CITY COUNCIL
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

02-O-0181

AN ORDINANCE
BY: ZONING COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING, LOCATED AT 384 PEACHTREE STREET, NW, LAND LOT 50 OF THE 14TH DISTRICT OF FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA AND CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY ON WHICH IT IS LOCATED, TO THE OVERLAY ZONING DESIGNATION OF LANDMARK BUILDING OR SITE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 20 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA AND REZONING FROM SPI-1 (CENTRAL CORE) TO SPI-1/LBS (CENTRAL CORE/LANDMARK BUILDING OR SITE); TO REPEAL CONFLICTING LAWS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

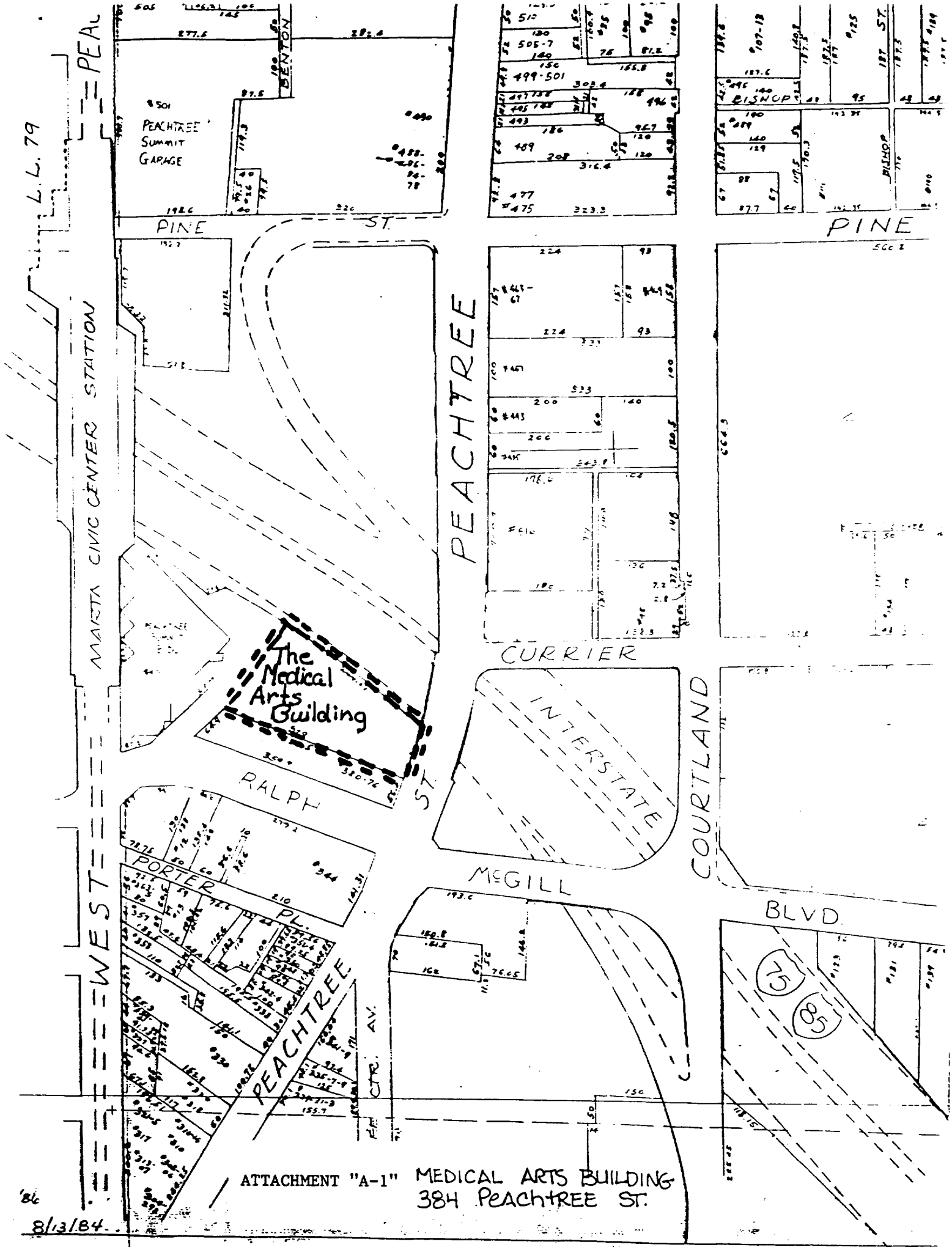
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, as follows:

SECTION 1. That the property known as the Medical Arts Building, located at 384 Peachtree Street, NW, Land Lot 50 of the 14th District of Fulton County, Georgia, and more fully described as Attachment "A-1" to this ordinance, which attachment is incorporated herein, met the criteria for Landmark Building or Site as set forth in the Nomination Resolution of the Urban Design Commission attached hereto as Attachment "B" and incorporated herein, and is hereby determined to be a Landmark Building or Site pursuant to Chapter 20 of the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, as amended.

SECTION 2. That the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, as amended, is hereby further amended by designating said property described in Attachment "A-1" to the overlay zoning category "Landmark Building or Site" pursuant to Section 16-20.006 of the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, as amended such that all parts of the site described by the metes and bounds description in Attachment "A-2" and any structures located thereon are so designated.

SECTION 3. That the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, as amended, is hereby further amended so as to provide that the subject property bears, in addition to its SPI-1 zoning classification, the overlay designation "Landmark Building or Site," which designation shall be officially abbreviated as "LBS" and shall immediately follow the abbreviation for the existing zoning classification. Said property is subject to all zoning regulations contained in Chapter 20 of the 1982 Zoning Ordinance, as amended, as well as any other applicable laws and regulations.

SECTION 4. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are repealed.



ATTACHMENT "A-1" MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING
384 PEACHTREE ST.

384 PEACHTREE STREET, NW

All that tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 50 of the 14th District of Fulton County, Georgia and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the point of intersection of the southwest line of the right of way of Interstate Highway Nos. 75 and 85 (also known as the Downtown Connector) and the northwest right of way line of Peachtree Street; thence south 15 degrees 54 minutes 30 seconds west along the northwest right of way line of Peachtree Street a distance of 96.37 feet to the corner of a building; thence north 74 degrees 37 minutes west a distance of 322.74 feet to an iron pin on the southeast right of way line of Alexander Street; thence north 43 degrees 23 minutes 30 seconds east along the southeast right of way line of Alexander Street a distance of 191.92 feet to an "X" placed in concrete; thence south 57 degrees 14 minutes 30 seconds east along the southwest right of way line of the Downtown Connector a distance of 244.67 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 0.88666 acres and being fully shown on a plat of survey for Peter E. Blum by Watts & Browning Engineers, dated August 15, 1973.

ATLANTA
URBAN DESIGN
COMMISSION

ATLANTA CITY HALL
55 TRINITY AVENUE, SW
SUITE 3400
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30335-0331
(404) 330-6200

N-01-03

RESOLUTION

Whereas, the Executive Director of the Atlanta Urban Design Commission initiated the nomination process by mailing the appropriate Notice of Intent to Nominate to the property owners of the MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING pursuant to Subsection (b) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, Section 16-20.005 Nominations; and

Whereas, the Executive Director has caused to be conducted extensive research regarding this proposed nomination and has compiled a written report stating the findings and recommendations regarding the historic, architectural and cultural significance of said nomination pursuant to Subsection (d) of said code section, which report, Exhibit "A", is attached to this resolution and is hereby incorporated by this reference; and

Whereas, a public hearing was held by this Commission to consider said nomination after appropriate public notice was provided as required by Subsection (e) of said code section; and

Whereas, this Commission has reviewed and considered said designation report as well as all other testimony, documentation and other evidence presented to it, including the testimony of all interested members of the public and property owners pursuant to Subsection (e) of said code section; and

Now, therefore be it resolved by the Urban Design Commission of the City of Atlanta as follows:

Section 1. That the designation report prepared by the Executive Director of the Urban Design Commission is hereby adopted by this Commission and shall constitute the Findings of Fact upon which this nomination is based.

Section 2. That the Commission hereby determines that the Medical Arts Building, a map of which delineating all boundaries, as well as a metes and bounds description, of the property are attached hereto as Exhibit "B" and "C", hereby incorporated by this reference, is architecturally, historically, and culturally significant and is hereby determined to be eligible for designation to the category of Landmark Building or Site (LBS) as meeting at a minimum, the eligibility criteria set forth in Section 16-20.004(b)(1), specifically including subsections b. and c. of this code section. The Medical Arts Building is located at 384 Peachtree St., NW, in Land Lot 50 of the 14th District of Fulton County, Georgia.

Section 3. That the Commission hereby further determines that said Medical Arts Building meets the criteria set forth in Section 16-20.004(b)(2)a., specifically including those criteria in the following groups: Group I (2) (3); Group II (1) (2) (3) (9) (10) (11); and Group III (2) (3).

Section 4. That the Commission having determined that the Medical Arts Building meets or exceeds the criteria set forth herein, hereby nominates the Medical Arts Building to the category of Landmark Building or Site (LBS), pursuant to Section 16-20.005(e)(3).

Section 5. That the Commission hereby directs the Executive Director to transmit this resolution including all supporting documentation to the Chair of the Zoning Committee of the Atlanta City Council, to the Commissioner of the Department of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Conservation, and to notify by first class mail the owners of the Medical Arts Building.

Approved and nominated by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission on January 9, 2002.

Spencer Tunnell, Chair
Atlanta Urban Design Commission

MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING
384 Peachtree Street, NW
Fronting 97' on the west side of
Peachtree Street
14th District, Land Lot 50
Fulton County, City of Atlanta
Existing Zoning: SPI 1

N-01-3
Proposed Designation
Landmark Building or Site-
Exterior

Constructed: 1926-1927
Architect: G. Lloyd Preacher

SIGNIFICANCE/ANALYSIS

The Medical Arts Building is closely associated with the growth and development of Atlanta as a major medical center for Georgia and the Southeast United States. Since the 1850s, Atlanta has been a magnet for doctors, patients, and medical facilities. With the establishment of medical and dental schools, hospitals, nursing schools, clinics, and office facilities, the city established its regional predominance in the field, a position it maintains to this day. The economic significance of the medical community has meant a more diversified local economy, which has proven largely recession proof in its medical segment. The large and numerous medical facilities, which have been located in Atlanta since its earliest years, have attracted patients and financial resources from throughout the South. The Medical Arts Building was the first high-rise office building constructed specifically for medical professionals. In fact, it was financed and developed by private doctors, thus strengthening its historical connection with the profession. The construction of the Medical Arts Building north of the central business district also shows the growth of the city along Peachtree Street and the importance of the automobile in directing the flow of urban development during the 1920s. Finally, the building is significant as the work of the major architectural firm of G. Lloyd Preacher.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION IN ATLANTA

The first medical doctor, Joshua Gilbert, arrived in Atlanta in the mid-1840s when the city was still named Marthasville. According to one historian, there were three doctors in the city's elite in 1848 and in 1852, Dr. Thomas Gibbs was elected mayor. Even in this first decade of the little railroad community's existence, these doctors were talking about establishing a medical school. The Atlanta Medical College was incorporated in 1854 and the first commencement was held in September 1855. By 1860, there were 160 students. In December 1857, the state legislature granted the college $15, 000 to defray the cost of the college building as well as a library and museum. In addition, this legislative act provided that one student from each of the state's congressional districts would be able to attend the college free. Thomas Martin states in his 1902 Atlanta and Its Builders that the best area physicians began to cluster in Atlanta and to build

a reputation beyond the locality. As a railroad center which made for easy access and due to a reputation for a healthy climate immune to the extremes of heat and cold found in most other parts of the United States, Atlanta attracted patients from an ever widening geographical sphere of influence during the 1800s.

These early doctors, however, did much more. They created one of the nation's first professional organizations, the Atlanta Medical Association. This group established a fee schedule for medical services and published a code of ethics as it ". . . actively sought to standardize and uplift their organization." The doctors involved also published the Atlanta Medical and Surgical Journal and pushed the city council to hire a city physician to serve the indigent. By 1860 nine doctors were considered to be among the small city's leading citizens.

During the Civil War, Atlanta served as a medical center, and prior to its capture in 1864, many doctors gained a great deal of practical experience treating the wounded and sick. After the war, the Atlanta Medical College re-opened and even more physicians set up practice in the city. By 1870 the Fulton County Medical Society and the Atlanta Academy of Medicine had been created. These were followed in 1885 by the Atlanta Society of Medicine. In 1879 a new school, the Southern Medical College, was established and actively competed with the older Atlanta Medical College for staff and students. Along with the Ladies Hospital Association, this new college set up its own hospital in 1882 and its own dental school in 1887. In the 1890s, the Atlanta Dental School was established, thus giving the city two such schools. The last significant medical school established in Atlanta in the nineteenth century was the 1883 Georgia College of Eclectic Medicine and Surgery (having previously operated in Forsyth and Macon, Georgia since 1839), which graduated the city's first woman, Rosa Freudenthal.

The Southern Medical College and the Atlanta Medical College merged in 1898 to form the Atlanta College of Physicians and Surgeons. Thomas Martin stated that this merger made Atlanta ". . . the center and seat of medical science in the Southern states." Soon, degrees were being awarded to students from as far away as Mexico and Massachusetts. Many of these future physicians obtained valuable experience by working in school clinics set up to serve the patients of nearby Grady Hospital. As Martin somewhat callously stated, "Eleven railroads centering here, and the numerous manufacturing establishment in and about the city furnish a constant and ample supply of surgical cases."

Meanwhile, Atlanta was becoming a major center for schools and colleges for African-Americans. Virtually all the Georgia schools begun for African-Americans during these early years were centered in Atlanta and a large proportion of the students came from the city. Spelman Seminary (later college) trained nurses and two of Morris Brown's 1898 graduates (the first time four year degrees were granted by that institution) went on to graduate school and received medical

degrees. Dr. William Lane returned to Atlanta and practiced medicine locally. By 1930 the African-American Mercy Hospital had been certified by the State Board of Examiners of Nurses to rain and graduate nurses. Eventually, the prestigious Morehouse School of Medicine would grow out of these early educational institutions.

Hospitals proliferated quickly between 1880 and 1890. The first was St. Joseph's Infirmary in 1881, the Home for the Incurables, the United States Station Hospital, Florence Crittenton Home, the Elkin-Hooper Sanitarium, and Grady Memorial Hospital (1891), with the separate buildings for whites and blacks and a pediatric building (1896). In the early twentieth century, large general hospitals like Georgia Baptist, Piedmont, Wesley Memorial, Crawford Long, and Emory University Hospital (a successor to the Atlanta College of Physicians and Surgeons) would be built.

Specialty hospitals and clinics were also significant in establishing Atlanta as a regional medical center. These included the only Pasteur Institute in the South for the treatment of rabies, the Atlanta Tuberculosis Association Clinic, Egleston Hospital for Children, Scottish Rite Hospital for crippled children, and the Steiner Cancer Clinic among others. In 1930 there were 690 physicians in the city with 500 of those in private practice, and 900 registered nurses. Perhaps more interesting, there were 174 specialists or those who "limited" their practice to a specific field, with 25% to 50% of their patients coming from outside Atlanta. This proliferation of medical personnel, hospitals, clinics, and offices has continued to this day.

PEACHTREE STREET AND THE MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING

This growth in medical services and facilities reflected the growth of Atlanta's population in the early years of this century as well as its physical expansion. By the 1920s, the automobile had changed forever the building patterns in the city. Doctors no longer needed to practice in the central business district because wealthier patients actually preferred easier access to sites along Peachtree Street and others reaching northward. For many years, Peachtree Street had been the home for the very wealthiest Atlantans and the site of the Medical Arts Building has been occupied since 1884 by the large brick mansion of William S. Everett. This Civil War captain purchased the property in 1883 and had his imposing home designed by one of the city's leading architects, G. L. Norrman. Everett had made his fortune in the post-war Atlanta in the wholesale dry goods business, eventually becoming chief partner in the large firm of Everett-Ridley-Ragan. He died tragically in 1904 when he was thrown from his carriage and both the Atlanta Journal and the Atlanta Constitution gave the event major coverage. Journal editors even wrote an editorial on the death of such a prominent man who "no appeal for the city ever found . . . behindhand, and no movement for the general weal was complete without him."

The property on Peachtree, which Everett had bought in 1883 for $7,500, was sold to the Medical Building Company in March 1926 for $121,000. Fulton County Deed Books show that this company issued bonds valued at $625,000 to erect a twelve-story office building with a three-story garage. The Medical Building Company was headed by H. C. Sauls as president and Grady Cole as secretary. The building permit issued in May stated the cost of the new building to be $850,000 and that it was to be steel framed with 12" brick walls.

Both H. C. Sauls and Grady Cole were prominent Atlanta doctors. Clay was a member of the Capital City Club and Sauls was president of the Fulton County Medical Society and a member of the Piedmont Driving Club. Sauls had graduated from the Emory University Medical School and was a professor at the same facility as well as president of the Emory Alumni Association. A diplomat of the American Board of Internal Medicine, he also served as president of the Piedmont Hospital Board of Trustees and board chairman of the new Medical Arts Building, the first Atlanta high-rise devoted solely to the medical profession.

The new building had the advantage of being located outside the increasingly congested central business district. The addition of a parking garage also made it very accessible to wealthy patients who were now living further and further north of the city and had the means to own automobiles. At the same time, the medical skyscraper was located near the rail depots, making it convenient for out of town patients seeking specialized treatment. The growing popularity of the shopping and entertainment district just two or three blocks to the south on Peachtree made the site desirable for those making the long automobile "trek" from Buckhead and beyond. When the building opened in 1927, the Junior League ran a lunchroom on the first floor and other amenities included a pharmacy, barber shop, optician, and a Western Union Telegraph office. Of the many doctors who quickly filled the modern new facility, seventeen were members of the elite Capital City Club. There was also a good representation of those doctors who "limited" their practices to a certain medical specialty.

ARCHITECT/ARCHITECTURE

The commercial development of Atlanta and Peachtree Street in the 1920s has been consistently noted. It was a decade of massive construction activity in Atlanta in almost all its branches. The announcements of new skyscrapers and multi-story buildings in the local newspapers became almost commonplace. Following the construction of the Equitable Building in 1892, skyscrapers were built with great regularity in the old central business district. Some of the most notable were the Hurt, Flatiron, Healey, Candler, and Grant-Prudential Buildings, which jointed Muse's and the former Citizen's and Southern Bank Building (now Nation's Bank/Georgia State University). After a slowdown in construction during World War I and the short economic downturn of the early 1920s, skyscrapers again began to mushroom on Atlanta's skyline. A major addition was made on the Hurt Building and the decade saw the erection of the Bona-Allen, A.T. & T.,

Glenn, and Carnegie Buildings, among many others. The residential character of Peachtree Street north of Ellis Street disappeared as department stores like Davison's (Macy's), Regenstein's, and the J. P. Allen's competed for space with hotels like the Henry Grady and the Winecoff. At the same time, high-rise office buildings were going up in the same area. These included the Rhodes-Haverty, William-Oliver, and W. W. Orr Buildings.

The new Medical Arts Buildings at Peachtree and Forrest Avenue (Ralph MacGill Boulevard) shared many of the basic design characteristics of its contemporaries even through it was unique in being the first such structure built to serve the important local medical community. Steel framed, it had the tripartite features common to this period with a two-story base of limestone, a plain shaft with simple fenestration, and a rather ornate top two stories. The latter featured limestone pilasters separating the same grouping of windows as appear on the shaft, and a heavy, decorative cornice. The outer "skin" of the structure is brick. In the 1960s and 1970s, the ground floor façade was subject to major alterations totaling almost $100,000. The upper floors, however, retain their original design features.

The building is typical of the work of G. Lloyd Preacher and Company, one of the largest and most successful architectural firms in these years. A native of South Carolina, Preacher was a 1904 graduate of Clemson University in mechanical and electrical engineering. He began his career as a draftsman for the Lombard Iron Works in Augusta, Georgia. By 1909 he had opened his own architectural office and, during the next decade, his Augusta buildings included the major Modjeska Theater, several schools and the Masonic Temple (1917). In 1918 he incorporated as G. Lloyd Preacher & Co., Inc., Architects and Engineers.

Perhaps seeing greater potential for a large firm in Atlanta, he moved to the city in 1921. In a few short years, Preacher had forged one of the largest architectural firms ever seen in his adopted city and the South as a whole. His firm was described as a ". . . group of specialists both in architecture and engineering, trained in the best schools of America and Europe . . ." and presided over by Preacher and later his sons. In 1926 he served as "president of the Georgia state board for the examination and registration of architects . . ." and was active in the Capital City Club and Chamber of Commerce.

During the economic prosperity of the 1920s, Preacher and Company designed almost every type of building throughout the South (417 in seven states), including hotels in Asheville, North Carolina, West Palm Beach and St. Petersburg, Florida, and the Fort Sumter Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina. His business ranged as far away as California with the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. In Atlanta, the firm designed the Carnegie Building, Atlanta City Hall, the Roxy Theatre, the Henry Grady, Cecil, Ansley and Dinkler Hotels, many apartments including those at Pershing Point and the St. Andrews, private residences, and forty-five schools for the rapidly expanding city system of those

years. Some of his major works in this field were Bass and O'Keefe High Schools, Joseph E. Brown School and Highland School.

The world economic depression of the 1930s destroyed Preacher and Company. By 1934 the firm had shrunk dramatically in size and had lost its license to practice in several states due to failure to pay the required state fees. Preacher closed his offices later that year and accepted an executive position with the Federal Home Owners Loan Corporation. He served in several government positions until after World War II when he reopened his architectural practice with offices in New York City and Atlanta. The architect did not prosper as before and in 1954, at age 72, he retired, dying in Atlanta in 1972.

CONCLUSION

The Medical Arts Building is highly representative of the importance of the medical profession in Atlanta and the architectural growth of the city in the first decades of this century. Since the 1840s, Atlanta has attracted members of the medical profession, who have taken a leading part in the economic development of the city. Doctors have led the way in promoting the growth and professionalization of their fellows by establishing medical schools, societies, publications, hospitals and clinics. As the city became recognized as a center for medical care in the years following the Civil War, many local physicians became economic and social leaders. In the capacity, Drs. H. C. Sauls and Grady Clay engaged in city building by heading the first business to develop a high-rise building strictly for the use of their professional colleagues. By selecting a site north of the old central business district and with a prestigious Peachtree Street address, they showed their awareness of the growth of Atlanta northward toward Buckhead. By incorporating a three-story garage in their plans, they also acknowledged the emergence of the automobile in the changing urban demographics and transportation systems used by their patients in the 1920s – a pattern which has continued to this day.

Finally, the Medical Arts Building is a fine example of a method of office construction (the skyscraper), which reached a high point in this decade before the Great Depression. Its design is typical of the high-rise buildings of the time and of the work of G. Lloyd Preacher. By locating in Atlanta and developing a clientele over a multi-state region, Preacher helped to make his adopted city a regional capital in the field of architecture. He and his firm are prime examples of the advance of Atlanta businessmen, in many professions, to the forefront of leadership in the economic development of the South.

CRITERIA

Group I: (2) (3)
Group II: (1) (2) (3) (9) (10) (11)
Group III: (2) (3)

FINDINGS

The proposed nomination of the Medical Arts Building meets the above referenced specific criteria as well as the minimum criteria for Landmark Building or Site as set out in Section 16-20.004 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Atlanta.

REFERENCES

Books

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Fulton County Deed Books at the Fulton County Courthouse.

G. Lloyd Preacher Subject File at the Atlanta History Center.

H. C. Sauls Personality File at the Atlanta History Center.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps at the Atlanta History Center.

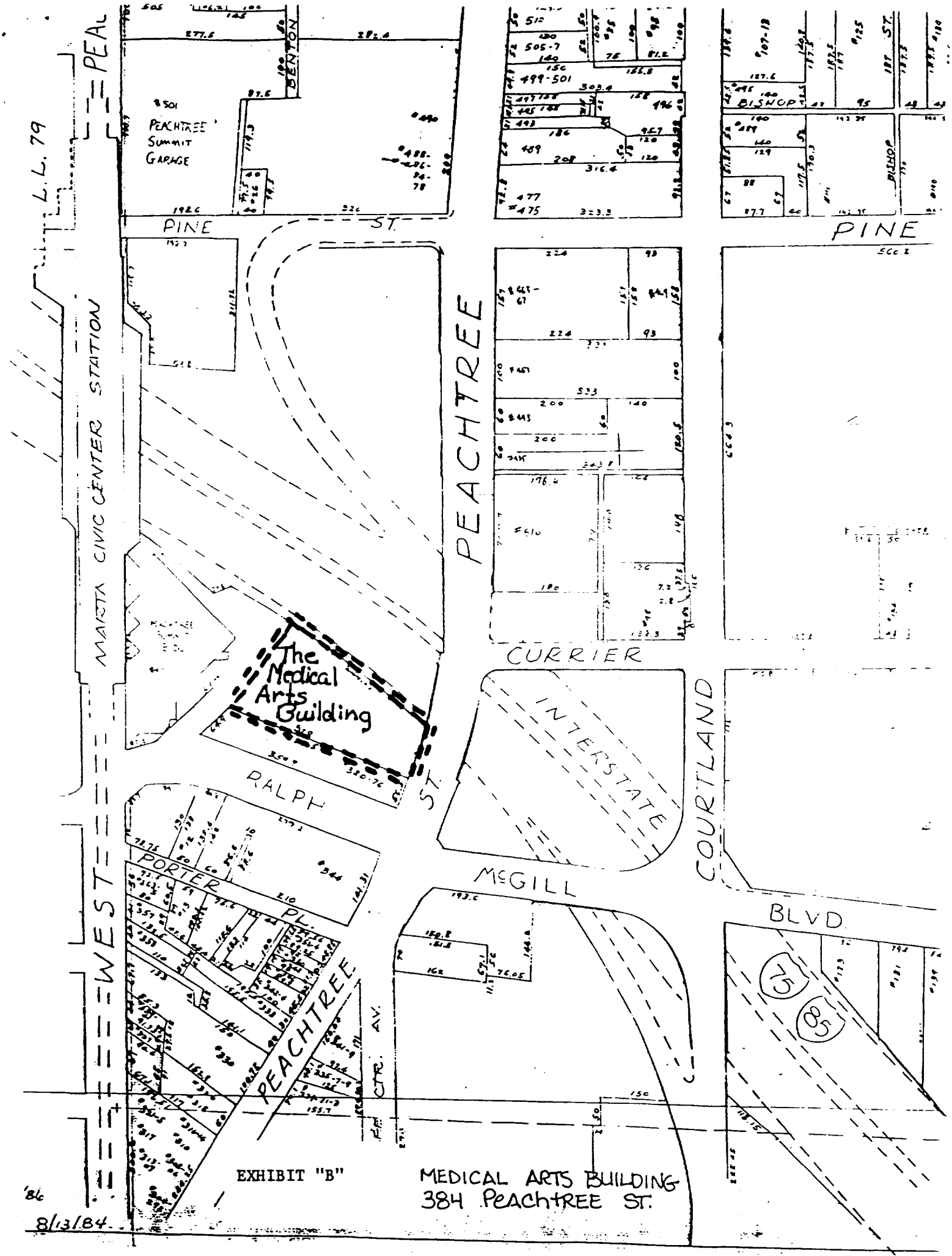

EXHIBIT "B"

MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING
384 PEACHTREE ST.

'86
8/13/84

384 PEACHTREE STREET, NW

All that tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 50 of the 14th District of Fulton County, Georgia and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the point of intersection of the southwest line of the right of way of Interstate Highway Nos. 75 and 85 (also known as the Downtown Connector) and the northwest right of way line of Peachtree Street; thence south 15 degrees 54 minutes 30 seconds west along the northwest right of way line of Peachtree Street a distance of 96.37 feet to the corner of a building; thence north 74 degrees 37 minutes west a distance of 322.74 feet to an iron pin on the southeast right of way line of Alexander Street; thence north 43 degrees 23 minutes 30 seconds east along the southeast right of way line of Alexander Street a distance of 191.92 feet to an "X" placed in concrete; thence south 57 degrees 14 minutes 30 seconds east along the southwest right of way line of the Downtown Connector a distance of 244.67 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 0.88666 acres and being fully shown on a plat of survey for Peter E. Blum by Watts & Browning Engineers, dated August 15, 1973.

EXHIBIT "C"