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**DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION**  
**HISTORIC PROPERTY**  
**EVALUATION SHEET**  
**Case #1**

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**ADDRESS:** 1401 Hampton Street

**APPLICANT:** Schell Carson, agent

**TAX MAP REF. #:** R11402-03-03

**USE OF PROPERTY:** Commercial

**REVIEW DISTRICT:** -DD/Pending Individual Landmark

**NATURE OF REQUEST:** Request recommendation for landmark status

**FINDINGS/COMMENTS:**

The buildings on this parcel were constructed in 1924 and 1935 and together comprised one of twelve district offices of the Federal Land Bank System nationwide. The Federal Land Bank System was a result of the 1916 Federal Farm Act which was created to provide loans to farmers, who as a group, were critically under-funded at that time. The buildings are good examples of their types, the earlier building at the western end of the parcel built in a Neoclassical style, and the later building to its east, a more streamlined and restrained structure reflective of the Art Moderne and Art Deco styles which came into vogue in the 1930s. The earlier building was designed by well-known Georgia architect A. Ten Eyck Brown, while prominent local firm Lafaye and Lafaye designed the 1930s building.

Staff finds that the building meets #1, 2, 3 and 5 of the criteria for Group II landmarks, listed below, as found in the City Ordinance. Only one criterion is needed to support landmark designation:

- 1) The sites of events, homes of men, etc., having contributed to local history;
- 2) Reasonably distinctive characteristics in architectural design, not necessarily unique;
- 3) Somewhat rare type in Columbia;
- 4) Belonging to a family or "genera" of buildings of which it is a good example;
- 5) The work of an architect of local importance;
- 6) A good example of a style or type of building which is becoming, or is in danger of becoming, extinct locally.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff supports a recommendation to City Council that 1401 Hampton Street move forward as a Group II landmark.



**Federal Land Bank Building, AgFirst**  
1401 Hampton Street, Columbia, S.C.  
1924, 1935



Federal Land Bank image from the Works Progress Administration, c. 1930s (*South Caroliniana Library*)



Federal Land Bank in 1979, image by Russell Maxey (*Richland Library*)

Their exterior stone and brick in nearly pristine condition, the buildings comprising the Federal Land Bank structure at 1401 Hampton capture two significant periods in the bank’s development, and juxtapose two interesting trends in architecture. Though now somewhat obscured by mature trees, these buildings are unique to the city, as the district headquarters of a bank system created to help the many farmers of America. The designs of prominent Atlanta architect A. Ten Eyck Brown and the prolific Columbia firm Lafaye and Lafaye, the two buildings express careful considerations of materials, scale, and details that were popular in the opulent 1920s and streamlined 1930s.

### **The Federal Land Bank System**

Land was always part of the American dream. As the young nation pushed west and controlled more territory, it was obvious that the dream was often surpassed by the harsh realities of limited money, and the cyclical nature of crop production, heavily dependent on good weather with long periods of waiting and hoping. The earliest large-scale “industry” of America was farming, meeting the basic necessity of food, and the federal government got involved with the extension of credit for this industry in the nineteenth century. Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act of 1862 in the beginnings of the Civil War. Considered one of the most important pieces of legislative acts in our nation’s history, the act “turned over vast amounts of the public domain to private citizens.” Around ten percent of the area of the United States, or 270 million acres, were claimed and settled under this act, largely in the western part of the nation in 160-acre parcels. While the cost for this process was twelve dollars up front and six more dollars after a five year “proving” period, the many costs of creating a house and a working farm extended beyond the

means of the many farmers, immigrants, women and even former slaves that took up parcels under the act.<sup>1</sup>

Banks were eager to lend to businesses and industries, but farmers found few who were willing to lend, and those that did offered short terms and high interest rates. In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt, the Country Life Commission and congressional committees studied the issues facing the rural families of America, which constituted about half of the population. The Commission's recommendations included the creation of cooperatives and a cooperative credit system for farmers. In 1910 there were over 6 million farms listed in the federal census, and they were the lifeblood of many communities, growing not only food but cotton, which fueled the textile mills industrializing southern cities like Columbia. South Carolina had over 176,000 farms, over half of them owned by African Americans or other "non-whites," as they were listed in the 1910 census. North Carolina, Georgia and Florida had almost 600,000 farms between them.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of Presidentially-sponsored trips to Europe to study rural development and credit programs, a commission under Woodrow Wilson made recommendations for supplying long and short-term credit to farmers. Congress supported these recommendations by passing the Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916, which established Federal Land Banks in twelve districts across the nation, with hundreds of National Farm Loan Associations that fed into the federal bank system. The system extended long-term credit to farmers, but increasing mechanization and cost pressures from Europe generated a need for short-term credit options. Congress then created the Agricultural Credits Act of 1923, which worked with farming cooperatives and commercial banks, though it too had only moderate success at achieving widespread short-term credit. Ideally, the system "was created to give to agriculture a dependable credit system, simple in operation and at a cheaper cost than was possible under the conditions surrounding the farmer prior to its establishment."<sup>3</sup>

The twelve districts created throughout the nation included one headquartered in Columbia, South Carolina, to serve the state but also to serve North Carolina, Georgia and Florida. Other headquarters were in New Orleans, Houston, Berkeley, Spokane, Omaha, Wichita, St. Louis, Louisville, St. Paul, Springfield and Baltimore. Given the rival cities in the Southeast, it is surprising that Columbia gained the designation as headquarters. South Carolina's number of farms had grown in the previous decade and survived World War I and the boll weevil infestation of the late 1910s, but as the wartime need subsided, prices dropped throughout the 1920s for agricultural goods and spiraled down quickly in the fall of 1929 when Black Tuesday signaled the beginning of the Great Depression. For farmers that had obtained credit through the Federal Land Bank, the blessing had become a burden. Many could not meet their loan payments and simply walked away from their farms. By 1933, nearly half of the National Farm Loan Associations, or the local branches of the Federal Land Bank, were failing. Farm

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<sup>1</sup> National Park Service, "About the Homestead Act," available from <http://www.nps.gov/home/historyculture/abouthomesteadactlaw.htm>, accessed October 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Farm Credit Administration, "History of the FCA and the FCS," available from [http://www.fca.gov/about/history/historyFCA\\_FCS.html](http://www.fca.gov/about/history/historyFCA_FCS.html), accessed September 2013; University of Virginia Library, Historical Census Browser, Federal Census, 1910, available from <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/>, accessed September 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Farm Credit Administration; *The State* 8 May 1927, p1.

foreclosures were typical parts of doing business at the bank, as the very people who once extended help to America's farmers found themselves taking the very land that once provided hopes of prosperity.<sup>4</sup>

The number of farms dropped everywhere and was noticeable in the southeastern states; South Carolina lost almost 35,000 farms between 1920 and 1930. In an effort to halt the decline Congress passed two more acts, The Emergency Farm Mortgage Act of 1933 and The Farm Credit Act of 1933. Again aiming their resources at credit options, the government used these acts to avoid loan defaults through extending repayment schedules and offering emergency loans, as well as creating cooperative lending institutions that provided short, intermediate and long-term loans for farmers. The district banks, one of which was in Columbia, now had additional tools to assist farmers with loans and cooperatives. Franklin D. Roosevelt drafted a Presidential Order in 1933 that brought all of the agricultural credit operations of the federal government under a new agency, the Farm Credit Administration, later adopted into the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1939 before becoming independent again in 1953. The Farm Credit Administration also oversaw the new federal credit union system when it was created in 1934.<sup>5</sup>

Although the Federal Land Banks and their enabling acts endured a number of challenges in the last half of the twentieth century, AgFirst Farm Credit Bank is a direct descendent of the original bank system. Farming declined in America during the 1900s, as industries and technology changed the way America produced and used farm-grown goods. By 1960 the total number of farms was no longer a vital statistic captured by the federal census. However, agriculture remains an important part of the nation's economy, and as consumers look more towards locally grown options it may have a more prominent local face today than it has had in more recent decades. As an industry, farming was one of the few areas to succeed during the recent economic crises. Farm income reached a reported \$100 billion for the first time in 2011, resulting in a rise of approximately 5% of real income for farmers, an increase in land value and a decrease in farm debt. AgFirst Farm Credit Bank, "the largest agricultural lending organization in the United States" plays an important role in funding and financial services for 19 farmer-owned cooperatives, located in the eastern United States and Puerto Rico, and has been headquartered in the original Federal Land Bank buildings in Columbia.<sup>6</sup>

## **The Buildings**

As the district headquarters serving four Southeast states, the Federal Land Bank in Columbia, South Carolina was thriving by the early 1920s. It was located in the Palmetto Bank Building, at the northeast corner of Main and Washington Streets, a 1913 high rise with an elaborate Gothic-inspired exterior of limestone and terra cotta. The Federal Land Bank purchased a lot a few blocks away at the northeast corner of Marion and Hampton Streets for the handsome sum of

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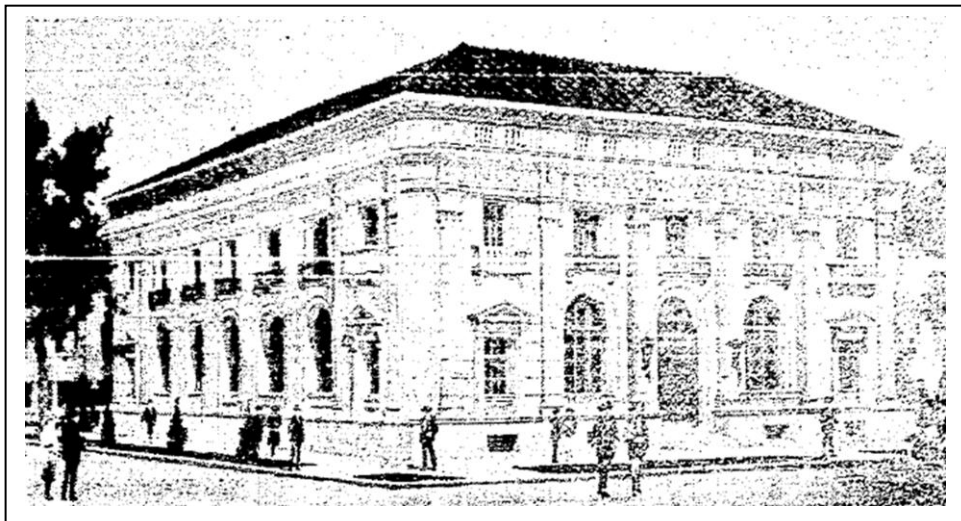
<sup>4</sup> *The State* 8 May 1927, p1; Farm Credit Administration; University of Virginia Library, Federal Census 1920, 1930.

<sup>5</sup> Farm Credit Administration

<sup>6</sup> University of Virginia Library, Federal Census, 1920, 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960; Albert R. Hunt, "America's Economic Bright Spot: Farming," *New York Times* 2 Feb 2012, available from [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com); AgFirst website <http://www.agfirst.com/index.asp>, accessed 19 Sep 2013.

\$18,000 in 1922. By February of the following year the newspaper displayed the architect's rendering of the proposed new bank building. It was two stories with a tile, hip roof, ornate pilasters on the façade with an intricate cornice and deeply recessed window and door openings, some of them featuring carved stone balusters.<sup>7</sup> The beige stone on the exterior followed a trend for other federal buildings in the city, including the federal post office and court house that is now city hall, completed in 1875, and the post office built on Gervais Street in 1921 that is now the State Supreme Court.

Atlanta architect A. Ten Eyck Brown (1878-1940) designed the building in 1922 with a Neoclassical style. A native of New York, he studied at the Academy of Design in that state and worked there and in Washington, D.C. before moving to Atlanta, Georgia. The son of an architect, Brown was a talented professional that became a prominent designer of public buildings in Atlanta and other locations, while also designing houses, apartment buildings and commercial structures, including banks.<sup>8</sup> Following some of his design trends for other public buildings, the Federal Land Bank featured a slightly recessed, wide central bay to allow for engaged columns rather than the pilasters located in the left and right bays of the façade. The first floor carries the monumental scale of arched fenestration, with shortened windows in the second story. Although the original design was only for two floors, the Agricultural Credits Act of 1923 added to the duties of the bank by extending intermediate credit and requiring more personnel, thus during the course of construction it was decided that a third story was needed.<sup>9</sup> Slightly recessed from the cornice of the original roofline, third floor is decidedly less dramatic, with slight reliefs of pilasters between the doubled, multi-pane windows that align symmetrically with the floors below. The names of the states served by the bank and the title "Federal Land Bank" were carved into the limestone cornice and remain visible today.



Although a poor copy, this architect's rendering of the original design shows the intended two-story height and low-pitched roof with tile.

*"The State," 11 Feb 1923, p22, image copyright of NewsBank.*

<sup>7</sup> *The State* 11 Feb 1923, p22.

<sup>8</sup> Robert M. Craig, "A. Ten Eyck Brown (1878-1940)," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, available from [www.georgiaencyclopedia.org](http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org), accessed September 2013.

<sup>9</sup> *The State* 7 Apr 1924, p7.

The construction of the Federal Land Bank took almost a year to complete. The contract was awarded to Southeastern Construction Company of New York and Charlotte by February of 1923. Mr. Garthwaite, the contractor chosen for the project, had an excellent resume; he had just completed work on the federal government's post office building on Gervais Street in Columbia. The Federal Land Bank was built of reinforced concrete and trimmed on the exterior with limestone on the two street fronts and brick on the rear. By October 1923 contractors were ordering plaster materials for the interior of the building. The Adams Cut Stone Company, which was not a local firm, completed the ornate exterior stonework by the end of November of the same year, before moving on to build dorms at Wake Forest University. Stone exteriors were rare in Columbia, even though a granite quarry exists just south of town. The softer limestone, like that on the Palmetto Building, which is perhaps one of the most intricate examples of stone carving in the city, was an easier material to carve for ornate trimwork. Stonework at the Federal Land Bank received a lot of praise and all of the handiwork was done on site for the columns and friezes of the building, including the gracefully sloped brackets under the pediments above the walk-out windows at the corners of the building. Likewise the state names carved into the cornice were likely done on site.<sup>10</sup>

Though not officially complete, the building hosted a meeting of over 160 representatives from the farm loan associations in Georgia in March of 1924. At the time of the meeting, one of the bank directors noted that over \$50 million in loans had been distributed to farmers since the creation of the land bank in Columbia. While it was a large sum to boast about, it was interesting to note that most of the applications for loans were rejected for ineligibility through the federal bank. The total sum of request had actually been around \$185 million.<sup>11</sup> Many farmers still struggled to find relief, especially when the federal bank system specifically designed to assist them was unable to meet the demand.

By April 1924 the employees were settling in to the new building, and a news article described the various offices inside, though provided only limited information about interior finishes on the walls or floors. It did praise the quality construction of the building, which used "neither taxes or tacks." As the district headquarters for over 500 farm loan associations in the four states it represented, the limestone trimmed building, it was designed as a "business palace" made of the "best material available," ensuring it was a "magnificent and durable structure." The interior was fitted with "every imaginable modern device for the comfort and convenience of the occupants," including "shower baths and rest rooms" for men and women, and furniture and fixtures of the "highest quality." There were drinking fountains and an elevator, and a winding concrete staircase with bronze railings provided a somewhat fireproof escape throughout the three floors. A long vault on the second floor with steel doors and cork floors provided a fireproof station for important papers such as mortgages; the doors on the vault weighed several tons each. There was even a "temperature regulator" that provided some limited control of the interior space. There were clocks in several obvious locations, fire hoses, and even a burglar alarm on the basement and first floor.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *The State* 22 Jul 1923, p16, 7 Apr 1924, p7, 29 Oct 1923, p9, 30 Nov 1923, p3.

<sup>11</sup> *The State* 26 Mar 1924, p12.

<sup>12</sup> *The State* 7 Apr 1924, p7.

The basement housed the utilities for the building, including the telephone, hot water system and furnace, but it also housed the printing departments, staffed at the time by young men. The president, vice president and secretary's offices were on the first floor, along with a room full of secretaries punching out letters on the many typewriters, a scene that repeated on the second floor. A law library and several attorneys also filled the second floor, along with a money vault and spacious offices for the bank's officers. Appraisers and file clerks rounded out the staffing. On the third floor was the largest room in the building, an assembly hall for conventions and social functions, as well as the office of the director. Stockholders paid the reported \$200,000 cost of the building with an additional \$15,000 on furniture and fixtures, instead of using tax dollars.<sup>13</sup>

In 1927, Edwy Reid offered a lengthy description of the bank in *The State* newspaper, and started off with a phrase that may still hold true today, "The Federal Land Bank of Columbia is better known to the country people of the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida than it is to the people of the city in which it is located." With a regional reach, the bank was integral to the agricultural success of four states, but it was essentially a silo among the city dwellers, who had no farms to operate and no need to "pass through its massive bronze doorways." About 100 employees oversaw about \$70 million in outstanding loans through this building, but were the only local people likely to enter the structure on a regular basis. Like other banks and businesses in the city at the time, these employees formed some sports teams, and in the summer of 1927 the "Federal Land Bank Stars" beat the Columbia National Bank team at the Epworth Orphanage field in a game of baseball.<sup>14</sup>

The Great Depression hit agriculture especially hard, and the effects were felt all the way to the bank, which began foreclosing on land and auctioning it off to try to recoup some of its loan money. By spring of 1930, the Federal Land Bank was trying to remain hopeful even in the face of selling off more than \$100,000 worth of farms in a single month. They presented the sales as opportunities for farmers to buy cheap land on credit, through the bank, with a foolhardy belief that the market would soon turn and conditions would improve.<sup>15</sup> Instead, the Great Depression lasted for many more years. By the fall of 1932 the bank issued a new policy for their loans. They made sure to note that it was not their wish to foreclose on anyone who had "reasonable hope" of working through their difficulties of meeting the loan if given enough time. They created extensions and other stop-gap measures to accommodate over 16,000 borrowers, over half of the 30,000 borrowers they served at the time. Some of the borrowers, overburdened by their loans and taxes, were "giving up the fight and moving away," leaving behind years of work and family homes on land that they could no longer afford. In an effort to recoup some of their own costs, the bank declared it would not sell the foreclosed farms at sacrificial prices but would instead hold onto the land and enter into contracts only with responsible parties, or would allow tenants to operate the farms, with the hope that they could one day become owners.<sup>16</sup>

New acts aimed at further relief for farmers generated a need for more employees and more office space at the Columbia headquarters. Employees were scattered throughout the city in

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<sup>13</sup> *The State* 7 Apr 1924, p7.

<sup>14</sup> *The State* 8 May 1927, p1, 11 Jun 1927, p13.

<sup>15</sup> *The State* 8 Apr 1930, p7.

<sup>16</sup> *The State* 24 Nov 1932, p2.



various offices due to the limited space of the original building. In the summer of 1934 the Lafaye and Lafaye architectural team drafted a building design that was put out for bid as a “fireproof office.” Considered “one of the state’s most respected and successful architectural practices from the 1910s to the 1970s,” the firm had projects throughout South Carolina, and designed several churches and the Township Theater in Columbia, among several large campus projects, including a majority of the buildings at the S.C. State Hospital on Bull Street.<sup>17</sup>



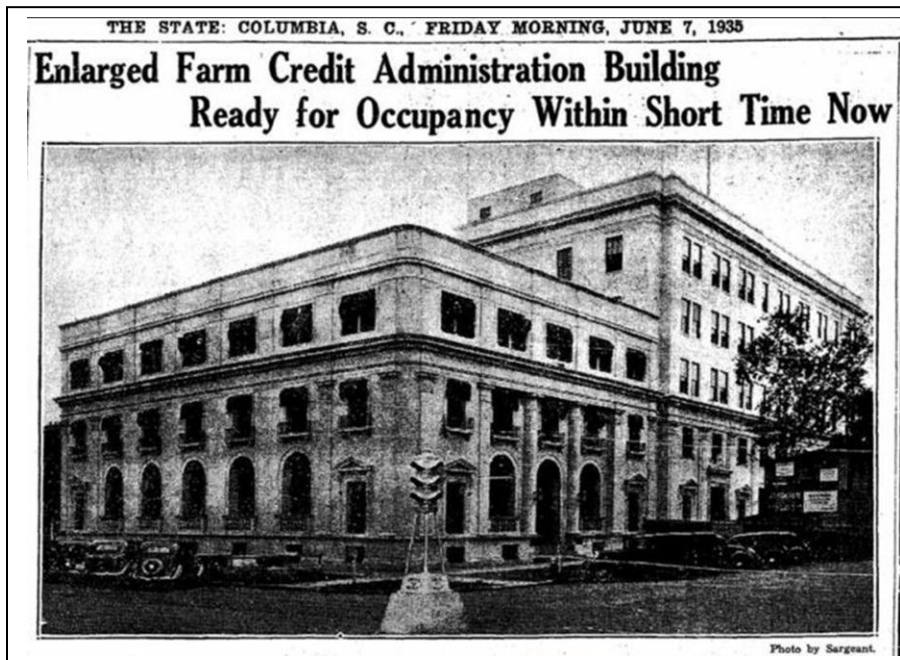
A 1979 image of the 1935 building by noted local photographer Russell Maxey.  
*Image courtesy of Richland Library*

Contractor J.C. Heslep won the bid for the new building and for adding elevators and other features to the old building. As per the drawings from Lafaye and Lafaye, the new five-story building would be “fireproof construction” and the “exterior design will be in keeping with the present building.” The “front and side returns will be faced with press brick” and all spaces would be amply lighted with metal windows. The interior was to feature plaster walls, acoustical treatments on the ceilings and linoleum floors, with movable metal partitions forming the offices. The lobby was to have tiled floors, marble wainscoting and an ornamental plaster ceiling. The entire ground floor was to serve as a central file room. Heslep promised to have the work done within ten months. Just two months later work came to a tragic halt when the basement excavation, as deep as 30 feet, generated an avalanche that killed two African-American workers. Although other workers immediately began “frenzied digging,” it took over half an hour to get to the trapped men, who were beyond help when finally found. Heslep claimed the collapse was unavoidable and that every precaution had been taken to avoid such a catastrophe. One of the men’s family members sued Heslep, which first wound up as a mistrial, but a second trial in pursuit of a \$50,000 wound up with an award of only \$2,000 for the plaintiff in May 1935.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *The State* 29 Jul 1934, p13B; Andrew W. Chandler, “Lafaye and Lafaye,” *The South Carolina Encyclopedia*, ed. Walter Edgar (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 527.

<sup>18</sup> *The State* 28 Aug 1934, p12, 25 Oct 1934, p12, 16 May 1935, p2, 17 May 1935, p2.

Work continued at the site and a simple ceremony hallmarked the placement of the cornerstone in February 1935, with speeches by the governor and mayor. The architects and the contractor were also recognized during the service, as were the many employees of the bank. A month later, several of those employees were named champions of the commercial basketball league in Columbia. The Federal Land Bank team won 15 of their 20 games that season and earned a photograph in the newspaper. Not to be outdone, the banks' all-girl "cage" team, perhaps a term for tennis, gained a photograph in the newspaper the following month. Like the men, they were young, and most were unmarried. It appears that it was popular among banks and offices in the city to have employees participate as a team in a variety of sporting events in the evenings and weekends during the 1930s.<sup>19</sup>



1930s news clippings from *The State*, copyright of News Bank

By April the new structure was gaining a roof and its interior plaster, while the older building underwent a roof transformation and an exterior cleaning. The tile roof that had a shallow pitch was removed and replaced with a “built up” or flat roof to mimic that on the new building. The old building’s entry and steps were removed on the façade and a stone balustrade installed across the original opening. By the first of July 1935 the new building was ready for occupants, and employees packed up offices from the Barringer Building, the Arcade and three other locations in order to consolidate under one roof.<sup>20</sup> Their pristine new offices had an exterior that blended the old with the new. The bay immediately adjacent to the 1920s edifice paid homage to its architectural details but the remainder of the building is far less dramatic in detailing and depth of features, though it does continue the limestone exterior veneer.

<sup>19</sup> *The State* 20 Feb 1935, 14a, 12 Feb 1935, p11, 20 Mar 1935, p10, 9 Apr 1935, p8.

<sup>20</sup> *The State* 12 Apr 1936, p16, 30 Jun 1935, p5.

## Architecture

The original 1924 building designed by Ten Eyck Brown was not constructed as designed. His two-story building remained intact, but the third story gained during original construction gives away some of its secrets, appearing in some ways as an afterthought. The first two stories, which have rounded corners, feature a number of ornamental details that give both depth and character to the limestone façade. True to the Neoclassical style, the building employs dramatic arches over recessed door and window openings, with heavy carved stone balustrades on the first floor and colossal engaged columns and pilasters on the façade. Recalling a slightly Egyptian Revival motif, the capitals of the columns and pilasters have slender leaves flaring out at the top, supporting a richly detailed cornice of carved stone inlays with a central circle, a dentil pattern, and the name of the four states served by the headquarters carved into the stone. Second story windows are rectangular with balconets of iron railings and simple stone brackets. A circle motif is carried from the iron work to the cornice and the capitals. The former entry was in the central arch of the three on the façade facing Hampton Street, though the entry was moved to the new building upon its completion. The windows on the third floor are not nearly as recessed as those on the floors below, and although there are slight variations in the limestone to mimic pilaster reliefs, there is none of the ornamentation and detailing that gives so much character to the originally designed floors of the 1924 building.

Despite its more humble appearance, the third floor provided a restrained architectural design that proved to be the wave of the future, and probably helped inform some of the design decisions of prominent local firm Lafaye and Lafaye in 1934. By that time the ornate and expensive detailing of the Neoclassical style was out of favor. Art Moderne and Art Deco, with their more streamlined appearance and concentration on smaller or more creative details, rather than using traditional forms, gained popularity in the 1930s. This coincided with the years of the Great Depression and the rise of the machine era, with an emphasis on mechanization and speed. This architecture was a distinct turn away from the revival styles like Neoclassical that kept reusing traditional motifs. The result was that for Lafaye and Lafaye's expansion of the Federal Land Bank in 1934 the ornamentation was sequestered to a single entrance bay and some cornice detailing, but the façade was given a much flatter and simpler treatment than its neighbor, similar to the third floor of the 1924 building. Further evidence of the influence of the original building's third floor is that its double windows were picked up and repeated across the entire façade of the new building.

The new building repeated the pilasters of the original structure in its entry bay, as well as the deeply recessed windows on the first story and their pediments, though they featured iron balustrades instead of stone. The recessed entry featured an eagle above a broken pediment, and the cornice detailing from the original building carried over for the entry bay, though it simplified to a dentil molding and cornice that wrapped around to the first bay of the east elevation, where faint recesses pay homage to the original building. A second cornice at the roof of the building is even simpler. Windows are a three over three pane configuration. The majority of the east and the north elevations are a light brown brick, typical of the brick that was covered up on the original building with the mural Tunnel Vision, by artist Blue Sky, in 1975.

As AgFirst, a descendant of the Federal Land Bank, leaves this site for new offices, it ends a legacy of continued use by the same institution for almost 90 years. That is an accomplishment that is rare in the capital city. However, there are some excellent examples of adaptive reuse in Columbia. As these buildings were designed by architects and built with durable materials for a significant district headquarters for the four southern states, they are ideally suited for designation as local landmarks, for potential listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and for the local, state and federal tax incentives that go along with those designations for a qualifying rehabilitation project. Important for its place in our region's history as well as its unique juxtaposition of Neoclassical and Art Moderne architecture, this set of buildings is important to the built landscape of Columbia.

Among the twelve cities to host the Federal Land Bank Buildings, most appear to be standing, and several have been adaptively reused. There does not appear to have been a common design element among the buildings, except for the striking similarities between Columbia and New Orleans' buildings. The New Orleans building was built as two stories, but without the depth in the recessed doors and windows found in the Columbia building. In Houston the c. 1929 building was even more streamlined, leaving its elaborate ornamentation at the cornice and around the door, but otherwise having a smooth stone exterior. Unfortunately the windows in this building have been replaced. The surviving bank in Berkeley, CA is from 1939 and appears to be intact. It has minimal detailing on the façade but some unique Art Deco details on the rear and the interior; it is now used for municipal offices. In Omaha the 1923 and 1934 buildings for the bank were both multiple stories, one faced with brick and the other with stone. They are now adaptively reused as apartments. Stone also clads the modestly ornamented bank building in Baltimore, MD, which has been adaptively reused as luxury apartments. The 1923 bank building in Louisville was eight floors with a brick exterior and large footprint, and appears to still be in use as a bank. With only twelve similar institutions across the nation, the Federal Land Bank buildings in Columbia are among a rare group of landmarks across the nation.



Built 1939 in Berkeley, CA, Berkeley Historical Plaque Project, <http://www.berkeleyplaques.org/index.php?page=federal-land-bank>



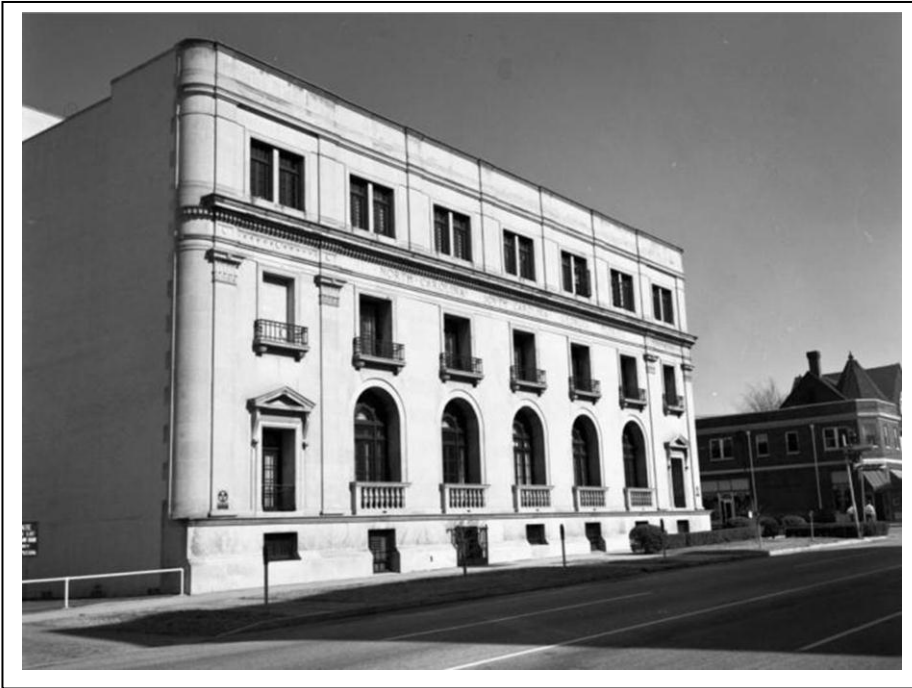
Built in 1923 and 1934 in Omaha, NE, this Federal Land Bank complex is now adaptively reused as apartments. *Image from [www.thebankomaha.com](http://www.thebankomaha.com)*





The c. 1923 Baltimore Land Bank,  
image from [www.landbanklofts.com](http://www.landbanklofts.com)

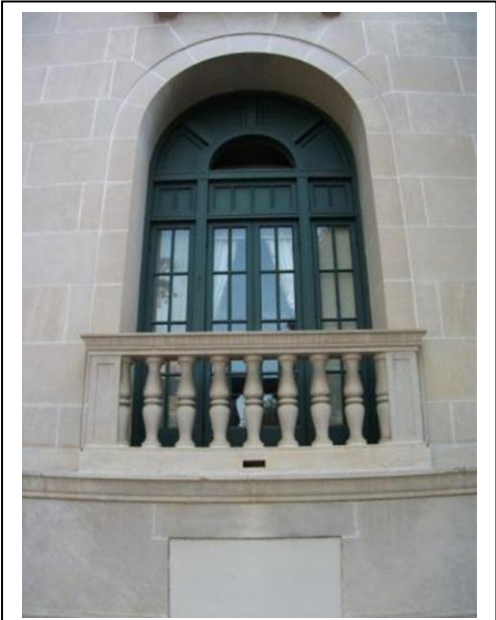
The 1923 Federal  
Land Bank in  
Louisville, KY  
*University of  
Louisville Library*

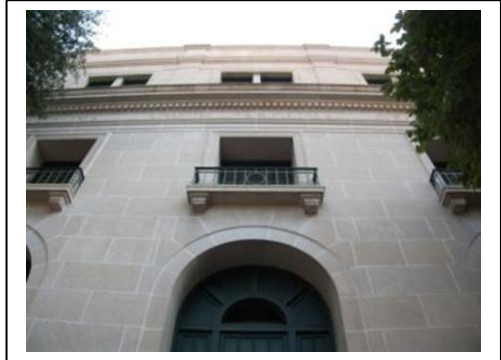


Left: A 1968 image of the west side of Columbia's building, by Russell Maxey (*Richland Library*)

Below: A 1976 image of Tunnel Vision by Blue Sky, image by Russell Maxey (*Richland Library*)

Bottom Left: Image of first floor window in 1924 building, S. Richey.





Images by S. Richey  
September 2013

