

NOV 20 1979

County Hamilton

Inventory # I-10-677

Temp. Field # 11

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

Historic Name Medical Arts Building Common Name Same

Owner First Presbyterian Church Address McCallie Avenue

Property Location Between First Presbyterian Church and Interstate Life

Insurance Building facing McCallie Avenue

Map: Quad Name Chattanooga No. 105-SE Edition 1969

Historical Data: Date of Construction 1928 Source _____

An "ultra-modern" skyscraper designed as a specially-equipped medical office building. Tenants, the architect, the builder, and the previous property owner of the land (Adolph Ochs) owned stock in the enterprise; the latter three, in lieu of payments due them. Each of the 43 medical suites was constructed according to the desires of the doctors to occupy them.

(See Attached Sheet)

Informant _____ Address _____

Present Use Offices Original Use Medical Offices

Original Location Yes Moved? _____ Date _____

Site Bldg. XX Structure _____ Object _____ Part of District Thematic

Areas of Significance Architecture

Eligible for NR? Yes Why? The building represents Hunt's transitional phase from Neo-Classicism to Art Deco and contains several significant Art Deco elements superimposed on the traditional skyscraper design.

Property endangered? NO By what? _____

Photos: B&W: Roll # _____ Frame # _____ Date taken _____ By _____

Color: Roll # _____ Frame # _____ Date taken _____ By _____

Location of Negative _____ Comments _____

Recorded by: Martha Carver Date Recorded: February, 1979

Address: Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission

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Architectural Data: Construction: Frame Log Brick XX Stone

No. of stories 10 Roof type flat Material Original?

Wall covering: weatherboard B&B Vertical board None XX

Tongue and Grooved Sawn Other

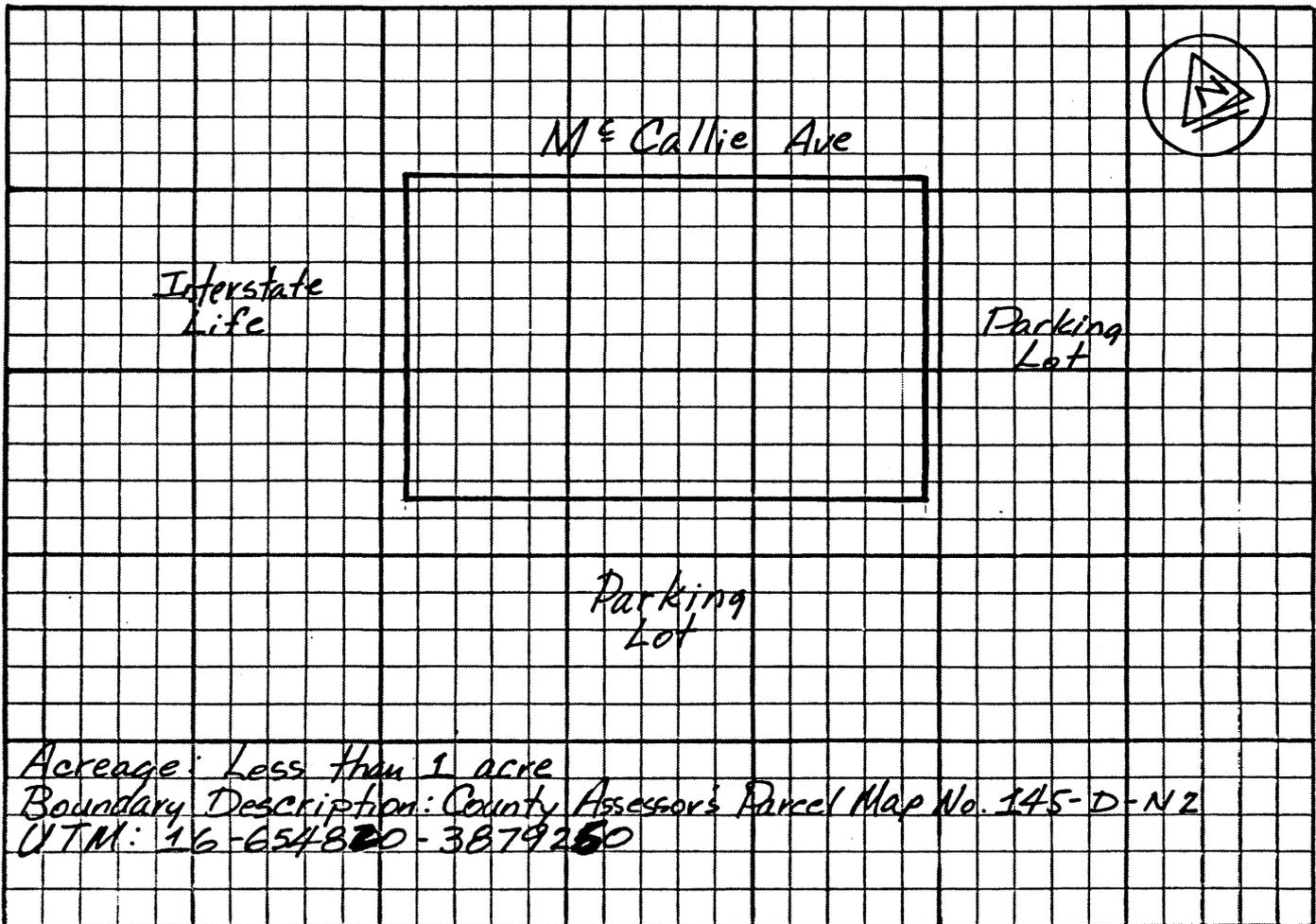
Chimney: No. Location Material

Foundation: Pier Stone Brick XX Other

Basic Plan Rectangular

Architectural Notes Functional medical office building with facade and roof treatment of arches and raised projections. Vaulted alabaster lobby with marble trim. German brass chandliers with frosted glass, walnut wood trim and doors; upper floors designed for efficiency and utility as medical suites.

Sketch Plan Below (include North, door and window locations, etc.):



R. H. Hunt Thematic District
Medical Arts Building
Field No. 11
Page Two

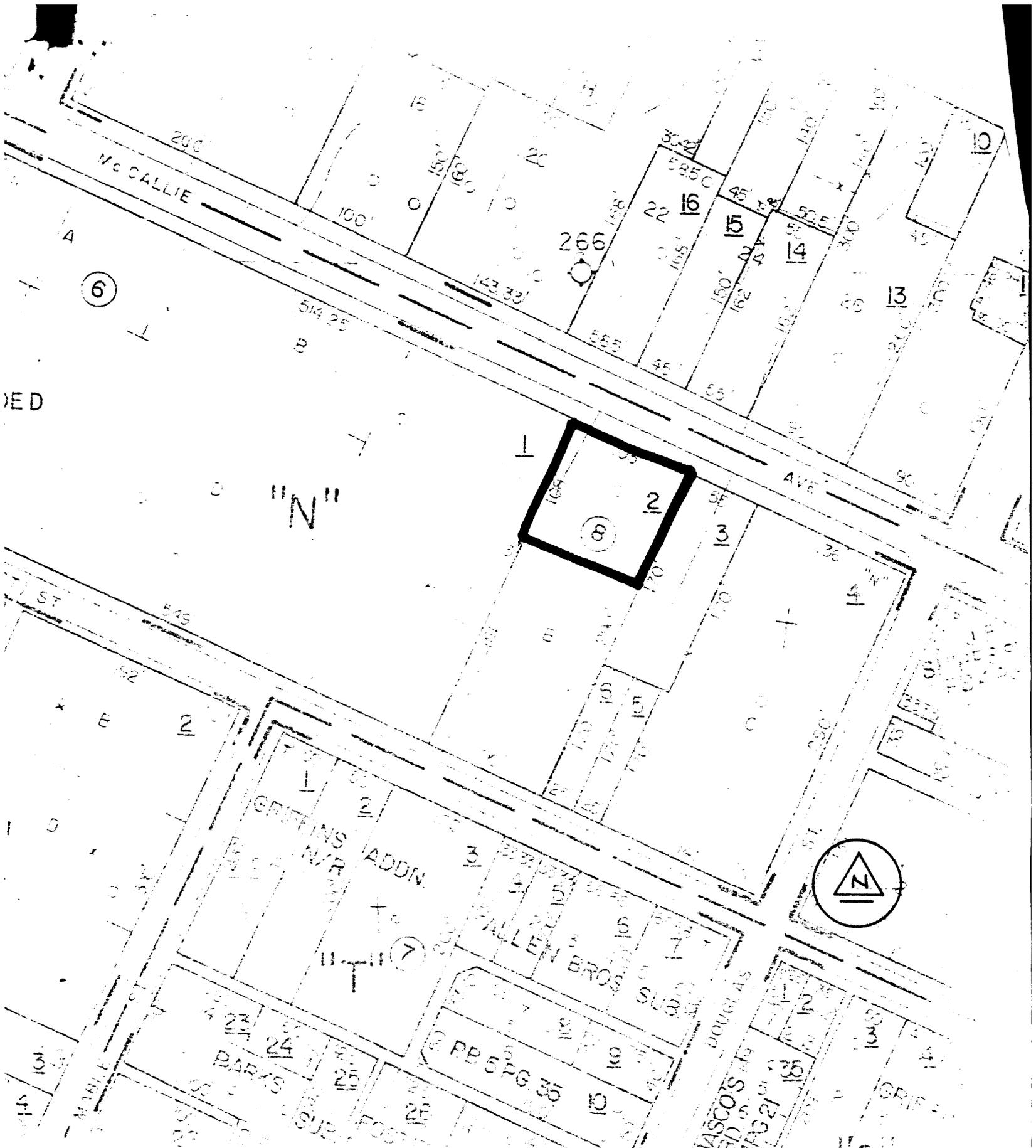
Both the Medical Arts Building and the Chattanooga Bank Building were constructed in the late 1920s and reflect Hunt's passage from Classical Revival influences into the Art Deco period. While neither building is completely Art Deco in execution, they both represent Hunt's evolution as an architect dealing with changing styles as well as representing the historical evolution of the Art Deco style which originated in the mid-1920s but did not fully develop until the 1930s. While Hunt's U.S. Federal Building (1932, #13) is his--and Chattanooga's--most outstanding Art Deco structure, these two buildings reflect this significant transitional period.

Although Hunt designed many office buildings, this appears to be his only building specifically designed to contain medical offices. Feeling that this type of organized medical facility was distinctly needed in Chattanooga, a special arrangement allowed the architect, builder, and the previous property owner (Adolph S. Ochs, owner and editor of the NEW YORK TIMES) to receive stock in the building rather than cash payments for their services in what seemed to be a risky venture. Also, these people and several tenants purchased stocks as an investment. Financially, the investment did do poorly and only through the efforts of Ochs descendants, who donated his one-fifth share of the bonds after his death to the investment group, was the organization able to continue.

Architecturally, the building reflects the traditional skyscraper form of a rectangular structure with three visual divisions (two-story base, shaft, and a decorative cornice usually featuring Classical motifs). Yet in this case, the trim is Art Deco. This can be seen in the base and roofline treatments. On the second floor, the fine bays are topped with rounded arches which create a visual band delineating this area of the building. Each of these bays is divided by a projecting two-story span topped by a staggered element in a chevron shape creating the impression of a ziggurat. This staggered chevron/ziggurat element is repeated along the roofline.

While not as outstanding as the U.S. Federal Building, the Medical Arts Building is nevertheless an excellent example of transitional architecture featuring several important geometric elements of the Art Deco style. Historically, it is important as an example of an effort by Chattanooga's Citizens to modernize their medical facilities. Thus, it is fitting that the traditional decorative elements chosen to accompany the skyscraper design are modernistic rather than the more traditional Neo-Classical motifs which characterize much of Hunt's work.

JUN 25 1980



Medical Arts Building 145-D-N2 1" = 100'

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