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**8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Street Office Buildings**  
report to the  
House Appropriations Committee

Department of General Services  
Department of Historic Resources  
*September 19, 2005*

# Background

## *Legislative History*

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- ❑ Chapter 955, 2003 Acts of Assembly
  - PPEA authorized (Phase I Washington & Finance Buildings, Phase II to be determined)
- ❑ Chapter 897, 2004 Acts of Assembly (Capitol Square Preservation Act) & Chapter 4, 2004 Acts of Assembly Special Session
  - “Replacement of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Street Office Buildings (Item C-3.10)”
  - “... demolition of derelict buildings and the development of office and parking facilities ...”
- ❑ House Document 13, 2005
- ❑ Chapter 951 of the 2005 Acts of Assembly (Item C-3.10)
  - “The Governor shall:
    - Prepare a plan for development of the property
    - Consider all feasible options related to such development, and
    - Consider alternative dispositions for existing buildings that are not essential to such purpose
  - The section further states that:
    - The Governor is authorized to enter into a PPEA Comprehensive Agreement, or any other arrangement for this purpose he determines proper, and
    - The General Assembly determines that time is of the essence in making such facilities available

# 8<sup>th</sup> Street Office Building

- ❑ Approximately 110,000 square feet
- ❑ Constructed in 1913 - originally known as the Murphy Hotel
- ❑ Commonwealth acquired in 1966 and has used as an office building
- ❑ Condition:
  - Significant deterioration & maintenance needs
  - Spalding Terra Cotta façade
  - Deteriorating structural supports
  - Inefficient floor plate & poor layout
  - Low floor to ceiling heights
  - Emergency egress/life safety issues
  - No parking
- ❑ Closed July 2005



# 9<sup>th</sup> Street Office Building

- ❑ Approximately 140,000 square feet
- ❑ Constructed in 1904 - originally known as the Hotel Richmond
- ❑ Commonwealth acquired in 1966 and has used as an office
- ❑ Condition:
  - Significant deterioration & deferred maintenance
  - Inefficient floor plate & poor layout
  - Low floor to ceiling heights
  - Emergency egress/life safety issues
  - Sound structurally
  - No parking



# The Buildings' History

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## ❑ **8<sup>th</sup> Street Office Building**

- ❑ Architecturally and historically significant
- ❑ Designed by noted Virginia architect John Kevan Peebles, also responsible for the 1906 additions to the Capitol
- ❑ An excellent and rare surviving architectural form
- ❑ Tallest building in Richmond until the Hotel John Marshall was constructed in 1929
- ❑ Closely connected with political and social history
- ❑ Particularly fine surviving exterior
- ❑ The interior has been seriously compromised

## ❑ **9<sup>th</sup> Street Office Building**

- ❑ Architecturally and historically significant
- ❑ Designed by John Kevan Peebles
- ❑ Dignified presence on Capitol Square
- ❑ Developed, owned, and operated by pioneering businesswoman, Mrs. A. D. Atkinson
- ❑ In addition to its association with women's history, the hotel was the scene rich political, social, and entertainment history over the past century
- ❑ Retains important interior spaces in addition to its exterior presence

# 2005 Assessment

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- ❑ Financed jointly by Departments of General Services, Historic Resources, the Historic Richmond Foundation and the William Byrd Branch of APVA
- ❑ Hillier Architecture was selected by panel made up of:
  - Directors of the Departments of General Services and Historic Resources,
  - Chairs of the Capitol Square Preservation Council and the Public Buildings Board,
  - The Staff Directors of House Appropriations and Senate Finance, and
  - The Southern Regional Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- ❑ Study April – June (released July 5)
- ❑ Report presents ten (10) options, or “feasible alternatives,” for development of the site

# Report Findings

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- ❑ Base need: minimum 250,000 square feet of office space & 150 parking spaces on this site
- ❑ Critical urban design/traffic considerations, pedestrian connections to the Square, etc. must be considered in redevelopment
- ❑ The site is extremely significant, bordering on Capitol Square - Design excellence is critical in any redevelopment
- ❑ Both existing facilities reflect typical deterioration for +/- 100 year old buildings.
  - Both buildings can be restored. The report finds that there is no single compelling reason to demolish both buildings, and stresses the importance of a balanced approach to preservation and other considerations
- ❑ Both buildings have inadequate floor plates, floor to ceiling heights, building systems, and ability to comply with contemporary life safety code
- ❑ Though they would remain relatively inefficient if renovated, all of the limitations could be addressed given appropriate design, construction techniques, and sufficient funding

# Report Findings (continued)

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- ❑ Both of the existing buildings are believed eligible for listing on the Virginia and federal registers
- ❑ While preservation-based options are more costly, the cost differential is believed to within a relatively narrow range
- ❑ There is a need to move forward immediately with a comprehensive improvement program
- ❑ While there are feasible scenarios in which the Commonwealth could divest itself of ownership or enter into a long-term lease, control of the site by the Commonwealth is a critical consideration

# Conclusions

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- ❑ **Report Recommendation & Governor's Conclusion:** Selling or long-term lease of these properties is not in the Commonwealth's best interests
  - The Commonwealth has a programmatic need for development of the properties
  - There is long-established policy to control the real property contiguous to Capitol Square
  - There are security and quality considerations for doing so
  - Relinquishing control of the properties would limit future flexibility
- ❑ The feasible alternatives remaining:
  - **A** - Renovate both, and new building at 9th & Broad
  - **B** - Renovate 9th Street; demolish 8th; new building at 8th-9th & Broad
  - **B1** - Renovate 9th Street; demolish 8<sup>th</sup> but keep its historic facades; new at 8th-9th & Broad
  - **D** - Demolish both buildings and erect a new building on the entire site
- ❑ Option **A** provides the highest recognition and response to historic preservation considerations and concerns, but is the most costly development plan
- ❑ Option **D** is the least costly and does the least to recognize and respond to historic preservation considerations, since both historic buildings would be lost
- ❑ Continuing to evaluate options, analyze project costs and financing alternatives as part of Budget development process

# Timeline

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Patrick Henry Complete:	April '05
8 <sup>th</sup> Street Office Building Closed	July '05
Finance Building Complete:	October '05
Washington Construction Begins:	November '05
Capitol, Washington Building Complete:	December '06
9 <sup>th</sup> Street Office Building Closed	January '07
<u><i>Tentative Approach (Not Approved/Under Development)</i></u>	
8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> & Broad Street redevelopment Begins	2006
9 <sup>th</sup> Street redevelopment Begins	2007
8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> & Broad Street Complete	2008
General Assembly Building Renovation Begins	2009
9 <sup>th</sup> Street redevelopment Complete	2009
General Assembly Building Complete	2011