

Thomasville Landmarks, Inc. Most Endangered Properties 2006

Jordan Furniture Store - 325 W. Jackson Street, Thomasville

History: What is now known as the Jordan Furniture Store building is one of the few remaining on the 300 block of West Jackson Street. It is architecturally significant as one of the largest remaining commercial buildings in “The Bottom,” a historically African-American business district. With minimum 12” brick walls, it is currently structurally sound. There are intact pressed metal ceilings and large display windows that add to its charm.

Threat: After being purchased, sight-unseen, by an out-of-town developer, it has been allowed to decay. The roof caved in during Hurricane Dennis and the resulting weather has further weakened the floor joists in the two-story section. Missing and broken windows are allowing rain into other parts of the building. The selling price is too high for the market. Another hurricane or severe rainy weather could cause irreparable harm to the structure. If allowed to decay to a certain point, the City will have no other choice but to declare it a potential harm and condemn it., resulting in a large part of the historic downtown being carried away to the landfill.

Solution: The Jordan Furniture store needs a new roof and stabilized window and door openings in order to prevent weather from further damaging the structure. Once stabilized, the building should be sold to someone who will return it to usefulness. Landmarks will work with the DDA, Main Street, and the owner to restore this significant structure. It is possible that Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits could be combined with state and local tax incentives to make this a good investment for a creative person.

Update: The City’s Minimum Property Maintenance Ordinance went into effect in Spring of 2007. The owner of this building will likely be forced to demolish it, although that is in contradiction to the Historic Preservation Ordinance. If the out-of-town owner had repaired the roof when it was first damaged, the property would be in very good condition.



Left: The Jordan Furniture Store and a historic billboard for Wrigley's spearmint gum.