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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 Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number952 Peachtree Street and 81 and 93 Peachtree Placecity, townAtlanta() vicinity ofcountyFultoncodestateGeorgiacodeGAzip code30309

() not for publication

3. Classification

) public-local

) public-state

) public-federal

(X) private

Ownership of Property:

Category of Property:

- (X) 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

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.

Signature of certifying officia

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

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

(Ventered 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

Keeper of the National Register

Date

10/27/04

Date

Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments, Fulton County, Georgia

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

Domestic: multiple dwelling

Current Functions:

Domestic: multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late Victorian: Queen Anne Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Tudor Revival

Materials:

foundation	Concrete
walls	Brick
roof	Terra Cotta
other	Wood

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments are two adjacent brick apartment buildings located on Peachtree Street and Peachtree Place (Ninth Street) in Atlanta's Midtown neighborhood. The area, north of downtown Atlanta first developed in the 19th century, then declined during the Depression, and investment in the neighborhood did not return until the 1960s and 1970s. A resurgence of building at the turn of the 21st century has left both apartment buildings isolated among one-story commercial buildings and large, steel-and-glass office towers, such as the Federal Reserve Bank, the First Union building, and an apartment building on Peachtree Street completed in 2003 that looms above the Palmer and Phelan apartments. Amid a neighborhood that continues to evolve, both apartment buildings have remained largely unchanged since their completion in the first decades of the 20th century.

The Palmer House

Begun in 1907 and completed in 1908, the Palmer House apartments is a five-story, U-shaped building with a symmetrical main façade and high hip roof. The Palmer was among the first apartment buildings in the city to offer luxury apartments. Designed by Atlanta architect Gottfried L. Norrman, the Palmer House is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style because of its eclectic details, picturesque massing, and use of contrasting materials. The entrance court is flanked by two towers and entered through a brick-and-stone archway. The main entrance is set within a classical surround with triglyphs and metopes across the frieze. The towers that flank the main entrance

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7-Description

featured three-bay balcony openings, which have since been filled with steel-casement windows. Classical pilasters distinguish the fourth-floor balconies and classical balustrades are line the fifthfloor balconies and portions of the roof. Tudor-style elements include the brick walls laid in Flemish bond that rise from an uncoursed-ashlar base, segmented or Tudor arches that form openings for windows and the main entrance, and the high chimneys, dormers, and steeply pitched roofs, which contribute to the building's picturesque appearance.

The east and west facades include stucco-covered tripartite windows that contrast with the red brick walls. The south, or rear, façade is distinguished by two stucco bay windows that rise the full height of the building. The exterior stairs are located at the southeast and southwest corners. Skylights were added to the roof in the 1970s, when the attic was converted into two loft apartments.

The interior plan is organized around the central lobby, which contains the main entrance, marble open-well stair, and elevator. The original elevator remains operable. Each floor features two apartments with different layouts, with the east units having the same plan and the west units sharing the same plan. Each apartment includes either one or two bedrooms, an entrance foyer, living room, dining room, sun porch, kitchen, pantry, and either one or two bathrooms. The apartments retain the fireplaces in the living room and the wainscoting and leaded windows in the dining room. The original wood floors and built-in pantry cabinets also survive.

The Phelan House

The Phelan House apartments were completed in 1915 on Peachtree Street at the corner of Peachtree Place. Designed by J. Neel Reid and Philip Trammell Shutze, the Phelan, arranged in "flats," represents the precursor to garden apartments, which were popular in Atlanta in the 1920s and 1930s. The Phelan is a three-story, U-shaped brick apartment building with a central courtyard on Peachtree Place. The plain Tudor-style building features two highly ornate entrance surrounds, characteristic of Reid, that feature lonic pilasters with an oversize broken pediment that embraces a double window with crossette corners. The courtyard is formed by two gable-front wings with steeply pitched gable roofs covered with red terra-cotta tiles. The Peachtree Street façade is covered with a side-gable terra-cotta roof.

The Phelan House is organized around a central courtyard that is entered from Peachtree Place. The main entrances to the building are located on the courtyard's west wing on the Peachtree Place and on Peachtree Street. The Peachtree Place entrance features elaborate lonic pilasters and an oversized broken pediment that embraces the small window above and a large cartouche. The Peachtree Street entrance is more elaborate with an oversized broken pediment that ties together windows in the second- and third-stairwell landings. The entire composition is strewn with cascading fruit garlands. The building's facades feature a variety of sash window openings. The arched corner balconies were enclosed with steel casement windows to create sunrooms.

Section 7--Description

The interior features two main stairs, a rear winder stair, and four apartments on each floor. Both main entrances lead to the steep, wide staircases that open onto the hall landings. There are four two-bedroom apartments on each floor. Many of the apartments retain original design features, such as built-in bookcases and cabinets, French doors, and hardwood floors.

8. Statement of Significance

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

() nationally (X) statewide () locally **Applicable National Register Criteria:** () **D** () **A** ()**B** (X) C Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): (X) N/A () **A** ()**B** ()**C** ()**D** ()E () **F** ()**G** Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture

Period of Significance:

1908-1915

Significant Dates:

1908 - Completion of the Palmer House.

1915 - Completion of the Phelan House.

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Donaldson and Pearson (contractor) Norrman, Gottfried L. (architect) Reid, J. Neel (architect) Shutze, Philip Trammel (architect)

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments are significant in the area of <u>architecture</u> because the buildings are excellent examples of early 20^{th-} century apartments that were built for the city's middle- and upper-class residents. The rising popularity of the automobile in the first decades of the 20th century prompted affluent businessmen and single-family residents to begin to move to new suburbs, making way for the development of apartment houses along the Peachtree Street corridor. Improved technologies in building methods, sanitary systems, and the conveyance of gas and electric power made it possible for people to live in luxurious new apartment houses.

The Palmer is among the first buildings in Atlanta to offer luxury apartments for rent. The Phelan is significant because its apartment "flats" incorporated modern amenities and were large enough for families who chose to live in the suburbs. The so-called "French flats" were practical because they maximized the income from rental property where land had become too expensive for large private homes on spacious lots. Apartment houses in Atlanta were usually built for the middle and upper classes, who may have previously lived in hotels or boarding houses. The new multi-family residences were euphorically described as "each like a separate and distinct little village with all of the conveniences of home life and the many worries and cares of domestic care removed" (Funderburke, 1997). The Phelan House is a precursor to the garden apartment, which was popular in Atlanta in the late 1920s and 1930s.

The Palmer House and the Phelan House apartments are significant because they were designed in popular styles of the period by some of the city's most important architects. Gottfried L. Norrman, architect of the Palmer House, worked in Atlanta for nearly three decades beginning in 1880. He and designed Victorian-era picturesque buildings in a variety of styles. The Palmer is the only apartment building that survives of the six that Norrman designed in Atlanta between 1896 and 1907.

J. Neel Reid and his associate Philip Trammell Shutze designed the Phelan House. The architectural drawings for the Phelan House indicate a collaboration between senior architects Hal Hentz and J. Neel Reid and the younger Philip Trammell Shutze. The drawing for the elaborate Peachtree Street doorway includes the initials of Hentz and Reid. The initials of Shutze and Reid appear on a drawing for the east façade under the heading "drawn by." Drawings for a typical floor plan and the north façade, which includes the Peachtree Place entrance and the courtyard, are marked "drawn by" and "traced by" PTS.

Reid and Shutze are among the state's best-known 20th-century classicists. Both architects studied in Europe before designing classically inspired residential and commercial buildings in Atlanta through the middle of the 20th century. Reid was the main designer in the firm and was one of Atlanta's best-known residential architects. Fascinated by Baroque architecture, Reid created lavish designs with oversized elements, such as door surrounds. In addition to his Atlanta residences, Reid designed Hills and Dales for Fuller Callaway in LaGrange, Georgia, Rich's and Muses's departments stores in Atlanta, and Emory University Hospital near Decatur.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Shutze's major Atlanta commissions include the renovation of the Citizens and Southern National Bank, the façade of Rich's downtown department store, the Reid House (originally the Garrison Apartments), The Temple, the Swan House, and Glenn Memorial Church on the campus Emory University. Shutze received the Bronze Metal for Achievement in Design by the American Institute of Architects in 1974 and the Classical America Society proclaimed him "America's Greatest Living Classical Architect" in 1977.

National Register Criteria

С

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the completion of the Palmer House apartments in 1908 and ends with the completion of the Phelan House in 1915.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The Palmer House and the Phelan House are the only resources associated with this nomination. Both resources contribute to the significance of the nomination.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

**This developmental history is based in large part on: [Atlanta Urban Design Commission]. Palmer House Apartments. N-91-4 Proposed Nomination: Landmark Building Exterior. n.d.

Beginning in 1884, Atlantans began to move to the suburbs spurred by the Peachtree Street streetcar line. By 1900, electric streetcar lines ran along both Peachtree Street and Piedmont Avenue to Fourteenth Street and Piedmont Park. Affluent Atlantans moved north to an area now called Midtown. Between the late 1890s and 1911, the block of land bounded by Eighth, West Peachtree, and Fourteenth streets and Piedmont Avenue became the home to some of the most prominent families in the city. Frank Ellis, W. S. Witham, Augustus Adair, Cornelius J. Sheehan, Thomas Egleston, Morton Emmons and John Tye, all built large houses in the area. Other prominent Atlantans who moved to the area included: A. M. Robinson, wholesale dry goods and notions merchant, James Freemen, jeweler and diamond merchant, Thomas Morgan, architect in the wellknown firm of Bruce and Morgan, General Andrew West, real estate dealer, and Captain Joseph Burke, who built an "ornate stone residence" at the corner of Crescent Avenue and Peachtree Place.

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Two books published in 1895 and 1903 provide an interesting pictorial and written record of Peachtree Street during this period. The text of the 1895 <u>Art Work of Atlanta, Georgia</u> describes the homes on Peachtree as the "most elegant residences" in the city. "For miles and miles the street is lined with homes that are in themselves tributes to the architect's art . . ."(1895). The 1903 book provides a picture of Peachtree Place taken from Peachtree. The Phelan residence on the southwest corner faces an equally spacious mansion on the northwest corner. The Joseph Burke home is barely visible behind large trees on the lot. The small, planted median on Peachtree Place is seen in the photo.

In 1895, J. L. Tye, a prominent Atlanta lawyer, owned the southwest corner lot at Peachtree Street and Peachtree Place. In c.1900, Sidney Phelan purchased the property and built a two-story brick and half-timbered house. Atlanta city directories list 790 Peachtree Street as the home of Sidney Phelan until 1909.

The 1908 city directory, the year the Palmer House was finished, indicates a mix of single-family residences, apartments, and businesses. By 1910-1911, the area was entering a new phase of suburban development. Commercial buildings and multi-family residences, i.e. apartment houses, were more and more evident. The Sanborn Insurance Maps for 1911 show that large private residences still predominated, however, several apartment buildings were built between Peachtree Place and Tenth Street. The Palmer House now covered the back half of the Phelan house lot. The Palmer House was a part of the growing trend in multi-family housing and commercial development. These apartments became the home to many to middle- to upper-class families and businessmen. Suburban apartment living had been a feature of northern cities long before it appeared in the South

Both the Sanborn Maps and the 1911 city directory show large numbers of commercial establishments along Peachtree Street between Tenth and Eleventh streets. Wilkerson Brothers grocery stood next door to Pope and Collier grocers and a post office. A significant proliferation of apartments appears in the same <u>1911 City Directory</u>—the Elysee Palace, Hampton Court and Holly Apartments between Peachtree Place and Tenth Street, and the Wickliffe Apartments in the next block of Peachtree Street. The new businesses also included the L. W. Rogers store, a forerunner of Colonial Stores, and laundries and automobile garages providing services oriented to the new suburbanites. On March 15, 1908, a real estate advertisement in the <u>Atlanta Constitution</u> underscored the popularity of apartments stating, "Apartment houses get more popular all the time, especially the ones up in town. Small suites of three or four rooms would be the proper idea for an apartment..."

Single-family houses, which could not withstand the forces of urban growth and rising land values, gave way to apartment houses. The first recorded apartment house in Atlanta was in 1890, designed by architect W. W. Goodrich for Mrs. Charles Handy on Spring Street (Funderburke, 1997). A 1906 article on the growth of apartment housing in Atlanta declared, "The continued advancement of Atlanta's prosperity is well evidenced by the large number of modern and metropolitan apartment houses which surround the business district." The <u>Atlanta Journal</u> observed in May 1907 that, "As soon as the plans are finished ... Sydney H. Phelan will erect ... the handsomest apartment house

Section 8--Statement of Significance

in the city, and the only absolutely fire-proof one in the south."

In the years before 1889, Sydney H. Phelan formed the S. H. Phelan Company and was later listed in the <u>Atlanta City Directory</u> as a broker with an office on East Alabama Street. In 1902, he moved into a newly constructed house at 790 Peachtree Street, the site of the Phelan House apartments. Mr. Phelan resided at 790 Peachtree with his wife, Palmer Graham, four daughters and three sons until 1910, when his address is listed in the Atlanta City Directory as Apartment 2, Palmer House. In 1920, Mr. Phelan's business was listed as "real estate." His son Malcolm was also listed as working in "real estate." His other enterprises included a plantation in Crawford County to which he retired around 1905. Sidney Phelan died on June 14, 1913 and is buried in West View Cemetery in Atlanta.

His first appearance in Atlanta records is as manager of the Gate City Produce and Cotton Exchange (<u>Atlanta City Directory</u>, 1881). He resided at the Kimball House Hotel. Two years later, he was among 62 prominent young men who chartered the Capital City Club. In 1884, Mr. Phelan served for one year on the Club's Governing Committee. In 1887, Mr. Phelan was listed in the <u>Atlanta</u> <u>Constitution</u> as a charter member of the Gentlemen's Driving Club, an exclusive social organization for the city's elite. As a prominent and apparently wealthy Atlantan, Mr. Phelan served as one of the seven directors of the Executive Committee for the Piedmont Exposition Company when it was charted on April 9, 1887. He worked to secure the area that is now as Piedmont Park for the Piedmont Exposition held in October of that year. Mr. Phelan was Shriner and Mason.

In late 1906 or early 1907, Sydney H. Phelan engaged the architectural firm of Norrman and Faulkner to design an apartment building for the back portion of the Phelan lot at 790 Peachtree Street. According to the building permit, the structure was to be five stories of reinforced brick with a tile roof. Wall thickness vary from 21 inches on the first floor to 12 inches on the fifth. When completed, Palmer House was one of the most expensive multi-family dwellings in the city. It featured fireproof construction of steel, concrete, brick, and tile and cost \$70,000. Named for Phelan's wife, Palmer Graham, the Palmer House was among the first luxury apartments in Atlanta and among Gottfried L. Norrman's best residential designs.

The S. H. Phelan Company hired Hentz and Reid to design a new apartment house on the front portion of the lot at the corner of Peachtree Place and Peachtree Street. On April 15, 1915, the city issued a building permit for the Phelan House, a three-story brick building, fronting sixty-four feet on Peachtree Street and 109 feet on Peachtree Place. The building featured twelve apartments with an estimated building cost of \$32,000. Phelan hired contractor Donaldson and Pearson, the same construction company that built the Palmer House apartments. The Phelan is significant for its apartment "flats" which incorporated modern amenities and were large enough for families who chose to live in the suburbs. The Phelan was the precursor of the garden apartment that was popular in Atlanta in the 1920s and 1930s. The Phelan House, which was completed in October 1915, reflects the transition of the Midtown neighborhood from an area composed of single-family houses distant from downtown to a suburban area of apartment buildings and commercial establishments.

Section 8--Statement of Significance

The area of Midtown surrounding the Palmer apartments remained basically a middle- to uppermiddle-class neighborhood until the Great Depression which signaled a long period of decline. The reasons included the rise of suburbs farther north and the subsequent loss of businesses, which was accompanied by a decline in rents. Efforts by the Midtown Neighborhood Association, the Midtown Businessmen's Association, and the construction of three nearby transit stations helped in the current revival of the area around the Palmer House and Phelan House apartments. Commercial development that began for the 1996 Olympics has revitalized an interest in Midtown apartments and once again made the area a desired residential neighborhood for Atlanta's middle and upper classes.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Atlanta Constitution, May 2, 1907.

[Atlanta Urban Design Commission]. Palmer House Apartments. N-91-4 Proposed Nomination: Landmark Building Exterior. n.d.

Funderburke, Richard Dees. <u>G. L. Norrman: New South Architect and the Urbanization of Atlanta</u> <u>1881-1909</u>. Ph.D. diss. Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia, 1997.

Grady, James. Architecture of Neel Reid in Georgia. University of Georgia Press, 1973.

Gwinner, Ken. Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments. National Register nomination. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia. 1981.

Pearlberg, Patti L. Palmer and Phelan Apartments. Historic Property Information Form. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia. 2000.

Philip Trammell Shutze drawings. Atlanta History Center, 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:

- (X) 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 0.91 acres

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 742180 Northing 3740910

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 property and all of the intact resources historically associated with the Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Steven Moffosn organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources mailing address 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 101 city or town Atlanta state Georgia zip code 30303 telephone (404) 656-2840 date August 15, 2004 e-mail steven moffson@dnr.state.ga.us

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

name/title Patti L. Pearlberg organization Coro Realty Advisors, LLC mailing address 3312 Piedmont Road, Suite 315 city or town Atlanta state GA zip code 30305 telephone (404) 846-4007 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) N/A organization (if applicable) Peachtree Place Ventures mailing address 3312 Piedmont Road, Suite 315 city or town Atlanta state GA zip code 30305 e-mail (optional) N/A NPS Form 10-900-a United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Photographs

Name of Property: City or Vicinity:	Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments Atlanta
County:	Fulton
State:	Georgia
Photographer:	James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed:	Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed:	April 2003

Description of Photograph(s):

Number of photographs: 25

- 1. Palmer House, photographer facing south.
- 2. Palmer House, main entrance, photographer facing south.
- 3. Phelan House (left) and Palmer House photographer facing southeast.
- 4. Palmer House, southwest corner, photographer facing northeast.
- 5. Palmer House, rear elevation, photographer facing north.
- 6. Palmer House (left) and Phelan House, photographer facing northwest.
- 7. Palmer House, interior, lobby, photographer facing west.
- 8. Palmer House, interior, lobby, photographer facing west.
- 9. Palmer House, interior, lobby, photographer facing east.
- 10. Palmer House, interior, stairs viewed from lobby, photographer facing up.
- 11. Palmer House, interior, third-floor stairs, photographer facing southwest.
- 12. Palmer House, interior, third-floor landing, photographer facing west.
- 13. Palmer House, interior, third floor, west-side apartment, parlor, photographer facing north.
- 14. Palmer House, interior, third floor, west-side apartment, parlor, photographer facing south.
- 15. Palmer House, interior, third floor, west-side apartment, dining room, photographer facing west.

Photographs

16. Palmer House, interior, third floor, west-side apartment, southwest stair, photographer facing south.

17. Phelan House (center) and Palmer House (right), photographer facing southwest.

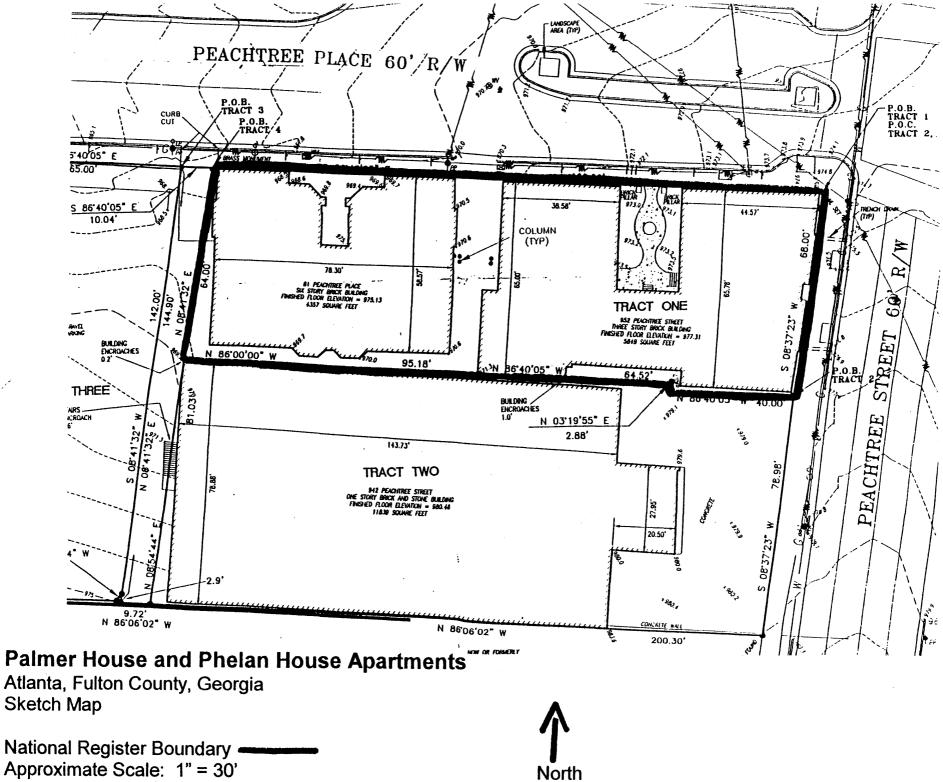
- 18. Phelan House, photographer facing northwest.
- 19. Phelan House, Peachtree Place entrance, photographer facing west.
- 20. Phelan House, interior, third floor, east stair, photographer facing north.
- 21. Phelan House, interior, third floor, northeast apartment, photographer facing south.
- 22. Phelan House, interior, third floor, northeast apartment, parlor, photographer facing east.

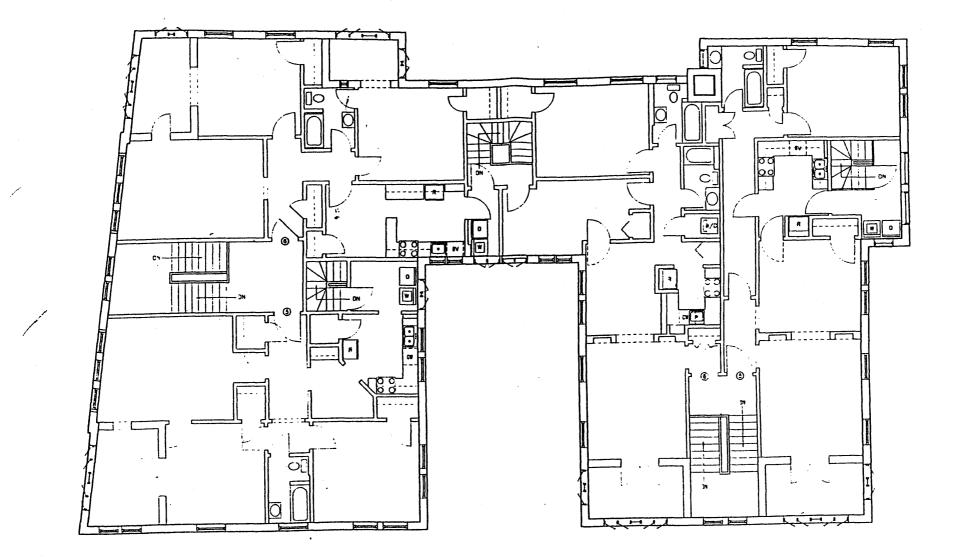
23. Phelan House, interior, third floor, northeast apartment, dining room, photographer facing southeast.

24. Phelan House, interior, third floor, northeast apartment, porch, photographer facing southeast.

25. Phelan House, interior, first floor, west stair, photographer facing north.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)

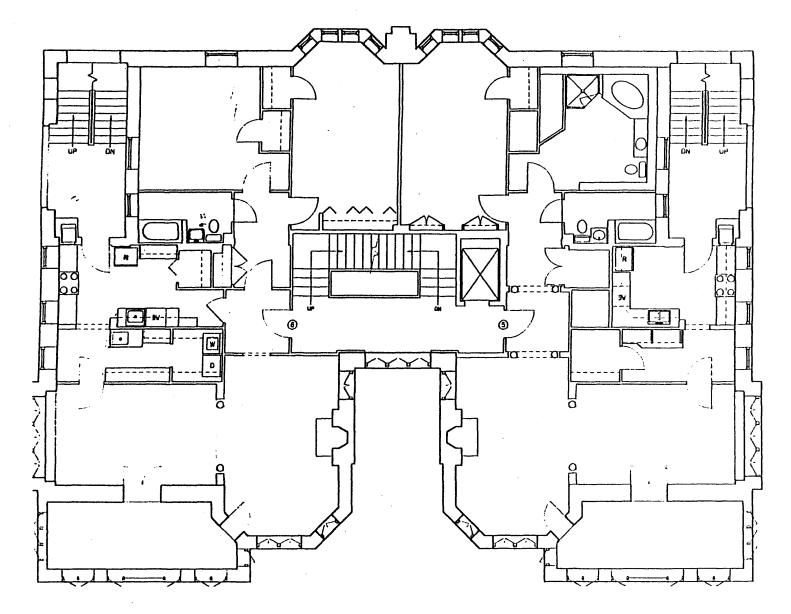




Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia Phelan House Third-Floor Plan

No scale





Palmer House and Phelan House Apartments

Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia Palmer House Third-Floor Plan

North

No scale