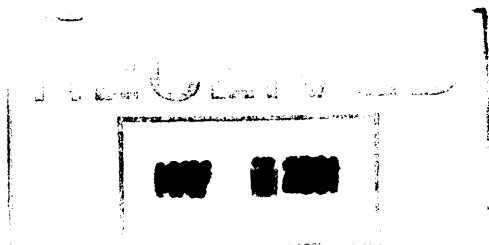


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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.

1. Name of Property

historic name 161 Spring Street Building
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 161 Spring Street, N.W.
city, town Atlanta
county Fulton code 121
state Georgia code GA zip code 30303

() vicinity of

() not for publication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:

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	1	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	1	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

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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 Coates
Signature of certifying official

5-3-01
Date

W. Ray Luce
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

Date

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, explain:

see continuation sheet

Edson H. Beall 6-14-01

Keeper of the National Register

Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

Commerce/Trade: business

Current Functions:

Domestic: hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Classical Revival

Materials:

foundation	Concrete
walls	Brick
roof	Asphalt
other	Terra Cotta

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The building at 161 Spring Street is an eight-story Neoclassical Revival-style building. The first three floors were designed by the Atlanta architectural firm R.C. Snow Company in 1928. The Atlanta firm of Barili and Humphreys designed floors four through eight, which were completed in 1948. The U-shaped building is supported by a reinforced-concrete structural system with cast-in-place columns. The original plan featured space on the ground floor for stores. The upper floors were reached by the main Spring Street entrance that led to a small lobby and stairs. A double-loaded corridor provides access to small offices in the floors above. Stairs are located in the southeast wing and in the base of the U-shaped plan behind the two elevators.

The principal facades on Spring and Williams streets are divided into three parts with terra-cotta ornamentation concentrated on the ground floor, the second floor, and the eighth floor. Floors three through seven are clad in brick laid in Flemish bond. Floors one and two are distinguished by terra-cotta cladding scored to resemble stone. Within this arrangement doors and plate-glass windows are set in arcades with multi-light transoms. Second-floor windows, like windows throughout the building, are metal-framed casements. On the third floor the end bays and the four center bays are set off with terra-cotta window surrounds and pedimented hoods. The eighth floor, clad in terra cotta, features a small cornice and, on the corner windows, ornate surrounds and flat hoods. The plain north and rear facades include metal-framed windows but none of the ornament found on the main facades.

In 1997, the building was rehabilitated to serve as a hotel. The first floor includes the lobby, which is now much larger than during the period of significance, the registration desk, and offices as well as

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Section 7--Description

conference rooms and a contemporary glass-enclosed light court. The U-shaped upper floors contain guest rooms and, except for the location of the elevators and two stairwells, retain no historic fabric, which is mostly a result of previous rehabilitations. However, a single-loaded corridor that opens directly onto the light court has replaced the double-loaded corridor that served offices facing the light court and those that looked out to the street. The historically open light court was glazed. 161 Spring Street received final certification from the Tax Incentives Program, Technical Preservation Branch, National Park Service on September 22, 1999.

161 Spring Street is located two blocks west of Peachtree Street and just north of the Fairlie Poplar Historic District in an area that contains historic, nonhistoric, and remodeled buildings.

8. Statement of Significance

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
Religion

Period of Significance:

1928-1950

Significant Dates:

1928 – 161 Spring Street Building built by the Massell Realty Company.
1946 – Purchased by Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.
1948 – Home Mission built floors four through eight.

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Raymond C. Snow Company (architect)
Barili & Humphreys (architect)

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Section 8--Description

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The 161 Spring Street Building is significant in the area architecture because it is an excellent example of the Neoclassical Revival style in Atlanta in the first decades of the 20th century. The Neoclassical Revival style reinterpreted classical motifs from earlier historical styles, such as Neoclassicism and the Greek Revival. Interest in classical architecture suited the conservative design tradition in Atlanta and the South and remained a popular style through the mid-20th century, long after other parts of the nation had turned to modernism. 161 Spring Street is especially important because its ornate exterior elevation remain virtually unaltered and because it is among the few dozen tall office buildings from the early to mid-20th century that survive in downtown Atlanta.

The 161 Spring Street Building is significant in the area of religion because it was the organizational center for domestic evangelical activities of the Southern Baptist Convention during the post-World War II era. The American Home Mission Society was organized in 1832 in Boston, Massachusetts as a branch of the Baptist Church to "evangelize the homeland." Establishing missions in the interior of America and aiding struggling churches were the dual purposes of this organization. The Baptist belief of bringing the word of God to every soul for its eternal salvation provided the motivation for the mission. Within twelve years, the organization split North and the South over the issue of slavery. The Baptists of the Southern states were loath to turn away wealthy supporters just because of their ownership of slaves. The northern missions required that all slave owners be banned from any position of leadership in the church. Fourteen Southern states broke away from the northern church in 1845, forming the Southern Baptist Convention. The convention includes states as far north as Maryland and as far west as Texas.

The Southern Baptist Convention included the Board of Foreign Missions and the Board of Domestic Missions. The General Associations (District) and the individual State Conventions also operated under the parent Southern Baptist Convention, however they were independent of the Mission Boards. From 1845 to 1870, the first headquarters of the Board of Domestic Missions was located in Marion, Alabama. During Reconstruction, the Mission Board was nearly disbanded. As part of its reorganization, it was renamed the Home Mission Board. By 1892, The Home Mission Board for the entire Southern Baptist Convention was headquartered in Atlanta and after 1946 (or 1948) in the 161 Spring Street Building.

Subjects of the evangelical activities of the Home Mission included "the Negro, the ignorant immigrant, the uneducated in the Appalachian and Ozark mountains, the Roman Catholics, the godless savages (Indians, Cubans and Hawaiians)."¹ The Baptists desired a total conversion to

¹ Victor Irvine Masters, *The Call of the South* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1915), 103.

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their beliefs regardless of any other religious beliefs that these peoples might have followed. Through its evangelical activities, the Home Mission also brought higher standards of living to isolated, rural areas and raised awareness of socially intolerable labor practices.

In addition to direct evangelical activities, the Home Mission also provided for the education of ministers and developed college and mission schools. Later, the Home Mission began to use television and radio to promote its beliefs. The Home Mission served as the coordinating organization for all these programs, unifying their efforts to maximize the impact of the Mission.

National Register Criteria

A and C.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

The 161 Spring Street Building meets Criterion Consideration A because it is significant as an excellent example of the Neoclassical Revival style in Atlanta in the first decades of the 20th century. It also meets Criterion Consideration C because, as the organizational center for domestic evangelical activities of the Southern Baptist Convention during the post-World War II era, the 161 Spring Street Building derives significance for its historical importance.

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1928 with the completion of 161 Spring Street and ends in 1950 (the fifty-years-of-age cut off) to include the period when the building served as headquarters for the Baptist Home Mission.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The 161 Spring Street Building occupies the entire National Register property. There are no other buildings, structures, sites, or objects associated with the nomination.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

Atlanta's Spring Street corridor at the beginning of the 20th century was composed of dwellings, small businesses, and a few boarding houses. By 1911, more extensive commercial development gave rise to such buildings as the Lyric Theatre, which was located behind the Handy Terrace apartments; a garage and a machine shop were located in the next block. The Carnegie Library was built one block to the southeast. The abundance of apartment buildings in the area indicate a dense

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population, however with the governor's mansion located only two blocks east on Peachtree Street it was likely a prosperous area.

In 1923, the Spring Street viaduct over the Western and Atlantic rail line was completed five blocks south of 161 Spring Street. At the time of its completion, the 1,900-foot-long viaduct was the largest civic improvement project in Atlanta. Previously, traffic along Peachtree and Whitehall streets was congested because railroad tracks blocked and divided north and south Atlanta. Automobile traffic was forced through narrow passages above and below the tracks. Because it was paved without streetcar tracks, the Spring Street viaduct did not impede the flow of automobile traffic, the new favored mode of transportation. The new viaduct fostered development along Spring Street by allowing automobiles to pass easily from Terminal Station to areas north and west of Five Points.

Business leaders and Atlanta newspapers touted the Spring Street viaduct as means to spur growth in under-developed quarters of the city. After the viaduct's completion, property values along the entire Spring Street increased fivefold and speculative construction began immediately. New construction, such as the Bona Allen building at Spring and Luckie streets and the International Building at Spring and Cain streets, were among the new buildings constructed at this time.

Real-estate magnate Ben Massell understood the potential for growth along Spring Street and in 1923 purchased a lot at the corner of Spring and Williams streets. Ben Massell, son of poor Lithuanian immigrant parents, was an Atlanta real-estate tycoon by his mid-30s. He entered the real-estate business in 1910, always with a building under construction, sometimes as many as twenty. Massell was often in debt and played the financing of his business like a high-stakes roller. He often said: "It's just as easy to owe \$5,000,000, as it is to owe \$5.00."

By 1923, his company, Massell Realty, controlled property valued up to \$2 million. In 1961, Massell was worth \$40 million, and had built more than 1000 buildings in Atlanta. Massell Realty built many prominent buildings in Atlanta during the first half of the 20th century, including the Georgian Hotel, Massellton Apartments, Peachtree-Baker Building, and the Massell Building at Walton and Cone streets.

In 1928, Massell hired Raymond C. Snow Company to design a speculative office building at 161 Spring Street. Although planned as an eight-story tower, only the first three stories were completed. Snow, first listed in the 1923 City Directory with his own architectural firm in the Hurt Building, died by 1930. No other works by his firm have been identified.

Manufacturers Record published the building's cost as \$350,000. Snow designed the building to be eight stories high, and it was advertised in the Massell Realty Company's "Blue Book" as eight-stories tall. However, it was constructed with three stories and a foundation designed to support the

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additional stories. A pre-1929 copy of the Blue Book depicts the shortened version of 161 Spring Street, priced for sale at \$400,000. The building's first tenants included James P. Simpson Co. Inc., and the American Wire Fabrics Co.

In 1946, the Baptist Home Mission Board purchased the 161 Spring Street and in 1948 commissioned the architectural firm of Barili and Humphreys to complete the remaining five stories. The Home Mission occupied the first three stories and leased the five upper floors until it sold the building in 1967.

After moving to Atlanta in the 1880's, the Baptist Home Mission Board was housed in a variety of locations throughout the city, mostly downtown near 161 Spring Street. The Home Mission prospered before the Depression, but suffered financial problems in the late 1920s. The worst blow to the organization came in 1898 when treasurer Clinton B. Carnes embezzled nearly one million dollars. It was not until 1943 that the organization fully recovered.

In 1946, the Home Mission sought larger quarters. By this time, its evangelical efforts centered on new subjects: mill towns, migrant field hands, and mining and lumber camps, the Alaskan frontier, and post-War military installations. The Home Mission organized an impressive civilian Baptist chaplain corps to service the military's church needs. The Home Mission purchased 161 Spring Street for \$200,000. The property was bought from Lorez Neuhoff, who had purchased it from the Massell Realty Company in 1930. One of the Board's first efforts was to hire the Atlanta firm Barili & Humphreys to design the remaining five stories. Completed in 1948, the upper floors are compatible with the style and design of the original building. The Baptist Home Mission Board occupied the lower three floors as late as late as 1967, when it was known as the Lawrence-Garrison Building. The top five floors were leased to various small firms. During the 1970s and 1980s, the building was known as the Atlanta Film Building and the Peachtree West Building. Atlanta Historic Hotel L.P. purchased 161 Spring Street in 1997 and rehabilitated the building to serve as hotel.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Ray & Associates. "161 Spring Street Building." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, February 1998. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

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:
- 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

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 1 acre

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 741770 Northing ~~3738460~~

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point formed by the easterly corner of the intersection of Spring Street and Williams Street, proceed in a northeasterly direction 102 feet along Spring Street. Then proceed in a southeasterly direction (parallel with Williams Street) 94.9 feet to a point roughly in the center of the city block. Then proceed southwesterly 102 feet to the northeast side of Williams Street and then proceed northwesterly along Williams Street 94.3 feet to Spring Street, the point of origin. See attached map.

Boundary Justification

The proposed boundary represents the current legal boundary and includes 161 Spring Street, the only property associated with this nomination.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Steven H. Moffson, Architectural Historian

organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

street & number 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W.

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

telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** April 15, 2001

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

organization Ray and Associates (historic preservation consultants)

street & number 328 7th Street, N.E.

city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30308

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

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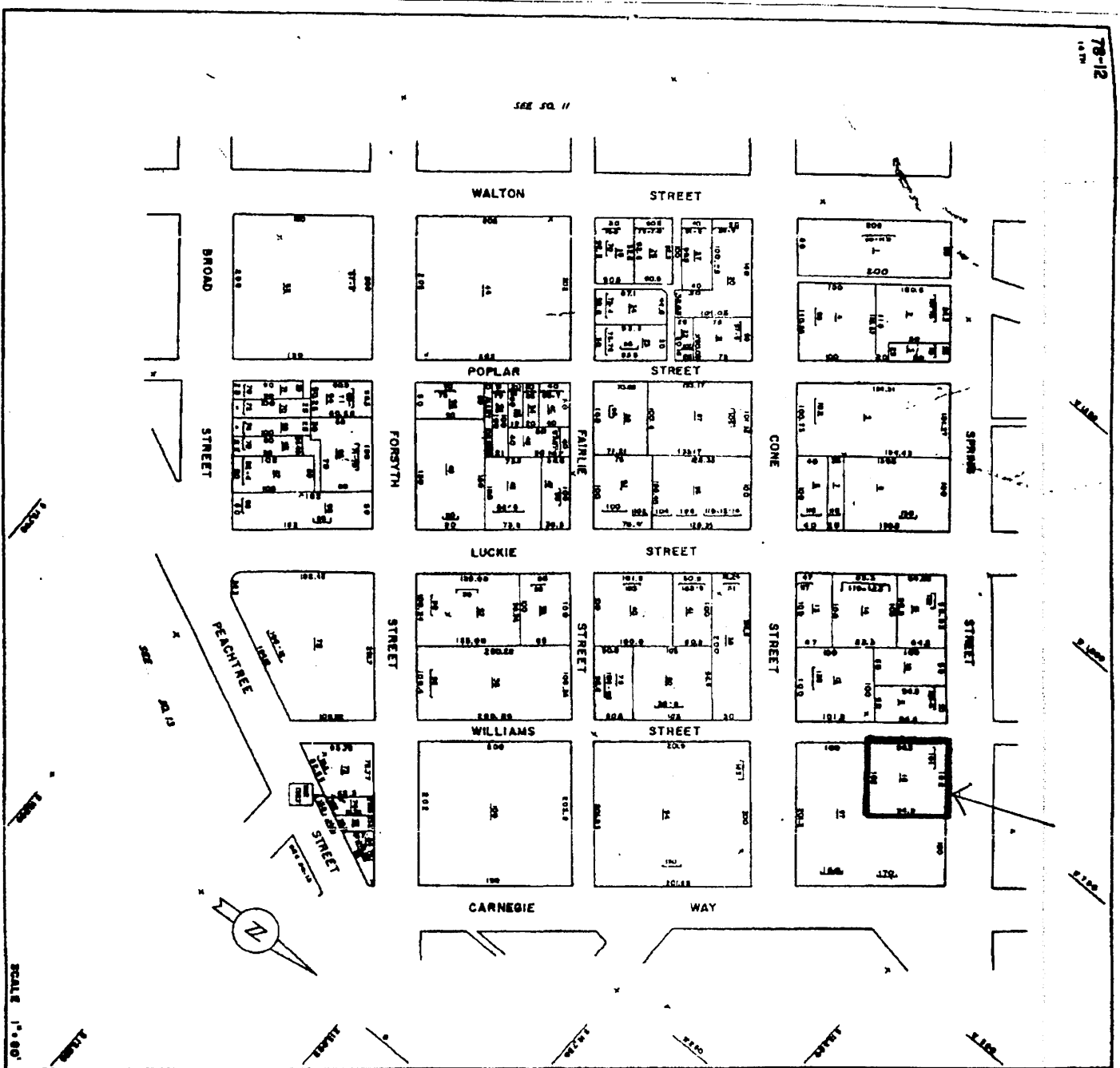
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Photographs

Name of Property: 161 Spring Street Building
City or Vicinity: Atlanta
County: Fulton
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: May 2000

Description of Photograph(s):

1. View on Spring Street, photographer facing north.
2. Main façade (detail), photographer facing southeast.
3. Rear and northeast facades, photographer facing west.
4. Interior, lobby.
5. Interior, atrium viewed from second floor.
6. Interior, atrium skylight.
7. Interior, atrium and glazed wall.
8. Interior, atrium viewed through a third-floor window.
9. Interior, Room 306, sitting area.
10. Interior, Room 308, bedroom.
11. Interior, Room, 317, kitchen.



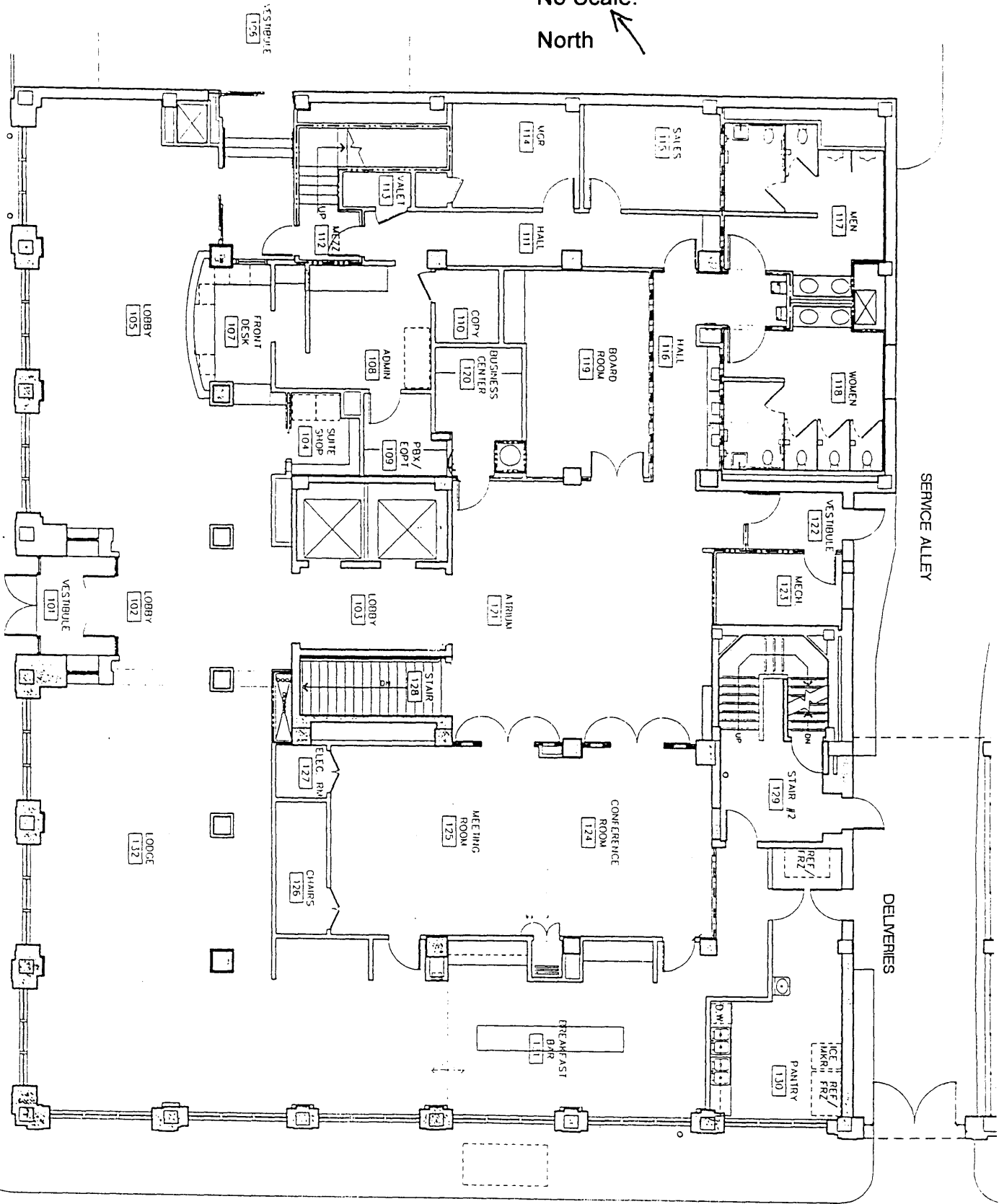
161 Spring Street Building
 Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia
 Sketch Map
 National Register Boundary
 Scale: 1" = 200'

North 

161 Spring Street Building
 Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia
 First Floor Plan
 No Scale.

North 

SPRING ST.



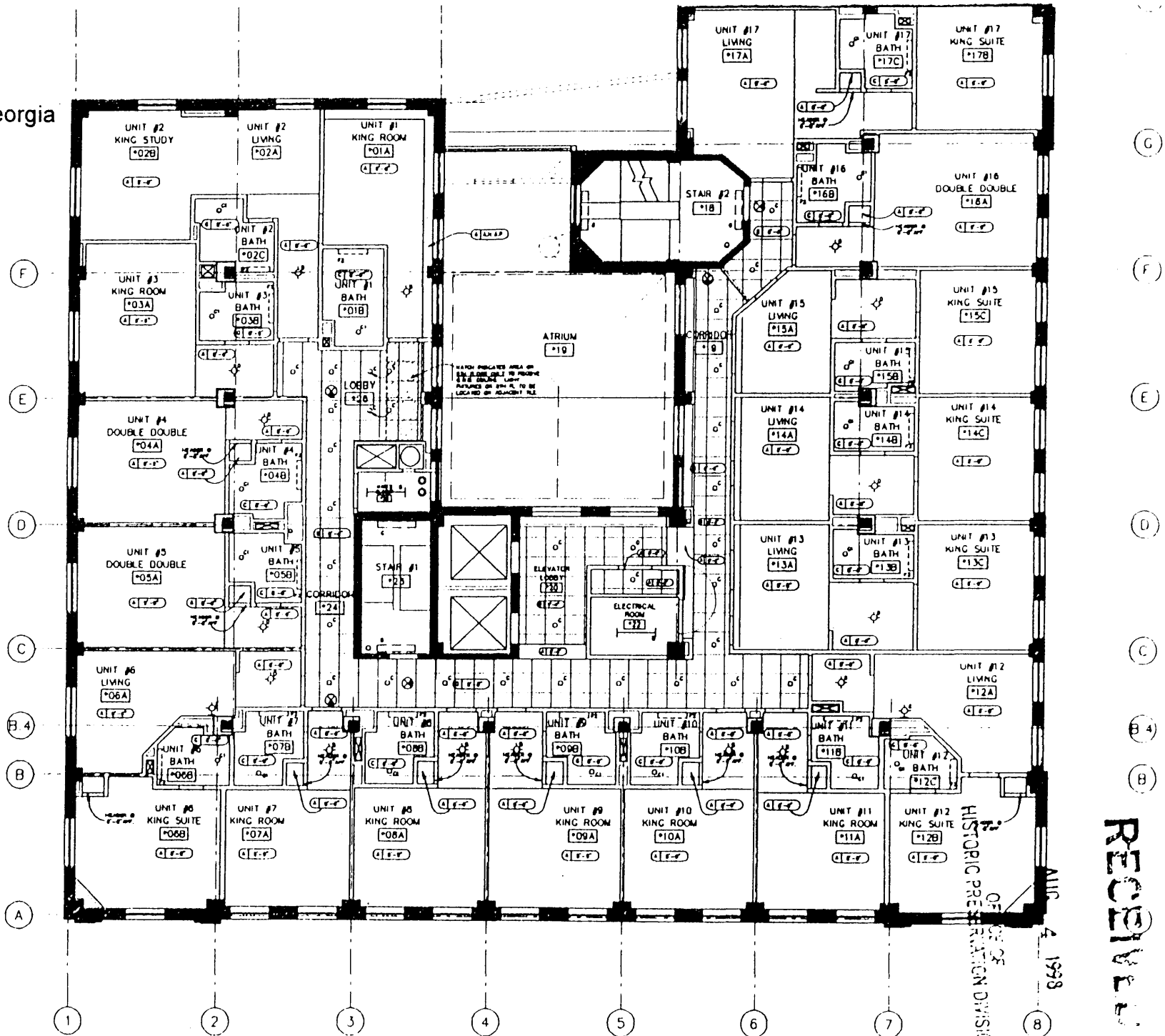
WILLIAMS ST.

161 Spring Street Building
 (Hampton Inn & Suites)

First Floor

161 Spring Street Building
 Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia
 Third (typical) Floor Plan
 No Scale

North ←



1
 A22
 TYPICAL FLOOR REFLECTED CEILING PLAN
 1/8" = 1'-0"

161 SPRING STREET

OFFICE OF
 HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION

AUG 4 1998

RECEIVED