

Sullivan Building history notes

**Mostly about Sullivan building, some references below to building at or around 21 Franklin St., 3-story building that was touching the Sullivan Bldg and torn down at some point*

- **Sources** for the below:
 - 2014: **NPS tourist brochure**:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g3-znmn_Q59zjTAGzpwupFqdXtG7yqYs/view?usp=sharing
 - 2013: **The Civil Rights Movement in Selma, Alabama, 1865-1972**:
<https://www.nps.gov/nr/feature/places/64501182.htm>
 - 2003: **Alabama SP Old Town Historic District Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation**: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/77836076#.X9vFpYLrImI.link>
 - 1978: **Alabama SP Old Town Historic District**:
<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/77836062#.X9vMkhya98E.link>
- **Rough building timeline (Sullivan)**:
 - 1913-1922
 - Black-built, by Horace B. Sullivan and son H. Stanley Sullivan, **thought to be after 1913** given that the 1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows (2) vacant 1-story buildings on the site at that date. **On the 1907 map, they identify a restaurant (on the corner)**, barber (on Alabama) and a bicycle shop (on Franklin).
 - 1922
 - H.B. Sullivan Undertaking Establishment (1922 STJ [ad showing](#), & [this 2013 NPS doc discusses](#); still there in 1925 [according to 2003 NPS doc](#), p. 123)
 - ~1950
 - Boynton Insurance Agency ([2013 NPS doc discusses](#) vaguely, says “By mid-century the building was home to insurance agents and Dallas County Voters League leaders Samuel Boynton and his wife Amelia Pitts Boynton”)
 - 1963
 - “Former headquarters of Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)” (from [2003 NPS doc](#), p. 20)
 - ~1965
 - Miller Funeral Home ([image showing](#))
 - **SNCC & SCLC** activities ([2014 NPS brochure](#), “Sullivan Building: The SNCC and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) directed their local voting rights activities from this building”)
 - Rev. James Reeb was taken to the building right next door to the Sullivan Building, before he was driven to Birmingham, only to die in the hospital (see [FBI map here](#))
 - 1976
 - Kynard Drug Co., Inc ([1978 doc from NPS](#), p. 28)
 - 2000 - 2006 (maybe longer)

- Amosa Restaurant ([says here](#) opened in 2000; [image of restaurant front, 2003 NPS doc](#), p. 128; & [this STJ article](#) on an anti-violence meeting there in 2006)
- Rough **building timeline (20-25 Franklin, [2003 NPS doc here](#), p. 110)**:
 - 1930
 - “African-American businesses in this building in 1930 included S. M. Boynton; county agricultural agent; J. M. Powell; Central City Relief Insurance Co.; Excelsior Club; Masonic Hall; St. T. Powell, photographer; Dr. C. S. Taylor; Ducies Cafe and Benjamin Miller, barber”
 - 1955
 - “The Boyntons then found their business at 21 Franklin Street (not extant) under economic attack because it **was recognized as the meeting place of the Dallas County Voters League.**” ([2013 NPS doc](#), p. 23)
- **Claims** about building(s):
 - Said to be **used by SNCC for voter registration training, & to be next door to Dr. Bernard LaFayette’s SNCC office** in the building that was torn down there (where our raised beds are currently; source: Dr. LaFayette when we walked him through building)
 - Said to be **one of the SNCC headquarters in Selma** in:
 - Cites [this video clip](#) of Dr. LaFayette, though **he doesn’t actually say if it’s that exact building name**, or 21 Franklin or around there that was torn down beside it--which is William Waheed’s contention, & what Dr. LaFayette later told Brendan and Andre when walking through the building, as noted above; from [2013 NPS doc](#), p. 27)
 - “Former headquarters of Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)” (from [2003 NPS doc](#), p. 20)
 - “Sullivan Building: The **SNCC and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)** directed their local voting rights activities from this building” (from [this 2014 NPS brochure](#), & as recently as a 2017 version, maybe even more recent; however [this SNCC newsletter from 1965 \(PDF\)](#) mentions the “Franklin St. office,” suggesting it may have been in the adjacent building
 - [This Selma Times Journal brochure](#), though it gives **no reference**
 - This pic from the 3rd floor stairwell:



- Said to be **one of the offices of the Dallas County Voters League**, calls building "one of the South's most important strategy centers for the Civil Rights Movement" ([this walking tour guide](#), page 4)
- Was an office of the **"Dallas County Independent Free Voters Organization,"** a 3rd political party that was formed in Selma in 1966 that didn't apparently have a lot of direct success, but is said to have helped get more black folks in office in that period ([according to this book that covers that topic](#), around page 174)
 - Evidence in the door in this picture on 3rd floor (also a black panther image on 3rd floor, which was from the similar 3rd party formed in Lowndes, the Lowndes County Freedom Organization):



- **Other context:**
 - The location for the Community Center was chosen due to the close proximity of African-American businesses that were located in the **now demolished three-story brick building at 21-25 Franklin Street**. African-American businesses in this building in 1930 included S. M. Boynton; county agricultural agent; J. M. Powell; Central City Relief Insurance Co.; Excelsior Club; Masonic Hall; St. T. Powell, photographer; Dr. C. S. Taylor; Ducies Cafe and Benjamin Miller, barber. **Sullivan Building at the corner of Franklin Street and Alabama Avenue contained** offices of Atlantic Life Insurance Co., Dr. D. C. Carter, Pilgrim Life Insurance Co. and Washington Benevolent Protective Association. On Alabama Avenue intersecting with Franklin according the city directory was Crocheron & Lewis, **undertakers at 1220 Alabama Avenue**, Annie M. Stone, restaurateur at 1205, Moses Lovett, dry cleaners, and Arthur Weaver, barber at 1209 Alabama (from [2003 NPS doc](#), p. 110)
 - Sullivan Building, 1220 Alabama Avenue, **c.1915**. Renaissance Revival. Three-story, commercial brick building. Dichromatic brickwork and multiple brickwork patterns. Display windows on brick bulkhead splay to corner entrance of wood door with glazing. Transom windows surmount display windows. Windows 1/1, arched windows 1/1, tripartite windows 1/1 with segmental archivolt with dentil course. Metal awning, c. 1950. **Former headquarters of Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), 1963**, Civil Rights Movement. 28 3 C ((from [2003 NPS doc](#), p. 20)