

**Historic Buildings  
in the  
The Midtown Project Area**

**Architectural/Historical Notes  
by  
Robert P. Stockton**

**Charleston, S.C.  
2008**

## **544 King Street Street – The Peoples First National Bank Building**

**T.M.S. 460-08-04-48**

A handsome Neoclassical structure of brick and stone, the building was constructed in 1927 for The Peoples First National Bank of Charleston, and designed by the important architectural firm of Simons & Lapham of Charleston.<sup>2</sup> Over several decades, the building has undergone modernizing changes such as suspended ceilings, new floor systems, partitions and additions, and a drive-through teller system. In spite of these changes the building's original architectural features are mostly intact and can be restored. Regent Charleston, LLC desire to retain and restore the original historic elements of the building and remove those, such as the drive-through teller system, which are non-historic.

Crucial issue: Over time, additions were made to the rear of the bank building (Figures 10, 11, 12). Most of that construction was subsequently removed (Figure 13). There remains, however, an unattractive warren of partitions, additions and cosmetic overlay on the rear of the building. An examination of that area indicates that within this accretion and nearly masked by it, is the original rear extension of the building, which was depicted on the Sanborn insurance map of 1929 (Figure 10). Project engineer Russell Rosen has concluded that the extension originally contained a boiler room, which theory is supported by the presence of a handsome chimney at the juncture of the extension and the main part of the building. Although the 1927 extension has lost its original roof, the exterior walls appear to be intact.

Recommendation: The accreted non-historic partitions, additions and overlay should be removed from the 1927 extension, and the historic walls and chimney retained for further use.

**ROSEN**  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

AND

**ASSOCIATES,  
INC.**

- CIVIL/STRUCTURAL DESIGN
- CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT/INSPECTION
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January 9, 2008

Architecture and Preservation Division  
City of Charleston  
75 Calhoun Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Charleston, SC 29401

Attn: Mr. Eddie Bello, AIA  
Urban Design and Preservation Architect

In re: Midtown Development  
544 King Street; TMS #460-08-04-048  
Partial Demolition Application

Gentlemen,

Reference is made to the packet of Sanborn Maps prepared and submitted under a separate cover, Sanborn Maps - Midtown Development.

This evolution of this property is shown therein.

In recent time, this was the Bank of America Building.

Demolition is requested for the modern alterations at the (boiler room) addition and the drive through facility.

Rear Portion

Although the Sanborn maps indicate structures there from possibly 1929 and 1944, the (rear) structure appears to date from the late twenties. It was probably built as a boiler room. There have been several alterations and additions in this area; most recently an employee break room. Alterations include brick columns at the rear, stucco at the rear, and concrete block enclosure.

Drive Through

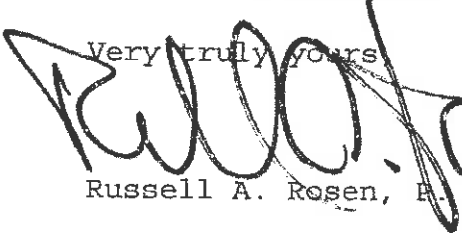
I am unsure of the date of the drive through and canopy. However, it is certain that this is relatively recent construction.

In conclusion, these portions of 544 King are not historically significant.

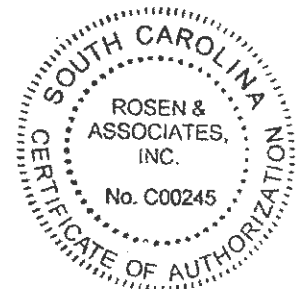
The primary reason for the requested demolition is to incorporate the more significant core (bank) building into the planned development.

Should you have any questions, please call.

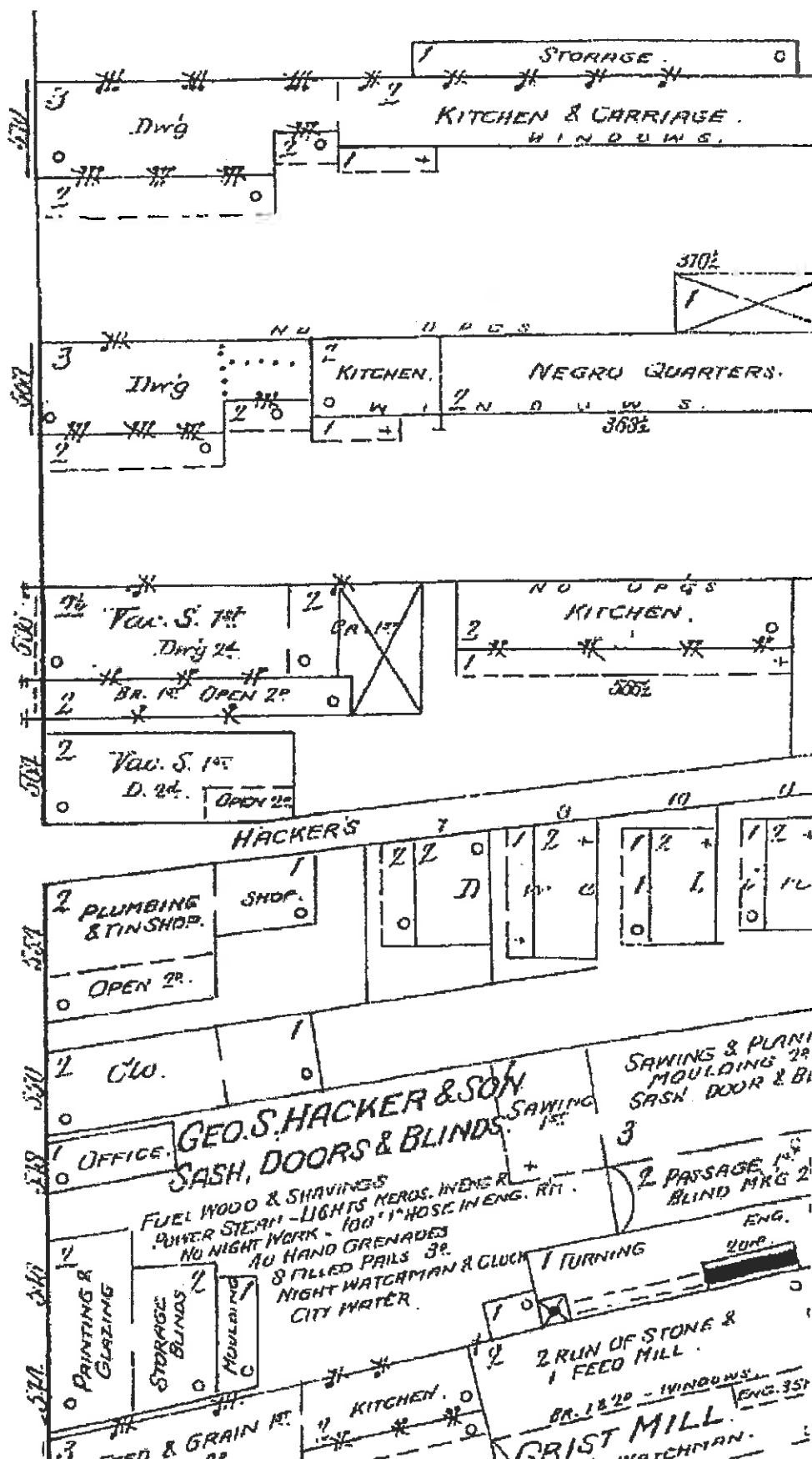
Very truly yours,

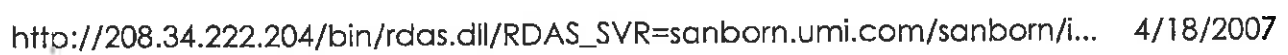
  
Russell A. Rosen, P. E.

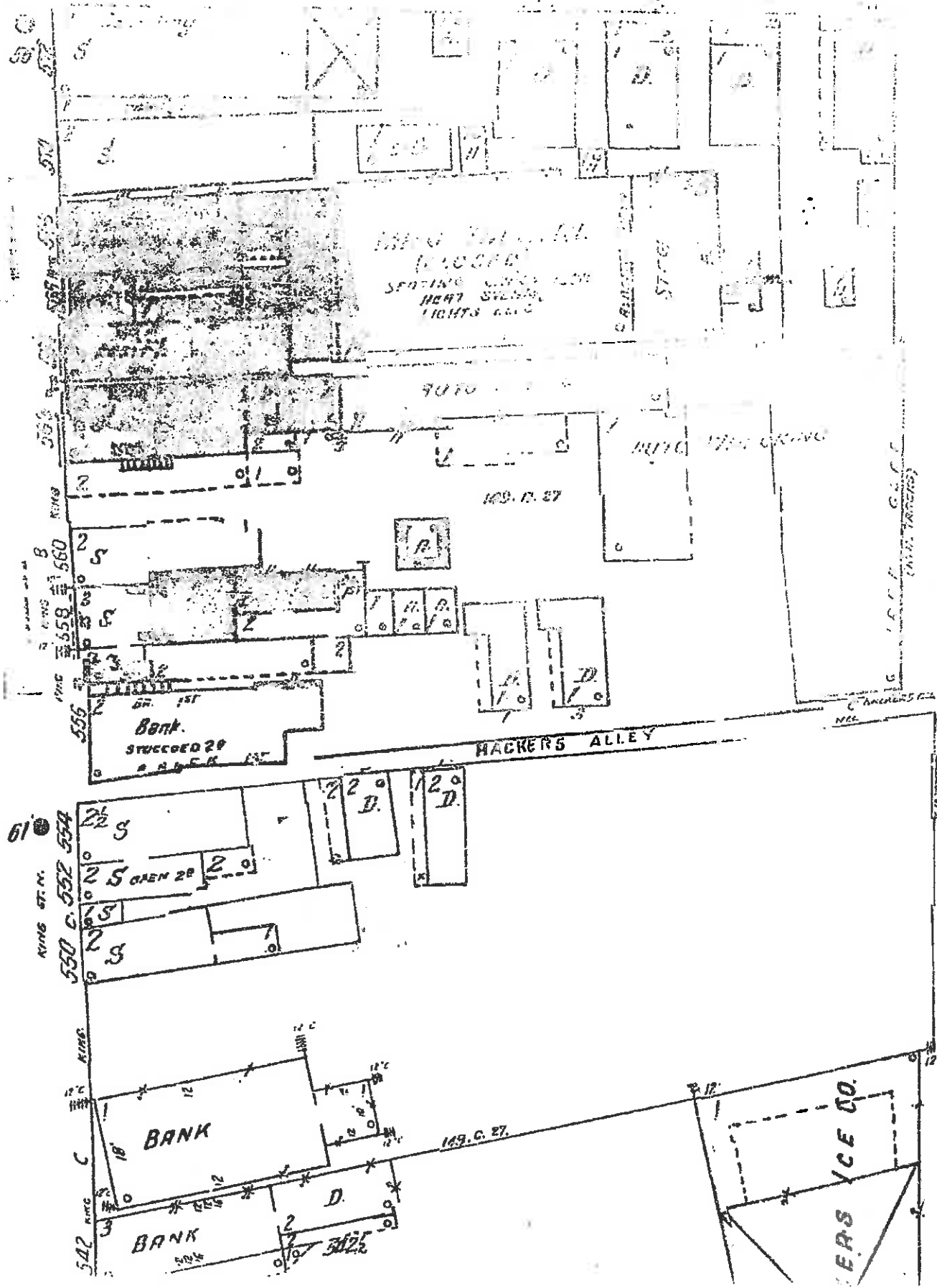
RAR/mad

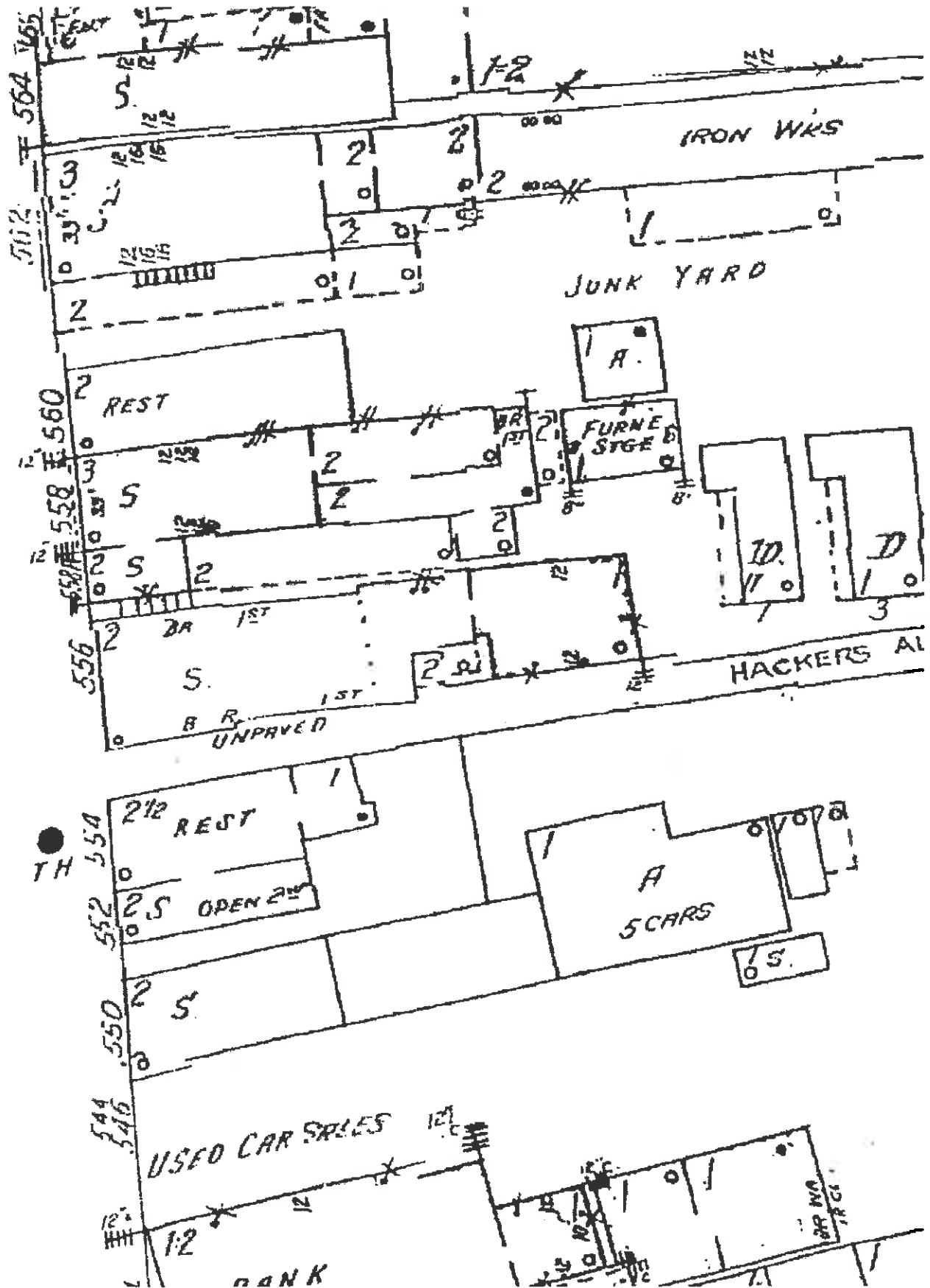


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Pg. 27, 1955

Page 1 of 1

