, City Hall

CITY TREASURER  
G. A. GINN, 108 Third Street North

CITY ATTORNEY  
E. H. MYERS, Office, Rooms 4 and 5 Wood block.

CITY ASSESSOR  
W. L. STRAUB, Office, 840 Central Avenue.

CITY COUNCIL  
A. C. PHEIL, President. D. MOFFETT, President Pro Tem.  
Ed. T. LEWIS. B. C. WILLIAMS. W. E. ALLISON.  
C. W. SPRINGSTEAD. A. F. FREEMAN.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

FINANCE—Lewis, Moffett, Springstead.  
SANITARY—Williams, Springstead, Moffett.  
STREET—Allison, Lewis, Williams.  
SCHOOL—Springstead, Allison, Moffett.  
BUILDING—Williams, Allison, Freeman.  
FIRE—Freeman, Springstead, Lewis.  
WATER WORKS—Lewis, Allison, Williams.

Council meets first Thursday of each month at City Hall at 8 p. m.

POLICE  
A. J. EASTERS, Chief, Office, City Hall.

PATROLMEN—J. C. McKIMM and GENERAL HARROD.

FIRE  
R. L. HACKNEY, Chief, Office, City Hall.  
JOSEPH SELLS and BENJAMIN BLANTON, Asst. Chiefs.

WATER WORKS  
W. W. COLEMAN, Superintendent, office at Waterworks Station.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE  
E. FRAZIER, Office, 820 Central Avenue.  
S. F. WICKWIRE.

A. J. EASTERS, W. H. MURPHY, J. C. McKIMM, Deputy Sheriffs.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER FIRST DISTRICT  
A. C. TURNER, Clearwater, Florida.

Item 2: *Polk's City Directory*, 1908,  
courtesy of St. Petersburg Museum of  
History. Pertinent information highlighted  
by author.

- circa 1908 – circa 1911: Grant Aiken served as St. Petersburg City's Attorney (Item 3).

**City Attorney Grant Aikin and Acting  
City Attorney W. R. Howard  
Exonerated.**

The report of the Auditor of the finances of the City of St. Petersburg as published in The Independent of May 27th, in regard to the Strowger paying certificates, to one not conversant with the facts may cast reflection upon City Attorney Grant Aikin, or former Acting City Attorney W. R. Howard. I desire to state that neither of these gentlemen are implicated in this matter in any respect. The certificates referred to were ordered turned over to E. H. Myers, who was at that time City Attorney, January 17, 1908, and were turned over to him February 6, 1908, by City Clerk Divine, and he deposited said certificates to his personal credit in the National Bank of St. Petersburg on or about March 29, 1908, after he went out of office. That the accounts of Grant Aikin, City Attorney, and W. R. Howard, acting City Attorney, have been checked by the auditor and found to be absolutely correct.

J. N. BROWN,  
Chairman Finance Committee City  
of St. Petersburg.

Item 3: *Evening Independent*, May 28, 1910.

- March 30, 1910: "Help Wanted" advertisement placed in *Evening Independent* noting address (Item 4).

**BUSINESS  
BOOSTERS**

**CLASSIFIED**

**WANTED.**

WANTED, a White Nurse Girl. Apply to Grant Aikin, 118 Fifth Avenue, north. 121-34

Item 4: *Evening Independent*, March 30, 1910

- April 18-19, 1910: Maude and Grant Aiken, and children Merrill, Carlisle, Burnette, Caryl, and Horace, listed as residents of house at 143 Sixth Avenue North, which Grant owned mortgage-free (Item 5).

143 91-93	143	91-93	Aiken, Grant J	Head H	M	W	46	M	11		Pennsylvania
			Maude B	Wife	M	F	35	M	11	5-5	Maude
			Merrill	Daughter	F	W	8	S			Florida
			Carlisle	Son	M	W	6	S			Florida
			Burnette	Daughter	F	W	5	S			Florida
			Caryl	Daughter	F	W	2	S			North Carolina
			Horace G.	Son	M	W	1/2	S			North Carolina

Item 5: Entry for Grant and Maude Aiken family, 1910 Census

- December, 1912: Death of Grant Aiken.

**DEATH EXPECTED  
AT ANY MOMENT**

**GRANT AIKIN GIVEN UP BY HIS  
PHYSICIANS AND IS SINK-  
ING RAPIDLY TO END.**

Grant Aikin, formerly city tax collector and city attorney and one of the best known men in St. Petersburg is dying at his home in this city and it is feared that he will not live through the day. He has been unconscious all day and the end is expected at any time.

Mr. Aikin has been in poor health for several years. While he was city attorney his health broke down and he gave up the practice of law, going to North Carolina in search of health. He improved very much there and came back to St. Petersburg, taking up his practice again. He was successful in his profession and now enjoys a good practice.

Mr. Aikin has a large number of warm friends in St. Petersburg and the news that he was dying soon spread over the business part of the city and caused profound regret. Many persons called at the house during the day to express their sympathy. It was not known, generally, until today that Mr. Aikin was in a serious condition. He has not been at his office for several days but his trouble was attributed to only a slight cold, which had caused some complications and his friends thought it was nothing serious.

This afternoon Mr. Aikin was sinking rapidly and the family were gathered at his bedside waiting for the end. Every possible effort to prolong his life was tried but with faint hope of success.

Item 6: *Evening Independent*, December 4, 1912

- 1912: Aiken Open Air School Opened

**AIKEN OPEN AIR SCHOOL**

*Oldest private school in Florida  
Established 1912. Same location 26 years.*

Nursery and Kindergarten, Grades,	<i>Sports</i>
Junior and Sr. High School, College	<i>Music</i>
Preparatory, Special Arts, Tutoring.	<i>Dramatics</i>
	<i>Dancing</i>

**FIFTH AVE. AND BAY ST., NORTHEAST**

Item 7: *Evening Independent*, April 2, 1938

# Private school was result of widow's efforts to keep family together

Maudie Alkin, St. Petersburg pioneer and founder of Alkin Open Air School, performed a remarkable feat as a widow, supporting her six children by running the private school for more than 30 years.

This bright, resourceful woman has been completely ignored by St. Petersburg's history books, but longtime residents remember the fund she started. Mrs. Alkin and her school very well.

A former student, Mary Anderson Hickey, recalls how patriotic and energetic Mrs. Alkin was. During World War I, other classes — which were held in the morning — her stipend was devoted to Red Cross work and a garden in

BACKWARD GLANCES

**BETTE SMITH**

support for the war effort. She traveled by streetcar to the garden and recruited children from the school to help.

"She was a wonderful person," Mrs. Hickey says.

MRS. ALKIN'S daughter, Bernette Beatty, who was born in St. Petersburg in 1905, describes her mother as "a genius, in a way, in math and science."

But when she came to St. Petersburg in 1904 she was unmarried, 20-year-old Maudie Chase. Her eight-member family journeyed from their native Maine to the war-rimmed and sandy streets of the small town on Tampa Bay.

At first, family members probably ran a hotel on Central Avenue, but Mrs. Beatty says she is not certain of that. In those days, there were several hotels in town including the turreted Dearet, but no paving and few wooden sidewalks. Amusements were slow in coming. Money was scarce.

This was the year the "twins" across Central Avenue between Second and Third streets were finally filled in. The low ground had plagued residents for years, becoming impassable with several feet of water during the rainy season.

JUST TWO YEARS earlier the first elections had been held and city founder Gen. J. C. Williams was defeated in his bid for mayor. Williams, who believed in open elections, was defeated by anti-alcohol candidate David Moffitt, who was an ardent prohibitionist, according to Karl H. Oringer's 1924 City of St. Petersburg.



Some St. Petersburg women may recognize themselves and friends at Alkin Open Air School as young girls doing their patriotic duty for the Red Cross and the war effort in 1917.

schools through third grade and then through high school. In between, she attended her mother's school.

She remembers the fun she had during the long walks to public school with a group of other children about 1916. "That was when her mother started her own venture that 'flopped.'"

THE FAMILY moved out to First Street and 33rd Avenue NE (now the Masonic Home of Florida), where Maudie Alkin started a boarding school for high school girls called Southland Seminary. Now the Masonic Home of Florida, the lovely school built around a patio could be reached by streetcar, Mrs. Beatty remembers.

Her mother went back and forth between her two schools and employed good teachers, but World War I and the slump in the economy may have contributed to the

failure of the boarding school.

During the summer of 1917, the downstairs rooms of the school were filled with teen-age girls who volunteered to help with the war effort. They knitted and sewed or picked oakum, Mrs. Beatty recalls. Only 13 years old, she was put to work picking oakum.

Oakum is the loose, stringy, hemp fiber obtained by taking apart old ropes. Oakumity used to caulk boat seams, it was used during World War I as a filler for bandages.

Mrs. Beatty says her mother's health failed during the terrible times of the Depression. By 1934 she was not well, but she lived until 1948.

Martha Alkin, her brother Dean's wife, kept the Alkin Open Air School going until the mid-'50s on a smaller scale, serving only junior and senior high students from 1950.