

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: Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Home Office Building  
*If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.*

Address 51 Louisiana Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001

Square and lot number(s) Square 631, Lot 809

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission ANC 6E

Date of Construction: 1935-36 Date of major alteration(s) 1953 addition (not included in nomination)

Architect(s) Shreve, Lamb & Harmon Architectural style(s): OTHER/Stripped Classical

Original use COMMERCE/TRADE/Office Building Present use COMMERCE/TRADE/Office Building

Property owner AMSQ LP

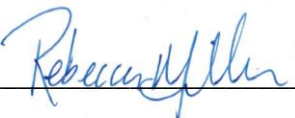
Legal address of property owner 675 Ponce De Leon Avenue NE, Floor 7, Atlanta, GA 30308

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) DC Preservation League

*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) DC Preservation League, 641 S Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 783-5144

Name and title of authorized representative: Rebecca Miller, Executive Director, DC Preservation League

Signature of applicant representative:  Date: 11/20/2023

Name and telephone of author of application DC Preservation League, (202) 783-5144

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.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Home Office Building

Other names/site number: Jones Day Building

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 51 Louisiana Avenue NW

City or town: Washington State: DC County: \_\_\_\_\_

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 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

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_ A      \_\_\_ B      \_\_\_ C      \_\_\_ D

<p>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p>_____</p> <p><b>Date</b></p>
---	---------------------------------

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p>_____</p> <p><b>Date</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

---

#### 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.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register           

---

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/office building  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/office building  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

---

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/Stripped Classical

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: limestone, granite, concrete

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

---

### Summary Paragraph

The Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Home Office Building, constructed in 1935-36 by the Turner Construction Company and expanded in 1953, is located at 51 Louisiana Avenue NW in downtown Washington, D.C., and faces the open green space of the U.S. Capitol Plaza. The original six-story steel-frame building, clad in Indiana limestone and New Hampshire granite, stands approximately 300 feet long, 55 feet wide, and 90 feet tall. Designed by the prestigious New York firm of Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon, the building expresses a restrained and monumental Stripped Classical style, which is a common architectural style in Washington, D.C., particularly in the design of Federal buildings constructed from the 1930s through the 1950s. Stripped Classicism is a modern reinterpretation of neoclassicism, representing the changing architectural tastes of the era. The recessed central façade steps the building back from the street. The main (second) floor is elevated from the street and surrounded by a shallow balustraded terrace along the Louisiana Avenue façade. The façade is divided into three distinct sections—a rusticated granite base, lightly pilastered shaft, and top-floor entablature—that conform to neoclassical principles and create a sense of formal balance. In keeping with the building's Stripped Classical aesthetic, surface decoration is minimal, consisting chiefly of ornamental medallions surmounting façade piers and a large scroll over the main entrance.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

Flanking the building's entrance staircase are two monumental limestone statues of griffins, carved in a *streamlined moderne* style by Edmond Romulus Amateis, a native Washingtonian. The exterior of the building as well as the statues are well preserved and have not been significantly altered, retaining their historic integrity.

---

## Narrative Description

The original six-story steel-and-concrete frame building, sheathed in Indiana limestone and New Hampshire granite, is approximately 300 feet long, 55 feet wide, and 90 feet tall.<sup>1</sup> It is divided into three vertical sections: a lightly rusticated base, encompassing the first and second floors; a three-story pilastered central section surmounted by a simple neoclassical cornice; and a top one-story section above the main cornice. A small central penthouse for mechanical systems rises from the roof of the building but is set back from the front elevation (illustration 1).

The recessed central (southeast) façade steps the building back and raises it from the street, creating a sense of stateliness. Because the façade parallels Louisiana Avenue, which is angled from the main street grid, the recesses at the sides form angled edges that serve to frame the central façade (illustration 9). The central façade is divided into fifteen bays, with an additional bay in each of the angled side sections. The bays are defined by single 1/1 windows with plain spandrels that feature slightly recessed central rectangular panels. The piers between the panels feature shallow fluting that gives them the look of neoclassical pilasters. Shallow ornamental medallions surmount eight of these piers, arranged symmetrically in pairs.

The façade is sharply demarcated into three parts, a rusticated granite base, central limestone shaft, and sixth-floor "entablature" atop a projecting cornice.<sup>2</sup> A central penthouse crowned by a scalloped cornice, is stepped back from the façade. A balustraded terrace surrounds the granite base of the building along the central façade, raising the main floor approximately 12 feet above the first floor and adding a sense of grandeur to the structure (illustration 6). A two-tiered, granite staircase consisting of seven steps from the sidewalk to a granite landing and an additional 15 steps to the main entrance, adds to the impression of monumentality. The entrance consists of three portals. The central portal is framed in a massive but shallow limestone pavilion surmounted by a neoclassical cornice with large scrolled ends above a Roman-key patterned band (illustration 8).

Flanking the building's entrance staircase stand two monumental statues of griffins on approximately 10-foot-tall pedestals. Carved from Indiana limestone, the statues measure 5½ feet tall, 4½ feet wide, and 9 feet deep. Carved in a *streamlined moderne* style, the griffins have bodies of lions and heads and wings of eagles. The griffin on the right, intended to be a male, has a somewhat more elaborate feather structure than the one on the left, a female (illustration 7).

---

<sup>1</sup> The description focuses on the original building, completed in 1936, rather than the 1953 addition at the rear.

<sup>2</sup> As noted by Pamela Scott & Antoinette J. Lee, eds. *Buildings of the District of Columbia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 182.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

The south and west façades continue the tripartite segmentation of the main façade but lack the shallow pilasters, ornamental medallions and other decoration of the main façade. The south façade, originally four bays wide, is extended at its west end by the five slightly recessed bays of the 1953 addition to the building. The west façade consists entirely of the 1953 addition. Five bays wide and six stories at the south end, it steps up to an 11-bay-wide, seven-story section. The façade of the addition is a simplified version of the original, although the extra floor results in a break in the cornices above and below the top floors (illustration 4).

---

## 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.)

- 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
-

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

architecture

commerce

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1936

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1936

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Shreve, Lamb & Harmon (architects)

Turner Construction Company (builder)

\_\_\_\_\_



Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

*The Acacia Building meets National Register Criterion A (DC Criterion B) because it was the home of one of the most important and successful insurance companies of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the congressionally chartered Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company. It strongly reflects the company's intense civic pride and sense of social responsibility, which typify the culture of the era in which the building was constructed. This sense of corporate responsibility, prudence, and fiscal restraint contrasted with the grander, more indulgent, and sometimes excessive designs of financial buildings constructed in earlier eras. The building's use as a welcome center for visitors to the nation's capital through its Acacia Club as well as its unique function during World War II as the city's central Red Cross blood donor facility magnify the significance of its "civically responsible" design.*

*The Acacia Building meets National Register Criterion C (DC Criteria D, E, and F) because it is an exceptional example of a privately-owned office building embracing federal Washington's design parameters and is an excellent example of the Stripped Classical style of the 1930s. Being one of the few private buildings to face the U.S. Capitol grounds, the graceful and distinguished Acacia Building was consciously designed to conform with other Federal buildings nearby rather than compete with them. Created by the master architectural firm of Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon, designers of the Empire State Building in New York City, the Acacia Building's Stripped Classicism contributes substantially to the formal dignity of Louisiana Avenue opposite the park-like setting of Capitol Plaza. Its tasteful and even elegant degree of design restraint is a notable achievement. It is enlivened with remarkable design elements, including a recessed façade that accentuates and celebrates the building's unavoidable angled corner siting, and the large, stately, streamlined moderne griffins that flank the staircase at the building's entrance. All in all, the Acacia Building is an exceptional example of 1930s building design, executed by a master architectural firm at a prominent location on Capitol Hill.*

---

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

The Stripped Classical design of the Acacia Building is an exceptional example of a corporately commissioned building designed to reflect both the rich history of the company that built it as well as the prevailing ethos of the 1930s, the era of the Great Depression. The company, a Washington firm with origins going back to just after the Civil War, played an important role in the development of the city and was headquartered in many different locations prior to the construction of this building. Its decision to purchase land and build its home office at this location helped radically change the character of the formerly industrial neighborhood at the foot of Capitol Hill. After selling its first building at the northwest corner of Indiana Avenue and First Street NW to the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the company hired the celebrated firm of Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon to design a landmark headquarters building befitting its

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

prestigious location. The result is an elegant and monumental structure that projects power and a sense of permanence with notable grace and dignity.

### **Early history of the Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company**

The founding of the Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company was an outgrowth of the Civil War. The loss of life during the war brought home the need for an insurance system to provide for the survivors of the deceased. A group of eight Washington, D.C., Masons met on October 26, 1866, at the home of organizer William Mertz, at 466 Tenth Street NW, to form a charitable association to aid the widows and orphans of Master Masons. The organization was modeled on ones previously established in Philadelphia and New York.<sup>3</sup>

The group was slow in getting organized. It was not until February 1868 that a formal resolution was drawn up and signed by 22 Masons petitioning Congress for a charter for the Masonic Mutual Relief Association of the District of Columbia. Most of the signatories were employees of the federal government, principally the Treasury and War Departments. Congress approved the measure in early 1869, and President Andrew Johnson signed it into law on March 3, 1869. It was one of several bills that Johnson signed on his last full day in office.<sup>4</sup>

The association was organized according to the assessment system, then in widespread use. Members of the Masonic Order would pay a fixed amount (\$3.10) to become insured members of the association. When a member died, each of the remaining members would pay an assessment (\$1.10), most of which would be paid to the deceased's beneficiary. Membership was not open to the general public.

Beginning with 173 members, the association grew steadily, increasing to over 2,000 by the end of its first decade.<sup>5</sup> Its annual membership meetings were held in the elegant Masonic Temple at 9<sup>th</sup> and F Streets NW, now a National Register landmark. After Alexander Gardner (1821-1882), the famous Civil War photographer, was elected secretary of the company in 1874, it opened its first business office at 921 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, in a storefront that later was home to the Boston Dry Goods Store, the forerunner of the Woodward & Lothrop department store. In 1882, Gardner was elected president of the association, but he died just 19 days after taking office.<sup>6</sup>

By 1893, the association had moved to a two-room suite of offices at 419 11<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, over Brodt's Hat Store. The association's first full-time employee was a clerk named William Montgomery (1869-1955), who would be instrumental in the company's future prominence. Montgomery, an Irish immigrant, had arrived in the country virtually penniless and had previously worked a variety of odd jobs in Washington. The Masonic Mutual Relief Association at that time was doing poorly; membership had declined to less than 800, and several death

---

<sup>3</sup> Howard W. Kacy, *A Unique and Different Company: The Story of Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company* (New York: The Newcomen Society in North America, 1964), 9.

<sup>4</sup> Kacy, 10-11.

<sup>5</sup> Kacy, 12.

<sup>6</sup> Kacy, 13.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

benefits had not been paid. According to legend, the association's board was considering dissolving the failing association, but young Montgomery convinced them to give him the chance to build it up.<sup>7</sup>

Montgomery succeeded in turning the association's fortunes around. He arranged for a loan to pay off outstanding debts and quickly stemmed the decline in membership. He began a process of championing reforms that would ultimately transform the small charitable organization into a major national insurance company. The premise of fraternal aid associations like the Masonic Mutual Relief Association was that young members would join out of a spirit of responsibility to the community, would pay assessments when fellow members died, and ultimately would leave a legacy for their beneficiaries when they died themselves. Montgomery realized that as membership grew and there was less community cohesion, this model was doomed to fail. Young men would have little incentive to join such an association and pay many assessments before expecting to receive any benefit.<sup>8</sup>

Under Montgomery's leadership, the association gradually transitioned from its original status as a charitable association to a modern insurance company, a process that took several decades. Early steps included adopting a graduated assessment system in 1895 whereby younger members would not pay assessments as high as older members, thus encouraging younger individuals to join. Likewise, a capital reserve was established in 1903 so that the association could guarantee that it would be able to pay out benefits—one of a multitude of changes that required Congressional approval. The association was the first fraternal aid society to adopt a capital reserve, something that only for-profit companies had done previously. Though it was controversial, the move was approved by Congress and ultimately adopted by many other fraternal aid associations. According to Howard W. Kacy, president of Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1964, changes to the association's charter were signed by seven different U.S. presidents: Ulysses Grant, Chester Arthur, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Warren Harding, and Herbert Hoover.<sup>9</sup>

As business expanded, the need for additional office staff steadily grew, and, during the early years of the twentieth century, the association frequently moved from one commercial building to another. In 1917, it moved to its first wholly owned home office building, a rather small, three-story structure at 1621 H Street, NW, near Lafayette Square. In 1919, after just two years, the association sold this building and moved back into rented space, this time at the spacious Homer Building at 13<sup>th</sup> and F Streets NW. Over the following years, the association would lease more and more of that building's space until it filled 50,000 square feet by 1926.<sup>10</sup>

The association was rapidly modernizing in these years. Key legislation in 1922 allowed it to drop its traditional assessment system and convert to a premium system much like commercial insurance companies used, though the association would still be owned by its members, unlike a commercial stock company. It was at this time that the name was changed to the Acacia Mutual

<sup>7</sup> "William Montgomery, Acacia President, Dies," *Post*, 5 Sep 1955.

<sup>8</sup> "The Story of an Emigrant Boy," *Post*, 17 May 1928.

<sup>9</sup> Kacy, 17.

<sup>10</sup> "Acacia Life Plans \$2,500,00 Buildings Near Station Plaza," *Post*, 7 Nov 1926.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Life Association. "Acacia" was chosen because the Acacia tree was a traditional symbol of resurrection and immortality. At the time of the conversion, membership in Acacia still was restricted to Masons; another amendment to the association charter in 1932 would open up membership to anyone who qualified for coverage.

### **The company's first home office building near Capitol Hill**

In 1925, with business booming, Acacia's directors began planning a move from the cramped Homer Building to a suitably large and prestigious new building. In an attempt to break the pattern of frequent moves, the association decided to invest in an extensive land purchase—about four acres; nearly two full blocks of District property—and to contribute to the beautification and re-development of the city, specifically in the area at the foot of Capitol Hill.

The blocks to the immediate northwest of the Capitol grounds, where the Baltimore & Ohio train station had been located before the new Union Station opened in 1907, were considered run down and in need of redevelopment. Congress had seized several blocks along North Capitol Street in 1913 and razed the motley assortment of buildings standing on them in preparation for a new open park space, known as Capitol Plaza (or Union Station Plaza), that would run from the Mall north to Union Station.

The blocks that Acacia purchased were immediately adjacent to the planned open green space, specifically the two blocks flanking First Street NW between D Street and Indiana Avenue. On the western block stood the old W. M. Galt & Company flour and feed mill and associated buildings. The eastern block was home to the Thomas W. Smith lumber yard as well as a small hotel on the southeastern corner. Acacia envisioned leveling both blocks and building a sprawling campus that would include not only a large new office building but apartment buildings to house its more than 300 workers. The new buildings would complement and blend with the various government office buildings immediately to the south and contribute to the beautification of the nation's capital. President Montgomery issued a statement that it was the association's express intention to "assist in the improvement of the city in connection with the recent acts passed by Congress for that purpose."<sup>11</sup> (Map 3)

The association's original plan, as announced in November 1926, was to construct the first building at the northwest corner of Indiana Avenue and First Street NW at a cost of approximately \$1 million. The ten-story granite and limestone building would initially be used as the company's home office but was to eventually be converted to housing for Acacia employees. Within five years, an even grander permanent home office building would be constructed on the eastern edge of the property facing the Capitol grounds, and it would front on the new "parkway from the Union Station plaza to the Peace Monument" for which Congress had appropriated funds (which was named Louisiana Avenue when it was completed).<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> "Acacia Insurance Company to Build Near U.S. Capitol," *Post* 26 Jul 1925.

<sup>12</sup> *Post*, 7 Nov 1926, *ibid*.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

The original limestone Classical Revival building, which still stands at First Street and Indiana Avenue, was built by the New York firm of Hoggson Brothers from 1927 to 1928.<sup>13</sup> As originally constructed, it featured employee-oriented amenities such as recreation rooms, shower-baths, a cafeteria, and a large auditorium. On the first floor were lounges for men and women, a library, and a writing room, spaces which all were finished in mahogany and marble. Upper floors were designed for offices and included a medical laboratory on the seventh floor and a state-of-the-art Photostat room for making copies of policies and contracts.<sup>14</sup>

*The Washington Post* noted admiringly that the new building was “in distinct harmony with its Governmental neighbors, as well as with the notably fine Union Station. Acacia’s new building is at home amid a group of buildings which all America journeys to Washington to see.”<sup>15</sup>

The building opened in May 1928 with a festive ceremony featuring prominent Masons as well as insurance agents from around the country who had attained the highest sales. The nighttime festivities featured spotlights dramatically showing off the new building’s stately neoclassical design. The company liked to refer to it as a “temple of service,” symbolized by the new Acacia Club on the first floor, a lounge for the exclusive use of association members.<sup>16</sup>

### **Sale of the 1928 home office building**

Despite the distinguished design, quality construction, and modern amenities of the 1928 building, Acacia never expected to use it as its main headquarters facility for very long. The stock market crash and onset of the Great Depression just one year after the building opened both hastened and altered these plans. The association continued to do good business despite the financial downturn. The 1932 change in its charter allowing it to sell insurance to any qualified customer helped build the business, as did its expansion into the home mortgage business in 1933.

That same year the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC) was created by Congress to offer refinancing to homeowners in danger of foreclosure. Though it was intended to be a temporary agency, the HOLC needed a large staff and substantial office space to handle all the loans it was processing, and it needed that space as quickly as possible. Its parent organization, the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, decided there was not enough time to construct a new building and decided to purchase the Acacia Building instead, an ideal choice for a financial institution. The Acacia building was purchased in July 1934 for \$1,060,000.<sup>17</sup> The building, which was expanded in 1936, continues to house the Federal Home Loan Bank Board and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2007 (Map 4).

---

<sup>13</sup> D.C. Historic Preservation Office, *D.C. Building Permits Database*, permit #9756, 26 May 1927.

<sup>14</sup> “Care of Employees Will Be Featured in Acacia Building,” *Post*, 6 Mar 1927.

<sup>15</sup> “Acacia’s New Home Model of Efficiency Comfort and Design,” *Post*, 17 May 1928.

<sup>16</sup> “Acacia Ceremonies Dedicating Building Witnessed By 5,500,” *Post*, 17 May 1928.

<sup>17</sup> National Register of Historic Places registration form for the Federal Home Loan Bank Board Building, (2006), Sec. 8, p.2.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**Design, construction, and layout of the new Acacia Building on Louisiana Avenue**

Acacia had occupied its home office building on New Jersey Avenue for just six years. As soon as its sale was announced, the company announced plans to immediately construct a new building on the land that it owned a block to the east.<sup>18</sup> By this time Louisiana Avenue had been completed from Constitution Avenue to Union Station, and the new home office building would front on Louisiana Avenue, facing the Senate office building and the Capitol across Capitol Plaza. Acacia planned to build the headquarters building in stages, potentially filling almost the entire block, although the initial structure would cover only about a quarter of the space (Map 4). In the meantime, the company would rent space in Harry Wardman's former headquarters building at 1437 K Street NW and other downtown sites to use during construction.<sup>19</sup>

The company's vice president, J.P. Yort, promised that the new building "will be constructed in monumental style to correspond to the Senate Office Building on the other side of the Capitol Plaza."<sup>20</sup> President Montgomery elaborated:

*The standard we have set for our new building, and which is effected in the plans drawn, calls for the erection of a structure which will be monumental in type, harmonize with the Government buildings in the vicinity, be plain and substantial and typify what the institution stands for—a building economical to construct, economical in upkeep, efficient in operation, providing good working facilities and one that may be harmoniously extended from time to time as the progress of the company necessitates.*<sup>21</sup>

Construction of the approximately \$1 million building began with groundbreaking on July 2, 1935, and the cornerstone was laid in October of that year.<sup>22</sup> Acacia had reportedly received applications from 35 architectural firms to design the new building, and the company finally chose the prestigious New York architectural firm of Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon, which had designed the Empire State Building. Likewise, applications from 31 building contractors were reviewed, and the Turner Construction Company, another New York firm, was selected as the builder.<sup>23</sup> Construction was completed ahead of schedule in June 1936, and a celebratory open house was held on July 1, 1936, to allow the public to inspect the new building. The building was formally dedicated on August 12, 1936. It was reportedly the only large private office building to be constructed in Washington since 1931.<sup>24</sup>

Clad in Indiana limestone and designed in a "Stripped Classical" style, the building reflected the goals of the company in relating to other federal office buildings as well as the prevailing ethos of the Depression era. According to *The Washington Post*, "It was the aim of the company

---

<sup>18</sup> Tiber Creek flows to the south through this block and is now encased in a culvert that runs underneath the Acacia Building. ("Excavators Uncover Old Tiber Creek Culvert," *Star*, 10 Aug 1935).

<sup>19</sup> "Acacia Mutual Selects Site for New Building," *Post*, 6 Jul 1934.

<sup>20</sup> "Acacia Will Build \$2,500,000 Home," *Star*, 26 Jun 1934.

<sup>21</sup> "Plans Revealed for \$1,000,000 Acacia Building," *Post*, 14 Apr 1935.

<sup>22</sup> D.C. Historic Preservation Office, *D.C. Building Permits Database*, permit #184187, 7 Sep 1935.

<sup>23</sup> "Edifice Harmonizes with Federal Scene," *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

<sup>24</sup> "Acacia Building to Open Monday," *Star*, 20 Jun 1936.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

in its selection of material and the form of design to consider only fitness for service and purpose, all forms of extravagance being avoided.”<sup>25</sup> Unlike the rich decoration of many of Federal Triangle buildings, the Acacia Building’s decoration is spare. It reflects the style typical of Federal buildings of that era.<sup>26</sup> “Inside,” *The Washington Post* observed, “the appointments give the feeling of quiet efficiency—the kind of beauty that artists and architects call ‘functional.’ There is no wasted space, no purposeless ornaments.”<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, the overall appearance of the building remains distinguished and monumental. When it first opened, the Acacia company installed floodlight projectors to illuminate the façade of the building at night, highlighting its strategic location across the plaza from the Capitol.<sup>28</sup>

The building’s ground (first) floor, which is actually partially underground along Louisiana Avenue, included space for mail, filing, and duplicating departments and was where the building superintendent had his office. A sophisticated security vault was also located on this level. In addition to the lobby, the main (second) floor above it hosted the investment, cashier’s, and claims departments as well as offices for policyholders’ services and other functions.

A unique feature of the building was the “Acacia Club,” located on the third floor (illustration 11). An amenity for use by Acacia policyholders visiting Washington, the club had been initiated in 1928 when the older building was completed. It offered “lounge rooms, writing facilities, a parcel checking service and many other facilities conducive to the comfort of the visitor, including shower baths.”<sup>29</sup>

On upper floors were located the switchboard and “automatic telephone equipment” room, library, sales departments, medical examination rooms, laboratories, and the actuarial and accounting departments, among other offices. The top floor was for executive and legal offices and rooms for the board of directors.

The building was designed with as few structural columns in the interior as possible, to allow maximum flexibility in configuring office space. Advanced amenities of the day included state-of-the-art air conditioning, “semi-indirect” lighting that reduced glare for office workers, and extensive soundproofing to enhance productivity. A conveyer system facilitated the transport of papers and files between floors, and a centralized vacuum system, with outlets strategically located throughout the building, allowing for efficient cleaning.<sup>30</sup>

### **The Acacia Griffin sculptures**

---

<sup>25</sup> “Interior of New Building Reveals Careful Planning for Efficiency,” *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

<sup>26</sup> Hans Wirz and Richard Striner, *Washington Deco: Art Deco Design in the Nation’s Capital*, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984), 89ff.

<sup>27</sup> “Public Inspects Office Building of Acacia Life,” *Post*, 2 Jul 1936.

<sup>28</sup> “Floodlights of Acacia Add Beauty to Plaza,” *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

<sup>29</sup> “Interior of New Building Reveals Careful Planning for Efficiency,” op cit.

<sup>30</sup> “New Acacia Building Replete With Modern Improvements,” *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

Flanking the building's entrance staircase stand two monumental statues of griffins on tall pedestals. Carved from Indiana limestone, the griffins were adopted as the logo of the Acacia company at the time the building was dedicated. In Greek mythology, they represent guardianship of treasure. Each of the two statues has a nest of agate eggs between its paws, representing the company's wealth that the griffins vigilantly protect.<sup>31</sup>

The sculptures are the work of Edmond Romulus Amateis (1897-1981), the son of an Italian architect and sculptor, Louis Amateis, who emigrated to the United States in 1883 and became chair of the Fine Arts Department at George Washington University. Edmond Amateis attended D.C public schools as a child and later received sculpture training at the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design in New York City and the American Academy in Rome. Amateis's style reflects an Italian Renaissance influence. His other major works in D.C. include a relief panel of George Washington and allegorical spandrels on the portico of the Mellon Auditorium in the Federal Triangle (1935) as well as two high-relief figures on the District of Columbia Chapter of the Red Cross Building (1953).<sup>32</sup>

### **Subsequent use and expansion of the Acacia Building**

The Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company capitalized on the new building's distinguished design and prominent location near the Capitol as implicit evidence of the reliability and trustworthiness of the company (illustrations 12 and 13). Hundreds of out-of-town policy holders were welcomed at the building in the Acacia Club. In 1943, President Montgomery offered space on the third floor of the building to the American Red Cross to use as a blood donor facility after that organization had been forced to leave its previous quarters.<sup>33</sup> Large numbers of donors patronized the facility. On Pearl Harbor Day, 1944, for example, over a thousand donors stood in long lines in the building to donate blood to meet war-related needs. The Washington Blood Donor Center was one of only 11 throughout the country that supplied blood to U.S. military forces during World War II.

The Acacia company continued to expand its business, and by 1953 its workforce had more than doubled from 377 in 1936 to 900.<sup>34</sup> Ever since the property on Louisiana Avenue had been purchased, the company had envisioned filling the entire square with additions and extensions to their main building. The company hired the same architectural firm, Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon, to design the new addition, and the same contractor, the Turner Construction Company, to build it. Construction began in 1953 and was completed in May the following year, with a dedication ceremony held in August during the company's annual meeting.<sup>35</sup>

The 1953 addition is a rectangular unit that connects to the west end of the 1936 Acacia Building and is situated along First Street NE. Thus, the annex stands inconspicuously at the rear

---

<sup>31</sup> James M. Goode, *Washington Sculpture: A Cultural History of Outdoor Sculpture in the Nation's Capital*, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 17.

<sup>32</sup> Goode, 764.

<sup>33</sup> "Montgomery Honored by Red Cross for Aid to Blood Service, *Star*, 18 Jan 1944.

<sup>34</sup> "Acacia's President Dedicates \$3.5 Million, 7-Story Addition," *Post*, 24 Aug 1954.

<sup>35</sup> "McShain Building and Acacia Addition Begin to Take Shape," *Star*, 17 Oct 1953.



Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

of the 1936 building and is not visible from Louisiana Avenue. The limestone-faced addition, which cost \$3.5 million to construct, was designed to match the look of the 1936 building but can be easily distinguished due to its height. At seven stories, it stands one floor taller than the 1936 building. Like the original building, it has a central penthouse that rises above its roof in the center of the annex. A triangular central courtyard space, open on the north side, was formed by the construction of the annex.

Inside, the sophisticated system of pneumatic tubes installed in the 1936 building was extended to transmit mail, folders, and other material between the two buildings. Acacia rented out some space on the ground floor for a branch of the National Savings & Trust Company at the southwest corner of the building, but otherwise occupied the entire annex for its own offices.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Jones Day law firm and Richard Rogers addition**

As one of the closest private office buildings to the Capitol, the Acacia Building conveys prestige and a sense of access to political power. By 1996, the Acacia board of directors had decided that the company could gain more value from the building by leasing it to another tenant than continuing to occupy it as its headquarters. (It subsequently moved its offices to Bethesda, Maryland.) Fittingly for the building's federally inspired design, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission considered leasing the space but eventually decided to build their own new structure next to Union Station. Instead, the large law firm of Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue took over the space. Partner Steve Teitelbaum was quoted as saying that the firm selected the space because of the unique building: "The building is extraordinary by Washington architectural standards. The building is what sells, not the location."<sup>37</sup> The firm moved into the building in 1999 after extensive renovations of the interior space and restoration of the exterior had been completed. The restoration was designed by the Washington firm of Hartman-Cox Architects.<sup>38</sup>

The JBG Companies, a real estate development firm, bought the building from Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company for \$123 million in 2004. The purchase agreement gave JBG the right to demolish a parking structure located on a separate lot on the northern portion of the square and construct a new office building on that lot.<sup>39</sup> JBG then commissioned renowned British architect Lord Richard Rogers to design a 10-story office building to fill the lot. Rogers created a modernist, glass-sheathed office building and connected it to the Acacia Building via a glass-covered atrium filling the triangular space that had previously been a courtyard. Central to the atrium is a bright yellow steel mast, in Rogers' signature style, that supports a web of bridges, stairs, and an elevator connecting the new building, the original Acacia building, and the 1953 annex. The new building, with an address at 300 New Jersey Avenue NW, was completed in 2009.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> "New Acacia Addition Will Be Dedicated Late in August," *Star*, 30 Apr 1954.

<sup>37</sup> Maryann Haggerty, "Who Cares About Location When Everybody Gets a Window?," *Post*, 13 May 1996.

<sup>38</sup> "New Office Building Planned Near Capitol," *Post*, 13 Jul 1999.

<sup>39</sup> Tim Mazzucca, "Acacia buy gives JBG room to grow," *Washington Business Journal*, 16 Aug 2004.

<sup>40</sup> Philip Kennicott, "A British Invasion," *Post*, 23 Jul 2009 and Tierney Plumb, "Work on 300 New Jersey Ave. finishes," *Washington Business Journal*, 28 Apr 2009.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**The architects: Shreve, Lamb & Harmon**

In 1935, Acacia hired the prestigious New York architectural firm of Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon to design the building. Originally formed in 1924 as a partnership between Richmond H. Shreve and William F. Lamb, the firm added partner Arthur L. Harmon in 1929 after it won the Empire State Building project, probably its most famous commission. In addition to completing that project in 1930-31, the company is best known for a variety of New York skyscrapers as well as a handful of mostly large office projects in other American cities, including Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Providence, Rhode Island.

Richmond Harold Shreve (1877-1946) was born in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, the son of a former dean of the Cathedral of Quebec. When he was eight years old, his family moved to New York. Shreve attended Cornell University and graduated from its College of Architecture in 1902. He then served on the Cornell faculty for four years, supervising the construction of Goldwin Smith Hall, a neoclassical building designed by the renowned New York architectural firm of Carrère & Hastings. Once the project was completed in 1906, Shreve joined Carrère & Hastings, becoming a partner in the firm in 1920.<sup>41</sup> It was at this firm that Shreve met William Lamb, and in 1924 the two left Carrère & Hastings to start their own firm. True to his professorial beginnings, Shreve always maintained an interest in education, funding a fellowship at Cornell University and offering a year's employment at Shreve, Lamb & Harmon for the top graduate of Cornell College of Architecture every year.<sup>42</sup>

Shreve "had a genius for the solution of operational and administrative problems of building," *The New York Times* observed.<sup>43</sup> For example, while Lamb is generally credited with the design of the Empire State Building, Shreve's organizational skills were key to solving the prodigious logistical and other production challenges associated with constructing the enormous building in less than a year. Shreve was also active as a city planner, serving as the director of the Slum Clearance Committee of New York in the 1930s, and as chief architect for several planned community projects in New York City, including Williamsburg Housing Project, the Vladeck Houses on the Lower East Side, and the Parkchester in the Bronx.<sup>44</sup>

Shreve's partner, William Frederick Lamb (1883-1952) was a native of Brooklyn, New York, and the son of a builder. After graduating from Williams College in 1904, he did graduate work at the Columbia University School of Architecture and studied at the Atelier Deglane in Paris, earning a degree from the École des Beaux Arts in 1911. He then returned to New York to work at Carrère & Hastings, where he met Shreve. "Possessing a remarkable grasp of plan and composition, he was actively in charge of the formative work in the design of many important structures during the construction heyday of the Nineteen Twenties," *The New York Times*

---

<sup>41</sup> Henry F. and Elise Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, (Los Angeles, Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970), 552.

<sup>42</sup> "Richmond Shreve, Architect, 69, Dies," *New York Times*, 11 Sep 1946.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Olivia Klose, *500 Fifth Avenue Designation Report* (New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, Dec. 14, 2010).

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

observed.<sup>45</sup> Lamb's work on the General Motors Building in New York City (1926) led to his firm's selection to design the Empire State Building. Lamb was also the principal designer of the Bankers Trust Building in New York City, numerous other bank buildings, and at least one other insurance company home office building in addition to the Acacia Building. He was also the design coordinator for the New York World's Fair in 1939 and was appointed by President Roosevelt to two terms on the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. Like his partner Richmond Shreve, Lamb also devoted much of his energy to the design and development of housing for low-income families.

In 1929, while design work for the Empire State Building was underway, Arthur Loomis Harmon (1878-1958) joined Shreve and Lamb, and it was under the name of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon that the company's most prominent works were created. A native of Chicago, Illinois, Harmon studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and graduated from the Columbia University School of Architecture in 1901. He then worked until 1911 at another prestigious New York architectural firm, McKim, Mead & White. While there he oversaw construction work on the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He maintained his own practice from 1913 to 1929, when he joined Shreve and Lamb.

Shreve, Lamb & Harmon were best known for skyscrapers and other modern office buildings, which were usually designed in a restrained and functional style, in contrast to the elaborate ornamentation for which Carrère & Hastings had been famous. The Empire State Building, for example, won awards shortly after its construction that recognized the "noble simplicity" and "dignity" of the structure's design.<sup>46</sup> The historic designation report for 500 Fifth Avenue in New York characterizes the firm's structures as typically featuring "unadorned limestone cladding, metal-framed windows and simple, set-back massing, occasionally with Art Deco or Streamlined ornamental motifs."<sup>47</sup> The Acacia Building is thus a classic example of the firm's style. The firm continued in business until the 1970s.

---

<sup>45</sup> "William F. Lamb, 68, Architect, Is Dead," *New York Times*, 9 Sep 1952.

<sup>46</sup> See "Honor Architects for Empire State," *New York Times*, 27 Jan 1932, and "Empire Tower Wins 1931 Fifth Av. Prize," *Ibid.*, 24 Feb 1932.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

“Acacia Building to Open Monday,” *Star*, 20 Jun 1936.

“Acacia Life Plans \$2,500,00 Buildings Near Station Plaza,” *Post*, 7 Nov 1926.

“Acacia Mutual Selects Site for New Building,” *Post*, 6 Jul 1934.

“Acacia Will Build \$2,500,000 Home,” *Star*, 26 Jun 1934.

“Acacia's President Dedicates \$3.5 Million, 7-Story Addition,” *Post*, 24 Aug 1954.

D.C. Historic Preservation Office, *D.C. Building Permits Database*, permit #184187, 7 Sep 1935.

“Edifice Harmonizes with Federal Scene,” *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

“Floodlights of Acacia Add Beauty to Plaza,” *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

Goode, James M., *Washington Sculpture: A Cultural History of Outdoor Sculpture in the Nation's Capital*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.

Haggerty, Maryann, “Who Cares About Location When Everybody Gets a Window?,” *Post*, 13 May 1996.

“Interior of New Building Reveals Careful Planning for Efficiency,” *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

Kacy, Howard W. *A Unique and Different Company: The Story of Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company* (New York: The Newcomen Society in North America, 1964).

Kennicott, Philip, “A British Invasion,” *Post*, 23 Jul 2009.

Klose, Olivia. *500 Fifth Avenue Designation Report*, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, Dec. 14, 2010.

Lewis, Michael J. *American Art and Architecture*, London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 2006.

Mazzucca, Tim, “Acacia buy gives JBG room to grow,” *Washington Business Journal*, 16 Aug 2004.

“McShain Building and Acacia Addition Begin to Take Shape,” *Star*, 17 Oct 1953.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Moeller, G. Martin. *AIA Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C.* (5<sup>th</sup> ed., Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012).

“New Acacia Addition Will Be Dedicated Late in August,” *Star*, 30 Apr 1954.

“New Acacia Building Replete With Modern Improvements,” *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

“Plans Revealed for \$1,000,000 Acacia Building,” *Post*, 14 Apr 1935.

“Public Inspects Office Building of Acacia Life,” *Post*, 2 Jul 1936.

Scott, Pamela & Lee, Antoinette J., eds. *Buildings of the District of Columbia*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

“Some Pertinent Facts About Acacia Life Insurance Co.,” *Post*, 1 Jul 1936.

Wirz, Hans, and Striner, Richard. *Washington Deco: Art Deco in the Nation’s Capital* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984).

Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970.

---

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**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):** \_\_\_\_\_

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

---

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreege of Property** \_\_\_\_\_

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the designated area are the footprint of the 1936 building and its entrance staircase and terrace. The designated area excludes the building's 1953 addition, which is derivative of the original building and does not contribute to the monumentality, grace, and symmetry of the original building, which was built to express the civic pride and commitment of the Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company. The Acacia Building stands on lot 809 in square 631. Square 631 is bounded by D Street NW to the north, 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW to the west, New Jersey Avenue NW to the east, and C Street NW to the south. The far southwest corner of the square is bounded by a short segment of Indiana Avenue NW. Lot 809 occupies most of the southern half of the square and corresponds to the footprint of the Acacia Building, including both the original 1936 building and its 1953 addition.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the designated area corresponds to the footprint of the original 1936 building as well as the formal entrance staircase and balustraded terrace, which encompass the ornamental limestone griffins that flank the main staircase. This ensemble is an essential element in the historically significant original design of the building.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: John DeFerrari, Trustee  
organization: D.C. Preservation League  
street & number: 641 S Street NW, Suite 300  
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20001  
e-mail info@dcpreservation.org  
telephone: (202) 783-5144  
date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Home Office Building

City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.

County:

State:

Photographer: See list below.

Date Photographed: See list below.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 13.

View from southeast. (Photographer: John DeFerrari, February 15, 2016).

2 of 13.

View from southeast, circa 1936. (Photographer: Theodor Horydczak. Source: Library of Congress).

3 of 13.

Construction progress, circa 1935. (Photographer: Theodor Horydczak. Source: Library of Congress).

4 of 13.



Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Building

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

View from southwest. (Photographer: John DeFerrari, October 29, 2015).

5 of 13.

View from northeast, showing 2009 addition. (Photographer: John DeFerrari, August 24, 2016).

6 of 13.

Main façade, showing balustraded terrace and griffin sculptures. (Photographer: John DeFerrari, October 29, 2015).

7 of 13.

Griffin sculpture. (Photographer: John DeFerrari, January 25, 2017).

8 of 13.

Main entrance. (Photographer: John DeFerrari, January 25, 2017).

9 of 13.

Detail of the southeast corner. (Photographer: John DeFerrari, October 29, 2015).

10 of 13.

Aerial view of the U.S. Capitol grounds showing the physical relationship of the Acacia Building to the Capitol and other federal buildings. The Acacia Building is immediately above the number 5 in the photo. (Associated Press, May 11, 1941).

11 of 13.

Postcard photograph of the no longer extant Acacia Club lounge (undated).

12 of 13.

Circa 1936 postcard showing the new Acacia Building facing the U.S. Capitol.

13 of 13.

Matchbook cover promoting the building's proximity to the U.S. Capitol.

**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.).

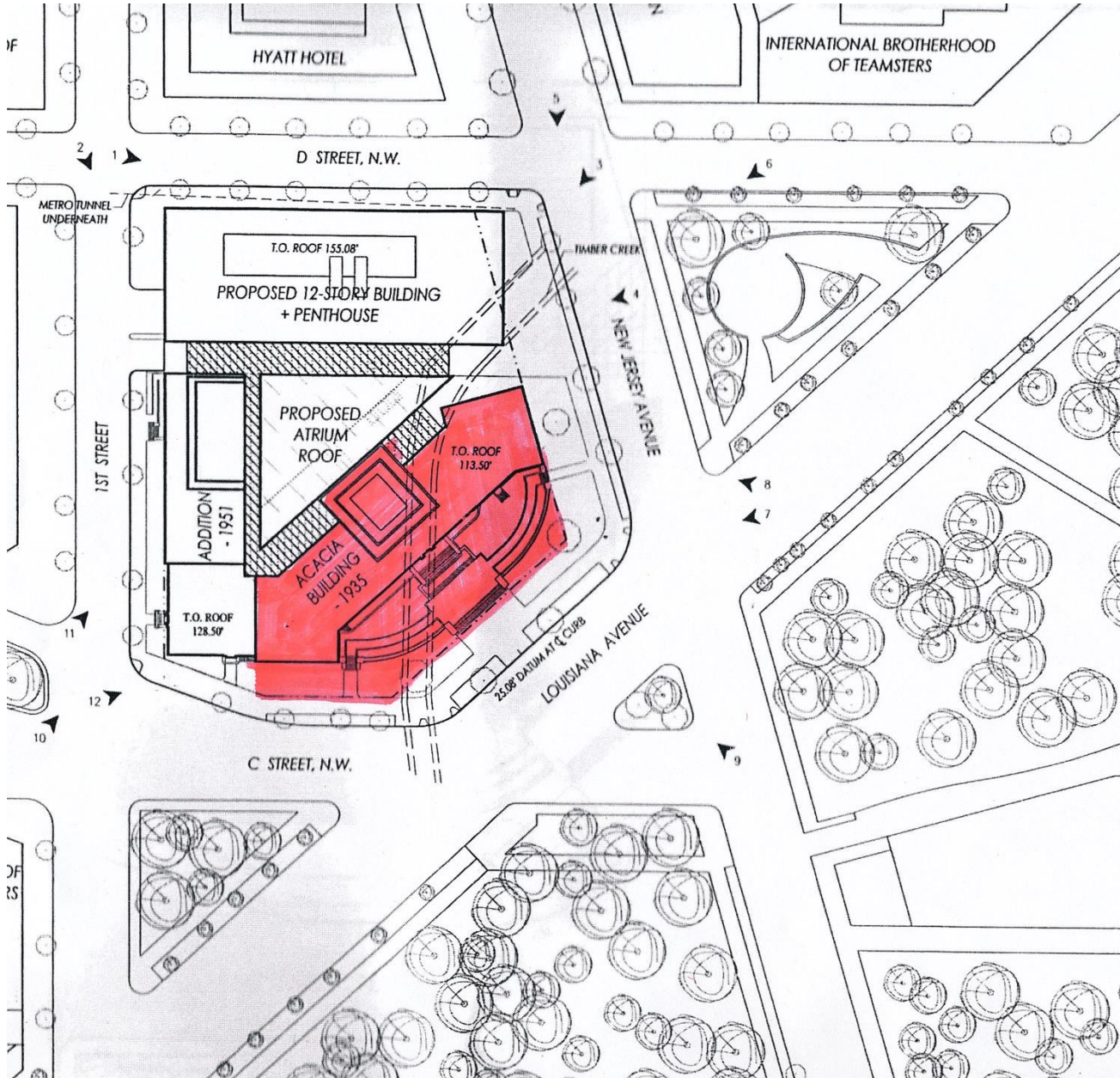
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building  
-----  
Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
-----  
County and State  
-----  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number MAPS Page 1



Map 1: Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Home Office Building (Jones Day Building). The designated area, comprising the original 1936 building and entrance staircase and terrace, is highlighted.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company
Home Office Building
-----
Name of Property
District of Columbia
-----
County and State
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number MAPS Page 2



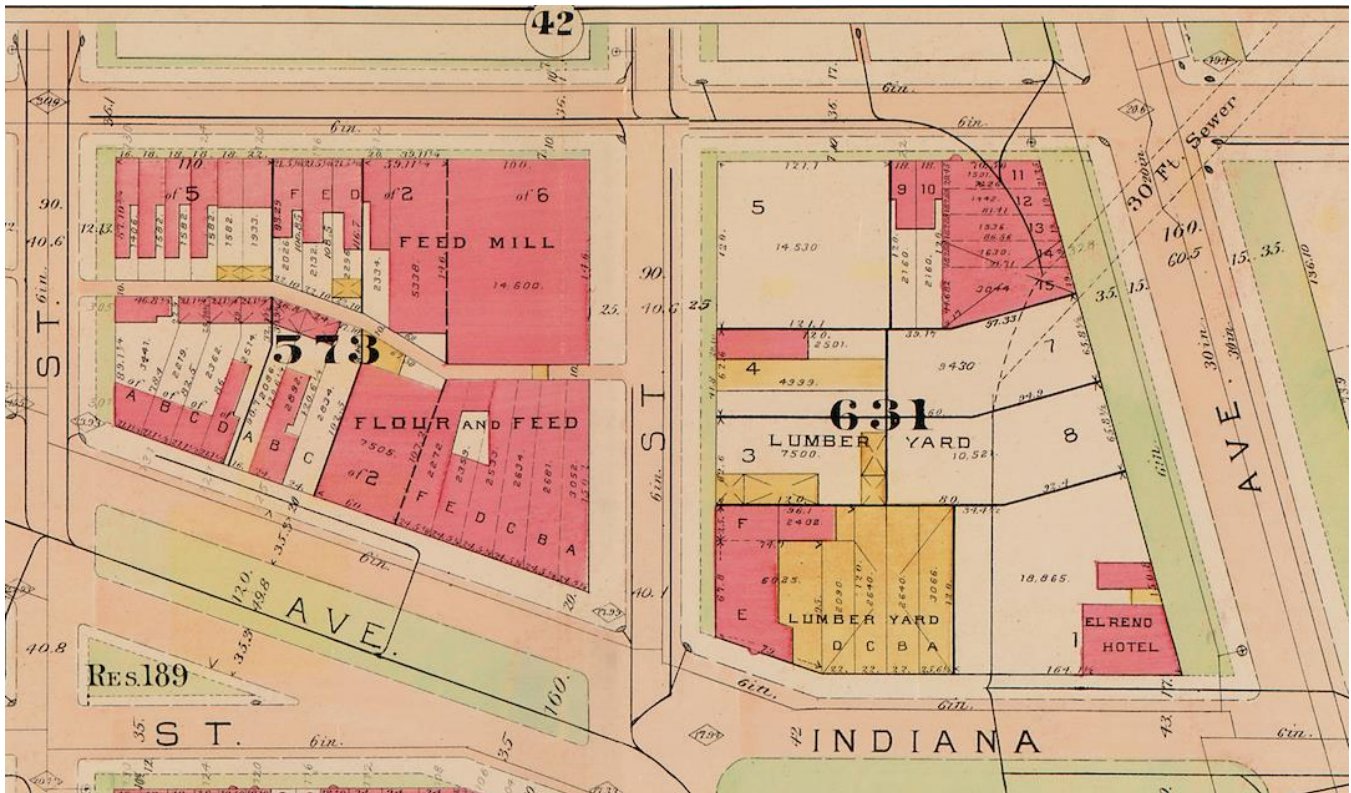
Map 2: Aerial photograph of the Acacia Building (Google Maps).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company
Home Office Building
Name of Property
District of Columbia
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number MAPS Page 3



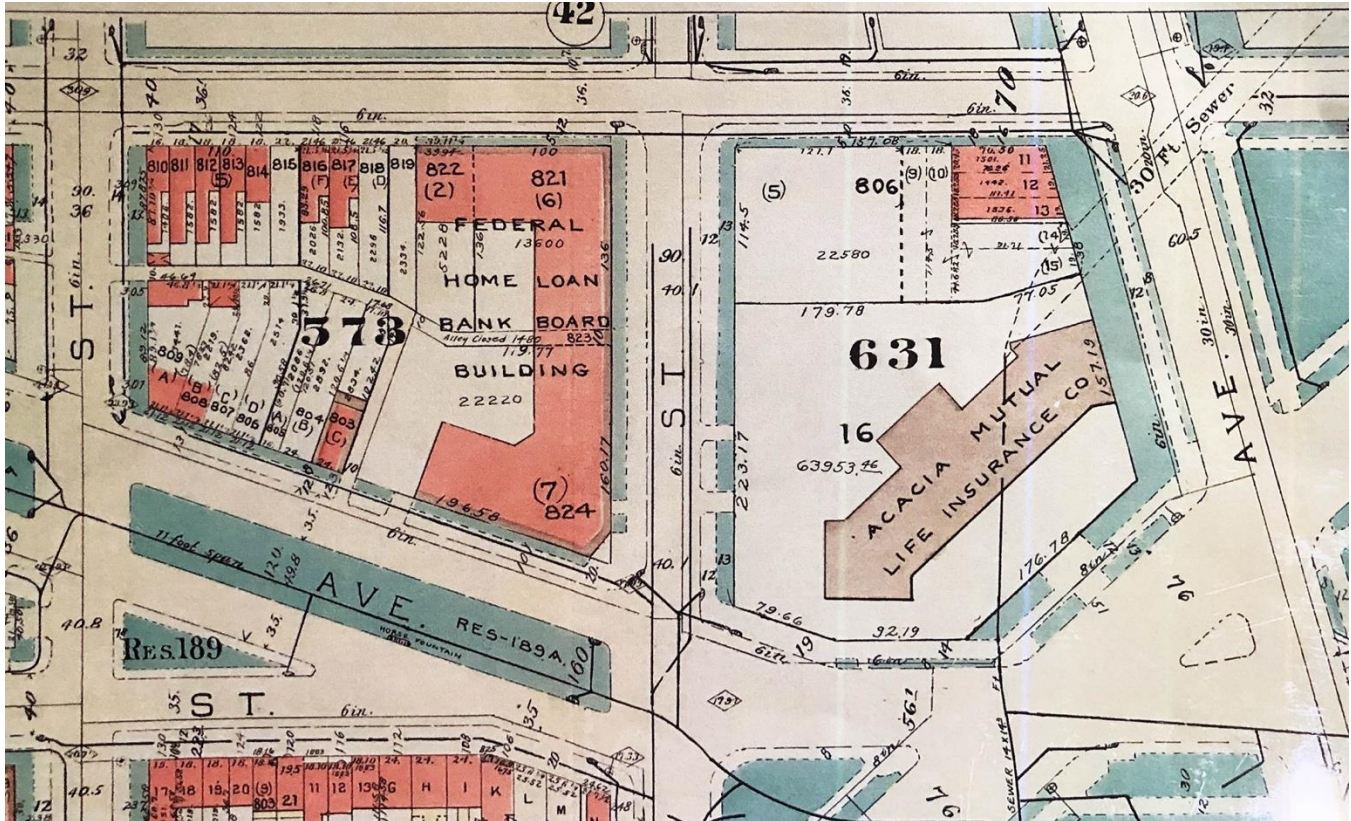
Map 3: Excerpt from 1913 Baist Real Estate Survey Map (Vol. 1, Plate 43), indicating the semi-industrial nature of square 631 and the adjoining square prior to construction of the Acacia office buildings.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building  
-----  
Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
-----  
County and State  
-----  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number MAPS Page 4



Map 4: Excerpt from 1939 Baist Real Estate Survey Map (Vol. 1, Plate 38), showing the recently completed Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company Home Office Building and the former Acacia home office building repurposed as the Federal Home Loan Bank Board Building.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 1



Illustration 1: View from southeast. (John DeFerrari).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

-----  
Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
-----  
County and State

-----  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)  
-----

Section number PHOTOS Page 2



Illustration 2: View from southeast, circa 1936. (Theodor Horydzak. Source: Library of Congress).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 3



Illustration 3: Construction progress, circa 1935. (Photographer: Theodor Horydczak. Source: Library of Congress).



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 4



Illustration 4: View from southwest. (John DeFerrari).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 5



Illustration 5: View from northeast, showing 2009 addition. (John DeFerrari).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 6



Illustration 6: Main façade, showing balustraded terrace and griffin sculptures. (John DeFerrari).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 7



Illustration 7: Griffin sculpture. (John DeFerrari).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

-----  
Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
-----  
County and State

-----  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)  
-----

Section number PHOTOS Page 8



Illustration 8: Main entrance. (Photographer: John DeFerrari).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 9



Illustration 9: Detail of the southeast corner. (Photographer: John DeFerrari).

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 10



Illustration 10: Aerial view of the U.S. Capitol grounds taken in 1941, showing the physical relationship of the Acacia Building to the Capitol and other federal buildings. The Acacia Building is immediately above the number 5 in the photo. (Associated Press).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 11



Illustration 11: Postcard photograph of the no longer extant Acacia Club lounge on the third floor (undated).



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Acacia Mutual Life Insurance Company  
Home Office Building

Name of Property  
District of Columbia

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number PHOTOS Page 12

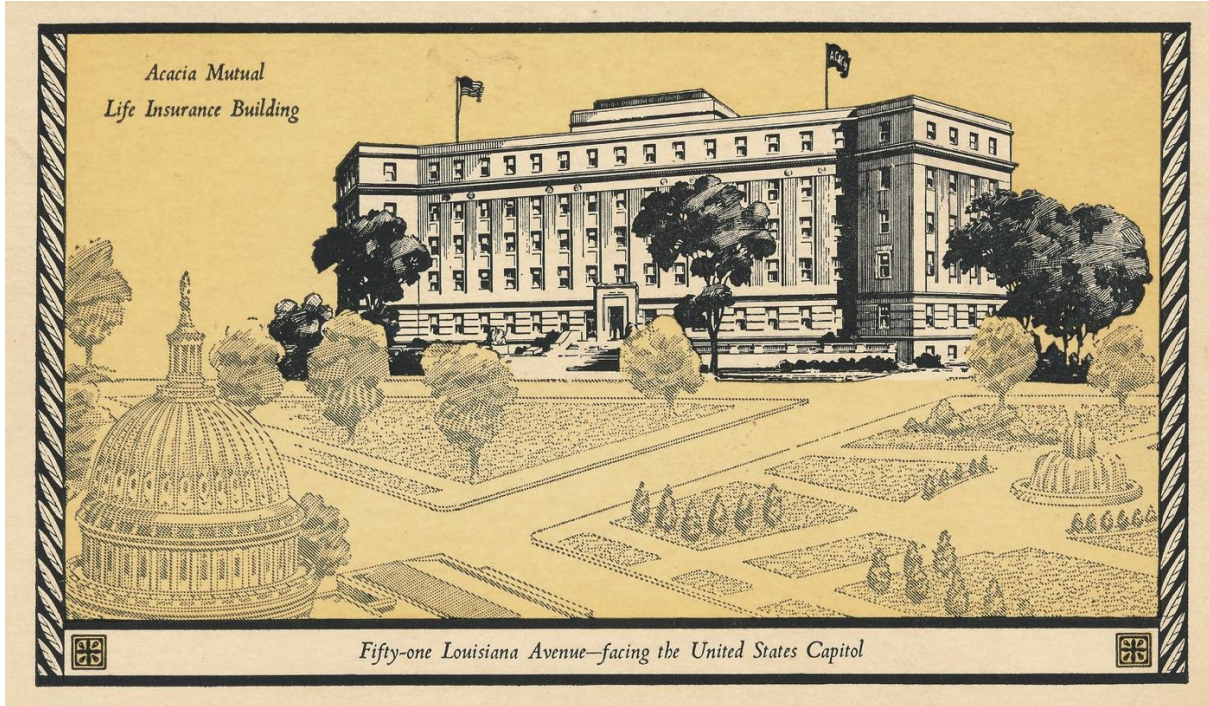


Illustration 12: Circa 1936 postcard showing the new Acacia Building facing the U.S. Capitol.



Illustration 13: Matchbook cover promoting the building's proximity to the U.S. Capitol.