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 Old Mount Dora A.C.L. Railroad Station other names/site number Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce 2. Location 341 Alexander Street street & number N/A not for publication Mount Dora N/A vicinity city, town zip code 32757 Florida FL state code Lake 069 county code 3. Classification **Ownership of Property** Category of Property Number of Resources within Property X private building(s) Contributing Noncontributing district 1 public-local buildings public-State site sites public-Federal structure structures object objects 0 Total Name of related multiple property listing: Number of contributing resources previously N/A listed in the National Register _ State/Federal Agency Certification As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination I request for determination of eligiblility 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 I meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet anne SHPD Signature of certifying official Date State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register.	Selour Byen	Intered in the National Register	3/5/92
determined eligible for the National			
Register. See continuation sheet.		·	
determined not eligible for the			
National Register.			
removed from the National Register.			
other, (explain:)	-		
	A		

HEGICIER

Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions) Transportation/Train Depot

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions) Commerce/Trade/ Professional Association

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)

No Style/ Wood Frame Vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation <u>Concrete</u> walls <u>Metal: Aluminum Siding</u>

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation Sheet

£.

See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance	ê				
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:					
Applicable National Register Criteria XA B CC	D				
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	D D E F G				
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) Tranportation	Period of Significance 1915	Significant Dates 1915			
	Cultural Affiliation				
Significant Person	Architect/Builder Unknown				

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

X See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): 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 #	 See continuation sheet Primary location of additional data: State historic preservation office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Specify repository:
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of propertyLess than one	
UTM References A [1_7] [4]3_6[9_4_0] [3_1]8_5[7_4_0] Zone Easting Northing C	B L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L
Verbal Boundary Description	
See continuation sheet	
	X See continuation sheet
Boundary Justification	
See continuation Sheet	
	X See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialis	st

Hama/ma Hitter; Hitterite bites breezerse		
organization Bureau of Historic Preservation	date	
street & number 500 S. Bronough Street	telephone (904)	487-2333
city or town Tallahassee	state Florida	zip code 32399-0250

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<u>Summary Description</u>

The Old Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Station in Mount Dora is a one-story, wood frame vernacular building constructed in 1915. The basically rectangular structure was designed to provide passenger and baggage facilities for regular railroad traffic passing through the city of Mount Dora. The building is covered by a hip roof and rests on a low, continuous concrete block foundation. There is also a stepped parapet over the telegrapher's bay on the southwest elevation of the building which faces the railroad tracks. Although the freight platform has been removed, and a number of changes have been made to the interior of the building, the depot still retains many of its original and distinctive features. These include the semaphore signals and schedule board on the exterior of the building, plus the ticket counter, station master's desk, and signal controls on the interior.

Exterior Alterations

The former depot occupies a triangular plot of ground bounded roughly by the railroad tracks on the west, Alexander Street on the east, and Fourth Avenue on the north. This site is located in the southwest corner of downtown Mount Dora near the northeast shore of Lake Dora.

Few alterations have been made to the exterior of the former depot since it was acquired by the Chamber of Commerce. The freight platform and loading doors on the track side (southwest elevation) of the building were removed during renovation and the original narrow weatherboard siding was covered with aluminum siding similar in appearance to the historic material. A ramp for handicapped access was constructed on the east elevation of the building where the main entrance is located. The roof retains its original terne metal shingles.

Interior Alterations

A number of changes have been made to the interior of the building. Partitions have been installed in the former baggage (now a meeting room) to provide rest restrooms and storage space. The meeting room, offices and reception area have been paneled. A drop ceiling was also installed in the building to cover the ducts of the air conditioning system that was installed by the Chamber of Commerce. The interior retains a number or original features, including the station master's desk, the ticket

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Description

counter, tariff desk and book rack, and the depot safe. All of these elements add to the charm of the depot and are reminders of its historic past.

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List of Photographs

1. Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. 2. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 3. Donald P. Hoagland 1991 4. 5. Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce 6. Northeast (Main) Facade, Looking Southwest 7. Photo No. 1 of 14 1. Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. 2. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 3. Donald P. Hoagland 1991 4. 5. Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce 6. Northeast (Main) Facade & Northwest Elevation, Looking Southeast 7. Photo No. 2 of 14 1. Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 2. Donald P. Hoagland 3. 4. 1991 5. Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce Northeast (Main) Facade, Looking Southhwest 6. 7. Photo No. 3 of 14 Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. 1. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 2. Donald P. Hoagland 3. 4. 1991 5. Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce Southeast Elevation, Looking North 6. Photo No. 4 of 14 7. 1. Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 2. Donald P. Hoagland 3. 4. 1991 Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce 5. 6. Southwest and Southeast Elevations, Looking Northeast 7. Photo No. 5 of 14

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5____ Section number ____7 Page ____ Photographs Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. 1. 2. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 3. Donald P. Hoagland 1991 4. 5. Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce 6. Executive Office, Looking Southwest Photo No. 11 of 14 7. Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. 1. 2. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 3. Donald P. Hoagland 4. 1991 5. Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce 6. Reception/Office Area, Looking South Photo No. 12 of 14 7. Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. 1. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 2. Donald P. Hoagland 3. 4. 1991 5. Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce Reception/Office Area (Detail), Semaphore Controls 6. Looking Northwest 7. Photo No. 13 of 14 1. Old ACL Railroad Depot, 351 Alexander St. Mount Dora (Lake County) Florida 2. 3. Donald P. Hoagland 4. 1991 Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce 5. 6. Meeting Room (Fomer Baggage Room--Detail), Depot Safe, Looking east 7. Photo No. of 14

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Significance

Summary Statement

The Old Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Station in Mount Dora fulfills criterion A for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Built in 1915, the former passenger depot has local significance in the area of Transportation for its association with the economic development of Mount Dora and as a visible reflection of the contribution that the creation of Florida's railroad network made to the growth of citrus culture and tourism in the city of Mount Dora and Lake County. The building is representative of the type of passenger facility constructed in small communities by the railroad companies and is among the oldest of the wood frame depots still standing on its original site in the state.

Historical Context

The city of Mount Dora is nestled among the hills and lakes of Lake County, being located about twenty-five miles northwest of Orlando and approximately four miles east of Tavares, the county seat. Lake County occupies that part of the central plateau of the Florida peninsula immediately west of the Atlantic coastal plain. The county boasts over 1400 lakes and is marked by forests of pines and deciduous trees, and by small communities whose economies are based on tourism (hunting, fishing, and recreational boating) and agricultural enterprises. Found off the "beaten path" but with good roads leading in all directions, Mount Dora enjoys the serenity of a small town without any isolation.

U.S. Highway 441 passes the north edge of the community and the old route of 441 travels through the heart of the historic section of the city. State Road 46 and 19-A also provide traffic arteries linking Mount Dora with nearby communities. Its hilly terrain on the northern edge of Lake Dora rises 184 feet above sea level. Lake County is famous for its many lakes, a chain of which connect with the Inland Waterway which leads eventually to the Intracoastal Waterway. Lake Dora is about three and a half miles wide and seven long, and it was from this body of water that the town derives its name. It is possible to travel by boat through the Dora Canal and other canals and locks to the Atlantic Ocean. The present population of the city is approximately 6,800 residents.

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Significance

The Founding of Mount Dora

Few settlers were found in Central Florida prior to the Civil War, but by 1875 an increasing number of people began to drift into the vicinity of what is now Lake County. The first pioneers to homestead the Mount Dora area settled on the eastern shore of Lake Dora, and by the end of the decade a small but thriving permanent community had been established along its northern and eastern edges. Neither the settlement nor the lake upon whose shores it stood had a formal name. It was originally known as Royellou, a name supposedly derived from the given names of the three children of one of the first residents in the area.

This name never became popular with the residents of the area and in 1883 was changed to Mount Dora, taking its name from nearby Lake Dora The lake itself gained its present name in 1882, during a survey of the boundaries of Orange County by the U.S. government. The surveyors were invited to camp on the homestead of Dora Ann Drawdy, where they were made to feel at home. To show their appreciation for her courteous treatment, they gave the name Lake Dora to the body of water that adjoined part of her homestead.

The Railroad Comes to Mount Dora, 1886

In the early days of the settling of Central Florida, the only methods of travel were by ox cart, horse back, wagon or boat. In time, however, it was seen that railroads were needed to form a speedier method of travel to insure development of the area. Before the arrival of the railroads, all supplies had to be brought to the settlement from Sanford, Florida (then known as Melonville), a distance of twenty-five miles, or they were hauled from southern Lake County to Lake Harris and boated to Leesburg where they were loaded on wagons for the final leg of the trip.

In 1880, the St. Johns and Lake Eustis Railroad, a narrow gauge line, was laid from the town of Astor on the St. Johns to Ft. Mason on the north shore of Lake Eustis, about 10 miles north of Mount Dora. This was the earliest railroad to operate in Lake County and greatly facilitated travel to the Lake Dora region, prompting the settlers to petition the federal government for the establishment of a U.S. post office. Postal operations began later that same year, with the settlement still being called "Royellou." In 1882, the rail line was extended to nearby

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Tavares and then to Lane Park, and in 1883 it was carried to Leesburg.

In the early months of 1884, the Florida Southern Railroad Company ran its first train into Lake County over a narrow gauge track that hand been commenced at Ocala in June 1883 and finished to Leesburg by the end of December. The line was then extended to Okahumpka, Lakeland, and eventually to Tampa. Trackage through Mount Dora was constructed in 1886 by the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railroad as a branch from Sanford that continued on to Tavares. In 1886, the first train rolled into Mount Dora over the tracks of the Sanford and Eustis Railroad, operated by the Jacksonville, Tampa & Key West Railroad Company. The Tavares & Gulf Railroad was built from Tavares to Clermont in 1886-1887. From July 1887 to August 1888 a branch line of the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railroad was brought from Sanford to Tavares.

In the spring of 1887 some citizens of the town of Tavares went to Tallahassee to petition the legislature for the creation of a new county from the existing Orange and Sumter counties. The new county was to be called Lake County because of the numerous lakes within the proposed boundaries. The new county was established by the legislature by an act passed May 27, 1887, and Tavares became the county seat.

The Citrus Industry in Mount Dora and Lake County

At the time of the arrival of the railroad, Mount Dora had just 174 residents. The construction of the rail line, however, provided the community with direct links to Jacksonville and Tampa, supplying the burgeoning citrus industry in Lake County with major rail and seaport facilities capable of distributing its citrus produce to markets world wide. With the establishment of an integrated railroad network in Central Florida, citrus production grew rapidly. Hundreds of groves--large and small-sprang up everywhere, as new settlers eagerly moved into the area to claim their share of the new "Florida gold."

The shipment of fruit from the growing areas was facilitated greatly in 1895 when the various rail lines in central and western Florida were incorporated into the Plant System, which changed all of its sections of narrow gauge track to standard gauge. In the early days most growers had their own packing houses. Oranges and grapefruit were loaded onto wagons and taken to these small wood frame buildings where the workers (mainly

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women and children) would wash the fruit and pack it into crates bearing a label with the name of the grove. The filled crates were then transported to a warehouse near the railroad depot in the nearby town or taken to loading platforms at special points along the rail line that were constructed to receive citrus and other agricultural products.

<u>The Big Freeze</u>

In the winter of 1894-95 a disastrous freeze destroyed nearly all of the citrus crop in Central Florida. Dramatic drops in temperature on December 28, 1894 and February 8, 1895 froze the fruit and killed the trees. Many citrus operations were abandoned, and a large number of groves were replanted with other crops. However, some citrus growers stayed with the groves and bought up the property of those who wished to sell out. Eventually the citrus industry recovered, so that by the mid-1920s Lake County was shipping between 1,600,000 and 2,000,000 boxes of citrus each year to eager markets.

The establishment of the Florida Citrus Exchange in 1909 revolutionized the citrus industry in Florida. Growers associations constructed large completely equipped packing houses that automated a number of operations, and the small packing houses vanished. Citrus was thenceforth carried to these large facilities devoted exclusively to preparing and packing the fruit sent to them by the various members of the cooperative. The crates were then loaded onto rail cars that stood at rail sidings next to the packing house, and the cars were joined to the trains on a scheduled seasonal basis.

Mount Dora, 1895-1915

The rapid expansion on the citrus industry in Lake County did not quickly bring about a dramatic rise in the permanent population of Mount Dora. By 1895, the town still had only about two hundred full-time residents, most of whom were directly or indirectly involved in the citrus industry, real estate development, or tourism. However, the large lakes in the vicinity of Mount Dora attracted many winter visitors to the area, and rail transportation made the community readily accessible to travelers. One event that drew thousands of visitors to Mount Dora each year was the assembly of the South Florida Chautauqua. Founded in 1887, the South Florida Chautauqua of Mount Dora was organized as an educational,

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religious, and benevolent institution, whose assembly lasted for ten days during March of each year.

The association acquired a tract of land in Mount Dora and constructed a hotel and an assembly hall capable of seating 1,500 persons. The object of the organization was to promote the religious and intellectual welfare of the people of Florida and other states and to remain nondenominational in its aims and spirit. The chautauqua regularly attracted so many visitors to Mount Dora that the assembly hotel and other lodging facilities were insufficient to accommodate all those who wished to attend it functions, so tents were pitched on the assembly grounds to acommodate the overflow. People attending the chautauqua were treated to concerts and other wholesome entertainments as well as being provided speeches by religious figures, politicians, and prominent men and women of letters.

Dining facilities provided meals for the attendants at a modest price, and there were stands on the grounds where visitors could purchase refreshments. Special trains were scheduled daily to stop at a covered platform at the west end of the grounds. On February 27, 1905, the auditorium was destroyed by fire and a large tent was provided for the assembly program. The chautauqua continued for two or three years, but it became a problem to secure talent and carry on with such makeshift facilities. Finally the annual programs came to an end and the chautauqua at Mount Dora just faded away.

In 1905, Mount Dora had a population of about three hundred residents. There were two general stores, a hardware store, a drug store, two churches, and a wood frame town hall that had been erected in 1904 by the Mount Dora Improvement Society, a forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce. In 1910, the town was granted a charter of incorporation. However, formal incorporation was delayed until 1912, and Mount Dora became a city in 1953.

Florida Railroads and the Mount Dora Depot, 1915-1990

The first railroad passenger depot in Mount Dora appears to have been built in 1895, the year the Plant System consolidated the various rail lines passing through Lake County. The station was a small wood frame structure that was erected on the site of the present facility. In 1914, the Atlantic Coast line Railroad Company acquired the line running through Mount Dora and

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constructed the existing passenger depot the next year. By then the permanent population of the town had reached approximately 500 residents, and the railroad handled a considerable volume of passenger and freight traffic out of Mount Dora. Between 150,000 and 200,000 boxes of oranges and grapefruit were being shipped to market from Mount Dora each year. Also, a considerable amount of naval stores (turpentine products) and other agricultural goods were being handled by the warehouses in Mount Dora. Two passenger trains in each direction stopped daily at the depot in 1914. By 1922 the traffic had grown to four mixed trains (those combining passenger, freight, and mail cars) daily.

Railroad development in Florida had been largely completed by World War I and began its decline shortly thereafter. The 1920s and '30s formed a period of consolidation and modernization, but few new depots were built after the 1920s, and these were erected mainly in the fast-growing urban centers associated with tourism. After World War II, railroad passenger service declined dramatically in Florida, largely as a result of the development of the interstate highway system and improved state roadways that entailed a declining economic incentive for the railroads to provide passenger service.

The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad merged with the Seaboard Air Line in 1967 to form the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad, and in recent years the S.C.L. became one of the family of lines owned by the CSX Corporation. Only Amtrak now provides passenger rail service and that to major metropolitan areas. Many rail lines have been officially abandoned, their rails having been pulled up and their rolling stock and other appurtenances disposed of as The historic stations have become a liability to the surplus. railroad companies, and many have already been demolished. The remainder face certain destruction without the intervention of individuals and agencies dedicated to their preservation. Rail passenger service to Mount Dora was discontinued in 1949 and in 1972 the building was leased to the Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber acquired ownership of the property in 1981.

The design of the passenger depot is typical of those stations built by railroad companies in small Florida communities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most railroad companies in Florida were somewhat haphazard in their approach to building stations during the period from about 1880 to 1920. The size of a community and the number of rail lines that served it naturally determined the quality of the terminal

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facilities that might be located there. However, as older and smaller railroads were consolidated into larger companies, the new corporation was content to use whatever facilities were already available, rather than allocate funds for new terminals. The was particularly the case in the smaller towns. Passenger transportation was usually secondary to freight, so that few allowances were made for the comfort of rail travelers. The majority of the railroad depots erected in Florida were one-story wood frame vernacular structures, but whether wood frame or masonry, they followed approximately the same design scheme.

The usually rectangular structure had a gently sloping roof with wide eaves to afford some shelter to the passenger and Sometimes the building had only one waiting baggage platforms. room, but more often there were two in the segregated South, one for whites and another for black passengers. The ticket agent and telegraph office usually occupied the center of the building and featured a projecting bay on the track side of the building to allow the station master to observe train movements and to operate the signals. Attached to one end of the structure would be the baggage and freight rooms. In some cases, however, freight was stored in a separate structure. Large and bulky items, such as bales of cotton or crates of citrus, were stored in nearby warehouses to await shipment to distant markets. In most cases, these secondary buildings have not survived, for they were the first ones abandoned as rail transportation dwindled following World War II.

Railroad companies sometimes used local architects to design their depots, but more often employed the talents of their own engineering department. The stylistic antecedents of the majority these buildings--which followed a similar pattern employed by most railroad companies--is vague, as the decorative details are usually few and the overall design has been subordinated to interior functions. The design of most stations constructed between 1880 and 1920, including the one in Mount Dora, had its roots in the Romanesque Revival and Queen Anne styles which grew to popularity in the late nineteenth century and persisted into the first decade of the twentieth.

Significance of the Mount Dora Passenger Depot

As demonstrated by the above narrative, the Old Mount Dora Passenger depot is a significant local resource that reflects the development of Florida's rail network ca. 1915 and is directly

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Significance

associated with the growth of the city of Mount Dora through facilitating the establishment of an economy based on citrus growing and tourism. Except for the loss of its loading platform, the exterior of the building remains much as it appears in a photo taken of the building in 1926. However, the loss of the platform and certain changes to the interior of the structure prevent the depot from being nominated to the National Register in the area of architectural significance. The building, however, retains sufficient physical integrity to reflect its historic appearance and character and should be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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Bibliography

<u>Bibliography</u>

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Section number <u>10</u> Page <u>1</u>

Boundary Description & Justification

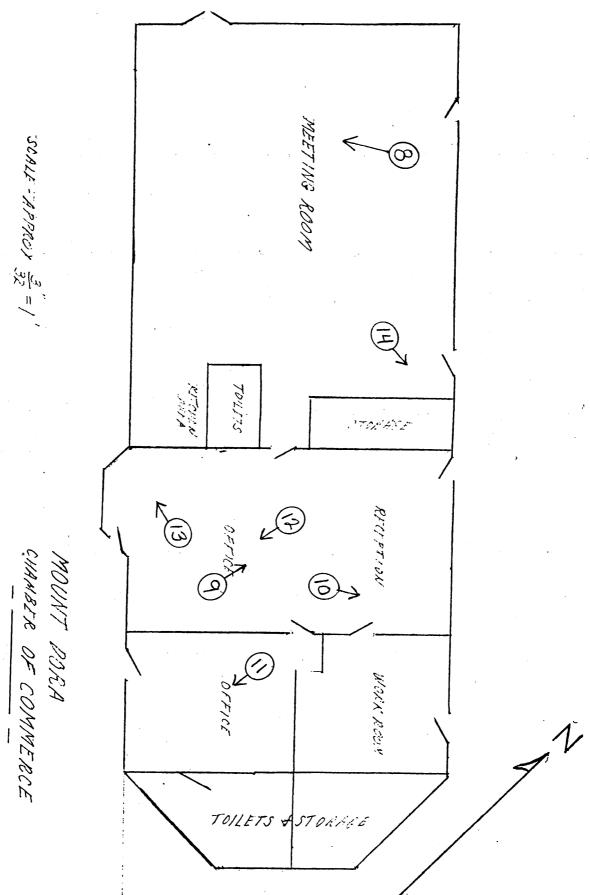
Boundary Description

Begin at the southeast corner of Lot 2, Block 7, according to the official map of the City of Mount Dora, as recorded in Plat Book 3, Pages 37 to 43, inclusive, Public Records of Lake County. Run thence west along the south line of said Lot 2 a distance of 98.15 feet, run thence north 37° 48' 10" west parallel to the centerline of the main track of the CSX Railroad (Old Seaboard Coastline Railroad and formerly Atlantic Coastline Railroad) a distance of 83.43 feet to the southerly right of way of Fourth Avenue, thence west along said southerly right of way of Fourth Avenue a distance of 40.58 feet to a point 8.50 feet from, when measured at right angles to the centerline of the main track of the CSX Railroad, thence southeasterly parallel and concentric with the said centerline of the main track of the CSX Railroad 293.20 feet more or less to a point on the westerly right of way of Alexander Street, thence north along the said westerly right of way of Alexander Street 157.55 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

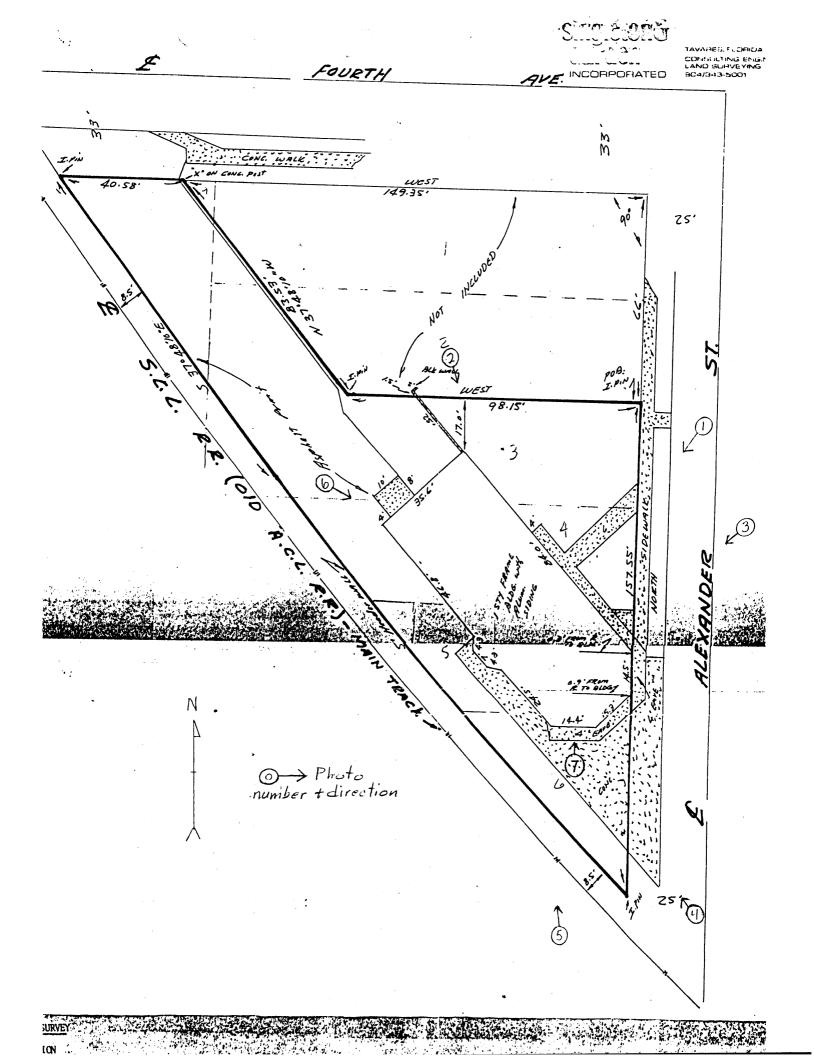
The building and all historic fabric and materials related to the Old Mount Dora A.C.L. Railroad Station are contained within the boundaries described above.

ATTACHMENT #3

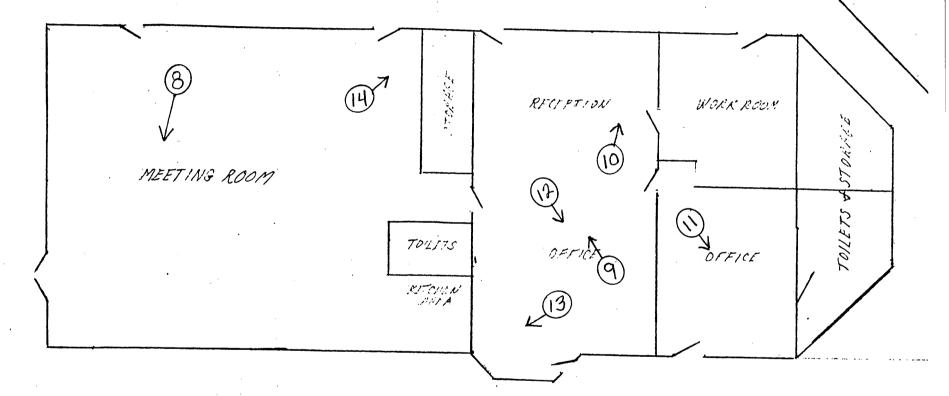




Atlantic Coast Line Station at Mount Dora, Fla. April 1926



ATTACHMENT #3



SCALF - APPROY 32 = 1

MOUNT DORA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE