

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

968

RECEIVED 2230

## 1. Name of Property

historic name General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse  
other names/site number Toby Sexton Tire

AUG 27 2008

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## 2. Location

street & number 488 Glenn Avenue  
city, town Atlanta ( ) vicinity of  
county Fulton code 121  
state Georgia code GA zip code 30312

( ) not for publication

## 3. Classification

### Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

### Category of Property:

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

### Number of Resources within Property:

#### Contributing

#### Noncontributing

buildings	2	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	2	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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#### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Richard Luce  
Signature of certifying official

8-19-08  
Date

for W. Ray Luce  
Historic Preservation Division Director  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property ( ) meets ( ) does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency or bureau

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#### 5. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Patrick Ardun 10/10/2008

determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_

determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_

removed from the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_

other, explain:

\_\_\_\_\_

see continuation sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of the National Register Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

Commerce/Trade: warehouse

### Current Functions:

Domestic: multiple dwelling

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movement: Commercial Style

### Materials:

<b>foundation</b>	Concrete
<b>walls</b>	Brick
<b>roof</b>	Asphalt
<b>other</b>	Metal

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The General Electric Repair Shop and Warehouse comprises two, large masonry buildings constructed in 1922 in Atlanta's Mechanicsville neighborhood, roughly ten blocks west of Turner Field. Mechanicsville is mostly an African-American residential neighborhood with a mix of light industry. The complex, with its four-story tower, is a landmark in southwest Atlanta (photos 24, 31, 33-34). The repair shop and warehouse were rehabilitated as residential apartments in 2006.

The **repair shop** at the corner of Glenn and Humphries streets is a long, rectangular two-story brick building with large factory-type windows (photos 31-32). It is a utilitarian building with virtually no ornament, except for the concrete-pedimented entrance on Glenn Street. The structural system is composed of steel posts and beams with load-bearing brick walls on the first floor and no support columns on the second floor. The second floor and stair tower were added before 1932. The roof is flat.

The Glenn Street (north) façade has three bays with large window openings and a small single door in the center of the first floor. The west façade is ten-bays long and continues with the same regular window pattern on the second floor. On the first floor, the first four openings on the north end are window openings. The remaining openings are freight doors with a loading dock in front of them. The south façade includes windows that have been filled with brick and a metal exterior stair (photos 19-20). The east façade is obscured by the stair tower and the parking deck (photo 12).

The interior of the repair shop was recently subdivided into apartments. In the 2006 rehabilitation, a double-loaded corridor was built the length of the building from north to south with two-story loft apartments on each side (photos 2-5). A separate stair tower is located along the center of the east

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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facade (photos 10-11). The floors in the building are constructed of concrete on the first floor and wood on the second. The ceilings are composed of exposed floor joists and roof decking. The walls are exposed brick, painted in some areas of the upper level.

The **warehouse**, the larger of the two buildings, is a four-story, concrete-framed building (photos 1, 6, 9, 15-16, 19, 18, 23-24, 26-27). It is supported on every floor by a grid of concrete "mushroom columns," so-called because of their mushroom-shaped profile. The building's brick spandrel walls are lined with sash windows that have replaced the original steel factory windows. The northern corners of the building are marked by thicker piers and raised parapets that form corner towers. The tallest concrete tower rises four stories above the building and is a visual landmark in west Atlanta (photos 1, 16, 33-34). The tower was built as advertising for General Electric and did not house any mechanical equipment. Originally filled with glass, the tower is currently composed of only the open concrete frame.

The building is five-bays wide and eight-bays long. The walls are set back slightly from the vertical concrete piers, which gives the building a sense of upward thrust. The bays in the northwest and northeast corners form small towers. Each bay houses one large window opening on each floor. A previous owner removed all of the historic windows.

The Glenn Street (north) façade has three center bays and two small towers on each end. The northeast tower houses a staircase. The center bay and each corner bay have a single-door entrance (photos 28-29). The west façade has a centrally located freight elevator tower. A smaller stair tower is located on the south end of the façade. The west façade of the elevator tower adjoins the stair tower of the brick service center, and provides access from one building to the other. The north and south facades of the elevator tower and all three facades of the stair tower are one-bay wide and have the same brickwork and window patterns as the main building. The east façade has eight bays. The fenestration of the south façade is different than the pattern of fenestration on the other facades (photos 13-16). The large factory windows are set in a smooth, white exterior that is covered with stucco. A brick smokestack is located on the southeast corner of the warehouse (photos 14-16).

The open interior of the warehouse was built originally as open space on each floor. In the 2006, rehabilitation, the building was converted to loft apartments. The plan features a C-shaped corridor with outside-facing apartments and apartments that open onto an atrium that was cut into the west side of the warehouse (photos 6-7). The previous owner removed all the bathroom partitions in the northeast corner on each of the floors. Two staircases connect the floors. One is located in the northeast corner, the other in the southwest corner. The ceilings and floors are constructed of concrete, although the flooring on the second, third, and fourth floors is wood. The concrete-and-brick perimeter walls have been painted in some areas. The south perimeter wall has been plastered and painted.

The General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse complex received final certification from the Technical Services Branch of the National Park Service on August 11, 2006. The rehabilitation transformed the two buildings from commercial structures to residential apartments. The exteriors were maintained with few changes, though the open interior spaces were subdivided to form

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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apartments. Although an atrium was created in the warehouse in order to bring light into the center of the building, much of the exterior wall was retained (photos 6-7). New construction includes a concrete parking deck located on the south side of the complex (photos 33-34) and a newly constructed apartment building on the east side (photos 13, 17, 21, 25, 33-34). Neither of these two structures is included within the boundary of this National Register nomination.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:**

nationally       statewide       locally

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

A       B       C       D

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):**  N/A

A       B       C       D       E       F       G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

Architecture  
Commerce

**Period of Significance:**

1922-1958

**Significant Dates:**

1922 – The General Electric Company built its repair shop and warehouse on Glenn Street in west Atlanta as the service center and warehouse for the company's Southeast region.

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

Flagler Company (builder)

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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**Statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The General Electric Repair Shop and Warehouse comprises two, large masonry buildings constructed in 1922 in Atlanta's Mechanicsville neighborhood in southwest Atlanta. The repair shop at the corner of Glenn and Humphries streets is a long, rectangular two-story brick building with large factory-type windows. It is a utilitarian building with virtually no ornament. The warehouse, the larger of the two buildings, is a four-story, concrete-framed building. It is supported on every floor by a grid of concrete columns. A tower, which rises four stories above the building, is a visual landmark in west Atlanta.

The General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse is significant in the area of architecture because the two buildings are excellent examples of large industrial buildings that were used by General Electric as its Southeast regional repair shop and warehouse. Concrete-framed warehouses with brick infill and metal factory windows were commonly built throughout the United States in the 1920s and 1930s because they could be built quickly, they were fireproof, and their open interior plans could serve a variety of uses. The Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company building in Atlanta is an example of an extant reinforced-concrete framed warehouse. In Atlanta, many of these large, concrete-framed buildings were built in industrial corridors along rail lines that run through the city and around it. Many of these buildings have been altered or demolished in recent years, including the complex of offices and factory buildings associated with the Scripto Company in downtown Atlanta.

The General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse is significant in the area of commerce because it represents Atlanta's rise as a center for regional corporate headquarters and because it represents the increasing use and availability of electricity and electrical appliances in the Southeastern United States in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the population of Atlanta tripled. New communities were added, such as Edgewood, Kirkwood, and West End. Growth of the suburbs was made possible by electric streetcars and later automobiles. City leaders encouraged not only the growth of business interests but also cultural institutions in the belief that Atlanta would emerge as a regional center for commerce and industry.

General Electric expanded operations in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and settled on Atlanta as its regional headquarters for operations in the South. From its Atlanta office, the Southeastern District headquarters of General Electric covered Georgia, Florida, Alabama, South Carolina, Mississippi and Louisiana. The company's earliest headquarters in the Kimball House, Equitable Building, Gould Building, and in a building at Spring and Cain streets no longer survive. The General Electric Repair Shop and Warehouse on Glen Avenue is only building in Atlanta that represents the rise of GE in the Southeast during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, General Electric developed its appliance business. In 1906, the first GE major appliance, an electric range, was introduced. In 1918, GE merged with Pacific Electric Heating Company, maker of the Hotpoint iron, and Hughes Electric Heating Company, maker of an electric range. Also in 1918, GE formed the Edison Electric Appliance Company to sell products under the GE and Hotpoint brands. The next year, GE, AT&T, and Westinghouse formed

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) to develop radio technology. In 1924, GE abandoned the utilities business following government antitrust action. With the increased acceptance of electricity, General Electric focused on the sales of appliances in the 1920s. In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, General Electric's sales volume in the Southeast grew rapidly and by 1912, company sales exceeded \$3 million.

**National Register Criteria**

A— The General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse is significant in the area of commerce because it represents Atlanta's rise as a center for regional corporate headquarters and because it represents the increasing use and availability of electricity and electrical appliances in the Southeastern United States in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

C— The General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse is significant in the area of architecture because the two buildings are excellent examples of large industrial buildings that were used by General Electric as its regional repair shop and warehouse.

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

N/A

**Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins with the construction of the General Electric Repair Shop and Warehouse in 1922 and ends in 1958, the 50-year end date, because the complex continued to operate as a repair shop and warehouse.

**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The National Register nomination for the General Electric Repair Shop and Warehouse includes two contributing resources, the repair shop and warehouse. There are no noncontributing resources associated with this nomination.

**Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

In 1922, the General Electric Company built its repair shop and warehouse on Glenn Street in west Atlanta as the service center and warehouse for the company's Southeast region, which included Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, and later Tennessee. In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the company sold generators, turbines, and other heavy equipment to industry, but in the early 1920s, General Electric turned to consumer sales of light bulbs and small appliances to broaden its sales base.

The General Electric Company (GE) was formed on April 15, 1892 from the merger of two companies, Edison General Electric Company and Thomson-Houston Electric Company, both producers of



National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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electrical products. The first president of the new company was Charles A. Coffin. Prior to the merger, the Thomson-Houston Electric Company had opened an Atlanta office in 1888, with Judge Howard Palmer, an Assistant District Attorney, as the sales office manager. Palmer's one-man office was located in the Kimball House in downtown Atlanta. In 1888, the city's first dynamo was installed to power the electric lights in the Markham House Hotel. However, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, electricity remained a novelty for most of the public.

In 1892, Palmer moved the General Electric offices to the Gould Building in Atlanta. After the formation of the new company, General Electric, Palmer was made a district manager of the Southeastern district. The next year, Palmer and a handful of assistants moved into a new office building, the Equitable Building at the corner of Peachtree and Edgewood streets in the heart of Atlanta's commercial district.

In 1895, Atlanta hosted the Cotton States International Exposition and the textile industry. Palmer served on the committee in charge of the exposition as well as head of the electrical committee. General Electric's exhibit was a model of the world's largest dynamo, which was located in St. Louis. The exposition, which focused the world's attention on Atlanta, was a showcase for textiles and electricity. While early applications of electricity were limited to electric lights and municipal transportation systems, industrial applications soon followed. The textile industry was the first industry to embrace electricity. In 1893, General Electric electrified Olympia Mills in Columbia, South Carolina. The generators that powered Olympia Mills were the largest generators the company had built. Later, General Electric installed larger generators at the Pelzer Mills in Pelzer, South Carolina. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, General Electric began to expand its operations to other cities, such as New Orleans. In addition to the textile industry, other industries were beginning to embrace electricity. In 1909, a steel mill in Gary, Indiana converted to electrical power. That same year, the first electrically powered ships were launched and southern port cities soon had GE representatives. These GE salesmen promoted generators, turbines, motors and other heavy apparatus. In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, General Electric's sales volume in the Southeast grew rapidly and by 1912, company sales exceeded \$3 million.

With the increased acceptance of electricity, General Electric ventured into the sales of appliances in the 1920s. Several internal mergers and divisions followed as the company reorganized its workforce to reflect changes in the industry and in the way the public used electricity.

As General Electric expanded operations in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it sought a larger base of operations in the South and settled on Atlanta as its regional headquarters. From its office at the corner of Spring and Cain streets in Atlanta, the Southeastern District headquarters of General Electric covered Georgia, Florida, Alabama, South Carolina, Mississippi and Louisiana. In 1930, the Tennessee offices were transferred to Atlanta.

In 1923, General Electric completed a new warehouse and repair shop on Glenn Street in Atlanta. The new building was designed by General Electric and constructed by the Flagler Company. Flagler, an Atlanta engineering and construction firm, was a well-known Atlanta company whose buildings included the Varsity, West End Baptist Church, the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company building, East Lake Country Club, and the Atlanta City Auditorium. Thomas Thorne Flagler, who

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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founded the company in 1911, served as the president of the Associated General Contractors of America, which he helped organize in 1918. The family-owned Flagler Company remains in business and has built numerous buildings throughout the Southeast.

The General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse is located along the Southern Railway line at Glenn and Humphries streets in Mechanicsville, an African-American residential neighborhood in southwest Atlanta. The 64,000-square-foot warehouse maintained a complete stock of General Electric inventory. The service shop had 10,000-square feet of floor space adjoining the warehouse. Office space occupied an additional 10,000-square feet. According to the Atlanta magazine *City Builder*, it was the "South's largest electrical warehouse."

After the Great Depression, enormous gains were made in electrifying the South and electricity became the dominant source of industrial power. After World War II, industrial expansion occurred at an even faster rate and in 1952, General Electric completed a two-story office building on Peachtree Street. The district sales department and the Atlanta local offices were moved to the new location.

General Electric's repair shop and warehouse operations remained at the Glenn Street site until 1977. A one-story shed located on the south side of the warehouse was demolished after 1950. Several smaller nonhistoric buildings on the site were also demolished. Sexton Toby Tire occupied the warehouse from 1978 until the 2000s. In 2006, the two buildings, whose condition had deteriorated, were rehabilitated as affordable housing. The certified rehabilitation included partitioning interior spaces into private apartments in both buildings and the construction of a new apartment building and parking deck.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Ellis, Marion. "General Electric." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia. 2002.

*Atlanta City Directories 1892-1980.* Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA.

City of Atlanta building permits. Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA.

Flagler Company business file at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA.

General Electric business file at the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1911-1950. Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA.

"South's Largest Electrical Warehouse Opened in Atlanta." The City Builder. August 1923, 46-47. Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, GA.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**  
**date issued:** Final certification by the Technical Services Branch of the National Park Service on August 11, 2006.
- 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 #**

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office**
- Other State Agency**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:**

**Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A**

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## **10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property**      Approximately one acre

### **UTM References**

A)    Zone 16      Easting 740520      Northing 3736100

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The historic district boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached map, which is drawn to scale.

### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the two principal buildings of the General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Steven Moffson

**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

**mailing address** 34 Peachtree Street, N.W., Suite 1600

**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303

**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** August 15, 2008

**e-mail** steven.moffson@dnr.state.ga.us

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Marion Ellis

**organization** Ray and Associates

**mailing address** 328 7<sup>th</sup> Street

**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 303038

**telephone** N/A

**e-mail** N/A

( ) **property owner**

(X) **consultant**

( ) **regional development center preservation planner**

( ) **other:**

**Property Owner or Contact Information**

**name (property owner or contact person)** Ronald Keller

**organization (if applicable)** N/A

**mailing address** 86 Pryor Street, Suite 300

**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303

**e-mail (optional)** N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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**Name of Property:** General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse  
**City or Vicinity:** Atlanta  
**County:** Fulton  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** December 2006

**Description of Photograph(s):**

Number of photographs: 34

1. Warehouse, view from apartments, photographer facing west.
2. Interior, Repair Shop, photographer facing southeast.
3. Interior, Repair Shop, photographer facing southeast.
4. Interior, Repair Shop, photographer facing east.
5. Interior, Repair Shop, photographer facing south.
6. Warehouse with light court, photographer facing northeast.
7. Warehouse with light court, photographer facing east.
8. Repair Shop, photographer facing northwest.
9. Warehouse, photographer facing northeast.
10. Repair Shop, stairs, photographer facing west.
11. Repair Shop, stairs, photographer facing south.
12. Repair Shop (left) and Warehouse (right), photographer facing north.
13. Warehouse (left) and apartments (right), photographer facing east.
14. Warehouse (left) and apartments (right), photographer facing east.
15. Warehouse, photographer facing north.
16. Warehouse, view from parking deck, photographer facing north.
17. Apartments (not in National Register boundary), photographer facing northeast.

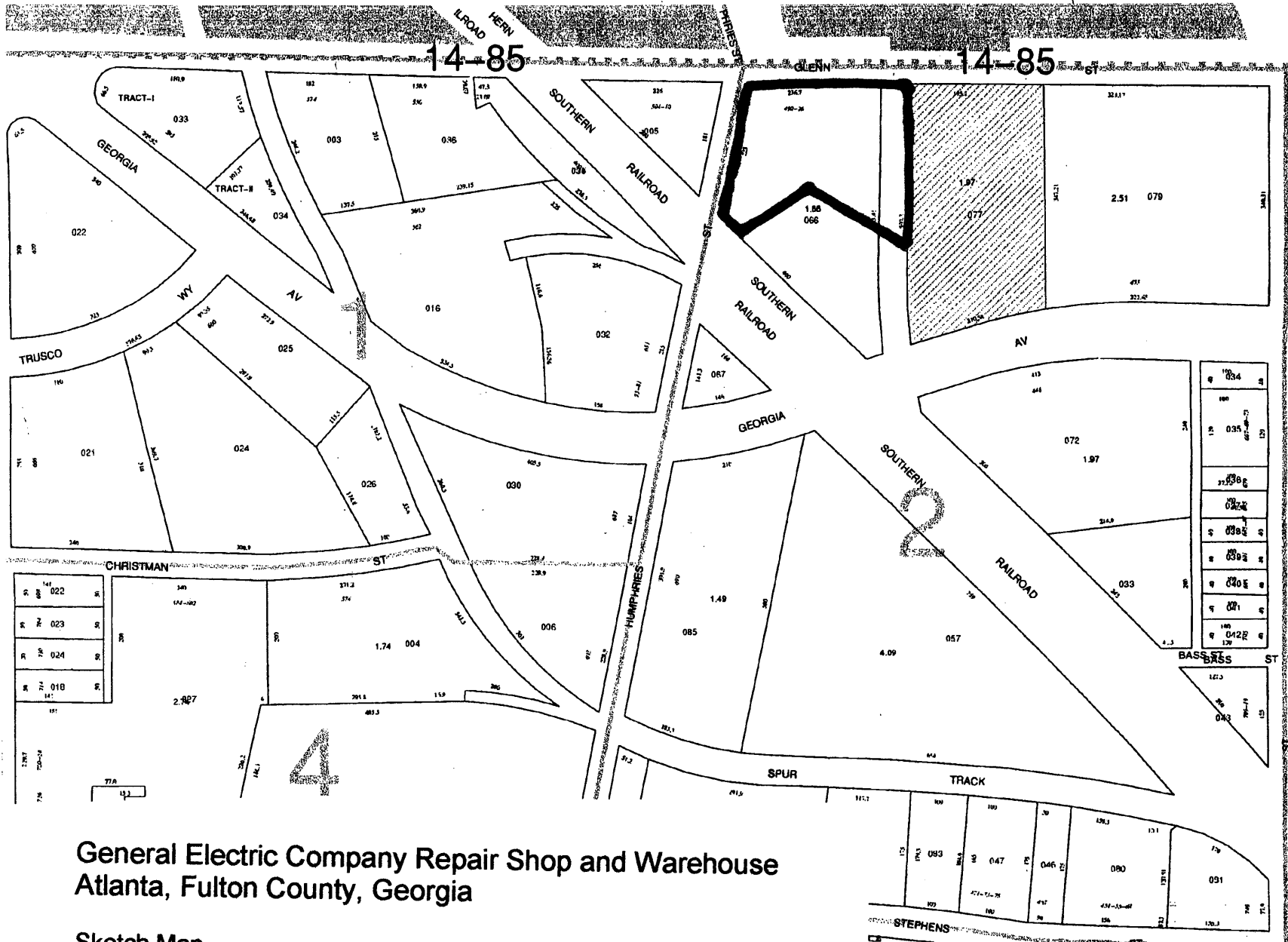
National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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18. Warehouse, façade detail, photographer facing north.
19. Repair Shop and Warehouse, view from parking deck, photographer facing northeast.
20. Repair Shop, fire stair, photographer facing northwest.
21. Apartments, photographer facing east.
22. Warehouse with smoke stack (right) and Repair Shop (center), photographer facing west.
23. Warehouse, photographer facing north.
24. Warehouse and Repair Shop, photographer facing southwest.
25. Apartments with Warehouse in background, photographer facing west.
26. Warehouse, photographer facing west.
27. Warehouse, façade detail, photographer facing west.
28. Warehouse, façade detail, photographer facing south.
29. Warehouse, façade detail, photographer facing southeast.
30. Warehouse, façade detail, photographer facing south.
31. Repair Shop and Warehouse, photographer facing southeast.
32. Repair Shop, photographer facing northwest.
33. Parking deck and apartments with Warehouse in background, photographer facing northwest.
34. Parking deck and apartments with Warehouse (center), photographer facing north.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)



General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse  
 Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia

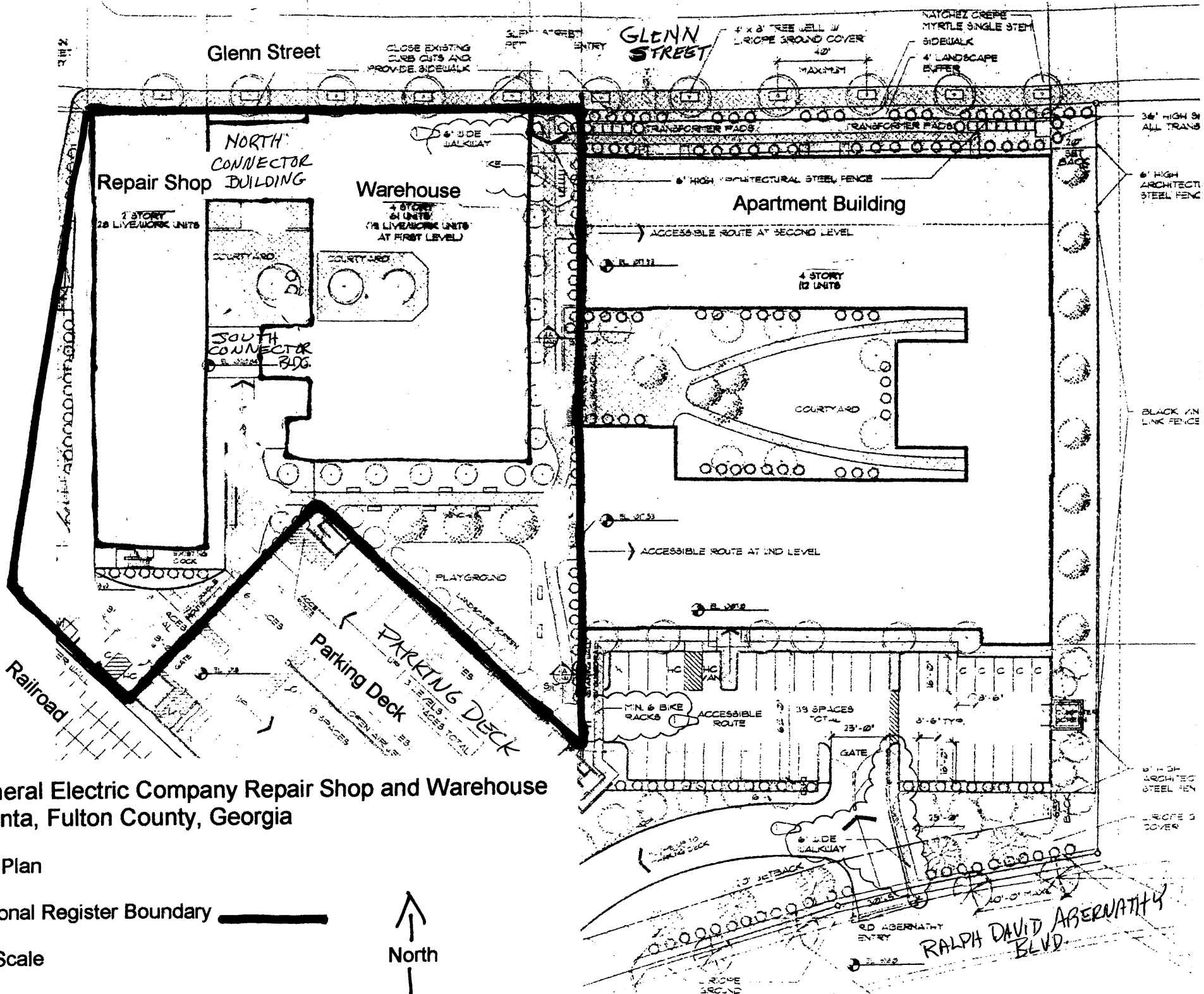
Sketch Map

National Register Boundary

Approximate Scale: 1 inch = 240 feet







**General Electric Company Repair Shop and Warehouse  
Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia**

Site Plan

National Register Boundary **—————**

No Scale



*RALPH DAVID ABERNATHY  
BLVD.*