United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Pro	perty					
historic name	M.C. Kiser Company	Building				
other names/site	ther names/site number					
2. Location						
street & number	210 Pryor Street, SV	ľ			N/A	not for publication
city or town At	lanta				N/A	vicinity
state Georgia		GA county	Fulton	code 121	zip coo	
	Agency Certification				-2.000	
I hereby certify for registering prequirements so In my opinion, to be considered so national Signature of certify Historic Preserval State or Federal age	properties in the Nation et forth in 36 CFR Parameter forth in 36 CFR Parameter for the property X measignificant at the following official Time: Dr. David the properties of	tion request nal Register of H t 60. ets does not ving level(s) of sig	for determination storic Places and meet the Nation gnificance:	on of eligibility mend meets the product of meets the product of the meets the product of the meets the product of the meets of the mee	edural and	cumentation standards I professional mmend that this property
Signature of comm	property meets do	es not meet the Nati	onal negister citter	Date	_	
Title		State or Feder	al agency/bureau c	r Tribal Government		
4. National Pa	rk Service Certificat		* 1			
	the National Register	al Register		ermined eligible for th		egister
Signature of the K	Geeper			Date of Action	/ /	

(Expires 5/31/2012)

M.C. Kiser Company Building Name of Property	Fulton County, Georgia County and State			
		County and St	ale	
5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)	Category of Property (Check only one box.)	Number of Reso (Do not include previ	ources within Pro	operty in the count.)
		Contributing	Noncontributin	ıg
X private	X building(s)	1	0	buildings
public - Local	district	0	0	sites
public - State	site	0	0	structures
public - Federal	structure	0	0	objects
	object	1	0	Total
Name of related multiple pro (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a	perty listing multiple property listing)	Number of cont listed in the Nat	ributing resourc	es previously
N/A		N/A		
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)		Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)		
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store		DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling		
COMMERCE/TRADE: wareho	use			
COMMERCE/TRADE: busines	s			
7. Description		Matarial-		
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)	Materials (Enter categories fro	m instructions.)		
NO STYLE		foundation: CONCRETE		
		walls: BRICK		
		roof:		
				
		other:		

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Narrative Description

Name of Property

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The M.C. Kiser Company Building is a three-story, masonry commercial building with a full basement located on a gently sloping lot in south downtown Atlanta at the intersection of Trinity Avenue and Pryor Street. Constructed in 1923 to house the M.C. Kiser Company's Shield Brand Shoes line manufacturing and wholesale retail operations, the building is an example of the two-part commercial block type, with retail on the ground floor and factory and warehouse functions on the upper floors. The building's exterior walls are constructed of brick in common bond, and the interior consists of "slow burning" or "mill" heavy timber construction that allowed for largely open floor plans. Due to its utilitarian function, the building is mostly devoid of ornamentation with the exception of its front, western façade. The three-story, front facade facing Pryor Street consists of three bays delineated by four brick pilasters that extend slightly above the parapet wall. The uppermost portion of each pilaster is adorned with terra cotta panels depicting stacked stylized leaves topped by a lion's head. Additionally, a terra cotta panel at the top of the central bay reads "M.C. Kiser Co." The northern elevation facing Trinity Street consists of 11 bays also defined by pilasters, with the outermost pairs of pilasters mimicking those of the front elevation. As the lot slopes down to the rear, the walkout basement is visible on the Trinity Street elevation and reveals a full four floors towards the eastern side. Four floors are also visible on the rear or eastern elevation, which consists of three bays, the outer two of which have arched openings into the basement. There are three different eras of windows on the main elevations of the building: the original multi-light metal windows occupy the exposed basement bays and rear elevation; large 1970s metal windows with one or two double-hung windows surrounded by multiple lights are located in the upper floors of the western and northern facades; and metal storefront windows from the 2017 rehabilitation occupy the first floor bays. The southern elevation is devoid of fenestration with the exception of two windows added during the 2017 rehabilitation. This recent rehabilitation converted the historically open plan of the building into apartments, partitioning the open spaces with metal stud walls clad in gypsum board. The rehabilitation retained original exposed brick and heavy timber posts and beams, uncovered and restored the original wood floors, exposed the beadboard floor planks that were historically visible with unfinished ceilings, and repaired plaster along the exterior walls. During this rehabilitation, two adjacent buildings not historically associated with the M.C. Kiser Company Building were connected to it, but these are not within the proposed boundary.

Narrative Description

(The following description is taken from the March 13, 2018 "Post-Rehabilitation Narrative Description" that was prepared by Brian LaBrie of Ray, Ellis, & LaBrie Consulting, LLC, and edited by Olivia Head, National Register Specialist, Historic Preservation Division. It is on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Stockbridge, Georgia.)

Setting

The M.C. Kiser Company Building is located in urban, south downtown Atlanta. Once considered downtown Atlanta, the area surrounding the building is bordered by two railroad lines to the north and west and is primarily composed of commercial block buildings ranging from one to five stories in height (photographs 1- 3 and 8). Institutional buildings ranging from two to five stories comprise the majority of nonhistoric construction in the immediate vicinity. The M.C. Kiser Company Building is approximately one block southwest of the Atlanta City Hall.

In general, there is minimal landscaping related to the rectangular-shaped building (photograph 3). The M.C. Kiser Company Building occupies the entire original tax parcel fronting on Pryor Street to the west, Trinity Avenue to the north, an unnamed alley to the east, and the adjacent lot to the south (photographs 4, 10, and 13). The adjacent lot has a paved parking area to its rear that is accessed by the alley to the rear of the M.C. Kiser Company Building, and an alley along the south side of this lot.

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The M.C. Kiser Company Building is a rectangular, three-story brick masonry building with a full basement located on a lot that gently slopes down to the rear (photograph 3). The building's brick is laid in a common bond pattern consisting of five rows of stretcher bricks separated by one row of header bricks (photograph 11). Constructed to house the manufacturing and wholesale distribution of a shoe company, the building is a good example of the two-part commercial block with retail on the ground floor indicated by storefront windows and manufacturing, warehousing, and office functions in the aesthetically differentiated upper floors (photograph 4). Typical of many two-part commercial blocks and utilitarian buildings, the M.C. Kiser Company Building has only minimal ornamentation, consisting of eight terra cotta panels featuring stacked, stylized leaves topped by a lion head on each of the building's tallest, pointed pilasters and a terra cotta sign panel at the top of the central bay of the front (west) façade, which reads "M.C. Kiser Co." (photograph 7).

The building's maroon-brick façade (or west elevation) fronts on Pryor Street and is composed of three bays delineated by four pointed pilasters that rise above the building's parapet wall. Large metal storefront windows installed during the building's 2017 rehabilitation occupy the ground floor, spanning the entire width of each bay (photograph 4). Similarly, c.1970 metal windows span the width of each bay of the upper two stories. These grouped metal windows currently consist of two one-over-one, double-hung windows enclosing or surrounded by fixed panes, all topped by smaller, square, fixed panes. Each fixed pane replaced a c.1970 aluminum panel during the 2017 rehabilitation (photograph 6). Cast stone sills are beneath each of the upper-story windows, while a stucco bulkhead is below each storefront window (photographs 5-6). A single-leaf glass and metal door enters the building in the façade's southernmost bay (photograph 4).

The M.C. Kiser Company Building's north, side elevation fronts on Trinity Avenue, whose downward slope to the east reveals the building's walkout basement (photographs 1-3 and 13). Like the facade, this side elevation was constructed of maroon brick, indicating its relative importance as a street-facing elevation. This elevation consists of 11 bays, again divided by pilasters. Two pairs of pilasters on the western- and easternmost ends of the building mirror those of the front elevation with terracotta panels and pointed ends framing a parapet wall (photographs 13-14). The three westernmost bays of the first floor contain the same storefront windows and stucco bulkheads as the front elevation (photograph 15). The remaining c.1970 grouped windows with cast stone sills on the first through third floors are similar to those on front elevation, except each only has one one-over-one, double-hung window flanked by fixed panels (photographs 13-14). All windows on this elevation similarly span the entire width of the bays. Aside from a c.1970 recessed entry added to the third bay from the east, the basement level contains original metal windows (photograph 13).

The walkout basement is fully visible on the rear (east) elevation (photographs 10 and 13). This elevation was constructed with lighter-colored brick but contains maroon-brick quoining at its northern corner (photograph 13). The rear elevation contains three bays, but unlike the front and north elevations, these bays are not delineated by pilasters, as the rear of the building would not have been as visible to the public as the other two. The basement level of this elevation, however, contains two segmental-arched loading door openings in the outer bays that were outfitted with modern glass storefront systems during the 2017 rehabilitation (photographs 12-13). The building's original large Fenestra steel windows, in which the intersection muntins were interwoven to enhance strength, have been retained on the rear elevation (photograph 11).

Once devoid of any fenestration, the building's south, side elevation now contains two small one-over-one, double-hung windows on the second and third floors, three bays in from the rear (photograph 9). These windows are located over a metal exterior door that has concrete steps down to the ground level. Like the rear elevation, this elevation exhibits maroon-brick quoining at its western corner (photograph 8). This elevation was connected during the 2017 rehabilitation to two interconnected, two-story buildings that were built c.1949 and c.1960 and served as storage buildings for the Atlanta Board of Education. These buildings are not within the nomination's boundary (photographs 8-9).

Interior

The interior of the M.C. Kiser Company Building is defined by its heavy timber, "slow-burning" construction. Although the building was subdivided into apartments during the 2017 rehabilitation, the building's heavy timber posts and beams originally facilitated the open space needed for the M.C. Kiser Company's retail, warehouse, and manufacturing operations. These heavy timber posts and beams have been incorporated into the subdivided apartments and are exposed or partially exposed, making them still largely visible throughout the building (photographs 21, 25, 28, 33, 39, 55, and 63).

The only historic interior partitions partially enclose the original staircase and the elevator shafts that flank this staircase along the southern exterior wall. These spaces are partitioned by original thick, brick walls with a fire door still extant over

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the basement freight elevator shaft (photographs 27 and 58). The remainder of the interior prior to the 2017 rehabilitation consisted of nonhistoric buildout by the Atlanta Public Schools, which has since been removed. Currently there are 10 apartments on the first through third floors with a communal hallway along the south wall (photograph 22). This hallway is accessed through a lobby from the first floor Pryor Street entrance and leads to a new egress stair to the west, as well as the original staircase flanked by historic elevators to the east (photographs 16, 18, 27, and 34). The lobby, hallway, and all apartments, with the exception of one unit on the first floor and basement units, have original tongue and groove wood floors, which were refinished during the 2017 rehabilitation (photograph 23).

One first floor apartment, which fronts Pryor Street and thus contains the large storefront windows, is accessed via a door on the north side of the lobby (photographs 19-21). The remaining nine apartments are accessed via the communal hallway and are largely located on the north side of the building, with the exception of one unit in the southeast corner (photographs 23-25). Interior apartment walls are composed of gypsum board covering metal stud walls, all added during the 2017 rehabilitation. While these gypsum-board walls reach the ceiling when dividing apartment units from each other and from communal spaces, many walls do not reach the ceiling inside of the apartments, thus revealing the heavy timber beams, posts, and original beadboard floor planks, visible due to the necessity of unfinished ceilings in "slow-burning" construction (photographs 19-21 and 23-25). All first floor units are loft apartments with spiral staircases, as ceilings are especially high on the first floor, emphasizing its original use as retail and showroom space (photographs 21 and 23). All exterior walls throughout the first floor are covered in historic plaster, which was repaired during the 2017 rehabilitation.

The second and third floors mirror the floorplan of the first, with nine apartments located on the north side of the communal hall and one apartment located on the south side of the building at the rear (photographs 29 and 41-42). Upper floor finishes are identical to ground floor finishes as well with original tongue and groove wood flooring, unfinished beadboard ceilings, plaster walls, and exposed and semi-exposed timber posts and beams (photographs 31-33, 35-36, 37-40, and 46-47). Apartment units on these floors are also divided with gypsum board walls that often do not fully reach the ceilings inside the apartments. The roof is accessed via the historic stair from the third floor and retains the building's original flue (photographs 50-51).

The walkout basement is divided into three small apartments along the rear with a retail space and fitness center along the north exterior wall (photographs 60-63). A storage room is located along the front of the building with no windows as it is below ground level on both the front and side elevations (photograph 53). There is an original communal hallway along the south wall of this floor that again connects to the original stair and elevators along with a new egress stair to the west (photographs 52 and 56-58). Finishes differ slightly in the basement. Original timber posts and beams are still present in the basement along with some original plaster walls. However, the floors are finished in concrete and some of the walls are exposed brick instead of plaster (photographs 53-63). An original fire door has been retained over the original freight elevator shaft (photograph 58).

<u>Integrity</u>

The property possesses integrity of design as the M.C. Kiser Company Building retains its original rectangular form and massing. Original finishes of the M.C. Kiser Company Building include hardwood floors, unfinished beadboard plank ceilings, timber supports, and plastered masonry exterior walls. The original large volume of each of the floors has been retained by keeping the full height of each floor in both the units and hallway. The original staircase, elevators, and flue were also retained during the rehabilitation. The historic metal windows on the walkout basement along Trinity Avenue and the east rear elevation were retained and repaired during the 2017 rehabilitation. Remaining window openings on the front, side, and rear elevations were reopened to their original opening size.

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8. Sta	tement of Significance	
Applie (Mark "	cable National Register Criteria x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property onal Register listing.)	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.)
XA	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	Commerce Architecture
В	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	
X C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.	Period of Significance 1923-1933
D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates 1923 – Date of construction 1933 – M.C. Kiser Company closed
	ria Considerations x" in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Person
Property is:		(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
А	Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	N/A
В	removed from its original location.	Cultural Affiliation N/A
c	a birthplace or grave.	IN/A
D	a cemetery.	
E	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	Architect/Builder N/A
F	a commemorative property.	
G	less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.	

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the M.C. Kiser Company Building is from 1923, the date of construction, through 1933, when the M.C. Kiser Company closed.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

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Following the Civil War, prominent Atlanta businessman Major Marion C. Kiser and his brother entered the growing industry of wholesale dry goods and established the M.C. and J.F. Kiser Company. This business became the M.C. Kiser Company in 1894 following M.C. Kiser's death and subsequent mergers and subdivisions with other notable mercantile houses. The M.C. Kiser Company that emerged was solely dedicated to the wholesale of shoes, launching its signature Shield Brand Shoes in 1894. Noted in the Atlanta Constitution in 1920 as "one of the most important business establishments of Atlanta," the burgeoning M.C. Kiser Company outgrew three prior locations, necessitating the construction in 1923 of a large, state-of-the-art building to house their operations. The company remained at this location until 1933 when it shut its doors and was followed by a succession of other commercial businesses. The M.C. Kiser Company Building is significant at the local level under National Register Criterion A in the area of commerce for its association with the mercantile and manufacturing industry that blossomed in postbellum Atlanta. The M.C. Kiser Company grew from a small dry goods wholesaler to one of the largest shoe manufacturers and distributors in Atlanta, embodying the city's entrepreneurial spirit during the early 20th century and the mercantile industries that facilitated the city's growth and development. The M.C. Kiser Company Building is also significant at the local level under National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture as a good, representative example of "mill" or "slow-burning" construction. Aimed at slowing fires long enough for fire protection measures to activate to save buildings rather than at preventing fires by using costly or sometimes ineffective fireproofing materials, "mill" or "slow-burning" construction became a popular, cost-effective method of construction during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. With its intact "slow-burning" features, including original thick, brick walls, interior heavy timbers and beams, large window openings, and automatic sprinklers and other fire protection systems, the M.C. Kiser Company Building remains an excellent and intact example of "mill" or "slow-burning" construction in south downtown Atlanta.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The M.C. Kiser Company Building is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of <u>commerce</u> for its association with the manufacturing and mercantile industry in Atlanta and that industry's impact on the development of the city during the second quarter of the twentieth-century. This substantial brick factory/warehouse represents the tangible legacy of a company that embodied the entrepreneurial spirit that has defined Atlanta from its genesis.

Following the devastation of the Civil War, Atlantans quickly turned their fortunes around, and the city once again became the commercial center of the southeast. This rebirth was due in large part to Atlanta's favorable location at the intersection of several rail lines, which attracted a variety of industrial activity and skilled craftspeople to the city beginning in the 1880s. Historian Timothy Crimmins has noted "the principal business of Atlanta was trade, and the warehouse was the most common nonresidential building type."²

With shipping readily accessible, many merchants who had started out with small dry good retail stores just after the Civil War, entered the wholesale market. One such company was the M.C. Kiser Company, which operated in various configurations in Atlanta from the late 1860s until 1933. M.C. Kiser's decision to switch to the wholesale market turned out to be quite lucrative and elevated him to the top rung of Atlanta citizenry. After Kiser's death in 1893, the company reorganized and devoted itself wholly to the manufacture and distribution of shoes. In this endeavor, they joined the ranks of several other manufacturing firms that were at the forefront of a trend that would permeate the city.

The reorganization of the M.C. Kiser Company resulted in the launch of the company's signature Shield Brand Shoes line in 1894. The Shield Brand Shoes line manufactured and sold shoes with names such as Gold Seal, Rough Rider, Arabian, and Men's Health Shoe. It claimed to sell more shoes in several southeastern states than any in the business, to have had the first car load of shoes ever shipped out of Atlanta, to have sold over a million dollars' worth of shoes annually, and was identified in a 1920 *Atlanta Constitution* article as "one of the most important business establishments in Atlanta."

¹ "M.C. Kiser Co. Purchases Large Lot," The Atlanta Constitution, February 21, 1920.

² Timothy J. Crimmins, Atlanta's Evolution: From Railroad Roots to Sprawling Metropolis. <u>www.sherpaguides.com</u>, April 25, 2005

³ "Atlanta Shoes Leading Field," *The Atlanta Constitution*, March 15, 1908.; M.C. Kiser Company advertisement, *The Atlanta Constitution*, September 3, 1899.; "M. C. Kiser Co. Purchases Large Lot," *The Atlanta Constitution*, February 21, 1920.

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The growth of the Shield Brand Shoe line necessitated the move of the M.C. Kiser Company out of its shared space with dry goods and notions wholesaler Draper, Moore, & Company and into a new state-of-the art building of its own. After a brief stint in a building on East Hunter Street, the M.C. Kiser Company purchased the lot on the corner of Pryor Street and Trinity Avenue and finished the construction of the M.C. Kiser Company building in 1923.

For the latter third of the 19th century, Atlanta's commercial district remained concentrated around the railroad gulch, a notable railroad junction in downtown Atlanta north of M.C. Kiser Company's future location, which accommodated the confluence of three major railroad lines by the mid-19th century. Outlying areas of this confluence were reserved for residential development. By 1890, Atlanta's commercial growth had tripled its 1880 volume, and the need for the commercial core's expansion was evident. While modern skyscrapers started to appear in the areas to the north of the commercial core to house white-collar workers, the manufacturing and warehouse district expanded to the south. This trend continued for the next quarter century.

At the time of the M.C. Kiser Company Building's construction, the block in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Trinity Avenue and Pryor Street was on the fringe of the commercial district with residential structures covering approximately half of the block. Commercial High School, the city's first coeducational school, had been built in the southwest corner of the block in 1915, and Piedmont Laundry occupied the northeast corner. By 1930, however, the entire block was occupied by commercial structures, as were the surrounding blocks. Of those commercial buildings, there were three wholesale dry goods stores, a wholesale clothes store, dress manufacturing business, hat manufacturing business, and shirt manufacturing business, among others, according to the 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, revealing the proliferation of commercial businesses, specifically wholesale and manufacturing enterprises, in south downtown Atlanta shortly after the construction of the M.C. Kiser Company Building.

The M.C. Kiser Company continued to operate out of its 210 Pryor Street location until the company closed in 1933, most likely due to the Great Depression, but the building continued to house mercantile and commercial businesses until the Atlanta School Board purchased it for office space in 1969. Buildings with the form and function of the M.C. Kiser Company Building were common in Atlanta at the time of its occupation by the M.C. Kiser Company, but most of those buildings either no longer retain historic integrity or have been demolished for parking lots or new construction. The M.C. Kiser Company is thus now a significant and relatively rare resource associated with Atlanta's mercantile trend during the late 19th and early 20th century, which in 1919 boasted "not fewer than three hundred and seventy plants that manufacture products for distribution on a commercial scale."

The M.C. Kiser Company Building is also significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of <u>architecture</u> as an excellent, representative example of early 20th century "slow-burning" or "mill" construction, which was an alternative to the previously sought-after "fireproof" building. The M.C. Kiser Company Building's thick brick walls, pilasters, large window openings, heavy timber interior construction, and automatic sprinkler system are all characteristic of this type of construction.

The shift towards "slow-burning" construction was partially a reaction to the great fires of Chicago (1871) and Boston (1872), after which ideas about cast iron as a fireproof material changed. Prior to these fires, cast iron had been in favor as a building material due to its perceived fireproof qualities, its high compressive strength, its "slender proportions," and "the speed with which it could be erected." During the Chicago fire, however, the brittle nature of the material led many cast iron facades to buckle and fall into the streets merely from the intense radiating heat of neighboring buildings, while interior combustible materials took much longer to burn. The additional destruction during these fires of buildings with exterior masonry walls, also considered fire-resistant at this time, further contributed to the move to reevaluate the effectiveness of these perceived "fireproof" materials. ⁷

The great fires also underscored the need for building material testing and standardized building codes. This resulted in the creation of a laboratory in 1893 by the National Board of Fire Underwriters used for fire testing and the later 1905 publication of the Board's first edition of its *Recommended Building Code*, "which was a first attempt to create uniformity in

⁷ Ibid: 57.

⁴ James M. Russell, City Building in the Old South and the New (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1988), 241.

⁵ "What Is Made in Atlanta and Who Makes It," *The City Building*, July 1919, 55.

⁶ Donald Friedman, *Historical Building Construction* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995): 56.

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construction that would help control fire hazards." The 1906 fire and earthquake in San Francisco further emphasized the "need for more comprehensive standards and codes related to the design, construction, and maintenance of buildings." This need inspired several books written in the 1900s and 1910s that offered details on the theory and practice of fire prevention and protection in buildings, including the 1912 book *Fire Prevention and Fire Protection* by Joseph Kendall Freitag, which included a chapter called "Slow-burning or Mill Construction."

"Slow-burning" or "mill" construction grew in favor in the 1890s when property owners and insurance agents began to see it as a viable and affordable alternative to earlier and contemporary iterations of fireproof or fire-resistant construction. Although some version of "slow-burning" construction had been around since at least the 1820s—the 1827 "Mill #1" building of the Bernon mill complex in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, for example, was built with "noncombustible walls, heavy timber posts and beams, and plank floors"—specifications for this type of construction were not created until the 1890s, when the Associated Factory Mutual Fire Insurance Companies (AFM) started to require sprinklers, isolated stairwells, and exterior ladders for insurance coverage. Also at this time, concrete, which would become a prolific fire-resistant material used in the construction of commercial buildings in the 20th century, was substantially expensive, making slow-burning construction much more cost-effective for fire protection. 11

In his book *Fire Prevention and Fire Protection*, Joseph Kendall Freitag explained the reasoning behind the classification of mill construction as "slow-burning:"

"Mill construction has been designated slow-burning, because, although largely composed of combustible materials, *intelligent use* and *sufficient mass* have greatly lessened the chance of the rapid spread of fire, or the probability of serious structural damage before the fire can be brought under control through the equipment or fire protection devices which should *always* accompany this type of construction. Such equipment includes watchman's service, automatic sprinklers, fire pails, hose, pumps and hydrants, besides an efficient private fire brigade [...]" 12

The goal of "slow-burning" construction, therefore, was not to prevent fire but to slow the spread of fire and its resulting structural damage—in other words, to "provide a maximum amount of protection at a minimum cost" by "so disposing the timber and plank in heavy solid masses as to expose the least number of corners or ignitable projections to fire, to the end also that when fire occurs it may be most readily reached by water from sprinklers or hose." While timber is a combustible material, as Freitag pointed out, timber posts had proven "far more reliable under fire test than […] unprotected wrought-iron or steel columns," as the surfaces of heavy posts and beams, could burn and char on the outside but still maintain their load-bearing capacity. The heaviness of the timber allowed for the posts to be spread out, meaning that if one post failed, it would not immediately affect those around it. The heavy timber construction coupled with the lack of corners and ignitable projections provided the time necessary for evacuation and for the automatic sprinklers and other fire safety measures to activate and potentially save the building.

According to Freitag's specifications, "slow-burning" construction typically consisted of exterior brick walls, at least 12" thick, but preferably 16" thick or pilastered; heavy timber columns or posts and beams, no less than 6" in width; staircases and elevator bays encased in brick or other incombustible partitions, including fire doors; thick plank floors laid directly on the beams; concrete floors in the basement, if possible; and windows "placed as high and made as wide as possible to obtain the best light." This type of construction would be supplemented by automatic sprinklers and often other fire protection methods, including a watchman's service, pumps and hydrants, and a hose. The slow-burning building should additionally be no taller than four stories. The slow-burning building should are slow-burning slow-burn

The M.C. Kiser Company Building exemplifies the trend of "slow-burning" or "mill" construction. The building's exterior brick walls are 16" thick on the east and south elevations and 8" thick between the recommended pilastered construction

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⁸ Jessica Engeman, "Pacific Hardware & Steel Company Warehouse," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, Salem, November 20, 2008: Section 8, 11.

⁹ Engeman, "Pacific Hardware:" Section 8, 11.

¹⁰ Ibid: Section 8, 11.

¹¹ Amy Slaton, *Reinforced Concrete and the Modernization of American Building* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001): 130.

¹² Joseph Kendall Freitag, Fire Prevention and Fire Protection (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1909): 69-70.

¹³ Ibid: 69, 75.

¹⁴ Ibid: 79.

¹⁵ Slaton: 130.

¹⁶ Freitag: 82-84.

¹⁷ Ibid.

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of the west and north elevations. Heavy timber posts and beams compose the interior structural system, and the beams support beadboard plank floors. Other extant features of slow-burning construction present in the M.C. Kiser Company Building include the large window openings and remaining Fenestra steel windows, the partitioning of the historic stairwell with thick masonry walls, a fire door shielding a basement elevator shaft, and the automatic sprinkler system. The 1931 Sanborn map additionally notes a Siamese fire department connection and chemical extinguishers, further fire protection measures.

The "slow-burning construction" features in the M.C. Kiser Company Building turned out to be excellent specifications for the manufacturing and mercantile business, as the wide spans between posts allowed for the open space necessary for showroom, manufacturing, and warehousing functions. With the substantial changes to the building makeup of south downtown Atlanta, the M.C. Kiser is significant as a relatively rare, extant example of a "slow-burning" building built to house a successful wholesale business during the early 20th century.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

(The following historic context is taken from two drafts of the "M.C. Kiser Company Building" Historic Property Information Form:" the October 17, 2006 draft prepared by Terri Gillett of New South Associates and the November 30, 2015 draft prepared by Brandy Morrison of Morrison Design, LLC. These drafts were compiled and edited by Olivia Head, National Register Specialist, Historic Preservation Division, and are on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Stockbridge, Georgia.)

M.C. Kiser Company

Marion Columbus Kiser was born in 1830 on a small plantation in Campbell County, later Fulton County, Georgia. At the age of 18, he began working at the store owned by his brothers in Powder Springs for a salary of \$5/month plus board. In the spring of 1861, he joined the Confederate Army where he eventually earned the rank of Major, a title he would be known by for the rest of his life. At the close of the war and following a brief return to farming, Kiser moved to Atlanta and opened a small retail dry goods store with his brother, J.F. Kiser, on Whitehall Street (now Peachtree Street) in 1866. In 1872, the company entered the wholesale market and moved to a new brick building at the corner of Wall and Pryor Streets. Ten years later, J.F. passed away and M.C. Kiser took over complete responsibility for the wholesale dry goods company, which continued to grow.¹⁸

During the 1880s, Kiser gained a solid reputation as "a successful businessman, sterling citizen and civic leader." Throughout the decade, Kiser's name could be found listed alongside prominent Atlanta names, such as Adair, Hurt, Inman, Collier, Grady, and others, on the various boards and committees that shaped the city. He served a term on the Fulton County Commission, was one of the founders of the Piedmont Driving Club, was on the building committee of the Georgia Confederate Soldiers Home, and was president of the Piedmont Chautaugua. In 1889, his wealth was estimated to be between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000. In 1890, he erected the massive, five-story, Kiser Law Building (demolished in 1937) at the northwest corner of Pryor and Hunter Streets with the well-known Atlanta architectural firm, Bruce & Morgan. He erected the Romanesque style Marion Hotel (demolished in 1951) in 1893 on the site of the original Bell House at 97 North Pryor Street. Major Kiser died in November of that same year and was memorialized with a 3000-word obituary in *The Atlanta Constitution*. He is buried in Atlanta's Oakland Cemetery.²⁰

Prior to his death, Major Kiser oversaw the merger of the M.C. and J.F. Kiser Company with two more of Atlanta's large mercantile houses to form the Kiser, Draper, Moore Company in 1892. Just seven months after his death, the company split into two "separate and distinct firms"—Draper, Moore & Company would take the dry goods and notions portions of the business, while the M.C. Kiser Company would, for the first time, deal exclusively in shoes. Principals of the new company included Gordon P. Kiser, who was a "prominent member of the firm of M.C. & J.F. Kiser," (though it is not known how or if he was a relation of M.C. Kiser), W.H. Kiser (M.C.'s son), C.D. Montgomery, C.H. Daly, and C.J. Sullivan. Both companies continued to operate out of their joint location at the corner of Pryor Street and Decatur Street.²¹

^{18 &}quot;M.C. Kiser Dead: One of Georgia's Most Prominent Business Men Passes Away," *The Atlanta Constitution,* December 1, 1893.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.; Franklin M. Garrett, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events* (Athens: University of Georgia Press [reprint], 1969).

²¹ "Two From One," *The Atlanta Constitution,* June 24, 1894.

Jnited States Department of the Interio	r
National Park Service / National Regis	ter of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900	OMB No. 1024-0018

M.C. Kiser Company Building	
Name of Property	

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Fulton County, Georgia
County and State

With the formation of the new firm in 1894, the M.C. Kiser Company launched its line of "Shield Brand Shoes." These shoes were marketed throughout the southeast by a team of, on average, 20 traveling salesmen. Mail orders also accounted for much of the company's business. The *Atlanta Constitution* ran many articles publicizing the company's success, even declaring "this Atlanta house sells more shoes in these particular states (GA, AL, NC, SC, TN, FL) than any in the business. Other milestones advertised were the "first solid car load of shoes ever shipped out of Atlanta," "over a million dollars' worth of shoes sold annually," and "Kiser Co. ships shoes to China." Continued success forced a move to larger quarters on East Hunter Street and finally again to the location at the corner of Pryor Street and Trinity Avenue in 1923.

M.C. Kiser Company Building

The M.C. Kiser Company Building was erected in 1923 to house the fast-growing Shield Brand shoe manufacturing and distribution business with an established history in Atlanta. In fact, the company was touted as "one of the most important business establishments of Atlanta" in an article in *The Atlanta Constitution* that appeared in February 1920 to mark the purchase of the lot.²⁵ Located at the southeast corner of Pryor Street and Trinity Avenue in downtown Atlanta, the parcel on which the building would be constructed was procured for \$50,000 from Mr. Harry G. Poole.²⁶ At the time of the sale, the area, which was located to the southeast of the commercial center of the city could be described as primarily residential; however, it was situated in an area of the city that was rapidly developing as a manufacturing and mercantile district. Commercial High School was located in the south of the block and the new United States Rubber Company building was located across the street.

Two and a half years later, in September 1923, the building was ready for occupation, an event that warranted another *Atlanta Constitution* article:

So fast has been the growth of the sale of Shield Brand shoes that the M.C. Kiser Company, of Atlanta, the Shield Brand shoemakers, have been forced to move into large[r] quarters three times in the past 30 years in an effort to keep up with their ever-spreading popularity...at last they have built the beautiful and commodious structure shown above...which can be said without hesitation or fear of contradiction to be the most beautiful, modern and up-to-date shoe house in the southeast.²⁷

It appears, from information gathered from company ledgers, that the M.C. Kiser Company employed approximately 45 people while at the 210 Pryor Street address. The company employed both men and women, though male employees outnumbered females by approximately two-to-one. Specific job titles were not available. Employees of the company did not live in any one concentrated area—addresses recorded ranged from College Park to Marietta to Decatur and of course, to Atlanta. Recorded salaries ranged from \$60/month to \$250/month, while Gordon P. Kiser, who served as president of the company, earned \$15,000 per year.²⁸

Though it is not definitively clear what caused the M.C. Kiser Company to close its doors, it appears that the Great Depression was the cause of the failure. In 1929, the business was reporting a net profit; however, that was not the case in 1931 and 1932, when net losses were reported as \$39,792 and \$48,676 respectively. No salaries are recorded after December of 1932 and at that point, those who were still employed had taken wage cuts including Gordon P. Kiser, who earned only \$7,200 (a little less than half of his former salary) for the years 1930-1932. The following year, 1933, the building was listed as vacant in the *Atlanta City Directory*.

The building was similarly listed as vacant in 1934. However, the next year the Standard Hat Company was listed as its occupant. Over the next 35 years a succession of manufacturing companies, the bulk of them specializing in hats or clothing, operated out of the building.

²² "Anniversary Days Come This Week for the M.C. Kiser Co.," *The Atlanta Constitution,* April 19, 1914.

²³ "Atlanta Shoes Leading Field," *The Atlanta Constitution*, March 15, 1908.

²⁴ Ibid; "M.C. Kiser Company" Advertisement, *The Atlanta Constitution*, September 3, 1899.

^{25 &}quot;M.C. Kiser Co. Purchases Large Lot," *The Atlanta Constitution,* February 21, 1920.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ "New Home of M.C. Kiser Company Corner of S. Pryor and Trinity," *The Atlanta Constitution*, September 2, 1923.

²⁸ M.C. Kiser Company Ledgers, 1893-1933, Atlanta History Center.

²⁹ M.C. Kiser Company Ledgers, 1893-1933, Atlanta History Center.

M.C. Kiser Company Building
Name of Property

Fulton County, Georgia
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(Expires 5/31/2012)

In 1969, the Atlanta Board of Education was listed as the owner on a building permit application for non-specific alterations estimated to cost \$326,485. Another application was filed in 1974 (estimated cost \$40,000) for "partition rearrangement and redecorating" on the third floor. Two more building permits were filed in 1982 for roof alterations. The Atlanta Board of Education remained in what they called the "210 Building" until December 2003. The M.C. Kiser Company Building was rehabilitated into an apartment building in 2017.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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M.C. Kiser Company advertisement. The Atlanta Constitution, September 2, 1923.

M.C. Kiser Company Ledgers, 1893-1933, Atlanta History Center.

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"New Home of M.C. Kiser Company Corner of S. Pryor Street and Trinity Avenue." *The Atlanta Constitution,* September 2, 1923.

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Slaton, Amy. Reinforced Concrete and the Modernization of American Building. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

"Two From One." The Atlanta Constitution, June 24, 1894.

"What is made in Atlanta and Who Makes It," The City Builder, July 1919, p. 55.

(Expires 5/31/2012)

M.C. Kiser Company Building	Fulton County, Georgia
Name of Property	County and State
Previous documentation on file (NPS): X preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested) previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Primary location of additional data: X State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Name of repository:
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A	
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of Property Less than one acre (Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)	
Latitude/Longitude Coordinates Datum if other than WGS84: (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)	
1. Latitude: 33.748782 Longitude: -84.	.392817
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
Boundary is indicated by the heavy black line on the attached ma	p, which is drawn to scale.
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)	
The boundary is the building footprint, which represents the prope	erty's historic boundary.
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Olivia Head, National Register Specialist	
organization Historic Preservation Division, GA Dept. of Natural Reso	ources date April 9, 2019
street & number 2610 Highway 155, SW	telephone (770) 389-7842
city or town Stockbridge	state GA zip code 30281
e-mail olivia.head@dnr.ga.gov	
Additional Documentation	
Submit the following items with the completed form:	
Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating	g the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having	

Continuation Sheets

photographs to this map.

(Expires 5/31/2012)

M.C. Kiser Company Building Name of Property

Fulton County, Georgia County and State

Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

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29 of 63.

30 of 63.

31 of 63.

32 of 63.

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

M.C. Kiser Company Building Name of Property:

City or Vicinity: Atlanta

Fulton County: State: Georgia

Photographer: Brian LaBrie, Ray, Ellis, & LaBrie Consulting, LLC

Date Photographed: December 18, 2017 and January 5, 2018

Description of	Photograph(s) and number:
1 of 63.	View of north side elevation; photographer facing southwest.
2 of 63.	View of the north side and west (front) elevations; photographer facing south.
3 of 63.	View of the north side and west (front) elevations; photographer facing southeast.
4 of 63.	View of the west (front) of the building; photographer facing south.
5 of 63.	Detail of 1st floor storefront system; photographer southeast.
6 of 63.	Detail of typical 2 nd floor window; photographer facing southeast.
7 of 63.	Detail of retained M.C. Kiser & Co. sign; photographer facing southeast.
8 of 63.	View of the west (front) and south side elevations of the M.C. Kiser & Co. Building; photographer facing
	northeast.
9 of 63.	View of the south side elevation of the building; photographer facing northeast.
10 of 63.	View of the east (rear) elevation of the building; photographer facing north.
11 of 63.	Detail of retained and repaired historic window; photographer facing northwest.
12 of 63.	Detail of loading dock door with modern window infill; photographer facing west.
13 of 63.	View of the east (rear) and north side elevations; photographer facing west.
14 of 63.	Detail of retained, nonhistoric windows on upper floors (typical); photographer facing southwest.
15 of 63.	Detail of modern storefront on north side elevation; photographer facing southwest.
16 of 63.	First floor lobby, note retained floors, ceiling; photographer facing southeast.
17 of 63.	View of the 1st floor lobby facing Pryor Street; photographer facing northwest.
18 of 63.	View of new staircase; photographer facing southeast.
19 of 63.	View of the live and work space of Apartment 101; photographer facing northeast.
20 of 63.	View of live and work space of Apartment 101; photographer facing southwest.
21 of 63.	View of loft area of Apartment 101, note retained ceiling; photographer facing south.
22 of 63.	View of first floor corridor, note retained and repaired plaster on brick (right), retained floor and ceiling; photographer facing southeast.
23 of 63.	View of bedroom of Apartment 104, note retained floor, ceiling, and structural beams; photographer facing
20 01 00.	northeast.
24 of 63.	View of the living area of Apartment 104, note historic ceiling, and repaired plaster on masonry; photographer facing northeast.
25 of 63.	View of kitchen of Apartment 104, note retained historic column (right); photographer facing southwest.
26 of 63.	View of package room on the 1st floor; photographer facing northwest.
27 of 63.	View of repaired plaster on masonry archway to the historic staircase; photographer facing south.

Detail of retained historic column with repairs; photographer facing east.

View of living area of Apartment 203; photographer facing north.

View of living area of Apartment 203; photographer facing southwest.

View of new staircase; photographer facing southeast.

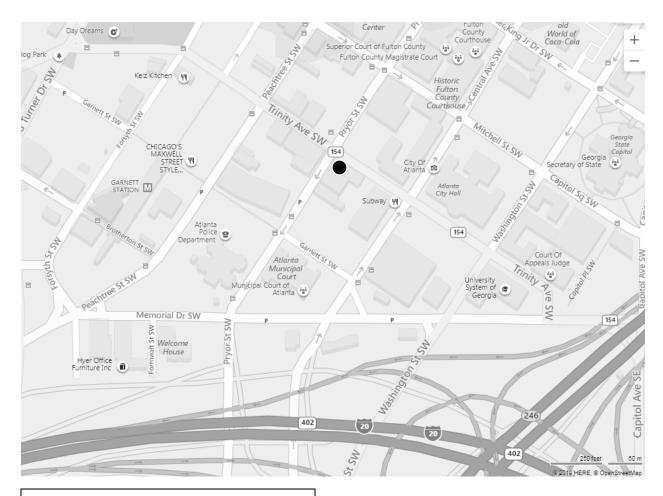
Second floor corridor, note retained historic ceiling and wood floors; photographer facing southeast.

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33 of 63. Detail of retained historic column; photographer facing southwest. 34 of 63. Detail of retained historic banister and handrail of historic staircase; photographer facing south. 35 of 63. View of corridor of Apartment 210, note retained and repaired historic window; photographer facing southwest. 36 of 63. View of bedroom of Apartment 210, note new window; photographer facing southwest. 37 of 63. View of living area of apartment 302; photographer facing east. 38 of 63. View of living area of apartment 302 showing retained floors and retained nonhistoric window; photographer facing northwest. 40 of 63. View of bathroom of apartment 302 showing retained floors and retained nonhistoric window; photographer facing southwest. 40 of 63. View of bathroom of apartment 302; photographer facing northwest. 41 of 63. Third floor corridor, note retained wood floors and historically exposed roof structure; photographer facing southeast. 42 of 63. Third floor corridor; photographer facing northwest. 43 of 63. Detail of new staircase; photographer facing southeast. 44 of 63. View of historic retained staircase with historically exposed brick; photographer facing southeast. 45 of 63. View of historic retained staircase with historically exposed brick; photographer facing southeast. 46 of 63. View of living area of Apartment 309; photographer facing southwest. 47 of 63. View of living area of Apartment 309; photographer facing southwest. 48 of 63. Detail of retained and repaired historic window in Apartment 309; photographer facing southeast. 49 of 63. View of invitation of Apartment 309; photographer facing south. 50 of 63. View of the corridor of Apartment 309; photographer facing south. 51 of 63. Detail of retained and repaired historic window in Apartment 309; photographer facing south. 52 of 63. View of the corridor of Apartment 309; photographer facing south. 53 of 63. View of the studio area of Apartment of the venting for the apartments was routed to the roof instead of exterior elevations; p		mpany Building Fulton County, Georgia
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62 of 63. Detail of repaired historic window; photographer facing northeast.	61 of 63.	View of the studio area of Apartment 001; note retained and repaired ceiling; photographer facing
	62 of 63.	
		Detail of retained and repaired historic ceiling (typical); photographer facing southeast.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



M.C. Kiser Company Building

210 Pryor Street SW

Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia

Source: Bing Maps, 2019

North:

Latitude: 33.748782 Longitude: -84.392817



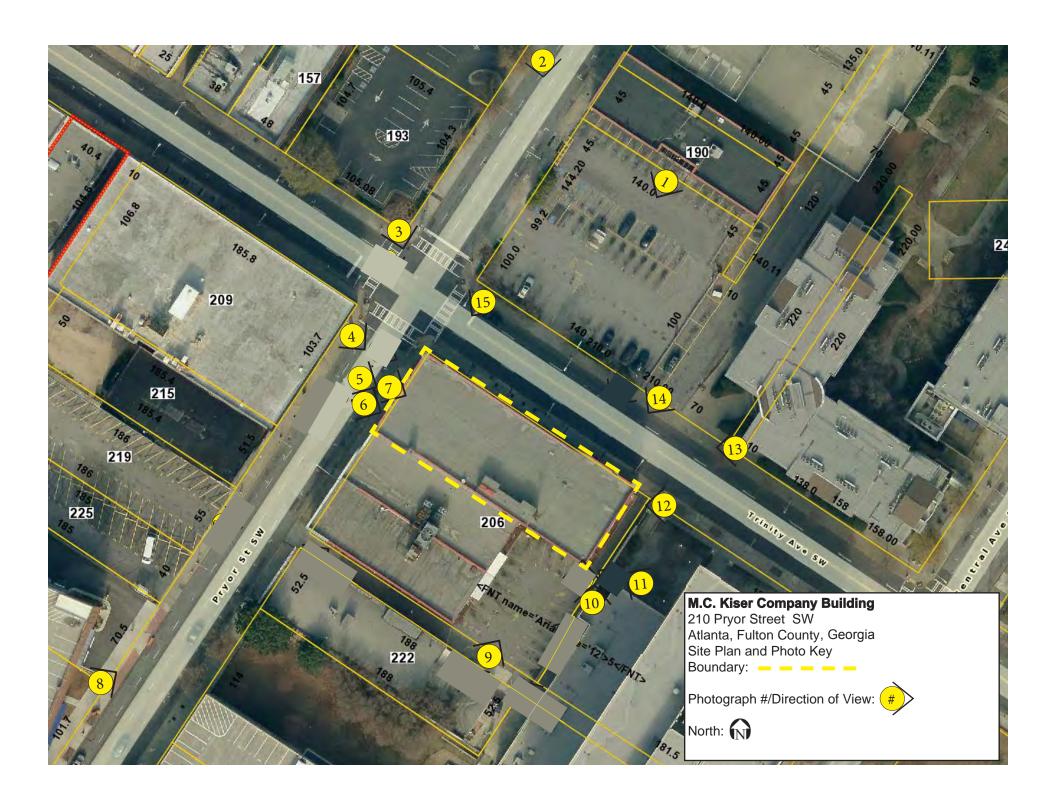
M.C. Kiser Company Building 210 Pryor Street SW

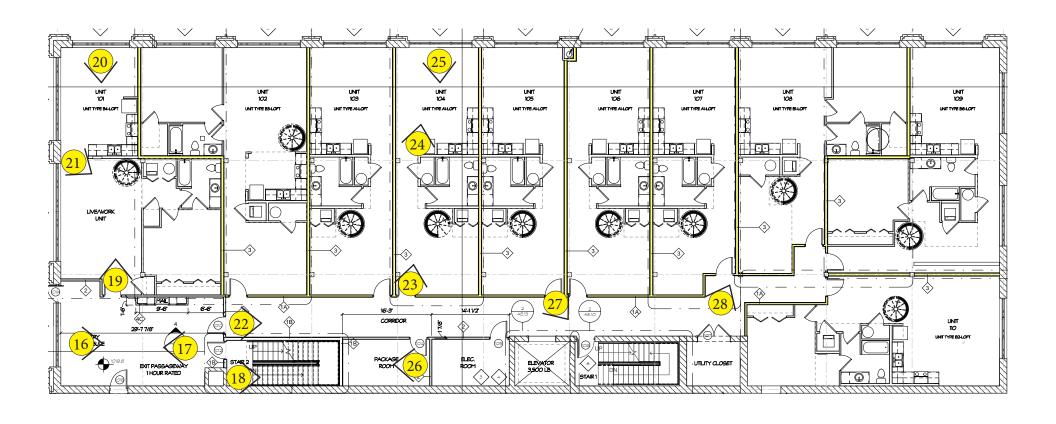
Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia

National Register Boundary:

Source: Fulton County parcel maps – qPublic

North:

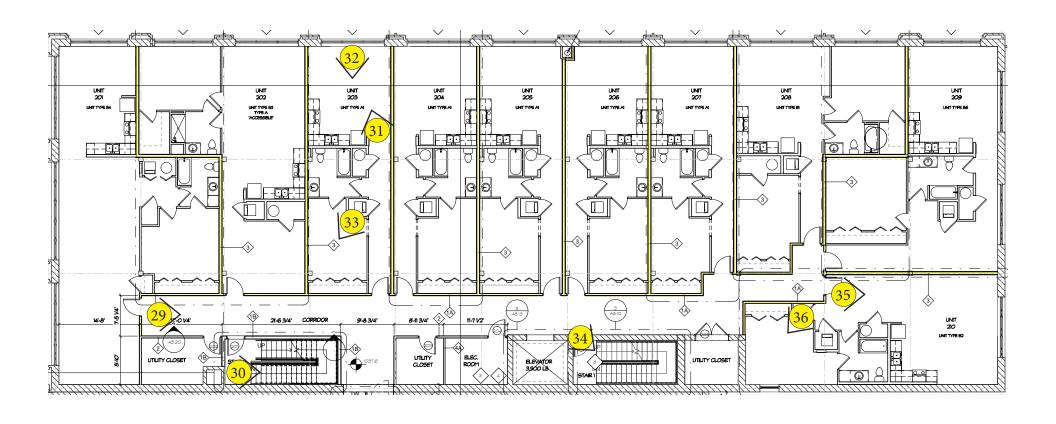




M.C. Kiser Company Building 210 Pryor Street SW Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia First Floor Plan and Photo Key Photograph #/Direction of View:

North: N

Not to scale



M.C. Kiser Company Building

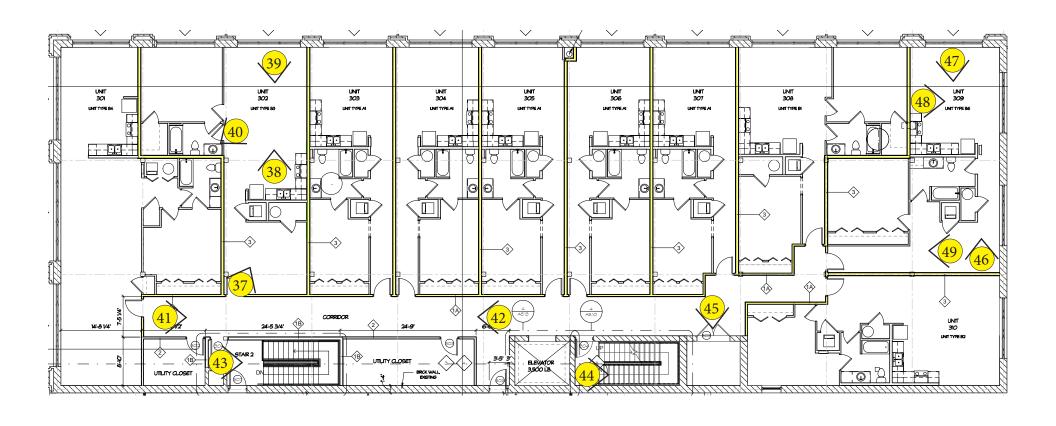
210 Pryor Street SW Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia Second Floor Plan and Photo Key

Photograph #/Direction of View: #

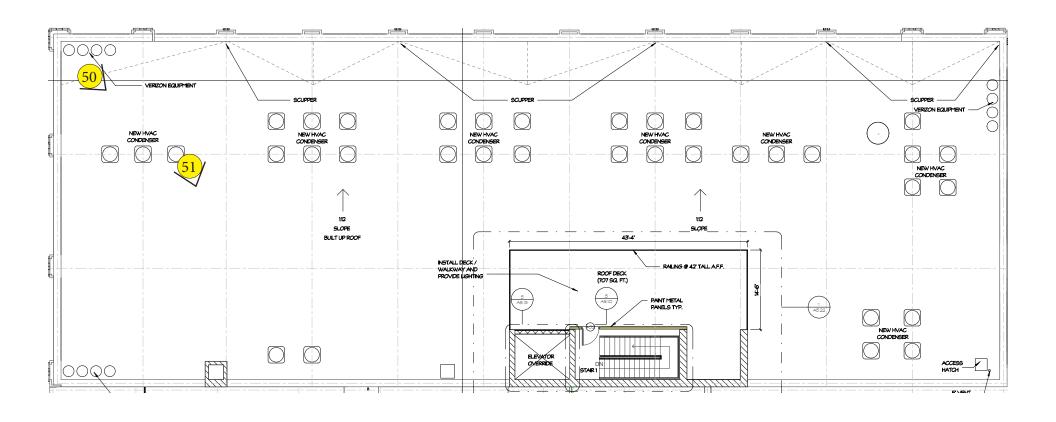


North: No

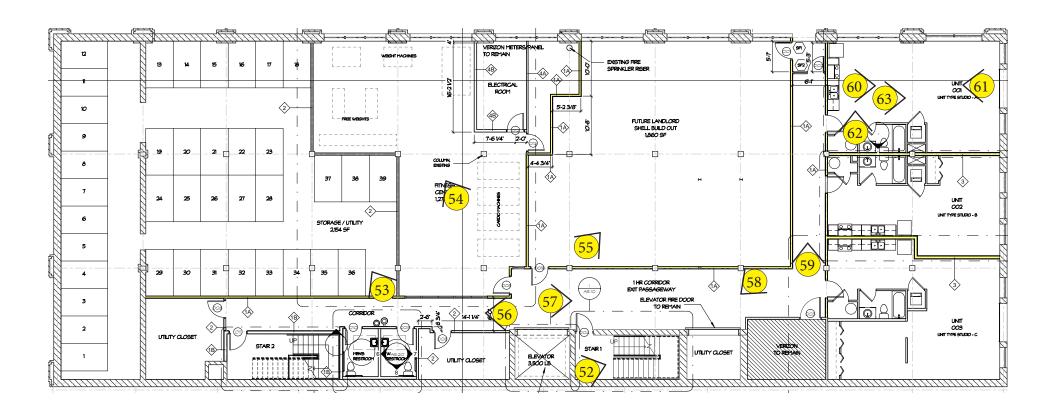
Not to scale



M.C. Kiser Company Building 210 Pryor Street SW Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia Third Floor Plan and Photo Key Photograph #/Direction of View: North: Not to scale



M.C. Kiser Company Building 210 Pryor Street SW Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia Roof Plan and Photo Key Photograph #/Direction of View: # North: North: North: North: North



M.C. Kiser Company Building 210 Pryor Street SW Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia Basement Floor Plan and Photo Key Photograph #/Direction of View: North: North: North: North: North













































































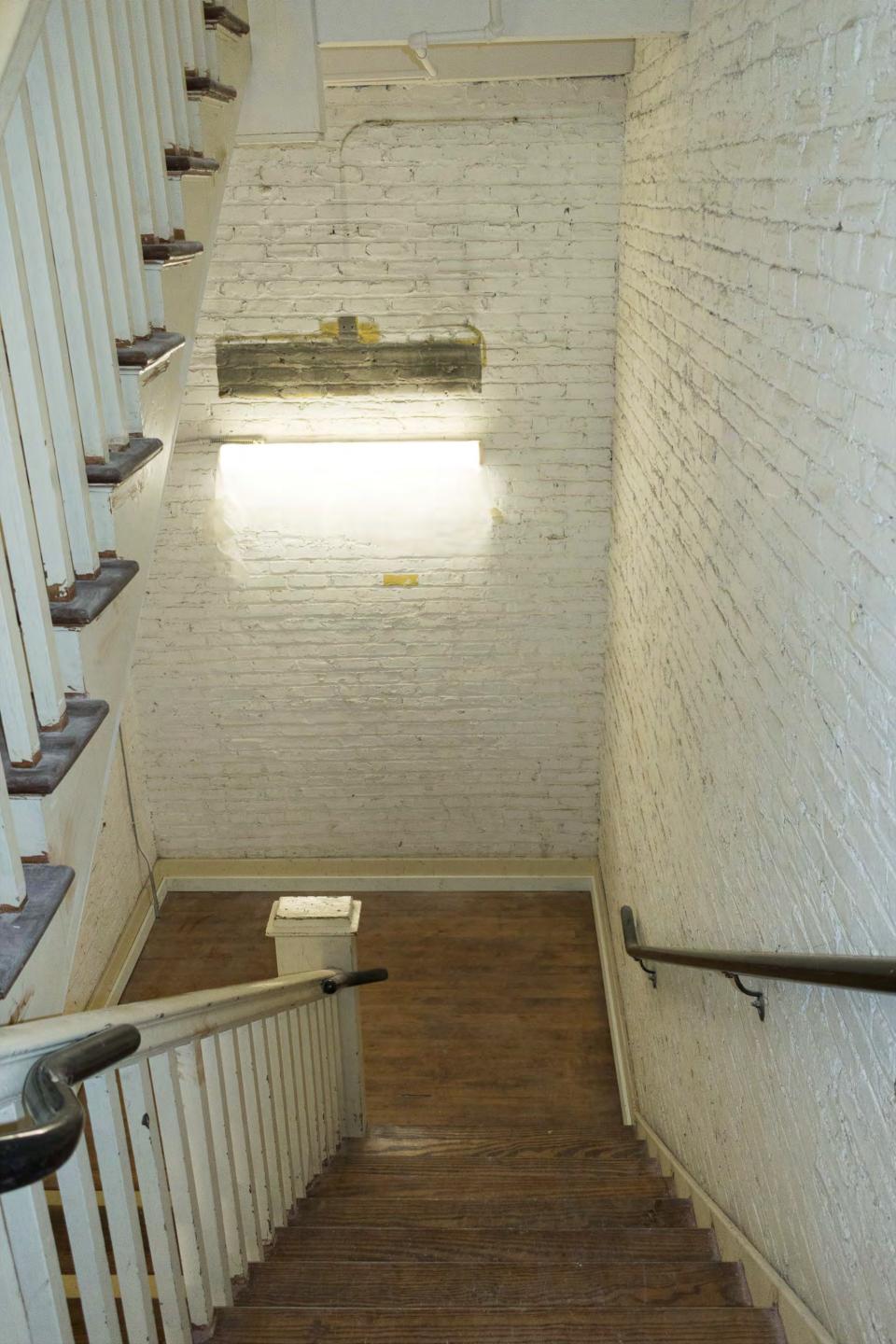




























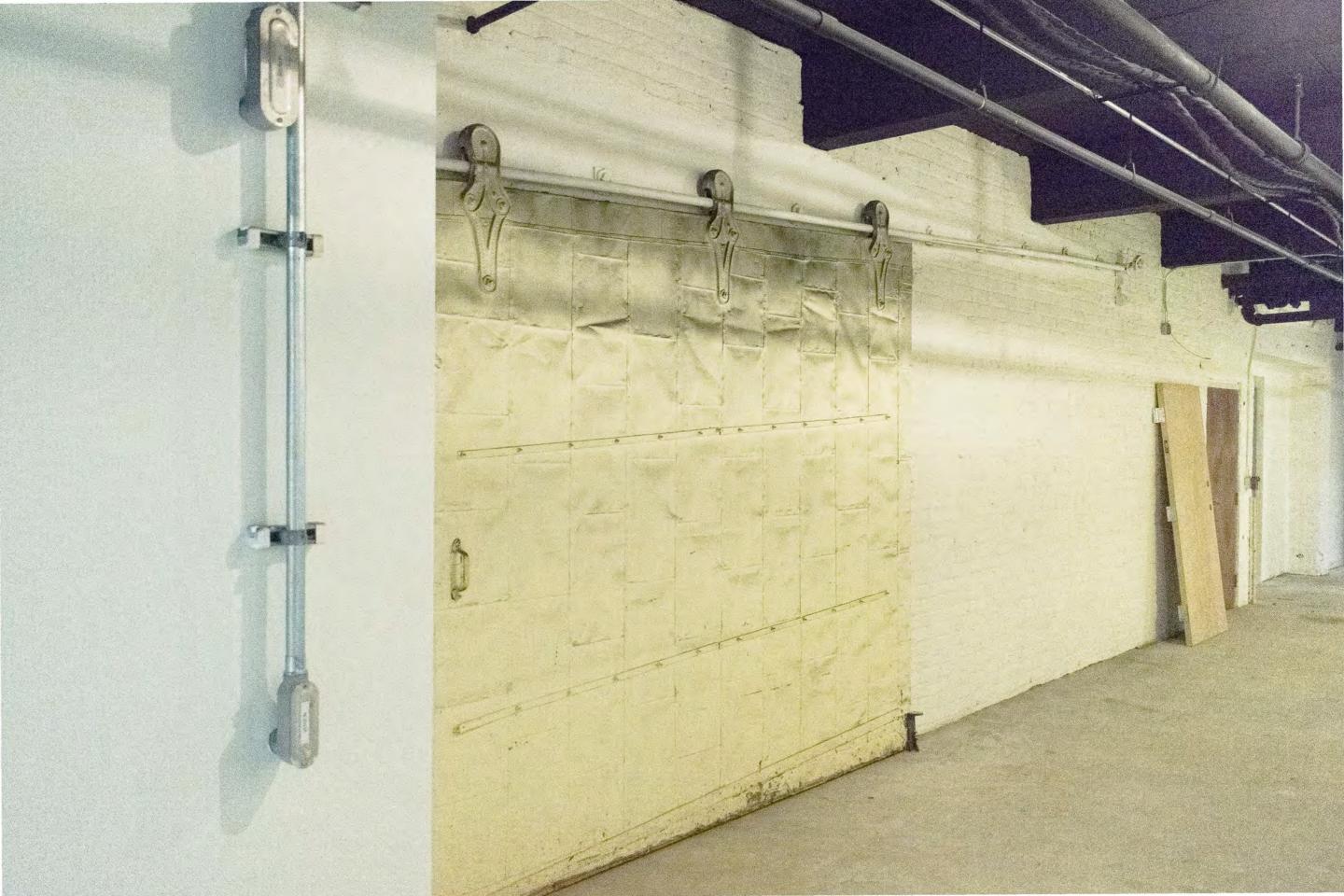






















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination				
Property Name:	Kiser, M.C., Company	Building			
Multiple Name:					
State & County:	GEORGIA, Fulton				
Date Rece 4/11/20			16th Day: D /2019	ate of 45th Day: 5/28/2019	Date of Weekly List
Reference number:	SG100003966				
Nominator:	SHPO				
Reason For Review	:				
Appeal		X PDIL		Text/Data Issue	
SHPO Request		Landscape		Photo	
Waiver		National		Map/Boundary	
Resubmission		Mobile Resource		Period	
Other		TCP		Less than 50 years	
		CLG			
X Accept	Return	Reject	5/28/2	2019 Date	
Abstract/Summary Comments:	AOS: Commerce and	Architecture; POS:	1923-1933;	LOS: local	
Recommendation/ Criteria	NR Criteria A & C.				
Reviewer Lisa De	eline	<u></u>	Discipline	Historian	-
Telephone (202)3	54-2239		Date	5/28/1	9
DOCUMENTATION	: see attached com	ments : No see a	attached SLF	R : No	

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



MARK WILLIAMS COMMISSIONER

April 9, 2019

Kathryn Smith National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 1849 C St, NW, Mail Stop 7228 Washington, D.C. 20240



Dear Mr. Loether:

Olivia Head

National Register Specialist

X	Disk of National Register of Historic Places nomination form and maps as a pdf				
X	Disk with digital photo images				
X	Physical signature page				
	Original USGS topographic map(s)				
	Sketch map(s)/attachment(s)				
	Correspondence				
	Other:				
COMMENTS:	Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed				
X	This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67				
	The enclosed owner objection(s) do do not constitute a majority of property owners.				
	Special considerations:				

2610 GA HWY 155, SW | STOCKBRIDGE, GA 30281 770.389.7844 | FAX 770.389.7878 | WWW.GEORGIASHPO.ORG