Historic Preservation in Americus, Georgia

Georgia Institute of Technology College of Architecture
Introduction to Historic Preservation

Spring 2012
“Downtown Americus Commercial Buildings: Proposals for Preserving and Using the Upper Floors”
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Dr. Leslie N. Sharp
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Thank you all.
Statement of Purpose

This project began with a request to Dr. Leslie Sharp, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs & Outreach at the College of Architecture, Georgia Institute of Technology from the Archway Partnership, University of Georgia and the Americus Downtown Development Authority to provide Americus with assistance in thinking through how best to utilize the upper stories of their downtown commercial buildings. Ms. Barbara Grogan with the Archway Partnership and Ms. Angie Singletary with the Downtown Development Authority had attended a recent presentation in Sandersville, Georgia, where Dr. Sharp and her students had presented a similar class project relating to the second stories of Sandersville buildings.

Americus is the county seat of Sumter County. Its commercial downtown is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its historical and architectural significance. While the overall occupancy rate for the downtown commercial buildings is good; the upper floors of these historic buildings are rarely utilized. The community leaders recognized that these spaces offer the opportunity to increase the usable square footage in the downtown area through investments into these buildings.

In October 2011, Dr. Sharp visited Americus to meet with members of the community and discuss the potential for using Americus as a class project. They looked at the buildings and discussed ideas for projects. Dr. Sharp agreed that Americus would provide her students with an excellent opportunity to use historic preservation as a framework for developing ideas for better using the upper floors of the downtown historic commercial buildings. On March 3 and 4, 2012, Dr. Sharp brought her Introduction to Historic Preservation class, made up of graduate and undergraduate students in architecture, building construction, planning, and engineering, to Americus for a field visit to document the buildings and begin thinking of how the upper floors could be better used.

"Downtown Americus Commercial Buildings: Proposals for Preserving and Using the Upper Floors” is a result of this effort to generate ideas for rehabilitating and using the upper floors of downtown commercial buildings. The students worked in teams of three and four students to develop proposals. Each of the ten teams provided current photographs and floor plans, proposed floor plans and renderings, and a brief narrative about the character defining features, history, and proposed use of their buildings. Their instructions were to not worry about costs but to generate ideas and identify potential issues. As a result of conversations with the property owners to identify their wants and needs, all of the teams proposed at least one residential rehabilitation. The teams were encouraged to consider and preserve the character defining features of their buildings.

The final report “Downtown Americus Commercial Buildings: Proposals for Preserving and Using the Upper Floors” is designed to stimulate interest and help the community envision the upper floors as a vibrant part of downtown. This report is a first step. There was no in-depth research done into economic viability or marketability of using these spaces. The students developed the programming or use of these buildings based on limited interaction with the community and property owners. The students also developed these ideas after only one visit to the building—errors are to be expected.

All proposals were made by students and not licensed professionals. Before any final decisions about the future uses of these buildings are made, professional architects, engineers, and/or contractors should be consulted, as should professional business people who understand the demographics and needs of the county. The students’ work will not substitute for working drawings executed by licensed architects and/or engineers but instead as stepping stones for the inspiration to move forward with recapturing the wealth of character in Americus.

The students have identified potential issues with the buildings such as water infiltration, lead paint, asbestos, accessibility, structural integrity, pigeon infestation, etc. They have only done a superficial investigation of the buildings and thus all of the buildings should be thoroughly inspected by professionals before any work is done.

The National Park Service provides technical assistance on their website www.nps.gov/history/tps, which provides valuable information about the care and maintenance of historic buildings. It is strongly recommended that all property owners consult professionals familiar with historic buildings and the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties in order to preserve the integrity of the buildings.
Historic Americus

Americus is the county seat for Sumter County in southwest Georgia. Established in 1832, it had become the largest city in the state by the end of the 19th century thanks in large part to the railroad tracks that were laid near the city in the 1800s. During the Civil War, the town became a massive Confederate hospital and suffered a wide spread fire that burned down most of the central business district. After this point, Americus prospered as a hub along the ever important railroad lines and a major agricultural center.

Today’s Americus

Today, Americus is known for its proximity to two major historic sites, graceful Antebellum and Victorian homes, and active downtown commercial district. Still a hub for important civic and business bodies, Habitat for Humanity has its international headquarters here. There are currently around 17,000 residents that, with the student body of over 3,000 at nearby Georgia Southwestern State, create the community of Americus.
Future Americus

Americus’s Downtown District, while very vibrant and a point of pride for its residents, has many second floor spaces in its commercial buildings that are currently vacant. The quality inherent in these historic structures and its proximity to the downtown shops and college campus make these major opportunities to increase the retail and residential stock for Americus. Many of these structures require extensive repairs and updates after years of disuse, but, starting in the 1960’s, the residents of Americus enacted a downtown revitalization effort focused on restoring their history through their architecture.

Our proposals for future Americus follow that wave of revitalization. Looking at ten of the downtown buildings, there is great potential for various uses from multi-family residential, event space, bar and lounge space, learning centers with Georgia Southwestern State, office space, bed and breakfast, extended stay living, and beyond. Some may require more initial capital than others but all have the capacity to build on the character of Americus.

The future potential for the revitalization of Americus lies in its historic roots, so all proposals are based first and foremost on maintaining and rehabilitating the historic character and appeal of the structures. Through research and the guidelines of the Secretary for the Interior, each proposal suggests a use that is framed by the structure.
American

George’s Menswear
126 N Jackson Street

Architect: Unknown
Date of Construction: 1884
Builder: Local Contractor
Original Use: Infill

Existing Conditions
Current Owner: George Saratsiotis
Square Footage: approx. 3,576 sq ft.
Architectural Style: Commercial Vernacular Victorian of the 1880s
Construction Method: Masonry Construction
Materials:
- Load-bearing Masonry Structure
- Exterior: Brick Veneer
- Roof Cover: Tar & Gravel
- Floor Construction: Wood Joist & Subfloor
- Ceiling: Plaster
Condition:
- 1st Floor and Front Entry have been maintained
- 2nd Floor has Water Damage and Structural Concerns
- Rear Entry and Facade have been neglected
**Historical Overview**

Dr. Barlow was an early settler in the town (around 1840) and died around 1879, leaving all of his wealth to his wife, Mrs. Barlow. She also inherited a large portion of the buildings in the downtown district.

The Barlow Block and the two buildings on the north of it, including 126 North Jackson St., but not the corner buildings on both end of Jackson, were lost to a massive fire on March 26, 1884. The Barlow Block and other buildings were rebuilt by Mrs. Barlow by September, 1884. No architect was engaged, they were just designed and built by local contractors. Some pieces of the remaining buildings were utilized but there are no records to prove which ones incorporated remains into the structures.

In 1946, Gerald Becker took ownership. In 1984, it was purchased by George Saratsiotis. In the 1950s/1960s time frame, the façade was blocked up and in the early 1990s, it was attempted to be made to look historic again.
Exterior

A

B

C

Rear Entry

Jackson Street

A

Americus

05/2012
Character Defining Features

Doors

Cornice

Interior Corridor

Skylight

Windows
Character Defining Features

Trim

Wood Floors

Hardware

Wallpaper
Project One - Issues and Concerns

See Preservation Briefs at http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm

Water Damage
Location: Walls, Ceilings
Recommended Reference for Correction:
Historic Preservation Brief #21:
Repairing Historic Flat Plaster Walls and Ceilings
Historic Preservation Brief #4:
Roofing for Historical Buildings

Structure
Location: End Walls and Fire Walls
Recommended Reference for Correction:
Historic Preservation Brief #2:
Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Bldgs
Historic Preservation Brief #35:
Understanding Old Buildings

Cleaning
Location: Exterior Facades & Interior Walls
Recommended Reference for Correction:
Historic Preservation Brief #1:
Cleaning & Water Repellent Treatments for Historic Bldgs.
Historic Preservation Brief #6:
Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings
Project One - Issues and Concerns

See Preservation Briefs at http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm

Accessibility

Location: Rear Stair, Original Front Entry
Recommended Reference for Correction:
Historic Preservation Brief #32:
Making Historic Properties Accessible
Historic Preservation Brief #11:
Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts

Windows

Location: Rear Facade and Interior Corridor
Recommended Reference for Correction:
Historic Preservation Brief #2:
Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Bldgs
Historic Preservation Brief #35:
Understanding Old Buildings

Lighting

Location: Sealed Windows, Closed Lightwells
Recommended Reference for Correction:
Historic Preservation Brief #13:
The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Hist. Steel Windows
Historic Preservation Brief #16:
The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Bldg. Exteriors
Project One- Proposal One

Two-bedroom residential: The layout style was original designed in 1885 as Victorian style tenement housing, so for purposes of historic preservation we propose using it as living space. The first change that needs to be made is refitting stairs to Jackson Street as seen in the 1900 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Rooms 1 and 2 will be used as bedrooms for light purposes. Room 1 has two windows and Room 2 has a skylight and the proximity to the new stairwell will generate more natural light. In Room 3, a non-structural wall will be erected to divide the room for a bathroom and a laundry room/storage space. Room 7 will be used as the common living space with a kitchen and space for eating, entertaining, and relaxing. This will be ideal for students and is viable because the district wants to attract more of the college population.

2nd Floor Proposal
1/8” = 1’-0”

1) Bedroom 1
2) Bedroom 2
3) Bath
4) Laundry
5) Closet
6) Kitchen
7) Dining
8) Living
Project One - Proposal Two

Commercial Use – Bar/Lounge: Economically, this use makes sense in the downtown district as there is currently only one bar. Adding another one will draw more college students and young adults to the area – therefore meeting a goal of the City of Americus Downtown Development Authority. The back wall of Room 2 will be a wall-to-wall bar and alcohol display. There will be high two-top tables scattered among the other walls for people to sit at and gather around. The majority of the center of the room will remain empty to allow people to dance as well as have easy access to the bar. Room 4 will have several flat screen TVs most often playing sports games. Room 3 will be converted to two small separate restrooms and a seating area. The flow will be uninterrupted. Room 5 will have a billiards table and dart board. The corridor will have either small tables or benches.

2nd Floor Proposal
1/8” = 1’-0”

1) Lobby
2) Bar
3) Bathroom
4) Lounge
5) Billiards
6) Storage
7) Street Access
**Harris Building** (J. W. Harris & Co. Hardware)

302 W Lamar Street, Americus, Georgia 31709

**Architect:** Unknown  
**Date of Construction:** 1880; **Builder:** Unknown  
**Original Use:** Hardware store  
**Other Uses:** Business, office space

**Brief History**  
The Harris building was originally built in 1880 for the purpose of a hardware store. The business sold items such as stoves, crockery, and tools. The building remained in use as a hardware store for many decades. Few major modifications were made to the actual structure throughout its history. An exterior set of second-story stairs in back of the building were removed and temporarily replaced by a storage shed before 1900. The hardware store eventually shut down. The first floor of the building became multiple office and business spaces while the second floor remained vacant.
Sanborn Fire Maps: Starting in 1885, these insurance maps show the building's business as a hardware store and two stairways, on the south and west sides of the building, that are not there anymore. The stairway on the west side did not last long, which is shown by the transition from the 1885 to the 1890 map. As seen in the 1895 map, a storage shed was added in place of the stairway to the south. After that, not much changed until 1912, which is the last documented map. The storage shed had an additional structure of a chicken house added to its west side. Likewise, the 1912 map shows that the traditional use of the building as a hardware store was combined with a buggie business.
**Americus**

General Interior + Character Defining Features

1. Northwest corner
2. Central stair to attic space
3. Interior view facing north
4. Windows on west wall, 14 foot ceilings

1. Fireplaces
2. High baseboards
3. Wood ceilings and floors
4. Full length windows

1. Wrought iron detail
2 & 3. Denticulation detail at window header and cornice
4. Elevator

1 & 2. Cracked plaster and brick walls
3. Window weights
Project Two - Existing Conditions

Current Owner: Bill Harris
Square Footage: 7,474 total; 3,737 per floor
Architectural Style: Southern Vernacular, Romanesque Revival
Construction Method: Mill construction (load-bearing brick and heavy timber)
Materials: Brick, timber, plaster
Condition: Needs renovation and repair to be operable as a revenue-generating space
Character Defining Features: High baseboards, wooden plated ceilings and floors, multiple fireplaces, full-length windows, high 14-foot ceilings, freight elevator shaft, brick and plaster interior walls, 3 brick wide walls with no cavity
Wall material treatment: The interior walls of the building were originally covered in a layer of plaster. Over the years, though, the plaster layer has started to crack and crumble. In its current state, the plaster freely falls off of the wall especially when disturbed. The current owner likes the aesthetic of the cracked plaster and underlying exposed brick and wishes to keep it. The main concern of keeping this aesthetic, though, is the unstable nature of the plaster.

We contacted Rod Stewart at Historic Plaster Conservation Services Limited. His first concern is why the plaster has not remained bonded to the brick, which is normally a strong relationship. The first step in preserving the plaster is to determine what went wrong with its adherence to the brick. A likely culprit is that the plaster received continuous exposure to moisture. The next step is to fix any current water leakage issues. If the water damage was caused in the past and has stopped, then the plaster can immediately be treated.

Mr. Stewart suggested a method for treatment. First, clean any loose dust off of the walls and seal them with shellac, sanding sealer, or Rhoplex MC 76, which is an acrylic resin (the Rhoplex would need to be diluted methyl hydrate at a one-to-one ratio). He suggests using either the shellac or sanding sealer for the plaster that still has its putty coat and the Rhoplex for the brick and the plaster with no putty coat remaining.

Another reference for treating historic plaster is number 21 (Repairing Historic Flat Plaster Walls and Ceilings) of the National Park Service's Preservation Briefs, which will be more appropriate for wall areas that need plaster repaired or replaced instead of preserved in its current state.
Other Existing Conditions

Windows

Along the north and east walls of the building, the tall windows have remained un-boarded. However, that is not the case for the south and west walls. Before any further use of the building, we recommend that the windows become un-boarded. Not only will the addition of the natural light be optimal for habitation, it will add to the historic aesthetic of the building in its original form.

All of the windows must also be inspected for the presence of window weights, which are the original mechanism of the building’s window system. Adding any missing weights back will help to maintain the historic windows usage and value.

Insulation and Fire Treatment

The attic and subfloor spaces need to be treated for vapor resistance and insulative quality. These specific concerns can be referenced in the National Park Service’s Preservation Briefs: number 1 (Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings), number 24 (Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings: Problems and Recommended Approaches), and number 39 (Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings).

Structural Concerns

The longer walls on the east and west sides of the building are experiencing unintentional splaying due to settling of structural brick walls. The owner has installed sets of overhead cables spanning the ends of the second floor space, which connect the east and west walls. However, the space is not currently in residential use let alone set up for residential use. We recommend that before any costly investment is made to renovate the space, a structural engineer should assess the suitability of the building for residential use.

Accessibility

The current state of accessibility of the building is not up to modern code. The handrails, the stair slope, and the freight elevator are all either in need of refurbishment or another way for inhabitants to access the building is necessary. How to modernize these existing is referenced in the National Park Service’s Preservation Brief number 32 (Making Historic Properties Accessible). Otherwise, we recommend another set of stairs. This can be referenced in the deck portion of our proposals.

Parking

Unfortunately, the gravel and dirt lot directly behind the Harris building does not belong to the owner. After the building’s original use as a hardware store ceased, the lot behind the building was sold to the small flower shop next door, which uses part of the west wall of the Harris building as one of its own.

However, there is a lot across Forrest Street from which parking spaces can be rented for any potential residents.

Traffic Light

Located at the front of the building, a traffic light obscures the building’s historic façade. To reclaim the value of the historic aesthetic, we suggest that the traffic light be relocated. The guidelines for traffic lights can be referenced in the Georgia Department of Transportation’s (GDOT) Traffic Signal Design Guidelines. Likewise, GDOT’s Traffic Signals Public Information Document with a particular importance placed on section 3 (How Do I Request a Signal Permit Revision to an Existing Traffic Signal?).
**Project Two - Proposal One**

The owner’s initial idea for the space was to create residential space throughout the second floor of the building. The linear nature of the space was conducive to creating two apartments, separated by a wall that runs the length of the building. Additionally, the proportions of the spaces allow for interesting transitions in the sequence of rooms. Each apartment features two bedrooms with closets, two full-sized bathrooms, a walk-in pantry, laundry room, kitchen, dining space, and living area. In each unit, one of the bedrooms is a master suite with an attached bathroom. The target market for these apartments will be college students and singles young professionals.
The floor plans feature two apartments that include two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Because the space is very linear, we decided to put up dividing walls that make the resident weave through the space to obtain the greatest spatial experience.
**Project Two - Proposal Two**

SRO, or single room occupancy, developments are generally composed of multiple one-room units with one or two tenants per room. Bathrooms are either in each individual unit or are shared. Kitchens can also be located in each individual room but are more likely to be shared along with gathering areas, such as living rooms. Much of the time, SROs are developed in old hotels or vacant buildings.

Traditionally, SROs cater to low-income or homeless populations and are coupled with social services. We feel, though, that this more communal style of living would also be beneficial for the populations that historic downtown Americus has and is trying to encourage. The Habitat for Humanity office, which is the former headquarters, is on the same block as the Harris building. The organization has employees relocating to Americus, and the building’s close proximity to the office is an optimal location for employees’ housing. Also, the city wants to encourage area college students to live in the downtown area, thus creating a more young and vibrant feel.

SRO living would be optimal for both of these types of residents because of the social lifestyle the development promotes. In both cases, the residents are more likely to be moving to Americus from different regions, which makes them more likely to not have social contacts. Because of the communal living room and kitchen space in the SRO development, an easier social lifestyle is attainable. At the same time, the residents will be able to retreat to each’s own private room for sleeping and respite.

Another benefit of SRO housing is the ability to have shorter leases than the conventional one-year rental period. Because much of the usable space is shared and smaller spaces are private, the amount of clean-up and maintenance between tenants is minimized, which allows for quicker turn-over times. The lowered commitment of shorter lease times will appeal to the Habitat employees, who may be only temporarily relocated to Americus, and to college students, who may only be able to meet potential roommates after starting school. A six-month or even month-to-month lease option is feasible and doable in SRO housing.

In our SRO proposal, we have allotted space for four bedrooms. Each bedroom features a personal bathroom, storage space, fireplace, and abundant natural lighting from the full length windows. The proposal also features plentiful shared space in the form of a generously sized kitchen and dining area as well as a living room and more intimate den located at the northwest corner of the building. Additionally, the shared space has an ample kitchen pantry and laundry room.
The floor plans include four bedrooms with their own bathrooms. There is a common area that includes a kitchen, laundry room, and living room. There is also a deck extension to the rear facade that acts as a second fire escape and a community sitting area.
Americus

Other Proposals

Exterior Deck and Stairs

This aspect of our design will be featured in both proposals for the Harris building. The deck extends 12 feet behind the structure and runs the full width of the building, which will provide residents with plenty of space for gathering and socializing. It will also feature a spiral staircase built by a local craftsman and friend of the building’s owner. A spiral, rather than linear, staircase was chosen to reduce the void on the deck and to minimize encroachment on the property behind the building, which belongs to the flower shop next door. This staircase will be the primary means of vertical circulation to the second floor, and will allow access without disturbing the activities on the first floor of the building.

Next Steps...

Tax Incentives and Easement Options

Options for the Harris Building:
- Georgia Heritage Grant Program
- Historic Preservation Fund (HPF)
- Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit
- Charitable Contribution Deduction
- State Preferential Property Tax Assessment Program
- Substantial Rehabilitation Test: Tax Freeze

Georgia Heritage Grant Program:
Phone: 404-881-9980
Website: http://www.georgiatrust.org/preservation/heritage_grants.php

Historic Preservation Fund (HPF):
Phone: 202-354-2020
Website: http://www.nps.gov/hps/hpg/hpf/

Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit
Phone: 404-656-2840
Website: http://georgiashpo.org/incentives/tax/federal

Charitable Contribution Deduction:
Website: http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=134331,00.html

State Preferential Property Tax Assessment Program:
Website: http://georgiashpo.org/incentives/tax/state

Substantial Rehabilitation Test: Tax Freeze:
Website: http://georgiashpo.org/incentives/tax/FAQ_tax
Computer Business Services Building
213 West Lamar Street
Americus, Ga 31709

Current Owner: Harvey Claiborne
Architect: Unknown
Builder: Unknown
Date of Construction: 1930 (Believed infill)
Date of Alteration: 1950 (Believed build-out)
Original Use: Office Building/Ladies Dress Shop
Demolished Building: Grocer
Current Use: Mixed Use/Upstairs Vacant
Square Footage: 1950 sq ft

Brief History
This site was originally occupied by a building that was used for a grocer. The building was torn down and re-built as infill. The current building was built in the 1930’s, this building is one of the newer buildings on W Lamar Street. Originally the building was used as an office building and the upper floor was used as ladies dress shop.
Existing Conditions

- Architectural Style: No Style
- Construction Method: Unknown
- Plaster/stucco covered front windows on the upper level
- Back facade is concrete
- Front is brick and concrete/plaster
- Side walls made of structural brick
- Skylights have been boarded up
Americus
Existing Conditions and Issues

Eliminate existing partition walls to expose more space.

Replace the ceiling with bead-board or completely remove the ceiling to fix the water damage.
Preservation Brief:
4 - Roofing
28 - Painting

Open skylights.
Preservation Brief:
17 - Architectural character
39 - Controlling unwanted moisture

Raise the pipes that are exposed along the right wall of the front end of the unit.
Preservation Brief:
4 - Roofing
16 - Substitute materials
Existing Conditions and Issues

Pavement of back lot to access parking.

Expose original brick wall throughout the space.
Preservation Brief:
1. Cleaning and water-repellant treatments

Repair, re-open, replace responsibly.
Preservation Brief:
9. Wooden windows

Exposed wiring to be determined by electrician if it is functioning.
Existing Conditions and Issues

Remove dress display closet along the right wall for more space.

Exposed wiring of existing lighting to be examined by an electrician to determine usability.

Remove stucco facade.
Preservation Brief:
11 - Storefronts
35 - Architectural investigation

Frame in storage room that is located along the stairs and below the unit.
Character Defining Features

Railings - Craftmen styling

Wood Slat Ceiling
Character Defining Features

Trim

Skylights
Proposal One - 2 Bedroom/2 Bath Single Unit Apartment

Single occupancy loft style apartment
Includes:
• Two bedrooms with closets
• Two full baths,
• Laundry room
• Full service kitchen

The first proposed layout is a single occupancy loft style apartment. This floor plan takes full advantage of the newly discovered light from the restored façade as well as uses the wonderful open area at the rear of the space. Designated spaces for energy efficient appliance have been left to the owners discretion due to a wide range of unit dimensions.
Proposal Two - 2 Bedroom/2 Bath Apartment
2 Unit Apartment

Double occupancy two-bedroom floor
Each Unit Includes:
- One bedroom with a closet
- One full bathroom with a shower-tub
- Washer and dryer unit
- Full kitchen
- Open dining/living space.

The second proposed layout is a double occupancy two-bedroom floor. This floor plan allows for more flexibility in terms of occupancy. Each unit is a fairly open floor plan with all of the previously mentioned features. The unit at the forward of the building is made possible by the new light from the removed stucco façade and also has a formal living room area in addition to the casual den at the front of the space.
Allison Building

120 W Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709

Architect: Curran R. Ellison, from Macon
Date of Construction: Nov. 1906 - Feb. 1907
Builder: Unknown
Original Use: Furniture Store and Offices, Drugstore, Undertaker
Current Use: Shops (First Floor)
Proposed Use: Loft-Style residences (3rd and 4th floors)

Brief History: Built by Richard Allison in 1906 to house the Allison Furniture Company, the Allison building opened its doors on July 1, 1907. Initially, it housed two businesses, both a furniture store and Davenport Drug Company. According to the 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, an undertaker had joined in as a third tenant. By this point Dodson had taken over the drug store space from Davenport. It has seen several other furniture stores come and go up to the 1987 restoration by Broadus Willoughby. Willoughby converted the lowest level into a series of seven separate shops along one interior hallway.
Allison Building- Existing Conditions

Current Owner: Mark Minnick
Square Footage (Overall, Per floor): 20,200 sq. ft

Architectural Style: Beaux-Arts Inspired, Commercial Vernacular
Construction Method: unreinforced masonry with timber framing
Materials: Brick, Wood, Plaster
Condition: Very good structural integrity, no visible damage from external elements such as water intrusion or termites. All original flooring, walls, framing and remaining windows. Some minor brick repair required around a few windows.
Existing Conditions - Third Floor

1. Existing third floor with parti walls and drop ceiling from when it was a furniture store.

2. Wall detail showing original brick and plaster, that has covered up the brick.

3. Window detail showing brick and timber frame.

1. Existing staircase on third floor.

2. Window frame and brick has been painted over with white paint.

3. Existing ceiling has been covered with drop ceiling frame and covered with plaster.

1. Existing window and ceiling framing.

2. Doors frames have been placed in the parti walls for transition between furniture showrooms.

3. Existing window frame and brick that has been covered with white paint.
Existing Conditions - Fourth Floor

1. Existing ceiling frame.
2. Wall detail showing original brick and window timber frame, each covered up white white paint.
3. Open floor plan with post and beams.

1. Existing wood flooring.
2. Window frame and brick has been painted over with white paint.
3. Railings are missing to stairs and stairwell light is hindered by blocked-in windows.

1. Existing staircase, circulation.
2. Existing windows with timber frame and brick wall. Should be utilized as an example.
3. Elevator shaft that needs repair.
Existing Issues

Problem: Walls

Third Floor:
Solution: Remove all interior partitioning, including chicken wire cage and existing restroom
Retain plaster on perimeter walls, repair as needed, see Preservation Brief 18
Repoint brick as needed, see Preservation Brief 2
Remove brick from bricked-over windows and repair for new window installation
Remove steel framing from center bay along façade. Repoint brick interior at hole.

Fourth Floor:
Solution: Remove all interior partitioning framing, except bead boarding around stair
Retain paint on perimeter walls along west wall, see Preservation Brief 18
Repoint brick as needed, see Preservation Brief 2
New interior partitions between apartments to reach full ceiling height, walls within apartments to end just below lowest chord of existing roof trusses

Problem: Columns

Third Floor:
Solution: Refinish as needed.

Fourth Floor:
Solution: Refinish as needed.

Problem: Windows

Third Floor:
Solution: Existing, repair and repaint all frames and trim.
Maintain as much existing trim as possible.
Consult Preservation Brief 9
New, install windows of appropriate configuration with matching trim and molding.
Paint to same color scheme.

Fourth Floor:
Solution: Same as third floor except for paint and installation of new windows.
Problem: Ceiling
Third Floor:
Solution: Remove existing drop ceiling.
Repair as needed. Maintain existing materials, configuration, and detailing.
Verify previous paint colors, or white.
Fourth Floor:
Solution: Retain existing ceiling along western portion of the floor.

Problem: Staircase
Third Floor:
Solution: Repair missing portions of rail, spindels and posts.
Refinish trim as needed.
Create door frame for exterior stair entrance
Fourth Floor:
Solution: Repair missing portions of rail, spindels and posts.
Refinish trim as needed.
Create new rail along open portion.

Problem: Elevator
Third Floor:
Solution: Rebuild framing and walls to match 4th floor detailing
Reinstall cab and rails
Fourth Floor:
Solution: Rebuild framing.
Reinstall cab and rails
Reconfigure 1st floor for elevator lobby and required pit.

Problem: Chimney
Third Floor:
Solution: Repair floor opening.
Fourth Floor:
Solution: Repair floor opening, remove remaining chimney stack and repair roof opening.
Character Defining Features

Variety of Windows

Ceiling

Wood frame around windows and exterior brick wall

Ceiling and Brick Wall
Stairs - Railings

Trim

Wood Flooring

Posts
**Allison Building - Proposal One**

Our first proposal is a one-story loft apartments.

This floor plan can be repeated on both the third and fourth floor, for a total of six units.

Each floor has 3 units
- Unit One: 1372 SF
- Unit Two: 2156 SF
- Unit Three: 1274 SF

We have also proposed fixing the elevator to make the apartments more accessible.
Third and Fourth Floor HVAC
Our second proposal is a two-story loft apartments.

This proposal yields four units. Two that are two levels and two that are one story.

This plan consists of four units:
Unit One: 2156 SF
Unit Two: 470 SF + 1176 SF = 2646 SF
Unit Three: 980 SF + 1470 SF = 2450 SF

We have also proposed fixing the elevator to make the apartments more accessible.
Fourth Floor HVAC

Allison Building
114 W Lamar Street

114 W Lamar St.
Americus Georgia

Architect and Builder Unknown
Date of Construction: Circa 1860

The first courthouse was constructed in 1834, and for its first two decades, Americus was a small courthouse town. The South Western Railroad arrived in 1854, and made Americus the eighth largest city in Georgia into the 20th century. We believe that our building was constructed during this period of time.

Gatherings from interviews of the residents of Americus, the upper floor of this building was a dentist around the 1940’s, a furniture store in the 1960’s and a restaurant around the 1970’s.
History

Owner: Kings Real Estate

Square Footage: 5000 sq ft overall, 2500 per floor

Architectural Style: Railroad Vernacular

Construction Methods and Materials: brick veneer facade with steel lintel, structural brick walls, lathe and plaster interior walls, wood plank ceiling and hardwood flooring

Condition: While the first floor seems to be in very good condition, the second floor is in poor condition. Several roof leaks and structural problems heavily contribute to its declining state.

Character Defining Features: front entrance staircase, windows, office doors from the 1940’s, hardwood flooring, plank ceiling.

History

1832- Chartered
1834- Courthouse constructed
1854- Arrival of South Western Railroad

114 W Lamar Street

1885
1890- notice a wood structure built adjacent
1895- the wood addition has been added to the front and a small brick building in the back
1900- wooden sets of stairs have been added to the buildings’ back facade
1912- wooden structures are replaced with brick, interior stairs seem to have been removed
Existing Conditions

1. Entrance Stairs- character defining feature, keep during renovation
2. Walls- believed to be original walls before the 1970's renovation
3. Doorways- doorways and their components, also some existing doors
4. Remove Renovations- walls put in for the furniture store or restaurant, also bridge over front entrance
5. Doorways to Remove- because of the many uses, the layout has been changed several times resulting in extra doorways and interior windows or open spaces in the walls

Because of several renovations, it is unclear which aspect of the building is "historic" and which has been added within the past few decades. Because of the remnants of a door opening in the wall adjacent to the next building, we believe that the upstairs of the whole building was accessible through a hallway perhaps leading to offices or small shops. Now that the real estate is owned by several different people, the previous purpose is unable to be replicated.

Two primary obstacles that this project will have to face are the many repairs that must be made and the issue with accessibility.
Repairs
1.) Water damage on the wood plank ceiling
2.) Water damage on the sheetrock ceiling
3.) Poor replacement of lathe causes the plaster to fail
4.) Plaster damage revealing brick
5.) Brick structural damage
6.) Peeling paint and plaster
7.) Panels that were now falling were installed on top of the plank ceiling
8.) Water damage from a roof leak
9.) Chipping plaster
Repairs

The exterior of the building has recently been plastered over and painted. The awnings have been replaced and much of the interior was trimmed in a burgundy color paint. The rest of the back facade of the building is still relatively historically accurate, even though a steel support has been installed. Because removing the plaster would probably cause the brick to deteriorate more rapidly, it is recommended that the plaster in poor condition be replaced. Painting the building a historical color would also be more historically accurate.
Character Defining Features

The unique windows and the staircase are the primary defining features of the building. There are three different kinds of windows, and most of them are in good condition. The entrance staircase is the only way to access the top floor of the building, however, it is not built to modern code. We suggest an alternate stair installed in the back facade to provide another way of access. This method is also historically accurate because there was a back staircase that was removed.
Project Five- Proposal One

RESIDENTIAL PROPOSAL.

Two apartment units, each with two bedrooms and one bathroom, provide downtown living.
Project Five - Proposal Two

The restaurant and bar proposal is intended to capitalize on evening events and social gatherings. The restaurant has been configured to provide access to the adjacent second story building for the proposed use of a rentable large dining room.
Citizen’s Bank; (Historic Fire Department Building)

109 N Lee St.

Architect: G.L. Normann
Date of Construction: 1890-91 (Ceremony in January of 1891)
Dates of Major Renovations: 1948, 1996
Builder: Unknown
Original Use: City Hall, Fire House (1st floor)
Other Uses: Firehouse, Courthouse (2nd and 3rd floors), Bank (1st floor)
Current: Commercial - bank/savings & loan/ business/office (2nd Floor)

Historic Photographs:
Below top: The historic building functioning as a fire station, which was founded in 1893. Below bottom: Image of the fire station interior. Below right: The historic fire department, police station and water tower are shown between 1893 and 1894. (Images from the Vanishing Georgia archives, Digital Library of Georgia)
History

- Built 1890, Dedicated Jan., 1891
- Originally part of City Hall complex
- Past Uses include a fire house and city offices
- The first floor was used as the fire station beginning in 1893
- Water tower and police department (wing connecting to water tower) were demolished in 1948
- Sold to Citizen’s Bank in 1996 and was turned into bank offices

Constructed in 1890, this building, located in the Americus business district, was originally part of the City Hall complex. Soon after, the first floor was used as a fire house where the first professional Fire Department of Americus was established in January 1893. Attached to this building was the police station and water tower. The police station and water tower were demolished in 1948. It was sold to Citizen’s Bank of Americus in 1996 who converted the second floor to commercial office space, with a bank occupying the first floor. The first floor has now been vacated and the banking operations have moved to a new building across the street. The second floor is still currently being used as bank offices. During the 1990’s renovation, a non-historic connected structure to the south of the building (inhabiting the location of the old police station) was demolished. A portion of the exterior brick facade on the south side was replaced at this time as a result of damage caused during the demolition and a small garden courtyard was created on this side of the building. The third floor space is currently unfinished and not in use.

Citations:


Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Georgia Towns and Cities, 1884-1922; http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/sanborn
**Project Six - Existing Conditions**

Current Owner: Citizen’s Bank  
Square Footage (Overall, Per floor): 3100 s.f.

Architectural Style: Greek revival and Italian Renaissance elements  
Construction Method: Structural brick masonry  
Materials: brick, stone sills and details, metal corrugated roof  
Condition: Excellent structural condition

The building multi-wythe structural brick walls with segmental arches at the ground level and full arches at the third floor. There is a large classical pediment and surrounding cornice at the ends of the gable roof, which evokes the Greek revival style. The arched window openings at the third floor are of the Italian Renaissance style.
Project Six - Character Defining Features - Exterior

- Window openings: rounded brick masonry segmental arch openings at 1st floor, flat stone window head openings at 2nd floor, and rounded brick masonry full arch openings at 3rd floor.
- Large classical pediment and surrounding cornice at the ends of the gable roof.
- Stone sash, heads and sills
- Stone plaque at southwest corner displaying information about the building's origins
Project Six - Character Defining Features - Interior

Character Defining Features - Interior:

- Ceiling-coffered stamped tin ceiling
- Windows-arched, double hung, wood frames
- Floor- original hardwood floor
- Lights-hanging light fixtures
- Wainscot moldings and baseboards-wooden
Project Six - Proposal One

Our first proposal is for residential apartments. There will be three one bedroom, one bathroom apartments ranging from 800-980 sq. ft. In order to preserve the historic features of the building there are minimal partition walls. Each apartment has an open floor plan complete with kitchen area and living area. The apartments are arranged such that each receives natural day light from the large, historic windows.

Items needing restoration and repair include:

- Plaster finish at walls
- Floor finish
- Windows (require weather proofing and restoration)
- Stamped tin coffered ceiling
- Light fixtures

View of proposed bedroom

Views of proposed kitchen area
NOTES

1. Sand and refinish existing wood floors, with care not to damage walls or moldings. Refer to NPS Preservation Standards.

2. Provide new contrasting finish at missing area of floor on corner.

3. Cove cloth floor where necessary at locations of new plumbing fixtures. Take care not to damage adjacent areas.

4. At historic wooden windows, provide weatherization and repair per NPS Preservation Brief #8.

5. Provide base and wall cabinets at kitchen areas and provide appropriate plumbing and cooking fixtures/equipment.

6. Repair damage to baseboards and window and repair per NPS Preservation Standards.

7. Repair plastered walls at 7/8" SPF. Sand and replace missing portions with new mix. Refer to Preservation Brief #23.


9. Provide restroom fixtures, accessories, and vanity counters.

10. Provide new MC doors and hardware.

11. Provide CAO doors at closet locations.

12. Repair plastered finish at existing historic walls. Refer to NPS Preservation Brief #23.

13. Replace wall and doors to remain in place, prime and paint to match new trim.

VENTILATION

14. Provide MAC controls which allow for separate metering of usage in each apartment. Install new compressor units at north side of building next to existing units.

15. Exterior and return grilles can be located at ceiling height. Watering grilles are to be dimensioned of permitted historic material. Metal clad panels at new grille locations and repair for replacement where panels are damaged or missing. Alternatively, exterior and return grilles may be located in floor near perimeter walls. Consult MAC specialist.

16. Provide water heaters and washer/dryer equipment at mechanical closets.

LIGHTING

17. Reinstall existing ceiling light fixtures where possible, where fixture components are missing or not functional. Provide new missing fixtures at historic wood window locations.

OTHER

18. Provide water metering and electric metering for separate apartment spaces.
Project Six- Proposal Two

Our second proposal is for an office space. This space would have a reception area and break room, copy room, a twenty person conference room, two restrooms and one private office. The rest of the space will remain open and can be used for part-height partitioned office space for employees. In order to remain ADA compliant, a private entrance complete with an elevator would be built on the south side of the building. The new private entrance will utilize door openings on the third floor that are currently filled in with brick from a recent, non-historic, renovation.

Items needing restoration and repair include:
- Plaster finish at walls
- Floor finish
- Windows (require weather proofing and restoration)
- Stamped tin coffered ceiling
- Light fixtures

Stairwell and elevator addition to address ADA accessibility issues (along portion of non-historic wall constructed during 1990's renovation)

Windows inspired by historic street elevation in size and shape

New exterior entry
Project Six - Proposal Two

Architectural partitions that do not extend to ceiling divide conference, reception, break room and private office spaces.
Project Six - Proposal Two

NOTES

1. SAND AND REFRESH EXIST. WOOD FLOORS, WITH CARE NOT TO DAMAGE WALLS OR MOLDINGS. REFER TO NPS PRESERVATION STANDARDS.
2. PROVIDE NEW CONTRASTING FINISH AT WOODS OR MOLDINGS REFER TO NPS PRESERVATION STANDARDS.
3. CORE DRILL FLOOR WHERE NEEDED AT LOCATIONS OF NEW PLUMBING FIXTURES. TAKE CARE NOT TO DAMAGE ADJACENT AREAS.
4. PROVIDE NEW CONCRETE FLOORS AND BASEMENTS NEW BASEMENT WALLS.
5. PROVIDE NEW TREE FINISH AT LANDINGS BETWEEN ELEVATOR AND STAIRS.

WALLS
6. PROVIDE NEW EXTERIOR STAIRWELL WALLS PER WALL SECTION REFER TO NPS PRESERVATION SHEET #16.
7. AT MORTAR MORTAR PANELS, PROVIDE MITERING AND REPAIR PER NPS PRESERVATION SHEET #16.
8. PROVIDE BASE AND WALLS AND KITCHENS Sink AT BREAK IT.
9. REPAIR DAMAGE TO BASEBOARDS AND WOODWORK AND REFRESH PER NPS PRESERVATION STANDARDS.
10. COMPLETE ELEVATOR WALLS AT ELEVATOR AND REPAIR PER NPS PRESERVATION SHEET #27.
11. PROVIDE NEW SLOPE WALLS, PLANE, AND PAINT.
12. PROVIDE AIA COMPLIANT RESTROOM FIXTURES AND ACCESSORIES.
13. PROVIDE NEW LEAD DOORS AND HARDWARE AT RESTROOMS. PROVIDE FER TO SLEEPER AT SLEEPER WALL ADJUST.
14. PROVIDE NEW EXTERIOR DOORS AT GROUND FLOOR OF PROPOSED ADDITION.
15. PROVIDE NEW PRE-ENGINEERED PARTITIONS, SUCH AS IN FURNITURE, WINDOW/DOOR PANEL SYSTEM.
16. PROVIDE PARTIAL MIDDLE FIXTURES AND PANELS SUCH AS IN MIDDLE WINDOW/DOOR PANEL SYSTEM.
17. PROVIDE NEW STAR WALLS AT STAIR WELLS TO REPAIR THE HISTORIC WALLS AND PAINT.
18. PROVIDE NEW BOOKS AT STAR WALL WELLS TO REPAIR THE HISTORIC WALLS.

TYPICAL EXTERIOR STAIRWELL WALL SECTION

SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"

NOTES

19. PROVIDE NEW STAIRWELL WALLS TO MATCH THAT OF THE HISTORICAL wirkings, WITHOUT INTERRUPING THE EXISTING COAT. REFER TO NPS PRESERVATION SHEET #19.

LAYOUT
20. PROVIDE BACK TO BACK SERVICE 3RD FLOOR INSTALLING A NEW COMBINE UNIT AT NORTH SIDE OF BUILDING NEXT TO EXISTING UNIT.
21. OPERATING AND RETURN GRILLE'S CAN BE LOCATED AT CEILING PERIMETER, MATCHING GRILLE TO DIMENSIONS OF PERIMETER HISTORIC PANELS. NEW PANELS CAREFULLY REPAIR HISTORIC PANELS AT NEW GRILLE LOCATIONS AND REPAIR FOR NEW PANELS WHERE PANELS ARE DAMAGED OR CHEST LOCATION IN FLOOR NEAR PERIMETER WALLS. CONSIDER MHC SPECIFICATIONS.

LIGHTING
22. REFRESH EXISTING CEILING LIGHT FIXTURES WHERE POSSIBLE, WHERE FIXTURES ARE MISSING, OR NOT FUNCTIONAL, PROVIDE NEW MATERIAL FIXTURES AT HISTORIC OLD AND NEW LOCATIONS.

SEATS
23. INCLUDE/REPLACE BENCHES TO ACCELEATE NEW STAR WELL AND ELEVATOR ADJUST.
Cohen Building: (Watts Hall, historically)
Address: 102 East Forsyth Street, Americus GA
Architect: Unknown
Date of Construction: before 1885; Builder: Unknown; Renovations: 1930, possibly 1954
Original Use: General Merchandise
Other Uses: Office (Certified Public Accountant)

The Cohen Building is seen on the earliest Sanborn maps for the city of Americus (1885), where it is identified as "General Merchandise (see image below)." According to the local paper, on June 22, 1883 "H.D. Watts ... commenced ... erecting a brick store on Northeast corner of the public square." In the 1930s, the tax parcel information for the property records two expenditures, once for $69,311 and again for $19,697. The back bay to the building had already been added by the 1900 Sanborn map (see below), so this renovation may have been due to the building's older age or to one of the multiple natural disasters the city of Americus has faced through the years, including tornadoes and fires. At this point, the general merchandise store was adjacent to the Sumter County Courthouse (the historic image below shows the E Forsyth elevation just to the left of the courthouse) and had a brick exterior in a similar style to other structures in Americus built at the end of the 19th century.

The property at 102 East Forsyth Street is legally described today as 201 through 205 East Forsyth Street. On the first floor, there is a corner storefront at Lee Street and E Forsyth with two additional store fronts along E Forsyth and a double glass door entrance to the second floor spaces. The property was purchased in 1954 by the current owners, Cohen Properties, Inc. for $28,600. This could have been the owner/period at which the building was renovated to its current fashion. A similar styled structure located at E. Forsyth and Jackson is listed in Sumter County's historic construction records as having started work on March 4th, 1952 on "re-modeling [a] two-story brick...building...southeast corner of Forsyth and Jackson...[to] have a corner entrance, with show windows on both streets...second floor...converted into office space." The similarities between the two buildings implies that the addition of the glass panels, known as vitrolite, as well as the white stuccoing on the exterior might too have come around 1954. The exterior windows, doors, and storefronts also appear to have been from this renovation. Going inside, the stair hall and second floor exhibit materials (floor tiles, ceiling ceramic tiles, curved glass interior windows, and paneled/half glass doors), that also appear to be from this period and within the general style of the Modern, or "Bauhaus," movement popular at the time. Currently, the zoning of the property is C-3 (Downtown General Business), with the same zoning for all the parcels in its lot and the lot across from and adjacent to the property. To the east, out of the Downtown, the property adjacent to the lot is residential and C-2 (General Business).
Existing Conditions

Current Owner: Cohen Properties (Amelia Pat Cohen)
Square Footage (Total: 10,631 sq ft; First and Second Floor: 4959 sqft)

Architectural Style: Modern
Construction Method: Masonry exterior walls with metal stud interior walls
Materials: brick, glass (decorative and standard glazing), tile (floor and ceiling), gypsum, veneer wood paneling

Condition: The main structure appears to be intact but finishes, mechanical and electrical systems all need updating and repair. The tile flooring may contain asbestos; professionals should be consulted for verification and removal. Most of the ceiling is acoustical tile or gypsum that has water damage and should be replaced. This acoustical tile appears to be part of a dropped ceiling. Upon removal, the higher ceramic tile ceiling may be revealed, which could increase the aesthetic quality of the spaces. The exterior applied glass facade needs repair and general maintenance as well. The adhesive and sealant appears to be failing or improperly applied; professionals should be contacted to assess and propose appropriate repair measures.

Exterior Physical Description: The exterior is mostly white painted stucco over brick on the first and second floors. The massing of the box building is broken down into a seven bay rhythm facing E Forsyth and a three bay along Lee with simple, brick detail pilasters, currently covered with stucco. The addition seen by 1900 does not have the pilaster bays, implying that Lee Street was a less prominent commercial fronting. At the ground-floor commercial, the storefronts are accentuated with black, vitrolite glass panels and steel frame shop windows, common to the 1950s. Where the storefronts meet the street, the facade cuts back into the building; this is probably a 1950s renovation design and not original. Very few examples of this style of building can be found in Americus. Though not currently in the historic district, this building should be considered for its architecture and 1950s materials and details.
The interior layout for the second floor of the Cohen building starts with the main flight of stairs coming from the street. The stairs lead to an L-shaped hallway that goes forward and to the right. This front hallway area is where the majority of the wavy glass walls and textured glass panel doors are located. Four smaller rooms are located off to the right of the hallway. To the left of the hallway is a larger room with a counter occupying most of the space. This room leads to two smaller rooms to the left, and the largest room in the building to the back. Straight down the hallway from the stairs leads down a small ramp to a long hallway spanning the length of the building and small rooms off of the long hallway.

The interior of the Cohen Building is finished in a variety of materials for the ceilings, walls, and floors. The ceilings are covered in gypsum, acoustic ceiling tiles, or ceramic tiles. The walls are covered with gypsum, wavy glass panels, or veneer wood paneling. And the floors are covered in checkered tile and carpet with different patterns and colors depending on the room. All of the rooms and hallways are lit with fluorescent lighting, except for the bathrooms which are lit with incandescent light bulbs.
Ceilings

Ceilings are covered in different types of tiles or gypsum.

Walls

Walls are covered in gypsum, different types of veneer wood paneling, and textured wavy glass.

Floors

Checkered tile and carpet are common throughout the second floor.
Character Defining Features

The interior of the Cohen building features many unique character defining features. Wavy glass wall panels are used in the main lobby area near the stairwell as an aesthetically pleasing alternative to solid walls and allow natural light from the windows to transfer into the interior of the building, brightening up the space. Additional features include the operable metal frame windows throughout the building, interior paneled doors with textured glass, ceramic tile ceiling, and a large skylight.

Character Defining Features:
- Operable metal frame windows
- Large hallway skylight
- Ceramic tile ceiling
- Textured wavy glass wall panels
- Textured glass door panels

1. Metal Frame Windows

Every room features one or more of these large windows. All windows open.

2. Hallway Skylight

The long hallway in the lower portion of the second floor features a large skylight, allowing natural light inside, instead of a window.

3. Ceramic Ceiling Tiles

Ceramic tiles are featured in the room with the large counter top. The tiles appear to be in good condition.
4. Wavy Glass Walls

There are seven wavy glass wall panels located near the main stairwell in the current lobby area. The glass allows outside light to enter into the interior rooms that do not have windows. The wavy glass creates a more open feel than regular walls, while still providing privacy for the room occupants.

5. Textured Glass Panel Doors

There are multiple textured glass doors located throughout the building. The doors are solid wood with a large rough textured panel on the top half of the door. The bottom half features a grill for ventilation and airflow. The textured glass panel doors create an interesting contrast located next to the wavy glass walls.
Large Corner Room (room #8)
- Ceiling tiles
- Veneer Wood Paneling
- Tile Floor

Side Room (room #10)
- Ceiling tiles
- Veneer Wood Paneling
- Drywall
- Carpet
- Different Door Frames

Counter Room (room #11)
- Ceramic ceiling tiles
- Acoustic ceiling tiles
- Tile Floor
- Ceiling at different heights
Front Hallway (hallway #3)
- Ceiling tiles
- Drywall
- Tile Floor

Front Hallway (hallway #4)
- Ceiling tiles
- Drywall
- Tile Floor

Back Rooms (rooms #1-6)
- Ceiling tiles
- Veneer Wood Paneling
- Drywall
- Tile Floor
- Carpet
Cohen Building - Proposal One (Learning Clinic)

With little change to wall locations, doors, and windows, the Cohen Building’s second floor can be renovated to take advantage of the new nursing program at the local college. Adding a few walls and relocating some of the existing doors offers a medical clinic with reception space, waiting room, records room, bloodwork room, physician’s office, patient rooms, and a restroom. The eastern half of the building will house a lecture, conference, and break room for a complete learning clinic.

To achieve this renovation, the major areas of work and cost include rewiring of electrical outlets, internet, and phone lines to replace the existing, outdated wiring. The existing fluorescent lighting could function well for the use, so may need only small repairs. The flooring will need to be completely replaced due to wear and possible health issues. The existing plumbing needs to be checked as well.

Additional major cost for this renovation will be in the area of accessibility. An elevator will be recommended to meet ADA requirements. The plan shows that the owner place an elevator along the front facade, within the retail space on the first floor, accessible from building entry. Service equipment will need to be located in the basement and on the rooftop. An ADA accessible ramp is shown from the waiting room to Hall #1 to navigate the floor level change from the front of the building to back.

Clinic Precedent Images

Reception Room

Door/Window Diagram

Wall Diagram

Finish Material Diagram

Electrical Diagram
Cohen Building - Proposal Two (Apartments)

Proposal Two allows the second floor of the Cohen Building to become five separate residential rental units, bringing more of the much in-demand apartments to the center of Downtown Americus. The residential renovation offers a common space for mail and community message boards, one three bedroom apartment, one two bedroom apartment, and three single units. The plan shows an elevator at the mailbox and stair hall area to be more appealing to renters bringing their own furniture, families, and the elderly.

To achieve this renovation, the whole of the second floor will be reshaped. All the existing mechanical, electrical, data, and plumbing will need to be replaced and rerouted. Most of the floors and walls will need to be completely rebuilt. The plan shows wall allowance for either 2x6 wood stud walls with gypsum board or metal studs of similar depth. While some of the existing doors can be repurposed, new residential doors are required. The storage closet at the top of the stair hall has been expanded to accommodate a new HVAC system. The floor level in the back bay of the building is elevated flush to the front bay with a raised floor system, offering a space for HVAC trunks, plumbing, electrical, and data lines to be installed. The ceilings will need to be refinished but can remain at dropped ceiling height to offer further flexibility to install the new systems for the residential units. Each unit is shown with a laundry room; ventless dryers may need to be used if the building envelope cannot be punctured for vents.

Apartment Precedent Images

Wall Diagram  
Door/Window Diagram

Finish Material Diagram  
Electrical Diagram
LEGEND
- One Bedroom Apartment
- Two Bedroom Apartment
- Three Bedroom Apartment
- Storage/HVAC
- Stair
- Hallway

Option Two Second Floor Plan
Scale: 1/16" = 1'-0"

Option Two First Floor Plan
Scale: 1/16" = 1'-0"

SQ. FOOTAGE:
- One Bedroom Apt: 2014 sq ft total
- Two Bedroom Apt: 786 sq ft total
- Three Bedroom Apt: 1494 sq ft total
- Storage/HVAC: 60 sq ft total
- Mailroom/Halls: 468 sq ft total
Concluding Notes

A. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

When possible, all standards set forth by the Secretary of the Interior should be followed and respected when performing a renovation or rehabilitation. The standards are as follows:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

For more information and specifics: http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/rehab/rehab_standards.htm

B. INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE

The International Building Code’s standards for construction and renovations will also need to be followed. Some exceptions can be made, however, to protect historic integrity. These exceptions may include:

1. Window and Door Openings: Minor reductions in the clear opening dimensions of replacement doors and windows that result from the use of different materials shall be allowed, whether or not they are permitted by code. For the Cohen Building, exceptions may be required to retain the existing exterior windows in a residential application, where egress requirements are greater than may be allowed by the awning, steel frame windows.

2. Electrical equipment: Newly installed electrical equipment will comply with all code requirements.

3. When the total area of all the works areas included in an alteration exceeds 50 percent of the area of the dwelling unit, the work shall be considered as a reconstruction and shall comply with the requirements for reconstruction work. The total area of construction for the proposed residential retrofit will be considered a reconstruction, and therefore will have more strict requirements to bring the building up to code.

4. Stairway: The existing stairway can remain as is with little modifications per code. The handrail and guard rail heights may need to be brought up to the code required 34 to 38 inches above the floor grade. Any renovations should be sensitive to the character of the building.

5. Ramps: The proposed ramp addition in the learning clinic shall have a slope of 1 unit vertical to 12 units horizontal maximum. The current sloped floor transition will not meet code.

6. Health and safety: Along with new electrical and mechanical systems, the renovation will required smoke detector and alarm installation. In the case of the residential proposal, automatic fire sprinklers and carbon monoxide alarms could also be required.

7. Parking: It is assumed that parking will be allowed on street.
Appendix

When deciding to renovate, code may require an additional stairhall for emergencies. The plans to the left are an option with an additional rear, Lee Street stairhall. In this residential application, one whole single unit apartment would be eliminated while another can be converted to a double. The end result, one three bedroom apartment, two doubles, and one single apartment.

Similarly, with the proposed stairhall added to the learning clinic renovation, the physicians office and one patient suite would be lost.

On the first floor, the existing commercial conditions at the Lee Street access door are unknown. The stairhall may fit within an existing storage room at the rear of the building or it may cut into existing retail space. While the stairhall may mean a reduction in drawn rentable space, it could be necessary to utilize the upper level for the public.

Sources:
Alan Anderson and the Sumter County Historical Society
Sumter County Genealogy, a GaGenWeb Project: http://www.sumtercountyhistory.com/
Sumter County/Americus Geographic Information System database: http://americus.binarybus.com/
The Vitrolite specialist: http://www.vitrolitespecialist.com/
Planters Bank Building / Citizens Bank of Americus

Address: 120 N Lee Street, Americus, Georgia 31709

Current Owner: John Edgemon
Square Footage: 18,296 Square Feet

Date of Construction: 1899
Date of Major Alterations: 1937, 1941, 1951
Architect: Willis Franklin Denny II
Builder: Planters Bank of Americus

Original Use: Bank, offices, assembly hall
Other Uses: Restaurant, bar

Construction of the Planters Bank Building began in June of 1899 and was completed in April of 1900. The bank occupied the ground floor with the second and third floor offices used by lawyers, realtors, and other commercial interests. The fourth floor was an assembly hall used as a Masonic lodge. After Planters Bank collapsed in 1928, Citizens Bank of Americus occupied the building from March of 1937 until moving across the street in 1961. The building then changed hands three times until it was purchased by its current owner in April of 1996.
PLANTERS BANK ERECTS ELEGANT NEW BUILDING A LARGE FOUR STORY BRICK STRUCTURE

Will Be built on Vacant Corner Opposite Courthouse – One of Finest Buildings in Americus. – Completed by Sept. 1st.

A magnificent building of pressed brick and granite, four stories in height and handsomely finished throughout, is to be erected immediately upon the desirable vacant lot just opposite the county courthouse.

The Planters Bank of Americus will be the builder and owner.

The officials of the bank have had the matter under advisement for several weeks, but have only recently secured possession of the lot. This accomplished, they determined to make a start at once, and L.C. Council is now in Atlanta consulting architects and securing plans for the bank’s new building.

“It will be an ornament to Americus and we are going to push it to completion as fast as possible” said Cashier Charles M. Council yesterday.

The building, he said, would be four stories, having a frontage of 52 feet on Forsyth street and extending back 100 feet on Lee. The bank will have spacious and elegant quarters in the corner, while a large and well arranged store room will occupy the remainder of the ground floor, having a frontage on Forsyth street.

Already there are demands for this from several parties.

The second and third floors, reached by broad stairways and elevator, will be handsomely fitted up for office purposes, and for lawyers, insurance men, brokers or cotton buyers will be very desirable. The fourth floor will be a large assembly hall and used either as a Masonic lodge or by secret orders here.

Each floor will be fitted up in handsome style, and there will be no lack of applicants for the rooms.

Mr. Council said yesterday, in discussing the matter of building, that he knew of no better investment for a part of the bank’s surplus cash, as the building, he thinks, will pay 6 per cent, at least, on the investment.

The present banking house is inadequate for the largely increased business, and besides the space is needed as offices for the cotton warehouse adjoining. The new building will cost $25,000 or perhaps $30,000. Mr. Council says that work will begin the day the architect’s plans are accepted, as the bank must occupy its new quarters September 1st.
STEEL DOOR FOR BANK VAULT.

It Weighs Ten Tons and is a Beauty Indeed

Harry Edwards’ story of the Dooly county safe was in a manner repeated here yesterday in the effort to place in position the great steel vault door of the new Planters Bank, by the side of which the Dooly safe was a match box in comparison.

Six or eight mules and an army of laborers were required yesterday.

After the great steel giant, weighing nearly nineteen thousand pounds, was hauled from the Central Railroad depot the task of getting it into the building was equally difficult, though this will be accomplished some time today.

It is now on a raised platform in the street, while a tramway with rollers will be used to slide it into position.

The vault was built by the Mosler Safe and Lock Co. and is equal to the finest made. No gang of burglars could drill through it in a week’s time, and thus protected the money of the Planters Bank will be absolutely safe.

INTO SPLENDID NEW BUILDING

Planters Bank Now Occupies New Quarters

The Planters Bank of Americus is now located in the massive and beautiful structure just completed, and Cashier C.M. Council and Assistant Cashier L.G. Council, the active officers of the bank, now welcome their friends and the public in this, one of the handsomest of modern banking houses in Georgia.

The change from the old quarters was made yesterday morning.

Every part of the furniture and fixtures is new, so that it was only necessary to carry across the street the bank’s money and books. This was carried in sacks and boxes and the change of base quickly made.

The new building is a splendid pile of granite and buff brick, four stories in height and costing perhaps $35,000. In architectural beauty it is unsurpassed, while the furnishings of quartered oak and bronze is as handsome as money could buy and skilled artisans devise and put together.

The great vault, with triple doors and time locks, is absolutely secure and would withstand any attack from without.

The second and third floors, fitted up as offices, are beautifully finished. Steam heat, gas and electric lights are throughout the building. The fourth will be the Masonic temple and like those below is a model of beauty, and the lodges are fortunate in securing it.

The building is an ornament to Americus, and every citizen of Americus is proud of it.
Willis Franklin Denny II (1874-1905)

Willis Franklin Denny II was the architect of the Planters Bank Building as well as many other notable buildings in Georgia. He was born in Louisville, Georgia in 1874. Denny moved to Atlanta in the late 1880’s to attend private school at Col. Asbury F. Moreland’s military academy at Moreland Park. He then studied architecture at Cornell from 1891-1892.

After a brief period living in Macon, he moved to Atlanta in 1894 and worked as a draftsman with the prominent architecture firm Bruce and Morgan. In 1897 Denny launched his own practice at the age of twenty-three and was instantly successful. He had offices in Atlanta, Macon, and briefly in Augusta. Denny was a mentor to both Eugene Wachendorff and Neel Reid, who both trained in his office and then went on to become notable designers themselves.

Denny designed many public and commercial buildings, but is best known for his residential and church architecture. He was an important transitional figure in the development of Georgia architecture at the turn of the twentieth century.

His work reflects the major shifts in design that took place at that time when the picturesque, eclectic forms of the Victorian era gave way to neoclassicism and more historically accurate period revival styles. Despite his early death from pneumonia at the age of thirty-one, the range of his work is quite impressive.


Inman Park United Methodist Church, Atlanta (1897)

W. F. Denny II Residence, Atlanta (around 1897, demolished 1940)

Central Baptist Church, Newnan (1898)

Victor H. Kriegshaber house / The Wrecking Bar Atlanta (1900)

Majestic Hotel, Atlanta (1900, demolished 1928)

Westminster Presbyterian Church Atlanta (1902, destroyed 1917)
St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Atlanta (1902-03)

First United Methodist Church, Atlanta (1903)

Piedmont Hotel, Atlanta (1903, demolished 1966)

Rhodes Hall, Atlanta (1902-1904)

Jefferson County Courthouse, Louisville (1904)
Description

Architectural Style: Beaux-Arts Inspired

Construction Method: Timber column and beams with wood joist and floor interior construction, and masonry bearing wall exterior construction.

Physical Description: The Planters Bank Building is a rectangular four story office building. It has a 40 square foot diagonal porch entry at Forsyth and Lee Streets with two sets of stairs and Tuscan style column at the corner. An elevator was added to the south end of the building in 1941 along with a single story 96 square foot entry addition. The exterior has single full arched windows at the ground floor, paired rectangular windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors, with paired full arched with circular transom windows on the 4th floor. There is an additional entry off of Lee Street leading to a main interior grand staircase.


Condition: The ground floor is a vacant restaurant, the additional interior floors have only stud walls remaining. Pigeons and major roof leaks threaten the interior building construction.

Northeast View  Southeast View  Southwest View  Northwest View  East Elevation at N Lee Street  North Elevation at Forsyth Street  West Elevation  South Elevation
Documentation

The Planters Bank Building has been altered throughout time from its original construction in 1899. After the collapse of the Planters Bank in 1928, the building was vacated. Later, Citizens Bank of Americus opened in the building in March 1937.

On May 13, 1941, the elevator addition was added to the southeast corner of the building with the work completed by contractor D.M. Still and Son. A 96 square foot ground floor entry addition was also made to the south facade. In August of 1951, Citizens Bank Building is the first office building in Georgia to comply with new state fire code.

In 1961, Citizens Bank of Americus left the building unoccupied after moving across the street to a newly constructed building.

Since its initial construction, the Planters Bank has been altered by: Interior office walls and studs were removed on 2nd floor. 3rd & 4th floor walls were stripped down to studs. The 4th floor ceiling was removed. The main staircase wood finish was stripped and balusters were removed. Marble was removed at the staircase. Windows were replaced.

Recent modifications have been made to the Planters Bank Building by: Second floor exit door and exterior egress stair added to the east side of the building. Second floor bar and stage added to interior. Windows were papered over. An HVAC and sprinkler system was added to the second floor. Partitions were added at the main staircase.
05/2012

3rd floor walls - plaster condition

3rd floor walls - lath condition

4th floor walls - lath condition

4th floor ceiling structure visible

Main staircase wood finish was stripped

Staircase balusters have been removed

Marble was removed at main staircase

Partitions were added at staircase

2nd floor walls have been removed

2nd floor bar added, windows papered over

2nd floor stage added

2nd floor HVAC and sprinkler system added

3rd floor walls - plaster condition

5/2012

2nd floor bar added, windows papered over

2nd floor stage added

2nd floor HVAC and sprinkler system added

3rd floor walls - lath condition

4th floor walls - lath condition

4th floor ceiling structure visible

Planters Bank Building
Character Defining Features

The following list of features are collectively important in defining the historic character of the Planters Bank Building:

- Bank Vault on the Ground Floor
- Grand Interior Staircase
- Interior Use of Marble
- Numbered Transom Windows
- Interior Wood Paneling
- Exterior Wood Paneling
- Open 4th Floor Plan
- Rusticated Ground Floor
- Windows
- Cornice
- Ornamental Brick
- Corner Entry
- Corner Entry Column

Bank Vault on the Ground Floor  Grand Interior Staircase  Interior Use of Marble  Interior Wood Paneling  Numbered Transom Windows
Open 4th Floor Plan

Cornice

Ornamental Brick

Windows

Exterior Wood Paneling

Rusticated Ground Floor

Corner Entry

Corner Entry Column
Planters Bank Building - Restoration Proposal

This option shows a restoration of the original uses of the Planters Bank Building on the upper floors. The second and third floors could be used as prime office space in downtown Americus with a flexible event space on the fourth floor.

The ground floor would remain as a neighborhood restaurant in this proposal.

Since the walls have been removed from the second floor, it could be used as office space with an open plan layout. A bathroom would be added to the southwest corner along with a reception desk and printing / copy room. The north side of the building has two common collaboration areas. The remaining open office could be rented out to one tenant such as a movie production company who could be recruited to film in downtown Americus and the surrounding area.

The third floor is closed individual offices similar to the original use. A bathroom would be added to the southwest corner along with a common reception desk and printing / copy room. The north side has two shared conference room spaces. The remaining offices could be rented out to individuals.

The open fourth floor could be used as flexible event space. It could be leased out for public events needing a large gathering space, and has the best view in downtown Americus. A ceiling would need to be added and the floor refinished would could cost around $4 per square foot.

Issues that need to be addressed include the addition of a egress exit stair at the northwest corner of the building. The current exit stair added to the second floor should be removed since it takes away from the character defining features within the facade of the building. An interior exit stair keeps the original character of the building intact.

Additionally, bathrooms will need to be added to the southwest corner of the building as there is space for vertical plumbing shafts. To save space, the woman’s room is proposed for the second floor, and the men’s room is proposed for the third floor.

Fire sprinklers will need to be working throughout each floor as well as a heating and cooling system. The elevator will also need to be working if it doesn’t already for public access.
Proposal 1 Second Floor Plan

1/16” = 1’-0”

Second Floor Open Office View North

Second Floor Open Office View Northeast
Proposal 1 Third Floor Plan  
1/16”=1'-0”  
Third Floor Shared Reception at Individual Tenant Offices
Planters Bank Building - Reuse Proposal

This option shows a reuse of the Planters Bank Building with a new program. The second and third floors are shown as bed and breakfast rooms with a wedding event venue on the fourth floor.

The ground floor would become the breakfast area for guests in addition to continuing to use the space as a restaurant in this proposal. The current bar area at the bank vault could be used as the concierge desk. A service space would be added for laundry and cleaning of rooms.

Since the walls have been removed from the second floor, the guest rooms can be larger to allow for a variety of room options in the overall bed and breakfast. Adding new walls can cost around $1.60 per square foot. The northeast corner room is the largest to be marketed as the honeymoon suite.

The third floor contains more intimate guest rooms the keeping the original office walls intact. The numbered glass transom windows can be reused to number all guest rooms. Guest bathrooms would be added as a linear element with separate shower and toilet rooms in order to keep the open view within each room.

The open fourth floor could be used as a wedding event space. With great views of Americus through the large windows, this would be a unique space to market for weddings especially as a full service venue. The groom's room is located at the northeast corner of the building, with the bride's room located at the southeast corner at the back and next to the grand staircase.

Issues that need to be addressed include the addition of an egress exit stair at the northwest corner of the building. The current exit stair added to the second floor should be removed since it takes away from the character defining features within the facade of the building. An interior exit stair keeps the original character of the building intact. It allows for the addition of the groom's room to keep with the symmetrical nature of the building, and also creates a front stage area.

The construction of the rooms as guest suites requires the installation of major plumbing work. A new bathroom could cost up to $10,000. Since the floor to floor height is significant at each floor, this space can be utilized to accommodate the additional pipes. At the third floor, bathrooms that are added at each room will each have plumbing that slopes and then runs straight down within the second floor guest bathroom spaces. These four plumbing chases can then run down to the ground floor and either run along the inside of the exterior wall, otherwise be gathered again within the ground floor ceiling to then run down to be accommodated within the service space of the kitchen. The installation of plumbing at each room is a significant undertaking.

Fire sprinklers will need to be working throughout each floor as well as a heating and cooling system. The elevator will also need to be working if it doesn't already for public access.
Proposal 2 Second Floor Plan

Second Floor Bedroom View
Proposal 2 Third Floor Plan  1/16"=1'-0"  Third Floor Bedroom View
Next Steps

The first step to preserve the Planters Bank Building should be to conduct a site investigation at the roof to fully assess specific issues causing damage to the building.

Roof leaks are currently threatening a number of areas on the fourth floor. There is visible water damage to the underlayment of the roof that can be seen from the interior. The main cause of this water damage could be from pigeons.

The building needs to be secured from pigeons to prevent further damage. Pigeon activity can negate the effect of conservation and cause considerable damage to a building leading to a loss in building value and character defining features.

Once a building becomes home to pigeons, they are there for life. Pigeons are not migratory, and prefer to live and breed near their birth site. They live for 3-4 years and can breed year round. A nesting pair will typically have 3-4 broods a year. Most of their nests contain 1-2 eggs, and they take approximately 18 days to hatch. The young can leave the nest around 10 days after hatching.

A pigeon roost site appears to be on the east facing interior of the Planters Bank Building within the fourth floor rafters since there is a very large quantity of droppings. Pigeons damage buildings by leaving their droppings everywhere, and particularly at their roost sites. On average, a well-fed pigeon deposits 25 pounds of droppings a year.

Pigeon droppings contain uric acid which makes them extremely corrosive and dangerous to human health. The droppings are the direct cause of millions of dollars worth of damage to buildings and other property.

On the exterior of a building, pigeons can block roof rainwater drainage systems with their feces, feathers, and nesting. This disruption of drainage and the resultant water penetration can cause severe decay problems. Pigeons are also capable of lifting roof coverings, especially if it is already slightly displaced.

Pigeons in the Planters Bank building currently have access to the fourth floor possibly through ventilation areas which should be screened. They could also be the reason for the water damage from their access to the roof.

A pest control company such as possibly Arrow Exterminators in Americus as long as they have experience with pigeons would be a valuable investment that would payoff and save the Planters Bank Building from further damage. Their phone number is 229-924-2231. The current cost of prevention far outweighs the future cost to repair damages.
Water damage to roof underlayment

Pigeon droppings at east facade on fourth floor

Pigeons threatening Planters Bank Building

Possible pigeon entry to fourth floor
Al’s Men’s and Ladies’ Apparel: Perry & Brown’s Store

Address: 121 W. Forsyth St.
Americus, GA 31709

Architect: Unknown
Developers: I.R. Cain, R.J. Perry, & P.F. Brown

Date of Construction: 1904 (March - June)

Original Use: 2 Story Retail / Activated Commercial

Forsyth Street facing West: Second Story Balcony and SE corner chimney

Urban block with zero setback. Parking on north side (back of building) Deep sidewalks (15’) with planter of widely spaced trees. 484 sf Canopy in the Historical Business District of Americus, GA. Facing South in continuous line of historical storefront buildings with parti-walls or small alleys between buildings. 76000648 NR: “The majority of buildings are two-story Victorian commercial stepped facades, characterized by bracketing, round windows with wrought-iron grille-work, and decorative use of brick.” Adjacent buildings include Herman Stein Building immediately to the West and then a large 2-story brick structure built in the 1800’s as a hardware store. Immediately to the East is a 1 story commercial building and then the Glover Grand Opera House.
History Continued;

Construction Commissioned as a joint venture between R.J. Perry, P.F. Brown, and I.R. Cain (all prominent citizens of Americus, GA) as a retail building which began construction in March - June 1904.

I.R. Cain was the land owner
R.J. Perry in construction and business development
P.F Brown ran/owned a couple stores and a 10 room house

In May 1897 a newspaper article was quoted saying "a 2 or 3 story building on Forsyth "to be the next Perry & Brown's Store" and R.J. Perry and Cain had previously worked together on the Cain house expansion.

Statue was removed from square in 1947.

1905 Sanborn Map: Storefront building with Grocery, Dry-goods, Boots and shoes.

Sanborn Map 1912: Second Story balcony completed and stair corridor remains

Second Story Balcony removed and Awning/Colonnade constructed

Forsyth Street facing East: Second Story Balcony and colonnade of West Adja-cent building

Summer 1959: Mid-century - although building remained retail, it was used as a Belk's Department store.
Existing Conditions; Issues

Current Owner: John Crisp

Square Footage:
Overall: 14,242 sf
Per Floor: 7,121

Architectural Style: Southern Storefront with Italiante elements

Construction Method: Masonry
Materials: Brick Masonry, Metal Bracketed Cornice, Glass storefront

Condition: Poor interior condition with Rehabilitate-able exterior features

Windows Blocked in:
Front: 7 (2-3-2) Symmetrical windows
East: 5 Symmetrical windows
West: 1 window and 1 wood double door
These windows are currently bricked in or containing vents.
Window: 3'-8" x 8'3" 2/2 window sash

Rusting Cornice
Along the roof, the molding and cornices are the defining characteristics of the exterior. A concern for the exterior is the major rusting of the details.

Painted Brick
The front façade is painted white on top of the brick. For proper restoration of the brick to remove the paint, refer to Preservation Brief 1 for steps to avoid when removing the paint.
Current Interior Condition
The second floor is one large room with no interior walls. It contains a small opening to a bathroom above the original location of the back staircase. The French doors that are boarded up led to the stairwell in the adjacent building, where the floor level is unequal to the floor in the main building.

HVAC & Evidence of Water Damage
The HVAC system seems to be non-operational. At one end, the ceiling tiles are hanging down or have fallen on the floor, covered with signs of water damage. The smell of the beginning of molding is another signal of water damage above the ceiling.

Evidence of Fire damage
In the rooms of the adjacent building connected to the stairwell. Potential fire damage to the structure of the exterior wall needs to be addressed.

Floor Level Offset:
At this time the stairs and floor level of the adjacent building do not meet this floor level or bottom of the wood double doors.

Paint condition
As seen around the window frame in the image above and the wall in the image below, the paint is peeling off the wall. Proper care for interior paint is addressed in Preservation Briefs 28.

Wall Condition / paint
Water / Mold Damage
Floor Level Offset
Plumbing / Sanitary Issues
Existing Conditions; Preservation

When developing proposals, efforts were taken to keep multiple elements of the original design intact. An example is the medallion detail on the frame of the windows. In addition, the current front stairs and the original exterior walls will be preserved. Suggested alterations to the exterior walls are opening the windows on the front and side facades with the original two-pane glass, recreating a symmetry of windows on the rear façade. Suggested alterations to the stairwell include adding in several additional stairs to adapt to the unequal floor levels between the main building and the adjacent building with the staircase, reconstructing the back staircase, and removing a wall to create an open hallway between the two staircases to restore the stairwell to its original design with the detailed openings on each stair. Also, several doors are suggested for construction for the new use of the building's second floor either into the stairwell or to the back deck. Finally, there was the push to rehabilitate the French doors as a point of entry to the second floor of the building.
 Corner Bocks & Moulding - 5” width

Interior Corridor Stair Details

CAST IRON OR STEEL FIREBOX - SE CORNER CHIMNEY. 5'-3" FROM OUTSIDE FACE OF WALL AND 27" WIDE FIRE-BOX WITH 5" WIDE FRAME.

2/2 WINDOW SASH - REMOVED

EXISTING FLOOR PLAN  SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"

Al’s Men’s and Ladies’ Apparel
Proposal One

The first proposal for Al’s Men’s and Ladies Apparel looks to develop apartments. The design includes 3 apartments and a communal living space between the main building and the building to the left of it. By creating a communal environment, there is more impact on the existing walls for alterations than the original design of the building is shown to have. Two additional stairs would be added to the top of the front staircase and the raising of the floor in the hallway in order to level the floor difference between the two buildings.

The front apartment contains an original fire place with molding around it, while the rear apartment has personal access to the back deck. In this proposal, all residents have access to a door to the back deck from within the building and rear staircase within the building rather than on the exterior. A unique addition to this proposal is the two separate areas of communal space, a gym and an internet café. These rooms will create a more wholesome atmosphere within the building. With this in mind, the adjacent building will contain two apartments to be considered as part of the apartment complex.
Proposal Two

Al’s Men’s and Ladies Apparel is best laid out to be re-purposed as apartments. This proposal looks to fit four apartments in the space. The plan keeps the current front stairs as they are a defining feature of the building. It adds an exterior set of stairs in the rear of the building as a back access to the building’s parking lot. Stairs are added beyond the French doors into the main building to adapt to the differing floor levels.

What is unique about this design is the access to the back deck is through the hallway for all residents to use. The back two apartments also have individual access to the back deck, while the front apartment has the distinctive original fireplace and molding. By having four apartments, the space usage is maximized.
**Windsor Hotel**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**
Current name: Windsor Hotel (Best Western Plus Windsor Hotel)  
Historic name of building: Windsor Hotel  
Address: 125 W. Lamar Street, Americus, Georgia  
Current owner: Sharad Patel  
Square footage: ~40,000

**HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**
Date of construction: 1892  
Architect: G.L. Norrman  
Builder: James Smith of Sparta, Georgia  
Original use: Full Service Hotel, Ballroom, Shops  
Other Uses: Skating Rink, Apartments, Home for the Elderly, Senior Center, Office Space, Bar, Restaurant

History:
Over the course of its life, the Windsor has been home to many ventures, but it has never been able to turn a stable profit. It has a long history of creative reuse through its array of owners who have conducted numerous renovations to bring it up to date with modern technologies or compete with other markets. It was conceived in late 1888 by banker Major Moses Speer as Americus was beginning to grow as a destination for those traveling to Florida. It was designed by Atlanta architect G.L. Norrman after his design beat out a simpler, square, wooden building. Construction began in mid-1890 with a grand opening celebration on June 16, 1892. In its early life, it was considered one of the grandest hotels and hosted many nationally notable guests. It's name is attributed to one of the leading business men of Americus, John Windsor, because it had an heir of elegance. However, it was hard hit by an economic depression and was sold in 1899. In 1910 it was renovated and updated to include electric lights, new elevators, telephones, and steam heat. It was sold again in 1930 to Mr. Howard Dayton of Daytona Beach, Florida, and later turned into apartments. The hotel was converted into a community for the elderly in 1950 with small apartments. Then in 1974, the hotel closed its doors and sat vacant until the community began investing in the Windsor once again, updating the uses and modernizing the features. Later in 1991, it was re-opened after a $6.5 million dollar renovation.
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION
Architectural style: Victorian and Queen Anne
Construction method: Masonry foundation
Physical description: The Windsor Hotel sits on almost an entire city block and consists of five floors with a three-story atrium lobby at the front entrance and hotel rooms off of the lobby. Shops, amenities, and a large dining room are also housed on the first floor. The exterior is all brick. There is a prominent, round, three-story protrusion on the façade in the southwest corner containing the bridal suite. There is also a square tower reaching above the fifth story, the highest point on the structure. There are many different window types (such as single- and double-hung sash windows, bay, dormer, picture, fixed, arched, and lancet) and roof lines (such as high-pitched gable, low-pitched hip, and cone) used throughout the building, creating an intricate and sophisticated façade. Many rooms have balconies with wrought iron rails.
Materials: Stone, brick (from a brickyard near Magnolia Dell in Americus), Golden oak wood
Condition: Parts of the Windsor are restored to their original condition, while others have been added on to and are now vacant.
Character defining features: Wide plank flooring, bay windows, arched windows, interior transom windows, plaster walls, exposed structural elements, high ceilings, tile flooring, curved metal balconies overlooking

CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES
ANALYSIS & PROPOSALS

Fourth Floor History:
Originally hotel room space, the fourth floor was remodeled along with much of the hotel into small apartments in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1987, the Windsor received a grant for its renovation as a senior center. Major alterations were performed in the 1980s to convert the fourth floor to private offices for a locally based corporation in hopes of gaining a steady stream of income. At this time, the HVAC system was updated to modern requirements and the ceiling height was dropped by 3’ to accommodate the new equipment. Their space included a reception area, individual offices, and a board room equipped with a bar. They leased the space for 10 years until 1996. It has sat vacant since, being used for storage of excess furniture and supplies.

Another area of the fourth floor, separate from the leased office space, once served as the service area of the hotel. It housed the laundry rooms and can be accessed by elevator or a stairwell near the kitchen. In recent years, the equipment has been removed and it has been used for an annual haunted house put on by the local college, Georgia Southwestern University.

Fifth Floor History:
The fifth floor was initially used as the Windsor Hotel’s ballroom and was host to a number of prestigious events. After 1912, it was converted to an indoor skating rink. Little documentation exists of this part of the fifth floor’s life. Later in the 1920s, it was renovated to be used as sample rooms for traveling salesmen. In the 1930s it was converted once again into small apartments. It was at this time that the steel truss and suspension system was installed and the distinctive tile floor laid for each apartment’s bathroom.

Fourth Floor Current Condition:

Fifth Floor Current Condition:

Phased Proposals:
We have structured our proposals as integrated phases that can stand in their own right or can be followed to the end point depending on what the market suggests the best use is over time. This will allow the owners to choose economically sounds practices in the restoration of the Windsor and ensure that not only is its past preserved, but its future is secured. To explore the historical motivations for each step, we assessed the Windsor’s many past uses and consulted the owners on what they saw for the building. The hotel has had a long history of adaptive reuse and this proposal will allow for the restoration of the building’s areas that have sat vacant and under utilized.
Phase 1: Reutilizing the Fourth and Fifth Floor
The goal of this phase is to not only prepare the fourth and fifth floors to be more adaptable to potential future uses or our proposed later phases, but also to create spaces that are usable as a phase independent and functional in itself. This step will be the most expensive and expansive of the phases because it entails the core preparation for the other phases. The main initiatives will be to:

- Change the fourth floor wall configuration to suit extended stay layout
- Restore the fourth floor wall height
- Re-vamp HVAC & plumbing to service fourth and fifth floor
- Re-open the ballroom space for events
- Complete stair access to fourth and fifth floors
- Prepare the fourth floor for second phase utilities and accessibility

Historical Value & Character defining features that imply this use:
Much of the original layout and materials of the fourth floor have been lost over time. The fourth floor was originally used as individual hotel rooms, converted to small apartments for the elderly in the 1950s, and later modernized to be a space for a private corporation's office. With this adaptive history and the previous use as apartments, our proposal is for an extended stay use. In its more recent renovation, the ceiling height was lowered to accommodate new mechanical and plumbing equipment. The floor plan is arranged so that the southern wing and the north-eastern wings as extended stay spaces can operate independently of the tower space and the roof terrace access point that will be the primary means of accessing the proposed second phase space. The bank of bathrooms will service the roof terrace space as well with the utilities space and the crawl space access point as a privacy wall between the extended stay and bathroom traffic.

The extended stay spaces each have kitchenettes and ample fenestration from the character defining windows with the original wood floors. The doors on the fourth floor will be the frames from the framing removed from the apartments on the fifth floor to celebrate the long standing history of the space as a residential space.

The fifth floor was originally used as the Windsor ballroom and we suggest returning it to an event space, and celebrating the and panoramic views of downtown Americus. While it has seen many uses since and survived by adapting to new demands, the character-defining windows on this floor make the most impact when the space is undivided as it was originally intended. This space although fragmented by the structural rods offers ample space for rentals for dinners, luncheons, meetings, dances, ballroom dance lessons, concerts, speakers, etc. Included are potential designs for transforming the rods that can tend to disappear with their thin silhouettes into lighting features that will celebrate the rods as sculptural and important structural and historical features. A small staging space for catering or equipment as a screened area can be adjacent to the elevator entrance space.
Reasons for configuration:
Fire: There is currently no fire escape available from the fifth floor. The current fire stairs need to be continued and to be extended to the fifth floor.
ADA: Accessibility guidelines will need to be referenced when future design takes place. Rest rooms, hand rails, and ample turning radius will need to be accounted for in this space.

Steps and considerations:
1. Complete the fifth floor stairwell to allow for easier access and the safety of the workers.
2. Remove the walls, ceilings, and carpeting from the 1980s reuse projects on the fourth floor. Once this is done, perform an assessment of the state of the exposed wood flooring and bare brick walls to determine if there are any remnants of the original materials.
3. Remove the fifth floor’s model apartment framing in preparation for opening the space to its original use. The door frames and hardware can be reintroduced in the final phase.
4. Remove the unused and heavy loads of the old piping systems on the crawl space and on the fifth floor. This removal is for structural longevity by removing loads and for opening up more space for new systems installation.
5. Remove deteriorated plaster from the fifth floor that was originally removed due to water damage and has had its integrity compromised.
6. Reopen the front facade windows that were bricked in the 1930s for the small apartment remodeling for a bathroom space.
7. Revisit and improve the restorations done to the fifth floor windows to ensure their usability and sealing capacity. Although we suggest leaving the windows uncovered, it may preferred by the owner to further insulate the space.
8. Install new utilities systems to service the upper and lower floors in what will be the 3 foot crawl space between the third and fourth floor. The discretion used in the access points to this utility space should follow the model of the lower floors.
9. Install foil or water insulation layer before installing new plaster walls on the fifth floor. Foam or fibrous insulation methods should be avoided due to proximity of the space to the roof and potential for any future leaking that would comprise a foam or fiber insulation. This will improve the thermal efficiency of the space as well as reintroducing the plaster walls.
10. Install new walls with the ceiling height raised to the original height at 3 feet below the level of the fifth floor. These walls should be of light constructions to minimize loads for the longevity of the space with the forethought of adaptability which has become the historical tradition of the fourth and fifth floors.
11. Decorate and furnish the fourth floor space with the same standards as found on the lower floors for the extended stay purpose.
12. Install lighting features and gathering space furniture for the fifth floor.
**Americus**

**Phase 2: Rethinking Potential Income Generators**

While the main focus of our proposals were on returning historic character to the “white box” fourth floor and making the fifth floor space usable once again, we also wanted to explore further options available to the hotel owners. This phase is flexible based on the market, and it will help the owners make use of the under performing areas of the building and create more amenities, generating income from a smaller investment. The Windsor suffers from not being able to offer a full range of services at this time, particularly in its lack of a full-scale restaurant and flexible event spaces. The goal of this phase will be to bring services into the Windsor in a way that will be both respectful of the building's roots and its future.

The three main initiatives will be to:

- Create roof terrace on fourth floor
- Convert current “haunted house” into restaurant
- Repair ceiling leaks and exterior damage to tower, add stair access to tower

**Historical Value & Character defining features that imply this use:**

When the Windsor was first constructed, the ballroom and dining room spaces were on the upper floors. Roof terraces were common extensions of indoor living space during the Victorian era and would be an ideal addition to the hotel's event space. The fourth floor space currently used for the haunted hotel tours is ideally suited to become a restaurant space. Although structurally it can no longer handle the equipment loads it was intended to hold as service wing and laundry space, it is directly accessible from the kitchen below with the service elevator, and can include a small final preparation kitchen space. There is little of original historic character left in this space as it has been stripped to the bones and will require extensive refinishing to return it to its initial condition.

The fourth floor restaurant area also offers access to the potential roof terrace and tower, an ideal extension of the Windsor's event space offerings and utilization of current dead space. This approach is important as it introduces a new entrance to the tower that does not need to go through the private extended stay areas. Making use of the roof will connect the tower and public restrooms completed during the first phase to the restaurant. This roof terrace will also harken back to the public Windsor Garden that stretched between the hotel and the old fire station and water tower before paved roads and parking lots took much of the downtown green space.

The fifth floor of the Windsor has undergone the most dramatic changes of any throughout its lifetime, and it has constantly adapted to the changing needs of the hotel and community. Although it grants the Windsor a rich history, many of the details and materials have been lost from the fifth floor's past lives and it has been structurally appended. Returning the level to more extended stay living would echo the time period in which it served as apartments for traveling salesmen.

**Reasons for configuration**

**Fire:** This floor currently has a core stairwell that meets the fire code in its materials and form, but it needs to be extended to the fifth floor as discussed in the first proposal.

**ADA:** Ramps will need to be added to meet accessibility requirements.

**Steps and considerations:**

1. Re-evaluate structural integrity of roof for suitability as terrace as well as fourth floor service area.
2. After approval from structural engineer, clean out fourth floor and finish within the Secretary of Interior's Standards to accommodate restaurant or event space. This will include a formal dining room, mechanically enhanced preparation area, and modernization of the dumbwaiter.
3. Refinish roof to insure waterproofing and finish as terrace. Install appropriate railings and safety code requirements. Replace window with door and appropriate access to roof.
4. Renovate tower and repair any damage from leaks or negligence. Add spiral stair to connect fourth floor to tower floor.
ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

Fire Safety Codes
It will be necessary to connect the fifth and fourth floors with the rest of the hotel by a continuous staircase built to current life safety standards in order to meet code. Completing the alterations proposed in the “Preservation Study: Windsor Hotel Americus, Georgia” (pgs 152-160) sponsored by the Middle Flint area Planning and Development will be the best means of providing a safe high and potentially high visitor volume space in the upper floors.

Structural Review
The plans for these upper floors were checked based on an estimate of the capacity of the existing structural elements. The fourth floor with its current reuse form implies that similar loads or functions can be applied to this floor. Such uses include: residential, office, meeting spaces, etc. Usage with light amounts of storage and traffic. The walls are only supporting the ceiling of the fourth floor; therefore structurally they are adaptable to the raising of the ceiling height and the reorganization of the walls for a new floor plan. The fourth floor space across the terrace has had significant water damage documented, and needs to be assessed for its load bearing potential.

The fifth floor is supported by wooden beams inserted into the brick walls, but they are heavily strengthened by the steel rod and truss system. The roof is supported by the wooden frame structure with a few contact points between the steel frame and the wood, the floor loads are not applied to the wooden roof truss. A basic estimate of the capacity of the steel rods and wood supports suggests that both there is the potential for residential and party space in the room. The calculations for this estimate as well as sources on assessing these values for historic steel work are included in the “Pertinent Documentation.”

References
Appendix

Sources


City of Americus, website, http://www.cityofamericus.net/


Sunter County/Sumter County Geographic Information System database: http://americus.binarybus.com/


The Vitrolite specialist: http://www.vitrolitespecialist.com/


Alan Anderson and the Sumter County Historical Society


Charlie Crisp, Mark Minick, Barbara Grogan, and Angie Singletary. Thank you, again!
Student Biographies

**Team 1**
James Bramlett is a fourth year undergraduate Architecture student from Winder, Georgia.

Mackenzie Madden is a first year graduate student of City and Regional Planning from Waldorf, Maryland, with a Bachelor of Arts in Advertising and Environmental Ethics.

Carly Smith is a second year undergraduate Architecture student from Suwanee, Georgia.

**Team 2**
Gillam Campbell is a first year graduate student of City and Regional Planning from Decatur, Georgia, with a Bachelor of Science in Public Policy.

Emily Lenke is an undergraduate Architecture student from Alpharetta, Georgia.

David Woods is an undergraduate Architecture student from Cleveland, Georgia.

**Team 3**
Rebecca Duncan is a fifth year undergraduate Architecture student from Newnan, Georgia.

Parker Mink is a master student in Structural Engineering from Nashville, Tennessee, with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering.

Alison Pak is a fourth year Industrial Design student from Atlanta, Georgia.

**Team 4**
John Bennett is a graduating Civil Engineering masters student specializing in Structures from Charleston, South Carolina.

Jessica Greenstein is a third year undergraduate Architecture student from Norcross, Georgia.

Natasha Sanjaya is a third year undergraduate Architecture student from Lawrenceville, Georgia.

**Team 5**
Jacob Davis is a master student of Architecture graduating in December from Ringgold, Georgia.

Anchit Nair is an undergraduate Electrical Engineering and Economic student from Dubai, UAE.

Caitlyn Simpson is a second year Architecture student interested in residential real estate, city planning, and real estate law from Macon, Georgia.

**Team 6**
Ken Dornstauder is a fourth year Chemical Engineering student from Wilmington, Delaware.

Jill Frederickson is a second year graduate student of Architecture from Santa Barbara, California, with a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture.

Timothy Niou is a third year undergraduate Architecture student from the Pacific Northwest.

**Team 7**
Clayton Burnett is a fourth year Industrial Design student from Dunwoody, Georgia.

Alyssa McKay is an undergraduate Architecture student from Greer, Virginia.

Jessi Pierce is a Master of Architecture student with a concentration in Urban Design and Facilities Management with a Bachelors of Science in Architecture from Lawrenceville, Georgia.

**Team 8**
Allison Bahe, is a Master of Architecture graduate student from Madison, Wisconsin with a Bachelor of Science from the University of Minnesota.

Olivia King is a sophomore Architecture student from Huntsville, Alabama.

Keren Siebner is a senior undergraduate Industrial Engineering student from Israel.

**Team 9**
Emily Marvel is a Master of Architecture student from Gainesville, Florida.

Allison Ostis is a fifth year undergraduate Industrial Engineering student with a minor in Multidisciplinary Design from Alpharetta, Georgia.

Melissa Ting is an undergraduate Architecture student from Norcross, Georgia.

**Team 10**
Katie Braswell is a graduating fourth year Architecture student from Marietta, Georgia, with an interest in historic preservation.

Maggie Smith is a third year Civil Engineering student with an Architectural History minor from Augusta, Georgia.

Akila Srinivasan is a senior undergraduate Electrical Engineering student from Dubai, UAE.

Paige Thomas is a Building Construction student from Athens, Georgia.