

**PRELIMINARY STAFF REPORT**

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**To:** City Planning Commission

**Prepared by:** Stephen Kroll  
and Leslie Alley

**Design Review:** 150/14

**Date:** December 2, 2014

**Applicant:** South Market District B1, LLC

**Request:** This is a request to permit the demolition of one (1) two-story, stuccoed, brick masonry structure located in the Central Business District, as required by Section 26-2 of the Code of the City of New Orleans.

**Zoning:** CBD-5 Central Business District

**Location:** Square 274, Lot 3 or 4 or 22, in the First Municipal District, bounded by South Rampart, Girod, and Julia Streets and O’Keefe Avenue. The municipal address is 730 South Rampart Street. (PD 1A)

**Proposal:** The subject site is a single lot fronting on South Rampart Street between Girod and Julia Streets in the Central Business District. The lot has a width of 25’-3”, a depth of 95’-3”, and an area of approximately 2,405 square feet. The site is developed with a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century two-story, masonry structure that was historically used for commercial purposes. The structure has most recently been used for television broadcasts by WDSU, which called the structure the “Dat Shack”. The structure occupies the front portion of the lot and features a balcony which extends over the adjacent South Rampart Street sidewalk. To its rear is a recently-constructed covered, unenclosed deck, which occupies most of the remainder of the lot.

The site is located on Square 274, which is currently planned for re-developed with two mixed-use buildings as part of the larger South Market District development. This portion of the development is named the Beacon. The Beacon’s first phase includes the portion of the square nearest Girod Street, which is to be developed with a 171,892 square foot mixed-use building providing first floor commercial space and upper floor residential units. The subject structure at 730 South Rampart Street is located adjacent to the footprint of this Phase 1 building. However, a portion of the subject structure’s foundation encroaches onto the Phase 1 property. That encroachment will severely affect the construction of the Phase 1 building<sup>1</sup>, according to the applicant.

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<sup>1</sup> This construction is permitted under building permit #14-17089-NEWC.

The subject structure is primarily within the footprint of the Beacon's planned second phase. According to the applicant, this second building is currently in pre-conceptual design. The Phase 2 conceptual package indicates that the subject structure was originally anticipated to be proposed for demolition in conjunction with Phase 2 of the development. However, the applicant must request the structure's demolition now to facilitate the construction of Phase 1, which has recently begun site preparation and foundation work.

### **Surrounding Development and Zoning:**

The subject site is located within the CBD-5 Central Business District, one of a number of fine-grained CBD Central Business Districts covering the portion of the Central Business District surrounding the Loyola Avenue corridor. The CBD-5 District covers a narrow stretch of land just to the river-side of Loyola Avenue. It is bounded by Lafayette Street to the uptown side and the Pontchartrain Expressway to the downtown side. The district varies in width, measuring three blocks in width at its widest point (between Loyola Avenue and Baronne Street) and one block in width (between South Rampart Street and O'Keefe Avenue) at its narrowest point. The district was historically developed with a dense collection of two- and three-story industrial and commercial structures. These structures were gradually demolished over the course of several decades since World War II, as fully developed blocks were eventually replaced by surface parking lots that increased the Central Business District's capacity to accommodate employees and visitors traveling to and from the CBD by car. As a result, for the last few decades, the CBD-5 District has been nearly entirely occupied by expansive surface parking lots. Most of these parking lots lack landscaping on-site and within the public rights-of-way adjacent to them, as well as any fencing, walls, or other improvements that would contribute to the presence of a built edge along their perimeters.

Until recently, these large surface parking lots included not only those lots occupying most of the subject square, but also several of the surrounding squares, including those directly opposite Girod Street and opposite the intersection of Girod and O'Keefe Streets. In the last few years, the applicant has begun developing portions or the wholes of those squares for the sort of dense, mixed-use development envisioned for the area by the City's Master Plan. This development, called South Market District, includes the Beacon development's first phase, which is under construction, and planned second phase as well as the Paramount building, a five-story mixed-use building containing ground-level commercial space and upper-floor residences, which is currently under construction, and the Park, a five-story building with ground-level commercial and upper parking levels, which is currently under construction at the intersection of O'Keefe Avenue and Girod Street. It is envisioned that South Market District will ultimately also include the structures on the adjacent square across South Rampart Street from the subject site, which is now occupied entirely by surface parking lots.

In addition to the South Market District properties, the surrounding blocks include the Energy Center, a late 20<sup>th</sup> Century skyscraper, which is located at the intersection of Lafayette and South Rampart Streets, and a series of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century masonry structures lining the river-side of O'Keefe Avenue. Included among these is a Rouse's grocery store, which occupies a three-story

masonry structure directly across O’Keefe Street from the site. That structure’s first floor is used for the grocery’s retail purposes, while the upper floors are used for parking and storage. Since its opening in late 2011, the grocery store has generated significant pedestrian traffic on the surrounding streets, as it has attracted residents and employees in the Central Business District throughout daytime and evening hours.

## **I. Analysis**

Section 26-2 of the City Code requires that the City Council consider the recommendation of the City Planning Commission before making a determination to authorize the demolition of a structure located within the Central Business District. The Code further requires that the City Planning Commission recommendation be made as a result of a meeting among the staffs of the City Planning Commission, the Historic District Landmarks Commission, and the Department of Safety and Permits. This meeting was held on December 1, 2014. The recommendation is also based on an evaluation of the architectural, historical, and urban design significance of the structure, the proposed redevelopment plan, the length of time the site would remain undeveloped, and if a parking lot is proposed, an evaluation of the area’s need for additional parking.

### **Architectural and Historical Significance**

The subject structure is not located within a local or national historic district and is not designated as a local or national landmark. The Historic District Landmarks Commission therefore has no information as to its date of construction or other details as to its significance. It is a two-story building and appears to have been built for and occupied by pedestrian-oriented commercial businesses. The structure’s first floor façade features a doorway and a garage door, which may have replaced earlier storefront windows. The second floor façade features a pair of shuttered windows. The rear of the site features a detached covered, unenclosed structure of recent construction that the representative of the Department of Safety and Permits indicates was constructed without proper permits.

### **Urban Design Significance**

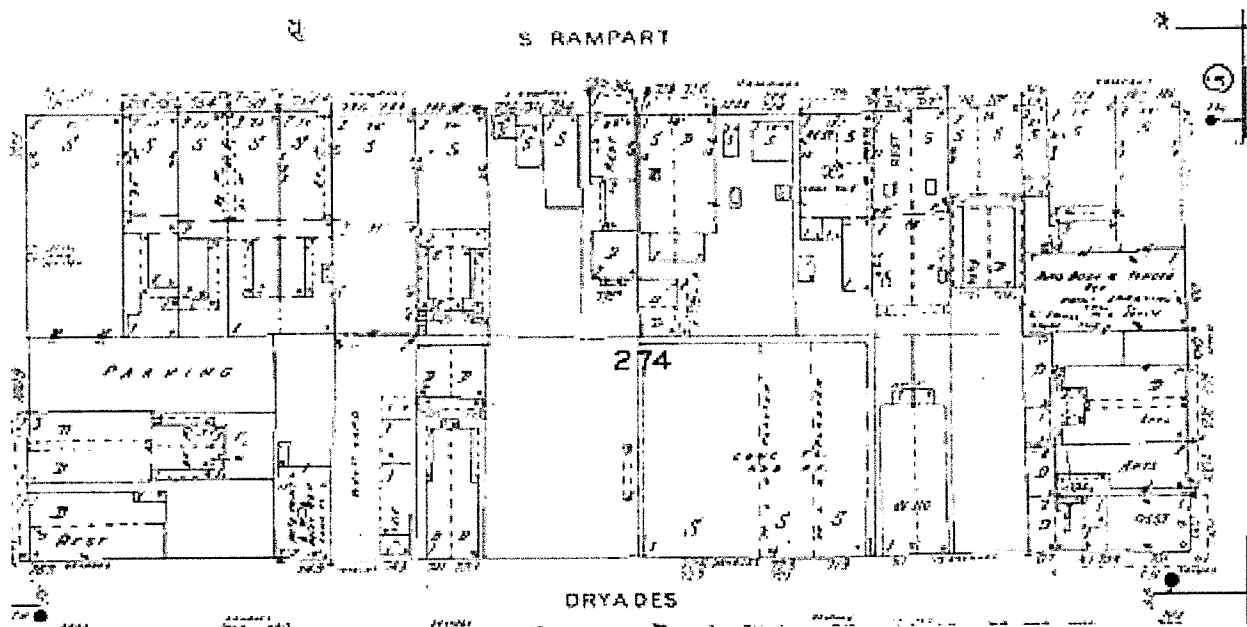
The staffs of the three agencies agree that the subject structure as it currently stands has little remaining architectural or historical significance. However, the subject structure does have urban design significance as it is one of very few remaining examples of the 19<sup>th</sup> century structures that historically defined this portion of the Central Business District.

### **Comments from the HDLC Staff**

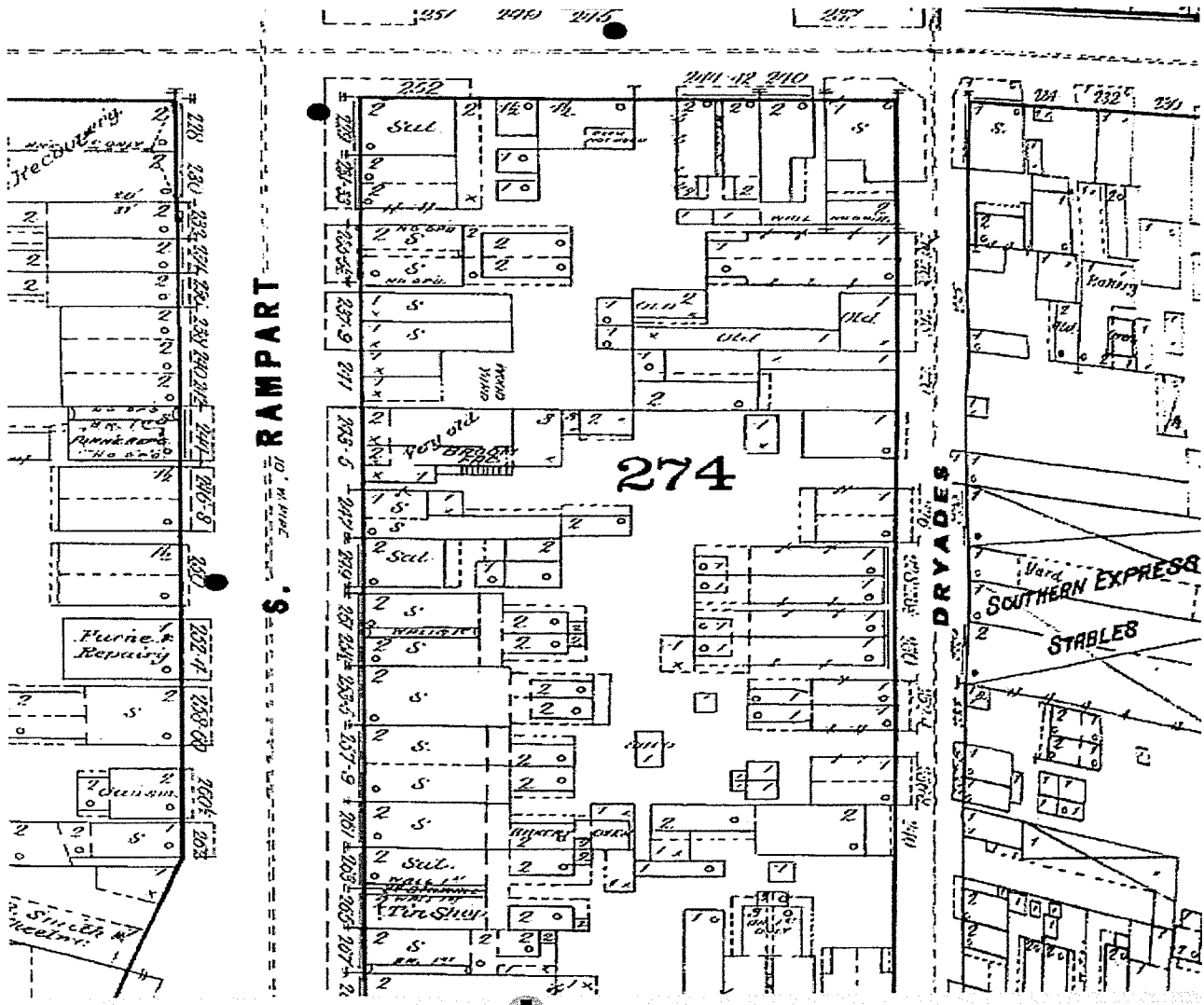
730 S. Rampart Street is a two bay, two-story, stuccoed, brick masonry, Classical Style building likely constructed during the 1860’s. This building is the last remaining historic structure on the square. The building has been altered, with the addition of a window opening at the ground floor and an inappropriate gallery. South Rampart Street was once a thriving residential and commercial

corridor well known for its contribution to the development of Jazz. According to local Jazz historian Jack Stewart, “The building and the lot to the right of it are associated with the musical Jiles family. They ran a radio, television, and music store at the site for many years. Drummers Albert Jiles, Sr. (c.1878-c.1922), Albert Jiles, Jr. (1905-1964) and Clay Jiles (c.1880-1927) played with many bands over the years including the Youka Brass Band, Chris Kelly, Lawrence Toca, Kid Howard, the Young Morgan Band, Papa Celestin, Kid Clayton, Wooden Joe Nicholas, the Excelsior Brass Band, Onward Brass Band and the Allen Brass Band.”

As evidenced by the 1951 Sanborn Insurance map, the second half of the twentieth century saw this square, as well as every other nearby square fronting on S. Rampart Street, transformed from a densely developed, intact neighborhood to a sea of unimproved asphalt parking lots dotted by the occasional solitary building. Very little historic fabric remains on S. Rampart Street. Most of the remaining historic structures exist due to their status as designated landmarks related to New Orleans Jazz legacy. These buildings include 401-403 S. Rampart Street – the Eagle Saloon, 413-15 S. Rampart Street – the Iroquois Theater, 427-31 S. Rampart Street – the Karnofsky Tailor Shop, and 445-49 S. Rampart Street – the Little Gem Saloon.



1951 Sanborn Insurance Map, showing intact streetscape



1885, Vol. 2, Sheet 32A

While this building is significant as it relates to the development of Jazz and the urban history of S. Rampart Street, it is undermined by its position as the last remaining historic building on the square, an artifact devoid of the context necessary to impart meaning. The prevailing zoning for the area is in gross contrast with the relatively diminutive historic structure, a situation that will lead to any and all new development of the square overwhelming the structure should it be preserved. While the staff of the HDLC agrees that the building is significant and should be saved, we cannot recommend its inclusion in a redevelopment plan that will only diminish it.

## Re-development Plan

The petitioned structure is within the footprint of the Beacon development's proposed second phase. This second phase will occupy the remaining portion of the square that is not developed with the Beacon's first phase, so that the two phases together cover the entire square. The proposed Phase 2 footprint includes not only the site of the subject property, but also another structure at the 1011 Julia Street, which is at the intersection of Julia and South Rampart Streets. The remainder of the proposed Phase 2 footprint is currently developed with a series of surface parking lots.

The Phase 2 development is currently in a pre-conceptual design stage. A conceptual package dated April, 2013 indicates that the Phase 2 building could have a 6-story low rise component along the central portion of the square and a 15-story high rise component along Julia Street. That conceptual package calls for ground-floor retail units, 250 upper-floor residential units, and 677 off-street parking spaces. As the proposal is in an early stage, the Phase 2 development proposal is subject to change and this description may not accurately described the ultimate development proposal. The applicant's representative estimates that construction on Phase 2 could begin in 2016; however, this also is subject to change.

While the Phase 2 development is still in the early pre-design stage and highly subject to change, the April, 2013 conceptual package indicates that the development is intended to redevelop the site in a manner consistent with the mixed-use development objectives expressed in the City's Master Plan, which is called the "Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The surface parking lots that occupy the square will be replaced with a mix of residential and commercial uses that will generate activity throughout daytime and evening hours, creating the vibrant mixed-use environment envisioned by Master Plan. Although the development plan calls for the demolition of the subject structure, which is not individually significant but does reflect the historic development character of the area, the loss of this structure is in the staff's view off-set by the improvement of the larger development site through the construction of the Phase 2 development.

### Consistency with the *Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

The structure's demolition is intended to allow for the construction of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Beacon development. The proposed demolition and associated site re-development is **consistent** with the *Plan for the 21st Century*, commonly known as the Master Plan. "Chapter 14: Land Use Plan" of the Master Plan designates the future land use of the petitioned site as "Mixed-Use Downtown." The goal, range of uses, and development character for that designation are copied below:

#### **MIXED-USE DOWNTOWN**

**Goal:** Support and encourage a vibrant, 24-hour live-work-play environment in the Central Business District, and provide areas to support a high density office corridor.

**Range of Uses:** High density office, multifamily residential, hotel, government, institutional, entertainment and retail uses. No new heavy or light industrial uses allowed.

**Development Character:** The scale of new development will vary depending on location within the CBD and will be determined by appropriate height and massing, particularly near historic districts.

As the Beacon development is to contain a mix of residential and retail units, the development would promote the Mixed-Use Downtown's goal of creating a "live-work-play" environment, which is characterized by residential and commercial uses, among other types of uses. The proposed demolition is intended to allow for this proposed development and therefore should also be considered to be **consistent** with the Mixed-Use Downtown Core Neighborhood designation.

## **Summary**

The applicant proposes to demolish a 19th century, two-story, masonry structure on South Rampart Street between Girod and Julia Streets. The structure, which is now surrounded by surface parking lots, was historically used for commercial purposes and has most recently been used for television broadcasts by WDSU. The entirety of the square, including the structure, a second historic structure at South Rampart and Julia Streets, and the surrounding parking lots, are now proposed for redevelopment with the South Market District's mixed-use Beacon development. The Beacon's first phase has been permitted for development while the second phase is in an early planning stage and is anticipated for construction in 2016.

The applicant requests the demolition of the petitioned structure because although the structure is not within the footprint of the Beacon's first phase, its foundation encroaches into the first phase footprint and therefore interferes with the construction of that phase. The above ground portion of the structure is in the footprint of the Beacon's second phase. To allow for the construction of both phases, the applicant requests the structure's demolition. The staff supports the demolition because it is part of a larger redevelopment effort that is consistent with the Master Plan and will once again provide a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood on this square and the adjoining squares.

## **II. Recommendation**

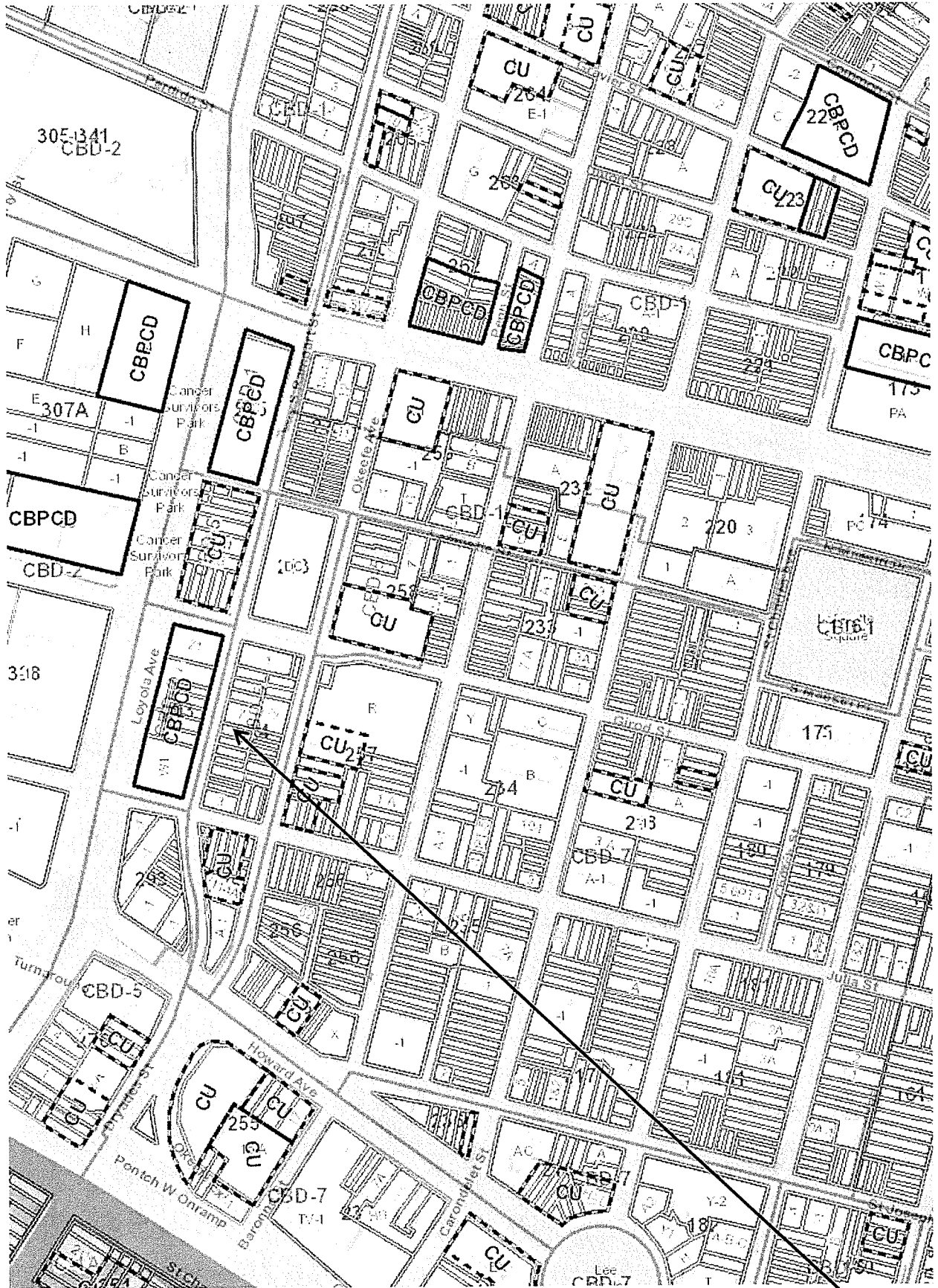
The staff recommends **APPROVAL** of this demolition request.

## **III. Reasons for Recommendation**

1. The structure's demolition is required for the South Market District's Beacon development. The development proposal calls for the square, which is now occupied mostly by surface parking lots, to be redeveloped with two structures providing a mix of commercial and residential units, in addition to off-street parking facilities. This development will promote the development goals identified for the site by the City's Master Plan. This viable and important development proposal justifies the demolition of this structure.

2. While this building is significant as it relates to the development of Jazz and the urban history of South Rampart Street, it is undermined by its position as the last remaining historic building on the square, an artifact devoid of the context necessary to impart meaning.





305-341  
CBD-2

307A  
CBPCD

318  
CBPCD  
CBD-2

Loyola Ave  
CBPCD

CBD-5  
CU

Howard Ave  
CU  
CBD-7

Pontch W Onramp  
CBD-7

Oxley Ave  
CBPCD  
CBPCD

CU

CU<sub>2-7</sub>

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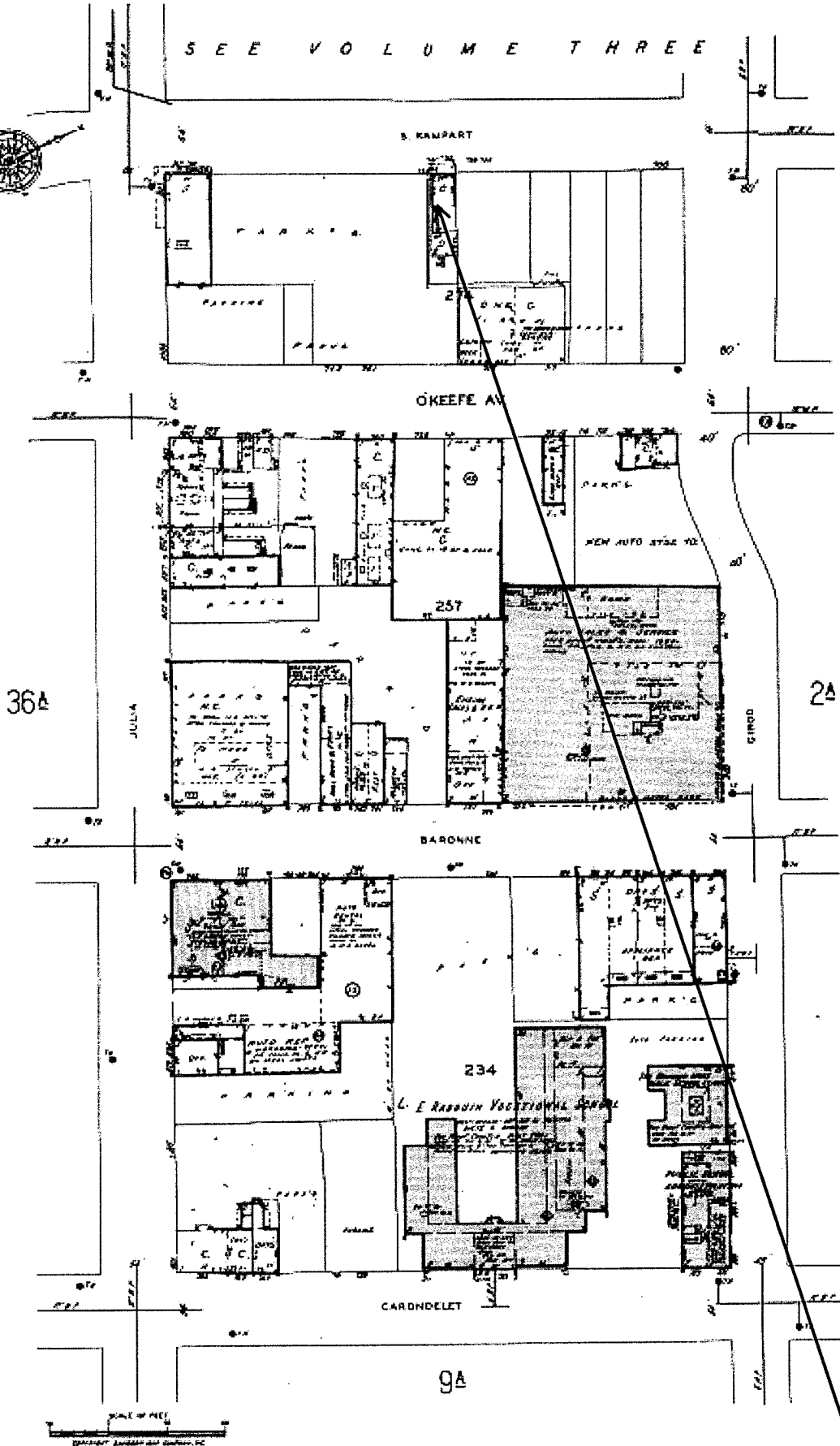
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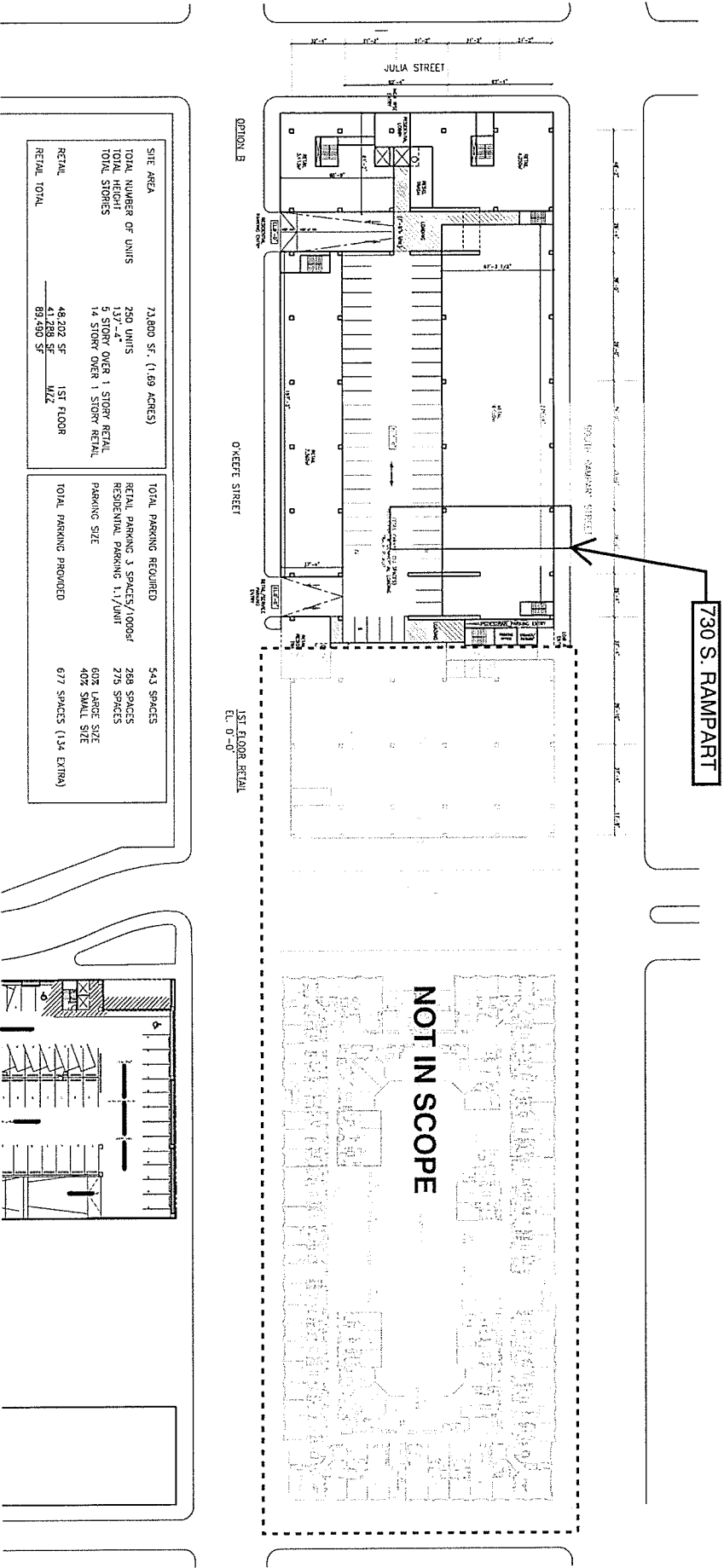
SEE VOLUME THREE

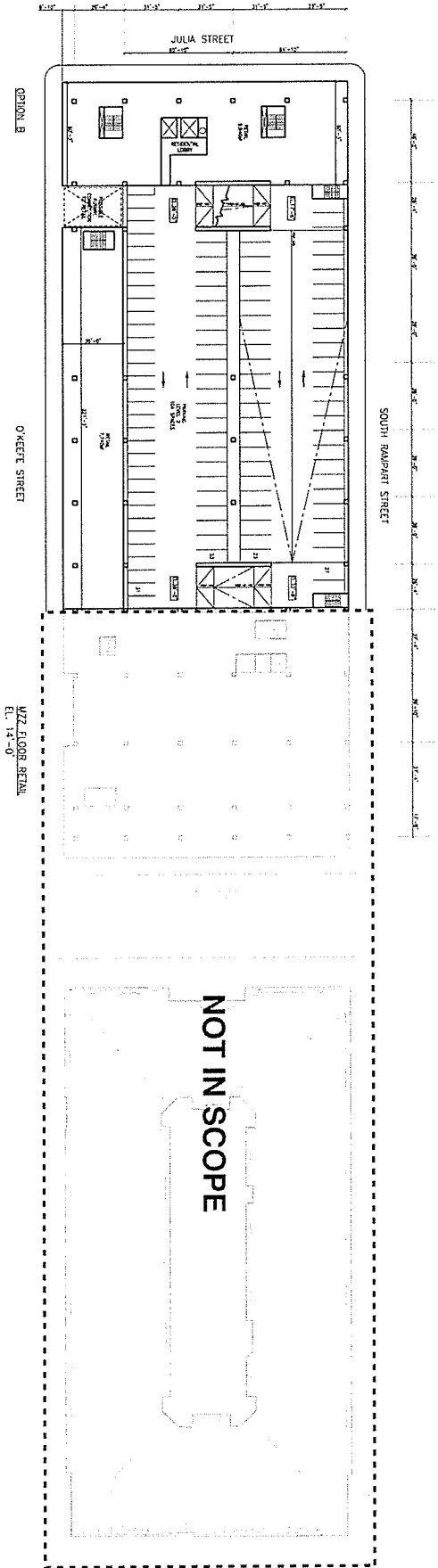




# CONCEPTUAL PACKAGE

MASSING STUDIES - 04.12.2013  
South Market Parcel B  
New Orleans, LA

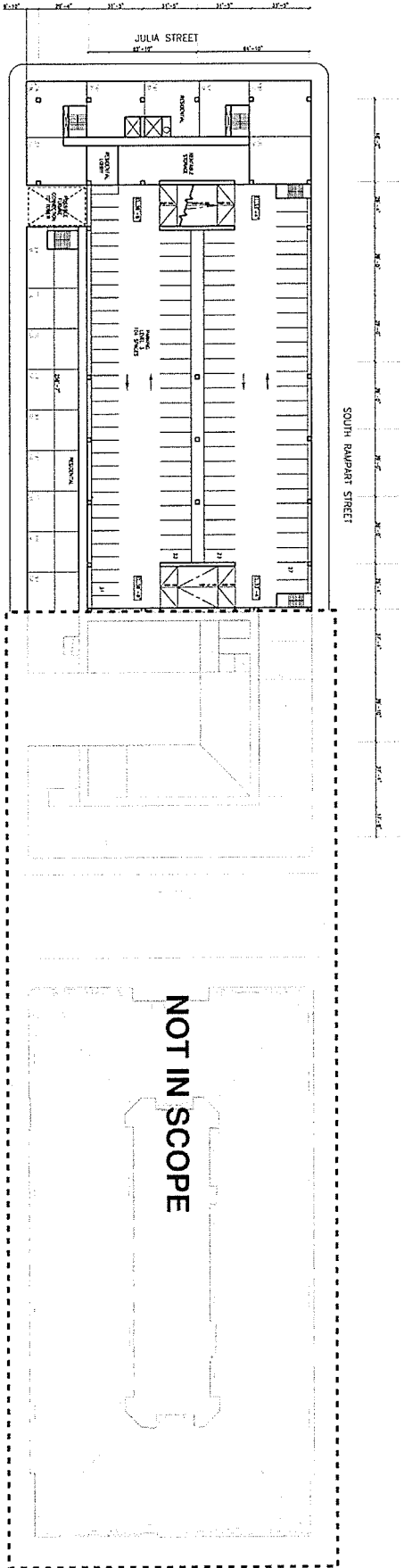




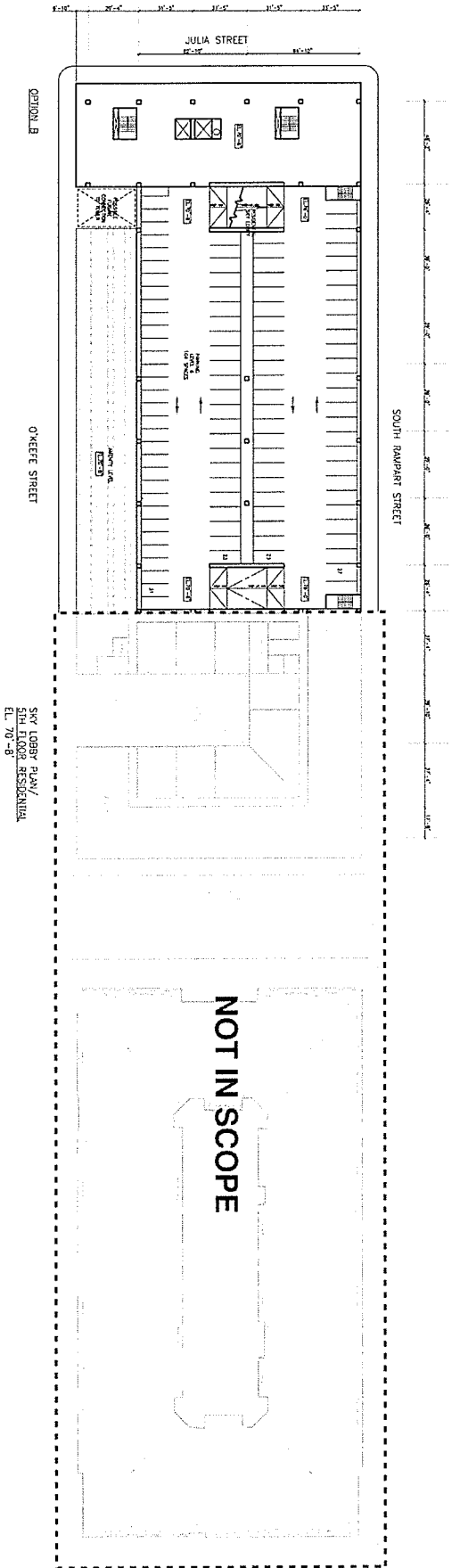
RETAIL MEZZANINE FLOOR PLAN - SCHEME 2

1" = 6'-0"

APRIL 2013

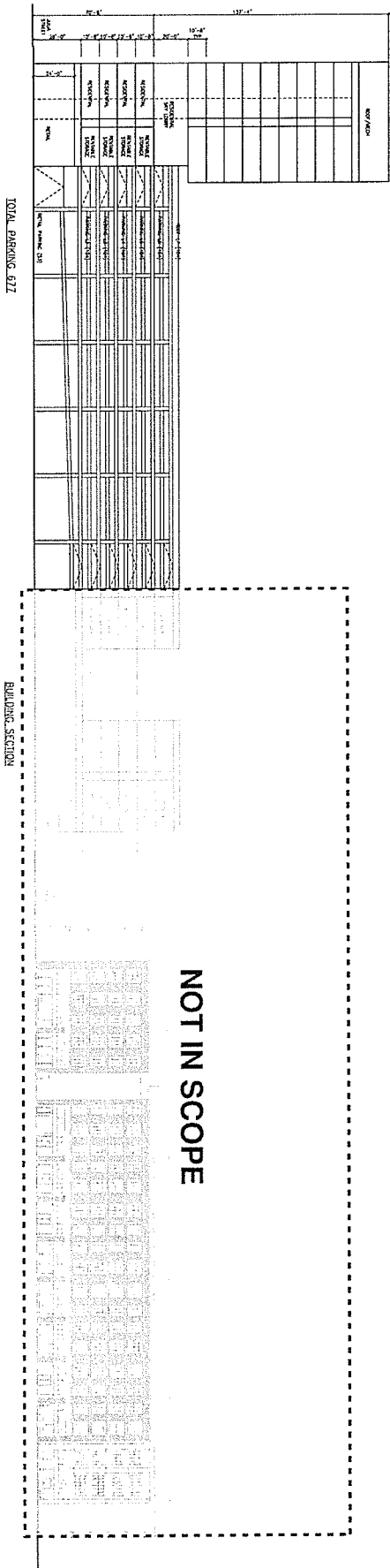


UNIT REGULATIONS (LOFT RISE)					UNIT REGULATIONS (HIGH RISE)				
UNIT TYPE	NET AREA	UNIT COUNT	%	TOTAL AREA	UNIT TYPE	NET AREA	UNIT COUNT	%	TOTAL AREA
1BR 1BA	±700 SF	100	70%	71,760 SF	1BR 1BA	±700 SF	88	54%	42,983 SF
2BR 1BA	±900 SF	15	10%	14,000 SF	2BR 1BA	±900 SF	28	21%	23,399 SF
2BR 2BA	±1100 SF	25	20%	24,000 SF	2BR 2BA	±1100 SF	20	23%	23,287 SF
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109,760 SF</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>96,273 SF</b>
UNITS AVERAGE NET SF				784 SF	UNITS AVERAGE NET SF				873 SF







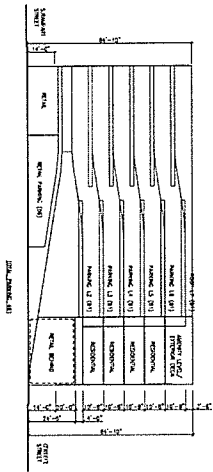
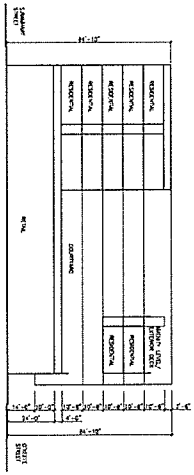


**NOT IN SCOPE**

TOTAL PARKING 627

BUILDING SECTION

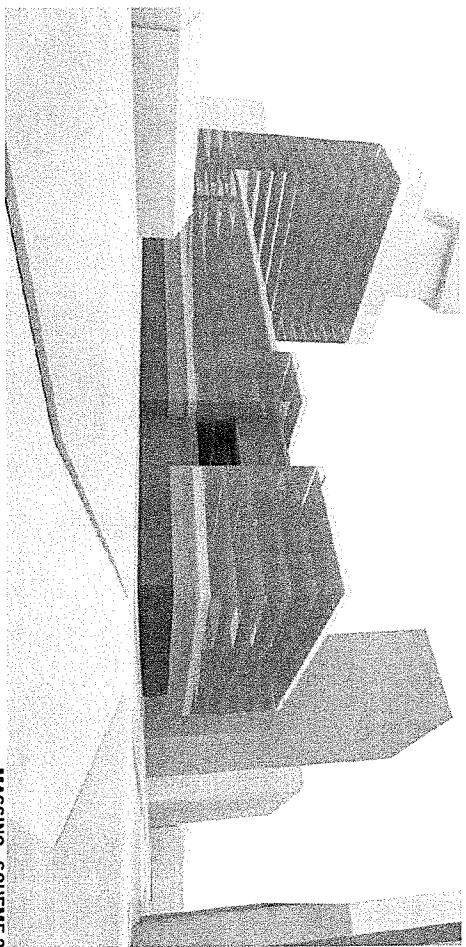
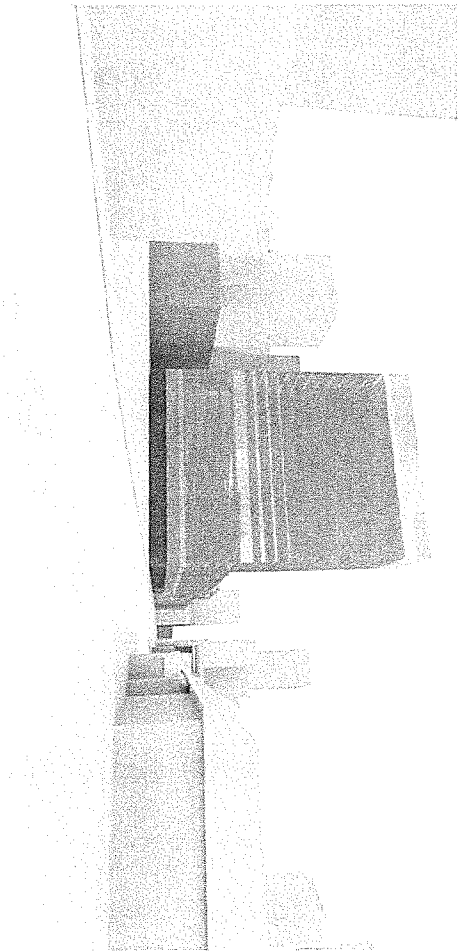
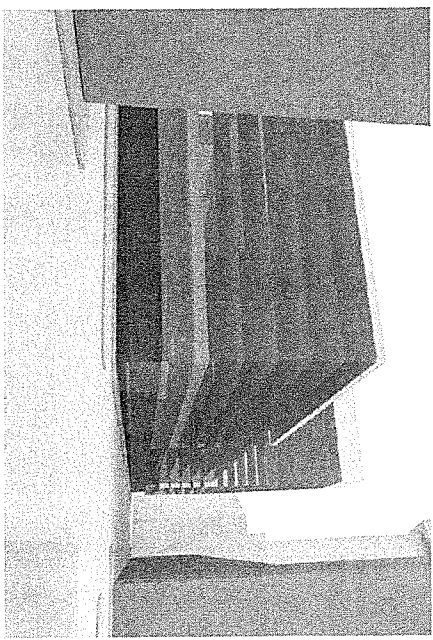
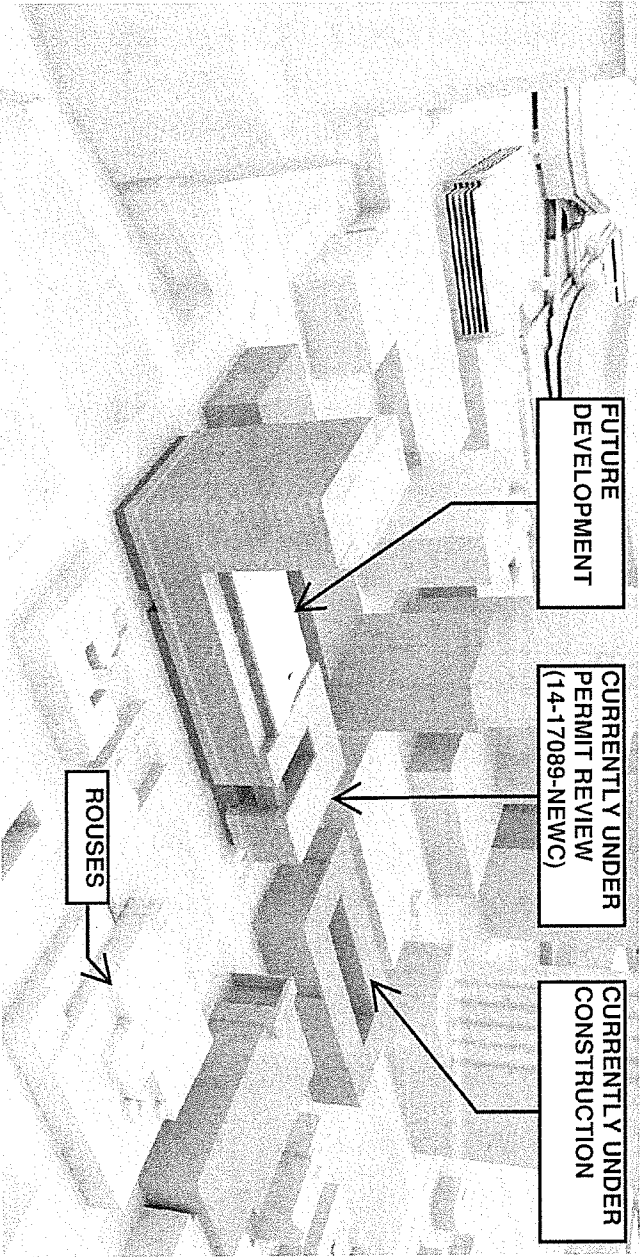
BUILDING SECTION - SCHEME 2  
1" = 64'



**BUILDING SECTION - SCHEME 1 & 2**

1" = 64'

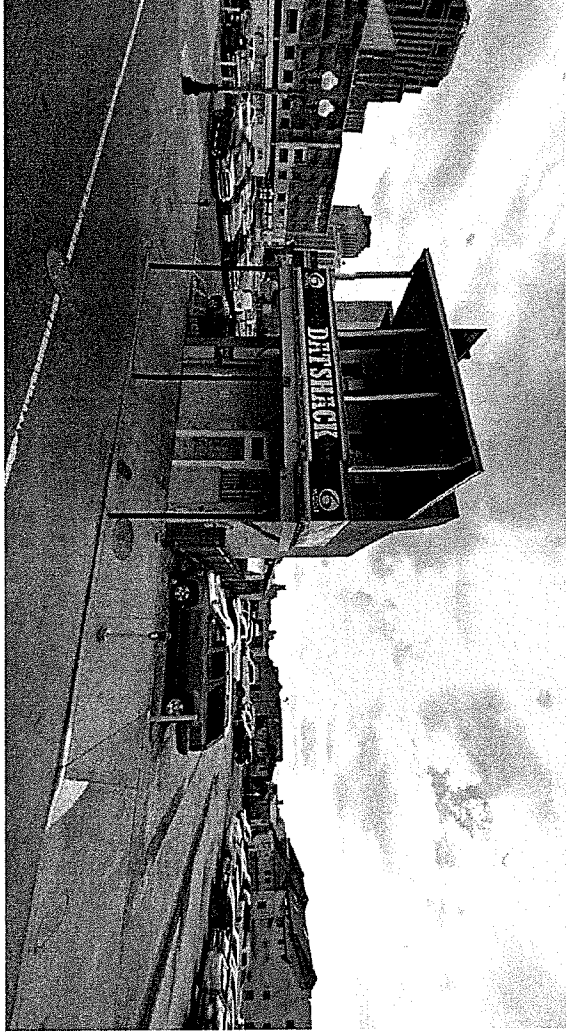
APRIL 2013



MASSING - SCHEME 2



Colorado Fair stadium - view from 730 S. Rampart

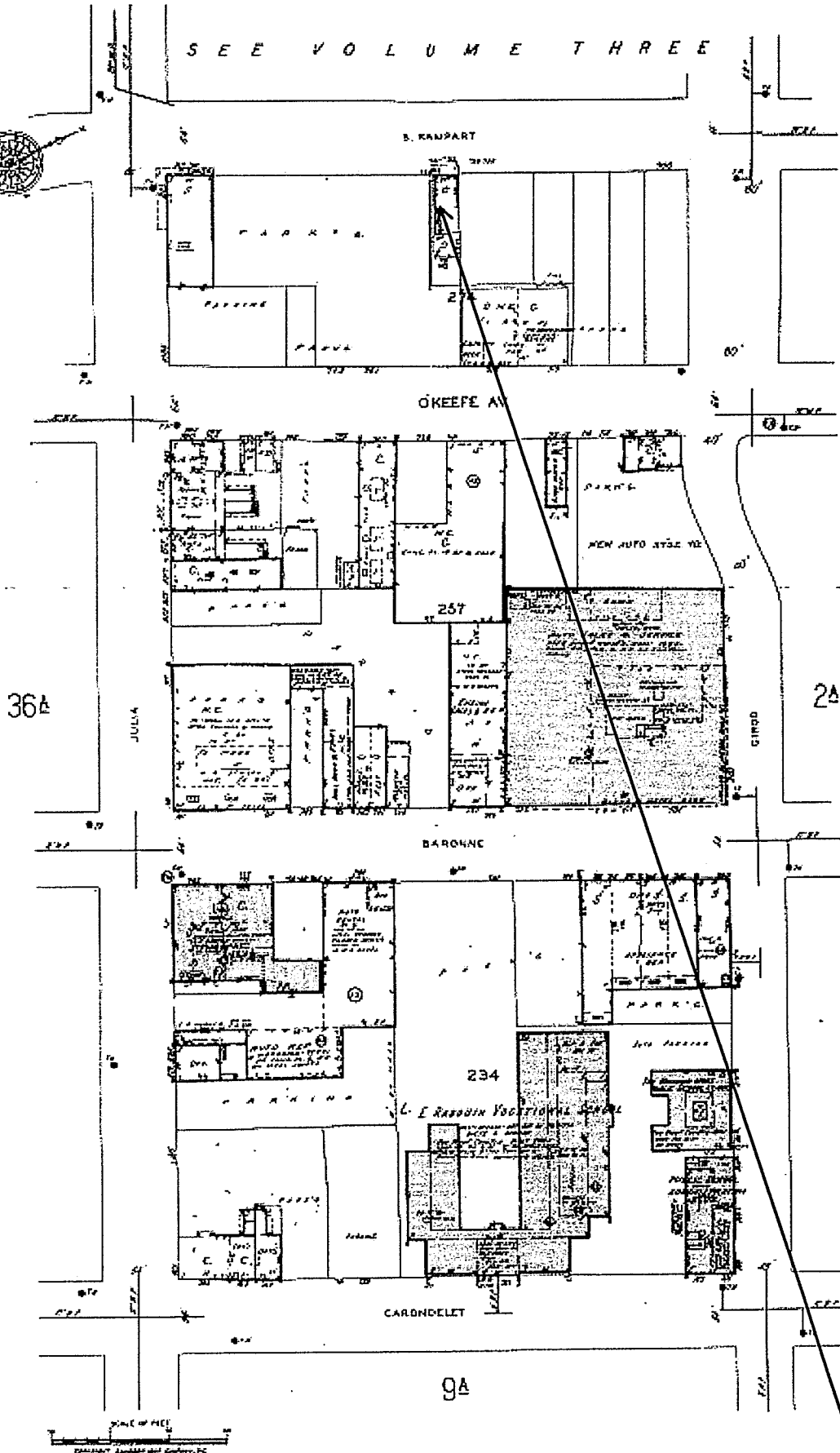


VIEWS OF 730 S. RAMPART



1A

SEE VOLUME THREE



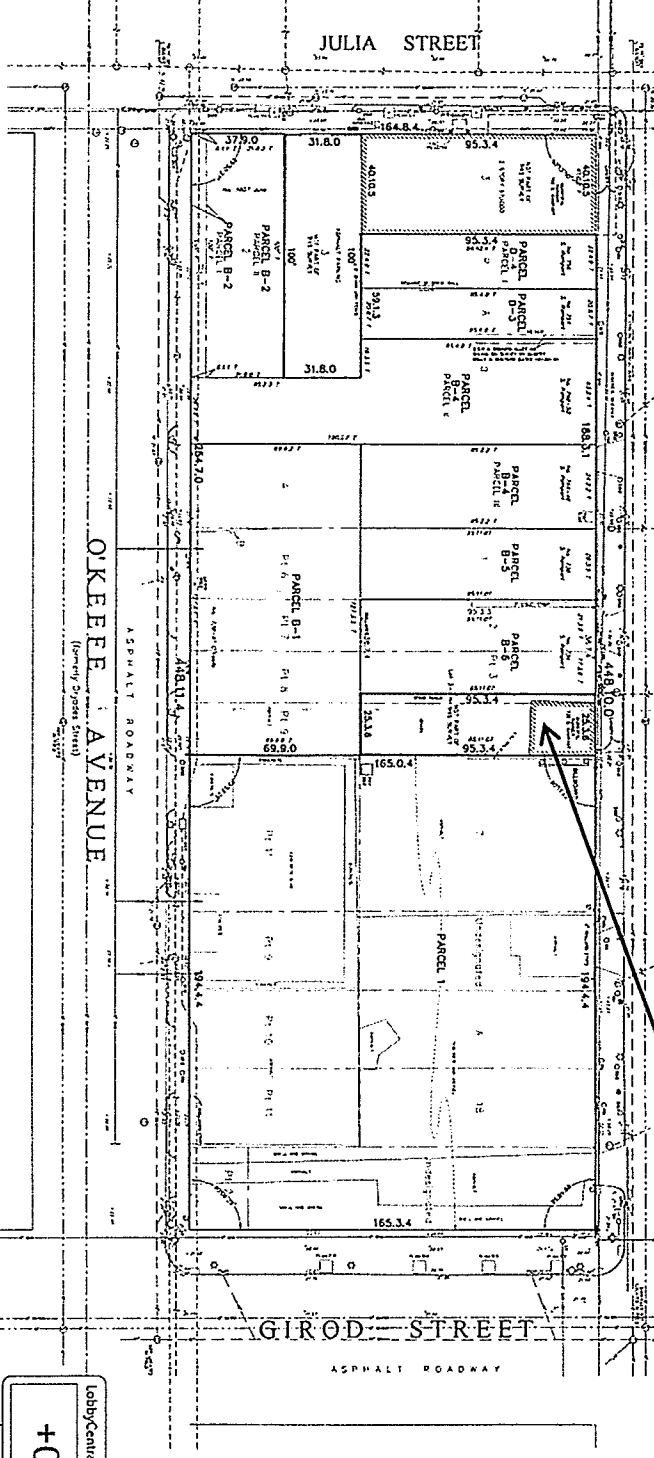
SQUARE 274  
FIRST DISTRICT

S. RAMPART STREET

JULIA STREET

GIROD STREET

O'KEEFE AVENUE  
(Formerly Dupont Street)



Lobby/Central Alarms  
+0



BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF NEW ORLEANS, LA. FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECORDING THE FOLLOWING PLAT OF THE FIRST DISTRICT OF SQUARE 274, FIRST DISTRICT, CITY AND PARISH OF NEW ORLEANS, LA. THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HAS REVIEWED THE PLAT AND HAS APPROVED THE SAME FOR RECORDATION.

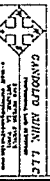
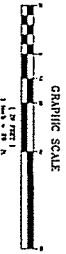
APPROVED AND ORDERED: \_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY ENGINEER

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY ATTORNEY

THIS PLAT IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all taxes and assessments levied on the property.
2. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of recording this plat.
3. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of surveying and mapping.
4. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of engineering and architecture.
5. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of legal fees and expenses.
6. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of public utility relocation.
7. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of street widening and improvement.
8. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of traffic control and signalization.
9. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of utility relocation and relocation of existing structures.
10. The owner of the property shown on this plat shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of utility relocation and relocation of existing structures.

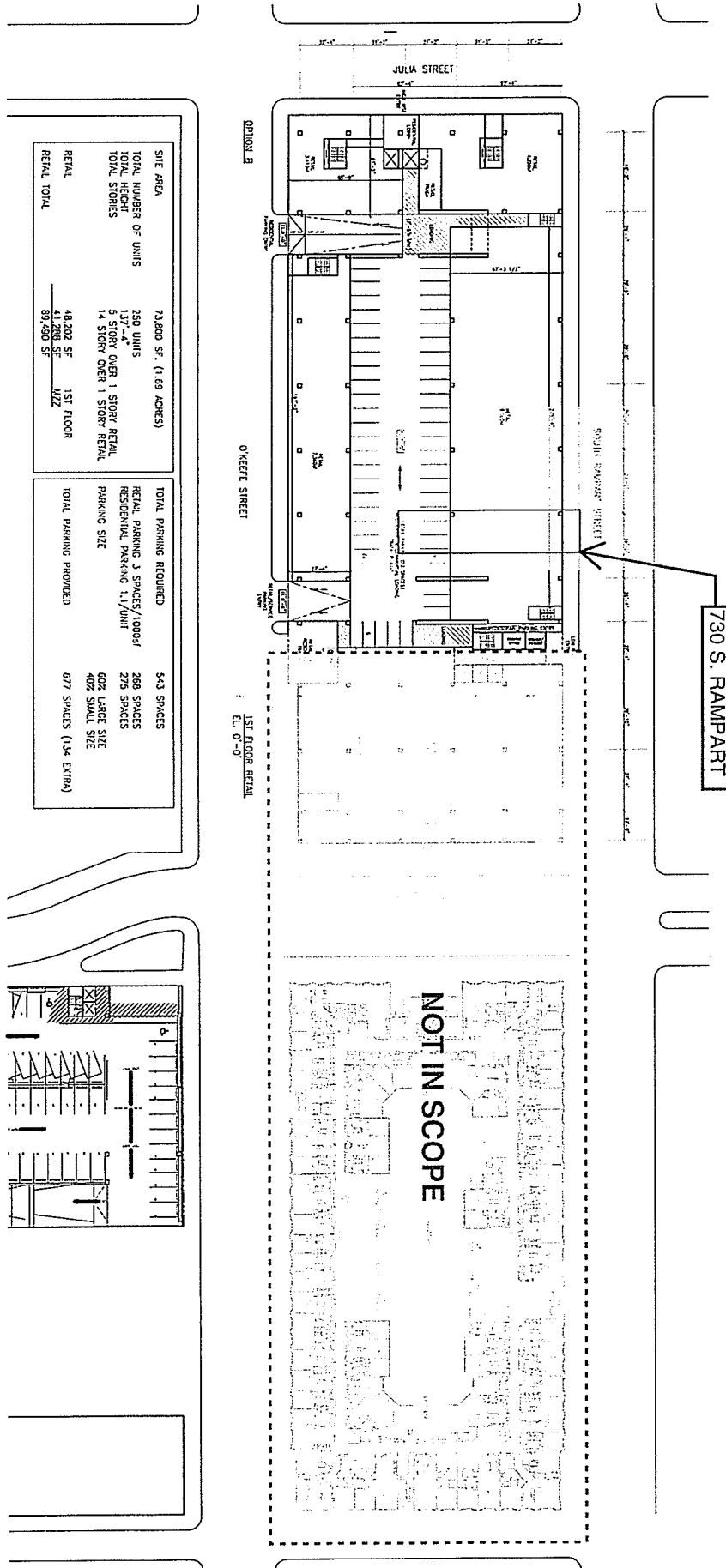


641-383-23-1



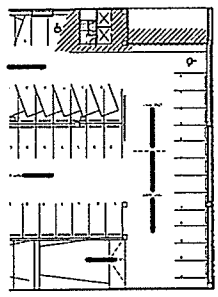
# CONCEPTUAL PACKAGE

MASSING STUDIOS - 04.22.2013  
South Market Parcel B  
New Orleans, LA



SITE AREA		72,800 SF. (1.69 ACRES)
TOTAL NUMBER OF UNITS		250 UNITS
TOTAL HEIGHT		137'-4"
TOTAL STORES		5 STORY OVER 1 STORY RETAIL 14 STORY OVER 1 STORY RETAIL
RETAIL		48,200 SF
RETAIL TOTAL		41,280 SF MZZ 89,480 SF

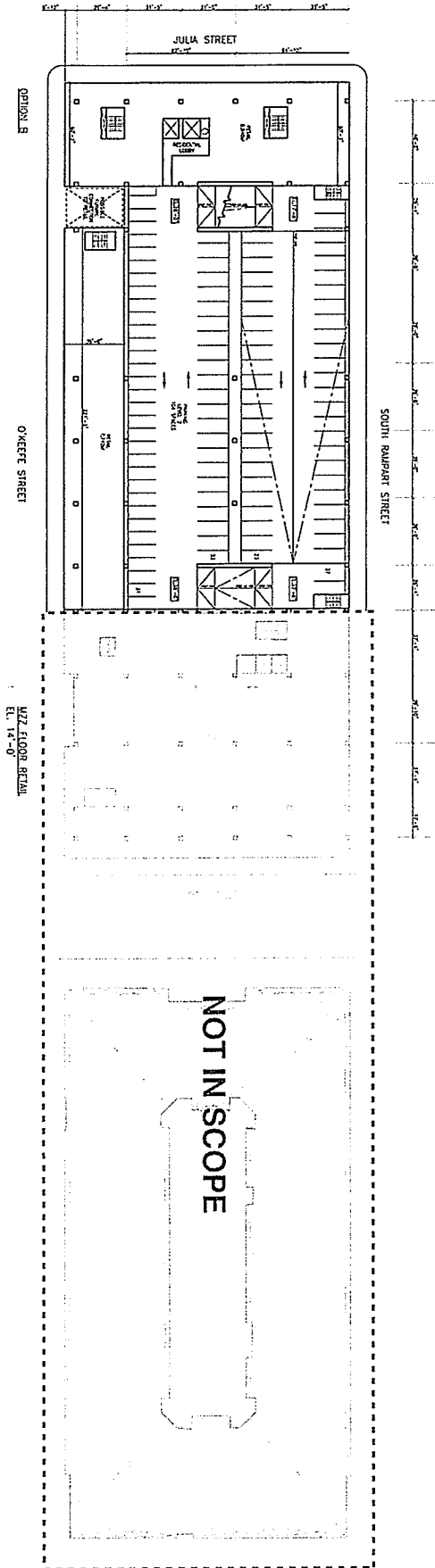
TOTAL PARKING REQUIRED		543 SPACES
RETAIL PARKING 3 SPACES/1000sf		268 SPACES
RESIDENTIAL PARKING 1.1/UNIT		275 SPACES
PARKING SIZE		402 LARGE SIZE 402 SMALL SIZE
TOTAL PARKING PROVIDED		677 SPACES (134 EXTRA)

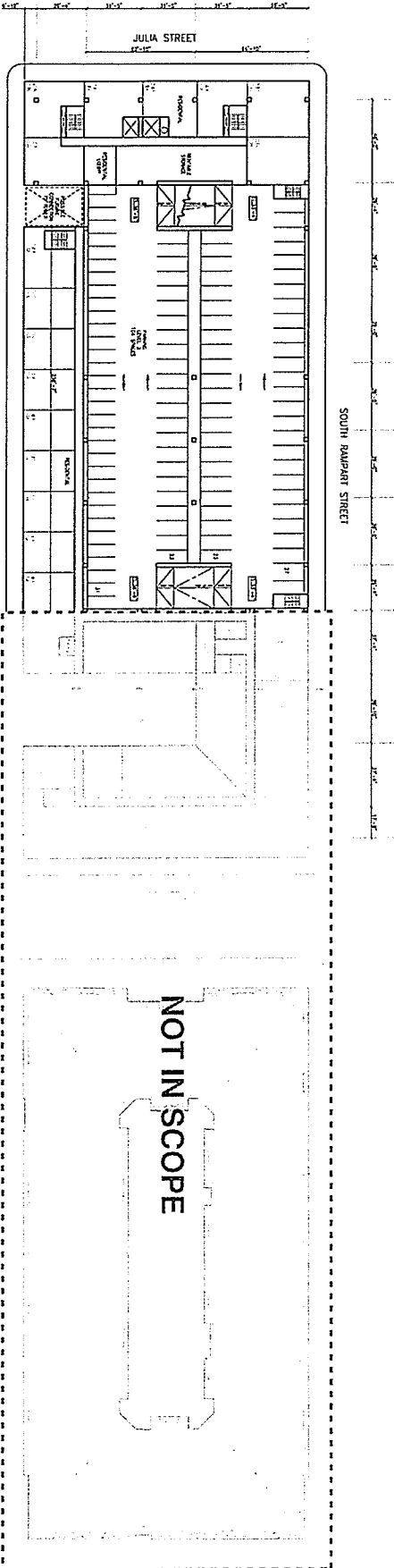


1ST FLOOR PLAN - SCHEME 2

1" = 64'

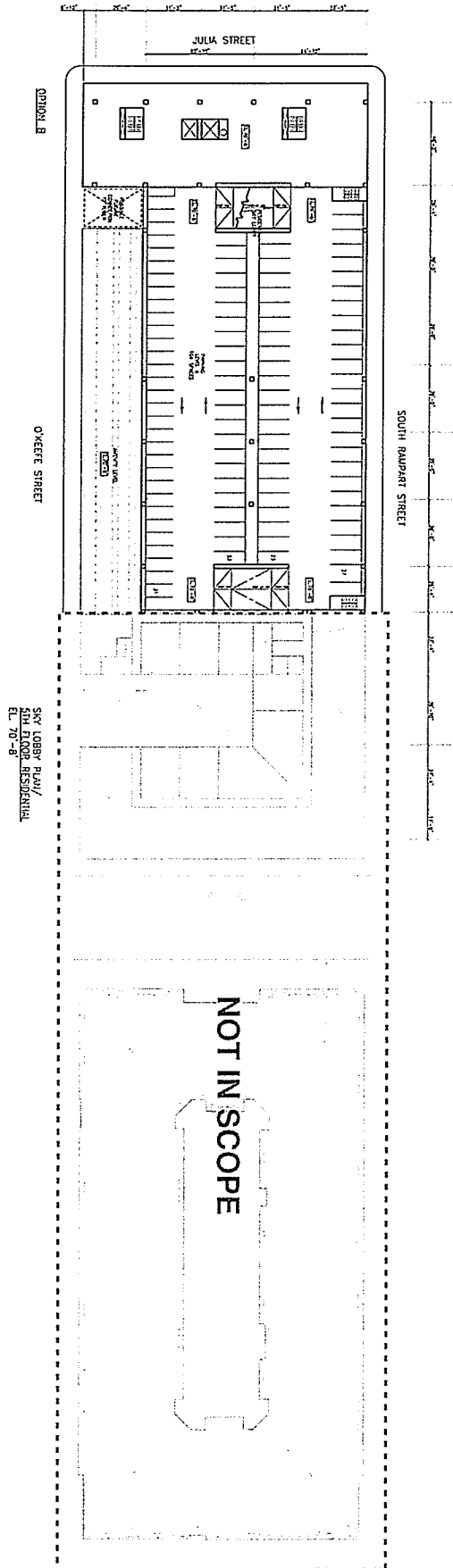
APRIL 2013



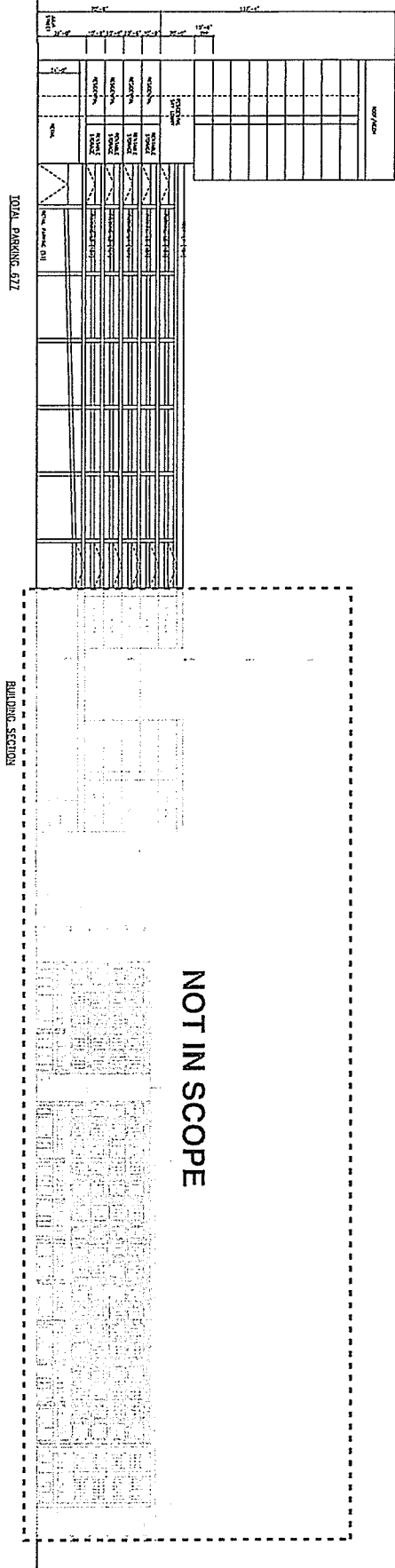
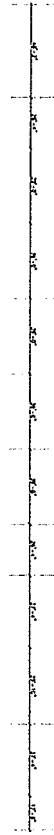


2ND-4TH FLOOR RESIDENTIAL/  
TOP PARKING PLAN  
ELL. VEHICLES

UNIT TABULATIONS (LOW RISE) 5 STORY OVER 1 STORY RETAIL				UNIT TABULATIONS (HIGH RISE) 15 STORY OVER 1 STORY RETAIL					
UNIT TYPE	NET AREA	UNIT COUNT	%	TOTAL AREA	UNIT TYPE	NET AREA	UNIT COUNT	%	TOTAL AREA
1BR 1BA	4,700 SF	100	70%	71,760 SF	1BR 1BA	4,700 SF	58	54%	42,983 SF
2BR 1BA	4,900 SF	15	10%	14,000 SF	2BR 1BA	4,900 SF	28	23%	21,306 SF
2BR 2BA	1,100 SF	23	20%	24,000 SF	2BR 2BA	1,100 SF	26	23%	29,894 SF
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>109,760 SF</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>96,273 SF</b>
<b>UNITS AVERAGE NET SF</b>				<b>784 SF</b>	<b>UNITS AVERAGE NET SF</b>				<b>875 SF</b>





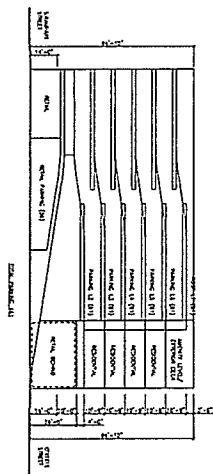
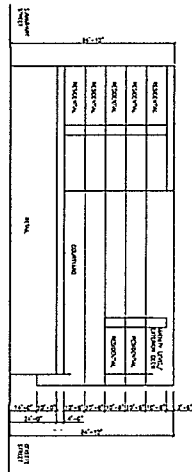


Eschew-Dinuzzi-Kippel Architects Inc. 1111 14th St. N

BUILDING SECTION - SCHEME 2

1" = 64'

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Estimate: Partner: Ruppel

Architect: Ruppel

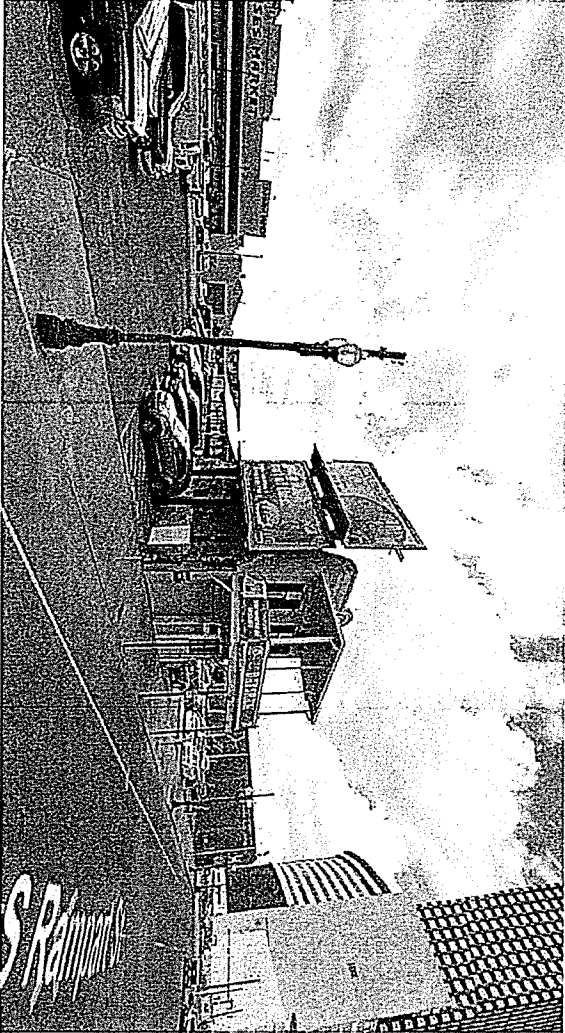
BUILDING SECTION - SCHEME 1 & 2

1" = 6'4"

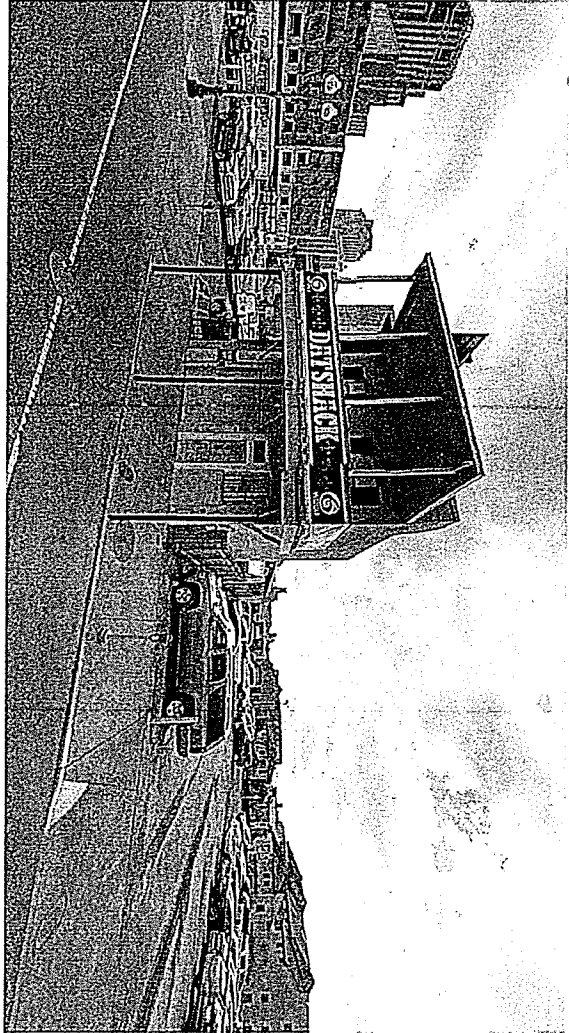
APRIL 2013







Exterior View of 730 S. Rampart, 2014



VIEWS OF 730 S. RAMPART