

# NOMINATION PROPOSAL - FLORIDA

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

DIVISION OF ARCHIVES, HISTORY AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT - FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS

## 1 NAME MRNS# 16

HISTORIC U. S. Post Office/Federal Building

AND/OR COMMON

Social Security Building

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 111 S. Orange Avenue

CITY, TOWN  
Sarasota

VICINITY OF N/A

Sarasota

STATE  
Florida

COUNTY

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME General Services Administration  
Richard B. Russell Federal Building

STREET & NUMBER  
75 Spring Street S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Atlanta

VICINITY OF

STATE  
GA

ZIP CODE

30303

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Sarasota County Courthouse Recording Department

STREET & NUMBER

Room 10, 2000 Main Street P.O. Box 3079

CITY, TOWN

Sarasota

STATE  
FL

ZIP CODE  
33578

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Florida Master Site File (FMSF) #8So380  
and Historic, Architectural and Archaeological Survey of Sarasota (HAASS)

DATE

FMSF: 1977 HAASS: 1982  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Division of Archives, History and Records Management Dept. of State

CITY, TOWN

The Capitol

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida 32301

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED. DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

### SUMMARY OF PRESENT AND ORIGINAL PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Federal Building or Post Office located at 111 South Orange Avenue is a Neoclassical Revival Style steel skeleton frame and pile foundation structure, completed in 1934 according to the plans of George Albree Freeman, Harold N. Hall and supervising architect Louis A. Simon.<sup>1-2</sup> The Post Office is sited on a plot of approximately 0.98 acres and the property is bounded by a balustraded stone railing consisting of vase-shaped stone balusters. Not only does the railing punctuate the property line but it creates a visual buffer against the traffic generated by South Orange Avenue at the west and Ringling Boulevard at the southern perimeter of the Post Office site. The west or main entrance elevation of the stone Neoclassical Revival structure is approached by a series of stone steps which provides access to the central colonnade or loggia entrance. The west elevation is an 11-bay facade, the entrance pavilion is marked by a 9-bay Colonnade of 8 Corinthian capitalled columns in antis. Three entrances were originally provided at the west elevation loggia. Doors formerly located at the third and seventh bays have been enclosed with stone (date unknown). At the second story eight windows appear and mark the nine-bay divisions. The parapet which tops the central pavilion or colonnade is a compressed pediment which intersects with a balustraded parapet which appears at the northern and southern end of the west elevation. The massing of the north and south elevations is similar with the exception of a seven-bay arched loggia which appears at the central recessed section of the southern elevation. The detailing of this arched loggia hyphen is a system of round-arched openings which spring from stylized Neoclassical Revival Style impost blocks. The north elevation is divided into eleven bays; however, in massing there are three distinct divisions--a pair of projecting pavilions flank a recessed facade. A one-story brick loading dock was added to the east elevation circa 1955. Although the sterile brick addition is unsympathetic in handling, the extension is located at the rear or east elevation of the Federal Building complex and the negative impact, therefore, is not readily apparent. The Federal Building or Post Office is currently the Sarasota office of the Social Security Agency and the building has been recognized as a significant property by the General Services Administration.<sup>3</sup>

### TEXT SUPPORTING SUMMARY OF PRESENT AND ORIGINAL PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Federal Building located at the east side of S. Orange Avenue at the corner of Ringling Boulevard was built beginning in 1932 according to the plans of George Albree Freeman and Harold N. Hall and the supervising architect, Louis A. Simon.<sup>4</sup> Completed in 1934, the construction cost of the Federal Building was subsidized by an appropriation of \$175,000 which was allocated by Congress in 1931 as part of the Works Project Association.<sup>5</sup> Located on a site of approximately 0.98 acres, the federal building lot measures 205' x 200'.<sup>6</sup> Built on a pile foundation with flat concrete slab and steel skeleton frame construction, the two-story Federal Building exhibits an exterior stone facade designed in the Neoclassical Revival Style.

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The western facade which fronts on S. Orange Avenue consists of an 11-bay facade, the main entrance is located at the center bay. The entrance pavilion consists of a 9-bay facade or colonnade of eight Corinthian capiteled columns in antis. Entrance is provided to the high based west elevation by a series of gradually sloped stone steps. The floor of the loggia or porch area is a flagstone surfacing with a circular pattern located at the threshold of each door opening. Fluted round-globed lamp standards of oxidized bronze flank the central pavilion and appear also at the south elevation. Three entry doors originally provided access at the western elevation. Entrance openings were formerly located at the third, fifth and seventh bays of the central entrance pavilion. The third and seventh bay doors were removed, and these openings were enclosed with stone at an unknown date. The central door is flanked by a pair of metal torcheres with frosted globes. Eight windows appear at the bay demarcations at the second story of the central pavilion porch. Fenestration is regular and symmetrical and consists of metal casement windows with eight-light configurations per leaf and an eight light transom window at the ground floor level. Blind niches appear at each end of the loggia or colonnade. The entablature of the central pavilion is a combination of parapet and cornice. Cornice ornamentation includes the use of modillions and stylized acanthus leaves similar in form to the acanthus leaves of the column capitals below. A gradually-sloped pedimented parapet appears above the cornice level of the central pavilion. This parapet projection wraps around the corner of the central compressed pediment and intersects with a balustrated parapet located at the north and southern wings of this elevation.

The property is marked by a balustrated stone railing; the balusters resemble the parapet balustrade; however, each vase-shaped baluster of the property railing is spaced at a wider interval.

The south elevation of 111 S. Orange Avenue faces onto busy Ringling Boulevard but is somewhat buffered by the generous site and visually buffered by the use of the vase-shaped stone balustrade which surrounds the property line. The massing of north and southern elevations is similar. The western block of the south elevation consists of a two-bay facade topped by a stone balustrated parapet and pierced by metal casement windows. The cornice of this block reflects the trabeated form of the second floor windows forming a stylized label lintel above each of the two window openings. Similar handling appears at the easternmost block of the south elevation. A seven-bay arched loggia appears at the central section of the southern elevation. Interior access is provided at each end of this loggia hyphen; entrance is also provided at the center bay. The detailing of this arched loggia is a system of recessed round-arched openings which spring from stylized Neoclassical impost blocks. Arched windows set within recessed surrounds with Neoclassical ornamentation are located at the ground floor of the interior loggia wall.

The north elevation of the Federal building is divided into eleven bays; however, in massing there are three distinct divisions. The central pavilion is recessed and indeed lower in height than the end wings of the north elevation. The entablature of the north elevation is identical to that of the south facade described above including the use of a block cornice which terminates at the lintel level of the second story windows creating an image of a label lintel. Brick visible at the south elevation is a one-story addition, which was built in 1955. Discussion of this loading dock extension is covered in the east elevation description that follows.

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The eastern elevation is the most altered of the four elevations. At the second-story level, metal hinged windows occur in deeply recessed surrounds. The sill level of these second floor windows intersects with the entablature and low parapeted roof which extends around the rear elevation or eastern facade of the Post Office Building. A one story brick loading dock extension was added circa 1955. The extension loading dock is a flat-roofed structure with wide overhang. A recessed entranceway running the course of the one-story loading dock is the only opening provided in this sterile brick extension building. Although unsympathetic in handling, the loading dock is located at the rear or eastern elevation of the Federal Building complex and in no way jeopardizes the eligibility of the Federal Building.

The interior of the building has been drastically altered although there are several original fittings. The aluminum front doors are ornamented with a decorative grille. Lobby area still retains its marble wainscoting and applied pilasters; however, most of the interior space has been altered by the use of modern lighting, in particular the use of fluorescent bulbs. These unfortunate alterations date to a renovation which occurred circa 1965.<sup>7</sup>

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Work of George Albee Freeman
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

**SPECIFIC DATES**

**BUILDER/ARCHITECT** George Albee Freeman, New York City and Sarasota; Harold N. Hall, Sarasota (Louis A. Simon, supervising architect)/contractor, Worsham Brothers of Knoxville, Tennessee

**SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Neoclassical Revival Style stone facade building located at 111 South Orange Avenue was constructed as a U.S. Post Office with a WPA federal subsidy of \$175,000.<sup>8</sup> The erection of the Post Office created construction jobs in Sarasota, despite the fact that the supervising contracting firm was the  Worsham Brothers of Knoxville, Tennessee. The plans of the Neoclassical Revival Style Post Office were supplied by George Albee Freeman, Harold N. Hall and supervising architect Louis A. Simon.<sup>9-10</sup> The Post Office is also significant as presumably the last executed monumental design by the nationally renowned architect George Albee Freeman, whose oeuvre includes: a Shingle Style residence designed in partnership with the prominent architect, Bruce Price,<sup>11</sup> as well as the Residence of Mr. Powell Crosley, "Seagate," which was officially listed on the National Register in February of 1983. Mr. Freeman died November 22, 1934.<sup>12</sup> The Neoclassical Revival Style building is significant for the quality of design and craftsmanship, in particular the use of finely carved stone ornament, exemplified by the carved stone Corinthian columns located at the west elevation colonnade. The structure also employs innovative building materials including the use of aluminum ornamentation at the interior of the Post Office. The Federal Building or Post Office is an example of the fourth phase of the development of Sarasota (1930-1935).

**TEXT SUPPORTING SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Federal Building located at 111 S. Orange Avenue was constructed as a U. S. Post Office with a WPA federal subsidy of \$175,000 appropriated by Congress in 1931.<sup>13</sup> Plans for the Neoclassical Revival Style Post Office were prepared by George Albee Freeman, his associate, Harold N. Hall and supervising architect, Louis A. Simon.<sup>14-15</sup> The test borings for the foundations were prepared by the local Sarasota contractor, C. W. Matheny and the plans of George Albee Freeman and H. N. Hall were approved at the Washington level by August of 1932.<sup>16</sup>

A contemporary newspaper clipping described the building as a "Classical design of the Corinthian type, fireproofed throughout with steel structure piling in the foundations. The most modern plumbing, heating and ventilating equipment will be installed. One radical innovation in the new Post Office will be the use of marble and aluminum where metal is ordinarily employed in parts of the building used by the public."<sup>17</sup> Although Neoclassical Revival in style, several design elements and materials were indeed innovative for the time; in particular, the suppressed or implied parapet which appears at the western elevation and the use of aluminum at the interior.

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The Federal Building or Post Office is an example of the fourth building period phase (1930-1935) represented in the Multiple Resource Nomination for the City of Sarasota. Following the collapse of the land boom in Sarasota and the subsequent national Depression, new construction projects signaling recovery were heralded in the local press. The arrival of the Kress Company Building in Sarasota (see MRNS #7, S. H. Kress Building located at 1442 Main Street) received major press coverage in 1931 and the allocation in 1931 of Federal funds for the erection of the Post Office received equally enthusiastic coverage. Although the supervising contracting firm was the Worsham Brothers of Knoxville, Tennessee, Federal money and new construction created construction jobs in Sarasota.<sup>18</sup>

The Post Office designs were created by George Albree Freeman who was born in 1859 in New York and practiced architecture in Stanford, Connecticut the latter part of the Nineteenth Century.<sup>19</sup> Mr. Freeman also practiced architecture in New York City where he shared an office at 28 W. 23rd Street with the nationally prominent architect Bruce Price.<sup>20</sup> Together Freeman and Price designed a Shingle Style residence (Seacroft) located near Seabright, New Jersey. The drawings for the resort shingle style house are dated 1882.<sup>21</sup> Freeman's architectural commissions in New York include a Neo-Georgian building dated 1904, extant at 128 East 44th Street.<sup>22</sup> George Albree Freeman first appears in Polk's Sarasota City Directory in 1926 with an office listed as 12 Blackburn Building located at 113 South Palm Avenue.<sup>23</sup> George Albree Freeman was also the architect of record for the residence of Mr. Powell Crosley, Jr., located in greater Sarasota with plans prepared June, 1929.<sup>24</sup> The residence of Mr. Powell Crosley, also known as Seagate, was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places in February of 1983. Freeman was a versatile and eclectic architect designing everything from Shingle Style seasonal residences to high style Mediterranean Revival mansions such as Seagate, as well as a Neo-Georgian townhouse in New York City, and finally, the Neoclassical Post Office or Federal Building in Sarasota, Florida. George Albree Freeman died November 22, 1934.<sup>25</sup> The Federal Building or new Post Office was presumably Mr. Freeman's last executed design.

The associate architect of the Federal Building, Harold N. Hall, was a local engineer and architect who was the architect of record for the Woman's Club located at 1241 N. Palm Avenue (please refer to MRNS #23, Woman's Club).

In summary, the Post Office Building or Federal Building, located at 111 S. Orange Avenue is significant in the use of stylized Neoclassical Revival Style ornamentation. Quality of craftsmanship is represented in the carved elements, in particular, the handling of the acanthus leaves of the Corinthian capitals which appear at the colonnade of the west elevation. The interpretation of Neoclassical Revival Style motifs is academic in handling. Neoclassical elements are applied to the building in an academic and accurate manner, such as the string courses, modillioned entablatures and columns in antis. The Neoclassical ornamentation, however, is not "parroted." Stylized elements appear, including the use of an implied pediment, which appears above the 9-bay loggia doors located at the west elevation, the modern material grilles being Neoclassical in form, the material being innovative. The Federal Building is a prominent building on a landmark site. Number 111 S. Orange is significant as an example of the building industry in Sarasota and a product of the Works Progress Administration. Finally, it is the last monumental design project executed by the architect George Albree Freeman.<sup>26</sup>

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NOTES FOR NOMINATION PROPOSAL - FLORIDA  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
MULTIPLE RESOURCE NOMINATION SARASOTA

- <sup>1</sup>Sarasota Herald, August 23, 1932, front page.
- <sup>2</sup>Cornerstone located at west elevation of 111 South Orange Avenue.
- <sup>3</sup>General Services Administration - Region 4. Federal Building, Sarasota, Florida, Survey, December 1977.
- <sup>4</sup>Sarasota Herald, August 23, 1932, front page.
- <sup>5</sup>Sarasota Herald, April 12, 1932, front page.
- <sup>6</sup>U. S. Post Office Plat Showing Lot and Reference Monuments. Plat prepared by C. H. Johnson, Engineer and Surveyor, October 13, 1934. CF-182 located at Sarasota County Historical Commission Archives, Sarasota, Florida.
- <sup>7</sup>General Services Administration--Region 4. Federal Building, Sarasota, Florida, Architectural and Historical Survey, prepared December, 1977.
- <sup>8</sup>Sarasota Herald, April 12, 1932, front page.
- <sup>9</sup>Sarasota Herald, May 12, 1932.
- <sup>10</sup>Cornerstone located at west elevation of 111 South Orange Avenue.
- <sup>11</sup>Vincent Scully, Jr., The Shingle Style and The Stick Style, 1955; reprint, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973, illustration #103.
- <sup>12</sup>Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased. Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingells, Inc., 1970, p. 221.
- <sup>13</sup>Sarasota Herald, April 12, 1932, front page.
- <sup>14</sup>Sarasota Herald, May 12, 1932.
- <sup>15</sup>Cornerstone located at west elevation of 111 South Orange Avenue.
- <sup>16</sup>Sarasota Herald, August 23, 1932.
- <sup>17</sup>Sarasota Herald, May 12, 1932, front page.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup>Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased. Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingells, Inc., 1970, p. 221.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Item Number: 7 (Description), 8 (Significance)

Page Number:

<sup>20</sup>Dennis Steadman Francis, Architects in Practice, New York City, 1840-1900,  
New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1980, pp. 32-63.

<sup>21</sup>Vincent J. Scully, Jr., The Shingle Style and the Stick Style, 1955; reprint,  
New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973, illustration #103.

<sup>22</sup>New York City, Landmarks Preservation Commission, Urban Cultural Resources  
Survey, Computer Survey of Manhattan.

<sup>23</sup>Polk's Sarasota City Directory, 1926, p. 353.

<sup>24</sup>George Albree Freeman, Residence for Mr. Powell Crosley, Jr., Sarasota,  
Florida, original drawings six sheets, June, 1929, on file, Tichener and Lindner,  
Architects, Inc., Sarasota, Florida.

<sup>25</sup>Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American  
Architects, Deceased. Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingells, Inc., 1970, p. 221.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.



Site Name Historic Resources of the  
City of Sarasota  
(Partial Inventory:  
Historic and Architectural  
Properties)

CONTINUATION SHEET

Item Number: 9 (Bibliographical References)

Page Number:

- Francis, Dennis Steadman. Architects in Practice New York City 1840-1900.  
New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1980.
- Freeman, George Albree. "Residence for Mr. Powell Crosley, Jr., Sarasota,  
Florida." Original Drawings, 6 Sheets, drawn by Ivo de Minicis, June, 1929.  
On file: Tichener & Lindner Architects, Inc., Sarasota, Florida.
- General Services Administration--Region 4. Federal Building Sarasota, Florida,  
Survey, December, 1977.
- New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. Urban Cultural Resources  
Survey Department. Computer Survey of Manhattan.
- Polk's Sarasota City Directory. Jacksonville: R. L. Polk and Company, 1926.
- Sarasota Herald. May 12, 1932. May 21, 1932. July 12, 1932. August 23, 1932.  
Microfilm on file, Sarasota Public Library, Sarasota, Florida.
- Scully, Vincent J., Jr. The Shingle Style and the Stick Style. New Haven:  
Yale University Press, 1955; reprint, 1973.
- Withey, Henry F. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased.  
Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970.

# 9 BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Site Size (Approx. Acreage of Property):

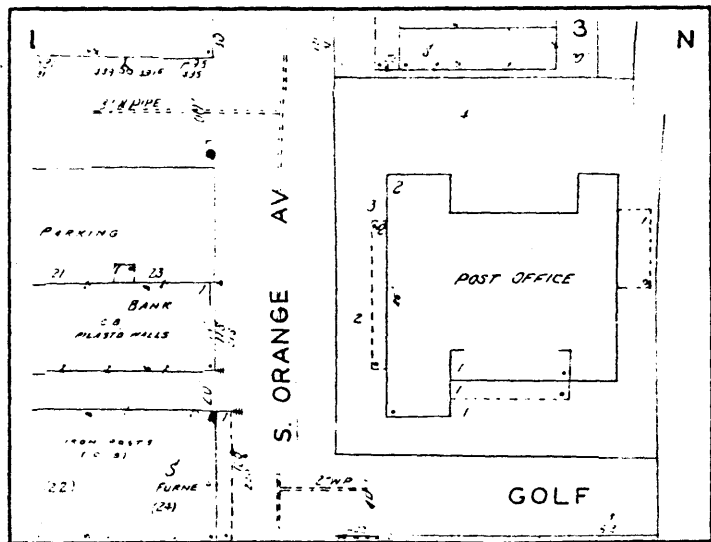
Less than 1

UTM Coordinates:

1 7 3 4 7 8 9 0 3 0 2 4 4 0 0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

USGS Sarasota 7.5 1973

Township	Range	Section
T36S	R18E	19



### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Board of Public Instruction Resub, Block H, POS 2/72 / Block No, B / Lot Nos. 1-6

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

### 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sarah Latham Kearns / Preservation Consultant, City of Sarasota

ORGANIZATION

c/o Planning Department

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall P.O. Box 1058

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Sarasota

STATE

Florida.

ZIP CODE

33578

