

# History by Horsman: The Stone's Block story

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*This image shows the Stone's Block as it appeared, circa 1910, superimposed onto a modern image of the corner of Columbus Avenue and Market Street in downtown Sandusky.*

*Credit: Tom Horsman and Sandusky Library Follett House Museum Archives*

*Credit: Photo illustration and provided photo/TOM HORSMAN and SANDUSKY LIBRARY FOLLETT HOUSE MUSEUM*

Imagine being able to hop a train at the corner of Columbus Avenue and Market Street in

downtown Sandusky and take it to any city you wanted to go to in northern Ohio: Fremont, Norwalk, Toledo or Cleveland.

For a period of time in the early 20th century, you could do just that.

The Lakeshore Electric Railway Co. was a major interurban electric streetcar system that ran between cities in northern Ohio from 1901 until 1938.

For about a decade, in the 1910s, the Lake Shore Electric had offices in the Stone's Block building, and the lower floors served as downtown Sandusky's interurban station. From here, you could catch frequent trains that would quickly get you throughout the region.

Stone's Block was built in the early 1880s and has been home to many businesses over the years:

- The building is probably most famous for housing Sandusky's first S.S. Kresge Co. five-and-dime store, which opened there in 1920.

- Kresge's eventually became Jupiter Discount Store in the mid-1960s. The exterior building was originally red brick until Jupiter Stores painted it to reflect the company's branding colors. Jupiter Store lasted a few decades until 1987, and that was the end of this building's life as housing retail stores.

- Since that time, it has been home to various bars and restaurants: Bourbon Street Bar, Cabana Jacks and now the very successful Small City Taphouse.

The once-beautiful and ornate building has unfortunately suffered from years of decay as the windows were removed, the paint has faded, and some of the ornamentation and cornice sections have gone missing.

Fortunately, the current owner of the building submitted plans to the city for a façade restoration project that will work to restore the old Stone's Block building to its former glory. The Sandusky landmark commission approved a certificate of appropriateness for the project just last week. This will be a great addition to the list of historic buildings in downtown Sandusky that have been restored and rehabilitated in recent years.

*Editor's note: Tom Horsman works for the city of Sandusky's department of community development as serves on the board of trustees for the Erie County Historical Society.*