

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD  
APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

New Designation   X    
Amendment of a previous designation         
Please summarize any amendment(s)       

Property name Davidson Building  
*If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.*

Address 927 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW or 1432 K Street, NW

Square and lot number(s) Square 218. Lot 0067

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission ANC 2F

Date of construction 1917 Date of major alteration(s)       

Architect(s) B. Stanley Simmons

Architectural style(s) Italian Renaissance Revival

Original use Office Building Present use Office Building

Property owner Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance

Legal address of property owner INCOR Holdings Inc., C/O BVT Management Services, Inc., 400 Interstate North Parkway, SE, #700, Atlanta, Georgia 30339-5017

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) INCOR Holdings Inc., C/O BVT Management Services, Inc.

*If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.*

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 400 Interstate North Parkway, SE, #700, Atlanta, GA 30339 - 5017, 770.618.3569

Name and title of authorized representative Dawn Arnstein, Owner Representative *Senior Property Manager, BVT Management Services, Inc. as agent for Incor Holdings, Inc.*  
Signature of representative *Dawn Arnstein* Date 2/15/11

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) DC Preservation League

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 401 F Street, NW, Room 324, WDC 20001, 202.783.5144

Name and title of authorized representative Rebecca Miller, Executive Director

Signature of representative *Rebecca Miller* Date 2/15/11

Name and telephone of author of application Eli Pousson - 202.442.8840

Date received         
H.P.O. staff

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Davidson Building

other names/site number Phillips Building, Carry Building, Three McPherson Square

## 2. Location

street & number 927 15th Street NW  not for publication

city or town Washington  vicinity

state DC code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility 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 \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1		<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Office Building

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**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Office Building

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American/Commercial Style

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**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Brick

walls: Brick and stone

roof: \_\_\_\_\_

other: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Narrative Description

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

#### Summary Paragraph

Constructed in 1917, the Davidson Building is a 12-story office building designed in a 20<sup>th</sup>-century Commercial style with Italian Renaissance-style details, offering a three-part division into base, shaft and cap. It is located at the southeast corner of 15th and K Streets, across from McPherson Square, in downtown Washington, D.C. It abuts a contemporary eleven-story office building along K Street and a six-story 1924 office building on the 15<sup>th</sup> Street side. The Davidson building is rectangular in plan with its long side extending along 15<sup>th</sup> Street and facing McPherson Square. The building is divided into three principal vertical bays and into a horizontal tripartite organization of base, shaft, and cap on the primary north and east façades. The vertical bays are divided into a central entrance bay and flanking projecting window bays extending the full length of the façade. The base, consisting of the first three floors, is clad with white stone, while the middle seven floors forming the building shaft are clad in red brick. The top two floors composing the cap are made of glazed off-white brick with white stone trim. Each section is separated by a white stone belt course that wraps around both primary façades. The building culminates at the cornice line supported by modillions with a frieze below. The flat roof is likely clad with bituminous material.

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### Narrative Description

The Davidson Building has two main elevations: the narrow K Street elevation on the north end of the rectangular building, and the longer 15<sup>th</sup> Street side facing west to McPherson Square. Based upon the building's hierarchical architectural treatment, however, the K Street elevation appears to have been intended as the primary façade. This elevation is divided into three bays. The base, set upon a low granite foundation and clad with white limestone covers the first three floors of the building. The first floor features a central entrance door framed by pilasters and flanked by two large windows. Currently, this entrance, consisting of a double metal and glass replacement door with a fixed single vinyl sash light above, provides access to a ground floor restaurant. The second floor has three symmetrically arranged, but shorter openings aligned above the first floor openings. The bottom two floors are capped by a broad cornice featuring a garland motif on-center. The third floor of the base forms an attic level with a tri-partite window on-center and single windows to either side with recessed panels between the window bays. A central stepped parapet caps this attic level of the building's stone base. The shaft of the building, corresponding with floors 4 through 10, and clad in red brick, features a central metal window bay surrounded by a Giant order segmental arch surround of stone. Each floor of this central bay features a large plate glass window on-center with two narrow side lights to either side with metal spandrels between each floor. To either side of the central window bay are single 1/1 windows recessed into the brick walls offering narrow brick sills. A stone cornice divides the brick shaft of the building from the cap above.

The cap of this elevation, consisting of floors 11-12 and clad with mottled terra cotta tile, sits upon the stone cornice of the shaft and offers a central arched opening recessed from the façade and framed by three-quarter engaged columns *in antis*. Square windows in both floors and superimposed upon themselves are located to either side of this double-height arched opening on-center. This Classically composed portion of the building is capped by a broad cornice with oversized modillions. As is typical for the building's 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial style, these top floors stand almost like an independent building atop the shaft.

The west elevation, facing the square, is organized into its three horizontal parts—base, shaft and cap—as well as three vertical parts. Vertically, the building consists of a central recessed block and two end piers. The central recessed block is three bays wide, while each end pier is two bays wide. An additional bay of windows extends the building one bay further south, making for a slightly asymmetrical façade.

As on the north end, floors 1-3 form the building's stone-clad base. On the first floor, the central block of the base holds three entrances—a double door leading to the building's lobby and two doors flanking it providing access to additional ground floor retail spaces. The second and third floors of this central block have windows in the three bays with larger openings on the second level and tri-partite ones in the third floor. The piers to either side of the central block are divided into two bays, with different window shapes and types at each level.

The building shaft, including floors 4-10, have a repeating series of windows—three bays of windows in the central block and two bays in the end piers. The windows in the central block consist of a tri-partite example on-center and narrow pairs of windows to either side. All of the windows, including the display windows on the first floor, are vinyl sash replacements.

The cap of the building on the west elevation corresponds with the shaft below in that it features a recessed central pavilion and two projecting wings, all clad with vermiculated terra cotta. Each of these bays are separated by double-height columns and the windows are separated by metal spandrels.

### Integrity

The Davidson Building is one of the earliest tall office buildings on McPherson Square and as such, stood out among the diverse mix of smaller scale residential and commercial structures surrounding the square. As the neighborhood developed as a financial and real estate center in the 1920s and experienced further commercial development throughout the post-WWII period, the building became one of many larger buildings on the square. Its existence along with that of the other early 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial buildings on the square, preserves the area's integrity of setting, feeling and association.

The building does have replacement windows and doors throughout; however, these replacements do not significantly detract from the quality of design, materials and craftsmanship of the building. The Davidson Building retains its original massing and its character-defining features such as the use of the classical order to divide up the building form, an exterior wall cladding of red brick and stone, a wide overhanging eave, and details such as Tuscan columns, brackets, cartouches, and garlands. These features ensure the continued integrity of design, materials, and workmanship that contribute to an overall integrity of association.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**Period of Significance**

1917

**Significant Dates**

1917

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

B. Stanley Simmons

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The Period of Significance for the Davidson Building is 1917, the year the building was constructed.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

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

Constructed facing McPherson Square in 1917, the Davidson Building is a representative example of a large scale private office development. In addition, the building fits within a category of private development designed and built for the federal government shortly before the Public Buildings Commission initiated policies to discourage the future practice of this trend. After the Federal Trade Commission left the building in 1918, subsequent tenants reflected the development of the 15th Street NW corridor as Washington's "Wall Street."

The Davidson Building is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C, as an excellent example of a multi-story, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century office building reflecting a commercial building form with Italian Renaissance-style detailing, designed by local and notable architect, B. Stanley Simmons. The Davidson Building is eligible at the local level of significance.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

The Davidson Building is significant in the Area of Architecture as an example of an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century office building in downtown Washington, D.C. Designed by local architect B. Stanley Simmons, the Davidson Building reflects the three-part commercial building form executed in a Classical (Italian Renaissance) style.

The Davidson Building is significant in the Area of Community Planning and Development for its illustration of the northerly growth of the city's financial district from 15<sup>th</sup> and H Streets to McPherson Square in the 1920s. Built in 1917, the Davidson Building was one of the early private office building to be constructed around McPherson Square, a trend which continued in the 1920s, transforming the square from a residential area into a business one.

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

The Davidson Building is a twelve-story commercial structure built in 1917 at the southeast corner of 15<sup>th</sup> Street & K Street NW. Designed by B. Stanley Simmons, the Davidson Building was built by the local development firm, Davidson & Davidson, for use as its offices and to lease to the recently formed Federal Trade Commission. The FTC remained in the building for only a few years before moving on to other situations. The building was purchased by W.S. Phillips in 1923 briefly becoming the Phillips Building. The property sold again to the Albert Carry Properties in 1930 becoming the Carry Building and remaining with that name until Joseph C. Carry's death in 1965.

Before the Davidson Building

Prior to the construction of the Davidson building, the southeast corner of 15th Street & K Street NW was the site of a "fine old residence," a three-story brick dwelling, built in 1888 by Charles. Edmonston for General Andrew A. Humphreys.<sup>i</sup> The home was used by Maryland Senator Arthur P. Gorman and later by Associate Justice Samuel Blatchford.<sup>ii</sup> In the 1880s, when the dwelling was built, the square was home to the 15<sup>th</sup> Street Presbyterian Church, St. Matthew's Institute, a school and private dwellings—both attached rowhouses and detached brick homes. Beginning in 1908, the Congressional Club, a large and fashionable women's organization established to provide a non-partisan setting for friendships among the spouses of members of the House and Senate in Washington, DC, used the residence for their programs. Incorporated by an act of Congress on May 20, 1908, the Congressional club has continued as an active service and social organization to the present.<sup>iii</sup> In March 1914, the Congressional Club began construction of a new purpose-built club building at 16<sup>th</sup> Street, New Hampshire Avenue, and U Street N.W. on land donated by Mrs. John B. Henderson.<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup> "DC Building Permit No. 0988," February 24, 1880.

<sup>ii</sup> "HOME FOR TRADE BOARD," *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, December 8, 1916, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=249068542&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

<sup>iii</sup> The Congressional Club, "About the Congressional Club," <http://www.thecongressionalclub.com/about/about.html>.

<sup>iv</sup> "CLUB WOMEN TO BUILD," *The Washington Post (1877-1954)*, March 8, 1914, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=171053132&Fmt=7&clientId=57002&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

### Design and construction of the Davidson Building

The Congressional Club moved into their new quarters in 1916, vacating their former residence on McPherson Square. Charles H. Davidson purchased the property with a \$32,000 trust and began demolition of the old residence on December 7, 1916 in preparation for construction of the Davidson building. Designed by B. Stanley Simmons and constructed by Michael I. Weller, the plans for the new building called for a ten-story concrete frame commercial building divided into a standard tripartite organization.

At the time of its construction, the building was described as “one of the handsomest office buildings in the city.” The concrete frame building is clad in brick with white stone detailing and entrances on both 15th Street and K Street. The upper stories are built from poured concrete, and windows sashes, doors and floors have a monolithic finish rendering the building fire-proof. The address of the building was 921 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW until new construction on the block in 1923 forced a change in the address to 927 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW. At the time of construction, the building was heated with a vapor vacuum system and was expected to cost \$200,000. At 130 feet tall the Davidson building exceeded the subsequent 1920 height limit by twenty feet, along with 22 other structures, including the Southern building, the Westory building, and the Interstate building. Davidson & Davidson had been permitted to exceed the height limitation because the Federal Trade Commission, a public agency, was the building’s primary tenant.

Although early, the Davidson Building was not the first office building on the square. It was preceded in 1912 by an office built by Harry Wardman at 1430 K Street NW and by a three-story office designed by A.B. Mullett & Co. at 900 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW. The Davidson Building was exceptionally tall for the period of its construction, remaining the tallest building in Washington, D.C. until the completion of the National Press Building. Upon its completion, the building housed the Davidson & Davidson Company on the first story and the Federal Trade Commission on the other eleven floors. At the time, many federal government agencies leased office space in privately constructed buildings. The Davidson Building was particularly convenient for the FTC, as the location provided close proximity to some of the major financial institutions that the FTC was tasked with regulating.

### Federal Trade Commission and the Davidson Building

Created on September 26, 1914, the Federal Trade Commission succeeded the Bureau of Corporations within the Department of Commerce inheriting that Bureau’s responsibilities and its employees. For the first two years, the FTC occupied 14,704 square feet of office space in the Commerce Building at 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW and rented space in the Southern Building for employees engaged in special investigations. The FTC moved to the Davidson building on August 11, 1917 retaining some space in the Southern Building for emergency operations.<sup>v</sup> In addition to their offices in Washington, DC, by 1918 the FTC maintained regional offices in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco.<sup>vi</sup> The FTC’s move to the Davidson Building, however, coincided with public concern over the financial costs and disorganization caused by the practice of government agencies leasing space in private buildings. In a 1917 report, the Public Buildings Commission observed that the FTC “occupies 33,000 square feet on 11 floors of the Davidson Building at Fifteenth and K Streets NW., at an annual rental of \$19,000, and 6,584 square feet of floor in the Southern Building, at \$9,060 per annum.”<sup>vii</sup> To reduce taxpayer’s expense, the Commission proposed to house both the FTC and the U.S. Board of Mediation and Conciliation in the Department of Justice Main Office at the northeast corner of Vermont Avenue & K Street. A 1919 report by the Public Buildings Commission moved the FTC again to “Fuel Building, No. 8.”<sup>viii</sup> By 1930, the FTC offices had moved to the No. 4 temporary government building or “tempo” at 2000 D Street. A major fire at this building on August 30, 1930 destroyed many records of the organization and prompted the construction of the Apex Building in 1930.<sup>ix</sup>

<sup>v</sup> The primary association of the building is clear from the sole identification of 921 15th Street NW in the 1917 City Directory as the Federal Trade Commission.

<sup>vi</sup> Federal Trade Commission, “Federal Trade Commission: A History,” October 10, 2007, <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/history/ftchistory.shtm>.

<sup>vii</sup> “Public buildings in the District of Columbia. Report of the Public Buildings Commission pursuant to certain provisions of the Sundry Civil Appropriation Act, approved July 1, 1916, authorizing the appointment of a commission to investigate and ascertain what public buildings are needed to provide permanent quarters for all the government activities in the District of Columbia.” December 18, 1917, [http://web.lexis-nexis.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/congcomp/document?\\_m=b8740f257984381ad6bdceda1906624d&\\_docnum=454&wchp=dGLzVtz-zSkSA&\\_md5=d335362601e0e2d06e51930e4c380ebe&taggedDocs=Z68,14Z2,9Z10,8Z2,46Z274](http://web.lexis-nexis.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/congcomp/document?_m=b8740f257984381ad6bdceda1906624d&_docnum=454&wchp=dGLzVtz-zSkSA&_md5=d335362601e0e2d06e51930e4c380ebe&taggedDocs=Z68,14Z2,9Z10,8Z2,46Z274),

<sup>viii</sup> Reed Smoot (1862-1941), Republican Senator from UT, “Report of the Public Buildings Commission.,” July 8, 1919, [http://web.lexis-nexis.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/congcomp/document?\\_m=b8740f257984381ad6bdceda1906624d&\\_docnum=333&wchp=dGLzVtz-zSkSA&\\_md5=1bf075e3625128239776db317dae3e3e&taggedDocs=Z83,8Z2,46Z25,4Z19,1Z69,4Z11,8Z146](http://web.lexis-nexis.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/congcomp/document?_m=b8740f257984381ad6bdceda1906624d&_docnum=333&wchp=dGLzVtz-zSkSA&_md5=1bf075e3625128239776db317dae3e3e&taggedDocs=Z83,8Z2,46Z25,4Z19,1Z69,4Z11,8Z146),

<sup>ix</sup> Federal Trade Commission, “Federal Trade Commission: A History.”

### Davidson Building to Carry Building

Davidson & Davidson had no problems filling the building following the FTC's abrupt departure. In 1919, the first women's real estate exchange in Washington, DC rented office space in the building. The exchange went beyond interior residential remodeling and furnishing to offer broader support to women's business and financial interests. Their slogan, "The Women of Washington Own Half of Its Homes," appeared in their several advertisements during the late 1910s and early 1920s.<sup>x</sup> By 1921, the building had been completely filled with tenants including industrial firms, newspaper offices, real estate agents, architects, contractors, lawyers, physicians, and twenty-five separate dental offices. Notable tenants included the Japanese Military Attaché, the DC Council for the Boy Scouts of America, and the ground floor office of Charles D. Sager, a local real estate agent who established offices at 612 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW temporarily before moving into his ground floor office in the Davidson Building.<sup>xi</sup> The more prominent ground floor offices accommodated tenants including an optician, a banking office, and the Percy H. Russell Co. real estate office.

In 1923, for unknown reasons, Davidson & Davidson sold the building to William S. Phillips in a transaction negotiated by Harry R. Loveless. Phillips removing partitions to turn the four ground floor offices into a single space for his own firm's offices and renamed the property the Phillips Building.<sup>xii</sup> At the time of this acquisition, Phillips was involved with residential development in Columbia Heights, Bloomingdale, Chevy Chase, Mount Pleasant, and Takoma Park. Phillips began as a salesman with Shannon & Luchs in 1906 and incorporated Phillips & Sager, Inc. in 1912. Phillips served as president of the company located at 715 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW before moving to 1409 New York Avenue NW. In 1919, Phillips bought out Charles S. Sager and renamed the business William S. Phillips & Company. By the time he purchased the Davidson Building in 1923 his firm had grown to forty employees in eight departments. After selling the Davidson Building to Albert Carry Properties in 1929, Phillips moved to 1516 K Street NW, a building later demolished for the Southern Railway Building, then in 1928 to the Investment Building. In 1930, the company moved into Valley Vista Apartments and shifted its focus to construction and real estate management before Phillips' retirement in 1932.<sup>xiii</sup>

Following the sale of the building to Albert Carry Properties, the new owners announced on October 20, 1929 a second name change with an advertisement by the H.L. Rust Company, rental agents, "Announcing The Carry Building... entirely renovated and re-decorated" at a "central location, convenient to financial and realty district."<sup>xiv</sup> The sale came hardly more than a week before the stock market crash on October 29, 1929 and the onset of the Great Depression. Vacancy in the building increased substantially and remained high through the mid-1930s. By 1937, tenants had returned and among the building's new occupants was the legal division of the Resettlement Administration with offices on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and 8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> floors. Although the Resettlement Administration left by 1939, they were replaced by the National Labor Relations Board and the Railroad Retirement Board. The NLRB remained in the building through 1943.

Throughout this period the ground floor spaces had a range of tenants including a barber shop, real estate firms, and opticians. The ground floor remained vacant for a period in the 1950s even as Albert Carry Properties advertised a "Corner Store for Rent in Carry Building," describing the space as "Very desirable for drug store, real estate office, etc. Approximately 1,200 sq. feet floor space with additional storeroom in basement."<sup>xv</sup> Joseph C. Carry continued to own the Carry building until his death in 1965.<sup>xvi</sup>

The building, now designated Three McPherson Square, is currently owned by BVT Equity Holdings, Inc., an international real estate investment firm with United States headquarters in Atlanta Georgia. Ground floor tenants include food service and retail, while the upper floors continue to be maintained as office for a range of organizations.

### Biographical summary of B. Stanley Simmons

Born in Charles County, Maryland on March 10, 1872, B. Stanley Simmons moved to Washington, DC as a child and remained in the city to establish his career in architecture. Simmons received a degree in architecture from the University of Maryland then graduated from the Boston Institute of Technology in 1895. From 1890 through the 1930, Simmons designed over 700 buildings in Washington, DC working closely with every major developer. In addition, Simmons was a versatile designer, working on row houses, fraternal clubs, commercial and institutional buildings, and apartment buildings.

<sup>x</sup> "WOMEN TOTAKE UPREALTY BUSINESS," *The Washington Post*, September 14, 1919.

<sup>xi</sup> "Display Ad 49 -- No Title," *The Washington Post*, May 4, 1919.

<sup>xii</sup> Curiously, Charles D. Sager had been partners with William S. Phillips in Phillips & Sager before they separated in 1919. Phillips moved to the Davidson Building from his previous office at 1409 New York Avenue NW.

<sup>xiii</sup> "CONSTRUCTION FIRM TO LIMIT ACTIVITIES," *The Washington Post*, March 1, 1930.

<sup>xiv</sup> "W.S. Phillips, Retired D.C. Builder, Dies," *The Washington Post*, January 25, 1951.

<sup>xv</sup> "Display Ad 67 -- No Title," *The Washington Post*, December 17, 1950.

<sup>xvi</sup> "Joseph C. Carry Dead at 78, Retired Area Businessman," *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, September 30, 1965.

Particularly significant projects include the National Metropolitan Bank at 15<sup>th</sup> Street and G Street NW completed in 1905, the Elks Club at 919 H Street NW in 1908, demolished in 1979, and the Fairfax Hotel now the Ritz-Carlton at 21<sup>st</sup> Street and Massachusetts Avenue NW in 1921. By 1902, Simmons had attracted significant recognition, as “an architect who has added to the beauty and growth of this city.”

Simmons was elected to the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1920 and by 1923 he was a member of the Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, Sacred Heart Church, and a range of social and civic organizations. Although he never studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, B. Stanley Simmons became a student of the Beaux Arts tradition and the City Beautiful Movement. While earlier designs for speculative rowhouses reflect Victorian styles, by the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Simmons’ designs for more monumental structures reflect a variety of academic styles inspired by the City Beautiful movement. For instance, the now-demolished Elks Club at 919 H Street NW, the Fairfax Hotel now known as the Ritz at 2100 Massachusetts Avenue NW, the Northwest Savings Bank, at 1789 Columbia Road, all executed in a Classical Revival style, or the Charlesfred Apartment building at 1705 P Street NW, designed in the Renaissance Revival vein, are all indicative of the influences of the Beaux Arts tradition. Simmons died on September 8, 1931.

#### Biographical summary on Davidson & Davidson

Founded in 1883, by H. Bradley Davidson, John C. Davidson and Luther S. Fristoe, the Davidson & Davidson Company established their first office at 4 1/2 Street and D Street NW facing Judiciary Square. They moved to the LeDroit Building at 8th Street & F Street NW then to 1338 F Street NW.

In 1885, the firm constructed the Smithfield—a building they later claimed was the first apartment building in Washington, DC.<sup>xvii</sup> This project was followed by the Analostan Apartments at 1718 Corcoran Street NW, the Gladstone and Hawarden at 14th Street and R Street NW, and the Llewellen at 23<sup>rd</sup> Street & F Street NW. By the early 1930s, the firm had built or financed approximately 100 apartment buildings. Their office buildings included an office for their own operators at 1413 G Street NW a building later razed to build the Washington Building at 1435 G Street NW. In 1901, the firm constructed the Bond Building in the same area. Their residential construction included the entire square, between 18th Street, 19th Street, S Street and Florida Avenue, as well as the Gunston Hall School, and homes in West Eckington near Truxton Circle, Randle Highlands in SE Washington, Mount Pleasant, and the Machen property in the area of 16<sup>th</sup> Street from the Riger Bridge to Blagden Avenue.<sup>xviii</sup>

By 1914, Davidson & Davidson had moved to the Southern Building at 15<sup>th</sup> Street & H Street NW. Three years later the firm began construction of the Davidson Building to accommodate their own offices and the offices of the Federal Trade Commission. Following the sale of the Davidson Building in 1923, the firm maintained offices at 1013 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW. A laudatory account on the firm’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1933, noted how the firm—one of “only one or two other realty concerns established in Washington at that early date” still in business—continued in the family under the management of Roy G. Fristoe, John H. Davidson, and Charles H. Davidson.<sup>xix</sup> The firm continued to advertise properties and appear in local accounts on real estate transactions through the late 1930s.

<sup>xvii</sup> The Portland Flats built in 1880 by Edward Weston is generally identified as the first purpose-built apartment building in Washington, DC.

<sup>xviii</sup> “Realty Firm Here Observes 50th Birthday,” *The Washington Post*, November 26, 1933.

<sup>xix</sup> Ibid.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** \_\_\_\_\_

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Eli Pousson  
organization D.C. Historic Preservation Office date September 17, 2009  
street & number 1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W. telephone 202 442-8800  
city or town Washington, D.C. state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail kprothro@starpower.net

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Photographs:**

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

**Name of Property:**

**City or Vicinity:**

**County:**

**State:**

**Photographer:**

**Date Photographed:**

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

1 of \_\_\_\_.

Davidson Building  
Name of Property

Washington, DC  
County and State

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**Property Owner:**

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

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name 1000 Vermont Avenue SPE LLC

street & number 1201 New York Ave NW, Suite 100 telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Washington state DC zip code 20005-6192

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

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







**PHILLIS building, southeast corner of Fifteenth and K streets northwest. William S. Phillips recently purchased this property (formerly**

